THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL
SYMPOSIUM ON

UNRAVELLING ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK LITERACY

UNIVERSITY OF
SURREY

SYMPOSIUM ABSTRACTS AND TIMETABLE

9 am	**Coffee and registration** (Lecture Theatre Lower Concourse)
9:30 am	**Parallel sessions A** Dr Rob Nash, Aston University, UK (LTE) Dr Christine O'Leary, Sheffield Hallam University, UK (LTH) Dr Philip Denton, Liverpool John Moores University, UK (LTJ)
10:10 am	**Parallel sessions B** Dr Edd Pitt, University of Kent, UK (LTE) Dr Emma Mayhew, University of Reading, UK (LTH) Dr Stephen Rutherford, Cardiff University, UK (LTJ)
10:50 am	**Parallel sessions C** Dr Jennifer Hill, University of the West of England, UK (LTE) Dr Rachel Forsyth, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK (LTH) Dr Jan Bamford, London Metropolitan University, UK (LTJ)
11:20 am	**Break** (Lecture Theatre Lower Concourse)
11:40 am	**Welcome and introduction** (Lecture Theatre E) Dr Emma Medland and Dr Naomi Winstone, University of Surrey, UK Professor Jane Powell, University of Surrey, UK
12:05 am	**Keynote: *'Integrating the development of student and staff feedback literacy'*** (Lecture Theatre E) Professor David Carless, University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong
1:05 am	**Lunch** (Lecture Theatre Lower Concourse)
1:50 am	**Parallel workshops** Dr Naomi Winstone and Dr Emma Medland, University of Surrey, UK (LTE) Professor Carol Evans, University of Southampton, UK (LTH) Professor Tansy Jessop, Southampton Solent University, UK (LTJ)
3:20 pm	**Break** (Lecture Theatre Lower Concourse)
3:40 pm	**Panel discussion** (Lecture Theatre E)
5 pm	**End**

Parallel workshops and sessions will be held in Lecture Theatres E, H or J

KEYNOTE

INTEGRATING THE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENT AND STAFF FEEDBACK LITERACY

Professor David Carless
University of Hong Kong

Feedback is potentially one of the most powerful ways of advancing student learning, but there is plenty of evidence that students and staff are not particularly satisfied with current feedback practices. Students generally find it difficult to use feedback for ongoing improvement; and teachers often perceive that feedback is time-consuming and unrewarding.

One of the barriers to the improvement of feedback processes is limited appreciation among students and teachers about what exactly effective feedback involves and how uptake can be facilitated. In this presentation, I take the position that the co-ordinated development of student and staff feedback literacy is an essential condition for productive feedback processes.

I set out what feedback literacy is; how it can be developed; and why it is sorely needed. I discuss a number of related pedagogical implications for assessment and feedback designs, and program-wide approaches. I address facilitating and inhibiting factors for the development of student and staff feedback literacy and set out some future directions.

DEVELOPING A FACULTY WIDE FRAMEWORK FOR FORMATIVE FEEDBACK

Dr Jan Bamford
London Metropolitan University

This paper offers insights into the development of a faculty framework for formative feedback that was informed by a 'feedforward' approach to feedback. As institutions face strategic questions around the importance of teaching quality, the metrics for assessment and feedback are of particular concern for business schools in what many perceive as a competitive market environment. The case focus here is on a business school and the introduction of the concept of formative feedback and feeding forward to academic staff in a London post-92 institution. The strategic plan for action underpins an aim to enhance teaching quality and in improving student outcomes and students' engagement in their learning. The development of the framework is a work in progress and the complexity of the feedback process and the development of a relational context to student learning is acknowledged. The paper draws on feedback from staff given at staff development workshops on how an idea of an institutional and faculty formative feedback initiative might be framed. It also considers feedback from students, following one to one performance reviews at Level 6, on how important such sessions were to them and how they aided their learning. The data therefore draws from the staff and student perspective of feedback in this case study.

