Exploring Student Surveys

Welcome

Professor Alyson Tobin, Theme Leader
Evidence for Enhancement: improving the student experience

2017-20

Year 1

Year 2

Year 3
Evidence for Enhancement…

- What information is useful to help us identify and understand what we do well and what could be improved?
- Do we use the information we have in the best way possible?
- Do we have the right information?
...Improving the student experience

Can we get better at using information to:

- **identify** where improvements could be made
- **prioritise** actions for improving the student experience
- **evaluate** the effectiveness of those actions
Exploring student surveys

- Gavin Lee (UWS) NSS in-depth analysis
- Prof Ian Dunn (Coventry) Using student surveys to drive enhancement of the student experience
- Prof Jeremy Bradshaw (Bath) Improving the PG student experience
- Ailsa Crum (QAA) Discussion
Evidence for Enhancement: NSS In-depth Analysis

Gavin Lee, University of the West of Scotland
What resources are available?

**Sources**
- HESA PIs
- NSS
- ISB
- PTES/PRES
- DLHE

**Collections**
- HESA Returns
- HEIDI Plus

**Applications**
- UK League tables
- International tables
- REF
- TEF
- Unistats
- SFC Agreements
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HESA PiS</td>
<td>Type and scope of the data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSS</td>
<td>Time period of data renewal</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISB</td>
<td>Questions it can help to explore or answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTEs/PRES</td>
<td>Important caveats, exclusions, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>DLHE</td>
<td>Publications/analyses which use the data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Where to find the data &amp; further analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What do we want to know?

What can NSS inform?
- Programme, subject and institutional review
- Institutional benchmarking
- Student choice
- Sector-wide enhancement
How do we turn data into action?

We start with a hypothesis:

- Scotland’s approach to quality enhancement improves the student experience
- Enhancement Theme activity should be informed by Scottish performance in NSS
25. It is clear how students’ feedback has been acted on.

Response range: 31.91 to 62.47
Q25 comparison

Scottish HEI Response Numbers

(1) Definitely Disagree Count  (2) Mostly Disagree Count  (3) Neither Count  (4) Mostly Agree Count  (5) Definitely Agree Count
Scottish correlation

Strong correlation

Overall satisfaction v Teaching on my course

Weak correlation

Overall satisfaction v Assessment & feedback

Overall satisfaction v Organisation & management

Overall satisfaction v Learning community
NSS 2018 - HEI v Benchmark
Q27: Overall Satisfaction
What differences do subjects make?

Does analysis by subject area tell us more?

• Are there different patterns or trends?
• Is cross-institutional subject-specific action more effective?
The teaching on my course
Learning opportunities
Assessment and feedback
Academic support
Organisation and management
Learning resources
Learning community
Student Voice
Overall Satisfaction

Computer Science - Scotland compared to the UK average
What next?
Questions and feedback
Improving the PGR Student Experience

Jeremy Bradshaw – University of Bath
Introductions

- To me;
- To Bath;
- To PRES.
At Edinburgh:
• College, School;
• Researcher Experience Committee.

At Bath:
• Doctoral College;
• Departmental Action Plans.
Postgraduates Who Teach

Direct result of PRES;
- PRES 2015, Q17, ‘taught (or demonstrated) ... during your research degree programme’, 53.9%;
- Bath SU-led project;
- Includes Centre for Teaching and Learning and others;
- Outputs include staff resource wiki.
Beyond PRES

• Every year or every other year?
• Submission rates not good (40%).
• Other ways to obtain PGR feedback:
  • Academic reps;
  • PG sabbatical officer;
  • Good representation of students at senior committees (UDSC, etc.).
Doctoral Safety

- Doctoral Safety project;
- Direct result of PGR student reps;
- Bath SU-led project.

Doctoral safety

Make sure doctoral students are safeguarded in their work off campus
Student Representation

- Bath SU reappraising representation model;
- Considering themed reps:
  - Health and safety;
  - Location of study;
  - Student experience;
  - …etc..
If you are a professional doctorate student, please complete the Professional Doctorate Experience Survey (PDES).

