

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

**Title: Effective teacher education practice:
The impact of written assessment ‘feedback’ for distance learners**

QUESTIONNAIRE

**Early Childhood Education Student Teachers
Thank you for agreeing to complete this questionnaire and contribute to the
research project.**



This questionnaire sets out to discover the value that students place on written feedback. Information will be gathered to examine whether students' progress and retention are linked to their views on effective feedback approaches. Students' perceptions of the role of written feedback will help to identify how improvements can be made to enhance teaching and learning.

Student information: Remember that the following information has been collected from your student file at The Open Polytechnic:

- Your grades
- Your year of study
- The pace at which you are working through the programme

Please note: The information collected in this questionnaire will remain anonymous.

All participants hold the right to withdraw from the research pilot without penalty or reason at any stage.

Please return this completed questionnaire by 31 May, 2005.

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

The questions in this section of the questionnaire will help us to identify the extent to which students with different characteristics have different views about written feedback.

PLEASE TICK YOUR RESPONSE

1. What year of the Diploma of Teaching (ECE) are you currently in?

Year 1 (enrolled in level 5 courses and 2 or less level 6 courses?)

Year 2 (enrolled in 3 or more level 6 courses and 2 or less level 7 courses?)

Year 3 (enrolled in 3 or more level 7 courses?)

2. What is your age bracket?

Under 20

20–25 years

26–30 years

31–40 years

40–50 years

Over 50 years

3. Which ethnic group do you identify with? *(You may tick all that apply)*

NZ European	<input type="checkbox"/>	NZ Māori	<input type="checkbox"/>
Samoaan	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cook Island Māori	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tongan	<input type="checkbox"/>	Niuean	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tokelau	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fijian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Pacific Nation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Other <i>(Please state)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

4. What is your first language? *(Please tick one)*

English	<input type="checkbox"/>	NZ Māori	<input type="checkbox"/>
Samoaan	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cook Island Māori	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tongan	<input type="checkbox"/>	Niuean	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tokelau	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fijian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cantonese	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mandarin	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other <i>(Please state)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

5. When you first enrolled in the Diploma, how long had it been since you had done any study?

- Under 1 year
- 1 year
- 2 to 5 years
- More than 5 years

6. What is your highest school qualification? (*Tick one only*)

- Finished primary school
- Some years at secondary school
- School certificate subjects
- Sixth form certificate
- University Entrance
- Higher school certificate
- Bursary
- Other

7. What is the highest qualification you have completed since leaving school? (*Please describe*)

8. What were your main reasons for deciding to study for a Diploma of Teaching ECE? Please rate each statement below on a 1 to 5 scale, with (1) being very important and (5) being not at all important. (*Please circle*)

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not important	Not at all important
1	2	3	4	5

Wanted to be an early childhood teacher	1	2	3	4	5
Love of learning	1	2	3	4	5
Love of young children	1	2	3	4	5
Needed the qualification to keep my job	1	2	3	4	5
To upgrade my qualification because of Government requirements	1	2	3	4	5
To support my centre to remain open	1	2	3	4	5
Fees were paid by my work.	1	2	3	4	5
Any other reason (<i>please specify below</i>)	1	2	3	4	5

VALUE OF FEEDBACK

In this section of the questionnaire we want to find out whether you find written feedback useful and what you value about written feedback.

(Written feedback comprises feedback sheets from the marker and comments on your script.)

9. What are your initial thoughts about the written feedback that you receive on The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand's assessments?

10. How is written feedback useful to you? Please rate each statement below on a 1 to 5 scale, with (1) being very important and (5) being not at all important (please circle).

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not important	Not at all important
1	2	3	4	5

It identifies strengths and weaknesses in my work	1	2	3	4	5
It deepens my understanding of what is meant in assessment questions	1	2	3	4	5
It helps me to understand the potential application of the content	1	2	3	4	5
It helps me to review my progress	1	2	3	4	5
It helps me to learn about what markers want	1	2	3	4	5
It motivates me to go for better grades	1	2	3	4	5
It motivates me to continue my studies	1	2	3	4	5
It builds my confidence	1	2	3	4	5
It encourages me to become an independent learner	1	2	3	4	5
It tells me the grade I received	1	2	3	4	5
Other (<i>please specify below</i>)	1	2	3	4	5

NATURE OF FEEDBACK/CONTENT

In this section of the questionnaire we ask you to identify the characteristics of written feedback that you find most helpful to your ongoing learning and writing of assessments.