This paper considers how teaching staff understand and employ key aspects of formative feedback within their current teaching practice, how formative feedback practice might be introduced, through a series of development workshops that required rethinking feedback and the approach that was being taking.

TOWARDS A SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF ASSESSMENT

▶▶▶ APPLICATION OF A FLAME METAPHOR FOR FEEDBACK

Dr Philip Denton
Liverpool John Moores University

Even in an era of readily-accessible electronic marking assistants with acknowledged benefits, feedback remains a troublesome issue; the National Student Survey and the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey consistently record lower student satisfaction with assessment than for any other aspect of study. While some have surmised that efforts to further improve the quality of feedback information have done little to improve learning, we contend that this instead reflects discontinuities in staff and students' understanding of assessment. This can be addressed through analogies as they provide a powerful means to convey complex topics in language that is familiar across the academy. In the flame metaphor for feedback, assessment performance information (fuel) is returned in a curricular atmosphere conducive to learning (oxygen). However, only if students are assessment literate (ignition) will information illuminate. This analogy hopes to unify staff and students' understanding of feedback as a flame, untouchable and arising from a process, rather than as an artefact that is transferred. The extended resonances of the metaphor will be considered, alongside assessment outcomes from the use of a novel electronic marking tool. It is concluded that, once all are in place, further enhancements in either feedback information, curricula, or assessment literacy can improve assessment outcomes and promote sustainable feedback practices.

RIDING THE ROLLERCOASTER

▶ ▶ ▶ USING INSTITUTIONAL PROCEDURES TO IMPROVE ASSESSMENT LITERACY

Dr Rachel Forsyth
Manchester Metropolitan University

Assessment can be a wicked problem from an institutional perspective: according to Rittel & Webber (1973), this is a problem which, among other characteristics, is unique, poorly defined, has many stake-holders with potentially conflicting values, and has no single correct solution. Academic staff may feel that they are subject to potentially competing pressures to improve student satisfaction with assessment, ensure the highest student performance, embed employability, ensure assessment is inclusive, get all of their marking and feedback complete within a short time, and avoid contributing to grade inflation. Professional services staff need to work out effective systems for managing assessment, with tight deadlines for every step of the process.

This session will describe a project to rewrite university assessment procedures to improve staff and student assessment literacy (Price et al, 2012) and will share some of the outcomes, resources and lessons learned from the process.

References

Price, M., Rust, C., O'Donovan, B., Handley, K. & Bryant, R. (2012) *Assessment literacy: the foundation for improving student learning*, (ASKe, Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development).

Rittel, H. W., & Webber, M. M. (1973). Dilemmas in a general theory of planning. Policy sciences, 4(2), 155–169.

IMPROVING THE STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE THROUGH DIALOGIC FEED-FORWARD ASSESSMENT

Dr Jennifer Hill
University of the
West of England

Harry West
University of the
West of England

Assessment feedback gains consistently low satisfaction scores in national surveys of student satisfaction, with most concern surrounding its timeliness, quality and effectiveness. We present the results of a two year qualitative study, thematically analysing semi-structured interviews with students who have undertaken dialogic feed-forward coursework on a second year undergraduate geography module in a British university. The assessment consists of submitting a considered draft of a coursework essay, which is discussed and evaluated face-to-face with the course tutor before a self-reflective piece is written about the assessment process and a final essay is submitted for formal grading. We present evidence that this process asserts a positive influence on the student learning experience in a number of inter-related cognitive and affective ways, impacting upon learning behaviour, supporting student achievement, and raising NSS scores related to feedback. We espouse an ipsative, cyclical approach to dialogic feed-forward that enhances assessment literacy and hence learners' longitudinal development.

STAYING TUNED

▶ ▶ ▶ USING SCREEN CAPTURE TO ENHANCE
ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK LITERACY

Dr Emma Mayhew
University of Reading

The current generation of student often expects more flexibility in the pace and place of learning and they usually engage more deeply when information is delivered visually rather than simply using more written mediums.

