

## Students' Perceptions of Assessment and Feedback in Higher Education

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**Abstract :** National student satisfaction data in England demonstrate that undergraduate students are less satisfied overall with assessment and feedback than other aspects of their higher education courses. Given that research findings suggest that high-quality feedback is a critical factor associated with academic achievement, it is important that feedback enables students to demonstrate improved academic achievement in their subsequent assessments. Given the growing importance of staff-student partnerships in higher education, this research examined students' perceptions of assessment and feedback in one UK university. Students' perceptions were elicited through the use of a university-wide survey which was completed by undergraduate students. In addition, three focus groups were used to provide qualitative student perception data across the three university Facilities. The data indicate that whilst students valued detailed feedback on their work, less detailed feedback could be compensated for by the development of pre-assessment literacy skills which are front-loaded into courses. Assessment literacy skills valued by students included the use of clear assessment criteria and assignment briefings which enabled students to fully understand the assessment task. Additionally, students valued assessment literacy pre-assessment tasks which enabled them to understand the standards which they were expected to achieve. Students valued opportunities for self and peer assessment prior to the final assessment and formative assessment feedback which matched the summative assessment feedback. Students also valued dialogic face-to-face feedback after receiving written feedback. Above all, students valued feedback which was particular to their work and which gave recognition for the effort they had put into completing specific assessments. The data indicate that there is a need for higher education lecturers to receive systematic training in assessment and feedback which provides a comprehensive grounding in pre-assessment literacy skills.

**Keywords :** formative assessment, summative assessment, feedback, marking

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