University of Huddersfield Repository

Ahmed, Jebar and Salter, Emma

Using blogs for summative assessment

Original Citation

Ahmed, Jebar and Salter, Emma (2010) Using blogs for summative assessment. In: University of Huddersfield Research Festival 2010, 8-18 March 2010, Huddersfield University. (Unpublished)

This version is available at http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/id/eprint/8545/

Blogging for Assessment

Jebar Ahmed & Emma Salter

University of Huddersfield March 2010

What's the assessment?

Students are asked to identify, analyse and evaluate a project associated with education for sustainability.

In their write up, they are encouraged to use a variety of resources – weblinks, video, photos, etc....

e-learning @ huddersfield

Home   Help   Logout

School of Education   My Institution   Modules   Library   Content Collection   System Admin

Announcements
Module Information
Staff Information
Module Documents
Assignments
Communication
Discussion Board
External Links
Tools

Tools
Communication
Module Tools
My Portfolios
Module Map

Control Panel
Quick Enrol

Refresh
Detail View

The plan concentrates on five key concepts which are; assets, education, media/advocacy, celebration and eco-twinning. Assets, education, and celebration are practical steps and are the concepts that will be concentrated on in this assignment. Media/advocacy and eco-twinning are aspects of the plan which aim to create partnerships and connections in order for the practical steps of the plan to be taken by the Sikh community. (Anon, 2009, p.2)

Assets: This can be particular skills, professions and time a person has as well as land and monetary investments.

Education: The education about the environment that Sikhs have access to through their teachers should be made available to all communities through the EcoSikh website. Awareness about what can be done about climate change and the environment can be raised through both formal and informal education.
-
Celebration: The EcoSikh initiative should be treat as a celebration. Annual celebrations should be held to commemorate the life of Guru Har Rai Ji and also to reflect on environmental habits.

The plan has its own Sikh eco-theology which is based on and relates to the history, heritage and teachings of Sikhism and is highlighted by stories about Gurus, in particular Guru Nanak who taught that nature and the environment are important and should be looked after as God is everywhere and is the creator of everything and so everything should be respected and loved.

The plan gives recommendations to individuals and families, gurdwaras and Sikh organisations and also the wider community. Examples of these guidelines

Blackboard Academic Suite - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

https://h1.hud.ac.uk/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab=courses&url=/bin/common/course.pl?course_id=_21742_1

Google

Most Visited Customize Links Free Hotmail Miniclip.com - Free Ga... SuprNova.org Windows Marketplace Windows Media Windows HUDCETT

e-learning @ huddersfield

Home Help Logout

School of Education   My Institution   Modules   Library   Content Collection   System Admin

Announcements
Module Information
Staff Information
Module Documents
Assignments
Communication
Discussion Board
External Links
Tools

Tools
- Communication
- Module Tools
- My Portfolios
- Module Map

- Control Panel
- Quick Enrol

- Refresh
- Detail View

Water

DIRTY WATER Vending Machine / UNICEF (tap pro..
☆☆☆☆☆

0:00 / 3:02

(YouTube 2010)

In the poor countries across the globe, collecting water is viewed as one of the daily burdens as it is extremely difficult and exhausting to complete this task. Year after year millions are killed by water related diseases where sadly majority are children. "Tragically, half of all people in developing countries have no access to clean, safe drinking water" (Islamic Aid 2010). With the intention of overcoming this severe issue, Islamic Aid help people to build and sustain clean water systems such as manual hand pumps, wells and tube-wells. The objective of such projects will be to reduce the number risks in relation to water-related diseases and to improve the access to water. Research revealed that if there is easy access to supplies of clean water, families can use their time more efficiently and they will also have more energy, resulting in an increase for food and income. Furthermore, there will be more time available on an academic level for children to attend school.

Why use a blog?

- A paper-free assessment in line with the ethos of sustainability [???]

