

Indicator Reporting - Glossary of terms

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (i.e. Indigenous student): A student who identifies as being of Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent or both (Source - OPSM Glossary).

Access Number: Commencing Domestic Students.

Access Rate: Commencing students in Equity Group / All Commencing domestic onshore students (Source: Higher Education Statistics).

Attainment Rate: Award Course Completions of Equity students / All Domestic Award Course Completions.

The Attainment Rate looks at the number of students completing a course in the given year, comparing the completions from the various equity groups to completions for all domestic onshore students. This measurement requires the students to have an enrolment record in the relevant year as well as a completion record, given that all address details that are used for the Equity calculations are obtained from the enrolment file. Some students do not have an enrolment record in their last year of study, so these will not be included in the calculations (reasons for not having an enrolment record may be: undertaking work experience, completing a thesis, research work without institution support or supervision, cross-institution study, repeated examinations - all of which could mean that the student had no study in the year in which the course requirements were completed, hence there is no requirement for an enrolment file record) (Source: Higher Education Statistics).

Also see Completion Rate (%).

BA:NIA ratio: this is the number of valid Best Aspects (BA) responses ÷ number of valid Need Improvement Aspects (NIA) responses. The BA:NIA ratio of categorised student comments may help to indicate an area/aspect that is perceived by students to be generally of good quality (i.e., an Achievement for the University) or poor quality (i.e., a Challenge that needs further attention).

Base number: The 'base number' is derived from the course headcount of students in a particular year and excludes those who are listed as having completed the course at the beginning of the following year.

Benchmark universities: The benchmark universities are based on the ACU Benchmark Group for 2013 Institutional Performance Portfolio (IPP) agreed by the Senior Executive Group in July 2013. The benchmark universities are Deakin University, Griffith University, La Trobe University, Queensland University of Technology, University of Canberra and University of Western Sydney.

Best Aspects (BA): This refers to the SELT survey item, 'What were the best aspects of [unit] that helped your learning?.'

Campus: The campus reflects the delivery location where the student is undertaking the unit or course of study. If the unit of study or course is taken in an offshore campus, externally, online or is not easily identified to a specific campus location, the campus is identified as 'Virtual' (Source - OPSM Glossary). Campus also refers to a physical domestic campus (e.g. Ballarat and Brisbane campuses).

Completions: Students who completed requirements for their course prior to the collection year are included in the count on course completion. A student who completed a combined degree course is regarded as completing one course.

Completion Rate (%): Indicates the percentage of students who have completed a course after a given number of years. Also see Attainment Rate.

Continuing Student: A continuing student is one who commenced a higher education course prior to the reference year.

Course: Refers to an award course, non-award course, enabling course, Bridging for Overseas Trained Professionals or cross provider program undertaken at a higher education provider (Source - HEIMSHELP).

Cumulative GPA: The Grade Point Average (GPA) is calculated as the average of unit grades obtained by the student, weighted by the credit point value of each unit (illustrated by the formula below). Numerical equivalent of grades for this purpose are as listed in the table below.

$$\text{GPA} = \frac{\text{SUM (grade numerical value x unit credit points)}}{\text{SUM unit credit points}}$$

Pass Ungraded (PS), Credit Granted (CG) and Withdrawn Without Academic Penalty (WW) grades are excluded from the calculation of the grade point average.

Notation	Final Result Grade	Range (%)	Guide	GPA Numerical Equivalent (i.e. Grade Point Value)
HD	High Distinction	85-100		7
DI	Distinction	75-84		6
CR	Credit	65-74		5
PA	Pass	50-64		4
NN	Fail	0-49		0
NH	Fail Hurdle	49		0
NU	Fail Ungraded	no mark		0
NL	Fail absent			0
WN	Withdrawn - Fail			0
PS	Pass Ungraded	no mark		No GPA number
CG	Credit Granted			No GPA number
WW	Withdrawn Without Academic Penalty			No GPA number

A cumulative GPA value ≥ 4.0 for the program (i.e. course) a student is enrolled in is one indicator of a student's success in their course. Grade point values are available in the [2021 Academic Regulations - ACU](#).

