Improving Pupils' Feedback Literacy: An inquiry into rubrics' impact on enabling self-assessment in four secondary English classrooms

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Abstract

This practitioner research study investigated the use of a rubric as a self-assessment practice in relation to essay writing in a Key Stage 4 English classroom. This research builds on a growing body of research on learners' self-assessment skills through examining how rubrics can enhance both self-assessment practices and learners' feedback literacy skills. This research develops an understanding of the way in which feedback literacy should be considered in a secondary classroom to both enhance and to be enhanced through self-assessment practices. As feedback literacy is a relatively new term with much literature being conceptual in nature, previous studies do not fully consider how self-assessment relates to feedback literacy, especially in a secondary context. In finding that rubric use enhances three key features of feedback literacy – appreciating feedback, making judgements and taking action – for the participants, this study contributes to the developing empirical research on feedback literacy in the secondary context and furthers knowledge on self-assessment as means of developing productive learning. This has implications on classroom practice as it provides insights into how best to enable learners to utilise feedback productively for learning and present challenges related to how to embed the holistic skills of feedback literacy within an already busy classroom.

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List of Abbreviations

ASE	Academic self-efficacy
IGCSE	International General Certificate of Secondary Education
SRL	Self-Regulated Learning
TA	Thematic Analysis
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

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1: Introduction

As a practising English teacher, I recognise the importance of feedback to learning and have a pedagogical and research interest in the area. Within my practice, I provide pupils with comprehensive feedback on their work, employing a range of feedback strategies to engage learners in the feedback process such as whole class feedback, exemplar work and one-to-one discussions. However, the main approach I take is written comments or targets on completed work. I have noted over several pieces of essay work in different classes and cohorts, that I am writing the same comments for learners, suggesting their progress is stilted as they are making the same errors. Reflecting on this, I considered whether there may be something in my practice that is limiting pupils' response to my feedback. Discussions with colleagues in my department revealed that, whilst they also employ a diverse range of feedback practices, they have observed a similar pattern with their pupils. We noted this was particularly acute with written feedback comments, leading to a feeling that we were repeating ourselves both over a set of class essays and in individual feedback to pupils, and that we were exacerbating an already demanding marking and feedback load. There are suggestions that our experience is not unique; practice reviews by the Education Endowment Foundation conclude that whilst written feedback is dominant in practice, its efficacy for student learning has begun to be questioned by teachers (Elliott et al., 2016; Elliott et al., 2020). This led us to ask the question: do pupils know what to do with written feedback?

Feedback is widely accepted to be one of the most effective interventions to improve student learning (Wisniewski et al., 2020; EEF, 2021b; Newman et al., 2021). Much research has focused on ways in which teacher practice can enhance feedback (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; EEF, 2021a) but has omitted the important and, arguably more central, role of the learner in feedback processes. This imbalance has begun to be addressed in more recent studies where the research has centred on the learner (Molloy et al., 2020) and explored learners' receptiveness to feedback (Ryan & Henderson, 2018), their ability to decode and understand feedback information (Carless, 2020) and their ability

and motivation to act on feedback (Mulliner & Tucker, 2017). The behaviours and skills of learners to engage meaningfully with feedback is influenced by their feedback literacy, a relatively new concept relating to the learner's "ability to read, interpret and use written feedback" (Sutton, 2012, p.31). By improving their feedback literacy, learners are more able to engage with and act on feedback meaningfully for their learning and progress (Winstone et al., 2019) and know more confidently what to do with feedback.

In this research and development project, I explore how a self-assessment intervention affects pupils' feedback literacy and enable them to make greater use of written feedback, enhancing their learning and attainment. I demonstrate how pupils' understandings, beliefs and interactions with feedback were altered through the intervention and how future approaches to feedback should consider how to engage and develop pupils' feedback literacy alongside enhancing their learning and progress.

School and Researcher Context

This research addressed an area that has been unresolved in the English department for a few years. The department recognises the limitations of close marking practices as a dominant feedback mode, given its limited efficacy and high impact on teacher workload (EEF, 2021a; 2021b) and has set a goal for 'less marking' to give greater focus on effective feedback practice. However, little progress over five years, teacher confidence in effective practical ways to achieve 'less marking', whilst maintaining the high standards of effective feedback expected professionally, is low. Teachers still closely mark essay work to feedback to pupils, especially in examination years, despite a range of feedback strategies being practised and shared in the department. Therefore, the topic of the research was relevant to and welcomed by the department when I first discussed my research intent in the Summer of 2023. Three colleagues volunteered to collaborate and participate in the research, and two others

volunteered to act as 'critical friends' to provide me with impartial assessment of the research and act as a sounding board for developing ideas.

The research context was the school I teach in: academically selective, independent, co-educational secondary school with around 800 pupils. The school is considering its IGCSE provision and investigating alternative frameworks for learning and assessment at Key Stage 4. My context is distinctive as pupil attainment at IGCSE is significantly above national averages: for 2023-2024, IGCSE Literature attainment was 96% 9-7 and IGCSE English Language 91% 9-7. Both courses are taught by the same teacher and the nature of the curriculum and timetable means teaching is pressured by time and the range of content.

It is important to make my position as researcher clear from the outset (Holmes, 2020) as I am a researcher researching their own practice and context. My positionality and reflexivity practices directly influence and impact each stage of the research process (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), with further discussion of these elements of research practice upcoming in the Methodology chapter. For now, a short statement describes my position: I am a classroom English teacher with four years' experience. I am the youngest and least experienced teacher in the department with no managerial responsibilities. I am invested in improving my practice using research-informed methods and consider current feedback practices at the school to be limited. Responsiveness to feedback is a life skill and I believe that each pupil can develop the skills of feedback literacy that will enhance their progression and attainment, not only in English, but in other subjects and more broadly throughout their lives (Carless & Boud, 2018).

2: Literature Review

This literature review aims to contextualise the key concepts of feedback, feedback literacy and self-assessment in relation to this research and development project. To do so, three questions guided my literature review:

1. What is the role of feedback in learning?
2. What is feedback literacy and its relevance to the secondary classroom?
3. In what ways can self-assessment enhance learner feedback literacy and engagement?

What is the role of feedback in learning?

Defining Feedback

Definitions of feedback proliferate in research literature and, whilst more recent research is beginning to develop greater consensus in how feedback is defined (Lipnevich & Panadero, 2021; 2022), there remains no common definition of what feedback should contain, who should give it or its method or timing of delivery (Brown et al., 2012). The disparate definitions of feedback make comparing studies difficult, which is compounded further by the term often being used interchangeably with grading and marking. In fact, the Teachers' Standards outline the duty of teachers to "give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback" (DfE, 2011, p.12), aligning with the more traditional view of feedback as 'telling' by a teacher to a pupil. Feedback as 'telling' accords with transmission models of education (Askew & Lodge, 2000) that do little to support and develop pupils' cognitive and affective needs within the learning process (Winstone et al., 2017). This is especially true, in Carless and Boud's (2018) view, when feedback tells, as pupils become passive receivers of information in their learning process. The concept of feedback has changed over the past decade (Hattie & Clarke, 2019; Winstone et al., 2021): much recent research into feedback processes and practices now foregrounds the role of the learner in the feedback

process, with feedback enabling learning and progress through learners' action (Lipnevich, Berg & Smith, 2016; Brookhart, 2017; Winstone & Carless, 2019).

Definitions of feedback range from the broad, such as Askew and Lodge's (2000) definition of feedback as "all dialogue to support learning in both formal and informal situations" (p.44) – to more specific, such as Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick's (2006) definition of feedback as "information about how the student's present state (of learning and performance) relates to… goals and standards" (p.200). However, for researchers such as Sadler (1989), Black and Wiliam (1998) and Hattie and Timperley (2007), feedback can only be considered as such when the gap between current and desired performance is closed. Sadler (1989) described this as the feedback loop. When considering feedback as a loop, feedback becomes a process where information changes a learner's behaviour or action (Ryan & Henderson, 2018). In this way, feedback is dialogic between the learner and teacher and is both the input creating the loop and the action through which the loop's closure is facilitated. Further, it is also dialogic in the way information interacts with process to lead to action. In the context of learning as a social enterprise, feedback helps to construct learning socially with the provider of feedback (Nieminen et al., 2022). Definitions of feedback that necessitate learner action are supported empirically: the work of Kluger and de Nisi (1996) whose meta-analysis of over three thousand reports on feedback from school, university and work (of which only 131 studies met the inclusion criteria) concluded that the most important factor about feedback was not its characteristics but rather what the recipient did with the feedback. More recent research views learners' active role in feedback as a necessary part of feedback to close the feedback loop (Sadler, 2010; Brookhart, 2018; Lui & Andrade, 2022). Research has moved towards a learning-centric view of feedback where the learner is central to (Boud & Molloy, 2013; Van der Kleji et al., 2019) and an active agent in feedback (Sadler, 1989; 2010).

For this research, feedback will be defined as information and interaction that causes a learner to act and improve their learning and performance. In considering feedback as both a product (the

information) and as a process (the act of addressing or changing learning because of this information), feedback requires the active participation of learners (Sadler, 1989).

It is also useful to define and briefly discuss the relationship between feedback, self-regulated learning (SRL) and academic self-efficacy (ASE) as these concepts are closely related (Brown et al., 2016); an appreciation of their interplay will facilitate later discussions. SRL refers to "self-generated thoughts, feelings and actions that are planned and cyclically adapted to the attainment of personal goals" (Zimmerman, 2000, p.14). SRL describes a learner's forethought, performance and self-reflection when learning (Zimmerman, 2000); when acting on feedback, a learner is said to be self-regulating as they are reflecting on the quality of their work and make adjustments to enhance their learning (Zimmerman, 2008). Feedback is an important element in SRL development as learners internalise appropriate performance and learning standards made clear through feedback to use in future learning; the sources of this feedback can be external or internal (Butler & Winne, 1995). Feedback also is produced in SRL where the learner reflects on their current performance to enhance the future state, a version of closing the loop in Sadler's (1989) terms. ASE is an essential sub-process in Zimmerman's (2000) model of SRL and refers to a learner's belief in their ability to successfully achieve at an academic task and has its roots in self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1977). Feedback can enhance ASE by affirming a learner's sense of mastery and competence leading to greater performance (Bandura, 1986; 1997). SRL is both an enabling skill in feedback and self-assessment but also is developed through self-assessing and receiving feedback. This is an important reciprocal relationship between these concepts.

Effective Feedback Practice

Whilst research has demonstrated that feedback has a strong positive impact on learning and learners' achievements (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Hattie, 2009; Wiliam, 2011; 2013; Wisniewski et al., 2020), feedback does not "automatically benefit the learner" (Ketonen et al., 2020, p.407) and can be counterproductive to learning (Kluger & de Nisi, 1996). Without feedback, learners are limited in their capacity and ability to make judgements about their progress and formulate next steps to improve their learning (Ryan & Henderson, 2018) so practitioners should be aware of ways to develop effective feedback practice to enable learners to realise feedback's positive potential for learning and progress. What constitutes effective feedback in practice is contested (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006) though there are trends in the research literature which provide a summary position from which to begin. Feedback is at its most effective when it seeks to influence future learning and/or performance (Sadler, 1989; Black & Wiliam, 1998; Wiliam, 2011) and is timely, supportive, descriptive and communicated in a manner learners understand (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Hattie, 2015; Andrade, 2013). Feedback which seeks to be "prospective, rather than retrospective" (Smith & Lipnevich, 2018, p.33) influences learners as they progress with their learning (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Wiliam, 2011; Brookhart, 2018). The pedagogical aim of feedback is to communicate the learning gap to the learner and provide the means of addressing the gap to enable learners to progress (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Hattie & Timperley, 2007), and consequently, a basic indicator of effective feedback is a change in learner behaviour or outcome (Nicol & MacFarlane-Dick, 2006) in response to this gap.

The type of feedback provided to learners also influences effectiveness. As with definitions of feedback and formative assessment, many typologies and ways of classifying feedback exist (see Lipnevich & Panadero, 2021). However, Hattie and Timperley's (2007) influential typology of feedback is an appropriate framework to follow as it provides this research with four levels or categories of feedback to consider within data analysis. Four key levels of feedback were identified as task, process,

self-regulation and self. Feedback at a task-level relates to specific comments about the task, often focusing primarily on the corrective but may also offer guidance on how to develop or access different information to enhance work (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Hattie and Timperley (2007) suggest that 90% of teacher feedback is task-level; this focus on the corrective and highly specific context of one task may limit the effectiveness of this feedback as it is unlikely to have an impact on the way in which the learner is learning or constructing knowledge (Butler & Winne, 1995). Task-level feedback could also limit a learner's progress for it does not elucidate the gap between performance and outcome in relation to the learning process, rather, it is commonly confined to strengths and weaknesses of a task opposed to the learning and to more superficial aspects of a task such as spelling mistakes. Nicol and MacFarlane-Dick (2006) suggest task-level feedback is most prevalent in classrooms as it is easier to feedback within the bound of the task's success or failure than it is to engage and feedback on the more abstract aspects of learning (of which the task is a product) such as the strength of argument or depth and accuracy of analysis.

Feedback on process relates to comments on the learning process required in a task and how information has been constructed, and often co-exists with task-level feedback (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Process feedback enables learners to understand the process needed to perform a task, leading to greater ability to provide self-feedback on how successfully a task has been completed (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Process-level feedback can improve learner confidence and self-efficacy as learners are adept at recognising how to be successful within a particular learning process (Zumbrunn et al., 2016).

Feedback on self-regulation relates to how learners "monitor, direct, and regulate actions toward the learning goal" (Hattie & Timperley, 2007, p.93). Self-regulation-level feedback is important as it informs learners on how to monitor their learning whilst guiding them to enhance monitoring to achieve learning goals (Butler & Winne, 1995). Feedback on a learner's SRL seeks to develop learners' skills in this area (Butler & Winne, 1995; Black & Wiliam, 1998; Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Nicol, 2021),

but feedback of this kind is rare (Brooks et al., 2019), with Van der Bergh et al. (2013) suggesting that just 1% of observed classroom feedback interactions focused on a learner's SRL. Improving pupils' self-regulation, generally and through feedback, is important as it is those SRL behaviours that can enhance learner's ability and willingness to seek, accept and act on feedback (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

Finally, feedback can be given in relation to the learner as a person. Feedback on the self can enhance motivation; Mandouit and Hattie (2023) found that positive comments can strengthen pupil motivation. Hattie and Timperley (2007) suggest that praise should be given for the task over the pupil's personality and Dweck and Master (2009) further suggest that praise should be given on effort opposed to ability. However, feedback on the self may be a less effective type of feedback (Kluger & deNisi, 1996; Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Comments on aspects external to the learning and focused on the learner's self or behaviour unrelated to learning have the potential to negatively impact self-image, -esteem and -efficacy of the learner leading to negative perceptions of feedback and limited uptake of the information provided, though there is a role of self-level feedback to comfort and support learners (Hattie & Gan, 2011). Accordingly, feedback on self needs to be carefully balanced.

In instructional settings, feedback at a task- and self-level are the most common despite feedback on process and self-regulation holding the greatest potential for improved learning (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). However, the typology does focus on what feedback is given to learners, and Hattie and Clarke's (2019) more recent research holds that there should be a greater focus on what the learner receives from feedback. Yet, learners are not necessarily predisposed to accept feedback so the atmosphere and tone of feedback processes can affect learner uptake of feedback and subsequent action taking (Carless, 2013). Further, feedback can be rejected by the learner (Kluger & de Nisi, 1996) and lead to negative affective reactions when teacher judgements are in opposition to personal beliefs related to the success of a piece of work (To, 2016). Teachers must be aware of the ways in which different feedback methods can enhance or limit learning and seek to actively engage pupils in feedback to realise its positive potential.

Feedback in Formative Assessment

One way learners can be encouraged to be active agents in feedback is by embedding feedback in formative assessment practices. As a central tenet of much pedagogical theory, research and practice, many definitions of formative assessment are found in the literature (Cizek et al., 2019). Bloom (1969) held that the purpose of formative assessment was "to provide feedback and correctives at each stage in the teaching-learning process" (Bloom, 1969, p.48). Formative assessment happens most often in the classroom and describes a diverse range of classroom activities and tasks that enable collaboration between teachers and students to produce feedback to adapt and modify teaching with the primary aim of improving learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Cizek et al., 2019). These activities include questioning, discussions, self-assessment and other activities where the current ability of the learner is assessed to inform future instruction to enhance learning (Cizek et al., 2019). The positive impact of feedback in formative contexts is well-documented and a range of positive effect sizes have been published from significant meta-analyses (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Hattie, 2009; Wisniewski et al., 2020) suggesting that feedback is an effective instrument to enhance student achievement, though appreciating that some feedback is more effective and powerful than others (Wisniewski et al., 2020).

