Miro Board as a Method of Collecting Feedback

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Miro is an online visual collaboration platform for real-time or asynchronous teamwork. It is a complex whiteboard that allows you and your team to design, create agile boards, work on projects, brainstorm, and much more. I started using it at the beginning of the 2020-2021 academic year to collate student feedback as part of my Student School Officer (SSO) role.

Being SSO for the School of Creative and Cultural Business (CCB) at Robert Gordon University (RGU) means I actively engage with student representatives and students within the School to gather feedback and communicate key messages to staff. I am a full member of the School Academic Board and a co-opted one of the Academic Regulations Sub-Committee. I take responsibility for an enhancement project in conjunction with the Academic Strategic Lead, and participate in university-wide and RGU:Union partnership activities, as appropriate (committees, working groups, projects). At the end of each semester, I provide progress reports.

I learned about Miro in the summer of 2020, from a colleague at Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland (sparqs) who was an Associate Trainer, just like me. She suggested our team to use the platform to give feedback on a project. I am a visual person and I like organisation and colour coding, therefore my interaction with the board was a positive one.

When I started working as SSO, I knew I would gather feedback from students. I created a survey first, but it was text-heavy, and I could not achieve a colour-coded mind-map as I wanted. I feel we are all bombarded by surveys for different

research projects anyway, so as survey fatigued as I was myself, I gave up on that method. I wanted something new, fun, exciting, interactive, that would look good and would be fast and easy to use. I had the experience of using Google Jamboard as well, so I tried designing in it first, but it had limited features, so I knew I had to use Miro.

The feedback I gather is around the Student Learning Experience (SLE) (Figure 1), so, when designing the board, I used the SLE model, created by sparqs, as a starting point. I then drew outward arrows from each of the 7 elements of the SLE and added matching post-it notes. This way, Course Representatives (Reps) could input the feedback they gathered from their peers, in a structured manner. There are almost 60 Reps in our team, so having a single space for everyone to type in real time came as a valuable aid for me. I love engaging with students face-to-face and creating a physical community, but this became impossible due to COVID-19 lockdown. So, on top of gathering feedback remotely, Miro helped me create a digital community.
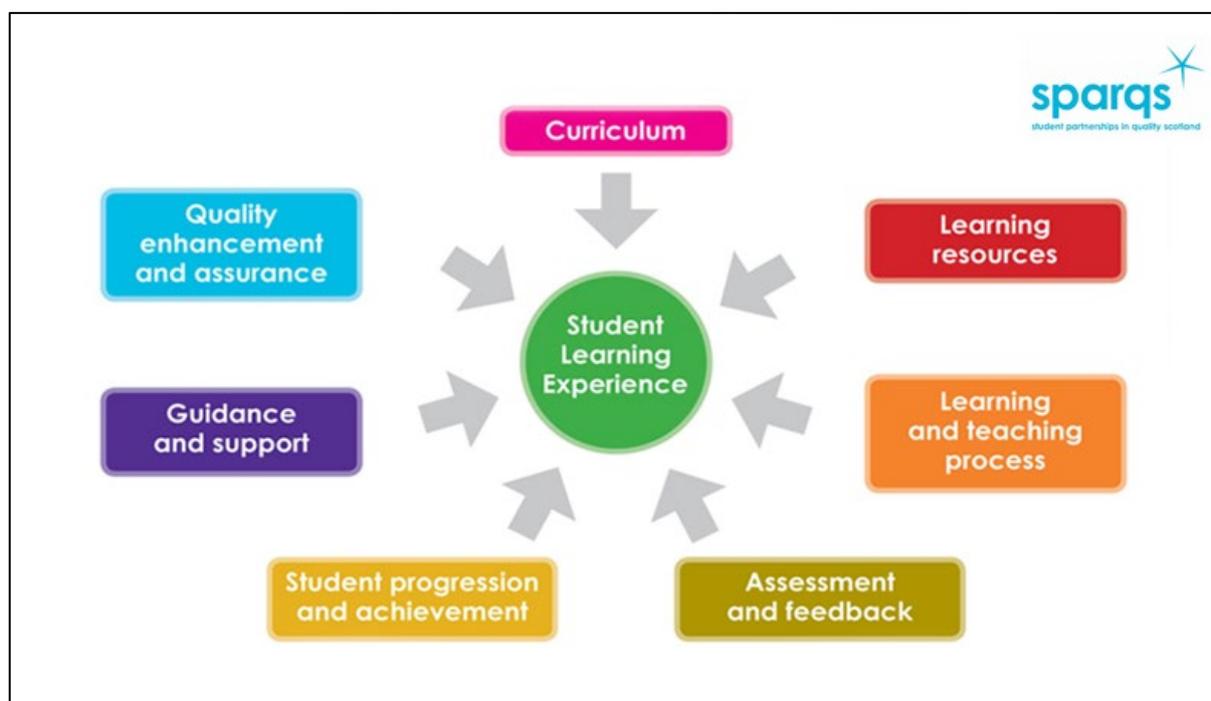

Figure 1. Student Learning Experience. Source: sparqs.

