



**The University of Sydney**

Faculty of Economics and Business

Student experience of Learning and Teaching

Trends and key issues: Undergraduate students 2001-2007

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## Glossary

The following terms and phrases are used throughout the report

SCEQ	Student Course Experience Questionnaire Administered to current students
CEQ	Course Experience Questionnaire Administered to graduates of previous year
Faculty scores Percentage agreement	The percentage of students who either agreed or disagreed with survey items
Qualitative data Comments	Students written observations received in response to open ended questions in the surveys. Relate to aspects of best practice in degree experience and aspects in need of improvement
Graduates	Students who completed the CEQ for 2007 i.e. graduated in 2006
Current students	Students who were studying at the University during 2007; from all years of the course

## Notes

### Note re percentage of respondents providing written comments in SCEQ

The percentage of students providing written observations in their answers to the SCEQ declined significantly in 2007. In 2005, 77% of respondents supplied written comments in answer to the open questions; in 2007 approximately half (51%) of respondents supplied written observations.

### Note re illustrative sample comments

Comments are recorded as they appear in the original documents. However, minor spelling, grammatical and transcription errors have been corrected. [sic] indicates that the word appears exactly as provided by the student, and that it is not possible to ascertain an exact interpretation of the original meaning.

### Note re analysis and counting of comments

Each comment is analysed according to the *Taxonomy for analysing qualitative data from the SCEQ/ CEQ*<sup>1</sup>, which is based on the University KPIs for Learning and Teaching, with those comments including more than one aspect being counted once for each aspect mentioned. The number of times an aspect is mentioned is presented as a percentage of the total number of comments received. For example, the following comment is counted as ONE COMMENT RECEIVED; but as it is mentioned in Good Teaching, Workload, Assessment; and Learning Community, the comment is counted ONCE in each of the relevant categories.

So far, most of the lectures from this degree are very enthusiastic with the courses they are teaching. They are continually listening to student feed back to improve the quality of this degree course. As the result, this semester doesn't have such heavy workload as some subjects, they convert the mid-exams into quizzes and learning models. The small quizzes and models help me prepare really well before hand, so when the exams come, I just have to revise what I've done, not to learn from the beginning.

Good Teaching:  
student  
motivation

Workload

Learning  
Community:  
Responsive to  
student feedback

Assessment

<sup>1</sup> Available from Quality Assurance Officer (Learning and Teaching)

## Executive summary

Data about the student degree experience in the Faculty of Economics and Business is collected through the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) (previous year's graduates) and the Student Course Experience Questionnaire (SCEQ) (current students).

Analysis of this data provides a comprehensive picture of trends in the student experience, and the performance of the Faculty in relation to Learning and Teaching Performance Fund Key Performance Indicators (Generic Skills; Good Teaching; Overall Satisfaction), and other related areas (Learning Community, Curriculum, Assessment and Workload).

Written observations from students about their experience provide evidence to support the percentage agreement scores, and provide detailed information about key issues in the areas of best practice or areas of concern.

### Key results

- Faculty scores for the **Generic Skills Scale** for the SCEQ (current students) have increased by 5% since 2003, and are currently sitting at 66% which is the University average. For graduates (CEQ) the 2007 score of 64% is marginally higher than the 2005 and 2006 results, and lower than the University average of 69%. Evidence of this positive result is also provided in the qualitative data from the Student Course Experience Questionnaire. It is pleasing to note the wide range of graduate attributes that students consider are being developed during their learning experience. (Section 1; KPI 7)
- Faculty scores in the **Good Teaching Scale** for the SCEQ (current students) have increased from 30% agreement to 36% agreement since 2003, whilst those for the CEQ (graduates) have increased from 38% in 2005 to 42% in 2007. In both the 2007 SCEQ and the 2007 CEQ, the percentage agreement scores for international students were higher than those for domestic students. These results are lower than the University average (SCEQ 44%; CEQ 48%). According to their written observations students feel that teaching across the Faculty could be improved by the use of up to date teaching methods, clearer explanations of the subject matter, the encouragement of discussions in class, and more supportive staff. A main area of concern is the continued presence of comments relating to the English language proficiency of academic staff (CEQ – 4% in 2006 and 2007; SCEQ – 5% in 2005 and 4% in 2007). (Section 2; KPI 8)
- **Overall satisfaction** with the degree course currently rates at 64% for graduates and 72% for current students. The University average for graduates is 71% and for current students is 73%. Students consider that the qualifications, knowledge and experience of staff contribute favourably to their overall satisfaction with the course. However, many of the domestic students are concerned about the perceived lowering of the entry standard of the course, particularly in relation to catering for the needs of international students both in language and in course content. (Section 3; KPI 9)
- There has been a steady increase of five percent in the SCEQ **Learning Community Scale** for the Faculty since 2003. 50% of students either agreed or strongly agreed with SCEQ survey items on this area of their experience. The University average for this scale is 58%, and places the Faculty within the bottom four faculties at the University. With a percentage agreement score of 52% in 2007 and 49% in 2005, domestic students appear to rate this area of their experience higher than international students (44% in 2007; 45% in 2005). Analysis of the comments received in the 2007 SCEQ and CEQ indicate that students are relatively satisfied with the learning environment provided by the Faculty and University. However, they expressed the opinion that the presence of a large number of international (NESB) students, together with large class sizes, inhibited class discussion and interaction between staff and students. (Section 4)
- In 2007 40% of comments received from graduates (CEQ) and 72% from current students (SCEQ) commented favourably on various aspects of the **Curriculum** including: content and structure of the whole degree program and individual units of study; relevance to career, work and industry; and flexibility of the degree structure. Overall satisfaction with the curriculum by students in the Faculty is indicated by the lower percentage of adverse comments received on this topic from both current students (44%) and graduates (22%). Since students do not usually mention either their degree or the Unit of Study to which the comment refers, it is not possible to isolate areas of best practice of improvement by these factors. (Section 5)

- The percentage agreement scores for **Appropriate Assessment** (47%) in the 2007 SCEQ has increased by 2% since 2005. The University average is 55%. Written observations from both current students and graduates indicated that, on the whole they appear to be satisfied with assessment practices within the Faculty on the whole students appear to be satisfied with assessment practices within the Faculty; however the nature of group work assessment, particularly in relation to participation and distribution of marks rates highly as an area of concern. (Section 6)
- The percentage agreement scores for **Appropriate Workload** (25%) in the 2007 SCEQ is higher than the University average of 23%. Very few students in the Faculty of Economics and Business commented either favourably or unfavourably on their workload. (Section 7)

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*June 2008*

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## Conceptual framework

### Student Evaluation of Teaching Surveys

The University Student Course Experience Questionnaire (SCEQ) and the DEEWR/ GCA Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) are designed to collect quantitative and qualitative data about students' perceptions of the quality of teaching and learning in their degree courses.

In both surveys students are asked to respond to statements using a five point Likert Scale to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with each statement. As part of the questionnaires, students are also asked to provide written comments on the best aspects of their degree experience and those that could be improved.