Feedback plays a central role in formative assessment as it provides learners with information about their current performance and how to improve it (Nicol & MacFarlane-Dick, 2006; Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Elliott et al., 2016). In his work, Sadler (1989) positioned identifying the gap between a pupil's current learning and their desired learning goal as the essential purpose of formative assessment. As the performance gap varies from pupil to pupil, formative assessment needs to be adaptive to the diversity of learners' needs within a classroom. Formative assessment also needs to identify the "just right gap" (Sadler, 1989, p.8) so that pupils are challenged to close the gap, but not demotivated because the challenge is perceived as unattainable or too small to be worth it. Finding this "just right gap" (Sadler, 1989, p.8) aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Vygotsky's (1978) theory suggested that the gap between current development and the

proximal next level could be assessed as the difference between what the learner can do on their own and what they can do with help. Wood et al. (1976) described this process metaphorically as 'scaffolding' which can be internalised by the learner as part of their learning process for that learning challenge thereby aiding their overall progress and learning. As such, providing feedback information is not enough in formative assessment practices, learners need to act on feedback to "alter the gap" (Sadler, 1989, p.121), progress learning and close the feedback loop, but require scaffolding to do so. As such, this learning-centric approach to formative assessment and feedback does not place the onus on learners alone (Little et al., 2024). Teachers have an important role in designing and providing beneficial opportunities for feedback (Malecka et al., 2022) or in "modify[ing] the teaching and learning activities" (Black & Wiliam, 1998, p.7) to enable learners to take an active role in feedback. Effective and productive feedback processes are characterised by a shared responsibility for learning between learners and teachers (Nash & Winstone, 2017).

In summary, whilst definitions, models and typologies of feedback are numerous in the field, feedback should be thought of as a complex learning process. Research has recognised how the positive impact of feedback can be furthered in ensuring the learner takes an active role in the learning process: a shared responsibility for teachers and learners to realise. It is in using feedback that it becomes effective for learning; in implementing or responding to feedback, the learner has been able to understand the feedback, place it in context of their learning and then make the necessary adjustments to improve their learning, which is why formative assessment requires self-regulated learners (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). It is in this context that the emerging concept of feedback literacy is interesting as a means of understanding the ways in which learners understand feedback to make use of it and has been suggested to be a means through which learners can engage with feedback processes (Carless & Boud, 2018; Winstone et al., 2019).

What is feedback literacy and its relevance in a secondary context?

Feedback Literacy: Conceptual and Empirical Understanding

Learners need to understand feedback in terms of its purpose and content as well as how to implement it in their learning to make progress and realise the full positive potential of feedback in their learning. Feedback literacy is concerned with how accurately learners make sense of feedback and the skills required to engage actively and fulsomely within the feedback process[1] (Carless & Boud, 2018). Without developed feedback literacy, information about how to improve learning contained in feedback could remain invisible to learners which hinders progress (Sadler, 2010; Carless & Boud, 2018). The concept of feedback literacy is developing; much of the literature pertaining to the topic is conceptual and relates to tertiary educational contexts.

First used by Sutton (2012) to describe a learner's "ability to read, interpret and use written feedback" (p.31), feedback literacy relates to the disciplinary and tacit knowledge of learners that enables them to form judgements about knowledge within a discipline so to assess the quality of their work (Sutton, 2012). Carless and Boud (2018), developing work by Sutton (2012), Boud and Molloy (2013) and Carless (2015), define feedback literacy as "the understandings, capacities and dispositions needed to make sense of information and use it to enhance work or learning strategies" (p.1316). Underpinned by socio-constructivist learning theories (Carless & Boud, 2018), emphasis is given to how knowledge is co-constructed by participants in the feedback process (i.e. the learner, the feedback, teacher and learning social context) and how learners' tacit knowledge is fundamental in their understanding and action upon feedback (Sadler, 1989; 2010).

Carless and Boud's (2018) conceptual framework outlines and describes four interrelated features of feedback literacy: "appreciating feedback, making judgements, managing affect and taking

[1] Teacher feedback literacy is a distinct related concept and a developing research area (Carless & Winstone, 2020; Boud & Dawson, 2021); this research focuses only on learner feedback literacy due to its relevance to the research topic. A longer study would do well to focus on teachers' conceptions of feedback and their feedback literacy also.

action" (p.1316: Figure 2.1) that learners can develop to enhance their feedback literacy. The framework is a spiral where the skills and behaviours of each feature develop over time with practise and come to benefit the learner in the future (Carless, 2019). In this way, feedback literacy is a skill which can be learned, developed and applied in a variety of settings, not just educational. It is not an innate or not a fixed ability. Brief outlines of the features of Carless and Boud's (2018) framework of feedback literacy help to contextualise these aspects which are to be examined within the research.

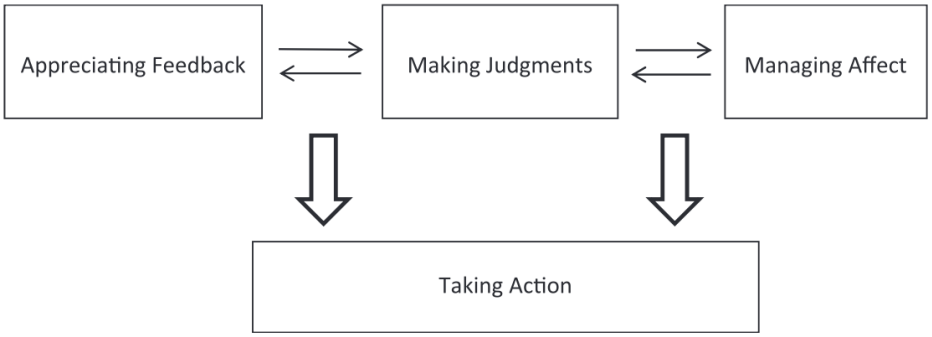


Figure 2.1: Features of student feedback literacy (Carless and Boud, 2018, p.1319)

A learner with developed feedback literacy appreciates the role and purpose of feedback to their progress and their active role within feedback processes (Sutton, 2012; Carless and Boud, 2018*).* However, for many learners, their view of feedback as telling (McLean et al., 2015) leads them to passively await corrective feedback given in a monologic way by a teacher (O'Donovan, 2017). To foster appreciation for their active role in feedback, learners need to develop a sense of shared responsibility within the feedback process (Carless & Boud, 2018; Winstone et al., 2021). Learners' perceptions of feedback can greatly affect their engagement and use of feedback (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Carless & Boud, 2018), therefore learners need to understand the value of the feedback they are given and how it enables them to achieve their desired learning goals. Appreciating feedback requires learners to have confidence in their work and self (Sutton, 2012).

Further, Carless and Boud's (2018) feedback literate learner is adept at making evaluative judgements about their work against learning goals (Sutton, 2012) to engage meaningfully in feedback processes. Evaluative judgement skills are the "capability to make decisions about the quality of work of self and others" (Tai et al., 2018, p.5) and tasks such as peer-assessment or use of exemplars are common interventions used to develop these skills (see Wood, 2022; To et al., 2022). Exemplars provide learners a chance to compare their work against that demonstrating particular criteria (Sadler, 1989). Learners give themselves internal feedback on their work and evaluate their judgements in relation to the exemplar material; this internal feedback helps to develop confidence in the self and the learner's ability to make accurate judgements about the quality of their work (Butler & Winnie, 1995; Carless & Boud, 2018; Little et al., 2024). To develop this tacit and disciplinary knowledge required to make judgements, learners should assess others' work against a set of criteria describing good work to hone evaluative judgement skills (Dawson, 2017; Carless & Boud, 2018).

Feedback literate learners effectively manage their affective response to feedback (Carless & Boud, 2018) and maintain an emotional equilibrium (To, 2016) to embrace feedback, even if it is critical. As the state of learning is a vulnerable one (Barnett, 2007), learners' reaction to feedback can be defensive (Robinson et al., 2013) limiting their uptake of the information. To (2016) suggests that learners need to develop feedback resilience as a means of managing "negative emotions in feedback processes and to produce insights from feedback for improvement" (p.461). Pitt and Norton (2017) suggest that affective responses also influence learners' motivation to engage with critical feedback positively and their self-belief in their work.

The final component of the framework is taking action (Carless & Boud, 2018). Taking action is facilitated and maximised through the other skills in the model as well as being constituent itself. To progress, learners must act on feedback received (Sutton, 2012) but often, learners can lack opportunities, motivation (Shute, 2008) and strategies to act on feedback (Jönsson, 2013). This is an important skill as it closes the feedback loop to progress learning.

Other conceptual models of feedback literacy exist: Molloy et al. (2020) used empirical findings to outline 31 categories of feedback literacy capabilities summarised in seven groups in their model of feedback literacy; informed by sociocultural theory, Chong's (2021) ecological model considers contextual variables alongside the individual's experiences. However, they have their roots in Carless and Boud's (2018) initial framework and given that their work underpins much of the conceptual and empirical research reviewed, it is an appropriate choice for this research. Quantitative instruments have begun to be validated to enable interventions into feedback literacy to be measured (Dawson et al., 2024); currently, six are validated, answering calls in conceptual and theoretical studies for more objective measures (Winstone et al., 2019). As none are validated for secondary contexts, Carless and Boud's (2018) framework provides the research with a theoretical structure against which to understand participants' feedback literacy skills.

Conceptual literature proposes that feedback literacy can be developed through a range of learning activities that attend to the development of the skills of each of the component features of feedback literacy (Carless & Boud, 2018; Malecka et al., 2020; Nieminen & Carless, 2023) and empirical studies have begun to examine how specific interventions enhance elements of feedback literacy. For example, to enhance appreciation of feedback and its process, Winstone et al. (2019) investigated how a feedback workshop enhanced the feedback literacy of 103 first-year Psychology undergraduates, finding that participants' self-report scores against a 14-item measure of student feedback literacy increased significantly. Other studies have focused on enabling students to make effective judgements. In one such study, Fernández-Toro and Duensing (2021) investigated Carless and Boud's (2018) theoretical recommendation "re-focus" "well-established learning activities, peer feedback and analysing exemplars" (p.1320) to develop feedback literacy. In setting up an online peer review forum for an Open University distance learning course in the UK, the authors found participants' confidence in reporting comparisons between exemplar and peer work to their own as

increased alongside increased confidence when making specific reference to marking criteria. Whilst peer feedback and exemplar work were shown to enhance making effective judgements for students, the study's findings are limited as only 38 of 332 students who visited the forum commented on the task set. Thus, the reported improved confidence in making judgements may be due to a student's already high personal engagement with a task suggesting a higher level of existing feedback literacy (Chong, 2021). Hoo et al. (2022) examined how self- and peer-evaluation with guided reflective journalling demonstrated the presence, extent and development of feedback literacy. In coding students' self-refection on their self- and peer-evaluations for seven key feedback literacy capabilities of Molloy et al. (2020), the authors demonstrated how these pedagogical activities enabled learners to develop feedback literacy capabilities across a curriculum.

Further to these examples, Little et al.'s (2024) scoping review of interventions used to improve students' feedback literacy provides a useful summary of the current empirical position: 16 empirical studies on feedback literacy interventions in the tertiary context were included in the review with 11 published in 2021, suggesting that research in this area is in its infancy; interventions were mainly focused on self- and peer-assessment with dialogue with educators and self-reflection also being popular; and feedback literacy was mainly measured through self-report questionnaires, collection of reflective activities and peer marking. Little et al. (2024) found that interventions were most successful in developing students' appreciation of feedback processes and in managing their affect, leading to increased confidence in the feedback process which links to students' willingness to act on the feedback they were given (Fernandez-Toro & Duensing, 2021; Tai et al., 2022).

Interventions help to develop students' tacit knowledge of the expectations of the learning task (Sadler, 1989; 2010) which enhances their feedback literacy skills. This tacit knowledge is also developed through teacher-student relationships. Teachers have an important facilitatory role in developing learner's feedback literacy (Xu & Carless, 2017; Carless & Boud, 2018; Molloy et al., 2020) as they are well-placed to develop learning opportunities and tasks that develop students' feedback

literacy skills. Further, the teacher-student relationship is important as it influences learners' perception and attitudes towards feedback (Sutton 2012) and characterises productive feedback processes (Nash & Winstone, 2017). Hill et al. (2021) demonstrate the importance of effective dialogue between learners and teachers to enhance feedback appreciation and feedback literacy. The study examined the experience of 19 undergraduates from the UK and USA over a year where face-to-face feed-forward dialogues with instructors were used a means of assessment feedback (Hill et al., 2021). All learners reported higher motivation and appreciation of feedback because of these dialogues which helped them to both appreciate the role of feedback in learning and their responsibility in feedback processes, as well as helping them to manage their affective responses more effectively (Hill et al., 2021). Further, authors state that "students self-avowed to their new learning behaviours carrying forward into future work" (Hill et al., 2021, p.13) suggesting the shift in learners' appreciation of feedback developed their confidence as learners, enabling them to take greater responsibility for feedback, making it valuable and meaningful for their learning and progress.

Feedback Literacy in the Secondary Context

Many secondary school teachers believe their pupils do not understand how to act on feedback; pupils lack the feedback literacy skills needed to understand and act on feedback. Respondents to Elliott et al.'s 2020 survey of teachers in England found that 70% of secondary teachers in 144 schools in England cited a lack of understanding of how to apply feedback as a barrier to pupils using feedback to progress. Lui and Andrade (2022) describe the way learners respond to feedback as the "next black box" (p.2); in building on Black and Wiliam's (1998) original metaphor used to describe the practices of formative assessment, Lui and Andrade (2022) suggest that the impact of understanding how learners respond to feedback, however difficult this might be, would be extremely meaningful and a powerful enhancement for feedback practice. Improved feedback literacy has the "significant potential to maximise benefits from feedback processes" (Nieminen & Carless, 2023, p.1382) and

these can/should be available to secondary learners, especially given its benefits for tertiary education and professional life (Ketonen et al., 2020).

However, there is a lack of research on feedback literacy in secondary contexts despite its apparent need. One piece of empirical research was found during the literature review that focused on developing feedback literacy directly in a secondary context; however, it is in a Finnish context. In their case study, Ketonen et al. (2020) examined how 13 Finnish students' feedback literacy developed over a study that took place over their Grade 7 and 8 science teaching (aged 13-15), using Carless and Boud's (2018) feedback literacy framework as both a theoretical and analytical foundation. The intervention comprised two measured peer-assessments taking place a year apart which informed the data, with six training sessions for pupils prior to the first peer-assessment and five more peer-assessments and another training session in between the measured peer-assessments. At the end of the research, the authors found that students had enhanced feedback literacy skills in "understanding the purpose of feedback, engagement and interpretation of received feedback and engagement in making revisions" (Ketonen et al., 2020, p.415), demonstrating how secondary learners are able to develop feedback literacy skills with support and instruction.

In summary, feedback literacy describes the skills learners need to make fulsome and productive use of feedback, thus making greater progress. Whilst conceptual literature is abundant, empirical research remains limited on the ways feedback literacy can be developed. The next section considers ways self-assessment could provide the means to develop learners' feedback literacy skills and engagement in feedback processes.

In what ways can self-assessment enhance learner feedback literacy and engagement?

Self-Assessment and Self-Feedback

Definitions of self-assessment can be broad (Panadero et al., 2016), but as a pedagogical practice to produce formative feedback, self-assessment is a process where learners assess and judge the strength and weaknesses of their own work against learning and performance criteria to formulate formative feedback so to revise and improve their work (Andrade, 2010; Yan & Brown, 2017). Self-assessment is an important practice in formative assessment as the learner closes their own gap between current and desired performance (Sadler, 1989), with Black and Wiliam (1998) holding that self-assessment is fundamental to productive learning. The meta-analyses produced by Brown and Harris (2013) and Youde (2019) report self-assessment enhancing academic performance by moderate effect sizes, though some studies in both meta-analyses had minimal or negative effect sizes, suggesting that the type of self-assessment is a key factor in its success.

Yan and Brown's (2017) empirically evidenced cyclical process model of self-assessment outlines three actions learners undertake in self-assessment: determining assessment criteria; self-directed feedback seeking from external sources such as teachers or peers, or through self-monitoring; and self-reflection on performance. In a formative context, the purpose of these actions is for learners to produce internal feedback about their learning (Andrade, 2010; 2019). Panadero et al. (2019) describe internal feedback as self-feedback to better capture the way that the learner is both the provider and receiver of feedback. This term will be used as it centralises the role of the learner's self in generating feedback in self-assessment. In self-assessment, "learners [are] making judgements about their own learning, particularly about their achievements and the outcomes of their learning" (Boud & Falchikov, 1989 p.529) which requires learners to have well developed evaluative judgement skills and self-regulatory skills (Panadero et al., 2019). These have similarities with the making judgements and managing affect features of Carless and Boud's (2018) feedback literacy

framework and demonstrate how self-assessment and self-feedback have a close theoretical link with feedback literacy (Yan & Carless, 2022).

