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Why reflect on practice?

Introduction

Assessment, feedback and feedforward is a fundamental part of the learning journey. Delivering high quality and effective assessment feedback and feedforward is challenging for many educational institutions. The strategic targets section shows how assessment and feedback fits into the university's strategic plan.



Psychology students outside the Moray Life Science Centre
by Tim Winterburn / HIE / UHI

Strategic targets

Strategic vision and plan

Enhancing assessment and feedback supports two critical performance indicators (CPIs) in the university's [strategic vision and plan](#).

Student satisfaction

Student satisfaction	Baseline (2013/14)	Target (2019/20)
CPI 3a National Student Survey (UK higher education)	3% below Scottish average overall satisfaction (84% / 87%)	2% above Scottish average overall satisfaction
CPI 3b National College Satisfaction and engagement student survey (Scotland)		2% above Scottish average overall satisfaction

Student attainment

The university's strategic plan also has two critical performance indicators in relation to student attainment:

Student attainment	Baseline (2013/14)	Target (2019/20)
CPI 5a Attainment of higher education students	2669 awards	10% increase in awards
CPI 5b Percentage of full-time further education students successfully completing their course	66.1% (compared to 66% nationally)	At least maintain at sector average

University quality monitoring processes

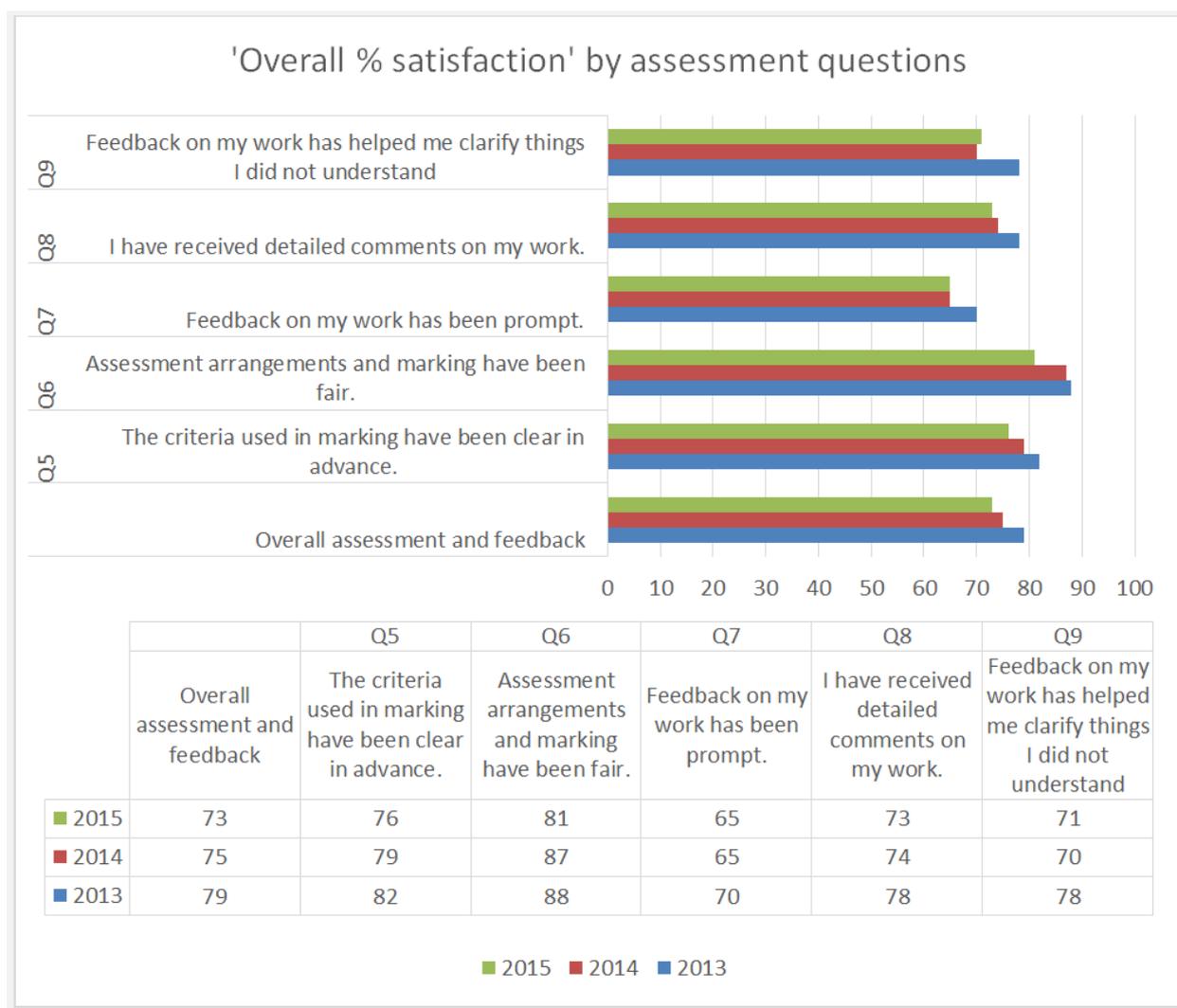
The following quality monitoring processes have highlighted the need for improvement for the University of the Highlands and Islands.

