Student Feedback on Teaching and Courses Policy

Academic Policy

1   Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the processes for collecting, analysing and reporting course and teaching feedback from students at the Victoria University of Wellington ('the University').

2   Organisational Scope

This is a University-wide policy.

3   Definitions

For purposes of this policy, unless otherwise stated, the following definitions shall apply:

Academic Staff:	Staff employed by the University with responsibility for research-led teaching in the form of lectures, tutorials and other teaching events.
Adjunct Staff / Contract Staff	Anyone employed to teach Victoria University of Wellington courses who is not a permanent employee of the University.
CAD	Centre for Academic Development
Course Feedback Survey:	Feedback from students on the quality of the learning opportunities in a particular course.
Faculty and School Course Report	Report summarising the medians and response rates for the core feedback questions for all courses surveyed in a school each trimester, with University, faculty and school comparisons.
Faculty and School Tutor Report	Report summarising the medians and response rates for the core feedback questions for all tutors surveyed in a school, with University, faculty and school comparisons.
Summary Report on a course / teacher / tutor	Report showing median results, percentages and response rates.
Teaching Feedback Survey:	Feedback from students on the quality of the teaching of an individual staff member.
Teaching Performance Profile (TTP):	A summarised history of teaching feedback for an individual academic staff member.
Tutor Feedback Survey	Feedback from students on the quality of tutoring by an individual tutor.

Tutorial:	A group interactive teaching session, including laboratories, workshops and formally-managed online discussions.
Tutoring Staff:	Staff employed by the University to support teaching of courses under the supervision of course coordinators or programme directors. This includes staff employed as sessional assistants, teaching assistants, laboratory assistants and in similar roles.

4 Policy Content and Guidelines

4.1 Purpose of the student feedback process

(a) Feedback on courses, teaching and tutoring is collected from students to contribute constructively to the on-going improvement of teaching and learning at the University.

(b) Student feedback should be used in conjunction with other sources of information, such as (but not limited to) peer observation, self-reflection, Head of School reports.

4.2 Administration of feedback process

(a) Formal student feedback on courses and teaching at the University is administered by CAD, under the direction of the Vice-Provost (Academic and Equity).

(b) The Director of CAD, in consultation with the Vice-Provost (Academic and Equity), sets out appropriate operational procedures to collect and report student feedback, in order to ensure the security, validity and usefulness of the information collected.

(c) Only feedback collected securely, in compliance with the University's processes, will be included in TPPs and in other formal feedback reporting provided by CAD.

(d) Feedback surveys set up using the University's online system for collecting student feedback will automatically remain open for 10 days and cannot be extended beyond that timeframe.

(e) CAD will assist staff in collecting informal and other forms of feedback from students, subject to available resources. This additional information can be summarised for staff use in course and teaching development but will not be formally reported. Before collecting informal/formative feedback, staff should check the HEC guidelines to ensure compliance.

(f) The Head of School is responsible for ensuring that student feedback is sought by all academic staff members in their School in accordance with this policy.

(g) Where the Head of School instructs an academic staff member to request feedback in the circumstances specified in s4.3(b) and/or s4.4(b), and the staff member fails to do so within an appropriate timeframe:

  (i) the Head of School has the authority to request that a course or teaching survey be carried out; and

  (ii) the matter may be dealt with under the Staff Conduct Policy.

4.3 Teaching feedback

4.3.1 Teaching feedback for University staff

(a) Any staff member involved in teaching a University course may request student feedback on their teaching performance in that course, providing they have taught a minimum of four hours of lectures in that course.

(b) Teaching feedback for the range of teaching activities that a staff member is engaged in is required in the following circumstances:

  (i)   in the first trimester of a staff member's teaching at the University; and

  (ii) when a staff member has not sought feedback for the previous two full teaching years.

(c) No academic staff member or administrative staff member (other than the Head of School) may request student feedback on teaching performance for any other University academic staff member.

(d) Student feedback on teaching cannot be requested if more than four weeks have passed since the last lecture by the individual in that course.

(e) Teaching feedback can only be requested once per trimester, per course. For full year courses, summative teaching feedback can only be requested once during the year for that course. CAD can assist anyone wishing to collect formative feedback part way through a course.

4.3.2   Teaching feedback for contract staff

(a) Teaching feedback can be sought at the request of the head of school for all contract teaching staff, providing they have taught a minimum of four hours of lectures in that course. This includes adjunct staff, teaching assistants, teaching fellows, PhD students, etc.

(b) If HoS wish these people to collect student feedback they will need to be entered into Banner as teachers on the course and given access to Student Records. It is not possible for the automated student feedback system to enable anyone to create surveys unless they are in Banner and able to access Student Records. Contract staff will be required to set up their own feedback using the University's online system.

(c) If HoS do not wish to grant Student Records access to casual/contract staff, the school will need to support these staff members to collect formative feedback.

4.4   Course Feedback

(a) The course coordinator is responsible for requesting student feedback on courses.

(b) Student feedback on courses must be sought:

  (i)   in the first year that a new or substantially revised course is offered;

  Note: Substantial revisions to a course include a change in teaching mode, such as conversion to on-line delivery, and significant changes to assessment. Refer to s15 of the [Academic Approvals Handbook](#).

  (ii) at least once in every three offerings of a course and not less frequently than once every three years;

  Note: It is recognised that not every course will be offered in the 'third year'. In those instances, the course is to be evaluated in the next year it is offered.

  (iii) each time a new 'Special Topic' course is offered; and

  (iv) at the request of the relevant Head of School.

(c) Student feedback on courses cannot be requested after the final lecture for the trimester.

