Module Evaluation Process Review Actions – Draft Policy

The review of City’s module evaluation process and operation has been based on a detailed consultation undertaken with colleagues in Schools, LEaD and Student and Academic Services, and feedback from staff and students. The Module Evaluation Process Review Report and Action Plan were endorsed by Educational Quality Committee, ExCo and Senate in June/July 2018.

A Module Evaluation Policy has been drafted in order to clarify the primary purpose of the process and the use of the data.

Educational Quality Committee is invited to comment on the draft policy ahead of wider consultation with stakeholders.

Recommended actions

Educational Quality Committee is asked to:

- consider the draft policy
- note the proposed next steps
Module Evaluation Process Review Actions – Draft Policy

The review of City’s module evaluation process and operation has been based on a detailed consultation undertaken with colleagues in Schools, LEaD and Student and Academic Services, and feedback from staff and students. The review process evaluated the effectiveness of current practice to identify what is working well, and the challenges and opportunities for enhancement to ensure that module evaluation meets City’s ongoing requirements and align with current priorities and external developments. The Module Evaluation Process Review Report and Action Plan were endorsed by Educational Quality Committee, ExCo and Senate in June/July 2018.

A Module Evaluation Policy has been drafted in order to clarify the primary purpose of the process and the use of the data (Recommendation 1 of the Action Plan). The attached Policy has been informed by the process review and subsequent discussions with the ADE Forum in June 2018.

Educational Quality Committee is invited to comment on the draft policy ahead of wider consultation with stakeholders. The stakeholder groups will include Schools, the SU, Human Resources and Information Compliance. Further sector research will be undertaken to ensure that the policy reflects best practice.

Next steps

Discussions with the ADE Forum indicate that all module evaluations should be undertaken using the same questionnaire format. Further work will be undertaken with stakeholders to refine the format where relevant, and to determine the maximum number of questionnaires a student should be asked to complete per module.

Guidance notes will be developed to support sharing of good practice as identified within the process review.

Work is being undertaken to prepare for potential migration to online surveys. A report will be provided to Educational Quality Committee with further details at a future meeting.

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1 Module Evaluation Process Review and Action Plan
Draft Module Evaluation Policy

Scope

This policy outlines City, University of London’s approach to the evaluation of undergraduate and taught postgraduate modules.

The policy should be read in conjunction with the Student Feedback Policy and the Guidance Notes for Discussions with Academic Staff on Student Module Evaluation.

Principles and Purpose

City, University of London is committed to continual enhancement of the student experience and the development of its programmes. Students are partners in their learning and their opinions are highly valued. Module evaluation is one of the review mechanisms used at City to gather feedback directly from students to inform programme development and enhancement of their taught student experience.

The module evaluation process enables a consistent approach to the gathering of quantitative and qualitative student satisfaction data at module level, to support City’s Vision and Strategy aims and strategic priorities. It provides an indicator of student satisfaction and enables Schools to take appropriate actions.

Module evaluation questions provide insights that can be used to inform understanding of, and enhance the quality of learning, teaching and assessment. The data is used alongside other sources of information such as external examiner reports and institution-level surveys.

Module evaluation also supports the staff development and review process.

This policy sets out:

- the baseline requirements for evaluation of modules and lecturers
- roles and responsibilities
- how data is stored, shared (with students and for internal use), and retained
- reporting requirements
- action planning
- expectations for feedback to students following module evaluation
- how data is used to inform staff development and appraisal
- equality and diversity considerations

Module Evaluation Requirements

All modules delivered in each academic year must be evaluated using the University’s module evaluation system. This includes dissertation and project modules, placement modules and those designed to support individual supervision. Modules with small cohorts are to be evaluated to ensure that all students have an opportunity to provide feedback.

The module evaluation question set is approved by Senate and ExCo to ensure a consistent approach to evaluation, and to enable comparisons to be made across modules and years.

Students are asked to provide feedback on staff teaching on each module. The scope of staff to be evaluated includes visiting lecturers, supervisors, tutors, teaching assistants and research students who teach. A proportional approach will be taken to the evaluation of modules taught by more than one person to provide appropriate oversight of the student experience on the module without over-
surveying the students. Typically, an individual would need to deliver 1/3 of the module content to be eligible for evaluation.

The timing of distribution of specific surveys within each evaluation period is at the discretion of the School to accommodate specific teaching patterns. Survey timings must however allow them to be completed and processed in time for the data to be included in the regular Board of Studies and Senate reports.

Roles and responsibilities

Student and Academic Services administer the central aspects of the operational and reporting processes. Module Evaluation Process and Guidance Notes and an annual schedule are produced to support the planning and operation of the activity for each academic year. A collaborative approach is taken with Schools to manage the data requirements and annual activity scheduling.

Schools will confirm the survey requirements for each term, in line with the University policy and the guidance. Student and Academic Services produces the surveys for distribution by the School.

Students will be informed about their role and engagement with module evaluation process to support module development, and of their responsibilities to provide constructive feedback (guidance to be developed).

Schools return the completed surveys to Student and Academic Services for processing and the collation and initial dissemination of results.

Boards of Studies are responsible for the oversight of module evaluation within Schools. Student and Academic Services provide oversight reports to Senate as outlined in this policy.

Data

The data gathered through the module evaluation process will be managed in line with legislative requirements and as outlined in the Process for Consideration and Management of Data arising from Module Evaluation in Schools. Results data is provided in the following formats:

- Individual reports detailing the specific results for each survey and the collated free text comments.
- Summary spreadsheets detailing the results for each survey undertaken within a School which sets out the scores for teaching, assessment and overall satisfaction.

