

Student Experience of Courses (SEC) and Teaching (SET)

Approving authority	Academic Committee
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Description	This document describes Griffith University's approach to gathering feedback about students' experiences of its teaching and its courses in order to assure their quality and to inform course improvement and program evaluation.

Related documents

[Principles to Promote Excellence in Learning and Teaching Practices](#)

[Course Approval and Review Process](#)

[Course Profile Requirements](#)

[Course Improvement Plan](#)

[Student Charter](#)

[Role Statement Course Convenor](#)

[Role Statement Program Director](#)

[University Reviews Guidelines](#)

[School Committee Constitution](#)

[\[Purpose\]](#) [\[Student Experience Instruments\]](#) [\[Responsibilities\]](#) [\[Access to Data\]](#) [\[Retention of Data\]](#)
[\[Support and Further Resources\]](#)

Interpretation

In this policy, reference to Academic Group, School, Group Pro Vice Chancellor, Dean or Head of School has the meaning set out in the [Structure and Governance of Academic Groups of the University](#).

1. PURPOSE

Griffith is committed to a University-wide approach to gathering feedback from students about teaching and courses, the implementation of which are supported by processes that are effective, efficient, comprehensive, systematic and sustainable.

Griffith University uses a wide range of methods to gather data to evaluate teaching and its courses. The data are used routinely as part of Griffith's ongoing quality assurance processes and to support scholarship in teaching. One of the methods of gathering data is to collect feedback on courses and teaching from students using survey instruments.

The specific purpose of gathering feedback from students is to:

- inform the routine evaluation of a course to assure the University and the Program Director that the course is contributing to learning in the program as intended and that the learning outcomes are consistent with those stated for the course.
- encourage academic staff to monitor and enhance the quality of teaching and learning within their courses by linking the student feedback processes with academic staff promotion and performance management processes including the voluntary compilation of teaching portfolios.

- encourage academic staff to engage in scholarship in teaching by reflecting, in the light of the feedback, on the course design and delivery and the development of new and/or improved approaches to learning and teaching.
- improve students' experience of teaching and learning at the University.
- provide a mechanism for students, as important stakeholders, to provide input to processes to enhance the quality of learning and teaching.

Completion of a feedback instrument or participation in a feedback process by a student is taken as consent to the use of the data provided in the ways indicated above. In all cases, the anonymity of the participants who provide feedback to the University will be maintained. This provision relates to both the use and storage of data. Any case where anonymity will not be maintained is subject to specific ethical clearance by the University's Human Research Ethics Committee and must be notified to students before data collection commences.

2. STUDENT EXPERIENCE INSTRUMENTS

The primary, University-wide, method for students to provide feedback on:

- teaching is SET - Student Experience of Teaching
- a course is SEC - Student Experience of a Course

2.1 Timing of Student Feedback

As a general principle students are to be given the opportunity to provide feedback on the teaching of any academic staff member who makes a substantial contribution to a course. This feedback is to be obtained by academic staff using SET a minimum of every second time they teach that course or every two years, whichever is sooner. A Head of School may choose to gather feedback on teaching using SETs when a person teaches a course for the first time, whenever there are major changes to the teaching methods or strategy employed, or whenever concerns are raised by students or others.

All courses in Griffith undergraduate and coursework postgraduate programs, with the exception of literature review courses, research proposal courses, the first part/s of multi-sequence courses including year-long courses, theses and dissertations, are to be evaluated using the Student Experience of Courses (SEC) survey instrument in every trimester the course is offered. The SEC/SET Co-ordinator located in the Office of Planning Services is responsible for initiating SEC surveys in each teaching period.

Course Convenors will be advised when a SEC has been initiated by Experience@Griffith.

2.2 Student Experience of Teaching (SET)

The SET instrument is designed to:

- provide valuable feedback to teaching staff and the University about student satisfaction with key elements of teaching;
- allow academics to ask questions about additional area(s) of particular interest, such as (1) an area where they need more information than the mandatory questions alone provide, or (2) specific features of teaching. In this way the instrument can be sensitive to individual needs and specific teaching contexts; and
- provide academic staff with qualitative comments. Individual comments should assist in the understanding of the numerical responses received by providing reinforcing or diagnostic feedback on aspects not necessarily covered by the instrument's items.

