

AUSA e-Voice Diary Report: 2020, Semester 2, Week 4

Report completed as of 28/08/2020



AUSA STUDENT VOICE OFFICE

1.0 Aim

Every semester, the Student Voice Office at AUSA sends out an online survey to registered Class Representatives to gather information regarding what is going on across the campus and within classroom settings at the University of Auckland. This report aims to outline the feedback received from Class Representatives about how semester one of 2020 has gone so far.

1.1 Methodology

The e-Voice diary was set up using google forms as the survey platform. The survey was distributed to all registered Class Representatives via email and was sent out to Class Reps on Monday 17th August and was closed on Monday 24th August.

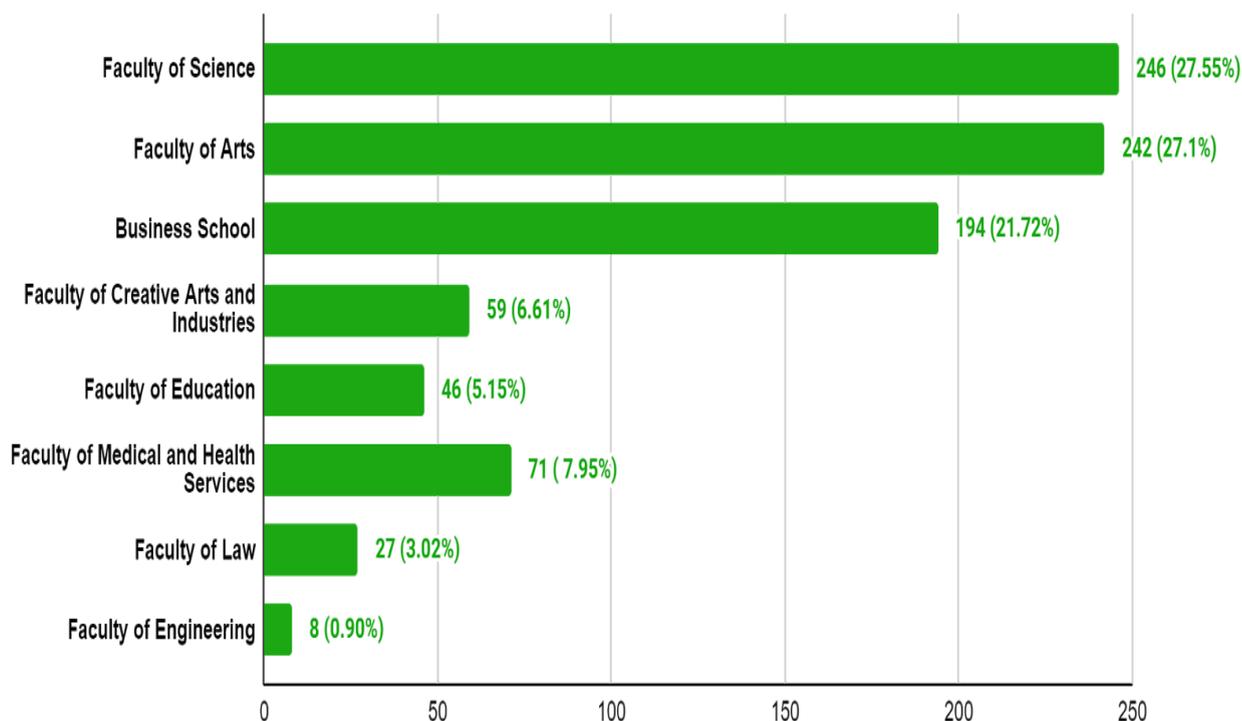
1.2 Introduction

The report will follow the structure of first summarising the results of each question, before going into further analysis of their results. A summary will be provided at the end of the report with possible implementations and recommendations as well as other implications following from here on forth.

2.0 Faculty Contributions

The following information provides details on which faculties took part in the survey and which faculties had the most respondents. The total amount of submissions received for this section is **877**.

Faculty (This is the faculty of the course you are representing)



The following statistics shown reflects the graphs above and will be presented in the order of highest to lowest in terms of respondents.

● Faculty of Science	246	27.55% * 893
● Faculty of Arts	242	27.1% * 893
● Business School	194	21.72% * 893
● Faculty of Medical and Health Services	71	7.95% * 893
● Faculty of Creative Arts and Industries	59	6.61% * 893
● Faculty of Education	46	5.15% * 893
● Faculty of Law	27	3.02% * 893
● Faculty of Engineering	8	0.90% * 893

Looking at the following statistics, it is clear that the Faculty of Science, Faculty of Arts and Business School have the highest respondent rates in comparison to other faculties.

