

## Giving Effective Feedback

**Audience: This resource is designed for TU Dublin lecturers**

**The aim of this resource is to help you:**

- Construct effective feedback for student learning
- Recognise student centred strategies for feedback
- Identify tools to provide effective feedback for your students

**Why it's important:**

Feedback is a key influence on students' academic achievement (Hattie, 2009). It clarifies expectations, promotes reflection and supports students to internalise the standards of their discipline. Effective feedback has a positive impact on students' future efforts and can build confidence, and support skill development.

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## What is feedback?

Feedback is any information, process or activity which affords or accelerates student learning based on comments relating to either formative assessment or summative assessment activities.

Feedback can...

- raise students' consciousness of the strengths of their work
- boost students' confidence and self-concept regarding personal strengths and abilities
- provide guidance on areas for further development of skills and enhancement of work; enhance students' own judgement, understanding of assessment criteria, and ability to self-audit their own work.

However, feedback can take up quite a bit of time: 'Writing comments on assignments, however, remains a major component of teachers' workload in higher education.' (Gibbs and Simpson, 2005, p.10). Given the time investment that feedback represents, we want to find ways to ensure it is effective and encourage students to learn from it.

### Effective feedback:

- Is feedback which is engaged with, and acted on by students
- Is timely
- Is clear, detailed and specific
- Has a forward-facing focus (i.e. is of use to the student for future work or assessments)
- Builds motivation and self-esteem
- Is realistic and focuses on the student's performance
- Is targeted to the purpose of the assignment and the criteria for success
- Encourages dialogue with tutors and peers as a way to make sense of their learning
- Helps students develop their ability to make informed judgements on their own work (from HEA Academy, 2013)

**“Main issue for me is that students don't seem to implement suggestions in future assessment. Seem only concerned with grade.”**

Staff respondent, Feedback in First Year: A Landscape Snapshot Across Four Irish Higher Education Institutions (Y1Feedback 2016)

### Strategies for Feedback

Peer feedback involves students reviewing and providing constructive feedback on each other's work. Feedback provided by peers may be more accessible and understandable than that provided by teachers. Constructing and receiving peer feedback can support and improve learning. Peer feedback can foster the development of learning networks. Consider using the discussion boards in Brightspace to facilitate informal peer feedback.

Marking guides and rubrics can help students to understand the expectations and standards associated with a particular assessment. Brightspace contains an effective rubrics tool.

In class dialogue and feedback – Approaches such as the muddiest point and think-pair-share can be used to stimulate discussion and feedback in face to face and online classes. Consider using [Vevox](#) (TU Dublin licensed

classroom polling tool) as a quick means of gauging your class's comprehension of a particular topic. And then you can provide immediate feedback and clarification to the class as needed.

**Audio or video feedback:** You can provide audio or video feedback on any assignments submitted through Brightspace. Potential benefits are novelty for your students - simply getting feedback in a different form may stimulate their interest and better engagement with the feedback. And audio/video feedback allows you to convey tone and nuance more effectively - reducing the likelihood of misunderstandings, and providing a greater sense of personal connection. Consider using a screencasting tool like [ScreenPal](#) to record your computer screen while you navigate through a student's assignment, highlighting particular areas and explaining your feedback aloud.

**Feedforward strategies:** This flips the timing of feedback, focusing the majority of the feedback that a student receives on a pre-submission plan, outline, or draft of their work, or on a subset of a larger work in progress, rather than on the 'finished product'. The multi-stage assignment approach, the assessment for a module comprises two or more related stages interleaved with feedforward comments. Peer feedback can be facilitated within this process also.

## Want to know more?

These additional resources may be useful

Additional Resource Details	Link / Reference
Learning Outcomes & Constructive Alignment	<a href="#">LTA Resource - Learning Outcomes</a> (includes constructive alignment, Bloom's Taxonomy, Planning teaching events)
Receiving and Giving Effective Feedback	<a href="#">University of Waterloo Centre for Teaching Excellence</a>