



Effective Feedback, Enhanced Learning

An FDTL4 – Funded project
Led by Nottingham Trent University
in Partnership with De Montfort
University, Leicester



The EFEL Team

- ◆ The Project is led by Nottingham Trent University:
- ◆ Project Director – Prof. Neil Macfarlane
- ◆ Project Consortium Manager- Dr. Colin Hughes



The EFEL Team

- ◆ The Consortium Partner is
- ◆ De Montfort University
 - Project Manager – Dr. Richard Jenkins
 - Also Associate Partner institutions involved



ESR

- ◆ NTU gained 4 points for Teaching, Learning and Assessment in
 - Molecular Biosciences
 - Organismal Biosciences
 - Physics
 - 'Excellent' for Chemistry in previous review structure.



HEFCE & FTDL

(fund for the development of teaching and learning)

◆ FTDL phase 4

- HEFCE funding arising from the joint findings of the Biosciences ESRs administered through FTDL
- Universities invited to bid for funding to....
'stimulate developments in learning and teaching and to secure the widest possible involvement of institutions in the take-up and implementation of good practice' (FTDL4)
- In particular projects were expected to address.. *'subject priorities, generic issues and the current national policy areas such as widening participation, graduate employability and student retention.'* (FTDL4)



Subject priorities – Molecular Biosciences

- ◆ The main area for concern in the overall Molecular Biosciences review was the area of TLA which had *'the lowest mean and mode grades across molecular biosciences, due largely to variable students' learning experiences and flaws in student assessment processes (QAA).*
- ◆ Areas for improvement were identified as ... *clearer guidance to students on the learning outcomes, assessment and marking criteria, and consistently better moderation and feedback are required to improve further the quality (QAA).*



Subject priorities – Organismal Biosciences

- ◆ Across the Organismal Biosciences TLA was the lowest scoring of the six aspects of provision graded.
- ◆ *The most common weakness is the **failure to establish, communicate and apply consistently grade descriptors or marking criteria**. In several cases, even when marking criteria exist, the marks awarded are not consistent with the criteria specified **Students' returned work often contains little written, constructive comment** even when the assessment is intended to provide information for the students to reflect upon their learning and make further progress. (QAA organismal biosciences)*

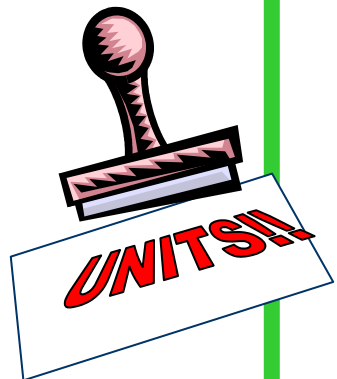




So why pick on feedback?



- ◆ Feedback is essential if students are to improve their understanding However there are:
- ◆ Problems with large class sizes
- ◆ Problems with timely provision of feedback
- ◆ Problems encouraging students to engage with the feedback and improve their performance How often do you have to remind students to: give units of measure....relate THEIR results to the background information....cite references properly....etc...etc.?





Project Aims

Aims of the project :

- ◆ The project is designed to identify, build on and disseminate good practice in:
 - the application of assessment criteria and grade descriptors;
 - assessment of students' work and the provision of feedback.



EFEL .. For Students

- ◆ The project will:
 - Improve transparency, fairness and consistency in assessment
 - Enable a better understanding of the application of assessment criteria and links with learning outcomes and achievements
 - Encourage reflection
 - Facilitate improved performance





EFEL For staff

- ◆ The project will:
 - Make marking more time efficient
 - Make moderation easier
 - Improve confidence in the consistency of marking
 - Ensure prompt return of work



