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# Crynoldebau / abstracts

Encouraging Reflection on Feedback

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Academic staff spend many hours designing assessments and providing feedback on completed coursework assignments. Following the move from paper submission to e-submission, we no longer have the visibly shocking piles of uncollected coursework and feedback sitting in departmental offices, but how can we tell whether feedback is being used effectively or indeed at all?

Feedback to improve performance is particularly important at the start of a student’s academic career and developing good feedback habits at this stage is also likely to be most effective. For these reasons the intervention that is presented here was undertaken with students on a foundation (year 0) course that is available to subject changers, mature students and others who do not meet our standard entry requirements. Given the nature of the cohort, extensive feedback, encouragement and individual support is often required.

I took the opportunity presented by restructuring of the course to design-in use of feedback at the outset. Students present pieces of coursework throughout the semester and the final part of the resulting portfolio is to reflect on the feedback that they have received and how they have used it. This task is assessed to promote engagement and the expectations were explained at the start of the semester to promote the idea that feedback engagement would be rewarded. Some of the reported changes in behaviour demonstrated a clear commitment to using feedback. Where this was not the case the students were encouraged to consider how this could be achieved in the following semester.

Advantages of bringing all of the coursework together as a portfolio in this way included facilitating students’ reflection on their demonstration of meeting the module learning outcomes. Additionally, students who were failing, or in danger of not reaching their potential, were given overall advice in the form of an individual “prescription” for improving their performance.