



THE
JOURNAL

**Full report of
Action Research
Project**

What- no grades?!

Are A2 Psychology students able to improve their essay writing skills purely on the basis of feedback through marking (oral and written)?

Rebecca Rhodes

INTRODUCTION

Context (setting the scene in relation to the Psychology Department, FSFC and nationally)

The aim of my research project is to investigate the effectiveness of formative assessment, with emphasis placed on feedback. In Psychology I feel we have taken on board the colleges' initiatives for Assessment for Learning with vigour, but only at the AS level. All AS assessments follow the following marking criteria: 1/3 of assessments are returned with no grades (formative assessing); 1/3 are peer/ self marked (formative assessing); and 1/3 are marked and graded by the teacher (summative assessing). All assessments are provided with detailed feedback and students are set targets to be taken in to consideration for the following assessment.

I considered if my feedback for both my AS and A2 classes was effective and how this could be measured. Reflecting further I wondered how students and teachers treated assessments and whether they saw them as a learning process or simply as the summation to a particular unit of work. If assessments are a learning process then I know I wasn't fulfilling this, as more often than not I was returning assessments, going through them with my students and then filing them away. I was doing this with my A2 classes as well.

Successful feedback is best treated as a learning process that is also fluid between assessments, Firstly, the teacher should try to provide constructive and clear guidance on not only what needs to improve but how this must be done. Secondly, the student should have the opportunity to respond to these comments by engaging with, and applying them to that very same assessment in order to aid and improve their learning and understanding of that advice.

On a national level, the concept of Formative Assessment was largely instigated by the research taking place at Kings College in London, with the publication of the now (in)famous *Inside the Black Box* by Black and Williams (1998). Extensive research and implementation of Assessment for Learning is happening not only nationally (in all educational fields from primary to FE/HE) but also internationally where studies have been carried out in Canada, Japan and New Zealand.

Purpose/ Aims (key questions to address)

With this project I wanted to move the focus away from AS students and apply A4L to my A2 classes instead. With them I wanted to investigate the following assumptions:

- 1) A2 students will improve their essay writing skills if they are provided with detailed and specific feedback (orally [one-to-one] and written)
- 2) A2 students will improve their essay writing skills if targets are set and they have allotted time to improve upon their work
- 3) A2 students who are not given grades will begin to focus on assessments as a learning process and regard them as less threatening

At this stage it is worth pointing out that when I refer to grades, I also mean percentages and marks.

Theoretical Background

There has been ample research into the impact of formative and summative assessing and the role both play in our students' learning.

From my research I have discovered that how we assess and the information we provide our students (feedback and/or grades) can impact both the learner's self esteem and their progress.

Self esteem and learning is a very powerful combination. Black et al (2002) make reference to the fact that if feedback is given as a grade it will enhance the students' ego rather than make them reflective upon the actual work itself. Grades lead students to compare themselves with others, focussing on their image and status rather than reflecting upon the work they have just had returned and considering how they could improve it. It focuses on the student's ability rather than effort which can damage the self esteem of low achievers. If students are given feedback only, it forces the student to look at what they can do to improve, which enhances learning. This directly fosters an environment where all learners can succeed, as they are able to build upon previous work (assessments) through the feedback provided, therefore knowing what steps need to be taken in order to improve. Another previous study offering similar support was by Kluger and DeNisi (1996) who commented in their review on feedback that often when students were told they had done well or badly, it had an effect on their egos but it did not increase their involvement with the task. Most recently, Stobart (2006) summarizes key features of feedback and the negative effect it has on students. Such factors included that learning is likely to stop when a summative grade is awarded. Another factor was that grades affect the learner's ego (by reconciling the mark with a view of themselves as learners) and can lead to a focus on success in comparison with fellow class mates rather than on the learning process. This especially has an effect on students who get low grades.

Progress is another facet of learning. High achievers can become focussed on maintaining their position of success so that they lose focus of the learning process and how they can improve. How often have you heard a student say, 'I'm

happy with this grade' or 'I got what I wanted.' Butler (1988) found that learning gains were greatest for Year 7 pupils who were given only comments compared to her other two groups (they were either given marks only or marks with comments). These two groups showed no gains. Butler found that students ignore comments when marks are also provided. A more recent study by Harlen (2006) concluded that feedback is most effective when students are involved in the process of setting targets. This encourages an active participation in their own learning rather than being passive and following the advice of the teacher.

METHODS USED

The target population

I taught two A2 classes, so was able to keep one as my Action Research (AR) group, and the other as my control. My AR group was chosen randomly.

