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A case for blended and collaborative learning as strategies for teaching editing and publishing within a postgraduate writing program

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Abstract

Several recent studies have called for the breakdown of ‘arbitrary distinctions between virtual and “face-to-face” classrooms’ (Comeaux & McKenna-Byington 2003: 348; see also McDonald 2002; Rosset, Dougis & Frazee 2003; Morse 2003). In 2004 the Professional and Creative Writing discipline at Deakin University added Editing and Publishing (which had previously been available as on-campus-only units at our institution) to an established list of online postgraduate writing units taught via the auspices of the new (to our university) WebCT technology. This paper describes and evaluates our experience of challenging the ‘arbitrary distinctions’ between our two cohorts of students by incorporating blended and collaborative learning strategies into our course via two specific projects.

Introduction

The authors of this paper have taught the Editing and Publishing units in Deakin University’s Professional and Creative Writing courses together since 2004, when the postgraduate Editing and Publishing units were made available to off-campus students for the first time. Although a number of writing units had been offered via online technology since 2003, pedagogical models for this mode of delivery for editing and publishing were non-existent. Much of our research and energy over the past three years has been directed towards redesigning our courses to accommodate the learning needs of the significant off-campus student cohort, while continuing to meet the needs of the smaller cohort of on-campus students.

The student-centred approaches of collaborative and blended learning have provided valuable strategies for achieving this aim. The theories behind these techniques are described in detail in this paper but, briefly, blended learning combines face-to-face and online facilities for students regardless of their mode of study (off-campus or face-to-face), while collaborative learning encourages team building and places students in charge of their own educative process (Bruffee 1993). This paper makes a case for the use of both teaching strategies and documents the growing acceptance and confidence in the methodology by our students and ourselves during the past two years as we migrated an inherited course, written for face-to-face delivery, to an online environment.

Constraints on learning: The characteristics of Editing and Publishing in 2004

The Editing and Publishing units had been taught to on-campus students for several years prior to our appointment, but had not yet been offered to the off-campus cohort. We encountered a number of problems when we first taught the units to both on-campus and off-campus students:

The Editing unit had a strong student–teacher focus, due to the subject matter and mode of delivery. The unit dealt with topics for which it was difficult to escape a teacher-as-expert paradigm, such as grammar and punctuation. As a result there was little interaction between off-campus students.
This paradigmatical approach also inhibited our ability to teach off-campus students (in particular) appropriate negotiation skills and to convey an accurate sense of the editor–author relationship. Assignments reflected that students had not grasped the constructive, sensitive and diplomatic role that editors play in reviewing and working on an author’s manuscript.

Certain content did not lend itself to teaching in off-campus mode. Computer-based editing skills require the teacher and student to be able to look at the one monitor in order to troubleshoot successfully.

We found the process of teaching the two cohorts the same material difficult. Many on-campus students appeared to see their weekly classes as a substitute for the substantive weekly readings, rather than a supplement. This meant that the on-campus teacher was required to reconstruct material conveyed via the readings in some detail during tutorial sessions in order that the whole cohort could benefit from class discussion and exercises, and the progress of the on-campus students was delayed as a result. This impacted on the course content and our ability to ensure equity across the two modes; taken to an extreme it threatened to create two units under the one descriptor.

We hold both aspirational objectives and pragmatic reasons for our adoption of collaborative and blended learning techniques. In particular we seek improved teaching and learning outcomes for our Editing and Publishing students: the students of blended learning courses tend to achieve higher results and express greater satisfaction (Ladyshewsky 2004; Rossett, Dougls & Frazee 2003). We also wish to avoid teaching separate courses under the one unit title as a matter of equity and efficiency: blended learning brings the on- and off-campus student cohorts together.

While the case studies and discussion that follow detail our experience of collaborative and blended learning using online discussion, we also report some success in alleviating problems associated with the troubleshooting of editing software with off-campus students (mentioned above). During each unit, one weekend is now devoted to an on-campus workshop to which both student cohorts are invited. Learning content focuses on computer skills formation (editing unit) and industry speakers (publishing unit) and these sessions have been enthusiastically embraced by a small group of students each semester. Whilst not a panacea – our students are located interstate and abroad as well as locally – these sessions have also provided a useful networking opportunity for those able to attend.

