DEVELOPING ENGAGEMENT WITH FEEDBACK TOOLKIT

16 - 19

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Acknowledgements

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Contents

Introduction

The Developing Engagement with Feedback Toolkit was developed at the University of Surrey by two Psychology lecturers, Dr Naomi Winstone and Dr Rob Nash, who received a grant from the UK Higher Education Academy to explore students' engagement with assessment feedback. Their research had demonstrated that students have difficulty understanding the language used within feedback, and knowing what steps they can take to put their feedback into practice. The Developing Engagement with Feedback Toolkit was developed to provide lecturers with a set of resources to use with students to develop their skills in using feedback productively. Further information about the development of the toolkit at the University of Surrey can be found here: http://tinyurl.com/hea-deft.

This document represents an adaptation of the original toolkit for use with students aged 16-19. This Toolkit is intended to be flexible. The Learning to use feedback resources are designed to help train students in the skills needed to use the feedback they receive, the Reflecting upon a single feedback event resources are designed to help students reflect on the feedback they have received, and the Synthesising multiple feedback events resources are designed to help students collate their feedback for future use. By selecting a set of activities, teachers can use the resources to tailor the activities to the needs of their students.

Learning to use feedback

The Learning to use feedback resources are structured around the concept of 'feedback literacy' (Sutton, 2012). Feedback literacy represents an individual's knowledge of what feedback means, what it is for, where it can be found, and how it can be used. Sutton identifies three dimensions of feedback literacy: *knowing* (i.e. knowing the purpose of feedback and recognising feedback as a source of learning); *being* (i.e. recognition of the emotional dimension of feedback and the impact of feedback on identity); and *acting* (i.e. knowing why it is important to take action on feedback, and how to make productive use of feedback).

One way of using the resources would be to work through all the activities sequentially during a series of lessons when they fit into your teaching (i.e. after the first assessment of the academic year for Lower Sixth students). Another would be to design a lesson involving one activity from the 'knowing' component, one activity from the 'being' component, and one activity from the 'acting' component. Teachers may also wish to use individual activities as stand-alone sessions, to target a particular skill or provide a refresher for students at more advanced stages of their programme of study. For all the activities there is a 'Resource' and 'Worksheet' section. The 'Resource' section gives an explanation of how the activities could be used and the 'Worksheet' section is to be used with the students.

The 'knowing' dimension of feedback literacy involves a student's awareness that feedback provides information *on* knowing; that is, it provides information on their current levels of understanding and skill. However, an equally important function of feedback is *for* knowing-to drive students' learning and skill development.

The first activity encourages students to consider the different functions and sources of feedback, as a way for them to appreciate the distinction between feedback *on* and feedback *for* knowing. The second activity in this section provides students with the opportunity to become familiar with marking schemes and grading criteria, and to develop skills of self-assessment. The third and final activity in this section is designed to extend students' appreciation of feedback *for* knowing, by developing their understanding of the learning potential of feedback information.

The 'being' dimension of feedback literacy recognises the personal investment on the part of students in the process of assessment, and how feedback has the potential to shape the learner's identity.

The first activity in this section directly addresses this issue, by enabling students to explore their own learner identity and how this is shaped by assessment and feedback. The second activity requires students to identify the potential barriers that might inhibit their engagement with feedback, and to develop solutions to overcome such barriers. The third and final activity in this section directly addresses the emotions that are generated by receiving feedback, and encourages students to consider how these emotions can be harnessed to support future development.

The 'acting' dimension of feedback literacy involves the skills necessary to read, understand and implement feedback. The activities in this section are more strongly targeted to the implementation of feedback information.

The first activity provides an opportunity for students to develop a 'toolkit' of actions that can be used upon receiving a particular piece of feedback. The second activity enables students to develop the ability to set action points and targets, and monitor progress towards them. The third and final activity in this section gives learners the opportunity to reflect on the relative role of the teacher and student in the implementation of feedback.

Reflecting upon a single feedback event

The purpose of these resources is to support students to draw out the learning potential of a piece of feedback they receive. One way of using the resources would be to work through all the activities sequentially during a series of lessons when they fit into your teaching (i.e. after the second and subsequent assessments of the academic year for Lower Sixth students). Another would be to design a lesson involving a couple of the activities. Teachers may also wish to use individual activities as stand-alone sessions, to target a particular area. For all the activities there is a worksheet to be used with the students.

Synthesising multiple feedback events

The purpose of these resources is to support students to synthesise the common messages they are receiving from multiple pieces of feedback, in order to inform their future learning. One way of using the resources would be to work through all the activities during a series of

lessons when they fit into your teaching (i.e. before the end of year assessment or mock exams for Lower Sixth students). Another would be to design a lesson involving a couple of the activities. Teachers may also wish to use individual activities as stand-alone sessions, to target a particular area. For all the activities there is a worksheet to be used with the students.

Both the activities in this and the previous section could also be used to build a feedback portfolio. Each of the resources represents an individual 'page' that could be used either in isolation, within a broader paper-based portfolio, or as an e-portfolio implemented via a Virtual Learning Environment. The overall intention of the feedback portfolio would be for students to collate all the pieces of written feedback that they receive, and then through using the resources, to reflect actively on these feedback comments, to synthesise the commonalities across different pieces of feedback, to set targets for improvement, and to track their progress over time.

