



The University of Sydney

Faculty of Dentistry

Student experience of Learning and Teaching

Trends and key issues: Undergraduate students 2001-2007

November 2008

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Glossary

The following terms and phrases are used throughout the report

SCEQ	Student Course Experience Questionnaire Administered to current students
CEQ	Course Experience Questionnaire Administered to graduates of previous year
Graduates	Students who completed the CEQ for 2007 i.e. graduated in 2006
Current students	Students who were studying at the University during 2007; from all years of the course
Faculty scores Percentage agreement	The percentage of current students/ graduates who either agreed or strongly agreed with relevant survey items in the SCEQ/ CEQ
Qualitative data Comments	Students written observations received in response to open ended questions in the surveys. Relate to aspects of best practice in degree experience and aspects in need of improvement
Percentage of comments received	The number of times an aspect is mentioned within the comments received from respondents is presented as a percentage of the total number of comments received

Notes

1 Percentage of respondents providing written comments in SCEQ

The percentage of students providing written observations in their answers to the SCEQ increased substantially in 2007. In 2005, 79% of respondents supplied written comments in answer to the open questions; in 2007 93% of respondents supplied written observations.

2 Data from international students

Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ)

Quantitative data (charts)

Less than 5 international graduates responded to the CEQ in 2004 – 2007. Results are therefore excluded as they are unlikely to be reliable. Number of respondents is taken from the number answering the “Overall satisfaction” item in the CEQ.

Qualitative data (Comparative tables and key issues)

Less than 5 international graduates who responded to the CEQ in 2005 and 2007 provided written observations on their experiences. Results are therefore excluded from the report as they are unlikely to be reliable. This is indicated by the phrase *Too few* in the comparative tables for qualitative data. In the Key issues sections of the report, results are shown for all students, and not separated into domestic and international.

Student Course Experience Questionnaire (SCEQ)

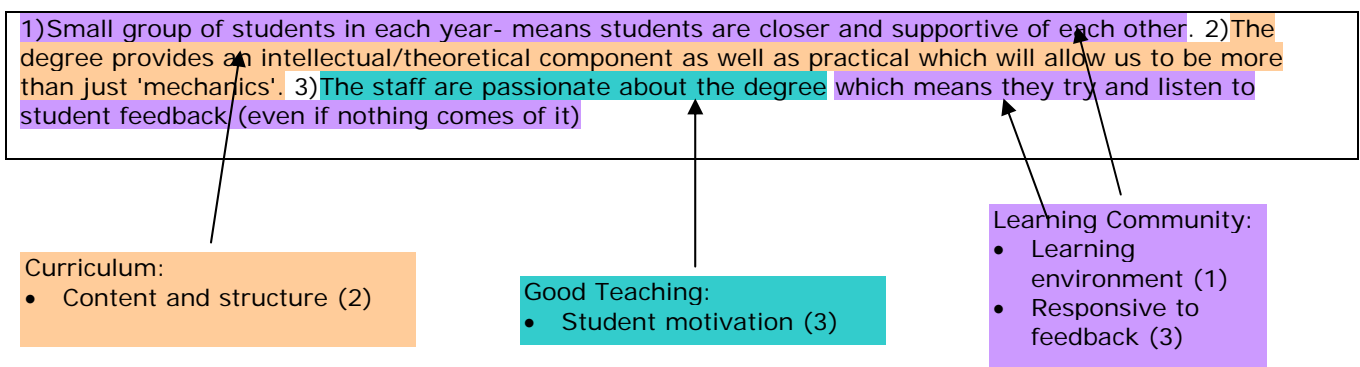
Less than 20 international graduates responded to the SCEQ in 2003, 2005 and 2007. Since the minimum sample size recommended for statistical analysis of SCEQ data is 20, the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data from this cohort, should be viewed with caution.

3 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.

4 Analysis and counting of comments

Each comment is analysed according to the *Taxonomy for analysing qualitative data from the SCEQ/ CEQ*¹, which is based on the University KPIs for Learning and Teaching, with those comments including more than one aspect being counted once for each aspect mentioned. The number of times an aspect is mentioned is presented as a percentage of the total number of comments received. For example, the following comment is counted as ONE COMMENT RECEIVED; but as it is mentioned in Curriculum (Content and structure); Learning Community (Learning environment; and Responsive to feedback);; and Good Teaching (Student motivation), the comment is counted ONCE in each of the relevant categories.



¹ Available from Quality Assurance Officer (Learning and Teaching)

Executive summary

Data about the student degree experience in the Faculty of Dentistry is collected through the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) (previous year's graduates) and the Student Course Experience Questionnaire (SCEQ) (current students).

Analysis of this data provides a comprehensive picture of trends in the student experience, and the performance of the Faculty in relation to Learning and Teaching Performance Fund (LTPF) Key Performance Indicators (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 experience provide evidence to support the Faculty (percentage agreement) scores, and provide detailed information about key issues in the areas of best practice or areas of concern.

The term "Faculty scores" refers to the proportion of current students/ graduates who either agreed or strongly agreed with the relevant survey items in the SCEQ/ CEQ for 2007.

Key results

- Faculty scores for **Generic Skills** (KPI 7; Section 1)
 - have remained steady for current students (SCEQ)
 - are above the University average for current students (SCEQ)
 - have decreased since 2006 for graduates (CEQ)
 - are below the University average for graduates (CEQ)
 - are in the middle range of faculties for both current students (SCEQ) and graduates (CEQ)

Since analysis of the qualitative data commenced, written observations on the development of University Graduate Attributes have appeared in more than half the comments received from respondents to the SCEQ and CEQ. The majority of comments received which relate to this topic, refer to the development of dentistry related skills, and the opportunities afforded from the commencement of the degree, to undertake work experience in the dental training hospitals.

- Faculty scores for **Good Teaching** (KPI 8; Section 2)
 - have decreased by 7% for current students (SCEQ)
 - are in the middle range of faculties for current students (SCEQ)
 - have decreased for graduates (CEQ)
 - are in the bottom third of faculties for graduates (CEQ)
 - are below the University average for both current students (SCEQ) and graduates (CEQ)

Analysis of the qualitative data suggests that whilst students appreciate the passion and enthusiasm of some academic staff, which motivates them in their studies, together with the approachability of staff and their concern for student welfare; they are dissatisfied with the quality of teaching by some lecturers and clinicians, would appreciate a more timely delivery of online learning resources (i.e. before the lecture), and require timely and constructive feedback on their work. With substantially more comments suggesting improvements than areas of best practice, current students (SCEQ) appear to be less satisfied with this KPI than graduates. Written observations from graduates are evenly divided between those that were satisfied with the standard of teaching, and those that suggested improvements.

- Faculty scores for **Overall Satisfaction** (KPI 9; Section 3)
 - are 41% for current students (SCEQ)
 - has decreased by 15% on previous results for current students (SCEQ)
 - are the lowest in the University for current students (SCEQ)
 - are 61% for graduates (CEQ)
 - has increased by 7% for graduates (CEQ)
 - are amongst the lowest in the University for graduates (CEQ)

Evidence from the qualitative data indicates that whilst students and graduates are satisfied with the knowledge, experience and qualifications of academic staff and clinicians, they are concerned that the lack of resources, and inadequate staffing levels are compromising their education and training, as well as resulting in additional expenses on top of their already high course fees.

- Faculty scores for **Learning Community** (Section 4)
 - are 49% for current students (SCEQ)
 - are the lowest in the University
 - have decreased by 9% since 2005

Evidence from the qualitative data suggests that whilst students appreciate the community feel that being in a small Faculty, and with the same cohort throughout the course, engenders; the poor condition of facilities at the Faculty and hospitals, together with a lack of equipment for training purposes, is a major area in need of improvement. Students are also concerned by the fact that Faculty do not appear to respond to student feedback.