Self-feedback is vulnerable to issues of accuracy or biases that limit the ability of individuals to accurately assess themselves (Panadero et al., 2019). The source and quality of the reference information that learners use for internal feedback, such as feedback from teachers and peers or assessment criteria, may also affect judgements made (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Self-assessment requires learners to make accurate judgments about their work against internal standards of knowledge. Should learners make inaccurate judgements of their work's success or limitations, then the self-feedback information is corrupted and incorrect feedback is acted upon which limits learning and progress, potentially confusing the learner as to the quality of work required to reach a certain level of performance. Reasons for inaccurate judgements may be intentional, such as when self-reporting grades (Kuncel, et al., 2005) or, more likely, unintentional, like when considering one's effort alongside output (Ross et al., 1998). Further, one's own optimism and self-belief might be unrealistic (Dunning et al., 2004; Saavedra & Kwun, 1993) or learners may lack of information or tacit knowledge associated with the learning or task (Dunning et al., 2004) resulting in inaccurate judgements. However, learners' self-assessment judgements refine over time with practise (Boud et al., 2013; Yan & Brown, 2017) and calibration with peer or teacher feedback (Lew et al., 2009) which helps to improve self-feedback accuracy.

As with any feedback, self-feedback needs to be acted upon with learners benefitting the most from self-assessment when afforded time for reflection and action in revising current and future learning and performance (Panadero et al., 2016). Self-assessment gives learners the opportunity to improve their performance before task submission as they revise and improve their work (Andrade & Valtcheva, 2009); in this way, self-assessment provides learners with an ability to take action on self-feedback. The positive learning effects of self-assessment (Topping, 2003) are also associated with learners' improved SRL where learners' self-reflection and forethought phases of SRL are enhanced as

self-assessment helps them to internalised performance standards so to better regulate themselves against them (Paris & Paris, 2001).

Self-assessment is one intervention that can develop learners' feedback literacy (Carless & Boud, 2018; Malecka et al., 2020; Yan & Carless, 2021). Self-assessment generates self-feedback to enact for improvements to learning and performance; this aligns with the appreciating feedback and taking action skills of feedback literacy. Further, as self-assessment requires and develops SRL and self-feedback is based on judgments made about one's work against performance standards, further alignment with the managing affect and making judgments skills of feedback literacy are demonstrated. Self-assessment can be improved by ensuring learners' have access to explicit assessment criteria, clear expectations of the self-assessment task with instruction (Andrade & Valtcheva, 2009), assistance and models of good self-assessment (Nicol and MacFarlane-Dick, 2006), and the opportunity to revise and improve the task (Goodrich, 1996; Andrade & Valtcheva, 2009). Without these conditions of self-assessment, the results of self-assessment may be more mixed and less efficacious (Yan et al., 2023).

Rubrics: Definition and Application as Self-Assessment

Rubrics are tools for assessing student work in summative and formative contexts, offering explicit criteria and include Popham's (1997) three essential features: evaluative criteria of the task, quality definitions of those criteria at various levels and a scoring strategy. Rubrics can be holistic or analytic (Brookhart, 2013). Holistic rubrics use a single scale to evaluate all criteria simultaneously allowing for an overall judgement to be made of student work and are more aligned to summative uses as a measurement tool (Brookhart, 2013). Analytic rubrics present criteria separately allowing for greater detail to be included and are more appropriate for formative contexts (Brookhart, 2013). When used

formatively, rubrics are a learning and teaching tool where their use ranges from providing teacher feedback or as a self-assessment strategy for learners (Andrade, 2023) to providing learners with a guide to understand learning goals and to monitor progress towards them (Brookhart, 2013). However, Sadler (2009) suggests that in breaking down holistic judgements to constituent elements does not fully represent the complexity of the qualitative judgements that rubrics seek to emulate; in this way, their attempt at openness has the potential to distort judgements made by learners. Further, Torrance (2007; 2012) warns against the use of rubrics as they suggest that in providing learners with explicit performance criteria, learners will only comply with the criteria and have surface engagement with their learning over more productive learning that takes place when one must establish performance criteria and comparative understanding for themselves. However, Panadero et al. (2023) conclude in their meta-analytical review of the effects of rubrics on academic performance that rubrics have a "positive and moderate effect on students' academic performance" (p.113). As "document[s] that articulate the learning goals for a task and describe varying levels of mastery of those goals" (Andrade, 2023, p.315), rubrics enhance learning with Panadero and Jönsson (2013) finding learners greatly value the transparency that rubrics provide. Holmstedt et al. (2018) suggest that rubrics may also make clear aspects of teaching that were previously unclear for learners. As rubrics make making criteria explicit and describe performance levels (Brookhart, 2018), learners can self-regulate their learning and improve performance through generating self-feedback (Jönsson & Svingby, 2007; Panadero & Jönsson, 2013).

Rubrics are commonly used for self-assessment (Andrade et al., 2008). For rubrics to be effective as an instructional tool to facilitate accurate self-assessment and effective self-feedback, rubrics should use language learners understand and reflect the mistakes that learners make and explain how successful work is made so (Andrade & Valtcheva, 2009). As rubrics communicate the tacit knowledge of an expert-assessor (the teacher), they can scaffold learners' self-assessment and promote learning. Research into rubrics used to guide self-assessment is varied with some research such as Andrade et al. (2008) and Sadler and Good (2006) reporting effect sizes of 0.87 and 0.82

respectively, and other research like that by Ross et al. (1998) reporting a much smaller effect size of 0.18, with Andrade and Boulay (2003) reporting effect sizes of 0.04 and -0.04 for a literature and historical fiction essays respectively. With specific reference to the context of this research and development project, Lipnevich et al.'s (2023) recent study into the impact of rubrics on the writing performance of 206 13-16-year-old American high-school students is of note. Lipnevich et al. (2023) established three conditions were established resulting in four groups of students: a group where a reading and analysis rubric were provided to learners; a group where three exemplars were provided corresponding to the lowest, average and highest scores; a group who received both sets of materials; and a control group. Lipnevich et al. (2023) found that students provided with rubrics alone were more successful in the writing task than any other group: this replicated findings from earlier studies (Lipnevich et al., 2014; Panadero & Romero, 2014). Following instruction, however, the group with rubric and exemplars performed just as well as the rubric-only group. One suggestion Lipnevich et al. (2023) offer for this initial under-performance of the rubric and exemplar group is the cognitive overload that this could have caused for students (Sweller, 2012) as following teaching, the group's performance matched that of the rubric-only group. This study also aligns with finding by Jönsson & Svingby (2007) and Panadero and Jönsson (2013); as rubrics make evaluative criteria explicit and describe performance levels (Brookhart, 2018), learners can self-regulate their learning and improve performance through generating self-feedback.

As an effective self-assessment tool which generates productive and actionable self-feedback, rubrics guide learners' understanding of quality in relation to the task to make accurate judgements against their own work. When used as self-assessment, rubrics offer an opportunity to address one of the main concerns related to self-assessment: the question of accuracy (Brown et al., 2015). Rubrics enhance self-assessment accuracy (Dunning et al., 2004) as rubrics explicitly state the evaluative criteria related to a learning goal, with descriptions of mastery, so that learners' self-assessment judgements are scaffolded. Learners use the rubric to support their developing understanding of the task and their current level of performance, before revising their work informed by the quality

descriptions included in the rubric. To this end, scholars suggest that rubrics and exemplars could be excellent aid for scaffolding students' self-assessment (Brookhart and Chen 2015; Lipnevich et al., 2014; Lipnevich et al., 2023) to generate accurate self-feedback (Andrade, 2018). For rubrics to be their most effective, empirical findings by Taylor et al. (2024) suggest that: students' perceptions of the rubrics impact are linked to the quality of its introduction and ongoing discussion in classroom teaching; rubric use should be modelled and referred to consistently by teachers; and exemplars could be used but sparingly to not overwhelm the learner. These practical considerations would help to realise the positive effects of rubrics on learning that the research suggests are attainable.

Self-assessment offers a way for learners to engage meaningfully with feedback as they must generate self-feedback during the practice. It also offers a means to develop key skills of feedback literacy and hone their capabilities of making judgements, taking action and managing affect. Therefore, it is important to ensure self-assessment practices are well-designed so that learners have access to accurate and productive reference information to enhance the quality and accuracy of their self-feedback. Rubrics offer one method of achieving this aim. Rubrics also align with feedback literacy features, particularly in their ability to helps learners to improve their ability to make evaluative judgements and empowers them to take action on feedback information (Andrade & Du, 2005; Andrade, 2010; Krebs et al., 2022). Therefore, the use of rubrics as self-assessment could offer a scaffold for developing learners' feedback literacy skills.

Summary & Final Research Questions

Effective feedback is beneficial for learning, but the literature shows that making it effective in practice is neither common nor straightforward: particularly with regard to enabling learners to take action. Academic thinking has highlighted a need to move from a task-based, transmission model with the teacher giving feedback to a passive recipient, to one where the learner is actively engaged in the

feedback as multiple levels. In order to act to close the feedback loop, learners need to understand their feedback and know what to do with it: feedback literacy is an interesting concept in this regard.

There is limited empirical research as to how to enhance feedback literacy, but self-assessment practices are suggested as a way to enable learners to practise ways of self-feedback to aid their learning and develop tacit knowledge and rubrics are highlighted as a potential means to facilitate this. In providing clarity of what good outcomes are and making explicit the task's marking criteria and performance descriptors, rubrics offer learners the chance to develop self-assessment skills and feedback literacy simultaneously. This allows learners to make evaluative judgements about their work and use self-feedback to improve their work and enhance their learning.

Research into feedback literacy is limited in the secondary context; this seems to be an important gap since establishing these skills is important to pupils in further education and life generally. Therefore, this research seeks to address this gap in a small way by researching the perceptions and experiences of feedback for pupils through an intervention to understand the extent to which the use of a rubric has changed the pupils' perspective on feedback and understand how elements of feedback literacy may have been altered. As such, the research was framed by these questions:

1. How do pupils experience feedback in the secondary English classroom and what is their current feedback literacy?
2. In what ways does a rubric enhance self-assessment practice for pupils?
3. In what ways are pupils' feedback literacy skills affected in the use of a rubric as self-assessment?

3: Methodology

Research Approach and Design

This practitioner research sought to understand how self-assessment enhanced pupils' experiences and perceptions of feedback and their feedback literacy. I considered what research approach would best answer the three research questions from a pragmatist view (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Cohen, Manion, & Morris, 2018): as the research seeks to understand the way in which feedback and feedback literacy is experienced in the context of classroom learning, my approach is aligned with a socio-constructivist view of the learner, is concerned with the ways learners understand feedback in their learning context and examined the effects of an intervention on feedback literacy skills. Therefore, I chose appropriate qualitative methods to capture learners' experiences of feedback and to understand the ways in which the intervention affected this experience from an interpretivist standpoint. The feedback beliefs and opinions of learners are key data in the research so qualitative methods were also the most suitable as they best suit research seeking to investigate and discover beliefs and opinions of those in a social context (Evans, 2015).

I designed a three-phase sequential qualitative methodology to collect the data required to answer my research questions (Table 3.1). Findings from initial data analysis of Phase 1 informed the design of the intervention and interviews. The sequential design led to the collection of rich data and being responsive to the research context, enhanced its quality. Researcher bias was actively limited as I was required to consider data deeply and objectively at each stage of the research to progress to the next phase. Data was analysed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013) to inform a conceptual account of pupils' feedback experiences and the impact of the intervention within the context of the school. As the practitioner-researcher is central and highly influential in qualitative research and reflexive thematic analysis, further consideration of my positionality and reflexivity practice is discussed in an upcoming section.

Table 3.1: Research design

Phase	Focus & Research Question	Purpose & Methods	Participants	Collaboration
1 October – November 2023	To understand current pupil feedback perceptions and experiences RQ1, RQ3 – partially: developing a baseline understanding of current feedback literacy skills	To establish a baseline current pupil perceptions and experiences of feedback and feedback literacy skills: pre-intervention survey	96 pupils	Design of survey with colleague, not involved in the teaching of Year 10 or the research Piloting survey with Form Group
2 Intervention January – March 2024	a) Development self-assessment skills through using a rubric b) Application of learning RQ2	a) To introduce the rubric and to teach and develop self-assessment skills using the rubric b) To enable pupils to apply their self-assessment skills to an essay using the rubric to scaffold	90 pupils	Colleague, not involved in the teaching of Year 10 or the research, acting as a critical friend in the design of the rubric Teaching by collaborating colleagues
3 April – May 2024	Evaluating impact for pupils RQ2, RQ3, RQ1 – partially: understanding if beliefs and attitudes to feedback have changed because of the intervention	To understand any change in pupil feedback perceptions and experiences: post-intervention survey To assess changes to feedback literate skills: post-intervention survey	81 pupils	
		Semi-structured group interviews Sample pupil work	9 pupils	Selection of purposive sample with collaborating colleagues through discussion and review of intervention work

Intervention: Design and Teaching

Carless and Boud (2018) suggest a need for research on feedback literacy combined with an intervention; this practitioner research designed an intervention which used a rubric in self-assessment and evaluated its impact on pupils' perceptions and experiences of feedback and their feedback literacy. The rubric was aimed at providing clear evaluative criteria and descriptions of quality to enable pupils to self-assess their work more confidently and accurately. The rubric's design was informed by the IGCSE Literature examination mark scheme, professional insight from marking and examination training and appropriate research literature (Dawson, 2017; Brookhart, 2013; 2018; Andrade, 2023). It detailed five learning goals of the essay task and four levels of attainment with quality descriptions for each level (Appendix 1).

The intervention took place over four lessons and details of the intervention lesson content is included in Appendix 2. The lessons' design was informed by initial data analysis from the pre-intervention questionnaires and Edwards' (2015) task sequencing model to promote learning. The first lesson introduced and familiarised participants with the rubric through class discussion and application to exemplar work under teacher guidance. Participants wrote their poetry essay in the second lesson with the rubric alongside. In the final two lessons, participants used the rubric to self-assess their work and make revisions and improvements before submitting the essay to their teacher.

Participants

The research sample was taken from Year 10, which was appropriate since an observation about Year 10 feedback prompted the research. Four (of six) Year 10 English classes were invited to participate (n=98), chosen as their teachers collaborated in the research. 96 pupils and their parents/guardians gave informed consent to participate. All participants were in their first year of a two-year IGCSE English Literature course (aged 14-15 years old) and were preparing for an end-of-year timed practice assessment essay on a poem from their poetry anthology.

Data Collection, Tools and Procedures

Surveys

Two surveys were designed and distributed to collect data on participants' feedback perceptions and experiences and feedback literacy skills pre- and post-intervention (Appendix 3). Surveys were administered online using Google Forms, which is familiar to participants. Collecting data online had practical benefits; data was easily exported into Microsoft Excel for analysis and coding and was easily password-protected and anonymised for data protection purposes. A pilot with my form group was undertaken to ensure completion took less than 15 minutes and that language was clear; I felt this was robust as my group had known me for three years and were comfortable to make constructive comments. Surveys were set as an in-class activity prior to the intervention lessons to enhance uptake and give enough time to answer fulsomely.

Pre-Intervention Survey

The pre-intervention survey consisted of 12 open and closed questions. Open questions were chosen to enhance the "authenticity, richness, depth of response, honesty and candour" (Cohen et al., 2018, p.457) of responses, hoping to capture pupils' understandings, beliefs and experiences of feedback as authentically as possible. When ranking questions were asked, such as on the usefulness of different types of feedback, four-point Likert scales were chosen to limit potential to over-select the neutral, middle option (Krosnick & Presser, 2010 cited in Cohen et al., 2018).

The second section of the survey contained three statement banks to understand how participants understood (making judgements), managed affect and took action on feedback, which covered the remaining features of Carless & Boud's (2018) feedback literacy framework. Each statement bank contained three 'I' statements related to the feature, informed by the research (Carless & Boud, 2018; Molloy et al., 2019; Dawson et al., 2024). Statements related to feedback literacy were adapted for the research context using my knowledge as a practitioner-researcher to ensure that participants understood the statements' intent.

Post-Intervention Survey

The post-intervention survey consisted of 17 open and closed questions and focused on how participants experienced the rubric and self-assessment intervention, asked how their perceptions and experiences of feedback were affected, and re-assessed their feedback literacy skills. The feedback literacy statement banks of the pre-intervention survey were repeated asking participants to consider if using the rubric to self-assess their work had enabled them to be 'more' or 'less' able to agree with the statement. An open question followed asking participants to explain which of the areas of feedback literacy they felt was most enhanced and why: this approach provided rich insight.

