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Investigating the relationships between the feedback practices of lecturers and students in the context of assessment and learning within a postgraduate business school

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I. Title Page

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I. Abstract

It is commonly agreed that feedback is a key component of higher education and critical for learning. Despite decades of research problems with feedback are still reported. Lecturers and students describe issues with feedback such as, timing, quality, usefulness, use of, effectiveness, and recipience. There are also differences between lecturers' and students' perceptions of feedback as well as among students and lecturers. The last two decades of research have repositioned feedback from something provided to students, to an ongoing dialogic process, with a focus on the development of feedback literacy. Whilst there is a growing body of research focusing on the feedback literacy of students and more recently lecturers, the effect of student and lecturer interactions is under researched. In particular, the interrelationship of student and lecturer feedback practices and its influence on the feedback process and feedback literacy.

The aim of this study was to gain a better understanding of lecturers' and students' feedback practices and the relationship between these practices. A better understanding of feedback practices highlighted the importance of involving students and lecturers in the development of the feedback process, and a way of aligning understandings of feedback. The research study was designed to answer the questions: How do feedback practices affect lecturers' and students' conceptions of feedback and the feedback process? How do the interrelationships between students' and lecturers' feedback practices and the arrangements that constitute these practices, affect the feedback process?

Adopting a practice approach and using Kemmis's theory of practice architectures (TPA) (Kemmis 2014; 2019) as a tool of analysis, a collaborative inquiry was conducted involving lecturers and students in cycles of data collection, sense making and evaluation. The site of the research was a Master of Business Administration (MBA) program situated in a regional university. The first two cycles of data collection used semi-structured interviews with the preliminary analysis used as a guide for the second round of data collection. Subsequent analysis revealed preliminary themes which were used to guide the final round of student focus group discussions and lecture interviews.

Three central themes were identified from the data: The importance of student and lecturer practices in developing a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes; the interrelationship of practices in constructing reciprocal responsibilities for feedback; and the arrangement of practices that act to enable or constrain feedback seeking. These three themes encapsulated the role feedback practices play in aligning lecturers' and students' conceptualisations of feedback. A better understanding of interactions between feedback practices and the arrangements that make them possible presents a way of aligning conceptualisations of feedback

This research offers a unique contribution to the understanding of feedback. The practice-based approach focused on the interrelationship between the lecturers' and students' feedback practices, how the practices were arranged, and the possible affordances. The use of TPA offered a way of investigating the interactions of students' and lecturers' practices and the arrangements of practice that affected the feedback process. An improved understanding of the interrelationship of lecturer and student practices enabled co-construction of the feedback process and clarification of the reciprocal responsibilities of lecturers and students. This in turn has the potential to improve engagement and feedback seeking, implement a culture of positive and ongoing feedback interactions, and demonstrate the need to embed feedback into the curriculum. Finally, this research has established the importance of developing the feedback literacy of students and lecturers together, and how the interactions between lecturers and students can be harnessed to develop reciprocal feedback literacies and induct students into the feedback process.

Implications for future practice include the extension of current feedback literacy frameworks that recognise the interrelationship of student and lecturer feedback practices. Embedding the development of the feedback process into curricula thus integrating lecturers and students in the co-construction of the feedback process.

II. Acknowledgements

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This thesis is dedicated to my wife and in memory of Gabby, our beautiful Boxer dog who was with me for most of the journey. Gabby was always willing to get out and do something whenever I needed it. She was a loyal companion on many runs, walks, and trips to the beach to chase her much-loved football and dig. Losing her in the final stages was very hard to take but part of her lives on in this thesis – she knew what feedback was really about!

Finally, and most importantly, I offer heartfelt thanks to my wife Bekky-Jane who never gave up on me and faithfully supported and encouraged me. Without your ongoing love and guidance this experienced would not have been conceivable.

III. Declaration

I, Mark Middleton, declare that this thesis, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Doctor of Philosophy, in the School of Business, Faculty of Business and Law, University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. The document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

Mark Middleton
31 August 2022

IV. Copyright Statement

V. Table of Contents

VI. List of Figures

VII. List of Tables

VIII. List of Appendices

IX. List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
AoL	Assurance of Learning
FG	Focus Group
HES	Higher Education Standard
I	Interview
L	Lecturer
LMS	Learning Management Systems
MBA	Master of Business Administration
NESB	Non-English-Speaking Background
PIS	Participant Information Sheet
PCF	Participant Consent Form
R*	Round of data collection * indicates the round number either 1, 2, or 3
S	Student
TEQSA	Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency
UOW	University of Wollongong
TPA	Theory of Practice Architectures

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction and Background

In this increasingly globalised world, there is growing pressure on universities to improve the delivery of programs, show that learning outcomes are being met, make courses relevant and applicable to the diversified workforce, and remain competitive in a global marketplace (Henderson, Phillips, et al. 2019; Nusche 2008). This is particularly pertinent as globalisation has opened up new markets and opportunities in higher education, but also increased the competition for students (Tight 2022). There are also more-stringent demands to verify the quality of programs offered. In the Australian context, universities are required to demonstrate compliance and provide evidence to support their course-outcome claims, as well as document and adhere to a more rigorous and transparent process for assessment and learning (AQF 2013)[1]. Assessment of student learning and assessment designed for student learning are essential components of teaching and learning.

Assessment of student learning judges the quality of students' work and provides certification that they have satisfactorily achieved the learning outcomes. Assessment designed for student learning is aimed at creating opportunities for students to learn without the need to apply a grade. Over the past three decades, there has been a significant amount of research into assessment and how to best utilise assessment for learning, with a particular focus on the role of feedback (see section 2.2). There is consensus in the literature that assessment directs learning (Boud & Associates 2010; Yan & Yang 2021), and that feedback is an essential element of assessment for learning (Boud & Molloy 2013b; Sadler 2010). Therefore, feedback plays a critical role in learning (Boud & Molloy 2013b; Henderson, Phillips, et al. 2019). Feedback can be simply defined "as processes where the learner makes sense of performance-relevant information to promote their learning" (Henderson, Ajjawi, et al. 2019, p. 17).

[1] The Australian context is governed by the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) and the Higher Education Standards (HES) Framework. The AQF is the national policy for regulated qualifications in the Australian education and training sector (AQF 2013p. 9). TEQSA is the independent national regulator of the higher education sector and is responsible for registering higher education providers and ensuring they meet the HES Framework.

Feedback, which is a fundamental component of education practice, has been found to have a powerful, but not always positive, influence on learning (Hattie & Timperley 2007). However, despite an increasing number of studies that outline good feedback practices (Carless et al. 2011; Dawson et al. 2021; Hattie & Timperley 2007; Winstone & Boud 2019b), both learners and teachers have noted problems with feedback. Students continue to report issues with feedback they receive, describing it as unhelpful (Boud & Molloy 2013a). Lecturers have also voiced concerns that feedback is a wasted effort and that some students do not act on, or even review, feedback (Henderson, Ajjawi, et al. 2019; Ryan & Henderson 2018). Whilst it is accepted that feedback drives learning, Henderson, Ryan and Phillips (2019 p. 1250) found that whilst implementing good feedback practices may be beneficial in overcoming challenges with feedback content[2], the challenges of "capacity and context" have seldom, if ever, been addressed. The authors also found that the challenges were perceived in different ways by students and staff and that effort was made to align more closely "their expectations and understandings of the purpose of feedback" (p. 1249). It appears that a successful feedback process requires more than good feedback practices. Students have also recounted not understanding or not knowing how to act on the feedback provided (Evans 2013). This raises the question of the value of research into good feedback practices if the reported practices do not always improve the effectiveness of feedback. The problem may not be with the feedback practices themselves, but rather with the interrelationship of lecturers' and students' feedback practices and whether the interactions of these practices enable a common understanding of feedback's processes and purposes. It is important to note that as feedback practices are constituted through the practices of lecturers and students, feedback practices are in effect closely entwined with lecturers' and students' practices. Several studies have suggested that lecturers and students have misaligned perceptions of what good feedback involves (Dawson et al. 2019; Orsmond & Merry 2011) There also appears to be a misalignment of lecturers' and students' understandings of feedback's purposes and the feedback process[3] (Dawson et al. 2019; Li & De Luca 2014), particularly regarding

[2] Referred to as feedback information in this thesis.
[3] Section 1.3.2 explains the distinctions between feedback practices, processes, and purposes.

assessment. This research aims to improve the understanding of the interactions between feedback practices and how they enable or constrain the feedback process.

In the higher-education context, the processes of assessment and feedback are described as “coexisting activities. As a result they have become entangled in both policy and practice”, resulting in the clouding of their purposes (Winstone & Boud 2020p. 1). However, feedback and assessment have distinct functions (Section 2.2) which, if conflated, can hinder the efficacy of both (Winstone & Boud 2020). The conceptualisation of feedback has also changed from information provided to students to an ongoing dialogic process that focuses on the interactions between students and lecturers, and emphasises encouraging students to act on feedback, rather than stipulating what lecturers should do (Winstone, Boud, et al. 2021). This has led to the development of lecturers’ and students’ feedback literacy, which has been the subject of much contemporary research (Carless & Winstone 2020; de Kleijn 2021; Heron et al. 2021; Molloy et al. 2020). The concept of student feedback literacy has been researched for over a decade (Carless 2020a; Carless & Boud 2018; Sutton 2012); lecturers’ feedback literacy has been considered more recently through both conceptual papers and empirical research (Chan & Luo 2022; Gravett et al. 2020; Molloy et al. 2020). There has, however, been limited research that considers the feedback literacy of both lecturers and students (Carless & Winstone 2020; de Kleijn 2021). Feedback has also been studied from a practice perspective. For example, Gravett (2020) introduces a socio-material perspective to understanding feedback, and others have focused on the disciplinary differences between both lecturers’ and students’ feedback practices (Esterhazy 2018; Penman et al. 2021; Quinlan & Pitt 2021). However, problems with feedback still exist, with what can be described as a disconnection between the feedback practices of lecturers and students (Pitt & Norton 2017; Poulos & Mahony 2008). Whilst there is an increasing amount of literature on feedback, and a focus on lecturers’ and students’ feedback literacy (Section 2.4), there is a dearth of research exploring lecturers’ and students’ understanding of feedback practices, and how feedback practices interact, particularly within the relationship between those of lecturers and students (Section 2.3). The feedback-literacy literature (Section 2.4) discusses the importance of student and lecturer feedback literacies, with Carless and Boud (2018, p. 1323) arguing that low levels of student feedback literacy are a barrier to effective feedback. However, current models of feedback literacy do not specifically address the practices of lecturers and students that enable or constrain how feedback is understood and acted on. If the usefulness of feedback is to be improved, lecturers' and students' conceptions and understandings of feedback need to align more closely. An improved understanding of how the feedback practices of lecturers and students interact will enable a common understanding of feedback and the feedback process, and develop the feedback literacy of both lecturers and students.

This thesis explores the feedback practices of lecturers and students by adopting a practice-based approach (Hager et al. 2012; Tobin 2014) that uses Kemmis's theory of practice architectures (TPA) (Kemmis 2018a; Kemmis, Bristol, et al. 2014; Kemmis & Mahon 2017; Tai et al. 2021). It examines the connections between the lecturers' and students' feedback practices that comprise the feedback process. It is anticipated that a better understanding of the feedback practices of lecturers and students will offer insights into how their practices can be more closely aligned to develop a common understanding of the feedback process. The development of a mutual understanding of feedback will benefit the feedback process as it will clarify student and lecturer expectations of feedback's purposes and the responsibilities within the feedback process. It is projected that this will have benefits for student engagement and enable students to act on feedback. This will also increase the usefulness of feedback for student learning.

An effective feedback process is necessary for universities if they wish to deliver on course outcomes and ensure student learning. As outlined above, feedback is essential for student learning to demonstrate that learning outcomes are met and to ensure that students have the requisite skills and knowledge on completion of their studies. A better understanding of the feedback process and practices may lead to improvements in how feedback is understood and applied, and for student learning as well as validating the quality of university programs. Validation of quality is a requirement driven not only by university policies but also by the requirements of accreditation bodies, which are becoming increasingly influential worldwide. Assessment has been used to provide evidence of student learning and to validate the quality of university programs.

This chapter will briefly outline the research context, define key concepts that are essential to developing an understanding of feedback, discuss the aim of the research, state the research question, and provide an overall outline of the thesis.

1.2 Research Context

The context of this research is assessment and learning in higher education, situated within an Australian business school and focusing on the Master of Business Administration (MBA) course. The business school has two main campuses[4] and five satellite campuses, with a mix of domestic and international students. There are full-time and part-time study options. Section 3.4 gives a detailed breakdown of the research participants. The MBA program was chosen as it is offered at many universities across the world, covers a broad spectrum of subjects across business courses in higher education, and is comparable between universities. Entry into the MBA program at this university requires a minimum of three years of professional experience, but there are differences in each student's work experience. The data collection for this research was conducted over a five-year time frame and there were variances in the MBA cohort during this period. Overall, the population consisted of full and part-time students and a mix of domestic and international enrolments (Section 3.4.1.2 gives population and sample details). It is also important to recognise that there are inherent power imbalances between lecturers and students, and among students (Section 4.4.1). Lecturers' greater knowledge of and responsibility for the assessment processes places them in a position of power over students (Blair & McGinty 2012; Winstone & Carless 2020, pp. 152-155). The power imbalance is greater for less-experienced students, and for international students from cultures with higher power distances (Rovagnati, Pitt, & Winstone 2021). How this power imbalance affects the feedback process is a key part of this research, as power plays a key role in the context of the feedback process and how it is understood (Sutton 2012).

For the purposes of this research, the epistemological view taken was interpretive social constructivism, which asserts that "meaning is not discovered, but

[4] A second main campus at Southwestern Sydney was opened during this research

constructed" (Crotty 1998, p. 9). This epistemological view is consistent with a number of prior studies (Ajjawi & Boud 2017; Carless 2020b; Charreire & Huault 2008; Price et al. 2007; Rushton 2005; Rust et al. 2005) that have used a constructivist approach to investigate feedback and learning. In an educational context, the lecturer and students are involved in the construction of meaning, and knowing is understood as created, embodied, and enacted (Dall'Alba & Barnacle 2007, p. 683). There are multiple constructed realities bound by context and practice. This aligns with a relativist ontology (Guba 1990; Guba & Lincoln 1994), and is consistent with conceptualising feedback as a process rather than a transmission of information, and for investigating practices (Section 3.2.1).

A practice-based approach is also consistent with the epistemology and ontology that has been generally adopted within the business school context, as it allows for the study of feedback practices and the relationship between these practices in the co-construction of meaning. A practice-based perspective (Gherardi 2000, 2009; Nicolini 2009; Nicolini 2013) situates the focus on the practices of feedback, rather than the practitioners of feedback. The adoption of a practice perspective offers a useful way to explore feedback practices and study the relationship between the practices of feedback in context. There is an increasing body of work that focuses on feedback; specifically, good practices of feedback, types of feedback, and the importance of feedback to assessment and learning (Yan & Yang 2021). Examples include Corradi and Gherardi (2010); Gravett (2020); Loscher et al. (2019). Whilst there is no universal practice approach (Schatzki et al. 2001), Nicolini (2013) outlines a "toolkit approach" where the similarities and differences of the various practice theories provide a way of studying practice. His approach is based on a cycle of zooming in to look at practices, and then zooming out to discern relationships in space and time (Nicolini 2013, p. 219). Nicolini's approach has been adopted by Mahon et al. (2017, pp. 45-46) and used in the TPA framework. Finally, a collaborative methodology was used in this thesis (Section 3.3.1), in which the research participants and the researcher were involved in the co-construction of meaning, and the researcher was positioned within the research process (Moghaddam et al. 2015; Patterson & Goulter 2015; Snoeren et al. 2012).

This section has briefly established the research context, noting the higher-education context and the site of practice of the MBA program in a regional business school. In the context of the MBA lecturers have power over students in two areas; lecturers have greater knowledge of the subject content, and are responsible for grading assessments. This creates a power imbalance which may impact the feedback process. The adoption of a practice-based approach goes some way to mitigating the effects of power imbalances that exist between students and lecturers, as it focuses on the practices rather than the person. Specifically, the use of TPA provides a way of investigating the interactions of students' and lecturers' feedback practices and the arrangements of practice whilst mitigating the power imbalance. The following section defines key concepts that are integral to the feedback process and to the broader context of assessment and learning. A distinction is made between practices of feedback, purposes of feedback, and the process of feedback.

1.3 Feedback in Assessment and Learning – Key Definitions

Feedback and assessment are intrinsically linked; thus, it is important to understand the relationship between feedback and assessment. This section defines the key concepts that will be explored in greater depth in Chapter 2, which offers an in-depth review of the literature on assessment and feedback, outlining what feedback is, how it is defined, and what its relationship is to learning.

1.3.1 Assessment and Learning Defined

Assessment is generally associated with judgement on the degree of learning that has taken place: "To assess is to make judgements about students' work, inferring from this what they have the capacity to do in the assessed domain, and thus what they know, value, or are capable of doing" (Joughin 2009, p. 16).

The assessment process requires lecturers to make judgements on the quality of students' work, but does not necessarily promote learning. The judgements on students' work should be communicated in a manner that is understandable, engaging, and relevant so that students can improve the quality of their work, develop their skills, and learn from the process (Rust 2007). An in-depth review of the literature on learning is outside the scope of this thesis, but the perspective being used for this research draws on a social constructivist epistemology of learning (Laurillard 2002; Rust et al. 2005). This perspective actively engages students in formal processes to communicate tacit knowledge (Price et al. 2010), where knowledge is not just transmitted from lecturer to student but is communicated and developed through a variety of interactions. Rust et al. (2005, p. 232) argues that in a social constructivist view of learning,

> Knowledge is shaped and evolves through increasing participation within different communities of practice. Acquiring knowledge and understanding of assessment processes, criteria and standards needs the same kind of active engagement and participation as learning about anything else.

Hattie (2009, p. 26) describes this view of learning as a combination of teacher-centred and student-centred learning and knowing how to “build constructions of understanding”.

Therefore, if assessment criteria are socially constructed, the process entails the sharing of tacit knowledge over time (Rust et al. 2005; 2003). The AQF defines learning from a teaching and learning perspective, rather than a developmental theory perspective: “Learning is a process by which a person assimilates information, ideas, actions and values and thus acquires knowledge, skills and/or the application of the knowledge and skills” (AQF 2013, p. 97).

This definition implies that learning is up to each individual, and is incongruous with a practice perspective. Applying a social constructivist approach (Rust et al. 2005) to this definition of learning suggests that the teacher’s primary role is to guide students through the learning process and equip them with the skills to identify what they do not know and the resources to gain this knowledge, and to assist them in clarifying their own construction of meaning. The process by which teachers equip and guide students relies on communication between teacher and student. However, learning is described by Kemmis as a process, but not in itself a practice (Kemmis 2022, p. 125), and as “coming to practise differently, situated in changed practice architectures” (Kemmis 2022, p. 165). Kemmis (2021, p. 282) holds that a practice view of learning whilst recognizing learning as "the acquisition of knowledge" it also needs to account for the process of learning. Kemmis (2021, p. 290) distinguishes a practice view of learning from learning as acquisition of knowledge.

> Practice theory shows (a) how both practices and learning are always entangled with the concrete particularity of these arrangements[5], and (b) through transformation of the arrangements that constitute the conditions of possibility for practices, learning can transform both practices and the practice architectures that make them possible.
>
> On this view, then, learning is more than just the acquisition of knowledge. Being situated in social life, materiality and history, *learning* is what happens when practices are *reproduced with variation or transformed* (along with their associated communities of practice) *or when new practices are produced from precursor practices.*

As feedback is a key part of the learning process (Rust et al. 2005), understanding feedback practices becomes critical for learning.

1.3.2 Feedback and the Feedback Process Defined

There is consensus that feedback is an essential component of assessment if learning is to take place (Black & Wiliam 1998; Boud & Molloy 2013b; Hattie 1987; Merry et al. 2013). More-recent research has built on the work of Sutton (2012) to discuss the importance of students' and lecturers' feedback literacy (Carless & Boud 2018; de Kleijn 2021; Malecka et al. 2020; Winstone & Carless 2020). It is also important to note that the conceptualisation of feedback has changed over the past three decades, moving from understanding feedback as a transmission of information, to considering it to be part of a sense-making process with active roles for both students and teachers. It has moved from a product provided in response to students' work to a process in which students engage with feedback (Winstone & Carless 2020), but with the feedback information (products of feedback) coming later in the feedback process. In the past five years, much of the research into feedback has focused on feedback literacies of students and staff (Carless & Boud 2018; Malecka et al. 2020; Winstone et al. 2019).

[5] Cultural-discursive, material-economic, and social-political settings.

Feedback processes, practices, and purposes are key terms used throughout this thesis. In this thesis, a student-centred perspective on the feedback process is adopted. Thus, the feedback process from the student perspective is defined as "an interactive process in which students make sense of a variety of inputs and use them to enhance their work or feedback literacy" (Carless 2020a, p. 144). The process involves "the activities undertaken by learners to obtain, understand, and use feedback information" (Winstone, Boud, et al. 2021, p. 12) and "knowledge construction strategies" (Malecka et al. 2022, p. 2). Feedback information is defined as "information learners can use to improve the quality of their work or learning strategies" (Winstone, Boud, et al. 2021, p. 12). Feedback information includes feedback on specific tasks such as comments on content and quality, and more-generalised feedback that may be useful for future learning and assessment that occurs during discussion and debate. Students access feedback information through engagement with the feedback process (de Kleijn 2021; Winstone, Boud, et al. 2021; Winstone & Carless 2020). Feedback information should be considered and used by students in the feedback process, with lecturers offering encouragement to engage actively in dialogues (Henderson, Ryan & Phillips 2019). It is also important to note that feedback practices, more than the information itself, are what drives the feedback process. The feedback process relies on feedback practices and includes what is thought and done in how students and lecturers relate within the feedback process. The feedback process refers to the overall development and progression of feedback, whereas feedback practices are the sayings, doings and relatings that make feedback possible and constitute the feedback process. In other words, the feedback process involves the ordering and enabling of the feedback practices. Understanding how lecturers and students distinguish feedback practices is important, as it influences the design of the feedback process and the delivery of feedback information (Chan & Luo 2022, p. 62), and may be different across learning contexts for both lecturers and students (Malecka et al. 2022).

Another aspect of feedback's purpose is developing students' ability for lifelong learning. Boud (2000) proposed that sustainable assessment was essential for lifelong learning. More recently, others (Boud & Soler 2016; Carless et al. 2011; Falchikov & Boud 2007; Sambell et al. 2013) have further explored sustainable assessment and how it can be used to instil the attitude and tools for lifelong learning. For the purpose of this thesis, the view is taken that sustainable-assessment theory encompasses formative and summative assessment, and that feedback literacy is integral to developing effective lifelong learners. In brief, feedback is central to lifelong learning, as it promotes dialogic communication and developing self-assessment skills to help students improve their self-regulatory and self-assessment skills (Nguyen & Walker 2016). Yan and Carless (2021) found that students' feedback literacy and self-assessment are important for the development of lifelong learning. Feedback is conceptualised within a socio-constructivist framework, and defined as "processes where learners make sense of performance relevant information to promote their learning" (Henderson, Ajjawi, et al. 2019, p. 248). This reframes feedback as what *students* do, rather than what *lecturers* do, placing a greater emphasis on students in the feedback process (Winstone, Boud, et al. 2021; Winstone, Pitt, et al. 2021).

1.3.3 Relational Considerations

As discussed in the previous section, for the purposes of this thesis, feedback is conceptualised as a process. The process of feedback involves interactions between lecturers and students. These interactions presuppose relatings between lecturers and students that constitute the feedback process. Therefore, relational considerations are a central part of practice, and understanding the complex interactions between lecturers and students is important. Relationship in the context of this research can refer to the relationships between teacher, student, process, and context, and can be viewed as a continuum along which interconnecting relationships take place. It can also refer to the relationship between the bundles of feedback practices used by both teacher and student.

The interpersonal relationships that occur as part of the feedback process can influence the feedback process. Price et al. (2010) found that it is important to consider the how relatings can impact feedback; "[s]tudents and staff were clear that the relationship between student and assessor is at the heart of a successful feedback process" (Price et al. 2010, p. 285). When there was no evidence of this, the students found it difficult to engage with the feedback, and staff could not evaluate the efficacy of the feedback provided (Price et al. 2010). It is recognised that the relationship between teacher and student may have an effect on the quality of feedback. Dialogues between teachers and students are a critical component of the feedback process, and affective factors can influence student-teacher interactions. Affective relations can be considered from a practice perspective by focusing on the practices that have a positive and negative impact on the interpersonal relationship. However, the focus of this thesis is on the relationship between the feedback practices and the impact this has on the feedback process. The relationship between feedback practices is a crucial consideration, as the feedback practices of lecturers and students enable the dialogic process which is central to feedback. However, there are reports of a disconnection between teacher and student regarding feedback and feedback practices (Dawson et al. 2019).

1.4 Research Aim

This thesis investigates feedback from a practice perspective. The aim of this thesis is to gain a better understanding of lecturers' and students' feedback practices and the relationship between these practices, to further the understanding and relevance of feedback for learning.

1.5 Research Question

This thesis investigates the feedback practices of teachers and students, and the relationship between these practices, in the context of assessment and learning within a postgraduate business school. The following questions were explored:

> How do feedback practices affect lecturers' and students' conceptions of feedback and the feedback process?
>
> How do the interrelationships between students' and lecturers' feedback practices and the arrangements[6] that constitute these practices affect the feedback process?

[6] The performance of practices depends on specific material arrangements. Practices and material arrangements necessarily hang together (Loscher et al. 2019, p. 3). (Kemmis, Bristol, et al. 2014, p. v) describes "the semantic, material, and social arrangements that support practices and prefigure their development". Section 3.2.3 gives a detailed explanation.

1.6 Justification and Significance of the Research

A practice perspective for studying feedback contributes to the growing body of work addressing feedback. Exploring the feedback practices of students and lecturers, how they interrelate, and the arrangements that enable them offers a way to improve understanding of how lecturers and students perceive and conceive of the feedback process. This then offers a way of improving the feedback process. Specifically, the use of the practice-architectures framework to investigate the arrangements of feedback offers insights into how lecturers' and students' practices are arranged and how these arrangements can affect the feedback process. This is important, as the way feedback is conceived has changed (Sections 1.3.2 and 2.4), with the emphasis now on students' capacity to engage with and act on feedback. For this to happen, students' and lecturers' respective understanding of the feedback process must more closely align. The development of a mutual understanding of the purposes of and responsibilities for feedback are central to the feedback process. This research undertakes a review of feedback practices, the relationship between practices, and interpersonal relationships entangled in practices. The intention is to identify the practices of feedback, the interactions between the research participants, and associated relationships central to feedback. Initiatives that have promoted student engagement and self-evaluation within the context of learning are included in the review of feedback practices and the relationship between good practices of feedback. The next section provides a brief overview of the thesis content.

1.7 Thesis Outline

Chapter 1 introduces the main area of interest, defines key terms, specifies the context, positions the researcher, articulates the research questions, and briefly outlines the significance of the research.

Chapter 2 introduces and reviews the relevant literature. The literature review first considers the purpose and definition of assessment, provides an overview of the assessment literature, and highlights key considerations. Second, the chapter establishes the link between formative assessment and feedback, and explains the significant role feedback plays in assessment for learning. Third, the chapter reviews feedback in practice, and outlines the perspectives of lecturers and students. The chapter then discusses feedback practices and the relationship between them from a practice perspective. Finally, a gap in the current literature is identified and related back to the research questions.

Chapter 3 outlines the research paradigm, design, and methodology, including a detailed discussion of the chosen methodology and methods, ethical considerations, and trustworthiness of the research.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the research, considering lecturers' and students' perceptions of feedback, their understanding of feedback, and responsibility for feedback and how it affects feedback-seeking practices.

Chapter 5 discusses the findings in the context of the literature and examines the significance of the findings.

Chapter 6 concludes the thesis, addressing the research question, summarising key findings, making recommendations for practice and further research, and outlines key contributions and limitations of the research.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter has introduced feedback practices as the central focus of this research and explained why feedback practices are important. It has provided a background to the underlying issues, offering definitions of key terms, and outlined the theoretical position adopted in this thesis. The research aims and broad research question were stated and a concise outline of the content of each chapter was provided.

Feedback has been studied extensively, and students and lecturers have consistently reported dissatisfaction with feedback. It appears that there is a disconnection between lecturers' and students' conceptions and practices. What remains clear is that further research into feedback practices is required. This research is important, as the examination of practices and their interactions may offer a way of improving students' and lecturers' respective understanding of feedback's processes, purposes, and responsibilities, which in turn may reduce barriers to student engagement, promote feedback-seeking, and develop the feedback literacy of lecturers and students through more closely aligned practices. The next chapter will provide a review of the literature on assessment and feedback, with a critical review of feedback literacies.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

This chapter reviews literature in higher education that pertains to assessment and feedback. It begins with an overview of assessment and its purposes, before focusing on feedback, feedback practices, and the feedback literacies of students and lecturers. The discussion of assessment, first, provides a brief overview of the past three decades of literature; second, defines key concepts of assessment; and third, provides the framework for a critical review of the feedback literature. This review considers the role that feedback plays in learning, the relationship between feedback practices, and feedback literacy. Whilst the focus of this research is on higher education, seminal research predominantly conducted in secondary education, which provided the basis for the research into higher education, is also included.

2.1 Assessment: An overview

Assessment is an ongoing process that includes monitoring and improving student learning, measuring student learning (Joughin 2009), providing formal recognition of student learning (Boud & Soler 2016; Praslova 2010, p. 17), and, in partnership with feedback, instilling the skills required for lifelong learning (Ecclestone 2010; Nguyen & Walker 2016). Over the past three decades, a great deal of research has been conducted on assessment, including how it is defined (Black & Wiliam 2009; Ibarra-Sáiz et al. 2020; Yan & Yang 2021), how it is practised (Leenknecht et al. 2021; McLaren 2012; Taras & Davies 2013), how it relates to “learning” (Nguyen & Walker 2016; Swaffield 2011; Wanner & Palmer 2018; Zeng et al. 2018; Zhang & Zheng 2018), and its impact on the quality of student learning (Boud & Associates 2010). For some educators, assessment is a simple and easy mechanism to measure knowledge acquired by learners. In the higher-education context, a significant proportion of the literature centres on a discussion of the primary purpose of assessment, and the degree to which assessment promotes learning (Carless 2015a; Taras & Davies 2013; Yan & Yang 2021). The literature pertaining to assessment is vast, including a number of books; for example, Joughin (2009) focused on assessment, learning and judgement as a whole; Ecclestone (2010) adopted a case study approach to transform formative assessment for lifelong learning; Clouder et al. (2012) used assessment to improve student engagement; Price et al. (2012) reviewed assessment literacy for improving student learning; Sambell et al. (2013) offered a guide to assessment as learning; Carless (2015a) looked at excellence in university assessment with a focus on feedback; Boud and Soler (2016) discussed sustainable assessment; Bryan and Clegg (2019) produced a handbook for innovative assessment; and Irons and Elkington (2022) wrote a practical guide to enhancing learning through formative assessment and feedback. There have also been books published specifically concerned with feedback: Boud and Molloy (2013b) focused on feedback in higher and professional education; Merry et al. (2013) looked at developing dialogues with students; Winstone and Carless (2020) investigated the design of effective feedback processes; and Henderson, Ajjawi, et al. (2019) considered the impact of feedback in higher education. Whilst it is outside the scope of this review to critique each in its entirety, it is important to note that whilst there have been different approaches used in examining assessment and feedback, all have the intent of improving student learning. In contrast, the specific focus of this literature review is feedback practices for assessment and learning.

Assessment is generally associated with judgement on the degree of learning that has taken place (Joughin 2009). Research conducted in the 1970s found that assessment, not teaching, had a greater influence on student learning, and that the assessment system dictated students' approach to a subject (Gibbs & Simpson 2004). Further research that reviewed an extensive number of studies found that formative assessment has the greatest single effect on learning quality (Black & Wiliam 1998; Hattie 1987; Sambell et al. 2013). There have been criticisms of assessment practices; for example, Knight (2002a) describes assessment as "the Achilles' heel of quality" and accuses summative assessment practices of being "in disarray" (Knight 2002b, p.275), while Race (2003 cited in Rust et al. 2005, p. 5) describes assessment practice as simply "broken". However, it is now commonly accepted that assessment is central to learning (Boud 2010; Falchikov & Boud 2007; Henderson, Ajjawi, et al. 2019; Price, Carroll, et al. 2011; Taras 2008) and assessment, not teaching, has a greater influence on student learning (Gibbs & Simpson 2004; Sambell et al. 2017). The following paragraph provides a brief history of the past three decades of assessment research.

In an attempt to focus on what constitutes assessment, Boud (1998) outlines some common erroneous assumptions: that assessment simply measures what a student knows, that students need to be compared with each other, and that all students should be treated identically. Boud also asserts that while assessment measures what a student knows, it has no ability to influence or change how students have perceived the information or the degree to which they have learnt. Black and Wiliam (1998), Hattie (1987), Sadler (1998), and Wiliam et al. (2004) demonstrate the link between assessment and learning at both a superficial, information-recall level and at the deeper level of understanding of concepts and principles. Comparing students' quality of work is not necessary (Boud 1998). Instead, universities across Australia have moved to criterion-referenced assessment (Biggs 1998), which judges performance against criteria, not against other students. If university education's focus is learning, and if formative assessment promotes learning, the emphasis should be on meeting the set criteria, rather than ranking respective cohorts. This has prompted much research into the constructive alignment of curriculum outcomes with assessment (Biggs 2003, 2007). Boud (1998) also refutes the notion that all students should be treated identically. He argues that this does not promote learning; rather, it tests who is best at the style of assessment used. Boud argues that it is better to sacrifice perfect equality and, rather, to design assessments that assess students' learning in a manner that allows them to perform optimally. The work of Boud and others has laid the foundation for the significant body of work that addresses assessment and its purposes.

Although the significant body of literature that discusses differing forms of assessment is outside the scope of this thesis, a brief selection of relevant studies includes those dealing with peer assessment (Li et al. 2020), self-assessment (Andrade 2019), authentic assessment (Villarroel et al. 2018), sustainable assessment (Boud & Soler 2016), assessment for learning (Sambell et al. 2013), assessment literacy (Price et al. 2012; Smith et al. 2011), and the higher-education context (Boud et al. 2018; Carless 2015a). It is now commonly acknowledged that both summative and formative assessment have the power to influence student learning in both positive and negative ways. The terminology and definitions for summative and formative assessment have not always been consistent, which creates confusion regarding the purpose of assessment. Early studies clarified definitions of summative and formative assessment based on assessment processes rather than functions (Taras 2009). Later studies have looked more specifically at function (Bennett 2011; Black 2015; Taras & Davies 2013) and, in some instances, assessment for learning – that is, formative assessment (Ecclestone 2010) – is referred to as “assessment *as* learning” (Dann 2014). Sambell et al. (2017) has provided a helpful summary of the diverse functions of assessment (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 Functions of Assessment

Function	Entails	Constitutes
Certification	Assembling evidence of students’ achievement through summative performances, for the purpose of **selection** and **certification** (award of degrees, classifications and so on).	Assessment ***of*** learning
Quality assurance	Demonstrating an institution’s academic standards in a form that is amenable to external scrutiny and verification, for the purpose of **accountability**.	Assessment ***of*** learning
Learning	Emphasising the formative and diagnostic function of assessment, helping students to learn through completing assignments and gaining feedback. The purpose is to **provide information** about student achievement to teachers and learners, thus enabling students to self-regulate and teachers to respond to learners’ needs.	Assessment ***for*** learning
Lifelong learning	Seeing student involvement in assessment as moments of learning, with the purpose of **developing students’ abilities to self-assess** and regulate their own learning. This is essential for independent learning beyond graduation.	Assessment ***as*** learning (although Bloxham sees this a subset of Assessment for learning).

(Sambell et al. 2017, p. 146)

Table 2.1 highlights the diverse range of assessment functions and repositions the focus of assessment from the measurement of acquired knowledge to a way to direct learning (Boud & Associates 2010). This subsequently removes the need for student comparisons, instead permitting a focus on student learning through assessment.

In the higher-education context, a significant proportion of literature centres on the primary purpose of assessment, and the degree to which assessment can promote learning (see, for example, Black & Wiliam 1998; Boud & Associates 2010; Boud & Falchikov 2005; Taras 2008; Wanner & Palmer 2018). Interestingly, as far back as 1995, Barr and Tagg (1995) proposed that higher education was shifting from a teacher-centred instructive approach to a student-centred learning approach. One of the common factors in the literature on assessment design is the role of feedback in the assessment process. Feedback – particularly feedback practices and their implementation – has come to the forefront of research. More recently, there has been a renewed emphasis on student-centred assessment and student involvement in the feedback process (Molloy et al. 2020; O'Neill & McMahon 2012; Scott 2013), in particular student feedback literacy (Section 2.4) (Carless & Boud 2018). A significant body of work focuses on feedback and good practice of feedback; some of the key research includes: Carless (2006), who analysed differing perceptions of assessment and feedback between lecturers and students; Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006), who outlined seven principles of good feedback and emphasised the need for students to take a proactive role; Hattie and Timperley (2007), who investigated the power of feedback and what makes feedback effective; Nicol (2007), who proposed 10 principles of good assessment and feedback practice; Boud and Associates (2010), who outlined seven propositions for assessment reform; Sadler, who researched the development of student capability and the teacher’s responsibility that goes beyond simply transmitting feedback information (2010); Boud and Molloy (2013a), who addressed the challenge of feedback design; O'Donovan et al. (2016), who solved the feedback dilemma in practice, recognising that feedback is potentially the most powerful part of assessment, but that there is a gap between theory and practice; Winstone, Nash, Parker, et al. (2017) who examined how learners receive and engage with feedback; and Carless and Winstone (2020) and de Kleijn (2021), who, as in this thesis, focused on developing the feedback literacy of students and lecturers. There are also four books mentioned in the introduction of this thesis that have made a substantial contribution to the feedback literature (Boud & Molloy 2013b; Henderson, Ajjawi, et al. 2019; Merry et al. 2013; Winstone & Carless 2020).

There has been less research and discussion regarding the interaction between teacher and student, and others involved in the feedback process such as administration staff and peers, and the practices that are part of this interaction. The acceptance by educators that assessment drives learning (Section 2.2) and that students construct their own meaning in order to learn, suggests that the role of feedback is to drive this process. Whilst it is generally accepted that feedback is central to learning (Sadler 2010), and drives learning (Boud & Molloy 2013b; Carless et al. 2011 & Lam, 2011; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick 2006; Orsmond et al. 2011), the provision of feedback does not ensure that students will actually read and apply feedback. Learners still need to be able to make use of the feedback (Winstone, Nash, Rowntree, et al. 2017).

Issues in feedback practices include communication, perceptions, form, style, and practices that either encourage or inhibit the relationship between feedback provider and recipient (Carless et al. 2006; Knight & Yorke 2003; Pokorny & Pickford 2010). It appears that the level of disconnection in the practices of feedback and in the relationship between these practices can hinder, rather than promote, learning. Studies have also found a disconnection between teacher and student in the delivery, understanding, and application of feedback (Adcroft 2010; Carless 2020b; Chalmers et al. 2018; Pat-El et al. 2014). This disconnection will be explored further in the discussion of feedback in Section 2.4, particularly in relationship to teacher and student feedback literacy (Carless & Winstone 2020). The consistent message is the importance of feedback to the usefulness of formative assessment (Section 2.1.3 defines and discusses this term) (Wu & Jessop 2018), and to helping teachers benefit from ongoing professional development in assessment practices. Feedback will be considered in greater depth in Sections 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4. The next section discusses how assessment is defined.

2.1.1 Defining Assessment

Assessment encompasses a broad range of meanings and interpretations. In defining assessment, Allen (2006) writes that assessment occurs within subjects, at the subject, course, program, and institution levels. The emphasis on assessment implies that the evidence of student learning is used to validate the quality of university programs. This requirement is driven not only by university policies, but also by the requirements of accreditation bodies, which are influential worldwide. Boud and Falchikov (2005) suggest that assessment should be positioned to encourage the development of self-assessment skills, providing some control for the individual over their own learning rather than being told by others how assessment is to be used. However, for some, assessment is still seen as measurement by assessors (Falchikov & Thompson 2008) rather than assessment being used to direct learning. The conception that assessment is integral to learning, as opposed to being treated as separate from learning, has been supported more recently, with papers looking at feedback-seeking behaviour (Crommelinck & Anseel 2013; Winstone, Nash, Rowntree, et al. 2017), developing students' feedback literacy (Carless & Boud 2018; Sutton 2012), and dialogic feedback (Ajjawi & Boud 2017, 2018; Crimmins et al. 2014; Gibbs 2014; Yang & Carless 2012). These concepts will be examined more closely when feedback is specifically addressed in Sections 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4.

Self-assessment of learning as discussed by Boud (1995; 1998; 2006; 2013) and Carless (2015a) highlights the premise that students who engage in accurate self-assessment will benefit from increased learning as they acquire the skills to make accurate judgements on their own work. A detailed discussion on learning is outside the scope of this thesis; however, as discussed above, it is accepted that assessment and feedback are central to learning. Assessment for learning encompasses both formative and summative feedback (Black & Wiliam 2018; Carless 2015a). By definition then, assessment and learning are integral to any educational experience, but exactly what constitutes the components and measurement of assessment and learning continues to be debated (Boud & Falchikov 2006). It is clear that assessment cannot be seen as independent of students or lecturers and their ideas, thoughts, expectations, and attitudes. However, there are a significant number of factors that may affect assessment, making a meaningful yet simple definition difficult. As will be discussed in Section 2.2.2, these factors include feedback practices that drive student engagement and the relationship between the key stakeholders.

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) outlines requirements for students studying at different levels of higher education. In the context of the MBA, the Level 9 Masters Coursework states, "Graduates at this level will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, expert judgement, adaptability and responsibility as a practitioner or learner" (AQF 2013, p. 59).

It is important, then, in higher education to move the student from teacher-driven to self-regulated learning. For this to happen, students need to be provided with opportunities to develop the ability to make judgements about their own and others' work (Carless & Boud 2018) in order to develop into effective lifelong-learners (Boud 1995; Boud et al. 2013; Falchikov & Boud 2007). If assessment is to be used for learning, then teachers and students must become partners in the assessment, feedback, and learning processes (Rust et al. 2005). This concept has been termed "sustainable assessment", which equips students for lifelong self-evaluation of their learning skills (Boud & Associates 2010; Boud & Soler 2016; Crossouard 2012; Nguyen & Walker 2016; Nicol 2007). It incorporates both formative and summative assessment, as students can use both to evaluate their own learning. Nicol (2008) makes the point that for sustainable assessment to be successful, students' ability to regulate their own learning needs to be developed, with students progressing past viewing higher education as simply a means of attaining knowledge and skills. Riordan and Loacker (2009) argue that effective educators ultimately make the teacher unnecessary. The teacher aims to guide the student in learning the course content and, at the same time, develop the students' skills in self-regulated learning and feedback-seeking.

The concept of sustainable assessment has been suggested as a model of assessment that could instil in students the desire and ability for lifelong learning whilst providing feedback on the immediate task (Boud & Falchikov 2006; Falchikov & Boud 2007). The primary goal of sustainable assessment is to develop students' skills in self-assessment for present and future use (Boud & Soler 2016). This requires students to be active participants in learning, and to comprehend the assessment criteria comparing their understanding with the feedback provided (Fastré et al. 2013). Sustainable assessment has been further developed by Boud et al. (2018) and Boud and Soler (2016), who emphasised developing evaluative judgement in students. For sustainable assessment to be most effective, students must be given the skills to self-assess the quality of their work. This depends on a relational interaction between students and lecturers based on a mutual understanding of the design, delivery, completion, and grading of assessments. The feedback process is central to ensuring that a mutual understanding is achieved and that the progress of students' learning is demonstrated (Carless et al. 2011). Sustainable assessment relies on the implementation of sustainable feedback, which has as its central principle the development of students' ability for self-regulation on future tasks.

Thus, sustainable assessment encompasses activities that can be used to instil the understanding of, and ability for, lifelong learning as well as providing a measure of learning (Boud & Soler 2016; Nguyen & Walker 2016). It is important to note that there are other aspects of assessment and learning that need to be discussed in the context of sustainable assessment. These aspects include conditions under which assessment supports learning, assessment-design principles, the scholarship of assessment, institutional requirements of assessment, self-regulation and student engagement, the hidden curriculum, feedback, and associated practices.

2.1.2 Purposes of Assessment

The increasing importance of assessment in the higher-education context has led to research into the main purposes of assessment. Numerous purposes of assessment have been described in a variety of ways in the literature. Assessment plays a key role in fostering learning, evaluating the quality of student achievement and meeting institutional requirements for the certification of student learning (Carless 2015a). For this thesis three broad purposes of assessment have been identified (Boud & Falchikov 2005; Carless 2015a; Dann 2014; Yan & Yang 2021):

- To have a measure of achievement that can be used for the purposes of certification that provides formal recognition of achievements for institutions and employers (Carless et al. 2017).
- To gather data that can be used for quality assurance (Knight & Yorke 2003).
- To promote learning and develop students' evaluative judgement (Yan & Yang 2021) (the focus of this thesis).

The first two purposes are integral components of assessment and do affect the purpose of learning; however, a detailed discussion is outside the scope of this review. The alignment of assessment for long-term and lifelong learning (Boud &

Associates 2010; Boud & Falchikov 2005; Falchikov & Boud 2007) could be categorised as a fourth purpose of assessment, but in this review is considered as part of the third purpose. Scholars argue that greater priority should be given to the preparation of students for lifelong learning and that formative assessment has the potential to equip students with these skills (Section 2.2.3).

Boud and Falchikov (2007) use various institutional policies to examine the reasons for assessment. Their findings suggest both a primary and secondary focus in most official documents pertaining to assessment. The primary focus is indicated by terms such as “outcomes”, “measurement”, and “integrity, whereas the secondary focus is indicated by terms like “feedback”, “improvement”, and “learning as a process”. From the review of Boud and Falchikov’s (2007) work, the dominant emphasis in university assessment documentation is on the physical process of assessment, ensuring that it is a fair and accurate reflection of a student’s knowledge at that point in time, rather than trying to ascertain how the assessment can contribute to learning. Although greater emphasis is now being placed on learning (Carless 2015b) and developing students' ability to evaluate their own work (Tai et al. 2018), universities are still tasked with grading students’ work. It appears that although there is agreement on the purpose of assessment, the priority given to the various purposes is different for each stakeholder. Although it is becoming increasingly necessary for institutions to demonstrate compliance due to the demands of government regulations and accreditation processes (AQF 2013; TEQSA 2012), there is no guarantee that this compliance will result in an increased contribution to or focus on learning. Boud and Falchikov (2007) raise the issue of time spent on the summative function of assessment compared to time spent on “learning”. There is an increased emphasis on trying to understand and improve assessment, and more recently, to ensure lifelong learning. This continued focus on assessment is unsurprising, as it has been recognised that “[s]tudents can, with difficulty, escape from the effects of poor teaching, they cannot (by definition if they want to graduate) escape the effects of poor assessment” (Boud 1995, p. 35).

Whilst the implication is that students can direct their own learning, they can do nothing about the assessment used to “measure” success in a particular subject. Students must focus on what is being assessed for successful completion of courses. Assessment is a central feature of teaching, and of the curricula that frame how, and how well, students learn and what they achieve. The responsibility for assessing students' work against appropriate standards has traditionally fallen to lecturers. However, students themselves need to develop the capacity to make judgements about their own work and that of others to become effective continuing learners and practitioners (Crossouard 2012; Knipprath & De Rick 2014; Nguyen & Walker 2016).

Kennedy et al. (2008, p. 205) note that "if learning is the goal for all students, then it should equally be the goal for all assessment". The emphasis is on productive learning, improving learning, partnering in learning, and moving learning to be the driving force behind all components of assessment (Race 2015). Conversely, it has been argued that, from the students' perspective, assessment defines the curriculum, which some have termed "the hidden curriculum" (Joughin 2010; Sambell & McDowell 1998); that is, students will focus on what is assessed. Additionally, all students have past experiences and knowledge that influence how they construe meaning and interpret assessments (Boud 2000). Assessment is the student focus, and as such determines the depth of learning. The degree to which assessment drives student learning has been debated for over three decades. Brown and Knight (1994, p. 12) write, "Assessment defines what students regard as important, how they spend their time, and how they come to see themselves as students". Boud (1995, p. 39) agrees to an extent, but argues that assessment messages are coded, not easily understood, and often read differently and with different emphases and inferences by staff and by students. He also asserts that students play a role in constructing the curriculum through their interpretations, perceptions, and actions (Boud 1995, p. 39). If assessment does define the curriculum, it thus plays a key role in the learning that takes place, and teachers play an integral part in determining how students interpret and construct the curriculum (Sambell & McDowell 1998). However, Winstone and Boud (2020) suggest that how the purposes of assessment are organised can inhibit learning. For example, if students perceive the emphasis of assessment to be on grading and evaluating performance, the focus is taken off learning. The following section discusses the common terms used to describe the purposes of assessment.

2.1.3 Summative, Formative, and Sustainable Assessment

Assessment has been typically categorised into two types: summative, or "assessment of learning", for grading and eventual certification of students (Boud &

Falchikov 2005), and formative, or “assessment for learning”, which typically relies on feedback to promote learning. Summative assessment is generally formal testing (Boud 1998) that gauges what students know at that point in time, whereas formative assessment is aimed at increasing students’ learning ability through feedback from peers, staff, and the students themselves. However, as Cookson (2018) points out, there has been a lack of coherence in the literature on assessment, and Winstone and Boud (2020, p. 2) suggest that “assessment often strangles the learning function of feedback”. Students, however, rarely differentiate between types of assessments (Black & Wiliam 1998), and trying to make assessments serve both formative and summative functions creates tensions for students as well as teachers (Boud 2000; Hounsell et al. 2008). Ecclestone (2010) and Knight (2002b) found that summative assessment can have a negative effect on learning, and Tang and Biggs (2007) outline the confusion that can occur between what is summative and what is formative. It may, however, be possible to find a common ground where both assessment functions are served (Wiliam & Black 1996). Synergy between summative and formative assessment can be found if assessments are designed with this in mind, but the distinction between summative and formative assessment is often blurred, compromising their respective functions (Harlen 2005).

Reconciling the tension between formative and summative assessment is an important consideration. In the higher-education setting, practice has traditionally emphasised the summative aspect of assessment as an essential component of all higher-education studies; thus, the summative result becomes the students’ focus, which can detract from learning (Black et al. 2003; Harlen 2005; Harlen & James 1997; Sadler 1998, 2010). Some efforts to combine formative and summative functions have resulted in fragmented assessment, premature testing, and a loss of focus from both students and staff (Black et al. 2003; Black & Wiliam 1998). However, Taras (2005) and Harlen (2005) argue that assessment can serve both a summative and formative function. In a small-scale study looking at both staff and student perceptions of assessment, Taras (2008) found disparity and confusion about the purpose of assessment and highlighted the need for future research into reconciling formative and summative assessment. A more recent study (Wu & Jessop 2018) found universities’ formative-assessment practices to be the weakest amongst five domains (how students learn; quality of feedback; internalisation of standards; student effort; and formative assessment). Whilst summative assessment is not the main focus of this review, it needs to be noted that feedback can be given on both formative and summative assessments, and some researchers (Taras 2008, 2009; Yorke 2003a, 2008) argue that the two types are so entwined that it is impossible to separate them. Bennett (2011, p. 8) describes a conceptual way to link formative and summative assessment: using the terms "assessment of learning" and "assessment for learning". His comparison of assessment purposes and types is outlined in Figure 2.1 This table highlights the relationship between the purpose and the type of assessment, recognising that assessment is generally both formative and summative, but that the primary purpose ("X") differs.

	Purpose	
Type	Assessment *Of* Learning	Assessment *For* Learning
Summative	*X*	*x*
Formative	*x*	*X*

Note: X = primary purpose; x = secondary purpose.

(Bennett 2011, p. 8)

Figure 2.1 A More Nuanced View of the Relationship Between Assessment Purpose and Type

Others have used alternative terms to describe assessment. Boud (2000) first used the term "sustainable assessment" to describe a purpose of assessment that was not sufficiently covered by either summative or formative assessment: assessment that incorporates both types to meet the immediate needs of assessment and prepare students for future needs. Boud (2000) and, more recently, others (Boud & Falchikov 2006; Carless et al. 2011; Fastré et al. 2013; Orsmond et al. 2011) have outlined how sustainable-assessment theory can integrate both summative and formative functions. The term recognises that both summative and formative assessment play a part in student learning and must work together to instil a desire for lifelong learning. A detailed analysis of the above issues is outside the scope of this thesis; however, the role of formative assessment and its link to feedback will be explored in Section 2.2.1. The following section focuses on other key considerations of assessment and learning.

2.1.4 Assessment, Learning, and Feedback

Researchers have examined aspects of assessment and learning in looking to improve the efficacy of feedback. A few common factors of research investigating issues related to assessment and learning can be identified: conditions in which assessment supports learning, assessment-design principles, improving the assessment process, self-regulation, and student engagement.

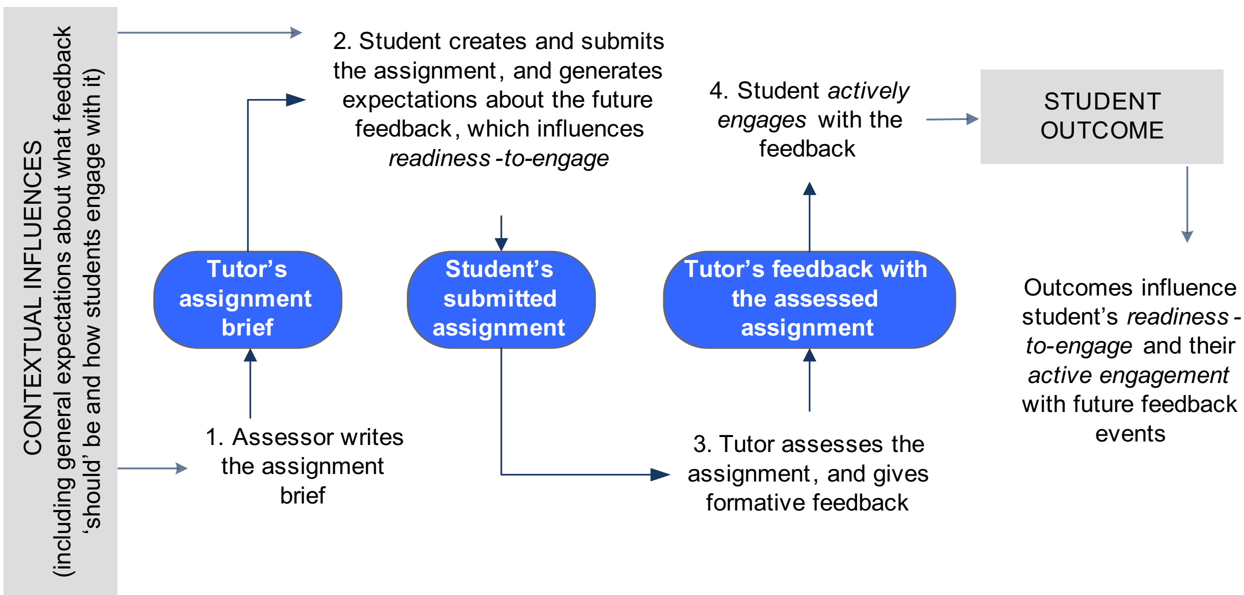
Several papers have outlined conditions in which assessment supports learning (Black et al. 2003; Boud & Associates 2010; Gibbs & Simpson 2004; McLaren 2012; Nguyen & Walker 2016). Feedback has been considered from a variety of perspectives, including social constructivist, which emphasises teacher-student partnerships (Carless 2020b); lecturers' perspectives on giving feedback as a social practice (Tuck 2012); and, more recently, a focus on the importance of student and lecturer feedback literacy (Carless & Winstone 2020; Tai et al. 2021). Others have included principles for good assessment practice. Nicol (2007, p. 3) outlined 10 principles of good assessment and feedback practice: clarifying what good performance is; encouraging students to spend "time and effort" on challenging learning tasks; delivering high-quality feedback information that helps learners self-correct; encouraging positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem; encouraging interaction and dialogue regarding learning (peer and teacher-student); facilitating the development of self-assessment and reflection in learning; giving learners choice in the content and processes of assessment; involving students in decision-making about assessment policy and practice; supporting the development of learning communities; and helping teachers adapt teaching to student needs. The common factors in each of these good practices of assessment is the importance of feedback and the focus on the role of the student, student engagement, and actions that develop students' abilities to self-evaluate.

Other examples include student engagement. Bloxham et al. (2007), and Carless (2015b) propose a model of learning-orientated assessment that focuses on developing students' evaluative judgement and engagement. Crisp (2010) outlined four types of assessment tasks that cover both summative and formative assessment, and Beaumont et al. (2011) propose dialogic feedback cycles. According to Ajjawi and Boud (2018), student engagement relies on dialogues. Whilst each of these areas of research are important on their own, they each affect feedback practices and are key elements of feedback literacy (Carless & Boud 2018).

Boud (2005, p. 36) and, more recently, Norton et al. (2019) have outlined assessment-design principles, giving attention to formative assessment and feedback. There has also been increased research and discussion on the scholarship of assessment (Biggs 1998; Price et al. 2008; Rust 2007), including topics such as the design of courses according to constructive alignment, realistic workloads, non-threatening real-world assessments requiring active engagement from students (Brown & Knight 1994; Rust 2007), and structured skills development (Rust 2007) allowing for “slow” learning and early failure (Yorke 2003a), including explicit guidelines on giving effective and prompt feedback. Segers et al. (2006, p. 238) found that simply changing assessment in accordance with constructive-alignment principles did not necessarily result in deeper learning, nor did students’ perceptions of assessment change. Instead, they suggest that more emphasis be placed on formative assessment, the perceptions of students, and the learning environment. The impact of students’ prior experience in assessment (Segers et al. 2006), their perceptions of the assessment demands, and the need to articulate assessment practices explicitly to them (Stefani 1998) have also been suggested as integral to good assessment. However, the importance of feedback in the scholarship of assessment is a common factor (Price, Handley, et al. 2011).

In the Australian context, effort has been put into improving assessment processes such as managing accreditation, ensuring degree quality, and providing information to key stakeholders (Moskal et al. 2008), as well as meeting the requirements outlined in the AQF (AQF 2013) and regulated by TEQSA (TEQSA 2012). Authentic assessment conducted through “real-world” tasks whereby students demonstrate and apply knowledge and skills in meaningful activities (Ashford-Rowe et al. 2014; Bryan & Clegg 2006; Swaffield 2011) and innovative assessment practices (Bryan & Clegg 2006, p. 255) have also been recently researched. A detailed review of these is outside the scope of this thesis, but some of the implications will be discussed in the context of feedback practice.

Rust (2007) raises the notion of students engaging with and developing assessment criteria, developing self-evaluation skills, and judging the quality of their own work. Students can learn acceptance of limitations on judgement, and the value of dialogue in developing new ways of working and of conversing with other learners. Further to Rust's work, Nicol (2009) discusses the use of learning technologies to engage students with feedback and enhance learning. Handley et al. (2011) outline a conceptual framework for engaging students in learning through a feedback cycle that helps prime students to engage in the assessment through formative feedback (Figure 2.2 below). This highlights the importance of understanding the purpose of feedback and the role of assessment design in engaging students. Researchers have also considered the relationship between key stakeholders in feedback, good feedback practices, and engagement (Boud & Molloy 2013b; Clouder et al. 2012; Price, Handley, et al. 2011; Walker 2009). These are discussed in section 2.3.



(Handley et al. 2011, p. 550)

Figure 2.2 Contextual and Recursive Influences on Student Engagement with Assessment and Feedback

Each of these areas has attracted a considerable amount of discussion and research, but this has taken place outside a logical and consistent framework from which to evaluate the disparate range of ideas.

2.2 Formative Assessment and Feedback

Formative assessment is predominantly aimed at providing learning opportunities, with feedback being central to this practice. Definitions of formative assessment have developed over the last five decades, first raised by Bloom (1969), who proclaims that the purpose of formative evaluation is “to provide feedback and correctives at each stage in the teaching-learning process” (p. 48). Bloom’s idea is still valid, although the term “formative assessment” is now used (Bennett 2011). The conceptualisation of formative assessment has been developed from social interactions between students and teachers to a process where teachers encourage students to share their understanding so that learning can be enhanced and accelerated through oral and written feedback (Carless 2007, pp. 171-172; Irons & Elkington 2022).

Black and Wiliam (1998, p. 2) defined formative assessment, which they termed assessment for learning, as having as its primary focus the promotion of students’ learning. The feedback becomes formative when it is used to adapt the teaching practices to meet learning needs. Black and Wiliam (2009) revised their original definition of formative assessment to the following:

> Practice in a classroom is formative to the extent that evidence about student achievement is elicited, interpreted, and used by teachers, learners, or their peers, to make decisions about the next steps in instruction that are likely to be better, or better founded, than the decisions they would have taken in the absence of the evidence that was elicited (p. 9).

These definitions argue that improving understanding through feedback is central, but the revised definition recognises a wider range of stakeholders and the interactions among them and seems to place a greater emphasis on the dialogic process among these stakeholders. For the purposes of this thesis, formative assessment is considered to be equivalent to assessment for learning (see (Cookson 2018) for a detailed discussion).

Ecclestone (2007) describes formative assessment as “assessment for learning”, rather than “assessment of learning”. However, Kennedy et al. (2008) find that others have used this phrase to describe a variety of different meanings, and they distinguish between assessment for learning and formative assessment. The argument is concerned with the distinction between the product (piece of work) and the process (learning to learn). If a product view is taken, students are less likely to apply the feedback to future tasks and overall learning, whereas the process view assumes that formative assessment is used for the task at hand and for future tasks, and to teach students how to learn. The importance of feedback remains the same whether it be product or process-focused, but the practices of the teachers and students may differ. Constructive feedback is a central tenet of both product and process views, as feedback has the potential to enhance learning. The key difference is that a process view sees assessment for learning beyond the immediate task (Kennedy et al. 2008, p. 200) and with student involvement. This will be discussed further in Section 2.4.

Swaffield (2011) and McDowell (2010) also make a distinction between formative assessment and assessment for learning. Swaffield distinguishes the degrees of formality associated with formative assessment, particularly in links to curriculum, the key players and the role they play, and the process of learning versus information to guide future learning, whereas McDowell (2010, p. 750) identifies that formative assessment is used to convey a wide range of meanings. The term “assessment for learning” is more tightly defined, with elements including informal feedback through in-class dialogue with peers and teachers; aiding students in developing self-sufficiency in learning; and authentic assessment tasks based on realistic scenarios. The key difference is shared control of learning between teachers and students, with the aim of developing students’ self-sufficiency (Sambell et al. 2013). Bennett (2011, pp. 6-7) proposes two distinctly different ways of defining formative assessment. The first is as an instrument to use for ongoing diagnoses of progress or learning, producing an interim quantitative score. The second is as an ongoing process, producing not a score but fresh insight for the teacher to gauge students’ degree of understanding. However, these views are oversimplifications. For meaningful feedback to be provided, appropriate instruments and suitable processes are both required. Bennett (2011) also outlines how summative assessment can support formative learning through motivating students to prepare for the summative assessment, which itself will develop expertise; taking a test has been shown to strengthen “the representation of information retrieved… and also slow the rate of forgetting” (p. 7); and through providing some formative information. However, the summative assessment must be explicitly designed with this intention for it to effectively support learning. Thus, formative assessment is “neither a test nor a process, but some thoughtful integration of process and purposefully designed methodology or instrumentation" (Bennett 2011, p. 7).

Clearly, there is some ambiguity around definitions of formative assessment and the terminology used. To help make sense of the confusion, Carless (2015a, p. 6) outlines a model he terms "learning orientated assessment"[7], which combines elements of formative and summative assessment with principles from previous definitions of assessment for learning. The model contains three key elements: learning-focused assessment tasks; development of students' evaluative expertise so that they increase their skills and confidence in making judgements about the quality of work; and student engagement with and through feedback**,** developing students to become self-regulated learners. This model accommodates both formative and summative assessment, but also encompasses the concept of student self-sufficiency through a focus on developing students' abilities to evaluative their own and others' work. Central to this model is dialogic feedback (Section 2.3) and developing the feedback literacy of students (Section 2.4).

Despite differences in definitions of formative assessment, the common factor is a reliance on feedback. The challenge is to provide feedback so that students can learn from it and, at the same time, to ensure that students are prepared for quantitative measurement to satisfy institutional policies. The volume of formative-only assessment positively affects the quality of learning outcomes, but is generally poorly understood (Black & Wiliam 2009). It is agreed that this also applies in higher education (Black et al. 2004; Nicol 2009; Yorke 2003a), although larger class sizes can hinder effective formative assessment. It is necessary to have a clear understanding of assessment if the correct balance is to be found with further development in the application of formative assessment across different stages of students' intellectual development and in the practices of giving and receiving feedback (Yorke 2003a, p. 477). Carless (2007) and Weaver (2006) compare planned formative assessment (that is, tasks that are designed to be formative) with interactive formative assessment (such as in-class dialogue) and individual versus whole-class formative assessment to highlight the reliance on feedback. They also recognise the limitations that result from some of the issues surrounding feedback, which include the timing of the feedback and providing opportunity for student action.

[7] First used at the Australian Technology Conference, Adelaide, 2003.

