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Guidance on course evaluations

Support and advice for working on course evaluations

Division for Quality Enhancement, 29 March 2022

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Introduction

The Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100) contains provisions on course evaluations (Chapter 1, Section 14). At Uppsala University the Vice-Chancellor issues guidelines (UFV 2020/2340) for course evaluations at all educational levels. This document aims to provide guidance and advice to support work on course evaluations¹.

The University has a responsibility to develop and renew its educational offerings. Course evaluations offer students an important opportunity to contribute to this process of quality assurance and enhancement. The active involvement of students in quality assurance and enhancement is also emphasised and specified in the programme for [Teaching and Learning at Uppsala University](#) (UFV 2015/826).

Course evaluations fulfil two main functions:

- they give students an opportunity to reflect on their learning and education in a structured manner, and
- they provide a basis for quality enhancement.

Giving students an opportunity to reflect on their own education in a structured manner is further reflected in *Teaching and Learning at Uppsala University*, which underlines students' role in their own learning.

Course evaluations are one of several inputs to continuous quality assurance and enhancement, in which it is important and necessary to take the views of students into account. Even when response rates are low, it is important to take these views seriously and reflect on how they can be used in ongoing quality assurance and enhancement.

In all work on course evaluations, from the perspective of teachers and students alike, the emphasis must be on constructive criticism and information that is relevant for action. One vital prerequisite if the results of a course evaluation are to promote quality and contribute to educational development is that those who are responsible for the course analyse and discuss the results jointly with students and teachers.

Disciplinary domain/faculty boards are responsible for the quality of research and education in their respective domains. The boards decide on responsibilities, procedures and formats for conducting course evaluations. The boards are also responsible for ensuring that the course evaluation process is designed in a way that meets the needs of their activities.

All students should be encouraged to play an active part in the course evaluation process. This means everything from taking students' perspectives into account when designing course evaluations, to making it easy for them to answer course evaluations and involving them in follow-up of results and discussion of measures. It is therefore vital to inform students of the importance of course evaluations.

This guidance document follows the numbering in the *Guidelines for Course Evaluations* (UFV 2020/2340) so that each point in the guidelines is followed here by guidance and advice on how to go about meeting the requirements in the guidelines. Additional supporting material is available in the [Staff Portal](#).

As stated above, the *Guidelines for Course Evaluations* cover course evaluations at all levels, including doctoral education courses. Throughout this document, the term 'students' is accordingly used to refer to students at all levels, including doctoral students. Most of the suggestions below are

¹ The guidelines and guidance document have been revised by a working group consisting of representatives of teaching staff from each disciplinary domain and representatives from the Faculty Offices, the students' unions, University IT Services and the Division for Quality Enhancement, following internal referral at the University.

applicable to courses in doctoral programmes, though special factors may need to be considered. A special document containing recommendations and advice for [course evaluations for courses in doctoral programmes](#) is also available in the Staff Portal.

Guidance and advice

1. Summative course evaluation

Guideline 1. A summative course evaluation must be carried out at or close to the end of the course. This should be done in writing. A course evaluation must be carried out for all courses, including courses involving thesis writing and degree projects, and for internship courses. A course evaluation may also be carried out after modules.

Students must have the opportunity to answer a summative (concluding) course evaluation after a course or close to the end of the course. A summative course evaluation should contain questions on the course as a whole. Since the course includes assessment, it is an advantage if the course evaluation can be collected after the course has been graded so that the evaluation includes students' views on the process of assessment and grading. This does not normally pose any practical problems in the case of electronic course evaluations distributed via a learning management system, but it can lead to a low rate of participation if the students have moved on to another course. One way to raise the response rate is to set aside time for the students to answer the course evaluation in connection with an exam feedback session or the introduction to the next course.