This survey gives you the opportunity to provide feedback about your experience of studying as a professional doctorate student at Bath, including your opinions about your taught units, supervision, residential, progression and the research culture of the University.

- PRES not well suited to professional doctorate students;
- Professional Doctorate Experience survey;
- Developed at Bath;
- Launched in 2018.
So you have the data, what next?
Reflections on harnessing the data to support enhancement activity
Where we were -
The NSS Improvement Framework

- Evolved out of a focus on release of results and subsequent response
- Developed in depth data set for each area, including sector subject comparators and longer trend data
- Approach based on department/school level activity with central facilitation and reporting

Framework approach:
- Detailed data analysis for Faculty and Dept level provided centrally
- Evidenced action through plans (template)
- Oversight and reporting centrally
  - Faculty Level
  - University Level
- Central review of subject plans for enhancement
- Forums
Areas for improvement

- Timing too late for the coming academic year and didn’t fit with natural planning cycle
- Profile of NSS and senior level scrutiny resulted in tactical narrow focus on honours year to see immediate impact – less focus on other surveys and data sets
- Some HoDs felt the need to focus energy on ‘defending or justifying’ performance rather than enhancement
- Emphasis on planning but variable in terms of implementation success (or monitoring!)
- Short time frame encouraged HoD level planning rather than full teaching team involvement
- 12 month planning horizon not ideal for L&T enhancement and embedding good practice

NEED TO MOVE FURTHER AWAY FROM REACTION TO FOCUS ON ENHANCEMENT
Learning and Teaching Improvement Planning

• Move away from NSS label for broader focus
• Pushed to start of the summer to fit with a more natural reflection point
• Planning timeframe allows development to happen prior to the coming academic year
• Extended to 2 year rolling plan focused on embedding enhancements, with reflection/refresh points when new survey data or student voice feedback is available
• Individualised data sets bringing all department/school data to a single access location
• Emphasis on whole picture rather reaction to single dominant data source

Still includes department/school level activity focus, facilitated by institution-wide events and system.
Questions?
QAA Scotland
Exploring Sector Surveys Event

Heriot-Watt University

Student Surveys: Process to Enhancement?

Dr Maggie King
Head of Academic Quality

30 April 2019
Heriot-Watt’s Key Learning and Teaching Surveys

External Surveys

• National Student Survey (NSS)
• Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey

HWU’s own Surveys

• Annual Survey
• Course Feedback Survey (CFS)

All institutional surveys (incl those not specifically related to learning and teaching) are overseen by the Student Survey Management Group
Institutional Process via University Committee for Learning and Teaching

- Results + Summary of Key Issues (September)
- Action Plans to UCLT: Schools, Student Union, Professional Services (November, May)
- Institutional Summary of Issues + Actions (November, May)
- Annual Report on all L+T Surveys (June)

University Committee for Learning and Teaching
NSS, PTES and HWU Annual Survey: Process for Results, Reporting and Actions

National Student Survey (NSS)
Each August, the University Executive considers the University’s scores/performance in the National Student Survey (NSS), including performance relative to other Scottish and UK HEIs. The institutional information is supported by detailed subject-based results and by open comments. The same information is considered by the Learning and Teaching Board and by its successor (from 2017/18), the University Committee for Learning and Teaching, at its September meeting.

The University Committee for Learning and Teaching (and previously, the Learning and Teaching Board) is formally responsible for managing actions taken in response to NSS.

Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and HWU’s Annual Survey (Learning and Teaching Sections)
Previously, the results of the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and HWU’s Annual Survey (Learning and Teaching sections) were reported via the Student Survey Management Group to Student Learning Experience Committee. From 2016/17, the process for considering and responding to PTES results was formally transferred to the Learning and Teaching Board (and now, the University Committee for Learning and Teaching) and incorporated into the NSS process. From 2017/18, the “Learning and Teaching” results of the Annual Survey will likewise be incorporated into the NSS-PTES process.

