



## Teaching and Module Evaluation Policy (Proposed)

<b>Policy Title</b>	Student Evaluation of Teaching Policy
<b>Approving authority</b>	Senate
<b>Field of application</b>	Academic teaching staff members
<b>Compliance to</b>	
<b>New or revised policy</b>	Revised policy
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<b>Stakeholders Consulted (in progress)</b>	Curriculum Committee; Learner Support Committee Faculty Management Committee; Faculty Board
<b>Policy Management (designation and name)</b>	DVC :Academic and Research
<b>Cross-reference</b>	Disciplinary Code Policy Grievance Procedures Policy VUT Ethical Guiding principles
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<b>Scrutinised by a legal person</b>	YES/ NO

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## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Vaal University of Technology (VUT) regards teaching that leads to student success as one of the core functions of the academic staff. As a result, academic staff are provided with support to ensure that the teaching and learning is efficient and effective in promoting student success. This is done to ensure that the practice of teaching and learning is quality assured and prioritised as crucial for successful and authentic learning. As a result, VUT has set the use of student evaluation of teaching and learning to ensure that the student experience is continually enhanced and improved.

### 1.1 PREAMBLE

This policy serves to enable the attainment of VUT vision to lead in innovative knowledge and quality technology education by encouraging research-informed strategies that promote innovative and blended *teaching and learning* experiences which will develop all students and staff to reach their optimum potential. Furthermore, the policy is in line with the Council on Higher Education (CHE), Quality Enhancement project (QEP) focus areas of enhancing academics as teachers and enhancing the learning environment to ensure improved quality of students' experiences. The Centre for Academic Development (CAD) has benchmarked academic development practices in relation to survey instruments used with Curtin University. The instrument has been statistically tested and accepted as reliable and valid. The survey instrument has been adopted and used by twenty-one (21) other universities in Australia and will be adapted within VUT context.

The policy aims to adopt cutting edge technology and teaching methods that will ensure the enhancement of a scholarly environment that is conducive to learning and promote the development of top quality employable and entrepreneurial graduates who will make an impact in society. VUT is involved in a drive with the intention to have all stakeholders enabled to conduct the teaching and module evaluation surveys online by the end of 2016.

The policy adopts the philosophy that defines the role of the teacher being to “make learning possible”. Thus, it focuses on learning and the application of learning - which means that the practice of teaching must be learner-centred, flexible and engender a meaningful approach to designing learning and assessment strategies. Awareness that individual learners have the capacity to reflect on real-life problems, apply knowledge and skills, work with others and find solutions. This is accepted as an important outcome of learning. It encourages learner responsibility and activity rather than teacher control and content delivery.

Peer evaluation of teaching is a mechanism whereby peers (academic colleagues) can give and receive feedback on teaching practice and its effectiveness in promoting student learning. Peer evaluation of teaching will be used in conjunction with student evaluation of teaching and will serve as a developmental tool and will serve to ensure individual development plans for individual lecturers.

## 1.2 ABBREVIATIONS

<b>CAD</b>	Centre for Academic Development
<b>CHE</b>	Council for Higher Education
<b>HOD</b>	Head of department
<b>VUT</b>	Vaal University of Technology

## 2. PURPOSE

To provide a framework in which the VUT evaluates teaching and learning, through its principal system of student feedback. These systems include:  
Students’ evaluation of teaching and module evaluation.

## 3. PRINCIPLES

VUT is committed to the monitoring and improvement of the quality of teaching and learning through systematic evaluation of teaching and learning.

All Stakeholders involved in the improvement of quality of teaching and learning are custodians of quality assurance. The survey instrument is modelled on outcomes based education and focusses on student perceptions about what the students perceive to help or hinder their achievement of the

learning outcomes. This survey employs a student focussed approach as opposed to the promotion or privileging of a particular teaching practice. The student evaluation system ensures that the student learning experience is provided within a learner and learning-centred, rich-technology enhanced environment.

The following principles will therefore guide the implementation of this policy:

- 3.1 Student evaluation of teaching and learning is compulsory for all modules and teaching staff as a means of monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.
- 3.2 Lecturers are responsible for ensuring they obtain student feedback on their teaching in at least one module per semester.
- 3.3 The quality of teaching and learning at VUT will be evaluated using multiple sources of data.
- 3.4 Feedback obtained through evaluation processes will be used to identify quality and excellence in teaching and learning and areas in need of improvement.
- 3.5 Students and staff will be responsible for engaging in evaluation processes in a constructive and professional manner.
- 3.6 Students will be informed how student feedback has been used to maintain or improve the quality of their learning experiences.
- 3.7 All student feedback collected will be anonymous. This will be assured by only evaluating modules where there are more than five students enrolled.

