

FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES
STUDENT COURSE EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE (SCEQ)
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS
ANALYSIS OF OPEN RESPONSE COMMENTS: 2005

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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 undergraduate students in the Faculty of Health Sciences in 2005.

Degree experience: areas of best practice

The aspects of degree experience which attracted most positive comments from undergraduate students were:

	% of comments received	
	<i>2005</i>	<i>2003</i>
Curriculum: clinical and practical aspects	38%	45%
Curriculum: content and structure	24%	22%
Good teaching: standard of teaching received	16%	15%
Curriculum: relevance to work/ career	12%	5%
Curriculum: flexibility/ diversity/ variety of courses	11%	5%
Learning community: learning environment	10%	13%

Degree experience: opportunities for improvement

The areas of degree experience which undergraduate students considered most in need of improvement were:

	% of comments received	
	<i>2005</i>	<i>2003</i>
Curriculum: content and structure	27%	34%
Appropriate workload	24%	18%
Good teaching: standard of teaching received	13%	16%
Good teaching: useful and timely feedback	13%	10%
Appropriate assessment	10%	8%
Curriculum: clinical and practical aspects	10%	11%

Student administration and student support services: areas of best practice

The aspects of student administration and student support services which attracted most positive comments from undergraduate students in 2005 were:

	% of comments received	
	<i>2005</i>	<i>2003</i>
Customer service: quality	43%	47%
Library services	13%	15%
Services provided: availability and existence	12%	7%
Web communications: online access to services	11%	1%
Administration and organisation: general (incl. faculty administration)	9%	
Computer access centres: university	8%	14%

Student administration and student support services: opportunities for improvement

**Faculty of Health Sciences: Analysis of student experience:
Undergraduate students: 2005**

The aspects of student administration and student support services which undergraduate students considered most in need of improvement in 2005 were:

	% of comments received	
	2005	2003
Customer service: quality	21%	17%
Services provided: advertisement	17%	20%
Library services	14%	20%
Administration and organisation: general (incl faculty administration)	12%	2%
Customer service: staffing levels	11%	4%
Services provided: equity of service provision	10%	8%

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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 undergraduate students in the Faculty of Health Sciences in 2005.

In 2005 80% of students who responded to the SCEQ provided comments on their degree experience, and 50% on their experiences of student administration and student support services.

2 Arrangement

1. Degree experience
 - Analysis of comments referring to best aspects
 - Analysis of comments suggesting improvements

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

Within each section, responses are ranked according to the percentage of comments received for each aspect. Sample comments are provided for the six aspects that received the highest percentage of comments. For comparison, results for the previous years qualitative analysis¹ are provided in brackets after the 2005 results.

Only aspects that received more than 5% of comments in 2005 are included in this report. 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. Comments are transcribed exactly as they appear in the original documents.

¹ i.e. 2000 – 2003. The SCEQ was not administered in 2004.

3 Analysis of the comments

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.²

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

Categories used in the analysis of SCEQ Open Response comments

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.

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

Students undertaking double degrees were asked to identify which degree/s they were commenting on in their answer. Where this has occurred the comment is counted in the results for the applicable faculty; where this has not occurred, the comment is counted in the results for both faculties.

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. Since 2000, more comments have been received from undergraduate students in reply to questions asking students to list areas in need of improvement than those asking for areas of best practice.

² A copy of the SCEQ Taxonomy is provided as a separate attachment.