The feedback portfolio would help to foster students' self-regulation and independence. The activities could be completed independently by the student and could also form the basis for dialogue with teachers. Discussing the student's progress and reflection can be a useful way of reinforcing the benefits of constructing a portfolio, and the teacher may wish to provide the student with further feedback on these issues within the portfolio itself.
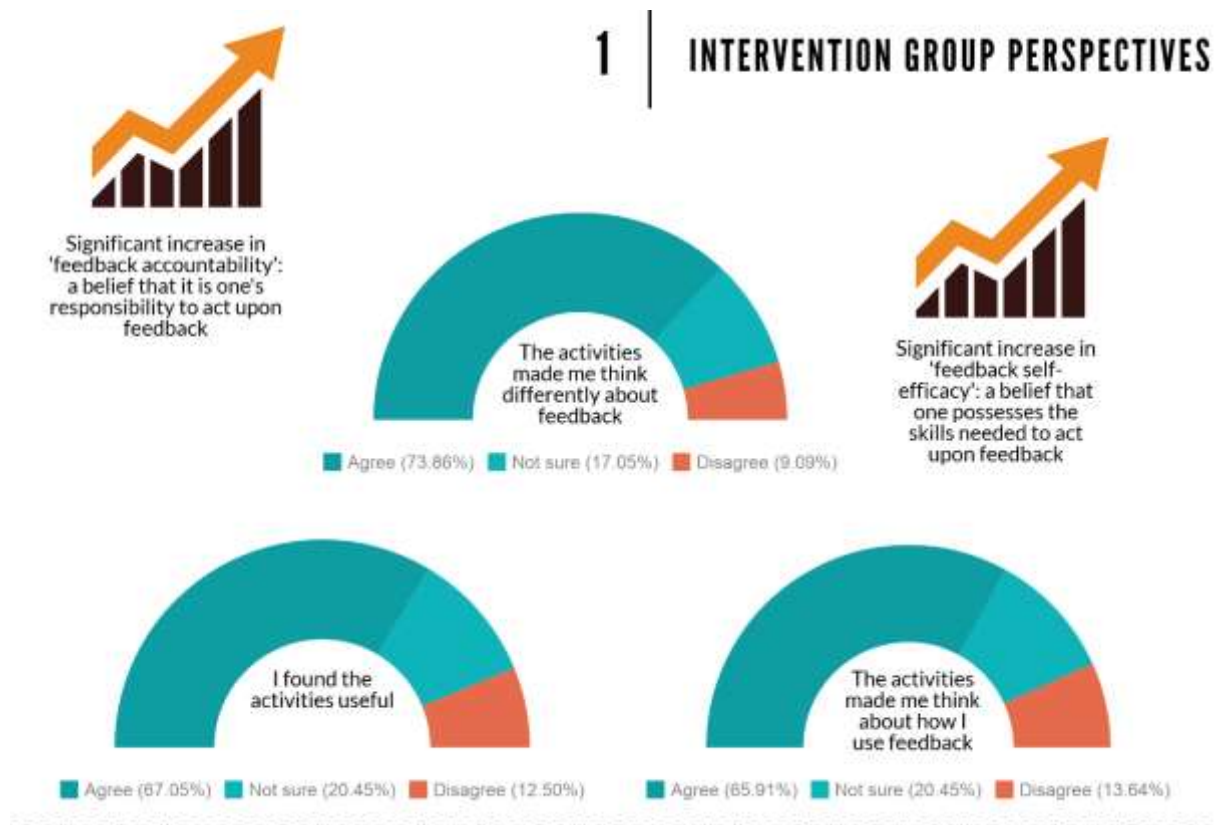
Case Study

The primary aim of the project was to test the impact of class-based activities based on the Developing Engagement with Feedback Toolkit (DEFT) to support students' engagement with feedback in a 16-19 setting. The trial involved Godalming College students who were in the Lower Sixth studying the following Level 3 subjects:

- A Level Biology
- A Level English Language
- A Level Geography
- A Level Music
- A Level Politics
- BTEC Media
- BTEC Sport

For the subjects indicated above two Lower Sixth (two-year A Level linear or two-year BTEC) classes were selected and assigned Group 1 or Group 2 status. Group 1 was the intervention group using the DEFT activities and completing questionnaires. Group 2 was the control group and they only completed the questionnaires. For each subject the teachers for Group 1 and Group 2 were different so that there was no bias in the actions of the teachers. There was no control group in A Level Music as there was only one class.

The key findings relating to the students who took part in the intervention group:

1 | INTERVENTION GROUP PERSPECTIVES

Significant increase in 'feedback accountability': a belief that it is one's responsibility to act upon feedback

The activities made me think differently about feedback

Agree (73.86%)   Not sure (17.05%)   Disagree (9.09%)

Significant increase in 'feedback self-efficacy': a belief that one possesses the skills needed to act upon feedback

I found the activities useful

Agree (67.05%)   Not sure (20.45%)   Disagree (12.50%)

The activities made me think about how I use feedback

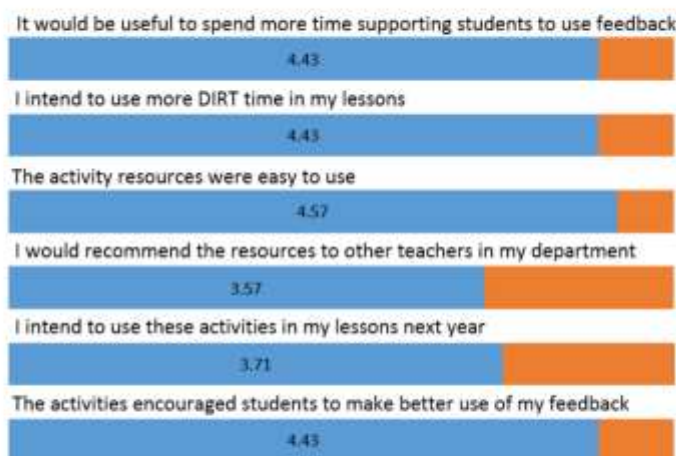Agree (65.91%)   Not sure (20.45%)   Disagree (13.64%)

The key findings relating to the teachers who took part in the intervention group:

"Seeing feedback from the student's perspective was an interesting reminder."

"Doing the activities made me reflect more on the feedback I give both written and verbal. I also got some good feedback from the students about my feedback and I have since tried to include more positive comments than just a tick."

"It was beneficial to spend the time in class to run over feedback, to allow students to ask questions about their feedback to clarify anything they don't understand."

2 | TEACHER PERSPECTIVES

It would be useful to spend more time supporting students to use feedback
4.43

I intend to use more DIRT time in my lessons
4.43

The activity resources were easy to use
4.57

I would recommend the resources to other teachers in my department
3.57

I intend to use these activities in my lessons next year
3.71

The activities encouraged students to make better use of my feedback
4.43

"It was good for [students] to consider the more prominent role that feedback should play within their learning process."

