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University Policy on Unit Evaluation

Annex A – Unit Evaluation using Bristol Live Unit Evaluation (Blue)

**Overview**

1. This annex outlines the principles, process and high-level actions around running unit evaluation surveys in Blue. It covers the use of Blue for gathering mid-unit feedback and for running end of unit evaluation. Details and guidance on how to operate the processes can be found in the [Bristol Education Administration Manual (BEAM)](https://uob.sharepoint.com/sites/beam/SitePages/unit-evaluation.aspx) and more general guidance around unit feedback can be found on the [Education and Student Success SharePoint](https://uob.sharepoint.com/sites/education-student-experience/SitePages/Unit-Evaluation.aspx).
2. Relevant to this Annex and attached are:

* Appendix 1:Mid-unit question sets
* Appendix 2: End of unit question sets and additional question banks

**Question Sets**

*Mid-unit feedback*

1. Mid-unit feedback will use one of the standard question sets (A, B, C or D) (see Appendix 1). School Education Directors should consult with Programme and Unit Directors to determine which set is most appropriate, and to decide if/which optional questions might be added. Normally, the owning school will specify the same question set for all units in the same year of each programme. Where units are shared across multiple programmes, the unit’s owning school determines which question set applies.
2. The question sets can be supplemented by optional questions, one pre-determined quantitative question and up to two custom questions which can be specific to the unit, school, discipline or programme; these can be quantitative or qualitative.
3. It is the responsibility of either the Unit Director or nominated Blue School Administrators in the school that owns the unit, to implement the agreed question set and add any agreed additional optional/custom questions in Blue.

*End of unit evaluation*

1. End of unit evaluation will use one of the question sets below depending on the type of unit, either:
2. standard unit;
3. independent study unit (e.g. project/dissertation/case study/portfolio);
4. placement/study abroad unit.
5. For standard units, there is also have the option of adding additional questions from the following pre-defined question banks:
6. labs/practicals question bank;
7. seminar/small group question bank;
8. fieldwork question bank.
9. There is also the option of adding up to three additional unit or programme specific custom questions, these may be quantitative (using the Likert scale) or qualitative (free text box). Optional custom questions may be used to seek feedback on new teaching strategies, new teaching environments, new technologies or changes made in response to previous unit evaluation feedback.
10. It is the responsibility of either the Unit Director or nominated Blue School Administrators in the school that owns the unit, to implement the agreed question set and add any agreed additional optional/custom questions in Blue.
11. The sets of questions and question banks can be found in Appendix 2.

**Timing**

1. This Timing section does not apply to the Bristol Dental, Medical and Veterinary Schools where Blue unit surveys operate on a different schedule. Email [unit-evaluation@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:unit-evaluation@bristol.ac.uk) in case of queries.
2. Blue uses the teaching block assigned to a unit (as defined in the Unit and Programme Catalogue) to determine the mid and end point of a unit. Where a unit does not run according to the [University’s standard teaching blocks](https://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/approve/approvalguidance/faqs/tbdefinitions.html/) (e.g. some units may be designated as a TB-1 unit, but only run over 3 weeks, or units that run over the summer vacation) are not currently able to use Blue for unit evaluation. In case of queries, email [unit-evaluation@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:unit-evaluation@bristol.ac.uk).
3. Unit Evaluation surveys will run according to the following principles;
4. Users cannot change the start date on which evaluation surveys are sent to students.
5. Mid-unit feedback surveys will default to run for 7 days (except for TB4 units, which will run for 14 days).
6. End of unit evaluation surveys will default to run for 14 days.
7. Users can choose to extend the end date for mid-unit feedback surveys for up to 7 days for units running in TB-1, TB-2, TB-4.
8. Users can choose to extend the end date for end of unit evaluation surveys for up to 14 days for units running in TB-1, TB-2, TB-4.
9. Users cannot choose to extend the end date for evaluation surveys (mid and end) for TB1-A, TB1-B, TB2-C and TB2-D units.
10. Surveys will normally operate according to the schedule laid out in Table 1 below.

