



# Student blogs as assessed coursework: a short case study

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# Student blogs as assessed coursework

## Reasons (prior):

- Something to replace a 'scrapbook' assignment
- Something different and creative for students
- In one case, it reflected the subject matter
- A speculative, 'ongoing' form of assessment
- Potential for formative feedback throughout module

## Reasons (during/after):

- Elements of digital literacy
- Potential for collaboration and Interdisciplinarity
- Wider impact of assessment and pedagogy

# Case study modules

## Module 1:

- 10 week module (spring term)
- 18 undergraduate students, foundation-level
- Topic of 'nations, nationalism and national identity'
- Blog = 50% of final grade (essay = other 50%)
- Blog project undertaken in last 5 weeks of module

## Module 2:

- 10 week module (spring term)
- 50 undergraduate students, year 2&3-level
- Topic of 'Social movements and popular protest'
- Blog = 40% of final grade (essay = other 60%)
- Blog project undertaken in all 10 weeks of module

# Final grades for blog assignment

## Module 1: foundation level

80+ (first)	=	1 (6%)
70-79 (2i)	=	1 (6%)
60-69 (2ii)	=	3 (16%)
50-59 (third)	=	0 (0%)
0-49 (fail)	=	13 (72%)

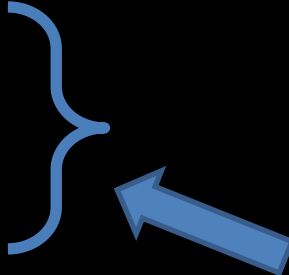
Not overly encouraging!



