MEMBERS OF THE ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION STANDING COMMITTEE
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) (Winthrop Professor Jane Long) – Chair
Associate Chair of Academic Board (Professor Brett Kirk)
Director of Centre for Advancement of Teaching and Learning (Professor Denise Chalmers)
Director of Institutional Research Unit (Dr Greg Marie)
President of the Guild (Ms Emma Greeney)
Director of Student Services (Mr Jon Stubbs)
Faculty representatives from the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee:
  Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning), Faculty of Engineering, Computing and Mathematics (Dr Angus Tavner) – Deputy Chair
  Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning), Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (Dr Brenton Knott)
  Assistant Professor Eileen Thompson (CATLyst, UWA Business School)
  Professor Sid Nair (Higher Education Development (Evaluations), CATL)

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING –
TUESDAY 8th DECEMBER 2009

This is to confirm that the inaugural meeting of the Assessment and Evaluation Standing Committee will be held from 9.30am to 11.00am on Tuesday, 8th December 2009 in the Senate room.

Part 1 of the agenda is to be dealt with en bloc by motion of the Chair. There are no items in Part 2. Part 3 is for discussion. A member may request the transfer of an item from Part 1 to Part 3.

Dr Kabilan Krishnasamy
Executive Officer
AGENDA

WELCOME
The Chair will welcome members to the first meeting of the Assessment and Evaluation Standing Committee.

APOLOGIES
The Chair will record any apologies. Members are reminded that apologies should be forwarded to the Executive Officer prior to the meeting.

1. ITEMS/BUSINESS IN PROGRESS FROM ASSESSMENT STANDING COMMITTEE FOR NOTING – REF: F7739, F25751

Members are asked to note that the following items, which have been carried forward from the Assessment Standing Committee, are highlighted in the Annual Progress report for 2009 – see item 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM/BUSINESS IN PROGRESS</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>RESPONSIBLE</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Practices within respective faculties</td>
<td>Feedback is being sought from Associate Deans (Teaching and Learning) on the extent to which the advice, provided in the paper entitled “Response to assessment Committee on Examinations” had impacted on assessment practices within respective faculties</td>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>In progress. Feedback requested by 2010.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderation Practices</td>
<td>Feedback is being sought from Associate Deans (Teaching and Learning) on moderation practices and other issues addressing students’ perceptions about bias in exam marking.</td>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>In Progress. Feedback requested by 2010.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Consideration</td>
<td>Review Special Considerations policy and procedures in the context of faculty feedback and develop a matrix to determine appropriate adjustment of marks in relation to special consideration</td>
<td>Second Stage Working Party convened by Academic Secretary, Ms Sylvia Lang</td>
<td>In Progress. Amended Special Consideration, procedures and proposed matrix will be considered in early 2010.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PART 1 – ITEM FOR COMMUNICATION TO BE DEALT WITH EN BLOC

2. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION STANDING COMMITTEE – TERMS OF REFERENCE – REF: F29274

Attached (Attachment A) for members’ noting is the terms of reference of the Assessment and Evaluation Standing Committee which was established in October 2009 under the auspices of the Teaching and Learning Committee.

For Noting.
3. **MEETING DATES IN 2010 – REF: F29275**

Members are asked to note the following meeting dates of the Assessment and Evaluation Standing Committee in 2010:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Dates</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Venue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4th February 2010</td>
<td>10.00am – 11.30am</td>
<td>Office of Development meeting room – Level 1</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>12th August 2010</td>
<td>10.00am – 11.30am</td>
<td>Office of Development meeting room – Level 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>14th October 2010</td>
<td>10.00am – 11.30am</td>
<td>Office of Development meeting room – Level 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th December 2010</td>
<td>10.00am – 11.30am</td>
<td>Office of Development meeting room – Level 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For noting.


At its meeting held on 12th November 2009, the Teaching and Learning Committee noted the attached (Attachment B) ‘Annual Progress Report 2009’, which provides an update of the issues that have arisen and discussed in relation to assessment policies and practices at UWA in 2009. Items in progress as noted in this report have been referred to the Assessment and Evaluation Standing Committee.

For Noting.

5. **A REVIEW OF EVALUATION OF TEACHING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA – REF: F27278**

One of the University’s strategic priorities is to develop and promote teaching evaluation strategies in order to provide high quality teaching and learning opportunities at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, courses that are responsive to ‘consumer’ needs and demands, and performance indicators for teaching and learning. Evaluation of teaching at UWA is undertaken through the following instruments:

- Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)
- Students’ Unit Reflective Feedback (SURF)
- Student Perceptions of Research Supervision (SPORS)
- Peer Review of Teaching

Attached (Attachment C) for members’ noting is extracts from a report that assesses the strengths and limitations of the system that is currently in place at UWA to conduct its evaluation of teaching and its evaluation of the students’ learning experience. In comparing the University’s current practices and procedures with those in a number of other Australian Universities, the report makes a case for proposing major changes to the policy, practices and procedures of evaluation of teaching at UWA. This report is being considered by the University’s Executive and is attached to the Agenda, at this time, for members’ information.

For noting.

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**PART 2 – ITEMS FOR DECISION TO BE DEALT WITH EN BLOC**

No items
6. **FORMULATION OF DEVELOPMENTAL ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK (DAF) – REF: F29500**

At its meeting held in April 2009, the Assessment Standing Committee which preceded the Assessment and Evaluation Standing Committee had agreed that a Developmental Assessment Framework (DAF) should be formulated with a view to:

- providing an array of assessment modes that may be considered in developing good assessment practices
- presenting it as a basis for identifying the essentials that should be considered in the curriculum development for units
- providing useful guidance for assessing new courses that would be considered by the Board of Coursework Studies as part of the Future Framework reforms.

The formulation of DAF is being undertaken by the Centre for Advancement for Teaching and Learning and attached (Attachment D) for members’ consideration is a paper that introduces various different forms of assessment which are commonly available and when they are best used.

For discussion.

7. **REVIEW OF THE UNIVERSITY’S ASSESSMENT POLICIES – REF: F29501**

By way of background, the University has a number of guidelines/policies that touch on matters relating to sound assessment practice including: identification of clear outcomes for courses and units; good communication between students and their teachers; commitment to regular critical review of existing practices; and acceptance of the imperative of open and transparent processes. These guidelines/policies are: Guidelines on Assessment, Guidelines on Learning Skills, Minimum Essentials for Good Practice in Assessment, and Guidelines for the provision of ungraded passes and fails.

In 2008, a review of school-level policy and procedure relating to teaching and learning, and assessment was conducted as part of the TQI (Teaching Quality Indicators) project, which undertook an audit of current teaching and learning policy and practice at UWA. It became evident from this review that the extent to which the current assessment guidelines are used when setting school-level policy is unclear. Further, there has been ongoing concern around the level of compliance across the University with the minimum essentials, and continuing discussion about the significant differences in policy and practice that exist in individual faculties and schools across the University.

In acknowledging the far-reaching inconsistencies in assessment policies and procedures and their applications across the University, the Assessment Standing Committee (which preceded the Assessment and Evaluation Standing Committee), at its meeting held in April 2009, had agreed that a review of the University’s Assessment policies and practices with a view to establishing a modicum of compliance procedures for University-wide implementation should be undertaken. The Committee recommended (via the Teaching and Learning Committee and Academic Council) that the Future Framework Implementation Working Party on “Framework and Definitions” be requested to consider the development of a university-wide assessment policy as part of the Future Framework reforms.

At its meeting held on 23rd September 2009, the Future Framework Implementation Committee discussed and concluded that it would be appropriate for such a review to be carried out by the Assessment Standing Committee, (in close liaison with the Framework and Definitions Working Party), a mainstream University committee which already has the review of assessment related practices and policies as a core function of its terms of reference.
Attached (Attachment E) for members’ consideration is a paper entitled ‘Assessment Policy at UWA – a short briefing paper for the consideration of the Assessment & Evaluation Standing Committee’ which proposes the following course of actions:

- develop an assessment policy which sets out minimum standards for assessment administration and also for matters relating to design of assessment practices in the curriculum
- that any faculty/school level policy/procedure should be aligned with the University assessment policy
- that the data already collected by the TQI project may be used to identify common themes / inclusions in current assessment policies and where the differences lie
- update a previous desk-top audit of assessment policies at Australian Higher Education institutions and review a number of recent ALTC (Australian Learning and Teaching Council) projects on assessment policy to identify the key aspects of the new assessment policy for UWA

Members are asked to provide feedback, if any, on the proposed course of actions and any other appropriate advice.

For discussion.

8. INFORMAL REPORT FROM THE CHAIR – REF: F29275

The Chair may advise members on any recent issue that is of particular relevance to Assessment and Evaluation practices at UWA.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Assessment and Evaluation Standing Committee will be held on 4th February 2010 from 10am to 11.30am in the Office of Development meeting room (Level 1).
ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION STANDING COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference

Role:
The role of the Assessment and Evaluation Standing Committee is to consider, advise and make recommendations to the Teaching and Learning Committee and/or other University bodies or officers, as appropriate, including:

(a) review assessment-related practices and policies and their implementation at UWA to ensure transparency and good practice;

(b) consider changes to assessment practices and policies at UWA as appropriate, with a view to supporting high quality student learning;

(c) promote and disseminate examples of good practice in assessment that support other relevant University priorities including:
   • promoting good teaching approaches;
   • diversifying the experience of UWA students;
   • improving participation in UWA courses; and
   • extending the links between teaching, learning and research;

(d) review and advise on evaluation of teaching and student learning, with a view to ensuring its effectiveness, timeliness and relevance to the University;

(e) monitor progress of implementation strategies included in the Education Section of the University’s Operational Priorities Plan as they relate to assessment and evaluation of teaching and student learning;

(f) undertake research and review of issues associated with assessment and evaluation as requested by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning).

Membership:
The membership of the Assessment and Evaluation Standing Committee will be as follows:

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) (W/Professor Jane Long) – Chair
Associate Chair of Academic Board (Professor Brett Kirk)
Director of CATL (Professor Denise Chalmers)
Director of IRU (Dr Greg Marie)
President of the Guild (Ms Emma Greeney)
Director, Student Services (Mr Jon Stubbs)
Three Faculty representatives from the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee:
   Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning), Faculty of Engineering, Computing and Mathematics (Dr Angus Tavner) – Deputy Chair
   Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning), Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (Dr Brenton Knott)
   Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) TBC

Executive Officer: Dr Kabilan Krishnasamy, (Education Policy Services)
PART ONE: BACKGROUND TO ASSESSMENT AT UWA
The Assessment Standing Committee was established under the auspices of the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee in October 2005 with a view to reviewing and investigating a number of issues relating to the functionality of assessment practice at UWA. Its terms of references were formulated as follows:

- To review existing assessment related practices and policies, and their implementation at UWA to ensure transparency and good practice.
- To consider changes in current practices and policies at UWA as they arise from time to time, which may include such issues as:
  - revisiting the introduction of anonymous assessment;
  - availability of exam results online;
  - provision of marks for individual pieces of work;
  - adoption of progressive assessment and marks in all units; and
  - value of publishing both raw and scaled marks.
- To promote and disseminate examples of good practice in assessment, especially those that support the University’s aims and priorities, including:
  - Enhancement of the student learning experience;
  - Good teaching approaches and learning outcomes;
  - Diversifying the experiences of UWA students;
  - Improved participation in UWA courses; and
  - Development of links between teaching, learning and research.
- To undertake research and review of issues associated with assessment, as directed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning)

PART TWO: CURRENT MEMBERSHIP
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) (W/Professor Jane Long) – Chair
Associate Chair of Academic Board (Professor Brett Kirk)
Director of CATL (W/Professor Denise Chalmers)
Director of IRU (Dr Greg Marie)
President of the Guild (Mr Dominic Rose)
President of the Guild Education Council (Ms Keelia Fitzpatrick)
Director, Student Services (Mr Jon Stubbs)
Assistant Professor Eileen Thompson (CATLyst, Business School)
Assistant Professor Zarin Siddiqui (Lecturer in Medical Education – Assessment)
Ms Sue Smurthwaite (Associate Director, Education Policy Services)
Two Faculty members of the Teaching and Learning Committee:
  - Dr Angus Tavner – Faculty of Engineering, Computing and Mathematics (From 1 July 2007)
  - Dr Alexandra Ludewig – Faculty of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences (From 1 January 2008)

Executive Officer:
  - Dr Kabilan Krishnasamy, (Education Policy Services)
PART THREE: ISSUES, OUTCOMES AND FUTURE OBJECTIVES

1. LENGTH OF EXAMINATIONS:
The issue relating to length of examinations was once again placed on the agenda in 2009 against the backdrop of two developments that occurred in late 2008.

In September 2008, the Assessment Standing Committee considered the following options to address concerns that the turnaround time for producing exam results has been ‘unreasonably short’ and that it has been adding enormous pressure on academic staff:

- **Two hour exam model**: One area of possible solution is the decrease in exam duration (and hence the length of resulting exam scripts written by students, which would take less time to mark) from 3 hours, to a two hour standard.
- **Three exams per day model**: The decrease in the duration of examinations from three hours to a two-hour standard would make it possible to restructure examination timetable in a way that would allow the University to conduct three exam sessions per day.
- **Mid-semester Examinations**: Having two exams in a semester instead of a single three hour end of semester exam may create the opportunity for testing all the content in the unit at the required level of complexity in two different sittings instead of a single sitting.
- **Exam Structure**: The conduct of on-line exams which involved objective-based questions for certain units, may be another option for addressing workload issues relating to exam marking.
- **Teaching Time**: Another option is to reduce the teaching duration from 13 weeks to 12 weeks with a view to creating more time exam marking.

In considering these options, the Assessment Standing Committee agreed that there was a need to review UWA’s overall approach to assessment in light of the recommendations of the recent Review of Course Structures. Arguably, a Curriculum perspective rather than a unit-based approach to assessment may be more suited especially in the context of the Review of Course Structures.

In response to concerns raised by staff representatives on the Academic Consultative Committee (ACC), the Assessment Standing Committee, in late 2008, received another request to consider the following steps with a view to reducing exam marking stress and associated workload issues:

- reduce ALL exams to two hours, only three hours by exception, so as to reduce marking effort. The three hour exams would be scheduled towards the end of the examination period as a disincentive;
- provide Semester 2 results to students closer to Christmas, to allow more marking time;
- commence Semester 1 a week earlier as from 2011

Problems associated with timing of exams and their assessments are fairly intractable. On the one hand, the proposed reduction in exam duration might address staff concerns in relation to workload: the reduction in exam duration would in theory accommodate three exam sessions per day and in turn shorten the overall examination period, thereby both reducing marking effort and lengthening the turnaround time in producing exam results. However, the practical problems associated with time-tabling and exam venues are extensive, of longstanding, and cannot be ignored.

On the other hand, an across-the-board reduction in exam duration from 3 hours to a 2 hour standard could be viewed as imposing too-great rigidity upon variable discipline cultures and approaches to assessments within Schools.