Apart from the general benefits of collaborative learning, we had three specific aims in incorporating the learning techniques associated with it:

- To reduce pressure on and misconceptions about the student–teacher relationship by encouraging students to turn to each other for advice and explanation
- To facilitate the learning of interpersonal skills as well as a knowledge of written language within a set of vocational skills
- To improve student satisfaction with the social experience of learning.
Theoretical underpinnings of course revisions

Collaborative learning

Collaborative learning is used to describe forms of learning that are ‘participatory, proactive, communal [and] collaborative’ (Bruner 1996: 84). In short, the key recognised advantages of collaborative learning are that it deepens the social aspect of learning (Lent 2006: 69), acknowledges that knowledge is created through interaction rather than teacher–student transfer, is responsive to students’ existing levels of knowledge, experience and understanding and allows students to take control of their own learning (Alderman 2000: 2).

Collaborative learning principles share much common ground with other contemporary pedagogical principles, and indeed should be seen to benefit from and facilitate these other principles. There are close links, for instance, between collaborative learning and critical thinking, as collaborative projects demand evaluation and reflection skills essential for critical thinking (Lent 2006; Schamber & Mahoney 2006).

Furthermore, collaborative learning complements industry-based learning, for the reasons Light and Cox (2001) describe:

Employers value interpersonal skills and communication in a way they have never done before. Modern companies are less hierarchical and their employees are more likely to work collaboratively on projects than simply follow instructions (p. 183).

It was largely with the objective of developing industry-based skills that we initiated the collaborative learning projects discussed here. Defining these industry skills in our particular area is a more difficult task than for many other industries. As the subjects we teach sit within a professional and creative writing course, it is often difficult to identify and describe characteristics of the industry, as writers and indeed editors work across a range of organisations and in a variety of ways. Yet Light and Cox’s assertion is relevant to the writing and editing professions also. Krauth describes the changing work context of the writer, and the effect this has on their learning requirements:

In fiction and poetry, the writer has traditionally seen himself/herself as resistant to the notion of team activity. ‘I write alone,’ this kind of writer tends to say...

Outside the university context these days, professional fiction writers and poets clearly must admit: ‘I write in conjunction with my administration colleagues – my editors, publishers, agents and publicists – as indeed, I write in conjunction with my clients’ needs, the requirements of my audience’ (Krauth 2000).

One of the architects of collaborative learning, Kenneth Bruffee, describes how it mirrors the professional behaviour of editors: ‘Constructive readers of that sort read a draft, scribble some notes in the margins, maybe write a page or two of comments congratulating the writer on a good start, suggest a few changes, and mention one or two issues to be thought through a bit further. Then the two of them, reader and writer, sit down together and talk the draft over before the writer goes back to work on it’ (Bruffee 1993: 21). Our projects, and particularly their emphasis on collaborative learning, were designed to emphasise these collaborative relationships essential to the editing profession.
Light and Cox (2001) identify three categories of collaborative assessment. These are peer assessment, in which students are required to assess and comment on each other’s work; consultants and assessors exercise, in which fellow students act both as a resource and assessors of the student’s project; and group projects, in which groups of students undertake a common assessment task. The authors describe the delicate ground of peer assessment: ‘Traditional student-led seminars, for example, are often painful experiences, either in the sense that criticism is badly given and/or badly taken, or in the sense that serious discussion and criticism is difficult to initiate and sustain’ (2001: 183). Yet all three categories of collaborative assessment involve some form of peer assessment, even if it serves only as an evaluation and revision exercise for the group. Furthermore, the skills required for peer assessment – criticism, communication and negotiation – are usually central to the teaching objectives behind collaborative learning. Our process in the projects described in this paper may be seen as the transition from a peer assessment model of collaborative learning to a group project model.

In setting this progression in train, we were influenced by an instructive example: Belle Alderman’s (2000) discussion of a project initiated at the University of Canberra, in which small mixed groups of Professional Writing and Graphic Design students were required to collaborate to produce and exhibit a children’s picture book. The exhibition was judged by a children’s publisher who awarded prizes not just to the best illustrations or best text but also to the best collaborative work. Students were asked to reflect on the collaborative project, and these reflections suggested that it had proved a highly instructive exercise. It encouraged good work from individual students due to their commitment to their group, provided feedback from another person’s perspective and gave students emotional support (Alderman 2000: 13–15).

Alderman’s project was designed for oncampus students and class-based delivery, but the principle of collaboration that reflected professional working relations within the area of publishing and that fostered creativity was an aim we wished to replicate. Project A, described below, aims to replicate the author-editor collaborative process. Project B aims to replicate the role of the commissioning editor within the publishing team.