	Class size	Gender break down	GCSE average
Action Research group	17 (18 for first ½ of year)	Females: 13 (14) Males: 4	Females: 6.18 Males: 5.91 Overall: 6.12
Control group	16	Females: 8 Males: 8	Females: 6.44 Males: 5.49 Overall: 5.97

Data collection

- I provided my students with several Questionnaires throughout the course of the year. These included the following:
 - What do students know about Assessment for Learning (appendix 2).
 - Insight in to students' submitted work (appendix 3)
 - How did students find the written and one-to-one oral feedback and target setting (appendix 4)
 - Opinion on the re-working of essays and target achievement (appendix 5)
 - Reflection upon formative assessment at the end of both modules, Environment in January and Crime in May (appendix 6)
- Course reviews were carried out in January specifically asking my AR class to reflect upon the project
- Essay results
 - Marks for both Section A and Section B essays throughout the entire year
 - Section A essays are the equivalent of a single sided A4 typed essay divided up in to two parts. The first part requires a detailed description of a specific study. The second part requires students to think about the problems psychologists face.
 - Section B essays are the equivalent of three sides of typed A4, divided up in to three parts. The first part is a description of four or five studies. The second part is structured analysis of these studies, comparing and contrasting. Finally, the third part requires the students to engage with a 'real life' scenario whereby they need to apply their psychological knowledge.
- Diary reflections
- Comments made by students from both classes during lessons

Classroom resources

I revised the feedback sheet that we provide students for Section B essays (appendix 8) , and wrote a feedback sheet for Section A essays (appendix 7), both based directly on the OCR Psychology Mark Scheme

Ethical considerations

When I presented my project idea there was initial reservation about potential negative feedback from students and parents alike with regard to no grades being provided throughout the entire academic year. Two actions were taken regarding this. Firstly, a detailed explanation of what Assessment for Learning is, and how my project was going to impact my action research class was given to each student. At review evenings I was willing to provide grades if requested as all assessments had been graded and recorded. However no grades were ever demanded. I am also pleased to say that no issues were ever raised, to my knowledge.

However, there is no denying that of the class of 17, there were two vocal students who found the concept of getting no grades very frustrating, and these were voiced intermittently throughout the year. As these students were very mature, they were able to appreciate what the project was trying to investigate and were extremely accommodating, accepting that several students in the class may in fact benefit from receiving no grades.

Teaching strategies implemented and practicalities of these implementations

The A2 course is more structured than AS, therefore allowing times when I was able to leave the classroom to feed back to the students on a one-to-one basis whilst the rest of the class worked.

- I made the commitment to return essays within a three lesson turnaround (usually a week rather than the departmentally allocated two weeks).
- When setting and returning the marked essays, I allocated more time to feeding back and providing generic comments and advice that applied to the entire class.
- I also gave class time for students to read my comments and to generate any questions they may have regarding what I had written in preparation for the one-to-one chats.
- At varying stages of feedback, questionnaires were filled in by the students.
- There was never really enough time to sit down with all students during the one-to-one feedback sessions as it took longer than I expected. I literally worked my way from the bottom up. In my opinion, the students who were getting U to C grades needed more feedback than those who were getting B and A grades. If there was time, I saw everyone, but as the year progressed I found myself focussing on those who needed it most.

FINDINGS

Throughout the year I found myself reflecting upon the practicalities of my project. It was undeniably time consuming providing the feedback during the one-to-one sessions. The students became frustrated with the endless paperwork of reflecting upon their work and setting targets and I found the tracking of this all at times quite lengthy.

Diary Extracts

Throughout the course of the year I kept an electronic diary of my thoughts. A few extracts are included below.

Both Sarah C and Laura C were really concerned about not receiving a grade as both thought it was essential for their progress. Some students spoke up and said that they prefer it when they don't get grades as it de-motivates them and makes them feel worse for it especially when they had put in the effort.

I'd booked a computer room for the students to re-work their essays. In the previous lesson I told the class to come prepared with their electronic and paper versions of their work. Naturally, certain students didn't- either forgetting or providing a range of excuses. This made me extremely frustrated- what are they supposed to do? It seems like such a waste of what I perceive to be beneficial and valuable time!

Marking the essays doesn't take any longer between the two classes. And when I get my AR class re-submits, having already discussed targets with the students, I am only looking for certain changes so the time of doing this isn't extreme. Upon reflection it would have been much easier and faster if all was done electronically with changes and comments in a different colour and then they are simply emailed from student to teacher and back again. It is almost fruitless when students resubmit changes without giving me the original which prevents me from being able to assess the improvements.

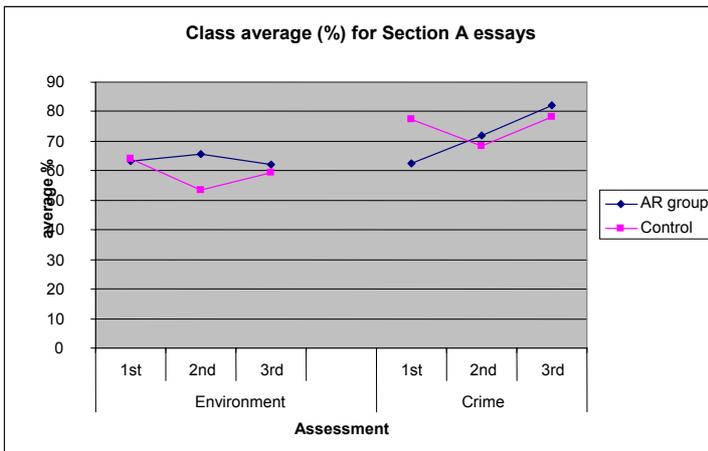
Some don't put a lot of effort in to their work, and are not referring back to previous comments and feedback making the same mistakes. They know they don't count, 'so why try?' is the attitude of a few.

