Subject Experience Survey Advisory Group

Guidelines on Providing Feedback to Students

Preamble

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Quality of Teaching and Learning – Subject Review Procedure, which can be found in the Policy Library at: https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1198. As outlined in the SES policy, Heads of Departments or Schools are required to put in place mechanisms and processes to ensure students are given feedback and appropriate interpretation of survey outcomes. They are also required to communicate to students actions taken as a result of survey outcomes.

The University of Melbourne regards feedback from students as an important aspect of the cycle of evaluation of individual subjects, courses and academic programs. Feedback from the SES provides one mechanism for teaching staff to address student concerns and communicate actions. It encourages a cycle of on-going improvements in subject delivery. However, feedback can also inform students of particular strengths of specific courses/subjects and highlight excellent teaching. Feedback provided by past and current students is seen as particularly valuable because it comes from the student perspective.

However, it is important to demonstrate to students that the feedback they provide through the SES is valued and used appropriately. It is predicted that this will contribute to improved quality of feedback and response rates. This document provides guidelines as to how faculties and subject coordinators can provide feedback from the SES to students who have recently taken the subject or are enrolled in the subject.

Feedback to students who have completed a subject

- This is particularly important to demonstrate to students that academics and the University value their participation in the SES.
- Subject coordinators should be encouraged to report back to students who have completed subjects that have been surveyed.
- Faculties, through their Academic Program Committees, should develop an appropriate template to be made available to subject coordinators. The specific form of the template should be determined by the Faculty, but it should be designed to encourage staff to provide feedback to students about how the subject scored on different dimensions, how these scores should be interpreted and what action is planned to further improve the subject. Staff should be discouraged from simply presenting SES scores without explanation.

- Subject coordinators should use the Learning Management System (LMS) to communicate to the students the results of the SES.
- This information should be provided to the students as soon as possible after the examination period, once subject coordinators have received their SES survey scores and comments.
- The responsibility to ensure that this procedure is completed lies with Heads of Departments (or Schools).

Feedback to students who have enrolled in the following cohort of a subject

- This is particularly important to demonstrate that student feedback from the SES can be used to improve delivery of subjects and provide information that is not available in Handbook Entries.
- Subject coordinators should be encouraged to use the LMS to communicate to the students the outcomes of the SES from the previous cohort of students. This would be in the form of the completed template described previously.
- It is recommended that each subject on the LMS should include a menu item called "SES Feedback"; this could contain a link to the completed template.
- Subject coordinators could also send an "Announcement" through the LMS that the feedback link is open for students to view.
- This information on LMS should be made available to students at least one week before the start of semester.
- The responsibility to ensure that this procedure is completed lies with Heads of Departments (or Schools).