



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME
A U S T R A L I A

POLICY:
STUDENT FEEDBACK

Purpose: To outline the main institutional mechanisms for considering, monitoring and using Student Feedback

Responsible Executive: Pro Vice Chancellor - Academic

Responsible Office: Quality Management and Academic Development

Contact Officer: Director, Quality Management and Academic Development

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Related Procedure: Teaching Performance and Unit Content Evaluations, updated July 2014, effective July 2008

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1. Purpose

The University of Notre Dame Australia values and actively seeks feedback from Students with the intention of supporting openness, responsiveness, and improving the Student Experience and outcomes. The intent of this Policy is to articulate the University's approach to the systematic collection, analysis, reporting and use of feedback from Students derived from the main institutional Student Feedback mechanisms.

2. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

Closing the Feedback Loop means the process of letting those who have provided requested feedback know how this feedback (usually in generalised terms) has been used.

Course with a Major Research Component means a course of study that involves conduct of research leading to a thesis/dissertation which is a major component of the overall course requirements (that is comprising two-thirds or more of the student load). Examples include Master Degree (Research); Master of Philosophy; Doctor of Philosophy; and Professional Doctoral Degrees.

Non-award Course is a course offered by the University that does not lead to a recognised AQF qualification and includes foundation year courses, Tertiary Enabling Programs and University Certificates.

QMAD means the Fremantle and/or Sydney branch of the Quality Management & Academic Development Office.

Student means a person enrolled in a course (including a Non-award Course) or unit at the University (including those delivered on behalf of the University by third parties) and includes a Graduate Student who is a person who has received an academic award or degree on completion of their studies at the University.

Student Feedback means solicited evaluation by Student/s on any aspect of the Student Experience.

Student Experience means Student engagement, perception, satisfaction levels primarily in relation to learning, teaching, and research.

Unit of Competency is the specification and application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance expected in the workplace. It is the smallest unit that can be assessed and recognised in endorsed components of Vocational Education and Training (VET) training packages.

University means The University of Notre Dame Australia.

Reference to other defined terms or University staff titles not outlined in this section 2 of the Policy, have the same definition prescribed in the University General Regulations or Statutes.

3. Related University Documents

This Policy must be read and applied in reference to the following University documents:

- 3.1 *The University of Notre Dame Australia Statutes* [section 42]
- 3.2 *The University of Notre Dame Australia Regulation: General Regulations*
- 3.3 *Procedure: Teaching Performance and Unit Content Evaluations*
- 3.4 *Policy: Unit Outlines and Unit Outline Template*
- 3.5 *Guidelines and Forms: Vice Chancellor Awards*
- 3.6 *Procedure: Student Grievance*
- 3.7 *Procedure: Higher Education Course Monitoring, Review and Re-accreditation*

4. Scope

All Students including those enrolled in Non-award Courses and courses delivered on behalf of the University by third parties.

5. Exclusions

Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualifications and Units of Competency.

6. Principles

- 6.1 Students should have an opportunity to provide feedback on their experiences at the University.
- 6.2 Student participation in providing Student Feedback will be primarily voluntary.
- 6.3 Collecting and responding to Student Feedback is an important means of enhancing the quality of the Student Experience.
- 6.4 The University employs a range of mechanisms to gather Student Feedback, including:
 - qualitative feedback gathered through informal processes such as face to face interactions, Student focus groups, elected Student representatives or through committees or other activities in which Students are involved;
 - summative evaluations of learning and teaching approved by the Vice Chancellor or Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor;
 - University sector-wide surveys approved by Government, peak bodies, or the Vice Chancellor;
 - discipline-specific Student surveys managed by professional or industry associations; customised surveys, including those used to gather feedback on specific delivery modes including (but not limited to) Student internships, clinical placements or field trips.
 - progress reports for Students undertaking a course with a major research component; and
 - formal Student complaint/grievance processes.
- 6.5 The range of main institutional level mechanisms used to gather Student Feedback by the University is summarised in Appendix 1.
- 6.6 Other customised surveys for more localised usage in gathering Student Feedback, which are not specified in *Appendix 1*, are subject to an approval process via QMAD and reviewed by the University's legal department as required, prior to use.

