

# Blackboard discussion boards in SML

## What did/do you do?

SML's use of Blackboard was commended in their ISR.

## Who is involved?

Franck Michel's French Blackboard pages were highlighted as examples of good practice.

## How do you do it?

Students use a discussion board to post 150-200 words about a given topic, writing in the target language. The aim is to demonstrate their regular use of French: the emphasis is on regular completion of this task rather than assessing the quality of their language. Eight tasks are set, one for each fortnight of the module.

These small tasks are assessed as a component of a language portfolio. This offers an assessment-related reward for students who complete the tasks, but recognises that they are relatively small tasks.

## Why do you do it?

Regular small tasks are set to build students' fluency in the target language: this task focuses on the quantity rather than the quality of language produced. Including the tasks as a component of a language portfolio mark gives students an incentive to complete them. It puts the emphasis on students' self-directed learning rather than on the lecturer's micro-management of students by assessing each task.

## Does it work?

Students who realise the value of the tasks tend to complete them, and are rewarded in their final mark. Those who don't, aren't.

## Teaching and Learning Case Study

HaSS 'communicating with students' project, 2010/11

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### Coherent Curriculum theme:

- Student Engagement
- Assessment and Feedback

### Other keywords:

- eLearning
- Blackboard