In this way, Schools, the Student Union and relevant Professional Services now produce combined NSS-PTES-Annual Survey (Learning and Teaching) Action Plans, rather than separate plans for each survey.

For the UCLT, this offers an integrated approach to considering the results of comparable surveys and enables the Committee to gain a comprehensive overview of student views of key learning and teaching issues from YT to Final Year to PGST across all modes and locations.

NSS-PTES Annual Survey Action Plans: University Committee for Learning and Teaching’s Process
The UCLT timeframe for dissemination and consideration of NSS, PTES and Annual Survey (Learning and Teaching) results and the consequent NSS-PTES Annual Survey (L+T) combined Action Plans are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Results</th>
<th>Distribution to Key Groups and Individuals (incl. relevant UCLT members)</th>
<th>Submission Date to UCLT Clerk</th>
<th>UCLT Meeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Throughout August</td>
<td>Last Monday in August</td>
<td>September</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Action Plans: Schools*, Student Union, relevant Professional Services* |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Action Plan Type            | Submission Date (for UCLT)  | UCLT Meeting                |
| Initial Action Plan         | 20 October                  | November                    |
| Updated Action Plan         | 20 February                 | March                       |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional Summary of Issues and Actions</th>
<th>Institutional Summary Type</th>
<th>Submission Date (for UCLT)</th>
<th>UCLT Meeting</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Initial Summary</td>
<td>20 October</td>
<td>November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Updated Summary</td>
<td>20 February</td>
<td>March</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HWU’s Survey Process

As good as it gets ....? Evidence for Enhancement ..?

• Institution-wide Process, but ...
  • no measures for evaluating the impact of institution-wide actions

• Comprehensive Action Plans, but ...
  • no requests for post-implementation evidence of impact of local actions; added to survey action plan template for 2018/19

Job Done?

• Action Plans + Summaries = Process; Policies, Procedures, Guidelines = Outputs. **None is evidence of effectiveness of change**
How do we know if the actions we have taken have made a difference?
Student Surveys: Evidence for Enhancement?

Proposals and Recommendations for enhancing HWU’s Approach to Student Surveys, from UCLT Away Day, 17 January 2018 and UCLT meeting, 4 April 2018.

1. Review of Current Survey Processes
2. Use of Enhancement Theme Funding
3. Survey Enhancements (Engagement + Results)
4. Evidence of Effectiveness of Actions
5. Practices at Abertay – Implementing at HWU?
6. Surveys 2017: Priority Areas for Action
Research Assistant, summer 2018: to revitalise the Course Feedback Survey and to focus on closing the feedback loop

• Survey Week (12-19 November)
• Question vetting
• Extensive staff and student engagement
• In-class completion
• Looking to the UK sector (and abroad)
• Empowering academic leaders to make a difference
Enhancement Theme Project: Semester 1, 2018

2018/19 Semester 1 Course Feedback Survey - Response Rates as at 19 Nov 18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Surveys Sent</th>
<th>Responses Received</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
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<tr>
<td>EGIS</td>
<td>10,832</td>
<td>2,247</td>
<td>21%</td>
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<tr>
<td>EPS</td>
<td>10,090</td>
<td>2,479</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>MACS</td>
<td>9,743</td>
<td>3,154</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SoSS</td>
<td>18,134</td>
<td>3,597</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEX</td>
<td>2,184</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50,983</td>
<td>11,869</td>
<td>23%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Enhancement Theme Project:
Semester 2, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Semester 1 (HWU) %</th>
<th>Semester 2 (HWU) %</th>
<th>Response rate variance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-7</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018/19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Where are we now?

After two rounds of the revised Course Feedback Survey..