Pre-emptive formative assessment is based on constructivist learning principles. Rust et al. (2005) argue that learning action must take place from the learner's prior knowledge and incorporate new insights into this existing knowledge. This emphasises the centrality of quality feedback in the learning process to clarify learning for the student (Carless 2007). If feedback is not provided, not understood, or misinterpreted, the formative function breaks down and learning suffers.

The formative assessment process, by definition, must involve feedback for students to gauge their level of knowledge. Traditionally, feedback has come from the teacher, but it may also be provided by peers (Boud & Falchikov 2005; Falchikov & Boud 2007) or through online tools or self-assessment (Boud 1995, 2007; 2010; Boud & Falchikov 2005; McDonald & Boud 2003), or a combination of these, providing the course structure allows for these interactions. More recently, feedback loops and feedback spirals have been used along with a focus on feedback literacy (Carless 2019), which will be discussed in more detail in Section 2.3. It is important to make students more aware of the significance of feedback to develop their ability to seek and use it. Boud, as early as 1995, raised the concept of self-assessment in learning as part of formative assessment, asserting that students who engage in accurate self-assessment would benefit from increased learning (Boud 1995). Boud argues that the defining characteristic of self-assessment involves students in setting standards for work and making judgements on how well these standards have been met (1995, p. 12). Student can benefit from self-assessment if they spend time considering the characteristics that make up a good assessment, and then apply these to their own work.

Self-assessment is a necessary skill for effective lifelong learning. Students will learn much more efficiently if they are equipped with the skills and know-how to test and evaluate their knowledge (Boud 1995). However, self-assessment is a skill that, arguably, should be taught to students through the feedback process. Boud and Falchikov (2006, p. 402) argue that to prepare students for lifelong learning, it is necessary to prepare them to make complex judgements about their own work. The implication is that students should become an active part of the learning process and become an "assessor of learning" who is unafraid to challenge the opinion of others; formative assessment is essential for this to happen. A model of assessment that promotes student-centred self-regulation in higher education (Bose & Rengel 2009) concludes that teachers should modify their teaching practices to fit this model.

Interestingly, a number of studies (for example, McKevitt 2016; Wanner & Palmer 2018) have found that despite evidence to support the adoption of strategies that encourage and support formative assessment, in particular self-assessment and peer assessment, universities are reluctant to adopt institutional policies to implement these practices.

In a related study, Nicol et al. (2014) looked specifically at peer feedback as a formative assessment tool that develops students' abilities to make judgements about the quality of their own and their peers' work. Nicol argues that this is a fundamental skill for students and one that is not well-embedded in standard curricula, and notes that students need to be involved in the process of constructing meaning and outlining conditions that make the process more productive. Students' production of feedback for their peers has equal value for learning to receiving feedback from lecturers (Nicol et al. 2014, p. 19). A similar study (Hamer et al. 2014) found little difference in the quality of the feedback, except that tutors gave more-specific feedback and longer comments. Peer feedback has been revisited in recent research focusing on feedback literacies (for example, Deneen & Hoo 2021; Han & Xu 2019). Peer feedback will be considered in the context of feedback literacy in Section 2.4.

The above studies highlight the importance of formative assessment and, more specifically, the use of peer and self-assessment as part of formative assessment. This contrasts with the reliance on summative assessment to produce grades. The tension between summative and formative assessment (Section 2.1.3) can begin to be reconciled once the dual purpose of assessment is understood and accepted. In the higher-education sector, it will always be necessary to provide some form of summative measure for the purposes of grading and accreditation. However, the notion that all assessment can be used for learning needs to be instilled in stakeholders (Carless 2006). Sustainable-assessment theory attempts to do this. Formative assessment can be considered one of the key conduits along which learning can take place. It promotes learning if feedback is provided. To be most effective, the feedback must offer a means of gauging immediate course-based progress as well as embedding more generic learning that can be applied to future tasks (Carless 2015a). In addition, the depth of learning that occurs depends on the student's approach, which can be influenced by feedback. To be consistent with a sustainable assessment framework, the approach must also have at its core the aim for lifelong learning that instils the ability and desire to gain skills for self-evaluation, no matter the context.

2.2.1 Linking Formative Assessment and Feedback Practices

The increasing importance over the past two decades of formative assessment for learning (Black 2015; Boud & Associates 2010; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick 2006; Wanner & Palmer 2018) and the notion that feedback is essential for assessment (Carless & Boud 2018; Nicol 2007; Zhang & Zheng 2018) have resulted in universities seeking ways to improve the formative-assessment process by exploring and improving the role of feedback. Wanner and Palmer (2018) found that peer and self-assessment are key components of formative assessment, as they help students develop their skills in self-evaluation and critical reflection. Their findings, which support and built on earlier studies (Ajjawi & Boud 2018; Boud 1995; Boud et al. 2013; Orsmond & Merry 2012), reconfirm the importance of formative feedback, but the authors acknowledge that work is still needed to reconceptualise assessment as a process done with students rather than to them (Wanner & Palmer 2018). They also assert that students need to be willing to be part of an ongoing process of formative assessment and be comfortable making judgements and providing feedback about their own and their peers' work.

Taras (2008) considers feedback the distinguishing feature of most definitions of formative assessment. Ecclestone (2010, p. 35) considers that for assessment activities to be formative, evidence of students acting on feedback needs to be seen either in the immediate context or for future work (or both). Thus, teachers have a responsibility to learn from students' responses to assessment feedback and adapt their teaching and learning strategies to improve feedback practices. In this way, feedback is a cyclical process that relies on dialogue, interactions, and practices between all stakeholders, and on subsequent action. However, according to Ecclestone (2010), if lecturers do not see how students respond to feedback, they cannot confirm that their feedback practices have actually resulted in formative feedback. As students may apply the feedback received to future subjects, lecturers may not see the student acting on the feedback provided.

Sadler's seminal work on formative assessment and feedback highlights the importance of feedback (Sadler 1989). The adoption of good formative assessment practices, both formal and informal, provides opportunities for students to uncover gaps in their knowledge and understanding, which in turn helps them identify their current knowledge, what they need to work on, and the steps required to be successful (Black & Wiliam 1998; Sadler 1989, 1998, 2010). If the formative-assessment process is relevant and meaningful, the desire to “close the gap” between current and requisite knowledge and skill should, theoretically, motivate students to take a deeper approach to learning (Rushton 2005). Moreover, formative assessment provides opportunities for students to develop learning strategies that are forward-focused, equipping them for both current and future learning (Boud & Molloy 2013b; Carless & Boud 2018). Whilst summative assessment can assist in identifying gaps in knowledge, it does not provide students with the opportunity to fill the knowledge gap immediately, instead compelling students to seek feedback at a later time.

2.2.2 Feedback Driving Assessment for Learning

A number of studies have highlighted the centrality of feedback to student learning (Ajjawi & Boud 2017; Black & Wiliam 1998; Carless 2006; Hounsell et al. 2008). However, Weaver (2006) found that 50% of students did not consider that they had received adequate guidance on how to make use of feedback, although the students did recognise the potential for feedback to improve their learning. Other studies have critiqued the adequacy of formative assessment and feedback in assisting student learning (Boud & Molloy 2013b; Merry et al. 2013), but there is a lack of consensus in defining exactly what it is that assists the learning process (Hounsell et al. 2007; Yorke 2003a). Rust (2007, p. 231) claims, “If the literature suggests we are bad at assessment generally, the evidence is that it is in the area of feedback that we are possibly worst of all…”

If it is true that feedback is not done well, it may be because there is no consensus on exactly what constitutes “good” feedback. Shute (2008, p. 156) in a review of feedback literature described the findings on feedback as “‘inconsistent’, ‘contradictory’, and ‘highly variable’” and found “very few (if any) general conclusions”. It has been well documented that students have expressed dissatisfaction with feedback (Dawson et al. 2019; Hounsell et al. 2008). National surveys such as the Course Experience questionnaire surveys in Australia and the

National Student Survey in the UK (Carless & Boud 2018; Winstone & Boud 2019a) have reported student dissatisfaction with the assessment and feedback process. Some of the dissatisfaction may be dependent on student emotional maturity (Pitt & Norton 2017), staff responsibility in adapting feedback practices (Carless & Boud 2018; Wei & Yanmei 2017), and discrepancies between student and lecturer perceptions of feedback (Dawson et al. 2019). However, Buckley (2021) cautions against the wide application of survey results to support problems with feedback. While recommendations for good feedback practices are provided in the literature, the implementation of these practices and the relationships between them are not well considered. Reviews of feedback (Burke 2009; Glover & Brown 2006; Mutch 2003; Shute 2008) and recent research focusing on feedback practices (Dawson et al. 2021; Winstone & Boud 2019b) have looked at the practices of feedback, with little or no consideration of the relationship between these practices, and the context in which the giving and receiving of feedback occurs. It is accepted that feedback must be communicated to the student, and that the opportunity to clarify and respond must be provided, but this process relies on the student and teacher communicating either in writing, face-to-face, or by some electronic means, whereby a relationship is formed. It is this web of interconnecting relationships and associated practices that this research investigates, as it appears that too often a disconnection occurs between teacher and student (Boud & Molloy 2013b; Dawson et al. 2019).

Numerous factors contribute to the complex topic of feedback and assessment for learning, including the interrelations between stakeholders such as other students, academics, subject coordinators, lecturers, and tutors, and the effect of technology on subject outlines, assessment outlines, plagiarism detection, and feedback from previous assignments. The interrelational experience can be affected by variables such as the level of respect and rapport between stakeholders, the perceived performance of the course deliverer, and the delivery of the course itself. Factors that may play a part in the efficacy of feedback include timing, form, structure, manner, technology, and expertise in providing feedback. Student expectations may also significantly affect the feedback process. Other issues to consider include the growing internationalisation of higher education, which may result in an increase in international students and may also affect the accreditation of higher-education institutions.

This section has outlined how feedback drives assessment for learning. It is clear that feedback is multi-dimensional and complex, and that simply providing feedback will not guarantee learning or that the feedback will even be used. It seems that feedback has multiple roles to play in student learning. The next section will discuss feedback for lifelong learning.

2.2.3 Equipping for Lifelong Learning

In the context of a postgraduate business school, formative assessment should be used to equip students for lifelong learning (Boud & Falchikov 2005; Ecclestone 2010; Nguyen & Walker 2016; Sambell et al. 2017). As lifelong learning is an attribute that has become highly regarded for future positions, it is imperative to instil and develop it in those currently employed to self-manage their learning process. This is, however, contrary to the traditional view of higher-education institutions, which recognise that formative assessment can be both formal and informal, but in a general sense, see their primary focus as promoting learning to prepare students for the requisite summative mechanism. Thomas et al. (2011) describes an attempt at designing and implementing assessment processes that used both self- and peer assessment. Both involved judgement by the students and/or their peers regarding how well they had achieved the stated outcomes. Good practice in this area is still not well defined, particularly within the increasingly multicultural environment in which most western universities now operate (Tait 2009).

A key reason for assessment failing to support learning is ineffective or misdirected feedback (Orsmond & Merry 2011; Penman et al. 2021; Weaver 2006; Winstone & Carless 2020). Assessment of high-level and complex learning is under threat, as are assessment standards (Price et al 2011, pp. 482-483). Assessment standards typically reside in academic/professional communities, and the way the assessment environment is managed strongly influences the effectiveness of assessment (Carless 2015a). This premise is consistent with prior research (Carless et al. 2011) and outlines some important challenges when reviewing assessment practices. It is necessary to understand not only the importance of feedback but also how to improve its implementation across a range of contexts. It is important to note that good practices of feedback, although well documented in the literature, do not necessarily always support learning, as there seems to be a disconnection between theory and practice. This thesis will assume a broad view of formative assessment that combines assessment for learning and formative assessment to develop lifelong learning, and that has feedback as its central driver.

Feedback is central to learning (Sadler 2010, p. 536), for student engagement, and for the development of students into self-regulated learners (Carless 2015a). It is important to recognise that just providing feedback is no guarantee of improvement. For example, the most commonly reported problems with feedback are communication issues, perceptions that influence affective issues, the form feedback takes, the timing of feedback, and relational issues between feedback provider and recipient (Carless 2006, 2015a; Knight & Yorke 2003; Pokorny & Pickford 2010; Rust 2007). Additional investigation is required into the practices of feedback that promote learning.

2.3 Feedback in Practice

A plethora of more recent papers have discussed how to implement feedback strategies in practice. Reviews (Boud & Molloy 2013b; Carless 2006, 2020b; Hattie & Timperley 2007; Sadler 2010; Winstone & Carless 2020) have identified a range of strategies that constitute good practice. However, the term "feedback" can convey a range of meanings and fulfill a number of purposes. In higher education, feedback fulfills a mix of roles: it identifies gaps in understanding to improve learning, and is an integral part of the relational dimension (Middleton et al. 2020) between teacher and student that is used to communicate these gaps. Knowledge and content feedback can be specific and help the student to identify gaps in knowledge. However, if the feedback relates to an academic or cognitive skill, it may not be possible to fill the gap quickly. This also depends on whether the teacher is passing on knowledge (content) or facilitating a student's self-assessment or a group's peer assessment (Wanner & Palmer 2018), or co-constructing meaning (Esterhazy & Damşa 2019).

Early definitions of feedback have tended to focus on the transmission of information related to students' performance or understanding (Hattie & Timperley 2007). This has been referred to as "old-paradigm" feedback (Winstone & Carless 2020) or "feedback mark 1" (Boud & Molloy 2013b). More recently, feedback has been reconceptualised as a process whereby students and lecturers engage in ongoing dialogues to develop understanding of key concepts (Carless 2022). The emphasis is on students improving their work by closing feedback loops and demonstrating the use of feedback (Carless 2019). Recent research has also focused on the feedback literacy of students and lecturers (Carless & Boud 2018; Carless & Winstone 2020; de Kleijn 2021).

The literature on feedback in higher education can be loosely placed in four categories: the effectiveness of feedback practices, different perceptions of feedback, engagement with feedback, and feedback literacies. The effectiveness of feedback practices has been widely investigated (see Evans 2013; Hattie & Timperley 2007; Li & De Luca 2014). Overall, these studies are inconsistent in the theoretical frameworks employed, and conceptualise feedback as inputs and outputs (see, for example, Donovan 2014; Glover & Brown 2006; Nicol 2007; Orrell 2006; Poulos & Mahony 2008).

Second, studies have focused on the perceptions of feedback (see, for example, Adcroft 2010; Beaumont et al. 2008; Carless 2006; Dowden et al. 2013; Gamlem & Smith 2013; Pokorny & Pickford 2010). These studies have generally used interviews and survey data to gauge students' and lecturers' perceptions in understanding and conceptualising feedback. A number of these studies have smaller sample sizes or are in specific contexts that make the findings less transferable to other contexts.

The third aspect is feedback engagement, as reviewed by Winstone, Nash, Parker, et al. (2017). The majority of studies have used surveys, questionnaires, and interviews to gauge participant engagement with feedback. Studies focusing on the role of student engagement have emphasised the importance of the relational aspects of engagement and the role of feedback (Clouder et al. 2012; Price, Handley, et al. 2011; Russell & Slater 2011; Weaver & Esposto 2012; Zepke & Leach 2010), and considered engagement with feedback as a social practice (Handley et al. 2011; Jørgensen 2019; Price, Handley, et al. 2011). Although an in-depth study of engagement is outside the scope of this literature review, key aspects that relate to feedback and the relational dimension will be considered. The final aspect, feedback literacies, is considered in Section 2.4.

In the past two decades, there has been a substantial amount of research regarding an array of issues associated with feedback; this research has reflected a move from considering feedback to be a transmission of information to considering it as a process that involves an array of entwined practices. The evolution of the research also highlights where the theory is yet to affect practice (Ajjawi & Boud 2017; Boud & Molloy 2013b; Dawson et al. 2019; Merry et al. 2013; Price, Handley, et al. 2011). Issues include students' difficulty in understanding and interpreting tutor comments, particularly the language used (Carless 2006; Gibbs & Simpson 2004; Higgins et al. 2002; Weaver 2006), and the different meaning of terminology applied by lecturers and tutors (Price et al. 2010). Walker (2009, p. 76) found that "a relatively high proportion of comments made on assignments are, however, very unlikely to be usable", suggesting that the degree to which theories of teaching and learning were understood by lecturers needed further study. Lecturers have also been shown to fail to recognise the students' perspective, meaning that students have not always understood the intention of feedback (Gibbs & Simpson 2004; Hounsell et al. 2005; Orsmond & Merry 2011). Lecturers may not always provide specific-enough advice for improvement (Higgins et al. 2001; MacLellan 2001). This was particularly relevant where a lecturer found it difficult to articulate to the student why a piece of work was of poor quality. Therefore, students may have found it difficult to act on the feedback (Gibbs & Dunbar-Goddet 2007; Poulos & Mahony 2008), especially if the feedback was presented in a one-way written format that for some students conveyed a degree of finality rather than encouraging inquiry (Hounsell et al. 2008). Students also perceived that the lecturer was not interested in engaging in a discussion about the feedback, which made the student less likely to accept and/or act on it. Whilst there have been various attempts to address these issues, it seems that simply focusing on fixing issues with feedback delivery has not resulted in consistent improvements or changes in practice (Carless 2006; Sadler 2010). The danger of poor feedback is that not only does it diminish the learning opportunity, but it can also actually be harmful to students' self-efficacy and future learning (Hattie 2007; Black & Wiliam 2009). If feedback is not carefully constructed within a learning environment where students feel comfortable, unclear negative feedback where there is an uncertain self-image can lead to poor performance (Black & Wiliam 2009).

Several challenges to providing effective feedback are discussed in the following pages and briefly summarised in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Challenges of Providing Effective Feedback

Issue	Outcomes
Terminology and language used	Difficulty in understanding comments Difficulty in understanding the meaning of comments Language used is unfamiliar – new terminology
Lecturer practices in teaching and learning	Lecturers lack understanding of teaching and learning theory, resulting in comments that are not usable Students are not instructed how to use feedback Feedback is not specific enough Lecturers find it difficult to describe the quality of work Timing of feedback Feedback is provided using an information-transmission model Feedback is rarely followed by suggestions for actions to improve student learning
Affective issues	Students' perception that the lecturer is not interested in engaging in a feedback dialogue or is making harsh or judgemental comments
Engagement	Lecturers do not recognise students' perspective Students do not read and/or engage with feedback at a deep level

Feedback has rarely been followed by suggestions for actions students can take to improve their learning (Carless 2006; Dawson et al. 2019; Henderson, Ajjawi, et al. 2019); in truth, students are rarely instructed in how to use feedback (Weaver 2006) and rely on unsophisticated strategies for making sense of it (Burke 2009), or do not use the feedback at all (Irons & Elkington 2022). This, combined with the timing of assessment due dates at the end of course work, larger class sizes, and increasing teaching workloads result either in the student not using the feedback or the quality of the feedback itself being poor (Dihoff et al. 2004; Hounsell et al. 2008). More-recent studies have repositioned feedback as a dialogic process (Ajjawi & Boud 2017, 2018; Gibbs 2014; Nicol 2010; Yang & Carless 2012) with the aim to assist students to become self-regulating learners (Carless 2015a; Carless et al. 2011; Chen & Bonner 2019; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick 2006; Roeser & Peck 2009). Sambell et al. (2017, p. 152) followed Sadler's (1989) formulation of formative assessment, outlining that good feedback enables students to see the quality of work and standard expected, evaluate their work is in relation to these standards, and employ a range of strategies to close any gap.

It has also been found that any discrepancies in the perceptions of feedback between feedback providers and recipients diminishes the value and quality of the feedback (Nicol 2007; Pokorny & Pickford 2010; Poulos & Mahony 2008; Rae & Cochrane 2008). To minimise such discrepancies, it has been suggested that the feedback process should be a dialogue (Gibbs 2014; Wood 2021; Yang & Carless 2012) that helps to clarify whether teachers and students understand each other (Chan & Luo 2022; Crisp 2007; Gibbs 2014; Merry et al. 2013; Nicol 2010; Orsmond et al. 2011) and builds on the relational dimension within which the dialogic process occurs (Bye & Fallon 2015; Middleton et al. 2020). Some feedback practices have been identified as making it less likely that feedback will be well-used. Six examples are discussed below.

First, giving grades without feedback has been found to be particularly damaging to motivation and to harm students' sense of competence (Black & Wiliam 1998; Hattie 1987). The provision of feedback with grades allows students the opportunity to determine what they did well and what needs development. It has also been found that students performed better when provided with feedback instead of grades, which suggests that feedback should be given before marks are returned (Nicol 2007; Rust et al. 2005); research has found that students read feedback more carefully when they receive it before they receive their marks (Black & Wiliam 1998), and they are more likely to use feedback to guide learning (Middleton et al. 2020). Under the right conditions, students are very willing to talk about feedback and are keen to share their views with lecturers (Carless 2006). This is a strong indication that feedback practices are as central to the efficacy of feedback as the content itself. Added to this, Black and Wiliam (1998) argue that the value of feedback is compromised if students are provided with the correct answers before they receive feedback.

Second, students' ability to make sense of feedback can be compromised by teachers using an information-transmission model, in which feedback is provided with no opportunity for clarification and discussion. It appears that teachers adopting this approach do not use the feedback process with the intent of creating a dialogue (Sadler 2010). Effective design of feedback processes needs to be embedded into the course structure (Molloy et al. 2020). Feedback is no longer something that is only provided on the return of assessment tasks. It needs to be provided in context and integrated into students' overall learning (Orsmond et al. 2005, p. 381) and into the curriculum (Pitt & Carless 2021). The way students make sense of feedback is critical, and recent research has found that teachers have a responsibility to assist students in how to make sense of feedback (Evans 2013; Ryan et al. 2022) or at least understand feedback practices (Crisp 2007, p. 577) and processes (Jensen et al. 2022).

Third, the timing and diffusion of feedback should not be too late to be useful, or too vague, unclear, inconsistent, or ambiguous (Chanock 2000; Glover & Brown 2006; Weaver 2006), or students simply will not understand it (Lea & Street 1998). This may lead to students not trusting or respecting the feedback provider (Orsmond et al. 2005), which results in the feedback not being accepted and, in some cases, being seen as a personal criticism.

Fourth, there are many reports of students not reading feedback (Hounsell et al. 2008), throwing it away "if they disliked the grade, while others seemed concerned only with the final result and did not collect the marked work" (Gibbs & Simpson 2004 p. 11), or not seeing or understanding its value: "Sometimes I do read the comments, but I find that I'll never write the same essay again anyway… I tend to ignore them [comments] in some ways, unless there is something very startling" (Hounsell (1987) cited inGibbs & Simpson 2004, p. 23). Giving feedback before marks are provided may encourage students to read the feedback in preparation for receiving their marks (Ahmed Shafi et al. 2018).

Fifth, it has been asserted (Yorke 2003a, p. 233) that the more general feedback is, the better it is for improvement in future tasks, but that this also needs to be combined with feedback related to the current task. The counter-argument is that general feedback lacks meaning unless it links to criteria that are common across a number of subjects or to general course outcomes are made clear. This may suggest that the application of feedback for future tasks needs to be linked to common criteria. Hattie and Timperley (2007) found considerable variability in the efficacy of feedback, implying that some types of feedback are more effective than others. They outlined different categories of feedback, such as feedback about a particular task, the process used in accomplishing the task, self-regulation, or the person. Feedback that focuses on the person is rarely effective, whereas feedback that focuses on set criteria and outcomes depends on the feedback provider’s ability to convey the message and the recipient’s willingness to receive it. This may then depend on the feedback practices used by teacher and student and the relationship between these practices.

Finally, Joughin (2009) outlines three kinds of problems with feedback that can affect the ability for learning to take place: the complexity of feedback as a learning process; structural problems related to the timing of feedback and its focus and quality (as discussed earlier); and issues of power, identity, emotion, and subjectivity. These issues all relate to the practice of feedback and can depend on the context. The effect of feedback relies partly on the motivation of the learner to reduce the mismatch between actual and expected performance (Betters-Reed 2008; Biggs 2007; Crisp 2007; Juwah 2004; Sadler 1998, 2010); thus, one of the purposes of feedback would then be to assist the student to move toward the expected level of performance. However, it is important that the student is engaged in the process of determining what this expected level of performance is, and that information to improve student strategies for processing learning tasks as well as improving their ability for self-regulation in learning is given (Hattie & Timperley 2007). Feedback that is perceived as justifying the mark does not encourage students to be forward-looking in the use of feedback (Winstone & Boud 2020), and may actually hinder students in making judgements on the quality of their work.

A number of studies have identified feedback practices that have proved positive in certain circumstances (Henderson, Phillips, et al. 2019; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick 2006), highlighted the inadequacy of some feedback practices (Henderson, Phillips, et al. 2019; Sadler 2010), investigated the holistic role of feedback towards lifelong learning (Crossouard 2012; Nguyen & Walker 2016), and discussed the need for quality feedback (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick 2006). In the context of higher education, identifying key feedback practices and how to best use them has the potential to enhance learning, demonstrate an assurance of learning, assist in the process of accreditation, and move towards a more student-centred learning approach. However, further research is necessary to determine the feedback practices that may affect learning, and, in particular, the relationships between these practices. Feedback practices that work to develop skills needed for lifelong learning (Ecclestone 2010; van Woezik et al. 2020) are of particular interest. If lifelong learning is the goal, then the aim of feedback should be more than situational and have a holistic purpose of instilling the tools for lifelong learning. Critical to this is individual students taking control of their own learning, thus empowering them to engage positively with feedback (Boud & Falchikov 2005; Hounsell et al. 2008; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick 2006; Sadler 2010). Feedback then becomes the driver of formative assessment and learning.

A related shift has been towards student-centred learning. Sadler (2010) points out that the emphasis should be on how students perceive and interpret feedback. This requires teachers to be more proactive in evaluating the efficacy of their feedback and feedback strategies. "It cannot simply be assumed that when students are given feedback they will know what to do with it" (Sadler 1998, p. 78). Thus, it is important for teachers to be aware of the responsibility that feedback providers are given and to ensure that they are suitably equipped to evaluate the efficacy of feedback. For teachers to be able to do this presupposes a two-way transfer of information and feedback on feedback, and that they have the necessary skills. Orsmond et al. (2011) describe this as a dialogic process combined with students becoming effective assessors and regulators of their own learning. This is a sustainable-feedback model that necessitates dialogue, goal-setting, and self-evaluation. Students must recognise the need for a proactive dialogue to engage fully with feedback (Ajjawi & Boud 2018; Asghar 2016). Thus, before looking at how relationship factors affect feedback, it is necessary to consider feedback from students' perspective to gain a clearer picture of how students construct their use of feedback.

2.3.1 Feedback from Students' Perspective, Engagement, and Dialogue

The effectiveness of feedback from a student perspective has been under-researched in the context of higher education and has only recently been explored (see, for example, Ali et al. 2018; Carless & Boud 2018; Chalmers et al. 2018; Dawson et al. 2019; Lowe & Shaw 2019). A study by Poulos and Mahony (2008) focusing on students' perceptions of the effectiveness of feedback identified three key dimensions: perceptions, impact, and credibility of feedback. The majority of research has focused on the what, how, and when of feedback, but predominantly from the teacher's perspective. Studies conducted from the student's perspective have reported contradictory findings. Yorke (2003b) found that students prefer more-generalised feedback, whereas Poulos and Mahony (2008) found that students preferred more-specific feedback. However, Yorke's study was focused on feedback for lifelong learning, and Poulos and Mahony's on the immediate context. If feedback is a two- (or more-) way process, then it is necessary to also gauge the what, how, and when from the student perspective (Carless 2007; Carless et al. 2011; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick 2006). Although it is believed that feedback supports learning and that students' responses to feedback vary in different ways at different times, there have been relatively few attempts to measure the extent of student engagement (Price et al. 2008). However, over the past 10 years research into student engagement with feedback and has focused on framing and defining student engagement (Axelson & Flick 2010; Handley et al. 2011; Kahu 2011), measuring student engagement (Carr et al. 2010; Hagel et al. 2011), improving student engagement (Chalmers 2014; Clouder et al. 2012; Kearney 2012), conceptualising student engagement (Hagel et al. 2011; Jørgensen 2019; Lawson & Lawson 2013; Winstone, Nash, Parker, et al. 2017), and examining proactive recipience processes that might lead to better engagement with feedback (Winstone, Nash, Parker, et al. 2017). A detailed analysis of student engagement is outside the scope of this review, but student engagement in the context of feedback literacy will be considered in Section 2.4

The complexity of issues that affect student engagement illustrates that simply identifying good practices of feedback does not necessarily improve feedback. Students do not always recognise when feedback is being provided unless it is in written form (Blair et al. 2013); hence it is important to make students aware of the less formal ways of feedback, such as class discussions and email. This can be done by outlining the different modes of feedback provided within a course, particularly highlighting the desire to create a feedback dialogue (Blair & McGinty 2012; Gibbs 2014; Merry et al. 2013; Nicol 2010). Interaction and dialogue are also central to implementing formative assessment, as Nicol (2010, p. 507) writes: "Feedback, as has been argued earlier, is not a monologue. The meaning of feedback comments is not transmitted from the teacher to the student; rather meaning comes into being through interaction and dialogue."

Feedback is crucial for improving students' understanding of the assessment process, the purposes of assessment, the importance of assessment for learning and the complexity surrounding the relational dimension (Price, Carroll, et al. 2011). Whilst the wide array of feedback practices covers the majority of these functions, the challenge is integrating them into a variety of contexts; feedback dialogues may provide this opportunity. Rowe (2011, p. 354) reports that students appreciated when teachers adopted feedback practices that involved a dialogical form rather than a passive one-way transmission of information. The students wanted a "more interactive relationship with the teacher", which involved a "more active and participatory form of learning", with students engaged on an individual level. Rowe's study was part of a larger research project that used focus groups, individual interviews, and existing literature to design a Student Feedback Questionnaire (Rowe & Wood 2008). These findings are supported by Price, Handley, et al. (2011, pp. 880-881), who, after a three-year study, described feedback as not just a unidirectional transmission, but rather a construction of feedback by the teacher and its reconstruction by students, which is influenced by the feedback environment and the dialogic interaction between teacher and student.

Extending the work on feedback dialogues, Yang and Carless (2012) propose a conceptual model of dialogic feedback that comprised three interdependent dimensions: cognitive, social-affective, and structural. The cognitive dimension addresses how to improve students' use of feedback, their understanding of feedback's purposes, and their self-regulation in appraising the gap between their present and required performance (Yang & Carless 2012, p. 5). The social-affective dimension accepts feedback as a "social and relational process in which dialogic interaction within a trusting atmosphere can help to promote learner agency and self-regulation" (Yang & Carless 2012, pp. 7-8), and hence create positive feedback experiences, a responsibility for feedback, and greater agency in the feedback process. Finally, the structural dimension considers what constraints affect the feedback process, including assessment practices and policies and institutional factors (Yang & Carless 2012). The analysis of feedback in these three dimensions highlights the importance of dialogues as interactions between lecturers and students to reduce misconceptions about feedback and improve engagement (Ajjawi & Boud 2017). Ajjawi and Boud (2018, pp. 1107-1108) found a lack of empirical research supporting the theorised value of feedback dialogues. They extended the work of Yang and Carless (2012) by offering empirical support for the three dimensions affecting dialogic feedback and recasting feedback "as a social act involving learners, tutors, contexts, and relationships" (Ajjawi & Boud 2018, p. 1115). The importance of creating a feedback dialogue between teachers and students is a critical to the feedback process, but the enabling factors have only recently been explored. The interplay between the social-affective, structural, and cognitive dimensions in enabling feedback dialogues (Ajjawi & Boud 2018; Yang & Carless 2012) requires further empirical research.

It is possible that a considerable number of the reported problems with feedback could be improved if students and lecturers were intentionally engaged in dialogue about feedback's purposes and processes. An open dialogue on feedback would also provide an opportunity to emphasise the value of formative assessment (Asghar 2016; Carless et al. 2011; Merry et al. 2013; Orsmond & Merry 2011). However, formative assessment is still not the norm at universities (Wanner & Palmer 2018, p. 1032), and recent research has found that putting formative assessment into practice is problematic (Wu & Jessop 2018, p. 1028). This issue had been addressed by Nicol nearly a decade earlier, but the practice of implementing formative feedback remains challenging (Nicol 2010). Student engagement is critical, but the role of educators in encouraging student engagement is still under-researched. Student engagement with feedback relies on lecturers' acceptance and understanding of the student-lecturer relationship (Zhang 2021), which is an aspect of the social-affective dimension.

It has been found that many students commencing undergraduate studies do not possess strategies to engage with feedback, particularly written feedback (Burke 2009; Carless 2006; Weaver 2006). It is evident that further research is required into the different perceptions of feedback from the student perspective (Carless 2006; Cramp 2011; Higgins et al. 2001; Poulos & Mahony 2008), particularly with regard to how students receive and respond to feedback (Higgins et al. 2002; Mutch 2003), how to engage students better with assessment, and what strategies teachers could employ. Middleton et al. (2020) suggest that explicitly teaching students how to use feedback could be valuable. The perceptions and responses of students to feedback are essential in the communication process. This is particularly important if it is accepted that feedback should be a dialogic communication between teacher and student. The bundle of feedback practices that facilitate this need to be further explored.

2.3.2 Feedback from Lecturers' Perspective – from Transmission to Process

Over 35 years ago, Harris and Rosenthal (1985) found that classroom dynamics and culture strongly related to performance. Most recent studies have placed feedback central to learning, and shift from regarding it as a teacher-given product to considering it a process, but have found that students do not always act on feedback (Boud & Molloy 2013a; Henderson, Ajjawi, et al. 2019; Molloy et al. 2020; Winstone & Carless 2020; Zhang & Zheng 2018). The purpose of feedback has also been studied and a range of broad interpretations discussed (Dawson et al. 2019; Hattie & Timperley 2007; Hounsell 2016; Nicol 2007; Pokorny & Pickford 2010; Price et al. 2010), and a disconnection has been consistently identified between lecturers and students concerning the purpose of, and responsibility for, feedback (Davis & Dargusch 2015; Pitt & Norton 2017; Poulos & Mahony 2008; Sambell et al. 2013). The feedback literacy (Winstone & Carless 2020) of lecturers and students (Carless 2020b; Carless & Winstone 2020; Malecka et al. 2020) is an area that needs to be understood better if this disconnection is to be addressed. Feedback literacy will be discussed further in Section 2.4. From the lecturer's perspective, there is an inherent expectation that students will engage with feedback and use it for future tasks, and that, ideally, students will become "proactive recipients" of feedback (Winstone, Nash, Parker, et al. 2017). In practice, this has not happened consistently, and students still report dissatisfaction with feedback. Recently, Winstone and Boud

(2019b) have explored cultures of feedback practice in Australia and the UK, recommending the development of a “feedback culture” where evidence of the impact of feedback is the norm (p. 12). It is also imperative to propagate a culture whereby feedback is viewed as promoting lifelong learning in a safe, interactive, dialogic environment (Ajjawi & Boud 2018; Boud & Soler 2016; Crossouard 2012; Nguyen & Walker 2016).

In the higher-education sector, lecturers generally have some freedom to determine the type of assessment task, mode of delivery, timing, and feedback process. This highlights the importance of lecturers understanding the purpose of feedback and their responsibility for it. It has also been recently proposed that the development and implementation of the feedback process should involve both lecturers and students. Feedback has been reframed to focus on what students do (Winstone, Boud, et al. 2021), with Ajjawi and Boud (2018) and Heron et al. (2021) examining the role of dialogue creation in feedback and Heron et al. (2021, p. 10) arguing for feedback to be considered “a natural and contingent part of the teaching and learning process", calling this “teacher talk”. However, the study by Heron et al. did not consider the student voice. Although the focus is on what students do, lecturers have, as part of their responsibility for feedback, to employ strategies that engage students. However, there is scope for further research exploring lecturer practices (Handley et al. 2011) to facilitate student engagement (Zhang 2021). It is important to note that the above strategies require lecturers and students to engage in dialogues about the purposes of feedback as part of the feedback process, and that this requires some level of ongoing relationship.

Reframing feedback as a process has been termed “feedback mark 2” (Boud & Molloy 2013b) and “new-paradigm feedback” (Winstone, Boud, et al. 2021). Carless (2015a) describes the old paradigm of feedback as providing comments and information to students (input-focused) and the new paradigm as requiring student involvement, interaction, and interpretation with a future outlook (output-focused). This has been extended further by Winstone and Carless (2020), with new-paradigm feedback seen as a partnership between teacher and student, with the teacher aiming to implement feedback practices that encourage students to engage and seek feedback and to understand its importance for their own learning. Winstone, Boud, et al. (2021, p. 12) refer to the old paradigm of feedback as “feedback information”, defining it as “information learners can use to improve the quality of their work or learning strategies”. They call the new paradigm of feedback “feedback processes”, defining it as “the activities undertaken by learners to obtain, understand, and use feedback information”. Intentionally embedding feedback in the learning process to create “feedback ‘cultures’” (Winstone, Nash, Rowntree, et al. 2017, p. 10) and embedding feedback into the curriculum (Winstone & Boud 2019b) have the aim of improving students’ feedback literacy (Winstone & Carless 2020). The literature in this area has been primarily conceptual (see Malecka et al. 2020; Wood 2021), with course design also being part of the foundational research into student feedback (Molloy et al. 2020). Winstone and Carless (2020, pp. 34-37) also outline a case study focusing on how feedback literacy was embedded into the curriculum design of a new subject. There is still scope for empirical research into the creation of feedback cultures through embedding feedback literacy into the curriculum. This will be discussed further in Section 2.4.

2.3.3 The Relational Dimension of Feedback – Impact of Power and Affect

Feedback involves interactions of individuals that occur in varied and complex ways. The interaction requires a level of communication between student and teacher. This interaction has been referred to as the relational dimension (Price et al. 2010), and has been described by both students and teachers as being at the “heart of a successful feedback process” (p. 283). Middleton et al. (2020) found that students’ relationship with teachers plays a significant role in the feedback process, and Heron et al. (2021) note that there is a relational dimension of teacher feedback literacy (Section 2.4). It is crucial that students are comfortable in their learning environment, as the relational dimension is critical. The lecturer’s direction of the relational dimension can affect this level of comfort, and is integral to the efficacy of feedback.

Before further discussion, it is necessary to outline what is meant by the term “relational dimension”. The provision of feedback assumes a relationship between the relevant stakeholders. This relationship and the practices associated with it is termed for the purposes of this review the “relational dimension”. The practices may include practices of engagement, feedback practices, institutional procedures or guidelines, and any other practice that may influence the relational dimension of the relevant stakeholders. Communication takes into consideration the relational dimension of feedback. Both parties need to be aware of the potential misconceptions if feedback is to be conveyed, interpreted, and responded to appropriately. Students will still evaluate feedback based on their relationship with the feedback provider (Ahmed Shafi et al. 2018). Price et al. (2010) found that in the absence of a relational dimension, students found it difficult to engage with feedback. This was extended in later work, which found that feedback is relational because students, despite the absence of a close relationship with the feedback provider, will still be affected by their impressions of the teacher, the teachers' credibility, and the trust students have in the teacher (Price et al. 2013, p. 45). The following section looks at the relational dimension of feedback practices and briefly reviews the literature in this area.

The review of the literature has thus far outlined the central role of formative assessment in learning, and found that feedback is an essential component of formative assessment. There is now a substantial quantity of literature on good feedback practices, but comparatively less focusing on the relational dimension and feedback practices of the stakeholders in the feedback process. Carless (2006) found that student evaluations of feedback are not as positive as staff evaluations, and that the perceptions of the value of feedback differ between teacher and student. A two-way flow of communication is essential for feedback practices to be most effective. For a two-way dialogue to be beneficial, a relationship between feedback provider and feedback receiver needs to occur (Section 2.3.1). In support of this, Pokorny and Pickford (2010, p. 22) conclude that the process of feedback involves communication and dialogue that takes place in "specific social contexts". The emphasis should be on how students perceive and interpret feedback, rather than how teachers intend feedback, which is a shift towards student-centred learning (Sadler 2010). It has been observed that students will be more receptive and positive towards feedback if the feedback provider and feedback recipient have a relationship of mutual trust and respect (Cramp 2011; Pokorny & Pickford 2010; Poulos & Mahony 2008; Wygal & Stout 2011). This is particularly so when the feedback is designed to move them forward and provide a safe and supportive learning environment.

There is a wide discrepancy in the perceptions of students of the value and quality of feedback (Hounsell et al. 2008). The teacher-student relationship is key to a beneficial feedback process (Price et al. 2008, p. 285). Further to this, Price et al. (2010) identified the need to have a relational dialogical process between teacher and student on the purpose of feedback, and note that what is needed to enhance the effectiveness of feedback is “recognition of the relational dimension” (Price et al. 2010, p. 284). There is a significant amount of research focusing on the creation and communication of feedback (Carless 2007, 2013; Duncan 2007; Sadler 2010), engagement of students (Bono 2011; Bryson & Hand 2007; Cramp 2011) and analysis of student perceptions and responses (Cramp 2011; Hounsell et al. 2008; Tang & Biggs 2007).

Although there is research on the idea of a “learning culture”, particularly for lifelong learning (Boud & Falchikov 2005, 2006; Ecclestone 2010; Falchikov & Boud 2007; Yorke 2003a, 2003b), there appears to be a lack of research identifying the conditions that have an impact on the acceptance and effective use of feedback by students, particularly the effect of the relational dimension between student and teacher in the feedback process. The assessment and learning processes are influenced by student-teacher relationships (Bergstrom 2010, p. 46). These processes have an effect on the role students expect of teachers and the uptake of one-on-one feedback opportunities. Pokorny and Pickford (2010, p. 26) found that some students felt it was their responsibility to initiate the relationship in seeking feedback. These students viewed the relational dimension between teacher and student as a key determinant of effective feedback practices, and one simple yet effective way of increasing engagement is through giving as much attention to feedback relationships as to the devices and strategies used to structure feedback (Pokorny & Pickford 2010, p. 28).

However, whilst there is a large body of research concerning feedback, there is limited research on students’ perceptions of feedback (Poulos & Mahony 2008, p. 144), particularly of its value and usefulness (Weaver 2006, p. 389). Mann (2001) highlights the need for teachers to be aware of their own “positional power” and not hinder the students’ control over their own learning. It is important that strategies are employed that encourage teacher-student dialogue about feedback. This is essential if feedback is to be effective in higher education (Laurillard 2002, pp. 210-211; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick 2006). Bryson and Hand (2007, p. 360) outline three levels of engagement that may assist in developing a framework for teacher and student engagement that facilitates dialogue: between staff and students (discourse);

between staff and subject (enthusiasm); between staff and the teaching process (professionalism). Other stakeholders to consider would be teaching teams, lecturers and tutors, faculty support staff, and academic language and learning staff. This is supported by Ajjawi and Boud (2018), who list relational activity as one of the dimensions needed for feedback dialogue. Price et al. (2010, p. 279) acknowledge that “[f]eedback provided can help to shape perceptions of a relational dimension while at the same time the relational dimension is a factor in the extent of engagement with feedback”. Perceptions formed through the feedback process help shape the relational dimension and may affect the degree to which students engage with feedback. This complex relational dimension is influenced by context, student maturity, and lecturers’ understanding of the relational dimension (Bye & Fallon 2015). More recently, Watling and Ginsburg (2019, p. 79) have argued that “[t]eacher-learner relationships based on trust create safety for learners to engage with feedback”, while Winstone and Carless (2020, p. 149) point out that the relational dynamics that are part of the feedback process set the context in which students are to engage with feedback. The relational dimension and practices of feedback in the higher-education context is of particular interest, as it is imperative that students and teachers cultivate relationships where an ongoing dialogue is possible (Winstone & Carless 2020).

Power imbalances between lecturers and students can affect feedback processes and students’ willingness to engage; this is particularly the case with students from Asian cultures, where there is generally higher power distance (Hofstede 1985). Hwang and Francesco (2010) found that power distance affected student’s feedback-seeking behaviour, but their study had a relatively small sample size and used a single measure of learning. Despite these limitations, their study did demonstrate that issues of power can influence aspects of the feedback process such as feedback-seeking. Students are also at a power disadvantage when it comes to knowledge of subject content and negotiating meaning (Henderson, Molloy, et al. 2019), but this can be reduced if practices that encourage co-construction of meaning are used (Molloy & Bearman 2019). At its most basic level, power can be considered as acting with affect, and therefore it can be claimed that practice theory is all about power (Hui et al. 2016, p. 171). However, power relations only exist in the performance of practices, and in practice theory, power is not specifically discussed because it is everywhere (Hui et al. 2016). However, practice theory can still assist in understanding the presence and operation of power in the feedback process by studying how practices relate and support each other (Hui et al. 2016).

As discussed in Section 2.3.2, there has been a shift away from a transmission-oriented, cognitivist model of feedback towards a socio-constructivist understanding of feedback. This conceptualisation considers students' engagement with, and action upon, the advice they receive as critical parts of the process (Henderson, Phillips, et al. 2019; Van der Kleij et al. 2019; Winstone & Carless 2020). A greater emphasis is placed on the learner's role in demonstrating "proactive recipience", of feedback information, which Winstone, Nash, Parker, et al. (2017, p. 17) defined as "a form of agentic engagement that involves the learner sharing responsibility for making feedback processes effective". Lecturers are encouraged to move from understanding feedback as a transmission of information on how well a set task was completed to a more dialogic interaction where students are empowered to seek and engage in discussion on the understanding and quality of their work (Molloy et al. 2020; Winstone & Carless 2020; Winstone et al. 2019). This cornerstone principle of feedback literacy will be discussed further in Section 2.4.

2.3.4 A Practice Perspective of Feedback

The change from conceptualising feedback as a product to seeing it as an ongoing process has raised challenges in the investigation of feedback. As discussed earlier, new-paradigm perspectives of feedback incorporate the engagement of students through the creation of feedback dialogues (Ajjawi & Boud 2018) and a focus on using feedback for developing lifelong-learning skills (Nguyen & Walker 2016). These perspectives also highlight the need for both lecturers and students to become more feedback-literate, and suggest that students have a responsibility to act on feedback provided (Hopfenbeck 2020) and actively seek feedback that will positively affect current and future learning (Winstone, Nash, Rowntree, et al. 2017). Entwined in the above conceptualisation of feedback is the socio-affective dimension, which recognises that relationships between lecturers and students can enable or constrain feedback (Esterhazy 2018; Middleton et al. 2020). In this relatively recent and developing conceptualisation of feedback, students have been positioned as central to the feedback process (Winstone & Carless 2020) and as active seekers of feedback. The focus changes to what students do, rather than what lecturers do. What students do can be broadly described as feedback-seeking, and the aspects mentioned above (engagement, dialogues, developing lifelong-learning skills) all involve students interacting with the feedback process. The intricacies of facilitating lecturers' transmission from lecturer-controlled to student-driven, learning-centred feedback is under-theorised and there is scope for further research.

In line with Henderson, Phillips, et al's (2019) description of feedback as socially constructed and contextually situated, this research adopts a broad definition of feedback-seeking, accepting that feedback is socially constructed and contextually situated. Students' feedback-seeking practices involve what is done to promote engagement and learning, and can also include the materials, technologies, and institutional processes used to seek feedback, and the practices employed in working with the lecturer and other staff involved in course delivery (Yan & Carless 2021). Therefore, feedback seeking involves not only what is being done to make feedback happen, but what is being done to enable feedback-seeking to occur in the first place (Carless 2022). Both students' and lecturers' practices can affect this, and there are a broad array of practices employed in the feedback process. Gaining a better understanding of these practices, how they are used, and the relationship between them may improve students' engagement, feedback-seeking, and understanding of the feedback process. Boud (2009, p. 31) outlined practice and practice theory, explaining that practice is both "a theoretical notion that provides a way of framing ways in which we investigate the world", and what practitioners do. He outlines how a practice perspective can be used to investigate assessment practices, in particular for preparing students for ongoing learning. Boud highlights the need to involve students in making judgements about their own learning and quality of work, and position students as "active agents in their own learning" (Boud 2009, p. 36). This is a central premise in new-paradigm feedback, and focusing on practices provides a way of engaging students in an ongoing feedback process involving both students and lecturers.

However, the study of feedback from a practice perspective is still relatively under-researched in education and workplace learning. The following studies use practice as the unit of analysis: Reich and Hager (2014); Malecka et al. (2022); Jørgensen (2019); Reimann et al. (2019); Tai et al. (2021). These studies are briefly described before key themes are highlighted and implications for practice discussed.

A theoretical study by Reich and Hager (2014, p. 428) adopted a practice-theory perspective to reconceptualise professional and workplace learning. The authors proposed a framework of six threads:

> knowing-in-practice – Professional learning is closely entwined with knowing, practicing, and innovating.
>
> Socio-materiality – Practice and professional learning occur in socio-material arrangements, in interrelated sets of material entities – humans, artefacts, organisms, and other objects.
>
> Embodiment – Practices are not limited to cognitive functions but are embodied in their own and between other bodies and material things.
>
> Relationality – Practice and professional learning involve much more than the contents of individual heads. Their relational and collective characteristics invoke notions such as choreography and orchestration.
>
> Historical and social shaping of practices –Practices exist and evolve in historical and social contexts, shaped by complex social forces, including power.
>
> Emergent nature of practices – That they change and evolve over time in ways that are not fully specifiable in advance.

Although the context of this framework was professional and workplace learning, there is correlation with an MBA course, as the cohort are either currently working in a professional context or have done so in the past. The six threads also closely parallel Kemmis's theory of practice architecture (TPA), which this research uses.

Reimann et al. (2019, pp. 9-10) investigated variances in the intentions and understanding of academics' practices to feedforward. The context for the study was three contrasting academic institutions in the United Kingdom (UK). By studying the academics' practices in response to their understanding of feedforward it was found that, although it made practitioners "rethink feedback as a process", there were still reports of practices that were based on traditional models of feedback transmission. A disconnection was also found between the theoretical perspective of new-paradigm feedback and practitioners' perspectives. In a contrasting study that focused on learners, Malecka et al (2022, p. 12) found that learners "feedback histories" can offer further insight in the demonstration of feedback literacies. They raised the need for the design of the feedback process to develop open dialogue about previous experiences of feedback and implications for future expectations. Jørgensen (2019, pp. 623-624) focused on student engagement through formative feedback and analysis using TPA. Jørgensen positioned feedback as a social practice of learning which equates to learning as participation, writing that "feedback is a learning practice that enables students to be 'stirred into' a substantive practice" (Jørgensen 2019, p. 629). Feedback should not focus on the effectiveness of specific interventions, but rather whether students engage with feedback. Tai et al. (2021) also used TPA to investigate feedback literacy, highlighting that a key part of feedback literacy was recognising that practices are co-produced. Their use of TPA is particularly relevant for this thesis as they are two of only a handful of studies of feedback in higher education that uses TPA and has the unit of analysis as the feedback practice.

The above practice-based approaches have focused on different aspects of feedback and offered varying implications for practice. However, there are several common themes that are helpful in understanding feedback practices. Firstly, practices emerge over time (Reich & Hager 2014) and are interrelated. The involvement of students and lecturers in feedback necessitates a relationship, as relatings are a central component of a practice approach. In fact, Reich and Hager (2014) emphasise the importance of the relatings between practitioners both at an individual and group level. This was supported by Jørgensen (2019) who linked the relatings involved in formative feedback to student engagement, citing the importance of relatings in dialogue creation.

The second common theme was dialogue creation. Dialogues can be used as the conduit for formative feedback (Jorgensen 2019), to discuss prior experiences of feedback and clarify expectations (Malecka et al 2022). Although it was not directly discussed in all of the studies, a process view of feedback requires opportunities for dialogue to be created and can be considered a key aspect of feedback literacies, the third theme. According to Tai et al (2021), knowing how practices are produced is a key part of feedback literacy as any feedback could result in multiple experiences and outcomes. Tai et al (2021) also raised the importance of dialogue as it is central to all three arrangements of practice that make up TPA (section 3.2.3).

The co-production of feedback and the relationship between practices is central to the research of Tai et al (2021) and Jørgensen (2019) as is the arrangements that enable or constrain practice. Adopting this approach acted to position feedback as a process, recognising that a transmission conceptualisation of feedback is not consistent with a practice lens. Whilst Malecka et al (2022, pp. 1-2) studied feedback practices, the study was confined to transitioning between distinct learning settings and did not consider the micro transitions within courses or within a single subject. This different context raises a question about the transferability of the findings. It also did not directly address the relationship between practices that is necessary for feedback to be co-produced. Whilst only two of the five studies directly mention feedback literacy (Tai et al 2021; Malecka et al 2022), four had implications for feedback literacy. Tai et al (2021) and Malecka et al (2022) repositioned feedback literacy to consider the material, discursive and social dimensions of feedback (Tai et al 2021, p. 2). Engagement with the feedback process (Jørgensen 2019) is necessary for developing feedback literacy. The six threads for theorizing of professional practice proposed by Reinmann et al (2019, pp. 420-428) offer a conceptual framework for understanding the practices necessary for the development of feedback literacy. The comparison of these studies highlights the move to consider feedback through a practice lens, but also the lack of a consistent approach to researching feedback practices. Whilst there is a growing body of literature adopting a practice-based approach, like prior feedback research, it has tended to focus on particular issues or contexts making broader application problematic.

Feedback can also be enabled or constrained by the arrangements of the socio-affective dimension (Kemmis's practice architectures framework), which was a key finding of Tai et al. (2021) and Jørgensen (2019) and was situated in the context of dialogue creation. Therefore, lecturers, and to a lesser extent students, need to be mindful of the socio-affective dimension when considering feedback practices (Winstone & Carless 2020). The practice architectures framework (Section 3.2.3 and 3.2.4) has been used to investigate practices and improve understanding of the interrelationships between practices in the local context (Kemmis 2010a, 2018b, 2019; Kemmis, Bristol, et al. 2014; Mahon et al. 2017; Wilkinson et al. 2010).

Finally, Hager and Beckett (2019) found that current theories of learning focus on the study of individual practitioners, rather than the group relational processes that constitute the site of the learning. As feedback is central to learning, a process understanding of feedback involving both students and lecturers requires a focus on more than individual practices. As illustrated, adopting a practice-based approach allows for the investigation of practice. Whilst each of the above studies investigates practice, there is scope to look more closely at the relationship between practices, with the emphasis on the practices rather than the individual. The final section will provide a more in-depth review of the literature pertaining to feedback literacy which is a relatively recent but increasingly growing body of work.

2.4 Feedback Literacy

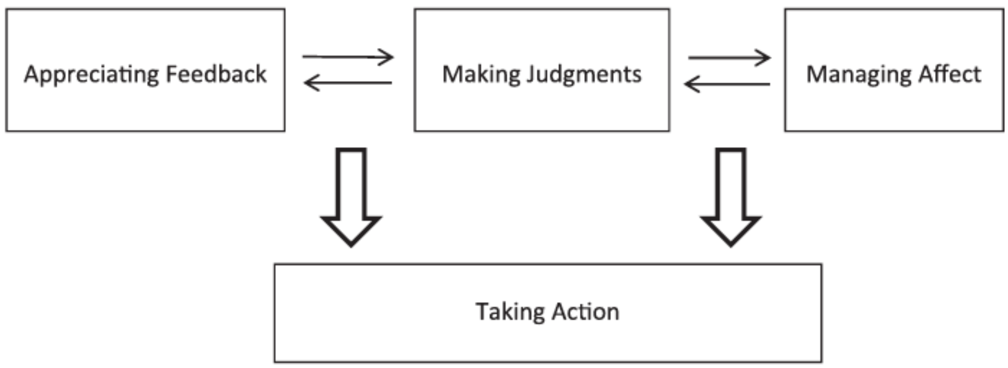
The focus on feedback literacy has been a relatively recent addition to the feedback literature, with Sutton (2012) first using the term, and Carless and Boud (2018) subsequently developing the concept. The underlying premise is that to ensure effective feedback processes, students must have the ability to understand and engage with feedback and that lecturers must provide the support needed. The research into feedback literacy adopts a new-paradigm approach to feedback (Section 2.3.2), positioning it as a learner-centred process with learners being active participants (Henderson, Ajjawi, et al. 2019, p. 17). However, learners must also be able not only to make sense of the feedback information provided, but to understand the purpose of feedback and the feedback process. Carless and Boud (2018) described feedback literacy as "an understanding of what feedback is and how it can be managed effectively; capacities and dispositions to make productive use of feedback; and appreciation of the roles of teachers and themselves in these processes" (p. 1316).

Building on the work of Sutton (2012), Carless and Boud (2018) proposed a four-feature model of student feedback literacy: appreciating feedback, making judgements, managing affect, and taking action. Carless and Boud's model has been used as the basis for other models of feedback literacy. The developments in feedback literacy are reviewed in more detail below. The new paradigm of feedback (Section 2.3.2) places students as central to the feedback process; frameworks of student feedback literacy follow this model (Carless & Boud 2018), with self- and peer assessment practices key to developing students' feedback literacy (Hoo et al. 2021). Until recently, both student and lecturer feedback literacy have been under-researched. Since 2018 there has been an explosion of research into feedback literacy, with both conceptual (Carless 2020a; Carless & Winstone 2020; Chong 2021; Malecka et al. 2020; Tai et al. 2021; Winstone, Nash, Parker, et al. 2017; Yan & Carless 2021) and empirical (Gravett et al. 2020; Malecka et al. 2022; Molloy et al. 2020; Noble et al. 2020; Song 2022; Winstone et al. 2019; Zhan 2021) papers published. However, there is still a dearth of studies that consider both student and lecturer feedback literacy, which this thesis aims to address. This section critically evaluates the literature relating to feedback literacy for both students and lecturers. First, the development of feedback literacy and associated frameworks is explained. Second, the need to intentionally embed feedback into the curriculum is considered, and finally the importance of the interplay between student and lecturer feedback literacy is discussed.

According to Molloy et al. (2020), one of the main barriers to effective feedback is the generally low levels of student feedback literacy. The term “feedback literacy” was first raised by Sutton (2012), who defined it as “the ability to read, interpret and use written feedback” (p. 31). In an empirical study involving 21 students and eight academics, Sutton (2012, p. 33) found that feedback literacy had three dimensions:

> an epistemological dimension, i.e. an engagement of learners in knowing (acquiring academic knowledge); an ontological dimension, i.e. an engagement of the self of the learner (investment of identity in academic work) a practical dimension, i.e. an engagement of learners in acting (reading, thinking about, and feeding forward feedback)

The majority of the recent research and conceptualisation of feedback literacy has been based on Sutton’s study and the work of Carless and Boud (2018), who extended Sutton’s work and provided a definition of feedback literacy that forms the basis of the more recent definitions: “the understandings, capacities and dispositions needed to make sense of information and use it to enhance work or learning strategies” (Carless & Boud 2018, p. 1316). This definition encompasses students’ capacity to understand and make sense of feedback and apply it to the relevant context. Students must understand not only what feedback is, but how to manage and use it for their learning. Carless and Boud (2018, p. 1319) four-part framework (mentioned above) can support their development of this understanding.



(Carless & Boud 2018, p. 1319)

Figure 2.3 Features of Student Feedback Literacy

This framework may assist in understanding and improving student feedback literacy, but is conceptual, and therefore the concepts put forward require validation through empirical studies. Moreover, Carless and Boud (2018) focused on undergraduate students, with the feedback literacy of lecturers only discussed in conceptual terms. Further to Carless and Boud's work, Molloy et al. (2020, p. 2) proposed that examining student feedback literacy more closely may aid lecturers in developing their own feedback literacy and develop or advance their own feedback practices to make feedback more effective. Their empirical study went some way in validating the conceptual framework of Carless and Boud. Students were asked to describe their practices that resulted in successful feedback events. For the purposes of the study, feedback literacy was defined as "students' ability to understand, utilise and benefit from feedback processes" (Molloy et al. 2020, p. 2). The following seven groupings form the basis of Molloy et al. (2020, p. 3) Student Feedback Literacy Framework.

Group 1: Commits to feedback as improvement
Group 2: Appreciates feedback as an active process
Group 3: Elicits information to improve learning
Group 4: Processes feedback information
Group 5: Acknowledges and works with emotions
Group 6. Acknowledges feedback as a reciprocal process
Group 7: Enacts outcomes of processing of feedback information

The above framework underscores the importance of students having knowledge of the feedback process, and in particular seeing it as an active and reciprocal process where information to improve learning is available. However, the specific data set and context of the study limit both the transferability of the findings and the validation of Boud and Carless' (2018) conceptual model. Chong (2021) also proposed a conceptual framework for feedback literacy that built on Carless and Boud (2018) framework by adding three dimensions: contextual, engagement, and individual. The contextual dimension was divided into four levels: textual, interpersonal, instructional, and sociocultural. Their framework specifically adopted an ecological perspective of learning and highlighted the importance of learner agency (Chong 2021, p. 97). The conceptual framework has laid the groundwork for future studies that focus on the importance of student agency in developing feedback literacy. This thesis will briefly consider student agency.

Carless and Winstone (2020) also extend the feedback-literacy scholarship by considering teachers' feedback literacy and how it interrelates with students'. Although prior studies have recognised the need for teachers to support students in developing their feedback literacy, the feedback literacy of teachers has not been specifically addressed. In their conceptual study, Carless and Winstone (2020) defined teacher feedback literacy as "[k]nowledge, expertise and dispositions to design feedback processes in ways which enable student uptake of feedback" (p. 4).

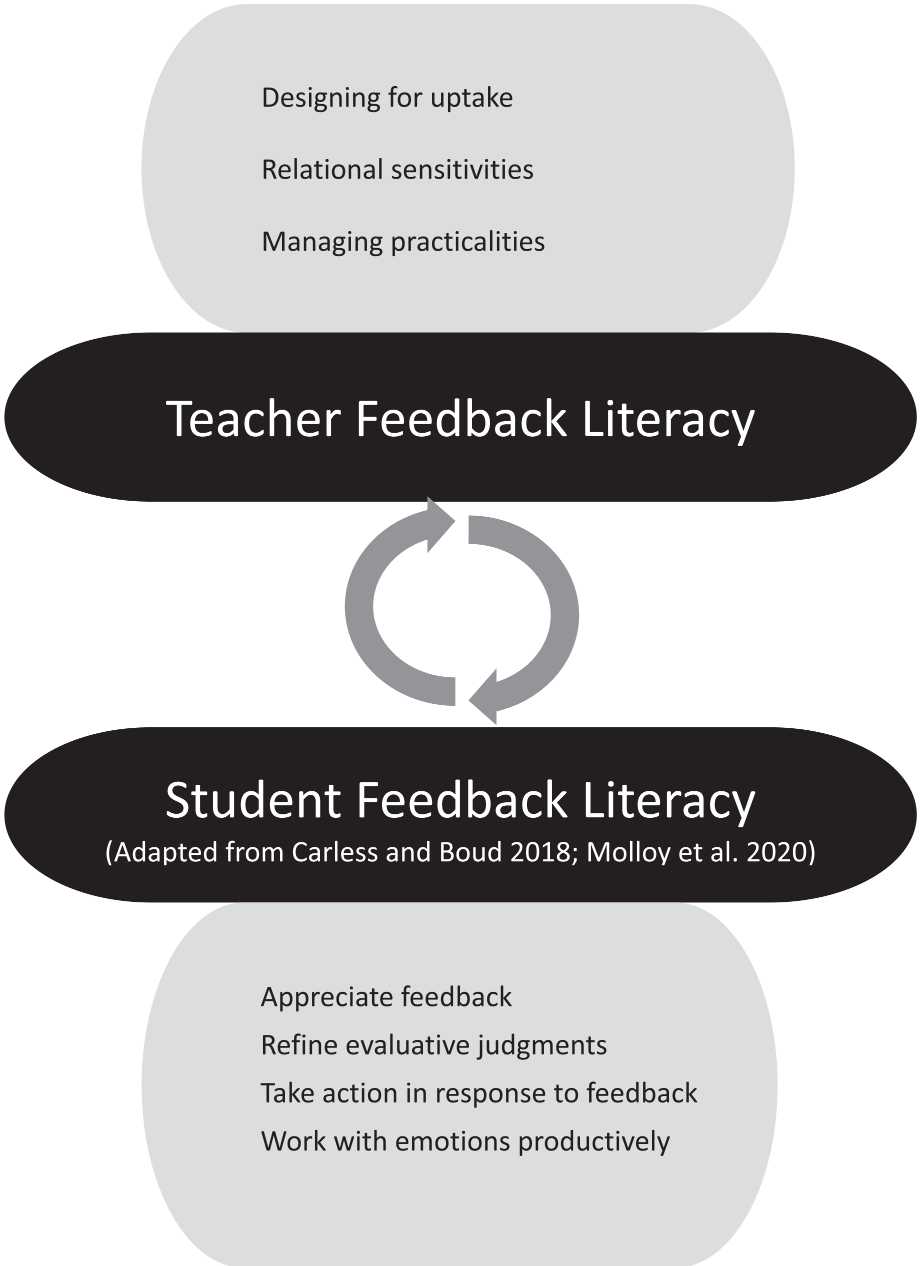
They recognised the importance of lecturers' feedback literacy in designing and implementing feedback processes that enable students access and engagement with the feedback process. They highlighted three dimensions of feedback literacy: design, relational, and pragmatic, which are discussed in greater detail below. However, the study by Carless and Winstone (2020) was conceptual and was not validated through empirical research. Boud and Dawson (2021) also devised a teacher feedback literacy framework through a review of teacher accounts. This research aimed to compliment the prior conceptual framework of Carless and Winstone (2020). The framework outlined 19 competencies (Boud & Dawson 2021, pp. 5-6), which were placed into three groups: the macro level, focusing on program design and development; the meso level, focusing on course module/unit design and implementation; and the micro level, focusing on feedback practices relating to individual student assignments (Boud & Dawson 2021). Teacher feedback literacy has the potential to influence students' engagement with feedback. The engagement dimension follows Carless and Boud's (2018) framework comprising cognitive, affective, and behavioural engagement. Finally, the individual dimension highlights how individual differences may influence students' perceptions and use of feedback (Chong 2021, pp. 97-99).