Cognizant of the considerable practical constraints associated with workload and student learning issues, the Assessment Standing Committee, at its meeting in April 2009, therefore agreed to take a slightly different approach in the first instance. This approach was to offer the University community a broad overview of exams in a pedagogical context, distilling current literature on their usefulness, to prompt further discussion locally. This resulted in the production of a paper entitled “Response to Assessment Committee on Examinations” and was disseminated in May 2009.
**Future Objectives:** It is intended that Associate Deans (Teaching and Learning) be invited, in mid-2010, to provide feedback on the extent to which the advice, provided in the paper entitled “Response to Assessment Committee on Examinations”, had impacted on assessment practices within respective faculties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status of Item:</th>
<th>Active</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item(s) next considered:</td>
<td>Feedback from Associate Deans to be considered by the Committee in Mid 2010.</td>
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</table>

### 2. ANONYMOUS ASSESSMENT:

Anonymity in formal examinations had been a long standing issue that had been considered by the University at different times. The following briefly chronologically captures the main developments relating to Anonymous Assessment:

- **Mid 1990s:** Anonymous Assessment considered by Academic Council where it had raised extensive debate
- **2005:** Guild prepared and submitted a report on Anonymous Assessment
- **Feb’ 2007:** Assessment Standing Committee commissioned a small working party to review the issue of anonymous assessment in examinations
- **Nov’ 2007:** Commencement of a Trial of anonymous assessment in a small sample of units
- **2008:** Trial was conducted in first semester
- **Dec’ 2008:** Report on the trial was considered by Assessment Standing Committee and it was agreed that the report should be forwarded to Faculty Teaching and Learning Committees via Associate Deans and the Guild for feedback
- **Mar’ 2009:** Received feedback which reflected a striking dichotomy between faculties and student representations on the proposed University-wide anonymous assessment
- **Apr’ 2009:** Assessment Standing Committee agreed to recommend to Teaching and Learning Committee that the proposed anonymous assessment process be not implemented University-wide, subject to the Assessment Standing Committee undertaking appropriate steps to address students’ perceptions about bias in formal exam marking, fears of such bias and their overall confidence level in the University’s formal assessment process.

This item was considered by both the Teaching and Learning Committee and the Academic Council. At its meeting held on 3rd June, the Academic Council:

“RESOLVED – 33/09
(i) that the proposed anonymous assessment process be not mandated University-wide;
(ii) to endorse the proposal that the Assessment Standing Committee be requested to undertake appropriate steps to address students’ perceptions about bias in formal exam marking, fears of such bias and their overall confidence level in the University’s formal assessment processes;
(iii) to encourage faculties and schools to adopt a form of anonymous assessment in examinations where deemed possible and appropriate.”

**Future Objectives:** At this stage faculties have been asked to provide feedback with regard to moderation practices and other activities that may address students’ perceptions about bias. This issue will be considered at a future meeting of the Committee.

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Item(s) next considered:</td>
<td>New Item: Feedback from Associate Deans on moderation practices and other issues addressing students’ perceptions about bias in exam marking will be considered in Mid 2010.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS AT UWA:

The issue relating to Special Considerations at UWA was actually revisited in May 2006, when the Student Guild produced a report entitled: “Special Considerations at UWA”, addressing the current complexities and differences between faculties in the application of special...
consideration. In response, the Assessment Standing Committee established a working party to review the report and develop relevant policy recommendations for referral to the Teaching and Learning Committee. The working party prepared and presented a report to the Assessment Standing Committee for consideration in 2007. In general terms the Assessment Standing Committee endorsed the Working Party report, but also recommended that a second phase working party be formed to review the existing rules in light of the 13 recommendations presented in the report.

The Second Stage working party, which was convened by Ms Sylvia Lang (University’s Academic Secretary):

- further developed the 13 recommendations set out in the first working party report and drafted a policy document that incorporated these recommendations
- identified the need to undertake several “projects” with a view to
  - developing a comprehensive set of procedures, including an updated application form
  - establishing an authoritative website providing information on Special Consideration
  - developing training material, including an information package, to assist assessors of applications for special consideration
  - investigating the whole issue and process of granting extensions to assessment deadlines across the University.
- explored additional key issues including grounds for special consideration, adjustment of marks, relationship between special consideration and supplementary assessment, differences in faculty approaches to special considerations, and academic integrity.

Following its endorsement, the Second Stage Working Party report and relevant policy document were forwarded to the Teaching and Learning Committee for consideration leading to its wider circulation across the University and also for consideration in making appropriate resources available for undertaking various projects as identified in the report.

Upon advice from the Assessment Standing Committee, the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee considered the proposed University Policy on Special Consideration at its meeting held on 5th March 2009, and resolved as follows:

“RESOLVED – 3/09

i) to note the Report from the Assessment Standing Committee on special consideration at UWA, as attached to the agenda;

ii) to endorse in principle the proposed University Policy on Special Consideration, as attached to the agenda;

iii) to request that members of the Teaching and Learning Committee forward the Report and proposed University Policy on Special Consideration to their relevant constituents, including faculties, schools and sections, for consideration and feedback;

iv) to request the Assessment Standing Committee to organise formulation of a budgeted proposal to undertake the additional work associated with the policy, including:
  - development of a comprehensive set of procedures to accompany the policy;
  - development of a matrix to determine appropriate adjustment of marks in relation to special consideration;
  - development of an authoritative website providing information on special consideration;
  - development of training material, including an information package.

v) that the Teaching and Learning Committee revisit the proposed University Policy on Special Consideration in light of feedback and clarity on accompanying procedures and the matrix.”

Thus, feedback from the Faculties was sought and referred to the Special Consideration Second Stage Working Party for further consideration and progression in May 2009.

Future Objectives: The item is still under consideration by the Second Stage Working Party and it is anticipated, at this stage, that an amended policy, procedures and proposed matrix will be forwarded to the Committee for consideration in March/April 2010.

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<tr>
<th>Status of Item:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Item(s) next considered:</td>
<td>Amended Special Considerations policy, procedures and proposed matrix will be considered in March/April 2010.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. **AUDIT OF CURRENT TEACHING AND LEARNING PRACTICE – TQI REPORT ON ASSESSMENT:**

The UWA Teaching Quality Indicators (TQI) pilot project aims to develop an agreed approach to recognising and rewarding quality teaching, and to providing intellectual leadership in deciding which indicators best measured the quality of teaching in Australian Universities. Notably, the major outcome of this project will be the development and implementation of a framework that identifies indicators and outcomes of teaching quality at the institutional and individual levels. The framework will be primarily methodological in nature, making use of new and existing data gathered systematically within an institution. The framework will also identify systems and processes that will support and value teaching quality.

At its meeting held on 1st April 2009, the TQI Implementation Reference Group considered the final report and resolved:

- by R3/09 to endorse the “Results from Survey of Heads of School – Teaching and Learning Related Policy and Practice” as the final report arising from the Review of Teaching and Learning Policy and Practice undertaken as part of the TQI pilot project and
- by R4/09 to recommend that the Assessment Standing Committee considered the survey results with a view to developing a University-wide Assessment policy and framework, both in relation to assessment practices, and administrative/compliance issues. The TQI Implementation Reference Group further recommended that the Future Framework Working Party “Framework and Definitions” should be requested to consider the development of a University-wide assessment policy as part of the Future Framework reforms.

In considering the above recommendations and at the same time in acknowledging the far-reaching inconsistencies in assessment policies and procedures and their applications across the University, the Assessment Standing Committee at its meeting held in April 2009 agreed, in principle, on the following two key outcomes:

**Outcome 1:**
- that a Developmental Assessment Framework (DAF) be formulated with a view to:
  - providing an array of assessment modes that may be considered in developing good assessment practices
  - presenting it as a basis for identifying the essentials that should be considered in the curriculum development for units
  - providing useful guidance for assessing new courses that would be considered by the Board of Coursework Studies as part of the Future Framework reforms.

The formulation of DAF is currently being undertaken by the Centre for Advancement for Teaching and Learning (CATL).

**Outcome 2:**
- that the University’s assessment policies be reviewed by the Future Framework Implementation Working Party on “Framework and Definitions” with a view to establishing a modicum of compliance procedures for the University.

At its meeting held on 23rd September 2009, the Future Framework Implementation Committee discussed and concluded that it would be appropriate for such a review to be carried out by the Assessment Standing Committee, a mainstream University committee which already has the review of assessment related practices and policies as a core function of its terms of reference.

**Future Objectives:** It is anticipated that a report from CATL on the formulation of DAF will be presented to the Assessment Standing Committee in due course. The issue of reviewing the University’s assessment policies, on the other hand, will be revisited in late 2009.

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item(s) next considered:</td>
<td>New items:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Review of the University’s Assessment Policies to be considered from late 2009 and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. A report on the formulation of DAF to be considered in due course.</td>
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5. REVIEW OF ASSESSMENT AT UWA:
In 2006, a Review of Assessment was undertaken to ascertain the state of play of assessment practices in all units at UWA.

Since 2007, the Assessment Standing Committee has had several discussions on the appropriate use of the 2006 report by faculties.

In 2009, based on an agreement within the Assessment Standing Committee, a memorandum from the Chair was sent to all faculties reminding them of the need to comply with the University’s minimum essential assessment practices such as developing unit outlines and other related matters in light of the evidence of the survey on the review of assessment.

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<td>Nil</td>
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PART FOUR: DECOMMISSIONING OF ASSESSMENT STANDING COMMITTEE

In light of the rationalisation of the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee system, the Assessment Standing Committee has been de-established in October 2009 and its terms of references absorbed by the newly established Assessment and Evaluation Standing Committee.

PART FIVE: ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION STANDING COMMITTEE

Role:
The role of the Assessment and Evaluation Standing Committee is to consider, advise and make recommendations to the Teaching and Learning Committee and/or other University bodies or officers, as appropriate, including:

(a) review assessment-related practices and policies and their implementation at UWA to ensure transparency and good practice;

(b) consider changes to assessment practices and policies at UWA as appropriate, with a view to supporting high quality student learning;

(c) promote and disseminate examples of good practice in assessment that support other relevant University priorities including:
   • promoting good teaching approaches;
   • diversifying the experience of UWA students;
   • improving participation in UWA courses; and
   • extending the links between teaching, learning and research;

(d) review and advise on evaluation of teaching and student learning, with a view to ensuring its effectiveness, timeliness and relevance to the University;

(e) monitor progress of implementation strategies included in the Education Section of the University’s Operational Priorities Plan as they relate to assessment and evaluation of teaching and student learning;

(f) undertake research and review of issues associated with assessment and evaluation as requested by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning).
Membership:
The membership of the Assessment and Evaluation Standing Committee will be as follows:

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) (W/Professor Jane Long) – Chair
Associate Chair of Academic Board (Professor Brett Kirk)
Director of CATL (W/Professor Denise Chalmers)
Director of IRU (Dr Greg Marie)
President of the Guild (Mr Dominic Rose / Ms Emma Greeney)
Director, Student Services (Mr Jon Stubbs)
Three Faculty representatives from the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee:
  Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning), Faculty of Engineering, Computing and Mathematics (Dr Angus Tavner) – Deputy Chair
  Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning), Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (Dr Brenton Knott)
  Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning), TBC

Executive Officer: Dr Kabilan Krishnasamy, (Education Policy Services)

Future Meeting Dates:
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Dr K Krishnasamy
13th October 2009
A Review of Evaluation of Teaching at University of Western Australia

Prepared For the Pro Vice Chancellor (Teaching & Learning) and the Director of Centre for the Advancement of Learning & Teaching by Associate Professor Janice Orrell Education Consulting August 2009
Review of Evaluation of Teaching at UWA

Overview
This report will describe the system that the University of Western Australia has in place to conduct its evaluation of teaching and its evaluation of the students’ learning experience. In doing so, its strengths and its limitations will be identified and recommendations will be made for improvement. Close attention will be given to the aspirations for distinctiveness espoused by the University regarding its teachers, teaching, student learning outcomes and graduate qualities. Just as assessment design has been shown to be very powerful in determining the quality of student learning, the focus on evaluation of teaching systems directs academic teachers attention on what is important. The University communicates what it considers important to its staff by what it evaluates, recognises and rewards.

Approach
To generate this report, an exploration of current practices at UWA has been conducted through an examination of current surveys and key institutional documents and interviews with representatives of key University stakeholders in the process. The evaluation practices of other Australian Universities have also been reviewed and frameworks have been adopted from the publications of selected experts in the field of evaluation of teaching in higher education to critique the findings and to guide the recommendations for future action.

The University participates in a number of externally driven surveys regarding teaching and learning quality, which it utilises in its quality assurance and forward planning processes namely the AGS (CEQ, PREQ &GDS), AUSSIE and the First Year Experience Survey. While these national surveys are reasonable sources of data through which the University can deliberate about the quality and impact of teaching at UWA, the University has limited control over their design, timing and focus. Therefore, this review will focus largely on those internal mechanisms over which the university has control, namely, policies, surveys, processes and infrastructure established to evaluate teaching and review curricular and courses. These mechanisms include:

- University teaching performance management and promotion systems;
- Aspirational statements about student learning and graduate outcomes;
- All forms of internal student feedback surveys regarding their experiences of learning and teaching at UWA at both the course level and higher degree candidature level;
- Course, department, school and faculty review and reporting.
Terms of Reference/Deliverables
The outcomes negotiated for this review include the following and are listed below.

1. Recommendations on principles of interpretation, judgment and use made of information gathered from students to improve the quality of teaching.
2. Recommendations that clarify the needs and uses of student perception of teaching data to enhance and improve the quality of teaching by individual teachers, unit and course coordinators, heads of School and university leadership.
3. Recommendations on principles governing the number, type, range and frequency of student survey instruments to be used at UWA to evaluate teaching.
4. Recommendation on the reporting and use of data to the University, Schools and individuals and on access to the aggregated and raw data.
5. Recommendations on mechanisms for surveying students where appropriate.

Context

University of Western Australia is well reputed nationally and internationally as a place for students to study. Testament to this is its performance in the Australian Government Learning and Teaching Performance Fund in each of its annual iterations and the recent AUQ (2009) review. It is noted that UWA is about to embark on an ambitious program of change to its delivery of undergraduate education, namely The Futures Framework. While the current systems of review have been appropriate for their time, the radical changes that have been signalled will require evaluation processes that are fit for the new purposes. Reliable guidance in the on-going design and early stage evaluation of effectiveness of the new curriculum will be essential. This review, therefore, is timely and has the expectation of change at the forefront of its deliberations.

UWA currently has a well-developed suite of procedures to review its educational quality. The university community has engaged with these to both assure and improve the quality of students’ learning experience. A first order principle of evaluation is to begin with what matters most! In this spirit, this review has begun with a consideration the primary aspirations of UWA and has looked for the degree of congruence, coherence and completeness amongst the various student perception surveys currently in use. This analysis was then used as a basis for making the recommendations in this report.

UWA Aspirations for Learning and Teaching

The two following lists represent a synthesis of several values oriented frameworks that have been publicly espoused as distinctive about UWA, namely, Educational Principles, Graduate Qualities and Teaching Criteria Framework. These two new lists will be used in this review as a guide to compare current questions asked of students in evaluation of teaching surveys.