The *Guidelines for Course Evaluations at Uppsala University* state that course evaluations “should be in writing”. In a guideline, the word ‘should’ means that reasons are needed for applying the guideline in a way that differs from the way described in the guideline. For some courses, a written survey form may not be the most suitable method. For example, if the group of students is very small, this could be a good reason for holding an oral discussion instead, taking notes on the students' views. In that case, the discussion must be designed to enable the students to express their honest opinions. The grading role of teachers/supervisors may prevent such honesty. One way to deal with this is for a person in a more independent position than the teacher responsible for the course/supervisor to conduct the oral evaluation in the absence of the teacher concerned or to hold the evaluation after the grades have been set. Another option is for the students themselves to note down their opinions on the course in small groups and then discuss them with the teacher responsible for the course. An oral summative course evaluation must also be summarised and evaluated within the framework of a course report (see further point 10).

The choice of method also depends on the information wanted and the student group concerned. Course evaluations can be relatively simple and informal. For example, the students can be asked to note down the strengths and weaknesses of the course on a sheet of paper at the end of the course. The course director then makes a simple compilation of the responses.

In the case of longer courses (e.g. courses lasting a whole semester) that consist of several modules, module evaluation can serve as a tool for obtaining more specific feedback on the various parts of the course while the information is still fresh in the students' minds. Module evaluations can also make the summative course evaluation (the evaluation of the whole semester) less of a burden and allow it to focus on the course as a whole and the perceived goal attainment. If module evaluations are used, the results should be mentioned in the course report (see further point 10).

Sometimes different students may finish a certain course at different times. In such cases, each

individual student should be given the opportunity to answer the course evaluation as soon as they have completed the course.

2. Formative course evaluation

Guideline 2. Formative course evaluations (which are conducted during the course) may be used to supplement the summative course evaluation. If module evaluations or formative course evaluations are used, the results of these should be mentioned in the course report (see further points 9 and 10).

Formative course evaluations give students an opportunity to express their opinions during a course, in addition to participating in a concluding (summative) course evaluation. They give the teacher a chance to find out how the students' learning environment is functioning during the course and to make immediate adjustments if possible. Formative course evaluations can also increase students' motivation, as they demonstrate the teacher's commitment to providing as good a learning environment as possible. Results from formative course evaluations, and changes made while the course was in progress, should be mentioned in the course report. Moreover, like module evaluations, formative course evaluations can make the summative course evaluation less of a burden, as the students have already had the chance to give their opinions on parts of the course content.

The simplest type of formative course evaluation is an informal dialogue with students during the course, e.g. occasional group discussions or periodic mini-consultations where any problems can come to light. In addition, there are a number of formalised ways to gather information on a running basis that can make an ongoing course better. Formative course evaluations can answer questions, for example, about students' views on teaching components that have just ended and possible changes in instruction during the remainder of the course to facilitate learning. The questions in a formative course evaluation can be answered by students writing down their answers on Post-it Notes, for example, or by using tools such as online voting or digital noticeboards. A couple of concrete examples of questions or requests to use in formative course evaluations: *Indicate one or two things that were particularly good in this teaching component. What could be done differently during the rest of the course to facilitate your learning?*

3. Voluntary participation

Guideline 3. Responding to a course evaluation is voluntary for students.

It is not permissible to use course evaluations as a condition for something else, such as not handing out certain material unless a course evaluation is submitted, given that it is always voluntary for students to participate in course evaluations. This includes formative and oral course evaluations. Under the Higher Education Ordinance, students must be *given the opportunity* to submit a course evaluation, but they are not obliged to do so. Furthermore, the University is not allowed to offer inducements in the form of 'prizes' or rewards that students can receive or win upon completing the course evaluation. This is because Uppsala University, as a public authority, is not allowed to organise any type of lottery activities.

4. Anonymity

Guideline 4. As far as possible, course evaluations should be anonymous. They must not ask for students' names or similar means of identification.

Anonymity should always be aimed for but can be difficult to achieve in some cases, e.g. in courses with few participants and/or few teachers (see further points 5 and 6). However, it is often possible to make responses to course evaluations with few participants anonymous from the teacher's perspective. As stated under point 1 above, for instance, an oral course evaluation can be made anonymous by having a more independent person than the grading teacher carry out the course evaluation, such as a director of studies or a course administrator. This outside person will then have the task of compiling and summarising the responses to the course evaluation. Another option is for the students in the group to discuss among themselves and note down the responses. Written compilations from oral course evaluations must be preserved, registered and evaluated within the framework of a course report.

