Improving Student Achievement

Through Feedback

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Abstract

Ever since the groundbreaking work of Black and Wiliam (1998a), the question of how best to present feedback to students has been an international concern. Recent works by Andrade, (2005) and Lipnevich, McCallen, Miles, and Smith (2014) have shown that the use of annotated exemplars holds great promise. In this research, annotated exemplars were contrasted with personalized feedback in a randomized in situ study on writing development at the secondary school level.

This study was designed to measure the impact of two different types of feedback on students writing achievement; personalised and annotated exemplars. A further objective was to determine which style of feedback students preferred, and why. Data for the study were gathered through four different sources; pre and post-tests, focus group interviews, student surveys, and a researcher journal.

Each of two secondary school English classes, comprising one Year 9 and one Year 10 class, was divided randomly into two groups for teaching of writing. Two different styles of writing were taught during the year: transactional and creative. Each group was given one style of feedback (personalised or an annotated exemplar). This process was reversed when the second writing style was taught. Results of pre-testing and the final writing assessment were recorded. Each of the groups completed an anonymous survey asking them to answer questions around the feedback and their preferences. These data were expanded upon through having students participate in focus groups facilitated by the classroom teacher. The researcher’s journal provided an insight into the time taken to create and deliver the feedback, and record responses of the participants.
Most students showed improvement as a result of receiving feedback. An interesting aspect of the results was that the Year 9 group improved most in the first cycle, regardless of the style of feedback given. In the Year 10 group of students, personalised feedback resulted in the highest level of improvement. These findings were supported by discussion in the focus groups.

The significance of this study is that it is conducted experimentally *in situ* and contrasts two feedback styles. Evidence of effective feedback techniques is of importance for teachers seeking to enhance student learning and the quality of their teaching programmes.
# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements........................................................................................................... ii  
Abstract ............................................................................................................................. iii  
List of Tables ....................................................................................................................... viii  
List of Figures ..................................................................................................................... viii  
Chapter One: Introduction ................................................................................................. 1  
Chapter Two: Literature Review ....................................................................................... 8  
  Introduction ....................................................................................................................... 8  
  Feedback Defined .............................................................................................................. 9  
  Feedback and its Purposes ............................................................................................... 12  
    Feedback as formative assessment. .............................................................................. 12  
    Feedback to support students. ..................................................................................... 14  
  Potential of Feedback ....................................................................................................... 15  
  Effective Feedback .......................................................................................................... 18  
    Defining effective feedback. ......................................................................................... 19  
    Timing of feedback. ...................................................................................................... 20  
    Accuracy of feedback. .................................................................................................. 21  
    Goal orientation and feedback. ................................................................................... 22  
    Supportive feedback. .................................................................................................... 23  
    Manageable feedback. ................................................................................................. 23  
    Specificity of feedback. ............................................................................................... 24  
    Four levels of feedback. ............................................................................................... 26  
    Methods of delivering feedback. .................................................................................. 27  
Impact of Effective Feedback on Teachers ........................................................................ 31  
  Helping teachers improve their pedagogical understanding. ...................................... 32
The essay scores from the pre-test of Session II.................................................. 77
The pre/post differences from Session II. ................................................................. 78
Qualitative Results........................................................................................................ 80
Coding of focus group and survey data................................................................. 81
Focus Groups............................................................................................................... 82
Student Surveys.......................................................................................................... 86
Teacher Journal .......................................................................................................... 89
Chapter Five: Discussion ......................................................................................... 96
Summary of Qualitative Results............................................................................. 96
Contributions of the Study ..................................................................................... 97
Implications - Theoretical ....................................................................................... 99
    Key findings. ............................................................................................................ 99
Implications – Practical .......................................................................................... 106
Limitations of this Study......................................................................................... 109
Future Research........................................................................................................ 109
Conclusion ................................................................................................................. 113
References .................................................................................................................. 116
Appendix A: Information Sheet ............................................................................. 140
Appendix B: Consent Form ..................................................................................... 144
Appendix C: e-Asttle Rubric.................................................................................... 146
Appendix D: Junior Marking Grid .......................................................................... 154
List of Tables

Table 1. Means and standard deviations for Session One ................................................................. 73
Table 2. Means and standard deviations for Session Two ................................................................. 77
Table 3. Joint themes from focus groups ........................................................................................ 83
Table 4. Teacher Time Spent on Personalised Feedback .................................................................. 91
Table 5. Time log for Feedback – Annotated Exemplar Creation .................................................... 92
Table 6. Creation and Delivery of Annotated Exemplars ................................................................ 93

List of Figures

Figure 1. Graphical representation of the study design ................................................................. 55
Figure 2. Graphical representation of the study steps ................................................................. 69
Figure 3. Confidence intervals (95%) about group means for year and treatment group for pre-test scores. ................................................................. 74
Figure 4. Confidence intervals (95%) about group means for year and treatment group for change scores ................................................................. 76
Figure 5. Confidence intervals for pre-test scores for Session Two ....................... 78
Figure 6. Confidence intervals for pre/post change scores across years and groups. ................................................................. 80
Figure 7. Preferred style of feedback ................................................................. 89
Chapter One

Introduction

Improving student achievement is a universal concern for teachers. They are constantly looking for ways to ensure the best outcomes for their students. The global push to lift levels of education has resulted in governments undertaking intensive programmes of educational improvement. As an example, by 2017, the New Zealand government aims to have every 18 year old school leaver gain National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) Level Two (https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/indicators/main/education-and-learning-outcomes/114325). To do this, teachers must find effective and efficient ways to improve student achievement.

One of the tools that could improve student achievement is the use of regular and effective feedback. This is particularly important in the field of writing because, regardless of the subject area, the best quality writing skills are essential in the New Zealand academic system. According to a meta-synthesis of data on feedback by Hattie (1999), feedback is one of the most powerful influences on student achievement. Feedback is a type of formative assessment that provides students with a practical, task related scaffold, and teachers with an opportunity to help students set goals to improve their learning (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Hattie and Timperley go on to say that when feedback is combined with information about how students can improve their work, this creates a new level of instruction.

There are a number of issues to be considered when encouraging the use of feedback including looking at the questions of effectiveness (including teachers’
understanding of effective feedback), efficiency, and student preferences for a particular style of feedback. These are the foci of this research. More specifically, this thesis presents evidence that student achievement can be improved through the use of effective, regular feedback.

Feedback is defined as any information, process, or activity that improves student learning and is based on either a formative or summative task being undertaken by a learner (Irons, 2008). Cornelius-White (2007), and Konold, Miller, and Konold (2004) supported this by saying feedback is a series of deliberate interventions that ensure ongoing cognitive growth that has the potential to shape student behaviour. Stronge (2002) added that feedback is a powerful, constructive tool that can be used to promote student learning, and can be delivered in a variety of ways. Shute (2008) further defined feedback as a communication to learners that is intended to amend thinking or behaviours that in turn leads to improved learning. Regular, good quality feedback can considerably improve learning processes and potential outcomes providing it is delivered correctly (Shute, 2007).

Feedback is given to students through daily encounters with their teachers; it comes in many forms. The most common forms are:

- a grade or reward,
- a comment that provides praise only,
- personalized feedback about a specific task that is relevant to a particular student,
- annotated exemplars (Tunstall & Gipps, 1996b).

According to Marzano (2003), the most common form of feedback is either a numerical or letter grade. However, when feedback is more than the numerical or
letter grade, or a laudatory statement, and contains information relevant to the task being undertaken, it has the power to change learning, and potentially the achievement levels of students (Marzano, 2003). This type of feedback is known as elaborated or specific feedback. Using effective feedback as a tool could be critical for improving levels of students’ achievement. Giving students a cursory note such as “well done” or “good work” does not constitute feedback.

Feedback has potential to improve learning for all students, including low achievers (Fuchs, Fuchs, Hamlett, Katzaroff & Dutka, 1997). Indeed, Shute (2007) argues that struggling students benefit from regular communication in the form of feedback. A strategy that improves the achievement outcomes for low ability students is likely to positively impact all students. The flow-on effect of students being presented with regular and effective feedback early on in their academic career could potentially contribute to future success, therefore helping fulfil not only their own goals, but those of New Zealand society in general (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 9). The New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) highlights oral, written, and visual communication skills as being essential if students are to “participate fully in the social, cultural, political and economic life of New Zealand and the wider world.” (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 18).

Writing, which is an integral part of all subject areas of the New Zealand curriculum, is a logical starting point for the introduction of effective feedback. Effective feedback provides information on correct responses to a task, information that builds upon specific and clearly understood goals, is challenging but low in complexity (easily understood by students), contains learning related information rather than praise, lets students know what is expected of them, and allows tracking in relation to the
success criteria (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Writing regular and personalised feedback for all students in a single class is time consuming; not only in the production of the feedback, but also the individualised delivery of it. For students to benefit from personalised feedback, it is important they have time to read it, have it clearly explained to them, and be able to ask questions should clarification be required. The time factor problem is compounded in the secondary school situation where teachers have multiple classes throughout the day.

The ground-breaking work by Black and Wiliam (1998a) raised the question of how best to present and engage students with feedback, which has been of concern internationally. Research by Andrade, (2005) and Lipnevich et al. (2014) have shown that the use of annotated exemplars holds great promise. In this research, annotated exemplars are contrasted with personalised feedback in a randomised, in situ study on writing development at the secondary school level.

Personalised feedback is directed to the individual student and is relevant to their work specifically. It highlights what students have done well and indicates where improvements can be made. It is often in-depth and provides a scaffold for the students. The personalisation of the feedback means no comparison is made to other student’s work and consequently results in students being focused on their work only and not feeling the need to compete with peers (McInerney & McInerney, 2010). Black & Wiliam (1998a) note that poor, or lower-than-expected grades, can lead to students believing they are not capable of achieving. Personalised feedback focuses the student, allows the teacher and student to set further goals, and provides an opportunity for one-on-one communication between teacher and student, therefore supporting student learning.
Annotated exemplars are examples of high quality work given to students to use as models. The exemplars have been annotated by the teacher and highlight clear examples of why the work is deemed to be of excellent quality. Qualities such as, but not limited to, structure, ideas, crafting, grammar, or punctuation may have been included in the annotation. Depending on the age and ability level of students, a single annotated exemplar may have examples of multiple qualities highlighted. When using annotated exemplars, it is important that students know why a section of work has been annotated and what the annotation is an example of. Terms often encountered in a rubric such as crafting, structure or grammar, should be clearly explained before the exemplar is given to students. Annotated exemplars take time to create but the bonus is that they can be used multiple times in the right circumstances. Teacher’s choice of feedback style may be determined by the time required to create and deliver it. There are a number of issues to be considered when encouraging the use of feedback including looking at the questions of effectiveness, efficiency, and student preferences for a particular style of feedback; these are the general topic of this research.

This thesis presents evidence that feedback improves students’ achievement levels. The chapters are set out in the following order. Chapter Two, the literature review, includes current knowledge about feedback and its potential to impact student achievement. This is explored through the use feedback in either personalised or annotated form. The literature review explores the purpose of feedback, its potential, a definition of effective feedback, the impact of providing feedback on teachers and students, considerations around student engagement, and an explanation of the differences between annotated exemplars and personalised feedback. The review also examines the use of rubrics in conjunction with using feedback.
Chapter Three describes the methods used in conducting this research. Details regarding participants and the setting of the study are described. The collection of data through pre- and post-tests, focus groups, on-line surveys, and a teacher journal are outlined. The chapter acknowledges the everyday issues teachers and students regularly encounter such as disruptions to routines through daily activities, school assemblies, illness, or requiring longer periods of time to teach new skills.

The results chapter, Chapter Four, reports the data. Mixed methods have been used for the collection of the four separate sets of data for this study; qualitative and quantitative. The quantitative and qualitative findings are presented separately but within the same chapter. The first set is the quantitative data and consists of a pre- and post-measure of writing ability. The remaining sets of data are qualitative: the second set comes from a series of focus groups conducted with the participants. The third set of data has been gathered from an on-line anonymous survey completed by students. Student voice gives clear indicators as to preferred types of feedback and why. It is possible that the style of feedback preferred by students may in fact not be the best option for them. Students will be reflecting on their progress and improvement throughout the year. The fourth data source is a journal maintained by the researcher who is also the teacher of these classes. The journal logged reactions to the different approaches of feedback; time spent creating resources and general responses as the study progressed, and the teacher’s perception of what appeared to be working and what struggles may occur. The journal also records the time spent creating resources and writing personalised feedback, and while this study is not about the time factors involved, these may lead to a further study.
The final chapter, Chapter Five, presents the discussion/summary/conclusions. It comprises a summary of the previous chapters along with an in-depth analysis of the results. The findings are related back to the literature. Implications of the results, both theoretical and practical, are considered and discussed and the limitations of this particular study are visited. Limitations of the study and the potential for future research are also discussed in this chapter.
Chapter Two

Literature Review

Introduction

This literature review starts with a definition of feedback and a short discussion about its importance for students. Further, it identifies the challenges that teachers face in modern learning environments. It then engages with the research in the follow areas: the demands on teachers, facilitating student learning, and finding the right tool to suit the needs of both teachers and students.

The literature for this review was selected using academic search engines. Research in the field of educational feedback is growing, and the result of each search was extensive. Initially, limiting the search to papers published after 2000 and using reference lists of widely cited papers provided a more focused reading list. However, because of their regular and recent citations, some papers published prior 2000 were included. As often as possible, literature that focused on New Zealand experiences was also included.

The remainder of the literature review comprises six sections before concluding. These are:

1. Feedback defined.
2. Purposes of feedback.
3. Potential of feedback.
4. Effective feedback.
5. Impact of feedback on teachers.
6. Impact of feedback on learners.
7. Annotated exemplars and rubrics.

Each section addresses the areas outlined above and concludes with a discussion. The review then closes with a brief general conclusion.

Demands on teachers in a modern teaching environment are many and varied, including the need to meet assessment requirements (often encountering a wide range of abilities in a single class), maintaining working relationships with students, ensuring the best possible outcomes for students, and having time to meet the needs of both management and students. Staying abreast of such demands often requires the ability to sift through a wide range of tools on offer, selecting the ones most suited to the tasks at hand. With regard to facilitating student learning, there are many factors to consider. On a daily basis, students are exposed to new ideas that challenge their thinking, self-efficacy, motivation, and sense of empowerment. Additionally, teachers need to be mindful of factors such as poverty, health, and family environment. Learning is optimal when teachers can utilise tools that support motivation, empowerment, self-efficacy, and that provide challenges of appropriate magnitude and sophistication. One such tool is feedback. Formative assessment in classrooms provides the opportunity for teachers to give students feedback that supports their learning efforts and encourages strong working relationships between students and teachers. Students benefit from having clearly set goals, being empowered in their learning, and presented with achievable challenges.

Feedback Defined

In 1983, Ramaprasad defined feedback as information about the gap between a desired level of attainment and a reference point. His definition also noted that the information could only be called feedback if it was used to close the gap between the
two points. The conditions necessary for providing feedback are an original reference level (or objective), a required level of attainment, and a mechanism for comparison (Ramaprasad, 1983). Ramaprasad went on to note that feedback can be on just about anything and encourages strong working relationships. Feedback in education is a broad term that refers to a response about a student’s performance of a task, and is used as the basis for academic improvement (McLaughlin, 1992). More specifically teacher feedback is a consequence, verbally or in written form, that comes either during the process or after students complete a task. Ramaprasad (1983) highlighted three easily recognisable stages required for feedback to be effective.

The three stages are a desired level of attainment, an original reference point, and a mechanism for comparison (Ramaprasad, 1983). These three stages are both necessary and readily identifiable. Within feedback in an educational setting, the desired level of attainment is often the benchmark level determined by an educational objective (Bloom, Hastings, & Madaus, 1971) or a rubric (Andrade, 2001). The original reference point is the starting point of the students: their current level of ability is often determined in New Zealand through summative tests such as e-AsTTle or Progressive Assessment Tests (PAT’s), and the mechanism for comparison is feedback provided by the teacher. Hattie (2003) described feedback as actions or information provided, in this instance by the teacher, which informs students about how their work is progressing, and their level of understanding. These stages match those specified by Ramaprasad (1983).

According to a meta-analysis completed by Hattie (1992), feedback is one of the most powerful influences on student achievement. The meta-analysis included more than 100 factors that affect student achievement and indicated that feedback was one of the top five influences.
Parr and Timperley (2010) argued that feedback is a significant part of classroom instruction. Sadler (1998) noted that feedback is such a fundamentally distinctive aspect of responsible and responsive teaching that to have teaching and learning without feedback would be tantamount to learning without a teacher. Stronge’s (2002) research showed that feedback consistently emerges as a powerful tool to promote student learning. Elbow (1973, 1997, 2000) argued that feedback should be non-evaluative, can be administered at various times during a teaching/learning process, is crucial to improved knowledge and skill acquisition, and motivation of learners (also see Shute, 2008). In the setting of a secondary school English class, feedback can be used to improve students’ writing. The process of learning to write provides opportunity for teachers to nurture students’ self-confidence as emerging writers (Cummings, 2001). Emergent writers require multiple opportunities to edit, rework, add, delete, and generally improve their work (Kepner, 1991; Olson & Raffeld, 1987). A student’s development as a writer also relies on sufficient opportunities to examine and revise after receiving teacher feedback (Graves, 1983). A combination of whole class, small group and individual teaching, and opportunities, provided through the feedback, help students acquire the skills necessary to become competent writers (Zellermayer, 1989). The ability to provide opportunity for students to develop and craft ideas over a period of time, and in a number of drafts, makes feedback an ideal tool to encourage and support writers at all levels (Ferris, 1997; Sternglass, 1998).

Overall, the wide body of literature available indicates that feedback is a valuable tool to be utilised by teachers to support students’ writing as they progress from emergent through to competent writers. Feedback, used effectively, supports both teachers and students. The following sections explain in further detail the role feedback can have in improving levels of student achievement.
Feedback and its Purposes

Teachers create and use feedback to provide information about discrepancies between what students have accomplished and the level of accomplishment required to meet the end goal (Ramaprasad, 1983; Sadler, 1989; Straub, 1996, 1997; Stern & Solomon, 2006). Feedback also helps teachers meet assessment requirements, while motivating, empowering, challenging, and supporting student self-efficacy, which in turn contributes to improved levels of student achievement.

Feedback as formative assessment.

There are two different ways of looking at the use of feedback in an educational setting: summatively and formatively (Bloom et al, 1971). The summative use of feedback has to do with making judgments about where students are at any given time. Examples of summative feedback include a course grade, a score on a college entrance examination, or a mark received on a driver’s license examination. Formative feedback, the focus of this study, helps facilitate learning by providing students with the “where to next” stage of their learning. It enables students to improve upon work at various stages, gain knowledge, and develop skills (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Within the study of feedback there are terms that, on the surface of it, seem to indicate different characteristics but are quite similar in meaning. Although various scholars have disagreed with this argument, the terms “formative assessment” and “assessment for learning” are essentially indistinguishable for purposes of this study. Thus, the term formative assessment will generally be used when referring to them.

Formative assessments are a deliberately planned outcome of delivering feedback that is an ongoing process (Stiggins, Arter, Chappius & Chappius, 2004). They are designed to specifically generate feedback that helps a student’s chances of attaining or
exceeding the end goal (Sadler, 1998). Black and Wiliam (1998b) found that feedback is effective in many aspects of education, including different subject areas, content knowledge, developing skill sets, and levels of education (e.g., from primary school students through to those in higher education). The flexibility of feedback, the idea that feedback can be provided often and at any stage of the writing process, contributes to student learning because it occurs throughout the process (Scriven, 1967; Sadler, 1989; Shepard, 2003), and across all subjects (Ramaprasad, 1983). Consequently, formative assessments require teachers to gather, interpret, and act upon information about students’ learning. Improvement can occur either at an individual level or through targeted lessons that are delivered to small groups or a whole class (Bell & Cowie, 2001; Black & Wiliam, 1998b; Shavelson, Black, Wiliam & Coffey, 2003).

For example, in a writing unit, a draft piece of work is essentially a formative assessment. Once completed, the student submits the draft for feedback. Delivering feedback on the draft writing provides students with information on how well they have learned the skills required for the writing process. The process of providing the feedback moves the draft from a submitted piece of work to a formative assessment that can be used by the teacher to gauge the student’s progress. The student also uses the feedback to make improvements and/or learn more about his/her writing.

If feedback offers a correctional pathway for the student and provides information about the student’s progress toward the established end goal, instruction and feedback become interwoven and essentially create new instruction (Kulhavy, 1977). Hattie & Timperley (2007) indicated that feedback allows opportunity for students and teachers to set future goals. Consequently, learning processes can be scaffolded, which in turn provides students with the potential to increase achievement (Vygotsky, 1986). The
scaffolding can eventually be removed, thereby allowing the students to become self-regulated learners. Feedback does not just occur at one level, and some levels are considerably more effective at improving student achievement than others.

**Feedback to support students.**

Feedback has the power to motivate, empower, challenge, support students, and therefore potentially contribute to the improved level of their achievement (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Brinko (1993) noted that feedback is an essential part of the writing process in encouraging the highest possible level of achievement for students. Feedback can also empower students to be self-regulated learners (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006); self-regulated learners link directly with the key competency of managing self from the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) (Ministry of Education, 2007). Students who are effective at self-regulation are better placed to successfully use feedback to achieve learning goals (Butler & Winne, 1995).

