Mid-Course Feedback Guidance

Purpose of Guidance

Guidance for staff on mid-course feedback.

Scope: Guidance is not Mandatory

All staff who implement mid-course feedback.

Contact Officer	Nichola Kett	Academic Policy Manager	nichola.kett@ed.ac.uk

Document control

Dates	Approved: 27.08.19	Starts: 27.08.19	Equality impact assessment: See Student Voice Policy EqIA	Amendments: 19.06.20	Next Review: 2022/23

Approving authority	Senate Quality Assurance Committee as owners of the Student Voice Policy
Consultation undertaken	Extensive consultation was undertaken across the University as part of an evaluation exercise in 18/19. The results have informed the development of this guidance which was requested by Learning and Teaching Committee in May 2019.
Section responsible for guidance maintenance & review	Academic Services
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	[Student Voice Policy](#)
UK Quality Code	Quality Core Practice: *The provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience.* Quality Common Practice: *The provider engages students individually and collectively in the development, assurance and enhancement of the quality of their educational experience.*
Guidance superseded by this guidance	
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 651 4490.
Keywords	Mid-course feedback, student feedback, student voice

Mid-Course Feedback Guidance

What is mid-course feedback?

Mid-course feedback is feedback provided by students and responded to by staff while a course is running.

It is crucial for:

- Promoting constructive dialogue between staff and students at an early stage;
- Allowing staff to identify and respond to student concerns about a course in a timely way (ideally in a way that resolves the matter for the current cohort);
- Providing staff with an opportunity to explain to students why the course is structured in the way it is, and providing a further opportunity to outline changes that have evolved in response to feedback from previous cohorts[1].

Importantly, existing students on the course can benefit from any actions that may be taken, which helps to reinforce to students the value of giving feedback.

When should mid-course feedback be used?

From 2020/21 mid-course feedback should be used for all undergraduate and postgraduate taught courses that run for 10 weeks or more.

Mid-course feedback is appropriate in most course situations and can be adapted to suit the specific context. It is expected, therefore, that mid-course feedback will be used broadly.

However, there are some situations where it may be more challenging or less relevant to operate. For example, for short courses (of less than 10 weeks) it may not be possible to gather and respond to feedback meaningfully in such a short timeframe. For research-based courses (such as dissertations), courses that are more 'student-led' (e.g. SLICCs), or situations where there is a high degree of individual interaction with students and an opportunity for ongoing dialogue, it may be less relevant to carry out separate mid-course feedback.

Additionally, in such situations it is expected that greater reliance will be placed on student voice mechanisms such as Student-Staff Liaison Committees and course enhancement questionnaires (CEQs), which collectively provide all students with the opportunity to provide feedback on their courses.

How to gather mid-course feedback

Schools determine how mid-course feedback is carried out. There is flexibility for Schools to collect and respond to mid-course feedback in a way which works best and encourages constructive dialogue. Schools may wish to discuss options or co-design approaches with students. If Schools think that a particular approach to gathering mid-course feedback might raise equality and diversity issues then they should take steps to mitigate the risks.

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[1] It is expected that feedback (and responses to feedback) from previous cohorts will be made available to students at the start of the course, normally via the course LEARN homepage.

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Common ways to gather mid-course feedback are:

- Feedback postcards or forms
- Top Hat (electronic voting system)[2]
- Open fora
- Learn

Mid-course feedback is not a formal data collection exercise, it is about promoting constructive dialogue between staff and students. Staff have reported that mid-course feedback works best in terms of student engagement when it is carried out as a timetabled activity. Additionally, staff and students have expressed concerns about survey fatigue, therefore, it is advised that mid-course feedback is not collected through surveys.

Where on campus or online courses have small cohorts with ongoing dialogue between staff and students mid-course feedback needn't be viewed as a separate exercise and can be carried out as part of existing activities.

Mid-course feedback only needs to be gathered once per course. So, for a course running over one semester, the feedback is likely to be gathered in the middle of the semester. However, for a course running over 2 semesters, it is likely to be gathered at the end of semester 1.

Rather than being a formal survey method (like CEQs), mid-course feedback is an opportunity to engage in constructive dialogue with students. Hence, response rates are not a key consideration. If student engagement with mid-course feedback is low, this needs to be taken into account in any action taken in response to the feedback.

Further Information and Examples

Advice and resources (including examples) to help staff collect mid-course feedback from students can be found on the Institute for Academic Development's website at: https://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development/learning-teaching/staff/teaching-feedback/mid-course

Background information and examples for students can be found on the Student Voice webpage at: https://www.ed.ac.uk/students/academic-life/student-voice/enhancing-courses/mid-course-feedback

Closing the student feedback loop

> *"The unit responsible for gathering feedback from students must communicate actions taken in response on a timescale appropriate to student needs."*
>
> Student Voice Policy edin.ac/2MXbzKd

It is very important that students receive a response to their feedback. With mid-course feedback, it is expected that responses are made usually within one or two sessions[3] of the

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[2] https://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/learning-technology/electronic-voting-system/staff
[3] Depending on the frequency of sessions.

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feedback being gathered to be of value to students. Where it is not possible to make a change in response to feedback this should be communicated to students along with the reason(s).

Common ways for staff to feedback to students on their mid-course feedback are:

- At a subsequent timetabled session
- Email
- Learn

A good practice resource for staff on closing the loop on student feedback can be found on the Academic Services webpage at: https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/closing-feedback-loop

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