

**SRHE**

*Society for Research  
into Higher Education*

# **How are cultures of feedback practice shaped by accountability and quality assurance agendas?**

**Research report**

**April 2018**

**Dr Naomi Winstone, University of Surrey**



FEEDBACK CULTURES  
IN HIGHER EDUCATION  
PROJECT



# Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Executive summary	4
Introduction	6
Strand 1: Understanding practice	10
Methods	10
Findings	12
Strand 2: Understanding the drivers of practice	16
Methods	16
Findings	16
Strand 3: Driving practice forwards	22
Methods	22
Findings	22
Conclusions and implications	23
Outputs	24
References	26
Appendices	28

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Society for Research into Higher Education

## Acknowledgements

I wish to express my gratitude to the Society for Research into Higher Education for the award of this research grant, and to the University of Surrey for supporting the project. I would like to thank Rob Gresham at the SRHE for his ongoing support in overseeing the development of the research, and to Professor Ian Kinchin for his encouragement to submit the bid in the first place, and his informal mentorship throughout the process. I was also very fortunate to have some excellent research assistants working with me on this project. Jessica Bourne was invaluable during the second strand of the project, and Emily Papps and Molly Foster provided helpful input during the third strand of the project.

Particular thanks are due to Professor David Carless of Hong Kong University for his support, encouragement and intellectual input as my 'critical friend' for this project. It has been a true privilege to learn from his input and I look forward to our continuing collaboration on the book emerging from this project.

I would also like to formally acknowledge the support of Professor David Boud, Associate Professor Michael Henderson and the *Feedback for Learning* team at Deakin University and Monash University for collaborating on Strand 1 of the project. Particular thanks are due to Tracii Ryan for facilitating sharing of the Australian data, and Paige Mahoney for undertaking reliability coding.

Finally, I wish to thank the participants who gave their time to complete the Strand 1 survey, and those who agreed to be interviewed for Strand 2.

## Executive Summary

- The Higher Education landscape has shifted dramatically towards a predominant focus on accountability, quality audits, metrics, and student satisfaction. The advent of the Teaching Excellence Framework in UK Higher Education has the potential to intensify this culture. In the domain of assessment practice, such a shift may be seen to drive improvements in the quality, consistency, and speed of return of written feedback. However, an increased focus on accountability can promulgate a feedback culture focused on detailed written comments, rather than a more sustainable culture of student engagement and dialogue in the feedback process. The 'feedback culture' is taken here to represent the way in which feedback processes are typically organized or perceived at an institutional and/or disciplinary level.
- A focus on the transmission of unidirectional written comments in feedback practice are typical of what David Carless (2015) has termed the 'old paradigm'; many prominent scholars have promoted a shift towards a 'new paradigm' where student engagement, and the impact of feedback on learning, are of primary focus. This project involved three strands: an online survey with UK and Australian academics; semi-structured interviews with UK academics; and an evidence synthesis and the collation of case studies of practice. Taken together, the aim of these three strands was to gain a snapshot of feedback practice and 'feedback cultures', to explore influences on feedback practice, and to understand how to promote a shift towards a 'new paradigm' feedback model.

- The findings from the survey indicate that whilst there is some evidence of new paradigm practices, approaches aligned with the old paradigm dominate practice. There was more evidence of 'new paradigm thinking' in Australian respondents than in their UK counterparts. It is also evident from the survey findings that feedback 'cultures' may differ according to discipline area.
- The findings from the semi-structured interviews triangulate those from the survey, and demonstrate that whilst many academics recognise that a feedback culture in which learning predominates over delivery of comments is beneficial to students, there are many challenges which make this difficult to achieve in practice.
- The evidence synthesis identified many examples of successful implementation of new paradigm practices, and the case studies demonstrate in greater depth how these approaches impact student learning. The findings of the evidence synthesis will be presented alongside the case studies in a forthcoming book based on the project.

