

Programme Evaluation Guidance

Introduction

This guidance is for Programme Directors. It aims to outline what Programme Evaluation is, why it is important and how you can put the [Policy on Student Evaluation of Teaching and Learning](#) into practice for your Programme. This guidance is recommended as good practice and will help you to align your evaluation with [University educational priorities](#) and provide evidence to meet the needs of other internal and/or external Quality Assurance processes.

What is Programme Evaluation

Programme Evaluation is a way to evaluate programmes holistically from the student perspective once they have had sufficient time and experience to reflect upon their programme as a whole. It aims to obtain feedback from a diverse range of students on the Programme.

Modular and mid-modular evaluation enable us to understand students' experience of specific modules, and National Student Survey (NSS) and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) results enable us to understand students' broad experience of studying at the University. Programme Evaluation goes beyond these processes to understand students' experience at the level of the programme.

Why is Programme Evaluation important?

Programme Evaluation provides an opportunity to **meaningfully enhance practice by listening and responding proactively to the student voice**. It provides a formal means to:

- **Engage students in dialogue**
- **Identify and celebrate success**
- **Promote best practice and learn from each other**
- Reflect and **consider areas for enhancement**
- Use the **student voice** as a powerful **driver for change**
- **Communicate** how feedback has been acted on
- **Articulate impact** of any curricular and co-curricular activities/enhancements
- **Monitor progress** and provide **evidence of impact** against relevant programme level activities in School Teaching Enhancement Action Plans (**STEAP**).

Policy into practice

	What the policy says (getting the basics in place)	In practice (top tips to help you achieve this)
When to evaluate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually, towards end of each programme (to be determined by the Programme Director) When students will have had sufficient experiences to reflect In time to report to the relevant BoSSE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximise student engagement by utilising existing, or creating new, timetabled opportunities (e.g. a lecture, a dissertation showcase event) Be mindful of NSS/PTES windows and avoid barriers to engagement (e.g. exams/assessment deadlines) Consider the School T & L Operations Roadmap in terms of timelines for implementing enhancements
Who to involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme Directors are responsible for ensuring their programme/s are evaluated Oversight rests with the SCTL Students must be involved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather feedback that captures the views of a diverse range of students Empower Course and Senior Reps and Student Partners to take an active role in the process to maximise the diversity of student voice Involve your wider programme team for greater collective ownership of the process Work collaboratively with staff and students from combined programmes, programmes with shared teaching and/or branch campuses/partnerships where appropriate
What to evaluate	<p>The focus should be on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> coherence & integration across modules progression through the programme inclusivity e.g. range & balance of pedagogic approaches and assessment degree of flexibility students have to tailor their programme (where appropriate) impact of activities such as placements, field trips and study abroad development of graduate attributes how programme learning outcomes have been met for all students extent to which the programme meets the needs of all students 	<p>Capitalise on the process to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sense of existing student feedback (e.g. NSS, PTES) Reflect how individual initiatives/activities contribute towards impact at a programme level and connect to University educational priorities (e.g. Curriculum Framework) Establish a baseline from which you can monitor and systematically evaluate ongoing enhancement activities Provide evidence to meet the needs of other internal and/or external Quality Assurance processes (e.g. STEAP, TEF)
How to evaluate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The structure and method of evaluation of programmes is flexible depending on the nature of the information and feedback to be ascertained, and the form of student engagement that is most appropriate 	<p>Utilise Course/Senior Reps and Student Partners to support you and your programme team to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify themes arising from existing student feedback and prioritise where further exploration/feedback is needed Co-design an approach to engage the diverse student body in dialogue with the identified themes. <p>Working in partnership with a wider sample of students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather further feedback from a diverse range of students to identify strengths and areas for enhancement Co-create recommendations to feed into the action plan Discuss and agree plans for closing the feedback loop

Reporting/ Closing the feedback loop	Programme Directors must prepare a short Summary Report to be reviewed by the SSP Group, programme team and BoSSE and any actions identified and agreed. The Summary Report and associated actions must be shared with students to keep them updated on progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Closing the Feedback Loop Guidance • Co-present Summary Report and associated actions to relevant stakeholders (e.g. SSP Groups, programme team, BoSSE) • The Programme Director will be responsible for uploading the Summary Report and associated actions to Blackboard
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Making use of existing student feedback

Before gathering new data, you should draw on student feedback that already exists. Doing this in partnership with your students will help you begin to make sense of existing data, identify areas for further exploration, and prioritise areas in which to gather further student feedback.

In partnership with students you could ask the following questions:

- What do we know already about our programme?
- How do we know this? What is the evidence?
- What else do we need to know?
- How can we find out?

The following table outlines existing mechanisms for gathering student voice and feedback. For details on how to access existing data see the [Teaching and Learning data guide.pdf](#).

