

Covid-19 – Week Four Check In Survey: Response from the Department of Education UG

Dear EWP Students

Thank you for completing the Week 4 survey. The Education Department had the highest satisfaction rate (73%) of any department in the university. Nevertheless, there were some helpful suggestions, and I am writing now to let you know how we are responding to them.

There was a very positive response to online lectures, including to the fact that they are recorded, and to the in-person seminars. The overriding view was that seminar discussion allows you to consolidate your understanding. Several comments were directed at university-wide policies rather than departmental- or programme-level policies: for example, concerning timetables, fees, facilities on campus, the buses, and how to improve safety. All these comments will have been considered carefully by the university.

The comments that related more directly to the Education with Psychology programme included one that called for more organisation between lectures and seminars. It is certainly true that the gap between lectures and seminars differs between units and is not always ideal. The timetable is centrally administered: we are allocated the lecture slots and the in-person seminar days, so we cannot always guarantee an ideal relationship between them; nevertheless, we will take this point into account when planning the seminars for Semester 2 and try to mitigate awkward overlaps.

Another comment referred to there being too many breakout groups in lectures: "just focus on giving us the information". This view was contradicted by others, but we will take the whole range of opinions into account in reviewing our teaching this semester. We are learning with you on this and it has been a steep learning curve for us all.

Another comment mentioned tutors overrunning their time in the in-person seminars. We recognise that that does cause inconvenience, and that some of you have work and other commitments to get to at the end of your four hours of IPT. **We will include that in our feedback to staff, try to make changes for the rest of the semester, and this point will also be included in the induction of Semester 2 lecturers and seminar tutors.**

Some comments related to assignment support. Although it was a bit early, in Week 4, to be focussing on that, we recognise that what assignment support will become available in the later part of the semester, needs to be clearer from the start. You are entitled to seek assignment support in your seminars and/or from your unit convenors. **We will make sure that you receive specific information about this from your tutors and unit convenors.**

An important point that was made in the survey and was also raised by academic reps at the recent Staff-Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) meeting, concerns a lack of clarity about tasks and readings on Moodle. You would like them to be prioritised, so that it is clearer which are essential and which optional. **We will make improvements so that readings and tasks on Moodle are indicated accordingly.**

There will be another satisfaction survey in Week 8. Since week 4, things have changed, with the Government's four-week lockdown having prompted some students to go home (although far fewer for

EWP than for some programmes). Together with varying rates of self-isolation, this has tended to deplete and unsettle some of the seminar groups. We have made a few permanent changes and have attempted to adjust groups week-by-week. I'd like to thank you all, and also the seminar tutors, for your flexibility and resilience in what have been increasingly challenging circumstances. It will be important that you give us feedback in the Week 8 Survey on how the last few weeks have been for you.

If you have any feedback or suggestions at any point in this or next semester, do please email me, unit convenors, seminar tutors, or your academic reps. Thanks.

Best wishes
Graham

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