- Faculty scores for **Curriculum (qualitative data only)** (Section 5)
 - in 2007, 28% of comments from current students (SCEQ) were favourable whilst 33% recommended areas in need of improvement.
 - in 2007, comments from graduates (CEQ) were evenly divided between areas of best practice and those suggesting improvements

Analysis of the qualitative data indicates that whilst students appreciate the blending of practical and theory in the curriculum, they are concerned about the inclusion of what appear to be irrelevant material. In comparison with previous years, very few students commented unfavourably on the inclusion of medical material in the first years of the degree.

- Faculty scores for **Appropriate Assessment** (Section 6)
 - SCEQ score of 47% is identical to the previous three surveys
 - is lower than the University average
 - is in the middle range of faculties

Evidence from the qualitative data supports this result, with over 13% of comments received from current students expressing dissatisfaction with assessment practices across the Faculty, whilst 0-2% expressed satisfaction. Amongst current students (SCEQ) the main area of concern was the content of assessments, particularly in relation to the examining of material that had not been taught during the course, due in part to cancelled lectures that had not been re-run.

- Faculty scores for **Appropriate Workload** (Section 7)
 - are lower than the University average of 23%
 - have decreased steadily since 2002
 - is the lowest in the University

Analysis of the qualitative data suggests, however, that workload is not a major area of concern with students. In 2003 and 2005, an average of 9% of comments received from respondents to the SCEQ expressed dissatisfaction with their workload. In 2007, 5% of current students (SCEQ), the lowest on record, considered this item to be of sufficient importance in their experiences to suggest it as an area of improvement. The main issues raised by current students related to the intense workload connected to the degree, and a reduction in the amount of medical related material in the course. No graduates mentioned workload as an area of concern.

- Faculty scores for **Clear Goals and Standards** (Section 8)
 - have decreased substantially since 2000
 - have decreased by 9% since 2005
 - are the lowest in the University

Approximately 25% of comments received from current students in answer to the open question in the SCEQ, related to aspects of Clear Goals and Standards. Students are dissatisfied with the lack of clear aims and objectives, and the lack of clarity regarding expectations of the standard of work expected, particularly in relation to assessments. It should be noted that research indicates that clarity of goals is a problem for PBL courses.

- Faculty scores for **Faculty/ Department Student Administration** (Section 9)
 - have decreased by 22% since 2005
 - are the lowest in the University
 - are below the University average for the first time since 2000

The percentage of comments received from respondents to the surveys, which mention aspects of Faculty/ Department Student Administration as an area of concern, has remained at over 50% since 2005, thereby confirming the poor results present in the quantitative data. It is unusual for there to be so many comments

on Faculty administration in the responses to questions asking for areas of improvement in the degree course. The majority of comments referred to the cancellation of lectures without due notice, and the failure of the Faculty to communicate this to students.

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Conceptual framework

Student Evaluation of Teaching Surveys

The University Student Course Experience Questionnaire (SCEQ) and the DEEWR/ GCA Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) are designed to collect quantitative and qualitative data about students' perceptions of the quality of teaching and learning in their degree courses.

In both surveys 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 provide written comments on the best aspects of their degree experience and those that could be improved.

Quantitative and qualitative data from the CEQ and the SCEQ 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.

Difference between SCEQ and CEQ

Both surveys are administered by the Institute for Teaching and Learning. The SCEQ is distributed to a stratified sample of current students (i.e. all years of study, all degrees). The CEQ is distributed to all graduates of the University in the year following graduation.

Focus of the Trend Analysis Report

Based on the answers to these surveys, this report seeks to provide an analysis of observable trends in the student experience of learning and teaching in the Faculty of Dentistry between 2001 and 2007. The report also provides detailed information on the key issues highlighted in the analysis of the 2007 SCEQ and CEQ qualitative data. Reliable qualitative data for international students did not become available until the 2005 SCEQ.

Information is arranged by 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 student experience of learning and teaching in the Faculty.

When reading this report, it should be noted that the absence of favourable comments on a particular aspect of learning and teaching does not reflect student dissatisfaction on the relevant topic. Rather, it could be interpreted that the students are happy with their experiences, and prefer to focus on providing written observations on areas in need of improvement. Also of note is that students are increasingly providing constructive observations, and often mention more than one aspect of their experiences in these comments.

1 Generic Skills (KPI 7)

Definition

Generic Skills includes:

- 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)

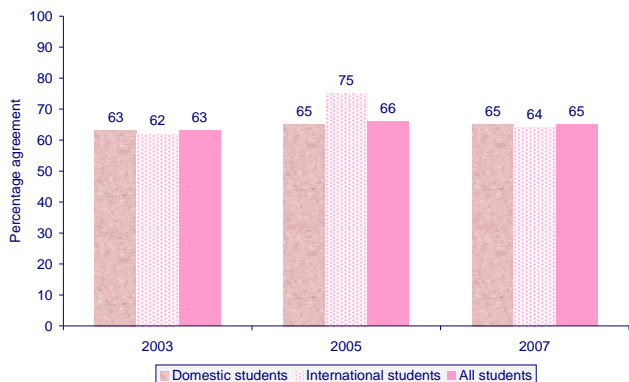
Trends

Faculty scores for Generic Skills for current students (SCEQ) have remained steady since 2003, and currently stand at 65% which is marginally below the University average of 65%. For graduates (CEQ), the current score of 65% represents a decrease of 8% since 2006, but is higher than the scores for 2004 (63%) and 2006 (73%). The University average for graduates is 69%. These results place the Faculty in the middle range of rankings for both current students and graduates.

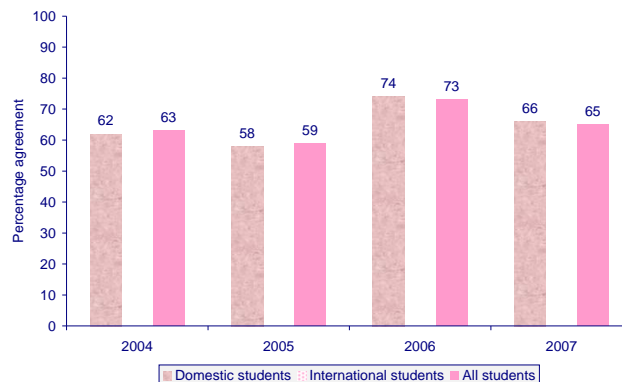
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1.1 Comparative results: Quantitative data 2001–2007

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



1.1.1 Student Course Experience Questionnaire: 2003; 2005; 2007 (current students)



1.1.2 Course Experience Questionnaire 2004–2007 (graduates from previous year)

1.2 Comparative results: Qualitative data 2001–2007

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 the student satisfaction with the development of University graduate attributes / generic skills between 2001 and 2007.

