

Student perceptions of their involvement in formative assessment feedback practices: “I can do it myself”

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Abstract

Student voice makes a valuable contribution in the effort to evaluate the impact of Assessment for Learning (AfL) as it is the student learning that AfL practices seek to enhance. The authors report on a practitioner-led qualitative study involving 11 students’ perceptions of the impact of student-generated feedback practices. This study was conducted in a senior high-school English classroom in New Zealand and involved teacher-led development of students’ ability to evaluate and give feedback on essay writing. A partnership model of teaching and learning was an underpinning pedagogic principle in a teaching unit focusing on essay writing where a multidimensional criterion rubric was used, model answers were marked, and students were led to create feedback on their own and peers’ essays. Students reported that they valued their involvement in the assessment process and described benefits of increased engagement and the enhancement of their self-regulatory skills, as well as a deepened understanding of essay writing. Through the use of student-generated feedback, students were enabled to become partners with their teacher and share power and responsibility for classroom assessment.

Introduction

Educational researchers exhort practitioners to include students in the process of assessment. Sadler (2009), for example challenges that, “learning environments are self-limiting to the extent that they fail to make appropriate provision for students to make, and be accountable for, serious appraisals” (p. 49). Assessment for Learning (AfL) is based on the understanding that learning can and should occur through assessment and that “the learner is a partner in learning, not a passive recipient . . . they have a stake in and a responsibility for their own learning” (Clarke, 2004, p. 5). By ensuring shared understanding of the purpose, process, and expected results of

assessment, AfL includes the development of student assessment capability as they become evaluators of their own and others' work, and apprentices in expert knowledge (Absolum, Flockton, Hattie, Hipkins, & Reid, 2009; Sadler, 1989). The provision of feedback regarding current and desired performance, especially through student self- and peer assessment, has been established as a core AfL practice, and one of the most critical influences on student learning (Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall, & Wiliam, 2003; Butler & Winne, 1995; Harris & Brown, 2018; Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

Sadler (2010) focuses on describing desirable feedback by its functions: to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current performance of a learner, with a rationale for those judgements, and to provide advice on how to improve the work. This 'feed-forward' (Timperley & Parr, 2009) should have an orientation general enough to be of use for future work (Sadler, 2010). How and in what social context this development process occurs is crucial. Also, for feedback to promote learning, it needs to be received mindfully (Shute, 2008); therefore, the context in which the learner receives and interacts with feedback is of vital importance. Finally, the feedback process should lead to action (Andrade & Heritage, 2018; Cowie, 2005); therefore, time and space need to be given for the assimilation of feedback information and for the opportunity to act on it.

Winne and Butler (1994) provide a definition of feedback as, "information with which a learner can confirm, add to, overwrite, tune, or restructure information in memory, whether that information is domain knowledge, metacognitive knowledge, beliefs about self and tasks, or cognitive tactics and strategies" (p. 5740). We add to Winne and Butler's definition from a social constructivist perspective, noting that feedback is information developed in a socially mediated context, through working with a product against a standard, which gives opportunities to respond cognitively, affectively, and/or by taking action. Student-generated feedback is the term used when feedback is created by students, either for their own work (self) or for a peer's work.

Self-generated feedback has the particular advantage of developing the student's intimate knowledge of their own work. Peer feedback has the advantage of developing skills and knowledge through somebody else's work where there is less at stake emotionally than with their own (Wiliam, 2014). Wiliam (2014) notes that the quality of the feedback-giver's own

work increases through peer feedback because they have come to understand the task requirements better. Practices that encourage self and peer feedback are a key vehicle through which students' assessment capabilities can be enhanced. Yet, they are still being under-utilised (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

There are significant issues with the successful implementation of AfL principles, including student-generated feedback practices. If implemented badly it does not produce benefits and can indeed produce negative effects (Earl, 2013; Liu & Carless, 2006; Torrance, 2007). The potential problems of peer feedback often centre around its social nature (Panadero, 2017a).

Harris and Brown (2013) note the ad hoc fashion in which AfL is often implemented, while Pryor and Crossouard (2008) comment on overly simplistic implementation, emphasising the important identity work involved in formative assessment, and its nature as a discursive social practice. Research consistently suggests that teachers need to carefully and explicitly teach feedback strategies and practices to enable students to produce useful feedback (Andrade & Boulay, 2003; Brown & Harris, 2014; Panadero & Alonso-Tapia, 2013; Sadler, 1998; Smith, Worsfold, Davies, Fisher, & McPhail, 2013). In addition, for there to be maximum benefit to student learning, evaluative knowledge and expertise must be developed concurrently with productive knowledge and expertise (Sadler, 1989). Consequently, giving students opportunity to move back and forth from producing work, to evaluating it, to producing more work, is essential for developing their skill levels and identities, as well as their agency in learning and assessment (Pryor & Crossouard, 2008).

Furthermore, Sadler (1998, 2009) makes a powerful argument that students must be inducted into the process of making reasoned qualitative evaluative judgements, with access to the same resources available to a teacher. The desired outcome is that students advance responsibility for their own learning. Over time, students can become increasingly proficient evaluators of assessment work and skilled at giving feedback. In addition to the skills-development process, students must have opportunity to apply that learning back to their own work. Evaluative knowledge and expertise is not the end in itself, rather it is "inextricably connected with constructive activity" (Sadler, 1989, p. 138). Students benefit from instruction in the practices of AfL (Andrade & Brown, 2016; Andrade & Heritage, 2018),

and it has been suggested teachers must provide this as well as managing the inevitable interpersonal issues that arise, in order to gain successful implementation. Furthermore, it has been identified that further work is required to investigate how it is best to facilitate self and peer assessment for students in the compulsory education sector (Harris & Brown, 2013).

Students' perceptions of the use of AfL are highly relevant because it is students who are at the centre of the learning experience, doing the learning of the content at hand as well as learning about the use of AfL. This involves reflection and metacognitive development on their part. The desired outcomes of AfL therefore require the development of personal skills and attitudes of students, as well as their academic achievement (Black, 1999; Sadler, 2010). While there is increased focus on student voice in research, student perceptions are still under-researched (for examples, see Cowie, 2005; Harris, Brown, & Harnett, 2014; Harris, Harnett, & Brown, 2009; Murillo & Hidalgo, 2017; Weaver, 2006). The study reported in this article captures student voice in order to offer insight into how students perceive their involvement in student-generated feedback practices in a secondary school setting. This study's use of a particular routine for building student capacity in creating feedback is also offered as a model for future use. The key research question was: What are student perceptions of the impact of student-generated feedback practices in formative essay writing in the English classroom?