- 6.7 The University will gather and report on Student Feedback at various levels, using processes which are consistent with the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011*.
- 6.8 In accordance with Australian privacy laws and University procedures and processes, feedback is anonymous or confidential, where indicated on that basis.
- 6.9 Student Feedback will be used to inform:
- improvements to the quality of courses and units;
 - enhancement of curriculum and assessment design;
 - improvements to learning resources, facilities, equipment and services;
 - benchmarking activities;
 - the scholarship of teaching and learning;
 - professional development and other capacity-building strategies across the University;
 - evidence for teaching quality in staff appointment and promotion processes, and for internal and external teaching awards;
 - evidence-based reporting, including the University's annual course monitoring process.
- 6.10 Closing the Feedback Loop is an important and expected step in Student Feedback processes and evidence of actions/improvements will be communicated to Students.
- 6.11 Each mechanism used to gather Student Feedback will not be used in isolation to evaluate the Student Experience at the University.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

- 7.1 QMAD has a responsibility to:
- make the existence, purpose, timing, and use of main feedback mechanisms (*Appendix 1*) known to Students;
 - actively promote core surveys to engage Students in the feedback process;
 - consider the range and frequency of approved student surveys that are centrally controlled in order to minimise survey fatigue and unnecessary duplication;
 - ensure ethical procedures and confidentiality of Student information are upheld and regularly assessed;
 - maintain all survey data compliant with relevant legislation and survey methodology;
 - maintain a register of approved surveys;
 - provide information, guidance and support to both staff and students when required.
- 7.2 The Research Office directors have a responsibility to coordinate, monitor, review, act on, and report on the main feedback mechanisms which involve aspects of The Student Experience relevant to research.
- 7.3 The Student has a responsibility, if providing feedback, to:
- contribute constructive, honest and thoughtful feedback;
 - provide feedback which is not derogatory or vindictive;
 - recognise his/her important role in contributing to improvements in teaching, learning, research where applicable, and the broader Student Experience.

- 7.4 Teaching staff has a responsibility to:
- encourage Students to participate in feedback processes;
 - engage with Student Feedback and actively respond, where possible, to improve the quality of learning, teaching, and research where applicable;
 - respond, where possible, to improve student experiences and outcomes;
 - maintain their own personal records of feedback, with due regard for the confidentiality of the data;
 - ensure confidentiality and ethical procedures are upheld;
 - reflect upon Student Feedback to provide information, guidance and support to students to enhance their learning.
- 7.5 The Dean of School (or equivalent) is responsible for:
- Closing the Feedback Loop for Students by conveying via a variety of means, how the feedback gathered has been used to effect changes and or improvements;
 - communicating outcomes as appropriate, to other relevant stakeholders;
 - acting on feedback to support improvements to teaching and research supervision performance.
- 7.6 Heads of support areas involved with the Student Experience have a responsibility to utilise applicable Student Feedback to inform priorities for improvement of facilities, administration, and student services.

Appendix 1: Schedule of main institutional Student Feedback mechanisms

Feedback Type	Feedback Mechanism	Feedback Group	Administration	Mode	Frequency	Approximate Timing	Brief Description	Uses of Information Collected	Reporting/Communication
Institutional Survey	Teaching Performance Evaluation (TPE)	Students, apart from those studying a course with a major research component	QMAD	Paper & some online	Biannual scheduled Cycles Refer to <i>Procedures: Teaching Content and Unit Evaluations</i> for further details	At conclusion of teaching period	The evaluation instrument used by Students to provide summative evaluation feedback on the quality of teaching at the University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Inform School, Campus, institutional quality monitoring and improvement cycles for teaching including internal benchmarking activities. . Inform follow-up and reward processes for teaching performance. . One source of evidence for teaching quality for the purposes of appointment, promotion, internal and external teaching awards. . Inform planning for academic professional development. 	<p>QMAD will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - prepare individual diagnostic style report for each teacher evaluated and the Dean/equivalent; -prepare School TPE aggregations for the Dean; -prepare comparative TPE institutional, Campus, College, School level graphs for the Dean; -prepare comparative TPE institutional, Campus, College and School level graphs for the Vice Chancellor and Heads of Campuses; -prepare TPE time series report at institutional, Campus, College and School levels for Vice Chancellor, Executive Council, and Academic Council. <p>The Dean will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -be responsible for the follow-up/review process with the relevant Teaching staff member where the unit mean rating has fallen below the University's required minimum performance standard, or for commending performance standards in line with <i>Procedures: Teaching Content and Unit Evaluations</i>.
Institutional Survey	Unit Content Evaluation (UCE)	Students, apart from those studying a course with a major research component	QMAD	Paper & some online	Bi-annual scheduled Cycles Refer to <i>Procedures: Teaching Content and Unit Evaluations</i> for further details	At conclusion of teaching period	The evaluation instrument used by Students to provide summative evaluation feedback on the content quality for a unit of study at the University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Inform School, Campus, institutional quality monitoring and improvement cycles for unit content including internal benchmarking activities. . Inform planning for academic professional development. 	<p>QMAD will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -prepare individual diagnostic style report on each unit evaluated for the Dean/equivalent and Unit Coordinator; -prepare School UCE aggregations for the Dean; -comparative UCE institutional, Campus, College, School level graphs for the Dean; -prepare comparative UCE institutional, Campuses, Colleges, Schools level graphs for the Vice Chancellor and Heads of Campuses; -prepare UCE time series report at institutional, Campuses, Colleges, Schools levels for Vice Chancellor, Executive Council, Academic Council. <p>The Unit Coordinator will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -close the feedback loop by conveying to Students via specific section provided in the unit outline template, the changes/improvements which have resulted from previous Student feedback provided via UCE. <p>The Dean will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -be responsible for the follow-up/review process with the relevant Teacher where the unit mean rating has fallen below the University's required

