

FACULTY OF DENTISTRY
STUDENT COURSE EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE (SCEQ)
POSTGRADUATE COURSEWORK STUDENTS
ANALYSIS OF OPEN RESPONSE COMMENTS: 2005

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Student Course Experience Questionnaire (SCEQ), is designed to collect quantitative and qualitative data about students' perceptions of the quality of teaching and learning in their degree courses, as well as their perceptions of student administration and support services. As part of the questionnaire students are asked to provide comments on the best aspects of their university experience (degree and administration) and those that could be improved. Based on the responses to these questions, this document seeks to provide an analysis of the areas of best practice, and opportunities for improvement, in the experiences of postgraduate coursework students in the Faculty of Dentistry in 2005.

Degree experience: areas of best practice

The aspects of degree experience which attracted most positive comments from postgraduate coursework students in 2005 were:

	2005		2003
	No	%	No
Curriculum: clinical and practical aspects of course	8	30%	4
Research led teaching	7	26%	3
Good teaching: standard of teaching received	7	26%	
Curriculum: content and structure	5	19%	
Industry and professions: visiting staff/ lecturers etc	3	11%	4
Overall satisfaction: quality of degree	2	7%	

Degree experience: opportunities for improvement

The areas of degree experience which postgraduate coursework students considered most in need of improvement in 2005 were:

	2005		2003
	No	%	No
Administration and organisation: general comments	6	23%	2
Curriculum: content and structure	5	19%	3
Curriculum: clinical and practical aspects	5	19%	1
Good teaching: useful and timely feedback	3	12%	1
Appropriate workload	3	12%	1
Research led teaching	3	12%	

Student administration and student support services: areas of best practice

The aspects of student administration and student support services which attracted most positive comments from postgraduate coursework students in 2005 were:

	2005	2003
Library services	7	1
Administration and organisation: enrolment	2	
Web communications: online access to services	2	
Mentoring	2	
Computer access centres: university	2	
Web communication: intranet/ internet	1	2

Student administration and student support services: opportunities for improvement

**Faculty of Dentistry: Analysis of student experience:
Postgraduate coursework students: 2005**

The aspects of student administration and student support services which postgraduate coursework students considered most in need of improvement in 2005 were:

	2005		2003
	No	%	No
Services provided: equity of service provision	7	32%	4
Library services	6	27%	2
Administration and organisation: general	5	23%	
Administration and organisation: enrolment	3	14%	
Services provided: advertisement of services	2	9%	
Web communications: intranet/ internet	2	9%	

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1 Introduction

The Student Course Experience Questionnaire (SCEQ), is designed to collect quantitative and qualitative data about students' perceptions of the quality of teaching and learning in their degree courses, as well as their perceptions of student administration and support services. As part of the questionnaire students are asked to provide comments on the best aspects of their university experience (degree and administration) and those that could be improved. Based on the responses to these questions, this document seeks to provide an analysis of the areas of best practice, and opportunities for improvement, in the experiences of postgraduate coursework students in the Faculty of Dentistry in 2005.

In 2005 64% of students who responded to the SCEQ provided comments on their degree experience; whilst 31% of students who responded provided comments on the best aspects of their experiences of the student administration and student support services, and 52% on aspects that were considered to be in need of improvement.

2 Arrangement

1. Degree experience
 - Analysis of comments referring to best aspects
 - Analysis of comments suggesting improvements

2. Experience of student administration and student support services
 - Analysis of comments referring to best aspects
 - Analysis of comments suggesting improvements

Within each section, responses are ranked according to the percentage of comments received for each aspect. Sample comments are provided for the six aspects that received the highest percentage of comments. For comparison, results for the previous years qualitative analysis¹ are provided in brackets after the 2005 results.

Only aspects that received more than 5% of comments in 2005 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 that may possibly identify the student are not been included in the sample comments. Comments are transcribed exactly as they appear in the original documents.

3 Presentation of results

In 2000 - 2003, less than 20 postgraduate coursework students provided comments in response to the open questions on their degree experience. Since it is statistically invalid to convert this low number into percentages, results from 2000 – 2003 are expressed as raw numbers. Results from 2005 are displayed as both raw numbers and percentage of comments received. This fulfils the requirement of this report to provide a comparison with previous years.

