**Feedback and Student Engagement Brainstorm**

At the TALQAC/MCSHE Forum on Teaching and Learning Strategies for Effective Feedback and Engaging Students, held 20 April 2018, participants were given the following task: in pairs, please discuss and jot down responses to the following:

* (at least) two examples of **effective feedback** provided to you when you were students or that you have provided as teachers (assuming you have taught). In your responses, please include why you thought the feedback was effective.
* (at least) two example of teaching techniques that **effectively engaged** you as studentsor youhave used to effectively engage students(assuming you have taught). Why did you consider the teaching engaging?

**Here are participants’ responses, in alphabetical order. Please note that anonymous responses are included towards the end of this document, followed by two detailed email responses.**

* **Stuart Barber, FVAS:** [srbarber@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:srbarber@unimelb.edu.au) **and** [artem.polyuyanyy@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:artem.polyuyanyy@unimelb.edu.au)

**Effective feedback:**

* Individual student feedback on each quiz / exam via email.
* Individual rubric based feedback on essays within Turnitin.
* Face to face individual feedback.
* Student surveys in class.
* Online quiz auto assessment / feedback.

**Effective engagement:**

* + Quiz in class to discuss understanding.
  + Think pair, share queries.
  + Peer assessment as early feedback for written assessment.
  + Use of peerwrite to assess student knowledge at the end of a case study.
* **Samantha Byrne, MDS:** [sbyrne@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:sbyrne@unimelb.edu.au)

**Effective feedback:** as a student (currently): peer feedback on a presentation; reflecting on this feedback as an assessment task. As staff: students have reported liking the written feedback provided via the LMS on assessment tasks during the semester.

**Effective engagement:** as a lecturer I use a variety of in-class activities to engage students: in class quizzes, polls (in small groups). Small group discussion of research articles. Pair and share the reporting back to the whole class on topical newspaper articles. Physical modelling of microbial e>>logy concepts using props / students as bacterial cells.

* **Jan Carey-Bioso, Optometry, MDHS:** [janetmc@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:janetmc@unimelb.edu.au)

**Effective feedback:** verbal feedback from a clinical teacher supervising a clinical consultation – directed personal feedback. *Practical* tips on the distinction between writing a critical review of literature and simply restating what is found in literature. These are added as comments on draft reviews. My stimulus for doing this in detail is pathetic feedback I received as a student many years ago. (Some tips sourced from library guides that have since disappeared.)

* **Rob Day, Science:** [**r.day@unimelb.edu.au**](mailto:r.day@unimelb.edu.au)

**Effective feedback:** Personalised comments provided on essays together with the marks lost. Correct answers and why for multiple choice questions where a substantial proportion chose a different answer.

**Effective engagement:** Making the issue relevant to the students. Giving students – sharing – the reasons you are passionate about an issue (issues) in a subject.

* **Jacinta den Besten, Physics, Science:** [denj@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:denj@unimelb.edu.au) **and Aovana Timmerman, Dental School:** [**timmerman.a@unimelb.edu.au**](mailto:timmerman.a@unimelb.edu.au)

**Effective feedback:** small groups – face-to-face verbal discussion. Written and formative feedback. Large groups – feedback mark sheet.

**Effective engagement:** small groups –research questions beforehand, then discuss in small group; get to know students. Large groups – discussion / debate in lectures.

* **Camille Dickson-Deane, FBE:** [c.dickson@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:c.dickson@unimelb.edu.au) **and Maria Klona, FBE:** [maria.klona@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:maria.klona@unimelb.edu.au) **and** **Teresa Menzies-Devine, MGSE:** [teresamd@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:teresamd@unimelb.edu.au)

**Effective feedback:** linked actions to the subject expectations. Highlighting what was done in my paper and a comparison with a visual of what was expected. Clearly expressed – what I had achieved and what needed attention.

**Effective engagement:** using an example I can relate to so I can understand the topic better. The body language and passion communicated to me during the lecture. Personalising tutorials / classes – reflects that [the] student is perceived as an individual.

* **Paul Gruba, Arts:** [p.gruba@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:p.gruba@unimelb.edu.au)

**Effective feedback:** end of MA: advice was that your purpose is to make a contribution to the field. Interviewing to be a short order cook and the chef threw me an onion and asked me to cut it up – which became the basis for the interview.

* **Ariana Henderson, University Services, Academic Skills:** [ariana.henderson@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:ariana.henderson@unimelb.edu.au)

**Effective feedback:** 1. When a teacher teaches us *how* to improve. 2. Providing me with *ways* of improving that can be applied in future.