11. To motivate you in your study, what type of comments in the feedback sheet or the script do you consider to be helpful? *Please rate each statement below on a 1 to 5 scale, with (1) being very important and (5) being not at all important. (Please circle)*

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not important	Not at all important
1	2	3	4	5

Comments on the level of the work in relation to the level of the course	1	2	3	4	5
Comments that focus on the marker's overall impression	1	2	3	4	5
Comments that explain how the learning outcomes of the assessment have been met/not met	1	2	3	4	5
Comments that identify strengths	1	2	3	4	5
Comments that identify where improvement is needed	1	2	3	4	5
Comments that focus on the argument	1	2	3	4	5
Comments that focus on the subject matter	1	2	3	4	5
Comments that focus on the use of supporting evidence	1	2	3	4	5
Comments on the structure of the assessment	1	2	3	4	5
Comments that provide justification for the grade given	1	2	3	4	5
Comments on the presentation of the assessment	1	2	3	4	5
Written comments on your script	1	2	3	4	5
Reflective questions on your script	1	2	3	4	5
Ticks on the script	1	2	3	4	5
Other (<i>please specify below</i>)	1	2	3	4	5

12. For improving your work, what type of comments in the feedback sheet or on the script do you consider to be helpful? Please rate each statement below on a 1 to 5 scale, with (1) being very important and (5) being not at all important. (Please circle)

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not important	Not at all important
1	2	3	4	5

Comments on the level of your work in relation to:

The level of the course	1	2	3	4	5
Comments that focus on the marker's overall impression	1	2	3	4	5
Comments that explain how the learning outcomes of the assessment have been met/not met	1	2	3	4	5
Comments that identify strengths	1	2	3	4	5
Comments that identify where improvement is needed	1	2	3	4	5
Comments that focus on the argument	1	2	3	4	5
Comments that focus on the subject matter	1	2	3	4	5
Comments that focus on the use of supporting evidence	1	2	3	4	5
Comments on the structure of the assessment	1	2	3	4	5
Comments that provide justification for the grade given	1	2	3	4	5
Comments on the presentation of your work	1	2	3	4	5
Written comments on the script	1	2	3	4	5
Reflective questions on the script	1	2	3	4	5
Ticks on the script	1	2	3	4	5
Other (please specify below)	1	2	3	4	5

13. Please provide one comment from your Diploma feedback sheets or scripts which has been particularly helpful to you? Why?

TIMING OF FEEDBACK

This section of the questionnaire will provide us with information on how your progress in completing the courses is affected by time-frames of returning marked assessments. Please tick your response.

14. On average, how long does it take for your marked assessments to be returned?

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Under 1 week | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1 week | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 weeks | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 weeks | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 or more weeks | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Comments:

15. Do you wait for feedback from your previous assessment before starting on the following one?

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Yes, always | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Yes, if it's the same course | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sometimes | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If you answered "yes" or "sometimes" to Question 15, please comment on why below.

If you answered “no” to Question 15, please go to Question 15a

15a. How do you use the feedback?

RECEIVING FEEDBACK

In this section of the questionnaire we wish to know what you do with your written feedback when you first receive it and the nature of any follow-up actions that you may take.

16. What do you usually do with written feedback when you first receive it? Please rate each statement below on a 1 to 5 scale, with (1) being always and (5) being never. (Please circle)

Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
1	2	3	4	5

I leave it unopened	1	2	3	4	5
Look at mark only and don't read the comments	1	2	3	4	5
Skim read the feedback	1	2	3	4	5
Read the feedback carefully	1	2	3	4	5

17. How much time do you usually spend on average reading your feedback when you first receive it? (Please tick one)

- Under 5 minutes
- 5–9 minutes
- 10–14 minutes
- 15–30 minutes
- More than 30 minutes
- I don't read it

18. In what order do you read your feedback when you first receive it? Please rate each statement below on a 1 to 5 scale, with (1) being read first and (5) being never read. *(Please circle)*

Read First	Read Second	Read Later	Read Last	Never Read
1	2	3	4	5

Comments on script	1	2	3	4	5
Feedback sheet - specific comments on structure etc	1	2	3	4	5
Feedback sheet - general comments at the end	1	2	3	4	5
Mark	1	2	3	4	5