Goals of AfL: Engagement and self-regulation

Research suggests that student-generated feedback can benefit student learning in both an immediate context and in the longer term (Munns & Woodward, 2006). Here, the concepts of student engagement and self-regulation have been chosen to express these benefits.

Student engagement

Engagement is a term often used with respect to students' commitment to school and their schooling, with positive engagement seen as a way of countering school dropout rates and improving outcomes for at-risk or low-achieving students (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004; Sheppard, 2011). This study uses Munns and Woodward's (2006) definition that student

engagement is a “*substantive* sense of satisfaction with, and a psychological investment in, the classroom work being undertaken” (p. 194, emphasis in original). Engagement is more than just being ‘on task’ but involves cognitive, emotional, and behavioural investment by students. Additional to this investment there exists an agentic aspect which acknowledges that students can proactively contribute to how they are taught and how they interact in class, so that their learning environment is more motivationally supportive for themselves (Reeve, 2013). These four aspects of engagement, although distinct, are mutually supportive pathways to progress in learning for students. Put simply, engagement is when, “students are thinking hard, feeling good and working well” (Munns, Zammit, & Woodward, 2008, p. 160).

Student-generated feedback practices are linked to the creation of substantial student engagement (Earl, 2013; Nicol & McFarlane-Dick, 2006). They do this by enabling students to become insiders in the learning community of the classroom rather than passive bystanders (Woodward & Munns, 2003) and student agentic engagement could be seen to facilitate this shift.

Student self-regulation

There is an increasing number of models available for understanding self-regulated learning which have difference emphases (Panadero, 2017b). Self-regulated learning, with a social constructivist emphasis, is “an active constructive process whereby learners set goals for their learning and monitor, regulate, and control their cognition, motivation, and behaviour, guided and constrained by their goals and the contextual features in the environment” (Pintrich & Zusho, 2002, p. 250). This definition reflects the key principle of students taking responsibility for their learning (Zimmerman, 2008). It includes the development of cognitive routines and the use of meta-cognitive monitoring (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). It also acknowledges the cognitive, affective, and behavioural processes involved in self-regulation while recognising that contextual features, including, for example, the conditions of assessment and the social context of the learning, play a part in the ability of a learner to self-regulate (Panadero, 2017b).

Significantly, educational researchers assert that self-regulatory skills can be taught and learnt (Brown & Harris, 2014; Hargreaves, 2013; Panadero & Alonso-Tapia, 2013). When understood from a social constructivist

perspective as something that can be developed in a supportive social context, self-regulated learning is seen as a goal of the learning context, not an innate set of abilities. Timperley and Parr (2009) describe this as a Vygotskian understanding of self-regulation because students move towards independence as initial scaffolding and support is reduced and student capacity increases. This is the case for aspects of self-regulation such as monitoring of progress. Thus, “for every individual at any point in time, there will be a mix of other regulation, self-regulation and other automatised processes” (Gallimore & Tharp, 1990, as cited in Timperley & Parr, 2009, p. 44).

Self-regulated learning has been conceptualised as a cyclical process involving goal setting, strategic action, and evaluation (Zimmerman, 2008). Students need to identify problems/challenges, consider and adjust strategies, and monitor the effectiveness of their learning. Thus, student-generated feedback produced throughout the cyclical process can provide opportunities for students to regulate their own learning and inform next steps through all stages of the cycle (Harris & Brown, 2018). Research supports the idea that self-regulatory thinking processes, attitudes, and behaviours can be developed through the proactive use of student-generated feedback practices (Brown & Harris, 2014; Shepard, 2000).

Context

The New Zealand education system is a conducive environment for the use of AfL (Crooks, 2011). Indeed, guidance for the implementation of assessment provided within New Zealand’s national curriculum document is framed by AfL understandings (Ministry of Education, 2010). The guiding focuses of assessment in *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) (NZC) is that it must benefit and involve students, support teaching and learning goals, be planned and communicated, be suited to the purpose, and be valid and fair. As stated in the New Zealand Ministry of Education position paper on assessment: “what is important is that all assessment is used, at some level of the system or other, to improve student learning. If it isn’t, it is not worth doing. If it is, then it is *assessment for learning*” (Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 20, emphasis in original). In New Zealand, involving students in assessment is explicitly understood to mean developing their assessment capability.

New Zealand's high-school national qualification, the National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA), is a specific focus for assessment. It involves a standards-based assessment system with standards aligned to the final three levels of *NZC*. There are four levels of attainment for each standard: Not Achieved, Achieved, Achieved with Merit, and Achieved with Excellence. The majority of standards are internally assessed by teachers in schools, but some are assessed externally to schools by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority through the use of examinations. The standard that is the focus of the teaching unit in this study is an externally assessed English essay. Student-generated feedback practices can sit very comfortably in a standards-based assessment framework, although it is worth noting that NCEA does not provide detailed criterion-based rubrics for each assessment standard. This study created a criterion-based rubric as a vital tool for both students and the teacher.

The scope of the study

The research in this study was practitioner research. Practitioner research is the intentional and systematic study of an aspect of a practitioner's own practice in their own professional context, where outcomes are shared with other practitioners (Menter, Elliot, Hulme, Lewin, & Lowden, 2011). Practitioner research is open to critique for a number of reasons, particularly regarding the gathering of trustworthy data in a situation where the researcher is known to the student subject. Every effort was made in this study by the teacher–researcher to carry out the intervention as a normal classroom activity and to survey and interview students with non-leading questioning. The teacher–researcher understood the power imbalance as an “asymmetrical reciprocity” (Edwards & Mauthner, 2002, as cited in Fontana & Prokos, 2007, p. 80). She sought to live into the identity of a teacher–researcher, adopting a learner inquiry attitude, as someone who sought to understand whether this approach to essay writing was useful or not. Despite its challenges, this position between research and practice creates unique opportunities for research to actually result in change (Borko, Liston, & Whitcomb, 2007; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2003).

A 10-week study was conducted in the first author's Year 13 (17–18-year-olds) NCEA Level 3 English class in which the secondary students were learning to write essays in preparation for an external examination for the

achievement standard AS 91472: Respond critically to specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s), supported by evidence. For this, students were expected to write an essay in response to one of several essay questions. Eleven out of the 17 students from this class responded to the invitation to participate in the study. All aspects of the study complied with the University of Waikato's Ethical Conduct in Human Research and Related Activities Regulations (2008) and were approved by the Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee. All students were free to participate in the study, or withdraw at any point without any penalty. They were assigned pseudonyms and consented to have their data used in this study.