Doing this project has challenged me at times. I know the effect and impact grades can have on students. There have been times when I thought providing a grade might in fact provide some students with increased motivation and others with a pat on the back, but I know from the research that I need to persevere. If I don't, what message am I sending to the students and more importantly to those who have appreciated receiving no grades.

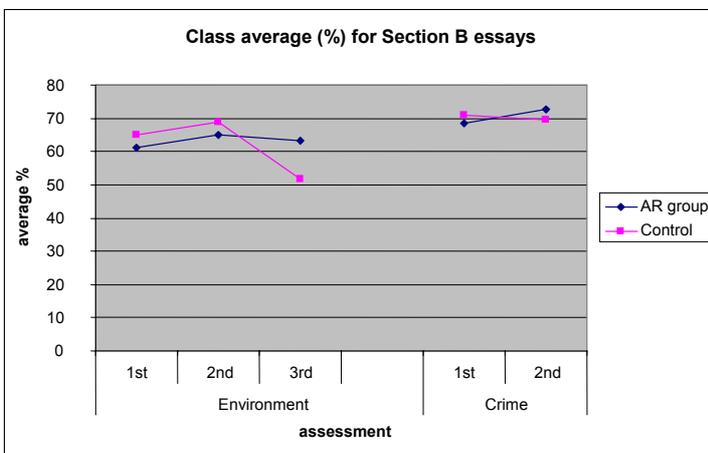
It's getting harder to get all essays in from students. This makes it equally difficult getting students to re-submit if I haven't had anything to mark in the first place- so I am not doing a re-submit for this essay. It has been a battle getting students to re-submit their work (both if they do it in class, or if they take it away to do). This part of the research strategy makes it long and drawn out and less effective.

My perception

With the range of feedback provided to my AR class, I felt that there remained a steady improvement from initial to final assessments for the Environmental module when compared to the control class (which fluctuated more between assessments). I felt that the students were taking heed of their own individual progress and were becoming increasingly aware of what they needed to do to improve and of the learning process. When I returned graded assessments to my control class, often I would hear comments from students who would compare their results, spending little time reading my comments. The focus was most definitely a discussion comparing grades, and trying to out do one another. For the Crime module, my AR class improved from one essay to the next whereas once again my control group displayed fluctuations between essays.



Both graphs show the average percentage for each assessment (by essay type) per class.



From this it can be seen that my AR class showed steady improvement across all assessments.

Overall it is fair to say that both classes began and ended with similar grade averages, but it was the essays in between that showed the largest variation.

I wasn't always convinced that when the students had the opportunity to re-submit work that all students from my AR group took full advantage of it. Certain students did, and their individual grades did improve throughout the year. Those who didn't, fluctuated. I felt I had a hand in guiding my students' progress as I was more engaged with their thoughts, efforts and reflections. On a positive note, individually, there were more students improving from one essay to the next when compared to the control group for both Section A and B essays.

Towards the end of each module, during revision time, I created small slips of paper for my AR group which had the students name, and whether they were at, above or below their minimum grades for both Section A and Section B essays. I offered this to students to collect at the end of the lesson. On both occasions only three students collected them, two of whom were high performing students and were the same two who from the outset were not enthusiastic about receiving no grades.

The Students' perceptions

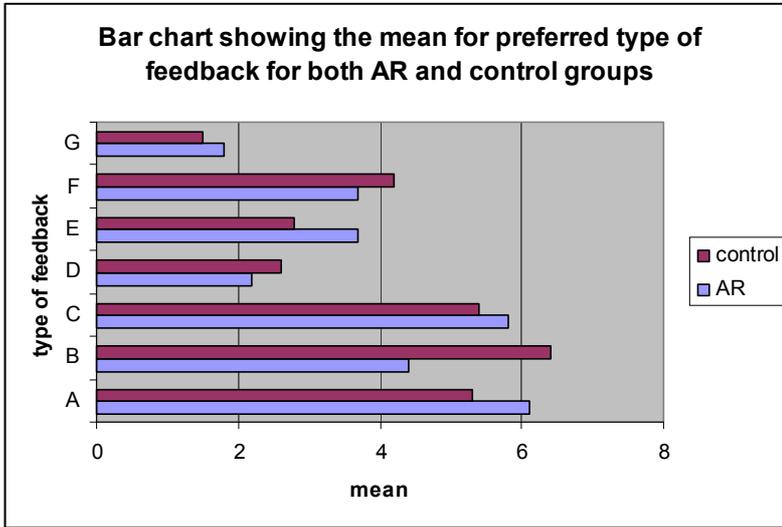
At the beginning of the year I gave both classes a questionnaire (appendix 2) in order to ascertain their awareness of Assessment for Learning and Formative Assessment. Results showed that less than a third were fully aware of what these were. I believe this lack of awareness did create a barrier to the implementation of the key concepts for my project to my AR class and it meant I had to be that little bit more convincing in my 'selling' of the concept.