At the same time, assessment and feedback has been increasingly recognised as a critical theme in UK higher education, in part because of the importance of student learning but also in terms of institutional reputation. The new Teaching Excellence Framework underlines this importance further.

In response, the Department of Politics, at the University of Reading, has made use of new, highly innovative screen capture software. By combining this technology with presentation tools like Prezi, VideoScribe and Powtoon, the Department has started to create

engaging short screencast videos to enhance assessment literacy and engagement with feedback. These screencasts outline essay writing skills, essay writing criteria and grading, sources of academic and pastoral support, Harvard and Oxford referencing styles but the technology has also been used as a basis for the provision of video feedback.

View rates and student responses in follow on questionnaires suggest that multimedia learning has impacted positively on student perceptions of their own understanding and student engagement with assessment and feedback. Adopting a multimedia approach using screen capture technology introduces a novel but effective way for lecturers to enhance their assessment and feedback provision.

BIASES IN REMEMBERING FEEDBACK ABOUT PAST AND FUTURE PERFORMANCE

Dr Rob Nash
Aston University

Students frequently receive feedback from educators that evaluates how well they achieved in the past, and feedback that directs them on what to improve in future. But how much of this feedback do students actually remember at a later time, when they have an opportunity to implement it? Surprisingly, virtually no empirical research has been published on the topic of people's memory for the feedback they receive. However, based both on educational findings and on theory from the memory literature, we predicted that future-oriented (directive) feedback should be remembered better than past-oriented (evaluative) feedback.

In this seminar I will outline a series of controlled experiments that we conducted to test this specific prediction. Our initial findings uncovered two distinct biases that appeared to shape how people remember performance feedback. Building upon our initial findings, we began a surprisingly exacting journey of trying to figure out why these memory biases actually occur. I will discuss the implications of our findings in light of current discussions around the advantages of so-called 'feed-forward', and in terms of current understandings of "best-practice" in giving feedback.

ALIGNING ASSESSMENT AND TEACHING FOR STUDENT LEARNING WITHIN THE CURRICULUM

Dr Christine O'Leary
Sheffield Hallam University

Assessment shapes how students view the curriculum (Boud, 1995; Ramsden, 2003). If we are to adopt a student-centred approach to curriculum design to promote student engagement and motivation (Coates, 2006; Zepke and Leach, 2010), assessment has to align to the Learning and teaching approaches (Biggs, 2003).

This session will explore how portfolio-based assessment can provide a vehicle for effective feedback and student engagement with their learning.

ENGAGING STUDENTS IN DIALOGIC FEEDBACK

▶ ▶ ▷ EFFECTS UPON FEEDBACK LITERACY
AND EVALUATIVE JUDGEMENT

Dr Edd Pitt
University of Kent

It has been suggested that more dialogue rich forms of feedback, such as dialogue with lecturers, exemplars and peer learning, can develop student's evaluative judgements and feedback literacy. Subsequently this may enhance their utilisation of feedback in subsequent assessments (Carless, 2006, 2015; Nicol, 2010, 2013). Such a claim is presently conceptual and has not been empirically investigated across differing disciplines, despite the growing research interest in the area of assessment and feedback within higher education. While this approach is theoretically sound and early studies of its use outside the UK are promising (Carless, 2017), it is sparsely used in UK higher education. To this end little is known about its effects on students' feedback literacy. One reason it may be rarely used is because it is not well understood how to put dialogic practices in place in mass higher education. This session will report on students' experiences of feedback dialogue from across the English HE sector. Delegates will gain an insight into how practitioners have used dialogic feedback and the effect it has had on their students development of evaluative judgement and feedback literacy.

LEARNING BETTER THROUGH PEER ASSESSMENT

Dr Stephen Rutherford
Cardiff University

Collaborative Learning is a powerful tool to support educational development. By challenging each other, and by evaluating and reflecting on the performance of peers, we gain greater insights into our own capabilities and limitations. Peer Assessment has the potential to encourage self-reflection, self-criticism and the development of analytical skills by using criticism and evaluation of another's work, to empower reflection on one's own work.

