

**BEST PRACTICES IN
GIVING FEEDBACK
ACROSS CURRICULUM:**

**IMPLICATIONS FOR GE
PRACTITIONERS**

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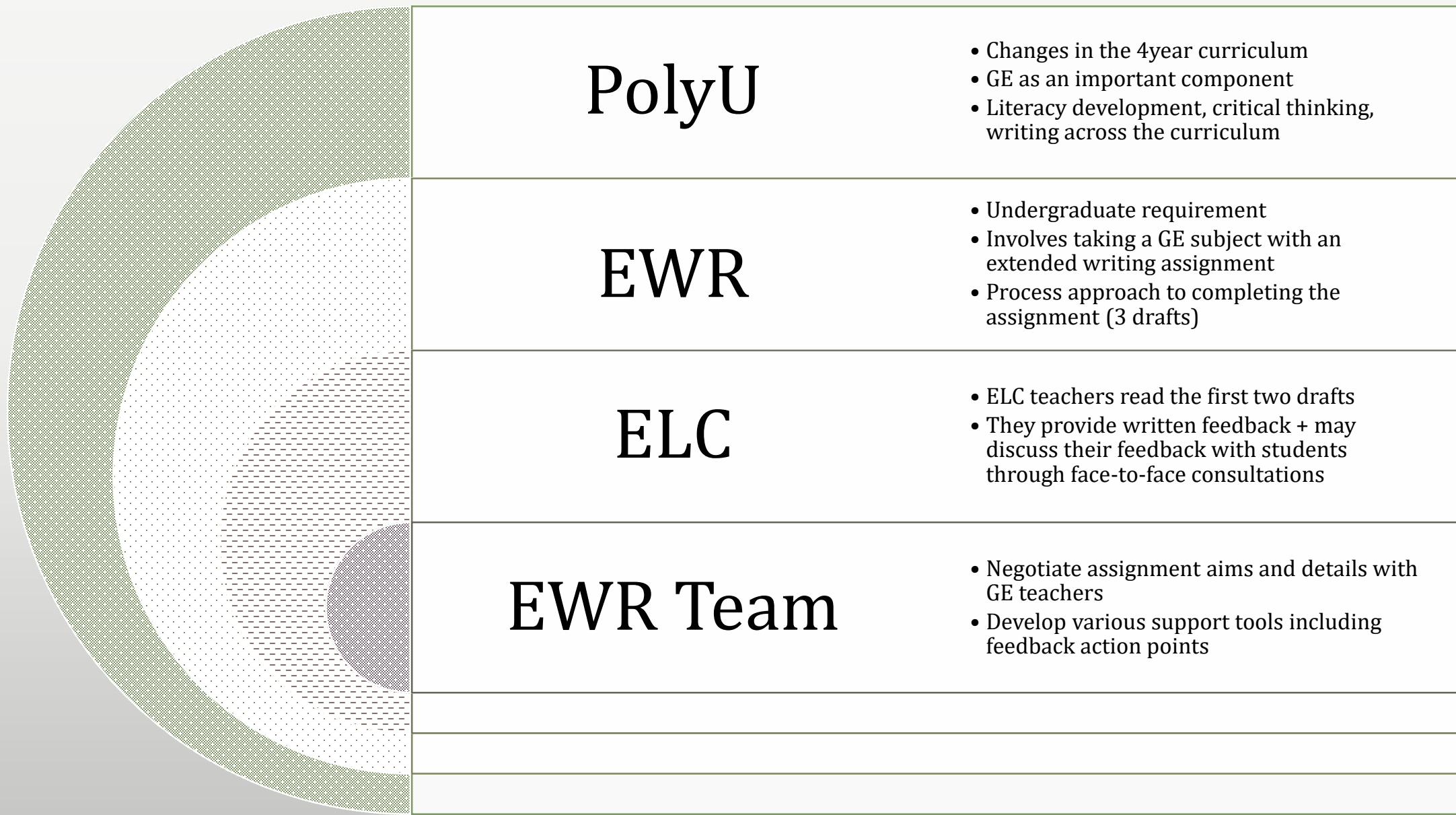
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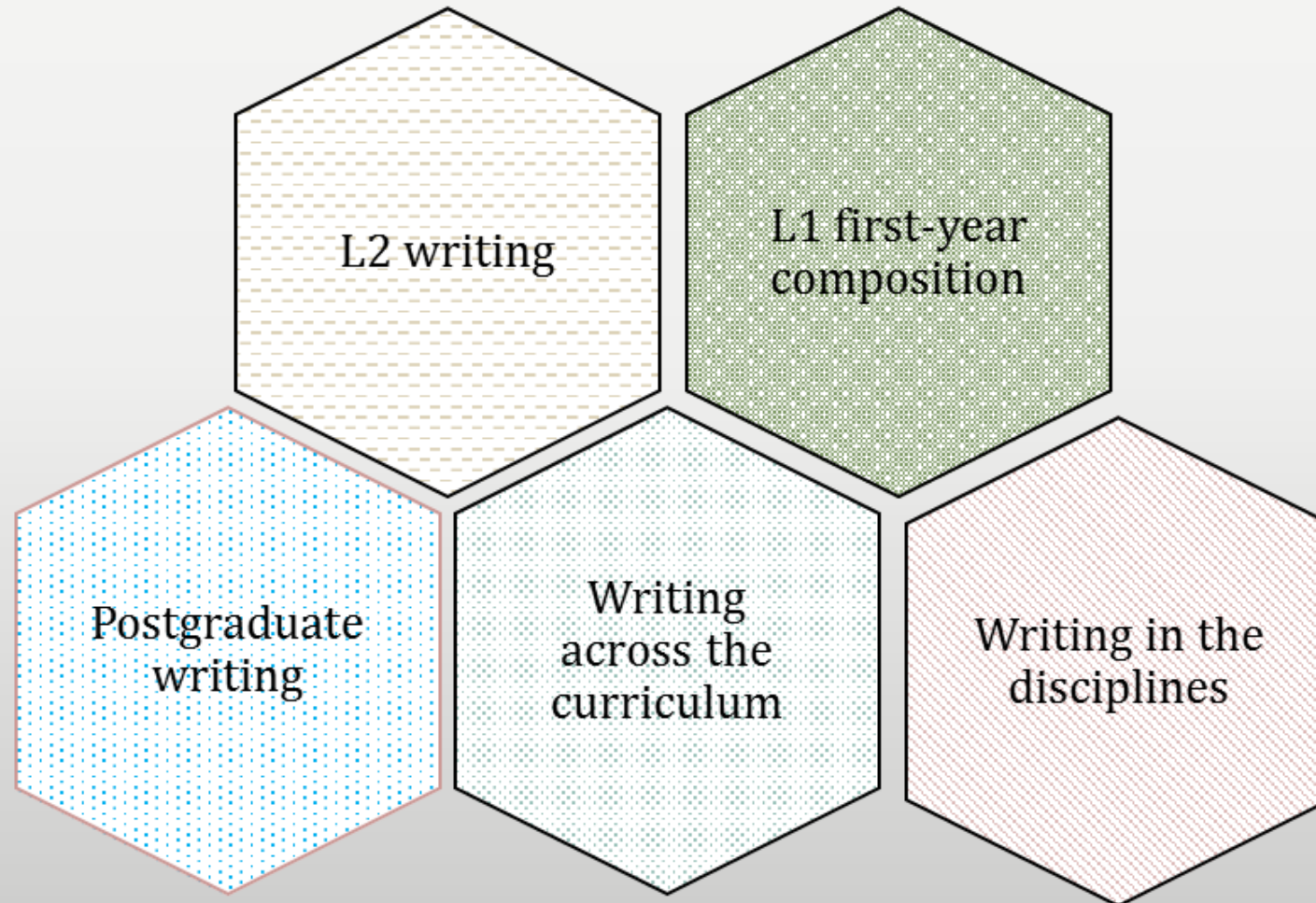
OUR CONTEXT



OUR QUESTIONS

- What have we learned by liaising with GE and writing teachers?
 - What do GE teachers expect from their students' writing? What kind of assessments do they set up?
 - What are some of the effective practices employed by writing teachers when giving feedback in the context of EWR?
- What does the literature say about the best practices in giving feedback?
- On the basis of the above, what kind of recommendations can be made for GE practitioners interested in including extended written assignments into their subjects?

