

# Assessment Case Study

**Feedback as a dialogue: Implementing a tool to encourage student reflection and feedforward**

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**Course:** MSc Forensic Psychology

**Student Level:** Postgraduate (Level 7)



## AN EXAMPLE OF ASSESSMENT THAT INVOLVES...

- Feedforward feedback
- Ongoing/dialogic feedback
- Developing assessment literacy

## AIMS

The aim of this intervention was to enable students to play an **active role** in the feedback process. Rather than merely acting as “passive” recipients of feedback, as per most traditional approaches, the intention was for students to **reflect on** their previous feedback and how they have used it. Students would also be encouraged to consider what could be improved in **future work (“feedforward”)**, and to **evaluate their performance** against the assessment criteria.

The imperative to take a **more dialogic approach to feedback** was identified following conversations with student representatives, as well as data from the PTES (Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey). Students highlighted their wishes for feedback to address **specific aspects** of their work, as well as **continuity** as they gained feedback from various academics during the course of their studies.

## ACTIONS

Following discussions with students and colleagues, the lecturer developed a **feedforward cover sheet**, which is reproduced on the next page. The cover sheet contains a series of prompt questions to enable students to reflect and evaluate in line with the aims of the intervention.

The feedforward sheet was **initially trialled** with students on the MSc course (around 80 students). The course team introduced the sheet to students during the course induction, so that they were all familiar with it and understood its purpose (see also “Message to Peers”).

It was explained that use of the sheet was **recommended, but not obligatory**. Most students opted to use the sheet; however, not all of them did so. Staff encouraged students to write as much as they wanted to on the form— some students wrote a great deal, but others very little. Students were also encouraged to complete the sheet well in advance of submitting so that they could **make changes to their work** having evaluated their performance against the assessment criteria.

## IMPACT

Use of the feedforward sheet gained some **positive feedback from students** (see below). It also resulted in **fewer marking queries**— having undertaken the exercises within the sheet, students had a greater understanding of the assessment requirements.

## SCALABILITY

This approach is certainly scalable, as shown by its subsequent roll out from the initial MSc course to the BSc Psychology, which has over 1000 students. Colleagues within CU are considering ways to pilot this approach on a **broader scale**.

## STUDENT FEEDBACK

The feedforward sheet...

- “is good, as it makes sure that we are aware of previous errors we have made. I also think it’s beneficial when we can ask what **particular feedback** we would welcome [...] so that the feedback we are given is personal and helpful for future assignments.”
- “...forces you to **engage with your feedback** because it’s easy to stop reading after the grade”.
- “...makes me write down all my feedback [...] to remember it and to include it to the feedforward. It also serves as a **guide to let the marker know** what I have tried to work on and what I want them to specifically **look at to improve.**”

## MESSAGE TO PEERS

- Be mindful of the **limitations of the approach**: in their feedback, students also said that completing the form can feel tedious and **add to the stress** of the assignment. Some worried that it would give the marker areas to criticise. Others felt that as each assessment is different, it can be hard to know **how to apply** previous feedback to new assignments.
- The **way in which the sheet is introduced** to students is crucial. For the MSc, this was done as part of a workshop in which students reviewed assignment rubrics, and evaluated and marked (anonymised) exemplar pieces of coursework. This all helped to demystify the assessment process, and to develop students’ assessment literacy.

*The feedforward sheet is reproduced on the next page.*

**Thank you to Sarah Pancholi for gathering the student feedback.**



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### HLS - Assessment Cover Sheet

|              |                                  |
|--------------|----------------------------------|
| Student ID   | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Course       | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Module Title | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Module Code  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Wordcount    | Click or tap here to enter text. |

### Originality Statement

I declare that this is entirely my own independent work, and that all sources of information I have used to help me develop this work have been accurately cited and referenced. This work has been produced in accordance with University guidance on good / academic conduct.

### Feed Forward

Completing this document will encourage you to reflect on the feedback you have already received, how you have used it to improve your work, and consider the particular aspects of your work that you would like to focus on for further improvements. It also encourages you to evaluate your own performance against each of the assessment criteria. This self-reflection and evaluation may encourage you to make further revisions to your submission – therefore **it is recommended that you complete this form in plenty of time ahead of the submission deadline.**

NB – Write as much as you like – boxes are expandable (this does not contribute to the wordcount)

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Summary of Developmental Feedback I've had from previous assessments</b>     |  |
| Click or tap here to enter text.  |  |
| <b>Summary of how I've tried to respond to that feedback in this assignment</b> |  |
| Click or tap here to enter text.  |  |
| <b>Summary of what I would like feedback on this time</b>                       |  |
| Click or tap here to enter text.  |  |
| <b>Assessment criteria</b>  | <b>How I think I have performed against this criterion</b> |
| ML to enter information from Rubric   | Click or tap here to enter text.                           |
| ML to enter information from Rubric   | Click or tap here to enter text.                           |
| ML to enter information from Rubric   | Click or tap here to enter text.                           |
| ML to enter information from Rubric   | Click or tap here to enter text.                           |