About Teachers and Teaching
UWA aspires that its teachers will
• Provide students with experiences which extend beyond the classroom;
• Provide rich interaction between staff and students in a research-intensive environment;
• Be knowledgeable about their subject material;
• Be knowledgeable about how students learn and ways in which to teach and use learning technologies;
• Be self-reflective and evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching and students’ learning;
• Be committed to cultural diversity, promoting equality of opportunity and understanding indigenous knowledges;
• Be committed to developing communities of learning.

About the Student Learning Experience
UWA espoused that through its teaching, students will:
• Develop critical thinking and higher order conceptual, reasoning and analytical skills;
• Have learning experiences that extend beyond the classroom;
• Master the discipline at internationally-recognized levels and standards;
• Be challenged and equipped to confront personal values and make ethical judgments;
• Acquire cross-cultural and other competencies to take a citizenship and leadership role in the local, national or international community;
• Learn how to learn independently and in a team from a variety of sources and experiences;
• Adapt acquired knowledge to new situations, question accepted wisdom and be open to new ideas and possibilities;
• Acquire the skills needed to embrace rapidly-changing technologies in a global environment;
• Communicate in English clearly, concisely and logically.

This review will consider how the existing evaluation surveys assist UWA to gauge progress in relation to these stated aspirations. Also noted as pertinent to this review is a university priority for the period 2009-2013:

To improve the quality of the student learning experience.

Objectives to support this priority include:
• The extension of high-quality teaching approaches and improve learning outcomes;
• The development of the links between teaching, learning and research;
• The improvement of student engagement in a high quality campus community.

Operational objectives for this period that are pertinent to this review include:
ED#.1 Further develop national and international benchmarking and quality assurance processes in teaching and learning.
ED3.4 Proactively use student evaluations/indicators to improve, support and disseminate good teaching practices at all levels (faculty/school/individual).
ED5.7 Implement teaching practices which encourage and support students to engage deeply with their learning.

Principles of Evaluation

Also guiding this review is the influence of key theorists who comment on evaluation of teaching in higher education, especially that of Michael Theall. Appended is a brief review of key factors to consider in developing and improving evaluation of teaching systems. Some key principles however, have been included here as indicators of the quality of effective systems to help explain the kinds of comments and recommendations that will follow.

Theall (2000) suggests several rules for institutions to consider when attempting to improve their evaluation processes. The following are selected from his full list, which is appended.

- Begin with what is most important;
- Balance individual and institutional needs and adapt or develop instrumentation suited to both institutional and individual needs;
- Build a coherent system for evaluation, rather than a piecemeal process;
- Establish clear lines of responsibility/reporting for those who administer the system;
- Invest in a superior up-to-date evaluation system and evaluate it regularly;
- Use multiple sources of information for evaluation decisions;
- Validation of the instruments used is essential;
- Reports produced on the data should be easily and accurately understood;
- Educate the users of rating results to avoid misuse and misinterpretation;
- Keep formative evaluation confidential and separate from summative decision-making.

The remainder of the report is divided into two sections, A and B. Section A is a review of the current conditions for the evaluation of teaching at UWA and provides a discussion and justification regarding the major changes that are proposed. Section B is a review of the full set of recommendations using the above Terms of Reference (ToR) as an organisational framework.

Section A: A review of Current Evaluation of Teaching

Student Surveys

General Statements

The following observations are based on interviews with key stakeholders involved with conducting and using student perceptions of teaching and their learning experiences at UWA. They included system administrators, academic users, and
student representatives. Most useful were two focus group discussions with two separate panels of Associate Deans Learning and Teaching.

There is a high level of commitment to, and engagement in, the extant processes to evaluate the quality of teaching and student experiences of learning. This has been evident in the institutional documentation, (mission, principles, policies, procedures and reports on teaching), as well as the interviews and focus groups conducted in this review. There was a shared recognition that it is important to focus on teaching quality and have trustworthy institution-wide processes that can produce valid and reliable data.

There is a high level of investment by many stakeholders in maintaining the status quo. While there was no singular, commonly held view of the overall evaluation of teaching process, there were strong personal investments in maintaining particular aspects of it—just which aspect was dependent on the informant’s place in the institutional system. If there is a decision to take up all or some of the recommendations in the report, this factor will need to be taken into account to achieve a general engagement with the changes.

In discussions with various stakeholder groups, the concept of evaluation of teaching focused primarily on student derived information, with scant reference to any other informational source. The proposed peer review guidelines drew little comment when mentioned. However, when it was discussed, there was a degree of scepticism and caution about the usefulness of this form of evaluation, possibly due to lack of familiarity or experience with it. This too will need particular strategic attention if there is to be sufficient uptake.

The notion of evaluation predominantly focused on individual teachers. This emphasis seems incongruent with the growing emphasis in UWA and all universities on increased collaboration in learning and teaching, on teamwork, on forging partnerships with related community and industry organisations as well as on an increase in multi-disciplinary forms of enquiry. The predominant focus on the individual academic also belies the evidence from educational research that has noted overwhelmingly that teaching quality is significantly influenced by the context in which it occurs and in particular by the values and dispositions of the immediate leadership.

Current Student Survey Systems

UWA has a complex and extensive range of surveys in place to evaluate the quality of teaching and the student experience. There are standard surveys as well as opportunistic surveys that focus on specific issues such as IT delivery and Library services.

Student Perception of Teaching (SPOT)

SPOT has been developed primarily as a formative evaluation instrument to assist teachers in learning about the impact of their teaching so that they can make changes where necessary. This instrument has unlimited flexibility to cater for diversity in modes of teaching. Despite its particular strengths, a recent comprehensive, internal report to the PVC (T & L) on the use of SPOT makes
several recommendations to overhaul the system. The concerns expressed in
the report are well founded and warrant attention. Following on from the prior
review this current review found that:

- SPOT seems to be an unduly labour intensive customer satisfaction survey.
- SPOT is used unevenly in an ad hoc manner across the institution. Some units,
  programs and departments administer it extensively to the point of over use,
  with very little evidence that it is used to leverage change. By contrast, some
  areas seem not to be using SPOT at all. That said, there are examples where
  some faculties have taken it seriously, and have embedded its administration
  and use into their systems of enquiry and change management. The School of
  Medicine is one such example.
- There is far too much choice and flexibility in the range of questions that can
  be used. The website has over 300 questions to choose from and there are over
  6500 questions in database. The items themselves are not validated and so
  there is considerable mistrust of the data they generate.
- The surveys are often a postscript to the unit and program planning process,
  evidenced by the way that questionnaires are requested at the last minute,
  often on the day they are to be administered.
- There is little to no evidence that the information gained from students
  through SPOT is used systematically to shape the next iteration of the unit.
- There is no clear process to inform the students on how their evaluation was
  interpreted and/or acted upon thus enabling the feedback loop to be closed.
  This issue was also identified in the AUQA (2009) recommendations.
- Because of the now cumbersome data processing procedures, survey data is
  returned to teachers quite some time after the semester has ended, often well
  into the following semester. At this point the information is of little practical
  use for unit planning until the next iteration of the unit, and there is strong risk
  that the survey information will be forgotten and not used.
- Teachers and topic coordinators need brief and rapid reactions from students
  about specific, newly adopted features of a unit and approaches to teaching
  during the semester. They, in turn, need efficient mechanisms to report back to
  students about any adjustments that might have been made. Some academics
  reported frustration in using SPOT to ascertain students perceptions of the
  impact of an innovation that may only occur in a small section of a unit. SPOT
  is unable to provide the rapid informational feedback to the academic in time
  to make formative adjustments to the new approaches based on student
  feedback. This highlights the need for an informal, rapid turn around
  formative mechanism that can assist academics to seek feedback from students
  in a timely way.

**Students’ Unit Reflective Feedback (SURF)**

Feedback from the Associate Deans (T &L) was that the information produced
from SURF was far too limited. The questions asked were not the most pressing
for them and there was no facility to get student comments, thus they found it
not particularly useful in forward planning.

Associate Deans expressed frustration that SURF failed to provide information
to evaluate team teaching or to acknowledge the distinctiveness of the diverse
environments in which teaching occurred. They appreciated that the information
gained was in the public domain and the facility to track change over time and the information was immediately available. Associate Deans applauded the universality of uptake of SURF and were frustrated that SPOT was voluntary and privatised.

Associate Deans sought a compromise between the overly flexible and privatised approach of SPOT and the austerity of SURF in terms of the range of questions and restriction to numerical data. In particular, Associate Deans asked for a comment function to be included with SURF and questions that would address issues of greater salience in trying to provide high quality learning experiences. The Associate Deans’ concerns are supported by the arguments of evaluation researchers who have warned that reducing teaching evaluation to a single number without the benefit of contextual information or comments can be seriously misleading (Pallett 1999 Collings, Chrisler and Quina, 1998).

**Student Perception of Research Supervision (SPORS) and On Supervision, Candidature And Research (OSCAR)**

SPORS is described as an evaluation of postgraduate supervision. It is a very useful tool to be used in discussions between supervisors and higher degree candidates to understand each other’s expectations of the supervisory relationship. It is not a mechanism for individual supervisors or departments, disciplines, Schools or faculties to assess the quality of supervision.

OSCAR, which is on-line, is a useful tool for Departments to ascertain a student’s degree of satisfaction with the supervision and the adequacy of the infrastructure support provided and could produce reasonable data at a School or Faculty level to support forward planning. Once again the survey tool does not provide for qualitative comment. Added to the data from the PREQ, Faculties, Schools and Departments are able to gain a rich insight into the needs and the satisfaction of postgraduate research candidates and allocate resources and professional developments in ways that best meet the perceived and/or strongly felt needs.

**Course, Department, School and Faculty Reviews**

UWA has a clearly articulated process for ongoing reviews of learning and teaching at multiple levels. With the appropriate commitment to these from the various levels of leadership, information should be systematically feed upwards to provide a well-elaborated body of evidence about the student experience and their perceptions of teaching effectiveness. Coupled with this should be (1) information regarding the responses that have been made to student feedback, (2) the impact in terms of improved satisfaction and/or improved learning outcomes, (3) resources needed in terms of focused professional development, (4) changes to organisational processes and policies or infrastructure and equipment and (5) provision of support and supplementary services for students.

What is also not clear is how large-scale review findings are fed back to the enabling services and to the teachers and unit and course coordinators. In other words, how do those with the day-to-day responsibilities for teaching and learning know what institutional surveys have found regarding students perceptions? Common concerns might be teaching in laboratories or teaching
large service learning units or the success of capstone units. How would these common issues be identified in the consolidation of aggregated data and how would this issue be communicated to teaching and learning committees and CATL so that appropriate resources and measures could be provided to the relevant groups?

The current *Schools Review Student Survey* is an exceptionally well-designed survey that is managed by the Institutional Research Unit (IRU). However, it is unclear whether there is an expectation that all Schools would use this particular survey. The questions in this survey address all the elements of the University aspirations for learning and teaching. This questionnaire should be used as a model in developing any future questionnaires, particularly whole-of-course surveys. It should not necessarily be replicated, but used as a basis for developing a suite of surveys that complement each other and confirm outcomes.

**National and Special Focus Surveys**

At the program level, the University accesses and utilises national graduate survey data from CEQ, GDS, AUSSE, First year Experience and Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire (PREQ) surveys on student engagement. A review of many Institutional reports indicates that at multiple levels of the university, Senior leaders use the outcomes of this data in quality reviews at a programmatic, discipline and Faculty level for forward planning and to assure its standards through making comparisons with other universities. The Institutional Research Unit has a significant role in aggregating the data from these and making meaning from them.

**Staff Survey**

A survey of UWA teachers regarding their perceptions of student engagement is noted and commended. Its purpose was to complement the AUSSIE survey. While the purposes of this particular staff survey were limited, that it occurred at all is highly commendable. All too often in universities teachers are left out in any consideration of stakeholder feedback on the quality of teaching. Teachers’ opinions, taken seriously and systematically within quality assurance evaluation processes, can make significant contributions to developing a lively, futures oriented blueprint and can assist universities document large scale changes.

**Benchmarking/Professional Accreditation**

It was evident in an extensive range of UWA Institutional reports reviewed in the preparation of this report that forms of external stakeholder review have occurred, particularly in relation professional education and accreditation bodies. As a cautionary note, Ewan’s (2009) recent thematic analysis of Cycle 1 of AUQA audits of Australian Universities should be considered. Ewen points out that the audits found that external benchmarking and external reviews of particular programs scarcely extended beyond what the reviews required for accreditation processes for professional degrees. She argues that,
based on the cumulative evidence from the first round report, there is an over reliance generally on professional accreditation bodies for external input into course reviews. She urges Universities not to limit their external reviews to accreditation processes as this risks entrenching restricted and conservative notions of the degree programme design and development. While accreditation bodies have an important assurance function, Universities need to be innovative in course design and consider students’ learning needs for the future. This is important in the light of the diverse destinations of graduates from professional degrees. For example, only 50% of law graduates seek employment in law. Their degree program, therefore, should consider the longer terms needs not only of those intending to practice law but also those who will take their law knowledge and skills into other practice arenas.

**Conclusions, Strengths, Problems and Gaps**

Despite the problematic issues raised by those interviewed, there are elements of worth to note in the current student evaluation systems. The following is a limited list of the key issues.

1. There is diversity among the tools that are currently in place and most are well signposted and well located in the broader university system on the CATL website. That said, there is an over emphasis on surveying at the unit level and a need for surveys at the course level.

2. There is a significant risk of over-surveying students. Because of the diversity of survey instruments, the frequency with which SURF is administered and the freedom of staff to administer SPOT as frequently as they would like, some students might be surveyed up to eight times in a year, even more if they participate in a first year experience survey or if their School is conducting a review.

3. The institutional reports produced based on SURF and other data provide a source of available data on teaching at UWA. However, the data does not attend to any of UWA aspirational statements. A failing of such limited questions is that they can only lead to a limited analysis of what change is needed.

4. The process of inducting Associate Deans into the use of SURF along with the requirement to report on the outcomes is also commendable and reportedly provokes serious attention to teaching and Units at the School and Faculty level.

5. The flexibility and groundedness of the SPOT system has attracted a large number of users. Unfortunately, there is little reported evidence of the impact of the interpretation of the data and the questions are not validated which undermines its trustworthiness.

6. There is a very clear guiding statement about the qualities expected of teachers at UWA to guide their performance reviews and gathering of evidence for applications for tenure and promotion. However, these values about teaching are not reflected in the evaluation questions in SURF and there is no guarantee that they will be attended to in SPOT. This failure to make explicit links in the various data generating and data use systems reduces efficiency and effectiveness of each aspect of the system as a whole.
7. It is commendable that staff have been surveyed as evidenced in the 2005 Survey of Staff regarding student engagement. This is an aspect of teaching evaluation surveys that is poorly attended to in many Australian Universities.

