



**The University of Sydney**

Faculty of Arts

Student experience of Learning and Teaching

Trends and key issues: Postgraduate coursework students  
2001-2007

Date July 2008

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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
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
Faculty scores Percentage agreement	The percentage of current students/ graduates who either agreed or strongly agreed with relevant survey items in the SCEQ/ CEQ
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
Percentage of comments received	The number of times an aspect is mentioned within the comments received from respondents is expressed as a percentage of the total number of comments received

## Notes

### Note re percentage of respondents (Current students) providing written comments in the SCEQ

The percentage of current students providing written observations in their answers to the SCEQ declined significantly in 2007. In 2005, 80% of respondents provided written comments in answer to the open ended questions; in 2007, less than half (41%) of respondents supplied written observations. This decline is present across the University.

### Note re qualitative data (international students) for CEQ

In **2005**, less than four international graduates provided written observations in their response to the CEQ. Since the minimum sub-sample for statistical reporting is 5, qualitative data is not available for this group of students.

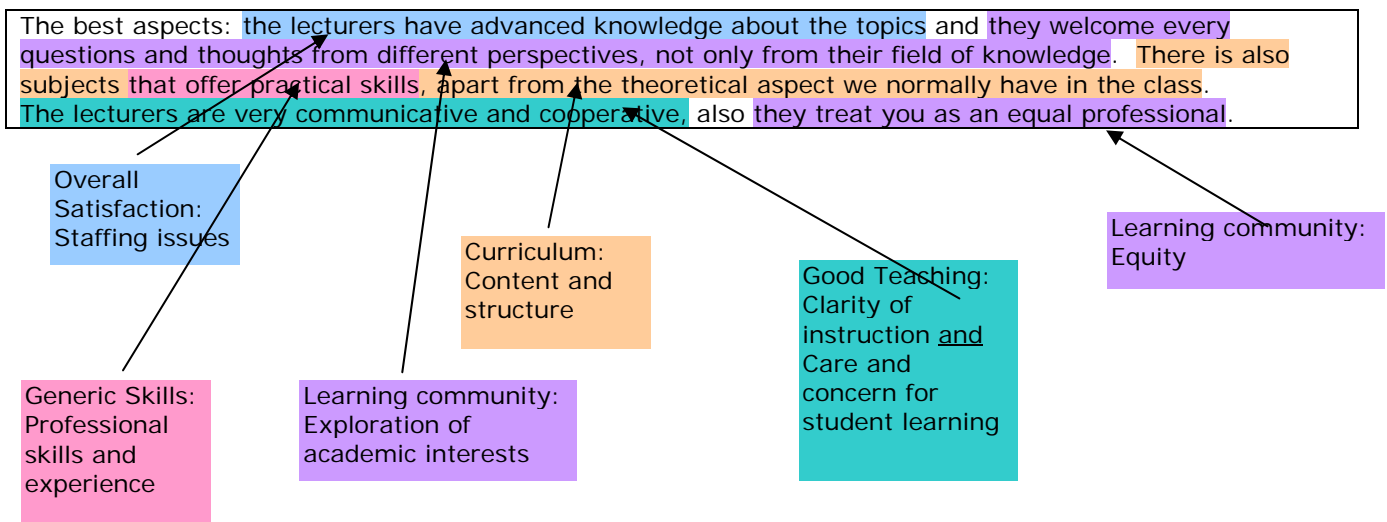
In **2007**, 19 international graduates provided written observations in the CEQ. Since the minimum sample analysis recommended for statistical reporting of CEQ data is 20, the analysis of the qualitative data for this group of students should be viewed with caution

### 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 Overall Satisfaction; Learning Community; Generic Skills; Curriculum; and Good Teaching, the comment is counted ONCE in each of the relevant categories.



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

## Executive summary

Data about the student degree experience in the Faculty of Arts 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; Workload; and Faculty/ Department student administration).

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

The term "Faculty scores" refers to the proportion of current students/ graduates who either agreed or strongly agreed with the relevant survey items in the SCEQ/ CEQ for 2007.

## Key results

- Faculty scores for **Generic Skills** (KPI 14, Section 1)
  - are 64% for current students (SCEQ) and 61% for graduates (CEQ)
  - are above the University average for both current students and graduates

Evidence from the analysis of the qualitative data indicates that the majority of students recognised that they were acquiring the full range of University Graduate Attributes.

- Faculty scores for **Good Teaching** (KPI 15, Section 2)
  - for current students, have remained static since 2005 at 58% (SCEQ)
  - for graduates, have fluctuated over the past four years, and are currently 59% (CEQ)
  - are above the University average for both current students and graduates
  - for current students (SCEQ), international students appear to be more satisfied than domestic students
  - for graduates (CEQ), domestic students appear to be more satisfied than international students

Analysis of the qualitative data indicates that current students' (SCEQ) experiences of teaching within the faculty have improved since 2005, with 14% more positive than negative comments, reversing the 2005 results. Comments from graduates (CEQ) are evenly divided between those who considered teaching to be an area of best practice and those who thought it could be improved.

- Faculty scores for **Overall Satisfaction** (KPI 16, Section 3)
  - are third highest in the University for current students (SCEQ)
  - have decreased by 28% for graduates (CEQ)
  - are above the University average for current students (SCEQ)
  - are below the University average for graduates (CEQ)

Students' comments relating to this KPI are evenly distributed between those who expressed satisfaction with the quality of their degree experience, and those that suggested improvements.

- Faculty scores for **Learning Community** (Section 4)
  - have steadily decreased since 2003
  - are above the University average

Over 25% of current students and graduates commented favourably on the community feel of the Faculty; and the opportunities to explore academic interests with staff and students from a variety of cultures and backgrounds. On the other hand, students would appreciate better library resources and physical facilities, and suggested that the presence of international/ NESB students inhibited class discussions.

- Faculty results for **Curriculum** (Qualitative data only) (Section 5)
  - for current students (SCEQ) are evenly divided between areas of best practice and suggested improvements
  - for graduates (CEQ), there were 17% more comments expressing satisfaction with the curriculum than those suggesting improvements

- Faculty scores for **Appropriate Assessment** (Section 6)
  - are higher than the University average
  - place it fourth in the University
  - have declined steadily since 2003
- Faculty scores for **Appropriate Workload** (Section 7)
  - are higher than the University average
  - have decreased steadily since 2003

Current students (SCEQ) expressed concern with the heavy workload, and number of assignments per unit of study. No graduates (CEQ) provided comments on this aspect of their experience.