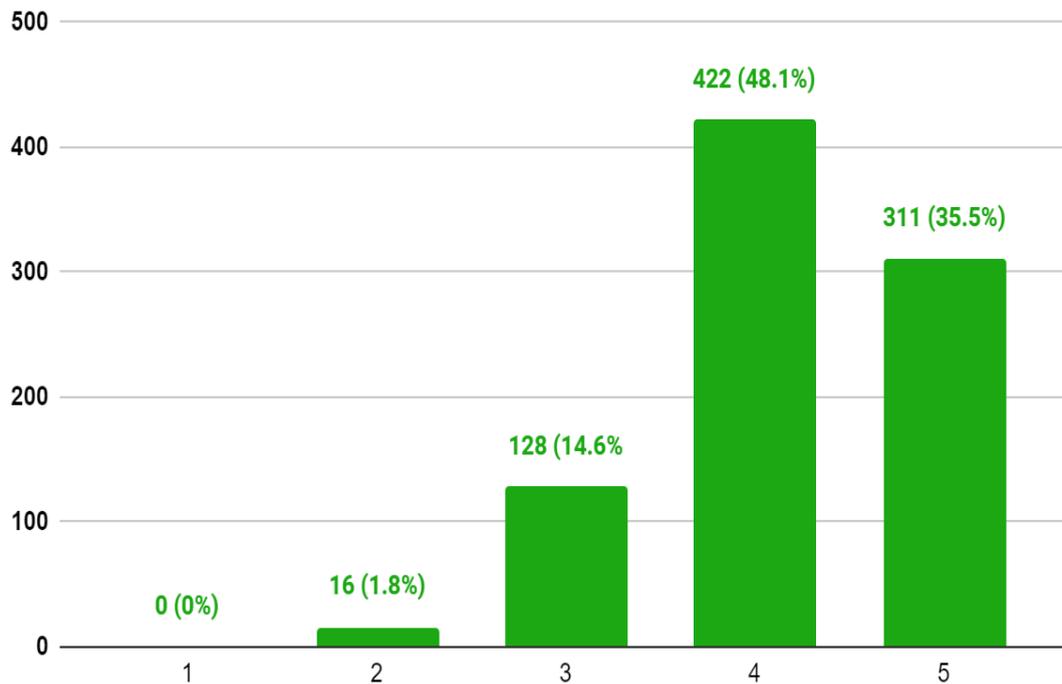
Three possible reasons for low response rates among certain faculties might be:

1. The increased workload of Class Reps due to lock down.
2. Some faculties have lower numbers of courses.
3. Other external factors due to lock down i.e internet issues, family issues, and other commitments.

3.0 Course Experiences

The following information outlines the overall rated experience of courses provided at the University of Auckland across all faculties during the first four weeks of semester 2, 2020. The Class Representatives were asked to select how they would rate the respective courses they represent, from '1' being 'Poor', to '5' being 'Excellent'. The overall total responses to this question were **877**.

Overall Course Experience



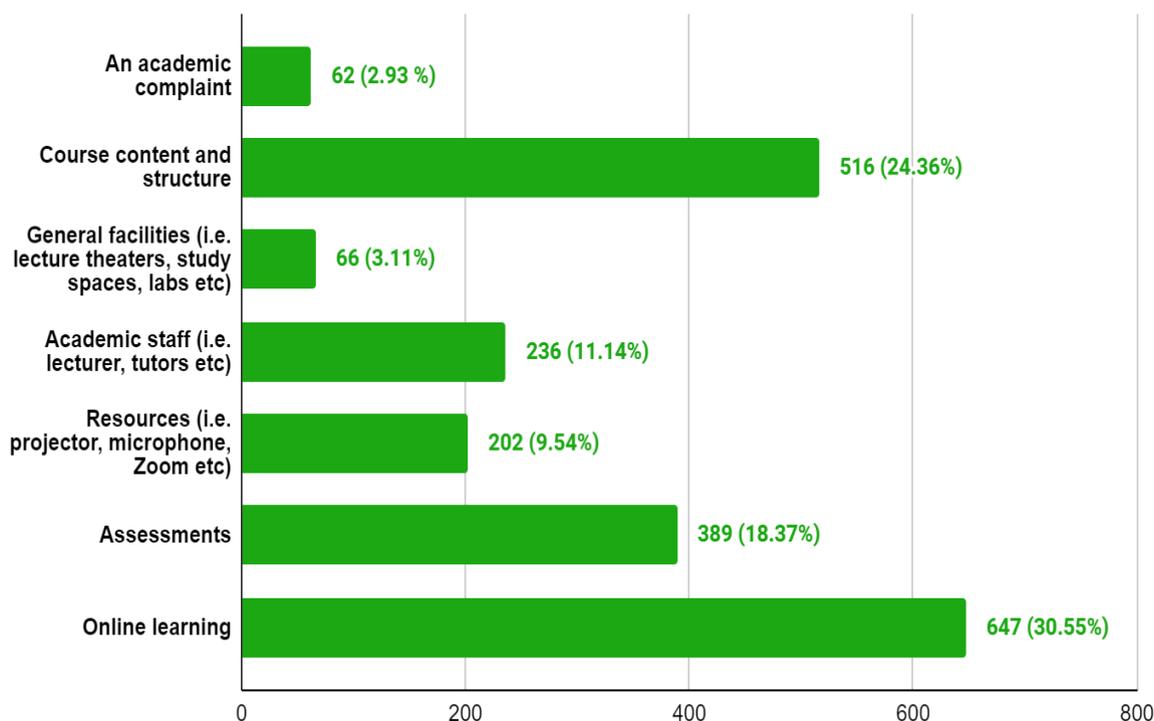
The following statistics are reflective of the graph above in the order from 5(Excellent) to 1 (poor):