8. There are GAPS in the current systems that if addressed would support and improve evaluation practice. Those noted are:

- A survey of Graduates 3-5 year out when they could give a considered view on the development of their graduate capabilities in their studies.
- A whole-of-course review that would give feedback on program coherence, learning support and other aspects of studying at UWA that relate to aspirational mission and strategic plans of the University. Done well, with interpretation of the data and systematic feedback to student about what was learnt from their feedback and what will be done as a result, such a survey, conducted on a biannual basis, could prove to be a valuable forward planning mechanism.
- The possibility for quick informal surveys needs to be taught to staff and systematically promoted. A few staff are already successfully using the LMS (WebCT survey tool) for conducting brief and rapid surveys of student perceptions and for responding to the students regarding what was learnt and what will be done. This potential for efficient, effective gaining of advice from, and providing feedback to, students regarding their experience and estimation of worth of specific aspects of their unit or teaching, as opposed to a full-scale evaluation of teaching, should be more fully exploited.
- To support its intent to develop strong partnerships with related industries and communities through its existing Work Integrated Learning programs and new programs of Service Learning, the university would be well served to establish a five year cycle of employer and community surveys to develop and evaluate agendas that involve students working to learn, and that are mutually beneficial to all parties.
- There is not a ready mechanism through which students could be systematically surveyed on-line. Although beyond the scope of this review, but related, is a suggestions that an on-line, individualised portal for each student should be considered through which all university/student communication occurs. The individualised communication portal could commence with application and continue through to graduation. It could deal with enrolment, retrieval of grades, library information, on-line generic tutorials for citation and referencing, emailing tutors and all student perception surveys. This is already common practice in many Australian Universities.

Concluding Comments

Teaching and learning are always a work in progress and can benefit from constructive feedback from those immediately involved and from experts in the field. Research on evaluation of teaching data demonstrates quite clearly that although students are quite reliable in their responses to surveys there is a lot of noise in the data. For that reason it has been suggested that the most important outcome is to ensure that surveys generate trustworthy data that is able to
inform development and change and that other sources of data are also considered.

UWA has extensive processes in place already to find out how students perceive their learning experiences and to ensure that educational programmes evaluate and quality benchmark. These systems while highly appropriate for their time have now become dated and restrictive. Unfortunately, as it stands, the survey that is used most systematically (SURF) does not focus on the things that UWA espouses as most important. This has lead to a weak analysis of student perceptions of their learning experience. Furthermore, there is little evidence that action is taken based on the information gained from either of the current surveys. There is also little evidence that students are informed of the outcomes or changes made and there is little evidence of how these diverse sets of evaluative data are linked and used constructively at the course, school and university level to assure and improve the quality of the student learning experience.

For these reasons a high priority for UWA is to introduce into the system an expectation that all surveys once administered should be linked in a relational database and used wisely at multiple levels of the system. This involves (1) considered analysis of the data (2) action taken on the data (3) communication to the students that the feedback has been considered and used.

UWA has put considerable effort over some time to assist in this process. The CATL web site that explains the system for SPOT and SURF is excellent. The attempt to provide information to assist critical reflection on lowest score was innovative, but missed the mark because academics perceived it as criticism rather than assistance. If this particular resource had been extended to cover all questions and all responses rather than just the lowest score questions, teachers may have been more receptive to the links to the resources. More importantly some excellent teachers may have discovered a language to describe what they do well.

The challenge to UWA at this point is to consolidate what it has in place; reduce the extent of surveying; focus on that which matters most; shift from ritualised surveying to systematic utilising of the information; and invest in a robust, efficient and flexible on-line platform to conduct surveys and to manage and store the data. To some extent this will require a cultural change in many sectors of the university, which is never easy. It will require an investment of funds to resources, research and development, an extensive professional education and induction programme and clearly articulated expectations for change through a new policy and a coalescing framework.

What follows is Appendix 1., which is a brief review of research and concepts that may be of some used in future deliberations, together with a bibliography of reliable research pertaining to student evaluations of teaching and the use of on-line environments to conduct student surveys; and by Appendix 2., which is a summary table of a scan of Australian University practices in relation to evaluation of teaching particularly noting on-line delivery systems.
Appendix 1: Review and Report

Attachment 1: A Brief Theoretical Review

Evaluation is an essential part of the educational process with its primary purpose being quality improvement. Done well, evaluation will produce evidence of how well teaching is meeting students’ learning needs and identify areas where teaching can be improved and inform the allocation of Department, Faculty and University resources in developing the curriculum. These are all largely formative functions. Institutional teaching evaluation processes and tools are also used to support applications for promotion and to comply with external demands for accountability. Unfortunately these summative functions often override the formative functions because of their very public and high-risk profiles.

Evaluation of Teaching is a term that is often used as a proxy for evaluation of the student experience and student achievement. This is problematic because teaching is just one of many elements in the student experience, albeit an important element. Evaluation of teaching is also often perceived of almost entirely as Student Evaluation of Teaching. Rundell (1997) argues that to rely solely on student information is very questionable. Although students are significant informants on many aspects of teaching, there are other informants that are more appropriate for particular elements of teaching and that risk being overlooked.

A systematic approach to Evaluation of Teaching Quality needs to consider three major dimensions, namely, the purposes, the sources of information and the users or audience. These dimensions are reflected in Theall’s model that follows. All too frequently, institutional systems focus solely on student evaluation of teaching through surveys and to some extent on curriculum design through reviews. The result is that there are large banks of data about teaching and curriculum quality that provide incomplete representations of educational quality that are often used inappropriately as evidence for decision making. Theall’s model is a sound basis for designing an evaluation of teaching system taking into account the diversity of purposes, information sources and end users.

Figure 1. The Evaluation of Teaching Agenda. (Theall and Franklin, 1990)

What can be evaluated?
What is attended to in an evaluation system establishes what is important and distinctive in that institution. Shulman (in Huber and Cox, 2004) argues most cogently that “work that matters should be work that counts”. Yet Huber and Cox (2004) point out that evaluation systems continue to reward most readily work that conforms to older norms. “Many campuses have changed their guidelines to encourage innovation, but whether this new work will really count is a questionable”. Theall lists many aspects of the education enterprise of universities that can be evaluated, namely,

- Students’ perceptions of teaching effectiveness;
- Students’ perceptions of their experiences at the institution;
- Student learning achievement standards;
- The educational design of degree programs including coverage, processes and standards;
- Integration and interpretation of graduate capabilities;
- Program cohesion and relevance;
- Incorporation of institutional distinctive aspirations for teaching and learning;
- The appropriateness of an instructor’s objectives;
- The instructor’s knowledge of the subject matter;
- The degree to which instructional processes or materials are current, balanced, and relevant to objectives;
- The quality and appropriateness of assessment methods;
- The appropriateness of grading standards;
- The instructor’s support for department teaching efforts such as curriculum development and mentoring new faculty;
- The instructor’s contribution to a department climate that values teaching.

The sources of information for each aspect are dependent on the purpose for conducting the evaluation and the use to which the information will be put. Theall (2000), who is one of the most credible contemporary theorists and researchers in the field of evaluation of teaching, suggests several rules for institutions to consider when attempting to improve the evaluation process. They are:

- Begin with what is most important;
- Establish clear purposes of the evaluation and who the users will be;
- Balance individual and institutional needs;
- Establish a legally defensible process;
- Be sure to provide resources for improvement and support of teaching and teachers;
- Build a coherent system for evaluation, rather than a piecemeal process;
- Establish clear lines of responsibility and reporting for those who administer the system;
- Invest in a superior up to date evaluation system and evaluate it regularly;
- Use, adapt, or develop instrumentation suited to institutional/individual needs;
- Use multiple sources of information for evaluation decisions;
- Collect data on ratings and validate the instrument(s) used;
- Produce reports that can be easily and accurately understood;
- Educate the users of rating results to avoid misuse and misinterpretation;
- Keep formative evaluation confidential and separate from summative decision-making.
The bottom line according to Theall (2000) is that “good practice (in evaluation) leads to good decisions”. Good practice includes recognising that teaching effectiveness is but one aspect of the student experience. Good practice also recognises that teaching effectiveness is shaped not only by a teachers’ capability and personal choices, but also by the context in which they work including the dispositions and practices of leadership at the immediate departmental level up to the faculty and university senior leadership level.

**Teaching Effectiveness**

Key evaluation theorists all remind us that teaching effectiveness is multifaceted. Despite the validity of this premise, there is an over emphasis on student perceptions of their education experience to the point of neglect of other equality valid sources of information. Theall (2000) emphasises that student ratings are an important part of evaluation of teaching effectiveness. The design of instruments to measure students’ evaluations, and the design of research to study the evaluations should reflect this multidimensionality.

Feldman (1976) identified nineteen Instructional Rating Dimensions:

- Teacher’s stimulation of interest in the course and subject matter.
- Teacher’s enthusiasm for subject or for teaching.
- Teacher’s knowledge of the subject.
- Teacher’s intellectual expansiveness and breadth of coverage.
- Teacher’s preparation and organization of the course.
- Clarity and understandableness of presentations and explanations.
- Teacher’s elocutionary skills.
- Teacher’s sensitivity to, and concern with, class level and progress.
- Clarity of course objectives and requirements.
- Nature and value of the course material including its usefulness and relevance.
- Nature and usefulness of supplementary materials and teaching aids (now we would include on-line learning environments).
- Difficulty and workload of the course.
- Teacher’s fairness and impartiality of evaluation of student’s quality of exams.
- Classroom management.
- Nature, quality and frequency of feedback from teacher to students.
- Teacher’s encouragement of questions and discussion, and openness to the opinions of others.
- Intellectual challenge and encouragement of independent thought.
- Teacher’s concern and respect for students; friendliness of the teacher.
- Teacher’s availability and helpfulness.

This is not to suggest that questions should be included in surveys pertaining to all 19 dimensions, but it does signal the importance of considering how an evaluation system as a whole takes these into account to assure the foundational standards of effective teaching. Marsh (1987) argued that there is no single criterion of effective teaching and no single study, no single criterion, and no single paradigm that can demonstrate, or refute, the validity of students’ evaluations. Different dimensions or
factors of students’ evaluations will correlate more highly with different indicators of effective teaching. While all efforts may be made to validate the instruments used and while considerable studies indicate that they are largely reliable, all indications suggest that student evaluations remain highly contestable.

Given the cost of large scale evaluations, it is important that any institutional system used to rate teacher effectiveness should be: clear about the purposes; use multiple sources of data to triangulate and validate the ratings and use the information to close the communication and investigative loop. If the intention or purpose is largely formative, that is, to improve the quality of teaching, then student perception is only one source of information, albeit important, and additional mechanisms are needed to ensure that the improvement agenda is fulfilled and accounted for.

Studies suggest that feedback coupled with a candid discussion with an external/unbiased consultant can be one of the most effective interventions to improve teaching effectiveness. However, the prevailing culture is one in which the resultant data from surveys of students’ perceptions of teacher effectiveness is often only seen by the teacher. It is easy to see that the status quo is in no small part prompted by a concern that student survey data might be used in performance management. Trust is a critical factor in an effective student evaluation of teacher effectiveness system; trust that the resultant information will be contextually interpreted and trust that the information will be used only for its formative purposes. When data is to be used summatively, this aim should be clear at the outset.

Excellent teaching entails more that competence in terms of content, techniques and technologies. Excellence also entails an ethical and moral commitment and integrity that is rarely taught and often merely implied. Teachers with moral integrity are concerned about the consequences of their teaching upon students and actively take responsibility for it without waiting to be held accountable.

**Evaluating the Teaching of New Academic Staff**

When they are appointed new staff are well equipped in terms of expertise in relation to content although studies have shown that their self-confidence is lowest in relation to their teaching (Boice: 2000, 1991, Kugel: 1993). New staff do have much to learn about teaching, yet research has shown that their primary concern is first is ‘what to teach’. University Foundations of Teaching programs attempt to introduce new staff to what is important to know about the processes of teaching and learning, accepting that much of it is learned on the job. Initial feedback from student ratings to early career teachers is often discouraging, because their students have been expecting a greater concern about ‘how to teach’. Appropriate recognition of the potential difference between novice and experienced academic teachers in student’s evaluation outcomes needs to be acknowledged. Furthermore differentiated systems are needed in the interpretation of new staff evaluations. (Pallett: 1999)

**The Problems Inherent in Student Evaluation of Teaching**

Student ratings of teaching have been over-emphasized and under-utilized. Pallett (1999) argues that student ratings are neither inherently good nor bad. How they are used determines their value. When they are used well, they can be helpful in supporting the agendas for which they are intended. When abused, trust is lost, impact is negative, and something potentially valuable becomes damaging.

Pallett describes the following examples of how the value of student ratings may be diminished or lost. This is an edited version that may have a function in UWA
planning for changes to its evaluation system. At this point, permission has not been obtained to use it this way so this document must not be for wider distribution. What follows is a summary.

*Overreliance on Student Ratings in the Evaluation of Teaching*

Pallett recommends that student ratings comprise no more than 30% to 50% of the evaluation of teaching, identifying components of effective teaching that students are simply not well equipped to judge.

*Not Enough Information to Make an Accurate Judgment*

Given the kind of impact personnel decisions have, both on individual faculty and the institution, it is imperative to collect enough information to inform good judgments. For important decisions such as tenure, promotion, and reappointment, using ratings from only a few classes is not appropriate.” Pallett recommends ratings of six to eight classes representing all of one’s teaching responsibilities be used in the evaluation process-more (eight to twelve) if class sizes are small.

“At times people infer from this statement that we recommend rating every class every term, which is not the case. Survey fatigue, a consequence of administering too many surveys in a term, can be an abuse unless those completing the forms are fully committed to the process. A better plan is to rate every class once every three years. For example, classes rated in year one should be rated again in year four. These elements of timing and frequency and scope need to be addressed in the university teaching evaluation policy and in the design of the overall system”.

*Questionable Administrative Procedures*

“If faculty and administrators take student ratings seriously, it is likely that students will take them seriously as well. If teachers and the institution take the process seriously, students also take them seriously. Administrative processes must be created and employed that do not permit tainting the results. Smaller errors and omissions in processes, such as failure to encourage honest and thoughtful responses, result in a loss of confidence in the information collected. Unless sound administrative procedures are followed, dependable information will not be provided”.

*Adequate Attention to Selecting/Developing an Instrument*

“The tendency for campuses to rely entirely on student ratings to assess teaching effectiveness is rapidly declining. Institutions that take the evaluation of teaching seriously include student ratings as part of larger body of evidence. The content of the student ratings tool should be determined by both the functions of the rating program and the content of other sources of evaluative information.”

*How effective teaching is defined is important in identifying the sources of evidence to use and, if student ratings are included, the content of the instrument.*

“Decisions about the purposes of the instrument will impact the content (Cashin, 1996) and the length of the instrument. If you want to use student ratings to serve purposes beyond personnel evaluation to guide improvement efforts, offer descriptive information that assists in advising, or serve as a supplemental source of evidence for accreditation-the instrument will need to be longer than one whose only intent is personnel evaluation.”