19. Which part of the feedback do you usually find most informative? Please rate each statement below on a 1 to 5 scale, with (1) being very important and (5) being not at all important. *(Please circle)*

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not Important	Not at all Important
1	2	3	4	5

Comments on script	1	2	3	4	5
Feedback sheet- specific comments on structure etc	1	2	3	4	5
Feedback sheet-general comment at end	1	2	3	4	5
Mark	1	2	3	4	5

20. What is the most likely action you will take if you do not understand a marker's feedback or have difficulty with actioning suggestions? Please comment.

USE OF FEEDBACK

This section of the questionnaire provides information on how useful the written feedback is for completing new assessments.

21. Do you consider previous written feedback when completing new assessments? Please rate each statement below on a 1 to 5 scale, with (1) being always and (5) being never. *(Please circle)*

Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
1	2	3	4	5

Last feedback	1	2	3	4	5
All previous feedback	1	2	3	4	5
Feedback for related courses	1	2	3	4	5
Feedback for courses at the same level	1	2	3	4	5

22. What parts of the feedback do you find most helpful for completing other assessments? Please rate each statement below on a 1 to 5 scale, with (1) being very important and (5) being not at all important. *(Please circle)*

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not Important	Not at all Important
1	2	3	4	5

Opening and closing comments	1	2	3	4	5
Content	1	2	3	4	5
Supporting evidence	1	2	3	4	5
Structure	1	2	3	4	5
Presentation	1	2	3	4	5
Mark for each section	1	2	3	4	5
Comments on script	1	2	3	4	5

(Please comment below)

23. If you have been required to resubmit work, how did the feedback support you to complete this successfully?

Please comment below.

GENERAL

This section of the questionnaire asks you to identify any improvements that we can make to the written feedback provided by markers and also provides an opportunity for you to provide additional comment on our written feedback processes.

24. What can markers do to improve written feedback? *(Please comment below)*

25. Is there any other comment you wish to make about the written feedback process? *(Please comment below)*

Thank you for completing this questionnaire, and good luck with your study.

Appendix 2: Information sheet for participants

Information Sheet for Participants

Title: Effective teacher education practice: the impact of written assessment ‘feedback’ for distance learners.

Centre for early Childhood Education, The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand, 2004.

Kia ora

This information sheet is to tell you about a research project being conducted at The Open Polytechnic and to invite you to participate.

What is the research about?

The Centre for Early Childhood Education is interested in finding out students’ views on the effectiveness of feedback both on scripts and in feedback letters. A greater understanding of what students term as effective feedback will enhance the ability of the Early Childhood Lecturers to support and/or extend the learning of students.

The research objectives are to:

- Examine students’ views on how the extent and immediacy of feedback supports their study and/or extends their learning.
- Identify the characteristics and methods of the feedback that students find most effective in supporting their study and/or extending their learning.
- Examine whether student characteristics are linked to student views on effective feedback approaches for supporting and/or extending their learning.
- Examine whether student progress and retention are linked to student views on effective feedback approaches for supporting and/or extending their learning.
- Involve ECE lecturers in the research processes to enhance their appreciation of evidence-based teaching practices and to build their research capability.

What will the research involve?

Students who have received feedback from at least five assessments will be asked to participate.

Students that agree to participate will complete a short questionnaire. The student will be identifiable in the questionnaire in order to align responses to student records.

The questionnaire will focus on how students perceive feedback, how the type of feedback and when they receive it aids in their learning.

Students who do not agree will not be required to participate.

Data will be collected from the student’s records and aligned with their responses in the questionnaire to determine whether student progress and retention are linked to student views on effective feedback approaches for supporting and/or extending their learning. The data collected will be your grades, your year of study and the pace at which you are working through the programme.

The student has the right to withdraw from the research at any stage.

What will happen to the information?

Original data will be securely kept at The Open Polytechnic during the research project. No individual statement will be able to be traced to any particular participant.

Key findings will be sent to any research participants who are interested, with brief summaries also noted in the student newsletter.

Overall information and key findings will be shared with relevant staff, but they will not be able to trace individual comments.

Key findings may also be presented at conferences or in journals for professionals interested in effective feedback for distance students and/or student teachers.

