

1 **Title: Examining how the presence, absence and numerical value of a grade affects**  
2 **students' perceptions of assessment feedback.**

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5 **Keywords:** Feedback-perception; Higher Education; Students; Grade-perception, Grade-  
6 priming.

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12 **Title: Examining how the presence, absence and numerical value of a grade affects**  
13 **students' perceptions of assessment feedback.**

14

## 15 **Abstract**

16 We explored whether the academic grade a student sees influences how positively or negatively  
17 they interpret written assessment feedback. Specifically, an experimental design was used  
18 where  $N = 94$  psychology students each read an identical passage of neutrally worded feedback.  
19 Depending upon which of three experimental conditions they had been allocated to, they also  
20 saw with the feedback either a grade of (i) 75% (High Grade;  $n = 33$ ); (ii) 45% (Low Grade:  $n$   
21  $= 31$ ) or (iii) No Grade (control condition;  $n = 30$ ). Next, they answered seven questions relating  
22 to their perceptions of the feedback they had read. As predicted, those in the High Grade and  
23 No Grade conditions provided significantly more positive perceptions of the neutral feedback  
24 compared to those in the Low Grade condition. Implications for those within higher education,  
25 who are responsible for deciding how and when grades and feedback are released to students,  
26 are discussed.

27

## 28 **Introduction**

29 Qualitative assessment feedback is a key component in learning gain (Hattie & Timperley,  
30 2007), and recent years have seen considerable interest in improving feedback practices  
31 across higher education (see e.g. Evans, 2013 for a review). Although a large proportion of  
32 research related to feedback content and practices is carried out in the UK (perhaps in  
33 response to the NSS, Evans, 2013), the issue is also of relevance internationally (Carless  
34 Salter, Yang & Lam 2011; Broadbent, Pandero & Boud 2018, Winstone & Nash, 2016), and  
35 it is widely recognised that assessment feedback is key for effective student progress  
36 (e.g. Ilgen & Davis, 2000). In addition, students who act upon their feedback tend to have  
37 better self-regulated learning and academic outcomes (Brown et al., 2016). However,

38 a remaining challenge is to determine how students perceive their feedback, and to what  
39 extent they successfully engage with the feedback process (Winston et al., 2017). Student  
40 satisfaction with feedback is a persistent cause for concern in higher education where a  
41 pertinent example is the National Student Survey in which feedback satisfaction continues to  
42 rate lower than other areas covered by the survey (Office for Students, 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2019).

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44 Assessment feedback has the potential to be useful and constructive to learning if  
45 appropriately acted upon, but this may depend on how it is delivered (Winstone et al., 2017)  
46 and also how it is received and perceived by the student. Qualitative feedback verbally  
47 communicates to the student areas of strength in their work, areas in need of improvement  
48 and suggestions for how the student might improve in their future work. This type of  
49 feedback has the potential to elicit differing responses, reactions and perceptions in the  
50 recipient. For example, Baadte and Schnotz (2013) have reported that feedback can affect  
51 students' motivation and engagement. As a result, much research effort has been directed  
52 toward identifying an optimal delivery method for feedback (Price et al., 2011; Winston et  
53 al., 2016). Fundamental to the effectiveness of feedback are the assumptions that students  
54 will actively read; mentally process; and then act upon their feedback. However, low levels of  
55 engagement with feedback (such as collecting/cursorily reading) are commonly reported (e.g.  
56 Hounsell et al., 2007; Sinclair & Cleland, 2007). Price et al (2011), report that, for some  
57 students, the grade alone is sufficient as a form of feedback, and that for some, a grade that  
58 meets their current self-expectation will actually reduce their motivation to attend to, and  
59 engage with, the written feedback.

