



The University of Sydney

Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning

The Student Experience of Learning and Teaching
(Bachelor level graduates)

Course Experience Questionnaire 2002 – 2008
*Including the focus of written observations received from
respondents to the 2008 survey*

June 2009

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Executive summary

Data about the experiences of bachelor level graduates from the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning 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 bachelor 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; Clear Goals and Standards; and Faculty / Department Student Administration).

Written observations, from respondents to the surveys, about their experiences provide evidence to support the Faculty KPI linked results (percentage agreement scores), 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 observations in the following groupings¹:

- 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 bachelor 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 respondents in answer to open ended questions on the best areas of their experience and those that were considered to be in need of improvement.

Generic Skills (Section 1; pages 11-13)

KPI LINKED RESULTS

After a low of 46% in 2007, the Faculty KPI linked results for Generic Skills has returned to the high 50s, and currently sits at 58%. The University average for Generic Skills is 66%.

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- 17% of respondents to the CEQ mentioned the acquisition of skills and abilities across the whole range of University Graduate Attributes
- 5% of these referred to the Research and Inquiry cluster: problem solving; analytical and critical thinking; and the expansion of knowledge on a subject
- The majority of comments which fell within the remit of Ethical, Social and Professional Understanding related to the development of group and team work skills (4%), rather than professional skills (2%).
- Sample comment: *"Team projects had helped students in developing qualities that are quintessential in the workforce"*

Suggested improvements

- 8% of respondents to the CEQ suggested improvements to this area of their experience
- Of these, 6% considered that they were not provided with enough opportunities to advance their professional or disciplinary skills; or with information which would be useful when commencing work in an architectural office (procedures, culture etc).
- Sample comment: *"In general I think the course would be better if it placed greater emphasis on helping students to gain the skills necessary to both complete the course and to enter the workforce i.e. printing, CAD work, drawing etc. At the moment the programs don't provide any proper formal training and the skills gained are not highly relevant or practical".*

¹ Please contact Rachel Symons (r.symons@usyd.edu.au or 9351 6560) to discuss your requirements.

Good Teaching (Section 2, pages 14-16)

KPI LINKED RESULTS

The KPI linked CEQ results for Good Teaching have increased considerably over the past four surveys, and currently sit at 51%, which represents an increase of 6% on the 2007 result, and is 13% higher than 2004/2005. The University average for Good Teaching is 47%.

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- 20% of respondents were satisfied with teaching practices in place across the Faculty.
- 12% of respondents appreciated the use of a variety of teaching methods; interesting lectures and tutorials; together with the ability of some lecturers to motivate students to do their best work
- Sample comment: *"Some very friendly, helpful staff. Staff that presented lectures in interesting ways. Subjects that were very interesting and exciting that motivated me to work very hard"*

Suggested improvements

- 30% of respondents were dissatisfied with this area of their experience
- 12% suggested that improvements could be made in the teaching methods used by some academic staff; and that lectures could be made more interesting
- The lack of timely and constructive feedback on submitted work was raised as an area of concern in 8% of the comments received; whilst the 6% considered that staff were unhelpful and did not understand students' problems
- Sample comment: *"Further attention to the quality of tutors is also needed especially in 1st and 2nd year. Some showed little to no interest in their students, or were unable to teach effectively. Furthermore there was a lack of organisation in the lectures, many tutors or lecturers never turned up for classes"*

Overall Satisfaction (Section 3; pages 17-18)

KPI LINKED RESULTS

The 2008 KPI linked result for Overall Satisfaction of 59% is the highest since 2005, and represents an increase of 16% on the 2007 result of 43%, and 6% on the 2006 result. The 2008 University average was 67%.

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- 3% of respondents (5/169) expressed satisfaction with that area of their experience that falls within the remit of Overall Satisfaction
- Sample comment: *"Ability to participate in exchange program at overseas University"*

Suggested improvements

- 14% of respondents suggested improvements in this area of their experience
- The majority of comments (9%) referred to the quality of staff, particularly in relation to teaching skills and relevant knowledge and experience
- Additional areas of concern related to the quality of the degree: professional standing; comparison to similar degrees at other universities etc.
- Sample comment: *"Tutors would not often give you enough time and often appeared disinterested. It would be useful to train tutors in teaching, not only choose them on their architecture skills."*

Learning Community (Section 4; pages 19-20)

NB: The CEQ does not include items relating to Learning Community

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- 50% of respondents provided written observations on the value of this area of their experience. This maintains the results of previous years, where the percentage of positive comments on this topic has consistently been above 45%.
- 34% appreciated the community feel of the Faculty, the friendships and networks developed with peers, opportunities to explore academic interests with staff and students during studio work, tutorials and other discussion fora; and the relatively small class sizes.
- The Architecture library (5%) and physical facilities, especially the newly renovated building (9%) were also valued by respondents
- Sample comment: *"Close knit community within the faculty. Building renovation was fabulous and made final years of course very pleasurable"*

Suggested improvements

- 8% of respondents considered that this area of their experience required improvement
- The majority of these comments (6%) referred to the learning environment including: tutorials; class sizes; equity and discrimination
- Sample comment: *"Studio space - there is insufficient space/facility for everyone to work successfully in the studio at once"*

Curriculum (Programme of Study) (Section 5: pages 21-23)

NB: The CEQ does not include items relating to Curriculum

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- 37% of comments received from respondents to the CEQ expressed satisfaction with the programme of study completed during their degree. This
- 22% appreciated the subject content of the curriculum
- The flexibility of the course structure, and the range of electives available was welcomed by 7% of respondents; whilst a further 8% were satisfied with the practical components of the course.
- Sample comment: *"The course touched on some very interesting areas (such as Agents/Artificial Intelligence in Design). The course covered a wide variety of areas, and in sufficient depth that I could develop all of them further when required. Some subjects and projects proved to be rather good mental exercise, requiring me to extend and change or flesh out my understanding of certain concepts and topics"*

