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Policy on Student Evaluation of Modules and Programmes

Introduction

This Policy sets out the minimum requirements that must be met in conducting student evaluation of modules and programmes. The Policy enables local control and management over student evaluation of modules and programmes using a framework which is approved by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee against a clear set of requirements and the following principles:

(i) The purpose of student module and programme evaluation is to support the enhancement of future provision and maintenance of academic quality and standards.

(ii) Students should have a clear understanding of the evaluation process.

(iii) Students should complete module and programme evaluations honestly and constructively, with consideration and respect for the teaching and support staff and their right to dignity at work.

(iv) Students should have confidence that their evaluation will be treated with respect and valued, and that their feedback will be acted upon where possible.

(v) Students should receive a communication that outlines any actions taken in response to evaluations.

(vi) Staff and students should work together in partnership to use evaluation results in a positive and constructive manner.

(vii) Students should have an expectation of confidentiality, except under specific rare circumstances (see 1.4).

Student module and programme evaluation, as set out in this Policy, is a method for identifying areas of good practice and areas where there could be improvement. The aim of the core rateable questions required in this Policy is to capture student perceptions, opinions and experience of the module or programme. However, the results may reflect a variety of confounding factors and/or biases and should not be interpreted in isolation. The results should be used comparatively and over time to inform and support other quality assurance processes and to lead to constructive dialogue with students and between colleagues about curriculum developments and enhancement of the student experience. They should not be used as indicators of teaching quality in staff development/annual review/promotion/probation.

In this Policy, the following definitions should be noted:

Evaluation(s):	surveys that students complete to evaluate their academic studies, capturing their perceptions, opinions and experience at module, component, course and programme level.
Module:	a credit-bearing unit in a programme of study.
Component:	a discrete element or specific part of a non-modular clinical programme.

Course: a credit-bearing standalone course, such as a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) course.

Programme: a set of modules or components, the successful completion of which leads to an award of the University.

MODULE AND PROGRAMME EVALUATION

In this Policy, references to 'modules' should be read to include components and courses (as defined above), unless indicated otherwise.

1. Requirements

1.1 All modules should be evaluated each time they are delivered. All programmes should be evaluated once for each year of study.

1.2 Module evaluations should be completed as close to the end of the module as is realistic, to provide students with a full perspective as possible from which to make their judgement. However, the precise timing of evaluations may be guided by practical considerations, including the requirement to maximise response rates.

1.3 Module and programme surveys (as described in 1.1 and 1.2) must be completed online using the University-approved system, except where the use of other systems has been specifically justified and agreed by the relevant faculty (see section 4 below).

1.4 Surveys should be conducted in a manner designed to protect student confidentiality at every stage of the process. The only exceptions to this principle are if the comments of a student lead to an acute concern for the wellbeing of the student or others, or if comments clearly contravene the Student Conduct Policy.

1.5 Module evaluation surveys must include the 'core' evaluative statements set out in Appendix A and programme evaluation surveys must comprise those set out in Appendix B.

1.7 In addition to the Appendix A, bespoke questions about modules may be used as required. These should be designed to protect student anonymity, be inclusive, and be respectful of diversity and equality.

2. Conducting Students' Evaluations

2.1 When a survey is made available to students, clear information should be provided about opening dates, access and completion arrangements, and closing or submission dates.

2.2 The instructions should include confirmation that students will complete the survey in confidence and that confidentiality will be preserved throughout the evaluation process (but see also 1.4).

2.3 Students should be reminded about potential biases in evaluations, and of the need to complete module and programme evaluations honestly and

constructively, with consideration and respect for teaching and support staff and their right to dignity at work.

2.4 Students should be informed about how and when the results will be made available to students **and** how and where responses to those results will be made available, i.e. what will be done in light of the results.

3. Results of Students' Module and Programme Evaluations

Results from the core evaluative questions and any bespoke questions:

3.1 Module leaders (module evaluations), programme directors (programme evaluations) and other designated staff will have access to responses to the core evaluative questions (Appendix A or B), and any bespoke questions for that module or programme, including any associated free text comments, immediately following the closing date of the survey.

3.2 Schools should make arrangements for the core evaluative and bespoke question results, including any free text comments, to be made available to the relevant Board of Studies (BoS) (or equivalent body), Dean of Schools/Institutes or their nominees, and Student-Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs) in a form and style that are sensitive to staff, such that offensive or inappropriate comments are removed whilst also keeping the overall balance of student response. The BoS and SSLC should also be provided with a response and action plan for promoting any good practice identified and for addressing any issues raised at the module and the programme level. Explanatory notes that provide context may also be provided.

Use of results in Annual Subject Action Planning and Periodic Review:

3.7 The full results from all surveys from each academic session should be available for reference in the production of the Annual Subject Action Plan report for the reporting unit. Similarly, survey results should be available for reference and scrutiny for the Periodic Review processes set out in the relevant guidance and requirements for Periodic Review.

4. Responsibilities of Faculties

4.1 The APVC (Education) for each faculty shall allocate responsibility for meeting the requirements of this Policy to either the Faculty Education Committee or the Faculty Academic Quality and Standards Committee (or equivalent).