4 Degree experience

4.1 Analysis of comments referring to the best aspects³

Curriculum: clinical and practical aspects (2005: 38%)
(2003: 45%; 2002: 41%; 2001: 41%; 2000: 51%)

- The professional practice undertaken throughout all 4 years and the opportunity it provides to apply skills taught
- Clinical experience, you don't really get a good idea of physio until you get out there and practice on real patients. Hands on experience has been the most useful learning experience for me
- Practical classes rather than theory are better, as we can see how we can use our skills and the effects. This is more useful and stimulating
- The practical application from the theory and course work to clinical practice as this gives us a solid foundation to build our clinical practice

Curriculum: content and structure (2005: 24%)
(2003: 22%; 2002: 26%; 2001: 23%; 2000: 25%)

- The degree I'm doing, B. of Health science, provides a broad knowledge about the health system and also the anatomy and physiology of the body system. it provides the basic knowledge on these subjects of science. also it give you the option of choosing electives so we can select what we are interested in.
- Subjects that are studied are very useful, as they give an understanding of the course. Also many of the subjects interrelate thus allowing we students to have a better understanding within each subject
- All the subjects we do are related – I'm no longer learning things simply because they're pre-requisites – everything is relevant to everything else
- Speech Pathology provides a means of explaining how speech problems occur and how to correct them in children. The different aspects of science studied to reinforce this idea is a good aspect of the course.

Good teaching: standard of teaching received (2005: 16%)
(2003: 15%; 2002: 12%; 2001: 19%; 2000: 23%)

- XX and XX are the best lecturers in the course. They are inspiring, encouraging and really create a desire to learn amongst the students
- Some lecturers who work hard to enable active learning and who provide feedback and you can always go and ask them questions
- The best aspects of the degree for Health Information Management (HIM) included how it was a fairly small course and students received more attention from lecturers. Also, some teachers knew the names of student's making the students feeling more easy with asking questions or making enquiries outside lectures/tutorials. Another aspect of HIM that was good was the fact that lecturers really tried hard to make the learning as interesting as possible. Lecturers used different resources and materials to make lectures more interesting, especially if the topic was dry.
- Good teaching staff. They readily help student solve the different questions. They also have excellent academic knowledge

³ Number of comment received: 2005: 204; 2003: 199; 2002: 232; 2001: 232; 2000: 65

Curriculum: relevance to work / career **(2005: 12%)**
(2003: 5%; 2002: 7%; 2001: 9%; 2000: 6%)

- Interesting to know what I'm studying for, what the profession is all about. The content is all related to what I will be needing
- The degree course is a trade and I learn information very applicable to that trade. This motivates me to learn
- Content is very much directed at understanding information relevant to the occupation, rather than memorising less relevant material
- Covers all aspects required for future employment

Curriculum: flexibility, diversity, variety of subjects **(2005: 11%)**
(2003: 5%; 2002: 4%; 2000: 5%; 2000: 8%)

- BHS, the course is fairly broad so it gives me a certain degree of flexibility which I enjoy
- Although my course is very specific in general, the subjects we study are extremely diverse and well distributed – I love the mix of Science, Bio-Medics, Language and Psychology
- My degree course covers a wide variety of subjects which allow me to develop my knowledge and expertise in Health Science. The electives allow us to design the course to suit our academic needs and accommodate to our chosen career paths.
- Half the degree of B. Health Science is made up of electives. This gives more freedom of choice to specialise in areas that suit you

Learning community: learning environment **(2005: 10%)**
(2003: 13%; 2002: 12%; 2001: 8%; 2000: 11%)

- Amazingly friendly and helpful students and teachers, making the whole environment more enjoyable and easier to learn in
- Having the same tute groups for all subjects allows us to get to know the other students well
- The community atmosphere at Cumberland promotes interaction between fellow students and collaboration of study methods and learning
- Having classes with the same group of people: this helps us establish good friends and helps us all work better together since we are familiar with one another

Other aspects mentioned included:

	<i>2005</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2000</i>
Skills development: generic graduate attributes	6%	5%	2%	2%	3%
Overall satisfaction: quality of academic staff	5%	5%	6%	6%	8%

4.2 Analysis of comments suggesting improvements⁴

Curriculum: content and structure (2005: 27%)
(2003: 34%; 2002: 32%; 2001: 34%; 2000: 40%)

