



The University of Sydney

Faculty of Health Sciences

Student experience of Learning and Teaching

Trends and key issues: Undergraduate students 2001-2007

September 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 presented as a percentage of the total number of comments received

Notes

Note re percentage of respondents providing written comments in SCEQ

The percentage of students providing written observations in their answers to the SCEQ declined significantly in 2007. In 2005, 81% of respondents supplied written comments in answer to the open questions; in 2007 just below half (47%) of respondents supplied written observations. This reflects the results for all faculties, with an average of 20-25% less respondents answering the open responses compared to previous years (2001 – 2003, 2005).

Note re analysis of qualitative data (international students)

2005 Student Course Experience Questionnaire (SCEQ)

Less than 20 international students provided written observations in their response to the SCEQ in 2005. Since the minimum sample size recommended for statistical analysis of SCEQ data is 20, the analysis of the qualitative data from international students for 2005 should be viewed with caution.

2007 Student Course Experience Questionnaire (SCEQ) and Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ)

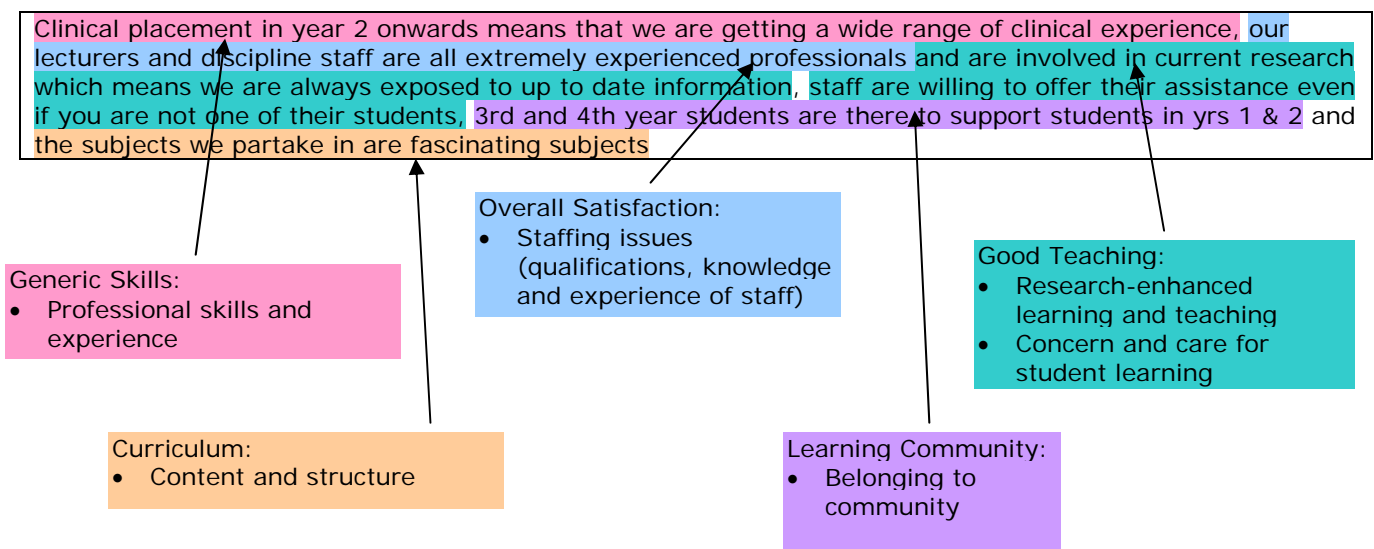
6 or less international students provided written observations in response to both surveys in 2007. This is indicated by the phrase *Too few* in the qualitative data comparative tables. In the Key Issues sections of the report, the qualitative analysis for both current students (SCEQ) and graduates (CEQ) is included in the overall totals.

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*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 Generic Skills (Professional skills and experience); Overall Satisfaction (Staffing issues); Good Teaching (Research-enhanced learning and teaching; Concern and care for student learning); Learning Community (Belonging to community); and Curriculum (Content and Structure), 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 Health Sciences 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; Workload; Clear Goals and Standards; and Faculty / Department Student Administration).

Written observations, from respondents to the surveys, about their experience provide evidence to support the Faculty (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 7; Section 1)
 - have declined for current students (SCEQ)
 - have fluctuated between 71% (2004; 2006) and 65% (2005; 2007) for graduates (CEQ)
 - domestic graduates (CEQ) have a better experience than international graduates
 - are lower than the University average for both current students (SCEQ) and graduates (CEQ)

The main focus of students written observations on this topic is the development of, and opportunities to practice, relevant professional skills and experience. Relatively few comments are provided on the development of the remaining graduate attributes.

- Faculty scores for **Good Teaching** (KPI 8; Section 2)
 - remain in the mid 30th percentile for current students (SCEQ)
 - are similar for both domestic and international current students (SCEQ)
 - have increased for graduates (CEQ)
 - international graduates continue to record a better experience than domestic graduates (CEQ)
 - are below the University average for both current students (SCEQ) and graduates (CEQ)

Despite the lower than average quantitative results, analysis of the qualitative data from current students (SCEQ) indicates that they are becoming more satisfied with their experiences of teaching practices across the Faculty. 2007 saw a substantial increase in the percentage of positive comments relating to teaching practices across the Faculty from previous years (2001 – 2005: 26% average; 2007: 41%).

Simultaneously, in 2007, the percentage of comments expressing satisfaction with teaching significantly outnumbered those that suggested improvements for the first time since analysis of the qualitative data commenced. Graduates (CEQ) continue to perceive this as an area in need of improvement, with more comments suggesting improvements being received, than those indicating satisfaction.

This provides qualitative evidence of the success of the ITL strategic initiative "Research-enhanced learning and teaching" within the Faculty is provided by the increasing percentage of current students (SCEQ) mentioning this topic in their written observations (6% in 2007, compared with 2% in previous years).

- Faculty scores for **Overall Satisfaction** (KPI 9; Section 3)
 - are 68% for current students (SCEQ), the lowest since 2000
 - current domestic students (SCEQ) continue to have a better experience than international students
 - are 67% for graduates (CEQ)
 - domestic graduates (CEQ) recorded a higher score than international graduates for the first time
 - are below the University average both current students and graduates

The main focus of comments received in both surveys was either satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the qualifications, knowledge and experience of academic staff (lecturers, tutors and clinicians). A similar percentage of positive and negative comments on this area was received, possibly reflecting the size of the faculty and the wide range of programs undertaken by students. The lack of information relating to employment opportunities after graduation was a consistent topic in comments received from graduates (CEQ).

- Faculty scores for **Learning Community** (Section 4)
 - are 53% for current students (SCEQ)
 - are lower than the University average
 - have decreased by 5% since 2005, the highest since 2001
 - are rated significantly lower by international students than domestic students

Analysis of the qualitative data from current students (SCEQ) indicates that students are becoming more satisfied with the learning environment engendered at Cumberland campus. The percentage of positive comments which mentioned various aspects of this area of their experience increased from an average of 26% in 2001 – 2005 to 31% in 2007. Comments from graduates (CEQ) in 2006 and 2007 focused more on the positive effects of being part of a satisfactory learning environment. It was also evident that the location of the Faculty at Cumberland has both positive and negative effects. Whilst students appreciate the community feel that this provides, and the friendships arising from being in the same group throughout their degree, the distance from the Camperdown campus has its drawbacks, particularly for students who are undertaking degrees requiring attendance at Camperdown or Mallet Street.

