



## Reimagining assessment: making it real for students through authentic assessment

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alliance) 14th October 2021

Part 2

Designing feedback for learning

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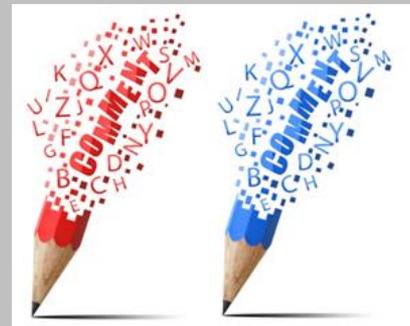
# What to do about feedback?

- Feedback has potential to be a positive pedagogical intervention but not something students always find useful
  - has been criticised roundly as ineffective, ill-timed, excessively teacher-focused and poorly designed  
(Boud and Molloy 2013; Winstone and Carless 2019)
- Ill-timed
  - *“The problem is, you can hand in an assignment thinking that you've got it...but sometimes you really haven't...and there's no way of checking that.”*
- Ineffective and teacher-focused
- *“If I'd known how to ‘Be more critical’ I'd have done it!”*



# We need to rethink our concepts of feedback in higher education

- ...in UK 'doing feedback' has become associated almost exclusively with the comments that tutors write on individual work, often when it's been submitted for marking. This positions feedback as inert information that is given/provided (Sambell et al, 2013:73)
- ...as 'monologue' (Nicol, 2010)
- ...'an episodic mechanism delivered by teachers' (Boud & Molloy, 2013)
- And students don't learn as much as we'd hope by being told, no matter how kindly and carefully (Sadler, 2014)



Shift from an exclusive focus on the provision/quality of **feedback information** to the design of feedback processes in enabling learning environments

Information on performance

Illumination



Transformation

Enable engagement with guidance and feedback processes

Course designs to enable uptake/action

Empower learners to develop evaluative expertise

Active involvement to support self regulation



Authentic assessment offers an opportunity to rethink our **feedback designs**

**Energise & engage** by designing more **authentic**, learning-oriented assessment tasks



**Enable** student engagement with **guidance** and **feedback** processes

**Empower** learners to develop **evaluative** expertise and self-regulation





What feedback  
literate teachers  
do (Boud and  
Dawson, 2021)

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## Designs which enable application and uptake (feeding forward)

### Organises timing, location, sequencing of feedback event

- Sequences feedback events to maximise their influence on student learning
- Ensures that feedback information is available in time for subsequent tasks
- Times feedback activities early in the semester



### Designs for feedback dialogues and cycles

- Stages tasks to maximise effects of feedback information
- Prompts students to identify particular kinds of feedback information they need
- Uses nested assessments in which input is given in stages in building a more substantial outcome



### Maximises effects of limited opportunities for feedback

- Uses feedback selectively where it can have most impact
- Allocates time to feedback events commensurate with their importance
- Coordinates feedback processes with other pedagogical practices



## Examples of designs which enable application of feedback information (feeding forward)



Drafts plus revisions



Work-in-progress presentations



Breaking overall task into two linked components



*"[The teacher] has actually sat down and said 'this is where you're going wrong, you might want to try this.' And I really like that. That helped me a lot."*



## Designs which enable students to interpret, generate meaning and new insights (by involving students in discussions and meaning-making and empowering them to make evaluative judgments)

### Constructs and implements tasks and accompanying feedback processes

- Designs feedback activities to enable students to self-assess before input from teachers
- Sources and deploys a wide range of exemplars to demonstrate features of good work
- Undertakes in-class discussions about feedback



### Frames fb information in relation to standards and criteria

- Explicitly connects feedback information to standards to be achieved
- Has students judge their own work against explicit criteria
- Reviews rubrics from the point of view of their value for feedback purposes



### Designs feedback processes that involve peers and others

- Designs exemplar exercises that involve students providing feedback
- Facilitates and equips students to engage in peer feedback processes
- Connects students with other feedback providers



## Dialogic use of exemplars in whole-group setting (Sambell & Graham, 2020)

Students produce 500 word 'answer' + access 3 exemplars (via VLE)

Students place 3 tutor selected exemplars in rank order & compare own work with each exemplar;

Generate feedback for all 3 plus own;

Tutors reveal their rankings & reasons.

Tutors role-play each exemplar 'author' & students make more comparisons

Students collectively suggest how each 'author' could improve their work;

Tutors respond (in role) and explain each 'author's' rationale/aims;

Students compare own original feedback info with revised collective feedback and compare their own production (thinking/writing) approaches with the exemplar-authors'.

Students review own work

Students note new insights and write future actions in assessment journal.