Suggested improvements

- 39% of respondents to the CEQ expressed concern about the programme of study undertaken during their degree.
- A high proportion (22%) mentioned that the subject content was not always relevant, and not up to date with industry practice
- 8% of respondents were dissatisfied with the practical components of the course
- Sample comment: *"Structure of main units of study seems a bit disorganized and sketchy - need to teach us more technical information from the start!"*

Appropriate Assessment (Section 6; pages 24-25)

NB: The CEQ does not include items relating to Appropriate Assessment

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- 9% of respondents to the CEQ mentioned that they were satisfied with assessment practices within the Faculty
- 7% commended the Faculty for allowing them freedom in their design projects and offering challenging assignments
- Sample comment: *"Lots of freedom and creativity allowed in projects and assignments"*

Suggested improvements

- 11% of respondents were dissatisfied with assessment practices
- Standardisation and parity of marking across tutorial groups was the main area of concern (7% of comments received)
- Sample comment: *"Fairer grading system (marks were not evenly distributed with some groups obtaining higher average marks than other tutorial groups)"*

Appropriate Workload (Section 7; page 26)

NB: The CEQ does not include items relating to Appropriate Workload

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- One respondent was happy with the workload and considered that *"The amount of stress and pressure I was put through during the course helped me in the work force"*

Suggested improvements

- 6% of respondents deemed the workload to be high; or that assessments needed to be more spaced out across the semester
- Sample comment: *"Need to space out assessment deadlines at end of semester for each subject. Final workloads become too excessive and stressful"*

Clear Goals and Standards (Section 8; page 27)

NB: The CEQ does not include items relating to Clear Goals and Standards

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- One respondent commented that *"High standards [were] expected of assessments"*

Suggested improvements

- 9% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with this area of their experience
- 6% would appreciate clearer definition of assessment requirements
- Sample comment: *"Sometimes I also felt that a little more transparency regarding assessments would have been good"*

Faculty/ Department Student Administration (Section 9; pages 28-29)

NB: The CEQ does not include items relating to Faculty/ Department Student Administration

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- 2/169 respondents were satisfied with communication between staff and students, and the scheduling of classes and tutorials
- Sample comment: *"The hours required at university. I think is good because it allows for work at home/part-time work for experience in professional life"*

Suggested improvements

- 9% of respondents considered this area of their experience to be in need of improvement.
- Sample comment: *"Overall organisation. Unclear communication, lack of information on assessments and administration"*

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June 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
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?
Percentage of comments received	The number of times an aspect is mentioned within written observations of respondents received from respondents is presented as a percentage of the total number of comments received from respondents to the CEQ 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 2009.²

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 undergraduate student experience of learning and teaching in the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning between 2002 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 (7: Generic Skills; 8: Good Teaching; and 9: Overall Satisfaction) plus additional factors (Learning Community; Curriculum; Assessment; Workload; Clear Goals and Standards; and Faculty/ Department Student Administration) 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.

² 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 2004 – 2008³

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.

	CEQ 2004	CEQ 2005	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007	CEQ 2008
	n=	n=	n=	n=	n=
Domestic students	16	85	75	13	115
International students	0	2	4	1	16
Overall	15	95	79	14	150

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 2002 - 2008

Areas of best practice	CEQ 2002	CEQ 2003	CEQ 2004	CEQ 2005	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007	CEQ 2008
	n=	n=	n=	n=	n=	n=	n=
Domestic		51	13	49	72	7	157
International		5	0	2	4	1	12
Total	22	56	13	51	76	8	169

Suggested improvements	CEQ 2002	CEQ 2003	CEQ 2004	CEQ 2005	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007	CEQ 2008
	n=	n=	n=	n=	n=	n=	n=
Domestic		52	12	53	72	8	157
International		5	0	1	6	1	14
Total	20	57	12	54	78	9	171

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

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

Qualitative data only: Where the number of respondents who have supplied written observations on their experiences is between 5 and 10 results are excluded from the report as they lie within the lower range of statistics that should be viewed with caution. This is indicated in the relevant tables by the phrase *Too few comments*

³ Data retrieved from the ITL AGS/CEQ website results and reports for the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning on 25.09.08 and 18.05.09 http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/ceq/tpi_report.cfm

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 XXX, YYY or ZZZ.

5 Analysis of comments

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

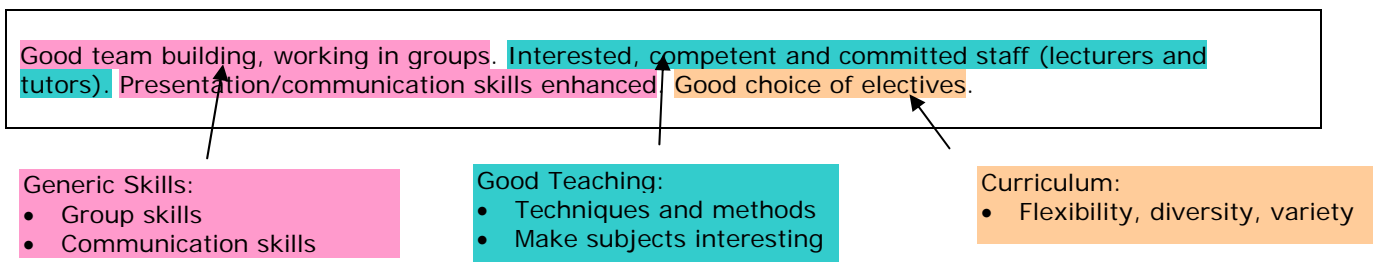
- Characteristics that define the area of the student experience
- CEQ survey items (Generic Skills; Good Teaching; and Overall Satisfaction only)
- recurring themes in students' comments and have been developed over many years of analysing qualitative data from students' surveys.

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.