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61 Withholding assessment grades and releasing qualitative feedback first, has been investigated  
62 as a potential tool to improve student engagement with feedback (Irwin et al., 2013; Jackson

63 & Marks, 2015; Lipnevich & Smith, 2009). However, to date, we found only one research  
64 report (Lipnevich & Smith, 2009) which has systematically addressed the impact  
65 of the grade awarded has on the receiver's response to feedback. Lipnevich and Smith (2009)  
66 used an authentic learning task to investigate the effects of feedback type, praise and grade on  
67 student performance. Lipnevich and Smith (2009) manipulated whether or not a grade was  
68 presented, and whether the presence of a grade had an impact on the effectiveness of  
69 the feedback. Overall, detailed feedback had the most beneficial effect on improvement.  
70 However, substantially lower improvement was observed when feedback had been coupled  
71 with a grade than with no grade given. The authors suggest that students' responses to the  
72 grade may impact their perception and processing of the feedback. This is very likely given  
73 the influence that emotions can have on cognitive processing (see Mueller, 2011 for review)  
74 and in educational assessment in particular (see Boud & Falchikov, 2007). In addition, the  
75 findings from Lipnevich and Smith (2009) indicate that receiving a grade directly impacts the  
76 student's response to their feedback, either due to a reallocation of cognitive resources,  
77 and/or their affective reaction.

78  
79 Irwin et al. (2013) report a case study of adaptive grade release, which required students to  
80 engage with the written feedback and submit a written reflection about the feedback before  
81 their assignment grade was released. Withholding grades was associated with better  
82 engagement with the feedback, for example being able to remember the feedback for longer,  
83 and better target setting for future assignments. Similarly, Jackson and Marks (2016) reported  
84 an improvement in the quality of student work during a trial of withholding assessment marks  
85 and requiring reflective commentary on the written feedback. However, the authors also  
86 reported that grade withholding could result in negative affect, in particular, feelings of  
87 frustration and anxiety.

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Although there has been some interest in grade withholding there is little direct and systematic investigation of the possible priming effect of assessment grade on perception of the associated feedback. This is an important focus for feedback research as there is a growing awareness and interest in how academic emotions influence learning (Pekrun, 2011). Pekrun (2011) has proposed the potential effects of both positive and negative academic emotions on subsequent learning, motivation, attention and self-efficacy. For example, feeling pride in response to assessment feedback has been shown to trigger motivation for future learning in some cases and complacency, and a reduction in perceived effort, in others (see Kahu et al., 2015). More recently, Pitt and Norton (2017) examined students' reactions to feedback for examples of "good" and "bad" pieces of work they had completed. The authors highlighted that the student's response to their feedback was largely determined by their emotional maturity, and how the student perceived the work against their own internal expectation of performance. Overall, most of the interviewees adopted maladaptive strategies to feedback (avoidance, fear, annoyance) that accompanied a "bad" grade, indicative of low emotional maturity (despite being final year undergraduates). Underperformance triggered feelings of motivation to improve and learn from feedback in only a few of the students, in line with Pekrun's (2011) theory of academic emotions. Howell et al. (2018) evaluated students' responses to learner analytics messages in a quasi-experimental study depending on the hypothetical grade (Distinction/pass/fail) that was sent to them. As expected, higher grades were associated with more positive affect, and lowest grades with most negative affect.. Although the study did not explicitly address the effect of such emotional reactions on perceptions of feedback, it would not be unreasonable to deduce that a very similar pattern would be observed.

113 The potential for grades exerting a negative priming effect on feedback perception is  
114 arguably a problematic outcome, especially for students who receive a low grade and so have  
115 an arguably greater need for improvement than those with a higher grade. Despite the  
116 interest in best practice for delivering feedback, it is surprising that the potential priming  
117 effect of the assessment grade on feedback perception has not, thus far, been investigated.  
118 Similar priming effects have been reported in research addressing evaluations of teaching  
119 where there is some evidence that the grade a student receives affects how they subsequently  
120 rate the quality of the teaching they have experienced (Arnold, 2009;  
121 Brockx, Spooren and Mortelmans, 2011)

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123 The present study aims to use a controlled online experiment to explore whether  
124 undergraduate students' evaluations of neutrally worded, written assessment feedback is  
125 affected by the presence and value of a grade. It is predicted that the perception ratings  
126 students give for a piece of written feedback will differ significantly across three different  
127 conditions; (i) where no grade is shown; (ii) where a low academic grade is shown and (iii)  
128 where a high academic grade is shown.

