



The University of Sydney

Faculty of Dentistry

The Student Experience of Learning and Teaching (Postgraduate coursework level graduates)

Course Experience Questionnaire Report

Includes:

- *Executive summary: key results for 2008*
- *Comparative results: Quantitative data 2004 – 2008*
- *Comparative results: Focus of written observations from respondents 2003 – 2008*

With attachments:

- A Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) 2008: categorised list of written observations received from respondents*
- B Student Course Experience Questionnaire (SCEQ) 2007: categorised list of written observations received from respondents*

July 2009

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Executive Summary

Data about the experiences of postgraduate coursework level graduates from the Faculty of Dentistry is collected through the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) in the year after completion of studies. e.g. graduates who responded to the CEQ during 2008 completed their postgraduate coursework level studies in the Faculty during 2007.

Analysis of this data provides a comprehensive picture of trends in the student experience, and the performance of the Faculty in relation to University of Sydney Key Performance Indicators for Learning and Teaching (Generic Skills; Good Teaching; Overall Satisfaction), and other related areas (Learning Community; Curriculum; Assessment; Workload; and Clear Goals and Standards)¹.

Written observations, from respondents to the surveys, about their experiences provide evidence to support the Faculty KPI linked results (percentage agreement scores²), and provide detailed information about key issues in the areas of best practice and suggested improvements, during their studies, and upon graduation.

The analysis of qualitative data reported in this document is based on written observations received from all respondents to the CEQ. Faculties are advised that if they are interested, it is possible to supply copies of the written groupings³:

- By subject matter: general (Generic Skills) to specific (Professional skills and experience)
- By degree/ aggregated degree
- By field of study (CEQ codes)

Key results for 2008

The following results are an indication of those areas of the student experience that were of significance to graduates once they had completed their postgraduate coursework level degree in 2007, and entered the workforce, or progressed to further studies. The KPI linked results reflect the experiences of respondents in relation to specific items in the survey; the qualitative data reflects the analysis of written observations provided by those respondents who answered the open ended questions on the best areas of their experience and those that were considered to be in need of improvement.

14 respondents answered the open question on areas of best practice; 15 suggested improvements. A categorised list of all comments received is at Attachment A.

Key Performance Indicators (KPI): Generic Skills; Good Teaching; Overall Satisfaction

This section provides a summary of the 2008 CEQ KPI linked results, together with a synopsis of the areas of best practice and suggested improvements mentioned by those respondents to the CEQ who provided written observations on their experiences.

Generic Skills (Section 1; pages 11-12)

KPI LINKED RESULTS

The KPI linked CEQ results for Generic Skills currently sit at 77%. This is identical to the 2007 score and 22% higher than that for 2006. The University average for Generic skills is 60%.

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- 36% of respondents to the CEQ who supplied written observations indicated that they were satisfied with the hands-on practical work and experience, clinical practice, and field trips.

Suggested improvements

- One respondent indicated that more practical components would have been appreciated.

¹ Very few postgraduate coursework level respondents (0-3) to the 2003 – 2008 CEQ provided written observations on Assessment, Workload, or Clear Goals and Standards. Therefore these areas of the student experience are not included in this report.

² Proportion of graduates who agreed or strongly agreed that their experience of the course was educationally positive in the areas of Generic Skills; Good Teaching; and Overall Satisfaction.

³ Please contact Rachel Symons (r.symons@usyd.edu.au or 9351 6560) to discuss your requirements

Good Teaching (Section 2, pages 13-14)

KPI LINKED RESULTS

The KPI linked results for Good Teaching increased considerably since 2006, and currently sit at 65%, an increase of 3% on the 2007 result, and 14% on the 2006 result. The University average for Good Teaching is 50%.

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- One respondent appreciated the mentoring received during their course

Suggested improvements

- 27% of respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied with teaching practices across the faculty
- Concerns included: feedback on work; and the quality of lectures

Overall Satisfaction (Section 3; pages 15-16)

KPI LINKED RESULTS

The 2008 KPI linked results for Overall Satisfaction (90%) maintains the high scores recorded in 2004 (92%) and 2007 (87%). The 2005 and 2006 scores were below 60%. The University average for this KPI is 65%.

QUALITATIVE DATA

Best practice

- One respondent who answered the open question on best practice indicated that there were some outstanding lecturers; whilst another indicated that they were happy to have finished.

Suggested improvements

- Two respondents indicated that improvements were required regarding the quality of staff, recognition of volunteer tutors, and the need for more tutors

Additional areas of the student experience

Respondents to the CEQ who provide written observations on their experiences, often refer to areas of their experience that are not directly related to the KPI linked numerical items on the survey, but are related to the extended CEQ scale of Learning Community, in addition to Curriculum (Programme of Study); and Faculty/ Department Administration. Since these topics may be mentioned in up to 50% of comments received, they are included in this report in order to provide a full picture of issues which were perceived by respondents to the CEQ to be either of best practice or in need of improvement during their period of study at the University.

Learning Community (Section 4; page 18)

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- 43% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the Learning Community aspect of their experience
- All of these comments referred to the learning environment including: the exploration of academic interests in tutorials and other fora; the camaraderie of the student body; and class sizes

Suggested improvements

- One respondent indicated that improvements in the quality of equipment in the dental hospital would be beneficial

Curriculum (Programme of Study) *(Section 5: page 19)*

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- 2 respondents indicated their appreciation of the following aspects:
 - The dental public health and preventive dentistry aimed at the population, and the research component;
 - Being able to specialise as a periodontist

Suggested improvements

- 20% of respondents suggested improvements in the following areas:
 - The lecture program;
 - The need to include public health units covered under Master of Public Health;
 - The delivery of one online unit

Faculty/ Department Student Administration *(Section 6; page 20)*

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- No respondents to the 2008 CEQ mentioned administration as an area of best practice in their response to the question "What were the best aspects of your course experience?"

