



Building Assessment Literacy in Higher Education using Peer Marking

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Key research interests: Psychological predictors of achievement; Student motivation and engagement; Impact of social processes within the classroom

Session Overview



Transition to HE, Self-Regulated Learning, Assessment Literacy, Peer Marking

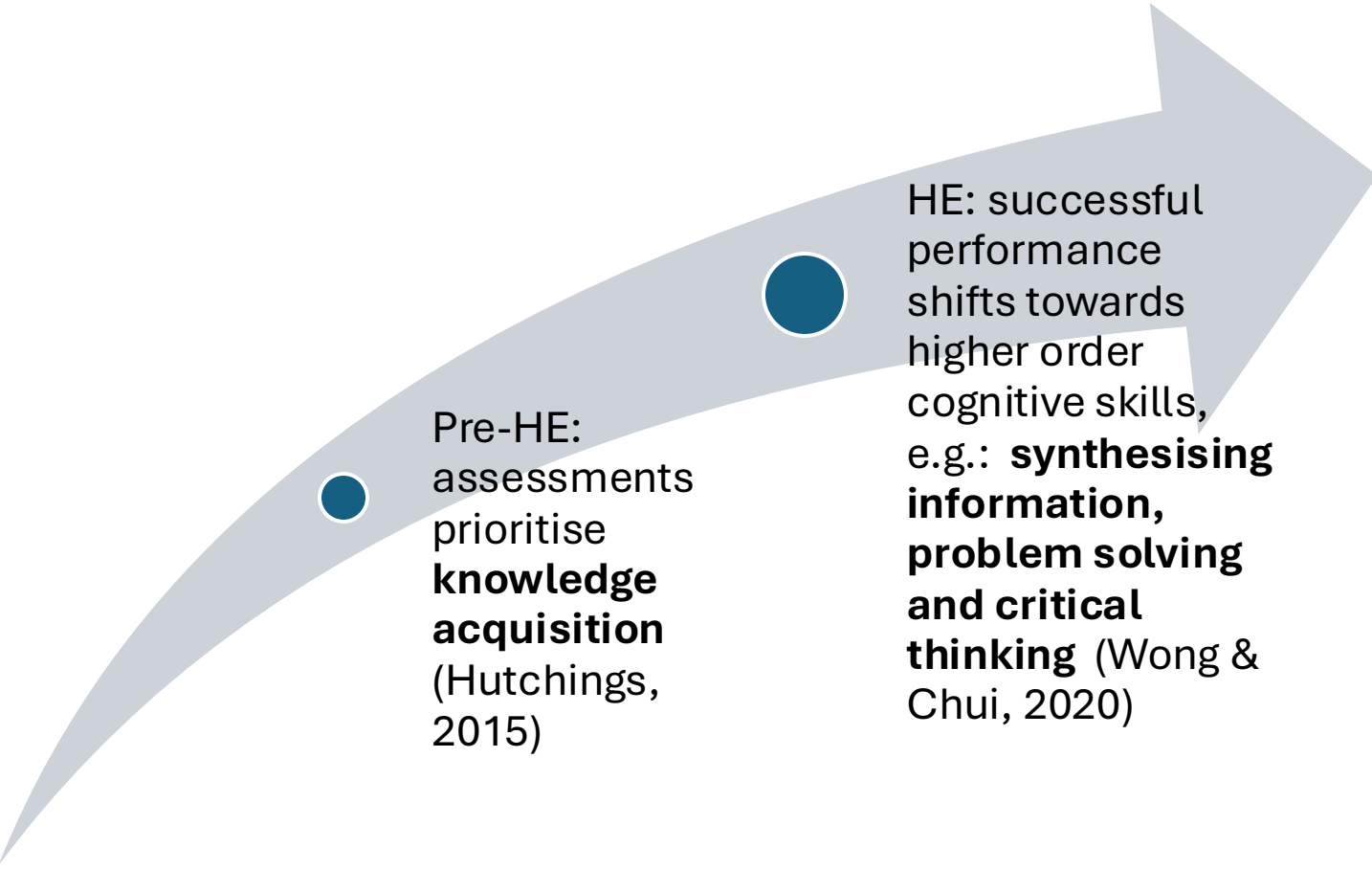


Peer Marking Activity: Method and Student Feedback



Reflections on Activity

Transition to HE: Academic Expectations



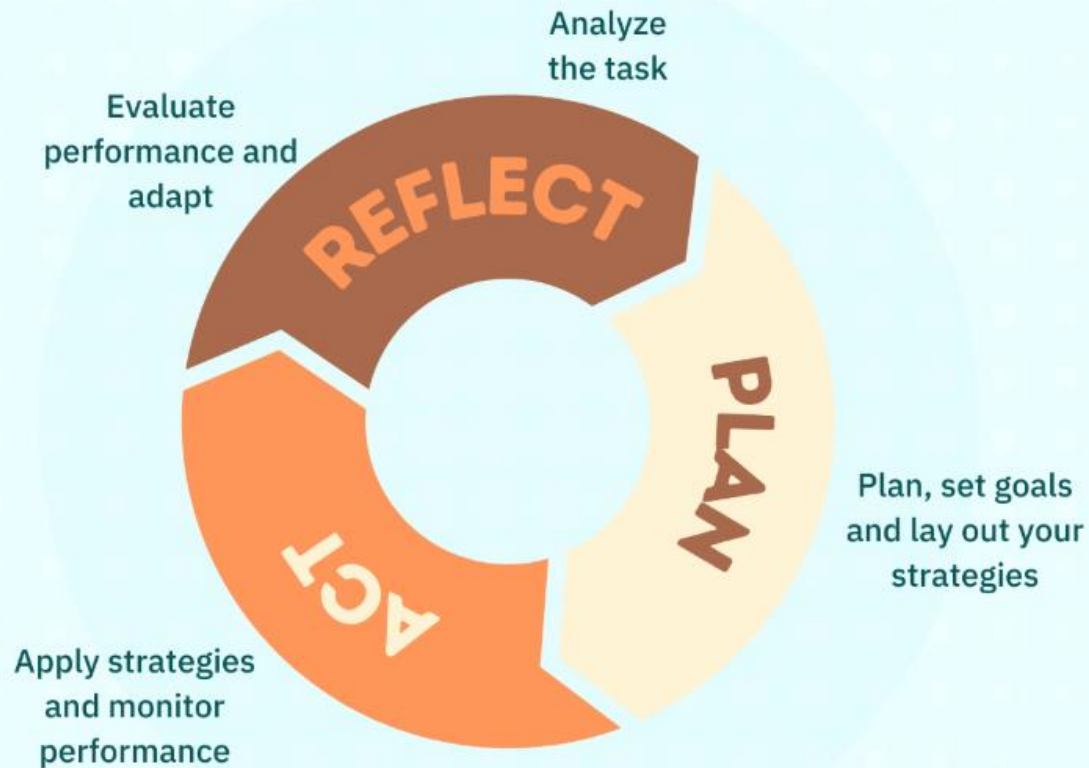
Pre-HE:
assessments
prioritise
**knowledge
acquisition**
(Hutchings,
2015)

HE: successful
performance
shifts towards
higher order
cognitive skills,
e.g.: **synthesising
information,
problem solving
and critical
thinking** (Wong &
Chui, 2020)

Students entering higher
education face a transition in
their studying and
assessments experiences
(Lowe & Cook, 2003)



The Cycle of Self-Regulated Learning



Self-Regulated Learning

Self-Regulated Learning

Effective self-regulated learning is related to a variety of positive factors such as **higher academic achievement, motivation and resilience**

To become self-regulated learners, students need to be able to **judge their work, identify its merits**, locate its **weaknesses** and determine ways to **improve** it (Nicol, 2009)

Students need to **understand the purpose of assessment** and be able to evaluate whether they have **done what they were asked to do**

However, first-year students often **over-rate their understanding of assessment processes** (Sandler 2009), with a disjuncture between what they think they are being assessed on and what the marking criteria/achievement standards require of them (Francis, 2008)

Assessment Literacy

Work undertaken by Smith et al. (2013) looked at effectiveness of a variety of techniques to support HE students' assessment literacy and academic outcomes