One of the features of social cognitive theory is the idea of reciprocal effects when learning (Bandura, 1997). How we think of ourselves affects how we behave, which in turn affects the feedback we receive, which affects what we think, and so this cycle perpetuates a belief in ourselves and our abilities (Schunk, 2003). Strong self-efficacy helps students set higher goals, such as trying to achieve to a higher level than previously attained, as long as the higher level is viewed as attainable (Bandura, 1997). Bandura and Locke (2003) were clear that when students receive feedback it can affect their self-efficacy and motivation, and that self-efficacy can be developed through effective feedback, which in turn can lead to future success (Vancouver, More & Yoder, 2008). Positive feedback that encourages students’ self-efficacy also enhances their decisions to persevere with tasks that may initially appear difficult (Klein, 1997). When
students require help to complete a task because of a lack of understanding or knowledge, teachers step in to help. However, if a student receives too much help and gains success, the student will often attribute that success to the helper. This kind of help does not support a student’s self-efficacy and will not encourage independent mastery, which is the best way to achieve strong self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). If help is delivered with effective and timely feedback, not only will it help build self-efficacy, but will potentially lead to independent mastery.

Using feedback to provide information about discrepancies between achievement and the required level of achievement helps teachers meet assessment requirements. The same feedback, when delivered effectively has the potential to motivate, empower, and support student self-efficacy, which in turn contributes to improved levels of student achievement. Indeed, the potential of feedback is considerable.

**Potential of Feedback**

There is solid base of literature that supports the potential impact of quality, timely feedback, and the level of the impact on the achievement of students in many subject areas. In their study, Lipnevich and Smith (2009) concluded that when detailed feedback specific to an individual’s work was shared with students, it was strongly related to academic improvement. This reinforces Black and Wiliam’s (1998b) claim that extensive feedback leads to greater student engagement and higher achievement levels. When effective feedback is an integral part of the teaching/learning process, it has the potential to improve student motivation, engagement, self-efficacy and self-regulation. Each of these four foundations is a contributor to success that in turn can often translate into improved academic achievement (Hayes, Rosenfarb, Wufert, Munt, Korn & Zettle, 1985).
Teacher feedback has the potential to shape and change student behavior because students are more likely to be engaged and motivated (Konold et al., 2004; Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). Smith and Ragan (1993) indicated that complex knowledge and skill acquisition requires feedback to achieve competence, and they believe that the feedback and movement toward competence can potentially improve motivation. In Black and Wiliam’s (1998b) study, they concluded that, “… the provisions of challenging assignments and extensive feedback lead to greater student engagement and higher achievement” (p. 13). Hattie (1999) also noted that effective timely feedback can lead to increased effort, motivation and engagement. The researchers appear to be in agreement that feedback can potentially have a positive impact on student achievement. Butler and Winne, (1995), Kluger and De Nisi, (1996), and Vollmeyer and Rheinberg, (2005) agreed that feedback specifically affects performance through motivation. Having their performance goals positively judged for competence can also have a strong motivating effect on students (Ames, 1992). Delivering motivationally favourable feedback to students is far more powerful than going over work that has been well done (Elawar & Corno, 1985).

The literature is almost unanimous in its praise for the utility of feedback to improve students’ motivation and engagement unless the feedback is negative. Indeed, Shute (2008) argued that feedback that has a negative impact on learning is not formative. Negative feedback can interfere with students’ efforts to improve their performance because of its controlling and/or critical nature which distracts from the task (Fedor, Davis, Maslyn & Mathieson, 2001).

Feedback is an important stimulus for self-regulation (Mathan & Koedinger, 2005). In turn, self-regulation is associated with academic motivation and higher
achievement levels. McInerney and McInerney (2010) argued that, “Self-regulation is the responsibility for learning outcomes assumed by the learner including self-generated thoughts, feelings and actions for attaining academic goals” (p. 184). High achieving students are more likely to seek assistance from adults such as teachers (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990). Assistance can be given in the form of effective feedback (Schunk, 2005). The information garnered from the feedback helps students realise how they are progressing relative to pre-determined goals. This then orients the students’ future goal choices and raises awareness of strategies needed to achieve them. The most effective learners are those who set goals, decide on strategies most appropriate for the circumstances, and use feedback to monitor their learning, which may be either externally provided or self-generated (Mathan & Koedinger, 2005).

The potential of feedback to improve achievement in writing is well supported. Graves (1983) explained that teachers’ feedback, guidance for students, and the time to make effective revisions are essential for the development of writers (Kepner, 1991; Olson & Raffeld, 1987), and while this advice was targeted at novice writers, it applies to all students starting a new level of academia, such as beginning secondary school students. When students arrive at secondary school, the focus is on narrowing the scope of writing to develop skills around essay, creative, and explanation writing to meet the needs of New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) assessment criteria. These skills can often differ from what has been previously taught, and therefore the students are essentially novice writers.

Providing effective feedback to students throughout a learning process has the potential to improve their chances of success and possible levels of achievement, therefore, teachers owe it to their students to ensure feedback becomes an ingrained
habit of teaching and learning (Butler & Winne, 1995). Knowing what constitutes effective feedback is vital if its potential to improve student achievement levels is to be realised.

**Effective Feedback**

Thus far, the discussion of the literature clearly indicates that feedback has a place in education and more specifically, in writing. Its potential to provide an opportunity for teachers to use formative assessment to support students is clear. Equally clear is that students will benefit from improved self-efficacy, motivation, and potentially improved academic outcomes that are the result of receiving effective feedback. In this section the research will focus on a brief discussion about effective feedback, and then focus on defining effective feedback, identifying the four levels of feedback, and establishing the best methods of delivery.

The literature clearly indicates that effective feedback has the potential to make a difference to the level of a student’s achievement (Duijnhouwer, Prins & Stokking, 2010; Harks, Rakoczy, Hattie, Besser, & Klieme, 2014; Timperley & Parr, 2009). Nicol and MacFarlane-Dick (2006) argued that effective feedback can be used to accelerate students’ learning. Feedback lets students know how their performance is tracking in relation to pre-determined goals and allows for corrections (Lock & Latham, 1990), therefore, allowing for greater opportunity for overall success.

Bloom’s (1968) Learning for Mastery (LFM) offers another persuasive argument for the delivery of effective feedback. Effective feedback is essential for mastery (Black & Wiliam, 2009). LFM underpins the belief that lower ability students can achieve if they are given greater opportunity to learn and better quality teaching (Milkent & Roth, 1989). Feedback was identified as one of the key elements of the
LFM strategy, and giving effective feedback is a key element of quality teaching (Ames & Ames, 1991). Feedback offers lower ability students chances to access better quality teaching. While the research on LFM is inconclusive, much of the research clearly identified that feedback plays a powerful role in mastery success (Guskey & Pigott, 1988). The next step is to determine what constitutes effective feedback.

**Defining effective feedback.**

To be effective feedback must meet some basic criteria. Effective feedback should address three main questions:

- Where am I going? – This question is answered through the provision of a clear set of goals for students.
- How am I going? – The answer to this question comes about through the delivery of effective and timely feedback.
- Where to next? – This question is also answered through effective and timely feedback – it lets students know what they have to do to meet the end goal (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

Effective feedback is also defined as feedback that is timely, accurate, constructive, focused on the outcome, supportive, encouraging, and positive (Baechle & Lian, 1990; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 1989; Silverman, 1993). Effective feedback should provide students with a clearly defined end goal (Hattie & Timperley, 2007) and must be manageable so it is not overwhelming (Shute, 2008; Stern & Solomon, 2006). It should also focus on what students do correctly as well as letting them know how and what to improve. Parr and Timperley (2010) took this idea further and suggested that to be effective, feedback must be directed at a deeper level of learning so it triggers cognitive processes. Indeed, Maclellan (2001) recognised that unless feedback prompts
discussion, it is unlikely to be helpful. For effective learning to take place, students must be actively involved in the learning process. This is possible through the use of effective feedback, which in turn prompts discussion (McInerney & McInerney, 2010). Being specific to the identified task is another key indicator of effective feedback. Specificity refers to the focus of information contained in the feedback (Goodman, Wood & Hendrickx, 2004). The research on effective feedback has indicated some minimum conditions of qualification: timing, accuracy, goal oriented, supportive, manageable, specific, and good student/teacher relationships which is discussed in depth below.

**Timing of feedback.**

As with most aspects of teaching, Bell and Cowie (2001) noted that the process of giving feedback to students must be planned, as must the opportunity for the students to interpret, respond, and ask questions (Hattie, 2009; Zellermayer, 1989). Focused teacher comments can enable learning, but the time given to students for revision makes the feedback more powerful (Hillocks, 1982). The timing of the delivery of feedback is also important. Shute, (2008) identified two considerations about the delivery of feedback: whether the feedback is delivered as immediate or delayed feedback. Immediate feedback is instant and delivered directly after the student has responded to a specific task, whereas delayed feedback can be minutes, hours, days, or even weeks after the completion of a task. Earlier corrective information encourages efficient retention (Phye & Andre, 1989); however, there are arguments for and against each method of delivering feedback.

A strong argument for immediate feedback is that it prevents errors from being encoded and therefore repeated (Shute, 2008). However, Anderson, Kulhavy, and Andre (1972) disagreed and stated that the idea of errors becoming encoded is not applicable because initial errors do not compete with yet to be learned skills, therefore,
the errors are forgotten or they do not interfere with the current learning. Mathan and Koedinger (2005) argued that immediate feedback negates the opportunity for students to detect errors and correct themselves, therefore depriving the student of the opportunity to develop necessary proof reading skills.

In Shute’s 2008 study it was argued that research showed there appeared to be no consistent main effect of timing and the delivery of feedback. Effective feedback is designed to accelerate a student’s learning, consequently it cannot be delivered at the end of a unit, nor can it be delivered instantly, but must be provided throughout the teaching and learning process to maximize the student’s level of achievement (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). For patterns of error to be identified by students, feedback must be delivered at regular intervals (Haswell, 2006; Lenz, Ellis & Scanlon, 1996). Schroth (1992) proposed that delayed feedback slowed the initial rate of learning, however, it facilitated a transfer of skills after the feedback had been processed.

Receiving work from students at any stage of the writing process, reading it, then writing feedback for students takes time, but the feedback given is personalised and relevant to each student, therefore making it more powerful (Lipnevich & Smith, 2009).

Accuracy of feedback.

Having an accurate measure of what is required to reduce the discrepancy between where they are currently placed, and what the learning intentions and success criteria are, is vital for students to progress confidently in their writing. Without effective feedback the development of successful writers could be hindered (Hawe & Dixon, 2014; Timperley & Parr, 2009). Targeting feedback accurately to a student’s academic ability is also vital to the level of effectiveness; there is little point in giving a student feedback that is beyond their level of comprehension. Zellermayer (1989)
argued that even the best quality feedback will be ineffective if students do not understand what is required to do to improve their work, and so the potential for increased student achievement becomes compromised. Accurate feedback is particularly important if an assignment is loosely framed and does not have right or wrong answers (Bangert-Drowns, Kulik, Kulik, & Morgan, 1991; Roos & Hamilton, 2005), and this type of assignment does occur throughout the secondary school curriculum. For example, the NZQA internally assessed English standard, Create a Visual text – (90855) requires students to “Develop and structure ideas in a visual text.” Students create a visual presentation loosely based around a topic of interest to them. While there are some criteria that must be met, students have a considerable amount of freedom to make their own interpretations of the standard guidelines. Accurate feedback is important to make sure students remain focused and on task, therefore ensuring achievement.

Goal orientation and feedback.

The purpose of the end goal is to ensure students know exactly what is expected of them. It also provides a clear target, particularly when students are working independently. If goals are not clear then students and teachers cannot know if the students have been successful (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Goals should always be challenging, meaningful for students, and generate feedback about whether students are on track to meet those goals (Shute, 2008). If the goals are set too high there is the potential for students to experience failure which could result in discouragement (Shute, 2008). Perversely, if the goals are set too low and are easy to achieve, the lure of success loses its power to encourage improved effort (Birney, Burdick & Teevan, 1969). Feedback that does not encourage a reduction in the gap between work
completed and the final goal is not effective (Clarke, Timperley, & Hattie, 2003; Timperley & Parr, 2005).

**Supportive feedback.**

Supportive feedback reinforces what students have done correctly and acknowledges what they need to work on. Feedback effectiveness is impacted in a positive way, when it provides information on correct responses and does not focus on the incorrect (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Support should be given after written feedback has been given to a student as there is little to be gained by giving feedback and leaving a student to decipher it themselves (Peterson & McClay, 2010). Peterson and McClay (2010) suggested that providing oral feedback to support written feedback ensures students are engaged and any misunderstandings are clarified. One-on-one conferences could provide the necessary support, build upon teacher/student relationships, and maintain the individualisation of the feedback. Sometimes feedback given is negative. Negative feedback can impact on a student’s feelings about self, their level of motivation, and relationships with teachers (Connors & Lunsford, 1993).

**Manageable feedback.**

If the feedback delivered is unmanageable, it can have a demotivating effect (Duijnhouwer et al., 2010). Giving too much feedback may also have a negative impact on students if it does not follow careful guidelines (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Increasing the quantity or complexity of feedback also has little or no benefit because students spend more time trying to understand what has been said. This shifts the focus from the current task, and potential development of problem solving skills, to understanding the feedback (Bangert-Drowns et al., 1991; Kulhavy & Stock, 1989). However, the provision of extra information through specific feedback that deepens a
students’ understanding or comprehension, may facilitate a shift from just knowing something to a more complex understanding of a concept (Butler, Godbole & Marsh, 2013). It is important to note though, that providing extra information does not mean increasing the volume of feedback. Increasing the volume results in an information overload, is not helpful, and ignores the understanding that there are only so many ideas a student can be expected to attend to at once (McKeachie, 1999).

Specificity of feedback.

Feedback is significantly more effective with details of how to improve the work rather than just indicating whether the work is correct or not (Bangert-Drowns et al., 1991; Pridemore & Klein, 1995). Specific (or elaborated) feedback provides information that does not focus on accuracy, but gives students an indication of what needs to be fixed or revised (Shute, 2008). Cues contained within feedback must be specific to the goals to optimise their effect (Straub, 1997). Feedback becomes even more effective when it offers students a challenge, but has a low level of complexity (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

Feedback that is not specific can have a negative impact on students because it leaves them floundering and wondering about how to improve the quality of their work (Butler, 1988; Kluger & De Nisi, 1996; McCloskey & Leary, 1985; Wiliam, 2007; Williams, 1997). A lack of specificity may cause students to view the feedback as useless and result in them becoming frustrated (Williams, 1997). As a consequence of the lack of specificity, they may be uncertain about how to respond in their work (Fedor, 1991). A lack of specificity could result in students being distracted while trying to interpret the teacher’s meaning rather than focusing on the task (Bangert-Drowns et al., 1991). The flow on effect of this is that the uncertainty can lead to lower levels of learning (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996; Sweller, Merrienboer, & Paas, 1998) and
possibly reduced motivation to respond (Ashford, 1986; Corno & Snow, 1986). An experiment conducted by Phye and Sanders (1994) indicated that specific feedback, as opposed to general advice, was considered superior to general advice because of its focus. Providing specific, clear feedback for procedural and conceptual learning tasks is a general guideline for teachers (Shute, 2008).

Another key determinant of the effectiveness of feedback is having a solid knowledge of, and good relationships with, learners. The sharing of knowledge between the expert (teacher) and novice (student) in the form of effective feedback helps strengthen relationships (Matsumura, Pathey-Chavez, Valdes & Garnier, 2002). Working together creates a situation whereby teachers and students become collaborative learning partners (Popham, 2008) and students are actively participating in their learning and instruction (Stiggins et al., 2004). Teachers are required to make judgements that can affect students and there is always the possibility that they may need to give negative feedback to their students. This could potentially lead to student disengagement. Considering this, trust, high quality interactions between the teacher and student, and an ability to interact on a very personal level, are of paramount importance (Sadler, 1989). Knowing students does not only mean knowing about them as they are now. Teachers need to have knowledge of students’ previous performances as well as their personalities to ensure feedback is tailored to meet the needs of the individual (Hattie, 2003; Hattie & Timperley, 2007). The stronger the relationship between teacher and student the more likely the teacher is to see improved levels of motivation (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995). The next step is to determine how we decide which level or levels of feedback are the most effective.
**Four levels of feedback.**

Hattie and Timperley (2007) identified four major levels of feedback and stated that the level at which feedback is delivered will have a direct impact on its effectiveness. The four levels of feedback are:

- **Feedback of the task (FT)** – is about a task or product, for example, whether work is correct or incorrect and may include instructions about how to further improve the piece with additional information such as, “You need to give more detail about the childhood of this person.”

- **Feedback of the process (FP)** – is aimed more at the processes required to complete a task and is most likely to be levels of feedback are: about the processing of information, the learning processes already taught, or completing the task. A comment such as, “You can improve this draft if you edit it according to the descriptors in the marking rubric” is an example.

- **Feedback of self-regulation (FR)** – is feedback to the students and encourages them to use self-evaluation to improve the task. For example, “Your planning included many good examples for use in your introduction, have you used them as intended?” This type of feedback encourages self-efficacy.

- **Feedback of self (FS)** – is directed at the individual student and is at a more personal level. For example, “You’re clearly a promising writer, well done”. Hattie and Timperley (2007) argued that this type of feedback is unrelated to performance, and consequently is the least effective type of feedback.

If the feedback is to be effective for students, it is important teachers ensure students develop the appropriate skills around identifying different types of feedback and how to use it (Tunstall & Gipps, 1996a).
Consequently, and taking into account Hattie and Timperley’s (2007) identification of the four major levels of feedback, it is reasonable to accept that feedback encompassing one or all of FT, FP, and FR are the best kind of feedback. All of FT, FP, and FR offer constructive support for students that in turn provides them with an opportunity to improve the quality of their work (McLaughlin, 1992). Using this system of written, verbal, and peer feedback, or a combination of these, appears to be the best methods of delivering feedback. Lipnevich and Smith (2009) noted that feedback is most powerful when it is unaccompanied by praise or grades. The next step is to choose a method of delivering the feedback that suits the needs of the student and teacher.

**Methods of delivering feedback.**

When choosing a method of delivery for students’ feedback, teachers must ensure it is tailored to the needs of their students, can deliver the type of message the teacher wants to convey, and is appropriate for the setting in which delivery takes place. Educational feedback is most often given to students through one of the following methods: written comments, praise, orally, rewards, peers, and/or grades (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

The first, and perhaps most widely recognised method of delivering feedback is written comments. These are comments written on student work (or appended to it in some fashion) that are specific to the work being presented and intended to improve academic performance (McLaughlin, 1992). Tunstall and Gipps (1996b), suggested students often do not realize they are receiving feedback when it is verbal, suggesting that written feedback may be the best form of feedback when working with secondary school students. Hounsell (1987) stated more than 20 years ago that feedback on
assignments was largely written, and Bailey and Garner (2010) noted that this is still the case. Written feedback covers the levels of feedback of the task, feedback of the process, and feedback of self-regulation.

Praise, as a form of feedback, can be delivered to students in either written or verbal form. Written or verbal comments can consist of laudatory statements such as “well done” (Marzano, 2003). Praise is the second most common form of feedback (Lipnevich & Smith, 2009). Teachers are encouraged to use praise to reinforce desirable behaviours because it is widely believed to have beneficial effects on students and their self-esteem (Dev, 1997) but there are examples of praise having a negative impact on students’ learning (Baumeister, Hutton & Cairns, 1990). Lipnevich and Smith, (2009) have noted that there are reasonable points for both sides of the praise argument, but that evidence is inconclusive. Praise is categorised at the level of feedback of self.

Oral or spoken comments that involve clear and concise questioning, and quality teacher-student dialogue is another method of delivering feedback to students (Savage, 1998). Verbally delivered feedback is categorised at the level of feedback of the task, feedback of the process, and feedback of self-regulation. Rewards are another form of delivering feedback to students. These could be in the form of stickers, awards, or certificates. Some scholars argue that they should not be considered feedback at all because they contain little, if any, task information (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999). Rewards are categorised at the level of feedback of self.

Peer feedback is a shared dialogue that gives students another perspective on their work (Askew & Lodge, 2000; Peterson & McClay, 2010). Peer feedback brings a social aspect to writing (Barton, 2001; Barton, Hamilton & Ivanič, 2000). Skills involved in giving peer feedback must be specifically taught (Peterson & McClay,
Having feedback delivered by peers can meet the level of feedback of the task, feedback of the process, feedback of self-regulation, and feedback of self.

Grades are also considered a form of feedback. A grade can be either numerical or letter based; they summarise the work (text, paper) that the student has submitted, and place the student within a set of parameters that may impact negatively (Marzano, 2003; Oosterhof, 2001). Grades are the most common form of feedback, do not deliver much useful information, and could potentially hinder performance because they focus the student at the level of self (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Butler, 1988; Lipnevich & Smith, 2009). However, Lipnevich and Smith (2009) noted that while grades are summative, they argue that a blend of grades and comments could ameliorate the negative effects. Butler and Nisan (1986) felt that grades could depress creativity and encouraged a fear of failure. Presentation of grades to low achieving students could be disconcerting if they highlight poor performance (Butler, 1988). Feedback provided in the form of grades is categorised at the level of feedback of self.

