



The University of Sydney

Faculty of Education and Social Work

Student experience of Learning and Teaching

Trends and key issues: Postgraduate coursework students
2001-2007

September 2008

Contents

GLOSSARY	3
NOTES	4
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	7
STUDENT EVALUATION OF TEACHING SURVEYS	7
FOCUS OF THE TREND ANALYSIS REPORT	7
1 GENERIC SKILLS (KPI 14)	8
1.1 COMPARATIVE RESULTS: QUANTITATIVE DATA 2001–2007	8
1.2 COMPARATIVE RESULTS: QUALITATIVE DATA 2001–2007	8
1.3 KEY ISSUES FOR COURSEWORK STUDENTS (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)	9
2 GOOD TEACHING (KPI 15)	11
2.1 COMPARATIVE RESULTS: QUANTITATIVE DATA 2001–2007	11
2.2 COMPARATIVE RESULTS: QUALITATIVE DATA 2001–2007	11
2.3 KEY ISSUES FOR COURSEWORK STUDENTS (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)	12
3 OVERALL SATISFACTION (KPI 16)	15
3.1 COMPARATIVE RESULTS: QUANTITATIVE DATA 2001–2007	15
3.2 COMPARATIVE RESULTS: QUALITATIVE DATA 2001–2007	15
3.3 KEY ISSUES FOR COURSEWORK STUDENTS (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)	16
4 LEARNING COMMUNITY	18
4.1 COMPARATIVE RESULTS: QUANTITATIVE DATA SCEQ 2003–2007	18
4.2 COMPARATIVE RESULTS: QUALITATIVE DATA 2001–2007	18
4.3 KEY ISSUES FOR COURSEWORK STUDENTS (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)	19
5 CURRICULUM	21
5.1 COMPARATIVE RESULTS: QUALITATIVE DATA 2001–2007	21
5.2 KEY ISSUES FOR COURSEWORK STUDENTS (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)	22
6 APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT	24
6.1 COMPARATIVE RESULTS: QUANTITATIVE DATA SCEQ 2003-2007	24
6.2 COMPARATIVE RESULTS: QUALITATIVE DATA 2001–2007	24
6.3 KEY ISSUES FOR COURSEWORK STUDENTS (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)	25
7 APPROPRIATE WORKLOAD	26
7.1 COMPARATIVE RESULTS: QUANTITATIVE DATA 2003–2007	26
7.2 COMPARATIVE RESULTS: QUALITATIVE DATA 2001–2007	26
7.3 KEY ISSUES FOR COURSEWORK STUDENTS (SCEQ 2007; CEQ 2007)	26

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 presented as a percentage of the total number of comments received

Notes

1 MTeach/BTeach responses

Graduates who have completed the MTeach/BTeach program are included in the postgraduate coursework component of the **CEQ**. The results of the analysis of their comments are included in this report.

Current students undertaking the MTeach/BTeach program are included in the undergraduate component of the **SCEQ**. The results of the analysis of their comments are included in the separate report of the undergraduate student experience.

2 Number of international students responding to the CEQ

Less than 20 international graduates responded to the CEQ in 2007. Since the minimum sample size recommended for statistical analysis of CEQ data is 20, the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data from international students for 2007 should be viewed with caution.

3 Percentage of respondents providing written comments

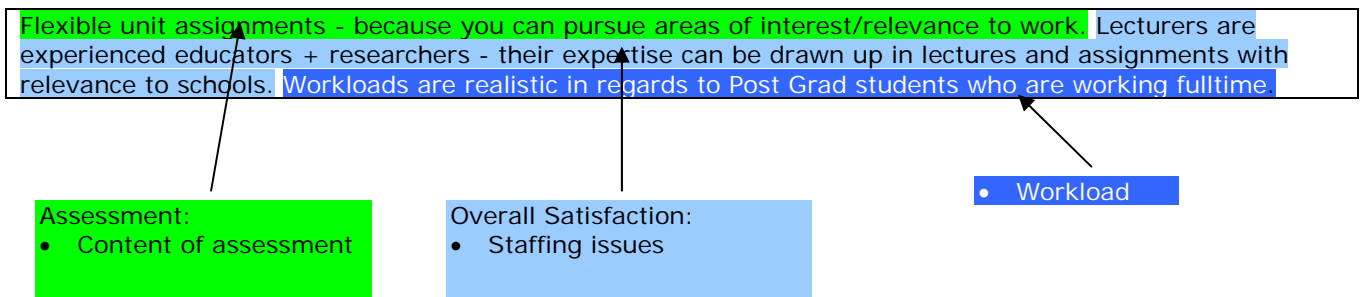
The percentage of students providing written observations in their answers to the SCEQ declined significantly in 2007. In 2005, 70% of respondents supplied written comments in answer to the open questions; in 2007 just under half (44%) of respondents supplied written observations. This decline is present across the University.

4 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.

5 Analysis and counting of comments

Each comment is analysed according to the *Taxonomy for analysing qualitative data from the SCEQ/ CEQ*¹, 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 Assessment (Content of assignments); Overall Satisfaction (Staffing issues); and Workload, the comment is counted ONCE in each of the relevant categories.



