

SCHOOL OF FORENSIC
AND INVESTIGATIVE SCIENCES



STOP
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Student's Guide
to Feedback

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Always make
sure you
collect your
feedback!

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Welcome to the School of Forensic and Investigative Science Student's Guide to Feedback

Why do I need this guide?

Recently the Students' Union talked to students about their **feedback** and what it meant to them. One thing which emerged was that students needed more information on exactly how to use their **feedback**. This guide will make sure you get the most out of the **feedback** you receive on your assessed work- it is going to make sure you are fully aware of just what **feedback** is and how to use it.

Why should I bother using feedback?

Simple answer... to improve your work and your grades. You need to **learn from your mistakes and learn what you are doing well**. Your lecturer doesn't give **feedback** for the fun of it, they do it to help you progress. You should be able to see a progressive rise in your grades, and you should find that you are more easily able to complete your work safe in the knowledge that what you are doing is on advice from your lecturer on previous work.

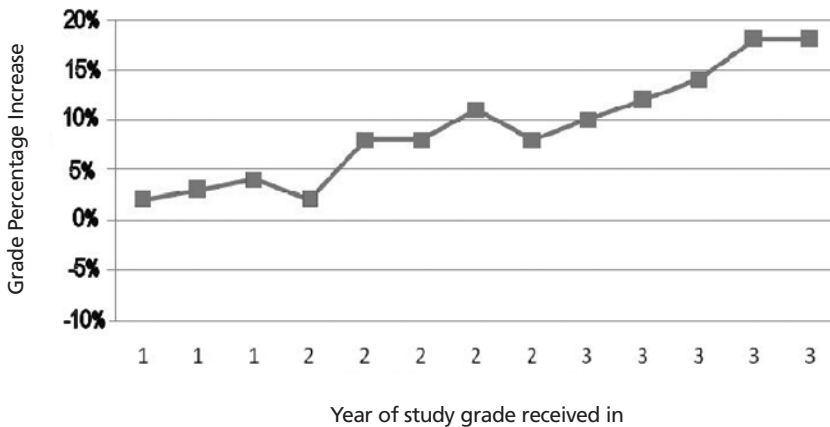
Below is a case study of a UCLan student who used their **feedback** throughout their time at University and has seen a progression in their marks. This student has now graduated from UCLan with a degree they were extremely pleased with:

"The feedback I received on my course was excellent and the fact that I used it properly and didn't just skim read it for the grade meant that I was able to greatly improve my work throughout my degree. Of course I had to work extremely hard for three years to gain the standard of degree I wanted but I know that my feedback directly contributed to this."

Below is a graph of this student's grade progression throughout their degree (note these grades are for written assignments only and not for the entire module grade). Of course, every student works at a different level but the same story of continuous development can be seen no matter where you start from and finish.

You should be proud of any progress you make.

Graph to show progression of student grades when making full use of feedback



What exactly is Feedback?

That really is the question isn't it? **Feedback** is part of everyday life. You are always assessing people and situations and giving your thoughts and opinions on them. This in itself is **feedback**. UCLan students have said that they mostly understand **feedback** to be written comments on their work and verbal comments that go with the written comments...

Is this wrong? No, not at all, but it is a simplistic view of what **feedback** really is. **Feedback** is much more than just the comments on your work. It is a continuous learning process and a vital part of your student experience. It can be peer to peer (with course mates) and it can also be received in a class room situation. It also teaches you to accept criticism and praise and be constructive with it.

If this is the first time you've studied at a university, you may be used to being able to hand in numerous drafts of an assignment in order to increase your grade. University works differently and whilst your tutors will be happy to answer questions about your assignment, they will not read, review or edit your work before submission.

Feedback can be received in two ways, as generic **feedback** and individual **feedback**.



Great... but what does that mean?

Individual feedback: Individual **feedback** is what you would consider 'formal **feedback**'. Often students are not satisfied until they receive this. Your individual **feedback** would be the grades on your work, the written comments on your assignments and your 'official' meetings with your lecturers to discuss your work and it usually comes after the deadline when your work can not be changed.

