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Chester

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# Podcasting: a tool for enhancing assessment feedback?

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# Outline structure

- Context: modules, assessment exercises and the methods of evaluation
- Creating and distributing the podcasts
- Accessing and listening to the feedback
- Nature and content of the feedback
- Student engagement with the feedback
- Some possible drawbacks
- Concluding thoughts

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# The case study modules

<i>Climate change &amp; natural hazard management, Level 3, 15 credits (n=26)</i>			
Assignments	Written feedback	Audio feedback - general	Audio feedback - specific
E-postcard	x	✓	✓
Group oral presentation	x	✓	✓
Report	✓ and mark	✓	✓
<i>Introductory field skills in geography, Level 1, 15 credits (n=24)</i>			
Mid-module test	x	✓	✓
Web site	✓ and mark	✓	✓

# Exploring the impact of audio feedback

<i>Climate change &amp; natural hazard management, Level 3 (n=26)</i>		
Pre-feedback questionnaire	Post-feedback questionnaire	Focus group (independent facilitator)
26 (100%)	18 (69%)	4 students, 2 hours
<i>Introductory field skills in geography, Level 1 (n=24)</i>		
Pre-feedback questionnaire	Post-feedback questionnaire	Focus group (independent facilitator)
21 (88%)	7 (29%)	5 students, 2 hours

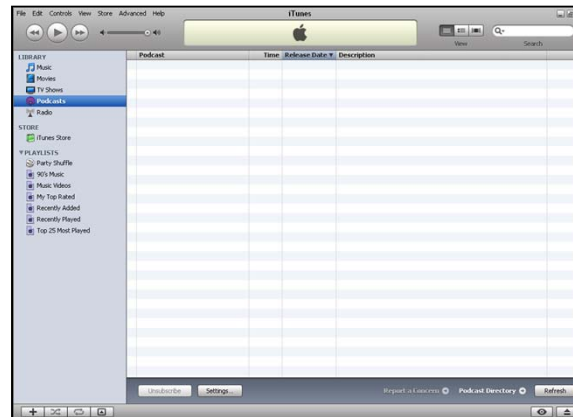
# Creating and distributing the podcasts

For on-line guidance see:

- <http://www.impala.ac.uk/>
- <http://www2.le.ac.uk/projects/impala/>



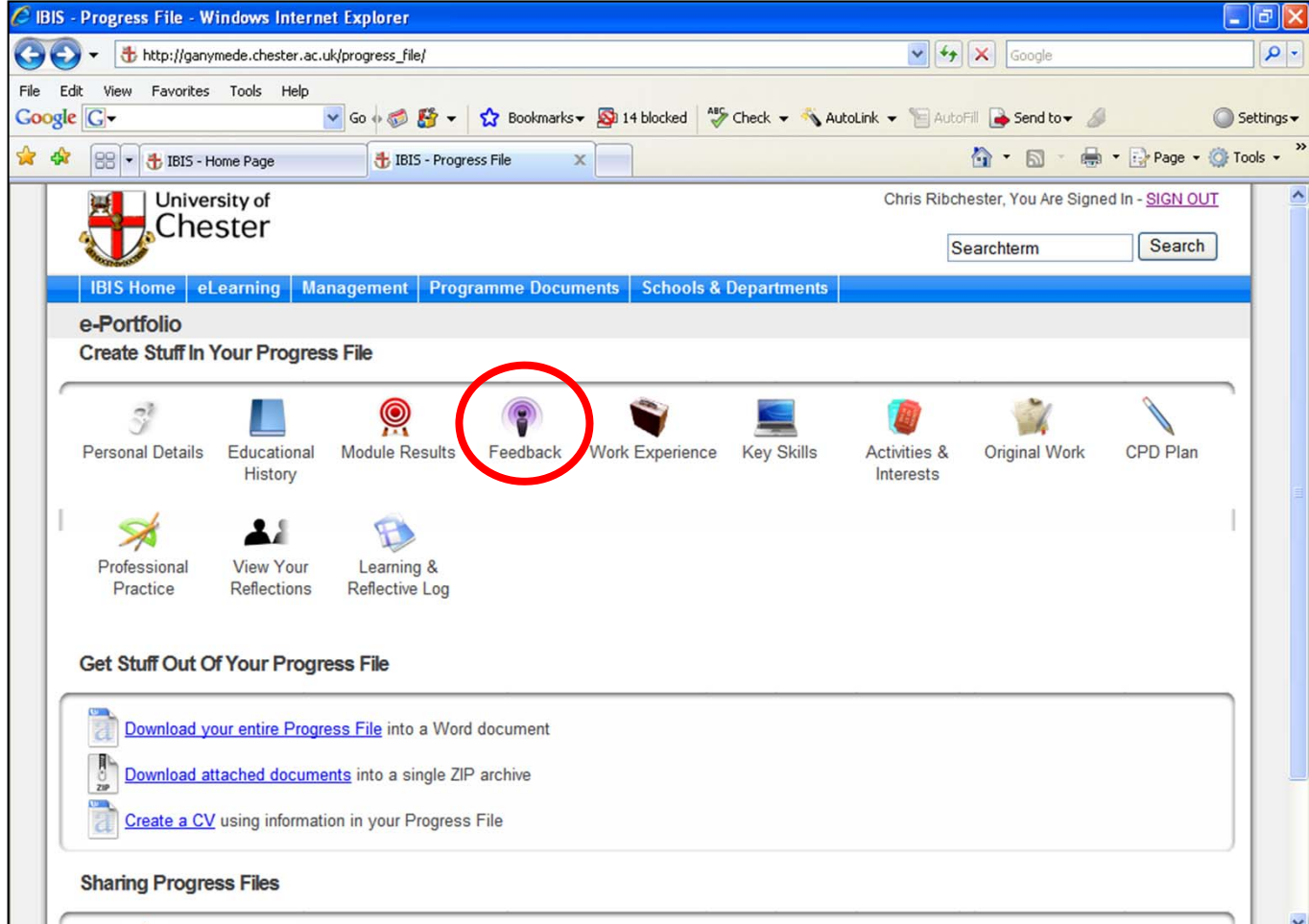
Recording: iPod with  
microphone attachment



