

Procedures for Implementing Student Opinion Surveys

Purpose

1. These procedures support the University's Surveying and Responding to Student Opinion Policy (the Policy), outlining the creation, delivery, management, and use of Newcastle University's (the University) institutional student opinion surveys.

Scope

2. The procedures apply to institutional surveys (e.g., module and stage evaluations, the Newcastle Student Survey) and national surveys (e.g., National Student Survey (NSS), Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES), and International Student Barometer (ISB)) that gather student opinion related to the Student Experience from Newcastle students.

Surveys Timetable

3. The University is not able to control when national surveys are conducted, although it has some discretion about exact opening and closing dates for most national surveys within the field season. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education sets these fieldwork dates, in consultation with the relevant Academic Deans.
4. Academic Units set the dates for module and stage evaluations. The timing for end of module (end of semester) evaluations should open near the end of or immediately after a module ends and should close before the next set of modules start. Stage evaluation should open after the Semester 2 assessment period and should close by the end of Teaching Week 2 of the next academic year.
5. Table 1 provides an example timetable of student surveys fieldwork; specific dates for national surveys are available online at <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/tds/student/opinion/>.

Table 1. Example timetable of student survey fieldwork.

Academic Year	Module Evaluation	Stage Evaluation	NSS	PTES	PRES	ISB
September	█	█				
October	█	█				
November	█					█
December	█					█
January	█		█			
February	█		█			
March	█		█		█	
April	█		█	█	█	
May	█			█	█	
June	█	█				
July	█	█				
August	█	█				

Roles and Responsibilities

6. The roles and responsibilities are presented here in alphabetical order. To understand their relationship with each other see Figure 1, which shows annual survey cycle/process.

7. Academic Deans

Deans of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Studies should be consulted with regards to fieldwork dates and additional questions for national surveys. They should also be included in weekly updates on response rates and have access to all results data and reports. Postgraduate Deans also contribute to the setting of target lists for the postgraduate national surveys.

8. Boards of Studies

Results of surveys both national and internal (module and stage evaluations) should be discussed at Board of studies meetings.

9. Degree Programme Director (DPD)

DPDs receive weekly updates on response rates for national surveys and have access to results data for their programme. They may also be involved in target list preparation for the NSS.

10. DELT/HELT

DELTs and HELTs receive weekly updates on response rates for national surveys and have access to results data for their School or unit. They would also be expected to contribute to promotion of surveys and awareness raising within their academic unit.

11. Heads of Academic Units

Heads of Academic Units have access to the responses from all surveys relating to their unit. They are also responsible for ensuring that adequate actions are taken in response to survey results within their unit, and ensuring that actions are communicated with students (closing the feedback loop).

12. Heads of Services

Heads of Services have access to the results of national surveys and stage evaluations which are relevant to their area. They are responsible for ensuring that adequate actions are taken in response to survey results relating to their service and for communicating this with students.

13. Learning and Teaching Development Service (LTDS)

LTDS are responsible for the running of all national surveys. This includes confirming and setting up target lists in liaison with the Planning Office and academic units, co-ordinating fieldwork and ensuring distribution of results. They also produce annual reports on results for University Education Committee (UEC) and Executive Board.

14. Module Leaders

Module leaders are responsible for making sure that module evaluations are carried out every time a module is run. They are required to discuss with Professional Service staff who create the evaluations what type of survey they require and set survey dates and times. Module leaders are to analyse results from student feedback, and close the student opinion feedback loop.

15. Professional Service staff

Professional Service staff are to create module and stage evaluations and ensure that student feedback is received by the module leader for module evaluations and that stage evaluation feedback is received by the nominated school person. They are also responsible for checking target lists for the national surveys.

16. Student Experience Sub-Committee (SESC)

SESC has oversight of all student surveys and is responsible for monitoring the implementation of module and stage evaluation questionnaires on behalf of UEC.

17. Student Representatives

Student Representatives are asked to assist in the promotion of both national surveys and module and stage evaluations among their peers to encourage participation, in order to increase response rates and gather more feedback.

18. Survey Champions (national surveys)

Survey champions are asked to assist in the promotion of national surveys amongst students to encourage participation, in order to increase response rates and gather more feedback.