Purposive Sampling

Nine participants were selected for purposive sampling to "focus on specific, unique issues or cases" (Teddlie & Yu, 2007 in Cohen et al., p.218) by examining more deeply the personal experiences of pupils related to feedback and the intervention through analysis of participant work and interviews. Whilst limiting the breadth of the insight, the depth achieved through purposive sampling gave "rich and relevant information" (Flick, 2009, p.123 cited in Cohen et al., 2018) that matched the research aims. An extreme case sampling approach (Cohen et al., 2018) was chosen to learn from the success and the limitations of the intervention, uncovering relationships in data without making assumptions as to a participant's experience. 24 participants were nominated for the sampling by their teachers after their intervention work was reviewed; each teacher nominated two participants who had made effective self-assessment judgements about their work and whose edits had improved their work (extreme-positive), two participants whose work was deemed typical of the task (typical) and two whose self-assessment was limited or their edits unsuccessful in enhancing their work (extreme-negative). Three pupils from each grouping were selected for the sample using a random number generator.

Pupil Work Examples

Participants in the sample had their rubric and essay work collected and analysed to better understand the context of their extreme case groupings and learning experiences ahead of interviews. These were photocopied in colour to capture the stages of the intervention task fully for data analysis before being returned to participants. A sample can be seen in Appendix 4.

Semi-Structured Group Interviews

Three three-participant semi-structured interviews (n=9) were conducted in the final phase of the data collection. More effective feedback research depends upon "greater attention on the cognitive processes that are involved in the learning" (Wiliam, 2018, p.3) and interviews enabled me to understand in richer detail the cognitive processes and experiences of participants during the intervention and in their feedback experiences more broadly. Semi-structured interviews gave me flexibility to ask pertinent follow-up questions to understand comments fulsomely and explore more tangential ideas that participants offered (Bryman et al., 2021). An interview guide, informed by Kalve's (1996), provided repeatability between the interviews. Any questions that were asked off-guide were transcribed verbatim during the interview. Interviews were not recorded but transcribed responses by hand during the interview, making the data vulnerable to researcher bias. Recording interviews would have provided a more accurate account but I chose not to for two reasons. Firstly, these pupils are not familiar with research processes and recording them risked them feeling pressure to respond in a 'correct' way, thereby affecting further the social dynamics associated with group interviews and thus biassing the data. Secondly, I was confident I could record accurate data based on my experience of note taking in my Year 1 project and the assurance gained from giving interviewees time to review and confirm the notes taken in the interview.

Interviewees' responses may have been influenced by pressures of social desirability when paired with a peer (Cohen et al., 2018), group interviews offered the opportunity for discussions to

develop between participants to illuminate their experiences further and develop nuance from the participant perspective that I, as a teacher and researcher, may not be able to conceive.

Data Analysis

78 sets of full data were analysed following the removal of participants who had not completed the intervention and cross-referencing attendance in the intervention lessons with the pre-and post-intervention surveys. Data was analysed through a process of reflexive thematic analysis (reflexive TA) informed by Braun et al. (2019) and Braun and Clarke (2013, 2019, 2020, 2023). As a practitioner researching their context, reflexive TA is highly appropriate for this research as it is a process of analysis where value is placed on "researcher subjectivity as … a resource" (Braun et al., 2019, p.848) enabling the researcher to "explore and develop an understanding of patterned meaning across the data set" to produce a "coherent and compelling interpretation of the data, grounded in the data" (ibid.). Further, my experience of the research context aided the development of "patterns in data, describe and [interpretation of] those patterns and to provide a theoretically informed interpretation of them" (Braun & Clarke, 2020, p.43) to ensure that the conclusions reached were as reflective of the experience of pupils as possible. My insight as a practitioner-researcher enhances my data analysis as the interpretivist and socio-constructivist approach of this research holds that knowledge and experience is contextual and subjective, making my understanding and experience as a practitioner in context valuable to the research. Reflexive TA is an appropriate choice over other conceptualisations of TA such as coding reliability thematic analysis which requires a predetermined hypothesis emphasising objectivity and operates from a positivist paradigm which limits the potential for the data to reflect the experiences of pupils and how their experiences have been altered through an intervention which would not have served the research questions as well. I followed Braun and Clarke's (2013, 2023) six phases of reflexive TA to systematically and critically analyse data over a series of weeks. My process is outlined below:

Phase 1: Familiarisation I familiarised myself with the data by reading through the complete data set three times to begin "to think about what the data mean" (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p.205). Interview transcription also helped to familiarise the data. Initial notes were taken during familiarisation to outline potential areas for analysis, such as how the rubric enhanced feelings of security and provided pupils with clarity.

Phase 2: Coding I used two first-cycle coding methods (Saldaña, 2021) to analyse the experiences of pupils related to feedback, self-assessment and the intervention, and changes to feedback literacy. To answer RQ1, I coded data inductively using an affective method to code for emotion and values as these would enable me understand pupils' experiences of feedback in an exploratory way. For RQ2 and RQ3, I initially coded data deductively using a descriptive method with codes informed by the research literature reviewed as I sought to understand the ways in which the intervention enhanced self-assessment practices and influenced pupils' feedback literacy. Coding inductively then enabled me to capture the experience of the learners in their context, deepening insights.

Data was coded line-by-line with codes added to cells next to the data, helping to organise a growing set of codes systematically as they developed and were refined over a series of weeks. Analytical memos kept during this process kept thinking consistent and clear. Affective method codes and inductive codes for RQ2 and RQ3 were initially more semantic but became more latent as coding progressed. Data was double coded with semantic and latent codes (Patton, 1990); semantic codes reflected the experiences of the participants throughout the research process and later latent codes enabled me to interpret greater meaning from the data. When coding was completed, I reviewed the codebook, removed like-codes and refined the list to 21 codes for the next phase of analysis.

Phase 3-5: Generating, Reviewing and Defining and Naming Themes Initial themes were generated after collating codes into common areas; I frequently returned to the data to ensure that the patterns developed were reflective of the raw data collected. Notes from my reflective journal and the drawing of thematic maps became useful in critically reviewing analysis as themes and sub-themes were developed and helped to ensure that I was not limiting the ways I viewed the data and encouraged

me to keep an open analytical approach. Four themes were identified after a process of review: feedback as action; enhancement through rubric; self-assessment; and behaviours of feedback literacy. Themes such as self-efficacy, recognition of progress and personal judgement were collapsed into codes as they did not contain enough data to be deemed a thematic pattern. Working on Excel enabled me to re-cut data into relevant themes and sub-themes to continue to analyse; this recutting sat alongside the raw data so to ensure I was remaining true to the context of the data collected.

Phase 6: Writing Analysis Writing my findings enabled further interrogation of the analysis undertaken and enabled me to deepen my understand of the data when making connections with existing literature. Refinement of my ideas over this phase enabled me to answer my research questions fulsomely in line with the investigation's aims.

Reflexivity & Positionality

As reflexive TA is described by Braun and Clake (2013) as the process through which the researcher actively creates knowledge from data, identifying patterns and making meaning from these elements, analysis was influenced by my own experiences, context and beliefs. Therefore, I needed to be attentive to and critical of the ways my experiences will have impacted analysis and seek to mitigate this influence to enhance the validity of this research.

As a practising teacher with four years of experience teaching English and in my school context, my knowledge and experience are important resources in the research, but also limit objectivity and reliability. Nichols and Cormack (2017) hold that, because practitioner research happens within the researcher's contexts, "traditional views of objectivity or distance to demonstrate their own interests aren't influencing the research" (p.102) cannot be realised, but practitioner-researchers can and should critically engage with their positionality. Developing a reflexive practice required me as a researcher to recognise, understand and navigate the ways my personal experience and assumptions may impact the research (Braun & Clarke, 2013) and attempt to mitigate their

influence (Gough & Madill, 2012) throughout the research process. An active awareness and engagement with reflexive practices alongside a critical view of my positionality also led to enhanced research integrity (Mosselson, 2010). Wilkinson (1998 as cited in Braun & Clarke, 2013) suggests reflexivity applies to personal and functional considerations. Throughout the research, I practised personal reflexive checks and balances, informed by Braun and Clarke (2013) and Attia and Edge (2017), such as keeping field notes, a research diary and holding critical discussions with two Department colleagues not involved in the research throughout the design, analysis and write up stages of this research. Further, I continued to keep my reflexive journal from Part 1 of the Masters in Learning and Teaching programme, as recommended by Nadin and Cassell (2006), which enhanced my reflexive practice as I had the benefit of time to reflect on and consider my approaches and observations from my last research to enhance this research. Within the functional aspect, I considered carefully how group interviews may have influenced how participants discussed their experiences and influenced the data recorded.

Reliability & Validity

In qualitative research, reliability relates to the "fit between what researchers record as data and what actually occurs in the natural setting that is being researched" (Cohen et al., 2018, p.270). As such, practices such as keeping a reflexive journal, taking field notes and consistent reference back to raw data through the data analysis phase helped me to develop consistency and trustworthiness within the research. These practices enabled me to develop a data set that best reflected the learning context of the participants involved in the research and limited the ways in which my insider status as practitioner-researcher may have led to assumptions about shared experiences. The choice not to record interviews limits the reliability of the data (Cohen et al., 2018). As a mitigation, I shared my interview notes with interviewees to review at the end of the interview to increase accuracy (Bryman & Cassell, 2006) and I took a set of field notes immediately after the interview, annotating the

interview notes in a different colour adding detail I could recall from the interview and aspects such as body language and tone to deepen the interview data (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

There are a range of steps that can be taken to ensure validity in qualitative research (Cohen et al., 2018). As research took place over eight months, I had a prolonged engagement in the field and documented my research process fulsomely. I engaged meaningfully with reflexivity to control my bias as the experiences and knowledge of the researcher underpins qualitative research and the method of reflexive TA (Braun & Clarke, 2013). My consistent and documented attempts to reflect critically on my role, position and influence in and on the research process (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2018), especially as a sole researcher, in my reflexive practice enhanced the validity of this research further. Collaborative relationships with colleagues also enabled peer debriefing to evaluate the conduct, findings and the research. Triangulation between methods meant that data was collected using multiple methods and data sources which were analysed together to develop the understanding of feedback and the effect of the intervention on participants. Themes were developed across different data sources (surveys, sample work and interviews) which improved the consistency of evidence and made conclusions reached more reliable and valid.

Ethical Considerations

To ensure consistent and high levels of ethical consideration throughout my research, I referred closely to the *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* as set out by the British Educational Research Association (2024). When applying for ethical approval through the Department of Education's CUREC committee and planning my research project, the BERA (2024) guidelines and Oxford University's Approved Procedure 25 (Central University Research Ethics Committee, 2022) were read closely to consider key ethical concerns and mitigate and acknowledge the impact of these on the research. Ethical clearance was approved (Research ethics reference: EDUC_CIA_23_290) and approval for research was granted by the Headteacher.

All participants gave informed assent to participate in the research after I presented an overview of the research and its purpose at the beginning of an English lesson. Given the importance of clear explanations of informed assent and the right to withdraw, I gave this overview to each participating class myself as I was best placed to offer answers to specific questions or concerns related to the research and assent. As participants were under 16, consent was also sought from parents and guardians in writing following a letter explaining the research and the right to withdraw (Appendix 5).

The School's and University's GDPR guidelines and good confidentiality research practice meant that I was very conscious of correct storage of personal data. The Excel spreadsheet of data and analysis was password protected and no personal data was stored longer than outlined by the School and University's data protection requirements. I reviewed my data storage procedures with the Data Officer at school who was confident and comfortable with my approach to securely manage data. Data will only ever be reviewed as part of this research and will be destroyed in line with CUREC requirements.

The decisions related to interviews prompted thoughtful ethical consideration and reference to the University's best practice guide (Central University Research Ethics Committee, 2020). Power imbalances between interviewer and interviewee are particularly acute in the education setting where I hold power as a teacher and as researcher; therefore, interviews were conducted in a conscientious manner to alleviate any anxiety on the part of the participant (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Interviews were also held in a neutral space at a convenient time for participants. Given the anxieties of pupils when asked to speak with a member of staff, I decided that group interviews would be best placed to enable participants to feel at ease.

Another key ethical consideration was the potential for the intervention to negatively impact a participant's feedback understanding and cause confusion in their learning. In considering the beneficence and non-maleficence of the research, I had careful discussions with my collaborating colleagues as to the intended benefits of the intervention and how to mitigate negative consequences

that may arise. This meant that the essay work produced by participants and their self-assessment would be reviewed by their teachers carefully and feedback provided on both their work and self-assessment. In this way, we would be able to adjust and respond to significant issues of misunderstanding or misapplication of the task to limit any negative impact on learning, SRL and self-efficacy for that learner. These discussions were taken very seriously and utilised our collective evidence-informed professional judgements as experienced teachers.

Collaboration

Three teachers volunteered to collaborate with the research after an explanation and in a department meeting in September 2024. Collaborators were involved in discussions about the research and intervention design, lesson planning and data collection as well as acting as critical friends during data analysis. As the youngest teacher in the department with no managerial responsibilities, teachers volunteering did so under no professional pressure, as evidenced by two Year 10 teachers electing not to participate. One of the collaborators was the Head of Department which required careful management to ensure that their comments were not unduly privileged due to status or influenced others' potentially opposing views. Collaboration was particularly successful when generating themes during reflexive TA: numerous discussions were held with collaborating colleagues to clarify theme definitions, how sub-themes related to the overarching patterns of the data and where sub-themes were duplicated. The insights of the collaborators helped to ensure that analysis was logical, reflective of the data and clear to outsiders.

I collaborated with a colleague, who was not involved in Year 10 teaching or the research, who had 20 years' experience using rubrics in the international education sector; they acted as a peer reviewer and reviewed the rubric, checking, for example, that the language of the progression between the levels for each aspect was clear and appropriate. Next, the rubric was then shared with other collaborating colleagues to critique and ensure they were confident using it in their teaching. In

their respective classes, teachers introduced the rubric and its purpose, asking pupils to read it through once before addressing any areas of confusion for pupils. Another colleague also acted as a 'critical friend' more holistically in the research process helping me to consider, for example, the series of lessons and their planning for the intervention and, later in the research, considering tentative conclusions from data analysis with a critical lens.

4: Findings and Discussion

Pupils' experiences of feedback: from telling and trying to acknowledging and acting

RQ1: How do pupils experience feedback in the secondary English classroom?

The first research question developed an understanding of pupils' current experiences of feedback, contextualising the research and providing a baseline from which potential changes from the intervention could be measured. Data from pre- and post-intervention surveys alongside interviews informed the findings related to this question.

Telling and Trying: Experiences of feedback pre-intervention

Pre-intervention, it was clear that universally participants clearly viewed feedback as 'telling'. Their experiences were characterised by the way in which they define feedback and how they value feedback. Pre-intervention, all participants defined feedback as "comments" or "information" from a teacher about the content or success of completed work in the survey. This definition is striking in that it was universally held and it strongly aligns with the information-transmission model of feedback (Askew & Lodge, 2000). Participants viewed feedback as the endpoint of learning which is to be received once work was completed, signifying the end of the task; feedback was not seen as an element of the learning process but more as a comment upon the success or limitations of this process. Further, as the definition relates to completed work, participants' views of feedback are more limited to viewing feedback only comments or information related to a task, as opposed to other levels of feedback that are present in Hattie and Timperley's (2007) typology. Feedback for these participants appears to be a product received from a teacher on a task-level rather than an element contributing to a broader learning process.

Foremost, participants appear to not appreciate that more productive feedback processes rely on a sense of shared responsibility between learners and teachers to progress learning (Nash &

Winstone, 2017). This lack of understanding was strikingly presented in the survey results: 82% participants stated that their teacher was the most responsible for feedback. Many survey responses offered comments and justifications as to why teachers are most responsible for feedback: many held that teachers were accountable for pupils' learning, progress and attainment improving at IGCSE; others suggested that the teacher was the expert and the best person to give feedback; and for some, they viewed giving comments to pupils as part of a teacher's job and that feedback satisfied this professional expectation. Whilst these are valid reasons as to a teacher's professional and pedagogical duty to both feedback and their learners, it betrays a limited perception of the role and responsibility of the learner in feedback, which may stem from teachers' lack of understanding of productive feedback processes.

Interviews revealed more about how this perception has come about for learners: interviewees were asked to consider the definition of feedback produced and the aspect of responsibility for feedback and asked to consider how this perception had been built. All interviewees discussed how their understanding of feedback was shaped by their experiences earlier in the school. Whilst some mentioned primary school, all mentioned the feedback experiences in Years 7 to 9 where they had become used to being told by teachers what to do to do better. As one interviewee stated: "feedback was the things we needed to do on a basic level of correction or changes, I was never expected to think about feedback" (P3). Other interviewees also recalled how their previous feedback as telling experiences at the school meant that they now "[didn't] really see feedback as something that I was part of but something that was given to me at the end of work" (P5). Therefore, school experiences are another factor informing participants' perception of feedback as telling and at a task-level (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Elliott et al., 2020).

