

# Improving Students' Understanding of Feedback:

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- ● ● | Feedback.....
- ● ● | Misunderstood or just not recognised?

*Alternative title.....?*





# Aims of Workshop

- Explore students' views and perceptions of received feedback
- Considered methods to enhance understanding, recognition and usage of feedback
- Shared good practice and successes

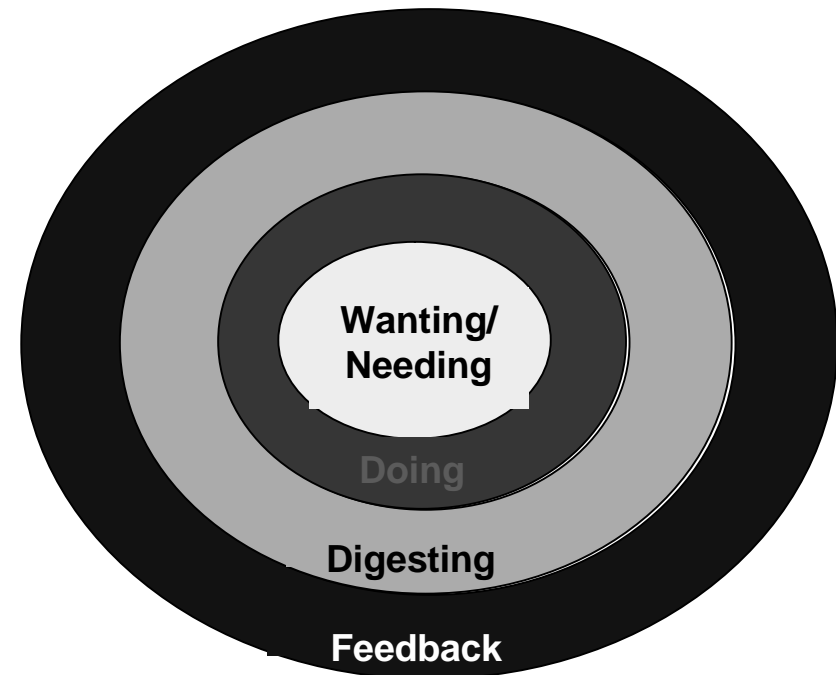




# Successful learning....



## Ripple on a Pond



*Phil Race:* Using feedback  
to help students learn



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# What is feedback?

- Agreed importance to learning

*“feedback is crucial in learning situations.....”*

*“90% of attending surgeons reported they gave feedback successfully, only 17% of residents agreed with this assertion”*



Sender-Lieberman et al. Med Teacher 2005



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# National Student Survey

- All final year students at UK HE institutions
- Rate 1-5 agreement with 22 statements about HE experience
  - *The teaching on my course*
  - *Assessment and Feedback*
  - *Organisation and management*
  - *Learning Resources*
  - *Personal Development*
  - *Overall satisfaction*



# National Student Survey: “assessment and feedback” questions

- *The criteria used in marking have been clear in advance*
- Feedback assignments and marking have been fair
- *Feedback on my work has been prompt*
- I have received detailed comments on my work
- *Feedback on my work has helped me clarify things I did not understand*





# Assessment and Feedback category

Nationally the “lowest” rated category

- Rating agreement at level 4/5

- 62% across all UK universities

- 19-56% Medicine



- ● ● | Feedback Group with students – (2006/7)

- Nominated representatives across all student years
- Focus group technique to explore understanding amongst student body
- Working group to consider where to go to from here
  
- Feedback study 2007/8 with focus groups from each year





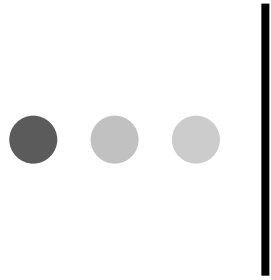
What are your students' experiences or views on the feedback they get?

- *What sort of responses have you had / do you think you might have from surveying a cohort of your students?*
- *What would they raise?*

*Discuss*

*Come back with a few examples*





What are your students' experiences or views on the feedback they get?





# Conceptual formulation of what feedback is...

- Information
  - *“Feedback is information on progress of teaching and learning provided through various methods of assessment”*
- Reaction
  - *“Direct response by an individual or group to another person’s behaviour..”*
- Cycle
  - *“Error correcting information returned to control centre .... Enabling it to offset deviations in its course towards a particular goal”*





But is that what students / learners think “feedback” is?





# Feedback project 2007/8

- Clarify students' understanding of purpose of feedback, and its' role in their learning
- Influences and progression in understanding
- Evaluate whether an electronic resource is helpful in improving this
- increase staff awareness of good feedback practice





# 2007/8 Feedback Study

Beginning of academic year

- Focus groups
  - *Each year*
  - *Understanding of feedback*
  - *Views on how best to launch the resource*
- Questionnaire to whole school
  - *Understanding of feedback*
- Staff liaison

Launch of electronic resource

End of academic year

- Focus groups
- Questionnaire to whole school





# Focus groups and questionnaire – key findings

## Misunderstandings

- Difference between *feedback* on the course cf *feedback* on their work back to students

## Recognising when they get it

- Written feedback
- if not individual / one-to-one / who gives it
  
- Why feedback not instantaneous
- When / how / why they get feedback
- How to get more or judge if they need more



● ● ● | What can we do to improve students' understanding of the feedback they do get?

*Discuss*

*Ideas or examples of good practice /  
innovations you have tried*



● ● ● | So – moving forward from  
this.....





