Evaluation of Teaching, Courses and Programs Policy and Procedure

1 Purpose

To provide guidance and information on the evaluation of teaching, courses and programs

2 Scope

All University Students and Staff

3 Policy Statement

The University of Southern Queensland's Vision Statement states inter alia that the University aims to be "highly regarded for its learning and teaching excellence".

Teaching is a creative activity designed to foster students' learning, their ability and desire to undertake scholarly work, and their personal development and creativity. Teaching draws upon the professional and disciplinary expertise of staff and is continually revitalised by research, scholarship, consultancy or professional practice. Teaching includes the design, implementation and evaluation of curriculum materials for all modes of delivery.

Learning is an activity where students acquire and productively apply new knowledge and skills. Such learning empowers students to make wise choices and solve problems. In particular, it is a sustainable, lifelong, renewable process for people and for institutions that serve people.

Quality assurance and the continuous improvement of the University's educational programs are fundamental to the mission of the University. Evaluation of undergraduate and postgraduate education, and specifically teaching, courses and programs, is necessary for purposes of accountability, benchmarking and continuous improvement.

This Policy aims to establish conditions for evaluating the learning and teaching experience of students, the quality and viability of all programs, and for monitoring and ensuring systematic improvement of the University's programs and courses.

Evaluation of quality is:

- the systematic consideration of stakeholder's views and benchmarking activities about the quality of programs and the courses that comprise the programs; and

- the aggregation, analysis and interpretation of student's feedback on their perceptions of

the quality of the courses and the teaching of them, to inform judgements about program quality and relevance.

Evaluation of viability refers to:

- reporting on the viability of courses and programs with regard to relevant contextual factors.

This Policy outlines principles and responsibilities pertaining to the implementation of evaluation. In adopting this policy the University recognises that the evaluation of educational provision as a whole will involve more than the evaluation of teaching, courses and programs. The University also recognises that the resources available to develop and sustain programs may affect their quality. Therefore, the University will continuously evaluate the viability of its programs in order to use resources to maximum effect.

The emphasis of the University evaluation system is on the use of feedback for continuous improvement within University quality assurance processes. Balanced evaluation based on combinations of standard student survey questionnaires and other methods and instruments serves a range of purposes including:

- to ensure the delivery of quality learning and teaching experiences across all courses and programs in all campuses and across different modes of delivery;

- to improve student's learning experiences and outcomes;

- to assist in curriculum planning;

- to provide staff with information in regard to professional development needs;

- to provide staff with reliable, consistent and timely evidence of the quality of their teaching and student learning which may be used in progression/promotion processes, in so far as these matters are dependent upon quality teaching; and

- to gather information and evidence for reporting purposes, specifically the demonstration by the University of effective quality assurance processes in relation to the learning and teaching environment.

An important principle for the use of data gained from evaluations is that no single source of data will be relied upon when drawing inference about the teaching, courses or programs. Rather, multiple sources of data will be used to help ensure that the interpretation of data is reliable.

4 Principles

1. The University will undertake regular evaluation of learning and teaching, courses and programs in all modes and at all campuses, using student and other stakeholder feedback as appropriate.

2. Each campus shall evaluate each course in each mode at least once every three times it is offered thus:
   a. for undergraduate courses and postgraduate coursework, via the Student Evaluation of Learning and Teaching (SELT) Questionnaire; and

   b. for postgraduate research programs, via the Student Evaluation of Research Experience (SERE) Questionnaire.

3. Each course shall be evaluated or monitored by the teaching team or discipline team at least once in each year it is offered.

4. Each program shall be evaluated for quality and viability at least once during its accreditation cycle.

5 Procedures

1. Evaluation of learning and teaching will include student feedback obtained from the SELT or SERE Questionnaire, as appropriate. In addition, staff may choose to use other, optional instruments such as short, open-ended written responses, Peer Evaluation of Learning and Teaching (PELT), meetings with student representative groups and non-standard questionnaires. Refer to guidelines in 5.1 below.

