



Three principles for feedback that students can use

David J. Walker
University of Dundee
d.j.walker@dundee.ac.uk

These principles are based on research carried out by Mirabelle Walker, a Teaching Fellow in one of one of the Open University's CETLs, the Centre for Open Learning in Mathematics, Science, Computing and Technology (COLMSCT).

1. Give plenty of comments that relate to the student's skills development. *Students usually find it straightforward to use such comments to improve their performance.*
2. When giving a comment that relates to the content of an answer, include an explanation - that is, explain a correction, say why you are suggesting different content, etc. *Many students are unable to move their conceptions closer to those expected unless you explicitly help them to 'bridge the gap'.*
3. When praising some relatively complex aspect of an answer, explain why it's good. *Students may not have made explicit to themselves the elements of good work; if you do so they have a higher chance of repeating their success.*

A word of explanation

Comments that relate to students' skills development are comments on such matters as: answering the question set; using references appropriately; structuring an answer (whether text, mathematics or diagrams); using evidence, examples, etc. appropriately; using correct English; etc.

Comments that relate to the content of an answer are comments on such matters as: how accurate the answer is; what had been included and omitted; etc. They also include points of clarification.



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