When I asked the students 'What should a teacher provide you with to enable you to achieve success in their subject (not only to Psychology) there were a range of comments. Below are the comments that students wrote with specific reference to feedback:

- One-to-one chats
- Avoid just giving ticks, but give comments as well
- A grade is needed as comments are not enough (if I get a C it will make me work harder)
- Feedback doesn't have to involve grades, but instead a detailed comment on how to improve

- Lots of thorough feedback
- Make sure that feedback also emphasizes work that has been done well

I also asked the students' *What type of feedback do you prefer?* I provided a range of combinations that included grades, written feedback, oral (one-to-one) feedback. Below is a graph that shows the overall mean preferences by class (the lower the mean is the most preferred).



KEY

- A: grade only
- B: written feedback only
- C: oral feedback only (one-to-one)
- D: grade and written feedback
- E: grade and oral feedback
- F: written and oral feedback**
(used in this project)
- G: grade, written and oral feedback

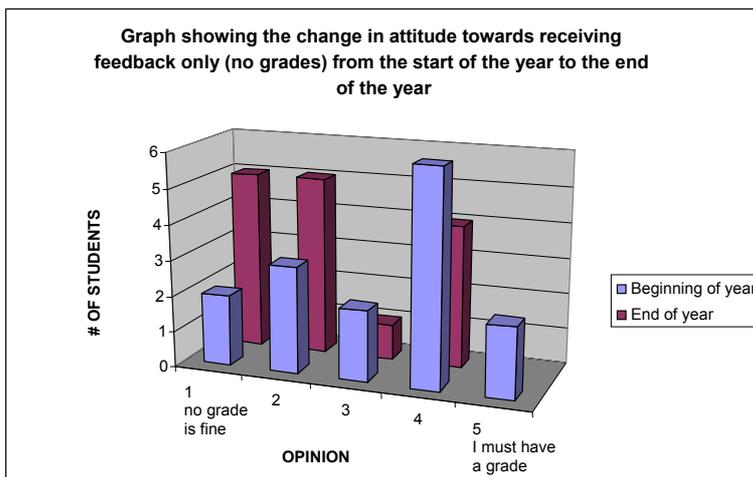
The most popular choice from both A2 classes was receiving all three (option G). The least preferred for my AR class was option A (grade only) and the least preferred option for my control class was B (written feedback only). The combination that I was implementing with my AR class (option F) was ranked 3rd equal out of the seven choices for most preferred.

I also asked both classes 'What do you think is the purpose of grades and feedback?' This is what they had to say:

Purpose of a grade	Purpose of feedback
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows you where you are at • Motivates you • Enables you to push yourself and something to work towards • A high grade is motivating • Can act as a guilt trip • Can inspire to achieve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To encourage • Good for revising • Helps understand • Allows targets for specific problem areas

At the end of both modules I gave my AR students another questionnaire (appendix 6) to gather their thoughts on the feedback they had received. I found that their attitudes had changed from the beginning of the year.

One of the questions measured the shift in attitude towards not receiving grades (see graph below). At the beginning of the year over half the class felt that it was important that they received grades on their work (8/17) and by the end of the year this had halved. As for the students who were content with receiving no grades, this doubled from five initially to 10 by the end of the year.



Further qualitative findings from this questionnaire included:

- Overwhelmingly strong support for the quality of written feedback which the students found helpful, enabling them to know exactly what they needed to do to improve
- Overwhelming support for the re-submission of work as the students found this beneficial even though it meant extra work. However a vast majority felt that they never made the most of the opportunity and time given to them to improve upon their work.
- Compared to their other subjects, they were getting the most support and feedback from Psychology and that this has given them increased confidence
- Students felt that they were now focusing on the comments which they didn't really do before.
- Mixed reaction to the power of grades. Some still felt that grades meant praise and that grades allow you to gauge where you are at. Other students commented on the fact that they feel demoralized in their other subjects when they get a grade, whereas in this class they don't and that it helps them learn better.
- Mixed reaction to the quality of verbal feedback. The students who had done well found the verbal feedback least beneficial however those who were struggling found the time invaluable as they were able to clarify what I had written and ask questions
- When asked to reflect upon not receiving a grade for work, some wrote that in the beginning they felt it was a disadvantage but now they don't as they appreciate the detailed comments they were getting instead. There were four who didn't necessarily need a grade, but either wanted it or found that it helped in knowing where they were working at
- Overall, the students were extremely positive about the action research project and their experiences

DISCUSSION

What worked well?

I felt that even though my AR class did not out perform my control class (contrary to my background research) I had in fact achieved and learnt the following:

- Students are more aware of assessment for learning, specifically formative assessment
- Students were receptive to feedback only.
- Students spent quality time reading feedback and improving upon their work.
- I became more efficient in my marking.
- I learnt how to word my feedback so that it was not only highlighting the positives but also providing specific guidance as to what needed to be improved.
- I was able to sit down with students more often in a one-to-one situation even though with large class sizes this can be very difficult and time consuming.
- Work needs to be returned quickly or else it becomes a distant memory for the students thus meaningless when it is returned and feedback is almost worthless.
- Setting a maximum of three targets meant that students were more focussed on what they had to rectify, rather than re-writing the entire essay again.

