

# STUDENT VOICES

## *A Reflection on Lessons Learnt with Tackling Grade Inflation.*

**Jay Lytwynenko and Mark Zarb**

A common issue with the academic process is that of grade inflation, or the over-abundance of good grades, which directly leads to a perceived loss of grade value by employers [1]. Throughout the past several years during Assessment Boards within the School of Computing – there have often been issues flagged surrounding the subject of grade inflation, especially within BSc Digital Media. Reasoning for such issues has varied between cohort, module and even material, with staff citing factors such as ‘...a less challenging topic’ to ‘...particularly strong & engaging cohort.’ In addition, there is often the case of applying academic judgement when assessing work with no clear assessment criteria, which can lead to an inconsistent and lengthy process – potentially risking inconsistency between various markers, each with independent judgement.

This case study overhauls the assessment method for several modules and implements a requirements-based approach in both coursework setting and assessment structure. This approach was initially tested in Semester 1 of the 2020/2021 session and upon successful outcome based on initial SEQ scores (Table #1), second marker’s feedback and preliminary student feedback, was rolled out across further modules in Semester 2 & more so in the 2021/2022 session.

	2019/2020	2020/21
Stage 3	62%	88%
Stage 4	80%	83%

Table #1 – SEQ Data showing a rise in student satisfaction re: course-based assessment expectation.

This presentation will reflect upon the past issues that led to this analysis and the development of a successful solution.

[1] Ehlers, T. and Schwager, R., 2016. Honest grading, grade inflation, and reputation. CESifo Economic Studies, 62(3), pp.506-521.