



1. Background - About the Quality of Teaching Questionnaire

The Quality of Teaching (QoT) survey provides feedback from undergraduate and postgraduate students on their perceptions of the quality of teaching and their learning experience in each of their subjects. The survey has been used throughout the University since 1994 with some variation in the questions over that period. The survey is mandatory in all 'taught' subjects with exemptions allowed in certain circumstances such as subjects with low enrolments or where conducting the survey is not practical.

Common questions cover a student's understanding of what is expected of them in their subject, quality of teaching, intellectual stimulation, feedback on progress, interest of the teaching staff, the student's learning community, use of multimedia based technology and materials and overall satisfaction with the quality of their learning experience. Responses are provided on a five point scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1).

2. Semester 1 2006 summary

The Quality of Teaching survey for Semester 1 2006 shows students to be largely satisfied with most aspects of the experience in their subjects, although outcomes in many areas including overall satisfaction and the quality of teaching were marginally lower compared to the previous semester. This decrease comes after a gradual improvement each semester since Semester 2 2003. Areas showing improvement include students' perceptions of the feedback they received and the use of information and communication technologies in their subjects. Some points in brief are:

- *Overall satisfaction with the quality of the learning experience in this subject (Question 9)*
 - 75.1% of respondents in undergraduate subjects agreed, down from 75.6% in Semester 2 2005.
 - 76.8% of respondents in postgraduate subjects agreed, down from 77.2%.
 - Mean ratings were steady at 3.9 for undergraduates, and 4.1 for postgraduates.
- *This subject was well taught (Question 2)*
 - 76.8% of respondents in undergraduate subjects agreed, down from 77.2% in Semester 2 2005.
 - 82.5% of respondents in postgraduate subjects agreed, down from 82.6%.
 - The undergraduate mean decreased to 3.9, and was steady for postgraduates at 4.1.
 - The number of poorly rated subjects and the teaching load in those subjects increased from 2.0% to 2.7% and from 2.5% to 3.7% respectively. Teaching load was concentrated in a small number of subjects, 25% was in a one subject, and 75% in ten (of 36 in total).
- 55.2% of undergraduates agreed that they received helpful feedback in their subject, up from 54.5% in Semester 2 2005 (Question 4)
- 54.6% of undergraduates agreed there was effective use of computer-based teaching materials in their subject, up from 52.6% (Question 7).

- 55.6% of undergraduates agreed that the web-based materials in their subjects were helpful, up from 53.5% (Question 8).

Faculty Highlights

- Overall satisfaction, and the ratings of the quality of teaching remains high in the faculties of Arts, Law, Music, Veterinary Science, and the Victorian College of the Arts.
- The proportion of students who agreed that overall they were satisfied increased for the fifth consecutive semester for Science, and for the third consecutive semester for Economics and Commerce.
- Teaching load in poorly rated Science subjects decreased to 1.2% in Semester 1 2006 from 15.3% in Semester 2 2003.

Areas for concern or further improvement

- Although improving, Questions 4 (feedback), 7 (computer-based), and 8 (web-based) are rated low with just over half of undergraduate respondents expressing agreement.
- There are a small number of subjects which are frequently rated low. Nearly one quarter of subjects rated less than 3.2 on Question 2 in Semester 1 2006 were rated 3.2 or lower three or more times since Semester 1 2000, including six subjects on six or more occasions.
- Overall satisfaction and the quality of teaching rated by students in engineering subjects is comparatively low and have not improved since the Semester 2 2003 survey.
- Overall satisfaction for students in Land and Food Resources subjects has decreased for the third consecutive semester.

3. Overall University outcomes

3.1 Overall satisfaction (Question 9)

The level of students' overall satisfaction with the learning experience in their subjects showed a small decrease from Semester 2 2005, but still indicates students were mostly satisfied with their experience (Figure 1). The main points are given below.

