Interpreting Student Survey Reports

Once the student survey data has been processed and the analyses available, the next step is to interpret its findings to identify:

- the main strengths of a course as perceived by those giving the feedback
- a course’s perceived weaknesses or shortcomings
- aspects of a course that warrant further exploration
- perceived strengths and weaknesses of your teaching

Reflection

Take a step back from the detail and reflect on any patterns emerging. Consider the following points:

- Data for the particular question.
- Data for related questions.
- Data collected by other sources of formative feedback.

The following questions can help as you begin to reflect on the information you have gathered:

- What did I learn about student’s perceptions of the course?
- What did I learn about my teaching?
- What worked well?
- What didn’t work so well?
- What do I now know more about?
- What do I know differently?
- What do I need to know more about?
- Where do I go from here?

Action Plan

An action plan will draw together the information and reflections you have recorded from the survey reports, and could include the following headings:

- Desired outcomes – long and short-term.
- Strategies to achieve these outcomes.
- Actions to achieve each strategy.
- Timeline for implementation.
- Sources of assistance and resources.
- Criteria for achieving these outcomes.
- Plans / ideas for future directions.
Consultation

It is a good idea to consult on feedback before implementing action. A colleague might spot contextual subtleties, or offer a different perspective on the data. Similarly, an Academic Developer from CAPSL would be happy to meet with you once you have considered the comments and report.

Student evaluation by questionnaire is only one means of collecting information. Other sources and methods also provide valuable information and should be considered as part of course or teaching evaluation. An Academic Developer will discuss any aspect of your teaching or of the curriculum which you would care to develop further as a result of student feedback.

For more information please contact CAPSLs Academic Developer, Ciara O’Farrell (ext. 3930) and/or www.tcd.ie/CAPSL