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## 130 **Method**

### 131 *Participants*

132 The study was conducted online between January and March 2019 and initially,  $N=101$   
133 undergraduate psychology students, in their first or second year of study from the University  
134 of Winchester participated. However, incomplete data from seven participants were removed  
135 and so  $N=94$  participants were included within our analyses. The mean age of participants was  
136 19.5 years  $SD = 1.4$  ( $N=91$  due to missing age data for  $n=3$  participants). The final sample  
137 consisted of 20 males, 73 females and one participant who identified as non-binary. Participants  
138 were allocated to one of the three experimental conditions, on an alternating basis.

139

140 ***Design***

141 A 3-way between groups design was used. The independent variable was ‘Grade’, which had  
142 3 levels: High Grade (75%) ( $n = 33$ ), Low Grade (45%) ( $n = 31$ ) and No Grade (control group  
143 where no numerical grade was shown) ( $n = 30$ ). The dependent variable was each participant’s  
144 total score on a Feedback Perception scale that was designed specifically for use in the present  
145 study. The scale consisted of seven items, each rated on a 9-point Likert scale. The items were  
146 worded as follows: (i) ‘How happy would you be receiving the feedback?’; (ii) ‘How positive  
147 or negative was the feedback in your opinion?’; (iii) ‘How useful was the feedback?’; (iv) ‘How  
148 confident would the feedback make you feel?’; (v) ‘How anxious would the feedback make  
149 you feel?’ (This item was reverse coded before analysis); (vi) ‘How helpful was the written  
150 feedback?’ and (vii) ‘How likely would you be to use the written feedback to help you in a  
151 future assignment?’. The minimum possible total score was 7 and the maximum possible score  
152 was 63; where a higher score indicated a more positive perception of the feedback the  
153 participant had been asked to read. Cronbach’s Alpha for the Feedback perception Scale was  
154 .815 indicating a high and acceptable degree of internal consistency.

155

156 ***Materials***

157 A short piece of written assignment feedback was created for use in the present study. The  
158 feedback was written by the lead researcher who is a university psychology lecturer with seven  
159 years’ experience of providing higher education students with written feedback. The feedback  
160 was intended to contain only neutral statements about a fictitious essay, consisting of both  
161 evaluative comments and feedforward guidance. A second university psychology lecturer, with  
162 eight years’ experience of giving written feedback to undergraduates, reviewed an initial draft

163 of the statement and suggested edits. From this, a final 210 word version of the feedback  
164 statement was made (see Appendix A).

165

### 166 ***Procedure***

167 The study was advertised on an online psychology department participant pool portal. Those  
168 who indicated an interest in completing the online study were presented with an information  
169 sheet and consent form and then, if they wished to continue, asked to indicate their consent  
170 electronically. Participants were initially asked two basic demographic questions; their age in  
171 years and the gender with which they most closely associated (Male / Female / Non-Binary).  
172 Next, they were given the following instructions on screen: “Imagine you have received the  
173 following feedback from an assignment at University” and were then presented with the  
174 neutral feedback stimulus.

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176 In addition, depending on which experimental group participants were assigned to, the  
177 feedback stimulus also contained underneath the text either (i) a High grade of 75%; (ii) a  
178 Low grade of 45% or, (iii) for the No Grade control group, no visible grade was displayed  
179 with the feedback. After reading the feedback, participants were then asked to respond to the  
180 seven perception questions and were provided with debriefing information.

181

### 182 **Results**

183 To test the research Hypothesis, a one-way ANOVA was conducted with Grade as the  
184 independent variable with three levels: (None, Low, High). The total scores each participant  
185 scored on the Feedback Perception scale were used as the dependent variable. The Levene’s  
186 test was non-significant ( $p = .911$ ) indicating that the error variance was equal across all  
187 groups. A significant main effect was found for Grade  $F(2,91) = 6.69, p = .002, \eta p^2 = .13$ .