To make sure Reps knew how to use the board, I created a technical walkthrough video (Figure 2) and included, right on the board, a link to the Course Representative Resource Pack, and some reminders of how to write effective feedback and what to do with it next (Figure 3). I was happy to see that they interacted with the board very fast and completed the task easily. While the comments become anonymous after the contributor finishes, having this open space shared amongst all CCB Reps also ensures transparency across the team.
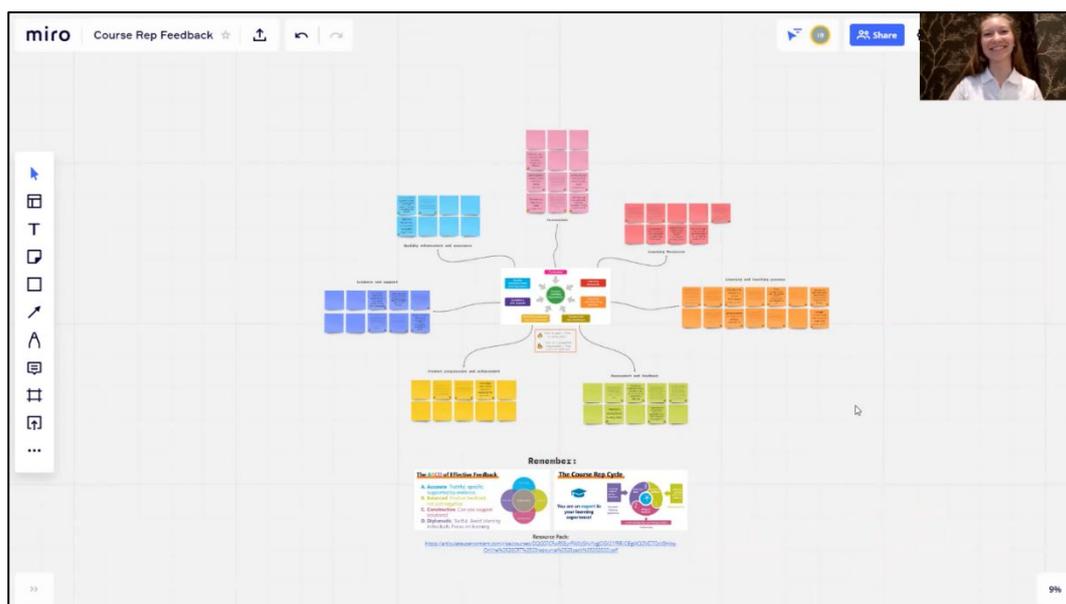

*Figure 2. Technical walkthrough for Miro Board. Source: Author.*
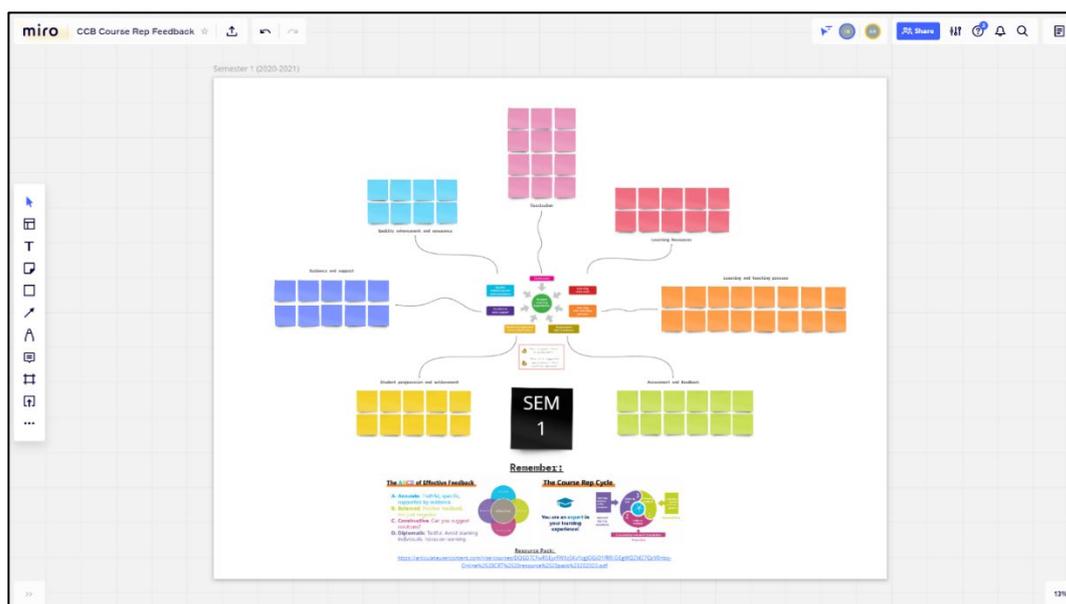
Figure 3. Miro Board with useful reminders underneath. Source: Author.

