



## FEEDBACK ON YOUR ASSIGNMENTS IS VALUABLE BECAUSE IT ENABLES YOU TO:

- reassess and improve your approach in future submissions or assignments, and
- close the gap between where you are and where you need to be to succeed in your learning.

Feedback is an essential part of the university's assessment system. It encourages you to manage your learning independently and successfully. It is the last link in the chain of assessment information available to you and it's the main element that encourages you to learn from the way others see your work. When feedback is provided by an expert in your field of study, rather than a peer or friend, it makes good sense to use it well. Consider feedback a *learning tool* rather than simply a judgement.



Sometimes your feedback will be limited to a mark or grade. Whenever it includes comments, these are likely to relate to the criteria on the Marking Sheet (or Assessment Rubric) and have two distinct elements:

1. positive comments pointing out what you did well
2. formative comments suggesting how and what to improve.

Although it can be tempting to search out the positive and ignore the rest, this is not strategic and leaves you open to repeating mistakes next time. Remember, feedback is given to help you learn and improve.

## MAKING BEST USE OF FEEDBACK

### LEARN TO ACCEPT FEEDBACK, EVEN DIFFICULT MESSAGES

When others review your work, whether they are markers or peers, try to remember they are commenting on the piece of work and not on you as a person. Practice putting your emotions aside as you review all the marker's comments. This will allow you to assess the feedback calmly and learn from it. In this process, the feedback becomes quite motivational.

### WHEN YOUR FEEDBACK IS A GRADE, USE IT TO CALCULATE THE SCORES YOU NEED IN FUTURE ASSIGNMENTS

Each assessment task (i.e. assignment) is allocated a fraction of the overall grade (e.g. 20% for an early task, compared to 40% for a final task). This allows you to calculate what you need next time to reach your final goal or to pass the topic.

### DON'T BE DISCOURAGED BY A DISAPPOINTING EARLY GRADE

The weighting of assessment tasks, especially in first year topics, is generally designed so that you can pass despite a disappointing early grade (i.e. early tasks have a lower weighting than later tasks). It is not at all unusual for new students who are adapting to university to experience a disappointing grade or drop in their grades. If this happens to you, check your feedback and find out how to do better in your next assignment.



## IF YOUR GRADES ARE CONSISTENTLY LOW, MEET WITH YOUR TUTOR TO EXPLORE NEW LEARNING STRATEGIES

Establishing a good academic record is important for your future studies so work out your options when experiencing difficulties in a Topic. Ignoring one or two low grades is not a good option and may put you at risk of failing. It's a risky approach. Instead try talking to your tutor after class or email them for an appointment. Review online Student Learning Support Service (SLSS) resources and/or visit the Learning Lounge.

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## ANALYSE THE MARKER'S COMMENTS AGAINST THE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- Markers generally provide comments relating to each of the assessment criteria as well as a final grade.
- Match the comments to the relevant criteria on the marking sheet (or rubric) so you can see where and why you have lost marks.
- Look at the feedback from past assignments while working on your current assignment. Then, when editing your draft, check that you've responded to previous feedback and acted on the most valuable comments.

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## FUTURE-PROOF YOUR WRITING

Make a checklist of your 'personal demons' (i.e. repeated flaws in your argument, logic, written expression, structure, or presentation). Use this checklist in your proofreading regime to avoid repeating errors.

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## ACT ON REFERRALS

If you are referred to special School-based tutorials or specialist staff at the university (e.g. qualified advisers in the Flinders Learning Lounge or Librarians), act on this advice promptly.

Review the wide range of self-help learning guides on Mathematics, Referencing, Academic Writing, and assignment preparation available online and on campus. These guides are invaluable resources and will guide you in your studies.

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## FIND ANSWERS

- Whenever feedback confuses you (e.g. uses abbreviations or unfamiliar terms), talk it through with others. This can be done in class, in person with your tutor, or over a coffee with fellow students. You can also drop in to speak one of our advisors at the Learning Lounge in the Central or Sturt Libraries.
- If you believe there has been an error in the marking of your assignment, follow up with your tutor promptly and within the recommended timeframe (check guidelines in your Statement of Assessment Methods (SAM) or the relevant Assessment Policy). Note that grade changes are guided by policy rather than personal circumstances. You can also seek assistance from the Flinders University Student Association (FUSA).