FEEDBACK: NOT ONLY FOR THE PAST BUT ALSO FOR THE FUTURE

IN COLLABORATION WITH PREVIOUS WARWICK STUDENT, AMBER ZHANG

*A grade is just a number, and feedback is something we can use for improvement. The usefulness of feedback goes far beyond the marker's evaluation of that essay; it is a learning opportunity that allows for continuous improvement, self-discovery, and the development of good habits. Using feedback effectively is a vital component of any degree programme, and **Amber shares some tips and experiences on how she used it.***

Understand our feedback

Feedback can be classified as "suggestive" and "encouraging", but it is often the "suggestive" or the "critical" that can lead us to a higher grade. "Critical" feedback may have heavy emotional impacts and may even undermine our confidence. But using them properly would benefit us significantly. Here is my to-do list after getting feedback.

1. Whether the grade is good or bad, put the assignment aside for a day or two to allow a brief break from it. Reading through the feedback provided by the marker again afterwards often ensures that I am reading and understanding each comment in a less emotional (joyful or frustrated) state of mind.

2. Review the feedback (in-text and overview comments) to check if I understand and agree with the marking.

3. Reread the essay with the feedback in mind. If you have any questions/concerns about the feedback, don't be afraid to contact your marker! We will only be able to improve if we understand what we're being recommended to do.

But don't ignore positive feedback! It's easy to dwell on the critical comments, but we can also learn from the positive aspects of our work. Keep them to build up our confidence.

Feedback is useful when preparing for our next assignment!

You might even find it useful to talk through your feedback with your peers and find ways you can learn from each other.

Record our feedback

Once read and understood, it is important to create a storage system of our feedback for future reference. Feedback is useful when preparing for our next assignment!

Recording can be done in various ways, whether a table, mind map or something that could help you visualise the strengths and weaknesses. And the recording needs to be in a way that suits us and is achievable so we can easily use it to review the feedback and learn from different works.

Also, if the marker comments on the same point multiple times, it is worth prioritising the feedback into separate categories, which may help us to identify the specific

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Assignment Details & Grade	Overall Learning Points	Structure & Coherence	Research & referencing	Criticality & Argument	Language & Style	Understanding & Content

issues and provide an idea of where to focus.

Above is the template table I use to store feedback on each work.

> …*we can also learn from the positive aspects of our work.*

Use our feedback
Once we have a system to collect and store feedback, we have a great resource to help us improve. I recommend revisiting the feedback regularly, especially before submitting our next assignment. As presented in the table above, I personally tend to compartmentalise the marking criteria, which not only helps me to avoid making the same mistakes but also helps me become more aware of and consolidate my strengths!

Only by using the feedback you've mused over will you improve on your next assessment. The grades of submitted work are part of the past that seems unlikely to change, but the feedback attached is the space for our future improvements.

Need some extra help? Library Online courses include some great self-help resources to help develop Library skills and knowledge at any time.