Domestic Student: A student who is one of the following:

- Australian citizen (including Australian citizens with dual citizenship) or
- New Zealander citizen or a diplomatic or consular representative of New Zealand, a member of the staff of such a representative or the spouse or dependent relative of such a representative, excluding those with Australian citizenship (Note: includes any such persons who have Permanent Resident status) or
- A permanent humanitarian visa holder or
- A holder of a permanent visa other than a permanent humanitarian visa (Source - OPSM Glossary).

Disability: Students who have indicated that they have a disability, impairment or long-term medical condition which may affect their studies (Source - HEIMSHelp).

EFTSL: An EFTSL is an equivalent full-time student load for a year. It is a measure, in respect of a course of study, of the study load for a year of a student undertaking that course of study on a full-time basis. Course enrolment is reported by [Course and Unit Viability Analysis Policy](#) Note: The EFTSL loads in the report are provided to the nearest whole number (i.e. an EFTSL value of 0.375 would be rounded down to an EFTSL load of 0 while an EFTSL load of 0.500 would be rounded up an EFTSL load of 1).

The EFTSL in this report is Bill Hours field from the SSZTALY report in Banner. For the majority of units 10 Credit Hours corresponds to 0.125 Bill Hours; a 20 Credit Hour unit corresponds to 0.25 Bill Hours.

Equity: includes only domestic students with their permanent home residence in Australia. Data includes students studying at all course levels. The rate is the indicator expressed as a percentage of all domestic onshore students.

Equity Group: Students from any of the following backgrounds – Non-English speaking background, Student with a disability, Student from regional/remote areas, Low socio-economic status.

Faculty: Lists the four Faculties - Faculty of Education and Arts (FEA), Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS), Faculty of Law and Business (FLB) and Faculty of Theology and Philosophy (FTP). In addition, please note the following definitions/notes:

- Combined Schools: refers to courses including Non-Award ACU STEPUP Pathway, Study Abroad, Exchange and Non-Award.
- Research Services: refers to courses including Doctor of Philosophy, Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Education.
- Tertiary Preparation Pathway and Study Abroad: refers to the Non-Award Tertiary Preparation Program Health Sciences.
- Undeclared Faculty: Cert III Aged Care; Cert III Early Child Ed & Care; Cert III General Ed for Adults; Cert IV in Ed Support; Dip Early Child Ed & Care; Diploma of Nursing; Exchange; Non-Award ELICOS; Non-Award OUA; Non-Award UG; Study Abroad and Uni Step Up Pathway.
- ACUcom and Education Pathways (Global and Education Pathways) are usually not compared in data analysis with the four Faculties.
- At unit level, key Core Curriculum unit (i.e. UNCC100 and UNCC300) reporting is discussed on its own rather than within the context of a particular Faculty.

International Student (i.e. Overseas Student): A non-domestic student to undertake study in Australia.

- An **Onshore** overseas student is one of the above and is residing in Australia during the unit of study.
- An **Offshore** overseas student is an overseas student residing outside Australia during the unit of study (Source - OPSM Glossary).

Items: An item refers to a question in the SELT or SES survey. The items in this Dashboard include rating-type (i.e. Likert scale), and open-ended-type (i.e. comments based and represented as category, subcategory and specific theme counts).

Interpolated Median: The Interpolated Median (IM) values at the University level for all Student Evaluation of Learning and Teaching (SELT) survey Core Items show differences in the student satisfaction for specific aspects of units and teaching. Based on the assumption that the responses within a category are evenly distributed within that category's range, the Interpolated Median (IM) can be calculated as follows:

$IM = M - 0.5 + (0.5N - n1)/n2$, where **M** is the standard Median, **N** is the total number of responses, **n1** is the number of responses below the category which contains the middle point, and **n2** is the number of responses in the middle point category; in the event $n2=0$, then $IM=M$.

Rating scale – For each rating-type item, the responses consist of *Strongly Agree* (=5), *Agree* (=4), *Neutral* (=3), *Disagree* (=2) and *Strongly Disagree* (=1). There is also the option to select *Not Application* (NA) which is excluded from the IM calculation.

Need Improvement Aspects (NIA): This refers to the SELT survey item, 'Please suggest how this unit can be improved.'

Participation Number: All Domestic Students.

Participation Rate: Students in Equity group / All domestic onshore students (Source: Higher Education Statistics).