"The activities made students really focus on the feedback and think about how they were going to act on it, rather than just looking at their mark/grade"

With the introduction of linear A Levels (harder content, tougher marking and students taking exams at end of course) it is important that students are reflecting on their performance and developing their skills over the two years of the course to make sure that they are fully prepared to take their 'one off' exam.

The results of the project were presented to the College's teachers and to S7 teachers at a feedback conference. At the College the activities in the DEFT were made available to be used across the college from 2018-2019 to highlight/increase the use of DIRT (Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time) time and develop students' engagement with feedback.

LEARNING TO USE FEEDBACK

Learning to use feedback: Description of the resources

Below is a list of the resources that are available for you to use with a brief description of their purpose so that you can choose the most relevant activities for your students and subject. The activities are best used as part of DIRT (Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time) after students have received feedback from the teacher.

Knowing

K1: Feedback Definition *(pages 8 and 9 of this document)* – This resource can be used to help students identify the different forms of feedback that they receive and why using feedback is important.

K2: Standards and Criteria *(pages 10 and 11 of this document)* – This resource can be used to help develop the students' understanding of marking schemes/grading criteria by taking on the role of the marker.

K3: Feedback as a tool for learning *(pages 12 and 13 of this document)* – This resource is most useful to students to show what can be learned from the process of using feedback, and to understand how feedback can be used as a tool for learning.

Being

B1: Feedback and Identity *(pages 14, 15 and 16 of this document)* – This resource is most useful to give students an understanding that feedback comments can be interpreted differently according to the receiver's sense of learner identity.

B2: Overcoming Barriers *(pages 17, 18 and 19 of this document)* – This resource can be used to help students to consider the factors that prevent them from engaging with feedback, and to develop an understanding of strategies to overcome these barriers.

B3: Using emotion positively *(pages 20 and 21 of this document)* – This resource can be used to help students to reflect on how they feel when they receive feedback, understand the importance of the emotions they feel, and to appreciate the role of emotion in supporting improvement.

Action

A1: The process of action *(pages 22, 23 and 24 of this document)* – This resource is most useful to give students an understanding of the importance of acting on feedback and ways of putting feedback into action.

A2: Identifying Actions *(pages 25 and 26 of this document)* – This resource can be used to help students to develop a 'bank' of actions that they can use in response to feedback they receive to improve their skills or put the comment into action.

A3: Action Planning *(pages 27 and 28 of this document)* – This resource can be used to help students to create an action plan to improve and develop the skills required on the basis of feedback they have received.

Feedback Definition – Resource K1

Activity Format: *Individual work and class discussion.*
Resources: *Post it notes, 3 sheets of A3 paper and K1 worksheet (page 9 of this document).*

Learning objective: **To enable students to consider the many sources, forms and functions of feedback, and to develop a shared definition of feedback.**

Activity Guidance

The end point of this activity is the development of a working definition of feedback that students and the teacher agree on.

To achieve this, students should first be invited to consider the following questions:
- What is feedback?
- Where and who do I get feedback from?
- What is the purpose of feedback?

Each of these questions should be considered by students individually, writing their answers on the post it notes.

For each of the questions there needs to be a corresponding A3 sheet. The students should then stick their answers to the A3 sheets so their answers are anonymous.

There should then be a class discussion about the answers to each of the questions. The purpose of the discussion is to facilitate a shared definition of feedback.
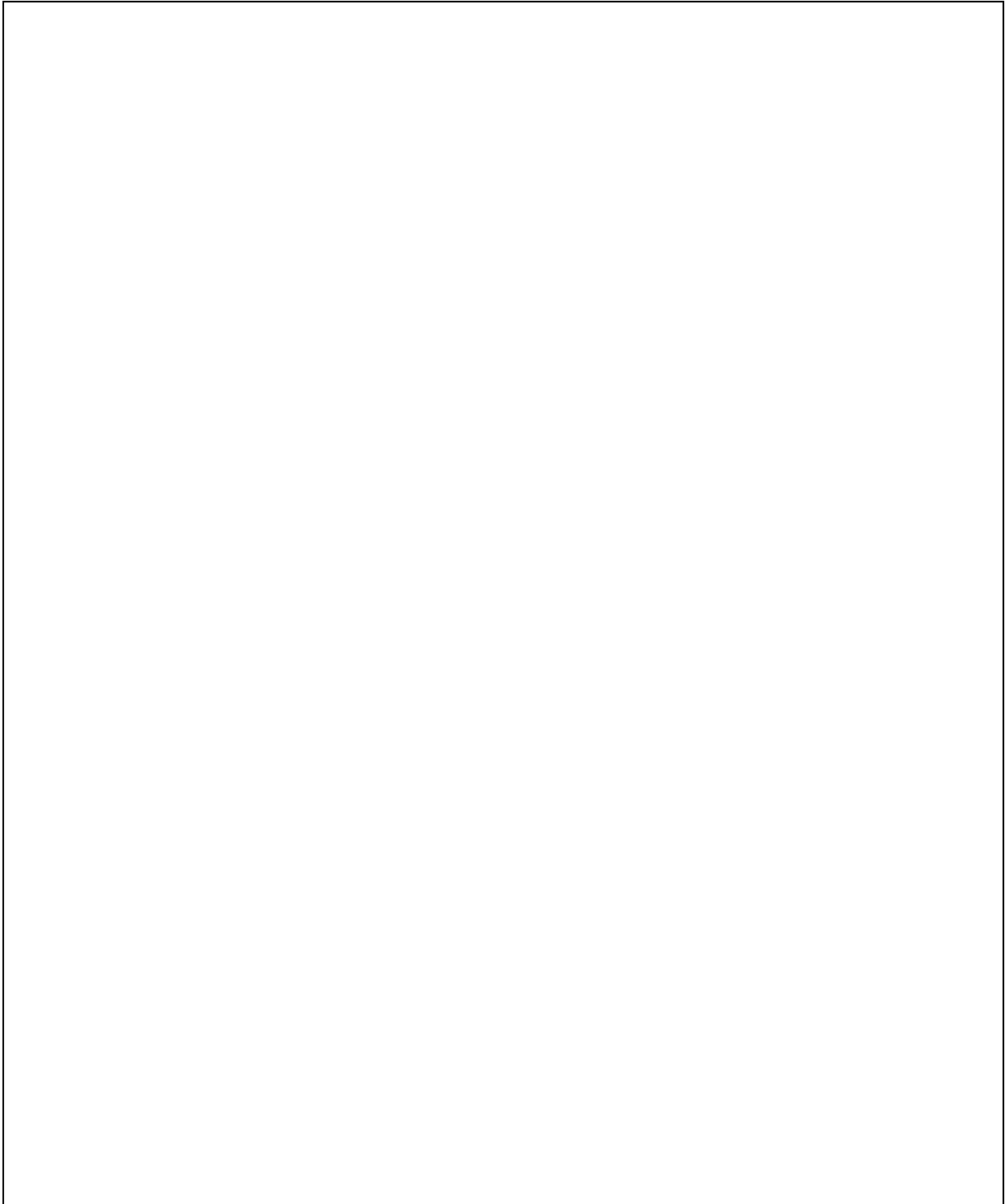
The class in conjunction with the teacher should come up with a definition of what feedback is that incorporates the students' responses to the questions. The class definition should be recorded on the K1 worksheet.

