A MODEL FOR STUDENT EVALUATION TO ENHANCE TEACHING AND LEARNING QUALITY AT THE CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, FREE STATE

by

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work submitted here is the result of my own independent investigation. Where help was sought, it is acknowledged. I further declare that this work is submitted for the first time at this university/faculty towards the Ph.D. degree in Higher Education Studies, and that is has never been submitted by me to any other university/faculty for the purpose of obtaining a degree.

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DEDICATION

Grateful appreciation goes to my wife, Lizette, for your love, support and faith in me. I dedicate this thesis to you with the following extract from Proverbs 31: 28 – 31:

"Strength and honour are her clothing, and she shall rejoice in time to come.
She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness.
She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.
Her children arise up and call her blessed, her husband also, and he praiseth her".

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Soli Deo Gloria – To God alone the glory!

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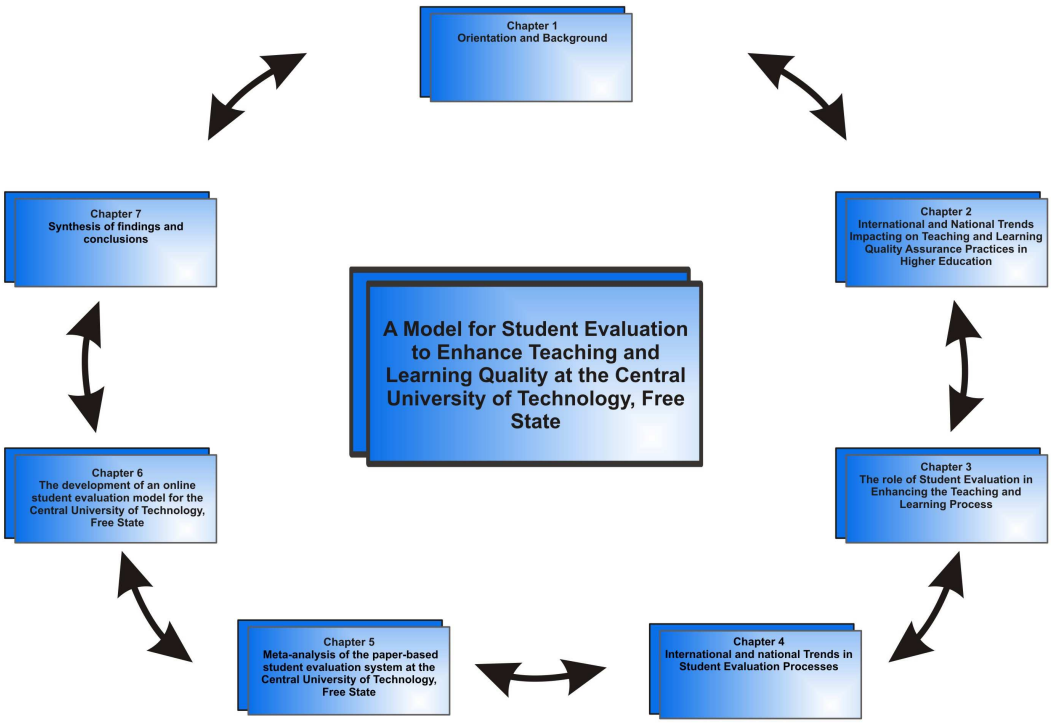
LIST OF ACRONYMS

AACU	Association of American Colleges and Universities
ADC	Academic Development Centre
ATN	Australian Technology Network of Universities
AUQA	Australian Universities Quality Agency
AUT	Auckland University of Technology
CELTS	Centre for the Enhancement of Learning, Teaching and Scholarship
CEPD	Centre for Educational and Professional Development
CEQ	Course Experience Questionnaire
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CHEA	Council for Higher Education Accreditation
CHERI	Centre for Higher Education Research and Information
CQAHE	Committee for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
CTL	Centre for Teaching and Learning
CUT	Central University of Technology, Free State
DoE	Department of Education
ETQA	Education and Training Quality Assurer
EUA	European University Association
ENQA	European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
GCCA	Graduate Careers Council of Australia
HEDC	Higher Education Development Centre
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
IRU	Institutional Research Unit
ITL	Improving Teaching and Learning
LSN	Learning Support Network
LTDU	Learning and Teaching Development Unit
NCHE	National Commission on Higher Education
NQF	National Qualifications Framework

NSSE	National Survey of Student Engagement
NZAAU	New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit
NZQA	New Zealand Qualifications Authority
OEI	Office of Education
QPU	Quality Promotion Unit
RS	Rhodes University
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SAUVCA	South African Universities Vice-Chancellors' Association
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SEEQ	Student Evaluation of Educational Quality
SELT	Student Experience of Learning and Teaching
SEP	Student Evaluation of Papers
SERTEC	Certification Council for Technikon Education
SETA	Sectoral Education and Training Authority
SFT	Student Feedback on Teaching
SFTT	Student Feedback on Team Teaching
TQM	Total Quality Management
TUT	Tshwane University of Technology
UA	University of Adelaide
UK	United Kingdom
UKCOP	University of Kentucky College of Pharmacy
UO	University of Otago
UP	University of Pretoria
US	University of Stellenbosch
USA	United States of America
WebCT	Web Course Tools

STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY



SUMMARY

There seems to be a worldwide interest in enhancing the student learning experience, particularly through interactive learning - an educational philosophy that places the student at the centre of the learning process.

Even more important is the fact that the learning facilitator is supposed to monitor students' progress towards achieving specific and generic objectives much more progressively. However, to achieve these goals and to ensure that learning is maximised, it is imperative for higher education institutions to regularly receive feedback about the quality of the learning process and experience. Consequently, student evaluation of teaching and module content has been instituted by almost all higher education quality assurance agencies around the world. The responsibilities of the Higher Education Quality Committee in South Africa and its engagement in institutional audits, its support for institutionalising a culture of self-managed evaluation that builds on and surpasses minimum standards, and its endeavours to develop and implement accredited programmes in higher education institutions are examples in this regard.

For many years, the impact of student evaluation on the South African higher education system has been limited. As governmental demands for educational accountability grow, the teaching profession finds itself under pressure to demonstrate its value with solid, credible data/evidence. However, in an environment in which there are so many emerging and competing demands, there is a danger that the essential focus on the teaching and learning function could be lost. Universities, therefore, need to quantify their value to provide hard evidence that they have succeeded in promoting learning among students. The most direct source of information about the quality of the learning experience in higher education is the students themselves. Accordingly, the purpose of student feedback is to meet quality assurance requirements and to demonstrate to internal and external stakeholders that students are receiving an adequate educational service. To make an effective

contribution to internal improvement processes, the views of students need to be integrated into a regular and continuous cycle of analysis, reporting, action and feedback.

The primary purpose of the study was to undertake research that would lead to the development of a model for student evaluation in order to enhance teaching and learning quality at the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT). This research falls primarily within the qualitative research paradigm, although some of the data were gathered by utilising quantitative techniques. A qualitative approach was adopted since the experiences of and feedback from the various stakeholders were interpreted and described in a qualitative way. A variety of qualitative research methods were applied in this study. For example, an exploratory literature study was done, interviews with international and national experts/authorities were conducted and focus group discussions were organised. All of these techniques are applicable and appropriate when a case study is conducted, since case study methods involve an in-depth, longitudinal examination of a single event (Flyvjerg, 2006). It provides a systematic way of looking at events, collecting data, analysing information, and reporting the results.

In the first place, the researcher explored the international and national driving forces behind the renewed interest in the enhancement of quality teaching and learning. Secondly, the researcher investigated student evaluation practices, both internationally and nationally, and thirdly, he determined which student evaluation measuring instruments are applied, internationally and nationally. Given the complexity of the student evaluation process, the unique and distinctive manner in which each of the various systems and measuring instruments in the United States of America, England, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa is managed, was found to be truly remarkable.

The knowledge gained during the development and implementation of the paper-based student evaluation system at the CUT since 2001, has provided valuable insight into the development of an online student evaluation system. The researcher looked at the rationale behind the implementation of an online

student evaluation system, traditional paper-based evaluations versus online student evaluation surveys, the outcomes of recently conducted studies on online surveys in the USA and Australia, the advantages of online student evaluation practices, and the challenges associated with online student evaluation surveys. The knowledge and insight obtained in this regard led to the development of a model for online student evaluation of teaching and module content at the CUT. The researcher argued that the ultimate challenge of online evaluations is to convince students that their active participation will enhance the quality of teaching and learning practices. He foresees that it is inevitable that online evaluations will eventually match and replace the traditional paper-based student evaluation system.

The inclusion of signposts at the end of each section in Chapters 2, 3 and 4, which refers to the implications a specific section has for the whole student evaluation system, adds further value to the study. This single case study provides a detailed description of the student evaluation process at the CUT and the researcher's interpretation of the case. It promotes a better understanding of student evaluation of teaching and module content at the CUT and facilitates informed decision-making.

KEY WORDS

Accreditation

Educational technology

Flexible teaching methodologies

Formative evaluation

Online questionnaire

Paper-based questionnaires

Quality assurance

Qualitative data analysis

Quantitative data analysis

Standard-based evaluation scale

Student evaluation measuring instrument

Summative evaluation

Teaching and learning practices

Triangulation of student evaluation

OPSOMMING

Dit wil voorkom asof daar wêreldwye belangstelling in die verryking/verbetering van studente se leerervarings is, veral deur middel van interaktiewe leer - ’n opvoedkundige filosofie wat die student in die middelpunt van die leerproses plaas.

Van groter belang is die feit dat die leerfasiliteerder veronderstel is om studente se vordering in die rigting van spesifieke en generiese doelwitte wat bereik moet word, op ’n baie meer progressiewe wyse te monitor. Om hierdie doelwitte egter te bereik en te verseker dat die leerproses gemaksimaliseer word, is dit noodsaaklik dat hoër onderwys-instellings gereelde terugvoer ontvang oor die gehalte van die leerproses en -ervaring. Gevolglik is studente-evaluering van onderrig en module-inhoud by bykans alle gehalteversekeringsagentskappe van hoër onderwys regoor die wêreld ingestel. Die verantwoordelikhede van die Hoër Onderwys Gehaltekomitee in Suid-Afrika en die betrokkenheid daarvan by institusionele oudits, die ondersteuning wat dit bied vir die institusionalisering van ’n kultuur van selfbestuurde evaluering wat voortbou op minimum standaarde en dit transendeer, en die inisiatiewe wat dit van stapel stuur vir die ontwikkeling en implementering van geakkrediteerde programme in hoër onderwys-instellings, dien as voorbeelde in hierdie verband.

Die impak van studente-evaluering op die Suid-Afrikaanse hoër onderwys-stelsel was vir baie jare van ’n beperkte aard. Soos wat die regerings se eise vir toerekenbaarheid in die onderwys toeneem, word die onderrigprofessie al hoe meer onder druk geplaas om sy waarde deur middel van tasbare, geloofwaardige data/bewyse te staaf. In ’n omgewing waarin daar soveel nuwe en mededingende eise is, bestaan daar egter die gevaar dat die belangrike fokus op die onderrig- en leerfunksie verlore kan raak. Daarom is dit nodig dat universiteite hulle waarde moet kwantifiseer om sodoende oortuigende bewyse te verskaf dat hulle werklik ’n leerkultuur onder studente bevorder. Die mees direkte bron van inligting oor die gehalte van die

leerervaring in hoër onderwys is die studente self. Gevolglik is die doel van studente-terugvoering om te voldoen aan die eise van gehalteversekering en om interne en eksterne belanghebbendes/rolspelers daarvan te oortuig dat studente ’n toereikende onderwysdiens ontvang. Om ’n effektiewe bydrae tot interne verbeteringsprosesse te lewer, moet die sienings van studente geïntegreer word in ’n gereelde en voortdurende siklus van analise, verslagdoening, aksie en terugvoering.

Die hoofdoel van die studie was om navorsing te onderneem met die oog op die ontwikkeling van ’n model vir studente-evaluering om die gehalte van onderrig en leer aan die Sentrale Universiteit vir Tegnologie, Vrystaat (SUT), te verryk/verbeter. Hierdie navorsing kan hoofsaaklik binne die kwalitatiewe navorsingsparadigma geplaas word, alhoewel ’n deel van die inligting ingesamel is deur gebruikmaking van kwantitatiewe tegnieke. Daar is besluit op ’n kwalitatiewe benadering aangesien die ervarings en terugvoering van die onderskeie belanghebbendes/rolspelers op ’n kwalitatiewe wyse geïnterpreteer en beskryf is. ’n Verskeidenheid kwalitatiewe navorsingsmetodes word in hierdie studie gebruik. Daar is byvoorbeeld gebruik gemaak van ’n verkennende literatuurstudie, onderhoude wat met deskundiges binne en buite die land gevoer is, en groepbesprekings. Al hierdie tegnieke is toepaslik en geskik wanneer ’n gevallestudie uitgevoer word, aangesien gevallestudiemetodes gerig is op ’n diepgaande, longitudinale ondersoek na ’n enkele gebeurtenis (Flyvjerg, 2006). Dit verskaf ’n sistematiese volgorde om gebeure, die insameling van inligting, die ontleding van data en verslagdoening van resultate te benader.

In die eerste plek het die navorser ondersoek ingestel na die internasionale en nasionale dryfkragte agter die hernieude belangstelling in die verryking/verbetering van gehalte-onderig en -leer. Tweedens, het die navorser na studente-evalueringspraktyke op nasionale en internasionale vlak gekyk, en derdens, het hy vasgestel watter meetinstrumente vir studente-evaluering gebruik word, nasionaal en internasionaal. Teen die agtergrond van die kompleksiteit van die studente-evalueringsproses is die unieke en besondere wyse waarop elkeen van die wye verskeidenheid stelsels en

meetinstrumente in die Verenigde State van Amerika (USA), Engeland, Australië, Nieu-Seeland en Suid-Afrika bestuur word, merkwaardig.

Die inligting wat bekom is tydens die ontwikkeling en implementering van die papiergebaseerde studente-evalueringstelsel aan die SUT sedert 2001, bied waardevolle insigte in die ontwikkeling van ’n aanlyn-studente-evalueringstelsel. Die navorser het die redes vir die implementering van ‘n aanlyn-studente-evalueringstelsel, tradisioneel papier-gebaseerde versus aanlyn gebaseerde evalueringstelsels, die uitkomste van studies wat onlangs in die VSA en Australia onderneem is, die voordele van aanlyn-studente-evalueringspraktyke, die uitdagings wat met aanlyn-evaluerings ondervind word, die voordele van aanlyn-studente-evalueringspraktyke, en die uitdagings wat met aanlyn-evaluerings ondervind word ondersoek. Die kennis en insig wat hierdeur opgedoen is het gelei tot die ontwikkeling van ‘n model vir aanlyn studente-evaluering van onderrig en module inhoud by die SUT. Hy argumenteer dat die fundamentele uitdaging met aanlyn-evaluerings sal wees om studente te oortuig dat hul aktiewe objektiewe deelname die kwaliteit van die onderig- en leer prosesse sal verbeter. Die navorser voorsien dat dit onvermydelik is dat aanlyn-studente-evaluerings dieselfde status as tradisionele papier-gebaseerde evaluerings sal verkry en dit mettertyd sal vervang.

Die insluiting van wegwysers aan die einde van elke afdeling in Hoofstukke 2, 3 en 4, wat verwys na die implikasies wat ’n spesifieke afdeling het vir die totale studente-evalueringstelsel, voeg verdere waarde toe tot die studie. Hierdie enkele gevallestudie verskaf ’n gedetailleerde beskrywing van die studente-evalueringsproses aan die SUT sowel as die navorser se interpretasie van die geval. Dit bied ook groter insig in studente se evaluering van onderrig en module-inhoud aan die SUT en fasiliteer weloorwoë besluitneming.

SLEUTELWOORDE

Akkreditering

Onderwystegnologie

Buigsame onderrigmetodes

Formatiewe evaluering

Aanlyn-vraelys

Papiergebaseerde vraelyste

Gehalteversekering

Kwalitatiewe data-analise

Kwantitatiewe data-analise

Standaardgebaseerde evalueringskaal

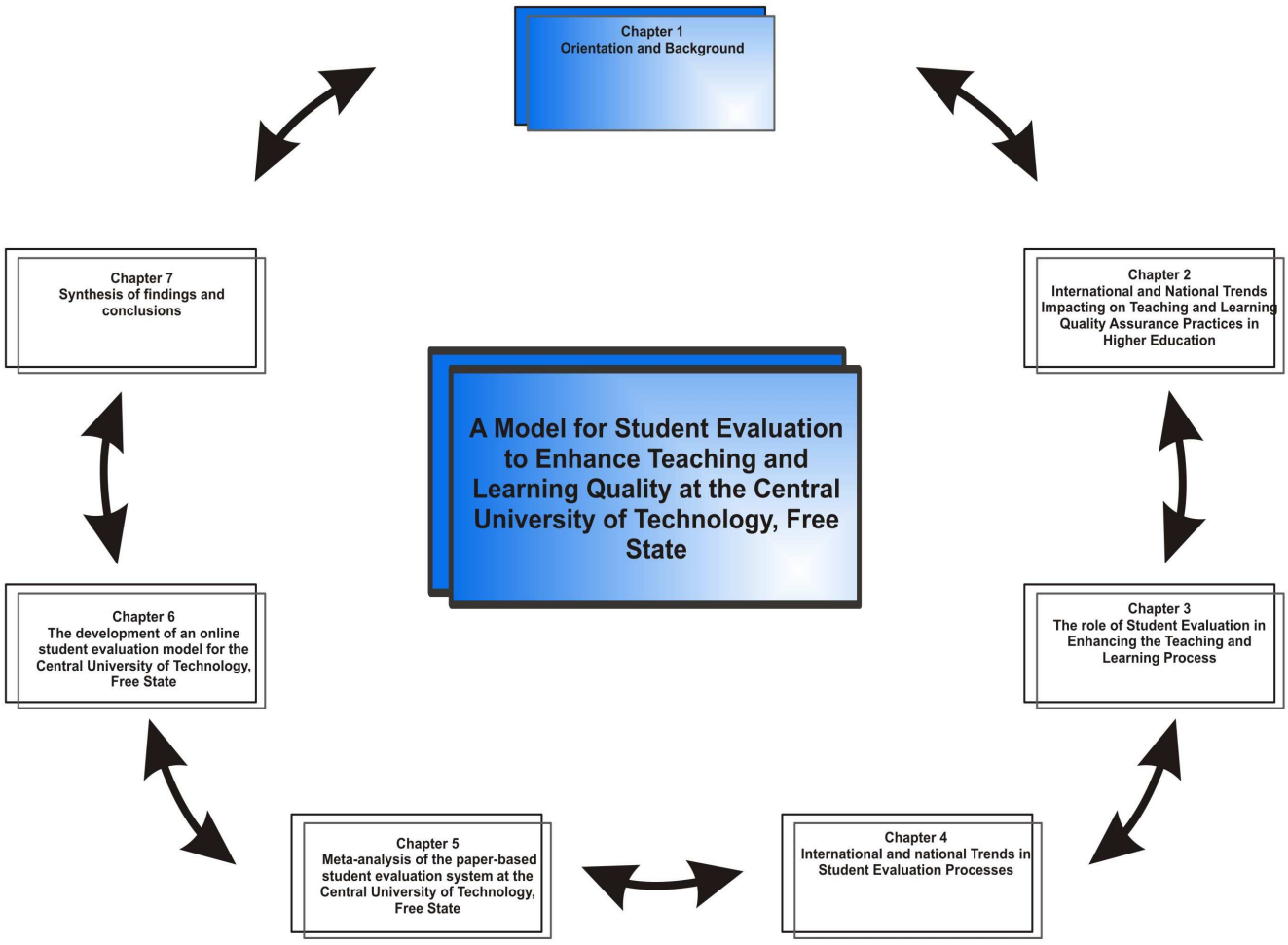
Studente-evalueringsmeetinstrument

Summatiewe evaluering

Onderrig- en leerpraktyke

Triangulasie van studente-evaluering

CHAPTER 1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Chapter 2
International and National Trends Impacting on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Practices in Higher Education
Chapter 3
The role of Student Evaluation in Enhancing the Teaching and Learning Process
Chapter 4
International and national Trends in Student Evaluation Processes
Chapter 5
Meta-analysis of the paper-based student evaluation system at the Central University of Technology, Free State
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Synthesis of findings and conclusions
A Model for Student Evaluation to Enhance Teaching and Learning Quality at the Central University of Technology, Free State

CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Being Director of the Centre for Teaching and Learning at the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT), which is concerned (*inter alia*) with student evaluation of teaching and module content, granted the researcher the opportunity to engage with the development, implementation, evaluation and improvement of the CUT's student evaluation system.

This challenging task placed the researcher in the position of research manager, as well as participant and observer, with regard to the entire student evaluation process. Furthermore, it provided the researcher with first-hand experiences and made him a first-line contact to whom comments and experiences were directed. This was an ideal position, as the researcher had the authority to integrate feedback into the student evaluation system. It also enhanced the ownership of participants, as they felt their inputs were valued and were being integrated into the process. The research was soon informed by the researcher's everyday experiences with the student evaluation system, which made him an expert, knowledgeable resource and source of information in this regard.

This introductory chapter provides the background to the study, as well as the rationale behind the study, the problem statement and unit of analysis, the purpose of the research, and the research methods employed in this research project. It furthermore defines the significance and limitations of the study, outlines the structure of the chapters and provides definitions for terminology frequently used in this study.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

More than ten years ago already, Cameron & Whetten (1996) alerted us to the fact that a significant fundamental shift had occurred in higher education literature. For them, this change represents a shift away from considerations of the construct of effectiveness and institutional performance, towards considerations of quality assurance.

It became increasingly evident that notions of quality were beginning to replace effectiveness as a central organisational variable in the higher education environment. This trend also emerged within South Africa, where the variety of transformation issues posed by the South African government since 1994 included policies and initiatives to implement quality assurance for the higher education system. Subsequently, the Council on Higher Education (CHE) was established in 1995, with the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) as one of its subdivisions. The HEQC has also identified teaching and learning as the focus of institutional audits in the years to come.

One way of assessing the quality of teaching and learning is through students evaluating lecturers, the facilitation skills of lecturers and the quality of learning materials and text books. It is argued that student evaluations play an important role in providing evidence that the institution is taking teaching and learning seriously – particularly in the South African context, where the percentage of students who drop out and/or fail is too high. However, student evaluations as such do not represent a panacea for what is going wrong in the classroom, since teaching is known to be a complex human endeavour that the effectiveness thereof cannot be accounted for in purely behavioural terms. Knowledge about what constitutes teaching effectiveness has therefore, until recently, not had much influence on teaching practices in higher education. There seems to be consensus that there is still too much lecturing and not enough critical thinking going on in higher education classrooms, as lecturers are indeed subject experts, but are often insufficiently educated in how to teach these subjects. In addition, there seems to be little evidence of learner-centredness and interactive learning in university teaching.

In analysing the title of this thesis, the improvement of teaching and learning practices is a key focus. However, little consensus exists on what constitutes quality in teaching and learning, as the researcher believes that the term quality is an overused and over-defined term in higher education. This is reflected in the literature (Giertz 2001), where quality has *inter alia* been referred to as something that intrinsically represents the core of traditional academic qualities with the focus on knowledge creation and student learning, and extrinsic focusing on the concerns and demands societies direct towards higher education institutions. Giertz (2001) refers to “politically correct quality” to describe the role of the State authorities in relation to quality in higher education.

Harvey & Green (1993) provide a heuristic framework for attempting to define quality assurance by suggesting that it can be viewed as excellence, as transformative, as fitness for purpose or as value for money. Harvey & Newton (2005) reaffirm that such definitions are without any solid theoretical basis. Quality as fitness for purpose, for example, does not provide a deep enough conceptualisation and definition. Fitness for purpose, even if linked to a fitness of purpose (thus implying a non-trivial purpose), still fails to evoke the core concept of quality.

For the purpose of this study, it is important to reach consensus on the meanings of the term quality in teaching and learning. Defining quality within such a broad context is easier said than done, as all student evaluation mechanisms contain implicit assumptions about the characteristics that constitute quality teaching. The Senate Committee at the York University in Canada (2002) maintains, for instance, that lecturers may emphasise different domains of learning and may employ different teaching methodologies and encourage learning in various fields, or may use different instructional strategies. All this may be done in the knowledge that students have diverse backgrounds and levels of preparedness. In one situation a lecturer may see his/her role as transmitting factual information, and in another as facilitating discussion and promoting critical thinking.

Since the emphasis of this study is on the role of student evaluation in improving the quality of teaching and learning practices in higher education, it is necessary to define what is meant by quality teaching and learning in this context.

1.2.1 Quality in teaching and learning

Knowledge about what constitutes teaching quality has not had much influence on teaching practices in higher education until recently. The practice of teaching in higher education strongly reflects the educational system that prepares and qualifies its lecturers during their graduate education. Lecturers in higher education are, for the most part, educated to be justifiable authorities on the subjects they teach, but the majority are only indirectly educated in how to teach those subjects.

Research conducted by the researcher at the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) during 2005 indicated that 75% of academic staff had no lecturing experience or formal teaching qualifications prior to their appointment at the CUT. On average, more than 80% of newly-appointed academic staff attending orientation courses at the CUT had no formal teaching qualifications. Exceptions include those members of the academic staff who were fortunate enough to be exposed to individuals who stimulated a broader range of teaching practices and experimentation, and who were therefore more likely to adopt those stimulating approaches themselves. There seems to be consensus that there is too much lecturing and not enough critical thinking going on in higher education classrooms, despite statements made by scholars such as Ramsden (1998:5), who contended: "…teaching is one of the most delightful and exciting of all human activities when it is done well."

1.2.2 Defining quality in teaching

A frequently raised question in the literature on the evaluation of teaching is: "How can we define excellence in teaching?" It seems that this question must be answered before one can proceed with any kind of evaluation. However, the problem with this question is that it may not be answerable in absolute terms.

A major reason for not having a useful and practical definition of quality in teaching, is therefore that teaching may be too broad a concept to be limited by a single definition. Teaching undergraduates will involve a different set of criteria than teaching graduate students. The criteria for excellence in teaching to be considered for promotion to full professor, for instance, will necessarily be different from those for associate professor level. Excellence in teaching also varies according to discipline, course design and level of experience (Ramsden, 2003; Fry *et al.* 1999). A more useful way of thinking about excellence in teaching is in relative terms: To what extent has improvement in practice revealed an individual's capacity for continual growth, development and intrinsic instructional worth to the faculty, department and school?

It would be far more difficult to agree upon and evaluate an absolute definition of excellence in teaching than a relative one. Assuming that adequate and appropriate standards of merit have been applied in appointing a lecturer, his or her continual worth to the institution will be closely related to the capacity for improvement in performance. The fact that the lecturer was appointed to teach at a particular institution sets the level of standards according to which he or she will be evaluated.

The task now becomes one of determining how capable the individual is of improvement, based upon a sufficiently broad range of criteria and data sources. Some people may not require much improvement to function at an exemplary level, yet their particular capabilities may cause them to exceed established expectations. Others will show an even greater degree of

improvement but will still not measure up to expectations, in which case they should probably not have been appointed in the first place.

1.2.3 Defining effective lecturers

During the past 50 years, the debate over effective teaching has moved from a discussion of technical, classroom skills - or process skills, as they have been called - to a focus on skills necessary to make the subject matter understandable to the student. Thinking dichotomously about teaching as either a technical process skill divorced from the subject matter, or solely a translation of abstract and technical information into understandable terms, limits the conception of what teaching is.

Looking at teaching as a scholarly activity that is connected to research suggests a dialogue between the tasks of understanding a body of knowledge and explaining it. Effective teaching must be concerned with both of these areas of expertise: a lecturer who has a body of knowledge to profess but is unable to communicate it, is no more effective than one who can hold students rapt in wonder, but does not know what he or she is talking about.

This dichotomy can be avoided by a more integrative model of teaching: Effective lecturers understand enough about their students' ways of thinking to be able to translate their own understanding of the subject matter into a form that connects with their students. Schulman (1989:11) remarks that one of the things we see when we look at teaching analytically is this combination of an emphasis on understanding the subject matter, understanding how it is represented in the heads of students and then being able to generate representations of your own, as a teacher, that will act as a bridge between the subject matter and the students.

Recent work on lecturers' effectiveness (Light & Cox, 2001; Mortiboys, 2002; Porter & Brophy, 1988; Ramsden, 2003) has yielded the following observations to support an integrative model that is both process-based and content-based:

- Effective lecturers promote learning by communicating to their students what is expected, and why.
- Effective lecturers not only know the subject matter - they intend their students to learn, but are also aware of the misconceptions their students bring to the classroom that will interfere with their learning of that subject matter.
- Effective lecturers are clear about what they intend to accomplish through their instruction and they keep these goals in mind, both in designing the instruction and in communicating its purposes to the students. They make certain that their students understand why they should learn what they are required to learn, and are satisfied with the reasons given for this.
- Effective instruction provides students with metacognitive strategies to regulate and enhance their learning. It also provides them with structured opportunities to exercise and practise independent learning strategies.
- Effective lecturers create learning situations in which their students are expected not only to learn facts and solve given problems, but also to organise information in new ways and formulate problems for themselves. Such learning situations include creative writing opportunities in language arts, problem-formulation activities in mathematics, and independent projects in science, social studies and literature.
- Effective lecturers continuously monitor their students' understanding of presentations and responses to assignments. They routinely provide timely and detailed feedback, but not necessarily in the same ways for all students.

- Effective lecturers realise that what is learnt is more likely to be remembered and used in the future if it serves students' purposes beyond merely meeting school requirements. Effective lecturers take time for reflection and self-evaluation, monitor their instruction to make sure that worthwhile content is being taught to all students, and accept responsibility for guiding student learning and behaviour (Light & Cox, 2001; Mortiboys, 2002; Porter & Brophy, 1988; Ramsden, 2003).

Other typical questions that are often asked when lecturers are evaluated, include: Has the lecturer assumed the responsibilities related to the teaching mission?; Does the lecturer recognise the problems that are obstacles to good teaching in his or her institution, and does he or she take a responsible part in trying to solve them?; To what extent is the lecturer striving for excellence in teaching?

If teaching is to be adequately rewarded as a valued activity and contribution to the faculty/school/department or programme, the extent to which a lecturer has accomplished the following should be recognised, namely whether there is sufficient data on teaching quality; alternative teaching methods have been explored; changes have been made in the lecturer's courses over time; the lecturer sought assistance in trying new teaching ideas; the lecturer developed special teaching materials, and whether the lecturer participated in teaching improvement opportunities. The teaching portfolio is one of most appropriate means of providing evidence of efficacy, as it assists the lecturer in keeping a record of all achievements and reflections. Obviously, the results obtained from student evaluation questionnaires will be included in a teaching portfolio as part of evidence, for purposes such as promotion and nominations for teaching excellence awards.

In arguing that there is a great need for the improvement of teaching and learning, that lecturers are not trained in pedagogy, that increasingly diverse student populations require innovative ways of teaching, the need for greater accountability and the worldwide trend of providing evidence of quality in

teaching and learning brings the unit of analysis in this study to the fore, namely the role of student evaluation in improving the quality of teaching and learning practices.

1.3 RATIONALE FOR THIS STUDY

There seems to be a worldwide interest in enhancing the student learning experience, particularly through interactive learning, which is an educational philosophy that places the student at the centre of the learning process. Such an approach acknowledges the educational environments from which students come (Centra, 1993a).

The fact that the learning facilitator (lecturer) is supposed to monitor the students' progress much more progressively with a view to achieving specific and generic objectives, is of even greater significance. However, to achieve this and to ensure that learning is maximised, it is imperative for institutions to continuously receive feedback about the quality of the learning process and experience. Quality assurance agencies include in their audit criteria the requirement that student feedback on teaching, learning and research be obtained.

However, student evaluations should not be viewed as something new. Centra (1993a) maintains that student evaluations of lecturers can be traced as far back as the universities of medieval Europe, while Arreola (1995) refers to seventy years of research on this topic. It is recognised that student evaluation is implemented for different purposes, such as quality enhancement, performance appraisal, permanent tenure, promotion, building of a teaching portfolio or reflective practice.

Currently, it is increasingly being recognised that improvement, enhancement and accountability functions in the teaching and learning process are part of the quality assurance agenda. The Review Committee on Higher Education Financing and Policy in Australia (1997) maintains that "providing high-quality learning experiences should be at the heart of university endeavour." The

New Zealand Tertiary Education Advisory Commission (2000) recommended that “the needs of learners should be recognised as central to the design of the tertiary education system.” So, too, the Dearing Committee in the United Kingdom (1997) argued that “the enhancement and promotion of learning and teaching must be a priority for all of higher education.” There is a long tradition of student evaluation in the Nordic countries, as students are viewed as co-actors in the higher education system. In these countries, students participate in institutional audits and work co-operatively with quality assurance agencies. Students are involved in all the phases of the agencies’ evaluations, beginning with the planning of evaluations, inputs in self-evaluations, participation in external panels and acting as informants during site visits, as well as in the evaluation follow-up. Consequently, we have seen students in these countries taking ownership of the process and actively contributing to the enhancement of the learning experience (Froestad & Bakken, 2004).

In South Africa, it is a core function of the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) to address the highly uneven capacities of the South African higher education system. They have also identified teaching and learning as the focus of institutional audits in the years to come. Student evaluations could play an important role in providing evidence that the institution takes teaching and learning seriously – particularly in the South African context, where the percentage of students who drop out or fail is too high.

There seems to be consensus that there is still too much lecturing and not enough critical thinking going on in higher education classrooms, as lecturers are indeed subject experts, but are often insufficiently educated in how to teach these subjects. There also seems to be little evidence of learner-centredness and interactive learning.

1.3.1 Trends in student evaluation practices

Student evaluation is, however, a controversial issue, since student ratings constitute a perceived threat to the self-esteem of academics and could be ego-threatening, as such evaluation usually includes the evaluation of instruction to some extent.

Academics are often anxious that evaluations will not be objective and well-defined, although most do concede that some means must be found to evaluate their teaching performances. For some academics, student evaluations constitute an infringement on their academic freedom and autonomy (Aleamoni 1987). Some academics are also of opinion that students do not have the ability or knowledge to make judgements regarding their teaching, although Aleamoni (1987:27) maintains that, based on his research, it is evident that students are not easily fooled, and that - when evaluating their lecturers - they generally discriminate among various aspects of teaching abilities. The researcher is of the opinion that evaluation is an inborn human talent, employed on a continuous basis by our ancestors to ensure their survival.

Parents and grandparents condition learners to evaluate their school and/or their school teachers from an early age by asking them how they experience school, or to indicate which teacher they like best or least. In fact, Williams & Ceci (1997) found that a lecturer's enthusiasm does have a biasing effect on student ratings, although no positive correlation was found between instructor enthusiasm and student learning. In addition, the notion that students should be viewed as clients looking at them (the lecturers) from a business point of view, is not accepted by all. The research findings of Greenwald (1997) over a 25-year period extending from 1971 - 1995 showed support for student evaluation.

1.3.2 Methodological concerns in student evaluation

A common complaint regarding the evaluation of teaching is that it constitutes a subjective judgment, and that objectivity is almost impossible. However, objectivity can be obtained through both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

The quality of objectivity can be achieved by the development of explicit criteria for evaluating the data collected. In order to achieve quantitative objectivity, data should be collected from multiple sources (colleagues, students, advisees, graduate students, alumni) and in various forms (student questionnaires, peer evaluation, classroom observation, course materials, personal statements from the lecturer, qualitative data from students, advisees and alumni in the form of letters and samples of student products). Staff members are also concerned about the use of results for summative purposes, implying that final judgements are made on aspects such as promotions and permanent appointments based on these results.

Another area of concern is the methods that are used. Academics seem to be resistant to questionnaires that are designed without consultation, as they feel these would be tailored to fit individual needs. Obviously, issues regarding reliability, validity and the usefulness of evaluations inform this debate further (Marsh & Roche 1997). As summative evaluations are known to be done at the end of a module, it could happen that only a few students are in class on that day, and that the findings therefore cannot be generalised. Another issue is the reliability of student ratings, which concerns the consistency of ratings. However, a number of studies maintain that students are generally very honest in their ratings.

Arreola (1995) also points out that the stability of student ratings from year to year is very high, with correlations in the range of 0.87 to 0.89. Similarly, research cited by Costin *et al.* (1971), as well as studies completed by Gillmore (1973) (in Arreola, 1995) & Hogan (1973) report correlations from 0.70 to 0.87 for "student ratings of the same instructors and courses" (Arreola,

1995:83). Aleamoni (1987) also concludes that the literature suggests that students' judgments are fairly stable and consistent. Other factors that play a role are the class size, the gender of raters, the reason for taking a particular course and personality differences. According to Arreola (1995), results in the literature regarding gender and ratings are inconsistent, although earlier studies by Costin *et al.* (1971), showed that female students tended to be more critical of their male instructors than were their fellow male students.

1.3.3 Determinants of success in student evaluation

Despite the numerous arguments often advanced in an attempt to prove that student evaluation is ineffective, Murray (1996) provides us with valuable perspectives on the issue by focusing on the converging evidence obtained from three independent sources - faculty surveys, field experiments, and longitudinal comparisons - in support of the view that student evaluation of teaching has contributed significantly to the improvement of certain aspects of university teaching. The contribution of student evaluation to the improvement of teaching is greatly enhanced by expert consultation with instructional development specialists.

This finding provides support for the positive impact of instructional development offices and programmes in improving teaching. More research is needed to determine the most effective ways of combining student evaluation with expert consultation. According to Murray (1996), there is no clear evidence that student evaluation of teaching has led to the negative side-effects commonly attributed to it. Evidence that student evaluation leads to a significant improvement in teaching, in combination with research demonstrating the reliability and validity of student evaluation forms, provides strong justification for the use of student evaluation of university teaching, both as diagnostic feedback to faculty members and as one of several sources of information considered in decisions regarding staff appraisal and promotion.

However, since students are capable of assessing only some aspects of teaching, student evaluations should never be the only source of data on teaching in faculty staff decisions. In the light of this, the implementation of peer evaluation and self-evaluation systems forms part of the evaluation process.

In the context of this study, and as Kwan (2001) confirms, the rationale underpinning the introduction of a university-wide student evaluation of teaching and module content system is that such a system, if properly planned and introduced, will presumably lead to the enhancement of teaching and learning practices in higher education institutions. Student feedback, as one indicator of teaching effectiveness and programme quality, will enable university administrators to make informed personnel decisions concerning tenure, promotion, or contract renewal. As a result, good lecturers are more likely to be recognised, rewarded and retained, and this will provide added incentive for individual lecturers to endeavour to improve their teaching.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND UNIT OF ANALYSIS

Literature provides ample evidence that the development and implementation of a student evaluation of teaching measurement instrument, although not an easy task, could play a significant role in enhancing the overall quality of an institution's teaching and learning experience. However, part of the success of such an instrument rests on whether it addresses the needs of a particular institution, whether the system can be owned by the entire institutional teaching fraternity and whether it delivers the expected results. The Central University of Technology, Free State, (CUT) did not have a contextualised instrument or process in place as part of its drive for quality enhancement at the beginning of 2001. This task was subsequently assigned to the researcher, in his capacity as the Director: Teaching and Learning. Arising from this identified problem, a number of research questions were formulated for this study.

1.4.1 Problem questions

1. What are the international and national higher education driving forces for a renewed interest in the enhancement of quality in teaching and learning practices? (Chapter 2).

2. What is known about student evaluation of teaching and module content practices at certain international and national higher education institutions? (Chapter 3).

3. What student evaluation measuring instruments exist both internationally and nationally, and how are they constructed, administered and implemented? (Chapter 4).

4. What type of online student evaluation measuring instrument would be the most appropriate within the CUT's context? (Chapter 6).

1.5 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The primary purpose of this study was to undertake research that would lead to the development of a model for student evaluation of teaching and module content to enhance teaching and learning quality at the CUT. The study wished to accomplish the following secondary objectives, namely to:

1. Explore the international and national higher education driving forces for a renewed interest in the enhancement of quality in teaching and learning (Chapter 2).

2. Investigate student evaluation practices, both internationally and nationally (Chapter 3).

3. Determine what instruments do exist internationally and nationally, how are they constructed and what they measure (Chapter 4).

4. Research, explore and develop the most appropriate student evaluation model within the CUT's context (Chapters 5 and 6).

1.6 RESEARCH METHODS

The research falls primarily within the qualitative research paradigm, although some of the data was gathered in a quantitative way. The researcher decided to follow a primarily qualitative approach in view of the fact that the experiences and feedback from the various constituencies are interpreted and described in a qualitative way. It would not have been appropriate to quantify participants' responses, as the purpose of the research is to describe the evolving process that took place over a five-year period and how it has influenced the development of the proposed model presented in Chapter 6.

According to Denzin & Lincoln (2005:76), qualitative research means any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification. Such research includes research about people's lives, stories and behaviour, as well as organisational functioning, social movements, or human relationships. Denzin & Lincoln (2005:225) caution that *"the design of a naturalistic study… cannot be given in advance; it must emerge, develop, unfold…"* Thus, the researcher reports fully on what was done, why it was done, and what the implications are for the findings in this online model for student evaluation of teaching and module content with a view to improving teaching and learning practices at the Central University of Technology, Free State (Patton, 1990:62).

Different typical qualitative research methods were utilised in executing the qualitative research, such as an explorative literature study, interviews with international and national authorities and focus group discussions. All of this is applicable and appropriate when a case study is conducted. Flyvbjerg (2006) argues that case study methods involve an in-depth, longitudinal examination of a single event. This provides a systematic way of looking at events, collecting data, analysing information, and reporting the results. Yin (2002), on the other hand, suggests that a case study should be defined as a research

strategy, an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon within its real-life context. He notes that case study research can be based on any mix of quantitative and qualitative evidence. This study, as a single case study, fits these definitions and provides a detailed description of the student evaluation process at the CUT and the researcher's interpretation of the case. It promotes a better understanding of the evolvement of the student evaluation system at the CUT, and facilitates informed decision-making.

During the implementation of the pilot studies, comprehensive quantitative data was gathered from 4164 students. The quantitative data did not reflect the participants' views on the measuring instrument and evaluation process, but their opinions on teaching performance and module quality.

1.6.1 Literature review

The literature review in this study answered research questions 1 – 3 (see 1.4.1), although it also influenced the entire process and the model in Chapter 6. With a view to answering the first three research questions (see 1.4.1), the researcher investigated and reported on the driving forces behind international and national higher education quality assurance (Chapter 2) and reflected on a number of international and national student evaluation trends (Chapter 3), as well as existing international and national student evaluation measuring instruments (Chapter 4).

The literature study of relevant sources dealing with the topic provides a foundation for the argumentation and recommendations of the study. Quantitative data from questionnaires, as well as qualitative data obtained from the pre-pilot and full pilot studies at the CUT, interviews with different academic staff developers in Australia, New Zealand and the South African higher education sector and stakeholders from the Central University of Technology, Free State, were used to develop a model for the improvement of teaching and learning quality at the CUT.

1.6.2 Personal visits and interviews with international and national experts

In order to gain more hands-on knowledge on the application and management of student evaluation systems, the researcher visited four international universities and consulted with South African universities to orientate himself in this regard.

At the Curtin University of Technology in Australia (see 4.2.1.1), the researcher visited Dr Beverley Oliver (2004), Director at the institution's Teaching Development Unit. Staff at the Unit are responsible, *inter alia,* for the management and implementation of the Student Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ) system. During a visit to the University of Adelaide in Australia (see 4.2.1.2), the researcher met with Dr Ursula McGowan (2004), Deputy Director: Academic Staff Development at the Learning and Teaching Development Unit. One of the objectives of this Unit is to develop, manage and implement appropriate methods for the evaluation of student learning and staff teaching. Dr Margaret Kiley (2004), Director at the Centre for the Enhancement of Learning, Teaching and Scholarship at the University of Canberra in Australia (see 4.2.1.3), indicated that student evaluations of teaching and module content took place on a voluntary basis.

Staff at the Centre for Educational and Professional Development at the Auckland University of Technology in New Zealand (see 4.3.1) are responsible for the management and implementation of the student evaluation process. Dr Jim Lester (2004), Director at the Centre, explained during an interview that the student evaluation process is a tried and trusted package for the enhancement of educational quality at the university. The student evaluation systems at the University of Otago (see 4.3.2), as well as at the institutions visited in England (see 4.4) and the United States of America (see 4.5) were explored to gain more insight in this regard.

Telephonic interviews were conducted with Dr Gerhard du Plessis (2006), Programme Director for the management of the student evaluation system at the University of Pretoria (see 4.6.1); Prof. Chrissie Boughey (2006), Director of the Academic Development Centre at Rhodes University (see 4.6.2), and Dr Brenda Leibowitz (2006), Director of the Centre for Teaching and Learning at the University of Stellenbosch (see 4.6.3). Approval was granted for the researcher to make use of the information on their websites. During a personal visit to Prof. Marlien Herselman (2006), Acting Head of the Department of Knowledge Development at the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), valuable information was gathered on the planning, implementation and management of an online student evaluation feedback system.

1.6.3 Site

Although the student evaluation systems of various universities were studied, both nationally and internationally, this study should be viewed as a case study as the development, implementation and evaluation were conducted at the CUT.

1.6.4 Research phases and steps

In an attempt to develop a student evaluation of teaching and module content measuring instrument and system for the CUT, the research was conducted according to different phases. The first phase was the planning and implementation of a pre-pilot study during 2001. The second phase was the implementation of a full pilot study during 2002, while the third phase and full implementation of the study was conducted during the 2003, 2004 and 2005 academic years. The fifth phase and re-planning of the study was conducted during the 2006 and 2007 academic years, and the sixth and last phase during 2007 (see Table 1.1).

The pilot studies comprised various action steps (listed below) that are described in Chapter 5:

Step 1: Identifying key variables
Step 2: Group feedback strategy
Step 3: Designing the questionnaire
Step 4: Piloting the questionnaire
Step 5: Administering the questionnaire
Step 6: Data analysis
Step 7: Reporting the outcome
Step 8: Acting on the report

Interviews, focus group discussion and semi-structured discussions (see 5.2.3.1), formed part of the research process in all the phases. The aim of these interviews was to collect first-hand information to finalise the structure and content of the questionnaire.

Finally, based on the inputs of all institutional stakeholders, a draft questionnaire was designed by the researcher and submitted to the aforementioned constituencies and the CUT Senate for discussion and critical analysis. Consensus was only reached after several consultations, and the final student evaluation questionnaire was drafted.

Table 1.1: Summary of research methodology utilised during each implementation phase

Phase	Date	Research methodology	Comments
1. Pre-pilot study	April - July 2001	Paper-based questionnaires	535 students in 16 modules at the CUT
2. Full pilot study	May - September 2002	Paper-based questionnaires	3629 students in all faculties at the CUT

3. Full implement-tation and evaluation	2003: March - October 2004: March - October 2004: June and July 2005 - academic years	Paper-based questionnaires Paper-based questionnaires - Benchmarking - Semi-structured interviews - Reconnaissance of the research field Paper-based questionnaires	1735 students in all faculties at the CUT 2300 students in all faculties at the CUT Visits to 3 Australian universities and 1 New Zealand university 3500 students in all faculties
4. Re-planning	2006 - 2007 academic years	- Literature study - Benchmarking - Semi-structured interviews - Telephonic interviews	Telephonic interviews with South African counterparts at three universities, and a site visit to one university
5. Online pilot study	2007: May	Online questionnaire	101 students in School of Information and Communication Technology

1.6.5 Pre-pilot and full pilot phases

The project included a pre-pilot and full pilot phase. During the pre-pilot phase, which ran from April until July 2001, 16 modules were evaluated by 535 students in various schools. The main reasons for the pre-pilot phase were, *inter alia,* to assess the wording and meaning of the questions and determine general reactions to length and content. The full pilot phase of the project took place from May until September 2002. This full pilot stage, in

which 3629 learners were involved, could be regarded as a dummy run of the entire evaluation process, and was conducted to determine whether the analysis provides the type and range of information required for the performance management system and academic staff development initiatives of academic staff at the CUT. It is important to mention that the researcher was also a member of the Internal Project Team that was responsible for the development of a performance management system for academic staff at the CUT. He could therefore share his experience gained during the student evaluation project with the project team, and ensure that these two initiatives supplemented each other.

The amendments made during the full pilot phase, May to September 2002, included strategic changes based on response rates; problems of distribution and return and general comments by lecturers and learners; specific changes in the wording of questions, pre-coded answers and instructions to avoid ambiguities, and changes dictated by the analysis and type of output required at the end of the phase. The student evaluation process at the CUT really began in earnest during 2003, when 1735 questionnaires from all faculties were administered. It became evident that the questionnaire data analysis and report preparation processes were work-intensive, and an external consultant was contracted to assist in this regard. The Centre for Teaching and Learning at the CUT was, however, still responsible for all the administrative and feedback processes.

Academic staff at the CUT became increasingly aware of the necessity of the evaluation process, and the demand for evaluations increased. More than 2300 evaluations were conducted between March and October 2004. The Human Resources Department at the CUT indicated that the submission of student evaluation reports would become compulsory for performance management purposes. During this period, academic staff were reminded of the necessity and importance of “closing the feedback loop” by providing feedback to students on the outcome of the evaluation process.

Student evaluation reports formed part of the institutional portfolio that served before the Higher Education Quality Committee during the CUT institutional audit in 2004, and it became evident that student involvement and participation in the quality enhancement process was a given. The administration of student evaluation questionnaires increased during 2005 and 2006, and 3500 evaluations were conducted during this period. The entire administrative process became extremely work-intensive and posed a heavy burden to the Centre for Teaching and Learning, making the assistance of additional personnel indispensable.

1.6.6 Data analysis

The analysis of the questionnaire data from the pre-pilot project in 2001 was conducted by the staff at the Centre of Teaching and Learning. Due to the extent of the full pilot project during 2002 and the lack of human capacity, the services of an external organisation were obtained to analyse the data. An example of a data analysis report is reflected in Table 5.2.

The researcher also analysed the data of interviews from individual participants as separate cases, and thereafter performed a cross-case analysis in order to gain a broader view. Denzin & Lincoln (2005:49) have argued that an understanding of individual cases (before they are aggregated in any way) is the best guarantor for theoretical assertions that are grounded in specific contexts and real-world patterns. Typologies were created to facilitate the identification of themes and sub-themes that were taken into consideration in designing the final model for student evaluation at the CUT.

1.6.7 Research ethics

The researcher is aware of the nature of the research, and the fact that some of the questions might affect the respondents' standing with the institution due to the sensitivity of the information. Confidentiality was ensured through carefully maintained participant anonymity.

To maintain lecturer and student co-operation in applying the evaluation system during the pilot period, every effort was made to assure the lecturers and students of the confidentiality of the evaluation data and outcomes. During the administration of questionnaires in class, the evaluation administrator emphasised the confidentiality of questionnaire data and reminded the students that the questionnaires would be completed anonymously. Lecturers were not present during the evaluations, and the completed questionnaires were collected and processed by the researcher. The feedback reports reflected only the module code for identification purposes, and were administered and distributed with the utmost responsibility and confidentiality.

During personal or telephonic interviews with CUT colleagues, students, or colleagues from national and international universities, the researcher obtained approval from each interviewee for the use of written or spoken information. In most cases, the information is available on their institutions' websites. No references to any staff members at the CUT were disclosed, nor personal and confidential information regarding such staff members. Approval was granted by all the interviewees from external institutions (see 1.6.2) for the disclosure of their names and research information during this study.

1.6.8 Demarcation of the study

This research falls within the Higher Education Studies, an interdisciplinary field, with Education one of the major disciplines involved. Higher Education is a rather new field of study, different from Education, which focuses primarily on the young learner, beginning with the pre-school stage, right through primary school and secondary school. Higher Education focuses on adult, post-secondary school learners, and specifically on andragogy. Within Higher Education as field of study one also finds the typical discipline focus, such as Higher Education management, philosophy, teaching and learning (psychology), curriculum development and andragogical theories. Student evaluation touches on management (the administrative side thereof), as well as psychology (learning theories) and curriculum-related issues. This is in line

with the interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary nature of Higher Education studies, which cuts across all disciplines.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The Executive Committee of the Senate at the CUT formulated a Resolution during January 2001 (see 1.6.5) representing the core of this study, which instructed the researcher to initiate a project on the evaluation of teaching and module content by students. This would be the beginning of a new culture of quality assurance at the CUT.

The intention of the Senate Resolution was to enhance the teaching and learning practices at the CUT, with the emphasis on the evaluation of teaching performance and the quality of module content by students. The primary purpose of the study was therefore to undertake research that would lead to the development of an effective and efficient measuring instrument for student evaluation at the CUT. All role players (see 5.2.3.1 – step 2) were continuously consulted during the designing of the questionnaire (see 5.2.3.1 – step 3), as well as the piloting (see 5.2.3.2 – step 4), and the administering thereof (see 5.2.3.2 – step 5). Comments and inputs that could contribute to the development of an effective an efficient paper-based questionnaire were considered during the planning, implementation and evaluation of the pre-pilot, full pilot and full implementation phases.

The continuous process of consultation and feedback between the researcher and role players established an open communication channel, and reflected in typical cycles of action learning. The significance of the study is anchored in the belief that the student evaluation process contributes to the enhancement of teaching and learning practices at the CUT, and could serve as a student evaluation model at other higher education institutions.

The significance of the study is further emphasised by the following factors:

- The comprehensiveness of the qualitative and quantitative data reports submitted to academic staff (see Table 5.2).

- The focus on module content evaluation – considered the most effective level for gathering and using feedback because it is closest to the student experience, and therefore most appropriate for ensuring fairly immediate improvements to the teaching and learning process.

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following aspects are indicators of the demarcations of this research:

- The target group was limited to students enrolled for formal qualifications at the main campus of the Central University of Technology, Free State, and excluded students from the Kimberley and Welkom campuses. Postgraduate students were also excluded. The target group is nonetheless representative of all undergraduate students from the first to the fourth year of study.

- The emphasis of the research was placed on student feedback as one indicator of teaching effectiveness and module quality. Other indicators of teaching and learning quality, such as peer evaluation and self-evaluation, were not investigated.

1.9 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted according to the following structure:

Chapter One (an introductory chapter) provides a broad overview of the study, including the rationale of the study, problem statement, purpose of the study, research methods, delimitation of the field of study, and structure of the research.

The focus of Chapter Two is a literature overview of international and national trends impacting on quality assurance in teaching and learning practices, with a view to providing the background needed for this study. Trends as experienced in certain European countries, the United States of America, East Asia and the Pacific, as well as South Africa, are discussed.

In Chapter Three, the researcher describes the role of student evaluation in the educational process. The rationale underpinning the introduction of a university-wide student evaluation system is that such a system, if properly planned and introduced, will presumably lead to the enhancement of teaching and learning. It is emphasised that student feedback, as one indicator of teaching effectiveness and module quality, will enable university administrators to make informed personnel and programme quality decisions.

Chapter Four explores international and national trends in student evaluation processes. Given the divergent interests of some stakeholders, as well as changing economic and policy trends, the systems to evaluate teaching and module content tend to develop over time. In this chapter, the researcher describes a number of student evaluation systems that are used both nationally and internationally to evaluate teaching practices and module content.

In Chapter Five, the researcher gives a meta-analysis of the paper-based student evaluation systems as the CUT.

The rationale, challenges, pilot project, and administration of an online student evaluation system are the focus of Chapter 6.

Synthesising the main findings of the literature review, findings from the pilot studies, observations by the researcher, interviews and focus group discussions constitute Chapter 7.
The “sign-postings” that appear at the end of each section in literature chapters 2, 3 and 4 refer to implications for that specific section with regard to the entire student evaluation system.

1.10 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

The following concepts, which are used throughout the text, are briefly defined as working definitions in the context of this thesis for the sake of orientating the reader.

1.10.1 System, model and process

The terms system, model and process are used on a continuous basis throughout the study. For clarification purposes the meaning and relatedness of each term, within the context of this study, are described.

System: According to Steiner (1988), an education system must consist of the teacher, student, content and context subsystems. In the context of this study, the researcher argues that a student evaluation of teaching and module content system consist of the administrator (Centre for Teaching and Learning at the CUT), the lecturer (provider of the teaching and learning process), the students (evaluators of the teaching process), the content (teaching practices and module quality), and the context (the environment where the evaluation occurs).

Model: Kühne (2005) argues that a model is information on something, created by someone, for somebody, for some purpose. In context, the paper-based and online student evaluation models provides information on the student evaluation outcomes on teaching and module content quality, created by the researcher for the lecturing staff at the CUT to enhance the quality of their teaching and learning practices.

Process: Hopkins (1997) maintains that a process can be broken down into a series of key steps and tasks which have a logical structure and a systematic step-by-step approach. In the context of this study, the researcher believes that this relates to the step-by-step actions during the student evaluation process.