- Enhance students' transferable IT skills

- Add variety to the diet of assessment

- Encourage students to think critically about a variety of sources – not just text

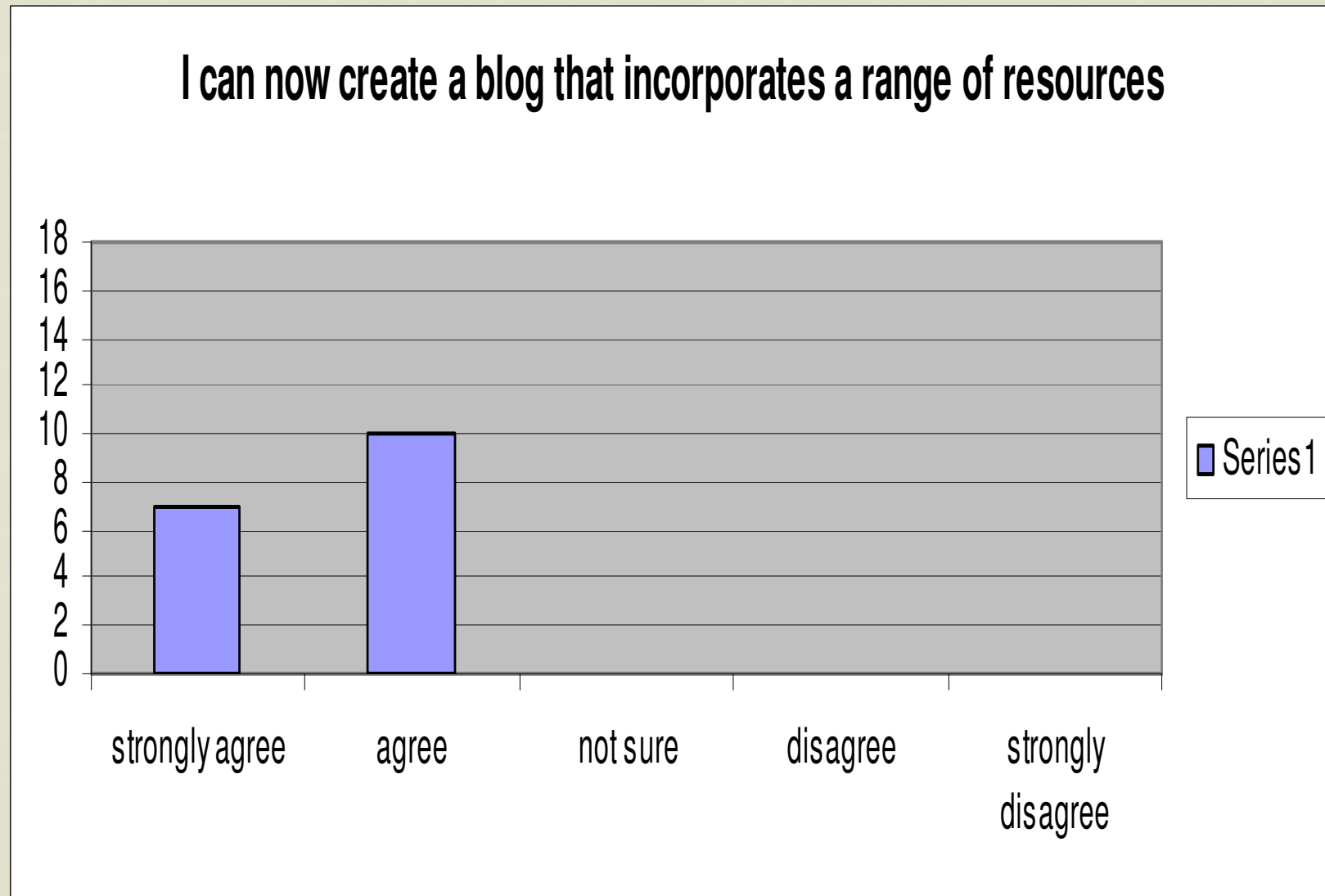- Build tutors' skills, confidence and versatility with e-learning

Anxieties

- Tutors' lack of IT knowledge & experience
- Would the technology work?
- Level of IT support required from Jebar [added work load]
- How would students take to creating a blog?
- Would the technology detract from the academic quality of the assessment?
- Is a blog really the right tool for the job?
- Marking online

