



## Module Evaluation Policy

**Approving Body:** Quality Assurance Committee

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Purpose of the Policy

1.1.1. Aberystwyth University is committed to providing students with a first-class learning experience. Students are partners in their learning at Aberystwyth, their opinion of academic schemes and the wider student experience is highly valued. Surveying students is one way of eliciting student opinion and this document sets out the University's policy and procedures in respect of:

1.1.1.1. The overall framework and criteria regarding the delivery of module evaluation;

1.1.1.2. The roles and responsibilities of the key stakeholders involved in these processes and;

1.1.1.3. The stages of the module evaluation process;

### 1.2. Core Aims and Principles

1.2.1. Continuous Quality Enhancement. The purpose of module evaluation is to enhance the student learning experience. The process aims to make continuous improvement to student satisfaction, engagement, and success. Listening to the student voice and obtaining student views on their learning experience, both formally and informally, is central to module evaluation. Module evaluation is a key element of University quality assurance and enhancement.

1.2.2. Student Engagement. A culture should be fostered which encourages a genuine conversation between students, academic and professional services staff. Evaluations are only one means of gathering student opinion and they should not be overused or used to the exclusion of face-to-face interaction between staff and students, which may be via student representation on University, Institute, Department and course level committees or Staff Student Consultative Committees (SSCCs). Module evaluation should be used to foster dialogue and enhance engagement. Staff and students should work together in partnership to use module evaluations in a positive and constructive manner.

1.2.3. Effective Communication. As students are partners in their learning at Aberystwyth we must demonstrate the value attached to the student voice and communication with students. Feedback to students is critical in this respect. This means ensuring that evaluation data are carefully considered, action plans formulated and discussed with students, for example through Staff-Student Consultative Committees (SSCC's), and outcomes effectively communicated through a variety of channels and in a timely fashion.

1.2.4. Module quality enhancement should consider a range of sources. Making changes to modules / courses in direct response to student feedback in isolation may not always be appropriate as other sources of information also have a role. Module evaluation data is collected in order to help inform the professional academic

judgment of teaching staff, and to help staff develop their academic programmes in partnership with students. However, in order to maintain student engagement with evaluation and improvement processes, students must be informed of the results of evaluations and any actions that are being taken. Staff should also detail why change has not been implemented in response to student opinion.

### 1.3. Definitions

- 1.3.1. **Module:** a credit bearing unit in a study scheme.
- 1.3.2. **Module Evaluation:** the process in which students feedback, assess and rate their academic studies and the quality of teaching on the module.
- 1.3.3. **Module Evaluation Questionnaire (MEQ):** The MEQ is the actual questionnaire that is filled out by students. It is provided centrally but administered by academic units and consists of core questions, module-specific questions and free text fields. The MEQ responses are anonymous.
- 1.3.4. **Module Coordinator (MC):** Member of academic staff responsible for a module. The module may contain a number of additional teaching staff.
- 1.3.5. **MEQ Window:** Period of time (defined in teaching weeks, e.g. weeks 7-10 Semester 1 and 2) during which MEQs take place. Module coordinators and staff teaching on the module run the MEQs in-class during this period.
- 1.3.6. **Continuous Feedback** (from students): The process by which students are able to feedback at any time about their experience as opposed to set-piece surveys.
- 1.3.7. **Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS):** Individual responsible for learning and teaching in the department / institute. This encompasses all roles in Institutes / Departments under the titles Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS / DUG) and Director of Learning and Teaching (DLT).
- 1.3.8. **Head of Department (HoD):** Head of an academic department or Theme Leader within an Institute role.

### 1.4. Scope

- 1.4.1. This policy applies to all Aberystwyth University taught undergraduate schemes, including those taught through collaborative arrangements at partner organizations, although the precise arrangements for partners may be subject to variation in practice. The formal MEQ process applies to all taught undergraduate modules. However, many of the policy's principles should be also applied to postgraduate taught modules. The policy does not apply to research training modules.
- 1.4.2. It applies to internally run module evaluation questionnaires only. It does not apply to external surveys such as the National Student Survey (NSS), the International Student Barometer, Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey, and Postgraduate Research Experience Survey.

