



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

# BES Exemplar 5 Ngā Kete Raukura – He Tauira 5 Learning logs He kete wherawhera

This is the fifth of a series of exemplars being prepared for Quality Teaching for Diverse (All) Learners in Schooling: Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration [BES]

**He Ako Reikura, He Ākonga Rerekura (Te Katoa): Hei Kete Raukura [BES]**

This publication, currently in development, is a second iteration of *Quality Teaching for Diverse Students in Schooling: Best Evidence Synthesis [BES]* (2003).

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## Background to BES Exemplar 5: Learning logs

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BES Exemplar 5 describes how a teacher used feedback logs with a class of senior secondary students and how this approach strengthened student–teacher communications and accelerated learning. The proportion of students in her class not achieving the relevant NCEA Level 1 standards at the end of the year was less than half that of comparison groups, while the proportions gaining achieved, merit and excellence were correspondingly greater.

The context for this exemplar is year 11 English, but teachers who have assisted with the exemplar’s development have found the approach it describes useful for improving feedback processes in other curriculum areas. Furthermore, across the best evidence syntheses, learning logs and thinking books of various kinds have been found to accelerate the progress of learners from different year levels and in different curriculum areas.

### **BES exemplars celebrate and support teachers’ work**

This exemplar illustrates teacher leadership of disciplined innovation. The innovation concerned was developed by New Zealand secondary teacher, Jennifer Glenn, who used her doctoral study as an opportunity to build on existing research and development and to engage in action research to strengthen her professional knowledge and her teaching.

The exemplar includes a series of questions to support teachers to introduce learning logs in their own contexts using an inquiry and knowledge-building approach. Teachers and leaders assisting with the development of the exemplar said they found this feature useful. Providing feedback on an early version, Ray Scott, Principal of Aquinas College, said the exemplar was “very useful, applicable, and helpful for improving the learning of students and teachers”.

Secondary teacher, Xanthe Sulzberger, recently trialled and adapted the learning logs approach for use with her senior physical education class. She explains:

“I am really working hard with my Level 2 physical education class to create learning logs electronically (via email) in which I give them robust feedback and feed forward for their final essays/reports. I have trialled this with one Achievement Standard thus far with great success. In the internal Achievement Standard, the class achieved as many Excellence grades as Merit and Achieved combined. They are a great (albeit spirited!) bunch of 19 students, some of whom have learning needs, while others struggle with literacy. I have been amazed with the results to date! I am halfway through the next Achievement Standard, in which I have adapted my teaching and the feedback process to make it all more streamlined.

“I have had fantastic feedback from the students about the learning logs and the formative feedback they receive. They are becoming increasingly self-managing of their learning. One flow-on effect is that I have more teaching time in the classroom. Also, I feel I have reduced the time I spend marking internal assessments because I have already given the students detailed feedback on their work and know where they are sitting on the assessment rubric.”

Other teachers also say that, by taking an inquiry and knowledge-building approach as described in the exemplar, they are able to gain much deeper understanding of student thinking. For those who have already been using similar approaches in the classroom, the exemplar suggests how they might refine their practice.

New Zealand evidence of high-impact interventions at the senior secondary level is rare. What is needed now is for New Zealand educators, leaders, facilitators, and researchers to explore how this approach can be made as practical as possible for teachers. Also, there is potential to integrate this approach with collaborative group work, which may serve to intensify peer learning supports and student self-regulation.

## Addressing areas of need

Many secondary teachers spend long hours providing feedback that is not taken on board. This exemplar shows how they can gain greater leverage from this work by providing feedback that is genuinely formative. It shows how interactive learning logs can improve student motivation, self-regulation, and achievement for both high- and low-achieving students. The students in the study group were highly positive about the approach. One boy said, ‘This is the best thing that ever happened to my writing.’

The New Zealand Government has established as a target 85% of 18-year-olds gaining NCEA Level 2. The high-impact approach described in this exemplar supports deep learning that has the potential to significantly improve students’ results in line with this target.

## Acknowledgments

The Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis Programme pays tribute to the professional leadership of teacher, Jennifer Glenn.

The development of this exemplar has been strengthened by formative quality assurance and other advice and critique. We acknowledge and thank:

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- Stephanie Greaney, Education Review Office.

Thanks also the team at Learning Media for your patient and iterative work in developing this exemplar to date.

## About the BES exemplars

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This new series of BES exemplars is being prepared by the Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis (BES) Programme. Each exemplar has been selected because it illuminates highly effective teaching approaches that accelerate progress for diverse (all) learners in areas where improvement is needed. They exemplify the eleven dimensions of quality teaching using examples that come from across the curriculum and are relevant to primary, intermediate, and secondary levels of schooling.

The series has been given priority in response to requests from teachers and principals for real-life examples that make transparent the nature of highly effective teaching and the professional learning, leadership, and educationally powerful connections with families, whānau, and communities that support such teaching. The exemplars are derived, where possible, from research and development carried out in New Zealand schools and kura. They celebrate the outstanding work of New Zealand educators.

While the BES exemplars show how significant improvements can be made through teaching, they are not ‘magic bullets’. Rather, the exemplars illuminate the high-impact research and development that informed and developed the expertise of the teachers, facilitators, school leaders, and researchers they feature.

The BES exemplars are being progressively released online. They will be a core resource for the forthcoming:

Quality Teaching for Diverse (All) Learners in Schooling: Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration [BES] He Ako Reikura, He Ākonga Rerekura (Te Katoa): Hei Kete Raukura [BES].