• same response as previous years, despite being about 3 weeks shorter

• Reports to academics before end of semester, providing time to analyse and close feedback loop where possible

• After initial focus on closing feedback loop, moving on to:
  - Promotion and uptake (target of 30%; variability across campuses)
  - Drop-off between S1 and S2 (too many surveys? More to be done on closing feedback loop and on building a culture where feedback matters?)
  - Evidence of enhancement?
What next? Tackling the Course-School Chasm

Flurry of activity at the course (module) level and School level, but in between ....?
What next?

Are we tackling the right things?
The OU Text Analytics of Student Comments Initiative – insights from the exploratory phase

Thomas Daniel Ullmann and Heather Gibson

QAA event - Exploring Student Surveys
QAA Evidence for Enhancement Theme: Improving the Student Experience
Glasgow
30/04/2019
OU context

A SIGNIFICANT PRESENCE IN ALL FOUR UK NATIONS

THE LARGEST UK UNIVERSITY, AND ONE OF THE LARGEST IN EUROPE

174,898 STUDENTS

24,709 STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY

1,400 STUDENTS IN SECURE ENVIRONMENTS

3 IN 4 STUDENTS IN WORK - EARNING WHILE THEY ARE LEARNING

Student Experience on a Module Survey (SEaM)

SEaM 1 since October 2012

40 Likert-scaled items about
• Teaching, assessment and learning
• Feedback on tutor
• The module overall

Three open-ended questions:

• **Question 1:** What aspects of teaching materials, learning activities or assessment did you find **particularly helpful** to your learning?

• **Question 2:** What aspects of teaching materials, learning activities or assessment did you find **not particularly helpful** to your learning?

• **Question 3:** Do you have **any other comments** to add about your study experience on this module?
Reading time: 109 minutes (SD = 63) per module

Sample of 23 prominent undergraduate modules of 4 consecutive presentations (October 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Sum of words</th>
<th>Mean word count</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Estimated reading time [hours]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 1</td>
<td>22,196</td>
<td>887,239</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question 2</td>
<td>18,362</td>
<td>881,739</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question 3</td>
<td>10,842</td>
<td>727,590</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Assuming a reading speed of 250 words per minute (Meyer & Felton, 1999; Spichtig et al., 2016)

OU Text Analytics of Student Comments Initiative
Two examples
## Comment content analysis

**Typical tasks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manual content analysis</th>
<th>Text analytics</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exploring themes</td>
<td>Keyword analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annotate text according to a framework</td>
<td>Dictionary-based approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sentiment analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical analysis based on manually annotated data</td>
<td>Statistical analysis based on automatically annotated data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Collaboration with the Open programme**

**Students studying towards an open degree vs a named qualification**

Students can design their own qualification and choose from a wide range of modules in any subject

Over 40% of OU students each year graduate with an **Open** degree qualification

The BA/BSc (Hons) Open degree is the largest qualification awarded by the OU

**Analysis:**

Students studying towards an open degree vs a named qualification

Courses starting in October 2017 and February 2018

Only courses with more than 10 students that aim towards an Open degree

2,491 comments from Open degree students

11,197 comments from named degree students
## Keywords

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>LL-ratio</th>
<th>Use</th>
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<td>research</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>13.59</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMA (final assessment)</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>1269</td>
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<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>reading</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>12.51</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>57</td>
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<td>TMA05 (formative assessment)</td>
<td>45</td>
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### Keywords - assessment

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Ensuring that OU’s curriculum is accessible to disabled students

The Open University has more disabled students than many institutions have entire student populations.

What words do students with a declared disability use more often compared to students that did not declare a disability?