## Introduction

Assessment and feedback are commonly framed as the higher education sector's areas of weakness, when compared with other areas of learning and teaching practice (Knight, 2002). These issues most readily arise when the results of student satisfaction surveys are released; student satisfaction with the detail, nature, and speed of return of feedback is often cause for concern. These results often create a sense of frustration in academic staff, when the efforts that they have expended to improve feedback practice do not appear to have paid off. Feedback practices also find themselves high on institutional agendas as a result of the oft-cited evidence that feedback has the potential to be the strongest influence on students' achievement (Hattie, 2009). However, there is very little evidence in the educational literature to inform our understanding of *how* feedback processes are enacted, with academics' practices being "shrouded in considerable mystery" (Yorke, Bridges & Woolf, 2000, p. 18). Furthermore, the practices adopted by staff are not always in accordance with their own beliefs about what is effective and important (Orrell, 2008). Put simply, "current feedback practices are not fit for purpose" (Carless et al., 2011, p. 395).

Academics have responded to the rising prominence of feedback on institutional agendas by committing increasing amounts of time and effort to provide what they believe is detailed and useful feedback (Robinson, Pope, & Holyoak, 2013). Recent influential reviews within the compulsory education sector (Elliott et al., 2016; Independent Teacher Workload Review Group, 2016) argue that accountability agendas should not perpetuate the myth that effective practice involves increasing the time spent on the provision of feedback, and the delivery of more detailed comments. In tertiary education, the challenge of developing feedback practice under considerable time and

workload constraints represents a 'feedback conundrum' (Carless, 2015, p. 17) that is difficult to resolve.

One solution to this conundrum, which has been advocated by prominent scholars (e.g. David Carless, Margaret Price), is to assign greater importance to the role of the student in the feedback process. Emphasis on unidirectional written comments in feedback practice represents what Carless (2015) terms the 'old paradigm'. Here, the focus of feedback practice is placed firmly on what the educator does, and their one-way transmission of feedback. In contrast, the 'new paradigm' represents a very different way of thinking, with a focus on how students engage with and use feedback. The emphasis of new paradigm practices is placed on the impact of feedback on students' learning and their subsequent work. In this sense, then, the focus is no longer placed on what the educator does, but on what the student does. For this reason, peer feedback and the development of self-regulation and evaluative judgment are important elements of the 'new paradigm' (Carless, 2015). Such an approach also answers the conundrum of how to provide more detailed comments within workload constraints, as the student takes on greater responsibility for ensuring that feedback has impact on learning. It is possible to view the old and new paradigms of feedback practice as different 'cultures' of practice, which differ in the extent to which the student is seen to play an important role in the feedback process.

Institutional guidance on feedback practice will likely shape the feedback culture which is enacted in that unique setting. Carless (2015) discusses the concept of 'double feedback duty', where feedback is often required to fulfil several parallel functions; to satisfy the requirements of quality assurance agendas, and also to optimally support students' development. If emphasis is placed on the former, then innovative approaches

that might better support student learning and maximise the efficiency of academics' time may be resisted, and a culture of passive reception may dominate over one of proactive recipience. However, very little is known about how such cultures develop and are enacted.

This study consisted of three cumulative research strands, aiming to uncover academics' knowledge, perceptions, and adoption of 'new paradigm' practices (see Winstone, Nash, Parker & Rowntree, 2017a, for a taxonomy of these practices and the cognitive processes they target), to identify characteristics of different 'feedback cultures', and to understand the perceived influences on feedback practice and how they have changed. The project involved an international comparison with the Australian system, through collaboration with Professor David Boud, to facilitate isolation of feedback cultures and practices that might be specific to the UK system. These findings, together with evidence from the literature, have been used to develop resources to guide practice involving student engagement with feedback.

## **Project aims and overview**

- 1) To explore the dominant feedback 'culture' across disciplines and institution types;
- 2) To explore how accountability has shaped and continues to shape feedback practice;
- 3) To produce evidence-based resources to promote feedback practices that are sustainable, motivating, and transformative for all stakeholders in the process.

Strand 1 of the project involved an online survey, distributed in the UK and Australia, to measure perceptions of old and new paradigm models of feedback, and to collect accounts of practice. Strand 2 involved semi-structured interviews with UK academics, to explore in more depth the drivers of pedagogic decision-making in assessment and feedback practice. Strand 3 brought together the findings from Strands 1 and 2, alongside a synthesis of evidence for the efficacy of new paradigm feedback practices, to develop resources to promote the importance of student engagement with feedback.