*Conduct Research to Support the Validity and Reliability of a Student Ratings Tool*

Pallett Reports that student ratings instrument, invariably, are locally developed, having no evident to support the instrument’s validity or reliability. “While there are often good reasons to have a locally developed instrument, it is extremely important
to establish its credibility through reliability and validity studies. Without such studies, many faculty members (especially those who are psychometrically sophisticated) will lack trust in the instrument. In addition, if a personnel decision is ever challenged in a grievance hearing or lawsuit, those who use the instrument will be on firmer ground if evidence supports the reliability and validity of the system". 
Bibliography


Collings. L. H., Chrisler, J. C., Quina. K (1998)“Student Evaluations: Gender Bias And Teaching Styles” Tomorrows Professor Message No 81


Huber, M, Cox Work that Matters Should Be Work that Counts in Tomorrow's Professor Msg.#549 February 2004 Faculty Evaluation:


http://www.math.tamu.edu/~william.rundell/teaching_evaluations/article.pdf


Theall, M and Franklin (Eds) (1990) “Student Ratings of Instruction: Issues for improving practice”. New Directions for Learning and Teaching N0 43
San Francisco Jossey bass

Theall M (2000) "Electronic Course Evaluation Is Not Necessarily the Solution"
The Technology Source, November/December 2000


Appendix 2: Scan of Australian University On-line Student Evaluation Systems
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNIVERSITY</th>
<th>ONLINE SET’S</th>
<th>TEACHER INPUT LEVEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Australian Catholic University [ACU] | YES | INFORMATION:  
  - The Student Evaluation of Teaching involves the use of a questionnaire with 15 items. The lecturers have the opportunity to add up to 5 additional items (see SET Instructions). The questionnaire is designed to gather students' perception of the quality of the participating lecturers' teaching. 
  - Data gathered through this questionnaire may be used to support lecturers' applications for promotion, and performance or probation review, along with individual professional development.  


| Australian National University [ANU] | NO | INFORMATION:  
  - Standardised ANUSET surveys allow you to obtain comprehensive student feedback on teaching and learning at the end of semesters. These evaluation surveys are available in a variety of forms and are available in hard copy or online. In consultation with CEDAM, lecturers are also able to customise their evaluation by adding a limited number of their own questions.  

| Bond University [Bond] | YES | INFORMATION:  
  - In 2007, Bond University’s Teaching & Learning Committee established a review of the University’s TEVAL (Teaching Evaluation) procedures and processes. The chair of this sub-committee is Associate Professor David Field, Faculty of Law. A sub-committee was established and met six times before submitting a report with recommendations to the Teaching & Learning Committee. 
  - Work will begin in early 2009 on a trial of the EVASYS electronic subject evaluation system alongside the current TEVAL data collection process. Other measures of teaching quality such as peer review and teaching scholarship will also be evaluated as supplements to a subject evaluation system. 
  - For further information about this review, please contact Teaching & Learning Services on (07) 5595 3300.  


| Central Queensland University [CQU] | YES | INFORMATION:  
  - Central Queensland University has instituted system-wide student evaluation of teaching and courses across all campuses and delivery sites since Autumn 2001. 
  - This service is provided by Evaluation Services who produce and administer the questionnaires, consisting of core and optional questions. Summary analysis of quantitative data, provision of qualitative data to appropriate staff, various analyses and reporting  

| 5. Charles Darwin University [CDU] | INFORMATION:  
As of second semester 2004, Charles Darwin University began a new system of mandatory student evaluation of units and modules using the [Student Experience of Learning and Teaching (SELT)](http://www.cdu.edu.au/teachingandlearning/studentevaluation.html) system with a sample of the units on offer in a semester being selected for the evaluation exercise.  
| 6. Charles Sturt University [CSU] | INFORMATION:  
| 7. Curtin University of Technology [CURTIN] | INFORMATION:  
Curtin's online system for gathering and reporting student feedback on their learning experiences  
|  
|  

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Janice Orrell:  Page 2
### eVALUate unit survey
- (which is automatically available for all current students to give feedback on the course work units in which they are enrolled)

### eVALUate teaching survey
- (which enables students to give feedback to individual teachers on their request)

### eVALUate for Comprehensive Course Review

**eVALUate graduate survey**
- (which gathers recent graduates’ perceptions on the effectiveness of their course in assisting them to achieve Curtin's graduate attributes and employability)

**eVALUate employer survey**
- (which gathers employers’ perceptions on how well they feel Curtin graduates are prepared for employment)


#### 8. Deakin University [Deakin]

**INFORMATION:**
- As noted in Deakin University's evaluation policy and procedures, all units and the teaching of those units must be evaluated each time they are offered. The generic instrument used to collect data for this purpose is the Student Evaluation of Teaching and Units (SETU) survey. SETU is administered by the Planning Unit, and reports are available on their survey website:

**PLANNING UNIT WEBSITE:**
- The Planning Unit produces reports on the major externally-coordinated annual surveys of course outcomes, the GDS and CEQ, as well as on many of the other surveys conducted at Deakin. High-level reports on many of these surveys are available for download from this website. Most of these reports are restricted to Deakin staff and students, and a small number are restricted to Deakin staff only.

The Planning Unit is also responsible for the [Survey Evaluation Framework](http://www.deakin.edu.au/planning-unit/surveys/index.php).

**Course outcome surveys**

**Other survey reports**
- [Student Satisfaction Survey](http://www.deakin.edu.au/planning-unit/surveys/index.php)
- [Staff Satisfaction with Administrative Services Survey](http://www.deakin.edu.au/planning-unit/surveys/index.php)
- [Getting Started at Deakin Survey](http://www.deakin.edu.au/planning-unit/surveys/index.php)

#### 9. Edith Cowan University [ECU]

**INFORMATION:**
- The Unit and Teaching Evaluation Instrument (UTEI) is used to improve the quality of teaching and learning at Edith Cowan University through the collection and analysis of student feedback.

  - If you want to link directly to this policy you can use the following link.
  - 10 questions for units
  - 8 questions for teachers
  - 8 questions for tutors


#### 10. Flinders University [FLINDERS]

**INFORMATION:**
- Flinders University has a standard, mandatory instrument for gathering data from students about their response to teaching, supervision and topics. This instrument is known as [Student](http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/policies_db/tmp/ac066.pdf)
| 11. Griffith University [GRIFFITH] | INFORMATION:  
http://www62.gu.edu.au/policylibrary.nsf/xmainsearch/fec5ded2338d87e4a256f630063f8f0?opendocument  
- The GU Student Evaluation of Course (SEC) Questionnaire consists of three sections:  
  1. 10 mandatory, fixed questions which are the same across the whole institution  
  2. 10 additional, but optional, questions chosen from a database of questions  
  3. 3 spaces for respondents to write comments as text, each prompted by one of 3 general questions.  
- http://www62.gu.edu.au/policylibrary.nsf/xmainsearch/fec5ded2338d87e4a256f630063f8f0?opendocument#Data_collection_tools  
- The Griffith University Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) Questionnaire consists of three sections:  
  1. 10 mandatory, fixed questions which are the same across the whole institution  
  2. 10 additional, but optional, questions selected by the individual academic staff from a database of questions  
  3. 3 spaces for respondents to write comments as text, each prompted by one of 3 general questions.  
| 12. James Cook University [JCU] | INFORMATION:  
- At JCU, formal student evaluation consists of:  
  - Student Feedback about Subjects (SFS)  
  - Student Feedback about Teaching (SFT)  
  - Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) – the national questionnaire distributed to every graduate of every degree of every university.  
  Staff are also encouraged to seek student feedback through other informal processes such as online surveys, focus group interviews, student representatives.  
- SUBJECT QUESTIONARIES ONLINE  
- TEACHING QUESTIONARIES IN CLASS |
| 13. La Trobe University [LATROBE] | INFORMATION:  
- In 2009, the CTLC is providing new forms to enable La Trobe teaching staff to gain student feedback on teaching, tutoring and subjects in accordance with La Trobe University's new Student Feedback on Teaching Policy, Student Feedback on Teaching Procedures, Student Feedback on Subjects Policy and Student Feedback on Subjects Procedures.  
Please note there are different feedback forms for undergraduate and postgraduate students. |
| 14. Macquarie University [MACQUARIE] | INFORMATION:  
- TEDS Surveys and Order Forms  
TEDS provides the following survey instruments for evaluation. For more information on these surveys and their uses, please see About TEDS Surveys.  
Survey  
Learner Experience of Teaching (LET)  
Purpose Individual Teacher Development |
Access to Report Only to teacher being evaluated
Voluntary
Paper, on line

**Learner Experience of Unit (LEU)**
Purpose: Unit/ Program Development
Access to report: Unit Convenor, Head of Departments, (Other relevant Learning & Teaching Committee
May be mandated by program
Paper on-line

The following surveys are available for particular teaching modes and situations. They are currently under review

**Learner Experience of Distance Education (LED)**
Purpose: Distance Unit/ Program Development
Access to report: Teacher, Unit Convenor, Head of Department, Learning & Teaching Committee
May be mandated by programs
Paper & Online

**Individual Supervisor Survey (ISS)**
Purpose Individual Postgraduate Supervisor Development
Access to report: Only to supervisor being evaluated
Mandated
Paper

**NOTE:** TEDS survey instruments should not be used in isolation as student feedback gives only one view of teaching and learning quality. Reviews, planning and development strategies at individual, Department, Program, Faculty and University levels should draw on evaluative data obtained using diverse methods, from a range of sources.

http://www.mq.edu.au/ltc/eval_teaching/forms.htm

**LET'S**
- The core items are based on generic attributes of good teaching.
  Staff may select optional items from the Question Bank or from pre-selected groupings to gain more specific feedback on their teaching.

(The following links open up in popup windows)
  The questionnaire consists of:
  - **6 core questions on teaching**
  - up to 6 optional items on teaching (from the Question Bank or pre-selected groups)
  - **2 open-ended questions**

http://www.mq.edu.au/ltc/eval_teaching/let.htm

**LEU'S**
- The Learner Experience of Unit Questionnaire can be used as part of a course or program review or evaluation. It can also be appropriately used to evaluate external or distance units.

(The following links open up in popup windows)
  The questionnaire consists of:
  - **14 core questions** on the unit
  - up to 10 pre-selected items on the course unit (chosen by departments)
  - open-ended questions

http://www.mq.edu.au/ltc/eval_teaching/leu.htm

15. Monash

**INFORMATION:**
### UNIVERSITY EVALUATION

- **UNIT EVALUATION**
  - The unit evaluation instrument consists of ten common items (eight quantitative and two qualitative items). Changes to the common items must be approved by the Learning, Teaching and Quality sub-committee of University Education Committee. Up to ten additional quantitative items may be added by a faculty in order to produce a common faculty unit evaluation form of no more than 20 items.
  - [http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/quality/unit-evaluation-policy.html](http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/quality/unit-evaluation-policy.html)

- **TEACHER EVALUATION**
  - The Monash Questionnaire Series on Teaching (MonQueST) is a set of 11 questionnaires, each focused on a different teaching activity such as lecturing, tutorials, practicals etc. Each questionnaire is structured to enable student feedback to be obtained on specific aspects of an individual's teaching to produce useful feedback for academic staff which may be used in constructing a teaching dossier to support probation or promotion applications.

### 16. Murdoch University [MURDOCH]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFORMATION:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>STUDENT SURVEY OF UNITS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The unit questionnaire consists of eight core questions which have been developed with reference to the university's <a href="http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/quality/unit-evaluation-policy.html">Unit Quality Standards</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The core questions are –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. It was clear what I was expected to learn in this unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The assessment tasks were appropriate to the learning objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The feedback on my marked work was useful for my learning in this unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The assessment tasks tested my understanding of the subject area, rather than just memory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Activities in this unit helped me achieve the learning objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The unit resources were useful for my learning in this unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I was satisfied with the level of support from staff in this unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Overall, I was satisfied with the quality of this unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions are asked on a 6-point scale from <strong>Strongly Agree</strong> to <strong>Strongly Disagree</strong> with the additional option of <strong>Unable to Judge</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In addition to the core questions, unit co-ordinators may select up to ten optional ratings questions from the <a href="http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/quality/unit-evaluation-policy.html">item bank</a>, and also write an open-ended question in their own words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are also three standard open-ended questions for student comments –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Please comment on what you thought were the best aspects of this unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What improvements (if any) would you suggest?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Any other comments?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**How will it be surveyed?**
- All unit surveys are undertaken using MOSS (Murdoch Online Survey System).

### 17. Queensland

**INFORMATION:**

- All unit surveys are undertaken using MOSS (Murdoch Online Survey System).

**TEACHING SURVEY**
- In class only
- Example of survey
1. The Learning Experience Survey (LEX) is the university-approved mandatory student evaluation survey for units and teaching. It commenced in Semester 1 2007 in all non-research units for all teaching periods, replacing the Student Evaluation of Units and Student Evaluation of Teaching. Students are regularly asked to provide feedback on their experiences of units and teaching. This feedback is used to make decisions on what QUT can do to enhance the learning experience of our students at unit, course and university levels.

LEX survey ratings criteria
Responses are rated from 1 (Rarely) to 5 (Always) for the following criteria:
1. The unit activities helped me develop useful skills and knowledge.
2. The relevance of the unit activities was clear.
3. The structure and organisation of the unit assisted my learning.
4. I received helpful feedback on my learning.
5. I have been satisfied with the overall quality of this unit.
6. This teacher demonstrated expertise in the unit topics.
7. This teacher taught in a clear and helpful way.
8. This teacher showed a positive attitude to helping me learn.
9. I have been satisfied with the overall teaching of this staff member.

