

FACULTY OF NURSING
STUDENT COURSE EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE (SCEQ)
POSTGRADUATE COURSEWORK 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 postgraduate coursework students in the Faculty of Nursing in 2005.

Degree experience: areas of best practice

The aspects of degree experience which attracted most positive comments from postgraduate coursework students in 2005 were:

	% of comments received	
	<i>2005</i>	<i>2003</i>
Curriculum: content and structure	23%	49%
Good teaching: standard of teaching received	23%	19%
Good teaching: motivating, stimulating, challenging	13%	11%
Curriculum: clinical and practical aspects	13%	
Curriculum: relevance to work/ career	10%	9%
Curriculum: flexibility, diversity, variety	10%	2%

Degree experience: opportunities for improvement

The areas of degree experience which postgraduate coursework students considered most in need of improvement in 2005 were:

	% of comments received	
	<i>2005</i>	<i>2003</i>
Good teaching: useful and timely feedback	33%	12%
Good teaching: standard of teaching received	21%	16%
Appropriate assessment	21%	16%
Overall satisfaction: quality of degree	16%	4%
Curriculum: content and structure	14%	28%
Appropriate workload	12%	10%

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 postgraduate coursework students in 2005 were:

	% of comments received	
	<i>2005</i>	<i>2003</i>
Customer service: quality	50%	67%
Administration and organisation: general comments	20%	
Services provided: accessibility and convenience of services	10%	
<i>No other aspects received 6% or more comments</i>		

Student administration and student support services: opportunities for improvement

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

	% of comments received	
	2005	2003
Library services	25%	45%
Administration and organisation: general comments	25%	6%
Web communications: intranet/ internet	13%	
Computer access centres: faculty	13%	
Customer service: quality	8%	18%
Customer service: opening hours	8%	9%

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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 Nursing in 2005.

In 2005 65% of students who responded to the SCEQ provided comments on the best aspects of their degree experience, and 88% on the aspects that they considered to be in need of improvement. This substantial increase between comments reflecting on best aspects and those reflecting on areas in need of improvement contrasts with the 2005 results for most other faculties where the difference in the percentage of comments received on best aspects and those on areas in need of improvement is not so large. This possibly indicates an overall dissatisfaction by postgraduate coursework students with their experiences in the Faculty of Pharmacy.

50% of students who responded provided comments on the best aspects of their experiences of the student administration and student support services, and 40% 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

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.

NB: In 2000, less than 20 postgraduate coursework students provided comments in response to the to the open questions. Since it statistically invalid to convert this low number into percentages, results from 2000 are not included in the comparative 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.

Degree affiliation is supplied at the end of the sample comments for degree experiences. Every attempt is given to provide comments from students in all degrees. However, in some cases the comments received on any one aspect have all emanated from students in the same degree. Degree affiliation is not supplied for comments relating to student administration and student support services since it is assumed that these experiences are not dependant on the degree being undertaken.

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

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.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.

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 postgraduate coursework 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

NB: Only two aspects in this section of the report were mentioned in more than five comments. Therefore, to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments have been provided for the remaining top aspects.

Curriculum: content and structure (2005: 23%)
(2003: 49%; 2002: 28%; 2001: 41%)

- Allowing the degree course to run in distance mode allows me as a person not residing in the Sydney metropolitan area to attend/participate *Master of Nursing*
- Wide range of subjects to choose from some thought provoking over obviously best effort and have made to keep up to date i.e., clinical practice. *Master of Nursing*
- The flexible mode of delivery meant that attendance for each unit of study was four separate days (9am-5pm) over eight weeks - ideal for postgraduate study when you are also working, and have children. One of the lecturers - Dr AA - is the best teacher I have ever had. If only she had been our lecturer more often ... *Master of Nursing*
- Grad Dip Midwifery. Practical tutorials were excellent - examining real placenta. Mechanism of labour. Need more practical demos with doll and pelvis for normal births and shoulder dystocia. Clinical subjects were all great. I feel limited time was spent on these subjects - which had essential core content. *Grad Dip in Midwifery*

Good teaching: standard of teaching received (2005: 23%)
(2003: 19%; 2002: 22%; 2001: 29%)

- The staffs encouragement to think outside the square when approaching continuing education and learning. That my views are important and that I should not be afraid to voice them, keeping in mind that I should be able validate them with current research. *Master of Nursing*
- X X, he made learning intellectually stimulating, he was also approachable. Nothing was a problem. *Master of Nursing*
- Most lecturers were informative and stimulating. Some assignments were clearly defined and were interesting to research. *Grad Cert in Nursing*
- xxx xxx was a fantastic asset in the faculty of Nursing, Midwifery. The standard of the course dramatically declined in her absence. She was inspiring / helpful / supportive / gave great feedback etc. She is a terrible loss! *Grad Dip in Midwifery*

Other aspects mentioned included:

	2005	2003	2002	2001
Good teaching: motivating, stimulating, challenging	13%	11%	2%	
Curriculum: clinical and practical aspects	13%		2%	1%
Curriculum: relevance to work/ career	10%	9%	2%	5%
Curriculum: flexibility, diversity, variety	10%	2%		5%
Research led teaching	10%		2%	1%
Learning community: learning environment	8%	9%	26%	21%
Skills development: graduate generic attributes	8%	15%	6%	4%