5. Privacy

Guideline 5. It is important to respect the privacy of staff and students in all aspects of course evaluations.

To maintain confidence in course evaluations as a tool for course development and student influence, it is essential to respect the privacy of staff and students in all aspects of course evaluations. All aspects of course evaluations must be characterised by mutual respect between students and staff (teachers, supervisors, administrators and others), and between members of staff. Quite apart from protecting the role of course evaluations in course development, as an employer and education provider the University aspires to protect a good work environment.

See point 6 below for a description of how the privacy of staff and students can be protected.

6. Publication of free-text responses

Guideline 6. If students' free-text responses are to be published in full, this must always be preceded by screening from a privacy perspective. Responses must be anonymised by removing names of persons and any offensive comments or personal attacks must be reformulated without detracting from the meaning of comments. If a student's written comments are altered, it is important that it is clear which parts are direct quotations and which have been reworded. However, the original responses need to be preserved (see also point 12e). Full publication of free-text responses must not be approved by a paid student.

Discretion must be exercised when publishing students' free-text responses to course evaluations. The protection of a good work environment stipulated by the work environment legislation becomes a live issue in the case of derogatory comments about an identified person. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) prohibits the publication of sensitive personal data, for example, information about a person's political opinions or religious beliefs.

While factual feedback contributes to opportunities for teachers to develop, judgements that are offensive and do not stick to facts can be hurtful and pose a direct work environment problem. Such judgements are contrary to the purpose of course evaluations to contribute to course development, and reduce the motivation of teachers to make active use of course evaluations and to learn from criticism. Although all free-text responses and comments from students need to be screened before publication, there is nothing to prevent teaching staff from accessing the unedited responses if they wish to do so.

Naturally, the privacy of individual students is just as important as concern for the privacy of teachers and other members of staff, such as course administrators. Free-text responses must therefore always be screened before the results of the course evaluation are published.

Note that the students' original responses need to be kept for two years after making the compilation of responses, but after that they may be disposed of under archiving provisions (see also point 12). Normally, the original responses are automatically saved even after screening has been performed, if the University's electronic course evaluation system is used.

Screening of free-text responses is not just a matter of removing people's names; attention must also be paid to other ways in which an individual could be identified. If, for example, the course administrator mentioned is the only person in their category at the department, they can easily be identified. This also applies to other small groups of staff such as study counsellors or in courses involving only one or two teachers. Where it is unavoidable that individuals are identifiable, it is particularly important to rephrase any offensive comments as factual points of view, without losing the message. If a student's written comments are altered, it is important that it is clear which parts are direct quotations and which have been reworded. A couple of fictitious examples:

Student's comment: "Johanna, who teaches the veterinary medicine course, doesn't give feedback on our assignments and doesn't answer emails."

Edited comment: "[Name], who teaches the [name of course], doesn't give feedback on our assignments and doesn't answer emails."

Student's comment: "The course administrator has no interest at all in doing his job and on top of that is generally hopeless, you never get your timetable on time. I think he hates students."

Edited comment: [the student expresses criticism of the course administration and would like, for instance, to receive the timetable in good time]

If several students have raised the same problem, this could be one way of dealing with it in the course report:

*"The comments reveal that some students perceive a lack of commitment on the part of certain teachers and that students receive inadequate feedback on their work. Some comments express a wish to receive the timetable in better time and one student would like the staff in charge of the course to respond to emails more quickly. **Measure:** The director of studies is responsible for further investigation and relevant measures to remedy the problems raised before the next course."*

Students can be involved in screening free-text responses. Paying students to do this kind of screening increases transparency and can also make the students feel more confident that the published responses convey the original sense of the comments. However, approval must be obtained before publishing the responses. Such approval must come from an employee of the University and must not be delegated to a paid student.