# Key Issues – for staff / teachers

- That the students actually do get feedback
- timely feedback
- Quality of feedback
  - SMART
  - Understandable to students



# Key aspects of “good and effective” feedback from literature

- Students and staff must have a *clear and mutual understanding* of the desired *learning outcomes* of a learning activity
- Feedback is provided in a *timely* fashion, and in *sufficient detail*. It should focus on the *performance* of the student in achieving the desired outcomes





## Key aspects of “good and effective” feedback from literature (2)

- Feedback is *recognised* as being given
- Feedback is attended to and *understood*
- Feedback is *acted upon*





# So what did we do differently....

## Development of “Feedback” resource

### ○ Key elements

- Information about what is purpose of feedback
- When and how the students get feedback
- What to do with it
- How to judge if they need more, and how to get it





# What's on the site?

<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/medicine/mbchb/feedback/>

- principles of good feedback
  - how to get the most out of feedback.
- Every course mapped
  - where to get feedback, in relation to specific learning outcomes for that ICU.
  - Links to the full learning outcomes for each ICU.
- Links to explain how to go about
  - obtaining
  - using different types of feedback.



# School of Medicine

## FACULTY OF MEDICINE AND HEALTH

[home](#) | [mbchb](#) | [feedback](#)

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### Feedback in the MBChB

[Home](#)

[Principles of good feedback](#)

[When can I expect feedback?](#)

[Opportunities for feedback](#)

[How to get and use feedback](#)

[Learning outcomes](#)

### Feedback resources for students and staff

[Using feedback to help students to learn \(pdf\)](#)

[Making feedback work \(doc\)](#)

[24 hour feedback \(doc\)](#)

[Student feedback reflection form \(doc\)](#)

## Feedback in the MBChB

This site has been designed to highlight to students and staff the time on the MBChB course, and the opportunities students have to elicit feedback given to them. The intention is that by highlighting when feedback is given and therefore take action on it.

Focus groups were held within each student year by an independent staff member to gather their reflections after meeting a group...

"The last group I met was Year 5 students who had a different perspective on the feedback they had received, how they responded to it and its value. They were saying that the only feedback they received was from their clinical supervisors. This included written feedback from OSCEs and...



# Key points

- Staff liaison to ensure
  - Review of resource and contents for their ICU
  - Publicise and direct students to it at appropriate times eg after assessment results
  - Staff able to access the resources





# What else can you do?

- Terminology
  - *“Feedback” vs “course evaluation”*
- Raise profile
  - *Clear identification*
  - *Reflective practice*
- Frequent reminders

*Does it improve learning?*





# Outcome???

- Improved student understanding of role of feedback in their learning
- *Use and recognition of wider range of resources for feedback*
- Improved staff awareness of role of feedback / mechanisms / highlighting for students
- *Improved NSS scores*





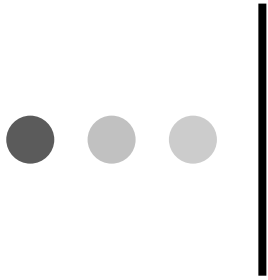
# Useful general resources re Feedback

- Principles of Good Feedback
  - *Gibbs & Simpson 2004. Does your assessment support your students' learning. J Teaching Learning in Higher Education*
- Phil Race – website + literature
  - *www.Phil-Race.com*
- Engaging Students with Assessment Feedback: what works
  - *FDTL5 project – literature review, HEA website*
- NSS Institutional Case Studies
  - *Higher Education Academy website*  
<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/>
- Leeds Feedback resource  
<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/medicine/mbchb/feedback>



● ● ● | Feedback?    Feed forward?  
      ....or just *feed me!!*







# Does Feedback actually work?

## Literature limited

- Factual recall not enhanced
- Limited action by students
- written comments
  - Like to read if grade unexpected
- Our experience.....



Weaver 2006, Brown 1997, Race 2001, Wojtaas 1998, Fritz 2000



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# Characteristics of “feedback”

## 1. Content

- *Cognitive or evaluative*
- *Standard / results / effects*
- *Behaviour*
- *Feedback recipient*

## 2. Aim

- *Motivational, improvement*
- *Promote reflection*





3. Feedback recipient

4. Form

- *Oral, written, specific, non-evaluative*

5. Preparation

- *Collecting results, observing subject*

6. Source

- *Internal feedback (from the recipient)*
- *External (task results, or observer)*





7. Feedback provider

8. Communication conditions

- *Timeliness, directness*

9. Contextual factors

- *Place where feedback given*





# Input and output

- Practice of academics in giving feedback
  - Social practice demanding attention to
    - Text
    - Conditions of production, distribution and reception
    - practicality
  
- What student recipients do with it!
  - Grades vs written feedback
  - Different message taken than intended by tutor
  - Existing levels of self- esteem



Mutch 2003 Active Learning in Higher Education: *Exploring the practice of feedback to students*

Young 2000 J Further & Higher Ed. *"I might as well give up"*



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# “Advice” literature on feedback

- Tends to focus on poor practice to make case for improvement
- Advice focus
  - Improvements in individual practice
  - Programme design
    - Guidance to students
    - Clarity of criteria





# Feedback vs Feed forward...

- Reason for ignoring feedback
  - Only want grades
  - Only read if grade not expected
  - Lack of recognition of value
  - Lack of recognition of implications for future work

Duncan 2007 *Feed – forward: improving students' use of tutors' comments. Ass Eval HE*





# Action research.....

- Staff analysed students' feedback histories
  - Collated
  - Synthesised
  - Formulated individual learning plan for next assignment
- Similar findings
- Low uptake of additional support, minimal outcome benefits