## 2. Module Evaluation Policy

### 2.1. Delivery

- 2.1.1. The University expects all staff to seek student views on the learning experience of a module at appropriate points and using appropriate mechanisms. This is particularly important for modules that are scheduled over the full academic year and to enable immediate adjustments to be made to the module or learning experience where necessary.
- 2.1.2. All modules must be formally evaluated using the MEQ each time they are run. The Module's MEQ must be administered during the advertised MEQ Window. Any exceptions to this must be formally approved by the Institute Director and PVC Student Experience. A record of these will be maintained by the central survey team. Whilst MEQ evaluation is the formal method of evaluation, formative mid-module evaluations are also encouraged.
- 2.1.3. In the interest of preventing survey fatigue, MEQ replaces all other module evaluation questionnaires / surveys, apart from those providing formative mid module or continuous feedback. Additional surveys, where they take place, are organized by the department / institute and must not be a substitute for the MEQ.
- 2.1.4. Module coordinators are responsible for ensuring their module(s) are evaluated with the MEQ. They are responsible for choosing the timing of the MEQ within the MEQ Window. The Module coordinator and / or academic staff teaching on the module will normally deliver the MEQ.
- 2.1.5. In exceptional circumstances the PVC for Student Experience may require that MEQs for module(s) and / or departments are administered centrally. This will be communicated to the relevant module coordinator(s) and department(s) prior to the MEQ Window.
- 2.1.6. The MEQ has a core set of compulsory questions to ensure that the University has a consistent approach to module evaluation. Module coordinators are optionally able to add up to four module-specific questions.
- 2.1.7. In all module evaluations students' anonymity should be protected.
- 2.1.8. Approaches to MEQ delivery and responses to student opinion must recognize the diversity of the schemes we offer, with respect to content, mode of delivery, campus location and level and composition of the student body.

### 2.2. Collaborative Delivery and Partner Organizations

- 2.2.1. For modules run at branch campuses, partner organizations or through collaborative delivery, a module evaluation should take place using the MEQ questions, via an appropriate means of delivery during a period agreed with the PVC for Student Experience.

- 2.2.2. Module evaluation outcomes should be shared with Link Tutors, relevant DUS, Head of Department and the central survey team.

### 2.3. Module Evaluation Analysis, Action Plans and Reports

- 2.3.1. On receiving their MEQ results Module Coordinators complete the MEQ Module Action Plan. This is then sent to and approved by the relevant DUS.
- 2.3.2. The relevant DUS completes the MEQ Departmental / Institute (as appropriate) Action Plan based on departmental / institute data and completed individual Module Actions Plans.
- 2.3.3. Any changes to a module or scheme as a result of the MEQ process, must be made in accordance with the Academic Quality Handbook.
- 2.3.4. Response to student feedback should be made in accordance to the University's Welsh Language Scheme.
- 2.3.5. A range of procedures yielding information from students, staff, external examiners and, where appropriate, Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies need to be used to inform change. Since the opinion of students gathered through MEQs is only one source of information on the quality of teaching provision and student services, it must be considered alongside other information and not necessarily acted upon in isolation.
- 2.3.6. Satisfaction rates and response rates for MEQs will be monitored centrally, and summary management reports provided to Institutes and departments.
- 2.3.7. Results of MEQs will never be analysed in a way that could identify individual students from their responses.
- 2.3.8. Comments received through MEQ that a member of staff believes breaches the Students Rules and Regulations should be raised with the relevant DUS and at their discretion disregarded.

### 2.4. Module Evaluation Outcomes and Communication

- 2.4.1. Students will be provided with timely information about the outcomes of module evaluations together with responses to any issues raised. These will be published on the VLE within one week, wherever possible, of completing the module action plan. Students must be notified of the availability of the feedback. A summary will also be published in the next version of the module on the VLE for the following year / cohort.
- 2.4.2. Feedback and discuss face-to-face with students the raw results of the MEQ as soon as possible and by the last teaching day of the semester.
- 2.4.3. Staff should also detail why suggested changes have not been implemented in response to student opinion in any feedback.
- 2.4.4. Departmental-level responses should be tabled at SSCCs.