6 Counting of comments

Each comment is analysed according to the *Taxonomy for analysing qualitative data from the SCEQ/CEQ⁴*, 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 Curriculum (Content and Structure); Learning Community (Tutorials; Class size); Generic Skills (Professional skills and experience); Good Teaching (Techniques and Methods); and Faculty Department Student Administration (Practicum organisation) , the highlighted phrases within the comment are counted ONCE in each of the relevant categories i.e. 6 aspects in one comment.



⁴ Available from Quality Assurance Officer (Learning and Teaching)

1 Generic Skills (KPI 7)

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 Attributes⁵.

- 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

After a low of 46% in 2007, the Faculty KPI linked results for Generic Skills has returned to the high 50s, and currently sits at 58%. The University average for Generic Skills is 66%.

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- 17% of respondents to the CEQ mentioned the acquisition of skills and abilities across the whole range of University Graduate Attributes
- 5% of these referred to the Research and Inquiry cluster: problem solving; analytical and critical thinking; and the expansion of knowledge on a subject
- The majority of comments which fell within the remit of Ethical, Social and Professional Understanding related to the development of group and team work skills (4%), rather than professional skills (2%).

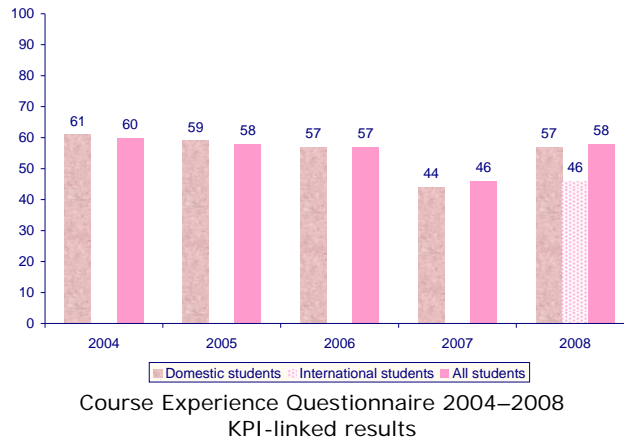
Suggested improvements

- 8% of respondents to the CEQ suggested improvements to this area of their experience
- Of these, 6% considered that they were not provided with enough opportunities to advance their professional or disciplinary skills; or with information which would be useful when commencing work in an architectural office (procedures, culture etc).

⁵ http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/graduateAttributes/policy_framework.pdf

1.1 Comparative results: Quantitative data 2004–2008

The following tables show the proportion of students who either strongly agreed or agreed with relevant survey items for Generic Skills in the CEQ.



1.2 Comparative results: Focus of written observations 2002–2008

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 between 2002 and 2008.

	CEQ 2002	CEQ 2003	CEQ 2004	CEQ 2005	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007	CEQ 2008
Areas of best practice	Domestic		13%	0%	10%	8%	17%
	International		<i>Too few comments</i>				33%
	All	0%	13%	0%	10%	8%	17%
Suggested improvements	Domestic		2%	0%	6%	15%	8%
	International		<i>Too few comments</i>				7%
	All	10%	2%	0%	6%	17%	8%

1.3 Key issues for coursework graduates (CEQ 2008)

1.3.1 Areas of best practice

	Domestic (n=157)	International (n=12)	All (n=169)
Ethical, social, professional understanding			
- Ability to work in a group/ team working skills	6%	8%	6%
- Development of discipline/ professional skills			
- Presence of work placement/ industry experience in the course			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *Team projects had helped students in developing qualities that are quintessential in the workforce*
- *Problem solving, creatively and on your own and working as a team. Learning how to design*
- *Good team building, working in groups. Presentation/communication skills enhanced. Good choice of electives*

Sample comments: international students

- *The best aspects of my course is to create the original idea inspired by own and group brainstorming and research skills*
- *Focusing on teaching students how to do high level research while still in undergraduate level*
- *You learn to manage your time to complete the work in given amount of time*

1.3.2 Suggested improvements

	Domestic (n=157)	International (n=14)	All (n=171)
Ethical, social, professional understanding			
- Discipline or professional skills were not developed	7%	0%	6%
- Work placement/ industry experience in the course required			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *Skills were acquired on our own and not demonstrated in our course work. I believe courses should focus on individual types of work and give students a far greater idea of what it would be like in the industry whether it be in graphic design, 3D design, web, movie or even database design*
- *Even though technology is making architects draw less, I still feel it is very important to teach people to draw with pencil and paper and not on the computer. On the contrary, it would have been better to teach us more design computer programs*
- *In general I think the course would be better if it placed greater emphasis on helping students to gain the skills necessary to both complete the course and to enter the workforce i.e. printing, CAD work, drawing etc. At the moment the programs don't provide any proper formal training and the skills gained are not highly relevant or practical*
- *Needs to be more job related/experience - when I got a job the course hadn't taught me anything relevant to a student position in an architecture firm*
- *More industry links required, even to the degree of work experience placement*
- *Run info sessions where that could help student to get into the office and build up their experience along side their study schedule. Encourage student to do work experience while study so by the end of the degree students are confident with their ability*

2 Good Teaching (KPI 8)

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 learning⁶)

Summary

KPI LINKED RESULTS

The KPI linked CEQ results for Good Teaching have increased considerably over the past four surveys, and currently sit at 51%, which represents an increase of 6% on the 2007 result, and is 13% higher than 2004/2005. The University average for Good Teaching is 47%.