- Faculty scores for **Faculty/ department student administration** (Section 8)
  - Have improved by 16% since 2005, and currently sit at 63%
  - Are below the University average

Evidence from the qualitative data confirms this positive result. The percentage of comments from current students (SCEQ) expressing dissatisfaction with Faculty administration declined by 10% since 2002; whilst those from graduates (CEQ) declined by 12%.

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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 Arts 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 (14: Generic skills; 15: Good teaching; and 16: 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. Faculty/ Department student administration is also included, due to perceived improvements in the service since the 2005 SCEQ.

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 14)

## 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)

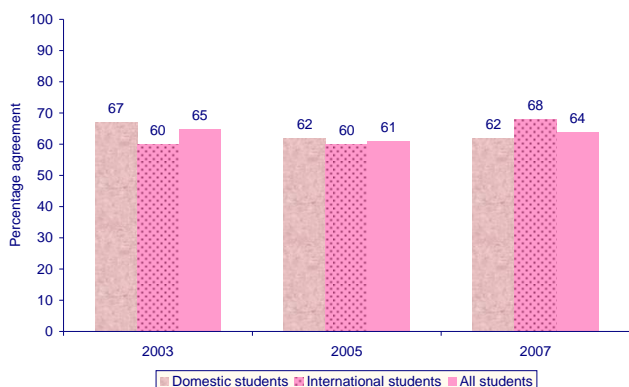
## Trends

Faculty scores of 64% agreement for current students (SCEQ) and 61% for graduates (CEQ) indicate that students perceive that the Faculty is providing them with the graduate skills considered essential by the University. The University average for Generic skills in 2007 was for 65% graduates and 62% for current students.

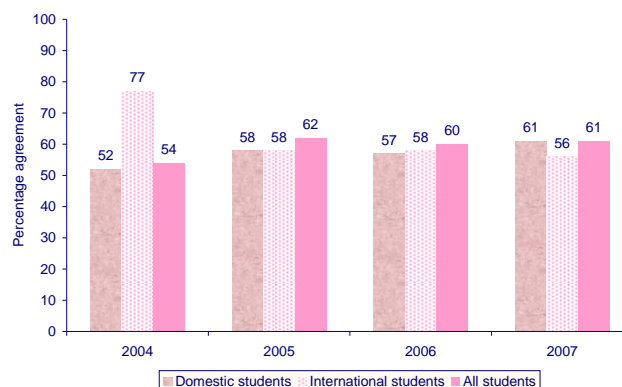
Evidence from the analysis of the qualitative data indicates that the majority of students recognised that they were acquiring the full range of University Graduate Attributes.

### 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 from respondents to the surveys 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	12%	15%	20%	24%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	23%	26%	n/a	21%
	<b>All</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>24%</b>
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	4%	9%	0%	4%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	13%	11%	n/a	38%
	<b>All</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>12%</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=66)	International (n=55)	All (n=121)
Ethical, social, professional understanding			
- Development of discipline/ professional skills	6%	13%	9%
- Presence of work placement/ industry experience in the course			
Communication skills			
- Written and oral communication skills are being developed	5%	11%	7%
- Students are provided with skills necessary to communicate with or relate to others in a group situation			
- Presentation skills are being developed			

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *The internships were also really beneficial, as they gave me excellent hands on experience which I wouldn't have been able to have otherwise. I learnt more during my internships, which were hands on, than I did in lectures.*
- *Discussions on the current ongoing peace and conflict issues relating with the theories, and simulating the actual conflict resolution workshop are the best aspects of the course. The discussions and the simulation exercises have not only helped to develop my analytical skills but also no additional text in original comments*
- *The interactions in the seminars are very interesting in most classes I found that I was challenged orally to present my ideas in a logical and relevant manner which I think will be helpful in the future*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *Group discussion is the best part. Teachers arouse student's interesting and talent on resolving problems through group discussion while practising the ability of communicating as well*
- *The MECO6901 course (Dealing with the Media) is good because it makes students more practice for related skills and it may help a lot in the MECO students' future jobs*
- *I benefit a lot from the practice of developing our critical thinking and writing abilities. These kind of things made me think more carefully and do research more seriously.*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=49)	International (n=19)	All (n=68)
Ethical, social, professional understanding			
- Development of discipline/ professional skills	18%	5%	15%
- Presence of work placement/ industry experience in the course			
Communication skills			
- Written and oral communication skills are being developed	2%	16%	6%
- Students are provided with skills necessary to communicate with or relate to others in a group situation			
- Presentation skills are being developed			

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *Researching , essay writing development, practical experience IE museum internship / handling artefacts*
- *Doing practical work, for example working for a Personnel Recruitment company and actually doing a campaign as my assignment. Very useful*
- *Practical courses that helped with actual job requirements IE planning exhibitions filling in acquisition reports etc*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *My confidence is boosted as a result of this course, I acquired knowledge and skills in terms of communicating in an efficient and professional way*
- *English writing skills*
- *Internship Placement*

### 1.3.2 Suggested improvements

#### Current students (SCEQ 2007)

In 2007, 10% of current students (12/121 comments received) who provided written observations in their responses to the SCEQ considered that University Graduate Attributes were not being developed during their studies. Comments were evenly distributed between: Research and Inquiry; Ethical, Social and Professional Understanding; and Communication skills.