The step-by-step process (actions and tasks) during the implementation of the paper-based or online student evaluation of teaching and module content models forms part of the whole student evaluation system at the CUT.

1.10.2 Student evaluation

The CUT views student evaluation as an approach that integrates student views into management strategic decision-making processes, and is therefore a quality enhancement tool designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning practices. It is furthermore viewed as an ongoing process of exploration and analysis of student views on the learning experience, contributing towards the establishment of an accountability process to ensure that concerns are addressed in a clearly defined action cycle.

Where reference is made to the concept “student evaluation” in the thesis, it reflects the entire student evaluation of teaching and module content process.

1.10.3 Student evaluation measurement instruments

Student evaluation measuring instruments, also named questionnaires in this study, are commonly used in higher education institutions to assess teaching and module content quality. The data generated by these instruments can be used to assist lecturing staff in improving their teaching practices, for personnel administrative practices such as determining annual teaching performance, for promotional purposes or the awarding of teaching excellence awards. Given the way in which this data is used, it is imperative that the measuring instrument should be valid and reliable.

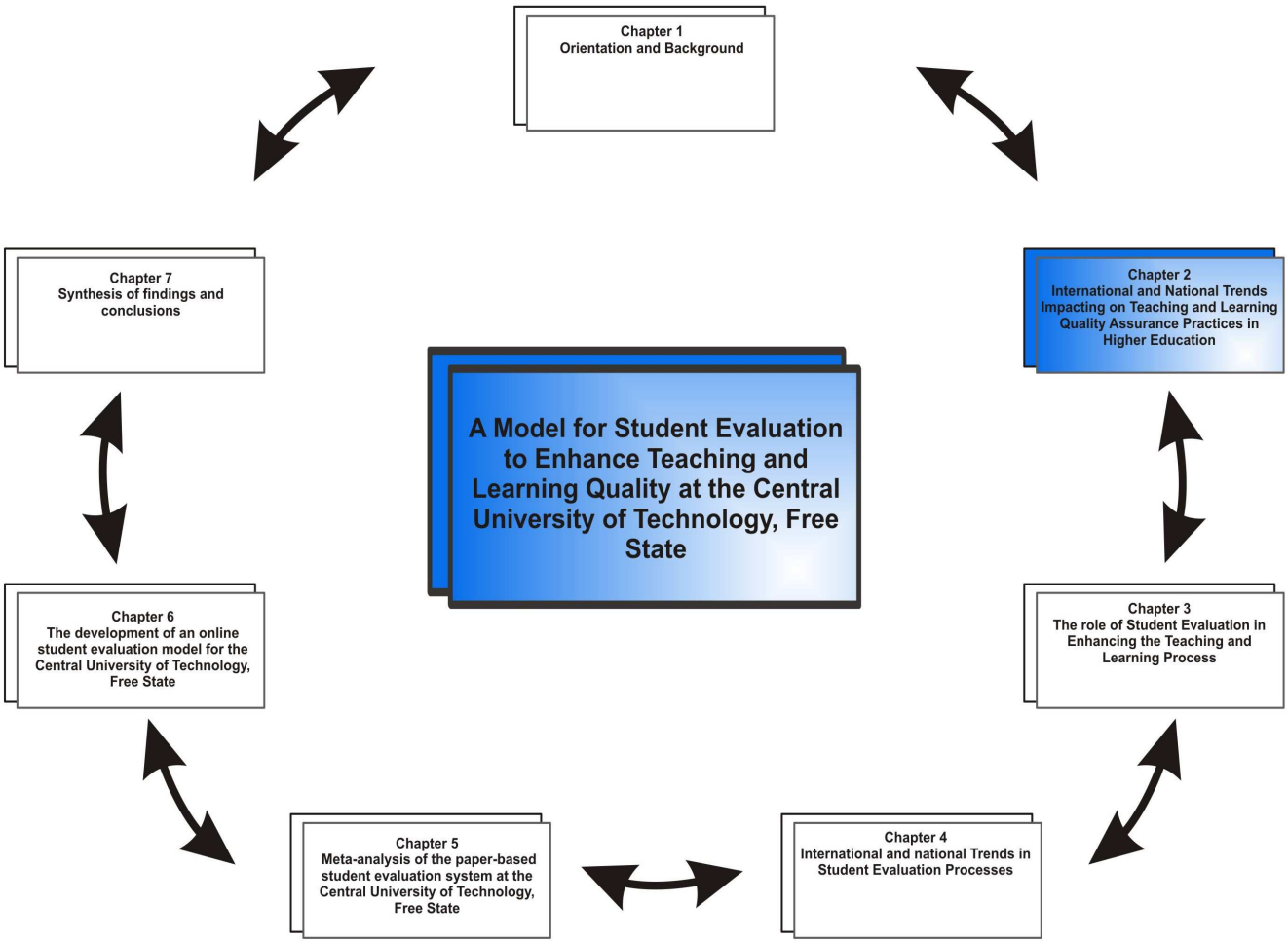
1.10.4 Quality assurance

In the Council on Higher Education (CHE) document *Criteria for Institutional Audits* (2004), quality assurance is defined as the processes of ensuring that specified standards or requirements have been achieved. In the context of this thesis, the researcher believes that quality assurance is the planned and systematic review process of an institution, programme or module to determine whether acceptable standards of teaching and learning have been maintained and/or enhanced.

1.11 CONCLUSION

Chapter One explored the background to the study. This chapter not only explained the need for this study, but also the complexities and problems experienced with student evaluation systems. This chapter further provided the rationale behind the study, the problem statement, the purpose of the study, research methods and delimitations of the study, as well as an orientation as to how the study was approached. The subsequent chapter outlines the international and national trends impacting on quality assurance in teaching and learning practices.

CHAPTER 2


Chapter 1
Orientation and Background
Chapter 2
International and National Trends Impacting on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Practices in Higher Education
Chapter 3
The role of Student Evaluation in Enhancing the Teaching and Learning Process
Chapter 4
International and national Trends in Student Evaluation Processes
Chapter 5
Meta-analysis of the paper-based student evaluation system at the Central University of Technology, Free State
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Synthesis of findings and conclusions
A Model for Student Evaluation to Enhance Teaching and Learning Quality at the Central University of Technology, Free State

CHAPTER 2

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL TRENDS IMPACTING ON TEACHING AND LEARNING QUALITY ASSURANCE PRACTICES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

One of the key and enduring characteristics of higher education institutions throughout the centuries has been the ability to adapt to changing demands. This capacity has enabled higher education institutions to retain much of their distinguishing central features as institutions of knowledge and learning.

As has happened many times in the past, higher education institutions now face a number of critical challenges that may impact on the quality of their teaching and learning practices. Internationally, it is increasingly being recognised that improvement, enhancement and accountability functions in the teaching and learning process are part of the quality assurance agenda. The Review Committee on Higher Education Financing and Policy in Australia (1997) concluded that “providing a high-quality learning experience should be at the heart of university endeavour.” In the same context, the New Zealand Tertiary Education Advisory Commission (2000) recommended that “the needs of learners should be recognised as central to the design of the tertiary education system”. So, too, the Dearing Committee (1997) in the United Kingdom argued that “the enhancement and promotion of learning and teaching must be a priority for all of higher education” (Commonwealth of Australia, 2002).

The outcome of Chapter Two is to provide a literature review of the international (European, North American, East Asian and Pacific) as well as national trends regarding teaching and learning quality assurance in higher education, in order to provide the background needed for this study.

2.2 INTERNATIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE TRENDS IMPACTING ON TEACHING AND LEARNING PRACTICES

On the surface, a higher education institution is no more or less complicated than a company that produces multiple products. However, according to Fife & Janosik (2000), there are two major factors that place a higher education institution in a category of its own: the much wider constituency that a higher education institution must satisfy, and the measurability of its outcomes. A business is generally accountable to its customers to deliver a satisfactory product or service, to the government to comply with various regulations, and to its stockholders for sound financial management. Higher education institutions must do all these things, namely satisfy a constituency that includes the academic staff as creators of the knowledge base, the students (who are major stakeholders), alumni, parents, employees, elected representatives, donors, and the general public.

Many higher education teaching and learning outcomes are easily measured, but others, such as critical thinking or the ability to make sound decisions in ambiguous situations, are more difficult. The process of defining, measuring and reconciling the expectations held for teaching and learning practices is much more complicated and inclusive than it is for the corporate world. Although this does not mean that quality teaching and learning practices cannot be defined for higher education institutions, it is not as easy as it might seem (Fife & Janosik, 2000). The researcher believes that quality results from understanding the dynamic relationship of vision, mission, resource inputs, systems and processes and outcomes, as well as the need for continuous assessment and improvement of the teaching and learning process. It should therefore be obvious - both for business and the educational sector - that setting quality standards must involve those who create and those who

consume their goods and services, namely the academic staff and business entrepreneurs and the students and customers.

Barrie (2001) emphasises that, in a time of shrinking public funding, government quality assurance agendas worldwide are being brought to bear on the unfamiliar target of university teaching. According to him, such quality assurance agendas are based primarily on an economic-rationalist interpretation of quality, and seek to assure that higher education teaching practices represent value for money. He concludes that, while claims of quality teaching are not new, the introduction of processes to explicitly measure and demonstrate teaching quality are. In the past, teaching was to a large extent a private activity that took place behind the closed doors of the classroom. It was a transaction between lecturer and student that was not open to public scrutiny or critique, and was not subject to the approval of the institutional management.

The rapid and continuous transformation of the international higher education landscape raises many questions and challenges, and these changes are being felt at all levels of the institution. Higher education institutions must not only transmit knowledge for their own sake, but also provide skilled labour, produce new knowledge and provide state-of-the-art technologically advanced teaching and learning programmes. Karlsson (2004) emphasises that, although higher education institutions and governments worldwide are able to respond to some changes, the internationalisation of education, international mobility of students, the establishment of branch campuses in foreign countries and electronic learning technologies are all factors that make quality teaching and learning practices difficult. It can be argued that the constant increase in variables in the international higher education context makes it even more important to have stable, valid and reliable quality assurance mechanisms in place. Students, businesses and governments all require the ability to assess the quality of the services rendered by educational institutions. As international trade in higher education develops, quality - especially in the teaching and learning context - constitutes a way of

regulating this rapidly expanding market. It protects students as consumers, and defends academic values in general.

The integration of quality assurance principles into higher education has become a European-wide issue, since the need for a clear quality assurance and accreditation system was laid down as one of the Bologna Processes (see 2.2.1). This move towards integrating quality assurance into higher education has benefited institutions and students by setting out to develop a model for international co-operation in higher education that improves the quality, transparency and comparability of degrees and the studies that have been completed in the process of qualifying for such degrees. According to the National Unions of Students in Europe (ESIB, 2002), the benefit to the institution, students, academic staff and society in general that can be gained by implementing a recognised quality assurance process in a course or faculty at institutional, national and international level, is clear.

Quality is often described as the totality of features and characteristics of a service that affect its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs. Quality in higher education, according to Article 11 of the World Declaration on Higher Education (UNESCO 1998), is a multi-dimensional concept that should embrace all its functions and activities, namely: teaching and learning, academic programmes, research and scholarship, staffing, students, buildings, facilities, equipment, community service and the educational environment. Quality assurance should take the form of internal self-evaluation and external review, conducted in a transparent way by independent specialists, if possible in co-operation with international experts. Independent national bodies should be established and comparative standards of quality, recognised at international level, should be defined. Stakeholders should be an integral part of the institutional evaluation process. Quality also requires that higher education should be characterised by its international dimension: exchange of knowledge, interactive networking, mobility of academic staff and students, and international research projects, while taking into account the national cultural values and circumstances (ESIB, 2002).

The quality assurance trends impacting on the teaching and learning practices as experienced in the European countries, the United States of America (USA), East Asia and the Pacific, as well as South Africa, are discussed in the following paragraphs.

2.2.1 The role of the European Union in enhancing quality in European higher education

Europe is characterised by a public higher education system in which higher education institutions derive their formal qualification-awarding capacity directly or indirectly from the state. Until the mid-1980s, only a small number of European higher education institutions took the possible internationalisation of the European higher education system into account.

While the various European national quality assurance agencies had been exchanging information about their quality assurance procedures for some time, there was no formal European mechanism in place to recognise the results of an evaluation across national borders. Since 1988, five key quality assurance developments have taken place in Europe to enhance quality teaching and learning practices across national borders. The key developments, as described in the European Student Handbook on Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESIB 2002), are:

- The Magna Charta Universitatum in 1988, which upholds university autonomy, serves as the precondition for promoting the adaptability of universities to the ever-changing requirements of today's society.

- The meeting of ministers at the Sorbonne University during 1998 discussed the central role of higher education in the development of Europe through the creation of a European Higher Education Area by 2010.

- The Bologna Declaration in 1999, in terms of which certain European countries agreed to increase the competitiveness of Europe through a range of measures aimed at creating a European Higher Education Area. These include *inter alia* a system of credits and co-operation in the enhancement of teaching and learning practices.

- During 2001, the Salamanca Convention of European higher education institutions considered quality in teaching and learning as a fundamental building block for the establishment of a European Higher Education Area.

- Similarly, the Prague Communiqué of the European Education Ministers of 2001 regarded quality as a major factor in determining the competitiveness and attractiveness of European higher education.

Since 1999, the European concept of the quality of higher education has been strongly influenced by the follow-up process of the Bologna Declaration, in which the European Union Ministers of Education called for greater visibility, transparency and comparability of quality in higher education. The Prague Communique of 2001 challenged three organisations - the European University Association (EUA), the National Unions of Students in Europe (ESIB) and the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) - to collaborate in establishing a common framework of reference and disseminating best practice in teaching and learning. Based on this, the ENQA took the initiative of inviting the leadership of the EUA and the ESIB to a first meeting in June 2001, in order to discuss mutual interests and possible grounds for co-operation.

A recommendation by the Council of the European Union in 1998, which envisaged the introduction of quality assurance methods in higher education and the promotion of European co-operation in this field, formed the basis of the discussions during the meeting. The recommendation focused on the establishment of transparent quality assessment and quality assurance systems, which should be based on a number of common principles. These principles had been established in earlier European pilot projects, and relate mainly to the autonomy of the institutions responsible for quality assurance, respect for the autonomy of higher education institutions, the various stages in the assessment procedure and the publication of quality assessment reports (Council of the European Union, 1998).

The trends presented in the previous paragraphs show a move in Europe towards increased attention to quality teaching and learning practices. The creation of the ENQA brings the hope that these developments will indeed help to create greater transparency in European higher education institutions. The recommendation by the Council of the European Union (1998), as mentioned earlier in this section, encouraged member European states to establish quality assurance systems with the following aims (ENQA 2003):

- To safeguard the quality of higher education within the economic, social and cultural contexts of the countries concerned, while taking into account the European dimension and the rapidly changing world.

- To encourage and assist higher education institutions in applying appropriate measures, particularly quality assurance and training and research, as a means of improving the quality of teaching and learning practices.

- To stimulate a mutual exchange of information on quality and quality assurance at community and global levels, and to encourage co-operation between higher education institutions in this area.

It thus seems that all European countries have some kind of institutional quality assurance mechanism in place, although they differ significantly in terms of purpose, focus and organisation. Quality assurance is an internal responsibility of higher education institutions in certain European countries where no national quality assurance agency exists, such as Austria, Switzerland, the French community of Belgium, Germany and Slovenia.

2.2.1.1 *Broader European trends*

In countries like Portugal, Spain, Germany and Iceland, universities are obligated to implement their own quality assurance system, although national quality assurance bodies exist to take responsibility for the organisation of the quality assurance process.

However, the majority of countries have a quality assurance agency also carrying out external evaluation functions. Some operate as single national agencies in unitary or integrated systems, e.g. in the United Kingdom, Norway, Sweden and Romania, or in binary systems, e.g. Denmark and Estonia. Poland and Ireland have an agency for each sub-sector of a binary system. In countries with decentralised or federal structures in higher education, some specific features exist: in Spain, some communities such as Andalucia and Catalunya have their own quality assurance system and agency that follows the same principles as the agency at national level: in Germany, the Federal Ministry is funding a special project operated by the Rectors' Conference for the sharing of information and experience concerning quality evaluation between the federal states, and the United Kingdom has two agencies - one for Scotland and another for the rest of the country (ESIB 2002).

In Italy, the 1999 reform laws regarding higher education required all universities to re-organise their self-evaluation and replaced the former "observatory" for university evaluation by a new, independent National Committee for Quality Assurance, which can set standards and produce reports. The first phase of Spain's national plan for quality evaluation expired

at the end of 2000. In Ireland, the new *Qualifications Act of 1999* created a new National Qualifications Agency with two awarding bodies (for higher education and for further education) in addition to the standing Higher Education Authority, which reviews the quality assurance procedures of universities. Austria, Switzerland, the French community of Belgium and Slovakia have plans to set up a national quality assurance agency that would seek to establish links with ENQA. A similar project also exists in Greece, where quality assurance has gained acceptance in higher education institutions (ESIB, 2002).

Slovenia has no plans for the creation of a quality assurance agency. In most countries, external quality assurance agencies deal with the evaluation of programmes, rather than entire institutions, and in several countries the evaluation process is organised along subject lines on a cross-institutional basis, e.g. the Netherlands, Flanders, Estonia and the United Kingdom. This type of "benchmarking" of particular disciplinary or professional areas is becoming increasingly important and more common (ESIB, 2002).

2.2.1.2 *Discussion of the European model*

One can say that, from a European perspective, there is a development of different systems and methods that look increasingly similar. It is hard to say whether this stems from the aims of the European Union or the international interaction. The discussion about the increasing need for further education and training for a bigger part of the population in the knowledge-based society is now the goal description for higher education in all European countries.

Whether the economic-productive view of knowledge and the human capital ideal is also something that dominates the students' view of their education or whether only the programme descriptions and the contemporary rhetoric for the governments are influencing factors in this regard, is not clear. In the current political rhetoric, education is considered fundamentally important for economic and democratic development. There is also a trend towards a more professional type of university lecturer who is supposed to be the 'facilitator,

researcher and administrator', in addition to an increasing perception that university lecturers should lean towards a more disciplined and research-oriented view regarding quality (ESIB, 2002).

As indicated in the Communiqué of the Conference of Ministers responsible for Higher Education in Berlin on 19 September 2003, the quality of higher education has been given top priority with a view to the establishment of a European Higher Education Area by 2010. The need for mutually shared criteria and methodologies on quality assurance was emphasised. It was also stressed that the primary responsibility for quality assurance, with particular reference to the enhancement of teaching and learning practices, lies with each higher education institution itself, and that this provides the basis for real accountability within the national quality framework. It was agreed that, by 2005, European quality assurance systems should include a definition of the responsibilities of the quality assurance agencies and institutions involved; an evaluation of programmes or institutions, including internal assessment, external review, participation of students and the publication of results; a system of accreditation or comparable procedures, and international participation, co-operation and networking.

2.2.2 The quality assurance system in the United States of America

Accreditation in the United States of America - with specific reference to Northern America - is a process of external review to scrutinise colleges, universities and programmes for quality assurance and improvement. It is the primary means by which higher education institutions assure and improve the quality of teaching and learning practices.

The role of the accreditation process is extensive in the sense that accrediting organisations are responsible for the accreditation of approximately 6400 higher education institutions in 50 states. According to the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), more than 18,700 programmes are accredited by recognised accreditors, in a variety of subject-related fields (CHEA, 2003a). Accreditation is a private form of self-regulation that serves the higher education institutions as well as the students, the government and

the public, and plays an important role in the American educational environment. It sustains and enhances the quality of higher education, maintains the academic values of higher education, acts as a buffer against the politicising of higher education and serves public interests and needs (CHEA, 2003a).

2.2.2.1 *The role of accreditation bodies in enhancing quality in the American higher education system*

Accrediting organisations in the USA operate in an environment in which two of the major levels of government have significant authority in respect of higher education (CHEA, 2003b). Firstly, state governments have primary responsibility for all levels of education. A public higher education institution must be authorised to operate by a state, whilst private higher education institutions must be licensed by a state. The conditions associated with granting this authority or licensing vary from state to state, but in most states institutions may be authorised to operate without being accredited. State governments routinely review the finances and programmes of public higher institutions who are funded through the annual or biannual budgeting of a state, and must submit requests for funding to state legislatures. State governments, directly and indirectly, play a prominent role in determining tuition fees at public institutions, and public and private institutions must comply with a range of state laws applicable to the rest of society in areas such as employment and working contracts (CHEA, 2003b).

Secondly, the American federal government cannot grant authority for higher education institutions to operate, nor license such institutions. It cannot take action in academic areas such as curriculum design, academic staff matters or the setting of academic standards. However, the federal government is the main source of funds for student grants and loans, as well as public funds for research that go to public and private higher institutions. The federal government also holds public and private higher education institutions accountable for compliance with federal laws such as civil rights and occupational safety (CHEA, 2003b).

Accreditation in USA higher education with regard to teaching and learning matters entails the following (CHEA, 2003b):

- Assuring quality – accreditation is the primary means by which colleges and universities assure quality for students and the public, especially through quality teaching and learning practices. Accredited status signifies to students and the public that an institution or programme meets minimum standards with regard to aspects such as the competency of the academic staff, the quality of curriculum content, the professionalism of the student services and the effectiveness of the library services.

- Access to federal funds – accreditation is required for access to federal funds, such as student aid. The federal government and accreditation institutions maintain a co-operative relationship where the government relies on confirmation by such institutions that the quality of institutions and programmes satisfy certain standards. Federal student aid funds are available to students only if the institution they are attending is accredited by a recognised accredited organisation.

- Easing transfer – accreditation is important to students with a view to transferring courses and programmes among colleges and universities. Educational institutions take note of whether or not the credits a student wishes to transfer, have been earned at an accredited institution.

- Gaining employer confidence – the accreditation status of a higher education institution in the United States is important to employees when the credentials of job applications are evaluated and decisions are made with regard to supporting employees for further studies.

There are three types of American accrediting organisations, namely regional accreditors, national accreditors, and specialised and professional accreditors. According to Alderman (2000), the responsibility of accrediting organisations is to reassure the public of the quality of the teaching and learning practices of American higher education institutions. Their reports might be shared with agencies of the federal and state governments, but are not published or made available to the public.

Accreditation in the American higher education system is a process of self-regulation to ensure and improve teaching and learning quality practices. This self-regulation involves the development of standards by the accrediting organisations, which are used by higher education institutions to undertake self-studies. Accreditation, as the basic mechanism developed and used by the American higher education institutions for self-scrutiny and self-criticism for more than a century, has proved to be a valuable resource for assuring quality as higher education has grown and diversified over the years. The accreditation process has been instrumental in ensuring that the core academic values of American higher education are maintained over time (CHEA, 2003).

2.2.3 The quality assurance systems for teaching and learning in East Asia and the Pacific

The International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education was founded in 1991, with 20 member countries. The number of member countries in 2003, with a national quality assurance system in place, increased to 60. This growth is mirrored in East Asia and the Pacific, in the sense that 13 quality assurance bodies are operating in countries in this region, the world's most populated and economically dynamic region. The general characteristics of these 13 national bodies are explained in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Quality assurance and accreditation in higher education in East Asia and the Pacific

		Founding and Governance				Q A Type			Funded by		
Country	**Year founded**	**Founded by Government**	**Non-government origin**	**Independent body**	**Government representative body**	**Accreditation**	**Audit**	**Assessment**	**Government**	**Institutions**	**Other**
Australia	2001	X		X	X		X		X	X	
China PRC: Provincial	2000	X			X	X		X	X	X	
Hong Kong PRC	1990	X		X		X			X	X	X
India	1994	X		X		X		X	X	X	
Indonesia	1994	X		X		X			X	X	
Japan Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA)	1947		X	X		X				X	
National Institution for Academic Degrees (NIAD)	2000	X				X			X		
Korea	1982	X		X		X			X		
Malaysia	1996	X		X		X				X	
Mongolia	2000	X		X		X				X	
New Zealand	1994		X	X			X			X	
Philippines Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines	1987	X		X		X			X		

Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities	1957		X	X		X				X	
Thailand	1999	X		X		X			X	X	
Vietnam	2002	X				X			X		

[Source: Working Paper Series on Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education in East Asia and the Pacific, 2003]

As indicated in Table 2.1, three types of quality assurance are operative to some extent in higher education institutions in East Asia and the Pacific, namely assessment, auditing and accreditation. In this region, assessment is also applied as an evaluation tool that generates a grade, whether numeric or literal, and is used by India and China in combination with the process of accreditation. Institutional audits, as a check to ascertain whether what a higher education institution explicitly or implicitly claims about itself is true, are found in well-established higher education systems with strong traditions of internal self-evaluation, such as Australia and New Zealand. Accreditation is an evaluation of whether an institution is managing its teaching and learning practices in an effective and efficient manner, and whether it qualifies for a certain status and is the primary choice of governments in the region for national systems of quality assurance. This status may have implications for the institution itself as a kind of permission to operate as a higher education institution, and/or for its students, in the form of eligibility for grants or a professional degree.

Higher education institutions in East Asia and the Pacific that comply with the accreditation criteria specified in legislation, are found to:

- have educationally appropriate objectives, as defined over time by the specific higher education community;

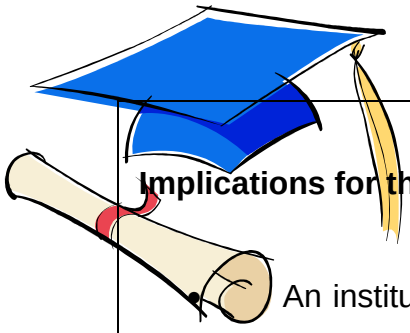
- have the financial, human and physical resources required to achieve these objectives;

- have demonstrated that these objectives are being achieved, and

- have provided sufficient evidence to support the belief that they will continue to achieve their objectives for a reasonable period of time.

According to Lenn (2004), there are a number of initiatives that, if implemented and managed correctly, will serve to strengthen the quality of higher education teaching and learning practices in East Asia and the Pacific. These activities include the development of staff to carry out the accreditation functions and the establishment of a region-wide quality assurance forum that should form the foundation for a regionalised quality assurance system.

In addition, the establishment of a regional pool of external reviewers, the implementation of a regional quality assurance service and staff exchange systems and the collaborative training and development of staff will all play a pivotal role in this regard.



Implications for this study

- An institution needs to reach consensus on what constitutes quality teaching and learning practices.

- A student evaluation system should be directed at improving the quality of teaching and learning on a continuous basis.

- Institutions should determine whether skilled labour, new knowledge and state-of-the-art, technologically advanced programmes are being presented.

- An institutional quality assurance system should be internationally recognised.

- Transparent quality assessment and quality assurance systems should be established.

- The need for mutually shared criteria and methodologies on quality assurance is of the utmost importance.

- Student evaluation practices should be carried out in conjunction with other forms of evaluation and data collection, such as self-evaluation and peer evaluation.

2.3 NATIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE TRENDS IMPACTING ON TEACHING AND LEARNING PRACTICES

According to Smout & Stephenson (2001), South African higher education institutions have a long tradition of trying to do things right, of being concerned that graduates should be of a high standard. They emphasise the fact that evidence of this stretches back to the first university colleges that pre-date the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910. From the earliest times in South African higher education history, one of the critical measures of output was the ability of South African university graduates to further their studies at the top universities in the United Kingdom.

By 1994, there were 21 universities and 15 technikons in South Africa serving a population of almost 40 million people, and quality ranged widely across these institutions. The historically white institutions were well established with considerable resources, significant financial reserves and long-standing relationships with corporate and individual donors. These institutions have had ample time and resources to devote to quality issues. The historically black

higher education institutions, by contrast, have had much less opportunity to build up their academic reputation and quality assurance structures.

During January 1995, the South African Universities Vice-Chancellors' Association (SAUVCA), then statutorily known as the Committee of University Principals, established a Quality Promotion Unit (QPU) to assist universities in conducting productive institutional self-evaluation at different levels, and creating a basis in the higher education system for the accreditation of programmes for the purpose of articulation (South African Universities Vice-Chancellors' Association, 1997).

The philosophy of the QPU was that of self-regulation, quality improvement rather than quality control, of evaluating institutions against their own mission statements rather than uniform standards, and of avoiding a direct link to state funding (Stephenson, 1999). The emphasis of the QPU was therefore on quality systems rather than quality *per se*, and fitness for purpose was the principal term of reference. SAUVCA held the view that ownership of the quality assurance system should rest with the universities, and not with the government or an independent quality assurance body (Council on Higher Education, 2000).

On the other hand, the Certification Council for Technikon Education (SERTEC) was established by Act during 1986, as an autonomous statutory body responsible for ensuring equal standards and certification of technikon qualifications. During its first meeting, the Council decided that its main focus would be to monitor the quality of technikon education, and the first evaluation committees performed their assessments in 1991. The SERTEC methodology evolved from accreditation based on compliance with accreditation, and its focus moved towards institutional rather than programme evaluation.

The accreditation model followed by SERTEC was one of self-evaluation reports, followed by two-day site visits by committees composed of peers, private and public sector representatives and professional bodies, to validate the self-evaluation and to ensure that the prescribed norms and standards were met. Educational changes formed part of the new political dispensation

in 1994 and the focus in education was on the outcomes achieved through learning, with particular attention to those generic learning outcomes that were fundamental to the learning process. A fundamental change during this period was that a new external quality assurance body would serve the entire higher education sector in South Africa, and SERTEC would no longer serve the technikons (Genis, 2001).

2.3.1 Policy and legislation impacting on the quality of teaching and learning practices

The **Higher Education Act, Act 101 of 1997,** is the end product of the deliberations, beliefs, ideas and inputs of South African educational experts, as well as knowledgeable experts from other countries. In the Preamble of the Act, the first two sentences are of particular importance for the enhancement of a co-ordinated approach to quality teaching and learning practices, namely:

> "Whereas it is desirable to establish a single co-ordinated higher education system, which promotes co-operative governance and provides for programme-based higher education" and "Restructure and transform programmes and institutions to respond better to the human resource and economic needs of the Republic of South Africa…"

The above-mentioned Act was preceded by the **White Paper on Higher Education Transformation, 1997,** which reflected on challenges facing higher education institutions, with specific reference to the enhancement of quality teaching and learning practices. The latter document stipulates quite clearly that the programme-based approach ensures greater articulation between the different tiers of the HE system, that it promotes flexibility and diversification in the range of programmes offered and fosters co-operation between institutions that will result in structural changes and a reconfiguration of the institutional landscape.

This resulted in the development of a new programme accreditation system, as experienced in higher education today. The establishment of educational bodies and authorities during the last number of years drastically transformed the higher education landscape. Some of these entities have very important

implications for the implementation of a programme-based higher education system and the adoption of an outcomes-based education and training approach to teaching and learning.

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), established by section 3 of the **South African Qualifications Authority Act of 1995 (Act No. 58 of 1995)**, legalises governmental involvement in tertiary education, as it requires that all qualifications (including tertiary qualifications) be registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The NQF is therefore the linchpin of the government's plan for education and training in South Africa. It is the instrument through which access, quality and development will most effectively be encouraged as we move towards becoming a truly learning society. According to Mehl (1998), some of the guiding principles in this regard are:

- to establish a learning environment that enables people to realise their full social and economic potential in the modern world;
- to produce educated people who are independent problem-solvers and reflective learners, and who have learnt how to learn and how to continue learning;
- to provide a learning environment with the proper integration of academic abilities and workplace skills in order to produce qualifications that appropriate intellectual content;
- to remove the "learning ceiling" and to provide a pathway of lifelong learning towards meaningful qualifications;
- to establish the framework for a nation of lifelong learners who are able to realise their full potential through flexible curricula.

With the establishment of the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) in 1995, quality was endorsed as a key principle for a transforming higher education system. The Commission stressed the importance of comprehensive, development-oriented external quality assurance for a single,

co-ordinated higher education system with effective planning and monitoring capacity. External quality assurance was, in the NCHE's view, the only way of managing quality differences across institutions and programmes (Council on Higher Education, 2005). The NCHE emphasised effective self-evaluation at institutional level as a key feature of the management systems of autonomous higher education institutions, and recommended that the external quality assurance system operate within the framework of the SAQA Act.

The Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC), which was established in June 1999, is a permanent committee of the Council on Higher Education (CHE) with statutory responsibility for conducting institutional audits, as mandated by the Higher Education Act of 1997. This responsibility of the HEQC is also recognised by SAQA through its accreditation of the CHE as the Education and Training Quality Assurer (ETQA) for the higher education band (Council on Higher Education, 2005).

The mandated roles of the HEQC and its definition of quality, as published in the HEQC Founding Document in 2001, are summarised below.

Table 2.2: HEQC-mandated roles

Role	Definition
Accreditation (programmes)	• The accreditation of public providers to offer stipulated learning programmes leading to NQF-registered qualifications. • The accreditation of private providers to offer stipulated learning programmes leading to NQF-registered qualifications. • Collaboration with professional councils and SETAs on the accreditation and evaluation of professional and work-based programmes leading to NQF-registered qualifications.
Audit (institutions)	• The review and evaluation of

	the effectiveness of quality assurance policies and systems of all public and private providers of higher education, with particular emphasis on teaching and learning, research and knowledge-based community service arrangements.
Quality promotion and capacity development	• The development of a programme of activities to institutionalise a culture of quality in higher education, as well as commitment to continuous quality improvement. • The development and implementation of initiatives to build and strengthen the capacity for high-quality provision systems at institutional, learning programme and individual levels.

[Source: Council on Higher Education: South African Higher Education in the First Decade of Democracy, 2005]

Internationally, it is increasingly being recognised that improvement, enhancement and accountability functions of quality assurance must be constantly balanced with one another. This is even more critical in the case of the HEQC, with its intention of addressing the highly uneven capacities of the South African higher education system within a consistent transformation framework. Well-targeted capacity-building activities, namely the accreditation of programmes, the implementation and management of institutional audits, and capacity-building initiatives (see Table 2.2), have been conceived as the foundation of effective auditing and accreditation activities, and the basis on which HEQC requirements can reasonably be met (Council on Higher Education, 2005).

2.3.2 The Higher Education Quality Committee's approach to quality assurance with regard to teaching and learning

The HEQC will, in partnership with higher education institutions, engage in and take responsibility for the following main areas of activities (HEQC Founding Document, 2001).

2.3.2.1 *Institutional audits*

The HEQC commenced its first six-year cycle of audits in 2004. Four institutions, including the CUT, were audited during this period. In the document *Framework for Institutional Audits*, compiled by the HEQC in June 2004, it is stipulated that institutional audits constitute one of the mechanisms through which the HEQC carries out its responsibilities regarding quality assurance in teaching and learning. The audits focus on an institution's policies, systems, procedures, strategies and resources for the quality management of the core functions of teaching and learning practices, research and community engagement, including the relevant academic support services (CHE HEQC, 2004a).

During the first cycle of audits from 2004 to 2009, two broad areas in the higher education environment are evaluated. Firstly, the mission of the institution and the links between institutional planning, resource allocation and quality management, and secondly, the core functions of the institution, namely teaching and learning practices, research and community engagement. The findings from the first cycle of audits will be reviewed by the HEQC, and will be fully integrated into preparations for the second cycle of audits.

2.3.2.2 *The impact of programme accreditation on the teaching and learning process*

The accreditation approach aims to grant recognition status to programmes that can satisfy the HEQC's minimum standards for provision, or timeously demonstrate their potential to do so, in order to protect students from poor-quality programmes through accreditation and re-accreditation arrangements,

and to encourage and support providers to institutionalise a culture of self-managed evaluation that builds on and surpasses minimum standards (CHE HEQC, 2004b).

The accreditation model entails a rigorous programme accreditation process, based on a fundamental distinction between the accreditation of new and existing programmes. In the case of new programmes, the HEQC already uses a two-phase accreditation process, consisting of a candidacy and a final accreditation phase. In the candidacy phase, an institution must demonstrate that a programme meets the minimum input standards for infrastructure, activities and resources (CHE HEQC, 2004b). Alternatively, the institution is required to demonstrate its potential to meet these standards within a stipulated period of time. The institution must also submit a plan outlining how it intends to implement the new programme, and progress evaluation must be submitted halfway through the programme in order to provide an opportunity for development on the basis of areas identified for attention.

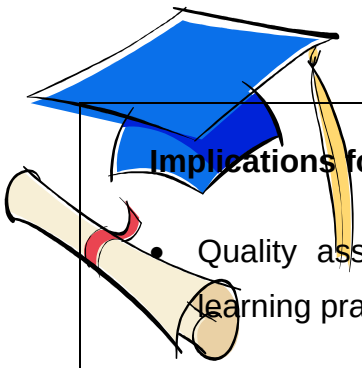
Within one year of the first cohort of students graduating from the programme, the institution must demonstrate compliance with conditions set during the candidacy phase and perform a self-evaluation of the programme using the HEQC's criteria for the accreditation phase (CHE HEQC, 2004b).

2.3.2.3 *Quality promotion and capacity development*

The aim of this initiative is to develop quality assurance capacity in collaboration with higher education institutions and relevant stakeholder bodies. The idea is also to conduct research on the impact of quality assurance in different contexts, to disseminate information and knowledge pertaining to quality assurance and to seek to stimulate debate on quality assurance issues.

The HEQC is involved in the following initiatives for quality promotion and capacity development purposes: the orientation and preparation of institutional auditors, the orientation and preparation of programme evaluators, the publication of teaching and learning resources/manuals, the initiation and

management of quality promotion projects, developmental seminars, and international liaison (CHE HEQC, 2005)



Implications for this study

- Quality assurance should contribute towards transforming teaching and learning practices in the South African context.
- It should comply with national policies such as the SAQA Act of 1995 (Act No 58 of 1995).
- It should complement the development of a single co-ordinated higher education system.
- It should protect students from poor-quality programmes through accreditation and re-accreditation arrangements.
- It should encourage and support institutions to adopt a culture of self-managed evaluation that builds on and surpasses minimum standards.
- It should enhance an outcomes-based education and training approach to teaching and learning.

2.4 FACTORS INFLUENCING THE SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE

Some of the factors influencing the national higher education landscape, with special reference to quality teaching and learning practices, are described below.

2.4.1 Globalisation

In March 2002, the former Minister of Education, Prof Asmal, referred to the fact that we live in a world of transformation, affecting almost every aspect of what we do; that we are being propelled into a global order that no-one fully understands, but that is making its effects felt upon all of us. He continued his argument by stating that, within the context of globalisation, the key challenge facing higher education systems in a developing country such as South Africa is how to ensure that it simultaneously develops the skills and innovations required for addressing the national development agenda, as well as for participation in the global economy. The issue therefore is not whether to engage with globalisation, but how to engage with it.

In the light of the above, the questions remain: what are the implications for South Africa's higher education institutions, and to what extent have the implications of globalisation affected the lives of all the role players in the South African higher education landscape? The researcher believes that the demand to supply students who perform well, will become a priority for institutions in the national and international higher education arena.

Van der Merwe (2002) states that higher education is a vital component of any government policy that seeks to maximise the emancipatory effects of globalisation for its citizens, and to minimise the destructive global effects of competitive dominance on its citizens. Institutions of higher education in any society serve as important repositories of accumulated intellectual capacity and knowledge within that society, where knowledge is generated and transferred to new generations of learners. If this statement is accepted and

recognised by government, higher education will be strategically well-placed to make a significant contribution to the development of a policy framework that meets the demands of globalisation. The South African government accepted this challenge with the establishment of a National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) in 1996, which formulated a White Paper on the Transformation of Higher Education in 1997. This Commission's work culminated in a comprehensive National Plan for Higher Education that was published in 2001.

Many of the recommendations in the National Plan have been translated into legislation, and into the development of specific strategies aimed at enhancing teaching and learning practices and programme self-evaluation processes to meet the challenges of globalisation. These strategies include the following (RSA DoE, 2001):

- The need to broaden access to higher education so that learners can acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to enable them to function in the competitive global arena, and to convey their knowledge and skills to others.

- The need to embark upon a concerted strategy of quality assurance in all aspects of higher education - a strategy that will not only ensure fitness of purpose, but also fitness for purpose of programmes, assessment criteria and teaching and learning practices.

- The need to develop a strategy that promotes the most effective and efficient use of available resources, so that institutions can focus their collective intellectual energy on programmes in which they have undoubted expertise and which contribute to society's need for global competitiveness.

As the core of this study focuses on the improvement of teaching and learning practices in higher education institutions, it is clear that constructive and constant engagement between the government and institutions is imperative in order to ensure the most beneficial way to implement these practices. Their success can be measured against one standard only: their contribution to making South African higher education institutions, individually and collectively, as well as the graduates they produce, competitive in the global economy.

Only global competitiveness can generate the sort of quality in teaching and learning practices that breeds economic success and social well-being (Van der Merwe, 2002).

2.4.2 Massification and enrolment capping

The transformation of the higher education system in South Africa since the 1990's, and specifically the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) Report of 1996, which increased participation in the higher education system from 15% to 20% within a period of 15 years, signalled the end of the so-called elite system of higher education in South Africa. The emphasis on promoting vocational education with increasing numbers of students from different backgrounds and with varied skills and attributes, led to the introduction of a system of mass education in South Africa.

The NCHE argued that moving from an elite to a mass higher education system could address both equity and development needs. The central proposal of the NCHE was that South African higher education should be massified and steered through goal-directed funding. Increasing participation rates would provide greater opportunity for access (equity) and goal-directed funding. The NCHE acknowledged that the government could not dramatically increase the proportion of its education budget assigned to higher education, and that enrolling more students would have to take place through innovative programme and co-operative delivery modes. To ensure that increased numbers of students would not lead to a serious decline in standards, the

establishment of the HEQC was proposed and massification was identified as the key reform driver (Moja, 2005).

The government accepted the NCHE proposal to set equity and efficiency as the goals of transformation, but opted for gradual expanded student access through planned growth over a ten-year period instead of the proposed massification. The government indicated that the NCHE goals would be achieved through the implementation of policy instruments, such as a planning dialogue with institutions, a new goal-directed funding formula, a reliable information system, and a national plan that would provide benchmarks for planned growth and funding (Moja, 2005).

History is the silent witness of the growth in the higher education system since 1994. The overall number of enrolled students from 1995 to 2005 grew by 193 000 (36%), while the average graduation rate barely increased from 15% in 1993 to 16% in 1999, and fell back to 15% in 2003. The government's argument was that, in order to maintain a sustainable funding level per student and improve efficiency, the number of enrolled students should be capped and institutions should increase graduate output. The government argued that graduate outputs could be increased through improved efficiency and quality, and not through the enrolment of more students (Moja, 2005).

The massification debate in 2007 differs significantly from that in 1995. The new higher education system in South Africa has created many new challenges for higher education institutions. The teaching methods have not been able to keep up with the pace set by the increasing class sizes, and funding has not been sufficient to cover the rising costs of more classroom space.

The application of an outcomes-based approach in all spheres of education in South Africa is another challenge for the implementation of quality teaching and learning practices. The urge for lifelong learning has changed the general student profile, and the image of the average student as being between 18-22

years of age, coming from a middle-class background and entering higher education directly after school, has changed dramatically.

2.4.3 The changing teaching environment

The environment surrounding higher education in South Africa has changed dramatically since the political transformation more than a decade ago. This is evident from the list of new legislation on higher education since 1994. Where universities could once operate within a relatively stable environment, the external world has now become turbulent. Changes are taking rapidly, politics affects funding as well as programmatic directions, and institutions are repeatedly challenged to implement strategies to enhance the quality of their teaching and learning practices.

Lockwood (2002: 200) has no doubt that educational institutions will need to change the ways in which they teach, and in which students learn. Institutions will not be able to simply scale up their current forms of teaching, as fewer resources will be available. This paradigm shift will require academic leaders at every level of the institution with the vision to create an environment where every role player can truly participate.

Almost 40 years ago, McLuhan & Fiore (cited in Robinson *et al.* 1999) noted that post-secondary educational institutions are modelled on an industrial age assembly-line approach and facilitated by 19th-century educational technologies, where students remain stationary receptors and information comes to them in prefabricated, orchestrated units that are no longer pedagogically sufficient. They argued that a creative effort was needed to switch “the educational process from package to discovery…”

Like McLuhan & Fiore (1967), many leaders from industry and educational-directed organisations had held this vision for decades, but in the early 1990s - for the first time in the history of education - placing students at the centre of the educational process became the universal cry of commissions, professional organisations, business leaders, policy-makers and, increasingly,

educators - from every sector of the educational landscape (O'Banion, 1997:19). Even the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU), which was established in 1915 and was the guardian of the traditional method of education and proponent of liberal learning for decades, distributed a paper in 1995 entitled "The Direction of Educational Change: Putting Learning at the Centre".

Transformation towards democracy and access to knowledge for all students is a key focus of all government policies. Student-centredness is seen as a key means of providing for personal and social development through new curriculum initiatives. The purpose of implementing a student-centred approach to teaching is broadly summarised by the National Department of Education (1996:11) as follows: Curriculum development, especially the development of learning programmes and materials, should put students first, recognising and building on their knowledge and experience, and responding to their needs. Curriculum development processes and the delivery of learning content (knowledge, skills, attitudes and values) should take into account the general characteristics, developmental and otherwise, of different groups of students.

2.4.4 Educational technology

The South African government holds strong views about the need to overcome the digital divide (between those with access to educational technologies and those without), and the need for all sectors of society to participate in the new information economy, although educational technology has received far less attention at macro level than in countries such as Britain and Australia. The process of formulating information and communication technology policy directives for the enhancement of higher education teaching and learning practices in South Africa has not yet been activated.

The most recent document in this regard, namely *A strategy for information and communication technology in education,* published by the Departments of Education and Communication in 2001, focuses only on schools (Czerniewicz,

2004:147). The lack of national directives with regard to the role of educational technology can, according to Burbules & Callister (in Czerniewicz, 2004:148), probably be ascribed to caution about online learning, which is often conflated with distance learning in South Africa, as in other countries.

However, access to technology in itself does not ensure access to equal educational opportunities, but is linked to the overall challenges facing South African higher education institutions. The transformational process in higher education is currently at three interrelated levels, namely the macro level, where institutions are being merged and restructured with new funding formulae for students; the meso level, where issues include the changing demographics of both students and academic staff in and across institutions, and the micro level, where the primary task of academic staff is to enhance the quality of their teaching and learning practices (Czerniewicz, 2004:150).
Moreland & Jones (in Reddy, *et al. 2003: 28*) are of the opinion that, to be effective in technological teaching and learning practices, lecturers must develop three dimensions of knowledge. These are knowledge of technology, knowledge in technology and general technological pedagogical knowledge. They state that teaching begins with an understanding of what is to be learnt and what is to be taught. These three dimensions could provide the basis for a conceptual framework for the development of programmes in technology education, and reflect coherence with the outcomes-based approach to teaching and learning (Reddy *et al.* 2003:27).

Innovations such as e-mail, the Internet, the World-Wide Web and telematic educational technologies such as WebCT form part of a technological revolution in higher education institutions, and the rapid advancement in information and communication technology has already had a substantial impact on teaching and learning practices. Universities are competing in the international arena, and it is becoming essential for academic staff to adapt to the changing educational environment. Given the strategic role of technology in higher education and the importance of acceptance and adoption of technology by academic staff, it is necessary to determine the social and psychological variables that contribute to the process of technology adoption.

An increase in the use of educational technologies for teaching and learning practices should be beneficial to the implementation of online student evaluation surveys, as students will be accustomed to the electronic media. An increase in module web presence may also expedite the online survey administrative and feedback processes. The implementation of educational technologies will inevitably lead to staff development for open and flexible learning.

2.4.5 Staff development for open and flexible learning

At present, academic staff at higher education institutions worldwide have to cope with a series of competing pressures. External issues such as globalisation (see 2.3.1), massification (see 2.4.2), the changing teaching environment (see 2.3.3), and the implementation of different educational technologies (see 2.3.6) demand new educational thinking.

Internally, academic staff have to cope with more students without a proportional increase in staffing, fundamental curriculum changes due to the move towards competency-based teaching and assessment and the demand to become aware of the individual needs of a wide range of students who are inadequately prepared for higher education. These external and internal circumstances force higher education institutions to adopt open and flexible teaching and learning strategies in response to changing political and socio-economic circumstances, new educational thinking, international competition and the advances in information and communication technology.

This shift needs to be accomplished economically and in accordance with the educational needs and cultural diversity of the students (Latchem, 2004:1-2). He argues that such a transformational shift towards open and flexible teaching and learning practices requires higher education institutions to become learning organisations, that lines of communication need to be open, ideas need to be shared through top-down and bottom-up processes, and mutual understandings and obligations need to be negotiated. New forms of teaching practices need to be championed by senior management, and open

and flexible teaching and learning needs to be recognised by all the role players in the institution. Support groups/centres are needed to lead, support, advise and evaluate the progress made by academic units/schools, and academic staff need to transform themselves from instructors into facilitators of learning. Latchem (2004) concludes by indicating that students need to be less lecturer-dependent and should engage in self-guided, peer-guided and tutor-guided and resource-based learning practices, and that new technologies and technology-based work practices need to be adopted and mastered. Although the vast majority of university lecturers are highly committed to their functional work, Dearn *et al.* (2003) observed that Australian lecturers are rarely trained or qualified to do what they are employed for - teaching.

They add that most academic staff that accredit graduates for professional practice have no formal teaching qualifications and/or teaching experience in the execution of their own working responsibilities. In a survey conducted by the researcher at the CUT during April 2005, 75% of the respondents indicated that they have no formal teaching qualification. It is obvious that the majority of academic staff in the mentioned circumstances are more familiar with conventional face-to-face methods of teaching than open and flexible learning practices. To address their needs, staff development practices should be conceived as an integrated, systematic and ongoing process.

In another institutional survey conducted by the researcher at the CUT during April 2005, the teaching and learning needs of academic staff were determined by means of a comprehensive questionnaire. In one of the questions the respondents were asked to study short descriptions of certain strategies, instruction methods, techniques and tools they implement in their teaching and learning practices, and to indicate the extent to which they make use of these in their instruction/facilitation task.

The outcomes on this specific question - responded to by 86(n) academic staff members, representing a feedback response of 68% - are as follows:

Table 2.3: Survey for training needs analysis – CUT, 2005

Instructional strategies/methods /techniques/tools utilised during teaching practices (CUT)	Descriptions of strategies/methods/ techniques/tools	Never	Seldom	Frequently
Traditional lecturing	This method entails that the lecturer delivers a monologue, with little interaction between the lecturer and the student	9.5%	47.6%	42%
Lectures with class discussions	The lecturer provides an overview of the content and initiates discussions afterwards by making use of questions. Students are expected to read learning material prior to the lecture	2.3%	34.9%	62.8%
Guest lecturers	A guest lecturer is invited to present a lecture in order to elucidate certain aspects of the work	54.1%	43.5%	2.4%
Panel of experts	Certain themes/aspects are discussed by a panel of experts. Students are subsequently given the opportunity to address questions to the panel	79.8%	17.9%	2.4%
Debates	Where the learning content lends itself to debate, controversial topics are formulated for this purpose	34.5%	45.2%	20.2%
Buzz groups	A buzz group is an informal group discussion. Clear assignments are formulated prior to the discussion. The groups are small enough for all members to give their opinions	25.0%	38.1%	36.9%
Organised learning cells	Students are organised into learning “cells”. The cells meet after the lecture to discuss academic work and	51.2%	34.5%	14.3%

Instructional strategies/methods /techniques/tools utilised during teaching practices (CUT)	Descriptions of strategies/methods/ techniques/tools	Never	Seldom	Frequently
	problematic areas that have been identified			
Syndicate groups	The class is divided into groups, and each group works separately on the same project/task/assignment. A group leader is selected, and work is assigned to group members. The group provides verbal or written feedback	33.3%	32.1%	34.5%
Brainstorming sessions	The class generates ideas to solve an identified problem. After all possible solutions/ideas have been listed, smaller groups are formed and the best possible answers are formulated.	40.5%	34.5%	25.0%
Role-play	Where the study content lends itself to this, students apply their knowledge by means of role-play (dramatisation)	69.5%	14.6%	15.9%
Resource-based learning	Study material is developed in a way that encourages students to reflect on the content, to carry out tasks, and to facilitate interaction between the student and the study material. A reading list is provided to students as part of their study material. This method implies less contact time, and encourages self-study	11.9%	36.9%	51.2%
Self-study units	Where the study material lends itself to this, the lecturer develops self-study units that the students work through in their own time. Class	14.3%	36.9%	48.8%

Instructional strategies/methods /techniques/tools utilised during teaching practices (CUT)	Descriptions of strategies/methods/ techniques/tools	Never	Seldom	Frequently
	discussions follow on this			
Computer-based instruction (WebCT, video, lectures on CD, Internet-based and intranet-based education	This method may be used for practising certain skills and transferring study content that may, for example, serve as the basis for classroom discussions. If the material is effectively designed and interactive in nature, it could even replace a tutor or limit the involvement of a tutor	38.4%	18.6%	43.0%
Experiential learning and training	Experiential learning and training refers to a training model where there is a formal arrangement between an educational institution and an employer/profession, involving the placement of students in an organisation so that they may gain practical work experience and are given the opportunity to learn through observation	35.7%	21.4%	42.9%
Service learning	The integration of practical work and the application of study material in a service-based situation that simultaneously renders a service to the community	50.0%	28.6%	21.4%
Audio cassettes	Lectures are recorded on audio cassettes, and students listen to these in their own time	92.9%	4.8%	2.4%
Videos	The lecturer has his/her lectures video-recorded, and makes the recordings available to students. This may be used in cases where the lecturer has to repeat lectures.	71.4%	25.0%	3.6%

Instructional strategies/methods /techniques/tools utilised during teaching practices (CUT)	Descriptions of strategies/methods/ techniques/tools	Never	Seldom	Frequently
	Video recordings of guest lectures and lectures presented by other experts may be used in the same way			
Fieldwork	This is a method that takes groups of students to the real world. It grants students the opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge they would not ordinarily have been able to access in a lecture hall	58.3%	23.8%	17.9%
Laboratory work	This refers to the practical classes that are employed in the natural and health sciences	45.1%	4.9%	50.0% #
Case studies	This is an intensive, detailed description and analysis of an individual or a group that may be used particularly as a proposed model of a certain phenomenon within the context of its environment	27.4%	35.7%	36.9%
Clinical teaching	This entails providing students with supervision and guidance in acquiring the necessary competency to master the clinical skills required to become a health professional. It may also entail the teaching of medicine and surgery by treating or operating on patients in the presence of a class, in a clinic or hospital. Pertains to the practical, experimental method of health professions education, namely the observation and treatment of patients in clinics or hospitals	72.2%	12.7%	15.2%
Problem-based teaching	The curriculum consists of specifically selected and designed problems,	8.2%	29.4%	62.4%

Instructional strategies/methods /techniques/tools utilised during teaching practices (CUT)	Descriptions of strategies/methods/ techniques/tools	Never	Seldom	Frequently
	which require that the students apply critical knowledge and problem-solving skills			

[Source: Training needs analysis conducted at the CUT, 2005]

The survey outcomes indicated that the majority (64%) of the instructional strategies/methods/techniques mentioned in the questionnaire are never or seldom utilised by CUT academic staff in their teaching practices. This tendency correlates with the fact that 75% of CUT academic staff - as mentioned earlier - are not in possession of a formal teaching qualification, and are therefore obviously not capable of teaching in a more open and flexible manner. This state of affairs necessitates the compulsory enrolment of all CUT academic staff members to complete formal modules in assessment and learning facilitation.

Errington (2004) argues that decisions about the kind of flexible learning initiatives in which academic staff feel they can participate are influenced by the degree of perceived support at all levels of the institution. The quality of this support for new initiatives is embedded within the institution's own culture, and this culture - constituting a complex range of collective beliefs - is likely to determine the degree to which change can or will be facilitated by academic staff.

The implementation and utilisation of flexible teaching and learning practices and the worldwide trend towards technological education necessitates investment in macro and micro educational technology by the South African higher education sector. Staff development is essential for the successful implementation of open and flexible learning. Development needs arise in relation to the provision of effective and reliable technical support services and effective administrative procedures. Teaching and learning programmes

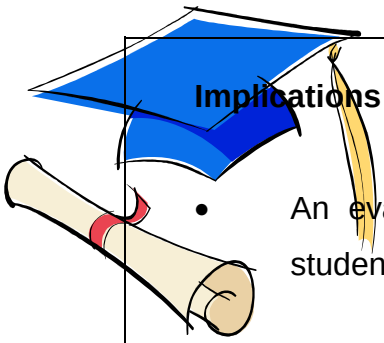
should provide training in the use of necessary technologies, as well as developing pedagogical understanding. In flexible learning approaches that involve the use of technology there is a need for basic training in the use of the technology, especially if staff are unfamiliar with it. Where software is involved, academic staff also need to become familiar with the ways in which the software works (Kirkpatrick, 2001:170).