This publication, currently in development, is a second iteration of Quality Teaching for Diverse Students in Schooling: Best Evidence Synthesis [BES] (2003). For updates on progress, go to the BES website at [www.educationcounts.govt.nz/goto/BES](http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/goto/BES)

While teachers are the primary audience for these BES exemplars, they are also intended as a resource for leaders, policy makers, and all those involved in supporting the work of teachers. To support their use in a variety of contexts, each exemplar incorporates the following features:

- A section on background information explains the significance of the exemplar. It highlights the expertise of the educators that enabled accelerated improvement and identifies the area of national need that they addressed in their work. You may prefer to read the exemplar before reading this background information.
- A list of supporting resources is provided for those who wish to investigate further. Full text copies of cited articles can be requested from the BES website.
- A ‘Professional learning: Starter questions’ tool is intended to support schools seeking to use the exemplars as catalysts for improvement. Specifically, it is intended to support an inquiry and knowledge-building process to improvement that is responsive to the unique needs of the students, teachers, and wider community in each context.
- An ‘Implementation alerts’ checklist highlights the complexity of change for improvement, emphasising the fact that ‘how’ change happens and is supported is critical to success.

The pedagogical approaches explained in these exemplars do need, of course, to be appropriately integrated into a comprehensive plan for improving teaching and learning.

### Feedback to inform BES development

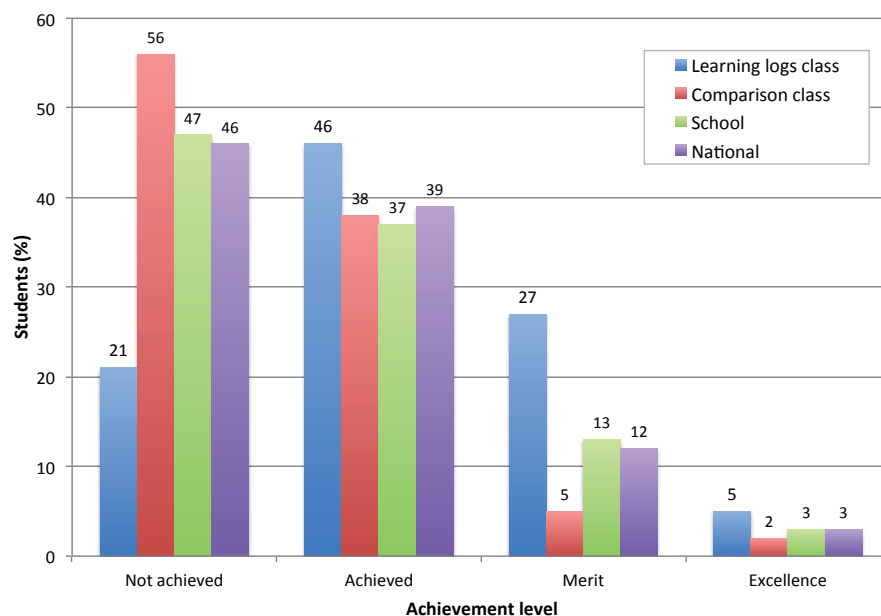
We will draw upon your feedback when finalising the exemplars for this new BES iteration. Please send any feedback to [best.evidence@minedu.govt.nz](mailto:best.evidence@minedu.govt.nz)



# BES Exemplar 5. Learning logs

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| <p><b>Source</b></p>   | <p>Glenn, J. (2010). <i>Using a feedback log to improve academic writing in secondary classrooms</i>. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Auckland, Auckland. Available at <a href="http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/goto/BES">www.educationcounts.govt.nz/goto/BES</a></p>   |
| <p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p><i>'Effect size' is a statistical measure of the impact of an intervention on an outcome. Hattie<sup>1</sup> shows that the average yearly effect of teaching in New Zealand in reading, mathematics, and writing from year 4 to year 13 is <math>d = 0.35</math>. Effect sizes above 0.40 represent an improvement on business-as-usual and effect sizes of <math>d = 0.60</math> are considered large.</i></p> | <p>This BES exemplar shows how learning logs, when used reflectively, can help strengthen teaching and learning in academic writing in the senior secondary school. It features a teacher who successfully translated theory into practice in an environment where students were facing high-stakes external assessment for NCEA Level 1.</p> <p>The learning log became the site for most written teacher feedback, replacing comments made directly on to the student's work. In their log, each student conducted a year-long conversation with their teacher about their growth as a learner and, more specifically, as a writer. This innovative form of structured student-teacher interaction was the crucial element in a strategy to drive improvement in the teaching and learning programme; it is described in more detail later.</p> <p>Teacher-researcher Jennifer Glenn found that the learning logs made her more responsive to her students. They became, in fact, a tool for continuous teaching improvement. The formative feedback process improved student motivation, self-regulation, and achievement, while also strengthening teacher-student relationships. The longer teacher and students used the logs, the better they became at using them. By using them, both teacher and students were able to track progress over time. The teacher used this cumulative record as valuable evidence to inform her inquiry and knowledge-building approach and thereby to strengthen her practice.</p> <p>The feedback teachers give their students is a key influence on learning. Indeed, Hattie<sup>2</sup> found that, of 49 teaching strategies, formative assessment had the fourth-highest impact (<math>d = 0.73</math>) on achievement. However, the effectiveness of feedback depends on its quality and, as international research shows, many teachers give low-quality feedback. In 2007, the Education Review Office<sup>3</sup> found that only 40% of teachers were using high-quality formative assessment strategies and that "significant numbers of students were not well informed about what they were achieving or what they needed to do to improve their learning" (p. 2).</p> <p>Although this exemplar focuses on academic writing in English at the upper secondary level, the best evidence syntheses demonstrate the high impact of similar approaches across all levels of schooling and in different curriculum areas – even for five-year-olds using 'thinking books' in social studies.<sup>4</sup></p> |
| <p><b>Learners and learning context</b></p>  | <p>This exemplar is based on an action research study carried out by a teacher-researcher in a mid-decile rural high school over one school year. Glenn had been spending considerable time marking and giving feedback to the 80 students in her three senior English classes. She wanted to know to what extent this was making a difference to their learning and whether a new approach would be more effective.</p> <p>The subjects of the research were 32 students in a year 11 (NCEA Level 1) English class. As part of the study, Glenn carried out in-depth qualitative analysis of the logs of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• three students whose initial achievement was low;</li> <li>• five students whose initial achievement was average;</li> <li>• three students whose initial achievement was high.</li> </ul> <p>The students were to be assessed on three NCEA achievement standards focusing on academic writing in response to literary texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AS90054 1.3 Read, study and understand an extended text. (2004)</li> <li>• AS90055 1.4 Read, study and understand a number of short written texts. (2004)</li> <li>• AS90056 1.5 View/listen to, study and understand a visual or oral text. (2004)</li> </ul> <p>At the end of the year the students were required to write an academic essay under exam conditions. The essay was marked externally.</p>   |