Building on the idea of Hattie and Timperley’s (2007) identification of major levels of feedback and applying them to the most common methods of delivery, the most effective methods of delivery seem to be written, oral, and through peers.

While it is clear that effective, positive feedback can improve a student’s level of academic achievement, sometimes negative feedback must be given. Negative feedback can impact on a student’s feelings about self, their level of motivation, and relationships with teachers (Connors & Lunsford, 1993). Kluger and DeNisi (1996) argued that negative feedback is just as important as positive feedback. However, if it is necessary to give negative feedback, Brinko (1993) and Straub (1997) noted it should be carefully worded and brief, without compromising detail. Relationships are an integral part of any
effective teaching environment, therefore, it is important that teachers strike a careful balance with comments, still giving necessary information and accomplishing pedagogic goals, while interpersonal relationship are maintained (Hyland & Hyland, 2001).

When considering writing, the amount, type, and quality of feedback can have a direct impact on the quality of a final piece of writing (Matsumura et al., 2002). Quality feedback is most effective when conveyed in a variety of modes to suit various styles of learning and academic learning levels. The feedback must prompt mindful responses that encourage the correction of errors (Black & Wiliam, 2009; Brinko, 1993). Effective feedback informs students about what is expected, how they can reach those expectations, and allows them to track performance (Locke & Latham, 1990). Feedback in the form of insincere praise is unlikely to encourage students to become competent writers (Brophy, 1981), and, according to Ferris (1995), students want to receive constructive criticism rather than simple platitudes such as, “well done” or “good work”. Assessment as feedback is not just an end-of-task exercise to award a final grade, but can be a valuable learning experience (McKeachie, 1999). Higher quality revisions come about when teachers’ comments encourage students to carefully examine the content of their work as opposed to focusing on surface features such as spelling and grammar (Kepner, 1991: Olson & Raffeld, 1987). Ferris (1997) found that encouraging supportive comments were also beneficial for English language learners, so this finding has potential significance for English as second language students in our schools.

There are a number of factors that determine the effectiveness of feedback and its potential to contribute to improved academic achievement levels of students. Timing,
accuracy of content, goal orientation, supportive nature of teachers, level of 
manageability, specificity, and impact on teacher/learner relationships are all factors 
that must be considered when writing effective feedback for students. When taking 
these into account, and ensuring the feedback is of a high quality, it is clear that 
feedback as a tool is essential for improving student achievement. Understanding what 
defines effective feedback, being able to confidently identify the four levels of 
feedback, and establishing which methods of delivery suit the circumstances allow 
teachers to ensure they are making a difference.

**Impact of Effective Feedback on Teachers**

Understanding factors that contribute to the effectiveness of feedback, its potential 
to contribute to improved achievement levels for students, the four levels of feedback, 
determining the best delivery method for students, and opportunities to meet the 
learning need of a wider group of students require teachers to think about their 
practices. This section firstly acknowledges the assessment demands on teachers, 
particularly when completing formative assessment. It then focuses on shifting 
pedagogical practices, how to manage time required to write the feedback, and 
understand the potential of feedback to improve academic achievement at every level of 
our schooling system. The final part of this section offers ideas for implementation for 
teachers and a conclusion. Although certain skills are essential, if the potential of 
feedback is to be harnessed (Hall & Burke, 2003; Torrance & Pryor, 2001), teachers 
also need a solid understanding of desired learning outcomes and the success criteria of 
every standard they teach (Hattie, 2009). While there is onus upon students, ultimately 
it is incumbent upon teachers to ensure students have the necessary skills to ensure a 
full understanding is within the grasp of every student.
As a formative assessment, feedback is a pedagogical practice (Brown, Harris & Hartnett, 2012) and has many implications for the classroom teacher. It requires teachers to make a shift toward providing students with in-depth information that will aid improved levels of achievement and move away from measuring levels of achievement. Formative assessment generally makes greater demands on teachers when compared to assessment that requires them just making judgments about a student’s ability in relation to their peers (Marshall & Drummond, 2006). This means just making comparison judgments will not be enough (Black & Wiliam, 2004; Shepard, 2003; Stiggins, 2002; Tang, Leung, Chow & Wong, 2010).

**Helping teachers improve their pedagogical understanding.**

Matsumura et al. (2002) reported that many teachers tended to give superficial feedback that does not lead to any improvement in content. This can happen because teachers are unsure about what defines effective feedback and how to write it. Matsumura et al. (2002) concluded that teachers do not necessarily have the knowledge and skills to implement the writing process and that professional development could be undertaken to provide these elements. There is little doubt that including effective, regular, and timely feedback poses challenges for classroom teachers, but Guskey (2000) argued that successful implementation can result in changes in attitudes and beliefs for teachers, as well as improved achievement for students.

Implementing any shift within an educational system, even if positive outcomes are predicted, is difficult because of the potential internal and external factors such as teacher workload, time allowances, and the quality of professional development involved (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Tierney, 2006). It must be acknowledged that implementing such changes can be challenging and often requires a huge paradigm shift.
for those involved (Hall & Burke, 2003; Torrance & Pryor, 2001). The provision of effective feedback to students requires teachers to undergo professional development that should ideally start within the school (Willms, 2003). The need for professional development to help teachers understand what effective feedback is and how to write it, so it is not a superficial, and therefore unhelpful, is important (Matsumura et al., 2002). Learning these skills should be one of the first steps teachers undertake if they are to deliver effective feedback to students. Every time new professional development is presented to staff, they make a conscious decision about whether or not they will embrace the changes. Furthermore, teachers must be confident in their decision about what will work most effectively and efficiently for them and their students. Providing effective feedback is a change in teacher practice that will make a positive difference to student achievement levels (Hattie, 2003).

Knowing how to provide feedback that reaches beyond the surface level technical aspects such as spelling, punctuation, and grammar (Connors & Lunsford 1993) does not necessarily come naturally to all teachers, and to make such changes requires a high degree of pedagogical knowledge (Webb & Jones, 2009). Early studies indicate the fallibilities of teachers with formative assessments such as feedback may include:

- Unreliability.
- Order effects – the carry over effect from one assessment to the next.
- Halo effect – instances when a teacher’s personal impression of a student may interfere with an assessment.
- Teacher tendencies toward leniency or severity.
- Influence of extraneous factors that focus on surface features (Edgeworth, 1890; Starch & Elliot, 1912; Hartog & Rhodes, 1936 as cited in Sadler, 1987).
While the initial research that noted the fallibilities was conducted some considerable time ago, it was considered worthy enough to be mentioned in the research of Sadler (1987) and therefore, has been included here. More recently, Tunstall and Gipps (1996) reported that teacher judgment was used in formative assessment such as feedback, and often this was incomplete, fuzzy, qualitative, and based on a limited range of criteria (Harlen & Qualter, 1991). The reasons for these fallibilities are many and varied, and range from the personality of the teacher to fatigue, and in some cases, carelessness. It is reasonable to note that the original studies that identified these reasons, involved teachers who graded using their knowledge of the task, their expectations for students, and personal knowledge of students, but the grading was conducted without the support of tools such as norm-referenced marking grids (Sadler, 1987). It is for the abovementioned reasons that teachers may prefer summative testing to formative assessment. Summative testing most often negates qualitative human judgment, which in conjunction with deep subject knowledge, is required to ensure effective feedback is delivered (Sadler, 1987). If this is the case, then it is worth considering whether or not summative testing is the default position of teachers because they doubt their own ability to be truly objective and indeed capable when it comes to providing effective feedback. Summative testing only provides teachers and students with an end of unit result and does not aid the learning process (Crooks, 1988; Black & Wiliam, 1998a). It does not give students an opportunity to develop strong self-efficacy, or few if any, of the skills associated with self-regulation (Black & Wiliam, 1998a; Deci & Ryan, 1985). Social comparison can occur as a result of summative testing which in turn can result in low self-esteem (Ames, 1992). Summative testing should never be the default position of teachers because the missed opportunity for learners could potentially have repercussions for their level of achievement. In this
instance, working as a whole staff or part of a faculty within a whole staff may provide support for those who want, or need to change, but are not comfortable making changes in isolation.

**Managing time.**

When introducing a new aspect of any teaching programme, a concern of many teachers is the time it takes to implement. Delivering effective feedback is wildly time consuming (Andrade, 2005). This is a cost in time for the teacher when writing and delivering the feedback, but also for their own professional development to guarantee feedback is delivered effectively (Sadler, 1989). McKeachie (1999) raised the point that if we are asking students to write more, higher quality work, then how can we, in good conscience, not spend more time providing quality feedback? To alleviate the time factor, McKeachie (1999) suggested that teaching peer feedback, student revision before submission, the submission of drafts before final grade submission, and writing less are measures that could be taken. The first three suggestions are consistent with much of the discussion of this review. However, McKeachie’s final suggestion is problematic and worthy of further discussion. To mitigate the issue of time, Hounsell (2007) suggested creating a structured feedback form because this would:

- negate the concern with transparency and demonstrate equity for all students;
- ensure there is greater consistency within departments, across departments and within schools;
- demonstrate a measurable standard for quality assurance purposes such as external moderation for NZQA because it would clearly explain learning outcomes and success criteria; and
- a standardised form would support new teachers and new teaching staff (Hounsell, 2007).
While the provision of such a standardised form would indeed save time, it appears to go against one of the key elements of effective feedback, that of individualisation (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Form filling is easy, but if teachers choose this path, providing feedback could simply become another box ticking exercise that would not encourage quality teaching or quality feedback.

**Student achievement.**

The delivery of effective feedback has the potential to impact student achievement across all levels of the New Zealand schooling system. Black and Wiliam (1998a) saw the teacher in the role of facilitator of learning throughout the learning process, and as such, teachers bring their knowledge and skills to their practice. To be effective in the role of facilitator, a deep subject knowledge or mastery is vital for teachers so they are able to pass on informed feedback that can impact levels of learning achievement of their students (Black & Wiliam, 1998a). Not having a grasp of their subject matter, in this case writing and how it works, means teachers will struggle to be able to pass on informed and effective feedback that can improve students’ achievement levels (Black & Wiliam, 1998a).

Research from Phelps and Schilling (2004), noted that reading was not a discipline and that there is no one group of scholars with an all-knowing knowledge on the subject of how language works. Moats and Lyon (1996) and Snow and Wong-Fillimore, (2002) noted that many teachers lack a basic knowledge of how language works. Parr and Timperley (2010) suggested this is a similar set of circumstances for writing and that there are many schools of thought about the best way to teach writing.

The potential for feedback to encourage the transfer of skills is well documented. Delayed feedback (feedback not given immediately) is considered superior when
considering the ability to transfer learning skills particularly in relation to concept-formation tasks (Corbett & Anderson, 2001; Schroth, 1992; Shute, 2008). Tasks such as these are most likely to be encountered in, but not limited to, subjects such as the sciences, subjects under the humanities umbrella, and English. Unfortunately, in a secondary school setting, one teacher transforming their teaching practice in their subject area through the delivery of effective feedback is not enough for students to view it as normal. Consequently, transformative change, such as the delivery of regular effective feedback, must be across multiple faculties within a whole school. This is of particular importance if teachers are to encourage the transfer of skills across subject areas (Corbett & Anderson, 2001).

In a study of higher education by Bailey and Garner (2010), teachers noted that one of their concerns about giving feedback was that it may not be understood by their students. This suggests there is a need for professional development for teachers around the type of language used in the feedback, but perhaps more importantly, it means teachers have to take the time to ensure students are exposed to the idea of feedback, its language, and the teachers’ style of presentation before it is delivered for the first time (Bailey & Garner, 2010). This concern is relevant to the delivery of feedback at all levels – students will not gain knowledge of something unless it is taught, preferably explicitly, rather than relying on the notion that it has been taught before.

**Ideas for implementation.**

Wiliam and Thompson (2007) identified five steps that will support teachers in their implementation of effective feedback:

1. Ensuring students fully understand the learning intentions of the task.
2. Incorporate skill building around the topic and integrate it into the unit.

3. Provide effective feedback.

4. Teach and implement the use of peer feedback to facilitate collaborative learning.

5. Encouraging students to take ownership of their learning.

Each one of the five steps builds upon the other to path the way to relatively seamless learning. A well-designed programme that provides numerous feedback interventions can enhance students’ zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978); it meaningfully engages students, scaffolds the task or assignment, and can lead to mastery (Bandura, 1997).

The delivery of effective feedback has a considerable impact on teachers. The primary issues are the time involved in writing feedback and the need for ongoing professional development to ensure teachers have the appropriate skills to be able write and deliver their feedback effectively. Another consideration when deciding to implement the use of feedback is that it should be carried out school wide, or at the very least, through departments to ensure the teaching skills are disseminated as widely as possible. Another flow on effect of implementing the delivery of effective feedback school-wide is the potential for students to start transferring skills across subjects.

**Impact of Effective Feedback on Students**

Before teachers can even consider delivering effective feedback to students, there are a number of issues they must contend with. For example, having the time to write and deliver effective feedback, having access to quality professional development to ensure required skills are in place, and the belief that effective feedback can improve levels of student achievement are perhaps the most important.
This section of the literature review provides a general overview of the impact of feedback on students, and then focuses on student motivation and engagement, feedback and lower ability students, and feedback and writing.

Receiving effective feedback is linked to improved levels of achievement, motivation, and self-efficacy. It requires students to be active learners in their education, and can help lower ability students achieve more (Bandura, 1997; Butler & Winne, 1995; Kluger & DeNisi, 1996; Schunk, 1990; Vollmeyer & Rheinberg, 2005; Zimmerman, Bandura & Martinez-Pons, 1992). Effective feedback can also assist in the development of the skills required for students to become self-regulating (Meichenbaum, 1985). However, for students to be able to make the most of any tools designed to improve their learning experience, they must be willing and engaged participants in their own learning.

**Student motivation and engagement.**

The resolution of the gap between the benchmark and desired level of achievement identified by feedback can also motivate higher levels of effort (Locke & Latham, 1990; Song & Keller, 2001). Feedback that is delivered effectively has the power to increase effort, motivation, and engagement (Sadler, 1989). Students who are working on a task because they think it is useful, interesting, and important are considered intrinsically motivated (Ryan & Deci, 2000). These students are more likely to persist with different strategies to achieve their goals (Covington, 2002; Pokay & Blumenfeld, 1990; Vansteenkiste, Lens & Deci, 2006). Intrinsically motivated students are more likely to strive for excellence, have a desire to improve, be engaged, and be able to identify the goal they are working towards (McInerney & McInerney, 2010).
Quality feedback may improve students’ perceptions of their ability and increase motivation to participate in learning (Deci & Ryan, 1991), but the feedback must be successfully processed to be effective. Successful processing of feedback places the onus on students to be attentive to learning processes so their understanding of what feedback is and how to use it is well-developed (Butler & Winne, 1995; Lipnevich & Smith, 2009; Winne & Butler, 1994). A lack of engagement by students means they are less likely to achieve to the best of their ability. A consequence of a lack of engagement is that the impact of the feedback is not likely to have any bearing beyond what the students are currently working on (Muncie, 2000). This means that not only do the teachers have to learn about how to write effective feedback, but also that students must be taught about the language of feedback and how to successfully interpret it (Peterson & McClay, 2010). Students must also be held accountable for reading, processing, and using feedback when they are revising (Peterson & McClay, 2010).

Knowledge about how to make connections between the feedback, their work, and how to implement necessary changes can result in improved engagement and higher quality pieces of completed work (Sadler, 1989). Once students have received the feedback they must engage with it by making the suggested changes (Bell & Cowie, 2001; Zellermayer, 1989). The resulting action of the learner is largely dependent on the type of message the feedback delivers, the way it is delivered to the student, and the context in which it was carried out (Lipnevich & Smith, 2009). If the processes around feedback are incorporated into the learning environment and become part of everyday learning, they will help students learn to make qualitative judgements about their own work (Sadler, 1998). Because feedback can be personalised to an individual students’ needs, it becomes empowering, (Hyland & Hyland, 2001).
Feedback and lower ability students.

Perhaps one of the strongest motivators for teachers is that feedback has the potential to support the learning of students who are struggling and working at lower levels (Brinko, 1993). Positive feedback received by low achievers encourages attention on the task (Brunot, Huguet, & Monteil, 2000) and encourages opportunities for scaffolding that support all learners (Vygotsky, 1986).

The quality of the feedback must be the same for all students, especially those with lower ability (Sadler, 1998). Sadler’s argument is borne from the notion that all students should be treated equally and given the same quality feedback. However, Shute (2008) argued that lower ability students may require greater support. Shute’s argument is based around the notion that lower ability students may lack confidence and require more feedback to encourage the belief that they can succeed. So, in essence, both researchers are right. All feedback should be quality feedback and everyone in a class should be given the same level of feedback, but it may be that the amount of time spent with individual students, especially lower ability students, explaining and ensuring the feedback is understood, is greater. Supporting written feedback with a one-on-one teacher conference may be a way of addressing possible issues (Brinko, 1993). Verbal support of feedback is about clear questioning and quality teacher/student dialogue that guides students to a clearer understanding (Savage, 1998). Combining written and verbal feedback will create a stronger delivery method that in turn will impact the effectiveness of the feedback to ensure a full understanding (Brinko, 1993). Extra support does not necessarily only apply to lower ability students. Students often ignore written feedback, yet extra support through a vehicle such as the one-on-one conferences may ensure the information provided is at the very least, understood by the student and not ignored (Matsumura et al., 2002). The decision about how to work with
lower ability students and those who choose to ignore the feedback comes down to the type of students in the class. The decision is also impacted by the classroom teacher’s knowledge of their students and the relationships with them (Matsumura et al., 2002). This deep and often expert knowledge may inform decisions around method and delivery of the feedback.

**Feedback and writing.**

Feedback is clearly linked to improved levels of writing ability, especially in older students and those who appreciate it (Ferris 1997). Effective feedback provides constructive criticism and support rather than simple platitudes, which are unlikely to encourage good writing (Brophy, 1981; Ferris, 1995). The development of students as competent writers is dependent on opportunities for them to examine their writing, make corrections, or complete any rewriting over a period of time and a number of drafts, all the while using teacher feedback (Ferris, 1997; Graves, 1983; Sternglass, 1998). Teacher feedback gives students opportunity to rework drafts – progressively becoming more competent writers. Time gives students opportunity to develop skills to critically evaluate and revise work (Zellermayer, 1989). The delivery of positive comments through feedback help students stay focused on the task, and it is reasonable to assume that focused students are more likely to achieve more success (Lipnevich & Smith, 2009).

There are many benefits for students from the delivery of effective feedback. The key ideas are that students must have a clear understanding of what is expected of them, the feedback should be detailed and supportive, time spent ensuring students have a clear understanding of the feedback and when needed, the written feedback is backed up with verbal support. Effective feedback can also help improve students’ self-efficacy,
motivation and engagement. There is also potential for feedback to have an impact on the achievement levels of low ability students. To make the most of effective feedback, students must accept responsibility for their learning by paying attention and asking questions if necessary.

**Annotated Exemplars and Personalised Feedback**

Having determined that effective feedback has huge potential for students, there remains just one question: what is the best way to deliver the feedback? The following section considers two methods of delivery, annotated exemplars and personalised feedback. The use of annotated exemplars becomes more powerful when used in conjunction with marking rubrics (Foster & Marasco, 2007) which are discussed in this section.

**Personalised feedback.**

Personalised feedback has been described by Lipnevich and Smith (2009) as detailed descriptive feedback. It is typically written by the teacher, and relates to the individual student’s work only. At no stage are students compared to others in their cohort (Ames, 1992). Personalised feedback is linked to the desired learning outcomes and clearly indicates to students what is correct, where the student is currently positioned, and how they can close the gap between where they are and where they need to be (Black & Wiliam, 1998b; Ramaprasad, 1983). The written feedback is given to the student to read and digest. Once they have had enough time to read it through, students meet for a one-on-one conference to discuss the feedback with their teacher. Feedback is considered more effective when it is delivered in a variety of modes – e.g. written, verbal, structured, or unstructured (Brinko, 1993). The meeting with the teacher gives students an opportunity to clarify their understanding of the feedback, ask questions,
and talk through ideas (Brinko, 1993). Ensuring the personalised feedback is of high quality is vital because it has the potential to improve a student’s perception of their ability and increase their motivation to participate (Deci & Ryan, 1985), but this raises the issue of the time required to write personalised feedback.

**Disadvantages of personalised feedback.**

Time is one of the key disadvantages of using personalised feedback to improve student learning. One of the few options to save time is to cancel one-on-one conferences between student and teacher. However, cancelling the one-on-one conferences is not a time saving option because the personalised feedback becomes more effective when it allows students to respond, and interact with the writer (Brinko, 1993).

**Writing personalised feedback.**

Another interesting consideration regarding personalised feedback is the paucity of examples in the literature of what personalised feedback might look like, and what it might contain. This raises the question that if personalised feedback is as powerful as the research indicates, how do teachers find out what the content should look like and how do they know if they have “got it right”? How do teachers know where to go to find examples, and who determines what a good example of personalised feedback, looks like?