¹ Available from Quality Assurance Officer (Learning and Teaching)

Executive summary

Data about the student degree experience in the Faculty of Education and Social Work 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 (LTPF) 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.

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)
 - have remained steady for current students (SCEQ)
 - are below the University average for current students (SCEQ) for the first year since 2000
 - current domestic and international students are recording similar experiences (SCEQ)
 - are below the University average for graduates (CEQ)
 - international graduates are having a less satisfactory experience than domestic graduates for the first time

Evidence from the analysis of the qualitative data indicates that both current students (SCEQ) and graduates (CEQ) consider that they are developing the full range of University Graduate Attributes.

- Faculty scores for **Good Teaching** (KPI 15; Section 2)
 - have increased by 8% since 2005 for current students (SCEQ)
 - have been consistently above the University average for current students (SCEQ) since 2000
 - are lower than previous years for graduates (CEQ)
 - are lower than the University average for graduates (CEQ)
 - domestic and international students are recording similar experiences

Analysis of the qualitative data from current students (SCEQ) indicates that experiences of teaching within the Faculty are evenly divided between students who consider this to be one of the best areas of their experience and those who suggested improvements. For graduates (CEQ), a higher percentage of comments received from respondents focused on areas of improvement rather than areas of best practice.

- Faculty scores for **Overall Satisfaction** (KPI 15; Section 3)
 - are 79% for current students (SCEQ), an increase of 8% since 2005
 - have been consistently higher than the University average for the SCEQ since 2000
 - are 63% for graduates (CEQ), a decrease of 3% since 2006
 - are lower than the University average for graduates (CEQ)

The focus of the majority of comments received from postgraduate coursework students in response to both surveys is satisfaction with the credentials of the academic staff in terms of qualifications, experience and knowledge.

- Faculty scores for **Learning Community** (Section 4)
 - are 61% for current students (SCEQ)
 - continue to be higher than the University average
 - have decreased since 2005

Analysis of the qualitative data indicates that opinion is divided regarding this area of the student experience, with similar percentages of comments from respondents to both the SCEQ and CEQ, recording aspects of the Learning community to be either an area of best practice or one that is in need of improvement. Whilst some respondents considered that they felt part of a professional community and were able to explore academic interests through discussions and group work, others felt isolated from their peers and unable to participate in interactive activities.

- Faculty scores for **Curriculum (qualitative data only)** (Section 5)
 - in 2007, 33% of comments from current students (SCEQ) were favourable whilst 26% recommended areas in need of improvement
 - in 2007, 15% of comments received from graduates (CEQ) were favourable, 31% recommended areas for improvement
- Faculty scores for **Appropriate Assessment** (Section 6)
 - for current students (SCEQ) continue to be higher than the University average
 - have steadily decreased since 2003
 - domestic students continue to have a better experience than international students
- Faculty scores for **Appropriate Workload** (Section 7)
 - are marginally lower than the University average of 33%
 - very few students in the Faculty commented either favourably or unfavourably on their workload
 - domestic students continue to have a better experience of workload than international students

The majority of comments on this topic related to difficulties associated with having simultaneous due dates for assignments.

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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 Education and Social Work 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 student dissatisfaction on the relevant topic. Rather, it could be interpreted that the students are happy with their experiences, and prefer to focus on providing written observations 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)

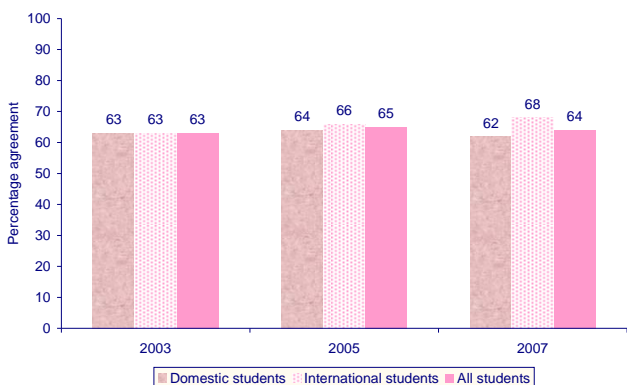
Trends

Faculty scores for current students (SCEQ) have remained in the mid 60s since 2003. The current score of 64% is marginally lower than the University score of 65%. This is the first time since the commencement of the SCEQ (in 2000) for postgraduate coursework students that the Faculty has been below the University average. International students continue to record similar experiences to domestic students in this KPI. For graduates (CEQ) the current score of 56% is lower than the University average of 62%. International graduates, for the first time, are recording a lower score than their domestic counterparts.

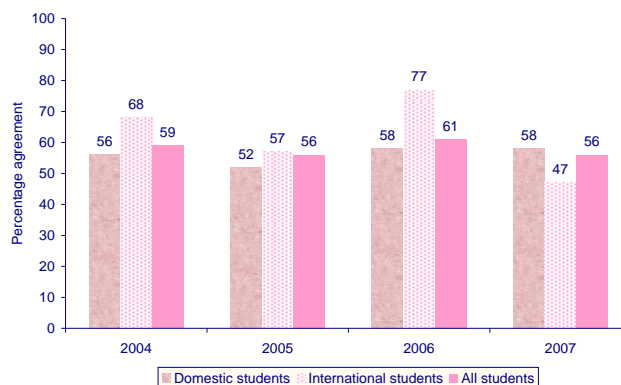
Evidence from the analysis of the qualitative data indicates that both current students (SCEQ) and graduates (CEQ) consider that they are developing the full range of University Graduate Attributes.