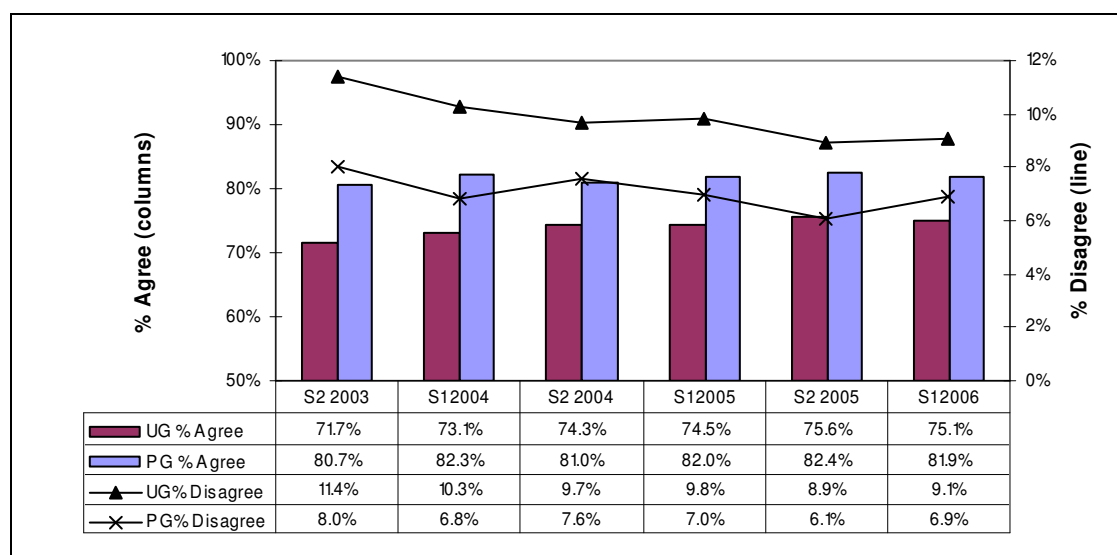
Undergraduate subjects

- 75.1% agreed that overall they were satisfied, down from 75.6% in Semester 2 2005.
- 9.1% disagreed, up from 8.9% in Semester 2 2005.
- The mean rating was steady at 3.9.

Postgraduate subjects

- 81.9% agreed that overall they were satisfied, down from 82.4% in Semester 2 2005.
- 6.9% disagreed, up from 6.1% in Semester 2 2005.
- The mean rating was steady at 4.1.

Figure 1: Question 9 (overall satisfaction) percentage agree and disagree, Semester 2 2003 to Semester 1 2006



3.2 This subject was well taught (Question 2)

The survey also showed a small decline in the proportion of students who agreed that their subjects were well taught, the first decrease since Semester 2 2002 (Figure 2). The main points are given below.

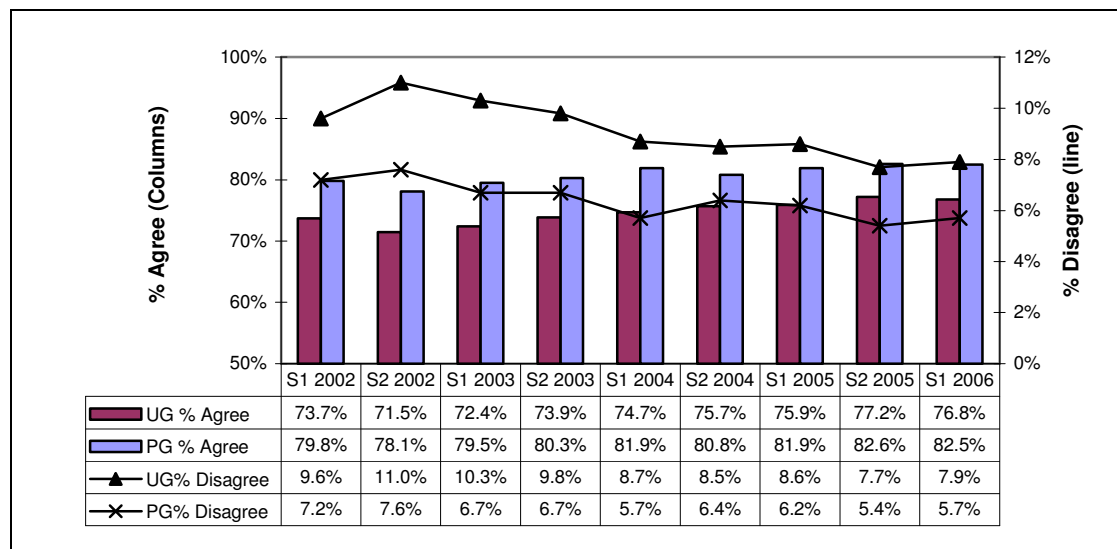
Undergraduate subjects

- 76.8% agreed that their subjects were well taught, down from 77.2% in Semester 2 2005.
- 7.9% disagreed, up from 7.7% in Semester 2 2005.
- The mean rating returned to 3.9 after rising to 4.0 in Semester 2 2005.
- The median mean rating was steady from the previous semester at 4.13, the 25th percentile at 3.80 and the 75th percentile at 4.44.