If academic staff are to embrace the shift towards open and flexible learning, they need to develop a knowledge base that allows them to understand the pedagogical practices underpinning approaches to teaching and learning that encourage independent, self-directed learners and lifelong learning. This adds another layer of learning to an already heavy learning load – not only must they learn how to use the technologies in a technical sense, they must also learn how to use them effectively in an educational sense. Staff development activities should be grounded in local contexts, and a practice-focused approach that reflects discipline-specific issues is usually recommended as the most effective approach (Kirkpatrick, 2001:170-171).

From the literature perspectives of Edwards *et al.* (2000), it is clear that open and flexible learning should not be seen as an alternative mode of education, but as an overarching driving force, a move that allows students greater choice in how, when, where and what type of learning takes place. Moves to open and flexible learning should result in the improvement of students' learning opportunities and experiences. They also state that a traditional university moving towards open and flexible learning undergoes fundamental change. Relationships between lecturers and students also change, as well as relationships among and between lecturing staff and technical staff. Lecturing staff who have been teaching mainly by traditional face-to-face methods may need support in planning, designing, developing and evaluating open and flexible learning environments.

Latchem (2004) has no doubt that the extent of staff development required for such transformation is often seriously underestimated. He argues that far more is needed than the occasional short-term, self-contained and voluntary

workshop. Supporting moves into open and flexible learning requires a clear vision and strategic plan, total commitment by senior and middle managers and strong alignment between the strategic plan, human resource management and staff development systems.



Implications for this study

- An evaluation measuring instrument should establish whether students are prepared to compete in a global world.
- Teaching should assist students in acquiring appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes.
- Teaching and learning should supplement the notion of access with success.
- The lecturer should be responsive to the teaching and learning needs of disadvantaged students.
- Educational technology should be integrated into teaching and learning practices.

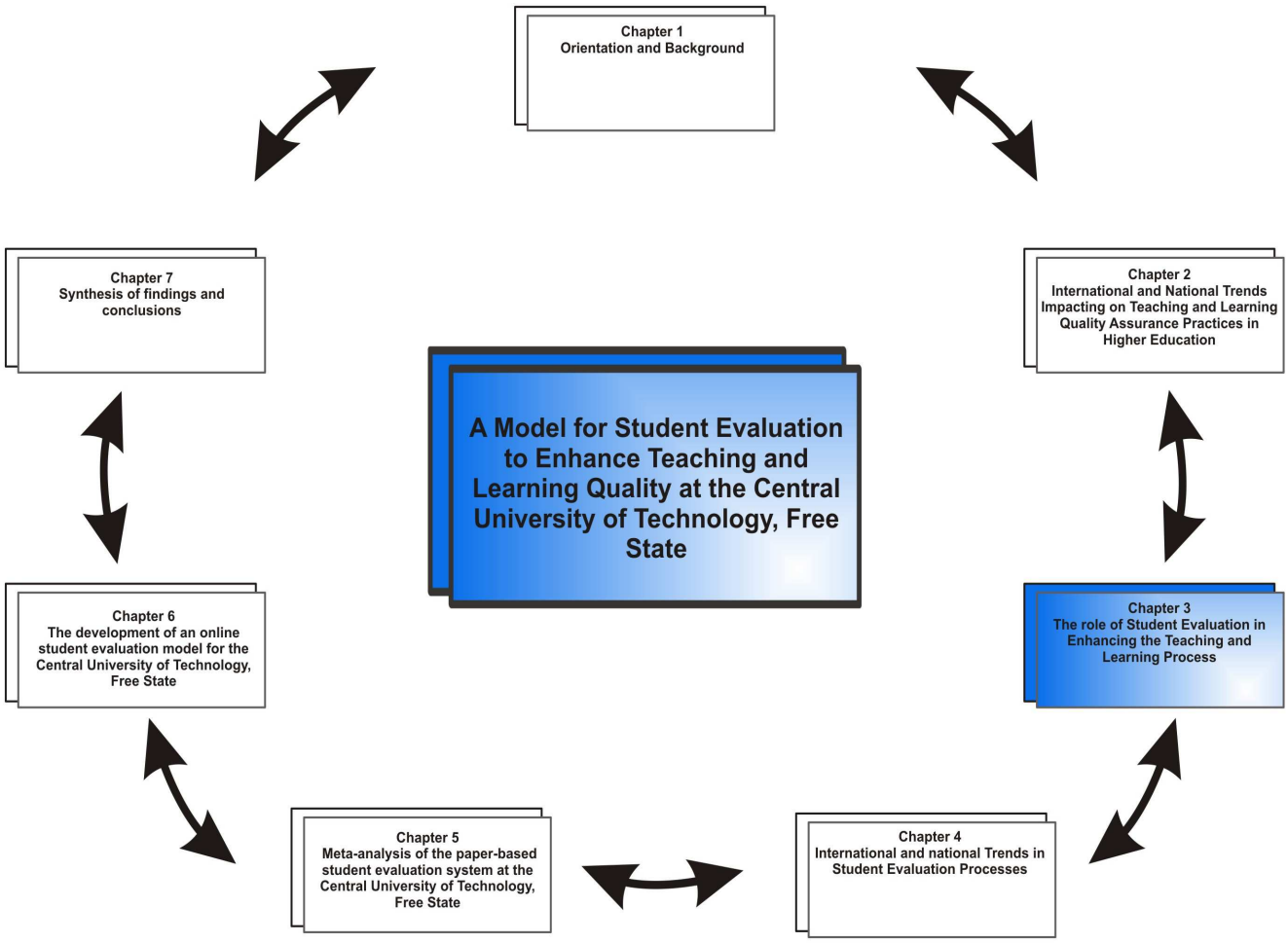
2.5 CONCLUSION

The concurrence of globalisation, massification, the pursuit of a learner-centred approach to education and an increasing demand for open and flexible learning means that higher education institutions face many new challenges to their teaching and learning functions.

The worldwide transformation of the higher education landscape forces institutions to enhance their quality assurance practices to compete for the best available students in the global market. As the demand for education continues to rise, governments are implementing quality assurance mechanisms to ensure educational accountability. External quality assurance agencies are monitoring and reporting on higher education programmes and teaching and learning practices.

An analysis of the international and national trends impacting on quality assurance highlighted the fact that the process of defining, measuring and reconciling the expectations held for effective and efficient teaching and learning practices is more complicated than anticipated. Setting quality standards should involve all role players in the educational process, and suitable mechanisms should be employed to achieve this. The role of student evaluation in the quality enhancement process, as one of the mechanisms to achieve quality enhancement, is discussed in Chapter Three.

CHAPTER 3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Chapter 2
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Chapter 3
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International and national Trends in Student Evaluation Processes
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CHAPTER 3
THE ROLE OF STUDENT EVALUATION IN ENHANCING THE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESSES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In response to the growing concern about the quality of teaching and learning practices in higher education institutions and the increasing public demand for accountability, as discussed in Chapter 2, many universities have set up systems for collecting student feedback ratings. As Kolich & Dean (in Kwan 1999:27) noted, it has been observed that student evaluation of teaching and subject content has become "a central part of the fabric of university life", and students' ratings are often taken as a "barometer of teaching competence and indicator … of the instructor's expertise".

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss student evaluation of teaching and subject content in higher education institutions. In the context of this thesis, and as Kwan (2001) confirms, the rationale underpinning the introduction of a university-wide student rating system is that such a system, if properly planned and introduced, will presumably lead to the enhancement of teaching and learning practices in higher education institutions. Student feedback, as one indicator of teaching effectiveness and programme quality, will enable university administrators to make informed personnel decisions concerning tenure, promotion, or contract renewal. As a result, good lecturers are more likely to be recognised, rewarded and retained, and this will provide added incentive for individual lecturers to endeavour to improve their teaching.

Feedback from students play an important role in the maintenance of quality in higher education. As quality assurance arrangements have become more formalised, so too have the arrangements for the collection, analysis and use

of student feedback. The contextual factors that can influence the student feedback process, are discussed.

3.2 REASONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STUDENT EVALUATION SYSTEMS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Cannon & Newble (2002) emphasised that one of the most dramatic shifts in higher education practice in the past decade has been the move towards accountability. By accountability they mean a demand to provide clear evidence of what is being done in higher education, and of the outcomes of teaching and learning practices. They add that the information gathered as evidence during student evaluation practices is then used in a variety of ways, *inter alia* to improve the quality of teaching and learning or formative measurement of teaching, as well as for personnel decisions regarding promotion and contract renewal or the summative measurement of teaching.

The completion of student satisfaction questionnaires about teaching performance and subject effectiveness is a common practice in higher education institutions all over the world. The last two decades of the twentieth century have been witness to the study of student evaluation of teaching effectiveness as one of the most frequently emphasised areas in North American educational research (Leckey & Neill, 2001). This practice only became compulsory in the South African higher education context with the establishment of the Higher Education Quality Committee in June 1999. In order to meet the accountability and quality demands, it is important that those responsible for the enhancement of teaching and learning practices should know what criteria to implement in this regard (see 2.3.1).

Although quality assurance is much broader than students' evaluation of teaching effectiveness, the collection of this information is important for several reasons. It can be used as diagnostic feedback to academic staff to assist them in enhancing the quality of their teaching performance, it can provide a measure of teaching effectiveness for use in administrative decision-making processes, it can inform students and assist their decision-

making when selecting a course of study, and it can be used to inform research on teaching (Leckey & Neill, 2001:25). Rowley (1995) argues that insufficient attention had been directed towards improving the student evaluation questionnaire and aspects associated with the feedback process to students. She believes that gathering relevant, representative and useful student opinions is a necessary part of the quality assurance process.

From the literature perspectives of Kember *et al.* (2002), the student evaluation questionnaire seems to be the most widely used form of teaching evaluation in higher education. They identified three justifications for this exercise, which may be interrelated. The first is that the feedback obtained through the questionnaires contributes to the improvement of teaching quality. Academic staff take note of any weaknesses or areas for potential improvement revealed by the questionnaire data. In their subsequent teaching, they make efforts to remedy weaknesses to improve their teaching. The logical outcome of this process would be an overall increase in the quality of teaching over time. The second reason is that ratings from questionnaires are also commonly employed in appraisal exercises. Decisions about tenure, contract renewal and promotion now require evidence of teaching ability, as well as research output. The third reason for having student feedback questionnaire systems in place is that evaluating academic staff once every two or three years is an explicit requirement laid down by university management and, in many cases, by a Senate resolution.

In Australian higher education, performance measures are increasingly applied to compare universities with one another. In the future, performance comparisons may even be linked to recurrent funding; consequently, measures of performance have increased in the higher education community (Smith *et al.,* 2001). Ramsden (in Smith *et al.,* 2001) points out that the course experience questionnaire has therefore become a central performance indicator of the quality of teaching and courses in the higher education sector in Australia, and is used by the government to compare institutions' performances with regard to teaching and course characteristics.

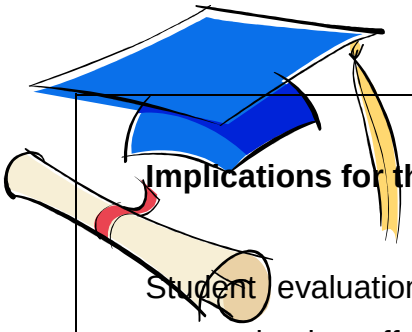
The researcher argues that the purpose of the course experience questionnaire is to ascertain whether there is a better way of improving teaching and course effectiveness. As far as the worldwide university sector is concerned, student evaluations are implemented in order to determine whether universities could achieve their objectives more efficiently and effectively. The following reasons for the implementation of student evaluation systems in improving the quality of teaching and learning practices in South African higher education institutions, were observed by the researcher at the South African higher education institutions discussed in Chapter 4 (see 4.6.1, 4.6.2 and 4.6.3).

Table 3.1: The role of student evaluation in the South African higher education context

Users of student feedback	Reasons for using student feedback	Level
Lecturer	To determine the quality of teaching performance To improve the quality of teaching To remedy weaknesses in order to improve teaching To employ for performance appraisal purposes	Module(s)
Programme/ Curriculum Committee	To determine whether learning outcomes were reached To determine the coherence of the programme To determine the viability of the programme To review and revise the programme, if necessary To improve the student's learning experience in general	Module(s) and programme(s)
Departmental/ School/Faculty	To comply with external audit requirements To comply with institutional policies and procedures (Senate resolutions) To manage future programme strategy	Programme(s)

Users of student feedback	Reasons for using student feedback	Level
Institutional Management	To comply with external audit requirements To ensure the quality of the teaching and learning experience	Programme(s) and qualifications as a whole
Current students	To influence the quality of teaching and learning through critical inputs To be acknowledged as an important partner in the teaching and learning process	Module(s)
Prospective students	To evaluate the quality of the teaching and learning process in order to make informed decisions To compare the quality of the teaching and learning process among institutions	Module(s) and programme(s)

The reasons tabled above are an indication of the usefulness of student evaluation outcomes at different institutional levels and for a wide variety of stakeholders, with a view to improving teaching performance and the quality of modules, programmes, or qualifications as a whole.



Implications for this study

Student evaluation outcomes can be used as diagnostic feedback to academic staff to assist them in their teaching performance.

- It can provide a measure of teaching effectiveness for use in administrative decision-making processes.

- It can assist prospective students in selecting a course of study, and can inform research on teaching.

- Feedback obtained from questionnaires contributes to the improvement of the quality of teaching.

- Ratings from questionnaires are employed during performance management practices.

- Feedback questionnaire systems are an explicit requirement laid down by institutional management to enhance quality teaching and learning practices.

- Student evaluations are implemented in order to ascertain whether institutions could achieve their teaching objectives more effectively and efficiently.

3.3 STUDENT EVALUATIONS IN A QUALITY-DRIVEN HIGHER EDUCATION CONTEXT

The South African higher education system, like many other higher education systems in the world, is experiencing a dramatic increase in external quality review processes and an unprecedented focus on operational accountability for expenditure. The factors driving such changes are many and varied, but those mentioned in Chapter 2, namely globalisation (see 2.4.1), massification and enrolment capping (see 2.4.2), the changing teaching environment (see 2.4.3), educational technology (see 2.4.4), and staff development for open and flexible learning (see 2.4.5) are among the most significant.

Barrie (2001)* agrees that, while claims of quality teaching on the part of universities and the people who work in them are not new, the introduction of external processes to explicitly measure and demonstrate teaching quality are. In the past, teaching was to a large extent a private activity between the lecturer and student and was not open to public scrutiny or critique, nor was it subject to external quality checks. Quality audits of teaching and learning practices constitute a well-established quality assurance mechanism in many countries, and have received much attention since the establishment of the Higher Education Quality Committee in South Africa. Governments and

national departments of education are collecting nation-wide statistical teaching performance measures such as progression and retention rates, graduation destination data and graduate perception of teaching quality. Such external quality assurance activities require that teaching become a more publicly visible activity, accountable and measurable within the university itself. Student evaluation of teaching and subject content practices is therefore a central element of many universities' management strategies to assure quality in the teaching and learning process (Barrie, 2001)*.

The use of student evaluation of teaching and subject content quality as a performance measure in itself is not new, as it can be traced back to the early 1900s in the pioneering work of Remmers during 1927, 1928 and 1930, as well as his colleague Brandenberg during 1927. Barrie (2001)* argues that such measures have been part of many universities' promotion policies, where student evaluations were conducted as a summative mechanism, but in a secondary role as a source of feedback information to support academic staff in the formative process of improving their teaching and learning practices. An example of the improvement of teaching and learning practices receiving high priority at national level is the University of Ulster, Northern Ireland (Barrie, 2001), where each academic staff member has a co-ordinator for student learning and academic staff are encouraged to be innovative in their teaching and learning practices. Reflective practice in teaching and learning is encouraged by regular evaluations by students to inform the annual course review programme.

Two of the key considerations in lecturing excellence listed by the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme in Northern Ireland, are making use of student feedback to influence the development of teaching and learning practices, and being reflective about personal teaching, learning and assessment practices (Leckey & Neill, 2001). For those responsible for the collection of student evaluation data (normally the academic development units at universities), the focus on the use of such data was primarily concerned with the improvement of teaching and learning practices at the level of the individual lecturer. This

role has changed, as those units are now being called upon to prove teaching and learning quality at institutional level.

With the imposition of external quality assurance processes on higher education, academic development units are experiencing pressure to prioritise the collection and use of student feedback data in order to prove institutional quality, rather than for the purposes of individual improvement development plans. In the past, academic development units worked predominantly at the level of individual staff or courses, and their clients were individual lecturers and students.

The student evaluation process went to great lengths to avoid the use of student feedback as a basis for comparison between individuals, or normative reporting of such data in any form (Barrie, 2001:3)*. With the emergence of the quality agenda, such units are increasingly being called upon to more directly meet the immediate quality assurance needs of university management in the student feedback systems they provide. Increasingly, academic development units are working at all levels of the institution - with management and lecturers, and through them with students as well - and are subject to the different and sometimes competing agendas of these groups in terms of the student evaluation process (Barrie, 2001:3)*.

The shift towards a student-centred approach to education led to the evolution of student feedback questionnaires with a different focus. Instead of asking lecturer-centred questions such as “Were the learning outcomes clearly explained to the students?”, the questions became student-centred, for instance “Were the learning outcomes clear to me?”, or “Did the teaching in this course help me to learn effectively?”. Shifting the focus of the questions away from inventories of specific teaching behaviours to students’ perceptions of the teaching-learning experience might also avoid the need to have a different behaviourally-based survey for each teaching context or lecturer. Lecturer-centred surveys focus on the particular repertoire of teaching techniques appropriate within a particular context. As such, they are often content-specific. Thus, a particular survey would be required for the teaching

techniques used in design, another for teaching physics and yet another for teaching music (Barrie, 2001:11)*.

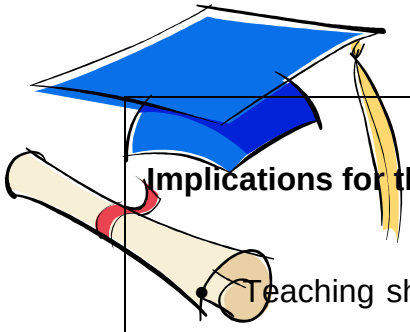
The focus of student-centred survey items is on the student's perceptions of the usefulness of whatever teaching technique or teaching behaviour is used in that particular context (Barrie, 2001:11)*. For instance, an item such as "Did the teaching help me to learn effectively?" elicits information on students' perceptions of the experience, regardless of what teaching techniques were used. Similarly, an item such as "Were the learning outcomes of this course clear to me?" does not specify how these outcomes were written or communicated.

This has parallels to the ideas discussed in Biggs's (1997) work on teaching across cultures with common conceptions of quality teaching and learning, across different contexts and individuals, at more abstract levels (Barrie, 2001:11)*. Items focusing on students' perceptions of the teaching and learning experience do yield information on teaching behaviours and the teaching context, but from the students' perspective. Because of this different perspective, the information gathered could be more useful than that obtained from teaching-focused survey items.

If student evaluation of teaching and subject content data is to be used to improve the quality of the learning outcome, it will probably need to consider all elements in the learning process. However, the design and selection of survey items should recognise that the way in which students perceive the teaching and learning context will probably be the vital link in the process (Barrie, 2001:12)*. Given the importance of students' perceptions in mediating the effect of teaching inputs and the influence of such perceptions in shaping students' approaches to learning (and ultimately also the quality of student learning outcomes), surveys that focus only on teaching inputs, without considering how students perceive such inputs, may not generate the data lecturers need in order to improve the quality of student learning outcomes. Similarly, from a quality assurance perspective informed by student-centred understandings of teaching and learning, data on students' perceptions of

their teaching and learning experiences, rather than data on the lecturers' behaviour alone, would be more important in ensuring quality learning outcomes (Barrie, 2001:12)*.

The fact that student evaluation questionnaires have often not gathered information from a student-centred perspective is perhaps part of the reason why student evaluation has not always helped lecturers to improve their teaching and learning practices in the way they would have hoped. The next section provides more clarity on specific institutional-level evaluations for the enhancement of teaching and learning practices.



Implications for this study

- Teaching should become a more publicly visible activity, accountable and measurable within higher education institutions.

- Student evaluations are directed at staff and student development initiatives.

- Student evaluations encourage reflective practices.

* The merit for the strong support on the opinions of S. Barrie is founded in the valuable contribution thereof to section 3.3.

3.4 THE INSTITUTIONALISATION OF STUDENT EVALUATIONS

Student evaluation of teaching form part of a higher education institution's overall quality assurance system, which is designed to monitor how well the institution is meeting its goals. The goals are usually derived from an institution's mission statement, and mission statements need to be translated into measurable strategies through the quality assurance system.

Most higher education institutions around the world collect some type of student feedback as part of their strategies to enhance the quality of their teaching and learning practices. Harvey (2003)* describes this feedback as the expressed opinions of students regarding the service they are receiving as students. This may include perceptions about the teaching and learning practices they experience at the institution, the learning support facilities such as libraries and computer facilities, the learning environment, which includes lecture rooms and laboratories, and support facilities such as student accommodation, health facilities and student services. Furthermore, Harvey (2003)* adds that feedback from students has two main functions: internal information to guide improvement, and external information for potential students and other stakeholders, including accountability and compliance requirements.

To make an effective contribution to internal improvement processes, the views of students need to be integrated into a regular and continuous cycle of analysis, reporting, action and feedback. In many instances, a clearly-defined strategy to complete the feedback cycle may not exist. Establishing an effective feedback cycle is not an easy task, and may be the reason why data on student evaluation is so often not used to effect change, irrespective of the good intentions of those who initiated the process (Harvey, 2003:4)*. Williams (2002) noted that, to gain support and trust, the student feedback process must be transparent, management must be committed to the approach and resources must be made available to support the whole process.

Harvey (1999)* identifies six strategic functions that management has to fulfil in respect of quality improvement in this regard, namely: setting the parameters within which the student evaluation quality improvement process takes place; establishing a non-exploitative, suspicion-free context for students and academic staff in which a culture of quality improvement can flourish; establishing and ensuring a process of internal quality monitoring; disseminating good practice through an effective and open system of communication; encouraging and facilitating teamwork amongst academic and support services staff; and delegating responsibility for quality improvement to the units that are going to deliver continuous improvement at the staff-student interface.

Although the views of current students on teaching and learning practices offer a useful information source to prospective students, few higher education institutions make the outcomes of their student feedback surveys available to external sources (Hodges, 2002). As Williams (2002) notes, opposition to the use of student feedback as a key element in any future quality assurance policy has been based largely upon the fear that, once made public, it may have the effect of "potentially compromising the rigour and candour of those processes if these are to form the basis of public information". The question of whether student feedback data should be made public, hinges on the balance between more information for prospective students and internal quality improvement. In this regard, Harvey (2003)* is of the opinion that institutions that undertake institutional surveys do not directly compare student feedback outcomes with other institutions at institutional level. He argues that such comparisons may be conceived as ill-advised, since institutions face different issues, have different types of students, and different expectations.

Not all institutions and staff within an institution have the same ideas and priorities regarding student feedback. Even amongst those academics who are in favour of collecting student feedback, there may be differences of opinion regarding the purpose of the feedback, how it should be collected and how the information should be used (Watson, 2003:150). Powney & Hall (1998) found that the methods of collecting feedback could be fragmented,

with little coherence between information collected at programme level and at institutional level.

It is important to look at the different types of satisfaction surveys available at institutional level to enhance the quality of teaching and learning practices. The satisfaction surveys at institutional level, programme level and module level will now be discussed.

3.4.1 Institutional-level student satisfaction surveys

Systematic, institution-wide student feedback about the quality of students' total educational experience as a tool that institutions can use to comprehend the complexity of the total learning experience, is a growing tendency in the higher education environment (Harvey, 2003)*. These surveys tend to encompass most of the services provided by an institution, and should not be confused with standardised institutional questionnaires seeking feedback at programme or module level.

The outcomes obtained from institutional-level surveys are normally reported at faculty and programme level, published with an ISBN number and made available on the institution's website. Actions taken are reported back to the students through an annual publication. Harvey (2003:11)* made the following suggestions regarding the implementation and management of institutional-level surveys: surveys should provide data for internal improvement and information for external stakeholders; it is necessary to establish an action cycle that clearly identifies lines of responsibility and feedback; surveys need to be tailored to fit the improvement needs of the institution; reporting needs to be directed at the level at which effective action can be implemented, and survey results should be published and/or made available on the institution's website.

3.4.2 Programme-level student satisfaction surveys

According to Harvey (2003)*, programme-level satisfaction surveys tend to focus on the quality of teaching and learning practices, course organisation and programme-specific learning resources. He argues that most universities in the United Kingdom have some form of programme-level feedback, although this may not be consistent across institutions.

In a modularised learning environment, programme-level analysis of learning does not necessarily provide clear indicators of potential improvement of the programme without further feedback from module level. Where module-level satisfaction feedback from students is required, there is less need for programme-level questionnaire surveys (Harvey, 2003)*. The satisfaction survey used at the Open University in the United Kingdom, for instance, is primarily aimed at the programme level, as their students are more focused on the quality enhancement of programmes. The University aims to give information on student views at programme level, and to encourage action among programme teams. Programmes are re-surveyed to determine whether student satisfaction increases in response to any changes made (Harvey, 2003:13)*.

The Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA), established in 2000 as an independent national agency, conducts institutional audits of self-accrediting institutions. The AUQA focuses on the quality assurance processes that are in place at higher education institutions to achieve the institution's mission and objectives. Student satisfaction data obtained from student evaluation surveys and graduate employment data are, *inter alia,* submitted by the universities in this regard. The audits focus on key areas of teaching and learning, research and management, and on the adequacy of a university's quality assurance arrangements (Australian Department of Education, Science and Training, 2004).

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA, 2005) developed seven criteria for course approval and accreditation. According to Criterion 4, the acceptability of the proposed course to the relevant academic, industrial, professional and other communities should be identified and properly addressed. Student evaluation data with regard to teaching and subject content obtained from past and present students forms part of this exercise (NZQA, 2005). Higher education funding and supervision is predominantly a State responsibility in the United States of America, and quality is largely ensured through an accreditation process. There are six regional accrediting agencies, and accreditation by the relevant agency is a higher education institution's guarantee of quality. Processes and requirements vary among the six regional accrediting bodies, but accreditation of programmes is intended to certify that institutions meet basic resource and performance criteria, to strengthen educational quality, to encourage self-examination, to support self-regulation, and to assure the public that an institution meets certain minimum standards of quality. The American Council on Education identified 27 national assessment criteria in 2001, including questionnaires to measure the experience of enrolled students with regard to teaching effectiveness and subject content (Australian Department of Education, Science and Training, 2004).

The South African **Higher Education Act** of 1997 assigns responsibility for quality assurance in higher education to the Council on Higher Education (CHE). This responsibility is discharged through its permanent sub-committee, the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC). The mandate of the HEQC includes quality promotion, institutional audit and programme accreditation. Quality-related criteria constitute a critical element in the execution of the HEQC's functions, fulfilling the dual purpose of serving as evaluative tools for the HEQC's audit and accreditation activities (CHE, 2004:1). The criteria are intended to enable higher education institutions to analyse and reflect on their quality management arrangements, and to guide the production of self-evaluation reports.

Criterion 19 in the HEQC Criteria for Programme Accreditation Report reads as follows: “User surveys, reviews and impact studies on the effectiveness of the programme are undertaken at regular intervals. Results are used to improve the programme’s design, delivery and resourcing, and for staff development and student support, where necessary”. In order to meet this criterion, user surveys should be undertaken at regular intervals to obtain feedback from academic staff involved in a specific programme, students, graduates, peers, external moderators, professional bodies and employers, to ensure that the programme is attaining its intended outcomes (CHE, 2004).

Programme-level satisfaction surveys must be properly analysed and linked to a programme-level action and feedback cycle, and data obtained should assist prospective students in selecting appropriate universities and programmes of study. Programme-level satisfaction data should also assist universities in external programme accreditation surveys, and specific information for improvement purposes should be obtained through discussion sessions or focus groups.

3.4.3 Module-level student satisfaction surveys

Feedback on specific modules or learning units provides an important element of continuous quality improvement with regard to the teaching and learning process. The feedback focuses on the specific teaching and learning practices associated with the module, and direct action for improvement can be taken. The primary purpose of module-level feedback is to assist the lecturing staff in modifying the module to enhance student learning (Harvey, 2003)*.

Module-level satisfaction feedback involves direct and mediated feedback from students obtained through formal or informal discussions in class, or via student evaluation questionnaires (see 3.5.2.1). Harvey (2003)* indicates that almost all British higher education institutions are required to collect some kind of module-level feedback from students, for inclusion in programme annual reports. The main method of collection in this regard is student feedback questionnaires. Questionnaires should not inhibit qualitative

feedback methods, and open-ended questions should therefore form part of the feedback process. Direct qualitative feedback is often far more useful in improving the learning situation within a module or unit of study (Harvey, 2003)*. Although open-ended questions are seen as more time-consuming to arrange and analyse, they encourage students to make suggestions for the improvement of the teaching and learning process. It is important that students' views collected during module-level satisfaction surveys have the same cycle of reporting, action and feedback to students as institution-level or programme-level surveys.

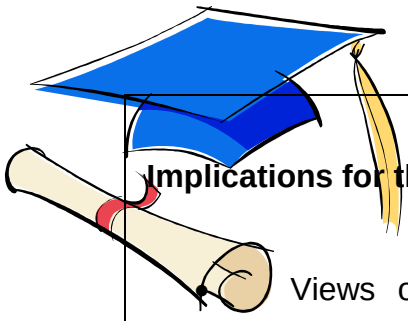
The following recommendations by Harvey (2003)* regarding module-level satisfaction surveys are of the utmost importance:

- Module-level feedback is vital for the ongoing evolution of modules, and academic management needs to be responsive to both formal and informal feedback.

- Module-level feedback questionnaires should be tailored to the improvement and development of modules, and general standardised questions should not be included.

- Module-level feedback should be properly analysed and linked to a module-level action and feedback cycle.

* The merit for the strong support on the opinions of L. Harvey (2003) is founded in his valuable knowledge and insight in the institutionalisation of student evaluations on institutional, programme and module level.



Implications for this study

- Views of students need to be integrated into a regular and continuous cycle of analysis, reporting, action and feedback.

- The student evaluation process must be transparent, management must be committed to the approach and resources must be made available to support the whole process.

- Student evaluation surveys need to be tailored to fit the improvement needs of the institution.

- Reporting needs to be directed at the level at which effective action can be implemented.

- Surveys should be undertaken at regular intervals to ensure that programmes are attaining their intended outcomes.

- Programme-level surveys must be properly analysed and linked to a programme-level action and feedback cycle, and data obtained should assist prospective students in selecting appropriate universities and programmes.

- Questionnaires should not inhibit qualitative feedback methods, and open-ended questions should form part of the feedback process.

3.5 INSTITUTIONAL PROCESSES FOR COLLECTING AND USING STUDENT FEEDBACK DATA

Feedback from students has always played an important role in the maintenance of quality and standards in higher education. As quality assurance arrangements have become more formalised, so too have the arrangements for the collection, analysis and use of student feedback. A number of other contextual changes have also influenced these arrangements.

In a publication by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE, 2004), it is stipulated that the expansion and differentiation of higher education has had major implications for the inner workings of higher education, and for the people who work and study in this field. An increase in the staff/student ratios has meant that the traditionally close relationships between lecturers and students have disappeared in most higher education institutions. Informal means of communication between academic staff and students have proved less effective in securing reliable feedback on teaching effectiveness and the quality of subject content. These trends have led to the gradual replacement of informal communication with formal communication, of which the widespread introduction of student feedback surveys has been a conspicuous aspect (HEFCE, 2004).

A strategic approach should be followed in the collection and use of student feedback, and such feedback data should be gathered in a structured way throughout the institution.

3.5.1 Purpose of student feedback data

Some ambiguity exists within institutions regarding the purposes of student feedback, and this often seems to be associated with a lack of commitment on the part of both the academic staff and students regarding the collection and use of student feedback data.

In a comprehensive review of North American research on student feedback, Pascarella & Terenzini (1991) found that the impact of a first degree on a student's intellectual and personal development is determined largely by the extent and content of a student's interactions with academic staff and student peers, both inside and out of the classroom. Research conducted by McInnis (1997) and McInnis & James (1995) has confirmed that these findings apply to most students. In their studies of the first-year university experience they established the importance of the social context of learning, including the informal learning opportunities that emerge in unstructured conversations with peers and academic staff. It seems that the social dimensions of the university experience are particularly important for young, full-time undergraduates.

Although overwhelming evidence can be found in literature that student evaluation feedback is mainly concerned with a notion of quality enhancement, specific purposes in this regard may differ in terms of emphasis. These variations in emphasis may arise from different conceptions of student feedback. Some institutions may equate student feedback with student satisfaction; however, according to a report by the Centre for Higher Education Research and Information (CHERI), this is by no means a universal view (CHERI, 2004).

The report emphasised that students could regard the evaluation process as: an evaluation of their own learning styles and study methods; student views regarding whether their individual objectives had been met; intended for staff appraisal and promotion purposes; part of the external quality assurance process; feedback to inform prospective students on the quality and standard of programmes; or aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning practices in higher education institutions (CHERI, 2004).

It is likely that different users of student feedback data will have different purposes. The lecturer will probably use the data for the endorsement of his or her teaching approach, but also to determine which teaching methodologies were effective, and which were not. The lecturer may also be more interested in the students' level of understanding of the subject matter, than whether they

enjoyed the course or not. A programme curriculation team might be looking to student feedback data for evidence that learning outcomes have been met. School or departmental committees might be looking at the data, together with a range of quality assurance indicators, as part of institutional quality assurance arrangements. An institutional quality improvement manager might compare student feedback data with external quality assurance criteria and alignment with the institutional quality improvement plan (CHERI, 2004).

The possibility also exists that the student feedback process could become an institutional ritual, that engagement becomes largely an act of compliance, and that feedback is collected, but little is done with the outcomes and those involved have few expectations that change will occur as a result of it. Whatever its stated purpose, or combination of purposes, the collection of student feedback data must take into account the intended uses and the nature of the institutional quality assurance and quality enhancement procedures.

Forsyth (2003) argues that student feedback systems such as the assessment of student tests and examinations serve formative and summative purposes. For formative purposes, such systems can provide specific, useful feedback data regarding which teaching and learning practices are effective in the classroom. A positive formative review inspires lecturers to continue with their good work, while a negative review guides their personal development efforts.

3.5.1.1 *Formative purposes*

Centra (1993b:5) states: “Formative evaluation is used to improve teaching performance; the information is given to teachers, whether it is obtained from students, colleagues, or faculty development specialists, and is meant to bring about positive changes”. In a report by the Project Team for Teaching and Evaluation, from the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs at the Truman State University in the USA (2003), it is stated that formative student evaluation focuses on constructive criticism, that it recognises strengths as well as weaknesses and offers suggestions for change in behaviour and

procedures in the teaching and learning process. At the University of Otago, New Zealand, evaluations for formative purposes provide information that guides ongoing changes in their teaching and learning practices. The information includes classroom assessment techniques to determine students' understanding of a particular part of the curriculum, diagnostic strategies to provide information about students' prior knowledge and/or experience, and the use of student evaluation data regarding teaching and subject content (Higher Education Development Centre, 2001).

A very interesting approach by Smith (2001) with regard to formative evaluation and feedback in teaching reflects a frame of mind and an approach to professional practice that has, at its core, the desire to be effective, to monitor current performance against some standard by collecting information and to make decisions, both about the effectiveness of current practice and possible improvements. He argues that a more scholarly (or professional) approach to teaching has given rise to the notion of scholarly teaching and a scholarship of teaching and learning. This transformation in how academic staff view their work as lecturers will require learning and change that needs to be informed and supported by formative feedback (Smith, 2001:51).

Teaching refers to the designing and implementation of activities to promote student learning. Scholarly teaching demands more than the normal teaching process – more than merely applying educational theory and research in your own practice. The scholarship of teaching and learning encompasses both the teaching and the learning process. It refers to the vision, design, enactment, outcomes and analysis of the teaching and learning process in a manner open to critical evaluation by all the role players (Smith, 2001).

In the light of Smith's (2001) findings, teaching can not only be improved in its own right through formative feedback practices, but academic staff may improve their teaching by becoming more scholarly and contributing to the scholarship of teaching and learning. Formative evaluation in the form of student feedback data on teaching and subject content is necessary to

promote and sustain the learning required for this transformation in the way lecturers think about their subject matter.

3.5.1.2 *Summative purposes*

Webb & McEnerney (1997) state that summative student feedback systems can be used as a means of measuring staff performance to collect reliable and relevant data in order to make personnel decisions, such as hiring, tenure and promotion. They argue that student feedback is judgemental by nature and carries legal implications. Summative evaluation data must therefore be consistent with personnel policies and procedures, and an appropriate appeal or grievance procedure should be in place.

In the context of this research, summative evaluation refers to student summative evaluation of teaching and subject content with a view to making personnel decisions. Summative evaluations for personnel purposes require systematic and controlled procedures for collecting information, as well as standards for making judgements. Centra (1993:5) adds that care must therefore be taken to minimise bias and contamination of information used for summative evaluation. Furthermore, Webb (1994:49) adds that summative evaluation systems need to be standardised so that comparisons for personnel decision purposes can be made across institutions. They should also be simple to understand to facilitate processing and prevent student resistance, and should not be biased towards particular teaching approaches, behaviours or styles.

Ramsden (1996) draws attention to the fact that the focus of summative student evaluations is to enhance the teaching and learning process, but argues that matters related to the measurement of teaching performance can lead to disagreement and defensiveness on the part of academic staff. He argues that changes in the understanding of teaching are fundamental, and that the achievement of high standards of teaching requires a self-critical attitude that promotes constant improvement.

Personnel recommendations based on summative evaluation data can be very sensitive, as they can affect the lives of academic staff and the status of a specific department, school or institution. In the light of this, special care should be taken to ensure that the summative evaluation outcomes are based on a representative and comprehensive review of the lecturer's contributions to the teaching and learning process (Hoyt & Pallett, 1999). Arreola (2000) reiterates this in noting that, for a student summative evaluation system to be truly effective for personnel decisions, it must gather an aggregate of relevant performance data and demonstrate a pattern of performance over a certain specified period of time.

3.5.2 Mechanisms for collecting student feedback

This section considers the types of mechanisms that can be used by higher education institutions for collecting student feedback data. It is important to remember that each feedback mechanism has certain implications with regard to the planning, administration, implementation, analysis and feedback processes.

Whatever mechanisms are used in the collection process, it is important that the participants should know what the purpose of the exercise is, and how the outcomes will be administered and reported. Involvement of students in the feedback process at all stages can have a positive effect on the whole evaluation system, and many institutions have found it effective to consult students in developing a suitable feedback system. The researcher's practical experience in the administration of over 11600 questionnaires at the Central University of Technology, Free State, indicated that students need to feel that they are actively involved as partners in the entire evaluation and quality enhancement process.

During the planning, implementation and evaluation of this evaluation process, the researcher found that the following evaluation principles play an important role:

- establishing an informal but structured atmosphere in class before the evaluations are conducted;

- explaining the aim of the evaluation process – that they (the students) are in partnership to enhance the quality of the teaching and learning practices at the institution, which entails that they should feel they are valued and are being listened to, that they have ownership of their own learning;

- developing reflective thinking;

- establishing a positive lecturer/student partnership, and ensuring that quality management and enhancement practices take full account of student views;

- giving an example of quality assurance practices in industry, such as the completion of client satisfaction forms in a restaurant or a hotel, the complaints desk when you buy a new car, or the customer care division at supermarkets when you want to exchange goods;

- emphasising that that their full co-operation is needed in the evaluation of the teaching practices of lecturing staff and the content of the learning material, and highlighting the value of including them in the evaluation process;

- stressing the confidentiality of the exercise and the fact that the questionnaire is completed anonymously;

- allowing time for questions before the questionnaires are distributed;

- discussing the different sections of the questionnaire thoroughly and ensuring that they know how to complete it;

- thanking the students for their participation and encouraging them to require feedback ("closing the loop", as described in section 3.9) regarding the outcomes of the evaluation from their lecturer.

Different feedback mechanisms may be needed for different purposes. Institution-wide questionnaires are best used for the purposes of gathering information related to student satisfaction with facilities and services, and to provide an overview of the learning experience. However, at the module level of evaluation where the focus of this research lies, and where the purpose is to improve the teaching and learning process, a number of mechanisms can be used. The different types of mechanisms will now be discussed.

3.5.2.1 *Student feedback questionnaires*

The compilation of a questionnaire for feedback on teaching and subject content purposes is a team effort. All the role players, namely academic management, lecturing staff, students and the appropriate academic support unit, should be involved in the planning and implementation processes. It is also very important to ensure that uniform procedures for the management of the process exist. An institution or faculty may therefore not use criteria or processes that create discriminatory evaluations based on ethnic background, race or gender.

All the role players should agree on what to measure and how to measure it in order not to violate basic civil rights, and the evaluators must be able to provide evidence that the procedures have been applied correctly and consistently. Arreola (2000) emphasises the fact that the legal ramifications

surrounding the designing and use of student evaluation questionnaires must be considered within this context. The designing and development of a valid and reliable student evaluation questionnaire, intended to measure the teaching performance of a lecturer and/or the quality of subject content, is a specialised technical task requiring professional expertise in statistics and psychological measurement. The fact that the questionnaire, as measurement instrument, is being designed to measure, *inter alia*, psychological phenomena such as perceptions, opinions and reactions, does not mean it should not be developed to meet the same standards of accuracy, reliability and validity as any other measuring instrument (Arreola, 2000:94).

On a practical level, certain steps must be followed to plan, design, implement and manage a student evaluation questionnaire (see 5.2.3). Firstly, the purpose of the questionnaire must be determined. An institution may require formative and/or summative evaluation data to enhance the quality of the teaching and learning practices, or for personnel administration purposes such as promotions and merit awards. The second step is to specify the elements to be addressed in the questionnaire. Arreola (2000) is of the opinion that, if the instructional design of the course is to be judged, questions should be asked regarding the organisation, structure, objectives, relevance and content. If the instructional techniques are to be judged, questions should be asked regarding the method of presentation, student interaction and level of difficulty. If the lecturer's presentation skills are to be judged, questions should be asked regarding the personal characteristics of the lecturer, such as personal skills, preparation and commitment (Arreola, 2000:95).

The third step is to determine the types of items the questionnaire should contain. It is important to note that the accuracy of the students' response and the meaningfulness of the ratings depend upon the appropriateness of the item and response formats (Arreola, 2000:95). It is evident that the majority of higher education institutions include open-ended and/or close-ended items in the questionnaire, whereas a combination of these items proves to be the most effective. The fourth step is to prepare and select the items to be used in the questionnaire. The involvement of all the role players is of the utmost

importance in this regard to ensure that the opinions of all are accommodated. The fifth and final step is the organisation of the items within the questionnaire, where grouping for easy reading and responding purposes is essential (Arreola, 2000: 96).

Brennan & Williams (2004) are of the opinion that, before a questionnaire is used for the first time, it should be piloted with a group of students in order to check the following:

- How long does it take to complete?
- Are the instructions clear?
- Are the questions understandable and unambiguous?
- Are the questions relevant?
- Is the layout user-friendly?
- Are there any other problems or difficulties in completing the questionnaire?

It is therefore extremely important that such a questionnaire be piloted, even more than once should it be necessary.

The researcher's personal experience indicated that the value of a student evaluation system relies on the confidence the students have that their input will not be to their disadvantage, and that it will have some positive effect on the quality of the teaching and learning practices at the institution. The administration, management and direction responsibilities of a campus-wide evaluation system should be placed outside the faculty domain, preferably within an academic development unit or a centre for teaching and learning, to ensure independence. The possibility of questionnaire fatigue – a common

complaint among staff and students – could present another administrative barrier.

In a modularised system, as implemented at the CUT, a student may be required to complete up to five student evaluation questionnaires in one semester, and if those questionnaires are used in the way their purpose intends, they will also constitute an added burden on staff in terms of processing, analysis, interpretation and action based on the results. A solution would be to administer such questionnaires less frequently for the same module/programme group, or to select a sample from the specific student group.

The student evaluation questionnaire should be educational in the highest sense of the word. It should help students to gain a better understanding of their own learning, stimulating and encouraging them to accept responsibility for the enhancement of quality in the entire educational process.

3.5.2.2 *Student focus groups*

Morgan (1997) defines focus groups as "… a research technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher. In essence it is the researcher's interest that provides the focus, whereas the data come from the group discussion."

Focus groups have been used extensively in social sciences research and in market research, and are now used widely in education. Wall (2001) confirms this statement in a paper where the potential contribution of focus groups as a supplementary source of information regarding the quality of teaching and learning practices in higher education, is discussed. The paper describes the application of focus group research to review problems with the delivery of an undergraduate module in a business management programme at Sheffield Hallam University, in the United Kingdom.

Wall (2001) reports that the process was successful in that, *inter alia,* it gave the student members in the focus group a sense of empowerment, and produced some firm and realistic recommendations. The report produced by the lecturer, in this specific case, was seen as constructive and used as a key source of information in the ongoing process to recurriculate the programme. It is evident from the above-mentioned example that student focus groups can provide important and meaningful inputs to enable in-depth exploration of particular aspects of the student experience in order to inform future development.

Further advantages of using student focus groups for evaluating teaching practices are that it allows a lecturer to gain multiple perspectives on a particular issue, and to explore teaching-related issues in greater depth than he/she might otherwise be able to do. Good ideas and solutions to problems are often generated through the focus group's interactive process, as students reflect on one another's experiences and ideas. Students benefit from being involved in decision-making about their learning, and from feeling that their opinions matter (Loriz & Foster, 2002). Participation in focus groups can also give students a greater awareness and understanding of issues related to teaching and learning, as well as a greater sense of satisfaction with a course (Hamilton *et al.* 2002).

Focus group discussions can be used for formative and summative module evaluation purposes, and are particularly useful for (Loriz & Foster, 2002):

- focusing on (a) particular aspect(s) of teaching;
- teasing out issues in areas suggested by previous student evaluations of teaching or module content;
- assessing the impact of changes made to teaching and/or module content;

- evaluating a new programme or an innovation in teaching; or

- triangulation of evaluative data.

A focus group is best guided by an impartial facilitator who is not involved in teaching the specific module and has good interpersonal and leadership skills – a person who is non-judgemental and is capable of creating an atmosphere of trust (Gibbs, 1997). This does not mean that a lecturer cannot arrange his/her own focus group discussions, but he/she needs to be aware of the power differentials inherent in the situation. The students need to feel free to express their ideas/perceptions without fear of criticism or retribution. To do so, they will need the lecturer's assurance that they are making a contribution to enhancing the teaching and learning practices at the institution, and that whatever they say will be used only for that particular purpose.

Although focus group discussions have many advantages, there are certain limitations – as with all research methods. The facilitator must allow the participants to talk to one another, to ask questions and express doubts and opinions, while having very little control over the interaction other than generally keeping the participants focused on the topic. Gibbs (1997) is therefore of the opinion that focus group research is open-ended, and cannot be entirely predetermined. Another potential limitation of focus groups is that the participants are speaking in a specific context, within a specific culture, and it may be difficult for the facilitator to clearly identify an individual message (Gibbs, 1997).

Sim (1998) is of the opinion that, because students have different learning styles and conceptions of learning, it will impact on how they will respond to teaching, and thus how they will respond to discussions about teaching and learning. He argues that it is more important to understand what individual students are saying about an issue, and to look for ways to accommodate and incorporate such differences in one's teaching, or to help students to

understand the limitations and learning implications of certain individual and collective viewpoints.

As in the case of student evaluation of teaching questionnaires, it is the opinion of the researcher that it is good practice to provide feedback to students after focus group discussions. Whether the facilitator is able to provide this feedback to the same cohort of students from which the focus group was drawn, will depend on when the focus group met and how long it has taken to collate the resulting data. It is also of the utmost importance to inform students on the changes that could be made and those that could not be made, and to explain why. All changes should be documented in a teaching portfolio as evidence of professionalism and commitment to improving the quality of teaching and learning.

3.5.2.3 *Informal discussions between lecturers and students in class*

Reasons for obtaining feedback from students on teaching practices are usually a mixture of the personal and the professional. Some students are more willing to express their feelings in an informal setting, and there should be no reason for lecturers not being able to make use of informal discussions in class to obtain feedback on their teaching and module/programme content.

Forsyth (2003) has no doubt that some of the most useful information about teaching effectiveness can be gathered through informal discussions between students and lecturers in class. He argues that a lecturer may, for example, wonder whether students have enough time to complete the work assigned. Another may be worried that students' notes do not accurately reflect the contents of the lecture. Another may hope that students are learning to apply class material in their everyday lives, but may be unable to assess his/her success in reaching this goal. These and other specific desired teaching outcomes can be discussed and argued effectively in an informal class setting.

As a feedback technique, an informal discussion has distinctive strengths. It provides opportunities for exploring teaching-related and learning-related issues in depth, weighing the significance of points raised and clarifying students' suggestions on the improvement of the educational process (Day, 2004). To ensure success during informal discussions, the facilitator should set a clear framework or structure that will assist all students in making a positive contribution. A possible starting point is to ask the students to identify the main strengths and weaknesses of the teaching and the module content and/or practical classes, or to suggest changes they think would be helpful. It is advisable to appoint a student in class to assist in recording the main discussion points before a summary of the findings is compiled and feedback is given to the students.

Informal discussions with students should be managed well to ensure that they do not degenerate into complaint sessions. More structure can be added by supplying students with an agenda with specific discussion points before commencement of the discussions.

3.5.2.4 *The One-Minute Paper*

Angelo & Cross (2001) confirm that no other classroom assessment technique has been used more often, or by greater numbers of teaching staff, than the One-Minute Paper. This versatile technique provides a quick and extremely simple way to collect written feedback on the quality of teaching and/or module content.

To use the one-minute paper, the facilitator stops the class a few minutes early and asks students to respond briefly to some variation of the following questions: "What was the most important thing you learnt during the class today?" and "What important questions remain unanswered?". Students then write down their responses on index cards or half-sheet scrap paper (Angelo & Cross, 2001).

The great advantage of this technique is that it provides manageable amounts of timely and useful feedback for a minimal investment of time and energy. By asking students what they see as the most significant things they are learning, and what their major questions are, teaching staff can quickly check how well those students are learning what they (the staff) are teaching. The feedback obtained can help staff decide whether any mid-term corrections or changes to the teaching and/or module content are needed and, if so, what kinds of instructional adjustments should be made.

Chizmar (1999) elaborates by stating that the one-minute paper pinpoints problems and suggestions without assigning blame. His experience with this feedback technique is that it is instructive, and that regular feedback from students is impossible to ignore. Student responses became more thoughtful and useful as it became clear to them that the whole purpose of the exercise is to enhance the quality of the teaching and learning process.

The following quotations from students from the Illinois State University (Chizmar, 1999), on their experience of the one-minute paper are self-explanatory: “I think the feedback is beneficial because it made us aware of what we did not fully understand and enabled us to follow up with questions”; “It is a good tool to get people to say they don’t understand something if they’re too embarrassed to ask questions in class. Traditional classroom feedback devices – exams, quizzes, papers, oral presentations – seldom meet this criterion. However, traditional classroom feedback devices can be more “TQM-like” if they are managed according to quality principles”; “I found it helpful to know that other students had the same problems as I did. I also found it interesting to know what different problems other people had that I didn’t have”.

Bartlett & Morrow (2001) argue that although tests and examinations are used, *inter alia*, to determine how students learn, they do not help to highlight or identify deficiencies in student knowledge. They emphasise that student misconceptions of learning should be determined at the earliest possible time, and that the one-minute paper, probably one of the most successful and

often-used techniques, can bridge this problem. They state that this technique requires minimal effort in terms of preparation, implementation and analysis, as well as minimal effort on the part of the students. These factors and the fact that it is very effective for obtaining feedback in large classes, greatly contribute to the overall success of this technique. It can provide immediate feedback to the lecturer, and the responses can be rapidly read and tabulated. A study conducted by Chizmar & Ostrosky (1998) has shown that the use of one-minute papers leads to a 6.6% across-the-board increase in student performance.

Perhaps the most important advantage of this feedback technique is that it allows academic staff to demonstrate an interest in student learning. In this way it encourages student-lecturer interaction, specifically in large classes where interaction can sometimes be difficult.

3.5.2.5 *Electronic communication feedback technologies*

The use of communications technology in higher education teaching and learning practices is a general phenomenon. Some of the reasons for this are that a more flexible teaching and learning environment has evolved in response to a more diverse student population; financial pressures on universities have required the introduction of innovative measures to teach more students with the same or fewer resources, and higher education institutions are endeavouring to market themselves as experts in the field of information technology (Cummings *et al.* 2001).

In addition to becoming a widely-used educational tool, Web surveys are gaining popularity as a mode of collecting survey information in developed countries. This may be due to the advantage the Web holds as a cost-effective method to enhance response rates, especially among computer-literate students who have Internet access at home (Carini *et al.* 2003). Although this may be true in First-World educational circumstances, the vast majority of South African students don't have Internet access at home, and

are obligated to attend computer literacy courses when they enrol at colleges or universities.

The availability and accessibility of computer facilities to students at South African educational institutions can also hamper the management and administration of online teaching and module content evaluations. Due to the fact that little is known about how South African students perceive and respond to Web-based surveys, the researcher focused on studies conducted in this regard at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, as well as several higher education institutions in the United States of America (USA).

The main research question addressed at the Chinese University in Hong Kong was whether mode of administration affects the form of response to the questionnaire items. In other words, do those students who use the Internet and those who use paper-based questionnaires perceive the constructs in the instrument in the same way? Do those who choose to reply through one mode of response have different interpretations of the questions in comparison with those who prefer the paper-based mode? In order to address the main research question, the following subsidiary research questions were formulated: “Would students in particular disciplines prefer to respond to questionnaires on paper or via the Internet?”; “Would scores differ by mode of administration?”; “Would any differences in scores remain after checking for student characteristics?”, and “Do students who use a paper or Internet version of an instrument respond differently to questions about their courses or programmes?” (Leung & Kember, 2005).

A questionnaire was administered to a total sample of 2786 undergraduate students from all seven faculties at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. A paper and an e-mail with hyperlink version, asking the same questions, were prepared. The paper version was first sent by mail to each of the selected students, accompanied by a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study, procedures for completing the questionnaire, voluntary participation, and the guarantee of anonymity and confidentiality regarding all the responses. Students completing the paper version were asked to mail back the

questionnaires in a business reply envelope. A few days later, the electronic version of the questionnaire was sent to the students selected through e-mail. Desired responses could be entered by clicking on buttons, and submission took place by clicking on a “submit” button at the bottom of the survey. A total of 1759 students correctly completed and returned the paper-based and Internet questionnaires, which constitutes an overall return rate of 63% (Leung & Kember, 2005).

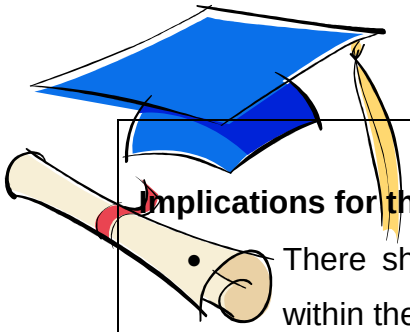
The choice of mode of response was more or less equal between the paper-based and the Internet versions. The exception was students from the Faculty of Engineering, who showed a significant preference for responding through the Internet, which is hardly surprising in view of the nature of engineering programmes in the faculty. As stated, the main research question addressed during this study was whether students respond differently to questions when administration takes place through the Internet, or is paper-based (Leung & Kember, 2005). Firstly, the study showed that the reliability of the scales was the same for both modes of administration. Secondly, it was found that both sets of data are well suited to a common factorial mode, and thirdly that the mode of administration did not affect the interpretation of the questionnaire. These results led to the conclusion that, if higher education institutions administer questionnaires through the Internet, the results are not likely to differ from those that would have been obtained through a paper-based mode (Leung & Kember, 2005).

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) in the USA annually collects data about the nature of the college/university experience from tens of thousands of first-year and senior students at several hundred 4-year colleges and universities. As both paper-based and Web survey modes are used, the NSSE data constitute a rich source of information for examining possible response differences between paper-based and Web administration modes (Carini et *al.* 2003). The target sample included 151,910 students from 276 colleges and universities that registered for the NSSE survey in 2000; each institution provided student information in an electronic data file.

The results reported in this project were based on 58 288 undergraduates (27 121 first-year students and 31 167 senior students). Of this group, 37 682 students completed the paper-based questionnaire, and 20 606 (10 254 students from Web-only institutions and 10 352 students who exercised the Web-based option) completed the Web version. At 233 institutions, each student was sent a paper-based questionnaire, but had the option of completing it on the Web. In contrast, 53 other colleges and universities elected to use a Web-exclusive format, wherein all contact with students was electronic and students completed the questionnaires via the Web. There were two mutually exclusive scenarios for completion of the questionnaires, namely paper-based or Web-based and Web-based only.