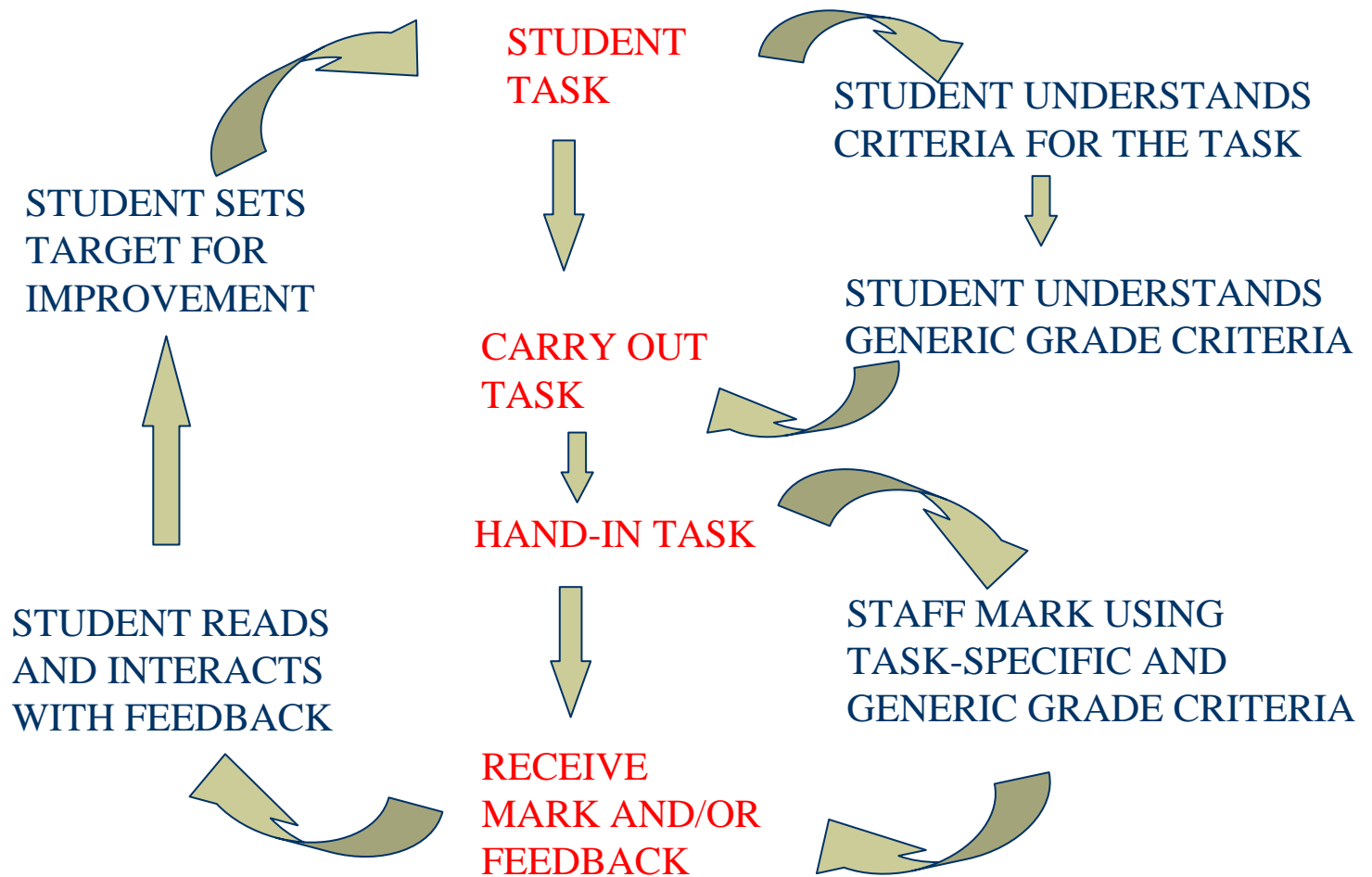


... so what are we going to do





The Assessment and Feedback Process



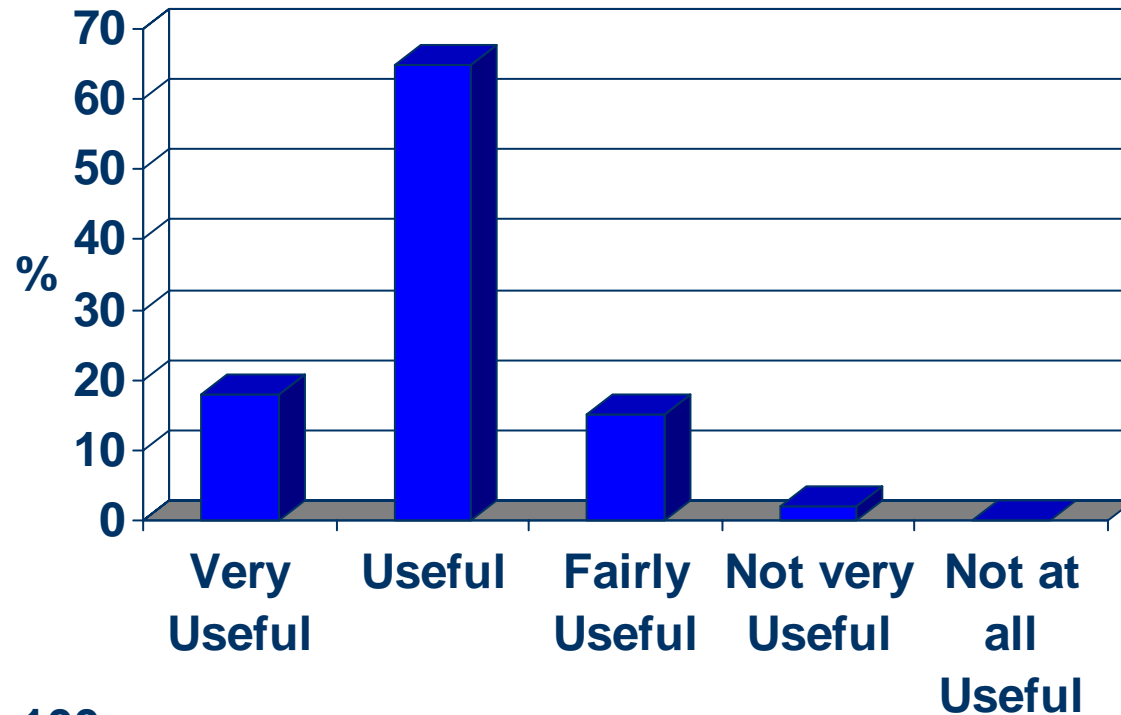


Task-Specific Criteria Assessment Sheets (TSCAs)

- ◆ A student entitlement
- ◆ Informs students of aspects to be assessed
- ◆ Informs students of mark allocation
- ◆ Being developed by all staff (good practice)
- ◆ Should a common format be used?