When I chose this method of gathering feedback, I considered several factors, and after Reps started interacting with it, the success confirmed my choice:

1. **Time required and time available.** Using Miro, allows Reps to input data in their own time in a fast manner and lets me visualise it and pass it on in meetings and to key staff easily.

2. **Likely response rate.** I usually get a high response rate, but just to make sure it is kept high, I remind Reps to interact with the board regularly and send them the link they need to access to do that. Using multiple methods also allows Reps to choose their preferred one. Therefore, apart from using the Miro board, I set up online meetings and inform Reps they could send me emails too, I created a Microsoft Teams group, I posted on our Rep Forum, and I sometimes used [Mentimeter] as well.

3. **Representation.** As mentioned above, we have other channels set up for anyone who prefers to send me their feedback differently, to make sure everyone is represented, but I can say the Miro board has been the most successful so far, as it really collates everything in one place and is fun to use.

4. **Language.** I explained both in text and visually both on the board and through other channels and gave examples of questions Reps can ask their peers, to ensure the task is clear and easy to follow by everyone, no matter if English is their first or second language.

5. **Accessibility.** I shared the Miro board link with all CCB Reps on the Forum area and MS Teams group chat to make sure it is easily accessible. To open the Miro board, Reps can log in with their student email address.

6. **Usefulness of data.** Using specific questions for each of the seven elements of the Student Learning Experience, as recommended in the Course Rep Resource Pack, ensures we gather relevant feedback from students. Having the ABCD of Effective Feedback and the Course Rep Cycle (Figure 4) on the board reminds them how to write accurate, balanced, constructive, and diplomatic feedback and that they should act on it and then close the feedback loop.
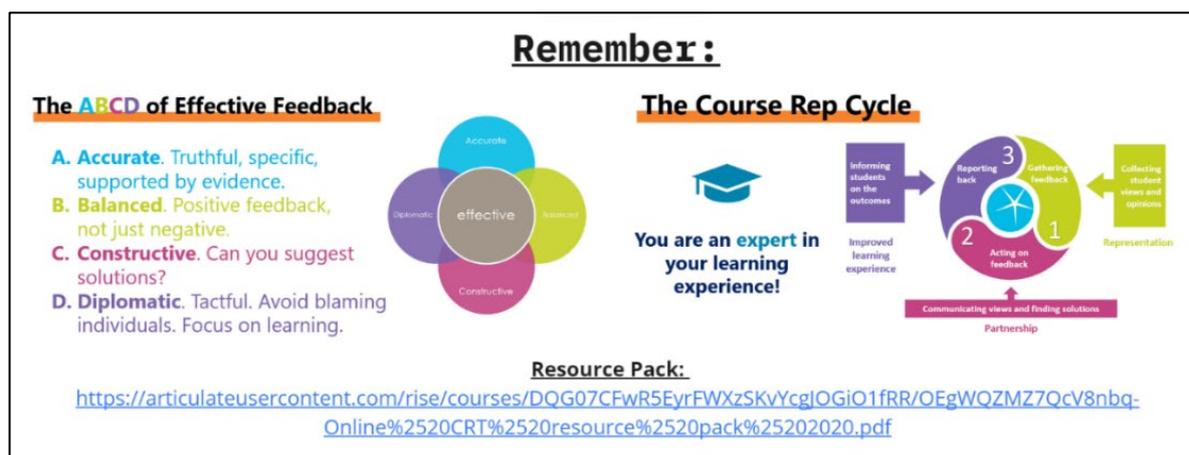
Figure 4. ABCD of Effective Feedback and Course Rep Cycle. Source: Adapted from sparqs.

As SSO, I pass on the Miro link to key staff members in the School of CCB or summarise the points raised and share them during meetings with the University and RGU:Union. I discuss the feedback with them, and we develop solutions collaboratively to enhance the student experience.

