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Feed forward - information for students

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# FEED FORWARD – INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

**General advice**  
**What is feedback**  
 Feedback is information about your performance skills and understanding and is a great opportunity to help you improve. Feedback may be verbal or written from your tutors, mentors, family or friends. Make it part of your learning.

**Why do you get feedback**  
 Feedback is provided to help you identify your strengths and weaknesses. You can use positive feedback and critical feedback to make changes to future work and behaviour.  
 Think of feedback as a way of signposting you in the right direction to help you with future assessments.

**Feedback**

**Understand it & reflect on it!**  
 We know many students don't take any notice of feedback for a variety of reasons. By ignoring feedback will make it difficult to improve. Reflect on feedback, even if you disagree with feedback think about how you could justify your argument or make it clearer. Or contact the marker to discuss it further.

**What should I do with feedback**  
 Even if you are happy with your mark your feedback will help you to understand why you did well and what you should do again in the future. It may offer ideas on how to improve even more!

**Feed forward**  
 It is often easy to understand comments about spelling or referencing the can be used to feed forward into your next piece of work. It might be very specific feedback to a particular subject or assessment but think about why the comments have been made and how it could be used in future assessments. If in any doubt please contact the marker for clarity

**Feed forward – what does it mean?**  
 Using the feedback from one assessment to help you when completing a future assessment

**Useful contacts:**  
 Your learning set lead for information on assessments and feedback  
 The marker of your assessment for further clarity with feedback  
 Student engagement team for help with essay writing skills and study skills  
 Support services if you think or you have been advised that you may need additional learning support

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Most feedback on assignments is focused on what has been done rather than on what improvements can be made for future pieces of work (Vardi, 2013). There have been many studies that report on how students find feedback difficult to understand and therefore find it problematic to make use of them in subsequent assessments (Lea and Street, 2000, Beaumont, O'Doherty and Shannon, 2011, Price et al, 2010)

Price et al (2010) recognised that students report that they do not know what to do with feedback. This is reflected in what has been reported by students from the midwifery courses at UWL.

Hine and Northeast (2016) recognised that using feed-forward strategies would improve student performance and satisfaction with feedback. Two handouts (shown here) have been designed and trialed with a group of Level 4 student midwives in Berkshire. This has given the students an explanation about what feed-forward is and how it can be used to inform their future work. This has also benefitted them by being better able to understand some of the key terms used in written feedback. An improvement has been observed between assessments. The information sheets have been recently been introduced across the midwifery year groups and subsequently shared with colleagues in the College of Nursing, Midwifery and Healthcare.

**References:**

Beaumont, C., O'Doherty, M. and Shannon, L. (2011) 'Reconceptualising assessment feedback: a key to improving student learning?', *Studies in Higher Education*, 36(6), pp. 671–687. doi: 10.1080/03075071003731135.

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Lea, M. R. and Street, B. V. (1998) 'Student writing in higher education: An academic literacies approach', *Studies in Higher Education*, 23(2), pp. 157–172. doi: 10.1080/03075079812331380364.

Price, M. et al. (2010) 'Feedback : all that effort, but what is the effect?', *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 35(3), pp. 277–289. doi: 10.1080/02602930903541007.

Vardi, I. (2013) 'Effectively feeding forward from one written assessment task to the next', *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 38(5), pp. 599–610. doi: 10.1080/02602938.2012.670197.

## Glossary of feedback terms

- Abstract**  
 Not being able to explain something clearly or being too vague about a point, not using examples.
- Analyse**  
 Show that you have examined, in detail, all the different aspects of an issue. Looking at it from a different perspective.
- Clarity**  
 Make sure the points you have written are clear to the reader. Explaining your points and not assuming the reader will automatically know what you were thinking.
- Concise**  
 The need to explain ideas of points in your work with fewer words but still being able to keep the meaning. (The other term might be 'waffling') Avoid complicating your work with needless words or phrases.
- Critically evaluate**  
 Show that you have thought about and questioned the claims that have been made or described. They may be valid but show that you have not just accepted them on face value.
- Depth**  
 Explanation of your arguments in detail, using example where appropriate and working through your ideas in a clear and logical way rather than glossing over them.
- Flow**  
 Showing an easy to follow coherent and logical order to your work. Using connection points and topics to mesh your work together.
- Illustrate**  
 Back up the points you make using evidence.
- Proof read**  
 Make sure to read your work and check it carefully for spelling and grammar mistakes. Check the flow of your work and check your references match your list.
- Structure**  
 Present your work in a logical way so the reader can follow your argument. Show the connections between the paragraphs and that each section has a good beginning sentence and ending sentence.

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For more information please contact Clare Gordon, CNMH, Course Leader for Midwifery in Berkshire [clare.gordon@uwl.ac.uk](mailto:clare.gordon@uwl.ac.uk)