

Monitoring: Samples of feedback to tutors

Maria Kasmirli

Tutor 1

Hi Seth, some detailed and tailor-made teaching here.

You offer comments that pick up on errors help to stretch students. Quite rightly, your comments focus on content with stronger students and structure with weaker ones. I particularly liked your comments on content. (However, it is also a good idea to point students back to the course materials.) Your advice on structure is good, but weaker students -- who might not be as clear about the basic issues as they would have to be to follow your advice -- might find it easier to follow a few general steps, such as the following: (1) exposition of the main theory, (2) conclusions that follow from the theory, (3) discussion of problems, (4) discussion of responses, (5) conclusion.

I thought you could have also offered some more general, encouraging comments. These could be positive comments on students' use of examples, discussion, expression, independence, structure, etc. For instance, Wylie's exposition of the Chinese Room could have been singled out for praise since it was much more focused and clear than anything else in that TMA. Students need to be told when they have well -- otherwise all they see is problems. (By the way did Wylie have an extension?)

On marking: To repeat, I found myself agreeing with your comments. But then, given your comments, I thought your marking seemed slightly on the generous side. But I don't wish to make much of this though because marking is, at least to a certain degree, subjective.

Tutor 2

Hi Helen, some sensitive teaching here. I found your comments encouraging and engaging. I particularly liked your probing points in the text. Perhaps there could be more of those. However, I also thought that students should be advised to draw more heavily on course materials and not encouraged to look elsewhere--at least not for this level of study. There is already too much for them to get to grips with without having to digest new and untaught materials. For example, Road's would have done much better with a more focused reading and TMA structure. The student has tried really hard, but as it stands, their TMA is too ambitious -- it tries to cover too much and moves around the target without quite hitting it. (I wouldn't have thought that it deserved a first, but I don't wish to make much of this.) Also, I wasn't too sure about the suggestion that students needed an introduction to set AI within the mind-body debate. I don't think the title asks for it -- it is a rather focused title. I'd say that side discussions like the qualia material in Road's TMA are also not needed. I thought Nieland's TMA was much more focused -- though I agree with you that it didn't quite deserve a first. Aside from my picky points though, I liked your PT3 engagement with the students -- especially on Perks' TMA.