4. Effective Teaching and Feedback

Effective teaching and feedback: A course's teaching and feedback should be designed together to actively support learning because learning is a process of iterative improvement.

For a learner to be able to improve their knowledge, skills, and abilities in a subject area, they need to understand what quality in the discipline looks like; to be able to judge their own work against this concept of quality; and to improve their own work to meet this. Teaching should therefore provide a framework for learners to gain an understanding of quality in the discipline, and to empower students to use feedback to improve their work actively and iteratively.

Effective teaching and feedback focuses on the learner's participation and must be responsive, flexible and adaptable to meet the diverse needs of learners and their different perspectives. Building student-staff relationships, clearly communicating expectations, encouraging active participation in a safe learning environment, using constructive developmental feedback, and respecting diverse student views and contexts are the key tenets of student-centred teaching and feedback.

Reflective questions for course teams

How do you encourage contact between students and the course team?

1. How do you foster **student/staff relationships** on the course? How do you foster student/staff relationships on the course and how do you set boundaries to protect staff time and staff wellbeing?

2. Does the course team have a coherent communications strategy? Do you provide multiple **communication channels** for students? How do members of the course team communicate with students and with one another? Is communication effective?

How do you develop reciprocity and co-operation among students?

3. What do you do to develop a course culture of **reciprocity** and to build a sense of connection, interaction, peer learning and co-creation in a learning community? How do you encourage students to support one another's learning? Does the course team encourage peer support mechanisms, e.g., course-based societies?

4. How do you design learning activities to support **student collaboration** (e.g., through groupwork, peer evaluation or debate)? How do you organise collaborative activities to ensure all students feel included and have the best opportunity to succeed?

How do you encourage active learning?

5. How do your pedagogical approaches encourage **deep learning** (e.g., problem-based learning, flipped approaches, self-evaluation, peer-review)?

6. Do you provide opportunities for students to actively engage in learning both inside and outside of timetabled sessions? Are these opportunities structured/scaffolded and differentiated?

How do students access prompt feedback?

7. Is **formative feedback** integrated into the course in a way and at a time that is developmental? How do students access timely feedback they can reflect and act upon? Do you encourage students to seek, engage with, and take up feedback from other students, stakeholders and/or technologies (e.g. GenAI)?

8. Do you work with students to develop **constructive** approaches to using feedback, to enable students to understand all feedback channels and to create a learning loop? Does feedback encourage students to improve their work and make links to their learning in other parts of the course?

How do you emphasise time on task?

9. Do you **scaffold** students' learning by breaking down requirements into aligned, scheduled and manageable learning activities? Do you support new students to work on small tasks with short deadlines, increasing the size of tasks and length of deadlines as a student progresses through their course?

10. Are students made aware of detailed task **requirements** and the time a learning task would typically take to complete to a high standard?

How do you communicate high expectations?

11. Are expectations clear? Do you communicate your belief, particularly for students from non-traditional backgrounds and disadvantaged groups, that they can **achieve highly** on the course? How do you do this?

12. Do students know what **high-quality work** looks like? Do you provide exemplars, work through solutions in class, and share excellent work completed by students who have previously studied the course? If not, can you do this?

How do you respect diverse talents and ways of working?

13. How do you encourage students to draw on their **strengths**? How do you scaffold, promote and explicitly value students' particular strengths on your course?

14. How do you make sure all students are challenged appropriately and **differentiate** learning activities to engage students who are excelling and those who may be struggling? How do you scaffold support for the different ability levels of students whilst still maintaining a consistent approach to course requirements and criteria?

For further reading on **Effective Teaching and Feedback**, see the associated Talis Reading List. For case studies, resources and further support developing effective teaching and feedback contact CLT.