

# Feedback on Online and Blended Teaching

## - General Tips



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## About this Guide

### Who is this guide for?

All Maynooth University staff who teach/support teaching



### Time to read guide

5 mins

### When should I use this guide?

When you are planning to gather feedback from students on their experiences of online and blended learning

## Seeking Feedback on Online and Blended Learning v Seeking Feedback on Classroom Teaching – What's the Difference?

There is a growing body of research on the gathering of student feedback on online courses. Most of this literature relates to modules and programmes that were purposely designed to be online rather than the result of an 'emergency pivot' to online teaching such as that which took place in response to Covid-19. This literature, however, valuably suggests that feedback should not be gathered on online/blended modules in exactly the same way as traditional face-to-face modules (Ravenscroft *et al.*, 2017; Nordmann *et al.*, 2020).

The following considerations should be borne in mind:

Online teaching methods sometimes create confusion about the exact roles that instructors and students are expected to fulfil. It may be worth gathering feedback on these subjects.

Online courses encourage a different kind of relationship between home and study compared with classroom-based teaching. The ways in which students respond to this should be investigated.

Online programmes frequently receive lower evaluation scores than their face-to-face counterparts.

Students' opinions of online and blended teaching and learning may improve as they become more familiar with these methods (Tratnik *et al.*, 2019; Li *et al.*, 2017).

## Useful Tips for Gathering Good Quality Feedback on Online and Blended Modules and Programmes

Avoid questions about matters that do not apply in an online or blended environment; if adapting a feedback method that has been developed for a fully face-to-face environment, be sure to remove questions that are not relevant.

Include separate sections for questions on technical matters and teaching issues, this enables students to separate their feedback on technical difficulties from their opinions about teaching (Gómez-Rey *et al.*, 2018).

Focus groups and similar qualitative methods can be useful for shedding light on matters that you did not consider when planning your feedback questions (Cochran *et al.*, 2016). This may prove valuable for identifying the unexpected impacts of measures adopted in an emergency.

Ensure the feedback methods used do not further exclude students that had difficulties accessing online teaching and learning. For example, if poor internet connection prevented students from attending online tutorials then they may not be able to participate in online focus groups. Adopt at least some feedback methods that allow students with poor access to internet or keyboard devices to participate.

Include questions about how students with caring or similar responsibilities can be better supported when learning at home.

If possible, gather ongoing feedback from the same students to assess whether students' attitudes to online learning change as they become more familiar with it.

## Resources

National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.

### **INDEX Irish National Digital Experience Survey. Findings from Students and Staff who Teach in Higher Education**

NSteP resources including **Quick Guide for Staff Who Teach: Supporting Student Engagement during the Covid-19 Crisis** and **Quick Guide on Hosting Online Staff-Student Committees: Supporting Student Engagement during the Covid-19 Crisis**

Surrey Assessment and Learning Lab **Feedback Opportunities in Online Learning**

## References

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**Date of Publication:** March 2021.

**Authors:** Joe Curran, Centre for Teaching and Learning, and Student Feedback and Teaching Evaluation Initiative Team.

The Student Feedback and Teaching Evaluation Initiative (aka Enhancing Teaching and Learning through Programme and Module Evaluation Initiative) was funded by the Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning Enhancement Funding in Higher Education 2019 – SATLE (HEA in partnership with the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education).

How to cite this guide: Curran, Joe, Centre for Teaching and Learning, and Student Feedback and Teaching Evaluation Initiative Team. (2021). *Maynooth University Student Feedback and Teaching Evaluation Initiative Guide: Feedback on Online and Blended Teaching - General Tips*. Maynooth: Maynooth University.



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