This is an academically selective school with high performance outcomes at IGCSE and despite its limitations, participants' experience of feedback as telling has enabled them to be successful thus far in their learning and schooling. This goes someway to explaining why all participants also value

feedback highly: all participants held that feedback was 'very useful/useful to their learning and progress'. Pupil 8 in interview suggested that pupils within the school have an intrinsic respect for feedback because "we all want to get better so we all value when we are told what to do to be better – it is part of being successful here". The context of the school has likely shaped this view, but it does demonstrate an awareness of feedback facilitating learning in some way. As Winstone et al. (2017) suggest, learners may recognise how feedback enhances their learning, but many underplay their role in realising such an enhancement. However, given the strength of response to the open question regarding responsibility for feedback, participants do not seem to yet be aware that a learner can take an active role in feedback to further their improvement. Contrary to the prevailing direction of current feedback research where the learner is positioned as a central and active agent in feedback processes (Sadler, 2010; Boud & Molloy, 2013; Van der Kleji et al., 2019), these participants appear to accept and affirm their passive role in feedback processes.

These findings show a reality in contrast to the literature: feedback as telling is successfully working for these learners who achieve well above national averages, despite its mode and task-level focus being theoretically suboptimal. Research does demonstrate there is another more effective way to realise greater progress for learners and embed skills of feedback literacy that will more greatly prepare them for tertiary education and life beyond school, but to realise this potential from research, there will need to be a significant shift in learners', and teachers', perception and experience of feedback. The data suggests that there is some appetite for change from a learner perspective. Firstly, nine respondents answered that they themselves along with their teachers were most responsible for feedback, with the remaining four pupils suggesting they had ultimate responsibility for feedback. It would be fruitful to follow up to identify the beliefs, perceptions and experiences that have enabled these participants to have this more developed understanding of the feedback relationship. Secondly, interviewees as a groups came to the conclusion that, in Year 10, feedback was somewhat different from Key Stage 3 as "now we have to think about how we analysed or structured [work], so feedback

isn't just correcting things but is about how we're thinking" (P2). This is an astute comment as it captures how experiences of feedback in Key Stage 4 are shifting towards process-level and self-regulation-level (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). For their peer in interview, this shift caused frustration: "that's why I get annoyed with feedback [in Year 10] – I want to be told exactly what to do to improve because that is how it used to be, but feedback I get now is about bigger things that I don't know how to do" (P3). This exchange suggests that some participants have grown comfortable with feedback as telling, and that when the feedback they experience no longer matches their expectations, they perceive that their feedback contract has been broken; this could negatively affect motivation and SRL thereby limiting engagement with feedback further. Frustration may be the result of not having the opportunity earlier in their schooling to develop the knowledge and skills to be able to understand and act on feedback; Sadler (2010) holds this lack to be a severe limitation of the information-transmission model. Finally, despite the finding that participants feel teachers are most responsible for feedback leading to a limited appreciation of the need for a productive dialogue between teacher and learner, when asked what they do with feedback, responses overwhelmingly referred to participants working independently in "trying" to remember feedback for next time to improve their work. In attempting to implement feedback, learners are trying to close the feedback loop (Sadler, 2010) and take action (Carless & Boud, 2018) but they appear to lack the tools and processes to turn effort into outcome.

Acting and Acknowledging: Post-intervention changes to pupils' understanding of feedback

Post-intervention, participants demonstrated a greater awareness of how feedback's effectiveness is enhanced through tacking action and, therefore, how feedback has an important role in the learning process. When asked again to define feedback, participant responses demonstrated a change in the understanding and perception of feedback with participants recognising and characterising their role in feedback processes to be one of action to enable progress. 87% of participants agreed that the

intervention had helped them to develop this new appreciation of process and action to make progress. Participants used verbs such as “use”, “do” and “implement” to describe the ways in which they were now going to act on feedback suggesting that participants had gained greater confidence in the ways they could use of feedback. As a result of understanding feedback as a catalyst for action, participants demonstrate an increased awareness of their role in feedback.

As participants recognised their active role in feedback more fulsomely, this aided their appreciation of feedback as a learning process and shared responsibility. Firstly, in recognising feedback as part of a learning process, participants are beginning to view feedback as a “prospective” (Smith & Lipnevich, 2018, p.33) for future learning. When considering feedback as something to aid future learning, Pupil 3’s frustration at process-level and self-regulation-level feedback described above was tempered: “I think of feedback as more about the future now and not just about that work; it’s about what to do differently myself and not just the content to make sure I am getting better”. Secondly, 82% of participants now suggest a shared responsibility for feedback between teacher and learner when asked who is the most responsible for feedback. This change demonstrates a clear appreciation of the reciprocal relationship between learner and teacher within the learning process. Interviews revealed how participants considered the relationship with their teacher as something now central to feedback: “getting feedback is like a mini-conversation with my teacher – it would be impossible for him to talk to everyone about every essay but the feedback acts like his words and I need to reply to them” (P4). The concept of feedback as a mini-conversation is interesting and aligns with the dialogue that effective feedback (Hill et al., 2021) requires between learners and teachers; the accuracy of these mini-conversations relate to SRL and ASE of each learner and it would be an interesting research area to investigate to understand the ways in which learners are constructing meaning to take action in feedback processes.

Ultimately, through recognising their active role in feedback, participants have been able to appreciate their role in feedback as a learning process and as a shared responsibility. However, for

some interviewees, this shift has made understanding and working with feedback harder: “if it is not about corrections, then I need to know more ways of actually changing the way I am doing things” (P6). Therefore, with learners moving to a position of recognition of their need to act in a learning process with their teacher, teachers must adapt to this new requirement. Teachers need to teach, support and design learning in a way that develops the skills needed to act fulsomely on feedback: this is what the intervention aimed to provide.

Self-Assessment and Rubrics: clarity and confidence

RQ2: In what ways does a rubric enhance self-assessment practice for pupils?

The second research question considered how and to what extent the intervention (the introduction of a rubric and instruction on how to use it) enhanced pupils’ self-assessment practices. Interview data and samples of pupil work along with responses to the post-intervention surveys informed the key finding that rubrics enhanced clarity of expectations for participants but the extent to which it enhanced their self-assessment was more varied.

Rubrics provide clarity for learners – they help to define the gap between current and desired performance in Sadler’s (1989) terms. Foremost, rubrics provided participants with clarity about the expectations of the learning goals for the task where previously they had lacked insight, in keeping with previous research into the reasons why learners find rubrics useful (Panadero & Jönsson, 2013; Brookhart, 2018; Lipnevich et al., 2023). 89% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they understood the requirements of the task more clearly with the rubric and comments in the survey referred to the rubric as “useful” and “helpful” over 70 times. Those interviewed affirmed that the rubric provided clarity and transparency over expectations that had previously been missing: “it is good to have all the information for a good essay in one place” (P4) and “[my teacher] has talked

about all the aspects before but it is hard to remember them, so the rubric is good to have them written down" (P7). Interviewees also suggested that the overwhelming use of "useful" and "helpful" by their peers was due to how the rubric made quality descriptions. In describing what quality at each level was, the rubric made clearer aspects of teaching and learning that participants had not previously considered or noted (Holmstedt et al., 2018): "I vaguely knew what Level 3 analysis was, but it was good to see what parts of Level 2 and 4 I had also included so I could make it better" (P3).

In this way, the rubric has provided this participant with the opportunity to generate quality self-feedback through comparing their work to the rubric closely, making consequent edits to improve the work, leading to enhanced performance. The new-found clarity of expectations could also enhance participants' ability to enact SRL behaviours. The three phases of SRL are forethought, performance and self-reflection (Zimmerman, 2000) which are supported by a clearer understanding of criteria and performance so that learners can plan, monitor and evaluate their performance and generate self-feedback effectively. Participants value the rubric as it gives them greater clarity about learning goals, expectations and markers of quality; this aligned with findings from Panadero and Jönsson (2013) where learners value transparency afforded by a rubric.

However, the relationship between rubric use and enhanced self-assessment is not as conclusive. Positively, 64% of participants used the rubric to scaffold self-assessment improved their confidence when making judgements about their work. As making effective evaluative judgements is a key concern in self-assessment practices, rubrics provided guidance for participants when writing their essays, in line with reported benefits of rubrics (Andrade & Du, 2005; Jönsson, 2013). Interviews of the extreme-positive case group and for two members of the typical case group explained how their confidence self-assessing was greatly enhanced as they were able to make secure comparisons between their work and the rubric. The rubric supplemented tacit knowledge of the task and expectations making clear where and how elements of work were conforming to each level. One interviewee commented that "I could see easily where I fell into Level 2 for analysis and Level 3

description gave me ideas on how to improve my work" (P5), which demonstrates the way in which this learner produced effective self-feedback through careful SRL behaviours and the use of the rubric. The positive correlation between the use of a rubric and enhanced writing performance is seen in the research of Andrade et al. (2008) also and for just over half of these participants, the rubric enhanced their self-assessment confidence through enabling clearer and more accurate comparative judgements of their work against the rubric. Greater confidence self-assessing may be associated further with the way the rubric helped to lessen cognitive load for participants (Sweller, 2012) when writing and self-assessing an essay, in keeping with the recommended timing of a rubric to be given before a task (Panadero & Romero, 2014).

For 46% of participants, however, their confidence in self-assessing was not enhanced. Reasoning for this in the survey responses suggested that the rubric overwhelmed participants with the complexity of the task that they were expected to complete. Furthermore, the rubric was dense visually and comments in the survey and interviews suggested that participants through that there was too much information on the rubric. As one interviewee stated, "it made me think about how much you actually have to do and balance in an essay and that is even without understanding the poem well and remembering all the right terminology and ideas to include in the essay – it made me feel like there was too much to do" (P9). For this learner, there is a clear stress associated with an enhanced understanding and clarity of the task. Panadero and Romero (2014) found similar in their study of the negative dimensions of SRL (such as stress, anxiety and pressure to perform) where rubrics caused higher stress when performing the task than the control group. Sadler (2009) criticises rubrics for sharing criteria with learners beforehand as they may not understand them; in this context, it is not that learners do not understand the criteria, but it is that the understanding is overwhelming. This finding aligns with Panadero et al. (2017) where the effect of self-assessment interventions on SRL led to students reporting lower self-efficacy when using rubrics or other similar instruments. As an element of SRL, self-efficacy of learners is important in self-assessment as it relates to a learner's

belief in their ability to complete the task needed to enhance performance (Bandura, 1997); whilst there is some evidence that rubrics enhance self-efficacy in writing (Andrade et al., 2008), for nearly half of participants their self-efficacy is limited by their lack of confidence in self-assessing with rubrics.

Therefore, whilst rubrics are reported to be useful for participants due to their form and clarity, they do not necessarily enhance self-assessment for all participants. Where self-assessment was enhanced, participant engagement and capability to act on the self-feedback from the rubric's use appears an important factor. One measure of this engagement is the way in which some participants closely annotated and made adaptations to their rubrics during the instruction lessons. In reviewing the rubrics of the purposive sample, it was clear that the extreme-positive and typical cases engaged with their rubrics as there were personal annotations and notes made to enhance their understanding of certain elements, based on personal thought or classroom discussions. For the extreme-negative case participants, like Pupil 8, there were no annotations on the rubric. This may suggest that personalising a rubric helps to familiarise learners with it and make the rubric their own. When questioned about their use of the rubric in interview, the extreme-positive case group agreed that annotating their rubrics during class discussions enhanced their understanding and helped them to apply the rubric to their own work in subsequent lessons. This could suggest that the group's self-assessment was enhanced further than their peers due to this personal engagement, adding further nuance to Panadero and Romero's (2014) findings that rubrics enhanced the accuracy of students' self-assessment. As rubrics "describe what learning looks like" (Brookhart, 2018, p.2), the way in which annotations and adaptations by learners enhance their ability to use a rubric successfully for self-assessment is a key finding. One hypothesis as to why this practice would help self-assessment and the production of self-feedback is that the annotations and adaptations personalised the learning for the learner. In this way, learners are developing their tacit knowledge of the learning goals. Interventions which develop learners' tacit knowledge of the standards and expectations of learning enhance feedback literacy (Sadler, 1989; 2010) and self-assessment accuracy (Dunning et al., 2004)

and therefore examining further how this enhances self-assessment and feedback practices would be a fruitful future research topic.

Further, to engage with the rubric meaningfully, learners need to be able to understand the rubric as a document as well as its intent as a learning tool. Interviews with the typical-case group and the extreme-negative group suggest that these participants had a more limited view of the rubric as a learning tool than the extreme-positive group: these interview groups likened the rubric to science mark schemes. The typical-case group discussed how science mark schemes are useful self-assessment as you can check your accuracy quickly and answers are explicit; conceding that English has greater nuance to ideas of right and wrong than empirical science subjects, participants held that the rubric gave them a list of what to do to perform well. The extreme-negative group made the same comparison but discussed rather how the quality descriptions were not explicit enough to explain what to do to qualify from one level to another. These participants suggested that they used the rubric like a checklist of items, and whilst their work demonstrated some improvement through self-assessment, their edits appeared more superficial, such as the inclusion of an additional quotation in body paragraphs or more specific terminology. For the typical-case group, their comments and work suggest compliance with the criteria over the deep engagement with learning that the extreme-positive case group showed through greater edits of full sentences and sequencing of ideas within body paragraphs. So, whilst participants value rubrics for their explicitness, the criticisms of rubrics by Torrance (2007; 2012) are worth considering here as it appears that the rubric's use of explicit criteria has led to compliance and surface engagement with learning by some participants. As rubrics "describe what learning looks like" (Brookhart, 2018, p.2), the way in which annotations and adaptations by learners enhance their ability to use a rubric successfully for self-assessment is a key finding.

Feedback literacy: developing capabilities and limiting factors

RQ3: In what ways are pupils' feedback literacy skills affected in the use of a rubric as self-assessment?

This section will report the findings for three feedback literacy skills (as the role of appreciating feedback has been discussed in relation to RQ1 more fully) and use comments from the post-intervention survey to offer reasons as to why participants felt more able to understand feedback, manage affect and use feedback after the intervention. Interview data provides greater depth and personalised experiences to the discussion.

Understanding feedback

It is notable that participants were positive overall about their understanding and application of feedback pre-intervention, although, as discussed earlier, this was at a task-level. Post-intervention findings show an increase in participants' abilities to understand how the comments received relate to performance criteria and what they need to do differently to improve their work but there is a slight decrease in understanding teacher comments. The changes are not large in any of the factors.

Table 4.1: Findings from pre- and post-intervention surveys on understanding feedback

	Pre-Intervention		Post-Intervention		Change
	Agree	Disagree	More able	Less able	
I understand the comments that my teacher gives me.	72	6	68	10	-5%
I understand how the comments I received relate to performance criteria.	64	14	70	8	8%
I understand what I need to do differently next time to improve my work.	68	10	73	5	6%

For the former two aspects, comments from the survey outline how the rubric enabled them to make more effective evaluative judgements about their work in relation to feedback comments: as one respondent put it “I understand now how the comments actually link to a certain aspect of the task, like evidence, and I can judge my work against the expectation more easily”. 23 participants also commented specifically on the exercise where exemplar paragraphs were assessed against the rubric in the first intervention lesson. The task used exemplars in a dialogic way (Carless & Chan, 2017) so that learners could refine their judgements of the work with the guidance of their teacher. In affording these participants a low-stakes task in which to practise making judgements and to have their judgements refined, their ability to make accurate judgements and begin to refine their self-evaluative capacities was enhanced, which for Dawson (2017) are key benefits of rubric use. These also align with Carless and Boud’s (2018) making judgements feature of feedback literacy where opportunities for self-evaluation enable the improvement of learners’ judgement over time.

Despite the decrease in respondents understanding teacher comments being only four participants, their comments as to why they felt less able to understand teacher comments gave a sense of being overwhelmed with the rubric and an over-complication of the task. This finding was interesting especially considering discussions of participant confidence in self-assessing in the preceding section. Perhaps understanding feedback from teachers was made harder for a small number of learners as the explicit criterion were hard to reconcile with teacher comments: “my teacher doesn’t give me feedback in [the aspects of the rubric] so it is hard to know now what they mean as I like the rubrics as it is clear, but [my teacher’s] comments aren’t any more”. For these participants, Sadler’s (2009) criticism of rubrics fundamentally failing to fully represent the nuanced, complex qualitative judgement of the expert assessor in breaking down holistic judgments into component criteria seems relevant. Participants’ ability to make judgements about their work has been compromised by having two sources of feedback that may operate at different levels, that is to say: some teacher feedback may be holistic and self-feedback from rubrics is criteria-led or analytical

which may come into conflict. Whilst a finding for a small number of participants, it is no less significant as it suggests that there is a need for teachers to be aware of how their comments may confuse learners.

Managing Affect

Again, participants were positive overall about their abilities in managing affect, potentially driven by the general desire to improve. Findings from the pre-intervention survey suggest that participants manage their emotional reactions to feedback well with only minor changes noted post-intervention.

