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SCHOOL OF ART

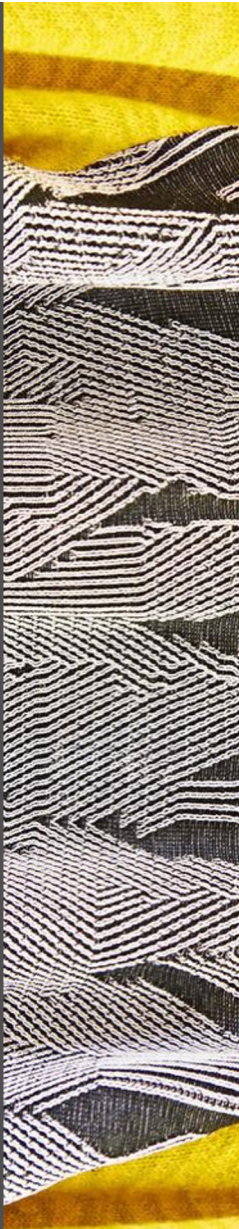


Queen Mary
University of London

Developing an approach to compassionate feedback

Advance HE 4 December 2024

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Belonging through Assessment: Pipelines of Compassion

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/membership/collaborative-enhancement-projects/assessment/belonging-through-assessment-pipelines-of-compassion>



Belonging

'...a feeling or sensation of connectedness, and the experience of mattering or feeling cared about, accepted, respected, valued by, and important...'

(Terrell Strayhorn, 2012, p. 4)

Compassion

'...noticing of distress and/or disadvantage to self or others, and a commitment to take action to reduce it'

(Paul Gilbert, 2005)



A friend gifted me this engraved compass and it took me several moments to remember I wrote this line in my book 😭



12:46 AM · Jan 3, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

Compassionate Feedback: Aims

- **Develop definitions** of what compassionate feedback might look like
- **Devise guidance and support** for approaches to compassionate feedback within the art and design disciplines.
- **How can existing structures and processes be adapted and modified?**
- 'emotional labour of feedback' (Spaeth 2018), including issues of workload.
- Can we restore 'joy' in assessment (McArthur 2018) and make the assessment process both manageable and compassionate?

What we learned from our own workshop

Understanding: With education as an act of love (Freire), belonging is understanding: students need to understand that their educators understand their learning journey. We need understanding of **individual requirements for learning**, and to inculcate **awareness of diverse experiences**.

Qualities of compassion help us define how to embody it, including:

- mirroring so that the other feels 'seen';
- active listening;
- honesty and transparency: helping students understand why, what, and how.

Understanding our power: Our pedagogy should suggest and guide rather than dictate. Assessment creates artificial structures dealing with non-human elements, including grades. More compassion built into the structures would be key, and acknowledging our own power position.

Learner journey

- Feedback is part of a **durational learner journey**
- **Acknowledging past learning**
- Would **compassionate approaches towards students and staff workloads** place most value on formative feedback and assessment moments and frame the summative (albeit with a feedforward element) as more “contained” and manageable?
- Feedback as a two-way conversation and process recognising environment, tone, and language, a relational and dialogical **‘done with’ rather than ‘done to’**.
- Engaging students in assessment (e.g. self- and peer-assessment, co-creation) and ‘de-coding’ assessment structures (e.g. transparent constructive alignment) **would inform mutual understanding**.

Belonging through Assessment: Pipelines of Compassion

QAA Collaborative Enhancement Project 2021

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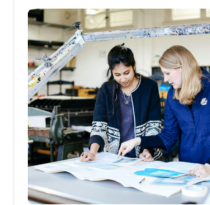
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Interrogating Spaces

Compassionate Feedback

OCTOBER 11, 2022 UAL TEACHING, LEARNING AND EMPLOYABILITY EXCHANGE SEASON 3 EPISODE 1



Interrogating Spaces

Compassionate Feedback



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LISTEN ON



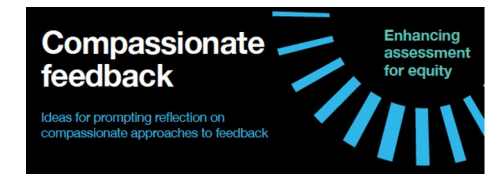
SHARE EPISODE



<https://interrogatingspaces.buzzsprout.com/683798/11480939-compassionate-feedback>

Prompts for compassionate feedback

- Design
- Relational aspect
- Student agency
- Equity
- Tone and language



Why this resource?

This resource supplements the podcast 'Compassionate Feedback' and lists the ideas and suggestions made by the contributors to the podcast as well as additional ideas arising from discussions involving colleagues from Glasgow School of Art as part of the 2021 QAA Collaborative Enhancement Project entitled 'Belonging through Assessment: Pipelines of Compassion'. It is meant to serve as a springboard for discussions rather than as a guide on how to enact compassionate feedback.

How can you use this?

The list can be used by individual tutors, as they reflect on their practice, or in team discussions, or in discussions with students.

You may think of additional or different approaches to compassionate feedback, and you may notice some apparent contradictions, or tensions, between different prompts. This is because there is not one single way of approaching compassionate feedback. Again these are only prompts and suggestions to help you start thinking about what your approach might be.

Design

Is feedback happening at times when it can be useful to students?

Does formative feedback play a prominent role in the student journey?

Can formative feedback acknowledge past learning, and support students in achieving their learning goals?

How is students' engagement in assessment supported (e.g. self- and peer-assessment, co-creation)?

Are students supported to decode assessment structures and approaches?

Is assessment done with students, rather than done to them?

Relational Aspect

Think about who the student is, what is special about them, what challenges they may have overcome, and what their goals and interests are - and reflect this in the feedback.

See things from the student's perspective.

How does feedback convey that you hold the student in high regard, that you care about their learning and that you believe in them?

Invest time in creating a welcoming space for all students.

The work since...

Queen Mary University of London:

- Programme view of assessment
- Student journey

Glasgow School of Art:

- Transformational curriculum work
- Sharing practices and reflection



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Belonging through Assessment: Pipelines of Compassion
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