# Strand 1: Understanding Practice

## Research questions

1. What knowledge, perceptions and practices exist in UK/Australian academics regarding student engagement with feedback?
2. How do dominant 'feedback cultures' differ across countries and disciplines?

## Methods

### Participants

The sample consisted of 688 university teaching staff; 291 worked in the UK, and 397 worked in Australia.

### Design and Materials

Data were collected via a hybrid questionnaire, consisting of likert scale, multiple-choice, and open-ended items. Alignment with 'old paradigm' and 'new paradigm' principles was measured using 10 items; respondents were asked to indicate on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) their agreement with five 'old paradigm' statements (e.g. *"Feedback is important in justifying the mark that has been awarded"*) and five 'new paradigm' statements (e.g. *"Feedback enables students to judge their own performance"*). Composite scales were created for old paradigm principles ( $\alpha = .82$ ) and new paradigm principles ( $\alpha = .81$ ).

Use of 'new paradigm' practices was measured by presenting respondents with a series of learning-focused feedback practices (e.g. *"Encourage students to use a range*

*of strategies to implement their feedback*”), and asking them to indicate the frequency with which they use these practices on a five-point scale.

Influences on feedback practice were measured by presenting respondents with a series of seven potential influences, assessing: the influence of prior experience (e.g. *“Your own experiences as a learner”*); the influence of informal learning and development opportunities (e.g. *“Reading books on feedback”*); and the influence of formal training (e.g. *“A qualification in education or pedagogy”*). Respondents were invited to select as many influences as they felt applied to their own practice; composite variables for each category of influence were created by calculating the proportion of influences in the category that had been selected.

The emphasis placed on student engagement with feedback was assessed using a single likert scale item, to which agreement was scored on a five-point scale anchored at ‘strongly disagree’ and ‘strongly agree’: *“I specifically design follow up assessment tasks to allow students to enact the comments they receive in prior tasks”*. Evidence of focus on the enactment of feedback was further assessed using an open-ended item: *“How do you know whether your feedback is effective?”*. These open-ended responses were coded thematically using an inductive approach.

The adoption of practices to support the development of students’ feedback literacy was measured using five likert scale items, scored from 1(never) to 5(always). Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they built time into the curriculum, for example, *“to help students develop their understanding of standards and criteria”*. The five items formed a composite variable ( $\alpha = .65$ ). Finally, respondents were asked to provide a response to the open-ended item *“What do you do to support students to make use of feedback?”*.

## **Procedure**

Institutional ethical approval was granted. The survey link was distributed at two Australian Universities; one research intensive (“Group of Eight”) and the other more teaching oriented. In the UK, the link was distributed across six institutions; three were ‘research intensive’ and three were ‘teaching-focused’.

## **Findings**

In this section, headline findings are presented. Further detail can be found in Winstone and Boud (2018), Winstone (2018a), and Winstone and Carless (2018).

### **Alignment with ‘Old Paradigm’ and ‘New Paradigm’ models of feedback (UK sample)**

Respondents showed a stronger alignment with principles relating to an Old Paradigm model in comparison to principles relating to a New Paradigm model. Alignment with New Paradigm principles was significantly higher in those working in Health and Medical disciplines, in comparison to those working in STEM disciplines.

### **Adoption of ‘New Paradigm’ practices (UK sample)**

UK Respondents’ use of new paradigm practices was limited; most common across all disciplines was the practice of encouraging students to use a range of strategies to implement feedback, and the coordination of assessment at programme level. The use of technology to facilitate the feedback process was limited across all disciplines. The

provision of feedback whilst teaching was higher in STEM disciplines than in Health and Medical disciplines.

### **Influences on feedback practice (UK & Australia)**

Across the sample as a whole, the influence of formal learning and development opportunities (e.g. accredited teaching programmes, workshops) had the least influence on respondents' feedback practice; this influence was significantly lower than that of informal learning and development (e.g. reading books/papers; attendance at meetings where feedback is discussed) and that of prior experience. The latter two influences did not differ significantly .