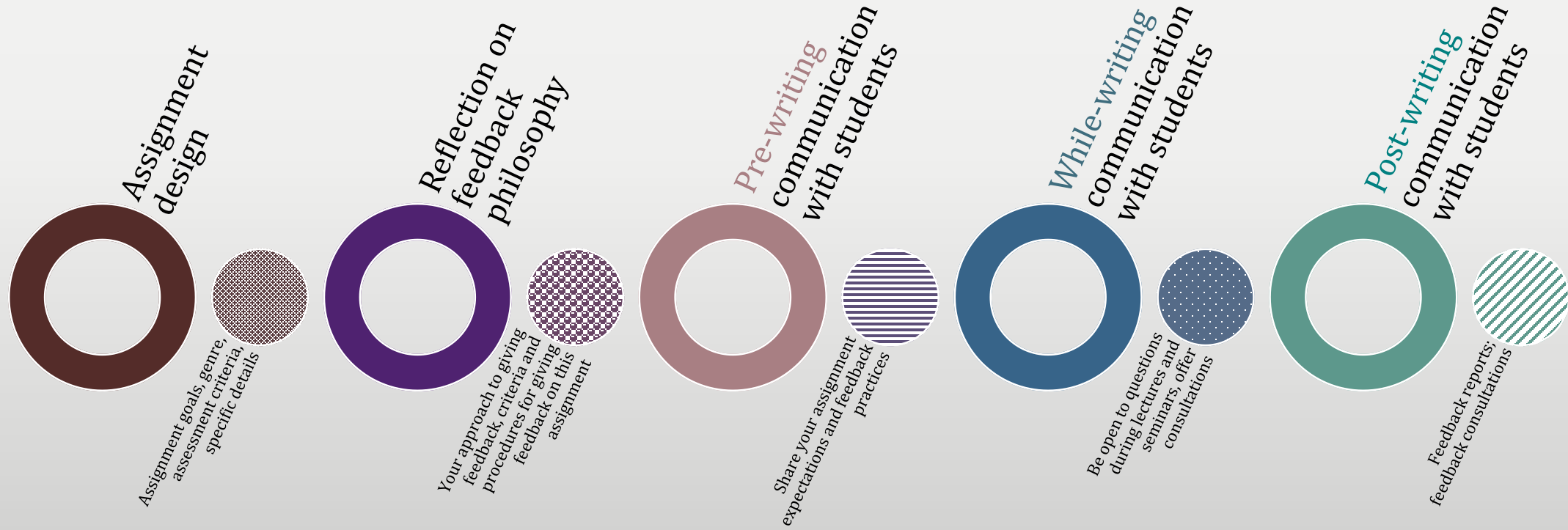
OUR RESEARCH BASE



AIMS OF FEEDBACK

- To encourage dialogue between teacher and students
- To provide students with information about their learning
- To encourage reflection
- To encourage positive self-esteem and belief in value of learning
- To evaluate and modify teaching

FEEDBACK AS AN ACTIVITY SYSTEM





- **Number of assignments:** are you, by any chance, over-assessing our students?
- **Assignment goals:** do you have a clear vision of what you would like your students to display in their writing? How are these goals related to course learning outcomes?
- **Assignment genre:** not everything is an essay!
- **Assignment parts:** what sections will you expect to see in students' writing?
- **Drafting:** will your students submit one or more drafts?
- **Role of reading:** what should students read to complete this assignment successfully?
- **Role of sample texts:** will you be sharing sample texts with your students? Why? Why not?
- **Connections to other assignments:** how is this assignment related to the other assignments of the course?
- **Details:** number of words, referencing style, format, submission procedures
- **Assignment Instructions handout:** use our template to create your own assignment