Generic feedback: Generic **feedback** is something which is often not recognised by students as being **feedback**, when actually it is a very important form of **feedback**. It can often take the form of a conversation with a lecturer about your work before you hand it in. It could come from another student in a group discussion about your work. It could be your lecturer addressing the class with generic comments. Whatever form it takes, generic **feedback** is what it says; **feedback**. Just because you have not received your work back with detailed written comments all over it yet does not necessarily mean you have not received any **feedback** at all. You will though always get individual **feedback**.

This is what you would expect individual feedback to be written on and this is normally what the feedback sheet would look like in your School. Image for reference only.

UCLan
University of Central Lancashire

School of Forensic and Investigative Sciences
Assessment Coversheet

Date Stamp

Module Code Module Tutor

Module Title

Student's Name

Course/Subject

Assignment Title/Number

I confirm that this piece of work which I have submitted is all my own work and that all references and quotations from both primary and secondary sources have been fully identified and properly acknowledged in footnotes and bibliography.

Signed Date: Submission deadline

Extension Agreed date: Extension Agreed by:

Work should be presented in the following format: Grade*

- On single sheets of A4 on one side only (unless in a logbook)
- Word processed and printed in black ink (unless in a logbook)
- Stapled together at one corner – no folders, plastic wallets or paper clips

Learning Outcomes or School Marking Criteria for this Assignment To be completed by the student	Module Tutor Feedback

General comments:
Strengths

Areas for improvement

If there is something you do not understand or some aspect on which you want further clarification, you must make an appointment with your tutor to discuss this assessment and the feedback reflect upon your personal development (EOP). Upon receipt of the feedback from your tutor, you must take on this assessment for your future action.

1 st Marker Signature	2 nd Marker Signature
Date	Date

* Please note that all grades are provisional subject to completion of the assessment.
** Only a sample of the work submitted will be seen by your tutor.
White copy to Course Records. Pink copy to student after completion by your tutor.

Always pay attention to feedback, it is useful, no matter what form it takes.

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When should I expect feedback?

The Card says you should expect feedback on assessed work in 15 working days.

- ▶ You should expect at least generic **feedback** on any written assignments, presentations, logbooks, performances or other such course work projects in 15 working days. Note that 15 working days means days that the University is open, so this for example would not include a Bank Holiday, and over Christmas when the University is normally closed for up to 6 working days.
- ▶ On your written examinations you should receive generic **feedback** within 15 working days of publication of the results. This **feedback** may be verbal, written through e-mail or other means such as a lecture about the main points.
- ▶ If you would like individual **feedback** on your exam script you should make an appointment to see the Module Tutor and ask how you could have improved your paper. Please note that you should give the tutor some notice so that they can dig out your paper and reread it. Sometimes large exams are marked by a team of people so you may have to see another member of the teaching team if they were your marker. And, don't leave it too long, as papers are archived after the exams and you might miss your chance.
- ▶ Your dissertation or final project is considered the same as an exam in terms of results publication and **feedback**. Make an appointment to see your supervisor after the results are out to discuss **feedback** if you would like some, again giving a bit of notice.
- ▶ Please be aware that your exam or dissertation cannot be discussed with tutors before the results come out. We are not allowed to give any hint of the marks before results day.
- ▶ For any assessment that you do at UCLan which contributes to your module mark you should receive individual **feedback**.
- ▶ Please note that if your lecturer can not get your **feedback** to you in 15 working days, they should always inform you so you know when to expect it.

If you are considered a distance learner please note that you should expect feedback on assessed work in 20 working days

STOP
LISTEN
YOU'RE GETTING
FEEDBACK

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What should I expect in 15 working days?

- ▶ In 15 working days you should expect generic **feedback** on your assessment.
- ▶ This generic **feedback** could be in the form of a class discussion, a conversation with your lecturer, or peer **feedback**.
- ▶ Sometimes your lecturer may be able to provide you with individual written **feedback** in 15 days which is great, a real gold standard.
- ▶ Your tutor may not be able to meet with you to go through every piece of work you do, this is especially true for modules with large numbers of students. However, you should be able to meet with them at least once during your module to discuss your work.
- ▶ As previously stated, if your lecturer is unable to deliver individual **feedback** in 15 days they will let you know.

Ok, so now I've got some feedback - what do I do with it?