In terms of international differences, informal learning and development opportunities were a stronger influence on feedback practice in Australian than UK respondents. Discipline differences were also evident, where respondents from Health and Medical disciplines reported a stronger influence of formal learning opportunities on feedback practice than those from STEM disciplines and Arts and Humanities disciplines, and also a stronger influence of informal learning opportunities than those from STEM disciplines.

### **Emphasis placed on student engagement with, and enactment of, feedback (UK & Australia)**

Australian respondents reported that they were more likely to build opportunities for enactment of feedback into their assessment design than their UK counterparts. Coding of open-ended responses to the question "*How can you tell whether your feedback is effective?*" led to the identification of eight categories: what students say; what students

do; design follow-up tasks; external review; peer review; reflection/experience; guidelines and principles; and not possible to know. Full statistical analyses for these data are reported in Winstone & Boud (2018). Three elements of the findings are of particular note:

1. Across both countries, approximately 1 in 5 respondents reported that it is not possible to know whether feedback has been effective. The majority of these responses made reference to the fact that assessments are often positioned towards the end of modules, and thus the respondents reported that they do not see the students again.
2. The influence of peer review, and external review (e.g. external examiners) were much more prominent sources of evidence for the effectiveness of feedback in the UK than in Australia.
3. Perhaps most strikingly, whilst respondents from Australia were significantly more likely than respondents from the UK to seek evidence of the impact of feedback on what students do (that is, a change in their understanding, skills, or attitudes to learning), respondents from the UK were significantly more likely than respondents from Australia to seek evidence of the effectiveness of feedback on the basis of student satisfaction. In some cases, this was positive evidence of effectiveness (i.e. students reported that they were satisfied with the feedback in end-of-module surveys); in others, evidence of effectiveness was inferred from what students didn't say. Many respondents explained that they would know their feedback had been successful if they didn't hear anything from students, and there were no complaints regarding feedback.

## Supporting the development of students' feedback literacy (UK sample)

Respondents in STEM disciplines reported using practices to support the development of students' feedback literacy significantly less often than those in Arts/Humanities, Health/Medicine, and Social Sciences disciplines.

Responses to the open-ended item "*what do you do to support students to make use of feedback?*" were coded semantically using a theoretical approach. A variety of practices emerged, including helping students to manage their emotional responses to feedback, and supporting students to develop a sound understanding of assessment standards and criteria. More than one third of respondents reported encouraging students to engage in dialogue or discussion. It is notable, however, that nearly one third of respondents stated that they did not take actions to support students to make use of feedback, either because they did not think this was possible within a modularised curriculum, or because they did not feel it was their responsibility to do so.

## **Strand 2: Understanding drivers of practice**

### **Research Questions**

1. How are feedback practices influenced by accountability and quality assurance?
2. What are the drivers of feedback practice and 'cultures' in UK HEIs?

### **Methods**

#### **Participants**

A total of 28 UK academics took part in this strand of the project which involved in-depth interviews (see Appendix 1).

#### **Materials and Procedure**

Institutional ethical approval was granted. Interviews followed a semi-structured format, and took place in person or over the telephone. The interview schedule explored participants' perceptions of how assessment and feedback practices had changed during the period of time they had been working in higher education, and common feedback techniques in their own discipline. They were also asked about challenges they face in assessment and feedback, and their use of audio/video and peer feedback. Interviews were transcribed verbatim.

### **Findings**

Thematic analysis of the transcripts led to the identification of several factors that had an impact on the enactment of feedback practice: workload, student complaints, student satisfaction, and quality assurance. In each case, these factors were the source of tension, with respondents discussing how they had to reconcile conflicting influences on

their practice. Taken together, these findings provide insight into the many and varied barriers to the uptake of 'new paradigm' feedback practices, serving to contextualise the survey findings reported under Strand 1.