Suggested improvements

- 20% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with this area of their experience
- Areas of concern included: organisational problems and changing timetables.

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July 2009

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Glossary

The following terms and phrases are used throughout the report

CEQ	Course Experience Questionnaire Administered to graduates of previous year e.g. students who completed the CEQ during 2008 completed their studies during 2007
SCEQ	Student Course Experience Questionnaire Administered to current students every two years. Next survey due during Semester Two 2009.
KPI linked results	These results refer to the Australian Graduate Survey (AGS) and the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ). Key Performance Indicators from the AGS and CEQ are used as part of the National Learning and Teaching Performance Fund.
Percentage agreement	CEQ item responses are combined and reported in terms of the proportions of graduates who agreed or disagreed that their experience of their course was educationally positive in the areas of: Generic Skills; Good Teaching; and Overall Satisfaction.
Qualitative data Focus of written observations	Students written observations received in response to open ended questions in the CEQ: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were the best aspects of your course? • What aspects were in need of improvement? <p>Written observations from respondents may cover all aspects of the student experience: Generic Skills; Good Teaching; Overall Satisfaction; Learning Community; Curriculum (Programme of Study); Appropriate Assessment; Appropriate Workload; and Clear Goals and Standards.</p>
Percentage of comments received	The number of times an aspect is mentioned within written observations received from respondents is presented as a percentage of the total number of comments received from respondents who answered the CEQ open questions relating to areas of best practice and suggested improvements in any particular year.

Conceptual framework

Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ)

The CEQ is a national survey administered by the independent body, the Graduate Careers Council of Australia (GCA). It is a survey of *graduates* of all Australian universities. CEQ results are reported at least a year after the graduates actually finish their courses.

The Institute for Teaching and Learning (ITL) CEQ reports use responses obtained from graduates of the University of Sydney who completed their courses in the previous year (i.e. the 2008 reports are for students who completed in 2007). The ITL reports use the GCA data and are therefore usually published shortly after the GCA reports. As an example: the 2008 reports are for graduates who completed their courses in 2007. The data is collected during 2008 and the reports are published in 2009.⁴

Students are asked to respond to statements using a five point Likert Scale to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with each statement. As part of the questionnaires, students are also asked to comment on the following questions:

- What were the best aspects of your course?
- What aspects were in need of improvement?

Quantitative and qualitative data from the CEQ provide evidence of the success of University and Faculty initiatives to improve the overall student experience in general and the student experience of learning and teaching in particular.

Focus of the Report

Based on the answers to the CEQ, this report seeks to provide an analysis of observable trends in the postgraduate coursework student experience of learning and teaching in the Faculty of Dentistry between 2003 and 2008. The report also provides detailed information on the key issues highlighted in the analysis of the 2008 CEQ qualitative data.

Information is arranged by the Key Performance Indicators (Generic Skills; Good Teaching; and Overall Satisfaction) plus additional factors (Learning Community; Curriculum; and Appropriate Assessment;) which, taken together, comprise the graduate experience of learning and teaching in the Faculty.

Focus of written observations from respondents

By examining the foci of the students' comments in the 2008 CEQ, this report seeks to highlight areas that were of best practice in the graduates' experience during their studies at the University of Sydney, together with those that have been suggested as areas of improvement.

The views of the graduates on their overall experience at the University, as received through the open response comments, are a valuable insight into what was important to them; what they considered to be areas of best practice; and what they considered needs improvement. They often highlight issues that relate to the usefulness of their course once they have graduated and/or are in the workforce.

It is important to remember, when looking at the results of the analysis of this data, that the absence of favourable comments on a particular aspect of learning and teaching does not reflect that this is not an area of best practice. Rather, it could be interpreted that the students were happy with their experiences, and prefer to focus on commenting about areas in need of improvement. For example, very few comments on assessment are received in answer to the question on areas of best practice; whilst very few comments on the development of generic skills feature in those suggesting improvements.

Student Course Experience Questionnaire (SCEQ) 2007

Since it is possible that final year respondents from the 2007 SCEQ might also have responded to the 2008 CEQ, a short report on the results of the analysis of qualitative data from the 2007 SCEQ is included at the end of this report.

⁴ Further information about the CEQ can be found at <http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/ceq/>

Notes

1 Quantitative data analysis

The GCA does not allow surveys collected by phone to be included in any CEQ quantitative analyses. To ensure that the University's KPI reporting matches the GCA criteria, the ITL has adopted the same approach to its analysis of the quantitative data i.e. the KPI linked results shown in this report. The number of responses (n) is based on the number of students who supplied an answer to the Overall Satisfaction item in surveys collected by post and electronic methods only.

Number of respondents (post and electronic collection) to the CEQ 2005 – 2008⁵

NB: The "degree" variable has been used to map respondents to faculty for overall and international student results. The "field of study" variable has been used to map respondents to faculty for domestic student results.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
	n=	n=	n=	n=	n=
Domestic students	11	5	10	13	9
International students	1	0	3	2	1
Overall results	13	5	13	15	10

n=the number of respondents who answered the "Overall Satisfaction Item".

2 Qualitative data analysis

The analysis of the qualitative data is based on responses to the open questions received from ALL respondents to the CEQ (post, electronic and phone).

