Using Moodle assignments in the School of Education

Background

We needed certain features that were available in Moodle assignments and did not need the features that Turnitin offered, e.g.,

- a School-specific grading scale (a system of ‘spot marks’)
- to support School policy on grading
- to deliver grades via Moodle
- School assessment policy also requires the return to each student of a ‘feedback form’ for each assignment, explaining the criteria used in grading and how each particular assignment met (or failed to meet) those criteria.

What did you do?

- We found Moodle assignments to be more configurable for our needs than Turnitin assignments. We now use Moodle assignments in modules across the School.
- We could add our own grading scale (a system of ‘spot marks’) which ensured a match between School policy on grading, and the delivery of grades via Moodle.
- We could also make use of Moodle’s ‘response files’ feature, which was important to us because of the need to return the feedback forms.
How did it work out?

- It is appropriate to support the School’s assessment policy
- Staff were happy enough with it
- Students have very little difficulty with it

Recommendations and tips

- In 12-13 I set up a rather clunky ‘copy and paste’ activity (using the ‘notes’ feature) to get students to confirm that they understood the regulations relating to assignment submission. In 13-14 I’ve ditched that idea and now simply remind students of the regulations (I include a link to them) and tell them that by clicking on ‘send for marking’ they are agreeing that they understand them.
- One thing we find particularly useful is the ability to set up resubmission assignments which are visible only to students who fail to get a pass mark in the original assignment (using ‘grade condition’ in the ‘restrict access’ settings).
- The problem many staff encounter is that the grading screen contains too many columns and finding the ‘grade’ button for a particular assignment can involve a lot of horizontal scrolling.
More information:

- Moodle Magic Case study 14: Using Moodle assignments for non-text submissions
- How to create a Moodle assignment
- How to delete a draft Moodle assignment (student instructions)
- How to enable resubmission of a Moodle assignment (staff viewpoint)
- How to give feedback privately to students