Here is what one of the Reps in our team said about using Miro to gather feedback:

1. Do you enjoy using Miro?

Yes, I thought Miro worked very well and worked well for multiple contributors.

2. Was it easy to use it? Did the tutorial I created help you?

It was easy enough to use, however if you did not give a tutorial, I think I would have found it quite complicated at first. So, this was very helpful.

3. Does Miro help you structure the feedback well?

Yes, having sections made it easier to categorise the feedback.

4. Are there any recommendations you want to make?

The only issue I had was not having enough feedback to upload, due to lack of responses. I think in ordinary times where you could speak to people in person this would not have been an issue.

5. Do you/would you use Miro for your own projects?

Yes, definitely. I would suggest this for group projects in the future.
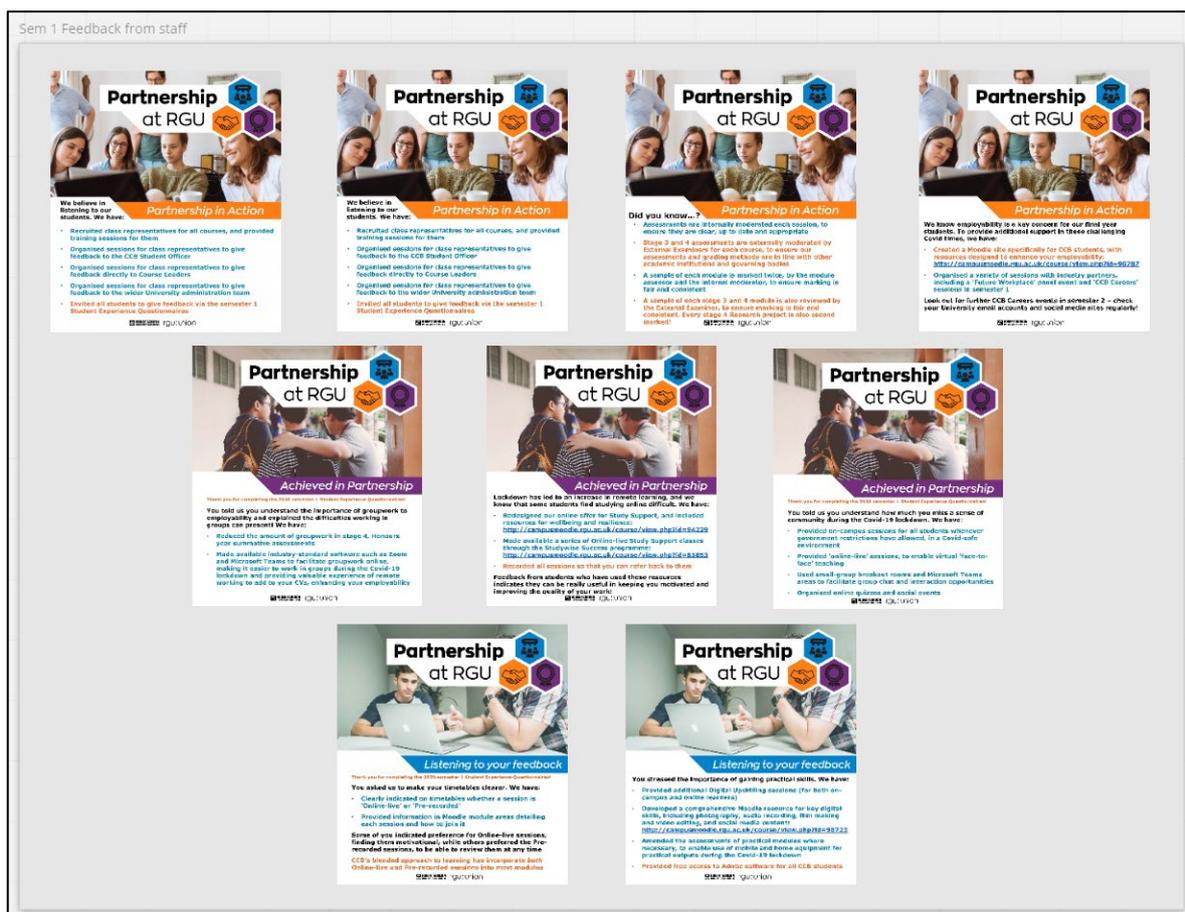
Figure 5. Staff closing the feedback loop. Source: Author.

When the first semester finished, staff members created posters with what they worked on based on students' comments, to close the feedback loop (Figure 5). So, I created another board on Miro to make the staff feedback public amongst Reps. I believe it is very important to let everyone know that their voices have been heard and their feedback really matters.

