



UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
Office of the Vice-Principal: Academic

Procedure: Student Feedback on Teaching Survey (SFTS)

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1. Purpose

Academic staff can use a variety of feedback sources to reflect on their teaching practice and build up a portfolio of evidence. These include lecturer reflection on their teaching, consultation with students, input from the head of department (HoD), peer reviews such as class observation reports as well as from external examiners. Eliciting feedback on teaching from students and reflecting on this feedback is one of the ways through which academic staff can become reflective practitioners. The purpose of this document is two-fold; firstly, it establishes a procedure for student feedback on teaching as a tool that can be used to inform continuous professional development of academic staff as reflective practitioners (development) and secondly, for the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching (accountability) in line with the Policy Teaching and Learning, S4463/16. The procedure establishes a framework within which the improvement of the quality of teaching and students' educational experiences are subject to regular and systematic formative and summative evaluation. Furthermore, the procedure ensures systematic collection of student feedback on teaching to support academic staff efforts to reflect on their teaching practice and enhance the standard and quality of teaching and learning at the University of Pretoria (UP).

It is assumed that the improvement of teaching practice will in turn enrich the learning experience of students and improve and strengthen the expertise in the scholarly approach to teaching. The procedure on the Student Feedback on Teaching Survey (SFTS) is informed by the five teaching and learning principles as stated in the addendum of the T&L policy (S4463/16), namely, encouraging contact between students and lecturers, inviting engagement, promoting deep learning, providing appropriate learning support and respecting diversity. Specifically, the procedure addresses the following:

- Within- and end-of-module student feedback on teaching at undergraduate and applicable postgraduate levels;
- Continuous student feedback on teaching and assessment practice to ensure quality in modules taught, and to support the development of academic staff.

The following principles must be adhered to:

- Triangulation of various sources of data on modules and teaching such as, self-reflection, student feedback, peer reviews (internal and external);
- Consideration of context in interpretation of student feedback results;
- Contribution to the development of new insights on teaching practice to develop scholarly approach teaching, and professional learning;
- Contribution to the quality enhancement in teaching and curriculum;
- Anonymity of students in all within- and end-of-course student feedback provided – the lecturers and the Heads of Department do not have access to the evaluation sheets completed by students, only the custodians of the system who are the Department for Education Innovation Student Feedback Office have access;

- A supportive and nurturing environment for the academic staff to help them draw insights from the student feedback and use it to inform their professional development;
- Confidentiality for academic staff by ensuring that written student feedback in the form of comments is kept confidential by all the stakeholders who have access to this data.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all:

Permanent, fixed term contract and temporary academic staff teaching a module or part of a module.

Academic modules that are part of an accredited subsidized undergraduate and applicable postgraduate academic programmes.

3. Implementation procedure

3.1 Multiple opportunities for obtaining student feedback on teaching

To enhance the development of academic staff as reflective practitioners and the effective monitoring and evaluation of teaching, this procedure promotes and recognises the value of providing academic staff with multiple opportunities for acquiring student feedback on teaching.

The system provides academics with an opportunity to solicit student feedback through eight cycles of SFTS administration. These include:

- **Four Fixed cycles of end-of-module/course student feedback on teaching (Summative)** as a means for improving the future delivery of modules and courses and assist academics to gain insights and understanding of the impact of their teaching and assessment practices.
- **Four Flexible cycles** fall outside the four main cycles of feedback and can be used for team taught block teaching modules to field lecturers for student feedback immediately after they have presented their section of the work.
- The flexible cycles are administered as a special arrangement and in communication with the student feedback office to accommodate these modalities of teaching.
- The enrolment for modules for summative (end-of-course/module) student feedback is compulsory. However, it should also be guided by the performance agreement specification with the head of department (HoD) to avoid student survey fatigue.
- The enrolment for formative (within-course/module) student feedback is optional for all academic modules except for the High Impact Modules (HIMs).

- The formative and summative student feedback on teaching should be supplemented and triangulated with a variety of feedback sources, such as the lecturer reflection on their teaching, input from the HoD, peer reviews such as class observation reports as well as external examiner reports.

3.2 Timing and frequency

- Academic departments should carefully manage and coordinate the timing and the frequency of enrolling modules in any of the eight SFTS cycles, especially for team-taught modules, to prevent students' survey fatigue.
- Formative (within-module) student feedback may be obtained for academic staff half way through a course/module using the electronic student feedback system. The timing of the formative assessment may be dictated by the context of the module e.g. need to evaluate the impact of a turnaround teaching strategy and may be specified in the performance agreement.
- End-of-module student feedback using SFTS must be obtained for every lecturer in at least one module annually or as specified in the performance agreement with the head of department.
- It is advisable to solicit both formative and summative student feedback for at least one module per lecturer in a year for developmental purposes.
- All high impact/risk modules must enrol for the formative and summative SFTS.

3.3 Accessibility and feedback on results

SFTS Aggregate and detailed module results/reports for within- and end-of-course/module evaluations will be made available on the survey platform to the academic staff, their reporting Heads of Department and Deputy Deans after every cycle of feedback.