This definition can then be referred back to throughout the course to remind students what feedback is and where it is available throughout the subject.

Feedback Definition – Worksheet K1

Subject/Class:

Class definition of feedback:

Standards and Criteria – Resource K2

Activity Format: *Small group discussion and class discussion.*
Resources: *An exemplar essay/assignment/exam answer, a copy of the relevant marking scheme/grading criteria and K2 worksheet (page 11 of this document).*

Learning objective: **To develop students' assessment literacy through discussion and application of the marking criteria and standards.**

Activity Guidance

The teacher should begin by leading a discussion focused on the marking scheme/grading criteria that is used to assess the students' work for the relevant essay/assignment/exam answer. Particular emphasis could be given to:

- Explaining the grade descriptors (e.g. mark bands, criteria and differentiating 'good', 'very good', 'excellent') and how the expectations differ between these.
- Explaining individual criteria that are mentioned in the marking schemes, and which the marker takes into account when assessing work.
- Explaining the weighting of different criteria in the grading process (for example, the importance of description/explanation versus evaluation).

Following this discussion of the marking scheme/grading criteria and how they are applied, students should be given a copy of an exemplar essay/assignment/exam answer. Either individually or in pairs/small groups, they should be instructed to read the essay/assignment/exam answer and then use the marking scheme/grading criteria to decide what grade to award it. This can be done either by assigning a specific grade, or just placing the response within an appropriate mark band. This exercise could be done using standardised marking sheets/feedback pro formas, to allow the student to fully take the position of a marker.

Standards and Criteria – Worksheet K2

Below is an exemplar copy of a standardised marking sheet/feedback pro forma.

	Level 5 (25-30) A/A*	Level 4 (19-24) B/C	Level 3 (13-18) D/E	Level 2 (7-12) E/U	Level 1 (0-11) U
AO1	Thorough and in-depth knowledge and understanding of content, theories and issues, which are effectively selected in order to underpin analysis	Accurate knowledge and understanding of content, theories and issues, which are carefully selected in order to underpin analysis	Mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of content, theories and issues, many of which are selected appropriately in order to underpin analysis	Some accurate knowledge and understanding of content, theories and issues, some of which are selected appropriately in order to underpin analysis	Limited accurate knowledge and understanding of content, theories and issues, some of which are selected appropriately in order to underpin analysis
AO2	Perceptive comparative analysis of content, with sustained evaluation drawing on similarities and differences within the information, which make cohesive and convincing connections between ideas and concepts	Consistent comparative analysis of content, with coherent evaluation, drawing on similarities and differences within the information, which make relevant connections between ideas and concepts	Mostly focused comparative analysis of content with focused evaluation, drawing on similarities and/or differences within the information, which make mostly relevant connections between ideas and concepts	Some emerging comparative analysis of content information with some focused evaluation of similarities and/or differences within the information, which make some relevant connections between ideas and concepts	Limited emerging comparative analysis of content information with some focused evaluation of similarities and/or differences within the information, which make some relevant connections between ideas and concepts
AO3	Constructs fully relevant and effective arguments and judgements, which are consistently substantiated and lead to fully focused and justified conclusions	Constructs mostly relevant and effective arguments and judgements, which are mostly substantiated and lead to mostly focused and justified conclusions	Constructs generally relevant and effective arguments and judgements, many of which are substantiated and lead to some focused conclusions that are sometimes justified	Constructs some relevant and effective arguments and judgements, some are partially substantiated and lead to generic conclusions without much justification	Constructs limited relevant and effective arguments and judgements, some are partially substantiated and lead to generic conclusions without much justification

Feedback as a tool for learning – Resource K3

Learning objective: **To provide students insight into what can be learned from the process of using feedback, and to understand how feedback is a tool for learning, in the same way as a lesson can be.**

Activity Guidance

The teacher should begin by leading a discussion on feedback and how it might contribute to learning (unless already covered in activity K1). Each student should be given a copy of worksheet K3, which lists possible actions that a student could potentially take after receiving feedback on a piece of work. Students could work either individually or in small groups to consider each feedback action in turn, and suggest what can be learnt from taking that action. For example:

Possible Action: Picking a few sentences/paragraphs from your work and thinking from the marker's perspective about how clearly those sentences/paragraphs are expressed.

Examples of what might be learned from taking this action:

- What the marker might expect.
- Common writing style (structure/use of language) features of your writing that warrant attention.
- How others might interpret your meaning differently to how it was intended.
- That something that seemed clear to you may not be clear to others.

Once the worksheet has been completed, students can share their ideas through a class discussion.

Feedback as a tool for learning – Worksheet K3

Below is a list of things that you might do when engaging with the written feedback you receive. What might you learn about your work, or about the marker, by taking each of these actions?

Action	What might be learned by taking this action?
Looking at the marking scheme/grading criteria, and trying to figure out how you could achieve the next level	
Identify what targets you have been set by the marker	
Looking at the mark/grade you received	
Picking a few sentences/paragraphs from your work and thinking from the marker's perspective about how clearly those sentences/paragraphs are expressed	
Taking one aspect of your work, such as your evaluation or structure, and thinking what you could do to improve	
Looking through your feedback for all the things the marker has said you did well	
Making an action plan based on the feedback you have received, aiming to identify the areas that you can improve on in subsequent pieces of work	

Feedback and Identity – Resource B1

Activity Format: Small group discussion and class discussion.
Resources: B1 worksheet (pages 15 and 16 of this document).

