

Student Surveys Policy

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Student Surveys Policy

1 Introduction and Scope

This policy sets out the University's approach to the systematic collection of student feedback on their student experience through University-wide student surveys, along with the approval process for new and/or one-off University-wide student surveys. This policy will be of interest to all students and staff within the University community and may be of interest to professional, statutory and regulatory bodies, including The Office for Students and the UK Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).

2 University-wide Core Student Surveys: In Scope of the Policy

Survey Period	Survey and (Provider*)	Frequency	Eligible students
Open to all decliners throughout the recruitment cycle	Decliners survey (<i>in-house via Strategic Planning Service</i>)	Annual	Applicants who have declined an offer to study at the University of Hull
October to November	New Home Student Survey (<i>in-house via Strategic Planning Service</i>)	Annual	All new home students
November to December	International Student Barometer (ISB) (<i>via i-graduate (Tribal) Ltd</i>)	Annual	All new international students
February to April	Hull Student Survey (HSS) (<i>in-house via Strategic Planning Service</i>)	Annual	All non-final year undergraduates
February to April	National Student Survey (NSS) (<i>via Ipsos Mori/Office for Students</i>)	Annual	All final year undergraduates
February to April	Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) (<i>via AdvanceHE</i>)	Annual	All postgraduate taught students
February to April	Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) (<i>via AdvanceHE</i>)	Annual	All postgraduate research students
December to January March to April June to July	Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQs) (<i>in-house via Strategic Planning Service</i>)	Once a trimester	All students

*In-depth analysis at both subject and University-wide levels is undertaken by the Strategic Planning & Business Intelligence Service

This policy does not cover local subject-based activities where timely feedback is sought via survey instruments for example: subject/cohort workshops, thematic conferences and other group events involving stakeholders from outside the staff and student community. Nor does it cover any surveys conducted as part of a student research project; for research survey approval, please refer to the relevant Faculty Ethics panel.

3 Guiding Principles

The purpose of the policy is to establish a coordinated approach for University-wide surveys of students at the University of Hull to inform systematic future planning for improving the student experience. Survey outcomes and analysis inform subject level continuous evaluation and enhancement with wider strategic thematic analysis to inform University-wide performance measures with due consideration of the following:

- a) To limit student survey fatigue to maximize response rates to maintain the validity of results
- b) To improve the use of and wider application of current University-wide survey data to improve the student experience
- c) To minimise duplication of survey themes and timing of additional surveys across the student community
- d) To ensure the University is fully engaged with the National Student Survey and its annual outcome(s) to inform internal enhancement planning and external application of the data within The Office for Students regulatory framework
- e) To ensure no other institution-wide student survey takes place at the same time as the HSS, NSS, PTES and PRES surveys (normally February to April)

4 New Survey Consideration & Approval

Surveys provide an established method for obtaining large datasets of systematic student feedback; in many cases there are other equally effective ways of understanding the student experience which can be supported and conducted at a more local level. Before proposing a new survey, staff should consider alternatives such as focus group sessions, asking specific questions in collecting mid-module feedback, or consulting Student Academic Representatives. These activities can help staff gather qualitative feedback, which is often more illuminating at programme or broader subject level than responses to a survey.

Exploring the large amount of data that has already been collected is another tactical approach to avoiding over surveying students. Consulting with the Student Voice and Surveys Group, Faculty Forums, and Student Services team will help highlight what information is already available which may answer the critical question(s) staff may be seeking insight on.

The brief process provided in the *Appendix* should be followed for any staff led internal surveys that intend to reach any sample of University of Hull students where the demographic is from more than one department or subject and which are not included in the core survey list covered by this policy.

