



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

POLICY:

TEACHING PERFORMANCE AND UNIT CONTENT EVALUATION

Purpose:	To outline the rationale, guiding principles, main procedures which relate to teaching performance and unit content evaluation processes
Responsible Executive:	Provost
Responsible Office:	Quality Management Office
Contact Officer:	Manager, Quality Management Office
VC Approval Date:	17 th June 2008
Effective Date:	1 st July 2008
Modification History:	First developed June 2007; modified 31/3/08 (SE); modified 4/6/08 (SE); modified Jan2009 (SE)
Campus Applicability:	All Campuses

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to support the University of Notre Dame's commitment to quality teaching with the ultimate goal of fostering excellence in students' learning experiences. The University's main internal evidence-based quality assurance systems for teaching and learning are in the form of Teaching Performance Evaluations (TPE) and Unit Content Evaluations (UCE). Together with the Course Experience Questionnaire, TPE and UCE provide a valuable source of institutional evaluative data for comparison, analysis, reporting, and incorporation into the University's quality monitoring and improvement systems for teaching and learning.

Whilst TPE/ UCE serve the University well in terms of institutional data, these results alone should not be considered as a complete or definitive evaluation of a teacher or a unit. Schools, under the leadership of the Deans, and individual academics are encouraged to collect additional forms of evaluative evidence and to devise their own more specific quality management cycles.

Definitions

Teaching Performance Evaluation (TPE) – the evaluation instrument used by students to summatively evaluate the quality of teaching for a particular unit at the University of Notre Dame Australia.

Unit Content Evaluation (UCE) – the evaluation instrument used by students to summatively evaluate the content quality for a unit of study at the University of Notre Dame Australia.

Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) – a component of the Australian Graduate Survey which reports nationally on the course experience perceptions of those students who completed the requirements for a coursework degree from an Australian higher education institution in a particular year and who responded to the questionnaire. The key components of the CEQ are: Good Teaching Scale, Clear Goals and Standards Scale, Appropriate Assessment Scale, Appropriate Workload Scale, Generic Skills Scale, Overall Satisfaction Item.

Minimum Performance Standard (MPS) – the University of Notre Dame's minimum unit mean rating (UMR) for acceptable teaching and/ or unit content performance.

Commendatory Performance Standard (CPS) – the UMR used as evidence of teaching and/or unit content excellence at the University of Notre Dame Australia.

Guiding Principles

1. The reasons for conducting evaluations are:
 - to act as a systematic means of monitoring academic standards based on student perceptions of teaching performance and unit quality;
 - to inform University, School, course and unit quality assurance and enhancement processes for teaching and learning;
 - to provide a diagnostic tool that will enable individual academics to identify the strengths and weaknesses in her/his teaching;
 - to provide a diagnostic tool that will enable academic staff to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the unit s/he coordinates;
 - to act as a mechanism for staff accountability to be utilised in the academic staff contract renewal and/or promotion process;
 - to help identify general areas of weakness that may relate to the CEQ;
 - to identify areas of need for professional development planning.

2. The Dean of the School is responsible for ensuring that both maximum contracted and sessional academic staff are fully aware of the contents of this policy.

3. Teaching Performance Evaluations are normally conducted on the following bases:

- When the teacher is teaching a unit for the first time;
- When teaching in either summer term or winter term;
- If within the previous 3 evaluation cycles any TPE UMR for a particular individual has fallen below the specified minimum standard;
- When the unit delivery has recently undergone significant change;
- At the request of the Dean or the individual lecturer/tutor;
- At the request of the Vice Chancellor or delegate;
- If the contract of a maximum term contracted teacher is due for review in the current year;
- For sessional teachers, at the summation of each unit taught.

If a variation to the above criteria is sought, Quality Management Office(Fremantle)/ Office of Quality Management & Research (Sydney) should be contacted by the Dean in the first instance and approval will be sought from the Provost/DVC of the particular Campus.

4. Unit Content Evaluations are normally conducted for internal, external, online, and intensive units on the following bases:

- When the unit is being delivered for the first time;
- When a unit is delivered in either summer term or winter term;
- If within the previous 3 evaluation cycles any UCE UMR for a particular unit has fallen below the specified minimum standard;
- When the unit content has recently undergone significant change;
- At the request of the Dean or the unit's coordinator;
- At the request of the Vice Chancellor or delegate;
- When unit content evaluation data is required for accreditation by external professional bodies;
- When the unit is a compulsory unit in a forthcoming course review;
- For a core curriculum unit, each time it is offered;
- If a unit has not been evaluated according to the above criteria, then it is to be evaluated every third time that it is offered.

If a variation to the set criteria is sought, QMO/OQM&R should be contacted by the Dean in the first instance and approval will be sought from the Provost/DVC of the particular campus.

5. Where a unit has multiple lecturers, each lecturer is normally evaluated only if s/he has delivered 3 or more sessions.

6. The University's standards for TPE and UCE are set on an annual basis and are in two forms: the Minimum Performance Standard (MPS) and the Commendatory Performance Standard (CPS). The numerical criterion for each of these is advised by the Academic Councils and approved or determined by the Executive Council.

7. The University's eligibility standard for a Letter of Commendation is a UMR of at least the CPS in a minimum of two units which have ten or more student responses and no other unit taught having a UMR less than 4.0. The Letters of Commendation are signed by the Provosts/DVCs with final sign-off by the Vice Chancellor.