		SCEQ 2001	SCEQ 2002	SCEQ 2003	SCEQ 2005	SCEQ 2007	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007
Areas of best practice	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	60%	59%	42%	44%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	50%	50%	<i>Too few comments</i>	
	All	64%	66%	53%	59%	58%	42%	41%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	9%	5%	11%	4%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	11%	<i>Too few comments</i>	
	All	5%	8%	6%	8%	5%	10%	4%

1.3 Key issues for coursework students (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)

1.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=178)	International (n=18)	All (n=196)
Ethical, social, professional understanding			
- Ability to work in a group/ team working skills	56%	50%	56%
- Development of discipline/ professional skills			
- Presence of work placement/ industry experience in the course			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *Clinical practicals like dealing with patients and practising for patients. the hands on aspects of the degree are most beneficial and enjoyable*
- *Immediately beginning practical/clinical work. allows a lot of time to develop and practice skills to be used on patients*
- *Practical experience - interactions with patients. I consider this to be one of the best aspects as it gives insight into the future - and is the greatest learning experience of all*

Sample comments: international students

- *Clinical experience- gives students exposure to real patients and real problems*
- *The best aspects are that when I graduate, with my skills I will be able to get a good job. I will have learnt sufficient skills to be competitive in the job market*
- *Seeing patients in clinic and getting hands-on experience*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	All (n=25)
Ethical, social, professional understanding	
- Ability to work in a group/ team working skills	41%
- Development of discipline/ professional skills	
- Presence of work placement/ industry experience in the course	

Sample comments

- *Hands on skills Practical aspect of working with patients*
- *Practical experience and members helped prepare us for work in the real world*
- *Hands on hospital work*
- *Clinical practice, treating patients*
- *Treating patients, Clinical side*
- *Treating patients under supervision (internship)*

1.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)

5% of undergraduate students (i.e. 11/209 comments received from respondents to the SCEQ) felt that they were not receiving enough training in professional skills, and that clinical sessions were limited due to a lack of resources, thereby compromising their skills development.

Sample comments: domestic students

- *we do not have enough clinical sessions - often running short of time and rush. I believe clinical experiences and prac sessions are an important pathway of being a competent clinicians*
- *We are currently engaged in a debate between the Faculty of Dentistry and the Westmead Centre for Oral Health and Sydney Dental Hospital regarding the probable reduction in clinical teaching hours next semester due to steadily increasing number of students. The numbers of students has increased, but the clinic space and staffing levels have not changed. This will potentially mean that we receive a reduced amount of experience prior to graduation - a completely unsatisfactory situation. My question is, why did none of the staff or administrators in these organisations see this coming and do something about it well in advance?*
- *More clinical time offered to students*
- *We don't have enough clinical sessions because there's not enough clinics and tutors. This really impacts on our learning, especially with each year the number of students increasing, meaning less clinic time for everyone*

Sample comments: international students

- *More time in tooth conservation as drilling is such a vital component and more time is needed to master the drilling skills. We are already limited in the drilling time, then they go and cancel more sessions. I know some students that were forced to buy portable dental units ranging over \$2000 just so they could practice their drilling skills as we did not get enough time in class*
- *We have also spent way to much time with communication, I do feel that it is important to learn to communicate properly, however, the time that we spend there seems to be just thrown together to fill our time slots*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

4% of undergraduate students (i.e. 1/26 comments received from respondents to the CEQ) considered that the amount of clinical experience could be increased.

Due to the low number of comments, and to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

2 Good Teaching (KPI 8)

Definition

Good Teaching includes:

- Good teaching experiences (interesting, teaching methods, discussions encouraged etc)
- Motivating teaching (enthusiasm, passion of teachers)
- Concern and care for student learning
- Good explanations received (includes English language proficiency of teachers)
- Feedback on work (timely, constructive)

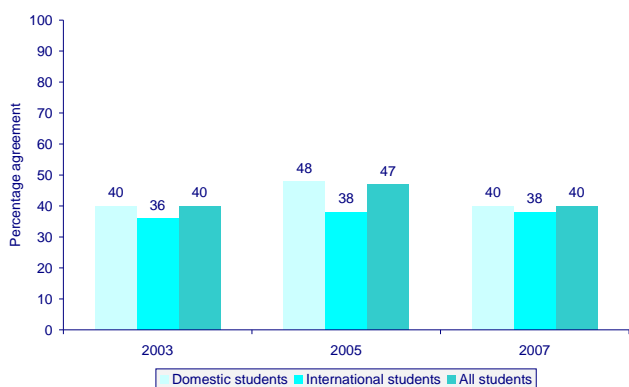
Trends

Faculty scores for Good Teaching in 2007 are in the 40th percentile, for both domestic and all current students (SCEQ). The current SCEQ score of 40% has decreased by 7% since 2005, but is identical to the 2003 score. This score is below the University average of 44% and places the Faculty in the middle range of all faculties. Results for graduates (CEQ) have decreased steadily since 2005. The current CEQ score of 43% is below the University average of 48%, and places the Faculty in the bottom third of all faculties.

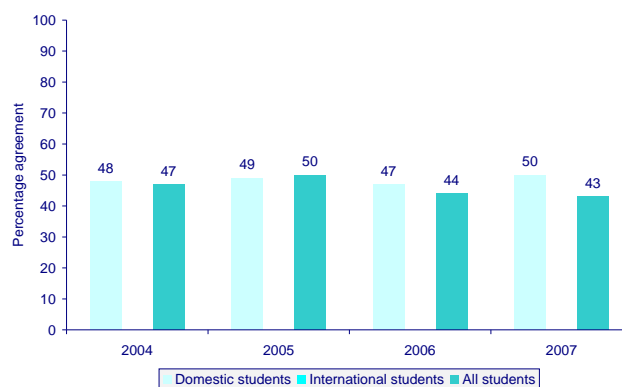
Analysis of the qualitative data suggests that whilst students appreciate the passion and enthusiasm of some academic staff, which motivates them in their studies, together with the approachability of staff and their concern for student welfare; they are dissatisfied with the quality of teaching by other lecturers and clinicians, would appreciate a more timely delivery of online learning resources (i.e. before the lecture), and require timely and constructive feedback on their work. With substantially more comments suggesting improvements than areas of best practice, current students (SCEQ) appear to be less satisfied with this KPI than graduates. Written observations from graduates are evenly divided between those that were satisfied with the standard of teaching, and those that suggested improvements.

2.1 Comparative results: Quantitative data 2001–2007

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.



2.1.1 Student Course Experience Questionnaire: 2003; 2005; 2007 (current students)



2.1.2 Course Experience Questionnaire 2004–2007 (graduates from previous year)

2.2 Comparative results: Qualitative data 2001–2007

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 student experience of Good Teaching between 2001 and 2007, as indicated in the responses to open questions in the SCEQ and the CEQ.

		SCEQ 2001	SCEQ 2002	SCEQ 2003	SCEQ 2005	SCEQ 2007	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007
Areas of best practice	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	42%	28%	21%	24%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	29%	22%	<i>Too few comments</i>	
	All	12%	13%	14%	40%	28%	20%	22%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	43%	48%	11%	26%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	46%	47%	<i>Too few comments</i>	
	All	28%	32%	29%	43%	48%	10%	23%

2.3 Key issues for coursework students (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)

2.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=178)	International (n=18)	All (n=196)
Good teaching experiences			
- Use of innovative and up to date teaching methods and techniques			
- Ability to keep students interested in the subject	10%	6%	10%
- Encouragement to participate in discussions during lectures and tutorials			
- Learning resources are up to date, and relevant to curriculum			
Motivating students			
- Teachers display enthusiasm for teaching/ subject	8%	6%	8%
- Teachers are perceived to be passionate and inspiring			
- Students are motivated by lecturers/ tutors etc			
Sample comments: domestic students			
- <i>The staff are really enthusiastic in trying their best to make the course as interesting as possible. This must be given to certain tutors, such as Dr.xx who has given dentistry student his priority in helping us learn the medical components of our degree. The practical sessions, especially our clinical sessions and tooth conservation sessions are always very useful. The staff are there to help you on the spot, and they are ready to give you very constructive feedbacks. In general, the course is very practical, in which students can apply theoretical learning to clinical settings very readily. Also, in terms of exam feedback, both the clinical and the tooth conservation have done extremely. Whereby students are basically given immediate feedback on their performance. This is very helpful to improve our learning</i>			
- <i>Most of the teaching staff are competent and can thankfully teach.</i>			
- <i>I believe tooth conservation is one of the best parts of dentistry, it is run by a very enthusiastic, caring and knowledgeable person. We know everything that is expected of us, as it is clearly outlined. Most if not all the dentistry lectures are well run, interesting and relevant</i>			
- <i>Excellent lecturers and clinical tutors. They are motivating and keep the subject interesting and relevant</i>			
Sample comments: international students			
- <i>Lecturers are very enthusiastic and prepared for sharing their knowledge. Practising on real patients from 1st year very hands on.</i>			
- <i>Good staff (Friendly, knowledgeable) Good lecturers (All are experts in their fields, very stimulating).</i>			