#### 4 RULES AND PROCEDURES

The following rules and procedures will apply in the implementation of the policy:

- 4.1 Teaching and learning evaluation data will be used to:
  - 4.1.1 Improve teaching and learning experiences for students and staff.
  - 4.1.2 Assist teaching staff to engage in a scholarly review of their teaching by reflecting on module design, delivery, student engagement, and assessment.
  - 4.1.3 Provide evidence of quality and excellence in teaching and learning.
  - 4.1.4 Provide data to benchmark teaching and learning quality

within and beyond VUT.

- 4.1.5 Provide evidence for teaching staff to use as indicators of teaching performance when discussing their performance with the head of department (HOD).
- 4.1.6 Provide evidence for academic staff promotion, and in teaching excellence awards.
- 4.1.7 The survey reports will be separated into a module report and a teaching report.
- 4.1.8 The module report will be released to the Module/ Course coordinator.
- 4.1.9 The teaching report will be strictly confidential to the individual who has requested the survey.
- 4.1.10 It is intended to have all the surveys conducted in an online automated system. The optimisation of survey response rates once surveys are online will be achieved through the shared commitment of staff. This requires that:
  - 4.1.10.1 Teaching staff shall ensure that they make arrangements in conjunction with CAD to conduct surveys for their classes.
  - 4.1.10.2 Teaching staff to remind students to fill in student surveys for quality improvement and teaching development purposes in the online platform when the automation process is fully functional.
  - 4.1.10.3 Heads of Department to engage with teaching staff to work with students to increase response rates when the automation process is fully functional.
  - 4.1.10.4 CAD to engage with Departments to increase student response rates and support staff with timely advice on various ways to increase response rates.
  - 4.1.10.5 CAD will provide a report to all staff on departmental, faculty and institutional response rates.
- 4.1.11 Students will be regularly informed on the outcomes of their feedback.
- 4.1.12 Module Reports will be made available to the module coordinator, the

HOD and the Executive Dean of the Faculty. The module coordinator is responsible for sharing the results with the Program coordinator and teaching team of the particular module.

4.1.13 The teaching report will be made available to the individual Lecturer who has requested the survey. It is the responsibility of the individual Lecturer to discuss the outcomes of the evaluation of the report with the HoD in order for the HoD to provide developmental support for the individual Lecturer where necessary.

4.1.14 The teaching report is a required source of evidence of teaching quality in conjunction with other sources of information in performance review processes and as formal recognition of teaching excellence.

4.2 The use of survey reports will be governed by the following rules and guidelines:

4.2.1 Professionally qualified staff in CAD will provide guidelines in the interpretation of data. For all reports all stakeholders will show due care for colleagues in the spirit of VUT ethical guiding principles. Misuse of data reports will be dealt with in terms of the VUT's disciplinary code policy and grievance procedure policy.

4.2.2 Course/Module coordinators must read the qualitative comments and use the data to reflect on both qualitative and quantitative feedback. They should then share the qualitative comments which are general in nature (that is, in which staff are not identifiable) with all the teaching staff for the Module.

4.2.3 It is appropriate to pass on the comments (both positive and negative) to the identifiable staff member only. All comments in which a staff member is named are confidential to the staff member and to those charged with the coordination and management of the unit.

4.2.4 HOD and Course Coordinators are expected to use Module Reports to ensure the overall improvement of course quality as part of the Course Review process.

4.2.5 The CAD, institutional research unit and Senior Executives may use the aggregated data to determine and predict overall and to make recommendations for the improvement of teaching and learning.