**Annotated Exemplars**

The alternative to personalised feedback is the use of annotated exemplars. Annotated exemplars are an example of work at a specific grade that has been deemed to achieve at a minimum standard or higher (Foster & Marasco, 2007). For example, an annotated exemplar would typically represent the writing of a student at Year 9 that has
reached a minimum standard. The exemplar shows what the marking rubrics tell about an assessment (Foster & Marasco, 2007). An exemplar illustrates student work for other students so they can recognise that they can attain or exceed the grade level of the exemplar. Annotated exemplars can be used to establish writing standards and can easily be employed across any year and subject level. Furthermore, they can be used at any stage of the teaching/learning process (Foster & Marasco, 2007). Students, who actively work with specific criteria, as identified by marking rubrics and exemplars related to their work, can use the combination to make their work better (Hillocks, 1986). Hillocks (1986) concluded that students engaged actively in using criteria that they applied to their own, or others work, produce not only more effective revisions, but also superior, first drafts.

Creating annotated exemplars.

Creating annotated exemplars for students is a relatively straightforward process. Exemplars can be created from previously written student work that has been marked, moderated, and reached specific standards. In the case of secondary school students, the standards that are required are set by NZQA. Permission from students to use their work is required, but generally, there is a large body of work that can be garnered for use. The teacher then annotates each piece, clearly indicating examples of the specific criteria that demonstrate work has reached the graded standard. Creating a marking legend, whereby colours or symbols on the exemplars correspond with colours or symbols on the marking rubric, will help students make connections. For example, a teacher might highlight all aspects relating to Audience and Purpose in blue. When the student receives their annotated exemplar and marking rubric they will know that all pieces highlighted in blue relate to Audience and Purpose. The time required to create annotated exemplars is not onerous. The work used has been previously created,
marked, and moderated, and providing teachers have a strong knowledge base of their subject, annotation will not take long. Explaining the colour coding, or other form of legend used, and links to the marking rubric, is absolutely essential. Students must understand what they are reading. Understanding can be improved simply by teachers using the language of the marking rubric in every day instruction (Schafer, Swanson, Benē & Newberry, 2001). Two clear advantages of using annotated exemplars are that they can be used multiple times, and when used in conjunction with rubrics, the strength of the exemplar is increased (Stiggins, 2001). Annotated exemplars and rubrics appear to be inextricably linked because when used in conjunction with each other, they provide a more powerful scaffold for students (Foster & Marasco, 2007).

**Rubrics**

The use of rubrics to support students’ learning is under-researched, however, given the importance of students having clear ideas of expectations and end goals (Hattie & Timperley, 2007), the use of rubrics appears to be common sense. Using rubrics in conjunction with annotated exemplars should, in theory, further strengthen the power of both tools (Stiggins, 2001). Andrade and Boulay (2003) suggested that learning improves when effective feedback guides students to monitor their own learning and shows them what they need to do to achieve the learning objectives. Using rubrics can help students “see” what success might look like and can help them make judgments about their own work (Stiggins, 2001).

Rubrics are an increasingly popular method of communicating a teacher’s expectations for students (Andrade, 2001; Goodrich, 1997; Popham, 1997). A rubric is defined as a one or two-page document that clearly has two very clear features. The first is that the rubric will provide a list of criteria of what is being assessed, and the second
is that the rubric will describe a range of levels of quality. NZQA marking rubrics show a range of levels from “Not Achieved” through to “Excellence” (Andrade, 2001). A rubric is effectively a scaffold to help students progress through a task. Cooper (1999), Cooper and Odell (1999), and White, (1994) explained that literature on assessing writing, indicates students will engage with a rubric because it gives clear information about expectations for that assignment, and more importantly, guidelines on how they can improve their writing. A rubric also contains repeated language e.g., “insightful content”, which may occur across a range of grades but will mean something different at a different level, which exemplars can help illustrate (Foster & Marasco, 2007).

Using rubrics to support learning means teachers will need to ensure students have access to them from the beginning of a unit of work. A consequence of this is that the rubrics must be designed while units are being planned (Andrade, 2005) and the initial development takes time. Concerns raised by Andrade (2005) are that rubrics are not always self-explanatory, there are issues of reliability and validity, and treatment time may need to be extended. While it is true that stand-alone rubrics are not always self-explanatory, this issue can be addressed through some simple steps. Taking time to work with students and explain a rubric should be integrated as part of the explanation of an assessment (Schafer et al., 2001). The more often the language of rubrics is used, the more ingrained the knowledge becomes and eventually they become just another part of the assessment (Schafer et al., 2001). Andrade (2001) argued that even just handing out a rubric and explaining its contents have helped improve written assessment scores. Reliability and validity issues can be ameliorated if departments work together to create and moderate the exemplars.
The decision about which style of feedback to use will be determined by a number of factors including; clearly articulated goals for students to work toward, teacher knowledge of their subject, ability to create rubrics, an understanding of what the different types of feedback are, which style of feedback is preferred by students, and time. Impacting this decision will also be the ability of the teachers to find clear high quality examples of personalised feedback.

**Conclusion**

This review has considered literature that indicates that feedback is an effective tool for teachers to use to improve student achievement levels (Duijnhouwer et al., 2010; Harks et al., 2014; Timperley & Parr, 2010). Prior to the use of feedback, students should know what their current level of achievement is and what the end goal of a particular task is. If these two steps are in place, then the feedback can provide information that helps students close the gap between the two points. There are some conditions that must be followed to ensure the feedback is of a quality that will make the best possible impact. Feedback must be timely in its delivery, accurate, oriented towards a clearly explained goal, supportive, manageable, and specific to the current task. Another key factor in the effectiveness of feedback is that the concept should be clearly understood by those intending to use it. This is relevant whether it is an individual teacher, a department, or whole staff intending to use feedback. It is important that teachers understand the potential of feedback to improve academic achievement and also its ability to have demoralizing consequences if not delivered in a manner that meets the criteria.

Professional development and considerations of the time cost are important factors for teachers when being asked to implement any new innovation. Providing
effective feedback is time consuming not only in its creation, but also in its delivery, so this will likely impact how useful teachers perceive the tool. One tool that could be used in conjunction with feedback and that could help ameliorate the time factor involved in creating and delivering personalised feedback, is annotated exemplars. Acknowledging that feedback does not necessarily have to be personalised in order to be effective provides options for teachers. Annotated exemplars, used in conjunction with marking rubrics, could provide an alternative to personalised feedback. The use of rubrics is already in place in some schools and their value is abundantly clear (Andrade, 2005). The key to making rubrics work effectively is to ensure they are used regularly so students become conversant with how they are set out, the language used, and how the rubric can be used to improve the quality of their work. When using the rubrics in tandem with the annotated exemplars, teachers can provide a strong scaffold for students to not only improve their achievement levels, but to begin the process of becoming independent learners.

The potential for feedback to impact on student achievement in a positive manner is perhaps the most overriding reason for its inclusion in a programme of teaching and learning. Any tool that can improve students’ levels of achievement is not only important, but also absolutely vital if students are to achieve to their potential, and teachers are to be effective in their teaching. Teachers can best tailor learning programmes to suit the students’ learning needs if they know which approach is best for individual students. Thus, this study compares two common approaches to giving feedback. The research questions are:

- How is secondary student achievement in writing affected by personalised written feedback compared to annotated excellence exemplars?
- What methods of feedback do students prefer and why?
The following chapter outlines the methodologies used in conducting this research. It also includes an outline of the participants and setting of the study.
Chapter Three

Methodology

This experimental study was carried out *in situ* to determine preferred styles of feedback and the impact each style has on student achievement. The experiment was developed as part of the student participants’ regular learning programme. The researcher is a specialist English teacher who originally trained as a primary school teacher, and then entered the secondary school system after eight years of teaching. The emphasis of primary school training on educating teacher trainees in reading and writing has resulted in the researcher developing strengths in teaching literacy. At the time of this experiment, the researcher was in her tenth year of teaching at the secondary school level; and she currently holds the position of Assistant Head of Department, English. Classes assigned to the researcher most often comprise lower ability students who score lower on standardised reading and writing tests. Within each of the assigned classes, there was a wide range of literacy ability.

To meet ethics committee approval, the teacher spent time explaining to each of the classes about the study. The teacher talked about her interest in life-long learning, and how this study could potentially improve her teaching and outcomes for students. Details contained in the information sheet were discussed, and students encouraged to ask questions. Two questions were asked: “Do we get to go to Dunedin with you, and will we have to do extra work?” Each student took home an information sheet for his or her parents, and a consent form. The Ethics committee gave final approval on 15 January 2015 – reference 14/202, Māori Consultation was approved by the committee on 16 December 2014.
The experiment took place in two English classes in Years 9 and 10 in a low
decile, co-educational secondary school where students range from Year 9 to Year
13 (Grade 8 to Grade 12 in US equivalents). Year 9 and 10 students are considered
the junior school, as these are the students’ first two years of secondary schooling.
The student roll is derived from a range of contributing primary schools and one
intermediate (middle) school; the contributing area is a lower socio-economic
community. Twenty per cent of the people who live locally are over 65 years of age
and recent statistics show a steady increase in the number of unemployed in the
region (Ministry of Social Development, 2016).

The mixed methods paradigm was defined by Campbell and Fisk (1959) as a
synthesis of quantitative and qualitative methods. It considers multiple viewpoints,
perspectives, and positions, although the methods are not always of equal value
within the study (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, 2007). A mixed methods
approach is not simply about collecting the two different types of data but uses both
approaches jointly to increase the overall strength of a study (Creswell & Clark,
2007). There are a number of strengths of the mixed methods paradigm. The first is
that the potential biases from a single methodology might be ameliorated by using
data from multiple sources (Creswell, 2009). The use of multiple independent data
sources also helps reduce the possibility of anomalies (Webb, Campbell, Schwartz,
& Sechrest, 1996). Another of the strengths of the mixed methods approach is that
it permits the researcher, in this case through focus groups, to hear directly from the
participants.

A mixed methods approach was appropriate for this study because together the
data sets have potential to provide a deeper and broader picture of the phenomena
(Tobin & Begley, 2004). The quantitative and qualitative data sets complemented each other. Using qualitative data in a complementary approach with quantitative data allowed the exploration the ‘why’ component of students preferences (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The design of this study does not favour either the qualitative or the quantitative research, but places an equally important focus on both.

Three different approaches were taken in this mixed methods design. Quantitative data was gathered as a result of the pre-test, compared with the post-test grade after receiving either an annotated exemplar or a personalised response as formative feedback at the end of the term. Marks on that piece of writing served as a post-test. A repeated measures analysis of variance was used to analyse the data. Feedback condition and year of school, served as independent variables in the students, and pre/post differences as the repeated measure.

The second component was a set of focus groups carried out with the students to record their reactions to the two approaches after the study was completed. Their responses to an anonymous on-line survey were also recorded. The focus groups and on-line survey were conducted after the study was completed, so all students had experienced both annotated exemplars and personalized feedback. This component allowed for an in-depth exploration of how students reacted to the two different approaches.

The third component consisted of the records kept by the teacher/researcher in the study. In particular, the amount of work necessary under the two formative feedback conditions. The amount of work was quantified by keeping careful track of how much time was spent generating and implementing the feedback, in the two formative feedback conditions.
Combining the three forms of data collection in this mixed methods designed allowed for a very complete and integrated investigation into two very different approaches to formative feedback. Figure 1 presents a graphical representation of the study design

**Tensions in the Dual Role of Teacher/Researcher**

While there are advantages of the dual role of the teacher researcher, it also brings with it many tensions. Atkinson (1994) highlighted the following tensions and suggests that for the teacher/researcher role to be effective, the domains must be effectively combined. An extensive list has been created by Atkinson (1994) about the differences, often in thinking, of the teacher and researcher. However, it is important to acknowledge the bias a teacher can have when they undertake the dual role of teacher/researcher.

The tensions that arose in this study were:

- Effective randomization of groups
- Planning of units of work
- Marking of the pre and post tests
- Surveys
- Focus groups
Figure 1. Graphical representation of the study design
Ameliorating the potential bias was important if the study was going to withstand the rigour of a doctoral thesis. After some consideration, the following steps were taken to ensure the study was of the highest level of integrity, possible.

- To ensure the randomization of the groups was rigorous a system endorsed by New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) was used. The same system is used to determine which internally assessed standards, in a school, will be selected for external moderation by NZQA.
- The planning of lessons was checked by the Head of Department – English to ensure they were in keeping with our regular programme of teaching
- Although all pre and post tests were marked by the teacher/researcher, they were all moderated by the Head of Department – English
- The surveys were carried out through Google Forms and available on line for students. It was decided to conduct the surveys on line to ensure anonymity. This provided an opportunity for students to be completely honest in their answers
- The focus groups were conducted by the teacher/researcher. This was not ideal, but after consideration it was decided the teacher/researcher could elicit more information from students than an unknown person.

On balance, there are a number of strengths in the dual role of teacher/researcher. A teacher/researcher has an insider knowledge, clarity about the day to day events, and opportunity to be able to select appropriate problems for research (Reed & Proctor, 1995). They are also more likely to be sensitive to issues relating to the data collection process, understand the data, and be more committed to the dissemination of the findings (Reed & Proctor, 1995).
Participants

The participants for this study attend a decile 2F coeducational secondary school, situated in a small urban town with a population of 20,300. Schools in New Zealand are currently graded by decile ratings. There are five socio-economic indicators taken from the community that are used for determining decile ratings. The statistics are supplied by Statistics New Zealand and recalculated every five years after the Census of Populations and Dwellings is conducted. The five indicators are:

- The percentage of households with the region with income in the lowest 20% nationally.
- The percentage of employed parents/caregivers employed in the lowest skill level occupational groups.
- The number of people living in the household.
- The percentage of parents/caregivers with no or a very low level of educational qualifications.
- The percentage of parents/caregivers receiving income support benefits (Ministry of Education, 2016)

According to the Ministry of Education (2016), the decile rating of a school is determined by the degree to which schools draw their students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Schools can be given a rating of 1 – 10 with gradations within each number dependent on the backgrounds of the students. The decile rating, which applies to state and state integrated schools, determines the amount of funding a school receives to help it overcome any barriers to learning that students from lower socio-economic families and communities may have. A 2F rating
indicates that the school is populated by students from moderately high to high socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Ministry of Education (2016) data show the gender composition of the school is 52% male and 48% female. The age range of the students in the school is twelve to eighteen years. The ethnic composition of the school is 51% NZ European/Pākehā, 38% Māori, 8% Samoan, and 3% other. Special features of the secondary school are: Te Whare Awhina – a Learning Support Unit, a fully staffed Medical Centre, drug and alcohol counsellors, and He Whare Manaaki Tangata – a Teen Parenting Unit. As of July, 2016, the role of the school was 667.

Teachers are assigned five classes usually within their teaching discipline at a range of year levels and abilities. At the beginning of the year the researcher was assigned two junior classes: one Year 9 and one Year 10. The Year 9 class started the year with twenty-two students – nine males and 13 females. This is a ratio of 41% males and 59% females and is marginally different to the overall school make-up. Ethnically, the class is similar in representation of the wider school composition: 55% NZ European/Pākehā, 27% Māori, 4.5% Samoan, 9% Tongan, and 4.5% Other. Before the research started, one of the students left the class. Thus, the total number of students in the Year 9 portion of the study was 21. The school uses Progressive Achievement Testing (PATs) (http://www.nzcer.org.nz/tests/pats). The PAT tests are multiple choice tests designed to assist teachers in the determination of appropriate levels of instruction. The results also help teachers decide on the best methods and programmes most suited to the needs of their students. The school uses the Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary, and Punctuation and Grammar tests in conjunction with a school designed writing assessment which is marked using the e-AsTTle (https://e-asttle.tki.org.nz/Teacher-resources/Marking-resources-
for-e-asTTle-writing) marking schedule. Participants in the study ranged from stanine 1 to stanine 7 on this measure. Stanine scales are a method of scaling test scores over nine levels of achievement. Stanines give parents and teachers a standardised measure of students’ achievement. The wide range of stanines within the classes indicates a broad range of needs within the study sample.

The Year 10 class started the year with 22 students – 15 females and seven males. This ratio is 68% male and 32% female and is substantially different from the overall school composition. Ethnically, the class is similar in composition to the school as a whole: 55% New European/Pākehā, 27% Māori, 9% Samoan, and 9% Other. Three of these students left the school before the study began. The total number of students was 19. The stanine scores for reading ranged from 4 to 7. The range of ability in this class was not as wide as the Year 9 class, and the number of students at the lower end of the scale was just four, indicating that many of the students are operating comfortably within an acceptable range for their age.

Measures

There were four separate sets of data collected for this study. The first set was the quantitative data that consisted of a pre- and post-measure of writing ability. The second set came from a series of focus groups conducted with the participants. The third set comprised the outcomes from an anonymous online survey. A journal maintained by the researcher, who was also the teacher of these classes, provided the final set of data. The journal logged time spent creating resources for each of the types of feedback, time spent with the students, and general responses as the study progressed.
At the beginning of the year, students produced a piece of writing that was marked by the teacher and moderated by the HOD of English. The final grade on this piece was used as an initial benchmark for each student. The next step was to have students assigned to random groups for the assignment of interventions. After a period of teaching the necessary skills for the particular writing genre, students were given a writing task to complete that related to the current topic of study. The Year 9 students were asked to write a report and the Year 10 students were to write a diary entry. The pieces were handed in, marked, and moderated according to the department-wide marking schedules. The schedules encompass marking sub-areas from the e-asTTle (https://e-asttle.tki.org.nz/Teacher-resources/Marking-resources-for-e-asTTle-writing) writing assessments. The final score was made up from sub-scores given in the areas of:

- Audience and Purpose.
- Ideas.
- Language Features – crafting.
- Language Features – mechanics.
- Structures.

Within each of the above mentioned areas students were marked on their ability ranging from Below NZC Level 3 to NZC Level 5 (or higher) for Year 9 and NZC Level 3 to NZC Level 6 (or higher) for Year 10. The marking schedules are used throughout the English department and reflect the stages and progressions of the NZC. This process was repeated in the third term and a final benchmark piece was produced at the end of term three.
Procedure

At the beginning of the year, students and parents were informed that the teacher/researcher was conducting an *in situ* research project. The research was discussed with students. The researcher explained that their learning would not be compromised, and in fact, the intervention could potentially improve their academic outcomes. Students were given the necessary ethics forms and a cover letter for them and their parents (See Appendix A). All students returned the forms but three came with requests for parents to be contacted. The parents wanted to discuss what the research could potentially offer their child and to reassure themselves that the research would not negatively affect the quality of their child’s learning. One parent in particular was concerned because her child was achieving at a lower level than most of the students in the class and she wanted reassurance that her child’s learning would not suffer in any way. After a lengthy discussion, she understood the potential for gains in her child’s learning. Ultimately, the parents were supportive.

The Year 9 class was seen four times per week and the Year 10 class three times per week, each for one-hour instructional periods. Using a single instructor allowed for easy access to participants and gave consistency in instructional approach, marking, and feedback. To ensure the reliability of the work, a moderator, the Head of Department, also check marked completed tasks. The decision to gather data at several points over a full academic year allowed for a repeated measures approach to the study and provided two data streams. The data came from two different genres of writing: transactional and creative, thus giving more depth to the data collected.
Both groups of students were given the same writing pre-test early in term one. The test was appropriate for both the Year 9 and Year 10 classes. The test and marking schedule were developed by the Ministry of Education and are available to all New Zealand schools. Teachers can choose from a range of prompts for a range of writing genre: narrative, recount, describe, explain, or persuasive. The English department chose the same prompt for all Year 9 and 10 students. Each of the prompts provides either a picture or word starter, for example **Recount** - (Genre) – **Did well** (words in a square) – **What I did well** (title) **Think of a time when you did something really well. Write to recount that time** (instructions to student). Students were given 50 minutes including instruction and planning time to complete the writing task.

The standardised marking rubrics measure the following concepts: Ideas, Structure and Language, Organisation, Vocabulary, Sentence Structure, Punctuation, and Spelling. These concepts are narrowed down to match those used in the New Zealand Curriculum. After the tests were marked and moderated, scores were converted to New Zealand Curriculum level scores using the e-asTTle Writing Score Conversion table (See Appendix B). The conversion provides teachers with clear indicators of students’ academic levels and allows them to work from the New Zealand curriculum for planning future units of work. The scale runs from one through to six. Within each number band, the students can achieve at basic, proficient, or advanced stage within their curriculum level. For example, a student who receives the grade 30 is deemed to be working at New Zealand Curriculum level 4B, and a score of 34 equates to a level of 4A. The e-asTTle scores stop at 44, which is equal to \( \geq 6B \) and could be achieved by higher performing Year 10 students. The English department of the secondary school where the study took
place used the basis of the e-asTTle writing rubric to create their own marking schedule that covered the areas of: Audience, Ideas, Language Features-crafting, Language Features-mechanics, and Structure (See Appendix C). The teacher gave students grades, but the assessments were not returned because there was no further work required on the pieces. Grades were recorded in the on-line mark book in the student management system (KAMAR) that is used within the school. Once all grades were entered into the mark book, the class was divided randomly into groups. This was completed via the school office through the student management system and meets NZQA standards for randomisation of groups. The class remained physically intact, but the groups were named A (received annotated exemplars first) and P (received personalised feedback first).