Source of Student Feedback	How it may help
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-module • Module Evaluation 	Identify trends and themes arising across cohorts.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSP Groups • BoSSE 	Recent insight towards issues and best practice within your programmes as reported by Senior and Course Reps.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSS Results 	In addition to the core questions, each year the University asks a range of optional questions which can be particularly relevant to Programme Evaluation. See Annex 1 for relevant questions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PTES Results 	Whilst noting the typically low response rates, this can provide an indication of feeling across a programme and may provide a useful starting point for areas to consider further. See Annex 1 for relevant questions

Gathering new data

Having identified themes arising from existing data, prioritise areas for further exploration in partnership with your students to enhance your understanding and inform your action planning.

It is recommended to co-design your methodology in partnership with students and work together to identify which method will be best to gather the data needed. You could utilise existing opportunities e.g. themed SSP Group meetings, focus groups, workshops, online surveys, surveys in class, or a combination of methods. You could also create opportunities for student-led methods e.g. student moderated focus groups.

For more information, see data collection methods on the [Evaluation & Impact website](#).

PGT Survey

Given the intensive nature of PGT programmes and the timing of the PTES survey (March-June) you may wish to undertake your own survey to enable you obtain feedback from students once they have had more time and experience to reflect upon their programme as a whole. Given PTES questions are more limited than NSS in the areas of focus, a PGT Programme Evaluation Questionnaire which you can use/adapt to your context can be found in [Annex 2](#).

Top tips for engaging students: 'CREATE'

- **Communication:** utilise lecture shout-outs, emails to students, Student Rep networks, Academic Tutoring meetings, Academic Societies
- **Reward and incentivise:** provide lunch and offer hours towards the RED Award. If making payment for focus group/workshop attendance, this can be made by [Campus Jobs](#)
- **Embed:** underpin your approach to Programme Evaluation using the [Principles of Partnership](#)
- **Accessibility:** gather views that capture the diversity of experience of students in your cohort, create opportunities with which all students can engage. e.g. an online workshop or timetabled activities for when students are already on campus
- **Transparency:** articulate how Programme Evaluation will benefit students and set clear expectations for what their involvement will be
- **Engagement:** active collaboration with the wider programme team can foster a sense of belonging.

Action planning and next steps

As part of Programme Evaluation, you are required to identify and agree any actions to be taken. You should ensure that you make the actions specific, achievable and time-bound, and ensure that you will be able to measure impact following the actions taken. The outcomes of this process may inform priorities and provide evidence of progress/impact against relevant programme level activities in School Teaching Enhancement Action Plans.

The development of any associated actions are best when co-created with students. This encourages colleagues and students to work together towards shared goals, creating positive change that is meaningful and sustainable. Having shared responsibility and accountability for monitoring progress ensures students' views and opinions about the course are valued and makes it clear how students' feedback on the course has been acted upon. See [Closing the Feedback Loop Guidance](#).

To monitor and evaluate the success of planned changes, it is important to consider evaluation at the design stage of the action plan and any changes/initiatives, before they are implemented. This will enable you to put an evaluation plan in place and thus make it easier to assess impact of actions upon completion.

Further support

There are a number of staff within the institution who share experience and expertise evaluating. If you are looking for generic help with evaluation, including resources and templates, the [Evaluation and Impact website](#) is a great place to start.

For further help or bespoke support with evaluation see [Support for Evaluation A guide for staff](#).

For guidance on enhancing existing programmes see [Designing Programmes](#).

Annex 1: Relevant questions in already existing student surveys

Area of focus	NSS	PTES	
Coherence and integration across modules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core 7: To what extent have you had the chance to bring together information and ideas from different topics? Optional B4.1: All of the compulsory modules are relevant to my course Optional B4.3: The modules of my course form a coherent integrated whole 		
Progression through the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core 6: How well does your course introduce subjects and skills in a way that builds on what you have already learned? Core 9: How well has your course developed your knowledge and skills that you think you will need for your future? Core 14: How often does feedback help you to improve your work? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I was given appropriate guidance and support when I started my course The support for academic skills meets my needs (for example, support for your writing, language, subject-specific skills) I have been encouraged to think about what skills I need to develop for my career 	
Inclusivity e.g. Range and balance of pedagogic approaches and assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core 2: How often do teaching staff make the subject engaging? Core 8: To what extent does your course have the right balance of directed and independent study? Core 11: How fair has the marking and assessment been on your course? Core 12: How well have assessments allowed you to demonstrate what you have learned? Optional B7.2: The range and balance of approaches to teaching has helped me to learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is sufficient contact time (in-person or virtual/online) between staff and students to support effective learning Assessment arrangements and marking have been fair 	
Degree of flexibility students have to tailor their programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optional B4.2 There is an appropriate range of options to choose from on my course 		
Impact of activities such as placements, field trips and study abroad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optional B5.1: I received sufficient support and advice from my institution about the organisation of my placements Optional B5.2: My placements were valuable in helping my learning Optional B5.3: My placements have helped me to develop my skills in relation to my course Optional B5.4: My placements have helped me to develop my general life skills Optional B5.5: The taught part of my course was good preparation for my placements Optional B7.5: Practical activities on my course have helped me to learn Optional B15.3: The skills I have developed during my time in higher education will be useful for my future career 		
Extent to which all students have demonstrated Programme Learning Outcomes and Curriculum Framework Graduate Attributes	Mastery of the discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core 3: How often is the course intellectually stimulating? Core 4: How often does your course challenge you to achieve your best work? Core 5: To what extent have you had the chance to explore ideas and concepts in depth? Optional B12.3: I have learned to explore ideas confidently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The course is intellectually stimulating The course has enhanced my academic ability My course has challenged me to produce my best work
	Skills in research and enquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optional B7.4: My learning has benefited from modules that are informed by current research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> My research skills have developed during my course
	Personal effectiveness and self-awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optional B1.1: The course has helped me to present myself with confidence Optional B1.2: My communication skills have improved Optional B1.3: As a result of the course, I feel confident in tackling unfamiliar problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a result of the course I am more confident about independent learning My confidence to be innovative or creative has developed during my course My ability to communicate information effectively to diverse audiences has developed during my course I am encouraged to ask questions or make contributions in taught sessions (in-person or virtual/online)