The Griffith Student Experience of Teaching (SET) instrument consists of three sections:

- 1) mandatory, fixed questions which are the same across the whole institution;
- 2) additional, but optional, questions selected by the individual academic staff from a database of questions; and
- 3) spaces for respondents to write comments as text, with open-ended prompts to identify aspects done well and those that could be improved.

2.3 Student Experience of a Course (SEC)

The SEC instrument is designed to:

- provide valuable feedback to teaching staff and the University about student satisfaction with key elements of the course;
- provide information from an overall satisfaction item that can be benchmarked against equivalent survey items in other universities;
- allow academics to ask questions about additional areas of interest, such as (1) an area where they need more information than the mandatory questions alone provide, or (2) specific features of a course. In this way the questionnaire can be sensitive to specific needs and course contexts; and
- provide academics with qualitative comments. Individual comments should assist in understanding the numerical responses received and in providing reinforcing or diagnostic feedback on aspects not necessarily covered by the Instrument's items.

The Griffith Student Experience of Course (SEC) instrument consists of three sections:

- 1) mandatory, fixed questions which are the same across the whole institution;
- 2) additional, but optional, questions chosen from a database of questions; and
- 3) open-ended questions relating to positive aspects of the course and areas for improvement.

2.4 Method of Administration: Experience@Griffith

The online-survey tool Experience@Griffith is the primary method of delivery of the University-wide SET and SEC instruments.

2.5 Timing of Data Collection

Data collection using Experience@Griffith is completed between Weeks 11 to 13 each trimester to facilitate the reporting and benchmarking of a course and feedback on teaching data. Equivalent timing towards the end of a course is used for courses taught in non-standard periods or intensive mode. Surveys may only be conducted outside this period with the approval of the Dean (Learning and Teaching).

2.6 Reporting of Experience Data

SEC and SET results for individual courses are available from Experience@Griffith in Week 14 of each trimester. Reports are made available within an equivalent time frame for courses taught in non-standard periods or intensive mode.

2.7 Interpretation of SET and SEC results

All SET surveys are conducted within the context of the course being taught. As a consequence, interpretation of teaching and course feedback needs to consider carefully the impact of contextual variables on the scores obtained, and comments made, before conclusions are reached.

Academic staff are encouraged to seek additional sources of feedback about the quality of teaching and courses, such as peer observation and student focus groups, to assist in the process of interpreting and responding to the feedback,

2.8 Course Review and Improvement Reports

All Course Convenors are encouraged to complete a Course Improvement Plan (CIP) after receipt of SEC feedback. Course convenors may be requested by the Head of School and/or Deputy Head of School, Learning & Teaching to prepare a CIP where SEC data indicate there may be issues of concern. These reports should be prepared by the Course Convenor after Week 14 and before the next trimester in which the course is offered. Reports are provided to the Head of School within an equivalent time frame for courses taught in non-standard periods or intensive mode.

2.9 Reporting Experience Outcomes to Students

Mean scores for the SEC overall satisfaction question are available to students from Experience@Griffith for surveys completed within the last calendar year. In addition the

Course Convenor must complete the Previous Student Feedback section of the Course Profile the next time the course is offered, to demonstrate improvements and changes made to the course as a result of student feedback.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Teaching staff

Individual academic staff members are expected to initiate and oversee the process of their own SET feedback in consultation with the Course Convenor and according to the timeframe specified in 2.5.

Teaching staff are expected to discuss results of their SETs with the Course Convenor and to engage in a scholarly process of critical reflection, interpretation, and implementation of improvements.

3.2 Course Convenor

The Course Convenor is responsible for ensuring that (SEC) and (SET) surveys take place according to the timeframe specified in 2.5 and to initiate SETs at the request of teaching staff or the Head of School.

In addition, the Course Convenor is expected to engage in a scholarly process of critical reflection, interpretation, and implementation of improvements to both the teaching of the course and the course itself using all relevant feedback data. This scholarly process is documented in the form of the Course Improvement Plan (CIP) after each course offering.