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- 20% of respondents were satisfied with teaching practices in place across the Faculty.
- 12% of respondents appreciated the use of a variety of teaching methods; interesting lectures and tutorials; together with the ability of some lecturers to motivate students to do their best work

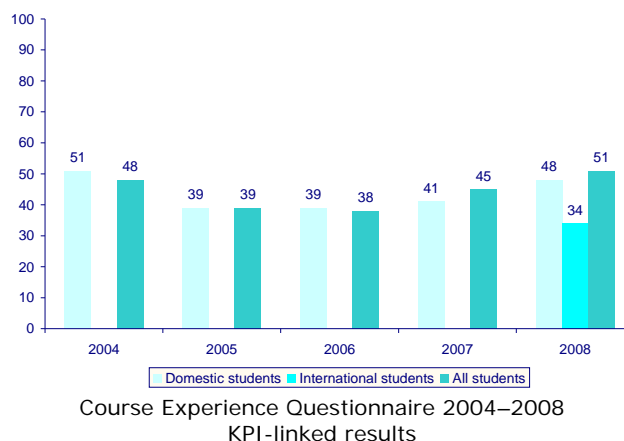
Suggested improvements

- 30% of respondents were dissatisfied with this area of their experience
- 12% suggested that improvements could be made in the teaching methods used by some academic staff; and that lectures could be made more interesting
- The lack of timely and constructive feedback on submitted work was raised as an area of concern in 8% of the comments received; whilst the 6% considered that staff were unhelpful and did not understand students' problems

⁶ The development of research skills is included in Generic Skills: Information Literacy

2.1 Comparative results: Quantitative data 2004–2008

The following tables show the proportion of students who either strongly agreed or agreed with relevant survey item statements for Good Teaching in the SCEQ and the CEQ.



2.2 Comparative results: Focus of written observations 2002–2008

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 between 2002 and 2008, as indicated in the responses to open questions in the SCEQ and the CEQ.

	CEQ 2002	CEQ 2003	CEQ 2004	CEQ 2005	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007	CEQ 2008	
Areas of best practice	Domestic	24%	23%	18%	21%		20%	
	International	<i>Too few comments</i>						8%
	All	14%	21%	23%	18%	20%	20%	
Suggested improvements	Domestic	19%	33%	32%	42%		30%	
	International	<i>Too few comments</i>						29%
	All	45%	18%	33%	31%	40%	30%	

2.3 Key issues for coursework graduates (CEQ 2008)

2.3.1 Areas of best practice

	Domestic (n= 157)	International (n= 12)	All (n= 169)
Good teaching experiences			
- Use of innovative and up to date teaching methods and techniques			
- Ability to keep students interested in the subject	7%	0%	7%
- Encouragement to participate in discussions during lectures and tutorials			
- Learning resources are up to date, and relevant to curriculum			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *Active discussion through design studios and lecture based discussion*
- *Some very friendly, helpful staff. Staff that presented lectures in interesting ways. Subjects that were very interesting and exciting that motivated me to work very hard.*
- *Small tutorial groups, excellent resources, good staff who want to teach and are passionate about architecture. Great library, don't get rid of it*
- *Design Practise - however this depended greatly on the tutor and their individual methods of teaching. Encouragement and guidance was very important*
- *The design tutors in particular were very much in tune with what students wanted and were always willing to listen and help. Design studio - listening, learning, indulging in ideas*
- *Feedback from tutors and lecturers was good*

2.3.2 Suggested improvements

	Domestic (n= 157)	International (n=14)	All (n=171)
Good teaching experiences			
- Teaching methods and techniques used are outdated/need improvement	12%	7%	12%
- Discussions of issues during class were not encouraged			
- Lecturers were boring; did not engage with students			
- Learning materials and resources were outdated			
Concern and care for student learning			
- Students did not feel supported in their learning;	6%	7%	6%
- help and advice was not readily available			
Feedback on work (from staff to students)			
- Comments on work are not constructive; do not explain where mistakes occur that can be rectified.	8%	0%	8%
- Feedback is untimely and not helpful			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *Further attention to the quality of tutors is also needed especially in 1st and 2nd year. Some showed little to no interest in their students, or were unable to teach effectively. Furthermore there was a lack of organisation in the lectures, many tutors or lecturers never turned up for classes*
- *No feedback on submitted work in some classes, more practice exams made available, more constructive feedback in design rather than just harsh and unhelpful comments*
- *Clarity in what was expected in work, some lectures were boring and felt like it wasted my time*
- *Lecture courses are terrible, no effort is put into making subjects interesting by utilising different teaching methods*

Sample comments: international students

- *Lectures on structure, construction and environment are very difficult to follow and understand*
- *A few tutors are bossy and picky, they do not encourage students, but we are forced to follow his/her 'suggestion' in order to satisfy and pass*

3 Overall Satisfaction (KPI 9)

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 result for Overall Satisfaction of 59% is the highest since 2005, and represents an increase of 16% on the 2007 result of 43%, and 6% on the 2006 result. The 2008 University average was 67%.

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

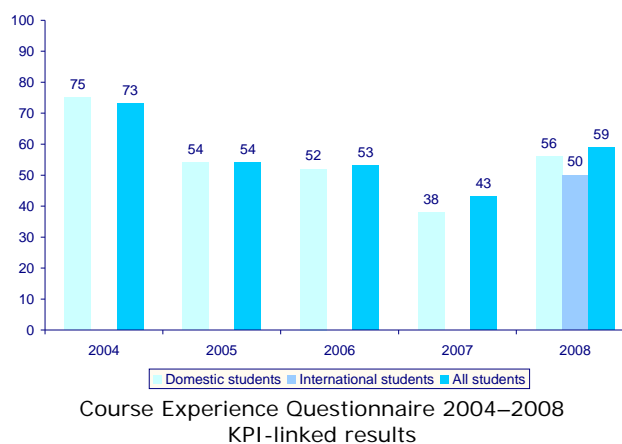
- 3% of respondents (5/169) expressed satisfaction with that area of their experience that falls within the remit of Overall Satisfaction

Suggested improvements

- 14% of respondents suggested improvements in this area of their experience
- The majority of comments (9%) referred to the quality of staff, particularly in relation to teaching skills and relevant knowledge and experience
- Additional areas of concern related to the quality of the degree: professional standing; comparison to similar degrees at other universities etc.

3.1 Comparative results: Quantitative data 2002–2008

The following tables show the proportion of students who either strongly agreed or agreed with the survey statement '*Overall I am satisfied with the quality of this degree course*' in the CEQ.



3.2 Comparative results: Focus of written observations 2002–2008

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 between 2001 and 2007.