- Faculty scores for **Curriculum (qualitative data only)** (Section 5)
 - in 2007, 42% of comments from current students (SCEQ) were favourable whilst 33% recommended areas in need of improvement.
 - in 2007, 42% of comments received from graduates (CEQ) were favourable, 36% recommended areas for improvement.

The relevance, flexibility and professional content of the curriculum are all appreciated, together with opportunities to combine subjects from other faculties with those from Health Sciences.

- Faculty scores for **Appropriate Assessment** (Section 6)
 - SCEQ score of 46% is amongst the lowest in the University
 - have decreased steadily since 2002
 - domestic and international students have similar experiences

The main focus of comments received from both current students (SCEQ) and graduates (CEQ) was the types of assessment used by the Faculty, particularly the perceived lack of equitable marking in group assessments.

- Faculty scores for **Appropriate Workload** (Section 7)
 - are lower than the University average of 23%
 - have remained at 21% since 2003
 - place the Faculty in the bottom third of faculties

The percentage of comments received from both current students (SCEQ) and graduates (CEQ) expressing dissatisfaction with workload this topic from has remained steady at an average of 19% since analysis of the qualitative data commenced.

- Faculty scores for **Clear Goals and Standards** (Section 8)
 - are just above the University average of 42%
 - international students continue to have a better experience than domestic students (SCEQ).

In relation to comments received which mention aspects of Clear Goals and Standards, 11% of current students (SCEQ) were dissatisfied with the lack of clear aims and objectives, and the lack of clarity regarding expectations of the standard of work expected, particularly in relation to assessments. This is double the percentage of comments received on this topic in 2005.

- Faculty scores for **Faculty/ Department Student Administration** (Section 9)
 - have remained steady since 2005
 - are lower than the University average for the first time since 2000
 - domestic students continue to have a substantially better experience than international students (SCEQ)

The percentage of comments received from respondents to the surveys, which mention aspects of Faculty/ Department Student Administration as an area of concern, has doubled since 2002. The main focus of comments was communication between Faculty administration and students especially regarding changes in timetabling and cancellation of lectures; and the organisation/ allocation of practical experience placements.

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 Health Sciences between 2001 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; Workload; Clear Goals and Standards; and Faculty/ Department Student Administration) 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 observations, and often mention more than one aspect of their experiences in these comments.

1 Generic Skills (KPI 7)

Definition

Generic Skills includes:

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

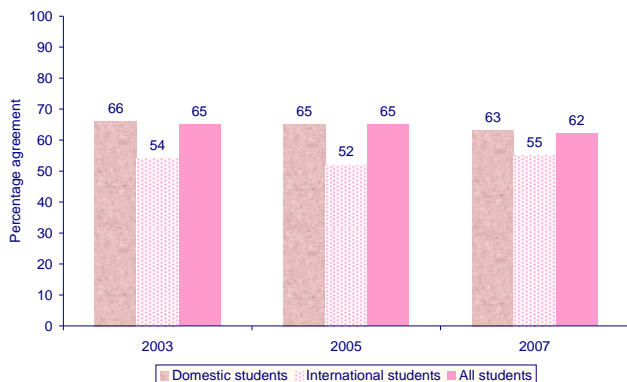
Trends

Faculty scores for Generic Skills for current students (SCEQ) have declined since 2002, and currently stand at 62%, which is below the University average of 66%. The scores for international students have increased during this time; whilst that for domestic students have decreased. For graduates (CEQ) scores have fluctuated between 65% (2005; 2007) and 71% (2004; 2006). Domestic graduates (CEQ) recorded higher scores than international graduates in 2006 and 2007; compared to lower scores in previous years. The University average for the CEQ is 69%.

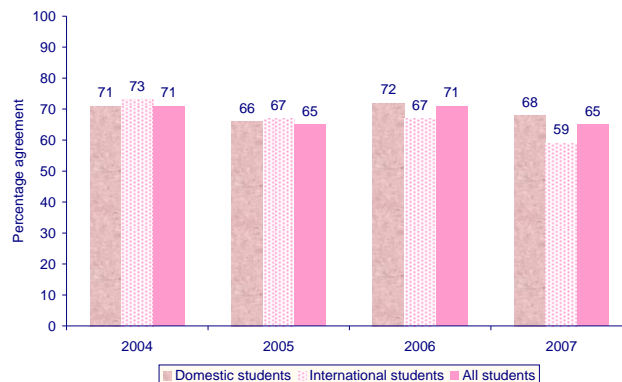
The main focus of students written observations on this topic is the development of and opportunities to practice their professional skills and experience. Relatively few comments are provided on the development of the remaining graduate attributes.

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	44%	36%	52%	40%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	40%	Too few	44%	Too few
	All	41%	44%	49%	44%	37%	52%	40%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	5%	11%	12%	13%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	9%	Too few	25%	Too few
	All	11%	12%	12%	5%	10%	13%	13%

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

1.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	All (n=156)
Ethical, social, professional understanding	
- Ability to work in a group/ team working skills	31%
- Development of discipline/ professional skills	
- Presence of work placement/ industry experience in the course	

Sample comments

- *my degree is good for the future career. we are learning real professional things as a radiographer because my degree course is learning and clinical placement as well. That means students can grow up into more real professional before graduating than other's course of students*
- *Group work as well as individual research. Group work enhances communication skills which is very important when working in a multidiplinary team in hospital settings after completion of courses; and individual research enhances personal and intellectual independence*
- *Working in a variety of settings within this course i.e. working with young children with language difficulties, adults with aphasia, school placements etc. By allowing me to experience different speech difficulties, I now slightly have a better idea of what areas of speech pathology I would like to work in. - Knowing that you have a relationship with the lecturers after graduation and if I'm working in any of the lecturer's field, I am welcome to inquire and ask for help after graduation etc*
- *Clinical experience-allows me to get a feel of the work I will be doing. Although It was very hard to do while working a part time job. I recommend that students work once a week rather than doing block work*
- *Clinical practicums were particularly beneficial, as it allows student to apply what they have learnt on campus to the clinical setting. In addition, I personally felt that clinical practicums helped me learn more, as I don't remember/understand/learn until I really see/ experience and interact. SO more clinical practicums or longer periods of it would be good, especially during the first and second year to allow students to apply and appreciate what they have learn in uni to the clinical setting*
- *I think the practical classes in the Exercise & Sport Science degree are extremely beneficial to students' learning. They are most helpful in reinforcing what has been learnt in the lectures and ensure that students get a hands-on idea of what is expected of them.*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	All (n=207)
Ethical, social, professional understanding	
- Ability to work in a group/ team working skills	35%
- Development of discipline/ professional skills	
- Presence of work placement/ industry experience in the course	

Sample comments

- *There was a lot of group work involved in this course, therefore helped me to develop my leadership skills and verbal communication*
- *Completing clinical placements Working together as a team Developing relationships with peers, both professionally and socially*
- *Having 26 weeks clinical placement where we could have fantastic opportunity to learn hands on skills*
- *Learning new skills including working as an occupational therapist and developing crucial elements such as time management, stress management and organisational skills*
- *Practicum requirements and the working opportunities that practicum provided. Highly practical and interactive course*
- *We had a lot of hands on time with clinical placement in various hospitals and private practices where we were able to apply things we were taught in lectures. IE, take x-rays pm real patients*

1.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	All (n=156)
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Ethical, social, professional understanding

- Would have preferred more opportunities to obtain necessary skills 10%
- Professional experience/ placements unsatisfactory

