THE GRADUATE DESTINATION SURVEY:  
AN OVERVIEW  

For further information about this document contact:  
Andrew Brion       andrew.brion@rmit.edu.au       (03) 9925 2713       IRCU  

For further information about CEQ online tools contact: 
Neil Wentworth     neil.wentworth@rmit.edu.au      (03) 9925 9709      IRCU
# The Graduate Destination Survey: An Overview

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. **Background** .......................................................................................................................... 3
2. **How is the GDS conducted at RMIT?** .................................................................................. 3
3. **Who does RMIT survey?** ....................................................................................................... 4
   3.1. The sample .......................................................................................................................... 4
   3.2. The response rate .................................................................................................................. 4
4. **What information is available?** .............................................................................................. 5
   4.1. Graduate Destination Survey (GDS) ..................................................................................... 5
   4.2. Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) ............................................................................. 5
   4.3. Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire (PREQ) .................................................. 6
5. **Where can I access more information?** ................................................................................ 6
   5.1. Information available within RMIT ....................................................................................... 6
   5.2. Information available outside RMIT .................................................................................... 8

Appendix A - Information available from the GDS 2004 .......................................................... 10
Appendix B - The Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) at RMIT ...................................... 12
Appendix C - The Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire (PREQ) ......................... 16
1. **Background**

The Graduate Destination Surveys (GDS) is a national survey of higher education students conducted around four months after the completion of their award. It collects information about their course, any work in their final year, their status regarding work and study four months after graduation, and methods they have used to search for jobs.

All universities in Australia survey their graduates using the GDS, and every graduate is sent a questionnaire. The survey has existed in some form for over thirty years.

In 1993, the GDS was extended to also incorporate the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ), which gathers perceptions of graduates about the quality and usefulness of their programs. In 2000, it was further modified to include the Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire (PREQ), rather than the CEQ, for relevant graduates.

While each university has some responsibility for conducting the GDS amongst its graduates, the Graduate Careers Council of Australia (GCCA) provides the overall management and maintenance of the survey.

At RMIT, the Survey Services Centre manages the administration and data collection of the GDS.

2. **How is the GDS conducted at RMIT?**

The Careers Development and Employment unit has always administered the GDS/CEQ at RMIT. Over the past couple of years, these responsibilities have been gradually transferred to the Institutional Research Consultancy Unit (IRCU) and the new Survey Services Centre (SSC). The IRCU has taken primary responsibility for analysis of GDS/CEQ data since 2002 and, with Careers Development and Employment, co-authored the 34th Graduate Destination Survey Report this year. IRCU is now responsible for all analysis and reporting of GDS information at RMIT.

Each April, RMIT surveys all its graduates from the previous year. In accordance with GCCA guidelines, RMIT:

- Designs and prints questionnaires and reply-paid envelopes in March/April
- Enables a web version of the GDS at the end of April ([http://www.careers.rmit.edu.au/gds.htm](http://www.careers.rmit.edu.au/gds.htm))
- Posts a questionnaire and a reply-paid envelope to all graduates at the end of April
- Posts reminders to graduates who have not replied at the end of May and June
- Follows up domestic graduates who have still not replied by late July via telephone
- Progressively codes up all questionnaires and enters the information into a database
- Sends the final dataset to GCCA at the start of September
A few universities ask GCCA to print the standard GDS questionnaires for them. RMIT, along with most of the larger institutions, prints its own questionnaires. This is for two reasons. Firstly, RMIT adds a small number of their own questions to the survey. Secondly, RMIT scans all the questionnaires using specialist software and hardware, and the questionnaires therefore have to be designed and printed appropriately.

Similarly, GCCA provides an opportunity to use their web-survey, and provides a data-entry and coding service. Again, for the reasons given above, RMIT generally chooses to process its surveys in-house.

3. Who does RMIT survey?

3.1. The sample

All higher education undergraduate and postgraduate students who graduate in the previous year are surveyed in the following April, approximately four months after graduation.

The GDS methodology does not require an institution to survey their international offshore graduates. Nevertheless, RMIT surveys, not only their domestic and international onshore graduates, but also their offshore graduates.

In recent times, RMIT has surveyed up to almost 7,000 graduates each year.