The beginning of the school year is very busy with organisational tasks such as student identification photographs, organising lunch passes, and often students will be swapped around classes until a best fit is found. Because of this, the decision was made to delay the start of the writing unit until week six of term one. By the end of term one/beginning of term two, students in both classes had completed the learning of skills, which were taught over a period of seven weeks and were required for the first writing unit. Throughout the duration of the unit, the students worked on samples of their specific writing genre. The samples ranged from a single paragraph to two or three paragraphs. Each piece was based upon the final assessment task and was kept in a portfolio. Samples were produced in response to a teaching session that focused on any one of the areas covered by the marking rubric. For example, one session focused on identifying the potential audience of the writing and how to target writing to a particular audience.
For the final assessment, students chose the piece they were happiest with. Students crafted, edited, and proof-read their work until they felt it had attained the necessary standard. They had been provided with clear guidelines, through a rubric, about what was expected in their final piece. The Year 9 students were expected to produce a piece of transactional writing and the Year 10 students would produce a piece of creative writing. Both pieces had to meet guidelines within the marking rubric. Throughout the course of the unit, we had examined the marking rubrics in depth and students were comfortable with how they were set out, and the language used within them. Year 9 students were writing a final report as an outcome of their inquiry learning project. The report was expected to be approximately 150 words in length. Year 10 students were writing a diary entry from the perspective of a prisoner of war and the entry was expected to be a minimum of 200 words. The learning outcomes were discussed and questions were answered. Some students decided to write their assessment piece from “scratch”, however, most chose a piece from their writing portfolio. Students drafted their final piece of work and submitted it for feedback.

The sessions where students would receive their first round of feedback were planned. When students submitted their work for feedback they received either the exemplar or personalised feedback (depending on whether they were group A or group P). The exemplars were highlighted, indicating how the exemplar achieved the level of excellence. Personalised feedback was written directly to the individual students. The content of the feedback response depended on the nature of the student’s work. One-on-one meetings with students who received personalised feedback took place after feedback had been given. Students in the group that received annotated exemplars did not have one-on-one meetings. The group met as a
whole and the exemplar was handed out. Students were given time to read the exemplar and details were explained. Students had time to ask questions and talk as a group about any concerns they had. When the teacher was happy students fully understood how the exemplar worked, the students returned to their work.

The teacher-generated feedback was personalised and specific to the individual student’s work. Upon receiving their work, students were given time to read it and make a note of any questions they had. Each student had a one-on-one meeting with the teacher. The meetings were an opportunity for the students to seek any necessary clarification and for the teacher to ensure the student understood their feedback. The feedback was then used by students to improve their work. The last piece was crafted, edited, proofread, and submitted for a final grade.

Keeping track of the time required for writing the feedback, creating annotated exemplars, meeting with students for their one-on-one meetings regarding their personalised feedback, and carrying out the group meetings for the annotated exemplars was necessary and required some creative thinking. As a matter of habit, teachers create resources without thinking about the process. It is an ingrained aspect of teaching. However, every step of this process needed recording. Consequently, each resource was created step-by-step, and every minute recorded, therefore, possibly taking more time than usual. Recording the time to produce the personalised feedback was an interesting process. Again, teachers tend to respond to work with little consideration to the steps involved in the process. For the purposes of this study every minute used for each step, from the initial read through of a piece of work through to the one-on-one meeting, had to be recorded.
Student responses to the interventions were harder to record. However, one student agreed to have her personalised feedback meeting recorded. Much of the feedback from students came in the form of casual comments, from the one-on-one meetings. Because of the personal nature of the comments the researcher was reluctant to give these too much credence and decided instead to rely on the focus groups for the majority of student responses to the interventions.

On the day the feedback was returned to students, the session did not go quite as planned. Students in the annotated exemplar group were gathered in one area of the classroom and given their exemplars and marking rubrics to read through while the personalised feedback students were given their feedback to read. Students with personalised feedback were told to read their feedback, re-read their work, and see if they could relate feedback comments to ideas in their work. Space was provided on the feedback sheet allowing students to record questions. The meeting with the annotated exemplar groups was relatively straightforward, however, both year groups took longer than anticipated. The Year 9 students required 30 minutes of teacher time and the Year 10 students required 28 minutes. Fortunately, work had been provided for students in the other group, so management of the class was not an issue. The personalised feedback groups had been allocated no more than five minutes each for our one-on-one meetings; students in both the Year 9 and Year 10 groups required more than eight minutes. The time taken to deliver the feedback, regardless of feedback style, was considerably more than anticipated. At the end of term two/beginning of term three, students went through the same process as previously, but Year 9 students worked on creative writing and Year 10 students worked on transactional writing. Expectations around the length of the essay were similar. Feedback style was reversed this term; those that received annotated
exemplars in the previous term received personalised feedback this term and vice versa. The decision to have a two-component study was to ensure all students experienced both treatments. Experiencing both treatments meant they could make an informed choice when comparing the two forms of feedback in the focus groups and on line survey.

In the fourth week of term four, three focus group interviews per class were conducted over three days. Class lists were randomised through the school office KAMAR system and students were divided into three near equal groups. Before the allocated days, the students had the process of the focus group explained, then they were given a list of the questions they would be asked. All students were comfortable with the idea and this may, in part, be due to the strong relationships between teacher and students. The focus groups were conducted in the boardroom off the main office; the room was spacious, light, comfortable, and students were provided with drinks, fruit, and snacks. The Year 9 class was fully in attendance, although absences on one day meant the groups were uneven. Three Year 10 students were absent because they were attending a young leadership course off campus. Figure 2 provides a graphical representation detailing the steps taken throughout the study.

Analysis

Several sets of data were utilised for this study. For the quantitative set of data, the researcher looked at distributions of all variables to check for outliers or other irregularities. These occurred because of students leaving or arriving at school, changing classes or sustained absences around the time of assessments. At the beginning of the study, there were 44 students, but this number dropped to 40.
The data were then processed using SPSS. The main research question concerning a comparison between annotated exemplars and personalised feedback was analysed through the use of repeated measures analysis of covariance. A variety of graphs of the results and follow-up analyses were conducted and are explained in the Results chapter.

The focus group interviews were recorded using a recording USB and supported by the researcher making notes. Both sources were transcribed and comments were categorised under the questions they related to. Within the questions the comments were further categorised with other comments of a similar nature. The new categories were then split into themes. The findings for each question were then summarised with the researcher noting similarities and differences. The results of the on-line survey went through the same process.
Figure 2. Graphical representation of the study steps
The journal recording the time involved with each of the resources was maintained throughout the year. At the end of the year the amount of time spent creating, checking, and administering each of the resources was collated and used to calculate the amount of time required per student to provide the feedback.

The following chapter reports on the four sets of data gathered throughout the study.
Chapter Four

Results

This chapter presents the results and findings of the study. For ease of reading the Methods chapter is briefly summarised first, then results are presented. The data gathered throughout this research were a mix of quantitative and qualitative; the quantitative results are presented first. For the quantitative data set, the basic analysis was a repeated measures analysis of variance. The pre-test from the beginning of each marking period and the scores on the final handed-in writing pieces were used as the scores in the repeated measures analysis. The type of feedback received served as the independent variable. Separate analyses were conducted for each of the two marking periods when the study was being conducted.

The study was conducted in situ in a classroom setting in a New Zealand secondary school. The participants were the students in the researcher’s classroom. The test and marking rubric used for both the pre-test and the outcome measure came from Assessment Tools for Teaching and Learning (AsTTle), developed by the Ministry of Education, and aligned with the New Zealand Curriculum. The task was the same for both year groups – an expository essay on the impact of technology in schools. Time allowed for the planning, essay writing, proof reading, and editing was 50 minutes. When the task was completed, it was marked by the teacher and then moderated by the Head of Department of the school where the study took place. Marking rubrics assessed each piece of student writing on seven elements: Ideas, Structure and Language, Organisation, Vocabulary, Sentence Structure, Punctuation, and Spelling. Within each of the elements there are six or seven detailed categories of performance. Students’ work was given a grade from...
one to either six or seven on each of the elements (the maximum score varied for different elements), then added together to give an overall mark. This score can be converted to an associated curriculum level using the e-asTTle Writing Score Conversion Table. The conversion of writing scores to curriculum levels is designed to give teachers a clear starting point to plan future writing units. For the purposes of this study the researcher used only the overall writing score and these scores were used as a benchmark for each student.

Throughout the teaching of the writing genre (either transactional or creative), students collected practice pieces of writing in a portfolio. Near the end of the semester, the students chose one piece that they would work on until a first draft was completed and submitted. When the draft pieces were completed, each group of students received an intervention; either personalised feedback or an annotated exemplar. Students used the intervention to improve their work and then submitted it for marking. The study was conducted in two sessions. In the first session, Year 9 students worked on transactional writing and Year 10 students worked on creative writing. This process was reversed for the second session.

**Quantitative Results**

**The essay scores from the pre-test of Session I.**

The analysis of the data began by looking at the results from the first instructional session. The means and standard deviations for pre-test scores, post-test scores, and the change scores can be found in Table 1. T-tests showed that the pre-test scores across treatment groups were not significantly different for either of the Year groupings. Thus, the pre-test results indicated that the random assignment resulted in roughly equivalent groups.
Table 1.

Means and standard deviations for Session One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Exemplar (n=11)</th>
<th>Personal (n=10)</th>
<th>Exemplar (n=9)</th>
<th>Personal (n=10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>2.33 (1.22)</td>
<td>2.72 (1.27)</td>
<td>3.40 (1.17)</td>
<td>4.13 (1.25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>3.00 (1.00)</td>
<td>3.64 (0.67)</td>
<td>4.40 (1.07)</td>
<td>5.00 (1.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>0.67 (0.87)</td>
<td>0.91 (1.58)</td>
<td>1.00 (0.47)</td>
<td>0.88 (0.42)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3 shows an error bar plot of the means with a 95% confidence interval around the means of the pre-test scores.

![Error Bar Plot](image)

**Figure 3.** Confidence intervals (95%) about group means for year and treatment group for pre-test scores.

**The pre/post differences from Session I.**

The first hypothesis tested whether the personalised feedback or annotated exemplars produced different results in terms of gain from pre- to post-test scores on the essays. The means and standard deviations for all groups on the post-test scores and
change scores are presented in Table 1. The hypothesis was tested using a repeated measures analysis of variance. The repeated variable was the pre- versus post-testing. The treatment variable (exemplar versus personalised) allowed for the testing of the hypothesis, and the year variable was included to look for any differences between Year 9 and Year 10. In a repeated measure design such as employed here, the hypothesis of interest is typically tested through the interaction of treatment group and the pre- and post-test differences. That is, the question concerns whether the change from pre- to post-test results was the same for the two treatment groups (exemplar versus personalised). The main effect for the treatment group includes both the pre- and post-testing, and is of little value.

The results from this analysis show two findings to be statistically significant. First the pre/post-differential was significant (F (1,34) = 28.064, p ≤ .001, partial eta squared = .452). The overall mean difference between pre and post scores was 0.868 (SD = 0.963). The next significant finding was that the Year 10 students significantly outperformed the Year 9 students, which was to be expected (F (1,34) = 16.61, p < .001). (Statistics for non-significant findings that are not testing hypotheses will not be displayed unless they are close to statistical significance.) The interaction term that tested the hypothesis of differential pre/post-changes for the treatment groups fell far short of significant (F (1, 34) = .032, p = .86). All other terms in the analysis were non-significant. A second set of repeated measure analyses were run for each year separately to see if there might be differential results by year, again, the interaction term was non-significant.

What these results indicated was that the annotated exemplar groups and the personalised feedback groups did not show significant differences in terms of the
growth between pre-test and post-test. Figure 4 presents a graph of the 95% confidence intervals for the means of the change scores from pre to post. What can be seen here (and in Table 1) is that there is more variability in performance gains for the Year 9 students than for the Year 10 students, but the group mean pre-post change differences between groups (annotated exemplar versus personalised feedback) are small. The overall mean gain scores for all groups are strong, with a pre/post growth between .67 and 1.00 curriculum units depending upon the year and the treatment group.

Figure 4. Confidence intervals (95%) about group means for year and treatment group for change scores.
The essay scores from the pre-test of Session II.

The essay scores from the second pre-test were taken prior to the students receiving the second instructional session, in which the treatment groups were flipped from the first session. These results are presented in Table 2 and depicted in Figure 5. They were tested for equivalence in the same fashion as the first session (via two t-tests). As was the case for the first session, differences between groups were not significantly different.

Table 2.

*Means and standard deviations for Session Two*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Exemplar</th>
<th>Personal</th>
<th>Exemplar</th>
<th>Personal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Creative)</td>
<td>(Transactional)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>3.00 (1.00)</td>
<td>3.18 (.404)</td>
<td>2.90 (1.66)</td>
<td>4.12 (1.24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>3.33 (1.00)</td>
<td>3.63 (.674)</td>
<td>3.70 (.948)</td>
<td>3.87 (1.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>.333 (.500)</td>
<td>.4545</td>
<td>.800 (1.92)</td>
<td>-.250 (1.03)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 5. Confidence intervals for pre-test scores for Session Two.

The pre/post differences from Session II.

The hypothesis examining group differences in writing scores was again tested using a repeated measures analysis of variance. The results from this analysis were substantially different from the first set (see Table 2 and Figure 6). None of the main effects nor the interaction terms are statistically significant. This was somewhat surprising with respect to the simple pre/post differences. The gains are much more modest (there is even a drop for one group), and the Year 10 students now show somewhat more variability. The mean gain was 0.368 (SD = 1.195). These findings
suggest that the differences noted in Session One might not be age differences, but the type of writing being done. Students completed tasks in two writing genres, expository and creative, and the variability occurs with the same type of writing; creative in both sessions. This could be important and has potential for a follow up study. For the statistical test of the hypothesis of group differences, the interaction between pre/post and feedback approach was not significant (F, 1, 34, = 1.44, p = .239).

It is interesting to note that the gains overall here, across both feedback groups and both years, were smaller than for the first session. This might be due to a “primacy effect” with the first instructional session. That is, it may be that getting feedback and having that feedback explained was very powerful (across both feedback groups) the first time it was received, and slightly less powerful the second time. This speculation, too, awaits further research.
Qualitative Results

The qualitative data for this study came from three different sources; focus groups with the student participants, an on-line survey completed by the students, and a reflective journal kept by the researcher. The purpose of the focus groups and on-line survey was to include student voice in the outcomes of the study. The focus groups were conducted first.

Figure 6. Confidence intervals for pre/post change scores across years and groups.
Coding of focus group and survey data

Data from focus groups and online surveys proved valuable. The decision to use focus groups was motivated primarily by the idea that the data gathered from the interviews could be combined with other qualitative information to add depth to the study (Morgan, 1996). Krueger and Casey (2000), define focus groups as “carefully planned series of discussions, designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest, in a permissive non-threatening environment” (p. 5). Morgan (1996), goes further and defines them as essentially group interviews and notes that add to the data that have already been gathered. A convenience sample (Springer, 2009) of three focus groups from each of the Year 9 and 10 classes was used. Each group comprised of between five and seven students. The groups were created randomly, although they did not cross year levels. Focus groups can provide safe and secure environments for participants, while offering the support of their peers (Morgan & Krueger, 1998) and this was an ideal circumstance for the teacher to ensure students were comfortable enough to talk openly. Students were provided with afternoon tea for participating.

Boyatzis (1998) identifies thematic analysis as “the process to be used with most qualitative information that translates it into qualitative data” (p. 4). The thematic analysis of data from the focus group interviews and online surveys, was generated inductively from raw information (Boyatzis, 1998). The focus group discussions were recorded and complemented with written notes which were immediately transcribed. The next step was to read through the transcripts and identify patterns of words, these were recorded on a spreadsheet. The key words were then grouped into themes. To ensure the accuracy of this process the interviews were photocopied on to large pieces of paper, which were then cut and pasted under headings, allowing a match-up of data. The key word transcription was completed for each group discussions, summaries
created for the separate year groups, and then one single summary combining year 9 and 10 themes was created.

**Focus Groups**

A convenience (Springer, 2009) sample of three focus groups from each of the Year 9 and 10 classes was used, consisting of between five and seven students. The groups were created randomly, although they did not cross year levels. The decision to keep the students within their year group cohort was to ensure they were comfortable enough to talk openly. Students were provided with afternoon tea for participating.

The teacher served as the moderator for the group. The focus groups were semi-structured and students were advised of the questions before the start of the discussion. From the overall number of students involved in the research, only three were unable to be involved in the focus group discussions because they were off campus as part of a school trip. Once the questions had been read, students were given an opportunity to query anything they were unsure of. The decision to do this was prompted because of the duration of the intervention – almost a full academic year – and it was possible students would require reminders such as terminology or the order of events. The questions, while specific, gave students an opportunity to think about their responses and recall thoughts about the types of, and experiences with, the feedback. The following eight questions were presented:

- Have you received feedback before? What was it like?
- What is your preferred type of feedback and why do you prefer it?
- What are the best bits of the feedback you received?
- How do you follow through with the feedback?
• Has the feedback impacted the quality of your work?
• How do you feel when you get the feedback?
• How do you feel about your level of achievement in writing this year?
• Is there anything else you would like to say about feedback and how it has helped you with your writing?

The focus group discussions were recorded and backed up with written notes which were transcribed. Initially, the transcription was going to be verbatim but the researcher decided to transcribe the discussions looking for key words, which varied according to the question being answered. The key words were then translated into themes. The key word transcription was completed for each individual discussion, summaries created for the separate year groups, and then one single summary combining Year 9 and 10 themes was created. The most common themes were: the method of feedback delivered in the past, preferred style of feedback, feelings about receiving the feedback, and specific strengths and weaknesses of feedback (see Table 3). Student’s identities have been protected through the assignment of a pseudonym. The number that appears after the name is the student’s year group.

Table 3. Joint themes from focus groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Joint themes</th>
<th>Number of references</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Past feedback styles</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred style of feedback</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings when receiving feedback</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific strengths and weaknesses</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The types of feedback students received in the past generally fell into the category of least effective according to the literature on feedback efficacy described in Chapter Two. Almost all students had received feedback in the past, and it was usually in the form of stickers or comments. David (Y9) commented, “stickers or sentences telling me I was doing alright but not what was right.” Andre (Y10) said that sometimes his teacher wrote comments in his book but he couldn’t read her writing, “I never knew what she had said, so I didn’t know if I got my work right or not.” These types of comment were echoed by many other students. Rachel (Y10) commented, “I received stickers and liked them but didn’t realise how useless they were.” Elyse (Y10) said, “I received silly comments that didn’t help my work at all.” Many of the students had experienced feedback but in very simple and ineffectual forms.

When it came to preferred style of feedback, student responses were unanimous. The preferred style of feedback was overwhelmingly in favor of the personalised feedback, although the teacher was surprised at the number of students who did not prefer one style to another, but just liked receiving feedback. Courtney (Y9) – “I like the personalised feedback because it is about me and you told me how to fix my work.” This type of comment was echoed by many students. Jon (Y9) – “I liked both of them – the examples showed me lots of things to do and how to do them.” Mereama (Y10) – “Getting the feedback was the best bit but I liked the exemplars so I could compare what I had done to what my work should be like.” Graham (Y9) – “Both styles because we got to ask questions and see where we had to do fixes.” Taine (Y9) – “It didn’t matter which style as long as I could ask questions.” These student thoughts raised a theme within a theme, many of them commented that it was important to be able to meet with the teacher and ask questions. The one-on-one meetings were considered the most important aspect of the personalised feedback.
The question, “How did you feel when you received the feedback?” provided some interesting feedback from the students. Many Year 9 students felt nervous or worried before receiving the feedback, but many of them viewed it as constructive criticism. John (Y9) – “[I was] Worried that I might not be able to fix it but then we discussed it and I feel better because you explained it, so it was easier to understand.” Rebecca (Y9) – “Okay. Not so bad now. I was worried at the beginning.” The Year 10 students were a lot more positive about the initial feedback experience; they viewed it as an important step to improving their work and they felt confident when receiving it. The researcher considered the strong relationships with students was a factor in their levels of confidence, although this was not directly acknowledged by them. Austin (Y10) – “I was worried at the beginning because I thought maybe I got it wrong but then I realized you were going to help me understand how to be a better writer.” Whetu (Y10) – “[I was] Nervous the first time I got the feedback but now I am excited to see how I can make my work better.” Alysha (Y10) – “If I get it right now I will be okay when I do my NCEA work.” These comments were echoed by many of the students.

