

Frequently Asked Questions - Student Course Surveys

Why can't each course have their own set of questions?

Unitec needs to have longitudinal evaluative data with a consistent set of questions for all students. This allows teachers and leadership to make comparisons across time and across the institution.

Every course teacher is also encouraged to create and use their own evaluation tools and processes during the semester to supplement the institutional course evaluation survey. This will allow teachers to make quick and responsive improvements to courses.

Can we have the survey earlier so that we can make changes during the semester?

One iteration of the survey was run earlier in response to feedback. It clashed with the student NPS survey, which made students feel overwhelmed. Student feedback was that the survey needed to be later in the semester for them to have useful comments, especially about assessments.

Can we have the survey at the same time every semester so we can plan for it?

Changes to the survey timeline have been in response to feedback. From 2021 Semester 1 the surveys will follow the timeline provided below.

My course does not follow the usual semester timeline

There is some flexibility for those courses. Please contact tkkinsights@unitec.ac.nz as early as possible in the semester to discuss your needs.

Students get too many emails about the survey.

Unitec continues to work on this very real problem and this semester are trialling a single URL link for all students to use. This new process will mean just one email to provide the survey link and one reminder email. This link will not change from one semester to another and so will be able to be posted on the Moodle pages for each course and simply hidden between surveys. This will solve the problem of students not being able to find their survey emails. Students will need their ID# to respond.

Where can students find their ID#?

Student ID numbers are on their cards. Most will have these available on campus as they are needed to log into SEATs. They can also find their ID# by logging into Moodle. If they click on their name at the top right of the Moodle page and select 'profile' they will be able to see their ID number.

We get very low response rates.

Paper surveys do get higher response rates than digital ones but there is no capacity within Te Korowai Kahurangi for transferring data from paper to computer to be able to analyse and report the results. The huge amount of data requires digital analysis to be efficient. With digital analysis data can be connected to demographics such as ethnicity, gender and age of students, providing essential data to support teachers with course and programme evaluation.

Better response rates are usually achieved when teaching staff encourage students to do the survey and when students are provided 10-15 minutes in class for this purpose.

If there are only a couple of responses, it is easy to guess who they are from.

Only courses with 3 or more responses are reported to ensure student privacy, and validity of results.

What if only one student replies and they had a bad attitude and responded more than once to the survey to give negative feedback?

Students are unable to respond more than once to each course survey.

There are several teachers on my course. It's not fair that one teacher can mean my course gets poor ratings.

If there are negative comments or overall ratings below 6 on a course (especially if this is a sudden change or has been consistent over several semesters, APMs and HOS need to see this as a possible red flag and carry out an inquiry process. This should not be a punitive process but a genuine search for more data and for a solution. Low overall ratings can sometimes seem unrelated to ratings for individual questions. Often an SGID (small group instructional diagnostic) evaluation will provide answers. Te Puna Ako liaisons are able to help with this. Comparisons should also be made to other informal evaluations you have carried out during the semester such as exit tickets or Student Forums.

When do I get results from the survey?

Course reports which include student comments are made available to HOS and academic leaders to distribute to teachers in Week 16. Summarised results are available in the student performance Power BI dashboard soon after. If you don't have a Power BI license or need help using it, please contact IT to request a license.

What do I do with the results?

It is important that teachers 'close the loop' in the feedback cycle. Once you have the data please look for consistent issues that have arisen and create your response to students. Begin by thanking them for participating in the survey. You will not be able to solve all their concerns, but it is important that you let them know why this is so. Where you can make improvements in response to student feedback, describe what you will do and when. Reflect on this information in your online CEP. Although the students are likely to have completed their course you can upload your response to a programme level Moodle course or to the Moodle of one of their compulsory courses in the following semester. Students from the next cohort also appreciate knowing that student feedback is listened to and actioned.

Will the survey work on a phone?

The survey is designed to work well on mobile devices.

Who do I contact if I have feedback or further questions about the survey?

You can email Jeff and Michelle at tkkinsights@unitec.ac.nz or Maureen (Te Puna Ako) at mperkins2@unitec.ac.nz