3.4 Closing the Feedback loop

- It is advisable to show evidence of having reflected on the feedback given by students by acknowledging the students for participating and taking time to give feedback and also sharing the insights gained from their feedback within clickUP.
- The feedback to students may include a reflection on the results, mutual responsibilities of the lecturer and students, planned actions for improvements, areas that are beyond the lecturer's control, what can and cannot be changed, and how the feedback will be used in future.

3.5 SFTS structure and platform

The SFTS structure and platform accommodates the student evaluation of modules taught by one lecturer and team-taught modules.

- **Six questions** that inquire into the lecturer's teaching are used to calculate the proxy quality of teaching of each lecturer (**lecturer teaching mean**). These questions are set up on the student feedback platform in such a way that a student answers the questions for each lecturer teaching in the module in the case of a team-taught module.

- **Seven questions** inquire into the module quality and are used to calculate the proxy quality of teaching in each module (**module teaching mean**). These questions are set up on the student feedback platform in such a way that a student answers the questions once.
- **Three qualitative questions** provide students with an opportunity to indicate what they liked most, did not like in the module and areas for improvement.

The student feedback on teaching survey consists of six distinct sections with 18 standard items, namely:

Section A: **Two** background questions

Section B: **Seven** module-facing teaching questions, used to calculate the proxy measure for the quality of teaching in the, viz; module teaching mean

Section C: **Six** lecturer-facing teaching questions, used to calculate the proxy measure for the quality of teaching of the lecturer, viz; lecturer teaching mean

Section D: **Three** Qualitative items

Optional

Section E: Additional context specific items – additional questions (maximum 7) which are faculty/discipline/module specific can be added in consultation with the Education Consultants and Student Feedback Office (SFO) – recommended for high impact modules (HIMs).

- Sections A, B, C, and D, are compulsory institutional items of the survey, whilst section E is for the optional contextualised questions. When using section E, the lecturer would be either assisted by the Education Consultant to review their individually drafted questions or given access to the databank of previously used questions which can be adapted to their contexts.
- The enrolment of modules for student feedback on teaching survey is conducted electronically and the academic staff are responsible for indicating the need for inclusion of additional questions in the survey. Education Consultants will provide support for quality assuring new items that the lecturer may wish to include in the survey and which are not reflected in the databank.

4. Definitions

Student Feedback on Teaching Survey (SFTS)

The **SFTS** is a survey designed to elicit feedback from students regarding their experience of teaching at UP.

Multiple data

Data is drawn from several reliable sources to prevent purely subjective and/or arbitrary conclusions drawn from student feedback.

Teaching Portfolio

A **teaching portfolio** is recommended for the purpose of confirmation of probation, performance appraisal, and promotion. It includes a teaching philosophy, teaching goals, teaching responsibilities, and an overall reflection on how practice supports student learning.

5. Roles and responsibilities

| Role | Responsibilities |
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| Student Feedback Office (SFO) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Publish the enrolment cycle dates through platforms available to the lecturer e.g. email, clickUP.• Manage and provide support for the electronically administered SFTS enrolment system.• Import enrolled modules from clickUP into the chosen survey administration platform.• Check enrolment records and communicate any areas requiring urgent attention for smooth administration of the survey.• Communication with the users regarding variance in enrolments, viz; alignment of records with clickUP, chosen dates of SFTS administration alignment with the SFTS schedule etc.• Share survey invitation with the students.• Administer the survey.• Close the survey and inform the academic staff when reports are available. |
| Lecturer | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consult EI website for published cycle dates.• Determine the cycle date that suits the teaching schedule/context.• Determine in consultation with the HoD the frequency and timing for enrolling the module for student feedback.• Enrol for student feedback and accurately complete the enrolment form.• Receive an automated email notifying them of the modules enrolled for feedback immediately after completing the enrolment form and notify the student feedback office of any module that may have been missed in the relevant cycle of feedback and needs to be added.• Encourage students to complete the survey when it is launched.• Download reports from the system. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close the feedback loop (sharing insights gained from the student feedback with the students through clickUP or class Representative). • Keep records of the insights gained from feedback (e.g. reflections that identify areas of improvement). Include these records as part of the teaching portfolio which can be used for performance management, probation or promotion purposes. • Keep records of the SFTS reports. |
| Module coordinator (team-taught module) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult EI website for published cycle dates. • Determine the cycle date that suits the teaching schedule/context of the team. • Determine in consultation with the HoD and team, the frequency and timing for enrolling the module for student feedback. • Enrol team members for student feedback based on their schedule of teaching and accurately complete the enrolment form. • Remind team members enrolled in a particular SFTS cycle to encourage students to complete the survey when it is launched. • Request an aggregate report from the student Feedback office. • Discuss the aggregate report with the team and its implications for the curriculum, teaching and assessment practices in the module. • Keep the SFTS records of the individual lecturers in a team-taught module confidential (when shared/when a lecturer's name is mentioned). |
| Students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend class regularly to ensure that the feedback provided is informed through classroom attendance and engagement with the lecturer(s) being evaluated and course material. • Complete the survey when the cycle opens. |