# 11 out of 17 students said they could not create a blog before the assessment

Before completing this assessment I was able to create a blog that incorporates a range of resources
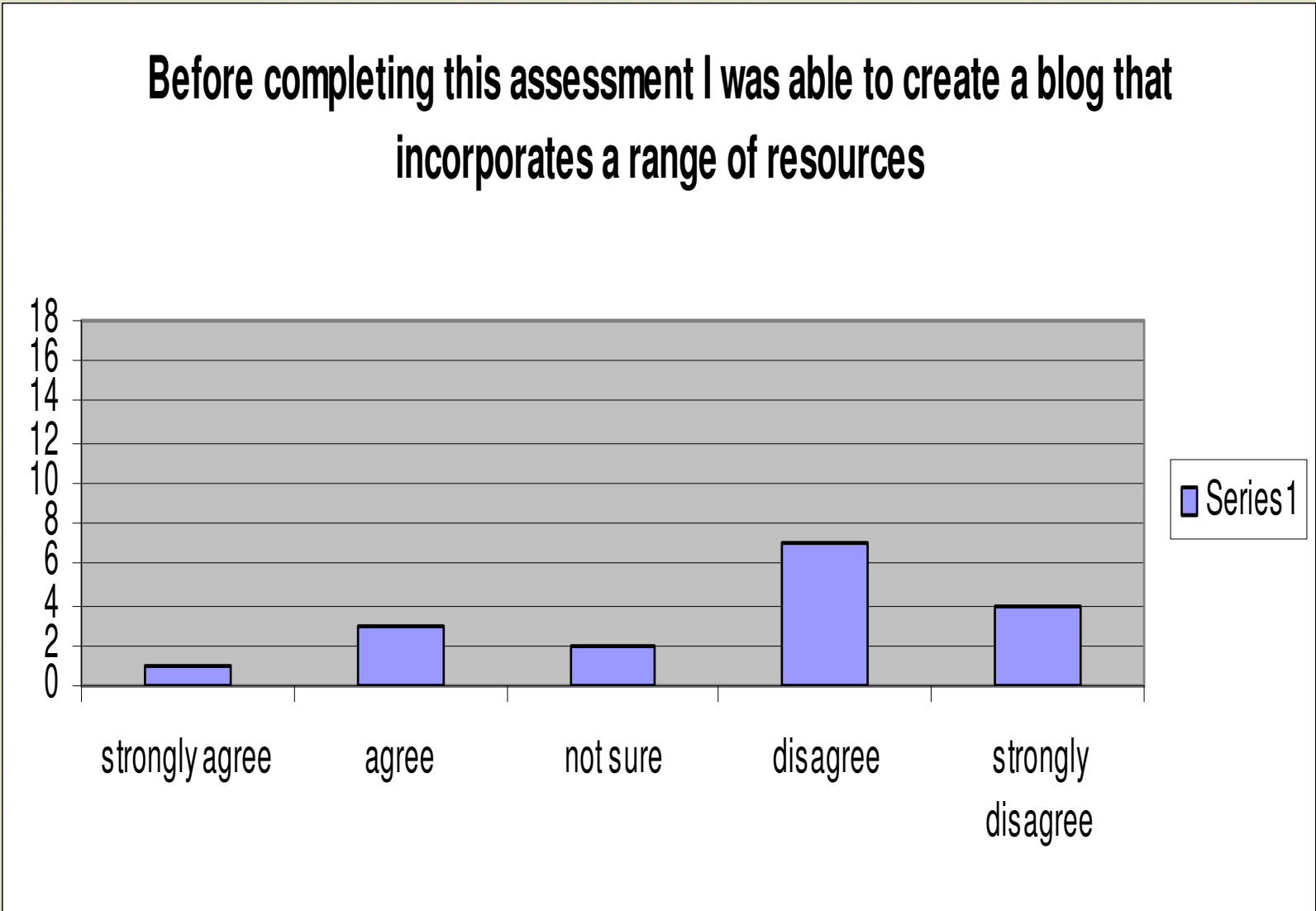
17 out of 17 students said they could complete a blog after completing the assessment