Number of respondents (post, electronic and phone collection) who answered the open questions CEQ 2004 - 2008

Areas of best practice	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
	n=	n=	n=	n=	n=	n=	n=
Domestic students	8 ⁶	2	8	2	10	10	12
International students		0	1	0	3	1	2
Total		2	9	2	13	11	14

Suggested improvements	CEQ 2002	CEQ 2003	CEQ 2004	CEQ 2005	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007	CEQ 2008
	n=	n=	n=	n=	n=	n=	n=
Domestic students	7	2	6	2	11	9	13
International students		0	1	0	3	1	2
Total		2	7	2	14	10	15

n=the number of comments received in answer to the relevant 'open response' question

3 Reliability of quantitative and qualitative data

The following information on the reliability of statistical data in the above tables should be taken into consideration when reading this report:

Quantitative and qualitative data: Where the number of respondents is less than 5 results are excluded from the report as they are unlikely to be reliable.

- KPI linked results are shown for domestic students and overall results only
- Qualitative results from 2003 and 2005 are excluded from the report.
- Qualitative results for 2002; 2004; 2006 – 2008 are shown for the total number of respondents

Quantitative and qualitative data: Where the number of respondents is between 5 and 19 results should be viewed with caution. The minimum sample size recommended for statistical analysis is 20

- Due to the low number of written observations provided in 2008, and to preserve student confidentiality, the complete list of comments, as received, is at Attachment A. Broad areas of the student experience of learning and teaching mentioned are identified alongside each comment.

⁵ Data retrieved from the ITL AGS/CEQ website results and reports for the Faculty of Dentistry on 05.11.08 and 23.07.09 http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/ceq/tpi_report.cfm

⁶ Separate data for international respondents did not become available until 2003

4 Illustrative sample comments

Comments are recorded as they appear in the original documents. However, minor spelling, grammatical and transcription errors have been corrected. [sic] indicates that the word appears exactly as provided by the student, and that it is not possible to ascertain an exact interpretation of the original meaning. To preserve student confidentiality, sample comments are only provided if there are six or more comments relating to that aspect in the responses. Comments that may possibly identify the student are not been included in the sample comments. Lecturers and tutors names, where included by the respondent, have been replaced by Dentistry, YYY or ZZZ.

5 Analysis and counting of comments

The components of categories and sub-categories used in the analysis of qualitative data are based on:

- Characteristics that define the area of the student experience
- CEQ survey items (Generic Skills; Good Teaching; and Overall Satisfaction only)
- recurring themes in students' comments and have been developed over many years of analysing qualitative data from students' surveys.

Together, they represent the range of features of each aspect which are considered to be essential to student satisfaction with the relevant part of the degree experience and/or overall satisfaction with the course.

Each comment is analysed according to the *Taxonomy for analysing qualitative data from the SCEQ/CEQ*⁷, which is based on the University KPIs for Learning and Teaching. Based on the premise that a comment is what is written by an individual respondent in response to one of the open response questions, and a tally in the statistics being a specific phrase or sentence referring to one aspect of the student experience, the total number of times an aspect is mentioned in any one set of comments is calculated as a percentage of comments received in the year of the survey. As a general rule, only those aspects which receive over 5% of comments from the whole cohort (i.e. domestic and international combined) are considered significant enough to be included as specific issues in the report.

For example, the following comment is counted as ONE COMMENT RECEIVED; but as it is mentioned in Learning Community (Exploration of academic interests; Class Sizes); Generic Skills (Professional skills and experience); and Assessment (Types of), the highlighted phrases within the comment are counted ONCE in each of the relevant categories i.e. 4 aspects in one comment.

Small class size, one to one interaction with staff. Field trips. Not stressful in terms of exams

Learning Community:

- Exploration of academic interests
- Class sizes

Generic Skills:

- Professional skills and experience

Assessment

- Types of assessment

⁷ Available from Quality Assurance Officer (Learning and Teaching)

Part A Key Performance Indicators

This section relates directly to areas of the student experience which are encompassed by the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) linked numerical items in the survey (Generic Skills; Good Teaching; and Overall Satisfaction)

Page references

1	Generic Skills	(pages 11 – 12)
2	Good Teaching	(pages 13 – 14)
3	Overall Satisfaction	(pages 15 – 16)

The following information is included for each KPI:

- Coverage: CEQ survey items; Qualitative data analysis categories
- Summary of 2008 results (KPI linked results and qualitative data analysis)
- Comparative data: KPI linked results 2005 – 2008
i.e. The proportion of students who either agreed or strongly agreed with relevant survey items

1 Generic Skills

Coverage

The *Generic Skills Scale* is an attempt to take into account the extent to which university courses develop graduate attributes. Graduate attributes that may have been acquired in the process of learning discipline knowledge should endure and be applicable in a broader context. Graduate attributes typically identified in this context include communication skills, the capacity to learn new skills and procedures, the capacity to make decisions and solve problems, the ability to apply knowledge to the workplace, and the capacity to work both in teams and with minimum supervision.

CEQ Survey items

- 2 The course helped me develop my ability to work as a team member
- 5 The course sharpened my analytic skills
- 9 The course developed my problem solving skills
- 10 The course improved my skills in written communication
- 11 As a result of my course, I feel confident about tackling unfamiliar problems
- 22 My course helped me to develop the ability to plan my own work.

Qualitative data analysis

There are 5 sub-categories within Generic Skills, against which students comments are analysed. These match the five main University Generic Graduate Attributes. The components of these sub-categories are allied to the skills and abilities for each attribute provided in the University policy framework for Graduate Attributes⁸.

