



Strategic
Alignment
Fund

Who will get on the RAFT?

REIMAGINING ASSESSMENT & FEEDBACK TOGETHER

Student and staff co-creating interventions to identified assessment and feedback challenges in a disciplinary setting.

'Reimagining Assessment and Feedback Together' (RAFT) was a strategic Teaching & Learning project at Munster Technological University, coordinated by the Teaching and Learning Unit (TLU). It was supported by the National Forum's 'Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning Enhancement' (SATLE 2020) fund. Our vision for RAFT was to enhance the Assessment and Feedback (A&F) experience for students and staff to explore (and hopefully solve!) an A&F challenge.

The purpose of our poster is to outline how RAFT came about, its structure and support approach, the nature of activity carried out across multiple disciplines, and how it will continue to impact the Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Student Engagement agenda at MTU into the future.



What is RAFT about?

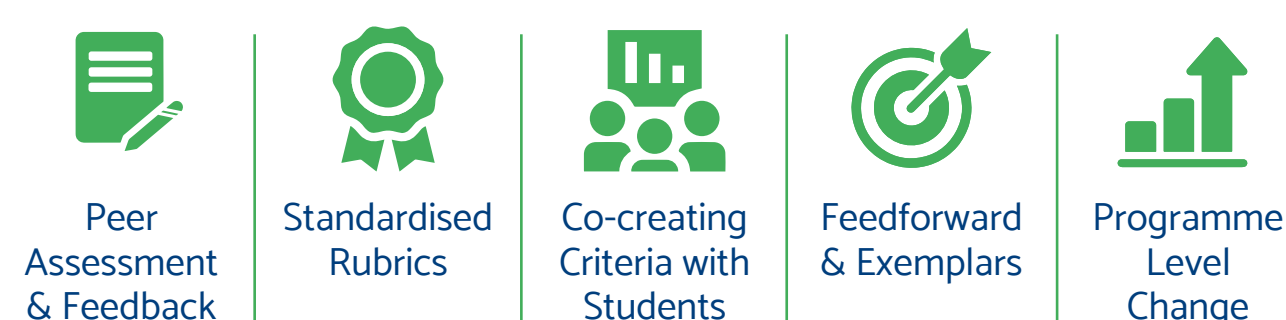
Reimagining

Adopting an action-research, cross-disciplinary and multi-campus approach it set out to enhance the Assessment and Feedback (A&F) experience for students and staff by providing structure, time and expertise to reimagine a specific A&F challenge.

- Structure was provided through an online, flipped-classroom, professional development programme utilising Action Research to develop an intervention for a module.
- Time was provided by a 1hr timetable alleviation running across Semester 1 (to identify, plan and prepare an intervention) and Semester 2 (to implement, monitor and gather evidence of the intervention's impact)
- Expertise was provided by the participants, course team, external inputs (Bovill (2020), Carless (2017), Nicol (2007)) and critically, student partners (those who had, or were, experiencing the module).

Assessment & Feedback

Interventions developed across many areas of A&F practice with small teams forming around core themes including:



Together

This was a key word for RAFT in two ways:

- developing interventions through student-staff collaboration intended to build staff confidence in seeking input from students. Student Collaborators (based in the discipline) were active in reviewing module delivery, engaging in peer assessment / feedback processes, and co-creating assessments.
- engaging in self-supporting groups of staff participants to provide accountability partners, networks, and research collaborators as the interventions developed.

What happened in RAFT?



Semester 1

Weekly, online workshops to raise awareness of local, national and international A&F practices, including:

- Identifying an A&F issue and exploring solutions
- Planning, with student input and consultation, an intervention for execution in Semester 2
- Preparing to evidence and evaluate intervention's impact
- Submission of action plan to evidence rationale and development of planned intervention

Semester 2

A blend of whole-cohort activity and personalised support and consultation, enabling:

- Implementing the planned intervention,
- Monitoring and responding to issues from student participants
- Gathering evidence and reporting on the process

Co-creating: some positive by-products

- Raising A&F literacy amongst students and staff
- Developing mutual appreciation and an empathetic view of challenges and experiences of A&F
- A ripple-effect: staff colleagues see the impact of the interventions on the (staff) participants' motivation and teaching approaches.



MTU

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Mumhan
Munster Technological University

RAFT in action

EXAMPLE

Creating Rubrics Together for a Dissertation Module

The growth of student numbers for a dissertation module presented an opportunity to review existing student feedback about the rubric and a desire from all to make these clearer and more rigorous as the number of staff assessors increases, thus enabling higher inter-rater reliability. Working with student collaborators, staff co-developed a criteria-based rubric in a 'live' approach i.e. each component of the rubric was developed as the students were reaching that point in the dissertation process. For example, the criteria used to assess the Literature Review was developed as students were preparing to write their Literature Review. This approach developed student awareness of how the assessment rubric was applied, increased engagement in the use of the rubric and fostered an enhanced dialogue between educator and learner.