		CEQ 2002	CEQ 2003	CEQ 2004	CEQ 2005	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007	CEQ 2008	
Areas of best practice	Domestic		8%	0%	8%	3%		3%	
	International		<i>Too few comments</i>						0%
	All	18%	7%	0%	8%	3%		3%	
Suggested improvements	Domestic		21%	8%	11%	13%		14%	
	International		<i>Too few comments</i>						14%
	All	10%	19%	8%	11%	12%		14%	

3.3 Key issues for coursework graduates (CEQ 2008)

3.3.1 Areas of best practice

3% of undergraduate students (i.e. 5/169 comments received from respondents to the CEQ) mentioned overall satisfaction with the degree course; or the qualifications, knowledge and experience of academic staff as being areas of best practice. Due to the low number of comments received from both current students and graduates, and to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

3.3.2 Suggested improvements

	Domestic (n=157)	International (n= 14)	All (n=171)
Quality of staff			
- Staff required training in teaching at tertiary level			
- Staff were not experienced in modern architectural / planning practices	9%	7%	9%
- Relevant and up to date knowledge of lecturers and tutors in subject area			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *At the time I took the course - it was new. I suspect a lot of teething problems came into affect. The lecturers, tutors and professors took approaches either overly broad or far to specific to be of any significant use other than to introduce possibilities. Being close to many members of my course it became apparent that this course would not really lead to anything. Skills were acquired on our own and not demonstrated in our course work. I believe courses should focus on individual types of work and give students a far greater idea of what it would be like in the industry whether it be in graphic design, 3D design, web, movie or even database design. I felt very lost in the course and it obscured my expectations of what life after university would be like. Towards the end of my degree I could see improvements being made in the course as newly enrolled students appeared to be taking more useful subjects. I hope this has continued as everything that I now know and the skills I use in my work and those which I use to interact with clients where ENTIRELY gained on my own, in my own time*
- *Choosing tutors. Some tutors should really not be chosen. Tutors should be there to motivate the students in their creative ways, not force their own design ideas onto the students and expect them to know how it works.*
- *Tutors would not often give you enough time and often appeared disinterested. It would be useful to train tutors in teaching, not only choose them on their architecture skills*
- *Year co-ordinators were too overworked and not able to do their job properly resulting in a disorganised program for 4th and 5th year students. Very disappointing for the students. Tutors were not skilled enough to take 5th year students - more time should be spent enticing reputable and respected architects rather than young PhD students. Also - tutors should be architects and not industrial designers for these final years of study.*

Sample comments: international students

- *More time and more funding and too much lecturers in one subject*
- *Some elective staff is not put effort on the subject. Which I think is kind of waste my time and money, and they are quite judgemental*

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

- 50% of respondents provided written observations on the value of this area of their experience. This maintains the results of previous years, where the percentage of positive comments on this topic has consistently been above 45%.
- 34% appreciated the community feel of the Faculty, the friendships and networks developed with peers, opportunities to explore academic interests with staff and students during studio work, tutorials and other discussion fora; and the relatively small class sizes.
- The Architecture library (5%) and physical facilities, especially the newly renovated building (9%) were also valued by respondents

Suggested improvements

- 8% of respondents considered that this area of their experience required improvement
- The majority of these comments (6%) referred to the learning environment including: tutorials; class sizes; equity and discrimination

4.1 Comparative results: Focus of written observations 2002–2008

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 between 2002 and 2008.

		CEQ 2002	CEQ 2003	CEQ 2004	CEQ 2005	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007	CEQ 2008	
Areas of best practice	Domestic		39%	23%	47%	49%		48%	
	International		<i>Too few comments</i>						75%
	All	41%	36%	23%	45%	47%		50%	
Suggested improvements	Domestic		21%	0%	32%	11%		9%	
	International		<i>Too few comments</i>						0%
	All	35%	19%	0%	31%	13%		8%	

4.2 Key issues for coursework graduates (CEQ 2008)

4.2.1 Areas of best practice

	Domestic (n=157)	International (n=12)	All (n=169)
Learning environment			
- Enjoyed University social life			
- Felt that they belonged to a community (degree/ Faculty)	34%	33%	34%
- Academic interests were being explored with staff and students e.g. in tutorials; during studio sessions			
- Happy with size of class			
Physical resources			
- Library staff and services satisfactory	13%	33%	14%
- Facilities (buildings; lecture rooms; computers; etc) of acceptable standard			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *Studio - tutor groups were the most beneficial courses. I feel I gained the most from these, in all aspects of my learning*
- *Close knit community within the faculty. Building renovation was fabulous and made final years of course very pleasurable*
- *The ability to access other students and the faculties resources. The encouragement by staff to pursue and tackle theoretical and practical creative exploits*

Sample comments: international students

- *Social year working towards a common target - good to get into a variety of other fields such as graphics and screen printing as part of the normal teaching method - well varied*
- *I took the course, design in architecture. I like the curriculum's and staff who work really hard for students. We actually did several survey after every single semester and we gave our feedback to staff and they did consider and change and try to improve such things*
- *Studio work, teamwork. Facilities/infrastructure available to student - computers, printers, plotters, laser cutters, etc*

4.2.2 Suggested improvements

	Domestic (n=157)	International (n=14)	All (n=171)
Learning environment			
- Academic interests were not explored with staff and students e.g. in tutorials; during laboratory work	6%	0%	6%
- Class sizes too large for productive discussions			
- Issues of equity/ discrimination identified			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *Studio space - there is insufficient space/facility for everyone to work successfully in the studio at once*
- *Design Technologies might be better taught in tutorials rather than lectures. Seemed quite disorganised at times. Tutors should have some training in how to teach and give appropriate and helpful feedback*
- *To many special provisions were provided to students who were not deserving of them*
- *Interaction with design tutors and more meeting times*
- *More computers or computer labs. More studio hours with our tutors. More help with finding jobs for graduates once they have completed the course*
- *Retaining the quality of its current environment for junior years*

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 employers⁷". 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
- Practical components of degree course⁸

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

- 37% of comments received from respondents to the CEQ expressed satisfaction with the programme of study completed during their degree. This
- 22% appreciated the subject content of the curriculum
- The flexibility of the course structure, and the range of electives available was welcomed by 7% of respondents; whilst a further 8% were satisfied with the practical components of the course.