## Outcomes



**Figure 1. Aggregate achievement, 2004, NCEA Level 1 English**

The graph compares the achievement of the study group (the class that used the learning logs) with the comparison group, with all students in the school, and with the national cohort. As can be seen, the study group:

- achieved more highly in NCEA Level 1 than those who didn't use the logs;
- achieved a higher percentage of 'merits' and 'excellences' and fewer 'not achieved' results than the whole-school and national cohorts.

Furthermore, the students in the study group also:

- achieved more highly than would have been predicted from the results of a test conducted before the intervention;
- made far higher achievement gains than did a class taught previously by the same teacher without the use of learning logs.

When the results of the class that used the learning logs were compared with those of the comparison class, a very large effect size of  $d = 1.08$  was obtained. When the results were compared with those of a class previously taught by the same teacher but without the use of learning logs, the effect size was also large at  $d = 0.67$ .

By the end of the year, almost all members of the class perceived the learning logs to have had a positive impact on their academic writing:

*Kara: Contrary to my belief [at the start of the year, that they might be a waste of time and extra work], it has been extremely helpful and a timesaver; actually. Having all my notes, essays, thoughts and helpful criticism right in one book is great and helps me to re-work my writing to make it better.*

No student had a strongly negative response to the logs. The only student to make a negative comment wanted the process continued but with feedback written on each essay rather than in a separate log.



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| <p><b>Curriculum relevance:<br/>New Zealand Curriculum<sup>5</sup></b></p> | <p>The focus of this exemplar is on writing within the context of the English learning area, where students at this level are required to express increasingly sophisticated and connected ideas, to shape texts for audience and purpose, and to organise text for coherence and completeness.</p> <p>But success in academic writing is fundamental to success across the curriculum, and the relevance of the exemplar extends well beyond the focus learning area in other ways, too, including:</p> <p>Principles: The learning logs encouraged the students to reflect on their learning processes and empowered them to achieve personal excellence.</p> <p>Key competencies: Students were prompted to reflect on their feelings about the teacher’s comments in their learning logs, and to set goals. The prompts ensured that learning about attitudes and values as well as knowledge was taking place. In particular, the students developed the competencies of thinking; managing self; and using language, symbols, and texts.</p> <p>Values: The learning logs provided a space for students to inquire, be curious, and think reflectively about their learning.</p> <p>Teaching as Inquiry: The learning logs were not only a valuable source of feedback for the students, they also provided important information for the teacher as she considered the focusing inquiry: ‘What matters most for my students?’</p> <p>Assessment: <i>The New Zealand Curriculum</i> explains, “The primary purpose of assessment is to improve students’ learning and teachers’ teaching as both student and teacher respond to the information it provides” (p. 39). The study demonstrates how teacher prompts can support students to develop self-assessment capability. The learning logs also have the potential to support peer assessment.</p>  |
| <p><b>Te Marautanga o Aotearoa</b></p>                                     | <p>He tino take tō te aromatawai i roto i <i>Te Marautanga o Aotearoa</i>. He tata rawa atu te hono i waenganui i te painga o te ako me te aromatawai. Ko te tino take o te aromatawai, he whakapiki i te ako a ngā ākonga, me te kounga o ngā hōtaka ako. He take anō mō te aromatawai, arā ko te whakahoki kōrero ki ngā mātua me ngā ākonga e mōhiohia ai e pēhea ana te haere o te ako. Ko tētahi anō, ko ngā tohu mātauranga o te kura tuarua. E whai ake nei ētahi mātāpono.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kia whaitake ki te ākonga, kia tika, kia pono. Kia mārama ngā ākonga ki tā rātou e ako ana.</li> <li>• Ka uru ngā ākonga ki ngā tauanga aromatawai. Ka whakawhiti, ka matapaki i ō rātou whāinga, rautaki, tō rātou ahu whakamua ki ō rātou pouako, ki ō rātou mātua, ki a rātou anō.</li> <li>• He tautoko tā te aromatawai i te piki whakarunga o te ako.</li> <li>• Ka whakamahia te aromatawai i roto i te ngākau pai, kua hei whakamataku.</li> <li>• He tino take tō tenā aromatawai, tō tēnā aromatawai, nō reira, me hāngai te aromatawai ki te tino pūtake o te mahi.</li> </ul> <p><i>Assessment plays an important role in the curriculum. Excellence in teaching and learning is inextricably linked to assessment. The key purpose of assessment is to enhance student learning and the quality of teaching and learning programmes. Assessment also enables the provision of feedback to both parents and students about learning progress. Assessment is linked to qualifications at secondary school. The following are some principles of assessment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Assessment is worthwhile for the learner; accurate, and reliable. The learner understands what they are learning;</i></li> <li>• <i>Learners engage in assessment practices. Learners negotiate and discuss their aims, strategies, and progressions with their teachers and parents and with each other;</i></li> <li>• <i>Assessment supports improved learning;</i></li> <li>• <i>Assessment is seen as positive rather than a process to be feared;</i></li> <li>• <i>Each assessment activity has a clear purpose. As such, assessment should be valid and relevant to its intended purpose.</i></li> </ul> |
| <p><b>The learning logs</b></p>  | <p>The students maintained individual learning logs in which their teacher wrote specific feedback about their essay writing. After giving them time to read and reflect on the feedback she asked them to respond to it, also in their logs, using these three prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you think I’ve said about your writing?</li> <li>• How do you feel about the outcomes/comment?</li> <li>• Set three goals for the next similar piece of writing.</li> </ul> <p>Sometimes Glenn adapted the questions to fit a specific learning focus.</p>  |

Over the seven months in which they were used, Glenn made seven to nine entries in each log. The logs provided a means by which both teacher and student could engage in dialogue and make learning goals and success criteria visible.

