DIFFERENT FEEDBACK FORMATS FOR FORMATIVE/SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS
LITERATURE REVIEW
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Abstract
Feedback is given to allow students to know how well they are progressing, what areas they can improve on and what their strengths are (Jones, 2005). In order for feedback to be effective, students need to be informed of how feedback will be given to them, when it will be given to them and also in which format it will be delivered. Through informing students early on they are able to understand how to create dialogue between themselves and their tutor. This literature review discusses traditional methods of feedback such as oral and written feedback as well as alternative methods such as electronic forms and peer feedback. These methods of feedback can be taken into consideration when creating assessment plans, to help students draw clear links between their feedback, learning outcomes and assessments.

Introduction
Feedback is used to relay specific qualities of a students work to enable them to review what has been done well, what has not, and how their work could be better (Boud, 2009). Ideally, feedback should correspond to the set assessment criteria and allow students to reflect on whether they have met the criteria adequately or not. Practice and repetition of completing assessments and implementing feedback can help students internalise and understand the evaluation criteria better (Philippakos, 2017). For feedback to be effective, it should be delivered in a variety of methods to allow students of all abilities to be included. Considering different formats of feedback enables students to be proactive in their learning, as often new and innovative methods can make the learning process exciting.

Oral feedback
Oral feedback is an interactive method of feedback that can be frequent and immediate. Oral feedback may take place during teaching or outside of teaching hours, for example in informal face to face conversations after receiving feedback or during tutorials.

Oral feedback can be time effective for tutors, compared to other formats of feedback such as written or electronic (Jones, 2005). Written feedback is lengthy and laborious whilst podcasting requires using the correct equipment in an appropriate space with noise control. It can benefit students through increasing engagement and dialogue between tutors and students, as tips and ideas for improvement can be easily shared about the assessment process.

Being able to share ideas can allow students to be more informed about the assessment criteria. Jones (2005) argues that learners do not always recognise informal discussions as feedback, in order to rectify this, students should be made aware of opportunities for receiving feedback, highlighting the different methods feedback may be delivered in. Jones suggests that this will allow students the opportunity to be prepared for feedback, therefore take in what is being said.

Although oral feedback can be an effective learning tool for students, the efficient and immediate nature of the feedback can mean it is easily forgotten. Not having a physical record of the comments made can make it challenging for students to refer back to something at a later stage. A way to rectify this may be by informing students to take notes when receiving feedback to have evidence to reflect on later. Another issue which may occur is tutors can easily dominate an oral feedback session, rather than working collaboratively with the student to discuss their ideas. They may do this to justify their marks and give more detail towards the reason for the feedback. To resolve this, tutors can demonstrate to students how to interpret given feedback with their own knowledge, skills and learning.

Written

Written feedback may be either physical or digital depending on the context. In order to deliver good written feedback, it is important to use the assessment criteria to mark against students work. Ensuring that students are marked according to what they have been told they will be assessed on. This creates a relationship of trust between markers and learners. Furthermore, constructive feedback should be delivered to students to address areas of improvement, in a tone that allows the learner to believe that genuine improvement can be made through acting on the given guidance (Jones, 2005). It is important that the feedback is focused on the quality of work as opposed to critiquing the person delivering the work. In turn this minimises the possibility of personality issues influencing how the feedback is received particularly where negative feedback is being provided (Brinko, 1993).

Written feedback that is delivered online such as comments annotating a student's assignment or a message written at the end of an assignment is becoming a popular method of communicating with students. Annotating student feedback in this way can mean specific parts of the assignment can easily be addressed and referred back to (Rodway-Dyer et al, 2009).

Although digital feedback can speed up the feedback process, it does not eliminate the issue of delivering timely feedback entirely. The lengthy nature of written comments combined with tutors' heavy work load can mean that feedback delivery is delayed which reduces its effectiveness (Borup et al, 2015). To resolve this issue, students should be made aware at the beginning of a course when to expect feedback after submitting an assignment.

In addition to this, other perceived benefits of written feedback include the permanency of evidence, and ease of access to digital feedback. As students are able to revisit feedback notes at a later date, they are more likely to remember what has been said, which they can take forward when revising for future assignments. The ease of access to digital feedback means that students can conveniently access their feedback at any time, in any place and in privacy.

Electronic

As the teaching and learning process is becoming increasingly digitalised, electronic feedback is becoming more popular amongst tutors and students. Arguably this is due to the ease of communication and delivery. Students often have technological gadgets and experience and skill using technology which can be utilised in the learning process (France and Wheeler 2007). This section will explore three forms of electronic feedback that can be given to students: podcasts, audio feedback and email interaction, and will highlight the positive and negative attitudes towards each.

