

## CATEI (Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement)

### Background

CATEI (Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement) is web based software that can be customized to undertake surveys. It has been developed by the University of New South Wales (UNSW) to collect, analyse and evaluate student learning experiences.

The software has been successfully installed on the campuses of tertiary institutions and has applicability to all institutions seeking to evaluate and improve teaching performance. The survey can be hosted and administered by NSi or can be purchased outright by an Institution that wishes to modify or host the survey system itself.

### Details

The survey is a series of course, topic and teaching evaluation questionnaires which are provided to students. Student responses are summarised by the CATEI software. The software is an electronic, web-based system for Student Evaluation of the Classroom Environment, based on the Oracle relational database management system ('System'). The System functionality includes web interface with on-line delivery, database building and evaluation, and report generation. It can also be used as a paper-based survey, which can be later scanned as an electronic entry at the user's discretion.

CATEI is used by UNSW to gather quantifiable data from its students about their experience and views on courses they have undertaken. It assists staff by providing them with data for critical reflection regarding their teaching. It provides a basis for a productive dialogue with both students and peers, and powerful information for course improvement and teaching development.

CATEI is administered, delivered and managed online – a feature that distinguishes it from many other survey instruments. It delivers

significant sustainable benefits in the environmental, educational, financial and administrative fields and its application has assisted UNSW to be recognised as the leading university by the Australian Learning and Teaching Performance Fund, netting the highest amount distributed by the Fund.

### The Survey consists of two components:

#### Course Evaluation

The relevant details for each course are entered into the system, including report recipient (defined by class, school, faculty or other hierarchy) and survey dates. Questions about the course, some of which are standard across the University and others written by the Faculty or School are included in the survey.

#### Teaching Evaluation

Staff for each course are entered into the system according to their chosen grouping (e.g. lecture, small group or studio) and teaching format.

The questionnaire usually contains between seven and 20 items. A minimum of seven questions are kept standard at university-level and another three are standard at faculty level (these can vary from faculty to faculty). Teachers can include questions tailored to their course to be answered by their students only.

Students receive regular emails during the survey period reminding them to participate. They are invited to write comments and to rank their staff and course (with the flexibility to select ranges such as "1 to 5" or "A to L" ranking).

### Analysis of Results and Feedback to Students

Updated survey results for each course are sent to each coordinator upon completion. Teaching evaluation is confidential and only sent to the staff member listed on the survey, from which they can choose to share with their mentors and superiors.

Course coordinators receive regular updates about survey response rates during the survey period, enabling them to maximize participation. Coordinators then analyse feedback and respond with a quantitative report to their Head of School and pass comments flow back to the students.

### Outcomes from the using CATEI at UNSW include:

- Environmental savings result from reduced paper use because the survey is primarily done on-line at UNSW. This has materially reduced paper costs at UNSW;
- IT is a time-efficient and cost-effective technology – the entire process for implementing the survey is managed by one staff member;
- This is in addition to the many benefits resulting from a reliable and quantifiable feedback in the future development of courses;
- Students have genuine input into the development of courses and programs;
- Excellence in teaching is recognised and acknowledged and educational standards are improved through the application of the best practice of evaluation of courses.

#### Further Information:

Graham Morton

Business Development Manager

T: +61 2 9385 7443

M: +61 419 581 114

E: [g.morton@nsinnovations.com.au](mailto:g.morton@nsinnovations.com.au)

Ref: 07\_2108