

Assignment Feedback – how do tutors feel about it?

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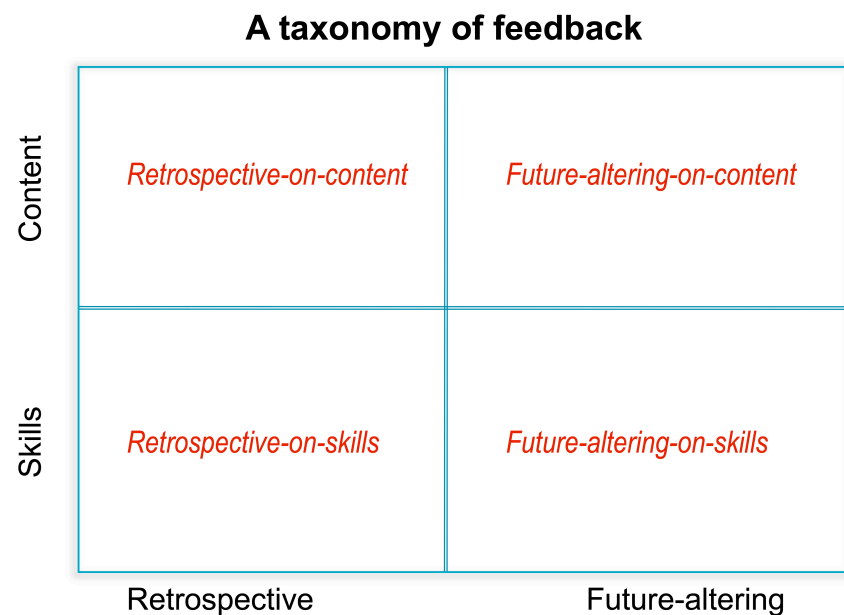
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The Problem

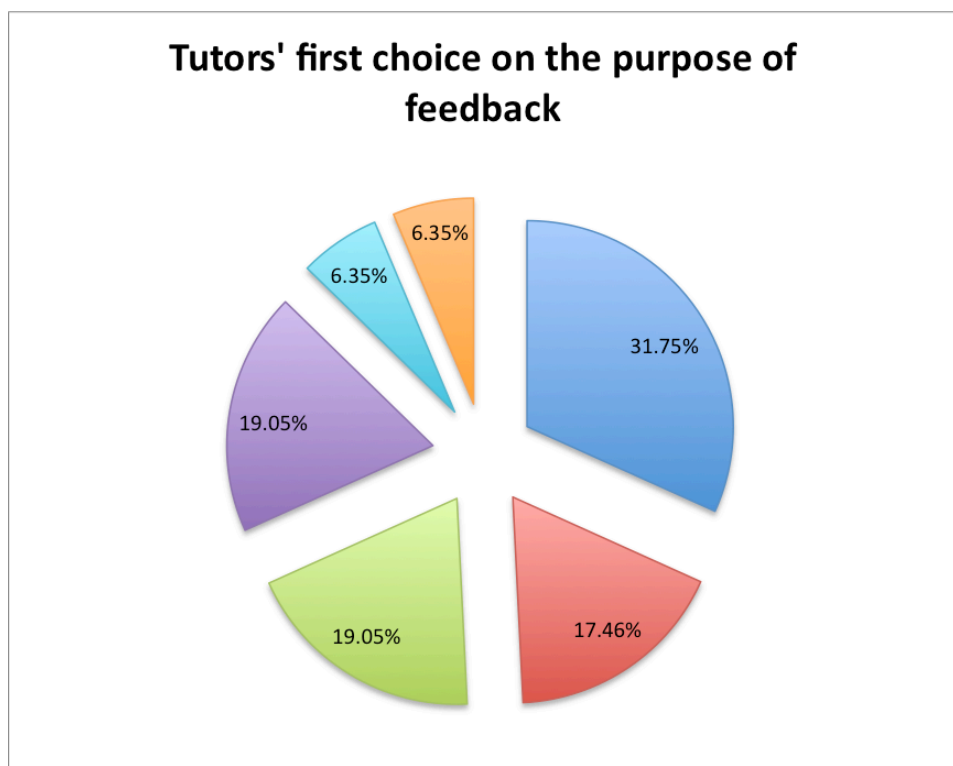
Whilst there is general agreement that effective and timely feedback on assignments is essential, methods used to formulate and provide that feedback vary widely both within and outside The Open University (OU). Feedback comments may either be targeted at the gap between the student's performance and the ideal in a particular assignment (*retrospective feedback*), or at more generic themes, applicable to future work (*future-altering*).

This research is based on an OU Level 1 Technology module with 2400 students and 140 tutors. Tutors provide feedback on 4 assignments submitted electronically.



Survey results

RESULT	WHAT THIS MEANS
91% of tutors 5 or more years OU teaching experience, 29% > 10 years	Tutors: wealth of knowledge Feedback: based on outdated methods
54% of tutors provide feedback in 3 places	Tutors: more feedback is better Students: swamped and confused
35% of tutors use a standardised template for additional comments	Students: less personalised feedback Weaker students: list of negative comments
85% of tutors provide detailed marks information at least twice	Feedback: stresses where marks lost Students: demotivated
78% of tutors think the marking guides most help them clarify to students the expected standard	Marking guides: focussed on retrospective feedback on content



- Deliver high quality information about learning
- Develop ability to reflect and self-assess
- Help clarify what good performance is
- Close the gap between current and good performance
- Improve motivation and self-esteem
- Encourage dialogue about learning
- Use feedback to improve teaching (zero%)