

Students' expectations of examination feedback

Centre for Education – 'Examining our feedback practices'



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Structure of today's session

Introduction
to project

Positives and
negatives of
exams

Student
perspectives
on exam
feedback

Practices
at Cardiff
University

Quick discussion

- Did you have exams as part of your academic studies?
- Did you get feedback on your examinations?
- What are the positives and negatives of examinations as a form of assessment?



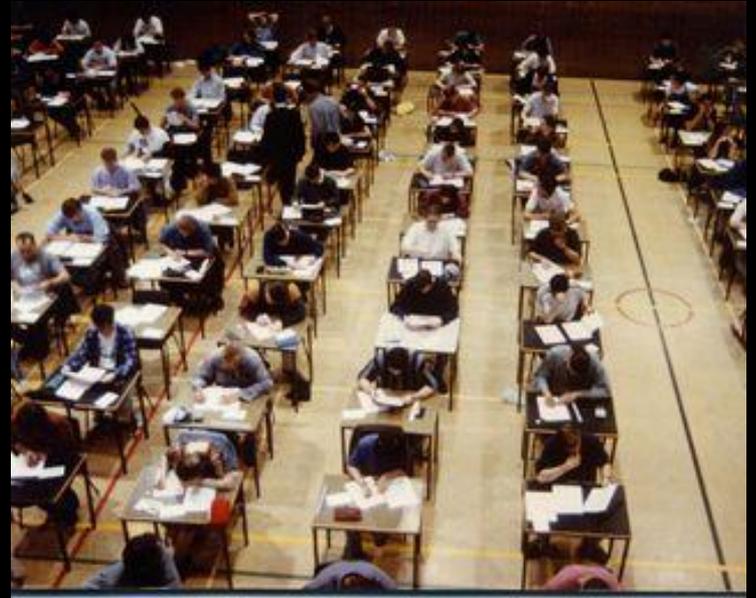
'Examining our feedback practices' project

- Centre for Education Innovation
- Education Innovation Fund
- Seedcorn project

- Focused on 'formal', scheduled examinations

- Improve student satisfaction with feedback on examinations

- Student engagement, multiple schools



Examinations as an assessment method - positives

- Promotes coverage of curriculum – being ‘ready for anything’
- Useful for foundational learning – core knowledge
- Independence – just you!
- Reduced risk of plagiarism
- Quicker to mark
- Some students perform well in exams



Examinations as a form for assessment - negatives

- Student anxiety and stress
- Timetabling – late and ‘congested’
- Resources not at hand – may not be authentic
- Hand writing and legibility
- Limited feedback and short turnaround times
- Scripts and feedback not easy to access or administer

A purple poster for a 'HealthyU' stall. The text on the poster includes: 'Anxious about exams? Come along to our HealthyU stall Hallward Library, University Park Tuesday 30 April, 11 am-2pm'. The University of Nottingham logo is in the top right, with 'UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA' below it. The main graphic is three overlapping hearts: a teal one on the left, a purple one in the middle with 'HEALTHY' written across it and a white 'U' below, and a pink one at the bottom. To the right of the hearts, the text reads: 'Find out how to deal with exam stress and share your 5-a-day — the five things you do to look after your mental health. For more information about dealing with exam stress visit nottingham.ac.uk/counselling'. At the bottom right is the URL nottingham.ac.uk/healthyu.



Examination feedback – a student perspective

Access to examination scripts

- Student confusion about access to examination scripts
- 'you have to fail to get access to your examination script!'
- Inability to recall what was written in exam
- Importance of seeing examination answers to understand feedback
- Expectations conditioned by prior experience (e.g. A Levels)

language awareness may be defined as the explicit knowledge, understanding and attitude pertaining to or of a particular language or a number of languages. In Leo van Lier's statement, he conveys that there needs to be a clear understanding of a language and how the language is supposed to be used by others. Van Lier critiques that it is important to understand language as a large mechanism for the effectiveness in the classroom and the textual material being produced. In the Caribbean, there is a tendency for people to stereotype certain languages and their importance in the formal education system, particularly the use of creole and dialects. This awareness van Lier inhibits in his statement is important at every level of the education system, including the stakeholder involved in implementing a policy for language learning and language awareness. In Caribbean classroom, the teachers' medium of instruction is English even though most students speak some other creole or dialect.