## 2.5. Access to Data and Sharing of Results

- 2.5.1. Data generated by MEQ will be used for quality enhancement purposes.
- 2.5.2. Module Coordinators have access to the MEQ results for their module(s). They are encouraged to share (either fully or partially) this with other staff teaching on the same module at their discretion.
- 2.5.3. Scheme coordinators will have access to MEQ results for modules on their scheme.
- 2.5.4. The Head of Department will have access to the MEQ results for all modules in their department. At their discretion, the quantitative results may be shared within the department. Departments are encouraged to share results with other departments for modules on joint schemes.
- 2.5.5. The relevant DUS will have access to the MEQ results for all modules in their department / institute.
- 2.5.6. The Institute Director and Institute Manager will have access to the MEQ results for all modules in their institute. With the agreement of the relevant HoD and DUS, the quantitative results may be shared within the institute.
- 2.5.7. The University Executive and central survey team will have access to all MEQ results.
- 2.5.8. Summary data will be made available to University committees involved in quality assurance or enhancement.
- 2.5.9. Module evaluation results for collaborative provision / partner organizations should be shared with relevant Link Tutors. They will form part of the department's results.
- 2.5.10. The data may be used elsewhere at the discretion of the PVC Student Experience (or nominee) if there is a clear case for its use to enhance quality. Anonymity of responses will be protected. A case must be made for the use of both qualitative and quantitative data.

## 3. Module Evaluation Roles and Responsibilities

### 3.1. Students

- 3.1.1. Are encouraged to engage with module evaluation and provide constructive feedback.
- 3.1.2. Complete module evaluations honestly and with consideration and respect for the teaching and support staff for each module in accordance with the Students Rules and Regulations.

### 3.2. Module Coordinator

- 3.2.1. Ensure that the module's ASTRA data record is correct, in particular with reference to the module coordinator and teaching staff details.
- 3.2.2. Ensure their module is surveyed with the MEQ within the agreed MEQ window.
- 3.2.3. The MC or teaching staff on the module will normally administer the MEQ in-class.
- 3.2.4. Ensure, if required, that up to four module-specific MEQ questions are produced, translated and submitted before the relevant deadline.
- 3.2.5. Identify when they propose to run the survey prior to the start of the MEQ Window.
- 3.2.6. Ensure, where possible, that data collected are representative of the student cohort. This includes employing methods to improve engagement with the survey, encouraging students to fill in the survey and explaining its benefits, and encouraging attendance.
- 3.2.7. Ensure that they do not influence students during the completion of the MEQ and that they afford students every opportunity to complete the MEQ independently and express their views honestly.
- 3.2.8. Analyse results of the MEQ and produce a Module Action Plan by the published deadline.
- 3.2.9. Upload DUS-approved feedback to students to Blackboard within one week of completing their action plan. Students must be notified of the availability of the feedback. A summary will also be published in the next version of the module on the VLE for the following year / cohort.
- 3.2.10. Feedback and discuss face-to-face with students the raw results of the MEQ as soon as possible and by the last teaching day of the semester.
- 3.2.11. Send their Draft Module Action Plan to the relevant DUS and the central survey team.
- 3.2.12. Ensure that all module related actions identified on the Module Action Plan are carried out.

### 3.3. Heads of Department

- 3.3.1. Have overall responsibility for ensuring Module Evaluation is operating effectively in their Department. This includes staff engagement at all levels, dealing with major issues as they arise, monitoring action plans, and ensuring staff are fulfilling their responsibilities as outlined in this policy.
- 3.3.2. Ensure that each module is allocated a Module Coordinator.
- 3.3.3. Ensure all modules in their department are surveyed with MEQ within the agreed MEQ window.

- 3.3.4. Ensure that that action plans are developed for all surveyed modules and for the department as a whole, to ensure high quality teaching provision.
- 3.3.5. Ensure that actions outlined in plans are carried out, monitored and their impact reviewed.

#### 3.4. Directors of Undergraduate Studies

- 3.4.1. Work with Module Coordinators and their relevant Head of Department / Institute Director to ensure all modules in their department / institute (as appropriate) are surveyed with MEQ within the agreed MEQ window.
- 3.4.2. Complete the MEQ Departmental / Institute (as appropriate) Action Plan based on departmental data and individual Module Action Plans.
- 3.4.3. Send their Draft Action Plan to the central survey team.
- 3.4.4. Ensure that action plans developed are of sufficient quality and enhance learning and teaching in the department / institute
- 3.4.5. Ensure that actions identified in Departmental / Institute (as appropriate) Action Plans are implemented, monitored and their impact reviewed.
- 3.4.6. Table Departmental / Institute (as appropriate) Action Plans at relevant Learning and Teaching Committee.
- 3.4.7. Provide a Departmental / Institute (as appropriate) Action Plan summary to earliest available SSCC.
- 3.4.8. Provide a summary of actions points and target completion dates for the AMTS document.