Overall, the notes students were given when receiving personalised feedback were considered the best aspect of the feedback process. The written notes combined with the one-on-one meetings with the teacher, where students were encouraged to make notes and ask questions, were also considered very important. David (Y9) – “I might not have understood what you were trying to tell me if we hadn’t had our conference.” Improved confidence was also noted by the Year 10 students with comments about how they felt more confident in their ability to pass NCEA Level One. “Jade (Y10) – It feels good to know that I don’t have to try and guess what you want.” Mandy (Y10) – I feel better knowing if I get it wrong you will let me know.” Harris (Y10) – “Written notes to take away with me so I can look back at what we discussed are really useful.” Angela (Y10)
– “It was communication between you and me and you told me how I was doing – it was important because I felt I could succeed.” Ellen (Y10) – “Exemplars because you gave us really good examples of what you meant.” Scott (Y10) – “I am more confident that I can pass NCEA now.” Katie (Y10) – “I’m more confident so my work is better.” Robyn (Y10) – “Yes it [feedback] has impacted a lot. I’m better at some types of writing now.” The Year 9 students also showed increased confidence. Jake (Y9) – “Some bits have got a lot better.” Andy (Y9) – “I liked the notes so that I could check that I got it right.” Jarrod (Y9) – “Talking with you about what we had done was good.” Richard (Y9) – “I liked having notes and questions.” Peter (Y9) – “Report writing is better but I don’t think I’m better at storytelling.” The comments indicated that students had clear ideas about what worked well for them.

**Student Surveys**

A Google-form survey was used to further explore students’ thoughts on the different styles of feedback. The purpose of the survey was to support the discussions from the focus groups. The Google-form was created and e-mailed to each student. The survey was confidential and students were encouraged to remain anonymous. This was done in the hope that the assurance of anonymity may illicit more honest and open responses. They were encouraged to complete the survey and time was set aside during English classes. Almost all of the students responded to the survey, only two students were absent during the allotted time for it to be completed. The questions in the survey were:

- What class were you in?
- Are you male or female?
- What ethnicity are you?
- How helpful do you find feedback?
• Did you find the feedback easy to understand? Yes, or No then explain your answer.
• Was the feedback useful when you started proofreading and editing your work? Yes, or No and then explain your answer.
• Which style of feedback did you prefer and why?

The results from the survey are presented in a summary form that provides graphs and written results, but does not differentiate between the students’ year groups. Written answers were collated, separated into themes using key words, and a summary was created. The first three questions have not had their results shown because that information was presented in the Methods Chapter.

Question four: How helpful do you find feedback? Overwhelmingly, students responded that they found feedback, in general, helpful. Thirty-six students used the terms helpful and almost all students expanded on their answers. For example, “because I know what I need to change or rewrite in order to get a better grade,” or “because it helps me improve my work and shows me my mistakes so I can grow from them and change them.”

Question five: Did you find the feedback easy to understand? Even though 94.7 % of students found the feedback easy to understand, two students struggled with it. This indicates that most students find the language used in the feedback at an appropriate level. The support of one-on-one meetings with students ameliorates any misunderstandings for most students. Two students (5.3%) did not find the feedback easy to understand. These two students may require further support. Checking the language and level of understanding after the one-on-one meetings is one measure that can be taken to ensure full understanding by all students.
Question six: Was the feedback useful when you started proofreading and editing your work? All students who completed their work (97.4%) felt the feedback was useful. Students commented that the feedback gave them very clear ideas about what was required. “It helped a lot because I could fix lots of errors with my writing”, “because it helped me see what I had done wrong.” The single student who did not find the feedback helpful, did not complete the task.

Question seven asked the students about their preferred style of feedback (see Figure 7). Preferences in the survey differ slightly from those in the focus group discussion. Sixty percent of students’ preferred personalised feedback, 19% preferred annotated exemplars, 16% liked all forms of feedback, and just 5% were unsure. Those who liked the personalised feedback cited many reasons, such as: “personalised feedback because it was directed at my work, written feedback and discussion because I can ask questions.” Students who preferred annotated exemplars liked them because they felt the colored highlighting gave them a clear idea of what was expected. “[I like] annotated exemplars because I could see what to do and have a fair idea of everything” is an example of the type of comment made by students. The students who liked both forms of feedback said, “I prefer all types of feedback, either/or feedback is feedback, I prefer feedback that helps me just do the work.” The response from students about the strength of feedback was clear and provided much for the researcher to consider.
Teacher Journal

The final data set was a journal, in the form of notes kept throughout the duration of the study. This journal contained a record of how the two approaches unfolded in the study, the time spent working under the two approaches, and observations of how the students responded to the two different approaches. The researcher acknowledges the subjective nature of such observations, but their usefulness in determining the impact of feedback on teachers and students is important. Since part of the rationale for using exemplars is an argument for efficiency, there is a need to have an understanding of the time spent under each approach, and how that compares to the effectiveness of the approaches.

The first set of data is the time log for producing personalised feedback. Personalised feedback is a preference for 60% of the students, and it has been transformational in the researcher’s teaching practice, but the time to produce this form...
of feedback was prohibitive. Producing personalised feedback for the first writing unit took a mean of 21 minutes per student for Year 9 students. Within this time the researcher read their submitted work, wrote, and delivered feedback. For the Year 10 students there was a mean of 26 minutes per student.

When deciding to use personalised feedback, the researcher did not factor in the individual needs of students and was shocked at the amount of time the one-one-one meetings with students required. The Year 10 students were a higher achieving class and were focused on preparing for NCEA. As a consequence of their focus, the Year 10 students spent extra time asking questions and making notes to ensure they knew exactly what to do. By comparison, the Year 9 students were a lower achieving class; therefore, there was a wide range of academic ability. They lacked confidence and would not always ask questions in our meetings. This resulted in students sometimes requiring extra time if they had questions they had not originally considered. A mean of approximately 24 minutes per student (24 minutes’ x 21 students = 8.4 hours) does not sound like a lot but when multiplied by the number of students in the two classes receiving personalised feedback, it soon adds up. In total, eight hours were spent providing feedback for just half the students being taught during each intervention. Added to planning, meetings, general duties of a teacher, and the time required for providing feedback to the other students, eight hours is an extra day per week. The following tables shows the mean amount of time spent providing personalised feedback to the classes throughout the year and the time taken for the creation and delivery of annotated exemplars.
Table 4.

*Teacher Time Spent on Personalised Feedback*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Unit</th>
<th>Number of students</th>
<th>Reading work before writing feedback*</th>
<th>Actual writing of feedback</th>
<th>Delivering of feedback to students</th>
<th>Total time taken to write and deliver feedback</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 9 Killer Disease – expository</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mean 4 – 6 minutes per student (50 minutes)</td>
<td>Mean – 8 minutes per student (80 minutes)</td>
<td>I planned to spend about 5 minutes per student – this did not work. Students took an average of 8 minutes 10 seconds each (81 minutes and 40 seconds)</td>
<td>Total overall = 3.51 hours Mean per student = 21 minutes</td>
<td>Students kept their pieces to the suggested minimum – perhaps not give word count in future. Totally shocked at the amount of time it took to talk to students about their feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 9 Letter to Jesse – creative writing</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Mean – 6 minutes per student (66 minutes)</td>
<td>Writing of feedback – 12 minutes 20 seconds per piece (134 minutes)</td>
<td>Delivery took just 7 minutes per student (77 minutes)</td>
<td>Total overall = 4.6 hours Mean per student 25.18 minutes</td>
<td>Feedback around this task was more focused on structure of the letter. Students understood the idea behind the letter – it related well to our novel study Still shocked at the amount of time it took</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 10 Research Report – expository</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mean 7 minutes and 30 seconds (67 minutes)</td>
<td>Writing of feedback took longer – students had written longer reports and had come prepared with questions 9 minutes and 10 seconds (82.5 minutes)</td>
<td>Delivery took longer – students had written longer reports and had come prepared with questions 9 minutes and 10 seconds (82.5 minutes)</td>
<td>Total overall = 4.30 hours Mean per student 28.5 minutes</td>
<td>Length of pieces were longer – students said they really enjoyed the research reports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Refers to the amount of time the researcher spent reading each student's piece of work before giving feedback*
Table 5.

Time log for Feedback – Annotated Exemplar Creation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Resource</th>
<th>Finding Resource</th>
<th>Annotating Resource</th>
<th>Checking by other</th>
<th>Total time taken to create resource</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 9 – The Plague of 1665 – transactional writing</td>
<td>Internet search/book search 15 minutes</td>
<td>Reading, proofing, and annotating resource – 20 minutes</td>
<td>Checked by Year 9 Social Studies HOD – 12 minutes</td>
<td>47 minutes to create resource</td>
<td>Resource is subject specific but could be used for any transactional writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 10 – Anne Frank’s Diary 25 July 1943 – creative writing</td>
<td>Internet search – 13 minutes</td>
<td>Reading, proofing, and annotating resource – 25 minutes</td>
<td>Checked by HOD of English Department – 10 minutes</td>
<td>48 minutes to create resource</td>
<td>Resource can be used multiple times – teacher had to learn how to scan and upload to file</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 9 – Letter home – a personal letter home from the war</td>
<td>Internet search 30 minutes nothing suitable – wrote own resource 20 minutes</td>
<td>Reading, proof reading, and annotating resource – 25 minutes</td>
<td>Checked by HOD of English Department – twice because it was written by researcher – 20 minutes</td>
<td>65 minutes to create resource</td>
<td>Creating this one from scratch was difficult because I found I was incredibly pedantic but could be used for any creative writing assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 10 – Research Report – Should NZ Police be armed with Tasers?</td>
<td>Internet search. I debated using an NCEA Level One Research Exemplar from TKI – over 2/3 days 2 ½ hours</td>
<td>Reading the resource, checking the commentary from NZQA – then annotating resource suitably for Year 10 students 45 minutes</td>
<td>Checked by HOD of English Department – 30 minutes</td>
<td>195 minutes (important to note that finding something suitable was more difficult than I thought it would be)</td>
<td>Resource could be used for any Year 10 class – maybe more scaffolding will be required for lower ability classes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.

*Creation and Delivery of Annotated Exemplars*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number in Group</th>
<th>Time spent presenting</th>
<th>Discussion time for marking rubric*</th>
<th>Time allowed for questions</th>
<th>Total time for each group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 9 – The Plague of 1665 – transactional writing</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Teacher spent 9 minutes reading – students were encouraged to read along</td>
<td>Discussion different aspects of marking grid approximately 6 minutes</td>
<td>Allowed 10 minutes used 15 minutes</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 10 - Anne Frank’s Diary 25 July 1943 – creative writing</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Students read themselves (Competent readers) – 5 minutes. Some questions at this point about language – 4 minutes</td>
<td>Discussion different aspects of marking grid was about 4 minutes</td>
<td>Allowed 10 minutes – used 15 minutes</td>
<td>28 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 9 - Letter home – a personal letter home from the war</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Teacher spent 6 minutes reading – students read along</td>
<td>Discussion different aspects of marking grid was 5 minutes – students are comfortable with the grid</td>
<td>Allowed 10 minutes – used 13 minutes</td>
<td>24 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 10 – Research Report – Should NZ Police be armed with Tasers?</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Students were given 10 minutes to read this themselves</td>
<td>Discussion about different aspects of marking grid was 8 minutes – this was a dense report and it was a Year 11 exemplar</td>
<td>Allowed 10 minutes used 15 – there was some unfamiliar language in the text</td>
<td>28 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Students are familiar with marking rubric - we have discussed it before
The amount of time spent creating the annotated exemplars was considerably less (112 minutes for Year 9 students and 143 minutes for Year 10 students) than providing personalised feedback. The time can be offset because the resources can be used multiple times.

Once the exemplars were created, time had to be allocated for them to be presented to the students. The setting for this was as a group and each student was given a coloured copy of the annotated exemplar. The Year 9 students required the exemplar to be read to them but the Year 10 students were happy to read it themselves. Once the exemplar had been read, the teacher and students spent some time discussing the colour coding and its relevance to the marking rubric. Students were familiarised with marking rubrics throughout the unit so were aware of the terminology. As a group, the students were encouraged to ask questions. The amount of time allowed for discussion was underestimated, although not seriously. In both year groups the extra time was used by students asking questions, to clarify their thoughts.

Throughout the teaching of both writing units, students were enthusiastic about their learning and willing to try both styles of feedback. After some initial nervousness about receiving their first round of feedback, students’ confidence levels grew and they were happier about handing work in for grading. Interestingly, the feedback resulted in settled, more focused classes, which was unexpected. There is nothing to indicate why this has happened, but the teacher’s professional judgment and experience, has led her to believe the focused approach to learning was impacted positively by the feedback intervention. Students began to believe they were capable of achieving, and as a result, decided they would focus on achieving. This does not mean the classes were without unsettled periods, but they were undoubtedly more focused on completing various writing tasks. The students in both classes discussed the feedback intervention openly.
They regularly asked questions, and at parent teacher interviews, wanted their feedback discussed with parents. Once again, experience has led the teacher to believe this happened because students were actively participating in, and had accepted responsibility for their learning. Because of actively participating and accepting responsibility for their learning, students were enjoying the positive outcomes.
Chapter Five

Discussion

This chapter presents a discussion of the results, the implications of the study, both theoretical and practical, the limitations, and potential directions for future research. This study resulted in four key findings: feedback was found to be effective, there were no significant differences in outcomes for personalised feedback and exemplars, personalized feedback is time consuming to produce and deliver, and students like all feedback, but prefer personalised feedback.

Summary of Qualitative Results

Despite the results of the study being statistically insignificant in terms of personalised feedback versus annotated exemplars, it is clear the student participants found the feedback useful. The results from the first session show strong growth from pre to post in both groups. The second session showed growth in three of the four groups, but was not statistically significant (sample size would be something of a problem here). The students’ appreciation of feedback became apparent through the focus group discussions and student surveys. A common theme throughout the qualitative data sections of the study was that students liked the feedback because it was about them and relevant to their work. Students showed reasonable gains throughout the year, although the results indicated there were slightly greater gains in the creative writing tasks and in the first sessions.

The focus groups and student surveys showed consistent results. Overwhelmingly, students indicated a preference for personalised feedback. They noted two very clear reasons for the preference: the one-on-one meetings and the
detailed feedback notes. Students liked the meetings because they had a chance to sit with the teacher, discuss their work, and ensure they had a full understanding of what was contained in the notes. They were also given time to ask questions and encouraged to make further notes. The written feedback students received was directed specifically to them and their work. The notes let them know what they were doing correctly, gave them direction about what could be improved, and instructions on how to do it. Students also found the feedback easy to understand and useful when they started proof reading and editing their work.

The teacher journal was kept primarily to track the amount of time spent creating and delivering the personalized feedback and annotated exemplars. The journal also recorded responses to the interventions. The time involved in writing and delivering personalized feedback was much greater than the time involved in creating and using annotated exemplars. The level of detail required when creating the personalized feedback is what the students felt was a key factor in its effectiveness, and yet it is this same factor that makes personalized feedback an impractical choice for every day teaching.

**Contributions of the Study**

This research combined quantitative and qualitative investigations to gather together what might be considered a more holistic and therefore complete picture of the effects of a feedback intervention in a real classroom setting. Specifically, the following conclusions can be drawn, if only tentatively, and if only for this classroom setting:

- Both the personalized feedback and the annotated exemplars results in improvements in writing over the pre-tests given at the beginning of the term.
• There were no significant differences in gains between annotated exemplars and personalized feedback.

• Students preferred personalized feedback by about 2 to 1, but were positive about both forms of feedback.

• Students liked being able to talk to their teacher about how to use the feedback or the exemplars.

• Large numbers of students had never received feedback before in this fashion.

• Delivering personalized feedback was enormously time consuming.

• It was not possible to find good examples of how to provide effective feedback that had been tested empirically in helping students to improve their writing.

Overall, it can be seen that annotated exemplars offer a useful approach to providing feedback that will assist students in their efforts to improve their writing. When provided with clear instruction on how to use them, students can effectively process the information provided in annotated exemplars in improving their written work. This study presents a more complete picture of the use and effectiveness of different approaches to feedback than is typically found in the literature. It not only looks at the effectiveness of two approaches to feedback, it also delves into the student reaction to that feedback and how it affects the teacher in terms of the allocation and efficient use of her time, both in the classroom, and while marking papers. To that end, this study serves as a model of how teacher-based classroom research can make important additions to the literature on feedback.
Implications - Theoretical

Key findings.

There were four key findings as a result of the study:

- Feedback was found to be effective.
- There were no significant differences in outcomes for personalised feedback and exemplars.
- Personalized feedback is time consuming to produce and deliver.
- Students liked all feedback, but preferred personalized feedback.

The first key finding in this study is that feedback is effective. A meta-analysis by Bangert-Drowns et al. (1991), shows that feedback generally has a positive effect on achievement. This assertion has been supported through the research of others (e.g., Cohen & Cavaleanti, 1990; Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Lipnevich & Smith 2009).

More than 97% of students within the study commented that feedback received about their work was important because it clearly indicated to them what they had done correctly, what they needed to improve upon, and how they should make the necessary improvements. Hyland & Hyland (2001) also noted that feedback should be a detailed response, not just a positive or negative comment, if it is to be of use to students. Connors and Lunsford (1993) highlighted that too much criticism may damage student’s motivation and self-confidence. Indeed, putting in place Hattie and Timperley’s (2007) notion that feedback should scaffold students by providing information about how to improve their work is vital. In the focus groups conducted in this study, students repeatedly commented that understanding what they had to do, and how they could achieve the goals, helped keep them focused. Students also noted that because they knew what they had to do, they felt more confident about their writing.
Relationships between students and teachers are important (Hyland & Hyland, 2001). Providing feedback to students is an opportunity to give them individualised attention that focuses on them and their work; this is not always possible in a regular classroom setting. Students within the study commented that knowing their feedback was about them, and relevant to their work, was also important. The discussion about the feedback in a one-on-one meeting gave students an opportunity to ask questions, enhanced their understanding, and helped improve self-esteem and motivation (Peterson & McClay, 2010). This was particularly important in the Year 9 cohort where student self-efficacy was not as strong as in the Year 10 group. Lower self-efficacy can result in students not wanting to seek help because it suggests that they are not as able as their peers (McInerney & McInerney, 2010). If students do not have a full understanding of the content of their feedback and do not feel comfortable asking questions in front of the class, there is the potential for decreased motivation and self-efficacy (McInerney & McInerney, 2010). As a cohort, the Year 9 students were reluctant to ask questions when in a whole class situation, so the small groups with the students using annotated exemplars and the individual meetings with the teacher played an important role in the students’ development as writers. One-on-one meetings with teachers can also reduce the likelihood of the student misunderstanding their feedback (Ryan, Gheen, & Midgley, 1998; Zellermayer, 1989).

The research clearly indicates that feedback has an overall positive impact on student learning: this is supported not only by researchers, but also students. In the focus groups and through the on-line survey, students spoke positively about their experiences with feedback, however, they did raise one concern. Students wanted reassurance that now they had received feedback, and knew how to use it, that it would
continue to be available to them. The researcher was not able to answer this question but encouraged students to talk to future teachers about providing feedback.

A key to the effectiveness of the feedback that was highlighted through the study was that when giving feedback it must be very specific and relate to clearly set goals. This is particularly important for students’ sense of self-efficacy and their motivation. Detailed or specific feedback, targeting an individual student’s work, has been strongly related to improvement in outcomes (Lipnevich & Smith, 2009). If students have a clear understanding of goals, then the effectiveness of the feedback improves (Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall & Wiliam, 2003). Black and Wiliam (1998a) and Hattie (2003) highlighted three questions that are vital when giving feedback.

- Where is the student is currently positioned in relation to the goal?
- Where do they need to be?
- How will they achieve the goal?

Haswell (2006) refined this idea by saying that feedback must be specific to the task, the problem, and the learner. If feedback focuses on just one or two aspects at a time it becomes more manageable for students and helps it remain specific (Shute, 2008; Stern & Solomon, 2006).

Brinko (1993) posited that feedback must not only be specific, but relate clearly to the end goal because it is then that feedback is most effective. Having clear goals is important and setting these up at the beginning of a unit of writing is vital. Using rubrics and success criteria to demonstrate what is necessary to achieve the set goal ensures there is clarity around expectations (Clarke, 2001). A lack of clear goals can result in confusion for students and obstruct the development of successful writers (Timperley & Parr, 2009). Students using the annotated exemplars found the high
quality models valuable because it was something tangible they could use in conjunction with their feedback. Whetu (Y10) summed this up well when he said, “Having the excellence models helps because even if I don’t do as well as the exemplar, if I follow what I have to do, I know I still have a good chance of achieving.” Those students who used the notes from personalised feedback found having written specific notes as they made corrections, useful. Students within the study spoke about how the feedback gave them very clear indications about what they had to work on to improve their work and how to do this. This knowledge gave them a sense of purpose when they returned to their work. Throughout the writing process students regularly commented on how much easier their work was because they were aware of what the end goal was. Knowing exactly what aspects of their work they had to work on to improve, helped keep the students focused, motivated, and improved their confidence (Peterson & McClay, 2010). Joan (Y9) – “I was worried that I might not know what to do to make the work better but then we discussed it and I felt better because you explained it, after that I was happy to go and work on it to make it better.”