Investigating students' perceptions of the AfL practices that were developed over the 10 weeks was the focus of the study, which involved students developing their abilities to evaluate and give feedback on essays written in practice for the examination. The student participants represented a mix of abilities working across the full range of achievement levels in all aspects of the Level 3 NCEA course, from Not Achieved through to Achieved with Excellence.

Table 1 describes the five phases of the study, beginning with a skills-development period, followed by three rounds of writing practice essays and giving feedback.

Mindful of expert advice (Pryor & Crossouard, 2008; Sadler, 2009), the two-period skills-development phase had three steps which focused on bringing students to as clear as possible an understanding of the success criteria.

Step one: Unpack the success criteria in the form of a rubric (see Appendix A). The teacher created an assessment tool in the form of a rubric to outline multidimensional criteria, with descriptions of performance across increasing levels of sophistication or difficulty. The implicit goal was to move across the levels of the rubric towards increasing mastery and sophistication of the task. The rubric was written with the aim of avoiding the use of jargoned language, to make meaning clear. While some researchers have shown benefits to involving students in the creation of rubrics (Andrade, 2000), this study chose not to with the rationale that, for this level of work (final year of high school), the rubric required very careful construction for which the students lacked expertise. The focus of this study was on helping students to understand the wording and meaning

Table 1. Summary of intervention and data collection

Phase	Student action	Time
Phase one: three-step skills-development phase	Students unpack the success criteria with teacher; go through a teacher-marked essay as a model, and mark two exemplar essays.	Two 1-hour periods
Phase two: first practice marking own essays	After having written a 'response to text' practice essay, students evaluate their own essay against the success criteria rubric and write self-feedback.	30 minutes
	Later, students read and reflect on follow-on teacher feedback.	20 minutes
Classroom activity: Further teaching and learning on text content. Brief recap on success criteria levels.		
Phase three: second essay feedback	After students write a second 'response to text' essay, they give either peer or self-feedback using the success criteria rubric.	30 minutes
	Later, students read and reflect on follow-on teacher feedback.	20 minutes
Classroom activity: Further teaching and learning: Unpacking essay questions		
Phase four: third essay feedback	A third 'response to text' essay is written in the school trial examinations. In this case students create self-feedback, then immediately look at and reflect on follow-on teacher feedback.	1-hour lesson
Phase five: gathering data phase	Students complete a questionnaire with Likert scale questions and written reasons for their answers.	
	Students participate in an individual, semistructured interview .	

of the rubric and to help them learn how to apply it. Also, pre-set criteria was used, rather than Sadler's (2009) suggestion of only a basic "manifest" criteria and a developing list of "latent criteria". This is because, in the teacher-researcher's judgement, Sadler's critique of a pre-set multi-criteria rubric was largely managed by considering the rubric from a flexible "best fit", holistic angle and that it was unnecessarily confusing for students to be wondering what other 'latent' criteria a work may or may not have. In terms of giving feedback, it would create too much uncertainty. In the unpacking of the rubric, the teacher-researcher sought to make explicit the limitations of rubrics if they are used too rigidly (Sadler, 2009). Students were encouraged to ask questions of the terminology and meaning, with the teacher actively moving around the classroom to ask if there were questions.

Step two: Give each student a copy of a teacher-marked essay (Low Merit) which was annotated throughout and included written feedback. The teacher reviewed the exemplar with students, making explicit the thinking behind comments, relating back to the rubric. In particular, the teacher had in mind the importance of showing writing as more of an art (Marshall, 2004), that making qualitative judgements requires balancing general global impressions with identifiable specific features (Sadler, 2009), and that it takes practice to become confident, with subjective differences still possible even between experienced markers.

Step three: Give each student, one at a time, three different exemplars of varying levels to mark, deliberately not in an ascending or descending order (Low Achieved, High Merit, High Achieved). This involved annotating the essay, ticking the rubric in places where descriptors seemed to fit best, and assigning an overall grade. Students then had to write two-step feedback—“What is going well?” (a feedback question that confirms what is working well) and “What areas could be a focus for further learning?” (a feed-forward question designed to target weaknesses and to advise on areas that would build into a better answer). This was a variation on Hattie and Timperley’s (2007) three-fold question model for effective feedback: “Where am I going? (What are the goals?), How am I going? (What progress is being made towards the goal?), and Where to next? (What activities need to be undertaken to make better progress?)” (p. 86) which has become widely accepted.

In providing examples of feedback, the teacher–researcher was again mindful of expert advice on desirable qualities of feedback (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Shute, 2008). The feedback modelled and wanted of students was largely functional, as Sadler (2010) advised. It identified the strengths and weaknesses of the essay and provided advice on how to improve the work. In particular, this included comments about how the essay was constructed and the elements it contained or was missing, and the strategies that make up essay writing (for example: good use of topic sentences; you maintain a clear line of argument from your thesis; more beyond the text connection is needed; more text detailing and quotation is needed etc.). The feedback given on one essay was therefore able to help students write subsequent essays, on different essay questions, because much of the feedback worked at the level of how to write and what elements were needed rather than specific details. The teacher–researcher was also mindful that students

often struggle with writing and lack confidence in their ability to change their writing, with potentially negative accompanying feelings (Johnson & Gelfand, 2013). The focus was therefore on how writing could be improved through specific focused efforts relating to rubric criteria.

After the skills-development phase, students had three separate opportunities to create self or peer feedback staggered through the 10 weeks. It should be noted that, in this study, student-generated feedback did not replace teacher feedback, but was created prior to teacher feedback. Follow-on teacher feedback was then used to confirm or correct student feedback, with the goal of enhancing student learning. This is in line with Sadler's (2009) understanding that it takes time for students to develop the capacity to monitor the quality of their work and that a teacher has marking expertise and experience that cannot quickly be equalled.

Data collection

Two key methods of data collection were used: an 11 question Likert scale questionnaire with accompanying written explanatory comments (see Appendix B), and individual semistructured interviews held with each participant at the end of the 10-week study. Interview questions aimed at drawing out further responses than what had been generated through the questionnaire.

All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed for analysis. Two supporting data sources were also used: a teacher–researcher diary and analysis of the feedback artefacts produced across the three essays. While there is possibility for tensions when more than one method of collecting subject voice is used (Harris & Brown, 2010), in this study there appeared to be no significant issues created for data analysis.