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	All (n=27)
Good teaching experiences	
- Use of innovative and up to date teaching methods and techniques	
- Ability to keep students interested in the subject	7%
- Encouragement to participate in discussions during lectures and tutorials	
- Learning resources are up to date, and relevant to curriculum	
Concern and care for student learning	
- Students felt supported in their learning; help and advice readily available	15%
- Lecturers understood problems and difficulties of students (academic and personal)	
Sample comments	
- <i>Accessible staff / faculty to address problems / concerns</i>	
- <i>Clinical experience, clinical staff were very involved and gave time to improving my work.</i>	
- <i>Lecturers were extremely good. Overall courses were great</i>	
- <i>Staff genuinely concerned with well being of students and approachable</i>	
- <i>Hands on education, tutors very supportive</i>	
- <i>Fellow students, some staff, tight knit group</i>	

2.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=190)	International (n=19)	All (n=209)
------------------------------	---------------------	-------------------------	----------------

Good teaching experiences

- | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|
| - Teaching methods used are outdated; Lectures were boring | | | |
| - Discussions of issues raised during lectures and tutorials are not encouraged | 33% | 26% | 32% |
| - Learning resources are out of date, and not relevant to curriculum; not available prior to lecture (incl. online resources; lecture notes etc) | | | |

Feedback on work (from staff to students)

- | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|
| - Comments on work are not constructive; do not explain where mistakes occur that can be rectified. | 13% | 16% | 13% |
| - Marks only supplied, no comments | | | |
| - Feedback is untimely and not helpful | | | |
| - Perceived lack of staff effort in provision of feedback on assessment | | | |

Sample comments: domestic students

- *The teaching of the anatomy component of the course was absolutely atrocious. I gained nothing from the lectures because they were completely unorganised, contained too much information, rambling, and the supporting notes were unreadable or too complex to understand. There was discrepancies between the information given to us by the anatomy teacher and the faculty of dentistry which added to confusion and frustration*
- *Feedback from exams have been very poor. We have done exams 9 weeks ago and haven't gotten any feedback on them at all and there is some speculation that they haven't actually been marked. This doesn't allow us to learn what they are looking for in future exams and how we could improve*
- *We are considered second rate citizens in the first two years of the course which we share with the medical students. While the medical students are given lecture materials before the lecture, we must wait until the Medical Faculty has the time to email our Faculty with the notes*

Sample comments: international students

- *When it comes to testing, we have not received feed back from any of the tests that we have written outside of Sim clinics. I think that is pathetic for a professional program such as dentistry not to have feed back*
- *Someone needs to organize things so that we get our lecture notes posted online before lectures, and that we get the latest version of them, someone needs to make sure our timetables are up to date, someone needs to come up with a syllabus for students and staff to follow so that we know what has been taught and what we are responsible for. someone needs to let students know well in advance important dates as I still don't know what date I need to be back for the start of next year*
- *Lecturer notes not posted online. Anatomy was poorly taught. Clinical sessions were also poorly organised. contradicting concepts taught*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	All (n=26)
----------------------	---------------

Good teaching experiences

- | | |
|--|-----|
| - Teaching methods and techniques used are outdated/need improvement | 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; | 9% |
| - help and advice was not readily available | |

Sample comments

- *Supervisor student interaction, very biased*
- *Assessments - grading and feedback*
- *online resources missing*
- *Lecturer, faculty (intra communication), comprehensive curriculum, a systematic approach to teaching. Clear communication with students*
- *Also, members of the faculty appeared to be playing politics and pulling in different directions, causing a poorer quality of teaching and experience*
- *Supervisor student interaction, very biased*

3 Overall Satisfaction (KPI 9)

Definition

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

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

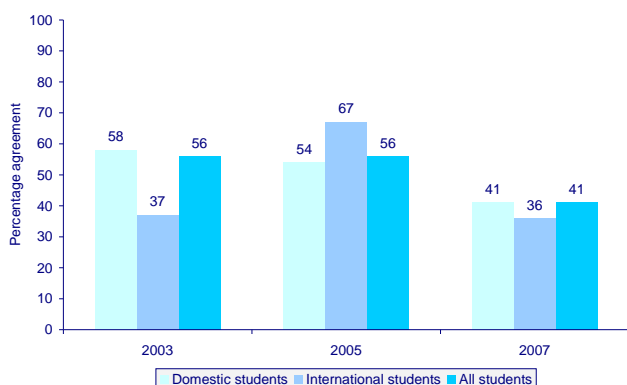
Trends

For current students (SCEQ) the current Faculty score for Overall Satisfaction is 41%, which is the lowest in the University, and represents a decrease of 15% on the 2003 and 2005 results. At 61%, the 2007 CEQ Faculty score is amongst the lowest in the University, where the average is 71%.

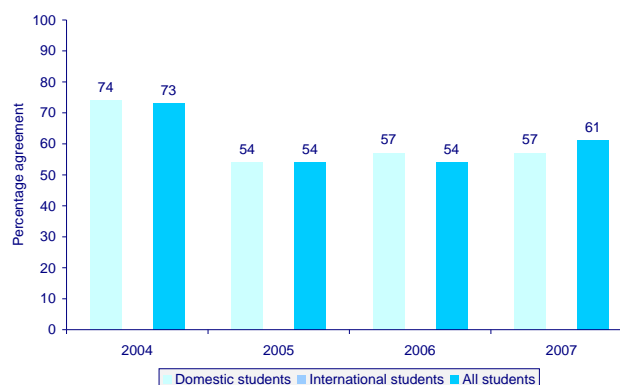
Evidence from the qualitative data indicates that whilst students and graduates are satisfied with the knowledge, experience and qualifications of academic staff and clinicians, they are concerned that the lack of resources, and inadequate staffing levels, are compromising their education and training, as well as resulting in additional expenses on top of their already high course fees.

3.1 Comparative results: Quantitative data 2001–2007

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 SCEQ and the CEQ.



3.1.1 Student Course Experience Questionnaire: 2003; 2005; 2007 (current students)



3.1.2 Course Experience Questionnaire 2004–2007 (graduates from previous year)

3.2 Comparative results: Qualitative data 2001–2007

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.

		SCEQ 2001	SCEQ 2002	SCEQ 2003	SCEQ 2005	SCEQ 2007	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007
Areas of best practice	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	12%	10%	11%	16%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	21%	17%	<i>Too few comments</i>	
	All	9%	8%	12%	13%	10%	10%	15%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	10%	20%	21%	22%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	8%	42%	<i>Too few comments</i>	
	All	21%	28%	18%	10%	22%	19%	19%

3.3 Key issues for coursework students (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)

3.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=178)	International (n=18)	All (n=196)
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Staffing issues

- Qualifications of staff in subject matter and in teaching at tertiary level acknowledged	7%	6%	7%
- Relevant experience of lecturers and tutors in subject area recognised			
- Relevant and up to date knowledge of lecturers and tutors appreciated			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *All the academics engaged with research is great because they provide us with up to date information. Clinical sessions with experienced dentists/specialists is good because we get hands-on experience with great mentors*
- *getting lectures from well known and respected people in the NSW health and dental profession*
- *Everyone has completed a degree prior to studying this current degree therefore each student is much more mature. plenty of hands on experience which significantly improves learning*
- *Working with specialists because they provide excellent expertise, advice*

Sample comments: international students

- *Some tutors/lecturers are very dedicated to the course & students which makes learning very enjoyable & enriching. best aspect would probably be the thought of the future - a good career choice & being able to use abilities, knowledge and influence as a professional to impact the lives of others*
- *Good lecturers (All are experts in their fields, very stimulating).*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

15% of undergraduate students (i.e. 4/27 comments received from respondents to the CEQ), were satisfied with the course, and with the relevant clinical experience of academic and external staff.

Due to the low number of comments, and to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

3.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=190)	International (n=19)	All (n=209)
Staffing issues			
- Lack of resources apparent; more staff suggested	13%	16%	13%
- Lecturers/ tutors/ demonstrators did not have required knowledge or experience in subject area			
- Some specialists not qualified to teach at tertiary level			
Value for money			
- Students dissatisfied with cost of course and/or resources required	4%	26%	6%
- Students unhappy about having to buy equipment			
- Students not advised about hidden expenses of course			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *Academically, PBL tutors of extremely variable quality - can be conducive to learning through their knowledge ability or can simply want to get through the tutorial ASAP and leave while not helping students at all. Faculty excuse that PBL tutors are simply meant to facilitate tutorials is absolute rubbish - what good is it if the tutors have no idea what they are talking about and don't know what to focus on?*
- *There needs to be more staff! Currently, there is one supervisor for a 6 students! Other times we require a specialist consult and they are being shared with both the third and fourth year dental students so the assistance is scarce. Also we would benefit from having more dental nurses or have each other to assist in the clinic as this would improve our time management, infection control and if we were assisting our peers, we could also collaborate and problem solve together*
- *It is far too disorganised and the dental faculty wanting nothing to do and the course. The degree is autonomously controlled a few select members trying to further their own careers*

Sample comments: international students

- *Also International students are out a whole lot more than \$2000 for being here. PBL tutors also continually complain about how much they are getting paid*
- *there are a lot of hidden expenses. The faculty grossly underestimated the amount of extra material we would need to buy. Every month we are asked to purchase something or it is highly recommended that we purchase something. On average this costs an unexpected \$200 a month. That is equivalent to one week's rent*
- *Over all I feel that I am getting a second rate education, with exception of the invasive procedures, I feel I could teach myself the material to a better standard out of textbooks and off of the internet than what the faculty is doing. I feel that I am paying way too much for this education and that the faculty doesn't really care as long as they get paid*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

5% of graduates (i.e. 5/26 comments received) who responded to the CEQ were dissatisfied with inadequate staff numbers.

Due to the low number of comments and to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

4 Learning Community

Definition

Learning Community includes the following:

- Learning environment (exploration of academic interests with staff and students (tutorials, laboratory work; belonging to a community, social experiences; cultural diversity; equity issues)
- Location/ isolation (affiliated campuses, hospitals, institutes)
- Induction and orientation
- Responsiveness to student feedback
- Physical resources (physical facilities; library)

Trends

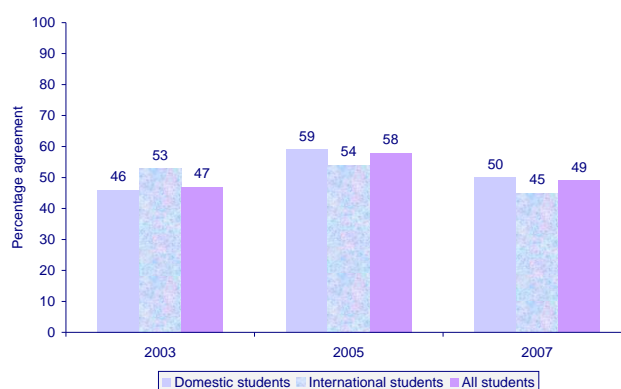
49% of students either agreed or strongly agreed with SCEQ survey items on the Learning Community. This represents a decrease of 9% since 2005, and is the lowest in the University. The University average for Learning Community is 58%.

Evidence from the qualitative data suggests that whilst students appreciate the community feel that being in a small Faculty, and with the same cohort throughout the course, engenders; the poor condition of facilities at the Faculty and hospitals, together with a lack of equipment for training purposes, is a major area in need of improvement. Students are also concerned by the fact that Faculty do not appear to respond to student feedback.

4.1 Comparative results: Quantitative data SCEQ 2003–2007

The following table show the proportion of students who either strongly agreed or agreed with survey item statements on Learning Community in the Student Course Experience Questionnaire.

Note: The Learning Community Scale is not included in the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ).



4.1.1 Student Course Experience Questionnaire: 2003; 2005; 2007 (current students)

4.2 Comparative results: Qualitative data 2001–2007

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 student experience of the Learning Community between 2001 and 2007.

		SCEQ 2001	SCEQ 2002	SCEQ 2003	SCEQ 2005	SCEQ 2007	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007
Areas of best practice	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	26%	17%	16%	20%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	21%	17%	<i>Too few comments</i>	
	All	17%	13%	14%	25%	17%	15%	19%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	17%	27%	5%	4%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	15%	37%	<i>Too few comments</i>	
	All	25%	20%	21%	17%	28%	5%	4%

4.3 Key issues for coursework students (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)

4.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=178)	International (n=18)	All (n=196)
Learning environment			
- Felt that they belonged to a community (degree/ Faculty)	14%	17%	14%
- Academic interests were being explored with staff and students			
- Class sizes were satisfactory			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *The people in my course are wonderful and we are all very close and supportive with each other. It makes going everyday at 7am very worthwhile.*
- *This degree is pass/fail, and I believe that this fosters a less competitive atmosphere amongst the students. I have found that the majority of us are more focused on helping all students pass and do well, and that we are working better as a whole, compared to my two previous degrees*
- *The random combination of students for PBL tutorials means there are always a range of perspectives on each topic which aids our learning and understanding*

Sample comments: international students

- *The best aspect of the degree is that it is a small program and you get to know your classmates well and fairly quickly. The social events organised by the students are always fun and easy to get to!*
- *Working with colleagues*
- *Small class. For the most part the faculty and admin staff are very supportive*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

5% of graduates (i.e. 5/27 comments received) who responded to the CEQ appreciated the close-knit community of students; the small class sizes; and the tutorials.

Due to the low number of comments and to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

4.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=190)	International (n=19)	All (n=209)
Staff unresponsive to feedback	6%	11%	7%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students concerned that the Faculty did not listen to their concerns 			
Physical resources			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Physical facilities inadequate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Buildings, lecture theatres, rooms o Computer facilities and resources o Equipment e.g. dental chairs, drilling apparatus 	15%	21%	15%

Sample comments: domestic students

- *The faculty does not listen to the students or their problems. The same problems that we faced in our first year (currently in 3rd year) are still being experienced in the current first year. The faculty staff do not act on any of our feedback and just consistently say that they have taken our comments on board but nothing ever changes*
- *Clinical, social, simulation clinic and lab facilities, as well as staffing. The faculty of Dentistry s 'overwhelming' under resourced. I find it almost shameful as an Australian to undertake training in Dentistry in such deplorable facilities and limited clinical time people are training !!*
- *The frequent constructive feedback suggestions left to the Dental faculty on the BDent website are normally either ignored or replied to with 'we will take this into consideration'.*

Sample comments: international students

- *Our clinical and preclinical facilities need updating in some aspects, as do our lecture theatres at the hospital*
- *Faculty administration is very poor. Often promises of change are made but are not carried out. We as students have given feedback numerous times but often faculty does not act upon our feedback*
- *Bachelor of Dentistry: Expanded facilities please! Construction of faculty building at Westmead!*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

4% of graduates (i.e. 1/26 comments received) who responded to the CEQ considered that the class sizes were too big.

Due to the low number of comments and to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

5 Curriculum

Definition

Student perceptions of the Curriculum used in their degree course include:

- Content and structure of degree(s) (intensive courses; relationship between Units of Study; content of Units of Study; relevance to work/ career/ industry)
- Online mode of delivery (WebCT)
- Flexibility of degree, including ability to take a range of Units of Study
- Availability/ cancellation of advertised courses
- Combined/ Cross faculty degrees
- Special programs (Talented students *and* Honours programs)
- Practical components of degree course²

Trends

In 2007 28% of comments received from current students (SCEQ) commented favourably on various aspects of the Curriculum; whilst 33% of comments received suggested improvements in this area of their experience. Comments received from graduates (CEQ) and which mentioned the Curriculum, were evenly divided between those expressing satisfaction and those suggesting improvements.

Analysis of the qualitative data indicates that whilst students appreciate the blending of practical and theory in the curriculum, they are concerned about the inclusion of what appear to be irrelevant material. In comparison with previous years, very few students commented unfavourably on the inclusion of medical material in the first years of the degree.

Note: Specific items on Curriculum are not included in either the SCEQ or CEQ. Therefore no comparative quantitative data is available for this aspect of the student experience. Due to the high proportion of student comments on the delivery, content, structure and relevance of the curriculum this important aspect of the student experience has been included as a separate item in reports since 2002.

5.1 Comparative results: Qualitative data 2001–2007

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 student experience of Curriculum between 2001 and 2007.

		SCEQ 2001	SCEQ 2002	SCEQ 2003	SCEQ 2005	SCEQ 2007	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007
Areas of best practice	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	21%	28%	21%	20%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	14%	28%	<i>Too few comments</i>	
	All	26%	27%	25%	20%	28%	21%	19%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	43%	33%	53%	22%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	8%	32%	<i>Too few comments</i>	
	All	18%	17%	22%	39%	33%	48%	19%

² Development of practical skills included in Generic Skills: Professional Skills and Experience

5.2 Key issues for coursework students (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)

5.2.2 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=178)	International (n=18)	All (n=196)
Content and structure			
- Content and structure of whole degree program/ individual units of study	25%	22%	24%
- Subjects appear to be linked together			
- Subject content is relevant to work/ career and industry requirements			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *I feel passionate about this degree as it integrates practical sessions with theory. I enjoy the concept of hands-on experience in combination with text book learning as I am able to thoroughly gain a deeper understanding of course topics. I also like the idea of being able to work with patients at such an early stage in the degree, as theory is understood to a greater extent when put into practice in the clinic in unpredictable circumstances. The best thing about this course is that we cover a wide variety of topics from psychology of an individual, communication and motivation skills, to the anatomy of the human body, how to place composite fillings and how to use an electronic scaler on a patient with heavy calculus. Prior to this course I didn't understand the degree of knowledge that was required in 'simple' tasks such as aiding an individual in altering their oral hygiene regime*
- *The degree provides an intellectual/theoretical component as well as practical which will allow us to be more than just 'mechanics'.*
- *I like the PBL structure: provides an interesting & more relevant means of learning*
- *Most of the subject matter is very interesting, along with practical experiences in the form of PreClinical and Clinical work provide a lot of feedback on how I am going. These aspects also make me feel like a dentist rather than learning things which you will never use in the work place.*

Sample comments: international students

- *It's really hands on so this develops learning more effectively. It is also really diverse which makes it interesting*
- *The medicine component of my program is quite valuable. I feel that the course is trying to develop an overall health practitioner, and not merely a dentist*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

19% of graduates (i.e. 5/27 comments received) who responded to the CEQ were satisfied with the content and structure of the curriculum, and the PBL method of delivery.

Due to the low number of comments and to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

5.2.3 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=190)	International (n=19)	All (n=209)
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Content and structure

- Unhappy with content and structure of whole degree program/ individual units of study	29%	26%	25%
- Subject content is not relevant to work/ career and industry requirements			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *The basic foundations of Physiology, Pharmacology, Cellular biology and Pathology are not covered adequately early enough in the course- makes understanding pathology more difficult later*
- *First year was good, although it could have been improved by abolishing unnecessary subjects which are not useful in the complete objective of the degree course*
- *Some streams of learning seem to be redundant fillers that are a waste of time and not helpful in an already heavy workload course e.g.. dental histology could be incorporated into oral pathology, especially since no one actually learnt anything substantial in dental histology (1st year) until it was covered from principles in pathology in 2nd year. Personal and professional development lectures are repetitive and stating the obvious for the majority of the time, a lot of which is common sense, whilst difficult subjects such as anatomy are rushed and compacted into barely comprehensible lectures for lack of time. While the lecturer for anatomy is brilliant, there is only so much that is humanly possible in a limited amount of time. Basic lectures e.g. introductory periodontology in first year were cancelled or replaced with the lecturer showing surgical videos which were completely irrelevant and useless with a lack of basic knowledge on the subject matter. Students were left unprepared for clinics on patients and then asked by clinical tutors why we didn't know what we were doing. The content of these lectures were still examined even though we had never had them delivered, and they were not caught up on until a year later as a stopgap measure. Non-applicable medical lectures from 1st and 2nd year need to be cut out from the dental syllabus, medical lecturers don't care for our education in general - often get trite comments such as 'you're dental students, you'll never see this anyway, you won't need to know it' whilst we sit the same written papers as the medical students with NO medical clinical experience to reinforce our learning*

Sample comments: international students

- *Everything in my degree can be improved*
- *The faculty does not discuss amongst themselves what is to be taught and how. we are often given conflicting information on how to do things, by different teaching staff*
- *In general the program is very poorly run. The material that is required for learning isn't presented appropriately, and as a result many of the students are confused and it seems that many of the tutors and even staff are just as confused*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

19% of graduates (i.e. 5/26 comments received) who responded to the CEQ were dissatisfied with the content and structure of the curriculum, and the PBL method of delivery.

Due to the low number of comments and to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

6 Appropriate Assessment

Definition

Appropriate Assessment includes:

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

Trends

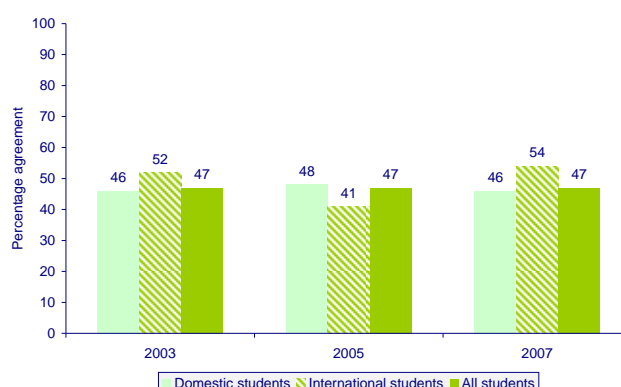
The percentage agreement scores for Appropriate Assessment in the SCEQ has remained at 47% for the past three surveys. This score is lower than the University average of 55% and places the Faculty in the middle range of faculties for this topic.

Evidence from the qualitative data supports this result, with over 13% of comments received from current students expressing dissatisfaction with assessment practices across the Faculty, whilst 0-2% expressed satisfaction. Amongst current students (SCEQ) the main area of concern was the content of assessments, particularly in relation to the examining of material that had not been taught during the course, due in part to cancelled lectures that had not been re-run.

6.1 Comparative results: Quantitative data SCEQ 2003-2007

The following tables show the proportion of students who either strongly agreed or agreed with survey item statements on appropriate assessment in the SCEQ.

NB: The Appropriate Assessment Scale is not included in the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ).



6.1.1 Student Course Experience Questionnaire: 2003; 2005; 2007 (current students)

6.2 Comparative results: Qualitative data 2001–2007

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 student experience of Appropriate Assessment between 2001 and 2007.

		SCEQ 2001	SCEQ 2002	SCEQ 2003	SCEQ 2005	SCEQ 2007	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007
Areas of best practice	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	2%	2%	0%	0%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	0%	<i>Too few comments</i>	
	All	1%	1%	0%	2%	2%	0%	0%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	16%	13%	11%	17%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	15%	11%	<i>Too few comments</i>	
	All	8%	8%	5%	16%	13%	10%	15%

6.3 Key issues for coursework students (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)

6.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)

2% of students (i.e. 3/196 comments received) who responded to the SCEQ expressed satisfaction with the choice, aptness and design of assessments.

Due to the low number of comments and to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

No graduates (CEQ) provided written observations on assessment practices in the Faculty in the responses to the open questions on areas of best practice

6.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=190)	International (n=19)	All (n=209)
Content of assessment	13%	11%	13%
- Assessments tested memory rather than understanding			
- Examinations included material that had not been taught			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *We also need to eliminate the need to memorise the sheer volume of information with open book exams to test comprehension*
- *We are being examined on materials that we have not been taught. We are emailed .ppt lectures that were not presented (since the lecturers fail to turn up) after the exam and advised that this was what we were supposed to have received before the exam. This is not a correspondence course. All assessable materials should be presented to us*
- *I did not have a clear understanding of what assessments I had or what content they covered. This is because too many acronyms were used, but not explained in a straightforward manner. Also, some assessments and their dates were not planned by faculty until after the start of the course, and therefore were not on the curriculum map we were given at the beginning of the year. Lastly, some exams contained content that we had not yet covered in the course!*
- *Some exams have had questions on topics and subjects we haven't actually done, and on resources which hadn't been given to us*

Sample comments: international students

- *. On all of our exams so far we have been tested on things we have not yet been taught. The faculty has not set up any sort of syllabus so they do not know what they have taught us. We have been tested on material that was supposed to be presented in lectures, but lecturers either turn up late or not at all, so the lecture is emailed out and never actually presented. This is completely inappropriate since this is not a correspondence course. Course fees would be much cheaper otherwise. I have sent the department feedback on this matter but they have yet to reply*
- *Exams: assessed on what hasn't been taught. rarely telling us what is included. Marking system very ambiguous- never know about progress.*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

15% of graduates (i.e. 4/26) who responded to the CEQ considered that assignments should be graded, and that there should be variety in the types of assessment used.

Due to the low number of comments, and to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided

7 Appropriate Workload

Definition

Appropriate Workload includes:

- 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

Trends

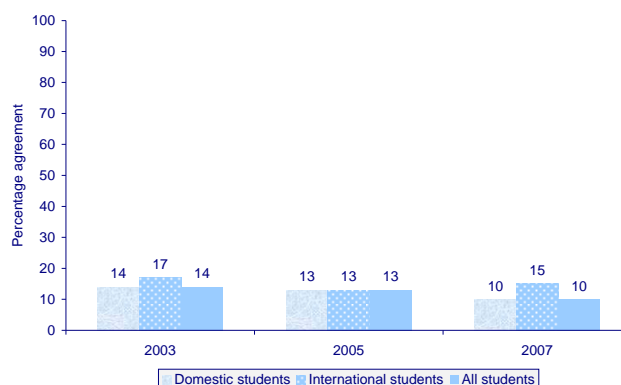
The percentage agreement scores for Appropriate Workload (10%) in the 2007 SCEQ is lower than the University average of 23%, and is the lowest in the University.

Analysis of the qualitative data suggests, however, that workload is not a major area of concern with students. In 2003 and 2005, an average of 9% of comments received from respondents to the SCEQ expressed dissatisfaction with their workload. In 2007, 5% of current students (SCEQ), the lowest on record, considered this item to be of sufficient importance in their experiences to suggest it as an area of improvement. The main issues raised by current students related to the intense workload connected to the degree, and a reduction in the amount of medical related material in the course. No graduates mentioned workload as an area of concern.

7.1 Comparative results: Quantitative data 2003–2007

The following tables show the proportion of students who either strongly agreed or agreed with survey item statements on Appropriate Workload in the Student Course Experience Questionnaire (SCEQ).

NB: The Appropriate Workload Scale is not included in the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ).



6.1.1 Student Course Experience Questionnaire: 2003; 2005; 2007 (current students)

7.2 Comparative results: Qualitative data 2001–2007

The following table provides an indication of trends in the student experience of Appropriate Workload between 2001 and 2007, as indicated in the responses to open questions in the SCEQ and the CEQ.

		SCEQ 2001	SCEQ 2002	SCEQ 2003	SCEQ 2005	SCEQ 2007	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007
Areas of best practice	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	1%	0%	0%	0%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	0%	<i>Too few comments</i>	
	All	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	9%	6%	0%	0%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	8%	0%	<i>Too few comments</i>	
	All	24%	19%	9%	9%	5%	0%	0%

7.3 Key issues for coursework students (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)

The main issues raised by current students related to the intense workload connected to the degree, and a reduction in the amount of medical related material in the course. The similarity of comments provided on this topic negates the purpose of providing sample comments to illustrate student concerns.

8 Clear Goals and Standards

Definition

Clear Goals and Standards includes:

- 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).

Trends

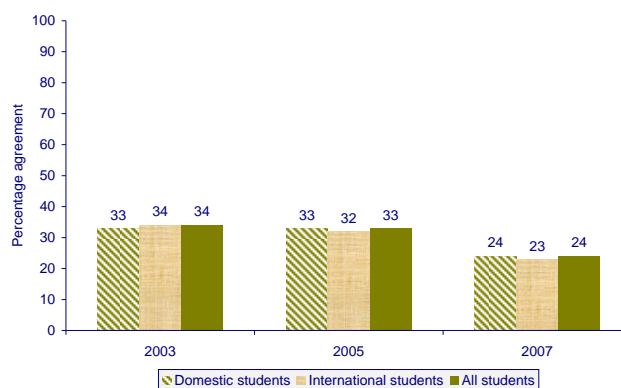
In 2007, the percentage of students who either agreed or strongly agreed with items in the SCEQ relating to Clear Goals and Standards was 24%, which is below the University average of 42%, and the lowest in the University. This represents a decrease of 9% since 2005, and 15% since 2001. It should be noted that research indicates that clarity of goals is a problem for any PBL course.

Approximately 25% of comments received from current students in answer to the open question in the SCEQ, related to aspects of Clear Goals and Standards. Students are dissatisfied with the lack of clear aims and objectives, and the lack of clarity regarding expectations of the standard of work expected, particularly in relation to assessments. It should be noted that research indicates that clarity of goals is a problem for PBL courses.

8.1 Comparative results: Quantitative data SCEQ 2003-2007

The following tables show the proportion of students who either strongly agreed or agreed with survey item statements on Clear Goals and Standards in the SCEQ.

NB: The Clear Goals and Standards Scale is not included in the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ).



6.1.1 Student Course Experience Questionnaire: 2003; 2005; 2007 (current students)

8.2 Comparative results: Qualitative data 2001–2007

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 student experience of Clear Goals and Standards between 2001 and 2007.