The second finding in this study was that there were no significant differences in outcomes between personalised feedback and exemplars. The quantitative results indicated that in the first session, students had shown significant improvement as a result of feedback, but one intervention was not superior to the other. In the second session, the pre/post differences were not statistically significant, which was somewhat surprising. It should be noted that the sample size for the study was not large, although the repeated measures design ameliorated this weakness to some degree. Although somewhat disappointing, these results are not inconsistent with the research literature, most notably Hattie and Timperley’s (2007) extensive review of feedback.
The third finding in this study was that students preferred personalised feedback. The student survey revealed that 60% of students preferred personalised feedback outright. Additionally, 16% of students preferred all types of feedback. Combining the two figures resulted in a total 76% of students who liked working with personalized feedback. Writers require guidance if they are to improve the standard of their work. The personalised feedback provided the opportunity for guidance and also for the students to redraft their work (Kepner, 1991; Olson & Raffeld, 1987; Zellermayer, 1989). Opportunities to redraft work gradually improved students’ writing skills and eventually, with regular exposure to and use of feedback, they will be able to critically evaluate and revise the work to meet the required standard (Zellermayer, 1989). Students highlighted a number of reasons why they preferred the personalised style of feedback and many commented that after receiving the first round of feedback and realising that it was a largely a positive experience, they felt confident to continue on with their writing. When questioned further, students highlighted the one-on-one conferences and the written notes as the most important parts of the feedback process. The combination of written notes and a meeting with the teacher meant that students were more likely to successfully process the feedback (Lipnevich & Smith, 2009).

There are two main parts to personalised feedback: writing the actual feedback and conducting the one-on-one meetings. Throughout the course of the study it became clear that there was little information available about how to write effective personalised feedback. For the teacher, learning to write effective feedback was a step-by-step process. The ideas and expectations of feedback indicated by researchers including Hattie (2003), Lipnevich and Smith (2009), and Parr and Timperley (2010) provided useful information about what should be included when delivering effective feedback. Once it was decided how the feedback would be written the process was
straightforward. The first comment on every piece of feedback was a positive comment that encouraged students to work towards the highest possible goals. The comments often over-stated the ability of the student to a minor degree with the idea that the comment would be a motivator for the students (Bandura, 1986). Bandura also noted that comments that were positive, persuasive, and encouraging in nature may contribute to improved self-efficacy. Improved self-efficacy can result in improved motivation (McInerney & McInerney, 2010). The feedback went on to indicate everything the student had completed correctly and then let them know what parts of their writing required correction or improvement. The final section of the feedback offered suggestions about how students could make the corrections and/or improvements, and encouraged them to meet with the teacher if they had further questions. Because of the lack of guidance available on writing effective feedback, it is difficult to know if the feedback given during the data collection period was of an effective quality.

The final significant finding in this study was that producing and delivering personalised feedback was time consuming and placed significant pressure on the teacher. While students preferred personalised feedback, the time involved in writing feedback for each and every student that was specific to them and their work (Butler, 1988) was excessive. If educators add in the time spent with the students in one-on-one meetings to ensure successful processing (Lipnevich & Smith, 2009), the time involved in writing personalised feedback is prohibitive. The Year 9 personalised feedback was delivered to two groups: one had 10 participants and the other 11 participants. The total amount of time taken to write and deliver the personalised feedback was 8.1 hours – a mean of approximately 23 minutes per student. The Year 10 personalised feedback was also delivered to two groups: one had 10 participants and the other 9 participants. The total amount of time taken to write and deliver the personalized feedback was 8.7
hours – a mean of approximately 27 minutes per student. While the minutes do not appear to be excessive, when added together over the course of each of the interventions, the personalised feedback in the first intervention required an extra 8.1 hours and the second 8.7 hours; effectively an extra day per week, per class.

Interestingly, there was a time difference between the two year groups when they received their personalised feedback. The difference in time was attributed to two factors:

- the Year 10 students asking more questions
- they took the time to make notes in our one-on-one meetings

Compromising the quality of the feedback by trying to save time would be a futile exercise. Unequivocally, students wanted the written notes and the one-on-one meetings. This finding aligns with Brinko’s (1993) claim that feedback is more effective when conveyed in a variety of modes, for example, verbally (through one-on-one meetings) and written (individual notes for each student). Specific, elaborated feedback, for example, comments pointing out what is right, what requires improvement, and how to make the improvements is preferred by students (Barry, 2008; Higgins, Hall, Baumfield & Mosley, 2005; Peterson & Irving, 2008; and Straub, 1997). Lipnevich and Smith (2009) support the idea that feedback delivered in different ways might have a differential impact on students of different abilities.

Knowing that students prefer the specificity of personalised feedback, and that it can also help students of lower abilities, presents a conundrum for teachers. How can a valuable tool be such a drain on the already overworked resources of classroom teachers? Another concern about using personalised feedback is that classroom teachers do not necessarily have the skills to write specific feedback (Matsumura et al., 2002). Even if the time was available, they may not know how to do it.
Creating annotated exemplars may also be problematic. The creation of resources requires teachers to have faith in their own ability. It can be daunting creating resources that will need to withstand serious scrutiny by students, peers, and potentially, external moderators. Working in conjunction with a colleague to create the resources or having another department member check them should ensure high standards are maintained. If this form of feedback was used by multiple members of a department it would not take long to build a bank of resources that could be used by all teachers. This would also save time. Departments would need to work together to decide whether or not they provide exemplars with a range of grades or just exemplars of an excellence standard. In this study, exemplars of an excellence standard were used. The rationale behind this is that if students have clear models of excellent work they are going to strive for an excellence standard themselves. The Māori whakataukī, “Whāia te iti kahurangi ki te tūohu koe, me he maunga teitei” – “Pursue excellence – should you stumble, let it be to a lofty mountain” – very well sums up, the rationale behind the teacher’s thinking.

**Implications – Practical**

There are a number of practical classroom implications as a result of the key findings in this study and many of them impact the role of the teacher. Superficial feedback does not lead to any improvement in the content of a student’s work (Clare, Valdes & Pathey-Chavez, 2000) and there is a tendency by classroom teachers to focus feedback on surface features such as spelling and punctuation (Connors & Lunsford, 1993). If we accept that feedback is an effective tool that can positively impact student achievement levels, then teachers will need to be provided with the relevant professional development. They must learn what effective feedback is, how to produce and deliver it, and how to imbed it into their programs. Improving the skills of teachers’ in these areas will require a broadening of knowledge in other areas, for example, using
rubrics to strengthen the impact of feedback. The use of rubrics to help students remain on task and reflect on feedback (Andrade & Du, 2005) is enhanced if the teacher’s knowledge of rubrics is strong (Schafer et al., 2001). Teachers will also need to be willing to change their thinking, for example, they will need to move away from the idea of rewards being a form of feedback (Hattie, 2009).

Feedback is most effective when it builds upon specific goals (Hattie & Timperley, 2007) and is specific to the task (Thompson, 1998). The quality of feedback is enhanced when it is planned and specific (Herschell, Greco, Filcheck & McNeil, 2002). Specificity in providing feedback relevant to set goals will impact the classroom teacher in a number of ways. There will be a need to ensure planning is specific and tasks are clearly set out. To be able to provide such specificity in both goals and feedback means that teachers will need to be well organised not only in their classrooms, but most importantly, in their planning. When units of learning are carefully planned they will include an end goal but also smaller goals that will occur throughout the unit. Careful planning will also allow for sufficient feedback to be provided at varying times throughout the learning (Peterson & McClay, 2010). This may mean teachers develop and employ a range of strategies and modes of delivery when providing feedback to meet students’ needs (Brinko, 1993; Hattie, 2009), which in turn could strengthen their teaching. When trialing different methods of using feedback or identifying achievement goals, teachers should be observant and deliberate when determining what is and is not working in the classroom (Hattie, 2009). When used as a strategy, feedback can change behaviours (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996) and promote intrinsic motivation (Deci et al., 1999; Krapp, 2005). It would be reasonable to argue that if teachers are willing to make changes in their pedagogical approach to
feedback then not only could they potentially have more focused students, but the
students are likely to improve their academic achievement levels.

The biggest impact in the classroom, and consequently for the teacher, is the
amount of time required to produce and deliver effective feedback. Because effective
feedback goes beyond providing cursory attention to surface features, it is important the
time cost is acknowledged. The body of literature used in this study did not examine the
time factor involved in delivering effective personalised feedback, but the researcher’s
data has indicated that the time involved is considerable. Overall, the personalised
feedback added another eight hours per round per class to the researcher’s week.
Teaching five different classes a day, as happens in most secondary schools, means a
situation could arise whereby multiple classes could require feedback at the same time.
Finding ways to ameliorate the time involved has been difficult. The idea of using a
tick box sheet negates the term personalised, and therefore does not meet the standard
of effective feedback. Ideally, smaller classes and more time for planning and marking
would work, but in already cash strapped schools and with the hectic workload of the
average teacher, these ideals are unlikely to be achieved.

The most positive implication of the key findings that will impact the classroom
is that students overwhelmingly prefer personalised feedback. After receiving
feedback, students became motivated to complete their work and were noticeably more
engaged (Hattie, 2003). The completion of work was rewarding for the researcher and
may have helped improve student self-efficacy (Bandura & Locke, 2003; Vancouver et
al., 2008). The more detailed and specific feedback is to an individual’s work, the more
it becomes strongly related to student improvement (Lipnevich & Smith, 2009).
However, creating more detailed and specific feedback again brings up the issue of the time required to produce the personalised feedback.

**Limitations of this Study**

There are a number of limitations of this study. One is that the sample size is small. Also, the study was conducted within a particular school, with just two classes of students, and their teacher was the researcher. Thus, the power and generalisability of the study are not as strong as would have been possible in a broader study. The Year 9 class were average to low academically, but the students in the Year 10 class were grouped as a class because they were considered academically strong. There were also more girls than boys in the study which could potentially affect overall results. On the other hand, the fact that the study was conducted in a real classroom setting is a strength because it provides a unique setting. This meant that every-day occurrences could be taken into consideration. Having a researcher who is also the teacher is both a strength and limitation. The strength has to do with the researcher’s commitment to the study, and that she has first-hand knowledge of the research. The limitation was that the study was restricted to one teacher, who may have had some inherent bias toward one approach or the other, although this was not apparent to the researcher at the time. The researcher was aware of this possibility and, guarded against it. This was achieved through the use of a marking moderator and following NZQA protocols for grouping students.

**Future Research**

If this study was to be started again, there are a number of things that could be done differently. Involving more than one subject area, working as a full time
researcher, conducting one-on-one interviews, refining the questions being used in the focus groups, and developing a greater understanding of annotated exemplars are the primary changes that could be made. The researcher is also interested in the potential of feedback to impact on lower ability students and their levels of academic achievement.

Working across more than one subject area when conducting a study such as this could provide further opportunity to measure the effectiveness of feedback. It would also provide a chance to observe the delivery of feedback from another perspective. Further, answers to the following questions could be of value:

- Do students in other subject areas require as much in-depth feedback for learning as is required for English studies?
- Do teachers of other subjects, struggle with the time involved in the creation and delivery of the feedback?
- Do the students respond in the same way?

Conducting the study as a full time researcher would have provided many opportunities to examine aspects of the process in much more depth. Meeting with parents and formally interviewing them about how they felt their students had benefitted from the feedback would have been interesting. Being able to conduct the study across a wider group of students would have made the study more generalisable, and therefore perhaps more relevant to colleagues. Meeting with colleagues to find out if the students involved in the study had shown improvements in writing in their subject area could have added depth to the results. Most importantly to the researcher, being able to actively seek ways of decreasing the time involved in the creation of personalised feedback, would have been an exciting undertaking, and added more depth to the study.
The value of student voice was not initially acknowledged by the researcher but it became abundantly apparent throughout the course of the data gathering process that student voice is a powerful tool. When students felt comfortable they talked about fears, excitement, nervousness, and what they considered important. The anonymity of the student survey gave them a chance to say what they were really thinking and the peer support within the focus groups encouraged them to open up. However, the opportunity to talk to the students in one-on-one interviews may have potentially revealed even more.

When analysing the data from the study it quickly became apparent that the questions used for the focus group interviews could have been worded better. An example of this was the question, “What are the best bits of the feedback you received?” Many of the Year 9 students and the Year 10 students sought reassurance that they had understood it correctly. The researcher initially considered the questions well composed but had not given them a great deal of thought after they were written. Reviewing the questions should have happened, particularly in light of the ability of some of the Year 9 students. If the questions had been reviewed, a useful exercise would be to practice asking them to groups of students not involved in the study and gauging their responses. More investigation into the wording of focus group questions would have been valuable skill for the researcher. This could happen through discussion with others who have used focus groups.

While the process of creating the annotated exemplars was enjoyable and the value in them is clear, the comment made by one student about them being too busy highlighted an issue. How much information does one include in a single exemplar? Upon examination it was clear that in fact too much information had been included and
this had resulted in some confusion for students. It is difficult to find clear examples of exemplars and the creation of the ones used for this study was based on exemplars provided by NZQA for students studying NCEA. Reflecting on the process, future exemplars created by the researcher would focus on just two or three ideas at a time. This would make the exemplars more manageable for students and teachers. There was not a huge difference in results between personalised feedback and annotated exemplars, therefore, using annotated exemplars might be the better choice because they are not so time intensive. However, there are skills required to produce effective and relevant annotated exemplars and given that there is a lack of good examples, teachers will be required to develop their own.

The literature review for this study raised the notion that personalised feedback has the potential to impact academic achievement levels of lower ability students. One of the classes in the study had a number of students achieving at the curriculum level 2/3 when they should ideally have been starting the year at curriculum level 4. The class was not considered by the teacher to be extremely low, and while the academic gains were not great, the impact of the feedback on their self-efficacy and confidence levels, was observable. As a result of this, the researcher is interested in actively investigating and measuring the growth of student achievement in a whole class of lower ability students.

The strongest message from this study was that effective feedback is a tool that can improve student achievement. It is a tool that has been well researched and there are some clear guidelines around what makes feedback effective. What is not so clear is what a piece of feedback should contain to maximise its effectiveness, or how teachers could possibly address the time issue. During the gathering of literature for
this study, it was anticipated there would be examples of what feedback would look like, but this did not happen. Teachers like to have models they can use and adapt to suit their teaching, subject area, and the students in their class. These two areas are potential areas for future research and could provide the impetus for more teachers to consider using effective feedback to improve student achievement.

**Conclusion**

This *in situ* study looked carefully at the potential of two recognised styles of feedback (personalised feedback and annotated exemplars) and how they could possibly improve student achievement. A particular strength of this study is that it was a randomised experiment conducted *in situ* using an actual programme of learning. The teacher/researcher had all students in the two classes participating in the study. Use of randomisation meant that the findings can be attributed to the treatment. The two approaches produced similar results in terms of growth from pre to post test and students indicated they preferred personalized feedback, but liked the annotated exemplars. The study has highlighted that effective feedback clearly makes a difference to student achievement levels. While there were no significant differences between the styles of feedback there were differences between pre- and post-test scores. The last, and most important finding, was that the annotated exemplar approach is several times more efficient than the personalised feedback approach. Combined with the student’s positive attitude for the annotated exemplar feedback and the substantial time savings, it looks like a potentially strong adjunct to the personalised feedback style of feedback. This kind of complete feedback picture from a real classroom with true randomization is not widely found in the research literature, which much more often, relies on artificially imposed studies.
Through focus groups and surveys, students provided valuable insights into how the feedback supported their learning, and the aspects of it they found most useful. They also indicated their preferred style of feedback. The researcher’s journal offered the unique perspective of a practicing teacher. The researcher/teacher recognised the power of feedback to aid improved achievement levels, but also acknowledged factors that would likely increase the teacher workload should the regular provision of effective feedback be implemented in a classroom.

This study outlines a strong case for the use of regular effective feedback in secondary school classes. The literature is robust in its support of the use of effective feedback to help students improve their levels of academic achievement, self-efficacy, and motivation. Researchers such as Black and Wiliam, (1998b), Lipnevich and Smith, (2009), Hattie and Timperley, (2007), Bandura and Locke, (2003), and Shute (2008) have provided a detailed body of literature that investigates not only the feedback itself, but the impact on the student through strengthened self-efficacy and improved motivation. Using annotated exemplars to provide a similar form of scaffold as the personalised feedback is also covered. The researchers provide clear definitions about what feedback is, what constitutes effective feedback, an explanation of conditions that support its delivery, and the best conditions in which to deliver the feedback. There are also clear ideas about how the use of rubrics can support personalised feedback and annotated exemplars.

The dual role of the teacher/researcher could have presented problems. These were carefully noted and every step possible was taken to ameliorate their potential impact. Randomisation of groups, moderated planning and marking, using standardised
pre and posttests, and online anonymous surveys, all minimised the potential impact of this dual role.

What the literature does not do is provide guidelines about how to write personalised feedback. It does not discuss the amount of time required to produce effective feedback nor offer any guidelines about producing exemplars. These factors are important when considering professional development that may be required if implementation of a feedback intervention is to take place. A small sample size means the relevance of findings is limited to the researcher and her future classes. However, the simplicity of the study means that while results cannot be generalized, they may be replicated with little effort. This offers the opportunity for other teachers, within English and other subject areas, to consider a similar study around using effective feedback to help improve their students’ academic achievement. The ability to carry out a study such as this one, as a practicing teacher, brings an insight that clinical researchers could struggle to match.

The knowledge that effective feedback and annotated exemplars are powerful tools to be used to improve student achievement raises further issues. Undertaking this study has highlighted a need to investigate how to write effective feedback, what an effective exemplar might look like, and how the time factor required to create and deliver the resources could be mitigated. Conducting studies across a range of subject areas, with larger sample sizes, multiple teachers and data collection methods could result in important new knowledge for the field.
References


Appendix A: Information Sheet

Application Form for ethical consideration of research and teaching proposals involving human participants

Reference Number: 14/002
12 January 2015

UNIVERSITY
OTAGO

An investigation into using personalised feedback to improve student achievement

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS or PARENTS / GUARDIANS ETC.

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to allow your child to participate we thank you. If you decide you would prefer your child not to take part there will be no disadvantage to your child and we thank you for considering our request.

What is the Aim of the Project?

This project is being undertaken as part of the requirements for my PhD (Doctor of Education). The aim of this study is to determine which style of feedback, personalised or annotated exemplars, has the greatest impact on student achievement. The use of student voice, to help determine which form of feedback has the most impact, will allow students to actively participate in their own learning.

What Type of Participants are being sought?

I would like to invite all students in my Year 9 and 10 classes to participate in the study.

What will Participants be Asked to Do?

Should you agree to allow your child to take part in this project, your child will be asked to

- Undertake a usual programme of study that will include pre-tests to determine your child’s gaps in knowledge about instruction and creative writing
Application form for ethical consideration of research and teaching proposals involving human participants

- Complete a motivational task about feelings around writing.
- Submit two assessment pieces of written work, one transitional and one creative.
- Participate in focus group interviews to help the researcher understand how the feedback has helped your child improve their writing.
- Complete a questionnaire about your child's preferences of feedback style and why your child prefers that particular style.

The time commitment required:

- The study will take place over the period of one academic year.

Please be aware that you may decide to not let your child take part in the project without any discrimination to your child or any kind. Your child will still participate in the class but the learning will not take place.

What data or information will be collected and what will be made of it?

The raw data that will be collected will be:

- Pre-test results - the results of the pre-tests will help determine the content of each of the writing units. It will identify gaps in knowledge. The results of the pre-test will also give a baseline figure to measure improved student achievement. The data will be recorded in the KAMAR mark-book system.

- Responses to the motivational task - this task will measure how your child feels about writing. The task will be carried out three times over the period of the year and the data will also be recorded in the KAMAR mark-book system. The data from the motivational task will be used to measure changes in student attitudes towards writing throughout the year.

- Grades from submitted assessments - at the end of each of the two writing units, your child will submit a piece of writing in the piece of the unit. The work will be marked and your child will receive their grade back. The final grades will be recorded in the KAMAR mark-book system. This data will be used to measure improvements in student achievement.

- Audio recordings of the focus group interviews - at the beginning of term four your child will take part in the focus group interviews. The interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. Any extracts from the focus group interview transcript will be anonymised and used to illustrate the findings in the study. Extracts may be used in subsequent publications and presentations.

- Your child will complete a questionnaire - the questionnaire will give the students a voice and an opportunity to tell the researcher what is important to them.

Who will have access to the data or information?
Application Form for ethical considerations of research and teaching proposals involving human participants

- Only the researcher and the supervisors of this EdD study will view any part of the raw data except when it is used to illustrate findings in the final research document for dissemination.

- You have rights of access to any demographic information collected about the college and student databases. This includes the right to correct or update information about students participating in this study.

- How will data or information be securely managed, stored and destroyed?

  Because the data collected in this study is part of a real class, the data will be recorded in the school management system, KAMAR. The researcher has access to markbooks that are relevant to each of the two classes. Senior management also have access to the markbook, however individual teacher’s markbooks are password protected.

  The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only those mentioned below will be able to gain access to it. Data obtained as a result of the research will be retained for at least 5 years in secure storage. Any personal information held on the participants (such as contact details and audio tapes of focus group interviews) may be destroyed at the completion of the research.

- The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity. Participants are welcome to request a copy of the results of the study from the researcher.

- Data and personal information collected in the completed research will be reported anonymously and will not include any personal or identifying information.

Will participants be provided with the results of the study? If so they should be informed of this.