Suggested improvements

- 39% of respondents to the CEQ expressed concern about the programme of study undertaken during their degree.
- A high proportion (22%) mentioned that the subject content was not always relevant, and not up to date with industry practice
- 8% of respondents were dissatisfied with the practical components of the course

5.1 Comparative results: Focus of written observations 2002–2008

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 between 2002 and 2008.

		CEQ 2002	CEQ 2003	CEQ 2004	CEQ 2005	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007	CEQ 2008	
Areas of best practice	Domestic		43%	46%	41%	53%		36%	
	International		<i>Too few comments</i>						50%
	All	27%	39%	46%	39%	54%		37%	
Suggested improvements	Domestic		37%	83%	30%	38%		38%	
	International		<i>Too few comments</i>						50%
	All	40%	33%	83%	30%	37%		39%	

⁷ See http://www.usyd.edu.au/strategy/learn_teach/initiatives.shtml

⁸ Development of practical skills included in Generic Skills: Professional Skills and Experience

5.2 Key issues for coursework students (CEQ 2008)

5.2.2 Areas of best practice

	Domestic (n=157)	International (n=12)	All (n=169)
Content and structure			
- Content and structure of whole degree program/ individual units of study	22%	25%	22%
- Subject content is relevant to work/ career and industry requirements			
Flexibility, diversity, variety			
- Students appreciate the range of subjects available	7%	8%	7%
- Students appreciate the ability to choose units from other faculties			
Practical components of curriculum			
- Satisfaction with practical components of curriculum	8%	17%	8%
- Appreciated mix of theory and practical			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *The course touched on some very interesting areas (such as Agents/Artificial Intelligence in Design). The course covered a wide variety of areas, and in sufficient depth that I could develop all of them further when required. Some subjects and projects proved to be rather good mental exercise, requiring me to extend and change or flesh out my understanding of certain concepts and topics*
- *The associated fine arts electives and ability to chose general electives from other faculties*
- *Practical learning experiences like construction and assembly in the wood and metaclastics labs*

Sample comments: international students

- *This course allow me to have understanding of the architecture professions*
- *Practical learning in the studio*
- *Conceptual development skills in Design Study and the translation of concepts to architectural languages*

5.2.3 Suggested improvements

	Domestic (n=157)	International (n=14)	All (n=171)
Content and structure			
- Unhappy with content and structure of whole degree program/ individual units of study	31%	43%	32%
- Subject content is not relevant to work/ career and industry requirements			
- Do not like intensive courses			
Practical components of curriculum			
- Dissatisfaction with practical components of curriculum	6%	0%	6%
- Would appreciate practical classes			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *The range of electives offered was far to small, I wanted to go into more study with topics I had enjoyed in my first two years of the degree however I was unable to do so. As an example in first year we did one semester of web design, a good introduction. However there was no advanced web design or any other options to expand on this area offered by my course*
- *Better integration of all core electives with core design work, so that they all flow together. Maybe better coordination between the heads of each area*
- *Needs more structure, not enough learning or enough work (refer to University of New South Wale's Architecture degree), needs larger focus on theory (history), and practical (construction), the school should help us find work placement*

Domestic (n=157)	International (n=14)	All (n=171)
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Sample comments: international students

- *I think that the description of the course is misleading and does not require previous knowledge of computer programming as a prerequisite. I think that it must be clear to students (before starting the program) that some knowledge in computer programming is needed. Otherwise, I think that students should be offered introductory level IT courses during the first year and should go through those courses level by level until they reach the required level*
- *Flexibility to incorporate other subjects on interest e.g. outside faculty. Workload was too heavy. More support and understanding from academics*
- *As you know, our course was practical not really full on study. But they did not change a lecture note or exam paper. As long as I know It has been recycled for at least 4 years. It was good for people who know senior students but it was not fair*

6 Appropriate Assessment

Coverage

This KPI covers the extent to which assessment measures higher order thinking and understanding; types of assessment; marking of assessments

CEQ Survey items

The CEQ does not include items relating to Appropriate Assessment

Qualitative data analysis

There are 3 sub-categories within Appropriate Assessment, against which students comments are analysed:

- content of assessments e.g. extent to which assessment measures higher order thinking and understanding; relation of assessments to coursework
- types of assessment (including group work as an assessment practice);
- marking of assessments (weighting; marks; by staff) (*explanation of marking criteria* is included in Clear Goals and Standards).

Summary

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- 9% of respondents to the CEQ mentioned that they were satisfied with assessment practices within the Faculty
- 7% commended the Faculty for allowing them freedom in their design projects and offering challenging assignments

Suggested improvements

- 11% of respondents were dissatisfied with assessment practices
- Standardisation and parity of marking across tutorial groups was the main area of concern (7% of comments received)

6.1 Comparative results: Focus of written observations 2002–2008

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 Appropriate Assessment between 2002 and 2008.