7. Areas for questions

Guideline 7. Course evaluations should be designed so that assessments address factual matters, e.g. achievement of course objectives, the execution and organisation of the course, and the contributions of instructors and students. Students should also have opportunities to comment on the course in free-text responses, e.g. by offering concrete suggestions for improvements.

Course directors and teachers need to think about which aspects are important to focus on as a basis for improving the course concerned. These days, there is an emphasis on students' independence and their own responsibility for learning. This is underlined in the programme for *Teaching and Learning at Uppsala University*, for example, which gives as much prominence to the role of students in a good education as to the role of the University. A course evaluation is also a good opportunity to give students a chance to reflect on their own input during the course. The simplest way to achieve this is to include an open question in the course evaluation about what the students have learned and what they need to develop further, but more specific questions are also possible, asking the students to comment on their own learning input.

As always when formulating questions, it is important to focus on the relevance for measures. The question should be posed in such a way that the answer will provide some indication of what should be changed. Apart from specific questions with predetermined alternative answers, constructive feedback in the form of responses to open questions can also give teachers important information that facilitates course development and professional development.

Course evaluations should aim to obtain a picture of how the course has created favourable conditions for meaningful learning and not put so much stress on 'what the teachers were like'. A course evaluation should not include general 'grading' of individual named teachers. One way to obtain feedback from the students on individual teaching components is to ask them to assess how a certain course component has contributed to their learning or to assess the value of the content of a certain lecture. Teachers can then receive meaningful feedback that can be used in a teaching and learning portfolio. Aspects of teachers' actions that have proved significant in the learning process and that it is possible to ask students about include the degree of clarity and the ability to motivate students and communicate with them.

In course evaluations, it is valuable to distinguish between: (1) the preconditions for a course or programme, (2) educational/learning processes, and (3) outcomes/results. It is therefore appropriate to ask questions in these three areas and about the course as a whole. The example below illustrates a possible structure:

- *Background/preconditions for the course* (e.g. students' prior knowledge and expectations)
- *Process* (such as student and teacher input, course requirements, course content, literature, types of teaching methods, degree of difficulty of the course, pace, assessment, study climate, links to research and working life, gender equality and equal treatment aspects, and support functions)
- *Course outcomes/results* (e.g. perceived achievement of course objectives, whether interest in and motivation for the subject have changed during the course, and the contribution of assessments and exams to the learning process)
- *Assessment of the course as a whole* (an overall assessment of this kind can include students' views on how well objectives, types of teaching methods and assessment tie in with each other, sometimes referred to as 'constructive alignment').

When assessing the quality of a course, it is important to know to what extent the course has stimulated and contributed to students' learning. The course evaluation should include questions about

factors that contribute to students' learning, for example, teaching that activates students and feedback on students' performance.

It is also possible to consider including questions about equal opportunities and moral harassment in the course evaluation. Note that any responses that contain information about perceived moral or sexual harassment and/or reprisals mean that the University has been made aware that these things occur. Since participants respond to the course evaluation anonymously and may provide limited information, an assessment needs to be made from case to case whether there is sufficient basis for taking any general action. Ultimately, the head of department is responsible for deciding on any measures.

Certain departments, programmes and faculties use standard questions to facilitate comparisons over time and between courses. Standard questions of this kind should be supplemented by questions designed for the specific course, as these may be important for capturing relevant views on the individual course. Course-specific questions can also make students more inclined to respond to the course evaluation, as they increase the relevance to the individual course and the questions are less monotonous to answer. A balance between standard questions and course-specific questions is preferable. It is also important that the questions in the course evaluation are formulated in terminology that the students are familiar with.

It is worth thinking about which aspects you are most interested in receiving students' comments on. If you have many questions in a questionnaire, you may need to prioritise so that the course evaluation does not end up being too long. You should also be careful about automatically asking certain questions; focus instead on questions that can provide input for improving the course. In addition, you should consider whether relevant information to supplement students' responses can be obtained from alternative sources (e.g. conversations with colleagues, exam results) so as to avoid burdening course evaluations and the students more than necessary.

