

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

STOP  
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Student's Guide  
to Feedback

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**Feedback** action plan      Back Cover

Always make  
sure you  
collect your  
feedback!

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## Welcome to the School of Social Work 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.

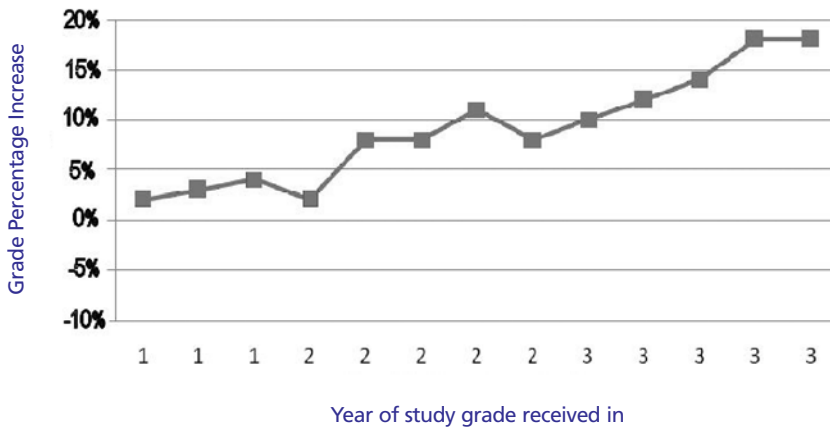
Below is a case study of a UCLan student who used their **feedback** throughout their time at University and has seen a progression in their marks. This student has now graduated from UCLan with a degree they were extremely pleased with:

"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



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 in order to ensure equity and fairness for all students, and to ensure that students attain academic awards on their own merit, the School has a policy that tutors will NOT to read draft essays for students. The only exception to this is during the resubmission process. Tutors may read a draft submission of a resubmitted essay, as part of the learning process. Separate guidance will be issued in relation to dissertation supervision.

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

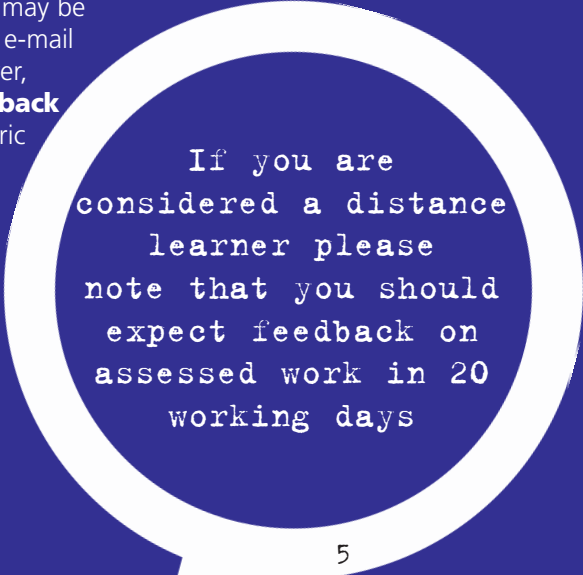




## When should I expect feedback?

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. However, individual written **feedback** should follow this generic **feedback** on written examinations.
- ▶ For your dissertation or final project you should also expect generic **feedback** within 15 working days of publication of results which should later be followed up by individual written **feedback**.
- ▶ 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 cannot 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

## What should I expect in 15 working days?

- ▶ Firstly it is important to note that students who undertake social work practice placements as part of their course are receiving continuous **feedback** about their practice all the time and will need to be open to this and able to reflect upon it and learn from it.
- ▶ 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 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 back at how much your work has improved from one year to the next.



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

It is important to note that academic grades cannot be changed and the decision of the marker is final, however, it is important that you understand why the marker came to the decision they did. One of the skills required of students studying social work and social care courses is that they are able to reflect upon their learning. It is important that you apply this skill to the **feedback** that you receive and try to make sense of it, critically reflecting upon your strengths and areas for development. Additionally, you should incorporate your reflection upon your **feedback** to the process of personal development planning that is an integral part of your course. If you need help to understand the **feedback** you have received, you should discuss this with the lecturer that marked your work. Remember too that your personal tutor can provide additional support about study skills and help you to reflect upon **feedback** as part of your personal development planning.

## Conclusion

We hope you have found this guide useful and you now have a greater understanding about the importance of **feedback**. The table over the page 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.

Further information on the assessment process is available in the School of Social Work Assessment handbook which can be found in eLearn (Web CT).



# 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/](http://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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