Module Evaluations

19. Every module must be evaluated (via an end-of-module evaluation) every time it is delivered using the one of the six compulsory question types identified in Appendix A. Each column identifies a question set type, where boxes shaded indicate a centrally-owned compulsory question set and are already built into the questionnaire structure. Boxes shaded indicate a centrally-owned optional question set which can be added during the survey setup process; and boxes shaded indicate a School-owned or module-specific optional question(s) which can also be added during the setup process.
20. The module leader should inform the appropriate Professional Service staff member of which question set is to be used for the module they lead.
21. By default, the module leader is identified as a teaching contributor on a module; other teaching contributors are identified when they are named on the MOFS and have been designated 'to be evaluated.' Contributors can be either internal or external to the University. The threshold to identify a teaching contributor for evaluation will be determined at Academic Unit/School level. This is a manual process requiring a dialog between the Professional Service staff member and the module leader. It is recommended that teaching contributors be evaluated if they contribute more than three hours per module. However, contributors that do not reach this threshold should be included, if they request, to contribute to staff development, see next paragraph.
22. An Academic Unit or clearly defined subject area may develop an additional set of questions to be used within a module evaluation; these are said to be School-owned optional questions. The recommended limit is five questions. No unit or subject area may add more than seven questions to this section.
23. Academic Units may choose to allow module leaders to add module specific questions to an evaluation. Module specific questions: The recommended limit for each module is five questions. Module leaders may not add more than seven questions to this section.
24. Four scenarios exist where module evaluation results should be shared between Academic Units. When one of these scenarios applies, then the Professional Service staff member responsible within the Academic Unit owning the module should, upon request, email the results to the relevant DPDs as soon as practical after a module evaluation closes. Sharing should include results of quantitative centrally-

owned compulsory questions, and may include qualitative and quantitative centrally-owned optional questions and School-owned or module-specific optional questions. Results of the staff-specific questions or any qualitative responses that mention individual members of academic staff must not be shared.

- **Scenario 1.** A module owned by one Academic Unit, where a significant teaching contribution comes from a member of staff based in another Academic Unit. The quantitative questions should be shared with each staff member associated with the module and individual staff member will receive their own staff specific qualitative and quantitative data.
- **Scenario 2.** A module owned by one Academic Unit, but taught as part of a degree programme based in another Academic Unit.
- **Scenario 3.** A module that forms part of joint degree programmes.
- **Scenario 4.** A module taken by Combined Honours student.

25. Module evaluation will contribute to staff development and may be used in building their evidence of excellence in teaching for promotion applications, Performance and Development Review (PDR), and internal and external teaching prizes/awards. The results from the module evaluations feed through into MyImpactT.

Stage Evaluations

26. Stage evaluations will be conducted for each stage on every undergraduate programme excluding intercalating stages and the final stage as this will be conducted by the NSS.
27. Stage Evaluation questions are identified in Appendix C and mirror those asked in the NSS questionnaire as well as containing some University added questions. This will help to identify and understand students' issues with learning, teaching and the Student Experience at an early stage. It will also allow for consistency in student feedback on their programmes across all of the undergraduate stages.
28. Results of stage evaluation questionnaires will be sent from the University's online survey system to a nominated contact within the school. Usually this will be the school manager/administrator.
29. Services covered by questions in the stage evaluation (Library, Estates and learning resources such as VLEs and ReCap) will receive the results for the relevant questions from stage evaluations in order to improve their provision.

National Surveys

International Student Barometer – ISB

30. The ISB is conducted as an external survey run by i-graduate. The annual ISB normally runs from October to December and asks European Union and international students in universities across the world about their course and learning experiences.
31. Eligible students include all full-time and part-time EU and international students studying an undergraduate, taught or research postgraduate programme. The survey includes all students at Newcastle main campus and Newcastle University London. It also includes study abroad and exchange students. The survey excludes NUMed and NUIS students, INTO pre-session English course participants, and eLearning students, regardless of where they are based.

National Student Survey – NSS

32. The NSS is conducted as an external survey run by Ipsos-Mori behalf of the Office for Students (OfS).

33. Eligible students include all those on courses leading to undergraduate credits or qualifications (such as Bachelor's Degrees, Foundation Degrees and Higher Education Diplomas) in their expected final year of study. The survey also includes students who have withdrawn from study during their final year as their feedback is equally valuable.