Every year we'd talk about making a change to our module. RAFT took us from a conversation and moved it into action, outcomes and a plan...informed by the literature, supported by energetic experts from TLU who helped us think how it would work in our setting. We're now seeing an impact on 200 students, spreading the impact to 500 across the School, and potentially to 2,000 across MTU.
STAFF PARTICIPANT

A standout moment was the qualitative feedback students were giving to one another. They'd nearly always address issues I'd have raised and often address issues I'd never have considered.
STAFF PARTICIPANT

EXAMPLE

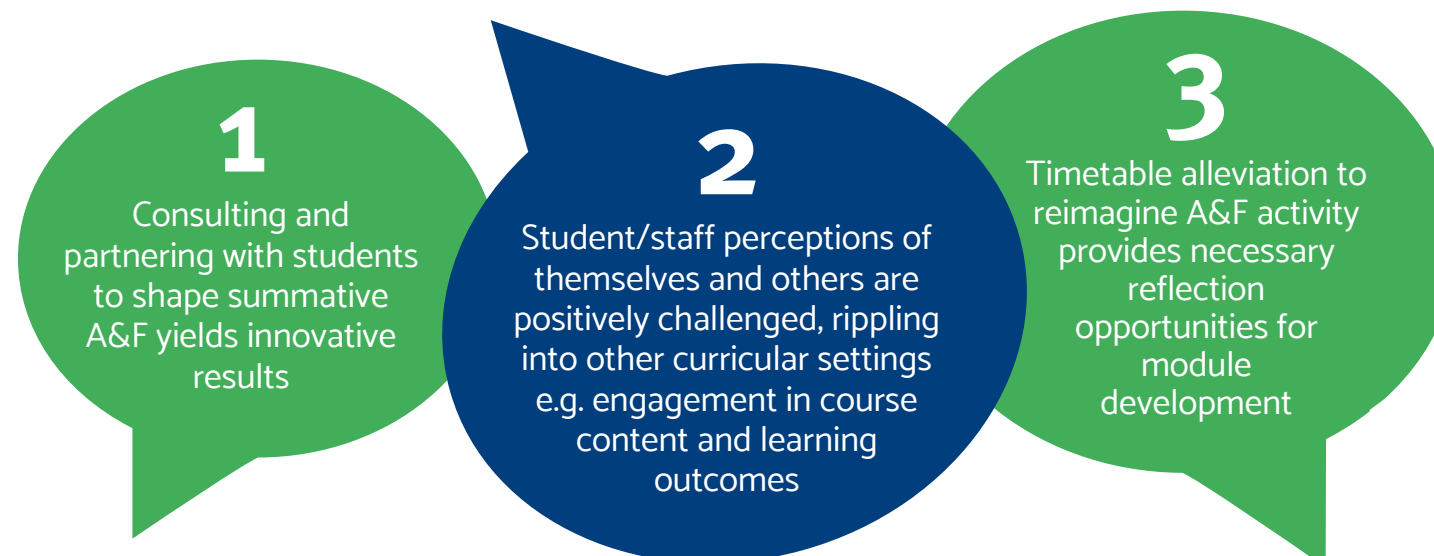
Group based Learning Plans in Lab Classes

In Engineering, Year 3 students take a lab module to develop (in small groups) their own experimental protocol as preparation for their Final Year Project, and to develop professional competencies in preparation for Placement. The intervention focused on a weekly lab report to document learnings and reflections following input from Year 4 students consultants who suggested students were not 'realising' the opportunities of completing the lab report. Working together with staff, they co-designed a learning plan to be used by Year 3 students comprising i) identify specific skills to be developed, ii) proposing a strategy to develop skill during subsequent work, iii) reflection after feedback is received.

Feedback from staff noted the positive impact of giving time to develop these resources and opportunity to reflect on practice, regardless of how long they'd been teaching. Feedback from students noted a transformation in how they worked in groups and the personal and professional benefits of collaborating on the learning plan. This intervention was jointly presented at an NSTEP conference to demonstrate co-creation activity directly in a class setting.

"It's intimidating going to college with intellectual lecturers... they can be seen as a superior...but we're all people. The learning plan helped us to communicate on an even platform. We could ask why we had a certain mark, we could even disagree together. It was more laid back, it was human-to-human or in a more person-to-person manner. It was way better than anything we've experienced previously."
STUDENT PARTICIPANT

Standout learning and impact

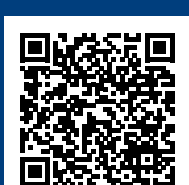


What's next for RAFT?

- Interventions concluded at the end of Semester 2 and participants have gathered feedback from students through validated survey instruments, semi-structured interviews and focus groups to evidence and evaluate the impact of each intervention.
- Case Studies are being produced to support the dissemination and translation of interventions across disciplines.
- An active / practical symposium in 2022-23 to challenge delegates to execute interventions in new modules and new disciplines.

REFERENCES

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- Carless, D. (2017). Scaling up assessment for learning: Progress and prospects. In D. Carless, S. Bridges, C.K.W. Chan & R. Glofcheski (Eds.), (2017). Scaling up Assessment for learning in Higher Education. Singapore: Springer.
- Nicol, D. (2007). Principles of good assessment and feedback: Theory and practice. In R. Harris & A. Muirhead (Eds.), Proceedings of the REAP international online conference on assessment design for learner responsibility (pp. 1-9). Glasgow: REAP.



<https://tlu.cit.ie/raft-reimagining-assessment-and-feedback-together>