- Research and inquiry (analytical, problem solving, critical thinking, knowledge expansion etc)
- Information literacy (retrieval and use of information)
- Personal and intellectual autonomy (independent learning; planning own work; intellectually curious etc)
- Ethical, social, professional understanding (including group/ team skills; professional skills and experience)
- Communication (written and oral; communicating with others; communicating understanding)

Summary

KPI LINKED RESULTS

The KPI linked CEQ results for Generic Skills currently sit at 77%. This is identical to the 2007 score and 22% higher than that for 2006. The University average for Generic skills is 60%.

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- 36% of respondents to the CEQ who supplied written observations indicated that they were satisfied with the hands-on practical work and experience, clinical practice, and field trips.

Suggested improvements

- One respondent indicated that more practical components would have been appreciated.

⁸ http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/graduateAttributes/policy_framework.pdf

1.1 Comparative results: Quantitative data 2004–2008

The following graph shows the proportion of graduates who either strongly agreed or agreed with the relevant survey items for Generic Skills in the CEQ.

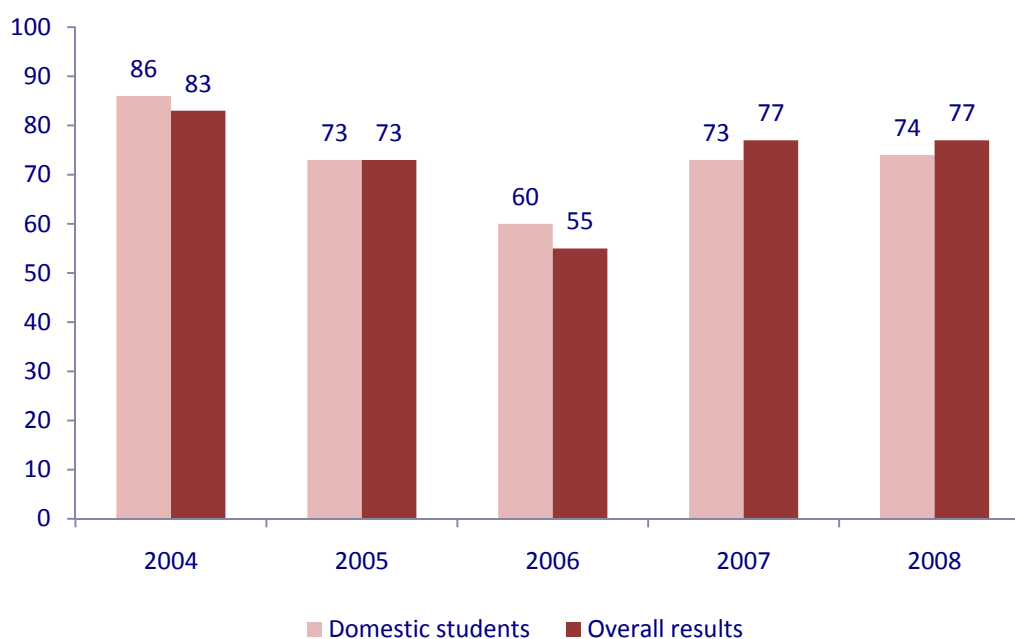


Figure 1: Generic Skills: KPI linked results: CEQ 2004 – 2008

1.2 Comparative results: Focus of written observations 2002; 2004; 2006–2008

The following table includes the percentage of comments received from respondents to the surveys, that can be classified as areas of best practice or areas for improvement under the heading of Generic Skills. The trends provide an indication of graduate satisfaction with the development of University graduate attributes / generic skills in 2002; 2004 and 2006-2008.

	CEQ 2002	CEQ 2004	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007	CEQ 2008
Areas of best practice	50%	89%	46%	27%	36%
Suggested improvements	57%	0%	7%	20%	7%

2 Good Teaching

Coverage

The *Good Teaching Scale* is characterised by practices such as providing students with feedback on their progress, explaining things, making the course interesting, motivating students, and understanding students' problems. There is a body of research linking these practices to learning outcomes. High scores on the *Good Teaching Scale* are associated with the perception that these practices are present. Lower scores reflect a perception that these practices occur less frequently.

CEQ Survey items

- 3 The teaching staff of this course motivated me to do my best work.
- 7 The staff put a lot of time into commenting on my work.
- 15 The staff made a real effort to understand difficulties I might be having with my work
- 17 The teaching staff normally gave me helpful feedback on how I was going.
- 18 My lecturers were extremely good at explaining things.
- 20 The teaching staff worked hard to make their subjects interesting.

Qualitative data analysis

There are 6 sub-categories within the Good Teaching Scale, against which students comments are analysed. Each of these sub-categories may be further broken down into relevant aspects (or components) of the student experience of Good Teaching. The components of these sub-categories are based on the SCEQ survey items together with recurring themes in students' comments.

- Good teaching experiences (interesting, teaching methods, discussions encouraged etc)
- Motivating teaching (enthusiasm, inspiration, passion of teachers)
- Concern and care for student learning (understanding difficulties with work; supportive; approachable)
- Good explanations received (includes English language proficiency of teachers)
- Feedback on work (timely, constructive)
- Research-enhanced learning and teaching (integration of research into curriculum; knowledge of lecturers' research; participation in research projects; scholarship of teaching and learning⁹)

Summary

KPI LINKED RESULTS

The KPI linked results for Good Teaching increased considerably since 2006, and currently sit at 65%, an increase of 3% on the 2007 result, and 14% on the 2006 result. The University average for Good Teaching is 50%.

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- One respondent appreciated the mentoring received during their course

Suggested improvements

- 27% of respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied with teaching practices across the faculty
- Concerns included: feedback on work; and the quality of lectures

⁹ The development of research skills is included in Generic Skills: Information Literacy

2.1 Comparative results: Quantitative data 2004–2008

The following graph shows the proportion of graduates who either strongly agreed or agreed with the relevant survey item statements for Good Teaching in the CEQ.

