

SYTEMATIC IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY IN RESPONSE TO UNIT EVALUATION DATA

This strategy involves the Centre for Higher Education Quality (CHEQ) and the Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching (CALT) working collaboratively with faculties across Monash to achieve improvements in student performance and satisfaction levels. The strategy is based on:

- working from data sources,
- targeting poorly performing units as a priority,
- establishing response teams consisting of CHEQ, CALT and faculty staff,
- linking staff and student development support,
- focusing initially on aspects which are perceived as being relatively easy to improve,
- providing concentrated support over a short term to achieve high impact,
- documenting and demonstrating improvement as a consequence of the actions taken.

<p>PLAN</p>	<p>Core planning team Dr Sid Nair Quality Advisor Research and Evaluation CHEQ, Dr Lorraine Bennett Deputy Director CALT Dr Christine Spratt Senior Lecturer CALT</p> <p>Identify for each faculty the bottom 25% poorest performing units, on the satisfaction item, using the most recent unit evaluation data. Also identify other units which have items with scores 10% or more below the Faculty mean.</p> <p>Focus on units of large class size and with good response rates. Analyse these units further with regard to other unit evaluation items and open ended questions.</p> <p>Identify any sequential or related poor performing units e.g. units in same course or year level.</p> <p>Select priority units and issues for attention.</p>	<p>Meet with ADT and other relevant staff from target faculty.</p> <p>Provide faculties with report containing: Excel table of Hot Spots, i.e. units within the bottom 25% and units which have any other items 10% or more below the Faculty mean.</p> <p>Confirm class size of selected units.</p> <p>Cross reference with MEQ 2003 & 2005 data and any other source material that faculties have collated.</p> <p>Agree on units to target and apparent presenting issues.</p>	<p>Establish faculty response team by identifying appropriate CHEQ and CALT learning and teaching support staff to work with faculty staff.</p> <p>Faculty to nominate appropriate faculty staff to join team eg. ADTs, unit or course coordinators, Director and/or staff of faculty education unit, quality manager.</p> <p>Response team to develop Action Plan - implementation to span 6 weeks maximum.</p> <p>Team consults with staff and if necessary students to better understand reasons for problems and type of support required, including classroom observation if necessary.</p>	<p>Communication/Documentation strategies:</p> <p>Process to be endorsed by SDVC, and PVC(Q) and relevant University committees informed.</p>
<p>ACT</p>	<p>Response team implements planned strategies.</p>	<p>Staff support might include:</p> <p>A review of assessment used in the unit. This may lead to assistance with assignment design, aligning assessment with unit objectives, reconsideration of the timing and number of assessed works, the place of examinations, the role, frequency and quality of assessment feedback.</p> <p>A review of learning materials used in the unit. This may lead to the preparation of materials which clarify for students the expected learning outcomes, reflect a better understanding of student learning styles and are more pedagogically sound.</p>	<p>Student support might include:</p> <p>Workshops which assist students with learning strategies such as note taking and revision, assignment and examination preparation.</p> <p>Online support which refers students to learning modules on a range of topics such as writing for a specific discipline, critical reading and source referencing.</p> <p>Raising student awareness related to feedback including types of feedback, how to obtain and listen for feedback, learning from fellow colleagues, listening in tutorials, tuning in to online feedback through MUSO sites.</p>	<p>Communication/Documentation strategies:</p> <p>Ensuring that relevant Curriculum and Education committees within faculties are aware of the response team's activities and receive regular reports.</p> <p>Document progress on Action Plan including capturing reflections of response team, faculty staff and possibly focus group of students, involved. Ensure that details of modifications are reported for future reference.</p> <p>Consider establishing an online database of response team's activities, progress and resources to facilitate sharing of information and ideas.</p>

MONITOR	<p>Core planning team to oversee, monitor and support the faculty-based response teams.</p> <p>Each response team to view the Action Plan as a dynamic document and progressively report on what worked and what needs to be added to the Plan.</p>	<p>As part of the ongoing monitoring of the Action Plan response team to gather data on how useful staff and students found the support. This might be through consultation with staff and focus groups with current students.</p>	<p>Core planning team to liaise with Faculty leadership and assess the perceived effectiveness and satisfaction with the response team's actions.</p>	<p>Communication/Documentation strategies:</p> <p>Preparing regular progress reports for distribution within CALT and to the SDVC, the PVC(Q) and relevant university committees.</p>
IMPROVE	<p>Response team to prepare recommendations for subsequent response teams.</p> <p>Where possible a CALT or CHEQ staff member from a previous response team to assist (be part of) a newly formed response team in another faculty to ensure transfer of learning.</p>	<p>Core planning team to monitor next round of Unit Evaluation, MEQ and CEQ data to see if there are any changes in the targeted units or the faculty-wide responses.</p>	<p>Core planning team to monitor and evaluate the observable changes that have been implemented as a result of the response teams actions.</p>	<p>Communication/documentation strategies:</p> <p>Report to VCGQ LTQsc – Ed Com – ACB Dean/ADT/FacManagers teaching staff/students</p> <p>Feedback to students and staff on improvements that have been implemented as a result of student feedback in unit evaluations and MEQ.</p> <p>Academic publications</p>

Summary of Recommended Methodology for Identifying Units to Target for Improvement in 2006

1. Initially focus on second semester 2005 unit evaluation data. (the assumption being that the improvements will impact on second semester 2006 units)
2. Identify the bottom 25% performing units for each Faculty based on the satisfaction item.
3. Add to this list other units where items were rated 10% below the faculty average for that item.
4. Within the units identified focus on those with a reasonable response rate and check against class size.
5. Look at units within the list which are offered on more than one campus and see if there are any campus specific issues.
6. Identify sequential unit or units within the same year level or course which are in the list.
7. Analyse all the selected units to see if other items are also below the mean.
8. Look at the open ended questions for the main units of concern for further clues (consult relevant CALT learning and teaching support staff)
9. Prioritise the units for attention and identify the issues.
10. Meet with relevant Faculty representatives, table the report and verify and confirm the units for attention
11. Cross reference the concerns and areas with CEQ and MEQ data and other factors identified by the faculty.
12. Agree on the units to be targeted and the issues to be addressed (identify/confirm personnel for specific unit evaluation response teams)
13. ADT (and/or Dean) facilitates first meeting of the response team leaders with relevant HOS, course and unit leaders.
14. ADT facilitates first meeting with the unit teaching team and first meeting with student focus group (if formed)