These studies have provided a starting point for understanding the relationship between student and teacher feedback literacy, but do not specifically address the practices involved. There is a growing body of work focusing on student feedback literacy, as it has the potential to strengthen feedback practices. However, the feedback literacy of lecturers and the practices they employ are closely tied to student feedback literacy and students' practices that enable or constrain feedback. When feedback is viewed predominantly as an act of lecturers, it unintentionally acts to reduce students' responsibility for seeking, engaging with, and using feedback (Winstone, Nash, Parker, et al. 2017). It is therefore the responsibility of lecturers to employ practices that assist students to become more feedback-literate through active involvement in the feedback process.

Recent studies (Boud & Molloy 2013a; Middleton et al. 2020; Winstone & Carless 2020) have supported the shift from information transmission initiated by lecturers to students becoming more active participants in the feedback process. Students taking a greater responsibility in the feedback process is evident in each of the papers that have been discussed in this section; however, Ahmed Shafi et al. (2018, p. 422) specifically addressed student responsibility, using the phrase "academically buoyant behaviour", which encompassed five key points of how students should interact with feedback: taking responsibility for the grade received (internal locus of control) and taking action; understanding current skills, capabilities and the grading system so that through feedback the grade is understood; being forward-looking; being improvement focused; and the fifth indicator, being action-orientated, meaning that students are constructive in their response to feedback and take action as needed. Whilst their findings are not inconsistent with the research into feedback literacy, further research is needed to validate their findings and those of the other conceptual studies discussed above.

2.4.1 Responsibility for Feedback Literacy and Embedding Feedback Literacy into Curricula

Nash and Winstone (2017) argue that students and lecturers have primary responsibility for feedback, but are responsible for different components of the feedback process. Lecturers' obligation is to employ strategies that enable students to take up feedback, whereas students should be prepared to engage with and act on it. Building on the work of Nash and Winstone (2017), Carless and Winstone (2020) outline a conceptual framework for teacher feedback literacy. This framework is designed to align with the student feedback literacy model built from Molloy et al. (2020) and Carless and Boud (2018), and addresses how student and lecturer feedback can be developed together. The model (Figure 2.4) contains three dimensions: design, relational, and pragmatic. Teachers guide the development of students' feedback literacy "through the enactment of the three dimensions" (Carless & Winstone 2020, p. 10) in a partnership arrangement. There are, of course, challenges to a partnership model, including process factors, affective issues, and uptake by lecturers and students.



(Carless & Winstone 2020, p. 8)

Figure 2.4 Interplay Between Teacher and Student Feedback Literacy

Winstone and Carless (2020, pp. 38-39) review some of the more recent research, and discussed the need for students to be given opportunities and support to develop their feedback literacy. Malecka et al. (2020) propose that for students to understand their responsibility to be actively involved in the feedback process, feedback literacy should be imbedded in the curriculum. However, there is need for further empirical research into embedding feedback literacy into the curriculum so as to assist students in developing their skills for making productive use of feedback. This encompasses a wide range of issues such as assessment criteria, marking rubrics, dialogues with lecturers and peers in the formative stages of their work, and the affective dimension, which influences relationships between lecturers and students. They also support the notion that the development of shared feedback literacy between students and lecturers is likely to be crucial. This is particularly pertinent to improving understanding of how curriculum activities can support learners' evolving perceptions of feedback, with the aim being to give students the skills to continue developing their feedback literacy in workplace settings (Malecka et al. 2020, p. 12).

It is recognised that "feedback is a complex process, and influenced by an ecology of practices, individual factors and contextual constraints" (Henderson, Ryan & Phillips 2019, p. 1250). Under a new-paradigm view, feedback is a process involving lecturers and students. However, how the process is developed and what it involves is contextually situated, and, according to Ajjawi and Boud (2017), is inherently socially constructed. This process requires lecturers and students to engage in dialogue for the co-construction and development of the feedback process. Feedback, then, is conceptualised as a social practice where the management of affective factors such as emotions, perceptions, and sense of identity play a key role (Gravett 2020; Roorda et al. 2011; Song 2022; Xu & Carless 2017). These factors may influence the uptake of the partnership model by students and lecturers. Whilst the frameworks that researchers have put forward (Boud & Dawson 2021; Carless & Boud 2018; Carless & Winstone 2020; Chong 2021; Gravett et al. 2020) are a starting point, the practices for implementing feedback literacy and the arrangements that support these practices are not clearly understood. There is scope for further investigation into examining how the feedback literacy of lecturers and students can be developed and used to enhance feedback practices. Currently, there is a growing body of work that considers student feedback literacy, and an increasing amount of work into reviewing the feedback literacy of lecturers and the interplay between student and lecturer feedback literacy. What is lacking is an investigation into how the feedback practices of lecturers and students and the relationship between these practices influence feedback literacy. Likewise, the question of whether improved feedback literacy affects the relationship between students' and lecturers' feedback practices needs to be examined. This presents an opportunity to better understand the feedback literacy of lecturers and students from a practice perspective.

2.5 Research Gap

Recent studies have found variations in students' and lecturers' understandings of feedback's purposes, and a lack of clarity over responsibilities for feedback, and how to encourage, facilitate, and interpret student engagement with feedback. In an effort to address these issues, the focus of recent research has turned to the feedback literacy of students and, more recently, lecturers, and the interplay between lecturers and students. Prior research indicates that this is a critical area for improving feedback and the feedback process, highlighting the different requirements and responsibilities for the feedback literacy of lecturers and students. The literature pertaining to feedback literacy consists of conceptual research and a growing amount of empirical research. However, there is still scope to extend the research pertaining to feedback literacy to study the interrelationship of the feedback literacy of both lecturers and students, particularly by adopting a practice approach to investigate the relationship between these practices. There is a dearth of studies in the higher-education context that focus on how feedback practices of students and lecturers relate and interact, and the arrangements that enable or constrain feedback and the feedback process. There is also scope for further investigation into how the feedback practices of lecturers and students influence each other.

This thesis aims to investigate the disconnection between lecturers' and students' understanding and application of the feedback process, and the importance of feedback literacy. It specifically addresses the practices that affect how feedback is conceived. The examination of feedback practices and the relationships between these practices provides a way to investigate the interaction between students' and lecturers' understanding of feedback literacy. Current research has highlighted the importance of feedback literacy and the need for lecturers and students to understand feedback's purposes, as well as their responsibility to the feedback process. However, there is a need to investigate how feedback practices of lecturers and students can be used to improve the development of student and lecturer feedback literacy and the complimentary roles that student and lecturer feedback literacy should play. This research will aim to investigate the interplay between the feedback practices of lecturers and students in the feedback process. This will be studied from a practice perspective, allowing for a participative approach that focuses on the practice rather than individuals. The adoption of this approach is pivotal in attaining a better understanding of feedback practices and, consequently, the development of feedback literacy in both lecturers and students. The purpose of and the responsibility for feedback from both students' and lecturers' perspective is not well researched from a practice perspective.

2.6 Conclusion

Feedback has been researched for over five decades. In the past 10 years, there has been an accumulation of studies looking at a wide array of issues pertaining to feedback, including numerous suggestions for good feedback practices. Despite the identification and implementation of these practices, many studies and surveys still report problems with feedback. The consistent message has been that there is still a disconnection between lecturers and students on what feedback is, its purpose, who is responsible for it, and how it is delivered. As a result, both teachers and students report frustration with the feedback process. Teachers do not understand why feedback appears not to be used or even read, and students are dissatisfied with the type, timing, clarity, and quality of feedback received.

This chapter has reviewed the literature on feedback in the context of assessment and learning. Assessment, its purpose, and role, and how it is connected to feedback was outlined. The importance of formative assessment and the role feedback plays in formative assessment was explained. Several issues relating to feedback were explored, including the role and purpose of feedback, sources of feedback, and lifelong learning. Feedback practices were considered, and the plethora of research into good practices of feedback investigated. This was done from both lecturer and student perspectives. It was concluded that despite a large body of work focusing on feedback and feedback practices, more needs to be done to improve the efficacy of feedback.

It is now commonly accepted that feedback is an ongoing process that requires engagement from both lecturers and students, but there is scope for improving the feedback process. Understanding and developing the feedback literacy of both lecturers and students has been the focus of the most recent studies in this area. The embedding of feedback literacy into the curriculum has been proposed, but exactly how this would be done is not clear, and to date there has been no empirical research into how effective this would be. The final section of this review considered feedback from a practice perspective and what can be learned by studying feedback from this perspective. A practice perspective allows for the study of students' and lecturers' feedback practices and the relationship between these practices. This approach is much under-researched and offers a way of exploring feedback through a different lens and for a better understanding of the interrelationship of feedback practices. The next chapter outlines the research methodology used to investigate feedback practices.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 explained the importance of feedback for assessment and lifelong learning. Whilst previous studies have highlighted a diverse range of feedback practices, the literature review identified a need for further research into the effectiveness and appropriateness of such practices and the relationship between them. This chapter elucidates the chosen paradigm, methodology and methods with a discussion of their appropriateness for this research. The project design, recruitment of participants, ethical considerations, trustworthiness, data collection, and data analysis are also discussed.

A paradigm outlines beliefs about how individuals see and interpret the world; the paradigm chosen for this study will assist in determining how the research is conducted (Guba & Lincoln 1994). For the purposes of this research an interpretive construct was adopted (Section 3.2). It is important that the ontological, epistemological, and methodological positions are consistent with the theoretical framework and the chosen paradigm to support an informed understanding of feedback practices, guide research methods, and ensure consistency when interpreting the findings (Crotty 1998; Denzin & Lincoln 2008). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) and Quinlan et al. (2015) consider that epistemological perspectives are based on ontological assumptions. The epistemological perspective guides the choice of methodology and the methods used to conduct research.

3.2 Research Paradigm

An interpretive constructivist paradigm takes an ontological view that meaning is created through interactions of the researcher and research participants. Meaning is influenced by society and the phenomena being researched; in this case, practices (Crotty 1998; Levers 2013; Schwandt 1998). This paradigm accommodates a participatory approach, acknowledging the limitations discussed by Heron and Reason (1997, p. 275). This paradigm also provides a way to research *with* the participants rather than research *on* the participants.

3.2.1 Ontology

Ontology is the interpretation and understanding of reality, or the nature of existence and how the world is viewed (Grbich 2013; Hennink et al. 2011; Hesse-Biber & Leavy 2011). Throughout this research, it is accepted that reality is socially constructed, and hence dependent on context, space, and time. In an educational context, the lecturer and students are both involved in the construction of meaning; however, the meaning constructed is not always the same. Therefore, an ontological approach that accommodates meaning that is socially constructed and context-specific is required. This allows for the construction and interpretation of meaning to occur between lecturers and students. For this reason, a relativist ontology is adopted (Denzin & Lincoln 2005; Guba 1990; Guba & Lincoln 1994) that allows for multiple constructed realities bound by context and practice, and is based on the contention that reality "is a finite and subjective experience and nothing exists outside of our thoughts" (Levers 2013, p. 2). Realities are constructed by people and are influenced by a variety of social interactions and experiences (Howell 2013). This is consistent with a participative approach that allows the researcher to work with the research participants in co-constructing meaning. It is also consistent with the conceptualisation of feedback as a process developed by the teacher and student, as opposed to simply information transmission.

3.2.2 Epistemology

Epistemology is the study of knowledge that investigates the relationship between the ontological view and what is already known (Hennink et al. 2011). This allows for the interpretation of participants' and researchers' understanding using existing theories of knowledge to determine what is considered valuable in order to augment and apply knowledge (Grbich 2013; Streubert & Carpenter 2011). The adoption of a constructivist epistemology is consistent with research that is investigating lecturers' and students' feedback practices and how they relate. An interpretive constructivist[8] paradigm, where "meaning is not discovered, but constructed", based on context, worldview, and experiences, is adopted for this research (Crotty 1998, p. 9). Crotty's view is adopted, as this method is consistent with a number of prior studies (Ajjawi & Boud 2017; Price et al. 2007; Rushton 2005; Rust et al. 2005) that have used a constructivist approach to investigate feedback and learning. The adoption of an interpretive constructivist approach provides a way to observe how lecturers and students construct meaning in order to comprehend the role of feedback in developing mutual understanding. This construction of meaning occurs between lecturers and students and the various practices adopted. This requires an epistemology that is relational.

3.2.3 Theoretical Perspective

A practice-based theoretical perspective was adopted for this study (Jørgensen 2019; Schatzki 2002; Schatzki 2019). A practice-based approach is appropriate as it is consistent with the adopted epistemology and with a relativist ontology. This perspective enables the investigation of feedback practices carried out between lecturers and students, with the aim of improving understanding of the relationship between these practices.

Practice theorists study people and their relationships as they go about their daily lives, revealing the individual practices and the interactions between practices (Kemmis 2019). A distinguishing feature of a practice-based study is that it is not

[8] Referred to as constructivism by Guba and Lincoln (1994).

confined to people, but encompasses social-material arrangements, the environment, and relations between the practitioners and the practice. It is through these interrelations that practices evolve (Hager & Beckett 2019, p. 41). There is no unified definition of practice; rather, there is a range of theories that have their origins in philosophy and social theories (Hager and Beckett 2019, pp. 33-47), including activity theory (Hashim & Jones 2007), situated learning theory and communities of practice (Lave & Wenger 1991), cultural and aesthetic perspectives (Hager & Beckett 2019), actor-network theory (Fenwick & Edwards 2010), and work-based learning (Hager & Hodkinson 2009; Little & Brennan 1996). Schatzki (2002) defines practices as "bundles of related activities and arrangements that are used in the performance of social order and relations" (p. 74). Practices involve *sayings, doings* and *relatings* associated with human activity (Kemmis, Bristol, et al. 2014), with a shared understanding between participants. A practice-based approach can focus on individual feedback practices and the relationship between them. Kemmis, Bristol, et al. (2014) build on Schatzki (2002) by focusing on the *sayings, doings,* and *relatings* in practice. The individual practices of feedback are explored, then considered in a broader context in relation to other practices. According to Kemmis, Bristol, et al. (2014), in practice, *sayings, doings*, and *relatings* are always bundled together and should be interpreted as a whole. Mahon et al. (2017) defined practice as:

> a socially established cooperative human activity involving utterances and forms of understanding (sayings), modes of action (doings), and ways in which people relate to one another and the world (relatings) that "hang together" in characteristic ways in a distinctive "project" (Mahon et al. 2017, p. 8).

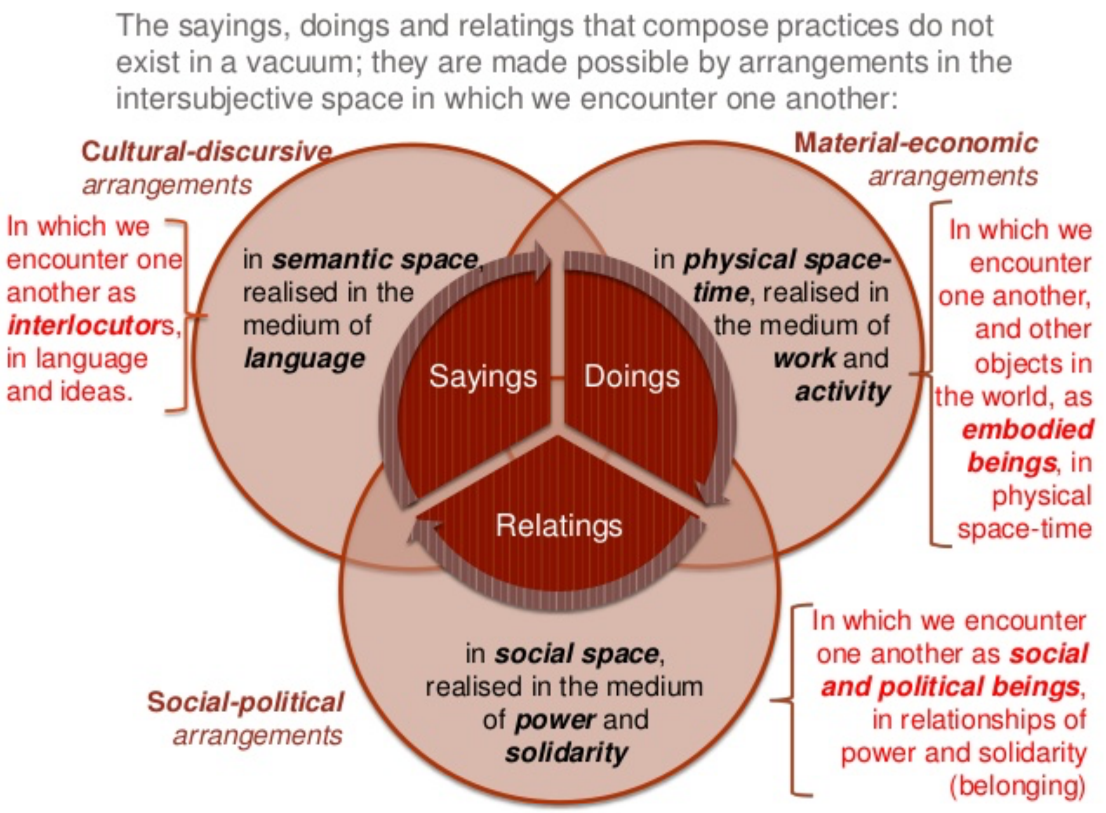
In the context of this research, the sayings, doings and relatings and how they are arranged are the constituents of feedback. They include how the feedback process is communicated, the practices that students employ when trying to access and make sense of feedback, and the discourse practices lecturers use in establishing the feedback process. If changes in practice are to be achieved and maintained, then the sayings, doings and relatings must be considered not independently (Schatzki 2002, p. 18), but interdependently.

Ecologies of practice – that is, how practices relate to one another (Kemmis, Bristol, et al. 2014, p. 314; Kemmis et al. 2009; Wilkinson et al. 2010) – explore practices as they unfold, including particular places (sites), moments (time), and contexts, under the assumption that practices are interdependent (Kemmis 2019). The following section outlines what is meant by a practice perspective and provides a brief review of a practice (Hager & Beckett 2019; Reich & Hager 2014), and, in particular, the practice architectures as outlined by Kemmis (2018b) and Kemmis, Bristol, et al. (2014).

In contrast to Schatzki (2009), who focused on the *doings* and *sayings* of practice, Kemmis et al. (2009) and Kemmis, Bristol, et al. (2014) place greater emphasis on *relatings* by making them more explicit. Kemmis, Bristol, et al. (2014, pp. 30-31) explain that practices are “enabled and constrained by three kinds of arrangements”, which Schatzki (2012) refers to as “material arrangements”, that occur at sites to enable or constrain the conduct of practices, “namely, *cultural-discursive*, *material-economic*, and *social-political arrangements*” (Kemmis, Bristol, et al. 2014, p. 30). Kemmis, Bristol, et al. (2014, p. 31) define practice as:

> a form of socially established cooperative human activity in which characteristic arrangements of actions and activities (doings) are comprehensible in terms of arrangements of relevant ideas in characteristic discourses (sayings), and when the people and objects involved are distributed in characteristic arrangements of relationships (relatings) and when this complex of sayings, doings and relatings “hangs together” in a distinctive project.

This research uses the theory of practice architectures (Kemmis, Bristol, et al. 2014, pp. 32-40), which, like many other practice theories, offers an ontological perspective on practice. Its main concern is with what practices are; how practices happen; how they are shaped, constrained, and enabled; and what practices do. Practice architectures comprise requirements that work to enable or constrain the conduct of practices (Kemmis 2019; Kemmis, Bristol, et al. 2014). The following description is based on the work of Stephen Kemmis, in particular Kemmis (2018b). Figure 3.1 illustrates how sayings, doings, and relatings are made possible by the arrangements in which people encounter each other.



(Kemmis 2018a, p. 13)

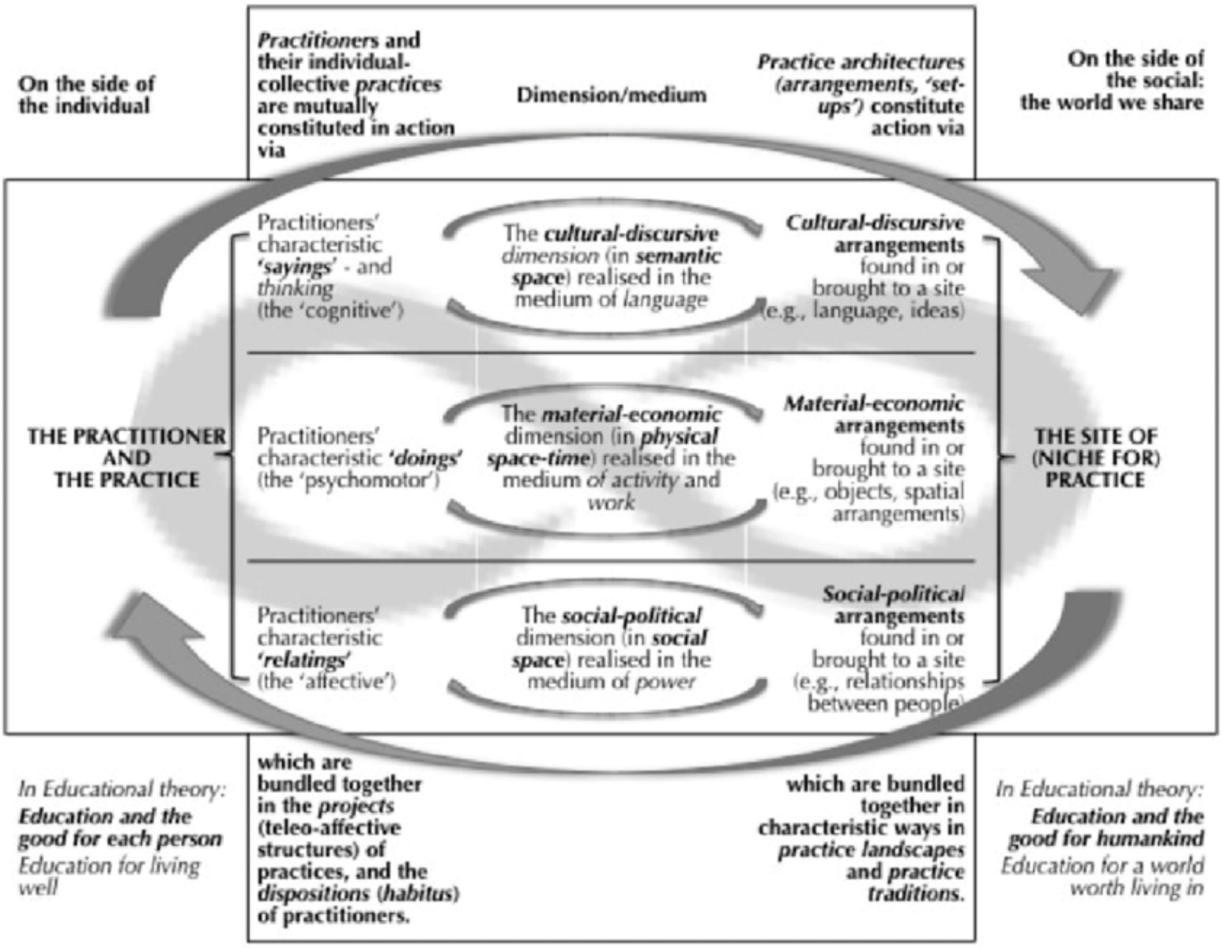
Figure 3.1 The Theory of Practice Architectures – 1

Sayings are the first component of practice as outlined by Kemmis (2018b). The arrangements of relevant ideas in characteristic discourses (cultural-discursive arrangements) make possible the sayings that occur in practice. These arrangements may facilitate or restrict the practice (Kemmis, Bristol, et al. 2014). They are concerned with the language used and what is relevant to describe the practice, and include thinking and other forms of understanding (Kemmis, Bristol, et al. 2014). This is what comprises the substance of feedback; that is, how the purpose of feedback is articulated to students and the discursive practices that students employ when trying to access and make sense of feedback (Kemmis et al. 2009). It involves “what is said, how it is said, what words are used” (Edwards-Groves 2018, p. 126).

The second component is *doings* of a practice: what can be done, what must be done, and what is actually done. The material-economic arrangements, that is, the arrangements of actions and activities make possible or impossible the doings or activities undertaken in the practice as individuals interact with each another. The material-economic arrangements include the physical settings such as spaces, teaching environment, and consultation rooms. In the context of feedback, they refer to the actions and activities that relate to how feedback functions and can be aligned with the feedback process. It can be described as “what is done, how it is set up in the space, what resources are required” (Edwards-Groves 2018, p. 126).

Finally, *relatings* are bound by the characteristic arrangements of relationships: how the practices interrelate with each other, how people relate to each other and the world, “and the displays of power, agency and solidarity at any given moment” (Edwards-Groves 2018, p. 126). Social-political arrangements are the resources that facilitate and make possible the relationships between people and objects that happen in practice. In the context of feedback, these arrangements are determined by how the individual practices feedback, the feedback stakeholders, and the physical environment within which feedback takes place, relate to each other. Relatings also refer to the relations among students, between students and lecturers, and among students, lecturers, and technologies. In practice, the *sayings, doings*, and *relatings* are bundled together with the arrangements. These arrangements are entwined within practice, (Figure 3.1).

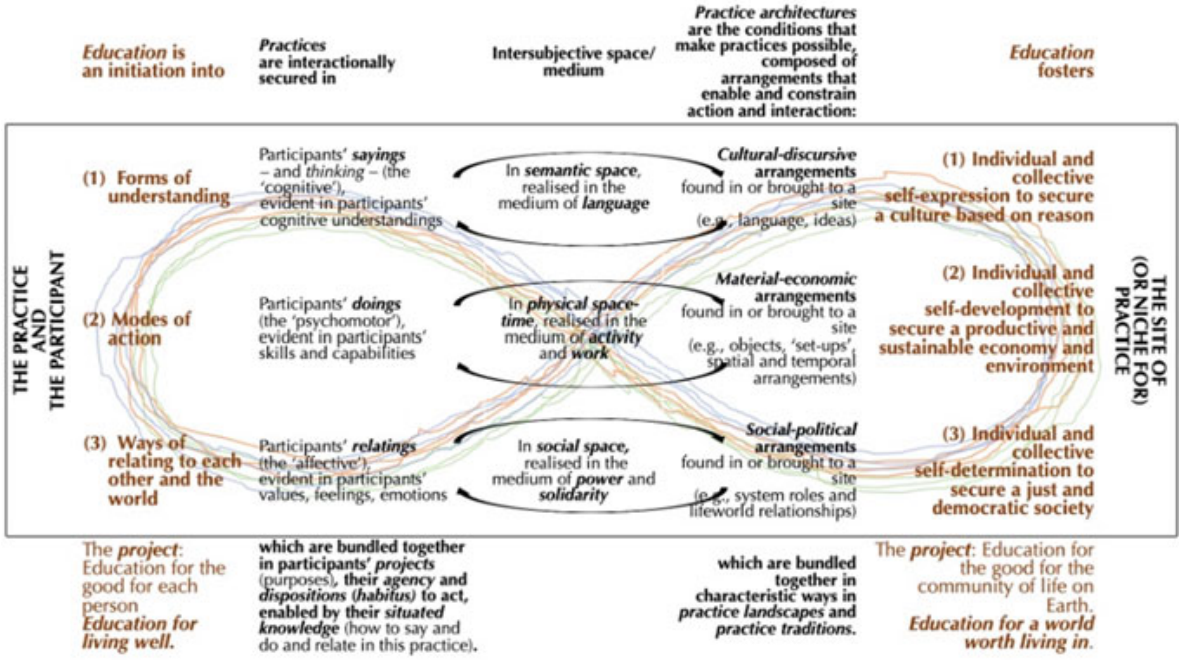
Figure 3.2, showing the framework of practice architectures, illustrates the complexity of and interconnection between practices. It is important to note that practices are never neutral, but are influenced by the experiences and understandings of the practitioners; this is described as the prefigurement of practices (Edwards-Groves 2018). The enacting of practices is influenced by pre-existing conditions: what is brought onto the site, who is present, and the relationships among them (Edwards-Groves 2018). However, these conditions do not automatically govern what really occurs. Practices are “made in the doing”, created and enacted in the moment of “doing”, but are dynamic and constrained by other practices (Edwards-Groves 2018, pp. 128-129).



(Kemmis, Bristol, et al. 2014, p. 38)

Figure 3.2 The Theory of Practice Architectures – 2

Figure 3.3 represents how TPA can be applied to an educational context. (Kemmis 2022, pp. 167-168) outlies an analytical framework for critically analysing education. It is particularly relevant to determine the extent to which students are initiated into forms of understanding, modes of action for self-development, and ways of relating to one another.



(Kemmis 2022, p. 168)

Figure 3.3 A Theory of Education

The complexity of investigating practices can be elucidated by employing Nicolini's (2009) work on zooming in and zooming out of practices. It is helpful because it moves the focus to the "details of the accomplishment of a practice in a specific place to make sense of the local accomplishment of the practice" Nicolini (2009, p. 120). Zooming in to a particular practice reveals the connections with other practices, enabling the researcher to investigate the everyday sayings, doings, relatings, and arrangements that constitute the fine-grained details of a particular practice. Zooming out broadens the picture to trace the connections to other practices, out to the institutional, structural, and economic level, as well as the political arrangements and power effect. This reveals how these functions shape lecturer and student practices and how the practices shape the institution. As practices do not occur independently, zooming in and out provides a way to map and understand the interrelationships between practices and allows for the study of individual practices within the context of the wider array of practices. In this research, this involves cycles of zooming in to look at the detail of the individual practices of both lecturers and students, then zooming out to discern relationships in space and time (Nicolini 2013, p. 219), identify patterns across practices, and explore the relationship between feedback practices, contexts, providers, and attitudes towards feedback in a broader context (Jørgensen 2019). For example, this could involve zooming in to investigate the practices involved when a student asks for help in understanding the requirements of an assessment task, then zooming out to see that this interaction causes the lecturer to change how the task is explained. Hager and Beckett (2019) argue that it is "through relational interactions between practitioners that practices evolve" (p. 41). Analysis at the group, rather than the individual, level is critical when studying practices, as it shifts the emphasis to the analysis of group relational processes that occur within the practice (Hager & Beckett 2019, p. 254). The practice-architectures framework (Kemmis, Bristol, et al. 2014) as outlined above will be used to investigate feedback from a practice perspective.

3.2.4 Feedback in the Context of Practice Theory

There have been considerable advancements in both the understanding and application of feedback. Studies about feedback (Carless 2006; Price et al. 2010; Rushton 2005) have highlighted that both teachers and students recognise its importance and value it, but there is still a disconnection between the provision and acceptance of feedback (Section 2.4). Adopting a practice perspective (Gherardi 2009; Nicolini 2009; Nicolini 2013) to study feedback practices in a general sense situates the focus on the practices, rather than the practitioners. A practice perspective allows for an interrogation of practices to identify the relationship between practices, determine how, why, and when they are used, and provide a greater insight into their utility.

Whilst there is no single practice approach (Gherardi & Nicolini 2006; Knorr Cetina et al. 2000; Schatzki 2012), Nicolini (2013) outlines a "toolkit approach" in which the similarities and differences of the various practice theories are used as a way of studying practice. When feedback is considered from a practice perspective, it provides a way to investigate the individual practices of feedback (for example, written feedback on tasks, email correspondence, consultation setup, response time and manner).

3.3 Methodology

This research will focus on the practices of the lecturers and students within a business school. The researcher was a staff member of the business school and also a postgraduate student. This placed the researcher within the research cycle rather than external to it. It is important to note that the researcher was not at any time teaching in the MBA program and did not have any influence on students' assessments. It is therefore necessary to use a methodology that is consistent with an epistemological, ontological, and theoretical perspective that situates the researcher within the research.

3.3.1 Collaborative Inquiry

The dynamic nature of the higher-education context (Section 1.2) and the challenges of investigating the practices of students and lecturers required a compatible methodological approach. Flexibility in the research design and methods was required to accomodate the different sites of practice and participant demographics, and the focus on the practices of students and lecturers. Investigating practices and the relationship between them also required a methodological approach that allowed collaboration between the research participants and the researcher. The flexibility in design is a defining feature of collaborative inquiry, as it places the researcher and participants within the research process as co-investigators of the defined problem (Kemmis & McTaggart 2005; Kindon et al. 2007; Reason & Bradbury 2006). Collaborative inquiry allowed for a variety of methods to be employed in both collecting and analysing the data. Collaborative inquiry is designed to create open discourse amongst interest groups and empowerment for future action (Snoeren et al. 2012). The sharing of collaborative knowledge is central to collaborative inquiry (Ozanne & Saatcioglu 2008) because it uses cycles of action and reflection to construct a common understanding and meaning, which can result in positive changes to practice.

This research adopted a practice-based approach using collaborative inquiry, which allows for participant involvement. According to Bray (2000), there is “no dogmatic way to conduct a collaborative inquiry"; rather, there are "parameters to guide its practice" (p. 5). Collaborative inquiry enables researchers to work with participants to create knowledge and subsequent action, through which the participants are empowered to construct and use their own knowledge (Patterson & Goulter 2015). It involves the key stakeholders, researchers, educators, and students, working together to research a problematic area; in this case, feedback for learning. It is consistent with the view that feedback is socially situated and dependent on the interpretations and perceptions of individuals and the environment in which they are positioned. The key distinction from other approaches is that collaborative inquiry relies on the relevant stakeholders as collaborators in the research project, thus ensuring greater commitment and eventual application.

It is also important to align the theoretical basis for knowing with the methods used for investigation (Charreire & Huault 2008). From this, formal knowledge can be constructed (Bray 2000, p. 38). Collaborative inquiry is consistent with interpretive constructivism, as the collaborative construction of knowledge is central and the methods used are consistent with interpretive constructivism. In this study, a collaborative inquiry involving both students and academic staff provided an appropriate avenue to investigate the reported disconnection between the provision and reception of feedback, as collaborative inquiry requires open discourse amongst interest groups and empowerment for future action (Snoeren et al. 2012). Collaborative inquiry was most appropriate because it allows for the concerns and needs of the participating teaching-team and students to be met, does not rely on large numbers of participants (Treleaven & Voola 2008), and places collaboration between stakeholders at the centre of the process. The use of collaborative inquiry is also supported by a number of other studies conducted in higher-education business schools (for example, Harding et al. 2015; Walther et al. 2017). The premise of collaborative inquiry is that the people studied are active participants in the research process, and that the research incorporates the knowledge and concerns of both teachers and students. The focus is on understanding and constructing meaning from experience, with the aim of developing a shared understanding to enhance a particular practice, and creating a new context for practice or problem-solving (Briscoe 2017; Harding et al. 2015; Walther et al. 2017). Kemmis (2009, p. 466) illustrates the use of a practice-based approach to conduct a collaborative inquiry by the following example:

> [W]hat education *means* (thinking, saying) to a teacher is always already shaped by ideas that pre-exist in various discourses of education; how education is *done* (doing) is always already shaped by the material and economic resources made available for the task; and how people will *relate* to one another in educational settings and situations (relating) is always already shaped by previously established patterns of social relationships and power.

Potential weaknesses of using this approach are the imbalance of power relations (Baum et al. 2006; Kindon et al. 2007); the challenges of balancing local and theoretical knowledge; and the reliance on the willingness of all participants to approach the research with a collaborative spirit (Reason & Bradbury 2006). Collaborative inquiry also relies on the acceptance that knowledge about the area being investigated will be constructed by the participants. To mitigate these potential weaknesses, it was important for the researcher to frame the research carefully, whilst being aware of the possibility of inadvertently influencing the participant through disclosing the researcher's own understanding (Bray 2000; Deni & Malakolunthu 2013).

The use of collaborative inquiry provides a way to balance the power relations between research participants and researchers. This is particularly significant in the context of student/lecturer power relations (Section 1.3.3). By highlighting the importance of collaboration, the power imbalance that is present in any teacher-student interaction is mitigated, as collaborative inquiry attempts to involve all stakeholders equally. The identification and involvement of all relevant stakeholders is important if the commitment of each stakeholder group is to be secured (Bray 2000). All relevant stakeholders were offered the opportunity to be involved in the research. Prior to the participants' involvement in the research, it was explained to them that a key premise is knowledge being constructed by the participants in collaboration with the researcher and other participants; the power imbalance was discussed; and participants were assured that the data collected would be de-identified and only other focus-group members might be able to identify who said what.

The methods used in this study were predominately aimed at seeking the perspectives of both teachers and students to develop an understanding of the practices that have affected feedback and the relational dimension. As discussed in Section 3.2.1, one of the defining features of collaborative inquiry is that there is no one set way in which to conduct the research. This means that there is no set method to follow, and great flexibility is available for the use of inductive methods throughout each research phase. Where appropriate, the use of observation, particularly in relation to student/teacher relationship dynamics, was used to gather relevant data concerning informal feedback practices. Wherever possible, the interpretation of observations was checked with the participants.

Despite the plethora of research identifying good feedback practices (for example, Boud & Molloy 2013b; Molloy et al. 2020; Winstone & Boud 2019b), these practices are often contextually situated and may not readily transfer to other contexts. Feedback practices can also be applied inconsistently, which increases the difficulty of comparing results across contexts. The examination of feedback from a practice perspective allowed for a less personal application, as it moved the focus onto practices and away from the individual. It was important to position the key stakeholders (lecturers and students) within the research process, working collaboratively to discuss practices and provide an initial interpretation of the findings for use in subsequent research cycles (Wiliam et al. 2004). This provided a way to approach the research from an epistemological stance that was consistent with knowledge being constructed. The collaborative inquiry approach was of benefit in ongoing discussions and sense-making.

3.4 Research Design

The following steps formed the initial framework from which the design for this study was based. Figure 3.3 provides an overview of the data-collection process and will be discussed further below. Section 3.4.1 describes the data-collection methods and the recruitment of the research participants. Section 3.4.2 outlines the data analysis, details how the data was analysed using codes and theme generation, and how the data was collected and reviewed. Ethical issues (ethics approval, formal consent, data storage) are discussed in Section 3.5.

3.4.1 Data Collection and Participant Recruitment

The study used multiple interpretive methods including surveys, interviews, focus groups, and observations. The use of both interpretive and survey methods in collaborative research is a growing trend (Chevalier & Buckles 2013); however, the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods needs to be considered with caution and the purpose clearly understood (Quinlan et al. 2015). In the context of this thesis, multiple interpretive methods were appropriate, as the survey data was used to inform the researcher and direct the qualitative methods used. The analysis of the questionnaire helped form the interview guide and questions. This approach has been used by other studies in higher education and is supported in the literature (Cremer & Ramasamy 2009; Popa et al. 2020). Cremer and Ramasamy (2009) administered a questionnaire to identify relevant issues, followed by in-depth interviews and focus groups. This approach allowed the researchers to narrow the focus of the interviews and focus groups onto key issues. Popa et al. (2020) combined a semi-structured questionnaire with semi-structured interviews. This allowed the researchers to study a large number of participants from several perspectives. This is consistent with the approach adopted in this research.

Using multiple interpretive methods allows for corroboration of results; complementarity, where different methods highlight different elements; and the use of survey findings to assist in designing the interview questions and direct focus group discussion (Chevalier & Buckles 2013; Schatzki 2012). The initial questionnaire provided a way to capture students' views of feedback with many participants. In determining the adequate number of interviews to conduct, Guest et al. (2006 p. 79) caution against having a specific number and outline the difficulties in determining data saturation, but posit that for a group of relatively homogenous individuals, 12 interviews are sufficient to achieve saturation, although more may be required for a more heterogenous group of participants. Hennink et al. (2017) distinguishes between code saturation and meaning saturation, finding that between 16 and 24 interviews were needed for meaning saturation. In practice, all participants who volunteered were interviewed. Section 3.4.1.3 discusses the participant recruitment process and outlines the details of participant numbers. Figure 3.3 is a visual presentation of the research design that illustrates what was done in each cycle of the research project and how each cycle flowed into the next.

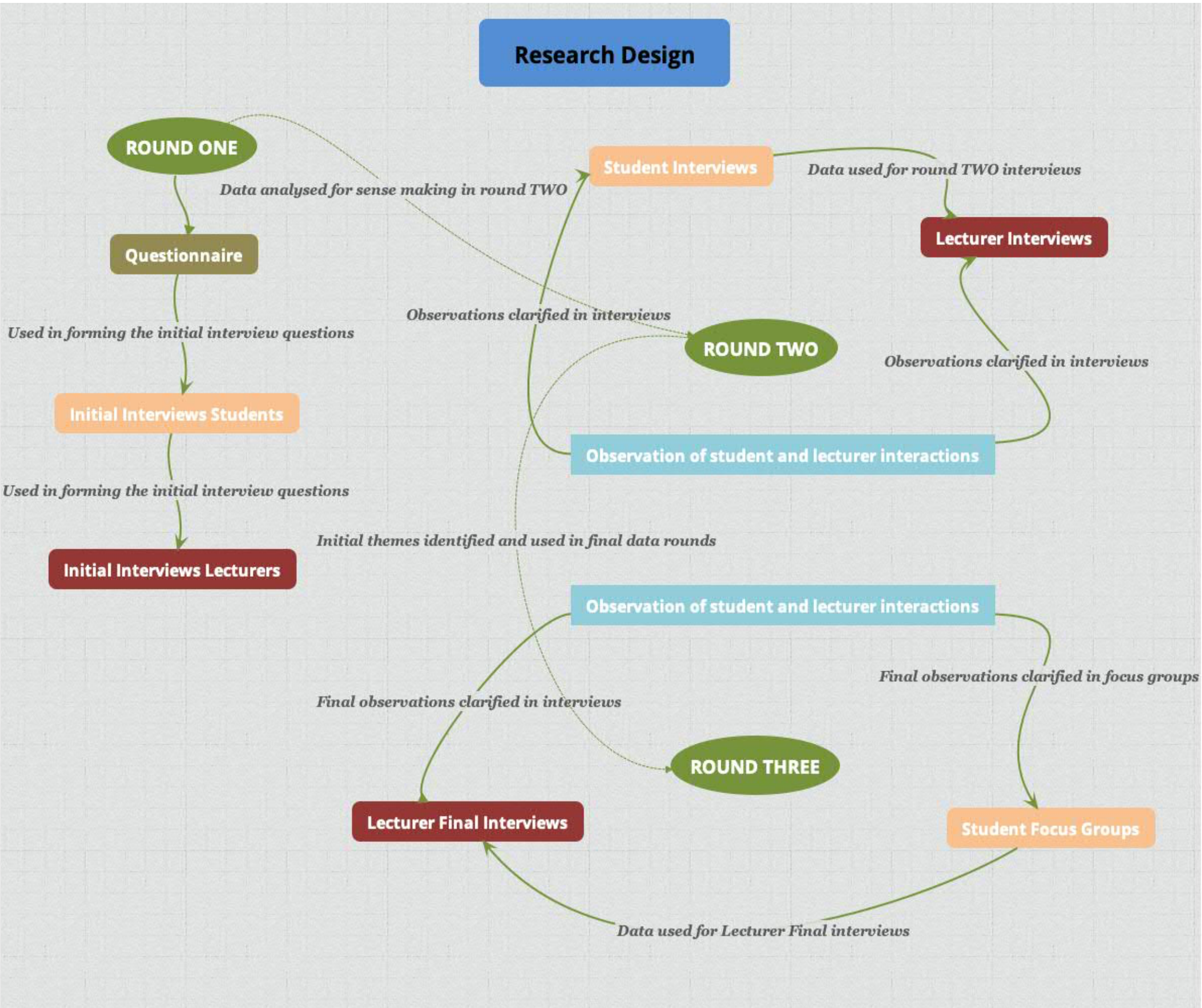


Figure 3.4 Research Design – Data Collection

ROUND ONE

Round one of data collection was aimed at gaining an initial understanding of how feedback practices affect lecturers' and students' conceptions of feedback and the feedback process. In round one of the data collection, an initial questionnaire (see appendix J) was distributed to the MBA cohort. The responses to the questionnaire were used to inform the interview questions used in the initial student interviews. The data from the initial student interviews was then used to inform the content of the initial lecturer interviews. The data for round one was collected over a four-month period crossing over two trimesters of the MBA.

ROUND TWO

The second round of data collection was aimed at developing an understanding of how the feedback practices used by lecturers and students (identified in round one) affected the feedback process. The conception of feedback and the interrelationship between lecturer and student practices were of particular interest. The second cycle of data collection included interviews of lecturers and students, specifically focusing on the relationship between the lecturers' and students' practices. The observation of classroom practices was used to investigate what was discussed compared to what happened in practice. The interview questions for the second cycle of data collection were taken from the initial analysis[9] of the data from the first cycle. The data for round two was collected over a 6-month period crossing over two trimesters.

ROUND THREE

In the final round of data collection and analysis, the arrangements of practice were of particular interest. In the final cycle of data collection, the analysis conducted on the data collected to that point was used to guide and facilitate the interviews and focus groups, and further observation of teaching practice was used to compare the findings from the interviews and focus groups to what happened in practice. The use of student focus groups provided an opportunity to zoom in and out of the practices of students and lecturers. This made it possible to look at individual practices as well as the overall context, interaction between practices and the supporting

[9] See section 3.4.5

arrangements. The data for round three was collected over a 9-month period across three trimesters.

In summary, the initial interviews offered the opportunity to explore students' and lecturers' feedback practices, and the round two and three interviews allowed for clarification of issues raised. The observation of classroom practices afforded a way to study student and lecturer practices in action; elucidation of the observations was sought in later interviews and/or focus groups when appropriate. Finally, focus-group discussions presented the chance for students to discuss with each other their interpretation and understanding of feedback practices that had been raised in round one and two interviews. The focus-group discussions also allowed for sense-making and refining and consolidation of key themes, and provided a method for member checking. This methodology requires no set number of focus groups; instead, the number of groups is context specific. Guest et al. (2017) found that two to three focus groups uncovered 80% of all themes. The recruitment of participants and details of participant numbers are discussed in Sections 3.4.1.3, 3.4.1.4, and 3.4.1.5, and are summarised in Table 3.1.

3.4.1.1 Methods Used for Data Collection – Multiple Interpretive Methods

As previously discussed, in the initial stages of the research project a questionnaire[10] was offered to all enrolled MBA students. The questionnaire was aimed at gauging students' perceptions of feedback. The data collected was used to guide the construction of interview questions and offer insights into the observations and document analysis. The data was also used in the focus-group guides[11]. This type of approach is reinforced by Schatzki (2012), who supports the complementary nature of using statistical and interpretive methods and is consistent with collaborative inquiry (Willis 2010). Potential limitations of surveying students included the affective relationship between students and lecturer influencing the likelihood of students being honest with their appraisal of feedback, the constraints of cultural mores that predicate direct criticism of teachers, and the propensity of central tendency when

[10] See Appendix J
[11] See Appendix B, C, and D

completing surveys (Kemmis, McTaggaart, et al. 2014, pp. 184-185; Reason & Bradbury 2001). Steps were taken to alleviate these limitations that included not directing the survey at one subject, de-identifying responses, and encouraging students to be open in their responses. The use of multiple interpretive methods allowed for a rich analysis of students' perceptions and provided direction for future interviews and focus-group discussions.

Students who opted in to complete the survey were asked to do so towards the end of their current session of study. This allowed students the opportunity to experience various modes of feedback throughout a subject. Students attempting more than one subject could also compare feedback practices across subjects. Interviewing students at different stages of the MBA program allowed for a variety of experiences to be captured at different stages of the MBA. The survey results were collated and used to form questions for the student interviews and focus groups, providing data for further interpretation and stimulation of critical dialogue. The purpose of the initial questionnaire was to unearth preconceived ideas and perceptions regarding feedback. The student interviews were also semi-structured, with students encouraged to discuss any area relating to feedback that they felt affected their studies. Reference was made to the student-questionnaire data, but this was done towards the end of the interview so as not to inadvertently direct students' thoughts. Both the student and lecturer interviews focused on the feedback practices adopted.

The first stage of qualitative data collection (Figure 3.3) involved semi-structured interviews, class and consultation observation, artefact analysis, and other student correspondence. There was also the option of follow-up interviews based on the data and analysis from the first stages of research. The lecturer interviews were one-to-one semi-structured interviews (Minichiello et al. 2008). The semi-structured format allowed for the use of the data collected in the student questionnaires, but also provided opportunity for the lecturer to discuss other aspects of feedback.

The second round of data collection consisted of student and lecturer interviews, with data from the questionnaire and the initial analysis of round 1 data used to direct the questions and discussion. Appendix B contains a sample interview guide. The final stage involved student focus groups and final lecturer interviews. In the student focus groups, the earlier findings were used as the basis for discussion (Appendices C and D). The focus groups were used for sense-making of the data and current analysis. They were also useful for clarifying the key elements of the study and to gauge a better understanding of how feedback is perceived. The focus groups discussed which practices had an impact on feedback. To assist with this, each focus group was provided with stimulus material comprising a summary of current academic practices and thinking regarding feedback. The discussion focused on what feedback practices are and students' experiences of them. One of the aims of the focus groups was to investigate students' perceptions of feedback and compare them to lecturers'. This process helped participants be actively involved in the focus groups. Both parties were informed about the perceptions held, so that they could be compared with the practices of feedback identified from the literature. The responses from the focus groups were collated, which provided an avenue for a collaborative analysis of the data and offered direction for the final round of data collection.

The final round of lecturer interviews was conducted after the analysis of the student focus groups was completed. No focus groups were conducted with the lecturers, as suitable times and locations could not be negotiated. Instead, final lecturer interviews were used in place of focus groups, with summaries of the earlier data made available for each lecturer to discuss. In the final lecturer interviews, the focus-group findings were used as the starting point. The use of focus groups was to foster an environment where the "agenda of the participants emerged", rather than being researcher-driven (Pokorny & Pickford 2010, p. 23). The responses from the student focus groups and final staff interviews were compared, and different perceptions noted.

Throughout each round of data collection, observations of student and lecturer interactions in the normal teaching environment were also conducted. These included non-participant and participant observation (Quinlan et al. 2015). As the researcher was situated within the research, observation of the current teaching environment, the student spaces, and the online environment were important in understanding the situational factors that may have affected the student responses, and in observing feedback practices first-hand. This was vital because practice is difficult to access fully if reliance is only on participant accounts, which do not give direct access to feedback practices. The observation of the practice of feedback was an important part of the overall data collection. It allowed for a broader and contextualised understanding of the day-to-day feedback practices in the site of the classroom. The observations included both formal and informal "teacher" and "student" interaction. Where possible, students and lecturers interviewed were also observed in lectures and other face-to-face interactions. The majority of the observations occurred after round one of the interviews. The observations were conducted across a different class in each round of data collection. The class choice was limited by the lecturers' willingness to participate and the students consenting to being observed. The observations were conducted with no involvement from the observer apart from an introduction, explanation of the research and consent request. In total 6 classes were observed across three subjects amounting to approximately 14 hours of observation once breaks were accounted for. The observation helped clarify the previous data collected and gain a deeper insight into how the participants engaged with the feedback process to improve subject knowledge and complete assessments. It also provided the chance to compare what was said about feedback practices with what was actually done in-class, in particular the physical arrangements, social dynamics, and students/lecturer interactions.

All stages of the collaborative-inquiry process focused on the practices of feedback from both student and lecturer perspectives. The data collected was used to start the collaborative process using focus groups and, later, to determine the content for the final-stage focus groups. Contextual issues were also noted and considered, such as physical space used, timing of lectures, and differences in cohorts. Analysis of relevant documents such as subject outlines, assessment task descriptions, and assessment schedules were conducted to determine any potential impact on or divergence from existing practices of feedback.

3.4.1.2 Research Participants and Context/Research site

The process of identifying, integrating, and involving the key players is important when implementing a collaborative-inquiry project. The site of the research was a postgraduate business school with a focus on the MBA program. A collaborative-inquiry approach required stakeholders to be situated within the study and play an active part in the research project as collaborators, thus ensuring greater commitment and eventual application. As discussed in Section 3.3.1, collaborative inquiry (Patterson & Goulter 2015) places the researcher in the midst of the research, as opposed to being an outsider looking in, and thus the researcher can be considered an active participant in the research cycles. The initial step was to identify and define the parties involved, including the program director[12], subject coordinators, lecturers[13], and students within a course of study. The research involved the key stakeholders working together to research a problematic area (in this case feedback practices) and was consistent with the view that feedback is socially situated and dependent on the interpretations and perceptions of the individual and the environment in which they operate. It is important to note that all research participants could choose to be involved in all parts of the research and were free to withdraw from the study at any stage (Section 3.5 gives details of ethical considerations).

The data was collected between 2013 and 2019, a period of six years. The population of the MBA program varied during this period and involved international and domestic students, studying full- and part-time. Table 3.1 outlines the numbers and percentages of domestic and international and part-time and full-time students.

Table 3.1 Population data for the MBA Cohort UOW

Year	Full-time	Part-time	International	Domestic	Total
2014	34 (34%)	67 (67%)	82 (81%)	19 (19%)	101
2015	77 (46%)	91 (54%)	130 (77%)	38 (23%)	168
2016	69 (35%)	126 (65%)	136 (70%)	59 (30%)	195
2017	48 (28%)	121 (72%)	112 (66%)	57 (34%)	169
2018	36 (23%)	122 (77%)	86 (54%)	72 (46%)	158
2019	37 (28%)	95 (72%)	60 (45%)	72 (56%)	132

[12] Appendix L lists terminology and roles.
[13] In this business school, tutors are not used in the MBA.

Table 3.1 highlights aspects of the population. First, there were significantly more international than domestic students in 2014 through to 2017, but in 2018 and 2019 the breakdown was closer to 50%. Within the mix of international and domestic students, more international students were enrolled in full-time study compared to domestic students. Typically, in MBA courses the majority of domestic students are working full-time.

Compared to the overall population, there was a higher percentage of domestic students who chose to take part in this research. In general, based on the interview data, international students typically had less practical experience, but domestic students lacked recent experience in academic study. This lack of experience in the requirements of academic coursework and assessments had the potential to make students more reliant on the MBA lecturers for guidance and direction (at least initially) and hence result in a greater demand for feedback

3.4.1.3 Recruitment

As discussed earlier, a critical part of the research involved identifying the key stakeholders, outlining the research project, and garnering their support. Communication about the context, scope, and purpose of the study was critical in obtaining stakeholder support and volunteers as research participants[14]. The key stakeholders included MBA academic staff and students currently enrolled in the MBA. Formal permission was sought from the stakeholders for their involvement in this research project (Appendix I contains the Participant Consent Form and Participant Information Sheet). Communication strategies for both students and staff were outlined, the area of investigation was reiterated, and the participants were collectively involved in aspects of the research plan through the three cycles of data collection. The collaborative nature was explained to the participants and they were informed that all parties would be involved in aspects of the planning and implementation of the research. It was explained that this was a shared journey in which all participants were encouraged to contribute, and that the perceptions of feedback from both the lecturer and student perspectives were of interest. The notion of a shared vision and the importance of reflection for knowledge creation was explained to the participants (Walter 2009). The research cycles commenced in June 2013 and were completed in May 2019. During this time three rounds of student interviews and a two student focus groups were conducted. There were also three rounds of lecturer interviews and observations (Figure 3.3). Table 3.2 lists the number of participants interviewed in each data-collection cycle. Within these cycles, data from the prior cycle was used as a base for the interview questions and excerpts were provided as a starting point for discussion.

Table 3.2 Participants by Data-Gathering Method

	Students **224 invited to participate**	**Lecturers** **28 invited to**
Questionnaire	140	n/a
Round 1 interviews	12 Students: 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12	7 Lecturers: 1,2,3,6,8,11,18
Round 2 interviews	14 Students: 1,3,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,21,22,23,24	4 Lecturers: 13,17,19,20
Round 3 interviews	n/a	4[15] Lecturers: 1,6,20,21
Follow-up interviews	4 – From round two students	n/a
Focus group 1	4 Students: 26,27,28, 29	n/a
Focus group 2	6 Students: 1,15,16,20,21,25	n/a

3.4.1.4 Student Participants

All students enrolled in the MBA were approached to be part of the study. Students who had recently completed the MBA were also invited to participate; however, none of these students chose to do so. The recruitment process was conducted via an email sent to students' UOW student email accounts and via attending lectures. The email included a brief introduction and the Participant Information Sheet (PIS) and Participant Consent Form (see Appendix I). The in-lecturer visits provided a brief

[15] Lecturers 1 and 6 participated in rounds 1 and 3, Lecturer 20 participated in rounds 2 and 3.

opportunity to outline the research and invite students to participate. Students were at different stages of their studies, as there are different pathways through the MBA, including part-time and full-time, with three intakes per year. None of the students who responded were excluded. In total, 224 students were invited to participate in the research. Demographic data on each student's progress in the MBA, full-time/part-time status, domestic/international status, and whether from an English-speaking or non-English speaking background (NESB) were collected. The students were able to choose the parts of the research project in which they were willing to participate. Table 3.3 summarises the demographic data for the student research participants taken from the questionnaire (Appendix K).

Table 3.3 Demographic Data for the Research Participants

		Questionnaire	Interview	Focus Groups	Work Experience	Totals
Domestic		105 (75%)	19 (73%)	8 (80%)		140
International		35 (25%)	7 (27%)	2 (20%)		
Full-time		41 (29%)	7 (26%)	2 (20%)		140
Part-time		99 (71%)	19 (74%)	8 (80%)		
English		93 (66%)	19 (73%)	9 (90%)		140
NESB		47 (34%)	7 (27%)	1 (10%)		
Work Experience	< 3 Years				11 (8%)	140
	3 to 5 Years				31 (22%)	
	> 5 Years				98 (70%)	
Wollongong IC Campus		103 (73%)	17 (65%)	9 (90%)		140
Sydney CBD Campus		29 (21%)	6 (23%)	0 (0%)		
Both		8 (6%)	3 (12%)	1 (10%)		

A total of 140 students participated in the research through either completing a questionnaire[16], being interviewed, or as part of a focus group. Students could choose to be involved in all or part of the data collection stages (questionnaires,

[16] See Appendix J for the questionnaire and Appendix K for the questionnaire data

interviews and focus groups), however the focus group participants were not interviewed. The survey data (Appendix K) was made up of 75% domestic and 25% international students; these percentages remained similar for the student interviews and focus groups. The percentages were similar for part-time versus full-time students, with 71% of students surveyed and 74% of students interviewed studying full-time. Finally, 34% of those who completed the survey were from non-English speaking backgrounds, but only 27% opted to be interviewed. Overall, 67% of the international students were from non-English speaking backgrounds, the majority of the domestic students were studying part-time, and all international students were enrolled full-time. Seventy-three percent of students interviewed were based at the main Wollongong campus.

Of the 140 student research participants, the majority had a significant amount of workplace experience: 98 students had over five years, 31 students had between two and five years, whilst 11 others indicated that they had less than two years of workplace experience. The requirement for enrolling in the MBA course is to have gained three years' professional experience. The students who indicated in the survey that they had less than two years of experience did not choose to be involved in the interviews or focus groups. The majority had not studied at a tertiary institution for an extended period, but most students had completed an undergraduate degree and some postgraduate qualifications. Twenty-six individual student interviews were conducted in two waves, and all students who opted into the interview stage were interviewed. There were two student focus groups and ongoing follow-ups with the members of these focus groups. Two student focus groups were conducted, with four students in the first group and six students in the second. The follow-up was done through email communication and/or phone calls. As students progressed through the MBA, the cohort changed, with different perspectives and experiences reported. The cohort changes were due to not all students choosing the same subjects, and different completion rates between full- and part-time students.

3.4.1.5 Lecturer Participants

All academic staff currently teaching in the MBA program and those who had taught in the MBA program in the previous three years were approached to be part of the research project. In total, 28 lecturers were invited to participate in the research. The lecturers were invited to be involved in all or some of the data-collection stages, depending on their personal preference. The stages initially involved interviews, observation, artefact analysis, and focus groups. Fourteen lecturers opted into the research; all were current permanent staff. None of the sessional lecturers opted to participate. All the lecturers who chose to participate met the inclusion criteria and were interviewed. In the first stage of data collection (Figure 3.3), seven lecturers were interviewed. Four lecturers opted into the second round of interviews, and four more opted into the final round of interviews, with one lecturer being involved in both rounds one and three. Overall, 50% of the 28 lecturers teaching in the MBA program were involved in the research. Five lecturers agreed to ongoing observations of their classes.

3.4.1.6 Research Reflexivity

A research journal was used to record unplanned, less formal, or serendipitous opportunities, as well as decisions made during the research process (Appendix H); for example, the researcher recorded his own journey, participant-recruitment process, times, locations, and dates of data collection in the journal. It was also used to record other potentially relevant factors that occurred in less formal interactions throughout the research, such as student-lecturer interactions, impacts of physical spaces, and use of voice tone and other non-direct practices. The data collected included discussions on determining how many students sought clarification of their marks, whether students collected assignments (and why or why not), and stories of assessment and feedback from both student and staff.

3.4.2 Data Analysis

The theory of practice architectures (TPA) was used as a framework to structure the analysis of practices. The use of TPA allowed the focus to be on the practices rather than the individual, and offered a way of exploring the interconnections of practice and arrangements. The process was iterative, with cycles of data analysis: initial interviews with students, then lecturers; second-round interviews and observations; and student focus groups and final lecturer interviews.

3.4.2.1 Survey Data[17]

The survey results were collated to provide a broad picture of the current student attitudes toward and understanding of feedback, and to provide an insight for coding the data collected through observation, interviews, and focus groups. Using survey data in this way is an appropriate approach in qualitative research, providing it does not imply greater generality of the findings, or place greater emphasis on the amount of evidence (Maxwell 2010). The analysis involved collating the student responses to each question on the survey (Appendix J contains the survey instrument). A Likert scale was used to gauge students' practices, attitudes, and experiences with feedback. The collated responses were then used to formulate the interview questions. The survey response rate was 24% of students.

The questionnaire comprised 36 items. Ten items were closed, 22 items used a Likert interval scale ranging from 0 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree), and four were choice items where students selected from a list. The use of an odd-numbered Likert scale was so that students could choose to be neutral if they did not feel strongly about the issue (Chyung et al. 2017). The closed items obtained sociodemographic data (gender, age, domestic or international student, English as first language, years' work experience, study domain, highest qualification, campus, and year started).

[17] Appendix K summarises the data.

3.4.2.2 Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is a method of analysing qualitative data to identify ideas, topics, and comments, particularly if these are raised by a number of participants (Saldaña 2016). The analysis is then used to identify, create, organise, and describe themes (Nowell et al. 2017). Thematic analysis was used initially as it provided a way of conceptualising large portions of data from different perspectives. The qualitative data collected, in particular, the *sayings*, *doings,* and *relatings* of students and lecturers, and the arrangements of these practices were analysed thematically using Kemmis's theory of practice architectures. This approach provided a way to focus the discussion and thematic analysis on the practices and the relationships between the practices, rather than on the individual. In the final round of data collection and analysis, the data was categorised by the arrangements of practice, that is, the cultural-discursive, material-economic, and social-political arrangements. The categories were then compared to the key themes from rounds one and two. Finally the themes were further developed in light of the use of TPA. Chapter 4 reports the findings, while chapter 5 discusses the findings in respect to TPA.

The data was then returned to the research participants for checking, validation, and sense-making in the second round of student and lecturer interviews. The student focus groups and final lecturer interviews involved students being presented with the most recent analysis, after which a discussion was facilitated to theorise the findings. This involved further discussion, sense-making, co-analysis, and co-theorising. The use of different perspectives of the staff and students on feedback practices for subsequent reflection was aimed at furthering knowledge and understanding of the feedback process.

3.4.2.3 Coding Rationale and Method

Coding typically moves through two main stages (Bazeley & Jackson 2013): initial identification and labelling, as discussed above, then refinement and interpretation. This helps to group the data for further analysis. The analytic work lay in establishing and linking the elements and themes (Saldaña 2016). The coding methods are discussed in Sections 3.4.2.3.1 and 3.4.2.3.2.

As data were collected, transcribed, and reflected on, coding was undertaken to capture themes and concepts relating to feedback and to determine how key concepts could be grouped. Engagement with the data allowed for increased familiarity, and hence greater depth and breadth of analysis. In analysing the data, the investigator was particularly attentive to recognising personal insights, which led to an improved understanding of the practices employed.

Hennink et al. (2011, p. 220) note that aspect of coding is recognising "when an issue raised is a code" and when it is worthy of being included in the analysis. They claim that an issue must be demonstrated to be "valid, robust and useful" for it to be included as a code. This is achieved by ascertaining the level of importance that a participant places on an issue and by determining if the issue is repeated in a number of different interviews, hence ensuring that it has meaning and is not just a passing comment. Repetition indicates the emergence of a dominant theme (Silverman 2011). Throughout the data analysis, the importance and repetition of issues discussed were noted. Insights articulated by as few as one participant were still considered, as they may have identified a key issue. This is consistent with a collaborative inquiry. As explained below, the interview transcriptions were pre-coded by interview question using the NVivo12 software package. This initially involved extracting and tabulating words and statements from participants into groups under key elements. From this, an initial code list was built. Each subsequent interviewee and focus-group participant was provided with a summary of the initial findings to stimulate discussion and aid in the analysis of the data and explore meaning, and as an additional member-checking process. From this the initial coding was adjusted.

Following reflection on the interviews, key words and phrases were noted and identified. The responses to each question were then coded in vivo, which is also known as "literal coding" or "verbatim coding" (Saldaña 2016, p. 74), and captured using NVivo12 as discussed below. Initial themes were identified through reflection and thematic analysis (Nowell et al. 2017). These themes were then used to formally analyse the data by allocating statements made by participants during the interviews (Creswell 2009). These themes were later used in the focus groups to review the earlier themes as part of co-analysis.

