Developing Professional Practice: Active Feedback, Professional Learning and a Whole Course Approach

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University of Glasgow

Adam Smith Business School

Dr Nick Quinn
Associate Director of Connections with Practice
nick.quinn@glasgow.ac.uk
Alison Gibb
Associate Director of Learning and Teaching
alison.gibb@glasgow.ac.uk

EQUIS ACCREDITED

AACSB ACCREDITED

AMBA ASSOCIATION OF MBAs ACCREDITED

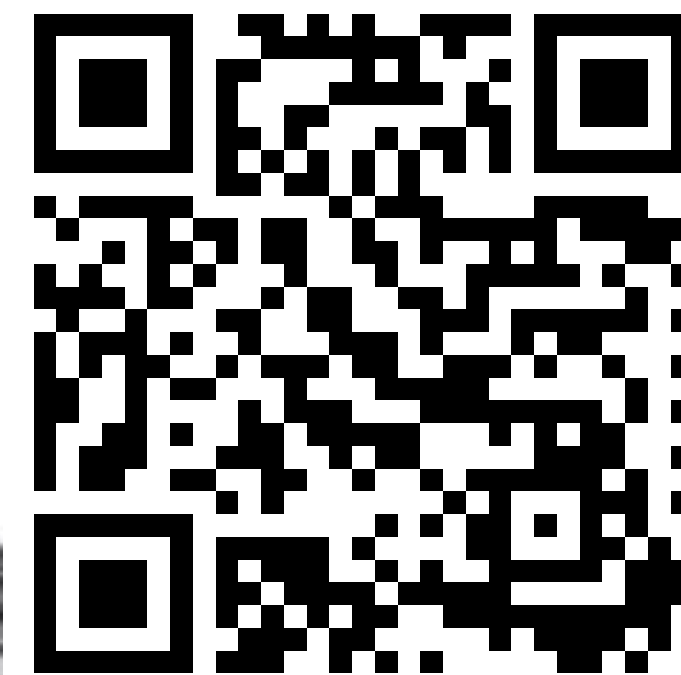PRME an initiative of the United Nations Global Compact

Dr Nick Quinn
Associate Director of Connections with Practice
nick.quinn@glasgow.ac.uk

Alison Gibb
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alison.gibb@glasgow.ac.uk

Backgrounds

- Previous careers in industry

- Second career 'pracademics'

  • Marketing

  • Consultancy

  • Manufacturing

  • Engineering

Areas of Focus

- Experiential learning

  • working with clients

  • developing key skills

  • retention of student agency

  • problem based learning

  • active feedback

Presentation Overview

- **Why Active Feedback**
  - Course Outline
- **What we did**
  - The framework
  - The activity
  - Theory to practice
- **Findings and Results**
  - Students
  - External (Clients and Colleague)
  - Teachers

Reason for course design

"Businesses often complain that university graduates require more soft skills and professional experience when they enter the workplace" (Mitchell, Skinner & White, 2010).

"Students and professional accreditation bodies ask for more experiential and problem-based learning to be embedded in the curriculum to enhance relevance and employability" (Green and Farazmand, 2012).

Why?