I can now create a blog that incorporates a range of resources

14 out of 17 students said they were provided with sufficient technical support

I was provided with sufficient technical support to create my blog for the assessment
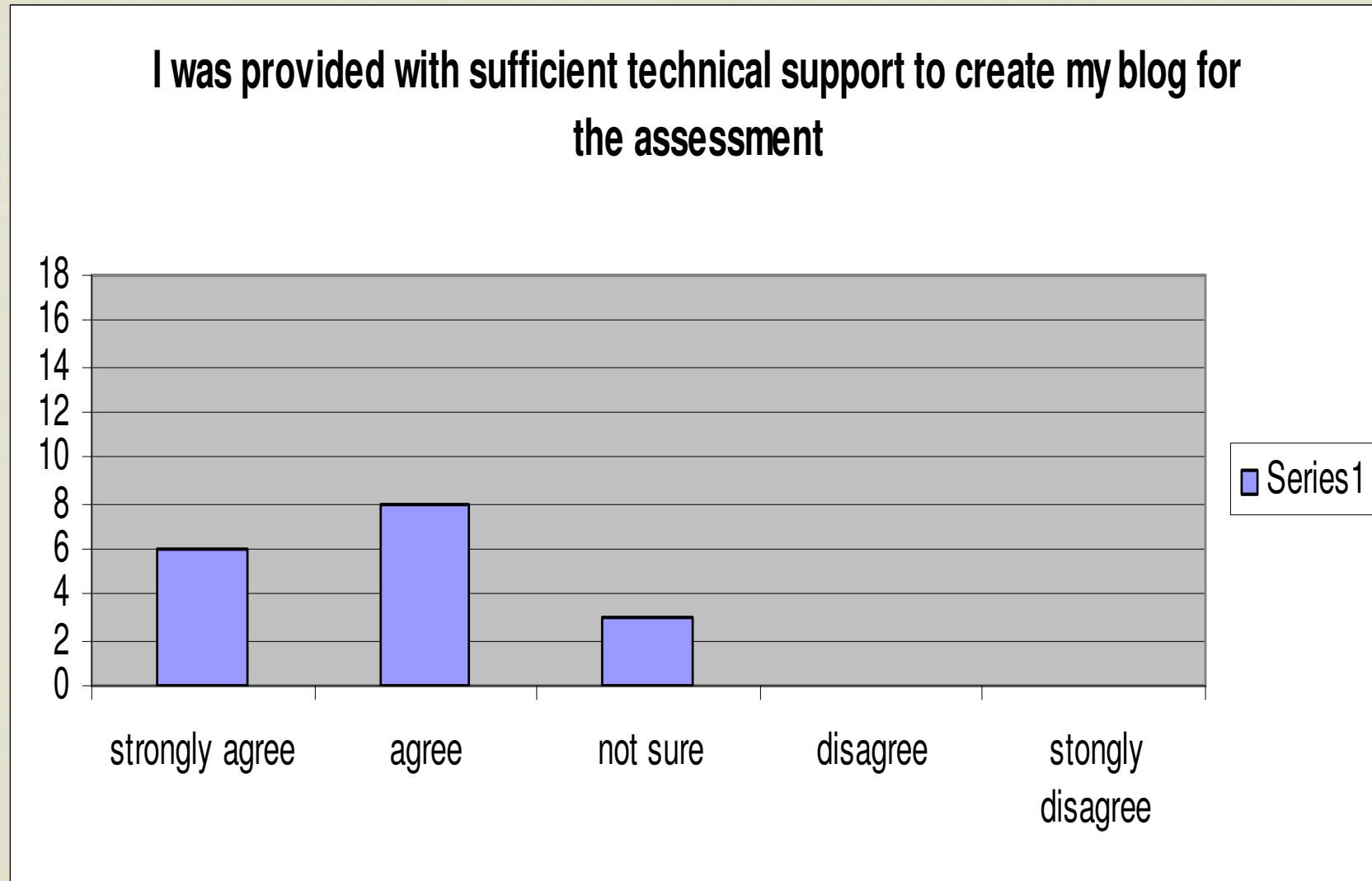
Out of 17 students 7 said creating a blog distracted them from subject content and 9 said it did not distract them
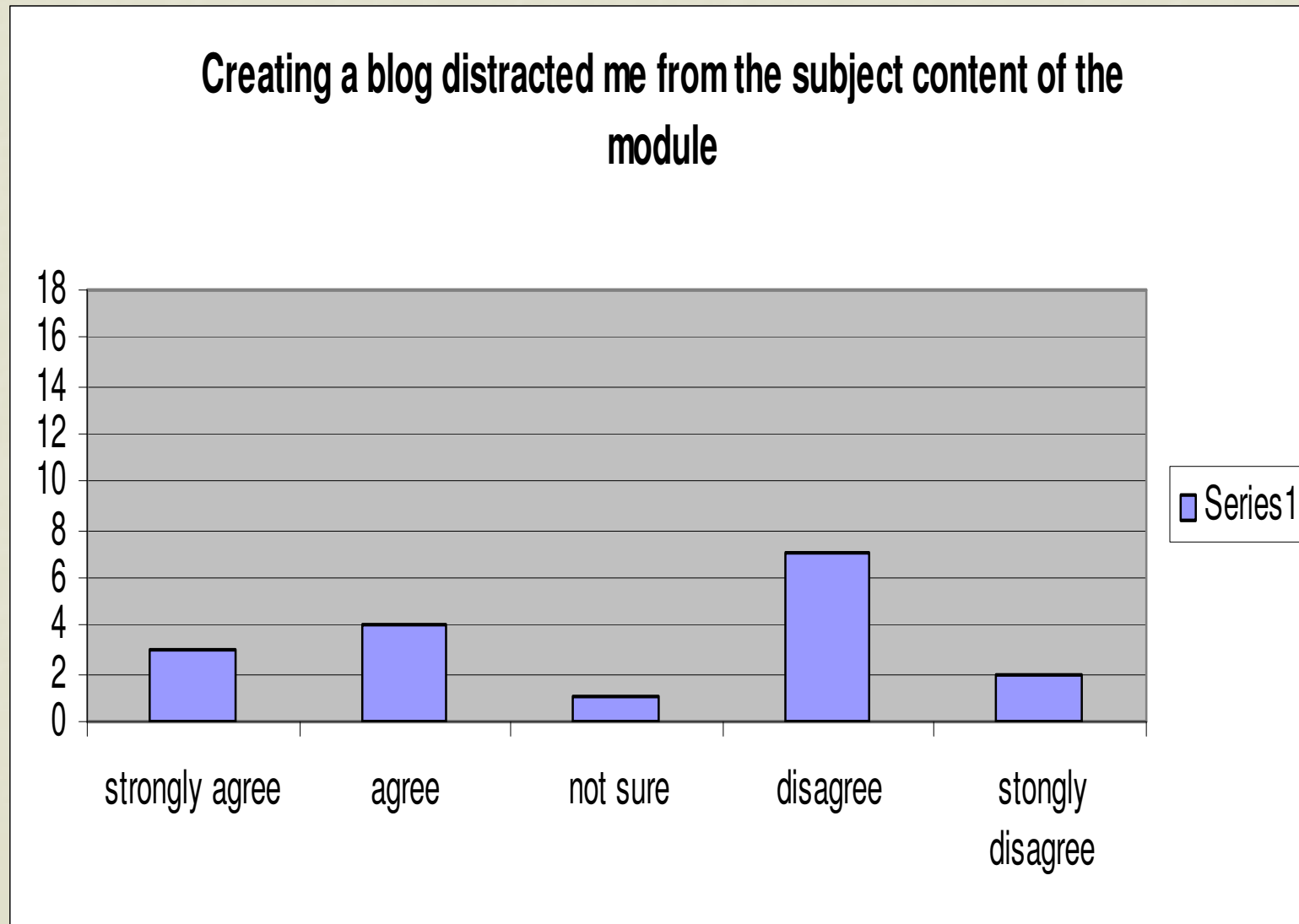
Out of 17 students 8 agreed that incorporating a range of resources in assessment helped them engage deeply with the module content and 4 disagreed