- some of the unit of study that I'm taking is irrelevant to the course itself, for example as a radiographer one doesn't really need research skills. i study 6 subjects at the moment and other courses do maximum 4 subjects which worth 6 credit points. for my course one unit of study worth only 3 or 4 or 5 credit points but this doesn't mean that i do less work for each subjects than other students who undertake other courses. I hope i get less amount of work so many students can actually pass their unit of study!!
- There are several subjects which appear supernumary & would be better off taught as electives. Some subjects like sociology, are relating to things outside our professional responsibility but if someone is interested, they would be great electives. For others, electives such as an extra BIOS subject may better suit.
- Weren't ever really taught about treatment options. Wouldn't mind revision anatomy classes every year or so to get a better grasp of anatomy or me going more hard on experience.
- Subjects with no direct relation to physiotherapy or making me a better practical physio being removed from the curriculum and spend more time and money on appropriate PT skills

Appropriate workload (2005: 24%)
(2003: 18%; 2002: 20%; 2001: 20%; 2000: 21%)

- The workload. I find it is extremely intense. 8 subjects is huge. It should be cut down. Or not all subjects should be examined at the end of the semester. Rather just plain assignments. It makes things less stressful
- The amount of workload could be reduced or spread out over a longer period of time to enable us students room to breath.
- The workload is really tough at times. The credit points allocated to clinical subjects is not representable of the work they involve.
- The fact that there are so many subjects to cover in the one semester. For instance, in year two we had 7 - 8 subjects per semester. I found it quite hard to cope when half way through the semester until the very end, I had approximately two assignments to complete per week.

Good teaching: standard of teaching received (2005: 13%)
(2003: 16%; 2002: 19%; 2001: 19%; 2000: 23%)

- ORL IB lecture was a little hard to pay attention due to poor overhead and noise level. Lecturer could prepare powerpoint or at least readable overheard rather than unprepared small print overhead materials.
- Style of lecturing, as I feel some lecturers hard to get their point across when explaining things on the particular subject
- Teaching style. Really need to improve this section. Make classes boring, need to be more interactive e.g. slide show presentations, more visual aids
- Unfortunately some professors are here for research, and you can tell by their poor teaching ability and lack of openness/ accessibility to students. Professors should be involved in the degree for the primary purpose of teaching, but it seems like the opposite is true, and the students suffer.

⁴ Number of comment received: 2005: 204; 2003: 199; 2002: 232; 2001: 237; 2000: 57

Good teaching: useful and timely feedback

(2005: 13%)

(2003: 10%; 2002: 8%; 2001: 13%; 2000: 14%)

- Feedback from presentations, assignments and essays. We usually only get a grade or a mark which does NOT explain what we did well and what needed to be improved. Therefore we don't know what to do better for the next assessment!
- More feedback could be given on assignments so that we can learn from our mistakes.
- More feedback could be given with regard to progress. exam results themselves don't tell you where you went wrong, whether you made silly errors or whether you just don't know enough. it would be good to get exam papers back so we can assess this ourselves or with a member of staff. (I do realise the impracticality of this however)
- Feedback is rarely provided grades and marks are insufficient assisting in improvement. Constructive advice must be regularly provided in a written i.e. 'hard copy' form for that specific student.

Appropriate assessment

(2005: 10%)

(2003: 8%; 2002: 10%; 2001: 12%; 2000: 9%)

- There is an awful lot of rote (sic) learning, therefore there are a lot of things i was able to learn for the exams, but probably don't remember now, as there was so much information to cram in. the exams should also be more short answer questions and essays as opposed to mainly being multiple choice, as i don't think multiple choice questions really assess your understanding of a subject.
- Other forms of assessment need to be considered in some subjects other than written exams. An exam worth 100% is not fair to students in this course based on the current workload
- examinations - many subjects only have one or two assessments which puts undue pressure on me during exam time (1 hour 100% exams are ridiculous! especially when they're solely multiple choice!)
- Spreading of assessments/exams. Having more exams with smaller weightings would be less stress in the exams - i.e. a 70% exam paper is basically pass/fail if you do badly.