**Effective engagement:** 1. When a teacher is *passionate* about their subject and conveys that passion. 2. When you give students the opportunity to solve/create/argue problems that truly changes the way students think about an issue.

* **Natali Krekeler, FVAS:** [krekeler@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:krekeler@unimelb.edu.au)

**Effective feedback:** reviews sessions for large groups; going through concepts that were misconceived. It also helps to tell students what feedback they are receiving. Often they don’t realise that they receive it.

**Effective engagement:** letting them create board games (keeping in mind learning objectives).

* **Barbara Keys, Arts:** [**bkeys@unimeblb.edu.au**](mailto:bkeys@unimeblb.edu.au)

**Effective feedback:** workshopping how to write an effective thesis statement, including peer feedback on draft thesis statement.

**Effective engagement:** historical role play: *hugely* engaging (‘Reacting to the Past’). Posing questions about the relationship of present-day issues and the past (content of the class) so that students draw connections that show how history helps explain the answer.

* **Anna Krohn, MGSE:** [Akrohn@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:Akrohn@unimelb.edu.au)

**Effective feedback:** specific written and verbal feedback, pinpointing elements in greater detail (rather than just the generic statements on the rubric).

**Effective engagement: reading circles –** shared summaries, written responses and verbal sharing, which included posing a question that the reading has prompted. Small group sharing.

* **Balavijendran Logan, Online Resources, Academic Skills:** [Logan.b@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:Logan.b@unimelb.edu.au)

**Effective feedback as student**: detailed, line-by-line, prescriptive: but showed investment by teacher. Feedback by someone who is invested in my success. I don’t want to let them down, so I act upon their feedback.

* **Sandra McLaren:** [mclarens@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:mclarens@unimelb.edu.au)

**Effective feedback:** whole class feedback delivered in lecture and/or written. Written feedback that clearly states what could be improved.

**Effective engagement:** setting up an experiment for students to design and ‘drive’ – this was the most engaging exercise I have run. Less involvement from me, gave them more autonomy and control.

* **Psychology**

**Effective feedback:** what tutors provide on assessments – essays and reports. Students are given criteria in advance; feedback in line with criteria, to justify the grade. Quiz for automatic feedback. Peer review against provided criteria. Peer wise – students create quiz for each other.

**Effective Engagement:** quiz.

* **David Rose, Social Work, MDHS:** [**drose@unimelb.edu.au**](mailto:drose@unimelb.edu.au)

**Effective feedback**: in program design subject: staged assessment and feedback: Hurdle assessment - students do peer review of each others’ program logic model and then tutor feedback; 2. Presentation of program logic model for tutor feedback (10% assessment); 3. Incorporate into major assignment for written feedback.

* **Antanas Spokevicius, Science:** [avjs@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:avjs@unimelb.edu.au)

**Effective feedback:** immediate feedback on performance eg students submitted or completed something and then get immediate feedback. Ability to incorporate and use feedback to improve performance eg give feedback on document prior to submission yo allow students to use this prior to submission.

**Effective engagement:** relationship, get to know them (students): this is why why they come to do coursework learning.

* **Anna Ryan, MMS:** [annatr@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:annatr@unimelb.edu.au)

**Effective feedback:** we’re having challenges with a judgment of our feedback being effective. In many of the instances we discussed we don’t yet know the student response.

**Effective engagement:** I tended to be engaged in feedback when the supervisor seemed to understand both my level of expertise and where I was headed.

* **Jessica Welch DMI/SBS/MDHS:** [jessica.welch@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:jessica.welch@unimelb.edu.au)

**Effective feedback:** feedback from a practice presentation gave me confidence in content with tips to improve presentation style. Feedback on a written assignment giving specific examples of how to improve – be more specific *here*, cut back on background/storytelling *here*.

**Effective engagement:** teacher as expert – teaching epidemiology from the perspective of working on the SARS outbreak for the WHO .

* **Sally Warmington, School of Medicine, MDHS:** [**sgwa@unimelb.edu.au**](mailto:sgwa@unimelb.edu.au) **and Ha Nguyen, University Services:** [**ha.nguyen1@unimelb.edu.au**](mailto:ha.nguyen1@unimelb.edu.au)**:**

**Effective feedback:** received praise about the quality of my writing during my PhD. On-going purposeful guidance about the *direction* of the work and focus on research question and argument. (during PhD).

**Effective engagement:** inviting students to undertake role plays relating to the topic of the tutorial (ethical practice) (SW). [Being] explicit about expectations of students at the start of the semester. (HN)

* **Valeria Cotronei-Baird, FBE:** [**valerisc@unimelb.edu.au**](mailto:valerisc@unimelb.edu.au)

**Effective feedback:** feedback that is constructive / formative ie identify the strengths and use strengths to guide students to address the challenges / problems (together with recommendations): that is a dialogue based on a specific learning outcome. Use of rubrics criteria.