Sample comments

- *I feel there could be more time spent on teaching how to document assessments and therapy sessions. Documentation is a major part of occupational therapy and there was very little time spent on it throughout uni. It may also have been useful to learn more about interviewing for jobs and submitting resumes*
- *I think one improvement could be the integration of some practical/clinical experience (no matter how small) into the first year course. Although I understand the reasons behind the heavy science-based background of the first year course, I think that having some sort of clinical earlier on in the degree would be beneficial. From this I think it would help to visualise more clearly where we are going with all the material that we cover in first year. Also, it would allow students to be more certain as to whether or not choosing physiotherapy has been the correct decision (rather than waiting until second year and then possibly discovering that, having experienced the practical/clinical side of the field it really isn't what you thought it was, and potentially pulling out of the degree program).*
- *I think USYD needs to incorporate clinical experience (even the MCP type of pracs) earlier on in the degree. They are seriously the best way of making the concepts we learn concrete and there is a big gap between things we learn in first and second year and then having the chance to properly apply them in third year*
- *Scheduled Practicum should be included in this course to enable us more readily access a variety of facilities, job opportunities & experiences in the workplace. Trying to organise our own practical experience at some if not many organisations was difficult if not near impossible. Set Practical experience could also facilitate in the learning and retention of knowledge if we as students are actually given the opportunity to put what we have learnt into practice. I feel like while I'm about to finish this course with a wealth of knowledge, being able to apply this knowledge in the 'real' world may be another scenario.*
- *It would also be good for students if there was work placement involved in this degree. Other than that it's very good*
- *The course content is inadequate in preparing students for clinical practice. It's difficult as it stands to get a job after graduation, the fact that the university is developing a poor reputation with hospitals and employers makes this even more so. The content is inappropriate - we have not been taught the basic concepts and skills to effectively perform our jobs post-graduation. Elementary skills such as patient straightening and land marking have been skipped. There are not enough practical classes to teach these elementary skills*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	All (n=215)
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Ethical, social, professional understanding

- Would have preferred more opportunities to obtain necessary skills 13%
- Professional experience/ placements unsatisfactory

Sample comments

- *Although this course is a stepping stone to other degrees, more clinical exposure would have been great. To prepare and become familiar with clinic situations would have helped me when starting my clinical experience in my post graduate degree.*
- *More emphasis on core clinical skills regarding Radiation Therapy (both theory and practical) and less emphasis (but not totally excluding) on elective subjects such as Psychology, Sociology*
- *More practical and experience required specific to areas studied. Organised practical experience*
- *More practicals would be good to gain more laboratory skills*
- *There is a far greater need for structured practical experience. Most job requirements when advertised highlight this yet our experience was severely limited.*
- *Not enough practicum work to help with getting employment*

2 Good Teaching (KPI 8)

Definition

Good Teaching includes:

- Good teaching experiences (interesting, teaching methods, discussions encouraged etc)
- Research-enhanced learning and teaching (integration of research into curriculum; knowledge of lecturers' research; participation in research projects²)
- 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

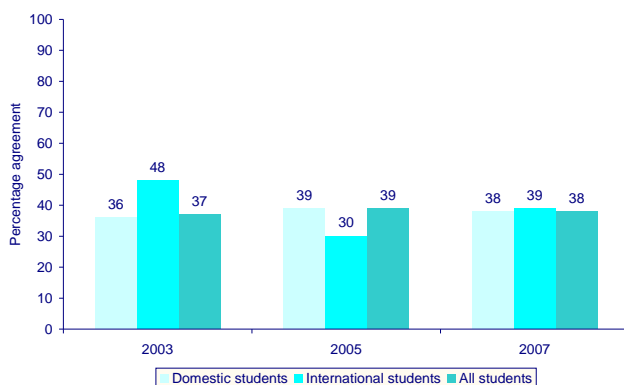
Faculty scores for current students (SCEQ) in this KPI have remained in the high 30s since 2002. The current score of 39% is below the University average of 44%, and places the faculty in the middle range of faculties. Outcomes for both domestic and international students are similar. For graduates (CEQ), the current score of 44% is marginally less than the 2006 result, but higher than previous years. The University average for graduates (CEQ) is 44%. International graduates continue to record higher scores than their domestic counterparts.

Despite the lower than average quantitative results, analysis of the qualitative data from current students (SCEQ) indicates that they are becoming more satisfied with their experiences of teaching practices across the Faculty. 2007 saw a substantial increase in the percentage of positive comments relating to teaching practices across the Faculty from previous years (2001 – 2005: 26% average; 2007: 41%). Simultaneously, in 2007, the percentage of comments expressing satisfaction with teaching significantly outnumbered those that suggested improvements for the first time since analysis of the qualitative data commenced. Graduates (CEQ) continue to perceive this as an area in need of improvement, with more comments suggesting improvements being received, than those indicating satisfaction.

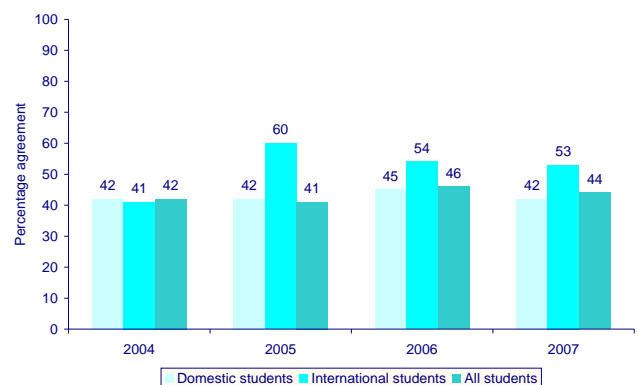
Of particular note is the substantial increase in comments from current students (SCEQ) which mention the integration of research into programs and/or the research activities of the academic staff (6% in 2007, compared with 2% in previous years). This provides qualitative evidence of the success of the ITL strategic initiative "Research-enhanced learning and teaching" within the Faculty.

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 The development of research skills is included in Generic Skills: Information Literacy

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	26%	41%	26%	25%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	10%	Too few	20%	Too few
	All	27%	22%	28%	25%	41%	25%	25%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	39%	34%	30%	34%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	55%	Too few	20%	Too few
	All	44%	42%	37%	40%	34%	29%	33%

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

2.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	All (n=156)
Good teaching experiences	
- Use of innovative and up to date teaching methods and techniques	15%
- Ability to keep students interested in the subject	
- Encouragement to participate in discussions during lectures and tutorials	
- Learning resources are up to date, and relevant to curriculum	
Student motivation	
- Students feel motivated by the teaching	6%
- Lecturers convey enthusiasm, passion for their subject	
Concern and care for student learning	
- Students felt supported in their learning; help and advice readily available	12%
- Lecturers understood problems and difficulties of students (academic and personal)	
Research-enhanced learning and teaching	
- Students participate in research projects	6%
- Students are aware of lecturers' research interests	
- There is a research component in the curriculum	
- (mentioned in 6% of comments received in 2007 cf. with 2% in previous years)	
Sample comments	
- <i>the lecturers who teach well are astoundingly good, like Anatomy lecturers on Cumberland Campus, and some lecturers like XX are very concerned about how best to help our learning, which motivates us to put in more effort for the unit</i>	
- <i>Bachelor of Health Science - the staff are keen to make the subjects interesting, often providing videos and team activities to do. They have been quite available to help. The course seems to be shaped to move people in a direction of research and activities reflect this.</i>	
- <i>Lecturers who are engaging as well as being extremely knowledgeable, passionate and interested in the area they are teaching in- this comes across in lectures and encourages me to be interested as well</i>	
- <i>Most of the lecture notes. They are easy to read and are a real help when looking up other sources</i>	
- <i>Lecturers: XX, XX, XX, XX and some of the Anatomy lecturers. These lecturers make their lectures suitable for learning. They are stimulating, well organised and accessible. They also clearly stated what was expected in terms of the quality of work and effort required. They seemed genuinely interested in teaching</i>	
- <i>great staff: good teaching skills and easy personality. able to share ideas thoroughly. good materials: easy to study off from and understand</i>	

