



STUDENT MODULE FEEDBACK: ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

About Student Module Feedback

The aim of Student Module Feedback is to help staff and students understand and enhance the student academic experience on a module, by working in partnership to identify strengths and changes to be introduced during and after the delivery of a module.

It should be a process rather than the result of a single output or opportunity to provide feedback. Student Module Feedback serves different purposes, including its role in the expression of the student voice, demonstrating our commitment to improving student academic experience, and as part of quality assurance mechanisms.

Online Surveys

There are a number of practical advantages to moving paper-based module evaluations that require scanning after being completed in-class – to online surveys. Online evaluations are often more convenient for students, and staff can significantly speed up real-time analysis of the results through the platform.

Switching to an online approach for Student Module Feedback could prompt concerns about ensuring sufficient participation and good response rates. This does not necessarily mean responses for online evaluations are less valuable.

The sample might still be representative and students often complete richer, more detailed responses in comment boxes.

This Toolkit

In response to concerns raised about online surveys experiencing lower response rates, this **Engagement Toolkit** has been developed to capture steps Departments can take to maximise the input from students.

What about 'anytime' feedback?

All students should have the opportunity to provide feedback and students should be able to offer feedback at any point during the module (encouraging 'anytime' feedback).

What about other surveys?

Student Module Feedback complements other formal and informal forms of student feedback and representation: The National Student Survey (NSS), The UK Engagement Survey (UKES), Student Voice Groups, and Student Representatives. All student feedback should be viewed holistically.

Annual Monitoring

Faculty Education Committees will receive reports on the annual student module feedback exercise as part of its review of Annual Review of Courses (ARC) reports. Themes raised through the ARC reports are fed into the wider University Committee structure, with overviews provided to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee and Education Committee.

Reporting

A summary report on Student Module Feedback for previous terms should be ready for discussion at the department's Summer Student Voice Group.

After discussion at Student Voice Groups, the summary report should be published on the web and accessible to all students.

Reports on overall satisfaction at a module level will be received and reviewed by Education Data Insight Action Group (E-DIAG).



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Engagement Tips and Tools

Creating accessible opportunities for students to provide Module Feedback

- Dedicate time to Student Module Feedback at the beginning of lectures/seminars as a starter activity to warm up ahead of the session. This will ensure student participation in surveys is not disrupted if the session overruns. Alternatively, provide a break in the middle of sessions for students to complete surveys.
- Make it as easy as possible for students to complete surveys by providing built-in opportunities to complete surveys. Ensure that Student Module Feedback is incorporated into communications about the module structure, as well as any accompanying handbooks or guides.
- Reminders can also be delivered during teaching sessions, especially about the date the survey opens and the opportunity for students to have their say.

Promoting Student Module Feedback surveys

- Increase the visibility of Student Module Feedback surveys by utilising social media to promote them.
- Engage with Student Voice to discuss ideas to enhance student engagement. Please email studentvoice@essex.ac.uk with any questions, or to arrange a meeting to talk through and develop strategies for promoting your surveys.
- Ensure your Student Representatives are informed about when Student Module Feedback surveys are going live, to encourage the wider discussion and promotion of surveys across all student voice channels.

Building feedback and feedforward relationships

- Raise awareness and underline the importance of end of module evaluation surveys by sending a pre-launch email. This could come from a senior member of staff, as this may give the evaluation more weight. Consider summarising how feedback from previous surveys has been taken on board and changes that students and staff have made together.
- Ensure any actions taken in response to student feedback are visible – provide specific examples. It's not possible to take actions that students are requesting, so ensure students are told why something hasn't been changed. This could help enhance understanding of the types of things that can be changed and the things that can't. Consider showing a slide at the beginning of a class conveying what has changed, improved or kept the same on the module in response to surveys in the most recent batch of responses.
- Encourage consistent approaches amongst course teams in building a rapport with students to encourage the completion of Student Module Feedback. If students see that staff actively take feedback on board via informal feedback mechanisms, they may be more inclined to complete the formal surveys.
- Emphasise how student engagement with surveys will benefit students if they are yet to take modules that will be re-run in the same year. Ensure students are aware that their feedback will be responded to swiftly and in-year where possible.
- Building relationships with students in conjunction with encouraging their engagement in module feedback is vital. Consider having members of staff who are designated 'leads' in engaging and helping students to understand what the purpose of Student Module Feedback is.
- The designated 'lead' for encouraging student participation in Student Module Feedback could drop into lectures and seminars to remind students to complete module feedback. If sessions are held remotely, utilise the 'chat' function to circulate the direct link to the survey to the entire class.



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What does Good Practice look like?

Encouraging feedback from the beginning of each module

- The use of data from Module Feedback surveys is vital to evaluating trends in student satisfaction of learning and teaching at the University. It is vital that it is made clear to students from the start of the module that they will have an opportunity to contribute to its development with their feedback, via Student Module Feedback.
- Induction weeks (as well as handbooks and other guides) could be an ideal opportunity to introduce the Module Feedback process, when it takes place, and to celebrate some of the positive changes brought about through student feedback previously given.

Monitoring participation when surveys are live

- When surveys are published, the designated 'lead' should continue to monitor participation in the survey and send targeted communications to non-participants, with a brief message and a customised subject line to catch attention.
- Following the launch and initial reminders for surveys going live, there could be a spike in response rates. Whilst reminders are possibly the best single way of improving participation rates, there is a danger of irritating students by sending too many.
- Departments may find students respond best to informal, friendly communications. Varying the tone and style of targeted communication each time. The message could be: "Please help us reach X%"
Or "We need another X students to complete the survey to reach X%. Please be one of these X students to inform future changes".

Closing the feedback loop

- The feedback process should close the loop and demonstrate how continuous improvement is driven by students.
- After Module Feedback surveys are complete, consider sending a "thank you email" and, if you have had time to review the results, it can be effective to include any headline results, an initial response and details of what will happen next.
- Creating an action plan of how you intend to respond to feedback from the surveys will ensure student feedback is visible. The plan can be circulated via email, or published on Moodle pages for the individual module, and for the wider cohort to see.
- This will ensure students who have since left the module have something to refer back to. Report on progress in terms of what can be changed, and as importantly what can't be changed and why.
- Closing the loop is vital to achieving a really great student experience and ensuring that we are engaging our students as active participants and partners in shaping their academic student experience.

Creating a culture of responding to student feedback

- Encourage a consistent approach to obtaining and responding to student feedback across the Department and individual course teams. Consistent efforts to engage them in module evaluation by all the tutors teaching on a module or course may encourage them to engage more.
- Creating and developing a culture of responding to student feedback encourages further participation in the student voice processes. Students are far more likely to engage positively with Module Feedback if they see evidence of responses to issues raised and suggestions given.