Editing and compressing: iTunes  
and GarageBand

# Accessing and listening to the feedback

- Within VLE:  
e-portfolio /  
progress file
- Initial concerns,  
scepticism and  
some technical  
hitches!
- But a high  
'listening rate'
- Limited  
downloading to  
mobile devices  
(despite high  
level of  
ownership)



The screenshot shows a Windows Internet Explorer browser window displaying the University of Chester e-Portfolio interface. The browser address bar shows the URL [http://ganymede.chester.ac.uk/progress\\_file/](http://ganymede.chester.ac.uk/progress_file/). The page header includes the University of Chester logo and the user name "Chris Ribchester, You Are Signed In - SIGN OUT". A search bar is present with the text "Searchterm" and a "Search" button. The main navigation menu includes "IBIS Home", "eLearning", "Management", "Programme Documents", and "Schools & Departments". The "e-Portfolio" section is titled "Create Stuff In Your Progress File" and features a grid of icons for various portfolio components: Personal Details, Educational History, Module Results, Feedback (circled in red), Work Experience, Key Skills, Activities & Interests, Original Work, and CPD Plan. Below this, there are options for "Get Stuff Out Of Your Progress File", including "Download your entire Progress File into a Word document", "Download attached documents into a single ZIP archive", and "Create a CV using information in your Progress File". The bottom section is titled "Sharing Progress Files".



# Nature and content of the feedback

## The potential for more depth and detail...

- *“there is more quantity of feedback and ... it is probably more specific and carefully thought through.”*
- *“More constructive, can be targeted to specific points for improvement and gives you a more accurate account of the quality of work and why marks were awarded.”*
- *“Seems to be more feedback on the podcast than you have on written feedback.”*
- *“You tend to get a lot more feedback than you would with more traditional methods.”*

## More personalised...

- *“More detailed and personal feedback. Clear idea of positive and negative points about the work.”*
- *“This feedback felt that the work had really been looked at and evaluated personally.”*
- *“It is done on quite a personal level and in a good amount of detail for you personally.”*
- *“A lot more personal information. Felt like I was getting a ‘one-to-one’”.*

# Engagement with the feedback

## Accessible...

- Delivered to the student and available off campus '24/7'
- Counters the handwriting problem (nearly half of 'pre'-survey respondents commented on this!)
- Students with specific learning difficulties

## Responsiveness to the spoken word and its nuances...

- You get *“the tone of voice with the words so you could understand the importance of the different bits of feedback”*
- Enhances the importance of constructing sensitive feedback commentaries:
  - “the impact of the words being spoken [will] be much harder hitting and may be a bit demoralising”*
  - “Any criticism will hit home more”*
  - “May be harder to hear a poor mark, rather than in writing”*
  - “[I am least looking forward to] hearing disappointment in their voices”*

# Engagement with the feedback

## The 'concealed' mark...

- Not instantly viewable as it is on a feedback sheet:  
*“makes you listen to all of the feedback not just the mark”*

## Context of receipt...

- Nearly three-quarters of students listened to their feedback off campus, individually, and in their own study spaces
- Conducive to careful engagement with the feedback content

# Some problems and challenges

- Separation of the feedback and assignment
- The loss of written comments, both annotations and summary feedback sheets
- Too much feedback!
- Time commitment in producing, editing and distributing the podcasts

## Conclusion

- Potential for more comprehensive feedback, which may be reviewed in more depth by students
- New opportunity to help diversify assessment feedback strategies

Lots more to explore...

- Is audio feedback ‘carried forward’ more than the written word?
- Is there an upper time limit?
- Does embedding into the e-portfolio encourage a greater engagement with PDP?
- Does the current positive feedback reflect a ‘novelty phase’?