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	All (n=207)
Good teaching experiences	
- Use of innovative and up to date teaching methods and techniques	13%
- Ability to keep students interested in the subject	
- 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	9%
- Lecturers understood problems and difficulties of students (academic and personal)	
Sample comments: domestic students	
- Assistance provided by staff members when experiencing difficulties with academic work	
- Some of the lecturers were extremely good at explaining concepts and always tried to help answer questions and made themselves available	
- Most members of staff were willing to give feedback provided it was sought early on.	
- The lecturer tried to explain the course content, until everyone understood. Asking questions was always allowed	
- Exercise Physiology and Anatomy were very well taught. There were also great opportunities to work with other students in a team	
- Lectures that facilitated learning but also made the subjects interesting and applicable to 'real-life' settings	

2.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	All (n=156)
Good teaching experiences	
- Teaching methods used are outdated; Lectures were boring	13%
- Discussions of issues raised during lectures and tutorials are not encouraged	
- Learning resources are out of date, and not relevant to curriculum	
- Lecture notes not available prior to lecture	
Feedback on work (from staff to students)	
- Comments on work are not constructive; do not explain where mistakes occur that can be rectified.	8%
- Marks only supplied, no comments	
- Feedback is untimely and not helpful	
Sample comments: domestic students	
- A particular lecture seems to take no interest in the student as an individual. She would greatly benefit by making her lectures more people friendly, organised and more interactive. This one lecturer has caused a great deal of confusion and distress for a lot of students simply due to a lack of clarity in her methods of teaching. For instance for a 50% assignment due no proper assignment sheet was given nor was it explained in terms of what information was relevant, presentation requirements and methods	
- Lecturers giving grades before the end of semester to give students a clear indication of how they have been progressing in the subject. I feel this is every important, it shouldn't get to the end of semester and you have no idea about 70% of your grade thus far	
- I have had many lecturers this year who I, and a majority of my class, have not been able to understand properly through their accents etc. It is difficult to learn about complicated concepts when you can understand the people giving the lectures	
- Lectures. Possibly notes should be put up after the lecture? Although I find that having notes for the lecture makes it a lot easier to absorb information etc it also makes it more difficult to focus. However this is not a definitive problem, I think either option has pros and cons	
- I think the lectures could really be improved. I'm finding that this semester, there aren't many lectures I feel obliged to go to. This is either because the lecturer reads straight from their PowerPoint presentation (which we can access online) or the content just doesn't seem worth listening to.	
- Sometimes its difficult to have motivation and put in exceptional effort and live up to expectations when some lecturers tend to lack in organising (exercise and sports science) even simple tasks such as putting lectures up before a lecture or even putting them up well in advance of exams. When clear, concise outlines of what is expected in a subject are absent it can make the subject seem more difficult than it is	

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	All (n=215)
<p>Good teaching experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching methods and techniques used are outdated/need improvement - Discussions of issues during class were not encouraged - Lecturers were boring; did not engage with students - Learning materials and resources were outdated 	13%
<p>Concern and care for student learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students did not feel supported in their learning; - help and advice was not readily available 	7%
<p>Feedback on work (from staff to students)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comments on work are not constructive; do not explain where mistakes occur that can be rectified. - Feedback is untimely and not helpful 	6%
<p>Sample comments: domestic students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Feedback from assignments, more interesting lectures and lecturers, lecturers not understanding students from country areas, very little support for country students</i> - <i>Too much focus on raw marks. Gaining feedback e.g. knowing where you went wrong in an exam / essay in order to strengthen weaknesses / areas lacking in knowledge</i> - <i>Some lecturers- knew their stuff but couldn't teach/explain it well. Seems like they were hired on their smarts and not their ability to lecture</i> - <i>If you are going to get international lecturers, make sure they can speak English fluently, especially in scientific areas</i> - <i>Teaching skills of the lecturers. Control students</i> - <i>The teaching staff should take more responsibility and need more ability to teach, not only focus on PH D's</i> 	

3 Overall Satisfaction (KPI 9)

Definition

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

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

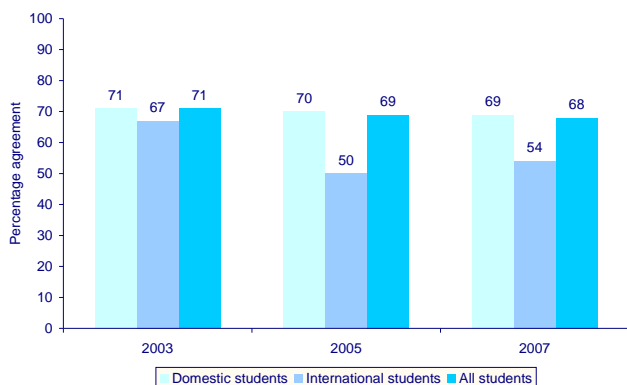
Trends

For current students (SCEQ), the Faculty score of 68% in 2007 is marginally lower than in previous years, and is amongst the lowest in the University. Domestic students continue to have a substantially better experience than international students. For graduates (CEQ) the score of 67% is lower than the University average of 71%. 2007 saw the first year in which domestic graduates recorded a higher score than their international counterparts.

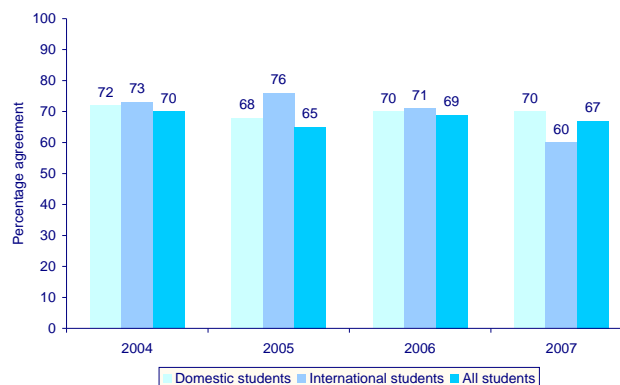
The main focus of comments received in both surveys was either satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the qualifications, knowledge and experience of academic staff (lecturers, tutors and clinicians). A similar percentage of positive and negative comments on this area was received, possibly relating the size of the faculty and the wide range of programs undertaken by students. The lack of information relating to employment opportunities after graduation was a consistent topic in comments received from graduates (CEQ).