Quantitative and qualitative data from the CEQ and the SCEQ provide evidence of the success of University and Faculty initiatives to improve the overall student experience in general and the student experience of learning and teaching in particular.

#### *Difference between SCEQ and CEQ*

Both surveys are administered by the Institute for Teaching and Learning. The SCEQ is distributed to a stratified sample of current students (i.e. all years of study, all degrees). The CEQ is distributed to all graduates of the University in the year following graduation.

### Focus of the Trend Analysis Report

Based on the answers to these surveys, this report seeks to provide an analysis of observable trends in the student experience of learning and teaching in the Faculty of Economics and Business between 2000 and 2007. The report also provides detailed information on the key issues highlighted in the analysis of the 2007 SCEQ and CEQ qualitative data. Reliable qualitative data for international students did not become available until the 2005 SCEQ.

Information is arranged by Key Performance Indicators (7: Generic skills; 8: Good teaching; and 9: Overall satisfaction) plus additional factors (Learning community; Curriculum; Assessment; and Workload) which, taken together, comprise the student experience of learning and teaching in the Faculty.

When reading this report, it should be noted that the absence of favourable comments on a particular aspect of learning and teaching does not reflect that this is not an area of best practice. Rather, it could be interpreted that the students are happy with their experiences, and prefer to focus on commenting on areas in need of improvement. Also of note is that students are increasingly providing constructive comments in response to the open-response questions, and often mention more than one aspect of their experiences.

# 1 Generic skills (KPI 7)

## Definition

Generic skills includes:

- Research and inquiry (analytical, problem solving, critical thinking, knowledge expansion etc)
- Information literacy (retrieval and use of information)
- Personal and intellectual autonomy (independent learning; planning own work; intellectually curious etc)
- Ethical, social, professional understanding (including group/ team skills; professional skills and experience)
- Communication (written and oral; communicating with others; communicating understanding)

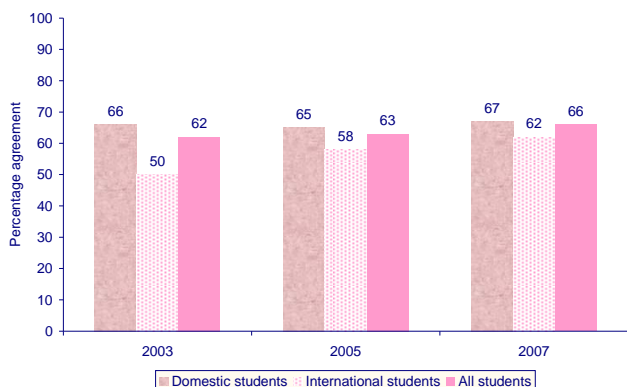
## Trends

Faculty scores for the Generic Skills Scale for the SCEQ (current students) have increased by 5% since 2003, and are currently sitting at 66% which is identical to the University average. For graduates (CEQ) the 2007 score of 64% is marginally higher than the 2005 and 2006 results, and lower than the University average of 69%.

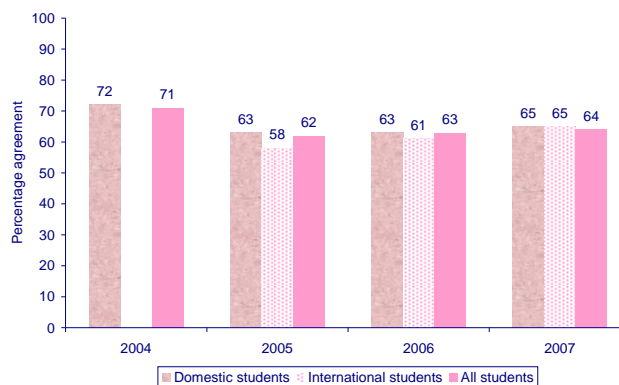
Evidence of this positive result is also provided in the qualitative data from the Student Course Experience Questionnaire. It is pleasing to note the wide range of graduate attributes that students consider are being developed during their learning experience.

### 1.1 Comparative results: Quantitative data 2001–2007

The following tables show the proportion of students who either strongly agreed or agreed with relevant survey items for Generic Skills in SCEQ and the CEQ.



1.1.1 Student Course Experience Questionnaire: 2003; 2005; 2007 (current students)



1.1.2 Course Experience Questionnaire 2004–2007 (graduates from previous year)

### 1.2 Comparative results: Qualitative data 2001–2007

The following table includes the percentage of qualitative comments received that can be classified as areas of best practice or areas for improvement. The trends provide an indication of the student satisfaction with the development of University graduate attributes / generic skills between 2001 and 2007.

		SCEQ 2001	SCEQ 2002	SCEQ 2003	SCEQ 2005	SCEQ 2007	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007
Areas of best practice	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	13%	14%	17%	17%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	20%	17%	35%	32%
	<b>All</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>20%</b>
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	4%	4%	4%	5%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	6%	3%	2%	10%
	<b>All</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>6%</b>

### 1.3 Key issues for coursework students (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)

#### 1.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=139)	International (n=30)	All (n=169)
<b>Research and inquiry</b>			
- The capacity to make decisions and solve problems			
- Development of analytical skills	6%	7%	7%
- Ability to apply critical judgement and thinking			
- Recognition of knowledge boundaries			
<b>Information literacy</b>			
- Recognise, locate, and retrieve information	1%	7%	2%
- Use information to construct knowledge			
- Information: economic, legal, social, cultural issues			

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *a lot of research/presentation involved in course work, hence it helps us to build our intellectual autonomy as well as our confidence in written/oral expression*
- *provides you with a wide range of skills that you can use later on in your degree or career and the opportunity to use information effectively*
- *the necessity to understand how to write an essay and to analyse is good.*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *Great analytical skills and application to current world situations*
- *know more about the economic environment in the world and improve my knowledge. extend ability to use technology and research*
- *The Online learning resources. Helped to improve autonomy.*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=224)	International (n=53)	All (n=277)
<b>Research and inquiry</b>			
- The capacity to make decisions and solve problems			
- Development of analytical skills	10%	15%	11%
- Ability to apply critical judgement and thinking			
- Recognition of knowledge boundaries			
<b>Ethical, social, professional understanding</b>			
- Ability to work in a group/ team working skills	3%	9%	4%
- Development of discipline/ professional skills			
- Presence of work placement/ industry experience in the course			
<b>Communication skills</b>			
- Development of written and oral communication skills	3%	7%	4%
- Ability to communicate with and relate to others			
- English language skills have been improved (NESB students)			

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *All the marketing subjects I did encouraged team work and allowed me to develop the skills to effectively communicate with people*
- *Internship program (Government) -> practical work experience*
- *Developed my skills in analysing arguments, writing my own arguments and structuring my thinking*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *The course has improved my oral and written skills in English*
- *The course helped me gain knowledge in the fields of Accounting and Finance as well as analytical skills, also the ability to work as a team member*
- *They taught me problem solving and analytical skills*

### 1.3.2 Suggested improvements

#### Current students (SCEQ 2007)

Across the University, very few current students who provide written observations in their responses to the SCEQ express concern about the non-development of specific graduate attributes. The Faculty of Economics and Business is no exception. Only 4% of undergraduate students (6/171 comments received) mentioned that they felt that necessary skills and abilities were not being developed during the course of their studies.