- 5 (Excellent) |311 |35.5% * 877
- 4 |422 |48.1% * 877
- 3 |128 |14.6% * 877
- 2 |16 |1.8% * 877
- 1 (Poor) |0 |0% * 877

- It can be noted that the overall course experience has been mostly positive for the first four weeks of semester 2, 2020.
- It should also be noted that these responses have limitations, due to possible Class Representative biases.

3.1 Outlining what Categories Class Representative 'Course Experience' Feedback Relate to

Class Rep Course Experience Feedback is About



The statistics below reflect the graph above and is presented in the order from highest to lowest in terms of the number of respondents.

● Online learning	647	30.55% * 2118
● Course content and structure	516	24.36% * 2118
● Assessments	389	18.37% * 2118
● Academic staff	236	11.14% * 2118
● Resources	202	9.54% * 2118
● General facilities	66	3.11% * 2118
● An academic complaint	62	2.93% * 2118

- The data above shows that a fair majority of the course experience feedback received from Class Representatives was about 'Online learning', totalling to 30.55% of overall feedback received.
- This was followed by 'Course content and structure' (24.36%) and then 'Assessments' (18.37%).
- The lowest area of course experience feedback was 'An academic complaint' (2.93%).

4.0 Expressed Views Regarding Course Experiences Categories

The following section seeks to outline specific areas of feedback provided under each 'Course Experience' category that was outlined in the previous section, 3.1.

It should be noted that some sections were noticeably intertwined when it came to analysing responses made. Therefore, some sections will share one subheading with others. Each subheading will outline what the standard feedback information was, as well as present individual quotes directly from class representatives.

The total amount of responses generated in this section was in total, **877**.

4.1 Course Content & Structure / Lecturers & Tutors / Student Academic Complaints

- **Students expressed their concerns around the 24-hour test/assessment removal**
 - *"Many students are dissatisfied with the University's responses to online learning, especially what will happen with assessments. Students are still trying to find their footing again with the stress of another pandemic and being able to adapt to a different routine and working style"*
 - *"There is not enough understanding and support from the University regarding the assessments for this course"*
 - *"The fairness of the test will be varied if a test is timed due to time zone difference and technical difficulties"*
 - *"A large number of students have complained about assessment change due to the COVID-19 arrangements"*
 - *"International students want the University to acknowledge their difficulty of working remotely in a different country"*
 - *"It is disappointing to put all that effort not to be able to perform well in a test because of feeling extremely pushed for time"*

- **Students have expressed concerns towards shifting back to remote learning**
 - *"Switching back to online has been frustrating and stressful for students"*
 - *"Quite a few students seemed to be behind and not catching up due to the lockdown shift"*
 - *"The main concern was students not keeping up with the fast shift to lock down"*

4.2 Assessments

- **Students have mentioned that there is a need for lecturers to be more helpful regarding the structure and details of an assessment**