10/05 Novel-theme Rework: again maybe (2) ... but still a few more things to take care of to be sure. [and then we move on to merit.]

- you still need to thread in for more quotation - you have only added 2 -> keep in mind just words/phrases - for example Para. 3: 'After this incident Ellie is haunted by those 'screams ripping the night apart' and the possibility that she, 'plain old Ellie ... has killed 3 people'. In his role as leader of the group, Homer Yarnas reassures Ellie that her actions saved she and her friends - from capture, maybe death. He points out that these invaders 'are the ones who tore up the rule book' and that 'in war' ...
- when you use John Marsden's quotation lead it in as his words - 'Marsden tells us that he didn't set out "to ... make ... etc. and then you must comment more fully on what he said - linking it to why the idea and/or novel is important.
- avoid 'wat is not' (see highlights) (20 are less so)
- good to see you making a point from the novel and then generalising -> keep pushing this.
- watch that proofreading -> ask me for spelling rules sheet ... doublings on issue!

Mrs Glenn.

18/05

- ① A little surprised because I thought that this one was better than the first one.
- ② \* Extend and reinforce the idea in my writing  
\* Use more quotation eg I quote in each paragraph.  
\* Need to learn how to lead in my quotation so that it flows and makes sense.
- ③ I feel that this system is great because you get a better analysis of my writing.

I understand that I need to leave out pointless detail and weed out more things that don't matter.

14/05 This is clearly strengthening (name) sitting right on Merit I think - but - I'd like to keep making sure! It's great to see how much you've strengthened this piece. The paragraphs have much more clarity/substance. Consider also threading in some of John Marsden's intentions here ... to link to and add to 'importance'. Have you read/extracted from the notes?  
Keep this going - Excellence is next! Mrs Glenn

18/05 - I'm happy it's strengthened more.

- ① Can I have too many paragraphs?? because I was going to have a paragraph about John Marsden but it was too long.

SMART GOALS

- ① Use more important quotation - that backs up what I'm saying.
- ② Make sure paragraphs have a clear intention.
- ③ Watch conventions, - get rid of spelling errors

③ I find this very useful because it shows me what I can do better and what I have achieved.

## The Quality Teaching Dimensions

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| <p><b>Outcomes focus</b></p> <p><b>Hua te ako, hua te ākonga</b></p> <p>Quality teaching is focused on valued outcomes and facilitates high standards for diverse learners.</p>  | <p>Glenn’s primary goal was curriculum-specific: to accelerate her students’ progress in terms of the three achievement standards that require them to respond to literary texts. A further goal was to develop transferable skills and competencies such as reflection, self-regulation, and self-efficacy by providing scaffolding that would support students to set their own learning goals. Glenn was also committed to affective outcomes, seeking to strengthen motivation and build quality relationships with her students.</p>   |
| <p><b>Teacher knowledge, inquiry, and use of smart tools</b></p> <p><b>Te mōhio o te kaiako, te tikanga uiui, te raweke tapu ngaio</b></p> <p>Teachers work smarter, not harder, through the use of evidence for continuous improvement.</p> | <p>Glenn’s own learning goals were to deepen her knowledge of effective feedback and improve her practice. She began by reading research literature about formative assessment and about student motivation, reflection, metacognition, and self-regulation. She also explored research findings on the use of journals and logs to influence learning.</p> <p>Research indicates that much teacher feedback on student writing has been unclear, misunderstood, and ineffective in supporting improvement. Sometimes, it has had unintended negative impacts such as decreasing motivation, confusing students, or focusing students on surface features at the expense of the main purpose. Glenn read and took in the evidence summarised elsewhere in this BES about the qualities of effective and ineffective feedback (see Appendix A of this exemplar and Exemplar 3: ‘Teacher and student use of learning goals’). As a consequence, she:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensured that the feedback she gave was specific to the task and to the deeper learning goals;</li> <li>• provided feedback that helped the students attend to cues they could use to monitor their progress towards their goals;</li> <li>• provided feed forward that helped the students understand what to do next;</li> <li>• avoided giving feedback that was non-specific, feedback about the personal qualities of the learner, and feedback saying that a response was incorrect without providing information or a strategy to guide the learner;</li> <li>• oriented her feedback to foster thoughtfulness and use of strategy rather than to improving surface features;</li> <li>• increasingly linked her feedback to criteria that had been discussed and explored with the students.</li> </ul> <p><b>Research and development underpinning the intervention</b></p> <p>Building on a wide-ranging review of relevant research including early best evidence synthesis findings, Glenn undertook a research and development process designed to foster continuous improvement. The learning logs were a key feature of this process, serving as a ‘smart tool’<sup>6</sup> that enabled Glenn to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strengthen the feedback and feed forward she gave her students;</li> <li>• better understand her students’ difficulties in order to strengthen her own teaching and their self-regulation.</li> </ul> <p>An inquiry approach, enabled by the interactive dialogue that took place via the learning logs, resulted in improved student outcomes.</p> |
| <p><b>Opportunity to learn</b></p> <p><b>Kapohia, akona</b></p> <p>Opportunity to learn is effective and efficient.</p>  | <p>Opportunity to learn was enhanced both in the whole-class situation and the individual task context. While this exemplar focuses on the teacher–student dialogue in the logs, individual essay writing was typically preceded by introductory lessons involving the whole class. At the end of this study, several students reported that the quality of whole-class sessions had improved because individual help had been provided in the learning logs:</p> <p><i>Brian: We cover things in class that are much more useful to me and everyone else.</i></p> <p><i>Bronwyn: She doesn’t have to spend as much of her/our class time explaining things to individuals about their work.</i></p>  |

