

Zhejiang University-University of Edinburgh Institute Feedback Standards and Guiding Principles

Purpose of Policy

This policy outlines the Zhejiang University-University of Edinburgh Institute (ZJU-UoE Institute) feedback standards and guiding principles.

Overview

This document sets out the standards required of feedback at the ZJU-UoE Institute, together with a framework of guiding principles to underpin the effective provision and use of feedback by teachers and students. The policy meets the same expectations as the University of Edinburgh Feedback Standards and Guiding Principles Policy, and is derived from that policy. The University of Edinburgh Feedback Standards and Guiding Principles Policy is reviewed by the University of Edinburgh Senatus Learning and Teaching Committee:

http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/feedback_standards_guiding_principles.pdf

This ZJU-UoE Institute policy is updated in line with the equivalent University of Edinburgh policy. Any required changes are approved by the ZJU-UoE Institute Board of Studies. In cases where there is a deviation from the University of Edinburgh regulations, approval must be sought from the University of Edinburgh Senatus Learning and Teaching Committee.

Scope: Mandatory Policy

All students. All staff who teach students.

Contact Officer

ZJU-UoE Institute Academic Administrator

Document control

Date Approved	Date Starts:	Amendments:	Next review:
15.12.16	September 2016	N/A	June 2017

Section responsible for policy maintenance and review

ZJU-UoE Institute Academic Administrator

Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations

ZJU-UoE Institute Taught Assessment Regulation: <http://zjue.intl.zju.edu.cn/en/policies-regulations>

If you require this document in an alternative format please email: ZJU-UoE Institute Academic Administrator

Zhejiang University-University of Edinburgh Institute

Feedback Standards and Guiding Principles

Feedback plays a vital role in sustaining excellence in teaching and learning at undergraduate and postgraduate level. This document sets out the standards required of feedback at the ZJU-UoE Institute, together with a framework of guiding principles to underpin the effective provision and use of feedback by teachers and students.

Throughout the document, feedback is defined as information to students which can enable them to review what they know, understand and can do in their studies, and to identify areas for improvement. Opportunities for feedback arise within timetabled classes (tutorials, practicals, lectures) as well as more informally. And feedback can be provided not only on coursework assignments, tests and exam answers, but also on activities that are not necessarily formally assessed such as class discussions, group exercises, problem-solving, fieldwork and field trips, placements and developing project plans and proposals.

Feedback is of most value when it focuses on work that is ongoing, and where students can readily make use of the feedback to enhance the quality of their learning. Where feedback is provided at the end of a course, it should focus not only on that assessment but also aim to look beyond it, towards students' future academic and professional work.

Standards

1. Feedback is integral to course design. Every course and programme will provide opportunities for students to get feedback on their ongoing performance and achievements.
2. Effective feedback is prompt, informative, helpful and acted upon.
3. Course and programme documentation (e.g. the course handbook or website) must inform students when, where and how feedback is offered in the course concerned.
4. Assessment expectations, standards and marking criteria will be clearly communicated to students, with opportunities for discussion, to enable them to understand and interpret feedback.
5. Students will also be advised on how, when and where they can best make use of the feedback provided to optimise their learning.
6. All students are expected to take careful note of feedback and to make good use of it in their studies.
7. All teachers and assessors are expected to give feedback in ways that can enhance the quality of students' learning, and to reflect on, review and update their expertise in feedback.
8. The provision of feedback must be regularly monitored in quality assurance procedures (e.g. in course questionnaires and/or focus groups, in staff-student liaison committees, and in programme/subject reviews) and appropriate action taken to address concerns raised.

Guiding Principles

- a. Feedback is a two-way process. It thrives on interaction and dialogue between students and their teachers, and where there is a sense of belonging to a vibrant community of learners.
- b. Feedback can only work well when it is a joint and shared responsibility:

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<p><i>The onus is on students to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • familiarise themselves with when, where and how feedback is provided • develop their understanding of assessment expectations, criteria 	<p><i>The onus is on teachers to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • design courses and programmes in ways that enable students to get and to act on feedback • inform students when, where and how feedback will be provided
<p>and standards in their chosen degree programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collect and reflect on the feedback provided, and grasp opportunities to put it to good use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide feedback which is prompt, informative and helpful, within the resources available to them, and advise students how they can put the feedback to good use

c. Feedback varies in a number of ways:

- It can fulfil a range of purposes, including to correct, to justify a mark or grade, to encourage and praise, to diagnose, to explain why or how, to troubleshoot, to debate, to suggest alternatives, to edit, to clarify, to advise on where and how to improve.
 - It can come from many sources: from lecturers, supervisors, tutors and demonstrators; from fellow-students; from professional practitioners; from students' own personal reflections; from the audience for a seminar or poster presentation.
 - It can take many different forms, including pre-assignment guidance; handwritten notes in the margins of an essay or report; ratings on a pro forma; verbal or emailed comments; 'clicker' responses in a lecture; a practice session in marking and commenting on a sample assignment; 'drop-in' advice; a supervision meeting; a debriefing by a professional practitioner; whole-class or 'generic' feedback on how an exam question had been tackled.
- d. Feedback needs to be fit for purpose. The particular kinds of feedback that are offered within any given course or programme unit will vary, depending on what and how students are expected to learn and the resources available.
- e. Under the ZJU-UoE Institute Taught Assessment Regulations, all students are entitled to see their examination scripts to assist with the provision of feedback and their self-reflective learning. Other feedback on exams may take a variety of forms, including generic feedback where marking timescales are short.
- f. Good feedback and high-quality learning go hand-in-glove. Where feedback is effective, it can help students to improve what they know, understand and are able to do — and so attain their full potential.
- g. In order to be effective, feedback needs to be prompt, informative, helpful and acted upon.

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- prompt feedback is returned to students within the agreed timescale for the work submitted;
 - informative feedback highlights strengths and weaknesses, giving specific examples or explanations;
 - helpful feedback offers suggestions about how to improve;
 - feedback only has an effect when it is engaged with and acted upon by students to improve their learning
- h. Students' engagement with feedback thrives when they experience it in a wide range of forms and settings, while gaining practice in acting upon and giving feedback as well as receiving it.
- i. Staff expertise in feedback grows when new tutors, demonstrators, supervisors and lecturers are well-supported in learning how to give feedback effectively in their subject area, and when good practice and innovation in feedback are shared amongst staff at all levels of experience.
[A website resource has been compiled by the University of Edinburgh on Enhancing Feedback, which links a range of innovative feedback strategies to over 200 case-examples drawn from across the subject range and from within and outwith Edinburgh:
<http://www.enhancingfeedback.ed.ac.uk/>]
- j. The quality of feedback is safeguarded when it is monitored and when it is valued appropriately in annual review and promotion.

15 December 2016