Due to the low number of comments, and to maintain student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=226)	International (n=49)	All (n=275)
Ethical, social, professional understanding			
- Ability to work in a group/ team working skills	4%	6%	4%
- Development of discipline/ professional skills			
- Presence of work placement/ industry experience in the course			

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *Industrial Relations/Human Resources Management - could include more practical experience.*
- *Commercial Law: more guidance on how to plan/execute research*
- *Need compulsory work experience programs!!*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *Experience, more work experience to help transition into workplace*
- *Responses from staff to student needs especially International students have language difficulties, should have more workshops for them and special consideration on results. Language was not the only barrier here*
- *The technology should follow the recently useful tools, such as MYOB software for studying Accounting. I think MYOB or other useful tools should be introduced before finishing the course*

## 2 Good teaching (KPI 8)

### Definition

Good teaching includes:

- Good teaching experiences (interesting, teaching methods, discussions encouraged etc)
- Motivating teaching (enthusiasm, passion of teachers)
- Concern and care for student learning
- Good explanations received (includes English language proficiency of teachers)
- Feedback on work (timely, constructive)

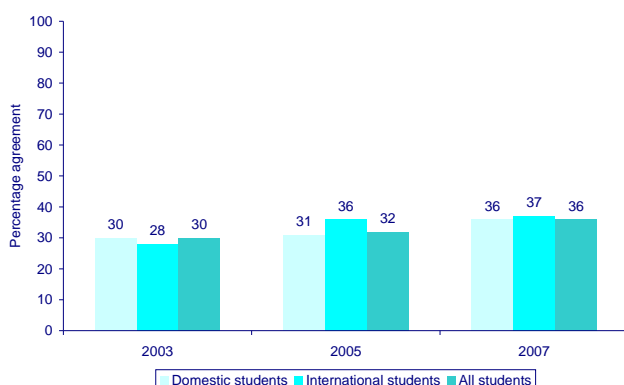
### Trends

Faculty scores in the Good Teaching Scale for the SCEQ (current students) have increased from 30% agreement to 36% agreement since 2003, whilst those for the CEQ (graduates) have increased from 38% in 2005 to 42% in 2007. In both the 2007 SCEQ and the 2007 CEQ, the percentage agreement scores for international students were higher than those for domestic students. These results are lower than the University average (SCEQ 44%; CEQ 48%).

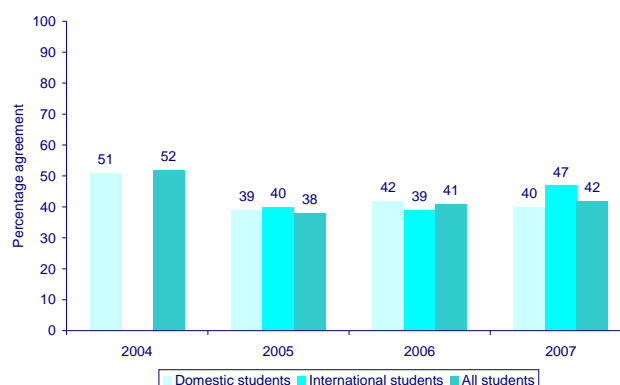
According to their written observations students feel that teaching across the Faculty could be improved by the use of up to date teaching methods, clearer explanations of the subject matter, the encouragement of discussions in class, and more supportive staff. A main area of concern is the continued presence of comments relating to the English language proficiency of academic staff (CEQ – 4% in 2006 and 2007; SCEQ – 5% in 2005 and 4% in 2007)..

### 2.1 Comparative results: Quantitative data 2001–2007

The following tables show the proportion of students who either strongly agreed or agreed with relevant survey item statements for Good teaching in the SCEQ and the CEQ.



2.1.1 Student Course Experience Questionnaire: 2003; 2005; 2007 (current students)



2.1.2 Course Experience Questionnaire 2004–2007 (graduates from previous year)

### 2.2 Comparative results: Qualitative data 2001–2007

The following table includes the percentage of qualitative comments received which can be classified as areas of best practice or areas of improvement, providing an indication of trends in the student experience of good teaching between 2001 and 2007, as indicated in the responses to open questions in the SCEQ and the CEQ.

		SCEQ 2001	SCEQ 2002	SCEQ 2003	SCEQ 2005	SCEQ 2007	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007
Areas of best practice	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	28%	20%	38%	36%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	22%	30%	26%	26%
	<b>All</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>34%</b>
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	55%	42%	50%	61%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	57%	41%	44%	45%
	<b>All</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>58%</b>

## 2.3 Key issues for coursework students (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)

### 2.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=139)	International (n=30)	All (n=169)
<b>Good teaching experiences</b>			
- Use of innovative and up to date teaching methods and techniques			
- Ability to keep students interested in the subject	12%	10%	12%
- Encouragement to participate in discussions during lectures and tutorials			
- Learning resources are up to date, and relevant to curriculum			
<b>Motivating students</b>			
- Teachers display enthusiasm for teaching/ subject	4%	7%	4%
- Teachers are perceived to be passionate and inspiring			
- Students are motivated by lecturers/ tutors etc			
<b>Concern and care for student learning</b>			
- Students felt supported in their learning; help and advice readily available	3%	7%	4%
- Lecturers understood problems and difficulties of students (academic and personal)			
<b>Good explanations received</b>			
- Clear instructions and explanations are received	1%	7%	2%
- Lecturer's are proficient in the English language and easy to understand			
<b>Sample comments: domestic students</b>			
- <i>Staff (lecturers and tutors) are supportive, friendly and creates an atmosphere which induces learning</i>			
- <i>Commerce: My tutor (for accounting) is excellent and can simplify or provide other explanations for hard concepts</i>			
- <i>Some lecturers are excellent due to their ability to synthesis past and present lectures, use real life and current research examples, and general confident presentation to the class. This increased my interest in my studies significantly</i>			
<b>Sample comments: international students</b>			
- <i>I like all the tutors in this semester, quite responsive and helpful to my study</i>			
- <i>There have been a few courses and lecturers who have been able to captivate my interests and a lot of other students as well. Their course structure, their method of teaching, their ability to command respect but still level with students etc</i>			
- <i>Also, to see lecturers so passionate about the subject they teach, as well as being able to hear about their personal experiences is very reassuring and encouraging.</i>			
Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=224)	International (n=53)	All (n=277)
<b>Motivating students</b>			
- Teachers display enthusiasm for teaching/ subject	8%	0%	6%
- Teachers are perceived to be passionate and inspiring			
- Students are motivated by lecturers/ tutors etc			
<b>Concern and care for student learning</b>			
- Students felt supported in their learning; help and advice readily available	9%	6%	9%
- Lecturers understood problems and difficulties of students (academic and personal)			
<b>Good teaching experiences</b>			
- Use of innovative and up to date teaching methods and techniques			
- Ability to keep students interested in the subject	17%	15%	17%
- Encouragement to participate in discussions during lectures and tutorials			
- Learning resources are up to date, and relevant to curriculum			