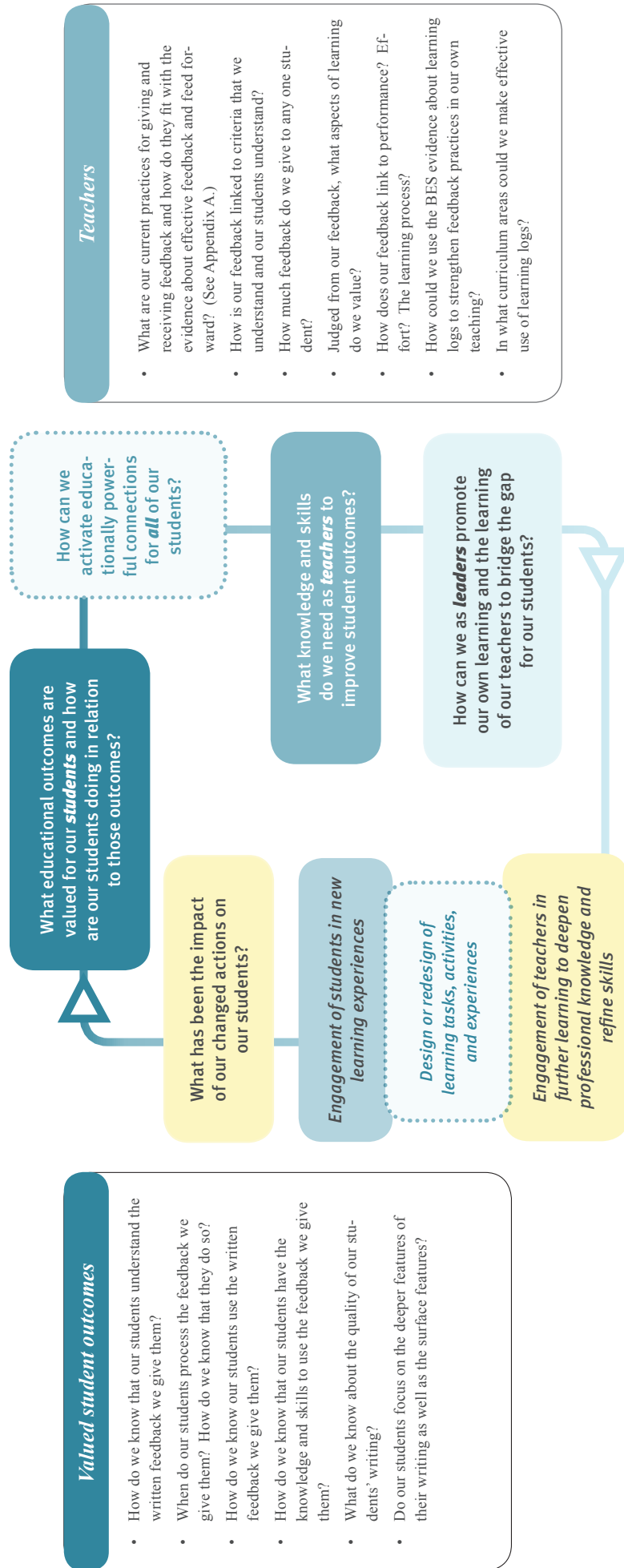


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| <p><b>Connection</b></p> <p><b>Tūhono</b></p> <p>Teaching makes educationally powerful connections to students' knowledge, lives, and identities.</p> | <p>The comments students made in their learning logs helped both students and teacher to build on their existing knowledge. In a number of instances these comments gave the teacher feedback that she was unlikely to have obtained from the usual classroom interactions.</p> <p>The learning logs gave Glenn emotional as well as cognitive feedback. Students' sense of self-efficacy (their belief in their capacity to achieve a task) is critical to their motivation. Glenn could tell from the logs when her students' sense of self-efficacy was low. She could then respond to their need for specific academic feedback – and their affective or motivational needs. The following entry shows a situation where a student's sense of self-efficacy was so low that she was feeling she should not continue:</p> <p><i>Pip: I'm not sure what I'll get. Probably an NA [Not Achieved] because the essay writing isn't coming easily to me. I think with my options the AS/US [lower class level] would be the best because things like this don't come easily to me. I try as hard as I can but I can't seem to grasp the concept/idea how to write these correctly.</i></p> <p>Later entries for and from the same student show a marked shift:</p> <p><i>Teacher: All credit to you [Pip] – it feels like you have changed gear! It's great ... keep at it. [Followed by detail on academic responses]</i></p> <p><i>Pip: I think I've nearly sussed writing paragraphs but need to think how I can give it extra depth and definitely learn and use quotes. [July]</i></p> <p>Two years later, this student won the year 13 English prize.</p>   |
| <p><b>Scaffolding</b></p> <p><b>Te ako poutama</b></p> <p>Pedagogy scaffolds, and provides appropriate feed forward and feedback on, learning.</p>    | <p>The process that the teacher used to scaffold understanding of the learning goals and how to work towards them increased student motivation and sense of self-efficacy. At the same time, it provided prompts and feedback to help them succeed:</p> <p><i>Fiona: I wasn't really surprised [at Not Achieved] because I've never been shown how to write essays properly. But now with your comments I'm sure I can write one ... [May]</i></p> <p><i>Ian: It [Not Achieved] wasn't a big surprise but I now know what to do next time to get achieved or higher. I agree that my idea was too big and I should narrow it down and be specific. I need to learn some quotations to back up my ideas. [May]</i></p> <p><i>John: I feel this is great for my writing. I appreciate ideas like these [arrows to specifics from the teacher] so I can improve next time. I have never got a merit for a piece of writing before and next time I feel I can get there. [July]</i></p> <p><i>John: ... stoked with a merit. [September]</i></p>  |
| <p><b>Responsiveness</b></p> <p><b>Tauaronui</b></p> <p>Quality teaching is responsive to student learning processes.</p>                             | <p>The logs made it possible for the teacher to be much more responsive to her students' learning needs. Crooks<sup>7</sup> explains that the feedback process calls for “insight into the difficulties students are having, good timing and excellent judgement about the choice of comments” (p. 6). Because the students were able to explain how they understood her comments, Glenn was more aware of their needs and better able to provide clear feedback.</p> <p>While the students accurately interpreted at least some aspects of her feedback, Glenn was able to recognise from their responses where they had misinterpreted or misunderstood something. In the formative assessment cycles, where the students were asked to summarise what they thought the teacher was saying, this was the case for 71.5% of feedback entries. For example:</p> <p><i>Teacher: Rework definitely an A [Achieved] this time [John] – and well on the way to M [Merit] where you should easily be ... I think, though, there's more fine-tuning needed to reach/ensure this:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I think the 1st body paragraph after the intro needs more explanation – as to how they did act/put into this situation ... and what important idea is explored here.</i></li> <li>• <i>Extend the importance.</i></li> <li>• <i>Extend 'small bites' of quotation – which should all be on your map.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Teacher: Good to see you improving.</i></p> <p><i>John: 3 goals to improve</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Extend the importance of my idea.</i></li> <li>• <i>Add extra small bits of quotation, to support ideas, this might give it extra importance.</i></li> <li>• <i>Use bigger words to add sophistication, use thesaurus.</i></li> </ul> |

