



## The Student Exit Survey at the National College of Art and Design

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Relevant element of ESG: Information systems

### **Poster Abstract**

Student feedback should be an integral component of forward planning by animating the learning environment and holding it to account. In 2006 the NCAD Quality Assurance Office established an "Exit Survey" to final year undergraduate students as a means of developing systematic feedback processes in tandem with the QA process. The Exit Survey is intended to provide summative feedback from final year students on their student experience and build up a comparative picture of changes over the years.

The presentation will address:

- Why we do it
- How we do it - concentrating on the survey itself, its format, questions asked, how results are analysed and how results are reported.
- Who does the analysis go to?

And ask:

- What are the next steps?



## The Student Exit Survey at the National College of Art and Design

### 1. Background

- National College of Art and Design, Dublin, Ireland has @ 1000 full-time students following NFQ level 8 – 10 courses: BA, BDes, PG Dip, MA, MFA, M.Ed, M. Litt, PhD.
- Awarding body – National University of Ireland (NUI).
- Following QA procedures now established in Europe of self-assessment by units followed by peer review.
- Self-assessment must include feedback from key stakeholders – the students.
- To embed student feedback as part of the academic cycle, an annual Exit Survey to final year undergraduates was proposed and instituted in 2006.

### 2. Why do we do it?

- Provides an assessment of current practices
- Provides internal guidance and direction for forward planning
- Keeps us in touch with key players
- Provides an on-going review to tie in with QA process
- It is in keeping with HEA requirements and with other colleges/universities
- Provides a potential historical archive of information “ a snapshot in time”



- **Should be of benefit to future students**

### The survey is:

- An objective evaluation tool
- Scientifically reliable
- Measurable
- Benchmark-able
- Designed to be convenient, economical and within a set timeframe.

### 3. How do we do it?

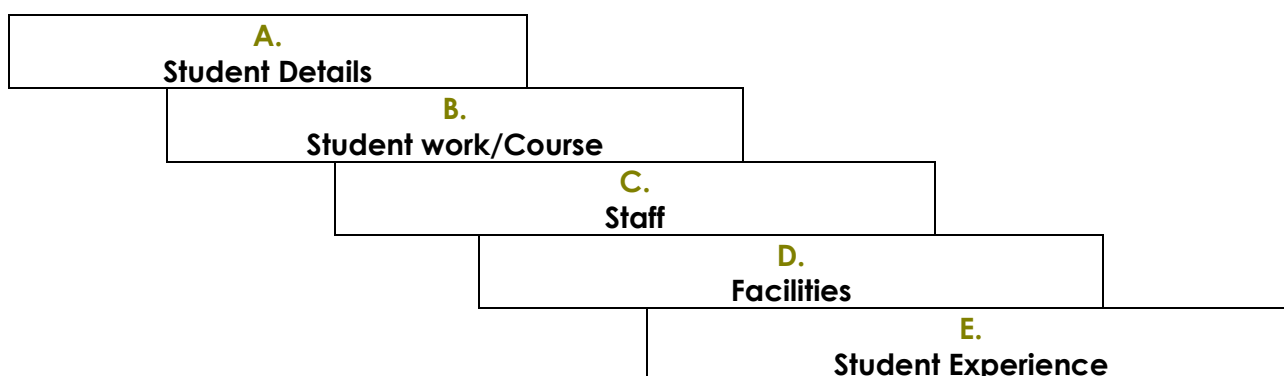
From 2006 – 2008 the survey was:

- Paper-based
- Completed by the individual student
- Required participation of Lecturers
- Response rates grew each year:
  - 2006 24%
  - 2007 49%
  - 2008 61%

2009:

- Trial of web-based survey circulated via student email
- Reminders sent via email
- @ 20 minutes to complete
- 57% response rate.