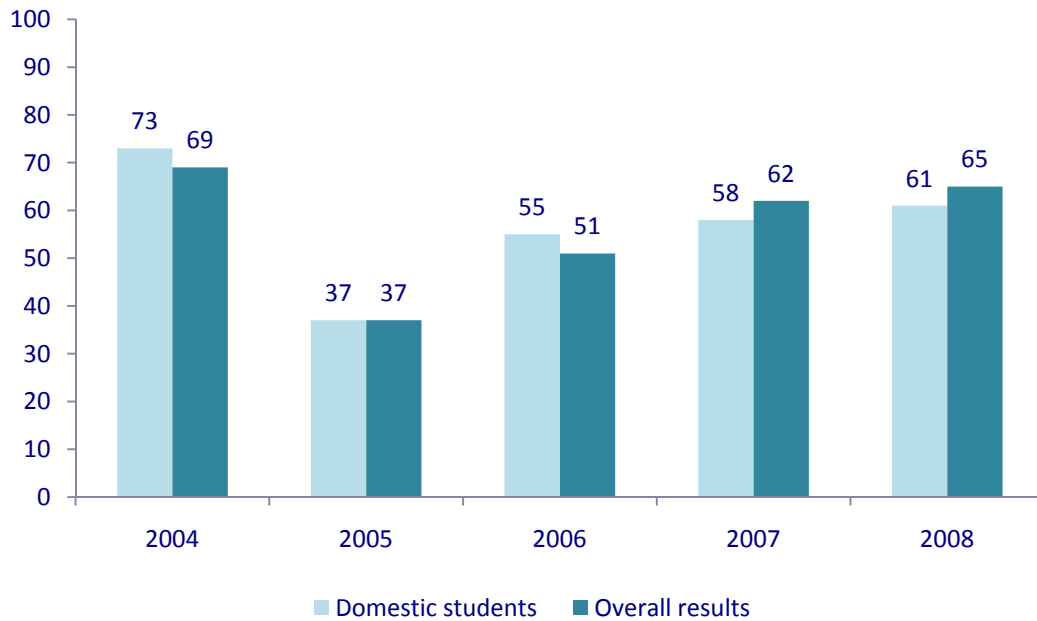


Figure 2: Good Teaching : KPI linked results: CEQ 2004 – 2008

2.2 Comparative results: Focus of written observations 2002; 2004; 2006–2008

The following table includes the percentage of comments received from respondents to the surveys, that can be classified as areas of best practice or areas for improvement, providing an indication of trends in the graduate experience of Good Teaching in 2002; 2004 and 2006-2008, as indicated in the responses to open questions in the CEQ.

	CEQ 2002	CEQ 2004	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007	CEQ 2008
Areas of best practice	25%	33%	31%	27%	14%
Suggested improvements	0%	29%	14%	30%	27%

3 Overall Satisfaction

Coverage

This single item asks graduates about their overall level of satisfaction with their degree course.

CEQ Survey items

25 I am happy with the quality of this degree course.

Qualitative data analysis

There are 4 sub-categories, within the KPI Overall Satisfaction. They represent the range of aspects of the student experience which are considered to have a major influence on the quality of the degree experience, and which are not covered elsewhere.

- Reputation of the University/ Faculty/ degree (including reputation in the professional arena)
- Quality of the degree
- Value for money (cost of course; entry standard of students; level of course content)
- Qualifications (teaching/ subject), knowledge and relevant experience of academic staff

Summary

KPI LINKED RESULTS

The 2008 KPI linked results for Overall Satisfaction (90%) maintains the high scores recorded in 2004 (92%) and 2007 (87%). The 2005 and 2006 scores were below 60%. The University average for this KPI is 65%.

QUALITATIVE DATA

Best practice

- One respondent who answered the open question on best practice indicated that there were some outstanding lecturers; whilst another indicated that they were happy to have finished.

Suggested improvements

- Two respondents indicated that improvements were required regarding the quality of staff, recognition of volunteer tutors, and the need for more tutors

3.1 Comparative results: Quantitative data 2002–2008

The following graph shows the proportion of graduates who either strongly agreed or agreed with the survey statement 'Overall I am satisfied with the quality of this degree course' in the CEQ.

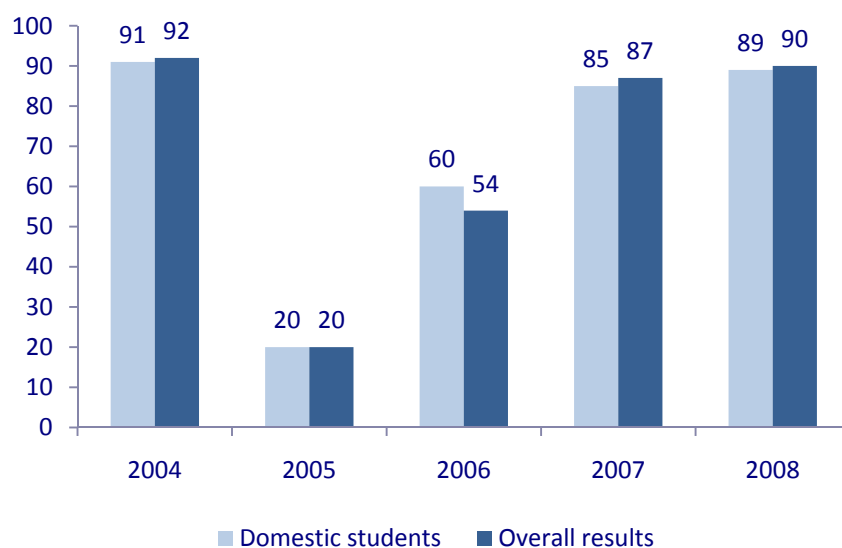


Figure 3: Overall Satisfaction: KPI linked results: CEQ 2004 – 2008

3.2 Comparative results: Focus of written observations 2002; 2004; 2006–2008

The following table includes the percentage of comments received from respondents to the surveys, that can be classified as areas of best practice or areas for improvement, providing an indication of trends in students' overall satisfaction in 2002; 2004 and 2006-2008.