- Students not adequately prepared for client interaction

  - Impact on whole course

  - less than optimal outcomes

  - poor reflection on teachers and students

  - lack of true knowledge exchange

  - not developing enough graduate attributes

  - staff workload and roles

  - improve student's own ability to generate own feedback

Course Design – MBA Consultancy

- **Capstone course**
  - Previous experience and knowledge
  - Taught course content
  - Previous experience in work
- **Application of knowledge**
  - Minimal taught content
  - Student defined approach
  - Experiential setting
- **Student Agency as focus**
- **Roles**
  - Teachers
  - Students
  - External partners
- **Non-Similar Comparisons**
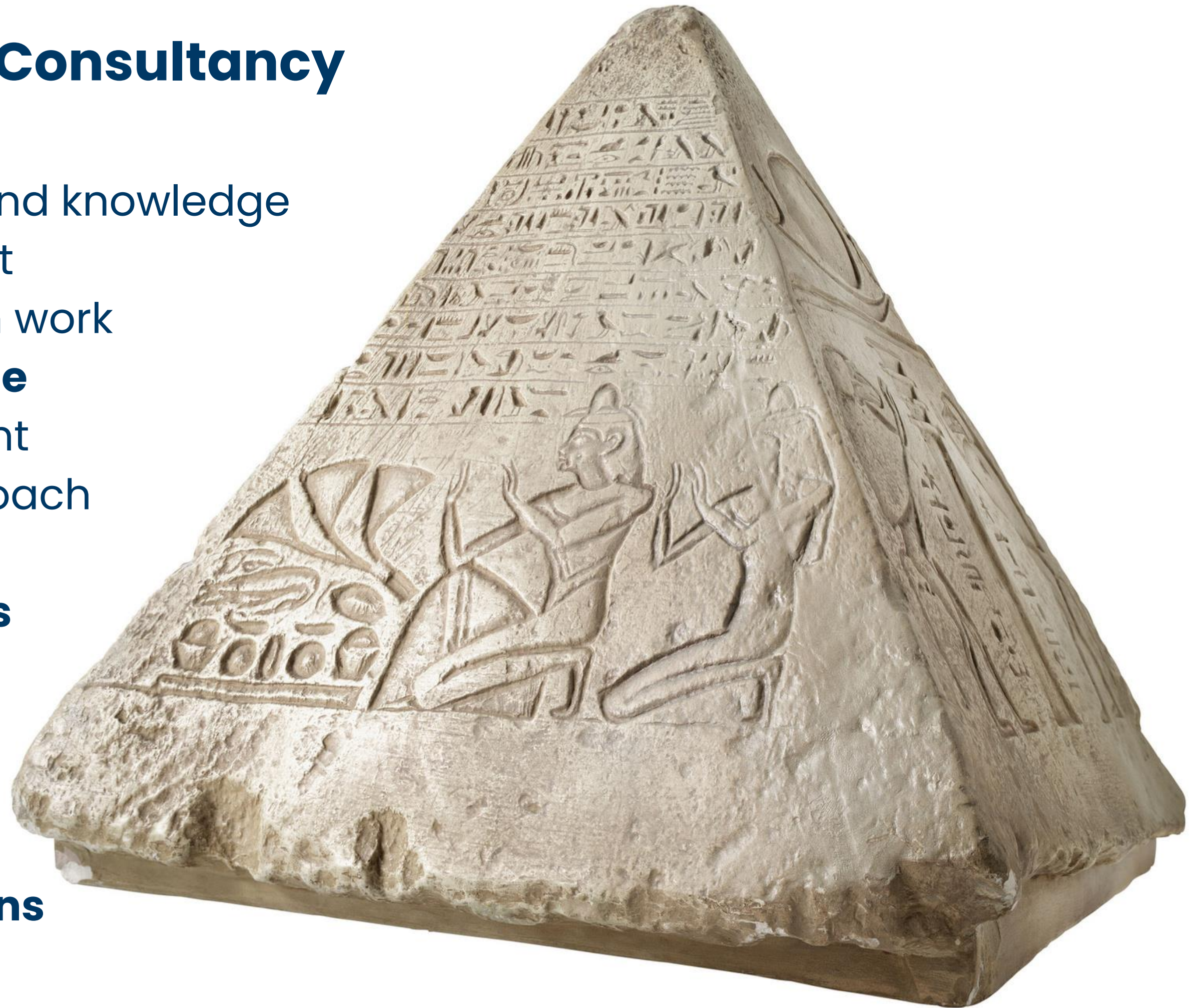
What?

- Whole course approach

- Extending single activity cycles (Do-Compare-[make]Explicit) through course

- Encouraging and preserving student agency

- Increase impact of experiences in course

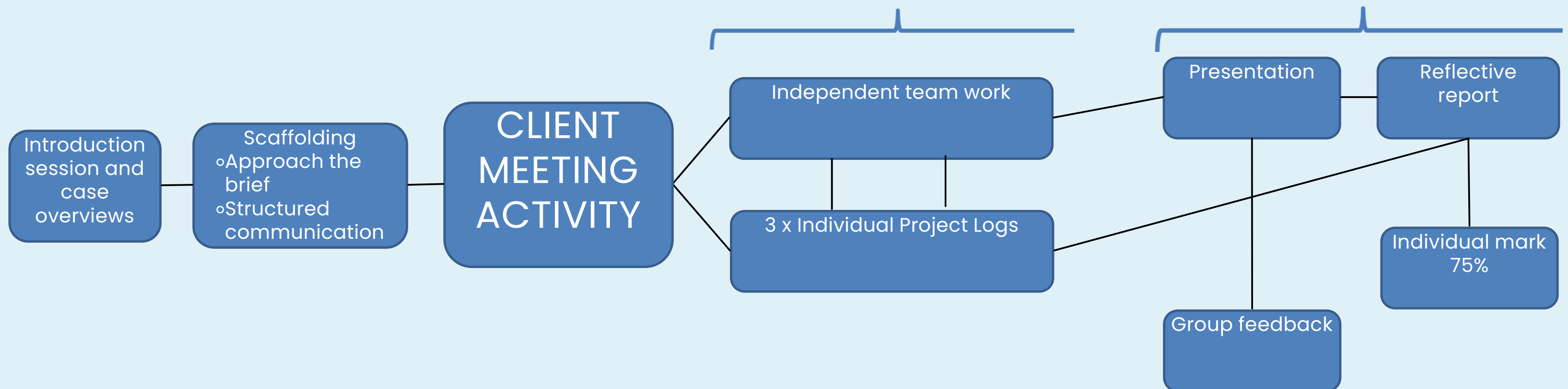- Multiple non-similar and far resources and dialogic comparisons

Course Design - MBA Consultancy

ILO: Enhanced capacity to apply academic knowledge to the solution of practical strategic challenges faced by an organisation.