Barriers

At times it did feel like it was an up-hill battle with certain students as they wanted grades or at least made it known that they were finding it difficult to ascertain where they were at. As mentioned in my diary extract above, I was struggling with my own dilemmas regarding this as I felt that at times I was losing the motivation, support and respect of these highly intelligent and capable students by not giving them what they wanted. I don't believe it was detrimental to their progress and success on the course, but I think it did impact upon the ethos and atmosphere of the class to a certain extent. I underestimated how disorientating and frustrating receiving no grades could be for some students but at the same time was always surprised when the most conscientious of students would admit to feeling demoralized upon receiving grades in other subjects.

Perrenoud (1991) reported that formative assessment requires a shift in students' attitudes toward work. Many students do not have a desire to learn as much as possible, but rather to do the minimum to get by. I believe this could be said of many A2 students, with my AR students being of no exception. Through this project, my attempts at implementing certain ideals required a significant shift in their attitude and overall commitment. They needed to take a more serious attitude towards their learning and college work. Evidence supporting the fact that they were not willing to alter their work ethic is reflected in many of their comments where they admit that they didn't put a lot of effort in to the resubmissions of work, or even their initial assessments.

Collecting back the re-submissions from students was challenging. If work was done in class the students felt rushed. If it was set as homework it was perceived as less of a priority as it had already been done once. The students have had little prior experience of re-submitting work so they found this expectation very new to them, seeing it as more work. The students knew the benefits of doing it but moving from an attitude to an actual behavioural shift was difficult.

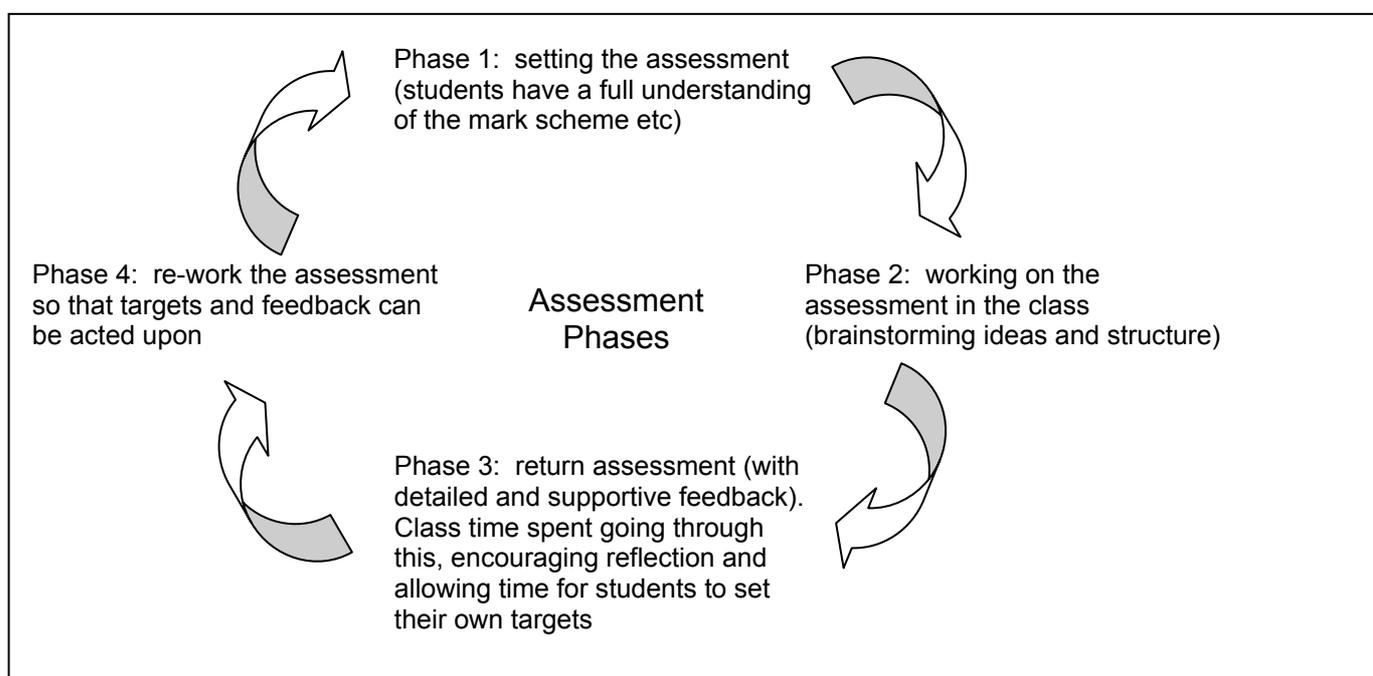
In March I attended an INSET in London entitled *Embedding Assessment for Learning* by Ruth Sutton. Ruth commented on my project voicing her opinion that not only was it a great and courageous idea but also that I shouldn't expect it to

succeed as there were several barriers in my way. Having completed my project I imagine some of the main barriers she was making reference to included student commitment and attitude to 'extra' work, as well as the fact that my sample consisted of A2 students who have had limited exposure and experience of formative assessment.