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 comments received from respondents to the surveys, that can be classified as areas of best practice or areas for improvement under the heading of Generic Skills. 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	32%	2%	30%	44%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	34%	28%	19%	44%
	All	3%	14%	14%	33%	13%	28%	44%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	7%	7%	9%	4%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	12%	4%	23%	10%
	All	1%	5%	7%	8%	6%	11%	4%

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

1.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)

13% (i.e. 10/73 comments received) of current students considered that skills and abilities were being developed in the areas of: professional skills and experience; research and inquiry; information literacy; personal and intellectual autonomy; and communication. The majority of comments came from international students.

Sample comment: domestic students

- *Master of Special Education. Enabled me to be eligible for work in my area of interest. I like the fact that there wasn't too much spoon feeding. Independence of thinking is encouraged even though it is made very clear the current trends/beliefs in sp. ed.*

Sample comments: international students

- *I think the best part of my degree course is presentation. I think it can improve our understanding for certain concepts, and present it to peers. it is a good way to learn*
- *Some units are very practical. Like in learning of Methodology of teaching, we should do teaching practice, it makes us have chance to observe what other teachers would do in their classroom*
- *The best aspect of this TESOL master's degree course, in my opinion, is the theory linking with the real teaching experience which stimulates my thinking, because it can help me to improve my teaching and made me understand how to carry out a research, expanding my view on research in this area*
- *The course is well designed and integrated with group tasks and individual works. It is very interesting to learn how to analyse the online collaboration while we are actually working online as a collaborative learning group*
- *Rich library resources and best instructors. As claimed in Item 48, I developed my personal and intellectual independence with the aid of rich resources in Fisher library and helpful teachers*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

	Domestic (n=108)	International (n=9)	All (n=117)
--	---------------------	------------------------	----------------

Ethical, social, professional understanding

- | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|
| - Ability to work in a group/ team working skills | 39% | 22% | 38% |
| - Development of discipline/ professional skills | | | |
| - Presence of work placement/ industry experience/ field trips in the course | | | |

Sample comments: domestic students

- *Emphasis on group work; practical teaching skills learnt; we were a small group (approx 200) and we got to know each other well in a real team spirit; high expectations on students to produce high quality work*
- *Learning to research and improve computer skills. Learning to give an interesting presentation. Learning about management and business struction in general. Meeting interesting people*
- *Practical tasks that could be applied in the workplace; visual art class was excellent, learning about building resilience*

Sample comments: international students

- *The practical experiences provided by the practicums in local schools were very valuable in developing my confidence in my ability to teach. The honours part of the course was also very valuable*
- *The teaching staff are very professional and give constructive suggestions, which helped me develop independent thinking while knowing how and where to get resources*
- *Enhanced my ability of study. Enabled me to find effective method to study*

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 Education and Social Work is no exception. 6% of postgraduate coursework students (i.e. 4/72 comments received) felt that necessary skills and abilities were not being developed during the course of their studies.

Due to the low number of comments received from respondents to the SCEQ, and to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

4% of postgraduate coursework graduates (i.e. 5/112 comments received) felt that necessary skills and abilities were not being developed during the course of their studies.

Due to the low number of comments received from respondents to the CEQ, and to preserve student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

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)

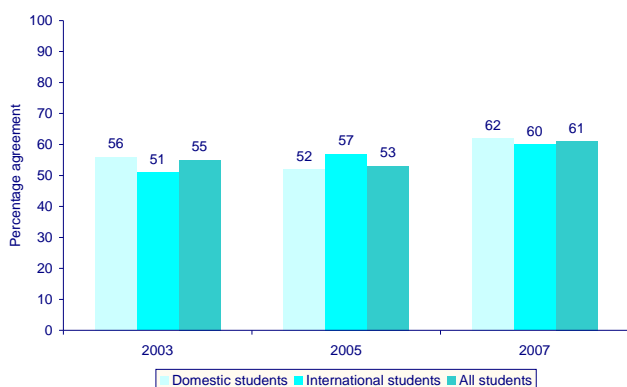
Trends

Faculty scores for Good Teaching for current students (SCEQ) have increased by 8% since 2005, and are currently the fourth highest in the University. The Faculty has been consistently above the University average for Good Teaching since 2000. For graduates (CEQ), scores are lower than those for 2006, and are lower than the University average of 52%. Domestic and international students are recording similar experiences for this KPI.

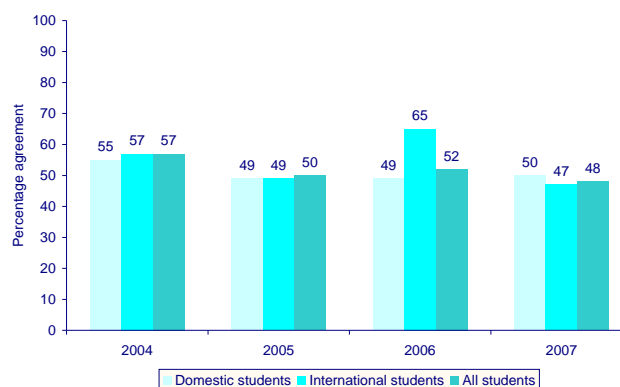
Analysis of the qualitative data from current students (SCEQ) indicates that experiences of teaching within the Faculty are evenly divided between students who consider this to be one of the best areas of their experience and those who suggested improvements. For graduates (CEQ), a higher percentage of comments received from respondents focused on areas of improvement rather than areas of best practice.

