

## Web 5.3

### Case Study 5.2: Student and academic formative feedback: examples

#### Group 1's Formative Feedback to Group 2

Your essay was pretty awesome, but here's a few comments we all made about it using the final marking criteria.

- 1) The introduction was quite vague, especially the opening sentence which sort of stated the obvious a little. You're also quite harsh on him straight away before you've even established two sides of the argument which is perhaps a little severe.
- 2) The uses of sources was quite good, though there could have been a higher amount of quotes included. Also, cross referencing between the sources would have been a more advanced analysis, but you seemed to use them in an accurate and relevant context which is good.
- 3) Throughout, quite strong and harsh comments are made which are based largely on opinion and seem quite one sided, such as 'was hated by the levellers and the ranters', and 'he was a power hungry tyrant' – this just seems like its a one sided argument all the way through, and we thought although its good to have strong opinions in essays, two views should be addressed.
- 4) The essay could have been longer and more substantial, with more background knowledge involved. The style of writing was sophisticated, though sometimes there is an absence of an explanation when a point is made which then results in the reader being a little confused as to how the paragraph argument relates to the question. Yet the reference to the question at the beginning and the end is effective.
- 5) The conclusion was not very in-depth or analytical, but simply made a yes or no judgement – this bit is the most crucial part, and it needed more links between the arguments, with a look at both points of view, and then an overall decision.

Overall though, it contained all of the crucial information and the style of writing flowed quite well so good job.

#### Group 2's Formative Feedback to Group 1

- 1) Your essay was well structured and displayed a good understanding of the topic. You gave a balanced argument and it was clear what points you were making. We felt that in the second paragraph there was a little too much unnecessary background information and fact which made the essay a little too narrative. The point should therefore perhaps have been explored from a more analytical angle in order to strengthen your argument.
- 2) You made good use of sources, which were well integrated. However there was no evidence of cross referencing which would be useful to support your case.

- 3) There needs to be greater explanation of how the personal rule is relevant to your argument.
- 4) Your paragraphs were well contacted and the counter arguments were balanced and made obvious.
- 5) Making a clearer link between sources and own knowledge would strengthen the essay and help it to flow. And perhaps a greater analysis of the usefulness of sources would enhance your answer.
- 6) The question that is being addressed needs to be constantly revisited in order to make your argument clear.

## Academic Formative Feedback to Group 1

### Criteria for Marking

#### Use of Sources

Does your answer –

- Integrate sources accurately into its arguments and explanations?
- You do do this – but try to include inferences from the sources and also evaluations into your arguments.
- Link the sources to own knowledge?
- You do clearly integrate discussion of the sources with your own knowledge (but not always – see the comments on your fourth paragraph below for example).
- Cross-reference between the sources?
- This needs to happen more – you should explicitly compare what sources say (or indeed imply) about the issues that you discuss more than you do.
- Consider the strengths and limitations of the sources?
- This needs to happen more – I can't easily find an example of it. Remember that you need to use sources as evidence – to prove or disprove a case – rather than simply to illustrate your arguments. Consider the origin of a source and its context. This will have a bearing on the value that you place on it. Is the value of three of the sources affected, for example, by the fact that they are speeches and thus interventions in politics as much as statements of private or unchanging beliefs? You could use knowledge also to consider the precise context of each speech.

#### Use of Knowledge

Does your answer –

- Contain detailed and accurate own knowledge?
- You do include your own knowledge. I think you should aim to increase its detail however (more specific events and episodes?)
- Use this knowledge to support a case (rather than simply to tell a story)?
- You certainly do this. There are points where you simply restate what is in the sources without further factual material of your own (e.g. your fourth paragraph would be strengthened by examples of C holding the independent views you mention).

- Link own knowledge with the sources to support its case?
- There are clear links in what you say to the sources. (But see above on how knowledge could be used in evaluating and contextualising the sources).