Regional and Remote Students: Student's postcode of permanent home residence is used to map students to a Remoteness Area classification under the Australian Bureau of Statistics' 2011 Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) classification of regions. Under the ASGS classification (used from 2011 onwards) the number of students from a metropolitan, regional or remote area can be calculated. The ASGS provides more accurate information for the regional classification of students than the MCEETYA classification previously used and was adopted by the department in 2011.

Regional status is assigned to domestic students only, excluding domestic students who have a permanent home address overseas. To calculate regional status, permanent home residence (E320) for each student is used. When deriving a student's regional status for a particular year, the relevant postcode of permanent home residence for that year is used. The calculation uses the student's earliest available E320 value in the

given year, as the initial value more closely represents the student's background. Each student's postcode is mapped to metropolitan, regional and remote categories. Postcodes can be mapped to multiple categories meaning that fractions can occur. For example, a postcode may be classified as 75% regional (0.75 regional) and 25% remote (0.25 remote). A postcode in the middle of Sydney however would be classified as 100% metropolitan and students in this postcode would receive a score of '1' for the metropolitan category (and '0' for the regional and remote categories). Integers and fractions are then summed across the data set to calculate an estimate of the number of students from a metropolitan, regional or remote area.

A regional student includes those students from either an Inner Regional or Outer Regional area as defined under the ASGS. A remote student includes those students from either a Remote or Very Remote area as defined under the ASGS. A small number of students are unable to be classified to a regional classification and these students are therefore assigned to 'unknown'. More information available [here](#).

Retention Number: The number of students (headcount) who continued a course in the following year.

Retention Rate: Retention Rates in this report are all calculated using the "New Normal Retention" method.

New Normal Retention Rate = Continuing Students / All enrolled students minus completed Source: Higher Education Statistics).

The [Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment](#) definition is as follows:

The New Normal Retention rate for year (x) is the number of students who commenced a bachelor course in year (x) and did not complete in year (x) or year (x + 1), and continued in year (x + 1) (retained students), as a proportion of all students who commenced a bachelor course in year (x) and did not complete in year (x) or year (x + 1). The new normal retention rate calculation is based on a match process using the students' StudentID. This gives a "crude" retention rate, which identifies students that are retained the following year at the same institution. Students who remained at the same institution, but changed course are counted as retained and students who changed institutions are not counted as retained.

The retention rate formula comprises the following calculations (Source: Higher Education Statistics):

"Students"=All students in the Equity group, "Completed"=All students who complete a course in the reference year or the following year, "Base"="Students" minus "Completed", "Retained"=Number of students from "Base" who are enrolled the following year, "Retention Rate"="Retained" / "Base". Example: An institution had 1000 students in 2007, of which 200 completed a course in that year or the following year, and of the remaining 800 students, 500 were enrolled again in 2008. The retention rate is 500/800 or 62.5%.

Socio-Economic Status (SES): The term refers to the level of social and economic position of people within society as reflected by various indicators such as income, education, and occupation. There are three levels of SES used in the Higher Education sector – high, middle and low SES. *Low socio-economic status* (Low SES) refers to the level of social and economic position of people within society as reflected by various indicators. (Source - OPSM Glossary and HEIMSHELP).

The 2016 ABS Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) Index of Education and Occupation is used to identify postcodes nationally as low (bottom 25% of the population), medium (middle 50%) or high (top 25%) socioeconomic status (SES). An estimate of the number of low SES students is made by counting the number of domestic students whose reported postcode of permanent home location is a low SES postcode. (Source: Higher Education Statistics).

Student Evaluation of Learning and Teaching (SELT) survey: Each SELT survey conducted is related to a *Course Registration Number (CRN)* in the ACU Student Administration system (i.e. *Banner* database). The online SELT survey environment for a particular CRN is configured if there are at least 10 students enrolled, and a survey report at CRN level created when at least five responses are received. The SELT questionnaire consists of the following core items:

Part A – Unit aspects

My experience of learning in [unit]:

1. I understood the requirements and learning outcomes (i.e., objectives) for the unit.
2. Assessment tasks guided my learning process and performance.
3. I received timely and useful feedback on my work.
4. Recommended resources (online, library, text book, handouts, etc.) were useful to my study.
5. Overall, I was satisfied with the quality of this unit.