Who is conducting the research?

Valerie Margrain, Dr Anne Meade, Trish Murphy, Jenny McClew, Angela Edlin and Liz Everiss.

Contact details

The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand, phone: 0508650200. Valerie Margrain: ext 5844, Trish Murphy: ext 4653, Jenny McClew: ext 4649.

Do I have to participate in the research project?

No, you do not have to participate in the research if you do not wish to. Participation is entirely voluntary. Only students who agree and sign consent forms will participate.

Even if you do agree, you can change your mind and withdraw at any time, without having to provide a reason.

What if I have any questions about the research?

Your questions or comments are most welcome and please feel free to call the researchers.

If you agree to participate in the research, please complete the Consent Form attached and return it in the postage paid envelope to The Centre For Early Childhood Education.

Appendix 3: Consent form

Effective teacher education practice: the impact of written assessment

PARTICIPANT PERMISSION FORM

CONSENT TO RESEARCH PARTICIPATION with The Open Polytechnic of NZ

Research Team: Valerie Margrain, Dr Anne Meade, Trish Muirhead, Jenny McClew, Angela Edlin, Liz Everiss.

- I have received an information sheet describing the research and introducing the researcher. I know that I can contact the research team to ask any further questions.
- I understand that I may withdraw myself, or any information I have provided, from the research—I can do this at any stage until the end of data collection without penalty or need to provide reasons.
- I understand the research methods include a written questionnaire and examination of student records (grades, year of study, and pace working through the programme). Some students may subsequently be invited to participate in focus group discussions—separate consent would be obtained for this phase.
- I understand that any information gathered will be kept anonymous. My comments will not be identifiable to anyone other than the research leader and research assistant.

Please tick if relevant:

- I am willing to complete the questionnaire
- I agree for data to be collected from my records (codes will be used instead of names)
- I would like to receive a summary of the research when it is completed.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____ Student ID: _____

Appendix 4: Focus group questions

TLRI Focus Group Questions (Appreciative Enquiry Approach) as at 1.7.05

Introduction round—name/year of study

1. What is assessment for? BRAINSTORM ON WHITEBOARD

Probe—learning for what?

2. Some of the questionnaire answers talked about technical aspects of assignments and some about content and theoretical aspects of learning.

I'd like to explore your views of the different aspects of feedback.

Probe—do the different aspects vary in importance by year of study?

3. What are the key messages from the written feedback that help you across all your study?

(silence)

4. In what way is written feedback part of dialogue with TOP staff?

Probe:— how accessible are markers to you?

5. Scales: challenge-----support

corrective-----affirming

Probes—Does this change by level of the programme

Does the tone of comments affect where on continuum

6. How do grades help your learning?

Probe—confidence and/ or motivation

7. These are the threads I've heard—do they provide an adequate summary?

Footnote: If consistency comes up as an issue, ask for examples/ask for solutions

Appendix 5: Information sheet for focus group participants

Supplementary Information Sheet for Focus Group Participants

Title: Effective teacher education practice: the impact of written assessment ‘feedback’ for distance learners.

Centre for early Childhood Education, The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand, 2004.

Kia ora

This information sheet is to tell you about the focus groups as part of the research project being conducted at The Open Polytechnic for which you have already completed a questionnaire. We would like to invite you to participate in a focus group with other Diploma of Teaching (ECE) students.

The focus group is being held at _____ (venue)

Start time: _____ Finish time: _____

Light refreshments will be provided.

A reminder of what is the research is about

The Centre for Early Childhood Education is interested in finding out students’ views on the effectiveness of feedback both on scripts and in feedback letters. A greater understanding of what students term as effective feedback will enhance the ability of the Early Childhood Lecturers to support and/or extend the learning of students.

The research objectives are to:

- Examine students’ views on how the extent and immediacy of feedback supports their study and/or extends their learning.
- Identify the characteristics and methods of the feedback that students find most effective in supporting their study and/or extending their learning.
- Examine whether student characteristics are linked to student views on effective feedback approaches for supporting and/or extending their learning.
- Examine whether student progress and retention are linked to student views on effective feedback approaches for supporting and/or extending their learning.
- Involve ECE lecturers in the research processes to enhance their appreciation of evidence-based teaching practices and to build their research capability.

What will the focus group involve?