The greatest predictor of enhanced student marks was the development of their **ability to judge actual work against criteria and standards**



Interventions to help students to develop their ability to judge their own and others' work enhances their learning outcomes



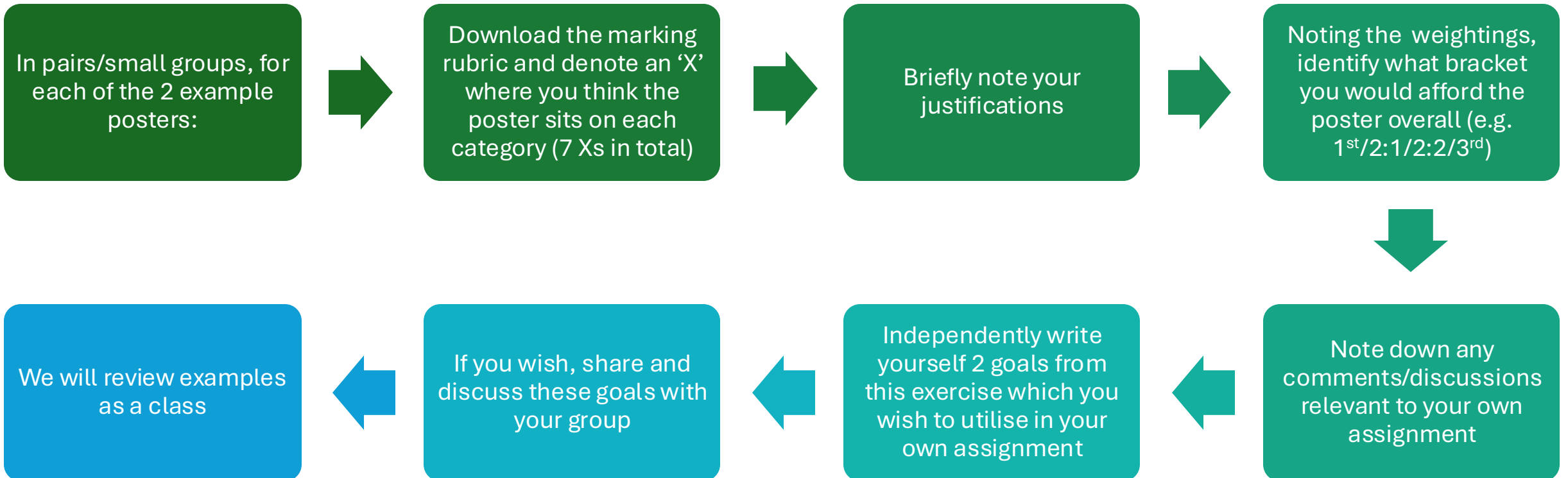
Peer marking can build student autonomy and motivation and can improve performance (Fleckney et al., 2024; Double, 2020), Peer marking promotes collaborative interaction, **enabling co-construction of knowledge** (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick 2006)

Peer Marking Activity Method

- Y1, Semester 2 Core Unit (55 students)
- Conducted in class (inclusive) in assignment preparation session
- Used 2 past submissions as examples
- Discussed research-informed benefits of peer marking



Peer Marking Activity: Method



PRACTICAL SKILLS

Quality of sources used (10%) TS1	Significant use is made of primary sources; current research is predominantly drawn upon.	Significant <u>use</u> is made of primary sources in conjunction some with high quality secondary sources. Current research is drawn upon. 	Principally makes use of primary sources, with some use of high-quality secondary sources. Some current research is drawn upon. 	Some use of primary sources, but generally reliant on appropriate secondary sources.	Mostly relies on secondary sources, with limited use of primary sources.	The work draws on some secondary <u>sources, but</u> also relies on inappropriate sources. Hardly any use of primary sources.	The submission is based on unreliable and/or inappropriate sources.
Referencing (5%) TS1	Sources used are acknowledged in the text and reference list and used effectively to support discussion. Referencing follows a systematic approach, appropriate to the discipline. All elements of individual references are present.	Sources used are acknowledged in the text and reference list and used to support discussion. Referencing follows a systematic approach, appropriate to the discipline. All elements of individual references are present.	Sources used are acknowledged in the text and reference list. Referencing follows a systematic approach, appropriate to the discipline. Entries in the reference list are accurate. 	Attempts to follow a systematic approach to the citation of sources, appropriate to the discipline. Most elements of individual references are present and accurate.	Sources of information acknowledged and integration between text and reference list is mainly effective with some inaccuracies or omissions. Attempts to follow systematic approach, appropriate to the discipline. Reference list contains some errors.	Some sources of information acknowledged but links between text and reference list are unclear. Referencing does not follow a systematic approach. Elements of individual references are incomplete and/or absent.	Little or no acknowledgment of sources of information in text and/or reference list.