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 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 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	46%	43%	25%	30%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	50%	46%	33%
	All	19%	28%	46%	32%	46%	28%	30%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	49%	52%	25%	40%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	38%	36%	45%	20%
	All	28%	36%	36%	46%	46%	28%	38%

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

2.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=44)	International (n=32)	All (n=76)
Good teaching experiences			
- Use of innovative and up to date teaching methods and techniques			
- Ability to keep students interested in the subject	9%	19%	13%
- Encouragement to participate in discussions during lectures and tutorials			
- Learning resources are up to date, and relevant to curriculum			
Concern and care for student learning			
- Students felt supported in their learning; help and advice readily available	16%	13%	14%
- Lecturers understood problems and difficulties of students (academic and personal)			
Research-enhanced learning and teaching			
- Students participate in research projects			
- Students are aware of lecturers' research interests	11%	16%	13%
- There is a research component in the curriculum			
- (mentioned in 13% of comments received in 2007, and 15% in 2005; cf. with 8% in 2003; and 2% in 2002)			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *Collaboration between staff and students was fostered and given more than adequate attention. Staff were quite interested in my work and helpful when I asked for assistance. Online communication was effective and useful (especially being able to backtrack to recheck advice or information).*
- *I am currently study in the Masters in International Education (distance education). ...I have enjoyed the inquiry basis of this unit of study - the curriculum unit provides ample material for reading and studying as well as suggestions for independent research. The curriculum leaders have also provided prompt feedback regarding progress during the course which is appreciated. Although it is a challenge to have a family, work and study at the same time - the interest level is high which encourages me to continue on this chosen path.*
- *Innovative approaches to teaching the subjects covered by the Masters. I have particularly benefited from the collaborative projects embedded into most of the subjects. Because of the knowledge gained in this course, I have significantly improved my career prospects. I am already moving forward into my chosen area, & I have yet to complete my Masters.*

Sample comments: international students

- *I'm doing four units of study this semester, and it's my first semester and it's totally new for me, so the thing I appreciate the most is that most of my lecturers are really supportive and they understand my difficulty in the course of study and give me a lot help*
- *Lecturers encourage active learning and participation in class and drawing on the experience of every student in the class*
- *The readings & assignments were very informative and in some courses, the course facilitator would outline why the article(s) were included in the required reading which helped to clarify the articles and the purpose of reading them*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=108)	International (n=9)	All (n=117)
Good teaching experiences			
- Use of innovative and up to date teaching methods and techniques			
- Ability to keep students interested in the subject	14%	0%	13%
- Encouragement to participate in discussions during lectures and tutorials			
- Learning resources are up to date, and relevant to curriculum			
Concern and care for student learning			
- Students felt supported in their learning; help and advice readily available	7%	22%	9%
- Lecturers understood problems and difficulties of students (academic and personal)			

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=108)	International (n=9)	All (n=117)
Sample comments: domestic students			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Most lecturers were enthusiastic, helpful and cooperative</i> - <i>Encouragement of group work. Open discussion and facilitation of group discussion</i> - <i>Passionate, Committed teachers and fellow students with my myriad backgrounds and perspectives</i> 			
Sample comments: international students			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The individual support available</i> - <i>Teaching staff work hard to inspire my learning motivation and improve myself learning ability</i> - <i>The staffs are very kind. They try their best to solve the problem for you</i> 			

2.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=44)	International (n=28)	All (n=72)
Good teaching experiences			
- Teaching methods used are outdated; Lectures were boring			
- Discussions of issues raised during lectures and tutorials are not encouraged	25%	11%	19%
- Learning resources are out of date, and not relevant to curriculum			
- Parallel teaching with undergraduate students not acceptable			
Feedback on work (from staff to students)			
- Comments on work are not constructive; do not explain where mistakes occur that can be rectified.			
- Marks only supplied, no comments	16%	14%	15%
- Feedback is untimely and not helpful			
- Perceived lack of staff effort in provision of feedback on assessment			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *Due to the nature of this being a Post Graduate degree, I feel there is a lot left to be desired in the teaching methods of some of the lecturers. Namely, the IT post graduate subject and the Individual Professional Portfolio - both these lecturers have done bare minimum so far. Their feedback is appalling and have placed the onus on us to teach the rest of the class with minimal input themselves. it begs the question - what are they being paid for?*
- *it would be wonderful if lectures would use full words/titles instead of trendy shorten versions of words in describing titles, books, government departments, web sites etc. Studying in a new field is difficult, please don't add to it!*
- *A lot of the lectures could be done online as we do not get much out of them sitting face to face with the lecturer. I travel up to 5hrs per day and don't appreciate sitting in a lecturer room listening to the teacher read the slides (I can do this at home or on the train) or present a lecture that has very little to do with the unit at hand (particularly when it is a masters subject and the students have to present for 1hr about the new unit the before we are supposed to get the lecturers version).*

