

# Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee (TALQAC)

September 2014



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
MELBOURNE

## Update on Subject Experience Survey (SES) Response Rates: Learning from recent successes

The Subject Experience Survey (SES) is an important feature of the teaching and learning landscape. The information provided through the surveys can be useful in reviewing subjects and identifying areas for subject improvement. The SES provides insights about students' experience of teaching and learning which can be used by academics to improve the delivery of classes, the preparation of course materials and methods of assessment. This update follows the previous TALQAC document on strategies to improve SES response rates.

We have recently seen an improvement in SES response rates. Although the overall response rate (47.4%) for the first half of 2014 is still below the target of 50%, we want to learn from those departments who have successfully improved their SES response rates.

We present some case studies from departments that have achieved a high SES response rate so we can learn from their approaches and strategies.



For the first half cycle of 2014 the University ran a competition where students could win a \$500 cash prize for completing the SES. Although this appears to have had a positive impact it is not clear whether this will be sustained. Ongoing effort is required to ensure high response rates.

### SES Response Summary

	S1, 2010	S2, 2010		1 <sup>st</sup> half, 2011	2 <sup>nd</sup> half, 2011	1 <sup>st</sup> half, 2012	2 <sup>nd</sup> half, 2012	1 <sup>st</sup> half, 2013	2 <sup>nd</sup> half, 2013	1 <sup>st</sup> half, 2014
Undergraduate	61.1%	58.7%	Online SES introduction	56.0%	42.4%	49%	38.5%	40.5%	35.3%	45.2%
Postgraduate	75.6%	73.3%		60.5%	48.9%	53.7%	45.6%	50.5%	48%	51.5%
<b>Overall</b>				<b>56.9%</b>	<b>44.1%</b>	<b>50.5%</b>	<b>40.9%</b>	<b>43.8%</b>	<b>39.9%</b>	<b>47.4%</b>

## School of Culture and Communication

This School has adopted a range of strategies to achieve a high SES response rate (59% in 1<sup>st</sup> half, 2014).

These include:

- Encouraging students to fill out the SES survey in class using their mobile devices in week 11 or 12. Subject coordinators dedicate time at the end of class to this task and they leave the room;
- Emphasising to students their responsibility to provide thoughtful responses and that their feedback can have an impact on the revision of the subject for the next cohort – future students benefit from the insight provided by current students;
- Due to the peaks in the response rate when the survey opens and just before it closes, email reminders are sent from subject coordinators to coincide with the mid-point of the survey;
- Using LMS Announcements and/or subject email lists to communicate an overall impression of the SES feedback to current students, acknowledging the importance of their contribution and completing the cycle of communication.

TALQAC welcomes feedback on this note and any suggestions from academic staff about effective strategies they have used in their teaching. Please send comments and suggestions to Chair, TALQAC:  
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## Melbourne Dental School

This School achieved a response rate of 71% in 1<sup>st</sup> half 2014. Their strategies included:

- A professional staff member was designated with the task of co-ordinating the SES for the school.
- The professional staff member liaised with all year coordinators in allocating in-class survey times.
- Each year level of Doctor of Dental Surgery, Bachelor of Oral Health and Doctor of Clinical Dentistry students was assigned a specific date/time (15-20 minutes) at the start or before the end of a class in the computer laboratory or a seminar room.
- Students were informed about the SES through the LMS. The benefits of their feedback for improving their program were also explained by academic staff in class prior to the survey.
- Students were encouraged to complete the survey by academic staff members during the survey period.
- Ongoing emails and LMS communications throughout the survey period encouraged student participation.
- Two gourmet food hampers were organized by the school and all students were given a raffle ticket which they could submit to the professional staff member on completion of the survey in class. The raffle was conducted at the end of the survey period and the winners announced via the LMS and student email.