2. Evaluation of courses will be undertaken using a Course Monitoring Report. In addition, staff may choose to use other, optional instruments such as PELT, focus groups, and non-standard questionnaires.

3. Evaluation of programs will be undertaken as per the Planning, Accreditation and Review Process for Academic Programs Procedure. In addition, each program will undergo a mid-cycle review. Refer to guidelines in 5.1.3 below.

5.1 Guidelines

5.1.1 Evaluation of Learning and Teaching

5.1.1.1 Role of Teaching Staff

All staff who are employed on a continuing (full-time or fractional), fixed-term or casual basis and who have a substantial involvement in teaching are required to:

1. Evaluate their teaching using the SELT or SERE instrument, as appropriate. In addition, staff may choose to use other, optional instruments such as PELT, short, open-ended written responses, meetings with student representative groups and nonstandard questionnaires.

2. Reflect on evaluation feedback and, where necessary, determine, implement and communicate to students a timely response that is consistent with the continuous improvement of teaching.

3. In accordance with the People Portfolio Policy and Procedures Performance Planning and Review, discuss with supervisors:
    a. the results of standard evaluations and other evaluations conducted and the interpretation of feedback;

    b. planned improvements and/or the outcomes of enacted improvements; and

    c. the ways in which improvements are reported to students.

5.1.1.2 Role of Supervisors of Teaching

Staff Supervisors of teaching staff will:

1. In accordance with the People Portfolio Policy and Procedures Performance Planning and Review, initiate regular discussions with teaching staff for whom there is a supervisory responsibility regarding:
    a. evaluations of teaching and the interpretation of feedback; and

    b. planned improvements and/or the outcomes of enacted improvements.

5.1.1.3 Role of The University

1. The University will ensure that information derived from individual evaluations of teaching is only used for the following purposes:
    a. to assist staff members to develop and evaluate their teaching approaches and practices, by gaining feedback from students about their teaching practices, and the perceptions of students about aspects of the learning and teaching environment;

    b. as a basis for discussion between supervisors and staff in performance reviews conducted in accordance with the People Portfolio Policy and Procedures Performance Planning and Review;

    c. by the staff member concerned, for professional development purposes, or in

processes relating to promotion, in accordance with provisions specified in University of Southern Queensland Enterprise Agreement and the People Portfolio Performance, Development and Recognition Policy.

2. The results of SELT and SERE, aggregated by course codes or discipline group as appropriate, will be posted on the University web site as required by DEST regulations.

3. In all cases, the University will ensure that information derived from individual evaluations of teaching will be treated in a manner compliant with the USQ Privacy Policy.

4. The results of individual evaluations will remain confidential and will be retained for not more than 10 years, in line with the Queensland *Public Records Act 2002*. Information derived from individual evaluations of teaching will be provided only to the staff member concerned, except that:
    a. a copy may be provided to the supervisor in confidence, either by the staff member concerned for professional development or career development purposes, or as required, in accordance with 5.1.1.2 above;

    b. a copy will be provided in confidence to the dean/director of academic unit for management purposes in relation to an individual staff member's employment.

5.1.2 Evaluation of Courses

5.1.2.1 Role of Course Examiners

Course examiners are required to:

1. Evaluate each course for which they are responsible, using a Course Monitoring Report devised by the Faculty1. In addition, staff may choose to use other, optional instruments such as PELT, focus groups, and non-standard questionnaires.

2. Evaluation of courses should involve the Course Examiner, the Course Moderator and either (a) as many other staff involved in the teaching of the course as possible or (b) all staff in the relevant discipline group.

3. Evaluation of courses should occur either (a) at the time of moderation of course results or (b) within not more than six weeks of the end of the teaching semester

4. Reflect on evaluation feedback (with others involved in course delivery if applicable) and determine and implement improvements to course curriculum, delivery and pedagogy.

5. Liaise with program coordinators regarding course evaluations, planned improvements, and the outcomes of enacted improvements.

