

"Learning from student reflection, a tutor's perspective".

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This handout gives you copies of the quotes from students which I will be drawing on in my talk:

1. Valuing the student's opinion.

"Before finishing, I would just like to say how strange it has felt writing this reflective essay, for it is the first time in years I have been encouraged to write about my own personal view in any detail." [JR 2001]

2. Do students take notice of feedback?

[1st presentation] "Liz's remarks said that I 'spoke fluently, if somewhat quietly' which shows my effort to speak slowly worked, but I had not consciously emphasised the loudness of my voice. I therefore concentrated on this in the next presentation." [2nd presentation] "Liz's remarks said that I 'spoke clearly, but rather fast'. Looking back I can see that this was because I was concentrating on speaking more loudly and clearly and not thinking so much about the pace, as this had been sufficient in the previous presentation. This shows that it is important to keep up good habits as well as improve on bad ones." [KG 2004]

[1st presentation] "I got 64% for my presentation which I thought was about right. Strengths identified were that I approached it in a personalised way, it was clearly and fluently spoken with good audience contact. I was pleased with all of these as they were all my aims. Weaknesses identified were not putting across more of my views, not indicating the structure of my talk and reading too much from my notes." [2nd presentation] "For my presentation I received 66% which I was pleased with as it showed an improvement from my last one. Strong points included a good understanding, establishing good audience contact, speaking slowly and clearly, laying out a structure and having a clear introduction and conclusion. Weaknesses identified were lack of clarity over the limits of infectious disease, a need to question the evolutionary point of view more and a limited use of overheads." [3rd presentation] "In terms of assessed feedback, I got 68% for this presentation .. I was really pleased with [this mark as it] showed an improvement on both previous presentations and because I felt that I had not done well at the time. The strengths noted were that my presentation covered a lot of ground, that the descriptions were good, that I made my views clear throughout, good audience contact, clearly spoken and a good use of overheads. The main weaknesses were that I ran over [time] and that I lost my way in the middle, which were both points I had noted myself" [SN, 2004]

3. How do students react to feedback?

"The feedback from the first presentation that I didn't make enough eye contact with the audience – fair enough, I read from a script – fair point, and that I didn't really follow through enough on the side points that I mentioned – fair enough and my tone of voice was too flat – fair enough. The 'fair enough' remarks are a reflective and considered reaction to the criticisms – at the time I was quite disheartened by the criticism because I felt that a lot of effort had come to nothing. On reflection it became evident that the criticisms were only there to highlight what I could do better and not an attack on the effort that went into the presentation itself." [JA, 2004]

"The feedback comments from my narrative presentation made me very aware that I had to produce a balanced account of the theories relating to this topic, and it seems to have succeeded. I was extremely happy to receive a tick and 'good' alongside the conclusion I came to by combining Sugiyama's and Miller's theories[W]e were asked to do a piece of free-writing about our essay feedback and I noted how the first thing I look at on receiving my marked script is the grade, only then can I put the comments into context. I was very pleased to have Liz describe my approach as 'critical' because of pondering over whether I was qualified to criticise other people's theories." [SH, 2004]

4. Did they learn what you expected them to learn?

"The whole exercise made me think differently about the study of human evolution and it made issues discussed in lectures more comprehensible. For example the workshop elucidated the nature of the evidence available in the fossil record .. In the lecture on the fossil record the evidence was discussed but the reality of the difficulty of using it was made plain in the workshop." [JR 2005]

"Overall, the workshop writeup was difficult, but the exercise did make me think more about issues faced by palaeoanthropologists in creating phylogenies. I also think by doing the workshop it allowed me to grasp the main differences between the hominin species and I think it clarified some characteristics which have been important in human evolution such as brain size, dentition and the slope of the face." [EM 2005]