	CEQ 2002	CEQ 2004	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007	CEQ 2008
Areas of best practice	0%	11%	31%	36%	14%
Suggested improvements	14%	29%	14%	20%	13%

Part B Additional areas of the student experience

Respondents to the CEQ who provide written observations on their experiences, often refer to areas of their experience that are not directly related to the KPI linked numerical items on the survey, but are related to the extended CEQ scale of Learning Community; in addition to Curriculum (Programme of Study), and Faculty/ Department Student Administration. Since these topics may be mentioned in up to 50% of comments received, they are included in this report in order to provide a full picture of issues which were perceived by respondents to the CEQ to be either of best practice or in need of improvement during their period of study at the University.

Page references

4	Learning Community	(page 18)
5	Curriculum	(page 19)
6	Faculty/ Department Student Administration	(page 20)

The following information is provided for each of the above areas of the student experience:

- Coverage: Qualitative data analysis categories
- Summary of 2008 results (qualitative data analysis)
- Comparative results: Focus of written observations: 2002- 2003; 2005 – 2008
i.e. The percentage of comments received from respondents to the survey that can be classified as areas of best practice or suggested improvements. Presented as the total received for the relevant KPI

4 Learning Community

Coverage

Learning Community concerns student perceptions of the social experience of learning at university. It indicates the student's sense of belonging to a community where learning with other people is a priority. It includes: being part of a group of students and staff committee to learning; exploration of ideas with other people; students ideas and suggestions being listened to during the course; exploration of academic interests with staff and students.

CEQ Survey items

The CEQ does not include items relating to Learning Community.

Qualitative data analysis

There are 5 sub-categories within Learning Community, against which students comments are analysed.

- Learning environment (exploration of academic interests with staff and students; tutorials; belonging to a community; social experiences; cultural diversity; equity issues; class sizes)
- Location/ isolation (all campuses, hospitals, institutes)
- Induction and orientation programs
- Responsiveness by staff to student feedback on the course
- Physical resources (physical facilities (buildings; computer access; library)

Each of these sub-categories are further broken down into relevant aspects (or components) of the student experience of being part of a community where learning with other people is a priority. Respect for cultural diversity and equity for all students are an important part of this experience; as is being listened to by academic staff. Together with 5: Curriculum, Learning Community is an essential ingredient in forming the students' opinion of their overall satisfaction with the quality of their degree experience.

Summary

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- 43% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the Learning Community aspect of their experience
- All of these comments referred to the learning environment including: the exploration of academic interests in tutorials and other fora; the camaraderie of the student body; and class sizes

Suggested improvements

- One respondent would appreciate improvements in the quality of equipment in the dental hospital

4.1 Comparative results: Focus of written observations 2002; 2004; 2006–2008

The following table includes the percentage of comments received from respondents to the surveys, that can be classified as areas of best practice or areas for improvement, providing an indication of trends in the graduate experience of the Learning Community in 2002; 2004; 2006 - 2008.

	CEQ 2002	CEQ 2004	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007	CEQ 2008
Areas of best practice	0%	11%	23%	0%	43%
Suggested improvements	14%	0%	14%	10%	7%

5 Curriculum

Coverage

Curriculum concerns student perceptions of curriculum (program structure) used in their degree course. Initiative LT1 in the new University Strategic Plan 2007 - 2010 states that we “Improve academic program structures to achieve greater coherence; provide choice while maintaining flexibility; and ensuring continuing relevance of our courses to students and employers¹⁰”. Qualitative data from the CEQ is used to help provide evidence of change in this area of the student experience.

CEQ Survey items

The CEQ does not include items relating to Curriculum.

Qualitative data analysis

There are 6 sub-categories within Curriculum, against which students comments are analysed:

- Content and structure of degree(s) (intensive courses; relationship between Units of Study; content of Units of Study; relevance to work/ career/ industry)
- Online mode of delivery (WebCT)
- Flexibility of degree, including ability to take a range of Units of Study
- Availability/ cancellation of advertised courses
- Combined/ Cross faculty degrees
- Special programs (Talented students *and* Honours programs)

Together with 4: Learning Community, Curriculum is an essential ingredient in forming the students' opinion of their overall satisfaction with the quality of their degree experience

Summary

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- 2 respondents indicated their appreciation of the following aspects:
 - The dental public health and preventive dentistry aimed at the population, and the research component;
 - Being able to specialise as a periodontist

Suggested improvements

- 20% of respondents suggested improvements in the following areas:
 - The lecture program;
 - The need to include public health units covered under Master of Public Health;
 - The delivery of one online unit

5.1 Comparative results: Focus of written observations 2002; 2004; 2006–2008

The following table includes the percentage of comments received from respondents to the surveys, that can be classified as areas of best practice or areas for improvement, providing an indication of trends in the graduate experience of Curriculum in 2002; 2004; 2006 - 2008.