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	6%	8%	5%	4%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	Too few	12%	Too few
	All	9%	8%	7%	5%	8%	6%	4%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	7%	11%	12%	9%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	Too few	5%	Too few
	All	8%	3%	11%	6%	10%	11%	8%

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

3.3.1 Areas of best practice

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	All (n=215)
Staffing issues	6%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff are qualified to teach at tertiary level - Staff have relevant knowledge and experience 	

Sample comments

- *our lecturers and discipline staff are all extremely experienced professionals and are involved in current research which means we are always exposed to up to date information*
- *The access and constant feedback from professionals in clinical subjects was fantastic. I felt like I was surrounded by professionals who really knew what they were talking about and could put theory into practice*
- *Lecturers who are engaging as well as being extremely knowledgeable, passionate and interested in the area they are teaching in- this comes across in lectures and encourages me to be interested as well*
- *my lecturers are active speech pathologists themselves and are researchers in the field. I find their level of knowledge and expertise very useful*
- *The best part of this course is having OT's who are so well known in the community of whom are so reputable. I also think it was great to see the OT's so passionate about what they do, which then rubbed off onto the student body*
- *Having lots of professional and experienced guest lecturers (e.g. ENT, current speechies) is also very helpful for learning*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

4% of graduates (i.e. 9/207 comments received from respondents to the CEQ) mentioned overall satisfaction with the degree course; the entry standard of students; or the qualifications, knowledge and experience of academic staff as being areas of best practice.

Sample comments

- *Challenging course work means we graduate ahead of other students with same degree at a different uni*
- *Exposure to many well respected lecturers in certain fields*
- *the lab staff were very helpful and knowledgeable*
- *The fabulous lecturers that knew so much about the subjects they were teaching*
- *high quality of cohort*
- *Job opportunities for people with / my qualification (quite in demand)*

3.3.2 Suggested improvements

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	All (n=156)
Staffing issues	6%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff are not qualified to teach at tertiary level - Staff do not have relevant knowledge and experience - Lecturers did not attend lectures; no replacements available 	
Sample comments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>For one subject in particular, tutors are not overly confident with what they are teaching us. I have had a few encounters with tutors who don't actually know the content they are teaching us... this is quite concerning at times as it is difficult to get your head around examinable material when your teacher is incapable of explaining it to you!</i> - <i>3 out of my 6 subjects in semester 2 were not taught even though they were supposed to have lectures - the lecturer was on 'sick leave' but no attempt was made to give us replacement lecturers or help and guidance for assessments. We as students were left to teach ourselves 3 full time subjects and attempt to pass examinations</i> - <i>More practical lecturers. many of the lecturers have not worked in the field for extended periods. Whilst there is clearly value in having academics on staff, academics teaching practical subjects (as opposed to theoretical subjects) where they are unable to answer contemporary questions as they have the same experience or in some cases less than the students who have undertaken fieldwork</i> - <i>There is minimal attention paid to written and verbal English skills. Many of my fellow students lack sufficient communication skills to practise their practical and analytical skills, and many of the lectures I attended were full of the overused and meaningless phrases usually found in company boardrooms and politicians' sound bytes. This language is then passed on</i> - <i>From very early on in my degree I felt as though this was a second grade degree to Speech Pathology and that hearing and speech students were given 'consolation' assignments and tasks which aren't of any real benefit. I felt as though it was only a means to get into speech pathology and not a worthwhile degree in and of itself. There isn't enough focus on hearing, the practical components of my degree have been a let down up until now. Also there isn't enough information given about which direction a student is able to take this degree, the only real options available are speech pathology, audio logy and special education, all of which require further study. I believe an entire restructure of the degree is necessary, to be able to keep student motivated and confident in studying this degree</i> - <i>Professional registration in some form should be considered. An association of behavioural health scientists??? MORE THAN HALF the students dropped out of the course due to lack of immediately visible job prospects</i> 	

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

8% of graduates (i.e. 18/215) who responded to the CEQ expressed concern about the quality of their degree/ course experience: cost of course; entry standard of students; reputation/ quality of the degree; qualification, knowledge and experience of academic staff; and the lack of information on career prospects/ job opportunities after graduation.

Sample comments

- *Placement into PDY jobs 90% of my graduating class, myself included do not have jobs in our field*
- *Direction we all finished up with no specific direction in what line of work we were suited to and the course wasn't provided properly as we found out in our last year that those who wanted to do pharmacy and entered the course with that expectation could not as our subjects were not mentioned*
- *The course needs to focus a lot more on radio graphic practice anatomy and pathology rather than statistics sociology psychology Sydney University would produce much better radio graphics if this was the case*
- *Lecturers with leisure background/experience. I attended a CBR placement in India but students in the course did not know of this program*
- *Out to the lecturer was sick and we were doing the whole term of course without proper teaching, maybe there should be more casual staff*
- *Stability in terms of teaching staff. Staff changed a lot so it was very confusing for the students*

4 Learning Community

Definition

Learning Community includes the following:

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

Trends

53% percent of students either agreed or strongly agreed with SCEQ survey items on the Learning Community. This represents an increase of 5% since 2005, and is the highest since this Scale commenced in 2001. Whilst the scores for domestic and international students were almost identical in 2003, in 2005 and 2007, international students were significantly less satisfied with their experiences of learning community than their domestic counterparts. The University average for Learning Community is 58%.

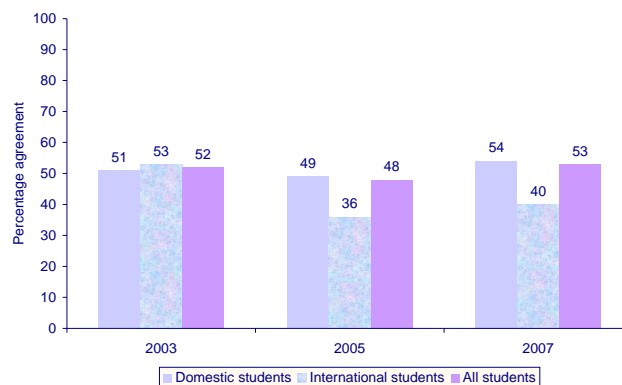
Analysis of the qualitative data from current students (SCEQ) indicates that students are becoming more satisfied with the learning environment engendered at Cumberland campus. The percentage of positive comments which mentioned various aspects of Learning Community increased from an average of 26% in 2001 – 2005 to 31% in 2007. Comments from graduates (CEQ) in 2006 and 2007 focused more on the positive effects of being part of a satisfactory learning environment.

It was also evident that the location of the Faculty at Cumberland has both positive and negative effects. Whilst they appreciate the community feel that this provides, and the friendships arising from being in the same group throughout their degree, the distance from the Camperdown campus has its drawbacks, particularly for students who are undertaking degrees requiring attendance at Camperdown or Mallet Street.

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	18%	32%	18%	16%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	10%	Too few	0%	Too few
	All	16%	19%	17%	18%	31%	17%	16%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	13%	23%	11%	9%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	18%	Too few	0%	Too few
	All	11%	13%	12%	14%	22%	11%	8%

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

4.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	All (n=156)
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Learning environment

- Enjoyed University social life
- Felt that they belonged to a community (degree/ Faculty) 24%
- Appreciated being at Cumberland campus
- Academic interests were being explored with staff and students
e.g. in tutorials; during group work
- Class sizes were satisfactory

Sample comments:

- *Cumberland is a small university, so it is quiet social at uni.*
- *The university resources for my degree are fantastic. I like the Cumberland campus, which is compact and quiet, with all students of the same course knowing each other well - just like a small connected community. I also like the resourcefulness of the library*
- *Being with the same people everyday, so therefore gaining valuable friendships for life. Also, learning something new and interesting every day*
- *I like how it is structured so that everyone in your year of the degree does all the same subjects together at the same time, means you can get to know peers well. It involves interactive and practical classes. Works in the required fieldwork well so you have 5 separate placements spread over all 4years.*
- *Having a small class is really helpful, you get the sense that the lecturers actually know you and are interested in how you are going throughout the semester*
- *I have found the student community for this course to be very conducive to learning. Being in an environment where everyone is interested in learning the same materials is very stimulating, and the use of the blackboard discussion forum to share our queries and knowledge reinforces that everyone else has troubles too and we can help each other to understand the material*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	All (n=207)
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Learning environment