Sample comments: international students

- *One aspect I expect to improve the course is about the feedback of the assignment. We have only one feedback to each assignment, and I believe it could be better if we could have more exchanges about the assignment and more opportunities to improve them. Anyway, the course is really beneficial to my career*
- *The aspects of my course that needs improving is continuous and constructive feedback form the lecturer . Where technology plays an important role learners need to be assured that they are led well through until such times when they can independently handle the technology used.*
- *The materials of some course may be updated because the research on teaching is still in process, the latest materials can be helpful for students to know the latest development of this field.*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=102)	International (n=10)	All (n=112)
Good teaching experiences			
- Teaching methods and techniques used are outdated/need improvement	14%	10%	13%
- Discussions of issues during class were not encouraged			
- Lecturers were boring; did not engage with students			
- Learning materials and resources were outdated			
Concern and care for student learning			
- Students did not feel supported in their learning; help and advice readily available	14%	0%	13%
- Lecturers did not understand problems and difficulties of students (academic and personal)			
Feedback on work (from staff to students)			
- Comments on work are not constructive; do not explain where mistakes occur that can be rectified.	9%	10%	9%
- Feedback is untimely and not helpful			
Sample comments: domestic students			
- <i>The teaching staff overall they were patronising / condescending; they did not practice what they preached; constantly felt if the course was criticised or questioned we would fail. Poor/unclear instructions and criteria</i>			
- <i>Also markings rubrics do not assist learning they just simplify things for markers hence many staff write no comments and do not justify their assessments.</i>			
- <i>Large variety in the quality of lecturing. Some were deep thinkers and well prepared for lectures while one or two seemed to come in and deliver superficial lectures off the staff.</i>			
- <i>Lecturers, sometimes they were dull in the delivery of information</i>			
Sample comments: international students			
- <i>The feedback from the staffs</i>			
- <i>The group learning environment</i>			

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

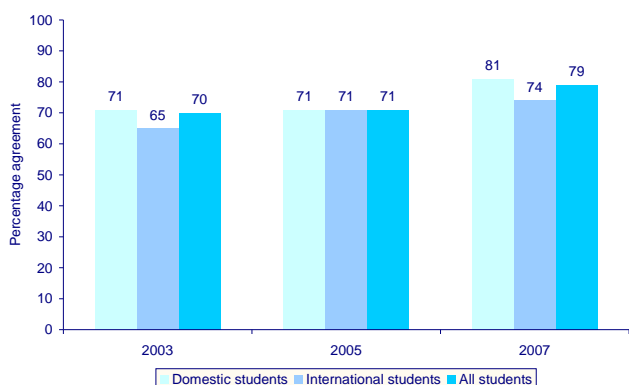
Trends

Overall Satisfaction with the degree course currently rates at 79% for current students (SCEQ) and 63% for graduates. These results represent a substantial increase (8%) for current students; and a decrease of 3% for graduates. The University average for current students is 75% and for graduates is 70%. The Faculty has remained consistently above the University average for current students (SCEQ) since 2000.

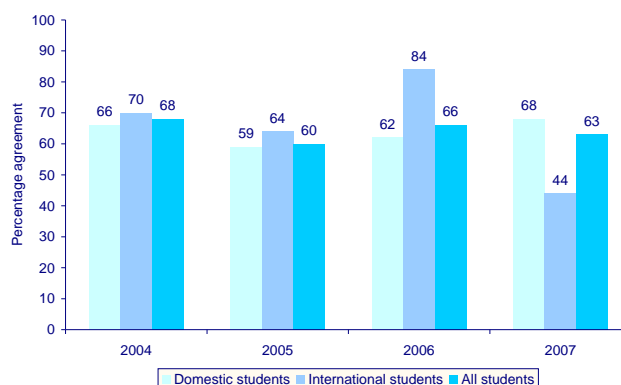
The focus of the majority of comments received from postgraduate coursework students in response to both the SCEQ and CEQ is satisfaction with the credentials of the academic staff in terms of qualifications, experience and knowledge.

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 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 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	10%	18%	14%	13%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	3%	6%	8%	11%
	All	27%	19%	21%	8%	13%	13%	13%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	8%	11%	8%	6%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	19%	0%	9%	0%
	All	30%	11%	14%	12%	7%	8%	5%

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

3.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=44)	International (n=32)	All (n=76)
Staffing issues			
- Qualifications of staff in subject matter and in teaching at tertiary level	16%	3%	11%
- 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

- *being taught by teachers who are currently teaching not ex teachers. Drawing on their real life knowledge not what someone experienced 10 years ago*
- *Having lecturers/tutors that are actually teaching currently in schools. Their insight is invaluable*
- *The input from the dept of education. Real teachers (doing the job now) teaching new teachers. This is more beneficial than it was in my undergraduate degree. Where my lecturers had not been in front of a class for years. What they said and what happened out in schools is very different*
- *The 'real life' experience that lecturers talk about during class tutorials, in relating the relevant issues of the course. This makes the learning more interesting, and far more practical*

