

# Student Perception of Formative and Summative Feedback

## BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

- Anecdotally, many students experiencing symptoms of perfectionism, a strong desire to please and external and internal pressure to succeed also have difficulty processing constructive feedback.
- Typically, we have observed that students receive feedback passively and do not use it to enhance their learning. The grade awarded draws most attention and focus.
- We know from our research that there is a correlation between feedback, learning and academic buoyancy.
- It's not only about how feedback is given but how it's received—state of mind matters (Bostwick et al., 2022)
- Academically buoyant students respond constructively to feedback; less buoyant students focus on emotions (Ahmed Shafi et al., 2018).
- With this in mind, the team decided to focus on the concept of Academic Buoyancy to explore whether our anecdotal observations could be supported by research.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

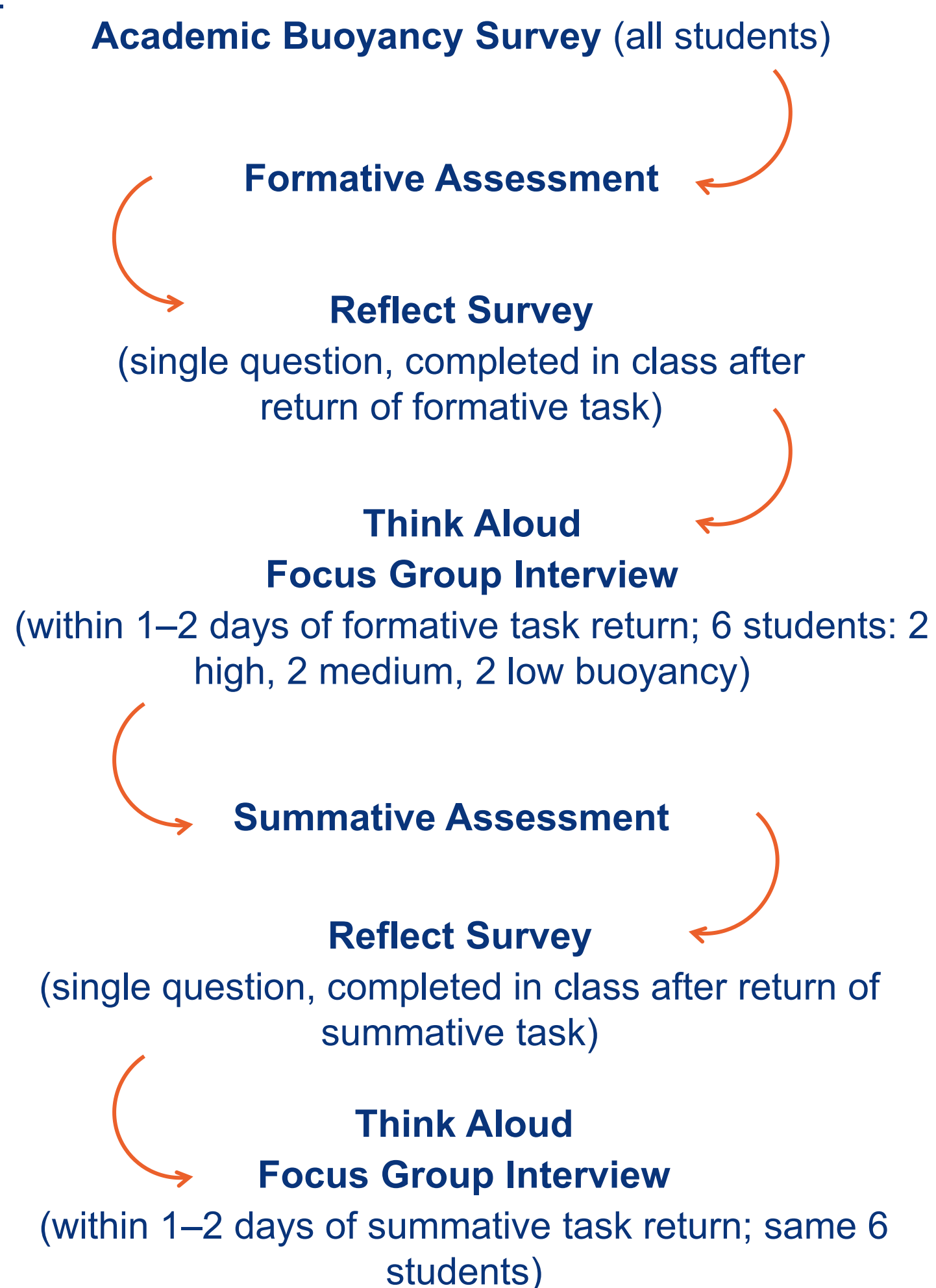
**How do students at Fintona receive, perceive and action feedback for learning?**

**How is formative feedback used by students to prepare for summative assessment tasks?**

## METHODS AND ANALYSIS

**Participants:** Foundation, Year 3, Year 5, Year 7, Year 10 and Year 12 students.

### Procedure:



### Analysis:

Think Aloud Focus Group interviews were recorded for analysis.

Sample codes:

Question 1 Receive	Question 2 Perceive	Question 3 Action
Positive	Confused	Non-Specific Action
Curious	Negative	Specific Action
Neutral	Passive	Uncertain
Negative	Helpful	
	Reflective	
	Apathetic	
	Neutral	

## FINDINGS

### Receiving Feedback

Overall, students at Fintona receive feedback positively.

The exception were the early and middle years of secondary school where a trend towards negative perception of feedback was observed.

### Perception of Feedback

A majority of students indicated that the feedback they received was helpful and designed to improve their learning.

While all students recognised that feedback was meant to be beneficial, many were unsure how to act on it and expressed a need for clearer guidance.

### Actioning Feedback

Students generally acknowledged that actioning feedback is a worthwhile process. However, the data revealed that many did not know **how** to act on feedback. Their responses were often non-specific or teacher-directed — “I did what the teacher said to do.”

There was considerable variation in students' intent, motivation, and capacity to take meaningful action.

#### Overall observation:

- Variability in emotional responses
- Aligned in their perception of feedback
- Understand the benefits of actioning feedback, although lack understanding on how to act on feedback.
- Lacking in motivation, opportunity and skills to take meaningful action.

## IMPLICATIONS

- Consider the role of Structural Constraints in our feedback: timetable, timely feedback, amount of feedback
- Target the emotional responses of early and middle years of secondary
- Consider the impact of the onset of formal grading in Year 5

## LIMITATIONS & FUTURE RESEARCH

### Limitations:

- Small sample size
- A wide range of ages.

### Future research:

- Conduct a more detailed analysis of the data that we have gathered.
- Look for trends across the whole school and within sub-schools/ year levels.
- Design an intervention – perhaps considering what effective feedback looks like in our context.

## KEY LEARNINGS

- ✓ We work with human beings – there are emotional considerations that impact how students receive and perceive feedback. Students have complex lives outside the classroom that feed into what we do.
- ✓ Students at certain ages take feedback personally – especially in early adolescence.
- ✓ Repetition is important in the feedback process.
- ✓ Learned how to conduct focus group interviews.
- ✓ Learned how to code data effectively.
- ✓ Explored the link between feedback and academic buoyancy.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## References

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