Generic or cohort examination feedback

- Generic examination feedback most useful for benchmarking
- ‘better than nothing’
- A ‘half-measure’
- ‘impersonal’
- Difficult to relate to a student’s own work
- Is it ‘feedback’?
- Does it help me improve?
- It’s not ‘helpful comments on my work’



GETTING FEEDBACK..?

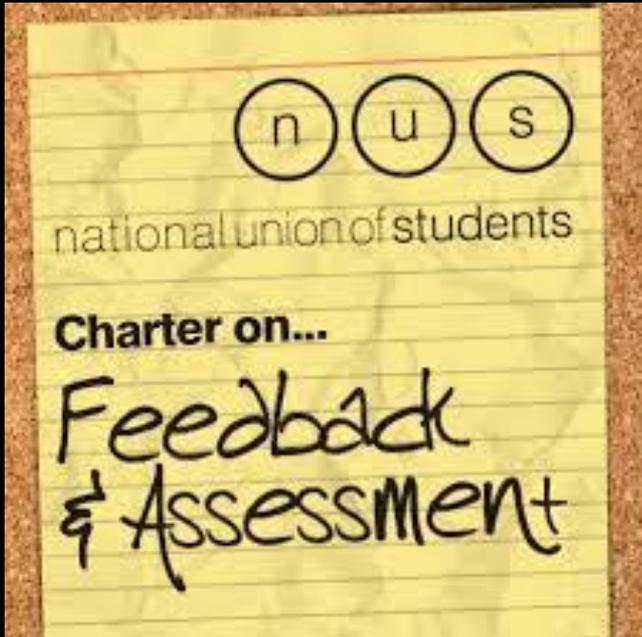
Use our tips to help improve your academic performance

Search '**getting feedback**' on the student intranet

College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences



Individual examination feedback



'Why no individual feedback on examinations?'

Individual examination feedback in writing as 'gold standard'

Variable practice within schools

Assessment and feedback benchmarking tool **nus**
national union of students

Principle	First steps	Developing	Developed	Refining	Outstanding practice
1 Diverse forms of assessment designed to assess a range of skills and knowledge	There is clear variety in the forms of assessment used on each programme. Assessment is well aligned to learning objectives and aims through knowledge based, summative assessments that require different skills than those developed during the course.	Assessment methods have been planned to have the mode of assessment & chosen to best demonstrate the learning outcomes of the course. Students are adequately prepared for summative assessments with the skills they learn on the course.	Assessment methods are chosen through a clear link to the learning objectives of the course. Several different types of assessment are used throughout the course, e.g. short written essay, poster presentation, group presentation, reflective log.	Programme or planned so that the different forms of assessment will cover areas that are covered in the wider work, e.g. by employers. Students have some choice in the assessment methods they are offered.	Students are encouraged and given the tools and support to design their assessment methods in partnership with academic staff. Programmes are planned intentionally to assess a broad range of skills and knowledge through a variety of forms of assessment. Students are able to articulate the skills they have developed through the varied forms of assessment on their programmes.
2 Assessment criteria	Assessment criteria are explicit, clear and consistent, and often contractual. They are kept to hand and students are not directed to them.	Assessment criteria are mostly clear and detailed enough to be of use, but students may not know about them or use them.	Assessment criteria are clear and easy to understand, and students are aware of when to find them. They are clearly linked to the learning outcomes of the course.	Assessment criteria are linked to learning outcomes and referred to throughout the course. Students are encouraged to understand what is expected of them in order to achieve each grade.	Assessment criteria are clear, easily accessible and linked to learning outcomes. Students fully understand and are supported to use them. They are designed in partnership with students to ensure accessibility.
3 Submission processes	Submission procedures are relatively complex and inconsistent, usually involving a lot of time and effort to return paper copies to the institution. There is no provision for students to submit their work in any other way, even if they are on a part-time.	Submission procedures are relatively simple, although might require paper-based, hard-copy submission that requires a process for returning or which is not available for all students. There are some access issues that haven't been dealt with yet.	Submission is largely electronic, although some departments may do things differently. Feedback is, where possible, provided online. There is provision for year-round students to submit electronically in all departments.	Submission is electronic where possible, and feedback is provided online. Submission processes are the same across all departments.	Submission is simple and flexible, through an online system that confirms receipt, and allows online grades and feedback. Accessibility for students is the paramount concern. Processes are reviewed frequently in partnership with students.



