

Students in Public exemplar details

Faculty, School and Subject Area: Cliff College (validated by the University of Manchester)

Course Unit/activity: Apol1 Apologetics

Course Unit Director/activity leader: Dr Justin Thacker

What is the assignment/knowledge product for dissemination to a public audience?

In this Level 5 unit, there are two compulsory assignments, one of which is a traditional essay of 2,000 words, comprising 60% of the unit grade. Students choose one from a list of six options relating to issues in Christian apologetics.

The other assignment is a mock email exchange between an atheist (unit tutor) and the student, comprising 40% of the unit grade. The student must choose an apologetic topic and offer this for approval to the unit leader. Following approval, the student will be sent an email with a question based on that topic in which the tutor assumes the position of an atheist friend of the student. The student must make an initial response by email of 500 words, followed by an email exchange totalling another 500 words spread over at least a further two emails. The style of writing must be appropriate for an email exchange with an atheist friend.

Why was it introduced?

The non-traditional assignment mode was introduced in order to assess the kind of 'real-life' skills that might be required by an effective Christian apologist.

Where is/could it be published?

The Methodist Recorder, a national Methodist newspaper, heard about this unit and its assignment, and was interested in this innovative approach. They asked to be sent an example of one of these exchanges. This was done and the exchange was published in the paper.

What are the challenges (e.g. copyright)?

Copyright rests with the college and so there are no legal challenges here. However, as a matter of courtesy we did ask the student involved in the particular exchange if they were happy for it to be published, and for their name to be attached. They gave their consent.

What are the student perceptions/responses/attainment?

Students have always appreciated the assignment. However, they have tended to think that it would be easier than it actually turned out to be.

If published, how do you monitor use of the resource/s?

It was published as a single article. We have not done any further monitoring.

Any other comments

n/a