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=224)	International (n=53)	All (n=277)
Good explanations received			
- Clear instructions and explanations are received	1%	6%	2%
- Lecturer's are proficient in the English language and easy to understand			

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *Some subjects were really great because of the teaching staff. Marketing Communications and Contemporary Marketing were stand outs because of the great lecturers who were fun, informative and helpful*
- *The WOS staff are fantastic. Helpful, interesting and truly have time for their students. They are also passionate about their work*
- *Particular lecturers who were exceptionally inspirational and motivating. Working alongside them especially Honours year*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *Some really good teaching staff (tutors and lecturers), good at explaining things and very caring, not only teaching theory but actually applying it to the real world using relevant teaching materials*
- *The lecturers were ever helpful, always willing to meet students anytime and help with questions*
- *For Econometrics: Lecturers attitude and skill are good*

### 2.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=139)	International (n=32)	All (n=171)
------------------------------	---------------------	-------------------------	----------------

#### Good teaching experiences

- |   |     |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|-----|
| - Teaching methods used are outdated; Lectures were boring                      | 21% | 19% | 20% |
| - Discussions of issues raised during lectures and tutorials are not encouraged |     |     |     |
| - Learning resources are out of date, and not relevant to curriculum            |     |     |     |

#### Concern and care for student learning

- |  |    |    |    |
|--|----|----|----|
| - Staff do not provide support and help for students, including one-on-one consultations | 9% | 9% | 9% |
| - Staff do not seem to understand student difficulties and problems                      |    |    |    |
| - Staff are perceived to be more interested in their research than in teaching           |    |    |    |

#### Good explanations received

- |  |    |    |    |
|--|----|----|----|
| - Instructions and explanations are not clear  | 5% | 9% | 6% |
| - Lecturer's are not proficient in the English language and difficult to understand (because of accents) |    |    |    |

#### Feedback on work (from staff to students)

- |   |    |    |    |
|---|----|----|----|
| - Comments on work are not constructive; do not explain where mistakes occur that can be rectified. | 6% | 3% | 6% |
| - Marks only supplied, no comments  |    |    |    |
| - Feedback is untimely and not helpful  |    |    |    |

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *Another tutor is aggressive and seems to care little for what students say, only noting that they have indeed spoken so he can allocate marks for tutorial participation. Obviously this encourages students to speak out in class, but it also makes it feel very competitive and often students simply make boring, obvious comments.*
- *Feedback. The most progress in understanding occurs in assessments. However, assessments are mostly just returned with some ticks and/or a mark with little to no deconstruction of the concepts encountered*
- *Certain lecturers are difficult to understand when they are from non-English speaking backgrounds*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *Some of the staff are not really friendly, especially when there are international students here. Academic staff sometime are not responsive to questions and sometime asking questions simply feels uncomfortable and stressful*
- *Some of the lecturers are not good enough, they can't explain things clearly, and some ignore student's interests and feedback*
- *Some lectures are really boring, the lecturer may relate more events occurred recently to make it interesting. Also the some tutors really don't know how to teach, they know the how to solve the problems but don't know how to explain to others*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=226)	International (n=49)	All (n=275)
<b>Good teaching experiences</b>			
- Teaching methods and techniques used are outdated/need improvement	23%	22%	23%
- Discussions of issues during class were not encouraged			
- Lecturers were boring; did not engage with students			
- Learning materials and resources were outdated			
<b>Concern and care for student learning</b>			
- Students did not feel supported in their learning;	12%	8%	12%
- help and advice was not readily available			
<b>Good explanations received</b>			
- Instructions and explanations are not clear	8%	8%	8%
- Lecturer's are not proficient in the English language and difficult to understand (because of accents)			
<b>Feedback on work (from staff to students)</b>			
- Comments on work are not constructive; do not explain where mistakes occur that can be rectified.	15%	4%	13%
- Feedback is untimely and not helpful			

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *A lot of Lecturers couldn't speak English properly or sometimes the tutors were unhelpful in explaining things. Lecturers were unapproachable to get feedback*
- *Finance staff needs to improve their attitude to teaching. There exist two types of staffs Don't care how student understood the course Don't want to provide help to student.*
- *Majority of teaching staff, especially tutors do not give good guidance or feedback on your work. Unless you are a literacy genius, I would say it would've taken precious time and marks to discover how to improve on your own!*
- *Feedback regarding progress/exam results*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *Feedback was not always helpful and the handwriting comments were too confusing to understand*
- *some lecture series were not seemingly planned, poor lecture skills in many, some lecturers were too hard to understand due to very thick accents*
- *The teaching staff should put more effort in making the lecture more interesting and with more content. On the other hand, they should respect students as well*

### 3 Overall satisfaction (KPI 9)

#### Definition

This single item asks graduates about their overall level of satisfaction with their degree course. Aspects include:

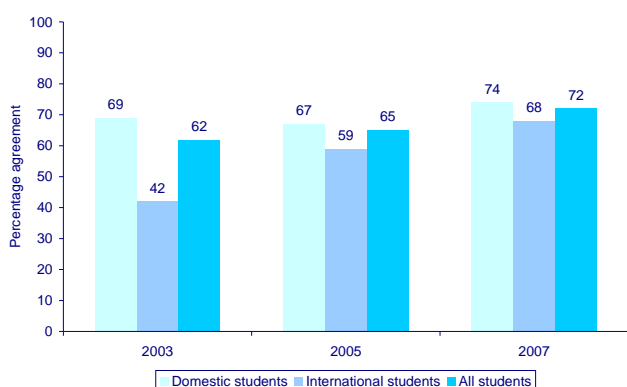
- Reputation of the University/ Faculty/ degree (including reputation in the professional arena)
- Value for money (cost of course; entry standard of students; level of course content)
- Qualifications (teaching/ subject), knowledge and relevant experience of academic staff

#### Trends

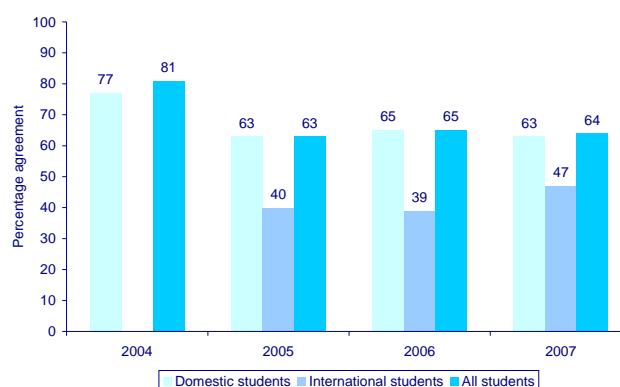
Overall satisfaction with the degree course currently rates at 64% for graduates and 72% for current students. The University average for graduates is 71% and for current students is 73%. Students consider that the qualifications, knowledge and experience of staff contribute favourably to their overall satisfaction with the course. However, many of the domestic students are concerned about the perceived lowering of the entry standard of the course, particularly in relation to catering for the needs of international students both in language and in course content

#### 3.1 Comparative results: Quantitative data 2001–2007

The following tables show the proportion of students who either strongly agreed or agreed with the survey statement 'Overall I am satisfied with the quality of this degree course' in the SCEQ and the CEQ.