		CEQ 2002	CEQ 2003	CEQ 2004	CEQ 2005	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007	CEQ 2008	
Areas of best practice	Domestic		4%	15%	2%	7%		10%	
	International		<i>Too few comments</i>						0%
	All	0%	4%	15%	2%	7%		9%	
Suggested improvements	Domestic		6%	0%	4%	8%		11%	
	International		<i>Too few comments</i>						7%
	All	0%	5%	0%	4%	8%		11%	

6.2 Key issues for coursework graduates (CEQ 2008)

6.2.1 Areas of best practice

	Domestic (n=157)	International (n=12)	All (n=169)
Content of assessment	6%	0%	7%
- Content of assessment relevant to course			
- Appreciated freedom to develop own projects			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *Associating assignments with a topic I am very passionate about - video game and gameplay*
- *Lots of freedom and creativity allowed in projects and assignments*
- *Working in a team. Many assessments team based*
- *The ability to work with interesting materials and do big, interesting and ambitious projects*
- *Many of the projects were challenging and out of your comfort zone*
- *Being assessed on project work*

6.2.2 Suggested improvements

	Domestic (n=157)	International (n=14)	All (n=171)
Marking of assignments	8%	0%	7%
- Fairer making system across tutorial groups required			
- Marking too stringent			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *Communication between tutorial groups to ensure common marking guidelines and brief*
- *Lack of parity of tutors in design subjects. Tutors, tutoring in the same subject appear to have no parity with some tutorial groups receiving very high marks while other receive very low marks*
- *Fairer grading system (marks were not evenly distributed with some groups obtaining higher average marks than other tutorial groups).*
- *The assessment of work was often too subjective and grades were determined by a tutor's personal style rather than the credit of the work*
- *The marking system for final design projects needs improvement and needs to be enforced. I did not feel the quality of my work ever deserved full marks. There was little to no criticism to help push me further and improve. Furthermore marking criteria was never enforced. For example, it clearly stated the marking penalties for people who did not produce a model or drawings for final presentations would mean the highest grade you could achieve was a credit, and yet when it occurred, it was never enforced. These people still got high distinctions. It makes a mockery of people who try hard to work to deadlines*

Sample comments: international students

- *Lectures on structure, construction and environment are very difficult to follow and understand. Final exams for these particular subject are not necessary, assignments are a better approach to make students understand what was learnt*

7 Appropriate Workload

Coverage

This KPI covers the extent to which students consider they have reasonable workloads. The even distribution of assignment deadlines is also included in this KPI.

CEQ Survey items

The CEQ does not include items relating to Appropriate Workload

Qualitative data analysis

All comments from students that relate to workload and/or the timing of assignment deadlines are counted under workload, which includes the following areas of the student experience of this topic:

- Reasonable workload
- Even distribution of assignment deadlines
- Pressure of course; not having enough time to understand the topic
- Inability to comprehend subject matter due to sheer volume of work

Summary

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- One respondent was happy with the workload and considered that *“The amount of stress and pressure I was put through during the course helped me in the work force”*

Suggested improvements

- 6% of respondents deemed the workload to be high; or that assessments needed to be more spaced out across the semester
- Sample comment: *“Need to space out assessment deadlines at end of semester for each subject. Final workloads become too excessive and stressful”*

7.1 Comparative results: Focus of written observations 2002–2008

The following table provides an indication of trends in the graduate experience of Appropriate Workload between 2002 and 2008, as indicated in the responses to open questions in the CEQ.

		CEQ 2002	CEQ 2003	CEQ 2004	CEQ 2005	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007	CEQ 2008	
Areas of best practice	Domestic		2%	0%	0%	0%		1%	
	International		<i>Too few comments</i>						0%
	All	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%		1%	
Suggested improvements	Domestic		10%	0%	6%	3%		4%	
	International		<i>Too few comments</i>						21%
	All	10%	9%	0%	6%	3%		6%	

7.2 Key issues for coursework graduates (CEQ 2008)

The main issues raised by current students related to the amount of work that was required in their courses e.g. the overwhelming workload; and the simultaneous due dates of assignments. The similarity of comments provided on this topic negates the purpose of providing sample comments to illustrate student concerns.

8 Clear Goals and Standards

Coverage

Practices characteristic of this KPI relate to the establishing of clear aims and objectives for a course, and clear expectations of the standard of work expected from students.

CEQ Survey items

The CEQ does not include items relating to Clear Goals and Standards

Qualitative data analysis

There are 3 components within Clear Goals and Standards, against which students comments are analysed.

- Clear aims and objectives for a course;
- Clear expectations of the standard of work expected from students;
- Clear explanation of the marking criteria used (*marking of assessments* is included under assessment).

Summary

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- One respondent commented that *“High standards [were] expected of assessments”*

Suggested improvements

- 9% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with this area of their experience
- 6% would appreciate clearer definition of assessment requirements
- Sample comment: *“Sometimes I also felt that a little more transparency regarding assessments would have been good”*

8.1 Comparative results: Focus of written observations 2002–2008

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 Clear Goals and Standards between 2002 and 2008.

		CEQ 2002	CEQ 2003	CEQ 2004	CEQ 2005	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007	CEQ 2008
Areas of best practice	Domestic		0%	0%	0%	0%	Too few comments	1%
	International		<i>Too few comments</i>					0%
	All	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%		1%
Suggested improvements	Domestic		8%	8%	6%	6%	Too few comments	10%
	International		<i>Too few comments</i>					0%
	All	0%	7%	8%	6%	5%		9%

8.2 Key issues for coursework graduates (CEQ 2008)

8.2.1 Areas of best practice

1/169 graduates mentioned that high standards were expected of assessments.

Due to the low number of comments received from both current students and graduates, and to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

8.2.2 Suggested improvements

	Domestic (n=157)	International (n=14)	All (n=171)
Standard of work	6%	0%	6%
- Clarification required regarding the standard of work expected for assessments			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *Assessment structure for certain subjects is complex and sometimes unclear*
- *Communication of what is expected of students is not clear*
- *Sometimes I also felt that a little more transparency regarding assessments would have been good*
- *The outcomes of the course were not always clearly outlined*
- *Clearer guidelines needed*
- *Communication of requirements to international students with poor language skills*

9 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.

NB: the analysis of qualitative data is limited to comments received in answer to the open questions on the degree experience. It does not include comments received in answer to the open questions on student administration and student support services.

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 administration and organisation;
- Organisation of practicums/ internships
- Scheduling of classes/ examinations;
- Communication between staff (academic and general) and students;

Summary

QUALITATIVE DATA

Areas of best practice

- 2/169 respondents were satisfied with communication between staff and students, and the scheduling of classes and tutorials

Suggested improvements

- 9% of respondents considered this area of their experience to be in need of improvement.