Grbich (2013) suggests that codes and themes are interchangeable terms in the analysis of research. Within this thesis, coding is used to refer to grouping and labelling, or identification of themes through labelling. This research followed the coding methods outlined by Saldaña (2016) and used the stages discussed in Grbich (2013, p. 232):

- Themes
- Theoretical concepts
- Key words
- Events and relevant contexts reported by participants
- Practices.

As explained in Section 3.2.3, practices were analysed using TPA, looking in particular at how the arrangements affected the sayings, doings, and relatings.

Several qualitative research software programs are available to assist in storing data and providing tools to enable that data to be managed when preparing for analysis. NVivo12 is one such program, and was chosen for the management of data in this research as it was available and supported at the university. NVivo12 was used to create nodes and assist in grouping the codes into similar categories, and in developing themes (Bazeley & Jackson 2013). The use of NVivo12 increased the proficiency and focus of the data analysis without replacing the learning. This increased efficiency allowed greater opportunity for time to be spent on making sense of the meaning of the data (Bazeley & Jackson 2013, p. 2). NVivo proved to be an efficient and helpful tool for recording, managing, and locating data collected for review.

The use of NVivo aided tasks that are generally part of analysing qualitative data including annotations on transcripts and the copying and pasting of blocks of text. The use of NVivo did not replace the reading of transcripts, rather it made the categorization and coding process more efficient. Document folders were established for digital recordings of interviews, interview transcripts, notes taken during interviews, observations, memos, and notes (Appendix E and F gives examples of coding tables taken from NVivo). NVivo also enabled searching and retrieval of quotes and information from within the coded documents. Reviewing the coding and source data in a single platform made the identification and refinement of categories easier and more consistent. Coding in this way enabled the consideration of relationships between categories and sub-categories, allowing for the identification of meaningful data for interpretation.

3.4.2.3.1 First-Cycle Coding

First-cycle coding was conducted using in vivo coding. First cycle coding places the emphasis on the participants' spoken words (Saldaña 2016) and involves going line by line through the transcripts. In vivo codes are useful in capturing processes and preserving participants' meaning within the codes. This method for first-cycle coding is applicable when using a collaborative approach, as it allows each participant's voice to be accurately maintained (Saldaña 2016). In vivo coding can be used on its own, but if it is used in conjunction with another coding method, both the participants' and researchers' voices can be used. Terms from the literature can also be incorporated, providing a broader and more encompassing approach to analysing the data. This thesis uses a thematic analysis (Saldaña 2016) to complement the initial in vivo coding.

Initially, the data was divided into interview questions (Appendix A) using the auto-coding function in NVivo12. Once categorised by interview question, the questions and derivations were coded in vivo using NVivo12 to collate and store the coding (a sample of the codes used and subsequent categorisation are included in Appendices E, F, and G) using key words from interview transcripts. A thematic analysis was conducted to summarise the first-cycle coding. The resulting themes were then used to form the basis of the discussion for the focus groups.

First-cycle coding was conducted on round one and two student interviews and lecturer interviews and observation and artefact analysis, according to the following steps:

1. Pre-coding, coding by question, and structural coding

The first step in coding (preliminary jottings pre-coding) was to note key phrases and words when transcribing the recorded interviews. These were used to assist in the subsequent first-cycle coding process described below and to make note of possible additions and changes to further interview questions and inquiry. The next step involved coding by interview question (Bazeley & Jackson 2013), where participants' interview responses were collated. This was helpful for sorting data into initial major categories suitable for use with interviews (Saldaña 2016). All initial interviews were coded by interview question.

2. Structural coding

The second step was structural coding to categorise large segments of data for further analysis (Saldaña 2016, p. 98). The categories were based on the research question and the findings from the literature review. This step was also helpful in reviewing the questions asked in the second round of interviews.

3. Initial coding (also known as open coding) and in vivo coding

The responses to each question were then coded by a combination of in vivo and initial coding. This was conducted to identify key excerpts. Using In vivo coding and initial coding in tandem is a recognised approach that allows for a range of coding possibilities from descriptive to conceptual to theoretical (Saldaña 2016). This method is appropriate for most qualitative studies, including collaborative inquiry (Saldaña 2016, p. 74). In vivo coding captured the actual language used by the participants, most closely incorporating the participants' voices, and was used as a starting point for the open-coding process. The sayings, doings, and relatings were coded using this method.

The initial lecturer interviews were completed after the student interviews. Anything new that was raised in the lecturer interviews was also coded in vivo. This ensured consistency with the previous coding (Kemmis 2009; Reason & Bradbury 2006; Saldaña 2016) and allowed new concepts/ideas to emerge from the interviews. In vivo coding allowed for the capture of the language used by the participant group (lecturers), which was important for the second-cycle coding and thematic analysis.

As part of the collaborative inquiry, the questions used for the lecturers were informed by the initial student interview coding and analysis, as described above (Saldaña 2016). This provided the opportunity to compare the different perspectives and practices between lecturers and students. It was also an essential part of the collaborative inquiry, as it involved integrating the key stakeholders.

4. Descriptive Coding

Descriptive coding (Saldaña 2016, p. 102) is appropriate for studies with a variety of data forms such as interview transcripts, field notes, correspondence, and artefacts. It fits well with the second cycle coding method, thematic coding. It also aligns with collaborative inquiry and looking at practices (Kemmis 2010b, p. 420-421). Descriptive coding was started after the above steps. It was then continued concurrently through the subsequent rounds of data collection and continued until descriptions were complete.

5. Identifying Themes

The codes identified using the above methods were divided into themes, which were used to shape the questions in subsequent interviews. This key component of collaborative inquiry allows for the integration of the initial participants into future discussions (Kindon et al. 2007; Schiller et al. 2018). The initial themes were updated after the lecturer interviews (Gibbs 2007).

3.4.2.3.2 Second-Cycle Coding

Second-cycle coding explored the interrelationships across codes with the aim of developing a more logical set of categories to develop a coherent synthesis of the data collected. The development of themes and overall concepts comes through second-cycle coding, which fits with collaborative inquiry as it allows for participants to be involved in the second-cycle coding process through collaboration (Saldaña 2016). Second-cycle coding was done on the existing coding, second interviews, focus groups, and observations. This process was repeated for the three cycles, with similar codes being placed into categories. The categories were analysed, and themes identified. The following steps outline the second-cycle coding process.

1. Process coding

Process coding is used for “simple observable activity…and more general conceptual action” (Saldaña 2016, p. 111) (for example, “student sort feedback after class”). Process coding allowed for the study of practices: sayings, doings, and relatings (Kemmis 2010b, pp. 420-421). Collaborative inquiry and thematic coding were two second-cycle methods used to further analyse process coding (Saldaña 2016).

2. Updating coding

The initial findings and analysis from round one student and lecturer interviews were used to shape the round two student interviews as well as to get participant feedback on the initial themes. Involving the participants in the sense-making and analysis process is crucial to the validity of collaborative inquiry (Kidd & Kral 2005). In vivo coding[18], descriptive coding, and structural coding were used, and the initial themes were updated.

3. Pattern coding

This is aimed at identifying and grouping generated themes. It is used to analyse and to order first-cycle coding, grouping codes into a smaller number of codes to reveal and develop major themes or constructs from the data (for example, “The purpose of feedback”). These themes are discussed in Sections 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4. It is also useful for examining patterns of human relationship (Saldaña 2016). Pattern coding was used after the initial interviews in preparation for the second round of interviews and focus groups.

4. Focused coding

[18] The in vivo coding method was only used for new areas that were raised and/or if the expression differed significantly.

Focused coding was used to assist in the development of theory, as it is useful for identifying the most significant initial codes, narrowing them down, and defining them (for example, “conceptions of feedback’s purposes”). The development of themes flows from these significant initial codes (Saldaña 2016). These themes were then used to guide the focus-group discussions before further analysis was conducted. It was also used to compare participant responses.

5. Axial coding

Axial coding is used strategically to reassemble data split in first-cycle coding (Saldaña 2016). Codes were moved into categories, reducing the number of initial codes. These categories were then developed into conceptual categories. The aim of this process was to find information saturation. This was achieved after coding the second focus group.

6. Values coding

Values coding was used when examining perceptions of feedback and exploring the impact of power distance in the lecturer/student interactions. This was raised in initial interviews several times and was explored further in the focus groups. It was used to explore the reported “disconnection” between lecturers and students in terms of feedback.

7. Ongoing theming of the data

Thematic statements (Appendix D) were used to help comprehend and explain the function and meaning of the coded data. The thematic statements were also useful for preparing the data for second-cycle coding and for use in guiding focus-group discussions. Some of the initial themes were collapsed and others expanded through the second-cycle coding process. The focus-group questions and direction were informed by previous interviews and other data-collection methods and used to assist in theming the data.

Memo writing through the coding process also played a significant part in the overall coding and analysis process. Writing memos helped to capture initial thought processes and unearth new concepts and how they relate to each other. Appendices E, F and G have examples of the coding used to demonstrate the rigour applied.

Integrating TPA into the coding process was useful for revealing the complex relationship between practices and the supporting practice architectures including the social arrangements that shape practice, the material arrangements enable or constrain practices, and the discursive resources used when talking about practice. TPA was helpful in making sense of the data as it offered a way of drawing connections between the different practices of students and lecturers, and the impact on feedback practice. First cycle coding methods that were used specifically to integrate TPA included in vivo coding and descriptive coding. These coding methods allowed for the capture and analysis of the original language used and for the development of rich descriptions of practice. Examples of coding linked to discursive resources included, *"intentionally creating dialogues", and "dialogue inhibitors"*. Lecturers and students talked about the importance of intentional dialogue creation for feedback. Examples of codes illustrating social arrangements included coding descriptions such as "*relationship and trust" and "comfortable approaching lecturers".* Students described the practices that made them feel more comfortable approaching lecturers and some lecturers outlined ways they tried to encourage student interaction and feedback-seeking. Finally, codes such as "timing and availability of consultations", "class size", and "delivery method" were linked to the material arrangements by comparing what was observed with in practice, and by what was said by both lecturers and students.

The second cycle coding methods used in integrating TPA were process coding, and thematic coding. Process coding allowed for the study of practices: sayings, doings, and relatings (Kemmis 2010b, pp. 420-421). The second cycle thematic coding was used to categorise the data into themes which were then aligned with TPA and linked back to the research question. Examples of the codes included *"feedback dialogues"* and *"purpose and form of feedback"* for sayings, "feedback-seeking behaviour" and *"feedback timing"* for doings, and *"relationship and trust"* and "*relational practices"* for relatings. These codes were then used to develop themes that were revealed through the analysis of the three phases. Thematic coding examples included "practices for understanding feedbacks purposes" (sayings/cultural-discursive arrangements), “mutual and reciprocal responsibilities for feedback” (doings/material-economic arrangements), and “enabling or constraining feedback-seeking” (relatings/social-political arrangements). This final stage incorporated the data analysis across the three phases of data collection and led to the development of the final themes and sub themes.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethics approval is required for all research conducted with or about people. Ethics approval was applied for, and approved, through the University of Wollongong Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), New South Wales Australia. The HREC approval number is HE12/457. Submission of a yearly progress report to the HREC is required for annual renewal of the ethics approval. Appendix I contains copies of the Participant Information Sheet and Participant Consent Form. The ethical considerations are outlined in the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (NHMRC 2007 (Updated 2018)). These include research merit and integrity, justice, beneficence, and respect for persons.

Research merit asks the researcher to consider the potential benefit of the study and the appropriate methods as grounded in relevant current literature. The principle of justice guarantees fair recruitment of participants and that they will be treated fairly with no impositions placed on them during the research. Beneficence considers the overall welfare of participants. Confidentiality and anonymous data collection are critical and, if possible, the participants will gain some benefit from their participation. This is of particular importance where there is a power imbalance (Reason & Bradbury 2008). Respect for persons implies that researchers seek free, informed, and ongoing consent, respecting the autonomy and freedom of individuals (NHMRC 2007 (Updated 2018)). In collaborative research it is important to consider issues such as informed consent, inherent power imbalances, and confidentiality. These issues are often dealt with as part of the collaborative process. Informed consent “becomes an evolving process” where consent is revisited as the research develops with the option for participants to withdraw consent at any time (Lake and Wendland 2018, p. 34). The inherent power imbalance is mediated to some extent through the collaboration between researcher and participants and the iterative process of analysis (Butler and Schnellert 2012; Walther et al 2017) and with a clear outline of the process. The creation a safe and confidential place for participants to share and discuss issues is an essential component in designing the structure of the collaborative inquiry and how it will be facilitated (Harding et al 2015).

From the outset of the research, it was made clear to participants that they were free to remove themselves from the project at any stage. Participants in the later stages of the research were presented with the findings from previously collected data (Figure 3.3). In these instances, the data was de-identified so that no link to a particular individual could be made. There were four options in which formal consent was sought: completing a survey, being interviewed, participation in focus group, and observation in the teaching environment. This observation included lectures and other feedback-related sessions such as consultation hours and other, less formal, times such as breaks during lecturers and after lectures. As part of the recruitment process, an email was sent to all students enrolled in the MBA inviting them to participate in the research, this included observation of classes. Before any observation of lecturers and feedback related sessions prior permission was sought from the lecturer involved, and the lecturer in turn sought permission from the cohort present. In the observation sessions conducted, all students consented to being part of the session. These sessions were not recorded in anyway rather notes were taken. All research participants were de-identified at the note taking stage. However, whilst the researcher was not involved with the MBA program in any way, they were a tutor in the University, and either because of this or because lecturers asked students to take part in the observed sessions, students may not have felt comfortable refusing to take part in the research. These issues were discussed with each lecturer and every effort was made by the lecturer to ensure students understood that they could choose not to participate or withdraw at any time. Due to the unscheduled nature of this kind of feedback, the collection of this data was discussed with the relevant staff to determine the most effective and least intrusive methods.

These principles were upheld during all stages of this study. Participants were provided with an information sheet (Appendix I) outlining the nature and purpose of the research, including the contact details of the research supervisors and the ethics officer. Participants were able to ask any questions regarding the study and were then asked to sign a consent form (Appendix I). They were informed of their right to participate or refuse to participate in the research, and that they could withdraw from the study at any time. Privacy and confidentiality were guaranteed throughout the study by de-identifying participants. This was achieved by numbering each participant and removing identifying details. All data collected was kept confidential and stored in a secure location, in strict accord with the code of research conduct outlined in the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (NHMRC 2007 (Updated 2018)). Hard copies of consent forms were stored on-site at UOW, and electronic copies were stored on a UOW computer and backed up.

The qualitative interview format used in the study required participants to discuss feedback. As the data sought could be of a personal nature, the possibility of participants becoming concerned was a potential risk. Ethical issues that could potentially have occurred for participants were addressed in the Participant Information Sheet. The interview questions and style allowed for students to decline to answer a question or to avoid discussing sensitive content. Participants were also assured that they could cease the interview at any time. If participants did become distressed, appropriate referral details were on hand for assistance available through UOW.

The ethical requirements of this research were considered, and the necessary steps were taken to ensure compliance.

3.6 Trustworthiness

The quality of qualitative research is determined by the trustworthiness of the process of inquiry. This is demonstrated by accurately conveying what the participants have discussed (Denzin & Lincoln 2008; Guba & Lincoln 1994; Lincoln & Guba 1985). Qualitative researchers have developed an equivalent language to express similar concepts. Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 290) propose that in relation to trustworthiness, the aim is to support the argument that the inquiry's findings are "worth paying attention to". The process of making sense and meaning of collected data must also be relevant and authentic to local researchers; otherwise it will not be relevant to the local context (Tobin 2014). Language used to demonstrate trustworthiness of the process in qualitative research is considered by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Guba and Lincoln (1994). They outline five criteria for gauging the trustworthiness of qualitative research: credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and authenticity. These criteria are explored in the following sections.

3.6.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to confidence in the truth of the findings; specifically, in the data and its interpretation by the researcher to ensure that credible findings will emerge (Lincoln & Guba 1985). Guba and Lincoln (1994) suggest that this replaces internal validity. They assert that credibility means recognisable and faithful descriptions of human experience – making something worthy of belief. Credibility is important because it instils confidence in the veracity of the findings. The key approaches to establishing credibility in this research have been outlined in Sections 3.2 and 3.3. They include consistency in the research paradigm, the use of appropriate research methods for the type of research being conducted, and a research design that fits with the methodology. Prolonged engagement builds trust and openness amongst research participants. The researcher being "in" the research allowed for trust-building and for observation across a range of contexts. Triangulation was accomplished using different data-collection techniques and the use of multiple data sources, including both students and lecturers. The focus groups and follow-up interviews made participant debriefing possible and provided an avenue for reviewing negative case analysis (a way to consider outliers that emerge from data collection). Referential adequacy requires keeping an original portion of the data for future comparisons. The original recordings of the interviews have been kept for this purpose. Member checks (Nowell et al. 2017) were conducted at each stage of the research: after the initial and second-round interviews and as part of the focus groups. Member checks ensure that what was discussed in the interviews has been accurately captured in the transcriptions. The focus-group discussions were also used to review earlier findings. Zooming in and out of practices provided the opportunity to review sections of data with focus-group participants. In addition to correlating interpretations with the research supervisors, the writing, rewriting, and ongoing critical dialogue with research participants strengthened the researcher's critical reflection by ensuring a review of the analysis and interpretations. This process raised awareness of any unintended biases and assumptions thus contributing to the credibility of the research. This was important to reduce the likelihood that preconceptions and assumptions would influence the interpretation of the data.

3.6.2 Transferability

Qualitative research should demonstrate transferability; that is, show that the findings may be applicable in other contexts, and thus achieve external validity. Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 316) refer to this as "thick description", which describes findings in sufficient detail and context that they may be transferable to other times, settings, and people. The role of the researcher is to describe and supply data so others can determine whether they can transfer the findings to other contexts. The transferability of findings is discussed further in Chapter 5.

3.6.3 Dependability

Dependability can be defined as the stability or reliability of the data over time, and the degree to which the findings are repeatable and consistent (Guba & Lincoln 1994; Lincoln & Guba 1985). Dependability requires that the findings are consistent within the ever-changing context of the research. An in-depth methodological description that would allow for the study to be repeated is required.

Employing multiple methods in cycles of data collection also contributes to the dependability of the findings. The repeated cycles of data analysis support the interpretation and theory generation of the findings. The use of interviews, focus groups and observations to collect and analyse data is consistent with a collaborative inquiry. However, because this study uses an interpretive perspective, understanding is co-created and there is no objective truth or reality to which the results of this study can be compared.

3.6.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is the degree to which the results can be confirmed or corroborated by others. Processes used to ensure this include reflexivity, triangulation, audit trail, and admission of researcher's beliefs and assumptions. A process for capturing reflexivity was accomplished using a research diary to record thought processes and reflections. Triangulation was established using multiple data sources. A clear description of the research process provided an easily identifiable audit trail.

3.6.5 Authenticity

From a constructivist paradigm, the notion of internal and external validity is better expressed as authenticity (Crotty 1998). Authenticity refers to the extent to which researchers, fairly and faithfully, reflect a range of realities; it includes ontological, educative, catalytic, and tactical authenticity. These will be briefly addressed.

The specific criterion is fairness; that is, a fair and balanced representation of the stakeholders' perspectives (Crotty 1998; Guba & Lincoln 1994). Ontological authenticity is a criterion for determining a raised level of awareness of the social environment by research participants and those with whom they come into contact in an organisational context (Guba & Lincoln 1994; Shannon & Hambacher 2014). This was demonstrated by students improving their understanding of feedback through involvement in the research during dialogic discussions in interviews and focus groups (Guba & Lincoln 1994; Shannon & Hambacher 2014). Educative authenticity is an increased awareness of and respect for others. Throughout the research, the participants' and researcher's understanding of feedback developed, and students' approaches to seeking feedback changed. Catalytic (Lather 1986) and tactical authenticity refers to the extent that an inquiry results in action on behalf of the research participants and subsequent training in some form of social action (Lincoln and Guba cited in Denzin & Lincoln 2005, p. 207). The extent of catalytic authenticity was captured through follow-up interviews and discussions. Several students reported that their view of feedback and how they approached it was affected by discussions with the researcher. Tactical authenticity was harder to demonstrate in this research, but if students become involved in the development of the feedback process and constructors of the purposes of feedback, tactical authenticity will have been demonstrated.

3.7 Summary

This chapter has elucidated the chosen paradigm and outlined the supporting theoretical framework, methodology, and methods used. The suitability and appropriateness of the chosen methodology for this research was discussed along with the project design, recruitment of participants, ethical considerations, data analysis, and trustworthiness. A practice-based collaborative inquiry was adopted, as this methodological approach allowed flexibility in research design (Section 3.3.1) and enabled researchers to work with participants to create knowledge, and to better understand meaning and how it applies to each individual context. This then empowered the participants to construct and use their own knowledge to improve their understanding and application of feedback in the context of the MBA. The findings will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 4 Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter reports on feedback practices in the context of the purposes of feedback, the responsibility for feedback, and feedback-seeking. The findings provide an insight into how feedback is perceived, comprehended, and used by different stakeholders in different contexts. The design of the research project meant that student and lecturer responses were collected separately; therefore, the findings are reported from both student and lecturer perspectives. However, the interactions between the practices of lecturers and students and the arrangements are drawn out using Kemmis's theory of practice architectures (TPA) (Kemmis 2018a; Kemmis, Bristol, et al. 2014) as outlined in Chapter 3 (Section 3.2.3). The use of TPA to investigate feedback from a practice perspective illuminates the conditions that enable or constrain practice. It also provides a way to explore the feedback practices of lecturers and students as they "hang together"[19] in distinctive projects. In the context of this research, lecturers and students enable and constrain each other's practices. The sayings, doings, relatings, and material arrangements are situated at specific sites where the practices take place. Feedback practices, therefore, are enabled or constrained by arrangements and "hang together" in the project of the practice and the practitioner's habitus (Kemmis 2019, pp.123-124). Practice architectures enable feedback to be investigated differently and offer a way to understand the complexity so that feedback practices can be transformed. In this study, the practices of and between lecturers and students were explored, and three main themes were identified: the purposes of feedback; the responsibility for feedback; and feedback-seeking.

Chapter 3 outlined the data collection process, detailing the use of an initial survey (see section 4.1.1), interviews, focus groups, and observations. The observation of teaching practices and student/lecturer interactions occurred throughout the research. Section 3.4, in particular 3.4.1.6 describe the approach taken, and Appendix H has an example of how the observations were used. Wherever possible

[19] Kemmis et al. (2014, p. 4) use this phrase to refer to how the practices interact and work with each other in the site of practice, and Kemmis (2019 p. 13) defines it as "The ends and purposes that motivate the practice".

clarification was sort on the researchers interpretation of the observations. Specific examples can be found in section 4.2.4 which highlighted inconsistencies in what was said and done, cultural considerations (section 4.3.1), and feedback-seeking (section 4.4). The chapter concludes by signposting the link between the findings and the use of TPA to analyse the findings in the Chapter 5 discussion. Table 4.3 provides a summary of the links and situates the practices used within the corresponding phases of data analysis. First, though, the perceptions of feedback are briefly considered, as they had an overall influence on how feedback was conceived.

4.1.1 Prior perceptions of feedback

Lecturers' and students' prior perceptions of feedback were overarching factors that influenced how feedback was conceived and which practices were employed. As discussed in Chapter 3 students were given a survey (appendix J) to gauge their initial perceptions of feedback, and this data (Appendix K) was used to shape the initial interview questions. Overall, students and lecturers revealed different perceptions of feedback. There was greater diversity in students' perceptions of feedback compared to lecturers'. Students' prior experience of feedback had a strong impact on their understanding of feedback: their perceptions tended to be formed through prior feedback experiences, and these perceptions had a stronger influence on how students conceived feedback. There were some variances in students' understanding of feedback, but the majority described feedback as information provided on return of submitted work. A few students discussed a broader perspective on feedback, recognising the power of formative feedback. A broader perspective of feedback was more readily accepted by the students who participated in the focus-group discussions.

Lecturers' prior experience of feedback did not have as strong an impact on their understanding of feedback as did educational theory, institutional requirements, and faculty practices. Lecturers' perceptions of feedback were also influenced by prior experience, but faculty- and discipline-based practices and institutional requirements had a stronger influence. An important distinction was whether feedback was conceived as a product given to students or seen more broadly as a process, with information transmission being only one part. There was a mix of conceptions, with some lecturers confining feedback to information provided on the return of assessments, and others accepting feedback as a process that also included classroom interactions, dialogues, and discussions on the application of theory. Participants who took a more product-orientated view of feedback had a narrower understanding of its purposes than those who recognised feedback as a process. The latter also recognised broader purposes of feedback and acknowledged multiple purposes of feedback practices. The differences were partly explained by different conceptions of the purposes of feedback, who had responsibility for feedback, how feedback was provided, how students accessed feedback, and the practices employed. Lecturers' and students' conceptions of feedback affected the practices used in the feedback process and how lecturers and students engaged with the process, or if (as discussed above) they even recognised feedback as a process. The different conceptions of feedback made it more difficult for lecturers and students to develop a common understanding of feedback's purposes.

The following sections consider feedback, comparing student and lecturer perspectives, but noting that from a practice perspective, there are likely to be many purposes of feedback. This chapter is structured according to three interdependent themes: students' and lecturers' understandings of the purposes of feedback; the responsibility for feedback; and how the practices used in understanding the purposes of and responsibility for feedback enable or constrain feedback-seeking.

4.2 Students' and Lecturers' Understandings of the Purposes of Feedback

This section reports on the purposes[20] of feedback as conveyed by the research participants. It starts with a general overview of what feedback is and what its purposes are. These purposes are then discussed in the following subsections: the summative purposes of feedback; the formative purposes of feedback; the effect of

[20] It is recognised that there are multiple purposes of feedback. However, where the research participants have referred to the singular form this has been retained.

students' motivation for studying the MBA; how variations in practice affect understandings of feedback's purposes; and the importance of communicating these purposes. Students and lecturers were asked about their understandings of the purpose of feedback; specifically, whether the purpose of feedback was articulated and/or discussed, and if so, how it was done, and did understanding the purpose help. Lecturers and students were also asked whether there was a common purpose among students, between lecturers and students, and among lecturers.

Students and lecturers reported various understandings of what feedback was. Most agreed that feedback constituted information provided on the return of assessment tasks. However, there were a variety of other interpretations (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Feedback Understandings

Students' and lecturers' understandings of what feedback is	Source
Grades	Students: 1, 11
Comments on return of assessment tasks, which may be useful for future tasks or subjects	Students: 2, 4, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15, 18, 20, 22, 23, 27 Lecturers: 1, 3, 6, 20, 21
Answering questions on assessment tasks prior to submission	Students: 2, 10, 14, 15, 20, 28 Lecturers: 2, 3
A process of communication between lecturer and student on the content and skills required for the subject	Students: 2, 5, 6, 10, 12, 15, 17, 25, 29 Lecturers: 2, 3, 18
In-class discussions and activities	Students: 1, 7, 11, 20, 26, 27, 28 Lecturers: 3, 19, 20
A process to convey strengths and weaknesses	Students: 1, 16, 20, 25, 26 Lecturers: 18, 20, 21
Initiatives taken to equip students for the workforce	Students: 5, 15, 28 Lecturers: 2, 3
An ongoing communication of information reassuring students that they are on the right track	Students: 7, 20, 21, 22, 26 Lecturers: 2, 3, 6, 20
Information on how the subject will run	Student: 9 Lecturers: 6, 20, 21
Getting students' thinking on track	Students: 9, 15, 28, 29
The mechanisms or actual process used	Students: 11, 26, 29

	Lecturers: 1, 20, 21
Building rapport and creating a connection	Students: 16, 20, 26, 28, 29 Lecturer: 19
Knowledge, understanding, and the opportunity to benefit from both	Lecturer: 1
Link between theory and content	Students: 15, 27 Lecturers: 8, 18, 21

The participants' understanding of feedback was at times conflated with feedback's purposes. For example, the creation of in-class discussions and activities required arrangements that allowed students to interact with each other and lecturers, and provided opportunities for feedback dialogues. Dialogue-creation is a key purpose of feedback, but also an opportunity to provide feedback. Likewise, feedback can be the process of communication between lecturers and students, but communication between students and lecturers can also be a purpose of feedback. What feedback is and what its purposes are closely entwined. Students and lecturers reported varying interpretations of the purposes of feedback (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Purposes of Feedback

Purpose	Source
To know how to improve, particularly the feedback about students' work and their strengths	Student: 1, 16, 20, 25, 26 Lecturer: 1, 3, 18, 20, 21
To establish a process of communication between lecturer and student to clarifying students' understanding of content and developing their skills	Student: 2, 5, 6, 10, 12, 15, 17, 25, 29 Lecturer: 2, 3, 18
To reassure students that they are on the right track	Student 7, 20, 21, 22, 26 Lecturer: 2, 3, 6, 20
To assist students in understanding the feedback process and how the subject will run	Student: 9 Lecture: 2, 3, 6, 20, 21
To build up the confidence and competence of students as they progress through the MBA	Lecturer 19
To justify the grade – "Marks speak with your comments"	Lecturer: 1, 3, 6, 19
Learning	Lecturer 3
To provide an opportunity to discuss assessment tasks and what is required prior to submission	Students: 2, 10, 14, 15, 20, 28 Lecturer: 2, 3
To get students' thinking on track To help them "make sense of the clutter" both in the context of study and in the workplace	Lecturer: 2, 3 Lecturer: 20
To guide and prepare students for future tasks and subjects	Lecturer: 2, 20

As shown in Table 4.2, there were variations in students' and lecturers' understanding of feedback's purposes. The lack of a common understanding affected the practices employed by students and lecturers. Most students reported that the purposes of feedback were not initially explained to them at the start of the MBA course or in each subject. The majority of students would have liked clarity on the purposes of feedback and how the feedback process worked. This is illustrated by Student 25 (FG R3), who said, "I wish the purpose and mechanisms of feedback had been explained to us at the start of our course because it would have been so helpful." In this example, the student had taken time to develop her understanding of feedback's purposes and the feedback process (which she termed "mechanisms"). If the feedback process and purposes of feedback had been explained at the start of the MBA, the usefulness of feedback may have been improved. She also recognised the distinction between feedback's purpose and the feedback process. Over a third of the students expressed similar sentiments. Lecturer 20's (I R3) views aligned with Student 25's in noting that the educational institution has a responsibility to educate students on the purposes of the feedback, as students are unclear in what they want or need to learn. He recognised the importance of using the feedback process to explain the purposes of feedback:

> What they would like to learn and how they would like to learn is not necessarily clear – there is a lack of clarity in that space. So, I see it's the responsibility of the educational institution, to first of all, educate – the purpose of the feedback (Lecturer 20 - I R3).

In further discussion, Lecturer 20 clarified that the institution has a responsibility to educate both lecturers and students in the purposes of feedback, but felt that a key purpose of feedback was to communicate and clarify the feedback process to students and establish the importance of feedback for learning:

> Here are the various purposes. Where do you fit in? Help students work their way through. Feedback can do this; feedback can do that. We want you in the MBA, from a purpose of feedback sense, to see what you're talking about, that broader learning, group work process, dealing with people – as you said, trying to make sense of the clutter, which is what the business world is about, or any workplace is about (Lecturer 20 - I R3).

The above extract illustrates that lecturers recognise a variety of purposes for feedback that go beyond information transmission. Lecturer 20 clearly recognises that the feedback process can be used “to make sense of the clutter” and to develop a common understanding of feedback’s purposes. However, Student 25 said she had been “given little guidance on what the purpose of feedback and how to seek that feedback”. Lecturers’ discussions with students more often centred on content clarification and assessments rather than either party intentionally using the feedback process to develop a common understanding of feedback’s purposes. Students accepted that their understanding of feedback’s purposes developed as they progressed through the MBA. Student 25 alluded to this by saying that she’d wanted the purposes of feedback explained at the start of the course so that she could have developed her understanding of feedback as she progressed through the MBA. Several other students also reported needing guidance in how to use the feedback process, particularly if they had not studied for an extended period. Most students explained that when they had commenced an MBA, they had been looking for reassurance that they had understood the material, what was going to be assessed, how they were to approach the assessment task, and how to approach seeking feedback. As students progressed through the MBA, they recounted being more active in seeking feedback, as they understood that feedback encompassed more than what was provided on assessment tasks. The students who were engaged in seeking feedback reported better understanding of the power of feedback, what they wanted, and how they could seek feedback through dialogue to determine expectations, progress, and the quality required. Nonetheless, this understanding depended on whether the lecturers discussed the purposes of feedback with the students and outlined the practices used in providing feedback. In one of the final focus-group discussions, the group agreed that the purposes of feedback had not been well articulated: “I don't think the purpose has been well articulated…accidental would be too harsh…but it wouldn't be that far off…” (Student 29 - FG R3). The group members were unanimous on this point and felt that if the lecturers had intentionally articulated the purposes of feedback, they would have been more likely to engage in the process and would have understood the feedback information better. This is an example of how the cultural-discursive arrangements affect feedback practices. Students’ willingness to engage in the feedback process is influenced by what lecturers say.

In contrast, the majority of lecturers interviewed in round one reported that their feedback centred on what was provided on return of assessment tasks, despite admitting that they had concerns about whether students used the feedback. Most of these lecturers, when questioned further, accepted that formative feedback practices may be beneficial for learning but cited time constraints as a barrier to using formative feedback. Lecturer 1 reported that students' use of feedback varied, and so he did not waste too much time on marking, and that on occasions he used the template as a way of speeding up the feedback process:

> I think it varies considerably from student to student. I've got a template now for providing feedback for assignments (Lecturer 1 - I R1).

In further discussion, Lecturer 1 recognised that the template itself could reinforce a product view of feedback, rather than prompting students to appreciate feedback as a process. In this instance, the feedback template is an example of both a cultural-discursive (written) and material-economic (physical/electronic document) arrangement. Lecturer 1's use of a template was driven by his experiences of students not using the feedback provided. He changed his practice based on students' actions. This in turn affected students, as they did not fully understand the template's purpose as a feedback tool. On further discussion, some lecturers agreed that institutional practice, not learning, was the primary reason for providing feedback on assessment tasks. Other lecturers intentionally scaffolded their assessment tasks throughout a subject so that the tasks built on each other, meaning that feedback on earlier summative tasks could be used in completing the next task. Some lecturers were clear in outlining the purposes of feedback as it applied to their subject, what they expected from students, and how students were to access feedback. Lecturer 21 acknowledged the need to better understand students' perceptions of feedback and their understanding of its purposes:

> We have perceptions of feedback being one size fits all for all students, and that if we had, as lecturers, more informed ideas at the beginning of the assessment process about what feedback is to you, as my MBA student, rather than to me, as the lecturer, that would be more useful in terms of giving feedback. (Lecturer 21 – I R3)

Whilst there was some understanding amongst lecturers of how powerful feedback could be for learning, they realised that there were inconsistencies in the quantity of feedback provided, which could confuse students. Lecturers also reported that some students were more focused on the grade than on learning, asking for feedback on how to get the best possible grade rather than demonstrating understanding of the content and how it could be applied. In some instances, lecturers reported that students overlooked the learning outcomes embedded in the assigned task, possibly because they were focused on achieving a certain grade rather than learning and applying knowledge. Lecturer 6 argued that feedback should make students think rather than directing students to the grade achieved.

> Design feedback to make students think…. Feedback [is] not about marks and assessment…marks speak with your comments (Lecturer 6 – I R2).

It was noted by some lecturers that feedback is more than absorbing knowledge; rather, it can be particularly useful in helping students apply theoretical knowledge that is relevant in the context of the MBA. However, some concerns were raised about the paucity of feedback.

> He [student] said it's the most feedback he's ever got, and he really appreciated it. That concerns me, that – how much feedback they're getting from other people (Lecturer 2 – I R1).

Lecturer 2 highlighted inconsistency in feedback practices, particularly around the quantity of feedback provided and how students interpret the value and purposes of feedback. Lecturer 20 explained how one student seemingly did not understand the purposes of feedback, confining feedback merely to what the lecturer said, and failing to recognise that feedback should also stimulate thinking:

> For her, the feedback was only about… "you told me something, and I did this exactly, and I thought this would result in that". She completely omitted that the process of feedback, how it has enabled her to think better…. But I'm not sure she understood the process of seeking…and that is a problem, because you get carried away by the marks part of it. So, there is a means to an end, while failing to recognise there is rich learning that can happen in that means space itself (Lecturer 20 – I R2).

If the purposes of feedback were not clearly explained to students, or if lecturers' practices were inconsistent with what was explained, students were more likely to be confused and to experience dissatisfaction with feedback, and less likely to make the best use of it. Participants in Focus Group 1 agreed that for most subjects they were dissatisfied with the feedback provided. They concluded that clarifying the purposes of feedback helped create a culture of feedback, where a mutual understanding of feedback's purpose could be developed. In Focus Group 2, students' dissatisfaction with feedback was also raised as a significant concern. The students noted that there appeared to be no mutual understanding of the purposes of feedback. This lack of a common understanding of feedback's purposes was raised as a possible inhibiting factor. The students also questioned the use of a template for feedback, saying that at times felt that the lecturers' feedback was more generic. There was no accepted consensus between students on the purposes of feedback, but students were more likely to conflate what feedback was with its purposes. Interestingly, there was some consensus between lecturers on the purposes of feedback, particularly to do with explaining a grade, and guiding students through the application of content. When students were asked about the purposes of feedback, over half of them talked about the importance of feedback whilst trying to explain feedback's purposes. In contrast, lecturers, whilst recognising the importance of feedback, did not conflate the importance of feedback with the purposes of feedback (this will be discussed further in Section 5.2).

This section has described a broad outline of the interrelationship between lecturers' and students' feedback practices in relationship to feedback's purposes. This has set the context for the following sub-sections, which consider other aspects of feedback's purposes.

4.2.1 The Summative Purposes of Feedback – Understand the Grade Provided and Feedback on Quality/Extent of Completion

Whilst feedback is described as having multiple purposes, students often focused on feedback for the current task, and how it related to the grade received. In these instances, feedback was often viewed from a task-focused, summative perspective;

that is, the purpose of feedback was limited to what was provided on the current assessment task, to assist students in understanding the grade received and to serve as a guide on the quality of their work. This section briefly discusses how students and lecturers understood feedback's summative purposes.

Students initially said that they considered feedback to mean grades, written communication on submitted assessment tasks, and possible guidance for completing future assessment tasks. The feedback was deemed useful in the immediate context:

> So, for me, it's understanding where I've fallen down in assignments…areas to improve upon and reasons why I lost marks, is what I understand feedback to be (Student 23 – I R2).

Some students valued feedback as affirmation that they had done well on the task or as assisting them to attain the grade they desired:

> I think that feedback is quite valuable from a formal point of view to know that you've got it right (Student 15 – I R2).

In these instances, students described feedback as a finite exchange rather than an ongoing dialogical process. Student 15 explained that she was seeking assurance that the way she had approached the task was correct. This gave her the confidence to complete similar tasks in the future. Another student also discussed the importance of feedback in knowing whether her approach was correct:

> I want to learn the subject because I want to, I want to, to know the assignment, because even with very good assignment [sic] with high mark [sic] I also want to understand more whether my approach is correct or not (Student 17 – I R2).

Both students 15 and 17 were seeking feedback on how well they had completed the task, and whether the approaches they had taken were satisfactory. In this context, feedback serves to illuminate the summative component. Student 17 recognised that just receiving a grade was not adequate, but deliberated whether a high grade was a sufficient indicator that her approach was correct. The concept that a grade (high or low) is not a replacement for feedback is supported by the experiences of Lecturer 1, who recounted an email he received from a student who had struggled to get through the subject and received 57%:

> I got an email from this student after the final results had been released. I thought, “Oh, God, they're going to appeal.” No. It was “I understand” – this student [was] writing to me thanking me for the knowledge et cetera I'd provided… (Lecturer 1 – I R1).

The initial reaction of Lecturer 1 was to assume that the student had wanted to challenge the grade. In reality, the student was appreciative of knowledge gained throughout the subject, despite not doing well in the actual assessments – the student had still learnt something despite the low grade. Lecturer 1 explained that the student had sought a great deal of feedback on returned (summative) assessment tasks. This illustrates how the summative purpose of feedback can be useful for learning. It is also an example of a student providing feedback to a lecturer, a less common purpose of feedback discussed in Section 4.1.

The excerpt from Lecturer 1 also raises a different, yet related, purpose of feedback: from the lecturer’s perspective, feedback is also used to justify the grade in case it is challenged. Despite accepting this view as common, lecturers did not comment on the justification of grades in a positive light, but rather as an occupational necessity. In contrast, some students expressed a desire to use the feedback, to understand the quality of the work submitted and then learn from it, recognising that just receiving a mark was not helpful for learning. This illustrates the different understandings of the purposes of feedback captured by Lecturer 1:

> “I understand why you mark the way you do,” strictly as he [student] put it. This student, I think an international student, [from] India. “I've learnt” – this is in the email from this student – “I've learnt a great deal, and thank you” … I said to my partner at the time, “That's better than any feedback that I've ever had, a person who's got 57 per cent and wrote to me and thanked me” (Lecturer 1 – I R1).

From a summative perspective, feedback can be used for justifying the grade and distinguishing various degrees of quality of work. It is generally conceptualised as being relevant for the immediate task. The next section focuses on the formative use of feedback and how feedback can be used for learning, and for improving the quality of an upcoming task and future tasks. However, the main focus is on the development of student learning of content, skills, and evaluative judgement.

4.2.2 The Formative Purposes of Feedback – Improvement for Future Tasks

Formative feedback is based on coursework delivery such as class dialogues, non-assessable tasks, and feedback prior to submission of assessment tasks. Learning is the central purpose of formative feedback (Section 2.1.3). This section reports on how summative feedback can be dual-purposed and how students and lecturers understand the formative purposes of feedback.

It is helpful if lecturers can ascertain the requirements for students to progress in a subject. This may entail feedback on content, process, or affective issues, but it is generally part of formative feedback. Lecturer 20 used feedback on formative assessments to assist students in learning and identify what each student needed:

> For me, feedback is a core part of education. I spend a lot of time on the formative part, rather than the summative part (Lecturer 20 – I R3).

Formative feedback is a key component of feedback's purposes. Some students recognised that they could use the feedback provided on summative tasks by applying it to future tasks because it served both a formative and summative purpose. This dual purpose of feedback illustrates the complexity in trying to describe feedback as either summative or formative. On occasions, the expectations of lecturers and/or the subject differences resulted in students not understanding how to apply feedback to other subjects. Students found it helpful if lecturers explained how feedback could be used in this way, but not all lecturers did this. When they did, the dual purposes of feedback were achieved:

> Of course, the summative part is there. We have to judge. We have to grade, and therefore people would need to know at the end of their learning what is that degree of learning, and I acknowledge that… [but] what they would like to learn and how they would like to learn is not necessarily…. So, I see it's the responsibility of the educational institution to first of all educate - the purpose of the feedback (Lecturer 20 – I R3).

Student 22 mentioned another distinction in the purposes of feedback:

> I think it's not just about the content. I think it's the skills. There's plenty of content information, plenty… (Student 22 – I R2).

Student 22 identified another of feedback's formative purposes: skills development. Six students reported wanting feedback on skills such as writing, referencing, and critical analysis. Lecturer 1 also outlined the importance of students reviewing the feedback on their work and understanding that they could seek further help:

> Some students who've done very poorly in the first assignment come and see me to get help, they go to Learning Development[21], and they just want to be reassured and they want to talk about the task. They admit that they didn't do it very well, they understand why they have failed the first assignment, and that they are struggling to do well in the second assignment (Lecturer 1 – I R3).

The focus was on improving for future tasks; in this instance, within the same subject. Lecturer 1 clarified that he saw this as a key purpose of feedback. On further questioning, Lecturer 1 could not outline specific practices that may encourage students to seek help, apart from making students aware of their options, and that this was one of feedback's purposes. In contrast, Lecturer 2 discussed how she kept records of the feedback provided on initial assessment tasks so she could see if students had used it:

> What I found, it actually gave me a couple of benefits, that I have the records of what feedback was given to the student between assignment 1 and assignment 2, so I can see if they've actually used the feedback. I make comment of that, "Nice to see you've used the feedback" (Lecturer 2 – I R1).

For Lecturer 2, it was important to able to ascertain whether students were using her feedback. If it was not used well, she would review what she provided and how, including checking that students understood the purpose of the feedback. For students repeating the subject, it afforded scope to discuss what they had done to improve their academic literacy. If students did not act on prior feedback, that

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[21] The Learning Development unit at UOW comprises academic language and literacy lecturers who offer individual consultations for academic writing.

presented an opportunity to explore why, and to discuss the students' understanding of feedback's purpose and the feedback information:

> It also helps for students who are repeating the subject, because I've got what they did before. So, if I see a marked difference in language or something like that, or I'm a bit suspicious, I go off hunting. It also gives me a point to lead into a conversation with a student, to say, "Well what have you done since last time?", or – to improve your writing, or things like that (Lecturer 2 – I R1).

Lecturer 2 did not inform students of this practice and did not have a particular reason for not letting students know, but felt that this could be done in the future, as it might improve students' understanding of feedback. Finally, Lecturer 2's practice of reviewing prior feedback provided a baseline to ensure that students were presenting their own work. This was raised only by Lecturer 2, but it still constitutes a purpose of feedback.

Lecturer 3, in applying feedback in a classroom context, asked students to apply the theory learnt to their own situation and then share this with the other students. This was achieved by dividing students into groups to discuss the application of the theory taught, followed by one group delivering a short presentation to the rest of the class with little preparation time. Lecturer 3 subsequently encouraged the rest of the class to ask questions and offer constructive critiques. The lecturer would then use this as the basis for further discussion and feedback regarding the presentations, application, and content. In this example, students needed to recognise feedback's purposes in formative assessment and be open to a dialogue with lecturers.

This section has considered the formative purposes of feedback that participants reported. The main focus reported by lecturers was to improve performance for future tasks; however, other purposes discussed included gauging quality, developing evaluative judgement, and improving skills. The next section looks at how student's motivations for studying the MBA affected their understanding of feedback's purposes.

4.2.3 Students' Motivations for Studying in the MBA and its Effect on Their Understanding of Feedback's Purposes

Students had different motivations for wanting to complete an MBA. The different motivations had an impact on students' understanding of the purposes of feedback, responsibility for feedback, and the process of seeking feedback. This section will specifically address how students' motivation for completing an MBA affected their understanding of feedback's purposes.

Most students' motivations could be grouped under three broad categories: to gain an MBA qualification for future promotion/work opportunities; to learn more about business that they could apply to their own workplace/business; and to gain a further academic qualification because they enjoyed learning and gaining further qualifications (Taken from Focus Group 1 and 2).

Students who wanted a qualification for future work and promotional opportunities had the aim of getting through the course and prioritised the successful completion of the assessment tasks. For these students, the purpose of feedback was initially formative, as they wanted feedback that would assure them that they were approaching the task correctly. However, the purpose became summative as, in reality, they just wanted to ensure that they passed. For example, Students 8 and 15 needed an MBA qualification if they wanted to progress in their respective organisations. Both worked long hours and were time-poor. They wanted to be able to access feedback that would assure them that they had understood what was required for each assessable task.

Students who wanted to improve their understanding of business practice and apply it to their current work context prioritised learning and its application in a real-world context above grades or the successful completion of a task. For example, one student was starting up a medical centre in partnership with others and had little prior business experience. This student wanted to get a sound overall understanding of the key elements of business practice in preparation for the new venture. His focus on learning changed how he understood feedback's purposes and, consequently, his feedback-seeking practices (Section 4.4) and what he expected from the lecturers.

Although they did not articulate this as clearly in the initial discussions, students in this category realised that the purpose of feedback for them was specifically learning the content and applying it to their particular context:

> So, it's not just the paper…it's the learning. At the time that I decided to do it, I wanted to develop those skills and develop that knowledge, so I was actively looking to learn. I was kind of disappointed if I didn't learn as much as what I'd hoped and didn't get as much out of class as I'd hoped (Student 20 – I R2).

In the above example, Student 20 recognised that a key purpose of feedback for her was learning, and that this was what motivated her. In this example, the purpose of feedback was looked at from two separate perspectives, with the student reporting that at times, she was disappointed with what she had learnt. This illustrates different expectations of the purposes of feedback between lecturer and student. If neither the purpose of feedback provided nor what the student requires is clear, students may not correctly interpret the feedback they receive. Student 21 recognised the importance of this:

> It's up to me as to whether I adopt that learning and apply it the next time I am asked to hand something in. If you can't find the opportunity to talk to the lecturer, then it's up to your interpretation and that can often be invalid, potentially (Student 21 – I R2).

The final category of students were the high achievers. They were used to receiving high grades and this was their primary motivation. These students saw the primary purpose of feedback as an opportunity to find out what was expected for a high-distinction paper. Student 23 expressed her desire to keep her high distinction average and wanted feedback that enabled this.

This section has considered students' motivation for feedback and how this can influence their understanding of feedback. On occasions, students' motivations changed as they progress through the MBA, and this had an impact on how they conceptualised the purposes of feedback.

4.2.4 The Influence of Variations in Practice on Understanding the Purposes of Feedback

In some instances, variations between what lecturers say about feedback and the actual practices employed made it difficult for students to understand feedback, its purposes, and how to access it. Students said that at times these variations left them confused about the purposes of feedback. There were inconsistencies between lecturers about feedback, with students concluding that "it was very person-dependent". Students, however, consistently emphasised the importance of feedback for learning, although they did not always adopt practices that were learning-focused. Some lecturers took the time to outline the importance of feedback, but did not schedule appropriate times where students could seek feedback. One lecturer encouraged students to attend consultation times but scheduled the consultation times within regular work hours. This made it difficult for part-time students (who worked full-time) to attend, as they would have to seek time away from their regular job. In this instance feedback's purpose of guiding students was not possible, as students could not access the lecturer. This is an example where the arrangements did not support the feedback practice of encouraging students to attend consultations. It illustrates an inconsistency, intentional or otherwise, between the saying/doing of attending the consultation time and the arrangement of scheduling during business hours. Whether or not the lecturer realised the scheduling issue, several students perceived this as the lecturer not wanting to be available.

Another example of inconsistencies in what a lecturer said and what they did was observed during a three-hour teaching block. The following is an extract from the field notes.

> Observation of Lecturer 3 (R1):
> Encouraged students to discuss the content of the lecture during a scheduled coffee break.
> Offered students the opportunity to discuss the lecture content during this break.
> Lecturer was observed leaving the room, resulting in students having no access to the lecturer to discuss content.

> Several students (knowing I was observing) commented on the lecturer's absence and questioned the value of the discussion without the lecturer's guidance. Students' conversations were mainly social rather than discussing content.

Discussing this observation with the lecturer a few days later, the lecturer explained that he needed a break, but also wanted the students to take the initiative and discuss the content without his influence. However, if students understood the purpose of feedback for guidance and the lecturer's practices made him unavailable, this sent conflicting messages to students about feedback's purposes. In this example, the students may also have misunderstood the lecturer's intentions in employing this practice or may not have felt comfortable in engaging in a peer discussion in an informal learning environment. This raises the question of how to ensure that students have understood the intent of a feedback practice.

An example raised in Focus Group 2 was Lecturer 22's use of marking rubrics for feedback. The group members agreed that the feedback from Lecturer 22 was at times non-existent or cursory. The marking rubric was only used as a tool to outline how to pass, rather than guiding understanding and learning of the content and the requirements of the assessment task. One student stated, "In the end we just ended up almost using the marking rubric not as a guide to understanding but as a straitjacket to pass" (Student 28 – FG R3). As a result, the feedback sought related to passing the subject rather than learning. It was not the students' original intention, but they felt they needed to do this to ensure completion of the subject. This illustrates the need to clearly articulate the purpose of feedback (in this specific example, a rubric) and how it is to be used. In this example the purpose of feedback for learning was constrained, as the students' and lecturers' conceptions of feedback varied. The result was that the students focused on passing rather than learning. Similarly, Student 29 mentioned that the students also deemed the lack of feedback on some assessment tasks less than satisfactory. "For some subjects, we just got a number, and that is unacceptable" (Student 29 – FG R3). Providing minimal feedback and a grade forced the students to focus on the grade rather than learning, and the purpose of feedback was lost.

This section has unpacked how variations in practices can influence how people understand feedback's purposes. Of particular interest were the interactions between practices and arrangements, recognising that how practices are arranged can enable or constrain feedback.

4.2.5 Communicating Feedback's Purposes

Part of developing a common understanding of feedback's purposes is communicating those purposes to the parties involved. This section considers the arrangements and practices used in the communication of feedback's purposes, particularly the variations in practice based on how feedback was understood.

The coursework documents supply information on what students need to do for each assessment task. The subject outline stipulates a submission date and time, marking criteria and/or rubric, the date of return, and grade descriptors. These institutional artefacts support the idea that one of the purposes of feedback is to report on the quality of submitted assessment tasks, rather than to be formative, supporting students in both completing assessment tasks and gaining an overall understanding of the subject. Whilst most lecturers outlined the requirements for each assessment task, there was little discourse (cultural-discursive arrangement) concerning why, when, and how feedback could be sought or how formative feedback could benefit students in the process of completing the task. Students who did seek formative feedback reported difficulty in accessing some lecturers. The onus was on students to be more proactive in seeking formative feedback. These issues will be discussed further in Section 4.5.5.

Interestingly, over half of the lecturers and a third of the students appeared to understand feedback more broadly; for example, they spoke about feedback on tasks, as well as feedback in the forms of in-class discussions, informal chats, and other intentional teaching strategies. When lecturers viewed and understood feedback more broadly, the purposes of feedback were considered to address issues ranging from preparing students to study (after an extended absence) to conducting in-class discussions designated for formative feedback, adopting practices that encouraged students to seek feedback, and developing students into lifelong learners. Students recognised how important it was to understand the purposes of feedback in postgraduate courses such as the MBA, because the majority of the cohort had not studied at the postgraduate level for several years, if at all. On reflection, the students felt that the purposes of feedback had not been explained clearly, and in some instances, rarely articulated or discussed with students in a formal manner, or in some cases not at all. Students reported that the majority of lecturers did not spend time discussing or explaining feedback or its purposes except to mention consultation times, use of email for communication, and that they would aim to grade and provide feedback on tasks within two weeks.[22] Students were unsure why lecturers did not explain feedback's purposes. A few students suggested that the lecturers themselves did not understand the purposes of feedback. Others suggested that lecturers did not realise that students needed the purpose explained, assuming students understood what it was. Most lecturers did not see feedback as a tool for creating a shared understanding. In fact, three of the initial lecturer interviewees considered feedback simply as a product so that students could understand the grade received. For some students, this did not present a problem, as they had developed a more informed understanding of the purposes and value of feedback. Others had been conditioned from their prior studies at secondary and tertiary levels to view feedback as a product provided by the lecturer for their use. Just over half the students in the first round of interviews noted that they had learnt more about feedback, its purposes, importance, and link to learning through being involved in this research than they had in the MBA coursework. These students stated that they felt more empowered to seek feedback now that they had a better understanding of its purposes.

In general, the feedback provided by lecturers was confined to formal assessment tasks in written form or embedded in a rubric. This limits feedback's purpose as summative-focused. There were, however, some instances of other feedback practices such as feedback on draft tasks, in-class discussions on assessment tasks, and, in a few instances, dialogues on feedback's purposes. Whilst the majority of students initially confined their interpretation of feedback to comments on

[22] The UOW policy is within three weeks.

assessable tasks or presentations, a few students had a much broader understanding of the purposes of feedback, recognising that feedback during class discussion could assist students in developing critical thinking and application. Students described this feedback as very subtle; it could be simply lecturers asking students a searching or reflective question during class discussion; for example:

> The very best feedback was that subtle stuff when it was in the moment…. That had the potential to be absolutely exceptional (Student 29 – FG R3).

This comment indicates the importance Student 29 placed on the immediacy of feedback. The arrangement of feedback practices to allow dialogic discussion provides the opportunity for "in the moment" feedback and engages both student and lecturer in the process with a common understanding of the purpose. Student 28 expanded on this, explaining that feedback tailored to the context and the student was most useful:

> When it was tailored, when it was intimate. Where they really…steered the discussion, they were able to seize that teachable moment… (Student 28 – FG R3).

When asked what they thought the lecturers were trying to do with this kind of feedback, students replied that lecturers were trying to use feedback to get students to think more critically about the content matter and its application. These students took a very broad view of feedback. They recognised in-class discussion as feedback and accepted that the purposes of feedback include engaging students in thinking at a deeper level and encouraging them to apply concepts to a workplace context.

In the context of the MBA, feedback was used as part of assurance of learning (AoL) (Section 4.4.4), which aimed at ensuring that students understood and achieved the subject's learning outcomes[23]. Not all students reported that they were aware that one aspect of feedback's purpose was for AoL. However, a few students said that feedback's role in AoL was not always explained well. The lecturers gave mixed responses when asked whether they explained that AoL was one purpose of

[23] It is important to note that AoL increased in prominence as the UOW Business School was going through the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation process. This occurred in the middle of the data-collection period for this research. Lecturers became more aware of AoL during and after this process, and this may have influenced lecturers' and students' responses.

feedback. A majority of lecturers questioned if students even knew the learning outcomes despite their being an essential part of subject outlines.

Some students did recognise that feedback was required to determine whether they had met a desired competency level, but argued that it should be more than that. Students argued that a purpose of feedback should be to “value-add” by incorporating shared experiences of other students from different industries. One student felt that they had not experienced this:

> …yes, I am ensuring that I am meeting the competency level. But in terms of the value-add, I am meeting the competency level, and more so that [the] feedback that I am getting should be directing me to go, “Well, look, you are meeting the mark in this context for the competencies here, but this is another area of exploration.” There is not one single subject I have had where any of the feedback was anywhere near that level of detail (Student 26 – FG R3).

In summary, students and lecturers reported different understandings of the purposes of feedback. These differences and the feedback practices of both lecturers and students affected each other. Participants highlighted the need to develop a mutual understanding of the purposes of feedback and discussed how this could be done. It was also noted that students’ understanding of the purposes of feedback could change as they progressed through the MBA, and that this could influence the students’ feedback practices and the feedback process. As students develop their understanding of feedback, lecturers’ feedback practices should adapt, with an aim to develop students’ propensity for lifelong learning. Finally, variations in the feedback practices of lecturers and students were explored. It was noted that variations in practice could influence how the practices are interpreted and cause confusion for both students and lecturers. The next section will consider the participants perspectives on their responsibility for feedback, noting that the understanding of feedback’s purposes affects students’ and lecturers’ responsibility for feedback.

4.3 The Responsibility for Feedback

This section explores the responsibility for feedback and the influence that lecturers' and students' practices have on recognising and understanding the responsibility for feedback. The ability or capacity of students and lecturers to respond (response-ability) is inherent throughout this section, but is addressed directly in Section 4.4. The findings in this section are based on questions asked of both students and lecturers: Where does the responsibility for feedback lie? Whose responsibility is it to initiate and drive feedback? What practices are used? Both students and lecturers gave mixed responses from when asked these three questions. There were some discrepancies in responses between lecturers and students, among the students, and among the lecturers; these will be discussed below. Four aspects of the responsibility for feedback will be considered: where the responsibility for feedback lies; mutual responsibility for feedback; the affective dimension; and temporal aspects to the responsibility for feedback.

4.3.1 Where Does the Responsibility for Feedback Lie?

This section discusses the respective responsibilities of students and lecturers in the feedback process. Although there are differences in students' and lecturers' responsibilities, the practices employed are not mutually exclusive and affect and enable each other.

As discussed in Section 4.2, in general, the lecturers tended to have a more consistent understanding of the purposes of feedback compared to students. However, this did not automatically result in the adoption of greater responsibility for feedback. Lecturers differed in their interpretations of their responsibility for feedback. Some lecturers recognised the need to take responsibility for explaining the feedback process and adopting practices that tried to engage students in this process. Other lecturers took the view that once they had provided feedback, students were responsible for engaging and seeking further feedback. The lecturers who took this view tended to conceptualise feedback as a product provided to students. Part of this discrepancy came from misunderstanding how students conceptualised feedback and their different comprehension of their own responsibility for feedback. In addition, the lecturers' practices surrounding feedback varied, with some disconnection between understanding the importance of feedback and assuming, at least initially, the responsibility for feedback.

Lecturers partly attributed the variations in feedback practices to subject-content differences, class size, and cohort variations. Lecturer 1 explained that larger classes (greater than 25 students) made it harder to engage students in the feedback process, as lecturers did not have time to address each student. Lecturer 3 liked to instigate spontaneous debates with groups of students and provide feedback on the responses. In the observation of Lecturer 3's classes, it was noted that some international students were reluctant to participate. After the class, Lecturer 3 he indicated to the researcher that this was outside his control and that students had a responsibility to engage with in-class activities. However, students' and lecturers' different conceptions and practices concerning the responsibility for cannot be entirely attributed to variations in content, class size, or cohort variations (Lecturers 1, 3, and 20 – I R1&2).

The inconsistencies in understanding the responsibilities for feedback had a clear impact on the practices of both students and lecturers. These inconsistencies resulted in a lack of clarity about their respective responsibilities for providing, seeking, and acting on feedback. Consequently, feedback was inhibited, and feedback-seeking practices were less likely to be encouraged (Section 4.4.2). Lecturer 6 recognised differences in his and his students' expectations of who was responsible for feedback:

> There are, let's say, expectation gaps between, say, my expectation and the students' expectation. I mean, it is our responsibility to inform students from the day one, what is my expectation with this feedback (Lecturer 6 – I R3).

Lecturer 6 placed the initial burden of responsibility on himself and, in general, on lecturers. He was conscious of the discrepancies between lecturers' and students' expectations and the importance of aligning these expectations and informing students of the feedback process. This point also illustrates that the purposes and responsibilities of feedback are closely entwined and can influence each other, and that practices that work to closely align students' and lecturers' expectations are important in the feedback process.

Students also reported mixed views on how they understood their responsibility in the feedback process. In general, students who had a better understanding of the purposes and importance of feedback reported taking on greater responsibility for seeking, understanding, and applying feedback. Student 25 felt that when students commenced an MBA, it was the lecturers' responsibility to take the time to speak to each student and explain the feedback process. The relational dimension was also evident in Student 25's response, which indicated a recognition of the need for lecturers to get to know the students:

> I think it [feedback] should be benchmarked at the beginning and have time in the class where the academic meets with each of the students, just to get to know them a little bit, and say, "Here's what's available to you, here's what I'm looking for", and probably just ask what the motives are (Student 25 - FG R3).

Student 25 has highlighted the significance of the *relatings* of practice ("get to know them…motives"), the *sayings* ("Here's what's available to you, here's what I'm looking for"), and the *doings* ("…at the beginning and have time in class"). This demonstrates how practices are made up of *sayings*, *doings*, and *relatings*; however, the arrangements are not so obvious. In this example, students and lecturers bring different ways of communicating, ideas, and words used. How and where feedback occurs is bound by the material-economic arrangements; for example, the site of practice which in this instance is the classroom. Finally, the social-political arrangements are what enable or constrain the relatings of lecturers and students, which is the exemplified by Student 25's emphasis on academics getting to know the students. When questioned further about how this may work out practically, Student 25 explained that the lecturer should

> [a]llow time and see what everybody else thinks and then probably come to a communal agreement on, "Can we all agree that for us for this class, feedback is X? Going forward, I am available for you to give you said feedback should you want it, and this is the form that we will take it" (Student 25 – FG R3).

Student 25 clearly articulated the desire for lecturers and students to discuss the feedback process and develop a mutually agreeable plan, but felt that it is the lecturers' responsibility to initiate and outline the process. Lecturer 6 expressed a broad understanding of feedback. He understood that his responsibility for feedback went beyond providing grades and comments on assessment tasks and extended to developing the student:

> I think feedback is not a piece of assessment and giving marks – it's way beyond that, way beyond that. I mean feedback is to develop the student, their personality, their communication, their commitment (Lecturer 6 – I R3).

Lecturer 6 adopted a broader array of practices to improve engagement with the students and develop their feedback skills and their commitment to the feedback process. He recognised the responsibility he had to get students engaged in the feedback process, making them more likely to seek feedback. He also asked students if they had applied their learning from other subjects, recognising that this is a fundamental skill that students should develop. Lecturer 21 also accepted that the lecturer is responsible for establishing the feedback process. She explained that the setup of the subject prior to the first lecture was crucial in engaging students. She encouraged face-to-face or videoconference discussions explaining that “an ongoing dialogue conversation is way more conducive to both parties than a static piece of written feedback” (Lecturer 21 – I R3). It was clear that the practices of both students and lecturers were affected by their understanding of their respective responsibility for feedback, particularly regarding seeking feedback.

The consensus amongst students and lecturers was that it is the lecturers' responsibility to initiate feedback, explain the process, and outline feedback's purposes, and the students' responsibility to be willing to engage in the feedback process.

4.3.2 A Mutual Responsibility for Feedback

Both lecturers and students identified practices that develop mutual responsibilities for feedback and overcome barriers that make feedback less likely to occur.

Students’ ability to take responsibility for and drive feedback relied on understanding their responsibility and how to engage in feedback. Some students did not accept any responsibility for feedback, viewing this as the lecturers’ responsibility. In contrast, the lecturers all recognised that they were responsible for providing feedback, but with variations in the practices used. This section will report on how students and lecturers understand their mutual responsibilities for feedback and the feedback process.