national union of students

Charter on...

Feedback & Assessment

3. Receiving feedback should not be exclusive to certain forms of assessment

Traditionally, summative feedback is usually only given on written essays and some forms of practical work. But students need feedback on all forms of assessment they come across in order to develop their learning. In the recent NUS/HSBC Student Experience Report, 90 per cent of students say they would like feedback on exams, compared to only 12 per cent who currently receive written comments and 9 per cent who receive verbal feedback. Most courses rely on exams as the summative assessment – it is therefore important that students receive feedback on these, especially in exams prior to finals.

Would you like to receive feedback on your exams?



Assessment and feedback benchmarking tool

Developed

Feedback quality varies across departments, although there is an institutional policy or guidance in place that is generally adhered to. Feedback, although not detailed, clearly identifies areas for improvement. There are mechanisms in place for feedback to be given on exams, although this may be generic or group feedback.

Refining

Individual feedback is provided on all forms of assessment, including exams. Feedback is detailed enough to clearly identify areas for improvement and examples of good practice. There are opportunities to discuss the feedback individually with a tutor, although this may not be the marker.

Outstanding practice: Partnership

Detailed, constructive feedback is provided on all forms of assessment, including exams. The opportunities to receive feedback are clearly explained to students at the start of the course, and students can choose the format in which they would like to receive feedback. There are opportunities to discuss the feedback individually with the marker.

Additional feedback and clarification

- One-to-one discussion
- Students note inconsistent practices
- Not a replacement for written feedback – difficult to recall
- ‘Guilty’ asking for support
- Advice when done better or worse than expected
- Feedback from assessor – not personal tutor



Timely examination feedback

- Four week feedback turnaround
- Some students' expectations of quicker feedback
- Others happy to wait until after examination boards
- Feedback released at same time as grades
- Importance of knowing when examination feedback will be available



Delivering feedback

- Access to annotated script
- Access to examination feedback over the summer period
- Typewritten feedback for legibility and ability to change format
- Examination feedback systems lagging behind coursework feedback systems



The screenshot displays the Turnitin GradeMark interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs for 'Originality', 'GradeMark', and 'PeerMark'. The main header area includes 'Welcome to GradeMark' by 'GRADEMARK DEMO USER', the Turnitin logo, a '10%' similarity score, and a '80' score out of 100. The central content area features a 'Welcome to GradeMark' message with the Turnitin logo and an image of a laptop and a red coffee cup. Below the image, text reads: 'This interactive tutorial lets you experience the benefits of marking and grading a written assignment online:'. On the right side, there is a sidebar titled 'Commonly Used' with a search bar for 'QuickMark templates'. Below the search bar, there is a 'Comment' button and a list of feedback comments: 'Awk', 'C/S', 'Citation Needed', 'Commonly Confused', 'Del.', 'Improper Citation', 'Insert', 'Missing "', 'P/V', 'Run-on', 'Sp', 'Support', 'Vague', 'WC', and 'Weak Transition'.



Practices across Cardiff University

- Individual typewritten examination feedback – SHARE
- Students view examination scripts with PS staff , personal tutor or module leader– WELSH, GEOPL, JOMECE, CHEMY
- Generic or cohort feedback, with or without access to examination scripts – LAWPL, JOMECE, OPTOM
- Students who fail are given access to script – LAWPL, ENGIN, COMSC
- Video feedback on examinations - DENTL



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