Postgraduate subjects

- 82.5% agreed that their subjects were well taught, little changed from 82.6% in Semester 2 2005.
- 9.1% disagreed, up from 8.9% in Semester 2 2005.
- The mean rating was unchanged at 4.1.

Figure 2: Question 2 (well taught) percentage agree and disagree, Semester 1 2002 to Semester 1 2006

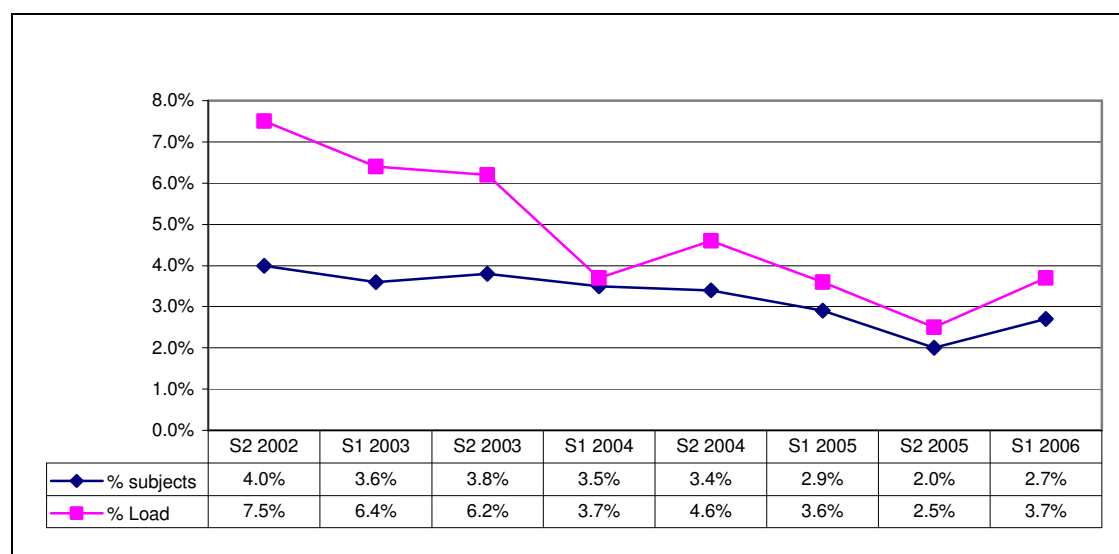


Low rated subjects on Question 2 (well taught)

There was an increase in the proportion of undergraduate subjects where the quality of teaching was perceived to be poor (defined by subjects with a mean rating of less than 3.0 on Question 2 (well taught)) (Figure 3), and the proportion of teaching load in these subjects in Semester 1 2006 following a steady decrease from Semester 2 2002.

- 2.7% of undergraduate subjects were rated at less than 3.0, up from 2.0% in Semester 2 2005.
- The proportion of teaching load in poorly rated subjects increased to 3.7% from 2.5% in Semester 2 2005.
- Teaching load in poorly rated subjects is concentrated in just a few subjects; 25% of the teaching load was in a single subject, and 75% of the load in ten (of 36 in total).
- A small number of subjects are frequently rated low on Question 2 (well taught). Of the 83 subjects (undergraduate and postgraduate) with mean of less than 3.2 in Semester 1 2006:
 - One-quarter (22) had mean of less than 3.2 on three or more surveys (including summer semester) since Semester 1 2000.
 - Four subjects were rated low on five occasions, and six subjects on six or more occasions.
 - One half of the subjects rated low, however, were surveyed for only the first or second time suggesting the low rating may be related to difficulties in introducing a new subject.

Figure 3: Question 2 (well taught) percent of undergraduate subjects and teaching load in subjects with mean rating of less than 3.0, Semester 2 2002 to Semester 1 2006

