



Program and Course Experience Survey via Microsoft Forms

A Business School and SSET Case Study on Enhancing
Teaching and Learning Governance

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Overview

To enhance Teaching and Learning (T&L) governance, the UQ Business School collaborated with SSET to implement a Program and Course Experience Survey using Microsoft Forms. Originally piloted post-census in Semester 1, 2026, the initiative was refocused in Semester 2 to a pre-census deployment (Weeks 3–4) featuring a streamlined 7-question survey.

This case study illustrates how shifting informal survey timelines prior to census date creates an early-warning mechanism to address course issues, boost student retention, and feed into multi-tiered faculty governance structures.

Background

Standard end-of-semester evaluations (SECaT) provide vital retrospective benchmark data, but they cannot address active cohort issues or prevent early student attrition.

In addition, SECaT focuses primarily on individual courses and does not capture students' experiences across their broader academic program. This creates a gap in identifying concerns that span multiple courses, such as assessment coordination, cumulative workload, curriculum sequencing and program coherence.

Hence, the Program and Course Experience Survey was introduced to provide a broader view of the student experience and generate timely insights that inform immediate improvements and long-term program-level enhancement initiatives.

Objectives

1. **Pre-census early intervention:** Identify engagement, relevance, and structural concerns early enough (Weeks 3–4) to improve student experience before census date, mitigating attrition risks.
2. **Faculty-wide governance integration:** Embed student feedback into Major **Committees**, Program Committees, and T&L Committees to drive systemic decision-making.
3. **Longitudinal impact:** Capture perspectives from continuing students—who comprised ~71% of respondents in the Sem 1 pilot—ensuring that implemented changes directly benefit their ongoing studies and future program reviews.

Approach

Operational Evolution & Platform Selection

The survey design underwent key strategic iterations between semesters to optimise student engagement:

- **Question rationalisation:** The Semester 1 post-census survey contained a broad question set. Based on initial feedback, Semester 2 was reduced to seven core questions, leading to a 25% increase in response volume.
- **Multi-channel promotion:** Promoted through faculty social media, faculty TV screens across campus, Learn.UQ program and course site pages, in-class QR codes, newsletters, and targeted email reminders.

- **Authentication & access security:** Restricts participation strictly to authenticated UQ students via Single Sign-On (SSO) to protect data security and participant confidentiality. Responses were restricted to one per participant.

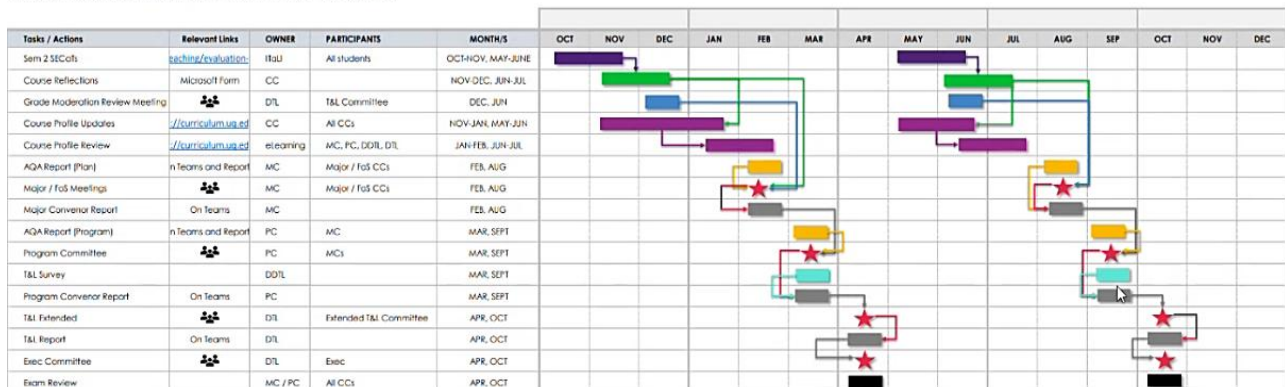
While SSO login ensures secure data governance, staff observed that authentication friction can act as a minor barrier for some students. Additionally, survey fatigue remains an operational challenge requiring ongoing management across campus communications.

Multi-Tiered Reporting & Governance Workflow

The Business School established a structured quality-assurance cycle to translate feedback into policy:

1. **Course Coordinator Reflection:** Academic staff review course-level survey outputs and formulate initial reflections.
2. **Committee Cascading:** Results flow systematically through Major Committee meetings, Program Committees (which include student representatives), and the Extended T&L Committee in April and October each year
3. **Closing the Feedback Loop:** Actionable outcomes are communicated back down to Convenors, Coordinators through regular Education newsletters and town halls. Program convenors coordinate feedback mechanism, including co-designing appropriate action plans, through the School's Student Program Committees following release of findings.

TEACHING AND LEARNING CALENDAR - MONTHLY



Outcomes and impact

Actionable pre-SECaT early warning

Established a formal mechanism to identify and resolve cohort-wide issues before formal SECaT evaluations.

Enhanced multi-level governance

Integrated student survey data into routine decision-making across all major program, major, and T&L committee structures.

Student retention & continuity

Enabled pre-census course adjustments, directly benefiting the 71% of Semester 1 respondents who were continuing (non-final-year) students across their remaining program duration.

Challenges and lessons learned

Optimise Survey Timing for Retention

Moving informal check-ins pre-census (Weeks 3–4) provides actionable intelligence when interventions can still directly impact student retention and satisfaction.

“This survey has proven to be a valuable leading indicator of teaching quality, enabling us to identify and respond to issues in a timely manner.”

Associate Professor Sarel Gronum, Director of Teaching and Learning, UQ Business School

Streamline Instrument Length

Reducing question volume (e.g., down to 7 core items) minimises survey fatigue and improves total completion rates.

“For me, the survey’s value lies in connecting students’ everyday learning experiences with the decisions we make about courses and programs. It provides a shared basis for identifying concerns and considering how best to respond. The next step is to make those responses visible to students, so they can see how their feedback contributes to improvements in their learning experience.”

Assoc. Prof. Ali Intezari, Deputy Director of Teaching and Learning, UQ Business School

Future directions

- **Partner with Student Associations and Committees:** Collaborating with student societies and student program representatives amplifies survey promotion and builds trust.
- **Leverage Strategic Focus Groups:** Combine quantitative pulse surveys with targeted annual focus groups (e.g., first-year experience) to explore underlying themes in depth.
- **Centralise Governance & Data Assets:** Leverage managed repositories (such as SharePoint) to store longitudinal survey outputs across semesters, track actions arising from student feedback, and assess their impact over time. Retaining comparable questions across semesters and seeking follow-up feedback will help determine whether changes have improved in the student experience and addressed key concerns. Ongoing data creates an enduring evidence base for periodic Program and School Reviews.
- **Coordinated Student Feedback:** Align future survey activities with School and Faculty engagement initiatives to reduce survey fatigue and maximise student participation.
- **AI chatbot:** SSET and Business School T&L portfolio are exploring conversational AI chatbot feedback models to introduce interactive, context-specific evaluation alternatives to traditional Likert-scale forms.