Assignment Template (to be converted into Assignment Instructions)

Subject code	
Subject title	
Credit value	
Weighting of the writing requirement assignment	_____%
Number of drafts	
Word limit	Draft 1 Draft 2 Draft 3
Genre	Academic Essay / Biographical Essay / Reflective Essay / Literary Essay / Personal Essay / Philosophical argumentation / Ethical Case Analysis essay / Argumentative essay/ Book Review / Book report / Project report / Lab report/ Management Report / Business report / Other (please specify): _____
Purpose and skills	1. What is the purpose of the assessment? 2. What skills do you expect students to demonstrate?
Role of reading	What is the role of reading in this assignment? What kinds of sources are acceptable? Are sources in languages other than English acceptable? Are you expecting a minimum number of references?
Organisational pattern	What organisational pattern do you expect? What sections do you expect in the assignment?
References / Formatting style	APA / IEEE / Vancouver / Harvard / Chicago/other Do you prefer headings and subheadings? What other formatting requirements do you have? Are you expecting graphics/media in the assignment?
Submission deadlines and channels	

Plagiarism	What measures will you use this semester to prevent plagiarism?
Marking criteria	What criteria will you use to assess this assignment?

Additional questions:

1. What do you expect your students to cover in the first draft and the second draft, if drafting is involved?
2. What problems do you expect students to experience while working on this assignment?
3. Do you use any models of writing with your students?
4. In what way(s) do you help your students with their writing assignment?

<http://literacy.elc.polyu.edu.hk/node/204>



- **Your role:** what is your role as feedback provider? Are you a coach? A reader? A judge?
- **Focus of feedback:** what do you usually comment on when giving feedback? Idea development? Organisation? Language? Style? Referencing? How do you ensure that assessment criteria are reflected in your feedback?
- **Amount:** how much feedback do you provide?
- **Databank of feedback points:** have you saved feedback you've given in your previous teaching? Are there areas students always find problematic?
- **Timing:** when do you provide feedback?
- **Mode:** do you offer written or spoken feedback or both?
- **Follow-up:** what do you expect students to do with your feedback?

	A	B	C	D
1	Genre	Heading	Sub-heading	Detail
2		Overall	First comment box	Dear _____, You have done a good job trying to develop your ideas for the first draft but there are a few things you can consider improving to make it a better essay overall and much easier for the reader to follow your good ideas.
3	Book report	Overall expectations	Length	BELOW WORD LIMIT: The draft is considerably shorter than the 1000 word limit. Make sure your 2nd draft meets the word length requirement.
4	Book report	Overall expectations	Structure	OVERALL STRUCTURE/FOCUS OF THE REPORT: This might be called a 'book report' but it is more like an academic essay that is pulling ideas found in the book and elaborating on them using your own ideas/experiences. Just like most academic essays, you have ONE overall view of the main point/opinion from the author and you spend the whole essay trying to prove / explain / argue that opinion by pulling details from the book, lecture or outside sources. Being able to do this will convince your professor your opinion on this topic is strong. To achieve this: After reading the book and attending lectures, what is your opinion about this topic. It could be expressed in one or two sentences (we call the Thesis statement) in the introduction. You would then spend the rest of the essay trying to argue / prove why you have this opinion. I advise you to draw an outline of this essay in the form of boxes to understand the bigger picture, the purpose of each paragraph you include and how each paragraph contributes back to the bigger picture = your thesis statement.
5	Book report	Introduction	Basic information about the book	INCLUDE BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE BOOK: Consider including the title and author of the book you are writing about as well as the overall message found in the book. This can just be a few sentences.
6	Book report	Part 2: Introduction	Purpose of the book report	INCLUDE YOUR OPINION: you should include details of how your opinions may be similar or different from the author's ideas as discussed in the book. You may include other perspectives as well if it helps build your case.
7	Book report	Introduction	Purpose of the book report	WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN POINTS: The main point of this book report is not very clear. Clearly state the exact few main points you will discuss in this report. Doing this will help the reader know what main points to look for in relation to this topic.
8				
9	Book report	Introduction	Structure	UNCLEAR INTRODUCTION: Your introduction is not very focused. Please keep in mind that an introduction is like a road map of the main things you will discuss in your entire essay. It provides a background information if necessary, clear clarification of keywords, purpose of the paper, a thesis statement (what are analyzing or arguing?) and sets the scope (what and how you will present your main point[s]) of the essay. Please note that the introduction does not always have to be written first. Sometimes people start developing the body paragraphs first (our arguments/main points) and later they go back to write the introduction. Refer to this site for more help: http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/introductions/