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| **Table 1: Unit evaluation schedule** | | | |
| **Teaching Block** | **Weeks unit runs** | **Week(s) mid-unit survey will be open\*** | **Weeks end of unit survey will be open\*** |
| TB-1A | Weeks 1 – 6 | Week 3 | Weeks 6 and 7 |
| TB-1 | Weeks 1 – 12 | Week 5 | Weeks 11 and 12 |
| TB-1B | Weeks 7 – 12 | Week 9 | Week 12 and the first week of winter break |
| TB-4 | Weeks 1 – 24 | Weeks 11 and 12 | Weeks 22 to 24\*\* |
| TB-2C | Weeks 13 – 18 | Week 15 | Weeks 18 and 19 |
| TB-2 | Weeks 13 – 24 | Week 17 | Weeks 22 to 24 |
| TB-2D | Weeks 19 – 24 | Week 21 | Week 24 and Revision Week 1 |
| AYEAR | various | n/a no mid-unit survey | Marking week and first week of summer vacation |
| \* May vary depending on when vacations and Bank Holidays fall. Exact dates for a specific year will be published [in SharePoint](https://uob.sharepoint.com/teams/grp-UnitEvaluationProject/SitePages/Unit-Evaluation-Survey-Dates.aspx). | | | |
| \*\* Except for the Bristol Law School | | | |

1. Students will be invited by email to participate in relevant surveys, non-respondents will be sent automated email reminders from Blue (two reminders for mid-unit surveys and three reminders for end of unit surveys) [see [BEAM for email specifications](https://uob.sharepoint.com/sites/beam/SitePages/Unit-evaluation-overview.aspx)].
2. Unit Directors and nominated Blue School Administrators will be notified via an automated email from Blue when a survey has been made available to students. Unit Directors should remind students that the survey is available during any scheduled teaching sessions and encourage completion [see [BEAM guidance](https://uob.sharepoint.com/sites/beam/SitePages/Monitor-and-improve-response-rate.aspx)].

**Reviewing and responding to unit feedback**

1. When a survey closes, Unit Directors will receive an automated email from Blue with instructions of how to access the feedback report and respond to it.
2. As stated in the Policy (points 8 and 10), Unit Directors should review the student feedback provided and complete the response to students form in Blue within:

* 10 working days from the date of the survey closing when responding to mid-unit feedback
* Normally, 15 working days from the date of the survey closing when responding to end of unit feedback (but always by 20 working days from close of survey).

1. Blue has been configured to send Unit Directors three automated reminders to complete and submit the response.
2. The day after a response has been submitted in Blue, it will be made available to students within Blackboard and Blue. Students are automatically notified that a response is available via email. Unit Directors and nominated Blue School Administrators will be able to access the response in the reports section of their Blue Homepage.
3. Unit Directors are encouraged to complete the respond to students form, even if the response rate/number of respondents is low or you are still considering the appropriate actions to take.

**Reporting and Results**

1. Mid-unit feedback reports are available to Unit Directors and Blue School Administrators. For team-taught units, Unit Directors should share the feedback report with relevant teaching colleagues.
2. Access to end of unit evaluation data is determined by the institutional hierarchy and education management roles as set out in Tables 2 and 3.

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| **Table 2: Static report access to end of unit data** | | |
| **Access hierarchy group** | **Reports available** | **Direct access by role via Blue** |
| Unit | * End of unit evaluation report (this is the only report in this table that contains qualitative data from students) * Response to end of unit evaluation report | Unit Directors  Blue School Admins |
| Programme | * Aggregated at programme level, including data on individual units | N/a - see point 24 below |
| Department | * Aggregated at department level, including data on individual units and comparisons with the school | Heads of Department / Directors of Teaching  Blue School Admins |
| School | * Aggregated at school and department level, including data on individual units and comparisons with schools in same faculty * List of units that have had staff respond to their student feedback * Student response rates for individual units | Blue School Admins  School Education Director/s and UG and PG Directors of Teaching or equivalent  Head of School |
| Faculty | * Aggregated at school and department level including data on individual units and comparisons with schools in same faculty * Aggregated at faculty level and showing aggregated school data * List of units that have had staff respond to their student feedback * Student response rates for individual units | Faculty Education Directors  Dean |
| University | * Aggregated at school and department level including data on individual units and comparisons with schools in same faculty * Aggregated at faculty level and showing aggregated school data * Aggregated at University level and showing aggregated faculty and school data * List of units that have had staff respond to their student feedback * Student response rates for individual units | Education & Student Success staff  University Education Directors (Quality)  Associate PVCs  PVC Education |

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| **Table 3: Interactive dashboard access to end of unit data**   * Quantitative and qualitative data available for units within the relevant group, includes individual units and groups of units e.g. by level of study, credit point value, teaching block. * Data available for student respondent demographics within the relevant group (subject to release threshold see pt 27) e.g. by international/home status, ethnicity. | |
| **Access hierarchy group** | **Direct access by role via Blue** |
| School | School Education Director/s  Head of School |
| Faculty (including schools within the faculty) | Faculty Education Directors  Dean |
| University (can see all school and faculty data) | BILT representative  University Education Directors (Quality)  Associate PVCs  PVC Education |

1. It is not possible to utilise the access hierarchy groups in Blue to give access to Programme level reports. Instead Programme Reports will be emailed to the School Education Director/s of the programme owning school, by the unit evaluation team in AQPO, annually each summer. Staff with access to the reports (as set out in Tables 2 & 3) may share these with individuals and committees/groups for the purpose of education enhancement in accordance with the [University’s Data Protection Policy](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/data-protection/policy/).
2. Faculty and University level role holders may request additional data where this is required for the purpose of education enhancement (contact [unit-evaluation@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:unit-evaluation@bristol.ac.uk)).
3. Mid-unit feedback reports and end of unit evaluation reports for individual units will be generated where there are one or more respondents.
4. Student demographic aggregate reports, results will not be shown for groups with less than 5 respondents.
5. Data from incomplete surveys, i.e. surveys students started but did not submit by the closing date, will not be included within reports.

**Data privacy and protection**

1. All data gathered via Blue is processed in accordance with the University’s Data Protection Policy and the [Student Unit Evaluation Privacy Notice](https://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/your-studies/teaching-and-learning/unit-evaluation/), links to the Privacy Notice are provided on the unit surveys welcome page and email notifications.
2. Where a member of staff feels that a student comment raises issues which require follow-up (either that the comment indicates that the respondent or others are at risk of harm or there is a breach of the University [Acceptable Behaviour Policy](https://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/student-rules-regs/)) they should refer this initially to their School Education Director and where necessary, the School Education Director should then contact [unit-evaluation@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:unit-evaluation@bristol.ac.uk) for advice.
3. Student free text responses are not reviewed or redacted before reports are issued.
4. As operators of Blue, staff in the Academic Quality and Policy Office have access to all data and reporting information.
5. Data within Blue will be retained electronically in line with the [University Data Retention Policy](https://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/records/).

**Appendix 1. Mid-unit question sets**

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| **Question Set A** | **Question Set B** | **Question Set C** | **Question Set D** |
| How often are you actively engaging with the content of this unit  [*Answers: Very often;* *Fairly often; Not very often; Rarely*] | How often are you actively engaging with the content of this unit  [*Answers: Very often; Fairly often; Not very often; Rarely*] | How often are you actively engaging with the content of this unit  [*Answers: Very often; Fairly often; Not very often; Rarely*] | How often are you actively engaging with the content of this unit  [*Answers: Very often; Fairly often; Not very often; Rarely*] |
| What is working well and should be continued? | What do you like best about the unit? | What should we do more of? | When have you felt most engaged with your learning in this unit? |
| Is there anything you would like to see improved within the unit? | If there was one thing you could change about this unit, what would it be? | What should we do less of? | When have you felt most disengaged from your learning in this unit? |
| What is exciting you? | Is there an area where you would need more guidance/support to enhance your learning? | What should we continue doing? | What action that anyone has taken have you felt most helpful in this unit? |
| What is challenging you? | Is there anything else you would like to say? | Is there anything else you would like to say? | What has been most puzzling or confusing in this unit? |
| Is there anything else you would like to say? |  |  | Is there anything else you would like to say? |
| *[Option 1]* Generally, how happy are you with the way this unit is going?  *[Answers: Very happy;* *Fairly happy; Not* *very happy; Not at all happy]* | *[Option 1]* Generally, how happy are you with the way this unit is going?  *[Answers: Very happy; Fairly happy; Not very happy; Not at all happy]* | *[Option 1]* Generally, how happy are you with the way this unit is going?  *[Answers: Very happy; Fairly happy; Not very happy; Not at all happy]* | *[Option 1]* Generally, how happy are you with the way this unit is going?  *[Answers: Very happy; Fairly happy; Not very happy; Not at all happy]* |
| *[Option 2]* School/Prog/Unit own question 1, can be qualitative or quantitative *[Likert scale]* | *[Option 2]* School/Prog/Unit own question 1, can be qualitative or quantitative *[Likert scale]* | *[Option 2]* School/Prog/Unit own question 1, can be qualitative or quantitative *[Likert scale]* | *[Option 2]* School/Prog/Unit own question 1, can be qualitative or quantitative *[Likert scale]* |
| *[Option 3]* School/Prog/Unit own question 2, can be qualitative or quantitative *[Likert scale]* | *[Option 3]* School/Prog/Unit own question 2, can be qualitative or quantitative *[Likert scale]* | *[Option 3]* School/Prog/Unit own question 2, can be qualitative or quantitative *[Likert scale]* | *[Option 3]* School/Prog/Unit own question 2, can be qualitative or quantitative *[Likert scale]* |

**Appendix 2. End of unit question sets and additional question banks**

* Standard units and three optional question banks for Labs/Practicals, Field work and Seminars/Small groups
* Independent study / project / dissertation units
* Placement units

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| **End of Unit question set – Standard units** | |  |
| **Ref.** | **Question** | **Answer options** |
| 1 | How motivated have you been to engage with the content of this unit? | *Very motivated;* *Fairly motivated; Not very motivated; Not at all motivated* |
| 2 | How often have you found this unit intellectually stimulating? | *Very often; Fairly often; Not very often; Rarely* |
| 3 | How well does this unit connect with other units you are studying? | *Very well; Well; Not very well; Not at all well; This does not apply to me* |
| 4 | To what extent does this unit cover the right amount of material? | *Exactly right; About right; Too much; Not enough* |
| 5 | How clear are the assessment requirements (including marking criteria & assessment briefs) for this unit? | *Very clear; Clear; Not very clear; Not at all clear; This does not apply to me* |
| 6 | Have you already completed any assessed work on this unit (even if it doesn't count towards your unit mark)? | *Yes; No (trigger for next four questions, 6.1–6.4)* |
| 6.1 | How well did the teaching and learning on this unit prepare you for the unit assessment/s? | *Very well; Well; Not very well; Not at all well* |
| 6.2 | How well have the unit assessment/s allowed you to demonstrate what you have learned? | *Very well; Well; Not very well; Not at all well* |
| 6.3 | How fair has the marking and assessment been on this unit? | *Very fair; Fair; Not very fair; Not at all fair* |
| 6.4 | Have you had feedback on your work in this unit? (This can include personal or group feedback in written, verbal or audio form) | *Yes; No (trigger for next two questions, 6.4.1 & 6.4.2)* |
| 6.4.1 | How often have you received assessment feedback on time in this unit? (i.e. received coursework feedback by the published date) | *Very often; Fairly often; Not very often; Rarely* |
| 6.4.2 | How often has feedback in this unit helped you to improve your work? | *Very often; Fairly often; Not very often; Rarely* |
| 7 | How easy was it to contact teaching staff and ask for help if you didn't understand something in this unit? | *Very easy; Easy; Not very easy; Not at all easy; I have not needed to do this* |
| 8 | How well organised is this unit? | *Very well organised; Well organised; Not very well organised; Not at all well organised* |
| 9 | How well have the resources supported your learning on this unit (e.g., books, journals, material on Blackboard equipment, software, collections)? | *Very well; Well; Not very well; Not at all well; This does not apply to me* |
| 10 | Overall, how satisfied have you been with the quality of this unit? | *Very satisfied; Satisfied; Not very satisfied; Not at all satisfied* |
| 11 | What have you liked about this unit? | *Free text comment* |
| 12 | How could the unit be improved? | *Free text comment* |
| 13 | Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your experience of the unit? | *Free text comment* |
| Unit Directors can also add up to 3 of their own questions, specific to the unit or programme, these can be qualitative and/or quantitative (Likert scale). | | |