Incorporating a range of resources in my assessment helped me to engage deeply witht the module content
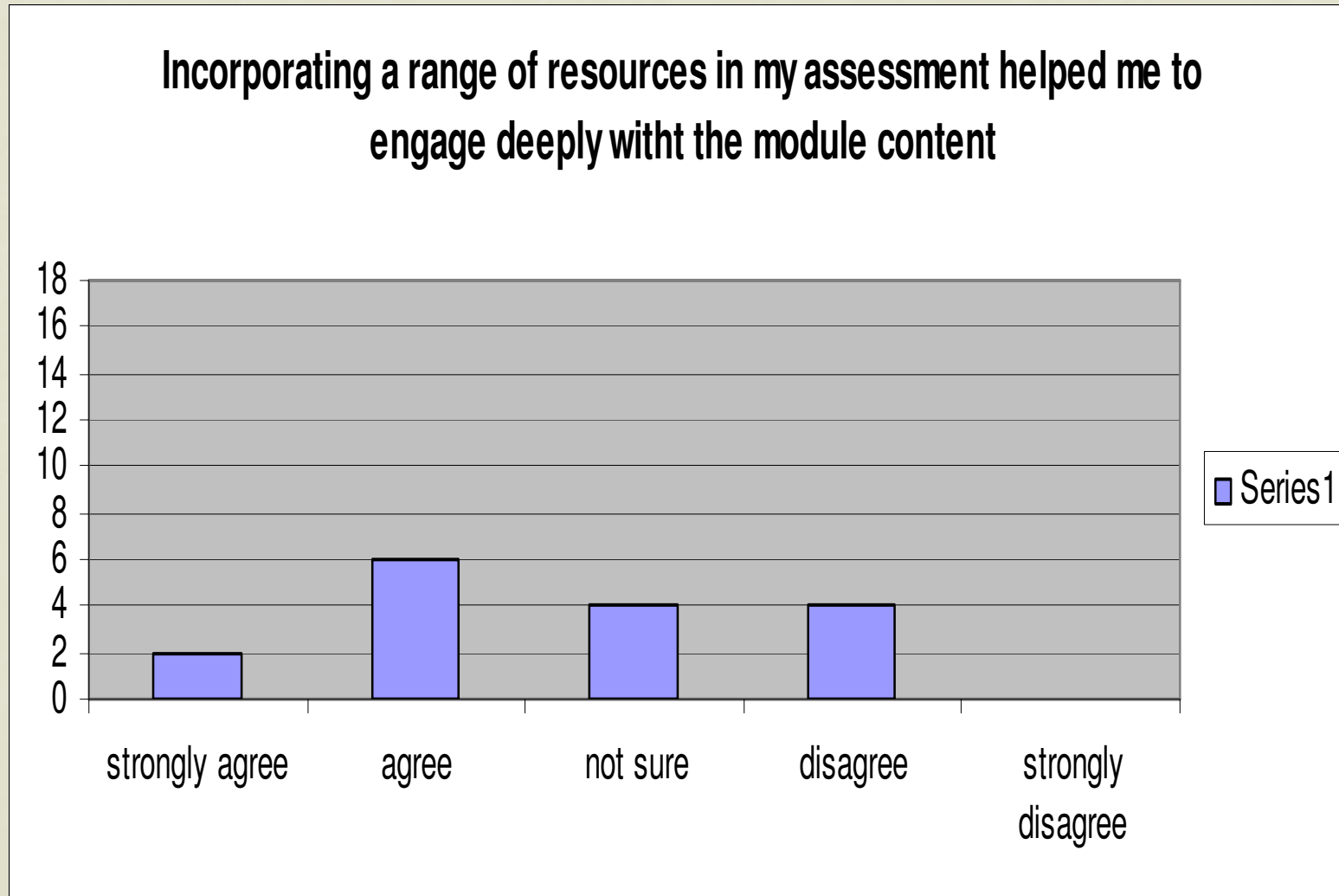
Student comments - positive

