#### Feedback as Dialogue

#### PERSPECTIVES AND CASE EXAMPLES FROM ELSEWHERE



#### Online collaborative work in first year Psychology (University of Strathclyde, UK)

This large first-year Psychology class provides scaffolded formative assessment to encourage regular reading and provide writing practice necessary for the exam. Students are divided into online discussion groups to work on an essay in regular three-week learning cycles, with each cycle focusing on one topic (e.g. memory and social psychology). The teacher provides general feedback to the online discussion board, and after completion of each assessment task, the teacher selects and posts the best group's work online as feedback.

Nicol, D. (2009). Transforming assessment and feedback: Enhancing integration and empowerment in the first year, pp. 54-58. Available from Enhancement Themes, The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, http://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/docs/publications/transforming-assessment-and-feedback.pdf

# Collaboration and reflection in Software Engineering (University of Auckland, New Zealand)

First-year computing students are required to submit a short reflective essay to the class wiki, instead of a lab report. They record their approach to a lab task, problems faced and interesting outcomes, and reflect on their observations, successes or failures. The students receive feedback from a group of their classmates assigned to read all the essays and summarise common mistakes or difficulties in the light of expected results of the lab task. Such regular feedback helps students know where to target their efforts for better performance. Meanwhile the teacher can identify class or individual difficulties and provide additional support.

Nicol, D. (2009). Transforming assessment and feedback: Enhancing integration and empowerment in the first year, pp. 54-58. Available from Enhancement Themes, The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, http://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/docs/publications/transforming-assessment-and-feedback.pdf

# Dialogic e-feedback in postgraduate Law and Education (University of Bergen, Norway)

The Faculty of Law has a system of non-graded writing assignments and feedback. Students post their individual writing assignments to the VLE (virtual learning environment or learning management system such as Moodle), receive online feedback from peers in small groups, and later discuss the assignment in a class meeting. The final exam consists of a take-home group exam followed by an individual one. Similarly, Education students

enrolled on a web-based programme publish their group assignments on the VLE and receive teacher feedback, but for the final assessment they submit a revised version of their assignment. Through such open access to other students' paper and teachers' comments, students are encouraged to argue for their own perspectives, to learn through divergent voices and disagreement and, more importantly, to actively use feedback to improve their own texts.

Dysthe, O., Lillejord, S., Vines, A. & Wasson, B. (2010). Productive Efeedback in higher education: Some critical issues. In S. Ludvigsen et al. (Eds), *Learning across Sites: New Tools, Infrastructures and Practices*. Oxford, UK: Pergamon Press. pp. 243-259

#### Peer review of research reports in Animal Behaviour (University of Melbourne, Australia)

The paper discusses the rationale for and implementation of an assessment initiative in which third year Animal Behaviour undergraduates submit scientific reports and experience a process similar to peer review of scientific publication. Students upload their paper for review (ungraded) on to a web-based submission system, and receive anonymous critique from two other students and a teacher. For assessment, students submit their final report with a Letter to the Editor, in which they explain how they dealt with the reviewers' comments. To encourage students to provide constructive comments to their peers, the peer review is assessed (20%).

Mulder, R. (2009). Peer review of research reports. Available from *Enhancing Assessment in the Biological Science*, http://bioassess.edu.au/examples/mulder-peer-review-research-reports

# Interactive flipped classroom in introductory Physics (University of Edinburgh, UK)

In this large first-year course, the lectures focus on problems students are having after reading the assigned materials. Accompanying the weekly reading is a weekly reading quiz (1% per quiz, 10% over the semester); students answer six questions online through the course VLE by a Monday morning deadline. Lectures are built around a series of clicker questions. The students respond to the questions with clicker handsets, and if the proportion of correct responses falls between 30% and 70%, the class discusses the concepts for a few minutes, followed by a re-vote and a teacher-led discussion. For assessment, students sit an open-note exam which focuses on problem solving rather than bookwork.

Bates, S. & Galloway, R. (2012). The inverted classroom in a large enrolment introductory physics course: A case study. *Proceedings of the Higher Education Academy STEM Learning and Teaching Conference*. Available from http://journals.heacademy.ac.uk/doi/abs/10.11120/stem.hea.2012.071

#### Electronic feedback in Criminology (University of Wales Swansea, UK)

In this initiative, the assessment of student essays has been streamlined by means of an electronic feedback form and a statement bank. The e-feedback form lists the module learning outcomes along with recommendations for how to use the form so that students can evaluate their own performance relative to the standard. Additionally, students are offered a follow-up feedback meeting with the tutor. Although it may be argued that the feedback process encourages a strategic approach to learning, students increasingly address the assessment criteria and use the feedback for self-evaluation.

Case, S. (2007). Reconfiguring and realigning the assessment feedback processes for an undergraduate criminology degree. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 32.3, pp. 285-299.

# Student self-assessment in Health Sciences (University of Sydney, Australia)

To encourage students to refer to standards-referenced assessment, a form is given to Health Sciences students to self-assess their work against the standards set and indicate their perceptions of their work. Teachers use the same form to grade the students' work, and their written feedback focuses on differences in the two judgements as well as guidance on how to achieve a higher grade.

Cathers, I. (2006). Feedforward and feedback: Helping students and staff engage with the standards. *Synergy*, 24, pp. 36-38. https://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/synergy/article.cfm?articleID=288

# Guidance on feedback in Business and Economics (Macquarie University, Australia)

This Faculty guide discusses a wide range of feedback strategies to help teachers improve the quality of feedback, including grading and marking, annotating individual scripts, providing model answers, student consultations, peer feedback, feedback on final exam, and online feedback. The guide concludes with a case study on using computer-marked multiple-choice assessments in a large class to generate feedback for individual students.

Taylor, P. (2008). How to give quality feedback: learning through dialogue. Australia: Faculty of Business and Economics, Macquarie University. http://staff.mq.edu.au/teaching/teaching\_development/resources/

# Creating a community of practice around postgraduate assessment in Education (Queen's University Belfast & University of London Institute of Education, UK)

The paper discusses a procedure useful for analysing and clarifying assessment criteria among teachers. The process involves a number of stages: (1) consider the assessment criteria and the standard; (2) analyse the criteria through reading and marking an assignment relative to the criteria; (3) discuss the marking and share understanding; (4) reach a consensus on the grade; (5) assimilate the criteria. In addition, the paper outlines a self-assessment task where postgraduate education students write a 500-word assignment to reflect on how they would improve their learning for future assignments.

Elwood, J. & Klenowski, V. (2002). Creating communities of shared practice: The challenges of assessment use in learning and teaching. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 27.3, pp. 243-256.

# Individual progress interviews as interactive feedback (University of Glasgow, UK)

The third-year Biosciences students are each given a 15-minute review of their progress with a teacher, at a time when students have attempted a variety of assessment methods including laboratory report, essay, powerpoint presentation, briefing paper, and exam. During the interview, teacher and student look into the record of the grades and comments on the returned work, and teachers help students identify areas for improvement.

Tatner, M.F. (2007). Individual progress interviews as a method of effective student feedback. *Practice and Evidence of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 2.2, pp. 151-156. Available from http://www.pestlhe.org.uk/index.php/pestlhe/article/view/30%20