3.2. The response rate

Approximately half of all RMIT graduates respond to the GDS – see the table below. The response rate for the CEQ and PREQ is slightly lower (around 40%): this is because the CEQ and PREQ are not administered over the telephone. These rates are broadly similar to the average across Australia.

The response rate from international graduates is significantly lower than that for domestic graduates. This is partly because address details appear to be less reliable, but also because, for reasons of economy, no telephone interviews are attempted with international graduates. As can be seen from the table below, RMIT succeeded in increasing the response rate from overseas graduates in 2003. This was achieved by sending reply-paid envelopes - previously these had only been able to be sent to domestic graduates. However, the response rate has again declined in 2004.

The overall, and domestic response rates, are higher in 2004 primarily because of a more intense wave of telephone interviewing.
The Graduate Destination Survey: An Overview

Table 1: RMIT GDS Response Rates 2001-2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year of Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Domestic</td>
<td>53.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- International</td>
<td>65.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Domestic</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- International</td>
<td>60.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Domestic</td>
<td>52.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- International</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. What information is available?

4.1. Graduate Destination Survey (GDS)

In addition to collecting basic demographic and program information from each graduate, the GDS also collects the information in sections headed as follows:

- Work in your final year
- What you were doing on 30 April
- Main paid work
- Job search methods
- Further study

This information is available, not only for RMIT, but also for all other Australian universities.

Appendix A provides a greater level of detail regarding the information available. Although this appendix specifically relates to the GDS 2004, most of the information is collected every year.

4.2. Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ)

Traditionally, the CEQ has consisted of twenty-five questions (items), twenty-four of which could be associated with six scales:

- Good Teaching Scale (GTS) – 6 items
- Generic Skills Scale (GSS) – 6 items
- Overall Satisfaction Item (OSI) – 1 item
- Clear Goals and Standards (CGS) – 4 items
- Appropriate Workload Scale (AWS) – 4 items
- Appropriate Assessment Scale (AAS) – 3 items
The Graduate Destination Survey: An Overview

Since 2002, the thirteen questions associated with the first three scales listed above (GTS, GSS and OSI) have continued to be compulsory for all Australian universities. However, along with the three other scales, five further scales have been added to an optional list of questions to make a total of thirty-six optional questions. The five new scales, which RMIT does not currently use, are:

- Intellectual Motivation Scale (IMS)
- Student Support Scale (SSS)
- Graduate Qualities Scale (GQS)
- Learning Resources Scale (LRS)
- Learning Community Scale (LCS)

RMIT continues to use the six original scales, plus an additional scale that is administered solely by three of the Australian Technology Network (ATN) institutions – the Work Relevance Scale. The Work Relevance Scale does not form part of GCCA’s established methodology.

Appendix B provides more information about the CEQ, its development, and the various items that go together to make up each of the standard scales used by RMIT.

4.3. Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire (PREQ)

The PREQ consists of twenty-eight questions (items), which can be associated with seven scales:

- Supervision – 6 items
- Intellectual Climate – 5 items
- Skills Development – 5 items
- Infrastructure – 5 items
- Thesis Examination – 3 items
- Goals and Expectations – 3 items
- Overall satisfaction – 1 item

Appendix C provides more information about these scales.

5. Where can I access more information?

Information can be accessed from a variety of sources, both within RMIT and outside.

5.1. Information available within RMIT

Careers Development and Employment have enabled graduates to complete the GDS, CEQ and PREQ at [http://www.careers.rmit.edu.au/gds.htm](http://www.careers.rmit.edu.au/gds.htm). It’s possible that this site may be located at a different address from 2005 onwards.

A very comprehensive set of GDS, CEQ and PREQ information and tools has been developed by IRCU at [http://www2.rmit.edu.au/departments/planning/ircu/outcomes/outcomes.php](http://www2.rmit.edu.au/departments/planning/ircu/outcomes/outcomes.php). This includes Student Outcomes Reports, Analytical Tools, Information and Reports on
The Graduate Destination Survey: An Overview

CEQuery, and a report on Improving CEQ results for RMIT. More details on each of these follows.