Part B – Teaching aspects

Overall, [Lecturer/Tutor name]:

6. Explains key ideas or concepts clearly.
7. Encourages my active participation in this unit.
8. Responds to student needs and concerns.
9. Demonstrates quality teaching.

SELT IM's for Question 5 which are less than 3.5 are shaded yellow; greater than or equal to 4.0 are shaded blue. SELT IM's for Question 9 which are less than 3.5 are shaded yellow; greater than or equal to 4.4 are shaded blue.

Student Experience Survey (SES): The Student Experience Survey (SES) is funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment and has been administered by the Social Research Centre since 2015. The *Overall Satisfaction* scale and *Teaching Quality* scale definitions are listed below. More information on the SES survey is available [here](#)

Student Experience Survey (SES) – Overall Satisfaction: The proportion of students who indicated satisfaction with the overall quality of entire educational experience at the institution, derived from responses to one item in the questionnaire.

Student Experience Survey (SES) – Teaching Quality: The proportion of students who indicated satisfaction with the quality of teaching they had experienced at the institution, derived from responses to eleven items in the questionnaire (see 'About SES' section on [Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching \(QILT\)](#) webpage for further details).

Success: Success measures academic performance by comparing the Equivalent Full-time Student Load (EFTSL) of units passed to the EFTSL of units attempted (Source - HEIMSHelp).

Success Rate: Success Rate or Student Progress Rate for year (x) is the proportion of actual student load (EFTSL) for units of study that are passed divided by all units of study attempted (passed + failed + withdrawn). Success Rate = Total successful EFTSL / Base EFTSL. Additional information on the Success Rate Formula used in this report is available in this Glossary.

Success Rate Formula: The Success Rate Formula (which is used to derive the ‘Success rate’), together with some information on grades (sourced from [2021 Academic Regulations](#)) are provided in Parts 1 to 3 below.

Part 1 Grade Codes

Pass codes: HD, DI, CR, PA, PS, PC.

Fail codes: NH, NN, NL, NU, WN.

Additional explanation:

Graded units: HD – high distinction; DI – Distinction; CR – Credit; PA – Pass; NN – Fail; NH – Fail Hurdle.

Ungraded units: PS – Pass Ungraded; NU – Fail ungraded with no mark.

Administrative grading codes: CG – Credit Granted based on equivalent studies; NL – Fail with no attempt at any assessment; WN – Withdrawn with academic penalty; WW – Withdrawn after the Census date without academic penalty.

Interim Grades: CE – Current Exchange; CU – Continuing Unit; DE – Deferred Examination; IP – Incomplete Practicum; NF – Interim Fail; RP – Results Pending; RW – Results Withheld.

Others: PC – Pass Conceded (please note, this grade code was formerly listed in ACU Academic Regulations).

Part 2 Successful / Non-successful

Grades indicating successful completion of units are HD, DI, CR, PA, PS PC. The grades for non-successful attempt of a unit may be due to various reasons, including the following:

- Interim Fail (NF) – Interim grade pending supplementary assessment.
- Fail Hurdle (NH) – 49%.
- Fail (NL) – 0-49%.
- When a student has made no attempt at any assessment for a unit (NL).
- Fail Ungraded (NU) – no mark.
- Withdrawn – Fail – when a student withdraws from a unit outside the provisions of Regulation 6.4.3 in Academic Regulations (WN).

Codes not included as an attempt maybe used in the following scenarios:

- Grade not yet entered for a unit (blank). Blank grades will be considered as a fail after 12 months.
- Deferred Examination (DE) – Interim grade pending Deferred Examination.
- Continuing Unit (CU) – Interim grade for a thesis, dissertation, project, research, performance unit extending over more than one standard study period.
- Withdrawn after the Census date without academic penalty (WW).
- Credit Granted (CG) Credit granted for studies previously, at ACU or elsewhere.

These grades are not included in the GPA calculation, and so are not included in the Success Rate calculation.

Part 3 Success Rate Formula

Formula for calculating the successful rate in this report is as follows. The formula is an adaptation of the Success Rate Formula sourced from Student Systems.

$$\text{Success Rate (\%)} = \frac{\text{SUM(Numbers (PA, PS, PC, CR, HD, DI))}}{\text{SUM(Numbers (PA, PS, PC, CR, HD, DI, NH, NL, NN, NU, WN))}} * 100\%$$

Please note, with some units in recent study periods there may be large withdrawal percentages and low Eligible grades due to a large number of Incomplete grades (e.g. RP - Result Pending) with a small number of students withdrawn. Therefore the Success Rates for these units may be quite low until the final results for all students are added to Banner.