Understanding motivation

Motivation plays a fundamental role in learning outcomes during middle childhood. In Key Stage 2 (KS2), students not only develop their social and cognitive abilities, but a growing sense of autonomy, self-awareness and social belonging, all of which greatly influences their learning and engagement. Research supports the belief that motivation at this stage is closely linked to academic achievement and emotional development (Finch, Saavedra, & Obradović, 2024). Yet, many classroom practices rely heavily on extrinsic motivators e.g. rewards/punishments, which fail to promote long-term engagement.

This poster is intended for primary school teachers and educational professionals, exploring how Self-Determination Theory (SDT) can be practically applied in KS2 classrooms, and equipping educators with research-informed strategies to support and enhance long-lasting motivation.

★ Effective introduction which ‘sets the stall out’

★ Practical, implementable advice...

✗ but not supported by empirical evidence – so how do we know it will be effective?

Teacher Tips

- ✓ Choose **one** SDT principle to focus on and build into your daily teaching - small changes make a big difference.
- ✓ Use **flexible, positive** language that encourages rather than directs (“Let’s try” instead of “You must”).
- ✓ **Break learning into manageable steps** and celebrate small wins to build confidence.
- ✓ **Praise effort and approach**, not just final answers - show pupils that the journey to success matters.
- ✓ **Give pupils real choices** in tasks or topics to boost their sense of ownership and get them working collaboratively .

How can I promote a self-determined environment?

Not all hope is lost! In a meta-analysis of the use of several SDT interventions, Wang et al. (2024) found that interventions promoting the three psychological needs did result in significantly higher levels of intrinsic motivation in those students. Further Deci & Ryan (2016) find that extrinsic motivators have a less detrimental impact when delivered in autonomy-supportive classrooms.

Escandell & Chu (2021) offer insight into how to promote relatedness within an educational setting. They promoted teacher-student relatedness by increasing non-formal feedback. This was bidirectional, with the teachers focusing on change-orientated feedback that students would be able to implement, as well as having students give feedback regarding if they were satisfied with their learning and what the teacher needed to do to help them succeed.

❌ Too much 'in the detail'/academic focus – when writing for lay audience better to consolidate ideas/focus

❌ In-text referencing not APA formatted – should be Deci **and** Ryan (2016)

