

FE.25 Encouraging A level Accounting students' participation in sessions through use of the video playback facility on Interactive Whiteboards

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Aim

To help students understand the layout of Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss accounts within AS Level Accounting.

Background

I teach in F.E. in the A level section, teaching AS and A2 Accounts as well as AS and A2 Business Studies. As is common across Further Education, attendance and retention rates are an ongoing consistent problem within the section. Finding ways to help students develop confidence in their studies are important in addressing these issues.

I have been involved in ICT Test Bed activities under the role of ICT Test Bed Team Leader and ICT Test Bed Lead Practitioner for the A level section.

Idea

One aspect of practice with ICT that students found helpful is the use of the video recording facility within the smart board. This study was devised as students experience difficulties every year with learning the variety of formats of Balance sheets and Profit and Loss Accounts which are a necessary requirement of AS and A2 level Accounting.

All students need to know the standardised sub headings which may vary slightly depending on the type of account, but in total there are around 10-15 standardised layouts, and students can become easily confused with the slight variation of these layouts.

Following the successful use of the recording facility for other aspects of the syllabus, I adopted a student's suggestion to use this facility, for the above formats,

Progress

Initially one video was taken – which was quite lengthy – incorporating all the format layouts. However this was revamped so a series of sections of the layouts were done such that they were discrete 1 minute entities rather than a continuous 10 minute video. We also encouraged students to write out the layouts, so the clips were all completed by the students themselves.

Changes to the teaching and learning experience

Students' retention of layouts has considerably improved. This retention is reinforced due to the fact that these clips can be brought up in any lesson, at any time, at the click of a button.

Also students may use the layout at home via the memory sticks or on laptops as and when they need additional support.

They are manageable bite size chunks of learning material not too tedious, long or boring as in the past when taken from a text book or delivered by OHT.

It also helps pupils distinguish between concepts of perfection, which they may never achieve and fitness for purpose or good enough which they may aim for. Some mistakes were made, however students spot these and it often helps them remember the correct procedure

They are also available for any recap and review as well as for instant testing of student knowledge – end of class tests, revision exercises etc. They can access a constant reminder which is permanent.

They are particularly used at the start of a lesson where layouts are brought up for instant review. They can also be flicked from one to the other, to compare and contrast differences in layouts that students need to know.

Motivation has certainly improved and there is the suggestion now by students to bring up formats and leave on the board now during the lesson. Many also now know different video clips by memory, for example, video clip number five is known to be for 'partnerships', and number 7 is for 'limited company accounts' etc.

Also the fact the clips are made by students means that they seem to remember who drew which one, recognise different writing styles which enables them to be memorised more easily as opposed to standard layouts in text books which have no colour or individuality i.e. student's retention of data is improved by personalised video clips.

Also with a video clip, I can talk through the layout as it is being revealed which is more beneficial than writing it out and then talking about it.

Student Feedback

Student feedback has been very positive -there is constant reference to the video clips ("whose was the best? easiest to follow?" etc) i.e. it has introduced an element of friendly competition and shared ownership. There is also talk in the future of using this facility for other accounting concepts. The only negative feedback was by certain students who prefer the perfection and precision a textbook layout can offer- which all students did not reach in their video recording.

Teacher Feedback

Observation from other teachers has noted that it has been effective for students who learn visually. It is also appropriate for the A level syllabus where a certain element of rote learning is required.

Conclusion

This facility has generated a wider interest amongst students on what is normally considered an excessively factual topic; this is due to 'ownership' of the material. Each student has the opportunity to input their own video footage which gives them this instant ownership. These layouts have engaged the student and the technology has empowered them, as the focus of control has now moved to some degree from the teacher towards the learner.

Although mistakes are made, the visuals allow the students to identify the mistake and make the necessary adjustments; which in turn is stored in their long-term memory for future recollection.

I believe it has brought accounting to life and captured the interest of a wider range of students.

Recommendations

a) Developing the materials

The layouts could be added to the college wide virtual learning environment. Also in the future, layouts could perhaps be made more visual perhaps by inputting different colours and

boxes to distinguish the various formulas. There are many shapes/colours etc on the Smart Board which were under utilised that could make the layouts more fun and perhaps more memorable.

b) Improving opportunities for students to adapt resources

A key element in the success of this activity has been the students' adoption and adaptation of materials, increasing their ownership and investment in their studies, and thus possibly addressing those attendance and retention issues which are of such concern. It would be useful in future to explore a wider range of activities where students' participation in creating resources could be encouraged, to improve their control of the learning experience.

c) Encouraging students' suggestions

In this study, the students were central to identifying ways that their learning experience could be improved. Perhaps an important aspect of developing ICT-based learning experiences is finding ways that students can be encouraged to contribute their insights into how the technology can be used.