

CASE STUDY

RMIT Surveys Team Successfully Supports Continued Growth in Courses using Explorance Professional Services

Institution:
RMIT University

Location:
Melbourne, Australia

Student population:
90,000+

Solution:
[Blue Experience Management Platform](#)

Challenges:
Servicing a large volume of surveys with limited resource

Reducing administrative burden via automation

Leveraging real-time metrics to optimise student and staff engagement



blue



Key Benefits

- Supporting almost 100,000 students globally with a very small team
- Fast response from Professional Services
- Received vital support through staff transitional periods
- Able to run more surveys each year, including pulse surveys
- Response rate dashboards accessible to staff members throughout the institute

The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) offers a lot of courses. As the largest dual-sector education institution in Australia, it offers both technical and degree programs to approximately 90,000 students every year. It hosts three campuses in Australia, two campuses in Vietnam, a center in Spain, a representative office in Indonesia, and programs offered through partners in Asia and Europe. In addition, it offers a vast number of undergraduate, post-graduate, certificate, and continuing education courses online to students everywhere through RMIT Online.

Managing A High Volume of Surveys with a Small Team

The University has a policy of running a course evaluation for every course, every teaching period. The total number of survey invitations RMIT generates annually adds up to almost 400,000. Amazingly, the unit that runs the surveys for RMIT manage these numbers with a very small team.

“Our policy is every student should have an opportunity to provide feedback,” says Malcolm McCormick, Senior Surveys Advisor for RMIT. “This is a huge organization with close to 100,000 students, we teach everything from Fine Arts to rocket science.”

RMIT uses Blue from Explorance, a leading creator of course evaluation software and services for institutes of Higher Education. To manage such a massive number of surveys with their small team, RMIT relies on Explorance hosting services and Professional Services. This service takes on many of the administrative aspects of course evaluation surveys for the University, saving the RMIT Surveys team much needed time.



Explorance Professional Services Lightens The Load

For high-volume survey periods, the RMIT Surveys team upload student and course data and survey content to a secure portal. With the support of Explorance Professional Services, the course evaluation surveys are created and distributed to students through Blue, direct to the students' university email.

"In all honesty, if we didn't have Explorance Professional Services as part of our team, we wouldn't be able to do what we do," says McCormick. "This service is especially critical to us when we are managing any staff transition, allowing for continuity. If we didn't have them helping us the way they did at the time, the whole thing would have fallen over, without any doubt at all."

In addition to course level evaluations, the Surveys team at RMIT also uses Blue to run other types of surveys, such as tailored versions of the Quality Indicators of Learning and Teaching (QILT) survey and the VET Learner Questionnaire conducted by the Australian Government. The RMIT Surveys team administers these for students that aren't part of the 'in-scope' population (offshore students), providing a full understanding of all aspects of the student experience across the Institute. Course surveys for RMIT's programs in China, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, Singapore and Vietnam that are run separately are supported by Explorance Professional Services.

Prompt Customer Support

Because of the high volume of surveys, RMIT has a dedicated resource at Explorance to provide professional services, led by Prashad Arasalingam, Manager of Professional Services APAC. Explorance also has several back up support team members who are versed in their specific setup, in the event the dedicated resource is not available. Any query submitted to professional services receives a response within an hour, and an action, if required, within 24 hours.

"Sometimes we'll receive a request for an urgent last-minute change from one of our internal stakeholders. For example, an incorrect teacher name may be entered and needs to be changed as soon as possible. I just have to ring up our contact at Explorance, and he makes the change straight away," says McCormick. "It's like he's part of the team here."

Useful Response Rate Features From Blue

The Blue course evaluation system is integrated with the school's Canvas Learning Management System (LMS), and the RMIT Student Administration Management system from PeopleSoft. The integration with their LMS allows them to run pop-up notices from Canvas that remind students to complete their outstanding surveys, with a direct link to the survey itself.

Another useful feature of Blue is the response rate dashboards, which can be viewed by various staff members directly, without the need to contact an administrator. "Some of our educators like to use the Response Rate Monitor to keep an eye on response rates for their course," says Harjinder Kaur, Data Analyst, Surveys at RMIT.

The monitor is also a useful tool for increasing response rates overall. "The Student Communications team also uses the Response Rate Monitor to understand the impact of campaigns to support response rates," adds Lifan Sudirjo, Data Analyst, Surveys at RMIT.



Service They Can Count On

Thus far, RMIT is very happy with the service they've received, and are pleased to be able to provide a high level of service to their internal stakeholders, even as new requirements and new courses continue to be added.

"When our stakeholders approach us with a request for surveys, we are usually confident Explorance will be able to do it," says McCormick. "We can commit to different projects knowing we have strong support behind us."

Professional Services has also provided support creating reports for the RMIT Surveys team.

"The other thing we're trying to do is minimize the amount of time we spend creating reports," McCormick says. "So for some of them, such as for our Vietnam campus, we have Explorance Professional Services create the report. Every little bit of time we can save helps."

This help was valued when RMIT administered a couple of pulse surveys in 2020, to conduct a quick check-in with students during the pandemic.

"With all the courses coming online, our team did not have the resources to take on the additional work of creating reports for it," says Kaur. "However, we asked Explorance to take on the project, and their Professional Services team was able to run it."

Overall, with Explorance's services, RMIT has been able to manage some exceptionally challenging times, with a small team to administer the surveys and reports for them.

"Explorance Professional Services has been very helpful, professional and prompt," says Sudirjo.

"They give us peace of mind that the surveys will run on time, whenever the request comes," says Kaur.



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