##### Sample comments: domestic students

- *I think some elements of the course should be practical and based on developing implementation skills and other courses should concentrate on research*
- *Dissertation sessions are a waste of time. These classes should be run like writing classes i.e. talk about research methods one week then structuring the next, writing etc.*
- *The internship should not be compulsory for all students dependent on their background and/or should be for a shorter duration of time.*

##### Sample comments: international students

- *The 'professional Communications' aspect of it. There is very little to almost no training in terms of effective oral presentations, handling interviews, interviewing, debating etc. The course title certainly does not represent its content. I was keen to be trained more in terms of effective communication, Orally and through multimedia presentations*
- *An essay writing support workshop can be developed for international students, especially for students in their first semester*
- *Some guidance of elementary and practical method of solutions in relevant area. As a media student, I found my writing class focuses only on skills of writing and structuring materials. The guidance to elementary side of journalistic process such as story ideas and pre-interview research appears to be weak. That's why I think it's difficult to have the ideas and sense I learn from the course fulfilled in practical way and effective procedure*

#### Graduates (CEQ 2007)

	Domestic (n=49)	International (n=16)	All (n=65)
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##### Ethical, social, professional understanding

- |   |    |     |    |
|---|----|-----|----|
| - Ability to work in a group/ team working skills               | 2% | 19% | 6% |
| - Development of discipline/ professional skills                |    |     |    |
| - Presence of work placement/ industry experience in the course |    |     |    |

##### Sample comments: domestic students

- *more verbal communication development*
- *I think a practical component to the Master of Professional Communication would be useful and advantageous to the course*

##### Sample comments: international students

- *More on oral speaking skills and analysis skills*
- *Need some practical aspects methods in delivering the concept. Such as internship or visiting some corporates to analyse their cases*
- *More practical work needed*

## 2 Good teaching (KPI 15)

### 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)

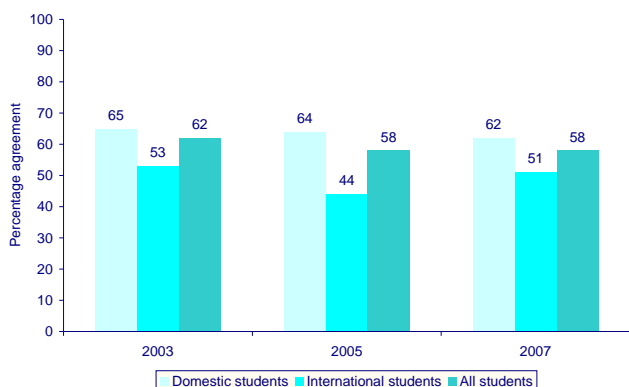
### Trends

Faculty scores for Good teaching for current students (SCEQ) have remained static at 58% since 2005. A substantial increase in the scores for international students between 2005 and 2007 indicates that their experiences of teaching within the Faculty are more satisfactory than those of domestic students, whose scores have decreased over the same period. The University average for current students is 51%. Scores for graduates (CEQ) over the same time period have fluctuated and currently sit at 59%, representing a significant decrease for both domestic and international students since 2006. The University average for graduates is 52%.

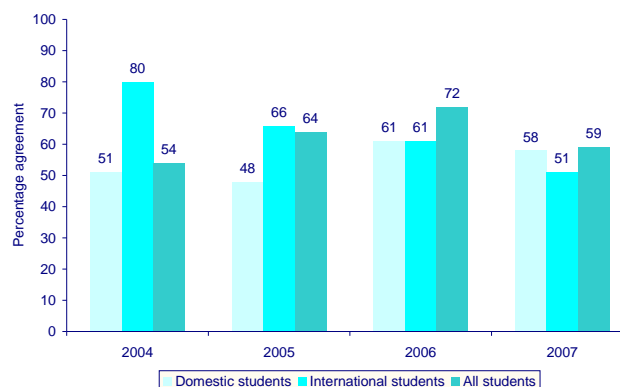
Analysis of the qualitative data for this KPI, indicates that current students' (SCEQ) experiences of teaching within the faculty has improved since 2005, with 14% more positive than negative comments, reversing the 2005 results. Comments from graduates (CEQ) are evenly divided between those who considered teaching to be an area of best practice and those who thought it could be improved.

### 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 from respondents to the surveys 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	26%	52%	25%	29%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	21%	38%	n/a	16%
	<b>All</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>25%</b>
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	26%	36%	17%	24%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	55%	26%	n/a	25%
	<b>All</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>25%</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=66)	International (n=55)	All (n=121)
<b>Good teaching experiences</b>			
- Use of innovative and up to date teaching methods and techniques			
- Ability to keep students interested in the subject	27%	18%	23%
- 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	17%	5%	12%
- 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	5%	13%	8%
- Lecturers understood problems and difficulties of students			
<b>Sample comments: domestic students</b>			
- <i>In the gender studies department I have found XX a very approachable and experienced lecturer who has encouraged us all to do not just appropriate work but work of a high standard, facilitating well group discussion and individual activity</i>			
- <i>Both my current lecturers are wonderful. They have relevant, real industry experience. They are enthusiastic and present all issues with interest, enthusiasm and at in a very current, hands on way. They are open to questions, opinions and class discussion. I have been fortunate to experience very good teachers here. I have found the three published recommended text books all interesting, reader-friendly and relevant.</i>			
- <i>I have also found the lecturers excellent. They have been well prepared, motivated and interesting</i>			
<b>Sample comments: international students</b>			
- <i>My professors have offered assistance and understanding as I have continued with my program. As a student, supportive faculty that understands that every student is not the same is essential to my experience</i>			
- <i>The lecturers I had throughout the course were excellent. They really made things easy to understand for students, and they are very responsive to students questions and feedback</i>			
- <i>I have the teaching in this department to be of a high standard and the course to be interesting and well prepared.</i>			

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=49)	International (n=19)	All (n=68)
<b>Good teaching experiences</b>			
- Use of innovative and up to date teaching methods and techniques			
- Ability to keep students interested in the subject	16%	11%	15%
- Encouragement to participate in discussions during lectures and tutorials			
- Learning resources are up to date, and relevant to curriculum			
<b>Concern and care for student learning</b>			
- Students felt supported in their learning; help and advice readily available	8%	5%	7%
- Lecturers understood problems and difficulties of students			
<b>Sample comments: domestic students</b>			
- <i>Some lecturers have been very helpful and dedicated towards providing guidance</i>			
- <i>A couple of my lecturer. They taught professionally, increased my interests and facilitated insightful discussion</i>			
- <i>I was really impressed with the way the course was structured and the level of teaching</i>			
- <i>Most of my lecturers were outstanding - very approachable, gave good lectures, provided adequate feedback</i>			
<b>Sample comments: international students</b>			
- <i>Teachers were professional and very good</i>			
- <i>Teacher's help</i>			