**Blended learning**

Blended learning is defined as learning that breaks down the ‘arbitrary distinctions between virtual and “face-to-face” classrooms’ (Comeaux & McKenna-Byington 2003: 348). It allows the advantages of both on- and off-campus teaching, as Parker describes: ‘place-based courses with rich conceptual learning objectives could be augmented with online discussion areas … virtual seminars could be augmented by many simple examples of technique that provided some level of interactivity’ (Parker 2001: 73). Literature on blended learning increasingly recognises that too often the concept has been regarded as the adoption of computer technology over classroom and print-based materials, rather than the authentic blending of both sets of instruments according to the considered, pedagogical advantage of each set. Leask (1999), for instance, notes that ‘It is still easy … to find examples of IT being used extensively in courses in ways that do not enhance teaching and learning. For example, the “dumping” of large amounts of text onto a web-site which students must first access and then print before they can use it, adds little to the value of the learning experience’ (p. 3). Our immediate response to the requirement to teach our units online in 2004 was probably guilty of this action, albeit with the best intentions. To an extent we misinterpreted the
advantage of a computer mediated communication (CMC) course, believing that because the subject of study (editing) was text-based, the key relationship was between teacher and student via the texts they were editing: the text was given to the student, who studied and amended it and sent it back to the tutor, who studied and commented on it. This relationship works very well for the writing units, because it replicates an author–editor relationship. (Students in writing workshops take an active role in critiquing and commenting on their fellow students’ writing.) It did not work for an editor–editor relationship: there was little apparent incentive for students to observe and comment on one another’s editing of their fellow students’ work, nor to solicit advice about the task from one another. This aggravated the problem described above, in which the ‘teacher–student’ relationship began to put an overwhelming burden on the teacher.

Our redesign of the Editing and Publishing units sought to avoid this behaviour. We explored the principles and models of blended learning. Educational scholars like Sull and Rice, for instance, acknowledge the similarities between online learning and collaborative project-based learning (defined as ‘a systematic teaching method that engages students in learning knowledge and skills acquired through an extended inquiry process structured around complex, authentic questions and carefully designed projects and tasks’ (Sull 2005: 1). As a result, online teaching lends itself to project-based learning: ‘When you’re teaching online, it’s very difficult to have an interactive, motivating course if you’re just spewing out text-based information. I think the more you teach online, the more you learn that it’s more effective to have student-centred, hands-on, authentic project-based activities than it is to have lecture-type activities where students are just reading and absorbing information’ (Rice, quoted in Sull 2005: 2). Indeed, this realisation reflects the redesign of our previously on-campus courses for off-campus mode.

Furthermore, blended learning lends itself particularly to course content that is orientated around written language. Comeaux and McKenna-Byington (2003: 352) note that ‘because the medium of interaction is writing rather than speaking, students in CMC courses write and read more than in traditional courses, to get the information they need to complete their work – for real audiences and real purposes’.

Thomas (2005) engages with ideas of reality and communities of practice, describing a case study that uses blended learning to achieve collaborative learning in a secondary school classroom. In her study, teenagers engaged in online role-playing games to create ongoing collaborative stories based on fantasy characters. Computer-mediated communication provided a forum for a ‘community of practice’: an informal group of people united by a joint enterprise. Because communication requires literacy, students came to value and improve their literacy:

... children are learning that to be literate is to have power. Literate behaviour is one of the most valued forms of capital in the community. The ability to weave each other’s words into a narrative and engage in stimulating, collaborative storytelling is considered the highest practice of the community. Literate behaviour is also privileged and sets up its own form of class system within the community (Thomas 2005: 35).

In a similar way, the practice of blended learning encourages our adult students to become immersed in the style of publishing documentation – both promotional and operational.
The following projects are offered as case studies to describe our use of the principles of both collaborative and blending learning within a CMC learning environment.

**Experiments with online collaborative and blended learning**

**Project A: Editing assignment – description**

The editing assignment was designed as an exercise in collaborative learning and industry-specific training. We devised a forum that allowed editing students to demonstrate their understanding of the copyeditor’s roles and responsibilities within the publishing process. In particular, we constructed an experiential exercise that required each student to effectively and appropriately communicate within an atmosphere designed to mimic the professional author–editor relationship.