³ Number of comment received: 2005: 39; 2003: 47; 2002: 50; 2001: 50; 2000: 17

4.2 Analysis of comments suggesting improvements⁴

Good teaching: useful and timely feedback (2005: 33%)
(2003: 12%; 2002: 8%; 2001: 3%)

- Pessimistic feedback on essays. i prefer encouragement and an optimistic view of my work with some feedback on areas that I could improve on. *Master of Nursing*
- Feedback to students needs to be more timely. This is especially vital for Distance Education when access to lecturers can be difficult and frustrate progress. *Master of Nursing*
- Feedback from staff needs to be done more often and in a more timely manner. We should be receiving assignments back and comments in plenty of time before the next assignment is due. This is not happening. *Master of Nursing*
- There has been little to NO feedback for some subjects. The time involved in following things up and seeking feedback is at times prohibitive. More lecturer involvement to provide feedback would be good. *Master of Nursing*

Good teaching: standard of teaching received (2005: 21%)
(2003: 16%; 2002: 22%; 2001: 14%)

- I felt that the teachers of my degree were completely disassociated from the students. The course was primarily self directed learning, and when help or assistance was requested it was not given. *Master of Nursing*
- While many of the lecturers were well prepare and presented an interesting and educational topic I found several to be unprepared and very "wishy washy" in there presentation. These presentations were often a waste of time and when we only have 4 days of face to face teaching that time is important. The second assessment for this subject was completely irrelevant and was not related to any of the topics covered in class or in the readings. I found lectures who were still working in clinical practice were of much more benefit than those who have not been involved in clinical practice. *Master of Nursing*
- The teaching , particularly Childbearing in Contemporary Society. xxx gave no insight into the teaching of the course. Her feedback into learning goals was "waffle", I found this subject to be a waste of time. *Grad Dip in Midwifery*
- One poor lecturer / coordinator - very patronising to all students and full of herself. " All your assignments are boring to read " xxx Faculty of Nursing. Very unprofessional, patronising and harsh. *Master of Nursing*

⁴ Number of comment received: 2005: 53; 2003: 50; 2002: 59; 2001: 86; 2000: 18

Appropriate assessment

(2005: 21%)

(2003: 16%; 2002: 14%; 2001: 6%)

- -The inquiry of Midwifery subject - exam of 2nd semester 2004 - should be reviewed. It did not assess content we had learnt in this subject. Poor assessment tool. -The lecture content of the subject - was not midwifery specific, our marks were delayed in being returned to allow valuable feedback prior to next assessment being handed in. I felt I got more out of reading out prescribed textbook more focus on current EBP (?) in relation to how research was conducted in Midwifery would of been much better. *Grad Dip in Midwifery*
- The second assessment for this subject was completely irrelevant and was not related to any of the topics covered in class or in the readings. *Master of Nursing*
- Some essay topics were not clearly worded - feedback afterwards said "didn't answer the question" yet most of the class misinterpreted it like me. Need to go through topics beforehand so this doesn't happen. was told also afterwards that I should have discussed it with the lecturer if I was unsure. 1. I wasn't unsure 2. I work full time 3. Only 2 weeks given to write *Grad Cert in Nursing*
- Assessment tools are not appropriate for the course *Grad Cert in Nursing*

Overall satisfaction: quality of degree⁵

(2005: 16%)

(2003: 4%; 2002: 5%; 2001: 5%)

- Taking into account the prior experience of students would help. Even though my limited clinical experience as a critical care nurse was set out in my application, it was not acknowledged by my lecturers in my units of study. These units were covering areas I need to learn about for my work, but they were pitched at experienced critical care nurses, so I floundered a lot. No one seemed to care. If the unit of study is meant for experienced practitioners it should be stated in the course material when you enrol, or academic advisors should tell you so. *Master of Nursing*
- I enrolled for one degree but the core component of the degree was never offered. I do not think a major in a degree should hand on the presence of one person. I would have liked warning of this at least as soon it was known and to be offered support about what would have been the best alternative considering the aim of my studies. I do believe in general there should be more emphasis helping students to decide what degree, or choices within that degree, would be most beneficial. It is often not until nearing the end of the degree that you really understand or know about courses offered and how alternative studies could be of benefit. *Master of Nursing*
- I found that some lectures were giving very basic inform, this is extremely frustrating when you are attending uni on your day off to be told information that would be given to a first year nursing student. *Master of Nursing*
- I think nurses still seem to be trying to prove themselves academically by very harsh, if not, ruthless marking. One subject I took had a 40% failure rate 2 years in a row, I think that those running the course should consider why so many people doing a masters degree should fail a subject I also think that doing one subject in half the time followed by another subject also done in have the time is not the answer. *Master of Nursing*

⁵ Includes: Reputation of university/ degree; funding/ financial issues (not union fees); value for money; intellectual level of course content

Curriculum: content and structure

(2005: 22%)