3.1.1 Student Course Experience Questionnaire: 2003; 2005; 2007 (current students)



3.1.2 Course Experience Questionnaire 2004–2007 (graduates from previous year)

#### 3.2 Comparative results: Qualitative data 2001–2007

The following table includes the percentage of qualitative comments received which can be classified as areas of best practice or areas for improvement, providing an indication of trends in students' overall satisfaction between 2001 and 2007.

		SCEQ 2001	SCEQ 2002	SCEQ 2003	SCEQ 2005	SCEQ 2007	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007
Areas of best practice	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	7%	4%	8%	11%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	9%	0%	8%	11%
	<b>All</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>11%</b>
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	8%	3%	6%	6%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	9%	0%	0%	0%
	<b>All</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>5%</b>

### 3.3 Key issues for coursework students (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)

#### 3.3.1 Areas of best practice

##### Current students (SCEQ 2007)

In 2007, very few current students who provided written observations in their responses to the SCEQ mentioned aspects relating to overall satisfaction i.e. reputation/ quality of degree/ University; qualifications, knowledge and experience of staff, including guest lecturers; the entry standards or students; or the cost of the course. Only 3% of undergraduate students (5/169 comments received) mentioned the aforementioned aspects as being areas of best practice.

Due to the low number of comments, and to maintain student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=224)	International (n=53)	All (n=277)
Staffing issues			
- Qualifications of staff in subject matter and in teaching at tertiary level	5%	6%	5%
- Relevant experience of lecturers and tutors in subject area			
- Relevant and up to date knowledge of lecturers and tutors			

##### Sample comments: domestic students

- *Helpful tutors with actual working experience in the area they are teaching*
- *The calibre of the staff and students impressive and I enjoyed the competitive environment*
- *Highly respected educational institution*

##### Sample comments: international students

- *Sydney University really stands up to it's name as the course materials are really up to date with what the relevant industry is using. This produces students with high abilities and huge advantages against other University students*
- *Academic proficiency of the teaching staff*
- *The reputation of the University was incredible*

#### 3.3.2 Suggested improvements

##### Current students (SCEQ 2007)

In 2007, very few current students mentioned aspects relating to dissatisfaction with the reputation/ quality of degree/ University; qualifications, knowledge and experience of staff; the entry standards of students; or the cost of the course. Only 2% of undergraduate students (4/171 comments received) mentioned the aforementioned aspects as being areas in need of improvement. No comments were received on this aspect from international students.

Due to the low number of comments, and to maintain student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

##### Graduates (CEQ 2007)

Five percent of students (i.e. 13/275) expressed concern about the quality of their degree/ course experience. No comments were received on this aspect from international students.

##### Sample comments

- *I was not pushed hard enough. University of Sydney is not academically rigorous at undergraduate level*
- *Less International students. They are a burden to the local students and bring down educational quality. Since they refuse to interact with the locals, there is limited cultural exchange*
- *There needs to be a review of the number of students who cannot speak English. Applies to Accounting. Felt that the course was dumbed down*

## 4 Learning community

### Definition

Learning community includes the following:

- Learning environment (exploration of academic interests with staff and students; belonging to a community, social experiences; cultural diversity; equity issues)
- Location/ isolation (affiliated campuses, hospitals, institutes)
- Induction and orientation
- Responsiveness to student feedback

### Trends

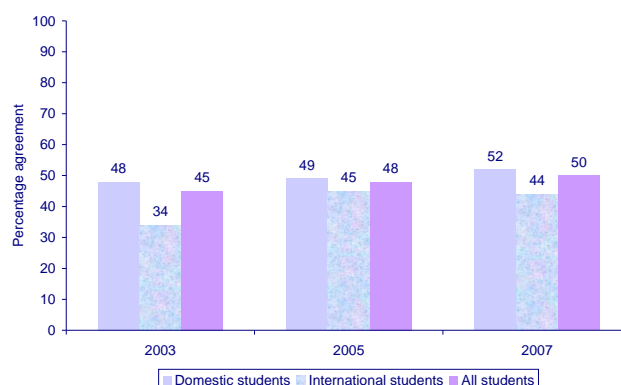
There has been a steady increase of five percent in the SCEQ Learning Community Scale for the Faculty since 2003. 50% of students either agreed or strongly agreed with SCEQ survey items on this area of their experience. The University average for this scale is 58%, and places the Faculty within the bottom four faculties at the University. With a percentage agreement score of 52% in 2007 and 49% in 2005, domestic students appear to rate this area of their experience higher than international students (44% in 2007; 45% in 2005)

Analysis of the comments received in the 2007 SCEQ and CEQ indicate that students are relatively satisfied with the learning environment provided by the Faculty and University. However, they expressed the opinion that the presence of a large number of international (NESB) students, together with large class sizes, inhibited class discussion and interaction between staff and students.

#### 4.1 Comparative results: Quantitative data SCEQ 2003–2007

The following table show the proportion of students who either strongly agreed or agreed with survey item statements on Learning Community in the Student Course Experience Questionnaire.

Note: The Learning Community Scale is not included in the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ).



4.1.1 Student Course Experience Questionnaire: 2003; 2005; 2007 (current students)

#### 4.2 Comparative results: Qualitative data 2001–2007

The following table includes the percentage of qualitative comments received which can be classified as areas of best practice or areas for improvement, providing an indication of trends in the student experience of the learning community between 2001 and 2007.