Survey Cycle: A survey cycle references a time period when a survey was conducted (i.e. from the start date to end date of the survey).

Teacher ID: this is generally the first two letters of a teacher's given name and their surname.

Unit: This refers to an alpha-numeric code that consists of four letters (indicating a discipline) and three numbers (note – first digit generally is an indication of the Year level of a course). The schema used for the first of the three numeric characters in the unit code is sourced from the [Guidelines for the Coding and Naming of Units](#). The [Handbook 2021](#) provides the list of units and 'unit type' for the respective courses in this table.

Unit Headcount: The number of students enrolled in a unit.

Valid Response Count: This is the number of student responses that were submitted that contained data (i.e. a student responded to items in the survey).

Thresholds – Courses: There are seven indicators used at course level.

Values above Lower Thresholds (Courses): this reflects the percentage of selected indicators (n=7) that are above lower threshold values for the following indicators: Retention Rate (Base Number), Success Rate (EFTSL), Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) 4 or more (Student-Courses), Student Experience Survey (SES) Overall Quality (Respondents), SES Teaching Quality (Respondents), Student Evaluation of Learning and Teaching (SELT) Q5 Interpolated Median (IM) (Responses) and SELT Q9 IM (Responses).

Values above Upper Thresholds (Courses): this reflects the percentage of selected indicators (n=7) that are above upper threshold values for the following indicators: Retention Rate (Base Number), Success Rate (EFTSL), Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) 4 or more (Student-Courses), Student Experience Survey (SES) Overall Quality (Respondents), SES Teaching Quality (Respondents), Student Evaluation of Learning and Teaching (SELT) Q5 Interpolated Median (IM) (Responses) and SELT Q9 IM (Responses).

Thresholds – Units: There are four indicators used at unit level.

Values above Lower Thresholds (Units): this reflects the percentage of selected indicators (n=4) that are above lower threshold values for the following indicators: Withdrawn percentage (Eligible Grades), Success Rate (EFTSL), SELT Q5 Interpolated Median (IM) (Responses) and SELT Q9 IM (Responses).

Values above Upper Thresholds (Units): this reflects the percentage of selected indicators (n=4) that are above lower threshold values for the following indicators: Withdrawn percentage (Eligible Grades), Success Rate (EFTSL), SELT Q5 Interpolated Median (IM) (Responses) and SELT Q9 IM (Responses).

Upper (Blue) and Lower (Yellow) thresholds for indicators are based on either ACU Strategic Plan targets or Sector benchmarks, where applicable. 2021 Success Rates are values calculated by based on real-time Banner data and indicated with an asterisk, so may vary slightly from Data Hub. Data Hub data represents data as submitted to the Government at a particular point in time.

Virtual Students: The term refers to Off-campus, Offshore, Online and Distance Mode

WN Count - Withdrawal of a student with academic and financial penalty (2021 Academic Regulations): A student will be recorded as having withdrawn with academic penalty (WN) if the student withdraws from the unit after the census date but prior to:

- the central examination period for a standard study period; or
- the end of classes in a non-standard study period.

WW Count - Withdrawal of a student without academic and financial penalty (2021 Academic Regulations): A student may withdraw from a unit without academic or financial penalty up to the following dates:

- the relevant census date of the study period; or
- in a professional experience unit or unit containing professional experience: normally one week after commencement of the professional experience or community engagement placement if the withdrawal occurs before the relevant census date of the study period.

Withdrawn Count (Total): The sum of the WN and WW counts listed above.

Withdrawn Percent (Eligible Grades): The percentage of student withdrawals (WN + WW) as a percentage of Unit Headcount. Count of Withdrawn Grades divided by the Count of Total grades, excluding grades such as CE (Current Exchange), CG (Credit Granted), CU (Continuing Unit) and IP (Incomplete Practicum). The Withdrawn Percent formula is shown below.