This session will outline the potentials and limitations of Peer Assessment, and suggest some case studies where it can be used to good effect. The key benefits from this form of assessment are often tempered by the students' own reticence about (or even opposition to) judging, or being judged, by their peers. This session will discuss approaches that can be used to gain student buy-in and to ensure that students gain the most out of the learning activities that are part of a Peer Assessment framework.

ENGAGING WITH STUDENTS' FEEDBACK ON FEEDBACK

▶ ▶ ▶ A STAFF-STUDENT CO-DESIGN APPROACH TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF A VLE FEEDBACK PORTFOLIO

Dr Naomi Winstone
University of Surrey

Dr Emma Medland
University of Surrey

Student satisfaction with assessment and feedback is the sector's "Achilles' Heel" (Knight, 2002, p.107). Students commonly report that the feedback they receive is not useful, often because it is not clear how to enact the advice, and how to synthesise comments across modules. Through a HEFCE-funded project, we engaged with students' perspectives on the utility of feedback in order to inform the design of a feedback portfolio within our VLE, which supports students to synthesise and act upon their feedback. This portfolio was developed in partnership with students using co-design methodology (Iivari, 2004).

In this workshop, we will invite delegates to participate in an interactive exploration of the co-design method, tracing the journey from the initial design workshops to the finished product. In the first co-design workshops, students used creative media such as playdoh and post-it notes to represent their experience of receiving feedback. We then asked them, both individually and in groups, to design their ideal feedback portfolio. We will invite delegates to explore artefacts from the design sessions, and to consider what is being voiced by the students through these artefacts. We will explore what the artefacts reveal about students' feedback literacy, and demonstrate how students' perspectives are directly reflected in the design of the portfolio.

Our evaluation of the process demonstrates that students felt ownership of the tool, and recognised that staff had listened to their views on feedback and taken them on board. We aim to give delegates insight into co-design methods as a way of engaging with the student voice to close the feedback loop. We will share ways in which we are currently using the method to develop a range of digital tools in partnership with students.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS LEARNING TRANSITIONS

▶ ▶ ▷ AN INCLUSIVE ASSESSMENT APPROACH

Professor Carol Evans
University of Southampton

This workshop will explore how individual and contextual variables impact students' and lecturers' access to learning, and the key role that assessment plays in this. Through the use of the EAT Assessment and Feedback Framework (Evans, 2016) we will explore inclusive approaches to assessment. In doing so, we will consider current debates about the importance of Universal Design and student self-management of learning, and how important lessons from research in these areas can be incorporated into assessment designs. A key part of this will also be exploring how we want our students to spend their time while at university with an emphasis on 'meaningful assessment pursuits' (Evans, Muijs, & Tomlinson, 2015).

Drawing on insights from neuroscience, cognitive psychology, and education we will explore assessment approaches that promote access to learning. Using the EAT framework, and underpinning principles, you will have an opportunity to explore an aspect of your own assessment practice, how you could develop it, and evaluate the impact of the changes that you have made.

A ROUGH, READY AND RAPID GUIDE TO TESTA

Professor Tansy Jessop
Southampton Solent University

This workshop will explore the rationale for a programme focus to assessment and feedback. Participants will become familiar with the three methods which make up TESTA: the TESTA audit, Assessment Experience Questionnaire (AEQ), and student focus groups. We will undertake a mock audit, and interpret authentic TESTA audit data, which gives the 'official line' of the planned curriculum. In contrast, we will actively engage with the Assessment Experience Questionnaire (AEQ v 4.0) and focus groups, which capture the 'lived experience' of students.   Finally, the workshop will scope out key changes that have occurred through TESTA, and successful strategies for negotiating these changes. Workshop participants should come prepared for action, data, work and lively conversation — all within tight timeframes!

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