		SCEQ 2001	SCEQ 2002	SCEQ 2003	SCEQ 2005	SCEQ 2007	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007
Areas of best practice	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	19%	21%	18%	20%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	7%	7%	9%	17%
	<b>All</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>19%</b>
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	19%	12%	20%	17%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	9%	16%	13%	4%
	<b>All</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>15%</b>

### 4.3 Key issues for coursework students (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)

#### 4.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=139)	International (n=30)	All (n=169)
Learning environment			
- Experienced social experience of being at university			
- Felt that they belonged to a community (degree/ faculty)	19%	3%	16%
- Academic interests were being explored with staff and students e.g. in tutorials; in group work			
- Enjoyed the cultural mix of students in the course			
- Happy with size of class			

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *Development of friendships with other students- students are kept together over various units of study within the degree and faculty, which encourages social networking and a more enjoyable university experience*
- *These intimate size of these courses also provided me with the opportunity to establish both personal and professional relationships with research staff, which will be extremely valuable if I choose to continue with post-graduate study*
- *Equally, the interaction between staff and students in all of my subjects makes the learning experience a pleasure. It is not constructed on a hierarchical, 'don't speak unless spoken to' basis, but rather is set up as a conversation and exchange of ideas among equals. This makes the learning experience more enjoyable as an active participant, but also ensures a higher degree of engagement and enthusiasm with the material and ideas presented*
- *Commerce (GOVT): Staff are receptive and keen to receive student feedback on a regular basis regarding course workload, assessment tasks, teaching methods, etc. and take action in response - this is important because students are not only able to have a say and take active ownership of their learning, but allows staff to be more effective in their teaching*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *Commerce - The wide variety of international students means that there is an exchange of ideas which tends to differ throughout the nationalities. We learn to work with people of different nationalities as well.*
- *So far, most of the lectures from this degree are very enthusiastic with the courses they are teaching. They are continually listening to student feed back to improve the quality of this degree course*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=224)	International (n=53)	All (n=277)
Learning environment			
- Experienced social experience of being at university			
- Felt that they belonged to a community (degree/ faculty)	20%	17%	19%
- Academic interests were being explored with staff and students e.g. in tutorials; in group work			
- Enjoyed the cultural mix of students in the course			
- Happy with size of class			

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *Small tutorial groups come helpful tutors who had prepared for the lesson. I learnt more in tutorials at times than in lectures( particularly management accounting a tutor was fantastic and enthusiastic.)*
- *Opportunity to work with international students*
- *Some lecturers were very good at explaining the content of the course and were responsive to student feedback*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *Making new friends and working together in a team*
- *Basically, the organised group work helped me so much, we could share knowledge with other students*
- *Tutorial work and group discussions helped me to understand the subject more*

### 4.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=139)	International (n=32)	All (n=171)
------------------------------	---------------------	-------------------------	----------------

#### Learning environment

- |  |     |    |     |
|--|-----|----|-----|
| - Did not feel that they belonged to a community   |     |    |     |
| - Academic interests were not explored with staff and students e.g. in tutorials; group work | 12% | 9% | 11% |
| - Too many international students in course  |     |    |     |
| - NESB students language difficulties hinder class discussions                               |     |    |     |
| - Lectures and tutorials had too many people in them; inhibited discussion                   |     |    |     |

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *In lectures I feel like an outcast - all Asian students, I feel uncomfortable, all international students, can't they have some Australian students?*
- *I would prefer smaller class sizes for some of the courses as having too many people in tutorials often makes it difficult to stay on topic or get everyone involved, particularly when there is 30 or more students in the tutorial class*
- *Some of my economics subjects there aren't any tutorials and I think having smaller classes would probably improve my learning experience. Having more face-to-face learning experience would be better - help me to understand the material better*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *I think the university should listen to students' feedback towards the teaching staff*
- *Most of my tutorials in the degree are merely based on the questions in textbook, which I found are not really helpful to my exam and assignments. Some of them are too basic or straightforward from text book. In my opinion, tutorial work should be based on lecture and confirm the knowledge we learned from lecture, and then expand to a wilder and interesting area*
- *I think tutorials are vital... and most if not all 3rd year subjects do not provide tutorials. Maybe tutorials in a general sense should not be applied but something similar such as a 1-2 week public forum tutorial where students show up and work through problems together with the lecturer or some appointed tutor*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=226)	International (n=49)	All (n=275)
----------------------	---------------------	-------------------------	----------------

#### Learning environment

- |  |     |    |     |
|--|-----|----|-----|
| - Academic interests were not explored with staff and students e.g. in tutorials; group work |     |    |     |
| - Too many international students in course  | 16% | 4% | 14% |
| - NESB students language difficulties hinder class discussions                               |     |    |     |
| - Lectures and tutorials had too many people in them; inhibited discussion                   |     |    |     |

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *'Too many kids who can't speak English' Problems for group work situations*
- *The tutorials could have been more in depth in terms of course content and discussion*
- *Orientation into University life was dismal - would have been great to have an older student as a mentor or even organise groups/peer support. xxx program is great*
- *Class sizes particularly in junior subjects too large*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *Sometimes insufficient space for all students in a lecture*
- *Finance courses has to be more interesting, more class interactive activities should be introduced*

## 5 Curriculum

### Definition

Student perceptions of the curriculum used in their degree course include:

- Content and structure of degree(s) (intensive courses; relationship between Units of Study; content of Units of Study; relevance to work/ career/ industry)
- Mode of delivery (PBL; online)
- Flexibility of degree, including ability to take a range of Units of Study
- Availability/ cancellation of advertised courses
- Cultural aspects i.e. inclusion of international or indigenous themes

### Trends

In 2007 40% of comments received from graduates (CEQ) and 72% from current students (SCEQ) commented favourably on various aspects of the Curriculum including: content and structure of the whole degree program and individual units of study; relevance to career, work and industry; and flexibility of the degree structure. Overall satisfaction with the curriculum by students in the Faculty is indicated by the lower percentage of adverse comments received on this topic from both current students (44%) and graduates (22%). Since students do not usually mention either their degree or the Unit of Study to which the comment refers, it is not possible to isolate areas of best practice of improvement by these factors.

Note: Specific items on Curriculum are not included in either the SCEQ or CEQ. Therefore no comparative quantitative data is available for this aspect of the student experience. Due to the high proportion of student comments on the delivery, content, structure and relevance of the curriculum this important aspect of the student experience has been included as a separate item in reports since 2002.

### 5.1 Comparative results: Qualitative data 2001–2007

The following table includes the percentage of qualitative comments received that can be classified as areas of best practice or areas for improvement, providing an indication of trends in the student experience of curriculum between 2001 and 2007.