5.1.1 RMIT Student Outcomes Reports

These include:

- A summary report on Student Outcomes 2001-2003, which looks at key trends from GDS/CEQ/PREQ in terms of some of RMIT’s strategic priorities.
- The Graduate Destination Survey Report 2003, which provides a comprehensive analysis of key GDS information across various student cohorts, and by portfolio.
- Institutional Rankings by CEQ scale, which compare RMIT’s performance against other universities for the Good Teaching Scale, Generic Skills Scale, and the Overall Satisfaction Item. They also make comparisons across Field of Study and Level of Qualification.
- A report on the CEQ Work Relevance scale, which focuses on vocational outcomes.

5.1.2 Analytical Tools

Users can access all of RMIT’s CEQ data from 1998-2004, and straightforwardly build their own time-series reports by portfolio, school, or individual program. This can be done for any CEQ scale or item-by-item. Analyses show both percentage agreement, and the proportion of graduates responding to each of the five points on the scales.

Additional analysis options are available for the Good Teaching Scale. For any program, its percentage agreement can be compared with the same figure for the relevant programs in the same field of study or field of education for:

- All Australia
- ATN
- Group of 8
- Innovation and Research group of institutions
- Victoria
- Each Victorian institution individually

Simple menus guide the user through the process that can produce publication quality Acrobat (.pdf) output, Excel output, or simple web (screen) output.

5.1.3 CEQuery – RMIT Qualitative Comments

IRCU has published a CEQuery webpage that allows a user to download the CEQuery software and analyse graduates’ qualitative comments for 2003 (http://www2.rmit.edu.au/departments/planning/ircu/outcomes/cequery.php). For example, this enables a user to examine all the comments for a program, school, or portfolio, in terms of domestic or international students.

The webpage also contains a report on RMIT’s 2003 qualitative comments derived from a CEQuery analysis, and comprehensive verbatim listings of qualitative comments by program within portfolio.

5.1.4 Improving CEQ results for RMIT

In 2002 a report was commissioned by the PVC Learning and Scholarship to examine how CEQ results might be improved, and the parameters that might be holding improvement back. This report was prepared as part of RMIT’s desire to improve the quality of its teaching and learning. This report is available at http://www2.rmit.edu.au/departments/planning/ircu/docs/outcomes/improvingceqresults.doc

5.2. Information available outside RMIT

- The GCCA provide a considerable amount of information about the GDS on their gradlink site at http://www.gradlink.edu.au/
  - gradsonline (http://www.gradsonline.edu.au/gradsonline/) gives an insight into the types of activities, salaries and jobs for graduates from different disciplines.
  - GCCA summarise the findings from the GDS in the Grad Files and GradStats each year – see http://www.gradlink.edu.au/content/view/full/24
  - Their ‘Research Centre’ provides more specialist and technical information about the GDS (http://www.gradlink.edu.au/content/view/full/57)

- For the more analytically inclined, the AVCC publish some summary GCCA data for 1994-2003 on their website as Excel files at http://www.avcc.edu.au/students/gradlink/GCCA/. For example, this information allows comparison between any program and the national average for the relevant field of study/education for any particular CEQ scale.

To give greater detail, the following Excel files are available for 2003 on the website (for 2003 only, field of study files as well as ASCED field of education files, where relevant, were also available):
  - CEQ figures by institution, level of qualification and ASCED field of education. The mean and standard deviation are shown for each scale, and the national scale mean and N size is also shown
The Graduate Destination Survey: An Overview

- CEQ figures by institution, level of qualification and institution-generated faculty/degree/course code variable (where an institution included it). The mean and standard deviation are shown for each scale, and the N size is also shown.

- There are 11 files showing the percentage disagree-agree on the 5 point Likert scale by ASCED field of education for each scale and the overall satisfaction item. Column headings used are SD% (% strongly disagree), D% (% disagree), U% (% undecided), A% (% agree), and SA% (% strongly agree).

- There are 11 files showing the percentage disagree-agree on the 5 point Likert scale by the institution-generated faculty/degree/course code variable (when used by an institution). Column headings used are SD% (% strongly disagree), D% (% disagree), U% (% undecided), A% (% agree), and SA% (% strongly agree).

