



Circular

2005 student experience  
survey

21 October 2005

SFC/04/2005



Scottish Funding Council  
Promoting further and higher education

Comhairle Maoinachaidh na h-Alba  
A' brosnachadh foghlam adhartach agus àrd-ìre



## 2005 student experience survey

21 October 2005

SFC/04/2005

<http://www.sfc.ac.uk/library/sfc/circular/2005>

This circular provides the outcomes of the third student experience survey commissioned by SFEFC and SHEFC, the Council's predecessor bodies.

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## **Recent SFC Circulars**

21 October 2005

SFC/03/2005

### **Partnership for the future: developing a new strategy**

This circular invites you to contribute to the development of a new strategy for the Council for the period 2006-09.

21 October 2005

SFC/02/2005

### **Main quality research grant: updating minor volume indicators**

This circular requests higher education institutions to provide updated values of the minor volume indicators in order to inform the allocation of research funding through the main quality research grant (MQRG) in 2006-07 and 2007-08.

7 October 2005

SFC/01/2005

### **Establishment of the Scottish Further and Higher Education Funding Council**

This circular announces the formal establishment on 3 October 2005 of the Scottish Further and Higher Education Funding Council.

## 2005 student experience survey

- 1 This circular provides you with the outcomes of the third student experience survey commissioned by SFEFC and SHEFC, the Council's predecessor bodies. The summary tables from the report are attached as Appendix A, and you can find the full report on our website at [http://www.sfc.ac.uk/publications/pubs\\_other.htm](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/publications/pubs_other.htm)
- 2 Earlier this year TNS Social (formerly NFO Social) were commissioned to undertake a survey of the experience of learners in Scottish colleges and universities. This is the third such survey. Previous surveys were undertaken, using the same methodology, in 2003 and 2001. The one difference is that this survey has been enhanced with input from a series of focus groups with learners.
- 3 The outcomes of this survey are very consistent with the findings of the previous surveys. Looking at the top line results, it is pleasing to see that once again over 90 per cent of the 2,000 learners questioned in the spring of this year claimed to be satisfied or very satisfied with their learning experience.
- 4 There are also some specific aspects of the student experience which learners have consistently rated much less favourably than other aspects. There are, no doubt, some complex factors underlying these responses. Nevertheless, I hope these findings will provide useful material for institutions' on-going processes of dialogue with their learners.



**Roger McClure**  
Chief Executive

## Appendix A – Summary tables

(extracted from: Survey of student experience, TNS Social, 2005)

**Table 0-1: Satisfaction with quality of learning experience and with university/college as a whole by sector.**

	YEAR	HE		FE	
		% satisfied	% dissatisfied	% satisfied	% dissatisfied
Overall satisfaction with the quality of learning experience	2001	87%	7%	90%	6%
	2003	92%	2%	94%	3%
	<b>2005</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Level of satisfaction with university/college as a whole	2001	88%	5%	89%	4%
	2003	93%	1%	93%	2%
	<b>2005</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>4%</b>

(BASES: 2001: n = 1,462 for FE, n = 586 for HE; 2003: n = 1,458 for FE, n = 618 for HE; 2005: n = 1,546 for FE, n = 569 for HE)

**Table 0-2: Level of importance and satisfaction with aspects of learning experience by sector**

	YEAR	HE		FE	
		% saying aspect is important	% satisfied with aspect	% saying aspect is important	% satisfied with aspect
The number of hours contact you have with teaching staff	2001	89%	74%	93%	89%
	2003	94%	77%	93%	90%
	<b>2005</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>87%</b>
The size of the group in which you are taught	2001	76%	80%	78%	86%
	2003	79%	77%	74%	87%
	<b>2005</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>87%</b>
The books you need being available in libraries	2001	94%	52%	85%	67%
	2003	93%	56%	84%	71%
	<b>2005</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>71%</b>
Having adequate access to computer facilities*	2001	88%	78%	83%	78%
	2003	94%	81%	85%	80%
	<b>2005</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>82%</b>
The quality of equipment in labs or workshops	2001	77%	62%	79%	63%
	2003	83%	67%	81%	68%
	<b>2005</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>63%</b>
The relevance of the course to the job you hope to do	2001	82%	67%	94%	85%
	2003	85%	69%	93%	86%
	<b>2005</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>87%</b>
The balance between the amount of formal attendance and private study time	2001	82%	71%	87%	82%
	2003	88%	72%	86%	84%
	<b>2005</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>82%</b>

Receiving adequate general help, learning support and guidance you get with your studies from teaching staff*	2001	93%	69%	97%	84%
	2003	95%	72%	95%	87%
	<b>2005</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>84%</b>
Receiving adequate advice and support with financial and other personal issues*	2001	63%	39%	83%	62%
	2003	76%	51%	85%	70%
	<b>2005</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>70%</b>
Receiving appropriate advice about careers and job vacancies*	2001	79%	53%	81%	56%
	2003	85%	49%	85%	64%
	<b>2005</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>66%</b>

(BASES: 2001: n = 1462 for FE, n = 586 for HE; 2003: n = 1,458 for FE, n = 618 for HE; 2005: n = 1,546 for FE, n = 569 for HE)

\* Question wording changed slightly between 2001 and 2003 on these statements

**Table 0-3: Perceptions of how successful institution is in promoting equal opportunities.**

	YEAR	HE		FE	
		% successful	% unsuccessful	% successful	% unsuccessful
How successful is institution in promoting equal opportunities?	2001	53%	6%	61%	3%
	2003	55%	5%	58%	2%
	<b>2005</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>1%</b>

(BASES: 2001: n = 1462 for FE, n = 586 for HE; 2003: n = 1,458 for FE, n = 618 for HE; 2005: n for FE, n = 569 for HE)= 1546

**Table 0-4: Knowledge and awareness of policies and procedures**

	YEA R	HE			FE		
		Yes	No	DK	Yes	No	DK
Would you know what procedure to follow if you wished to make an appeal on an academic matter, such as essay marks or exam results?	2001	49%	44%	7%	51%	42%	7%
	2003	47%	42%	12%	47%	46%	8%
	<b>2005</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>9%</b>
Does your institution have a complaints procedure for dealing with general complaints on issues such as library opening hours?	2001	52%	5%	43%	59%	5%	36%
	2003	45%	6%	49%	57%	10%	33%
	<b>2005</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>31%</b>
Does the college/university provide other ways for students to feedback concerns or positive comments about their experience?	2001	71%	7%	22%	68%	6%	26%
	2003	64%	8%	28%	71%	7%	22%
	<b>2005</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>21%</b>
Does your college/university have an equal opportunities policy?	2001	74%	1%	26%	76%	1%	23%
	2003	73%	1%	26%	77%	2%	21%
	<b>2005</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>19%</b>

(BASES: 2001: n = 1462 for FE, n = 586 for HE; 2003: n = 1,458 for FE, n = 618 for HE; 2005: n = 1,546 for FE, n = 569 for HE)

Note: 'DK' = 'Don't know'



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