- 4.2.6 VUT uses a number of surveys to gather data about the student experience. The data are used routinely as part of VUT's ongoing quality assurance process and are also used to support scholarship in teaching. Completion of a *survey* or participation in an evaluation process is taken as consent by students and staff to the use of the data provided for these processes.
- 4.2.7 Before conducting research that includes data collected from student evaluation surveys, staff must receive approval from the Research and Innovation Ethics Committee. Approval should be sought prior to the commencement of the evaluation where the results are to be used as part of a research degree or where there is an intention to publish or present the results at a public forum.
- 4.2.8 Collegial trust and respect will be observed throughout this process and care should be observed so that human dignity of individuals is maintained or upheld at all times.
- 4.2.9 Reporting on teaching evaluation will be strictly confidential and reports will be sent to and discussed with the individual lecturer concerned. The report may be shared with the concerned HOD (and where necessary the Executive Dean of Faculty) for purposes of the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning.
- 4.2.10 A report outlining an analysis of trends emerging from evaluations may be forwarded to the Quality Promotion Unit of a particular programme/department/ site of delivery's quality profile; also an evaluation report could be possibly used as evidence when a cyclical review occurs.

## 5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The departments and faculties will collaborate on the teaching evaluation processes by adhering to the following procedures.

### 5.1 Roles of CAD

The CAD will ensure that:



- 5.1.1 Valid and reliable survey instrument is developed or adopted so as to have a scholarly approach to the implementation of quality improvement in teaching and learning.
- 5.1.2 Evaluation data is collected and analysed.
- 5.1.3 Reports on the survey are provided to the individual Lecturer within a reasonable time after the evaluation. Departmental reports are provided to the HODs each semester and faculty reports are provided to the deans biannually.

## 5.2 Roles of Department heads

The Department heads will ensure that:

- 5.2.1 Lecturers adhere to policy requirements for improvement of quality of teaching and learning.
- 5.2.2 Lecturers are provided the support required to improve the quality of teaching and learning and as a result enhance the students' experience in the university.
- 5.2.3 Facilitate in the creation of a conducive learning environment for students within their departments.

## 5.3 Roles of Individual Lecturers

The Lecturers will ensure that they:

- 5.3.1 Liaise with evaluator in CAD to conduct the evaluation at an appropriate time.
- 5.3.2 Encourage students in their class to participate in the evaluation.
- 5.3.3 Take the necessary actions, in consultation with the HOD, to improve the quality of teaching and learning in conjunction with the staff development unit or human resources unit.
- 5.3.4 Negotiate with the HOD the kind of support required in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

## Appendix 1

### TEACHING EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

#### Teaching Survey

The following nine (9) questions will be used for the teaching survey.

1. **The lecturer prepares well for the learning activities.**  
(The lecturer has material prepared for class and has structured activities in a way that helps promote student learning)
2. **The lecturer explains concepts clearly.**  
(The lecturer is easy to understand in class (or online/written formats)).
3. **The Lecturer shows knowledge of her subject.**  
(The lecturer seem to have a good understanding and knowledge of the subject).
4. **The lecturer is enthusiastic in teaching this subject.**  
(The lecturer makes the subject interesting and conveys enthusiasm for the subject)
5. **The lecturer used varied teaching methods to accommodate students' diversity.**  
(Overall the lecturer uses different ways of teaching styles in order to accommodate different learning styles amongst students).
6. **The Lecturer uses examples to clarify theory.**  
(The lecturer is able to connect content with clear examples that helps students to understand concepts)
7. **The lecturer assisted students by demonstrating how work should be approached.**  
(The lecturer is able to illustrate approaches to understanding content that effectively promote student learning)

#### Open Ended Questions

8. Please comment on the lecturer's teaching strengths
9. Please comment on how you think the lecturer may improve teaching and learning for this subject.

## Appendix 2

### MODULE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. **The learning outcomes of this module were clearly communicated.**  
(The outcomes expected in this module are explicit)
2. **The module activities were well organised.**  
(The learning activities in this module are aligned in a manner that helped me to clearly achieve the module outcomes)
3. **The module integrated theory and practice.**  
(The module activities are designed in a manner that helps me to relate theory to practice)
4. **The learning materials used in this module facilitated my learning.**  
(Learning materials for this module are helpful in my understanding of content)
5. **The Lecturer explained how learning tasks would be assessed.**  
(Assessment criteria was clearly communicated before assessment tasks were conducted).
6. **Feedback on assessment indicated what was expected of students.**  
(Assessment feedback was clearly related to assessment criteria and made it clear why particular marks were awarded)
7. **Assessment tasks helped students to understand content.**  
(Assessment activities promoted student learning)
8. **Different methods of assessment were used.**  
(Assessment activities included different ways of assessing students' learning)