Procedure: Student surveys and evaluations

Purpose

To outline the processes for conducting student surveys and evaluations to monitor and improve the quality of learning, teaching and the student experience.

Procedure

Mechanisms for gathering student feedback

1. The University will gather student feedback via three distinct mechanisms:
   a. Formative feedback, primarily qualitative in nature, including informal mid-semester evaluations or feedback gathered through student representatives;
   b. Summative evaluations, namely the Student Experience of Learning and Teaching (or its successor);
   c. Core University surveys, including sector-wide surveys approved by government or peak bodies, and internal surveys approved by the Vice-Chancellor, or Deputy Vice-Chancellor. The administration of non-core surveys will be subject to approval.

Formative evaluations

2. Teaching staff, either individually or as a team, may gather informal formative feedback from students in their course to improve the immediate experience of teaching and learning for those students.

3. Formative feedback mechanisms will be primarily qualitative in focus. Teaching staff may choose from a range of informal feedback options, detailed on the University’s Survey website (http://unistats.anu.edu.au/surveys/), such as minute papers, “Stop, Start, Continue”, “H form”, focus groups and liaison with student representatives.

4. Formative evaluations will adhere to the principles outlined in the Student Surveys and Evaluations policy.

5. Formative evaluations are ideally conducted early to mid-semester, to allow sufficient time for reflection and action arising from the feedback.

6. Formative evaluations will not be conducted:
a. after teaching week 10 for a standard semester courses; or
b. after teaching week 7 for trimester courses.

7. Teaching staff will provide their students with a summary of the formative feedback and inform them of actions arising.

Summative evaluations

8. Summative feedback, collected via the Student Experience of Learning and Teaching (SELT) (or its successor) is used for both quality assurance and quality improvement of courses and teaching. Summative evaluations of courses are standardised across the University to allow for benchmarking. Summative evaluations will adhere to the survey administration processes outlined in this procedure.

9. SELT evaluations will be conducted using standardised questionnaires, mode of delivery and survey dates. SELT evaluations will be delivered online for efficiency and consistency. Only intensive courses taught in the field or offshore may request paper–based evaluations.

10. Courses will be evaluated using the Student Experience of Learning Support (SELS), or its successor, at least every second offering.

11. If a customised summative survey is required for a course, it may be locally administered in place of SELS in alternate offerings, or administered following the release of SELS results.

12. Individual teaching staff may request an evaluation of their teaching using a Student Experience of Teaching (SET) questionnaire.

SELT request process

13. Course evaluation requests may be submitted in bulk via Colleges, or may be requested by individual teaching staff or departmental or school administrators, in accordance with instructions on the SELT website.

14. Teaching staff requiring individual teaching evaluations will submit a request for the Student Experience of Teaching (SET), in accordance with instructions on the SELT website.

15. Requests for all summative evaluations must be submitted by the due dates, set out in the survey timetable on the SELT website.

Student Experience of Learning Support (SELS) reporting

16. SELS reports will be available after the release of student grades, in accordance with published survey timetable.
17. SELS reports will be provided to individual course convenors and lecturers at the conclusion of each course, regardless of the number of responses.

18. Open-ended comments will be provided to staff unedited. A staff member may apply to have offensive or threatening comments removed from their survey results with approval from their head of department by emailing evaluations@anu.edu.au with the relevant details and approval.

19. New course convenors will be able to access past SELS reports (qualitative and quantitative components) to facilitate quality improvement of the course.

20. In cases where an individual student or member of staff is identified in SELS open-ended comments, those comments will be treated confidentially.

21. Numeric SELS results, with a minimum of 5 responses, will be published on the Planning & Performance Measurement (PPM) website for access by staff and students. Numeric SELS results, with a minimum or 5 responses, will also be made available to University Education Committee (UEC), and used in the production of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

22. Aggregate SELS results will be published by PPM to enable staff to benchmark course results. Benchmarks will be based on evidence of significant differences between groups.

23. Colleges will provide UEC with a succinct report for each course with a SELS overall satisfaction agreement level below 60 per cent. The report shall focus on specific actions and timeframes to improve the student experience.

Student Experience of Teaching (SET) reporting

24. SET reports will be available after the release of student grades, in accordance with published survey timetable.

25. SET reports will be provided, regardless of the number of responses, directly and only to the academic staff member to whom the survey relates, for reflection on their professional practice.

26. The staff member may choose to incorporate their SET results and anonymised open-ended comments in their teaching portfolio, for the purpose of future appointments, promotions and teaching awards. Staff may also chose to share their SET results with others, including supervisors and/or educational developers for their individual professional development.

27. Open-ended comments will be provided to staff unedited. A staff member may apply to have offensive or threatening comments removed from their survey results with approval from their head of department by emailing evaluations@anu.edu.au with the relevant details and approval.
28. Aggregate SET results will be published by PPM to enable teaching staff to benchmark their results. Benchmarks will be based on evidence of significant differences between groups.

Core surveys

29. Core University surveys are routine sector-wide surveys approved by government or peak bodies, and internal surveys approved by the Vice-Chancellor, or Deputy Vice-Chancellor. Approved core surveys are:
   a. Student Barometer Survey (both the International Student Barometer and the Domestic Student Barometer)
   b. University Experience Survey
   c. Student Finances Survey (approximately every five years)
   d. Higher Degree Research Exit Survey
   e. Australian Graduate Survey (incorporating the Graduate Destination Survey plus the Course Experience Survey or the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey)
   f. Beyond Graduation Survey

30. Core surveys will be administered in accordance with any relevant codes of practice and/or proscribed survey methodologies.

31. Results from core surveys will be disseminated to the University via a range of methods, including ANU intranet, university committees and sub-committees, or direct email.

32. Further analyses may be requested from the relevant survey manager.

Approval of non-core surveys

33. Any student or graduate survey that is not a single course survey, multiple related course survey or a listed core survey will be defined as a non-core survey.

34. Non-core surveys must be approved by the Director, PPM at least one month before the survey start date. Parties wishing to conduct a non-core survey will use the approval request template available on the University’s Survey website.

35. Approval is not required for formative and summative evaluations administered at the course or multiple related course level.

36. Approved non-core surveys will be subject to a survey exclusion period at the end of each semester.

37. Approved non-core surveys will be added to the register of surveys.
maintained by PPM.

38. Results of approved non-core surveys must be disseminated to the University, and where appropriate, be distributed to the survey participants. Reports may be disseminated via a range of methods, including ANU intranet, university committees and sub-committees, or direct email.
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