For some examples of questions for course evaluations and response alternatives, see the [question bank](#) in the Staff Portal.

8. Use of course evaluations and representativeness

Guideline 8. Course evaluations should be used by the responsible bodies and decision-makers in the continuous development of education. In order to obtain data that is as representative as possible, it is important that course evaluations be carried out in a way that encourages a high response rate.

If the results of a course evaluation are to promote quality and development, this requires systematic discussion of how to use these results. There are several categories of employees who in one way or another are dependent on or interested in the information that course evaluations can provide. For those teaching a course, feedback from the students is a valuable source of ideas for improving the course and helps them in their professional development. For the course director, course evaluations provide information about students' perceptions of the course. Combined with the results of assessments and the views of teachers, they can enable the course director to determine which changes, if any, should be made for the next time the course is given. Directors of studies, programme coordinators, programme committees and other staff responsible for teaching and learning often have an interest in monitoring courses over time to ensure that the department's courses maintain the highest possible quality. Students' unions and domain/faculty boards are other groups with an interest in course evaluations.

A high response rate is often required to ensure that the results of a course evaluation are as representative as possible of many students' opinions. Low or declining response rates to course evaluations and other surveys are a common problem. However, various strategies are available for increasing the response rate in course evaluations. Here are a few suggestions.

- One of the most important things is to inform students right at the start of the course/programme about the value of course evaluations as a tool for developing the course or the programme.
- Systematic feedback on the results of course evaluations and subsequent measures, both to the students who have had the chance to answer the course evaluation and to new students next time the course is given, has an influence on students' inclination to respond to course evaluations (apart from being required by law). Students often specifically testify that feedback is important for their motivation.
- It is very valuable to have the support of the students when trying to raise the response rate. Unions and/or student associations can help to emphasise the importance of course evaluations. To give another example, some programmes appoint course representatives whose activities can include encouraging and reminding their coursemates to answer the course evaluation.
- A personal message from the teachers (for instance, an email) shows there is a recipient who is interested in responses. Some significant motivating factors reported by students are that the teachers show in various ways that the students' views are important and that they personally encourage the students to respond.
- Use formative course evaluations for supplementary information. These are both a tool for adaptation while the course is in progress, and show an interest in course development on the part of the teachers.
- Ask relevant questions and avoid excessively long course evaluation forms.
- Make it easy to complete the course evaluation by setting aside time for answering in connection with mandatory or other timetabled components (if possible after the students have been assessed on the course).
- Think about the method. Is the response rate higher with a course evaluation on paper that can be filled in at the lecture hall?
- Have well-designed procedures for reminders when answers to course evaluations do not come in.

In conclusion, the response rate can be raised by systematic efforts to create an educational environment with a high degree of student involvement, in which the importance of students' views is consistently emphasised.

Regardless of the response rate, it is important to make the best use of whatever student involvement exists. Low response rates must not become an argument for ignoring views conveyed by course evaluations; that would lead to a risk of fewer and fewer students choosing to share their opinions. Moreover, choosing not to listen to the group that does actually hand in comments, on the grounds that they are too few, indirectly gives those who do not get involved more influence. Free-text responses can contain feedback of great value regardless of the response rate, but quantitative data should be interpreted with caution when the response rate is low.

With regard to the validity of the results of course evaluations, it is good to be aware that there is research showing potential risks of gender and ethnic bias, for instance, in connection with course evaluations.² For example, tendencies have been found for individuals in various types of minority position to receive lower assessments in a course evaluation.

² See e.g. Heffernan, Troy. "Sexism, racism, prejudice, and bias: a literature review and synthesis of research surrounding student evaluations of courses and teaching." *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* (2021): 1-11.

9. Compilation

Guideline 9. A compilation must be made of responses to summative course evaluations. A compilation of responses must also be made when summative course evaluations are held orally. The compilation can be summarised in the course report, or appended to the course report in its entirety where appropriate.