Analysis looked at 99,940 comments of which 16,802 are from students that declared at least one disability.
Keywords

Keywords in the context of disability

disability, dyslexia, transcripts, screen reader, examiner, disabilities, daisy, dyslexic, ring, books, comb, health issues, mini lectures, voice, help, spiral, print, computer skills, TMA1, student support, activitys (sic), invigilator, hospital, family circumstances, titles, illness, waffle, illustrations, tutor, DSA2, …

Recap

• Two examples of the Text analytics of student comments initiative
• Diverse requirements for text analytics
• Text analytics toolkit needs to be flexible
• Importance of collaboration with subject experts

Next steps

• Validating automated methods
• Exploring how automated and manual methods can work together
• Exploring the role of automated analysis artifacts as a starting point for further exploration and sense making
• Exploring open-ended comments from other surveys, such as the NSS
Backup slides

Glad that you asked
Comment: This course was really difficult and I found it very hard to keep up with the workload so those who wish to study this module should be prepared for this.

Comment: Overall I enjoyed this module but there is a lot of reading, four large text books, though each was well written and relevant.

This was my first exam for decades! I revised hard and bought online practice papers from the OU student website. I would recommend that other students do this as they were really helpful for practice and to give you an idea of the layout of the exam.

As is often the way with distance learning, the tutor and tutorials can make a huge difference to your end result, so whilst I was disappointed to achieve a level three pass I know it didn't necessarily reflect on my learning.

Comment: I really enjoyed this course, it covers a wide variety of contexts and approaches to Childhood studies which I found really interesting. My tutor was supportive and encouraging, and tended to look at our TMAs at each tutorial, so I felt there was a good amount of guidance available for assignments.

This was my first module with the Open University, and I'd strongly recommend it if you have an interest in social sciences and you love kids!

Landscape
Automated methods

Dictionary-based approaches

Rule-based approaches

Machine learning based approaches
Ullmann (2015)

Dictionaries
Category A
Think, thought

Category B
But, despite

Further categories

Set of rules
IF text contains 'I' and 'thought' THEN add fact 'personal thought'

Further rules

Inference engine

Machine learning algorithms
Naïve Bayes
Neural Networks
SVM

Further algorithms

Calculating ‘keyness’ of words

Log-likelihood ratio statistic

\[ LL = 2 \sum_{i=1}^{k} \left( observed_{i} \times \ln \left( \frac{observed_{i}}{expected_{i}} \right) \right) \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Class 1</th>
<th>Class 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of a word</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
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</table>

\[ LL = 2 \times \left( a \times \ln \left( \frac{a}{e_1} \right) + b \times \ln \left( \frac{b}{e_2} \right) \right) \]

\[ e_1 = c \times \frac{(a + b)}{(c + d)} \]

\[ e_2 = d \times \frac{(a + b)}{(c + d)} \]

What Can the NSS Tell Us About Community and Belonging?

• Around a third of students do not feel as if they part of a community of staff and students.

• HEI’s have largely put in place good mechanisms allowing students to feedback – less clear to students how this feedback has been acted on.
• Edinburgh Napier analyses NSS verbatim comments by School.
• Some high level findings from the 2018 comments relating to what students at Edinburgh Napier consider to be key aspects of ‘community’.

- Shared Academic Experiences
- Relationship between Staff and Students
- Relationship between Students
- One Size Does Not Fit All

• No shared sense of what ‘community’ means among students.
A different view point?

Andy Pitchford (University of Bath) Wonkhe article:

“There is no community at university. We are individuals. We all compete for the same rewards and we can’t all share. I don’t care about my neighbour, the system doesn’t want me to.”
Other Factors which May Underpin Responses

Programme level activity doesn’t exist in a vacuum – many aspects of university life can shape responses (Bell and Brooks, 2018)

Students draw on a small number of recent experiences which stand out when answering questions (Elliot and Shin, 2002)

Higher performing students will respond more positively (Higgins, 2016)

Demographic characteristics e.g. socio-economic status, may impact on responses (Burgess, Senior and Moores, 2018)
For PLs, the NSS can...

✓ Provide useful evidence for stakeholders

✓ Monitor quality and identify areas for enhancement

✓ Act as a bolster for enhancement activities

✓ Help to ensure that the curriculum meets the student needs

• Give rise to competing priorities

• Increase transactional and commodified interactions with students

• Increase pressure and a culture of micro-management

• Lead to gestural rather than meaningful responses
Programme Level Exploration:
What Makes a ‘Community of Staff and Students’?
Developments in Criminology and Social Sciences

‘Criminology U.S. Summerschool’ 2018

- We are conducting a short project to compare opinions and experiences of students on both programmes about the idea of a ‘community of staff and students’ and what this means to them.