Withdrawn Percent =

$$\frac{(WN + WW)}{(CR + DI + HD + NH + NN + NU + PA + PC + PS + RP + RW + WN + WW)}$$

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Core Items for Student Evaluation of Learning and Teaching (SELT) survey

Student response options:

- *Strongly Agree (SA)*
- *Agree (A)*
- *Neutral (N)*
- *Disagree (D)*
- *Strongly Disagree (SD)*

Part A

My experience of learning in [unit]: (SA, A, N, D, SD)

1. I understood the requirements and learning outcomes (i.e., objectives) for the unit.
2. Assessment tasks guided my learning process and performance.
3. I received timely and useful feedback on my work.
4. Recommended resources (online, library, text book, handouts, etc.) were useful to my study.
5. Overall, I was satisfied with the quality of this unit.

Part B

Overall, [Lecturer/Tutor name]: (SA, A, N, D, SD)

1. Explains key ideas or concepts clearly.
2. Encourages my active participation in this unit.
3. Responds to student needs and concerns.
4. Demonstrates quality teaching.

What were the best aspects of [Lecturer/Tutor name]'s teaching?

Please provide suggestions to [Lecturer/Tutor name] for ongoing development of teaching quality.

Part C

What were the best aspects of [unit] that helped your learning?

Please suggest how this unit can be improved.

Any other comments.

Student Evaluation of Learning and Teaching (SELT) survey text analysis dictionary for 'Best Aspects' and 'Need Improvement Aspects' comments on unit and teaching aspects

The dictionary for SELT text analysis is based on information obtained from a number of sources. The *Office of Planning and Strategic Management* (OPSM) in ACU provided details contained in the *SEQuery* tool that was developed by the *Social Research Centre*; other sources are listed as footnotes and references. The categories, sub-categories and explanations were extracted from the literature. Some of the fine-grained descriptions listed for thematic areas below the sub-categories were derived within ACU.

1. Assessment

Design and Structure:

- **Assessment Clarity:** The degree to which an assessment, assignment, essay, exam or quiz was clear, or difficult.
- **Assessment Satisfaction:** The degree to which the assessment/ assignment was good/ satisfactory, boring, or relevant.
- **Assessment Structure:** Inclusive of final or major assignment, first assignment or second assignment.
- **Assessment Submission:** The submission of and weighting allocated to assessments or assignments.
- **Group Tasks:** Information in relation to group tasks or activities and assessments or assignments.
- **Hurdle Tasks:** Information in relation hurdle tasks.
- **Lab Report:** Undertaking the lab report comments.
- **Literature Review:** Undertaking the literature review comments.
- **Presentation Tasks:** The presentations in class including in relation to group presentation comments.
- **Problem Book:** Comments made about the problem book.
- **Quizzes and Tests:** The weekly quiz, test and multiple choice comments, including the degree to which the quiz was good/ satisfactory, relevant or boring.
- **References:** Comments in relation to references.
- **Word Limit:** Information in relation to word limits, including that the word limits were too little, too long or not clear in relation to assessments.

Marking and Feedback¹

- *Assessment Feedback* includes the promptness with which assignments are returned, use of staged deadlines, quality of the feedback received, including the extent to which markers comment on what was done well, explicitly identify key areas for improvement and say how improvements could have been achieved-with specific attention to the grading criteria distributed at the start of the subject.
- *Assessment Marking* includes the consistency and reliability of marking; fair assessment of group work projects and NESB student work. Covers reliability across different assessment methods: short answer; online; practice-based; group-based, etc. Also includes the extent to which plagiarism and cheating are detected, comments about 'soft-marking' and the confusion between norm-referenced and criterion-referenced assessment in determining grades.

More specific themes are as follows:

- **Feedback Quality:** The provision of constructive feedback.
- **Group Marks:** The equity in relation to allocation of group marks.
- **Marking Criteria:** The marking rubrics usefulness. The potential need to review marks or grades received. The assessment/ assignment feedback clarity and consistency including discussion about marks.
- **Peer Review:** Comments in relation to peer review marking.
- **Timely Marking:** The marking and feedback occurred in a timely manner.

¹ Scott, G. (December 2005). *Accessing the student voice: Using CEQuery to identify what retains students and promotes engagement in productive learning in Australian higher education*. Report, University of Western Sydney.

2. Learner Engagement

Class Interaction: Student interactions and online or face-to-face discussions².