## 2.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=64)	International (n=57)	All (n=121)
<b>Good teaching experiences</b>			
- Teaching methods used are outdated; Lectures were boring	19%	16%	17%
- Discussions of issues raised during lectures and tutorials are not encouraged			
- Learning resources are out of date, and not relevant to curriculum, unhelpful, long			
<b>Concern and care for student learning</b>			
- Staff do not provide support and help for students, including one-on-one consultations	9%	0%	5%
- Staff do not seem to understand student difficulties and problems			
- Staff are perceived to be more interested in their research than in teaching			
<b>Sample comments: domestic students</b>			
- <i>Some staff were genuinely interested in helping the students achieve their goals, but some were rather disinterested and ignorant. Lecturers should provide at least one session of individual consultation per student for essay assignments. This would really help</i>			
- <i>The course readings etc are often handed out 2 or 3 weeks late, are often incomplete, or simply not bound properly. This is extremely annoying - units of study are expensive, and the money should cover simple things like notes</i>			
- <i>all lecturers used outdated teaching methodologies and over - relied on PPT and lecturing formats.</i>			
<b>Sample comments: international students</b>			
- <i>Finally having all of my grade depend on papers due at the end of the semester leaves me with a sense that I have no control over my mark and my improvement in the class. How can I know how I am doing or what my mark will be if I have nothing available to give me an idea of my progress?</i>			
- <i>Teaching skills of lecturers. Lecturers are supposed to explain the key issues in the area in an explicit way. It's better to present them in PowerPoint slides which could make them salient. Lecturers are also supposed to prepare the lessons well, at least in a more organised way. They should also organise some activities for students to discuss about their own thoughts</i>			
- <i>Some of our teachers should improve their ability of teaching if they could. Maybe they know a lot themselves but the function of teacher is to teach</i>			
Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=49)	International (n=16)	All (n=65)
<b>Good teaching experiences</b>			
- Teaching methods and techniques used are outdated/need improvement			
- Discussions of issues during class were not encouraged	10%	19%	18%
- Lecturers were boring; did not engage with students			
- Learning materials and resources were outdated			
- Concerned about joint classes with undergraduate students (parallel teaching)			
<b>Concern and care for student learning</b>			
- Students did not feel supported in their learning;	6%	6%	6%
- help and advice was not readily available			
<b>Feedback on work (from staff to students)</b>			
- Comments on work are not constructive	8%	0%	6%
- Feedback is untimely and not helpful			

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=49)	International (n=16)	All (n=65)
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## Sample comments: domestic students

- *Cross two years - and undergraduates mixed with post graduates.*
- *The Department of Museum Studies - the senior academic lost papers, failed to return work, and was difficult to get in touch with.*
- *Lecturer XXX - Insensitive, uninspiring. I would never sign up to their subjects again*

## Sample comments: international students

- *Some teaching staff were not well prepared for our class. I and my colleagues felt that we did not get the service we were supposed to get and paid for*
- *Some course lecturers could do more with teaching and not merely point to available resources*
- *Lecturers should prove Information Technology (IT) and visual stimulus*

### 3 Overall satisfaction (KPI 16)

#### 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

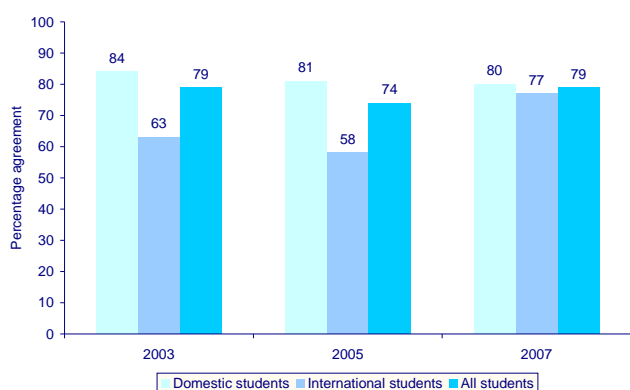
#### Trends

Overall satisfaction with the degree course currently rates at 79% for current students (SCEQ), which is above the University average of 75% and places the Faculty in the top third of faculties, where it has been since 2003. After a high score of 83% for graduates (CEQ) in 2006, the Faculty has returned to 66% in 2007, which is comparable to the scores for 2004 – 2005. The University average for graduates is 70%.

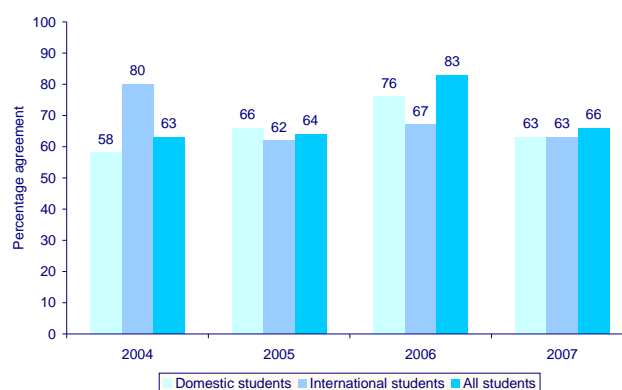
Students' comments relating to this KPI are evenly distributed between those who expressed satisfaction with the quality of their degree experience, and those that suggested improvements.

#### 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 from respondents to the surveys 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	18%	23%	23%	14%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	7%	11%	n/a	5%
	<b>All</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>12%</b>
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	18%	23%	11%	16%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	13%	5%	n/a	13%
	<b>All</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>15%</b>

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

#### 3.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=66)	International (n=55)	All (n=121)
<b>Staffing issues</b>			
- Qualifications of staff in subject matter and in teaching at tertiary level	23%	11%	17%
- Relevant experience of lecturers and tutors in subject area			
- Relevant and up to date knowledge of lecturers and tutors in subject area			

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *The best aspect of my degree course was the information provided to us by the lecturers during the lectures. The staff really have strong bases and background knowledge in the fields that they are teaching which broadened my knowledge and insight towards the course that I once was unsure I wanted to undergo*
- *Experienced teachers - published authors who practice what they teach*
- *In regards to the Screenwriters at work course it has been a great credit to the university to provide two of Australia's most prolific screenwriters in XX and XX, this presents a great balance of professional experience*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *The best aspects: the lecturers have advanced knowledge about the topics and they welcome every questions and thoughts from different perspectives, not only from their field of knowledge*
- *The teachers have a wide knowledge and they are very conscientious*
- *Practical hands-on experience gained through professors who themselves have a lot of practical experience in the media*