- The results of this project will help us to: enhance existing good practice your degree programme, identify things we can improve, and explore ideas for strengthening the feeling of community on the BACR and BASS programmes.

- Please take 10 minutes to complete the survey below (on a phone/laptop/tablet):
  - [https://survey.napier.ac.uk/n/CrimEnhancement.aspx](https://survey.napier.ac.uk/n/CrimEnhancement.aspx)
Institutional Level Exploration: Mini Projects

Enhancement Themes work on community and belonging at university

ENU approach: Bring together and support otherwise dispersed activities in this area.

Suite of funded mini-projects covering a number of themes: space, marginalised groups, cross-university initiatives

Evaluation: final reports and qualitative accounts from project leaders.

‘Bloody Big Project’
Recommendations

Time in the Programme Leader role should be protected for engaging with the NSS (& other evidence) in a meaningful way.

Institutions should foster a culture of enquiry, evidence gathering and innovation (Voorhees & Cooper, 2014) in relation to the NSS. Find out what’s behind the answers.

PLs should be encouraged not to view the NSS in isolation from other informal feedback – and to seek their own feedback.

While a strategic overview is required, PLs need discretion in how they use and respond to NSS in a way that works for their programme.
The primary remit of the Programme Leader (PL) is to improve the student experience (Cahill et al, 2015)

PLs want to engage with data to this end (Ellis and Nimmo, 2018)

But: To date there has been limited discussion around how PLs engage with data (see: Ellis, 2019)

Q: How can we make data relevant, useful and not overwhelming for PLs?

Q: How can we move from institutional processes to enhancement and meaningful change?

Q: How do we know if we have been effective?
‘Taught Student Surveys’

UG
- NSS (from 2005)
- ISS (2012-2015)

PGT
- PTES (2010-17)

UG & PGT
- International Student Barometer (2015)
- JISC Digital Student Experience (2017, 2018)
- Academic Engagement Surveys (2018)
Engagement vs Satisfaction

**UKES/NSSE** style engagement questions extremely useful:

‘What do students *do* vs what do students *like*’

- Engagement in Joint/single honours
- Demographics – nationality / gender
- Student life behaviours – commuting / working hours
2018 – no HEA Surveys

Strategic Decision not to participate in HEA Surveys

National PGT survey consultation / PTES Benchmarking
https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/developing-a-survey-of-postgraduate-taught-students/

Timing issues
Find an alternative Engagement Survey?

Coates, Hamish. 2006, Student engagement in campus-based and online education

Coates’ Engagement Scales

Online Active Learning
Online Teaching

Online Engagement
Online Social Interaction

Online Collaboration
Online Academic Relevance

Online Contact with Staff
Supportive Learning Environment

Student and Staff Interaction
Teacher Approachability

Complementary Activities
Active Learning

Collaborative Work
Academic Challenge
2018 Academic Engagement Survey

NSS
  Teaching on my course
  Learning Opportunities
  Assessment and Feedback

Coates’ Engagement instrument
  Positive and Negative Comments
  Overall Satisfaction

Delivered via onlinesurveys.ac.uk
2018 PGT Survey Timeline

• PGT survey was open to students from June to September 2018
• Initial results were presented to University PGT Committee in October 2018
• The survey data including full set of written comments were then distributed to Schools for discussion
• PGT Student Experience Enhancement plans were requested from the School in November 2018 to be included in PGT Student experience paper
• PGT Student experience paper will be presented to PGT Committee and SENATE in May 2019
## NSS Scales compared