For the second semester, I added another board around the SLE and a new board on what blended learning should look like in the academic year 2021-2022 (Figure 6).
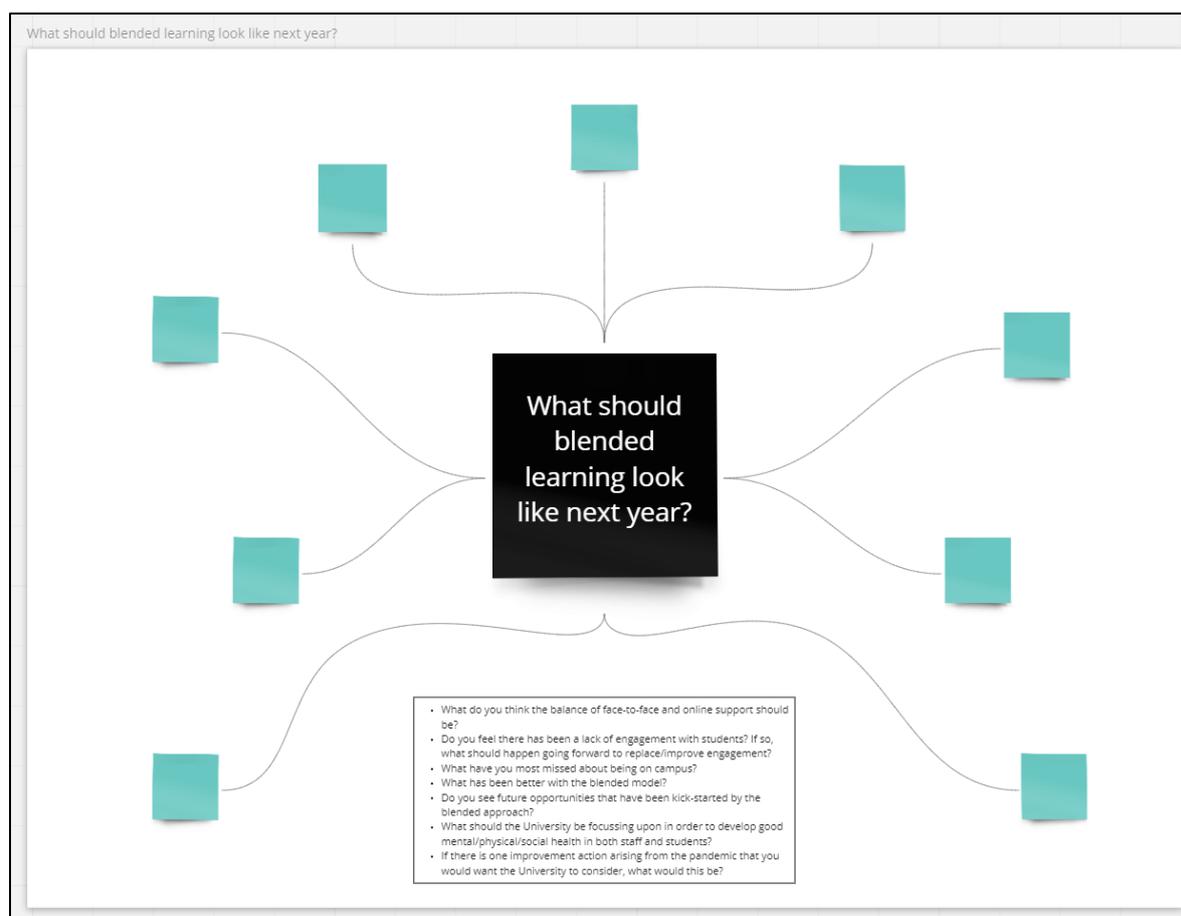
Figure 6. Miro board on what blended learning should look like in the academic year 2021-2022.

If you would like to use Miro, I suggest you go for it. Make an account and experiment. Miro is a combination of Paint, Microsoft Word, Google Docs, Canva and many more, so it has huge potential and is very intuitive. Each board is infinite, so you can rest assured you have plenty of space to unleash your creativity. You can use it as a mind-map for yourself, or a brainstorm platform during meetings or for your team's projects. It is a great platform for collaboration. Peers can add comments on your work, and you can see what they create in real time. You can also lock boards if you do not want others to edit them. You can even organise a video call with your team there. In Miro, you can also create presentations, story boards, product roadmaps, or you can design apps. If you do not want to start from scratch, Miro has many templates you can choose from.

So, what are you waiting for? Give Miro a try!