## **Tension 1: Juggling Workload**

One barrier to the adoption of new-paradigm, learning-focused feedback practices is workload. Participants spoke about the tension between what they would ideally choose to do in their feedback practice, and the reality imposed by their workload: *"I mean, it's about balancing what is useful to the students, um, but that's really what it boils down to but also it's about workload"* (P1). In this sense, workload might be preventing academics from creating the feedback culture that aligns with their values and beliefs about the potential impact of feedback:

*From my experience, things like time and workload issues seem to be kind of getting worse at this point, rather than better. And I think that inevitably has a knock-on, um, impact on feedback in particular and the time we spend on it and whether or not it's doing anything for our students. (P16)*

One pertinent example of the potential for workload pressures to limit engagement in new paradigm feedback practices concerns one-to-one verbal feedback dialogues:

*I think it would be good to do that, to have them all in and you know, get them feedback on their work, it's like the Oxbridge system, isn't it?*  
[Laughter]. (P4)

*I mean pedagogically it's great, um, so idealistically, wouldn't it be fantastic if we could do all of this? But time pressures...absolutely no*

(P17)

## **Tension 2: Covering Your Back**

The spectre of student complaints and appeals seemed to loom large when participants were discussing their feedback practice: *"it's as much covering my back and sort of looking like I do the right thing all the time"* (P15). What we might frame as old paradigm practices, where the focus is on the delivery of feedback comments, was described by participants as a 'safety net', where academic terminology and the associated audit trail are seen to provide some protection from complaints:

*I think there's a need for [feedback] to be [written], so you can almost cover your back with it [Laughter] (P7)*

*I'm as worried about someone checking my work and it's about me demonstrating process and covering my own back. Which is not what it's about. (P15)*

Concerns about the potential for complaints and reprisals may mean that individuals choose not to adopt what are often framed as more risky 'new paradigm' practices. This was particularly evident when participants were discussing the use of peer feedback:

*It was a purely formative exercise...and the amount of angst this created!  
I mean the students were sort of demanding...not merely that they could*

*get the lecturer to review the feedback they'd received if they thought it wasn't clear and accurate, but almost a formal appeal system [laughter].*

(P26)

### **Tension 3: Keeping Students Happy**

Student satisfaction is a prominent driver of practice across the sector, and there was clear evidence within participants' narratives that 'keeping students happy' was an influence on their feedback practice. In particular, the National Student Survey was described as a key driver of pedagogic decision-making: *"There is a push towards students' satisfaction on one level and this also then changes the way feedback is framed"* (P1).

It was evident from participants' narratives that performativity creates pressure to focus feedback practice on 'old paradigm' features of delivery, such as *"the quality and volume of feedback"* (P27), and the speed of return:

*So we seem to have this emphasis now on getting a quick mark and that means what feedback is and other types of feedback aren't really recognised.* (P15)

A further tension that was very clearly conveyed by participants was that between being seen to give students what they want from feedback, and doing what is best for their learning. This indicates that an emphasis on student satisfaction may be working against the adoption of learning-focused feedback: *"The kind of feedback that we would like to provide is probably different to the kind of feedback students would like to receive. There's a mismatch I think"* (P12).

Whilst some participants did show resistance to the prominence of student satisfaction, the majority were frank in expressing a belief that keeping students happy is important for their institution and their own career development.

#### **Tension 4: Double Feedback Duty**

There was evidence within participants' narratives that external accountability was of concern in their feedback practice:

*Sometimes perhaps there's a tendency to not only write feedback for your students but...external examiners and quality assurance and things, you're almost serving two purposes... (P16)*

This 'double feedback duty' (Carless, 2015) is seen to have a strong influence on the language used within feedback, where "*writing for the external examiner*" makes feedback "*very inaccessible*" to students (P22).

Participants also discussed how the influence of quality assurance, institutional audits, and external examining can lead to a focus on the mechanics of the feedback process, rather than the outcomes:

*I guess the toughest thing that we have to deal with is...the conflict between delivering a good educational experience from the pedagogical point of view, while under the constraints of...accountability and recording and audit. (P23)*

Whilst some participants did discuss the supportive role of external 'critical friends', quality *assurance* was a much more prominent theme in participants' narratives than quality *enhancement*.