Table 4.2: Findings from pre- and post-intervention surveys on managing affect

	Pre-Intervention		Post-Intervention		Change
	Agree	Disagree	More able	Less able	
I respond positively to feedback about my work.	71	7	72	6	1%
I deal well with any negative emotions related to feedback I have received.	70	8	73	5	4%
Critical comments motivate me to improve my work.	68	10	66	12	3%

The intervention appears to have minimal impact on participants' ability to manage their affect and as such, could be seen as the most well-developed feedback literacy skill that the research cohort possesses. Common defensive responses to feedback (To, 2016) did not feature in the survey comments as participants rather feel a sense of motivation: "glad that I know which areas to improve upon", positivity: "happy as I can see what I did well but also what I need to improve on", and for one respondent, "less stressed as I now know what to work on". These are markedly mature responses to feedback of this manner that may not be expected in the secondary setting and suggest that feedback resilience is high for these participants (To, 2016). Some comments, however, mentioned marks opposed to feedback which were associated with more negative affective responses such as

disappointment or irritation with their performance. It would be useful to understand the impact of feedback and marks awarded being separated from each other for learners' affective responses and measuring this through a validated and detailed measure, such as Dawson et al.'s (2024) Feedback Literacy Behaviour Scale, would clarify if it is performance or feedback that learners are emotionally reacting to.

Taking Action

The intervention has stimulated and enabled a change in the way participants use feedback to take action: this is very encouraging. The most significant findings were that participants felt more able to use feedback to improve future work and record this feedback to use again in the future.

Table 4.3: Findings from pre- and post-intervention surveys on taking action

	Pre-Intervention		Post-Intervention		Change
	Agree	Disagree	More able	Less able	
I use feedback to refine my understanding of what good quality work looks like.	64	14	69	9	6%
I use feedback I have received to improve future work.	37	41	68	10	40%
I record feedback to use again in the future.	32	46	59	19	35%

As taking action is both a component feature of feedback literacy and one that is facilitated and maximised through other features in the model (Carless & Boud, 2017), it is important to consider how the other features of feedback literacy could have first influenced these results. Most clearly, the positive results from RQ1, related to participants' appreciation of feedback and their recognition of their active role in feedback processes, have positively influenced participants' action-taking behaviours. Comments in the survey suggest that participants' increased ability to take action on

feedback relates back to their greater appreciation of feedback and their increased awareness and appreciation of their action role in feedback. Where previously learners may have underplayed their role in feedback processes despite recognising how feedback enhances learning (Winstone et al., 2017), the intervention seems to have enabled participants to recognise confidently their active role in feedback. Post-intervention, participants appear more willing to take on greater responsibility for their learning through taking action on feedback. “I understand my role more and my role is to do something with feedback” (P6) one interviewee stated to the agreement of their peers in interview; this comment demonstrates the interrelated nature of appreciating feedback and taking action that learners have begun to realise, suggesting the development of these two feedback literacy skills as a result of the intervention.

The remaining feedback literacy features of making judgements and managing affect are not as influential in this positive action-taking change from a participants’ perspective, given their low impact results above. However, the data shows that making judgement skills are influential but that their influence is not necessarily recognised by learners themselves. Comments from the survey also refer readily to how the rubric provided clear and more actionable ideas to respond to feedback than teacher comments alone: as one respondent put it “I can use feedback better now as I can see what the rubric says and apply the instructions from the descriptions to my work”. This view was shared by many respondents with 69% of those who felt more able to use feedback received to improve future work made reference to the rubric and its guiding qualities. It appears that the intervention and rubric has further enabled the making judgements feature of feedback literacy, which supports the new-found confidence and responsibility many of these learners have for taking action on feedback. Interestingly, participants do not appear to recognise this change themselves; the reported increased ability to understand how the comments received relate to performance criteria and understanding what to do differently next time to improve work were low. In a similar way to how participants reported to use the rubric to scaffold making judgements in self-assessment to ameliorate the gap

between current and desired performance (Sadler, 1989), the rubric scaffolds learners' action taking. The rubric offers learners a scaffold to support their learning and enable taking action on feedback, where they are able to achieve more success than when working without the rubric. In the intervention, learners are operating within their ZPD with the rubric providing help and a guide for their learning (Vygotsky, 1978). As learners can internalise the scaffolding to ensure learning progress is made (Vygotsky, 1978; Wood et al., 1976), the use of rubrics appear to help participants develop greater tacit knowledge of the expert-assessor to aid their work. Further, by scaffolding participants' action taking, the rubric also helps to close the feedback loop (Sadler, 2010) through the action the rubric initiates from learners.

In order for the action taken to be accurate and enhance performance, learners require greater teacher support. The comment from the survey quoted above used the term "instructions" from the rubric, suggesting that for this participant, the rubric provides clear actions and may betray a more superficial engagement with the explicit criteria and quality descriptions that Torrance (2007, 2012) warns against. As Black and Wiliam (1998) suggest, teaching and learning activities have to be modified to enable learners to take an active role in feedback; the rubric goes some way to provide this modification but for some participants, this is not enough. When considering the difficulties of using rubrics for self-assessment, 43 participants relayed difficulty around knowing what to do as a result of their self-assessment judgments. Put another way, these participants knew they needed to take action but did not know what action to take. More explicit teaching and instruction on the strategies to act on feedback (Jönsson, 2013) would not only enhance action taking for these learners, and others, but it would also provide a means to potentially limit poorly judged action-taking and alert teachers as to where learners' judgement making leads to misunderstandings. For learners with developed SRL and ASE, the rubric could offer strategies to act on feedback implicit in the quality descriptions. For other learners who might lack these aspects or be less able to understand the learning goals, greater detail and teaching on what actions to take in response to common self-

feedback responses and greater use of exemplars to familiarise learners with how to recognise the need for action and understand the action to be taken would be beneficial: these were all suggestions made by the interview groups. Again, the demands on the teacher have shifted with the new expectations and feedback literacy of the learner. Teachers could look to teach explicit action-taking methods to their learners or model the considerations taken when deciding what action to take based on self-feedback when working with an exemplar. These are some initial pedagogical ideas to enhance learners' ability to take action. Comments from collaborating colleagues post-intervention seemed to recognise this need also: all wished for more time in the next iteration at the beginning of the intervention to discuss the rubric in greater detail and after the essay writing, before self-assessment to start to model and scaffold the types of action-taking that learner should be looking to implement.

Ultimately, participants are more able to take action in response to self-feedback as the rubric has provided scaffolding as to what is needed to improve, why that is and how to do it. Whilst the quality of action taken might vary, the data suggests that, based on the depth and type of edits made on essays, most participants have been able to improve their work at a task level through self-assessment before submitting to their teachers, some at a process level, and a few at a self-regulation level. The next challenge to consider is to operationalise the more productive types of feedback at process and self-regulation levels to embed successful self-assessment practices which lead to effective self-feedback for learners and enhance their feedback literacy skills and learning. Taking action has enabled learners to better empower themselves to make progress and participate in productive learning when self-assessing as a result of the intervention.

5: Conclusion

Prompted by a consideration of whether pupils knew what to do with feedback, this research and development project examined pupils' perceptions and experiences of feedback to inform the design of an intervention to improve learners' feedback literacy and engagement. This research has shown that, as a self-assessment instructional tool, rubrics have improved pupils' understanding of feedback, their active engagement in feedback processes, and their ability to accurately and confidently generate self-feedback. A significant finding was the way in which learners' feedback literacy was improved, particularly in relation to the skills of appreciating feedback, making judgements and taking action (Carless & Boud, 2018). Reasons for this relate to the way rubrics act as a scaffold for learning and how their constituent elements (Popham, 1997) enable learners to generate accurate self-feedback to enhance their work.

Interestingly, this research charted an about-turn in pupils' perceptions of feedback. Initially, participants characterised feedback as being at a task-level and as something that is provided to pupils by teachers through a monologic telling process. Pupils saw it as the teacher's responsibility to give feedback as part of their job, casting themselves as either passive in (O'Donovan, 2017) or underplaying their role in (Winstone et al., 2017) feedback processes. Whilst this approach is effective and benefits pupils' progress to an extent, given the past academic performance of both the school and these pupils, research literature suggests that there is better, more effective way of considering and practising feedback that leads to a holistic, multi-layered and participative process, that would better equip pupils for feedback experiences educationally, professionally and personally (Carless & Boud, 2018; Ketonen et al., 2020).

Post-intervention, pupils' perceptions of feedback by pupils were changed in their acknowledgment and engagement in feedback as a process and as a shared responsibility they held with their teachers. Pupils recognised that they had a greater and more active role to play in feedback which is the first step in realising more of the benefits of effective feedback outlined in research literature.

This change was realised through the successful use of rubrics to enable self-assessment and facilitate learners in recognising their active role in feedback, enhancing their feedback literacy skills and appreciating the shared responsibility they have with their teacher for feedback. The study found that rubrics add value and can enhance learners' perceptions and experiences of feedback through providing clarity and understanding of performance criteria for all participants. Further, rubrics help pupils to understand the gap between current and desired performance (Sadler, 1989) and enable them to close the feedback loop by taking action to edit and improve their work and close the performance gap. For some, rubrics are transformational as they unlock an understanding of the intended learning that enables them to practice SRL successfully and generate more accurate self-feedback to enhance their performance and learning. The understanding that some pupils gained from using rubrics enabled them to appreciate and take a greater participative role in feedback processes outside of self-assessment practices.

And it is this improvement in understanding their active role in feedback processes, appreciating a shared responsibility for feedback with their teacher, making effective self-assessment judgements to inform action based on self-feedback that demonstrates how rubrics have improved pupils' feedback literacy skills. Whilst a relatively new term and concept (Nieminen & Carless, 2023), feedback literacy provides teachers and learners with a way of understanding why learners might not understand what to do with feedback, thus giving focus to the instruction and interventions needed to enable learners to become feedback literate. This research demonstrates how a self-assessment intervention can enhance feedback literacy in the secondary context. The findings of this research suggest that these pupils now know what to do with feedback which will enhance their learning and progress going forward; they have become more feedback literate and more confident in their ability to generate self-feedback in self-assessment as a result and contributing factor.

Ultimately, pupils' feedback literacy skills were improved when using a rubric to self-assess an essay, in particular their skills of to appreciating feedback, making judgements and taking action. The

rubric enabled successful self-assessment through providing learners with a scaffold for their self-feedback which, when internalised, furthers their feedback literacy skills.

Implications

The findings from this practitioner research have implications for my practice and department and, in a small way, research into feedback more broadly. Given the success of the collaboration and the departmental interest and engagement with the research, the implications for my practice also relate to departmental practices. The department has adopted the self-assessment rubric into its planned Year 10 scheme of work: the first piece of assessed writing in Year 10 will now be self-assessed through the rubric before submission to teachers who will assess both the essay and the self-assessment. With adjustments to the intervention from this research, such as greater time to introduce and discuss the rubric, instruction and suggestions on how to personalise the rubric, as well as increased discussion about purpose of self-assessment, the rubric now forms part of the department's feedback practices. Teachers in the department found the rubric and self-assessment intervention to be productive and we will continue to monitor how using a rubric and self-assessment from the outset of the academic year impacts repetitive marking and contributes to the department's goal of 'less marking'. After discussing the research findings collectively, as a department we have decided to focus on improving instruction related to pupils' engagement with rubrics and reciprocal observations are currently arranged with colleagues to observe how they approach and discuss the rubrics with their classes to develop better practice as a department. Personally, I will be spending time defining good feedback processes with supported classroom tasks (namely adapting existing good practice in formative assessment in the department to include ensuring pupils have opportunity, motivation and skills to **act** upon feedback) in all year groups to help to foster feedback literacy and enable pupils a means of engaging actively in feedback.

On a school level, current feedback practice and pupil expectation is firmly rooted in task-level and information-transmission models of feedback. This reality needs to be recognised in any improvement initiative, including the consideration of learning and assessment at Key Stage 4. As these perceptions of feedback are built on early experiences of feedback in education, it strengthens the view that more needs to be done in a secondary, and even a primary context, to embed and discuss feedback literacy skills in a variety of contexts to enable our pupils to develop the understanding and skills that will benefit them in tertiary education and life in general. To realise the benefits that this research outlines, rubrics need to be part of a holistic intervention. Learners need to understand rubrics' purpose, its application and its limitations – they need teaching. Rubrics also provide insight into learners' motivations and abilities more broadly than the gap in performance on the task but gaps in their feedback literacy and SRL. This better-defined and more holistic gap between the learner's current and desired performance places a different, and potentially greater, load on teachers. For pupils whose understandings and mindsets have changed because of the intervention, their relationship with and expectations of their teacher is likely to shift. This shift is likely to be uncomfortable and may be confronting for some teachers and their practice: any improvement initiative will need to carefully consider the impact on teachers as a key enabler and challenge to introducing concepts of feedback literacy and any associated interventions.

More broadly, the findings of this research suggest that feedback literacy is not the sole concern of tertiary contexts; there is a strong argument to consider research in the secondary context and to begin to validate quantitative measures for the context to support empirical research in this area.

Fundamentally, central to this discussion is the debate on what the purpose of teaching is: is it simply to improve a pupil's ability to write a better examination essay, or is it to do more than that and equip the pupil with a set of skills that enable that individual to learn and improve themselves, whatever the topic, task or stage of education and life? Ideologically, I believe in the second purpose

of teaching and as a teacher, I will use my knowledge from this research to better teach and prepare my pupils both for examinations and education, but also help them to understand how feedback literacy skills will enhance areas of their lifelong learning long after school has finished.

Limitations

This research has explored how rubrics positively enhance self-assessment and feedback literacy in a secondary context. However, there are several limitations that must be kept in mind. Firstly, practical limitations relate mainly to the qualitative nature of the investigation. Surveys are self-report and therefore answers may be influenced by social desirability or a lack of clarity on what the question asks, risking a range of different interpretations of questions across the data set. Further, interviews were purposive and not representative of the data set as a whole. Whilst efforts were made to mitigate these practical limitations, the nature of the inquiry is likely to have influenced the data collected. Secondly, whilst Carless and Boud's (2018) feedback literacy framework was shown to be applicable for the secondary context in this research, the lack of validated measures for feedback literacy in a secondary context is a major practical and theoretical limitation of this research. Whilst validated measures of feedback literacy, such as Dawson et al. (2024), provided some useful guidance when considering the statements for surveys, I wrote my own statements to ensure participants understood the intent and content of the statement. Future research should look to develop empirical and validated measures for the secondary context.

As a result, it is necessary to consider the study's conclusions within its limitations; as the study relies on qualitative data within my specific school context, the findings are not generalisable. Findings do, however, contribute to a developing area of empirical research where self-assessment as an intervention to improve feedback literacy (Carless & Boud, 2018; Malecka et al., 2020; Yan & Carless, 2021) is showing benefits to learners and helping them understand, know and use feedback to make greater progress.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: The Rubric

Aspect	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Responding to the question	A developed and nuanced understanding of the poem's content and meaning underpins an engaged response to the question.	A clear and accurate understanding of the poem's content and meaning strengthens a focused response to the question.	Understanding develops over the course of the essay and there are some attempts to show understanding of the poem's content and meaning in response to the question.	Understanding is limited and there are frequent errors in explaining the poem's content and meaning in relation to the question.
Analysis	Analysis covers a secure range of form, structure and language points and uses a range of sophisticated literary terminology to accurately describe the effect of the poet's choices.	Analysis covers a range of form, structure and language points, though focus may lack balance. Literary terminology is mostly used accurately, and the effect of the poet's choices are considered.	Analysis is limited to a small range of form, structure and language points and there is little consideration of the effect of the poet's choices on the meaning of the poem. There is limited reference to literary terminology.	Analysis narrates the poem's content with little engagement of the effect of form, structure and language choices made by the poet. Literary terminology is missing or incorrect
Evidence	Evidence is carefully selected from the poem to support analysis and ideas. Evidence is used frequently and accurately. Well-chosen quotations are fulsomely analysed and cover a range of poetic devices.	Evidence from the poem is used to support analysis. Evidence is used often and adds depth to analysis. Quotations enable analysis to explain meaning and cover some poetic devices.	Evidence is limited and may be poorly selected. Analysis might reference some poetic devices but explanations are more narrative than analytical.	Evidence is largely missing from the essay. If included, it is to narrate the poem and there is no supporting analysis in response to the question focus.
Written organisation	The essay argues in a well organised manner. Ideas are well-sequenced with clear topic sentences and supporting analysis.	The essay has a clear organised structure. Ideas respond to the focus of the argument and topic sentences are used to frame analysis.	The essay has attempted structure but some of the ideas appear less connected to the argument presented. Topic sentences lack appropriate focus and relation to analysis.	The essay has little structure and is therefore hard to read. Paragraphs are not focused or do not exist.
Written conventions	Spelling, punctuation and grammar are correct. Writing is legible.	Spelling, punctuation and grammar are usually correct. Errors do not impede meaning. Writing is legible.	There are enough errors to make writing hard to read and understand. Writing legibility impedes reading in some parts.	The writing is almost impossible to read because of errors. Writing legibility impedes meaning.