The focus-group discussions revealed an alternate understanding where students considered feedback to be a mutual responsibility between student and lecturer. Most lecturers also positioned feedback as a mutual responsibility. Student 29 used the metaphor of a tennis match when describing feedback responsibilities. The lecturer has the responsibility to serve first and initiate the feedback. However, the student must accept the invitation by returning the serve and engaging with the lecturer. In this instance, the lecturer is required to understand and accept the responsibility for initiating the feedback and adopt practices that make it possible for the student to respond and engage in the feedback process. Both lecturers and students suggested this as particularly important at an early stage in the MBA course. These practices include outlining feedback’s purposes and importance, making time to engage in feedback dialogues, and making students as comfortable as possible in seeking and engaging with feedback. It is also helpful if students understand and accept that feedback is a shared responsibility. Students likewise must be willing to engage with the lecturer and have a responsibility to make this possible. Explaining to students what is expected from them and what lecturers provide is central to feedback and helps to develop a mutual responsibility for feedback. Lecturer 6 explained, “I think they need to understand that feedback is critical for them to give a good performance.” Lecturer 6 also made the point that students need to understand that lecturers will emphasise different areas:

> …different lecturers provide…they emphasise different aspects of feedback. Some are very critical of language. So, you learn from different lecturers, different skills. Some are giving more feedback on how you critically analyse (Lecturer 6 – I R3).

Lecturers may emphasise different areas in their feedback, which helps develop a mutual understanding of the responsibility for feedback. This was supported by

Lecturer 21, who outlined lecturer and student expectations for her subject in the first week of the trimester. Lecturer 2 revealed that two other lecturers had told her that they liked students to do her subject early in the MBA program because of the way she prepared the students:

> I know that Lecturer 11 and Lecturer 3 are keen for people to do my subject early on because I do a lot of set-up. I do a lot of assignment structure. I do a lot of feedback. Because they encourage it, I think they must be noticing it in their classes once the students have been in mine (Lecturer 2 – I R1).

Student 28 accepted that whilst lecturers have the responsibility to initiate feedback, students need to be willing to reciprocate. Student 28 used the phrase “be willing to be seduced”, which implies that students must be willing to actively engage with lecturers in the feedback process. The lecturers had mixed responses to this implication, some stating that they did outline the purposes, responsibility, and power of feedback, and that therefore it was up to the students to respond and seek clarification if required. Others felt that it was the faculty’s and lecturers’ responsibility to outline this and ensure that students understood the process and the importance of seeking feedback. Student 29 said that there was a clear hierarchy, with the lecturers responsible for initiating the relationship in which feedback would be provided:

> But there is a hierarchy. You go to a lecturer’s lecture, [where] you are the student, and the lecturer has the responsibility to disseminate the knowledge and create the relationship (Student 29 – FG R3).

From a student perspective, lecturers have the primary responsibility to offer feedback, but students need to be willing to participate in the feedback process that the lecturer has initiated:

> I think the primary responsibility lies with the teacher, but not sole responsibility. Would that be fair?... Students still have the responsibility to engage in the feedback process. But there is an adult responsibility on the part of the student to support, to reciprocate, to engage (Student 29 – FG R3).

Lecturer 20 was also very clear in saying that there is a shared responsibility for feedback (between lecturers and students), but recognised that, at least early on in a course, students may need help with understanding this dual responsibility and that this is part of the lecturer's responsibility. Lecturers therefore need to recognise this and adopt practices that channel students towards understanding and accepting their responsibility for feedback:

> It's for you to, say, then reflect, and therefore there is a responsibility on the student's part, but there is equally a responsibility on the academic's part…. There is certainly dual responsibility, absolutely. But a lot of the time, people don't think that it is the two-way street. That [it] is almost like a contract. Now, some people say, "Well, that's the responsibility of the students," but a lot of the students do not know their own potential… So, there is a lot of channelling that needs to occur in the initial stages, and to say, "You can do it" (Lecturer 20 – I R3).

Students and lecturers agree that recognising and accepting mutual responsibility for feedback is an essential component of the feedback process. Nevertheless, students raised several important issues that may affect the likelihood of their taking responsibility for feedback. Students said that they needed to feel comfortable approaching lecturers, and to be able to connect with the lecturer and establish appropriate ways to seek out feedback dialogues. This was made more difficult if lecturers did not adopt practices that encourage and assist students in engaging at this level, did not see the need for it, or did not see the responsibility for feedback as a mutual responsibility. The following section looks more closely at the affective dimension and the responsibility for feedback.

4.3.3 The Affective Dimension

Both students and lecturers raised issues such as relationship building, trust, and power relations (discussed in Section 4.4.1) that affected their willingness to engage in the feedback process. From a practice perspective issues like trust and power can be categorised as part of the affective dimension (Section 2.3.3). However, relationship building though dealing with power and trust is not in itself part of the affective dimension. In TPA, the affective dimension is addressed by considering the *relatings* of the practitioners and the social-political arrangements. It was found that whilst there is a mutual responsibility to manage the affective dimension, lecturers have greater power in the feedback process, and hence have a greater responsibility to make students feel as comfortable as possible. This section focuses on how the affective dimension can influence students' and lecturers' respective understanding of the responsibility for feedback. Examples of how lecturers and students responded to these issues are discussed below, but the affective dimension will also be considered in greater depth in Section 4.4 in the context of feedback-seeking.

Lecturer 3 outlined practices that she considered would orchestrate the affective relations that are likely to enhance confidence in students. She felt that easing students into the process quickly and offering reassurance would help students succeed in their studies. She recognised that she had a responsibility to adopt practices that would give students confidence that they could succeed in the MBA, even if they had not studied for an extended period:

> I try and reassure them and ease them into the process as quickly as possible. Because if they can get some confidence in their studies and the fact that they can do it, then they are more likely to succeed (Lecturer 3 – I R1).

Lecturer 20 described how he adopted practices aimed at establishing a relationship with students as part of the feedback process. For example, he talked about intentionally creating dialogues with students early in the course, as this acted to reduce barriers and make students more comfortable and willing to engage – "otherwise why would you open up?" (Lecturer 20 – I R2). On further inquiry, he clarified that his aim was to reduce the power distance so that students would feel comfortable seeking feedback. Lecturer 6 also commented on power distance, outlining how he had been "badly hurt" by high power distance in his own undergraduate studies and wanted to make sure his students did not experience this. Both Lecturers 6 and 20 mentioned that they intentionally spent time with students in lecture breaks, as it helped students learn how to approach them. Lecturer 20 said it also helped him understand students and be able to respond better to body language. "If I sense in the body language that people are either not comfortable or not getting it, I will actually pause and ask them if they understand" (Lecturer 20 – I R2). He explained that it was only possible to do this because he had first established a relationship within which students felt comfortable in engaging in feedback dialogues. Whilst all lecturers acknowledged the affective dimension, not all felt it was their responsibility to address. The view of three lecturers was that this was an adult learning environment, and thus the students needed to know how to deal with these things themselves.

The majority of students' responses showed they were less likely to seek feedback if they felt uncomfortable approaching a lecturer (Section 4.4.2). A few even admitted that they would only ask questions about 20 percent of the time, as they did not want to be seen as a nuisance. However, a few students stated that they would approach a lecturer no matter whether they felt uncomfortable if they needed feedback. Whilst students and lecturers recognised the need to adopt practices that built a relationship conducive to establishing a feedback dialogue, there was a lack of consistency in the practices and their application. Students accepted some responsibility for building a professional relationship, but felt that it was the lecturers' responsibility to act first by creating the feedback opportunity and making students feel comfortable in the process:

> I think they have the power to create feedback…. Yeah, to create it and then it is your responsibility…you walk into it ready to engage (Student 28 – FG R3).

Similarly, Student 29 used the term "to reciprocate" when referring to students' responsibility in responding to lecturers' strategies to encourage engagement with feedback. He went on to explain that whilst there is a mutual responsibility for feedback between lecturers and students, the practices are not necessarily the same. He elaborated, explaining that if he had an effective relationship with a lecturer, he was more likely to take responsibility for feedback, recognising it as a shared relationship:

> Also, to be fair, I reckon the lecturers that I had the most effective relationships with I also saw it as my responsibility. In almost all my lectures I attempted to form a relationship of some kind… (Student 29 – FG R3).

In relation to affect, Student 29 highlighted the importance he placed on establishing a relationship: "I saw it as my responsibility too, a shared responsibility…but I think building that relationship is a mutual responsibility" (Student 29 – FG R3). Student 26 felt that ideally students would take more responsibility for building the relationship where the feedback process operates, but the inconsistencies in the practices of the feedback process meant that this was not feasible. Student 29 agreed, explaining that as there was still a hierarchy, lecturers had the responsibility to create the relationship: "You go to a lecturer's lecture, you are the students, and the lecturer has the responsibility to disseminate the knowledge and create the relationship. Student 26 elaborated on Student 29's hierarchy comment by outlining that because of the power dynamic in play, it is the lecturer's responsibility to establish the relationship within which the feedback process can operate.

To conclude, students and lecturers alike recognised the importance of the affective relationship in developing a mutual responsibility for feedback. The students' voice was stronger on this point, with students suggesting that there were reciprocal roles for lecturers and students, with feedback practices adapted to suit. Participants noted that the lecturer has the prime, but not sole, responsibility to initiate feedback and establish the relationship, having both positional and expert (knowledge) power. However, the invitation needs to be accepted and acted upon by the student. Both lecturers and students can adopt practices that make this understanding of a mutual responsibility for feedback more or less likely to occur, with the affective dimension being an important consideration in this process. Developing an environment conducive to a successful feedback process can take time. Temporal issues and the responsibility for feedback are discussed in the next section.

4.3.4 A Temporal Aspect to the Responsibility for Feedback

The research participants reported a number of temporal aspects that affected the responsibility for feedback. Overall, the participants felt that the responsibility for feedback changed as students progressed through the MBA. Whilst lecturers had the responsibility to invite students to participate in the feedback process, from the student perspective, the response time for accepting an invitation to engage in the feedback process was important. Other related issues included the timing of feedback, pre-engaging students prior to the subject commencing, fast turnarounds on assessment work that had been submitted, and suitability of consultation times. Some students also felt that feedback should be embedded throughout the coursework, which would help alleviate inconsistencies in the timing of feedback between lecturers. These temporal aspects of the responsibility for feedback will be discussed below.

As students progressed through the MBA, engagement with the feedback process improved and students took on more responsibility for feedback. The responsibility for managing the feedback process became more of a mutual responsibility, and eventually became automatic for some. However, this needed students to have the purposes of feedback explained to them early in the MBA course (Section 4.2.5). Both students and lecturers expressed views that feedback should develop throughout the MBA with the aim of improving academic skills, comprehension of knowledge, and application to practice, and encouraging lifelong learning. One student commented that the MBA needs an "introduction to academic practice class", with lecturers in consensus about what is required. The timing of how the feedback process is explained and implemented is clearly critical.

The timing and what students need from the feedback process also affects students' propensity to engage. The students identified that in the initial subjects they needed information regarding the process, including how feedback is provided and the purposes of feedback (sayings of lecturers and artefacts); an understanding of the mechanisms in place to seek feedback (institutional documents and lecturers' sayings); and the time and opportunity to become comfortable approaching lecturers (*sayings* and *doings*).

Lecturers also recognised the importance of engaging students by preparing them for the task and by giving them fast feedback after the task. Apart from the initial overview of how the subject would proceed and be assessed, Lecturer 6 (I R2&3) reported that he employed practices that encouraged students to engage with the assessment ahead of time, so they were better prepared to attempt the tasks and hence seek feedback. This pre-engagement worked to make students more comfortable with the task and more likely to seek formative feedback leading up to submission. When asked, "Did students comment that you had done things differently then?", Lecturer 6 replied, "Yes. They say detailed feedback and they really appreciate the quicker feedback, because they can quickly learn and apply it for the next assessment." He went on to explain that he set up feedback to engage students both before the task was due and after the task was submitted:

> I mean not just the assessment; I call it, like, pre-engagement with the assessment. Process engagement, that's why they are doing the assessment, and then post [after submission] engagement (Lecturer 6 – I R2).

Part of the pre-engagement was to clarify what was expected of students. Lecturer 6 accepted that it was his responsibility to clarify the expectations about feedback and try to align students' and lecturers' expectations at the beginning of a course to avoid confusion. Lecturer 2 explained that she tries to give students confidence in the feedback process as quickly as possible, which improves the students' chances of success:

> There's a lot of apprehension when they're returning to study. So, I'm conscious of that, so I try and reassure them and ease them into the process as quickly as possible. Because if they can get some confidence in their studies and the fact that they can do it, then they're more likely to succeed (Lecturer 2 – I R1).

However, not all lecturers recognised or accepted that it was their responsibility to inform students about expectations of feedback, which resulted in differing expectations and dissatisfaction with feedback. Lecturer 6's experience was that students at times had unrealistic expectations of lecturers, particularly regarding consultation times and email response times. "The second complaint is they get the feedback but not the content-rich feedback" (Lecturer 6). To improve this, Lecturer 6 deliberately outlines expectations, engaging students in the subject through close attention to the assessment tasks and reiterating the importance of feedback and its timing:

> I'm a strong believer of right feedback on right time [sic] – it is really important because most of the time they complain to me for several other subjects, for example, about not having the feedback on time (Lecturer 6 – I R3).

Further to the temporal aspects of the responsibility for feedback, Lecturer 6 saw it as his responsibility to keep students engaged in the feedback process: "… we have the utmost responsibility to keep our students engaged". To keep his students engaged, Lecturer 6 arranged to get his feedback on assessment tasks back to students within 48 hours of the submission date. He found that the rapid return of marked assessments made it more likely for students to engage with the feedback provided (as they had just submitted the work) and build trust in the process:

> For example, when I tell my students, “These are the three assessments. I’ll be giving you the feedback within 24 hours to 48 hours of your submission,” they get shocked. I have been doing it for the last five years. You won’t believe it. Right? (Lecturer 6 – I R2).

Lecturer 6 outlined several feedback practices he adopted to better engage students. First, he set aside time immediately after the submission date for marking the assessment tasks. Second, students were told when to expect the feedback and, because the task was online, it was more accessible both for marking and for reviewing the feedback. Students were encouraged to engage with the feedback and discuss their performance with both the lecturer and other students. This assisted students in understanding what was required and aligned their judgement of their performance with the lecturers. The timing of the practices employed by both students and lecturers had an impact on the effectiveness of the feedback provided. Some students reported that as they progressed through the MBA course, they were more comfortable with feedback processes.

Whilst feedback is accepted as a necessary part of educational institutions, the timing of the feedback process is not as clearly outlined or explained. Students felt that the feedback process should be embedded in the curriculum; that is, intentionally made part of each subject and placed in the subject outline with an explanation of feedback’s purposes, who is responsible, ways of seeking it, and its benefits. This would clarify the responsibility for feedback at the start of the course/subject:

> Where does feedback come from or whose responsibility…taking on board what you have said about the culture and power distance – bloody hell, this is a university that’s saying we are going to teach this subject then embed feedback in the curriculum (Student 28 – FG R3).

Whilst students indicated that they felt it was the individual lecturer’s responsibility to initiate feedback (Section 4.3), the timing of when the feedback process was initiated is critical. If the feedback process were more consistently communicated at key stages of the course, student engagement could be scaffolded:

> I don't think there is anything wrong to say, "You know what? As the instigators of this particular course we've got this thing called feedback and this is how it works" (Student 28 – FG R3).
>
> And it's a critical part of the program (Student 29 – FG R3).

Student 25 also talked about structuring feedback to benefit students and the need to scaffold the feedback throughout the course so that students do not get overwhelmed:

> So, as long as it's [feedback] structured for success for the students and you're not going to overwhelm them with really in-depth stuff straight up, or at least if you scaffold cleverly that they feel that they're keeping up (Student 25 – FG R3).

In summary, the lecturers' responsibility for the temporal aspect of feedback is to clearly outline the process, importance, and timing. It is also necessary to recognise that the responsibility for feedback may change as students progress through the MBA and take on greater responsibility for the feedback process. The responsibility for feedback is a mutual responsibility that varies based on context. Whilst lecturers have the initial responsibility to invite students to participate in the feedback process, students need to reciprocate by engaging in the process. Feedback practices are enabled or constrained by the cultural-discursive, material-economic, and social-political arrangements. The development of a reciprocal responsibility for feedback relies on the interrelationship of practices and arrangements that enable co-construction of the process. The next section will look at practices that may make feedback more or less likely to occur. The particular focus will be on power distance and how this can influence feedback. The responsibility for feedback will also be revisited in the context of feedback-seeking.

4.4 Feedback-Seeking Practices

The purpose of this section is to scrutinise the feedback-seeking practices of lecturers and students. The introduction provides an overview of students' feedback, and what students wanted from feedback. It also considers lecturers' feedback-seeking practices. The sub-sections consider the impact of trust and empowerment on feedback seeking; practices that make feedback seeking more or less likely; and practices that make students more comfortable seeking feedback and more likely to interact in the feedback process. The section concludes by considering the impact of institutional factors on feedback-seeking. The findings are based on questions asked of both students and lecturers: What does feedback-seeking look like? What practices create a dialogue about feedback more or less likely to happen? What practices encourage and enable feedback? Students were also asked when and how they sought feedback, and what they did to seek feedback.

The degree to which students reported seeking feedback varied significantly. Students' and lecturers' understandings of the purposes of (Section 4.2), and responsibility for (Section 4.3) feedback changed feedback-seeking practices, as did the degree of trust in both the lecturer and the feedback process. Institutional factors and individual students' reasons and motivations for study also influenced feedback-seeking. Students described a range of practices used in the feedback process; of particular interest were those that made students more or less likely to seek feedback. In contrast, only a few of the lecturers raised the idea of seeking feedback on their teaching and feedback practices to see whether students found them accessible. Lecturers who did seek feedback on their feedback and teaching practices generally used the institution's subject and/or teacher[24] evaluations. Whilst the teacher evaluations ask students to give feedback on lecturers' teaching, the questions are not specifically worded to elicit a response on feedback practices. Only two students described occasions when a lecturer did ask the cohort for feedback on teaching practice. These students commented that the lecturers' feedback practices had the potential to encourage them to seek feedback. The students said that they

[24] Teacher evaluations focus on the teacher and teaching of the subject. Subject evaluations focus on the content, assessment, and application of the learnt material.

were more likely to employ a wider range of feedback-seeking practices as they became more comfortable with the lecturer.

As well as content-rich feedback, students wanted someone who listens and responds quickly:

> The content rich feedback is very important. So, I'm talking from the student perspective as well. Because some of the students are looking for a person who listens. [Laughs.] Right? Who is also available in their rooms at least three or four days per week. Also, they respond quickly to email (Lecturer 6 – I R3).

Two key issues are addressed in the above excerpt. Students want content-rich feedback, but also are more likely to seek feedback if the lecturer is available and approachable. In this example, the lecturer recognised that these were somewhat unrealistic expectations, but he was making the point that some students want constant access to feedback. Lecturer 6 reiterated that initially it is the lecturer's responsibility to initiate feedback, but the ultimate aim is to equip students to be lifelong learners who actively seek feedback:

> Yeah. Yeah. If you do that, they will engage. They know the meaning. The meaningfulness, the purposefulness of the feedback that they are getting (Lecturer 6 – I R3).

From the student perspective, the more general issues that deterred feedback-seeking included scheduling difficulties, an unwillingness to appear stupid, not wanting to speak out in class (fear of being wrong, not confident speaking in front of people, felt intimidated by the lecturer), poor past experiences, perceptions of the lecture's approachability, inability to know what to ask or not realising that they needed help, and not fully understanding the importance of seeking feedback. The majority of these issues, which relate to trust and empowerment, are discussed in Section 4.4.1. The scheduling of feedback sessions, which relates to temporality, is discussed in Section 4.4.3. Students who did not realise they needed help and/or did not know what to ask had often not engaged with the feedback process. In these instances, lecturers tried other engagement strategies but recognised that there is a degree of student responsibility in seeking and acting on feedback.

From the lecturers' perspective, the issues raised included students not acting on feedback; perceiving that students did not want any feedback, as they did not seek it; and limiting feedback to that given on completed tasks. However, some lecturers addressed these concerns to better engage students in the feedback process. These lecturers used formative feedback practices to determine the degree of student understanding. If students were struggling to understand, the lecturers would use different ways of explaining material. Some lecturers would engage students by seeking feedback on their own performance. This resulted in the students having a greater degree of trust in the feedback process and better engagement in feedback dialogue:

> So, the best lecturers are the ones that are seeking that feedback at every moment – seeking feedback on their performance and giving you [feedback] on yours and rolling with that dynamic (Student 29 – FG R3).

This is supported by Lecturer 6, who understood feedback to be much more than providing marks (Section 4.3), but particularly saw feedback as a way of developing students' commitment. Lecturer 3 was observed providing challenging feedback on formative in-class presentations with the aim of developing students' ability to think "on their feet". When asked about this, Lecturer 3 stated that he wanted students to be comfortable expressing their views and seeking feedback. Lecturer 6 highlighted that feedback was more complex than grades and comments on assessment tasks. He recognised the need to use feedback to develop the student in more than just the subject content. He did this by ensuing the comments and other feedback were consistent with the grade given:

> Sometimes feedback is a student many times come to me [sic] and they say, "We get feedback [of] excellent, very good and this and that, and then we get 50 marks," so they are disappointed. The marks you give need to speak with your comments, you know what I mean (Lecturer 6 – I R3)?

This ongoing reciprocal interaction is dynamic and constitutes a key part of feedback that illustrates the interrelationship between what is said, what is being done, and how they relate. It also demonstrates the interrelation between practices and the necessity of understanding the connections if a mutual understanding of feedback is to be achieved. For example, Student 28 commented that "…it is very much that purpose of trust, empowerment, communication – and done well, feedback is teaching." When asked to elaborate on what "done well" meant, Student 28 talked about lecturers who are self-reflective and seek real-time feedback on whether the students understand what is being discussed. Feedback-seeking, then, is a reciprocal process that is enabled or constrained by the degree of trust in the feedback process.

The following sections consider the role of trust, empowerment and power in feedback-seeking practices, practices that make feedback-seeking more or less likely, and practices that make students feel comfortable seeking feedback and more likely to interact in the feedback process.

4.4.1 Trust, Empowerment, and Power

Both students and lecturers raised the issues of trust and empowerment in relation to feedback-seeking. The students viewed this issue as having a significant impact, both positive and negative, depending on the lecturer's position. Students' trust in lecturers depended on factors including how the feedback process was explained, how well the subject was described, the degree of connection students felt with the lecturer, and how a lecturer used positional power. Students explained that trust can be established through lecturers being approachable and building rapport with students, and through sharing with students who they are. The following excerpt captures the essence of trust from the student perspective:

> Trust is everything. Trust is…I guess it's rapport-building, it's common respect, it's actually looking interested in what they are doing. Approachable, it's all those rapport building language skills… (Student 25 – FG R3).

Student 25 then explained some of the things the lecturers did to gain students' trust, build rapport, and encourage students to be comfortable approaching them for feedback.

> It's when they know your name, they invite everybody, they are inclusive, they ask questions. They draw from their own experience and are a little bit vulnerable sharing on who they are. I think it's the stature, it's that being open, it's the eye contact, it's injecting a bit of humour, it's all the things that build a rapport to make a great…to build the trust to establish a relationship.... I think it's probably coming from not a hierarchical positioning. I think in postgraduate courses we are probably a little bit privileged that most people are mature-aged, so it's not too much a position of power relationship (Student 25 – FG R3).

Student 25 also alluded to establishing a lower power-distance relationship, which was easier at the postgraduate level. Establishing trust was important for both lecturers and students. Lecturers also raised that students needed to trust in the feedback process and that they could seek feedback without fear of being made to look stupid.

A mutual understanding of feedback requires a level of trust and communication between lecturer and student. It necessitates the students' willingness to acknowledge their lack of understanding and recognise that feedback is a two-way process. As raised in Section 4.3.2, Student 27 expressed feedback as going "two ways", and Student 29 added elements of "trust, communication, and relationship-building for that learning". Once trust is in place, it is easier for a mutual understanding of the purposes of feedback to be established. The practices of both lecturers and students can build trust and have a positive impact on the likelihood of students seeking feedback. Lecturer 1 explained:

> I'm here as a well-educated academic…. I'm here to help you and to provide you with the benefit of my knowledge and experience. Trust is a clear component of that, building that relationship (I R3).

According to Student 29, a degree of trust in the lecturer was important. Student 26 also raised the issue of trust, but additionally described the use of positional power:

> So, if I walk into a class and I feel that…there was an element of trust that comes about it. Whereas some of them, you walked in, and you were really like, are we doing this power thing? (Student 26 – FG R3).

If Student 26 perceived that a lecturer was using positional power, his level of trust was lower. Whilst trust was raised by several students, it came out more strongly in a discussion with Focus Groups 1 and 2 than in individual student interviews. Trust and relationship-building allow students not only to understand the purposes of feedback, but to acknowledge that for feedback to be useful, students should recognise where and when they need help, and be willing to engage in a meaningful feedback dialogue.

Students 27 and 28 asserted that for students to be in the best position to seek feedback, some level of relationship, trust, and connection with the lecturer is needed. Student 27 noted that certain lecturers urge students to go to consultations, whereas others do not actively encourage consultation or other feedback mechanisms. Student 27 felt more comfortable attending consultations when he felt that a relationship had been established with the lecturer and the lecturer encouraged him to attend. He also explained that as an international student this has taken some time to establish. The relationship needs to be positioned so that what is required is mutually understood by both parties, "So I guess I still had my consultations, but it's almost [that] the way that the relationship is positioned and what you are there for is understood by both parties." (Student 26 – FG R3). According to Student 26, this implies a degree of trust from the student and recognition of this from the lecturer. The power dynamic (relatings/relationship needs) is an essential consideration when trying to better understand feedback. Students expressed that building trust is an important part of the lecturer's responsibility for feedback. The practices adopted in the feedback process are critical if students are to trust the process, but the power dynamic is entwined throughout and affects the relationship between practices. The next section considers power and the practices that make feedback more or less likely, from both the student and lecturer perspectives.

4.4.2 Practices that Make Feedback-Seeking More or Less Likely

The power dynamic and its impact on feedback flows through each theme. It is a complex web of relations that exists between the key stakeholders and between their practices. The use of power was a common factor when looking at practices that made feedback-seeking more or less likely. Lecturers have both greater positional power and more expert (knowledge) power than students. Lecturers are experts in their field, and their roles and responsibilities include setting and grading assessment tasks. This power dynamic is a crucial factor for lecturers and students to acknowledge and discuss (Lecturers 2, 6, 20 and Students 26, 28, 29.) There were also mixed perceptions about the use of power in the student-lecturer relationship. Student 28 used the word "power" in reference to lecturers' responsibility to create feedback. This highlighted that, from the students' perspective, the onus is on the lecturer to establish the feedback process and explain its purposes, but also students also recognised that this is done in the context of an unequal power balance (Section 4.4.1). Lecturers have the power to create feedback and use practices that encourage students to participate, but students need to acknowledge that they have a responsibility to reciprocate and participate in the feedback process (Student 29). Whilst it is important to recognise the power imbalance, it is also necessary to establish students' trust. As Student 29 points out, "There is a power imbalance and there is power risk, so part of that effective feedback mechanism is investment in relationships and trust" (Student 29 – FG R3).

Students recognised that lecturers can, and sometimes do, use their position of greater power to have an influence on students' feedback-seeking practices:

> Some lecturers want students to go to consultations, whereas others do not encourage feedback mechanisms in terms of approachability or even consultation – there is a power dynamic in play (Student 29 – FG R3).

Several students reported that particular lecturers appeared to implement practices that made it more difficult for students to approach them, actively discouraging feedback-seeking. Students also revealed that some lecturers adopted practices aimed at maintaining a power-distance gap when communicating with students. When questioned, students stated that they felt that these lecturers enjoyed their status and did not like it to be challenged. The following sections look at student and lecturer perspectives on power distance and its impact on feedback-seeking.

4.4.2.1 Practices that Make Seeking Feedback More or Less Likely – Student Perspectives

This section addresses how students' expectations and perceptions of lecturers' power-distance practices can affect the likelihood of feedback occurring. Power-distance practices either increase or decrease the power inequality between lecturers and students. From a practice perspective, lecturers can use practices that emphasise power over students or practices that invite power to students by creating open feedback dialogues. Although students and lecturers most often described power as something that is possessed, a practice perspective views power as enacted, produced in relations, as productive and influencing others. Focusing on the practices that enable or constrain the understanding and use of power can illuminate the effect of power imbalances. Understanding how practices relate and align with each other to enable or constrain action is critical (Hui et al. 2016, p. 182) for understanding power relations.

Several students raised power distance as an issue, particularly if students' perceptions were that the lecturer was intentionally using the power inequality to control interactions. The power imbalance between lecturers and students was raised as an important consideration when exploring practices that could make feedback more or less likely. This imbalance of power can be an initial barrier for students, or it can develop into a more permanent barrier. If students' and lecturers' interpretation of the power-distance dynamic between them is not consistent, this may lead to difficulties in subsequent interactions. The power dynamic is a key factor for lecturers and students to acknowledge and work towards achieving appropriate professional relationships.

For example, students found feedback more effective when the power distance was minimal: "…the most effective feedback I got was when the power distance was the smallest" (Student 28 – FG R3). Domestic students expected less power distance. "People of our sort of background, which is typically more domestic students, there will be less power distance…natural power-distance between lecturers [and students]" (Student 27 – FG R3). They recognised that lecturers create the context within which feedback takes place. A positive dynamic for feedback requires two-way communication. “That comes back to saying right up front [that] this forum is for adults and feedback is two-way” (Student 28 – FG R3). The higher the power distance, the less comfortable students were likely to feel in seeking feedback, as they reported being more reticent to approach lecturers, who were in a position of power.

Student 29 suggested that some lecturers want to maintain a particular façade that is based on a demonstration of power in the teaching context. Students in Focus Group 2 suggested that a few lecturers wanted students to demonstrate a degree of subservience where the lecturer uses expert knowledge as a potential control tool. Students mentioned that one lecturer was more concerned about his status, rather than supplying meaningful feedback. Students saw this as a misuse of power:

> Some lecturers were inconsistent with the theatre. They wanted to be seen in a certain light. It worked best for the people who were willing to undertake a subservient relationship. It worked least well for people who were wanting an a more equal relationship (Student 29 – FG R3).

Student 28 expanded on this, noting that the power dynamic was not always positive and could be detrimental to successful feedback. “But I think the point is the power dynamic was what was in play and rubbed people up the most poorly” (Student 28 – FG R3). Student 20 also commented that feedback was successful when it was positive, when what he had presented was seen as correct, and when he offered an alternative insight:

> In terms of feedback, his feedback was successful for me when it was positive, when I had managed to hit the nail on the head, think in a way that others had not, been insightful (Student 29 – FG R3).

The positive reinforcement was helpful in breaking down any perceived or real power imbalances. Feedback was “least helpful” when it was not clearly explained and/or cryptic. “It was least helpful for me when it was like your ‘sensei grasshopper’[25] – this cryptic. ‘Keep thinking, it will come, my son…’” (Student 29 – FG R3). Exploring

[25] Reference to an expression taken from the 1970s television series “Kung Fu”, where the student is to learn from the master.

this further, Student 29 explained that he felt some lecturers used a cryptic approach to maintain a knowledge advantage and, hence, a degree of power.

The majority of students raised the perception that lecturers used their position of relative power to influence the feedback relationship. According to students, the lecturers' understanding of the purposes of and responsibility for feedback had an impact on the practices they used. Students recognised the responsibility of lecturers to provide feedback, but noted that the lecturer also sets the environment, which may or may not encourage feedback-seeking practices from students, particularly if students feel uncomfortable:

> Yeah, one, because they are providing a service, so it's their responsibility. But also because of the power dynamic, they have the ability to create the environment from the get-go (Student 27 – FG R3).

As discussed in section 4.3.3, students acknowledged that there is a hierarchy, as the lecturer has the initial responsibility for creating the environment and relationship within which the process of feedback and feedback interactions can be initiated. How this environment is established plays an important role, Student 28 described the interactions with one lecturer as "Yeah, you have to sit at the feet of Socrates". Students found it much easier to approach lecturers who adopted practices to reduce the power imbalance and actively encourage students to get involved:

> I think it goes back to the power thing again, because even for myself, I am quite a direct person, so I am often not backward in coming forward, but I often was in this entire process (Student 26 – FG R3).

Students were able to identify lecturers' power-distance preferences:

> Lecturer 14, no power distance; Lecturer 15, no power distance and her feedback was very, very good (Student 25, and 16 – FG R3).

Lecturer 16 was described as having no power distance, with students' describing practices that were disarming and acted to reduce the power distance:

> Lecturer 16 from Subject 13, no power distance, very disarming, and really kind feedback at all levels (Student 27 – FG R3).

Lecturer 8 also was described as having low power distance and being willing to learn from the students: “Lecturer 8 had some moments where he took on and he learnt something from the students as well” (Student 25 – FG R3). This was seen as positive because it demonstrated a low power distance and a willingness to listen and respond.

Lecturers’ practices can make it more or less likely for students to seek feedback. One example used was in relation to students’ use of consultation times. Student 27 explained that one particular lecturer

> …doesn't encourage feedback mechanisms in terms of approaching or consultation – he doesn't have mechanisms setup. It is only the feedback he gives on assignments… (Student 27 – FG R3).

Student 29 agreed and said, “There is a power dynamic there.” In further discussion, the students suggested that this lecturer was happy to debate and discuss in class, “but then outside of class he almost blanks you” (Student 28 – FG R3). The other students in the focus group challenged Student 28 on this comment and he admitted that this was his perception. Student 27 agreed that the lecturer could improve how he encouraged students to seek feedback and make himself more accessible. The inconsistencies in the power-distance approaches of different lecturers made it difficult for students to adopt a consistent set of feedback-seeking practices, as lecturers’ feedback practices were lecturer-dependent: “The comment I would make on feedback, very lecturer-dependent” (Students 29 – FG R3).

Power distance was also an issue for international students, some of whom came from cultures with a higher power distance. International students from higher power-distance cultures expected lecturers to have a higher responsibility for driving feedback and were more accepting of this. As discussed previously, “[i]nternational students from some cultures honour that power distance” (Student 28 – FG R3) more than domestic students. However, international students from these cultures were more reliant on the lecturer taking a greater responsibility for feedback. This is an important consideration in the context of the MBA, which (at the time of research) had a significant proportion of international students. At times, they found it difficult to adapt to a lower power distance compared to domestic students. This had a bearing on their willingness to seek feedback and engage in a meaningful dialogue regarding feedback. Some international students' lack of experience and limited English skills also made them hesitant to seek feedback, as they were concerned that they would not be able to articulate and/or define what they needed. In these cases, the practices of the students were affected by their interpretation of power distance and how comfortable they felt or were made to feel by the lecturer. The practices of the lecturers in understanding the impact of power distance in different cultures were important in getting students engaged in feedback dialogues. Student 26 described an interaction where she was not comfortable seeking feedback, as the lecturer had not established an environment in which she felt comfortable. This was a critical concern as the lecturer had the initial responsibility to position the relationship:

> So, I guess I still had my consultations but it's almost the way that the relationship is positioned and what you are there for is understood by both parties (Student 26 – FG R3).

In this example, the student would have been more comfortable seeking feedback if the lecturer had adopted practices that made Student 26 feel more comfortable in the relationship.

The majority of students preferred lecturers whose practices made them more approachable and built trust (Section 4.4.1). Students also wanted lecturers to adopt practices that would encourage the establishment of a professional learning relationship with the lecturer and help develop a mutual understanding of feedback. These practices depended on the context and individual differences, but the aims were the same. The imbalance of power is something of which both lecturers and students need to be aware, but which lecturers have the responsibility to address. The student perspective is best captured by the following discussion:

> I think one of the things with the relationships which is inherently challenging is that students and lecturers perform dual and slightly contradictory roles. As a student, you are a customer, and you are paying $4,000 for a course, but you are deeply subordinate to the lecturer to pass. You really don't want to piss a lecturer off because your marks will start failing if you do. (Student 29 – FG R3).

> I think 99% of people fundamentally believe that (Student 26 – supported by all others in the focus group).

Student 29 raised the issue of lecturers being both product provider (course material and learning) and course grader (through assessment tasks). This dual role of the lecturer was a concern for students and was complicated further if there were also industry links where the student might encounter the lecturer in a professional setting outside of the MBA course. Some students were concerned that their relationship with the lecturer might result in reduced marks if the relationship was not positive, particularly when seeking feedback. This reflects a concern over the power imbalance between lecturer and student. The students who were concerned about the effect on their grades were also reluctant to engage in a dialogue regarding feedback. Both Students 28 and 29 raised the power-dynamic issue as having the potential to negatively affect feedback, particularly when the purposes of and responsibility for feedback are not clearly understood. Student 28 mentioned that some lecturers liked to use the power dynamic to have a degree of control over students, describing it as "the exaggerated power dynamic of one lecturer" (Student 28). Student 29 countered, "But the best lecturers didn't do that," but also accepted that a lower power distance can cause issues, particularly as the lecturer also has the responsibility to grade assessment tasks:

> The challenge with it is, with the dual roles, is that if things start becoming problematic it's hard to resolve…. If you have a lecturer that's deeply approachable and friendly, etc., and there is a student who fails and starts blaming the lecturer, certainly the lecturer will then protect themselves by being more distant (Student 29 – FG R3).

There were also some less obvious links to power. Some students admitted that how they perceived lecturers' actions and intent also had a bearing on their willingness to seek feedback. An example of a practice that affected students' perceptions of feedback was response times to emails: "If you shot a lecturer an email, whether they responded, how quickly they responded. That was a big indicator for me" (Student 28 – FG R3). The student went on to explain that the impression they got from poor response times to emails was that they saw feedback as a menial task that the lecturer reluctantly does, and that they were just lowly students. He recognised that this type of thinking was counterproductive; however, it still had an impact on whether he felt comfortable seeking feedback:

> I think the idea of having that kind of "I'm the student you're the lecturer" is sort of that ingrained mentality that is counterproductive (Student 28 – FG R3).

Student 7 felt that at times lecturers used their greater knowledge as power: "It is not very helpful if a lecturer is feeling more powerful because they have all the knowledge" (Student 7 – I R1). One student questioned the recruitment practices of the institution, asking whether the Business School looked to employ lecturers based on their ability to control the power dynamic. Whilst this was possibly said in jest, as the focus-group participants got a laugh, the fact that the student thought of this highlights students' concerns over power and control. They then said that they did not think it was a conscious practice, but it does underscore the perceptions students have and how practices may be construed if not carefully articulated. Finally, some students felt that the set-up of the physical space teaching space also played a role in how the power dynamic was perceived. Student 28 (FG R3) felt that some lecturers relied on the traditional forward-facing classroom layout to provide separation between the lecturer and students. This will be discussed further in section 5.2.2 and 5.2.2.3. The next section examines power dynamics from the lecturer perspective, focusing on practices utilised in understanding and reducing the impact of power distance and engaging students in feedback dialogues. It also considers how lecturers positioned themselves within the feedback process.

4.4.2.2 Practices that Make Seeking Feedback More or Less Likely – Lecturer Perspective

This section considers the issue of power dynamics from a lecturer perspective, focusing on the responsibility of lecturers to intentionally adopt practices that allow for clarification of how the feedback process will function. The power dynamic sets the relational parameters of how lecturers and students will interrelate. Most of the lecturers interviewed agreed that the lower the power distance, the more likely students would feel safe seeking feedback, engaging in dialogues concerning feedback, and acting on feedback. When asked about reducing the power distance, Lecturer 6 replied:

> Of course, it's really important. I taught this about 20 years ago of my starting career, the power distance of lecturers and the students. I have seen this because I'm coming from South Asia, so I have seen in my student life, how teachers and lecturers, they keep the distance. So, I was so badly hurt of this distance [sic] (Lecturer 6 – I R2).

Lecturer 6 recognised that the practices of lecturers can have a negative impact on students' propensity to seek feedback. Whilst there may be differences between lecturers' and students' expectations, it is lecturers' responsibility to clarify the expectations so they are consistent (Section 4.3.1). He recognised that the responsibility initially lies with the lecturer to establish the expectations and ensure that students' expectations are heard and incorporated. However, it is crucial that a mutual understanding is developed through interactions and dialogues among students and lecturers. Lecturer 6 also saw it as essential to establish "ground rules" for communication between students and lecturers, as this works to reduce the potentially detrimental impact of a high power distance. He also recognised the negative impact that intentionally high power distance can have on students. He shared that he himself was negatively affected, using the words "I was badly hurt of this distance" in describing his experiences as an undergraduate international student in Australia. Furthermore, Lecturer 20 talked about the importance of outlining to students the role of an educator:

> Well, you need to first educate, even in the classroom, why you are there as an educator, yeah? In other words, you need to clarify the role of the academic. You need to have a vision. The vision of "What are we here for?" (I R3)

Lecturer 20 is trying to imply that the role of the lecturer is greater than simply covering subject content and assessment. It is establishing how the students and lecturer will interact and communicate and the roles each has. This requires an understanding of the power dynamic:

> So, a lot of the times, people talk about, "This is the subject, these are the learning outcomes for the subject. We need to achieve this, and these are the topics." Yeah, absolutely. They're all part of it. But you need to achieve, at a broader level, how does this contract work? You need to clarify… (Lecturer 20 – I R3).

The term “contract” implies the need to establish a mutual agreement and understanding of the role of the academic in teaching the subject, engaging with students, and getting students engaged, outlining how performance will be assessed and how feedback will be provided and given. Lecturer 6 said, “…I always believe that it [feedback] should be contextualised, and within the curriculum.” In practice, this means that there is scope for individual lecturers to use different practices depending on the course taught. In this way the practices used can be arranged to suit the subject and context.

In addition to setting up a mutual agreement on how the feedback process functions, a number of lecturers discussed the need to establish an environment that is conducive to feedback-seeking. This was particularly important for international students with English as a second language. There were variations in how this was done. For example, some lecturers intentionally formed groups with a mix of international and domestic students and asked the group to share presentations. Lecturer 2 used this several times during impromptu class debates. Other lecturers opted to provide more-detailed notes or paired students from non-English speaking backgrounds with native English speakers. Others adopted teaching strategies that encouraged engagement through planned small-group discussions that gave students time to prepare their responses. One lecturer made this part of the first assessment, explaining that all students needed to participate.

In summary, both students and lecturers discussed the power imbalance between the two groups. Some lecturers and a majority of students outlined practices that can help to reduce the effect of this power dynamic and, conversely, practices that can make it less likely for students to engage with lecturers. The next section discusses the practices that make students feel more comfortable in seeking feedback.

4.4.3 Practices that Make Students Feel Comfortable Seeking Feedback

This section provides examples of practices that assisted in establishing a deeper understanding of feedback-seeking. These practices were affected by people’s perceptions of what feedback is, the purposes of feedback, and the responsibility for feedback. These practices will be considered from both lecturer and student perspectives.

4.4.3.1 Lecturers' Practices

As discussed in Section 4.2, lecturers reported a range of understandings regarding the purposes of feedback. From the lecturers' perspective, the most often cited purpose was feedback on submitted assessment tasks. However, several lecturers explained that some students would seek feedback prior to submitting the task. The in-class etiquette for discussion, that is, encouraging dialogue and input from students, was interpreted differently by each lecturer. Some relied on set activities to develop discussion while others had a variety of tools such as impromptu scenarios, asking students for workplace examples to use in discussion, and breaking the group into informal debating teams. The lecturers would employ these tools as the need arose. There were also mixed understandings of the importance of course and assessment design in providing the best opportunities for feedback. Some lecturers recognised the importance of providing time for in-class discussion and making students feel comfortable to engage in debate and ask questions. Others expected students to ask for feedback if required. These variations in practice played a role in the reported disconnection between students' and lecturers' expectations; in particular, the different conceptions about who is responsible for feedback.

Students felt that lecturers had a responsibility to outline the feedback process and engage students, but lecturers reported difficulties engaging students in the feedback process. Lecturer 21 explained that it is important to gain a better understanding of what students want and the practices students use to seek feedback: "If we don't ask students what they want, then we can't gauge how effective the feedback is" (Lecturer 21 – I R3). This raised the issue of whether students were asked what feedback they would like or if they wanted feedback. Other lecturers were critical of the assumption that students always want feedback. The effectiveness of feedback needs to be considered with this in mind. However, Lecturer 6 made it clear that he felt it was the lecturers' responsibility to clarify expectations, so they understood what students wanted. This contrasted with some lecturers who were reluctant to spend time on detailed feedback that was not going to be used. These lecturers were sceptical about the use of feedback on assessment tasks, reporting that students do not always read or use feedback. They also reported that some students leave assessment tasks to the last minute, and thus do not have the time to respond to formative feedback. Students also reported not knowing what feedback to seek, as the lecturers' expectations were unclear. The next paragraph discusses practices used by lecturers in communicating their expectations.

Some lecturers did not communicate clearly what they wanted students to do or were not clear themselves on what they wanted from the students. It is difficult for students to know what feedback to seek if what they were meant to do was not clear to the lecturers:

> The biggest place that I find my colleagues come unstuck is they don't know what they want students to do, so they don't communicate that openly and transparently (Lecturer 21 – I R3).

This was reinforced by Lecturer 6, who recognised that lecturers must understand the purposes of feedback before they can adopt responsibility for feedback and feedback-seeking. Whilst it is the lecturers' responsibility to outline what they expect from students, it is also their responsibility to explain the feedback process. He emphasised the importance of assessment design and clarity as well as building formative tasks throughout the coursework to assist students in engaging with the content. He agreed that lecturers have the initial responsibility to assist, direct, and coach students. "We are mature enough and we have responsibility to assist them, direct them, and coach them as much as possible" (Lecturer 6). However, lecturers also expected students to show a willingness to engage in the feedback process and actively participate in discussions. Lecturer 20 explained that it was necessary to educate students about the role of the lecturer. Without this, students may not understand that they need to accept the invitation to participate in the feedback process. Once students had a better understanding of their role in the feedback process, an ongoing dialogue could be established within which students were encouraged to seek guidance as needed. Lecturer 20 explained it this way:

> …but different elements of feedback, and there is this constant checking. Did you get it? If you don't get it, you need to tell me now, sort of thing. Then they have to feel

> comfortable in saying, I feel – otherwise – versus, I don't want to feel stupid asking you this question. (Lecturer 20 – I R2).

Lecturer 6 suggested that if students are asking questions, then he is confident that they are engaging and learning. He told students that he cannot clarify points if he is not aware that something is unclear, even saying to one class of students, “If you don’t ask question, I assume you don’t learn” (Lecturer 6 – I R2). Lecturer 20 said that he tried to make students feel comfortable in his classes so that they would engage in feedback dialogues even if they were unsure of the content. He saw this as his responsibility to initiate so that students felt comfortable engaging in this way:

> They feel comfortable doing that, and I don’t know whether it’s inherently they talk like that, or is it being cultivated in my class, yeah? So, there is a level of comfort that I feel that gets established before I go to this unknown territory… (Lecturer 20 – I R2).

Lecturer 19 agreed and applied this notion to consultations. He expressed frustration that students do not take the opportunity to attend individual consultations, telling them, “I can help you if you go to consultations” (Lecturer 19 – I R2). From his experience, the more comfortable students felt in the classroom context, the more likely they were to attend consultations.

Practices that engaged students in the face-to-face teaching context were seen as critical to learning. Lecturer 2 explained that the physical environment of the classroom had an impact on students’ propensity to answer and ask questions and engage in discussion. Large, forward-facing classrooms gave students the opportunity to sit towards the back where the majority of students were less likely to engage in discussion unless directly approached by the lecturer. Not being able to quickly transition the space for group work was also raised as an issue, as it discouraged lecturers from spontaneously facilitating a group discussion. Lecturer 20 actively encouraged students to bring relevant examples from their workplace to class. This helped students apply the theory to their work context and provided a wider application for all students. She agreed that there was a dual responsibility for feedback, and that while it was the lecturer’s job to initiate, as students developed their self-assessment skills, the responsibility for driving the feedback process shifted to them:

> Once the students have developed a better understanding of the purpose of feedback and the responsibility they have to the feedback process, students can be further guided to develop self-assessment skills. In other words, these individual moments are for us or for me to educate how that person can self-diagnose issues. …there is a scaffolded process where there is a lot of handholding at the initial stages. As the intensity of conversations increases, I tell them, “You don’t have to necessarily come to me for me to tell you that it’s not good enough. Here are [sic] a list of criteria that you can use to self-diagnose your own performance” (Lecturer 20 – I R3).

Lecturer 20 was one of only two lecturers who raised the issue of students’ ability to self-evaluate. She recognised the importance of developing the students’ self-assessment skills, but also understood the need to first teach students the purposes of feedback and the responsibility students have to engage in the feedback process. Lecturers 6 and 21 incorporated student self-checks into the subject delivery that were aimed at initiating the development of students’ capacity for understanding what constituted quality work. The self-checks also highlighted the importance of self-evaluation and encouraged feedback-seeking behaviour.

Other techniques aimed at encouraging students to seek feedback included providing a 48-hour turnaround for feedback on submitted tasks, explaining that students were more likely to engage and seek further feedback as it was fresh in their minds (Lecturer 6). Lecturer 21 discussed engaging students in the subject before it even starts (Section 4.3.1) and providing recorded verbal feedback as the final step in her feedback process. She expected students to have engaged ahead of time with formative tasks, which, from her experience, made students more willing to engage in the feedback process and seek feedback.

4.4.3.2 Students’ Practices

The students' perspectives on how an awareness of the purposes of and responsibility for feedback encourages feedback-seeking can be divided into three categories: students who considered feedback as the lecturers' responsibility and did very little to actively seek feedback; students who thought lecturers should initiate feedback but recognised that ultimately if this did not happen, it was their responsibility to follow it up; and students who had a clear understanding of the power of feedback for assessment and learning, and would take responsibility and work through barriers to not only seek feedback but seek a dialogue regarding feedback.

Students who saw lecturers as having sole responsibility for feedback appeared to have a more limited understanding of the purposes of feedback and its importance for learning. Some students admitted that they had not really considered the importance of feedback, but that during their studies and/or after discussion with the researcher came to see feedback as reassurance they were headed in the right direction:

> I probably didn't really think about the importance of feedback when I first started, but in growing through the course I can see that any type of feedback from the lecturers is reassuring and confirming that I am on the right track (Student 7 – I R3).

Even when they recognised the value of feedback, some students still saw the lecturer as responsible for driving feedback, and reported reluctance to seek feedback unless the lecturer's practices encouraged feedback-seeking. If the lecturers did not take responsibility for feedback, the students were less likely to take responsibility, with some reported being "put off" (Student 24 – I R1) by lecturers' feedback-inhibiting practices (Section 4.4.3.1), whilst others simply lacked the confidence to approach lecturers, as an international student explained: "As I said, I'm very conservative. I don't normally approach a lecturer" (Student 6 – I R1). Others did not know what to ask: "I did not know what I did not know" (Student 21 – I R2). Some students reported that having not engaged initially with the subject for a variety of reasons, they missed foundational concepts and then did not know how to catch up or were reticent to seek feedback, as this would reveal their lack of knowledge. This also applied to students not seeking feedback on tasks where they felt they did not do well:

> The reason I didn't say anything at the time to Lecturer 3 is I didn't want other students to know. I was really ashamed of not doing well…. I ducked out of the lecture and had a huge cry…but I didn't want anyone to know unless it was my friend who I could trust… (Student 19 – I R2).

Students described lecturers' practices that encourage engagement as being important in the early stages of subjects. Part of this is building opportunities for formative feedback dialogues into the class learning activities; that is, learning-orientated assessment.

Some students reported not being aware of the mechanisms for seeking feedback or not feeling confident in taking advantage of them, with some reporting that they felt uncomfortable seeking feedback from certain lecturers. Students who did not see feedback's purposes for learning or underrated its value relied on the lecturer driving the responsibility for feedback and engaged in fewer feedback-seeking practices:

> Well, it was like you were irritating, for showing up, asking questions. And they didn't particularly want to answer them, and if it required more than one explanation then they didn't want to…. Yeah, they didn't want to engage in explaining it much more. It's like you are wasting their time (Student 10 – I R1).

Students were discouraged by these kinds of responses and reported being less likely to seek feedback in future contexts, whether for the current subject or other subjects. Students acknowledged that the use of consultation time was encouraged verbally, but reported that the practices of some lecturers were inconsistent with the verbal message and the lecturers did not encourage the use of this time. A few students questioned why the consultation times were scheduled during work hours.

The students who understood the importance of feedback for learning but believed that the lecturer should be responsible for initiating feedback ultimately accepted the responsibility for feedback and adopted practices to seek feedback as required. Student 20 explained that she tended to drive feedback, but that the lecturer should be given this responsibility. However, she accepted that she may need to be the one driving feedback if the lecturer is not doing so:

> I believe the lecturer should definitely be given the responsibility to drive feedback, but if you don't drive it, you won't…or might not be able to get it, I guess. So, for me that's important. The individual feedback for me is important. So, I'll go out and seek it, and if I'm not sure about something, I'll talk to someone about it (Student 20 – FG R3).

Further discussion with Student 20 concerning how comfortable she was in seeking feedback revealed some inconsistencies. She was comfortable seeking feedback in most settings, but then said, "I guess it would be more challenging if it was someone that I didn't have that good a relationship with. It would be harder to do." She then went further, elaborating on when she might feel uncomfortable:

> Someone maybe I didn't connect with or that I felt didn't really understand who I was in…as a personal sense or as an individual outside the class. Does that make sense? (Student 20 – FG R3).

Student 20 went on to explain what she meant by connection and how this was established:

> So, in some cases I feel I have to really, like, get the lecturer and like their style of lecturing, their teaching, I feel it just clicks for me sometimes and others it doesn't, and I think there's always a disconnect [sic] in the message that's getting through … (Student 20).

Student 20 explained that if they did not feel a connection with a lecturer, the message that the lecturer was trying to convey would not be clear. The disconnection raised by Student 20 was supported by several of other students. These students explained that some lecturers' practices were less likely to establish a connection and that these lecturers did not appear to grasp that students were relying on them to take responsibility for driving feedback. The lecturers, on occasion, employed practices that made students either less or more comfortable seeking feedback. Student 28 referred to it as the lecturers' approachability:

> If I reflect on the feedback seeking. I think that you pick up quite quickly – for want of a better word – the lecturer's approachability…. It could be the simplest thing, like asking a question during class and whether the response was seen as an opportunity or an interruption to the class. So, the lecturers who saw that as an opportunity and were like, "That's so good! Anyone else want to go there? Let's go with this" (Student 28 – FG R3).

Students' perceptions of the approachability of a lecturer affected the likelihood of their taking responsibility for seeking feedback. Several students commented on the lecturers' approachability, and what practices made lecturers more approachable. A common practice was lecturers taking the time to engage with students and ascertain if students understood the content. In these instances, students were more likely to seek further feedback:

> Say, one lecturer I really, really enjoy that class. I found it easy to understand, I felt that they actually took the time to explain concepts and to make sure that everyone understood. It's more relaxed… (Student 20 – FG R3).

Informal time to speak with lecturers was seen to be of benefit, as Student 28 explains:

> And there were certain lecturers who you would build this feedback relationship and it would be in class, it would be after class, it would be during breaks, it would be during things, it would be after the course – you could see them, have a coffee (Student 28 – FG R3).

In contrast, in some instances, students felt that the lecturers were not trying to engage and work with the students, despite verbal encouragement to seek feedback (for example, by saying "Please ask if you need feedback on anything"). Certain students' perceptions were that some lecturers were simply telling students to seek feedback if needed, but that these lecturers did not want to work with them:

> …and another one was separate to that. I felt they more taught the class on their own agenda rather than the individual, looking at people as individuals and what they needed, and just kind of put the information out there rather than working with the group... (Student 20 – FG R3).

This created an interesting paradox, in that what was said did not always align with the practices used. In these instances, students were less likely to seek feedback from some lecturers. In the students' view, some lecturers seemed to resist establishing a real connection with students. The students' impression was that each of them was simply another student, and that seeking feedback would not be very beneficial. Students, however, did report that the more connected they felt to the lecturer, the more comfortable they were in actively seeking feedback:

> One of the things I find useful is…and this is a bit about the relationship that you might build with a lecturer, the feedback or the information is provided in the lectures, so you can connect with that often… (Student 21 – FG R3).

When asked what a lecturer could do to build this kind of relationship, most students talked about what lecturers did to build relationships (Section 4.4.1), and did not readily mention anything that students could do:

> I would say probably like casual chats. Or something which are [sic] not subject-related like activities where you get students involved, and it's not about, like, exam or it's not about the subject, where you get the chance to actually build that relationship. It has to be off the subject (Student 6 – I R1).

Student 6 appeared to focus on practices that may reduce the power distance between lecturers and students. Student 15 (I R2) supported this assertion: "Lecturer 2 is very accessible, you kind of feel… (I'm trying to word this the right way), much more free to talk" (Student 15). Similarly, Student 11 (I R1) commented:

> I think if you really want to make a change, make a difference, and try to improve, then you really need that engagement that one-on-one time. You sit down and have a look and assess what you've done, where you've done well and where you haven't done well.

Student 15 was making the point that if students feel a lecturer is more accessible, then it is more likely students will engage in a feedback dialogue and seek feedback. This was supported by Student 11, who used the term "engagement" when reviewing their performance with a lecturer. Student 20 expressed a desire not to be "just another number in the class":

> So, it was less comfortable…. I would have been less comfortable had I needed to seek feedback with that individual because I would have felt like I was just another number in the class. And they may not be able to provide me with individual, relevant feedback as opposed to someone else (Student 20 – I R2).

This example demonstrates the need for connection with the lecturer for students to be comfortable seeking feedback, and for lecturers to recognise their responsibilities in the feedback process.

Some students explained that they were able to overcome the barriers noted by other students and worked on creating the connection themselves. This was illustrated by Student 6, who, after saying he would not normally approach a lecturer, explained that he was now more proactive, recognising that he could not complete the course on his own and needed help from lecturers. He would seek feedback despite any barriers:

> Now I'm more proactive these days. I do plan on asking more questions when it comes to a difficult time for me because I need that.... I know I'm not going to be able to deal with two subjects or three subjects if I have to. Yeah, I need help basically...if I could do this by myself then I wouldn't come to study (Student 6 – I R1).

When questioned further about why he took greater responsibility for seeking feedback, Student 6 explained that he needed feedback for his learning and that the biggest barrier was overcoming his discomfort when approaching lecturers and he found this more difficult as an international student: "Ultimately, I think that's the one big barrier for most people." Participants in Focus Group 2 also raised approachability, with students citing response time to emails as an indicator of the lecturer's willingness to engage with students:

> Because one of the big things for me is actually that approachability. Because so many people are in office jobs, it's quite easy to send the lecturer an email. And for me, it spoke volumes…when they got back to you in a timely manner. Some would only respond in the consultation time or ask you to visit them in their consultation times to discuss. It's basically a f*** you (Student 28 – FG R3).

The students in this focus group were quite passionate on this point and went on to list the lecturers they considered approachable and those they felt did not really care. The passion with which they spoke and agreed with each other clearly highlighted the importance they placed on the approachability of a lecturer when seeking feedback. It also demonstrated that some practices employed by lecturers (Section 4.3.1) could work to build barriers rather than making students feel more relaxed in approaching them for feedback.

Several students said that once they recognised the importance of taking greater responsibility for feedback, they worked to overcome these barriers, and that this made it more likely that their feedback-seeking would improve.

Finally, students who viewed the purposes of feedback as critical for learning understood the importance of taking responsibility for feedback and adapted their feedback-seeking practices to suit. These students were more direct in the feedback they sought and seemed to be less affected by the potentially feedback-inhibiting practices of lecturers. They also were able to identify practices that might have made feedback more likely to occur. A number of these practices centred on making the student feel comfortable. Student 7 stated that "the lecturers make me, as a student, feel more than comfortable approaching them", and Student 10 explained that "if the perception is the lecturer actually cares…it's done in a friendly kind of smiling, non-threatening manner and they actually show that they care or at least pretend to care…", he would be more likely to seek feedback.

An example of a practice that made students feel more comfortable was lecturers responding in a positive and encouraging way to questions asked by students. This made other students feel more comfortable asking questions:

> You know what's really useful sometimes is when you feel scared to ask the question because you don't want to look silly as well. But if someone has approached the lecturer to ask them a question, and then the lecturer comes back and says to everyone, "Oh, that's a great question. I just had to let everyone know," and they share that with everyone, it sort of makes you feel comfortable that when someone else approached them that they wanted to give you that information, you know, they're not holding anything in (Student 7 – I R1).

Other practices by lecturers that made students feel more comfortable approaching them included appearing personable; actively trying to engage students through facilitating discussions; asking for people's examples; and using questioning techniques to guide students. However, it became evident that it was not one single practice, but rather the combination of them, that made students more comfortable. In contrast, some lecturers, whether intentionally or not, gave the perception that they were not interested in helping students:

> And some of them might mention that they have class in Sydney and so you sort of get the feeling that they might be busy. So, if you hear them saying that, you have to take that into consideration that they may not be always available. It can give the impression that they may not be wanting you to actually approach them (Student 6 – I R1).

Students who understood the importance of feedback were more willing to engage in class discussions, whilst others would only engage partially or not at all. Student 12 commented on his likelihood to ask questions:

> …I do [ask questions], but I can see other students who do not ask any questions. To be more precise, I'd say that I ask only 20 to 30% of my questions and the remaining percentage I go and Google it, or research it or try to find out (Student 12 – I R1).

Whilst Student 12 only asked fewer than a third of the questions he had, other students were willing to ask more questions, particularly if they saw it as necessary to complete the assessment tasks. These students were much more engaged and not discouraged by practices that they perceived as not encouraging students to seek feedback. When Student 12 was asked whether students seeking answers for themselves was a sign of them developing as a learner, he explained that he would only do this as a last resort because he was reticent to ask questions. When asked why, he initially said that it was "a cultural thing" (being an international student), then said, "I'd say that I am just a regular guy who is maybe a bit afraid of asking questions." He also said that sometimes he was conscious of not wanting to waste other students' time by asking too many questions.

To conclude, students' practices varied depending on how they understood and conceptualised the responsibility for feedback. Students who understood the purposes and power of feedback for learning were more likely to take greater responsibility for feedback and to use a range of feedback-seeking practices. Students who had a more limited or less developed understanding of feedback's purposes considered feedback to be primarily lecturers' responsibility. However, students' willingness to seek feedback increased when lecturers intentionally invited students to participate in feedback. It was also important that lecturers made it clear that students needed to accept the invitation to participate by engaging with the feedback process. This implications of this will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 5. The next section provides examples of practices that make feedback interactions more likely.

4.4.3.3 Examples of Practices that Make Feedback Interactions More Likely

This section focuses on practices that make it easier for students to become involved in feedback interactions such as in-class discussions, ongoing dialogues on relevant issues, and peer feedback. Employing these strategies early in both the MBA course as a whole, and individual classes was raised as important (Lecturers 2, 6, and 20). An example of this was lecturers using strategies to break the ice, which made students feel more comfortable asking questions and offering opinions:

> …I find if the lecturer has asked people early on and people get opportunities to actually voice themselves early on in the class, then when they throw out open questions, people will be more willing to participate because the ice has been broken, I guess (Student 20 – FG R3)).

Student 20 also said that when lecturers started a discussion by asking students their opinions, it set expectations for future interactions. This made it easier for students to participate. A common way of doing this is to incorporate group discussions with the intention to engage students and recognise the unique contributions that each student can bring:

> Group discussions, involving people in the room together, asking questions to individual people so you're active…you're an active participant in the room, in the learning… (Student 20 – FG R3).

> I think the best form of feedback was the face-to-face discussion, because, yeah, because we can clearly talk about our concern and we can understand and to clarify what he wants, his answers…and this can happen in lectures or consultation time as well (Student 17 – I R2).

Practices that encouraged students to be active in the learning helped to overcome the idea that feedback was one-way and made it easier for students to interact with lecturers and other students. Student 21 recognised the need to discuss feedback with lecturers but noted the barrier of availability:

> Feedback – it's typically one-way unless the student then goes and approaches the lecturer about it, and, logistically, that can be difficult…. I work, so I don't have lots of available time to come in (Student 21 – FG R3).

Practices that can overcome this kind of barrier were noted. This involved actively cultivating an environment where discussion was encouraged and where the reasons for classroom discussions were clearly explained, and highlighting the importance of discussions for feedback. Student 21 needed to take advantage of in-class opportunities. Student 7 proposed that positive affirmation towards students and communicating a student's questions to the wider cohort were helpful.

As discussed in Sections 4.4.1 and 4.4.3, practices that build a relationship of trust and a safe learning environment helped students feel more comfortable in seeking feedback and facilitated their willingness to become more engaged in a dialogue:

> Once you have that relationship, I become more comfortable and I'm willing to ask stupid questions…. So, you have to feel the engagement – I don't feel that sometimes (Student 6 – I R1).

Student 6 pointed out the importance of affective factors that made him more or less likely to become engaged in a feedback dialogue. The link between the power dynamic and engagement was raised throughout the research. There were also examples where students interpreted a lecturer's practices as an invitation to participate in feedback dialogue. Asking questions in class whilst engaging in a class discussion was cited as a valid feedback-seeking practice. Whilst all students agreed that immediate in-class feedback was ideal in practice, lecturers used practices (intentional or otherwise) that made students more or less likely to engage in this kind of feedback dialogue. Student 29 captured this concept with his review of some practices used:

> It could be the simplest thing, like asking a question during class and whether the response was seen as an opportunity or an interruption to the class (FG R3).