CONCLUSION

Significance of the work for my own professional practise

- In an overly assessed environment, it felt that the key objective for my action research was on the learning process rather than on assessment for the sake of assessing.
- Assessments must be marked and returned promptly. The longer it takes to return, the less significance the feedback has for the students.
- Students need to have hands on experience of what formative assessment is, ideally before they reach A2, if it is to be effective
- Time needs to be allocated during the course of a year to work on assessments. The student plays a significant role in their learning by being part of each phases (see diagram below)



College-wide implications

- Assessment for Learning and formative assessment can only be effective if it is supported and implemented across the college. If it is being done in 'pockets' then it will be very difficult to measure its' overall impact and benefits on the students' learning
- If grades can have an effect on ego building, then it is vital that FSFC emphasises not only that the college itself is excellent but that all students can succeed and learn here. As Black et al (2002) write 'Schools that emphasize excellence in achievement run the risk of sending the message that the only students who are valued are those that achieve the highest standards. Students whose performance falls below the highest levels come to believe that they cannot succeed and so disengage. Schools that value excellence in progress are sending the message that everyone can improve, and by feeding back to students about things that are within the students' control, emphasize that further improvement is possible.'

Future Implications

- For feedback to be effective, time must be set aside for students to follow-up on comments made by the teacher to fully involve the student in the learning process. This would involve student's setting their own targets.
- Whilst the students are re-writing their assessments, at this point I would hold my one-to-one discussions regarding the targets set. This is supported by Harlen (2006) who suggests that students' learning is greatly enhanced if they are part of the target setting process. I felt that I played a prominent role in the setting of targets. Upon reflection I should have encouraged my students to set their own instead.
- On a more practical level, I would get all assessments emailed to me so that I could provide feedback via the 'comment' function on Microsoft Word

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- 14) Nicol, D. and Macfarlane-Dick, D. (2006) 'Formative assessment and self-regulated learning: a model and seven principles of good feedback practice', *Studies in Higher Education* 31(2).

Useful web-sites

- 15) Information on how teachers can improve their feedback practice cited on www.heacademy.ac.uk/senlef.htm
- 16) Research on Assessment for Learning http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/research/themes/assessment_for_learning/?digest=all
- 17) For a list of resources regarding A4L <http://www.qca.org.uk/7658.html>

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Outline of Assessment for Learning and the Action Research Project

Assessment for Learning

Successful learning occurs when learners have ownership of their learning; when they understand the goals they are aiming for; when, crucially, they are motivated and have the skills to succeed.

Paul Black, *Assessment for learning: Beyond the Black Box*

All through your educational lives (at least 11 years), you have been assessed on a regular basis. When you have had work returned it would have had a grade or mark, and hopefully it had comments from your teacher as well.

What did you take the most notice of? What impact, if you were to reflect, do you think this grade had on you? Did you feel motivated to improve? Did you compare with your fellow peers and instantly feel better or worse? Were the comments of any help, telling you the things you had to do to improve?

Your education

It's all about YOU! It should be about supporting you to succeed and showing you the way in order for you to do the best that YOU can. It's about you fully understanding what is expected of you, how you need to go about it, and then hopefully, being given the correct support in order to improve any mistake. Of equal importance is to be proud of the things you did right. Does a grade, on its own, do this?

The message now confronting the educational community is that assessment which is explicitly designed to promote learning is the single most powerful tool for raising standards. Assessment FOR learning (A4L) aims to enable ALL students to achieve the best of their ability by challenging the traditional approach assessment has had for decades. This traditional approach is to provide a summative (end of topic) grade which reflects what you know. This is often referred to as assessment OF learning. However, A4L takes a different approach. One of its focuses is to use assessment to support learning. The main priority is to promote student learning, essentially through feedback (without a grade) where the emphasis is placed on comments. These comments identify what has been done well and what still needs improvement by giving guidance on how to make that improvement. Feedback will help you learn. For A4L to be successful, it is essential for students to be fully involved in the learning process, by reflecting upon their work and actively responding to the feedback by setting goals and targets.

The Action Research Project

This year I plan to mark all your essays providing you with detailed feedback and discussing targets with you. I will not be giving you specific grades or percentages for your work. I will keep you informed as to your progress in relation to your minimum grade during the reviewing process and if requested.

What I need from you

You will need to be willing to invest effort in to this and have the belief that you can achieve success. You will need to take heed of any guidance given, and display the commitment whereby you apply all feedback to your re-drafting of work. You will have to be very reflective on your work, completing several questionnaires throughout the year, whereby honesty would be appreciated.

What you can expect from me

I will mark your work within 3 lessons. This is so that when I feedback to you your work will still be fresh in your mind. You will get detailed written feedback commenting on things done well, and areas that need improving- with advice on how to do this. You will also at times be given one-to-one oral feedback. Class time will be set aside in order for re-drafting your assessment, taking on board all advice and targets set.

