1. Background

Assessment is vital to the education process. However, students often criticize the feedback more than other course components. The research describes a structured teaching strategy of providing feedback, peer assessment, and instructional dialogues, based on a scaffold template (scaffolding), as a source of information for dialogue to promote students’ performance and learning in an academic course. The SWOT model (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats), which originates from the business field, was adopted as an assisting tool.

Teaching strategy structure after the presentation:
Step 1: Students’ internal dialogue (feedback) using the matrix model (Figure 1).
Step 2: Building class colleagues SWOT (peer assessment).
Step 3: Instructional dialogues (discussion about the SWOT)
Step 4: Student reflection.

2. Method

Triangulation between the focus group (n=5) and questionnaires (n=41) was performed in order to investigate students’ perceptions and attitudes with regard to these strategy components and their learning.

3. Results and Discussion

Strengths: Using SWOT as a scaffolding model promoted learning performance “I learned to look ... at both the weaknesses and the strengths and not just one of them” and the sharing of knowledge among them “You can see if others think like me ... and you can see different insights and comments and expand on things I never would have thought of”, and raised their awareness of how to improve their performance. Positive student attitudes were recognized, and an increase in motivation, fostering of higher-order thinking skills and creativity, and learning how to give and receive feedback were reported: “I teach myself to formulate clear and constructive comments”.

Active student learning and improvement of communication skills between teacher and students and among the students themselves were described.

Weaknesses: A small number of students reported difficulties in filling in all of the SWOT matrix “I was focused to fill all four things and I have to say each of the cube, it hard”.

Opportunities: The experience of formative evaluation performance contributed to the change in students’ perception of the course feedback “Each step is important in itself, but together they form a continuum model contributes greatly to our reflective capacity”.

Threats: A small number of students were concerned about receiving their colleagues feedback as they thought they may be ‘assessed as unprofessional ... and this can affect one way or another for receiving feedback’.

The teaching strategy described here can be applied to any course in which students are required to submit a product (such as a paper, report, presentation, film, model/product, or work of art) that demonstrates their performance.

4. Bibliography