Data analysis

A mixed-methods approach to analysis was used in keeping with the mixed-methods data collection. Firstly, a basic count method was used to analyse the Likert scale data, and also to show where a number of students had made a similar response in qualitative data. Secondly, to understand the qualitative data, categorisation and thematic analysis were both applied.

Categorisation is a form of data coding through a series of increasingly narrow categories (Gillham, 2005). Thematic analysis reduces raw data through sorting and coding according to concepts and themes (Roulston, 2010; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). In this study, questionnaire questions had asked for specific feedback to all key areas of the learning process used in this study. These basic categories were maintained and students' perceptions regarding these particular steps were analysed individually, used in concert with the Likert scale quantitative data. Further categories of positive or negative responses to these key areas were then applied to help sort the data and themes were then further grouped when similar ideas were expressed. Thematic analysis was also applied across the data to seek to understand students' perceptions more generally. This process was largely inductive, working from what was found rather than having pre-set themes established. Examples of key themes that emerged include: more effective learning; follow-on teacher feedback creating room for reflection; expressions of empowerment; and taking responsibility. Other comments that didn't seem to fit into clear thematic groups were noted. Thus, the data were reduced through a process of "selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and/or transforming" (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014, p. 12).

Findings

In reflecting on their experiences across the 10-week period, students provided rich descriptions of their involvement in student-generated feedback practices and the perceived impact of this practice on themselves as learners. For the purposes of this article, findings are grouped into three areas. The first two are overall perceptions of the learning process, and perceptions of the phases of the process. Themes within these areas are indicated by bold type. The third area of findings is the key overall finding of a sense of empowerment and taking responsibility.

Overall perceptions of the learning process

Most students (8 out of 11) perceived that **their learning** of essay writing for this type of NCEA external assessment standard (this being the third year with the same kind of standard) **had improved** this year. While some had in previous years looked at marking criteria, and engaged in peer feedback,

no student had before gone through a systematic process of learning how to evaluate essays and give feedback. Jeffrey's comments show the enjoyment he gained from these new experiences:

I really did like looking at the example essays 'cause that gives me more ideas and going through the criteria for the marking; that also helped. (Jeffrey)

The process was seen as valuable learning, leading to 10 of the 11 students feeling that they understood their current level of performance in essay writing. As Jamie's comment indicates, he gained a strong understanding of the necessary standard, as well as becoming deeply attuned to his own writing quality:

When I'm writing essays now, I know what grade I'm writing at. I can feel the level of my writing's adequacy because after reading and marking exemplars I know the sort of structure that is expected of the different levels. (Jamie)

Nine students **expressed confidence in their ability to judge and give feedback** on an NCEA Level 3 written text essay. Also, nine were able to see how to improve their own essay writing based on development of that evaluative understanding. Alice expressed a clear link: "I got to see what the markers want and how I could improve."

Chris indicated that being involved in student-generated feedback practices had led to the independent generation of knowledge which previously had not occurred: "It encouraged us to see where we needed to improve, rather than having no idea what needed fixing." Steven commented on greater understanding of the nuances between the top two categories (Merit and Excellence) and that, "It allowed me to realise aspects of my essay writing that I was missing. For example, beyond the text thinking." Leon made significant progress in his writing over the 10-week study by improving his results from Not Achieved to Excellence and voiced confidence in understanding the elements of the essay writing process:

It helped me quite a bit I have to say. I can definitely write something that makes much more sense now, something that relies on the evidence and uses the evidence correctly in the first place and something that supports an idea or the topic much better. (Leon)

A negative opinion expressed about the experience, in the context of overall positivity, was that two students, Lucy and Kate, **weren't sure how to**

improve their work. Lucy, while feeling somewhat confident that she could judge and give feedback on essays, lacked confidence in her own writing ability, making it difficult for her to view it objectively and to focus on larger essay writing aspects such as structure and content, rather than her stylistic features: “I am never happy with my writing.” Kate, who wrote consistently Merit-level essays, was frustrated that the top Excellence grade seemed to be unattainable despite her hard work and knowledge. This made it hard for her to feel confident about evaluating essays or applying learning to her own work.

Even accounting for those negatives, all students, in various ways, perceived that being involved in the assessment world through the different phases of the study was a **better, more effective, more robust process** than what they had experienced when they simply received teacher feedback. Indeed, Jamie was perplexed as to why this process was not standard practice at all levels of education and why it should be that the teacher alone should understand the marking scheme.

Perceptions of the phases of the process

Skills development

Students felt that Phase 1, **the three-step skills-development phase, was not only critical to their learning, but enjoyable.** All 11 participants responded positively that the use of the success criteria rubric was worthwhile to their understanding of essay writing. It helped students differentiate between the grades:

This helps with seeing the different levels there are to the essays and what must be put into the essay to help achieve the higher grades. (Jeffrey)

Likewise, all 11 students **found value in using the success criteria rubric** while marking exemplar essays. Six students found that marking exemplars led them to apply that thinking to their own writing: “It was very good to ... be able to reflect the way you write directly to how you judge others’ writing” (Lucy). Some students did initially struggle with the language used in the rubric, so the use of marking exemplars was helpful in illustrating the meaning of the vocabulary used in criteria.

Self-generated feedback

Student perceptions were **generally positive about self-generated feedback** (see Figure 1).

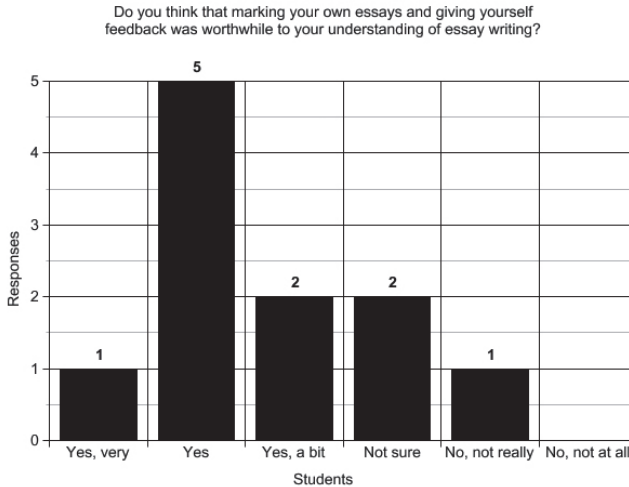


Figure 1. Student perceptions of self-generated feedback

However, the actual practices were more challenging than the skills-development phase, creating more reservations in some students. Most students (8/11) felt that self-generated feedback was worthwhile; two were unsure; and one felt “not really”. Reasons given for this regarded the lack of confidence as identified in the findings regarding the overall process.