- CEQ figures for pass and honours degree graduates by institution and ASCED field of education. The institutional and national means are shown for each scale, and the N size is also shown.
## Appendix A - Information available from the GDS 2004

### 1. Your course
- Title of program
- Major field(s) of study
- Level of award
- Is this qualification part of a combined or double degree?
- Type of fees (HECS, fee-paying, Other)
- In what year did you commence this award?
- Type of attendance (Full-time/Part-time)
- Mode of study (Internal/External)
- Whether received any credit or advanced standing towards the award

### 2. Work in your final year
- Whether had a paid job in final year
- Type of employment (Full-time/Part-time)
- Whether employer provided financial support for studies
- Whether employer provided time off in lieu
- Whether still with employer

### 3. What you were doing on 30 April
- Position regarding study (Full-time/Part-time/None)
- Position with regard to paid work

### 4. Main paid work
- Employer’s name
- Location of employment (Australian postcode, or overseas country)
- Whether self-employed
- Type of employer by sector
- Type of business carried out by employer
- Date of starting job
- Occupation
- Main tasks or duties
- Number of hours worked in main paid job in an average week
- Type of employment (Permanent/Short-term/Other)
- Gross annual salary
- If your job is full-time, is this your first full-time job of any sort?

### 5. Job Search methods
- During the last year did you actively seek employment?
- Methods used to look for employment in the last year
- If in employment, how first found out about job

### 6. Further Study
- Title of award
- Major field(s) of study
- Level of award
- Type of attendance (Full-time/Part-time)
- Mode of study (Internal/External)
- Name of institution
- Month of beginning award

(continued overpage)
7. **About you**
   - Gender
   - Age at 30 April
   - Whether a permanent resident (Australian postcode, or overseas country)
   - Type(s) of disability (if any)
   - Are you of Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent?
   - Do you come from a non-English speaking background?
   - Highest previous educational qualification (Title and Level)
Appendix B - The Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) at RMIT

Introduction

The Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) gathers perceptions of recent graduates about the quality and usefulness of their programs. At RMIT, the CEQ consists of 25 GCCA approved questions i.e. items to which respondents are asked to state a level of agreement or disagreement. All items are coded on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 = 'strongly disagree' and 5 = 'strongly agree'. In addition, RMIT includes seven additional items which make up the Work Relevance Scale and which are used by three of the ATN universities, and one further item.

The CEQ forms part of the Graduate Destination Survey (GDS), which is administered annually by the Graduate Careers Council of Australia (GCCA). The CEQ and GDS are mailed out four months after graduates have completed their award program.

CEQ Brief Background

In 1991 the Federal Government commissioned the Performance Indicators Research Group (‘The Linke Committee’) to examine indicators of performance in Higher Education. An outcome of the group’s recommendation was the creation of the Course Experience Questionnaire. According to the GCCA, Paul Ramsden and Noel Entwistle used the basic form of the CEQ in studies of undergraduate students in the United Kingdom. During 1989, Ramsden and colleagues tested a later version in Australian universities.

In 1993 the CEQ consisted of twenty-five compulsory items asked by all universities. The CEQ was further expanded in 2002 so that it now includes up to forty-nine items, thirty-six of which are optional. RMIT has continued to use the original twenty-five items.

Universities incorporate the CEQ into formal planning processes and recognise CEQ results as indicators of program quality.

The CEQ Scales

Thirty-two of the thirty-three items used by RMIT measure agreement or disagreement to a statement about one of the following program aspects:

- Quality of teaching
- Clarity of goals and standards
- Nature of assessment
- Level of workload
- Development of generic skills
- Work relevance (Three ATN universities only)
- Overall satisfaction

Items are grouped into 'scales' according to the program aspect they address. For example, the item 'The course (program) developed my problem solving skills', addresses generic skills and is part of the Generic Skills Scale.
RMIT generally reports the proportion of graduates who ‘agree’ with each item (or scale): this is the proportion rating the item (or scale) in either of the top two categories out of five. Below is a brief description of each CEQ scale used by RMIT.

**Good Teaching Scale (GTS)** measures respondents' perceptions of teaching standards. It focuses on teachers' feedback, motivation, attention, understanding of problems and skill in explaining concepts. Research undertaken by the GCCA indicates that a high score on this scale is associated with the perception that there are good practices in place, conversely lower scores reflect a perception that these practices occur less frequently.