9.1 Comparative results: Focus of written observations 2002–2008

The following table includes the percentage of qualitative comments received from respondents to the surveys which can be classified as areas of best practice or areas for improvement, providing an indication of trends in the graduate experience of Faculty / Department Student Administration between 2002 and 2008.

		CEQ 2002	CEQ 2003	CEQ 2004	CEQ 2005	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007	CEQ 2008	
Areas of best practice	Domestic		8%	0%	2%	0%		1%	
	International		<i>Too few comments</i>						0%
	All	0%	7%	0%	2%	0%		1%	
Suggested improvements	Domestic		23%	8%	4%	10%		9%	
	International		<i>Too few comments</i>						7%
	All	15%	21%	8%	4%	10%		9%	

9.2 Key issues for current coursework students (SCEQ 2007)

9.2.1 Areas of best practice

2/169 students who responded to the SCEQ were satisfied with University and Faculty administration, and attendance hours (scheduling of classes).

Due to the low number of comments received from both current students and graduates, and to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

9.2.2 Suggested improvements

9% of current students (i.e. 15/171) suggested that improvements were needed in Faculty / Department Student Administration. Apart from general comments relating to overall administration, respondents had specific concerns regarding the lack of communication between staff and students.

Sample comments: domestic students

- *Organisation of courses to make sure all classes which are scheduled do take place and that lecturers turn up when scheduled. There are large costs involved for buying materials each semester. Good, fun and covered*
- *information regarding requirements for entry to the masters course (which most students move on to) is not made completely clear*
- *Organisation and communication between teaching staff and students quite often left in the lurch as to where lecturers were - if they were even on, what assessments would be given and when. Assessments need to be spread through semester - especially Design*
- *Overall organisation. Unclear communication, lack of information on assessments and administration*
- *Organisation. Timetabling of lecture spaces*

Sample comments: international students

- *Organisation - a lot of wasted time*

Attachment A Student Course Experience Questionnaire (SCEQ) : Focus of comments 2007

The following data is included in this report as a guide to the areas which current students (SCEQ respondents) considered to be either of best practice or in need of improvement during 2007, which is the year in which respondents to the 2008 completed their studies.

Generic Skills

Best practice

- 15% of comments received expressed satisfaction with the development of generic skills/graduate attributes.
- Comments were evenly spread across four of the five University Graduate Attributes: Research and Inquiry; Ethical, Social and Professional Understanding; Communication; and Personal and Intellectual Autonomy

Suggested improvements

- 8% of comments received expressed dissatisfaction with this area of their experience
- The majority of these comments (6%) were concerned with issues relating to the gaining of professional and/or disciplinary skills

Good Teaching

Best practice

- 27% of comments received expressed satisfaction with teaching across the Faculty
- 10% of respondents appreciated the support provided by staff, and their availability and willingness to discuss academic and personal problems.
- Appreciation of the use of up-to-date teaching methods, interesting and engaging lectures, and the presence of useful learning resources accounted for 7% of positive comments

Suggested improvements

- 36% of comments received expressed dissatisfaction with this area of their experience
- The lack of current learning resources, boring lectures, and out of date teaching methods were the main areas of concern (10% of comments received); whilst 9% of respondents considered that staff were not supportive
- 6% of respondents would have appreciated clearer explanations during lectures; whilst the same percentage expected more timely and constructive feedback on work.

Overall Satisfaction

Best practice

- 8/226 or 4% of respondents appreciated the professionalism, qualifications, knowledge and experience of academic staff

Suggested improvements

- 9% of respondents provided comments that could be categorised as belonging to this KPI
- The majority of these comments (8%) related to the lack of relevant qualifications, knowledge and experience of academic staff in both discipline knowledge and tertiary teaching)

Learning Community

Best practice

- 74% of respondents expressed satisfaction with aspects of their experience that fall within the remit of Learning Community
- 33% appreciated the opportunity to explore academic interests with staff and students in tutorials; studio work and other discussion fora
- The community atmosphere of the Faculty was valued by 10% of respondents
- Appreciation of the library and physical resources (i.e. building; studio space; computers etc) was the focus of 27% of comments within this KPI

Suggested improvements

- 32% of respondents provided comments that could be categorised as belonging to this KPI
- Areas of concern included: tutorials and studio work; class sizes; equity and discrimination issues; and poorly maintained facilities.

Curriculum

Best practice

- 32% of respondents appreciated the programme of study or curriculum offered by the Faculty, considering it relevant to their future profession
- The flexibility afforded with combined degrees was appreciated by 9% of respondents; whilst 10% expressed satisfaction with practical components/ units

Suggested improvements

- 30% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the content and structure of the curriculum, and its relevance and usefulness to their future profession

Appropriate Assessment

Best practice

- 6% of respondents appreciated the types and content of assessment practices used within the Faculty

Suggested improvements

- 5% of respondents provided comments that could be categorised as belonging to this KPI
- Areas of concern included: the types of assessment used, including group assessment; and the perceived inequity in marking of assignments.

Appropriate Workload

Best practice

- 1% of respondents expressed satisfaction with workload

Suggested improvements

- 10% of respondents considered the workload to be too high.
- Areas of concern included: high volume of work; and simultaneous due dates for assignments.

Clear Goals and Standards

Best practice

- 1% of respondents considered this topic to be an area of best practice

Suggested improvements

- 17% of respondents provided comments that could be categorised as belonging to this KPI
- The main area of concern was a perceived lack of clarity regarding the standard of work expected from lecturers when completing assignments.

Faculty/ Department Student Administration

NB: comments relating to student administration are normally found in the answers to the open questions on Student administration and support services. The following analysis refers only to those comments located in the answers to the degree experience questions.

Best practice

- 3/226 or 1% of respondents considered this topic to be of best practice

Suggested improvements

- 14% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with faculty administration