The analysis showed that the responses of college and university students to paper-based and Web-based surveys generally evince small distinctions. This conclusion is consistent with the single-campus study at the Chinese University of Hong Kong mentioned above. The exceptions in this particular survey were the computing and information technology students, who favoured the Web-based questionnaire, which may also be attributable to their field of study, as with the engineering students in the first scenario (Carini *et al.* 2003). What does this mean for institutional researchers who wish to use Web-based questionnaires for the evaluation of teaching and module content? The two studies demonstrate the need for further research into possible mode differences, in order to select the best possible mode of evaluation.

According to Powney & Hall (1998), a pertinent question is whether or not the mechanisms of student feedback have kept pace with the changes in the organisation of higher education institutions. With the introduction of a modular teaching mode that crosses disciplines, students' learning experiences can now be shared across several departments/schools, or even across faculties. They argue that this phenomenon demonstrates the need for an overall institutional strategy for the timing, content, format and analysis of surveys in order to avoid a lack of consistency and efficiency.



Implications for this study

- There should be consensus on the purpose of student feedback within the institution.
- Student feedback outcomes serve formative and summative purposes.
- There should be consensus within the institution on how student evaluation outcomes will influence professional teaching practices.
- Summative evaluation data must be consistent with personnel policies and procedures, and appropriate appeal or grievance procedures should be in place.
- Attaining high standards of teaching requires a self-critical attitude.
- Consensus should be reached on which mechanisms to use for the collection, administration and reporting of student feedback outcomes.
- All role players in the evaluation process should agree on how to handle any legal implications.
- Certain steps must be followed to plan, design, implement and manage student evaluation questionnaires.
- Questionnaires should be piloted to determine the relevancy thereof.

- The use of focus groups as a supplementary source of information should be investigated.

- It should be established whether student evaluations will be complemented by informal discussions between lecturers and students.

- It should be decided whether one-minute papers will be used as a triangulating method.

- Consensus should be reached on whether electronic communication feedback will form part of the student evaluation system.

3.6 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF STUDENT EVALUATION SYSTEMS

As indicated by Coughlan (in Keane & Labhrainn, 2005) and Felder (1992), over 2000 references to research on the evaluation of teaching and module content by students can be identified in literature and on the Internet. The most prominent concerns in the literature include the possibility of potential biases in the student evaluations, for instance that those lecturers who are popular may receive higher ratings than others, that students cannot make objective, consistent judgements, that student ratings are only popularity contests, and that only excellent researchers can judge teaching effectiveness.

In order to verify the above-mentioned assumptions, the most fundamental requirements of a research instrument are that it should be reliable and valid - reliable in the sense that it would yield consistent results if used repeatedly under the same conditions with the same participants. This can be measured by a number of different coefficients of reliability, all of which vary in principle

between zero, reflecting total unreliability, and one, reflecting perfect reliability. According to Cherry & Meyer (in Palomba & Banta, 1999) three sources of measurement error can occur, namely the students, academic staff and supporting staff responding to the evaluation instrument, the administration of the instrument, and the instrument itself. It is therefore very important that the measuring instrument must be well constructed, that the questions are clearly worded, and that wording is unambiguous. The length of the instrument must also be consistent with the time available to administer it in class (Palomba & Banta, 1999).

On the other hand, McMillan & Schumacher (2001:244) are of the opinion that when measuring human traits, whether achievement, attitude, personality, physical skill, or any other trait, one will very rarely obtain a result that does not contain some degree of error. They argue that there are many factors that contribute to the less than perfect nature of human measures. There may be ambiguous questions, the lighting (in the classroom) may be poor, guessing on an achievement test may be lucky or unlucky, observers may get tired, and so on. The scores of two tests, for example, would therefore not be the same due to unavoidable internal human or external environmental error (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). Once it is determined that a measuring instrument will consistently provide reliable information, the validity of the instrument should be determined.

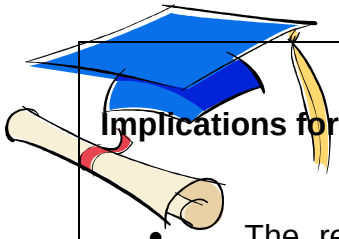
A measuring instrument should be valid in the sense that it measures the personal qualities or traits it purports to measure. Palomba & Banta (1999:90) maintain that, although the importance of validity cannot be overemphasised in theory, it is often given insufficient attention in practice because it is a very complex concept. According to Brennan *et al., (*2003*),* the following approaches can be followed to determine the validity of a measuring instrument:

- Face validity – examining the wording or structure of the constituent items by asking whether the contents of the instrument appear to be appropriate.

- Content validity – carrying out a more thorough process of analysis and comparing specific items used in an instrument.

- Construct validity – usually addressed by means of factor analysis, where evidence is provided that the instrument measures one or more distinctive traits or constructs.
- Convergent validity – measuring the same traits that are being measured by other measuring instruments, as discussed in paragraph 3.5.2.

McMillan & Schumacher (2001:243) clearly indicate that, as validity implies proper interpretation and use of the information gathered through measurement, it is necessary for all role players to understand that validity is a matter of degree, and not an all-or-nothing proposition. They argue that this implies that, in practice, it is possible to utilise already established instruments for which some evidence of validity exists. On the other hand, they also warn that it would be a mistake to accept the validity of an instrument just because it had been established. Already existing instruments need to be evaluated with even greater care and responsibility.



Implications for this study

- The reliability and validity of any student evaluation measuring instrument should be beyond reproach.

- The measuring instrument should be well constructed and clearly worded, the wording should be unambiguous, and the length should be consistent with the time available to administer it in class.

3.7 QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE STUDENT EVALUATION SURVEYS

The terms quantitative and qualitative are used frequently to identify different modes of enquiry or approaches to research, and the most obvious distinction lies in the form of data collection. Quantitative research presents statistical results with numbers, while qualitative research presents data as a narration with words (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:14). In the context of the research topic, quantitative and qualitative research data obtained from student evaluation questionnaires are utilised to enhance the quality of teaching and learning practices in higher education institutions.

In general, questionnaires are very versatile data collection tools and can be used to gather a variety of data of both a quantitative and qualitative nature. Data collection is not the only function of a questionnaire, as it can also raise awareness of particular issues and make respondents feel that they are valued and important partners in the decision-making process. In the higher education environment, institutions can choose between already developed student evaluation questionnaires from other institutions, or decide to develop their own. Schuh & Upcraft (2001:57) add that the most important criterion for determining which type of questionnaire to select is probably the purpose of the exercise. They argue that, if the intention is to compare the evaluation results with those of other institutions or with national standards, then existing questionnaires are the only choice. If such comparisons are not necessary, then a locally developed questionnaire may be sufficient.

3.7.1 Quantitative data analysis

It is important to identify the steps in the development of a quantitative measuring instrument in order to ensure the reliability and validity of collected data. Schuh & Upcraft (2001) identified the following seven steps.

Step 1: Determine what information is needed

The purpose of the study will determine what information is needed, and Patton (1990) identified six types of information that can be gathered:

- Experience and behaviour information – probes what a respondent does or has done, with the aim of eliciting descriptions of experiences, behaviours, actions or activities.

- Opinion and values information – helps to understand the cognitive and interpretive processes of respondents. Questions are posed that can determine what people think about certain issues, including their goals, intentions, desires and values.

- Information about feelings – the emotional reactions respondents have to their experiences and thoughts. In asking this type of question, one is looking for information that describes emotions such as anxiety, confidence, anger, and frustration.

- Information about respondents' knowledge – to determine what factual information the respondent has. This includes information about the availability of various services, programmes and facilities in an institution.

- Sensory information – what respondents have seen, heard, touched, tasted and smelled. This information could be used, for instance, to determine whether students are experiencing problems with their hearing in class.

- Background and demographic information – to identify the characteristics of the respondent, such as age, race and gender.

Step 2: Decide on the format of the questions

Most researchers make use of close-ended questions in their quantitative surveys, but include a number of open-ended questions as well.

Step 3: Decide on the measurement scale

The purpose of the study will determine the questions, combination of questions and scales, or combination of scales, to be used in the questionnaire. The measurement scales are also important, as the types of statistical analysis chosen are in part determined by the measurement scales used.

According to Terenzini & Upcraft (1996), considerable thought must be given to how the array of possible questions in a quantitative questionnaire is constructed. They identified four measurement scales: Nominal scales – the yes/no or male/female questions, where respondents are asked to indicate their specific preferences. Ordinal scales – the ranking of information in order of priority. Interval scales – can be used to rank-order objects or people according to certain traits, but interval variables have the added advantage of equal-interval score values. Likert-type scales are examples in this regard. Ratio scales – with all the characteristics of the above-mentioned scales, plus the advantage of having an empirically meaningful zero. Family income, age, and years of working experience are all variables measured on a ratio scale.

Step 4: Determine the wording of the questions

The success of respondent feedback during the completion of a questionnaire depends to a great extent on the wording used in such a questionnaire. Ambiguous or imprecise questions should be avoided; avoid questions that require recalling things that occurred long ago; avoid asking two questions in the same question, and avoid emotional words and phrases.

Step 5: Determine the sequencing of the questions

Poor sequencing of questions in a questionnaire can confuse respondents, bias their responses and jeopardise the quality of the entire survey. Rea and Parker (1997) suggest that the following guidelines must be taken into account in the compilation of a questionnaire:

- Start with straightforward and uncomplicated questions that are easy to answer and are related to the topic of the study.

- Sensitive questions should be placed at the end of the questionnaire, as it is more likely that the respondents will be prepared to answer such questions at the end of the questionnaire.

- Group related questions together in order to assist respondents in focusing on each question without being distracted by another.

- Follow a logical sequence of questions that respondents can answer in a sequential or temporal order.

- Consider including reliability checks by asking more or less the same question in a different manner.

- Ask about demographic characteristics at the end of the questionnaire, and request only information that is important to the purpose of the study.

Step 6: Format the instrument

The format of the questionnaire should be of such a nature that the instrument is easily scorable. For most quantitative studies, this means putting the instrument into scanning format. The respondent should also be able to provide the right responses to the appropriate questions without confusion. For instance, if the instrument can be scanned, there are two choices. Firstly, to provide a scannable response sheet next to the questions. The problem with this technique is that respondents can sometimes write on the wrong line, and thus provide incorrect answers. The second option is to provide a scannable response sheet next to the questions, on a single sheet.

Step 7: Pilot-test the instrument

The purpose of a pilot test is, *inter alia*, to ensure that the instrument does not confuse or frustrate the respondents, or miss the mark in terms of the purpose of the study. The traditional procedure for a pilot test is to mirror the data collection process of the intended study, and then to do the necessary editing and revision of the content and format based on the outcome of the pilot test.

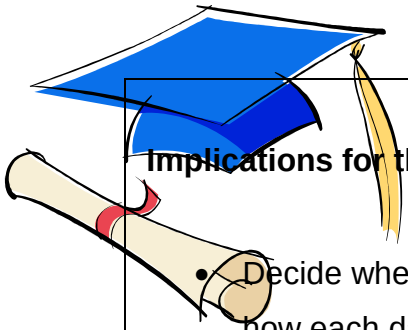
3.7.2 Qualitative data analysis

Based on the literature perspectives of Campbell *et al.* (2004), qualitative data analysis is a crucial part of the research process since analysis has characteristically been considered an interpretative art rather than a science, and is a process that does not lend itself easily to simple articulation. They add that qualitative data is gathered mainly from interviews and open-ended response questions in questionnaires.

Qualitative methodologies focus on the way in which respondents interpret their experiences with a certain service, and interviews, focus group discussions, participant observations or open-ended questions form part of this method. For the purpose of this research, the focus of this section will fall on the construction of open-ended questions as part of the student evaluation questionnaire. It sometimes happens that open-ended questions are left blank during an evaluation process, and this type of evaluation therefore requires more effort in the sense that respondents should be motivated enough to fill in the questions fully.

The following guidance can be given on the wording of open-ended questions:

- Convince the respondents that open-ended questions form a very important part of the qualitative data obtained via the questionnaire.
- Use familiar words in short, simple sentences.
- Use words that are fully understandable to the respondents.
- Ensure respondents that the information obtained will be treated confidentially.
- Ensure that the respondents understand the purpose of the survey, and that they should demand feedback on the outcome of the investigation.
- Allow sufficient space for respondents to respond to the various open-ended questions.



Implications for this study

- Decide whether quantitative and/or qualitative data will be gathered, and how each data type will be weighted.

- Decide on the role of open-ended and close-ended questions in the questionnaire, what their purposes will be and how they will be analysed.

- Decide what kind of scales and how many scales will be used, and for what purposes.

- Take scorability of the measuring instrument into consideration.

- Plan for the piloting of the measuring instrument.

- Check the difficulty of the language level in the questionnaire, and make sure that the students will comprehend what is being asked.

3.8 STUDENT EVALUATIONS AND HUMAN RESOURCES-RELATED ISSUES

In the publication “Quality Assurance in a Transforming University System: Lessons and Challenges” (Griesel, 2002), by the Unit for Research into Higher Education at the University of the Free State, the main reasons for the implementation of quality assurance mechanisms in higher education are indicated as, *inter alia*, the massification of education, accountability to stakeholders, internationalisation of qualifications, involvement of government

in quality assurance matters, and the professionalisation of the academe, which includes staff performance (performance management) and skills development strategies (staff development).

In the context of this study, this section will place the emphasis on performance management and staff development practices, as well as the role that student evaluations fulfil in this regard.

3.8.1 Performance management in higher education

McCaffery (2004) argues that managing staff performance in higher education institutions is a demanding task, even in the best possible circumstances. This view is shared and substantiated in a case study conducted by the researcher at the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT), as part of a project undertaken by the Centre for Higher Education Studies at the University of the Free State. The purpose of the project was to address the shortcomings of current performance management systems within higher and further education and training institutions in South Africa, and to establish a model for performance management.

Van der Merwe (in Wilkinson *et al*., 2004:76-177) pointed out that one cannot simply impose a performance management system on academic staff, as the individual and organisational outcomes to be attained should be clearly outlined in an institutional policy and procedure before implementing the system. Furthermore, in an era that demands efficiency, accountability and productivity, there are powerful incentives for the alignment of role players in the performance management process. Top management will need to engage in partnerships with staff in order to advance the teaching and learning process, while students - as institutional clients - also have an important role to fulfil in the evaluation process. The CUT project has revealed that performance management is a formal management process for harnessing, directing, measuring, evaluating and rewarding human effort, competence and talent. Furthermore, performance management is a dynamic process

integrating the institution's corporate strategic planning, financial and administrative activities.

The CUT investigation indicated that performance management concerns the gathering of information from a variety of sources in order to make reliable and valid judgements on the work performance of academic staff. It is argued that different people in the institution are better placed to make well-considered judgements about different aspects of teaching and learning. In the broadest sense, the stakeholders include: the staff member under evaluation; the direct supervisor; the head of the department/school; colleagues, and students. One purpose of staff evaluation is to gather information to support institutional and personnel decisions, or the summative assessment process. A second purpose of staff evaluation is to gather information to improve the quality of the teaching and learning practices in the institution, or the formative assessment process.

Mills & Hyle (1999:351) point out that there are definite differences in the aims of summative and formative teaching evaluations, and suggest that different types of information be gathered in this regard. The role of students in the evaluation process of academic staff is discussed in the context of this study.

3.8.1.1 *Feedback from students as an integral part of the performance management process*

It is a worldwide phenomenon that student evaluations of teaching and subject content constitute an integral part of the performance management process, teaching philosophy and educational practices in higher education institutions. The various literature reviews in books, published articles, educational journals and case studies consulted during research for this study, are cited as examples in this regard.

Although Ballantyne *et al.* (2000) are of the opinion that the validity of certain measures is sometimes questionable, student evaluations are generally considered more useful, accurate and valid than other measures of teaching

performance, and have the added benefit of being a direct measure of client satisfaction. Almost twenty years ago, March's (1987) review of the measurement and use of student evaluations of teaching effectiveness indicated that "student ratings are clearly multidimensional, quite reliable, reasonably valid, relatively uncontaminated by many variables often seen as sources of potential bias, and are seen as useful by students, faculty and administrators".

Gravett & Geyser (2004:193) emphasise that, broadly speaking, the educational process consists of three major components: planning, delivery and assessment. Each of these components impacts on the students in a different way, and should be evaluated independently. They point out that those factors that exert a gradual influence on students in the course a semester, such as the structure of the subject, the sequencing of the lectures and the timing of assignments, can be evaluated usefully at the end of a semester. Those factors that have more definite short-term effects on the teaching and learning process should be evaluated as soon as possible after the event to ensure a direct link between feedback from students and the learning experience on which the feedback is focused. Because this feedback is obtained shortly after the lecture, the students should be able to comment on specific issues.

Teaching evaluation results, whether obtained in a formative or summative manner, require careful interpretation if they are to be used effectively and efficiently in the performance management process. Independent and specialised advice should be available to assist academic management and lecturing staff in enhancing the quality of their teaching and learning practices.

3.8.2 The role of staff development in student performance

According to Campbell *et al.* (2004:15), better trained and prepared lecturers bring about improved student performance. Worldwide initiatives at secondary and tertiary education level indicate that student learning is enhanced if lecturers are developed through professional development programmes. An

example in this regard may be found at the Central University of Technology (CUT), Free State, where it is compulsory for lecturing staff to enrol for modules in assessment and learning facilitation in order to enhance the quality of their teaching practices. The researcher collected written testimonies by staff members who have successfully completed this six-month course, in which they related how the knowledge they gained assisted them and their students in the teaching and learning process.

From the literature perspectives of Joyce & Showers (2002:4), the following four conditions must be present if staff development is to significantly affect student learning:

- A group of lecturing staff members study together, share their practical experiences, put into practice what they are learning, and share the results (the CUT example above is cited as an example).

- The content of the staff development programme should focus on those teaching and learning aspects that have a high probability of affecting student learning, as well as student ability to learn.

- What is taught and how it is taught, as well as the social climate of the institution, will have to change to the extent that the increase in student ability to learn is manifested.

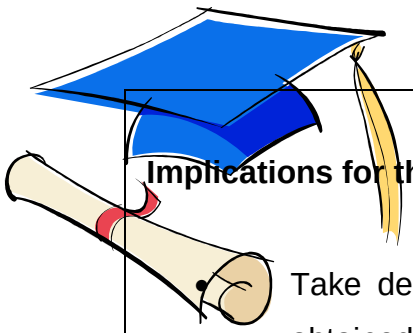
The staff development process as discussed in the educational literature over the last decade has built a convincing argument regarding the role of professional development in promoting teaching quality and increasing learner achievement. Simply put: what lecturers know and do, has an impact on what their students know and do. Deeper content knowledge, more content-specific instructional strategies and a greater understanding of how students learn enable lecturers to meet group and individual student needs (Teaching and Learning Plan, CUT: 2005-2007).

Staff training and development alone will not produce results. To produce improved results for students, professional learning must be embedded into a system of comprehensive reform. Such reform must include rigorous standards, assessment programmes that inform teaching and measure student progress towards attaining standards, policies that provide support for quality teaching and recognise the importance thereof, and leadership that advocates for high-quality professional learning. However, curriculum changes, assessment programmes, policies and leadership will remain inadequate in the classroom unless accompanied by professional academic staff training and development initiatives. Thus, failing to make provision for assisting lecturing staff in developing their skills and knowledge implies that the critical link between student performance and teaching is ignored; not surprisingly, studies show that students with better lecturers learn more (Teaching and Learning Plan, CUT: 2005-2007).

Staff development helps prepare academics for the complexities of equipping a new generation with the advanced skills and knowledge they will need for the unknown future. It assists academic staff in enhancing their knowledge of content to improve their ability to answer students' questions, enliven class presentations, and help students solve problems. It expands lecturers' repertoire of facilitation skills utilised to determine the best method to match an individual's specific learning needs. The most effective way, therefore, to improve the achievement of students is to improve the quality of facilitation/teaching. No effort to improve the quality of education for all students, especially for the most disadvantaged, can succeed unless it changes the way in which lecturers facilitate/teach and students learn. Improving academic staff training and development requires empowering lecturers to develop new models for integrating learning into all aspects of the educational process.

Effective academic staff development should thus be:

- Results-driven and job-embedded.
- Focused on helping lecturers to become deeply immersed, *inter alia,* in subject matter, modes of facilitation/teaching, modes of assessment and curriculum development.
- Curriculum-centred and standards-based.
- Sustained, rigorous and cumulative.



Implications for this study

- Take decisions at the appropriate levels regarding how results obtained from student evaluations will be used for staff development and performance management purposes.
- If student evaluation is used for staff development and performance management purposes, this should be reflected in institutional policies and procedures.
- Decide whether student evaluation will form part of teaching portfolios, and in what way.

3.9 CLOSING THE LOOP ON STUDENT FEEDBACK PRACTICES

The researcher believes that providing feedback to academic staff and students regarding the outcome of the evaluations done on teaching and subject content, should be considered an integral part of enhancing the quality of the teaching and learning process. Personal experiences at the Central University of Technology, Free State, in this regard showed that academic staff have been less successful in including students in sharing the outcomes of the evaluation data. The challenge of “closing the loop” is probably the most demanding aspect of the evaluation process.

It stands to reason that, if students become accustomed to regularly filling in evaluation questionnaires, yet rarely - if ever - receiving any feedback on the outcomes of the process, they will become less motivated to participate in future evaluation processes. The researcher discovered this tendency during evaluations done at the CUT, where students became sceptical and sometimes unwilling to participate constructively - especially in circumstances where the same students were involved in the evaluation of various lecturers during the same evaluation timeframe. The importance of purposeful actions accompanying the capturing and dissemination of information to those best placed to act on it, is stressed in this regard. Neumann (2000) supports this assertion by identifying four types of users, namely the individual staff members requesting an evaluation to reflect on their own teaching for improvement purposes; academic management and the human resources department, who utilise such evaluation for selection and promotion purposes; the staff development unit, which uses this information to advise members of the university community on aspects of evaluation and implications for decisions about teaching quality and improvement; and students, who use this information to ascertain that the time they have spent completing questionnaires is bringing about genuine change that will impact on their academic careers.

In a study of practices across the Australian Technology Network of Universities (ATN) in relation to the collection, analysis and employment of student feedback data, the issue of informing students regarding the action that was taken in following up their responses was of particular interest. The research showed, as in the CUT case, that while much work has been conducted in linking student feedback to strategic actions at all levels of university activities, universities have been less successful in including students in sharing the outcomes of the data. It was also found that surveys at the ATN were not always timely and conducive to report-back to students, and that the type of information generated was not always interpreted as meaningful by students. Data that reflects the kinds of issues that are significant to students, was often missing (Palermo, 2004).

It is the researcher's considered opinion that, if the purpose of the student evaluation process is to enhance the quality of teaching and learning practices in higher education institutions –

- the evaluation outcomes may not be used for disciplinary action against academic staff during or after the feedback process;

- all academic units at the institution should be subjected to the evaluation process, and feedback strategies should be developed and implemented;

- evaluations should be managed and conducted by an independent unit, such as a Centre for Teaching and Learning;

- the confidentiality of the evaluation outcomes should be respected at all times, especially during the feedback stage;

- students should not be victimised during or after the feedback process.

Watson (2003:148) also clearly indicates that feedback to academic management, lecturing staff and students encourages participation in future research, as it demonstrates the value of individual students' responses, the importance of their participation; it also increases confidence in the results (outcomes) and value of the research, and encourages the institutional management to explain how they will deal with the shortcomings that emerged from the survey.

The type of information presented to staff and students during the feedback process will determine the success thereof. If copies of the evaluation report are merely delivered without any explanation on the content, this would not constitute closing the loop, as it does not include the responses to students' views nor the resulting action. Personal investigations by the researcher at the CUT to determined what happened to the evaluation results after the evaluation process, indicated that the majority of academic staff members interviewed are not aware of the fact that feedback to students is an integral part of the whole feedback cycle. It is therefore not strange that, during reflection on previous evaluation exercises at the CUT, the researcher discovered that students indicated that they received no feedback from their lecturers. The general way of thinking seems to be that lecturing staff believe that evaluation outcomes can only be used for their own formative and summative purposes, namely to review subject content or teaching skills, and for performance management purposes.

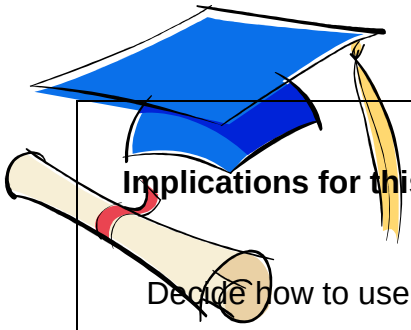
On the other hand, students also remain unaware of the fact that cumulative feedback on teaching and module content can result in significant positive changes in the quality of the teaching and learning process. This gap in understanding the real purpose of the feedback process can be attributed to a lack of communication between lecturer and students.

The researcher is of the opinion that feedback responses to students can be communicated in a variety of ways. It is likely that some of the key issues identified by students during the evaluation process can be acted upon immediately, for instance the acoustic quality in the classroom, the installation

of microphone and speaker systems in classrooms, noise control in the corridors, and the installation of air conditioners. Other issues may take more time to implement, such as the recurriculation of a module/programme, the implementation of a problem-based approach to education in a programme, the identification and prescription of new textbooks, or the publication of web-based lecturing material. It is important that feedback strategies be developed to suit specific circumstances.

The researcher believes that the following are examples of feedback mechanisms that can be utilised in closing the feedback loop: verbal report by the lecturer to students in class; verbal report by a student representative in the class; a written report in a student newsletter or newspaper; postings on faculty/school notice board; reports to relevant institutional committees with student representation; and general reports on the institutional intranet.

Moore & Kuol (2005) are of the opinion that, although different feedback mechanisms are of the utmost importance, it is the individual reaction by the lecturer or student to evaluation outcomes that has a more direct bearing on any subsequent effort to enhance the quality of teaching and learning practices in an institution. They suggest that building feedback reaction analysis into student feedback systems is at least as important as analysing the content of the feedback itself.



Implications for this study

Decide how to use student evaluation outcomes to close the feedback loop.

- Decide who should receive feedback, for what purpose, and to whom improvement actions should be reported.

- Decide what communication strategies will be used for feedback to various role players in the institution.

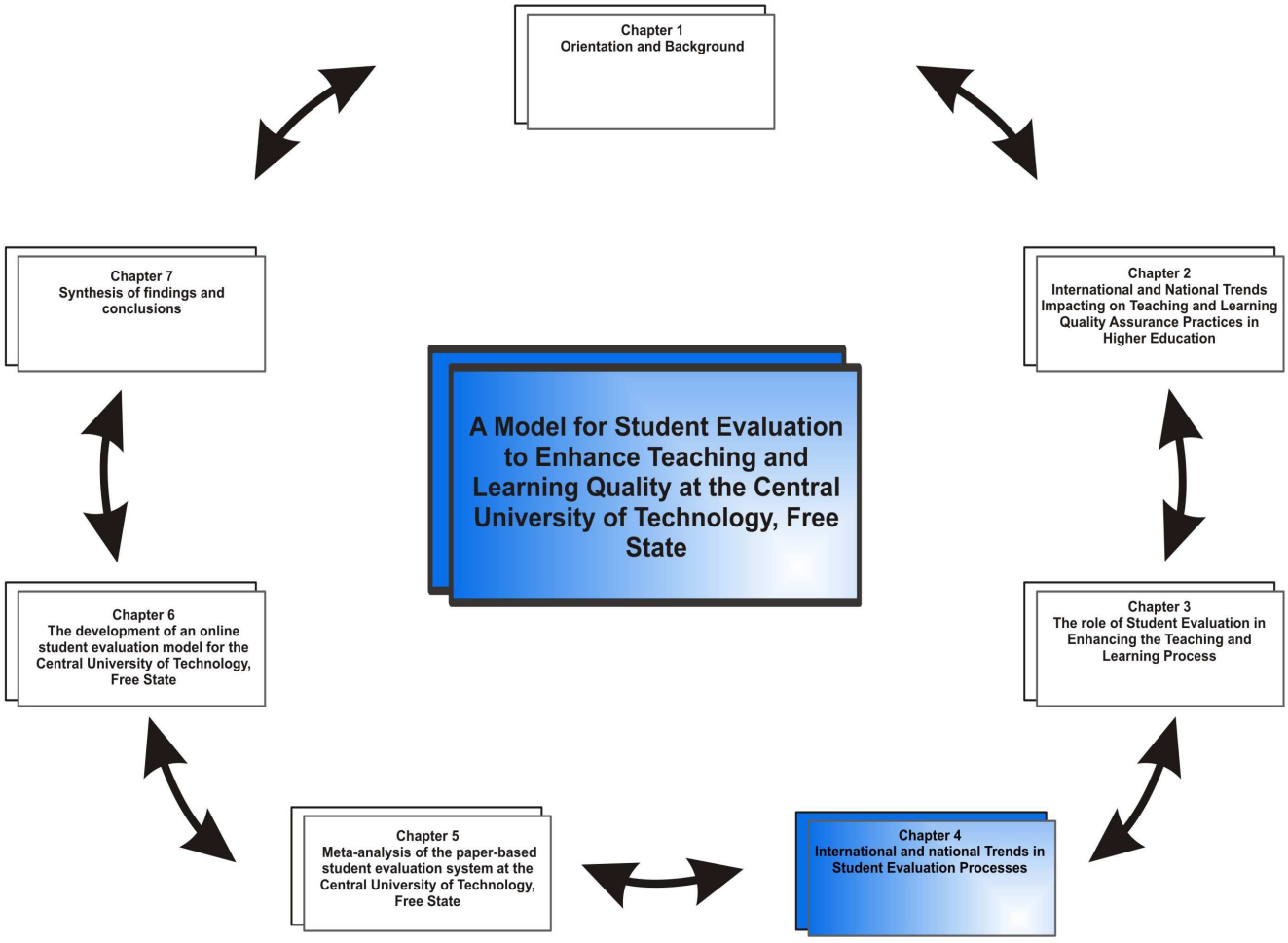
3.10 CONCLUSION

The emphasis of this chapter was to prove that the implementation of a well-planned and well-structured student evaluation of teaching and module content system will presumably lead to the enhancement of teaching and learning practices in higher education institutions.

The increased use of student feedback in tertiary institutions is a worldwide phenomenon, inspired by the internal striving for effectiveness and efficiency and external governmental demand for accountability. The introduction of these external quality assurance processes to measure and demonstrate teaching quality, require that teaching become a more publicly visible activity, accountable and measurable within the university sector itself. Student evaluation practices have therefore become a central element of many institutions' management strategies aimed at assuring teaching and learning quality.

In order to plan, manage and implement a student evaluation system that will satisfy the needs and aspirations of internal and external stakeholders, it is important to investigate international and national trends in this regard.

CHAPTER 4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Orientation and Background
Chapter 2
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Chapter 3
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CHAPTER 4
INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL TRENDS IN STUDENT EVALUATION PROCESSES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The need to improve the quality of teaching and learning in higher education institutions worldwide has resulted in universities developing or adapting quality measuring instruments for this purpose during the last two decades. Among the stakeholders in this endeavour are institutional management, faculty management, academic staff, internal and external quality assurance bodies, and students.

Given the divergent interests of some stakeholders, as well as changing economic and policy trends, the systems used to evaluate teaching and module content tend to develop over time. In this chapter, the researcher describes a number of student evaluation systems used internationally and nationally to evaluate teaching practices and module content. Personal visits to Australia and New Zealand (see 1.6.2) brought the researcher in contact with experts in the field of student evaluation. The rationale behind visiting these universities is grounded in the fact that they bear several striking similarities to the South African educational landscape. These similarities include, for example, quality assurance practices and the implementation of outcomes-based education and training principles.

4.2 INTERNATIONAL STUDENT EVALUATION MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

Examples of student evaluation measuring instruments used in Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and South Africa are discussed in this section. The purpose of this discussion was to investigate current international student evaluation practices and measuring instruments in order to identify best practices. This information was helpful in

the development of the online student evaluation of teaching system proposed in Chapter 6.

4.2.1 Australian student evaluation measuring instruments

The Australian national education policy encourages universities to seek greater commercial opportunities and align themselves with the needs of industry. Efforts by higher education institutions to attract business investment rely to a considerable extent on the available evidence regarding the quality of their teaching and learning practices. According to the Australian Department of Education's Higher Education Division (2003), credible higher education systems of quality guarantee successful co-operation with industry.

Since the late 1970s, the Australian Commonwealth Government has been promoting a climate of critical self-assessment within the higher education sector, and encouraging universities to monitor their own performance. Throughout the 1980s, this focus was extended to include the improvement of efficiency and effectiveness and an increased awareness of public accountability. From the mid-1980s, greater emphasis was placed on system-wide studies, and major discipline reviews were funded to determine standards to improve quality teaching and learning practices. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Australian higher education sector experienced some structural changes and rapid growth, but the Government remained determined to assure and maintain high quality educational standards (Australian Department of Education's Higher Education Division, 2003).

The Committee for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (CQAHE) in Australia was established in November 1992 to provide advice on quality assurance issues, to conduct independent audits and to make recommendations on higher education quality to the government. This Committee conducted three independent audits that served as a mechanism for involving universities in programme self-evaluation. Since 1998, the government requires annual quality assurance and improvement plans, which

are published by the Department of Education (Australian Department of Education's Higher Education Division, 2003).

Of significant importance for this study is the fact that all Australian universities develop annual quality assurance and improvement plans to monitor and evaluate the quality of their teaching and learning practices. This process of self-evaluation includes regular evaluation of student feedback on teaching and module content. Various arrangements for the assessment and improvement of staff teaching and research are in place at Australian universities. Institutions undertake student evaluation of teaching, develop special projects for the improvement of teaching and offer internal awards for teaching excellence.

The following information on the use of student feedback in selected Australian universities was collated following visits to the cited universities.

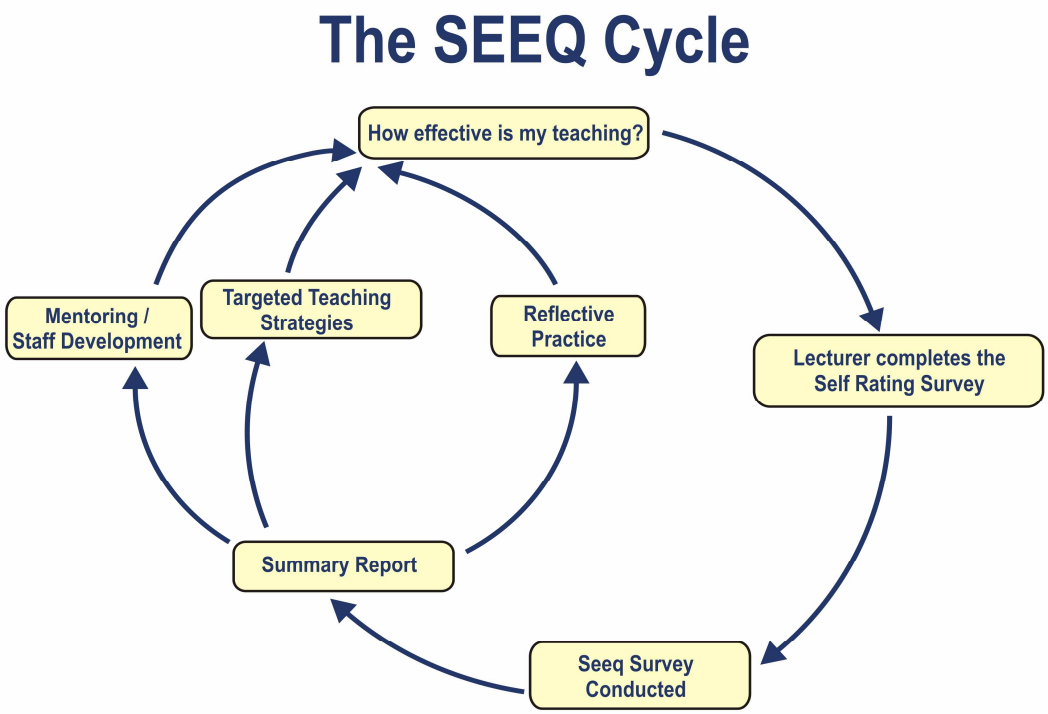
4.2.1.1 *Curtin University of Technology*

In an interview conducted with Dr B. Oliver(2004), Director of the Curtin University of Technology's Teaching Development Unit, she emphasised that the Curtin teaching community has an outcomes-focused approach to learning that goes beyond memorisation and skills acquisition – sometimes described as a surface approach to learning. She stressed that a deep approach to learning can only be fostered when learning outcomes are centred on the improvement of the following: students' understanding of a particular subject; their ability to relate previous knowledge to new knowledge; their ability to distinguish between evidence and argument; and the skills needed to organise and structure content into a coherent whole. It is within this context that Curtin students evaluate teaching practices and module content.

The Student Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ), consisting of the following SEEQ instruments - Lecturer Self-Rating Form (Appendix A), the Closed-Response Form (Appendix B), and the Open-Ended Comments Form (Appendix C), are the instruments used by Curtin academic staff to obtain student feedback on teaching and to develop teaching quality through

reflective practice. The SEEQ cycle (Figure 4.1) is used as a guide in this regard.

Figure 4.1: The SEEQ cycle - Curtin University of Technology



[Source: SEEQ at Curtin – http://lsn.curtin.edu.au/seeq/)

Dr Oliver (2004) stated that the SEEQ instruments provide an empirical basis for the evaluation of the teaching and learning practices at Curtin. It is administered at the end of the semester, when students have more clarity on subject content, to generate a summative profile of teaching performance at Curtin. The SEEQ instruments recognise the complex and multidimensional nature of teaching and aims to provide feedback on teaching rather than subject content. Academic staff are reminded of certain principles before they conduct the SEEQ instruments in class.

Careful consideration should be given as to why the SEEQ instruments are used. Is it used, for example, to monitor and improve lecturers' own teaching? Or is it used for the purposes of promotion or research? Staff are reminded that the SEEQ instruments are most effective when used teaching practices,

and that it should be used in conjunction with other evidence on the effectiveness of teaching.

The frequency of evaluation intervals is important, and peer- and self-evaluation systems can be implemented to avoid “survey fatigue”. It is not possible to alter any of the individual items on the SEEQ instruments. However, staff may delete, or instruct students to delete, whole factor groupings by drawing a line through the relevant set of items. The first four factor groupings (see Appendix B – Core factors), and the overall ratings on the SEEQ instruments (see Appendix B – Additional / Supplementary / Alternative Items) must be completed. Staff may devise their own rating items to be answered in the Additional Items section of the SEEQ instrument, and these should be provided on a separate sheet for each student. The SEEQ instruments should not be administrated by the staff member concerned, but by a colleague or student.

Staff members requesting the survey complete the Self-Rating form, while students complete the Closed-response Form and Open-ended Comments Form. Clear guidelines on how to conduct the SEEQ instrument are provided to the survey administrator and detailed instructions are read out to the students. Students are reminded that the SEEQ instruments are designed to provide feedback on teaching and that the feedback responses they provide are anonymous; and that they should base their responses on their experience of the specific staff member.

The Closed-response Forms are returned to the Learning Support Network (LSN) at Curtin for processing and the Open-ended Comments Forms are returned directly to the staff member. Staff at the LSN check that the forms have been returned in an official envelope, the envelope is sealed and signed, the date on the envelope matches those on the forms, the forms are original and not photocopies, and the forms have been delivered within a reasonable time from the date of administration. The forms are processed on dedicated computer equipment, generating an SEEQ - Summary Report (Appendix D) and an SEEQ Teaching Evaluation - Detail Report (Appendix E). The

summary and detailed reports, a guide to interpret the results and a document containing suggested follow-up actions are sent to the staff member administering the SEEQ instrument. The LSN, which maintains a strict policy of confidentiality, can provide further guidance and assistance in interpreting the SEEQ instrument results if required.

4.2.1.2 *University of Adelaide*

According to Dr U. McGowan (2004), Deputy Director: Academic Staff Development at the Learning and Teaching Development Unit (LTDU) at the University of Adelaide (UA), the mission of the LTDU is to assist the university community in improving student learning and staff teaching through development programmes and research. One of the objectives in fulfilling this mission is to develop, manage and implement appropriate methods for the evaluation of student learning and staff teaching.

The purpose of this objective is to provide staff with valid and reliable information to assist them in making informed decisions about the improvement of student learning outcomes. Dr. McGowan (2004) mentioned that the Student Experience of Learning and Teaching (SELT) system at the UA is one method for making informed decisions, and that staff are advised to use other methods, such as reflective practice and self- and peer-evaluation, to obtain an informed view of their teaching and learning practices. The SELT system enables academic staff to use either the standard template or to create a questionnaire to suit their own individual needs. All SELT processing includes the following: construction of questionnaires in Adobe Acrobat format; processing of student responses; summarising student responses in a readable format; and returning the results to the lecturer via e-mail.

Academic staff may choose from eight options (see Table 4.1) when selecting a questionnaire. The first four options are the standard templates that can be downloaded in Adobe Acrobat format from the AU website for use by an individual lecturer or a teaching group, for a course or for MyUni. Options five and six are for use in extended standard evaluations of individual or group

teaching or courses where the questions come from the list of extended options in the SELT Manual. Option seven is used for evaluating supervision of student work, while option eight is used when the questions originate from sources other than the SELT Manual.

The eight questionnaire options are summarised in the table below.

Table 4.1: Questionnaire options – University of Adelaide

Questionnaire type	Questionnaire content	Questionnaire usage
1. Standard teaching evaluation questionnaire (Appendix F)	The questionnaire consists of a single page containing the "Standard Teacher Questions for Learning and Teaching" – 7 standard questions with Likert responses and 2 open-ended questions for students' comments.	Recommended for use in applications for promotion or tenure and where a lecturer would like to track his/her teaching over a number of years.
2. Multiple teacher/tutor teaching evaluation questionnaire (Appendix G)	The questionnaire consists of a single page containing the "Standard Teacher Questions for Learning and Teaching" – 7 standard questions with Likert responses and 2 open-ended questions for students' comments. Each member of the teaching group uses a separate form under his/her own name and includes the title of his/her segment of the course that reflects the content taught.	Recommended for use in applications for promotion or tenure and where a lecturer would like to track his/her teaching over a number of years.
3. Standard course evaluation questionnaire (Appendix H)	The questionnaire consists of a single page containing the "Standard MyUni Questions for Learning and Teaching" – 15 standard questions with Likert responses and 2 open-ended questions for students' comments.	A lecturer may use this questionnaire when he/she wants student feedback on the course structure, content, resources and information independent of the lecturers presenting the material. It can also be used in conjunction with an individual teacher or group-teaching questionnaire.

Questionnaire type	Questionnaire content	Questionnaire usage
4. Standard MyUni questionnaire	The questionnaire consists of a single page containing the "Standard Course Questions for Learning and Teaching" – 12 standard questions with Likert responses and 2 open-ended questions for students' comments.	Lecturers might consider using this questionnaire when they want student feedback on the course MyUni website independent of the lecturers presenting the material. It can also be used in conjunction with an individual lecturer or group-teaching questionnaire.
5. Extended standard teacher evaluation questionnaire (Appendix I)	The questionnaire consists of a double-sided single page containing the "Standard Teacher Questions for Learning and Teaching" and up to 7 extra questions chosen from the question bank. This gives a total of 14 questions with Likert responses and up to 4 open-ended questions for students' comments.	This questionnaire allows a lecturer to obtain comparative feedback using the standard questions and also specific questions tailored for own needs. The standard questions will always be asked first and then the extended selection.
6. Extended standard course evaluation questionnaire (Appendix J)	The questionnaire consists of a double-sided single page containing the "Standard Course Questions for Learning and Teaching" and up to 4 extra questions chosen from the Question Bank. This gives a total of 19 questions with Likert responses and up to 3 open-ended questions for students' comments.	This questionnaire allows a lecturer to obtain comparative feedback using the standard questions and also specific questions tailored to own needs.
7. Standard supervision evaluation questionnaire (Appendix K)	The questionnaire consists of a double-sided single page and contains the "Standard Questions for Supervision".	This option is used for evaluating supervision of a student's research that culminates in the student writing a project report, dissertation or thesis. The survey outcomes can be used for both formative and summative purposes.
8. Course presenter evaluation questionnaire (Appendix L)	The questionnaire contains questions the lecturer has discussed with the LTDU evaluation staff.	Used when a lecturer would like to seek student responses to particular issues and has not been able to find an appropriate question in the Question Bank. The LTDU will assist staff in the formulation of questions.

To ensure the integrity of the evaluation process, a lecturer may not administer a questionnaire himself/herself. It is recommended that a staff member or a student, preferably the former, should conduct the survey. The questionnaires are usually administered at the beginning of a teaching session and a minimum of 15 minutes is allowed for completion. To maintain student participation in the evaluation system, students are assured of the confidentiality of their responses.

In the course of discussions, it became evident that many lecturers find the open-ended comments to be most useful for their teaching development. However, it was also mentioned that students are sometimes quite frank in their comments, or may occasionally express their views in an inappropriate manner. It is important to remember that such comments are not an uncommon occurrence; the researcher has experienced the same tendency at the CUT.

In order to minimise survey fatigue, it is of the utmost importance to plan the evaluation process in advance. It is more efficient if a School as a whole conducts its evaluations simultaneously, as this also simplifies the administrative responsibilities of the administrator to a great extent. At the AU, teaching and course content are evaluated in a cycle of two years. The success of any evaluation system depends on the cooperation of students. If students believe that their opinions on teaching and subject content may have an influence on the effectiveness of their learning, they will give valuable feedback. Once evaluation feedback is received, the lecturer should consider which feedback should be given to students to acknowledge their concerns and the suggestions made in their evaluations. The feedback can be directly communicated to students in class or by means of messages on WebCT.

The outcomes of the teaching and course evaluations can contribute to the AU,s quality assurance strategies. The extent to which academic staff use and act on the evaluation results may enhance the quality of their teaching and learning practices. SELT reports are submitted to the Office of Planning and

Quality, Deans, Heads of Schools and the AU Learning and Teaching Committee for planning and development purposes.

4.2.1.3 *University of Canberra*

The researcher met with Dr M. Kiley (2004), Director at the Centre for the Enhancement of Learning, Teaching and Scholarship (CELTS) at the University of Canberra (UC). The CELTS personnel are responsible for the management and implementation of the student feedback service that is available to all academic staff. At this institution, participation in the system is voluntary.

Paper-based questionnaires are used to obtain feedback, and the following three options are available. Firstly, the Student Feedback on Teaching (SFT) questionnaire (Appendix M), with 15 standard pre-selected questions, can be obtained. Lecturers may choose to select up to 12 additional questions from the SFT item bank. Secondly, a Student Feedback on Subjects (SFS) questionnaire, with no standard questions, can be used. Lecturers may choose and include up to 50 questions from the SFS item bank. Thirdly, a teaching team can obtain feedback through the Student Feedback on Team Teaching (SFTT) questionnaire (Appendix N), where each member of the team can choose up to 12 questions from the SFTT item bank for inclusion in the questionnaire. CELTS staff are available to assist lecturers in choosing or formulating the questions, changing the wording of an existing question or formulating a new question.

The first section on the Student Feedback on Teaching questionnaire will always contain 15 standard questions, while up to 12 additional questions can be chosen from the teaching item bank. The Student Feedback on Subject questionnaire contains no standard questions and staff may choose up to 50 questions from the subject item bank. It is recommended that no more than 20 questions are chosen and that open-ended questions be included in the questionnaire. The additional items for inclusion in the Student Feedback on

Teaching item bank and Student Feedback on Subject item bank are grouped under the following headings:

Table 4.2: Groupings: Student feedback on teaching and subject content

Student feedback on teaching	Student feedback on subject content
1. Students' view of own learning	1. Ratings
2. Lecturers' attitude towards students	2. The subject and its organisation
3. Lecturers' teaching	3. Subject components – lectures, guest lecturers, tutorials, workshops
4. Assessment of students	4. Subject components – practical, laboratory and computing sessions
5. Resources inside and outside the classroom	5. Teaching
6. Clinical teaching	6. Assessment
7. The unit and its organisation	7. Resources
8. Student equity	8. Students' approaches to their own learning
	9. Standard questions: Course experience questionnaire
	10. Standard questions for general education units
	11. Teaching using educational technology
	12. Open-ended questions

Dr Kiley (2004) made it clear that academic staff are sensitised to the fact that the development of an effective student feedback questionnaire involves choosing questions that are focused on the needs of lecturers and students - in other words, questions that are relevant to the concerns of lecturers and students. It is important to ensure that the wording of a question has the same meaning for all students in a class, because some words may convey different meanings to people from different cultural backgrounds. She emphasised that students need to have the necessary knowledge and/or experience to respond to a question. First-year students may have trouble in commenting on the relevance of a subject, while final-year students may answer such a question more objectively.

At the University of Canberra, each lecturer receives a computer-generated graphical summary of responses to the respective questionnaires. For each question, the lecturer receives a graph showing the number of responses received in each rating category, with the main strengths and weaknesses of his/her teaching and subject content displayed. A lecturer is thus able to see which questions received the highest ratings and which the lowest. If responses indicate a low rating on a particular question, the open-ended comments may assist the lecturer in understanding the nature of a particular problem. A lecturer may find that the majority of students are very satisfied with the questions, but that a certain group are dissatisfied with the same questions. It would be easy to ignore the dissatisfied students, but lecturers should try determining whether they really cater for all the students' needs in respect of teaching and subject content. The open-ended comments may hopefully provide clues as to why some students are feeling dissatisfied.

When feedback is obtained on teaching, the lecturer also receives a summary of average responses from all those at the UC who responded to the standard questions (Questions 1 – 15). Lecturers are thus able to compare themselves with the university average. When this is done, lecturers should remember that the nature of the subject taught, and the context in which it is taught, are important factors that may influence the ratings.

At the UC, CELTS personnel are responsible for the preparation of a specific questionnaire for a specific lecturer. The lecturer should explain the purpose of the survey to his/her students, the benefits accruing to students, that CELTS staff will process questionnaire responses, that responses are anonymous, and that a report will be submitted to the lecturer concerned. The class group nominates one or more students to distribute the questionnaires after the lecturer has left the class. The nominated student(s) collect(s) the completed questionnaires, seal(s) it in the confidential envelopes provided, and return(s) it to the CELTS. The CELTS returns the completed questionnaires, computer-generated graphical summary and open-ended question responses to the lecturer, and is available to discuss the survey outcomes with the lecturer.

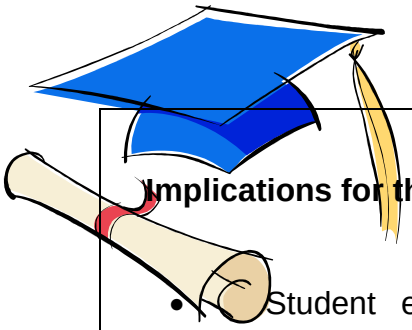
Academic personnel at the UC are made aware of the fact that students are only one source of information about teaching and/or module content quality. The CELTS booklet *Evaluating Your Teaching* identifies other sources of information to assist academics in determining their teaching quality.

4.2.1.4 *Australian national course experience questionnaire*

The Australian Commonwealth Government funds the annual undergraduate Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) (Appendix O). This survey is directed at all final-year students who have completed their studies with the Graduate Careers Council of Australia (GCCA). The CEQ surveys are a valuable source of information on students' perceptions of their experiences at university, and evaluate teaching, institutional goals and standards, student workload, assessment practices and overall student satisfaction.

Guthrie (2003), in responding to this practice, warns that CEQ results should always be used with caution and insight, because there may be a time lag between the collection of CEQ data and the release of results. The GCCA, however, argues that the CEQ represents a macro-level overview of teaching quality and should be used in conjunction with other evaluation instruments.

The CEQ also gives institutions an incentive to develop internal quality assurance measuring instruments that should improve the quality of teaching and learning practices.



Implications for this study

- Student evaluation measuring instruments are typically applied to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of teaching.
- In Australia, student evaluation practices are part of the instructional programme self-review process.
- Student evaluations could be used to enhance deep learning approaches and to test it regularly.
- It is important to take note of possible “survey fatigue”.
- The confidentiality of student evaluation outcomes should be guaranteed.
- Questionnaire options are becoming more popular and widely known.
- The needs of students with different ethnic/cultural/religious backgrounds should be taken into account.
- How the student evaluation system is explained to students contributes to the overall success or failure of the system.

4.3 NEW ZEALAND STUDENT EVALUATION MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

In the early 1990s, New Zealand universities agreed to set up the New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit (NZAAU) to conduct regular voluntary academic audits. In 2000, compulsory external quality audits were introduced for all educational providers under the umbrella of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA).

In late 2004, the New Zealand Government announced its intention to accelerate the shift towards more effective teaching and learning in tertiary education and established the National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence to assist tertiary education institutions in achieving the best possible educational outcomes for students. One of the functions of the Centre is to conduct evaluations to enhance the quality of teaching and learning practices in New Zealand higher education institutions.

Approaches in two New Zealand universities are reflected in the following discussion.

4.3.1 Auckland University of Technology

Staff at the Centre for Educational and Professional Development (CEPD) at the Auckland University of Technology (AUT), in cooperation with the Institutional Research Unit (IRU), are responsible for Student Evaluation of Papers* (SEP). Dr J. Lester (2004), Director at the CEPD, explained that the SEP is a tried and tested, centrally supported package for the evaluation of papers.

[* paper = module]

He mentioned that the feedback gained from student evaluation surveys is an opportunity for AUT clients to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of programmes' content and teaching quality, and provides valuable evidence to assist in programme reviews. In accordance with AUT policy, formal student feedback should be obtained every three years. In some cases it may be appropriate to conduct surveys more frequently, for instance: in subjects with low pass rates; if substantial changes have been made in subject content; to review newly accredited programmes; and at the request of students. In addition to this routine procedure, the Deputy-Vice Chancellor: Academic, Dean or Head of Department may also request that a SEP be initiated where concerns have been expressed.

The evaluations may take place at almost any stage during a semester, although it is inappropriate to administer a SEP during the last couple of teaching sessions. For this reason, and to avoid the backlog that last-minute requests create, no SEP requests are accepted after three teaching weeks prior to the end of each semester. Questionnaires are requested from the IRU, which then provides a questionnaire, designed to meet the specific needs of the lecturer. A staff member, not associated with teaching, administers the questionnaires. This person briefs the students on the purpose and process of the evaluation, distributes the questionnaires and collects them after they have been completed. He/she then forwards them via internal mail to the IRU. An interesting administrative arrangement at the AUT is that student evaluation surveys are scheduled in semester programme timetables.

For the sake of cost-effectiveness, questionnaires are processed by the IRU once a month. Completed reports and completed questionnaires are made available and returned to lecturers in the first week of each month. The Faculty Staff Developer provides assistance with the interpretation of the reports, while staff from the CEPD are also available for advice and assistance with the implementation of the findings. Dr Lester explained that academic staff should include the following aspects in the feedback process: a summary of students' concerns; anything that could possibly be changed; aspects of the lecturer's behaviour that he/she is unable to change and the

reasons why; practices the lecturer is unwilling to change and the reasons why; and issues which remain unclear and which the lecturer will investigate.

An SEP questionnaire may have a total of up to 15 quantitative items, which students rate on a seven-point Likert scale. The fixed questions relate to areas shown by research at the AUT to be critical for the enhancement of teaching and learning practices. The questions also relate to AUT policy on what should be evaluated. Beyond this, programme teams and/or the Board of Studies may select up to seven optional questions. The table below illustrates the fixed quantitative questions and category grouping of optional quantitative questions on the SEP questionnaire, attached as Annexure R.

Table 4.3 Fixed and optional quantitative questions on the SEP questionnaire

Fixed quantitative questions	Category grouping of optional quantitative questions
1. I would recommend this module to others	3 Administration, organisation and structural issues
2. Overall quality of teaching for this module	4 Assessment
3. Clear module goals and objectives	5 Learning and teaching methodologies
4. Fair assessment requirements	6 Resources
5. Overall module workload	
6. Availability of resources	
7. Overall organisation of the module	
9. Amount and quality of individual Feedback provided	

There are two fixed qualitative questions in the SEP questionnaire, namely: “What do you like best about this paper?” (subject) and, “How could this paper (subject) be improved?” The lecturer can also choose up to two additional qualitative questions about very specific issues or issues of a more general nature.

4.3.2 University of Otago

The information in this section was obtained from the *Guidelines for the Evaluation of Teaching,* University of Otago (UO), Higher Education Development Centre (HEDC 2001). The UO student evaluation system, as described in this manual, is well established and it may well contribute to getting a revised evaluation system at the CUT off the ground.