★ Attempt at some critical evaluation

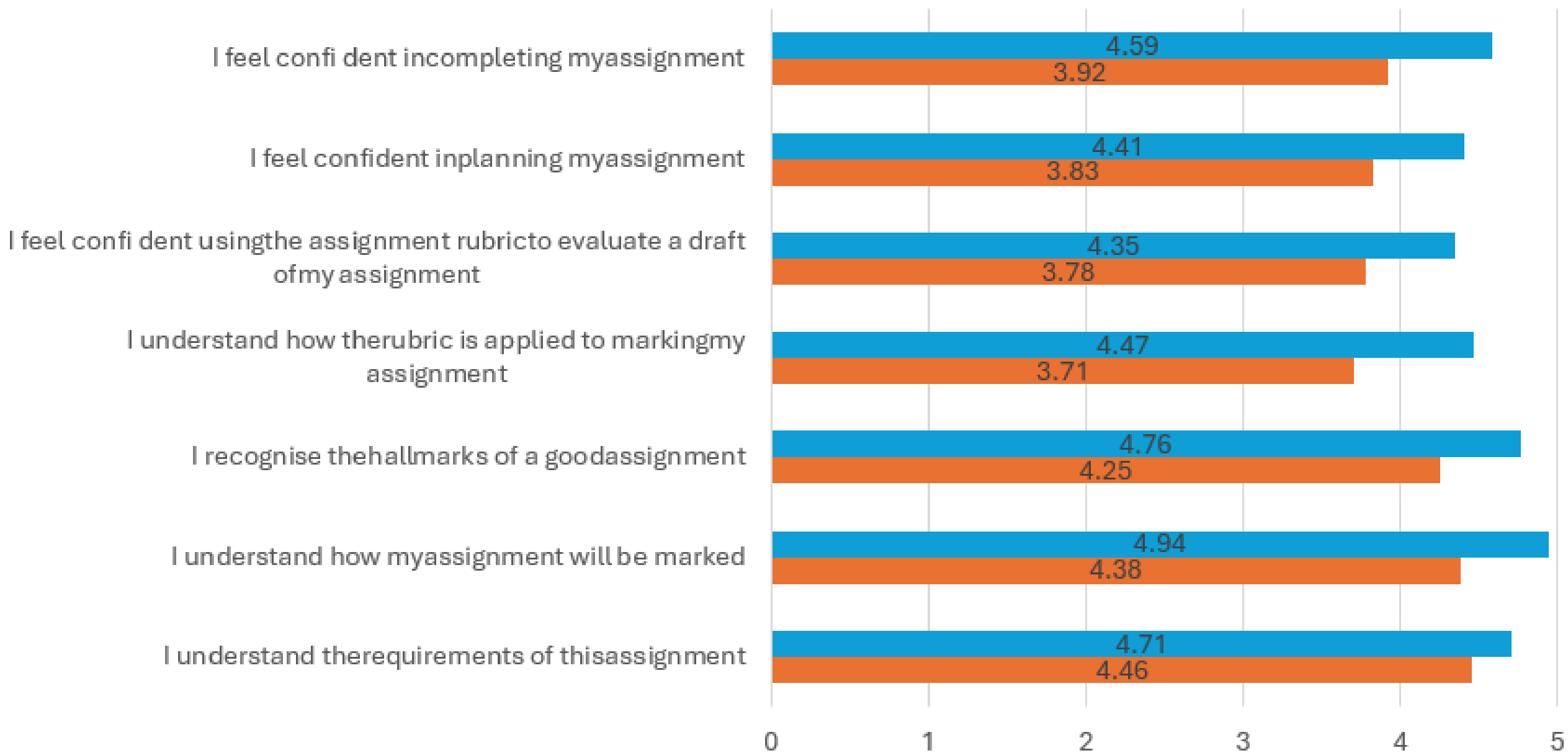
❌ But for the context of this assignment, how does this help teachers?

★ Good counter-argument around how teachers can promote relatedness

Peer relatedness was increased by incorporating group work or discussions into lessons. These lead to students self-reporting higher levels of relatedness and overall satisfaction (Escandell & Chu 2021). However, it should be noted that this study was carried out within a university setting, further the study did not mention the number of students in the class. Being able to implement more general feedback, as well as analysing student feedback is a time-consuming process and may not always be able to be achieved in school settings. Importantly, Niemiec & Ryan (2009) suggest that as long as students feel as though a teacher respects and values them, relatedness should be promoted within the classroom.



Student Feedback





Students' **confidence in planning and completing** their assignment **increased**