The perceived benefits were increased knowledge of essay writing and the success criteria (5/11); and that it led students to apply that knowledge to their future work (5/11). Students perceived benefits to their grades, and also to their ability to pay closer attention to detail as they developed their essay writing abilities:

I think the purpose is to get a better grade and it does it effectively by allowing you to pick up on smaller things by yourself and you remember what you’ve learnt a lot better. (Steven)

That self-generated feedback led to greater reflection was a key concept identified by students (five explicitly). Leon commented: “I think the

reason why it did help so much is that it helped me to reflect upon it [essay writing] quite a bit more.” The power of reflection is also evident in comments by students in regards to how they processed their thinking between exemplars, the marking schedule, and their own work. Jamie’s comments are representative:

After doing a few [marking practice essays] I found what I was doing wrong in marking them and in finding what I was doing wrong in marking them I could identify what the person was doing wrong and then relate that back to what I was doing wrong in my own work. (Jamie)

Two students explicitly suggested that these processes should be taught earlier in their schooling and as part of the development of learning to write essays.

Reservations regarding student-generated feedback focused on lack of confidence about accuracy of marking (rather than the worthwhileness of the act itself) in comments made by three students in the study, and two students voiced a lack of confidence in their own actual writing which seemed to make it hard to self-evaluate. More practice was identified by two students as a way to overcome the lack of confidence.

Peer-generated feedback

Peer-generated feedback was only used once in this study, and then only by those students who wanted to. For the seven students who engaged with it, **five found peer feedback worthwhile**, while the remaining two said “not really” (see Figure 2). On the positive side, Charlotte commented that it helped her learn better because she could talk about it with someone, and also because giving feedback made her reflect more. Others expressed the idea that peer feedback was valuable in terms of getting another opinion, with Peter suggesting that students were more, “brutally honest” than the teacher, while Leon suggested that getting help from students who were performing better was helpful. Jamie felt that he took peer marking more seriously than marking exemplars because of the drive to be fair to his classmate:

There was a little bit of bias as obviously if I was marking my friend’s work I wanted to be nice, but there was also a drive to be fair for their sake. As opposed to marking an exemplar I feel it was more helpful as it forced me to be more

thorough in the marking and look at it and give a fair judgement 'cause it's not just for some random person, it's for someone I know. (Jamie)

On the negative side was **the issue of trust**. Jamie commented that, "Having a classmate mark my essay was like having my work marked by someone I didn't really fully trust to know the criteria." This shows that students were **aware of the difficulty of the task both for themselves and for others**. The social dynamic involved in giving and receiving feedback created a challenge, with two other students commenting on the need to take the task seriously or it would not be successful (they were each other's partners) and one felt that their partner did not engage fully with the task and was, "less personal", giving "lacklustre" feedback (Steven).

The use of follow-on teacher feedback

All participants in this study **highly valued the follow-on teacher feedback** that they received after they had completed self/peer feedback. Alice's comment is representative: "It helped to validate my thinking. It then helped me to gain confidence to make correct judgement calls."

A frequent comment was that, at times, **students had previously not engaged with teacher feedback**. For example, Charlotte and Chris explained the usefulness of receiving teacher feedback after their engagement with self/peer assessment:

You're actually learning it yourself instead of just reading it and actually not taking any notice of it. (Charlotte)

This self-feedback has given me insight of where my writing is by allowing myself to pick out the areas that need to be improved, rather than the teacher marking and me having no idea. (Chris)

This ambivalent attitude to previous, teacher-only feedback, appeared to be replaced for some students by **a powerful sense of partnership with the teacher**, as expressed by Chloe:

I think self-learning as well as a teacher there definitely helps 'cause the whole time you're not being just told by the teacher 'cause it makes you not want to do it, but when it's yourself you realise what you need to do personally. You can make your own goals as well as with the teacher helping you. (Chloe)

Key finding: Sense of empowerment and taking responsibility

The feeling of empowerment in the classroom, through the use of student-generated feedback, followed by teacher feedback, was a thread with varying levels of strength that ran through 10 of the 11 students' interview comments. Seven were highly expressive of their agency. Comments indicated that, through their involvement across the 10 weeks, **students felt empowered to make their own decisions and be proactive** about their essay writing. Chris' comment is indicative: "I feel it has helped me more than, say, you giving me feedback personally of what I need to do to improve, whereas I can do it myself." Others expressed their sense of empowerment in terms of active as opposed to passive languaging:

I think it's just instead of writing an essay, being told what's bad, you're physically learning from your own mistakes and trying to find out, doing it all yourself gets you finding out for yourself and I think that's definitely a better way to learn than being told what to do. (Peter)

Two students felt a degree of empowerment but would like to have built up these skills from younger years to feel more confident and competent. Peter felt more knowledgeable but that the process was still a difficult one. Only Emma did not express some degree of empowerment; she enjoyed the process but, as noted above, was frustrated that she couldn't seem to improve her Merit grades despite greater understanding of essay writing.

Of particular note is the **sense of personal responsibility**, where student action was at the centre. Three students described a "wake-up call" experience where they recognised their responsibility to themselves to act upon feedback:

I think at first it's easy to do [give feedback for] someone else's work but when it came down to actually doing your own you realised how much you weren't responding to your own feedback so after the second time you'd done it you actually start responding to your feedback and the results got better and better. (Chloe)

It wasn't until the second round of feedback that self-monitoring was activated for Chloe, as she realised that she was not responding to her own feedback and that her second round of feedback was a repetition of the first.

Four other students expressed an understanding that it was up to them whether they pursued improvement: “‘cause I know what I need to be doing, it’s whether or not I do it,” said Charlotte, while Peter expressed that: “I think I can do it very well, I just need [to] put more time into it, my own time, more effort into it really.”

When students were asked **what might stop them from taking the needed steps to improve their essay writing**, six students focused on **factors of time**, specifying constraints in the examination or lack of good time management: “I feel pretty confident. I feel like I should be able to write an Excellence essay but it’s just a matter of getting to the stage where I can do it in the hour, hour and a half” (Stephen). Four noted **the effort required** to get started on essay writing or to go about taking steps to upskill themselves. For example, Alice commented: “Sometimes I get too lazy to study for English because I know I can at least pass.” In these comments, students still express a sense of responsibility for their own learning, along with an awareness of the barriers they perceived to improvement.

Discussion

This study has sought to elicit senior secondary school students’ perceptions of the process of learning about, generating, and receiving feedback for essay writing. As argued by Hargreaves (2013), “without the learner’s perspective, the crucially important affective and interactional aspects of learners’ responses to feedback are likely to be missing” (p. 230). This study illustrates the impact these experiences can have on students, and on relationship dynamics in the classroom.

