



MODULE DESIGN & ENHANCEMENT

Guide to Module Enhancement in UCD

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What is Module Enhancement?

Module enhancement is a self and peer evaluation of the educational effectiveness of a module informed by a customized set of qualitative and quantitative data that have been designed to provide a synoptic 360 view of a module, or groups of modules within a subject area or a school. The enhancement focus emphasizes an active and reflective approach to identifying aspects of the module(s) which have worked particularly well along with areas which may be developed further. Intended outcomes of the enhancement focus are pedagogic adjustments to future offerings of the module (e.g. adjustments to the design and delivery of the module) which seek to improve student learning.

Why is it Important?

Module enhancement allows for the regular and incremental updating of the educational design of modules for future offerings to ensure that they continue to provide an appropriate academic challenge for students. The enhancement process makes explicit the academic judgments and pedagogic adaptations that staff customarily implement in keeping their modules current and relevant to students' learning needs and the goals of the discipline or subject. It is an important aid to making evidence-based decisions about the design and teaching of module(s) for the benefit of their students. From a user perspective, for example students and indeed funding agencies, it confirms the professional and deliberative approach that is taken by staff to develop and offer a high quality and engaging educational experience.

What Data are Available to Support Module Enhancement?

A variety of qualitative and quantitative data are available to support a reflective exercise on various aspects of the module. By their nature, the data provide key indicators of all aspects of the offering of a module, in terms of:

- students' achievement of learning outcomes (grade information);
- learner experience of the module (student feedback);
- peer review of the quality and standards of the module(s) (Extern Examiner Reports);
- student engagement and preferences (registration data).

Supporting Data

1. Module Enhancement Report (MER)*

The composite module enhancement report (MER) gives a single-screen overview of your module information. The high level summary data includes links to access more detailed information including **module descriptors, registration data, student feedback on modules** and **grade distribution data**.

The Head of School will see information for all modules in the school, while individual module coordinators will only see information pertaining to modules for which they are responsible.

2. Extern Examiner Reports

3. Formative Feedback

Formative feedback is most effective when it is done frequently and when the information is used to make immediate adjustments to the module. Most formative feedback methods are designed to be quick and easy to use. Here's a link to examples of in-class methods for formative feedback/evaluation.

<http://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching/cat.html>

***Module Enhancement Report (MER)** is available In InfoHub, www.ucd.ie/infohub

Module Coordinators: click on the **Academic Staff** tab & then click on **Quality Enhancement & Student Feedback**. **Heads of School:** click on **School & Unit Management** tab, then click on **Student & Curriculum Information**, finally click on **Quality Enhancement & Student Feedback**

Student Feedback on Modules

At the end of each semester the standard university Student Feedback on Modules survey takes place. Module coordinators may consider using formative feedback in the early weeks of a module. Inclusion of student feedback incorporates a student-centered approach to module enhancement. Once student feedback has been analysed and considered alongside other qualitative and quantitative data, module coordinators should 'close the feedback loop' by communicating back to students how their feedback has impacted on the module. Module Coordinators and schools that demonstrate to students that their feedback is valued and used are much more likely to achieve higher response rates.

How can these Data be used at Module and School Level for Enhancement Work?

At module level these data, together with the module coordinator's expectations and experience of the module offering allow a reflective diagnosis of how well the module has achieved its intended educational outcomes. The module coordinator can use a series of leading questions to take a 'step back' and think in a structured manner about how well the module is achieving its aims (c.f. Table 1 below).

At School level module enhancement provides schools with the means by which to affirm the quality of their educational offerings. Heads of school, who have a formal governance and management responsibility for all modules offered by their school, will be able to: gain an informed understanding of the quality of educational experience offered to their students; identify any patterns in student learning performance; recognise the teaching strengths of the school and identify any teaching issues that require further development. Heads of school can use a series of questions to take an objective overview of the school's modules (c.f. Table 1 below).

Leading Questions for Module Coordinators

1. How well do the learning outcomes listed express clearly and explicitly what you expect students to learn?
2. Is the level of the module consistent with the learning outcomes of the module?
3. How do the learning outcomes of your module influence the design of student workload in terms of:
(a) The balance of activities and styles of assessments
(b) The amount of contact time
4. What does the pattern of student performance on your module suggest in terms of how well the students are achieving the learning outcomes you have set? *(Are there clearly atypical grade distributions in your module? For example more than 25% on A grades may suggest an underestimation of student ability or less than challenging assessment strategies. Similarly a fail rate approaching 25% may indicate unrealistic learning outcomes or assessment approaches).*
5. How well do you think your assessment strategy supports and measures students' achievement of the learning outcomes?
6. How does student feedback and evaluation link into the development of your module?
7. In your view what one aspect of this module worked really well? What one aspect of this module could be enhanced for the future?

Leading Questions for Heads of Schools/Subject Areas

1. What does this School already do really well in terms of its teaching?
2. Are there any issues arising across the range of modules offered in the school or subjects within the school which require further attention?
3. How well does the existing suite of modules contribute to the overall delivery of the discipline(s) by your School?
4. How well do the learning outcomes of modules at each level meet the requirements of the National Qualifications Framework?
5. Are there any modules within your School where the pattern of student performance indicates that student learning is taking place very effectively or indicates a possible cause for concern? For example modules with a failure rate of 25% or modules with 25% of A grades may warrant further investigation?
6. Is the specific timing of module assessments clear to students at the outset? For example, do all module descriptors assign a specific week in which an assessment falls due? Are there many instances of late changes in assessment methods for modules in your School?