1.1 Pod Casts

Savin-Baden (2010) argues that Podcasting assignment feedback is a practice that enables learning whilst helping students to become independent inquirers. Podcasts can be uploaded on to virtual learning environments with little trouble, allowing for the material to be accessed at any time, in any location. The flexibility and convenience of podcasts (Heilesen, 2010) appeals to students as it prevents an additional journey to campus to collect their feedback, although arguably this is not the same as receiving face to face feedback as questions cannot be asked directly and immediately.

Podcasts are a good alternative for individualised feedback tutorials which may be impractical in large cohorts. Ekinsmyth (2010) argues this method to be more detailed and personal, as richer accounts of student's strengths and weaknesses in their work can be addressed. As a result, deeper engagement is formed with the feedback, as students are required to pay closer attention as the mark or grade is not always explicit, as it is with written feedback (Ribchester et al, 2008). Bourgault et al (2013) discovered in a study

conducted with nursing students that written feedback following clinical assignments rarely lead to further questioning whereas students were more eager to initiate conversation after receiving audio feedback.

The experience of receiving feedback through a podcast can be more memorable, than reading it from a feedback sheet. Ribchester et al (2008) supports the view that podcasts help students to retain information, by contending that there is sensitivity to the spoken word and to visual cues. The notion that the spoken word can convey more than the written word (Ekinsmyth, 2010), and therefore encourage retention, may be helped further by the perceived sense of being directly spoken to in a podcast. This direct engagement is often sensed through the speaker's intonation and body language. The ability to use tone of voice to add emphasis to particular points, in conjunction with facial expressions and body language can be a functional way of helping students to understand feedback better. This can be particularly helpful when delivering constructive criticism, as Hennessy and Forrester (2013) report that students feel more comfortable listening to such comments without having to face their tutor. Furthermore, the conversational nature of podcasts means that specific subject related vocabulary can be explained better, or be eliminated to make things more understandable (Hennessy and Forrester, 2013). Rodway-Dyer et al (2009) therefore argues that the language used is therefore a balance between formal written feedback and colloquialisms used in face to face feedback.

The benefits behind creating podcasts for staff are also apparent. Speaking is often faster than typing which can save considerable time when delivering feedback (Ribchester *et al*, 2008). This can mean that not only is the feedback process less stressful and time consuming (Rodway- Dyer et al, 2009) but that feedback can be more constructive and individualised (France and Wheeler, 2007). Instead, the personal format gives students the perception that the teacher cares about the student (Bourgault et al, 2013). This can open opportunities for students to come forward with questions regarding the feedback, thus dialogue between staff and students is formed which can deepen an understanding of desired learning outcomes.

As mentioned earlier, podcasts can work as an alternative for individualised feedback tutorials and can save time in delivering feedback to large classes (Ribchester *et al*, 2008). Using podcasts to help large cohorts is beneficial as general comments can be shared to help the class as a whole, with added suggestions such as further reading. This ensures that fair feedback is delivered as everyone is receiving the same feedback. Alternatively, this whole class feedback could feed forward to individual feedback, where students can draw the links between the two and their own work to elicit a greater understanding of the programme.

On the other hand, there are some drawbacks to using this format of feedback. It can be debated that there is potential to give too much feedback to students. This becomes problematic as too much detail may be shared than that which is normally required of tutors (Ribchester et al, 2008). Providing lengthy feedback can be ineffective as students become overwhelmed with the workload and find it difficult to manage their time to cover the course material (Fernandez, 2009). An overlapping issue may be the reduced control over language, as unlike written feedback, oral conversations have less opportunity to filter what is communicated to students. Ekinsmyth (2010) highlights that written feedback can be safer in this respect as references and criterion is used in addition to standardised language.

Furthermore, the physical separation of feedback from the script can be challenging when addressing complex issues. It may be difficult to pinpoint particular areas of the assignment that the feedback relates to, which other formats of feedback may tackle better (Rodway-Dyer et al, 2009). For example, a physical copy of a script makes comments directed at details such as referencing and grammar easier to understand. (Ribchester et al, 2008). This

may be aggravated further by the inability to ask questions to the tutor as you would be able to with face to face feedback.

Lastly, technical issues must be considered. It can be a time consuming process to become accustomed to the software required to record feedback. This may be troublesome for staff, however through continued practice and usage this issue can be easily resolved. An issue which is harder to manage is the requirement for minimal disturbances when recording feedback (Hennessy and Forrester, 2013). Delivering feedback requires little background noise in order for the audio to be clear, which can be impractical for staff to deliver as a silent space is not always conveniently found or suited to their busy schedule.

1.2 Audio

As many of the benefits and challenges of podcasts are similar to audio feedback, this section will expand on those further but concentrate specifically on audio without visual aids.

It is argued that the biggest advantage in implementing audio feedback is that it can save staff time in forming feedback, therefore produce a faster turnaround time for delivery. However, Cann (2014) stipulates that audio feedback is only time efficient if it replaces the traditional form of written feedback, as opposed to being used as an addition to written feedback. Morris and Chikwa (2016) also support this idea by arguing that the time consuming element of audio feedback is not giving the feedback itself, but the technical aspects such as setting up audio, notifying students and saving files. This implies that although the spoken word is faster than writing or typing, tutors are still unable to save time until either a simple method of recording and distributing audio is made available or they learn to adapt to technology over time. Additionally, it can be argued that there is a presumption that students are able to access this format of feedback easily, or have the appropriate compatible technology to do so (Hennessy and Forrester, 2013).