18. RMIT University [RMIT]

<table>
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<th>INFORMATION:</th>
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<tr>
<td>The CES is the standardised university survey designed to evaluate students’ experiences of their courses. The CES can be administered at any time during the semester that you are teaching your course. The Survey Services Centre (SSC) processes the completed surveys and produces a course report for individual teachers and relevant staff with responsibility for improving the experience of students in a course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can order hard copies or online versions of the survey from the Survey Services Centre website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=ioklp141a1ib;STATUS=A?QRY=STUDENT%20EVALUATION&amp;STYPE=ENTIRE">http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=ioklp141a1ib;STATUS=A?QRY=STUDENT%20EVALUATION&amp;STYPE=ENTIRE</a></td>
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TYPES OF SURVEY
- Student experience survey
- Course experience survey
- RMIT Australian Graduate Survey

COULD NOT ACCESS INFORMATION WITHOUT LOGIN

19. Southern Cross University [SCU]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFORMATION:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The survey is conducted on-line with access via MySCU. 📖 A copy of the survey instrument is available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instrument consists of 7 core questions plus an additional 5 optional questions can be selected from a question bank by the Unit Assessor. [[imagelib_437] Full question bank]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are 7 core questions, plus 5 additional questions. Students have the opportunity to make additional comments about each of these questions</td>
</tr>
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</table>

20. Swinburne University of Technology [SWINBURNE]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFORMATION:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STUDENT FEEDBACK SURVEY (COMBINED TEACHING/UNIT QUESTIONAIRE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarised responses from Part A (teaching items) are reported to the staff member named on the survey and the Dean of the relevant Faculty, to be used in the improvement of teaching quality and to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
provide evidence for teaching awards and promotions applications. You only need to complete Part B (unit items) of the survey once for each unit. Summarised responses from this section are reported to the convener of the unit and the Dean of the relevant Faculty. Please take the time to fill in surveys for each of your teachers, the unit section for each unit, and tell us what you really think about how things are going. Also, take the time to write constructive comments, particularly where you think we could do better. These comments are used by the faculties to work out how to improve. You have up to 1000 characters (which is about 100 words) in each of the comment boxes. http://www.swinburne.edu.au/corporate/spq/survey/SFSurvey.htm

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• You have 8 options from which to choose when selecting your</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>questionnaire. Options 1 to 4 are the standard templates that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>can be downloaded in Adobe Acrobat format from the LTDU website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(<a href="http://www.adelaide.edu.au/ltdu/staff/evaluations">www.adelaide.edu.au/ltdu/staff/evaluations</a>) for use by an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>individual teacher, by a teaching group, for a course or for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MyUni. Options 5 and 6 are for use in extended standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>evaluations of individual or group teaching or courses where</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the questions come from the list of extended options on later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pages of this Manual. Option 7 is used for evaluating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>supervision of student work. Option 8 is used when the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>questions originate from sources other than in this Manual.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• As part of the automation of the SELT process, staff may</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>download any of the standard forms (in Adobe Acrobat format)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>for:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Individual Teacher SELT (Standard or extended Standard</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Teacher SELT)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Group Teaching SELT (Standard or extended Standard Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SELT)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Course SELT (Standard or extended Standard Course SELT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• MyUni SELT (Standard MyUni SELT)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>THERE ARE ALSO NON STANDARD QUESTIONAIRES</td>
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</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>22. University of Ballarat [BALLARAT]</th>
<th>INFORMATION:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) and Student Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of Courses (SEC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• To initiate a SET and/or SEC Evaluation, you will need to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>complete a request form. Download Student Evaluations Request</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Form (32.4kb).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To complete the form, fill in the following fields:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• From: Fill in your contact details, sign and date the form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You can only complete a request form for yourself. You</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cannot request a SET and SEC for someone else.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• SET or SEC: Write SET for an evaluation of your teaching or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SEC for an evaluation of the course. One choice only per cell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There is provision on the form to make four separate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>requests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Course Code: Write the course code for example ITECH 5000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Course title: Write the course title for example Business</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Macroeconomics.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Number of students: Write the total number of students in</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the course that you expect will actually take part in the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>evaluation.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Number of groups of students: The total number of students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>may be divided into groups. For each evaluation requested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>please state how many groups of students will be involved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Evaluation Date DD/MM/YY: Write the expected date of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>evaluation. Don't worry if you can't perform the evaluation</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>on that exact date. Also please allow at least 10 business</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>days from the receipt of your form for it to be processed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Canberra [CANBERRA]</td>
<td>INFORMATION:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Optional group code: If you want the standard 10 questions that everyone receives, leave this blank. If you want to add 10 additional questions that have been grouped according to particular themes, write in the appropriate group code. An example for a SET evaluation would be &quot;T&quot; which is for Small Group Lecturing. The full list of optional group codes is available by clicking the link further down this page.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Optional items (Questions 11 to 20): If you want more than the standard 10 questions, but you do not want to use an optional group code, you can select 10 individual questions from the list available from this website. The important point to note is that if you request a SET, you must only choose individual questions from the SET list, not the SEC list; and vice versa.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open ended question: Here you can write a question of 15 words or less, asking for student comment. Be careful that your question is appropriate for the nature of the evaluation. For example a question on a SEC evaluation might be &quot;Was the current textbook helpful or not?&quot;. This would not be appropriate on a SET evaluation because the question relates to the course content not the performance of the teacher.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some Schools, or individuals, have developed alternative versions of SET and SEC for use with their students. IPOL staff will only provide processing and reporting support for official UB SET and SEC instruments and processes. All teaching staff should ensure that their teaching and course evaluation practices meet UB guidelines to enable the University to benchmark various aspects of learning and teaching processes across all campuses where UB Courses are delivered.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>University of Melbourne [MELBOURNE ]</th>
<th>INFORMATION:</th>
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<tr>
<td>The UNIT SATISFACTION SURVEY (USS)</td>
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<td>From 2009 the survey consists of 19 generic questions relating to the unit, including 13 questions from the national CEQ survey, using a 5 point likert scale, plus two open text questions on the best aspects of the unit and those aspects that need improving.</td>
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<td>STAFF FEEDBACK ON TEACHING</td>
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<td>Staff are able to order a Student Feedback on Teaching Questionnaire (or if you are a tutor, a Student Feedback on Tutoring Questionnaire) ONLY. Each of these questionnaires contains 15 standard scaled questions, 5 standard open-ended questions and up to five scaled questions chosen from the item bank.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.canberra.edu.au/tlc/evaluation/Student-Feedback-on-Teaching">http://www.canberra.edu.au/tlc/evaluation/Student-Feedback-on-Teaching</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>THE QUALITY OF TEACHING (QOT)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Quality of Teaching survey provides feedback from undergraduate and postgraduate coursework students on their perceptions of the quality of teaching and learning experience for each subject in which they are enrolled.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.upo.unimelb.edu.au/Public/Qual_Eval/EC_QoT.htm">http://www.upo.unimelb.edu.au/Public/Qual_Eval/EC_QoT.htm</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>NOT SURE OF OTHER INFORMATION</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.upo.unimelb.edu.au/Public/Qual_Eval/EC.html">http://www.upo.unimelb.edu.au/Public/Qual_Eval/EC.html</a></td>
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| University of New England [UNE] | INFORMATION:  
There are two student evaluation instruments used at UNE:  
- the student evaluation of units using the Student Feedback on Unit survey form and  
- the student evaluation of teaching using the Student Evaluation of Lecturer Teaching Performance Survey.  
STUDENT FEEDBACK ON UNIT  
- 11 QUESTIONS - nine rating statements and two open ended questions. The rating statements are designed to gain responses about the unit overall to allow comparisons across the university  
STUDENT EVALUATION OF TEACHING  
- The Evaluation of Lecturer Teaching Performance survey (downloadable Adobe Acrobat file of a sample survey) consists of 15 statements. These questions seek to elicit responses pertaining to a lecturer's ability to: organise unit content effectively; present material in a variety of ways to assist learning; demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the subject area; select appropriate texts and readings; outline the unit requirements clearly; provide timely and constructive feedback; answer questions unambiguously; treat all students fairly; encourage class participation; exhibit a positive attitude to students; provide a solid learning foundation for future studies; use teaching aids and media; provide individual assistance where needed; and, effectively facilitate learning.  
- Optional Question Sets  
Optional question sets are designed to be added to the standard instruments. During 2007 we will be developing a wide range of optional question sets. We would appreciate your input on sets to develop and what questions may be included in each. Please contact us with your suggestions.  
| --- | --- |
| University of New South Wales [UNSW] | INFORMATION:  
Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) Process |
| University of Newcastle [NEWCASTLE] | INFORMATION:  
STUDENT EVALUATION OF COURSES  
- Originally, a 15-item survey instrument was used for the SEC. Following a review in 1998, a revised 8-item instrument was implemented. Following a further review in 2004, a new 11-item instrument was introduced on 1 January 2005  
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/university-surveys/sec/  
STUDENT EVALUATION OF TEACHING  
- Core SET Items  
Following a review in 2004, a standard eight-item instrument was introduced on 1 January 2005. The items consist of the following:  
1. This teacher clearly explained the content which he/she delivered in the course.  
2. This teacher is well organised for the parts of the course he/she delivered.  
3. This teacher motivates me to extend my learning in this course.  
4. This teacher clearly explained what I was required to do in assessment items.  
5. This teacher was generally available in person or in other ways for discussion of the course.  
6. This teacher gave helpful advice when I requested it.  
7. This teacher helped me to understand the importance of the content to my program.  
8. Overall, I would rate this teacher as:  
X |
**Elective Items**

In addition to those eight core items, staff can add elective items to their SET. While we recommend that the number of elective items be limited to four, it is possible to include more than this number. You may select elective items from an Item Bank (Word format). We can also provide a separate page for written comments for inclusion in the survey.


| 28. University of Notre Dame Australia – The [UNDA] | INFORMATION: COULD NOT FIND INFORMATION FOR THIS UNIVERSITY |
| 29. University of Queensland [QUEENSLAND] | INFORMATION: TEVAL
- Choose the TEVAL form most suited to your teaching context. There are several Types of TEVALs. If these do not fit with your teaching situation, please contact evaluation services and discuss your needs.
- Select the additional questions that will target the areas of practice or teaching innovation. Optional items will provide you with further information on the teaching and learning experience from the students’ perspective. **You will need the Item Numbers for the ordering process.** Please note that some TEVALs, such as the Problem-based learning TEVAL and the BEL-EVAL don’t allow space for optional items.**

**STANDARD UQ SURVEYS (TEVALS, ICEVALS AND UQSES)**

TEDI supports a variety of standard surveys for the evaluation of teaching and courses.

- The Student Evaluation of Teaching survey (TEVAL) is the most commonly used for the evaluation of teaching.
- The institutional Course Evaluation survey (iCEVAL) has replaced the former Course Evaluation survey (CEVAL) for the evaluation of courses. The CEVAL survey is no longer available.
- The University of Queensland Student Experience Survey (UQSES) is used to evaluate a broad range of aspects of the student experience: course programs, teaching quality, facilities, resources and services.

Please note that other surveys whose use is mandated for UQ review processes such as the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ), the Graduate Destination Survey (GDS) are not administered by TEDI but by the Academic Programs Unit. Two other surveys which the University administers, the PhD Completion Survey and the PhD Withdrawn Survey are administered by the UQ Graduate School.

The following table describes the main features of UQ standard evaluation surveys.

**TEVAL**

**Purpose:** To inform the improvement of teaching by individual lecturers and tutors and to support appointment and promotion processes.

**Timing:** Whenever required. Lecturers need to be mindful of school evaluation policies and other surveys which particular student groups may be asked to complete.

**Survey structure:**

Different types are available for different teaching contexts. Each consists of:

- set items
- an overall item
- three open-ended questions
Most TEVALs provide space for optional items.

**Format:** Paper-based. Development of an online form is a current priority.

**Participants:** Students enrolled in UQ class groups selected for evaluation by the lecturer or tutor.

**Ordering and conducting surveys:** TEVALs can be ordered online. The lecturer or tutor being evaluated is responsible for the preparation and administration of the TEVAL. Click to access the [step by step ordering process](#).

**Reporting:** A report is provided to the lecturer or tutor who has been evaluated. Reports provide a normative and a criterion referenced comparison. This document explains the statistical analysis of an [iCEVAL/TEVAL Sample Report](#) (PDF 836KB).

**Policy implications:** TEVAL data are required for appointment and promotion processes.

---

**iCEVAL**

**Purpose:** To inform institutional, faculty, school, program and course quality assurance and enhancement processes.

**Timing:** All courses must be surveyed at least once every three years.

**Survey structure:**
A standard survey that consists of:
- 15 items
- an overall item
- three-open-ended questions

Click to see a sample survey form ([PDF 102KB](#)).

**Format:** Paper-based. Development of an online form is a current priority.

**Participants:** Students enrolled in courses nominated by faculties and/or schools.

**Ordering and conducting surveys:** iCEVALS are ordered on behalf of course coordinators by schools – not individual lecturers. Course coordinators are responsible for the [preparation and administration](#) (PDF 22KB) of iCEVALs the same processes as are used for TEVALs.

**Reporting:** Copies of individual course reports are provided to course coordinators, Heads of Schools, and Associate Deans (Academic). The [iCEVAL/TEVAL Sample Report](#) (PDF 836KB) explains how iCEVAL reports are analysed. Course data are provided to the university community through the [UQ Reportal](#). Reports are also placed on the [Teaching and Learning at UQ website](#).

**Policy implications:** iCEVAL and UQSES data are required indicators for the [Curriculum and Teaching Quality Appraisal (CTQA) and Academic Program Review](#) processes, as dictated by University Policy (HUPP 3.10.13).

---

**UQSES**

**Purpose:** To inform institutional, faculty, school and program quality assurance and enhancement processes.

**Timing:** Every two years.

**Survey structure:** The [UQSES scales and items](#) (PDF 38KB) have either been developed at UQ or drawn from the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) and extended CEQ benchmarking surveys. There is also provision for student comment.


**Participants:** All first-year Undergraduate (UG) students, final-year and honours UG students and all final-year postgraduate (PG) coursework students.
Ordering and conducting surveys: TEDI administers all aspects of the UQ SES

**Reporting:** Different reports are provided for different purposes and audiences and can be accessed from the [UQ Reportal](http://www.tedi.uq.edu.au/evaluations/methods/standardSurveys.html) or the Student Survey Information page.

**Policy implications:** iCEVAL and UQSES data are required indicators for the Curriculum and Teaching Quality Appraisal (CTQA) and Academic Program Review processes, as dictated by University Policy (HUPP 3.10.13).

### 30. University of South Australia [UniSA]

**INFORMATION:**

- **SET**
  - The Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) questionnaire consists of 13 core questions about your teaching and helps provide systematic feedback from your students.
- **CEI**
  - The Course Evaluation Instrument (CEI) provides a combination of core and optional questions that enables you to build questionnaires which address teaching and learning issues across a course as well as explore issues at the course level. The text response feature provides students with an opportunity to express their views about the course.
  - Data collected by the CEI is used in the preparation of the Program Evaluation Report (PER).