## **Strand 3: Driving practice forwards**

### **Methods**

An evidence synthesis was conducted, to collate publications detailing the efficacy of the following 'new paradigm' feedback practices: developing feedback literacy; technology-enabled feedback; dialogue; self-regulation and developing evaluative judgment; designing assessment to enable enactment of feedback; peer feedback; developing students' engagement with feedback. Case studies aligned with each of these broad themes were also identified, representing individuals using these practices across a variety of disciplines and international contexts.

### **Findings**

A series of short resources were created, to facilitate understanding of the importance of new paradigm feedback processes (see Appendix 2).

Analysis of all of the open-ended items within the Strand 1 survey also highlighted cultural enablers to adoption of New Paradigm practices, and the Strand 2 interviews clearly identified academics' concerns regarding the use of these practices.

The evidence synthesis, together with relevant findings from Strands 1 and 2, were drawn together to form a proposal for the SRHE Book Series, co-authored with Professor David Carless. The book synthesises theory, evidence, and practice in the form of case studies. The book is due for publication in 2019.

## Conclusions and implications

Assessment and feedback remain key areas of interest within higher education. It is becoming increasingly apparent that ploughing more and more effort into the delivery of feedback, including the volume of comments and the speed of return, is not going to lead to sustainable and transformative student learning. Instead, the importance of student engagement is gaining increasing prominence in the literature (e.g. Price et al., 2011; Winstone et al., 2017a; 2017b).

Across the three strands of this study, it is evident that holding strong values and beliefs about the importance of facilitating learning through feedback can serve to minimise the impact of perceived barriers to the adoption of new paradigm feedback practices. The findings may highlight an important avenue for the development of 'feedback cultures' where student learning takes centre stage. Accountability and quality assurance are important dimensions of the higher education landscape yet the ways in which they are enacted may lead to risk aversion, unintentionally promulgating a feedback culture more closely aligned with the 'old paradigm' transmission-focused model.

# Outputs

## Presentations

Winstone, N. E. (2017). *Facilitating student engagement with feedback*. Keynote presentation at the University of Winchester Learning and Teaching Conference, June 2017.

Winstone, N. E., & Boud, D. (2017). *Supporting students' engagement with feedback: The adoption of student-focused feedback practices in the UK and Australia*. Paper presented at the Society for Research into Higher Education Annual Conference, Newport, Wales, December 2017.

Winstone, N. E. (2018). *Barriers and facilitators to the adoption of learning-focused feedback practices*. Paper to be presented at the 9<sup>th</sup> Biennial EARLI SIG1 Conference, Helsinki, August 2018.

Winstone, N. E., & Carless, D. (2018). *Developing students' feedback literacy*. Paper to be presented at the 9<sup>th</sup> Biennial EARLI SIG1 Conference, Helsinki, August 2018.

## Papers

Winstone, N. E., & Boud, D. (2018). *Exploring cultures of feedback practice: The adoption of learning-focused feedback practices in the UK and Australia*. Manuscript under review.

Winstone, N. E. (2018a). *Moving feedback forwards: Adoption of transmission-focused and learning-focused feedback practices in UK Higher Education*. Manuscript in preparation.

Winstone, N. E. (2018b). *The influence of accountability and quality assurance procedures on feedback practices in UK Higher Education*. Manuscript in preparation.

Winstone, N. E., & Carless, D. (2018). *How do university teachers promote the development of feedback literacy in their students?* Manuscript in preparation.

## **Book**

Winstone, N. E., & Carless, D. (2019). *Innovative feedback practice in higher education*. Routledge.

