UCL

Enhancing and giving quicker feedback

Assessment & feedback quick guides

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Why is giving enhanced and quicker feedback important?

Helps learning. Gibbs & Simpson (2004) suggest that seven of ten conditions under which assessment supports learning are actually about feedback.

Helps teaching. Greater alignment of feedback with module outcomes can help you plan your teaching methods and topic coverage.

Fosters a good culture. Students must hand in work on time and quicker feedback reciprocates the gesture.

Saves time. Quicker feedback doesn't mean compressing the time taken to write feedback – the suggestions presented here are genuine time-savers.

Resources

Defeyter, Margaret and Pamela McPartlin (2007), 'Helping Students Understand Essay Marking Criteria and Feedback', Psychology Teaching Review, 13 (1), 23-33

Gibbs, Graham and Claire Simpson (2004), 'Conditions under which assessment supports students' learning', Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, 1, 3-31

Krathwohl, David (2002), 'A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy: An Overview', Theory into Practice 41(4) 212-9

TESTA: http://www.testa.ac.uk/.

Tong, V.C.H. (2011) Linking summative assessments? Electronic feedback and feedforward in module design. British Journal of Educational Technology, v42, E152-155

UCL Teaching Toolkits

Steps for enhancing feedback processes and generating quicker feedback

Self- and peer-feedback, used alongside tutor feedback. Lawrence Bellamy has used self- and peer feedback on his first-year module to help him prepare students for their term essay and to expedite the feedback process for over 460 students. He reports 'this format of assessment and feedback has been well received by our students and will be applicable to any essay based assignment'.

• Guided marking can help students see what standards are required, and can help foster responsibility for assessing their own performance, formulating feedback and responding to it. (See the Guided Marking quick guide)

• Proformas can provide consistent and useful feedback See the Using Proformas quick guide)

• Bloom's taxonomy can be used to identify dimensions of knowledge and cognitive processes that can be usefully self- and peer-assessed through quizzes, short writing tasks, and other simple activities (Krathwohl 2002).

• TESTA (Transforming the Experience of Students Through Assessment) is a tool that analyses the students' experience of assessment and feedback on a degree programme. It has been used widely in UCL (see 'Resources' below).

Nick Grindle, December 2015

For more help or to discuss: arena@ucl.ac.uk

Seven suggestions for giving quicker feedback

1. Ask students to mark their own work. Remember self-assessment can be automated, e.g. using 'quiz' on Moodle. These are good opportunities to assess outcomes such as recall of factual knowledge or performing basic-but-essential procedures such as references and citations.

2. Ask students to write their own feedback sheets (see Defeyter and McPartlin 2007 below).

3. Keep it verbal! Verbal feedback helps to check understanding. You can be sure a student understands a topic if they can explain it in their own words.

4. Ask students for two areas where they would like feedback (from Gibbs and Simpson 2004). Helps check that a student has an adequate conception of the task and ensures that you're spending your time efficiently.

5. Write less! (and explain why you're doing so). This is invaluable. Brief and timely feedback may well be just what a student needs, with an invitation to discuss further.

6. Give feedback to the whole group, and then individual feedback for more specific points.

7. Use electronic delivery for quicker return of essays (especially over Christmas and Easter breaks)- but note that many students don't check their feedback on Turnitin. They just collect the marks.

Case studies

The UCL Teaching and Learning Portal has case studies on assessment and feedback with helpful ones on enhancing and giving quicker feedback.

Including those by Eva Sorensen (guided marking and peer feedback), Richard Milne (using peer feedback to improve essay-writing), Seb Savory (using peer feedback to mark 100 assignments in an hour), Mira Vogel (using Moodle's 'workshop' peermarking tool to co-ordinate peer review across groups on the same course) and Vincent Tong (2011) incorporating feedback into module design.