#### Graduates (CEQ 2007)

In 2007, 12% of graduates (6/68 comments received) provided comments relating to their overall satisfaction with the course or with the quality of academic staff. Due to the low number of comments and to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

### 3.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=64)	International (n=57)	All (n=121)
------------------------------	--------------------	-------------------------	----------------

#### Value for money

- |  |     |    |    |
|--|-----|----|----|
| - Funding or financial issues relating to course are affecting student learning  |     |    |    |
| - Consider cost of course too high   | 14% | 2% | 8% |
| - Entry standard of fellow students considered to be affecting student satisfaction e.g. lack of English language oral communication skills; writing portfolio of acceptable standard; catering for international students |     |    |    |

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *For a University with such a wealth of history in terms of the production and preservation of Australian literature, that there are no undergraduate programs in creative writing is baffling. For those who give up the opportunity of academic work at post-graduate level to access the creative writing program as it stands, there is definite feeling that we are to pay our fees and be forgotten*
- *The majority of the class is not fluent in spoken English. They are mainly fee-paying overseas students. Therefore, class discussions are limited in scope and depth. This pulls the standard down.*
- *Finally, students on the MA course in Creative Writing should have a portfolio of work assessed before they are allowed into the course - student numbers seem more important than the quality of work being produced*
- *Arts - quality of teaching - one lecturer could not actually speak academic English adequately for the programme and had very poor topic knowledge. A 2 hr seminar often went for only 20 30 minutes as he had nothing else to say. He did not understand Australian businesses or corporate communication and could not add any value at all to the coursework*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *Students lacking in a linguistic background are enrolled in the same core unit as those requiring linguistics as a pre-requisite. This hinders the quality of classroom discussion*
- *I am personally really unsatisfied with the whole Masters, the way I've got to take advantage of it is me putting a lot of effort in making things happen, because honestly I perceived from 99% of my class the frustration and the in satisfaction respecting to the program*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=49)	International (n=16)	All (n=65)
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#### Value for money

- |  |     |    |    |
|--|-----|----|----|
| - Funding or financial issues relating to course are affecting student learning  |     |    |    |
| - Consider cost of course too high   | 10% | 0% | 8% |
| - Entry standard of fellow students considered to be affecting student satisfaction e.g. lack of English language oral communication skills; writing portfolio of acceptable standard; catering for international students |     |    |    |

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *It is difficult to explain, but because there were many ESL students in these classes, our overall marks/results were drawn down due to them. They had no idea! and as a result we suffered. Our equals referring to non-ESL speakers (locals)*
- *More lecturers to broaden and strengthen the areas of expertise and to offer more subject choices*
- *60 Day unpaid internship - this equates to three months work without pay and caused extreme financial hardship. two more staff three increased reference to the regional / community museum sector*
- *2 of the subjects had very big enrolment numbers for a post graduate fee- paying student( around 30 and 20)*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *Diversification of contents, including expansion of staff. Staff at Centre were loaded with too much per individual and unable to focus more on each of their teaching/supervising duties*
- *More qualified and experienced teaching staff*

## 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

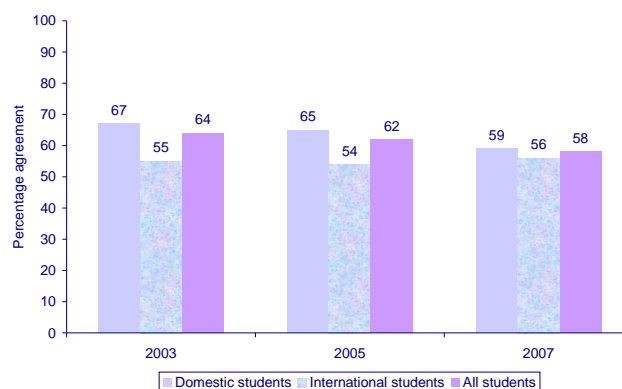
Fifty eight percent of current students either agreed or strongly agreed with SCEQ survey items on the Learning Community. Although the Faculty has consistently remained above the University average for this Scale, there has been a steady decrease in the score since 2003. The University average currently sits at 54%.

Over 25% of current students and graduates commented favourably on the community feel of the Faculty; and the opportunities to explore academic interests with staff and students from a variety of cultures and backgrounds. On the other hand, students would appreciate better library resources and physical facilities, and suggested that the presence of international/ NESB students inhibited class discussions.

#### 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	29%	21%	18%	24%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	29%	29%	n/a	42%
	<b>All</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>29%</b>
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	21%	34%	31%	24%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	20%	19%	n/a	6%
	<b>All</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>20%</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=66)	International (n=55)	All (n=121)
<b>Learning environment</b>			
- Experienced social experience of being at University			
- Felt that they belonged to a community (degree/ Faculty)	21%	22%	21%
- Academic interests were being explored with staff and students e.g. in tutorials			
- Enjoyed the cultural mix of students in the course			
- Happy with class sizes			

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *I have been out of the active learning environment for many years. Undertaking this course has given me a renewed confidence that I have the ability, as well as the intellectual capacity and interest, to achieve at a reasonable standard, to learn and be stimulated, and to mix with people from all backgrounds and interests. I have much enjoyed being welcomed into the academic community, in spite of being part-time and not having a high status profession.*
- *The opportunity to exchange ideas and information with fellow students from a variety of backgrounds*
- *The interactions in the seminars are very interesting in most classes I found that I was challenged orally to present my ideas in a logical and relevant manner which I think will be helpful in the future*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *Strong and supportive community of peers and lecturers, both academically and socially. Helps very much in creating an open and conducive environment for the true exchange of ideas, and working towards common goals with all our differences..*
- *I like some small size classes in the semester such as advanced Writing for media. there are just about 15-25 students in a classroom. we can have a lovely discussion and listen to everyone's opinion clearly*
- *The lecturers I had throughout the course were excellent. They really made things easy to understand for students, and they are very responsive to students questions and feedback*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=49)	International (n=19)	All (n=68)
<b>Learning environment</b>			
- Experienced social experience of being at University			
- Felt that they belonged to a community (degree/ Faculty)	20%	32%	24%
- Academic interests were being explored with staff and students e.g. in tutorials			
- Enjoyed the cultural mix of students in the course			