- Enjoyed University social life
- Felt that they belonged to a community (degree/ Faculty) 13%
- Appreciated being at Cumberland campus
- Academic interests were being explored with staff and students
e.g. in tutorials; during group work
- Happy with size of class

Sample comments: domestic students

- *As a small group we were given a lot more one-on-one time and lecturers were able to know students personally, which I believe created A superior learning environment*
- *Small number of students allowed lecturers to be attentive to students*
- *Work placement, seminars (instead of lectures and tutorials), practical tutorials and group work*
- *Smallish number of people in course, lecturers interested in what they were teaching, Anatomy labs, Library resources*
- *The way semesters were structured, allowed you to remain with the same group for all subjects and build strong relationship and friendships I can call upon later in my career*

4.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	All (n=156)
Learning environment	
- Did not feel that they belonged to a community	8%
- Academic interests were not explored with staff and students e.g. in tutorials; during laboratory work	
- Class sizes too large for productive discussions	
Learning resources	
- Physical facilities inadequate e.g. Computer facilities and resources	11%
- Insufficient library services	
Sample comments: domestic students	
- <i>The location of the degree is a problem for me personally. If the course was at the main campus in the city I would be much more pleased, as would a lot of students I have spoken to in this course</i>	
- <i>There is no bonding between students. A field trip at the beginning of the semester to a relevant Facility e.g. AIS in Canberra, for a few days would give the students time to develop friendships in a different environment other than tertiary study</i>	
- <i>Perhaps smaller tut groups. I found that with a large group, feedback was not as readily available</i>	
- <i>more tutorials - where you could discuss case studies and clarify some of the content covered in the lectures because in most of the units of study there is a lot of content to get through and tutorials would help in digesting the material</i>	
- <i>Not really many resources to use, hard to access books, everyone borrows them and your left with nothing-except the internet, very hard to find journal article. Medline at uni was hard to use and didn't always give me what I wanted and couldn't access most of them online</i>	
- <i>In addition, more computer in the computer lab or library will be appreciated as it is very difficult do group/individual work when library computers are ALWAYS FULL!!</i>	

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	All (n=215)
Learning environment	
- Did not feel that they belonged to a community	6%
- Academic interests were not explored with staff and students e.g. in tutorials; during group work	
- International students inhibited discussion in class	
- Class sizes too large for productive discussions	
- Issues of equity/ discrimination identified	
Learning resources	
- Physical facilities inadequate e.g. Computer facilities and resources	8%
- Insufficient library services	
Sample comments	
- <i>whenever I went to practical class, I felt seriously most X-ray machines were old models or broken down. It dose not seem to invest management of educational equipments. Because of unsuitable educational materials, students have not been improving much compared with other university students</i>	
- <i>Health Sciences Campus - limited services compared with main campus</i>	
- <i>Group work. Other students with poor English made group work difficult</i>	
- <i>Too much independent study, we needed more class time, tutorials and lectures</i>	
- <i>Find course / teaching staff weren't willing to interact with students</i>	
- <i>The health sciences campus was a little lacking in clubs and societies</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)
- Mode of delivery (online; WebCT; distance)
- Flexibility of degree, including ability to take a range of Units of Study
- Availability/ cancellation of advertised courses

Trends

In 2007 42% of comments received from current students (SCEQ) and graduates (CEQ) commented favourably on various aspects of the Curriculum; whilst 33% of comments received in the SCEQ and 36% in the CEQ suggested improvements in this area of their experience. The relevance, flexibility and professional content of the curriculum are all appreciated, together with opportunities to combine subjects from other faculties with those from Health Sciences.

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	46%	41%	30%	42%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	60%	Too few	24%	Too few
	All	36%	37%	31%	47%	42%	30%	42%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	31%	34%	43%	36%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	36%	Too few	40%	Too few
	All	34%	32%	34%	31%	33%	42%	36%

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

5.2.2 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	All (n=156)
Content and structure	
- Content and structure of whole degree program/ individual units of study	35%
- Subjects appear to be linked together	
- Subject content is relevant to work/ career and industry requirements	
Flexibility, diversity, variety	6%
- Students appreciate the range of subjects available	
- Students appreciate the ability to choose units from other faculties	
Sample comments: domestic students	
- <i>Contents of my degree course match with my current working environment. It helps me to apply learned knowledge to practice in my work field, which makes me more confident with myself</i>	
- <i>job specific units of study/degree is aimed at one occupation - covers a broad range of areas [e.g. anatomy, cognition, occupational rehab] - offers placements abroad</i>	
- <i>Working in a variety of settings within this course i.e.. working with young children with language difficulties, adults with aphasia, school placements etc. By allowing me to experience different speech difficulties, I now slightly have a better idea of what areas of speech pathology I would like to work in</i>	
- <i>Because I'm doing health sciences as well as the nursing I have a wider knowledge about many different aspects to do with health and the health arena. This I feel has benefited me a lot and I think this combination of courses is quite good</i>	
- <i>Exercise and Sports Science/Nursing: I am able to learn a lot more about the human body than I would be learning if I was just doing a basic nursing course, which I believe will make me more efficient as a nurse. The course has also opened up a lot more career opportunities for me that I had previously never thought of.</i>	
- <i>The best aspect of the hearing and speech course is that it provides the hearing and speech students with all the same classes as the speech pathology students which allows the students who want to transfer into speech pathology to do so with ease. As well, the speech pathology subjects are useful in many other degrees hearing and speech students may want to enter after their degree such as teaching, early childhood or audiology</i>	
Graduates (CEQ 2007)	All (n=207)
Content and structure	
- Content and structure of whole degree program/ individual units of study	29%
- Subject content is relevant to work/ career and industry requirements	
Flexibility, diversity, variety	11%
- Students appreciate the range of subjects available	
- Students appreciate the ability to choose units from other faculties	
Sample comments: domestic students	
- <i>Good selection of units covered such as anatomy, Physiology, Pharmacology etc.</i>	
- <i>Covered a broad range of subjects. Gave enough knowledge of subjects, to be able to go directly into workforce</i>	
- <i>Good balance of theoretical and practical material. Subjects were specific to the degree and not 'general' subjects. Taken by students from several courses</i>	
- <i>Flexibility of choosing electives within campus and also on other campuses having the ability to complete subjects via distance made, which is perfect if you work and study at the same time</i>	
- <i>Interesting content, broad range of subjects studied</i>	
- <i>The diversity of the subjects made the course more interesting and broadened employment options. It has given me a large of options through the variety of units undertaken</i>	

5.2.3 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)	All (n=156)
------------------------------	----------------

Content and structure

- | | |
|--|-----|
| - Unhappy with content and structure of whole degree program/
individual units of study | 27% |
| - Subject content is not relevant to work/ career and industry
requirements | |

