

This video highlights some of the challenges to students understanding their feedback, and how to address them.

Clarity of message

- Major challenge is the language used in feedback – is this accessible to the student? Do they understand the meaning of the comments/guidance?
- **Dominant disciplinary discourses need to be made explicit** ([Van Heerden et al., 2017](#)) and students need to be encouraged to articulate their tacit knowledge (e.g., existing motives, ideas, opinions, beliefs, and knowledgeable skills) ([Clark, 2012](#)).
- Given individual differences in learning, the **feedback message needs to be kept simple and focused on what matters most**.

Goals and motivations for feedback

Feedback should be seen as a valuable and precious resource, of high value to the students. They are gaining the rare and precious insight of an experienced professional on their work. We need to develop students' abilities to identify areas they would like for focus.

Training needs to encourage students to be more discerning in how they seek, give and utilise feedback in order to move away from a receipt model if feedback is to be unshackled and its potential to impact practice realised (Evans, 2022).

Facilitating dialogue

- Feedback as a process means that there needs to be active dialogue and discussion between the learner and others (other learners and/or the educator).
- **The importance of co-constructive dialogue between educator and student** to support understanding of assessment is acknowledged. Training that focuses on supporting students to better understand feedback through reinforcement is an outmoded paradigm that does not sufficiently acknowledge the role of learners as authors/owners of assessment feedback exacerbates the problem ([Evans et al., 2018](#)).
- Feedback needs to be **dialogic** to support student self-regulation, efforts should be placed on those interactional features that promote and sustain feedback dialogue ([Ajjawi & Boud, 2017](#); [Yang & Carless, 2013](#); [Evans, 2013](#)).
- Feedback should be based on **well-defined, negotiated goals** rather than purely on the quality of the learner's performance given the numerous goals (specified and unspecified) in play and impacting student decisions ([Eva & Regehr, 2013](#)).
- People are unlikely to change in response to data-delivery methods that attack their self-perceptions' ([Eva & Regehr, 2013, p. 463](#)).
- Efforts should be placed on **checking students' interpretation and use of feedback**: does feedback achieve what we need it to?

Feedback needs to be seen as a reciprocal process with feedback available from different sources and importantly seeing the learner as a key feedback resource.

Students need to be able to ask questions in an open and non-threatening environment.

Opening opportunities for students to come and talk to you in 'office hours' is not likely to be taken up by the less confident students (and typically the ones who need the most guidance), so we need to think of ways of making this reciprocity as accessible and non-threatening as possible.

Feedback as co-constructed and multifaceted to include self-generation of feedback.

Encouraging the students to self-critique their own work is important.

We need to guide students in seeking and utilisation of feedback cues from the environment. ([Ajjawi and Boud, 2017](#); [Carless, 2020](#); [Carless and Boud, 2018](#); [Farrell et al., 2017](#); Nicol [2010](#), [2021](#))

The potential impact of **peer feedback** on learning and understanding is extremely potent. This will be discussed in more depth in Module AF3.

Preparing for feedback

- Students need to **prepare for feedback**. Where students have insufficient knowledge, detailed feedback may be inappropriate as students may not be able to process this. Similarly sufficient time is needed for students to process feedback messages prior to discussions about how to move work forwards; this introduces the notion of space to process feedback to maximise effectiveness of feedback encounters with others.

Opportunities to construct own meaning

- Students must have opportunities to **construct their own meaning** from the received message ([Clark, 2012](#); [du Toit, 2012](#); [Sadler, 1989](#)).
- If students are to learn from feedback, they must **have opportunities to do something with it** ([Nicol, 2010](#); [Carless et al., 2011](#); [Price et al., 2011](#)).
- Students need **multiple opportunities to assess work for themselves** so they can internalise the requirements of assessment (Sadler, 2009).

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