

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL SURVEYS 2020

COVER SHEET

Action is required of the Committee as indicated below.

The Committee is asked to note the 2020 response rates for the National Student Survey and the current response rate for the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey.

A) NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY 2020 – RESPONSE RATES

1 Introduction

The National Student Survey was live for Ulster University students from 27 January - 30 April 2020. The University's sample for 2019 consisted of 4,080 students. The response rate for 2020 was 75.59.

2 Survey operation

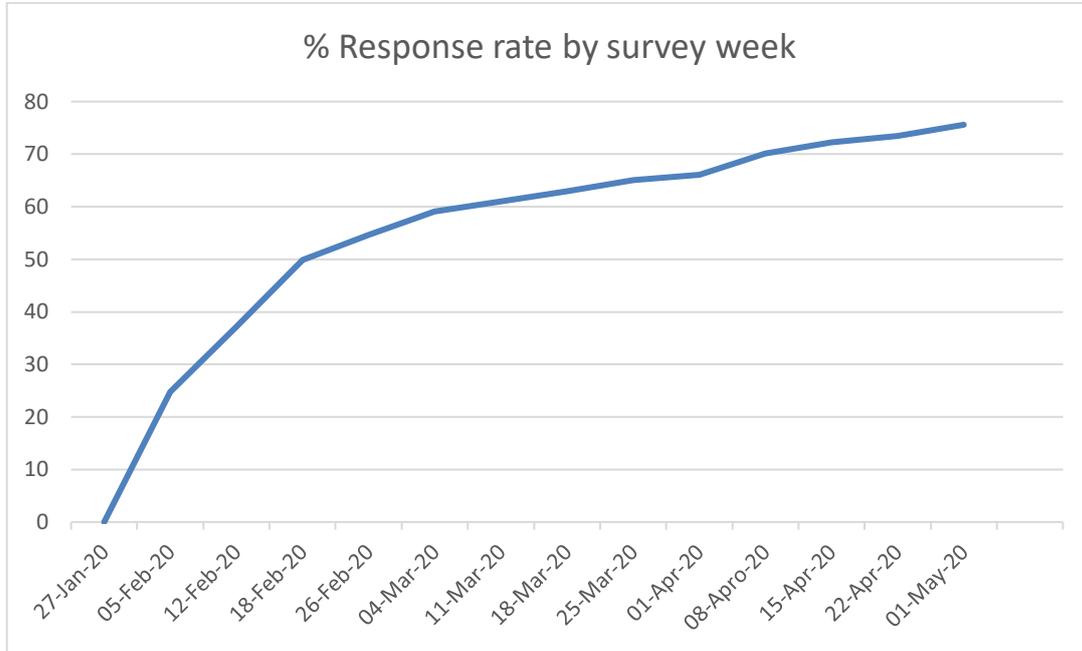
The NSS is a multi-method survey using online and telephone methods and is administered by Ipsos MORI on behalf of the Office for Students (OfS). Students were sent an email on 27 January 2020 requesting them to complete the survey online. Reminder emails and SMS messages were sent out each week and on 17 February 2020 the telephone survey commenced. Closure of campuses due to COVID 19 occurred mid-way through the survey the period. It is difficult to ascertain the impact that this will have on the outcome of the survey, however the majority of responses did occur prior to the shut-down of the campuses.

The University raised student awareness of the survey through the following initiatives:

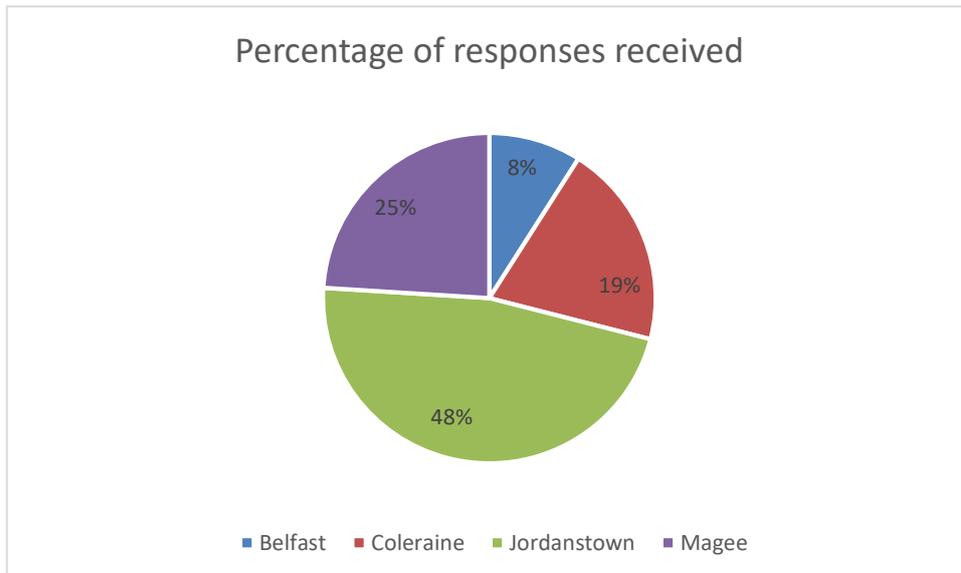
- Each student in the University's survey population received a joint email from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and the Students' Union President requesting them to complete the survey.
- Posters were displayed on each campus.
- Adverts were placed on all student workstations in the libraries, on Blackboard and on campus plasmas. Regular tweets were also sent out by the University and the Students' Union throughout the survey period.
- During the survey period Quality Enhancement made the survey more accessible to students by providing iPads at central locations on each campus to enable students to complete the survey online.
- Course Directors raised awareness of the survey with students and encouraged participation.
- Response rates were monitored and weekly progress reports were disseminated through the Quality Enhancement Unit
- A number of Course Directors took up the offer to make iPads available to students in class to complete the online survey.