Appendix 2: Intervention Series of Lessons Outline

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Lesson</th><th>Content</th><th>Resources</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Pre-intervention</td><td>20 minutes to answer the pre-intervention questionnaire</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Intervention</td><td>1</td><td>Introducing the rubric: purpose and application
- Read through the rubric alone, dotting areas of confusion
- Compare with pair to prepare for class discussion on the rubric's purpose, application and meaning to address areas of misunderstanding and confusion
Application of the rubric: practice
- Five exemplar paragraphs of differing rubric levels were given to pupils on a familiar poem: pupils needed to assign each a level. Independent task before paired sharing of ideas to facilitate a class discussion
- Class discussion to award each paragraph an appropriate level on the rubric. Teachers to manage where exemplars might be high for one aspect of the rubric and low for another, explaining how as a marker, this would be reconciled
Tasks designed to familiarise pupils with the rubric and begin to practise self-assessment skills, particularly the ability to make appropriate evaluative judgements, with the guidance of their teacher.</td><td>Rubric
Exemplar paragraphs</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>Write a poetry essay over the course of the lesson: question and poem at teacher's discretion. All pupils have access to their rubrics to have alongside when writing the essay.</td><td>Rubric from previous lesson</td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td rowspan="2">(Initially planned as one lesson, all teachers found that pupils needed longer than anticipated to self-assess and edit their work.)
Initial self-assessment of essay
- Pupils to read through their essay once without doing anything to refamiliarize themselves with the task
- On second reading, pupils use the rubric to annotate onto their essays where they had achieved aspects of the rubric and the level – this was to be done in another colour pen
Short self-reflection task on the essay and self-assessment process before pupils then noted the range of improvement and editing actions they were going to undertake to improve their work
- Scaffold for the sorts of improvement and editing actions that may be undertaken provided on a slide that was projected throughout the task</td><td rowspan="2">Clean rubric with self-assessment tasks
Supporting self-assessment ideas slideshow</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td></tr>
</table>

		Edits and improvements made in a third colour and pupils were asked to indicate on their rubric where the self-assessment edits had improved a level or aspect of their work. Essays and rubrics were collected by the teacher for feedback.	
Post-intervention		20 minutes to answer post-intervention questionnaire	

Appendix 3: Pre-Intervention and Post-Intervention Survey Questions

Pre-Intervention Survey Questions

Questions on perceptions of feedback

1. Define feedback.
2. Who is the most responsible for feedback? Why?
3. How important do you think feedback is to your performance and progress in learning?

Questions on experiences of feedback

4. Select all types of feedback you have experienced in English this year and rank their usefulness
    a. Rank of Usefulness: least useful, somewhat useful, useful, most useful, not experienced
    b. Types of Feedback: verbal comments from my teacher, verbal comments from my peers, peer-assessment, self-assessment, written comments from your teacher, written targets from your teacher, whole class feedback, discussion with your teacher, numerical mark on your work
5. For a feedback type you have chosen as **most** useful, please explain why you find this the most useful.
6. For a feedback type you have chosen as **least** useful, please explain why you find this the least useful.
7. The feedback I receive in English is:
    a. Not very useful for my learning and progress.
    b. Somewhat useful for my learning and progress.
    c. Useful for my learning and progress.
    d. Very useful for my learning and progress.
8. Consider a recent piece of feedback you received in English, describe your experience of feedback in relation to this example.

Questions on feedback literacy skills

9. Consider these statements about how you understand the feedback you receive. Do you agree or disagree in relation to your feedback in English?
    a. Statements:
        i. I understand the comments that my teacher gives me.
        ii. I understand how the comments I receive relate to performance criteria.
        iii. I understand what I need to do differently next time to improve my work.
    b. Agree/Disagree
10. Consider these statements about how you feel about the feedback you receive. Do you agree or disagree in relation to your feedback in English?
    a. Statements:
        i. I respond positively to feedback about my work.
        ii. I deal well with any negative emotions related to feedback I have received.
        iii. Critical comments motivate me to improve my work
    b. Agree/Disagree

11. Consider these statements about how you use feedback you receive. Do you agree or disagree in relation to your feedback in English?
    a. Statements:
        i. I use feedback to refine my understanding of what good quality work looks like.
        ii. I use feedback I have received to improve future work.
        iii. I record feedback to use again in the future.
    b. Agree/Disagree

Closing questions

12. *Optional Question:* If you have any further comments about feedback in English, or anything that you have been asked as part of this survey, please write them below.

Post-Intervention Survey Questions

Questions on perceptions of feedback

1. Define feedback.
2. Who is the most responsible for feedback? Why?
3. Did the intervention contribute to any changes in your perceptions of feedback?
    a. Yes/No
    b. Please briefly explain your choice.

Questions on the intervention

4. Self-assessment is a form of feedback that is useful to me.
    a. Strongly Agree/Agree/Disagree/Strongly Disagree
5. The rubric helped me to develop more confidence in my self-assessment skills for poetry essays.
    a. Strongly Agree/Agree/Disagree/Strongly Disagree
6. I am more able to accurately self-assess my poetry essay with the rubric.
    a. Strongly Agree/Agree/Disagree/Strongly Disagree
7. What did you think of the rubric you used in your self assessment lessons?
8. What were the benefits of using the rubric to help self-assess your work?
9. What were the difficulties of the rubric when self-assessing your work?
10. Did the rubric help to make clear some of the feedback you have previously received?
11. I will be using my rubric in future essay work.
    a. Yes/Maybe/No
    b. Please briefly explain your choice.
12. I would like to use rubrics more frequently in English.
    a. Yes/Maybe/No
    b. Please briefly explain your choice.

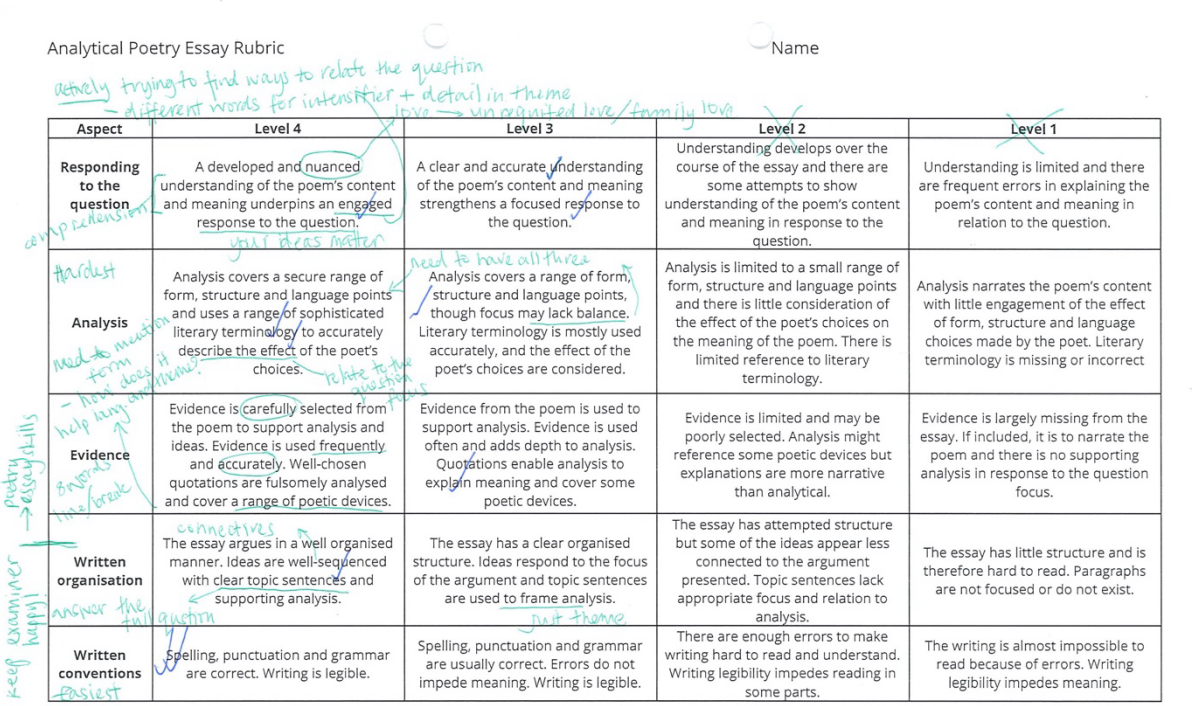
Questions on feedback literacy skills

13. Consider these statements about how you understand the feedback you receive. Considering the rubric and self-assessment lessons you have been a part of recently, do you feel more or less able to understand the feedback you receive?
    a. Statements:
        i. I understand the comments that my teacher gives me.
        ii. I understand how the comments I receive relate to performance criteria.
        iii. I understand what I need to do differently next time to improve my work.
    b. More able/Less able
    c. Please briefly explain your choices.
14. Consider these statements about how you feel about the feedback you receive. Considering the rubric and self-assessment lessons you have been a part of recently, do you feel more or less able to manage your feelings about the feedback you receive?
    a. Statements:
        i. I respond positively to feedback about my work.
        ii. I deal well with any negative emotions related to feedback I have received.
        iii. Critical comments motivate me to improve my work
    b. More able/Less able
    c. Please briefly explain your choices.
15. Consider these statements about how you use feedback you receive. Considering the rubric and self-assessment lessons you have been a part of recently, do you feel more or less able to use the feedback you receive?
    a. Statements:
        i. I use feedback to refine my understanding of what good quality work looks like.
        ii. I use feedback I have received to improve future work.
        iii. I record feedback to use again in the future.
    b. More able/Less able
    c. Please briefly explain your choices.
16. *Optional Question*: If you have any specific examples of how the rubric and self-assessment have changed how you understand, feel about or use feedback, please detail this below.

Closing questions

17. If you have any further comments about feedback in English, or anything that you have been asked as part of this survey, please write them below. *Optional question*.

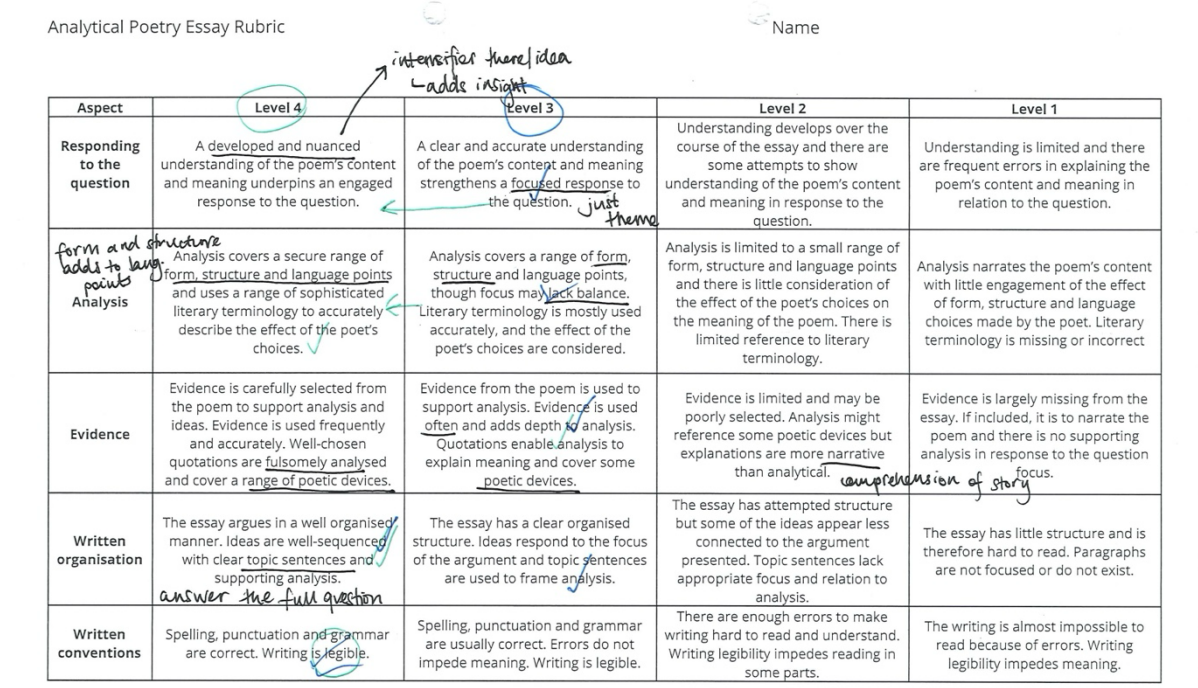
Appendix 4: Exemplar pupil engagement with the rubric from each sample group



Analytical Poetry Essay Rubric Name

Aspect	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Responding to the question	A developed and nuanced understanding of the poem's content and meaning underpins an engaged response to the question.	A clear and accurate understanding of the poem's content and meaning strengthens a focused response to the question.	Understanding develops over the course of the essay and there are some attempts to show understanding of the poem's content and meaning in response to the question.	Understanding is limited and there are frequent errors in explaining the poem's content and meaning in relation to the question.
Analysis	Analysis covers a secure range of form, structure and language points and uses a range of sophisticated literary terminology to accurately describe the effect of the poet's choices.	Analysis covers a range of form, structure and language points, though focus may lack balance. Literary terminology is mostly used accurately, and the effect of the poet's choices are considered.	Analysis is limited to a small range of form, structure and language points and there is little consideration of the effect of the poet's choices on the meaning of the poem. There is limited reference to literary terminology.	Analysis narrates the poem's content with little engagement of the effect of form, structure and language choices made by the poet. Literary terminology is missing or incorrect
Evidence	Evidence is carefully selected from the poem to support analysis and ideas. Evidence is used frequently and accurately. Well-chosen quotations are fulsomely analysed and cover a range of poetic devices.	Evidence from the poem is used to support analysis. Evidence is used often and adds depth to analysis. Quotations enable analysis to explain meaning and cover some poetic devices.	Evidence is limited and may be poorly selected. Analysis might reference some poetic devices but explanations are more narrative than analytical.	Evidence is largely missing from the essay. If included, it is to narrate the poem and there is no supporting analysis in response to the question focus.
Written organisation	The essay argues in a well organised manner. Ideas are well-sequenced with clear topic sentences and supporting analysis.	The essay has a clear organised structure. Ideas respond to the focus of the argument and topic sentences are used to frame analysis.	The essay has attempted structure but some of the ideas appear less connected to the argument presented. Topic sentences lack appropriate focus and relation to analysis.	The essay has little structure and is therefore hard to read. Paragraphs are not focused or do not exist.
Written conventions	Spelling, punctuation and grammar are correct. Writing is legible.	Spelling, punctuation and grammar are usually correct. Errors do not impede meaning. Writing is legible.	There are enough errors to make writing hard to read and understand. Writing legibility impedes reading in some parts.	The writing is almost impossible to read because of errors. Writing legibility impedes meaning.

Sample from extreme-positive case: annotations ≥ 8



Analytical Poetry Essay Rubric Name

Aspect	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Responding to the question	A developed and nuanced understanding of the poem's content and meaning underpins an engaged response to the question.	A clear and accurate understanding of the poem's content and meaning strengthens a focused response to the question.	Understanding develops over the course of the essay and there are some attempts to show understanding of the poem's content and meaning in response to the question.	Understanding is limited and there are frequent errors in explaining the poem's content and meaning in relation to the question.
Analysis	Analysis covers a secure range of form, structure and language points and uses a range of sophisticated literary terminology to accurately describe the effect of the poet's choices.	Analysis covers a range of form, structure and language points, though focus may lack balance. Literary terminology is mostly used accurately, and the effect of the poet's choices are considered.	Analysis is limited to a small range of form, structure and language points and there is little consideration of the effect of the poet's choices on the meaning of the poem. There is limited reference to literary terminology.	Analysis narrates the poem's content with little engagement of the effect of form, structure and language choices made by the poet. Literary terminology is missing or incorrect
Evidence	Evidence is carefully selected from the poem to support analysis and ideas. Evidence is used frequently and accurately. Well-chosen quotations are fulsomely analysed and cover a range of poetic devices.	Evidence from the poem is used to support analysis. Evidence is used often and adds depth to analysis. Quotations enable analysis to explain meaning and cover some poetic devices.	Evidence is limited and may be poorly selected. Analysis might reference some poetic devices but explanations are more narrative than analytical.	Evidence is largely missing from the essay. If included, it is to narrate the poem and there is no supporting analysis in response to the question focus.
Written organisation	The essay argues in a well organised manner. Ideas are well-sequenced with clear topic sentences and supporting analysis.	The essay has a clear organised structure. Ideas respond to the focus of the argument and topic sentences are used to frame analysis.	The essay has attempted structure but some of the ideas appear less connected to the argument presented. Topic sentences lack appropriate focus and relation to analysis.	The essay has little structure and is therefore hard to read. Paragraphs are not focused or do not exist.
Written conventions	Spelling, punctuation and grammar are correct. Writing is legible.	Spelling, punctuation and grammar are usually correct. Errors do not impede meaning. Writing is legible.	There are enough errors to make writing hard to read and understand. Writing legibility impedes reading in some parts.	The writing is almost impossible to read because of errors. Writing legibility impedes meaning.