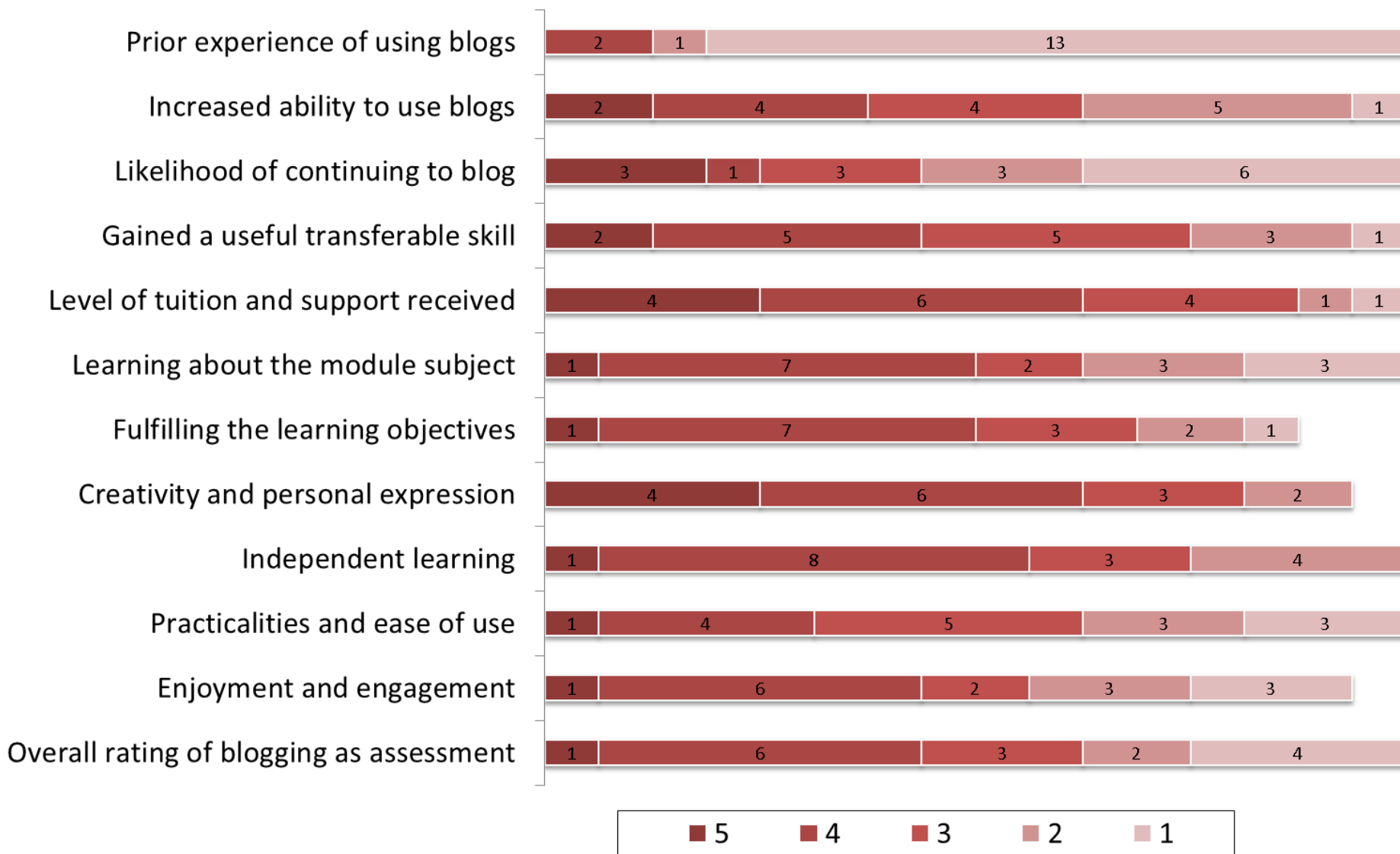
## Module 2: year 2&3 level

70+ (first)	=	7 (14%)
60-69 (2i)	=	16 (32%)
50-59 (2ii)	=	14 (28%)
40-49 (third)	=	0 (0%)
0-39 (fail)	=	4 (8%)
Deferred	=	9 (18%)