The lecturer's response was important. If students witnessed a positive response from the lecturer, other students were more likely to participate in the discussion. As mentioned by Student 28 (Section 4.4.3.2), some lecturers actively encouraged interaction outside of the classroom setting. This would make feedback-seeking easier and feedback dialogue more likely, as the lecturer was seen as more approachable:

> If I reflect on the feedback-seeking, I think that you pick up quite quickly – for want of a better word – the lecturer's approachability (Student 29 – FG R3).

Approachability, understanding the reciprocal nature of feedback, and maintaining the relational aspect of feedback were features of lecturers' practices that made students more likely to engage in a feedback dialogue. One student commented that a lecturer completely changed his perception of seeking feedback during consultation times. He was gently encouraged to see the lecturer for a one-on-one consultation, as he could be given more time (invitation to participate). He had never been to see a lecturer in an individual consultation before. He suddenly realised that he was ignoring a vital opportunity to seek and engage in a feedback dialogue. When telling a colleague about the value of it, he said, "You know if you got off your a*** and went to the consult, that had the potential to be absolutely exceptional" (Student 29 – FG R3).

Room design can also play a role in teaching practices employed and how students seek feedback. Lecturers 2, 3, and 21 all mentioned the importance of the physical teaching space in engaging students in a feedback dialogue. Recognising that every space is unique, the general principles raised included a clear view for students and lecturers, breakout spaces, room for the lecturer to move around and engage with different parts of the room, a comfortable physical environment set at an appropriate temperature, adequate lighting, and comfortable furniture. Lecturer 2 saw it as particularly important to establish a comfortable and distraction-free learning environment.

A key strategy used to initiate discussion was actively encouraging students to raise issues they encountered in their work practice. Lecturers 2 and 3 were very clear on this point. They both saw this as a vital part of creating a feedback dialogue about key components of the course. It was also used as part of an engagement strategy to encourage students to interact on subject content both during and outside of class. Lecturer 3 also commented that students' applying the course content to their workplace practice was much more likely to create a discussion.

Several students raised lecturers' lack of confidence and experience, particularly in their ability to communicate the content clearly. The students were able to identify lecturers who had limited teaching experience and/or practical work-related knowledge. This affected whether students felt that it was worth seeking feedback. The lecturers' experience also affected whether they employed strategies to determine whether students could comprehend and apply the content. Experienced lecturers were more likely to seek feedback from the students on the students' comprehension (Focus Group 2). The second focus group also raised the issue of the approachability of the lecturer, although they did acknowledge that approachability was subjective, and perceptions could differ between students.

4.4.4 Institutional Issues that Affect Feedback-Seeking Practices

According to Lecturer 20, the majority of the current MBA lecturers are passionate about teaching and learning: "Yeah, you've got a pocket full of greatly passionate people who really, really know the purpose of feedback, and therefore we are all fortunate" (Lecturer 20). When asked if the MBA lecturers intentionally articulate the purposes of feedback to students, Lecturer 20 explained that this is not happening at an institutional level, and it will not happen unless it becomes policy and that people take responsibility for implementing:

> I feel strongly about saying what institutions provide, because institutions, they create policies, wonderful policies, right? When you read the policies you think, "Oh my God, they've got it." But in terms of practice, I think there is a big disconnect [sic] between policy and practice, and institutions are not necessarily taking responsibility of [sic] how to implement policy. I think they strongly believe that if they come up with a policy, practice would be implemented naturally (Lecturer 20 – I R3).

This extract provides an example of how arrangements make the implementation of the institutional policy (in this case articulating the purpose of feedback) possible. Lecturer 20 stated that institutions create policies, but also acknowledged a "disconnect [sic] between policy and practice". The policies are made up of words (sayings) and are bound by the cultural-discursive arrangements or contextual conditions such as the language used and meaning taken. The policies are also intertwined with their implementation (doings) and bound by the material-economic arrangements that make up how the policy is implemented. The mode of delivery (electronic, physical), the platform used, and how it is accessed all affect the implementation. Finally, the ways of relating between policy-makers, academics, and students is affected by power and solidarity. It appears that the social-political conditions do not support the relatings of the practice. This is evidenced by Lecturer 20 explaining that the policy-makers thought that simply producing a policy would result in successful implementation. There is a disconnection between the artefact (written policy) and how the implementation will be done.

Lecturer 6’s response to a similar question, which also included the responsibility for feedback, elucidated his assumption that lecturers would outline the responsibility for feedback because the lecturers had won teaching and learning awards:

> I don't know. All I can say is that because they have won teaching and learning awards, I suppose they do that…. That's an assumption, yeah? Because they've got awards teaching and learning, I suppose they need to have reflected. They need to have talked about providing feedback and how they do it, and how it has worked for them, because they need to demonstrate outcomes and so on (Lecturer 6 – I R3).

In the above examples, two lecturers in the same postgraduate business school both acknowledged the importance of feedback but took different approaches in answering the question. Lecturer 20 raised the disconnection between policy and practice and how having a policy does not necessarily mean the practice will be in line with the policy. Lecturer 6 interpreted the question entirely differently, assuming that if lecturers had won learning and teaching awards, they must have been able to demonstrate proficiency in providing feedback. Lecturer 6 clarified that whilst it is necessary for MBA lecturers to provide feedback, he was not convinced it was always done well. The key point is that an institutional policy on feedback does not mean that feedback will be effective, or even implemented well, without an understanding of the supporting arrangements. Student 28’s views supported this, explaining that there are differences between lecturers' practices and that feedback is not systematically embedded in the institution:

> …so, there is a huge disconnect [sic] in that space, and therefore you have got these pockets of individual academics who might be passionate in this space, of encouraging, promoting, enhancing learning, and if you take away those outliers, institutions would be.... In the overall institution, it becomes – it's a chance encounter, yeah? That is my feel [sic]. I don't think it's systematically embedded. It's there at the policy thing. (Student 28 – FG R3)

Student 28 identified discrepancies in the practices of lecturers, with some adopting practices to enhance learning and others not. In later discussion, Student 28 felt that there may be a reliance on the institution to embed feedback in the curriculum, and that if it does not do so, lecturers will not adopt feedback practices.

In the context of the MBA, Student 26 expressed the view that feedback is about the assurance of learning.

> Assurance of learning…for me that's what it is in this context of the MBA. The feedback is about the assurance of learning. Because we are not paying to be here for some fun, we are here for genuine learning, so you are going, "Is what you are telling me…am I getting it? Or am I, you know, not getting it?" (Student 26 – FG R3)

During the focus group, Student 29 asked "When you say assurance you mean to ensure or to value add?" Student 26 replied:

> Actually, both. So, you want to be going, "Yes, whatever I am giving you back by my assignment, my presentations, I'm meeting the mark." So, yes, I am ensuring that I am meeting the competency level. But in terms of the value-add, I am meeting the competency level and more, so that feedback that I am getting should be directing me to go, "Well, look, you are meeting the mark in this context for the competencies here, but this is another area of exploration." There is not one single subject I have had where any of the feedback was anywhere near that level of detail – me, personally (Student 26 – FG R3).

Both students and lecturers agreed that institutional practices do affect feedback and need to be considered further. There has recently been an increased emphasis on assurance of learning as a quality-assurance tool. This has particularly been a focus for business schools seeking accreditation and seeking to demonstrate that their students will graduate having achieved a range of learning outcomes. Assurance of learning and its impact on feedback will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has reported students' and lecturers' perspectives on the purposes of feedback, the responsibility for feedback, and feedback-seeking, and briefly considered the impact of institutional forces on feedback. Several variations in how the purposes of feedback were understood were reported. In some instances, this caused confusion for students and lecturers and a lack of consistency in feedback practices. It was noted that feedback practices can also influence lecturers' and students' interpretation of feedback's purposes. Changing how feedback is conceptualised and adopting a process, rather than product, view allows lecturers and students to develop a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes. Likewise, the feedback process and associated practices can be tailored to fit the requirements of specific contexts and encourage a reciprocal relationship between student and lecturer feedback practices.

The second theme identified was the need to recognise and understand the reciprocal responsibilities for feedback between lecturers and students. The lecturer has the initial responsibility to establish the feedback process and communicate the purposes of feedback and how the feedback process works. However, for the process to work, students have reciprocal responsibilities and need to be willing to accept the lecturers' invitation to participate and engage in the feedback process. The more comfortable students are with the feedback process, the more likely students are to seek feedback. Likewise, lecturers who understand the purposes of feedback and their responsibility in the feedback process will be more likely to employ feedback practices that engage students and enable feedback-seeking.

Third, the impact of trust and power on feedback-seeking practices was considered. Students' and lecturers' perspectives on practices that made feedback-seeking more or less likely were discussed before focusing on feedback practices that made students feel comfortable seeking feedback. A variety of feedback practices that either enable or constrain feedback and the arrangements of these practices were highlighted. It is important to note that whilst the purposes of and responsibility for feedback have been reported separately, they are dependent on each other and together influence feedback-seeking. The feedback practices and arrangements that enable or constrain these practices are closely entwined with each other, and in practice cannot be separated. Finally, institutional practices and how they affect the provision of feedback were briefly considered.

Chapter 5 will position the key findings discussed in this chapter within the TPA framework, it will discuss the relationships between practices, the site of the practice, and how the arrangement of practices can enable or constrain the feedback process. In particular it focuses on how the arrangements of practice acted to enable or constrain the development of mutual understandings of feedbacks' purposes, the responsibility for feedback, and feedback seeking. The practices of lecturers and students revealed across the three major themes will be analysed using TPA to explore how the cultural-discursive, material-economic, and social-political arrangements of practice can enable or constrain practice. Table 4.3 provides an overview of how the themes in chapter 4 are analysed using TPA in Chapter 5.

Table 4.3 Summary of Themes, Sub-themes, and Findings in relation to TPA

Theme	Arrangements	Examples of practice	Sourced from
Developing a mutual understanding of feedback	Cultural-Discursive	Differing conceptions of feedback	Phases 1, 2 & 3
		The use of the feedback process to develop a better understanding of feedback's purposes and to further develop feedback's purposes	Phase 3 – student focus groups and final 3 lecturer interviews
		A culture of feedback	
		Developing students' evaluative judgement through practices of engagement and dialogue	Phases 2 & 3
	Material-Economic	Understanding variations in feedback practices to develop a mutual understanding	Phases 2 & 3 – in particular lecturer final interviews
		Equipping students to act on feedback	
		Physical environment and medium through which feedback is provided	Phases 1, 2 & 3
		Temporal aspects of feedback practices	Phases 2 & 3 – in-particular student focus groups
	Social-Political	The effect practices have in understanding power, relatings and affect and the development of a mutual understanding of feedback.	

The Responsibility for Feedback – Understanding and Communicating the Reciprocal Responsibilities	**Cultural-Discursive**	Articulating the responsibility for feedback. Practices that enable or constrain what is said when communicating the responsibility for feedback	Phase 3
	Material-Economic	What lecturers and students do in the development of the responsibility for feedback	Phases 2 & 3 – in-particuly student focus groups
		Reciprocal responsibilities for feedback	Phases 2 & 3
	Social-Political	How power, affect, and relations impact the development of a reciprocal responsibilities for feedback	Final student focus groups and final lecturer interviews
		Students' confidence in developing reciprocal responsibilities	Phase 2 and student focus groups
Feedback-Seeking – The Interrelationship between the Purposes of Feedback and the Responsibility for Feedback on Feedback-Seeking	**All**	Embed feedback-seeking in the curriculum	Phase 3
		Barriers to students' feedback-seeking	Phases 1, 2, & 3
		Variations in feedback practice - how It affects feedback-seeking	Phases 1, 2, & 3
		Temporal aspects	Phases 2 & 3
		Affective factors	Phases 1, 2, & 3
		The impact of students' reasons for study on feedback-seeking	Phases 1, 2, & 3
		Feedback literacy	Phase 3

Chapter 5 Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The findings reported in Chapter 4 described students' dissatisfaction with feedback, and lecturers' frustration with students not always acting on feedback or taking the initiative to seek it. Students who reported dissatisfaction with the feedback process were less likely to seek further feedback. Students' likelihood of seeking feedback was lower when they had had previous negative experiences with feedback. In contrast, lecturers recounted their perceptions of students not making use of the provided feedback, which led to lecturers questioning the value of offering it. Students' dissatisfaction with feedback and lecturers' frustrations at feedback not being used resulted in a lack of engagement with feedback information and the feedback process.

This research identified three central themes. The first theme recognised the importance of lecturers and students understanding the purposes of feedback amidst variations in practice. The second theme explored the mutual responsibility for feedback and understanding the reciprocal responsibilities of lecturers and students. The third theme revealed how feedback-seeking is enabled or constrained by feedback practices and the arrangements that prefigure, facilitate, and are essential to practice. Each theme considered the perspectives of lecturers and students by examining feedback practices, the relationship between these practices, and the arrangements that acted to enable or constrain the practices. Sub-themes were also intertwined throughout the main themes, including variations in practice, temporal aspects to feedback, feedback culture, development of students' and lecturers' reciprocal feedback literacy, and the process of embedding feedback literacy into the curriculum. These sub-themes were helpful in exploring the relationship between the three main themes. However, they were particularly relevant in understanding feedback-seeking.

The theory of practice architectures (TPA) (Kemmis 2019; Kemmis, Bristol, et al. 2014) (Section 3.2.3) frames the discussion and positions this research within the current literature, highlights areas of congruence, extends current theories, and outlines new concepts. The three dimensions of practice (sayings, doings, and relatings) and the arrangements of practices will be used to structure the discussion whilst focusing on the three main themes. These three themes will be discussed to gain a better understanding of the feedback practices that students and lecturers use to develop a mutual understanding of feedback, cultivate reciprocal responsibility for feedback, and enable feedback-seeking.

This chapter will initially consider the first two themes by looking at the three practice dimensions and the arrangements for each. Whilst the practices and their arrangements will be explored independently, they are interdependent and interwoven. The chapter will thus conclude by considering the interrelationship between feedback-seeking and the first two themes and the arrangements of feedback practices. The following sections compare the findings from this research with the current literature, outline areas of agreement, discuss any contradictions, highlight where this research extends current theory and practice, and examine new findings and their implications for the research question.

5.2 Developing Mutual Understandings of the Purposes of Feedback

This theme highlights the importance of developing mutual understandings of the purposes of feedback between students and lecturers whilst accommodating variations in practice. The discussion focuses on aspects of feedback's purposes but also considers how the interdependent arrangements of practice enable or constrain the development of feedback's purposes. For the sake of clarity, the structure of Section 5.2 will independently consider the cultural-discursive, material-economic, and social-political arrangements that affect the development of mutual understanding of feedback's purposes. In practice, they are interwoven and act together.

5.2.1 Cultural-Discursive Arrangements that Act to Enable or Constrain the Sayings Employed in Understanding the Purposes of Feedback

This section investigates the cultural-discursive arrangements that enable or constrain the development of mutual understandings of feedback's purposes, and are critical in shaping the way feedback is conceptualised and communicated. They can be observed through the culture of an institution and the language used. In relation to feedback, the arrangements work to enable or constrain the language or discourse used for describing, interpreting, and justifying feedback practices. Understanding and articulating feedback's purposes is a key theme that, in part, has been addressed by others. Carless and Winstone (2020) included it in the context of developing feedback literacy, Yang and Carless (2012) highlighted the need to induct students into the multiple purposes of feedback, and Winstone (2022) listed a common understanding of feedback's purpose as part of feedback culture. This research reported on the development of a feedback culture where feedback literacy is advanced, but it also identified challenges to developing a common understanding, including multiple sites of practice, differences among subject disciplines, and disparities between individuals' experiences. This research also demonstrated that cultural-discursive arrangements make possible feedback practices that are required in the development of a common understanding of the purposes of feedback. The following sections look more closely at the conceptions of feedback, the feedback process, developing a mutual understanding, feedback culture, engagement, and dialogue.

5.2.1.1 Different Conceptions of Feedback and Its Effect on Understanding Feedback's Purposes

Lecturers conceptualised feedback differently from students; there were also variations within each group. It was also found that students did not consistently consider how lecturers conceptualised and conveyed feedback. Similarly, lecturers failed to acknowledge or recognise that students may not always have the same conceptions of feedback. The different conceptions of feedback can partly be attributed to variances in the language lecturers use to talk about and explain feedback's purposes compared to that of students, and reluctance to engage in dialogues about the purposes and processes of feedback. The way students and lecturers think about feedback is shaped by cultural-discursive arrangements such as articulation of course aims, institutional policies, individual conceptions, and the communication of the feedback processes. In relation to the literature, Henderson, Ajjawi, et al. (2019, p. 252) explained that lecturers need to induct students into feedback dialogues by modelling ways of speaking, thinking, and doing. This research supports Henderson et al.'s findings by first confirming the importance of understanding how the cultural-discursive arrangements (speaking and thinking) and the material-economic arrangements (doing) can enable or constrain feedback (Section 5.2.2). It also extends the work of Henderson, Ajjawi, et al. (2019, p. 282), who listed an induction process as part of an institutional feedback culture, by finding that lecturers need to involve students in developing an induction to the feedback process, which outlines the purposes and process of feedback and practices used. It cannot be assumed that students will automatically understand the purpose of lecturers' practices, as feedback is dynamic, with changes in practice and variations in individual conceptions emerging over time. Students and lecturers perceive and experience feedback differently, which makes feedback a complex process that is contextually situated. Lecturers' and students' use of feedback (Section 5.3), the practices they adopt, and the relationship between the practices shape how the purposes of feedback are understood.

The thought processes and language used in conceptualising feedback are bound by the cultural-discursive arrangements of the specific context. Not only were conceptual differences reported amongst lecturers and students, but the variations in how feedback's purposes were articulated constrained the effectiveness of the feedback provided. Section 4.2 highlighted the differences in understanding the purposes of feedback among lecturers, among students, and between the two groups. This finding was consistent with recent research (Henderson, Ryan & Phillips 2019, p. 1249), which reported a need for more work to be done on aligning students' and lecturers' understanding of feedback's purposes. Similarly, Dawson et al. (2019) questioned whether learners know the purposes of feedback and their responsibilities within the feedback process (Section 5.2.2). The findings of the current study aligned with Dawson's findings in that a lack of clarity regarding the purposes of feedback affects its usefulness and relevance. This is particularly pertinent if the lack of clarity is between students and lecturers. This study highlighted the disconnection between students' and lecturers' understanding of feedback's purposes and raised the importance of developing a mutual understanding (Section 5.2.1.4) of these purposes. It supported Nicol's (2010) assertion that for students to actively engage with feedback, they need to understand its purposes of feedback.

The findings confirmed the role lecturers have in initiating the development of a mutual understanding of the purposes of feedback and embedding the purpose of feedback into the feedback process (Sections 5.2.1.2 and 5.4). The following section considers the feedback process and how it can be used to improve understanding of feedback's purposes.

5.2.1.2 Using the Feedback Process for a Better Understanding of Feedback's Purposes

This section focuses on feedback practices related to students' understanding of and engagement with the feedback process (rather than reviewing and acting on the feedback (doing), which will be considered in Section 5.2.2). Section 2.3 outlined how feedback has changed from a teaching-centred process to a learning-centred process. Feedback has shifted from being conceived as a product or information delivered to students (old paradigm), to being conceived as feedback processes (contemporary paradigm) (Carless 2015a; Winstone, Boud, et al. 2021), that involves lecturers and students engaging in dialogue regarding quality and performance, which in turn leads to learning (Boud & Molloy 2013b; Sadler 2010). Section 4.2.5 reported that some students and lecturers still appeared to conceptualise feedback as a product they provided to students, as shown by lecturers' frustration that the feedback provided was not acted on. Likewise, students described feedback in terms of information they received from lecturers. They also expressed dissatisfaction with its type, amount, quality, and timing. The implication was that feedback was an entity rather than an ongoing process in which feedback information is provided for students to act on through interactions with lecturers. The feedback practices and enabling cultural-discursive arrangements used by lecturers and students acted to reinforce the transmission orientation. In other words, the feedback process was not conducive to feedback. For example, a number of participants cited limited opportunities for students to discuss feedback and the timing of feedback resulting in students having minimal opportunity to seek clarification. Arrangements (such as language used) made students less comfortable engaging in a dialogue and developing their understanding.

The development of a mutual understanding of feedback has been presented in previous studies (Molloy et al. 2020), but the idea that the feedback process[26] can be intentionally used to develop a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes has not been described previously. For example, in examining the concept of feedback literacy, Carless and Boud (2018) discussed students' understanding of the role of

[26] Section 1.3 explains the feedback process

feedback but did not extend this discussion to using feedback to develop a mutual understanding. Similarly, Henderson, Ajjawi, et al. (2019) acknowledged that students need to better understand how feedback works and discussed the importance of the feedback process, but their focus was on the impact of feedback rather than on using the feedback process to develop a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes. There were similarities with Henderson's research, such as feedback not being articulated clearly to students, resulting in confusion about the purposes of feedback; students wanting the purposes of feedback explained to them earlier in their course of study; and teachers recognising that students do not always understand feedback (Henderson, Ajjawi, et al. 2019). However, the focus was on how students used the feedback rather than using the feedback process to develop and establish mutual understanding of the purposes of feedback. In a related study, Esterhazy (2019, p. 68) applied a sociocultural lens, focusing on feedback practices to unpack the relations and processes that take place in the feedback process. Similarly, this research adopted a practice-based approach to improve understanding of how students' and lecturers' feedback practices interrelate. A plethora of research has identified good practices of feedback (Section 2.3), but very little has investigated the feedback practices that enable the development of a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes. Without a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes, students may not understand or accept lecturers' practices aimed at engaging them with feedback.

Consistent with prior studies (for example Winstone, Nash, Parker, et al. 2017), clearly identifying the feedback process led to an improved understanding of feedback for both students and lecturers, resulting in better use of feedback for learning. However, Dawson et al. (2019, p. 26) were unsure whether all the people involved in feedback conceptualise it as a process and recognise the importance of developing a mutual understanding of its purposes. The current study's initial data analysis (from the first round of student interviews) corroborated Dawson's suggestion, but in the final cycles of co-analysis, somewhat surprisingly, both students and lecturers described feedback as a process and emphasised the importance of developing a mutual understanding (Sections 4.2.5 and 4.4.1). A plausible explanation is that lecturers and students developed how they conceptualised feedback as they progressed through the MBA and now recognised feedback as a process. This understanding may also be attributed to the involvement of lecturers and students in this research. As a result of their involvement, students commented that they thought more about the feedback process, purpose, discussed feedback with peers, and reflected on what feedback they wanted. Likewise, lecturers reflected on how they understood feedback and how they interacted with students in the feedback process.

The findings highlighted the lack formal induction into feedback, with students instead relying on discourses with individual lecturers and peers, and on institutional artefacts such as subject outlines, lecturer notes, and, more generally, university-wide policies. Extending Dawson et al.'s (2019) work, this research found that the feedback process needed to be intentionally embedded in the curriculum (Sections 5.2.1.3 and 5.4.2), with the purposes of feedback and the responsibilities for feedback clearly expressed (Section 4.3). Although the lecturers were amenable to doing this, they raised concerns about how the feedback processes could be embedded into the curriculum, particularly as there were distinct differences between subjects. The findings suggest that this would involve communicating to students the expectations of the feedback process and involving them in a dialogue regarding not only feedback but also the feedback processes. The importance of dialogue creation supported the findings of Ajjawi and Boud (2018), but also raised the need to develop a mutual understanding of feedback as part of the feedback process. This will be discussed further in Section 5.4.

Both lecturers and students conveyed a need for flexibility in the implementation of the feedback process to cater for different subjects and teaching styles. This is congruous with Henderson, Ryan, Boud, et al. (2019), who concluded that feedback practices may need to be different for each cohort. It is also in agreement with Henderson, Phillips, et al. (2019), who argue that there is a contextual basis to feedback that needs to be understood and allowed for. Similar to Henderson, Phillips, et al. (2019), the current study's findings suggest that simply replicating feedback practices does not guarantee that the feedback will be effective; in some instances, feedback practices need to be situated and specific to the context. Whilst understanding the feedback process is discussed as part of students' feedback literacy (Carless & Boud 2018; Malecka et al. 2020; Molloy et al. 2020), it relies on lecturers outlining the process of feedback and the purposes of feedback, rather than using the feedback process to develop a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes. Whilst it may be necessary to have variations in feedback practices to suit the context, in the MBA program, if the feedback process is to be used for establishing a mutual understanding of the purposes of feedback, the language and dialogue that lecturers use needs to deliver a consistent message to students. In this instance, cultural-discursive arrangements and dependent practices are working to constrain the establishment and articulation of a common purposes of feedback, and need to be reviewed. This will be discussed in Chapter 6. The following section investigates this in greater detail, in particular exploring how the feedback process was articulated to students.

5.2.1.3 Using the Feedback Process to Develop the Purposes of Feedback

As discussed previously, the conceptualisation, development, and articulation of feedback's purposes should be embedded in the feedback process. However, it is also important to understand that the feedback practices of lecturers and students can affect the feedback process. Lecturers' understanding of feedback's purposes were diverse (Section 4.2); consequently, a large range of practices were employed. For example, monologic feedback practices (Nicol 2010) were still reported despite a significant amount of literature supporting the development of feedback dialogues (Ajjawi & Boud 2018; Reddy et al. 2020). The findings revealed that practices that conveyed feedback as a finite exchange rather than an ongoing dialogic process were not conducive to the development of a common understanding of the purposes of feedback. Additionally, some lecturers stated that it was the institution's responsibility to educate students and staff on the purposes of feedback, and hence they did not implement practices aimed at developing a mutual understanding. These examples highlight how cultural-discursive arrangements can constrain the purposes of feedback. If lecturers' feedback practices do not convey the purposes of feedback, or at least open a discussion on the purposes of feedback, students will find it difficult to align their understanding of feedback's purposes with lecturers' understandings. This lack of alignment between lecturers' and students' understandings of feedback's purposes mirrored earlier research that found differences between lecturers' and students' understanding of feedback's purposes (Dawson et al. 2019).

When the purposes of feedback are embedded within the curriculum, the feedback process can be used to develop a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes. This also offers a way of improving the alignment of feedback's purposes between lecturers and students and creating a culture of feedback. This extends current research that advocates for the development of a culture of feedback where students are proactive recipients (Winstone & Boud 2019b). An example from the findings provides a useful illustration. Over half the students interviewed reported that their understanding of feedback's purposes had developed through their involvement in the research interviews and focus groups of the current study (Section 4.2.5). Initially this finding was somewhat unexpected, but on reflection, this development in student understanding was consistent with the use of collaborative inquiry (Section 3.3.1). It also supports the involvement of students and lecturers in co-constructing the feedback process, and, hence, the development of a common understanding of feedback's purposes.

Students also mentioned that they had advanced their understanding of feedback's purposes through informal peer study groups, and that these peer study groups provided a way of interpreting feedback and task requirements. These examples illustrate how the cultural-discursive arrangement enabled a space (peer study groups) where the discourse and language used made possible the development of feedback's purposes, as well as the development of understanding of feedback's purposes between lecturers and students as part of the feedback process. It is important to note that although the peer study groups were informal and arranged by students, they were made possible as students engaged in discussions through classroom interactions. It is also consistent with the concept of lecturer and student feedback literacies (Boud & Dawson 2021; Carless & Winstone 2020; de Kleijn 2021). The development of students' and lecturers' feedback literacies and the interaction between them requires some level of mutual understanding.

5.2.1.4 Developing a Mutual Understanding of the Purposes of Feedback

A central theme of this research is the importance of a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes and how it can be developed. This mutual understanding occurs between the actors involved in the feedback process and involves a complex web of associated practices that create the conditions of possibility or impossibility for developing a mutual understanding of the purposes of feedback. However, this understanding takes time to develop, and may be influenced by contextual and individual factors. As discussed above (Section 5.2.1.1), institutions and lecturers have the responsibility to establish a process for feedback and to communicate this to students. The emphasis has moved from lecturers simply offering feedback to students, to lecturers and students participating in a mutual dialogue about goals for improvement, and taking action to respond to and act upon the shared information (Carless & Boud 2018; Dawson et al. 2019; Winstone, Pitt, et al. 2021). The findings of the current study support earlier research, with students expressing the desire to have more in-depth discussions about feedback and to be situated as active participants in, rather than simply consumers of, feedback. An implication of students' desire for more in-depth dialogue is the establishment of a feedback process that places lecturers and students in a partnership, with mutually agreed-on purposes, and an understanding of the roles that both play. Whilst the lecturer is responsible for initiating the process for developing a common understanding of feedback's purposes, the process of establishing and conveying this information needs to be done in consultation with students. One student used the phrase "reciprocal learning" to explain that lecturers need to create an environment where a mutual understanding of feedback is established. This environment will be discussed further in Sections 5.2.2 and 5.2.3. A mutual understanding of feedback's purposes aligns with elements of the feedback-literacy models outlined in Section 2.4, but proposes a way of involving students and lecturers in the co-construction of this process. This proposal addresses the recommendation of Carless and Winstone (2020) that further research into the development of lecturer and student feedback literacy in tandem is needed. A better understanding of the cultural-discursive arrangements that would enable this will be discussed in Chapter 6.

Students felt that with some lecturers the feedback provided was “incidental”. From the student perspective, this reflected either the lecturers’ misunderstanding or undervaluing the importance of feedback, a lack of interest in offering feedback, or students’ misunderstanding or misinterpreting the lecturers’ feedback practices. A few lecturers reported that they did not make feedback a priority, as their prior experiences were that the majority of students did not act on or even review feedback. This is an example of the three arrangements of TPA acting to inhibit the feedback practices of the lecturer. Students not listening and acting on feedback results in lecturers providing less feedback, or at least not prioritising feedback. However, students may not have understood the feedback or may have felt uncomfortable seeking clarification, and so did not act on or respond to the feedback. It is also possible that neither student nor lecturer had a clear understanding of the purposes of feedback, or their understanding were misaligned, which was reported in Chapter 4 and supports the findings of Li and De Luca (2014), who found differences between students’ and lecturers’ understanding of feedback. This example illustrates the complexity of feedback and the web of relations that surround the practices and the site of the practice. This will be explored further in Section 5.4. The next section considers how a better understanding of feedback’s purposes can mitigate institutional barriers and develop a culture of feedback.

5.2.1.5 A Culture of Feedback – Language and Institutional Barriers

Feedback is provided in the semantic space in the medium of language. Feedback can take the form of written comments, verbal recordings, dialogues on feedback provided, dialogues in class with lecturers and peers, and generic feedback provided to all students. It is also an institutional requirement with guidelines on timing, format, and quantity. Feedback on performance (both summative and formative) is a critical purpose of feedback, but one which has received much criticism (Section 2.2). Considerable research has focused on good practices of feedback (Boud & Molloy 2013b), student engagement (Henderson, Ajjawi, et al. 2019), and recognising that feedback is contextually situated (Henderson, Phillips, et al. 2019). It is accepted that feedback needs to be integrated into the learning process from the outset (Winstone & Carless 2020), but in practice this is not reported as happening consistently.

Issues such as the timing and quantity of feedback, engagement with feedback, contextual considerations, and feedback design were all reported in this research (Section 4.3). The findings indicated that in some instances, lecturers' prior experiences of feedback as a transmission of information inadvertently influence current practices. This was consistent with Nash and Winstone (2017), who found that prior experiences with feedback and institutional practices influences the approach taken. More recently, Winstone (2022) analysed institutional documents to explore the influence of feedback cultures on practice, noting that institutional policy does influence feedback principles and culture. This aligns with the findings of the focus-group discussions in the current study (Sections 4.2 and 4.4.4), which showed that institutional policy should embed feedback into the curriculum to develop a culture of feedback.

As feedback is an essential part of university education, feedback practices have become an integral part of institutional policy. The conceptualisation and understanding of feedback have significantly developed. The inclusion in institutional policies of guidelines and regulations regarding feedback aims to provide a unified approach for lecturers and consistency for students. However, some lecturers in this study outlined what can be described as a disconnection between policy and practice, such as when two lecturers recognised the importance of feedback but had different understandings of its purposes and their responsibilities in the feedback process. Simply embedding feedback requirements into institutional policies does not guarantee a satisfactory feedback process. The complexity of feedback combined with a broad array of contextual and discipline-based variances makes detailed institution-wide policies challenging to apply. If lecturers do not accept or understand the purposes of feedback, they are unlikely to recognise their responsibilities within the feedback process. As revealed above, an alternative that came out of the findings was to develop a culture of feedback. Students determined that the institution has a responsibility to develop a learning-centred and practice-based feedback culture. This supports the value and importance of feedback, and allows what constitutes feedback practices to be tailored to the specific context from the institution as a whole to the level of the individual subjects. This learning-centred, feedback-based culture places lecturers and students in a feedback partnership with distinctive and complementary roles. This finding closely aligns with Winstone, Pitt, et al. (2021), who discussed a culture of responsibility-sharing between students and lecturers, and Winstone and Carless (2020), who discussed the cultivation of student and lecturer feedback literacies. At a more practical level, Nash and Winstone (2017, pp. 1-2) also advocated for a culture of shared responsibility for feedback between students and lecturers, and Winstone and Boud (2019b, p. 12) argued for “the development of a ‘feedback culture’ where seeking evidence of the impact of feedback is the norm”. A feedback culture involves the cultivation of student and lecturer partnerships where reciprocal responsibilities for feedback are established, and students accept invitations to engage in feedback processes.

To establish a culture of feedback entails a mutual understanding of feedback’s purposes, acceptance of the lecturers’ and students’ responsibilities for feedback, recognition of the distinct roles that students and lecturers have in the feedback process, and communicating this to students. This aligns with the broader conceptualisation of feedback literacies (Section 2.4), but emphasises the importance of developing student and lecturer feedback literacies in conjunction with each other. For example, if feedback was conceived as an ongoing process, it could be used to guide a student’s approach to an assessment task. However, this relies on the lecturer accepting that offering formative guidance on assessment tasks and engaging with students in a feedback dialogue is a purpose of feedback. It also assumes that the cultural-discursive, material-economic, and social-political arrangements enable a discussion. Participants noted that how feedback was provided on performance was equally as important as the actual feedback provided (Section 5.3). The arrangements of practices were critical in enabling or constraining feedback, students’ engagement, and lecturers’ willingness to establish a feedback culture. The language used and the way it was delivered was also important, as students were quick to highlight affective factors that inhibited feedback. These will be discussed further in Section 5.4. A feedback culture that prioritises student engagement and dialogue is a key component of the purposes of feedback, particularly as it is critical for the development of students’ evaluative judgement, as discussed in the next section.

5.2.1.6 Developing Students' Evaluative Judgement Through Engagement and Dialogue

Lecturers reported that students need to develop independence and build skills to become self-directed learners rather than continually rely on lecturers. This only became a reality when students were engaged in the feedback process and accepted the invitation to participate in feedback dialogues (Section 4.4.3). The engagement and dialogue creation were initially lecturer-directed, but the aim was to develop students' and lecturers' feedback literacy to the point where the feedback process was ongoing and integral rather than a forced process. Lecturers felt that the practice of intentionally scaffolding skills throughout a course would build students' feedback literacy and align students' and lecturers' understandings of feedback's purposes. Carless and Winstone (2020, p. 11) suggested that further research into the "nature and direction on interplay between teacher and student literacy" would be beneficial. The findings suggested intentionally scaffolding skills to develop feedback throughout a course; in particular, practices that develop feedback dialogues. In line with Carless and Winstone's suggestion for further research, the findings highlighted the need to ensure that lecturers are aware of their responsibility to invite students to participate in feedback dialogues. Feedback dialogues offer a way of increasing the "interplay" needed to develop students' and lecturers' feedback literacy.

The purpose of feedback for evaluative judgement leading to lifelong learning did not come out strongly in this research. Only two students made mention of using feedback to develop their evaluative judgement, but they also mentioned that the development of their evaluative judgement was not highlighted by lecturers. This may explain why the students did not raise it, and why those who did were not highly motivated to focus on developing their evaluative judgement. Other students alluded to this use of feedback for improving their ability to gauge the quality of work and for lifelong learning (Sections 4.2.5 and 4.4). Recent literature (Boud et al. 2018; Tai et al. 2018) suggests that evaluative judgement is a crucial skill for both current and future applications, and that lecturers need to develop this in students. Falchikov and Boud (2007) recognise that developing evaluative judgement is a fundamental competency required for the workplace and for fostering lifelong learning (Nguyen &

Walker 2016). However, both students and lecturers mentioned student engagement and feedback dialogues as key issues. In this instance the language used – “evaluative judgement” and “lifelong learning” – were not familiar to most students and some lecturers. However, students’ propensity to engage in a feedback dialogue was influenced more by affective issues and how the dialogue was created. These issues will be discussed in detail in Sections 5.2.2 and 5.2.3.

In summary, the cultural-discursive arrangements worked to either enable or constrain the development of a mutual understanding of feedback’s purposes. These arrangements make possible the sayings, doings, and relatings and create the environment to either enable or constrain feedback practices. This section has considered the practices of lecturers and students in developing a mutual understanding of the purposes of feedback. It has highlighted the importance of understanding how the feedback process can be used to establish a mutual understanding of feedback’s purposes as well as for feedback for learning. Kemmis’s practice architecture provides a framework whereby the practices of lecturers and students and the cultural-discursive arrangements can be examined without focusing on the individuals. The next section will consider the material-economic arrangements and how they enable or constrain students’ and lecturers’ understanding of feedback’s purpose and the doings of the practice of feedback.

5.2.2 Material-Economic Arrangements that Act to Enable or Constrain the Doings Employed in Understanding the Purposes of Feedback

Material-economic arrangements enable or constrain the doings of a practice. These arrangements include physical settings such as spaces, teaching environments, and consultation rooms. The doings of practice are the medium through which feedback is provided, including written and oral feedback, the use of learning management systems[27] (LMS), and participation in peer study groups. Other material-economic arrangements that work to enable or constrain practice and how the practices are understood include, for example, variations in the practices of lecturers and students, amongst lecturers, and amongst students; equipping students to act on feedback;

[27] UOW uses Moodle.

the physical environment; the medium through which feedback is provided; and temporal aspects such as class schedules[28], time provided for feedback dialogues, and access to lecturers' consultation times. Each of these arrangements enable or constrain the actions (doings) of students and lecturers, as discussed below.

5.2.2.1 Understanding the Variations in Students' and Lecturers' Feedback Practices to Develop a Mutual Understanding

Section 4.4.2 reported a number of variations in feedback practices used by students and lecturers. Variations were found amongst students, amongst lecturers, and between students and lecturers. The variations in the doings of feedback are of particular interest, as they influenced students' and lecturers' understanding of feedback's purposes and the propensity for students to seek feedback. The variations in feedback practices can be broadly categorised into two areas: the giving of feedback (for example timing, mode, quantity) and the actual feedback process itself. Interestingly, there were discrepancies between what was articulated and what was done. Students expressed confusion in understanding the purposes of feedback, specifically what some lecturers were trying to achieve, and difficulty in engaging with the feedback process. The findings suggest that even if the variation is unintentional, from the students' perspective it can result in their not engaging in the feedback process or in reducing the likelihood that they will seek feedback. This is an important point, which is consistent with Winstone and Carless (2020), who outline the significance of students' engagement in the feedback process, with the goal to develop students as learning-centred seekers of feedback. The findings supported the notion of developing students to become the drivers of feedback but emphasised the role that lecturers play in developing students' engagement with feedback, and students' responsibility for feedback.

Prior research (Adcroft 2010, 2011; Mulliner & Tucker 2017; Winstone & Carless 2020) found that students and lecturers can have different conceptions of feedback's purposes, resulting in variations in practice. The current research also found variations in practice. The variations often highlighted areas where the practices of

[28] UOW uses a trimester model for the MBA course.

lecturers and students appeared to misalign, particularly in what was required to be done from both the student and lecturer perspectives. It is suggested that by considering the material-economic arrangements that affect the doings of feedback practices, the variations can be reduced, and hence students' and lecturers' understanding of feedback's purposes, can be more closely aligned. This will be discussed further in Section 6.1. A closer alignment of lecturers' and students' feedback practices may be helpful in encouraging students to engage and act on feedback. The next section looks at how students act on feedback and how the feedback process can be designed and developed to equip students for action.

5.2.2.2 Equipping Students to Act on Feedback

Prior research (Poulos & Mahony 2008; Winstone, Nash, Rowntree, et al. 2017) reported the frustration of lecturers when students had not acted on feedback or even viewed feedback, with lecturers seeing this as a waste of their time. In these instances, feedback was presented to students as information they should act on. However, by arranging the provision of feedback as a product to use presented barriers to action; for example, students not understanding what was meant or how to use the feedback, and students not knowing how to seek clarification or not feeling comfortable doing so. In contrast, students who conceptualised feedback as process were more inclined to seek help engaging in the feedback process and with the feedback information. These students reported having had the purposes of feedback explained to them by lecturers and explained that they had been encouraged to take action and, in some instances, had been provided with a step-by-step process for acting on feedback. Lecturers who recognised the importance of feedback for learning adopted practices that made feedback more accessible for students. Consistent with the findings of Price et al. (2010), some lecturers employed strategies to determine how well the feedback process had led to changes in understanding and performance. One lecturer revealed that she kept a record of feedback comments to see if students had responded to her feedback. However, she rarely challenged students' non-action, citing time constraints with a compressed trimester model. In this instance, the material-economic arrangement of the MBA program limited her feedback practice and the opportunity to work with students in developing their understanding of feedback's purposes. However, very few lecturers described practices that helped determine if students had acted on feedback. For those lecturers who did adopt practices to determine if students had acted on feedback, there was very little consistency between the practices used. This lack of consistency caused confusion for some students, as they had not experienced these practices before and did not understand their purpose. In the feedback-literacy literature, students acting on feedback is a key tenet (Sutton 2012; Winstone & Carless 2020; Winstone et al. 2019); however, getting students to act consistently on feedback is a challenge. The findings demonstrated that students often did not know what to do with feedback or how to act on the feedback provided. Practices that encourage students to actively engage with lecturers in co-constructing the feedback process result in a closer alignment of lecturers' and students' understanding of feedback's purposes.

If lecturers expect students to act on the feedback provided, they must ensure that the material-economic arrangements enable the development of a mutual understanding of this purpose of feedback. It may be beneficial to provide students with the opportunity to develop their feedback-literacy skills in specific education sessions, or even embed these skills in the curriculum (Section 5.4). From the lecturers' perspective, if feedback is used to justify the grade or seen as simply informing students about their performance, students may not fully engage with it if they deem their performance satisfactory. In contrast, most lecturers accepted that feedback could be useful for future tasks and application in a real-world context, but did not specifically address the need to equip students to act on feedback. These findings support those of Winstone and Carless (2020, p. 39) in highlighting the need to understand and improve lecturers' feedback literacy and develop a common alignment of feedback's purposes. How students act on feedback will be considered more closely in Section 5.4.

5.2.2.3 The Physical Environment

As discussed in the introduction to Section 5.2.2, the physical space where the classes were delivered influenced the actions of both students and lecturers and the feedback practices associated with in-class formative feedback. Kemmis, Bristol, et al. (2014, p. 32) use the example of a traditional classroom with tables in rows facing the centred whiteboard and lecturer. This arrangement is indicative of a one-way transmission of information, as it allows greater control of the class but limits opportunity for engagement, discussion, and feedback dialogues. Gibbs (2014) and Ajjawi and Boud (2018) both found that if feedback is to be effective, the opportunity for a dialogue between student and lecturer is necessary. The findings of the current study agreed with Gibbs (2014) and Ajjawi and Boud (2018), but also found that this dialogue can be used to establish a mutual understanding of the purposes of feedback. However, the physical space and teaching environment can either hinder or enable dialogue creation. For example, the lecturers identified the default set-up for teaching spaces as forward-facing with the lecturer central to the class. Some adopted the practice of getting students to rearrange the room into small-group tables more conducive to discussion; others did not.

These arrangements influenced what students and lecturers felt comfortable doing, with students more likely to engage in a feedback dialogue when the physical environment was conducive to discussion. Traditional classroom layouts are not as conducive for dialogue-creating practices, and lecturers tended to consider that it was not worth the effort of rearranging the furniture. The visual display resources were designed for a traditional format. On occasions, lecturers did change the physical arrangement, particularly if they wanted students to work in groups or engage with the cohort, recognising that the physical arrangement of the classroom acted to enable or constrain students' involvement. In relation to developing a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes, the arrangements of the physical environment can inadvertently send mixed messages to students regarding the purposes of feedback.

The arrangements that make up the teaching environment may also affect whether a mutual understanding of feedback's purpose is developed. This was illustrated by students describing lecturers who embraced the theatre of the traditional lecturer-centric classroom and appeared to like the control and attention of the cohort. Students commented (Section 4.4.2.1) that these lecturers liked the position of power that this provided; however, it was not always conducive to making students comfortable engaging in a feedback dialogue, and it raised issues of power (Section 5.3.3). Others preferred to take more of a facilitating role and encouraged a student-centric focus, which supports the notion of using feedback to develop students' understanding of feedback's purposes and the responsibility they have in driving feedback. These findings parallel those of Carless et al. (2017, p. 139), who, in the context of student and lecturer feedback literacy, found that the responsibility for feedback should be shifted to the student, as it provides them with greater agency in the feedback process. This is also consistent with Henderson, Phillips, et al.'s (2019) findings regarding aspects of student and lecturer feedback literacy. This will be considered in greater detail in Section 5.4.8.

Closely linked to the physical environment where the feedback process is conducted are the other mediums through which lecturers and students engage in the feedback process. The next section considers how feedback information is provided to students within the feedback process.

5.2.2.4 The Medium Through Which Feedback Information Is Provided

The medium through which feedback information is provided is also an important consideration in developing a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes. The use of learning management systems (LMSes), the practices associated with electronic submission, and the provision of feedback have raised impediments to students' engagement with and use of feedback. The material-economic arrangements that enable the use of LMSes work to promote a transmission model of feedback rather than supporting feedback as a process. LMSes also tend to be used initially for summative purposes, with little opportunity to seek clarification or further guidance on the grade provided or the quality of the submission unless students initiate a one-on-one consultation. The recording of verbal comments is also possible and provides a potentially faster mode of providing detailed feedback information on submitted, work but does not provide students the opportunity to seek immediate clarification. Providing feedback information is part of the feedback process, but how the information is presented and used is important.

Students in this study suggested that lecturers could provide formative feedback on drafts of assessment tasks, or at least ongoing guidance on the quality of work expected. However, lecturers stated that time constraints and issues of equity made the provision of feedback on drafts unlikely. In these instances, one of the key purposes of feedback is not being fulfilled. If, instead, one of the purposes of feedback was to establish an ongoing dialogue on expectations, subject content, and quality expected, it would also fulfil students' desire for formative feedback and engage students in the development of the feedback process and a better understanding of feedback's purposes. This is in line with an extensive review of current feedback practices; for example Yan and Yang (2021) and Gravett et al. (2020) investigated the practices associated with developing lecturers' feedback literacy and the parallels with that of students. The current research adds to the body of work that addresses how the relationship between the feedback practices of lecturers and students can be better understood and used to develop a common understanding of feedback's purposes. The provision of formative feedback requires an understanding of how the material-economic arrangements can enable or inhibit this part of the feedback process. This point will be discussed in Section 5.3.2.

A growing number of studies address electronic submission and feedback, with organisations like Turnitin looking to supply not only the software for submission but automated grading tools and feedback. Turnitin was established as a tool to check for plagiarism, but now offers physical submission software, a summative grading application, and feedback tools. Students reported that they were unclear on how to access the feedback through the online platform, and others found the feedback tools harder to interpret than feedback through more-traditional means. Some lecturers admitted that they were still learning how to use the online tools for grading and feedback, but the automation made some aspects easier. What is clear from the findings is that the arrangements of these processes affects students' likelihood of reading and using feedback and how well lecturers can make use of these tools. The medium through which feedback is provided needs to be supported by the material-economic arrangements to enable the best use of this relatively new technology.

Finally, a group of students explained how they formed a self-directed study group, with one student crediting the group as central to her completing the MBA. Within this group they were able help each other to decipher what was required in assessment tasks, and to clarify content and how to approach lecturers. One student admitted that she intentionally adopted the practice of setting up a study group with whom she described as high-achieving students. Although the study group was informal, it illustrates how the material-economic arrangement of students meeting in a physical space for a lecture enabled them to meet and form a self-directed study group. Moreover, the prior experience with unsatisfactory feedback practices was the catalysis to form the group. This finding is in line with recent research into the importance of peer feedback in developing students' evaluative judgement (Er et al. 2021; Reddy et al. 2020). It also supports the findings of Zhu and Carless (2018) in highlighting the value of dialogue in peer feedback. There were, however, distinct points of difference. First, the peer study group was based on oral discussions rather than written. Second, it was established and facilitated by the students with no lecturer involvement. Third, it went beyond discussions of course content to consider assessment requirements and affective strategies for approaching lecturers. Finally, although this group was formed by students for support, it resulted in an ongoing peer feedback process that the group members described as critical in them getting through the course. One of the reasons for establishing the group was that the students were time-poor, and sharing their knowledge and the results of their interactions with lecturers was more efficient. Temporal aspects are a key consideration in the doings of the feedback process, as discussed in the next section.

5.2.2.5 Temporal Aspects

Temporal aspects are another example of material-economic arrangements that enable or constrain the implementation of feedback practices, affecting how feedback is conducted and the likelihood of students engaging with feedback. They are made up of a complicated web of practices enabled or constrained by material-economic arrangements. Time constraints of lecturers and students, the timing of classes, the scheduling of courses, consultation times, and the turnaround time for submitted tasks are all temporal issues raised in this research and discussed by others (Edwards-Groves 2018; O'Donovan et al. 2019). For example, the timing of feedback was reported by both lecturers and students. Students wanted faster response times and access to feedback when they needed it. Practices whereby students can access feedback as close as possible to submitting their tasks were advocated by two lecturers, with one lecturer working his schedule around fast return of feedback. Lecturers mentioned time pressures, larger cohorts, compressed assessment schedules, and content-heavy curricula as reasons for having less time to provide feedback on tasks and to develop students' feedback literacy. The embedding of feedback into the curriculum, as discussed by Student 28, would result in a time allocation for feedback but could affect the quality of feedback, as it would become a matter of compliance (Malecka et al. 2020). The scheduling of assessment tasks and making time for formative assessment has been extensively examined (Boud & Molloy 2013b; Henderson, Molloy, et al. 2019; O'Donovan 2019). The current study supports these earlier studies, reporting that students need time to read, reflect and clarify their thinking before they can act on feedback. It also highlights the need to allow time for students to work through emotions surrounding feedback and let the meaning develop. The co-construction of the feedback process would allow for the consideration of temporal aspects and to some extent alleviate a strictly compliance orientated approach.

Another example is the ability of students to access lecturers' consultation times. This issue was raised by more than half the students, with most citing difficulties in making the scheduled time. A plethora of literature examines good practice of feedback, particularly regarding accessing lecturers and the return of feedback (for example, Merry et al. 2013; Boud & Molloy 2013b). The current research reaffirmed the existence of tensions associated with the timing of feedback, but also offered a way of better understanding the arrangements that affect the feedback process. A final example from the findings is the use of a trimester model in the MBA course. The MBA course being taught over three trimesters allowed for a greater number of subjects to be scheduled throughout the year, but resulted in less time between subjects. Students found that they had less time between task submission dates and difficulties in acting on earlier feedback in subsequent tasks; the trimester system also allowed lecturers less time to grade and provide feedback and less time to use the feedback process to develop a mutual understanding of feedback's purpose.

This was particularly pertinent when the course was delivered in an intensive mode[29] or after work hours (Section 5.2.2.4). In the intensive delivery mode these arrangements provided greater time for feedback dialogues to occur but fewer opportunities for students and lecturers to develop connections (Section 5.4), as in general the intensive delivery mode only scheduled three face-to-face classes. This supports the argument for embedding feedback into the curriculum, which will be discussed in Chapter 6.

The findings demonstrate that using TPA to analyse the temporal aspects of feedback can illuminate arrangements that will either enable or constrain feedback. On a more general note, there is very limited literature that uses TPA to investigate the feedback practices of lecturers and students. Research that uses TPA for research into higher-education practices includes Hemmings et al. (2013), Kemmis and Mahon (2017), and Tai et al. (2021). This will be discussed further in Sections 5.4 and 5.5.

The physical environments through which students and lecturers interacted was important in developing the social-political arrangements in which students and lecturers related. For example, the scheduling of consultations sometimes constrained students' ability to seek feedback due to their other commitments; environments where students and lecturers could meet informally during breaks were often unavailable; and written feedback was sought, for instance, through email. It also includes affective issues such as comfort, power distance, and openness to engage in discourses. These will be discussed in the next section.

5.2.3 Social-Political Arrangements that Enable or Constrain the Relatings Associated with Understanding the Purposes of Feedback

Social-political arrangements, or how the lecturers and students relate to each other in a practice, include affective factors such as power dynamics, trust, and the relational dimension (Section 1.4.3). Lecturers and students encounter one another

[29] The face-to-face component of intensive delivery of MBA subjects consisted of two lots of two-day weekends and another single day.

as social beings in social space in the medium of unity and power (Kemmis 2022, p. 76). In the context of this research, most of the students had experience working in a management role in a range of industries, and the social-political arrangements should reflect this adult education context. The social-political arrangements can enable or constrain the development of a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes. The following section discusses the purposes of feedback whilst considering the effect of social-political arrangements such as power and relationships.

5.2.3.1 Exploring How Affect, Power, and Relations Influence the Development of a Mutual Understanding of Feedback's Purposes

Section 5.2 discussed the conception that the feedback process can be used to develop a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes in the context of cultural-discursive arrangements. This section explores how social-political arrangements, such as power, trust, and relations, can enable or constrain the use of feedback practices in developing a mutual understanding of feedback. Section 4.4.1 described students' perceptions of affective factors that affected feedback. If the purposes of feedback are conceived as ongoing and co-constructed, the relationship between students and lecturers is a critical factor. Students appreciated that feedback could be delivered in a way that made them feel more comfortable engaging with the feedback provided. In these instances, students appeared to conceive feedback as a product given to them rather than recognising feedback as an ongoing process. This conception limited students' understanding of the purposes of feedback and their willingness to engage in the feedback process. Students felt more comfortable approaching lecturers and developing a mutual understanding of feedback's purpose when an environment of trust between lecturers and students was established. This required lecturers to adopt practices that made students feel comfortable engaging in a dialogue about the purposes of feedback.

Power imbalances, students' concerns over their lack of knowledge and, the perception that the lecturer was reticent to engage in a dialogue on feedback were all barriers to students' engaging with lecturers (Section 4.4.2). These are examples of how the arrangements of practices can constrain the likelihood of students engaging in a dialogue to develop a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes. In these examples, practices and supporting arrangements that enabled a trusting relationship to be established were necessary. This is in agreement with Poulos and Mahony (2008), who discussed the importance of establishing a relationship of trust between students and lecturers. Their study focused only on students and did not consider the lecturer perspective.

Power and students' perceptions of power were crucial issues raised by both students and lecturers. The power imbalances between teachers and students hindered student agency, as they impeded effective feedback exchanges. Students were less likely to approach a lecturer or engage in classroom discussion if the lecturer was seen to have high power distance. The power imbalances between teachers and students can impede effective feedback exchanges, illustrating the constraining effect of social-political arrangements. This finding was consistent with those of Yang and Carless (2012), who acknowledge that even perceived power imbalances can result in issues such as lack of trust. Further, lecturers and most students were able to outline practices that can help to reduce the effect of this power dynamic and make it more likely that students will seek and engage in feedback. However, students felt that certain lecturers used their position of power as a means of control, which was not conducive to establishing a mutual understanding of feedback. One suggestion made by both students and lecturers was for lecturers to adopt practices that allow for dialogic interactions early in the course to reduce power-distance perceptions. This is similar to findings by Yang and Carless (2012), who proposed intentional dialogue creation early in the course. It also supports the use of portfolio tools (Winstone et al. 2019), which are the arrangements that are aimed at facilitating dialogue creation. In this context the arrangements of the practice act to enable or constrain dialogue creation.

Both lecturers (Section 4.3.3) and students (Sections 4.4.1 and 4.4.2) stated that feedback interactions were more likely if practices that reduce the effect of power imbalances were adopted. This is particularly important if students are to take more responsibility for feedback as they progress through their course of study (as suggested in Section 5.3). An outline of the feedback process and clarification of what is expected of students resulted in increased student engagement, feedback dialogue, and development of students' feedback literacies. For example, this was evidenced by students reporting feeling more comfortable approaching lecturers (Sections 4.4.3.3), developing an understanding of the importance of feedback-seeking (Section 4.4.2.1), and recognising their responsibility for feedback (Section 4.3.1). Formative activities where students could interact without fear of their lack of knowledge being exposed were also helpful. The University of Wollongong requires formative feedback to be provided early in a subject, but how this is to be done is not mandated, nor is the need to explain the purpose of formative feedback to students. In some instances, formative feedback tasks were set up without an explanation of their purpose. Most of the students interviewed were not immediately familiar with formative assessment tasks or their relationship with feedback. Part of this can be explained by the terminology used, which was new to students, but it also raises the question as to how the feedback process and the purposes of feedback were explained to students and whether students understood and engaged in this process. In this example, both the cultural-discursive arrangements (communication and meaning) and the social-political arrangements (relationship and power) were working to constrain the development of a mutual understanding of feedback's purpose. The next section considers the practices and arrangements that work to enable the development of reciprocal responsibilities for feedback.

5.3 The Responsibility for Feedback – Understanding and Communicating the Reciprocal Responsibilities

Students' and lecturers' understandings of their responsibilities for feedback were a crucial factor in its effectiveness. Differences in how students and lecturers recognised their responsibility for feedback were reported in Section 4.3. Greater variations in conceptualisations were noted between students than between lecturers. As discussed in Section 5.2.1.1, feedback has traditionally been understood through a cognitivist model of one-way transmission of knowledge, with lecturers primarily responsible for providing feedback, and students viewed as passive recipients (Malecka et al. 2020). Feedback is increasingly understood from a socio-constructivist perspective (Ajjawi & Boud 2017), where dialogic interactions intentionally seek to develop students' evaluative judgement to equip them with skills for lifelong learning (Ajjawi & Boud 2018). The variations in practice that specifically addressed responsibility for feedback found in this study (Section 4.3) have not been widely reported in the literature, but have come to prominence more recently in the context of feedback literacy, which Winstone, Nash, Rowntree, et al. (2017, p. 7) called "proactive recipience" (Section 2.4). Proactive recipience focuses on getting students to engage actively with feedback processes and share the responsibility for making the feedback process effective. The current findings support the findings of Winstone, Nash, Rowntree, et al. (2017), but also highlight the arrangements that enabled the development of students' proactive recipience.

Some lecturers adopted practices that were in line with a socio-constructive perspective of feedback (Evans 2013), whereby knowledge is constructed through interaction with others. This perspective recognises that a central aim of feedback is the development of students' evaluative and self-regulatory abilities (Ajjawi & Boud 2017). However, students in the current research reported a lack of familiarity with this idea, particularly if they were new to academic study or returning to it after an extended absence. This illustrates that lecturers have a responsibility to develop students' understanding of feedback. If a common understanding was not developed, lecturers effectively defaulted back to the one-way transmission model, which unintentionally relieved students of the responsibility to seek and use feedback and created a disconnection between lecturer and student in the feedback process. This is consistent with the findings of Nash and Winstone (2017) that students in higher education had received very little guidance on how to use feedback, and that without this dialogue, barriers to effective feedback will remain.

In the context of this research, variations in students' understanding of their responsibility for feedback may be in part attributed to the context of the MBA course and the make-up of the cohort. It was common that MBA students enrolled in a postgraduate degree after an extended absence from study or were international students who had not studied in a western university context. A number of these students were unaware of their responsibility for feedback and defaulted to past experiences. Students reported taking at least one trimester to adjust to the requirements of academic study, particularly in how and when to approach lecturers, and how best to use feedback. Rovagnati et al. (2021) investigated feedback literacies from an international student perspective and the degree to which past histories with feedback affected feedback literacy. They highlighted the importance of understanding the impact of affective factors and institutional cultures on students' understanding of their responsibility to feedback. Likewise, although lecturers were more accepting of their feedback responsibilities (Winstone, Pitt, et al. 2021), they were not always cognisant of the students' needs concerning feedback, particularly when students were returning to study after an extended absence. Both students and lecturers reported a lack of clarity on who was responsible for feedback and what was expected. This is demonstrated by lecturers expressing frustration with students' apparent disregard for the feedback provided and students expressing a desire for more feedback. In effect, it resulted in feedback being reduced to a transmission-of-information model. This was consistent with the findings of Winstone, Pitt, et al. (2021), who found that sharing the responsibility for feedback is a key part of the feedback process. The development of a shared responsibility for feedback is built through ongoing dialogues, where power differentials are reduced and mutual trust is established (Winstone, Pitt, et al. 2021, pp. 128-129). This will be discussed further in Section 5.3.1

The practices that assisted students in understanding their responsibilities were outlined in Section 4.4.3. The following section considers the responsibility for feedback and the cognitive understanding required to develop reciprocal responsibilities.

5.3.1 Cultural-Discursive Arrangements that Enable or Constrain the Sayings Employed in Understanding the Responsibility for Feedback

It could be argued that simply making students aware of their responsibilities in the feedback process would be beneficial; however, it is also important that lecturers' and students' responsibilities are complementary and that students understand that they have a responsibility to reciprocate. For example, some students expressed the opinion that the lecturer was responsible for establishing the feedback process and outlining the responsibilities, but claimed that this was not done consistently. This finding was in agreement with Winstone, Pitt, et al. (2021) and Van der Kleij et al. (2019), who found that as the transmission of information model was still prevalent, students expected that it was the lecturers' responsibility and that they themselves had minimal responsibility. Other students in the current study, however, reported a shared responsibility that was more in line with the findings of Boud and Molloy (2013a), Winstone and Carless (2020), and (Winstone, Pitt, et al. 2021), who agreed that the effectiveness of feedback processes depends on a shared responsibility. The current research highlighted the importance of shared responsibility, particularly in how the responsibilities were communicated. It also revealed that cultural-discursive arrangements can constrain the communication between lecturers and students, resulting in students not understanding their reciprocal responsibility to facilitate the feedback process. This can be illustrated by the lack of consistency amongst students as to what their responsibility for feedback was and by the variations in how lecturers conceptualised the feedback process. A majority of lecturers had the view that the institution should be responsible for ensuring consistency in feedback practices, and that if nothing was provided, lecturers would resort to adopting their own feedback practices. This resulted in lecturers adopting a transactional model where feedback was understood as a product provided to students rather than an opportunity to engage students in a feedback dialogue. In these examples, the cultural-discursive arrangements made students less likely to seek feedback (Section 5.4) and unclear on their responsibilities to the feedback process. This is consistent with elements of feedback literacy (Gravett 2020; Gravett et al. 2020) that outline the importance of discerning and accepting the roles and responsibilities of the lecturers and students in feedback processes. However, it extends the work of Gravett (2020) by focusing on the practices involved in developing and communicating the responsibilities for feedback, and in developing a better understanding of the enabling arrangements.

Another key finding from this research was the need to clarify students' and lecturers' expectations regarding feedback responsibilities and to establish a mutual and reciprocal responsibility for feedback. The need for mutual responsibility for feedback supports the findings of Winstone, Pitt, et al. (2021), who advocated for sharing responsibility for feedback, but found that the processes were still transactional in nature. It is also consistent with Carless (2020b), who advocated for reframing the feedback process as a partnership between students and lecturers. In addition to being consistent with prior research, this research extends the work of Winstone, Pitt, et al. (2021), who only sampled educators, and Carless (2020b), who focused on a small group of four participants. It also highlights the concept of reciprocal responsibilities, noting that for the feedback process to be truly reciprocal, students are required to respond to lecturers' invitation to participate and actively engage in the feedback process. Students' engagement is also enabled or constrained by material-economic and social-political arrangements, which will be discussed further in Sections 5.3.2 and 5.4

5.3.1.1 Articulating the Responsibility for Feedback

Chapter 4 reported that lecturers and students recognised the importance of feedback, but that frustrations with feedback and wide variations in feedback practice were still present. An explanation that directly addresses the research question is that the responsibility for articulating who is responsible for feedback is not well understood. The process of articulating this responsibility is grounded in the semantic space and relies on discourses between lecturers and students, which have been described as feedback dialogues by Blair and McGinty (2012) and To and Yiqi (2018), and artefacts such as subject outlines, lecture slides, and other institutional documents. These discourses depend on the arrangements to make them possible. Several students reported that lecturers have the responsibility to articulate the purposes and responsibilities for feedback and how the feedback process functions. Most of the lecturers agreed. However, only some students recognised that they have a responsibility to reciprocate and be willing to engage in a feedback dialogue with lecturers. The importance of dialogue creation is a significant finding that has been explored in recent literature (Ajjawi & Boud 2017, 2018; Edwards-Groves 2018). The dialogue may concern the student's performance, the course content, or the feedback process itself. The current literature has focused on student performance and course content (Zhu & Carless 2018), as opposed to articulating the feedback process. The implication from this research is that creating a dialogue to communicate and develop the purposes of feedback through the feedback process assists in developing a mutual understanding of the responsibilities for feedback between students and lecturers. It also allows lecturers to create an environment where both students and lecturers understand what the aim of feedback is and how it can occur (where feedback is done, as discussed in Section 5.2.2.3). As students improved their understanding of feedback's purposes and the mutual responsibility for feedback, they were increasingly willing to engage in class discussions and to improve their understanding of how feedback could help them.