		SCEQ 2001	SCEQ 2002	SCEQ 2003	SCEQ 2005	SCEQ 2007	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007
Areas of best practice	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	57%	72%	44%	43%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	42%	70%	31%	28%
	<b>All</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>40%</b>
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	35%	44%	27%	21%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	21%	44%	29%	24%
	<b>All</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>22%</b>

## 5.2 Key issues for coursework students (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)

### 5.2.2 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=139)	International (n=30)	All (n=169)
<b>Content and structure</b>			
- Satisfied with content and structure of whole degree program/ individual units of study	35%	40%	36%
- Subjects appear to be linked together			
- Subject content is relevant to work/ career and industry requirements			
<b>Flexibility, variety, diversity</b>			
- Appreciate flexibility of degree structure, esp combined degrees	24%	20%	23%
- Ability to take a range of units of study			
<b>Online method of delivery</b>			
- Appreciate the benefits of Blackboard and WebCT	13%	10%	12%

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *(B. Com (Lib Studies)) Being able to learn a wide range of subjects, including some arts and sciences, even if commerce will remain my main focus. This, in a way, allows me to discover the way other faculties teach their material, giving me a wider experience of a university degree*
- *There are many majors in the Commerce Faculty in which students can choose from. Opens many opportunities for students.*
- *Commerce: wide variety of subject to chose from and ability to have a 'taste' of everything before determining a major to pursue. The use of bb in distributing lecture notes, assessments and other useful material in a convenient and easy to use manner*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *The first year gives us a range of commerce subjects to choose from. This is good as in the first year, we may not be 100% sure about which subjects we like and which we don't. That way, by the end of first year, we will have a clearer idea of what to major in*
- *The course's applicability in real world situations allows me to be able to understand more of the issues surrounding the business world today, which is really satisfying to a student as it allows for instant gratification*
- *Flexibility of the Commerce (Liberal Studies) course due to very little core units, it allows me to explore a wide range of academic subjects*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=224)	International (n=53)	All (n=277)
<b>Content and structure</b>			
- Content and structure of whole degree program/ individual units of study	30%	26%	29%
- Subject content is relevant to work/ career and industry requirements			
<b>Flexibility, variety, diversity</b>			
- Appreciate flexibility of degree structure, esp combined degrees	11%	2%	9%
- Ability to take a range of units of study			

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *I was able to choose the courses I wanted to take and I was able to gradually specialise in particular areas in accordance with my interests*
- *The ability to take on a second major. I feel that as a result of the subjects that I studied, I have a good understanding to contribute to the workforce (IE. basic understanding of Statistics, Economics, Commercial Law).*
- *Pretty flexible, got to choose my own subjects. Allowed me to work. Allowed me to progress*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *Economics: the courses are well specialized. Each subject has specific topic to study. Marketry [sic]: The researches we did in marketry[sic] subject does help a lot to understand the real market*
- *My course gave me a variety of choices of what I was interested in and combined them together*
- *It was fun and the subject matters were interesting*

## 5.2.3 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=139)	International (n=32)	All (n=171)
<b>Content and structure</b>			
- Unhappy with content and structure of whole degree program/ individual units of study	35%	31%	35%
- Subject content is not relevant to work/ career and industry requirements			
<b>Flexibility, variety, diversity</b>			
- Course too structured	4%	9%	5%
- Not able to take a range of units of study			

## Sample comments: domestic students

- *having more subjects to choose from: I did mention in the previous question that there is a variety of subjects to choose from, it is limited in some areas. For e.g., finance there is no particularly specialised finance. U.S. courses offer very specific finance subjects*
- *Also it would be nice to have an Engineering/Econ degree so that we don't have to waste time doing compulsory units such as accounting which are BORING and useless to us since we don't hope to do an accounting major. instead jus fundamentals of accounts could be a compulsory unit.*
- *The only area for improvement would be the fact that the course structure prevents being able to do double majors. Although the compulsory units of study do provide an exposure to the different areas of Commerce, it means there is a limitation imposed on being able to complete double majors*

## Sample comments: international students

- *Greater flexibility in 1st and 2nd year courses would be great. Certain core units may not be relevant to student's chosen major's)/career path and may demotivate students.*
- *In my third year, a lot of what I was learning was repetitions from other subjects.*
- *I think our degree course should allow students to choose either concentrate on some areas or cover a variety of courses like the current policy. I do know that doing other subjects will make students have more complete knowledge but sometimes it is just a bit unworthy.*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=226)	International (n=49)	All (n=275)
<b>Content and structure</b>			
- Unhappy with content and structure of whole degree program/ individual units of study	18%	24%	19%
- Subject content is not relevant to work/ career and industry requirements			
- Do not like intensive courses			

## Sample comments: domestic students

- *I believe the faculty is rectifying this but the commerce faculty appeared to need 'refreshing' by updating course content and processes to maintain competitive against other universities*
- *Lack of flexibility in degree structure. Lack of choice in supplementing the course with subjects in other faculties. Finance subjects often built on inadequate knowledge base*
- *Need more variety of subjects like politics of other countries outside the west*

## Sample comments: international students

- *The University might offer more course to the student who want to achieve success on more than one major*
- *there was sometimes a lack of application of theory to real issues, could be made more interesting (especially microeconomics)*
- *The course is not relate to the real career*

## 6 Appropriate assessment

### Definition

Appropriate assessment includes:

- extent to which assessment measures higher order thinking and understanding;
- types of assessment (incl. group work as assessment practice);
- marking of assessments (weighting; marks; by staff) (*explanation of marking criteria* is included in Clear Goals and Standards).

### Trends

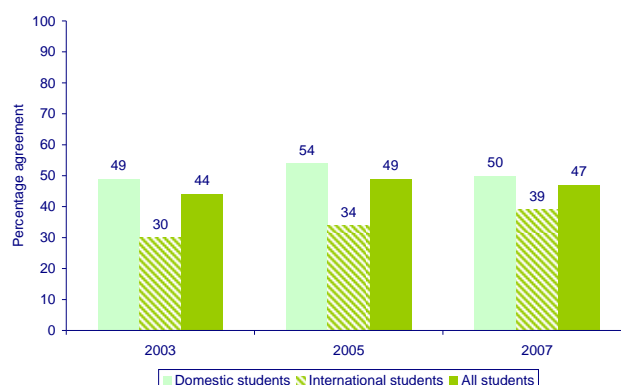
The percentage agreement scores for appropriate assessment (47%) in the 2007 SCEQ has increased by 2% since 2005. The University average is 55%.

Written observations from both current students and graduates indicated that, on the whole they appear to be satisfied with assessment practices within the Faculty; however the nature of group work assessment, particularly in relation to participation and distribution of marks ranks highly as an area of concern.

### 6.1 Comparative results: Quantitative data SCEQ 2003-2007

The following tables show the proportion of students who either strongly agreed or agreed with survey item statements on appropriate assessment in the SCEQ.

NB: The Appropriate assessment Scale is not included in the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ).



6.1.1 Student Course Experience Questionnaire: 2003; 2005; 2007 (current students)

### 6.2 Comparative results: Qualitative data 2001–2007

The following table includes the percentage of qualitative comments can be classified as areas of best practice or areas for improvement, providing an indication of trends in the student experience of appropriate assessment between 2001 and 2007.

		SCEQ 2001	SCEQ 2002	SCEQ 2003	SCEQ 2005	SCEQ 2007	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007
Areas of best practice	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	10%	7%	9%	9%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	4%	7%	13%	4%
	<b>All</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>8%</b>
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	18%	17%	13%	9%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	15%	3%	12%	10%
	<b>All</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>9%</b>

## 6.3 Key issues for coursework students (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)

### 6.3.1 Areas of best practice

#### Current students (SCEQ 2007)

Seven percent of students (i.e. 12/169) expressed satisfaction with the choice, aptness and design of assessments. The majority of comments were from domestic students.