4.2 The faculty committee selected by the APVC shall develop the faculty's operational procedures for student evaluation that covers the following:

(i) The criteria for determining the timing for module and programme evaluation. The faculty procedures should set out the circumstances and criteria to be considered when deciding on the optimum timing for module and programme evaluation. The faculty procedures should be clear about how and where decisions on this are made.

(ii) The format for student surveys. The faculty procedures may set out the criteria for approving exemptions to the use of online surveys using the approved system. The faculty procedures should be clear about how and where decisions are made about the format to use.

(iii) The requirements and criteria for setting bespoke questions for use in a survey. The faculty procedures may specify bespoke questions set at faculty level, or Level 1 or 2; or the faculty procedures may allow bespoke questions at module level. The decision-making process for setting and approving bespoke questions should be clearly set out in the faculty procedures.

(iv) The timescale for completing student evaluations. The faculty procedures may set a faculty-wide timescale by which student evaluations must be provided to students and completed, or the faculty procedures may allow the timescale to be determined at a more local level. The procedures should be clear what the timescale requirements are where these are set by the faculty. Where decisions are devolved below the faculty, the faculty procedures should set out a range of timescales within which to set the completion times for evaluations, and the faculty procedures should be clear about the criteria for setting timescales and the decision-making process for setting and approving them.

(vi) The timescale for publishing results and responses to evaluations and for communicating these to students. The faculty procedures should set out the timescales for publishing results to students, the format for publishing results and how they will be communicated to students. NB: the faculty procedures should ensure that the publication of results is managed in a way that is sensitive to individual staff and meaningful to students. In addition, the faculty procedures should set out the timescale, format and communication requirements for informing students about how the relevant area is responding to the evaluation results. Where the faculty wishes to devolve decisions on some of these matters to more local levels, the faculty procedures should be clear on the criteria for making such decisions and where the authority lies to make them.

(vi) The protocols and requirements for providing evaluation results to Student-Staff Liaison Committees (SSLC) and other forums. The faculty should set out the procedures for providing evaluation results to SSLCs, the format in which the results should be provided, and state which SSLC in the academic session should receive the results. The faculty procedures should also identify any other boards, committees or groups that should receive the evaluation results, and in each case state the purpose for them receiving the results, who is responsible for providing the results, and the formatting requirements for the results.

4.3 The faculty committee shall submit the faculty operational procedures for student evaluation to AQSC for approval, and shall submit any subsequent changes to the procedures to AQSC for approval.

4.4 The faculty committee shall make the approved faculty procedures available to students and staff.

Appendix A – Core Module Questions

[Statement to be included in the preamble to all surveys.]

The University of Liverpool takes your views seriously and acts on your feedback in order to improve the student experience. Student surveys are confidential and provide an opportunity for you to give us your views, including what you feel we could improve and what we do well (your evaluations are a good way for us to identify and share good practice).

Confidentiality
All data collected in this survey are confidential and will be held securely in accordance with the University's Data Protection Policy. None of your teaching staff, nor anyone in your school or faculty, will be able to identify you from your responses (unless you choose to include comments that would identify you to the staff who have taught you). Results will be reported to relevant staff as aggregated data, which may include demographic data held by the university (gender, age, ethnicity etc.), except where such information could be used to identify you; your name, student number and individual responses cannot be seen. The University centrally reserves the right exceptionally to identify respondents only under certain well-defined circumstances, such as suspected breaches of the law or the University's Student Conduct Policy, or an immediate concern for student or staff welfare.

When completing the surveys, please remember that staff have a right to dignity at work and should always be treated respectfully. Inappropriate or abusive comments could contravene the Student Conduct Policy and potentially constitute bullying and harassment.

Please reflect on potential biases in your responses; would your response change if your teacher was of a different gender, race, age, or had a different accent, for example? Constructive and respectful feedback helps us to improve the student experience and is welcomed. As a general guide, think about ***how you would like someone to provide such feedback to you****, or how you would provide this feedback face-to-face.*

<u>Teaching and Learning Opportunities</u>

The effectiveness of the teaching on the module, and how helpful it was in supporting your learning.

1. The module was well taught.
   (1) Strongly Agree; (2) Agree; (3) Neutral; (4) Disagree; (5) Strongly Disagree.

2. The module enabled me to develop a good understanding of the subject.
   (1) Strongly Agree; (2) Agree; (3) Neutral; (4) Disagree; (5) Strongly Disagree.

<u>Text response</u>
Do you have any specific comments about your learning on this module?

<u>Organisation and Support</u>

The organisation and support for the module in addition to timetabled teaching, including support from staff and access to other resources such as IT, software, library and Canvas.

Academic Support (support from teaching staff in addition to formal teaching)

3. I received the academic support I needed for this module.
   (1) Strongly Agree; (2) Agree; (3) Neutral; (4) Disagree; (5) Strongly Disagree.

Organisation and Management

4. The module was well organised and ran smoothly.
   (1) Strongly Agree; (2) Agree; (3) Neutral; (4) Disagree; (5) Strongly Disagree.

