

Learning & Teaching Conference 2010

Abstract 5C

Student Attitude to Audio Versus Written Feedback

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First year Biology at the University of Glasgow consists of two courses, 1A and 1B, with an annual intake of 750-800 students. Both courses consist of lectures, practical lab sessions, tutorials and discussion groups. With such large numbers of students, teaching methods and delivery continually change and develop to ensure best delivery of the course content. As such, assessment and feedback systems also need to remain current and accessible to all. Timely, instructive and developmental feedback on student work is arguably the most powerful single influence on a student's ability to learn. As part of the transition from school into university, feedback is a recognised method of maximising student potential (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Research shows that increasing student numbers and associated rise in marking workloads, means that feedback can be slow in returning to the student and lacking quality/detail (Glover & Brown, 2006). From the markers perspective there is some evidence that students fail to engage with, misinterpret or ignore written feedback. We have carried out a pilot study to apply, and attempt to build upon, principles of good feedback practice to the assessment of coursework. To do this, an essay assignment was submitted online by Biology 1A students, marked and written feedback provided to all. A randomly selected group of students (10% of the cohort) also received audio feedback (electronic audio files were imbedded into the student work and returned to them by e-mail) on their submitted work. All students then completed an anonymous 'Feedback' questionnaire detailing their experiences with the feedback they received, with additional questions that were answered solely by the 'audio group' asking more specific questions about the effectiveness of the audio feedback. To carry out this study, new technologies were utilised and these will be demonstrated at the meeting along with the study conclusions.

References:

Hattie, J. and Timperley, H. (2007) The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, 77, 81–112

Glover, C. Brown, E. (2006). Written Feedback for Students: too much, too detailed or too incomprehensible to be effective? *Bioscience Education*, 7.