

MEDIA RELEASE

400 000 university students to have their say

23 July 2012: Around 400 000 students from 40 universities are set to have their say on core aspects of their university experience, in what will potentially be Australia's largest ever survey of higher education which opens this week.

The University Experience Survey (UES) is being conducted to help universities and government learn more about students' experiences at university, and how they can improve teaching and learning.

First-year and final-year students will report on how active and engaged they are in learning, the support they experience from teachers and universities, and the degree to which they develop skills and knowledge.

The UES is an Australian Government initiative to help ensure ongoing improvement in the quality of learning and teaching in Australian universities. The survey focuses on aspects of the student experience that are measurable, linked with learning and development outcomes, and for which universities can reasonably be assumed to have responsibility.

The Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education appointed a consortium led by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) to administer the 2012 UES.

ACER's Higher Education Research Director, Associate Professor Hamish Coates, said the survey is a powerful tool for both universities and students.

"A lot of research and development work has gone into the survey to ensure that it can provide valid, reliable and generalisable information to inform ongoing improvement in the quality of learning and teaching in Australian universities," Coates said.

The survey is being administered online to a sample of first-year and final-year students, including domestic and international onshore students, in all 37 public institutions as well as in participating private institutions.

Students selected to participate in the UES will be contacted between July and September. Their involvement will help inform student choice, as results may be published on the My University website.

A report on the 2012 survey is due for release in December. The report will include a strategy for using the UES for the purposes of international benchmarking, as well as detailed discussion of results and any other significant findings emerging from the research.

In addition to the project report, the consortium will prepare and provide detailed diagnostic and benchmarking reports for each participating institution. National and institution-specific data sets will also be produced.

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