

# Formative and Summative Feedback using Moodle Marking Guide

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## Class Sizes:

26 Students

## Discipline:

Social Care  
(part-time degree)

## Feedback Approaches

Multistage assignment (Draft and Final), Marking Guide with Exemplar, online written feedback

## Technologies

Moodle Assignment, Moodle Marking Guide, Moodle Feedback Files

## Challenge & Aim

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The challenge in this case study was to engage students with thinking about assessment criteria while providing them with tutor feedback on a draft piece of work using published assessment criteria that would assist them in improving their draft for a final submission. As the students were part-time students, Moodle gradebook was used to provide a means of submitting assignments remotely. This is followed by criteria based feedback that students could use to improve their work for the final submission which was also in Moodle gradebook and with the same marking criteria.

The aim of this case study was to provide timely constructive feedback to students which they can use to improve their final submission/assignment.

## Evidence from the Literature

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Feedback is a significant and valuable part of the assessment process (Poulos and Mahony 2008, Price *et al.* 2010, Beaumont *et al.* 2011, O'Donovan *et al.* 2015). It has the potential to guide student learning and improvement of work (McKevitt 2016). As noted in the Y1 Feedback synthesis of the literature (Y1 Feedback 2016) written feedback is the most common means of providing feedback to students. Sopina and McNeill (2014) found that 91% of 335 first-year students in their study preferred to electronically submit an assignment. This was related to the fact that students were able to read the typed feedback on the electronic submission as opposed to the handwritten feedback on paper submissions. Technology mediated feedback can include general comments on work and more specific in-text annotations.

Students find both of these beneficial in terms of information regarding their performance and indications as to how it can be improved (Agius and Wilkinson 2014). Other benefits accruing to students are that the feedback can be made available via email or a VLE, such as Moodle, which can be easily accessed by students and does not require collection (Parkin *et al.* 2012, Carless, 2015). Indeed, students appreciate the convenience of such feedback because it is readily accessible and/or downloadable over time (Parkin *et al.* 2012). While the benefits of technology mediated feedback are clear there are also some *potential* drawbacks. Not all students may view digital feedback to be as personalised as handwritten feedback (Tse, Christie and Rana 2014). Teachers may have to invest a lot of time providing the feedback (Buckley & Cowap 2013) but it is possible that over time and with increased familiarity this will improve (Jones and Kelly 2014).

### Feedback Approach

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In this case study the Moodle gradebook was used for a draft and final submission of students' work. The criteria for the marking guide were discussed in class with the students and an exemplar of a part of the assignment was presented to them in conjunction with the marking criteria. The tutor set up a marking guide in Moodle gradebook for a final submission and then copied this marking guide to another gradebook for a draft submission. Students submitted a draft piece of work three weeks prior to their final submission.

The tutor used the marking guide to provide non-graded criteria based feedback which was aimed at students improving their work in relation to those criteria. This formative feedback was aimed at supporting the students in improving their work prior to the final submission. Following the draft submission the tutor used another Moodle gradebook with the same marking guide to give summative graded feedback to those students, make general comments, and providing feedback files, if necessary.

## Outcomes

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Students evaluated the study using a questionnaire. From a class of 26 students 20 students submitted a draft piece of work. However, only 16 students agreed to complete the questionnaire.

### Students

The main findings were as follows:

- 12 of the students stated that they would like to get feedback in this way again with 2 not wishing to receive feedback in this way again.
  - The majority of students (11) found it easy to access the feedback with the remaining 5 responding neutrally.
  - Only 8 of the students found Moodle Assignment/Gradebook easy to use with 2 finding it difficult and the remaining 6 being neutral.
  - 9 of the students found using Moodle Assignment/Gradebook a satisfying experience with 2 being dissatisfied and the remaining 5 being neutral.
  - All students accessed their feedback at least once with 7 accessing 2-3 times and 1 accessing it 4-5 times.
  - All the students found the feedback provided to be useful with 6 finding it very useful, 5 finding it quite useful, 4 finding it useful, and 1 finding it somewhat useful.
  - In terms of the clarity of the feedback, 13 students found it to be clear with 1 finding it unclear and 2 being neutral.
  - Only 8 students responded to say that they had used all the feedback on their draft for their final submission. 4 students responded to say that they had used some of the feedback for their final submission.
- 14 of the 16 students who responded reported that they have intended to use the feedback received to improve their final submission and 1 student was neutral.
  - 13 of the students agreed that they would pay attention to feedback they will receive in the future with 3 remaining neutral.
  - 14 students report an intention to use feedback to improve future work they will have to do with 2 remaining neutral.
  - 5 students reported being very much more confident, 5 students reported being a little more confident and 6 students reported being somewhat more confident in using digital technologies.
  - Finally, 14 students reported Moodle Gradebook as a good method of feedback with 1 reporting it as a poor method of feedback.

### Tutor

The tutor evaluated the case study by way of a personal reflection.

Moodle gradebook allows the submission deadline to be managed by the module leader. I was particularly impressed with the function that allowed marking guides to be included as part of the gradebook to allow students to view the criteria against which their work would be evaluated. I set up the final submission gradebook initially; this included marks for each criteria. Then I set up the draft submission gradebook and copied the marking guide into this gradebook. In hindsight, I should have set up the draft submission gradebook first and then the final submission gradebook completely separately. I showed it to students to make sure they were comfortable with it and to check that they would be able to use it. I explained the marking guide to students and asked that they use it for assessing their own work.

I told them I would be using the same criteria to assess their work, but that they would not receive a mark on their draft, only comments on how to improve on the criteria. I provided them with an exemplar of part of the assignment. I placed both gradebook submissions close to each other on the Moodle page. This caused some confusion although they were given different titles. Doing it again, I would only put one up at a time or hide the final submission gradebook until after the draft feedback was provided. Once I had received drafts I was able to begin providing feedback. However, students were not receiving the feedback I had included on each separate criterion (this was because I had copied the marking guide from the final submission which meant that I should include a mark for the draft). My way around this was to copy the marking guide and paste it into the feedback comments section in the gradebook and then I could type in the comments for each criterion. This added slightly to my work and slowed the return of feedback to some students who were dissatisfied with this. On the positive side, once the feedback was provided and released to students my work was done & they had a permanent place where they could view it.

- Get some support from your Learning Technologist before setting it up and run a pilot.
- If using the rubric/marketing guide function in Moodle for a draft submission; draw it up entirely separately to a final submission & create separate rubric/marketing guides.
- Allow students to view one submission inbox at a time (draft followed by final).
- Give the students a class on how to use the Moodle Gradebook.
- Reassure students that they can ask for more feedback in class – provide Generic Feedback to the whole class.
- Show the students how you would provide feedback on the exemplar piece of work using the marking guide.

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