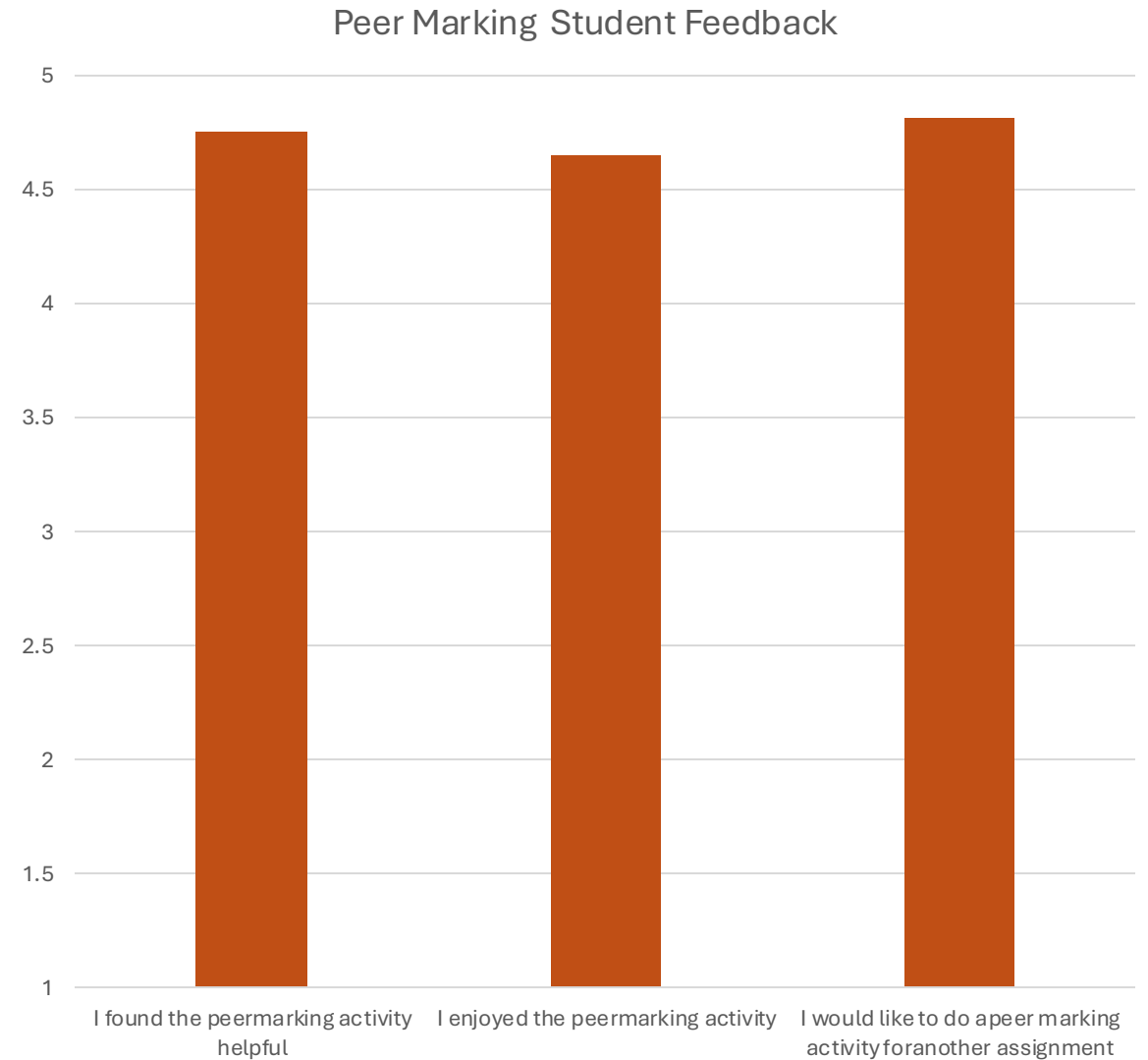


Students **better understood** how the rubric is **used** to mark their assignment and felt more confident in using it **to evaluate their own draft** work before submission



Students had a **better understanding** of how their **assignment would be marked** and what the **hallmarks of a good assignment** were

Students **enjoyed** the peer marking activity, found it **helpful** and would like to engage with it for another assignment



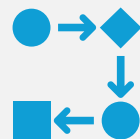
Qualitative Feedback



Was very helpful to see some actual examples of previous posters, which gave inspiration of what to do and what not to do



It was especially helpful when you went over it and pointed out what was good and bad as it made it really clear



Very helpful to see examples and evaluate them - gives us a place to start. Thank you

Reflections



Very positive student engagement and feedback



Would want to devote more time to the activity going forward as time felt tight



Consider how approach can be used more widely without risk of 'cookie cutter' assignments

References

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Any
Questions?