### 31. University of Southern Queensland [USQ]

**INFORMATION:**

- **STUDENT EVALUATION OF COURSES (SEC) SURVEY**
  - 17 QUESTIONS
- **STUDENT EVALUATION OF LEARNING AND TEACHING (SELT)**
  - 14 QUESTIONS
- **STUDENT EVALUATION OF DISTANCE LEARNING AND TEACHING (SEDLT)**
  - 18 QUESTIONS

### 32. University of Sydney [SYDNEY]

**INFORMATION:**

- **INSTITUTE FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING**
  - [Numeric & Scannable Questionnaires](http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/feedback/aboutSF.htm)
  - Teaching in Lectures
  - Teaching in Tutorials
  - Teaching in Demonstrations
  - Teaching in Clinic
  - Teaching On-Line
  - **Open Response Questionnaires**
    - Standard Open Response Questionnaire
    - Standard Group Open Response Questionnaire
    - Multiple Lecturer's Open Response Questionnaire
    - Tutorial Open Response Questionnaire
    - Distance Education Open Response Questionnaire
    - **Design your own Open Response Questionnaires**
      - Customised Open Response Questionnaire
      - Customised Group Open Response Questionnaire
  - [http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/feedback/aboutSF.htm](http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/feedback/aboutSF.htm)
| 33. University of Tasmania [TASMANIA] | INFORMATION:  
- SETL is the University of Tasmania’s Student Evaluation of Teaching and Learning program which was introduced in 1993  
- Both Unit and Teaching SETLs have standard (i.e. core) and optional (i.e. teacher-selected) sections for you to respond to. Core questions relate to all teaching and learning arrangements at UTAS – face-to-face and ‘virtual’ (e.g. online; by videoconference; print-based study guide). See SETL Core questions – Understanding what they mean [Word] for elaboration on each core question in both the Unit and Teaching SETLs. It’s worthwhile having this document with you when you come to respond to a SETL in one of your units.  
| 34. University of Technology Sydney [UTS] | INFORMATION:  
STUDENT FEEDBACK SURVEY (TEACHING AND SUBJECT)  
- The Student Feedback Survey consists of nine evaluation statements and two open ended questions.  
The nine evaluation statements are:  
1. *This subject was delivered in a way which was consistent with its stated objectives. IML Guide (.doc)  
2. *My learning experiences in this subject were interesting and thought provoking. IML Guide (.doc)  
3. *I found the assessment fair and reasonable. IML Guide (.doc)  
4. *There were appropriate resources available to support the subject. IML Guide (.doc)  
5. *I received constructive feedback when needed. IML Guide (.doc)  
6. The teacher appeared to be well prepared and presented the material in a well organised manner. IML Guide (.pdf)  
7. The teacher is able to explain concepts clearly. IML Guide (.pdf)  
8. Overall, I am satisfied with the teaching of this staff member.  
9. *Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of this subject. *Items from the obsolete Subject Feedback Survey.  
The two open-ended questions are:  
1. What did you particularly like in this subject?  
2. Please suggest any improvements that could be made to this subject.  
An additional seven items from the Item Bank may be added to these core questions.  
| 35. University of the Sunshine Coast [USC] | INFORMATION:  
STUDENT FEEDBACK ON TEACHING (SFT)  
- The SFT instrument is flexible in that it contains 10 standard items and enables lecturers to add up to a further 10 items from an extensive, thematic item bank.  
http://www.usc.edu.au/University/AbouttheUniversity/Governance/Policies/Academic/Teaching.htm |
| 36. University of Western Australia [UWA] | INFORMATION:  
CENTRE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHING (SPOT) SURVEY  
- To ensure that you have some general content items in your survey, up to three rating items below each heading are automatically included - standard global items -(items with a reference number in the 800s). The rest of the items are your choices from the item bank that address your teaching situation and requirements. Items should reflect your contribution to the teaching of the subject. Do not include items just out of interest for the sake of filling up the |
STUDENTS’ UNIT REFLECTIVE FEEDBACK (SURF)
Survey instrument developed at UWA in 2004 for student evaluation of their units. SURF results provide feedback to the University on students’ educational experiences and promote systemic responsiveness to this feedback. The 6-item questionnaire asks students to express disagreement/agreement on a 4-point scale with the following statements:

Q1. It was clear what I was expected to learn in this unit.
Q2. The assessment requirements were clearly stated.
Q3. The assessment tasks were closely linked to the unit objectives.
Q4. The unit was well organised.
Q5. The learning resources (handouts, text, web resources, etc) were adequate for my study in the unit.
Q6. Overall, this unit was a good educational experience.

http://www.catl.uwa.edu.au/etu

37. University of Western Sydney [UWS]

INFORMATION:
STUDENT FEEDBACK ON UNITS (SFU) SURVEY
- The SFU comprises 13 items relating to unit quality including content and relevance, assessment, learning environment, learning experience and outcomes, and workload. As well as ranking each item, students are invited to comment on best aspects and aspects needing improvement in the unit.

STUDENT FEEDBACK ON TEACHING (SFT) SURVEY
- SFT survey is based on the SEEQ (Students' Evaluation of Educational Quality) instrument, which has been in use within the University since 1995.
- The survey comprises 31 items grouped into nine dimensions of teaching with 2 open ended questions, and a staff member self-evaluation survey.

http://www.uws.edu.au/opq/planning_and_quality/surveys#3

38. University of Wollongong [UOW]

X

INFORMATION:
TEACHER AND STUDENT EVALUATIONS

39. Victoria University [VU]

INFORMATION:
SET’S (STUDENT EVALUATION OF TEACHING)
The SET questionnaire has three components: Core items, optional items and open-ended items.

SET Core Questions
1. With this teacher, I usually have a clear idea of where I am going and what is expected of me.
2. This teacher motivates me to do my best work.
3. This teacher is willing to put time into commenting on my work.
4. This teacher makes a real effort to understand difficulties I am having with my work.
5. This teacher normally gives me helpful feedback on how I am going
6. This teacher is extremely good at explaining things
7. This teacher works hard to make the subject interesting
8. This teacher really understands the content of this subject.
9. This teacher uses student ideas and comments to improve their teaching.
10. Overall, how would you rate the quality of teaching provided by
this teacher in this subject

The SET Optional Questions have eight categories relating the teacher’s teaching situation:

1. Aims and objectives
2. Knowledge and teaching skills
3. Teacher characteristics
4. Concern for students
5. Assessment
6. Promoting understanding
7. Curriculum design
8. Commitment to improvement

Open-ended questions ask for written comments from the students. These comments are written comments from students.


SES’S (STUDENT EVALUATION OF SUBJECT)

SES Core Questions

1. I do some of my best work in this subject.
2. I receive adequate help with areas I find difficult in this subject.
3. The feedback that I receive in this subject is helpful.
4. I understand most of the content of this subject.
5. I find this subject interesting.
6. The learning outcomes and expected standards of this subject are clear to me.
7. The workload in this subject is appropriate.
8. The assessment in this subject allows me to demonstrate what I have understood.
9. I can see the relevance of this subject to my degree.
10. Overall, how would you rate the quality of this subject?

The SES Optional Questions have eight categories relating the teacher’s teaching situation:

1. Aims and objectives
2. Knowledge and teaching skills
3. Teacher characteristics
4. Concern for students
5. Assessment
6. Promoting understanding
7. Curriculum design
8. Commitment to improvement

Open-ended questions ask for written comments from the students. These comments are written comments from students.


THIS WEBSITE HAS LINKS TO INFORMATION ON STUDENT EVALUATIONS FOR A NUMBER OF UNIVERSITIES IN AUSTRALIA

Forms of Assessment

These pages introduce various different forms of assessment which are commonly available and when they are best used.

All of them are discussed under the following headings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Brief description of the method</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indications</td>
<td>When to use it</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cautions</td>
<td>When not to use it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special considerations</td>
<td>Things to be aware of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Anything else which has not been mentioned under another heading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>Other sources, information, references</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The assessment methods:
1. Case Studies
2. Direct observation
3. Unseen examinations
4. Seen or open book exams
5. Multiple choice tests
6. Performance projects
7. Practical projects
8. Problem sheets
9. Self assessment
10. Simulations
11. Collaborative assessment
12. etc

Sources utilised:


Etc
### Assessment table: Best fit for type of learning and skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of assessment</th>
<th>1 Disciplinary knowledge and skills</th>
<th>2 Research based skills</th>
<th>3 Acquire the skills required to learn</th>
<th>4 Develop personal, social, cultural and ethical awareness</th>
<th>5 Communicate clearly, effectively and appropriately</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Case Studies</td>
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<td>2. Direct observation</td>
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<td>5. Multiple choice tests</td>
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<td>10. Simulations</td>
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<td>11. Collaborative assessment</td>
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1 Case-Studies

Description

Case studies range from simple vignettes illustrating issues in the practice of a discipline, through to complex sets of documentation which may require analysis and research. Questions may be short answer: "Was Anne within her rights to insist on a refund? What legislation governs this situation?" to complex plans for a marketing strategy, or proposals for a design solution.

Indications

- Excellent for assessment of application of principles to real-world situations. Can reach all the way up Bloom's original taxonomy to "synthesis" and "evaluation".
- Provides useful information for formative purposes, including diagnosis of problems, because answering the questions or meeting the requirements is often a multi-stage process.

Cautions

- Do not use where criteria for assessment of correct or successful answers are contestable or unclear (although it is acceptable for there to be several "correct" answers).
- Requires a degree of sophistication on the part of students when used at any level beyond the "single-issue" case.

Special considerations

- The level of detail has to be addressed carefully. If too sparse, it may well suggest its own answers: if too complex, students can get lost. Distracting information is legitimate, but should be introduced with care. Do not carried away with the story!
- Case-studies are usually presented in textual form, although videos and spreadsheets have their place in appropriate disciplines. Note that the translation of material into text presents its own problems.

Notes

- Both the design and the marking of case-study based work is time-consuming, and they really need to be piloted and revised in the light of feedback, which makes them problematic for use for examinations.
- Can be used in conjunction with several other methods: they may shade into simulations, can form the basis of project briefs, and lend themselves to collaborative working
- See also Problem-Based Learning

Resources
2 Direct Observation

Description

For practical subjects, this is the most obvious form of assessment: watch someone doing something to see if they can do it properly.

Indications

- For assessment of practical skills, which can be demonstrated by performance.

Cautions

- For any area in which performance itself is not enough, direct observation needs to be supplemented by other methods. One recommendation is oral questioning, to get at the rationale of performance.

Special considerations

- Sampling: one observation is not enough, but there is a trade-off, because observation is an extremely expensive way of assessing.
- Need for clear assessment criteria: reliability is only assured when everyone engaged in the assessment process is perfectly clear about what is being looked for, and what evidence is required to determine competence. Developing observation protocols is not a trivial activity.
- Control for context: one of the difficulties of assessing teaching by direct observation, for example, is that some classes and topics are far more difficult to teach than others.
- Ensure that product evidence is gathered and retained wherever possible, including video-recordings etc. When evidence consists of check-lists or similar devices, ensure that the student has a copy as soon as possible, and that there is an opportunity for dissenting views of a particular occasion of observation to be recorded. Direct practice is ephemeral, and judgements may later be contested.

Notes

See work practice

Resources
3 Unseen Examinations

Description

This is the traditional form of summative assessment. Students are confronted with a number of questions, in essay, problem, short-answer or multiple-choice format, about which they have either minimal or no prior information, and have to produce answers in a set period, with recourse to no other resources than those in their heads, or specific equipment provided by the examiner.

Indications

- Unseen examinations are seen as one of the most secure forms of assessment because they take place in a highly controlled and invigilated environment.
- Proponents of examinations point out that they are one of the few ways of ensuring that students revise the entire syllabus, and commit it to memory. Unfortunately, such memory is—if not short-term—closely tied to the stimulus of the examination event.

Cautions

- As suggested above, students may simply "cram" the facts and regurgitate them (relevant or not).
- Examinations typically generate high degrees of anxiety, amounting to cognitive paralysis on the part of some candidates. They call for very specific skills, which may well be irrelevant to the subject being examined, and are therefore often low on validity, but high on discrimination potential.

Special considerations

- In the humanities and social sciences, in particular, exams are deceptively easy to set. In maths, pure and applied sciences, individual questions may be difficult and time-consuming to devise, but this is largely a matter of ensuring their individual consistency and that the issues addressed do not exceed the content and level of the module.
- Little attention is usually paid to the overall impact of the exam represented in the spread of questions and the opportunities afforded to the student to display their capabilities. The underlying assumption of setting exams often seems to be, "Let's see how we can catch them out", rather than "What will give them the opportunity to display their knowledge?"

Notes

Resources

Denise Chalmers, CATL, UWA.
4 Seen or Open-book Examinations

Description

The seen (as opposed of course to "unseen") examination allows students to read case-study material or prescribed texts for a defined period (probably about a week) before the date of the examination. They can discuss it and research background material, but they do not know the actual questions to be asked until they enter the examination room.

The open-book examination allows students to consult required texts (legal statutes, for example, or various tables) during the examination. The texts have to be clean, i.e. without any form of annotation.

Indications

- If examinations are required, both of these are useful devices for getting around the memorisation requirement, thereby freeing the student to concentrate on higher-level issues in revision. They retain, however, most of the security advantages of the standard examination.
- The seen paper makes it possible to present substantial amounts of information in advance, and to test the students' skills in working with it.

Cautions

- Seen examinations are only slightly less anxiety-inducing than conventional ones.
- There is always the possibility of some students managing to derive an unfair advantage during the preparatory period: on the other hand, is that so different from the case of any student who revises efficiently and uses whatever resources are available?

Special consideration

- The preparatory material needs to be prepared with great care.
- Even more than unseen examinations, students will concentrate their revision on what they expect to find in the paper, potentially to the neglect of the rest of the module content.

Resources
5 Multiple-Choice Tests

Description

- Multiple-choice questions (MCQs) are sometimes referred to as “objective” tests, although the only thing which is more objective about them than other forms of assessment is the standardisation of the marking scheme.
- They consist of a "stem", which usually takes the form of a question. The student then has to choose from a number of "items", which are alternative answers. In most forms, one of these is the correct answer (although there are variants which allow for a number of correct answers), and the others are "distractors".

Indications

- Useful for easy administration to large numbers of students, especially where marking is to be done by assistants rather than the test-setter. Computer marking and web-administered tests are well-established.
- Effective for testing sheer knowledge and memory, and for problem-solving in convergent subject areas.

Cautions

- Any area in which there may be legitimate dispute about the "correct" answer.

Special considerations

- Good MCQs are much harder to design than you think.
- Knowledge that a topic is to be assessed by MCQs may well encourage students to revise by memorising discrete items of information, rather than developing an overall understanding of the topic.

Notes

- The probability of choosing the correct answer on a random basis is not particularly high, if there are sufficient distractors ("True or false" questions are rarely a good idea), and a sufficient number of questions.
- The "trick" is to ensure that the distractors are plausible. If they are chosen on the basis of representing common errors in understanding the topic, patterns of wrong choices can have useful diagnostic value.

Resources
6 Performance Projects

Description

In the performing arts, in particular, the performance project—staging a play, a concert, a dance performance—is a well-established form not only of summative assessment, but of structuring an entire sequence of teaching. However, other forms of practical project which involve planning, implementation and evaluation share important features with the traditional performance project. Hence a marketing campaign, an enterprise project, a charity fund-raising exercise, an exhibition, an expedition, a sports competition and so on fall into broadly the same category.

Indications

- Any relatively complex area of learning which requires planning and preparation to be translated into a practical expression, generally involving a group working together.

Cautions

- Largely dictated by risk factors—take them very seriously—and cost.
- Performance projects are big events, and can easily absorb much more time than expected on the part of students and staff. They may jeopardise other concurrent work. Always consult colleagues teaching other modules to the same students in that semester, and integrate several modules under the overall project, if you can.

Special considerations

- Assessment criteria, as always, need to be clear. Assessment takes place all through the project, to give credit for thoroughness of planning, team management, financial control, etc., as well as the final event. It makes sense for assessment of a number of areas of study to be undertaken within the same framework.
- As ever, that calls for a clear marking scheme, and given the "sudden death" nature of the final product, probably a number of markers to provide checks and balances
- Allowance needs to be made for unforeseen factors, so that the assessment of all members of a group is not jeopardised by, for example, illness or injury to a lead performer, or bad weather.
- And it is not over even when the fat lady sings. There will be post-event activities such as winding up the financial arrangements and making good changes to rooms. They can also yield assessable material (and continuing the assessment into the follow-up may help ensure it is tackled seriously).
- Ensure that product evidence is gathered and retained wherever possible, including video-recordings etc.