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|  | <p>Glenn concluded:</p> <p><i>John has clearly extracted the essential meaning of the feedback, but thought that ‘Extend the importance’ related to his ideas, rather than to the second part of the question. Despite earlier classroom discussion, my shorthand was too ambiguous for him to make the intended connection. John has also linked this idea of ‘importance’ to the use of quotation (which is logical) and perhaps to the use of ‘important’ vocabulary, neither of which was intended. This is a reminder that I need to be clear in my feedback and check that the students understand. (Doctoral dissertation, pp. 86–87)</i></p>  |
| <p><b>Thoughtful learning strategies</b></p> <p><b>Takina te wānanga</b></p> <p>Pedagogy promotes learning orientation, student self-regulation, metacognitive strategies, and thoughtful student discourse.</p>   | <p>Both the research literature and her own experience showed Glenn that when students seek to improve their writing, they tend to focus initially on improving their work in relatively superficial ways; for example, by proofreading or paraphrasing. The learning logs were a tool for prompting students to focus thoughtfully on the deeper features of writing. Through them, the students became more aware of their cognitive processes and were supported to manage those processes.</p> <p>The teaching process used in this exemplar enabled the students to answer the important questions: ‘Where am I going?’, ‘How am I doing?’, ‘What are my next steps?’, and ‘How will I know when I’ve got there?’ Glenn later reflected that the logs could have been made even more useful with the addition of a further question, ‘Why am I going there?’</p> <p>The students were clear that the learning logs enabled them to think more deeply:</p> <p><i>Wendy: I like using this blue book [learning log] because it makes you really think about what you need to improve.</i></p> <p><i>Student: I understand that I need to leave out pointless detail and weed out things that don’t matter.</i></p> <p><b>Reflection time</b></p> <p>The teacher set aside time in class for students to read and reflect on feedback. By doing this, she actively protected their thinking time.</p> <p><b>Potential pitfall</b></p> <p>There is a growing literature about the effectiveness of learning logs. However, as with any other teaching approach, if their use becomes ritualistic and they do not genuinely encourage thoughtfulness, they will not bring about desired improvements in learning. Appendix C: <i>Implementation alerts</i> is a tool designed to help teachers avoid such pitfalls.</p> |
| <p><b>Assessment for learning</b></p> <p><b>He aromatawai i roto i te ako</b></p> <p>Teachers and students engage constructively in goal-oriented assessment.</p>  | <p>By instructing them to ‘set three goals for the next similar piece of writing’ once they had considered and summarised her feedback, Glenn supported her students to translate feedback into feed forward, in this way promoting self-regulated learning.</p> <p>Both teacher and students found that, as the year progressed, the cumulative picture of learning contained in the logs became an increasingly helpful resource. Students used their logs to support their preparation for the external assessment:</p> <p><i>Kara: I have definitely been able to improve my writing as I can easily look back at what I have done previously and see what Mrs Glenn thought about it and look at my goals to improve it. With all of that in mind it’s easier to develop my work.</i></p> <p><i>Pip: They [the logs] have had a great effect. I look at the goals and feedback and it helps lots and I now find it a lot easier to write essays.</i></p> <p>Glenn reflected: “The logs need to be a fresh and evolving process – in my case, the only consistent bottom lines are that feedback leads to interpretation and goal setting and that time is given for this.”</p>   |
| <p><b>Caring and inclusive learning communities</b></p> <p><b>Te ako, he tohu manaaki, he piringa tangata</b></p> <p>Pedagogical practices enable classes and other learning groups to work as caring, inclusive, and cohesive learning communities.</p> | <p>The learning logs provided a means by which the teacher could attend to next learning steps for all her students, including the low and high achievers. At the end of the year, many students said they felt her understanding of their individual learning needs was much more personal and accurate than before. They experienced her feedback as an expression of care for them and their work.</p> <p><i>John: This is the best thing that has ever happened to my writing.</i></p> <p><i>David: I feel that this system is good because you get a better analysis of my writing.</i></p> <p>Other researchers have found that the social context in which feedback is given and received can influence its effect. When students are given clear feedback in ways that do not publicly humiliate them (as can happen, for example, when they ‘get it wrong’ in class discussion), they tend to experience the learning environment as caring.</p> <p>Learning logs help shift power from teacher to students, supporting the latter to become self-regulating learners. As a result of this shift in power, the classroom can become a less stressful place for both students and teacher.</p>  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | <p>Although her plan did not provide for structured peer collaboration, Glenn concluded that, in a further phase, learning logs could also be used for peer assessment, thereby supplementing teacher assessment and self-assessment and giving students greater access to timely feedback. In this study, around a quarter of the class would have liked more frequent feedback from the teacher.</p> <p>Since completing this study, Glenn has trialed using the logs for peer assessment. She has found that developing students' ability to give each other helpful, reciprocal feedback increases their opportunities for metacognitive reflection and helps build their capacity to self-assess and self-regulate learning.</p> <p>Peer assessment is not a substitute for teacher feedback and Glenn often reviews work that has been peer-assessed, commenting on points of agreement and disagreement, and building on student comments. By doing so, she gains deeper insight into her students' understanding of the criteria for success.</p>   |
| <p><b>Resources</b></p> <p>Full text copies of cited articles can be requested by New Zealand schools through the Ministry of Education's Research Behind BES service: <a href="http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/topics/BES/Research-behind-the-BESs">www.educationcounts.govt.nz/topics/BES/Research-behind-the-BESs</a></p> | <p>Moon, J. (2006). <i>Learning journals: A handbook for reflective practice and professional development</i>, (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). Oxon: RoutledgeFalmer.</p> <p>Parr, J., &amp; Timperley, H. (2010). Feedback to writing, assessment for teaching and learning and student progress. <i>Assessing Writing</i>, 15, pp. 68–85.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Appendix B, Marking grid for NCEA Level 1 text response, is Jennifer Glenn's original level 1 matrix, which separates out the success criteria for text response from those for academic writing. While it is still evolving, she has found it to be a workable tool that efficiently demonstrates students' progress against the learning goals.</p> <p>Glenn has used the following approach to help teachers at workshops see how they can strengthen the feedback they give students:</p> <p><i>I have handed out extracts of student comment and asked teachers to consider what the comment says about that student and what an appropriate response might include. This has occasioned good discussion and interest in the sort of information and dialogue that emerges from the process.</i></p> <p>Glenn suggests that learning logs could easily be used in an online environment. Options include online diaries, Intranet sites, and e-portfolios. My Portfolio (<a href="http://myportfolio.school.nz/">http://myportfolio.school.nz/</a>) is an option that is currently offered free to New Zealand schools.</p> |