Lecturers have a responsibility to invite students to participate in the feedback process (Section 4.3.4), but affective factors (Section 5.3.3) may influence the likelihood of students accepting the invitation. However, this understanding of feedback needs to be accepted by lecturers. If lecturers do not use practices that support a process view of feedback and invite students to participate, feedback-seeking will become less likely. When the practices of lecturers and students were considered independently, the process of feedback did not appear problematic. However, when considered together, the lack of coordination and integration between students and lecturers became evident. It can be concluded that lecturers have the responsibility to invite students to participate in the feedback process, and that students have the responsibility to accept the invitation. The above findings confirm and extend the work of Winstone, Pitt, et al. (2021), highlighting the importance of reciprocal responsibilities, but also addressing Winstone, Pitt, et al's

(2021) call to develop feedback cultures where mutual responsibility for feedback is "discussed, negotiated, and enacted" (Winstone, Pitt, et al. 2021, p. 129). Whether this results in action is also affected by the material-economic arrangements that enable or constrain the doings of feedback. The following section will consider the material-economic arrangements in relation to the responsibility for feedback, in particular the reciprocal responsibilities of lecturers and students.

5.3.2 Material-Economic Arrangements that Enable or Constrain the Doings Employed in Understanding the Responsibility for Feedback

Section 5.3.1 outlined the importance of clarifying who is responsible for feedback and discussed the reciprocal nature of the responsibilities for feedback, specifically focusing on the cultural-discursive arrangements. Section 4.3 reported the gap between students' and lecturers' expectations, with students expecting lecturers to be responsible for providing feedback, and lecturers wanting students to respond and act on feedback. This section focuses on what lecturers did to clarify responsibilities in the feedback process, what students did to reciprocate and act on feedback, and the material-economic arrangements that made this possible. It concludes with a brief discussion of how the responsibilities of lecturers and students may change as students progress through their course of study.

Section 4.4.3.1 described some of the practices that lecturers used in fulfilling their responsibility for feedback and making students feel comfortable seeking it. These practices were aimed at engaging students in the feedback process by getting them to read and respond to feedback. What students do in the feedback process depends on of their understanding of their responsibilities in this process; this, in turn, is affected by the material-economic arrangements that prefigure and enable or constrain practices. For example, the timing of feedback on written tasks was critical (Section 4.3.4), as were pre-engaging students with feedback (Sections 4.3.4 and 4.4.1), and getting students to participate in class discussions regarding feedback (Section 4.4.3.2).

5.3.2.1 What Lecturers and Students Do to Develop a Reciprocal Responsibility for Feedback

Sections 4.3.2, 4.3.3, and 4.4.3 also raised the concept of repositioning lecturers and students as partners in reciprocating arrangements. If lecturers can develop students' understanding of their responsibilities to recognise and accept a reciprocal role in the feedback process, students' engagement (doings) with the feedback process should follow. This supports the importance of developing academic buoyancy (Middleton et al. 2020, p. 4). Students are more likely to accept and act on their reciprocal responsibilities to feedback if they are able navigate the feedback process better. Carless and Boud (2018) explain that positioning students as partners involves renegotiating traditional power arrangements in higher education to enable new forms of reciprocal engagement. This was mirrored in this research. The phrase "reciprocal relationship" was used by students in Focus Group one (Sections 4.3.3 and 4.4) to explain that it was the lecturer's responsibility to invite students to participate, and that students needed to accept the offer and reciprocate. This type of partnership with students takes time to establish and relies on both parties understanding and accepting the partnership.

Perhaps of equal importance is understanding that as students progress in their studies, they become more feedback-literate (Section 2.4) and better able to recognise their responsibilities in the feedback process. The shift is from a product-orientated, feedback-giving perspective to a mutual responsibility for the feedback process. In essence, the feedback process, which includes feedback giving and seeking, becomes more student-driven. There was still a mutual and shared responsibility for feedback, but the roles of lecturer and student transformed. As students became more confident in the course and their own academic ability, they took on more responsibility for seeking feedback. In some instances, this was driven by a desire to succeed no matter the obstacles, and by the recognition that if they needed assistance, they had to seek it. This progression is part of developing students' feedback literacy and is best incorporated by embedding it into existing activities (Molloy et al. 2020, p. 11). As students become more comfortable seeking feedback and build relationships with their lecturers, the responsibility for seeking feedback moves further towards students. However, this is only possible if lecturers understand and accept this progression and adopt practices that encourage students to take greater responsibility for seeking feedback. This aligns with the work of Molloy et al. (2020), Carless and Winstone (2020), and Gravett (2020) on the interplay between student and lecturer feedback literacies and the notion of shared responsibility (Section 2.4), but adds to the debate by considering the material-economic arrangements that allow this to happen. For example, lecturers can intentionally allow time in class to create feedback dialogue with students where student feedback literacy can be cultivated. Lecturers can also create physical spaces that make students feel comfortable, and can schedule consultations at suitable times and locations to encourage students to seek feedback dialogues.

The next section focuses on feedback-seeking and the practices and arrangements that facilitate feedback-seeking practices. It will also briefly consider temporal issues related to feedback-seeking and reciprocal learning.

5.3.3 Social-Political Arrangements that Enable or Constrain the Relatings regarding Understanding the Responsibility for Feedback

Sections 4.3.3 and 4.4.1 outlined how the affective dimension can affect students' and lecturers' likelihood of recognising and adopting reciprocal responsibilities for feedback. As discussed in Section 5.3.3, power imbalances between lecturers and students, lack of trust, empowerment, and the relational dimension all have the potential to influence the development of a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes. Students were quick to mention lecturers' practices that made it less likely that students would engage with feedback. However, few students discussed practices they themselves could employ to take responsibility.

Likewise, lecturers also need to recognise the importance of feedback and understand their role in developing students' propensity to seek and engage with it. The lecturer has a degree of responsibility to the feedback process that will enable students to successfully complete course work and develop their self-evaluation skills. Sutton (2012) suggests that the development of feedback literacy is "to a degree, contingent upon the social relations within which feedback is situated" (p.

38). Most of the students implied or openly stated that the affective relationship with a lecturer influenced their proclivity to engage with and act on feedback. This is consistent with Sutton (2012), who suggests that the feedback literacy of students may be enhanced by lecturers who demonstrate an "ethos of care" (p. 39). Feedback is essential for learning, but it is also a challenging aspect of higher-education pedagogy. Feedback should be provided on the quality of work and used to improve students' evaluation skills and sense-making, and to develop the ability for lifelong learning. For many lecturers, this expanded role of feedback is challenging (Boud & Molloy 2013a). However, it is part of the emergent concept of lecturer feedback literacy. Carless and Winstone (2020, p. 2) outline that "teacher feedback literacy mainly involves the design and management of assessment environments that enable students to develop feedback literacy capabilities". They defined lecturer feedback literacy as "the knowledge, expertise, and dispositions to design feedback processes in ways which enable student uptake of feedback and seed the development of student feedback literacy" (Carless & Winstone 2020, p. 4)

This social-political arrangements that affect students' and lecturers understanding the responsibility for feedback align with elements of Carless and Winstone's relational dimension (Section 2.4). In particular, the importance of understanding and developing the interplay between the feedback literacy of students and lecturers (reciprocal responsibilities; Sections 4.3.2 and 4.4.3.3) was demonstrated, thus contributing to the empirical validation of Carless and Winstone's conceptual model. The next section considers the reciprocal responsibilities in greater depth.

5.3.3.1 How Power, Affect, and Relations impact the development of a reciprocal responsibilities.

The establishment of a partnership involves lecturers recognising how the partnership will alter feedback practices and accepting the resulting changes in power arrangements. It also requires students to have a level of trust and confidence in the lecturer. The findings reported that trust develops over time and that the level of trust differed among students. It was found that some lecturers used practices that are likely to build trust and make it more likely for students to accept an invitation to participate in the feedback process and feel confident and comfortable seeking feedback. Lecturers who recognised the importance of gaining a level of trust with students, and intentionally used practices to create trust, had more success getting students to engage and actively seek and clarify feedback. This finding was in keeping with Nguyen and Walker (2016), who found that in doing this, teachers effectively empowered students to engage in the feedback process, cultivating students’ feedback literacy and developing students' propensity for lifelong learning. The feedback-seeking practices of students in the current study were also affected by lecturer and institutional practices. Feedback-seeking practices will be explored further in Section 5.4.

5.3.3.2 Students Confidence

Part of the lecturers’ responsibilities are to choreograph the conditions where it is possible for students to gain confidence to seek feedback, for example on understanding course content and assessments (Section 4.3.3). Students expressed the need for reassurance that they have understood the requirements of assessment tasks and are headed in the right direction. Students who were not comfortable seeking feedback were reluctant to ask questions, and would seek feedback elsewhere, such as from peers and online searches. Students attributed this reluctance to how comfortable individual lecturers made the students feel and each student’s comprehension of the importance of feedback. Students reported that they were less likely to approach a lecturer to engage in discussion if they felt uncomfortable. This supports the findings of Winstone, Pitt, et al. (2021, p. 128), who found that within a feedback culture of mutual trust, feedback dialogues can be used to establish mutual responsibilities and encourage greater student involvement in the feedback-seeking. This illustrates how the social-political arrangements can affect the likelihood of students not only taking responsibility for feedback but also having the confidence to seek feedback. Cultural-discursive arrangements affect how successfully the responsibility for feedback is articulated. Recognising and working to understand these arrangements will be beneficial as students and lecturers develop a reciprocal responsibility for feedback and students more actively seek feedback.

The following section considers feedback-seeking practices and how the cultural-discursive arrangements enable or constrain the facilitation of feedback. It also looks more specifically at the effect of the interrelationship between understanding the purposes of feedback and acknowledging the responsibilities for feedback, and at how these arrangements enable or constrains feedback-seeking.

5.4 Feedback-Seeking – The Interrelationship between the Purposes of Feedback and the Responsibility for Feedback on Feedback-Seeking

Sections 5.2 and 5.3 considered the purpose and responsibility of feedback and the practices employed by students and lecturers. The discussion included how arrangements could enable or constrain the feedback practices. This section focuses on the third major theme: feedback-seeking and how developing a mutual understanding of feedback's purpose and reciprocal responsibilities can enable feedback-seeking practices. It is important to note that practices and their arrangements are not independent of each other; instead, they are interdependent and interwoven in a complex web of relations that (Kemmis 2018a) has termed "ecologies of practice". In this section, it is argued that students' feedback-seeking practices are affected by the feedback practices of lecturers, whether a mutual understanding of feedback's purpose is developed, and how the reciprocal responsibilities of the feedback process are understood.

Section 5.2 argued that the feedback process could be used to develop a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes. In addition, Section 4.4 reported that students who had a better understanding of the purposes of feedback took on greater responsibility for seeking, understanding, and applying feedback. However, the likelihood that students would seek feedback depended on the alignment of lecturers' and students' understanding of feedback's purposes. This reflects the findings of Henderson, Ryan, and Phillips (2019, p. 1249), who recommended that further work needs to be done in aligning student and lecturer understandings of the purposes of feedback. Whilst improving the alignment of students' and lecturers' understandings of feedback's purposes would be beneficial, this requires lecturers to accept the primary responsibility for feedback, and students to be willing to recognise their reciprocal responsibility for participating in the feedback process. This supports previous research findings that once students have developed a better understanding of the purposes of feedback and their responsibility in the feedback process, they can be further guided to develop self-assessment skills for lifelong learning (Crossouard 2012; Nguyen & Walker 2016; Boud & Soler 2016). Whilst is important that understandings are aligned, other issues also affect feedback-seeking, including limiting feedback to the current task, embedding feedback-seeking in the curriculum, addressing barriers to feedback seeking, variations in practice, temporal aspects, affective factors, motivations for study, and feedback literacy. These will be explored in the following paragraphs.

5.4.1 Limiting Feedback to the Current Task

Some students limited feedback to the current task and did not extrapolate the key principles to other contexts, subjects, or assessment tasks. This resulted in a lack of development of feedback literacy and lifelong learning skills. Some students did not always know what they wanted or needed or could not, or did not, articulate it. This made it more difficult for lecturers to provide effective feedback even when students sought it. Lecturers who adopted feedback practices that encouraged students to engage in formative dialogic feedback provided students with opportunities to unpack what they required. This was consistent with research outlining the importance of lecturers creating environments where students can appreciate and use feedback (Carless & Winstone 2020, p. 2). These lecturers recognised their responsibility to engage students in the feedback process by explaining the purposes of feedback and working with students to co-construct the development of the feedback process. Lecturers who employed these practices generally had a broader understanding of how feedback could be used and accepted, and acknowledged that they were responsible for engaging students in feedback dialogues and implementing practices that encouraged feedback-seeking. However, the reported lack of consistency in lecturers' practices may explain why some students described not having the purposes of feedback explained to them and being unclear on the feedback process. Some lecturers were much more willing than others to accept responsibility for outlining the feedback process and using practices to initiate feedback. In contrast, other lecturers limited feedback to comments on assessment tasks and engaged in minimal formative feedback, largely during teaching episodes. This appeared to confuse students, with mixed messages about the purposes of and responsibility for feedback, which affected students' inclination to seek it. The adoption of a practice approach to examine the interrelationship between lecturers' and students' feedback practices and the enabling arrangements provides a way of developing a mutual understanding of feedback’s purposes and responsibilities. This extends the conceptual framework of Carless and Winstone (2020) by providing a way of improving the interplay between lecturers’ and students’ feedback literacy and offering empirical support to their conceptual model. The next section explores the suggestion made by several students and one lecturer that feedback-seeking should be embedded in the curriculum.

5.4.2 Embed Feedback-Seeking in the Curriculum

Section 4.4 reported on students’ feedback-seeking practices and discussed the benefits of embedding the purposes of feedback and responsibilities for feedback in the curriculum to encourage feedback-seeking. This research supports the findings of Pitt and Carless (2021), who suggest that “signature feedback practices and the development of feedback literacy…have the potential to be integrated in the curriculum” (p. 11); and those of Winstone and Carless (2020, pp. 34-37), who use a case-study approach to describe how feedback was embedded in the curriculum (Section 2.3.2). It is important to note that although the case they examine is contextually situated and may not be transferable to other contexts, the findings of this research promote the benefits of working with students to develop a mutually agreeable feedback process. The current research also extends the conceptual model proposed by Malecka et al. (2020, p. 2) in which the curriculum is “operationalized” for “developing student feedback literacy”, by revealing the importance of considering how the arrangements of practice enable the embedding of feedback throughout the curriculum. Further, when feedback practices are embedded in the curriculum, the feedback process can be more readily used to clarify understanding of feedback’s purposes and responsibilities of lecturers and students in the feedback process. This would then align the development of students’ and lecturers’ feedback literacy and provide a guide as to the practices lecturers and students employ, clarifying expectations. Finally, it would offer a way to consider more carefully the arrangements that could make feedback-seeking more likely, help clarify lecturers’ responsibility for providing feedback, and shape students’ understanding of their responsibility in the feedback process.

More specifically, the findings suggest that in practice, it is also necessary to develop students' ability and propensity to seek feedback. Lecturer practices aimed at improving students' feedback-seeking behaviour need to be embedded at a course, discipline, school, faculty, and institutional level. At the course level, some lecturers in this study recognised that the practices they employ in the feedback process affected students' feedback-seeking behaviour and made it more or less likely for students to seek feedback (Section 4.4.3.3). This finding extends the conceptual framework of Malecka et al. (2020, pp. 6-8), who proposed three mechanisms for embedding feedback literacy in the curriculum: eliciting, processing, and enacting. The current study's findings provide empirical support for Malecka et al.'s (2020) conceptualisation and raise the idea of cultivating a feedback culture. A few students went as far as suggesting that the development of a culture of feedback where students and lecturers become more feedback-literate may promote feedback-seeking. This partly parallels the work of Winstone and Boud (2019b), but moves the emphasis from seeking evidence of feedback's impact to feedback literacy (Section 2.4). In the context of the current research, feedback literacy was found to involve three key aspects: understanding what feedback is, knowing how to make constructive use of feedback, and discerning and accepting the roles and responsibilities of lecturers and students in feedback processes, which will then promote both students and lecturers to seek feedback. This builds on the work of Carless and Boud (2018) and Carless and Winstone (2020) by expanding feedback literacy to specifically use the feedback process to develop and articulate students' and lecturers' mutual responsibilities for feedback, which in turn will promote learning. It also emphasises the importance of the interactions between students' and lecturers' feedback literacy. This study did, however, identify barriers that affected students' feedback-seeking, which are discussed in the next section.

5.4.3 Barriers to Students' Feedback-Seeking

The propensity of students to seek feedback was influenced by a range of factors, including level of engagement, affective factors (such as trust, empowerment, and power distance), students' responsibilities in the feedback process, and students' understanding of the purposes of feedback (Section 4.4.2). Students spoke of a lack of cooperation and coordination between lecturers and students in the feedback process that impeded students' feedback-seeking. Lecturers, in contrast, reported that a significant number of students seemed unwilling to engage with lecturers in seeking feedback. The findings underline that whilst lecturers and students recognised the benefits of developing a partnership for improving feedback-seeking, there was a disconnection between the two groups. Current literature emphasises the importance of student-teacher partnerships (Carless 2020a; Carless & Boud 2018; Dawson et al. 2019; Matthews et al. 2021; Zeng et al. 2018), particularly highlighting recent moves to place greater emphasis on students' role in the feedback process. This change has shifted from practices that engage students with feedback to include students' practices in seeking feedback (Molloy et al. 2020). As seen in Section 5.3, students and lecturers have reciprocal responsibilities for feedback, but feedback-seeking has been conceptualised as primarily the responsibility of the student. In contrast to this conceptualisation, two students reported occasions where lecturers sought feedback on their teaching practice outside of the teacher and subject evaluations (Section 4.4.3). This resulted in students feeling more encouraged to seek feedback themselves. Lecturers asking students for feedback on their teaching practice may be considered a cultural-discursive arrangement that enables students to feel more comfortable seeking feedback. At its core, the move from the transmission model of feedback to a more dialogic interaction empowers students to seek and engage in discussion of their understanding and the quality of their work (Carless & Winstone 2020; Molloy et al. 2020; Winstone et al. 2019). However, lecturers still have the responsibility to educate and equip students in this evolving process of feedback. This study found variations in the practices employed by lecturers and students to accomplish this. The variations on their own did not necessarily hinder feedback-seeking; however, how the variations in feedback practice were interpreted could do so. This was dependent on whether the practices of lecturers and students encouraged feedback dialogues where interpretations could be clarified. This is discussed further in the next section.

5.4.4 Variations in Feedback Practice and How It Affects Feedback-Seeking

The variations between lecturers' feedback practices and how students interpreted or misinterpreted these practices had an impact on the students' feedback-seeking practices and the degree to which feedback was used. Feedback-seeking practices encompass a large part of the "doing" component of feedback. What students do to actively engage with the feedback process comprises a bundle of interrelated practices, and the likelihood of students engaging with feedback is influenced by the feedback practices of lecturers and the message these practices send students. Chan and Luo (2022) have identified that the current literature does not clearly delineate what lecturers consider a feedback practice to be; rather, it focuses on what practices are effective. However, little consideration has been given to the number or combination of practices that should be used for feedback to be effective. Chan and Luo (2022) recognise that feedback is "an evolving and complicated construct" that has evolved from a "teacher-centred transmission-orientated paradigm" to a "student-centred process-orientated paradigm", and more recently to a "ecological/sociomaterial paradigm" (pp. 62-63). The changing understanding of what feedback is and what its purposes are, has led to wide variations in practice. The current research also reported variations in practice and the confusion this caused, particularly for students seeking feedback.

A simple example of this is the practice of providing feedback on draft assessment tasks. As discussed in Section 5.3.1, some lecturers encouraged students to submit draft assessments and provided formative feedback on the draft tasks. In contrast, other lecturers specifically said that they would not accept drafts, citing equity concerns and time constraints, whilst others would accept a one-page outline. This caused confusion amongst students as to whether they could seek feedback on draft tasks. The practice itself is not the issue; rather, the inconsistencies in both the practice and the associated arrangements of the practice are what cause the confusion. The variations in practice between lecturers on submitting draft tasks caused some students to admit that they were put off seeking feedback altogether or were unclear on what they could or should seek feedback on.

Variations in feedback practices are to be expected, but lecturers and students need to develop a mutual understanding of the purpose of these practices and their intended effect. This is applicable not only to the current context but also to future learning. This finding supports the work of Chan and Luo (2022) (as discussed above) and Malecka et al. (2022), who investigated how students navigated feedback practices across different learning contexts. The development of student feedback literacy to recognise how to transfer feedback practices for future learning is critical. Likewise, lecturers need to accept their responsibility in developing students' understanding. This is particularly important in the context of students' propensity to seek feedback, but can be affected by temporal aspects, as discussed in the next section.

5.4.5 Temporal Aspects

The interaction between feedback practices is complex and challenging to develop in a single course, unit, or point in time. It involves cognitive and dispositional skills, which can be progressively improved, although this requires practice in different settings over time and appropriate feedback interventions to refine the practice. Temporal issues are important considerations in understanding feedback-seeking. The material-economic arrangements that enable or constrain students' likelihood of seeking feedback include temporal issues such as prompt return of assessment tasks, programming of teaching sessions and consultations, modes of delivery, scheduling of assessment tasks, and students' and lecturers' personal time constraints. Whether students act on feedback and develop evaluative judgement can also depend on the timing of feedback. The following paragraphs briefly address temporal issues that affect students' feedback-seeking practices.

Both lecturers and students identified temporal aspects as important in enabling or constraining students' feedback-seeking practices (Sections 4.3.4 and 4.4). However, temporality in the context of feedback is under-researched in the current literature. Issues such as mandated turnaround times for feedback were not linked to learning, and in some cases supported the transmission mode of feedback (Winstone 2022). Gravett (2020) argues that some temporal issues are outside the control of students; for example, not being able to make consultation times or free up time to engage in feedback. Kemmis et al.'s (2014) application of TPA accounts for time as part of the material-economic arrangements. The use of TPA to analyse feedback offered a way of conceptualising the temporal aspects of feedback and understanding how temporal arrangements can affect feedback-seeking practices. Temporal arrangements and their impact on the responsibility for feedback were discussed in Section 4.3.4 and, in the context of feedback-seeking, in Section 4.4. Section 5.3.2 discussed the timing of feedback and its influence on how students engage with, respond to, and act on the guidance provided. These arrangements have the potential to make feedback-seeking more or less likely. Lecturers require the time and opportunity to cultivate students' practices of feedback-seeking, and students need time to develop the awareness and confidence to seek feedback and use it for both current learning and future purposes, such as developing evaluative judgement. As stated in Section 5.2, acting on feedback and developing evaluative judgement are components of feedback literacy (Winstone & Carless 2020, pp. 7-8). This will be discussed further in Chapter 6. Temporal issues also affect how students and lecturers process affective factors. This is discussed in the next section.

5.4.6 Affective Factors

Most students cited affective factors that influenced the likelihood that they would seek feedback. Affective factors were discussed in Section 5.2.3 and 5.3.3 in the context of the social-political arrangements that enable or constrain the development of a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes and reciprocal responsibilities for feedback. This section focuses on affective factors that make feedback-seeking more or less likely. Students raised issues of trust, power, and empowerment when asked about feedback-seeking (Section 4.4.1). Students were less likely to seek feedback from lecturers whom they perceived to establish higher power distance, and noted that power distance could be reduced through in-class dialogue. This supports the findings of Yang and Carless (2012) and Ryan et al. (2021), and is also consistent with Ryan and Henderson (2018), who suggest that dialogue creation may alleviate some power issues. Students' emotional maturity and interpretation was discussed in the context of power. As students progressed through the MBA, they became more likely to seek feedback as they adapted to the environment. Again, this was consistent with Yang and Carless (2012), although the authors emphasised the benefit of peer feedback in dealing with power differences. This research found that focusing on the feedback practices, rather than on the power dynamics themselves, went some way toward dealing with power imbalances. From a practice perspective, power is bound up in the way lecturers and students relate to each other in specific sites of practice (Edwards-Groves 2018). The recognition and understanding of the practices and arrangements of practices that make up the relatings offer a way to reduce the impact of perceived power differences.

Critical comments can also affect students' propensity to seek feedback, particularly if they are not fully understood. Lecturers gave examples of practices they used to make students more comfortable (Section 4.3.3), but students reported not always understanding the intent of the practice or trusting the lecturer. Pitt and Norton (2017, p. 14) use the term "emotional backwash", to describe issues relating to controlling one's emotions, and highlight. the importance of focusing on the performance, and not the individual. This research adds to their assertion by also suggesting the need to focus on feedback practices that encourage feedback-seeking and to take into account affective issues such as trust and emotional sensitivity. A related issue is how students' motivation for studying the MBA affects feedback-seeking. This is discussed in the following section.

5.4.7 The Impact of Students' Reasons for Study on Feedback-Seeking

Students' motivation for wanting to complete the MBA can affect feedback-seeking practices. Prior research found that the perceived usefulness of feedback influences whether students are motivated to accept and use it (Henderson, Ajjawi, et al. 2019 p. 28; Yan & Yang 2021, p. 124). Students' individual motivations also play a role when they are trying to process feedback (Winstone, Nash, Parker, et al. 2017). This research adds to the literature by proposing that students need to develop the skills to understanding the impact of their motivations for study, as this will affect their engagement and feedback-seeking. Students in this research identified three main motivations for studying the MBA: gaining a qualification useful for future promotion or work opportunities, learning business skills and knowledge that they can apply to their own workplace/business, and gaining an academic qualification because they enjoy learning. Students' motivations for studying the MBA had an impact on the feedback they sought. For example, students whose motivation was to gain a qualification necessary for future promotion or work opportunities tended to focus on completing the course as efficiently as possible. For these students, understanding and completing the assessment tasks became the priority. A focus on completion directed their feedback-seeking to what was required to succeed in the assessments, rather than gaining a practical understanding of the application of content. Some of these students just wanted to pass, rather than to get a specific grade. In contrast, students whose motivation was to learn new skills and knowledge that they could apply in their current or future workplaces wanted feedback that was relevant to practical applications. These students also were more likely to embrace lifelong learning. Finally, those who wanted to achieve an academic qualification for the sake of learning tended to focus on gaining a higher grade. These students wanted to do well in the assessment tasks, and this shaped their feedback-seeking. They sought feedback that would assist them in achieving a high grade in the assessment tasks. This required a different emphasis on the feedback provided, with students seeking feedback on how to do well on the task rather than simply understanding and applying the concepts.

The findings of this study show that each student's motivations in seeking feedback are based on their own unique context, and that it is not feasible to expect lecturers to tailor feedback to suit every student's unique situation. The changing conceptualisation of feedback from what lecturers deliver to what students do (Carless & Boud 2018) has positioned students as the ones who need to take action on feedback information and engage in the feedback process. Lecturers are responsible for designing the feedback process so that students can engage (Carless & Winstone 2020). Feedback dialogues (Winstone & Carless 2020) are a key tool in the interplay between students and lecturers in the feedback process.

This research has highlighted that students' motivations for seeking feedback are an important consideration and do affect their feedback-seeking. Rather than attempting to understand individual student motivations, lecturers should focus on developing students' understanding and responsibility for the feedback process, and equip them to seek feedback that is congruent with their own motivations. The onus is on the student to recognise what feedback they need, and then to seek this feedback within the established feedback process. If a dialogic feedback relationship is cultivated, what students need becomes part of the feedback process, culture, and institution-wide practice. Also, lecturers are more likely to understand the impact of social-political arrangements, such as power imbalances, trust, and the relational dimension, on students' propensity to seek feedback. This closely aligns with the current developments in feedback literacy (Section 2.4), which are discussed in the next section.

5.4.8 Feedback Literacy

The importance of feedback literacy for lecturers and students is discussed in Section 2.4 and is incorporated throughout the analysis of three main themes. In brief, students who are more feedback-literate will be more likely to seek feedback (Carless & Boud 2018, p. 1316; Molloy et al. 2020, p. 528; Sutton 2012, p. 31). Carless and Boud's (2018) four-part conceptual framework for developing student feedback literacy (Section 2.4) included developing the feedback processes, student judgements, managing affect, and taking action (Carless & Boud 2018, p. 1316). Students' feedback literacy has also been the focus of several recent empirical papers (Molloy et al. 2020; Malecka et al. 2020; Gravett 2020; Carless 2020a) that have developed student feedback literacy models (Section 2.4). Lecturers' feedback literacy is an emerging concept (Carless & Winstone 2020; Malecka et al. 2020). The interplay between lecturer and student feedback literacy and positioning feedback processes as involving shared responsibilities are key issues in feedback literacy (Carless & Winstone 2020, p. 4) and in engaging students in feedback-seeking.

Consistent with the evolving scholarship of feedback literacy, this research supports the notion of shared responsibility and the need to consider the interrelationship between the feedback practices of lecturers and students.

The first two themes of developing a mutual understanding of feedback’s purposes and reciprocal responsibilities in the feedback process complement existing feedback-literacy frameworks but have investigated feedback literacy from a practice perspective. The use of Kemmis’s (2018a) TPA advances prior research by providing a way to understand the feedback practices of both students and lecturers, but also the arrangements that work to enable or constrain these practices. This research has also provided empirical support to aspects of Carless and Winstone’s (2020, p. 8) conceptual model, particularly in managing affect (relational dimension) and developing a partnership approach to feedback-seeking. Students are more likely to engage in the feedback process through dialogic interactions if the understanding of lecturers and students is more closely aligned. The key areas of alignment include understanding feedback's purposes, clarifying responsibilities for feedback, positioning students’ regulation of feedback-seeking, and understanding institutional practices.

5.5 Conclusion

This discussion has compared the findings reported in Chapter 4 with the literature discussed in Chapter 2. The findings have been compared to the most relevant literature, with points of commonality revealed and areas where this research extends existing work highlighted. Kemmis's TPA was used to frame the discussion, with the unit of analysis being practices, in particular feedback practices. The cultural-discursive, material-economic, and social-political arrangements that make possible the practices of feedback provided insight into the interrelationship between students' and lecturers' feedback practices. This was a key point of difference to previous research.

The findings of this research were consistent with more-recent conceptualisations of feedback, strongly supporting the new paradigm of feedback that places the emphasis on students' actions and recognises feedback as a process rather than as information transmitted to students. It also supported the conception that lecturers have a more strategic role in developing students' recognition of the feedback process and how the purposes of feedback are understood. Lecturers have the responsibility to design learning environments that are conducive to student engagement and that position students as the drivers of feedback-seeking. Students need to understand the reciprocal responsibilities of lecturers and students and accept their role in the development of the feedback process.

The critical contribution to knowledge coming out of this research is how practices and their arrangements can enable or constrain the development of the feedback process. The importance of adopting practices to develop a common understanding of feedback's purposes between lecturers and students was demonstrated. A partnership approach that assumes reciprocal responsibilities of lecturers and students in developing the feedback process was discussed, along with how these two themes relate to current literature. Finally, this study asserts that practices and the arrangements that enable or constrain action and interaction are interdependent and entwined in the actions of lecturers and students and the projects of practices. The interrelationship between practices and the arrangements, and how they work to enable or constrain feedback-seeking, was investigated. This thesis has offered empirical support to recent investigations into feedback practice, but has also provided ways of developing practice and building stronger partnerships between students and lecturers in the feedback process. The next section summarises major contributions to the scholarship of feedback, methodologies, and practice, and offers suggestions for future research, before outlining the limitations of the research.

Chapter 6 Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

Previous chapters have provided a background for and justification of the research design, an outline of the findings, and a discussion positioning the findings in the context of the relevant literature. This chapter completes the thesis by summarising the overall aims of the research as they relate to the findings, highlighting the original contribution to knowledge developed from this research, and making recommendations for the development of feedback practices for learning. It concludes by outlining the limitations of the study and discussing implications for future research.

6.2 Summary of the Aims of the Research as They Relate to the Findings

This research achieved the aim of gaining a better understanding of feedback practices and the relationship between these practices to further the understanding of the feedback process. The following sections explain how the findings have answered the research questions:

> How do feedback practices affect lecturers' and students' conceptions of feedback and the feedback process?
>
> How do the interrelationships between students' and lecturers' feedback practices and the arrangements that constitute these practices affect the feedback process?

6.2.1 How Do Feedback Practices Affect Lecturers' and Students' Conceptions of Feedback?

Students' and lecturers' understandings of feedback's purposes and their responsibilities to the feedback process are influenced by feedback practices. The feedback practices of lecturers and students are entangled and interrelated. The arrangements of practice and the message they convey affect how feedback is conceptualised. Prior conceptual research has suggested that effective feedback processes rely on the actions and involvement of both lecturers and students (Winstone & Carless 2020). The current research has found that closer alignment of the practices of lecturers and students in the co-construction of the feedback process is helpful in reconfiguring how lecturers and students conceptualise feedback. This reconceptualisation aims to develop a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes and clarify the reciprocal responsibilities of lecturers and students. Thus, feedback practices play an integral role in more closely aligning students' and lecturers' conceptualisation of feedback. They also constitute the feedback process and are critical for the development of students' and lecturers' shared feedback literacies.

6.2.2 How Does the Interrelationship between Students' and Lecturers' Feedback Practices and the Arrangements that Constitute These Practices Affect the Feedback Process?

The findings reported that a shared understanding of feedback between students and lecturers is desirable, and that students and lecturers have reciprocal responsibilities in the feedback process. However, there were reported discrepancies in how students and lecturers understood feedback's purposes and their responsibilities in the feedback process. Lecturers' responsibility for establishing the development of the feedback process with students is affected by student practices. Similarly, students' responsibility to engage in the feedback process, signifying their willingness to participate, are affected by the practices of lecturers. The development of a shared understanding of feedback's purposes is influenced by the alignment of lecturers' and students' practices. The development of a shared understanding is shaped by the practice architectures that make possible the interrelationship of lecturers' and students' feedback practices and the evolution of reciprocal responsibilities.

The use of TPA to analyse feedback practices elucidated the arrangements that constrained and/or enabled feedback practices. Examination of the cultural-discursive arrangements revealed variations in the language used, differences in the conceptualisation of feedback, and inconsistencies in the articulation of feedback's purposes and the feedback process. Social-political arrangements such as relational issues and power shaped the feedback practices of students and lecturers to either enable or restrain the feedback process, particularly in the creation of feedback dialogues. The creation of these dialogues (Ajjawi & Boud 2018) was found to be an essential part of the feedback process. It is critical to understand the significance of interpersonal connections (Gravett & Winstone 2022) and the management of affect in the feedback process in establishing feedback dialogues. These affective issues are key enabling factors in the use of feedback dialogues for the development of a common understanding of feedback's purposes and responsibilities. Practices that developed feedback dialogues were at times constrained by material-economic arrangements, such as teaching spaces designed for information transmission rather than discussions, temporal issues limiting opportunities for dialogue, and difficulties with the medium through which feedback information is provided. Material artefacts such as subject outlines and school policies, and material arrangements such as employment agreements, teaching allocations and scheduling, and lecturer training and development also acted as enabling or constraining elements.

In this research, it is argued that the co-construction of the feedback process should be something that is embedded into the curriculum (Section 4.3.4). This has the potential to result in changes to how feedback's purposes are understood and to the responsibilities of lecturers and students. This research demonstrated the importance of recognising the interrelationship between lecturers' and students' feedback practices and the arrangements that make the practices possible. An understanding of the interrelationship of these practices is necessary to align lecturers' and students' understandings of feedback's purposes, develop feedback literacy, and engage students in feedback-seeking.

6.2.3 Feedback-Seeking

Students' feedback-seeking practices were limited by differences between students and lecturers in their understanding of the purposes of feedback and responsibilities for feedback. If a common understanding was developed and reciprocal responsibilities for feedback were established, students would be more likely to adopt feedback-seeking practices. However, the way this is done is important.

Lecturers' practices can have unintended consequences for students seeking and engaging with feedback. Issues such as slow response times, accessibility, affective factors, and even the language used can all affect students' likelihood of seeking and engaging in feedback. The co-construction and meaning-making of the feedback process can also affect students' feedback-seeking. Students need to understand what is being asked of them and what they are expected to do, and the practices of both lecturers and students need to be configured so that they align to a common goal.

This section has discussed how feedback practices affect students' and lecturers' conceptions of feedback and the development of the feedback process. The interrelationship between students' and lecturers' feedback practices and the arrangements that constitute these practices can influence the feedback process. Feedback practices need to establish the feedback process, develop a mutual understanding of feedback, and clarify responsibilities for the feedback process. The interaction between the practices of students and lecturers and the arrangements that make the practices likely are central to the development of the feedback process.

6.3 Summary of Contributions to Knowledge

Overall, this research contributes to the understanding of feedback practices and sheds new light on the interplay between lecturer and student practices, highlighting how the interaction of feedback practices enables the co-construction of the feedback process and leads to the development of lecturers' and students' feedback literacy in tandem. The findings address the scarcity of empirical research examining the relationship between the feedback practices of students and lecturers and respond to the call for further research into how feedback processes can be used to develop feedback literacy (Ajjawi et al. 2022; Molloy et al. 2020). This thesis offers a methodological contribution by adopting a practice-based approach to investigate feedback practices and the relationship between them. This appears to be the first study to use Kemmis's TPA to investigate the relationship between the feedback practices of lecturers and students in the context of higher education. The use of TPA provides a way to better understand the arrangements that enable or constrain feedback practices. The following sections summarises the methodological, theoretical, and practical contributions to knowledge.

6.3.1 Methodological Contributions

This thesis is novel in its use of Kemmis's theory of practice architectures (TPA) to investigate feedback. There is limited literature that uses TPA to investigate the feedback practices of lecturers and students (for example, Hemmings et al. 2013; Tai et al. 2021), and, at the time of writing, little that focuses on both lecturers' and students' feedback practices in higher education. TPA provides a way of understanding the practices that occur amongst lecturers and students in the feedback process, and the arrangements that enable or constrain these practices. It also allows for the examination of the relationship between students' and lecturers' feedback practices and the arrangements of practice in a particular site of practice.

As discussed in Section 6.3.1, focusing on practices reconfigures understandings of feedback and the feedback process, and feedback's relationship to assessment and learning. The feedback practices of lecturers are entangled and interdependent. The feedback process consists of interrelated practices that are co-produced through the *sayings*, *doings*, and *relatings* of lecturers and students. The construction of the dynamic feedback process is entwined in the interrelationship of the practices of lecturers and students. This study of feedback practices offers a unique insight into the complexity of feedback and a way of aligning students' and lecturers' understandings of feedback's purposes. An improved understanding allows for the development of shared and reciprocal responsibilities; this increases the propensity of students to seek feedback within the feedback process and establishes a culture of feedback in which feedback-seeking is embedded. By analysing the arrangements that enable the practice, it is possible to improve understanding of the interactions between practices. Practice has the power to shape what lecturers and students do in the feedback process, how they think about feedback, and the relations implicit in the feedback process. The use of TPA offers a new perspective on how feedback practices work to develop and shape the feedback process.

The use of Kemmis's (2019) TPA adds to the body of work investigating feedback, particularly the feedback practices of lecturers and students. TPA provides a way to improve understanding of the feedback practices of both students and lecturers and arrangements that work to enable or constrain these practices. This research also provides empirical support to aspects of Carless and Winstone's (2020, p. 8) conceptual model of feedback literacy, particularly in managing affect – part of what Carless and Winstone (2020, p. 6) called the relational dimension – and developing a partnership approach to feedback-seeking. Students are more likely to engage in the feedback process through dialogic interactions if lecturers' and students' understanding is more closely aligned. The key areas of alignment include understanding feedback's purposes, clarifying responsibilities for feedback, positioning students' regulation of feedback-seeking, and understanding of institutional practices.

6.3.2 Theoretical Contributions

6.3.2.1 Feedback Practices that Enable the Feedback Process to Be Used to Develop a Mutual Understanding of Feedback's Purposes

This research highlights the disconnection between students' and lecturers' understandings of feedback's purposes and raises the importance of developing mutual understanding (Section 5.2.1.4). To this point, a plethora of research has identified good practices of feedback (Section 2.3), but very little has investigated the feedback practices that enable a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes to develop. The empirical findings of this research reveal how practices of students and lecturers interact in the process of feedback, and how the arrangements of the practices are critical in enabling the development of a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes. The development of a mutual understanding of feedback has been presented in previous studies (Molloy et al. 2020), but the focus was on how students used the feedback rather than the interrelationship of students' and lecturers' practices. This practice-based approach does not appear to have been described previously and offers a theoretical contribution to the conception of the feedback process. The theoretical contribution was to demonstrate how a better understanding of the arrangements of students' and lecturers' feedback practices, and their interrelationship, could enable the possibility of the feedback process being used for the development of mutual understanding and responsibilities.

6.3.2.2 Embedding Feedback into the Curriculum, Developing a Culture of Feedback, and Understanding the Arrangements of Practice

Nash and Winstone (2017) found that prior experiences with feedback and institutional practices influence how feedback is conceptualised. Consistent with Nash and Winstone (2017) and Dawson et al. (2019), the findings of this study reveal that if lecturers' and students' prior experiences with feedback are based on transmission of information, this could influence their current practice. Winstone (2022) also analysed institutional documents, noting that institutional policy does influence feedback principles and culture. This research, whilst supporting the findings of Nash and Winstone (2017), Dawson et al. (2019), and Winstone (2022), also extends their work. It contributes to the development of feedback practice by arguing that institutional policy should intentionally embed the construction of the feedback process into the curriculum (Sections 5.2.1.3 and 5.4.2), develop the purposes of feedback and the responsibilities for feedback (Section 4.3.4), and establish a culture of feedback.

Current literature advocates for development of a culture of feedback where students are proactive recipients (Winstone & Boud 2019b; Winstone, Nash, Rowntree, et al. 2017). The current research offers a way of understanding the arrangements of feedback practices that enable or constrain the development of students' proactive recipience. The findings of this research also support the development of a feedback culture, but extend current thought by arguing that the development of a culture of feedback needs to be embedded in the curriculum as part of the feedback process; and requires the cultivation of student and lecturer partnerships where reciprocal responsibilities for feedback are established, and students accept invitations to engage in the feedback process. These findings contribute to the literature by addressing Winstone et al.'s (2021, p. 129) call to develop feedback cultures. The next section explains how the current research extends this further by linking feedback cultures with feedback literacy.

6.3.2.3 Using a Practice Approach to Improve Feedback Literacy

In this research, a practice approach was used to examine the arrangements and relationships between lecturers' and students' feedback practices. This approach offers a way of developing a common understanding of feedback's purposes and responsibilities through studying the interactions of students' and lecturers' practices. This research offers empirical support to the conceptual framework of Carless and Winstone (2020) by providing a way of improving the "interplay" (p. 1) between lecturers' and students' feedback literacy. This research also extends the conceptual mechanisms proposed by Malecka et al. (2020, p. 2) by which the curriculum was used as a means of developing student feedback literacy. This research underlined the importance of considering the arrangements of practice when aiming to embed the feedback process in the curriculum. For students to develop feedback literacy, Malecka et al. has emphasised the need to focus on “knowledge and awareness of feedback processes as well as their enactment” (Malecka et al. 2020, p. 12). Whilst Malecka et al. acknowledge that lecturers also need to be feedback literate, how this is developed in conjunction with students’ feedback literacy is not clear. A better understanding of the practices and arrangements of practice enables the possibility for the mutual development of the feedback process between lecturers and students, thus improving feedback literacy.

As outlined in 6.3.1.2, the feedback process can more readily be used to clarify feedback’s purposes and responsibilities if it is embedded in the curriculum. The embedding of feedback in the curriculum would help align the development of students’ and lecturers’ feedback literacy and provide a guide to the practices lecturers and students employ in the development of feedback literacy. The findings provide empirical support for Malecka et al.’s (2020, pp. 6-8) conceptual framework and raise the idea of cultivating a feedback culture (Section 6.3.1.2). A few students went as far as suggesting that the development of a culture of feedback where students and lecturers become more feedback-literate may promote feedback-seeking. A feedback culture to develop feedback literacy partly parallels the work of Winstone and Boud (2019b), but moves the emphasis from seeking evidence of feedback’s impact to developing feedback literacy (Section 2.4). Feedback literacy was found to involve understanding what feedback is, making constructive use of feedback, and discerning and accepting the roles and responsibilities of lecturers and students in feedback processes to promote feedback-seeking. This builds on the work of Carless and Boud (2018) and Carless and Winstone (2020) by proposing the use of the feedback process to develop students’ and lecturers’ feedback literacy, emphasising the importance of the interchange between them. It also positions feedback-seeking in the feedback-literacy research and contributes to the emergent concept of lecturer feedback literacy. Carless and Winstone (2020, p. 4) define lecturer feedback literacy as “the knowledge, expertise and dispositions to design feedback processes in ways which enable student uptake of feedback and seed the development of student feedback literacy”. The current research places the development of student and lecturer feedback together, thus changing the conceptualisation of feedback literacy to one involving the practices of lecturers and students and the relationship between these practices. The social-political arrangements that enable or constrain feedback can be aligned with elements of Carless and Winstone's relational dimension (Section 2.3.3). The importance of understanding and developing the interplay and reciprocal responsibilities between the feedback literacy of students and lecturers (Sections 4.4.3 and 4.4.3.3) was demonstrated. This contributes to the empirical validation of Carless and Winstone's conceptual model. It also enhances the model by offering a way of improving understanding of the interrelationship between lecturers' and students' feedback practices, and how this can contribute to the shared development of lecturer and student feedback literacy as advocated by Carless and Winstone (2020, p. 10).

6.3.3 Practical Contributions

6.3.3.1 Positioning Students and Lecturers as Partners in the Feedback Process and Developing Mutual Responsibilities

The research highlighted disconnections between students' and lecturers' understandings of the feedback process. Feedback literacy (Section 2.4) positions students and lecturers as responsible for the co-construction of this process. Positioning lecturers and students as partners in the feedback process allows for a closer alignment of their feedback practices. This research contributes to student and lecturer feedback-literacy scholarship in two ways. First, it supports the idea of student and lecturer partnerships and shared responsibilities in developing the feedback process (Carless & Winstone 2020). Second, it extends the understanding of feedback literacy by recognising how the arrangements of lecturers' and students' practices can enable or constrain partnerships and the establishment of a common understanding of the feedback process. This contributes to Carless and Winstone's (2020, p. 11) call for further research into the development of lecturer and student feedback literacy in tandem. The use of TPA provides a method of analysing the relationship between the practices of students and lecturers in developing partnerships.

6.3.3.2 Aligning Students' and Lecturers' Understanding of Feedback's Purposes to Create Engagement

The development of students' feedback literacy involves getting students to engage with and act on feedback (Winstone & Carless 2020; Winstone et al. 2019). However, getting students to act consistently on feedback is a challenge, particularly if they do not understand the purposes of feedback. This research also found that students did not know what to do with feedback or how to act on it, and reported a range of understandings of feedback's purposes. The benefits of involving students and lecturers in the development of feedback's purposes were reported. These benefits resulted in a closer alignment of lecturers' and students' understanding of feedback's purposes and a higher likelihood that students will engage with, and act on, feedback. Further to the co-construction of the feedback process, the material-economic arrangements that affect the doings of feedback are useful in identifying potential barriers to student action and the development of feedback partnerships between lecturers and students.

The current literature has focused on student performance and course content (Zhu & Carless 2018), as opposed to articulating the feedback process. The implication from this research is that creating a dialogue to communicate and develop the purposes of feedback through the feedback process assists in developing a mutual understanding of students' and lecturers' respective responsibilities for feedback. It also allows lecturers to create an environment where they and their students understand what the aim of feedback is and how it can occur (Section 5.3). The more students improved their understanding of feedback's purposes and the mutual responsibility for feedback, the more willing they were to engage in class discussions and to improve their understanding of how feedback could help them.

6.3.3.3 Using Feedback Dialogues to Develop Feedback Literacy and Engage Students

Students and lecturers discussed intentionally scaffolding skills throughout a course. In particular, they spoke about practices that develop students' capability to engage in feedback dialogues, and lecturers' ability to initiate dialogues. In line with Carless and Winstone's (2020) suggestions for further research, the findings highlighted the need to ensure that lecturers are aware of their responsibility to invite students to participate in feedback dialogues. Feedback dialogues offer a way of increasing the interplay necessary for the synergetic development of student and lecturer feedback literacy.

This is an important point, which is consistent with Winstone and Carless (2020), who outline the significance of students' engagement in the feedback process, with the goal being to develop students as learning-centred seekers of feedback. The findings supported the notion of encouraging students to become drivers of feedback, emphasising the reciprocal roles that lecturers and students have in engagement with, and responsibility for, feedback. The interrelationship of practices and their practice architectures are critical in enabling or constraining the development of reciprocal roles through dialogue.

6.3.3.4 Inducting Students into the Feedback Process

Lecturers need to involve students in developing an induction to the feedback process, which outlines the purposes of feedback and the feedback process and practices. It cannot be assumed that students will automatically understand the purpose of lecturers' practices, as feedback is dynamic, with changes in practice and variations in individual conceptions constantly emerging. Lecturers' and students' use of feedback (Section 5.3), the practices they adopt, and the relationship between the practices shape how the purposes of feedback are understood. This extends the work of Henderson, Ajjawi, et al. (2019, p. 282), who list an induction process as part of an institutional feedback culture.

6.3.3.5 Contributing to Feedback-Seeking

The development of students' capability to seek feedback is central to their learning and for improving their feedback literacy (Joughin et al. 2021). A recent addition to the conception of students' role in feedback literacy is the importance of students' active pursuit of feedback information (Henderson, Ryan & Phillips 2019). A large body of work focuses on feedback-seeking in organisations, but less on students' feedback-seeking in higher education (Joughin et al. 2021). This research offers a way of developing students' feedback-seeking capacity and positioning feedback-seeking within the growing body of work focusing on feedback literacy.

6.4 Recommendations for the Development of Feedback Practices for Learning

This research has revealed several areas crucial for the development of feedback:

1. Current frameworks of feedback literacy should be extended to specifically incorporate partnerships between students and lecturers in the development of the feedback process.
2. The feedback process and its development should be embedded in the curriculum, and students and lecturers should be involved in the development process.
3. Lecturers should schedule time and implement practices aimed at co-constructing the purposes of feedback with students. This is also relevant as students' understanding of feedback's purpose develops as students progress in the MBA program. This results in changes to the responsibilities of lecturers and students and a need to be continually developing the feedback process.
4. A practice-based approach to developing evaluative judgement should be adopted.
5. Further research in the use of semiautonomous learning teams should be conducted to extend the literature on peer review and highlight the value of dialogue in peer review. This needs to go beyond discussions of content to consider assessment requirements and affective strategies for approaching lecturers.
6. Support for an ongoing peer feedback process, where sharing knowledge and interacting with lecturers is more efficient, should be supported.
7. The variations and hence students' and lecturers' understanding of feedback's purposes should be more closely aligned by considering the material-economic arrangements that affect the doings of feedback practices.
8. It may be beneficial to provide students with the opportunity to develop their feedback-literacy skills in specific education sessions, or to embed these skills in the curriculum.

6.5 Limitations

The nature of this research resulted in some limitations to the collection of data. First, as participation was voluntary, the demographics of the research participants may not be representative of the MBA cohort. While Table 3.1 provides general population data for the MBA cohort at UOW, this was not necessarily reflective of the actual participants. This could be a weakness of this research as it would be ideal to engage a representative sample of participants. However, as the demographics of the MBA cohort could conceivably differ between trimesters it would be unrealistic to expect a fully representative sample.

Secondly, as the data was collected over a period of four years the changing demographics of the MBA cohort were to some extent represented. As students progressed through the MBA and the cohort changed, this may have affected the perspectives and experiences that were being presented in the interviews and focus groups thus providing a more diverse sample of experiences and understandings. The use of TPA meant the focus was on practices, particularly investigating the differences between lecturers' and students' practices. Focusing on the differences and the practice architectures that enabled or constrained feedback mitigated the differences in the demographics of the cohort over the data collection period. However the use of TPA and a practice based approach may have resulted in some aspects of the data being overlooked. For example, there was a lack of consistency in how feedback practices were conceived, which made it difficult to identify patterns in how lecturers and students construed the purpose of feedback.

Thirdly, given the nature of the research methodology and the voluntary participation, it was not always feasible to align students, courses, and lecturers. This made longitudinal analysis, and application to particular courses and subjects problematic. This is a limitation of the research method which requires cycles of data collection and sense making. It also highlights the complications and complexity of doing research in the dynamic environment of higher education where there is an unequal distribution of power between students and lecturers and within the authority structure of the institution itself. The voluntary participation also potentially limited the size of the sample, and the context of a postgraduate business school places limitations on the transferability of the findings.

Fourthly, the adoption of a practice-based collaborative inquiry, where the research participants and researcher are situated within the research, resulted in the researcher having an influence on the participants' understanding and conceptualisation of feedback. During the data collection phases both students and lecturers commented on how being involved in the research prompted them to think more deeply about feedback and their role in the feedback process. Whilst it is important to recognise this and acknowledge the influence of the researcher, it is consistent with the chosen methodology and may demonstrate the impact of situating feedback as a process. It also consistent with the use of TPA as it illustrates how the arrangements of practice work to enable or constrain practice.

Finally, the final interviews were conducted face to face, as they occurred just before the COVID lockdowns. In the period of data collection, face-to-face classes and consultations were the norm. However, from mid-March 2020, classes and consultation times have been available online (for example, through the videoconferencing application Zoom), and hence been more accessible. The transition to online learning may also limit the application of some of the findings, as the practice architectures will have been altered by moving to online learning and assessment. However, the overriding principles are applicable, providing the contextual changes are considered.

6.6 Implications for Future Research

There is scope for further research into the feedback literacy of lecturers and for building on the conceptual model proposed by Carless and Winstone (2020) and the empirically devised feedback-literacy competencies outlined by Boud and Dawson (2021, pp. 7-9).

The theoretical contribution was to demonstrate how a better understanding of the arrangements of students' and lecturers' feedback practices, and their interrelationship, could enable the possibility of the feedback process being used for the development of mutual understanding and responsibilities.

This research has argued that a better understanding of the arrangements of practice opens up the possibility of the feedback process being used for the development of mutual understanding and responsibilities. However more research is required in order to develop this concept into an actionable model.

If feedback practices were recognised as part of students' and lecturers' identities, social-political arrangements such as power, control, values, and emotion would be less likely to be constrain their development of a shared understanding and practice of feedback. Further research into these arrangements is required (Henderson et al. 2019; Ryan & Henderson 2018).

Several questions need further research to gain a greater insight into these feedback practices:

- What are the conditions/aspects/arrangements that influence/encourage/support students' effective use of feedback?
- What are the conditions in which feedback supports learning generally?
- What are the conditions in which feedback (formal and informal) supports learning in a business school?
- Do the sum of and relationship between these feedback practices have a greater effect on students' effective use of feedback than individual feedback practices
- The MBA comprises subjects from several disciplines and disciplinary norms may affect feedback practices. There is scope to investigate the influence of different disciplines on feedback practices and the arrangements.

6.7 Conclusion

Feedback is recognised as central to learning, but dissatisfaction with feedback is consistently reported. Research has developed to focus on good practices of feedback, but there is a scarcity of research that investigates the interrelationship of practices and the arrangements that make the practices possible. The use of TPA offered a fresh approach to investigating feedback's practices and arrangements of practice; this enabled the study of lecturers' and students' feedback practices and how they interact within the feedback process. The investigation revealed variations in understandings of the purposes of feedback and the responsibilities for feedback. These variations affected the propensity of students to seek feedback. The findings suggest that the feedback process be co-constructed by lecturers and students thus developing a mutual understanding of feedback's purposes and clarifying reciprocal responsibilities. Recognising the interrelationship of feedback practices offers a way to align the practices of lecturers and students more closely through involvement in the co-construction of the feedback process. This links closely to current research into feedback literacy, but specifically addresses students' and lecturers' reciprocal responsibilities, and the development of feedback literacy in tandem. Finally, this research has provided a way of investigating the interrelationship of feedback practices and the enabling or constraining arrangements of practice. This has led to a better understanding of feedback practices and the benefits of more closely aligning lecturers' and students' conceptualisations of feedback within the feedback process. In this way, the feedback process can be used to develop a mutual understanding of the purposes of feedback, clarify reciprocal responsibilities, develop a feedback culture, and encourage feedback-seeking practices.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Question guide for initial interviews

Initial Interviews Question Guide

1. Are there occasions when you respond more positively to the way feedback is.
    a. Provided
    b. Provided by the lecturer
    c. By what the lecturer does
    d. By how the lecturer presents it

2. Can you apply the things you've learned, although you've only done one subject, to your current job?
    a. To workplace
    b. Content

3. Different types of feedback
    a. Across subjects
    b. Types of feedback experienced

4. Do you actively seek feedback from lecturers?
    a. Email
    b. In class
    c. Consultation times
    d. How often?

5. Do you always go over your feedback?
    a. Always Read feedback
    b. Respond to feedback
    c. Read, Listen, Apply

6. Feedback on Assignments
    a. Usefulness
    b. Applicability

7. Feedback useful for future subjects
    a. Generic feedback
    b. Take feedback received to another subject?

8. Has the feedback met your expectations?

9. Has the feedback received assisted you in clarifying your understanding?

10. Have you found differences in practices across subjects in MBA?

11. How do they make you feel comfortable?
    a. Feedback interactions with lecturer
    b. Lecturers that are more easily approached
    c. More comfortable seeking feedback
    d. What made it hard or easy to approach lecturers

12. How often do you seek feedback?

13. Practices of feedback
    a. How was it given
    b. What types of practices were used
    c. What differences in practices were noticed
    d. Styles of feedback
    e. Used consultation time
    f. Was feedback explained when you started the MBA
    g. Relational practices
    h. Different feedback preferences from lecturers
    i. Have you got better at seeking, understanding, and interpreting the feedback provided?
    j. Class interaction and perception of lecturer
    k. General feedback in class

14. Purpose and form of feedback

15. Purpose of MBA

16. Types of feedback

17. What's the least helpful part of feedback you received?

18. What's the most useful feedback you've received?

19. What's your understanding of feedback as it applies in the MBA context?

20. Thinking across all the subjects you've done, have there been some subjects that have done, the feedback thing we're talking about, the process, better than other subjects?

Appendix B: Sample Interview Guide for second round of data collection

Sample Interview Guide for Second Round Data Collection
Includes a brief summary of data analysis so far

1. **What is your understanding of the purpose of feedback?**
    a. **Is it intentionally articulated and discussed with students? If so, what practices are used?**
    b. **Is there a common purpose between lecturers and students? Between students? Between lecturers?**

Theme Information:
Understanding of the purpose of feedback was similar across the lecturers interviewed. All considered feedback as integral to learning however the extent to which the purpose of feedback was/is intentionally articulate and discussed with students differed. Although indicated that initially it is the responsibility of the lecture to outline the purpose of feedback, but this was dependent on the extent of understanding students had around the purpose of feedback. Two of the lecturers took steps to try and ascertain the students understanding of the purpose of feedback and would discuss the purpose if necessary. The others felt that students would/should be aware of this already and would not address the purpose of feedback unless asked to but structured the feedback to help students progress through the subject – expressing this as feedforward not feedback.

It was agreed that some students do not know what they want out of feedback and often confine feedback's purposes to summative work submitted for grading. Working with students to broaden their understanding of feedback was seen as critical.

Understanding that institutional / faculty / school policies does not ensure feedback happens. There is some disconnect between policy and practice - do they intentionally provide for the purpose of feedback or is it just seen as a mechanistic thing? A better understanding of the purpose of feedback and not a reliance on policies is key. Even with 'policies' in place often feedback is *"a chance encounter".* The following are related excerpts from the final three lecturer interviews related to this.

The following is a sample of the comments (direct quotes) / points made by both students and lectures about the purpose of feedback.

> I feel strongly about saying what institutions provide, because institutions, they create policies, wonderful policies, right? When you read the policies you think, oh my God, they've got it. But in terms of practice, I think there is a big disconnect between policy and practice, and institutions are not necessarily taking responsibility of how to implement policy.
>
> Just having policy does not lead to practices being implemented… It's a chance encounter, yeah? It is not systematically embedded. It's there at the policy thing.

So, the issue of can it be cultivated? Yes. Was it cultivated? I'm not sure. However, if you don't have a system, or a process, or an infrastructure in place, people are unlikely to do it. It goes into driving behaviour. The problem now is that it can happen at a mechanistic level. I must provide something by week three, and therefore I will provide it.

Feedback for student engagement: Feedback is a core part of education and whilst it is the responsibility of the educational institution to educate people how to learn through feedback, students have a responsibility to engage in this process. To get students better engaged with feedback, a dialogue around feedback may be helpful. If the purpose of feedback is clear to them then this responsibility will be better understood and acted on.

The purpose of feedback, and I always believe should be contextualised, and within the curriculum.

Students need to go away with greater knowledge and self-assess the extent to which this is happening.

Formative feedback is equally if not more important than the summative part: The purpose of formative feedback is to help students understand what is required, how to improve the quality and its application.

For me, feedback is a core part of education. I spend a lot of time on the formative part, rather than the summative part.

Of course, the summative part is there. We have to judge. We have to grade, and therefore people would need to know at the end of their learning what is that degree of learning, and I acknowledge that.

Feedback is not just about absorbing knowledge. It can be particularly useful in helping students apply the theoretical knowledge – particularly relevant in the context of the MBA.

Students being focused mainly on grades missing the learning available from the process of feedback.

For her, the feedback was only about, you know, you told me something, and I did this exactly, and I thought this would result in that. She completely omitted that process of feedback, how it has enabled her to think better, or stronger, or higher, or…

But I'm not sure she understood that the process of seeking - and that is a problem, because you get carried away by the marks part of it. So, there is a means to an end, while failing to recognise there is rich learning that can happen in that means space itself.

2. **Where does the responsibility for feedback lie?**
    a. **Who should drive/initiate feedback and what practices are used?**
    b. **Is this intentionally articulated to students? How?**

Responsibility for feedback is initially the lecturer: Institutional/faculty/school policies can raise awareness of this. However as discussed above when there is a disconnect between policy and practice with feedback not being systematically embedded feedback becomes more of a chance encounter. If the purpose of feedback is not intentionally articulated, then confusion around responsibility for feedback may result.

> What they would like to learn and how they would like to learn is not necessarily clear - there is a lack of clarity in that space… It's for you to, say, then reflect, and therefore there is a responsibility on the student's part, but there is equally a responsibility on the academic's part… There is certainly dual responsibility, absolutely. But a lot of the time, people don't think that it is the two-way street.

Need to clarify the role of the academic and the environment in which feedback may occur to better understand the responsibility of feedback

> You need to first educate, even in the classroom, why you are there as an educator, yeah? In other words, you need to clarify the role of the academic. You need to have a vision. The vision of what are we here for?
>
> The lecturer has to initiate a way of operating that feedback, and then the student must come back with something and say, okay, here's where I'm up to. But initiating is one thing, but providing that conducive environment is another thing.

Intentionally clarifying the role of the academic: That is, how the contract works and teaching students' resilience. Students need to understand the importance of doing the groundwork in preparation and the consequences of not doing this. They also need guidance to understand and fulfil their potential. This includes learning the skills required to evaluate the quality of their own work

> That is almost like a contract. Now, some people say, well, that's the responsibility of the students, but a lot of the students do not know their own potential… but there is a lot of channeling that needs to occur in the initial stages, and to say, you can do it.

Responsibility to focus on the student, where they are at and what they need guidance with.

> So, we could focus on what matters the most to a person, so for some people it could be about articulating an idea. They may have a brilliant idea, but they do not know how to put it on paper. For them, that learning is about articulation… So, it's knowing about the priorities for a person, that focus of learning.

I push people. I say, you - I tell them, you need to be far more specific than what you have just said, because it's not meaningful for me to provide feedback on that, yeah?

Responsibility to intentionally establish a relationship around which feedback can occur:

I intentionally establish… as a feedback practice I intentionally establish a relationship. Otherwise, why would you open up?

If that relationship isn't established, then... It won't work. Absolutely

You need to establish that relationship, yeah? If you go cold-hearted and say, you have this what the face, they would go, what are you talking about? You have to establish, and many times I do.

The boss/student dynamic was raised as an issue: Power/distance issues can be problematic, particularly for students who are lacking in confidence. Reducing the perceived or real power distance between lecturers and students is the responsibility of the lecturers – but in some cases is used by lecturers as a tool to minimise student contact. Lecturers lack of experience in the real world may impact on their understanding of who is responsible for feedback.

Maybe a lot of academics have not worked in the real world. They did their PhD, or they did their master's, or something, and they moved into academia not knowing how to build a relationship. Or they believe there is a dependency relationship because you are the subordinate.

Responsibility to use feedback to get students to think: It is important to get students thinking and evaluating their work. The extract below is an example of the practices used by one of the lectures

So, there's a lot of warming up that I do, and I - try to, I test them on concepts so that they are able to apply it in the real-world practice itself, and all my assessments are to do with the real world. So, none of them are purely theoretical from that point of view.

Responsibility for the lecturer to intentionally create a dialogue around feedback

There are many different elements of feedback, and there is this constant checking. Did you get it? If you don't get it, you need to tell me now, sort of thing. Then they have to feel comfortable in saying, I feel - otherwise - versus, I don't want to feel stupid asking you this question. So, there is a level of comfort that I feel that gets established before I go to this unknown territory.

Appendix C: Sample Interview Guide Student Focus Groups

Student Focus Groups Guide

Students were provided with an interview guide with the key questions and representative quotes from prior rounds of data collection and analysis. This document is a concise representation of the guide and what was discussed

Outline literature around feedback
- Product v Process
- Dialogue creation and opportunities to engage in a dialogue.
- Purpose = Sense making, clarification, assurance of learning, assessment, developing skills for lifelong learning.

This research is looking at feedback practices in-particular how the relationships between and amongst these practices can inhibit or enable feedback to occur and to increase the efficacy of feedback. Feedback viewed as.

