



### 5. CAREFULLY ORCHESTRATE DISCUSSION ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE UNDERSTANDING OF FRUITFUL LEARNING STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES TO SUBJECT-MATTER, AND TO PROMOTE THE IDEA THAT FEEDBACK FOCUSES ON IMPROVEMENT

For example, if you choose a range of brief examples, you could role-play the ‘author’ of each example and ask students verbally to give you feedback which will help you improve your approach, making clear (by your reactions, in role) that feedback carries emotional freight. However, when taken in the spirit of constructive criticism and when a concerted attempt is made to share meanings/check for (mis) interpretations, it can feedforward in highly productive ways.

### 6. USE EXEMPLARS-BASED ACTIVITIES TO DEVELOP STUDENTS’ SKILLS TO MONITOR THEIR OWN WORK WHILE THEY ARE PRODUCING IT

Learning to evaluate ‘peers’ work, via exemplars, helps develop their assessment literacy in low-stakes situations. By comparing and contrasting examples students can be supported to learn to make evaluative judgments about the extent to which subject content has been mastered and generate feedback, so they’re gradually enabled to become less reliant on external regulation. Help them see the importance of practising making evaluative judgments about examples, whereby they’re learning to ask themselves questions (self-assess) about the quality of their own work e.g. ‘How am I doing?’ ‘Is this right?’ ‘How can I tell?’ ‘Should I go further?’ ‘What other steps could I take?’

### 7. COMBINE FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT TASKS WITH EXEMPLAR-BASED FEEDBACK DISCUSSIONS AND ASSOCIATED ACTIVITIES TO ADVANCE STUDENTS’ SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE AND HELP THEM CHECK THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF RELEVANT CONTENT AND ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

Some tutors are wisely wary of using ‘finished product’ exemplars in the same content-area as high stakes summative assessment, for fear of stifling creativity or encouraging plagiarism and imitation. Using examples drawn from students’ early attempts at ‘interim’ formative tasks (which mirror some aspect of what students need to do in high-stakes assessment) offers one alternative. The task might engage students, for instance, in a challenging domain which is known to cause difficulties for novices.

### 8. HELP THEM RATE THEIR WORK BY COMPARISON WITH THEIR PEERS

Carefully chosen exemplars, with the requirement for students to rank their own work in relation to a range of examples, coupled with guided discussion/feedback on the quality of their self-evaluation, can provide sensitising feedback. ‘Weak’ examples can, for example, alert students to potential missteps or partial understandings, which could interfere with their capacity to do well in high-stakes assessment, so they can remedy misconceptions before it’s too late. Examples of ‘good or excellent’ work can motivate students and help them understand what is required to achieve a good grade.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

In so far as it is possible, we want to ‘open the black box’ for students to demystify assessment requirements, enabling them to work confidently knowing they are heading in the right direction rather than struggling to guess what is wanted. By providing exemplars we can help them feel confident to tackle new kinds of assessed tasks and to achieve to their potential. Hence, we can pre-empt some of the necessity for post-hoc explanatory feedback by front-loading our guidance.

## REFERENCES

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