



LEEDS
BECKETT
UNIVERSITY

Working with students to use feedback as part of their learning

Produced by the Centre for Learning & Teaching

Working with students to use feedback as part of their learning

We need to be working on changing student perceptions of feedback - it is the student's responsibility to seek feedback, to reflect on feedback, to use feedback and to give feedback to others if they are to learn.

Students should be actively looking to peers and tutors for feedback - it needs to be formative, useful, regular, rich, relevant and recognised as a learning activity in which, and with which, students need to actively engage.

Feedback **MUST** be contextualised, collaborative, developmental and integrated into students' day-to-day learning, and colleagues' day-to-day teaching activity. It should be designed into courses as part of the overall planning - not as an afterthought.

Feedback should be part of student learning integrated into classroom and academic advising activity as part of a continued and integrated part of the student learning. It needs to be useful and is not just a "gift wrapped package" of information delivered as an entitlement after the module has ended and after the work has been done.

You may want to consider some of the following points and guidance to give the student every opportunity to use the feedback to improve their performance in the future and reinforce their current achievement.

1. Be clear **WHY** you are providing feedback to your students in the first place. If there is no opportunity for the students to use it, then sometimes just a mark may actually be enough.
2. **Be explicit about what feedback actually is**, why it is useful and the breadth of what it entails. Encourage the individual students to identify what sorts of feedback are **most useful** for them.
3. You should consider being as **inclusive** as possible to all groups of students and use alternative or combinations of feedback methods to suit a greater range of students:
 - a. audio/verbal feedback
 - b. In-class discussion/feedback session
 - c. Peer feedback - get the students to work together in class on reviewing example assessments and their own work.
4. **Use clear grading criteria** so that students can understand what is expected of them and how the work has been graded:
 - a. Any grading criteria should clearly align to learning outcomes
 - b. Use these grading criteria during feedback (this could be a marking grid or rubric)
 - c. Use words in feedback that build skills appropriate to the level of learning e.g. critical thinking, critical reflection etc., and signpost the students to resources to inform clarity and students' understanding.
5. Ensure there is a **clear structure** to your feedback comments so that a student can follow it systematically through the assessment.

Working with students to use feedback as part of their learning

6. **Keep it focussed:** too much feedback can be unhelpful as students feel overwhelmed and not know what they should focus on.
7. **Be specific** with comments, whether they be verbal, or written, in relation to the assessment criteria
 - a. E.g. *not* just 'you need to be more critical' instead *try* 'you need to be more critical because' or 'you have critically assessed some of the points but not all, think about
8. Provide clear, achievable **action points** that are clearly expressed, and that focus on the students improving their future learning, the quality of the work and their level of achievement. If writing by hand, make it legible - or use an electronic feedback tool such as Turnitin or Blackboard assignment.
9. Emphasise the **transferability** of any feedback received - how can students use it in other modules? For other types of assessment in the future?
10. **Be balanced** in the amount of positive and constructive critique you provide. You may consider using a "feedback sandwich" (positive – constructive – positive). Encourage the student (perhaps in an academic advisor catch up meeting) to self-reflect on what they feel are their individual areas for development.
11. Make the feedback feel **personal**. Where possible use their name and make sure they know the person to contact if they have any questions.
12. Feedback should be part of a **2 way dialogue** so why not think about building your **face to face contact** with the students around feedback? Try to use your academic advisors to do this.
13. **Pitch feedback sensitively and constructively** - a misinterpreted comment can cause unintended stress to students or feels like a personal critique. This is particularly important for students who are improving a "failed" assessment. Use of audio feedback can sometimes help with this as voice intonation can give a greater sense of the meaning of your comments.
14. Identify and provide **opportunities for questions** from students about their feedback. You may want to encourage them to reflect on the more low-stakes formative assessment that may have taken place earlier in the module. In addition, encourage them to actively seek help from family members, friends, peers. They may not know the subject area in detail but they will be able to identify clarity, style, and whether the student has addressed the assessment title.
15. Encourage students to self-refer early to **Skills for Learning** for tailored resources and help (workshops, individual one to one sessions) if you notice core academic skills need improving.

Working with students to use feedback as part of their learning

Further Information

You can read more information about giving effective feedback from the Higher Education Academy (now AdvanceHE) in their feedback toolkit

https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/resources/feedback_toolkit_whole1.pdf

If you want to find out more about different methods of feedback such as audio or video you can find out more here <https://teachlearn.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/teaching-and-learning-activities/assessment-and-feedback/giving-feedback-to-students/>

Skills for Learning <https://skillsforlearning.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/>.

Guides on how to use Turnitin and Blackboard assignment can be found here

<https://teachlearn.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/guides/learning-systems-guides/>.

Please contact the Centre for Learning and Teaching if you need any more help and information.

Please contact the Centre for Learning and Teaching if you need any more information:
clt@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

December 2018

SS/RP/RS



LEEDS
BECKETT
UNIVERSITY

Produced by the Centre for Learning & Teaching