Key concerns

- My key concern is that while I am giving you feedback, I will be out of the room, and will have to rely on you to be responsible independent learners.
- I am also aware of the fact that the concept of not getting a grade for every assessment is possibly new to you, and will take some getting used to. I need to you be open-minded, and appreciate the fact that I would never put your learning in jeopardy. Regular reviews will be carried out whereby your grades will be accessible

I would like you to go away and think about the above information. Feel free to discuss it with parents/ caregivers at home. In the space below, please write down any thoughts you might have, concerns, or questions you may wish to raise during the next lesson.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS- INITIAL

In AS Psychology, Assessment for Learning was carried out as an essential part of aiding students to succeed.

1. Do you know what assessment for learning is? YES NO

If you said Yes to the above question, can you please provide a brief description of what you think assessment for learning is: _____

2. Below are a series of statements. Tick any one that you think is true about assessment for learning

TICK	Assessment for learning...
<input type="checkbox"/>	i. means that students are made fully aware of all learning goals
<input type="checkbox"/>	ii. aims to help pupils know and recognize the standards they are aiming for
<input type="checkbox"/>	iii. involves self assessment
<input type="checkbox"/>	iv. involves peer assessment
<input type="checkbox"/>	v. provides feedback so that students know their next steps to build on success and strengths, as well as to correct weaknesses
<input type="checkbox"/>	vi. believes that every pupil can improve
<input type="checkbox"/>	vii. involves the teacher and student in reviewing and reflecting on assessments
<input type="checkbox"/>	viii. ensures that students take increasing responsibility for their progress and to become more actively engaged in their learning

3. Do you know what formative assessment is? YES NO

If you said Yes to the above question, can you please provide a brief description of what you think formative assessment is: _____

4. In your opinion, what should a teacher provide you with to enable you to achieve success in their subject (not specific to Psychology). Try to avoid commenting directly on lesson activities, but rather exam technique, questions, assessments, marking and feedback.

5. In AS Psychology which of the following did you experience (tick for yes if you did) and provide any further comment or opinion

TICK	Did you...	Comment
	Get told about the actual mark scheme so that you were fully informed as to what the examiners would be looking for and marking?	
	Get some assessments back without a grade or mark?	
	Get action points which informed you on areas you needed to improve?	
	Know how to improve from each assessment to the next?	
	Find feedback told you what you had done right?	

6. When you get assessments returned (in Psychology or any subject), what do you focus on? (circle only one response)

GRADE

COMMENTS made by teacher

Why? _____

Why not the other? _____

Any further comment? _____

7. Below are several possible ways in which you can receive feedback on your assessed work. Rank each one, with 1=most preferred and 7=least preferred.

	Grade only
--	------------

	Written feedback only
	Verbal feedback only (one-on-one)
	Grade and written feedback
	Grade and verbal feedback
	Written and verbal(one-on-one) feedback only
	Grade, written and verbal (one-on-one) feedback

Can you please provide a reason for your 1st and 7th choices

1st: _____

7th: _____

8. What purpose or function do you think receiving a grade has? _____

9. What purpose or function do you think written or verbal feedback serves? _____

Thank you for completing this questionnaire

1: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS- 1st submit of assessed essay

Upon submitting your work, can you please complete the following questions.

1. How much time in total did you spend on this essay? _____
2. When completing this essay, did you refer to any of the following for guidance? (please tick)

<input type="checkbox"/>	How to write A2 essays (pink) booklet
<input type="checkbox"/>	Examiners mark scheme
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hints sheet (green)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify)

3. What areas of this essay do you think you did well on? _____

Why? _____

4. What areas of this essay do you think might need improving? _____

Why? _____

Stage 3: Post-discussion task setting

Having had written and verbal feedback on your assessment this is your chance to reflect further about what needs to be done to improve your current essay and future essays.

Goals for THIS assessment.

What do you plan to do to improve this piece of work?

1)

2)

3)

Aims and goals for future assessments

When you get set your next essay, what do you plan to do the same (to retain previous success) and what do you plan to do differently, to show that you recognize the standards required in order for you to improve?

1)

2)

3)

3: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS- Re-working of essay

1. Did you find the feedback (both written and verbal) supportive and informative? Why/ why not? _____

2. What changes do you plan to make?

CHANGES	Teacher comments only
1)	
2)	
3)	

You have been given class time to re-work your essay, with the intention of making improvements.

3. Did you find the time given in class to re-work your essay, applying the advice you were given, enabled you to feel more confident and informed about what was required of you to improve THIS essay? Why/ why not? _____

4. Do you feel as if you have a better understanding as to how to improve and write better essays in the future? Do you feel more confident in yourself? _____

Teacher use only

The end: How have you found assessment for learning, specifically formative assessment?

Please answer the following questions below and provide comments.
Your honesty and self reflection would be appreciated.

With specific reference to Psychology:

If you think back to the beginning of the year, I explained to you that I would not be giving you any grades, but giving ONLY FEEDBACK on submitted work, **what did you think?**

1	2	3	4	5
That's ok				I MUST have a grade

Comment: _____

How do you feel **NOW**?