In 2000-2005, less than 20 students provided comments on the best aspects of their experiences of student administration and student support services; whilst in 2000-2003 less than 20 students provided comments on aspects that could be improved. Since it is statistically invalid to convert numbers lower than 20 into percentages, results are expressed as raw numbers, and ranked by number of comments per aspect. In 2005, 22 students provided comments on aspects of their experiences that could be improved. Due to the low number of comments per aspect in this section of the report, and the fact that other years received fewer than 20 comments, it has been decided to leave these results as raw numbers, and not convert them into percentages.

¹ i.e. 2000 – 2003. The SCEQ was not administered in 2004.

4 Analysis of the comments: taxonomy and process

The manual analysis and evaluation method used by the University is based on an in-house taxonomy which allows for standardisation of reporting across the university and ease of comparison with the SCEQ quantitative analysis reports. Within the taxonomy, the main categories are based on the SCEQ items, and sub-categories based on their characteristics. Additional categories, based on the frequency of occurrence in students' comments over the past four years, are also included. Categories for the analysis of comments relating to administration and support services are defined using the most commonly mentioned aspects e.g. quality of customer service, opening hours, staffing levels, online access to services; and names of individual services e.g. Counselling, Library, Student Centre.²

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluation and feedback• Academic Board policies• Curriculum• Skills development• Learning community• Learning resources• Overall satisfaction• Good teaching | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear goals and standards• Appropriate assessment• Appropriate workload• Elearning• Research-led teaching• Student progression and retention• Cultural diversity• Equity |
|--|---|

Categories used in the analysis of SCEQ Open Response comments

This taxonomy is under constant revision as the need to sub-divide categories becomes apparent. For example, until 2005 the category *Online learning and resources* was used to record all comments mentioning students' experiences of elearning. In 2005, the increase of elearning across the university, and the review of its use, has necessitated the sub-division of this category into the following elements: *Online resources*; *Elearning: uptake by students/ staff*; *Learning management systems*; *Support provided*; and *Face to face vs. online learning*. NB: The SCEQ included specific questions on elearning for the first time in the 2005 survey. These additional qualitative analysis topics reflect these changes.

Each comment received is analysed according to the SCEQ Taxonomy, with those including more than one aspect being counted in each aspect mentioned.

It should be noted, however, 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 that the students are happy with their experiences, and prefer to focus on commenting on areas in need of improvement.

² A copy of the SCEQ Taxonomy is provided as a separate attachment.

5 Degree experience

5.1 Analysis of comments referring to the best aspects³

NB: *Only three aspects in this section of the report were mentioned in more than five comments. Therefore, to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments have been provided for the remaining top aspects.*

Curriculum: clinical and practical aspects of course (2005: 8 (30%))
(2003: 4; 2002: 2; 2001: 2; 2000: 2)

- Strong clinical component at Westmead
- Practical weeks at Westmead Hospital - provide hands on experience. Medical emergency simulations - show how pressure of the situation affects performance.
- A lot of practical hospital based training. The degree is flexible to cater to my interests.
- Clinical experience

Research led teaching (2005: 7 (26%))
(2003: 3)

- Opportunity to do research and further learning in many areas
- my degree is involving clinical and research. both are well integrated.
- Exposure to worldwide techniques and research
- I have learned how to analyse and solve questions or problems by using critical thinking skills as well as to carry on research projects when doing this degree course.

Good teaching: standard of teaching received (2005: 7 (26%))
(2002: 1)

- The knowledge of the majority of the teaching staff is inspiring and their ability to teach is outstanding
- Excellent teaching during clinical sessions
- Teaching staff - voluntary and paid.
- help from the teaching staff is great. personal and professional

Other aspects mentioned included:

NB: *all the aspects mentioned below were mentioned in less than six comments*

	2005		2003 No	2002 No	2001 No	2000 No
	No	%				
Curriculum: content and structure	5	19%		3	2	2
Industry and professions: visiting staff/ lecturers etc	3	11%	4			
Overall satisfaction: quality of degree	2	7%			1	
Skills development: generic graduate attributes	2	7%	1	1		
Learning resources: library	2	7%	1			

³ Number of comment received: 2005: 27; 2003: 15; 2002: 13; 2001: 6; 2000: 3

5.2 Analysis of comments suggesting improvements⁴

NB: *Only one aspect in this section of the report were mentioned in more than five comments. Therefore, to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments have been provided for the remaining top aspects.*

Administration and organisation: general comments

(2005: 6 (23%))

(2002: 2)

- Communication between course organisers and lecturers; communication between course organisers and students
- Financial support - PELS covers up to \$5,000, course costs more than \$70,000. Integration with hospital - not uniform amongst post grads from different disciplines.
- I felt there was no one person responsible for student concerns throughout the course and we didn't know who to approach when we had problems. e.g., when having problems with finding cases I received 3 different answers from different people about what to do.
- Co-operation between the hospital and university. The conflict makes the course frustrating and stressful.