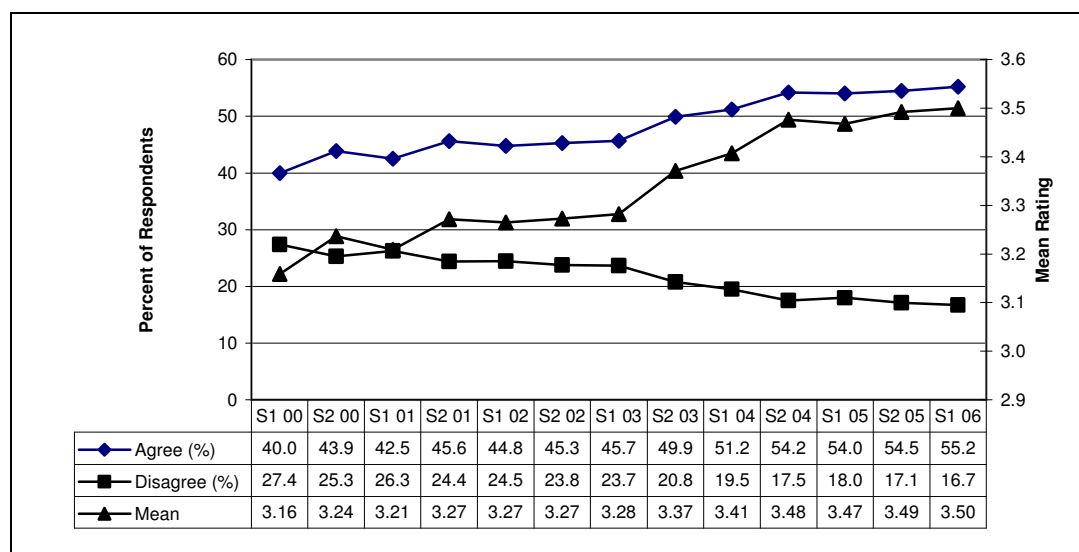


3.3 I received helpful feedback on how I was going in my subject (Question 4)

Students' perceptions of the feedback they receive in their subjects continues to improve, although at a lower rate than that recorded during 2003 and 2004 (Figure 4). The main points for undergraduate subjects are:

- 55.2% of respondents agreed they received helpful feedback, up from 54.5% in Semester 2 2005.
- 16.7% disagreed, down from 17.1% in Semester 2 2005.
- The mean rating was steady at 3.50.
- In 11% of undergraduate subjects (149) more than a third of respondents disagreed that they received helpful feedback.

Figure 4: Question 4 (feedback): % agree, % disagree and mean rating for undergraduate subjects, Semester 1 2000 to Semester 1 2006



3.4 Summary of outcomes for the nine common questions

Undergraduate subjects

The outcomes for the Semester 1 2006 survey shows minor but generally lower outcomes compared to the previous semester, but on the whole, survey results remain positive (Table 1).

- Although down slightly from the previous semester, three-quarters of undergraduate respondents agreed that:
 - they were clear in what was expected of them in their subjects (74.3% agreed);
 - their subjects were well taught (76.8% agreed);
 - their subjects were intellectually stimulating (74.8% agreed);
 - the teaching staff showed an interest in their academic needs (76.0% agreed); and
 - they were overall satisfied with the quality of the learning experience in their subjects (75.1% agreed).
- Two-thirds (67.3%) agreed they felt part of a group of students and staff committed to learning in their subjects.
- A lower, but improving, level of agreement was reported for feedback and the use of ICT in subjects with just over one-half of respondents agreeing that:
 - they received helpful feedback in their subjects (55.2% agreed, up from 54.5%);
 - there was effective use of computer-based teaching materials (54.6% agreed, up from 52.6%); and
 - the web-based materials for their subjects were helpful (55.6% agreed, up from 53.5%).

Table 1: Outcomes for undergraduate subjects, Semester 2 2003 to Semester 1 2006

	Mean						% Agree and Strongly agree						% Disagree and Strongly disagree					
	S2 03	S1 04	S2 04	S1 05	S2 05	S1 06	S2 03	S1 04	S2 04	S1 05	S2 05	S1 06	S2 03	S1 04	S2 04	S1 05	S2 05	S1 06
Q1 expected of me	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	72.6	71.4	74.4	73.4	75.4	74.3	11.4	11.8	10.0	10.6	9.4	10.1
Q2 well taught	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	4.0	3.9	73.9	74.7	75.7	75.9	77.2	76.8	9.8	8.7	8.5	8.6	7.7	7.9
Q3 intell' stimulating	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	72.1	72.3	74.1	73.6	75.3	74.8	10.3	9.7	8.9	9.2	8.1	8.5
Q4 feedback	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	49.9	51.2	54.2	54.0	54.5	55.2	20.8	19.5	17.5	18.0	17.1	16.7
Q5 interest of staff	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.0	71.5	73.2	75.2	75.1	76.9	76.0	8.5	7.3	6.7	6.7	6.0	6.4
Q6 part of group	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.8	60.9	63.9	65.7	66.1	67.1	67.3	11.3	9.6	8.9	8.8	8.2	8.3
Q7 computer-based	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.5	44.0	49.7	49.5	52.0	52.6	54.6	22.4	19.2	18.4	17.7	16.7	16.5
Q8 web-based	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.5	47.8	51.5	50.6	53.6	53.5	55.6	19.5	17.3	16.9	16.1	15.5	14.9
Q9 overall satisfaction	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.9	71.7	73.1	74.3	74.5	75.6	75.1	11.4	10.3	9.7	9.8	8.9	9.1

% agree includes percent agree and percent strongly agree. % disagree includes percent disagree and percent strongly disagree.

