LEARNING SKILLS
WEEK 2 UNDERSTANDING
AND USING FEEDBACK

Bob diligently takes
and from the recom-
readings, before some
reproducing the infor-

Pete questions

QUIZ
INTRODUCTION

In this session we will consider:

• what feedback means in a higher education setting
• how feedback impacts upon learning and assessment
• different types of feedback
• strategies for making effective use of feedback
WHAT IS FEEDBACK?

Different perspectives from the literature:

• Information or suggestions that enable students to reorient their efforts as an assignment or learning progresses (see for instance Carless 2002)

• Opportunities for students to test their understanding of concepts through formative assessment (see for instance Black and William (1998), Hounsel et al (2007))

• Situations or activities where students gain an understanding of what represents high quality work (see for instance Keppell and Carless (2006) and Gibbs and Simpson (2004/5))
WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Understanding and making effective use of feedback will...

- offer you a valuable indication on whether you have grasped a concept or topic
- enable you to collect constructive comments on your ideas and work so that you can develop and enhance them
- expose you to different perspectives or open up avenues for exploration you wouldn’t otherwise have considered
- help you to recognise your own strengths and weaknesses as a learner, enabling you to address your weaknesses and exploit your strengths
- **significantly influence how you perform in assessment exercises**
FEEDBACK IN PRACTICE

Undergraduate experiences of higher education

- Fran, English Literature
- Sarah, Education
- Lisa, Social Policy and Politics
- Rosalind, Chemistry
- Hashim, Business and Entrepreneurship
What form does feedback take?

**Dialogue with tutors**

- Class-based tests or quiz exercises
- Tutorial discussion and similar
- Marking exercises
- Comments on marked work (drafts and final submissions)
- Including learning groups, project work, paired revision, discussion boards and others
- Peer discussion outside of class
- Crit and performance
- Online quiz exercises with canned feedback

**DIFFERENT TYPES OF FEEDBACK**
FEEDBACK IN PRACTICE

A case study: feedback on the Learning Skills course

- Online Quizzes
- Team Project Work
- Mid-Term Meeting
- Week 7 Feedback Session
- Lecture Voting Quiz
- Tutorial Discussion
- Marking Exercises
- Week 5 Clinics

Feedforward
FEEDBACK IN PRACTICE

A case study: feedback on the Learning Skills course

‘Peer discussion exposes students to alternative perspectives on problems and to alternative tactics and strategies’
Nicol and MacFarlane-Dick (2006:11)

‘Active engagement in assessment helps students to understand assessment.’
Keppell and Carless 2006:182
The feedback source could be a tutor, quiz exercise, peer discussion, marking exercise and so on.

FEEDBACK IN PRACTICE

Ongoing feedback loop

Student critically reflects on question

Student proposes idea

Feedback on idea

Student critically reflects on feedback

This could be an assessment question, a task, a concept, an idea and so on.

See for instance Hounsell at al (2007)
STRATEGIES FOR USING FEEDBACK EFFECTIVELY

- Understanding what it is and acknowledging why it matters
- Recognising that it comes from different places and takes different forms
- Actively seeking and generating it (rather than simply waiting to receive it)
- Putting relevant suggestions or points into practice
- Thinking of it as comments on one’s work (rather than a judgement on oneself)
- Looking beyond the grade or mark
- Taking time to reflect on what it means
- Seeking clarification where required
- Recognising that it comes from different places and takes different forms
- Understanding what it is and acknowledging why it matters
IN CONCLUSION

We’ve seen that:

• feedback takes many forms
• it’s up to you to make use of feedback
• feedback is inextricably linked to how effectively you learn and has a strong bearing on how you perform in assessment exercises

And finally,

• don’t wait until you get to university to apply effective feedback strategies to your own studies
• think about how today’s session might inform your response to the Individual essay assessment exercise
REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

A case study: feedback on the Learning Skills course