In cases where the number of units taught criterion and/or the number of student responses criterion present(s) a disadvantage, an individual *may* be eligible for a standard Letter of Merit according to set University criteria (i.e.) **Type A** for UMR of at least the commendatory performance standard in a minimum of 2 units and no other unit taught having a UMR less than 4.00, regardless of number of student responses (where number of student responses criterion presents a disadvantage) and **Type B** for UMR of at least the commendatory performance standard when only one unit was taught, regardless of

number of student responses (where number of units taught criterion presents a disadvantage).

The Dean of each School/DVC Broome Campus is responsible for signing Letters of Merit. Where eligibility for a Letter of Merit conflicts with responsibility for letter sign-off, alternative appropriate sign-off arrangements will be made.

8. Just prior to the evaluation period, the QMO/OQM&R arranges for information to reach students about the importance of their responses for TPE/UCE and how the data generated from these will be used.
9. Accountability for the supervisory details for administering TPE and UCE rests with the Dean of each School on the Fremantle and Sydney Campuses, and with the DVC Broome. Full consideration must be given to:
 - (i) maintaining an environment which promotes order, uniformity of process, confidentiality of responses among students;
 - (ii) implementing practices which promote anonymity, truthfulness, and considered student responses and;
 - (iii) ensuring that the individual being evaluated has no contact with the completed questionnaires.
10. The timing for administering paper-based evaluations is normally according to the following criteria but may vary as advised/negotiated with the QMO/OQM&R:

▪ Standard semester length unit	= during Week 11 or 12 of unit
▪ Non-standard semester or intensive unit	= during the last week/day of unit
▪ Units which conclude later than standard end of semester date	= during Week 11 or 12 of standard semester
▪ For multiple presenters (3 or more sessions taken)	= during each presenter's last session
11. Schools are responsible for sending evaluation questionnaires to external and off-campus students.
12. The processing of evaluation forms is undertaken by the Quality Management Office once all evaluation questionnaires for a particular evaluation cycle have been returned/accounted for.
13. Because of issues with statistical data instability, where the student response rate for TPE/UCE is less than 10, an individual report will be prepared and the results will appear on specific aggregated lists but such results will not be included in the aggregated graph data which are used to calculate UMR averages for the University, Campuses and Schools.
14. For each evaluation round, TPE/UCE results are not released until after the last of the University's Board of Examiners has met. However, if required, Deans can make arrangements with the Quality Management Office for a confidential briefing on particular results; these should not be conveyed to the individual in question until after the relevant Board of Examiners meeting.
15. The TPE and UCE individual reports and aggregated lists/graphs are in the first instance sent to the relevant Dean of each School on the Fremantle and Sydney Campuses and to the DVC Broome who arrange for academics to receive their individual reports and for unit coordinators to receive the UCE reports.

16. Records of all TPE/UCE results are stored securely and confidentially in the Quality Management Office. Copies of aggregated lists and graphs are sent to:
- Vice Chancellor (whole University results)
 - DVC Fremantle (Fremantle & Broome results)
 - Provost Fremantle (Fremantle & Broome results)
 - DVC Sydney (Sydney results)
 - Provost Sydney (Sydney results)
 - Executive Deans (National College results)
17. The Manager, QMO (Fremantle) and OQM&R (Sydney) informs Deans with respect to individuals and units requiring follow-up because of low TPE/UCE via a follow-up proforma.
18. The Dean organises an interview with individuals and unit coordinators where TPE/UCE has fallen below the required MPS. The Dean will decide if a management plan is required and will document the developments. Where possible, the professional development offerings of the Staffing Office should be incorporated into the performance management plan; prioritised areas of skill focus have been established for the Staffing Office through analysis of evaluations below the MPS. The Provost/DVC may request a special meeting with Deans for those instances where a trend of low performance is evident.
19. The completed follow-up forms are returned to QMO/OQM&R and the campus-specific information is conveyed to the Provost/DVC of the Campus; Deans may also have requested a meeting with Provost/DVC. Sydney and Broome Campuses send copies of the completed proformas to QMO and campus originals are to be retained).
20. All follow-up proformas are stored either in QMO or the Fremantle Staffing Office (as arranged between these Offices). Further use of the TPE/UCE information is a matter for decision by the Vice Chancellor, the Provosts, the Deputy Vice Chancellors and/or the Deans of Schools.
21. The Manager, QMO is responsible for preparing a list of individuals who are eligible for Letters of Commendation and Letters of Merit. This list is sent to the Dean of each School/ DVC Broome who must give endorsement for each of the listed individuals before the Letters can be prepared by QMO.
- Copies of the signed Letters are stored either in the Quality Management Office or the Staffing Office (as arranged between these Offices).
22. All original evaluation questionnaires are returned to Schools. These should then be distributed to individuals (TPE) and Unit Coordinators (UCE) unless the Dean discerns that student anonymity would be compromised. As a matter of sound pedagogical practice, academic staff should carefully consider this feedback as a basis for modifying, improving, refining and/or affirming unit content and teaching performance.
23. Deans are responsible for ensuring that practices are in place for informing subsequent cohorts of students (i.e. not the group which completed the particular evaluation) of the ways that the TPE/UCE information has been used as a basis for making positive changes.
24. If there is contention or valid reason to deviate from any aspect of the evaluation process which has been specified in this policy, the Manager QMO/OQM&R should be contacted in the first instance. If necessary, a referral will be made to the Provost of the particular campus for further discussion/ decision.

APPENDIX

YEAR	MPS	CPS
2005	3.90	4.50
2006	3.90	4.30

YEAR	MPS		CPS	
	Fremantle/Broome	Sydney	Fremantle/Broome	Sydney
2007	3.90	3.90	4.30	4.30
2008	3.90	3.90	4.30	4.30
2009	3.90	3.90	4.30	4.30
2010	3.90	3.90	4.30	4.30
2011				
2012				
2013				
2014				