Learning Resources

5. I had access to essential resources when I needed them for the module.
   (1) Strongly Agree; (2) Agree; (3) Neutral; (4) Disagree; (5) Strongly Disagree.

6. The Canvas course for this module is well-organised and easy to navigate.
   (1) Strongly Agree; (2) Agree; (3) Neutral; (4) Disagree; (5) Strongly Disagree.

Alternative Q6 for programmes delivered in partnership with Kaplan Higher Education UK:

The Classroom for this module is well-organised and easy to navigate.
(i) Strongly Agree; (2) Agree; (3) Neutral; (4) Disagree; (5) Strongly Disagree.

Text response

Do you have any additional comments about the support you received?

Assessments

'Assessments' do not merely refer to final exams, but may include written continuous assessments, practical assessments, online tests or self-evaluation questionnaires, and may be formative (for practice) or summative (for credit).

7. Have you had an assessment on this module?
   (1) Yes; (2) No; (3) Not sure.

8. The instructions and criteria used to mark the module assessments were clear and transparent.
   (1) Strongly Agree; (2) Agree; (3) Neutral; (4) Disagree; (5) Strongly Disagree; (6) Not Applicable.

Text response

Do you have any comments about the assessment on this module?

Feedback

'Feedback' includes occasions when students receive written or verbal comments on their work, ideas or performance, either individually or collectively, as well as other opportunities for students to judge their progress, such as self-evaluation questions, online tests, etc.

9. Have you received feedback during the module?
   (1) Yes; (2) No; (3) Not sure.

10. The feedback I have received was clear and helpful.
    (1) Strongly Agree; (2) Agree; (3) Neutral; (4) Disagree; (5) Strongly Disagree.

Text response

Do you have any specific comments about feedback in this module?

Overall

11. Overall, I have been satisfied with this module.

(1) Strongly Agree; (2) Agree; (3) Neutral; (4) Disagree; (5) Strongly Disagree.

Text response:

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about this module that you have not been able to include so far? Please include any examples of good practice you would like to share, as well as anything we could improve.

Appendix B – Core Programme Questions

Teaching

The effectiveness of the teaching on the programme, and how helpful it was in supporting your learning.

1. How effective has the teaching on the programme been this academic year?
   (1) Very effective; (2) Effective; (3) Not very effective; (4) Not at all effective.

Text response

Please identify any aspects of teaching that you felt were effective or that you believe could be improved:

Workload

2. How well distributed and manageable has the workload on the programme been?
   (1) Very manageable; (2) Manageable; (3) Not very manageable; (4) Not at all manageable.

3. How appropriate was the balance and distribution of assessments?
   (1) Very appropriate; (2) Appropriate; (3) Not very appropriate; (4) Not at all appropriate.

Text response

Please comment on the teaching and assessment workload this year.

Advice and guidance (academic and non-academic support)

Support from teaching staff and others outside of formal teaching.

4. How well were you able to access academic guidance and advice from teaching staff when needed?
   (1) Very well; (2) Well; (3) Not very well; (4) Not at all well.

5. How well were you able to access personal advice and support when needed?
   (1) Very well; (2) Well; (3) Not very well; (4) Not at all well.

Text response

Please comment on the advice and guidance you have received this year.

Learning Resources

Software, library/online books, PCs, Canvas, lab equipment, etc.

6. How easily were you able to access the learning resources required?
   (1) Very easily; (2) Easily; (3) Not very easily; (4) Not at all easily.

7. How well have your Canvas courses provided a clear and consistent user experience across your modules?
   (1) Very well; (2) Well; (3) Not very well; (4) Not at all well.

Alternative Q7 for programmes delivered in partnership with Kaplan Higher Education UK:

How well has the Learning Platform provided a clear and consistent user experience across all your modules?
(1) Very well; (2) Well; (3) Not very well; (4) Not at all well.

Text response
Please comment on the provision of learning resources this year.

Assessment and Feedback

'Assessments' do not merely refer to final exams, but may include written continuous assessments, practical assessments, online tests or self-evaluation questions and may be formative (for practice) or summative (for credit).

8. How clear were the marking criteria used to assess your work?
(1) Very clear; (2) Clear; (3) Not very clear; (4) Not at all clear; (5) n/a

9. How well have assessments allowed you to demonstrate your knowledge, understanding, and/or skills?
(1) Very well; (2) Well; (3) Not very well; (4) Not at all well.

'Feedback' includes occasions when students receive written or verbal comments on their work, ideas or performance, either individually or collectively, as well as other opportunities for students to judge their progress, such as self-evaluation questions, online tests etc.

10. How often does feedback help you to improve your work?
(1) Very often; (2) Fairly often; (3) Not very often; (4) Rarely; (5) n/a

Text response
Please provide any further comment about assessment and feedback.

Overall
11. Overall, how satisfied have you been with your programme this session?
(1) Very satisfied; (2) Satisfied; (3) Not very satisfied; (4) Not at all satisfied.

Text response
Is there anything else you would like to tell us that you have not been able to include so far? Please include any examples of good practice you would like to share, as well as anything we could improve.