- *“Having more instruction on when the assignments are due and how to apply the content to the rest of the assessment appropriately”*
- *“Most said that there needs to be additional guidance for what is required in our tests, exams, and assignments as instructions are very vague”*
- *There were uncertainties on information about future quizzes and assessments as they updated the quiz late”*
- *“We have been expected to complete an upcoming assignment with no marking rubric, grade weight, or due date. The lack of clarity during uncertain times has not been helpful”*
- **Students request that the lecturers consider grade bumps**
 - *“They would also like to put forward the idea of the grade bump for the rest of the semester, and not just the first half”*
 - *“What is the possibility of another grade bump, similar to semester one? I feel that people were better prepared for another lock down, but this will still affect the efficiency of teaching/learning, and some students will still struggle to readjust to this new normal”*
 - *“Students would like the 5 % grade bump for online learning”*

4.3 Resources / General Facilities Concerns

- **Lack of access to the University's resources whilst they are paying full course fees**
 - *“We were discussing the new online structure with our lecturer. However many students are disappointed that they are again paying full fee prices for online courses without access to our study spaces”*
- **Lack of enough resources provided by lecturers**
 - *“The main concerns were not getting enough course resources and support during the lock down. Many students felt like the style of lectures being delivered was not enough to support their learning”*
- **Tutor's WIFI during tutorials**
 - *“There is a concern amongst students about our tutor's ability to access quality internet connection for zoom tutorials. Having experienced one such moment myself, it was quite disrupting for the tutor's connection to be dropping in and out”*
- **Zoom and internet connections**
 - *“Students said they might have some general connection issues with zoom”*

- *“Other students noted how online labs and the labs in general were difficult to keep up with due to issues with zoom”*

- **Enabling Piazza**

- *“We have received numerous requests to enable Piazza. Most students feel the lack of anonymity in canvas discussions is a barrier to freely asking questions as students have to put much more thought into what they write as their name is available for everyone to see, which results in them not bothering at all”*

5.0 Commendations

Apart from all the common general concerns listed in previous section 4, there are praises by many Class Representatives, despite there being extreme difficulty that the University and its academic staff may be facing due to this shift into lock down. They have prevailed, and the Class Representatives have expressed their gratitude towards that.

- *“The course is well organised on Canvas, the lecture slides and lab resources are self-explanatory and accessible, and the workload is fair. The lecturer is interesting to listen to, makes sure aims/assessments are understood and is approachable if you have a question”*
- *“Mark has been compassionate and ensured that no student has felt as though they have been ‘left behind’ despite the shift to online learning”*
- *“The teaching techniques used in lectures are appealing, and all of us seem to enjoy the course so far. Caroline, our lecturer, is doing a great job in presenting the topics in class”*
- *“Lecture is moving at a good pace, and tutorials prove to be very helpful”*
- *“Transition to online has been pretty smooth”*
- *“Students agreed that the course was delivered well with an amazing team behind it with good communication as we went into lock down”*
- *“Lecturers are helpful and engaging to all students”*

6.0 Key Takeaways

This report has outlined the general and key information that the Class Representatives of the University of Auckland have provided regarding how the start of semester 2, 2020 has gone.

So, what are the key takeaways from all the information provided?

- Majority of students are pleased with the University's shift into lock down with the most common word to describe it would be, “smooth”
- Students hope that the university staff/lecturers start to update students effectively regarding assessment details, due dates, guidance, structure, and clarity
- Students request that the university recognises the circumstances that the students are facing during their shift into lock down and their time in remote learning and hope they continue to receive support
- Another key takeaway is the response rate of the e-Voice diary submissions received, and how it has significantly improved in comparison to semester one of 2020

7.0 Recommendations

Piazza

- There has been a significant amount of praise towards Piazza and its effectiveness towards students’ engagement and content help. Currently, as 1-to-1 interaction has been cut off from students, due to lock down, Piazza has been a useful substitute. While the Piazza platform has helped many students during this lock down, its use has not been consistent in every course.
 - Hence, a recommendation to implement Piazza in all courses would be a step in the right direction. This would be beneficial for students due to the current lack of in-class interaction experienced during the lockdown period.

Grade bumps

- The recent lockdown has affected students in all areas of their academic and personal lives. The current lock down has caused significant stress to students due to the shift to online learning. This move, according to students, might hinder their potential to achieve excellent grades in tests and assessments. Also, students don’t think online learning has had a positive effect so far; instead, it has resulted in increased workloads and a lack of understanding of course contents - due to low engagement between students and their lecturers. As a result, students have suggested that a grade bump has proven to help and should be considered, as seen from the recently concluded semester one.
 - Therefore, a recommendation would be to implement grade bumps for students. This lockdown is an exceptional circumstance; students will never get used to this environment and will continue to be disadvantaged, hindered, and behind.

