

Feedback Literacy and Dialogic Feedback

Category: Assessment, Feedback and Learning

Feedback literacy is the understanding, capacities and dispositions needed to make productive use of feedback processes. Dialogic feedback treats feedback as interaction through which meanings, standards and possible actions are clarified, rather than as information transmitted once from an expert to a passive recipient.

Student feedback literacy involves appreciating feedback, making judgements about quality, managing emotional responses and taking action. Dialogue may occur with educators, peers, exemplars or one's own developing work, but it must enable learners to question, interpret and decide ([Carless & Boud, 2018](#)).

Feedback Literacy Practices

1. **Appreciate:** Recognise feedback as a process that can support learning beyond a single mark.
2. **Judge:** Compare work with criteria, exemplars and alternatives to develop evaluative judgement.
3. **Interpret:** Ask questions, test meanings and distinguish priorities from minor corrections.
4. **Manage affect:** Acknowledge emotional responses while maintaining agency and a learning orientation.
5. **Act:** Plan, implement and evaluate changes in revised work or a subsequent task.

Examples in Practice

After receiving comments on a laboratory report, students annotate what each comment implies, compare two exemplars, discuss uncertainties with a peer and state one revision principle. They apply it to the next report and explain the change.

Why It Matters

More comments do not guarantee more learning. Feedback becomes educationally powerful when learners develop the judgement and opportunity to participate in meaning-making and improvement, while educators design conditions that invite questions and recognise different linguistic, cultural and emotional experiences. Educator feedback literacy matters equally: staff must design participation, communicate standards and recognise how authority shapes dialogue ([Ajjawi & Boud, 2017](#)).

Further Reading

6. Carless, D., & Boud, D. (2018). [The development of student feedback literacy: Enabling uptake of feedback](#). *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 43(8), 1315–1325.
7. Ajjawi, R., & Boud, D. (2017). [Researching feedback dialogue: An interactional analysis approach](#). *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 42(2), 252–265.
8. Sutton, P. (2012). [Conceptualizing feedback literacy: Knowing, being, and acting](#). *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, 49(1), 31–40.

Related Terms: Dialogic Learning | Evaluative Judgement | Feedback Uptake | Self-Regulated Learning