<http://literacy.elc.polyu.edu.hk/exercise/174>



- **Written assignment guidelines:** include assignment genre, aims and expectations, assessment criteria, role of reading, style requirements, referencing conventions, etc.
- **Other documents:** such as assignment checklists (developed by teacher or students) and assessment rubrics.
- **Lectures and seminars:** schedule a session to discuss the assignment in detail. Encourage students to ask questions.
- **Analysis of sample assignments:** get students to read through, analyse and mark sample assignments.
- **Consultations:** invite students to see you to discuss outlines and early drafts with you.

Use this checklist **before** submitting your first draft to ensure that it meets all the requirements.
Submit the completed checklist (as part of the assignment cover) together with your first draft.



<input type="checkbox"/>	The first draft
<input type="checkbox"/>	is about 700 words
<input type="checkbox"/>	uses headings and subheadings
<input type="checkbox"/>	uses an academic style and tone
<input type="checkbox"/>	ensures all sections logically connect and transition smoothly
<input type="checkbox"/>	The introduction
<input type="checkbox"/>	introduces the topic/issue to be reviewed
<input type="checkbox"/>	justifies the choice of the issue
<input type="checkbox"/>	clearly states the purpose of the review
<input type="checkbox"/>	previews the organization of the review
<input type="checkbox"/>	The body paragraphs
<input type="checkbox"/>	start with a clear topic sentence to introduce the main idea
<input type="checkbox"/>	develop the main idea with explanation, examples, data, and statistics
<input type="checkbox"/>	include in-text citations for all information and ideas from other sources
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Review literature in this topic area by:</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	- identifying issues and developments related to the topic
<input type="checkbox"/>	- discussing the topic's applications and relation to non-science/engineering aspects of society
<input type="checkbox"/>	- synthesizing research and summarizing and evaluating individual studies
<input type="checkbox"/>	- identifying and discussing problems and challenges related to the topic
<input type="checkbox"/>	- discussing solutions and approaches to the problems and challenges
<input type="checkbox"/>	Visuals/figures (optional for Draft 1) are
<input type="checkbox"/>	labeled clearly with figure captions, in-text citations and references (see below)
<input type="checkbox"/>	discussed and referred to within the text
<input type="checkbox"/>	IEEE referencing
<input type="checkbox"/>	used for in-text citations
<input type="checkbox"/>	used for a list of references

IEEE Referencing Guide: <http://elc.polyu.edu.hk/Referencing/IEEE.aspx>

How to reference figures in IEEE style:

In-text citation - After the title of the figure, written in CAPITAL LETTERS, give the citation number for the source and the page number. For example: DIAGRAM OF THE EYE [2, p. 89]

Reference list - Cite the source according to the type of source you are using (journal, book, website, etc.)



- **Peer-review:** incorporate peer review activities into your seminars.
- **Reminders:** remind students about everything
- **Lectures and seminars:** encourage students to ask questions.
- **Consultations:** invite students to see you to discuss early drafts with you.
- **Submission:** ask students to use checklists and add reflections to their submissions.