Learning objective: **To help students to appreciate that feedback comments can be interpreted differently according to the receiver's sense of learner identity.**

Activity Guidance

The teacher should begin by separating the class into groups, and providing each group with a piece of feedback (for example, the feedback provided in worksheet B1). The groups should first be asked to read this feedback carefully, and then briefly discuss and make notes on strengths and weaknesses of the feedback.

Next, each group should be given a 'character profile' as illustrated in worksheet B1. Each of these profiles describes a different person along with information about their learning approaches, and character traits relevant to their learning such as their self-confidence and motivation. The students should ideally be unaware that other groups have received different 'characters'.

Groups should be asked to discuss how the person described in their character profile might understand the piece of feedback, and importantly, to discuss what that person might infer about themselves on the basis of the feedback comments. Groups should then be asked to feed back their ideas to the class. The teacher should lead a discussion of the discrepancies between groups' responses, revealing that each group received different character profiles. Students should be asked to consider why the character profiles would lead to different interpretations of the same feedback. The students might then be encouraged to reflect on what they would infer about themselves if they received that piece of feedback, and to discuss how these reactions relate to their learner identities.

Feedback and Identity – Worksheet B1

The following piece of feedback was given in response to a student's piece of work:

You covered quite a good range of material in your work. However, you presented a lot of unreferenced arguments. The integration of material in this work was good, but there is room for improvement in terms of the critical evaluation of the evidence. You present some valid points of critical analysis but these are not always used to address the question. Clearly link these points of critique to your argument so that we know what implications they have for the conclusions we might draw. Your overall structure is clear but you need to work on your paragraph transitions. In many places, your argument can be difficult to follow because you move between different topics without clear signposting to the reader. The work also contains a very large number of errors, and in many cases these are severe enough that your arguments do not make sense. There is no evidence that the work has been proof-read.

Once you have read the information above note down the strengths and weaknesses of the feedback in the table below.

Strengths	Weaknesses

Character Profile

Sam is a second-year student. She/he got very good grades at GCSE, but really worries about her/his performance at A Level/BTEC. Sam is often desperate to learn every part of the course material, and often does a lot of extra reading outside of lessons, but finds it difficult to integrate everything into her/his work. This causes Sam to panic, and every piece of work always feels as though it is rubbish. Sam hates submitting work as it never feels good enough, and she/he is then worried during the whole time it is being marked. When a piece of work is returned, Sam is frightened to look at the comments, for fear of what they might say.

1. How might Sam interpret the feedback comments?
2. What might Sam think or feel about herself/himself as a result of receiving these comments?

Character Profile

Alex is a second-year student. She/he got very good grades at GCSE, and is really confident about her/his performance at A Level/BTEC, being certain that she/he will get very high grades. Alex attends all lessons but does not feel the need to take detailed notes, as this approach has always paid off in the past. Alex loves submitting work, as she/he feels that the work is of such high quality that the marker will be very impressed. Alex can hardly wait for marked work to be returned, and is excited to see what the marker has said about the work.

1. How might Alex interpret the feedback comments?
2. What might Alex think or feel about herself/himself as a result of receiving these comments?

Overcoming Barriers – Resource B2

Learning objective: **To enable students to consider the factors that prevent them from engaging with feedback, and to develop an understanding of strategies to overcome these barriers.**

Activity Guidance

The session should begin with a general discussion about what makes using feedback so difficult. It might be useful for the teacher to guide the discussion, such that students do not solely focus on criticising the feedback they receive. Features of the feedback may be one of the barriers to implementing it, but students should be encouraged to think more broadly about the potential factors that might make it difficult to make use of feedback.

Next, students should be divided into groups, and each student given a copy of the B2 worksheet. The teacher should explain that these are quotes from actual students, when talking about their experiences with feedback. In their groups, students should discuss the quotes and extract common themes between them. Ideally, students should try to sort the comments into groups, representing different barriers to using feedback. If they find it hard to define these groups, you can give them some prompts (for example, the comments could be sorted under the themes of understanding, acting, engagement, and emotion).

Each group then feeds back their themes to the rest of the class. Once each group has discussed their themes, discuss the differences between the themes extracted by each group. Then, as a class, discuss potential solutions that could be offered to overcome the barriers that have been identified.

Overcoming Barriers – Worksheet B2

The comments below are taken from Focus Group discussions with students, about their experiences with feedback.

If the teacher tells me that parts of my argument are hard to follow, I wouldn't know which bits were hard to follow, and which bits I need to look at to see why it wasn't quite right. This might be quite tricky to find yourself, as obviously you've written it, so you think it's alright.
If I need to improve the structure of my work, I need more teaching. It's something that's innate.
There are so many teachers and so many subjects; I don't think I've ever got feedback that's been the same.
I get angry with my feedback. Like, I got a mark back the other day, on my last piece of work and I wasn't happy with it. I read what the teacher had written and thought 'Oh well – that's your opinion!'
I think it is so hard to take feedback on board, as you've got your own specific writing style and you're so stuck in your way.
Sometimes you don't know what to do with the comments. Although the teacher might have made a valid point, you don't know where in your essay they want you to have done something.
I generally just take the mark as more important than the written feedback. I mean, the feedback is useful, but if I've got a high mark, I don't really care what the feedback says!
When I was writing an essay, I probably wouldn't ever go back and look at the feedback I'd had before. Which is something I probably could do more.
It's horrible. The feedback you get is really harsh! And it's just like, 'Well, okay! I'm not looking at that, it's just negative!'
Sometimes feedback is written in really fancy language. They're just saying it in a really roundabout way rather than just 'You need to make clearer arguments'.
If I feel that feedback is generic to everyone, I just discard it. If I think its individual to me, I will read it and probably use it again.
I haven't spoken to teachers about my work before, but I know that you can do that, I mean they do offer feedback in that sense.
If there is feedback on something negative, but there's something clear enough that I can change, I would give it a lot of attention. But if it's something negative and really general, I feel like I can't change it, and I won't pay attention to it.
I should read it. And then have it out when I'm then writing the next bit of work. But realistically, I normally sort of skim over it. I suppose I do probably take in points from it, but then you kind of file it away with your work.
I think sometimes it can be a bit difficult to read your feedback in front of friends, because you quite easily make comparisons between you and other people.
I know which teacher is marking my work and then I try to phrase my work in the way I think they want it.
When I get a piece of work back, I'm really bad, and I'm just like, 'Oh, that's my mark, put it away now.'