Sample comments

- *More choice of subjects rather than compulsory subjects so that we can chose subjects relevant to our future and interests therefore making us more willing to learn. For example subjects such as Health, Science and Research are relevant to individuals who want to do research later on but some students are looking to a more hands on approach to health. Subjects such as Indigenous Health should be optional.*
- *The order in which some subjects are studied, found that we would do a prerequisite two years before the next subject and found it hard to remember*
- *For the Exercise and Sport Science degree, I do not feel that we are adequately prepared for integration into the work force at the completion of our studies. We have a lot of knowledge but are not adequately prepared to translate it into practice.*
- *Also the progression of subjects needs to be looked at. In this degree particularly Human Occupations, Occupational Therapy Theory and Practice and Components of Performance repeat the same information across all 4 years of the degree. Collaboration by the unit coordinators so there was some continuation rather than rehashing would be advised*
- *My degree is preparing me for a career - I think I could do better in the subjects that will actually impact my career if I didn't have to waste time with BACH subjects where people from multiple degrees are lumped together so a lot of the content is general rather then specific*
- *The instability of the structure of the course needs to be improved. Since the degree structure was changed every year for the last a few years, that caused great confusion for the people who are interested in this study area. Also great disappointment has been created from the new double degree courses, which make the current students feeling very disadvantaged, and 'left-out' in a way*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)	All (n=215)
----------------------	----------------

Content and structure

- | | |
|--|-----|
| - Unhappy with content and structure of whole degree program/
individual units of study | 31% |
| - Subject content is not relevant to work/ career and industry
requirements | |
| - Do not like intensive courses | |

Sample comments: domestic students

- *More diverse electives at the end of fourth year need to be available e.g. rehabilitation , aged care etc*
- *A few more Audiology subjects, it was more Speech focused and driven*
- *Coding should be an elective not everyone desires to (clinical Classification) Work in it caused a lot of students to fail and repeat and had to waste an extra year to report one topic / unit*
- *Course not relevant to today's workplace. Very few people from course get jobs, this not made clear to students (IE. job opp. glossed over) (too many course positions)*
- *More emphasis on core clinical skills regarding Radiation Therapy (both theory and practical) and less emphasis (but not totally excluding) on elective subjects such as Psychology, Sociology*
- *Not enough focus on application of theories - lots of theory learning but not much application in real life situation. Not enough paediatric content - a large focus on mental health, not enough works there*

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

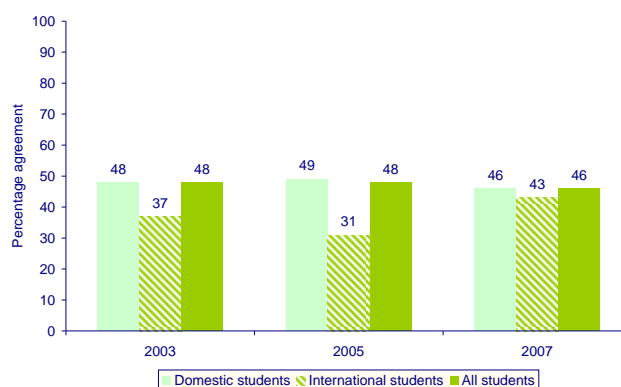
The percentage agreement scores for Appropriate Assessment in the 2007 SCEQ is the amongst the lowest in the University. After peaking at 49% in 2002, the faculty score has returned to the 2001 score (46%). 2007 saw the first time that the scores of domestic and international students were similar, compared to previous years when international student scores were markedly less than those for domestic students.

The main focus of comments received from both current students (SCEQ) and graduates (CEQ) was the types of assessment used by the Faculty, and the perceived lack of equitable marking in group assessments.

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	1%	1%	3%	1%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	Too few	8%	Too few
	All	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	15%	8%	6%	8%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	27%	Too few	0%	Too few
	All	12%	10%	8%	15%	8%	5%	8%

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

6.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)

1% of students (i.e. 2/156) who responded to the SCEQ expressed satisfaction with the relevance and variety of assessments.

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

1% of graduates (i.e. 3/207) who responded to the CEQ expressed satisfaction with the variety of assessments used by lecturers.

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

6.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)

8% of students (i.e. 12/156) who responded to the SCEQ expressed dissatisfaction with the types of assessment used in the faculty; and with the marking of assignments.

Sample comments

- *I think that giving students two exams throughout the subject is better than giving students an exam during the exam period based on 13 weeks of information. It places too much pressure on students and not all are suited to this method. this method seems like its all about just memorising information than actually learning*
- *I also felt on occasions that there was a lot of rote learning involved. I often found that exam questions were poorly written but only one interpretation was accepted. Clinical subjects definitely required us to apply theory to practice. In summary the application of knowledge we require in clinical subjects could be encouraged throughout the degree.*
- *I feel too many of our exams are only multiple choice, and have too high a weighting. This puts a lot of pressure on students who are stronger in their writing and analytical skills as not much chance is given to them in exams*
- *Other things I felt strongly against were lecturers who outsourced their marking to PhD students who obviously weren't explained the same criteria students were*
- *we weren't sure what assignments were worth and we weren't supposed to have an exam and then ultimately we had to do an online quiz without knowing what it was worth.*
- *Also there needs to be a bit more communication between off campus clinical educators and on-campus coordinators in terms of what exactly is required in clinical units of study, and how to mark the COMPASS.*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

8% of graduates (i.e. 17/215) who responded to the CEQ expressed dissatisfaction with types and content of assessment and the marking of assignments.

Sample comments

- *Health informatics - more hands on IT Classes Medicine - More thought - provoking exams!*
- *Some of the assessments were a bit too demanding for first year of University*
- *consistency of marking clinical reports and projects (as marking outsourced to a variety of personnel)*
- *The variation in marking between the different clinical placements as some of the marker were not trained enough to accurately assess the students*
- *Assessments that involved group work- this is not an ideal way to access an individuals skills, particularly when not all people hold the same priorities with assignments*
- *Lack of accountability in group assessments*

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

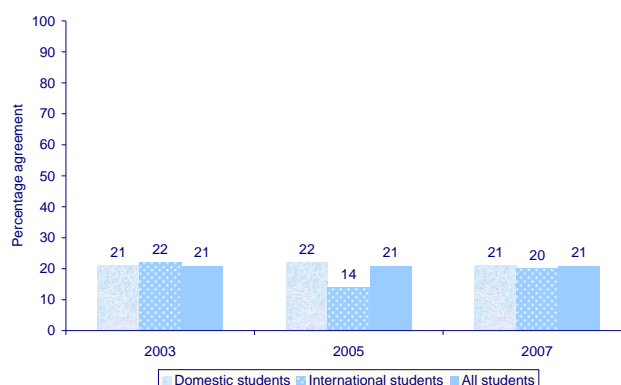
The percentage agreement scores for Appropriate Workload (21%) in the 2007 SCEQ is lower than the University average of 23%, and places it in the bottom third of faculties. The Faculty score for Workload has remained at 21% since 2002.

The percentage of comments received from both current students (SCEQ) and graduates (CEQ) expressing dissatisfaction with workload this topic from has remained steady at an average of 19% since analysis of the qualitative data commenced.

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	2%	2%	0%	0%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	Too few	0%	Too few
	All	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	19%	19%	5%	7%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	9%	Too few	5%	Too few
	All	20%	20%	18%	19%	18%	5%	7%

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; the difficulty of getting through all the required readings; 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.

8 Clear Goals and Standards

Definition

Clear Goals and Standards includes:

- Clear aims and objectives for a course;
- Clear expectations of the standard of work expected from students;
- Clear explanation of the marking criteria used (*marking of assessments* is included under assessment).

