

PERSPECTIVES OF QUALITY TEACHING IN THE UNIVERSITY SECTOR

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Understanding quality teaching from the student and academic perspective is critical if we are to improve teaching practice and student experience at universities. Research on student evaluations, an institutional measure of quality teaching, suggests that low completion rates combined with anonymity, result in minimal useful data for improving teaching quality (Dicker et al., 2019; Harrison et al., 2020).

To define quality teaching in Science and Engineering, we surveyed students and academics. Students stated that the main indicators of quality teaching were teaching staff, delivery mode and challenging content, whilst academics defined quality teaching as having up-to-date content, hands-on experiences, and good classroom facilities.

We further ran focus groups to better understand perspectives of high-quality teaching. The focus groups identified three major themes around quality teaching: teaching style, supportive learning environment and hands-on experiences. Academics highlighted that time and budget were the biggest impediments to quality teaching whilst students highlighted poor assessment practices and communication resulted in low quality teaching.

This study suggests that high-quality teaching in Science and Engineering is defined by good communication between academics and students, opportunities for hands-on experiences and engaging delivery modes. A supportive learning environment coupled with clearly articulated assessment guidelines will improve both teaching quality and student experience at university.

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