Staff at the HEDC are of the opinion that one should be able to distinguish between the kind of information that students can provide during the evaluation process and the kind which is beyond their experience. Shephard (2005) believes that students can provide constructive comments on the way lectures are structured, the organisation of small group teaching, the clarity of teachers' explanations and the timeliness and effectiveness of feedback about assessment. He argues that students are probably not able to comment on the currency of a lecturer's knowledge or its appropriateness for a specific level of teaching. These aspects of teaching may be better evaluated by peers. Complaints about excessive surveying are therefore less if students are aware of the purpose of the evaluations and the contribution it may make to the enhancement of their learning practices.

The UO makes use of two independent student evaluation questionnaires, the Student Evaluations of Teachers questionnaire, and the Student Evaluations of Courses questionnaire. Personnel at the HEDC are responsible for the administration of the surveys. The questionnaire for surveying individual teaching performance consists of ten questions, and the first five questions are compulsory and are automatically included in the questionnaire. The other five questions must be chosen by the lecturer from an item bank of 45 questions and customised to his/her situation. A very interesting approach at the UO is that the student evaluation survey also provides the option of a photo of the lecturer on the questionnaires, in case the students might be uncertain about the lecturer's identity. The *Evaluations of Teaching: Summary Data Sheet* on the UO intranet shows the annual evaluations of lecturers' courses, and are automatically updated by HEDC personnel whenever a new

evaluation is carried out. The above-mentioned sheet may be supported by the *Context Form for Evaluations of Teaching* when survey results on the evaluation of teaching are submitted for promotion, progression or confirmation for annual performance appraisal purposes. This context form provides additional information on the circumstances of each course surveyed.

The Student Evaluation of Courses questionnaire allows students to provide feedback on those aspects of the course of which they have direct knowledge. They can comment on the learning environment as it pertains to them and the relevance of the course content in relation to their background and previous experience. Students can provide feedback on course outcomes, lecturer skills and attitudes, course organisation, and course material. Lecturers at the UO are reminded that senior students might be able to make more objective inputs about course content than first-year students, and that course questionnaires be compiled with this in mind. In the selection of questions, consideration should be given to the mode of teaching and the issues which were important to the lecturer during the planning of the teaching and curriculation of course content.

The central feature of the course questionnaire system is the item bank of 279 rating-type questions from which lecturers must select 14 questions to fit one side of an A-4 sheet, with open-ended questions on the backside. If more rating questions are required, the open-ended questions must be reduced. Questionnaires containing more than 30 rating and open-ended questions, or extending beyond two sides of an A-4 sheet, will not be prepared by HEDC personnel because of student survey overload and the difficulty in processing the questionnaires. An option to overcome this problem is to use more than one questionnaire during a course to evaluate different course elements.

4.3.2.1 *Administrative procedures*

The procedures for administering the teaching and course questionnaires are more or less the same, except for the number of questions selected on each questionnaire. A request form (available from the HEDC) containing information on the rating type and open-ended questions is completed and sent to the Questionnaire Administrator at least five working days before the survey should be conducted. A master copy of the questionnaire is sent to the lecturer, who is responsible for making sufficient copies for distribution in class.

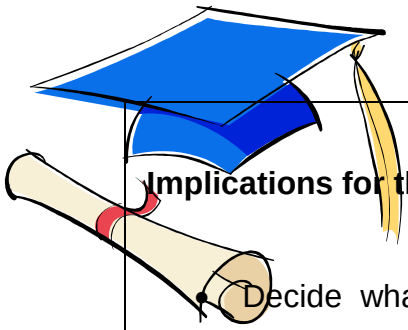
Lecturers are reminded that the four guide marks at the corners of the master copy should appear on all photocopies since the questionnaires are optically scanned to capture the data. Lecturers are advised to select a session where they would expect average or above average attendance, but not involving a test or other stressful activity. It is worth asking the students a few days before the survey whether there are other factors that might affect attendance, such as a test in another subject.

About ten minutes at the end of a class session are allowed for the questionnaire to be distributed, completed and collected. This procedure is in contrast with general survey procedures found at most Australian and New Zealand universities, where questionnaires are administered at the beginning of a session. Lecturers are also allowed to be present in the class during the evaluation process. This practice is also in contrast with the evaluation process at most other universities. After the questionnaires have been analysed, an updated *Evaluations of Teaching: Summary Data Sheet* as well as the filled-in questionnaires are submitted to the lecturer and HEDC personnel are available to assist lecturers with the interpretation of the results.

The most critical, but most often neglected, facet of student evaluation data is the feedback process. The first step, as stipulated in the *Guidelines for the Evaluation of Teaching Manual*, is to reflect on the information. What does it communicate about the evaluation? Were there any surprises? What can be

learnt from the data? According to the manual, decisions need to be made about priorities.

The lecturer concerned should identify what can be changed without consultation and what needs input from others. The results of the evaluation and any plans ensuing from it should be communicated back to those who generated the original data. While summative evaluation data may be used for human resource purposes, it is important that the results of formative evaluation be shared with students.



Implications for this study

- Decide what information should be reported: a summary of student concerns; anything that could possibly be changed; aspects of the lecturer's behaviour that he/she is unable to change and the reasons why; practices the lecturer is unwilling to change and why; and issues that remain unclear.

- Students need to be assured that their feedback will be used to bring about improvement.

- Negotiate and allocate administrative responsibilities and tasks.

4.4 STUDENT EVALUATION MEASURING INSTRUMENTS IN ENGLAND

As part of a revised method for quality assurance in higher education in England, a document titled *Quality Assurance in Higher Education* was compiled by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, Universities UK and the Standing Conference of Principals in England (HEFCE 2001). This document sought to replace the previous arrangement of institutional audits and subject reviews with the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in England.

A task group to co-ordinate the revision process was set up to identify the categories of data, information and judgements about quality of teaching and learning that should be available within higher education institutions, and those that should be published. The task group published a document entitled *Information on quality and standards of teaching and learning: proposals for consultation* (HEFCE, 01/66 2001), setting out proposals and inviting responses. In reaction to the invitation, a report, *Collecting and using student feedback on quality and standards of learning and teaching in HE,* was prepared for the HEFCE by a consortium of organisations led by SQW Limited. This group included the Centre for Higher Education Research and Information (CHERI) of the Open University.

The study had two main components. The first one was to identify good practices by higher education institutions in collecting quantitative and qualitative feedback from students and to make recommendations on the design and implementation of mechanisms for use by individual institutions. The second component was to make recommendations on the design and implementation of a national survey of recent graduates to assist prospective applicants who wished to enter the British higher education system. Fieldwork for the study was undertaken between September and December 2002 and written information on institutional processes was requested from all higher education institutions in England.

Visits were made to 20 institutions. During these visits, discussions were held with staff and current students on both feedback procedures within the institutions and the potential value of a national graduate survey. The institutional processes, as stipulated in the *Report*: *Collecting and using student feedback on quality and standards of learning and teaching in HE*, will be discussed by the researcher.

The 20 institutions were selected to represent the diversity of the higher education sector in England and took into account the size and type of an institution as well as the geographical spread. Meetings were held with senior managers, deans, heads of department, central administrative units responsible for student feedback, and students. The main reasons why these institutions conduct student evaluations are, amongst others: to enhance students' experience of learning and teaching; to contribute to the monitoring and reviewing of quality and standards; to ensure the effectiveness of course design and delivery; to promote dialogue with students; to be part of the teaching and learning process; and to measure students' overall satisfaction.

Most institutions operate a mix of mechanisms for collecting student feedback, and find both quantitative and qualitative methods useful, although some institutions maintain that qualitative feedback is by far the most effective form of feedback. The most commonly used feedback mechanisms are staff/student liaison committees, student representation on committees and questionnaires. The majority of institutions indicated that institution-wide policies on the collection and use of student feedback have been established and the most common level at which feedback is collected is the module level, followed by the programme level. The module level is thought to be the most effective level for gathering and using feedback since it is closest to the student experience. A number of institutions have discontinued programme/institutional level questionnaires because of the low response rates and because the information generated was too broad to be useful.

An issue related to that of the level at which questionnaires are administered was the common complaint of questionnaire fatigue. An investigation during the study indicated that in a modularised system based on semesters, a student might be required to complete up to 12 module questionnaires per semester. If questionnaires are used as intended, there will also be the added burden on staff to process, analyse, interpret and take action based on the results. Some evidence emerged from the interviews with academic staff and students that the completion of questionnaires and the use of the resulting data can easily become ritualistic for both parties.

The questionnaires the task team received as part of the consultation process varied in type and length, although questions tended to cover a comparable/similar range of aspects/topics. These include organisation and content, teaching, learning and assessment practices, appropriateness of teaching methods used, clarity of presentations and handouts, preparation of staff, workload, support and guidance provided, the learning environment, skills development, level of difficulty, and overall ratings for the module/programme. Many institutions try to limit questionnaire length to two sides of an A-4 sheet, but many questionnaires are double this length and sometimes even longer. It was evident that few questionnaires ask for details about the student, making it impossible to analyse data according to factors such as age, year of study or entry qualifications.

The majority of institutions agreed with the presumption that surveys should include quantifiable “tick-box” elements, that can be analysed electronically. They also thought that students should be given the opportunity to make comments and/or recommendations. Seven institutions highlighted the costs of collecting, analysing and reporting on open-ended responses, while two small specialist institutions felt that open-ended questions and face-to-face contact were more important and that fixed-choice questions produced invalid results because students were being asked to comment on complex issues that cannot be reduced to tick-boxes. One institution commented that it would only use fixed-choice questions because of administrative and resource related issues. Most institutions mentioned that, in practice, a few open-ended

questions need not substantially add to the burden of analysis if they are briefly surveyed to ascertain whether new issues are being raised.

The task team found that there was some evidence in the responses provided by the institutions that institution/programme level questionnaires received 20-30% lower response rates than those administered at the module level. This was not a surprise, since module level questionnaires are more focused and relevant to the immediate student experience, and they tend to be paper-based and administered in class. Eight institutions mentioned that they had experience with online questionnaires, but that their pilots had resulted in lower response rates than when they had been paper-based. Although the administration of questionnaires will have an effect on response rates, there are two main issues involved: how serious staff and students are about the collection and use of feedback, and the logistics and administration. The first issue is the more important one, as response rates will be affected by how questionnaires are presented to students. If academic staff believe that student feedback surveys are of no importance and/or imposed on them by bureaucrats, and if students believe that staff never take notice of the results, it will not be surprising if students do not take the completion of questionnaires seriously. Surprisingly, in discussions with students it became clear that it was not the number of questionnaires they were asked to complete that caused the problem, but the feeling that the exercise was a waste of time because nothing happened after they made their views known, i.e. there was no response, nothing changed for the better.

In terms of logistics, the vast majority of questionnaires were administered at the end of a class. Many of the students felt that they were given insufficient time to complete the questionnaires, that the purpose of the exercise was not always fully explained, and that they were not made to believe that their inputs were important to the lecturer or institution.

It seems there are varying practices regarding the distribution and collection of questionnaires in class. Some institutions involve a student representative, while others use staff not connected to teaching. Although this may demonstrate a commitment to independence and may promote confidence in the process, an alternative view presented to the task team was that an independent person gives the process a bureaucratic flavour and could imply a lack of trust in academic staff. The task team found that the extent to which questionnaires are standardised varies between institutions and often within institutions. Some institutions recommend the use of a standard questionnaire, but allow flexibility in terms of additional questions. Fifteen institutions have a central unit that administers, processes and analyses a common questionnaire.

The HEFCE task team presumed the following regarding the standardisation of questionnaires: student opinion surveys should be conducted consistently within each institution, and across its different schools and faculties in order to generate a consistent set of results; a core set of standard questions should be identified which all institutions should include in surveys and which would be reported publicly on a regular basis; and surveys should also allow for individual preferences by academic staff to give them the opportunity to obtain the information they believe will be of most value to them and their students.

After intensive consultations with academic staff and the evaluation of existing institutional student evaluation practices, the task team made the following recommendations on the administration of student feedback questionnaires in British higher education institutions (HEFCE 2001):

- Sufficient time should be allowed for students to complete in-class questionnaires, the purpose should be fully explained to them and their objective contributions should be welcomed.

- When module level feedback is collected, consideration should be given to the frequency at which students are expected to answer questionnaires to counter questionnaire fatigue.

- Questionnaires should be standardised within institutions to provide a basis for comparison both within and between institutions.

- If questionnaires are not completely standardised, a common core of questions and limits to variation should be set.

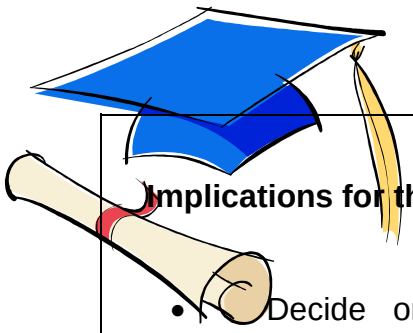
- Response rates should always be published, and where it is below a certain percentage, the results should be treated with some caution.

- Questionnaire feedback should not be used in isolation, but the results of other feedback mechanisms should also be taken into account.

- Questionnaires should include open-ended questions to provide students with an opportunity to raise issues not covered by fixed-choice questions, and a system should be established to ensure that open-ended question answers are read.

Consultations with institutional leaders revealed that the vast majority of institutions use the annual monitoring and review process and committee cycle as the main means for following up results, deciding what action to take, checking whether action has actually been taken, and monitoring the effect it has. Individual lecturers can do a great deal to rectify problems when it occurs, while heads of department have a role to play to ensure that individual lecturers provide constructive feedback to students. The task team believes that if students complete the questionnaires in an honest and objective way, higher education institutions should reciprocate by using rapid and effective mechanisms for reporting what follow-up action has been taken and will be

taken to enhance the quality and standards of teaching and learning and to address areas of concern identified by students.



Implications for this study

- Decide on appropriate mechanisms for the collection of student feedback.
- Decide on the level (module, programme or institutional) at which student evaluations will be done.
- Sufficient time should be allowed for students to complete in-class questionnaires.
- Questionnaires should be standardised within institutions to provide a basis for comparison.
- Questionnaire feedback should not be used in isolation, but should take account of the results of other feedback mechanisms.

4.5 STUDENT EVALUATION MEASURING INSTRUMENTS IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

More than 78 million people are known to be involved in various spheres of the educational system in the United States of America (USA). The system is in ever-growing demand, which forces educational institutions to enhance their quality assurance practices and present themselves in the best possible way to their current and prospective students (Boika:2004).

Although quality assurance principles have been applied in the USA for decades, especially in the business world, Boika (2004) maintains that it was only when higher education became the prerogative of large numbers of the population and turned into one of the major public service fields, that it became a focal point. The huge territorial distances in the USA, the federal principle underlying state government, and the presence of state and private educational institutions as well as their high level of independence, make for a complicated system of quality-assured education. In this complex public-private system, recognised accreditation organisations, also known as accreditation agencies, develop quality standards and manage the process of determining whether higher education institutions and programmes meet certain set standards.

According to Schray (2006), the accreditation system in the USA has been in use for more than 100 years as the primary vehicle for defining and assuring quality in the delivery of higher education programmes. Accrediting organisations play an important role in USA higher education, since accreditation is used to determine whether higher education institutions are eligible for receiving federal and state grants and loans for programme delivery, and also to protect taxpayers against fraud and abuse.

The USA Department of Education has established standards for use in the recognition of accrediting organisations (agencies) based on federal legislation. According to these criteria, any recognised accrediting organisation must demonstrate that it has an accreditation process that

effectively addresses the quality of the institution or programme in nine defined areas of concern. One of these areas is of particular importance for this research, namely the institutional record of student complaints received by, or available to the accreditation organisation in the form of student evaluation of teaching and module/programme survey outcomes.

The practice of obtaining student feedback on teaching and module content is widespread in USA higher education institutions. Marsh & Dunkin (1992) identified four reasons for collecting students' evaluations of teaching, namely: it provides diagnostic feedback to lecturers about the effectiveness of their teaching; it provides a measure of teaching effectiveness to be used in administrative decision-making; it provides information for students to use in the selection of course units; and it provides an outcome or process description for use in research on teaching. They noted that the first reason/purpose was universally considered to be of practical value in the USA, but the others not. In some cases, student survey outcomes are required before academic staff are even considered for promotion, while at other universities, the student evaluation system is optional or not encouraged at all. In some universities, the outcomes of surveys are sold in university bookstores to assist students in the selection of courses, while at other universities, the outcomes are strictly confidential .

Initially, student evaluation feedback was obtained by means of standard questionnaires, and feedback responses were submitted to heads of department and the lecturers concerned. In this case, the evaluation process was relatively simple and convenient for lecturers and students, since the measuring instruments were constructed in-house and may never have been subjected to any kind of external assessment for validity and/or reliability (Richardson, 2005:388).

According to Coffey & Gibbs (2001), the Student Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ) questionnaire, developed in the early 1980s by Professor Herbert Marsh, brought a radical change in the student evaluation process. It is still one of the best developed and most widely used measuring instruments

in the USA and is used to obtain student feedback on teaching and the development of teaching quality through reflective practice.

The SEEQ questionnaire has been tested and validated over a number of years and has been adapted for use in various higher education institutions all over the world. Forsyth (2003) indicates that the following specific characteristics are measured when students complete the SEEQ questionnaire: organisation of presentations and material; group interaction; breadth of subject content coverage; learning value of the course; student/lecturer interaction; examination and grading; enthusiasm of lecturer; difficulty of workload; and the value of additional reading material.

Seldin (1993) has no doubt that student evaluations in the USA have become the most widely used and in many cases the only source of information on teaching and programme content effectiveness. He indicates that student ratings were first used in the early 1920s when students at the University of Washington were asked to complete questionnaires about their professors. Since then, experience has confirmed the wisdom of following certain strategies in the student evaluation process. The following guidelines are examples in this regard (Seldin, 1993: 82-87):

- Student evaluations should be only one of several sources of information on teaching performance.

- If student evaluations are used to improve teaching, the questionnaires should be distributed about one-third of the way into a semester to give a lecturer sufficient time to adjust the teaching. If used for personnel decisions, the questionnaires should be administered in class during the last two weeks of the semester.

- The administrative process should be standardised, whatever the purpose of the evaluation. An independent person should read a statement of instructions to the class, and the lecturer concerned should not be present during the evaluations. Questionnaires should be analysed within a period of two weeks and the outcome presented to the parties concerned.

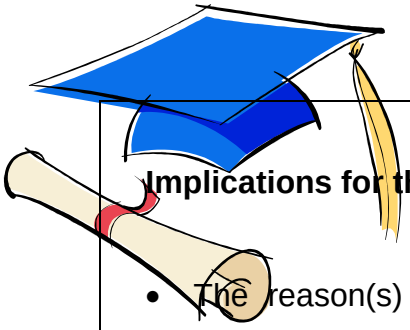
- To ensure credibility of evaluation results, a minimum of 75% of the registered students in a class should complete the questionnaires.

- To provide academic staff with an indication of how their evaluations compare with those of their peers, a manual, with the average scores or percentiles that lecturers received, should be made available.

- Regardless of the purpose the evaluations will be used for, open-ended questions should be included in the questionnaires.

- The option to include additional questions selected by the lecturer should be available.

Today, higher education administrators in the USA depend on student evaluations of teaching and module content to determine the instructional quality of the American higher education environment. Institutions use the evaluation outcomes because they are generally accessible and offer information about relevant aspects of higher education. With no efficient alternative for the evaluation of USA teaching practices, the student evaluation system is likely to remain the most extensively used method of teaching evaluation.



Implications for this study

- The reason(s) for obtaining student feedback should be determined. For example, the evaluations could serve as: diagnostic feedback to lecturers about the effectiveness of their teaching; a measure of teaching effectiveness to be used in administrative decision-making processes; information for students to use during the selection of course units; or an outcome or process description for use in research on teaching.

- For formative purposes, questionnaires should be distributed about one-third into a semester to give the lecturer sufficient time to adjust the teaching.

- For summative purposes, questionnaires should be administered in class during the last two weeks of the semester.

- Student evaluation administered processes should be standardised, for example: an independent person should read a statement of instructions in class; the lecturer concerned should not be present during the evaluations; and questionnaires should be analysed and feedback be given within a period of two weeks.

- To ensure credibility of evaluation results, a minimum of 75% of registered students should complete the questionnaire.

- A manual of student evaluation outcomes, with average scores or percentiles, should be made available.

4.6 STUDENT EVALUATION MEASURING INSTRUMENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Although the implementation of quality assurance processes have been in place in the South African higher education sector for many years, mechanisms for student evaluation of teaching and module content gained momentum with the establishment of the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) to manage and monitor the quality assurance activities of all higher education institutions.

A consequence of this mandate was the compilation by the HEQC of the *Improving Teaching and Learning (ITL) Resources* document to focus the attention of higher education institutions on the importance of quality-related capacity development initiatives. A related objective of the ITL document was to promote the development of internal systems and practices that would effect and sustain improvements of the quality of teaching and learning practices at an institutional level (CHE, 2004c). The HEQC selected seven key focus areas (resources) of teaching and learning in higher education in an attempt to cover all the stages of the quality cycle. ITL Resource 2, Programme and Course Review, and ITL Resource 6, Staff Development and the Self-Evaluation of Teaching are of particular importance for this study (CHE, 2004c).

ITL Resource 2, Programme and Course Review, reaffirms the fact that students are key participants in the teaching and learning process and should therefore be given the opportunity to participate in the quality review process by means of student evaluation surveys. In this regard, students can comment and provide feedback on, *inter alia,* the clarity of programme and/or module goals, the effective organisation of programmes/modules, appropriate workload, appropriate level of difficulty, the effectiveness of the teaching methods used, the opportunities for group interaction, and the fairness of assessment practices. The outcome of student evaluation surveys, as a direct measure of the quality of teaching and learning, can be included in institutional programme reviews.

As previously mentioned (see 3.1, 3.2 and 3.4), students' perceptions of the quality of teaching and subject content should be balanced by information gathered from a variety of sources, for example colleagues, a member of a staff development or quality promotion centre, a programme head or an external examiner. ITL Resource 6 on Staff Development and the Self-Evaluation of Teaching warns against the danger that student perceptions used alone could run the risk of simply becoming an exercise in measuring client satisfaction.

The ITL Resource documents are examples of HEQC initiatives, mandated by legislation, to promote and improve the quality of teaching and learning practices in South African higher education institutions. The CUT Institutional Audit Report, with student evaluation survey inputs gathered during the first cycle of HEQC audits in 2004, is another example of a quality promotion initiative. The national quality promotion initiatives necessitate the compilation or updating of institutional policies and procedures to enhance the quality of teaching and learning practices.

The aim of the next section is to report on the student evaluation practices at three South African higher education institutions. Officials at the three institutions granted permission to discuss their systems and practices for the purpose of this study. To respect the autonomy and intellectual property of the institutions, the specific questionnaires used during their evaluation processes were not included in this thesis.

4.6.1 University of Pretoria

Dr Gerhard du Plessis (2007), Programme Director for the management of the student evaluation system at the University of Pretoria (UP), agrees that student feedback at the UP has an important role to play in module development and lecturers' professional development.

The existing student evaluation system at the UP has been in operation since 2003. Issues related to the validity and reliability of the measuring instrument, reliability of the administering processes, and questionable handling of the output results by some stakeholders resulted in the selective implementation of the system, and raised the alarm. Some of the problems included the following: lecturers' mistrust of the system; the compulsory use of a standardised measuring instrument with no choice of self-selected item-bank questions; the failure to report survey outcomes to students, which affected their perceptions of the system negatively; the failure to always discuss survey outcomes with lecturers; and questionnaire fatigue, caused by the large volume of questionnaires distributed during the semester. This led to the planning and implementation of a revised and updated system at the UP.

The revised student evaluation system was developed in three phases. The first phase contained a statistical analysis of the existing questionnaire that consisted of evaluations of module content, teaching and assessment. The result of the analysis led to the removal of the module content factor and also highlighted the identification of new factors. The second phase was completed in 2004, and was associated with the expansion of the questions to a total of 54 items after an extensive literature study of national and international higher education measuring instruments. Items that demonstrated high reliability during phase one were retained, items with merit but low reliability were reformulated, and new items that focus on teaching and learning were added.

The relevance of the new 54-item questionnaire was determined by testing both Afrikaans- and English-speaking students, with special emphasis on the importance of items and students' grasp of the context of the questions. A

group of experienced lecturers was also tested. The feedback from these groups was analysed, and this resulted in the compilation of a 36-item measuring instrument. During the third phase, the draft questionnaire was piloted to students enrolled for the same modules used during the 2003 analysis. The questionnaire consisted of four factors, namely teaching, professionalism, facilitation of teaching and assessment. The final version of the questionnaire was launched during the second quarter of the 2006 academic year for full administrative implementation.

The following procedures relate to the administration of the student evaluation system at the UP: procurement of the questionnaires by the lecturer; formulation of additional questions on the request form for inclusion in the questionnaire, if applicable; appointment and orientation of an independent person to conduct the survey in class; completion and collection of the questionnaires in class in the absence of the lecturer; submission of all the open-ended responses to the lecturer concerned; submission of the questionnaires to the Computer Centre; scanning and processing of data; submission of the survey outcomes data in electronic format to the lecturer and in hard copy to the Head of Department; evaluation and interpretation of survey results by the lecturer for the identification of growth and development possibilities; discussion of the report by the lecturer and Head of Department; identification of development opportunities by the lecturer and Head of Department; updating of the teaching portfolio for performance management purposes; and the provision of feedback to students on the survey outcomes.

4.6.2 Rhodes University

The information obtained for the compilation of this section originated mainly from the document *A Brief Guide to the Evaluation of Teaching and Courses* (2005) on the Rhodes University (RU) website. Approval for the usage thereof was granted by Prof. C. Boughey, Director at the Academic Development Centre (ADC).

The above-mentioned document states that the HEQC initiatives to manage and monitor the national quality assurance activities in the South African higher education environment encouraged RU staff to engage in a process known as reflective practice. Reflective practice, in the context of this study, involves the utilisation of student evaluation outcomes to determine what lecturers do in order to develop and enhance their teaching and students' learning. The RU approaches the student evaluation process from as many different angles or perspectives as possible, but this section will mainly focus on the administration and implementation of a web-based teaching and course evaluation measuring instrument.

The ADC has developed a web-based teaching and course evaluation measuring instrument called the Evaluation Assistant that allows a lecturer to construct a questionnaire to suit his/her own specific needs. To construct a questionnaire, a lecturer can select questions from an item-bank and may also submit his/her own questions if those in the item-bank do not meet his/her needs. The questionnaire makes provision for the selection of 6-point Likert scale type questions for quantitative feedback and open-ended questions for qualitative feedback. The attention of academic staff is drawn to the fact that the validity of statistical data for Likert scale questions is questionable for class sizes of less than 20 students. For such small groups of students, lecturers are advised to rather use open-ended questions. The maximum number of questions that the student evaluation questionnaire caters for is three open-ended questions, 27 Likert scale questions, and three standard questions that appear in all questionnaires.

Before RU lecturers construct their web-based questionnaires, they are reminded to do the following (Rhodes University, 2004):

- To think about the purpose of the evaluation. The following questions could be asked before the compilation of a questionnaire: Do you need the data in a teaching portfolio? Do you experience some kind of a problem in your teaching? Do students complain about something in your course? Do you plan to change the curriculum? Would you like to gather evidence of enhanced student learning or simply look at student satisfaction?

- To decide whether they want to evaluate their teaching or the course. Two separate questionnaires are proposed.

- To decide what kind of information a lecturer would like to elicit on his/her teaching or course content, since student evaluation is a form of research into a lecturer's teaching. It is important for academic staff to decide which aspects of their teaching or course design they want to examine before they construct the questionnaire.

- To consider whether a questionnaire is the most appropriate measuring instrument to use for eliciting student opinion. Other options, such as peer evaluation, group discussions and external moderator evaluation should also be considered.

- To think about the type of questions they want to include in their questionnaire. Open-ended questions might elicit more useful information from smaller groups of students.

- To consider the timing of the evaluations. Summative evaluations will provide academic staff with an overview of the entire course, but the respondents will not directly benefit from a particular evaluation as in the case of formative evaluations.

Once a questionnaire has been compiled, the lecturer will receive the required number of questionnaires through the internal mail system and appoint a facilitator to administer the questionnaires in class. After completion, the questionnaires are sent to the ADC in a sealed envelope for analysis and the provision of a confidential report. The ADC sends the report to the lecturer involved, who is encouraged to discuss the content with colleagues or staff at the ADC, who are available to collaborate with him/her in the development of improved teaching and learning strategies. The ADC document warns that sometimes only very general conclusions may be drawn from the analysed data and that students may suffer from questionnaire fatigue.

The ADC staff is proactive about the management and implementation of the student evaluation system. They encourage academic staff to use a variety of means of eliciting ongoing formative and summative feedback from their students, to inform their students on how they intend responding to the survey outcomes, to reflect critically on their teaching and on the evaluations they receive, and to document the evaluation outcomes in their teaching portfolios.

4.6.3 University of Stellenbosch

Approval for reporting on the student feedback practices regarding teaching and module content at the University of Stellenbosch (US) was granted by Dr Brenda Leibowitz (2007), Director at the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL). Mr Edwin de Klerk, Senior Advisor at the CTL, is responsible for the management of the system.

Student feedback forms part of the quality development and assurance system at the US and is integrated with other systems, such as the external evaluation of departments and annual performance management interviews

with academic staff. A distinction is made between student feedback that leads to quality assurance and the improvement of modules, and feedback that contributes to the professional development of academic staff. A further distinction is made between student feedback elicited during the presentation of a certain module in order to monitor and possibly adapt the teaching and learning process (formative feedback), and student feedback conducted after the completion of a module (summative feedback).

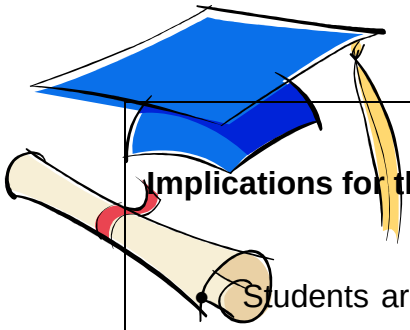
Student feedback ensures and advances quality teaching at the US, and is utilised for formative and summative purposes with regard to all modules and teaching activities every two years. A single questionnaire with core questions is used and certain allowances are made for faculties that need to include questions more specific to the subject environment. The following aspects of US policy on student feedback should be taken into account when compiling a questionnaire: it should cover the most important general questions regarding the modules and academic teaching; faculties should use the same core questions and may add no more than three questions to the questionnaire to cover context dependent issues; the questionnaire should be brief to prevent student resistance; and the CTL handles the design and reproduction of student feedback forms to ensure that they meet the necessary technical criteria.

Academic staff should not be present during the completion of the questionnaires in class, and where more than one lecturer was responsible for a module, feedback is required for each individual lecturer. Questionnaires are completed anonymously and treated confidentially and, for the purposes of statistical reliability and validity, at least 80% of students taking a certain module should be present when feedback is required. Feedback for the evaluation of all modules and teaching activities should be collected every two years, but newly appointed academic staff may request that feedback within the first six months of teaching not be distributed to their departmental chairs and deans. This feedback will be treated confidentially and the lecturer should consult a member of the CTL to receive appropriate support and advice, if necessary.

The opportunity to collect student feedback electronically at the US was investigated during 2002. A number of academic staff members, all of whom already had an active WebCT module, participated in the trial run on a voluntary basis. The average response rate for those who participated in the trial was 36%. When two of the lecturers accompanied their students to the computer user area and asked them to complete the questionnaire on WebCT, they had a response rate of more than 80%. Another lecturer who did not accompany students to the computer area, encouraged students by awarding them additional marks for completing the questionnaire electronically. This lecturer obtained an average response rate of 60%.

Student feedback on teaching and programmes is utilised in conjunction with the existing system of feedback on individual modules to enhance and develop academic programmes. The utility of student feedback as a development mechanism depends on appropriate follow-up actions initiated and coordinated by programme coordinators. Programme feedback is collected annually (towards the end of the final academic year) from final-year students. Information is obtained on the extent to which the outcomes of the programme have been achieved, the coherence, relevance, focus, depth and width of the programme, and the extent to which the US attained its general objectives regarding teaching and learning programmes.

In order to provide an opportunity to all lecturers to report on their own experience of teaching and module presentation, they are given the option of voluntarily completing a self-evaluation questionnaire. The questionnaire is available online at the CTL website.



Implications for this study

- Students are key participants in the teaching and learning process and should be given the opportunity to participate in the quality review process by means of evaluation surveys.

- Student evaluation outcomes should be included in institutional programme reviews.

- Action must be taken to ensure that: lecturers do not mistrust the student evaluation system; survey outcomes do not result in students being negative about the system; survey outcomes are discussed with lecturers and students; questionnaire fatigue does not set in.

- The procedural arrangements for the administration and execution of evaluations in class should be effective and efficient.

- The validity of statistical data for Likert scale questions obtained from class sizes of less than 20 students is questionable.

- The purpose of evaluations should be clear. This could be, for example, to identify possible problems in teaching or to collect information before curriculum changes are proposed.

- Academic staff must decide which aspects of their teaching or course design should be evaluated before a questionnaire is constructed.

- Student evaluation questionnaires should be brief to prevent student resistance, and the technical layout should be of a professional standard.

4.7 CONCLUSION

The visits to Australia and New Zealand, the investigations into student evaluation systems in England and the United States of America, and the discussions with experts at South African universities opened up exciting vistas of possibilities and opportunities.

Given the complexity of the student evaluation process, the unique and distinctive manner in which each evaluation system is managed interested the researcher. Since 1998, quality assurance and improvement plans are required annually by the Australian Government and published by the Department of Education. It is important to take note that all Australian universities develop annual quality assurance and improvement plans to monitor and evaluate the quality of their teaching and learning practices. These schemes include regular evaluations of teaching and module content exercises. The annual Course Experience Questionnaire in Australia, directed at all final-year students, is a valuable source of information on student perceptions.

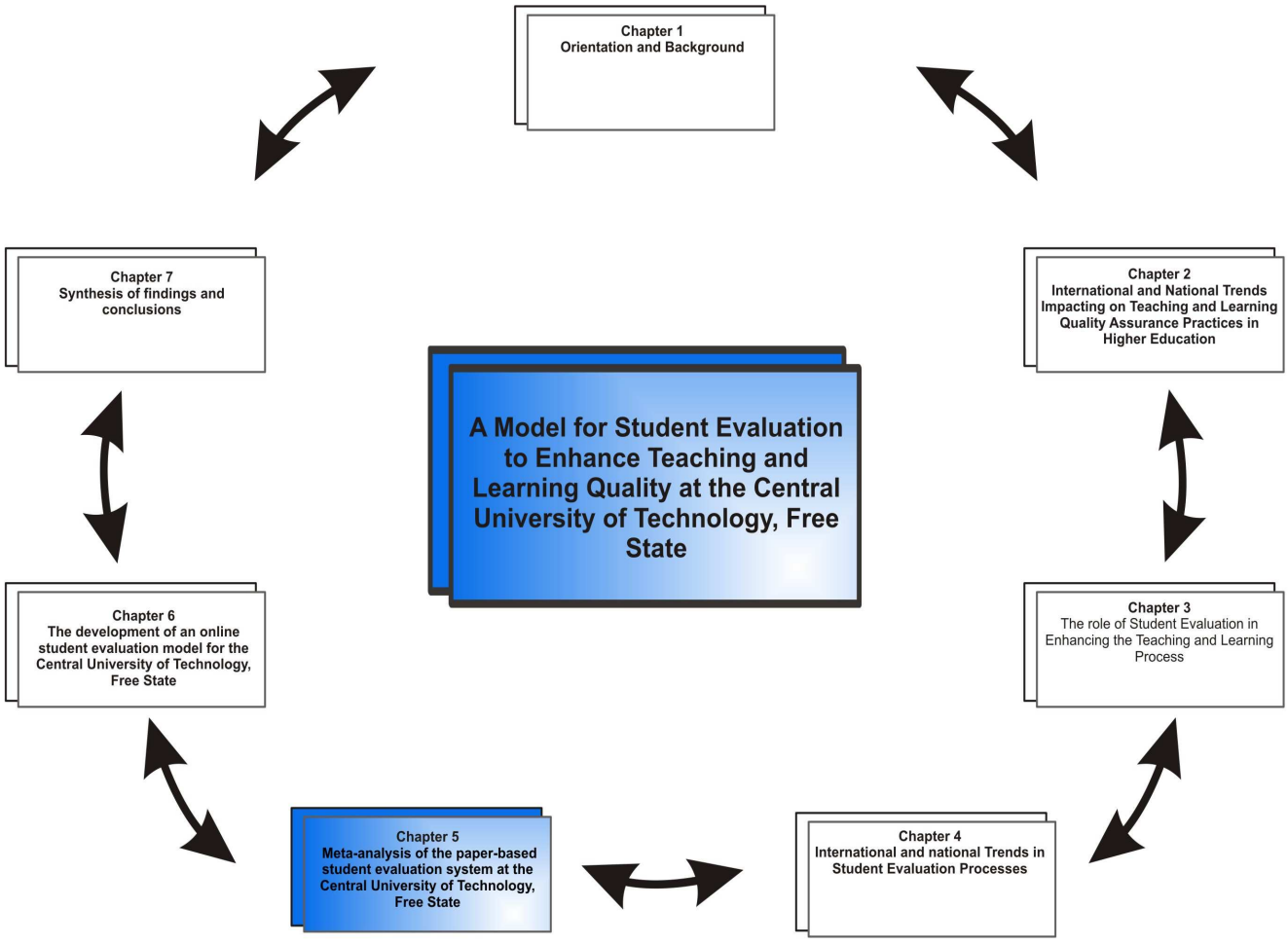
Since 2000, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority and National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence have been accelerating the process to assist Australian higher education institutions in achieving the best possible educational outcomes for students. It is remarkable that the higher education institutions in New Zealand, compared to those in Australia, receive a kind of “carte blanche” to manage their own student evaluation systems. In contrast with the New Zealand student evaluation system, institutions in England are regulated by legislation to enhance the quality of their teaching and learning

practices. Most institutions make use of a mix of mechanisms for collecting student feedback, and find both quantitative and qualitative methods effective, although some institutions maintain that qualitative feedback is by far the most useful.

The American higher education system is currently experiencing an “educational boom”, and there is a growing demand for quality educational practices. The huge territorial distances, the federal principle underlying state government, the large number of state and private educational institutions as well as their high level of independence, make for a complicated set-up. In this complex system, accreditation agencies develop quality standards and determine whether these set standards are being met. The practice of obtaining student feedback is widespread in American universities, and in many instances, this is their only source of information on teaching quality and programme content effectiveness.

Although quality assurance processes have been in place in the South African higher education system for many years, student involvement has gained momentum with the establishment of the HEQC. Although the researched universities (see 4.7.1, 4.7.2, 4.7.3) were very supportive in sharing their well-structured student evaluation practices for research purposes, it seems as if the concept of student participation in the quality assurance process still needs to be sold at institutional level. Chapter 5 presents a meta-analysis of the paper-based student evaluation system at the CUT.

CHAPTER 5


Chapter 1
Orientation and Background
Chapter 2
International and National Trends Impacting on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Practices in Higher Education
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The role of Student Evaluation in Enhancing the Teaching and Learning Process
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International and national Trends in Student Evaluation Processes
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Meta-analysis of the paper-based student evaluation system at the Central University of Technology, Free State
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A Model for Student Evaluation to Enhance Teaching and Learning Quality at the Central University of Technology, Free State

CHAPTER 5

META-ANALYSIS OF THE PAPER-BASED STUDENT EVALUATION SYSTEM AT THE CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, FREE STATE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the process of developing a paper-based instrument for obtaining student feedback on teaching and module quality at the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT), is described. The researcher reports, by means of an exploratory descriptive analysis, on the process of developing the paper-based student evaluation measuring instrument for the CUT. This chapter also elaborates on how the entire development process unfolded, who participated in it, how stakeholder feedback was obtained, what changes occurred over time and how it influenced the decision to explore online student evaluation of teaching and module quality as an alternative to the initial paper-based student feedback system.

5.2 PILOT PROJECT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PAPER-BASED STUDENT EVALUATION MEASURING INSTRUMENT

In an attempt to respond to the need for enhancing the quality of teaching and learning at the CUT, the Executive Committee of the Senate formulated a resolution (UKS/01/01/10) during January 2001 (representing the core of this study) that instructed the Centre for Teaching and Learning, headed by the researcher, to initiate a project on the evaluation of teaching and module content by students. This would be the beginning of a new culture of teaching evaluation at the CUT.

To execute this resolution the following *modus operandus,* designed in different steps*,* formed part of the pilot phase of the research:

Step 1: Identifying key variables
Step 2: Group feedback strategy
Step 3: Designing the questionnaire
Step 4: Piloting the questionnaire
Step 5: Administering the questionnaire
Step 6: Data analysis
Step 7: Reporting the outcome
Step 8: Acting on the report

The pilot project also formed part of some other initiatives implemented at the CUT, namely the development of a new performance management system and the introduction of compulsory teaching portfolios that could provide a basis for making judgements during performance appraisal.

5.2.1 Objectives of the project

The CUT views student evaluation of teaching as an approach that integrates student views into strategic management decision-making processes, and is therefore a quality enhancement tool to develop a system for student evaluation of teaching and learning practices. It is furthermore viewed as an ongoing process of exploration and analysis of students' views on their learning experience, contributing towards the establishment of an accountability process to ensure that concerns are addressed and a clearly defined action cycle is established to ensure quality improvement.

The identified objective for the pilot project was therefore to develop a student evaluation system that would, if correctly managed, improve the quality of teaching and learning practices at the CUT - thus enhancing the student's learning experience.

5.2.2 Research methodology

The research approach during the pilot project was democratic and participatory in the true sense of the word. These two notions were considered of great importance in order to get staff involved in the process. Subsequently, various sources of literature that described global, national and regional practices in student evaluation were consulted to familiarise the researcher with common trends. Although the researcher made use of quantitative evaluation data during the pilot studies, the research falls mainly within the qualitative research paradigm (see 1.6).

The pilot project commenced during January 2001 with a group feedback strategy (see 5.2.3.1 – step 2) to collect input and comments for the design of a paper-based questionnaire used during the pre-pilot study, which ran from April until July 2001. Inputs and comments were received during the design of the questionnaire for the full pilot study, which was conducted from May until September 2002 (see 5.2.3.2 – step 4).

The design and refinement of the pilot questionnaires took almost two years, during which period adjustments were made for the full implementation (see 5.2.3.4 – phase 4). An example of the current CUT student evaluation questionnaire is reflected in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: CUT paper-based student evaluation questionnaire

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, FREE STATE
SENTRALE UNIVERSITEIT VAN TEGNOLOGIE, VRYSTAAT

Questionnaire: Student evaluation of teaching & module content
Vraelys: Studente-evaluering van onderrig- & module-inhoud

1. The aim of this questionnaire is to determine the effectiveness of the teaching process, as it is experienced by you as a student./
   Die doel met die vraelys is die bepaling van die effektiwiteit van die onderrigproses, soos dit deur u as student ervaar word.
2. **The questionnaire is completed anonymously**. / **Die vraelys word anoniem voltooi.**
3. Answer codes are provided with each question. **Only one answer is allowed. /** Antwoordkodes word by elke vraag voorsien. **Slegs een antwoord per vraag word toegelaat.**

A:

1	Faculty / Fakulteit		
2	Department;School Departement;Skool		
3	Lecturer / Dosent		
4	Subject/Module / Vak/Module:		

Please complete the following / Voltooi asseblief die volgende

5	Diploma	Encircle response / Omkring antwoord	**1**					
	Degree / Graad		**2**					
6	Compulsory subject / Verpligte vak	Encircle response / Omkring antwoord →	**Yes/Ja**		**No/Nee**			
			1		**2**			
7	Full-time / Voltyds	Encircle response / Omkring antwoord →	**Yes/Ja**		**No/Nee**			
			1		**2**			
8	Study year / Studiejaar	Encircle response / Omkring antwoord →	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**		
9	Gender / Geslag	Encircle appropriate response / Omkring toepaslike antwoord →						
	Male / Manlik		**1**					
	Female / Vroulik		**2**					
10	Age in years / Ouderdom in jare	Indicate in the blocks / Dui aan in blokkies →						
11	First Language / Eerste Taal	Afrikaans	**1**					
		English / Engels	**2**					
		Sotho	**3**					
		Tswana	**4**					
		Xhosa	**5**					
		Other language / Ander taal	**6**					
12	Language in which the subject/module is presented Taal waarin die vak/module aangebied word	English/ Engels	**1**					
		Afrikaans	**2**					
		Both English and Afrikaans / Beide Engels en Afrikaans	**3**					

13. Please **encircle** the appropriate response ◯ **Omkring** asseblief die toepaslike antwoord:

Give your total assessment of the **content of this subject** / Dui u totale assessering van die **inhoud van hierdie vak** aan.	**Uitstekend Excellent**	**Goed Good**	**Gemiddeld Average**	**Swak Poor**
	75 – 100%	**60 – 74%**	**50 – 59%**	**0 - 49 %**

B: Student evaluation of teaching/facilitation / Studente-evaluering van onderrig/fasilitering

Please **encircle** the appropriate response**, e.g.**: (4) 3 2 1 **Omkring** asseblief die toepaslike antwoord, bv.:

Answer codes / Antwoordkodes **4 = Almost always / 4 = Byna altyd** **3 = Frequently / 3 = Dikwels** **2 = Sometimes / 2 = Somtyds** **1 = Hardly ever / 1 = Byna nooit**

	My lecturer:	**Almost always/ Byna altyd**	**Frequently / Dikwels**	**Sometimes/ Somtyds**	**Hardly ever / Byna nooit**	**My dosent:**
1.	communicates effectively (verbally)	4	3	2	1	kommunikeer effektief (verbaal)
2.	gives clear explanations	4	3	2	1	gee goeie verduidelikings
3.	has a good command of English	4	3	2	1	praat goeie Engels
4.	has a good command of Afrikaans	4	3	2	1	praat goeie Afrikaans
5.	has a presentation style that allows me to take adequate notes	4	3	2	1	het 'n aanbiedingstyl wat my die geleentheid gee om genoeg notas te maak
6.	uses teaching materials effectively (blackboards/ whiteboards, overhead projector, videos, MS PowerPoint)	4	3	2	1	gebruik onderrigmateriaal effektief (swart-/witborde, oorhoofse projektor, videos, MS PowerPoint)
7.	uses other resources (library, Internet, group work) to facilitate the learning process	4	3	2	1	gebruik ander bronne (biblioteek, Internet, groepwerk) om die leerproses te fasiliteer
8.	shows how this subject relates to other subjects in my course	4	3	2	1	wys hoe die vak verband hou met ander vakke in my kursus
9.	explains the learning outcomes before the beginning of each lecture	4	3	2	1	verduidelik die leeruitkomste voor die begin van elke lesing

	My lecturer:	Almost always/ Byna altyd	Frequently / Dikwels	Sometimes/ Somtyds	Hardly ever / Byna nooit	My dosent:
10.	uses practical examples to explain the study material	4	3	2	1	gebruik praktiese voorbeelde om studiemateriaal te verduidelik
11.	encourages students to ask questions	4	3	2	1	moedig studente aan om vrae te vra
12.	provides a good mixture of lectures and class discussions	4	3	2	1	voorsien 'n goeie kombinasie van lesings en klasbesprekings
13.	encourages students to express their own ideas	4	3	2	1	moedig studente aan om hul eie idees weer te gee
14.	treats students with respect, irrespective of race or gender	4	3	2	1	behandel studente met respek, ongeag ras of geslag
15.	is available for individual assistance when needed	4	3	2	1	is beskikbaar vir individuele hulp wanneer nodig
16.	grades assignments fairly	4	3	2	1	merk werkopdragte regverdig
17.	marks and hands back assignments within a reasonable timeframe	4	3	2	1	merk opdragte en gee dit terug binne 'n redelike tydsverloop

C: Student evaluation of subject/module content Studente-evaluering van vak-/module-inhoud

The aim of this part of the questionnaire is to determine the effectiveness of the subject/module content, as it is experienced by you as a student./ Die doel met hierdie deel van die vraelys is om die effektiwiteit van die vakinhoud te bepaal, soos dit deur u as student ervaar word.

Please encircle the appropriate response, e.g.: 4 (3) 2 1 **Omkring asseblief die toepaslike antwoord, bv.:**

Answer codes / Antwoordkodes **4 = Almost always 4 = Byna altyd** **3 = Frequently 3 = Dikwels** **2 =Sometimes 2 = Somtyds** **1 = Almost never 1 = Byna nooit**

A.	Content	Almost always/ Byna altyd	Frequently / Dikwels	Sometimes / Somtyds	Almost never/ Byna nooit	Inhoud
1.	There was an appropriate balance between theory and practic	4	3	2	1	Daar was 'n toepaslike balans tussen teorie en praktyk
2.	Current developments in this field were highlighted	4	3	2	1	Huidige ontwikkelings in hierdie veld is uitgelig
3.	The material was covered at the right level for my needs	4	3	2	1	Die materiaal is aangebied op die regte vlak volgens my behoeftes
B.	**Organisation**					**Organisasie**
4.	Lectures and/or tutorials/practicals were appropriately linked with regard to content	4	3	2	1	Lesings en/of tutoriale/praktika is toepaslik gekoppel met die inhoud
5.	Different activities (e.g. group work) were well organised	4	3	2	1	Verskillende aktiwiteite (bv. groepwerk) is goed georganiseer
6.	The order of the material developed logically over the semester/year	4	3	2	1	Die orde van die materiaal het logies gedurende die semester/jaar ontwikkel
C.	**Teaching materials**					**Onderrigmateriaal**

7.	Overall, the teaching materials (handouts, study guides) were of a high quality	4	3	2	1	Oor die algemeen was die onderrigmateriaal (uitdeelstukke, studiegidse) van hoë kwaliteit
8.	The recommended textbook(s) provided useful information in this field of study	4	3	2	1	Die aanbevole handboek(e) het nuttige inligting in die vakgebied voorsien
9.	Study guides assisted my learning	4	3	2	1	Studiegidse het die leerproses ondersteun
D.	**Practical work (where applicable)**					**Praktiese werk (waar toepaslik)**
10.	Learning experience outside the lecture hall (eg. field work, clinical work) took place	4	3	2	1	Leerervarings het plaasgevind buite die lesinglokaal (bv. veldwerk, kliniese werk)
11.	Practical sessions were well organised	4	3	2	1	Praktiese sessies is goed georganiseer
12.	Laboratory/practical sessions were a valuable component of this subject	4	3	2	1	Laboratorium-/praktiese sessies was 'n waardevolle komponent van die vak
13.	Adequate time was allowed for the completion of practical exercises	4	3	2	1	Voldoende tyd is toegelaat om die praktiese oefeninge te voltooi
14.	The laboratory sessions developed important practical skills	4	3	2	1	Die laboratoriumsessies het belangrike praktiese vaardighede ontwikkel
E.	**Assessment (tests, examinations, assignments) and feedback**					**Assessering (toetse, eksamens, opdragte) en terugvoer**
15.	The assessments/assignments were a fair test of my knowledge.	4	3	2	1	Die assesserings/opdragte was 'n regverdige toetsing van my kennis
16.	Assessment criteria were clearly defined.	4	3	2	1	Assesseringskriteria was duidelik gedefinieer
17.	Assessment tasks reflected the outcomes as stated in the study guide	4	3	2	1	Assesseringstake het die uitkomste soos gestel in die studiegids, gereflekteer
18.	The assessments were a useful learning exercise	4	3	2	1	Die assesserings was 'n nuttige leeroefening
19.	I understood the assessment questions	4	3	2	1	Ek het die assesseringsvrae goed verstaan

D: Learning outcomes — Leeruitkomste

	The following skills and competencies are addressed in the subject/module:	**Yes/ Ja**	**No/ Nee**	**Die volgende bekwaamhede en vaardighede word aangespreek in die vak/module:**
1	Problem-solving skills: Identifying and solving problems	1	2	Probleemoplossingsvaardighede: Identifisering en oplossing van probleme
2	Team work: Working effectively with others in a team/group	1	2	Spanwerk: Effektiewe samewerking met ander in 'n span/groep
3	Organising and self-management: Managing yourself and your activities independently	1	2	Organisering en selfbestuur: Om jouself en jou aktiwiteite selfstandig te bestuur
4	Research skills: Collecting, analysing, organising and evaluating information	1	2	Navorsingsvaardighede: Die versameling, analisering, organisering en evaluering van inligting
5	Communication skills: Communicating effectively in oral and written mode	1	2	Kommunikasievaardighede: Effektiewe verbale en geskrewe kommunikasie
6	Technological literacy: The ability to use science and technology effectively	1	2	Tegnologiese geletterdheid: Die vermoë om wetenskap en tegnologie effektief te gebruik

7	Holistic approach: Demonstrating an understanding of the world as a set of related systems	1	2	Holistiese benadering: Die vermoë om die wêreld as 'n stel verbandhoudende stelsels waar te neem

E: Student Evaluation of Teaching Facilities
Studente-evaluering van Onderrigfasiliteite

The aim of this section is to determine the effectiveness of the teaching facilities, as it is experienced by you as a student./

Die doel met hierdie afdeling is die bepaling van die effektiwiteit van die onderrigfasiliteite, soos dit deur u as student ervaar word.

Please encircle the appropriate response, e.g.: 4 (3) 2 1 **Omkring asseblief die toepaslike antwoord, bv.:**

Answer codes / Antwoordkodes **4 = Almost always / 4 = Byna altyd** **3 = Frequently / 3 = Dikwels** **2 =Sometimes / 2 = Somtyds** **1 = Almost never / 1 = Byna nooit**

	The lecture hall/laboratory	Almost always / Byna altyd	Frequently / Dikwels	Sometimes / Somtyds	Almost never / Byna nooit	Die lesinglokaal/ laboratorium
1.	The lighting of the lecture hall is adequate	4	3	2	1	Die beligting van die lesinglokaal is voldoende
2.	The audio-visual equipment (overhead projector, etc.) is in good working order	4	3	2	1	Die oudiovisuele toerusting(oorhoofse projektor, ens.) is in 'n goeie werkende toestand
3.	Lecture halls are sufficiently flexible to allow for various teaching approaches to be used. The physical arrangement of chairs supports group work	4	3	2	1	Lesinglokale is genoegsaam aanpasbaar om verskeie onderrigmetodes moontlik te maak. Die fisiese rangskikking van stoele ondersteun groepwerk
4.	The lecture halls are neat and clean	4	3	2	1	Die lesinglokale is netjies en skoon
5.	There are enough seats in the lecture hall	4	3	2	1	Daar is genoeg sitplekke in die lesinglokaal
6.	The temperature in the lecture hall promotes a learning atmosphere	4	3	2	1	Die temperatuur in die lesinglokaal bevorder 'n leeratmosfeer
7.	I can hear the lecturer clearly	4	3	2	1	Ek kan die dosent duidelik hoor
8.	I am able to concentrate on lectures without undue noise and other distractions from the corridor	4	3	2	1	Ek is in staat om te konsentreer sonder onnodige geraas en ander steurings buite in die gang

F: Open-ended questions
Oopeindevrae

You may give your own opinions / recommendations in response to the following questions:

U kan u eie opinies / aanbevelings gee in die beantwoording van die volgende vrae:

20. Suggested ways to improve **subject/module content and teaching** . / Voorgestelde wyses om die **vak-/module-inhoud en onderrig** te verbeter.

21. Any other general comments? / Enige ander algemene kommentaar?

22. Your experience of outcomes-based education, where lecturers are facilitators of learning and students active participants in the learning process – for instance: discussions in class; student presentations and group work. / U ervaring van uitkomsgerigte onderrig, waar dosente die fasiliteerders van leer is en studente die aktiewe deelnemers aan die leerproses – byvoorbeeld: besprekings in die klas; aanbiedinge deur studente en groepbesprekings.