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| Head of Department | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the suitable cycles (timing) for each lecturer based on various factors such as the teaching schedule of each lecturer. • Discuss the frequency of student feedback for each lecturer based on the performance appraisal agreement (e.g. 1 module subjected to formative and/or summative student feedback per year). • Receive an automated email notifying them of the modules enrolled for feedback in their department and notify the student feedback office of any module that may have been missed in the relevant cycle of feedback and needs to be added. • When the reports are available, log into the student feedback system for management oversight function; review departmental performance trajectory visa viz, student responses to the items of the SFTS. • Identify areas for improvement emanating from student feedback for the department. |
| Faculty/Departmental administrator (with permission of the HoD/Deputy dean) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult EI website for published cycle dates. • Ensure that the invitation (with a link) for the enrolment in each SFTS cycle is distributed to all the lecturers in the department. • Enrol modules for student feedback and accurately complete the enrolment form on behalf of the department (depending on HoD preference). • Receive an automated email notifying them of the modules enrolled for feedback immediately after completing the enrolment form and notify the student feedback office of any module that may have been missed in the relevant cycle of feedback and needs to be added. • Liaise with the SFTS office on behalf of the department or faculty for any departmental SFTS queries. |
| Deputy dean | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the SFTS records confidential. • Two to three days prior to the students receiving the survey, log into the student feedback system to view the faculty module enrolment trajectory. • Log into the student feedback system for management oversight function; review faculty performance trajectory such as, performance per items of the SFTS, faculty mean vs departmental means, identifying areas of success and improvement for the faculty & the utilisation of additional questions added by each faculty. • Identify areas of development for the faculty. |

6. Associated documents

This procedure should be read in conjunction with the Policy on Teaching and Learning, S4463/16.

7. Policy life cycle

This procedure will be reviewed based on significant changes in user requirements and/or in the Policy on Teaching and Learning.

8. Document metadata

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| Document number: | |
| Document version: | <i>Version 3</i> |
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ADDENDUM 1: PROPOSED NEW STUDENT FEEDBACK ON TEACHING SURVEY

Section A: Background questions (2 items)

1. Approximately what percentage of classes (face-to-face and/or online) scheduled for this module did you attend?
Options: Less than 50%; 50 – 60%; 61 – 74%; 75% or more; Almost all scheduled classes; Not applicable
2. I spent enough time preparing for class so that I could understand my lecturer/s in class.
Options: I strongly disagree; I disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; I agree; not applicable

Section B: Module-facing items (7 items)

NB. Each item is setup to be answered once by a student for the module.

3. Communication was clear.
Options: I strongly disagree; I disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; I agree; I absolutely agree
4. Learning activities are/were in line with the specified outcomes as stated in the study guide and/or clickUP.
Options: I strongly disagree; I disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; I agree; I absolutely agree; I don't know
5. The feedback I received on assessment tasks has helped me improve my understanding of the module.
Options: I strongly disagree; I disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; I agree; I absolutely agree; not applicable
6. The activities in this module challenged me from time to time.
Options: I strongly disagree; I disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; I agree; I absolutely agree
7. I found attending class beneficial.
Options: I strongly disagree; I disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; I agree; I absolutely agree
8. The instructions in clickUP were clear to understand and assisted me in achieving the course outcomes.
Options: I strongly disagree; I disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; I agree; I absolutely agree
9. The communication I received within the clickUP module encouraged deep engagement with the coursework.
Options: I strongly disagree; I disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; I agree; I absolutely agree

Section C: Lecturer-facing items (6 items)

10. The lecturer was well prepared for each class.
Options: I strongly disagree; I disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; I agree; I absolutely agree

11. The lecturer treated students with respect.
Options: I strongly disagree; I disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; I agree; I absolutely agree
12. The lecturer was accessible and approachable to ask questions or raise concerns (during specified consulting hours and or pre-arranged appointments).
Options: I strongly disagree; I disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; I agree; I absolutely agree
13. The lecturer creates/created appropriate learning opportunities to prepare students for assessment as per the study guide.
Options: I strongly disagree; I disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; I agree; I absolutely agree; not applicable
14. Lecturer feedback on assessments was made available to me within the agreed timeframes.
Options: I strongly disagree; I disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; I agree; I absolutely agree; not applicable
15. The lecturer assessed students work fairly.
Options: I strongly disagree; I disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; I agree; I absolutely agree

Section D: Qualitative section (3 items)

16. What did you like most in this module?
17. What did you like least in this module?
18. Any other areas of improvement for this module?

Optional

Section E: Module specific additional items: (maximum 5)

Up to seven additional questions which are faculty/discipline/module specific added in consultation with the Education Consultant/HERI – recommended for high impact/risk modules (HIMs).