Students were paired and took on the roles of author and then editor for each other’s work. Each student was required to provide a piece of their own written work – between 1500 and 2000 words. The choice of content was theirs, though they were required to provide a short statement that contextualised the work for their editor, indicating the purpose of their writing and its intended readership.

Editors were required to copyedit the work and to convey their suggestions for improvements to the manuscript in a letter addressed to the author; as well, each provided a style sheet as evidence of their decisions for imposing consistency of style on the manuscript. Assessment was based on submission of the three requirements (edited manuscript, letter and style sheet) and weighted heavily towards the author letter in which students were to provide a thorough explanation for each category of correction recommended. This weighting was intended to address the foreseen problem of discrepancies in the standard of works presented to students for editing. The edited manuscript was assessed for clarity of instruction and the clarity, quality and appropriateness of queries addressed to the author. The style sheet was assessed for its comprehensiveness, clarity and appropriateness.

Two discussion threads were established via the WebCT software for on- and off-campus discussion of the editing task. Following submission of their work for assessment, students uploaded their author letters and were encouraged to enter into an online dialogue about the editing process and its reception by the author. On-campus students also had an opportunity to discuss issues face to face. (Incidentally, this resulted in very little online discussion by this cohort but a lively tutorial session in which students began to see how easily one could antagonize a writer.) With hindsight we believe we should have made online discussion between author and editor compulsory for the whole student cohort. In order to encourage cross-fertilisation between the on- and off-campus students, this discussion should be directed through a single WebCT thread.

The editing assignment was given a timeframe of six weeks. During this time the prescribed readings and tutorial discussions and exercises focused on equipping the students with an understanding of the basic structural needs of a manuscript and practice in using copyediting techniques. In particular we endeavoured to convey an understanding of the sensibility and sensitivity of an editor when working with a writer. As John Dessauer put it: ‘Nowhere is the essential midwifery of publishing more apparent than in the editor’s task when he must
literally inhabit an author’s soul and whisper to him as though from within’ (Dessauer 1974: 38).

**Project A: Editing assignment – evaluation**

Three key benefits of this project were clear from student and teacher feedback. The first was a stronger engagement of the student with the learning experience. One of the processes demanded by this project is that of revision: the project effectively encourages revision of writing as students receive their edited manuscripts from the editor-student, and are required to assess and adopt or reject the changes the editor has suggested. Revision is valuable because of its relationship to ‘the act of evaluating’ and, as Schamber and Mahoney argue, because it encourages ‘higher-level group critical thinking’ (2006: 120).

Secondly, the project had the desired effect of improving students’ interpersonal skills in a manner that replicated professional relationships. Several students commented that, in comparison to their other assignments in which material for editing had been prescribed by the teacher, they were much more cautious about making changes to a fellow student’s work, and more careful to explain the rationale for the changes they made. We believe it was those students who engaged in the task as a real project, who took their editorial brief seriously and worked long and hard to produce the edited manuscript – many making good suggestions for structural changes – who were the ones to benefit from the assignment. Usually it was the same students who also benefited from the corollary experience – that of having their word edited. Those students who were paralysed by the brief – which was to suggest improvements in the work without overwhelming the writer’s style – confined themselves to praise in the author letter and to minimal impositions of consistency and corrections to grammar and spelling in the manuscript.

We believe these two benefits of the project could be fostered further. To this end, the scope of the project will be altered in 2007 to include the requirement that author and editor ‘meet’ formally online after the author has received the editor’s suggestions. At this meeting, the author should discuss the changes he or she has adopted and the reasons for doing so, and might query the editor about the rationale for his or her recommendations. This is part of the transition from a peer assessment model to a group assignment model mentioned earlier, as the editor and author are together made responsible for producing a stronger manuscript.

The third key benefit of this project lay in the marking process. Both teachers reported that reading and marking students’ work was more time-consuming than previous assignments, as the text had to be read once to get a sense of the writing and once to assess the editing. However, both teachers found the experience of marking more enjoyable due to the variety of the writing and the variety of the editors’ responses to it.