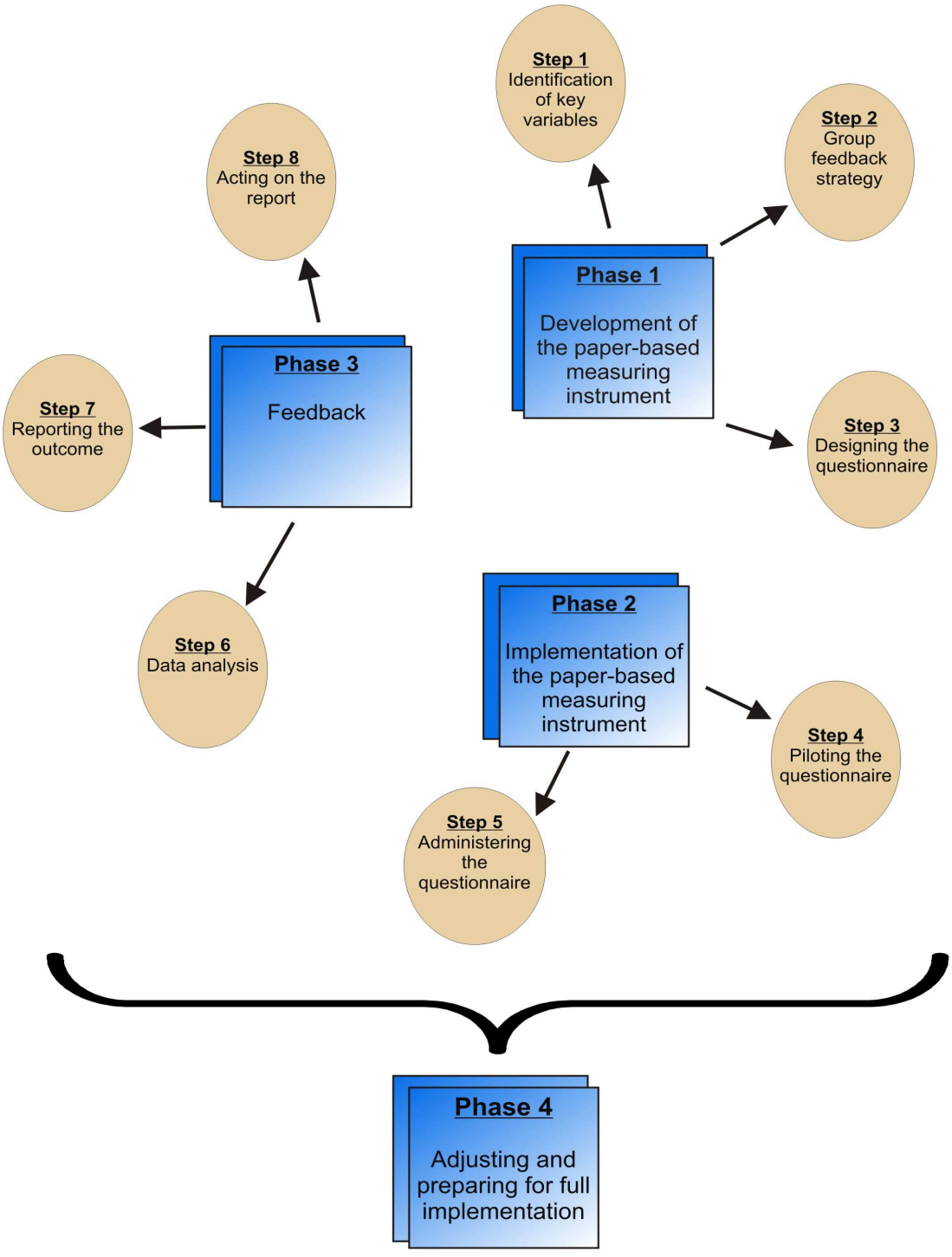
Thank you for your time in completing this questionnaire.

Dankie vir die tyd wat u bestee het aan die voltooiing van hierdie vraelys.

5.2.3 Phases and steps in the pilot project

The pilot project existed of the following four phases, divided into eight steps – as indicated in Figure 5.1:

FIGURE 5.1: PHASES AND STEPS IN THE PAPER-BASED PILOT STUDY



5.2.3.1 *Phase 1: Development of the paper-based measuring instrument*

Step 1: Identification of key variables

The identification of key variables for inclusion in the evaluation questionnaire (see Table 5.1) was an important initial step given the underlying aim of the project, namely to enhance teaching and learning practices at the CUT. The key variables provided the basis for analytic breakdown of the data that would enable action at academic staff development and academic management level.

The following key variables were identified by the researcher after a comprehensive consultation process with all the role players concerned (see Step 2):

A = Demographic information
B = Student evaluation of learning facilitation
C = Student evaluation of subject/module content
D = Critical cross-field outcomes
E = Student evaluation of teaching facilities

The above-mentioned key variables, with the exception of critical cross-field outcomes specified in variable D, were included in the questionnaires used throughout the pilot project. Variable D was included in the recommended questionnaire for use at the CUT, and Section F (containing open-ended questions) was moved to the last page of the questionnaire.

Step 2: Group feedback strategy

The researcher decided to make use of group feedback strategies to obtain the views of academic staff and students regarding which elements of their teaching and learning experience they regard as important for inclusion in the questionnaire. During this phase, 16 academic staff members (representing

the 16 modules evaluated during the pre-pilot project) and eight students from the Student Academic Affairs Committee, as well as the members of the Student Representative Council, were targeted for their feedback. Individual as well as collective electronic (e-mail) and written feedback (by memorandum) was received from academic staff, but no formal feedback was received from the Student Academic Affairs Committee and the Student Representative Council. Presentations were made by the researcher to Faculty Boards, where student representatives and academic staff gave verbal feedback in this regard.

Input/suggestions received focused mainly on:

- the availability of educational resources and facilities in classrooms;
- the inclusion of educational technology and its contribution to learning;
- the utilisation of the Internet as a research, information and communication tool;
- the use of various teaching facilitation methodologies to make the learning experience more interesting;
- the incorporation of more group work and student participation during the educational process;
- the availability of academic staff for consultation purposes;
- the improvement of the overall organisation of learning content.

The primary objective of the project was to develop a paper-based student evaluation measuring instrument to improve the quality of teaching and learning at the CUT, and to involve all stakeholders in the decision-making

process as far as possible. It was therefore impossible to accommodate all the suggestions/input received.

Step 3: Designing the questionnaire

Since the planning and implementation of the pilot project, all the stakeholders were unanimous that the success of the questionnaire would be determined by the extent to which students would perceive it to be user-friendly. They suggested that the questionnaire should retain the interest of the respondents, and should be designed in a professional way. Almost all the respondents indicated that the use of technical or undefined terms should be avoided, as well as leading, ambiguous or vague questions, asking more than one question at a time, and including complex questions in the questionnaire.

As mentioned, key variables were identified and used as a framework during the compilation of the questionnaire. Related items were grouped together. The open-ended questions (Section F on the questionnaire) were placed separately on the last page of the questionnaire for easy removal and submission to the various stakeholders concerned. Before the evaluations were conducted, students were introduced to the researcher and briefed on the purpose of the questionnaire, as well as the reason why they had been asked to complete the questionnaire; the importance of receiving the respondent's objective and honest reply; how to complete the questionnaire; reassurance regarding the confidentiality and anonymity of completing the questionnaire; an indication of how long it would take to complete the questionnaire, and the way in which feedback would be provided to the students (see 3.9).

5.2.3.2 *Phase 2: Implementation of the paper-based measuring instrument*

Step 4: Piloting the questionnaire

The project included a pre-pilot and a full pilot phase. During the pre-pilot phase, which ran from April until July 2001, 16 modules were evaluated by 535 students in various departments and schools. The main reasons for the pre-pilot phase included checking the wording and meaning of the questions and determining general reactions to length and content. The following amendments were made to the questionnaire after the pre-pilot survey in July 2001:

- The inclusion of an open-ended question, “What is the strongest negative characteristic of the lecturer?”, in Section A of the questionnaire.

- The inclusion of Section C, “Student evaluation of teaching facilities”, consisting of eight questions.

- The inclusion of an open-ended question, “General comments on teaching facilities”, in Section C of the questionnaire.

- The inclusion of the statement “Students understood the assessment questions” in the category Assessment and Feedback, in Section D of the questionnaire.

The full pilot phase of the project took place from May until September 2002. This full pilot stage – which involved 3629 learners – could be regarded as a dummy run of the entire evaluation process, and was conducted to determine whether the analysis provides the type and range of information that is required for the performance management system and academic staff development initiatives of academic staff at the CUT. It is important to mention

that the researcher was also a member of the Internal Project Team that was responsible for the development of a performance management system for academic staff at the CUT. He could therefore share his experience during the student evaluation project with the performance management project team. Since 2001, the student evaluation system has formed a cornerstone of the CUT performance management system.

Step 5: Administering the questionnaire

The lack of sufficient human resources capacity at the CUT's Centre for Teaching and Learning was a major constraint during the pilot project, especially during the survey administration process. It is extremely time-consuming to distribute the questionnaires for completion in the classrooms and to co-ordinate the administrative process.

The assistance of the faculty officers and faculty administrators in this regard was indispensable. Since the method of administering and gathering student responses in class could determine the quality of the resulting data, the researcher took personal responsibility for this process. A standard set of instructions was provided by the person who conducted the evaluation to ensure that all the respondents understood the evaluation process, and lecturers were advised by means of a formal letter that they should not be present during the evaluations. Upon completion, the questionnaires were returned to the person who conducted the evaluation.

It took 45 minutes on average for students to complete the questionnaires in their classrooms at the beginning of a class session, and it was therefore also possible for them to evaluate the teaching facilities in the classroom. It was stressed to the students that their frank and honest comments were desired, and that they were not expected to indicate their names or student numbers on the questionnaire. The researcher believes that the success of an student evaluation of teaching and module content system is partially determined before the evaluation process by creating a positive student mindset.

Students should know that their inputs are essential with a view to enhancing the quality of teaching and learning practices at the institution. In the design of open-ended questions, it is important to decide what content areas are central to the purpose of the questionnaire, and what questions should be asked. A central issue in the compilation of open-ended question design is that all respondents should interpret the questions in the same way the researcher intended.

5.2.3.3. *Phase 3: Feedback*

Step 6: Data analysis

The analysis of the questionnaire data from the pre-pilot project in 2001 was conducted by the staff at the Centre of Teaching and Learning. Due to the extent of the full pilot project during 2002 and the lack of human resources capacity, the services of an external organisation were obtained to analyse the data. The data analysis resulted in an in-depth feedback report to academic staff, which was also provided to Directors of Schools and Programme Heads. An example of such a data analysis report is reflected in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Example of a paper-based data analysis report

Evaluations for Subject A

Response rate

Class size	n	%
20	19	95.0

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Biographical information of students: Subject A

Gender	n	%
Male	18	94.7
Female	1	5.3

Language		
Afrikaans	4	21.1
English	1	5.3
Sotho	8	42.1
Tswana	2	10.5
Xhosa	2	10.5
Other	2	10.5

Age in years as on June 2004		
16-20	9	47.4
21-25	10	52.6
26-30	-	-
>30	-	-

Full-time/Part-time		
Full-time	18	100.0
Part-time	-	-

Study year		
1	3	16.7
2	14	77.8
3	1	5.6
4	-	-

SECTION B: LECTURER TEACHING PRACTICES

Lecturer teaching practices: Subject A

Variables:		1 Hardly ever	2 Sometimes	3 Frequently	4 Almost always	
	n	%	%	%	%	Mean
Presentation & communication	18	-	22.2	55.6	22.2	3.000
Preparation & organisation	18	5.6	55.6	38.9	-	2.333
Lecturer vs. student interaction	18	-	33.3	55.6	11.1	2.778
Assessment & feedback	17	17.6	35.3	17.6	29.4	2.588
Total	**18**	**-**	**33.3**	**66.7**	**-**	**2.667**

Student evaluation of teaching: Subject A

	Variables:		1 Hardly ever	2 Sometimes	3 Frequently	4 Almost always	
	My Lecturer:	n	%	%	%	%	Mean
1.	Communicates effectively (verbally)	16	6.3	12.5	50.0	31.3	3.063
2.	Gives clear explanations	17	-	41.2	41.2	17.6	2.765
3.	Has a good command of English	18	11.1	27.8	33.3	27.8	2.778
4.	Has a good command of Afrikaans	15	-	20.0	40.0	40.0	3.200
5.	Has a presentation style that allows me to take adequate notes	18	27.8	11.1	22.2	38.9	2.722
6.	Uses teaching materials effectively (blackboards/ whiteboards, overhead projector, videos, MS Powerpoint)	18	-	16.7	38.9	44.4	3.278
7.	Uses other resources (library, Internet, group work) to facilitate the learning process	16	68.8	12.5	18.8	-	1.500
8.	Shows how this subject relates to other subjects in my course	18	16.7	44.4	22.2	16.7	2.389
9.	Explains the learning outcomes before the beginning of each lecture	18	22.2	44.4	22.2	11.1	2.222
10.	Uses practical examples to explain the study material	18	-	22.2	22.2	55.6	3.333
11.	Encourages students to ask questions	18	5.6	11.1	22.2	61.1	3.389
12.	Provides a good mixture of lectures and class discussions	18	33.3	44.4	5.6	16.7	2.056
13.	Encourages students to express ideas	17	35.3	35.3	23.5	5.9	2.000
14.	Treats students with respect, irrespective of race or gender	18	-	-	27.8	72.2	3.722
15.	Is available for individual assistance when needed	18	27.8	16.7	22.2	33.3	2.611
16.	Grades assignments fairly	14	-	28.6	28.6	42.9	3.143
17.	Marks and hands back assignments within a reasonable timeframe	17	41.2	29.4	5.9	23.5	2.118

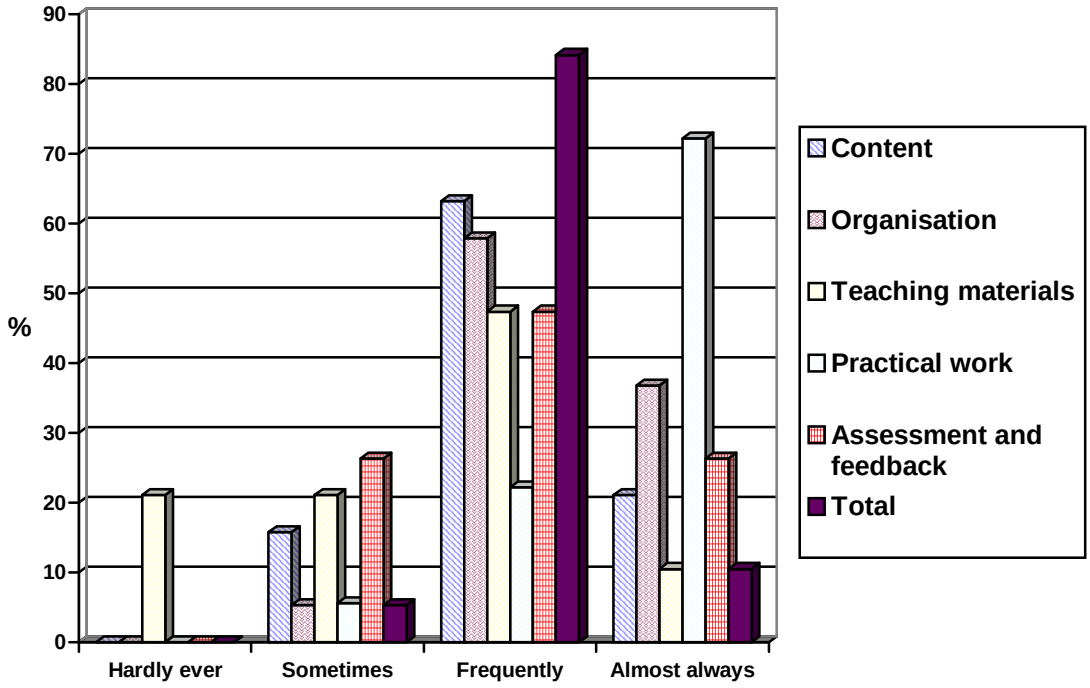
SECTION B: SUBJECT CONTENT

Subject Content: Subject A

Variables:		1 Hardly ever	2 Sometimes	3 Frequently	4 Almost always	
	n	%	%	%	%	Mean
Content	19	-	15.8	63.2	21.1	3.053
Organisation	19	-	5.3	57.9	36.8	3.316
Teaching materials	19	21.1	21.1	47.4	10.5	2.474

Variables:		1 Hardly ever	2 Sometimes	3 Frequently	4 Almost always	
Practical work	18	-	5.6	22.2	72.2	3.667
Assessment and feedback	19	-	26.3	47.4	26.3	3.000
Total	**19**	**-**	**5.3**	**84.2**	**10.5**	**3.053**

Subject Content Evaluation: Subject A



Total assessment of subject content: Subject A

Variables:	n	1 Poor		2 Average		3 Good		4 Excellent		
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	Mean
Total assessment of subject content	18	0	0.0	9	50.0	5	27.8	4	22.2	2.722

Student evaluation of subject content: Subject A

	Variables		1 Hardly ever	2 Sometimes	3 Frequently	4 Almost always	
A	**Content**	**n**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**Mean**
1.	There was an appropriate balance between theory and practice.	19	-	5.3	15.8	78.9	3.737
2.	Current developments in this field were highlighted.	18	5.6	38.9	33.3	22.2	2.722
3.	The material was covered at the right level for my needs.	19	10.5	15.8	47.4	26.3	2.895
B.	**Organisation**						
4.	Lectures and/or tutorials/practicals were appropriately linked with regard to content.	19	-	10.5	31.6	57.9	3.474

	Variables		1 Hardly ever	2 Sometimes	3 Frequently	4 Almost always	
5.	Different activities (e.g. group work) were well organised.	19	10.5	21.1	42.1	26.3	2.842
6.	The order of the material developed logically over the semester/year.	19	5.3	5.3	52.6	36.8	3.211
C.	**Teaching materials**						
7.	Overall, the teaching materials (handouts, study guides) were of a high quality.	19	26.3	26.3	15.8	31.6	2.526
8.	The recommended textbook(s) provided useful information in this field of study.	19	10.5	26.3	21.1	42.1	2.947
9.	Study guides assisted my learning.	18	55.6	5.6	33.3	5.6	1.889
D.	**Practical work (where applicable)**						
10.	Learning experience outside the lecture hall (eg. field work, clinical work) took place.	18	5.6	5.6	5.6	83.3	3.667
11.	Practical sessions were well organised.	18	-	-	22.2	77.8	3.778
12.	Laboratory/practical sessions were a valuable component of this subject.	18	11.1	11.1	22.2	55.6	3.222
13.	Adequate time was allowed for the completion of practical exercises.	18	-	5.6	11.1	83.3	3.778
14.	The laboratory sessions introduced important practical skills.	16	18.8	6.3	12.5	62.5	3.188
E.	**Assessment and feedback**						
15.	The assessments/ assignments were a fair test of my knowledge.	18	-	16.7	38.9	44.4	3.278
16.	Assessment criteria were clearly defined.	18	16.7	22.2	33.3	27.8	2.722
17.	Assessment tasks reflected the outcomes as specified in the study guide.	17	17.6	23.5	29.4	29.4	2.706
18.	The assessments were a useful learning exercise.	19	-	10.5	42.1	47.4	3.368
19.	I understood the assessment questions.	19	5.3	52.6	21.1	21.1	2.579

SECTION C: TEACHING FACILITIES

Student evaluation of teaching facilities: Subject A

	Variables		1 Hardly ever	2 Sometimes	3 Frequently	4 Almost always	
	The lecture hall/laboratory	**n**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**Mean**
1.	The lighting of the lecture hall is adequate.	19	-	5.3	15.8	78.9	3.737
2.	The audio-visual equipment (overhead projector, etc.) is in good working order.	19	5.3	10.5	21.1	63.2	3.421
3.	Lecture halls are sufficiently flexible to allow for various teaching approaches to be used. The physical arrangement of chairs supports group work.	19	10.5	10.5	36.8	42.1	3.105
4.	The lecture halls are neat and clean.	18	-	5.6	22.2	72.2	3.667
5.	There are enough seats in the lecture hall.	18	-	5.6	22.2	72.2	3.667
6.	The temperature in the lecture hall promotes a learning atmosphere.	19	26.3	31.6	21.1	21.1	2.368
7.	I can hear the lecturer clearly.	19	5.3	21.1	31.6	42.1	3.105
8.	I am able to concentrate on lectures without undue noise and other distractions from the corridor.	19	5.3	21.1	26.3	47.4	3.158

SECTION D: COURSE OUTCOMES

Student Skills and Competencies: Subject A

	This subject taught me to develop the following skills and competencies:	n	Yes %	No %
1	Problem-solving skills: Identifying and solving problems	17	70.6	29.4
2	Team work: Working effectively with others in a team/group	18	83.3	16.7
3	Organising and self-management: Managing yourself and your activities responsibly	18	83.3	16.7
4	Research skills: Collecting, analysing, organising and evaluating information	18	50.0	50.0
5	Communication skills: Communicating effectively in oral and written mode	18	55.6	44.4
6	Technological literacy: Using science and technology effectively	18	66.7	33.3
7	Holistic approach: Demonstrating an understanding of the world as a set of related systems	18	72.2	27.8

Step 7: Reporting the outcome

One of the most important aspects of any evaluation programme is the method of reporting the outcomes. If the results are not reported in an appropriate, accurate and timely manner, the usefulness of the instrument and the system as a whole will be seriously compromised. It is important to ensure that students receive feedback on the outcomes of the research.

The Deans, Directors of Schools and Programme Heads were advised to treat the reports of each individual lecturer with the necessary confidentiality, and to invite the Director: Teaching and Learning (the researcher) to attend the scheduled meeting with the lecturer concerned. During this meeting the report was discussed in detail, whereafter the training and developmental needs were determined and a plan of action was drawn up.

Step 8: Acting on the report

The student evaluation approach is about providing management information, based on student perspectives that aid decision-making and follow-up action to enhance the quality of the teaching and learning process. Depending on the outcomes of each individual report, the respective Deans and Directors of Schools are responsible for the interpretation of the feedback report. Academic management are aware of the fact that the researcher, as Director:

Teaching and Learning, is available at all times to assist in the determination of specific training and development needs arising from the report.

5.2.3.4 *Phase 4: Adjusting and preparing for full implementation*

The researcher made the following adjustments to the student evaluation questionnaire upon completion of the full pilot study during September 2002:

- Moving the open-ended questions on pages one, four and six to the last page of the questionnaire for easy removal and distribution purposes.

- Changing the 5-point Likert scale evaluation to a 4-point Likert-type evaluation scale (see Table 5.3).

- Reducing the student evaluation of teaching/facilitation questions from 20 to 17.

- Reducing the student evaluation of module content questions from 21 to 19.

- Including a new Section D on the SAQA critical cross-field outcomes, where students had the opportunity to indicate whether the SAQA critical cross-field outcomes had been addressed. This section was included in order to determine the personal competencies, thinking competencies and life competencies that would enable students to become active, responsible and successful members of society.

5.2.4 Report to Senate

Findings made by the researcher and feedback received from the role-players during the pre-pilot and full-pilot studies projects (2001-2002), revealed that some of the administrative processes needed to be revised.

The progress report submitted to the CUT Senate during October 2002 clearly indicated that the student evaluation system requires an ongoing process of exploration and analysis of student views on teaching and module content, the establishment of a culture of accountability to ensure that concerns are addressed and a clearly defined action-cycle to enhance quality improvement. The following reasons why the CUT would benefit from an investigation into student evaluation of teaching and module content were stipulated: it would demonstrate the institution's commitment to its principal stakeholders – its students; it would focus on the student learning experience and would be instrumental in enhancing student learning opportunities; it would provide a clear set of procedures for a process of continuous quality improvement; it would ensure that strategic management decisions are based on reliable and valid information about student concerns; and it would provide a benchmark against which progress over a period of time can be measured and assessed.

The report stipulated that the management of the following issues will determine the failure or success of the implementation of a student evaluation system at the CUT:

- The implementation of a work-study investigation at the Centre for Teaching and Learning to determine the personnel resources required to apply the student evaluation system in all faculties.

- The implementation of a well-structured timely feedback system for lecturers and students.

- The implementation of timely individual lecturer feedback sessions for training and development purposes.

- The implementation of programme evaluations to determine the overall view of teaching and learning in faculty programmes.

- The frequency of student evaluations in the context of the total implementation of a performance management system for academic staff.

- The investigation into the implementation of an online student evaluation system at the CUT.

A critical analysis of the above-mentioned recommendations to Senate (2002) shows many similarities between the studies mentioned in section 6.2.1.1 and 6.2.1.2 (see study 1 and study 2) and the paper-based student evaluation system implemented at the CUT. The recommendations to the CUT Senate also supports the findings of other research projects (Johnson 2002; Llewellyn 2002; Layne *et al.* 1999; Marsh 1987; Ory 1990; Rosenfeld & Booth-Kewley 1993), which emphasise the need for immediate and flexible student evaluation feedback to academic staff and students, smooth administrative processes, a system more convenient to students, more useful and coherent responses to open-ended questions, and immediate access to formative and summative evaluation data. The investigation into the online student evaluation of teaching and module content, i.e. the last recommendation to Senate referred to above, has the advantage that it also addresses some of the other recommendations made to Senate.

The rationale behind an online model for the evaluation of teaching and module content at the CUT is related to the immediate availability of survey data for analysis and reporting purposes, timely feedback to all the role-players concerned, and more extensive qualitative responses from students to the open-ended questions.

5.3 STANDARDS-BASED EVALUATION SCALE

It is important to establish a scale that will be used to communicate the final evaluation outcomes for each individual evaluation. An evaluation scale used in a questionnaire requires that an institutional set of professional standards be developed. Table 5.3 gives an indication of the different Likert-type evaluation scales used during the pilot studies and the full implementation of the student evaluation questionnaire.

Table 5.3: Evaluation scales used during the pilot and full implementation phases

Phase	Likert-type evaluation scale used
Pre-pilot and full pilot phase	1: Always 2: Usually 3: Seldom 4: Never 5: Not applicable
Full implementation phase	1: Almost never 2: Sometimes 3: Frequently 4: Almost always

The pilot project revealed that a 5-point Likert scale, with the inclusion of a "not applicable" indicator, can provide a kind of "escape" to students who do not want to make a definite evaluation choice. In the light of this, the 4-point scale, as prescribed by Arreola (2000), was introduced to academic staff. The academic staff accepted this scale, in view of the fact that students would be "forced" to make a definite choice.

The following standards-based faculty evaluation scale, as prescribed by Arreola (2000), communicates the evaluation outcomes for each individual evaluation.

- Exemplary performance – representing 4 on the evaluation scale

This rating is given to those lecturers who, during the rating period, consistently exceeded the institution's standards of professional performance. Lecturers receiving this rating represent the highest levels of professional academic performance within the institution, making significant contributions to their schools and academic field, as well as to society as a whole.

- Professional-level performance – representing 3 on the evaluation scale

This rating is given to those lecturers who, during the rating period, consistently met the institution's standards of professional performance. The lecturers receiving this rating constitute those good and valued professionals on whom the continued successful achievement of the institution's mission, goals and objectives depends.

- Improvement required – representing 2 on the evaluation scale

This rating is given to those lecturers who, during the rating period, did not consistently meet the institution's standards of professional performance. This rating must be given with 1) specific feedback as to which standards of professional performance were not met, 2) suggestions for improvement, and 3) a written commitment to assisting the individual in accessing the resources required for improvement. Improvement in performance is required within the next evaluation period.

- Unprofessional – representing 1 on the evaluation scale

This rating is given to those lecturers who, during the rating period, did not meet the institution's standards of professional performance. This rating represents performance that is not acceptable and/or is inconsistent with the conditions for continued employment with the institution.

5.4 INPUTS DURING THE PILOT PHASE

During the pilot phase of the student evaluations, valuable information was obtained from students. Students provided specific feedback on what they would prefer/like to see during their learning experience, identified gaps in the learning process, and even made recommendations regarding how these gaps could be addressed. Their suggestions included the following:

- Greater focus should be placed on the implementation of resource-based learning practices, including problem-based learning opportunities and more flexible learning methodologies such as the utilisation of the Internet.

- The relationship between a specific module in relation to the whole programme/qualification should be explained in the learning guides.

- Module learning outcomes should be explained at the beginning of each presentation.

- The proficiency in English and communication skills of lecturers should be upgraded.

- Greater emphasis should be placed on practical work – there should be a balance between theory and practice.

- Regular feedback sessions on assignments and/or tests should immediately be implemente
- More group work and discussions in class should be planned and implemented.

In an attempt to address some of these gaps, the following training and development initiatives were identified and addressed: the presentation of capacity-building seminars and conferences to orientate academic staff in the implementation of resource-based teaching and learning methodologies; workshops to train academic staff in the compilation of study guides, and the development and presentation of an English course to update the proficiency and communication skills of lecturers.

The open-ended questions provided the most valuable feedback. Students were requested to give an opinion on the following questions: suggestions for improving the module content and the teaching practices of the lecturer; their experience of outcomes-based education; and any other general comments. The following input was received from the students:

- Students should be provided with more practical exercises, where applicable. Visits to industry or government departments should be planned.
- The peer (student) assessment practices should be implemented as part of the continuous evaluation process.
- Guest speakers from the industry should regularly address students on subject specific issues.
- Students are of the opinion that the attendance of classes during test weeks is not productive.

The researcher is of the opinion that the above-mentioned examples of student comments on teaching performance and module quality are an indication of their striving for quality teaching and learning practices. However, student evaluations did not provide the whole picture of teaching and learning

quality, and it is therefore the responsibility of academic staff to triangulate and validate the findings from student evaluations against peer evaluation and self-evaluation outcomes.

5.5 TRIANGULATING STUDENT EVALUATION

It is a worldwide principle that student evaluation practices should not be the only yardstick used to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of teaching and learning in higher education institutions. The CUT also acknowledged this, and therefore decided to implement peer evaluation and self-evaluation systems as part of the evaluation process. The purpose of this decision is to triangulate and validate the findings from student evaluations against peer evaluation and self-evaluation outcomes. Examples of peer evaluation and self-evaluation instruments used by the researcher at the CUT are attached as Appendices P and Q.

The purpose of peer evaluation of teaching at the CUT is to augment student evaluations by focusing more on scholarly content and competence than on teaching style and delivery, and it is used as an instrument to improve and maintain the quality and excellence of teaching. During the CUT peer evaluation process, the following criteria are used to evaluate a lecturer's teaching performance: how the lecturer introduces the lecture; the presentation, facilitation, development and discovery of new knowledge; the rounding-off phase of the lecture; the utilisation of time, and the lecturer's professional conduct, performance and appearance in class.

The CUT's Self-evaluation of Teaching and Module Content questionnaire contains almost the same questions on teaching and module content as the Student Evaluation questionnaire. This procedure enables lecturers to compare their own evaluation outcomes to those of their students, as well as their peers. It is remarkable that the majority of lecturer self-evaluation outcomes are remarkably lower compared to those of their students. On the other hand, peer evaluation outcomes are higher in comparison with lecturer self-evaluation outcomes.

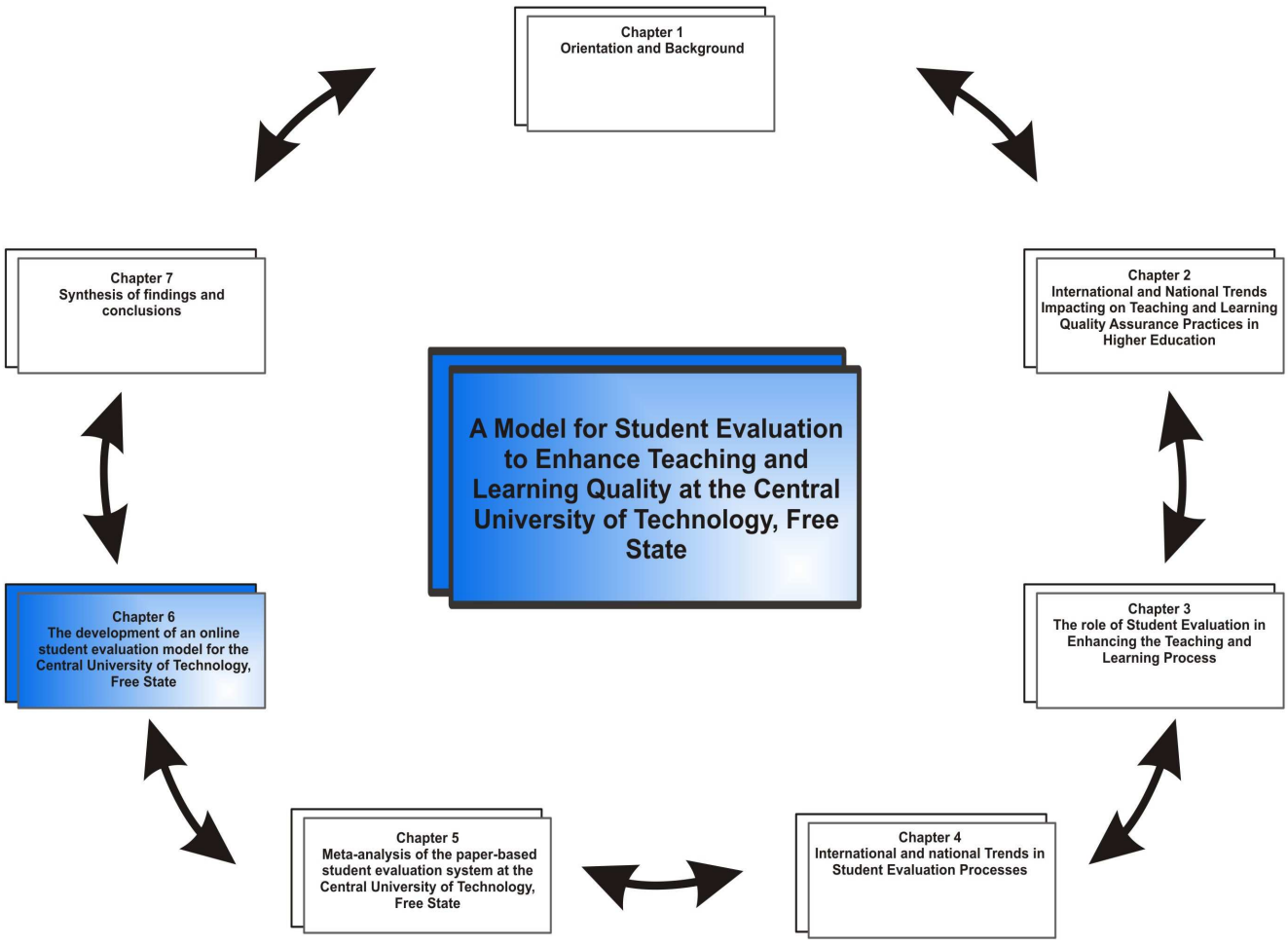
Obviously, the paper-based student evaluation, self-evaluation and peer evaluation practices are labour-intensive exercises and, although they provide almost 360-degree feedback to the lecturer, the lack of sustainability of this approach made the researcher aware of its limitations. These limitations include the lack of human resources at the Centre for Teaching and Learning, the time-consuming process of evaluating data and providing feedback to lecturers and students, and cost implications with regard to the duplication of paper-based questionnaires.

It was evident that, being a University of Technology, the institution should seek to implement a more technology-driven approach that could advance the student evaluation process. Subsequently, the researcher therefore began to explore the possibilities for the implementation of an online student evaluation system at the CUT (see Chapter 6).

5.6 CONCLUSION

The introduction of a paper-based student evaluation system, augmented by peer evaluation and self-evaluation, at the CUT did not take place overnight – it took almost five years to develop and refine the system in preparation for implementation. However, the fact that the development of the system took place through consultation and was based on action learning principles contributed towards academics and students taking ownership of the system. The experience gained and lessons learnt during the planning, implementation and evaluation of the paper-based system had an enormous influence on the development of the online student evaluation system.

CHAPTER 6


Chapter 1
Orientation and Background
Chapter 2
International and National Trends Impacting on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Practices in Higher Education
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International and national Trends in Student Evaluation Processes
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CHAPTER 6
THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ONLINE STUDENT EVALUATION MODEL FOR THE CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, FREE STATE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The introduction of the Internet and the World Wide Web has encouraged higher education institutions to redesign their teaching and learning practices to include the use of online technologies. This has, inter alia, been driven by a number of factors, including the rapidly increasing amount of information available on the web, the need to increase the flexibility of teaching and learning to meet the needs of a more diverse student population and the desire to ensure that students are exposed to information technology skills as part of their educational experience (Cummings & Ballantyne, 1999).

Hess (2005) is of the opinion that an innovative electronic approach towards education, where students may not even know their lecturers, will result in new teaching and module evaluation methodologies. She adds that role-players such as accreditation agencies and professional bodies may suggest new approaches to programme evaluation that stress learning outcomes, continuous programme improvement and overall instructional accountability in higher education.

In this chapter, the researcher looks at the rationale behind the implementation of an online student evaluation system, traditional paper-based evaluations versus online student evaluation surveys, the outcomes of recently conducted studies on online surveys in the USA and Australia, the current paper-based evaluation system at the CUT, the advantages of online student evaluation practices, and the challenges associated with online student evaluation surveys.

6.2 RATIONALE BEHIND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ONLINE STUDENT EVALUATION SYSTEM

Conducting paper-based student evaluations of teaching and module content on a regular basis can be a cumbersome task, especially in medium- and large-sized higher education institutions. The result may be that too much time passes between the administration of questionnaires in class and the reporting of results. This may constrain the ability of academic staff to make well-timed revisions of their teaching strategies or to use the data effectively for personnel administration purposes. The ability to capture raw survey data online offers clear advantages over current student evaluation practices (Kelly & Marsh, 1999).

Evan & Miller (1969) were the first researchers in the USA to compare online surveys with paper-based surveys and their research indicates that online surveys provoke more honest and objective responses. Erdman *et al.,* (1983), Kiesler & Sproull (1986) and Martin & Nagao (1989) also found that students who used online feedback systems left fewer blank items and gave feedback that was more accurate. Laubsch (2006) argues that although there may be many issues with and concerns over the use of online student evaluation systems, sufficient information is available to confirm the value and validity of such systems.

Goodman & Campbell (1999) clearly show that although administrative support for the effective management of an online evaluation system is indispensable, such a system has a number of advantages compared to a paper-based evaluation system. These advantages include, but are not limited to, less use of class time for questionnaire administration, faster data processing, and the ability to get in-depth qualitative feedback. Costs associated with the traditional paper-based surveys are many, for example, printing of questionnaires, administration and distribution and collection of questionnaires in class, analysis of quantitative questionnaire data, typing of open-ended student responses, and the compilation and delivering of feedback reports to academic staff (Dommeyer *et al*., 2004).

Given the popularity of electronic education and the accessibility of the World Wide Web, it may be instructive to compare traditional paper-based surveys with online evaluation surveys, and to look at examples of existing international online systems.

6.2.1 Traditional paper-based surveys versus online student evaluation surveys

During the 1990s, researchers in higher education focused their studies on the validity and reliability of mail and e-mail technologies as student survey instruments (Heflich & Rice, 1999). In the meantime, substantial efforts have also been made in American and Australian higher education institutions to compare the effectiveness of paper-based surveys with that of online surveys.

Published research studies have found that the results of paper-based surveys do not differ significantly from that of online student evaluation surveys (Handwerk *et al.,* 2000; and Matz, 1999). Demographic differences, however, have been found in comparing respondents to non-respondents of online surveys (Underwood *et al.,* 2000). Virtually every university in America and Australia regularly conducts student evaluations of teaching and module/programme content. The majority of these evaluations are conducted by means of paper-based exercises in a classroom setting. The results of these evaluations are used to make decisions on personnel, and consequently they generate controversy among academic staff. While most of these research studies have focused on the psychometric properties of the reliability and validity of the questions or appropriate usage of the results, some studies have concluded that there are major concerns over the way in which evaluation data is collected (Franklin & Theall, 1989).

The results of recently conducted research on paper-based surveys versus online student evaluation surveys are therefore of great importance for this study. Two recently conducted studies are excellent examples in this regard. These studies, conducted in the USA and Australia, are discussed below.

6.2.1.1 *Study 1: University of Kentucky College of Pharmacy – United States of America*

The information in this section was obtained from an article by Anderson, Cain and Bird, published in the American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education, 69(1), in 2005.

Based on the findings of an extensive literature review and informal surveys of programmes used by other colleges and schools of pharmacy, the University of Kentucky College of Pharmacy (UKCOP) began the development of an online evaluation system. Prior to the study, the UKCOP used a paper-based evaluation system administered by one person across all academic units at the college. These teaching and programme content evaluations have been the subject of a number of discussions at faculty and curriculum committee meetings over the last few years. Academic staff members have expressed concern about the time that passes before they receive feedback from the evaluations. The time required to process the large number of questionnaires and the need to type students' handwritten comments obtained from the open-ended questions to maintain confidentiality have caused delays of up to four months in reporting the results to faculty members. This process made any timely formative feedback impossible – information that would have enabled academic staff to improve the effectiveness of their teaching (Anderson,*et al.*, 2005).

In August 2003, the curriculum committee asked the College's Office of Education Innovation (OEI) to investigate the implementation of an online evaluation system. The reasons were as follows: student feedback would be analysed automatically; faculty members would receive feedback, including comments, in a more timely fashion; students could complete the evaluations as early as possible, especially for those classes in which they only see the lecturer for a few weeks; students would have time to make more thoughtful comments; and the data would be available electronically. The OEI reviewed the literature, examined a variety of online software, and contacted other

schools and colleges of pharmacy to learn what survey methods they employ (Anderson *et al.,* 2005).

A pilot study, using the standard university-wide questionnaire, was conducted at the UKCOP to compare online surveys with traditional paper-based evaluations. The pilot involved the same course, in two separate classes, in the first, second and third year of the pharmacy curriculum and the course was evaluated by using the traditional paper-based questionnaire as well as the newly developed online questionnaire. Both questionnaires used a 21-item Likert scale survey that contained the existing standard questions. Blackboard course management software was used to pilot the online questionnaires, since the university provided and supported it and the students were already familiar with it (Anderson *et al.,* 2005).

A survey was conducted to determine student satisfaction with the online evaluations. Students in general preferred the online evaluation format over the traditional paper-based format, and believed that the online questionnaire allowed them to provide more effective and more constructive feedback than the paper format. The pilot study allowed college management to establish the following four criteria for conducting effective and efficient online student evaluations: a simple format for the creation and editing of evaluations; student online access to evaluations that protect their anonymity; a mechanism for sending automatic e-mail reminders; and good statistical reporting (Anderson *et al.,* 2005).

As a measure to ensure that response rates remain high, it was decided that the completion of online evaluation questionnaires would be mandatory for all programmes. This requirement was included in syllabi and indicated that non-completion of an evaluation questionnaire would result in a grade of incompleteness for the course. To fulfil this requirement, students were given the option either to complete or not to complete the evaluation when they logged into the first screen of each online evaluation. If they chose not to complete the evaluation, they were automatically linked to a screen where they were asked to provide a brief reason for this choice. Students electing

this option were not penalised. Results of the 2004 first semester evaluations indicated that an average of 8% of the students in each class elected not to complete the online questionnaires. They stated that time was a factor, although they were given seven days to complete each evaluation and were sent two reminders during this period (Anderson *et al.,* 2005).

A number of valuable lessons were learned at the UKCOP during the pilot study. It appears that online evaluations provide a more effective way of gathering constructive feedback than traditional paper-based methods and that students can complete the surveys in a more efficient manner. The majority of students preferred not to use class time for evaluations and they indicated that their comments were more thoughtful and purposeful when made online and outside of the class situation. Since lecturers have direct access to final reports, they can evaluate student comments while they are still relevant and make timely, constructive adjustments to their teaching methods and course content (Anderson *et al.,* 2005).

6.2.1.2 *Study 2: Murdock University – Australia*

The information in this section was obtained from a paper presented by Christine Ballantyne at the Australasian Evaluation Society 2004 International Conference held in Adelaide, Australia, from 13-15 October 2004.

In the first 2003 semester, Murdock University, Sydney, Australia, instituted a comprehensive Student Satisfaction Survey. The purpose of the survey was to put in place a process that would collect information on the overall student experience at the university. The survey sought information on course issues, such as the options available for students with different learning styles, the helpfulness of staff and the amount of encouragement students receive to take responsibility of their own learning. Students were asked to rate their satisfaction with each service on campus and to indicate how important that service was to them. The university adopted a policy of electronic transmission as the mode of communication and all students were provided with a student e-mail address. Students who did not wish or were unable to

use electronic means of communication were required to make a special request to use paper communication. In this context, the practice of initiating a survey online and then providing non-electronic respondents with paper-based questionnaires were, according to the researcher, a well thought out decision and an indication of how important the communication link between students and university authorities is.

This mixed-mode approach has been used at Murdock University a number of times and the Student Satisfaction Survey has provided a large cohort of students, which allowed a comparison of the paper-based and online evaluation approaches. The survey population included all students enrolled at local campuses, and did not include offshore and postgraduate students. Students were initially informed of the survey by an e-mail message directing them to the online questionnaire. Those who did not submit their questionnaire online within two weeks were sent a paper-based questionnaire. In addition, these students were provided with the online questionnaire. A further paper reminder was sent out three weeks later. The survey population consisted of 9044 students and 4626 responses were received, giving a response rate of 51%. Sixty-three percent of the responses were received online.

When Murdock University first started using online surveys in 1998, three criteria were required before deciding whether the population was suitable for an online survey. These were: level of access of participants to information technology; lowest level of computer literacy of participants; and level of acceptance by participants of undertaking online tasks. The study indicated that male students, younger students, full-time students, and students with overseas relatives were more likely to respond online. The open-ended questions of the questionnaire were kept to a minimum and students were asked to comment on three questions. The percentage of respondents making comments in this survey was smaller in the online group, but when measured in words per comment, characters per comment and lines per comment, the online comments were more prolific.

The author of the paper concluded that despite the increased use of the World Wide Web and electronic communication, differences between paper-based surveys and online surveys remain, which would make the decision to move to online-only surveys somewhat premature. Mixed-mode surveys are therefore the preferred option, combining the cost savings of online surveys with the extensive coverage of a paper-based backup.

The author of the paper is of the opinion that as more and more everyday tasks are undertaken electronically, online surveys will becomes the most acceptable way to respond. She foresees that paper-based surveys will ultimately be replaced by online surveys, but exactly when this will happen is impossible to predict.

6.2.2 Using online student evaluations to improve teaching

Academic staff teaching at the CUT are appointed with the expectation that (eventually) they will be effective lecturers. The systematic evaluation of their teaching practices by students is a logical extension of this expectation, since, just as students need feedback to correct their learning errors, academics also need feedback to improve their teaching practices.

The researcher envisages that an online evaluation system would allow students to complete electronic questionnaires anywhere and anytime without the time constraints of in-class surveys. The responses would be easily analysed, summarised and displayed in tables or graphs, and lecturers would not struggle to decode the sometimes illegible handwriting of students in qualitative responses. Currently, qualitative student responses at the CUT are transcribed from paper-based questionnaires and entered into a database, and could, in large classes, delay the reporting process enormously. Online data collection and reporting will also ensure the airing of student opinions, which is the first step to make certain that lecturers listen to those opinions and use them to improve the quality of their teaching practices. Most importantly, the interval between data collection and data feedback would be

drastically shortened. This implies that corrections to teaching practices and module content would receive immediate attention.

The manner in which student evaluation surveys is administered is a very important factor in the evaluation process. Chang (2004) conducted a comparative study of paper-based and online student evaluation systems and concluded that online evaluations can be successfully administered where the student body is fairly computer literate and familiar with accessing the campus computer network. His study provides strong evidence that the validity and reliability of student evaluations are not dependent on the type of survey used, whether it be a paper-based evaluation or an online survey. This is consistent with the results of a study done by Layne *et al.,* (1999).

Another advantage of an online system is that evaluation information could be made available to those students participating in the evaluation process. The current procedure for administering paper-based questionnaires in class, data analysis and the submission of an evaluation report to the staff member concerned and his/her superiors at the CUT, takes an average of four to six weeks.

6.2.3 Formative evaluation practices

Evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and learning practices is a prerequisite for enhancing educational quality. Evaluation feedback also impacts on the professional satisfaction and self-image of academic staff and establishes a climate which communicates an institution's commitment to quality teaching and learning practices (Hoyt & Pallett, 1999).

Formative student evaluation of teaching practices is undoubtedly extremely important as it gives academic staff opportunities to improve their teaching skills and curricula content. The advantage of an online formative student evaluation system is that the necessary corrective actions can be taken in a more timely manner than in the case of paper-based evaluations. Kaynama & Keesling (2000) developed an online evaluation technique called "assessment

quality circle" to gather information from students on their reactions to a web-based marketing course. The evaluation technique revealed several important pieces of information the developers needed for design revisions. They reported that the integrative evaluation programme facilitated continuous improvement in the instructional delivery and learning process.

In a similar project, Oliver & Sautter (2005) explored the use of a new online technique for improving the formative value of the student evaluation process at the New Mexico State University. They used the WebCT learner management system (LMS) and departmental administrative assistants' course sites for each discipline area to be evaluated. The designers named each WebCT course site in such a way as to ensure that students recognise the purpose and related content of each site, e.g. a course titled "Department of Marketing Class Evaluations" contained surveys for all marketing classes taught during a specific term. All students taking one or more classes in a given discipline were granted access to the relevant site. The site administrator used the "Selective Release" function in the design of each class's student evaluation of teaching survey to ensure that only the students enrolled in a particular class have access to the survey instrument.

Students were free to complete the evaluation instrument in their own time, taking as much time as they needed and completing it at any location that provided access to the internet. The survey function in WebCT guaranteed that no names were tied to survey reporting. In this specific case study, the site designers managed the opening and closing of the release period for the evaluations and distributed summaries of the survey results to the relevant academic staff members. The WebCT survey tool automatically calculated descriptive statistics for all close-ended questions as well as the submitted written comments on all open-ended questions. Most importantly, the feedback was immediately available to academic staff, who could use it to amend/adjust their courses.

An online student evaluation system provides a greater guarantee of anonymity to respondents, and this contributes to the increase in response rates for online submissions. The evaluation procedure allows designers to customise course surveys according to the lecturer's individual needs, which leads to the improvement of formative feedback strategies. Centra (1993) argues that the formative value of student evaluation of teaching is predicated on the extent to which the evaluation process provides new information to the lecturer for teaching and curriculum improvement purposes.

The use of web-based surveys is increasing and academic staff members worldwide have being using online surveys to evaluate or research their teaching practices for some time. An example in this regard is the Deakin University in Australia, which recognised the potential savings in time and expense they would gain by replacing their existing paper-based questionnaire system with an online evaluation method. The Drexel University, Philadelphia, USA, replaced the traditional voluntary paper-based evaluation approach with an online process to meet new programme accreditation standards. The aim of the online system is to develop a formal student evaluation system to be conducted regularly and uniformly across the university, resulting in a continuous quality teaching and learning improvement process. Columbia University in the City of New York implemented an online evaluation system for midterm and end-of-term evaluations to improve assessment, feedback, and actions taken to advance the quality of academic programmes offered (McGourty *et al*., 2002).

The researcher maintains that an online formative student evaluation system would provide all role-players at the CUT with timely feedback, thus enabling continuous curriculum improvement practices. However, the challenges arising from implementing and using online evaluation surveys should not be underestimated.

6.3 CHALLENGES OF USING ONLINE STUDENT EVALUATION SURVEYS

An investigation into the specific challenges associated with the implementation of online student evaluation is of utmost importance to ensure effective and efficient survey outcomes. In study 1 (see 6.2.1.1), the author of the paper mentioned, *inter alia*, that it is a challenge to provide timely formative student evaluation feedback to academic staff to enable them to improve the effectiveness of their teaching. In study 2 (see 6.2.1.2), the author referred, *inter alia,* to the problem of establishing effective two-way communication between university authorities and students.

Research conducted on online student evaluation indicates that a diversity of views exist as to the benefits and limitations thereof. The benefits include the following: more objective student responses on open-ended questions; timely submission of feedback reports to academic staff and students; time and cost savings on the duplication and distribution of paper-based questionnaires; the freedom students have to complete the evaluation in their own chosen time; and the anonymity of online evaluations that allows students to offer more thoughtful remarks than the traditional paper-based method (Donovan *et al.,* 2006).

Online evaluations, however, have limitations too, such as the following: the requirement that students must have access to computers; the belief of lecturers who are not proficient in computer technology or knowledgeable about online surveys that online evaluations are less accurate than traditional paper-based surveys; the belief that quantitative scores are lower; the belief that negative comments are more frequent; and perhaps the most commonly voiced negative complaint against online student evaluations – low response rates. While the criteria for and processes of online implementation vary across institutions, low response rates remain a major concern.

6.3.1 Response rates

Hmieleski & Champagne (2000) argue that the low response rates of 30% to 40% for web-based surveys appear to be the most important reason why paper-based systems are being maintained.

They also point to evidence that students who are forced to complete paper-based questionnaires in class, simply encircle an entire column labelled “agree” or “satisfied”, and leaving the open-ended question section blank before rushing out of class. In this case, even student attendance of 100% would result in subjective survey outcomes. Tucker *et al.* (2003) add that the success of an online evaluation system relies heavily on the support of academic staff and the extent to which students participate in and accept ownership of the whole evaluation process.

The College of Business and Economics at California State University, Northridge, USA, did a study involving 16 lecturers to see how the method of evaluation and the presence of online incentives affect response rates. Each lecturer taught two sections of the same undergraduate business course and the same form was used for both methods. Lecturers were randomly assigned to one of four groups using different incentives: 0.25% grade incentive for completion of an online evaluation (four courses); in-class demonstration of how to do online evaluation (two courses); if two-thirds of the class submitted online evaluations, the students would receive their final grades early (two courses); and a control group of eight courses. The online evaluations averaged a 43% response rate and the paper-based evaluations averaged 75%, while the control group averaged a response rate of 29%. In individual cases, the incentives had the following effect: response rates of 87% for grade incentives; response rates of 53% for the demonstration; and response rates of 51% for early final grades. Although the allocation of incentives may not be feasible or ethical for some lecturers, the case study outcomes at California State University illustrated its potential.

In his dissertation for his Master's degree in Computer Science, Walters (2005) shows that response rates are greatly improved by sending e-mail reminders to students, putting up appropriate campus posters, the appearance of relevant articles in campus newspapers and lecturers motivating their students to complete online questionnaires. He also mentions that response rates are higher when time is scheduled for students to complete online evaluations in computer laboratories.

Although the students involved in this study were concerned that their evaluation responses would not be confidential because of the login methods, these concerns were usually alleviated when they received a guarantee that their responses would not be used to identify them and would not have any effect on their grading.

While the above-mentioned research suggests that online student evaluations can be successful, low response rates remain a reality. In the light of this problem, many higher education institutions are using a variety of strategies to increase online response rates, with some degree of success. Rewards may be achieved by tangible incentives and respondents' perceived value; reduced risk may be achieved through privacy and confidentiality and the commitment of respondents; and trust may be achieved by personal and/or institutional credibility (Anderson & Kanuka, 2002).

The following strategies could possibly increase students' participation in online evaluations.

- Access to learning material is not allowed until the online questionnaire is completed and submitted.

- Online module evaluation forms an integral, compulsory component of the module content and has to be completed to pass the module.

- Online evaluation forms a core educational component of continuous assessment practices, with students learning to critically appraise their own and others' work.

6.3.2 Other challenges

Some of the other challenges relate to the need to create a culture that embraces online student evaluation of teaching and module content. According to McGourty *et al.* (2002), changes in culture affect both students and academic staff, and staff can be instrumental in increasing response rates by demonstrating commitment to the evaluation process. Even something as simple as promoting the online evaluation process in class, provides added incentives for students to complete and submit questionnaires online.

In addition, there are a host of logistical and organisational challenges to meet when online evaluations are implemented. Harrington & Reasons (2005) point to the *dedication* and *cooperation* required to coordinate the work, to establish and to test the evaluation items, to determine access permissions to the evaluation data, to assign responsibility for process details, to upload module enrolment data into the survey software, to provide technical support to students and academic staff, and to collect and report the findings. Other student rating issues identified by Ballantyne (2000) include lack of effective reporting mechanisms to inform students about module and programme changes, compliance with open-records legislation, access rights, reliance on technology and anonymity of student responses.

The researcher argues that the ultimate challenge of online evaluations is to convince students that their active participation would enhance the quality of teaching and learning practices. Since the administrative and data analysis processes will be simplified as time goes by, it is inevitable that online evaluations will eventually match and replace the traditional paper-based system. For this reason, the researcher believes that the CUT should investigate the possible implementation an online student evaluation system.

6.4 ONLINE STUDENT EVALUATION PILOT STUDY

After studying the literature on online student evaluation the researcher came to the conclusion that the use of web-based surveys for the execution of student evaluation of teaching and module content would not change the aims of existing paper-based evaluation processes, namely the improvement of teaching practices and the quality enhancement of programme content.

However, the factors motivating research on Web-based student evaluation systems for implementation at the CUT are grounded in the research conducted during the pre-pilot and full pilot phases and the recommendations made to the Senate during October 2002 (see 5.2.4), and the elimination of the existing paper-based student evaluation weaknesses, namely: the lengthy administrative procedure of paper-based evaluations, and the slow feedback process to lecturers and students on evaluation outcomes. The researcher is of the opinion that the availability of online learning material will cause a gradual reduction in face-to-face teaching, with less direct contact between lecturer and student. The worldwide rapid growth in online learning and the progress made at the CUT in developing a minimum web presence in all programmes, might result in online student evaluation practices becoming an essential quality enhancement tool at the CUT.