- Because of the informal nature of this study your child will be aware of their progress throughout the course of the year. This will be indicated on your child’s reports and on their returned pieces of assessment.

Can Participants Change their Mind and Withdraw from the Project?

Participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from participation in the project at any time up until raw data is transcribed, without any disadvantage to yourself or any
Application Form for ethical consideration of research and teaching proposals involving human participants

Kind Should you change your mind this means any data produced in the study that involves you will be removed from the analysis and reporting.

What if Participants have any Questions?

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:

Darragh Price
Student Researcher
Telephone: 0274713084
donnaphi@wits.ac.za

Dr. J.K. Smith
College of Education
University Telephone Number: ...
jeffrey.smith@gmail.com

This study has been approved by the University of Wits Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph 03 479 8256 or email pary.wilco@wits.ac.za). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix B: Consent Form

Application Form for ethical consideration of research and teaching proposals involving human participants

Reference Number: 14/2012
16 February 2013

An investigation into using personalised feedback to improve student achievement

CONSENT FORM FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:-

1. My child’s participation in the project is entirely voluntary;

2. I am free to withdraw my child from the project at any time without any disadvantage;

3. Students who do not participate in the project will still take part in class as normal;

4. Personal identifying information will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years.

5. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve my child’s anonymity.

I agree for my child to take part in this project.

..............................................................................................................  .................................................................
(Signature of parent/guardian) ................................................................. (Date)

..............................................................................................................  .................................................................
(Name of child)
Application Form for ethical consideration of research and teaching programs involving human participants

Reference Number: 14/203
16 February 2012

An investigation into using personalised feedback to improve student achievement

CONSENT FORM FOR STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:-

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary;

2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage;

3. Personal identifying information, including audio recordings, will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years;

4. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity should I choose to remain anonymous.

5. I, as the participant:  
   a) agree to being named in the research  
   b) would rather remain anonymous

I agree to take part in this project.

..................................................  ..................................................  ..................................................
(Signature of participant)  (Date)  (Signed Name)

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator [ph 03 479 8256 or email gary.wilte@otago.ac.nz]. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix C: e-Asttle Rubric

### e-asTTle writing marking rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Page Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideas</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure and language</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence structure</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Punctuation</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note**

The e-asTTle writing rubric is supported by a set of generic exemplars as well as smaller sets of exemplars specific to each prompt. The generic exemplars can be downloaded from the 'Enter Scores' page under 'Mark Test'.
# Ideas

Skill focus: the relevance, quantity, quality, selection and elaboration of ideas for the topic

**Definition**

- **Quality of ideas**
  Simple ideas are related to the personal, immediate world of the writer (concrete, predictable, familiar, personal and/or close to writer's experience).
  Complex ideas may involve generalisation, abstraction and reflection on the wider world and groups of people.

- **Selection of ideas**
  The deliberate choice of relevant ideas or subject matter to engage and influence the reader.

- **Elaboration of ideas**
  Elaboration should be relevant and may be given by providing background information or factual detail, describing, explaining, providing evidence, analysing, or evaluating.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>R1</th>
<th>R2</th>
<th>R3</th>
<th>R4</th>
<th>R5</th>
<th>R6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Describer</strong></td>
<td>Ideas are unrelated to the topic OR One brief, simple idea related to the topic</td>
<td>Text has a few simple, unelaborated ideas related to the topic OR An idea is related to the topic and has some basic elaboration</td>
<td>Text has many simple, unelaborated ideas related to the topic OR An idea is related to the topic and has some complex elaboration AND Text has one elaborated idea OR Text has several ideas that have some elaboration</td>
<td>Ideas are relevant and begin to show some complexity</td>
<td>Ideas are complex and elaborated</td>
<td>Ideas show insight, originality and some authority and/or reflection on the wider world Ideas are deliberately selected, effective and elaborated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Notes</strong></td>
<td>One idea may be repeated</td>
<td>Ideas may be disconnected or brief points in a list Some evidence of a main idea (e.g., persuasive text may take a position)</td>
<td>Elaboration may lack depth and detail Complexity may not be controlled Main idea/thesis is present but focus may not be sustained</td>
<td>Elaboration is detailed Complex issues or themes are raised Main idea is focused</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Generic examples</strong></td>
<td>Son The girl Feeling seaweed</td>
<td>I be kin The Erfah The adventurous dog</td>
<td>Margin for era When I</td>
<td>Evolving life pattern Heavy-booted fast</td>
<td>Plastic bags Don't move</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Structure and language

**Skill focus:** The presence and development of structural and language features appropriate to the specified purpose.

## Definition

- **Structural features:**
  The component parts that are typically associated with a text written for a particular purpose. For example, when narrating, structural features may include an orientation to the context (place, time and participants), a series of events/actions, a problem or complication, and a resolution.

- **Language features:**
  The language patterns that are typically associated with a text written for a particular purpose. These include selection of tense, tone, text connectives and vocabulary. For example, when narrating, typical language features include use of past tense, connectives denoting time (in order to provide a clear sequence of events), expressive and/or descriptive vocabulary, and dialogue.

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>R1</th>
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<th>R6</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Descriptor</strong></td>
<td>Structural features and language features are inappropriate for purpose or absent</td>
<td>Some structural features are appropriate to purpose</td>
<td>Some structural features are appropriate to purpose</td>
<td>Structural features are appropriate to purpose and some show development (may be one well-developed element with others less developed)</td>
<td>Structural features are appropriate to purpose and are developed and mostly controlled</td>
<td>Structural features and language features are appropriate to purpose, controlled and effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Notes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>See 'Structure and Language Notes' for each prompt for guidance on appropriate structural and language features.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examples</strong></td>
<td>The girl</td>
<td>Yes I'm agree</td>
<td>The Erith</td>
<td>Rainbow's and</td>
<td>Plastic bags</td>
<td>Don't move</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The adventurous dog</td>
<td>By the mail</td>
<td>My iPod</td>
<td>When I</td>
<td>Youth gym</td>
<td>And the All Blacks scored!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Organisation

**Skill focus:** The organisation of ideas into a coherent text.

#### Definition
- **Coherence**

The way ideas are linked to each other and to the broader context of the writing and/or the wider world, to produce a text that is meaningful to the reader. When the text is coherent, the relationships between ideas are clear and the writing ‚flows‘. When assessing a text’s coherence, look for clear text connectives, consistency of verb tenses, and accuracy of referring words (e.g., pronouns) across the text as a whole.

**NOTE:** The focus is on the text as a whole, rather than on individual sentences.

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Descriptor</strong></td>
<td>Ideas are disconnected and/or random</td>
<td>Text attempts to group and sequence ideas</td>
<td>Ideas are grouped and sequenced, and text generally flows</td>
<td>Text shows control over grouping and sequencing of ideas but paragraphs are not used or are indicated incorrectly</td>
<td>Ideas are organised into basic paragraphs</td>
<td>Paragraphs support the development of the text</td>
<td>Paragraphs are deliberately structured to direct the reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Text lacks coherence</td>
<td>Text has some coherence</td>
<td>Text may be brief but coherent</td>
<td>Text is coherent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Notes</strong></td>
<td>May be a very short text</td>
<td>Some ideas are grouped spatially, temporally or logically</td>
<td>Errors in or absence of linking words or inconsistencies in tense across text may interrupt flow</td>
<td>Errors in or absence of linking words or inconsistencies in tense across text do not interrupt flow</td>
<td>Paragraphs have minimal development (e.g., one sentence), or some paragraph breaks are not indicated</td>
<td>Some paragraphs may be out of sequence</td>
<td>Subheadings, topic sentences and linking words are present and appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text contains like ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Genre examples</strong></td>
<td>S n</td>
<td>I be kin</td>
<td>The Erileh</td>
<td>The adventurous dog</td>
<td>Plastic bags</td>
<td>Think about</td>
<td>Evolving life pattern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>By the mall</td>
<td>My iPod</td>
<td>Rainbow’s and</td>
<td>A library</td>
<td>And the All Blacks scored!</td>
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149
# Vocabulary

**Skill focus:** the range, precision and effectiveness of word choices appropriate to the topic

## Definition
- **Simple everyday words:** words that are related to the personal world of the writer; words that are used frequently
- **Precise words:** words that are descriptive, expressive, academic, technical or abstract

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<th>R4</th>
<th>R5</th>
<th>R6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Descriptor</strong></td>
<td>Uses a small range of simple, everyday words and phrases from personal vocabulary</td>
<td>Uses a range of simple, everyday words and phrases from personal vocabulary</td>
<td>Uses a range of everyday words and phrases, with a small number of precise words to add detail</td>
<td>Uses a variety of precise words and phrases to add information and/or interest</td>
<td>Selects words and phrases to enhance meaning and/or mood</td>
<td>Precise language choices consistently enhance meaning and/or mood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Notes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>May use adjectives, adverbs and/or precise verbs to add interest and detail</td>
<td>May use idioms, metaphors, similes and other figures of speech</td>
<td>May be some experimentation with vocabulary; some words may be used incorrectly</td>
<td>Deliberate and sustained use of precise vocabulary (descriptive, expressive, academic, technical and/or abstract) for effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Genetic examples</strong></td>
<td>8 n</td>
<td>I be kin</td>
<td>The adventurous dog</td>
<td>The Eiffel</td>
<td>Margin for</td>
<td>Youth gym</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Stiffl</td>
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<td>Think about</td>
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</table>
Sentence structure

Skill focus: the quality, effectiveness and correctness of sentences

Definition
When judging the correctness of each sentence, consider the following (note: the focus is on the use of correct forms within a sentence, rather than between sentences or paragraphs or across the text as a whole):
- word form (e.g., singular or plural)
- verb tense
- subject-verb agreement
- articles and pronouns
- use of prepositions and relative pronouns to expand sentences
- arrangement of (order of) elaborating phrases and clauses
- missing words
- order of words

NOTE: In order to make assessment of sentence structure more manageable, 'read in' missing or incorrect sentence punctuation (including full stops). (Punctuation is assessed separately, in the 'Punctuation' element.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>R1</th>
<th>R2</th>
<th>R3</th>
<th>R4</th>
<th>R5</th>
<th>R6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Descriptor</td>
<td>Few correct sentences</td>
<td>Correct sentences are short and may have minimal extension</td>
<td>Correct sentences begin to show variety in structure and type</td>
<td>Most sentences are correct</td>
<td>Sentences are controlled and show variety in structure, length and type and have extending phrases and/or clauses</td>
<td>Sentences are deliberately crafted to impact and engage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Notes | Text consists of fragments, phrases or sentences with missing words
Some meaning is dissemble | Sentences may be simple and/or compound and/or basic complex
May contain long, run-on sentences with overuse of conjunctions | Some sentences may have repeated structures
Errors in longer sentences may be brought about by use of speechlike structures | May attempt to use sentences for effect | Some sentences may be controlled for effect
Meaning is clear (may be some inconsistency or minor error) | Sentences express precise meaning |
| Generic exemplars | The girl
Yes I'm agree | The adventurous dog
Stifft | The Eiffel
My IPod
When I | Rainbow's end
Plastic bags | Evolving life pattern
And the All Blacks scored! | Don't move |

151
# Punctuation

**Skill focus:** The accurate use of sentence punctuation markers and the range and accuracy of other punctuation to aid understanding of the text and to enhance meaning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>R1</th>
<th>R2</th>
<th>R3</th>
<th>R4</th>
<th>R5</th>
<th>R6</th>
<th>R7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example</td>
<td>Little, no or random punctuation</td>
<td>Experimentation with sentence punctuation</td>
<td>Some correct use of sentence punctuation</td>
<td>Correct punctuation of most sentences—beginning and end—and some correct use of other punctuation</td>
<td>Correct sentence punctuation AND correct use of other punctuation (e.g., contractions, commas in lists)</td>
<td>Punctuation assists meaning</td>
<td>Control of punctuation to enhance meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td><strong>FULL STOPS</strong> May be one full stop at end of writing</td>
<td><strong>FULL STOPS</strong> Used separately to mean of text (e.g., random, end of the or end of page). May be one instance of correct use</td>
<td><strong>FULL STOPS</strong> Some sentences may be isolated by commas</td>
<td><strong>FULL STOPS</strong> Sentence endings are marked by full stops. Exclamation marks or question marks</td>
<td><strong>FULL STOPS</strong> and <strong>CAPITAL LETTERS</strong> May have some minimal incorrect use</td>
<td><strong>FULL STOPS</strong> and <strong>CAPITAL LETTERS</strong> May be some minor error in sentence punctuation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td><strong>CAPITAL LETTERS</strong> Letter formation may make it hard to distinguish whether capitals are intended for sentence beginnings or proper nouns</td>
<td><strong>CAPITAL LETTERS</strong> Letter formation may make it hard to distinguish whether capitals are intended for sentence beginnings or proper nouns</td>
<td><strong>CAPITAL LETTERS</strong> Used to begin sentences</td>
<td><strong>CAPITAL LETTERS</strong> May be used randomly (incorrect use, where handwriting style overrides function)</td>
<td><strong>CAPITAL LETTERS</strong> May be some minor error in sentence punctuation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td><strong>OTHER PUNCTUATION</strong> May experiment with conjunctions or commas (may be some correct use)</td>
<td><strong>OTHER PUNCTUATION</strong> May experiment with conjunctions, commas or other punctuation (may be some correct use)</td>
<td><strong>OTHER PUNCTUATION</strong> May use one or two other types correctly</td>
<td><strong>OTHER PUNCTUATION</strong> Experiments with other types: direct speech may not use a new line for new speaker; punctuation within a direct speech attempt to create effect</td>
<td><strong>OTHER PUNCTUATION</strong> May have one area that shows consistent weakness</td>
<td><strong>OTHER PUNCTUATION</strong> May have minor error in complex punctuation, e.g., in direct speech or commas for phrases and clauses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples</td>
<td>The girl</td>
<td>The adventurous dog</td>
<td>My iPod</td>
<td>Plastic bags</td>
<td>A library</td>
<td>Youth gym</td>
<td>Don't move</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples</td>
<td>The Earl</td>
<td>Yes I agree</td>
<td>Margin for era</td>
<td>When I</td>
<td>I personally believe</td>
<td>Heavy-booted feet</td>
<td>And the All Blacks scored</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

152
## Spelling

Skill focus: the difficulty of words used and the accuracy of the spelling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>R1</th>
<th>R2</th>
<th>R3</th>
<th>R4</th>
<th>R5</th>
<th>R6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Describer</strong></td>
<td>Uses some letters to represent meaning</td>
<td>Spells a few personal and high-frequency words correctly (e.g., my, it, if)</td>
<td>Spells a range of personal and high-frequency words correctly (e.g., school, where, friend, outside, playing)</td>
<td>Spells a wide range of high-frequency words correctly</td>
<td>Spells high-frequency and some difficult words correctly</td>
<td>Spells high-frequency and a range of difficult words with few or no errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Notes</strong></td>
<td>Single letters or strings of letters that do not support meaning</td>
<td>Attempts words using phoneme-grapheme relationships</td>
<td>Attempts a wider range of words using phoneme-grapheme relationships and word chunks</td>
<td>Attempts difficult words using phoneme-grapheme relationships and developing knowledge of spelling rules and morphemes</td>
<td>Attempts difficult words using diverse phoneme-grapheme relationships, and knowledge of spelling rules and morphemes</td>
<td>Using base spelling rules but may over-generalise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Example</strong></td>
<td>Some consonants and vowel sounds (including blends and digraphs) may be reproduced correctly, e.g., -th, -sh, -oe, -ow</td>
<td>May attempt words with more than two syllables, e.g., amazing (amazing)</td>
<td>All sounds are represented in words</td>
<td>Irregular words may be spelled correctly (e.g., went, through)</td>
<td>Achieves close approximations of difficult words</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Generic examples</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- S
- Mi cat
- I the kin
- The Enfeh
- My iPod
- Margin for era
- The adventurous dog
- Think about
- Evolving life pattern
- I personally believe
- Plastic bags
- Don't move
Appendix D: Junior Marking Grid

Junior Creating Meaning - Writing
Formal and Creative
Version 1 2016

Name: ___________________________ Teacher Code: __________

These levels are based on students being Proficient (P) at a level (generally reaching the criteria). If they are just beginning to reach that criteria, they will be considered Beginning (B), and if they are reaching the criteria consistently they will be considered Advanced (A).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Below NZC Level 2</th>
<th>NZC Level 3 Proficient</th>
<th>NZC Level 4 Proficient</th>
<th>NZC Level 5 Proficient</th>
<th>NZC Level 6 Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience &amp; Purpose</strong></td>
<td>Recognizes how to shape writing for purpose and audience by:</td>
<td>□ Beginning to choose context, language, and style.</td>
<td>□ Awareness that their text is written for an audience.</td>
<td>Shows some understanding of how to shape writing for purpose and audience by:</td>
<td>□ Careful choice of context, language, and writing style.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shows a progressively increasing understanding of how to shape writing for purpose and audience by:</td>
<td>□ Conveying and sustaining personal voice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideas</strong></td>
<td>Forms and expresses ideas competently by:</td>
<td>□ Forms and expresses ideas beginning to add some detail.</td>
<td>□ Forms and expresses ideas with increasing clarity.</td>
<td>Selects, forms, and expresses ideas competently by:</td>
<td>□ Selects, communicates and expresses ideas effectively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shows some understanding of how to convey personal voice.</td>
<td>□ Shows an awareness of a range of thought and viewpoints.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language Features - crafting</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates some style by:</td>
<td>Using some language features.</td>
<td>Demonstrates some style by:</td>
<td>Using some suitable language features.</td>
<td>Demonstrates appropriate style by:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Using a range of suitable language features to communicate meaning and effect.</td>
<td>Using a range of suitable language features to communicate meaning and effect.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

154
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Features - mechanics</th>
<th>Language Features - mechanics</th>
<th>Language Features - mechanics</th>
<th>Language Features - mechanics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shows a limited use of language.</td>
<td>Shows correct use of language by:</td>
<td>Shows a consistent use of correct language by:</td>
<td>Shows an consistent use of correct language by:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Work does not appear to be proofread for errors in spelling, punctuation or grammar</td>
<td>- Beginning to proofread work with increasing accuracy</td>
<td>- Proofreading work with accuracy so that there are minimal basic errors</td>
<td>- Proofreading work with accuracy so that there are minimal complex errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Uses most simple sentence indentation (e.g. capital letters, full stops)</td>
<td>- Uses most grammatical conventions correctly when writing simple and compound sentences, and complex sentences</td>
<td>- Uses almost all grammatical conventions correctly when writing simple and compound sentences, and complex sentences</td>
<td>- Uses all grammatical conventions correctly when writing simple and compound sentences, and complex sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Most simple and compound sentences are constructed correctly (e.g. consistent tense, subject-verb agreement)</td>
<td>- May have some run on sentences and/or fragments</td>
<td>- Minimal run on sentences and/or fragments</td>
<td>- Uses the conventions of all punctuation without intrusive errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- May have regular run on sentences and/or fragments</td>
<td>- Uses simple correct sentence indication (e.g. capital letters, full stops)</td>
<td>Uses consistent correct sentence indication (e.g. capital letters, full stops)</td>
<td>Demonstrates a good understanding of spelling patterns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Spells most high frequency words correctly</td>
<td>Uses some other basic punctuation correctly e.g. speech marks, apostrophes for contractions</td>
<td>Mostly uses accurate complex punctuation e.g. colons, ellipses, semi colons</td>
<td>Shows a clear understanding of structure by:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Errors may interfere with meaning

Errors no longer interfere with meaning

Few intrusive errors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates use of a simple structure by:</td>
<td>Demonstrates use of structure by:</td>
<td>Demonstrates appropriate use of structure by:</td>
<td>Shows a clear understanding of structure by:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- May attempting to organise ideas but may not make sense – semblance of organisation</td>
<td>- Organising and sequencing ideas with some confidence</td>
<td>- Organising ideas into paragraphs with increasing confidence</td>
<td>- Achieving a sense of coherence and wholeness in texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- May attempt simple conjunctions to link ideas within sentences e.g. and, because</td>
<td>- Beginning to use simple connectives and linkages within and across sentences e.g. since, through</td>
<td>- Beginning to organise ideas and content logically and they make sense, using the conventions of the text form</td>
<td>- Ideas are organised and developed for purpose and effect, using the conventions of the text form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- No attempt at paragraphs</td>
<td>- Attempting to paragraph, but may not follow a specific structure or be used appropriately OR no paragraphs</td>
<td>- Using a variety of connectives and linkages within sentences and between paragraphs – e.g. however, furthermore</td>
<td>- Uses complex linkages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Uses simple sentences, with some variation in the beginnings</td>
<td>- Begins to use a variety of connectives and linkages within sentences and between paragraphs – e.g. however, furthermore</td>
<td>帕拉格拉姆s are used appropriately, are well crafted and developed, and specific in purpose</td>
<td>- Paragraphs are used consistently, linking main ideas and details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- May attempt compound or complex sentences</td>
<td>- Demonstrates appropriate structure by:</td>
<td>Using a variety of sentences (structure, beginning, length) for effect</td>
<td>- Consistently using a variety of sentences (structure, beginning, length) for effect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>