									minimum performance standard, or for commending performance standards in line with <i>Procedures: Teaching Content and Unit Evaluations</i> ; -utilise strategies as appropriate to further communicate to Students evidence of actions resulting from Student Feedback.
National Survey	University Experience Survey (UES)	First Year and Later Year Students	QMAD & Graduate Careers Australia & the Social Research Centre	Online	Annually	Mid-year	The UES is one of a number of initiatives being developed by the Australian Government to help ensure ongoing improvement in the quality of learning and teaching in Australian universities. This survey focuses on aspects of the Student Experience that are measurable, linked with learning and development outcomes, and for which universities can reasonably be assumed to have responsibility.	. Designed to provide reliable, valid and generalizable information to the Australian Government and to universities (e.g.) informing ongoing institutional improvement, monitoring and planning. . Transparency of information to students.	QMAD will: -prepare institutional report for Vice Chancellor, Executive Council, Academic Council, Academic Staff; -preparing College/School level reports for Deans. The Dean will: - close the feedback loop/communicating to Students and relevant stakeholders, evidence of actions resulting from UES feedback.
National Survey	Australian Graduate Survey (AGS): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ)• Graduate Destinations Survey (GDS)	Graduate Students (Australian)	QMAD & the University's Office of University Relations & Graduate Careers Australia	Online & paper	Biannually April & Oct Deadlines [up to 2014]	Mid-year completers surveyed October of same year. end-of-year completers surveyed April following year	Survey of course completers /graduates from Australian higher education institutions who have recently completed an award course. It provides data on graduate experience and employment outcomes. Involves CEQ (experience of the recently completed course), GDS (work, study and job seeking activities after completing their course) and PREQ (for graduates who complete the requirements for a research higher degree).	. Inform decision-making & processes at various levels in relation to course quality. . Benchmark with similar institutions and against national data. . Marketing potential especially through Good Universities Guide.	QMAD will: -prepare institutional report for Vice Chancellor, Executive Council, Academic Council, Academic Staff; -prepare College/School level reports for Deans. The Unit Coordinator will: -close the feedback loop by conveying to Students via specific section provided in the unit outline template, the changes/improvements which have resulted from previous Student feedback provided via AGS. The Dean will: -utilise other strategies as appropriate to further communicate to Students evidence of actions resulting from Student feedback.
National Survey	Beyond Graduation Survey (BGS)	Graduate Students (Australian)	QMAD & the University's Office of University Relations & Graduate Careers Australia	Online	Annually	Mid-year	A National survey of Australian graduates who went on to complete the Australian Graduate Survey (AGS). The focus of the survey is on how graduates' work and study life have progressed 3 years from course completion. It involves longitudinal tracking of career aspirations, relevance of qualification to current employment and importance of a higher education qualification.	. Trend data for benchmarking can inform future directions for quality improvements at various levels.	QMAD will: -prepare institutional report for Vice Chancellor, Executive Council, Academic Council, Academic Staff; -preparing College/School level reports for Deans. The Dean will: -utilise other strategies as appropriate to further communicate to Students evidence of actions resulting from Student feedback.
National Survey	Australasian Survey of Student Engagement Survey (AUSSE)	First Year Students & Third Year Students	QMAD & Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER)	Online & Paper	Annually [2009 to 2012]	Mid-year	Seeks to gauge students' engagement with university education. The aim is to provide institutions with new and significant perspectives for managing and enhancing higher education quality.	. Benchmark with similar institutions and against national data.	QMAD will: -prepare an institutional report for Vice Chancellor, Pro Vice Chancellor - Student Engagement, Executive Council, Academic Council.