Further consultation will be undertaken to define the parameters for surveying of multiple lecturers to ensure academic staff can gather sufficient data to support staff development, appraisal and for the Standard Academic CV and the Annual Monitoring of Programmes (APE) process. This will take into account the rationale, student views, and consider the time required for surveys to be completed.

A free text comments box could be provided on the evaluation form for students to provide feedback on other members of staff.

Further guidance will be provided on recommended timings

Results data and the individual reports are held electronically on dedicated shared drives. Access to these shared drives is limited to key individuals associated with the administration and oversight of the process and data.⁶

Results data is used to produce monitoring reports and action plans. Any inappropriate comments will be redacted by the School before the relevant individual report is shared with the member of staff. Any data required to support HR processes will be provided by the individual and School concerned, not by Student and Academic Services.

Schools are encouraged to use the survey results to support innovation and enhancement activities.

Schools will retain records of module evaluation results and actions to inform the respective Annual Programme Evaluation and Periodic Review submissions.

**Reporting**

Results are collated by Student and Academic Services 3 times per year and shared with Schools.

The summary spreadsheets of collated data from the quantitative questions for each School are provided to Programme Committees, Boards of Studies and Learning and Teaching Committees for discussion.

Good practice noted from module evaluations should be shared at Learning and Teaching Committees and disseminated as appropriate. Learning and Teaching Committees should also note feedback on what is working well, and areas for improvement, to inform future practice and programme development.

Termly reports are submitted to Senate to provide oversight of results.⁷

Action plans to address modules with low scores are provided to ExCo for final sign-off, following approval by the Dean of School, in order to provide assurance that appropriate measures are in place to address any issues arising from the evaluations.

The results from module evaluation, and the respective actions taken, are used in the broader framework for programme evaluation and review, to inform the reflective reports and action plans for:

- Annual Programme Evaluation
- Periodic Review

It is expected that collated evaluation results will also be shared with students as soon as possible after the results at:

- Staff-Student Liaison Committees
- Student Experience Committees

**Action planning**

Feedback received from a range of sources is used to inform action planning and change, including students, staff, external examiners, Periodic Review and the requirements of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies. Student comments gathered through module evaluation are considered alongside these other sources of information on teaching, assessment and student services, and not

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⁶ Further guidance to be provided

⁷ Reporting formats will be reviewed in liaison with Senate and Schools
in isolation. Where modules have received low scores however, the reasons for this must be explored as detailed below.

- **Modules scoring 3.5 or less for teaching, assessment or overall satisfaction**

Where a module has received a score of 3.5 or less in the aggregated responses for teaching, assessment or overall satisfaction, the School is required to produce an action plan to articulate the measures being taken to investigate the reason(s) for the low score and the actions being taken. Schools must ensure that there is a clear strategy for improving each result prior to the next delivery of the module. The action plan responses must be sufficiently detailed and appropriate for wider dissemination (i.e. to include in Annual Programme Evaluations and sharing with students, Staff-Student Liaison Committees and other audiences as appropriate). The action plans are anonymised and should focus on the issue rather than an individual member of staff.

**Feedback to Students following Module Evaluation**

It is important to ensure that students have confidence that appropriate action is taken in response to their feedback. Actions planned or already taken in response to the current or past years’ results will be shared with current students and future cohorts by departments and programme teams. Individual survey results (excluding free text comments) and collated results may be shared with students.

Appropriate changes will be made as soon as possible and ahead of the next delivery of the module, subject to the usual City approval processes and in line with legal and regulatory considerations. Changes may not always be appropriate; should this be the case the reasons for this will be explained.

**Standard Academic CV, Performance Development and Staff Appraisal**

Module evaluation is one of a range of processes that supports the development and management of academic staff performance. The nature of module evaluation at City means that results relating to individual modules are based on student feedback on the module as a whole. This may include comments relating to other members of staff where the module has been delivered jointly and/or general resourcing issues. In using module evaluation results to support appraisal, performance development and other staff-related processes, these factors will be acknowledged and the data used should therefore focus on teaching scores and individual contribution.

Guidance for Heads of Departments is available to support constructive discussions with staff relating to module evaluation. A developmental approach should be taken to support staff where appropriate and to promote innovation and enhancement. Training and development, coaching and/or mentoring will be made available to support staff where requirements have been identified.

Module evaluation scores form part of the suite of academic performance metrics and indicators of academic esteem which support applications for promotion or progression. They may also be used by academic staff to contribute to their applications for teaching awards.

**Equality and Diversity Statement**

City, University of London is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all its activities, processes, and culture, under its Public Sector Equality Duties and the Equality Act 2010. This includes promoting equality and diversity for all, irrespective of any protected characteristic.

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working pattern, family circumstance, socio-economic background, political belief or other irrelevant
distinction.

Where relevant to this policy, decision-making panels will ensure a reasonable gender balance and
will actively consider representation of other protected groups.

**Unconscious bias**

Unconscious bias may affect how students complete module evaluation, and how results are
interpreted by staff. All members of the University community should be respected and valued for
their contributions, and the interpretation of module evaluation results should ensure that these values
are observed at all times (*signpost to further guidance on unconscious bias and how students will be
briefed on providing constructive feedback*).

**Accessibility**

All students should have the opportunity to provide module evaluation feedback. The University is
working towards improving the accessibility of questionnaires and alternative formats for students with
specific requirements.