

Student Feedback Policy

1. Policy statement

- 1.1 Every student will have the opportunity to give their feedback on the different aspects of University life.

2. Overview

- 2.1 The University of Southampton (the University) and the University of Southampton Students' Union (SUSU) are committed to working in partnership to provide effective structures for student feedback.
- 2.2 This policy covers how the University gathers feedback from students about their University experience, and utilises it in quality assurance and enhancement activities.
- 2.3 The University considers it important to create a culture and an environment that promote student engagement throughout the institution. Working in partnership with SUSU, the University is responsible for providing opportunities for students to give feedback on their experiences. The University listens to the student voice captured at programme, academic unit, Faculty level and institutionally, and through activities led by SUSU, through mechanisms such as;

2.3.1 Surveys, focus groups and interviews

The University takes part in a range of surveys including the [National Student Survey](#), the [Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey](#), the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey, the [International Student Barometer](#) and a range of ad hoc surveys, focus groups or interviews. The results of these are considered at Faculty level and also feed into Faculty action plans.

2.3.2 Module evaluation surveys

Module survey is the primary direct means by which every student can participate in quality assurance at the University. Each module is evaluated through a questionnaire each time it is taught and module survey results are part of the annual monitoring process. Key issues of concern are raised at Staff-Student Liaison Committees and where appropriate are reported up to programme boards or to Faculty Programmes Committees. From Semester 1 in the 2015-16 academic year, students will be able to see, after the end of each semester, the Annual Module Reports for the modules that they took that semester.

2.3.3 Student representation through elected Course Representatives, Academic Presidents and Faculty Officers and Staff student liaison committees (SSLC's)

The University and the University of Southampton Students' Union (SUSU) are committed to providing effective structures for student feedback and representation and to working in partnership to ensure that the Academic Student Representation System (ASRS) functions effectively. [The Academic Student Representation Policy](#) and guidance document was written and is maintained by SUSU.

Collecting, analysing and responding to evidence are fundamental features of a research-intensive university, and the University employs professional researchers to conduct and analyse feedback from students at institution-level in order to make improvements to the student experience. There is a commitment to closing feedback loops demonstrated through regular ['You Said, We Did'](#) campaigns.

3 Governance

- 3.1 This policy is jointly owned by the University and SUSU, who will work together to ensure adherence to the principles below. In particular, the Pro-Vice Chancellor (PVC) Education and SUSU's Vice President (VP) Education have responsibility for ensuring that feedback is collected responsibly, acted upon where necessary and that any actions taken are fed back to students effectively.
- 3.2 The Management Information Scrutiny Group is responsible for reviewing analyses of research results and other management information, and has a reporting line to the Education Strategy Executive Group (ESEG), and through ESEG to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC), both of which have student representation.
- 3.3 In addition, there is a cross-University informal network which shares good practice around the National Student Survey, and there are a number of ad-hoc working groups which are established to support individual project lifecycles.
- 3.4 Student representation operates in line with the [Academic Student Representation Policy](#).

4 Principles

4.1 Any primary research to be conducted responsibly and ethically.

4.1.1 The research professionals employed by the University to conduct student research abide by the [Market Research Society \(MRS\)'s code of conduct](#) as do any agencies to which work is outsourced.

4.1.2 The University also has its own ethical approval system, [ERGO](#), which assesses all research using a risk-based approach.

4.1.3 Both the MRS code of conduct and ERGO share the same core principles for research methodology, for example;

- fairness of access
- protection of (vulnerable) participants
- anonymity and confidentiality for responses
- data protection

4.1.4 Where open-ended comments are collected, these are monitored for inappropriate language or information which might result in an individual being identified before they are disseminated within the University or SUSU.

4.1.5 In order to protect the anonymity of respondents and to provide robust data, a minimum reportable response rate/ number of responses is/are set specific to each project, both for analyses of 'total responses' and for sub-groups.

4.1.6 Any complaints raised through student feedback mechanisms will be referred through the [Student Complaints](#) regulations.

4.2 Student feedback to be used to enhance the quality of the student experience and to ensure that the management of academic quality takes account of student views.

4.2.1 Student feedback is analysed at a number of levels, including institutional-level, faculty-level, programme-level, and by demographic factors (such as fee status, widening participation factors etc).

4.2.2 These different analyses are discussed in the relevant fora, for example ESEG or ASQC for institutional analyses, Faculty Programmes Committees or Faculty Executive Groups for Faculty or programme level analyses etc.

4.2.3 Student feedback is routinely used in the formal processes of the University in order to enhance the quality of the student experience. Faculty performance agreements, business planning, programme validation and QME annual monitoring processes, all require commentary from faculties and academic units on the issues raised in student feedback mechanisms, and any actions taken or proposed.

4.3 The University will feed back to students and SUSU about actions taken in response to student feedback.

4.3.1 Student feedback received through surveys or other research should be actively linked to the student representation system, with student representatives given access to the relevant analyses, allowing them to be discussed in fora such as Staff-Student Liaison Committees (SSLC's).

4.3.2 There are a number of mechanisms which may be used to directly feed back to students the actions taken as a result of feedback. These include;

- Emails from Director of Programmes, Heads of Unit etc.
- Regular '[You Said, We Did](#)' campaigns, supported by a website.
- Social media – for example the Library uses Facebook and Twitter.

4.4 Guidance

4.4.1 Further guidance is available from the Institutional Research team in [Strategy, Planning and Analytics \(SPA\)](#), contactable at insres@soton.ac.uk.

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