Using Feedback Effectively

What is feedback?

Review - Information used to review a product, service, performance etc.

Spotlight - strengths and weaknesses.

What is it for?

Helps you to continue to do what you did well.

Allows you to make improvements on areas of weakness.

Supports future success.

Academic context

All assessed coursework will have feedback with the mark/grade. This could essays, reports, presentations etc. The feedback will focus on how well you have:

- Met the assignment learning outcomes
- Met the assignment brief
- Met the research and analysis required
- Followed your tutor's guidance

What will the feedback include?

Constructive critical* evaluation of your work.

Objective view of where you have done well and where you need to improve.

The strengths and weaknesses of your work.

Strategies for improving future work.

*see the section on Critical Thinking to understand the academic meaning of critical

Is feedback important? Yes!

- Part of the learning partnership between you and your academics
- Key tool in the learning process
- Use it to enhance your learning and the quality of your work
- If you ignore it you won't know how to improve!

How will I receive feedback?

Various means - Online via Turnitin, on paper, in person (or even via video).

How to approach feedback

See it as positive opportunity not a negative criticism.

Ignoring your feedback is a missed opportunity.

Emotional reaction – it can be disappointing getting a lower mark than you expected, but do not be demotivated, it's not personal and it's designed to give you an honest account so that you can improve.

I got a good grade so I don't need to bother with feedback, do I?

Yes! Do you know why you did well?

It's important to understand why you got a good grade so that you can do well again.

You can always improve. No assignment will be perfect, use the feedback to achieve an even higher grade next time.

What should I do with it?

Actively engage with the feedback: Read, Reflect and Implement

- Read it – read the feedback and read back through your assignment to make sense of the feedback
- Reflect – make sure you understand why you did well and where you can improve
- Look for reoccurring patterns - Is the same feedback occurring assignment after assignment? E.g. grammar, sentence structure, referencing, critical argument, not using enough evidence, not answering the question, not producing a balanced argument
- Implement - feed forward. Make sure the feedback improves your future work

Keep your feedback handy when you write your next assignment.

You may just need to bear things in mind for the next assignment or you may need to seek help to improve an aspect of your academic work.

Use feedback to make a list of areas you perform well in and those where you need to improve.

From this, identify actions and strategies you need to capitalise on strength and overcome weaknesses.

I know what I need to improve – but how do I do it?

If you need help, consider these options:

Personal Tutor: discuss in detail what you need to do to improve.

LEAP Online: complete appropriate sections – your tutor may make some suggestions.

Peer support: PASS, Peer mentor, study groups. Sometimes talking things through with other students helps.

LEAP study tutors: you can book an appointment to go through a particular issue.

LEAP workshops: there may be classes available for the topic you need help with.

Library: for help with gathering the right academic evidence.

Email, leap@bolton.ac.uk, for further information regarding PASS, peer mentoring, LEAP Online, Leap Workshops and study tutors.

What if I don't understand the feedback?

Confused by assessment jargon.

Confused by technical jargon.

The feedback is unclear.

Clarify by speaking to your tutor.

What if I don't agree with the feedback?

You feel your tutor has misunderstood you or has made comments which are unfair.

Discuss with your tutor.

Do I get to give feedback?

Yes. At various points in your university life – module evaluation questionnaires, NSS.

Summary

Your responsibilities:

- Engage with feedback positively
- Reflect
- Clarify
- Implement

LEAP Online Access LEAP Online at: http://www.bolton.ac.uk/leaponline