How effective is your feedback?

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STAGES 4-5
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During this session we will

• engage with findings about best practice in providing feedback to guide student learning
• identify the strengths and weaknesses of different feedback strategies
• apply a form of feedback to student work samples

After this session we hope you will

• develop your own effective feedback strategies and frameworks to guide your students’ learning
What is feedback?

Feedback

- is an essential part of the learning process
- is any form of teacher response to student performance
- presents students with the means, motive and opportunity to improve and self-regulate their learning
- should help students ‘close the gap’ between where they are and where they need to be in relation to their learning

Feedback should not be confused with

- positive reinforcement
- self-esteem boosting
- praise or punishment
In your table groups, list the forms of feedback you give in a typical week in your various interactions with students.
Why is feedback important?

• Meta-analyses of research on student achievement shows that
  ‘feedback is at or near the top of those treatments which have the greatest effect on student learning’.
Relationship between teaching, assessment and feedback

What’s the learning goal?
1. Provide a clear statement of the learning target
2. Show and discuss examples of strong and weak work

Where is the student in relation to the learning goal?
3. Offer regular descriptive feedback
4. Teach students to self-assess and set goals

What does the student have to do to reach learning goal?
5. Design focused lessons
6. Teach students focused revision
7. Engage students in self-reflection on their learning
Relationship between assessment and feedback

Criteria for assessing student work need to be

- clear
- understood by the student
- used to frame teacher’s personalised feedback

Similarly, frameworks for providing feedback should be

- clear
- understood by the student
- useful for guiding learner improvement and self-evaluation
What does research suggest about feedback?

• See Handout 1 of recent research on the relationship between feedback and learning.

• Feedback is important in response to improving student performance in all types of learning activities – i.e. not just formal assessment tasks.
To be effective, feedback needs to be

- frequent / prompt
- constructive
- instructive
- focused
- practical
- understood

- sensitive to the learner(s)
- based on a professional assessment of what the student can do and is capable of achieving
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- sensitive to the learner(s)
Why is this poor feedback? Other examples you have seen?

Weak punctuation
Sloppy spelling
You can do better
Satisfactory work
Have you been paying attention in class?
A great piece of work
More concentration needed
Is this the best you can do?
You are so clever, well done!
Some good ideas – but some careless ones too
Dylan Wiliam on feedback and learning

Dylan Wiliam refers to two types of feedback:
‘ego involving’ and ‘task involving’.

US research uses different terms for the same types:
   Evaluative feedback (ego involving)
   Descriptive feedback (task involving)

Dylan Wiliam concludes:
* Ego involving feedback is rarely effective
  in improving student learning.
* Good feedback causes thinking.
## Evaluative vs Descriptive Feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluative [‘ego-involving’]</th>
<th>Descriptive [‘task involving’]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generally used in summative assessment</td>
<td>Generally used in formative assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typically uses a single grade or mark</td>
<td>Describes features of student work or performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides no information about specific aspects of student work</td>
<td>Identifies strengths and gives information on how to improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May compare students to each other</td>
<td>Relates directly to learning goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May stifle learning – lack of understanding of how to improve</td>
<td>Promotes learning by increasing motivation and self-efficacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good work!</td>
<td>Good work: Your use of historical terms and concepts is much better than in your draft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is a weak response.</td>
<td>This is a weak response. You have not responded directly to the question and you have not provided evidence for the statements you make.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examples of descriptive feedback

• You have used the key historical terms well and this gives your response an air of authority. Your spelling of the key terms is much better than in your previous essay. Only three have been spelt incorrectly this time. See if you can find them.

• Your map of the Viking homelands is very well done with accurate labelling and a great key. In your written response you needed to explain in more detail how the geographic features you have shown so clearly in your map helped shape Viking society. Try listing the main geographic features from your map, then writing a sentence for each one.

• The structure of your response shows that you have looked at both sides of this discussion. Do you think you have provided enough evidence to support your conclusion? Use two colours to highlight your evidence for both sides and you will see what I mean.
Self regulation (FR)
Encourages learner to self-evaluate, to develop self-beliefs

Process (FP)
Focus on the learning process used to complete the task

Task (FT)
Focus on information, what’s correct or incorrect

Self as a person (FS)
Praise [preferably related to effort in completing the task]

Student understanding of feedback

Constructing feedback
• Constructing attainment: explicit discussion of what the task expects of the learner
• Constructing the way forward: negotiating ways improvements might be carried out

Descriptive feedback
• Specifying attainment: identifying what’s been done well – or otherwise, in relation to task criteria
• Specifying improvement: suggesting better ways of doing an aspect of the task

Evaluative feedback
• Rewarding, punishing } more likely to reflect behaviour, personality, rather than task performance
• Approving, disapproving } presentation etc, rather than task criteria
Feedback frameworks

Feedback to identify:
• What can I do?
• What can’t I do?
• How can I do better?

Feedback aimed at:
• Where am I going?
• How am I going?
• Where to next?

Do you use a feedback framework?
Do you include students in your feedback framework?
Your task: Provide descriptive feedback on two work samples

Working in pairs or threes, provide descriptive feedback for each work sample.

• Instructions for task
  This formative task asked students in a mixed ability Year 7 class to
  - use a discussion format to answer the question
  - refer to information learnt in class
  - use relevant historical terms and concepts

• Relevant outcomes
  Uses a range of historical terms and concepts when communicating an understanding of the past (HT4.9)
  Selects and uses appropriate written form to communicate about the past (HT4.10)
In conclusion, effective feedback practice

• helps clarify what good performance is
• delivers quality information to students about their learning
• facilitates the development of self-evaluation in learners
• encourages teacher and peer dialogue about learning
• encourages positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem
• provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance
• provides information to teachers that can be used to help shape their teaching
Back at school . . .

• Do your current processes reflect best practice in assessment?
• Do you and your colleagues use a feedback framework?
• Do your students understand the feedback you provide? How do you know?
• Do your students use your feedback to improve their learning?

Would you like support to improve assessment practices at your school? Session 2 of this course may be for you!