1	2	3	4	5
That's ok				I MUST have a grade

Comment: _____

OVERALL

1) The quality of written feedback has been helpful

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly agree				Strongly disagree

Comment: _____

Could this have been improved? YES NO?

If YES, how? _____

2) The quality of verbal feedback has been helpful

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly agree				Strongly disagree

Comment: _____

Could this have been improved? YES NO?

If YES, how? _____

3) Taking the opportunity to re-submit work has meant I have been able to rectify areas that I had made mistakes on

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly agree

Strongly disagree

Comment _____

Could this have been improved? YES NO?

If YES, how? _____

4) I do not feel disadvantaged or uninformed by not receiving grades/ %/ marks (consider how you felt about this at the beginning of the course).

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly agree

Strongly disagree

Comment _____

5) Compared to my other classes, I feel I am getting a large amount of constructive and supportive feedback in Psychology.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly agree

Strongly disagree

Comment _____

6) I feel that through all the feedback I have received I am becoming more confident in what is expected of me and what I need to do in order to produce a quality piece of work.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly agree

Strongly disagree

Comment _____

7) I feel I have taken every opportunity to improve upon my work

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly agree

Strongly disagree

Comment _____

Could this have been improved? YES NO?

If YES, how? _____

8) Do you feel this approach to assessing your work has been beneficial?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly agree

Strongly disagree

Comment

9) Any other comments?

Thank you

A2 PSYCHOLOGY FEEDBACK SHEET: Section A Essay

NAME: _____

ESSAY TOPIC: _____



Part A: A description of ONE study (6 marks)

Terms and concepts

Confident use of psychological terms and concepts					
---	--	--	--	--	--

Evidence

The answer is detailed and accurate					
The answer is well organized					

Understanding

The answer gives a clear account of the specific topic from a psychological perspective					
There is clear understanding of what has been written					

Part B: Discussion of difficulties encountered when carrying out psychological research (10 marks)

Terms and concepts

Confident use of psychological terms and concepts					
---	--	--	--	--	--

Range of difficulties

There is a good range of points that consider the difficulties (or issue) being raised					
--	--	--	--	--	--

Evidence

Each point has been clearly explained and elaborated upon in coherent and thorough detail					
---	--	--	--	--	--

Argument structure

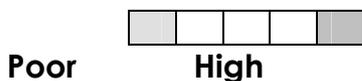
The answer engages with the question throughout displaying clear argument structure and is appropriate					
--	--	--	--	--	--

Overall	
---------	--

A2 PSYCHOLOGY FEEDBACK SHEET: SECTION B ESSAY

NAME: _____

ESSAY TOPIC: _____



Part A: 10 marks- It should consist of four to five paragraphs.

Concepts and Terminology: This is measuring the quality of your written English and use of psychological terminology. [3 marks]

Appropriate terms and concepts are presented and used in a confident way					
Spelling and sentence structure is good					
Views are expressed clearly					
Punctuation is appropriate					

Evidence: This is measuring the range of studies/ theories you have described and in how much depth. There should be four pieces of psychology. [4 marks]

Appropriate psychological evidence is accurately described					
Studies/ theories chosen are wide-ranging					
Detail is appropriate					

Understanding: This is how well you have understood what you've written. [3 marks]

The answer shows excellent understanding of the question throughout					
Terminology, examples, expansion of complex points are clear					
Answer is coherent and well structured					
Final sentence links directly back to question					

Part A Comments: _____

Part B: 16 marks- It should consist of four paragraphs.

Range of issues: This is how well you have identified and defined each appropriate evaluation issue. There should be 4. [4 marks]

There are a range of issues					
Each issue has been identified					
Each issue has been made relevant to the question					
Each issue has been explained and elaborated					

Evidence for issues: This is how well you discuss psychological research in relation to your four evaluation issues. There should be at least two studies linked to the issue. Always given examples to illustrate the points you are making. [4 marks]

Studies chosen are appropriate for the issue					
Studies have been commented on effectively					

Analysis: Here you should include analysis sentences at the end of each 4 paragraphs, as well as using linking phrases (e.g.: also, by way of contrast...) [4 marks]

There is analysis in the form of comparisons and contrasts					
This analysis is accurate, detailed and effective					

Argument Structure: This is an overall view of how well your paragraphs are structured and presented. Also takes in to account the quality and persuasiveness of your argument. [4 marks]

Answer is appropriately structured					
There are compelling arguments that demonstrate originality and insight					
There is 360° analysis of each issue					

Part B Comments: _____

Part C: 8 marks

Application: This is how many relevant suggestions you make. Aim for at least three and make sure they are relevant to the scenario in the question.

[4 marks]

Suggestion (s) made are appropriate to the request					
Suggestion is based on appropriate psychological evidence					
Suggestion is detailed and clearly explained					

Comments: _____

Application Interpretations: Reasons: This is whether each suggestion is backed up by explicitly named and relevant psychological research.

[4 marks]

There is a clear rationale for each suggestion					
There is confident use of terminology, examples and points are fully explained upon					
The answer is clear and well structured					

Comments: _____

Overall: