

Paper 2

Valuable Voices; Invaluable Teaching/Learning Experiences

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Abstract

Providing excellent learning experiences for university students often depends on the ability of educators to understand students' learning needs. Formal and informal data collection tools are used to capture the students' voice which must be heard, understood and responded to appropriately by academic staff. At Curtin University in Western Australia the methods of enabling student experience to be voiced have developed over the last decade. Previously, manual data collection methods such as the Student Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ) and the Unit Evaluation Questionnaire (UEQ) were used. However, since 2006 an online tool, eVALUate, has been used each semester to collect this data across the university. Despite the eVALUate tool being developed through consultative processes within the university, some academics have criticised its use because of low return rates, issues of interpretation about some questions and the diversity of contexts to which the same questions are applied. Although staff members are provided with reports quickly because of the electronic system, the data is collected at the end of semester and reports to academics are provided after students have left the units. Thus, as a summative report, academics are not able to respond directly to the students providing the feedback.

Moreover, each of the seven sub-schools at Curtin Business School (CBS) determines its own methods for obtaining interim feedback from students in order to improve teaching/learning processes and individual academics react differently to available formative feedback. In 2009, a faculty-wide, CBS survey was conducted to identify methods that were used to encourage students to give voice to their experience and describe the associated costs/benefits of the usage of the devices. Data were collected by approaching the teaching & learning representatives of the seven sub-schools and asking them to respond to the questions in collaboration with their School colleagues. Their responses were collated and analysed by the Coordinator of Teaching & Learning and the results of the survey were reported back to Schools through the CBS Teaching & Learning Committee representatives. The current paper is used to review some of the literature in relation to giving voice to the student experience, particularly related to the way in which it has been achieved at Curtin University. A description of the research methodology and the results of the CBS staff survey are discussed. It was apparent that a multiplicity of methods was used to give voice to the student experience. This multi-method approach is appropriate given the diverse nature of the student population at universities and is offered as a contribution to the critical approach to the theme of student voice in this conference.

Introduction

In March 2008 the Hon. Julia Gillard MP, Australia's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education, initiated a review of the Australian higher education sector. The review incorporated national consultation with a range of stakeholders and the receipt of 450 formal submissions. The final report, known as the *Bradley Review*, was released in December 2008. The *Bradley Review* highlighted the changes that have occurred in the higher education sector in Australia over recent decades and the current need for improvement in the resourcing and performance of the sector. Significantly, the *Bradley Review* noted "a high-quality student experience is central to the future of higher education ... students are more likely to complete their studies if they are satisfied ... [and] return to study if they have had a positive experience previously" (Bradley, Noonan, Nugent, & Scales, 2008: 69).

The provision of a high-quality student experience is important to the staff of Curtin University and, more specifically, to academics in the Curtin Business School - the largest of the university's five faculties. Curtin Business School (CBS) is a comprehensive teaching and research facility, with an extensive multi-national

reach and over 15,000 students from 70 countries. CBS has an international reputation as a practical, innovative institution that has consistently educated and developed industry-ready graduates for the global business community. To maintain this reputation and meet the current and future needs of its students, it is imperative for academic staff in CBS to provide and develop opportunities for student voice that staff can respond to.

In this paper a range of methods of giving voice to the student experience are explored. Literature is reviewed in relation to mechanisms used to evaluate the student experience on a national level, and international comparisons are made. Also, literature is reviewed to provide background information about how Curtin University has developed and used various instruments to evaluate the student experience over the decade from 1999 to 2009. Specifically, research was conducted within CBS to investigate the opportunities business school students have to voice their opinions about their university learning experiences and how the faculty academics respond to student feedback. As a result of reviewing the literature and conducting the research it is apparent that there is a range of alternative approaches to giving voice to the student experience, some of which have been intensively and extensively researched. Even so, the quest to respond to student feedback in such a way that it improves the student experience in a demonstrable way remains complex and challenging.

The Student Experience in Australia

The primary national instrument used to collect summative data about the student experience is the Australian Graduate Survey (AGS) which is comprised of two components – the Graduate Destination Survey (GDS) and the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) or, alternatively, the Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire (PREQ). In Australia, the AGS is administered approximately four months after students complete their university courses; it is used to collect data in relation to students' work, study, salaries and course satisfaction. The preliminary results of the 2008 AGS indicated that of the graduates from bachelor degrees who were available for full-time work 85.2% were employed full-time; these results were the strongest employment figures for new graduates since 1990. In 2008, the majority of students were broadly satisfied with their courses (they answered '3', '4' or '5' on a 5 point scale); dissatisfaction was minimal (they answered '1' or '2' on a 5 point scale). Since 2000, the percentage of students who stated they were satisfied (they answered '4' or '5' on a 5 point scale) has remained stable between 68-71% (Graduate Careers Australia, 2008).

The CEQ has been used in Australia since 1993 but in 2005 the United Kingdom (UK) began using it to evaluate the experiences of final year university students (Bradley et al., 2008; Graduate Careers Australia, 2008). Seven items were compared; *overall satisfaction, communication skills, tackling unfamiliar problems, I received helpful feedback, teaching staff made the subject interesting, staff are good at explaining things, and staff put a lot of time into commenting on my work.* A comparison of similar items from the 2006 CEQ results in Australia and the UK indicated that in all but one category universities in the UK outperformed their Australian counterparts. For example, British students were 35% more satisfied than Australian students in relation to the item - *staff are good at explaining things.* Australian students were slightly more satisfied than British students with the receipt of *helpful feedback* (Bradley et al., 2008). Some consideration could be given to the difference in the timing of the data collection, because better results from the CEQ could have been obtained by surveying final year students. Even so, Australian students were generally less satisfied than British students (Bradley et al., 2008; Oliver, Tucker, Gupta, & Yeo, 2008).

In 2007 the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) piloted the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE) which was derived from the College Student Report – a component of the United States National Survey of Student Engagement. Twenty of the 39 Australian universities and five universities in New Zealand participated in the AUSSE pilot (Bradley et al., 2008; Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2009). The data derived from the AUSSE made it possible to compare the experiences of Australian and New Zealand university students with those of students in North American

universities. Five categories of student experience were compared; *academic challenge, active learning, student and staff interactions, enriching educational experience, and supportive learning environment.*

The comparative results showed that “Australian results were below those of the United States and Canada for every scale, although slightly above those of New Zealand in most categories” (Bradley et al., 2008:76).

Consequently, the *Bradley Review* panel proposed strategies to enhance the experience of Australian university students. Some of the strategies included changed funding arrangements, the development of a broader accountability system and tools to measure and monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Furthermore, they recommended that Australian accredited higher education providers continue to administer and provide annual reports on the Graduate Destination Survey, the Course Experience Questionnaire and, from 2009, also utilise the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (Bradley et al., 2008).

Curtin’s Quest to Give Voice to the Student Experience

At a national level, the CEQ was used by the Australian Government to gather data about students’ reflections on their university learning experiences. Data were collected after students had completed their courses and entered the workforce and results were analysed and reported back to the universities. Until recently it was difficult to analyse the qualitative component of the CEQ. However, the development of CEQuery, a qualitative analysis tool, has greatly assisted in the analysis of students’ open-ended comments about their university experiences. Over a two year period, 2004-2005, funding was provided for *Accessing the Student Voice: Using CEQuery to identify what retains and promotes engagement in productive learning in higher education.* Curtin, along with participants from thirteen other universities in Australia, participated in this extensive collaborative research project that systematically investigated students’ open-ended comments in the CEQ (Scott, 2005). The outcomes of this research were disseminated through a series of workshops, forums and reports.

At a local level, academics at Curtin, like their counterparts in other universities, sought to gather formative data about students’ learning experiences as they progressed through their courses. One of the earlier monitoring tools, the Student Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ) survey, was designed and validated in 1982 (Marsh, in Oliver et al., 2008). SEEQ was used on a voluntary basis by lecturers and the results were given only to the participating lecturer.

From 1999-2002, both within the faculties and at the university level, research and development of monitoring tools based on the CEQ occurred. In the Curtin Business School, the Unit Experience Questionnaire (UEQ) was developed and administered at the end of semesters or trimesters. In the School of Physiotherapy, the Course Experience on the Web (CEW) was developed. Evidence from the use of the CEW showed the benefits of including an instrument that could predict the likely outcomes of the CEQ and provide academics with enough warning to make adjustments to their teaching and learning programmes to enhance the student experience before their course of units was completed. The Curtin Annual Student Satisfaction (CASS) Survey has been used across the university each year since 2002 to measure students’ satisfaction with their overall experiences at Curtin (Curtin University of Technology, 2009; Dixon & Scott, 2003; Dixon, Scott, & Dixon, 2007; Oliver et al., 2008; Straker & Smith, 2000; Tucker, Jones, Straker, & Cole, 2003).

These instruments did not provide sufficient information to inform improvement of teaching and learning at the unit level across the university. Hence, the need to provide an instrument that targeted “students’ perceptions of what helps them to learn ... what students bring to the teaching-learning experience ... and students’ overall satisfaction with the unit” was recognised across the university (Oliver et al., 2008: 622). In 2003 broad consultation with stakeholders, development and trial of a student experience survey, known as *eVALUate*, began. Development occurred in four phases and included three pilot studies, unstructured interviews, paper-based and online questionnaires. The final version was piloted in November 2005 and, subsequently, implemented in Semester 1 2006 at Curtin’s campuses in Western Australia, Sydney and

Malaysia (Oliver et al., 2008). Since 2006 the implementation of *e*VALUate has broadened and been subject to ongoing analysis and reporting. In 2009 *e*VALUate was available for use in Summer School, Semester 1, Semester 2, Trimester 1, Trimester 2 and Trimester 3. It was available in all of Curtin's Australian campuses and nine offshore campuses located in Malaysia, Mauritius, Singapore and Hong Kong (Tucker & Pegden, 2009). Within the Curtin Business School, in alignment with the rest of Curtin University, *e*VALUate has been implemented for seven successive semesters and cumulative data have been collected. Because the focus of this research is on the different ways that CBS academics give voice to the student experience only *e*VALUate data in relation to CBS is reported in this paper.

Research Methodology

In this research, mixed methods were used to collect the data. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected through the administration of a survey. Participants were purposively selected because of their pivotal role as Directors of Teaching and Learning within the seven CBS Schools. Ethical issues concerning research with humans were considered. All participants were informed about the purposes of the research and given the opportunity to volunteer their participation. No participants were coerced and all participants had the right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured. At the conclusion of the research the findings were presented to the CBS Teaching and Learning Committee of which the participants were members. Also, the results were disseminated to the wider academic community through conference presentations and scholarly publications.

Participants had the option of completing the survey using their own knowledge as School Directors of Teaching and Learning or to consult with their staff. By selecting these key people, the researcher aimed to minimise the workload for a majority of academic staff. Consequently, the survey was sent to the CBS Schools' Directors of Teaching and Learning. There were responses from six of the seven CBS sub-Schools; thus, the return rate was 86%. Four Directors of Teaching and Learning completed the survey on behalf of their School peers, the fifth completed it individually as a coordinator of a very large unit and the sixth delegated the task to an associate who, subsequently, interviewed and recorded the responses of the unit coordinators within their School. The survey responses were tallied by the researcher and the results synthesized. Thus, the research results are presented in this paper as descriptive paragraphs.

In addition to the data collected through the survey, the researcher also collected data from the *e*VALUate University Aggregated Reports (Tucker & Pegden, 2008, 2009) which were published on Curtin's website and available to staff and students. The data in these reports were collected over time as a result of the university-wide *e*VALUate student surveys and, subsequently, analysed by a team of experts within Curtin's Office of Teaching and Learning and published to report back to the University community. Also, previously, the researcher had assisted two of the CBS Schools to collect their own formative data about the student experience through student interviews and the Stop, Start, Continue student survey.

As part of her role as CBS Coordinator of Teaching and Learning, the researcher had communicated with faculty academics about ways in which they responded to feedback they received from students. Consequently, the researcher had a sound knowledge of the various ways in which the student voice was expressed and responded to within the faculty. The co-author of this paper, an expert in the fields of education and research, scrutinised and informed the interpretation of the results. Thus, triangulation occurred and the conclusions presented in this paper were verified. In the following sections the different methods of giving voice to the student experience used within CBS are identified, together with the results from the *e*VALUate University Aggregated Reports (Tucker & Pegden, 2009) and the faculty survey.

Giving Voice to the Student Experience in Curtin Business School

The results of the faculty survey and information on the Curtin website indicated a variety of mechanisms were used to collect data about the student experience. Three distinct levels of data collection were reported

to be used to identify the students' voice, with strong support by staff for the different techniques. The first set of techniques involved four well-established, statistically-based surveys that provided summative data regarding the students' experiences. The CEQ and CASS provided information about students' experiences at the course level. The two eVALUate surveys provided information about students' experiences within their units of study and with their lecturers and were formal institutional data collection tools.

The second set of techniques comprised of six activities which were less formal collections of data and formative in nature; i.e., staff were able to respond to the voice of the students and make on-going changes or corrections in the presentation of their unit. They were the Stop Start Continue student survey, interviewing student representatives, focus groups, obtaining class-level feedback, during semester assessments and the writing of learning journals. The third set of techniques used to recognize students' voices can be described as incidental occasions which provide formative data to enable staff to respond directly to students' needs. The two major incidental types identified were feedback through personal staff/student contacts and online discussion boards. In the following section, the discussion of the twelve various techniques is informed by the responses of CBS research participants.

Summative Methods

Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ)

The CEQ is an externally managed national process that targets all students on completion of their courses and investigates their course experience. Results are later released to the university and its faculties. One of the School Directors of Teaching and Learning stated:

I'm not sure that this one has been that useful. The data tends to be from experiences some years before and there are often small numbers sometimes from less representative places like small offshore partners. I've not seen it used in a relevant, systematic way that really impacts down to the unit level (DTL 1).

Curtin Annual Student Satisfaction (CASS) survey

CASS is a centrally managed university-wide annual survey for all students. The questions in the survey extend beyond the scope of students' experience in relation to specific units. The surveys are conducted online and lecturers do not participate in the process. Aggregated results are published on the Curtin website. Specific reports are provided internally for key stakeholders. Participants were not asked to comment on the CASS survey.

eVALUate (unit focus)

In 2009 eVALUate was available for use in Summer School, Semester 1, Semester 2, Trimester 1, Trimester 2 and Trimester 3. It was available in all of Curtin's Australian campuses and its nine offshore campuses. Access to results is limited to the Dean of Teaching and Learning, Head of School and Unit Coordinator who may share the results with lecturers but must ensure that no data identifying individuals are made known. The majority of respondents in the faculty survey indicated that little effort was required by them to use eVALUate because it is an automated online instrument managed centrally by the Office of Teaching and Learning. They also noted that response rates were either low (below 35%) or medium (36-59%). The data from the eVALUate University Reports shown in Table 1 below confirm participants' perceptions of the response rates for eVALUate. The shaded scores are below the target response rate of 35%: though, response rates have improved over time.

Table 1 CBS eVALUate response rates 2006-2009

Teaching Period	Number of Units	Response Rate
Semester 1 2006	316	23.7%
Semester 2 2006	326	24.9%
Semester 1 2007	310	36.2%
Semester 2 2007	315	31.3%
Semester 1 2008	314	39.9%
Semester 2 2008	312	38%
Semester 1 2009	287	38.6%

Source: Adapted from Tucker & Pedgen, 2008, 2009.
Adapted from

Participants' responses varied when asked to comment on the impact of *eVALUate*. Some noted it had low impact and provided minimal gains, others stated it had medium impact and provided moderate gains, and others claimed it had high impact and provided high gains. Similarly the perceptions varied about the types of gains it offered. Participants noted that the use of *eVALUate*:

1. Demonstrated compliance with University requirements;
2. Provided evidence that could be used for academic promotion;
3. Identified targets for improvement;
4. Was a cathartic experience; and
5. Explained the situation.

Comments from Schools' Directors of Teaching and Learning who spoke on behalf of the lecturers in their Schools noted that *eVALUate* was institutionally supported and administered centrally. Specifically, a Director of Teaching and Learning noted;

at the start students were not able to be discriminating about the content and context of their unit; or to identify what they or the lecturer had control over (DTL 2).

Responses from lecturers in one School were somewhat negative about the use of *eVALUate*. They noted that:

This as a stand alone method of evaluating unit or teacher performance is ridiculous (L1).

It is a rough general indicator as to whether a course is what students expected, but what do they expect (L2)? Targeted, relatively easy – instant feedback on performance of unit (L3).

***eVALUate* (teacher focus)**

This is voluntary and confidential and results can only be accessed by the teacher who requested the survey. Respondents indicated that 'all', 'most' and '50%' of lecturers request the teacher survey. DTL participants comments about the level of difficulty in collecting the data and the impact of *eVALUate* (teacher focus) were consistent with the comments they made about the impact of *eVALUate* (unit focus). Lecturers' comments about the usefulness of this method of data collection ranged from:

independent unbiased in terms of voluntary responses (L3) to ... not valid feedback on teaching performance (L4) to ... what alternatives do we have (L5)?

Formative Methods

Stop Start Continue Survey (SSC)

This is a survey in which students note, in writing, what lecturers or tutors should stop, start or continue doing in a particular unit. It is usually administered mid-semester so that lecturers can respond to student

feedback promptly. The SSC survey was used in a majority of Schools and respondents stated that they used it either once per year or once per teaching period.

In one School individual lecturers had mixed feelings about the effort required to administer the SSC. Almost half of the respondents noted the effort required was excessive but the remainder felt that it was reasonable. Interestingly, in two of the Schools where the SSC is used there are specialised teaching and learning personnel who provide support to academic staff through the collation and analysis of the SSC data. Typically, lecturers noted that student response rates for the SSC were high and usually high gains were achieved. The most frequently identified gains were the identification of targets for improvement and the explanation of the situation. Lecturers noted:

the SSC was relatively easy and quick to administer ... provided feedback early in the unit – time to respond (L3); valid and practical (L6) and; great feedback and students feel good about it (L7).

Interviewing student representatives

In specific units, students nominate to represent the voices and experiences of their peers to provide feedback to lecturers. Respondents stated they interviewed student representatives either once per year, once per teaching period or on an ad hoc basis. Even so, in most Schools student representatives were rarely interviewed. The Director of Teaching and Learning in one School explained why they decided to discontinue the practice;

We stopped doing this because there was concern about the identification of the student representative. Also there were issues about representation and what exactly was the role of the student rep. Whilst we could have persisted it was a good deal of work, not institutionally supported, and open to some problems and risks (DLT 1).

Focus groups

These are groups of students who volunteer to participate in a collaborative discussion about particular items of interest within specific units. Respondents stated they used focus groups to provide feedback on individual units or courses in general, usually no more than once per annum. However, some lecturers used them more regularly at the unit level with their students:

for the specific purpose teaching due to the composition of students (L10).

The Director of Teaching and Learning in one School noted:

whilst useful on an ad-hoc basis, they are quite time consuming to set up – so unless they are institutionally supported and integrated it is always extra work for the Schools (DTL 1).

During semester students' assessment

Formal student outcomes achieved as a result of students' participation with specific assessment items enabled the majority of respondents to reflect on student performance at least on a monthly basis. Assessment points enabled individual and group voices to be heard when assessments were returned to students. Some individual respondents thought it was reasonable to respond to feedback from students' assessment and others thought it was difficult. Participants who spoke for their Schools noted that reflecting on student results was a reasonable expectation. Reflection on student assessment brought high gains in terms of identification of targets for improvement and explanation of the situation; some respondents noted that it demonstrated compliance. Lecturers commented that student assessment results:

give you a feel for where they are going wrong (L4) and that we have an obligation to give timely and meaningful feedback (L9).

Class-level feedback

In one School a questionnaire was administered during weeks 4/5 of every teaching period in 50% of the units. The perception was that the questionnaires could be administered within the current workload structure and resulted in moderate return rates (36-59%) and medium level gains. In another School they used a questionnaire once to evaluate a project. Other Schools stated they used other mechanisms but did not specify further.

Student reflection and journal writing

A number of staff noted the 'teaching' of strategies for giving and receiving feedback encouraged students to interact more with staff and fellow students; the consequence being that students were more confident about their ability to interact, more direct in addressing relevant issues and more able to receive feedback and react positively to it.

Several respondents identified the task of having students keep a weekly journal of their learning as being particularly useful. By recording their progress regularly, using a basic technique such as E.R.G.A. (Experience, Reflection, Generalisation, and Application) or P.M.I. (Pluses, Minuses, and Ideas), students were able to express their voice about positive or negative aspects of their development. The writing process encouraged students to be quite specific in identifying pros and cons of their progress, which enabled them to voice their opinions more readily in learning team and class situations. A Director of Teaching and Learning noted:

the use of the learning journal has been a fillip for students and staff. Staff realized students did not understand, and battled to learn and practice the use of feedback techniques, let alone learn techniques to help them respond to feedback; whether it be positive or negative. Students' capacity to analyse and be self-critical about their study improved dramatically (DTL 2).

In several units student reflections of their learning were included as part of the assessment.

Incidental Formative Feedback

Feedback through staff/student contact

This is informal anecdotal evidence that occurs as a result of interaction and communication between lecturers and students. Respondents stated lecturers were informed by students' comments within the class as they interacted with them on a weekly basis. The majority of respondents noted students' personally commented to them on a daily basis at each lecture/seminar session; it was easy to receive comments from students and respond to the whole student group. Typically, respondents perceived the impact of interaction with students to be highly beneficial and most frequently identified areas of improvement and explained the situation. Lecturers commented that interacting through communication with students was:

necessary for maintaining a relationship with students (L1); spontaneous and trends can be relayed back to class (L8); honest and non-threatening (L7) and; you get to feel what they are struggling with and what is easy (L4).

Also, the Director of Teaching and Learning in one School noted:

Staff always have an ear open for personal comments. Sometimes it's a link to a generic issue/problem; sometimes it's idiosyncratic, so one has to be open to the possibilities. If it's backed up by other forms of feedback then that strengthens the validity (DTL 1).

A university-wide requirement is that academics allocate two 2-hour sessions per week for student consultation and notify students of their availability for personal contact. It is a rare occasion when there are not at least one or two students that take advantage of these times to visit the lecturer in the privacy of the academic office to discuss personal or learning issues.

Online discussion boards

The typical forum for online discussion at CBS is through the Blackboard learning management system. Respondents stated they received feedback about the student experience via discussion board either daily, weekly, or monthly. Some stated they only used it for online units, others did not specify what type of units they used it in. Lecturers' opinions about the level of difficulty in using discussion boards varied. Distance education lecturers stated:

It's easy. Students communicate this way these days (L9) and they need to talk to each other (L11).

Face-to-face lecturers stated:

It's too time consuming (L5), have tried – not successful (L7) and timely, effective and valid information for teaching staff (L6).

As a method of unit evaluation, a Director of Teaching and Learning commented:

I can't see students committing to this over and above the existing eVALUate (DTL 1).

Responding to the Student Voice at Curtin Business School

Regardless of how many mechanisms are in place for giving voice to the student experience, unless there are appropriate responses from academics and students are aware of the responses, the effort is in vain. To demonstrate their responsiveness lecturers provide students with *feedback*. Students' perception of this *feedback* is measured through formal mechanisms like eVALUate. Traditionally, eVALUate scores across the University and within the major faculties for the item related to feedback have been the lowest of all items. The eVALUate results for the feedback item for CBS and Curtin are compared and shown in Table 2. Although the results have improved progressively over time, the results are still below the target of 80% agreement.

Table 2 .CBS/Curtin Comparison of eVALUate Results 2006-2009:

(Percentage of students who agree with the item "Feedback on my work in this unit helps me to achieve the learning outcomes")

Teaching Period	Feedback CBS	Feedback Curtin
Semester 1 2006	71.5%	70.5%
Semester 2 2006	70.9%	70.8%
Semester 1 2007	74.4%	72.9%
Semester 2 2007	76.2%	74.0%
Semester 1 2008	77.9%	75.7%
Semester 2 2008	78.2%	77%
Semester 1 2009	77.4%	76.3%

Source: Adapted from Tucker & Pedgen (2008, 2009)

Academics have sought to improve their *feedback* to students. One of the contentions has been that students do not always recognise when they are being given *feedback*, so lecturers have increased their use of this term

when they give students *feedback*. Also, lecturers have implemented interim measures to collect data about students' experiences within the teaching period so they can respond to students' concerns in a timely manner and make it known to students that they have responded to their voice. Many of the informal mechanisms, such as Stop Start Continue, have been used for this purpose. Additionally, the improvements based on *eVALUate* are reported in the unit outline (DTL 1). Results from the CBS research show that Schools have responded by increasing resources devoted to teaching and learning and providing professional development for staff. Audience response systems have been purchased and used to increase interaction between lecturers and students in large lectures. Heads of School and Unit Coordinators have discussed *eVALUate* scores with lecturers and developed strategies for improvement. Teaching and Learning consultants have conducted teaching observations and lecturers have reflected on their teaching so they can continually improve their performance. In spite of this there are still some lecturers who are unaware of any of these initiatives.

Conclusion

The student voice has informed the direction of teaching and learning from a national perspective, at the University level and within the Curtin Business School. The *Bradley Review* (2008) provided the Australian Government with recommendations to enhance the experiences of students in Australian universities. Over the last decade Curtin University has developed, refined and implemented several mechanisms to facilitate the expression of students' experiences with their courses and the units within them. Within the Curtin Business School lecturers respond to the student voice expressed through summative, formative and incidental mechanisms. Such responses have led to a continual improvement in teaching and learning. Although gains have been made over time, there is still room for improvement. The provision of effective feedback for students is one of the most challenging teaching endeavours yet pivotal to enhancing the student experience. Not only has expression of the student voice been a valuable experience for students, it has proven to be an invaluable asset for staff in developing excellent teaching/learning experiences.

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