5 Roles and Responsibilities

Strategic Planning & Business Intelligence Service: Within the Service, the Student Insight and Sector Policy team are responsible for the annual implementation, data analysis, production of management reports and course specific survey reporting. They provide advice and guidance on the current datasets and insight reports available, and can advise on appropriate tools and techniques for ad hoc student feedback exercises. The team maintain an annual calendar of student surveys, and the survey instruments and question banks used, and advise the Chair of the Student Voice and Surveys Group if a survey proposal needs approval by the Student Voice and Surveys Group.

The Student Voice and Surveys Group: The content, timings, and participation in the surveys covered by this policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Student Voice and Surveys Group. The Group's university-wide representative membership, including from HUSU, and terms of reference is overseen by the University Student Experience, Engagement and Employability Committee (USEEEC) chaired by the PVC Education. The Group meets monthly, and during peak Survey Season twice a month.

Faculty Engagement and Student Experience Committees (FESECs): responsible for reporting to USEEEC on Faculty related student experience, employability, engagement, and retention issues. The group specifically monitors and plans for action in response to feedback from the Student/Staff Forums (SSFs); student surveys (MEQs, ISB, HSS, NSS, PTES, PRES); Hull University Students' Union (HUSU) and student representation channels relating to school or faculty level student experience; Providing a forum for the discussion and dissemination across the Faculty of good practice in learning, teaching and assessment, student experience, employability, engagement and retention.

6 Data Collection, Storage and Reporting

The information collected through student surveys covered by this policy will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). Any personal data will be collected and processed for the purpose of determining eligibility to take the survey, monitoring response rates, facilitating the right to withdraw from the survey, and for linking to demographic characteristics as held in our student record system (SITS).

The University will redact any personal information from responses which could identify the student respondent, and will aggregate with other data to look for trends or other data observations to help inform enhancement planning for future provision. Aggregated responses will be reported at subject, faculty and institutional level. This will be confidential and will not contain personal data. Student feedback provided through surveys will be held by the University of Hull in compliance with our Records and Data Retention Schedule.

7 Review and Monitoring

Once implemented, this policy will be overseen by the Student Voice and Surveys Group and routinely reviewed every three years. An earlier review may be necessary if there is regulatory policy change arising from The Office for Students that will impact the nature, purpose and timing of the core student survey season between February and April each year.

Appendix

Brief Process for Further Student Survey Proposals

It is often suggested that a student survey will quickly provide answers to the many challenges Faculties and Professional Services are constantly striving to address. With the already wide ranging and extensive student surveys in place, it is possible that the insight is already there. In the first instance, colleagues should contact the Student Insight and Sector Policy team (surveys@hull.ac.uk), in the Strategic Planning & Business Intelligence Service to discuss the critical questions they are trying to address and what would be the appropriate route to seeking the insight sought. The team will respond to any enquiries within two working days.

In order for a further large-scale systematic survey to be considered for approval by the Surveys and Student Voice Group, survey administrators should consider the following:

1. Seek alternative ways of collecting feedback, such as focus groups, exit polls from events, interviews with students, or online polls in Teams, etc.
2. When considering a new University-wide survey, staff should discuss the following with the Student Surveys and Policy team:
 - a. What the purpose of the survey is, and what question(s) they are seeking answers to?
 - b. Do any of the current core University-wide surveys already cover the question(s)? Existing data that is relevant to the proposed survey may already be available.
 - c. Who is the survey population?
 - d. How the responses will be analysed?
 - e. How the results will be used and where they will be shared with both staff and students?
 - f. How the administrator will inform the student community of changes implemented in response to the survey's findings?
 - g. If a new/one-off survey is still the right approach, will Ethics approval be required before survey implementation?
3. Proposals for additional University-wide one-off or regular surveys will be considered for approval by the Student Voice and Surveys Group and if successful, added to the list of core surveys.
4. Where a University-wide survey is being proposed to seek primary research evidence as part of a PG Research student proposal, approval should be sought from the relevant Dean/Director, Head of School, and ethics committee.

The Student Insight and Sector Policy team (surveys@hull.ac.uk) will be happy to advise further.

Version Control

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