	CEQ 2002	CEQ 2004	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007	CEQ 2008
Areas of best practice	50%	22%	31%	27%	14%
Suggested improvements	57%	43%	36%	30%	20%

¹⁰ See http://www.usyd.edu.au/strategy/learn_teach/initiatives.shtml

6 Faculty/ Department Student Administration

Coverage

Any comments that students make relating to administrative and organisational aspects of their degree experience in answer to questions on degree experience; and how that affects their overall learning experience.

CEQ Survey items

The CEQ does not include items relating to faculty/ department student administration.

Qualitative data analysis

There are 4 components within Faculty/ Department Student Administration, against which students comments are analysed. They represent the range of administration and organisation issues which are considered to be essential to student satisfaction with this aspect of their degree experience and/or overall satisfaction with the course, and which are included in student surveys of teaching:

- General comments on the overall quality of Faculty/ Department administration and organisation;
- Organisation of placements/ internships
- Scheduling of classes/ examinations;
- Communication between staff (academic and general) and students;

Summary

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- No respondents to the 2008 CEQ mentioned administration as an area of best practice in their response to the question "What were the best aspects of your course experience?"

Suggested improvements

- 20% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with this area of their experience
- Areas of concern included: organisational problems and changing timetables.

6.1 Comparative results: Focus of written observations 2002; 2004; 2006–2008

The following table includes the percentage of qualitative comments received from respondents to the survey which can be classified as areas of best practice or areas for improvement, providing an indication of trends in the graduates' experience of Faculty / Department Student Administration in 2002, 2004, 2006 - 2008

	CEQ 2002	CEQ 2004	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007	CEQ 2008
Areas of best practice	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Suggested improvements	14%	0%	21%	30%	20%

Attachment A CEQ 2008: Categorised list of comments

The following comments were received from postgraduate coursework level graduates in response to the 2008 CEQ. The broad area(s) by which each comment has been analysed is indicated in the second column.

14 respondents provided written observations relating to Areas of Best Practice; 15 respondents suggested improvements

Areas of best practice

COMMENT	AREAS OF LEARNING AND TEACHING
Discussions, sharing of experiences/methods with colleagues.	<i>LEARNING COMMUNITY</i>
Practical.	<i>CURRICULUM</i>
The camaraderie developed with the other candidates - we all worked well together and helped each other.	<i>LEARNING COMMUNITY</i>
Mentoring.	<i>GOOD TEACHING</i>
Hands on experience.	<i>GENERIC SKILLS</i>
Learning from other people's mistakes and learning how not to have them.	<i>LEARNING COMMUNITY</i>
The hands-on practical work at Westmead Hospital.	<i>GENERIC SKILLS</i>
Some outstanding lecturers.	<i>OVERALL SATISFACTION</i>
Clinical practical works.	<i>GENERIC SKILLS</i>
Multiple opinions. Class camaraderie.	<i>LEARNING COMMUNITY</i>
Speciality as a periodontist.	<i>CURRICULUM</i>
The best aspects of the course are dental public health and preventive dentistry aimed at the population. I also enjoyed the research component of the course.	<i>CURRICULUM</i>
Finished.	<i>OVERALL SATISFACTION</i>
Small class size, one to one interaction with staff. Field trips. Not stressful in terms of exams.	<i>LEARNING COMMUNITY</i> <i>GENERIC SKILLS</i> <i>ASSESSMENT</i>

Suggested improvements

COMMENT	ASPECTS OF LEARNING AND TEACHING
Amount of theoretical/research component.	<i>CURRICULUM</i>
Lecture program.	<i>CURRICULUM</i>
The quality of some of the lectures can be improved.	<i>GOOD TEACHING</i>
Throughout the course there was some wasted time due to organisational problems.	<i>FACULTY ADMINISTRATION</i>
Lectures.	<i>GOOD TEACHING</i>
Equipment in dental hospital.	<i>LEARNING COMMUNITY</i>

COMMENT

**ASPECTS OF LEARNING
AND TEACHING**

Getting the lecturers or speakers ready. Schedule was changing often.

*GOOD TEACHING
FACULTY ADMINISTRATION*

We have kind volunteer tutors in the clinics. They need more recognition from the university as well as more awareness of the need for more teaching staff and tutors.

QUALITY OF STAFF

More practical components.

GENERIC SKILLS

Feedback on assignments.

GOOD TEACHING

Planning and organisation. Explanation of assignment questions.

*FACULTY ADMINISTRATION
CLEAR GOALS AND
STANDARDS*

More time for reading journals.

WORKLOAD

The course needs to include public health units that are covered under the Master of public health. This is to broaden our knowledge and understanding as far as public health is concerned and not mere confined to dental public health.

CURRICULUM

Some.

OVERALL SATISFACTION

One online course with staff not in XXX was difficult for all of us.

CURRICULUM

Attachment B SCEQ 2007: Categorised list of comments

The following comments were received from current students in response to the 2007 SCEQ (which is the year in which respondents to the 2008 completed their studies) . The broad area(s) by which each comment has been analysed is indicated in the second column.