- The teaching staff of this course motivated me to do my best work
- The staff put a lot of time into commenting on my work.
- The staff made a real effort to understand difficulties I might be having with my work.
- The teaching staff normally gave me helpful feedback on how I was going.
- My lecturers were extremely good at explaining things.
- The teaching staff worked hard to make their subjects interesting.

**Clear Goals and Standards Scale (CGS)** measures respondents' perceptions of the clarity with which teachers communicated expected academic standards and course goals.

- It was always easy to know the standard of work expected.
- I usually had a clear idea of where I was going and what was expected of me in this course.
- It was often hard to discover what was expected of me in this course.
- The staff made it clear right from the start what they expected from students.

**Appropriate Workload Scale (AWS)** measures respondents' perceptions of the appropriateness of their course workloads. High scores indicate perceptions that workload levels were adequate but not so excessive so as to be detrimental to learning.

- The workload was too heavy.
- I was generally given enough time to understand the things I had to learn.
- There was a lot of pressure on me as a student in this course.
- The sheer volume of work to be got through in this course meant it couldn't all be all comprehended.

**Appropriate Assessment Scale (AAS)** measures respondents' perceptions about the extent to which assessment stresses the recall of information rather than other intellectual skills. High scores indicate that respondents perceived that skills other than recall were critical to successful academic performance.

- To do well in this course all you really needed was a good memory.
- The staff seemed more interested in testing what I had memorised than what I understood.
- Too many staff asked me questions just about facts.
The Graduate Destination Survey: An Overview

Generic Skills Scale (GSS) measures respondents' perceptions of generic skill development (e.g. problem solving, communications, planning, team working) achieved in their courses.

- The course developed my problem-solving skills.
- The course sharpened my analytical skills.
- The course helped me develop my ability to work as a team member.
- As a result of my course, I feel confident about tackling unfamiliar problems.
- The course improved my skills in written communication.
- My course helped me to develop the ability to plan my own work.

Work Relevance Scale (WRS) measures respondents’ perceptions of their readiness for the workplace.

- The course developed an understanding of workplace skills
- The course provided the opportunity for putting theory into practice
- The skills developed in the course were useful and relevant
- The course developed current professional skills
- The course was a good combination of theory and practice
- What I learnt benefited my future work
- The course helped prepare me for the workforce

The 31st item says “The assessment methods employed in this course required an in-depth understanding of the course content”.

The 32nd item asks graduates to indicate their Overall Satisfaction with their courses - 'Overall, I was satisfied with the quality of this course'.

The 33rd item says “The course prepared me very well for my employment as at April this year”.

Notes on Interpreting CEQ data

Analyses undertaken by the Institutional Research Consultancy Unit (IRCU) in interpreting CEQ data are in accordance with standard practices as recommended by the GCCA in its annual statistical reporting.

There are two approaches to reporting the five-point scale CEQ items:

- A mean score and standard deviation can be ascribed to each item by scoring the five points 100, 50, 0, -50 and –100.

- A percentage agreement, being the proportion of respondents choosing the top two points on the five-point scale, can be ascribed to each item.

RMIT analyses of CEQ data generally report the percentage agreement by item (or scale). The percentage agreement refers to the percentage of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the item. In tables reflecting CEQ ranking, percent agreement has been used as the basis for the ranking.
Thus, for example, one cohort of students can be compared to another on the basis of their agreement with a particular scale such as ‘Good Teaching’ (provided the sample sizes are adequate).

It would not be appropriate to compare the percentage agreeing with two different scales e.g. between the percentage agreeing with the Good Teaching Scale and the percentage agreeing with the Appropriate Workload Scale. This is because each scale contains a unique set of items which, due to differences in wording, may draw different response levels and hence, levels of agreement.

Care should be taken in comparing results across universities. Differences in disciplines and student profiles need to be considered when analysing results. Certainly, aggregations beyond the field of education level need to be interpreted with some caution.

Further advice on interpretation of the CEQ results is in the Australian Vice-Chancellor's Committee's (AVCC), Code of Practice the Disclosure of Data from the GDS/CEQ. This document guides readers in interpreting CEQ data and drawing conclusions.