**Effective engagement:** using jigsaw activities. Peer feedback on each other’s lesson/activities (not formally assessed). Students asked to teach topic to other students acting as students. Teacher role and student role – each learn content but also generic skills.

* **Anonymous**

**Effective feedback:** 1.Feedback on assignment question [is] specific. 2.Feeding back with specific feeding forward. 3.Personalise. 4.Attention paid throughout the assignment. 5.MCQ prepared for each other by students.

**Effective engagement:** 1.Mini-quizzes before class. 2.Asking questions time to time in the lecture.

* **Anonymous**

**Effective feedback:** written and personalised feedback on assignments.

**Effective engagement:** (secondary) science teacher giving practical demonstrations. Must involve students doing something *active*. Change of pace – break up class time with videos.

* **Anonymous**

**Effective feedback:** detailed feedback on why MCQ answers were wrong/right: can see errors. Feedback on how to structure a sentence differently – to improve writing. Feedback on errors - where they lost marks and how to do the correct solution (solving a problem).

**Effective engagement:** starting from a question and discussing how this might work and building to how it really does work (developmental genetics) - exciting to think about and why. Quizzes with small rewards – eg lollies; lightening the mood.

* **Anonymous**

**Effective feedback:** 1. Comments on essays about how to structure them etc in high school – learnt how to do it better. (No feedback beyond naked exam results when I was a UofM student). 2. Going through MST papers with students after their exam when results are known. Students say this is useful.

**Effective engagement:** use of humorous analogy / example to explain something (concept) clearly. I remember it 25+ years after the lecture.

* **Anonymous**

**Effective feedback:** oral feedback immediately following performance of the target behaviour.

**Effective engagement:** tapping into what the students feel they need to improve or want feedback on. Noticing the small aspects of performance of the target behaviour, both positive and negative.

* **Anonymous**

**Effective feedback:** specific example of what was done well / not done well. Peer to peer feedback- identifying areas of improvement of a peer’s work. Kind, constructive feedback.

**Effective engagement:** encouraging collaborative work [to] the response. ‘Hooks’. ‘Approachable’.

* **Anonymous:**

**Effective feedback:** provide *specific* comments on documents / reports. Put feedback into context – where what they are learning will go next. Provide [?] context.

* **Anonymous:**

**Effective feedback:** feedback comments that provide clear examples of where to improve. Face to face feedback dialogues.

**Effective engagement:** video feedback that is personalised. Feedback that takes into account individual situations of students.

* **Anonymous:**

**Effective feedback:** scaffolding the assessment so that feedback can be taken on board – not empty and not applied: ‘formative feedback’.

**Effective engagement:** field/site visits related to assessment tasks. When they work on a specific case study or project.

* **Anonymous**

**Effective feedback:** (1)to a student – feedback I provide(d) that was directly linked to the task brief and the rubric. We linked with evidence in the writing and linked the 3 up.(2) As part of an oral presentation delivery: directly after the OP input, practice took place. Feedback *straight after* the performance about practice elements and elements requiring work (constructive feedback) have proven enormously well received.

**Effective engagement:** activities that lead students to a realisation (deductive teaching) rather than telling them.

* **Matthew Dyki, FBE:** [mdyki@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:mdyki@unimelb.edu.au)

**Effective feedback:** Here is what we do in a post grad accounting subject ACCT90030, it has already been identified by FBE as good practice <https://staff.unimelb.edu.au/fbe/wcla/good-teaching-series/Valerie-Matt-Martin-GTS.pdf>.

We have student presentations, on a hypothetical case I write (albeit based on conversations with real business where possible) where students have to identify what are the strengths and weaknesses of a business process, in particular the effect of the process on producing good accounting information.

Students are in self-selected groups of 4-5 students and present is to a panel of three academics where all students must present. The presentation itself is 10 minutes with 20 minutes allocated to Q/A and providing feedback to students. When asking questions purposely ask students questions not on the part they presented (but normally connected to) to help overcome the silo effect common in group assignments. The questions are also leading feedback questions most of the time.

Students are also required to submit a 500 word presentation brief (executive summary) which we use as a document to provide feedback to students during the presentation via Turnitin. I find Turnitin and the use of quick marks a great way to provide detailed feedback to students during oral presentations. It is not device dependent, drag and drop and being non-device dependent I can use a laptop and quickly add comments if needed. (note I think this is more flexible then the app that Dr Mendoze developed and is Uni supported) I also have a well-developed set of rubrics that I use and put into Turnitin to provide feedback (was asked to be the academic presenter on rubrics at one of the practical pedology workshops run last year by LE).