Trends

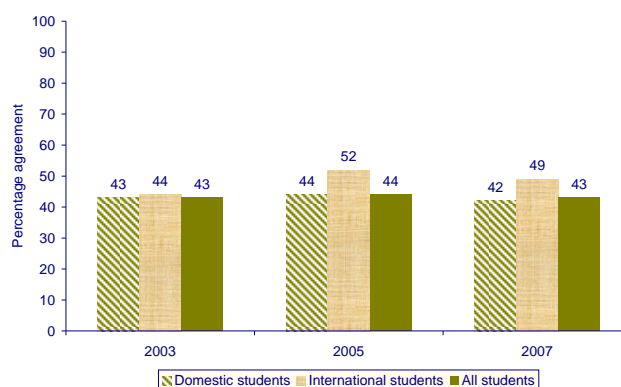
In 2007, the percentage of students who either agreed or strongly agreed with items in the SCEQ relating to Clear Goals and Standards was 43%, which is above the University average of 42%. International students continue to have a better experience than domestic students.

In relation to comments received which mention aspects of Clear Goals and Standards, 11% of current students (SCEQ) were dissatisfied with the lack of clear aims and objectives, and the lack of clarity regarding expectations of the standard of work expected, particularly in relation to assessments. This is double the percentage of comments received on this topic in 2005.

8.1 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 Clear Goals and Standards in the SCEQ.

NB: The Clear Goals and Standards Scale 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 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 Clear Goals and Standards 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%	Too few	0%	Too few
	All	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	7%	10%	2%	1%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	Too few	0%	Too few
	All	1%	3%	1%	6%	11%	2%	1%

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

8.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)

2% of current students (i.e. 3/156 comments received) mentioned that clear objectives were provided; expectations were clear; unit outlines were accurate; and expectations were clearly communicated.

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

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

No graduates mentioned aspects of clear goals and standards in their written observations on areas of best practice in their degree experience.

8.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)

All
(n=156)

Standard of work

8%

- Lecturers did not convey the standard of work required
- Staff were unclear about their expectations

Sample comments: domestic students

- *A set of standards of what is to be learnt or what is to be expected from students by the end of semester should be readily available for each unit of study*
- *Also, we often don't know what is expected of us in terms of content of exams, and the future aspects of our course*
- *When clear, concise outlines of what is expected in a subject are absent it can make the subject seem more difficult than it is*
- *Organisation. I think that sometimes going into exams students feel a little underprepared because they do not know what they are really being tested on. There are objectives and then there are lectures and people do not know which ones to learn, or whether that should just go through both*
- *Clinical placements are worth a fair amount of credit points in this degree and it would be better if there was some sort of standardised marking scheme employed so that each student is marked on their ability as a Nuclear Medicine Technologist and not on their ability to make nice with their supervisor!*
- *Sometimes the communication between lecturers and students is poor as to exactly WHAT an assessment task requires. It means that our assignments/exam performance lack in quality and consequently our marks suffer unfairly*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

1% of students (i.e. 2/215) expressed concern about the lack of clear aims and objectives for the course, and suggested revising the current marking criteria. Due to the low number of comments, and to maintain student confidentiality, no sample comments are provided.

9 Faculty/ Department Student Administration

Definition

Faculty / Department Student Administration includes:

- Overall quality of Faculty administration and organisation;
- Scheduling of classes;
- Organisation of practical experience placements;
- Communication between staff (academic and general) and students.

Trends

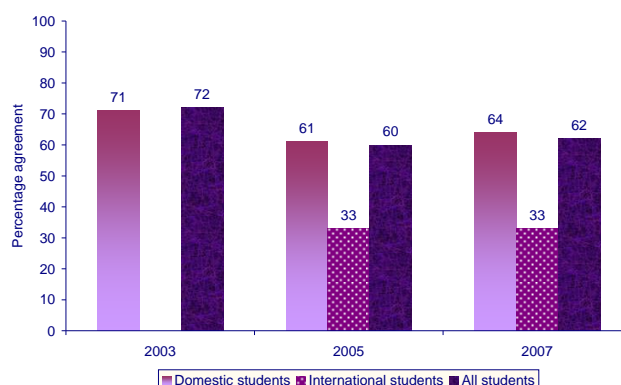
SCEQ faculty scores for Faculty / Department Student Administration have remained steady since 2005, and currently sit at 62% which is below the University average of 66%. Domestic students continue to have a substantially better experience than international students.

The percentage of comments received from respondents to the surveys, which mention aspects of Faculty/ Department Student Administration as an area of concern, has doubled since 2002. The main focus of comments was communication between Faculty administration and students especially regarding changes in timetabling and cancellation of lectures; and the organisation/ allocation of practical experience placements.

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: *Student experience of administration and student support*.

9.1 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 / Department Student Administration.



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

9.2 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 / Department Student Administration 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	2%	2%	0%	0%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	Too few	0%	Too few
	All	2%	1%	0%	1%	2%	0%	0%
Suggested improvements	Domestic	n/a	n/a	n/a	10%	15%	8%	10%
	International	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	Too few	5%	Too few
	All	24%	8%	11%	10%	15%	8%	11%

9.3 Key issues for current coursework students (SCEQ 2007)

9.3.1 Areas of best practice

Current students (SCEQ 2007)

2% of current students (i.e. 3/156 comments received) were satisfied with aspects of communication by the Faculty; and the organisation and allocation of placements.

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

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

In response to the question on areas of best practice in their degree experience, no graduates provided written observations on their experiences of Faculty/ department student administration.

9.3.2 Suggested improvements

Current students (SCEQ 2007)

15% of current students (i.e. 24/156 comments received) suggested that improvements were needed in Faculty/ Department Student Administration. Apart from general comments relating to overall administration, students expressed concern about communication between staff and students; and the organisation and allocation of placements.

Sample comments

- *Better facilities at Cumberland Campus, more effort put into giving students information on time i.e. administration issues, lecture changes etc. It is terribly upsetting to waste your time because no-one bothered to email you*
- *Administration was awful. We never once had a timetable before commencing semester and often couldn't be sure of these till week 3 plus there were so many administration changes and no one was helpful in this department*
- *The website was never updated and in particular contact information was always outdated which resulted in unreturned emails and phone calls.*
- *The organisation of the 3 week work placement was a shambles and many students had to seek their own placements and they were not completed well past their due date. Again this added to the overall neglect felt by BBHS students and the lack of confidence that our degree actually meant something or we were desired by employers. Nor were there any presentations about the placements to other students so we didn't learn from others' experiences. (Although some students did have successful placements)*
- *the allocations of clinical placements - the not-knowing, and the lack of support from uni in organising these has been disappointing. I mean the university generally, not the specific staff members involved*
- *Due to the size of the practical classes the learning from lecture and in the practicals is not supported well. Most of the lecture material is explained and taught during clinical sessions. The organisation of the school is also lacking causing a lot of confusion as to where clinicals are located and other important dates*

Graduates (CEQ 2007)

23% of graduates (i.e. 23/215) suggested that improvements were needed in Faculty / Department Student Administration. Apart from general comments relating to overall administration, students expressed concern about communication between staff and students; and the organisation of placements by the Faculty.

Sample comments

- *Need to sort out placements for all students. I had to sort out my own and that was the reason for me deferring my course*
- *Organised work placement. All the other schools at the campus had it and now after I completed the degree, its a definite deficit*
- *Definitely a more structured work placement program. Allocating students to specific work - related fields and rotating them would be a great idea.*
- *Communication between lecturer and students regarding due dates of assessments and assignments to be handed in*
- *Clarity of information / all lecturers and tutors were unsure of correct methods / procedures in administrative areas. The uni administration was not helpful and confusing often giving several different answers*
- *Organisation of replacement lecturers and better administrative staff*