



Resources presented at the Market Place on 17th October

Applying evaluation methods to learner and tutor training

Rationale

When tutors return assignments to students, they can only guess at the ways in which students are going to engage with their feedback. Many believe that students never look at the feedback. Conversely, many students hesitate to ask their tutors for clarification when they do not understand the feedback or would need more information. These two activities are intended to promote the feedback dialogue by helping students and tutors close the communication gap and become aware of each other's concerns, assumptions and needs.

Two approaches

The two activities suggested here are based on methods that were initially developed for data collection and evaluation purposes. However, the Project Team began to see their potential value as reflection-inducing tools and is currently adapting them for training purposes. The two methods in question are:

1. Students using screencast recordings to talk their tutors through the feedback they just returned, as they point at the relevant sections on the screen. This is the basis for the **feedback on feedback** activity described below.
2. The Feedback Evaluation Tool for Tutors (FACT), which is demonstrated in a screencast at http://www.open.ac.uk/blogs/efep/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/FACT_profiling_demo1.swf
This is the basis for the **feedback alignment** activity described below.

Feedback on feedback

The principle is very simple: Students get their assignment back, look at the feedback and tell their tutors what worked, what did not, what they have learnt, and what additional support they need.

The screencast software used is Jing. It was chosen because it is free and easy to use, and also because many OU tutors already use it regularly to provide additional feedback to their students.

Resources presented at the Market Place:

- A set of briefing notes for students entitled **Giving your tutor feedback**
- A model recording, which can also be viewed at http://www.open.ac.uk/blogs/efep/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Example_talk-through.swf Please note that the current screencast was designed for data collection purposes, but can easily be adapted for training purposes.

Feedback alignment

Initially designed for evaluation and research purposes, the FACT tool provides a visual profile of assignment feedback in terms of the emphasis made on strengths and/or weaknesses and the depth of feedback within each of those two categories.

The feedback alignment method consists of prompting students and tutors to reflect together upon the feedback given on a particular assignment. During the first stage of the activity tutor and student work independently following a template that is based on the FACT method. In the second phase, they compare notes and discuss any discrepancies in their responses using a traffic-light system. This helps them assess the depth of the feedback provided by the tutor, the amount of additional scaffolding required by the student, and possible mismatches in their mutual expectations and assumptions about each other's roles/abilities.

Resources presented at the Market Place:

- Table showing the **levels of scaffolding** used in the FACT method
- Self-evaluation template for **tutors**
- Self-evaluation template for **students**
- Template for **merged report** (comparing student's & tutor's evaluations side by side)

The method will be piloted in a series of training workshops that the Project Team will be running in 2013.