A compilation must be made of responses to the course evaluation presenting both quantitative data (e.g. the breakdown of responses to questions with predetermined response alternatives) and qualitative data (e.g. free-text responses, comments). If you use an electronic course evaluation system, quantitative data is usually processed automatically and delivered in the form of a report. Automatically generated reports of this kind often present bar charts showing the percentage breakdown of responses, question by question. Depending on the design of the compilation, it can either be summarised in the course report or appended to the report in full. If the compilation is bulky, e.g. in courses with many participants, a summary may be more appropriate. Regardless of how the compilation is presented in the course report, it should be commented on and evaluated by the teacher in charge of the course (see further under point 10 below).

Course evaluations generally require only simple descriptive statistical analyses. The types of questions and associated response alternatives mainly used in course evaluations are often not suitable for calculating mean values. Instead, the account should take the form of a breakdown of responses in absolute or relative numbers (per cent) and possibly a median value (the middle value). One way to achieve transparency and comparability without using mean values is to merge response alternatives, e.g. to present the share for the two most 'positive' and/or 'negative' response alternatives on a five-point scale, for example. The essential point, however, is to take the results of course evaluations into account and use them in course development, and for this reason there should be scope for various methods of presentation, depending on local traditions and preferences.

When referring to quantitative results, the scale should be presented in a way that shows clearly whether it is a five-point scale, for instance, and what the opposite ends of the scale mean, e.g. 1 = 'to a very small extent' and 5 = 'to a very great extent'.

When the response rate is low the results of the quantitative analysis should be interpreted with caution. The response rate should always be indicated in the compilation. If the total number of responses to the course evaluation is low, either because of a low response rate or because the course has few participants, it can be misleading to report the results in percentages. Results from a relatively small group of students should be reported in absolute numbers to give a fairer picture of the material.

Free-text responses/comments (qualitative data) must receive attention and consideration and be presented in the compilation. One way to do this is to sort responses/comments with similar content into categories under recurrent themes. The compilation then presents the key themes as headings with a distillation of the contents of the free-text responses coming under each theme. It can be useful to clarify the themes by means of illustrative quotations.

If all free-text responses are published they must all be screened from a privacy perspective (see further point 6).

10. Course report

Guideline 10. A course report must be written in which the responses to the course evaluation and the execution of the course are evaluated by a course director or other person appointed for the purpose. The course report must thus include the views of both students and instructors and must describe the strengths and weaknesses of the course, along with any suggestions for improvements and proposed measures, if relevant. Key views from students' free-text responses should be summarised and presented in the course report.

If a course evaluation is to make a constructive contribution to improving a course, the views of students have to be put in context and followed up with discussions of results between teachers and students, for example, between the course director and course representatives. The experiences and perspectives of teachers must be factored in when analysing course evaluation results, taking account of the response rate and examination outcomes, for instance, as well as more long-term perspectives, in order to ensure that any changes that are made are well founded.

As stated in the guidelines, a course report must be written in which the responses to the course evaluation and the execution of the course are evaluated by the course director (or another person appointed for the purpose). The course report must include the views of both students and teachers and describe the strengths and weaknesses of the course, along with any suggestions for improvements and proposed measures, if relevant. If the choice is made not to take some measure that students have suggested, reasons for this should be stated. Key views from students' free-text responses must be summarised and presented in the course report, where selected free-text responses can be an excellent way to illustrate the summary. The course report should also mention results from formative course evaluations and any changes made while the course was in progress. It can also be a good idea to specify the semester concerned, the number of registered students, the response rate for the course evaluation, and the outcome of examinations. Potential recipients of the course report are, besides the course director/teacher in charge of the course, other teachers on the course, the director of studies, the programme director or the equivalent, other higher level staff members responsible for study programmes, and not least students.

A course report does not need to be either long or especially detailed. What it does is to make it evident that attention is being paid to the results and to show what is going to be done next time around. Apart from making feedback clearer, it can help ensure that the course director's/other teachers' ideas for developing the course are not forgotten and make it easier for those in charge of a programme to monitor courses over time.