National survey	Australian Graduate Survey (AGS): Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PREQ)		QMAD & the University's Office of University Relations & Graduate Careers Australia	Online & paper	Biannually April & Oct Deadlines [up to 2014]	Mid-year completers surveyed October of same year. end-of-year completers surveyed April following year	Seeks students' perceptions of the quality and frequency of supervision, intellectual and social climate, infrastructure, approaches to research, quality of thesis examination, and generic skills development in their research higher degree.	. Benchmark with similar institutions and against national data.	Research Office will: -prepare institutional report/s for Pro Vice Chancellor - Research, Executive Council, Academic Council.
Institutional Survey	Supervisor and Research Student Expectation Questionnaire	Higher Degree by Research (HDR) student HDR Supervisor/s	Research Offices	Paper	Given to individual Student and Supervisor/s at the commencement of research candidacy meeting	Submitted by individual Student at first mid-year progress report meeting	Gauges the quality and expectations of the Student- Supervisor relationship	. Identify areas for improvement and communication	Research Offices will: -prepare institutional report/s, as required, for PVC Research, Research Committee, Executive Council, Academic Council.
Institutional Report	Research Progress Report	HDR Students HDR Supervisor/s	Research Offices	Paper	Each Semester	End of semester	Progress report completed by Student, Supervisor/s, Dean, Pro Vice Chancellor - Research; the main aim is for these contributors to assess academic progress. It also provides an opportunity for Students to provide confidential feedback on the quality of supervision and the quality of Research Office support.	. Follow-up on any supervision/academic issues which emerge. . Improvement of administrative services which support Student research.	Research Offices will: - use the outcomes of reporting to inform the Board of Examiners.
Standing Committee of the University (see <i>University Statutes section 41</i>)	Student Board	Elected Student representatives	Chaired by Vice Chancellor	Standing Committee	Annual Election	At least 3 meetings per year	The Student Board shall, on a national University-wide basis and in relation to the Student Experience: -provide a forum for consultation and participation by Students in the University's decision-making processes; -monitor and appraise all aspects of student life across the University; -encourage and facilitate relationships and communication between the campuses of the University, the campus based Student Associations, the organs of the University and its students.	. Provide a Student perspective in decisions concerning or affecting Students of the University. . Recommend measures to enhance the Student Experience in a manner consistent with the ethos of a Catholic University. . Provide input into Student material and documentation in consultation with relevant University Offices.	Student Board will: -promote communication among the Campuses of the University, its Students and Student Associations; - provide a forum for consultation and participation by students in the University's decision making processes.
Campus-Based Representative Committees	Student Affairs Committees	Students	Head of Campus	Campus-based Committee	Annual invitation	Negotiated	Each Campus of the University shall have its own Student Affairs Committee.	. Monitor and appraise all aspects of student life on the Campus. . Facilitate relationships and communications between the	Student Affairs Committees will: -promote communication between the Campus-based Student Associations and the Offices of the University; -liaise directly with Student groups to ensure concerns are appropriately addressed;

(see section 41 of University Statutes)								Offices of the University and its Students. . Ensure liaison between the Campus-based Student Associations and the Offices of the University.	- provide a recognised means of communication between Students and University authorities.
Institutional Survey	Library Client Survey	Student and Staff Library users	Managed by InSynch external service: link available via Library homepage	Online	Biennial	September/October	Library users are required to rate Library services. Measures are used primarily to indicate areas of strength and weakness.	. Quantify Library performance and benchmark against the sector (as this instrument is widely used in Australian university libraries). . Improve services. . Provide evidence for progress against operational plan targets. .Budget planning.	University Librarian will: - table results at Academic Council; - provide a synopsis of results to Schools via email; - provide a synopsis of results to Students via email.
Campus-Based (as required)	Residential Hall Survey	Students residing on-Campus	Manager of Student Residences	Online	Biannual	At conclusion of teaching period	Residential Students (which may include Study Abroad, International, and some Domestic Students) provide feedback on the application process, field trips, residential hall supervision and support from University staff, orientation program, pre-departure preparation and arrival support received.	. Monitor levels of Student satisfaction with services provided. . Improve services for Residential Students.	Manager of Student Residences will: - provide a report of results and areas of improvement focus to Pro Vice Chancellor - International, Campus equivalent of Executive Director of Admissions & Student Services + Deputy Director of Admissions & Student Services; - use the information gathered as a basis for investigating and addressing as required, issues raised by partner institutions.