

QUICK GUIDE TO SET REPORTS

Using your SET reports and 'closing the loop'

Student feedback is most valuable when both staff and students are engaged in the process, and see the evaluation and feedback processes as having an important role in improving the student experience and learning and teaching at the University.

SET results are important for a number of reasons, including:

- individual reflection on teaching;
- reflection on the quality of a course and its overall delivery;
- providing information to the University on the overall quality of courses and teaching;
- for individuals to use for promotions or continuation applications, or teaching awards.

*Student feedback through summative evaluation is **one form** of evaluation of teaching or of a course.* SET results should be to complement other forms of monitoring or feedback, such as formative evaluation, peer review, and end-of-course review.

Effective use of student feedback also means **closing the loop**. Feedback on student evaluations should be provided to both current and future students; including common issues raised by students in open-ended comments, and summaries of quantitative statistical data for the Likert-scale questions.

1. Interpreting SET quantitative results

The University uses the 'overall' course quality question to identify courses where an issue may be flagged. Courses with a <70% agree and strongly agree result on this question are 'red flagged'. 'Red flagging' is an indication that further review of the course or teaching is required.

The results of the other course and teaching Likert-scale questions are equally as important to understand where students might perceive that there is an issue. A high 'Generally disagree' rate is worth further investigation; a high neutral result can indicate student ambivalence about a particular aspect of the course.

2. Interpreting SET qualitative comments

Unstructured open-ended comments can be difficult to interpret, especially if a lot of feedback is received. Student cohorts in any particular class may bring different experiences, backgrounds, expertise, preferences and expectations to the classroom.

Some things to consider when reflecting on qualitative responses:

Relate the qualitative to the quantitative responses

Qualitative comments can be used to contextualise the positive or negative responses received in the quantitative data. The qualitative comments may provide you with in-depth information about specific areas and practical suggestions for change and improvement.

Look for patterns/themes

The open-ended questions in the SET surveys ask about the best aspects of the course or teaching, and about what could be improved.

It may be helpful to examine the range of comments received by identifying repeated patterns of comments, or themes identified by students.

Dealing with a range of responses

You may receive contradictory qualitative responses, such as extremely positive and extremely negative comments. This might indicate that different groups of students in your class have different expectations and learning needs. Reading the comments with this in mind could give you some insight into these groups, and how you could modify aspects of your course content or delivery to meet a broader range of learning needs.

Positive qualitative comments received through SET may also be used to strengthen your teaching portfolio for teaching awards. Comments made by students, in association with numerical data, illustrate the unique features of your teaching philosophy, course design, and highlight the effectiveness of your teaching practice.

3. Responding appropriately to student feedback

The purpose of considering SET feedback is neither for you to address all comments, or to attempt to make changes when impractical or inappropriate. You may find that some straightforward changes can significantly improve the teaching and learning experience (e.g. speed of delivery). However, if a student evaluation flags other issues with a course, this is an issue for discussion with the Course Director, and should be addressed in the end-of-course review.

If students have responded positively to your teaching, you may use it to demonstrate and enhance your strengths. If you receive criticisms of your teaching, the feedback should be considered together with contextual factors, such as programme structure, course design and students' expectations.

See the ['Closing the loop' feedback template](#) on the SET website resources page.

4. Closing the Loop on Students' Feedback

Why it is important?

Closing the loop on student feedback is a key component in the cycle of enhancement and evaluation of courses and teaching at the University of Auckland.

Closing the loop means communicating back to the students about the result of an evaluation, and what *might* be done, or what *has* been done to address that feedback.

Closing the loop on student feedback helps to persuade students that their feedback matters, and that it can contribute to an enhanced learning experience (Bennett & Nair, 2010; Harvey, 2003; Leckey & Neill, 2001). This will lead to an increase in engagement with evaluations, and a strengthened overall response rate (Powney & Hall, 1998).

| Strategy | Methods | Advantages | Disadvantages |
|---|---|---|---|
| In-class (by individual lecturer, by Course Director or by teaching team) | Verbal report to class | Effective at the course level | - Some students might not present -Uses class time |
| | Written report to class | | |
| | Included in the course outline for the next iteration of the course | Easy and easily accessed by students | Only benefits future students |
| Electronic communication | General email to all students in the class | - Easy and quick for courses delivered in various modes - Inexpensive and efficient - Convenient for practicum, distant, or off-campus students - Can be an effective communication tool for large classes | Not delivered in person |
| | Uploading on CANVAS | | |
| | On a course website, Facebook page or other social media platform | | |

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