

# Assessment for Learning: Feed forward with feedback

## Strategies to increase efficiency

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# From the literature



- Strong evidence to suggest students don't always read feedback – it's the grade they want (Duncan, 2007; Garcia-Sanpedro, 2012).
- Students view feedback as one-off and linear rather than engagement for future learning (Hine & Northeast, 2016).
- In an online environment, feedback/feed forward in unit outlines and announcements can be ignored (Baker & Zuvela, 2012).
- **Strong evidence to support feeding forward through purposeful assessment patterns: move away from high stakes final assessment to more even distribution of workload (i.e., early low stakes linked to at least one of 2 medium stakes assessments)** (Russell, 2010).

# Assessment for learning

- The ‘teaching moment’ – optimal receptivity and individualised instruction using feedback.
- Constructive alignment of teaching, learning, and assessment is critical.
- But – students need to know that they *can* learn from feedback, and *how* they can learn from feedback.
- What are you doing to help students read and learn from the feedback you provide?**

# Making feedback explicit



## Interact2 announcement:

Grades for your first assignment will be released today.

**Want to do better next time?** Read, understand, and address the feedback from your marker. The comments written on your paper are an individualised learning opportunity for you. Take advantage of them to improve your knowledge and skills. If you aren't clear what they mean and what you should do next, make an appointment (email, Skype, face-to-face) with an ALLaN Adviser at <http://student.csu.edu.au/study/ALLaN>.

## I2 assignment feedback discussion forum:

Set up a forum monitored by the academic and an ALLaN Adviser and dedicated to questions and information clarifying feedback suggestions.

# Making feedback explicit



The codes below relate to comments **in the margins** of your essay. If I have highlighted one of them on the front page, it means that it is an issue of particular relevance to your writing.

AGR	You need to make an agreement of number or time.
ARG	There is a problem with the argument.
AMB	The sentence is ambiguous.
EG?	Give an example to support claim made.
LW	Long winded. Write shorter clearer sentences.
N/S	This is not a sentence.
RTP	Material in the paragraph is not related to the topic sentence.
STR	The essay structure is unclear.

*Adapted from a template by Dr John O'Carroll*

# Making feedback explicit



If it is possible, comment on the improvement you can see in an individual student's work from one assignment to the next – they appreciate it!

# Making feedback easy



## Use a feedback comments bank:

- ELLaN Policy @ CSU Interact2 Org site
- Norfolk – now includes a language and literacy comments bank
- Build your own assignment-specific comments bank
- Collaborate/share to build a discipline-specific comments bank

# Making feedback easy



## Use the world's simplest feedback grid:

### Feedback on language, literacy, and numeracy in written assessments

Meaning is conveyed clearly, accurately, and unambiguously; literacy and numeracy standards for this task are met.

#### The language and literacy areas you need to work on to ensure academic and professional success are:

Purpose/focus	<input type="checkbox"/>	Integrating research	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Text structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	Referencing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grammar	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paragraph structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	Punctuation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Proofreading and editing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sentence structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spelling	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Numeracy (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>				

If one or more of these boxes are checked, please book an appointment with an ALLaN Adviser to develop relevant skills or access other ALLaN services at <http://student.csu.edu.au/study/skills>

# Making feedback easy

## ELLaN Interact2 Organisation site resources:

- Feedback on language, literacy, and numeracy
- Feedback to support English language and literacy development
- Feedback comments bank
- Literacy diagnosis criteria checklist
- Literacy self-evaluation
- Literacy peer evaluation
- Language, literacy, and numeracy diagnostic criteria for HDR candidates
- Suggested wording for academic writing and referencing criteria for inclusion in rubrics

# Making feedback relevant



## One model – PHC100:

Subject co-ordinator Dr Ann Lazarsfeld-Jensen, School of Biomedical Sciences

Feed-forward assessment task

Assignment 1

- Essay
- Explicit instruction on language and literacy features
- Explicit and constructive feedback on language and literacy features
- Models of successful essays provided to contextualise feedback

Assignment 2

- Include a 100 word paragraph reflecting on how they had used feedback from the first assignment to improve the second

# Making feedback relevant



## Discussion forum:

If you include discussion forums as learning tasks (graded or not) in your subject, include one topic entitled 'Feedback' with questions like:

- What was the most useful/interesting/surprising/instructive/positive piece of feedback you received on your first assignment?
- How have you used the feedback you received on your first assignment?
- What action/s have you taken as a result of the feedback you received on your first assignment?
- Do you think/did you perform better in the second assignment because of feedback you received from the first? Explain.

Even if participation in the forum isn't mandatory, its existence and title will be instructive to any student who wanders through – if only by identifying feedback as a commodity worth talking about.

# Making feedback relevant



## Rubrics for evaluation, peer evaluation, and self-evaluation:

- Effective tool for feeding forward to students because you have their attention.
- Explain performance expectations clearly, specifically, and instructively.
- The test of a good rubric is whether students are able to grade their own or a peer's work prior to submission using only the rubric.
- Encourage self-evaluation – with a dedicated announcement, discussion forum, or tutorial activity.
- Require students to submit a self-evaluation along with their paper, and an indication of what is preventing them from doing better – this provides an opportunity for reflection and individualised support through responses that clarify understandings.
- If assignment topics are individualised, create a tutorial activity based around peer feedback using the rubrics. This serves to focus attention on the rubric and possible strategies for improvement, while broadening exposure to content.

# Making feedback relevant



## Performance descriptors for language (example)

Fail standard: Fails to meet criteria for a pass.

Pass standard: The text contains frequent errors in spelling, grammar, word choice, and structure, lacks clarity, and is not concise, but the meaning is apparent to the reader with some effort.

Credit standard: The text contains some errors in spelling, grammar, word choice, and structure, lacks clarity occasionally, and may not be concise, but the meaning is apparent to the reader with little effort.

Distinction standard: Language features and structures are used to convey meaning effectively, clearly, unambiguously, and in a tone appropriate to the audience and purpose with few spelling, grammatical, or punctuation errors.

High Distinction standard: Language features and structures are used to convey meaning effectively, clearly, concisely, unambiguously, and in a tone appropriate to the audience and purpose with no spelling, grammatical, or punctuation errors.

## **Assessment for learning – a plan**

- Develop a shared ‘language’ of feedback and literacy
- Provide explicit instruction on the form and use of feedback
- Construct instructive marking criteria
- Provide effective, constructive feedback
- Allow opportunities for students to recycle this knowledge in subsequent assessments and/or subjects

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