The aim of using a variety of assessments and feedback formats is to ensure that all students are being provided for according to their individual learning styles and talents. Audio feedback may discriminate against students who have hearing challenges if their needs are not considered when creating such feedback (Perrin 2015). A simple way to remedy this may be to provide subtitles, or offer further academic learning support in advance to receiving such feedback.

The benefits of audio feedback are that there is an impression that the tutor cares more, or is more focused on giving feedback specifically to the individual student. This may be due to the casual conversational tone that can be carried out in audio as well as the level of detail that can be shared (Hooper, 2010). By offering personalised feedback, students are more likely to engage with learning by seeking further dialogue beyond the feedback given, therefore solidifying their understanding of the course content and learning objectives further (Cann, 2014).

Lastly, it can be argued that audio feedback may be unsuitable for certain types of assessments. Depending on the assessment, it may be difficult to link parts of the assignment or clearly signpost areas for improve to students. However, Perrin (2015) suggests that audio feedback can be more satisfying to learners as it provides greater and more detailed explanation which forms as a guidance for improvement. He goes on further to suggest that continuous use of audio feedback can create a sense of a learning community as dialogue between the student and tutor is increased. Allowing students to collaborate with their tutors can strengthen their self-assessment skills whilst building on their course knowledge.

Peer feedback
The core benefits of peer feedback is developing students into life learners. There are many different methods of providing peer feedback for example by feed backing back on presentations, or reporting back on a classmate's performance of a task. (Zundert, 2010). Peer feedback allows students to consider what it is like being the reader of text, which can help them tackle problems when writing their own work, as they consider challenges the reader may face (Philippakos, 2017). Becoming a self-directed learner demonstrates student's ability to take control of one's own learning (Zundert, 2010). Students are able to gradually internalise the evaluation criteria though repeated practice of peer assessment and feedback. They become more effective assessors when understanding the marking criteria and how it links to performance, a skill that can be taken forward when reassessing their own work independently (Li et al, 2010).

Furthermore, it is suggested that the process of peer feedback can boost functional skills such as reviewing, diagnosing errors, identifying missing knowledge and clarifying information (Lin et al, 2001). The practical aspect of peer feedback is that there are more students than tutors in a classroom which can mean feedback can be effective through immediacy as well as being individualised. (Topping, 2009). Topping (2009) suggests that this greater volume and diversity of feedback can arguably compensate for delivering feedback of a lesser quality. Arguably continuous practice of peer assessment could increase the quality of feedback given, as students become more accustomed to the process and through monitoring or workshopping with students on how to deliver effective peer feedback. Additionally, the frequency of feedback can also be increased as pressure is released from tutor's workload which may counterbalance the quality disadvantage (Gielen et al, 2010).

Issues with peer feedback are that students do not always value their peer's evaluation over their tutors' comments (Philippakos, 2017). Students argue that their problems are not always identified as well, therefore more general or inaccurate comments are make. This reduces the quality of feedback given, as students view their peers' comments as weak. The reason for this may be that students do not want to be responsible for lowering their peers' marks, as they are worried that the same will happen to them (Nildon, 2003). A method of combating this is to prevent peer feedback from counting towards a final grades, i.e a summative assessment, which allows students the flexibility to give open and reflective comments which can improve their learning process without worrying about it contributing towards their final score.

Conclusion
In summary, the findings of this literature review show how different formats can affect the delivery of feedback and its effectiveness. Being able to consider the different types of feedback available, enables the correct feedback approach to be selected when designing a course in order to make sure students are getting the most after completing an assessment.

Although innovative methods of delivering feedback can increase student engagement and thus promote student-tutor dialogue, there are possible challenges each method faces. Technology based feedback methods of podcasting and audio feedback run the risk of being more time consuming than intended as staff require training to use software, or a quiet space to be able to record appropriately. On the other hand, traditional methods of written feedback can also be time consuming whilst producing even further issues such as lack of student understanding. Illegible handwriting and the use of academic jargon can mean students are unable to benefit from written feedback. This being said, each method of feedback can be beneficial if used appropriately, for example oral feedback can increase dialogue between both students and tutors as well as amongst students. Peer feedback can also increase the ability to become lifelong learners as students learn to recognise and

implement their understanding of standards of good quality work when they produce their own work.

The various methods of feedback should be highlighted to students at the beginning of a course for them to be most effective. Research shows that students often do not recognise forms of feedback, particularly informal oral feedback, therefore emphasising to students when feedback will be given will serve to increase their attention in listening for feedback and their motivation for seeking out feedback.

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