## References

- Carless, D. (2015). *Excellence in University Assessment: Learning from award-winning practice*. London: Routledge.
- Carless, D., Salter, D., Yang, M., & Lam, J. (2011). Developing sustainable feedback practices. *Studies in Higher Education*, 36(4), 395-407.
- Elliott, V., Baird, J., Hopfenbeck, T. N., Ingram, J., Thompson, I., Usher, N., Zantout, M., Richardson, J., & Coleman, R. (2016). *A marked improvement? A review of the evidence on written marking*. London: Education Endowment Foundation.
- Hattie, J. A. C. (2009). Visible learning: A synthesis of 800+ meta-analyses on achievement. *Abingdon: Routledge*.
- Independent Teacher Workload Review Group (2016). *Eliminating unnecessary workload around marking*. London: DfE.
- Knight, P. T. (2002). Summative assessment in higher education: practices in disarray. *Studies in higher Education*, 27(3), 275-286.
- Orrell, J. (2008). Assessment beyond belief: the cognitive process of grading. In A. Havnes and L. McDowell (Eds.), *Balancing Dilemmas in Assessment and Learning in Contemporary Education* (pp.251-263). London: Routledge.
- Robinson, S., Pope, D., & Holyoak, L. (2013). Can we meet their expectations? Experiences and perceptions of feedback in first year undergraduate students. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 38(3), 260-272.
- Winstone, N. E. (2018a). *Moving feedback forwards: feedback for learning in UK Higher Education*. Manuscript in preparation.

- Winstone, N. E. (2018b). *The influence of accountability and quality assurance procedures on feedback practices in UK Higher Education*. Manuscript in preparation.
- Winstone, N. E., & Boud, D. (2018). *Exploring cultures of feedback practice: The adoption of learning-focused feedback practices in the UK and Australia*. Manuscript under review.
- Winstone, N. E., & Carless, D. (2018). Developing students' feedback literacy. Paper to be presented at the 9<sup>th</sup> Biennial EARLI SIG1 Conference, Helsinki, August 2018.
- Winstone, N. E., Nash, R. A., Parker, M., & Rowntree, J. (2017a). Supporting learners' engagement with feedback: A systematic review and a taxonomy of recipience processes. *Educational Psychologist*, *52*, 17-37.
- Winstone, N. E., Nash, R. A., Rowntree, J., & Parker, M. (2017b). "It'd be useful, but I wouldn't use it". Barriers to University students' feedback seeking and recipience. *Studies in Higher Education*, *42*(11), 2026-2041.
- Yorke, M., Bridges, P., & Woolf, H. (2000). Mark distributions and marking practices in UK higher education some challenging issues. *Active learning in higher education*, *1*(1), 7-27.

## Appendices

**Appendix 1: Participant characteristics (Strand 2, semi-structured interviews)**

Participant	Gender	Discipline	Institution Type <sup>1</sup>	Experience (Years)
1	M	Education	TF	7
2	F	Psychology	TF	4
3	M	Electronic Engineering	RI	21
4	M	Advertising Management	TF	8
5	F	Psychology	RI	8
6	M	Law	TF	28
7	F	Psychology	TF	6
8	M	Macroeconomics	RI	15
9	F	Ecology	TF	25
10	F	Health Sciences	RI	10
11	M	Biochemistry	RI	17
12	M	Innovation Management	RI	8
13	F	Veterinary Medicine	RI	8
14	F	Psychology	RI	21
15	M	Life & Sports Sciences	TF	15
16	F	American Studies/Education	TF	2
17	F	Religious Studies	TF	11
18	F	Immunology/ Biosciences	RI	16
19	M	Chemistry	RI	11
20	F	Psychology	RI	3
21	F	Nursing	RI	5

22	F	Education	TF	8
23	M	Mechanical Engineering	RI	20
24	F	Psychology	TF	10
25	F	Psychology	RI	17
26	M	Law	TF	40
27	F	Sports and Exercise Science	TF	17
28	F	Medical Education	RI	10

<sup>1</sup> TF = Teaching-focused; RI = Research-intensive

## **Appendix 2: Resources created as part of Strand 3**



FEEDBACK CULTURES  
IN HIGHER EDUCATION  
PROJECT

HIGH IMPACT

# FEEDBACK



## The 'Old Paradigm'

### Feedback as Comments

Focus on one-way transmission of information from marker to student

MONOLOGUE  
emphasis placed on what the marker does

#### EXAMPLES OF 'OLD PARADIGM' TRANSMISSION PRACTICES



Providing markers with guidance on the ideal nature and format of feedback comments