##### Sample comments: domestic students

- *I've found the research projects in the International Studies degree the most interesting and useful things because you can apply your knowledge to an area of interest usually. In law, I've really enjoyed problem questions which allow you to apply the law we've learnt*
- *Assessments are good; not too frequent and weighted well*
- *I found a number of my subjects use a range of mediums for teaching and assessments which ensures a well rounded understanding of the material*
- *Commerce -the best part was the online assessment because this was continuous and kept you working, gave an idea of how you were going*

##### Sample comments: international students

- *The small quizzes and models help me prepare really well before hand, so when the exams come, I just have to revise what I've done, not to learn from the beginning*
- *There are plenty of assignments and quizzes*

#### Graduates (CEQ 2007)

Eight percent of students (i.e. 22/227) expressed satisfaction with the choice, aptness and design of assessments. The majority of comments were from domestic students.

##### Sample comments: domestic students

- *Government major - assignments were challenging and creative*
- *Lecturers made International Business more interesting with the different range of assessments not found in other subjects*
- *I enjoyed the Marketing Plan Design of the course, most Marketing subjects has us doing assignments that allowed us to be creative*
- *The course material was structured well and assignments were made to be challenging*

##### Sample comments: international students

- *Varieties of tasks/projects*

### 6.3.1 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=139)	International (n=32)	All (n=171)
Types of assessment			
- Unhappy with the forms of assessment used by the faculty	9%	0%	8%
- General comments on dissatisfaction with assessment			
- Unhappy with group assessment			

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *I felt like I was definitely being graded on the information I could rote-learn and regurgitate in this course, there were no real opportunity for everyone to participate in the course because the tutorials were so crowded. I never had the chance to meet my lecturer, and I doubt even my tutor knew my name - and I am a loud and active student. I detest crowded learning environments*
- *I found that with a lot of courses the marking was too fragmented- that is, the components we were marked on were broken down too much, for example 10% participation, 25% essay, 30% exam, 20% tutorial participation, 15% discussion groups and group essay. simply too much work!! – too much of a focus on group work and the marks allocated to this form of study was too much- in many courses a big portion of my grade depended on group work, and I do not feel its a true reflection of my personal ability. I am all for group work but at a reasonable weighting- maybe 20-25%. I had classes that ranked group work up at around 40 to sometimes 50%. simply too much!!*
- *More assignment tasks and quizzes to force students to continually keep up to date with lecture material. Example Macroeconomics have quizzes nearly every week and forces students to always keep up to date.*
- *I believe that too much of the course is tested, and thus does not really focus on how much you know but whether your knowledge is suited to the exam questions and more disappointingly how you do on the day. Accounting on the other hand just has 2 quizzes during the whole semester.*
- *There are also, in my opinion, far too many group assignments involved in commerce subject which account for a great proportion of assessment marks. While I appreciate the team building skills and processes that we are learning, dealing with students who are dissimilarly motivated to perform is quite frustrating and occurs on an all too frequent basis*
- *Commerce- The final mark is compartmentalized into so many assessments that it is quite easy to flounder in it*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=226)	International (n=49)	All (n=275)
Types of assessment			
- Unhappy with the forms of assessment used by the faculty	5%	10%	6%
- General comments on dissatisfaction with assessment			
- Unhappy with group assessment			

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *Group work needs to be monitored, some students do not input yet receive same marks*
- *Group work caused a serious problem especially in commerce, where many in the group would do no work, not understand anything yet still receive the mark of the group*
- *More practical work/assessments that relate more closely to what we are learning*
- *Consistency in marking assignments shocking*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *Exam scale should have more assignment instead of only rely on exam result (Economic)*
- *Poor lectures and poor assignment design for Finance discipline*

## 7 Appropriate workload

### Definition

Appropriate workload includes:

- Reasonable workload
- Even distribution of assignment deadlines
- Pressure of course; not having enough time to understand the topic
- Inability to comprehend subject matter due to sheer volume of work

### Trends

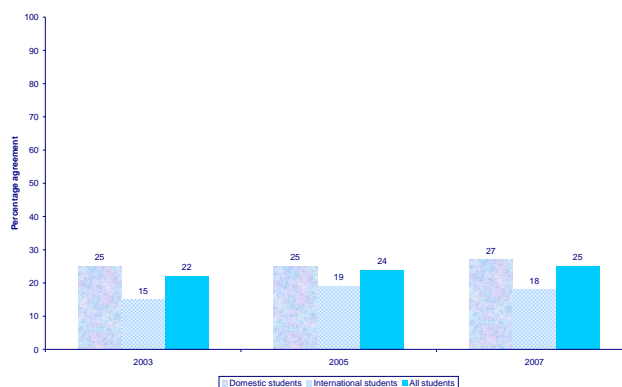
The percentage agreement scores for appropriate workload (25%) in the 2007 SCEQ is higher than the University average of 23%.

Very few students in the Faculty commented either favourably or unfavourably on their workload.

#### 7.1 Comparative results: Quantitative data 2003–2007

The following tables show the proportion of students who either strongly agreed or agreed with survey item statements on Appropriate Workload in the Student Course Experience Questionnaire (SCEQ).

NB: The Appropriate Workload Scale is not included in the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ).



6.1.1 Student Course Experience Questionnaire: 2003; 2005; 2007 (current students)

#### 7.2 Comparative results: Qualitative data 2001–2007

The following table provides an indication of trends in the student experience of appropriate workload between 2001 and 2007, as indicated in the responses to open questions in the SCEQ and the CEQ.

		SCEQ 2001	SCEQ 2002	SCEQ 2003	SCEQ 2005	SCEQ 2007	CEQ 2006	CEQ 2007
Areas of best practice	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	1%	2%	2%	0%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	2%	7%	0%	4%
	<b>All</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	7%	4%	2%	2%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	2%	3%	0%	6%
	<b>All</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>3%</b>

### 7.3 Key issues for coursework students (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)

#### 7.3.3 Areas of best practice

##### Current students (SCEQ 2007)

Three percent of students (i.e. 5/169) expressed satisfaction with the workload. Comments were evenly divided between domestic and international students. They all considered the workload for their degree(s) to be fair and reasonable. Due to the low number of comments, and to maintain student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided

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##### Graduates (CEQ 2007)

One percent of students (i.e. 3/277) expressed satisfaction with the workload. Comments were evenly divided between domestic and international students. They all considered the workload for their degree(s) to be fair and reasonable. Due to the low number of comments, and to maintain student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided

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#### 7.3.3 Suggested improvements

##### Current students (SCEQ 2007)

4 percent of students (i.e. 7/171) considered that the workload was too high, and that assessment deadlines often clashed. The majority of comments emanated from domestic students. Due to the low number of comments, and to maintain student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided

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##### Graduates (CEQ 2007)

3 percent of students (i.e. 7/275) considered that the workload was too high, and that assessment deadlines often clashed. Comments were evenly divided between domestic and international students. Due to the low number of comments, and to maintain student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided

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