Ballantyne (2003) reconfirms this by stating that the development of the Internet over the past ten years, in particular, has brought new challenges for education. As universities move towards more flexible modes of teaching, students have access to education whenever and wherever they choose. This creates new challenges for the evaluation of teaching and module content, as the “captive audience” is lost when students are not required to attend classes. A responsible argument would be that, if the learning environment is to be truly flexible, the student evaluation process should be flexible too. In an ideal educational situation, students should have the opportunity to respond to paper-based questionnaires in class, or in their own time online. However, the practical realities in the South African educational context, with its limited

technological and human resources, force higher education institutions to make some well-considered choices.

In the light of the above, and in recognition of the literature on Web-based evaluation systems (see 6.2) and international and national trends in online evaluation systems (see 6.2.1), an online student evaluation pilot study was conducted at the CUT during March 2007. The pilot study was conducted in the School of Information and Communication Technology, and students in the Web Management II and III modules were targeted. The aim of the pilot study was to:

- Identify possible system faults.
- Test system reliability.
- Monitor system performance.
- Determine the general acceptability of an online evaluation system.
- Determine the students' satisfaction with the completion of the online questionnaire.

This specific school was chosen for the pilot study for a number of reasons, namely: the students in the school have a high level of computer literacy; the school was one of the first at the CUT to introduce learning material on WebCT, and sufficient computer facilities were available for students to conduct the evaluations in a controlled environment in class. In addition, the two lecturers concerned were enthusiastic about adapting the traditional paper-based student survey to convert it into an online system, as they foresee a more timely feedback process with online survey outcomes. In their study, Goodman & Campbell (1999) point out the importance of academic staff support for an online evaluation system. Their research shows that

response rates were high in the first semester of implementation, when academic staff actively promoted the online system. However, response rates dropped when staff support waned in the second semester.

It is important to mention that students participated in the CUT online pilot study on a voluntary basis, and that no incentives were provided to increase the participation rate. Despite this, a 78% response rate (representing 101 student respondents) was achieved.

6.4.1 Online pilot student evaluation questionnaire

The questionnaire (see Table 6.1), was used during the online student evaluation pilot study and the primary aim of the project was to test the functionality of the online student evaluation system. However, the pilot questionnaire was compiled in such a manner that the evaluation outcomes could be used for the enhancement of the teaching performances and module content of the lecturers concerned.

The online pilot questionnaire differed from the current paper-based one, as the primary aim was to evaluate the system for possible faults, as well as to determine its reliability, performance, acceptability and operational satisfaction to lecturers and students. Apart from some personal information, where students were requested to submit the lecturer's name, the module code, their gender, the language in which the module is presented and the scheduled lectures attended, quantitative and qualitative questions were included in the questionnaire. The questionnaire is divided into specific components where students are requested to evaluate a module according to categories of content quality (five questions), teaching and learning practices applied (six questions), quality of teaching materials (three questions), and assessment practices (eight questions). Eight questions are included to rate the teaching performance of the lecturer. These questions are evaluated by Likert scale indicators, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, and participants can also select a "not applicable" indicator if required. The qualitative evaluation consists of three open-ended questions, where students are

requested to submit some general remarks to indicate what they consider the most valuable aspects of the module, as well as which aspects of the module can be improved upon. The last question referred to the fact that the institution has moved from the traditional paper-based lecturer/module evaluation to an online, electronic format, and students were requested to indicate (on a scale of 1 to 10) their overall impression with the new format (see Table 6.2).

Table 6.1: Online pilot student evaluation questionnaire

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
LECTURER / MODULE EVALUATION

Dear Student

The Lecturer / Module evaluation survey is part of the University's efforts to ensure that it provides an education of the highest quality. We greatly appreciate your co-operation in completing this questionnaire.

PLEASE NOTE: THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF YOUR FEEDBACK IS ASSURED

Please answer all the questions

1. Lecturer name:
- ☐ *M.Venter*
- ☐ *S. Viljoen*
- ☐ *Other*

2. Module:
- ☐ *WEB 20*
- ☐ *WEB 30*

3. Your gender:
- ☐ *Male*
- ☐ *Female*

4. Language in which the module was presented:
- ☐ *English*
- ☐ *Afrikaans*

5. Your student number:

6. Appoximately how many of the scheduled lectures did you attend?
- ☐ *< 25%*
- ☐ *25% - 50%*
- ☐ *51% - 75%*
- ☐ *> 75%*

Please evaluate the following statements by indicating to what level you agree or disagree with the following statements:
Mark N / A if the statement is not applicable to the lecturer or module, or if you do not know.

7. CONTENT:

	N/A	*Strongly Disagree*	*Disagree*	*Neutral*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*
7.1. The content of the module was well planned	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.2. The content provided the opportunity to develop skills (eg. reading, writing, numerical skills, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.3. There was a link between module content and learning outcomes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.4. The content of this module linked up well with other modules in my degree / diploma (programme)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.5. The content of the module was understandable	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. TEACHING AND LEARNING

	N/A	*Strongly disagree*	*Disagree*	*Neutral*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*
8.1. The teaching activities helped me to achieve the stated learning outcomes for this module	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.2. The lecturer used teaching aids (audio - visual, e.g. overhead projector, Power Point presentations) effectively	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.3. The lecturer encouraged student participation in class	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.4. Opportunities were created for the application of theory	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.5. The time to achieve learning outcomes was sufficient	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.6. The module developed my knowledge of the discipline	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. TEACHING MATERIALS

	N/A	*Strongly Disagree*	*Disagree*	*Neutral*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*
9.1. The textbook / handouts was a valuable aid to learning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.2. The learner guide was a valuable aid to learning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.3. Additional teaching materials (articles, CD's, internet, etc) were valuable aids to learning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

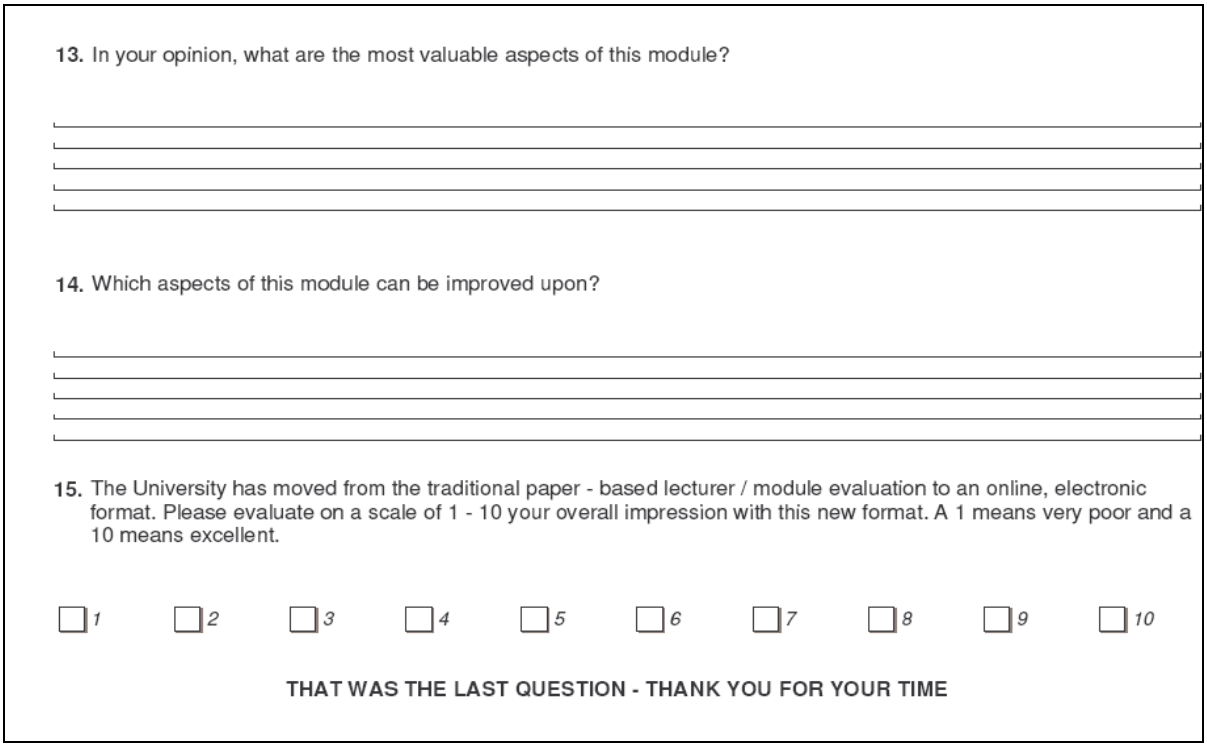
10. ASSESSMENT:

	N/A	*Strongly Disagree*	*Disagree*	*Neutral*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*
10.1. Assessment tasks were clear	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.2. Assessment tasks were linked to module outcomes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.3. The assessment criteria were clear	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.4. The assessment criteria were applied according to stated guidelines	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.5. The feedback on assessment helped me to improve shortcomings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.6. The lecturer returned marked work within a reasonable time frame (eg. two weeks)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.7. Procedures to discuss the outcomes of the assessment were in place	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.8. Continuous assessment was applied	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

11. THE LECTURER:

	N/A	*Strongly Disagree*	*Disagree*	*Neutral*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*
11.1. The lecturer knows the course content	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.2. The lecturer was prepared for the contact session(s)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.3. The lecturer explained things clearly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.4. The lecturer / learning facilitator effectively facilitated the teaching - learning process (was creative in teaching and learning methods)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.5. The lecturer was available to provide guidance during consultation hours	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.6. The lecturer displayed a willingness to listen to students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.7. The lecturer treats students with respect irrespective of race or gender	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.8. The lecturer was punctual (eg. for lectures)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12. General remarks



13. In your opinion, what are the most valuable aspects of this module?

14. Which aspects of this module can be improved upon?

15. The University has moved from the traditional paper - based lecturer / module evaluation to an online, electronic format. Please evaluate on a scale of 1 - 10 your overall impression with this new format. A 1 means very poor and a 10 means excellent.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

THAT WAS THE LAST QUESTION - THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

The researcher made the following observations during the online pilot study:

- Online student evaluation of teaching and module content is dependent on adequate access to computer facilities – at home or on the campus. Although no technical or organisational problems were experienced during the pilot study, it should be remembered that the surveys were conducted in a computer laboratory with adequate computer access for students. Limited access to computer facilities may impede online student evaluations.

- Online evaluation dates should be scheduled in student learner guides to remind students of their responsibility to participate in the quality enhancement process.

- Test dates should be kept in mind when online evaluations are scheduled. Evaluations and tests should preferably not be scheduled on the same day, as students may become nervous during the evaluation process.

- Senior students could be trained to conduct online evaluations in class.

- Online evaluations are conducted within a shorter period of time than paper-based questionnaires. This implies that less teaching time is utilised for evaluation purposes. The pilot online surveys took 15 minutes on average to submit, while the paper-based surveys normally took 45 minutes to complete.

6.4.2 Online student evaluation data report

Student inputs from the online pilot questionnaire could be processed, analysed and a data report (see Table 6.2) submitted to the lecturers who participated in the pilot project within a period of 24 hours.

The pilot study demonstrated that the possibility exists to submit timely feedback reports on teaching performance and module quality to academic staff within a highly acceptable time period. This will ultimately assist lecturing staff to address possible shortcomings in their teaching practices and/or module content within a short period of time. Lecturers could evaluate student comments (see Table 6.2 – question 12 for general remarks; question 13 for comments on the most valuable aspects of the module; and question 14 on aspects of the module which can be improved) while they are still relevant and make timely, constructive adjustments to their teaching methods and module content.

Because 97% of respondents indicated that lectures are presented in English, it is believed that the majority of students prefer English as the medium of communication in class. The researcher recommends that future online questionnaires should be presented in both Afrikaans and English to comply with the CUT language policy and procedure. The outcome of question 6 is of particular importance for this study, because it revealed that 63% of respondents attended more than 75% of the scheduled lectures. If the

response rates (63%) of this specific module (Web Management II) are compared with some international rates (43% - see 6.3.1), it would still be acceptable for reporting purposes.

The adaptability of the proposed online student evaluation system provides that questionnaires and reports can be compiled and submitted in various ways to accommodate the preferences of lecturing staff.

Table 6.2: Example of an online data analysis report

GENDER

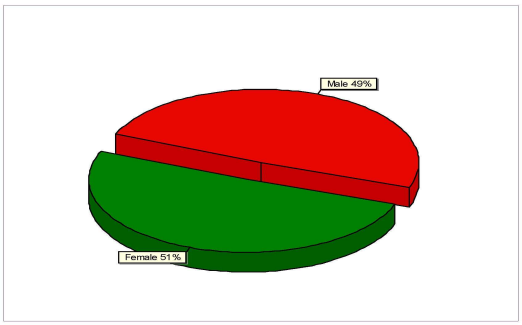
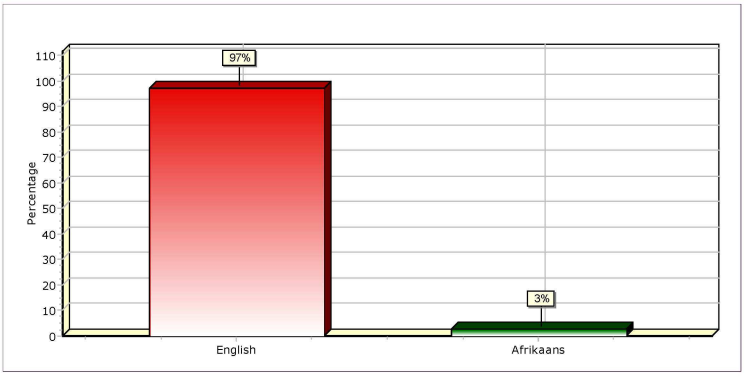


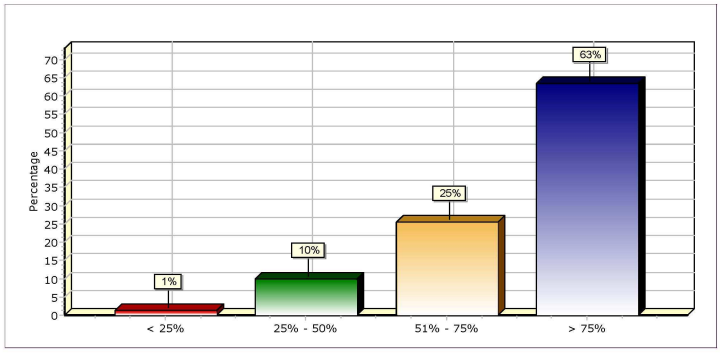
CHART: GENDER (Q3)

MODULE LANGAUGE



GRAPH: MODULE LANGUAGE (Q4)

NUMBER OF SCHEDULED LECTURES ATTENDED



GRAPH: SCHEDULED LECTURES ATTENDED (Q6)

EVALUATION OF CONTENT

Content	Content and outcome Frequency	Content and outcome Percentage	Content understandable Frequency	Content understandable Percentage	Linked with other modules Frequency	Linked with other modules Percentage	Provided skills Frequency	Provided skills Percentage	The content of the module Frequency	The content of the module Percentage
N/A	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%	1	1%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Neutral	12	17%	13	18%	6	8%	9	13%	5	7%
Agree	30	42%	29	41%	23	32%	31	44%	36	51%
Strongly Agree	25	35%	24	34%	38	54%	27	38%	27	38%
Total	68	96	68	96	68	96	68	96	68	96

TABLE: CONTENT (Q7)

EVALUATION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and learning	Achieve outcomes Frequency	Achieve outcomes Percentage	Audio - Visual Frequency	Audio - Visual Percentage	Developed knowledge Frequency	Developed knowledge Percentage	Opportunities created Frequency	Opportunities created Percentage	Student participation Frequency	Student participation Percentage	Time sufficient Frequency	Time sufficient Percentage
N/A	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
Disagree	2	3%	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%	1	1%	5	7%
Neutral	9	13%	3	4%	6	8%	15	21%	5	7%	21	30%
Agree	40	56%	20	28%	44	62%	35	49%	22	31%	29	41%
Strongly Agree	17	24%	44	62%	16	23%	18	25%	40	56%	12	17%
Total	68	96	68	96	68	96	68	96	68	96	68	96

TABLE:TEACHING AND LEARNING (Q8)

EVALUATION OF TEACHING MATERIALS

Teaching materials	Material valuable Frequency	Material valuable Percentage	Study guide valuable Frequency	Study guide valuable Percentage	Textbook valuable Frequency	Textbook valuable Percentage
N/A	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	4	6%	0	0%	1	1%
Disagree	5	7%	2	3%	0	0%
Neutral	17	24%	10	14%	5	7%
Agree	14	20%	30	42%	27	38%
Strongly Agree	27	38%	26	37%	35	49%
Total	68	96	68	96	68	96

TABLE: TEACHING MATERIALS (Q9)

EVALUATION OF ASSESSMENT

Assessment	Applied to guidelines Frequency	Applied to guidelines Percentage	Assessment applied Frequency	Assessment applied Percentage	Criteria clear Frequency	Criteria clear Percentage	Improved shortcomings Frequency	Improved shortcomings Percentage	Outcomes linked Frequency	Outcomes linked Percentage	Procedures in place Frequency	Procedures in place Percentage	Returned marked work Frequency	Returned marked work Percentage	Tasks clear Frequency	Tasks clear Percentage
N/A	0	0%	3	4%	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%	1	1%	2	3%	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	3%	0	0%	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%	3	4%	0	0%	1	1%	1	1%	0	0%	3	4%	0	0%
Neutral	8	11%	14	20%	11	15%	15	21%	5	7%	11	15%	8	11%	10	14%
Agree	39	55%	37	52%	43	61%	37	52%	39	55%	37	52%	21	30%	38	54%
Strongly Agree	24	34%	14	20%	17	24%	17	24%	26	37%	20	28%	37	52%	23	32%
Total	71	100	71	100	71	100	71	100	71	100	71	100	71	100	71	100

TABLE: ASSESSMENT (Q10)

EVALUATION OF LECTURER

The lecturer	Effective facilitation Frequency	Effective facilitation Percentage	Explained clearly Frequency	Explained clearly Percentage	Issues of race Frequency	Issues of race Percentage	Lecturer available Frequency	Lecturer available Percentage	Lecturer knows content Frequency	Lecturer knows content Percentage	Lecturer listened Frequency	Lecturer listened Percentage	Lecturer prepared Frequency	Lecturer prepared Percentage	Lecturer punctual Frequency	Lecturer punctual Percentage
N/A	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	3	4%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%	1	1%	1	1%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	3%
Neutral	9	13%	4	6%	1	1%	8	11%	1	1%	8	11%	1	1%	2	3%
Agree	36	51%	28	39%	19	27%	28	39%	23	32%	25	35%	30	42%	24	34%
Strongly Agree	25	35%	38	54%	50	70%	30	42%	47	66%	38	54%	40	56%	43	61%
Total	71	100	71	100	71	100	71	100	71	100	71	100	71	100	71	100

TABLE: LECTURER (Q11)

GENERAL REMARKS (UNEDITED)

General remarks
none
She's a good a lecture and i injoy her sessions.
Everyting is in place and working well for now. Lecturer is very efficient and effective, she is one for the future!!!
Mrs.Venter is a good lecturer
The course provides good information and learning
She is a great lecturer, she must keep it up! Everything is well in control,no problems.
I am happy with the subject so far and it helps me in achieving my goal of becoming a web developer. Let them BigUp their Good works.Continue with that excellence.
I couldn't have chosen a better lecturer to teach this subject. From my side I see Ms Venter as the best person to lecturer this subjet and besides she has a very good understanding with the students. She understands us. the students need more time to finish the projects, because they work to meet the deadline of the projects at the end of the day they don't understand the work done on the projects.they just work to finish the project on time. The lecture is very active.She is very reliable when it comes to what tells you. The assasments is everything in the textbook, nothing you cant see it was not in there. The lecture session is excellent the,student have a chance to participate in class.
She is so a good lecturer because she is ever giving us time when we dont have learning materials to buy them.
thanx 4 the good work u guys are doing keep it up!hope u improve on the web-ct issue.all the best In total the lecturer is well prepared to offer classes on this respective module and gives me to complete whatever type of assignment i'm given for the respective module even if it is not my practical class so genrally it is an honour to have such a lecturer especially for this kind of module
The lecturer does everything in her power to help us if we need help.
Ms Venter is one of the best lucters in the I.t department, she presents the course in the most comprehensive manner. everything is excellent except for that one i mentioned in a next page
EVERYTHING THAT THE LECTURE WAS SUPPORSE TO DO SHE DID. The lecturer is very useful and is always willing to assist students.She explains everything very clear.
The lecture is agood person like anyone. I am happy for this intiative, i think both parties will benefit, thats if treated fairly.
This subject is a very interesting one, but it lacks the enthusiasm in class. Mrs Meiring is exceptionaly competent in what she is doing in the subject in question(web managment II)
She must keep up the good work. RELY ENJOY THE SUBJECT AND ALSO THE LECTURE IS GOOD no
I find the subject very interesting even though the books are way too expensive
Having a lecturer like Mrs Venter helps every to concentrAte in class,with her small question and Answer exercise after every sessions makes every one concentrate during class. The lecture i think knows her work very well,she also available for her student all the time. No comment!! good the lecture makes the subject enjoyable and intresting... My lecturer is friendly and a hardworker, wishing best of luck to all of her students. When it come to the lecturer i will say if she will stop to spoon feed us and let us to be more independent and concerning the module if a new language could be added that will enhance our design skills. if things could be done in a more practical in the sence that when you finish with the subject, you know axactly what it is tha you will be doing in real life.maybe visit workplace where the type of subject you are doing is applied and you get to see what it is that you are studyind towards, for motivation purpose.
Lecturer has been remarkable thus far. Examplary and a superb leader. I believe that classroom interaction can definately be improved

MOST VALUABLE ASPECTS OF MODULE (UNEDITED)

Q13

Obtain the newest teqniques in web design

Learning New Things and Applications

after completing it, i will be able to create a web site

The most valuable aspects of this module is that it carries more or less the same contents as Internet Programming Two.

Creating Web Sites
Creating web pages
The theory and practical part
everything is accurate
the most valuable ascpect is that we as student we learn new things that we did not know about developers of the web pages and site
Being able to create a web site.
The most valuable aspects of this module are teaching techniques etc.
Being able to creat web sites knowing the required guildelines for it to work
web principles, style sheets and coding HTML.
To emprove the works of the lecture

Learning knew things e.g how do web city created,how it is linked.

to learn how to design the web sites,
the tables and links that you must create, the dreamweaver8 software is a very nice software
It is that the student gain skills and knowlegde on how to design good websites
This course is teaching people many thiks that will experence in the future
The ability to be able to create a web page about anything with the greatest of ease is what i found valuable.
Is to know how to create the most successful and working web page and to become the web master.
designing good site
It tearches me for the future ahead
teaching me how to develop a readable and presentable web site,think of the users
The power of macromedia dreamweaver 8, its helping guidance in conjunction with the textbooks and the effiency of the lecturer in this field
Html

Both the practical and the theory part
That as a student I will be able to
create my own web site at the end
of this module.
we have to get the software for this module, the problem we have is that we are not able to practice this at our places

---

Learning how to create Web sites, and being able to create my own web site at the end.
the creation of web sites and the better understanding of the internet and how it works
none
We learn much about Internet and Web pages.

I think they prepere us to be a good Web developer
Understanding the basic of web designand learning the code in order to do so aswell as learing how do work with macromedia 8
Web Site Management
The most valueble aspects of the module is to learn about web and the languages used to design web pages.
The basics of creating a web page.
It seems to concentrate on what we will use in future in our careers, which good
How to create a best web page.
Improvement
MODULES ARE CLEAR AND STRAIGHT FORWARD
practicals
teach you how to be a succeable web designer ,teach you how to link pages to web site.
The most value aspects of this module is way the survey was conducted
I find both theory and practical to be very valuable; in terms of applying what I've learned in the corporate world.
creation of a web site and application of rules to that site so that it works perfect
To be equiped with creating effective sites
creating links and the way that linkks can communicate with one another.
The chapters 1-4 i think they make more sense than the other chapters i have studied so far
Being a good Website designer
Everything exceot the below Statement.
Creating consistent layout
To be able to design web sites in a scale of good and best web pages.
HTML which teaches us students how to create our own website and knowing the principles to follow when busy with a website.
no comment.
This is the very good module that helps us design Web Sites, everything about it I like.
Designing web pages using XHTML, HTML, CSS and usage of the different types of links.
Multimedia features on web pages and so on.
Exciting and informative styles of designing like using tables, rowspans, colspans and so on!

ASPECTS OF MODULE WHICH CAN BE IMPROVED UPON (UNEDITED)

Q14

Practical

N/A

None
None
Everything is fine
everything is well planned.thank u
They need no improvment
There should be more practical and less theory.
Up to so far i think everything is fine.
There is too much theory to read and study in a short period of time, i mean 7 chapters that a lot for a single term.
Style sheets and more of HTML.
Keep on creating new ways to emprove the learning criteria.

Just an extra time for our practicals becouse we dont have dreamweaver 8 pls inorder for me/us to pass.
This module is fine but the only thing is that it is too much work but not too much to study.

the theory
The module is great ,the practical and theory corresponds

the lecture must not say that we have done some things in INP.
all are explained very well
for now Nothing should be Improved
so far so good,i really apreciate it.i`ve learnt so much this couple of weeks
if there can be at least two practical exercises per week other than that everything is ok
Casscade style sheet

Theory, more especially CCS and Tables.
The theory
the theory can be more understandable.
there must be a software in the library too
I don't think there is any because everything is clear.
I do not have any complaints

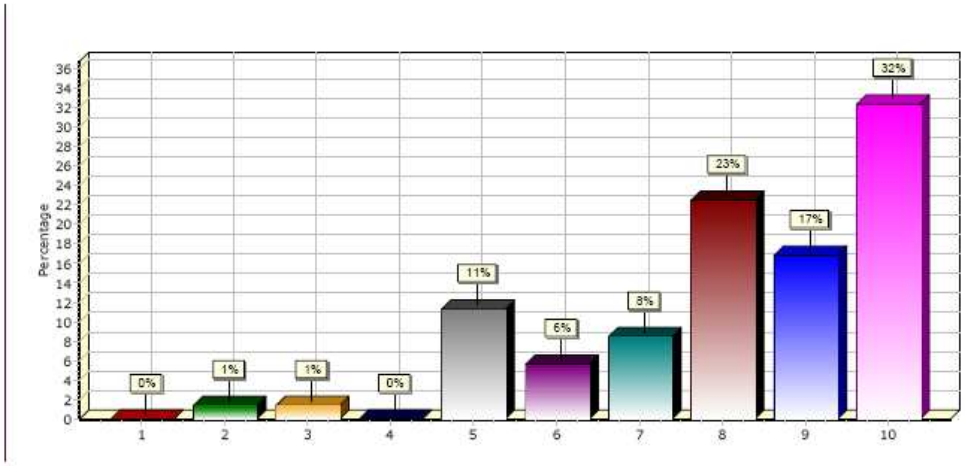
none
How to pop up pictures.

I think everything is still fine at the moment.

So far, so good, we don't have problems with Mrs Vernter.
more time for practical.

N/A
The hands-on projects
For me it is fine.
SOME OF THE MODULES E.G 3
theory
none
The way the lectures give task and how to
none what so ever. i think it's quiet up to date
I dont think there is any other aspects that should be improved
there should be more practicals
none up to so far
The chapters 5 - 6 have too much practical and there is no material for us to practice on it . like exercises to practice on.
non
Provides enough material like Instalation Soft-ware(Dreamweaver Disk)
from my prospective everything seems to be upto standard, so far...
Every aspect has a good percentage, and lecturers are well formed for the module. It is the student duty to focus, attend classes and release energy to learn(study).
Maybe adding a new language that will have an impact and help to deal with the future as the future web designer!!!!!!
practical test after every session/chapter for preparaion of main tests
This module is very good and the University should make sure that the program of Dreamweaver 8 is available in all labs in our IT department, because now we as student are straggling to enter in room 225, so it is appropriate that all the labs has this software.
Multi media colaboration.
Interactive exercises which help students be more creative with desinning web pages and sites

EVALUATION OF ELECTRONIC FORMAT OUT OF 10



GRAPH: EVALUATION OF ELECTRONIC FORMAT (Q15)

The knowledge gained through a literature study and discussions with international and national authorities, as well as the insight gained from the online pilot project, enabled the researcher to develop a model for student evaluation of teaching and module content at the CUT.

6.5 ONLINE STUDENT EVALUATION MODEL

The primary purpose of this study was to research and explore the most applicable student evaluation model within the CUT's context (see 1.5). The advantages of the model, compared with the traditional paper-based model, should include a reduction in the class time required for questionnaire administration, faster data processing, the ability to get more timely, in-depth qualitative feedback, cost-effectiveness, and the timely submission of evaluation reports to lecturers. Some specific challenges for the implementation of an online student evaluation of teaching and module content system at the CUT are also discussed.

6.5.1 Specific challenges for online student evaluations

Despite the increased use of the Internet and the emphasis on electronic communication, about 70% of first-year students enrolling at the CUT are technologically underdeveloped, while some students are computer illiterate.

For many students, their very first encounter with a computer takes place when they attend the information literacy classes presented by staff of the Library and Information Centre. Due to a shortage of computer facilities at the CUT and the fact that the implementation of electronic learning is still in its implementation phase, lecturers are not well-equipped in the utilisation of WebCT as an electronic teaching mode. The fact that CUT lecturers are positive about the student evaluation system (see 1.7), that the system is acceptable to students, that it is part and parcel of the teaching and learning culture and is supported by professional staff development practices, will surely contribute towards addressing the challenges mentioned above.

6.5.2 Factors that may influence the online evaluation system

In order to ensure that the outcomes of the proposed online student evaluation system are as valid and reliable as those obtained from the paper-based evaluation system at the CUT, the following matters need to be taken into consideration.

6.5.2.1 *Confidentiality of student evaluation responses*

The experience with the paper-based evaluation system at the CUT proved that the confidentiality of student evaluation responses is a primary student concern. The current paper-based evaluation systems at the CUT easily preserve anonymity by instructing students not to submit their names or student numbers on the questionnaire.

6.5.2.2 *Authenticity of the evaluation system*

To portray an accurate picture of students' perceptions of teaching performance or module quality, evaluation data must not be contaminated by submissions from anyone other than students registered for a specific module. This is of particular concern with respect to summative evaluations, as the outcomes may contribute to the staff appraisal process. The proposed online evaluation system at the CUT ensures that only those students who are registered for a specific module will be able to complete the online questionnaire.

6.5.2.3 *Representation – one student, one vote*

The proposed online evaluation system guarantees that students will only be allowed to submit one evaluation per lecturer and module for a specific period of time. This feature is secured by the system design, where students are requested to use their student number and pin code to log onto WebCT and the specific module to be evaluated. After the questionnaire has been completed and submitted, it cannot be resubmitted.

6.5.2.4 *Data security*

As data security is of great concern for all the stakeholders in any evaluation process, raw data should be made known only to restricted and authorised groups of people such as the director of the school, the programme head and the lecturer concerned. Within the proposed online evaluation system at the CUT, the evaluation data (evaluation report) is secured in a specific data processing unit (external evaluation consultant) and sent to the Centre for Teaching and Learning (internal unit) for distribution to the stakeholders concerned.

6.5.2.5 *Access to the evaluation measuring instrument*

In order to achieve acceptable response rates and to provide every student with the opportunity to participate in the evaluation process, all students should have access to the evaluation measuring instrument. The proposed CUT online evaluation process should be able to provide sufficient access, since it will be made available to students over an extended but well-defined period, from any network access point – at home or on the campus. The evaluation dates could also be specified in learner guides to remind students in this regard.

6.5.2.6 *Questionnaire design*

Experience with the paper-based student evaluation process at the CUT indicates that the questionnaire in use is too extensive. Due to the fact that a number of design issues surface in online questionnaires, where users – according to Kelly & Marsh (1999) – suffer more readily from eye strain and other forms of physiological stress, a new online questionnaire was designed for use during the pilot study. The researcher acknowledges the need for the format and content of the questionnaire to be adapted from time to time to suit the specific needs of academic staff.

6.6 ADMINISTRATION OF THE ONLINE EVALUATION SYSTEM

Eighty percent of the students who participated in the CUT online student evaluation pilot study (see Table 6.2) are in favour of online evaluations in comparison with the traditional paper-based questionnaires, although there are still issues to be resolved for successful implementation, such as the availability of computer facilities.

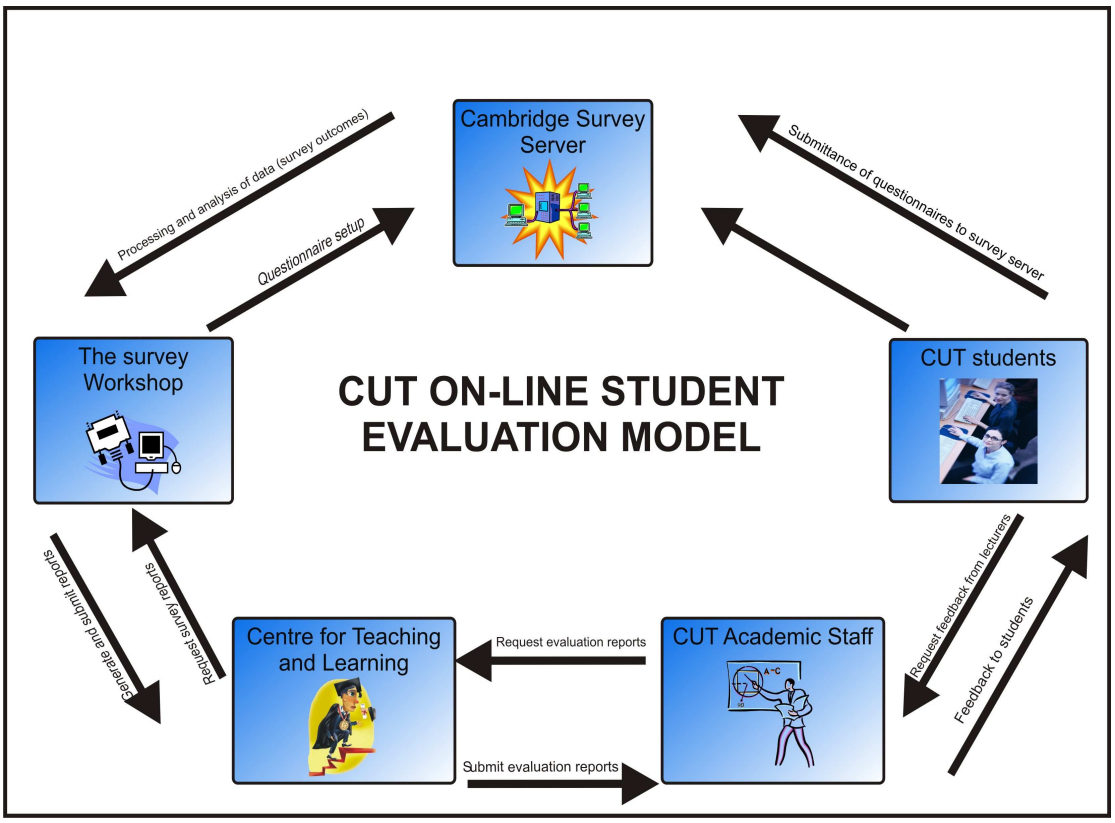
Although the pilot study was mainly constructed by non-academic staff, it is foreseeable that academic staff will become more involved in the execution of the online system in future. It could become their responsibility to administer the process in faculties by scheduling the proposed evaluation dates in learning guides, arranging for an appropriate computer laboratory where evaluations will be conducted, and appointing senior students to act as mentors during the online evaluation process. To reduce the risks involved in the entire switch from paper-based to online evaluations, the new system can be implemented in phases, i.e. online evaluations can initially be done with all first-year students, and then gradually expanded to second-, third- and fourth-year students as the process develops.

The online student evaluation system at the CUT will make use of the Cambridge Survey Server (CSS) as database management system to conduct the student surveys on the CUT campus. The Survey Workshop, a local survey organisation that processed, analysed and compiled the student evaluation reports on the basis of the paper-based questionnaires (see1.6.5), will act as mediator between the CSS and the Centre for Teaching and Learning. The services of the Survey Workshop are essential during online evaluations, as the software programme to download processed and analysed data from the CSS server is expensive, and a license is required in this regard. The advantage of the Cambridge system lies in its ability to store data on an online server, which can then be accessed by registered users (such as the Survey Workshop), enabling them to download data to their own local database or server, where the data can be managed according to their own needs. A position of trust has been established between the Centre for

Teaching and Learning at the CUT and the Survey Workshop since 2001. The availability of survey data analysts in Bloemfontein who have professional knowledge of the higher education environment, is non-existent.

The flow diagram below provides a simplified explanation of all the role players/components in die proposed CUT online student evaluation process.

Flow diagram 6.1: CUT online student evaluation model



The whole survey process consists of a number of successive actions with different role players or components of the evaluation process. The specific role of each role player/component is as follows:

6.6.1 Cambridge Survey Server

The appropriate student evaluation questionnaire, constructed according to the needs and specifications of the CUT academic staff, is uploaded on the Cambridge Survey Server by the local survey agent. The questionnaire can now be accessed by CUT students on the appropriate date and at the time determined by a specific lecturer, as agreed with the CUT Centre for Teaching and Learning. After the students have completed and submitted the online questionnaires via WebCT in a classroom, the evaluation data are processed and analysed for reporting purposes.

6.6.2 The Survey Workshop

The Survey Workshop is the mediator between the CSS and the Centre for Teaching and Learning at the CUT, and is responsible for submitting an evaluation questionnaire on the CSS for completion by CUT students. After the students have completed and submitted their questionnaires via the CUT WebCT server and the CSS has processed and analysed the survey data, the Survey Workshop will be able to download all the survey outcomes to their own local server for the compilation of the feedback reports.

6.6.3 Centre for Teaching and Learning

The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL), headed by the researcher, at the CUT is responsible for the internal management of the student evaluation system. This includes the planning, implementation, evaluation and feedback processes of the entire student evaluation system. The role of the CTL in the online student evaluation process is to ensure that the feedback reports are a true reflection of student inputs during the evaluation process. The CTL should also use evaluation reports to determine possible training and development needs and communicate these to programme heads and directors of schools. Appropriate developmental initiatives should then be scheduled for academic staff.

6.6.4 CUT academic staff

The CUT academic staff are the end consumers in the student evaluation cycle and are responsible for the interpretation of the evaluation reports submitted to them by the CTL, for possible improvement of their teaching performance and the enhancement of module quality. They are also responsible for communicating the evaluation outcomes to their students and discussing possible actions, where applicable, in this regard.

6.6.5 CUT students

The students are the end users in the teaching and learning process, and fulfil a watchdog function in the whole evaluation process. They can express an opinion on their perception of what is necessary during the teaching and learning process and can report on their experience.

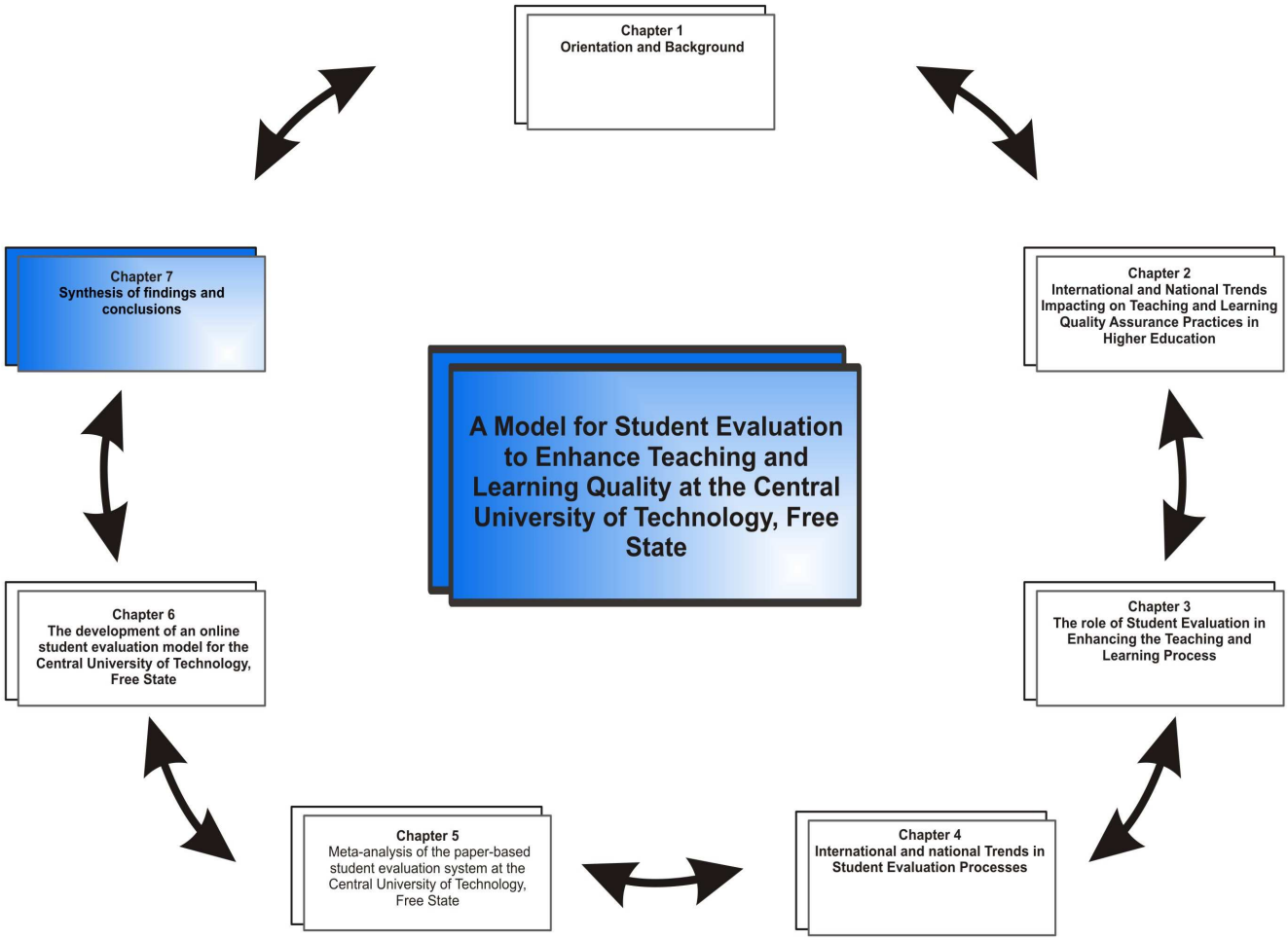
The flexibility and compatibility of the CSS software allows for the immediate change and/or creation of new questionnaires, and could be presented to respondents in a quick and accurate way. Like all effective evaluation systems, the proposed CUT online system will be constantly monitored and adjusted to adapt to the dynamic nature of higher education. The online pilot study exposed a number of strengths and weaknesses related both to academic staff readiness for and response to the evaluation process, as well as administrative concerns over its implementation. Examples of the strengths are: cost savings in the reproduction of paper-based questionnaires; timely processing and analysis of survey data; timely feedback to academic staff and students on evaluation outcomes; timely adjustments in teaching performance and module content quality, and the possibility for lecturers to select their own evaluation questions for inclusion in a questionnaire. The weaknesses are of a more administrative nature, and include the lack of adequate computer facilities at the CUT and a possible lower response rate in comparison with the traditional paper-based questionnaires.

If the aims of the pilot study (see 6.4) are evaluated, the proposed online system is technically successful. The ability of the new proposed system to deliver timely and accurate evaluation data, as reflected in the pilot feedback report (see 6.2), is an example in this regard. While there are obvious infrastructural challenges to address, the proposed system has proved to be fast, reliable and more timely than the paper-based system it was designed to replace.

6.7 CONCLUSION

The goal of developing an online model for the evaluation of teaching and module content at the CUT is founded in the immediate availability of survey data for analysis and reporting purposes, timely feedback to all the role players, and more extensive qualitative responses from students to open-ended questions. The knowledge gained through the literature study, discussions with international and national authorities and benchmarking against existing online student evaluation models, assisted the researcher to develop an online model for student evaluation at the CUT. The researcher is of the opinion that the success of the pilot project is an indication that online surveys could ultimately allow students to complete electronic questionnaires anywhere and anytime, without the time constraints of in-class surveys.

CHAPTER 7


Chapter 1
Orientation and Background
Chapter 2
International and National Trends Impacting on Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Practices in Higher Education
Chapter 3
The role of Student Evaluation in Enhancing the Teaching and Learning Process
Chapter 4
International and national Trends in Student Evaluation Processes
Chapter 5
Meta-analysis of the paper-based student evaluation system at the Central University of Technology, Free State
Chapter 6
The development of an online student evaluation model for the Central University of Technology, Free State
Chapter 7
Synthesis of findings and conclusions
A Model for Student Evaluation to Enhance Teaching and Learning Quality at the Central University of Technology, Free State

CHAPTER 7
SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of this study was to develop a model for the student evaluation of teaching and module content to enhance teaching and learning quality at the Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT) (see 1.5). This model could lead to the timely feedback and reporting of student evaluation outcomes obtained from formative evaluations for the improvement of teaching effectiveness, and from summative evaluations for consideration during staff promotion or appraisal decisions. The model could also be used for other research purposes at the CUT where the administration of questionnaires forms part of such a study or project.

With this in mind, the following research questions and objectives were formulated for the study (see 1.4.1 and 1.5).

7.1.1 Research questions

- What are the international and national higher education driving forces for a renewed interest in the enhancement of quality in teaching and learning practices? (Chapter 2).

- What is known about student evaluation of teaching and module content practices at some international and national higher education institutions? (Chapter 3).

- What student evaluation measuring instruments exist both internationally and nationally, and how are they constructed, administered and implemented? (Chapter 4).

- What type of student evaluation measuring instrument would be the most appropriate within the CUT's context? (Chapter 6).

7.1.2 Objectives

Subsequently, the following objectives were formulated for this study:

- Exploring the international and national higher education driving forces for a renewed interest in the enhancement of quality in teaching and learning practices (Chapter 2, 5 and 6).

- Investigating student evaluation of teaching and module content, both internationally and nationally (Chapter 3).

- Determining what student evaluation measuring instruments exist internationally and nationally and how they are constructed, administered and implemented (Chapter 4).

- Researching, exploring and developing the most appropriate and applicable model for student evaluation of teaching and module content within the CUT's context (Chapters 5 and 6).

The main findings of the study are accordingly discussed.

7.2 MAIN FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

The main findings of the research, which included a thorough literature study, involving the current and relevant literature on the performance indicators of quality enhancement in higher education, student-centred perspectives, the students as "customers", the student evaluation processes at international and national higher education institutions, and online student evaluation systems were discussed. Visits to higher education institutions in Australia and New Zealand provided qualitative information obtained during personal interviews.

Telephonic conversations with and visits to South African higher education institutions, as well as comments from CUT academic staff, provided valuable information.

These main findings will be elaborated on in the following manner:

7.2.1 Main findings of the literature study

The main findings of the literature study in Chapters 2, 3 and 4 will be discussed for greater clarification.

7.2.1.1 *The findings of Chapter 2*

The aim of this chapter was to provide a literature overview of international and national trends impacting on quality assurance in higher education teaching and learning practices, in order to provide the background for the study. Trends as experienced in some European countries, the United States of America, East Asia and the Pacific, as well as South Africa, were discussed.

It was evident from the literature study that the 1980's can be viewed as the era during which new forms of quality assurance emerged in higher education institutions. By the new millennium almost all higher education institutions worldwide were experiencing new forms of academic quality regulation monitored by external quality assurance agencies (see 2.1 and 2.2). The integration of quality assurance principles into higher education has become a European-wide issue governed by five key developments, namely: the Magna Charta Universitatum in 1988; the meeting of European ministers at the Sorbonne University during 1998; the Bologna Declaration in 1999; the Salamanca Convention of European higher education institutions in 2001; and the Prague Communiqué of the European Ministers of 2001 (see 2.2.1).

The accreditation of higher education institutional programmes is the yardstick for quality assurance in the USA. Accreditation agencies operate in an environment in which two of the major levels of government have significant authority. The state governments have primary responsibility for all levels of education, while the federal government is the main source of funds for student grants as well as public funds for research (see 2.2.2). The literature reveals that 13 quality assurance bodies are operating in East Asia and the Pacific with three modes of quality assurance, namely assessment, auditing and accreditation (see 2.2.3).

The aforementioned international quality assurance trends also have a direct and major impact on South African higher education institutions, dating back to the first university colleges in 1910 up to the current quality assurance regulations of the HEQC. The new political dispensation in South Africa since 1994 has given rise to national policies impacting on the enhancement of teaching and learning practices, as well as an approach to enhancing quality assurance in higher education institutions, initiated by the HEQC (see 2.2.4.3).

Some of the factors influencing the South African higher education landscape include globalisation (see 2.4.1); massification and enrolment capping (see 2.4.2); the changing teaching environment (see 2.4.3);educational technology (see 2.4.4);and staff development for open and flexible learning (see 2.4.5). The worldwide transformation of the higher education landscape forces institutions to improve their quality assurance practices in order to compete for the best available students in the global market. An analysis of the international and national trends impacting on quality assurance highlighted the fact that the process of defining, measuring and reconciling the expectations held for effective and efficient teaching and learning practices, is complex. Quality mechanisms such as student evaluation practices should be employed to achieve this.

7.2.1.2 *The findings of Chapter 3*

While Chapter 2 concentrated on the international and national trends impacting on quality assurance in higher education teaching and learning practices, the main purpose of Chapter 3 was to focus more specifically on the student evaluation of teaching and module content processes. In the context of this study, and as confirmed by Kwan (2001), the rationale underpinning the introduction of an institution-wide student evaluation system will presumably lead to the enhancement of teaching and learning quality.

The study revealed that the completion of student evaluation questionnaires regarding teaching performance and module effectiveness is a common practice in higher education institutions worldwide. Some of the reasons for the implementation of a student evaluation system are discussed (see 3.2), and summarised by Kember *et al.* (2002) as a process where formative feedback can be used for the improvement of the quality of teaching; they also state that summative ratings from questionnaires are used for personnel administrative purposes, and for managerial decision making purposes. As an example, reference is made to a higher education institution where the improvement of teaching and learning practices receive high priority at national level and academic staff are motivated to be innovative in their teaching and learning practices.

The necessity of integrating the views of students into a regular and continuous cycle of analysis, was outlined in this chapter (see 3.4). Williams (2002) confirms that, to gain support and trust, the student feedback process must be transparent and institutional management must be committed to making resources available to support the whole process. The following types of student satisfaction surveys were described: institutional-level satisfaction surveys (see 3.4.1); programme-level satisfaction surveys (see 3.4.2); and module-level satisfaction surveys (see 3.4.3).

Critical mechanisms for collecting student feedback in higher education institutions that were identified, were as follows (see 3.5.2):

- Student feedback questionnaires (see 3.5.2.1): It is emphasised that the design, development and implementation of a valid and reliable questionnaire is a specialised technical task that requires professional expertise.

- Student focus groups (see 3.5.2.2): Wall (2001) confirms the importance of student focus groups in a paper where the potential contribution of focus groups as a supplementary source of information about quality to teaching and learning practices is discussed.

- Informal discussions between lecturers and students in class (see 3.5.2.3): The fact that informal discussions have distinctive advantages and provide opportunities for exploring teaching- and learning-related issues in depth, was discussed.

- The One-Minute Paper (see 3.5.2.4): The literature consulted revealed that no other classroom evaluation technique has been used more often or by greater numbers of lecturing staff than the One-Minute Paper.

- Electronic communication feedback technologies (see 3.5.2.5): Due to the fact that little is known about how South African students perceive and respond to Web-based surveys, the researcher focused on research conducted at The Chinese University of Hong Kong and the National Survey of Student Engagement in the USA. The research revealed that the mode of response was more or less equal between the paper-based and web-based surveys.

Coughlan (2004), Cashin (1999) & Felder (1992) maintain that over 2000 references by students to research on the evaluation of teaching and module content can be identified in literature. Among the most prominent concerns in the literature is the possibility of potential biases in the student evaluation process. In order to verify these concerns, the reliability and validity of student evaluation systems were discussed (see 3.6). This chapter also reveals the importance of quantitative measuring instruments (see 3.7.1) and qualitative data analysis (see 3.7.2) as different modes of enquiry, or approaches to research. The outcomes of a case study on the shortcomings of the existing performance management system at the CUT were outlined in this chapter. The case study indicated that performance management concerns the gathering of information from a variety of sources in order to make reliable and valid judgements on the work performed by academic staff (see 3.8.1). In order to substantiate the case study findings, the feedback from students as an integral part of the performance management system was discussed (see 3.8.1.1).

Campbell *et al.* (2004) argued that lecturers who are better trained and prepared imply students who obtain better results. Worldwide initiatives at secondary and tertiary institutions indicate that student learning is enhanced if lecturers are developed through professional development programmes (see 3.8.2). The wide range of staff development initiatives identified in the study bears testimony to the complexity and significant role of staff development in higher education institutions.

The study revealed that students became sceptical and sometimes unwilling to participate constructively in the evaluation process if feedback on the outcomes of the evaluations is not provided to them. The importance of the feedback process is highlighted in two case studies (see 3.9). This is confirmed by Watson (2003), who claims that feedback to academic management, lecturing staff and students encourages participation in future research as it demonstrates the value of individual students' responses and the importance of their participation, increases confidence in the outcomes

and value of the research, and encourages the institutional management to explain how they will deal with the shortcomings revealed by the research.

The chapter concluded by highlighting the fact that the implementation of a well-planned and well-structured student evaluation system will presumably lead to the enhancement of teaching and learning practices in higher education institutions.

7.2.1.3 *The findings of Chapter 4*

Given the divergent interests of some stakeholders, as well as changing economic and policy trends, the systems to evaluate teaching and module content tend to develop over time. Firstly, Chapter 4 describes student evaluation systems used in Australia, New Zealand, England, the United States of America and South Africa, and secondly theoretical perspectives on online student evaluation questionnaires and processes.

The main purpose of Chapter 4 was therefore to investigate international and national student evaluation measuring instruments in order to identify best practices for possible application during the development of a CUT model. Since the late 1970's, the Australian Commonwealth Government has promoted a climate of critical self-assessment within the higher education sector, and universities were encouraged to monitor their performances. The Committee for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Australia gives advice on quality assurance issues, conducts independent audits and makes recommendations to the Government.

The long term focus of Australian higher education institutions is to provide evidence of the quality of their teaching and learning practices in order to attract business investment. All Australian universities develop annual quality assurance and improvement plans to monitor and evaluate their effectiveness (see 4.2.1). The South African situation, where the HEQC monitors the higher education quality process (see 4.6), is similar to the Australian self-evaluation process, which includes regular evaluation of student feedback on teaching

and module content. A possible shortcoming in the South African educational system is the implementation of an annual undergraduate course experience questionnaire, directed at all final year students who have completed their studies. The Australian Course Experience Questionnaire is an example in this regard (see 4.2.1.4).

The New Zealand higher education sector as a whole collaborates to ensure the maintenance of quality standards in teaching and learning. The most obvious expression of this collaboration is the New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit, which independently evaluates the universities' commitment to self-evaluation in respect of the maintenance and enhancement of teaching and learning (see 4.3).

Each university in New Zealand has a strong evaluation culture and a variety of measuring instruments such as peer evaluation, self-evaluation and student focus groups, which are used in an effort to ensure that the teaching, courses and programmes are of the highest quality. Although the evaluation systems differ from one another, all evaluation questions are designed to evaluate quality and give rise to ongoing improvement (see 4.3.1 and 4.3.2).

An investigation into the New Zealand student evaluation system, indicates the following CUT shortcomings:

- A lack of sufficient peer-focused, self-focused and student-focused group evaluations.
- Well-developed guidelines for the use and interpretation of student evaluation outcomes.
- Evaluations by postgraduate students.
- Completion of a graduate satisfaction survey by all final-year students.

The three main external role players in the monitoring and evaluation of quality assurance in British tertiary education are the Higher Education Funding Council of England, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, and the Standing Conference of Principles in England. During 2001 a task group was set up to identify the categories of data, information and judgements regarding the quality of teaching and learning that should be available within tertiary institutions in England (see 4.4).

The task group had two objectives, namely to identify good practice by higher education institutions in collecting quantitative and qualitative feedback from students and to make recommendations on the design and implementation of mechanisms for use by individual institutions. Twenty institutions were selected to represent the diversity of the higher education sector in England. It is interesting to note that the task group findings correspond to a great extent with the existing CUT model, namely: the use of qualitative and quantitative evaluation techniques; module-level evaluations; the common complaint about questionnaire fatigue; that data from questionnaires could easily become ritualistic for lecturers and students if feedback is not provided; the costs of collecting, analysing and reporting of paper-based questionnaires; a central unit that administers, processes and analyses the questionnaires; a standardised questionnaire that provides a basis for comparison between schools and faculties, and that feedback should not be used in isolation, but should other feedback mechanisms into account.