Postgraduate subjects

Students in postgraduate subjects continue to express high levels of agreement across all questions with the exception of two areas: the feedback they receive on how they are going in their subjects and the use of information and communication technologies in their subjects (Table 2). These two areas, however, continue to improve. Mean ratings were steady across all questions, and there was only minor variation in the proportion of respondents who agreed from the previous semester. Some key points for Semester 1 2006 include:

- More than eighty percent of postgraduate respondents agreed that:
 - they were clear in what was expected of them in their subjects (82.2% agreed);
 - their subjects were well taught (82.5% agreed);
 - their subjects were intellectually stimulating (83.0% agreed);
 - the teaching staff showed an interest in their academic needs (83.1% agreed);

- they felt part of a group of students and staff committed to learning (80.2% agreed); and
- they were overall satisfied with the quality of the learning experience in their subjects (81.9% agreed).
- 62.6% agreed they received helpful feedback on how they were going in their subject, up from 61.6% in Semester 2 2005.
- 64.0% agreed that the computer-based teaching materials were effective, up from 63.5% in Semester 2005.
- 59.6% agreed that the web-based materials for the subject were helpful, up from 59.1% in Semester 2 2005.

Table 2: Outcomes for postgraduate subjects, Semester 2 2003 to Semester 1 2006

	Mean						% Agree and Strongly agree						% Disagree and Strongly disagree					
	S2 03	S1 04	S2 04	S1 05	S2 05	S1 06	S2 03	S1 04	S2 04	S1 05	S2 05	S1 06	S2 03	S1 04	S2 04	S1 05	S2 05	S1 06
Q1 expected of me	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	80.1	81.5	81.4	81.8	82.8	82.2	7.0	6.0	6.4	7.0	5.8	6.3
Q2 well taught	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	80.3	81.9	80.8	81.9	82.6	82.5	6.7	5.7	6.4	6.7	5.4	5.7
Q3 intell' stimulating	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	81.6	82.5	81.5	82.7	82.6	83.0	5.5	4.5	5.7	5.5	5.0	5.0
Q4 feedback	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	57.4	57.9	59.9	59.3	61.6	62.6	12.8	12.3	11.6	12.8	10.4	11.2
Q5 interest of staff	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	80.7	81.6	81.5	81.3	81.7	83.1	5.8	4.5	4.7	5.8	4.6	4.7
Q6 part of group	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	78.6	80.9	80.9	80.1	80.4	80.2	4.9	4.4	4.4	4.9	4.4	4.9
Q7 computer-based	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.8	52.7	57.5	56.8	60.1	63.5	64.0	14.5	12.1	11.7	14.5	9.8	9.6
Q8 web-based	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.7	50.6	53.9	53.4	56.1	59.1	59.6	13.5	12.3	11.4	13.5	9.6	9.8
Q9 overall satisfaction	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	80.7	82.3	81.0	82.0	82.4	81.9	8.0	6.8	7.6	8.0	6.1	6.9

3.5 Subjects surveyed and response rates

Table 3 reports the number of surveyed subjects, subject enrolments and the survey response rate for each faculty over the period Semester 2 2003 to Semester 1 2006.

- 1910 subjects were surveyed yielding just under 75,000 responses.
- The response rate of 67.3% is roughly in line with previous Semester 1 response rates.
- All faculties had a response rate of 60% or above.
- About 13% of subjects had a response rate of less than 50%, a typical proportion from 2001.
- The number of unsurveyed subjects without exemption was 24. This represents survey coverage of 99% of required subjects.