I get quite a lot of teachers saying, 'You need to expand on this more.' And it's like, 'Well, if there is a word limit and I expand on this, I'm going to have to lose something else. So, what should I lose?' Because it's sort of that balance, which can be quite frustrating.
I think teachers expect us to read all of the feedback, but I don't know if they realise how little we understand the stuff that they say.
I hate when they say stuff say about your use of commas, because I have used commas, like I'm not stupid, I know how to use commas. Just say 'This could be clearer.' Don't say 'Your use of commas is not always appropriate.'
I think it's fine if teachers make a critical comment, but then they need to make a suggestion how to improve the critique that they're making of my work. Otherwise I'm not going to pay much attention to it
I think for me it was mostly about the mark, rather than the details of the feedback that you got. I don't know, but that's what I talk about with my friends.
Feedback is too specific to that particular piece of work. I definitely wouldn't use it on another piece of work.
I usually get quite angry whenever I read feedback, because they say things like 'This isn't clear'. I know what I'm trying to say, and I think 'What do you mean it's not clear?', like, it's right there on paper!
Sometimes feedback says that there's a lot of errors, but it doesn't necessarily say which bits are errors and which bits aren't. So it's quite hard moving forward, I guess, as the feedback is just a bit too vague and non-specific.
When the teacher gives us back our work in class the people who sit next to me will ask how I did. But, they tend to do a bit better than me, so I think sometimes you don't really want to talk about your feedback.

Using emotion positively – Resource B3

Activity Format: *Individual work with facilitated group discussion.*
Resources: *B3 worksheet (page 21 of this document).*

Learning objective: **To enable students to understand the importance of the emotions elicited by feedback, and to appreciate the role of emotion in driving their future development.**

Activity Guidance

Students should use a piece of written feedback they have received on work they have produced. Students should be encouraged to read through the feedback, and to select a few phrases that elicit (or elicited) emotions, either positive or negative. They should then attempt to critically reflect on how they feel, and on how they can use those pieces of feedback and their own feelings to help decide what to do differently next time.

It may be useful to discuss the functions of emotion in the process of receiving feedback, for example, *"Even though reading negative feedback can be difficult, if we don't block out the emotions we feel in response to the feedback, it can really change the way we do things and can make us more independent as learners."*

Using emotion positively – Worksheet B3

Read through a piece of written feedback that you have received. Pick out a few phrases that the marker has written. Try to reflect on your emotional reactions to these comments, and then think about their consequences: do these feelings help you in any way? Or do they have negative consequences?

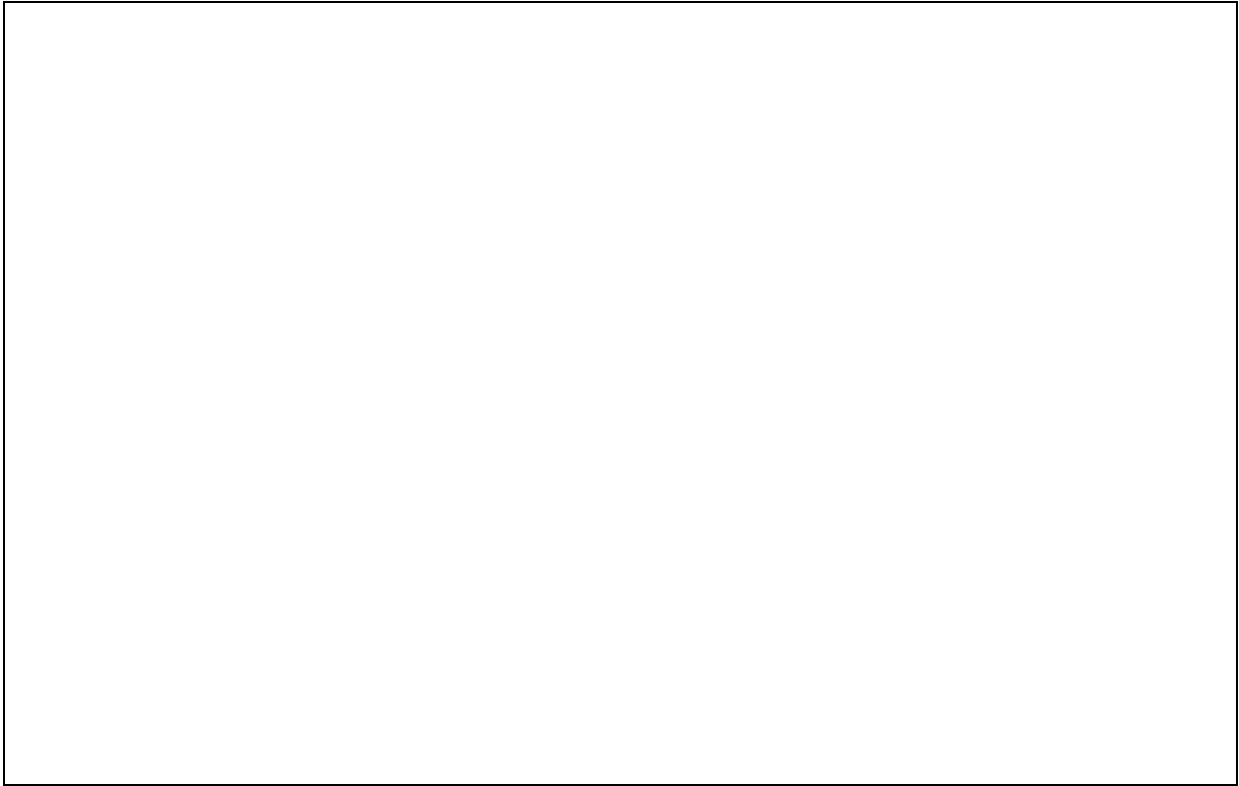| Key message	What is my emotional reaction?	Is this emotional reaction helpful? Is it harmful? Or is it a bit of both?

