

Formative feedback through conversations: “Now we’re talking!”

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Abstract

We have introduced a comprehensive process of verbal feedback into a core second year module to complement the written feedback we provide. We have adopted a collaborative approach where both academic and professional services colleagues have worked together to provide feedforward through conversations with students. We have learned that making scheduled appointments for feedback meetings encourages participation. This makes our practice more inclusive because it brings in those students who have no draft to discuss and who would not therefore be able to benefit from a traditional formative feedback opportunity.

Text

We have introduced a comprehensive process of verbal feedback into a core second year module to complement the written feedback we provide. In 2018-19 we increased the amount of formative feedback on the module and initially planned to introduce opportunities for emailed written feedback on the two reports before submission (Reilly, 2019). However, the offer of emailed feedback on the initial report was taken up by very few students. We immediately changed our plan and designed a timetable of face-to-face appointments for verbal feedback on the individual final reports (Espasa et al, 2018). Because the feedback was in the form of a conversation, if a student kept the appointment but had no draft final report at the meeting, we could still discuss his or her ideas or specific questions. We also used the feedback opportunity to build a key relationship outside of the department and brought an employability consultant into the module team who gave verbal feedback on mock group presentations. Benefits to participants include how we can use conversations to make the feed forward process more inclusive.

Espasa, A, Guasch, T, Mayordomo, R, Martínez-Melo, M and Carless, D (2018), A Dialogic Feedback Index measuring key aspects of feedback processes in online learning environments, *Higher Education Research & Development*, 37:3, 499-513, DOI:10.1080/07294360.2018.1430125

Reilly, D (2019), “Let’s talk”: the value of dialogic feedback, Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA), available from <https://thesedablog.wordpress.com/2019/05/22/dawnreilly1/#more-865>