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| **Question banks – some or all can be appended to the Standard unit question set (optional)** | | |
| **Ref.** | **Question** | **Answer options** |
| **A** | **Labs / Practicals** | |
| A1 | How well have the labs/practicals improved your understanding of the unit material? | *Very well; Well; Not very well; Not at all well; This does not apply to me* |
| A2 | How well organised were the unit labs/practicals? | *Very well organised; Well organised; Not very well organised; Not at all well organised; This does not apply to me* |
| A3 | How well supported were you by staff/demonstrators during the unit lab/practical sessions? | *Very well supported; Well supported; Not very well supported; Not at all well supported; This does not apply to me* |
| A4 | How well prepared did you feel for the unit labs/practicals? | *Very well prepared; Well prepared; Not very well prepared; Not at all well prepared; This does not apply to me* |
| A5 | To what extent have the unit labs/practicals have helped prepare you for the unit assessment/s? | *To a large extent; To some extent; To a small extent; Not at all; This does not apply to me* |
| A6 | Is there anything else that you would like to tell us about the labs/practicals? | *Free text comment* |
| **B** | **Field work** | |
| B1 | To what extent has field work improved your understanding of the unit material? | *To a large extent; To some extent; To a small extent; Not at all; This does not apply to me* |
| B2 | How well organised was the field work? | *Very well organised; Well organised; Not very well organised; Not at all well organised; This does not apply to me* |
| B3 | How supportive were staff during the field work? | *Very supportive; Supportive; Not very supportive; Not at all supportive; This does not apply to me* |
| B4 | Is there anything that you would like to tell us about the field work? | *Free text comment* |
| **C** | **Seminars / Small groups** | |
| C1 | To what extent have seminars/small groups improved your understanding of the unit material? | *To a large extent; To some extent; To a small extent; Not at all; This does not apply to me* |
| C2 | How well organised were the seminars/small groups? | *Very well organised; Well organised; Not very well organised; Not at all well organised; This does not apply to me* |
| C3 | Is there anything that you would like to tell us about the seminars/small groups? | *Free text comment* |
| **D** | **Learning opportunities** |  |
| D1 | To what extent have you had the chance to explore ideas and concepts in depth in this unit? | *To a large extent; To some extent; To a small extent; Not at all* |
| D2 | How well did the unit introduce subjects and skills in a way that builds on what you have already learned? | Very well; Well; Not very well; Not at all well; This does not apply to me |
| D3 | How well has the unit helped you develop knowledge and skills that you think you will need for your future? | Very well; Well; Not very well; Not at all well |

