

Improving student learning through departmental student feedback self-studies

Possible Action Plan (C) for a Participating Department

Desired Outcomes

A lecturer wishes feedback on the various elements of their teaching style. In particular,

- which aspects are effective, and in what ways?
- which aspects are ineffective, and in what respects?
- what suggestions (within the range of possibilities) do current students offer

Action intended

- Publication of results of feedback enquiry, and proposed actions to be taken, probably in a form which makes it a private communication between one lecturer and one class group, with thanks for the feedback
- Personal decision about what changes to make in personal style
- Monitoring of effect of changes

Method

1. The lecturer will approach the class collectively, and invite them to write a letter of advice to their lecturer for next time the programme is being delivered. The advice should concentrate upon the lecturer's strengths, as well as scope for improvement.
2. The class should choose a clerk person, who will have no responsibility other than to keep order in a class meeting, note the points made, and pass them on to the lecturer for transcription.
3. The class then, in the absence (of course) of the lecturer, will form buzz groups for a short time, focusing on the question "What helpful suggestions (*not* critical judgements) can we offer this lecturer for next time, whenever that occurs?"
4. Thereafter, from buzz groups or elsewhere, individuals will call out and the clerk will record, constructive suggestions.
5. Once suggestions die down, the clerk will return to the noted points in order and ask for quick shows of hands, recording whether the point is endorsed by a majority, a few, or just one or two members of the class.
6. The list will be left on the whiteboard/flipcharts/screen for the lecturer. The lecturer will consider and respond to the suggestions later.

Analysis of Feedback

The analysis of the feedback is likely to be an extremely sensitive activity. Carried out by the lecturer alone, it faces the hazards of subjectivity, and defensive reactions. Carried out by another, however close to or distant from the lecturer concerned, it may make communication of findings difficult.

On the whole, it seems best to adopt an admittedly simplistic plan, in which the class, and their clerk, summarise and even order points with indications of the support for them, and the importance attached to them. (point 5).

The lecturer then decides what respond, and why? And reports accordingly.