The process overall

Student perceptions in this study add to the research which consistently suggests that teachers need to carefully and explicitly teach feedback strategies and practices to enable students to produce useful feedback. In this study, the teacher spent two lessons explicitly teaching the students about essay marking through the use of a rubric. This followed Sadler’s (1998, 2009) and Pryor and Crossouard’s (2008) guidance that unlocking the success criteria through students actually grappling with marking themselves is the key to developing their competency, as “no amount of

telling, showing or discussing is a substitute for one's own experience" (Sadler, 2009, p. 49).

All students appreciated the skills-development stage in which they learnt how to use the success criteria rubric. The findings suggest that they would not have been able to gain the experience and skills necessary to evaluate essays so readily without it. However, the language used in the rubric was still of concern to some students and they needed the practice of working with it, while marking exemplars, to be able to understand it more clearly. The challenge many students experienced in using the marking tools reflects Sadler's (2009) understanding that teachers' knowledge takes time to develop and that a teacher has marking expertise and experience that cannot quickly be equalled.

Self-generated feedback

In this study, students expressed the idea that feedback was more powerful when it was self-generated as an act of self-regulation, rather than coming solely from the teacher. Andrade (2010) argues that students can be regarded as the definitive source of feedback to themselves, given that they have immediate and ongoing access to their own work, and the thoughts and actions that arise from this. Given that feedback is a difficult form of communication (Higgins, Hartley, & Skelton, 2001), self-generated feedback 'cuts out the middle man'. Follow-on teacher feedback was able to fulfil a different function of validation/correction of the students' understandings as expressed in the feedback they created, providing an expert or alternative perspective. The interplay between student-generated feedback and teacher feedback created a sense of feedback as dialogue along the lines promoted by Nicol and McFarlane-Dick (2006). Both feedback products became shared knowledge between students and teacher, often sparking conversation. This study shows, as Sadler (1989, 2009) and Marshall (2004) assert, that given the chance, students can move to become insiders in the assessment world.

Peer feedback

The mixed findings generated from student commentary on peer feedback reinforce the claim that person-to-person feedback is, "an essentially *problematic* form of communication involving particular social relationships"

(Higgins et al., 2001, p. 273, emphasis in original) with particular interpersonal challenges (Panadero, 2017a). Overall, while benefit was found by at least five of the seven students who engaged in it, peer feedback was less straightforward than self-generated feedback. Significantly, students had different views on the nature of the feedback received from a peer and whether it was reliable information. This is in keeping with research which shows that students hold established epistemological beliefs about learning and knowledge that need to be acknowledged and reshaped (Butler & Winne, 1995). Here, beliefs about whether peers could be a valid learning source were evident. This study provided only one opportunity for students to use peer assessment, but the findings suggest that peer feedback requires a different set of skills from self-generated feedback—skills related to social engagement with others. Such skills need their own development process.

Linking to the goals of AfL: Student engagement

Using Munns and Woodward's (2006) definition of student engagement, it is clear that students were significantly engaged through these student-generated feedback practices. All three aspects of Fredricks et al.'s (2004) multidimensional engagement, as proposed by Munns and Woodward (2006), were present during the student-generated feedback process: reflective involvement; genuine valuing; and active participation. Genuine valuing was shown through students' warm endorsement of the worthwhileness of student-generated feedback practices. Five students explicitly articulated the benefits of the process in terms of reflection. Others expressed their engagement in terms of enjoyment. This supports Munns and Woodward's (2006) proposal that there are, "strong theoretical and practical connections between student engagement and student self-assessment" (p. 193). Additionally, student commentary provided evidence that the students were agentially engaged (Reeve, 2013) throughout the process.

As teacher anecdotes suggest and research supports, student engagement with traditional teacher-only feedback is often poor for a variety of reasons (Harris et al., 2014; Weaver, 2006; Wingate, 2010; Wojtas, 1998). Student voice in this study supported this idea, revealing that some students had previously not interacted fully with teacher-only feedback. This study

suggests that, with the use of a few deliberate yet simple practices, substantial engagement can be secured.

Linking to the goals of AfL: Student self-regulation

This study affirms the research that student-generated feedback practices are linked to increased self-regulation, which is seen as highly desirable for the development of lifelong learners. Student commentary about their own learning in this study also supports assertions that self-regulatory skills can be taught and learnt. Students taking responsibility is one clear indicator of self-regulation (Zimmerman, 2008) and the development of cognitive routines, metacognitive monitoring, and practical action-taking are the outworkings of self-regulated learning (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). In this study, students' perceptions of the impact of student-generated feedback practices showed that students felt a high degree of responsibility for their learning. Confidence in their understanding of the current quality of their essay writing, and what they needed to do to improve, support this sense of ownership over their learning.

Indicators of self-regulated learning

The first indicator of student self-regulation, as described by Smith et al. (2013), is a cognitive routine used to make evaluative judgements of work against a success criteria and then specifying advice for future work, keeping in mind what a successful end product might look like. Most students expressed confidence in their ability to go through the cognitive routine of marking against a success criteria and giving feedback, by the end of the study. These findings also support Hattie and Timperley's (2007) assessment that self-regulation is occurring when students can independently apply a process to generate information which could lead them to further action.

A second indicator of student self-regulation, as presented by Hattie and Timperley (2007), was apparent in the metacognitive self-monitoring of progress from one essay to another as students responded to their feedback. Most students showed some sense of metacognitive monitoring across the three essays in that they were able to articulate particular issues they had with essay writing and what they needed to do to improve their writing. For example Chloe's "wake-up call" was the awakening of her self-monitoring faculties and led to affective and practical responses.

Taking action: The role of motivation in self-regulation

Closely tied to metacognitive self-monitoring is taking action in response to need. This study supports Zimmerman's (2008) assertion that taking action is at the heart of self-regulated learning. This is where students in this study were most divergent in their response and where the partnership between teacher and student was most needed. There were a number of students who took action that saw significant increases in their results (five). Jamie went from Achieved results to Excellence, while Leon went from Not Achieved to Excellence. Chloe, Alice, and Charlotte went from Achieved results to Merits. Their comments about this improvement show they believed it was a result of their engagement with this learning process.