The process of action – Resource A1

Activity Guidance

The session should begin with a discussion of why it is important to act upon feedback. Students should then be instructed to work individually, and write down on the worksheet a list of the things that they do upon receiving feedback. These might range from simply reading it through to more proactive strategies such as keeping a list of common comments, or seeking guidance from teachers. The teacher should emphasise that students' worksheets will remain completely anonymous. The teacher collects all the individual worksheets and shares the actions with the class, ideally by writing them on a whiteboard so that all students can see the list.

Next, divide students into groups and ask them to discuss the list of actions, and rank them in order from least to most effective, considering the reasons for their ranking. Each group then feeds back to the rest of the class. A useful topic for discussion is how those that had been ranked as least effective could be reframed to become more effective. Students could also be invited to reflect on whether they think they do enough with their feedback.

The process of action – Worksheet A1

Write down a list of the things you do upon receiving feedback.

Discuss the list of actions that have been created from the class discussion. Rank the actions in order from least to most effective.

Action	Rank

Identifying Actions – Resource A2

Learning objective: **To enable students to develop a 'bank' of actions that they can take in response to feedback they receive.**

Activity Guidance

Identify at least four feedback comments that were common issues in the work you have given back to the students (see A2 worksheet for examples). For each of the comments there needs to be an A4 sheet of paper with the comment as a heading.

In small groups students should be presented with each of the pieces of paper and write a list of actions that could be taken to improve the skills identified by the comment or put the comment into action.

For example, if the comment is '*you need to evaluate your points more thoroughly'*, then possible actions might include '*make notes on points of evaluation as I am studying'*; '*talk to my teachers about what they are expecting to see in terms of evaluation*'; '*speak to study support about strategies to improve my evaluation*'.

If students struggle to come up with actions, then the teacher could scaffold the discussion by providing headings under which to list action points, such as '*things I can do in my own study time*'; '*people I could go to for further support*', '*resources I could use*', etc.

Each group should then share with the whole class the action plans for the comments given to them, and the teacher should encourage a class discussion. At the end of this activity, students should be able to take away a 'bank' of actions they could consider taking the next time they receive similar feedback comments.

Identifying Actions – Worksheet A2

Examples of feedback comments given to students.

You need to be more evaluative in your writing
Aim for a more coherent argument
Your writing could be more concise
You could achieve a better balance between description and evaluation
You can make stronger use of research evidence to support your argument
Your structure could be clearer
Check that your sentence structure is correct
Make sure that you are fully answering the questions for each piece of work
Revise your understanding of punctuation and grammar
Make sure that you consider counterarguments to the positions you present
You need to ensure that a clearer answer to the question comes across to the reader
Try to use a wider range of sources to provide support for your argument

Action Planning – Resource A3

Activity Format: *Individual work and class discussion.*
Resources: *A3 worksheet (page 28 of this document).*

Learning objective: **To enable students to develop the skills required to create an action plan on the basis of feedback received on their work.**

Activity Guidance

For this activity, students should use a piece of written feedback that they have received on a piece of work. The teacher should begin by explaining to students how effective action planning requires identifying a) the area that needs to be developed; b) what actions need to be taken to enable this development; and c) what information would be needed in order to evaluate whether those actions had been effectual.

Students should then be given a copy of worksheet A3, and instructed to go through their own feedback individually, extracting around three areas that the marker has identified need to be developed. The students should then complete the worksheet by thinking about how they could develop that skill, and how they will know that they have been successful in improving that skill. Before beginning this activity, it might be useful for the teacher to go through an example with students.

Once all students have completed the worksheet individually, students can be invited to share the actions that they are planning to take. It is likely that many of the issues identified in the first column of the table will be common across students, so it may be beneficial for students to hear what actions others have considered to address a similar issue.

Action Planning – Worksheet A3

Individually go through the feedback you have received. Find three areas that the marker has identified that need to be developed. For these three areas complete the table below by thinking about how you could develop that skill, and how you will know that you have been successful in improving that skill.

What do you need to develop/target?	What actions will you take to achieve this development/target?	How will you know if you have achieved the development/target?

REFLECTING UPON A SINGLE FEEDBACK EVENT

Reflecting upon a single feedback event: Description of the resources

Below is a list of the resources that are available for you to use with a brief description of their purpose so that you can choose what you would like to use with your students so that it is most relevant to your subject. The activities are best used as part of DIRT (Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time) after students have received feedback from the teacher.

The resources in this section are focused on implementing feedback from a single assessment.

Reflecting on Feedback from an Assessment *(page 31 of this document)***:** This resource can be used to help students to think about what the teacher's feedback is telling them and how the feedback might be used in the future.
Reflecting on Generic Feedback *(page 32 of this document)***:** This resource could be used if the teacher gives generic feedback to the whole class (not individualised feedback) to help students think about how the feedback applies to their own work.
Action Planning Log *(page 33 of this document)***:** This resource is most useful if students have been given guidance on specific skills they need to improve. The resource encourages the students to think about how they are going to improve the skills and who they might seek guidance from.

Reflecting on Feedback from an Assessment

Use this sheet to record and reflect on your feedback from an individual essay/assignment.

Piece of work:

Date completed:

What are the main messages from the teacher?

Is there anything in the comments that you do not fully understand? If so, what?

How does the feedback make you feel?

Look at the comments telling you what you have done well. Consider *why* you have done these things well, and consider what you need to do similarly for your next essay/assignment.

Look at the comments telling you what you need to do to improve. Consider *why* the marker has made those comments, and consider what you need to do differently for your next essay/assignment.

Reflecting on Generic Feedback

Use this sheet to develop pointers for improvement from generic feedback that is directed to your whole class.

Sometimes, your teachers will give you 'generic' feedback, where their suggestions apply to many of the pieces of work that were submitted, but not to everybody's. This sheet helps you to figure out how you personally can use this feedback.