The huge territorial distances in the USA, the federal principle of state government and the presence of state and private educational institutions, as well as their high level of independence, result in a complicated system of quality-assured education. Accreditation agencies develop standards and manage the process to determine whether educational institutions and programmes meet certain set standards (see 4.5). Although the implementation of student evaluation practices is widespread in USA higher education, the administration of evaluations may differ. An example in this regard is that, in some cases, student evaluation outcomes were required before academic staff were even considered for promotion, while at other

universities the student evaluation system is optional, or not encouraged at all. At some universities the outcomes of surveys are sold in university bookstores to assist students in the selection of courses, while the outcomes remain strictly confidential at other universities. Student evaluations are the most widely used source of information on teaching and programme content effectiveness, and in some universities the only source of information in this regard.

The South African higher education quality assurance mechanisms show clear concurrence with the Australian and New Zealand higher education quality assurance systems, while the similarity between their student evaluation systems is also evident. After an investigation of the student evaluation systems of three South African universities (see 4.6.1, 4.6.2 and 4.6.3), the researcher came to the following conclusions:

- Student evaluation systems are managed in a very professional manner.

- Although some student evaluation systems are newly constructed and designed, institutions prefer to conduct paper-based evaluation systems (see 4.6.1).

- The design and composition of the various student evaluation questionnaires at the universities differ to a great extent in comparison with international standards.

- The utilisation of two separate questionnaires for the evaluation of teaching and module content (see 4.6.2).

- Integration of the student evaluation system with other mechanisms (peer evaluation and self-evaluation) for formative and summative evaluation purposes (see 4.6.3), is necessary.

- The implementation of online student evaluation practices (see 4.6.3).

Although all three of the South African universities consulted during this study demonstrate a well-administered student evaluation system, the situation at other national universities may not be as promising. The statutory responsibility of the HEQC to conduct institutional audits (see 2.3.2.1), and the programme accreditation process (see 2.3.2.2), will force higher education institutions to develop and implement student evaluation systems. It is envisaged that this study will provide the necessary guidelines to assist South African higher education institutions in this regard.

The rapidly increasing amount of information available on the World Wide Web has encouraged higher education institutions to redesign their teaching and learning practices to include the use of online technologies. Hess (2005) is of the opinion that this redirection of the educational process will result in new teaching and module evaluation methodologies (see 6.1). The unacceptable length of time between the administration of paper-based questionnaires in class and the reporting of outcomes to lecturers and students, may constrain the ability to make well-timed revisions of teaching strategies. According to Kelly & Marsh (1999), the ability to conduct online student evaluation surveys has clear advantages over traditional paper-based surveys, as it may imply a reduction in the class time required for questionnaire administration, faster data processing, and the ability to obtain more in-depth qualitative feedback (see 6.2).

Although the majority of student evaluation processes in the USA and Australia are conducted by means of paper-based surveys in the classroom, Handwerk *et al.* (2000), and Matz (2000) are of the opinion that the results of paper-based versus online evaluation surveys are not significantly different. The outcomes of two recently conducted studies in the USA and Australia at the University of Kentucky and Murdock University (see 6.2.1.1 - study 1 and 6.2.1.2 - study 2), are cited as examples in this regard. The studies revealed, *inter alia*, that online evaluations provide more effective methods of gathering

constructive feedback, that the majority of students prefer online evaluation practices, and that online evaluations will ultimately replace paper-based evaluation systems.

A report submitted to the CUT Senate on the paper-based student evaluation pilot studies conducted during 2001 and 2002 (see 5.2.4), acknowledged the shortage of human resources at the CUT Centre for Teaching and Learning and reaffirmed the implementation of a teaching portfolio system and a well-structured, timely feedback system for lecturers and students, as well as the necessity of individual lecturer feedback sessions for the determination of training needs, programme evaluation implementation practices, acknowledgement of the performance management system at the CUT, and investigation of the implementation of an online student evaluation system. The goal to develop an online model for the evaluation of teaching and module content at the CUT is founded in the immediate availability of survey data for analysis and reporting purposes, timely feedback to all the role players concerned, and more extensive qualitative responses. Two fundamental advantages in this regard are the employment of online evaluation outcomes for the improvement of teaching quality (see 6.2.2), as well as for formative evaluation practices (see 6.2.3).

Online student evaluation systems may have limitations too, such as requiring students to have access to computers, the fact that lecturers who are not proficient in the use of computers or knowledgeable about online surveys believe that online evaluations are less accurate than paper-based surveys, the belief that quantitative scores are lower and that negative comments are more frequent, as well as low response rates. In the light of this, the challenges of using online student evaluation surveys (see 6.3) are discussed, with the emphasis on low response rates (see 6.3.1), and other problems (see 6.3.2) experienced with online evaluation practices.

7.2.2 Main research findings of the empirical investigation

More than ten years ago, Cameron & Whetten (1996) revealed that a fundamental shift had occurred in higher education literature, and that notions of quality were beginning to replace effectiveness as a central organisational variable in the higher education environment.

This trend also emerged within the South African higher education sector, where the government initiated certain quality assurance initiatives in higher education to enhance teaching and learning practices (see 1.2). Due to the absence of a properly structured student evaluation system at the CUT, and in an attempt to be responsive to the needs for quality assurance, the Executive Committee of the Senate at the CUT initiated a project aimed at the evaluation of teaching and module content, representing the core of this study (see 5.2). The main research findings regarding the development of a model for student evaluation at the CUT will subsequently be discussed.

Input obtained from the various role players during the pre-pilot and full pilot study (see 5.2.3.1), indicated that the student evaluation questionnaire should be professionally designed and easy to complete. Almost all the respondents (see 5.2.3.1) suggested that the use of technical or undefined terms, leading questions, ambiguous or vague and/or complex questions, should be avoided. All role players agreed that the success of the questionnaire would be determined by the extent to which students would perceive it to be user-friendly (see 5.2.3.1). The CUT staff seem to be resistant to questionnaires that are designed without proper consultation, as they feel these would be tailored to fit individual needs. It also became clear that students at the CUT were not accustomed to evaluating their lecturers and commenting on module content in such a structured way. Prior to 2001, student evaluations were conducted on a haphazard manner by the lecturer in the classroom with no assurance regarding the confidentiality of student input, as students were obligated to write their name and student number on the questionnaire. In the light of this, the manner in which questionnaires were administered in classrooms became a very sensitive issue.

Although input on questionnaire content was obtained from various role players during the design phase, and although no official complaints were received, the researcher became aware of the fact that the questionnaire may be too comprehensive. It was therefore concluded that questions and comments regarding learning outcomes (see Table 5.1, section D) and student evaluation of teaching facilities (see Table 5.1, section E) should preferably be excluded from the questionnaire. A comparison with national and international questionnaire design methodologies showed that the main objective should be to focus on teaching performance and module effectiveness.

While the literature reveals that the process of “closing the loop” on evaluation data is of the utmost importance (see 3.9), the researcher experienced the tendency of academic staff at the CUT being less successful in sharing the evaluation outcomes with their students and peers. One of the reasons could be that lecturers are not accustomed to a formal student evaluation process, and/or are hesitant to share possible shortcomings with peers. The student evaluation system at the CUT provided valuable quantitative and qualitative data (see 5.4), and the implementation of peer evaluation and self-evaluation mechanisms triangulate and validate the findings obtained from student evaluations (see 5.5). A major constraint with the paper-based student evaluation system at the CUT, especially during the survey administration process, was the lack of sufficient human resources (see 1.6.5 and 1.6.6). The implementation of an online evaluation system will solve this problem to a great extent.

Critical issues that were identified in a model for student evaluation included the fact that paper-based surveys can become cumbersome in medium- and large-size higher education institutions, as well as the unacceptable time duration that elapses between the administration of questionnaires in class and the reporting of results, and the fact that published research studies have found that the results of paper-based versus online student evaluation surveys are not significantly different. Research conducted regarding online evaluations indicated that various diverse views exist on the benefits and

limitations thereof. The benefits include more objective student responses to open-ended questions; timely submission of feedback reports; time and cost savings on the duplication and distribution of paper-based questionnaires; the fact that students are allowed to complete the evaluation in their own time, and that students prefer the anonymity of online evaluations, which allows them to make more well-considered suggestions than the traditional paper-based method (Donovan *et al.* 2006).

The main findings of the researcher as participant observer will subsequently be discussed.

7.2.2.1 *Participant observation*

The researcher observed a worldwide increasing demand for external quality review processes and an unprecedented focus on the enhancement of teaching and learning practices over the past five years. The necessity of student participation in the quality enhancement process is clear. The study indicated that students can be objective in their observation of teaching effectiveness and module quality, and that timely feedback reports are of the utmost importance. Findings made since 2002 revealed that some of the administrative processes that take place during the implementation of paper-based surveys need to be revised. The researcher envisages that an online student evaluation system will allow students to complete electronic questionnaires anywhere and at any time, without the time constraints and costs of in-class surveys.

7.3 MODEL FOR STUDENT EVALUATION AT THE CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, FREE STATE

As universities move towards more flexible modes of teaching, it could be argued that students should have access to education whenever and wherever they choose. This introduces new challenges for the evaluation of teaching and module content in view of the requirement that, if the learning environment is to be truly flexible, the student evaluation process should be flexible too.

In an ideal educational environment, students should have the opportunity to respond to paper-based questionnaires in class or online in their own time. However, the practical realities in the South African educational context, with its limited technological and human resources, force higher education institutions to make some responsible choices. In the light of this, and in recognition of the literature on Web-based student evaluation systems and international and national trends in online student evaluation processes, an online student evaluation pilot study was conducted at the CUT. The aim of the pilot study was to identify possible online system faults, to test system reliability, to monitor system performance, to determine the general acceptability of an online evaluation system, and to determine the students' satisfaction with the completion of online questionnaires.

The researcher is of the opinion that the aim of the online pilot study was achieved, as demonstrated by the following findings:

- The effective and efficient manner in which the online questionnaire was downloaded by the Survey Workshop on the Cambridge Survey Server (see 6.6).

- The ability of the CUT WebCT system to host the online survey and to transmit the evaluation data to the Cambridge Survey Server.

- The simplicity of the whole evaluation system (see Figure 6.1).

- The fact that no complaints were received from the students during the online evaluation process.

- The fact that a substantially higher number of responses was received for the open-ended questions (see Table 6.2 – responses to questions 12, 13 and 14) than the number normally received for the CUT paper-based student evaluation questionnaire.

- The provision of evaluation reports to the lecturers concerned within a period of 24 hours.

- The fact that the majority of the respondents in the pilot study preferred to evaluate teaching performance and module quality online (see Table 6.2 – question 15).

The researcher believes that the observations (see 6.4.1) made during the online pilot study indicate that numerous challenges may be encountered in the implementation of an online system. The biggest challenge would be the availability of computer facilities where students can complete and submit online questionnaires. If this obstacle could be resolved, online surveys would certainly be an efficient means for collecting student responses. The following recommendations would enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the CUT online student evaluation system:

- The implementation of an online student evaluation system that would provide greater flexibility in questionnaire design in respect of layout and the inclusion of optional course-specific questions.

- The compilation of a database that would allow lecturers to select a set of questions for inclusion in questionnaires to meet their own specific teaching and learning requirements.

- The improvement of response rates through the use of e-mail reminders to students. During the scheduled period of evaluation, the online system should be able to send reminder notices to students who have not yet completed the online questionnaire.

- The online student evaluation process needs to be integrated into a teaching and learning approach that actively and routinely incorporates the use of online resources.

- The gradual phasing in of the online evaluation system through the implementation of pilot studies in each of the three faculties, beginning with, for example, the first-year students.

- The implementation of an incentive system to reward students who complete online questionnaires within the scheduled time. Incentives could include the allocation of a certain percentage to the module marks of such students.

Although the pilot study was limited to responses from two modules, the evaluation outcomes have provided strong evidence that Web-based surveys can enhance the quality of teaching and learning practices. The manner in which the system is managed, will ultimately determine the acceptability thereof.

7.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following aspects indicate the demarcations of this research:

- The target group was limited to students enrolled for formal qualifications at the main campus of the CUT, and excluded students from the Kimberley and Welkom campuses. Postgraduate students were also excluded. The target group is

nonetheless representative of all undergraduate students from the first to fourth year of study.

- The research focused mainly on student evaluation of teaching performance in the class situation, as well as module content. However, drawing on the experience the researcher gained during this period and the literature consulted, the researcher believes that the focus on module content evaluation is perceived as the most effective, as it is the closest to the student experience.

- Other indicators of teaching effectiveness and module quality within a total student learning experience (such as peer evaluation, lecturer self-evaluation, focus group discussions) were not investigated, as the emphasis of the research was placed on student feedback.

- This study falls within a CUT case study paradigm, and was not tested in other higher education institutions. However, student evaluation of teaching and module content is of such a nature that it can be adjusted for different institutional cultures.

7.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher recommends that the following aspects be investigated in terms of future research:

- Whether online student evaluation outcomes will enhance the professional development of academic staff.

- The influence of online student evaluation outcomes on the performance management system of academic staff.

- The impact of the implementation of online student evaluation outcomes on the enhancement of teaching and learning practices.

7.6 CONCLUSION

The core of this study can possibly be summarised in the words of an unknown author, who wrote the following regarding student evaluation practices: “If our goal is merely to deliver the lecture, feedback is irrelevant. If, however, we wish the audience to learn effectively, then feedback is vital”.

The intention of this study was to develop an improved model for student evaluation of teaching and module content to enhance teaching and learning quality at the CUT. Since it is difficult to define quality in the educational process (see 1.2.2), the researcher believes that no single definition of quality will fit all higher education institutions. Quality is a process, an ever-moving target, and continuous stakeholder participation is therefore essential with a view to ensuring quality teaching and learning processes. The involvement of various role players such as top management, academic staff and students, in attaining the research objectives (see 1.5) is an example in this regard.

This study points out that there is a great need for institutional quality in South Africa. This is evident from the changing South African higher education landscape (see 2.3.1) and institutional self-assessment approaches (see 2.3.2), where issues such as institutional audits, programme accreditation and quality promotion are analysed to determine stakeholder involvement. Student involvement in determining quality teaching and learning practices is a common practice throughout higher education. This practice has been driven by factors such as globalisation (see 2.4.1), massification and enrolment capping (see 2.4.2), the changing teaching environment (see 2.4.3), educational technology (see 2.4.4), and staff development for open and flexible learning (see 2.4.5).

The significance of student involvement in the determination of teaching performance and module quality makes it imperative to gather feedback effectively and efficiently. The study indicated that the success of the student feedback process is, *inter alia*, determined by the time- and cost-effectiveness thereof. The development of an online model for student evaluation of teaching and module content confirms the success of this study.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

LECTURER SELF-RATING FORM

Using the 9-point scale below, indicate by circling the most appropriate number the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the factors/statements you have selected as descriptions of your teaching in the class/unit you have chosen to conduct SEEQ. This survey is purely for your use and comparison with the Closed-response form completed by students.

Learning/Academic Value	Students found the subject intellectually challenging and stimulating.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	Students have learned something which they consider valuable.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	Students interest in the subject has increased as a consequence of this course.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	Students have learned and understood the subject materials in this class.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Instructor Enthusiasm	I was enthusiastic about teaching the class.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	I was dynamic and energetic in conducting the class.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	I enhanced presentations with the use of humour.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	My style of presentation held my interest during class.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Individual Rapport	I was friendly towards individual students.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	I made students feel welcome in seeking help/advice in or out of class.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	I had a genuine interest in individual students.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	I was adequately accessible to students during office hours or after class.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Examinations /Grading	Feedback on examinations/graded materials was valuable.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	Methods of evaluating student work were fair and appropriate.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	Examinations/graded materials tested course content as emphasised by me.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Organisation /Clarity	My explanations were clear.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	Class materials were well prepared and carefully explained.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	Proposed objectives agreed with those actually taught so students knew where the class was going.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	Gave presentations that facilitated taking notes.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Breadth of Coverage	I contrasted the implications of various theories.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	I presented the background or origin of ideas/concepts developed in class.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	I presented points of view other than my own when appropriate.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	I adequately discussed current developments in the field.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Group Interaction (Tutorial)	Students were encouraged to participate in classroom discussions.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	Students were invited to share their ideas and knowledge.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	Students were encouraged to ask questions and were given meaningful answers.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	Students were encouraged to express their own ideas and/or question me.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Assignments /Reading (Unit Controller)	Required readings/texts were valuable to students.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
	Readings, homework, etc contributed to an appreciation and understanding of the subject.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Appendix B

Students' Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ)

CLOSED-RESPONSE FORM

Student evaluation is one of the methods used for improving the quality of teaching at the university.
This survey will provide this staff member with valuable feedback about teaching effectiveness.
Your name is NOT required and all information is confidential. Please complete as accurately and honestly as possible.
You should base your responses on this staff member's teaching in this unit.

Staff Member's Name: ....

Unit/Class: ....

Date: ....

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Use a blue/black biro or 2B pencil
- Do not use red pen or felt tip pen
- Erase mistakes fully
- Make no stray marks

Please MARK LIKE THIS ONLY:

Please indicate the EXTENT of your agreement/disagreement with the following statements as they apply to this unit by using the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree

If any items are not applicable simply leave them blank

Core factors – this section MUST be completed

Factor	Item	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
LEARNING / ACADEMIC VALUE	You found the class intellectually challenging and stimulating.	
	You have learned something which you considered valuable.	
	Your interest in the subject has increased as a consequence of this class.	
	You have learned and understood the subject materials in this class.	
INSTRUCTOR ENTHUSIASM	Staff member was enthusiastic about teaching the class.	
	Staff member was dynamic and energetic in conducting the class.	
	Staff member enhanced presentations with the use of humour.	
	Staff member's style of presentation held your interest during class.	
INDIVIDUAL RAPPORT	Staff member was friendly towards individual students.	
	Staff member had a genuine interest in individual students.	
	Staff member made students feel welcome in seeking help/advice in or outside of class.	
	Staff member was adequately accessible to students during office hours or after class.	
EXAMINATIONS / GRADING	Feedback on examinations/graded material was valuable.	
	Methods of evaluating student work were fair and appropriate.	
	Examinations/graded materials tested class content as emphasised by the staff member.	
OVERALL RATING	(1=Very Poor...3=Poor...5=Average...7=Good...9=Very Good)	
	Overall, how does this class compare with other classes at this institution?	
	Overall, how does this staff member compare with other staff members at this institution?	

Additional factors – complete as instructed by staff member

Factor	Item	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
ORGANISATION / CLARITY	Staff member's explanations were clear.	
	Class materials were well prepared and carefully explained.	
	Proposed objectives agreed with those actually taught so you knew where the class was going.	
	Staff member gave presentations that facilitated taking notes.	
BREADTH OF COVERAGE	Staff member contrasted the implications of various theories.	
	Staff member presented the background or origin of ideas/concepts developed in class.	
	Staff member presented points of view other than his/her own when appropriate.	
	Staff member adequately discussed current developments in the field.	
GROUP INTERACTION	Students were encouraged to participate in class discussions.	
	Students were invited to share their ideas and knowledge.	
	Students were encouraged to ask questions and were given meaningful answers.	
	Students were encouraged to express their own ideas and/or question the staff member.	
ASSIGNMENTS / READINGS	Required readings/texts were valuable.	
	Readings, homework, etc. contributed to appreciation and understanding of the subject.	
WORKLOAD / DIFFICULTY	Subject difficulty, relative to other subjects was: (1=Very Easy...5=Medium...9=Very Hard)	
	Subject workload, relative to other subjects was: (1=Very Light...5=Medium...9=Very Heavy)	
	Subject pace was: (1=Too Slow...5=About Right...9=Too Fast)	
	Average number of hours per week required outside of class: (0=None...1=1 Hr...9=9+ Hrs)	

Students' Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ)

ADDITIONAL / SUPPLEMENTARY / ALTERNATIVE ITEMS

(Leave blank if no additional questions are provided)

Please indicate the EXTENT of your agreement/disagreement with the following statements as descriptions of this unit by using the following scale:

1 Strongly Disagree | 2 | 3 Disagree | 4 | 5 Neutral | 6 | 7 Agree | 8 | 9 Strongly Agree

If any items are not applicable simply leave them blank

1.	11.	21.	31.
2.	12.	22.	32.
3.	13.	23.	33.
4.	14.	24.	34.
5.	15.	25.	35.
6.	16.	26.	36.
7.	17.	27.	37.
8.	18.	28.	38.
9.	19.	29.	39.
10.	20.	30.	40.

BACKGROUND UNIT / CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

1 Your gender:

Male ○ Female ○

2 Your expected unit mark:

Fail ○ Pass ○ Credit ○ Distinction ○ High Distinction ○ Other ○

3 Your average mark in previous university units:

Fail ○ Fail/Pass ○ Pass ○ Pass/Credit ○ Credit ○ Credit/Distinction ○ Distinction ○ Distinction/High Distinction ○ High Distinction ○

4 In comparison to other units, how easy is it to get good marks in this unit?

Very Easy ○ ○ Easy ○ Average ○ ○ Difficult ○ ○ Very Difficult ○

5 Your reason for taking the unit:

Course Requirement ○ Chosen Course Major ○ Course Elective ○ General Elective ○ General Interest Only ○ Other ○

6 Level of interest in this unit before the start of the unit:

Very Low ○ ○ ○ ○ Medium ○ ○ ○ ○ Very High ○

7 Year in course:

1st ○ 2nd ○ 3rd ○ 4th etc. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Thank you for your feedback

Appendix C

STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL QUALITY (SEEQ)

Students evaluation is one of the methods used for improving the quality of teaching at the university. This survey will provide your lecturer with valuable feedback about teaching effectiveness. You should base your responses on this staff member's teaching in this unit. Your name is NOT required and all information is confidential. Please complete as accurately and honestly as possible.

Thank you for your cooperation

Lecturer/Instructor: ..... Unit/Class: ..... Date: ... / ... / ...

OPEN-ENDED COMMENTS

Your written comments will be returned to your lecturer. If you have concern for your anonymity, please print your comments.

Please indicate the important characteristics of this lecturer/unit that have been most valuable to your overall learning experience.

1. .....
2. .....
3. .....

Please indicate the important characteristics of this lecturer/unit that you feel are most important for him/her to improve (particularly aspects not covered by the rating items).

1. .....
2. .....
3. .....

Please use the additional space to clarify any of your responses or to make other comments.

.....

Appendix F

SELT
STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

STANDARD TEACHING EVALUATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE AUSTRALIA

SURVEY COVERSHEET - MUST BE RETURNED WITH COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES

SURVEY INFORMATION

1. Academic Period: Please Select **Academic Year:** 2007

2. Discipline/School: Please Select

3. Course Details:

	Course Code	Course Name	Course Lvl
1.			Select
For use with combined courses only. 2.			Select
3.			Select
4.			Select

4. Course Component: (Optional. e.g. Tutorials/practicals/specific lecture)

5. Teacher Details:

Title	First Name	Last Name	Email Address
Select			

6. Teaching Dates: -- --- 2007 To -- --- 2007

7. No. Students:

8. How many separate classes is this survey being administered to:

9. Date of Survey: -- --- 2007

10. Survey Requestor:

Title	First Name	Last Name	Email Address
Select			

FOR THE SURVEY ADMINISTRATOR

1. Print your name:

2. Mark your position (X) Staff ☐ Student ☐ Self ☐

3. Place the completed surveys WITH THIS COVERSHEET in a sealed envelope in the internal mail and address to:

Evaluation and Survey Service, CLPD
Level 1, Schulz Bldg

Office Use Only 1

SELT
STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE AUSTRALIA

This survey is evaluating the TEACHING of Select in the following course(s):

Use a DARK PEN to mark your response as follows: [X] Correct any mistakes by filling in the box as follows: [■] [X]

		Outstanding 7	6	5	Reasonable 4	3	2	Very Poor 1	N/A
1.	All things considered, how would you rate the effectiveness of Select as a university teacher?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
		Strongly Agree 7	6	5	Undecided 4	3	2	Strongly Disagree 1	N/A
2.	Select is well organised.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	Select shows concern for students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	Select shows enthusiasm for encouraging student learning.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	Select encourages student participation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	Select stimulates my interest in learning in this course.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	Select gives clear explanations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. What are the best aspects of Select 's teaching?

9. Select could improve student learning by:

Appendix G

SELT
STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE AUSTRALIA

MULTIPLE TEACHER/TUTOR TEACHING EVALUATION

SURVEY COVERSHEET - MUST BE RETURNED WITH COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES

SURVEY INFORMATION

1. Academic Period: Please Select **Academic Year:** 2007

2. Discipline/School: Please Select

3. Course Details:

	Course Code	Course Name	Course Lvl
1.			Select

4. Course Component: (Optional, e.g. Tutorials/practicals/specific lecture)

5. Teacher Details:

	Title	First Name	Last Name	Email Address
1.	Select			
2.	Select			
3.	Select			
4.	Select			
5.	Select			
6.	Select			
7.	Select			
8.	Select			
9.	Select			
10.	Select			
11.	Select			
12.	Select			

6. Teaching Dates: -- --- 2007 To -- --- 2007

7. No. Students:

8. How many separate classes is this survey being administered to:

9. Date of Survey: -- --- 2007

10. Survey Requestor:

Title	First Name	Last Name	Email Address
Select			

FOR THE SURVEY ADMINISTRATOR

1. Print your name:

2. Mark your position (X): Staff ☐ Student ☐ Self ☐

3. Place the completed surveys WITH THIS COVERSHEET in a sealed envelope in the internal mail and address to:

Evaluation and Survey Service, CLPD Level 1, Schulz Bldg

Office Use Only ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐2☐☐☐☐☐

SELT
STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE AUSTRALIA

This survey is evaluating TEACHING in the following course(s):

Use a DARK PEN to mark your response as follows: ☒ Correct any mistakes by filling in the box as follows: ■

Please select the relevant teacher/tutor of your class in the boxes below (MARK ONLY ONE).

		Outstanding 7	6	5	Reasonable 4	3	2	Very Poor 1	N/A
1.	All things considered, how would you rate the effectiveness of this person as a university teacher?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
		Strongly Agree 7	6	5	Undecided 4	3	2	Strongly Disagree 1	N/A
2.	This person is well organised.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	This person shows concern for students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	This person shows enthusiasm for encouraging student learning.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	This person encourages student participation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	This person stimulates my interest in learning in this course.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	This person gives clear explanations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. What are the best aspects of this person's teaching?

9. This person could improve student learning by:

Appendix H

SELT
STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

STANDARD COURSE EVALUATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE AUSTRALIA

SURVEY COVERSHEET - MUST BE RETURNED WITH COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES

SURVEY INFORMATION

1. Academic Period: Please Select **Academic Year:** 2007

2. Discipline/School: Please Select

3. Course Details:

	Course Code	Course Name	Course Lvl
1.			Select
For use with combined courses only. 2.			Select
3.			Select
4.			Select

4. Course Component: (Optional. e.g. Tutorials/practicals/specific lecture)

5. Teacher Details:

Title	First Name	Last Name	Email Address
Select			

6. Teaching Dates: -- --- 2007 To -- --- 2007

7. No. Students:

8. How many separate classes is this survey being administered to:

9. Date of Survey: -- --- 2007

10. Survey Requestor:

Title	First Name	Last Name	Email Address
Select			

FOR THE SURVEY ADMINISTRATOR

1. Print your name:

2. Mark your position (X) Staff ☐ Student ☐ Self ☐

3. Place the completed surveys WITH THIS COVERSHEET in a sealed envelope in the internal mail and address to:

Evaluation and Survey Service, CLPD
Level 1, Schulz Bldg

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SELT
STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE AUSTRALIA

This survey is evaluating the following course(s):

Use a DARK PEN to mark your response as follows: [X] Correct any mistakes by filling in the box as follows: [■] [X]

		Very Heavy 7	6	5	Reasonable 4	3	2	Very Light 1	N/A
1.	Overall, how would you rate the workload in this cou...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
		Strongly Agree 7	6	5	**Undecided 4**	3	2	**Strongly Disagree 1**	N/A
2.	Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of this cou...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	This course stimulates my enthusiasm for further learni...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	I feel part of a group committed to learning.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	It is made clear what is expected of me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	I receive adequate feedback on my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	I am motivated to learn in this course.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	The assessment allows me to demonstrate what I understand.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.	This course helps me develop my thinking skills (eg. problem solving, analysis).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.	The learning resources (eg. handouts, web resources) are valuable for my understanding of the course.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.	I am satisfied with the course information provided (eg. outline, assessment details, timetables).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12.	The learning environment is free from discrimination.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13.	The learning environment takes into account the diversity of students' backgrounds.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14.	My ability to work independently is being increased.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15.	I understand the concepts presented in this course.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SELT
STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

STANDARD COURSE EVALUATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE AUSTRALIA

16. What are the best aspects of this course, and why?

17. This course could be changed in the following ways to improve my learning:

Appendix I

SELT
STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

EXTENDED TEACHING EVALUATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE AUSTRALIA

SURVEY COVERSHEET - MUST BE RETURNED WITH COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES

SURVEY INFORMATION

1. Academic Period: Please Select **Academic Year:** 2007

2. Discipline/School: Please Select

3. Course Details:

	Course Code	Course Name	Course Lvl
1.			Select
For use with combined courses only. 2.			Select
3.			Select
4.			Select

4. Course Component: (Optional. e.g. Tutorials/practicals/specific lecture)

5. Teacher Details:

Title	First Name	Last Name	Email Address
Select			

6. Teaching Dates: -- --- 2007 To -- --- 2007

7. No. Students:

8. How many separate classes is this survey being administered to:

9. Date of Survey: -- --- 2007

10. Survey Requestor:

Title	First Name	Last Name	Email Address
Select			

FOR THE SURVEY ADMINISTRATOR

1. Print your name:

2. Mark your position (X) Staff Student Self

3. Place the completed surveys WITH THIS COVERSHEET in a sealed envelope in the internal mail and address to:

Evaluation and Survey Service, CLPD
Level 1, Schulz Bldg

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SELT
STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE AUSTRALIA

This survey is evaluating the TEACHING of Select in the following course(s):

Use a DARK PEN to mark your response as follows: [X] Correct any mistakes by filling in the box as follows: [■] [X]

		Outstanding 7	6	5	Reasonable 4	3	2	Very Poor 1	N/A
1.	All things considered, how would you rate the effectiveness of Select as a university teacher?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
		Strongly Agree 7	**6**	**5**	**Undecided 4**	**3**	**2**	**Strongly Disagree 1**	**N/A**
2.	Select is well organised.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	Select shows concern for students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	Select shows enthusiasm for encouraging student learning.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	Select encourages student participation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	Select stimulates my interest in learning in this course.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	Select gives clear explanations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SELT
STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE AUSTRALIA

8. What are the best aspects of Select 's teaching?

9. Select could improve student learning by:

Appendix J

SELT

STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

EXTENDED COURSE EVALUATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE AUSTRALIA

SURVEY COVERSHEET - MUST BE RETURNED WITH COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES

SURVEY INFORMATION

1. Academic Period: Please Select **Academic Year:** 2007

2. Discipline/School: Please Select

3. Course Details:

	Course Code	Course Name	Course Lvl
1.			Select
For use with combined courses only. 2.			
3.			
4.			

4. Course Component: (Optional. e.g. Tutorials/practicals/specific lecture)

5. Teacher Details:

Title	First Name	Last Name	Email Address
Select			

6. Teaching Dates: -- --- 2007 **To** -- --- 2007

7. No. Students:

8. How many separate classes is this survey being administered to:

9. Date of Survey: -- --- 2007

10. Survey Requestor:

Title	First Name	Last Name	Email Address
Select			

FOR THE SURVEY ADMINISTRATOR

1. Print your name:

2. Mark your position (X) Staff ☐ Student ☐ Self ☐

3. Place the completed surveys WITH THIS COVERSHEET in a sealed envelope in the internal mail and address to:

Evaluation and Survey Service, CLPD
Level 1, Schulz Bldg

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SELT

STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE AUSTRALIA

This survey is evaluating the following course(s):

Use a DARK PEN to mark your response as follows: [X] Correct any mistakes by filling in the box as follows: ■ [X]

		Very Heavy 7	6	5	Reasonable 4	3	2	Very Light 1	N/A
1.	Overall, how would you rate the workload in this course	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
		Strongly Agree 7	6	5	**Undecided 4**	3	2	**Strongly Disagree 1**	N/A
2.	Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of this course	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	This course stimulates my enthusiasm for further learning.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	I feel part of a group committed to learning.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	It is made clear what is expected of me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	I receive adequate feedback on my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	I am motivated to learn in this course.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	The assessment allows me to demonstrate what I understand.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.	This course helps me develop my thinking skills (eg. problem solving, analysis).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.	The learning resources (eg. handouts, web resources) are valuable for my understanding of the course.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.	I am satisfied with the course information provided (eg. course outline, assessment details, timetables).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12.	The learning environment is free from discrimination.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13.	The learning environment takes into account the diversity of students' backgrounds.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14.	My ability to work independently is being increased.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15.	I understand the concepts presented in this course.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SELT
STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING
EXTENDED COURSE EVALUATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE AUSTRALIA

Strongly Agree 7 6 5 Undecided 4 3 2 1 Strongly Disagree N/A

16. What are the best aspects of this course, and why?

17. This course could be changed in the following ways to improve my learning:

Appendix K

SELT
STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

STANDARD SUPERVISION EVALUATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE AUSTRALIA

SURVEY COVERSHEET - MUST BE RETURNED WITH COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES

SURVEY INFORMATION

1. Academic Period: Please Select **Academic Year:** 2007

2. Discipline/School: Please Select

3. Course Details:

	Course Code	Course Name	Course Lvl
1.			Select
For use with combined courses only. 2.			Select
3.			Select
4.			Select

4. Course Component: (Optional. e.g. Tutorials/practicals/specific lecture)

5. Supervisor Details:

Title	First Name	Last Name	Email Address
Select			

6. Supervision Dates: -- --- 2007 To -- --- 2007

7. No. Students:

8. How many separate classes is this survey being administered to:

9. Date of Survey: -- --- 2007

10. Survey Requestor:

Title	First Name	Last Name	Email Address
Select			

FOR THE SURVEY ADMINISTRATOR

1. Print your name:

2. Mark your position (X) Staff ☐ Student ☐ Self ☐

3. Place the completed surveys WITH THIS COVERSHEET in a sealed envelope in the internal mail and address to:

Evaluation and Survey Service, CLPD
Level 1, Schulz Bldg

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SELT
STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE AUSTRALIA

This survey is evaluating the supervison of Select in the following:

Use a DARK PEN to mark your response as follows: [X] Correct any mistakes by filling in the box as follows: [■] [X]

		Outstanding 7	6	5	Reasonable 4	3	2	Very Poor 1	N/A
1.	All things considered, how would you rate the effectiveness of Select as a supervisor?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	Select exhibits a professional approach to supervision.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	Select is accessible for consultations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	Select is interested in helping me to learn.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	Select interacts well with me on a personal level.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	Select gives helpful guidance in the conception of my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	Select gives helpful guidance in overcoming problems associated with my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	Select has enthusiasm for my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.	Select helps to maintain my enthusiasm for my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.	Select is skilled in applying theory to practical situations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.	Select clearly states his/her expectations regarding my work and performance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12.	Select has a realistic appreciation of the time and effort required to complete my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13.	Select has a realistic appreciation of the technical resources available for my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14.	Select gives me adequate feedback on my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15.	Select is fair with critical appraisal of my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Appendix L

SELT

STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

AGSB COURSE PRESENTER EVALUATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE AUSTRALIA

SURVEY COVERSHEET - MUST BE RETURNED WITH COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES

SURVEY INFORMATION

1. Academic Period: Please Select **Academic Year:** 2007

2. Discipline/School: Adelaide Graduate School of Business

3. Course Details:

For use with combined courses only.

	Course Code	Course Name	Course Lvl
1.			Select
2.			Select
3.			Select
4.			Select

4. Course Component: (Optional. e.g. Tutorials/practicals/specific lecture)

5. Teacher Details:

Title	First Name	Last Name	Email Address
Select			

6. Teaching Dates: -- --- 2007 To -- --- 2007

7. No. Students:

8. How many separate classes is this survey being administered to:

9. Date of Survey: -- --- 2007

10. Survey Requestor:

Title	First Name	Last Name	Email Address
Select			

FOR THE SURVEY ADMINISTRATOR

1. Print your name:

2. Mark your position (X) Staff ☐ Student ☐ Self ☐

3. Place the completed surveys WITH THIS COVERSHEET in a sealed envelope in the internal mail and address to:

Evaluation and Survey Service, CLPD
Level 1, Schulz Bldg

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SELT
STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE AUSTRALIA

This survey is evaluating the following course(s):

Use a DARK PEN to mark your response as follows: [X] Correct any mistakes by filling in the box as follows: [■]

		Very Heavy 7	6	5	Reasonable 4	3	2	Very Light 1	N/A
1.	Overall, how would you rate the workload in this cou	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
		Strongly Agree 7	**6**	**5**	**Undecided 4**	**3**	**2**	**Strongly Disagree 1**	**N/A**
2.	Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of this course.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	It is made clear what is expected of me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	I receive adequate feedback on my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	I am motivated to learn in this course.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	The assessment allows me to demonstrate what I understand.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	This course helps me develop my thinking skills (eg. problem solving, analysis).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	The learning resources (eg. handouts, web resources) are valuable for my understanding of the course.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.	I am satisfied with the course information provided (eg. course outline, assessment details).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.	I understand the concepts presented in this course.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.	This lecturer stimulates my interest in learning in this course.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12.	The classroom experience is valuable for my understanding of the course.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13.	Overall, this person is an effective teacher.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14.	I would recommend this course to others.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SELT
STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

AGSB COURSE PRESENTER EVALUATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE AUSTRALIA

15. What are the two best aspects of this course and why?

16. What could be done to improve this course? Please make two suggestions:

Appendix M

Order No: 18

University of Canberra
Centre for the Enhancement of Learning, Teaching and Scholarship (CELTS)
Student Feedback on Teaching

Student feedback is one way for staff to obtain feedback on their subject in order to make changes to improve the quality. Would you please fill in this questionnaire and make thoughtful comments on the back page. Your responses are anonymous and will be treated in confidence. If you are in a class of fewer than 20 students, you may elect to have your responses to the open-ended questions typed for return to your lecturer, by placing a tick in the box on the back page. The questionnaires will be processed in the Centre for the Enhancement of Learning, Teaching and Scholarship.

Subject Code: 234 **Subject Name: Test Subject Name**

Very Poor	Poor	Not Quite Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

For the following question please circle your response on the adjacent scale:

1. All things considered, how would you rate the teaching of this lecturer in this subject 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5

For the following questions please circle your response on the adjacent scale:

The Lecturer:

2. made the objectives clear for each session 0 1 2 3 4 5
3. was able to explain concepts clearly 0 1 2 3 4 5
4. seemed well prepared for each session 0 1 2 3 4 5
5. taught the subject matter in a way that helped me understand it 0 1 2 3 4 5
6. tried to make the subject interesting 0 1 2 3 4 5
7. demonstrated the relevence of the subject to the whole course 0 1 2 3 4 5
8. made opportunities to ask questions 0 1 2 3 4 5
9. was available for consultation 0 1 2 3 4 5
10. made clear the criteria used to assess student work 0 1 2 3 4 5
11. gave adequate feedback on assignments and other prescribed work 0 1 2 3 4 5

The Subject

12. The subject covered what the subject description said it would 0 1 2 3 4 5
13. Assessment tasks set and/or exams were related to the subject goals 1 2 3 4 5
14. Assessment tasks allowed me to demonstrate what I had learnt 1 2 3 4 5
15. The work load was comparable to other subjects at this level 0 1 2 3 4 5

Items chosen by Coralie McCormack

16. I have learned to think critically 0 1 2 3 4 5
17. Practicals were a useful learning experience 0 1 2 3 4 5
18. I was encouraged to think critically 0 1 2 3 4 5
19. The lecturer links material in this class to activities in other classes 0 1 2 3 4 5

Please give thoughtful responses to each of the following questions:

What are this staff member's strengths in teaching?

What improvements would you suggest to his/her teaching of this subject?

What did you particularly like in this subject?

What improvements would you suggest to the subject itself?

Please feel free to make other comments, particularly in relation to your ratings on page 1.

Appendix N

Order No: 4

University of Canberra
Centre for the Enhancement of Learning, Teaching and Scholarship (CELTS)
Student Feedback on Team Teaching

Student feedback is one way for staff to obtain feedback on their teaching in order to make changes to improve the quality. Could you please fill in this questionnaire and make thoughtful comments on the back page. Your responses are anonymous and will be treated in confidence. If you are in a class of fewer than 20 students, you may elect to have your responses to the open-ended questions typed for return to your lecturer, by placing a tick in the box on the back page. The questionnaires will be processed in the Centre for the Enhancement of Learning, Teaching and Scholarship.

Subject Code: 2342 **Subject Name: Test Subject Name**

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4	5

For the following questions please circle your response on the adjacent scale:

Items chosen by Lance Jones:

1. The lecturer links material in this class to activities in other classes 0 1 2 3 4 5
2. The lecturer makes students aware of the English language support services available 0 1 2 3 4 5

Items chosen by C McCormack:

3. The lecturer links materal in this class to activities in other classes 0 1 2 3 4 5
4. Too much of our learning time was taken up doing assessment tasks 0 1 2 3 4 5
5. I have had enough opportunity to demonstate what I have learned in this subject 0 1 2 3 4 5
6. The lecturer suggests specific ways students can improve 0 1 2 3 4 5

Items chosen by Polly Smith:

7. The subject outline helped me to understand the material 0 1 2 3 4 5
8. The subject is relevant to my present employment 0 1 2 3 4 5
9. I have learned to think critically 0 1 2 3 4 5
10. I have learned to work independently 0 1 2 3 4 5
11. The clinical teacher encourage me to play an active part in the session 0 1 2 3 4 5

Please give thoughtful responses to each of the following questions:
Please note: These questions relate to the part of the subject taught by C McCormack

What improvements to the subject would you suggest?

What improvements would you suggest to his/her teaching of this subject?

Please note: These questions relate to the part of the subject taught by Lance Jones

What are this staff member's strengths in teaching?

What improvements would you suggest to his/her teaching of this subject?

Please note: This question relates to the part of the subject taught by Polly Smith

What did you particularly like in this subject?

Appendix O

COURSE EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of these questions is to collect graduates' perceptions of their university study experience. Please complete the following questions on the basis of your most recent program of study.

The term 'course' in this context refers either to the degree you have just completed or to the major field/s of study which made up that degree.

If you have completed a degree in a single major or field of study only (for example, medicine, engineering, architecture, pharmacy, education, law, physiotherapy), please use the left hand column of numbers only (headed "Major 1"). Name the field to which your responses apply (please write on the dotted line) and circle your responses to the statements below.

If you completed a double degree (such as arts/law or commerce/law) or a double major (for example, English and history, computer science and mathematics, psychology and sociology, biology and zoology), please use both columns of numbers. ***Name one field at the top of each column*** (please write on the dotted line) and circle your relevant response to the statements below.

Major 1
[please write on dotted line below]

.....

CEQ major 1 code [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ]
office use, 200-205

Major 2
[please write on dotted line below]

.....

CEQ major 2 code [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ]
office use, 206-211

	Major 1: Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree		Major 2: Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree	
The staff put a lot of time into commenting on my work	1 2 3 4 5	220	1 2 3 4 5	269
The teaching staff normally gave me helpful feedback on how I was going	1 2 3 4 5	222	1 2 3 4 5	271
To do well in this course all you really needed was a good memory	1 2 3 4 5	223	1 2 3 4 5	272
I was generally given enough time to understand the things I had to learn	1 2 3 4 5	224	1 2 3 4 5	273
The course helped me develop my ability to work as a team member	1 2 3 4 5	225	1 2 3 4 5	274
It was always easy to know the standard of work expected	1 2 3 4 5	227	1 2 3 4 5	276
The sheer volume of work to be got through in this course meant it couldn't all be thoroughly comprehended	1 2 3 4 5	228	1 2 3 4 5	277
The teaching staff of this course motivated me to do my best work	1 2 3 4 5	229	1 2 3 4 5	278
The course sharpened my analytic skills	1 2 3 4 5	233	1 2 3 4 5	282
My lecturers were extremely good at explaining things	1 2 3 4 5	234	1 2 3 4 5	283
The teaching staff worked hard to make their subjects interesting	1 2 3 4 5	235	1 2 3 4 5	284
The workload was too heavy.	1 2 3 4 5	238	1 2 3 4 5	287
The course developed my problem-solving skills.	1 2 3 4 5	242	1 2 3 4 5	291
The staff seemed more interested in testing what I had memorised than what I had understood.	1 2 3 4 5	245	1 2 3 4 5	294
The staff made a real effort to understand difficulties I might be having with my work.	1 2 3 4 5	246	1 2 3 4 5	295
I usually had a clear idea of where I was going and what was expected of me in this course.	1 2 3 4 5	247	1 2 3 4 5	296
There was a lot of pressure on me as a student in this course	1 2 3 4 5	248	1 2 3 4 5	297
The course improved my skills in written communication.	1 2 3 4 5	251	1 2 3 4 5	300
It was often hard to discover what was expected of me in this course.	1 2 3 4 5	258	1 2 3 4 5	307
As a result of my course, I feel confident about tackling unfamiliar problems.	1 2 3 4 5	261	1 2 3 4 5	310
My course helped me to develop the ability to plan my own work.	1 2 3 4 5	262	1 2 3 4 5	311
Too many staff asked me questions just about facts.	1 2 3 4 5	263	1 2 3 4 5	312
The staff made it clear right from the start what they expected from students.	1 2 3 4 5	265	1 2 3 4 5	314
Overall, I was satisfied with the quality of this course.	1 2 3 4 5	268	1 2 3 4 5	317

What were the best aspects of your course? Please write below:

.....

.....

.....

What aspects of your course are most in need of improvement? Please write below:

.....

.....

.....

Course code [ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ] - Other variable/s: .....
Office use only 170-179

Appendix P

LECTURER EVALUATION FORM
CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, FREE STATE

LECTURER: _____ SUBJECT: _____

CRITERIA	EVALUATION				
	5	4	3	2	1
1. INTRODUCTION					
1.1. Exciting introduction.....					
1.2. Linking to student's life world or pre-knowledge.....					
1.3. Statement of objective or formulation of outcome.....					
2. PRESENTATION/FACILITATION/DEVELOPMENT AND DISCOVERY OF NEW KNOWLEDGE					
2.1. INTEGRATED BALANCE Of various methods (e.g. Narrative, question-and-answer, group discussion).....					
2.2. CONTROL OF LEARNING MATTER					
2.2.1. Knowledge confidence on tertiary standard.....					
2.2.2. Practice oriented.....					
2.2.3. Promotion of insight and understanding.....					
2.3. MEDIA/TEACHING AIDS					
2.3.1. Clearly visible/readable.....					
2.3.2. Illustrative.....					
2.3.3. Purpose application/correct use.....					
2.3.4. Variety of teaching aids (e.g. Overhead projector, board, photos, model, poster).....					
2.4. INCULCATION OF LEARNING MATTER					
2.4.1. Accentuation/repetition/illustration/explanation.....					
2.4.2. Opportunity for student self-activities.....					
2.4.3. Comprehension testing by means of questions to determine whether objectives/outcome were achieved.....					
3. ROUNDING OFF					
3.1. Summary/Conclusion.....					
4. UTILISATION OF TIME					
4.1. Well-planned/complete unity of all lesson phases.....					
5. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT/PERFOMANCE AND APPEARANCE					
5.1. Confidence and enthusiasm					
5.2. Appearance/dress.....					
5.3. Good use of language.....					
5.4. Bilingualism.....					

TOTAL (100)

COMMENTS: _____ ..... %

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

PANEL MEMBER: _____ **DATE:** _____

Appendix Q

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, FREE STATE
SENTRALE UNIVERSITEIT VAN TEGNOLOGIE, VRYSTAAT

Lecturer self evaluation of teaching & module content	Module code:
Dosente selfevaluering van onderrig & module inhoud	Module kode:

1. The aim of this questionnaire is to determine the effectiveness of the teaching process, as it is experienced by you as a lecturer.
   Die doel met die vraelys is die bepaling van die effektiwiteit van die onderrigproses, soos dit deur u as dosent ervaar word.
2. Answer codes are provided with each question. **Only one answer is allowed.** / Antwoordkodes word voorsien met elke vraag. **Slegs een antwoord per vraag word toegelaat.**

A: Lecturer evaluation of teaching — Dosent evaluering van onderrig

Please **encircle** the appropriate response: **e.g.** (4) 3 2 1 — **Omkring** asseblief die toepaslike antwoord:

Answer codes / Antwoordkodes	4 = Almost always / Byna altyd	3 = Frequently / Dikwels	2 = Sometimes / Somtyds	1 = Hardly ever / Byna nooit

	Lecturer:	Almost always / Byna altyd	Frequently / Dikwels	Sometimes / Somtyds	Hardly ever / Byna nooit	Dosent:
1.	I communicate effectively (verbally)	4	3	2	1	Ek kommunikeer effektief (verbaal)
2.	I make clear explanations	4	3	2	1	Ek gee goeie verduidelikings
3.	I have a good command of English	4	3	2	1	Ek praat goeie Engels
4.	I have a good command of Afrikaans	4	3	2	1	Ek praat goeie Afrikaans
5.	I have a style of presentation that allows students an opportunity to take adequate notes when necessary	4	3	2	1	Ek het 'n aanbiedingstyl wat die studente die geleentheid gee om genoeg notas te maak
6.	I use teaching materials effectively (black/ white boards, overhead projector, videos, MS PowerPoint)	4	3	2	1	Ek gebruik onderrigmateriaal effektief (swart/wit borde, oorhoofse projektor, videos, MS PowerPoint)
7.	I use other resources (library, internet, group work) to facilitate the learning process	4	3	2	1	Ek gebruik ander bronne (biblioteek, internet, groepwerk) om die leerproses te fasiliteer
8.	I show how this module relates to other subjects in the course students follow	4	3	2	1	Ek wys hoe die module verband hou met ander vakke in die kursus wat die studente volg
9.	I explain the learning outcomes	4	3	2	1	Ek verduidelik die leeruitkomste voor die begin van elke

	Lecturer	Almost always / Byna altyd	Frequently / Dikwels	Sometimes / Somtyds	Hardly ever / Byna nooit	Dosent
	before the beginning of each lecture					lesing
10.	I use practical examples to explain the study material	4	3	2	1	Ek gebruik praktiese voorbeelde om studiemateriaal te verduidelik
11.	I encourage students to ask questions	4	3	2	1	Ek moedig studente aan om vrae te vra
12.	I provide a good mixture of lectures and class discussions	4	3	2	1	Ek voorsien 'n goeie kombinasie van lesings en klasbesprekings
13.	I encourage students to express ideas	4	3	2	1	Ek moedig studente aan om hul eie idees te gee
14.	I treat students with respect irrespective of race or gender	4	3	2	1	Ek behandel studente met respek ongeag ras of geslag
15.	I am available for individual help when needed	4	3	2	1	Ek is beskikbaar vir individuele hulp wanneer nodig
16.	I grade assignments fairly	4	3	2	1	Ek merk werkopdragte regverdig
17.	I mark and hand back assignments within a reasonable timeframe	4	3	2	1	Ek merk en gee opdragte terug binne 'n redelike tydsverloop

B: Evaluation of module content Evaluering van module inhoud

The aim of this part of the questionnaire is to determine the effectiveness of the module content, as it is experienced by you as a lecturer./ Die doel met hierdie deel van die vraelys is die bepaling van die effektiwiteit van die module inhoud, soos dit deur u as dosent ervaar word.

Please encircle the appropriate response: e.g. 4 3 2 (1) Omkring asseblief die toepaslike antwoord:

Answer codes / Antwoordkodes **4 = Almost always / 4 = Byna altyd** **3 = Frequently / 3 = Dikwels** **2 =Sometimes / 2 = Somtyds** **1 = Almost never / 1 = Byna nooit**

	Content	Almost always / Byna altyd	Frequently / Dikwels	Sometimes / Somtyds	Almost never / Byna nooit	Inhoud
1.	There is an appropriate balance between theory and practice.	4	3	2	1	Daar is 'n toepaslike balans tussen teorie en praktyk.
2.	Current developments in this field were highlighted.	4	3	2	1	Huidige ontwikkelings in hierdie veld is uitgelig.
3.	The learning material are covered at the right level for the students needs.	4	3	2	1	Die leermateriaal word aangebied op die regte vlak volgens die studente se behoeftes.
B.	**Organisation**					**Organisasie**
4.	Lectures and/or tutorials/practicals were appropriately linked with regard to module content.	4	3	2	1	Lesings en/of tutoriale/praktika is toepaslik gekoppel met die module inhoud.
5.	Different activities (e.g. groupwork)	4	3	2	1	Verskillende aktiwiteite (bv. groepwerk) is goed

	Content	Almost always / Byna altyd	Frequently / Dikwels	Sometimes / Somtyds	Almost never / Byna nooit	Inhoud
	were well organised.					georganiseer.
6.	The order of the material developed logically over the semester/year.	4	3	2	1	Die orde van die materiaal het logies gedurende die semester/jaar ontwikkel.
C.	**Teaching materials**					**Onderrigmateriaal**
7.	Overall the teaching material (handouts, study guides) were of high quality.	4	3	2	1	Oor die algemeen was die onderrigmateriaal (uitdeelstukke, studiegidse) van hoë kwaliteit.
8.	The recommended textbook(s) provided useful information in this field of study.	4	3	2	1	Die aanbevole handboek(e) het nuttige inligting in die vakgebied voorsien.
9.	Study guides assisted the learning process.	4	3	2	1	Studiegidse het die leerproses ondersteun.
D.	**Practical work (where applicable)**					**Praktiese werk (waar toepaslik)**
10.	Learning experience outside the lecture hall (eg. field work, clinical work) took place.	4	3	2	1	Leerervarings het plaasgevind buite die lesinglokaal (bv. veldwerk, kliniese werk)
11.	Practical sessions were well organised	4	3	2	1	Praktiese sessies is goed georganiseer.
12.	Laboratory/practical sessions were a valuable component of this subject.	4	3	2	1	Laboratorium/praktiese sessies was 'n waardevolle komponent van die vak.
13.	There was adequate time for the students to complete practical exercises.	4	3	2	1	Daar was voldoende tyd vir die studente om die praktiese oefeninge te voltooi.
14.	The laboratory sessions introduced important practical skills.	4	3	2	1	Die laboratoriumsessies het belangrike praktiese vaardighede teweeggebring
E.	**Assessment (tests, examinations, assignments) and feedback**					**Assessering (toetse, eksamens, opdragte) en terugvoer**
15.	The assessments/assignments were a fair test of the students knowledge.	4	3	2	1	Die assesserings/opdragte was 'n regverdige toetsing van die studente se kennis.
16.	Assessment criteria were clearly defined.	4	3	2	1	Assesseringskriteria was duidelik gedefinieer.
17.	Assessment tasks reflected the outcomes stated as specified in the studyguide.	4	3	2	1	Assesseringstake het die uitkomste soos gestel in die studiegids gereflekteer.
18.	The assessments were a useful learning exercise for students.	4	3	2	1	Die assesserings was 'n nuttige leeroefening vir die studente.
19.	The students understood the assessment questions	4	3	2	1	Die studente het die assesseringsvrae goed verstaan.

6. Learning outcomes				6. Leeruitkomste	
	The following skills and competencies were addressed in the module:	Yes / Ja	No / Nee	Die volgende bekwaamhede en vaardighede word aangespreek in die module:	
1	Problem-solving skills: Identifying and solving problems	1	2	Probleemoplossingsvaardighede: Identifisering en oplossing van probleme	
2	Team work: Working effectively with others in a team/group	1	2	Spanwerk: Effektiewe samewerking met ander in 'n span/groep	
3	Organising and managing oneself: To manage yourself and your activities responsibly	1	2	Organisering en selfbestuur: Om jouself en jou aktiwiteite selfstandig te bestuur	
4	Research skills: To collect, analyse, organise and evaluate information	1	2	Navorsingsvaardighede: Die versameling, analisering, organisering en evaluering van inligting	
5	Communication skills: To communicate effectively in oral and written mode	1	2	Kommunikasievaardighede: Om effektief op 'n verbale of geskrewe wyse te kommunikeer	
6	Technological literacy: To use science and technology effectively	1	2	Tegnologiese geletterdheid: Om wetenskap en tegnologie effektief te gebruik	
7	Holistic approach: To demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems	1	2	Holistiese benadering: Om die wêreld as 'n stel verbandhoudende stelsels waar te neem	

Dankie vir die tyd wat u bestee het met die voltooing van die vraelys/

Thank you for your time in completing this questionnaire