#### Learning resources

- Happy with resources available at the library 4% 11% 6%
- Appreciate accessibility of electronic databases and journals; course readings

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *Excellent teachers, small class sizes, engaged and committed fellow students, lecturers always happy to make personal appointments, Fisher library, good subject range.*
- *Meeting many other interesting post graduate students with very interesting experiences to share - overseas students and local - very tight Department*
- *The greater depth of the subjects and the seminar discussions with fellow students who were as dedicated to them as I was*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *I met great friends through my course. My course helped me to explore the fields I didn't know before I commenced my degree*
- *Interaction with Australian students studying German. Great inter library loans section in the library. Very helpful*
- *The course encouraged me to read as much as possible. It has provided me with many chances to discuss with others*

## 4.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=72)	International (n=32)	All (n=104)
<b>Learning environment</b>			
- Did not feel that they belonged to a community			
- Academic interests were not explored with staff and students e.g. in tutorials	8%	0%	8%
- Perception that international/ NESB students inhibit class discussion			
- Lectures and tutorials had too many people in them; inhibited discussion			
<b>Learning resources</b>			
- Unhappy with library services and resources	12%	0%	9%
- Standard of physical facilities not acceptable			
<b>Sample comments: domestic students</b>			
- <i>Resources, including access to rooms and better equipment. The technical equipment such as projectors, often didn't work if they were available at all. Also, a few books that would have helped my learning were not available for loan at Fisher Library.</i>			
- <i>The discussion groups could be smaller to enable more interaction from all members of the group instead of the most dominant personalities that thrive in larger group settings</i>			
- <i>Being an English speaker meant I was a minority in the classroom. I felt I was being held back by non-English speaking students</i>			
<b>Sample comments: international students</b>			
- <i>Class size. Master level classes should be much smaller, ideally around 10-20, so that students could have more chances to contribute to the class and improve their communication skills in research</i>			
- <i>some lecturers are more willing to share their knowledge with the local students. and some are not so patient when answering the international students' questions</i>			
- <i>Also, there is not enough copies of books available in the library. For the popular books, we always have to wait for a long time before we can borrow them</i>			

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=49)	International (n=16)	All (n=65)
<b>Learning environment</b>			
- Did not feel that they belonged to a community			
- Academic interests were not explored with staff and students e.g. in tutorials	14%	18%	16%
- Perception that international/ NESB students inhibit class discussion			
- Lectures and tutorials had too many people in them; inhibited discussion			
<b>Learning resources</b>			
- Unhappy with library services and resources	17%	5%	12%
- Standard of physical facilities not acceptable			
<b>Sample comments: domestic students</b>			
- <i>Difficulty level can be increased to a more challenging level. Too many foreign students hampered discussion in class, most of them could not follow. Hence, a higher level type of discussion couldn't be made.</i>			
- <i>Better rooms/ chairs/ facilities in general (IE: air-con). An arts library would be good. More space in PGACL for part-time students</i>			
- <i>Head of the Dept was very open about the fact that the Uni was only interested in numbers and money therefore any feedback we provided was redundant</i>			
- <i>The staff at CPACE DO NOT read or implement student comments on courses</i>			
- <i>being stuck in groups with people who have no grasp of the English language</i>			
- <i>Library resources lack of resources</i>			

## 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)
- Method 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, positive and negative comments on the Curriculum from current students (SCEQ) were evenly divided at 40% each; whilst 17% more comments from graduates (CEQ) indicated satisfaction with this area of their experience.

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 from respondents to the surveys 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	42%	50%	25%	41%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	25%	27%	n/a	26%
	<b>All</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>37%</b>
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	34%	34%	28%	24%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	33%	47%	n/a	6%
	<b>All</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>20%</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=66)	International (n=55)	All (n=121)
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#### Content and structure

- Content and structure of whole degree program/ individual units of study	30%	22%	30%
- Intensive courses			
- Subjects appear to be linked together			
- Subject content is relevant to work/ career and industry requirements			

#### Diversity, flexibility, variety

- Flexibility of degree structure	12%	2%	7%
- Ability to take a range of units of study			

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *All the different types of media were covered, explained and were assessed on writing them. This allows for a grasp of all the ways of how to write certain media.*
- *Master of Creative Writing. Having only done 4 subjects so far, but I would have to say I am most impressed with the Poetry subjects. They give you valuable practical experience as well as one on one contact with professional poets. Also, gives adequate info on how to get yourself published and heard*
- *A variety of subjects yet with a coherence that allows you to find themes and ideas that appeal to you and are relevant to what you hope to do with your degree*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *The course combines theories with lots of practical exercises and the balance between these two is good. This combination model is absolutely wonderful since it helps me learn things not only from books but from the real life. I love it*
- *As an international student, I found that the course has provided me with a very good direction of Western style of overviews on relevant issues and encouragement of an open mind. This kind of overviews and way of thinking often runs through different subjects. Perhaps that's why I found different subjects often connect with each other in some way*
- *There is excellent cohesion between the units of study; subjects are studied and discussed from a variety of angles which complement each other. This helps to provide a well-rounded examination of the topic and prove that the topics aren't just chosen arbitrarily*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=49)	International (n=19)	All (n=66)
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#### Content and structure

- Content and structure of whole degree program/ individual units of study	33%	26%	31%
- Subject content is relevant to work/ career and industry requirements			

#### Diversity, flexibility, variety

- Flexibility of degree structure	8%	0%	8%
- Ability to take a range of units of study			

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *Course offered a range of areas in which to specialise this was an advantage when seeking work in the museums sector*
- *I was really impressed with the way the course was structured and the level of teaching*
- *Interesting subjects that were well integrated*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *My course helped me to explore the fields I didn't know before I commenced my degree.*
- *Content. English writing. Development of programs*
- *The leading field among relevant subjects. Great course structures*

