

EVALUATION OF LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY

PURPOSE

Student Feedback plays an increasingly significant role in both quality improvement and quality assurance in Australian Higher Education. The Higher Education Standards 2015, requires that student feedback forms a significant part of the evaluation of learning and teaching:

5.3 Monitoring, Review and Improvement

5. All **students** have opportunities to provide **feedback** on their educational experiences and student feedback informs institutional monitoring, review and improvement activities.
6. All teachers and supervisors have opportunities to **review feedback** on their teaching and research supervision and are supported in enhancing these activities.
7. The results of regular interim monitoring, comprehensive reviews, external referencing and **student feedback** are used to mitigate future risks to the quality of the education provided and to guide and evaluate improvements, including the use of data on student progress and success to inform admission criteria and approaches to course design, teaching, supervision, learning and academic support.

Fundamental to the achievement of its Mission, the Sydney College of Divinity values excellence of scholarship, which underpins all of its educational programs. The achievement and maintenance of quality learning and teaching is an integral component of this philosophy. The commitment to maintaining high academic standards must be sustained by quality learning and teaching.

To ensure the provision of a quality educational experience for the students, teaching staff must be committed, well-prepared, expert in their Discipline, and willing to review, reflect upon and improve the programs and course units they teach.

This policy on the Evaluation of Learning and Teaching provides a framework for undertaking the evaluation of the quality of course units offered each semester and the quality of the teaching in the delivery of these units.

The evaluation process seeks to

- 1) comply with the Higher Education Standards;
- 2) enhance understanding about learning and teaching through collecting information from a range of sources, in a systematic way;
- 3) provide teaching staff with information about their teaching performance that will inform their own planning and professional development and lead to continuous improvement in course materials, learning activities, and teaching performance;
- 4) enable the College to demonstrate effective quality assurance processes in relation to learning and teaching;
- 5) maintain a uniformly high standard of learning and teaching across Teaching Bodies of the College.

The pedagogy underlying these functions is that the evaluation of learning and teaching is a developmental and formative process to be used in the development of teaching practices and improvement of learning and teaching environments.

SUMMARY

This policy encompasses sources of data for evaluation, student feedback, teacher self-reflection and analysis and the responsibilities of students, staff, and SCD committees.

SCOPE

All students
All teaching staff
SCD Academic Director)
Principals
Discipline Coordinators
SCD Committees
Coursework Committee
Academic Board

POLICY

Evaluation Sources

Evaluation data comes from a number of sources, including Student Learning Outcomes, Student Feedback and Evaluation, Teacher Self Reflection and Analysis and Peer Review of Teaching. Whilst the remainder of this Policy elaborates the Student Feedback and Evaluation Source, strong encouragement is given for teaching staff to also utilise data from other sources.

Student Feedback

Student feedback on quality of course units and quality of teaching is sought through surveys administered to all enrolled students at the conclusion of the teaching of all course units (including course units taught by distance education). SCD Student Feedback will also be sought for the purposes of comparison with student experience in other tertiary institutions, e.g. through the suite of Quality in Learning and Teaching surveys (QILT).

Confidentiality

The delivery, analysis, and feedback of the student feedback surveys will be conducted in a manner that ensures that results of individual evaluations remain confidential.

Teacher Self-reflection and Analysis

Teaching staff are encouraged to think beyond student ratings in terms of their own professional development. They should supplement the survey findings by developing and refining their own teaching philosophy, maintaining a Teaching Portfolio, utilising processes of self reflection and analysis, and being responsive to the student feedback.

Teachers should also engage in peer review of teaching as a further means by which analysis and improvements occur. This involves classroom performance via observation (face-to-face or video), and teacher-student interaction analysis (both in-class and on-line).

Responsibility

Under the direction of the Coursework Committee, the Academic Director oversees this policy and its accompanying procedures by liaising with Teaching Bodies over the delivery, analysis, and feedback of the student feedback surveys.

Principals of Teaching Bodies are responsible for ensuring that teaching staff are informed of the student feedback on the quality of the unit and on the quality of teaching, and for ensuring that changes made as a result of student feedback are appropriately communicated to the student body. They are also responsible, at the institutional level, for evaluating the feedback and for taking appropriate action to ensure continuous improvement in the quality of units and the quality of teaching within their institution.

Teaching staff, in conjunction with their supervisors, are responsible for evaluating the feedback and for taking appropriate self-reflection and analysis and other actions to ensure continuous improvement in the quality of units and the quality of teaching. Changes made to Course Units as a result of student feedback are to be recorded on future versions of Course Unit Booklets.

Students are responsible for completing the feedback surveys to the best of their ability and on time.

Discipline Coordinators, the Coursework Committee, and Academic Board are responsible, at the consortium level, for evaluating the feedback and for taking appropriate action to ensure continuous improvement in the quality of units and the quality of teaching within their discipline and across the consortium.

Author(s), Latest (Role) and Previous	P. Bolt (Academic Director); N. Holm (Former Coursework Director).
Last Approval (Date)	Standing Committee of Academic Board (27/1/2017)
Date for Review	Jan 2022
Previous Approval(s)	Academic Board (3/9/12) Academic Board (6/11/12)
Minor Amendments from 1 January 2017	