1. Summary of Results

Undergraduate
The percentage agreement results for the 10 areas are from 19 to 74; the lowest results are for Appropriate Workload (19), Good Teaching (37), Clear Goals (41) and Appropriate Assessment (43); the highest are for Quality of Student Support (74), Generic Skills (70), Overall Satisfaction (69) and Computer Centres (68).

In comparison to the previous surveys (SCEQ 2007), the Faculty has improved in all areas except Computer Centres; the most improved are: Good Teaching (+9), Quality of Student Support (+7), Appropriate Assessment (+5) and Overall Satisfaction (+5). For the following 8 areas the SCEQ 2009 results are the highest since the surveys have been administered: Good Teaching, Clear Goals, Appropriate Workload, Generic Skills, Learning Community, Overall Satisfaction, Student Support and Administration. However, despite these improvements the results in all areas are below or at the University average; the biggest differences are in Good Teaching (-7), Appropriate Assessment (-8) and Overall Satisfaction (-6).

Postgraduate
The percentage agreement results for the 10 areas are from 26 to 74; the lowest results are for Appropriate Workload (26), Appropriate Assessment (44), Clear Goals (48) and Good Teaching (49); the highest are for Faculty Student Administration (74) and Quality of Student Support (70).

In comparison to SCEQ 2007, the Overall Satisfaction has improved (+4), there is a significant decline in Appropriate Assessment (-15) and Computer Centres (-8), and slight decline in the other areas (from -1 to -3). The results in all areas except Student Administration are below or at the University average; the biggest differences are in Appropriate assessment (-15), Overall Satisfaction (-7) and Computer Centres (-6).

2. Key Issues

The numerical scores and free-text student responses indicate the following issues for both undergraduate and postgraduate students:

1) Workload, assessment and expected standards
- High and unevenly distributed workload – workload during semester is too high; several assignments and exams are in the same week
- Inappropriate assessment - more project-based assignments during semester instead of tests and exams; more weight on assessment during semester and less on exam
- Insufficient feedback – feedback on ongoing assessment is insufficient and in some cases not helpful
- Unclear expected standards – ambiguous assessment requirements and lack of marking schemes.

2) Teaching quality
- Staff motivation and responsiveness – some lecturers are not motivated to teach well (perception that teaching is less valued than research), are not enough approachable and responsive to student feedback;
- Staff teaching skills – some lecturers and tutors cannot explain the material well; some tutors are not prepared and not knowledgeable enough; more interaction with students during lectures and more real life examples;
- Staff English proficiency – some lecturers and tutors whose first language is not English are difficult to understand;
- Course content and teaching materials – outdated course content, lecture materials and solutions not available electronically for some courses.
The Faculty has implemented a number of procedures and initiatives to improve learning and teaching. We are very pleased that they have resulted in improved SCEQ results but we also recognise the need for further improvement.

1) Actions to enhance and reward good teaching
   • In 2010, the Faculty revised the Dean’s Awards for Outstanding Teaching, aligning the criteria with VC’s and ALTC’s awards, increasing the prize money and involving ITL in the selection panel. This attracted a good number of applicants and helped with the applications for external awards. The Faculty won 3 out of the 4 VC’s teaching awards and received 2 out of the 4 ALCT citations for contribution to student learning awarded to the University of Sydney staff.
   • In 2010, the Faculty introduced the Dean’s Awards for Excellence in Tutoring.

2) Actions to provide better training for staff
   • The Faculty requires all new academic staff to complete the ITL’s P&P Program and encourages academic staff to complete the Graduate Certificate in Education program.

3) Actions to improve teaching quality
   • Teaching improvement grants – In 2009 and 2010 the Faculty funded 18 teaching improvement grants (16 TIES and 1 TIP) from Faculty funds. In addition, the Faculty secured 4 TIP and 6 TIES grants funded by the University.
   • Quality assurance - The Faculty has implemented quality assurance based on the Unit of Study Evaluation (USE) surveys. The surveys are completed for each unit of study; coordinators are required to explain unsatisfactory results and outline actions that will be taken to address the issues. Some schools have additional course evaluation meetings at the end of each semester focusing on curriculum and delivery issues. In addition to USE and SCEQ, the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee also monitors the CEQ surveys and benchmarks the results with the Engineering and IT Faculties from the Go8 universities. The results are used to identify action items in teaching plans.
   • Teaching seminars - The Faculty has decided to run a seminar series on good teaching starting in semester 2, 2010. This will be a forum for sharing insights on good practice (including the role of assessment as driver for student learning, the importance of useful and timely feedback and clear goals and expectations).
   • Faculty Unit of Study Database (CUSP), http://cusp.eng.usyd.edu.au/students/view-units-page/ - In CUSP we also collect information about the alignment of assessment, learning outcomes and graduate attributes; the structure, weighting and deadlines of the individual assessment components. We plan to use this information to address the assessment and workload issues.

4) Actions to improve computer facilities - The Faculty is involved in the planning of the new Learning Centre in the PNR building which will provide additional computer access.

4. Communicating the Response to Students
The Faculty response will be communicated to students via the Faculty webpage.