Self-evaluation documents (SEDs)

Every module leader completes a self-evaluation document (SED) which informs the Programme SED as part of the annual quality monitoring process. Valuable information is drawn from these documents, including identifying areas for development and action in the forthcoming year.

National Student Survey

Responses to the multiple choice questions in the National Student Survey (NSS) show that UHI students are less satisfied with practice in assessment and feedback in 2015 than in previous years (see Figure below).



The key message of the graph is that in 2013 we had 79% overall % assessment and feedback satisfaction; this dropped to 75% in 2014 and dropped again to 73% in 2015.

Free text comments left by students indicate that:

- There are pockets of good practice around assessment and feedback with the number of positive comments increasing over the three years in which students have participated in the survey.
- The majority of the negative comments concerning assessment and feedback relate to the quality and timing of feedback. In terms of quality students feel that feedback was not helpful or detailed enough; in terms of timing some students reported not receiving feedback at all on some assessments, as well as not receiving feedback on time e.g. “feedback on first assessments not received in time to prepare for the second assessment”.
- A new theme amongst negative comments emerged in 2015 relating to the vagueness or inaccuracy of assessment requirements and marking criteria, and the inconsistent application of policies regarding mitigating circumstances/late submission.

Red button

The [Red button student feedback system](#) gives students a simple mechanism to tell us about their experience. Red Button Annual Reports have highlighted that students tell us they need feedback returned in good time (especially if it relates to the next assignment) and that accurate feedback and assessment information must be provided, particularly at induction.



Our service standards - The red button

Reflecting on professional practice

Reflecting on your teaching practice in assessment, feedback and feedforward is a fundamental part of enhancing your own professional practice. This resource aims to support you to reflect on your practice, identify and apply changes and review the impact of these changes.

Recording the way you enhance your professional practice is important; not just to keep a record of your continuous professional development but, by sharing your findings, you can also have a positive impact on your own students, your colleagues and their students.

Taking part in peer reviews and providing opportunities for your students to offer feedback throughout the teaching term are some of the ways you can reflect on your own and your colleagues' professional practice.



College tutor with student - [Shutterstock](#)

Sector-wide initiatives

Higher Education Academy

There are a number of education sector initiatives which inform activities undertaken in the university. The work of the [Higher Education Academy](#) and the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) are two examples of the way in which sector-wide initiatives inform activities within the university.

Curriculum for Excellence

The university also aims to connect effectively with national developments, particularly in areas that have a key impact on enhancing the quality of the learner experience. Those areas include transition from further education to higher education, HN and degree enhancement and [Curriculum for Excellence](#) (CfE) implementation.

This [animation](#), produced by Education Scotland, provides an overview of the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) and examines the ways in which assessment can result in positive outcomes for learners aged between 3 and 18. Much of the content is relevant to assessment and feedback practice in the university.



[The Global Learning and Observation to Benefit the Environment \(GLOBE\) program visits NASA Goddard](#) by [NASA Goddard Space Flight Center](#) from Flickr, [CC BY 2.0](#)

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