Sample from typical-case: annotations >0

Analytical Poetry Essay Rubric

Name

Aspect	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Responding to the question	A developed and nuanced understanding of the poem's content and meaning underpins an engaged response to the question.	A clear and accurate understanding of the poem's content and meaning strengthens a focused response to the question.	Understanding develops over the course of the essay and there are some attempts to show understanding of the poem's content and meaning in response to the question.	Understanding is limited and there are frequent errors in explaining the poem's content and meaning in relation to the question.
Analysis	Analysis covers a secure range of form, structure and language points and uses a range of sophisticated literary terminology to accurately describe the effect of the poet's choices.	Analysis covers a range of form, structure and language points, though focus may lack balance. Literary terminology is mostly used accurately, and the effect of the poet's choices are considered.	Analysis is limited to a small range of form, structure and language points and there is little consideration of the effect of the poet's choices on the meaning of the poem. There is limited reference to literary terminology.	Analysis narrates the poem's content with little engagement of the effect of form, structure and language choices made by the poet. Literary terminology is missing or incorrect
Evidence	Evidence is carefully selected from the poem to support analysis and ideas. Evidence is used frequently and accurately. Well-chosen quotations are fulsomely analysed and cover a range of poetic devices.	Evidence from the poem is used to support analysis. Evidence is used often and adds depth to analysis. Quotations enable analysis to explain meaning and cover some poetic devices.	Evidence is limited and may be poorly selected. Analysis might reference some poetic devices but explanations are more narrative than analytical.	Evidence is largely missing from the essay. If included, it is to narrate the poem and there is no supporting analysis in response to the question focus.
Written organisation	The essay argues in a well organised manner. Ideas are well-sequenced with clear topic sentences and supporting analysis.	The essay has a clear organised structure. Ideas respond to the focus of the argument and topic sentences are used to frame analysis.	The essay has attempted structure but some of the ideas appear less connected to the argument presented. Topic sentences lack appropriate focus and relation to analysis.	The essay has little structure and is therefore hard to read. Paragraphs are not focused or do not exist.
Written conventions	Spelling, punctuation and grammar are correct. Writing is legible.	Spelling, punctuation and grammar are usually correct. Errors do not impede meaning. Writing is legible.	There are enough errors to make writing hard to read and understand. Writing legibility impedes reading in some parts.	The writing is almost impossible to read because of errors. Writing legibility impedes meaning.

Sample from extreme-negative: annotations not taken

Appendix 5: Assent from Participants & Consent from Parents/Guardians

Informed assent was sought from participants following a presentation at the beginning of an English lesson as to the purpose of the research as well as details about its origins, design and XXX. Parents/Guardians were written to using the school's usual online mail system to consent to their child's participation.

Pupil Assent Form

This consent will be sought on a GoogleForm through the School's Network – a copy of the form will be also sent to pupils' school email address.

Your school email will be recorded when you complete this form.

This form is to record your assent (this is what we call consent when you are under 18 years old) to participate in the research on Feedback Literacy & Self-Assessment in the English Classroom. Please read each of these statements and answer the prompt.

1. Someone has explained this research to me. Yes/No
2. I understand what this research is about. Yes/No
3. I have asked all the questions I want. Yes/No
4. I have had my questions answered in a way I understand. Yes/No
5. I understand I can stop taking part at any time and this is OK. Yes/No
6. I am happy to take part in this research. Yes/No

If you have any further questions, or you would like to talk more about this research, please email or speak with [Name and Contact Details including school email address].

Text from Information Sheet for Students Aged 11 to 16 years to inform assent

Feedback Literacy & Self-Assessment in the English Classroom

INFORMATION SHEET FOR STUDENTS AGED 11 TO 16 YEARS

Central University Ethics Committee Approval Reference: EDUC_C1A_23_290

I am inviting you to join in a research study. I am [Name], and I am studying for a Master's degree in Learning and Teaching at the University of Oxford. I am doing some research, and I would like you, together with the rest of your English class, to join in this research which is focussed on feedback literacy and self-assessment, not individual students. Before you decide if you would like to join in, it is important to understand what the research is about, why we are doing it and what it would involve for you. Please read and think about this leaflet carefully. I have also written to your parents/guardians to tell them about this research and think about whether you should be included. Please talk to your family, friends, or me about what you would like to do and, if you are unhappy, let me know.

Why is this research being conducted?

This research is part of my MSc studies at the University of Oxford. The research aims to understand your understanding of and responses to feedback in the English classroom as a pupil. Feedback is known to be an extremely important part of learning and the ways in which pupils use feedback is known to affect their learning and progress. Feedback literacy refers to the ways in which pupils receive, understand and act upon feedback. This research will seek to understand how pupils' feedback literacy can be enhanced in the English classroom using self-assessment.

Why have I been invited to take part?

I am inviting you to take part because they are a young person, aged between 13 and 18 years, attending [School Name] and studying English. I am inviting four classes to take part across the Middle School and all pupils in these classes are invited to be involved in this research.

Do I have to take part?

No - it is up to you to decide if you want to take part in this study. You are free to stop taking part at any time during the research without giving a reason by telling your teacher, the researcher or your parent/guardian. You do not have to say why and this will not affect your education. If you decide to stop, no one will be upset with you. If you do not wish to join in, you will attend your lessons as normal but your work will not be collected or recorded as part of the research.

What will happen if I take part?

This research will take place over the Spring Term, over a series of English lessons. If you take part, you will be asked to:

- Complete a pre-teaching questionnaire of no longer than 15 minutes on your Chromebook.
- Take part in a lesson related to self-assessment and feedback literacy and complete a written task which will be reviewed as part of the research data.
- Complete a post-teaching questionnaire in the same manner as the one you completed prior to the intervention.

You may also be interviewed to share your thoughts and experiences related to feedback, the task and ideas related to feedback literacy. You will be following your usual studies in these lessons with the intervention related to feedback literacy and self-assessment supplementing your usual learning.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks in taking part?

There is no risk associated with participating in this study. You will be asked to consider how you feel when receiving feedback, either positive or negative feedback, and whilst this may be uncomfortable for a short time, you will be supported in your learning and improvement as a result. You manage these emotions daily when receiving marks or comments on your work across your subjects.

Are there any benefits in taking part?

The intended benefit of the research is to enable you to gain a greater understanding of how to best receive, understand and act upon feedback. This could enhance your learning and progress in English and your schooling more broadly. It is hoped that this research will lead to a greater understanding of how to successfully build feedback literacy within assessment practices at the school.

What information will be collected and why is the collection of this information relevant for achieving the research objectives?

Results are kept confidential and only the people doing the research can look at the data. Only a number will identify you, and all information and results will be kept in a password-protected computer and in the University's secure network. Once I have collected the data for my research, all the data will be anonymised and I will change the name of the school and all participants when I write about my research. No one will know that you have taken part unless you tell them yourself.

The findings from the research will be written up in a dissertation. A copy of my dissertation will be deposited both in print and online in the Oxford University Research Archive where its access will be restricted. You will not be identifiable from any publications associated with this research.

Data Protection

The University of Oxford is the data controller with respect to your personal data, and as such will determine how your personal data is used in the research. Your personal data will be destroyed once the research has been completed.

The University will process your personal data for the purpose of the research outlined above. Research is a task that we perform in the public interest. Further information about your rights with respect to your personal data is available from https://compliance.web.ox.ac.uk/individual-rights.

What if I don't want to take part in the research anymore?

Just tell your parent/guardian or me that you don't want to take part. You don't have to give a reason, and no one will be annoyed with you. It is your choice. If you withdraw before 27th March 2024, all data that you have contributed to the study will be deleted; however, after this date, all data will be anonymised.

Who had reviewed this research?

This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Oxford's Central University Research Ethics Committee, EDUC_C1A_23_290. The research has also been discussed with the Head and the Deputy Head Academic.

What if there is a problem or something goes wrong?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, please contact [researcher name and contact information or my supervisor, [name and contact information], and we will do our best to answer your query. I will acknowledge your concern within 10 working days and give you an indication of how it will be dealt with. If you remain unhappy or wish to make a formal complaint, please contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Oxford who will seek to resolve the matter as soon as possible:

Dr Elizabeth Wonnacott, **Department of Education Research Ethics Committee Chair**

Email: ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk

Address: Research Services, University of Oxford, Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JD

What should I do next?

Please complete the assent form on Google Classroom that has been posted to take part in this research. You will have the opportunity to ask questions there if you would like. Please remember that you may withdraw at any time, without affecting your education and without giving a reason, by notifying the researcher. I will be writing to your parents this week also so they can consent to your participation also: I would be grateful if you were to check with them that they have responded to the question at the end of the letter.

If you would like to discuss the research with someone beforehand (or if you have questions afterwards), please contact:

[Name and Contact Details including school email address]

Thank you for reading: please ask me any questions you would like over email or in person.

Parental/Guardian Consent for Participating in Education Research

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am writing to gain your consent for your child to participate in an education research study. I teach English and am also studying for a Master's degree in Learning and Teaching at the University of Oxford. The School has agreed to take part in a study investigating feedback literacy in the English classroom and how self-assessment can help pupils to engage with and enact feedback to progress their learning in the subject, which will form my degree dissertation. Today, I have invited your child, along with the rest of their class, to be part of this research. This research is taking place in four Year 10 English classes with collaborating colleagues. I very much hope you would like your child to take part, but before you decide, it is important that you understand why the study is being done and what it will involve. The attached letter explains the research further.

The Head, Deputy Head Academic and Compliance Officer are all aware of the research and the research has been approved ethically by the University of Oxford's Research Ethics Committee.

Please consent to your child's participation by selecting a response below, before Friday 17th December.

If you have any questions before consenting, or at any stage during the research, please do contact me on [school email address].

With best wishes,

[Name]

Response Form

Name of child:

Name of Parent/Guardian:

- I have read and understood the details of the above study, and have had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the study with others.
- I have received satisfactory answers to my questions.

- I understand that the project has received ethics clearance through the University of Oxford's ethical approval process for research involving human participants, and I understand who will have access to the data, how it will be stored and what will happen to the data at the end of the study.
- I understand that participation is voluntary and that my child and I are free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason and without my child's education being affected in any way. I understand how to raise a concern or make a complaint.

❑ I give permission for my child to take part in the above study.

❑ I do not give permission for my child to take part in the above study.

[Electronic signature and time stamp recorded through submission on the school online mail system]

Text from Information Sheet for Students Aged 11 to 16 years to inform assent

Feedback Literacy & Self-Assessment in the English Classroom

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARENTS / GUARDIANS

Central University Ethics Committee Approval Reference: EDCU_C1A_23_290

I am [Name] and I teach English here at [School Name]. I am also studying for a Master's degree in Learning and Teaching at the University of Oxford. The School has agreed to take part in a study investigating feedback literacy in the English classroom and how self-assessment can help pupils to engage with and enact feedback to progress their learning in the subject, which will form my degree dissertation. I would like to invite your child, along with the rest of their class, to be part of this research. Your child has already been made aware of the study during an English lesson this week and may have already spoken about the research at home with you. I very much hope you would like your child to take part, but before you decide, it is important that you understand why the study is being done and what it will involve.

Why is this research being conducted?

This research is part of my MSc studies at the University of Oxford. The research aims to understand pupils' understanding of and responses to feedback in the English classroom. Feedback is known to be an extremely important part of learning and the ways in which pupils use feedback is known to affect their learning and progress. Feedback literacy refers to the ways in which pupils receive, understand and act upon feedback. This research will seek to understand how pupils' feedback literacy can be enhanced in the English classroom using self-assessment. I hope that these findings will allow me to develop methods of enhancing learning and teaching in the English Department and share my knowledge more widely within the School also.

Why has my child been invited to take part?

I am inviting your child to take part because they are a young person, aged between 13 and 18 years, [school name]. I am inviting four classes to take part across Year 10 and all pupils in these classes are invited to be involved in this research.

Does my child have to take part?

No. You can ask questions about the research before deciding whether to allow your child to be involved. If you do agree to their involvement, you may withdraw your child at any time, without giving a reason and without any effect on their education, by advising me of this decision. The deadline by which you can withdraw any information they have contributed to the research is 27th March 2024; after this point, all data will be anonymised.

If your child is not involved in the research, they will not be observed or nor have their work submitted as part of the data; they will participate in the lesson associated with the research for it has intrinsic educational value to them regardless of their inclusion in the data.

What will happen if my child takes part?

This research will take place over the Spring Term, over a series of English lessons. If your child takes part, they will be asked to:

- Complete a pre-teaching questionnaire of no longer than 15 minutes on their Chromebook.
- Take part in a lesson related to self-assessment and feedback literacy with their classroom English teacher where they will complete a task, a piece of writing and self-assessment of their work before editing, before submitting and receiving feedback on the work from their teacher.
- Complete a post-teaching questionnaire in the same manner as the one they completed prior to the intervention.

Your child may also be interviewed to share their thoughts and experiences related to feedback, the task and ideas related to feedback literacy. Your child will not be removed from any learning time if they are selected for interview, and they have the right to decline the invitation. At each point of the research, I will seek assent from your child ensuring that they are comfortable with what they are being asked to complete and that they have a right to not participate. Pupils will be following their usual studies in these lessons with the intervention related to feedback literacy and self-assessment supplementing their usual learning.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks in taking part?

There is no risk associated with their participation in this study. Pupils will be asked to consider how they feel when receiving feedback, either positive or negative feedback, and whilst this may be uncomfortable for a short time, your child will be supported in their learning and improvement as a result. Your child manages these emotions daily when receiving marks or comments on their school work.

Are there any benefits in taking part?

The intended benefit of the research is to enable pupils stand to gain a greater understanding of how to best receive, understand and act upon feedback. This could enhance their learning and progress in English and their schooling more broadly. It is hoped that this research will lead to a greater understanding of how to successfully build feedback literacy within assessment practices at the school.

What information will be collected and why is the collection of this information relevant for achieving the research objectives?

As researcher, I will have access to the information collected as part of this study. The information your child provide during the study is the **research data**. Any research data from which your child can be identified is known as **personal data**. No personal data is being collected in this study except for whether you and your child have given your permission to take part.

The different types of information that I will collect, its relevance and storage plans are listed below:

- Consent forms: this will be identifiable data and will hold personal data in the form of your child's name. This will be stored in a password-protected encrypted file within the University's network. This data will be pseudonymised as soon as is practicable within the research, in keeping with the University's best practice guide for research data management. Consent forms will be retained by the researcher for 3 years after publication of the work of the research, after which it will be deleted.
- Questionnaire responses: this research data will be de-identified as soon as possible after collection. This data will be stored in a password-protected file within the University's network.
- Written work: this research data will be de-identified as soon as possible after collection. Work will be scanned into the University's network and stored in a password-protected file. Hard copies will be returned to pupils as this work will be part of their usual studies.
- Interviews: this research data will be de-identified and notes taken throughout the interview will be scanned into the University's network and stored in a password-protected file. Physical notes will be securely stored in a locked cabinet within the English Department and securely disposed of after the research has been completed.

My supervisor and I will have access to the research data. All research data will be anonymised after the 27th March 2024 and I will not identify the school or any pupils in any reports of the research. The data will be destroyed once my degree has been confirmed, expected January 2025.

Will the research be published? Could my child be identified from any publications or other research outputs?

The findings from the research will be written up as my dissertation. A copy of my dissertation will be deposited both in print and online in the Oxford University Research Archive where its access will be restricted. Your child will not be identifiable from any publications associated with this research.

Data Protection

In my research I will adhere to the School's and the University of Oxford's data protection requirements and will use best practice from BERA to inform my research data management. The University of Oxford is the data controller with respect to the research data. I will only collect and store personal data on the School's IT system and, once anonymisation has occurred, the research data will be securely transferred to the University's systems. Further information about your rights with respect to your child's personal data is available from https://compliance.web.ox.ac.uk/individual-rights and you can refer to the [hyperlink to the School's Privacy Notice] also.

Who had reviewed this research?

This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Oxford's Central University Research Ethics Committee, EDUC_C1A_23_290. The research has also been

discussed with School leadership, including the Head, the Deputy Head Academic and the Compliance Officer.

What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, please contact [contact email] or my supervisor, [Supervisor name and contact email], and we will do our best to answer your query. I will acknowledge your concern within 10 working days and give you an indication of how it will be dealt with. If you remain unhappy or wish to make a formal complaint, please contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Oxford who will seek to resolve the matter as soon as possible:

Dr Elizabeth Wonnacott, **Department of Education Research Ethics Committee Chair**

Email: ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk

Address: Research Services, University of Oxford, Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JD

What should I do next?

Please complete the question below if you **would** like your child to take part in this study. Please remember that you may withdraw your child at any time, without affecting their education and without giving a reason, by notifying the researcher.

If you would like to discuss the research with someone beforehand (or if you have questions afterwards), please contact:

[Name and contact information]