24 respondents provided written observations relating to Areas of Best Practice; 22 respondents suggested improvements

Areas of best practice

COMMENT	AREAS OF LEARNING AND TEACHING
Ability to combine my work with a full time quality degree. Contact with two best academics/ professionals in the field.	<i>CURRICULUM OVERALL SATISFACTION</i>
Clinical time ? session active interaction with teachers.	<i>GENERIC SKILLS LEARNING COMMUNITY</i>
Cohesive student environment-> increased diversity of equipment skill sets-> increased awareness of management methodologies and subject matter.	<i>GENERIC SKILLS LEARNING COMMUNITY</i>
Excellent consultants with varied backgrounds and special interests; working at Westmead provides many exciting cases due to the large referral base.	<i>GENERIC SKILLS OVERALL SATISFACTION</i>
Intellectual discussion of problems and cases with class mates.	<i>LEARNING COMMUNITY</i>
Part time nature - difficult when in full time employment develop skills and enough knowledge gained for independent appraisal of new knowledge as presented.	<i>GENERIC SKILLS</i>
Relaxed atmosphere, good staff.	<i>LEARNING COMMUNITY OVERALL SATISFACTION</i>
Small group. Able to interact with others and enough attention from staff and professors.	<i>LEARNING COMMUNITY</i>
Small year group facilities interactive learning.	<i>LEARNING COMMUNITY</i>
Teaching by experienced and highly skilled clinicians.	<i>OVERALL SATISFACTION</i>
The practical and hands on experience with patients. The one-on-one with tutors.	<i>GENERIC SKILLS</i>
Very practical course.	<i>CURRICULUM</i>
creative knowledge, high profile staff and understanding the subject without memorizing	<i>CURRICULUM OVERALL SATISFACTION</i>
Freedom.	<i>CURRICULUM</i>
Great academic staff and clinical tutors to learn from. Very good experience and are patient and professional in their instruction and guidance. Excellent range and variety of clinical experience	<i>CURRICULUM GENERIC SKILLS GOOD TEACHING OVERALL SATISFACTION</i>
interaction with other students	<i>LEARNING COMMUNITY</i>
It probably is the tension free atmosphere that helps you operate at your full potential.	<i>LEARNING COMMUNITY</i>
Meeting new friends who are going through the same experience	<i>LEARNING COMMUNITY</i>
my fellow student colleagues	<i>LEARNING COMMUNITY</i>

COMMENT

Research aspect is the best part of my degree course cause it gives me ideal platform for my future researches

AREAS OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

GOOD TEACHING

The feedback from experienced professionals and specialist

GOOD TEACHING

The teaching staff and resource available to us when needed

GOOD TEACHING

we have only one person in our department we truly works hard and fortunately he heads the department.

OVERALL SATISFACTION

Well, you can learn how to communicate with different people. I think it is good. Cos, it is very important skill, isn't it?

GENERIC SKILLS

Suggested improvements**COMMENT**

A clearer guide to the important points to focus on in a topic. We have an extensive reading list which includes not only the relevant information but the misinformation as well.

AREAS OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

CLEAR GOALS AND STANDARDS

Administrator-> was not told when course be given. -> units of study changed and I was not informed and hence pre enrolment was difficult. Not informed on what depth of knowledge is required or given clear goals.

*CLEAR GOALS AND STANDARDS
CURRICULUM
FACULTY ADMINISTRATION*

At the moment our 'research day' is actually 2 half days, which often get interrupted by the clinical aspect of work. It would be much better if a complete day was scheduled for research.

GOOD TEACHING

Communication/Admin. timetable and schedule should be issued well advance and not change.

FACULTY ADMINISTRATION

Get rid of the few power- dominating tutors/ lecturers.

OVERALL SATISFACTION

Improved scheduling of coursework blocks.

FACULTY ADMINISTRATION

More checking in with students in the time between practicals. Need one sort of forum on the Internet to meet regularly. Many of us are from all over Australia. Only see peers at the start and the end.

LEARNING COMMUNITY

More clarity with expectations of students.

CLEAR GOALS AND STANDARDS

More simulation ??resuscitation training.

GENERIC SKILLS

Our tuition fees are not used for our education. They do not pay our tutors. I do not use uni facilities except online. \$21000 annually - and barely any is used for my education. Most of our education is funded by Westmead hospital. This is not just.

OVERALL SATISFACTION

Part of the program is not sufficiently developed due to lack of staff/ supervisors.

OVERALL SATISFACTION

career guidance aspect of my course could be improved upon , moreover it would really help if little clinical aspect was also involved in my course.

GENERIC SKILLS

Facilities available for students. (e.g.. larger common room) More structured coursework for theory regarding dental implants

*CURRICULUM
LEARNING COMMUNITY*

Increase clinical tutors because there are very little at present.

OVERALL SATISFACTION

Most things. The teaching is poor, the facilities for students are poor. We have much more work to do than a normal masters degree does.

*GOOD TEACHING
LEARNING COMMUNITY*

COMMENT

AREAS OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

There is no room for having a balanced life for the 3 yrs that one is in the course.

WORKLOAD

not clear what to do after completing it, job opportunities are not clear

OVERALL SATISFACTION

Organisation, learning outcomes, bringing the course up to date with current practice and topics worldwide.

*CLEAR GOALS AND STANDARDS
CURRICULUM
FACULTY ADMINISTRATION*

The work load!

WORKLOAD

Timetable organisation is very haphazard. Also resistance from General Anaesthetic department in Westmead

FACULTY ADMINISTRATION

we do not have adequate staff in our department and also in the clinic. sometimes I feel very helpless and disappointed when I really need guidance from a staff member. the number of dental chairs are less than the number of students enrolled and few of them are not in a working condition.

*GOOD TEACHING
LEARNING COMMUNITY
OVERALL SATISFACTION*

Well for one I feel since this degree is related to Public Health Dentistry, using staff from the School of Public Health to teach subjects like Biostatistics, Epidemiology, Health Promotion etc, will benefit the students more. The reason being that Staff from the School of Public Health specialize in these subjects where as if a dentist teaches these subjects their knowledge would most definitely be lacking in many areas of such subjects.

OVERALL SATISFACTION

Well, if international students can get more scholarship, that would be great!

OVERALL SATISFACTION