**Further Reading**


RMIT University (2002), *Improving Course Experience Questionnaire Results for RMIT*
Appendix C - The Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire (PREQ)

Introduction

The Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire (PREQ) is a survey of research degree candidates at the conclusion of their program of study. The CEQ consists of 28 GCCA approved questions i.e. items to which respondents are asked to state a level of agreement or disagreement. All items are coded on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 = 'strongly disagree' and 5 = 'strongly agree'.

The PREQ forms part of the Graduate Destination Survey (GDS), which is administered annually by the Graduate Careers Council of Australia (GCCA). The PREQ and GDS are mailed out four months after graduates have completed their award program.

PREQ Brief Background

The GCCA and the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) developed the PREQ, and first implemented it in 1999. It has a number of potential uses: providing a national overview of broad issues; setting a context against which institutions might undertake their own analyses; and identifying examples of good practice.

The PREQ Scales

The twenty-eight items measure agreement or disagreement to a statement about one of the following program aspects:

- Supervision
- Intellectual Climate
- Skills Development
- Infrastructure
- Thesis Examination
- Goals and Expectations
- Overall satisfaction

Items are grouped into 'scales' according to the program aspect they address. For example, the item 'The thesis examination was fair', addresses examinations and is part of the Thesis Examination Scale.

RMIT generally report the proportion of graduates who ‘agree’ with each item (or scale): this is the proportion rating the item (or scale) in either of the top two categories out of five.
Below is a list of items making up each PREQ scale.

**Supervision**

- Supervision was available when I needed it
- My supervisor/s provided helpful feedback on my progress
- My supervisor/s made a real effort to understand difficulties I faced
- My supervisor/s provided additional information relevant to my topic
- I was given good guidance in topic selection and refinement
- I received good guidance in my literature search

**Skills Development**

- My research sharpened my analytic skills
- My research further developed my problem solving skills
- I learned to develop my ideas and present them in my written work
- Doing my research helped me develop my ability to plan my own work
- As a result of my research, I feel confident about tackling unfamiliar problems

**Intellectual Climate**

- The department provided opportunities for social contact with other postgraduate students
- I was integrated into the department’s community
- A good seminar program for postgraduate students was provided
- The department provided opportunities for me to become involved in the broader research culture
- The research ambience in the department or faculty stimulate my work

**Infrastructure**

- I had access to a suitable working space
- I was able to organise good access to necessary equipment
- I had good access to the technical support I needed
- I had good access to computing facilities and services
- There was appropriate financial support for research activities

**Thesis Examination**

- The thesis examination process was fair
- I was satisfied with the thesis examination process
- The examination of my thesis was completed in reasonable time

**Goals and Expectations**

- I developed an understanding of the standard of work expected
- I understood the requirements of thesis examination
- I understand the required standard for the thesis
The Graduate Destination Survey: An Overview

The 28th item asks graduates to indicate their Overall Satisfaction with their research experience - 'Overall, I was satisfied with the quality of my higher degree research experience'.

Notes on Interpreting PREQ data

Analyses undertaken by the Institutional Research Consultancy Unit (IRCU) in interpreting PREQ data are in accordance with standard practices as recommended by the GCCA in its annual statistical reporting.

There are two approaches to reporting the five-point scale PREQ items:

- A mean score and standard deviation can be ascribed to each item by scoring the five points 100, 50, 0, -50 and –100.

- A percentage agreement, being the proportion of respondents choosing the top two points on the five-point scale, can be ascribed to each item.

RMIT analyses of PREQ data generally report the percentage agreement by item (or scale). The percentage agreement refers to the percentage of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the item.

Thus, for example, one cohort of students can be compared to another on the basis of their agreement with a particular scale such as ‘Supervision’ (provided the sample sizes are adequate).

It would not be appropriate to compare the percentage agreeing with two different scales e.g. between the percentage agreeing with the Supervision Scale and the percentage agreeing with the Skills Development Scale. This is because each scale contains a unique set of items which, due to differences in wording, may draw different response levels and hence, levels of agreement.

Care should be taken in comparing results across universities. Differences in disciplines and student profiles need to be considered when analysing results. Certainly, aggregations beyond the field of education level need to be interpreted with some caution.

Further Reading