		SCEQ 2001	SCEQ 2002	SCEQ 2003	SCEQ 2005	SCEQ 2007	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007
Areas of best practice	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	1%	0%	0%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	0%	<i>Too few comments</i>	
	All	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	17%	24%	5%	4%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	8%	21%	<i>Too few comments</i>	
	All	10%	8%	5%	16%	24%	5%	4%

8.3 Key issues for coursework students (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)

8.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)

1% (2/196 comments received) of current students mentioned that clear objectives were provided; expectations were clear; unit outlines were accurate; and expectations were clearly communicated

Due to the low number of comments received, and to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

No graduates mentioned this topic in the open question relating to areas of best practice.

8.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=190)	International (n=19)	All (n=209)
Aims and objectives	7%	5%	7%
- Students were not provided with course aims and objectives			
Clear expectations for standard of work			
- Students were unaware of the standard of work required	13%	11%	13%
- Students unaware of the work required to attain certain grades			
- Students unaware of assessment requirements			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *We really need to be made aware of our course objectives and expectations of many subjects and we also need to be better informed of any last minute timetable changes by improving communication between staff and students*
- *We need some sort of syllabus / curriculum so that we are clearly given a statement of what is needed to understand and learn for assessments*
- *A clear outline of the syllabus being taught with clear points which need to be achieved, more collaboration with the medical faculty to make sure we are getting the same information as the medical students, better assessments and also a clear outline of what is expected*
- *Assessment criteria has been known to have been changed so that it has been more difficult to pass an exam AFTER the exam has been sat. This is both unfair and unprofessional of the faculty and caused a significant rift between students and the faculty*

Sample comments: international students

- *Make learning objectives more clear by having a suggested study guide etc*
- *Information can be presented in a more concise, organised manner, rather than being told to read numerous textbooks card informed that all information is testable. Completely unrealistic expectations at times. 90% failure rate in the LA exam speaks for itself*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

1% of students (i.e. 1/26) would appreciate an explanation of required knowledge for coursework. Due to the low number of comments, and to maintain student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

9 Faculty/ Department Student Administration

Definition

Faculty / Department Student Administration includes:

- Overall quality of Faculty administration and organisation;
- Administration of combined degrees;
- Scheduling of classes; timetable issues;
- Communication between staff (academic and general) and students;

Trends

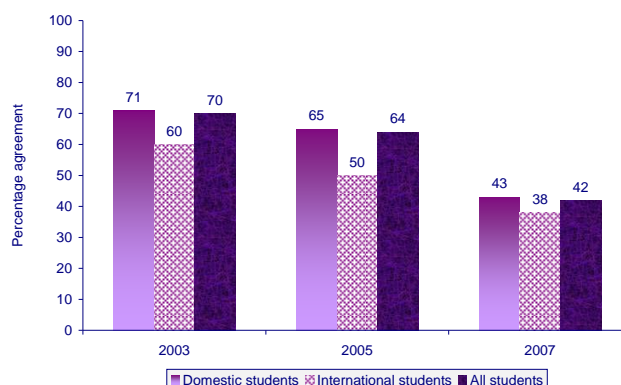
SCEQ faculty scores indicate that student perceptions of Faculty / Department Student Administration has declined considerably since 2003, and currently sits at 42%, a decrease of 22% since 2005. This result places the Faculty lowest in the University, where the average is 66%. This is the first time since the commencement of the SCEQ that the Faculty has been below the University average.

The percentage of comments received from respondents to the surveys, which mention aspects of Faculty/ Department Student Administration as an area of concern, has remained at over 50% since 2005, thereby confirming the poor results present in the quantitative data. It is unusual for there to be so many comments on Faculty administration in the responses to questions asking for areas of improvement in the degree course. The majority of comments referred to the cancellation of lectures without due notice, and the failure of the Faculty to communicate this to students.

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. This analysis will be provided in a later report: *Student experience of administration and student support*.

9.1 Comparative results: Quantitative data SCEQ 2003-2007

The following tables show the proportion of students who either strongly agreed or agreed with the SCEQ question on the overall quality of Faculty / Department Student Administration.



6.1.1 Student Course Experience Questionnaire: 2003; 2005; 2007 (current students)

9.2 Comparative results: Qualitative data 2001–2007

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 student experience of Faculty / Department Student Administration between 2001 and 2007.

		SCEQ 2001	SCEQ 2002	SCEQ 2003	SCEQ 2005	SCEQ 2007	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007
Areas of best practice	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	1%	2%	0%	0%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	7%	6%	<i>Too few comments</i>	
	All	2%	0%	0%	2%	2%	0%	0%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	60%	62%	32%	61%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	54%	68%	<i>Too few comments</i>	
	All	24%	20%	41%	59%	63%	29%	54%

9.3 Key issues for current coursework students (SCEQ 2007)

9.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)

2% (4/196 comments received) of current students who responded to the SCEQ were satisfied with the services provided by Faculty administration.

Due to the low number of comments, and to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

No graduates provided positive comments on this topic.

9.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=190)	International (n=19)	All (n=209)
General comments			
- Students were dissatisfied with the administration section of the Faculty	17%	21%	18%
- Students were dissatisfied with the organisation of the degree by Faculty administration (i.e. not the structure of the degree)			
Scheduling classes			
- Students were unhappy with timetabling of classes	13%	11%	13%
- Students were not informed of cancelled lectures			
- Timetable changed not notified to students			
Communication			
- Lack of communication between faculty and students	9%	26%	34%
- Lack of communication between academic staff and administration			
- Lack of communication between faculties; faculty and hospitals			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *Administrative areas - constant timetable changes, late notice of changes. Don't get exam timetable until student-vacation week, unsure of what exams are being sat each semester. Poor organisation overall. A lot of work missed so students suffering and forced to catch up in short time period*
- *The faculty website- timetables not updated, lecture notes not posted in the correct areas, emails taking 2 weeks to be sent, lecturers and students being told different venues. Lectures not being rescheduled but content being examined*
- *The organisation of my degree is poor. Timetable are from week to week and lectures get changed or cancelled at very short notice or lectures just don't so up. The exam timetable is given to us only just before Stuvac, it is now early September and I still don't know how many exams I have at the end of semester and when the are. It is already hard enough to study full time and work part time without being messed around with time tables.*

Sample comments: international students

- *Not enough information about the course is sent out before beginning. Important course dates, such as the last day of exams, when the breaks are, exam dates, and the start date for the following year were not told to us until the first day of classes*
- *The organization of the administration can be greatly improved. Small things such as scheduling and communication between faculty and students may be worked on. I feel that we as students in this course, are inadequately informed in terms of expectations. Communication is very last-minute, and we are informed about examinable content, for example, only 1-2 weeks before the test date. Such things may be easily corrected if the organization of the administration may be improved upon*
- *Not well organised- timetable changes that are not told to students. Lecturer notes not posted online. Anatomy was poorly taught. Clinical sessions were also poorly organised. contradicting concepts taught*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	All (n=26)
General comments	
- Students were dissatisfied with the administration section of the Faculty	27%
- Students were dissatisfied with the organisation of the degree by Faculty administration (i.e. not the structure of the degree)	
Scheduling classes	
- Students were unhappy with timetabling of classes	12%
- Students were not informed of cancelled lectures	
- Timetable changed not notified to students	
Communication	
- Lack of communication between faculty and students	15%
- Lack of communication between academic staff and administration	
- Lack of communication between faculties; faculty and hospitals	
Sample comments	
- <i>The faculty is very poorly organised. The faculty requires organisational help. Often classes here cancelled at the last minute, the faculty requires an independent student representative within the faculty, for the students interests</i>	
- <i>PBL'S in third and forth year, communication from faculty to students, RE lectures being cancelled ETC</i>	
- <i>Communication between hospitals Communication between staff</i>	
- <i>Organisation between disciplines. Decision process re: progression and remediation, co-ordination between staff</i>	
- <i>Administration (administration) organisation of clinical</i>	
- <i>General organisation. Timetabling etc</i>	