However, this study affirms that motivation plays a role in self-regulation (Nicol & McFarlane-Dick, 2006). As noted in the findings, six students indicated that time was a factor stopping them from taking the needed steps in response to feedback, and four students noted the effort required. As Zimmerman (2008) states, "The core issue is whether a learner displays personal initiative, perseverance, and adaptive skill. These proactive qualities of learners stem from advantageous motivational feeling and beliefs as well as metacognitive strategies" (p. 167). Students who failed to take action because of time or effort constraints had arguably not reached this level of independent self-regulation. In the case of time pressure in the NCEA examination, the action needed was practise writing essays in a timed context. For students who indicated "time" in terms of time management, and "effort", they needed greater organisation and self-discipline. In the case of 'lack of knowledge of how to go about it', these answers indicated that further individualised learning and teaching needed to happen. Some, like Emma, may have benefited from further analysis of Excellence exemplars, as well as going back over her own feedback more thoroughly to see what was being said. Steven needed to make a vocabulary list. If the teacher had provided time in the teaching programme for students to address their particular needs, acknowledging that these students were in the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1986) for self-regulation, it is likely students would have done what was needed.

Overall, these findings corroborate the assertion by other researchers that feedback is among the most important influences in the development of self-regulation. However, the claim that, "when feedback allows students

to see the gap between their actual production and some reference point that makes sense to them, they are both motivated and able to work with their conceptions and make adjustments” (Earl, 2013, p. 115) was less evident for all students within the time frame of this study. Some students, such as Chloe, saw the gap and did something about it, showing self-regulation. However, other students needed that combination of recognising the gap and having teacher facilitation to enable them to fill it. In addition, there were two students, who, by choosing not to take the actions needed because of the effort entailed, did not yet demonstrate self-regulatory competency in this area.

Link to lifelong learning

Self-regulation is seen as a key feature of a person equipped to be a lifelong learner (Earl, 2013; Nicol & McFarlane-Dick, 2006). In this study, there was an indication that, for some students at least, the self-regulating behaviours and cognitive routines they had learnt through this 10-week process had become an important part of who they were as a learner. Students’ expressions of the belief that these skills should be taught from an earlier age indicate that they saw value in them beyond the immediate task of NCEA Level 3 essay writing. One student’s expression that, “It will impact everything” (Charlotte) and that she would apply this approach to her other subjects in the future, suggests that she had gained the self-regulatory perspective linked to lifelong learning.

Conclusions and implications

This practitioner research shares the perceptions of 11 students regarding practices undertaken in their English classroom in their final year in a New Zealand high school, over a 10-week period. The limitations of such a qualitative study are clear in terms of context, scale, and even researcher neutrality and it is up to the reader to decide to which contexts the findings might be transferable. However, within these limitations, this study makes a contribution to work on student-generated feedback by highlighting students’ realisation of the value of these processes. What students want and need in terms of feedback is to become competent partners with their teacher. Student-generated feedback is an important part of the puzzle of creating more engaging working relationships with students, and helping

students to develop self-regulatory skills. The implications are obvious here: teachers and systems must include students in effective feedback processes. This study used a learning process that largely proved successful and is offered as a model for teachers wanting to engage students with student-generated feedback practices at the high-school level. One challenge in New Zealand's NCEA system is the lack of rubrics for assessment meaning that teachers and students are lacking a crucial tool that needs to be developed for each assessment.

Sadler (1989) describes student-generated feedback as enabling students to develop their evaluative knowledge through first-hand, proactive experience, rather than as passive recipients of teacher feedback. To do this, students must develop understanding of how to evaluate their work against a standard: this "is not an interesting option or luxury; it has to be seen as essential" (Black & Wiliam, 1998, pp. 54–55). Teachers must keep working on this in day-to-day classroom practices, creating resources, and taking the time to properly invest in developing students' skills so that they can effectively engage in evaluation and feedback processes for themselves and others.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Feedback sheet for NCEA Level 3 - Respond critically to written text

The following rubric is created from the 2014 NCEA marker's report, the 2014 BBA marking schedule and T3 2013 National Newsletter: English

	Not Achieved	Achieved	Merit	Excellence
Answering the question	<p>Has misunderstood the meaning of key words.</p> <p>Shows a narrow understanding of text aspect(s).</p> <p>N1: Does not develop an argument successfully.</p> <p>N2: Develops a simple argument .</p>	<p>A3: shows some understanding related to the question.</p> <p>A4: shows a good understanding related to the question, but may have an Inconsistent response.</p> <p>A3: develops a relevant argument.</p> <p>A4: develops a relevant, focused argument.</p>	<p>Maintains focus on the question.</p> <p>MS: shows some convincing understanding related to the question and builds a partially convincing argument (but may be inconsistent)</p> <p>M6: convincing, and sound understanding of question and creation of argument.</p>	<p>Maintains a singular focus on the chosen question.</p> <p>Develops a sophisticated and insightful and/or original argument relating to the question.</p>
Text knowledge	<p>Shows limited familiarity with the text.</p> <p>N1: little direct reference to textismade. Few or no quotations.</p> <p>N2: includes some text evidence which may be relevant to the discussion.</p>	<p>A3: shows some evidence of familiarity with the text.</p> <p>A4: shows familiarity with the text.</p> <p>A3: begins to support points using appropriate, specific details and/ or quotations. A4: provides solid support.</p>	<p>Shows an in-depth, accurate knowledge and understanding of the text.</p> <p>Range of relevant, appropriate text evidence.</p> <p>Evidence is woven into the response.</p>	<p>Generous and insightful detail and evidence that supports and expands the discussion.</p> <p>In-depth holistic knowledge.</p> <p>Evidence is woven well into the response creating lucidity.</p>