ILO: Increased ability to work creatively and develop innovative solutions within constraints set by an external client.

ILO: Have experience with presenting and justifying your own solutions to external businesses partners

ILO: Improved ability to work constructively in teams under time pressure and solve potential conflicts within the team.

Introduction session and case overviews

Scaffolding
∘Approach the brief
∘Structured communication

CLIENT MEETING ACTIVITY

Independent team work

3 x Individual Project Logs

Presentation

Reflective report

Individual mark 75%

Group feedback

Resource Comparison

- Feedback research – Focus on dialogue
- Misses power of resources to generate feedback
- Significantly improves learner agency in feedback without increasing teaching workload

Feedback we plan for

Feedback generated from teacher comments

Feedback generated from peer comments

Feedback generated from resources and observations

[Hidden in plain sight]

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Merits and issues associated with different types of feedback comparisons

	Resource-based feedback **Resource-feedback**	**Dialogic-feedback** **Peer feedback**	**Teacher / External feedback**
Merits	Puts feedback agency squarely in students' hands Students make feedback judgements rather than receive judgements of others Different comparators result in different kinds of feedback No limit to feedback students can generate on own	Builds students' feedback agency Students make judgements and receive judgements More feedback than teacher alone can provide Develops collaborative skills and learning communities	Teacher is subject expert Uses feedback to scaffold and support student learning Anchors feedback provision in standards. Uses feedback to motivate and reassure students Teacher-student relationship critical to learning
Issues	Resources don't respond to student productions [no reader response] Students might not generate all the feedback they need due to blind spots in thinking Students need induction into this view of feedback No framework for teachers wishing to implement this type of feedback	Some students consider peer comments untrustworthy. No benchmark for standards Blind leading the blind or 'group think' Students need training in making judgements & commenting	Teacher feedback seen as a judgement by students Emotional backwash Tension between feedback as telling and student self-regulation development Workload issues Students don't understand comments & received too late to use

Resource-Feedback Comparisons

- Puts feedback agency squarely in students' hands
- Students make feedback judgements rather than receive judgements of others
- Different comparators result in different kinds of feedback
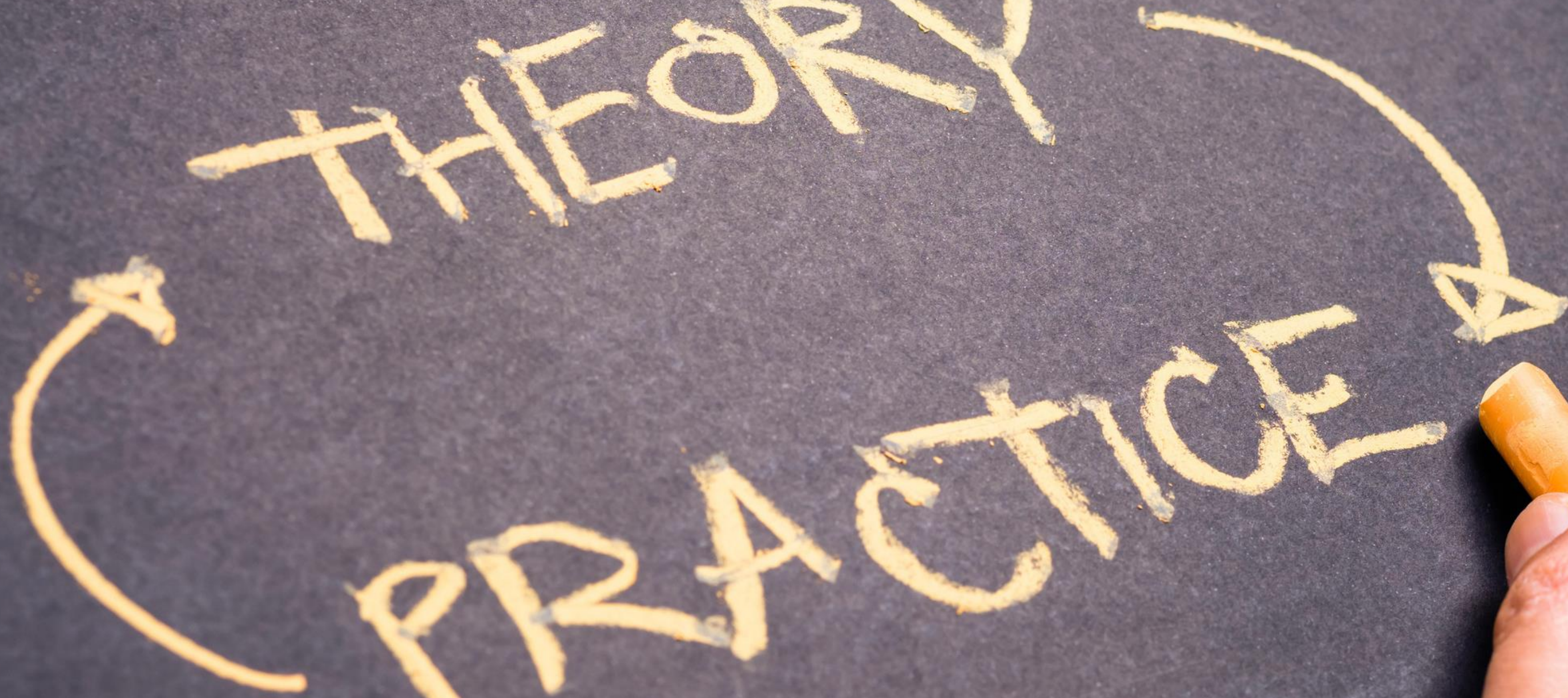- No limit to feedback students can generate on own

