

Interpreting the Summary Report

General interpretation

The following provides guidance for initial interpretation of student feedback obtained via the evaluation. For further help with feedback consult with academics in CEDIR or your Faculty.

One way of analysing the results is to compare the total percentage of respondents agreeing with the statement (SA+A+MA) with the total number of respondents disagreeing with the statement (SD+D+MD).

The written comments provided by students are usually very valuable, as it is in these responses that students identify issues of importance to them. Read the students' comments fully, so as not to miss valuable information. There may be only a few adverse comments when overall they are positive, however negative responses may indicate an opportunity to make changes.

It is important to remember that the results of the evaluation provide just one set of perceptions, and need to be compared with and supported by information obtained by other methods from other sources such as student focus groups, periodic brief surveys and peer review.

Specific interpretations

University means¹ vary and they are calculated on the first 8 questions only. Note that the composition of the class undertaking the evaluation may have an impact on the result: undergraduate classes generally rate lower than postgraduate; first year classes generally rate lower than later years. Other factors that may effect ratings include: the discipline or area of study; the type of teaching evaluated; and the size and location of class evaluated.

For the questions on stimulating thinking (Q5) and enthusiasm (Q8) UOW means are slightly lower than for other questions in the same evaluation.

It is important to notice any inappropriate responses. Students may answer questions 9, 10 and 11, for example when in fact the class is larger than 30. They may also respond to question 12 and 13 when you are not actually the teacher marking their assignment.

It is also important to notice the number of incomplete responses and the effect that may have on overall scores.

The reporting scale

In order to summarise student responses efficiently, a numeric value is assigned to each response category as follows SA (6), A (5), MA (4), MD (3), D (2) and SD (1). The bar chart for each item shows the percentage of students in a particular evaluation who provided each rating.

The mean

A mean² is provided for each item, calculated using the scale values indicated above. In this context, the mean is provided as a summary indication of the rating provided by this particular group of students on each item evaluated. Because of the nature of the scale used, and other factors, the mean rating should not be viewed as a precise measure.

1. University means are available under Outcomes on the Teacher and Subject Evaluation web page on the UOW website <http://www.uow.edu.au/cedir/asd/tsse/index.html> (as at 03/09/2008)

2. $\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$