

The Intrinsic Value of Formative Assessment and Feedback as Learning Tools in the Acquisition and Improvement of a Practical Legal Skill

By Dawn Jones. 54 Law Teacher 443 (2020).

Article Categories: Institutional Matters: LRW & External Stakeholders; Surveys & Empirical Research; Unique Populations (LL.M., Non-JD, Int'l, Generations)

Keywords: Assessments; Empirical Research; Feedback; Learning; Legal Writing; Motivation; Pedagogy; Practice Ready

Reviewer's Summary:

The author collected data over three years to determine whether students who were given regular formative assessments performed better on summative assessments. The author describes the formative assessment as a teaching tool, with the feedback allowing the student to better understand the lesson. The data was gathered from a Practical Legal Drafting module at Wolverhampton Law School (UK); this course covers one of the skills necessary to pass the Solicitors Qualifying Examination 2. Feedback alone is not what leads to improved performance. Students must engage with the feedback on formative assessments. The study showed (as others have before) that student engagement with feedback on formative assessments were a better predictor of success on summative assessments than was student performance on formative assessments.

Summarized by: Jill Sturgeon, University of Colorado-Boulder, Wise Law Library, in 2021