- **Discussions and Activities:** The discussions and activities undertaken in class time.
- **Inclusion and Wellbeing:** Sense of belonging to university². Comments that relate to the sense of 'belonging' that comes from a welcoming, friendly, approachable environment and culture and set of relationships among both staff and students. Comments which indicate that the student feels s/he is seen not as a number but an individual. Comments about levels of engagement or isolation felt by students. Also covers comments on the wide range of formal and informal types of social support, in particular peer support but also a general culture of support and service, ability to network, interaction with others, the development and use of reciprocal relationships¹. Includes comments in relation to experiences with book club.

Student Support: Received / offered relevant support².

- **Academic Skills:** Academic skills, careers, administrative and learning advisors available / helpful². Includes academic or career advice received including in relation to essay writing, literacy and numeracy skills. The PASS program participation value as an aid to learning.
- **Work and Family Commitments:** How work and family commitments affect student's ability to study.

3. Learning Resources

Infrastructure and Libraries: Facilities and resources - quality².

- **Facilities:** Classroom and lab quality, class sizes and levels of crowding, quality of computers and technical infrastructure, equipment levels and quality, ease of access to physical facilities and their quality, campus environment, equipment levels, social spaces. Also comments about funding levels for facilities and financial support at universities¹.
- **Libraries:** Library collections, services, ease of access, facilities, equipment, efficiency, online services as well as face-to-face services, borrowing services and rules, fines¹.

Study Resources: Textbooks and learning resources – quality².

- **Learning Materials and Guides:** The quality of practical manuals or course, lecture or study materials and notes, or practical booklets.
- **Readings and Textbooks:** The appropriateness or number/ degree of difficulty of readings or resources for the unit.

Technology Enhanced Learning: Online learning materials - quality².

- **Adobe Connect:** The experience with Adobe Connect.
- **Blogs and Forums:** The use of blogs or forums for teaching.
- **Lecture Recording and Slides:** The lecture recording or slides usefulness.
- **LEO:** The LEO site resources.
- **Online Learning:** The online learning resources. The usefulness of the online materials.
- **Turnitin:** The experience with Turnitin.
- **Video Clips:** The usefulness of the video clips.

² Social Research Centre (November 2016). *SES Autocoder Tool 1.1.1*

4. Skills Development

Intellectual and Knowledge Development: Intellectual skills developed by course².

- **Critical Thinking:** Critical thinking skills developed by course². Complex problem solving developed by course². Also acquisition of problem solving skills.
- **Knowledge Development:** Knowledge of study areas developed by course².
- **Research Analyses:** Learning research skills, research for assignments, analysing texts or undertaking data analysis.

Personal Development: All aspects of *personal* Emotional Intelligence identified in recent studies of successful graduates and other research (see Vescio 2005³) e.g. the ability to remain calm when things go wrong, self-confidence, sense of 'efficacy', willingness to take negative feedback, ability to tolerate ambiguity, persevere and maintain self-motivation, independence, self-understanding etc.). Also includes comments about the personal satisfaction that comes from completing a higher-education program¹.

- **Self-Confidence and Achieving:** The student confidence increased by undertaking the unit. Achieving results in the unit or having a sense of accomplishment or a rewarding experience.
- **Work Readiness and Learning:** Work readiness developed by course². Includes gaining promotion, improved employability, improved workplace performance, direct application of what was learnt at work¹. The relevance of a unit for a student's future career. Going on to further and higher study as a result of the course; commitment to life-long learning. In the case of NI (Need Improvement) comments students may talk more about the blocks they experienced or the reasons why the course didn't motivate them to go on to further study¹. Also includes comments students have made about their studies.

Practical Skills: Practical application of theory².

- **Practical Classes:** The feedback in relation to practical classes, the amount of content in practical classes and the practical duration, timing or frequency.
- **Practical Satisfaction:** The degree to which the student found the practicals to be engaging or informing, enjoyable, helpful or satisfying.
- **Theory in Practice:** The consistency with which a course seeks to link and balance theory with practice, designs in a range of practice-oriented experiences directly connects to related theory. The extent to which it is practically oriented and applied in its design¹.

Work Integrated Learning: Work integrated learning (WIL) is an umbrella term for a range of approaches and strategies that integrate theory with the practice of work within a purposefully designed curriculum (as provided in *The WIL Report* by Carol-Joy Patrick et. al. 2009⁴).