	Global and future-facing outlook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optional B12.1: I feel part of a group of students committed to learning • Optional B12.2: I have been able to explore academic interests with other students • Optional B12.4: Within my course, I feel my suggestions and ideas are valued • Optional B12.5: I feel part of an academic community in my college or university 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel part of a community of postgraduate taught students • I feel a sense of belonging at my institution • There are sufficient opportunities to interact with other postgraduate taught students • The course has created sufficient opportunities to discuss my work with other students (in-person or virtual/online)
Extent to which the programme meets the needs of all students		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core 3: How often is the course intellectually stimulating? • Core 4: How often does your course challenge you to achieve your best work? • Core 22: To what extent do you get the right opportunities to give feedback on your course? • Core 23: To what extent are students' opinions about the course valued by staff? • Core 24: How clear is it that students' feedback on the course is acted on? • Optional B18.2: (UoR specific) Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the course • Core 27: During your studies, how free did you feel to express your ideas, opinions, and beliefs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the course The course is intellectually stimulating. • The course has enhanced my academic ability • I am encouraged to be involved in decisions about how my course is run • I am happy with the support for my learning I receive from staff on my course • The support for my health and wellbeing meets my needs (for example, personal tutor, student support and counselling services)

Annex 2: PGT Programme Evaluation Questionnaire which you can use/adapt to your context

All closed questions scored on a 5-point scale where 0 = definitely disagree and 5 = definitely agree

1. What are your reasons for studying this taught postgraduate programme? [open-ended response with character limit of 500 including spaces]

Learning and teaching

2. The learning outcomes of my programme are clear
3. The modules of my programme seem to fit together well
4. The range and balance of approaches to teaching has helped me to learn
5. In general my learning has benefited from modules that are informed by current research and/or practice
6. My programme has provided opportunities to:
 - a) bring information and ideas together from different modules
 - b) connect my learning to real-world problems or issues
 - c) challenge current perspectives
 - d) formulate and explore my own questions, problems or scenarios
7. I get the support I need to meet the academic challenges of postgraduate study
8. The learning across my programme prepared me well for my dissertation or major project

Assessment and feedback

9. The range and balance of approaches to assessment has helped me to develop
10. Feedback I have received has enabled me to develop my approach to learning across my programme
11. Feedback from modules helped me prepare for future assessments

Skills development

12. My programme has provided opportunities to develop my skills in:
 - a) thinking critically and analytically
 - b) research and/or enquiry
 - c) becoming an independent learner
 - d) being innovative and creative
 - e) working effectively with others
 - f) tackling unfamiliar problems
 - g) communicate information effectively to diverse audiences
13. My programme has enabled me to:
 - a) Develop my personal values or ethics
 - b) Develop my understanding of people from other backgrounds (economic, racial/ethnic, political, religious, nationality etc.)
14. The practical activities (e.g. placements, study abroad, field trips) on my programme have helped me to develop
15. My dissertation or major project enabled me to demonstrate the range of my knowledge and skills

Academic community

16. I feel comfortable expressing my views
17. I have had the right opportunities to work with other students as part of my programme
18. I feel part of a community of staff and students
19. I have had the right opportunities to provide feedback throughout my programme
20. It is clear how students' feedback on the programme has been acted on
21. Staff value students' views and opinions about the programme

Overall experience

22. My programme has been intellectually stimulating
23. I am satisfied with the quality of my programme
24. Looking back on your experience, are there any particularly positive or negative aspects you would like to highlight? [open-ended response; character limit of 500 including spaces]