Notwithstanding our assurances that the weighting of the assessment was designed to address issues of bias, some students complained that the requirement of collaborative learning promoted inequity, as each student’s success depended to an extent on the quality of their partner’s work. Interestingly, this feedback did not come from the highly motivated students, despite the fact that they were often contributing substantially more than their partners.
Project B: Publishing assignment – description

For this assignment the students assumed the role of a commissioning editor creating a book proposal, which they were required to ‘pitch’ to their hypothetical publishing board. Each student was required to research publishers’ lists, match their book to an appropriate publishing house, and thus to a targeted market, a specific format, price range and design specification, and to provide a rationale for their choices. The assessment was judged on the persuasive nature of the proposal with regard to book, magazine or web-based project, its marketing and publication plans, and the provision of a suitable design brief taking into account price, target market and competition. Marking was weighted towards the concept and market analysis over the design brief. The student body was thus encouraged to enter into an imaginative process that put them at the centre of the publication process – as the advocate for the publication itself.

These projects were supported by staff provision of readings, tutorial discussions (on and offline) which centred around the publishing processes they would be exploring, and tutorial exercises that familiarised them with the processes of publication, marketing, scheduling and costing of books and other forms of publication.

Project B: Publishing assignment – evaluation

Some students came to the project with a well-articulated concept for a publication they were writing themselves and used the project to identify a publisher and pull together a ‘real’ proposal. Others undertook the required research, some even identifying interesting market gaps. Still others chose to model their proposals on existing publications rather than to investigate genuinely new possibilities.

There was some confusion amongst the students about the difference between content that might be included in the proposal (a selling document) as opposed to the publication plan (an operational document). We found our task was one of providing clarification and explanation, reiterating in fact what was available in the set reading material: that in a real-work situation there is substantial overlap precisely because these documents have different purposes and readerships. For a significant number of students, it seemed, the independent learner paradigm was inhibited by a lack of confidence.

A further area of student uncertainty was the costing of the project. For the purpose of assessment we did not require that students provide a detailed costing for their proposal – though some did. We provided exemplary material that demonstrated realistic parameters within which students might speculate about the number of books they would need to sell in order to cover their costs: an object lesson in real-world pragmatics. Indeed, some savvy students discovered and shared a website providing costs for a range of print runs and formats. Although this was designed for short-run and print-on-demand titles, and the costings delivered in $US, it nevertheless provided a reasonable indication of the significance of the print cost to paper-based projects and allowed students to hypothesise realistically about their ideas.

From the students’ introductory descriptions of themselves, it was to some extent possible to distinguish students who had sought out the course for an industry experience from those who were seeking other experiences; for instance, enhancing their writing skills or opportunities for self-development. The former were more successful in Project B. These
students made independent enquiries via the internet about publishers’ lists, submission processes and the latest jacket fashions. They visited bookshops to review the physical form, and entered into the online discussion about the projects with enthusiasm, providing informative and strategic suggestions for their colleagues. Because their individual projects were different, the students appeared to respond with a sense of collaboration rather than competition, which to us was gratifying. Several students plan to use their projects as the basis of real publication proposals.

Some on-campus students – who had expressed negative feelings about the WebCT software as a study environment early in the course – participated infrequently in the online area and contributed little to these discussions. They did however admit to referring to the online discussions to assist with their own conceptual problems about the topic.

A number of students had difficulty imagining themselves as part of the publishing team, promoting their own project as editor, preferring rather the role of author soliciting an expression of interest from the publisher. To that end, their publishing proposal came from the author as supplicant rather than the editor as champion. Although this misconception was addressed during on-campus tutorials and off-campus postings it still permeated the finished assessment task, probably due to the exemplary material provided via WebCT and readings that – in the absence of appropriate detailed material about the sponsorship role of the in-house editor – focused on the author proposal.