- It was a new experience which helped me add a new skill to my previously accomplished skills
- The blog created for my assessment was very easy and it was made fun, it's better to do this assessment as a blog than an essay
- It was stressing at first, but as I got used to it I managed to set myself a plan. I am more confident using a blog & happy that I now have an additional skill I can use
- Interesting approach to assignment; has equipped me with skills that I can comment on in applications for employment and further study

Student comments - negative

- Blog technology needs developing before students are expected to use it
- I found learning how to create a blog caused me to worry & this resulted in my time being wasted
- I didn't like having to put my work on a blog as I do not have the internet at home
- […] found it really hard creating the blog & uploading the pictures; could have done without it

and the undecided…

- Would have preferred to just have done an essay as I felt that I didn't do the blog as well as I could have done because I was concentrating on the content of the essay. However, I do understand why we have done it as a blog and it's a good idea.
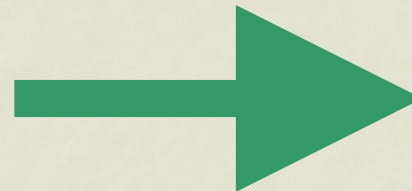
Ingredients for success

Strategic direction

Validation

Assessment

Support (students and staff)

Reduction in Administration

Blog

Issues

- Non-typical use of the Blog tool
- 'Slicing the carrot' for students – structuring the assessment
- Complying with policy
  - External examiner
- Timely support