- **Field work:** The usefulness of field work or site visits.
- **Placement:** Immerses a student in a workplace related to their discipline or career goals. Ideally, placement combines both class-based learning and structured and supported workplace activity with opportunities to reflect on learning and seek timely feedback on performance. Examples include: Internships, work placements, practicums, clinical placements, work shadowing, supervised professional experience, co-operative education, cadetship, traineeship or service learning^{Error! Bookmark not defined.}
- **Simulation:** The usefulness of simulations.

³ Vescio, J. (2005). *UTS Successful Graduates Project: An investigation of successful graduates in the early stages of their career across a wide range of professions*, UTS, Sydney.

⁴ Patrick, C-j., Peach, D., Pocknee, C., Webb, F., Fletcher, M., Pretto, G. (December 2008). *The WIL [Work Integrated Learning] report: A national scoping study* [Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) Final report]. Brisbane: Queensland University of Technology.

5. Teaching

Teacher Accessibility: Ability to contact staff (face-to-face, online, by telephone etc.), staff availability, how and when they respond, their willingness to support students, as well as comments about the interface between staff: student ratios and staff accessibility and responsiveness¹.

- **Teacher Attitude:** Teachers related to and encouraged students and were committed and dedicated to their learning.
- **Teacher Communication:** The communication skills of teachers, including whether teachers were helpful and pleasant toward students.
- **Teacher Responsiveness:** Teachers engaged with students and responded to emails and were willing to meet face to face with students. Teachers were willing to answer questions or provide advice and were supportive toward students.

Teacher Quality: Staff members' ability to inspire; their enthusiasm, promptness in coming to class, reliability, levels of organisation, engagement; their professionalism, organisation, commitment to the area taught, interpersonal skills and clarity of communication including English-language skills¹.

- **Teacher Delivery:** The effectiveness of delivery of the lecture.
- **Teacher Knowledge:** The teacher's knowledge or skill. The practical application of the teaching.
- **Teacher Passion:** The student found the teacher to be passionate or inspirational. The degree to which a student found the lectures to be engaging or information.
- **Teacher Satisfaction:** The degree to which students were satisfied with the teaching, including how interesting, helpful, or enjoyable the teaching was for the student.

6. Unit

Unit Content: How interesting, engaging, current, and relevant course *content* is. Also includes comments about courses being personally relevant to the key interests and meeting students' other needs¹.

- **Content Clarity:** The degree to which the content was clear, or difficult, unit outline.
- **Content Relevance:** The degree to which the content was relevant.
- **Content Satisfaction:** The degree to which the lecture or tutorial content was good/ satisfactory, or boring. Includes topics covered in class.
- **Core Units and Mission:** Comments in relation to the University mission and/ or core units, as well as application of content to the workplace such as Catholic education and schools.

Unit Structure: Includes subject balance and distinctiveness from each other, subject quality, overall load and amount of content to be learnt, appropriate sequence of learning, overlap between subjects, prerequisites, admission levels, timetable, overview of field, recognition of prior learning (RPL), the appropriateness of the modes of learning used (part time/ full time, mixed mode, multi-site, intensive, work- based, distance, online etc.). Also includes comments about the appropriateness, timing, length and variety of mix of learning methods used, the extent to which the course has depth, a clear direction, is integrated, and has an overall integrity¹.

- **Flexible Delivery:** In relation to weekend delivery intensive learning, elective units, self-directed learning and flipped classroom.
- **Guest Lecturer:** The guest lecturers or guest speakers.
- **IBL:** Comments in relation to Inquiry Based Learning (IBL), including improvements needed to IBL, or to not have IBL learning.
- **Learning Workload:** The workload in the unit, often a reference to too much work in the unit.
- **Lecture Structure:** The lecture structure clarity, including course year structure. The lecture duration, timing or frequency. The face-to-face element of learning and lecture attendance.
- **Lessons Plans:** Learning how to create a lesson plan.
- **Resource Sessions:** Comments about resource sessions.
- **Role Play:** Comments about role plays.
- **Seminars and Workshops:** Comments about seminars or workshops.
- **Tutorial Structure:** The tutorial structure clarity, the tutorial attendance, duration, timing or frequency.

References

The following information was referenced in compiling this dictionary and underpins many of the categories, sub-categories and themes in this report.

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