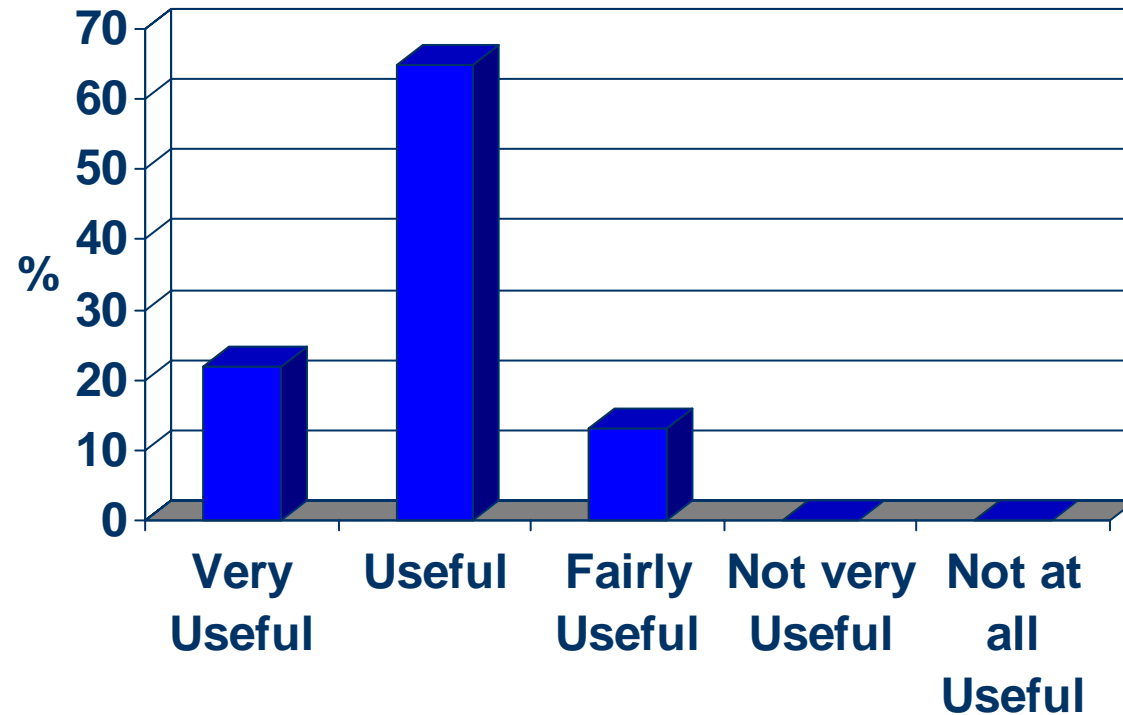
Student Perceptions of TSCAs



n≈100



Student Views of Assessment Feedback Sheets related to TSCAs



$n \approx 100$



Effective Feedback

- ◆ Detailed?
- ◆ Related to Task-Specific Criteria?
- ◆ Related to Learning Outcomes?
- ◆ Focused on major strengths / weaknesses?
- ◆ On the script / feedback sheet / both?
- ◆ Received quickly?



Coursework Feedback Survey

Students value:

- ◆ Constructive criticism
- ◆ Help with improving their work
- ◆ Where they went 'wrong'
- ◆ Legible feedback
- ◆ Encouragement for positive aspects



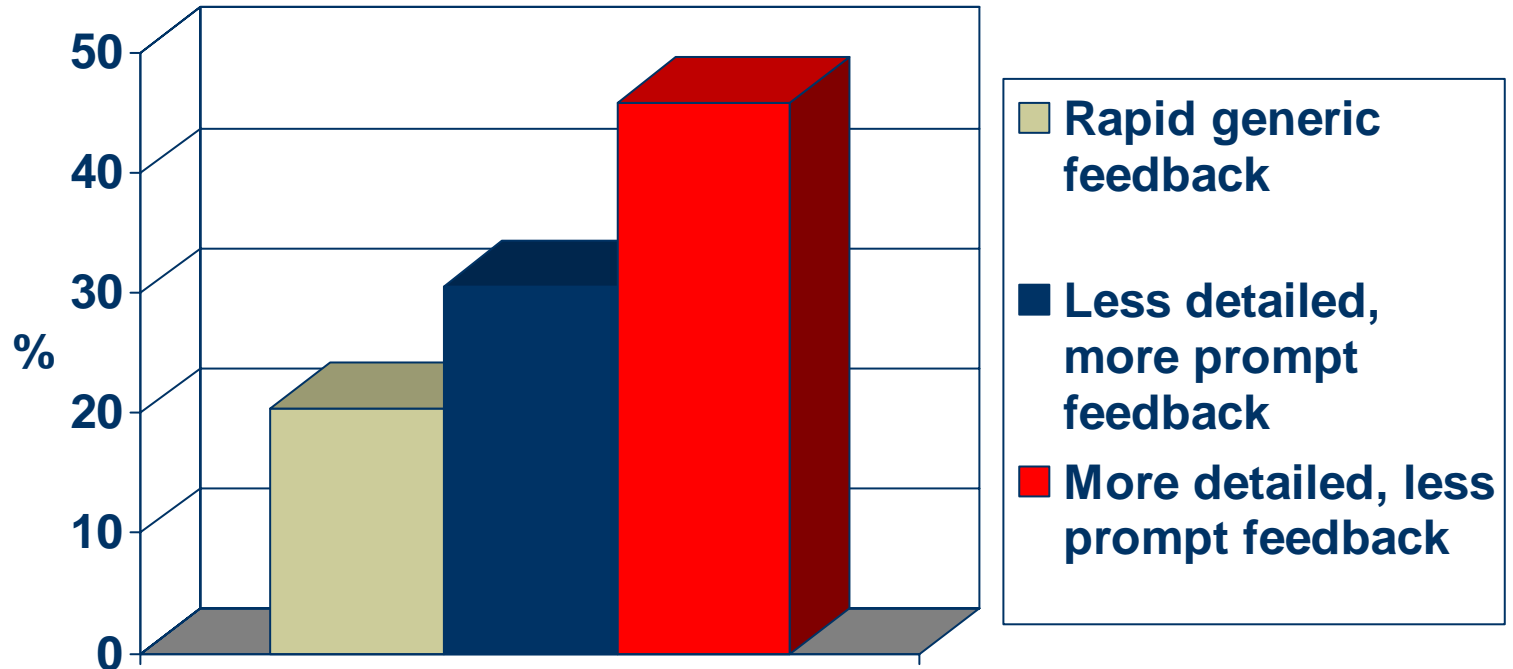
Coursework Feedback Survey

Students do not value:

- ◆ Mark only
- ◆ Unconstructive / destructive feedback
- ◆ Feedback lacking detail
- ◆ Work marked contrary to advice
- ◆ Illegible feedback



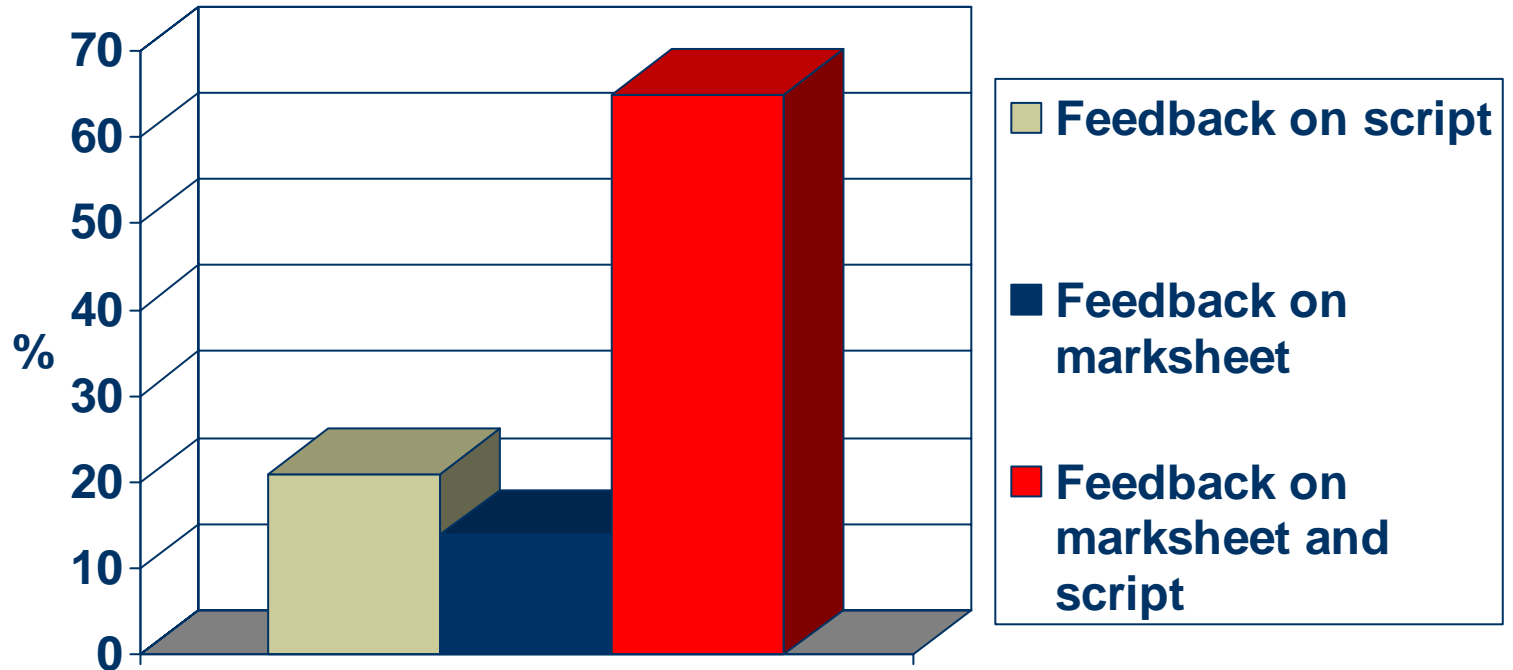
Feedback Preferences



$n \approx 100$



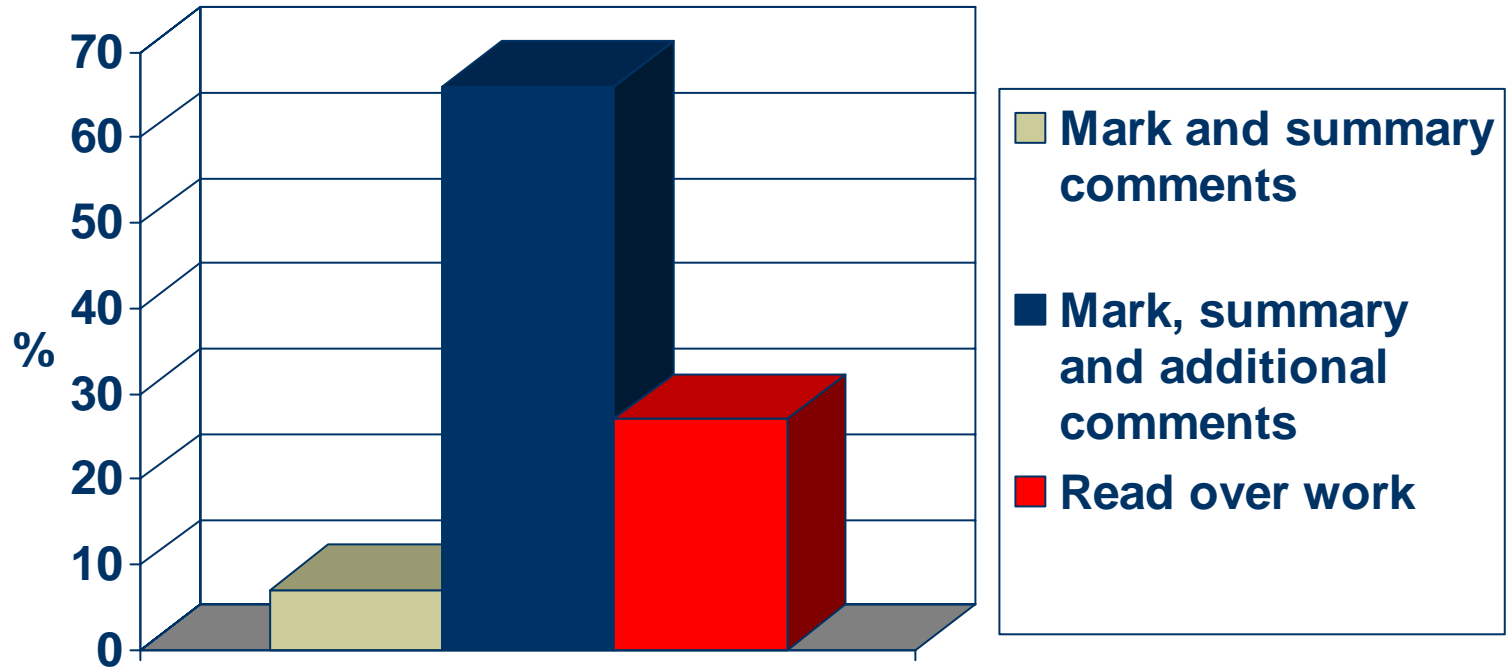
Feedback Location



n \cong 100



Student Interaction with Feedback



n \approx 100



Contact EFEL

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Task-Specific Criteria Assessment Sheets (TSCAs)

- ◆ TSCAs have been one of the successes of the EFEL Project. They are being seen a student entitlement where the following are made clear by staff:
 - Assessment criteria
 - Mark allocation



Task 1

- ◆ Produce a TSCAs for a task you will be giving to students in the next few weeks.
 - Ensure that the criteria are understandable
 - State the mark allocation
 - Show your TSCAs to a colleague
 - Are their expectations similar to yours?
 - Might a student's expectations be similar to yours?
 - How might feedback on the criteria be given?



Assessment and Feedback Evaluation – Key Questions

- ◆ Are there clear criteria for all types of assessment tasks?
- ◆ Are the criteria written for different levels?
- ◆ Do students understand the assessment criteria?
- ◆ Do students understand staff feedback?
- ◆ Is staff feedback legible?
- ◆ Does staff feedback help students to learn by being developmental?
- ◆ Is feedback timely?
- ◆ Do you manage assessments to ensure that there is neither student (or staff) overload?
- ◆ Is the workload for students on a Xcp module equitable with all other Xcp modules?



Key Questions cont.

- ◆ Are all assessment tasks monitored/approved before being given to students
 - examinations
 - tests
 - coursework tasks?
- ◆ Is feedback by staff monitored in any way?
- ◆ **Task 2**
 - Discuss arrangements in your Department/ School/ Faculty for selected items on the list
 - Add any questions to the list