

FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE

STUDENT RESEARCH EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE (SREQ) ANALYSIS OF OPEN RESPONSE COMMENTS 2003

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS

Introduction

The following document provides an analysis of the comments received in answer to the SREQ open response comments from postgraduate research students in the Faculty of Architecture in 2003.

Students were asked to provide comments on the following:

- *What are the best aspects of your research higher degree experience? Please explain why these aspects are good.*
- *What aspects are most in need of improvement? Please explain why.*

Each comment received was analysed for subject content and categorised into aspects which are closely aligned with the following SREQ Scales and their characteristics:

- *Quality of Supervision*
- *Quality of Infrastructure*
- *Research Climate*
- *Generic Skills*
- *Overall satisfaction*

Comments which included more than one aspect (e.g. quality of supervision and infrastructure) were counted in all aspects mentioned.

Arrangement

1. Analysis of comments referring to the best aspects of the degree course
2. Analysis of comments referring to aspects that could be improved

Responses are ranked according to the percentage of comments received for each aspect. Sample comments have been provided for the aspects that received the most number of comments. Results from the previous years qualitative analysis are provided as a percentage. Only aspects that received 5% or more comments in 2003 are included in this report. To preserve student confidentiality, sample comments are only provided if there are five or more comments relating to that aspect in the responses. Comments which may possibly identify the student are not included in sample comments.

SREQ 2003 OR Q 43¹**What are the best aspects of your research higher degree experience?****Students are happy with their supervision****(2003: 30%)**

(2002: 27%)

- Opportunity to work with supervisor of international standing in a supportive, collegial environment
- Empathy and support of supervisors, the time to follow my personal research interests with support and encouragement of supervisors
- My supervisor. Availability, support feedback, knowledge, advice, advocacy are all excellent

Students feel part of a research community**(2003: 20%)**

(2002: 17%)

- The research group culture – extremely supportive and knowledge sharing
- There is a strong research culture within the Faculty
- It enables you to set up really efficient networks across other universities with other researchers. Being part of the universities research community gives credibility to the research you do and therefore assists in changing problem areas

Students appreciate library services and staff**(2003: 16%)**

(2002: 17%)

- Library, e-journals, resources and equipment have good levels
- The library in my Faculty is very helpful for my research. The staff is very supportive
- The very helpful and efficient and supportive library staff

Students appreciate the ability to work independently**(2003: 16%)**

(2002: 13%)

- A lot of freedom and independence
- Learning to work independently on a big (thesis) project
- I have developed the ability to research independently

¹ Number of comments received: 2003 – 44; 2002 – 30

SREQ 2003 OR Q 44²**What aspects are most in need of improvement?**

Students are unhappy with some aspects of their supervision (2003: 19%)
(2002: 19%)

- Antagonistic approach of some research supervisors to people researching within the broad area similar to theirs
- Supervision is not consistent and feedback is not regular
- Accountability of supervisors to ensure that they themselves are reviewed on whether they are assisting their students through the course of their degree

Students are dissatisfied with some aspects of financial support (2003: 19%)

- More funding for presenting a paper in conferences held overseas. The current funding is not even enough for a return air ticket
- There is not enough funding within my field of study, as I have still not been able to get a scholarship
- Better financial support according to the performance and need of the individual student (why is there a maximum amount of 3 x \$2002 (PRSS) no matter how often the student attends and presents at international conferences

Students are dissatisfied with the physical facilities provided (2003: 14%)
(2002: 30%)

- The computers need improvement as there is a computer for me at my desk at the university but have not been able to use it for the past 12 months because of its age and the utter frustration when I try to use it.
- Our Faculty needs to organise the networking of computer equipment better; the machines/ software are there, but I think could be deployed more efficiently
- The reliability of the work environment needs improvement. My computer in my office in the Faculty was given to other students two times, without that I was even notified or asked to save or delete my data and work from the hard disk

Students do not feel supported by the Faculty/ Department/ School (2003: 14%)
(2002: 22%)

- Better support of collaborative work among students/ researchers
- Having more the impression that what I am doing might be interesting for my supervisor and also other professors in the Faculty. Many relationship issues should be improved at many levels
- There is an appalling lack of research [support] or social interaction within this Faculty

² Number of comments received: 2003 – 37; 2002 – 27