### Analysis of the issue

Does your answer –

- Consider the phrase quoted in the question clearly and where necessary clarify key words (in other words does it have a clear sense of what the statement in the question actually means and of what the historian is claiming)?
- I think you should spend a bit more time on Hutton. What are the possible judgements on C that he discusses? What exactly is he saying is the view to take? It's worth clarifying what is being claimed a little more before evaluating it.
- Consider evidence for the claim in the question and also against the claim in the question?
- You need to do this more: what evidence does Hutton have? If you want to take a different view you should assess the strengths and weaknesses of his view explicitly.

### Style

Does your answer –

- Have a clear structure in each paragraph (point, evidence, explanation)?
- Yes!
- Link the various points that it makes into an overall argument?
- You could probably make the links more explicit. Ideally (if the first sentence of a paragraph states the point it is going to make) it should be possible to follow your argument by reading that only. I would also aim to use clearly argumentative paragraph starters (“however... on the other hand... “ etc).
- Address the question directly from the start and in each paragraph?
- You are clearly debating the issues throughout. You could make this more explicit however (see the point above).
- Have a clear conclusion that refers back to the question and answers it and that follows from the points made in the rest of the answer?
- You need to add this.

## Academic Formative Feedback to Group 3

### Criteria for Marking

#### Use of Sources

Does your answer –

- Integrate sources accurately into its arguments and explanations?
- You do do this – but notice that there are paragraphs (amounting to about half your answer) where you don't explicitly mention the sources.
- Link the sources to own knowledge?

- You do clearly integrate discussion of the sources with your own knowledge but you could do this more – e.g. use your own knowledge to evaluate and contextualise these sources (see below).
- Cross-reference between the sources?
- You do this (e.g. at the end of your first paragraph) but I suggest doing this more explicitly (saying something like “as both source X and source Y confirm”) and that you do it more.
- Consider the strengths and limitations of the sources?
- This needs to happen more – I can’t easily find an example of it. Remember that you need to use sources as evidence – to prove or disprove a case – rather than simply to illustrate your arguments. Consider the origin of a source and its context. This will have a bearing on the value that you place on it. Is the value of three of the sources affected, for example, by the fact that they are speeches and thus interventions in politics as much as statements of private or unchanging beliefs? You could use knowledge also to consider the precise context of each speech.

#### Use of Knowledge

Does your answer –

- Contain detailed and accurate own knowledge?
- You do include your own knowledge. I think you should aim to increase its detail however (more specific events and episodes?)
- Use this knowledge to support a case (rather than simply to tell a story)?
- You certainly do this. It could be done in greater detail however (for example, in paragraph three you talk about religious toleration – illustrate this with examples?).
- Link own knowledge with the sources to support its case?
- There are clear links in what you say to the sources. (But see above on how knowledge could be used in evaluating and contextualising the sources).

#### Analysis of the issue

Does your answer –

- Consider the phrase quoted in the question clearly and where necessary clarify key words (in other words does it have a clear sense of what the statement in the question actually means and of what the historian is claiming)?
- I get a good sense that you are aware of a debate on how to characterise C and it is useful that you mention other views also (e.g. Hill). I think you should spend a bit more time on Hutton, however: what are the possible judgements on C that he discusses? What exactly is he saying is the view to take? It’s worth clarifying what is being claimed a little more before evaluating it.
- Consider evidence for the claim in the question and also against the claim in the question?
- You need to do this more: what evidence does Hutton have? If you want to take a different view you should assess the strengths and weaknesses of his view explicitly.

## Style

Does your answer –

- Have a clear structure in each paragraph (point, evidence, explanation)?
- Yes!
- Link the various points that it makes into an overall argument?
- You could probably make the links more explicit. Ideally (if the first sentence of a paragraph states the point it is going to make) it should be possible to follow your argument by reading that only. I would also aim to use clearly argumentative paragraph starters (“however... on the other hand.... ” etc).
- Address the question directly from the start and in each paragraph?
- You are clearly debating the issues throughout. You could make this more explicit however (see the point above).
- Have a clear conclusion that refers back to the question and answers it and that follows from the points made in the rest of the answer?
- Make this more explicit. Your last paragraph is drawing a conclusion but it feels a bit too much like it is making an additional point. Make that point and then sum up?