Curriculum: clinical and practical aspects

(2005: 10%)

(2003: 11%; 2002: 12%; 2001: 11%; 2000: 14%)

- Practical experience – Hands on not enough and in too large blocks (e.g. 20 weeks straight). Financial support especially on Prac. Rurally (compulsory). No income and living out of home and working no pay 5 days/week is not possible to do without a financial backer
- The minimal ongoing feedback and lack of feedback after practical assessments made it difficult to learn how to improve for later clinical work. The course could be made more clinically orientated and relevant (such as incorporating clinical days or sessions throughout the course as we learn academically) because currently it has been difficult to integrate theoretical coursework to clinical practice after such a long time.
- Clinical expectation – there is too high an expectation for us to cope with a full load of academic subjects and clinic. At times the expectations are unrealistic because clinic is extremely time consuming
- Practicals – they should involve more practical work not just sitting around and answering questions – I could do that at home

Other aspects mentioned included:

	<i>2005</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2000</i>
Curriculum: relevance to work	7%				
eLearning: uptake by staff/ students	6%	(new topic)			
Communication	6%	1%	2%	3%	7%

5 Experience of student administration and student support services

5.1 Analysis of comments referring to best aspects⁵

Customer service: quality (2005: 43%)

(2003: 47%; 2002: 53%; 2001: 48%; 2000: 56%)

- Staff listen to the problem you may have and actually help you hands-on as opposed to simply guiding you
- Help is provided straight away which means efficient and quick support when required
- They are helpful, especially as they show genuine concern which allows students to feel they can confront the issues they want to discuss or any subject changes they are having
- Friendly staff – makes dealing with them easy and pleasant

Library services (2005: 13%)

(2003: 15%; 2002: 13%; 2001: 12%; 2000: 18%)

- Sam's library has one of the biggest collection of journals and relevant books for my course. The intranet services are extremely helpful also.
- The library is a great resource, especially the online access to journal articles and other online resources
- friendly and helpful staff- i think they ultimately determine the quality of the service. e.g. in library the staff have always been very helpful and also friendly when approached and even if some books aren't available they help to put your name on hold etc to try and get you what you need.
- Library facilities were good as was the ejournals collection

Services provided: availability and existence (2005: 12%)

(2003: 7%; 2002: 9%; 2001: 13%; 2000: 8%)

- That the services are there if you need them. This is good cause it makes you as a student feel empowered
- Although I did not utilise many of the services at the University, the fact that they are there to use had I ever needed them is good
- The readily availability of resources; because it means if we have a problem we know where to go to get it fixed
- They are convenient for student

Web communications: online access to support services (2005: 11%)

(2003: 1%)

- Easy to access because they are on the internet. Makes it easier to change your personal details etc.
- Using the Usydney for enrolment and other administration has been helpful and efficient.
- Always helpful, good that a lot of administration can now be done online making it accessible whenever needed
- Access to these services online

⁵ Number of comment received: 2005: 142; 2003: 128; 2002: 116; 2001: 140; 2000: 50

Administration and organisation: general

(2005⁶: 9%)

(2000: 1%)

- Student admin are generally helpful - this is very important when students feel there is no support or help around
- Student administration are very knowledgeable and approachable as they are open every week day and are willing to help.
- The best aspects would be the individual school admin on the Cumberland campus. They provide us with so much stuff, and really assist us, especially in a clinical setting, which is really useful.
- Student administration is easily accessible on campus and available when required (mostly).

Computer access centres: university

(2005: 8%)

(2003: 14%; 2002: 11%; 2001: 7%; 2000: 10%)

- Good and friendly staff in computer labs who were happy to help
- Being able to readily access computers has been very useful whilst working on campus - particularly as I live quite a distance away.
- the computer access is always running well and computers are always available.
- Computer services are an essential part of communication and learning processes. These were done very well

Other aspects mentioned included:

	<i>2005</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2000</i>
Services provided: accessibility and convenience	8%	8%	10%	9%	4%
Web communications: intranet/ internet access	8%	8%	5%	3%	8%

⁶ In 2005, this includes Faculty Administration (where specifically mentioned in the comment). These comments were previously counted in Customer Service: Quality