**Reflection and evaluation**

As an exercise in collaborative learning the benefits of the editing project (Project A) were evident to both the on- and off-campus cohorts of our students, as well as to us, their tutors. Many students at first daunted by the idea of making changes to the text of a ‘real person’ – to whom they would be required to explain and justify their editorial suggestions for the text – came to acknowledge, during class discussion and feedback sessions, the focus provided by mimicking the professional relationship between editor and writer. This was an original experience and superior to the less reflective approach taken to a tutor-constructed exercise. The students felt the import of the material they were presenting and worked harder and more creatively to produce acceptable texts. During feedback on this task, students mentioned the need for ‘sensitivity’ and ‘tact’. Some discussed their desire for experienced third party advice, while others took unexpected initiatives. For example, one student was presented with a children’s story to edit. While the student was not experienced with the format, he took the initiative of reading the literature on children’s books as well as a number of books similar to the one presented for editing. This is precisely the kind of research editors do in a professional engagement when confronted by unfamiliar tasks. This positive attitude was not true of the whole cohort, however, as some students abnegated the responsibility of making considered and justified changes by confining themselves to minimal copyediting of the texts. It has been our experience that both face-to-face and online classes are carried by a small cohort of students who engage with and take responsibility for their own learning processes. It is, of course this cohort that benefits most from collaborative and blended learning projects. These students seem to respond to the tutors’ challenges, apparently succeeding beyond the expectations of both student and tutor. Bruffee writes that the practice of student writing in collaborative learning is part of their involvement in a professional community of peers. Student work ‘fosters in students the ability to contribute to that community, to respect the community’s values and standards, to help meet the needs of other members of the
community, and to produce on time the work they have contracted to produce’ (Bruffee 1993: 48). Our experience is that the commitment of a small group of students improves the quality of work of the whole community. This is one of the key benefits of collaborative learning. We observed that as we required students to collaborate and thus to observe the effort their fellow students were putting into the project, the highly motivated students – by initiating and producing work of a high standard – effectively set the expectations for success for the whole student group. Perhaps as a result, our feedback in 2006 was that the units were more challenging, thought-provoking and stimulating than students had expected.

Conversely, there were several students in both units whose apparent lack of confidence, and lack of ease with the collaborative experience, undermined their ability to fully benefit from the processes. In Project A this was manifested in editor responses that did not engage deeply with the author’s writing but were excessively praising and where corrections focused entirely on minor matters like punctuation errors. In Project B it was manifested in proposals that mimicked existing publications rather than investigating new creative opportunities, and in the desire to use exemplary material as a template rather than a guide. If the following observation by Bruffee is correct, this may be because those students are not yet able to vest authority and to trust in themselves:

First, they learn to vest authority and trust, tentatively and for short periods of time, in other members of their transition group. Then, with more confidence, they learn to vest authority and trust in the larger community that comprises the class as a whole. Finally, they learn to vest authority and trust in themselves as individuals who have internalized the language, values, and mores of the still larger community, the community of knowledgeable peers, that the teacher represents and that they have been striving to join (Bruffee 1993: 4).

If this is the case, our recommendation for extending the size and significance of the collaborative groups may enhance these students’ ability to engage in the collaborative projects.

We are aware also of the requirement to address student feedback about lack of clarity in instructions. All theories of blended and collaborative learning emphasise the need to clearly articulate the goals of each project. This was our aim when developing the assessment tasks. It has become apparent, however, that the assignments and the attendant tutorials and resource materials will require some fine tuning in order to more fully articulate our desired goals.

Towards a ‘group project’ model of learning

We mentioned earlier our ambition to progress the collaborative learning requirements from a peer assessment model to a group project model. This will involve the following changes. Project A, borrowing from Light and Cox’s consultants and assessors exercise (2001: 183-4), will include a ‘mentoring committee’, via a WebCT discussion thread, to which students can address questions of other students relating to their editing or their concerns as an author. Project B will be expanded, so that small groups act as publishing companies and the proposals the students within that group put forward will form the publishing list. The ‘highly suspect’ nature of the assessment of collaborative work identified by Light and Cox (2001: 182) is thus ameliorated by a separation of tasks: that of establishing the parameters of a
publishing list (within the small group purview), and an individual publishing project (the individual student’s purview).

We anticipate these reforms will enrich the students’ learning experience by increasing the well-recognised benefits of collaborative learning: the social aspect and the creation of knowledge through interaction. We also anticipate that they will address the negative feedback of students who saw peer-to-peer work as inequitable, and the anxiety behind this feedback. Larger groups will provide a ‘checkpoint’ for students against which to measure their own work and that of their fellow students.

Conclusion

The teaching and assessment initiatives we have described in this paper are designed to increase our students’ expectations of the quality of work they must achieve, the industry-related and communication skills of our graduates, and their satisfaction with the learning experience. Student feedback suggests that on the whole these Editing and Publishing assessment tasks have been successful: qualitative feedback often volunteered these projects as the standout learning experiences of the course. Whilst this is gratifying to us as teachers, we must temper any tendency towards self-congratulation with our knowledge that this feedback most likely comes from students seeking industry experience, those identified as constituting the ‘most likely to succeed’ category mentioned earlier. Our task now is to heighten the collaborative and blended experience by increasing the size of groups and their integration.
References