188 The significant main effect of grade on Feedback Perception scale score was followed up  
189 using Bonferroni corrected pairwise comparisons (See Figure 1). The mean score for the  
190 High Grade condition ( $M = 44.82, SD = 6.8$ ) was significantly higher than for the Low Grade  
191 condition ( $M = 38.19, SD = 7.7, MD = 6.62, SE = 1.87, p = .002, d = .93$ ), but not significantly  
192 different from the No Grade condition ( $(M = 43.1, SD = 8), MD = 1.72, p = 1$ ). Mean scores  
193 for the No Grade condition were significantly higher than for the Low Grade condition ( $MD$   
194  $= 4.9, SE = 1.91, p = .036, d = .64$ ). These findings all supported the research hypothesis that  
195 the presence of a higher grade mediates a more positive perception of the written feedback.

196 <Figure 1 about here>

197 Next, exploratory analyses were conducted examining possible effects of the independent  
198 variable Grade on the participants' responses for each of the seven individual items in the  
199 Feedback Perception scale. A one-way between subjects MANOVA was conducted using the  
200 participants' ratings on the seven perception questions as seven separate dependent variables.  
201 Table 1 shows the mean ratings and standard deviations for all three experimental groups  
202 across all seven perception questions. The Box's M test was non-significant ( $p = .471$ ) and  
203 therefore covariance matrices were assumed equal. The Levene's tests for all seven  
204 perception questions were non-significant indicating that the error variance was equal across  
205 all groups. At the multivariate level the MANOVA showed a significant main effect of the  
206 Grade variable Wilks'  $\lambda = .69, F(14,170) = 2.51, p = .003, \eta p^2 = .17$ .

207 <Table 1 about here>

208 At the Univariate level, a significant main effect was found for the feedback condition for  
209 how happy participants would be to receive the feedback (Question i),  $F(2,91) = 9.07, p <$   
210  $.001, \eta p^2 = .17$ . Bonferroni post hoc comparisons revealed that the mean happiness rating for

211 the High Grade condition ( $M = 6.42$ ,  $SD = 1.71$ ) was significantly higher than for the Low  
212 Grade condition ( $M = 4.52$ ,  $SD = 2.00$ ,  $MD = 1.91$ ,  $SE = .46$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $d = 1.04$ ) and the  
213 mean happiness rating for the No Grade condition ( $M = 5.90$ ,  $SD = 1.81$ ) was also  
214 significantly higher than for the Low Grade condition ( $M = 4.52$ ,  $SD = 2.00$ ,  $MD = 1.38$ ,  $SE =$   
215  $.47$ ,  $p = .013$ ,  $d = .74$ ). The pairwise comparison between the High Grade and No Grade  
216 conditions was non-significant ( $p = .79$ ).

217 A second Univariate main effect was found for how confident participants would feel after  
218 reading the feedback (Question iv),  $F(2,91) = 8.01$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta p^2 = .15$ . Bonferroni post hoc  
219 comparisons revealed that the mean confidence rating for the High Grade condition ( $M =$   
220  $5.79$ ,  $SD = 1.62$ ) was significantly higher than for the Low Grade condition ( $M = 4.39$ ,  $SD =$   
221  $1.73$ ,  $MD = 1.40$ ,  $SE = .40$ ,  $p = .002$ ,  $d = .85$ ) and that the mean confidence rating for the No  
222 Grade condition ( $M = 5.77$ ,  $SD = 1.38$ ) was also significantly higher than for the Low Grade  
223 condition ( $M = 4.39$ ,  $SD = 1.73$ ,  $MD = 1.38$ ,  $SE = .41$ ,  $p = .003$ ,  $d = .9$ ). The pairwise  
224 comparison between mean confidence ratings for the High Grade and No Grade conditions  
225 was non-significant ( $p = 1$ ).

226 A third Univariate significant main effect was found for how likely students would be to use  
227 the feedback to improve their marks on future assignments (Question vii),  $F(2,91) = 3.63$ ,  $p =$   
228  $.03$ ,  $\eta p^2 = .07$ . Bonferroni post hoc comparisons found only one significant difference  
229 between conditions. The mean Likelihood rating for the High Grade condition ( $M = 7.30$ ,  $SD$   
230  $= 1.05$ ) was significantly greater than the mean rating for the Low Grade condition ( $M = 6.35$ ,  
231  $SD = 1.91$ ,  $MD = .95$ ,  $SE = .37$ ,  $p = .038$ ,  $d = .63$ ). Pairwise comparisons were non-significant  
232 between the High Grade and No Grade conditions ( $p = 1.0$ ) and non-significant between the  
233 Low Grade and No Grade conditions ( $p = .13$ ).

