

Student Survey Policy

Purpose

Student surveys are a valuable method of collecting and assessing opinions in order to effect positive change. When used correctly, they can be an important way of providing information that can improve quality and student satisfaction. This policy aims to establish a coordinated approach for student surveying at QMUL. It does not intend to limit the gathering of feedback from students via surveys. It does, however aim to:

- monitor the frequency with which students are asked to participate in surveys
- assure the quality of student surveys
- assure that results are shared in a timely fashion, where appropriate
- assure the results will be used for the purposes for which the data was gathered

Improved use of data and reporting of results

This policy aims to address concerns regarding the number of surveys taking place in the university of which results are not reported or acted upon, and to ensure that QMUL efficiently and intelligently uses surveys and the data gathered by surveys. As a condition of survey approval, survey administrators must commit to timely analysis and reporting of survey results, sharing of results with the Student Survey Coordinator and consent to results being reported in an Annual Report to the Student Experience Advisory Board.

Limiting survey fatigue

The policy aims to ensure that student surveys are conducted in a manner that minimises redundancy and frequency of surveys and that QMUL students are not over-surveyed at critical times in the year for established surveys. To minimise the risk of over-surveying and to ensure that the university's core surveys remain a priority to students, a Survey Register and Calendar will be maintained by the Student Surveys Coordinator so that proposed surveys can be aligned with the topics and timings of other surveys.

Minimal overlap in collected data

A lack of coordination can result in similar surveys being simultaneously administered to the same students, creating confusion and frustration for respondents as well as survey administrators. To prevent duplication of existing survey data, the administration of non-core surveys requires the approval of the Student Survey Group. This policy defines the role of the committee and application procedure for the survey approval.

The policy and guidance documents apply to all surveys of QMUL students. If a survey does not have to follow the approval process, it is recommended that the guidance documents are still followed.

Policy Scope

This policy covers:

- All surveys of QMUL current students.

This policy does not currently cover:

- Surveys of QMUL staff, alumni or applicants. The policy may be developed to include these groups in the future.

Core Surveys

The following are considered core surveys for gathering information about student experience and engagement, and do not need to go through the approval process.

- National Student Survey (NSS) and the Intentions After Graduation Survey
- National Student Housing Survey (NSHS)
- Module Evaluations
- Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES)
- Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)
- Queen Mary Student Survey (QMSS)
- QMSU Annual Survey

All surveys that are not considered a core student survey must go through the Survey Approval Process. Very short, multiple choice surveys may be exempt from this process – contact the Student Surveys Coordinator to assess this.

Survey Approval Process

Scope

The process must be followed for:

- Internal surveys that intend to reach any sample of QMUL students where the demographic is from more than one department and which are not included in the core survey register.

Process

In order for a survey to be considered for approval, survey administrators must undertake the following:

1. Consult the Survey Calendar – any surveys that propose to overlap with an existing survey and a similar sample may possibly not be approved. This ensures that survey fatigue is minimised.
2. Consult the Survey Register to see if there is existing data that is relevant to the proposed survey findings. Contact the Student Survey Coordinator for help in obtaining any available data.
3. Fill in a Survey Approval Form. Please note that submission of an application does not guarantee approval.
4. Surveys will be considered for approval by the Student Survey Group and if successful added to the Survey Calendar.
5. Approval of a survey obligates the survey administrator to share the results with QMUL and the population surveyed within the timeframe committed on the Survey Approval Form.
6. The survey administrator must also consent to results of the survey being reported in an annual report of student surveys, on the QMUL website where appropriate for staff and/or students to view, and via the Business Intelligence survey tool

Student Survey Group

The Student Survey Group will meet on a regular basis to consider any survey applications against:

- The number of surveys taking place within the proposed survey period that survey a similar target population
- Possible duplication of information and whether required information may be obtained from existing data sources, surveys or otherwise
- Potential value and quality of the data to be collected

- The potential impact on the target population
- Suitability of proposed methodology
- Impact and consideration of data protection issues.

Survey Calendar and Register

In order to demonstrate which student groups are being surveyed and when throughout the year, a survey calendar is available online and maintained by the Student Surveys Coordinator. It displays all core and approved surveys for the current academic year by surveyed cohort, ie year of study. To see at a glance which student groups are being surveyed and when, to accompany the calendar all core and approved surveys are listed online in a survey register.

The Survey Calendar and Register will be updated following each Student Survey Group meeting.

Data

On completion of internal surveys the data should be made available to load in to the Business Intelligence survey portal. The Business Intelligence Team will load the raw data into the portal. At this stage the survey respondents will be linked to their demographic characteristics as recorded in the student record system, SITS. Please see the guidance document for further information.

Reporting and Use of Data

By applying to the Student Surveys Group for survey approval, the survey administrator is agreeing to make the results of the survey available as appropriate.

- The results of all approved surveys will be reported on in an Annual Report to the Student Experience Advisory Board & the Education Quality Board.
- Results should be shared with QMUL staff and students, for example via Connect, QMPlus or Staff Student Liaison Committees.
- Actions and responses relating to the survey results should be fed into planning activities and made available to reporting back to students where appropriate.

Storage of Survey Data and Survey Tool

The data from each student survey will be uploaded to and stored within the QM Business Intelligence system, which will allow subsequent data analysis.

Guidance and Support

A separate guidance document is available to assist survey administrators with data protection, marketing, data gathering and ethics.

If survey administrators have questions about whether their survey needs approval or any other aspect of the survey policy or process, they are encouraged to contact the Student Surveys Coordinator.