

Towards Improving Feedback on Assignment Responses: An Analysis of Students' Experiences in the Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU)

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Abstract

The study sought to establish the type of comments that distance learners in Zimbabwe Open University receive on assignment responses and to find out the extent to which learners are benefiting from comments on assignment responses. The study used the case study design. The population of the study included all students registered in Mashonaland Central Region who had studied for at least one semester in their respective programmes. A stratified random sample of 80 students from the four faculties in the region was drawn and these students responded to a closed ended questionnaire. Forty (40) marked assignments were randomly selected from the four faculties for document analysis. The study found out that the markers comments fell short of what the students expected. The learners indicated that they do not benefit from assignment feedback. The respondents suggested that the tutors should give comments that direct them to more reading and that the comments should be reflective indicating the strengths and weaknesses of their essays. The study recommended that the university needs to staff develop the markers on a continuous basis and that part of tutorial time be devoted to giving feedback to students concerning their assignments