- focus on assignment criteria
- personalize your feedback
- make your feedback text-specific
- be personal
- focus on meaning as well as conventions of writing
- link the structure of the assignment with its content
- encourage students and add praise
- offer concrete suggestion that lead to action
- indicate what students can do to continue improving in this area
- sensitize students to the notions of readership, purpose, and style
- help students learn about academic conventions
- phrase as advice and explanations
- empower students to be in charge
- avoid indirectness
- use your databank of comments

Focus of the action point

Be positive

WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN POINTS: **This is a good first draft** but the main focus of the book report is **not very** clear yet. Clearly state the exact few main points you will discuss in this report. Doing this **will help the reader** know what main points to look for in relation to this topic. Check this site for more information on how to write book reports:

Hedge

Emphasize readership and conventions

<http://libguides.usc.edu/c.php?g=235208&p=1560694>

Direct to further information

SAMPLE ACTION POINT



- limit the number of points you would like to raise and prioritise them
- for the whole report, consider the sandwich approach: evaluation of the whole paper (often positive) → evaluative and coaching comments (typically negative) → positive ending
- for action points focusing on criteria, consider the structure of praise → criticism → suggestion
- do not always use the same structure (students may become desensitized to feedback if it is presented in a highly formulaic way)
- break the conventions (e.g., by inserting positive evaluations throughout various comments, include suggestions with positive rather than negative evaluations)
- marginal comments: ask for information + raise questions
- end comments: statements; greater percentage of positive comments; more general and summative, less text-specific

Writing Requirement Report - 1st Draft

Student Name:

Student ID:

Subject:

Group:

Teacher:

Date: 11/03/2017 13:57

Recommendations/Actions for improvement:

1. Dear You have a good start with your literary essay first draft. There are a few things you can consider for improving for the second draft.
2. Clearer focus: Your focus is a bit vague now, and your topic is rather broad. It's an interesting idea to compare cannibalism and psycho killer movies, and you also mention zombie movies; I think you should spend more time to narrow your topic and focus in on some interesting things to discuss. Have you considered comparing two films, one cannibal, one psycho killer? Or including that in this essay? That might help to build some critical content.
3. Thesis Statement Needs Work: Your thesis statement is almost there. In a literary essay like this, be sure to state the aim or purpose of your essay in the thesis statement. Make it clear to the reader what you will be discussing in the essay. I think you first need to develop your ideas and focus, and then can work to state that clearly.
4. Using sources well: You seem to have two really good academic sources with some interesting information. Can you do more with those sources? One discusses the taboo of cannibalism; again, perhaps relating this to a specific movie? Again, I think a smaller scope might help you to write a more effective essay.
5. Omit the 1-2 sentences to transition between your paragraphs: You write a lot of sentences to help guide the reader such as "As is said in this paragraph", "There will be a brief introduction"; however, these kinds of transitions are quite informal and not appropriate for an academic essay. Instead, use topic sentences and linking words to help the reader. I can help you with this in a consultation - please do book one.
6. Book a consultation: I'd like to see some big changes made, so I encourage you to come see me to discuss. I'd be happy to meet with you to help you with the issues I've mentioned above. Please book a 30 minute consultation session with me on the EWR website. Bring this feedback report and your draft to the consultation. Also, I teach the Writing Lab on Fridays, 1:30 - 2:30, A-306, during weeks 8, 10-13. Feel free to come by then as well.

Positive opening,
including a name

Suggestions phrased
as questions

Examples from
the text

Invitation to a
consultation



- discuss your written feedback face-to-face
- share general weaknesses and strengths with the whole class
- show students what they can do now that they have feedback
- relate this assignment to other assignments, other subjects, life beyond university

EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

- **feeds up** directing students to the overall goals
- **feeds back** letting them know how they are performing
- **feeds forward** pointing the students to the next step

Hattie and Timperley (2007, as referred to in Vardi, 2013, p. 599)

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- **Literacy in the Disciplines:** <http://literacy.elc.polyu.edu.hk/> (developed by an inter-university team and includes support tools for teachers as well as students)