234 Lastly, there was no main effect of the feedback condition for Question ii: how positive or  
235 negative the participants perceived the feedback to be,  $F(2,91) = 1.68, p = .19$ ; Question iii:  
236 how useful participants perceived the feedback to be,  $F(2,91) = 1.94, p = .15$ ; Question v:  
237 how anxious the feedback made participants feel,  $F(2,91) = .95, p = .39$ ; or Question vi: how  
238 helpful the students perceived the feedback to be  $F(2,91) = 2.13, p = .13$ .

## 239 **Discussion**

240 The present study examined whether university students' perceptions of a single piece of  
241 neutrally worded assignment feedback could be affected by the presence, absence and  
242 numerical value of a grade. We predicted that self-reported feedback perception scores would  
243 be significantly more positive for conditions where the feedback had a grade of 75 (High  
244 Grade) and the condition where No Grade was shown; compared to the feedback scores for  
245 those students who saw a mark of 45 (Low Grade). These predictions were supported. In  
246 addition, our results indicated that perceptions of the feedback were equally positive when  
247 compared between the High Grade group and the No Grade group. This pattern of results  
248 mirrors those found by Arnold, (2009) and Brockx et al., (2011) with respect to perceptions of  
249 teaching quality. In those studies, the grade received mediated students' perceptions of teaching  
250 quality, whereas, in the present study, the grade affected the perception of assignment feedback.

251 Additional exploratory analyses, conducted at an individual question level, revealed that two  
252 questions we asked which related to emotional responses to the feedback; i.e. how happy and  
253 how confident the students felt after reading the feedback, showed that students rated  
254 themselves significantly happier and more confident after reading the feedback and seeing a  
255 grade of 75, or when seeing no grade, compared to the students who saw a grade of 45. This  
256 association between a high grade and a positive emotional response relating to the feedback  
257 was expected and is in keeping with the findings of Howell et al. (2018). It is particularly

258 notable that seeing no grade also resulted in positive emotional responses which were  
259 comparable to those who saw a high grade. The association between seeing a high grade and  
260 positive perception of feedback is expected, but the finding that the response to the feedback  
261 was also more positive when no grade was seen supports an argument that it may be better to  
262 provide students with their written feedback before allowing them to see their grade. However,  
263 before this could be recommended, some additional research is needed to explore whether any  
264 potential post-grade change in feedback perception occurs. That is, whether a student who held  
265 an initially positive view of their feedback would perceive it more negatively if the mark they  
266 subsequently saw was low.

267 Importantly, whether the student believed they would make future use of the feedback was also  
268 associated with the grade received. For the question which related to the students' self-  
269 predicted functional response ('How likely would you be to use the written feedback to help  
270 you in a future assignment?') the High Grade group indicated they would be more likely than  
271 the Low Grade group to use the feedback in a future assignment. However, students who did  
272 not see a grade with the feedback were neither more nor less likely to say they would use the  
273 feedback in future than the students who saw a high or low grade. This pattern of findings is  
274 consistent with predictions based on Pekrun (2011) and Pitt and Norton (2017). Although the  
275 relationship between the emotional response to the grade and the functional response is  
276 complex, the typical association is that positive reactions lead to more functional use of  
277 feedback (though in some cases pride can also result in complacency and less effort in future  
278 assignments (Kahu et al., 2015); whereas negative responses are more likely to result in  
279 avoidance, anger and frustration, and lower engagement for future assignments (Pitt & Norton,  
280 2017). Further work will be necessary to better understand the relationship between feedback  
281 perception and a student's emotional and functional responses. To better quantify students'  
282 responses to feedback it would be useful to develop a feedback perception measure which

283 elaborates on aspects of both emotional and functional responses to feedback. Such a measure  
284 could build upon the adaptation of the Student Conception of Feedback Inventory (Student  
285 Conceptions of Feedback Questionnaire-II (SCoF-II; Irving & Peterson, 2006)) to university  
286 students used in Brown et al., (2016). However, it would be important to also include items  
287 related to emotional responses to the existing items which are targeted largely at functional  
288 responses.

