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The Relationship between Student Engagement with Feedback and Lecturer and Student views of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

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Abstract

Feedback is widely acknowledged to be a key component of quality teaching and important for effective learning and yet the extent to which it meets its potential in improving learning outcomes for students has been questioned in the literature. Whilst many explanations for this failing have been proffered, one area that would seem to have been neglected is the relationship between feedback and perspectives of teaching and learning. A case study approach was adopted to explore the relationship between student engagement with feedback and lecturer's and students' perceptions of teaching, learning and assessment. The case consisted of: a lecturer at a large, urban Institute of Technology in New Zealand; students enrolled in two of his courses; and some of the interactions between them, particularly in relation to specific assignment. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis of feedback on an early assignment in each course.

Findings indicated that there were disparities between lecturer's and students' views about the nature of knowledge and learning and that when views are misaligned, students can struggle to interpret assessment requirements. Tensions exist between requirements for a quick marking turnaround and provision of detailed feedback and the resulting tendency to provide only brief feedback comments. Student engagement with feedback was not always aligned with their perceptions of learning and assessment, suggesting that other factors influence engagement. This finding supports previous research in acknowledging feedback as a complex process.

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