- Students who have completed a questionnaire, and who live in particular geographic regions, will be semi-randomly selected to participate in a focus group.
- The focus group will consist of 6–12 students and two facilitators.

- Focus group facilitators will encourage discussion amongst participants regarding themes that have been drawn from the questionnaires.
- One of the focus groups will specifically include Māori participants.
- Any student has the right to withdraw from the research at any stage, however once data has been collated then it will be more difficult to extract individual data.

What will happen to the information?

- Original data will be securely kept at The Open Polytechnic during the research project. No individual statement will be able to be traced to any particular participant.
- Key findings will be sent to any research participants who are interested, with brief summaries also noted in the student newsletter.
- Overall information and key findings will be shared with relevant staff, but they will not be able to trace individual comments.
- Key findings may also be presented at conferences or in journals for professionals interested in effective feedback for distance students and/or student teachers.

Who is conducting the research?

- Valerie Margrain, Programme Leader of the Centre For Education Studies
- Dr Anne Meade, Research Fellow for The Open Polytechnic of NZ
- Angela Edlin, Regional Lecturer for the Centre for Education Studies
- Trish Muirhead, Regional Lecturer for the Centre for Education Studies
- Jenny McClew, Regional Lecturer for the Centre for Education Studies
- Liz Everiss, former Manager for the Centre for Education Studies

Do I have to participate in the research project?

No, you do not have to participate in the research if you do not wish to. Participation is entirely voluntary. Only students who agree and sign consent forms will participate.

Even if you do agree, you can change your mind and withdraw at any time, without having to provide a reason.

What if I have any questions about the research?

Your questions or comments are most welcome and please feel free to call Trish Muirhead, Jenny McClew, Angela Edlin or Valerie Margrain in the research team.

If you agree to participate in the research, please complete the Consent Form attached and return it in the postage paid envelope to The Centre for Education Studies.

Thank you.

Appendix 6: Consent form for focus group participants

Effective teacher education practice: the impact of written assessment

PARTICIPANT PERMISSION FORM for FOCUS GROUPS

CONSENT TO RESEARCH PARTICIPATION with The Open Polytechnic of NZ

Research Team: Valerie Margrain, Dr Anne Meade, Trish Muirhead, Jenny McClew, Angela Edlin, Liz Everiss.

- I have received a supplementary information sheet describing the focus group component of the research. I know that I can contact the research team to ask any further questions.
- I understand that I may withdraw myself, or any information I have provided, from the research - I can do this at any stage until the end of data collection without penalty or need to provide reasons.
- I understand that the focus groups involve attending a venue in my region for about two hours, with other Diploma of Teaching (ECE) students. Facilitators will invite group discussion of some of the themes drawn from the earlier questionnaire.
- I understand that any records of information gathered will be kept anonymous. My comments will not be identifiable to anyone other than the research leader and administration assistant.
- I understand that participants in the focus group will agree on a group contract at the beginning of the focus group. It will include keeping the names of the people in attendance confidential and non attributing specific statements to individuals in a way that might mean they are identified and lose their anonymity.
- I understand that there is no payment for attending a focus group, but I may be reimbursed up to \$20 for travel expenses.

Please tick if relevant:

I am willing to participate in the focus group on _____ (date) at _____ (venue).

I would like to receive a summary of the research when it is completed.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____ Student ID: _____

Appendix 7: Excerpt from data for constructed variables “pace” and “achievement”

Table 8 Percentage at each level of pace by year level of course

Level of pace	Year 1 (<i>n</i> = 30)	Year 2 (<i>n</i> = 63)	Year 3 (<i>n</i> = 31)
Slow	47	16	0
Medium	47	67	68
Fast	7	16	26
Overall	24	50	25

Percentages do not add up to 100 because of rounding of numbers and missing data.

Table 9 Summary characteristics of pace

Sample statistic	Value
<i>n</i>	121
Mean (standard deviation)	5.8 (1.6)
Minimum	2.0
Lower quartile	4.7
Median	5.5
Upper quartile	7.0
Maximum	9.0

Table 10 Summary characteristics of achievement

Sample statistic	Value
<i>n</i>	121
Mean (standard deviation)	12.9 (4.3)
Minimum	3.0
Lower quartile	10.0
Median	12.7
Upper quartile	16.0
Maximum	22.0