### 5.2.3 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=64)	International (n=57)	All (n=121)
<b>Content and structure</b>			
- Unhappy with content and structure of whole degree program/ individual units of study	23%	28%	26%
- Subject content is not relevant to work/ career and industry requirements			
<b>Availability of courses</b>			
- Courses listed in handbook / online not available	5%	12%	8%
- Cancellation of advertised courses			

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *The choice of subjects could be improved. There are too many 'trendy' subjects and not enough serious topics covering an area in depth. For example, there is no subject on Shakespeare, which many people in my class have commented on in feedback but it has not been addressed. As many students are English teachers or about to become English teachers, it is very remiss of the course organisers that this is not available*
- *I believe there should be more exploring of the dangerous or less acceptable aspects of practice and knowledge. By this I mean areas which are regarded as less than within acceptable bounds of practice. Sometimes more can be found from exploring pathways which are seen to be in poor taste or not proven by rigorous examination.*
- *The Scriptwriting subjects I am a little disappointed in as I was very much looking forward to learning screenwriting for feature films, but have discovered the subjects will not be focussing on this. Also throughout the whole course there is overall only 2 scriptwriting classes*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *Subject selection. (There were only 3 subjects this semester, two of which conflicted and one I was completely uninterested in, forcing me to work overly hard to find courses outside my field simply maintain a full course load and forcing me to take a course that will have little to no relevance in my future studies.)*
- *Several core units should be offered every semester so that students can take a series of classes (like Writing for the media and advanced writing for the media) in their chronological order. This is especially useful for degrees which consist of one year only..*
- *Certain courses should not be made core requirements (MECO 6913), and some courses should have prerequisites.*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=49)	International (n=16)	All (n=65)
<b>Content and structure</b>			
- Unhappy with content and structure of whole degree program/ individual units of study	18%	6%	15%
- Subject content is not relevant to work/ career and industry requirements			
- Do not like intensive courses			
- More cultural/ international content required			

#### Sample comments: domestic students

- *A wider choice of subjects for Broadcast Production would have been welcoming. Big problems with plagiarism existed amongst International students*
- *More course electives could have been available, and more library resources*
- *Framework - intensive format with full days of lectures over 5-6 weeks, instead of several hours per week over full semester. Severely hindered learning potential*
- *NEW COURSE - more verbal communication development. Too vague and broad - needs to be more specific. Case studies*
- *Summer courses are a bit of a joke. An MA. course should not last four to five days.*

#### Sample comments: international students

- *Current events in other countries were neglected, more global focus needed*

## 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)

### Trends

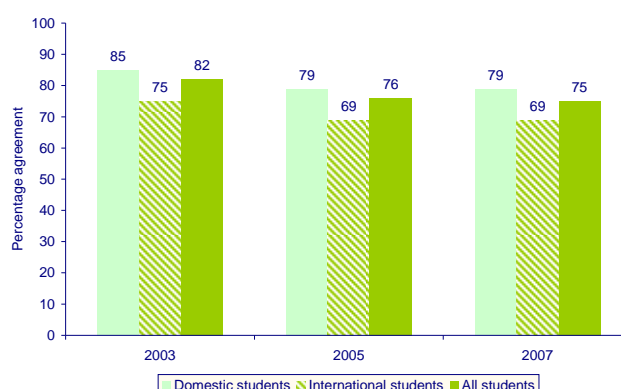
The percentage agreement scores for Appropriate Assessment (75%) in the 2007 SCEQ is higher than the University average of 66%, and places it as fourth in all faculties. However, there has been a steady decline in the Faculty scores for Assessment since 2003, when the results were 82%, and the Faculty scored the highest in the University.

In their written observations, students expressed concern about all aspects of assessment: content, type and marking structure and fairness.

### 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 received from respondents to the surveys which 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	1%	3%	5%	4%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	2%	11%	n/a	0%
	<b>All</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>3%</b>
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	5%	20%	0%	4%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	4%	13%	n/a	25%
	<b>All</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>0%</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)

Eight percent of students (i.e. 8/121) expressed satisfaction with the choice, aptness and design of assessments. The majority of comments came from international students.

##### Sample comments – domestic students

- *The ability for students to use their research speciality from their undergraduate degree in the assessment components of the course. This is particularly beneficial considering that the museum field is so broad and covers a range of disciplines from art to archaeology, natural history and science*

##### Sample comments – international students

- *Only written evaluation in form of essays, which is good as it develops a deeper understanding Hands on activities and role plays/ workshops. Makes a 'real' situation*
- *The assessments are tough but stimulating, and a welcome change from dreary three hour written exams in [my home country]!*
- *One of our teacher give us small assignments and online quiz every week which is good for us to separate our loads into parts and the grade is transparent. So that we can know how many scores we already get from this unit*
- *The topics for the assignments concentrated on extensive exploration of the issues, for which we had to use multiple resources. There was good interaction with the teachers in class*
- *The assessment methods are also very good, because the essays allow us to explore in detail the topics that are interesting for us.*

#### Graduates (CEQ 2007)

Three percent of graduates (i.e. 1/68) expressed satisfaction with the choice, aptness and design of assessments. Due to the low number of comments, and to maintain student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

### 6.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=66)	International (n=55)	All (n=121)
<b>Types of assessment</b>			
- Unhappy with the forms of assessment used by the Faculty	9%	5%	7%
- Dissatisfied with group work/ assessments			
- General comments on assessment			
<b>Marking</b>			
- Unhappy with marking of group assignments particularly in group assignments	8%	2%	5%
- Would like to be judged on content not on grammar/ academic writing skills			

##### Sample comments: domestic students

- *Some tutorials are marked by PhD students, some of whom cannot even pronounce the words properly. However bright a student may be, marking a tutorial or assignment has to done by someone who has the maturity to see different perspectives.*
- *There shouldn't be 50% on a research project and 30% on article reviews. This is not a research based course. We need to spend time dealing with the fundamentals of the subject. Research can be done only when the fundamentals are clearly and thoroughly dealt with. We have to spend more time going deep into the subject and may be do a small project worth about 25%.*
- *I also feel that the assignment seem to take precedent over the actual learning. The importance is placed on completion of assignments (to gain a mark) rather than what is important (to me, the education, the learning of the craft). I felt like I was handed the assignment at the beginning of the course (overwhelming in content and quantity) before I had learnt anything about what I was to consider. It seemed like students need 5 weeks on learning the subject before embarking on the assignments based on the newly learned information. It was like putting the cart before the horse for me.*