Why is EXPLICITNESS important?

- Increases the power of inner feedback
- Self-regulation
  - students see own feedback capability
  - makes own agency visible
  - raises metacognitive awareness
  - promotes transfer of learning to new contexts
- Teacher workload management
  - Teachers have better diagnostic information about students' learning, about what comments they need or what comparisons to stage next.
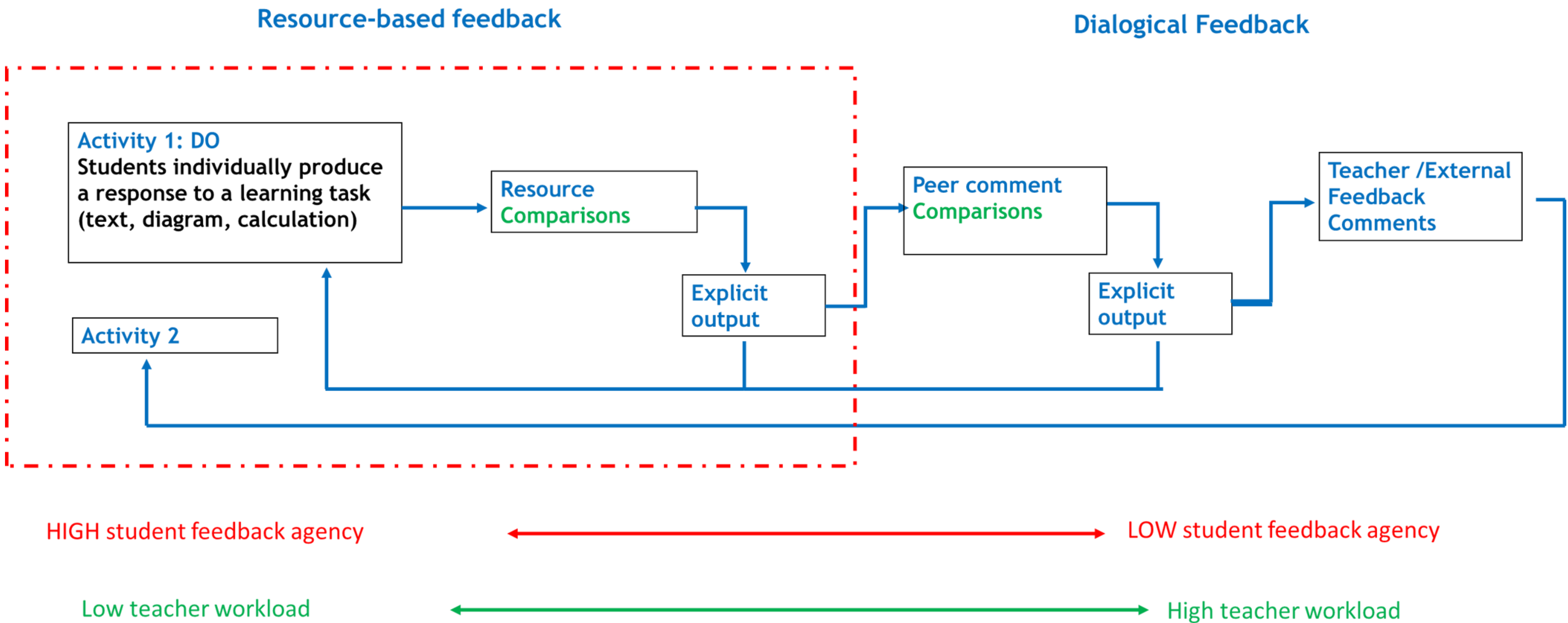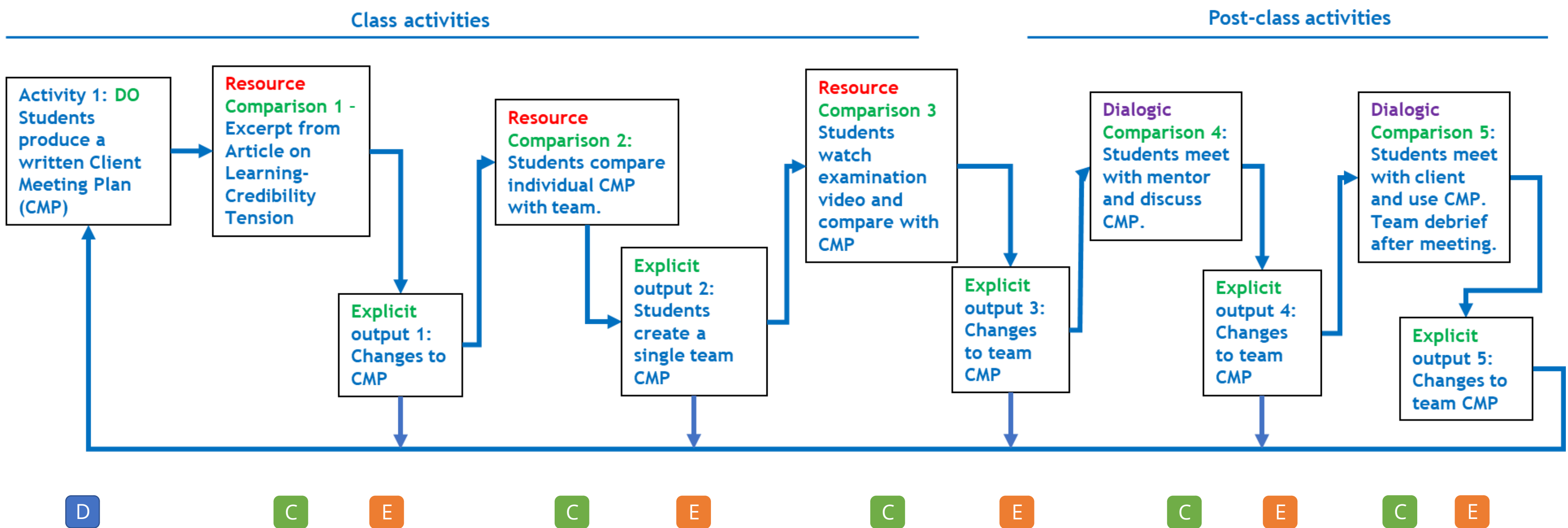
THEORY

PRACTICE

Planning and sequencing feedback comparisons

Resource-based feedback

Dialogical Feedback

Activity 1: DO
Students individually produce a response to a learning task (text, diagram, calculation)

Resource Comparisons

Explicit output

Activity 2

Peer comment Comparisons

Explicit output

Teacher /External Feedback Comments

HIGH student feedback agency ←——————————————→ LOW student feedback agency

Low teacher workload ←——————————————→ High teacher workload

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Core Activity Design

Class activities   Post-class activities

Activity 1: DO
Students produce a written Client Meeting Plan (CMP)

Resource Comparison 1 – Excerpt from Article on Learning-Credibility Tension

Resource Comparison 2: Students compare individual CMP with team.

Resource Comparison 3 Students watch examination video and compare with CMP

Dialogic Comparison 4: Students meet with mentor and discuss CMP.

Dialogic Comparison 5: Students meet with client and use CMP. Team debrief after meeting.