Notes

See the general remarks about group-based assessments

Resources
7 Practical Projects

Description

- A practical project is usually set for summative assessment in a vocational or professional area, where students work, individually or in a group, on a task set by the teacher or by negotiation (preferable) which brings together the knowledge and skill requirements of the module or course.
- The origin of the term "masterpiece" is in a practical project which marked the graduation of a former apprentice in a traditional trade.

Indications

- Particularly appropriate in vocational and professional education, where the integration of discretely-taught skills and knowledge is required.

Cautions

- Do not use when you are not convinced the students can cope; when there are unacceptable levels of risk, to students or clients if any; and where there is any substantial disagreement about objectives and criteria between members of the assessment team.

Special considerations

- Projects often take a long time to complete, sometimes longer than modern modular course structures allow. They can also require funds! It is important to ensure that the task is manageable within the time and other resources available, before allowing students to embark on it.
- Students rarely undertake projects with no tutor guidance at all, if only for health and safety reasons. It is important to be both clear and fair about the limits of the tutorial guidance available. You should also be explicit about the kind of evidence required for the assessment. Is it simply a report? Or is product evidence required too? Is a log required?
- See the notes on group-based assessments.
- The management of projects calls for many skills: time-management, organisation, communication, etc. While these are "Key Skills", which it is important for students to acquire, they may be strictly irrelevant to the task of the course. It is important to distinguish these in the assessment criteria, to avoid issues of discrimination.

Notes

- Remember that when students undertake projects which bring them into contact with the public, they do so in the name of your institution. This may be good PR, or it may be bad, but the institution may have rules about how its name can be used outside.
- There may also be ethical considerations about reference to particular clients or consumers in reports, or in video or audio evidence. Clearance can be complicated: consult your departmental ethics committee at a very early stage.
Resources
8 Problem Sheets

Description

Problem-, work- or example-sheets are traditional formative assessment devices in maths and science disciplines, but are also found in professional disciplines such as law and accountancy. Students are issued with a list of examples to be worked through in time for the next taught session, when they are discussed in class. They may well be self- or peer-assessed, and the teacher may or may not see them.

Indications

- Most courses in which there is a substantial element of intellectual skill involved, where this can be exercised without recourse to complex equipment which students may not be able to access.
- Usually, but not exclusively, in convergent subject areas (for purely practical reasons of dealing with many alternative and equally valid answers).

Cautions

- None, as long as the precautions are followed, and the students do have the tools to handle the exercise.

Special considerations

- The preparation of problem sheets is very time-consuming. They have to be devised so as to focus only on the material covered to date, and yet to make use of that material comprehensively.
- Take careful note of feedback about how long such problems take the average student: it is easy for the confident teacher to under-estimate how long they will take the struggling student.

Notes

- It is fairly common practice to make the examples more difficult as the student works through the paper. This ensures that:
  - There is something for everyone
  - You can get a rough idea of class level by finding out how far each student got
  - You can develop the sheet as a teaching device, by building later examples on earlier ones
- It is wise to develop a policy on collaborative working: it is likely to happen anyway, and students can learn a great deal from it—but if you place too much store on the results of these problem sheets, you may simply end up encouraging plagiarism (and even harassment and exploitation of some students). The old saw about, “the only person you cheat is yourself” may well be true, but does not often carry much weight. It is important to devise an approach which stops short of encouraging this.
- Central to such an approach is the way in which the processing of the answers is carried out in the class. Use it as an opportunity genuinely to find out where students
are experiencing difficulty, rather than leaving any students who confess to problems feeling that they are inadequate and stupid.

- Make efforts to anticipate common problems: "Anyone end up with a minus answer?"..."OK, it's a common difficulty. Look back to..." By showing that you recognise the difficulties students may experience, you respect them and encourage them.

Resources
9 Self-assessment

Description

This is self-explanatory: it is about getting students to develop the skills and judgment to assess themselves. Clearly it applies mainly to formative assessment, but it is none the less important for that. Students who are capable of assessing themselves are already half-way to being reflective practitioners (only half-way because the assessments may not be fully valid). It is part of their development that they should no longer be entirely reliant on their teachers to assess them.

Indications

More often than you think. Teachers tend to believe that given the chance of self-assessment, students will always mark themselves more highly than their teachers would. If the self-assessment is a short-cut to passing a module or not (summative), this might be the case, but their judgments—even in the case of “immature” adolescents—often prove to be remarkably accurate or even conservative.

Cautions

- First assessments in any given module, when the students do not really have a clue about the criteria and how they work in practice. Having said that, why not spend some time making them transparent to the students? There is the possibility of fostering surface learning, of course, if it is just a matter of helping them to play the assessment game, but if you can demonstrate that the assessments are valid, this is likely to be less of a problem.
- When there is some other agenda which might distort the assessment: group rivalries, for example, when the assessment is made public.

Special considerations

- Clearly, this approach is complementary to teacher assessment. It is not reasonable to abrogate all responsibility for assessment—and some students even resent being asked to take any part in assessment at all. They see it as the teacher's job: if they can't be persuaded otherwise, this is symptomatic of a problematic approach to the whole learning enterprise.

Notes

Don't expect students to assess themselves on a blank sheet: they need a format in which to do it. The framework below shows one approach. It is far from perfect, and it was devised specifically for an outcomes-based programme, and used in conjunction with a learning contract (hence the reference to an earlier question), but the first part helps students to realise that they are doing this assessment as an aid to their learning, rather than simply to jump through artificial hoops set for them by the teachers, and the second part helps them to focus on the assessment criteria—and if they can find their own faults as they are drafting their submission and correct them, so much the better.
Resources

Complete this when you have finished the work: but consult the questions as you go along as an aid to revising and polishing your submission

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Things which only you (the student) can assess</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>On reflection, what do I now know or understand that I didn’t before I started this piece of work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Has this work met my original learning needs? (Check with answer to Q.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Does it have any implications for the further development of my practice?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2</th>
<th>Things parallel to those which tutors will be assessing:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Have I adequately covered the content?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Does it meet the criteria for the level at which I am submitting it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Does the work present a coherent argument?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Have I addressed all the outcomes? And is it easy for the marker to locate them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>What are the principal strengths of this piece of work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>What are its principal weaknesses and the things I need to concentrate on further?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Does the work do justice to my capabilities? If not, why not?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Signed

Date

Denise Chalmers, CATL, UWA.
10 Simulations

Description

Simulations vary from the realistic flight simulator, through the pared-down role-play, to the stylised reconstruction of a business situation on a spreadsheet. It is not so much the external circumstances which are simulated, as the decision-making, skill and practice of the practitioner working with them. Simulations are special cases of games.

Indications

- Wherever there is a need to move closer to the reality of practice: where the text-based case-study does not convey the urgency of decision-making, for example.
- Wherever there is a need to move away from the reality of practice: on competence-based programmes, for example, there may be little opportunity (one hopes) for direct real-life observation of dealing with an aggressive client or patient, health or safety emergency, or particular kind of equipment fault.

Cautions

None, as long the demands of the situation are commensurate with the skill of the learner.

Special considerations

- Given that what you may want to simulate may be something which is dangerous in real life, it should go without saying that it will require special attention to health and safety precautions.
- The actual assessment, as ever, needs to be based on clear principles, with established criteria. Is it enough, for example, for the student to produce the desired result, or are there process issues to be observed as well? Should the event be recorded on video, so as to have a permanent record?
- For formative assessment, such recording is desirable when practicable, and immediacy of feedback is important.

Notes

There is more scope for the use of simulation than you might think. Have you thought of:

- "In-tray" exercises, in which the practitioner is faced with a pile of memos, reports, telephone messages and emails, such as she might find on her return from holiday, and a set period within which to prioritise them and respond appropriately?
- "Alternative history" exercises: the participant is presented with a (fabricated) article or report which presents research findings which are at variance with the conventional wisdom on a subject: he then has to prepare a response outlining how such evidence—if true—would impact on what we already think we know about the subject?
- Decision mazes in which everyone starts with a case-study, and several alternative courses of action: each choice leads to a different outcome, which is described together with further alternatives, and so on.
Resources
11 Collaborative assessment

Description

Having students work together, rather than individually, to produce a project or presentation.

Indications

- Use this approach when you want students to learn from each other, particularly in terms of drawing on previous experiences
- or when the material is too much reasonably to be covered by one individual
- or for a practical exercise which requires more than one person to complete it (such as a surveying exercise), or where equipment and resources are limited, and need to be shared (in some lab settings).

Cautions

- Working in groups with limited teacher guidance calls for a degree of maturity on the part of the students, and probably a certain amount of social cohesion within the group as a whole. Do not try it with a group which is still "forming" or "storming". Do not try it where there is any prior evidence of bullying or harassment.
- This is particularly the case in relation to relatively long-term projects which require effective management to be exercised by group members over their own efforts, especially where out-of-class research etc. is called for.
- In practical terms, it is extremely difficult to use this approach in conjunction with an anonymous-marking system.

Special considerations

Care needs to be taken with the composition of the groups: is it more desirable to work in:
- mixed-ability groups, so that the weaker members can learn from the stronger?
  Or
- "streamed" groups, so that the tutor can spend more time with the weaker groups?
- Self-selected groups, based on shared interests if each group is undertaking a slightly different project? Note that social considerations are quite likely to contaminate "shared interest" choices, which may or may not matter. Note the importance of thinking through the equal opportunities implications before accepting this apparently easy option.

Attention similarly needs to be devoted to the awarding of marks or grades for the associated assignment. There is always the possibility that one or members of the group will not "pull their weight", and may therefore jeopardise the assessment of their colleagues, or coast to a good mark on their backs. You can:
- call for individual assignments, based on the work done in common, but assessed conventionally. This is the safest method but can undermine the required co-operative culture, if individuals know that they can "break away" when it comes to the final assessment.
• allocate the same mark to everyone in the group, with the attendant problems identified above.
• allocate a total mark to the group (mark for the project x number of members) and let them work out themselves how it is to be divided up. This is a radical approach which requires considerable sophistication and negotiation skills on the part of the members of the group, and may constitute an abrogation of the teacher's appropriate authority.
• award individual marks regardless of the work being group-based. This is bound to be subjective, and further subject to your prejudices and preferences for some students (yes, even you and me!)
• Call for a common group report, and allocate the same mark to everyone for that (out of perhaps 60% or so of the total marks for the assignment), but then allow individuals to submit additional work for the remaining 40% of the marks: this is probably the best compromise.

Notes

• See the pages on Using the Group for general considerations about groupwork: these brief notes are only concerned with assessable group projects, not syndicate groups etc.
• Clear briefing for group-based tasks is essential. Since it is in their nature that much of the work will be invisible to the teacher, and normal considerations are complicated by issues of group processes, you should always provide a written briefing which covers most of the possible eventualities (such as what happens if a group member is sick for a substantial part of the project), and be transparent about the procedures.

Resources
Assessment Policy at UWA – a short briefing paper for the consideration of the Assessment & Evaluation Standing Committee

Jacqueline Flowers, CATL, November 2009

Background
UWA currently has the following guidelines relating to Assessment which are University-wide and have the status of policy:

- Guidelines on Assessment
- Guidelines on Learning Skills
- Minimum Essentials for Good Practice in Assessment
- Guidelines for the provision of ungraded passes and fails

There is concern around the level of compliance across the University with the minimum essentials, and continuing discussion about the significant differences in policy and practice that exist in individual faculties and schools across the University. The extent to which the guidelines above are used when setting school-level policy is unclear.

In 2006 the Assessment Standing Committee undertook a “Review of Assessment” to ascertain the state of play of assessment practices in all units in UWA.

In 2008, the TQI Project at UWA undertook an ‘audit’ of current teaching and learning policy and practice, which included a review of school-level policy and procedure relating to teaching and learning, and assessment in particular. The report “Results from Survey to Heads of School – Teaching and Learning Related Policy and Practice” was considered by the Assessment Standing Committee in April 2009.

In April 2009 the Assessment Standing Committee agreed on the following two key outcomes to address the far reaching inconsistencies in assessment policies across the University:

1. that a Developmental Assessment Framework (DAF) be formulated with a view to:
   - providing an array of assessment modes that may be considered in developing good assessment practices
   - presenting it as a basis for identifying the essentials that should be considered in the curriculum development for units
   - providing useful guidance for assessing new courses that would be considered by the Board of Coursework Studies as part of the Future Framework reforms.

2. that the University’s assessment policies be reviewed by the Future Framework Implementation Working Party on “Framework and Definitions” with a view to establishing a modicum of compliance procedures for the University.

In September 2009 the Future Framework Implementation Committee discussed and concluded that it would be more appropriate for such a review to be carried out by the Assessment Standing Committee and this second outcome has therefore been referred back to the Assessment Standing Committee for action.

Issues
There are two main issues relating to assessment practices at UWA which have been the subject of the reviews above.
1. Setting policy / guidelines in relation to assessment in curriculum design – e.g. the assessment tasks and how they fit in to a course. These issues relate to the pedagogy of the unit being taught, and it is to address the issue of good practice in designing, setting and marking assessment tasks that the DAF is being developed. For this aspect of assessment, a compliance-based policy is not appropriate.

2. Setting policy in relation to the ‘administration’ of assessment – the information provided to students, how grades / marks are awarded, student policies such as the granting of extensions etc. These issues are not discipline-specific, differences in approach have generally arisen for historical rather than pedagogical reasons, inconsistency in these issues is very apparent to students and can negatively affect their experience of UWA, and it is clear that whilst most faculties / schools of the University have policy / guidelines relating to these issues there is no consistency of approach. It is around these administration issues where a policy requiring compliance to a set of minimum standards may be appropriate to achieve consistency University-wide.

Proposed Future actions

The DAF currently being developed by CATL will go some way to resolving the issues around assessment pedagogy and achieving good practice in assessment at UWA.

It is therefore proposed that an assessment policy is developed which sets out minimum standards for assessment administration that any faculty / school level policies / procedures must align with. This policy would also incorporate the DAF in relation to the design of assessment practices in the curriculum, in order to give this framework the status of policy.

Given the large amount of work in reviewing assessment policies already done by the TQI project in 2008 it is suggested that a further review of assessment policy at UWA is not what is required to ascertain reasonable minimum standards of compliance to ensure consistency of assessment administration at UWA.

It is proposed that the data already collected by the TQI project is used to identify common themes / inclusions in assessment policies already in existence and where the differences lie.

It is also proposed to update a previous desk-top audit of assessment policies at Australian Higher education institutions and review a number of recent ALTC projects on assessment to identify the key aspects of any new policy:

- Assessment policy and impact on practice: sharpening the policy review process in Australian universities (2008), University of Queensland
- Enhancing the Assessment of Learning in Australian Higher Education: Biological Science (2005), University of Melbourne (report published)
- Facilitating staff and student engagement with graduate attribute development, assessment and standards in Business Faculties (2007), University of Technology, Sydney (report published)
- Leadership and assessment: strengthening the nexus (2006), Macquarie University (report published)

From these three collections of data a draft assessment policy (or an initial set of principles in the first instance) can be developed for wide consultation and further development across the University community.