Students make changes to future learning strategies:

*"I need to review my work as I go along when writing to make sure I'm staying on task"*

*"I don't think I know enough about the subject..so am going to do more reading."*

## Transformed roles for students in the feedback process



- “I used rather informal language, **and I saw I have to change that.**”



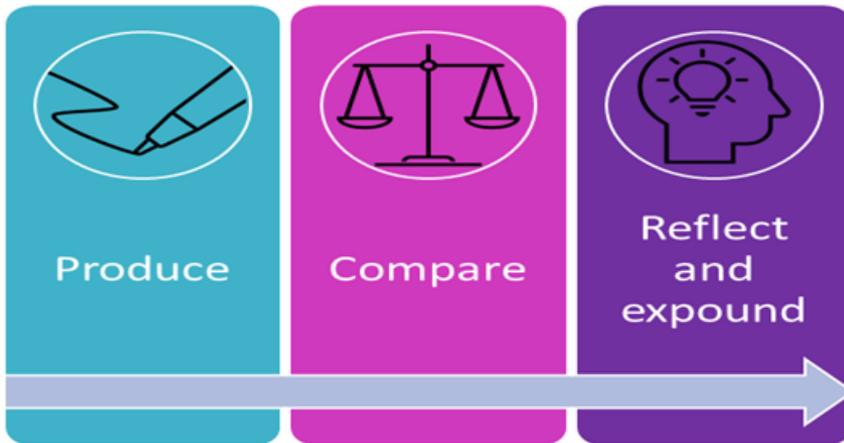
- “When we discussed this task in class **I realised** that what I had written didn’t focus on the question, and I had looked more at socialisation rather than social construction. It was this **that made me read** around the subject more.”



- “Having to comment on someone else’s presentation makes you **think a lot more**, made you more aware...by looking at other people’s work you were seeing what you’re good at and what you need to improve on....”



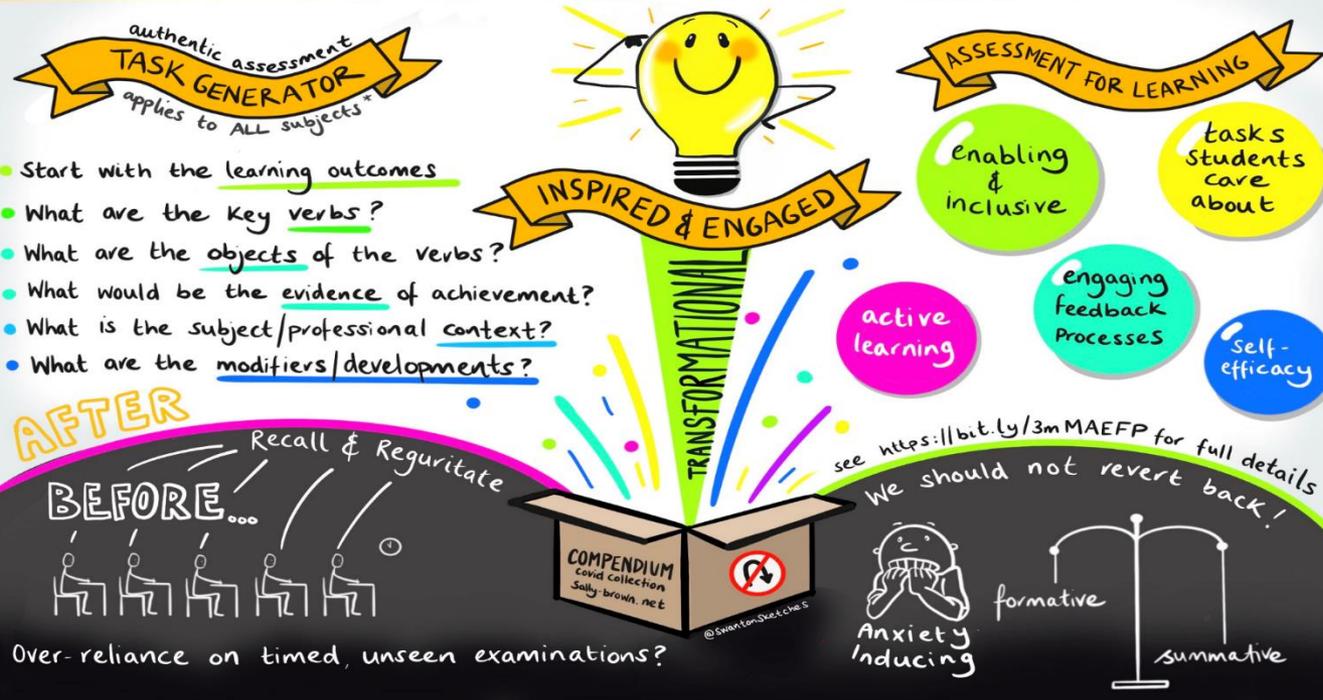
# Activate inner feedback via comparison-making



“Internal feedback is the **new knowledge** that students generate when they **compare** their current knowledge/competence against some **reference** information”  
(Nicol, 2020: p2)



# ASSESSMENT CAN PROMOTE, SUPPORT & EXTEND FUTURE LEARNING



The Covid Assessment Collection (Brown and Sambell, 2020, 2021) available at <https://bit.ly/3mMAEFP>  
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