	Not Achieved	Achieved	Merit	Excellence
<p>Shows critical understanding:</p> <p>author's craft and purpose</p> <p>audience response</p> <p>awareness of text type and its implications</p> <p>evaluations/ comparisons</p>	<p>Focuses mainly on plot rather than directed response.</p> <p>N1: no evidence of critical response (stance taken/ ideas explored/ understanding of the text type and author's purpose/ sense of evaluation</p> <p>N2: some evidence of critical response.</p>	<p>A3: communicates a straight- forward critical response: a point of view/opinion expressed in relation to the question or in response to ideas presented/or some awareness of text type/ or some awareness of author's purpose/or sense of evaluation or comparisons made.</p> <p>A4: critical response is clear, sustained.</p>	<p>MS: presents an informed critical response :has a point of view/opinion developed in relation to the question or in response to ideas presented/ awareness of text type/ awareness of author's purpose/ evaluation or comparisons made</p> <p>M6: discerning critical response (well-chosen angle/ points).</p>	<p>Strong sense of own insightful engagement /clear articulation of personal opinion.</p> <p>Clear understanding of author's craft linked to purpose/ audience/ text type.</p> <p>Shows maturity and insight in evaluating the text</p> <p>in terms of the question.</p> <p>May adopt a particular philosophical or critical lens to shape response.</p>
<p>Making connections to:</p> <p>'the human condition'</p> <p>society (past and present)</p> <p>psychological, religious and philosophical understanding</p> <p>other texts/ authors</p> <p>history</p>			<p>Begins to relate the text to wider society (past or present).</p> <p>Begins to make connections beyond the text.</p> <p>Presents understanding of ideas/issues/thinking (some- MS).</p> <p>May make appropriate worthwhile connections with other writer s/texts .</p>	<p>Views their text (s) as a vehicle for societal or contextual analysis.</p> <p>Presents a consistent philosophical discussion.</p> <p>Links aspects within the text to beyond the text with consistency.</p> <p>Shows insight and perception about the aspect specified In the essay question: how it relates to other texts or to other contexts such as human experience, society and the wider world.</p> <p>Perceptive, appropriate connections with other writers, texts or text types.</p> <p>Possible other sources include relevant critical texts and secondary sources.</p>

	Not Achieved	Achieved	Merit	Excellence
Structure	<p>Unstructured.</p> <p>Writes with weaknesses in organisation.</p>	<p>Essay is structured satisfactorily, including an introduction and conclusion.</p> <p>it is focused on addressing the question.</p> <p>A3: Possible weaknesses in organisation.</p>	<p>Writes purposefully, with a sense of deliberate crafting.</p> <p>Carefully structured answer.</p> <p>Solid basic essay structure - Introduction, body paragraphs and conclusion. Some evidence of internal paragraph cohesion and linkage.</p>	<p>Writes a cohesive, deliberately planned response with scope and focus. (Not necessarily formulaic- may be unorthodox to serve the question best).</p> <p>Introduction - includes defining of terms, a clear position, and is relevant.</p> <p>Clear topic sentences.</p> <p>Sustained argument, coherent, cohesive at sentence/paragraph/ whole essay levels . Evidence interwoven into own argument. Conclusion - summarising, evaluative - linked to author's craft and purpose, beyond the text, responsive.</p>
Language	<p>N1: writes with weaknesses in style: eg run-on sentences, incomplete sentences, spelling/ punctuation errors.</p> <p>N2: uses simple vocab accurately.</p>	<p>Writes coherently and directly.</p> <p>Has few writing convention concerns.</p>	<p>Solid writing style. Expression is largely clear and readable.</p> <p>Makes some accurate use of academic writing conventions and style features but may include some clumsiness.</p>	<p>Fluent, engaging, lucid writing style.</p> <p>Is articulate and shows some originality of expression .</p> <p>Analytical, academic, evaluative vocabulary. Accurate use of range of technical terms and academic writing conventions.</p> <p>Varied syntax.</p> <p>Use of connectives to aid coherence. Succinct use of language to make points.</p>

Student Feedback — self or peer (circle one):

What is going well?

Next steps?

Follow-on teacher Feedback:

What is going well?

Next steps?

Follow up actions: what action will you take from this feedback to gain needed skills and knowledge?
Do you have a question you need answered or an area you need help with investigating?

Appendix B:

Student perceptions of student-generated feedback questionnaire

(The following is a basic version of the online document used in the study. Students were able to select answers in the live online version.)

1. Success criteria rubric (the marking criteria sheet)

- * Do you think that using a success criteria rubric was worthwhile to your understanding of essay writing?

yes, very

yes

yes, a bit

not sure

no, not really

no, not at all

Can you explain your answer?

Please provide any explanation to your answer above—remember to be specific, rather than vague.

2. Marking exemplars

- * Do you think that assessing exemplar essays was worthwhile to your own understanding of essay writing?

yes, very

yes

yes, a bit

not sure

no, not really

no, not at all

Can you explain your answer?

Please provide any explanation to your answer above—remember to be specific, rather than vague.

3. Self-generated feedback

- * Do you think that marking your own essays and giving yourself feedback was worthwhile to your understanding of essay writing?
 - yes, very
 - yes
 - yes, a bit
 - not sure
 - no, not really
 - no, not at all

Can you explain your answer?

Please provide any explanation to your answer above—remember to be specific, rather than vague.

4. Peer-generated feedback

- * Do you think that a classmate marking your essay and giving you feedback was worthwhile to your understanding of essay writing?
 - I didn't receive peer feedback
 - yes, very
 - yes
 - yes, a bit
 - not sure
 - no, not really
 - no, not at all

Can you explain your answer?

Please provide any explanation to your answer above—remember to be specific, rather than vague.

5. Teacher follow-on feedback

- * How important was it that the teacher added their mark and feedback on top of self or peer feedback?
 - essential to my mind
 - it became less important as I became more confident
 - an important part of the process
 - not so important
 - Other:

Can you explain your answer?

Please provide any explanation to your answer above—remember to be specific, rather than vague.

6. Student confidence

- * How confident do you now feel to be able to judge and give feedback on a Level 3 Written Text essay?
 - very confident
 - confident
 - reasonably confident
 - still not very confident
 - not confident

Can you explain your answer?

Please provide any explanation to your answer above—remember to be specific, rather than vague.

7. Student-generated feedback 'training' process

- * Which steps do you think were important in helping you to be able to generate essay feedback?
 - going through the terminology in the success criteria rubric
 - working through a teacher-marked essay
 - marking exemplars
 - all of the above
 - Other:

Can you explain your answer?

Please provide any explanation to your answer above—remember to be specific, rather than vague.

8. Do you feel that you understand where you are at with essay writing?

- yes I do
- yes, mostly I do
- yes, somewhat
- no, not really
- no, not at all

Can you explain your answer?

Please provide any explanation to your answer above—remember to be specific, rather than vague.

9. Do you feel that you understand what you can do to improve your essay writing?

- yes I do
- yes, mostly I do
- yes, somewhat
- no, not really
- no, not at all

10. What, if anything, may stop you from taking the needed steps to make improvements to your essay writing?

time
the effort required
knowledge of how to go about it
Other:

Can you explain your answer?

Please provide any explanation to your answer above—remember to be specific, rather than vague.

11. Compared to other years (particularly Yr 12 and Yr 11) how do you feel the process of learning about/working on essay writing has gone?

quite a big improvement
somewhat better
about the same
I'm not sure
it has been worse

Can you explain your answer?

Please provide any explanation to your answer above—remember to be specific, rather than vague.