Postgraduate Research Experience Survey – PRES

34. The PRES is conducted as an external survey run by the Higher Education Academy (now part of AdvanceHE). The PRES is a national survey which asks postgraduate research students in universities across the United Kingdom about their course and their learning experiences.
35. Eligible students include any research student on a doctoral or research master's course. Students will receive an email with a personalised link and will need to use their login and password to complete the survey.

The quantitative results are discussed at relevant Boards of Studies and Student-Staff Committees. Academic Units respond to feedback with action plans, identifying any agreed actions, timescales for implementation, and who is responsible for each action.

Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey – PTES

36. The PTES is conducted as an external survey run by the Higher Education Academy (now part of AdvanceHE) and asks postgraduate taught students in universities across the United Kingdom about their course and their learning experiences.
37. Eligible students include all full-time and most part-time UK, EU, and international PGT students studying a programme of at least 60 credits, the greater part of which is at M level at all campuses; i.e. Newcastle, NU Medicine Malaysia, NU International Singapore, and NU London, including eLearning students. The University excludes all first year part-time students from the PTES, except when they are on a programme that is one year part-time only (e.g., PG Certificates). It also excludes students who are studying a single module only; e.g., CPD and occasional students. The PTES population includes study abroad and exchange students.
38. Students will receive an email with a personalised link and will need to use their login and password to complete the survey.

Response Rates

39. Guidance on boosting response rates in order to obtain valid results for student surveys is available on the [LTDS website](#) or from ltds@ncl.ac.uk.

Closing the Feedback Loop

40. Schools are required to provide all students with consolidated feedback on key actions taken in response to student feedback at the start of each semester. Guidance on what should be included and how the feedback should be provided is available on the [LTDS website](#) or from ltds@ncl.ac.uk.

List of Appendices

41. Appendices that accompany this policy include:

- [Appendix A: Module Evaluation Structure](#)
- [Appendix B: Module Evaluation Questions](#)
- [Appendix C: Stage Evaluation Questions](#)

Approved by ULTSEC Jan 2018 Last modified by Learning and Teaching Development Service (LTDS) August 2018.	
Intended for use by:	All academic staff UG and PG Deans Heads of Academic Units Director/Head of Excellence in Learning and Teaching Degree Programme Directors Module Leaders
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Appendix A: Module Evaluation Structure

Each column shows the order in which question sets appear in an evaluation. Boxes shaded indicate a centrally-owned compulsory question set; while boxes shaded indicate a centrally-owned optional question set; and boxes shaded indicate a School-owned or module-specific optional question(s).

1. Standard Modules	2. Independent Study Modules	3. Fieldtrip Modules	4. Design/Studio /Performance (DSP) Modules	5. Clinical Case Based Problem Solving (CBPS) Modules	6. Distance Learning Modules
Standard Core	Independent Study Core	Fieldtrip Core	DSP Core	Clinical CBPS Core	Distance Learning Core
School-/Subject-specific	Supervision-focused	Supervision-focused	Supervision-focused	Staff-specific	Supervision-focused
Staff-specific	Staff-specific	Staff-specific	Staff-specific	Module-specific	Staff-specific
School staff-specific	Module-specific	Module-specific	Module-specific	Summary	Module-specific
Seminar Core	Summary	Summary	Summary		Summary
Practical Sessions Core					
Group/Teamwork Core					
Module-specific					
Summary					

Appendix B: Module Evaluation Questions

Each module must be assigned a modules type: 1. Standard; 2. Independent Study (normally used for project/dissertation modules); 3. Fieldtrip (where a fieldtrip(s) comprise the full module), 4. Design/Studio/Performance (DSP) (where the module is comprises primarily of DSP activities); 5. Clinical Case Based Problem Solving (CBPS), or 6. Distance Learning.

A Likert scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree, is used to gather all quantitative responses. The majority of response options are quantitative; however, some qualitative responses are available. All questions/statements below are quantitative using a Likert scale unless [\[open\]](#) appears after it.

Centrally-Owned Compulsory Core Question Sets

The module type dictates which centrally-owned compulsory core question set applies.

Standard Core These questions relate to the module, course or unit as displayed in the evaluation title.

