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Assessment and Feedback Resource Pack

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Assessment & Feedback

LEARNING, TEACHING + TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

L TTC RESOURCE PACK

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Purpose of the Pack

The purpose of this resource pack is to provide specialized and localized information on assessment and feedback in higher education for academic staff in DIT. It is designed for staff new to teaching (experienced lecturers may find it useful too) and is intended to complement the largely-generic information delivered in workshops.

In relation to feedback, the aim of the pack is to position it as a practice that has a positive and sustained influence on learning, and as a fundamental part of curriculum design, not simply an episodic mechanism delivered by teachers to their students.

This pack is designed to be used in conjunction with a range of our selected resources on our web site www.dit.ie/l TTC

We recommend resources that we find useful ourselves and some additional reading on key aspects of both fields, and tell you why we like them.

Introduction to Assessment

Assessment is a key task of lecturers and time spent on assessment is a significant cost to Higher Education (HE) ([Nicol, 2007](#)).

Assessment determines largely what students see as being important, how they decide to allot their time, and how in general they understand the nature of their role as students ([Gibbs & Simpson, 2004](#)). Feedback has been demonstrated as having a major influence on the quality of student learning achieved (Black and Wiliam, 1998), student retention within the first year ([Yorke & Longden, 2008](#)) and the development of students as self-regulated learners ([Nicol & MacFarlane-Dick, 2006](#)).

There are three main purposes of assessment:

Assessment of Learning: used to signify whether programme learning outcomes and/or quality standards have been attained. This generally contributes to a student's grade, award or licence to practice.

Assessment for Learning: is intended to provide feedback to the student so that they can improve their work in the future and to the teacher so that they might adjust their teaching.

Assessment as Learning: is designed so students develop an understanding of their strengths and weaknesses and can develop skills as lifelong learners and self regulated learners.

By providing quick and frequent feedback and involving students in their own and other's (peer) assessment, can combine for and as learning.

Upcoming Events

- ◆ Event One
- ◆ Event Two
- ◆ Event Three

Designing Effective Assessments



Methods of assessment are determined by our beliefs about learning.
(Black & Wiliam, 1998)

It is important that assessment measures what it sets out to measure e.g. that it is a valid assessment.

Constructive Alignment of assessment: (Biggs, 1999) designs learning activities and assessment tasks with learning outcomes. This is based on the premise that students construct meaning from what they do to learn.

Fit-for-purpose assessment: (Brown, 2011) Programme assessment patterns that fail have too much summative

assessment for marks and too little assessment for or as learning (TESTA project). Programmes should balance the purposes of assessment as part of an assessment strategy. Students should be provided with an assessment map that shows how assessments are linked to modules and programme learning outcomes. This helps avoid clumping of assessments, over assessment of the same outcomes and demonstrates progress across levels of the programme.

Assessment Principles

REAP project (Nicol, 2004) 7 principles of assessment:

1. Clarify good performance
2. Facilitate the development of reflection and self-assessment in learning
3. Deliver high quality feedback to students

4. Encourage dialogue around learning
5. Encourage positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem
6. Provide opportunities to act on feedback
7. Provide information that teachers can use to help shape their teaching

“For lecturers to be able to develop new approaches to assessment, and relate them to different theories of learning, they must be able to investigate and reflect on their own classroom practices - particularly the way they question and give feedback to students.”
(Sadler, 2011)

Assessment Literacy

For students to reach their potential and develop as self-regulated learners, they need to hold a concept of quality roughly similar to that held by the teacher (Sadler, 1989) and understand the relationship between assessment and learning as well as the nature, meaning and level of assessment criteria (Price *et al.*, 2012). This is sometimes termed Assessment Literacy. Dialogue around assessment and feedback has been shown to be important in this regard for realising the importance of involving students in

dialogue to facilitate self-judgment and self-regulatory practice (Nicol, 2008, 2009). There is a need for students to actively work with assessment standards (Rust *et al.*, 2003). An example is Oxford Brookes University ‘Compact’ project between staff and students - with assessment as a joint responsibility.

Assessment and Feedback Toolkit

The RAFT project developed an online resource to support DIT staff in making informed choices in their assessment and feedback practice. 12 DIT RAFT Coordinators (3 per College) conducted a review of current assessment methods and followed up with in depth interviews. This toolkit is developed from 61 cases of real assessments developed and implemented by DIT lecturing staff.

Each section provides an overview of an assessment method, advantages and disadvantages as well as lessons learned and a contact name.

Please refer to the back page of this pack for examples from the RAFT Project.

Feedback Models

Feedback is the most powerful single influence that makes a difference to student achievement Hattie (1987). The delivery, form, and context of feedback are all important (Ellery, 2008).

There is evidence throughout the research literature that students are less satisfied with assessment and feedback than other features of their courses. Therefore we need to establish for our own practice - Is it simply a matter of finding better ways of undertaking feedback, or is the notion of feedback as it is commonly used the

real problem?

There are various models in use for provision of good feedback:

- The Feedback Sandwich: negative comments are sandwiched between two pieces of positive message (Molloy, 2010)
- RISE Feedback Model: Reflect; Inquire; Suggest; Elevate (Wray, 2014)
- Feedforward
- DIT's institute-wide recommendations about the turnaround time on students' work

Recommended Reading

Just to get you started, we have included two of the most influential articles in the field:

Boud, D. & Molloy, E. (2013). Rethinking models of feedback for learning: the challenge of design. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 38(6), 698-712. [This is useful for the overview it provides on the changing context of assessment and feedback over the past

50 years, including the origins of feedback].