The assignment for marking purposes is broken down into three nominal parts, The presentation, The brief (exec summary) and Individual presentation skills/Q/A The first two are marked at the group level and worth 10% each final grade, the last part individually split 5/5 final grade.

In having the marking panel we are able to split the marking workload, one person concentrating on giving feedback, one person identifying questions to ask and one person marking the soft or generic skills (lately this been Valerie Baird from the Williams Centre who’s PhD was on embedding generic skills).

After all presentations are done students get the written feedback about the assignment via Turnitin and email feedback about the individual part. In marking via Turnitin is easy to transfer all the grades to the grade center in the LMS.

**Effective engagement:** We use a business simulation which put students in charge of running a muesli manufacturing business and students compete against each other to make the most profit. The simulation gives students experience using SAP, commonly used by large business to capture business processes information and share data (what I teach), gives them an idea how to manage a business (few students have work experience) but more importantly they need to work as a team to succeed. The simulation also gets students to realise the scope and depth of what accounting information there is and breaks down silos between subjects. After playing the simulation we use it as a study to explore business processes. Playing the simulation gets students engaged in a way I have never seen before, but also teaches them a number of important concepts within my subject without them even realizing they being taught until we reflect on it in later weeks.

While it’s an intensive week find in terms of total workload its akin to each of marking papers individually, but doing it face to face its quicker and more in-depth feedback, the use of probing questions in the Q/A time enables us to turn this into a teaching experience to guide the students.

* **Janet Hergt, Earth Sciences:** [jhergt@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:jhergt@unimelb.edu.au)

**Effective feedback:** Frankly, it’s hard to know whether the kind of feedback I’m giving is effective or not (a common comment amongst peers here in Earth Sciences). Even if we cover a piece of written work in comments to help them improve their work, it may be the only written assignment in the subject, so we can’t tell if they take our feedback on board or not!

1. Around Easter time I give my third-year students the prac exam from the previous year and suggest they take the time over the non-teaching week to put themselves into simulated “exam” conditions and give it a go. This is specifically designed to:
   1. Give them a reality check on how well they are understanding the subject material (give some of them a kick in the pants, provide helpful guidance/’feedback’ to them on their progress in the subject)
   2. Give them a clear understanding of the exam format so this doesn’t ‘throw them’ on the day (the prac exam is quite different to the weekly pracs).
2. In the next class week following the Easter break, I spend time going through the ‘model’ answer, providing tips on where many of the students in the previous year went wrong. Indicating what THEIR misconceptions and areas of misunderstanding were, it takes the focus of the current class. Of course many in the current class will have made the same mistakes, but this helps us discuss these at arm’s length, i.e., without exposing any particular student in the class for ‘getting it wrong’. By providing this feedback (on the previous year’s class) to the current class as a whole, we have good discussion around key points, that I hope will improve the understanding of everyone in the room.

**Effective engagement:** I will use the same subject here. The first half of the subject is content-driven...students learn about particular geochemical ‘tools’ that we use in the business. There are a wide range of these, and we cover a different one each week.

1. The 6 weekly practicals are designed to build on each other...with the new tool being the main focus of the weekly prac. The suite of pracs all relate to the same geochemical problem...the origin and evolution of the magma responsible for generating the Tasmanian Dolerites. Students are given a new dataset each week, and need to integrate what they learn from one week to the next, improving their understanding of how ‘real geochemistry’ is performed. This simulation of genuine problem solving (which just happens to be my PhD as I have all of the necessary datasets!!) is something that really appeals to them. They feel like detectives, putting all of the clues together to work out what happened and when. They work well together in undertaking all of the necessary calculations etc and I get very positive feedback from them on this approach.
2. The practical exam (mentioned above in the feedback section above) is a completely artificially generated set of diagrams, data tables and a dummy geological “map”. The question is simple...” Write a geological history for the area depicted in the map using the geochemical information provided...using your interpretation of the geochemical information as evidence for the rationale of your story”. This is not simply an examination of the geochemical topics we’ve covered...it requires them to integrate a wide range of geological concepts they’ve learned over their previous years of study. Although perhaps not technically an ‘engagement’ piece, this format...although it’s really tough on them (and many complain!) also attracts very positive feedback from students as they really feel like they are working like ‘real’ geologists. I think it’s almost the “work integrated learning” approach of both 1 and 2 that improve student engagement in this subject...even though I designed this well before WIL was a ‘thing’.