

**FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NATURAL RESOURCES**  
**STUDENT COURSE EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE (SCEQ)**  
**POSTGRADUATE COURSEWORK STUDENTS**  
**ANALYSIS OF OPEN RESPONSE COMMENTS: 2005**

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## **1 Introduction**

The Student Course Experience Questionnaire (SCEQ), is designed to collect quantitative and qualitative data about students' perceptions of the quality of teaching and learning in their degree courses, as well as their perceptions of student administration and support services. As part of the questionnaire students are asked to provide comments on the best aspects of their university experience (degree and administration) and those that could be improved. Based on the responses to these questions, this document seeks to provide an analysis of the areas of best practice, and opportunities for improvement, in the experiences of postgraduate coursework students in the Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources in 2005.

In 2005 13 responded to the SCEQ. 9 of these provided comments on the best aspects of their degree experience, and 7 on the aspects that they considered to be in need of improvement. 9 students provided comments on the best aspects of student administration and student support services, and 5 on aspects that were considered to be in need of improvement

## **2 Arrangement**

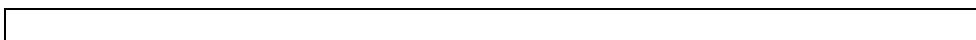
1. Degree experience
  - o Analysis of comments referring to best aspects
  - o Analysis of comments suggesting improvements
  
2. Experience of student administration and student support services
  - o Analysis of comments referring to best aspects
  - o Analysis of comments suggesting improvements

Responses are ranked according to the number of times an aspect occurs in the comments received. Due to the low number of responses received, and to maintain student confidentiality, no comments are provided. It is statistically invalid to convert this low number into percentages. Therefore results are expressed as raw numbers

## **3 Analysis of the comments: taxonomy and process**

The manual analysis and evaluation method used by the University is based on an in-house taxonomy which allows for standardisation of reporting across the university and ease of comparison with the SCEQ quantitative analysis reports. Within the taxonomy, the main categories are based on the SCEQ items, and sub-categories based on their characteristics. Additional categories, based on the frequency of occurrence in students' comments over the past four years, are also included. Categories for the analysis of comments relating to administration and support services are defined using the most commonly mentioned aspects e.g. quality of customer service, opening hours, staffing levels, online access to services; and names of individual services e.g. Counselling, Library, Student Centre.<sup>1</sup>

This taxonomy is under constant revision as the need to sub-divide categories becomes apparent. For example, until 2005 the category *Online learning and resources* was used to record all comments mentioning students' experiences of elearning. In 2005, the increase of elearning across the university, and the review of its use, has necessitated the sub-division of this category into the following elements: *Online resources*; *Elearning: uptake by students/ staff*; *Learning management systems*; *Support provided*; and *Face to face vs. online learning*. NB: The SCEQ included specific questions on elearning for the first time in the 2005 survey. These additional qualitative analysis topics reflect these changes.



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<sup>1</sup> A copy of the SCEQ Taxonomy is provided as a separate document.

**Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources: Analysis of student experience:  
Postgraduate coursework students: 2005**

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- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Evaluation and feedback</li><li>• Academic Board policies</li><li>• Curriculum</li><li>• Skills development</li><li>• Learning community</li><li>• Learning resources</li><li>• Overall satisfaction</li><li>• Good teaching</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clear goals and standards</li><li>• Appropriate assessment</li><li>• Appropriate workload</li><li>• Elearning</li><li>• Research-led teaching</li><li>• Student progression and retention</li><li>• Cultural diversity</li><li>• Equity</li></ul> |
|--|---|

**Categories used in the analysis of SCEQ Open Response comments**

Each comment received is analysed according to the SCEQ Taxonomy, with those including more than one aspect being counted in each aspect mentioned.

It should be noted, however, 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 that the students are happy with their experiences, and prefer to focus on commenting on areas in need of improvement.

*Rachel Symons  
Special Projects Officer  
Office of the PVC (Learning and Teaching)*

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#### 4 Degree experience

##### 4.1 Analysis of comments referring to the best aspects<sup>2</sup>

	<i>Number of comments received</i>				
	2005	2003	2002	2001	2000
Overall satisfaction: quality of academic staff	3	1	1		
Curriculum: content and structure	2	3		3	
Good teaching: standard of teaching received	2	1			
Skills development: generic graduate attributes	2		2		
Industry and professions: visiting staff/ lecturers etc	2				
Learning community: learning environment	1	1			
Learning resources: general	1	1			
Research led teaching	1		1	1	
Learning resources: physical facilities	1				

##### 4.2 Analysis of comments suggesting improvements<sup>3</sup>

	<i>Number of comments received</i>				
	2005	2003	2002	2001	2000
Curriculum: content and structure	7	4	1	2	
Communication	3	1			
eLearning: support provided	1				
Overall satisfaction: quality of degree	1				

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<sup>2</sup> Number of comment received: 2005: 9; 2003: 6; 2002: 7; 2001: 6

<sup>3</sup> Number of comment received: 2005: 7; 2003: 10; 2002: 7; 2001: 7

## 5 Experience of student administration and student support services

### 5.1 Analysis of comments referring to the best aspects<sup>4</sup>

	<i>Number of comments received</i>				
	2005	2003	2002	2001	2000
<b>General comments</b>					
Customer service: quality	4	2	4	1	
Administration and organisation: general	2				
Web communication: online access to admin and support services	1	1			
Services provided: availability and existence of services	1	1			
<b>Specific services</b>					
Library service	3		1		

### 5.2 Analysis of comments suggesting improvements<sup>5</sup>

	<i>Number of comments received</i>				
	2005	2003	2002	2001	2000
<b>General comments</b>					
Administration and organisation: general comments	3				
Web communications: intranet/ internet	1	1	1		
<b>Specific services</b>					
International Office	1				

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<sup>4</sup> Number of comment received: 2005: 9; 2003: 5; 2002: 5; 2001: 4

<sup>5</sup> Number of comment received: 2005: 5; 2003: 7; 2002: 1; 2001: 2