Systematic review of course reports can uncover patterns of strength and weakness within a programme. In cases where there are deficiencies in several courses in a programme, measures may be called for at the programme, department or faculty level. Major measures should be addressed in operational planning and then followed up in annual operational reports at relevant levels.

To some extent, teachers can use reflections and comments in the course report to show their approach to teaching and learning and to developing their teaching, which can be useful evidence of their teaching expertise, e.g. when applying for a position or promotion.

11. Feedback

Guideline 11. The students must be actively informed as soon as possible about results of course evaluations, any suggestions for improvements and any measures taken or planned as a result of the compilation of responses and course report. Both students who have had the opportunity to respond to the course evaluation and new students taking the course must be informed. New students must be informed of the result at an early stage of the course when it is next given.

It is vital that students find out about *any changes* made in response to course evaluation results, by course reports being made available to them, for instance. While students must have a strong voice, the results of course evaluations are one of several inputs for deciding on course development and changes; other inputs may include examination results, current research and teachers' opinions. It is the education provider that decides which measures, if any, should be taken as a consequence of the results, after careful consideration of the students' views.

The Higher Education Ordinance states that the students must receive information about the results and any measures decided on in response to the course evaluations. As mentioned previously, feedback to the students is important for several reasons, not least to encourage student involvement in the process of course development. Another effect of students having access to previous course reports for a specific course is that they can help follow up whether the measures presented in those reports have actually been implemented.

The Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ) has emphasised in its regulatory reviews that students must be actively informed of the results of course evaluations (see further [Swedish Higher Education Authority publications](#) on supervision of the application of regulations by higher education institutions 2018–2020). The expression 'actively informed' means that it is not enough simply to publish the compilation and course report, for example, in a learning management system. Institutions also need to tell the students that the results are available and where to find them. The Swedish Higher Education Authority has also clarified which students are to have access to the compilation and the course report. They are, firstly, the students who have had the opportunity to respond to the course evaluation, and secondly, new students taking the course. The students who have been offered the chance to respond to the course evaluation can be actively informed that the results are available (and where) by email. New students on the course can be informed about the results of the course evaluation the last time the course was given in connection with the introduction to the course, for instance, and an email could perhaps also be sent to all newly admitted students on the course about where to find the information.

12. Responsibility for implementation

Guideline 12. The official or body appointed by the domain/faculty board is responsible for ensuring: a) that course evaluations are conducted, a compilation of responses is made and the results are used in development work; b) that a course report is written as soon as possible to serve as a basis for changes in future courses, normally within two months after the end of the course; c) that a compilation of student responses and a course report are readily available to teachers and students concerned in accordance with point 11, and that they are informed about where to find the documents; d) that a compilation of student responses and a course report are registered and archived indefinitely; e) that the students' individual written responses are preserved for two years after the compilation is made.

It is up to each domain/faculty board to appoint an official or body responsible for implementing all aspects of the course evaluation process.

Under archive regulations, the original version of the written individual questionnaire responses must be kept for two years and the compilations of student responses and course report must be registered and archived indefinitely.

In general, a course report is an official document once it has been finalised. Questionnaire responses are to be regarded as official documents and should be assumed to be open to the public. This is because a completed course evaluation is to be regarded as a response received by a public authority. What is at issue here is the right of an individual to request access to a document.

13. Responsibility for follow-up

Guideline 13. The domain/faculty board must periodically ensure that the work on course evaluations is followed up in an appropriate manner in its domain and that feedback is provided to relevant stakeholders on the results of the follow-up. If deemed appropriate or necessary, the relevant board is responsible for issuing supplementary provisions.

The Higher Education Ordinance makes the higher education institution responsible for implementing course evaluations. Students must be given the opportunity to participate in higher education institutions' quality assurance procedures and in the process of further development of education. According to Uppsala University's rules of procedure, it is also the domain/faculty boards that are responsible for activities in their area, which means they are responsible for continuous monitoring of the work on course evaluations.

Some faculties have supplementary provisions, and course directors should find out what the situation is in their own disciplinary domain/faculty. Some faculties also use standardised question packages for use in all the faculty's courses.