1. The module, course or unit was well structured
42. The content was intellectually stimulating
43. I have received helpful feedback during the module, course or unit

Independent Study Core

1. This module stimulated my interest in conducting independent work
2. This module increased my confidence in carrying out an investigation
3. This module increased my knowledge of the discipline
44. The requirements of the module were clearly explained
45. The module materials supported my study
46. The staff on the module facilitated my study
47. If you would like to provide feedback on the resources available to support your study (e.g. IT, library, lab) please do so here [\[open\]](#)

Fieldtrip Core

1. I was well briefed before the trip
2. The trip was well organised
3. There was a clear link between the fieldtrip and my programme
4. There were sufficient opportunities to discuss the work with academic staff during the fieldtrip
5. The fieldwork equipment and other facilities (if relevant) were satisfactory
6. I was given sufficient information about assessment
7. The accommodation and catering (if provided) were good

Design/Studio/Performance Core

1. The module stimulated my interest in my chosen field
2. The module was well structured/organised
3. The module requirements were sufficiently challenging
4. The teaching and/or guidance I received was effective

5. The teaching and/or guidance helped me to develop my skills
6. The method of assessment was clearly explained
7. There were sufficient resources available to support my learning

Clinical CBPS Core

1. The module was well structured
2. There was sufficient library resource to support my learning on this module
3. My learning was enhanced by the materials available to me on Blackboard or LSE
4. The collaborative activities in this module increased my understanding and/or developed my skills
5. I felt supported by staff in my group work
6. The group functioned effectively to meet the requirements/objectives of the task
7. Please elaborate on your response to question 6 here [\[open\]](#)
8. I have received helpful feedback, both written and verbal, on group work during the module

Distance Learning Core

1. I understood the aims and requirements of the module from the introductory materials
2. The content was intellectually stimulating
3. The topics were presented in an appropriate order
4. The materials were easy to navigate
5. The materials supported my learning
6. I have received timely feedback during the module
7. The level of feedback was sufficient
8. I was given sufficient instructions concerning assessment
9. I was able to access technical support if I needed it
10. I was able to access sufficient online library resources
11. There were adequate opportunities for collaborative work within the module
12. The collaborative activities in this module increased my understanding of the subject area
13. Collaborative groups were the right size for the task
14. I felt supported by staff in the collaborative activities
15. My experience of collaboration was positive
16. Please elaborate on your response here

Staff-specific (compulsory for all Standard modules only)

1. This teacher stimulated me to learn
2. This teacher was approachable if I needed help with this module
3. Free text box for additional comments about the teacher

Summary (compulsory for all module types)

1. Overall I am satisfied with this module
2. What are the best features of this module? [\[open\]](#)
3. How could this module be improved? [\[open\]](#)

Centrally-Owned Optional Question Sets

The module type dictates whether a centrally-owned optional question sets can be used.

Seminar Core (only optional for Standard modules)

1. The seminars furthered my knowledge of relevant topics
2. I understood what was expected of me during seminars
3. There were adequate opportunities to interact with my fellow students
4. There were adequate opportunities to interact with the seminar leader
5. If you would like to provide some feedback any individual seminar leader please do so here (remember to include their name/s). [\[open\]](#)

Practical Sessions Core (only optional for Standard modules)

1. The practicals were clearly linked to the rest of the module
2. The instructions for the practicals were helpful
3. There were sufficient staff available in the practical classes
4. If you would like to provide feedback for any individual demonstrator please do so here (remember to include their name/s). [\[open\]](#)

Group/Teamwork Core (only optional for Standard modules)

1. The collaborative activities in this module increased my understanding and/or developed my skills
2. There were adequate opportunities to interact with supervisory staff
3. I felt supported by staff in my team work
4. The team functioned effectively to meet the requirements/objectives of the task
5. My experience of team work was positive
6. Please elaborate on your response here. [\[open\]](#)

Supervision-focused (only optional for Independent Study, Fieldtrip, DSP, and Distance Learning modules)

1. The expected relationship between the supervisor and student was explained to me
2. My supervisor had relevant subject expertise to support my study
3. The support I received from my supervisor was constructive
4. My supervisor usually responded to queries in a timely manner
5. If you would like to provide feedback for your supervisor please do so here (remember to include their name). [\[open\]](#)

Summary (only optional for Independent Study, Fieldtrip, DSP, Clinical CBPS and Distance Learning modules)

1. Overall I am satisfied with this module

2. What are the best features of this module? [\[open\]](#)
3. How could this module be improved? [\[open\]](#)

School-Owned Optional Question(s)

School-owned questions can be added to Standard modules only, where the recommended maximum number of additional questions for school-, subject- and school staff-specific is five, with a hard limit set at seven.