(d) Course feedback can only be requested once per trimester, per course. For full year courses, summative feedback on the course can only be requested once during the year for that course. CAD can assist anyone wishing to collect formative feedback part way through a course.

Note: The course coordinator should notify the class at least one week prior to feedback being sought.

4.4.1 Courses excluded from feedback

(a) Courses excluded from the requirement to seek student feedback include all research-based courses, theses, practicums, directed individual courses of study, etc.

(b) Academic staff requiring feedback for such courses should consider alternative ways of collecting relevant feedback. CAD staff can assist with advice on alternative means of feedback and/or the design of surveys.

4.5 Tutor Feedback

(a) The relevant course coordinator is required to take responsibility for requesting the student feedback on tutoring carried out by individuals who are not academic staff of the University.

(b) The task of *requesting* student feedback on tutor feedback surveys for tutors who are not academic staff of the University may be delegated to an administrative assistant, senior tutor or tutor coordinator. No academic staff member or administrative staff member (other than the Head of School) may request student feedback on tutoring performance for any other University academic staff member.

(c) Academic staff of the University may request their own individual tutor feedback surveys.

4.6 Analysis, Reporting and Retention of Feedback Results

(a) CAD will process, analyse, prepare reports on, and archive the statistical information from student feedback data.

(b) Teaching feedback results will be provided directly to the individual academic staff member.

(c) Course feedback results will be provided directly to the relevant course coordinator, who will be responsible for discussing the feedback with others teaching on the course.

(d) Tutor feedback results for academic staff will be provided directly to the individual staff member.

(e) Feedback results for other tutors will be provided to the relevant course coordinator, who is required to provide copies of the summary reports to the individual tutors within one week of receipt.

(f) Written comments for teaching and course feedback will be made available to the relevant academic staff member after the grades for the relevant course have been recorded in Banner. Written comments for tutor feedback surveys will be available to the relevant course coordinator after the grades for the course have been recorded in Banner.

4.6.1 Faculty and School Teaching Feedback Reports

(a) Reports summarising the medians for the core feedback questions on teaching will be provided at the end of each trimester to:

     (i)   the relevant Head of School;

     (ii)   the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean; and

     (iii)   the Vice-Provost (Academic and Equity).

(b)   The Head of School is responsible for reviewing the teaching feedback results and identifying with the staff member any action that needs to be taken in the light of the student feedback.

(c)   Aggregate University-level information about the 'Overall Quality' question on the teaching feedback forms will be reported annually as part of the University's Investment Plan key performance indicator.

4.6.2   Faculty and School Course Feedback Reports

(a)   Reports summarising the medians for the core feedback questions for all courses surveyed in a School each trimester will be provided to:

     (i)   the relevant Head of School;

     (ii)   the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean;

     (iii)   the Vice-Provost (Academic and Equity); and

     (iv)   the relevant Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) (or equivalent).

(b)   Medians for the core course feedback questions will be made available to staff and students through the University website, with an appropriate general commentary from CAD on the interpretation of such feedback. Median results for a particular course will be replaced when a new evaluation for that course has been carried out.

(c)   Medians for the core course feedback questions will also be available to staff through the Course Completion Report.

(d)   The Head of School is responsible for reviewing the course feedback results and identifying with the relevant staff member any action that needs to be taken in the light of the student feedback.

(e)   After receiving course feedback, the course coordinator will provide to students who are enrolled in the course next time it is offered a brief statement that summarises general feedback points from the previous cohort of students that are considered by the course coordinator to be salient and an outline of any relevant changes that have been made to this course as a result of student feedback and/or an explanation of why suggestions from students have not been followed. This statement is to be made in the course outlines and can also be made in any other relevant media.

(f)   A summary of the median scores for the core questions from course feedback for every course within a programme will be supplied to schools prior to programme reviews.

(g)   Aggregate University-level information about the 'Overall Effectiveness' question on the course feedback forms will be reported annually as part of the University's Investment Plan key performance indicator.

4.6.3   Faculty and School Tutor Feedback Reports

(a)   Reports summarising the medians for the core feedback questions on tutoring will be provided at the end of each trimester to:

     (i)   the relevant Head of School;

     (ii)   the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean; and

(iii)   the Vice-Provost (Academic and Equity).

(b)   The Head of School is responsible for reviewing the tutor feedback results and identifying with the relevant course coordinator any action that needs to be taken in the light of the student feedback.

4.6.4   Other reports

CAD will provide to the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor, Dean and Head of School any other student feedback reports requested.

4.7   Teaching Performance Profile

(a)   TPPs are produced by CAD in response to a request made in reasonable time from an individual staff member.

(b)   The TPP will include summaries of all the teaching feedback results stored by CAD for a given individual over the period of time specified.

(c)   TPPs will only be provided by CAD to the individual staff member or to the relevant Head of School.

4.8   Student Confidentiality

CAD commits to retaining the confidentiality and security of all student feedback data. Confidential information will only be provided to the persons/positions approved in this policy.

5   Legislative Compliance

Although the University is required to manage its policy documentation within a legislative framework, there is no specific legislation directing this policy.

6   References

Evaluation and Review Handbook

Investment Plan

Staff Conduct Policy

Further information on student feedback: www.victoria.ac.nz/staff/learning-teaching/student-feedback

Previous version: Student Feedback on Teaching and Courses Policy

7   Appendices

Nil.

8   Approval Agency

Academic Board

9   Approval Dates

This policy was originally approved on:	13 May 2010
This version was approved on:	22 November 2016 (AB16/51)
This version takes effect from:	22 November 2016

10   Policy Sponsor

Provost

11   Contact Person

The following person may be approached in relation to this policy:

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