AHELO Feasibility Study
Australian Participation

Phase 1 Outcomes

AHELO Australia Symposium
ACER
October 27, 2011
• AHELO Phase 1
• Australian engagement, participation and implementation
• Qualitative Outcomes
Implementing Phase 1

Student Focus Groups and Academic Review

Analyses of outcomes

Analyses of feedback

Revision of instruments

Final AHELO instruments
Participating Australian Universities

Charles Darwin University
Curtin University of Technology
James Cook University
Swinburne University of Technology
The University of Adelaide
The University of Melbourne
The University of New South Wales
The University of Newcastle
University of Technology Sydney
University of Western Sydney
• 78 student participants from Australian universities – final year Civil Engineering

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<td>Total students</td>
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• Two hour session
• Students undertook one Constructed Response Task and two modules of MCQs (60 mins)
• Students completed short survey about the assessment items
• Moderator conducted focus group discussion of assessment items, guided from ‘IC Manual’
Outcomes possible from next phase will likely include:

• Reliable estimates at institution level
• Ability to examine outcomes by student characteristics
• Benchmarking against ‘like’ institutions internationally
Qualitative Outcomes

Responses to the student feedback survey

*Items of focus:*

- The task challenged me to think (*challenge*)
- The materials stimulated my interest in the task (*interest*)
- The task made me apply knowledge and skills in real-world ways (*apply*)
- The task assessed an appropriate range of knowledge and skills (*range*)
- The task was relevant to my program of study (*program*)
- The task was relevant to future professional practice (*future*)
Qualitative Outcomes

Feedback on Constructed Response Tasks

[Bar chart showing feedback on various aspects of constructed response tasks, with categories on the x-axis (Challenge, Interest, Apply, Range, Program, Future) and response categories on the y-axis (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neither, Agree, Strongly Agree).]
**Feedback from Moderator Survey**

**Constructed Response Tasks paraphrasing of responses:**

- The task made sense and the instructions were adequate.
- Students general approach/strategy to completing this task by scanning the full task and all questions, then going back and working through sequentially. Although some just worked thru sequentially and others scanned then answered the ‘easy’ questions first.
- Was the task interesting?
  - Overwhelmingly – ‘Yes’, because: diagrams, ‘real-world problems’, ‘different to how we are tested usually’.
Feedback on MCQs

![Bar chart showing feedback on MCQs with categories: Challenge, Interest, Apply, Range, Program, Future. The chart uses colors to represent Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neither, Agree, and Strongly Agree responses.](chart.png)
Feedback from Moderator Survey
MCQ Modules paraphrasing of responses:

• Formulas would have helped:
  • ‘would have been able to answer more with a reference sheet’
  • ‘guessing doesn’t happen in real world engineering scenario’
  • used to having this material in uni assessments
• Some felt there was knowledge required that hadn’t been covered in their course due to electives, or that subject not until next semester.
• There was familiarity in the format – ‘more like uni tasks’
• Very recall/memory oriented:
  • frustration at not remembering: ‘I’ve forgotten so much!’
  • would have been ‘easy’ if asked at the time of learning this content
• Was the task interesting?
  • Less so than Constructed Response Task
    • not so real-world oriented
    • seemed less relevant
Qualitative Outcomes

Feedback from Academic Review (3 institutions)

• General feedback similar to that picked up by students in terms of content, recall, etc.

• There was some suggestion that the content (esp MCQs) was focused on the early stages of degree, rather than final years.

• Some felt that assessment covers only a small amount of total course content – will this allow for valid comparisons between institutions?

• Other more specific item-based feedback taken into the specific item review process.