Other aspects mentioned included:

	2005		2003	2002	2001	2000
	No	%	No	No	No	No
Curriculum: content and structure	5	19%	3	5	2	1
Curriculum: clinical and practical aspects	5	19%	1			
Good teaching: useful and timely feedback	3	12%	1	1	1	1
Appropriate workload	3	12%	1			
Research led teaching	3	12%				
Overall satisfaction: quality of degree	3	12%			1	
Learning community: learning environment	2	8%	4	2		
Good teaching: standard of teaching received	2	8%	1			
Clear goals and standards	2	8%		1	1	1
Learning resources: library	2	8%				

⁴ Number of comment received: 2005: 26; 2003: 16; 2002: 12; 2001: 6; 2000: 4

6 Experience of student administration and student support services

6.1 Analysis of comments referring to best aspects⁵

NB: *Only one aspect in this section of the report were mentioned in more than five comments. Therefore, to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments have been provided for the remaining top aspects. Since less than 20 students responded with comments to this question, results are expressed as raw numbers*

Library services

(2005: 7)

(2003: 6; 2002: 3; 2001: 1)

- Library . XX and YY at the Dentistry library (whom I only know by email - being off campus) have been extremely helpful.
- Online availability of some journals of the library
- Library services are efficient, helpful and up to date
- Library, particularly access to large databases was by far the most important part of the course. However living in an area with no broadband access made research and study slow. Not everyone lives in Sydney.

Other aspects and services mentioned included:

	<i>Number of comments received</i>				
	2005	2003	2002	2001	2000
General comments					
Customer service: quality	2		1		
Administration and organisation: enrolment	2				
Web communications: online access to services	2				
Mentoring	2				
Web communication: intranet/ internet	1	2	3		
Administration and organisation: general	1				
Services provided: accessibility and convenience of services	1				
Services provided: variety of services	1				
Specific services					
Computer access centres: university	2				
Health service	1				
International Student Support Unit	1				

⁵ Number of comment received: 2005: 13; 2003: 4; 2002: 3; 2000: 2

6.2 Analysis of comments suggesting improvements⁶

NB: *Only two aspects in this section of the report were mentioned in more than five comments. Therefore, to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments have been provided for the remaining top aspects.*

Services provided: equity of service provision (2005: 7 (32%)) (2003: 4)

- Improved services at Westmead hospital so I actually feel I am part of the university - it is very isolated. Even the provision an administration staff member who can verify student cards at the beginning of each year would make life significantly easier. As you can appreciate, it is almost impossible for a full-time postgraduate student to make the long, arduous trip to Sydney University just to verify a student card!
- Off campus students e.g. post graduates in Dentistry have little/no access to services. Need a face to face visit by representative to outline basic services e.g. 1-2 times a year.
- Keep in touch with off campus students on a regular basis and provide information on new services available on campus.
- Consider coming out to Westmead Dental Hospital to allow all postgraduate students to enrol on site rather than going to Syd Uni to do it- it was a bit of a waste of time.

Library services (2005: 6 (27%)) (2003: 2; 2002: 1; 2001: 1)

- Opening hours of the dental library are way too short and no availability on weekends. Additionally not many journals on periodontics are available online.
- The Dental Library is only open for restricted hours/i.e....., until 6pm) and only on weekdays. I would like more after hours access.
- dentistry library has very limited opening hours and basically no access for those at Westmead working 5 days a week. Westmead library is useless for Dentistry journals
- More journal access. Library books delivery in the faculty.

Other aspects and services mentioned included

	2005		2003	2002	2001	2000
	No	%	No	No	No	No
General comments						
Administration and organisation: general	5	23%				
Administration and organisation: enrolment	3	14%				
Services provided: advertisement of services	2	9%				
Web communications: intranet/ internet	2	9%				
Specific services						
International Office	2	9%				

⁶ Number of comment received: 2005: 22; 2003: 9; 2002: 5; 2001: 1; 2000: 1