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| **End of Unit question set – Project/Dissertation Units** | |  |
| **Ref.** | **Question** | **Answer options** |
| 1 | How clear was the guidance on how to select the dissertation/project topic? | *Very clear; Clear; Not very clear; Not at all clear; This does not apply to me* |
| 2 | How well have you been supported and guided in planning and undertaking the dissertation/project? (e.g., research strategies, developing project outline, literature review etc.) | *Very well supported; Well supported; Not very well supported; Not at all well supported; This does not apply to me* |
| 3 | How clear are the marking criteria used to assess your dissertation/project? | *Very clear; Clear; Not very clear; Not at all clear; This does not apply to me* |
| 4 | To what extent have you received regular and helpful advice/feedback on progress with the dissertation/project? (advice/feedback can include personal or group feedback in written, verbal or audio form) | To a large extent; To some extent; To a small extent; Not at all; This does not apply to me |
| 5 | How easy was it to contact teaching staff if you needed to regarding this unit? | Very easy; Easy; Not very easy; Not at all easy*; I have not needed to do this* |
| 6 | How well have the library resources supported your learning (e.g., books, journal articles, material on Blackboard)? | *Very well; Well; Not very well; Not at all well; This does not apply to me* |
| 7 | Overall, how satisfied have you been with the quality of the unit? | *Very satisfied; Satisfied; Not very satisfied; Not at all satisfied* |
| *8* | Does your dissertation/project have a practical element? | *Yes; No (trigger for next two questions, 8.1 & 8.2)* |
| 8.1 | How easy was it to access the practical resources (e.g., lab access, special collections, equipment, software) when you needed them? | *Very easy; Easy; Not very easy; Not at all easy; This does not apply to me* |
| 8.2 | To what extent have youreceived appropriate support and guidance to utilise the practical resources necessary? | To a large extent; To some extent; To a small extent; Not at all; This does not apply to me |
| 9 | Is group work part of the unit? | *Yes; No (trigger for next four questions 9.1–9.4)* |
| 9.1 | How useful was the advice about how to work as part of a group? | *Very useful; Useful; Not very useful; Not at all useful;* This does not apply to me |
| 9.2 | To what extent has group work helped you to learn by sharing ideas with your peers? | To a large extent; To some extent; To a small extent; Not at all; This does not apply to me |
| 9.3 | To what extent has the unit encouraged teamwork and participation? | To a large extent; To some extent; To a small extent; Not at all; This does not apply to me |
| 9.4 | How easy was it to get advice if problems occurred in the group? | Very easy; Easy; Not very easy; Not at all easy; I have not needed to do this |
| 10 | How well has the project/dissertation helped you develop knowledge and skills that you think you will need for your future? | Very well; Well; Not very well; Not at all well; This does not apply to me |
|  | What do you feel you have gained from undertaking the dissertation/project? | *Free text comment* |
|  | What (if anything) would you change? | *Free text comment* |
|  | Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the dissertation/project? | *Free text comment* |
| Unit Directors can also add up to 3 of their own questions, specific to the unit or programme, these can be qualitative and/or quantitative (Likert scale). | | |

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| **End of unit question set – Placement Units** | |  |
| **Ref.** | **Question** | **Answer options** |
| 1 | My placement has been based at: (drop down list) | *Drop down of placement provide types:*   * *UK University/College* * *University/College located outside the UK* * *School Setting* * *Clinical Setting* * *UK employer* * *Employer located outside the UK* * *Other* |
| 2 | How well did the University of Bristol support and guide you whilst arranging your placement? | Very well; Well; Not very well; Not at all well; This does not apply to me |
| 3 | How well did you feel your prior learning prepared you for your placement? | Very well; Well; Not very well; Not at all well; This does not apply to me |
| 4 | How well did the University of Bristol support you during your placement? | Very well; Well; Not very well; Not at all well; This does not apply to me |
| 5 | How easy was it to contact University of Bristol staff if you needed to regarding your placement? | Very easy; Easy; Not very easy; Not at all easy; I have not needed to do this |
| 6 | How clear are the criteria used to assess your placement learning experience? | Very clear; Clear; Not very clear; Not at all clear; This does not apply to me |
| 7 | How well has the placement helped you develop knowledge and skills that you think you will need for your future? | Very well; Well; Not very well; Not at all well; This does not apply to me |
| 8 | What do you feel you have gained by undertaking your placement? | *Free text* |
| 9 | What (if anything) would you change? | *Free text* |
| 10 | Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the placement? | *Free text* |
| Unit Directors can also add up to 3 of their own questions, specific to the unit or programme, these can be qualitative and/or quantitative (Likert scale). | | |