1. In the left-hand column, list what you find to be the key points of advice from the feedback.
2. Next, have a look back at your own piece of work, and think about the extent to which each of these pieces of feedback might apply to your work. Use the middle columns to self-assess your work against these points.
3. If you think that a particular point _does_ apply to your work (even a little bit), then use the right-hand column to think about the actions you could take to ensure you can address this point in future. These actions might be specific (e.g., "_Proof-read my work before submitting it_"; "_Double-check how to identify sources properly_"), or might be longer-term things to work towards (e.g., "_Focus on developing my writing style – book an appointment with Study Support_").

Feedback	To what extent might this feedback apply to me? (Tick the appropriate box)				What, if anything, could/should I do differently to ensure that I address this point in future?
	Not at all	_A little bit_	_Quite a lot_	_Entirely_	

Action Planning Log

Use this sheet to develop an action plan to help you improve a particular skill. Identify what you need to work on, and think about all of the sources of information and support available to you. Then, set yourself three specific targets and think about how you will know that you have achieved them. Will you be able to do something you cannot do now? Will you look for more positive feedback on that skill on your next essay/assignment?

Date:

What skill do you need to develop?

What resources could you use to help you (e.g. books websites, workshops)?

Who could you talk to for advice on how to improve this skill?

Target	What actions will you take to achieve this target?	How will you know you have achieved the target?

SYNTHESISING MULTIPLE FEEDBACK EVENTS

Synthesising multiple feedback events: Description of the resources

Below is a list of the resources that are available for you to use with a brief description of their purpose so that you can choose what you would like to use with your students so that it is most relevant to your subject. The activities are best used as part of DIRT (Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time) after students have received feedback from the teacher.

The resources in this section are focused on synthesising feedback from multiple assessments.

Reflecting on Feedback over a Term/Topic/Unit *(pages 36 and 37 of this document)***:** This resource is most useful being completed at the end of a Term/Topic/Unit as it encourages students to consider what they can learn from the feedback they have received over this period of time.

Synthesising Feedback *(page 38 of this document)***:** This resource is most useful if you want students to look for the common features of the feedback they have received on several different pieces of work.

Reflecting on Progress and the Use of Feedback over a Term/Topic/Unit *(page 39 of this document)***:** This resource is most useful if completed at the end of a Term/Topic/Unit as it is designed to support students to look back at what they have done to use feedback and to see what the impact of this has been.

Reflecting on Feedback over a Term/Topic/Unit

Use this sheet to consider the key messages across the feedback you have received this term/topic/unit.

Academic year (L6/U6):

Term/Topic/Unit:

Looking back over the feedback you have received this term/topic/unit, what skills have you shown improvement in?

How have you used your feedback to help you develop these skills?

Looking back over the feedback you have received this term/topic/unit, what does your feedback tell you that you still need to improve on?

How can you use your feedback to help you make these developments?

What do you most want to improve on next term/topic/unit? How are you going to achieve this?

How well have you completed the action plan you produced after each piece of work? Are there any outstanding actions you need to complete?

Synthesising Feedback

Use this sheet to pull together the information from your feedback over different pieces of work. For each piece of feedback you receive, extract the three most important things you think the feedback says about what you are doing well, and the three most important things you think the feedback says about what you need to do to improve. Are there any common messages coming from different pieces of feedback?

Academic Year (L6/U6):

Term/Topic/Unit:

Essay/Assignment	What have I done well?	What do I need to improve?

Reflecting on Progress and the Use of Feedback over a Term/Topic/Unit

Use this sheet to record the actions you took to implement your feedback and the effect of these actions over a term/topic/unit.

Date:

What action did you take to implement a piece of feedback?

What was the outcome of this action? How has it enabled you to develop/improve?

What was difficult about doing this? Why?

Useful Resources

Burke, D. (2009). Strategies for using feedback students bring to higher education. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 34*, 41-50.

Carless, D., Salter, D., Yang, M., & Lam, J. (2011). Developing sustainable feedback practices. *Studies in Higher Education, 36*, 395-407.

Nash, R.A., Winstone, N.E., Gregory, S.E.A., & Papps, E. (in press). A memory advantage for past-oriented over future-oriented performance feedback. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition.*

Nash, R.A., & Winstone, N.E. (2017). Responsibility sharing in the giving and receiving of assessment feedback. *Frontiers in Psychology, 8,* 1519. https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01519/full

Nash, R.A., & Winstone, N.E. (2017). Why even the best feedback can bring out the worst in us. *BBC Future.* http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20170308-why-even-the-best-feedback-can-bring-out-the-worst-in-us

Nash, R.A., & Winstone, N.E. (2016). Is your feedback carefully used, or barely perused? *Learning Scientists blog.* http://www.learningscientists.org/blog/2016/9/27-1

Nash, R. A., & Winstone, N. E. (2018). When feedback is forgettable. *Learning Scientists blog.* *http://www.learningscientists.org/blog/2018/3/14-1*

Sutton, P. (2012). Conceptualizing feedback literacy: Knowing, being, and acting. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International, 49*(1), 31-40.

Winstone, N.E., Nash, R.A., Menezes, R., & Rowntree, J. (2016). What do students want most from feedback information? Distinguishing necessities from luxuries using a budgeting methodology. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education, 41*(8), 1237-1253. http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02602938.2015.1075956

Winstone, N.E., Nash, R.A., Rowntree, J., & Parker, M. (2017). "It'd be useful, but I wouldn't use it". Barriers to University students' feedback seeking and recipience. *Studies in Higher Education, 42*(11), 2026-2041. http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03075079.2015.1130032?src=recsys

Winstone, N.E., Nash, R.A., Parker, M., & Rowntree, J. (2017). Supporting learners' engagement with feedback: A systematic review and a taxonomy of recipience processes. *Educational Psychologist, 52*(1), 17-37. http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00461520.2016.1207538

Winstone, N.E., & Nash, R.A. (2016). Route mastery: can we turn student feedback into a two-way street? *Times Higher Education, 2275,* 26-27. https://www.timeshighereducation.com/comment/can-student-feedback-become-a-two-way-street

Winstone, N. E., & Nash, R. A. (2016). *The Developing Engagement with Feedback Toolkit.* York, UK: Higher Education Academy. http://tinyurl.com/hea-deft