- A package of practices that are entwined in a web of interrelated actions that impact on each other.
- Some of these practices can be clearly identified as directly relevant to the efficacy of feedback whereas other practices are indirectly related but may have an impact on how feedback is received, interpreted, accepted or sort.
- The relationship between these various practices and how it impacts feedback is of particular interest.

Practice:
- Sayings
- Doings
- Relationships – How are they relating
- Arrangements – How the practices are arranged

What is your understanding of the purpose of feedback?

Is the purpose of feedback articulated/discussed with students? How so?

> I probably didn't really think much about the importance of the feedback when I first started, but in growing through the course like I can see that any type of feedback from the lecturers is reassuring and confirming that I'm on the right track. (S07)

> So, it's not just the paper. Also, for me it's the learning at the time that I decided to do it. I wanted to develop those skills and develop that knowledge, so I was actively looking to learn. I was kind of disappointed if I didn't learn as much as what I'd hoped and didn't get as much out of class as I'd hoped. (S20)

Is there a common purpose.
-between students?
-between lecturers and students?

> …it is based on what I'm looking for out of the course. So, if I am looking for some learning where the feedback is based around improving my learning then absolutely. Where the feedback is more tailored to increasing the marks or the fine tuning of the presentation, for example, that's less useful. But where it's based around say, for example, I've talked about the

source of information, you know, this answer could've been more complete had you used this other source of information or combined several sources together, that kind of thing is useful.(S21)

Get some really clear direction of where to go. (S09)

Feedback not about marks and assessment. Marks speak with your comments. Design feedback to make students think. (L06)

Does understanding the purpose of feedback help? If so, how?

Group discussions, involving people in the room together, asking questions to individual people so you're active… you're an active participant in the room, in the learning, and they kind of see you as a separate individual to the person next to you and the person next to you. (S20)

When you can connect it to something you're doing then obviously it helps join the dots very quickly. (S20)

It's up to me as to whether I adopt that learning and apply it the next time I am asked to hand something in. If you can't find the opportunity to talk to the lecturer, then it's up to your interpretation and that can often be invalid potentially. (S21)

Where does the responsibility for feedback lie?

Feedback seeking? What does it look like?

When do you seek feedback?

For me rarely. Only if I needed to in my view so if I wasn't performing a level that I was looking for. So, if I wasn't getting the results or the outcomes that I wanted then I would be seeking a lot of feedback as to where I have gone wrong. (S11)

Me, personally? I do, but I can see people, other people, other students who do not ask any questions… I ask only 20 to 30 percent of my questions and the remaining percentage I go and Google it, or research it or try to find out. (S12)

I guess it comes down how receptive the lecture would be to the feedback. Let's say some create the environment where you are free to provide feedback and your own opinion and others tend to maybe shelter themselves a bit from that. (S18)

Whenever I've not got what I feel is a correct understanding… so in order to understand the next one, you've got to understand the first one, that's when if I haven't understood that I'll ask the question. (S21)

What do you do to seek feedback?

I guess because I'm kind of an experienced professional, I'm looking for guidance from the get-go. I take notes. So, I'm looking for it from the very beginning. (S21)

I think it's really important that you can get feedback when you need it. (S09)

What practices make it more or less likely for a dialogue around feedback to happen

> I think the biggest thing is actually getting the feeling for the lecturer so it's often in the first one you get the feeling of what that lecturer likes and what works for them and that's probably the subject, but I tend to think of it as people. (S04)

> …if it's done in a friendly kind of smiling, non-threatening manner and they actually show that they care or at least pretend to care… because sometimes in previous faculties, you had people that were just very concise and abrupt... (S10)

> There needs to be a form of respect there, based on each other's knowledge and ability. (S11)

> Yes, you definitely have to be comfortable to go and see that individual and obviously they need to be available, and you don't want to feel like you are wasting their time or anything like that or being intimidated by them. (S11)

Feedback delivery – what practices encourage and enable feedback?

> So, in some cases I feel I have to really like get the lecturer and like their style of lecturing, their teaching, I feel it just clicks for me sometimes and others it doesn't, and I think there's always a disconnect in the message that's getting through or… (S20)

> I think it's all about building that relationship. Once you have that relationship, I become more comfortable and I'm willing to ask stupid questions. (S06)

> The issue is with MBA students, full time workers, they can't take advantage of those [consultation times]. So, I do make the offer of giving feedback by email. So, if they send me in a draft, I can say if they're on track or not on track. (L02)

> Should be easy access and there's no booking, and preferably it would be like just before the lecturer and just after the lecture…" (S06)

Course Delivery and School/Faculty Level considerations
Does class location, format, size impact on feedback?

> I just felt like it was really like a big mass… it was a huge… there were huge classes and I just felt like… I didn't have an identity within that room and there was no discussion. (S20)

> Well, I've been to one of the intensive classes when I initially decided to do two subjects and I went to that one weekend I just decided that it's too intensive. The delivery is not about making it easy for the student… it actually limits the time you have to ask clarification questions. (S06)

> But because the class was so much smaller than in general, they were much more prepared, much less hesitant... they can see the point of it much more clearly than they would in a larger class... It's more conversational and much more informal. (L01)

Are there sufficient opportunities to connect?

Appendix D: Sample Interview Guide Final Lecturer Interviews

Final Interview Guide – Lecturer

What is feedback?

At the centre of assessment is the notion of feedback, and whilst it is generally accepted that feedback drives learning thus placing it central to learning, just providing feedback is no guarantee that it will be utilised. Carless (2006) and Pokorny and Pickford (2010) outline issues in feedback practices such as communication, perceptions, form, style, and practices that either encourage or inhibit the relationship between feedback provider and recipient. It appears that there is a level of disconnect in the practices of feedback and in the relationship between these practices that can hinder rather than promote learning.

Discuss:

- Product v Process
- Dialogue creation (opportunities to engage in a dialogue)
- Purpose = Sense making, clarification, assurance of learning, assessment, developing skills for lifelong learning.

Students talked about feedback at its best being reciprocal, requiring an intentional dialogue

> Just that nod or the twinkle in the eye at the right time. So, it's encouragement, it's an assessment thing. It's very much about that interactive learning. And feedback at its best is… collaborative is the wrong word…" (S29) "Reciprocal?" (S28) "Reciprocal, well done yeah. So, the good, the really skilled lectures are the ones that seek, they are self-reflective and… (S29) "say hang on is this working for you?" (S28) "Yeah" (S27) "It's not? Let's stop and try a different way" (S29) "Yeah, its two ways yes" (S27) "So it's about trust and communication and relationship building for that learning. (S29)

The following questions are designed to facilitate discussion around emerging themes

What is your understanding of the purpose of feedback?

a) Is it intentionally articulated and discussed with students? If so, what practices are used?

b) Is there a common purpose between lecturers and students? Between students? Between lecturers?

Students:

Reassurance that they understand the content and how it applies. It may be directly related to an assessment task – assurance they are headed in the right direction (or providing a clear direction), applied to a workplace context - value add by incorporating shared experiences of students from different industries.

It goes beyond written comments on tasks, with formative feedback assisting in creating an environment of reciprocal learning.

> I sort of talk about the purpose of feedback being about teaching and learning, relationships, quality, and it's very… Feedback is much more than the written comments… I don't think the purpose has been well articulated… accidental would be too harsh…(S29).

Had the purpose of feedback been intentionally articulated the importance would have been better understood and student feedback practices would have changed.

That lectures either did not understand the purpose of feedback or did not realise the need to intentionally articulate this to students – particularly in their first few subjects of the MBA.

> But I think it comes back to that question – do the lectures understand that feedback is part of the teaching process? (S28).

Feedback is not an event it is a culture

> …huge variation on how it is actually delivered but if all the lectures understand that we are creating an environment of reciprocal learning – I don't think that's well understood. (F28)

Lecturers:
Mixed understanding of how powerful feedback could be and inconsistencies in the quantity of feedback provided.

> He said it's the most feedback he's ever got, and he really appreciated it. That concerns me, that - how much feedback they're getting from other people. (L02). Design feedback to make students think. (L06)

Used for justifying the grade – particularly if student complaints are an issue.

Demonstrating to students where they could improve and what was done well. In this context the purpose can be seen as applicable only to the specific task and whilst it needs to be applicable to the current task it may also be useful for future tasks, workplace practice and overall learning

> When you can connect it to something you're doing then obviously it helps join the dots very quickly. (S21)

Institutional practices such as providing a marking rubric are common practice in higher education however the use of them and students perception of this needs to be considered.

> In the end we just ended up almost using the marking rubric not as a guide to understanding but as a straight jacket to pass. (F28)

> Feedback is not just about marks and assessment; the marks speak with your comments. (L06)

Dual role

> So, the best lectures are the ones that are seeking that feedback at every moment- seeking feedback on their performance and giving you on yours and rolling with that dynamic. (F29)

The inconsistencies in understanding and articulating the purpose of feedback between students and lectures, between students and between lecturers has resulted in a disconnect between feedback practices.

Where does the responsibility for feedback lie? Who should drive/initiate feedback and what practices are used? Is this intentionally articulated to students? How?

There were three main responses from students to this question.

- Students who saw the responsibility for feedback as the lectures.
- Students who thought lecturers should initiate feedback but recognised that ultimately if this didn't happen it was their responsibility to follow it up.
- and students who understanding the critical importance of feedback for learning would take responsibility and work through barriers.

Feedback seeking from students, what does it look like? Students were asked when they sort feedback.

When not getting the desired results would seek feedback on where they went wrong

If something is not understood, then ask a question as others may have the same question but are unwilling to ask. Always conscious though of not asking 'stupid' questions

Need to be able to get feedback when you need it

Only ask 20-30 percent the rest was Googled – only sort feedback two or three times outside of class. But using consultation time very helpful

Dependent on how receptive the lecturer was – some create the environment where seeking feedback is easy. Others say the right words but then don't make you feel comfortable when you are meeting with them

Seek feedback to try and workout what the lecturer wants for a task or key learning point

What practices encourage and enable feedback seeking, making it more likely for a dialogue around feedback to happen? Power Distance?

Encouraged students to voice their opinion and ask questions.

Allowing students to feel more comfortable engaging in a feedback dialogue.

The power imbalance was raised as an issue which impacted on students taking responsibility.

Some students were willing to take responsibility for feedback if they were unsure about something, however others said it was dependent on how they felt about approaching lecturers citing the relationship they had with the lecturer influencing the likelihood of them initiating feedback.

Students feeling that the feedback interaction is a two way or group discussion that makes you want to engage in a dialogue. This is also true of non-face-to-face communication such as email where response times that are longer than the students expect may be perceived in a negative manner.

Getting the feeling for what that lecturer likes and what works for them.

Lecturers showing they care – smiling, non-threatening way. Which may result in feeling more connected with the lecturer, and reassurance from the lecturer that there are no stupid questions.

Seeing that the lecturer is willing and interested in helping

Students talked about having a form of mutual respect between students and lecturers.

Group discussions where students are active participants in the room, in the learning but you are seen as a separate individual to the person next to you – lecturers understand the diversity amongst students in the room.

What practices make it less likely?
Power distance issues.

Difficult in students meeting with lecturers – perceptions of being busy, class size.

Students seeing lecturer feedback as incidental or accidental rather than intentional.

Asking a question during class and whether the response was seen as an opportunity or an interruption to the class can impact on whether students will seek further feedback

Feedback delivery – what practices encourage and enable feedback?

Course Delivery and School/Faculty Level considerations - Does class location, format, size impact on feedback?

- Class size and make-up – International/Domestic and Full-time/Part-time
- Location
- Mode of delivery – intensive v weekly
- Course Structure
- Rubrics
- UOW feedback policy – how has it impacted practice

Appendix E: Screen shots from the NVivo 10™ software, showing Final Themes.

Feedback Literacy

Search All Files, Externals & Memos

Name	Created On
We don't ask students if they want feedback	29-Aug-19 3
Verbal Feedback through Moodle - 3 minutes	29-Aug-19 4
Use of rubrics	18-Jul-19 10:
Teaching Practice - Formative feedback	29-Aug-19 4
Student feeling comfortable	14-Jun-19 3:
Some people do. Others, they need to be cultivated. That is where it really depends upon how much the academic would like to invest, and how much the stude	26-May-19 4
So, there's a lot of warming up that I do, and I - try to, I test them on concepts so that they are able to apply it in the real-world practice itself, and all my assess	25-May-19 3
Scaffolding and Self-Diagnosis	26-May-19 4
Relationship Between Parties\Relationship Practice	12-Feb-15 7:
Relationship Between Parties\Relationship improves reception	16-Dec-15 1
Relationship Between Parties\Lecturer 2 is very accessible, you kind of feel... (I'm trying to word this the right way), much more free to talk	25-Feb-15 8:
Relationship Between Parties\Emotional Element	11-Feb-15 8:
Power Dynamic	03-Jul-18 2:5
Personal Literacy	26-May-19 4
Lecturer feedback sense making	21-Jul-17 10:
Intentionally establish relationship	13-Jun-19 3:
Feedback Literacy - A Practice Perspective\Practices encouraging positive feedback	07-Jul-15 11:
Feedback Literacy - A Practice Perspective\Practices discouraging feedback	07-Jul-15 11:
Feedback Literacy - A Practice Perspective	25-Nov-14 1
Feedback Literacy	15-Aug-22 9
Feedback as a culture	02-Aug-18 1
Feedback - Mediocre Culture	03-Jul-18 3:0
Culture of Feedback	29-Aug-18 4
After the rules of Feedback are established	13-Jun-19 3:

Purpose of Feedback

Search All Files, Externals & Memos

Name	Created On
What is feedback	08-May-14 11:44 PM
Useful Feedback	08-May-14 11:02 PM
The Purpose of Feedback - Different Understandings\For me it's about increasing learning.	14-May-17 10:33 AM
The Purpose of Feedback - Different Understandings\Feedback for assurance	17-Oct-15 3:18 AM
The Purpose of Feedback - Different Understandings	27-Jun-18 1:54 PM
The feedback however is very important and part of the gap that I think there currently is in the program for me personally	27-Jun-18 3:50 PM
Purpose of Feedback in MBA course	29-Aug-19 3:50 PM
Purpose of Feedback - Sharna	29-Aug-19 3:40 PM
Purpose of Feedback - Institutional Requirements	18-Jul-19 10:04 AM
Purpose of Feedback	24-Aug-18 10:23 PM
Purpose of Feedback	25-May-19 3:21 PM
For me, feedback is a core part of education. I spend a lot of time on the formative part, rather than the summative part.	25-May-19 3:11 PM
Feedback's Purpose	15-Aug-22 9:20 AM
Feedback Practice	14-Jun-19 3:36 PM
Disconnect between policy and practice	25-May-19 3:41 PM
Different Understandings around Feedback - Definition, Purpose and Conceptions\Key Feedback Words Descriptions	12-Feb-15 8:08 AM
Different Understandings around Feedback - Definition, Purpose and Conceptions\Different conceptions of the definiton and purpose of feedback	03-Oct-15 5:18 PM
Defining feedback as teaching, assessmemt etc.	29-Aug-19 4:27 PM
Curriculum based purpose	25-May-19 3:37 PM
Connection	14-May-17 10:25 AM
Clarifying the purpose of feedback in MBA	29-Aug-19 3:56 PM
Clarify the role of the academic around feedback	26-May-19 4:31 PM

Responsibility for Feedback

Search All Files, Externals & Memos

Name	Created On
The Responsibility for Feedback - Who	27-Jun-18 3:36 PM
Students not understanding what lecturer wants	30-Aug-19 10:15 AM
Student Responsibility	26-May-19 4:24 PM
Student responsibility	13-Sep-19 12:25 PM
Responsibility to engage students	13-Sep-19 9:59 AM
Responsibility for Feedback	13-Sep-19 9:55 AM
Responsibility for Feedback	29-Aug-19 4:24 PM
Responsibility for Feedback	03-Aug-18 4:34 PM
Responsibility for Feedback	24-Aug-18 10:23 PM
Responsibility for feedback	25-May-19 3:13 PM
Meaningful feedback	13-Sep-19 12:32 PM
Making students feel comfortable to ask	13-Sep-19 12:28 PM
Lecturer Affective	13-Sep-19 10:01 AM
Issues with giving feedback	13-Sep-19 9:59 AM

Feedback Seeking

Search All Files, Externals & Memos

Name	Created On
S[illegible]edback	24-Aug-18 10:20 PM
Meaningful feedback	13-Sep-19 12:32 PM
Making students feel comfortable to ask	13-Sep-19 12:28 PM
Lecturer feedback sense making	21-Jul-17 10:07 AM
Lecturer Affective	13-Sep-19 10:01 AM
He doesn't encourage feedback mechanisms in terms of approaching or consultation	03-Jul-18 2:54 PM
Feedback Seeking what makes it more or less likely	27-Jun-18 3:43 PM
Feedback Literacy - A Practice Perspective\Feedback seeking behaviour\I think it's really important that you can get feedback when you need it.	20-Jun-14 9:40 AM
Feedback Literacy - A Practice Perspective\Feedback seeking behaviour	09-May-14 8:34 AM
Barriers to feedback\Course Delivery and School Faculty Level considerations	27-Jun-18 3:46 PM
Barriers to feedback	14-May-15 7:33 AM

Appendix F: Samples of Categorisation Taken from Initial In Vivo Coding.

Samples of categorisations taken from initial in vivo coding

NB: The bolded and italicized text extracts provide examples of the in vivo coding

Connection – relationship and context

It's maybe just a personal thing. You get along with a lecturer better if you have more of a connection with a lecturer then. ***But how do you get that connection?*** Oh, that'll be… that's social. (S3)

I think there's always a ***disconnect*** in the message that's getting through. (S21)

An MBA is all about how do you probably ***connect*** with the industry guys and how are you leveraging whatever you learned, how are you applying in real-time situations in different organisations. (S20)

One of the things I find useful is, and this is a bit about the relationship that you might build with a lecturer, the feedback or the information is provided in the lectures so you can ***connect*** with that often. (S20)

So, I want to ***connect*** that in my teaching, in my delivery, in my assessment, I ask them to integrate, and in my comments, I ask them what happened to the things you learn from other subjects? Why don't you apply here? (Lecturer 6)

When you can ***connect*** it to something you're doing then obviously it helps join the dots very quickly. (S21)

One of the things I find useful is, and this is a bit about the ***relationship*** that you might build with a lecturer, the feedback or the information is provided in the lectures so you can ***connect*** with that often. (S21)

Face to face feedback

I suppose ***face-to-face***. Like I was saying... I probably respond better to that because I'm there, I want to show them that, yes, I am actually taking in their feedback. (S2)

I think that it generally comes down to fundamentally how they listen to you, and their answering the questions. So, in…in ***face-to-face***, it's nice when they…they see that you've got an issue and they do actually give you feedback in a different way to help you understand. (S23)

Relationship - Lecturer/Engagement/Personal

One of the things I find useful is, and this is a bit about the ***relationship*** that you might build with a lecturer, the feedback or the information is provided in the lectures so you can ***connect*** with that often. (S21)

I like it when it's more ***personal***… it makes it…it makes it easier and better to understand. (S1)

It's maybe just a ***personal*** thing. You get along with a lecturer better if you have more of a connection with a lecturer then. (S3)

I suppose that I need to feel ***comfortable***... I need to bridge that gap. I don't think I've bridged that gap yet. I don't think I have…. Once you have that relationship, I become more ***comfortable*** and I'm willing to ask stupid questions. (S3)

To build a relationship where feedback can occur - Engagement

I would say probably like casual chats? Or something which are not subject related like activities where you get students involved and it's not about like exam or it's not about the subject, where you get the chance to actually build that ***relationship***. It has to be off the subject. (S6)

So, you have to feel that ***engagement***. I don't feel that sometimes. (S6)

I don't know, maybe I guess it would be more challenging if it was someone that I didn't have that good a ***relationship*** with, it would be harder to do. (S20)

Comfortable

You definitely have to be ***comfortable*** to go and see that individual and obviously they need to be available, and you don't want to feel like you are wasting their time or anything like that or being intimidated by them. It's definitely important that needs to be clear for the individuals that that's available. (S11)

Because it's important for me enough no matter what issue there was that was making me ***uncomfortable,*** I wouldn't care because in the end that doesn't matter. I need to understand it. If I need to be able to do it, and I need to be able to get this assignment done. I need to be able to understand what I have to do here and get the content. (S17)

So, whatever issue there might be that would make me less ***comfortable*** with some people than others or… I'd overcome and say, "Who cares? I just need to get this information. (S20)

I think the lecturers make me, as a student, feel more than ***comfortable*** approaching them. (S7)

What's available, I mean the difference is as I work here like I can sort of see what's available, but I think maybe, I don't know, students say they don't see it, or they don't feel ***comfortable*** or… or there's something. (S10)

Power and Respect

Knowledge is ***power*** and it's not very helpful if a lecturer is feeling more powerful because they have all the knowledge. (S7)

There needs to be a form of ***respect*** there, based on each other's knowledge and ability. (S11)

You need to be spoken to like an adult – I'm transposing work practices in what we would expect as professionals to what we should be expecting in universities. (S19)

I'm not a naughty child and I hear plenty of lecturers talk to students like they're naughty children. (S19)

So, I think that you need to be spoken to like an adult. It needs to be ***private***. There's not much ***privacy*** here. (S19)

Approachability and Understanding the lecturers accessibility

Lecturer 2 is very ***accessible,*** you kind of feel… (I'm trying to word this the right way), much more free to talk. (S15)

I think in terms of learning more, it's good to have that sort of open-ended way to ***approach*** things and then get it marked based on the way you're applying that type of knowledge. (S2)

I know you can ***approach*** the lecturer but again I don't during the semester. (S4)

I will ask questions at the end of the lecture… that's the time where I will ***approach*** the lecturer. (S6)

Lecturer 12 doesn't have consultation time but says it's fine for us to ***approach*** her before or after lectures. (S14)

And some of them might mention that they have class in Sydney and so you sort of get the feeling that they might be busy. So, if you hear them saying that you have to take that into consideration that they may not be always available it can give the impression that they may not be wanting you to actually ***approach*** them. (S6)

I usually find that the lecturers who are more ***friendly,*** are easier to ask questions… they might break off and talk about their past experiences in the workplace, they might share a joke with the class, just share and might have a bit of chit chat before or after lectures, those kind of lecturers. (S14)

But the one from Subject 8 who it seemed just didn't want to be there, getting information from him was just like pulling blood from a stone. He just wasn't ***interested*** in helping at all. (S3)

I mean each teacher is different. You can sort of ***figure out how your teacher ticks*** and what makes them tick and what they look for. (S23)

Class Environment

And others are free to engage with the ***class*** to create an ***environment*** definitely that welcomes feedback and encourages it. (S18)

The bad ones tend to shut down the conversation pretty quick and might move quickly on to the next bit of the topic or, you know, say that you know, that's something for you to go and learn possibly outside of ***class.*** (S18)

Generally, I found the subjects that I took with the more full-time workers were generally more that ***environment*** where people share their ideas and their experiences. (S21)

Well, I've been to one of the intensive classes when I initially decided to do two subject and I went to that one weekend I just decided that it's too intensive. The ***delivery*** is not about making it easy for the student. (S6)

Tailored – just for you

But again, it seems like the themes that I'm hearing within myself, is around this personalised, ***tailored*** to my situation. (S20)

Probably, just the one-on-one, having the discussion was probably a good positive just because you sort of you know it's directed ***just for you.*** (S2)

Feedbacks that are sort of ***tailor*** made and not just some generic or general comment. (S6)

The one-on-one, having the discussion was probably a good positive just because you sort of you know it's directed ***just for you*** I guess. (S2)

Purpose

And you find that would probably draw my ***interest*** into knowing what that feedback is all about and get drawn into that a bit further and that would like trigger my thinking that I may have to go and talk to the lecturer. (S6)

That's pretty *inspiring*. And that kind of gives you a bit more, like, you don't want to let the team down type feeling. (S3)

So maybe in terms of that feedback side of things, the students that are at the end of their course, maybe the feedback ***purpose*** changes. Maybe the lecturer side of things and the way you seek feedback also changes. (S9)

I think it's not just about the content. I think it's the skills. There's plenty of content information, plenty, but it's about, for me, particularly in the finance one is, you know, what does it really mean and, because there's so many. And the confusion is you'll have the same sort of, for example, ratio but a couple of different words in the same ratio depends which book you look at. (S22)

Feedback Seeking

Well in fact, talking before about discussions with other students, I am actually in discussions with other students, learned some things of how they found ***other sources*** of information that I was unaware of and then that, so those conversations help me find some more guidance – we did that fairly frequently. (S21)

Feedback's Effectiveness/Responsibility/Type

Probably the most useful for me is ***informal and verbal***. Look at its ***effectiveness***, in that it's there in that moment there's a bit more back and forward and you can really get to the bottom of what you are seeking feedback on. (S16)

I believe the lecturer should definitely be given the r***esponsibility*** to drive feedback but if you don't drive it, you won't… or might not be able to get it, I guess. So, for me that's important. The individual feedback for me is important. So, I'll go out and seek it, and if I'm not sure about something, I'll talk to someone about it. (S7)

Group discussions, involving people in the room together, asking questions to individual people so you're active… you're an active participant in the room, in the learning, and they kind of see you as a separate individual to the person next to you and the person next to you. It's almost like they have a… they understand the different people that are in the room, and they kind know where they are at… (S14)

Summaries of Perceptions and Responses to feedback

Easier to ask questions in smaller less formal classes

Perception of lectures attitude to feedback – are they perceived as approachable

It's done in a friendly kind of smiling; non-threatening manner and they actually show that they care or at least pretend to care that the mark matters

Actually, reading feedback – dependent on teacher practices

Usefulness of feedback questionable

Draft reading practices

Use of consultation times

Relatable to work contexts

Engagement with content better when directly related to work and more likely to seek feedback

Informal and verbal feedback preferred

Generic feedback preferred as it lets you see what other students have trouble with

Lecturers give away hints when approached directly

The key is informal (formative) feedback along the way as you develop your writing

Danger of written feedback without the chance to clarify

Appendix G: Sample of Coding Used for Final Themes

Samples of coding used for final the development of themes

Purpose of Feedback

To guide learning that's probably pretty broad.

Feedbacks about is feedback on what you have done so far.

In this context of the MBA the feedback is about the assurance of learning. Because we are not paying to be here for some fun, we are here for genuine learning, so you are going "is what you are telling me… am I getting it?" Or am I you know not getting it?

Anytime I have ever come across someone explaining what feedback was to me, it was as a quality assurance tool… When you say assurance, you mean to ensure or to value add? Actually, so you want to be going yes whatever I am giving you back by my assignment my presentations I'm meeting the mark so yes, I am ensuring that I am meeting the competency level. But in terms of the value, add I am meeting the competency level and more so that feedback that I am getting should be directing me to go well look you are meeting the mark in this context for the competencies here but this is another area of exploration. There is not one single subject I have had where any of the feedback was anywhere near that level of detail.

I sort of talk about the purpose of feedback being about teaching and learning, relationships, quality, and it's very… Feedback is much more than the written comments or the comments.

Asking you a question - feedback could be just that.

It can be very very subtle. Just that nod or the twinkle in the eye at the right time..

So, it's encouragement, it's an assessment thing. It's very much about that interactive learning and class engagement.

And feedback at its best is a… I believe a collaborative… collaborative is the wrong word… Reciprocal?

I don't think the purpose has been well articulated… Accidental would be too harsh… but it wouldn't be that far off being…

I just really think it comes back to being so lecturer contingent.

Is there a common purpose between what students and expect and understand of the purpose of feedback and what lectures expect and understand the purpose of feedback? It very much depends on the students involved – the students are very diverse.

Responsibility for Feedback

It does rely on both parties but for the reasons of the disparity between levels of students (for starters) completely wipes off a whole lot of opportunity to give genuine feedback there and then. Because you know your feedback on whatever is going is potentially going to put down some of your other students in the room.

There is also the element of the nature of feedback that we are discussing here is very steeped in a sort of a very western anglo professional tradition where it actually is respectful to treat each other as equals – to treat your superior as an equal – that's showing you like and can approach them.

Where does feedback come from or whose responsibility… taking on-board what you have said about the culture distance – bloody hell this is a university that's saying we are going to teach this subject then embed feedback in the curriculum. Or make it a subject.

Or when kids walk through the door – go look half of you are internationals and we have enough cultural awareness in this organisation to say that we will be engaging on a journey that for you might be challenging culturally and mentally. I don't think there is anything wrong to say you know what as the instigators of this particular course we've got this thing called feedback and this is how it works…. And it's a critical part of the program.

Yes, and of the learning experience and it's going to be challenging for some of you and we are not trying to sanitise your culture or anything, but it has got to be embedded in the philosophy of teaching.

Facilitator: *Is it embedded in the philosophy of teaching?*

No, it's accidental – no its incidental not accidental - Or it's a procedural thing.

…so his assignment feedback landed 48 hours later, and you know it destroyed his weekends a lot but that was a process that he put in place that you know… and it added to the relationship because you trusted him and respected him.

Also, to be fair I recon the lectures that I had the most effective relationships with I also saw it as my responsibility. In almost all my lecturers I attempted to form a relationship of some kind.

Absolutely – and I saw it as my responsibility too – a shared responsibility. Things like being on-time, things like asking insightful and thoughtful questions, being an active participant.

Like participation. If they ask you a question don't be a free loader actually say something. Even if you have to give them a bit of slack to help them.

But I think building that relationship is a mutual responsibility.

Isn't that a way of giving them feedback too as like I am willing to learn, showing up on time, asking questions, reading your notes. Like I think it is just respect but it tells them I am here to learn.

Yeah engagement. Even things like saying I got it I would make a conscious effort to nod, or smile.

Try to give them some encouragement. Like you were saying – which I think was beautifully said earlier on at the start – feedback can be that nuance in tone.

Facilitator: *Equal responsibility? Or more student more lecturer*

The lecturer - I think they have the power to create the feedback… Especially at masters level. Yeah, to create it and then it is your responsibility… you walk into it ready to engage… To reciprocate. Yes, to reciprocate - they invited you to dinner sort of thing.

That's the reason it is their responsibility to make it. It is not our job to win them over it should be their job to win us over, but we should be part of that winning… We should be willing to be seduced as well.

I don't know - For me I don't think it is necessarily more of the lectures' responsibility. If you have consistency and you have genuine equal levels across every subject for engagement you can then state that yes, it is probably more ownership on the students' part because they are there to learn and you are in a masters environment so they should be really trying to engage in that learning experience. But in this environment where it is so inconsistent you could not say it is you students who need to… there has to be more to overcome the fact that it is so inconsistent.

But there is a hierarchy. You go to a lecturer's lecturer you are the student, and the lecturer has the responsibility to disseminate the knowledge and create the relationship - Yeah you have to sit at the feet of Socrates.

Yeah, but I think the primary responsibility lies with the teacher but not sole responsibility. Would that be a fair…? Yeah, it's like tennis they serve first. They've got to lead off. Yeah one because they are providing a service so it's their responsibility but also because of the power dynamic they have the ability to create the environment from the get-go. Yeah, it's not a democracy. Yes - so you kick off and I will reciprocate.

Yeah, that's a really good analogy, but there is an adult responsibility on the part of the student to support, to reciprocate, to engage.

Feedback-Seeking

You know if you got off your arse and went to the consult. That had the potential to be absolutely exceptional.

There were some questions that we could answer in class, and I was the only one to ask the questions I asked him if it was possible if you could share the solutions on Moodle or whatever. He said fine. One week and still no solutions so I asked him again. He said he can't share those solutions because he would be using those solutions for next year. I then sent him an email outlining that I was paying so much money and he wanted to make life easier for him next year. So, I made it very difficult for him to say no as otherwise I would find it difficult to pass the subject. I also said I wouldn't share the solutions with anyone, He then gave me the solutions.

So, if I am not sure whether or not there is going to be a genuine… I guess contentment for the lecture to have me ask a lot of question and to sit there and do the debate that Grant Means and to be respectful. So, if you are not confident that that's going to happen then you are immediately on the back foot in giving feedback and how you are going to respond to it. And I think for me that was not consistent in all of the subject it was actually only really there for two of them…

I was a little bit the same and it was when I was chucked in the deep end again in a numerical subject. I bailed the lecturer up after class and he said stop talking and come and see me in consultation. And I went there, and I was a bit flustered – and consultation is remedial education sort of thing. The way he approached it was the one who reversed my thinking. I was like consultation was the way to get feedback on your learning – like am I doing this right. And now I don't recall a subject since where I haven't been to consultation.

I misunderstood some of the feedback I think in terms of… he was really trying to give an academic direction about a path to go down – I was looking for some clarity on a thing and everything he came back to me with seemed to broaden out something I was trying to seek some clarity on, and it pulled me in because I was going to broad. It sounds to like you were seeking an answer rather than feedback.

If I reflect on the feedback seeking. I think that you pick up quite quickly – for want of a better word - the lectures approachability.

Oh yes one hundred percent. It could be the simplest thing like asking a question during class and whether the response was seen as an opportunity or an interruption to the class. So, the lectures who saw that as an opportunity and were like that's so good anyone else want to go there let's go with this. But that notion of… you kind of got that vibe very quickly. And there were certain lectures which you would build this feedback relationship and it would be in class, it would be after class it would be during breaks, it would be during things, it would be after the course – you could see them, have a coffee.

Email as well. If you shot a lecturer an email, whether they responded, how quickly they responded. That was a big indicator for me. At masters level for crying out loud there is a page in the front of the subject outline called emailed etiquette…

Because one of the big things for me is actually that approachability. Because so many people are in office jobs its quite easy to send the lecturer and email. And for me it spoke volumes when they got back to you in a timely manner. Some would only respond in the consultation time or ask you to visit them in their consultation times to discuss. It's basically a fuck you.

But as a feedback thing I went to him and said I am going to fail. That was my way of saying like almost an SOS because he wasn't reading the room. People were just clocking off and talking and not showing up. So, I just decided to light and emergency flare and just went and saw him and said I am going to fail.

Appendix H: Researcher Reflexivity Sample

Figure H.1 Theme formation – Purpose of feedback

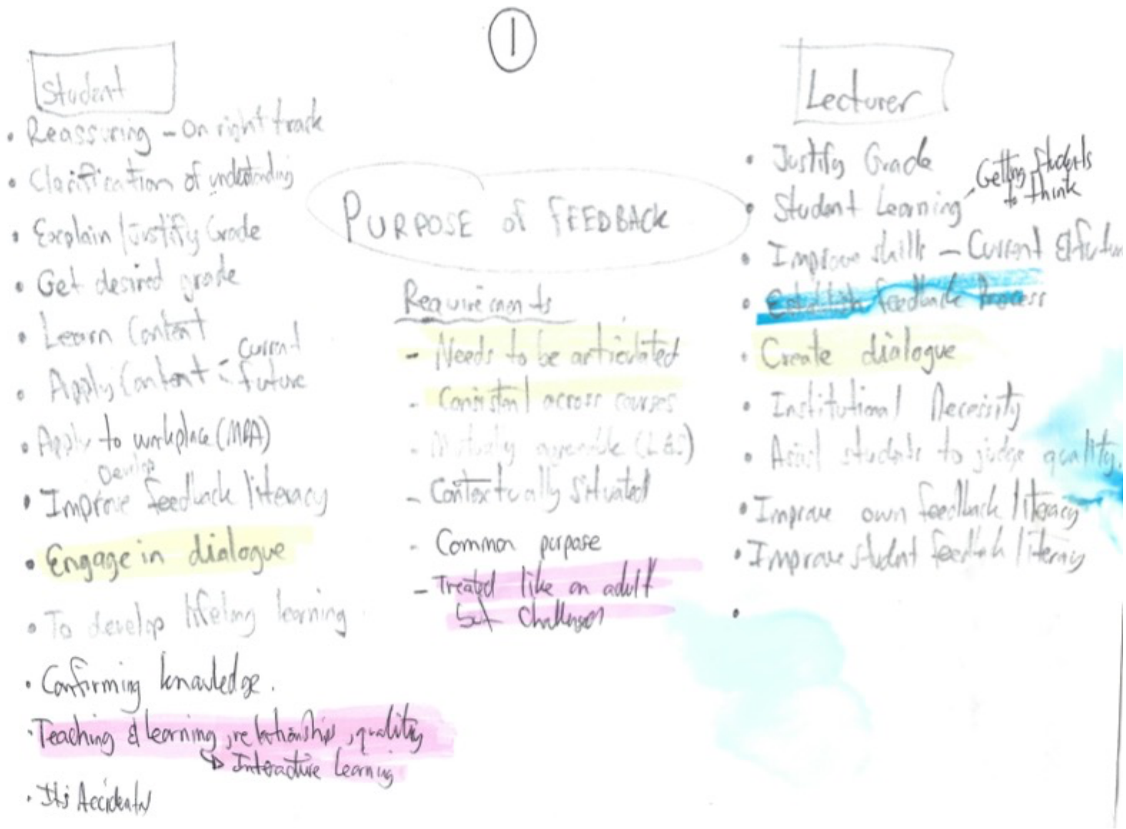


Figure H.2 Theme formation – Responsibility for feedback

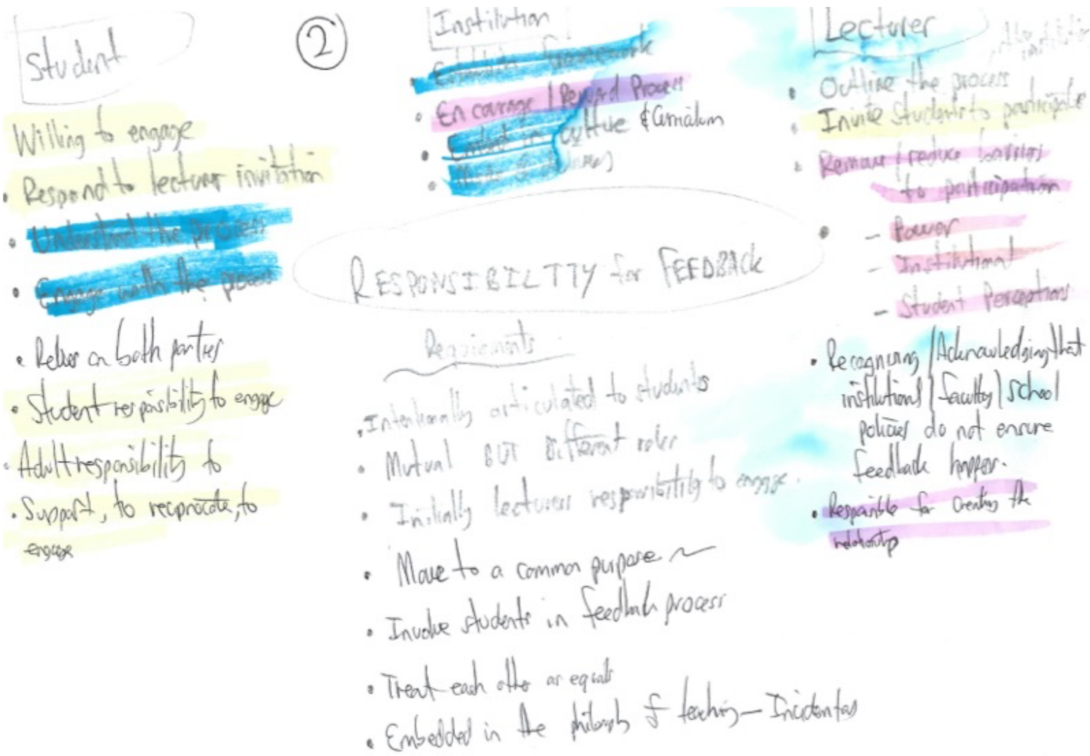


Figure H.3 Theme formation – Feedback-Seeking

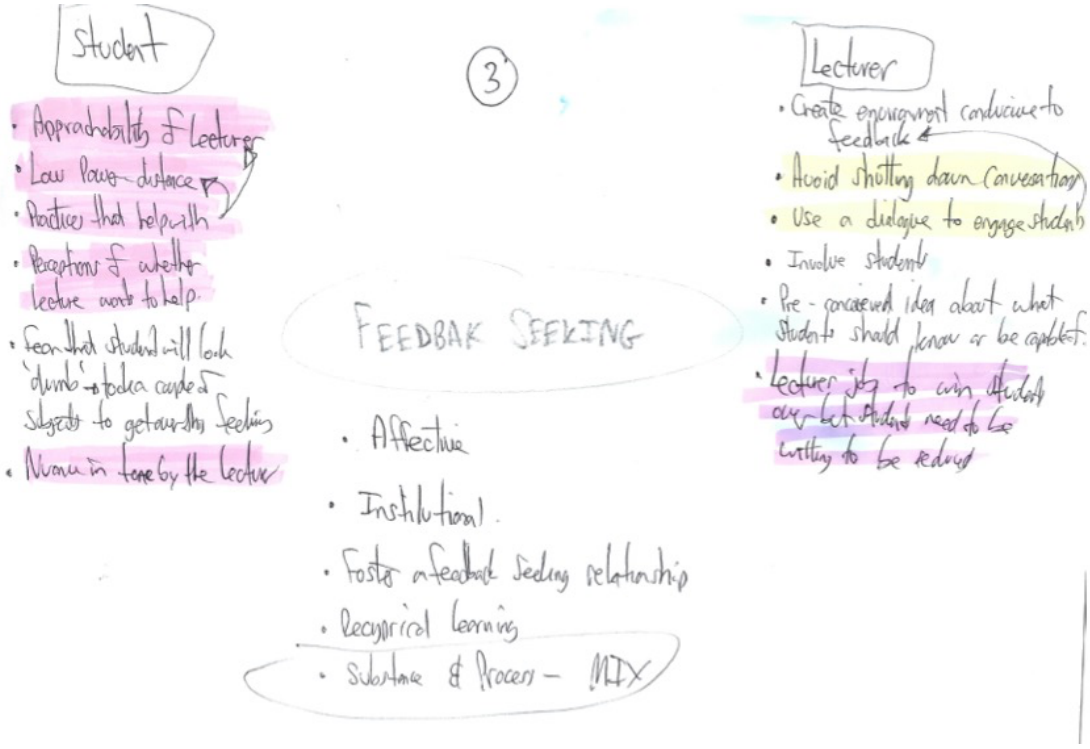
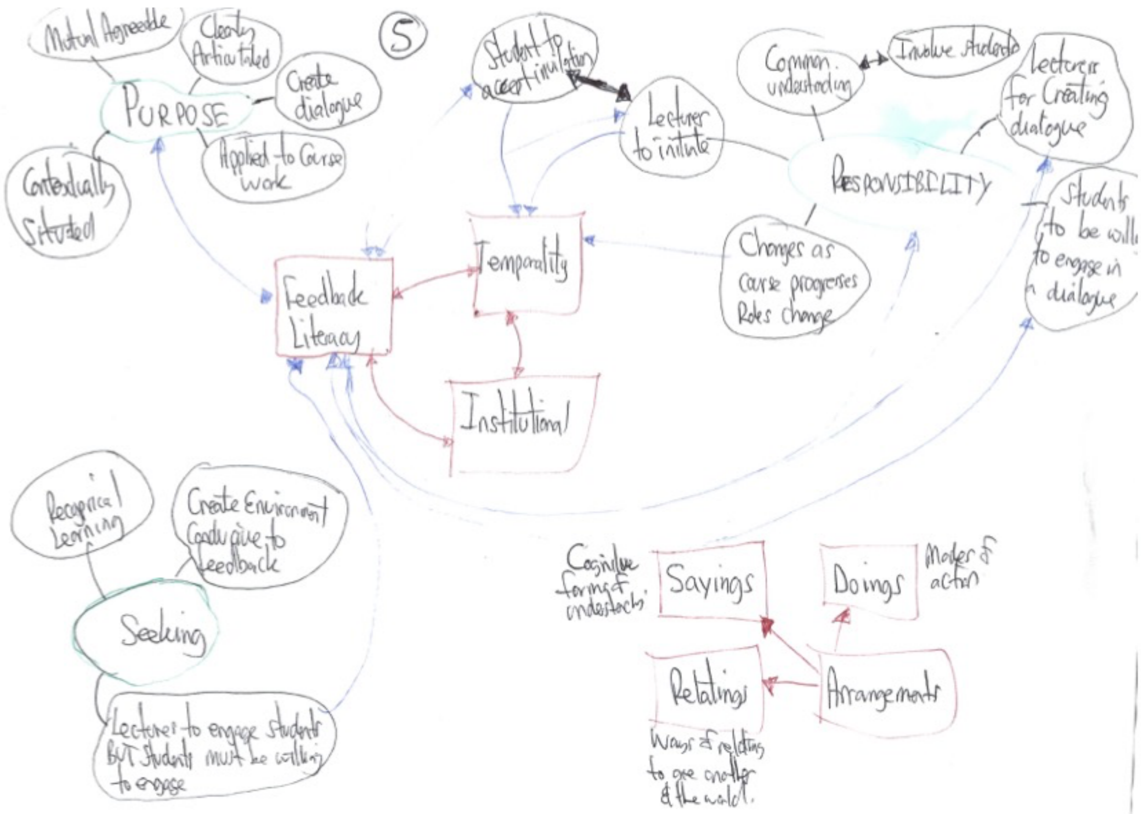


Figure H.4 Theme formation – Interactions



Appendix I: Ethics Documents

CONSENT FORM MBA STUDENTS – SYDNEY BUSINESS SCHOOL

PROJECT TITLE: The relational practices that impact on feedback
RESEARCHER: Mr Mark Middleton
RESEARCHERS: Dr Grace McCarthy, Dr Lynne Keevers
UNIT: Sydney Business School – University of Wollongong

PROJECT
I have been given information about the research project titled '*The relational practices that impact on feedback',* have read the participant information sheet and have had the opportunity to discuss the research project with Mr Mark Middleton who is a PhD student within the Sydney Business School at the University of Wollongong.

I have been advised of the potential risks and burdens associated with this research, the procedures required for the project and the time involved. I understand that it will include use of my time for participation in surveys, interviews, focus groups, group discussions and observation. I understand that if I consent to participate in this project the contributions I make will be used in this study but will be kept confidential. I have had an opportunity to ask Mr Mark Middleton any questions I may have about the research and my participation.

I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary, I am free to refuse to participate and I am free to withdraw from the research at any time. My refusal to participate or withdrawal of consent will not affect my studies and/or employment in any way with the Sydney Business School or my relationship with the University of Wollongong.

If I have any enquiries about the research, I can contact Mr Mark Middleton on mdm705@uowmail.edu.au or ph[redacted] or if I have any concerns or complaints regarding the way the research is or has been conducted, I can contact the Ethics Officer, University of Wollongong on (02) 4221 3386 or email rso-ethics@uow.edu.au.

By signing and ticking the appropriate checkboxes below I am indicating my consent to participate in the research project titled *'The relational practices that impact on feedback'*. I understand that the data collected from my participation will be used as part of the research required for Mr Middleton's PhD and inform curriculum development and teaching and learning practices in the Sydney Business School. It will also contribute to the submission of journal articles and papers which will be presented at conferences, and I consent for it to be used in that manner. I understand that I will not be identified in any publication or report that arises from this research. Specifically, I consent to:

- ☐ Complete a survey on feedback - Please turnover for sample survey questions
- ☐ Participate in focus groups and discussions. It is estimated that there will be three sessions. The focus group sessions will run for approximately 60 minutes and will be conducted at either the CBD or Innovation campuses of the Sydney Business School or on the UOW main campus. These sessions will be recorded. Only the members of the research team will read, hear, or see the responses. Please turnover for sample survey questions.
- ☐ Talking to the researchers in one-on-one interviews, which will be recorded. Only the members of the research team will read, hear, or see the responses.
- ☐ Aspects of my learning experiences may be observed as part of the feedback process. These observations will not be recorded in any form. The non-identifiable written record of these observations will only be seen by the research team.

Name: _________________________ Email: ___________________________
Signed: _________________________ Date: ____________________________

Sample Survey Questions Students

The survey contains 4 sections with a total of 35 questions. There are four sections focussing on the topics below. A sample question for each section is also included:

Section 1: Demographics:

> ***"I am a domestic / international student"***

Section 2: Feedback Practices**:**

> ***"I actively seek feedback in my degree program by (select all that apply)"***

Section 3: Value of feedback:

> ***"The feedback received prompted me to take action and go back over material covered in the course"***

Section 4: Attitudes to feedback**:**

> ***"I see feedback as a two-way flow of information between student and teacher"***

Sample Focus Group Questions Students

What is your understanding of feedback?

What types of feedback have you experienced? What have you found to be the most useful? Can you explain why? Can you provide any examples of what makes feedback useful?

Has the feedback you received met your expectations?

Are there occasions where you respond more positively to the way feedback is provided? Can you explain why?

How often do you actively seek feedback from lecturers? What stimulates you to seek feedback? How do you go about seeking feedback?

CONSENT FORM MBA TEACHING STAFF – SYDNEY BUSINESS SCHOOL

PROJECT TITLE: The relational practices that impact on feedback
RESEARCHER: Mr Mark Middleton
RESEARCHERS: Dr Grace McCarthy, Dr Lynne Keevers
UNIT: Sydney Business School – University of Wollongong

PROJECT:
I have been given information about the research project titled '*The relational practices that impact on feedback*', have read the participant information sheet and have had the opportunity to discuss the research project with Mr Mark Middleton who is a PhD student within the Sydney Business School at the University of Wollongong.

I have been advised of the potential risks and burdens associated with this research, the procedures required for the project and the time involved. I understand that it will include use of my time for participation in surveys, interviews, focus groups, group discussions and observation. I understand that if I consent to participate in this project the contributions, I make will be used in this study but will be kept confidential. I have had an opportunity to ask Mr Mark Middleton any questions I may have about the research and my participation.

I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary, I am free to refuse to participate and I am free to withdraw from the research at any time. My refusal to participate or withdrawal of consent will not affect my employment in any way with the Sydney Business School or my relationship with the University of Wollongong.

If I have any enquiries about the research, I can contact Mr Mark Middleton on mdm705@uowmail.edu.au or ph: [redacted] or if I have any concerns or complaints regarding the way the research is or has been conducted, I can contact the Ethics Officer, University of Wollongong on (02) 4221 3386 or email rso-ethics@uow.edu.au .

By signing and ticking the appropriate checkboxes below I am indicating my consent to participate in the research project titled *'The relational practices that impact on feedback'*. I understand that the data collected from my participation will be used as part of the research required for Mr Middleton's PhD and inform curriculum development and teaching and learning practices in the Sydney Business School. It will also contribute to the submission of journal articles and papers which will be presented at conferences, and I consent for it to be used in that manner. I understand that I will not be identified in any publication or report that arises from this research. Specifically, I consent to:

- ☐ Participate in focus groups and discussions. It is estimated that there will be three sessions. The focus group sessions will run for approximately 60 minutes and will be conducted at either the CBD or Innovation campuses of the Sydney Business School or on the main UOW campus. These sessions will be recorded. Only the members of the research team will read, hear, or see the responses. Please turn over for sample focus group questions.
- ☐ Talking to the researchers in one-on-one interviews, which will be recorded. Only the members of the research team will read, hear, or see the responses.
- ☐ Aspects of my teaching and feedback practices may be observed as part of the feedback process. These observations will not be recorded in any form. The non-identifiable written record of these observations will only be seen by the research team.

Name: ________________________ Email: ____________________________

Signed: ________________________ Date:____________________________

Sample Focus Group Questions Staff

What is your understanding of feedback? Is feedback necessary? Why/Why not?

What types of feedback do you use? Does one form of feedback take precedence?

How do you find students respond to feedback? In your experience do students actively seek feedback?

Can you tell me about some of your experiences of giving feedback.

Are there any practices you use that assist students to seek and engage with feedback?

CONSENT FORM
MBA STUDENTS (SYDNEY BUSINESS SCHOOL) – FOCUS GROUPS

PROJECT TITLE: The relational practices that impact on feedback
RESEARCHER: Mr Mark Middleton
RESEARCHERS: Dr Grace McCarthy, Dr Lynne Keevers
UNIT: Sydney Business School – University of Wollongong

PROJECT
I have been given information about the research project titled '*The relational practices that impact on feedback',* have read the participant information sheet and have had the opportunity to discuss the research project with Mr Mark Middleton who is a PhD student within the Sydney Business School at the University of Wollongong.

I have been advised of the potential risks and burdens associated with this research, the procedures required for the project and the time involved. I understand that it will include use of my time for participation in surveys, interviews, focus groups, group discussions and observation. I understand that if I consent to participate in this project the contributions, I make will be used in this study but will be kept confidential. I have had an opportunity to ask Mr Mark Middleton any questions I may have about the research and my participation.

I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary, I am free to refuse to participate and I am free to withdraw from the research at any time. My refusal to participate or withdrawal of consent will not affect my studies and/or employment in any way with the Sydney Business School or my relationship with the University of Wollongong.

If I have any enquiries about the research, I can contact Mr Mark Middleton on mdm705@uowmail.edu.au or ph: [redacted] or if I have any concerns or complaints regarding the way the research is or has been conducted, I can contact the Ethics Officer, University of Wollongong on (02) 4221 3386 or email rso-ethics@uow.edu.au.

By signing and ticking the appropriate checkboxes below I am indicating my consent to participate in the research project titled *'The relational practices that impact on feedback'*. I understand that the data collected from my participation will be used as part of the research required for Mr Middleton's PhD and inform curriculum development and teaching and learning practices in the Sydney Business School. It will also contribute to the submission of journal articles and papers which will be presented at conferences, and I consent for it to be used in that manner. I understand that I will not be identified in any publication or report that arises from this research.

Specifically, I consent to participate in focus group discussions. The focus group session will run for a maximum of 90 minutes and will be conducted at either the Sydney CBD campus or on the UOW main campus. These sessions will be recorded. Only the members of the research team will read, hear, or see the responses. Please turnover for sample survey questions.

Name: ______________________________ Email:_________________________

Signed: ______________________________ Date:__________________________

Sample Focus Group Questions Students

What is your understanding of the purpose of feedback?

Does understanding the purpose of feedback help?

Do you have an understanding of who is responsible for feedback?

What practices encourage and enable feedback?

Can you provide any examples of what makes feedback useful?

How often do you actively seek feedback from lecturers? And why do you seek feedback?

Appendix J: Survey Tool

Questionnaire for the survey of MBA Students

Section 1: Demographic Information:

1) Student number: ________________________

2) Gender
   - ❑ Male
   - ❑ Female

3) Age:
   - ❑ 18-24
   - ❑ 25-29
   - ❑ 30-34
   - ❑ 35-39
   - ❑ 40-44
   - ❑ 45-49
   - ❑ 50-54
   - ❑ 55-59
   - ❑ 60+

4) I am a:
   - ❑ Domestic Student
   - ❑ International Student

5) English is my
   - ❑ First language
   - ❑ Not my first language

6) I have the following years experience in the workforce
   - ❑ < 1 Year
   - ❑ 1 – 2 Years
   - ❑ 3 – 5 Years
   - ❑ 6 – 10 Years
   - ❑ > 10 Years

7) I am studying
   - ❑ Full time
   - ❑ Part time

8) My highest completed qualification is:
- ❑ Undergraduate Degree
- ❑ Postgraduate Degree
- ❑ Other (please specify) ____________________________

9) I am studying at the UOW Sydney Business School:
- ❑ Innovation Campus
- ❑ Sydney CBD Campus

Section 2: Feedback Practices:

The following questions relate to your experiences across the MBA program not just individual subjects

10) I have received feedback in the form of (select all that apply)
- ❑ Generic feedback delivered to the entire class
- ❑ Written comments on set assessments
- ❑ Informal discussions with lecturers
- ❑ Examples of good practice
- ❑ Peer feedback
- ❑ Grades
- ❑ Model answers given by the lecturer
- ❑ Other (Please specify) ______________________________________

11) I actively seek feedback in my degree program by (select all that apply)
- ❑ Taking advantage of the lecturers' student consultation times
- ❑ Asking questions during class time
- ❑ Talking to the lecturer after the class and/or in the mid-lecturer break
- ❑ Email or other electronic means
- ❑ Phone - including leaving a message
- ❑ Other (please specify) ______________________________________

12) Thinking about the feedback received across the MBA program
- ❑ I would like to receive more feedback
- ❑ I would like to receive less feedback
- ❑ The feedback I receive is adequate

When answering the questions below, indicate your response by marking the line at the point that best describes your opinion

13) In the MBA program I have had the purpose and design of feedback explained to me

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

14) In general I receive the feedback in time to make use of it

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

15) I would like feedback on examinations

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

16) I understand the feedback I receive

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

17) I use feedback provided

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

18) I make use of lecturer consultation time to seek feedback

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

Section 3: Value of feedback

19) I am satisfied with the **quantity** of feedback received

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

20) I am satisfied with the **quality** of feedback I receive

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

21) The feedback received prompted me to take action and go back over material covered

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

in the course

22) The feedback received is relevant beyond the immediate context

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

23) The feedback received helps to highlight the gap between my current knowledge and understanding and where I need to be

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

24) The feedback I receive allows me to make my own judgements on what constitutes quality work

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

Section 4: Attitudes to feedback

25) Please select all of the following that apply

- ❑ I seek and/or read feedback on assessments if I am disappointed with my grade
- ❑ I seek and/or read feedback on assessments if I am satisfied with my grade
- ❑ I seek and/or read feedback on assessments that count towards my final grade
- ❑ I seek and/or read feedback on all assessments

26) I collect assignments that contain feedback

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

27) I feel comfortable seeking feedback

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

28) I see feedback as a two-way flow of information between student and teacher

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

29) Feedback should encourage teacher and peer dialogue

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

30) Feedback provided should outline what to do better for my future learning

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

31) If I have had a prior negative experience when receiving feedback, I am less inclined to seek further feedback

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

32) One of the purposes of feedback is to equip me better for self assessment and regulation

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

33) Feedback should clarify what good performance is

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

34) Feedback should encourage learning ahead of performance

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

35) The feedback I receive matches my expectations of postgraduate study

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STRONGLY DISAGREE — STRONGLY AGREE

Appendix K: Questionnaire Data

Table K Questionnaire Data

Initial Questionnaire Data				
Question No.		**Question**	**Response %**	**Likets Scale 0 -10**
10	❑	Generic	84.42	
	❑	Written comments	84.42	
	❑	informal discussions	53.25	
	❑	examples of good practice	24.68	
	❑	Peer Feedback	25.97	
	❑	Grades	68.83	
	❑	Model answers	36.36	
11	❑	Taking advantage of the lecturers student consultation times	36.4	
	❑	Asking questions during class time	74	
	❑	Talking to the lecturer after the class and/or in the mid-lecturer break	68.8	
	❑	Email or other electronic means	71.4	
	❑	Phone including leaving a message	9.1	
12	❑	More Feedback	70.13	
	❑	Adequate	30	
13		In the MBA program I have had the purpose and design of feedback explained to me		4.96
14		In general I receive the feedback in time to make use of it		6.16
15		I would like feedback on examinations		8.33
16		I understand the feedback I receive		7.34
17		I use feedback provided		8.12
18		I make use of lecturer consultation times to seek feedback		4.74
19		I am satisfied with the quantity of feedback received		5.92
20		I am satisfied with the quality of feedback received		6.33
21		The feedback received prompted me to take action and go back over material covered in the course		6.91
22		The feedback received is relevant beyond the immediate context		6.22
23		The feedback received helps to highlight the gap between my current knowledge and understanding and where I need to be		7.23
24		The feedback I receive allows me to make my own judgements on what constitutes quality work		7.42
25	❑	I seek and/or read feedback on assessments if I am disappointed with my grade	71.43	
	❑	I seek and/or read feedback on assessments if I am satisfied with my grade	50.65	
	❑	I seek and/or read feedback on assessments that count towards my final grade	57.14	
	❑	I seek and/or read feedback on all assessments	76.62	
26		I collect assignments that contain feedback		8.51
27		I feel comfortable seeking feedback		8.15
28		I see feedback as a two way flow of information between student and teacher		7.75
29		Feedback should encourage teacher and peer dialogue		8.51
30		Feedback provided should outline what to do better for my future learning		8.65
31		If I have had a prior negative experience when receiving feedback I am less inclined to seek further feedback		5.45
32		One of the purposes of feedback is to equip me better for self assessment and regulation		8.17
33		Feedback should clarify what good performance is		8.71
34		Feedback should encourage learning ahead of performance		8.18
35		The feedback I receive matches my expectations of postgraduate study		6.22

Appendix L: Definition of Key Terms

Program Director at UOW:
Academic staff member who can provide strategic leadership for one or more UOW coursework programs, and who takes ultimate responsibility for key areas of the course design and course performance (https://www.uow.edu.au/the-arts-social-sciences-humanities/current-students/key-academic-contacts/)

Lecturer MBA UOW:
Prepares and deliver lectures in one or more subjects within the MBA program. Conducts research in a particular field of knowledge. May be involved in governance. NB: In the MBA program there are no tutors; the lecturer is responsible for all content delivery, assessment, and grading.

Learning Management System (LMS)

Web-based software application that stores a range of information types. The administration of instructors, users, courses, and content is centralised and automated within an LMS. There are many commercially available LMS applications (Chaubey & Bhattacharya 2015, pp. 158-159). The University of Wollongong[30] uses Moodle™.

The LMS has a range of functions including:

- The provision of an interactive learning environment.
- The administration and facilitation of customised instructional and learning materials and tool for lecturers including drag-and-drop tools for the provision of feedback.
- Student access to interactive learning content, assessment information and submission, and reports of learning progress.

[30] https://www.uow.edu.au/student/learning-co-op/technology-and-software/moodle/

Appendix M: UOW Grade Descriptors

University of Wollongong Grade Descriptors

The University of Wollongong Grade Descriptors are general statements that describe student performance at each of the University's grade levels.

They aim to:

a) Communicate to students and staff what our grades represent in terms of standards of performance.
   - Students can refer to these descriptors prospectively when working on assessments to understand what is expected of them, and retrospectively after having received a mark for an assessment or in a subject to understand how their performance has been assessed and graded.
   - Staff can refer to these descriptors prospectively when designing assessment tasks and marking criteria and when marking assessments, including using them as a basis for crafting marking rubrics, and retrospectively when undertaking benchmarking and review of marking and grading.

b) Provide a frame of reference for moderation of assessment activities, especially within teaching teams, to ensure that assessment practice across the University is appropriate, consistent and fair.

The University of Wollongong Grade Descriptors are expressed in general terms so that they are applicable to a broad range of disciplines, including mathematical and computational disciplines.

UOW uses criterion-referenced grading processes as opposed to a normal distribution grading scheme.

Grade	Mark (%)	Descriptor
High Distinction HD	85-100	A high distinction grade (HD) is awarded for performance that provides evidence of an outstanding level of attainment of the relevant subject learning outcomes, demonstrating the attributes of a distinction grade plus (as applicable): • consistent evidence of deep and critical understanding • substantial originality and insight in identifying, generating and communicating competing arguments, perspectives or problem-solving approaches • critical evaluation of problems, their solutions and their implications • use of quantitative analysis of data as the basis for deep and thoughtful judgments, drawing insightful, carefully qualified conclusions from this work • creativity in application as appropriate to the discipline • eloquent and sophisticated communication of information and ideas in terms of the conventions of the discipline • consistent application of appropriate skills, techniques and methods with outstanding levels of precision and accuracy • all or almost all answers correct, very few or none incorrect
Distinction D	75-84	A distinction grade (D) is awarded for performance that provides evidence of a superior level of attainment of the relevant subject learning outcomes, demonstrating the attributes of a credit grade plus (as applicable): • evidence of integration and evaluation of critical ideas, principles, concepts and/or theories • distinctive insight and ability in applying relevant skills, techniques, methods and/or concepts • demonstration of frequent originality in defining and analysing issues or problems and providing solutions • fluent and thorough communication of information and ideas in terms of the conventions of the discipline • frequent application of appropriate skills, techniques and methods with superior levels of precision and accuracy • most answers correct, few incorrect
Credit C	65-74	A credit grade (C) is awarded for performance that provides evidence of a high level of attainment of the relevant subject learning outcomes, demonstrating the attributes of a pass grade plus (as applicable): • evidence of learning that goes beyond replication of content knowledge or skills • demonstration of solid understanding of fundamental concepts in the field of study • demonstration of the ability to apply these concepts in a variety of contexts • use of convincing arguments with appropriate coherent and logical reasoning • clear communication of information and ideas in terms of the conventions of the discipline • regular application of appropriate skills, techniques and methods with high levels of precision and accuracy • many answers correct, some incorrect
Pass P	50-64	A pass grade (P) is awarded for performance that provides evidence of a satisfactory level attainment of the relevant subject learning outcomes, demonstrating (as applicable): • knowledge, understanding and application of fundamental concepts of the field of study • use of routine arguments with acceptable reasoning • adequate communication of information and ideas in terms of the conventions of the discipline • ability to apply appropriate skills, techniques and methods with satisfactory levels of precision and accuracy • a combination of correct and incorrect answers
Fail F	<50	A fail grade (F) is given for performance that does not provide sufficient evidence of attainment of the relevant subject learning outcomes.
Technical Fail TF		A technical fail (TF) grade is given when minimum performance level requirements for at least one assessment item in the subject as a whole has not been met despite the student achieving at least a satisfactory level of attainment of the subject learning outcomes.
Satisfactory S		A satisfactory grade (S) is awarded for performance that demonstrates a satisfactory level of attainment of the relevant subject learning outcomes.
Unsatisfactory U		An unsatisfactory grade (U) is awarded for performance that demonstrates an unsatisfactory level of attainment of the relevant subject learning outcomes.
Excellent		An excellent grade (E) may be awarded, instead of a satisfactory grade (S), within subjects from the School of Medicine that have been completed with a consistent pattern of high standard of performance in all aspects of the subject.

Nb: The University of Wollongong acknowledges Macquarie University's scheme of grade descriptors which have been used, with permission, as a basis for this document.