Explicit output 1: Changes to CMP

Explicit output 2: Students create a single team CMP

Explicit output 3: Changes to team CMP

Explicit output 4: Changes to team CMP

Explicit output 5: Changes to team CMP
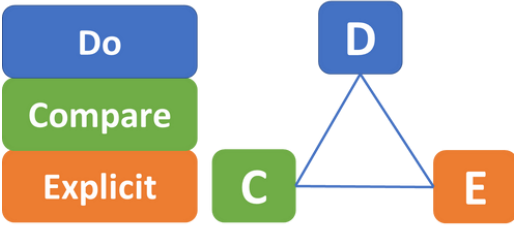
D   C   E   C   E   C   E   C   D   C   E

Resources Comparisons (Class Activities)
- Article on Learning Credibility Tension - Bourgoin & Harvey 2018
- Team compare the resources they have each created (CMP)
- Video: Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) - Chest Pains

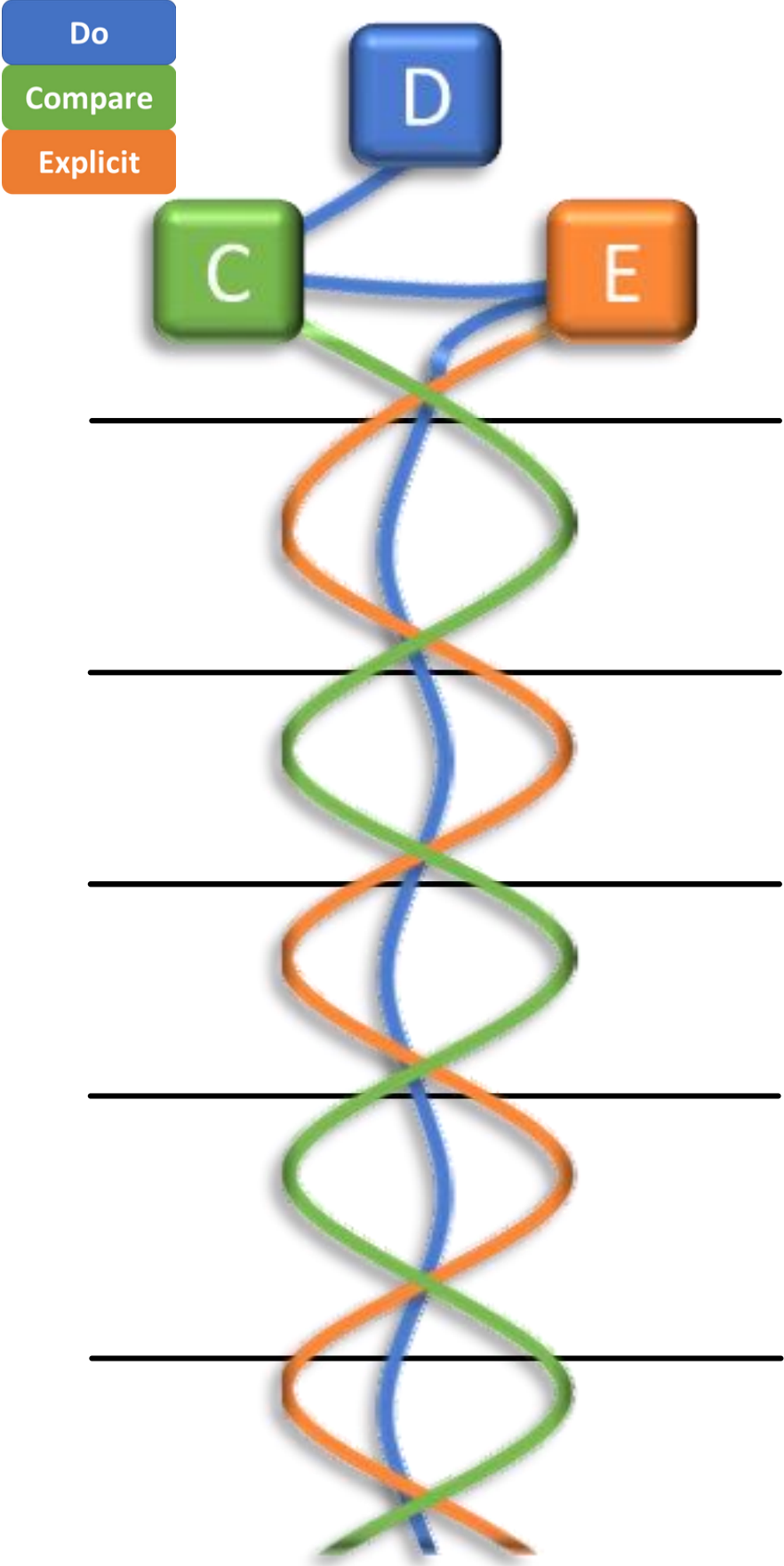**Dialogic Comparisons (Post-Class Activities)**
- Supervisor Meeting
- Client Meeting

Do
Compare
Explicit

D
C   E

INSTRUCTIONS ARE IMPORTANT

Class Activity Worksheet

Cycle One: Produce **(DO)** a client meeting plan: How will you open, what sorts of questions will you ask , how will you close with the client, how will you clarify expectations and deliverables? The final output can be anything as long as it captures the key elements.
Compare the plan with the excerpt of the article.
(Explicit): After reading the article, what did you learn about how consultants generate resonance with the client and how could you use this to improve your plan?