Sample comments: international students

- *It is addressing the areas of interest I have concerning a career change*
- *Interesting subjects, knowledgeable professors and lecturers*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=108)	International (n=9)	All (n=117)
Staffing issues			
- Qualifications of staff in subject matter and in teaching at tertiary level	11%	11%	11%
- 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

- *Lectures were of a high standard in most subjects Lectures with classroom experience (within the past one to five years) were very helpful with current knowledge of curriculum/syllabus group work requires more structure*
- *Some lecturers, particularly for HSIE, and the high calibre of students entering the course academically and socially*
- *Mixing with and being lectured by high quality professionals in coaching*
- *Good teachers with industry and teaching experience*
- *The lecturers. All staff members have great teaching & research experience within Australia and abroad. As this degree (MEd TESOL) involves teaching international students the views and experiences of lecturers are highly valued*

Sample comments: international students

- *Teaching staff*

3.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)

7% percent of students (i.e. 5/72) expressed dissatisfaction with the course as a whole; the lack of relevant qualifications/experience of academic staff, particularly in the area of ICT; and the lack of teaching experience in the international student cohort.

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

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

5% percent of graduates (i.e. 6/112) expressed dissatisfaction with the course as a whole; and the lack of relevant qualifications and/or experience of academic staff

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

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)
- Physical resources (physical facilities: buildings, rooms, etc; library)
- Location/ isolation (affiliated campuses, hospitals, institutes)
- Induction and orientation
- Responsiveness to student feedback

Trends

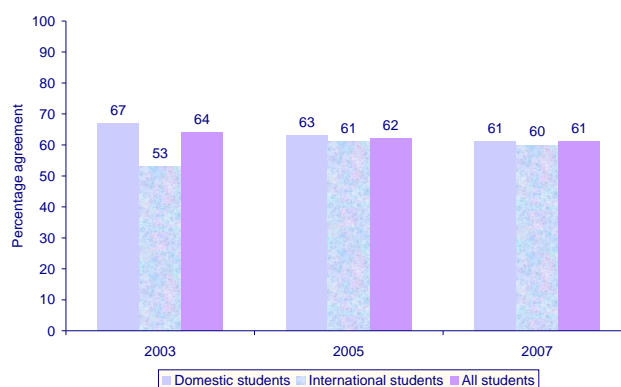
61% of students either agreed or strongly agreed with SCEQ survey items on the Learning Community. This is above the University average of 54%. Domestic and international students record similar experiences. The Faculty has consistently scored above the University average for this KPI since the scale was introduced into the SCEQ in 2001.

Analysis of the qualitative data indicates that opinion is divided regarding this area of the student experience, with similar percentages of comments from respondents to both the SCEQ and CEQ, recording aspects of the Learning community to be either an area of best practice or one that is in need of improvement. Whilst some respondents considered that they felt part of a professional community and were able to explore academic interests through discussions and group work, others felt isolated from their peers and unable to participate in interactive activities.

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 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 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	35%	9%	24%	20%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	17%	9%	27%	0%
	All	24%	22%	29%	30%	22%	24%	19%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	19%	18%	7%	15%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	31%	32%	9%	30%
	All	12%	14%	14%	22%	24%	7%	16%

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

4.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=44)	International (n=32)	All (n=76)
Learning environment			
- Enjoyed University social life			
- Felt that they belonged to a community (degree/ Faculty)	27%	6%	18%
- Academic interests were being explored with staff and students e.g. in tutorials			
- Enjoyed the cultural mix of students in the course			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *I am studying with a great group of retrainees who are actively offering peer support, sharing their knowledge, understanding and resources and who will become valued colleagues next year when I'm in the workplace. Some of my lecturers are great.*
- *Being able to interact face-to-face with coaches from other sports and therefore being able to throw around all the different ideas and then taking them home with me*
- *How they made us work in groups with people from different disciplines. This is good because we could learn from each other. It was also good seeing how peoples' perspectives were different. Having a mentor from a different discipline was good as it expanded our network*

Sample comments: international students

- *Getting resource through diverse methods are helpful to study in this course such as reading materials from short loan, reserve or electronic items. Even if the library has so many books students feel they are not enough to use*
- *With the open discussions in some of the courses, and the chance that I've been given for representation*
- *Qualified lecturers (mostly), relatively small tutorial classes, academic atmosphere (Research forum, colloquium)*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=108)	International (n=9)	All (n=117)
Learning environment			
- Enjoyed University social life			
- Felt that they belonged to a community (degree/ Faculty)	19%	0%	18%
- Academic interests were being explored with staff and students e.g. in tutorials			
- Enjoyed the cultural mix of students in the course			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *I was in the same class / group for all three semesters which enabled me to develop good friendships and support networks.*
- *Classroom discussions, ability to network with other sports coaches, special guests who addressed the various classes*
- *The collegial atmosphere, learning and sharing of resources*
- *Teamwork and communication with other students in the course*
- *Emphasis on group work; practical teaching skills learnt; we were a small group (approx 200) and we got to know each other well in a real team spirit; high expectations on students to produce high quality work*
- *Focus on teamwork and an environment of assisting peers as grades were pass/fail*

