# Learning from Feedback

## What is feedback?

Feedback from tutors consists of invaluable one-to-one advice on what the marker/tutor feel are the:

1. **Strengths** of the work – what was good about it.
2. **Weaknesses** of the work – what undermined the effectiveness of the assignment.
3. **Areas for improvement** – how to improve your performance in the current of next assignment.

Even though feedback can occasionally feel negative, it is a crucial part of learning and should never be ignored. The more you read your advice and think about how you will use the feedback the more useful and less negative it will seem.

## Types of feedback

Generally, there are two types of feedback:

1. **Formative feedback** – advice on how to improve the current work or future work.
2. **Summative feedback** – a final mark and comments on how well you have met assessment criteria.

## Format of feedback

Feedback from tutors commonly takes the form of a feedback or assessment sheet, or notes written onto a text-based assignment, or sometimes verbally during a critique or a tutorial – which you need to take note of. All notes and feedback forms should be read carefully for areas of improvement.

## Common areas of feedback

* **Academic content** – evidence of your background reading and research.
* **Critical engagement** – demonstration that you have understood, evaluated and made use of ideas to inform your response to the assignment brief.
* **Project management** – your ability to manage your time, develop and advance ideas methodically.
* **Communication** – your ability to convey ideas clearly.
* **Technical and academic conventions** – your adherence to academic. requirements relating to referencing, presentation and word count (in text-based assignments).

## Typical areas of criticism

* Inadequate background reading and research
* Lack of scholarly evidence to support points and ideas
* Lack of critical engagement with underlying issues – descriptive rather than analytical approach
* Poor time management leading to inadequate or surface idea development
* Lack of clarity
* Poor referencing, not adhering to word count, not following guidelines regarding content or format, not following specific discipline protocol.

## Using feedback

* Draw up a checklist of issues raised by the tutor and suggested areas for improvement. If you don’t understand any of the comments, contact your tutor for clarification.
* Prioritise your checklist in order of seriousness, as this will give you an order in which to implement feedback. This checklist will also act as a useful prompt for future assignments.
* Consider whether something like better organisation and time management (or improving English language skills) needs to be addressed. Take the necessary steps before the next assignment.

If you need help or advice with any issue raised in the feedback, then seek it out. If you need advice on how to address any issue raised in the feedback, book an appointment with the Skills for Academic Success Team (S.A.S.).

Scan the QR code to book appointments, view our events calendar, watch skills videos and more…