# Professional learning: BES Exemplar 5 starter questions



## Appendix A: Evidence about effective and ineffective goals and feedback

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Teacher knowledge:<br/>Effective goals</b>  | <p>Timperley and Parr<sup>8</sup> reviewed evidence about the qualities of goals and feedback that are most likely to foster self-regulated learning. Eventually, self-regulated learners formulate their own goals. “[Mastery learning] involves the learner having an understanding of what success in that task might look like and receiving instruction and feedback directly related to it” (p. 45).</p>  |   |
|  | <b>Effective goals</b>  | <b>Ineffective goals</b>  |
|  | <p>Clear goals with associated criteria or examples enable learners to judge their progress against the goal and give feedback to themselves.</p>   | <p>Unclear goals are likely to result in students being unsure about their learning, constructing alternative goals, wasting time, and experiencing continuing confusion about what the task requires.</p>  |
|  | <p>Specific goals focus students’ attention, develop greater commitment, and allow more directed feedback.<sup>9</sup></p>  | <p>General goals do not focus attention so are less useful for orienting feedback.</p>  |
|  | <p>‘Learning goals’ focus on understanding how to tackle new problems and learn new things.</p>   | <p>‘Performance goals’ focus on grades and can lead to students focusing their attention on their ability and how they compare with others rather than on monitoring their personal progress.</p> <p>Performance goals can promote less effective questioning patterns and poorer problem-solving ability than learning goals.<sup>10</sup></p> |
| <b>Teacher knowledge:<br/>Effective feedback</b>   | <p>The quality of the information that is fed back to students by the teacher or other students is critical for learning. By explicitly teaching their students how to provide effective feedback to peers, teachers can build additional support for learning <i>and</i> increase the achievement of both givers and receivers. Timperley and Parr<sup>11</sup> reviewed the qualities of feedback that is effective or ineffective in supporting self-regulated learning.</p> |   |
|  | <b>Effective feedback</b>   | <b>Ineffective feedback</b>   |
|  | <p>Task-related feedback supports the student to make progress with the task.</p>   | <p>Feedback about the personal qualities of the learner invites a focus on social relationships rather than cognitive processes and can be detrimental to the achievement of learning goals.</p>  |
|  | <p>Cognitively oriented ‘process feedback’ helps students identify cues that indicate progress towards goals, monitor task engagement, and assess the value of cues in terms of task success.</p>   | <p>‘Outcome feedback’ (feedback that simply identifies where a response is correct or incorrect) is of dubious value because it may not provide the student with the information they need to improve and to become a self-regulating learner.</p>  |
|  | <p>Quality feed forward provides the student with sufficient information for them to be able to use effective processes or strategies and make progress towards the goal.</p>   | <p>Feedback without support; feedback on progress that is not linked to a corrective strategy.</p>  |
| <p>Feedback for deep learning supports understanding, strategy development, and self-regulation.</p> | <p>Feedback for minimal learning orients the learner to surface features.</p>   |   |



## Appendix B: Marking grid for NCEA Level 1<sup>12</sup>

| <b>Level 1 text response: Success criteria</b> |   |   |  |   |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| <b>Academic writing</b>                        | <b>Not achieved</b>   | <b>Achieved</b><br><i>shows understanding using supporting evidence</i> | <b>Merit</b><br><i>convincing understanding</i>                      | <b>Excellence</b><br><i>perceptive understanding</i>  |
|  | too short   | reasonable length   | sustained  | planned and developed answer – builds coherent and convincing answer to all parts of the question         |
|  | lack of focus on question or focus only on part of question | answers what is asked   | planned and developed answer to all parts of the question            |   |
|  | no/limited evidence or quote dump                           | some evidence linked to points  | frequent apt evidence that is woven in                               | evidence apt, generous, woven in throughout   |
|  | generalised or simplistic                                   | some straightforward development  | clear argument developed   | coherent argument sustained   |
|  |   |   | uses terminology with ease   | terminology use is assured and linked to an evaluation of overall craft and purpose                       |
|  | lacks paragraphs muddled                                    | well organised  | balanced response  | organisation is logical, coherent, and integrated   |
|  | weaknesses in style and/or control                          | style satisfactory  | fluent style   | lucid style   |
| <b>Text response</b>                           | limited knowledge of the text                               | reasonably familiar with the text                                       | clearly familiar with the text                                       | comprehensive knowledge of the text   |
|  | lacks evidence/detail<br>too much plot                      | some specific reference to text as evidence of understanding            | frequent use of evidence woven in<br>ability to relate to whole text | details threaded convincingly throughout<br>discusses overall craft and purpose<br>may go beyond the text |
|  | ideas simplistic  | largely conventional ideas about text                                   | good points made showing some analysis that is expanded on           | may discuss position as reader  |
|  | little or no personal response                              | engages with text   | some maturity, perception  | mature, insightful, creative response – with judgements   |