Nicol, D., & Macfarlane-Dick, D. (2006). Formative assessment and self-regulated learning: a model and seven principles of good feedback practice. *Studies in Higher Education*, 31(2), 199-218. [This identifies seven principles of good feedback practice that support student self-regulation and examples of easy-to-implement feedback strategies].

Feedback Types & Tools

Peer Feedback:

Nicol, D., Thomson, A., & Breslin, C. (2013). Rethinking feedback practices in higher education: a peer review perspective. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 39(1), 102-122. [The capacity to produce quality feedback is a fundamental graduate skill; this article explores the cognitive processes that are activated when students construct peer feedback reviews].

Online Feedback:

Yuan, J., & Kim, C. (2015). Effective Feedback Design Using Free Technologies. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, 52, 408-434. [Examples of Tools are VoiceThread for a media sharing tool, a wiki for a collaborative tool, and Jing for a screencasting tool].

There are also voice-to-text tools like Dictanote (Chrome Extension) and Dragon Dictation (App) can help speed the feedback process.

Audio Tools:

Here is an example of [sharing voice feedback with students using a mobile phone](#). MS Word allows [audio comments to be embedded within a document](#). Other tools provide voice comments, such as [Kaizena](#), which allows audio comments to be embedded in a Google Doc, and [Voxer](#), which [combines a walkie-talkie with voice mail](#) so that "you can hear messages as people speak, or listen later if you are unavailable."

Visual Tools:

[Sketch](#) (by Evernote) and [Snagit](#) (by TechSmith) allow users to easily capture and annotate screenshots. dynamic feedback can be offered via screencasting using tools like [Jing](#), [Screenr](#), or [Explain Everything](#)

There are also some interesting examples on Pinterest:

<https://www.pinterest.com/imaginationfdn/giving-feedback/>

Feedback Resources

This is a great 1 page resource: <http://www.bioscience.heacademy.ac.uk/ftp/resources/newlect/feedback.pdf>

Lots of blogs about nowadays but this is a good one on feedback: <http://larryferlazzo.edublogs.org/2010/11/10/the-best-resources-for-learning-how-to-best-give-feedback-to-students/>

HEA Academy Selection on Feedback: [https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/search/site/Feedback?f\[0\]=im_field_the_me:2782](https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/search/site/Feedback?f[0]=im_field_the_me:2782)

Giving Student Feedback: 20 tips to do it right: <http://www.opencolleges.edu.au/informed/features/giving-student-feedback/>

Optimizing Feedback: http://www.jcu.edu.au/wiledpack/public/groups/everyone/documents/mou/jcu_090538.pdf

Podcasts - Feedback on Students' Work: <http://studentcaring.com/podcast/>



Try 'Plusing'
- to build on your students' ideas without using judgmental language

Assessment and Feedback Initiatives in DIT

College of Arts & Tourism

Experimental Project Presentation (Story stack)

<http://www.dit.ie/teaching/assessment/cases/case0001-experientialprojectpresentationstorystack/>

Case Study <http://www.dit.ie/teaching/assessment/cases/case0003-problembasedlearning/>

Interviews <http://www.dit.ie/teaching/assessment/cases/case0010-interview/>

Community Learning Project <http://www.dit.ie/teaching/assessment/cases/case0013-communitylearningproject/>

Wikis <http://www.dit.ie/teaching/assessment/cases/case0018-video/>

Self-Peer Assessment <http://www.dit.ie/teaching/assessment/cases/case0014-facilitatedself-assessmentandpeer-assessmentofperformance/>

College of Business

Literature Reviews <http://www.dit.ie/teaching/assessment/cases/case0053-literaturereview/>

Digital Marketing Plan <http://www.dit.ie/teaching/assessment/cases/case0054-digitalmarketingplan/>

College of Engineering & Built Environment

Blog <http://www.dit.ie/teaching/assessment/cases/case0060-blog/>

Observation <http://www.dit.ie/teaching/assessment/cases/case0058-observation/>

Presentations <http://www.dit.ie/teaching/assessment/cases/case0040-presentations/>

Posters <http://www.dit.ie/teaching/assessment/cases/case0041-posterpresentation/>

College of Sciences & Health

Concept map <http://www.dit.ie/teaching/assessment/cases/case0004-conceptmap/>

Video <http://www.dit.ie/teaching/assessment/cases/case0018-video/>

Multiple choice questions <http://www.dit.ie/teaching/assessment/cases/case0025-multiplechoicequestions/>

Performance tasks and portfolios <http://www.dit.ie/teaching/assessment/cases/case0031-performancetasksandportfolios/>

Where to go for more support...

The logo for Lttc (Learning, Teaching, and Teaching Centre) features the lowercase letters 'l', 't', 't', 'c' in a stylized, rounded font. A small yellow circle is positioned above the second 't'. The logo is set against a white background within a yellow-bordered box.

Find more online
www.dit.ie/lttc

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In the LTTc, we continue to run workshops and consultancies in the areas of *Assessment* and *Feedback* throughout the academic year.

In addition, once annually a 5 week accredited CPD is offered: 'Assessment & Feedback'

The role of feedback in undergraduate supervision is also explored in a 5 ECTS module 'Supervising Undergraduate Dissertations & Projects'

Details on both modules available here:

<http://www.dit.ie/lttc/programme/cpdshortcourses/>



"students want feedback just for them, just in time, and just helping nudge forward."