Table 3: Surveyed subjects and response rates for Semester 2 2003 to Semester 1 2006

	ABP	Arts	E&C	Edu	Eng	LFR	Law	MDHS	Music	Sci	Vet Sci	VCA	Total
Surveyed Subjects													
Semester 2 2003	60	443	169	168	145	93	115	230	48	137	16	152	1778
Semester 1 2004	67	466	155	188	157	98	102	231	55	125	16	158	1819
Semester 2 2004	73	466	193	198	153	94	120	247	55	140	16	171	1926
Semester 1 2005	93	471	173	185	150	95	92	234	65	131	22	155	1866
Semester 2 2005	96	478	191	175	153	110	117	259	69	140	16	155	1959
Semester 1 2006	103	473	174	189	160	102	79	233	76	130	22	169	1910
Response Rate (%)													
Semester 2 2003	55.5	60.4	63.9	74.1	58.8	66.4	77.4	70.8	61.7	63.5	73.1	70.0	65.3
Semester 1 2004	56.0	65.2	64.7	72.6	61.8	65.4	66.5	76.9	74.3	71.7	62.5	72.4	67.6
Semester 2 2004	61.0	60.9	61.2	74.3	61.1	63.5	58.9	69.5	68.5	68.3	74.8	69.0	64.8
Semester 1 2005	57.5	64.3	66.8	75.8	64.3	61.3	65.6	73.0	70.7	73.9	66.5	72.3	68.1
Semester 2 2005	57.7	63.0	61.4	73.8	60.9	67.5	61.5	73.1	60.9	66.2	68.8	70.3	65.2
Semester 1 2006	60.1	63.1	63.5	76.3	62.8	64.4	60.0	76.6	69.5	72.5	66.6	76.4	67.3

4. Dissemination and use of QoT results

The QoT survey is an integral component of the University's cycle of evaluation and feedback processes. Overall results are reported to Academic Board by its Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee (TALQAC) which has responsibility for monitoring the survey, reviewing policy and instruments and discussing outcomes with faculties. Heads of department are responsible for discussing subject outcomes with their staff, and departments are responsible for ensuring that results of the survey are made available to students and in a manner which ensures students' concern about confidentiality are met. Policy also requires that lecturers inform students at the beginning of each semester of the concerns raised by the QoT the last time the subject was offered, and that this information be available on the subject's website.

In addition to providing direct feedback from students, the outcomes of the survey are also used in a variety of the University's quality assurance processes such as departmental audits, academic course reviews conducted by TALQAC, and faculty operational performance reviews. The Commonwealth Government also requires that the outcomes of subject evaluations be publicly available on the University's website as a part of Stage 1 requirements of its Learning and Teaching Performance Fund.

The policy framework for the QoT is located on the Evaluation Cycle web site:

http://www.upo.unimelb.edu.au/internal/ECycle/QoTPolicyFramework_April%202006.pdf

The Student Administration QoT website has information for department contacts and information about interpreting and using information from the QoT:

<http://studentadmin-staff.acs.unimelb.edu.au/sms/qot/qot.aspx>

Further Information

The full report of each semester's results is available from Heads of Departments. Further information is available from Bill Jones (jonesw@unimelb.edu.au), or Suzanne Daroesman, Manager, Evaluation Cycle (Suzanne.daroesman@unimelb.edu.au)

What is the Evaluation Cycle?

The Evaluation Cycle is part of a formal structure adopted by the University of separate cycles of planning and budgeting, reporting on outcomes and performance, and evaluation. The Evaluation Cycle was established to permit the 'users' of University services to provide feedback on the quality, relevance and availability of programs and services. Although there have been a number of staff and student surveys in the past, with the establishment of the Evaluation Cycle in 1997 they have now been integrated and co-ordinated into a formal systematic process.

There are several components to the Cycle –

- Student feedback on the quality of teaching and learning
- Postgraduate research student feedback on the quality of supervision and academic support
- Student feedback on the quality of administrative and support services
- Graduate feedback on the quality and relevance of their University course
- Employer feedback on the quality of University graduates
- Staff feedback on the quality of University management and administration
- International Student Survey
- Graduate Destinations Survey
- Course Experience Questionnaire
- Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire
- Student feedback on the quality of supervision and academic support – Students undertaking a minor thesis/research project
- Survey of senior faculty staff on faculty management
- Academic department staff survey
- Survey of non-academic staff in central administration

The Graduate Destinations Survey, Course Experience Questionnaire and Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire are national surveys conducted in conjunction with the Graduate Careers Council of Australia. Each higher education institution administers the survey to its own graduates.

The Evaluation Cycle is co-ordinated by the University Planning Office.

Contact:

Suzanne Daroesman
Manager, Evaluation Cycle
University Planning Office
suzanne.daroesman@unimelb.edu.au
http://www.upo.unimelb.edu.au/upo_EC.html