Using brief presentations to assess project work

Tim Jones
Assessment

• Following a process of enquiry, there is a need to **collate and report** what has been found.

• Typically a **written** piece of work is used, essay, report, poster etc

• A **presentation** is another process to consider…
Presentation

• Students frequently see presentations, usually in the form of lectures supported by PowerPoint slides.

• In their professional lives they will have to make short presentations to colleagues, meetings, clients etc.
Individuals or groups?

• A presentation can be set as a group task, but it is difficult to make sure everyone in the team contributes equally.

• But…If we are to hear individual presentations surely there will be too little time?
Short presentations

• A lengthy presentation tests **endurance** of all concerned so how short can a presentation be…and still be useful?

• The 5 minute presentation…
The 5min presentation

• Realistic brief:

1. You are asked to make presentation to the Managing Director of your company outlining the **key findings** of your recent research (eg a previously submitted written report etc)

2. Conclude with your recommended **next actions** for the company

3. Be prepared to answer a a few **brief questions** on your presentation
Timing

Presentations can be run at 15 minute intervals:

• 5 mins: presentation
• 5 mins: questions
• 2 mins: for both markers to confer and agree marks
• 3 mins: for changeover and set up
Simple rules

• Everyone is issued with a time slot to attend:
  • ‘Arrive no later than 9.50am, your presentation will be at 10.00’
  • ‘Wait in room no123 to be called through to the adjacent presentation room124’
• Bring presentations on a USB data stick (state software/hardware setup)
• No shows and late arrivals get zero marks
• The presentation will be stopped at 5mins
Marking- the cynical view!

• Without **marking criteria** the tendency is to say it was ‘OK …as far as presentations go’

• Everyone who **turns up** at least passes and the very best get high 60’s %

• This is not helpful!
Marking criteria

- Make a specific mark sheet tailored to the assignment task.
- Look for specific things to be done rather than a vague, warm feeling that it was reasonable or alright.
Handling questions

• Award marks for how well questions are handled- this is unrehearsed and you see their true understanding of the material being revealed to you

• Do you need to ask questions to clarify confusing points?

• Have they got you so interested that you ask searching questions?
Feedback

• An immediate verbal ‘the graph on cost implications was very good’ is highly rewarding for students.

• Try not to criticise too harshly!

• Avoid starting a conversation or worse a negotiation!

• Allow collection of final marks sheets the day after
Possible variations

- **Auto-running** PowerPoint presentations submitted on CD with a ‘brochure’ explaining how to view the presentation

- **Advantage:** freedom from time constraint, and copy of material for audit etc.

- **Disadvantage:** no question can be asked and you don’t know if the work is truly that of the individual student.
Possible variations

• **Video** the presentation to keep an auditable copy for external examiner to see.

• Students could **view** the presentations to learn from the experience of others.

• Students could **submit** their own video clips of their presentations for marking.
Problems…

• How **awful** would a presentation need to be to fail?
• How **brilliant** should a presentation be to get 80%?
• What about **attacks of nerves**, stuttering etc?
• What about **equipment failure**?
• How do those with **English** as a second language manage the assessment?
Questions?
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## Marking sheet for 5 min ‘pitch’ presentation

### Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Who are you? What is it about?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market</td>
<td>What are the main market forces?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>What are the main technological issues?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foresight</td>
<td>What is your view of the future?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>Is it clear the presentation has finished?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speech</td>
<td>Is it audible and understandable?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pace</td>
<td>Is it too fast or painfully slow?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Kept to time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear message</td>
<td>Do I know more at the end, and want to learn more?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement with audience</td>
<td>Does it sound like you believe in what you say?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in front of people</td>
<td>Have you got control over your nerves?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Visual aids

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easy to understand</td>
<td>Are the aids used understandable?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear to read</td>
<td>Is it too small to read from the back?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate diagrams, tables, photos etc</td>
<td>Are the diagrams helping to explain things more clearly?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of samples, examples</td>
<td>Are any interesting samples used?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Missing information</td>
<td>Are questions essential to fill big gaps in the presentation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probing deeper</td>
<td>Do answers indicate full understanding of subject presented?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Agreed final percentage: %