### PGT, UG Honours, and UG levels 1-3 Learning and Teaching Satisfaction

#### NSS Scales

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#### PGT Scales

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<tr>
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<td>UG 1-3</td>
<td>715</td>
<td>7161</td>
<td>105.1%</td>
<td>105.1%</td>
<td>105.1%</td>
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</table>
Systematic Quantitative Analysis

- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Fee Regime
- Age
- Level
- Academic School
Systematic Quantitative Analysis

- Gender: Very few significant differences
- Ethnicity
- Fee Regime: Up to a quarter of questions
- Age
- Level: PGT more engaged in half of areas surveyed
- Academic School: Widespread differences by School
## Engagement within Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Descrptive</th>
<th>Coates</th>
<th>Data Sheet</th>
<th>Kruskal-Wallis Z scores</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School ranked by engagement response</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Divinity History Philosophy</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Engineering</th>
<th>Geosciences</th>
<th>Law</th>
<th>Language Literature Music and Visual</th>
<th>Medicine, Medical Sciences, and</th>
<th>Natural and Computing Sciences</th>
<th>Psychology</th>
<th>Biological Sciences</th>
<th>Social Sciences</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 Neher</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>Z1.1</td>
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<td>-0.62</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>3.33</td>
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<td>-1.25</td>
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<td>-0.36</td>
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<td>0.54</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-0.14</td>
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<td>-0.21</td>
<td>-0.58</td>
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<td>1.46</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Often</td>
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<td>Z3.1</td>
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<td>0.2</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-1.09</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>-1.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Online Engagement:** the extent to which you use online learning systems to enrich your study

**Online Active Learning:** key ways in which you use online learning systems to enhance learning

**Teaching staff participation in online discussions**

**Online Collaborations:** student use of online systems to work collaboratively with peers

**Online Teaching:** whether teachers use online learning systems to promote effective learning
Engagement within Schools
Moving Forward

- Quantitative vs Qualitative focus?
- Resource?
- Institutional Priorities
- Sector Norms
Postgraduate Surveys at St Andrews

Dr Jonathan McDougall-Bagnall
History/Background
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• PRES response rates were inline with sector averages (PRES 2017 – 45%)
• PTES response rates were poor (PTES 2016 – 19.4%)
History/Background

• The University of St Andrews used the HEA’s PRES and PTES surveys to monitor postgraduate experience up until 2017.
• We would run PTES every year and PRES every two years.
• PRES response rates were usually ok (PRES 2017 – 45%)
• PTES response rates were poor (PTES 2016 – 19.4%)
• Following PRES 2017 St Andrews opted to review its subscription to the HEA platform.
Pros and Cons of HEA Surveys
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Pros

• Benchmarking data
• Standardised survey
• Well tested survey
Pros and Cons of HEA Surveys

Pros
• Benchmarking data
• Standardised survey
• Well tested survey

Cons
• No real opportunity to survey St Andrews specific programmes/initiatives
• Long surveys
• Low response rates (especially at PGT level)
A St Andrews Specific Survey
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• 2017 saw the first St Andrews Postgraduate Taught Student Satisfaction Survey.
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• Survey was split in to two parts
  • Taught element survey in May.
  • Dissertation element survey in August.
A St Andrews Specific Survey

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• Survey was split in to two parts
  • Taught element survey in May.
  • Dissertation element survey in August.
• Taught element questions aligned to the National Student Survey questions (NSS) to aid in comparison with UG students.
What Happened?
What Happened?

• The first St Andrews Postgraduate Taught Student Satisfaction Survey saw a response rate of 20% for the taught element and 25% for the dissertation element.
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• 2018 saw response rates of 45% in the taught element and 44% in the dissertation element.
Benefits and Next Steps
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• Increased PGT response rates as a result of more control over the survey.
Benefits and Next Steps

• Increased PGT response rates.
• A richer data set to monitor impact of changes and to look out for potential areas of concern.
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• A St Andrews specific PGR survey.
  • Inaugural survey launched yesterday
• St Andrews Postgraduate Taught Student Satisfaction Survey 2019 will run in May