289 Despite the clear pattern of findings presented in this study it is necessary to acknowledge some  
290 limitations. Most importantly, this study utilizes a hypothetical feedback scenario in which the  
291 student has no personal investment. As discussed in Pitt and Norton (2017), it is important to  
292 consider students' individual perception of their performance and the associated emotional  
293 response to the grade and the feedback. It is necessary to acknowledge that each student has  
294 their own expectation and perception of what constitutes a high/low grade for them given their  
295 typical academic performance, and this would be something to control for in a future study.  
296 Nonetheless, given the pattern of results obtained, in a situation in which the student has no  
297 personal investment, it is likely that, in a real assessment scenario of grade and feedback  
298 release, the reported pattern of findings would be strengthened in comparison with the findings  
299 of the present study. A second potential concern is that the nature of the feedback used in this  
300 study was necessarily neutral, and so may have been considered vague or unhelpful in an  
301 assessment context. For this reason the measure of how likely students might be to act upon  
302 the feedback in the present study may be lower than it would be for feedback which gives a  
303 more meaningful evaluation of individual student work. This limitation may also explain the  
304 null results for the questionnaire items relating to helpfulness/usefulness, positive/negative and  
305 anxiety inducement. Finally, the questionnaire used focused heavily on the students' situational  
306 response to the feedback, with only one question considering self-regulation and future  
307 learning. In future work the research design should seek to incorporate more authentic written

308 feedback, as well as expanding the focus on how students are likely to implement the feedback  
309 in their future work. In a larger scale study, the type of course should also be considered, as  
310 responses to feedback may differ across courses and more so between vocational and non-  
311 vocational training.

### 312 **Summary**

313 To the best of our knowledge, the present study provides the first experimental evidence that,  
314 at least some, aspects of how positively or negatively students perceive written feedback are  
315 mediated by the presence and numerical value of the grade that is received for the  
316 assignment. We acknowledge that the neutral nature of the feedback used and the low level of  
317 personal investment the participants had in the hypothetical assignment scenario constrains  
318 the interpretation of our findings with respect to perceptions of feedback utility. However,  
319 our main hypothesis was supported providing findings in an area that is not yet well  
320 researched and this study therefore makes an important early contribution. We suggest that  
321 further studies are conducted within a higher education context to examine this grade-priming  
322 effect under more ecologically valid conditions. That is, if the priming effect of seeing a  
323 grade persists in situations where the student has a genuine emotional investment in the  
324 feedback and grade they have received. The findings address a gap in the literature on  
325 assessment feedback practices and can provide an important contribution towards planning  
326 initiatives such as, withholding grades and developing guidance for students to build their  
327 resilience in dealing with, and acting upon feedback constructively.