Don't just look at the grade Yes, the grade you receive is important but that is all it can tell you. You need to read the rest of your **feedback** to know how to improve your next grade and how you got there with this one. If your mark is better than you expected you need to know why you so you can make sure you do the same next time. You cannot change your grade, but you can improve your next grade by using your **feedback**.

Read it or listen to it In whatever form it comes to you, whether it's written on paper, on an e-mail or in an audio file, take notice of it. Your lecturer has spent time doing this to help you and just as you expect them to read your assignment, they expect you to read their **feedback**.

Make sure you understand it You need to make sure you know what your lecturer means. If you don't understand your **feedback**, it ends up being meaningless. Go and see your lecturer for clarification if you need to.

Think about it How can the **feedback** you've received on this assignment help you with your next piece of work? Were there comments about your general writing style, presentation, referencing? Each piece of assessed work you do does not stand alone, it is possible for it to be applied elsewhere.

Talk about it Whether it is with your lecturer for clarification and more detail, or if it is with your course mates, talking about your **feedback** can help you to better understand it. You and your course mates can also learn things from each other.

Keep it Even though you read your **feedback** when you get it, chances are you may have forgotten what much of it says when your next assignment is handed in, so make sure you keep it so you can refer back to it. It's also nice to have a look at how much your work has improved from one year to the next.



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What can I do if I'm not happy with the feedback I've received?

First, try to be clear about 'not happy'. If your **feedback** is critical, but true, you might not be happy about that but this does not mean that the **feedback** was unfair, untrue or not useful.

If you are upset because you have critical but true **feedback** and/or a low mark, and you do not know why or how to get better marks, that is the ideal time to make an appointment to see the tutor and ask for help. That is their job and most staff will be delighted that a student who's struggling is asking for help to improve. Take a notebook to the meeting so you can record their suggestions for improvement.

If you are dissatisfied with your **feedback** in the sense that you think it is inadequate, unfair, illegible or absent, or that your mark is unfair, once again you should really see the Module Tutor. Any tutor who has made a genuine mistake (such as mixing you up with another student with the same name) will be perfectly happy to amend your mark straight away.

If you feel, on the other hand, that the tutor has not made a mistake in adding your marks but has been unfair by being too critical in their comments, applying a criteria that wasn't in the assignment brief, or by your mark not reflecting the achievement of the paper, then again you will have to take it up with the Module Tutor. Ideally you should go along in full confidence that you can explain your grievance to him or her and have an adult conversation about it. Again, most staff will react well to students who want to explore the reason for their marking. However, if you feel awkward about raising the subject, you could ask your Personal Tutor or Course Leader to accompany you to the meeting, or take a friend with you, or have your Personal Tutor raise the issue with the Module Tutor, to sound them out, before you see them.

If you have tried to speak to the Module Tutor about your mark and do not feel that you have got anywhere, you can take the issue to your Personal Tutor. If they feel that you have a case they will inform the course leader and Student Experience Co-ordinator who will investigate the matter.

Conclusion

We hope you have found this guide useful and you now have a greater understanding about the importance of **feedback**. The table on the reverse should prove very useful for you to be able to recognise the use that **feedback** has been to you. Fill it in when you start to receive **feedback** and we hope that you can see a progression in your work. If, at any time in your university career, you are unclear about anything in your **feedback**, never hesitate to talk to your Module Tutor or Personal Tutor about it. That's what they are there for and staff would always prefer to help rather than have a student miss out on something that could be useful!



STOP, LOOK, LISTEN AND USE

Student's Feedback Action Plan *(complete after each piece of assessment)*

Three things I did which attracted positive **feedback**:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Three things I did which attracted critical **feedback**:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Three things I will do to address my critical **feedback**:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The most useful **feedback** I received was:

I will always use the **feedback** I receive because:

Three improvements I have noticed from using my **feedback** are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Use in conjunction with the 'This Way Up' Student Guide to Assessment www.uclan.ac.uk/ldu/StudentGuideToAssessment/

Copies available from **Learning Development Unit, University of Central Lancashire,**
Preston PR1 2HE Telephone 01772 892370



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Designed by Print and Design Services, University of Central Lancashire, 01772 892468.

