

How Good is Your School's Feedback on Learning?



A guide for school leaders on giving
learners effective feedback

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Introduction

Ensuring students receive effective feedback is one of the key determinants of whether they will be successful learners. Decades of education research support the idea that by teaching *less* and providing *more* feedback, we can produce greater learning.

According to Professor John Hattie (Visible Learning 2009):

'If feedback is directed at the right level, it can assist students to comprehend, engage, or develop effective strategies to process the information intended to be learnt. When feedback is combined with effective instruction in classrooms, it can be very powerful in enhancing learning.'

Providing effective feedback on learning should be a key component of a school's learning and teaching strategy and the professional learning of practitioners.

Here is some broad guidance for school leaders about what effective feedback looks like and how it can be evaluated as part of a school's review of HGIOS4 quality indicator 2.3: Learning, Teaching and Assessment.

Providing Effective Feedback to Learners

Feedback is information given students about their learning that helps them close the gap between where they are now, and where they are aiming to be. The goal of feedback is to provide students with insight that helps them to improve their learning or performance.

Research shows that feedback is most effective when used with the following approaches.

- a) Feedback is related to specific learning goals (the learning intention and the success criteria)
- b) Feedback is initiated by the student, in conjunction with self and/or peer assessment
- c) Feedback helps to identify misunderstandings and barriers to learning.
- d) Teachers are able to gauge when feedback is needed to promote learning.
- e) Feedback is timely – ie, it takes place during the learning process or soon after, often as a conversation.
- f) Students receive specific information about what they need to do to close the gap
- g) Teachers deploy the kind of feedback prompt that best meets the need of the students (eg, verbal, written, descriptive, evaluative)
- h) Teachers provide clear strategies to help the student improve.

- i) Teachers allow time for students to act on feedback.
- j) Feedback is user-friendly (focusing on a small number of actionable points, rather than overwhelming the learner with information).
- k) Written feedback comprises comments, rather than grades.
- l) Students use learning journals to help reflect on and review their learning.

Evaluating the Quality of Feedback

Here is a suggested approach for evaluating the quality of feedback in the classroom. This can be undertaken by school leaders during direct observation of learning, or by practitioners as part of professional reflection.

Use the Impact online quality improvement tool to complete the traffic lighting exercise and record strengths and weaknesses.

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Theme 2: The Quality of Teaching	
Feedback	
Feedback, both oral and written, is a regular component of day-to-day teaching.	● ● ●
Feedback is positive and focuses on next steps in learning.	● ● ●
Feedback is clear and concise, using familiar language from the classroom or lesson.	● ● ●
Feedback focuses on learning intentions and success criteria.	● ● ●
Feedback provides information on how well the learner has met the success criteria.	● ● ●
Feedback helps to determine next steps in learning and how to close the gap.	● ● ●
Feedback can be initiated by learners (not just the teacher).	● ● ●
Learners give and receive feedback from peers on their learning.	● ● ●
Feedback occurs as learners are in the process of learning, as well as at the end of a task or project.	● ● ●
Feedback helps to identify misunderstandings and barriers to learning.	● ● ●
Teachers make use of comment-only marking to provide students with a focus for progression.	● ● ●
Students use learning journals to help reflect on and review their learning.	● ● ●