

Programme Evaluation Policy

Academic Quality and Development
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UNIVERSITY OF
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Description	
<p>This document defines the criteria and procedures to be followed for Programme Evaluation.</p> <p>A summary of changes to this document appears on page 1.</p>	

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This list summarises the changes since 2021/22. The date confirms when the changes were implemented.

9 February 2022	1. The new Student Experience Committee has been added to the Access to Data table.
27 April 2022	1. Clustering has been introduced for programmes which have fewer than 10 students at a given level of study. 2. Amendments have been made to section 7 'Access to data'.

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1. Purpose of Programme Evaluation

The University is committed to the continuous enhancement of the student academic experience and values feedback from its students which it elicits through a range of formal and informal mechanisms, thereby fostering a culture of student engagement and dialogue. These feedback mechanisms include informal weekly module feedback processes, formal programme evaluation questionnaires, Student-Staff Liaison Committees and student representation on other University committees as well as national surveys such as the National Student Survey (NSS), Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and the UK Engagement Survey (UKES).

2. Programme evaluation:

- provides assurance to students of the quality of the student academic experience on their programme
- enables the University to identify good practice which can be disseminated across the institution, thereby benefitting the wider student community and to identify areas for improvement
- provides evidence that Programme Leaders should use when completing the University's Annual Programme Evaluation
- enables the University to gather evaluative information from students to inform future programme development
- provides assurance to the University that its programmes demonstrate a level of quality above the national quality requirements, for the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF)

The expected benefits for students arising from the University's approach to programme evaluation are:

- a reduction in the number of surveys that each student takes, to lessen the burden and attendant survey fatigue, whilst maintaining two formal evaluation points per academic year to provide an overview of the whole programme
- more agile and flexible approaches to student feedback which create a dialogue around learning
- the regular identification and sharing of good practice
- continuous module enhancement which underpins student learning
- benefit in real-time from their feedback on modules that they are taking
- an appreciation of the diversity of requirements and expectations in a typical cohort.

3. Principles

Programme evaluation at the University is made up of two interconnected processes: regular informal module feedback and formal programme evaluation.

Informal feedback from students about their programme: co-designed by the Module Tutor and the students studying the module

- Module tutors will engage students in an informal ongoing module feedback process using a format to be agreed with the students at the start of the module. The agreed approach must be inclusive, enable all students to participate and ensure that students can opt to give feedback if they wish to.
- Module tutors will respond to ongoing student feedback promptly during the next session.

Formal feedback from students about their programme: Programme Evaluation Questionnaire

- The University will carry out formal programme evaluation twice per level each academic year.
- Programme evaluation questionnaires should be designed to understand what works well for students, and to generate ideas and suggestions to support programme development and continued good practice across the University.

- Programme leaders will respond to the feedback in programme evaluation questionnaires within fifteen working days and will post their response on the programme's Canvas page (*using the standard feedback template*). If it has not been possible to action specific requests the programme leaders' response should include an explanation.
- Only comments relating to the quality of delivery and student experience (not about individual members of staff) should be shared with the tertiary recipients listed in the Access to Data table below.
- Faculty Academic Development Committee's (FADCs) will monitor the publication of responses through the APE scrutiny process.

4. Data analysis and management

- The anonymity of students completing a programme evaluation questionnaire is assured through CourseEval.
- Programmes with fewer than 10 students will be clustered with other related programmes for the purposes of the programme evaluation survey.
- Where it is not possible to achieve a minimum survey population of 10 by clustering related titles, programmes can merge year groups.
- Where programmes have attempted to cluster related titles AND year groups but have still not achieved a minimum survey population, programmes should use other methods to obtain feedback from students about their programme. This might include using the programme evaluation survey template, but having warned students that their anonymity cannot be assured.
- This warning should emphasise that, although students are able to complete the survey anonymously, the small size of the group being surveyed means that it may be possible to identify individuals from their responses.
- The reporting of results must ensure that it is not possible to identify individual tutors or students from their responses.
- Students should be discouraged from identifying individual lecturers by name.
- Where there are fewer than 10 responses, the results of the programme evaluation questionnaire should clearly indicate this when results are shared with the recipients in the Access to Data table below and comments should be redacted to eliminate any possibility of students being identified
- Programme Leaders should pay attention to student anonymity when responding to the comments.
- Sector research suggests that responses to module evaluation surveys, can reflect bias about gender and ethnicity and that survey data should not be used in isolation when considering whether any enhancements are required. The results from programme evaluation questionnaires should therefore be considered alongside other sources of information such as external examiner reports, minutes from SSLCs etc.
- The data produced through online programme evaluation will be used for the purposes of facilitating and enhancing module and programme enhancement.
- Reports generated by the CourseEval survey tool should only be sent to those people who need access to the information that they contain, to perform their role in module, programme and University-wide enhancements (see table below). Having received that report recipients are responsible for ensuring that the data it contains is not used or disclosed for any other purpose, other than reporting which is required for TEF purposes.
- Programme evaluation is not a performance management tool. The sole exception to this is that the University reserves the right to use programme evaluation data as part of its investigations into accusations of gross professional misconduct, whenever it is demonstrably appropriate to do so.
- Individual academic staff can, however, utilise evidence from programme evaluations to support any claims which require demonstration of excellence in learning and teaching.

