The Importance of Listening to, Valuing and Acting On Student Feedback: a perspective from the UK

Dr Sarah Williamson

Assistant Director

Centre for Academic Practice

Loughborough?

- Looga-baroo-ga?
- Low-brow?
- **Lufbra**

- Located in centre of England
- 17,000 students
- UK's largest single-site campus

Loughborough University

#InspiringWinners since 1909

Outline of Session

- Overview of Student Surveys in the UK

- Background, policy and practice at Loughborough

- Use of **explorance** Blue

- 'Closing the Feedback Loop' process

National Student Survey (NSS)

- Introduced in 2005
- Surveys all final year UG students in UK
  - ~300,000 students each year
- Ascertains students' opinions of the quality of their degree programmes & overall satisfaction
- Response rates are high – 75-80%

NSS Outcomes

- Feedback is taken seriously
- Universities enhance practice & provision:
  - Improving quality of feedback on assessed work
  - Better access to personal tutors
  - Improved assessment practices
  - Increased investment in resources, equipment and teaching spaces
- Outcomes feed into all major UK league tables

NSS Themes: 2005-2016

- The teaching on my course
- Assessment and feedback
- Academic support
- Organisation and management
- Learning resources
- Personal development

- Overall Satisfaction
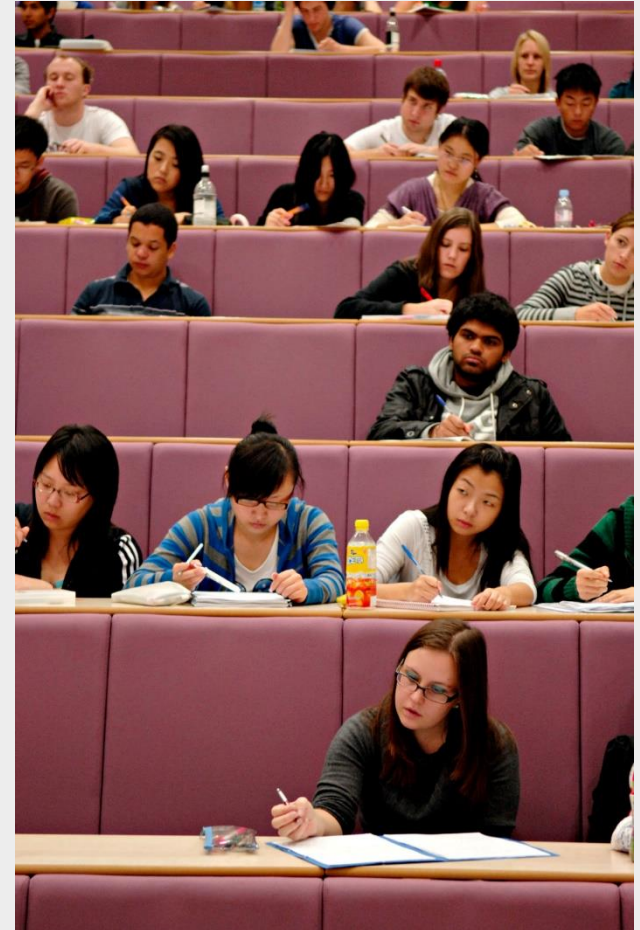
NSS Themes: 2017 onwards

- The teaching on my course
- **Learning opportunities**
- Assessment and feedback
- Academic support
- Organisation and management
- Learning resources
- **Learning Community**
- **Student Voice**
- Overall Satisfaction

NSS Student Voice Questions

- I have had the right opportunities to provide feedback on my course

- Staff value students' views and opinions about the course

- It is clear how students' feedback on the course has been acted on

How can the evaluation of modules help?

Background at Loughborough

- Established Module Feedback since mid 1990s
- Evaluation of individual teacher as well as module
- Use of paper-based method, followed by Moodle

And then came **Blue** in 2018/19…

- All modules evaluated every year
- Standard question set, with variations for different teaching types
- Underpinned by Code of Practice

Set-Up at Loughborough

- 9 Academic Schools
- Covering 22 Disciplines

- Established a hub and spokes approach for process set-up
  - Small central team supported by Feedback Administrators in Academic Schools

Role of Feedback Admins

- Ensure data captured is reliable
  - Module Leader info taken from student record system
- Input of additional teaching staff
  - No reliable data held centrally
- Allow variations from the defaults
  - selection of question set
  - evaluation start and end dates
- Each School responsible for own data quality

Early Successes

- Huge reduction in Admin staff workload
- 917 Modules surveyed in Semester 1

  1,067 Modules surveyed in Semester 2
- 42,500 student comments received
- Overall University response rate:

  34% in Semester 1

  28% in Semester 2

How do you close the feedback loop?

Closing the Feedback Loop

- Policy requires all Module Feedback to be responded to by Module Leaders
  - Not a new requirement, but made more explicit

- Module Leaders access reports through VLE
  - Includes quantitative data for module and individual staff questions and all free text comments

- Module Leaders provided with link to complete response
  - Asked to respond to four set questions

Questions to respond to:

A. What's going well?

B. Specific response to questions rated 3.5 or below

C. What could be improved?

D. Space to respond with any context or highlight good practice to the School

Questions to respond to:

A. What's going well?

B. Specific response to questions rated 3.5 or below

C. What could be improved?

D. Space to respond with any context or highlight good practice to the School

Questions to respond to:

A. What's going well?

B. Specific response to questions rated 3.5 or below

C. What could be improved?

D. Space to respond with any context or highlight good practice to the School

Questions to respond to:

A. What's going well?

B. Specific response to questions rated 3.5 or below

C. What could be improved?

D. Space to respond with any context or highlight good practice to the School

Questions to respond to:

A. What's going well?

B. Specific response to questions rated 3.5 or below

C. What could be improved?

D. Space to respond with any context or highlight good practice to the School

Reporting to Students - Module

- Module Leader comments checked to ensure tone, content and level of 'promises' are appropriate

- Module Leader response (A-C) combined with student responses to module questions and made available to students through VLE

Link to example

Module Feedback

✏ Your Modules — item(s)

18WSB013 - Robotics Project Design and Management

- **End date:** 2019-05-17

(1) | << | < | 1 | / 1 | > | >>

Outcomes & Module Leader Responses

Student Report 2018 SEMESTER 1

Reporting to Students - Discipline

- Additional reports provided to Student-Staff Liaison Committees:
  - Grid report of all modules in a discipline area
  - Combined report of all Module Leader responses

[Link to Grid report example](#)

Overall

- Senior managers pleased with how quickly they have access to a wealth of data

- Staff now have information to evidence their teaching practice, or help them know how to improve

- Students happy to be receiving responses

- We were keeping our fingers-crossed for enhanced results in our National Student Survey 'Student Voice' questions…

NSS Student Voice Questions

- I have had the right opportunities to provide feedback on my course

- Staff value students' views and opinions about the course

- It is clear how students' feedback on the course has been acted on

How did we do?

Questions	2018	2019
Right Opportunities	89	91
Views Valued	80	81
Feedback Acted On	66	71
Overall Score	77	81

Loughborough University

#InspiringWinners since 1909