(2003: 30%; 2002: 27%; 2001: 23%)

- Why is there so much wishy washy theoretical crap!?! If i want to do a research degree i would do one, instead i am enrolled in a clinical subject masters in aim of developing further clinical knowledge, i don't want to know the history of research or the history of bloody florence nightingale! WHO CARES?! Get back to the relevant stuff *Grad Cert in Nursing*
- Maybe the chance to integrate semester course work with professional work would help me. That is, have the freedom to use my work situation to complete assignments. *Master of Nursing*
- I have just tried to re-enrol for 2006, and have found that the faculty has changed my mode of study without advising me - I will now only be able to attend in blocks of lectures lasting 3-4 days at a time, which occur on my regular work days and even on Saturdays. Also, they have changed my Masters degree from 2 years part-time to 3 years part-time, have added extra subjects, and changed the core subjects. I was not notified of any changes to the degree: I only found out when I tried to re-enrol. As I only commenced my Masters degree in July 2005, I am surprised and annoyed that these changes have happened after only 4 months, and without a courtesy letter from the faculty. *Master of Nursing*
- More courses to choose from. While I work in a specialty area, more courses which may assist in my are would help. *Master of Nursing*

Other aspects mentioned included:

NB: all the aspects mentioned below were mentioned in less than six comments

	2005	2003	2002	2001
Appropriate workload	12%	10%	7%	6%
Learning community: student support: distance education/ external students	9%		5%	7%
Administration and organisation: general comments	7%	4%		3%
Clear goals and standards	7%		3%	
Industry and professions: visiting staff/ lecturers etc	7%			

5 Experience of student administration and student support services

5.1 Analysis of comments referring to best aspects⁶

Customer service: quality (2005: 30%)
(2003: 67%; 2002: 65%; 2001: 36%)

- They are efficient and helpful and always fix a problem promptly.
- Some staff obviously try to make themselves as helpful as possible within resources due to other limitations.
- -friendly staff who returned calls which is always very helpful.
- Good, friendly helpful staff. Reasonable length of waiting time

Administration and organisation: general⁷ (2005:20%)

- The people in Nursing Administration understand that I live 3 hours away and can't you nip in to sort out problems.
- Our nursing postgraduate administrative officer is very helpful, courteous and professional, and replies to all emails promptly.
- The people in Nursing Administration understand that I live 3 hours away and can't you nip in to sort out problems.
- All staff in faculty of nursing, library, cafeteria and teaching were all friendly and provided excellent service - ALWAYS

Other aspects mentioned included:

NB: all the aspects mentioned below were mentioned in less than six comments

	2005	2003	2002	2001	2000
Services provided: accessibility and convenience of services	10%		17%	4%	16%

⁶ Number of comment received: 2005: 30; 2003: 18; 2002: 23; 2001: 25; 2000: 7

⁷ 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 improvements⁸

Library services (2005: 25%)
(2003: 45%; 2002: 38%; 2001: 29%)

- Increase access to on-line journals and extend the opening hours of Nursing Faculty library.
- Nursing library closed on weekends - only time I can use it. This is ridiculous given the number of working people doing the course. Also when I tried to create a photocopy card it didn't work and was told I'd have to go to Fisher library to buy one. Ridiculous
- Allow distance students more flexibility with loans of books
- Library should be opened on weekends and later during weekdays. I had to use UTS - Lindfield's library to access books and journals. For this reason and limited car parking I found it frustrating to study at Mallet street campus.

Administration and organisation: general⁹ (2005:25%)
(2003: 5%; 2002: 8%)

- Collaborate with the lecturers. One incident was the administration told me one unit was not being offered for the semester, and that it was too late to change units only a few weeks into the semester. I then found out from the course coordinator that the same unit WAS being offered and that it was not too late to change units.
- at the beginning of the year you are sent multiple amounts of mail, this then continues through out the year some on email and some via post, this could be made much simpler by sending one big pack with all the important admin due dates sent out.
- Faculty of nursing be more efficient with getting timetables ready and assignments in on time
- The nursing faculty uses many different kinds of cards to access printers in computer centres, printers in the library and for photocopying. This is confusing and wasteful, because if you have money on one card you cannot use it for a printer/copier that uses a different card. The computers in the faculty computer lab were difficult to access because passwords were often changed and there was no one in the lab to tell you what the password was. A new bar-coded coversheet for assignments was introduced, but you cannot access this from home, only by going into the faculty and using one of the computers in the lab or in the library. The faculty does not accept assignments by email; other universities do this, why not ours? This would be especially helpful for postgraduate students.

Other aspects and services mentioned included:

	2005	2003	2002	2001
General comments				
Web communications: intranet/ internet	13%			
Customer service: quality	8%	18%	8%	27%
Customer service: opening hours	8%	9%	23%	15%
Communication	8%			
Specific services				
Computer access centres: faculty	13%			

⁸ Number of comment received: 2005: 24; 2003: 22; 2002: 26; 2001: 41; 2000: 12

⁹ In 2005, this includes Faculty Administration (where specifically mentioned in the comment). These comments were previously counted in Customer Service: Quality