3 Response rates and publication thresholds

At the close of the survey the University achieved a response rate of 75.59%. Approximately 81% of Ulster respondents completed the survey online, whilst the remainder completed it by telephone interview.



Closure of campuses due to COVID 19 occurred mid-way through the survey the period. It is difficult to ascertain the impact that this will have on the outcome of the survey, however over 60% of the available population responded by 11 March 2020.



48% of the total responses received were from students studying on the Jordanstown campus, 19% from Coleraine, 25% from Magee, and 8% from Belfast.

Ipsos MORI will be undertaking a cleaning process of the data and the final published response rates may vary marginally as a result.

The survey results feed into two datasets - the public dataset and the internal dataset and a publication threshold criteria must be met before the data can be released. The public dataset is published on the Discover Uni website and this information also feeds into national league tables. The publication threshold for the public dataset and its anticipated composition is outlined in section 3. The internal dataset, which includes the students' qualitative comments, is returned to the University and is used in internal quality enhancement processes.

4 Response rates: dataset

Survey results are published on the Discover Uni website and are subject to a strict threshold criteria, ie: 50% of the subject/course sample must respond, and the number of responses received must consist of a minimum of 10. The criteria is applied to course level and subject level data.

This year 123 courses were eligible for publication as 2020 data and 93 of these courses met the threshold. The responses from students on courses that did not meet the threshold will contribute to the relevant JACS subject level result.

The sample for the 2020 survey is represented across 63 CAH3 subjects. Of these subjects 58 have met the threshold for publication.

In addition to this the University will receive quantitative data for courses and CAH3 subjects that did not meet the publication threshold but received 10 or more responses.

5 Impact of COVID 19

Given the pressures and uncertainties universities and colleges are facing in responding to coronavirus, the UK funding and regulatory bodies are continuing to keep the NSS under review in conjunction with Ipsos MORI. Many students responded prior to the coronavirus lockdown, and the UK funding and regulatory bodies wished to continue to offer students the opportunity to respond if they wish to do so. The current position is that funders and regulators will look at the data when received to assess any impact the coronavirus outbreak has had on the results and make professional judgements about its statistical reliability.

6 Dissemination of results

The Office for Students have issued the following timetable of publication of NSS 2020 results:

1 July 2020	Results released to institutions and the national press and on the Office for Students website
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Results will be disseminated to Faculties as soon as possible after receipt and a full report on results will be received at the October meeting of Senate.

B) POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT EXPERIENCE SURVEY 2020

1 The Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey was available online for Ulster University students from 8 April – 15 June 2020. The purpose of the survey, which is run in association with Advance HE, is to provide institutions with useful quality enhancement information to identify, both at local and national level, areas where improvements could be made to further enhance taught postgraduate programmes. Results from the survey are not published and do not inform national league tables, although some aggregated results are compiled for benchmarking purposes. The survey covers all aspects of the student experience under the nine broad subject headings below:

- Quality of Teaching and Learning
- Engagement
- Assessment and Feedback
- Dissertation or Major Project
- Organisation and Management
- Resources and Services
- Skills Development
- Overall Satisfaction
- Motivations

2 SURVEY PROMOTION AND RESPONSE RATES

At the commencement of the survey period students received a joint email from the Interim Dean of Learning Enhancement and the President of the Students' Union informing them of the survey and encouraging them to participate. Deans, Heads of School and Heads of Faculty Administration and Course Directors were also informed of the commencement of the survey.

The survey promotion timeline is as follows:

29 April	Survey launch – students and staff receive emails
3 May	1st Reminder email to non-respondents
21 May	143/1903 responses (7% response rate)
27 May	2nd Reminder email to non-respondents
10 June	Final Reminder email to non-respondents
15 June	Survey Closes

3 Distribution of Results

Results will be provided to Faculties as follows:

- Course Directors will receive results for their course for consideration by the Course Committee where at least 10 responses had been received for the course. The threshold of 10 responses is set to ensure student anonymity.
- Aggregated School data, and student qualitative comments for courses which met the threshold of 10 responses will be provided
- Associate Deans (Education) will School and Faculty level results.

A full report on results will be provided to the October 2020 meeting of the Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee. This report will include national benchmark data which will be released to institutions in July.