Using feedback comments as a way of justifying the grade awarded



Designing new feedback forms to structure information given to students

DIALOGUE  
emphasis placed on what the student does

#### EXAMPLES OF 'NEW PARADIGM' DIALOGIC PROCESSES



Using formative assessment to enable students to close feedback loops



Asking students what they would particularly like feedback on



Giving students the opportunity to engage with exemplars, and partake in self-assessment

## The 'New Paradigm'

### Feedback as Dialogue

Focus on student engagement and the impact of feedback

"...information only becomes feedback when it is used productively"  
(Carless, 2015, p. 192)

For more, see: Carless, D. (2015). Excellence in University Assessment. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

Created as part of the Feedback Cultures in Higher Education project funded by the SRHE

# SRHE

Society for Research into Higher Education  
Advancing knowledge Informing policy Enhancing practice

Dr Naomi Winstone (n.winstone@surrey.ac.uk)



FEEDBACK CULTURES  
IN HIGHER EDUCATION  
PROJECT

HIGH IMPACT

# FEEDBACK



"Feedback is a dialogic process in which learners make sense of information from varied sources and use it to enhance the quality of their work or learning strategies" (Carless, 2015, p. 192)



**Ask students which elements of their work they would particularly like to receive feedback on**



**Discuss standards and criteria with students by giving them the opportunity to engage with exemplars, peer assessment and self-assessment**



**Design assessments so that students have the opportunity to put feedback into practice**

For more, see: Carless, D. (2015). Excellence in University Assessment. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

Created as part of the Feedback Cultures in Higher Education project funded by the SRHE

**SRHE**

*Society for Research into Higher Education  
Advancing knowledge Informing policy Enhancing practice*

Dr Naomi Winstone (n.winstone@surrey.ac.uk)



FEEDBACK CULTURES  
IN HIGHER EDUCATION  
PROJECT

# HIGH IMPACT FEEDBACK



## FEEDBACK RECIPIENCE SKILLS AND HOW TO SUPPORT STUDENTS TO DEVELOP THEM



### SELF-APPRAISAL

*The ability to make judgements about one's strengths and weaknesses*

**Can be developed through:**

- Self-assessment
- Reflection
- Portfolios



### ASSESSMENT LITERACY

*Understanding of the grading process and internalising standards and criteria*

**Can be developed through:**

- Self-assessment
- Peer assessment
- Engaging with exemplars



### GOAL-SETTING AND SELF-REGULATION

*Adopting goal-directed behaviours and monitoring progress towards meeting desired outcomes*

**Can be developed through:**

- Action planning
- Portfolios
- Dialogue and discussion



### ENGAGEMENT AND MOTIVATION

*Being open to, and positive about, receiving performance information*

**Can be developed through:**

- Formative assessment & resubmission opportunities
- Tailored feedback
- Dialogue and discussion

For more, see: Winstone, N. E., Nash, R. A., Parker, M., & Rowntree, J. (2017). Supporting learners' agentic engagement with feedback: a systematic review and a taxonomy of recipients processes. *Educational Psychologist*, 52, 17-37.

Created as part of the Feedback Cultures in Higher Education project funded by the SRHE

**SRHE**

*Society for Research into Higher Education  
Advancing knowledge Informing policy Enhancing practice*

Dr Naomi Winstone (n.winstone@surrey.ac.uk)



FEEDBACK CULTURES  
IN HIGHER EDUCATION  
PROJECT

HIGH IMPACT

# FEEDBACK



## MAXIMISING THE IMPACT OF WRITTEN FEEDBACK

Some questions to ask:



1. Is my feedback supporting development, or are my comments just there to justify the grade I have awarded?



2. Where will students have the opportunity to apply this feedback? What work will they be doing next?



3. Do my comments invite further discussion with students, or between students?



4. Does my feedback go beyond the specific task completed, to tell students how they are progressing towards programme-level learning outcomes and graduate attributes?

Created as part of the Feedback Cultures in Higher Education project funded by the SRHE

**SRHE**

*Society for Research into Higher Education*  
*Advancing knowledge Informing policy Enhancing practice*

Dr Naomi Winstone (n.winstone@surrey.ac.uk)