

# Handling Feedback

Research Active Staff Workshop

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Argent Court

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# Session Overview

- Welcome / Introductions
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Talk: Anamaria Pinter
- Lunch
- Talk: Exchanges Journal Editors (IAS)
- Peer review exercise

# Session Aims

- Provide a knowledge exchange with experienced researchers
- Provide transferable skills in relation to peer reviewing
- Trial peer reviewing on your work in progress
- Offer guidance on creating your own peer review workshop forum

# The Purpose of Feedback

Why do we give feedback?

How do you *use* feedback?

# Growth Mindsets vs Fixed Mindsets

A **growth mindset** is an attitude based on the belief that “your basic qualities are things you can cultivate through your efforts ... everyone can change and grow through application and experience.”

A **fixed mindset** holds to the notion that “your qualities are carved in stone” and you can’t improve. Feedback becomes redundant.

# Creating Distance

Receiving and responding to feedback can be an emotionally challenging task, even where the feedback is highly positive. Challenges:

- Preventing emotions from hindering your professional development
- Responding to negative feedback constructively
- Handling conflicting positions

What challenges have you faced and how have you handled them?

# Example Feedback Tables

## Feedback Matrix

The feedback matrix helps with self-exploration. It encourages you to examine both the positive and negative aspects of feedback, and then connect the comments back to what you already know about and what you did not know and need to explore more fully.

|            | Positive | Negative |
|------------|----------|----------|
| Expected   |          |          |
| Unexpected |          |          |

# Student Feedback Action Planner

| Most significant feedback comments                      | Positives                                  | Critical                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 1.                                                      |                                            |                                             |
| 2.                                                      |                                            |                                             |
| 3.                                                      |                                            |                                             |
| Your response - Do you agree / disagree                 |                                            |                                             |
| Building on feedback in future work                     | What can I do to build on these positives? | What can I do to respond to the criticisms? |
| Your own evaluation - anything you would add?           |                                            |                                             |
| The one thing I want to keep doing in future            |                                            |                                             |
| The one thing I want to change or improve in the future |                                            |                                             |



# Good Feedback Practice

What are the fundamental elements for a feedback matrix?

- Time specific
- Actionable
- Tied to actual work done
- Tied to development (future work)

What else...?

# Receiving Feedback

## Task:

- Create a draft feedback table of your own
- Convert one example peer reviewer's comments from the hand out into your draft table

## Think about:

- Issues of translation
- Handling contradictions between reviewers

# Translation Problems

Translating the language of reviewers into actionable tasks:

- Terms like 'clarity', 'discussion', 'focus', relate to argument
- Terms like 'execution', 'expression', 'concision' relate to style
- Reading recommendations require a clear grasp of argument and must be responded to
- Mention of 'analysis', 'criticality', relate to depth of discussion and how you use sources

# Good Feedback Practice

Good feedback should be:

- Actionable (SMART)
- Tied concretely to parts of the text
- Clearly relate to making a text better (growth mindset)
- Should support your intellectual position

What else...?

# When to Push Back and How

Always assume feedback is given to improve the quality of your work. But sometimes feedback can't be acted on. You *can* push back, but you have to justify your position clearly:

- when feedback and/or suggested reading run against the direction of your argument
- when feedback is unconstructive (unactionable)

Other examples?

And always check (with editors, colleagues...) whether you've understood the feedback.

# Giving Feedback

The same principles apply to giving feedback as to receiving.

You can also structure the feedback in order of priority, and to lessen the impact:

- Start positive
- Create 'feedback sandwiches'
- Make every criticism constructive, even the negative ones
- Avoid purely positive comments (are they useful?)

# Peer Reviewing Task

- Exchange work in groups of 2-3, on rotation.
- Start from a principle of identifying one thing you think is working well and one thing you think needs improvement in the work.
- Try to articulate *why* you feel there is a problem and offer possible solutions.
- Discuss each point made to clarify the position and how it might be resolved.

# Create Your Own Workshop

Things to consider in setting up your own research exchange forum:

- Who to invite (ECRs only, interdisciplinary)
- Workload (max length, conference paper dry runs)
- Frequency of meetings (relates to workload)
- Feedback frameworks (selecting respondents, open discussions, etc.)
- Administrative responsibilities
- Off-timing against peak periods of the academic year
- Including writing-only sessions between workshops



# Resources / Further Guidance

- RIS Support Teams for Grant Review Panel advice:  
<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/ris/people>
- Editors of journals
- Research Committee members in your Department
- RAS One to One Consultations:  
[http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/ldc/researchers/opportunities/1\\_1support/](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/ldc/researchers/opportunities/1_1support/)