School-specific: used in all Standard module evaluations in a School.

Subject-specific: used for a group of modules in a particular subject area, or for a particular programme or stage. Such questions should not overlap with questions on stage evaluations.

School Staff-specific: used in addition to the Staff-specific core question set. Questions in this category will be asked of the module leader and each teaching contributor named in the MOFS database as 'to be evaluated'.

Module-specific Optional Question(s)

Module-specific questions can be added to any module type, where the recommended maximum number of additional questions is five, with a hard limit set at seven.

Appendix C: Stage Evaluation Question Set.

The type of question used is listed in brackets following the question. Scaled refers to using the Likert scale where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree. Open questions refer to a free text open comments box.

The teaching on my course

1. Staff are good at explaining things (scaled)
2. Staff have made the subject interesting (scaled)
3. The course is intellectually stimulating (scaled)
4. My course has challenged me to achieve my best work (scaled)

Learning opportunities

5. My course has provided me with opportunities to explore ideas or concepts in depth (scaled)
6. My course has provided me with opportunities to bring information and ideas together from different topics (scaled)
7. My course has provided me with opportunities to apply what I have learnt (scaled)

Assessment and feedback

8. The criteria used in marking have been clear in advance (scaled)
9. Marking and assessment has been fair (scaled)
10. Feedback on my work has been timely (scaled)
11. I have received helpful comments on my work (scaled)

Academic support

12. I have been able to contact staff when I needed to (scaled)
13. I have received sufficient advice and guidance in relation to my course (scaled)
14. Good advice was available when I needed to make study choices on my course (scaled)
15. My personal tutor has been responsive if I have contacted them (scaled)
16. If you have comments on how the personal tutor system has worked for you, please include them here (note that you should not include the name of your tutor) (open)

Organisation and management

17. The course is well organised and running smoothly (scaled)
18. The timetable works efficiently for me (scaled)
19. Any changes in the course or teaching have been communicated effectively (scaled)

Learning resources

20. The IT resources and facilities provided have supported my learning well (scaled)
21. The library resources (e.g. books, online services and learning spaces) have supported my learning well (scaled)
22. The physical resources (books, photocopiers etc.) available through the Library were sufficient for the needs of my course (scaled)
23. I have been able to access course-specific resources (e.g. equipment, facilities, software, collections) when I needed to (scaled)
24. Electronic resources (e-journals, e-books etc.) available through the Library were sufficient for the needs of my course (scaled)
25. If you have comments on the resources and IT facilities referred to in questions 20 – 25, please include them here (open)
26. ReCap has been available to access lecture content during this stage of my studies (scaled)
27. If you used ReCap in this stage, under what circumstances has it been most useful to you? (open)
28. The VLE (Blackboard/LSE) was a useful part of my learning (scaled)

29. If you have comments on the VLE, or suggestions as to how it could be more useful, please include them here (open)

Facilities

30. The lecture theatres / seminar rooms / labs / other rooms in which I am taught are of good quality (scaled)

31. Please indicate how you think these rooms could be improved, if at all (open)

32. Which places do you use for independent study (multiple choice)

- a) Home
- b) Library
- c) Subject area building
- d) Student Union building
- e) Other (please specify)

33. Comment on the sufficiency of these independent study spaces if you wish (open)

34. Do you have views to share on the University campus? Which parts of the campus do you like or dislike? What changes to the campus would you like, if any? (open)

Learning community

35. I feel part of a community of staff and students (scaled)

36. I have had the right opportunities to work with other students as part of my course (scaled)

Student voice

37. I have had the right opportunities to provide feedback on my course (scaled)

38. Staff value students' views and opinions about the course (scaled)

39. It is clear how students' feedback on the course has been acted on (scaled)

40. The students' union (association or guild) effectively represents students' academic interests (scaled)

41. Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the course (scaled)

Summary

42. Please use the box below to add any further comments about your course. (open)