5.1.2.2 Program coordinators (or, where appropriate, subject area coordinators and others with equivalent coordination responsibilities)

Program coordinators are required to:

1. Liaise with course examiners with the goal of coordinating a systematic and timely evaluation of courses within a particular program.

2. Reflect on evaluation feedback with course examiners and others involved in program delivery in order to determine continuous improvements for the program within University's quality assurance processes, and in line with the Planning, Accreditation and Review Process for Academic Programs Procedure.

3. Submit the Course Monitoring Report to the Associate Dean (Academic) (or equivalent position) via the Head of Department (or equivalent position).

5.1.3 Evaluation of Programs

As part of the University's program accreditation processes (as detailed in the Planning, Accreditation and Review Process for Academic Programs Procedure), once initially accredited, all programs undergo a comprehensive review every seven years. In addition, each program will undergo a mid-cycle review generally in the fourth year of accreditation (as detailed in the Planning, Accreditation and Review Process for Academic Programs Procedure).

5.1.3.1 Role of Program Coordinators

Program Coordinators are required to:

1. Liaise with the Associate Dean (Academic) to ensure that each program for which they are responsible is evaluated according to the Planning, Accreditation and Review Process for Academic Programs Procedure (including mid-cycle reviews).

2. Liaise with Associate Dean (Academic) to review evaluation data, implement agreed improvements, and monitor outcomes.

5.1.4 Role of Deans, the Learning and Teaching Support Unit and the University in Evaluation of Teaching, Courses and Programs

5.1.4.1 Deans/Directors of Academic Units

Deans/Directors of Academic Units are required to:

1. Provide annually a report to Academic Board which will include the following:
   a. an analysis of feedback collected through standard evaluations and other

evaluations of teaching, courses and programs within the faculty/academic unit;

b. a discussion of planned improvements and/or the outcomes of enacted improvements to teaching and learning within the faculty; and

c. the ways in which improvements are reported to students and relevant staff members.

5.1.4.2 The Learning and Teaching Support Unit

The Learning and Teaching Support Unit will support and encourage the evaluation of learning and teaching through:

1. The provision of information, professional development opportunities and professional support to teaching staff, course coordinators, supervisors and deans/directors of academic units in relation to:
   a. University policy and procedures for evaluations of teaching, courses and programs;

   b. the conduct of SELT, SERE, PELT and other non-standard evaluations and completion of Course Monitoring Reports;

   c. analysis and interpretation of evaluation feedback; and

   d. the application of feedback to the continuous improvement of courses and teaching.

2. Regular reporting to Learning and Teaching Committee regarding:
   a. evaluation activities undertaken including records of standard evaluations conducted; and

   b. reflection on the quality of the University's evaluation system including improvements made and their outcomes, and suggestions for further improvement.

6 References

Learning and Teaching Policy and Procedure

Planning, Accreditation and Review Process for Academic Programs Procedure

USQ Privacy Policy

Performance, Development and Recognition Policy

Performance Planning and Review Procedure

Queensland Public Records Act 2002

7 Schedules

This policy must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

8 Policy Information

Accountable Officer	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Responsible Officer	Executive Deans (BELA/HES)
Policy Type	Academic Quality Policy
Policy Suite	
Subordinate Schedules	
Approved Date	23/5/2019
Effective Date	23/5/2019
Review Date	
Relevant Legislation	University Calendar 7.5 Policy on Teaching and Learning University Calendar 4.2 Planning, Accreditation and Review Process for Academic Programs Procedure University Calendar 11.3 USQ Privacy Policy *Queensland Public Records Act 2002* USQ Enterprise Agreement
Related Policies	Academic Programs and Courses Policy Learning and Teaching Policy Performance, Development and Recognition Policy
Related Procedures	Performance Planning and Review Procedure

	[Program Accreditation Procedure](#)
Related forms, publications and websites	
Definitions	**Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary**
	Definitions that relate to this policy only
Keywords	Evaluation, teaching, courses, programs
Record No	13/320PL