4.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=44)	International (n=28)	All (n=72)
Learning environment			
- Did not feel that they belonged to a community (degree/ Faculty)			
- Academic interests were not explored with staff and students e.g. in tutorials	16%	32%	22%
- Experienced discrimination			
- Class sizes too large			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *Some lecturers are arrogant and appear more interested in cementing their own academic superiority rather than educating their students. The university as a whole has a bad reputation for favouring international and female students, and I feel that nothing is actively being done in my degree course to quell such suspicions.*
- *Online learning- Feeling of isolation, lack of sense of community*
- *Although the unit of studies within the Masters degree are all very useful, I believe many of the units need a little more development. Especially, from a practical point of view. There needs to be more student-teacher or student-student interaction, an hour (tutorial session) simply isn't enough. Being able to exchange ideas on a topic is just as important as the theory we are provided with. Even having students do a micro-teaching session or brainstorming session (where applicable) enables learners with a better understanding. In other words, a more active and hands on approach to learning may be more effective in many ways*

Sample comments: international students

- *The communication among peers. Because we spend only two hours per course per week. And I feel I have not meet with classmates too often. Most of them work full-time and study part-time and too busy to have a chat*
- *Hope there will be less students in class. Too many students but few lecturers who can give enough feedback and support*
- *It would be better if we could have some more time for the tutorials*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=102)	International (n=10)	All (n=112)
Learning environment			
- Did not feel that they belonged to a community (degree/ Faculty)			
- Academic interests were not explored with staff and students e.g. in tutorials	16%	32%	22%
- Experienced discrimination			
- Class sizes too large/ rooms too small			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *Senior lecturers attitudes towards women with children.*
- *Study one tutorials - lacked direction and often lacked integration with lectures. Online tasks - often pointless*
- *The tutorials / seminars were often a waste of time because we had to listen to other people's personal history rather than focusing on theory. Also subjects shouldn't begin and end at unusual time as this becomes very confusing*

Sample comments: international students

- *Communication and interaction between teachers and students*
- *Some of the staff don't have adequate knowledge I experience with international students*
- *Classrooms too small*

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

Trends

In 2007 33% of comments received from current students (SCEQ) and 15% from graduates (CEQ) commented favourably on various aspects of the curriculum. 26% of comments received in the SCEQ and 31% in the CEQ suggested improvements in 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 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	28%	32%	19%	14%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	34%	34%	31%	33%
	All	46%	30%	36%	30%	33%	20%	15%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	31%	27%	43%	30%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	31%	25%	23%	40%
	All	35%	21%	32%	31%	26%	40%	31%

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

5.2.2 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=44)	International (n=32)	All (n=76)
Content and structure			
- Content and structure of whole degree program/ individual units of study	25%	34%	29%
- Intensive courses			
- Subjects appear to be linked together			
- Subject content is relevant to work/ career and industry requirements			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *The content is mostly relevant from a teaching point of view, so that knowledge and insights are immediately applicable to teaching and learning in the language classroom and to individual learners. It also motivates me as a teacher to be more aware of how I teach and to be more aware of individual learners' differences and needs*
- *The structure of the course, the subjects offered in the course and the reading material provided.*
- *being introduced to a wide range of information relevant to my career and then being able to follow special interests*

Sample comments: international students

- *The best aspects of my course is the relevancy that it has towards my profession. It has broadened my perspectives and changed my thinking on number of work practices. The technology integration part of this course also has enabled me to appreciate technology and how it affords contextual learning*
- *The course design is good enough for this degree course because it is quite practical for college English teachers to learn not only theory but also practice from the course*
- *The integration of education and technology is good. I mean, the expected outcome of this program can meet the need from the society*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=108)	International (n=9)	All (n=117)
Content and structure			
- Content and structure of whole degree program/ individual units of study	12%	33%	14%
- Subject content is relevant to work/ career and industry requirements			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *In developing a better understanding of my professional practice by developing an understanding of the theoretical framework underpinning this practice*
- *Offered on weekends. Flexible. Understanding of outside uni commitments*
- *The lectures because these enables students to acquire a lot of information in a short period of time which was essential in such an intensive course*

Sample comments: international students

- *I enjoyed my film class and I thought the maths class was very helpful and informative*
- *Subject area professors (drama English), opportunity to do honours, special, ed ,practical experience*
- *The honours part of the course was also very valuable*

5.2.3 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=44)	International (n=28)	All (n=72)
Content and structure			
- Unhappy with content and structure of whole degree program/ individual units of study	16%	14%	15%
- Subject content is not relevant to work/ career and industry requirements			
Online delivery of content			
- Online components of the course unsatisfactory	9%	0%	6%
- Differences between face to face and online components significant			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *I was dissatisfied with the specific degree course that didn't meet my expectations and learning needs at a number of levels. The content of the course made it necessary for a student-centred approach utilising students' prior knowledge, expectations and learning outcomes. This hasn't been the case. Areas that can be improved include course design, course pedagogy, assessments and workload*
- *The flexibility of the program could be improved. Perhaps including online learning or other models of teaching as it is often difficult to attend classes because of teaching and work commitments.*
- *The face to face subject did not seem as organised as the online subject. There wasn't always an obvious correlation from week to week in the information taught. Having no prior knowledge in the field it was difficult to know what was expected of me. Where as the online subject had 4 modules that built on each other as you proceeded through the subject. The final assessment task brought together all the concepts taught in the first 3 assessments.*