- Evaluation data which identifies staff will be treated as personal data and processed in accordance with the University's Data Protection Policy as described in the Privacy Statement which accompanies the programme evaluation process.
- Where it is necessary to provide Deans and Heads of Department with comparative data as part of the wider process of evaluating and improving the quality of the University's provision, it is the responsibility of all involved - senders and recipients - to ensure that such data is not used outside these processes.
- All those responsible for the handling, processing and distribution of programme evaluation data should be attentive to its potential impact on individuals. All outcomes from these surveys need to be subject to careful interpretation that takes account of people's professional circumstances and wherever possible and appropriate, their own analysis.
- Data will be retained for the academic year in which the survey takes place plus 3 years in line with the University's data retention schedule.

5. Scope

This programme evaluation policy applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes at the University including degree apprenticeships and programmes delivered through distance learning.

6. Requirements

The high-level requirements are described below. The Programme Evaluation page on DELTA will include detailed guides on survey administration, guidance for students and other key stakeholders, good practice case studies about informal module feedback and FAQs.

- Each programme will be evaluated formally through the programme evaluation questionnaire (PEQ) process twice per level each academic year using the University's approved standard questionnaire.
- The programme level questionnaire will include standard questions to enable comparison across different levels.
- The programme evaluation questionnaire will include a free text question at the end giving students the opportunity to give feedback on their modules.
- The programme evaluation questionnaire will also ask students if they have received a regular response to their informal ongoing feedback.
- CourseEval will be used for the purpose of programme evaluation.
- The surveys will take place up to and including week 13 of the semester and will be open for 4 weeks.
- Programme Leaders will encourage students to complete the PEQ, explain the purpose of this and the difference between informal module feedback and formal programme evaluation.
- Programme Leaders should give high level verbal or written feedback as soon as possible after completion of the surveys but publish the written response on the programme Canvas page within fifteen working days. This will include an explanation of where it has not been possible to follow up on specific feedback.
- In addition to the formal programme evaluation surveys, module tutors will invite students to give feedback on the module on an ongoing basis.
- Module tutors should discuss the appropriate feedback mechanism for this with the students at the beginning of the module and agree how often and how the students can provide feedback, including opportunities to provide feedback anonymously on an ongoing basis to their lecturer and how the lecturer will respond. There is no requirement for students to be asked to feedback weekly. Examples of current ongoing feedback practice are available in the Programme and Module Evaluation section of DELTA
- Completed programme evaluation questionnaires will go directly to the Programme Leader who is responsible for sharing the relevant information with individual module leaders and tutors.

7. Access to Data – programme evaluation questionnaires

Who has access	Roles and responsibilities
Primary recipients: receive survey reports directly and are responsible for the integrity of survey data	
Programme leader(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receives the automated report from CourseEval for their programme only, including data related to modules owned by their programme. Reviews the quality of the student experience across the programme. Has discretion to share outcomes with module leaders selectively and as required by the programme evaluation process.
Head of Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receives automated reports covering all programmes within their department from CourseEval. Uses these to review and evaluate the quality of the student experience at a Department level Should not disclose these, except to tertiary recipients in the form prescribed.
Dean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receives automated reports covering all programmes within their Faculty from CourseEval. Uses these to review and evaluate the quality of the student experience at a Faculty level Should not disclose these except to tertiary recipients in the form required for them to do their role described further down in the table below.
Head of Data and Insight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receives automated reports covering all programmes Has access to Raw survey data via the CourseEval Dashboard. Prepares reports to review and evaluate the quality of the student experience at a university level
Secondary recipients: may see information from the reports, selectively and at the discretion of primary recipients	
Module leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not receive evaluation reports directly The programme leader may discuss or share the outcomes of programme evaluations with module leaders in line with the requirements of programme evaluation
Tutors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not receive evaluation reports directly Programme leader(s) may discuss or share the outcomes of programme evaluations with module leaders having taken all necessary steps to protect the anonymity and integrity of students and staff.
Tertiary recipients: receive reports or may request data from primary recipients for specific purposes.	
Deputy Vice-Chancellor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not receive evaluation reports directly Receives reports showing scores and comments in order to review the quality of the student experience in the University.
Assistant Vice-Chancellor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not receive evaluation reports directly Receives reports showing scores and comments in order to review the quality of the student experience in the University and address issues pertaining to NSS.
Head of Student Insight and Enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not receive evaluation reports directly Receives reports showing scores and comments in order to review the quality of the student experience in the University and address issues pertaining to NSS.
Student-Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not receive evaluation reports directly. Can request access to data to review the quality of the student experience on the programme.

Faculty Academic Development Committees (FADCs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not receive evaluation reports directly • Can request access to data and can request reports, to review the quality of the student experience across the faculty.
Senate Academic Development Committee (SADC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May receive aggregated University scores in order to review the quality of the student experience on programmes in the University.
Student Experience Excellence Group (SEEG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May receive aggregated University scores in order to review the quality of the student experience on programmes in the University.
Student Experience Committee (SEC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May receive aggregated University scores in order to review the quality of the student experience on programmes in the University.
Non recipients: have access to raw data, either by virtue of their system role or for administrative purposes	
Head of Technology Enhanced Learning and Digital Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has access to the raw data for all programmes • Assists the Head of Data and Insight in the processing and aggregation of survey data
Programme Administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can access the raw survey data within their department sub-account due to the system role that they require to schedule and administer surveys.
Technology Enhanced Learning team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have access to raw data by virtue of their system administrator access.