Cycle Two: Compare your individual plans with your team. Create a team meeting plan. Discuss with class
(Explicit) : Thinking about your team mates' plans, what elements might you include in your own plan?

Cycle Three: Watch the medical examination video and **Compare** it to your plan.
(Explicit) How does the doctor demonstrate empathy with the patient whilst gathering information? How could this be used to enhance your plan?

Cycle Four: Discuss team meeting plan with supervisor **(Compare)**
(Explicit): How does the doctor demonstrate empathy with the patient whilst gathering information? How could this be used to enhance your plan?

Cycle Five: Meet the client **(Compare)**
(Explicit): How well did your meeting plan work with the client in the meeting? What would you change for future meetings?

Final Explicit record: (Reflection) What did you learn about the client meeting and engagement process? What could you do differently in the future? How did the comparison process help you in this regard??
(Learning Log – 500 words)

RESULTS

- Student Experience

- Client (External) Experience

- Teacher Experience

Results - Student n=42

Key Themes

- Understanding the Client perspective

- Relationship Management

- Preparation

Results – Student

Data gathered during class activities (Resource Comparisons)

Resource Comparison 1

"It all about understanding and creating an environment where client relate to the consultant and participate. Open discussion in another perception of resonance. Furthermore, information is key and for information (insight) trust is the key. Bonding and mutual understanding can formulate it."

Resource Comparisons 1 and 3

• "Demonstrating a deep understanding of how the company operates. Incorporate client ideas into their processes. My plan lacked the necessary ice breaking, introduction stage."

• "Use the ICE framework to structure the discussion
  ○ Build an initial idea using open questions
  ○ Understand the clients primary concerns in terms of implementation and resistance faced.
  ○ Set the expectations in terms of deliverables and success criteria"

Results – Student

Data gathered during class activities (Resource Comparisons)

Resource Comparison 3

- "Make client comfortable. Dig deeper, question the client."

- "Let your client talk uninterrupted. Listen to understand their POV. Gather as much info as you can."

- "Not to bombard with questions at the start. Phasing the client in."

- "In my personal planning I did not adequately consider the expectations and needs of my clients and neglected to build relationships with them in the meeting."

Resource Comparisons 1, 2 and 3

"Changes in meeting plan:

- I had initially focussed on making a structured plan on how I would approach the case in its entirety.

- However, now that perspective has changed, since we are not really expected to be aware of everything.

- In the meeting – introduction – build rapport – present – listen – collect information

Results – Student
One Minute Paper (after class activities)

Resource Comparison 1

- "I understand the value of the exercise, specifically those with low client interaction and experience"

- "Structure a line of questioning that clarifies the problem, especially focusing on what are the CLIENTS expectations."

- "Most important learning is that as a consultant we do not need to know everything about the client and their business, it is more important to build knowledge, "lean" on the journey, while maintaining credibility."

Resource Comparisons 1 and 2

- "Creating a proper questionnaire for the client meet. Making meeting immersive through proper usage of power point slides."

- "Having the trust of client, by proper usage of time, effective communication. Setting the agenda of meeting and required outcomes."

Results – Student
One Minute Paper (after class activities)

Resource Comparisons 1 and 3

- "Ask hard questions. Be respectful but don't be afraid to challenge your client. Pay attention to cues and use them to form your questions and information."

- "This exercise taught me how to approach a client and kick-off a professional meeting. Taught me important things to keep in mind."

- "The importance of planning a meeting ahead, setting up the objectives and the sought information to be gathered. Also, how to demonstrate knowledge by asking questions, rather than explaining or naming our experience."

Resource Comparisons 1, 2 and 3

- "It really worked for us but still, some improvement is needed. It also helps us to understand the requirement and utilization of the time. As of now, my biggest learning is time is a key factor in consultancy. In the meeting, we address and implement all learning like ppt, tempo, client vision and several other small and important points to get work done. "

Results

Student feedback from MS Form Taken after Class activities and Post class activities

Student Quote

"It really worked for us but still, some improvement is needed. It also helps us to understand the requirement and utilization of the time. As of now, my biggest learning is time is a key factor in consultancy. In the meeting, we address and implement all learning like ppt, tempo, client vision and several other small and important points to get work done. "

Student Quote

"This particular situation taught me how indispensable it is to know the customer better before interacting for the first time. In future meetings, when such a situation arises, I believe it is essential to remain calm and try to find a solution that favours all parties."