Sample comments: international students

- *A few more units could be added to provide more choices*
- *Linking of course with career outcomes. Clear pathways for a particular set of electives. Attempt to integrate them. Effort for fostering class cohesiveness, perhaps rescheduling classes from night to day, field trip...*
- *The materials of some course may be updated because the research on teaching is still in process, the latest materials can be helpful for students to know the latest development of this field*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	Domestic (n=102)	International (n=10)	All (n=112)
Content and structure			
- Unhappy with content and structure of whole degree program/ individual units of study	26%	30%	27%
- Subject content is not relevant to work/ career and industry requirements			
- Do not like intensive courses			

Sample comments: domestic students

- *Info tech was ineffective. Though lecturers were nice, indigenous aust. Perspectives needed to be taught not just how to teach indigenous students lack of support for special consideration circumstances*
- *Online components were a waste of time and disrespectful of students time and efforts*
- *The special education and science (primary) subjects were poorly designed. Feedback on assignments was often brief and took a long time to get back to us*

Sample comments: international students

- *Since I am an international student, I needed hope teachers could teach us more about how to compare the educational issues between Eastern and Western Education systems*
- *There was an element to impracticality to some of the required subjects and a few of the lecturers and tutor seemed drastically out of touch with the concerns of beginning teachers*
- *A lot of the other work I did in this course was not very relevant to my career as a primary school / special education teacher*

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

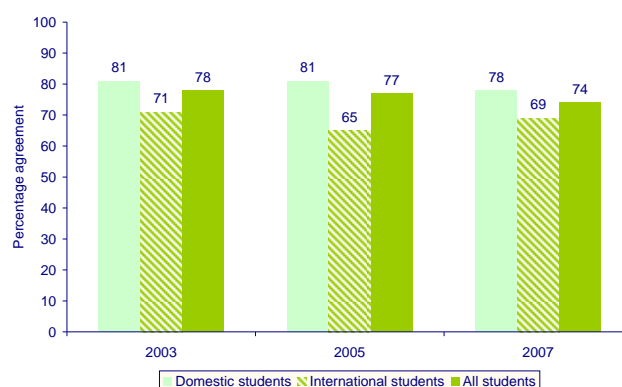
The percentage agreement scores for Appropriate Assessment in the 2007 SCEQ is 74%. Whilst this represents a slight decrease over the past three surveys, the Faculty remains well above the University average (currently 55%), a place it has maintained since the commencement of the SCEQ. Only four other faculties recorded higher scores in 2007. Domestic students continue to have a better experience than international students.

Written observations from current students (SCEQ) on this topic were evenly divided between those that considered assessment practices, and marking of assignments to be an area of best practice and those that thought improvements were necessary. Very few graduates (CEQ) commented on this topic.

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 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 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	6%	9%	8%	1%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	7%	6%	4%	0%
	All	9%	2%	7%	6%	8%	7%	1%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	15%	9%	6%	5%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	4%	4%	0%	0%
	All	9%	2%	5%	12%	7%	5%	4%

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

6.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)

8% percent of students (i.e. 6/76) expressed satisfaction with the choice, aptness and design of assessments, and the capability of staff to correctly grade assignments.

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

1% of graduates (i.e. 1/117) expressed satisfaction with the choice, aptness and design of assessments. No domestic graduates commented on this topic.

Due to the low number of comments from both current students (SCEQ) and graduates (CEQ), and to maintain student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

6.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)

7% of current students (i.e. 5/72) expressed dissatisfaction with the marking and weighting of assignments. This is a decrease of 5% on previous years.

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

4% of graduates (i.e. 5/112) expressed dissatisfaction with the content, type and marking of assignments.

Due to the low number of comments from both groups of respondents, 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

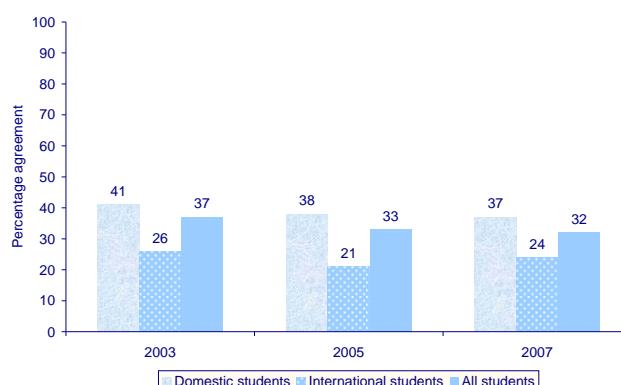
The percentage agreement scores for Appropriate Workload (32%) in the 2007 SCEQ is lower than the University average of 33%. Domestic students continue to have a better experience of workload than international students.

The majority of comments on this area of the student experience focused on the simultaneous due dates of assignments from different units of study.

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%	2%	0%	0%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	0%	0%	0%
	All	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	3%	9%	3%	2%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	4%	4%	0%	0%
	All	12%	6%	5%	4%	7%	3%	2%

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

The main issues raised by current students related to the amount of work that was required in their courses and the simultaneous due dates of assignments. The similarity of comments provided on this topic negates the purpose of providing sample comments to illustrate student concerns.