3.3 Head of School and Supervisor

The Head of School and/or Deputy Head of School, Learning and Teaching are responsible for ensuring that SECs and SETs have been conducted according to the timeframe specified in 2.5. The Head of School and/or Deputy Head of School, Learning & Teaching are also responsible for discussing SEC outcomes with course and program directors as part of the continuous performance enhancement process in learning and teaching.

The Head of School, Deputy Head of School, Learning & Teaching and/or Supervisor is responsible for discussing SET outcomes with the staff member concerned as part of the continuous performance enhancement process in learning and teaching.

3.4 Group Pro Vice Chancellor

The Group Pro Vice Chancellor has authority to decide that responses to open-ended questions be deleted from the database at the request of the staff member concerned if the Pro Vice Chancellor determines that the comments are malicious.

3.5 Students

Under the Griffith University Student Charter students are expected to provide constructive feedback on teaching, learning and other academic activities through participation in quality improvement activities such as providing feedback through SEC and SET surveys and other surveys. Students are expected to respond to open-ended questions in a constructive manner, focusing on learning and teaching issues, and avoiding content of a personal or inappropriate nature.

3.6 SEC/SET Coordinator

The SEC/SET Coordinator located in the Office of Planning Services is responsible for communicating with teaching staff, Course Convenors, Heads of School, Deputy Heads of School, Learning & Teaching about the initiation of the survey process, ensuring production and dissemination of reports, and resolving system usage related issues.

4. ACCESS TO DATA

The following have access to SET and SEC data:

Role	SET Data Access	SEC Data Access
Individual Teacher	SET mandatory & optional question scores as well as responses to open-ended questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For review and improvement For presentation for performance reviews and promotion applications 	SEC mandatory question scores & optional question scores as well as responses to open-ended questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For review and improvement For presentation for performance reviews and promotion applications, where applicable
Course Convenor	SET mandatory question scores for teachers in that course <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For review and improvement For preparation of Course Improvement Plan 	SEC mandatory & optional question scores as well as responses to open-ended questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For review and improvement For preparation of Course Improvement Plan and/or Previous Student feedback section of the Course Profile For presentation for performance reviews and promotion applications
Students	Selected data at the discretion of the Course Convenor is used within the <i>Previous Student Feedback</i> section of the Course Profile to illustrate staff commitment to using student feedback for course improvement and to foster student-teacher partnerships	Selected data at the discretion of the Course Convenor is used within the <i>Previous Student Feedback</i> section of the Course Profile to demonstrate use of student feedback for course improvement and to foster student-teacher partnerships.
Head of School and Deputy Head of School Learning & Teaching	SET mandatory question scores and responses to open-ended questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For teaching within all courses in their School for the purpose of staff performance and course improvement 	SEC mandatory question scores and responses to open-ended questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For all courses in their School for staff performance and course improvement
Supervisor	SET mandatory question scores and responses to open-ended questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For teaching in all courses taught by staff members for whom they are the supervisor, for the purpose of staff performance and course improvement 	SEC mandatory question scores and responses to open-ended questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By course for all courses taught by staff members for whom they are the supervisor, for the purpose of staff performance and course improvement
Program Director		SEC mandatory question scores <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For course improvement and program evaluation
Dean, Group PVC, DVC (Academic)	SET mandatory question scores and responses to open-ended questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For teaching in all courses taught by staff members in their Group for course improvement 	SEC mandatory question scores and responses to open-ended questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For course improvement and program evaluation
School Committee, Group Board, University Review process	SET mandatory question scores <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggregated by Group, School, & campus. 	SEC mandatory question scores and responses to open-ended questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggregated by Group, School, & campus.
All University Staff	Evaluation Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Previous Student Feedback</i> section in Course Profile 	Evaluation Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Previous Student Feedback</i> section in Course Profile The mean for SEC Question 6 for each course evaluated
General Public		The mean for SEC overall satisfaction question for each course evaluated.

5. RETENTION OF DATA

Electronic copies of SEC and SET scores for mandatory and optional questions and responses to open-ended questions are retained permanently within Experience@Griffith.

6. SUPPORT AND FURTHER RESOURCES

Further support and advice for staff in relation to student feedback on teaching and courses is provided via the Learning Futures Experience website.