Questionnaire laid out into clearly defined sections:



<b>A.</b> <b>Student Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty/Department of Study</li> <li>• course of study</li> <li>• previous study</li> </ul>
<b>B.</b> <b>Student work/ Course</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial source of awareness</li> <li>• Course content</li> <li>• Balance and demands of course</li> <li>• Assessment procedures &amp; marking</li> <li>• Timetabling</li> <li>• Erasmus &amp; work placements</li> <li>• Field trips</li> </ul>
<b>C.</b> <b>Staff: <u>Lecturers/tutors &amp; technicians</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expertise on subject, encouragement to learn, encouragement to participate, facilitation of student learning, clarity of communication, adherence to course, advice, technical support</li> <li>• Briefing sessions, slide lectures &amp; demonstrations, recommended references, visiting lecturers.</li> </ul>

<p><b>D.</b> <b>Facilities</b></p>	<p><u>Facilities in the department:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work space, security of work, quality of workshops &amp; studios, access to same, standard &amp; maintenance of equipment, maintenance of buildings, general house-keeping, day-to-day administration.</li> </ul> <p><u>Student support facilities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Services, reception, library, language centre, canteen, doctor, counsellor, careers advisory, security, health &amp; safety.</li> <li>• <u>Other:</u></li> <li>• Likely use of college &amp; use of library on Saturday, Use of own e-mail address on NCAD website.</li> </ul>
<p><b>E.</b> <b>Student Experience</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personally rewarding</li> <li>• Personally challenging</li> <li>• Peer learning</li> <li>• Critical thinking</li> <li>• Conceptual ability</li> <li>• Technical skills</li> <li>• Research skills</li> <li>• Enjoyment</li> <li>• Good understanding of subject</li> <li>• Relevance to industry</li> <li>• Prospects after leaving college</li> <li>• Any additional comments</li> </ul>

**Questionnaire presented in three basic styles:**

**Pre-coded directed questions**

**Circle numbers: categories & Likert scaling**

<i>Very Good</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Very poor</i>	<i>Don't know</i>	<i>N/A</i>
5	4	3	2	1	0	9

**Open-ended directed questions**

**Write on lines provided**

What initially attracted you to this course/department?

\_\_\_\_\_

**Spontaneous additional comments**

**Write in the space provided**

If you have any additional comments to make, please do so here:

\_\_\_\_\_

Web-based example:

[SURVEY PREVIEW MODE] Student Exit Survey 2009 - Mozilla Firefox

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=yUhhmmYB61EE2MFR49M57Hb28KUCPKC1dh161a81Du2qTgsUz28UhlFdhcNFPK0QDAZG5xg3zN0035%2bPwQY0rp05%2fGRJ1%3d

Exit this survey

### Student Exit Survey 2009

#### 10. Student Experience

100%

28. To what extent do you agree with each of the following:

	Disagree a lot	Disagree a little	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree a little	Agree a lot	N/A
The course is personally rewarding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The course is personally challenging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The course has enhanced my conceptual ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The course has enhanced my technical skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The course has improved my research skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The course has given me a good understanding of the subject	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have learnt what the course description stated I would learn	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

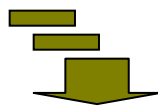
29. And finally, if you have any additional comments to make on your overall NCAD experience, please do so here:

Prev Submit

Done

### Analysis:

All quantitative information statistically analysed



Total numbers & percentages  
Mean scores  
Crosstabs  
Tables & charts

### Final report divided into three sections:

#### 1. Management Summary

For ease of access to key findings

#### 2. Detailed written report

Complete write-up of all findings for the year

#### 3. Complete tabular report

This provides mean scores across years

#### 4. Who does the analysis go to?

Full findings distributed to Senior Management

Pertinent findings distributed to Heads of Faculty



Filtered to Heads of Department

Summary report forwarded to Student Union and posted on NCAD intranet

#### 5. Next Steps

- Evaluation is inherent to the growth and development of NCAD and all academic institutions.
- Is the full potential of this process being exploited?
- Where actions are taken in response to student feedback, are they being captured?
- Acknowledging concerns of students is critical so we must enhance and systemise our feedback to students on actions taken as a result of their participation.
- What structures could be put in place to enable transparency?
- How can we explicitly capture not only the issues, *but also* the actions and the outcomes?