But... much more positive at this level

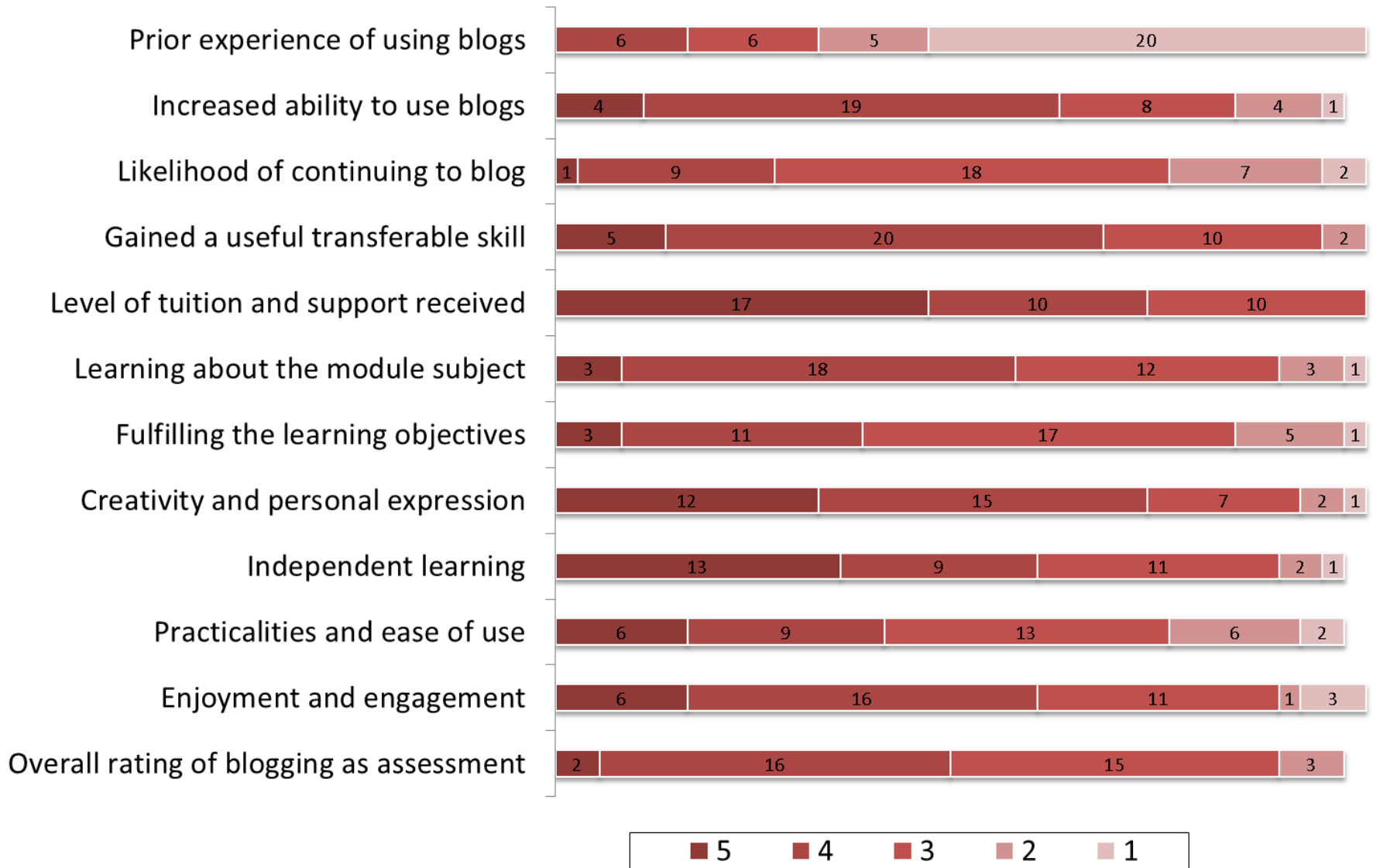


## Foundation Level module - student feedback on blog assignment



Questions were graded 5= highest mark (most positive) down to 1=Lowest (least positive)

## Year 2 & 3 module - Student feedback on blog assignment



Questions were graded 5= highest mark (most positive) down to 1=Lowest (least positive)

## Foundation level student feedback

‘Most enjoyable piece of work I have ever done and I really enjoyed this. I hope this catches on as it is great fun and a good motivator.’

‘I really enjoyed doing the blog, however I'm not very good with technology in general so at times it was quite frustrating; I do prefer writing essays, in the sense that it's a lot more straightforward, although the freedom of the blogs and the idea of blogging are very appealing.’

‘I disliked the idea of blogging and was uncertain as to how to approach this assessment, ending up essentially writing an informal essay and dividing it up into posts. I don't feel like I have written an academic piece of work.’

‘I would have much preferred to have written an essay. After spending the year getting to grips with referencing correctly I found it almost like taking a step backwards.’

## Year 2&3 level student feedback

‘It was incredibly useful to try a different method of assessment aside from essays and I feel as though I have gained a transferable skill.’

‘Great idea, really enjoyed blogging. More courses should have this as a form of assessment.’

‘I have enjoyed blogging as part of the course structure, it has given the opportunity to express your own opinion on the subject and draw your own comparisons.’

‘Knowing you’re getting assessed on something you are only using for the first time is daunting!’

‘The main thing that riled most people about the course was that for the amount of credits the course gives, you need to do twice the work as is normal in comparable courses.’



# Examples of some of the best blogs

## Module 1: foundation level

<https://hwils0011.wordpress.com>

<http://www.lwall002.wordpress.com>

<https://lfaga001.wordpress.com/>

## Module 2: year 2&3 level

<https://fdezo025.wordpress.com/>

<https://rpowe049.wordpress.com/>

<https://nmcbr049.wordpress.com/>

<https://rlawr010.wordpress.com/>

<https://egrig001.wordpress.com/>