## Appendix C. BES Exemplar 5 implementation alerts

| Not recommended  | What the research shows about more effective implementation   |
|--|---|
| Beginning the log process without discussing its purpose   | A written explanation may work, but it is much more likely that the logs will become a collaborative learning tool if the teacher explains their use, purpose, and potential to the students face-to-face.  |
| Expecting feedback in the logs to be one-way communication                                       | <p>Feedback in logs is more effective when it forms part of an ongoing, interactive dialogue. The teacher gives feedback and then asks the student to respond, often aided by purposeful prompts.</p> <p>Ideally, responses will be frequent and prompt. However, the process must be manageable. If time is short and the logs are working effectively, the teacher may just scan student responses, noting implications for teaching, and perhaps jotting quick replies.</p>  |
| Giving feedback that is too general  | If the teacher's feedback is too general or 'coded' in ways that the students cannot decipher, student responses will also be general. As a result, student learning goals and next steps will be vague. Shared understanding of the achievement criteria is crucial; teacher feedback needs to be connected to these criteria, and specific.   |
| Giving the same kind of feedback to all students   | When working well, the logs become the site for a personal learning conversation between the student, teacher, and selected others. Feedback – which can include questions, challenges, prompts, scaffolds, exemplars, actual examples, further references, and discussion points – must be tailored to each student and leave them clear about their next learning step and how to take it. The logs also provide a means by which students can raise and have answered their questions about the value of what they are learning. |
| Assuming understanding   | It is clear from research that students often do not understand, or misunderstand, what teachers say to them. The log provides a site where understanding can be checked.   |
| Expecting thoughtful student responses without providing the time and a structure for reflection | Many students are unaccustomed to reflecting on their learning and, often, their initial reflections are superficial. Carefully designed prompts can help elicit the reflection wanted. Whether learning is taking place in or out of the classroom (for example, online), it is important to set aside time for reflection, and to provide structure.  |
| Using the same reflective process all of the time  | While the aim is to develop the habit of reflecting on learning, any repeated activity can become a purposeless routine. It is important, therefore, to constantly revisit the purpose of the logs. Also, while some elements need to remain constant (for example, the checks for understanding), others can be varied (for example, timing, format, and context). It is important that the process be reflexive and evolving.   |
| Using the logs without a system  | If the logs are in book form, it is useful to set up a system for their storage and use in the classroom. Online logs are more flexible as long as internet access is readily available when needed.  |

- 1 Hattie, J. (2009). *Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. London: Routledge.
- 2 *ibid.*
- 3 Education Review Office (2007). *The collection and use of assessment information in schools*. Wellington: Education Review Office.
- 4 Swan, S., & White, R. (1994). *The thinking books*. London: Falmer Press. See also p. 80 in Alton-Lee, A. (2003). *Quality teaching for diverse students in schooling: Best evidence synthesis*. Wellington: Ministry of Education, and Case 2, p. 238, Aitken, G., & Sinnema, C. (2008). *Effective pedagogy in the social sciences/tikanga ā iwi: Best evidence synthesis*. Wellington: Ministry of Education. <http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/goto/BES>
- 5 This section draws on *The New Zealand curriculum* and its parallel document, *Te marautanga o Aotearoa*. It includes quotes and paraphrases from pages 8, 9, 10, 18, 35, and 39 of *The New Zealand curriculum* and page 15 of *Te marautanga o Aotearoa*. Ministry of Education (2007). *The New Zealand curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media. Ministry of Education (2008). *Te marautanga o Aotearoa*. Wellington: Learning Media.
- 6 In education, a smart tool is one that supports professional learning about how to advance student learning. In the *School leadership/He kura rangatira BES*, selecting, developing, and using smart tools was found to be one of the leadership practices that advanced valued student outcomes. Leaders select and design smart tools by ensuring they are based on valid theories and that they are well designed for their purpose. Tools can only be called 'smart' if they actually do advance valued outcomes.
- 7 Crooks, T. (2004, March). *Tensions between assessment for learning and assessment for qualifications*. Paper presented at the Third Conference of the Association of Commonwealth Examinations and Accreditation Bodies (ACEAB), Nadi, Fiji.
- 8 Timperley, H., & Parr, J. (2009). What is this lesson about? Instructional processes and student understandings in writing classrooms. *Curriculum Journal*, 20 (1), pp. 43–60. See also Timperley, H., & Hattie, J. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research* 77 (1), pp. 81–102.
- 9 Kluger, A.N., & DeNisi, A. (1998). The effects of feedback interventions on performance: A historical review, a meta-analysis, and a preliminary feedback intervention theory. *Psychological Bulletin*, 119, 2, pp. 109–38.
- 10 Newmann, R.S., & Schwaagner, M.T. (1995). Students' help seeking during problem solving: Effects of grade, goal and prior achievement. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32 (2), pp. 352–76.
- 11 Timperley, H., & Parr, J. (2009). What is this lesson about? Instructional processes and student understandings in writing classrooms. *Curriculum Journal*, 20 (1), pp. 43–60.
- 12 This is Jennifer Glenn's original level 1 matrix. It separates out the success criteria for text response from those for academic writing.