Results -Client n=9

Client Feedback from MS Form Taken after Class activities and Post class activities

Client Quotes

- "from the outset the level of professionalism they showed was exceptional"

- "The meeting overall was great, we really connected with the team, and I felt that they had a fantastic understanding of what we wanted to achieve with the opportunity and done a great job of managing our expectations."

- "I was blown away by the calibre of their work and I still can't believe how comprehensive and well thought out everything was."

Results – Client, Reputational

Overall NPS* = **9.2, second-highest ever achieved in ASBS**

Client	Feedback	NPS
1	The entire engagement throughout was really positive. The support provided by the Business Development Managers and the detail provided on our role was very strong. The students were also very positive and worked well with us throughout the duration of the project	9
2	Sadly we had to accommodate the students remotely given the our polices which lessened the experience however, I thought that the output had depth and represented a good rounded study.	8
3	Students very very motivated & engaged with the project. Staff were really accommodating of our business demands	10
4	Very professional , friendly and supportive - this applies for both the students and the staff. Communication excellent and very open and trusted collaborations. Really good to see the Business School leverage from external organisations and incorporate real life practical business issues that students can use as their industry projects. The work helps not just the students but also the organisations involved.	10
5	Very professional. Students were also well-researched and prompt.	9

*NPS–Net Promoter Score

Results – Teacher/ Learning Experience

Quotations from a Class Observation (Learning Development Professional)
**The observation took place during the class activities which are all Resource Comparisons**

- "This was a very active and engaging class. All groups were very engaged in group discussions while comparing their meeting plans and going through the class tasks. "
- "Overall, this was an exceptionally planned, pedagogically underpinned, and well managed class."
- "The class is distinctive in at least three ways:
  - it boosts students' creativity and peer-to-peer interaction in achieving the ILOs;
  - it is well designed and scaffolded to achieve the class aims, and
  - it is well embedded in the rest of the course and the final assignment. "
- "Since every client is different and there is no one good way of preparing for the meetings, this class did a great job in preparing students not only in terms of the content and format of the meeting, but equally important in contributing to building their confidence and reducing any anxiety or insecurities regarding the task."

Results – Teacher/ Learning Experience

Key Themes

- Enhances students' agency

- Encourages creativity

- Lifelong professional practice – graduate attributes

- Inclusivity

- Self-Regulatory ability

- Authentic feedback processes - **comparison is <u>not</u> cheating**

- **Confidence and own self-efficacy**

- Developing capacity to develop own feedback.

- No increase in feedback time as work is completed in preparation for class
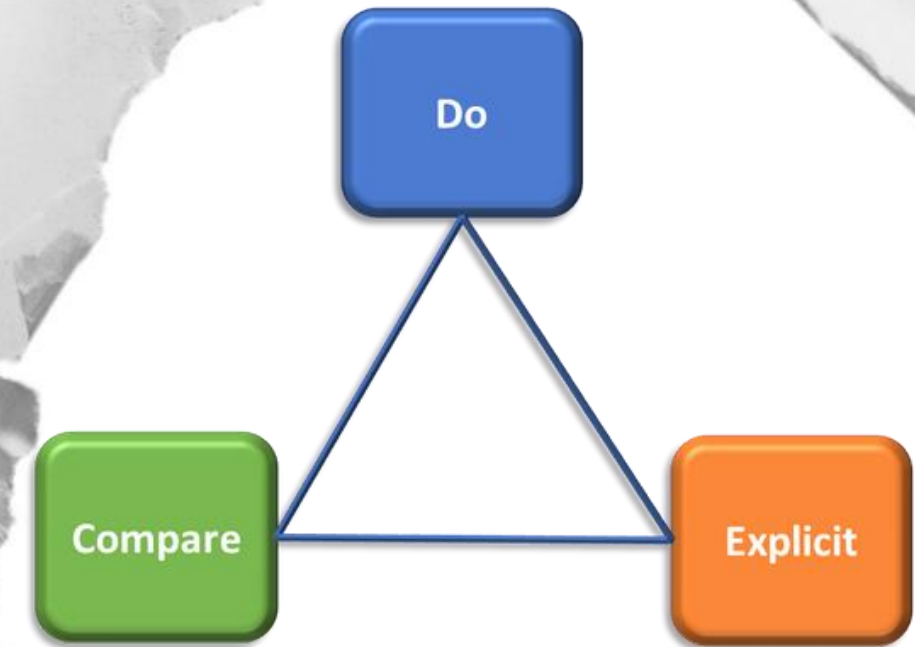
Questions?

Preguntas?

University of Glasgow

Adam Smith Business School

Nick

Alison

nick.quinn@glasgow.ac.uk

alison.gibb@glasgow.ac.uk

Linked in

www.linkedin.com/in/nickquinn/

www.linkedin.com/in/alison-gibb-08677a4/