

Learning and Teaching Conference 2012

Abstract 6A

Learning through reflective dialogue: Assessing the effectiveness of feedback vivas

Presenters: Stuart Hanscomb and Benjamin Franks, School of Interdisciplinary Studies

Tutors frequently complain that written feedback is not being followed by students. This leads to frustration on the part of markers, and failure to improve performance by students. The short feedback viva was devised in response. It is a 10-minute formally assessed viva with a student discussing their written feedback from their previously submitted assignment. The written feedback on the essay is provided several days in advance (usually over a week) by the academics. The feedback viva has four educational goals: 1. to ensure that students read the comments; 2. to assist them in identifying strengths and weakness in their work; 3. to enable the application of the advice to the marked assignment and to future academic work; 4. to allow the students to reflect on the skills learnt on this course and their wider applicability. It also provides an opportunity for the student to respond to the comments and highlight areas of ambiguity or disagreement with the assessment, thereby encouraging constructive dialogue for both students and academics. This presentation will explain the rationale and procedure for the viva, and discuss the results of recent H.E. Academy funded research into the vivas that aims to assess the benefits and drawbacks of this form of feedback. In particular, it aims to identify whether, and in what ways, the viva enhances or damages the student learning experience, meets its four educational goals and how utilizing this method has benefited academics in shaping their feedback and course delivery. Time will be allowed for audience Q&A.

Outcomes

1. understand the rationale and procedure of feedback vivas
2. understand student response to feedback vivas
3. assess the suitability of this method of assessment in their own teaching