5.2 Analysis of comments suggesting improvements⁷

Customer service: quality (2005: 21%)
(2003: 17%; 2002: 18%; 2001: 13%; 2000: 14%)

- Staff do not always seem willing to help, and at times I have felt like I am putting them out by asking for their help
- Be more active and help students with common problems before they need to ask for it
- Staff could be more friendly and smile. Be more enthusiastic in what they are doing. Faster service. Often have to wait long
- Some staff could try to be more friendly and learn to smile instead of demeaning and embarrassing you in front of others

Services provided: advertisement (2005: 17%)
(2003: 20%; 2002: 17%; 2001: 20%; 2000: 25%)

- A little more awareness of what services they offer would be good - it took some time for me to find out who I had to see, where I had to go and what I had to do to help my situation.
- advertise their exact services better so that people know what they are about!
- More awareness made of what support services are available- especially to the Cumberland students.
- The student support services are not advertised to students on campus well enough to bring about a greater awareness of the services that are available. If notices, open booths are available on open days this will create a greater appreciation by students of the services that are available.

Library services (2005: 14%)
(2003: 20%; 2002: 26%; 2001: 23%; 2000: 39%)

- the library could actually enforce the 'supposed to be quiet in the library' rule...I've tried studying or just researching there a few times but most of the time it's impossible to concentrate due to the magnitude of the noise
- The library i feel does not have a wide selection and seems that the many students who wish to borrow the same books for a particular assessment cannot and therefore are disadvantaged, even when starting a decent time before the due date.
- I think the library catalogue may be improved in regards to its reference of journal articles. May be just me but i sometimes have difficulty locating an article because the particular journal is hard to find as there are MANY of them.
- The Library could hold more journal articles relevant to my degree or they could order the relevant journal article for undergraduates doing honours, masters etc. not just the postgrad. Students

⁷ Number of comment received: 2005: 123; 2003: 133; 2002: 120; 2001: 128; 2000: 28

Administration and organisation: general (2005⁸: 12%)
(2003: 2%; 2002: 4%; 2001: 5%; 2000: 4%)

- Sometimes student administration can be a bit confusing and slow, so maybe some improvement in efficiency in student administration might be needed.
- Main administration - some, not all, staff are poorly informed about standard issues / procedures and become stressed when understaffed and this makes them rude and unhelpful. Please inform them on procedures!!
- Also the Admin staff can be a bit more "friendly".
- Administration is very bureaucratic. If there were fewer pointless details on the way to fulfilling a service (e.g., not have to go to several offices to pay something like a library fine) then a lot of time would be saved and fewer students annoyed.

Customer service: staffing levels (2005: 11%)
(2003: 4%; 2002: 3%; 2001: 2%; 2000: 4%)

- More people available to help with enrolment and more people available to help with issues during the holiday period.
- Have more people available to help especially at the beginning of semester so lines aren't so long.
- Employ more people so the wait is not so long. I have waited in a line for half an hour and was late to a lecture as a result.
- Expand staff, especially when there is an increased demand for student administration to avoid queues

Services provided: equity of service provision (2005: 10%)
(2003: 8%; 2002: 7%; 2001: 6%; 2000: 4%)

- more information about what happens on main campus as we are shielded from it on Cumberland. feel separated
- Student services at Cumberland campus are severely lacking when compared to those at main campus. Possibly provide more areas with shelter from rain and more activities to create a feeling of community at the campus.
- At Cumberland Campus we have very limited access to all university resources. We feel excluded from the university community and are at an extreme disadvantage!
- Making more things available to Cumberland students i.e., not all focus on main campus e.g., pay fines in person at Glebe??

Other aspects mentioned included:

	<i>2005</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2000</i>
Customer service: opening hours	7%	9%	6%	6%	11%
Web communications: Intranet/ Internet	7%	8%	9%	6%	

⁸ In 2005, this includes Faculty Administration (where specifically mentioned in the comment). These comments were previously counted in Customer Service: Quality