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=66)	International (n=55)	All (n=121)
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Sample comments: international students

- *I do not like heavy duty class which demands tons of work/assignments rather than asks how much I understand in the course.*
- *some assignments are very loosely connected with the theory - some assignments do not seem very planned or are simply unrealistic*
- *When papers/essays are marked by different markers, I lack assurance that both clearly understand they're on the same platform, and as such might have different expectations*

### Graduates (CEQ 2007)

Nine percent of graduates (i.e. 6/65) expressed dissatisfaction with the choice, aptness and design of assessments. Due to the low number of comments, and to maintain student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

## 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

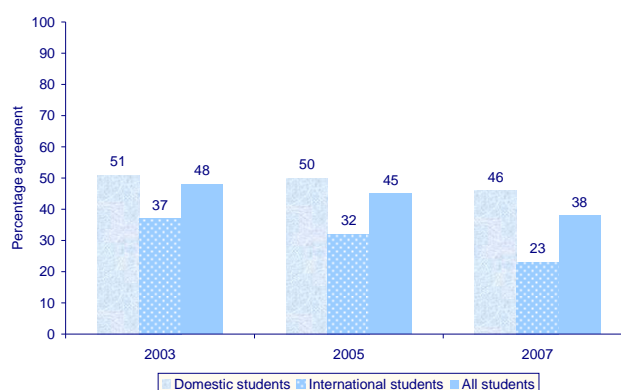
The percentage agreement scores for Appropriate Workload (38%) in the 2007 SCEQ is higher than the University average of 33%, and places it as fourth across the University. This score has decreased by 10% since 2003.

Current students (SCEQ) expressed concern with the heavy workload, and number of assignments per unit of study. No graduates (CEQ) provided comments on this aspect of their experience.

### 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	0%	0%	3%	1%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	0%	0%	0%
	<b>All</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	5%	3%	0%	0%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	13%	0%	0%
	<b>All</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>

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

The main issues raised by current students and graduates related to the amount of work that was required in their courses; and the number of individual assignments per unit of study. The similarity of comments provided on this topic negates the purpose of providing sample comments to illustrate student concerns.

## 8 Faculty/ department student administration

### Definition

Faculty / department student administration includes:

- Overall quality of Faculty administration and organisation;
- Administration of combined and Liberal Studies degrees;
- Scheduling of classes;
- Communication between staff (academic and general) and students;
- Career planning and advice

### Trends

SCEQ faculty scores indicate that student perceptions of Faculty/ department student administration has improved appreciably since 2005 (47%), and currently sits at 63%. The University average is 66%.

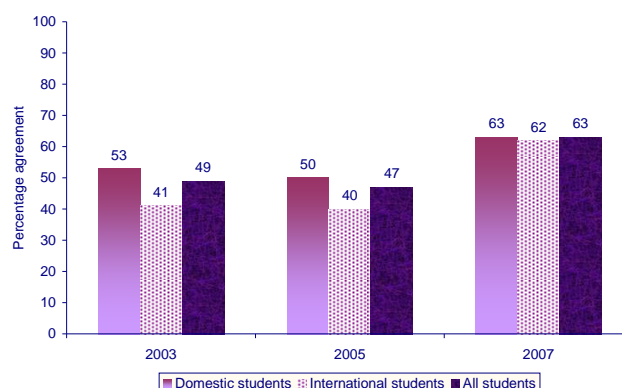
Evidence from the qualitative data confirms this excellent result. The percentage of comments from current students (SCEQ) expressing dissatisfaction with Faculty administration declined by 10% since 2002; whilst those from graduates (CEQ) declined by 12%.

NB: the analysis of qualitative data is limited to comments received in answer to the open questions on the degree experience. It does not include comments received in answer to the open questions on student administration and student support services. This analysis will be provided in a later report.

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

The following tables show the proportion of students who either strongly agreed or agreed with the SCEQ question on the Overall quality of Faculty administration and organisation.

NB: Faculty Administration and organisation is not included in the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ).



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

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

The following table includes the percentage of qualitative comments received from respondents to the surveys which can be classified as areas of best practice or areas for improvement, providing an indication of trends in the student experience of Faculty administration and organisation 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	1%	2%	0%	0%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	4%	n/a	0%
	<b>All</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	20%	9%	22%	8%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	9%	5%	n/a	6%
	<b>All</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>8%</b>

## 8.3 Key issues for current coursework students (SCEQ 2007)

### 8.3.1 Areas of best practice

#### Current students (SCEQ 2007)

2% of current students (3/121) provided comments on Faculty/ department student administration as an area of best practice. Due to the low number of comments, and to maintain student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

#### Graduates (CEQ 2007)

No graduates provided comments relating to Faculty/ department student administration as an area of best practice.

### 8.3.2 Suggested improvements

#### Current students (SCEQ 2007)

7% of current students (8/121) suggested that improvements were needed in Faculty/ department student administration. Apart from general comments relating to overall administration, students expressed concern about the scheduling of lectures and tutorials; and communication between staff and students.

##### Sample comments – domestic students

- *Classes that run AT NIGHT for postgraduate students - you do this for the LLM, so why not for the MA?*
- *I don't think this course takes into consideration students who work full-time. Often excursions are scheduled around 2pm and I have to take flex leave (at least one benefit of working in the public service)! Thankfully lectures are held after work though*
- *Improvements that could be made are agreements with other courses / faculties for cross listing of (relevant) subjects. The paperwork to obtain a cross list is both time consuming and many mixed messages are given about what paperwork is involved. Unfortunately its often just easier not to do the subject than traipse around trying to get the paperwork sorted.*

##### Sample comments – international students

- *Explanation of procedure and help from administrative staff rather than being sent in circles to find information on one's own*
- *We do need more help from the faculty administration when we are freshmen here*
- *5 some units have just one stream, I mean I really hate having lecture in the evening, but I have no other choices*

#### Graduates (CEQ 2007)

8% of graduates (5/65) suggested that improvements were needed in Faculty/ department student administration. Apart from general comments relating to overall administration, students expressed concern about the scheduling of lectures and tutorials; and communication between staff and students. The majority of comments came from domestic students.

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