328

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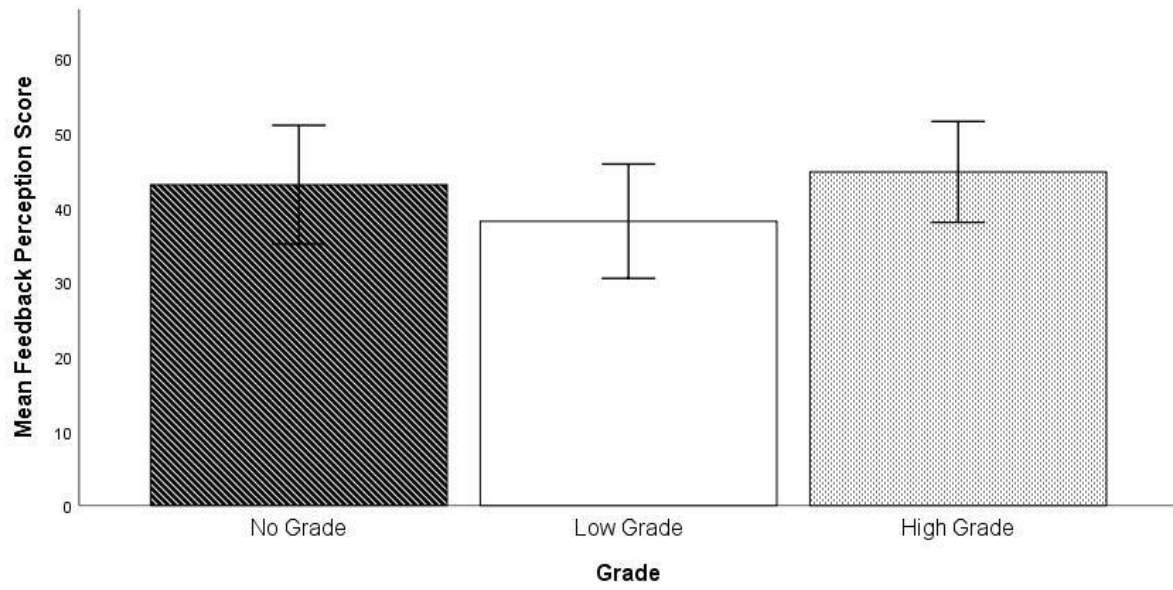
411 Table 1. Feedback perception scores provided by student raters who read an identically  
 412 worded paragraph of neutral academic feedback and were asked to (i) imagine they had  
 413 received this feedback for a recent assignment and (ii) respond to seven Feedback perception  
 414 questions, each scored on a 9 point Likert scale. Mean Perception Scores are shown per  
 415 question and as a function of whether the student also saw, displayed underneath the  
 416 feedback, either (i) a High Grade (75%); (ii) a Low Grade (45%) or (iii) No Grade (Control  
 417 condition). A higher score indicates a more positive response to the question

418

Feedback Perception Question	Grade Seen					
	No Grade (n=30)		Low Grade (n=31)		High Grade (n=33)	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
How happy would you be receiving the feedback?	5.9	1.8	4.52	2	6.42	1.7
How positive or negative was the feedback in your opinion?	5.67	1.3	5.03	1.6	5.55	1.5
How useful was the feedback?	6.5	1.6	6.39	1.5	7.03	1.1
How confident would the feedback make you feel?	5.77	1.4	4.39	1.7	5.79	1.6
How anxious would the feedback make you feel?*	4.2	1.8	4.77	2.1	4.21	1.7
How helpful was the written feedback?	6.33	1.5	6.29	1.5	6.94	1.2
How likely would you be to use the written feedback to help you in a future assignment?	7.13	1.4	6.35	1.91	7.3	1.1

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424 Figure 1 – Mean Feedback perception scores provided by N=94 student raters all of whom  
425 read an identically worded piece of neutral academic feedback and were asked to imagine  
426 they had received this feedback for a recent assignment and then respond to seven Feedback  
427 perception questions, each scored on a 9 point Likert scale. Scores are shown as a function of  
428 whether the student also saw displayed underneath the feedback either (i) a High Grade  
429 (75%); (ii) a Low Grade (45%) or (iii) No Grade (Control condition where no visible grade  
430 was displayed underneath the text). A higher score indicates a more positive perception of the  
431 feedback.

432

433 Appendix A

434 *'In general the writing was clear and concise but there were also a few grammatical errors.*  
435 *Consider asking a friend or family member to proof read your final draft as they may spot some*  
436 *minor errors that you missed. The structure of the essay was mostly logical, but where you*  
437 *discussed the two sides of the theoretical argument it became a little difficult to follow. I suggest*  
438 *that in future essays you could address this by perhaps starting with describing all the 'for'*  
439 *arguments and then moving on to discussing the 'against' arguments or vice versa. This makes*  
440 *it easier for the reader to follow the flow of the overall points being made. Some sections of the*  
441 *essay were appropriately referenced using mostly peer-reviewed literature. In future you could*  
442 *improve upon this by citing, where possible, multiple sources to support each of your*  
443 *arguments, especially where this provides evidence of having read wider than the lecture*  
444 *material. Your citations, in the main, conformed to the correct APA formatting conventions,*  
445 *although there were one or two which did not. The essay ended with a concise, easy to follow*  
446 *summary of the main points you had made throughout and I would definitely advise doing*  
447 *something similar to this in your next essay.'*

448