#### 3.5. Institute Directors

- 3.5.1. Have overall responsibility for ensuring Module Evaluation is operating effectively in their Institute. This includes staff engagement at all levels, dealing with major issues as they arise, monitoring action plans, and ensuring departments are fulfilling their responsibilities as outlined in this policy.
- 3.5.2. Identify and address common Institute-wide themes and issues raised by MEQ.

#### 3.6. Institute Managers

- 3.6.1. May, at the discretion of the Institute Director, have a role in managing some of the administrative aspects of MEQ at Institute level.

#### 3.7. Central Survey Team

- 3.7.1. Develop module evaluation guidance documents, processes and dates / times that are approved by the PVC Student Experience.

- 3.7.2. Develop systems that are used to deliver, monitor and report on MEQ.
- 3.7.3. Monitor MEQ, escalating issues as appropriate to Heads of Department, Institute Directors and the PVC Student Experience.
- 3.7.4. Manage all records relating to surveys, quantitative and qualitative feedback.
- 3.7.5. Produce reports for the University Executive, Institutes and Departments.
- 3.7.6. Promote and communicate Module Evaluation to staff and students.
- 3.7.7. Provide training, advice, help and guidance on Module Evaluation processes and systems.
- 3.7.8. Work with staff, students, and the Students' Union to improve staff and student engagement with Module Evaluation.
- 3.7.9. Run central communications campaigns on University-level initiatives that result from module evaluation feedback.
- 3.7.10. Organize regular Stakeholder Group meetings, consisting of academic staff representing all Institutes, administrative staff, and students.

### 3.8. Stakeholder Group

- 3.8.1. Raise any module evaluation related issues.
- 3.8.2. Provide advice and feedback on module evaluation including guidance documents, processes, systems and dates / times.
- 3.8.3. Assist in the continual enhancement of Module Evaluation at Aberystwyth University.
- 3.8.4. Act as champions of module evaluation in their respective academic units.

### 3.9. PVC Student Experience

- 3.9.1. Have overall responsibility for ensuring Module Evaluation is operating effectively for the University. This includes senior staff engagement, resourcing, dealing with major issues as they arise, maintaining a University-wide overview, and ensuring Institutes are fulfilling their responsibilities as outlined in this policy.
- 3.9.2. Ensure that high quality teaching is being delivered across the University and that module evaluation is being used for continuous quality enhancement.
- 3.9.3. Sets MEQ targets, thresholds and KPIs.
- 3.9.4. Approves detailed module evaluation guidance documents, processes and dates / times.

## 4. Module Evaluation Process

### 4.1. Phases

4.1.1. The MEQ process can be broadly broken down into the following phases. More details on the precise processes, systems and dates / times will be made available in guidance documents that complement this policy. Each phase is described below and includes some of the key processes within each phase.

### 4.2. Preparation phase

4.2.1. Awareness-raising communications to staff and students

4.2.2. Welcome meetings with students during Orientation Week highlighting MEQ

4.2.3. Training, advice and support for staff in the MEQ processes / systems (ongoing through all stages)

4.2.4. Submission of module-specific questions

4.2.5. Indication of the timing of MEQ for each module

### 4.3. Survey Phase

4.3.1. Reminder communications to staff and students

4.3.2. MEQs carried out by academic staff during the MEQ Window

4.3.3. University / Institute / Departmental monitoring of MEQ progress

### 4.4. Analysis and Planning Phase

4.4.1. Module Action Plans.

4.4.2. Departmental / Institute Action Plans.

4.4.3. Actions take place.

### 4.5. Reporting and Communication Phase

4.5.1. Summary of Module Action Plans posted on Blackboard.

4.5.2. Departmental / Institute Action Plans tabled at Learning and Teaching Committees.

4.5.3. Summary Departmental / Institute Action Plans tabled at SSCCs.

4.5.4. University and Departmental / Institute communication campaign to students on actions taken.

4.5.5. Reviewing the impact of actions.

4.5.6. MEQ results feeding in to AMTS process.