

# 2006 Student and Graduate Opinion Surveys

## Summary of University-wide Results

### Demographics

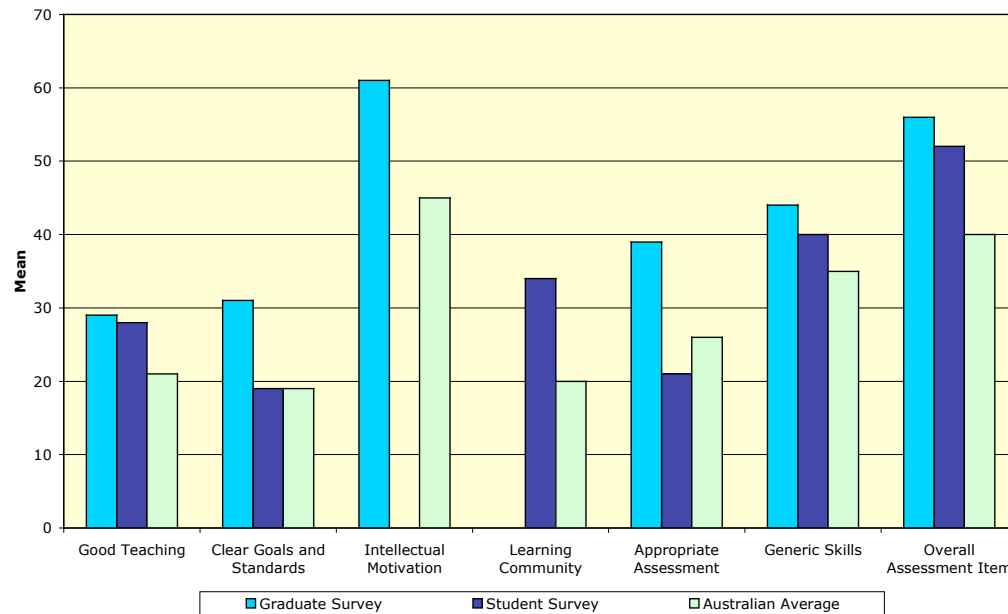
- The shift to online surveys supported with paper surveys for 2006 saw an increase in response rates of approximately 10%, to 49% in the graduate survey and 60% in the student survey.
- There was a slightly higher proportion of international graduates (7%) than in previous years, and a continuing trend towards English as a second language in both graduate (13%) and student (19%) respondents.
- Graduates tended to be more likely to be working and more likely to be earning higher salaries than in recent years; this was likely the result of the courses surveyed, which included PhDs, all Commerce Division postgraduate programmes, and the Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery.
- Academic reputation continues to be the most popular reason for studying at Otago.

### University Support Services

- Libraries, information technology and teaching facilities rated highly, similar to in previous years. Helpfulness of library and computing resource staff rated particularly highly. In the information technology area, training in the use of computers showed a marked improvement on previously slightly low ratings.
- Lower ratings in these areas showed similar patterns to previous years, with availability of study places and access to network ports in the library of some concern. It will be interesting to see how introduction of the wireless network affects ratings for this latter item in 2007.
- The campus environment and personal safety on campus rated very highly, similar to in 2005. There was less satisfaction with the University Union, where ratings had declined slightly.
- Administrative and support service ratings were similar to 2005, and generally very good. Residential colleges, the helpfulness of staff, the Guide to Enrolment booklet and examination procedures all rated particularly highly.
- The Maori Centre, Pacific Islands Centre and access in matters of grievance showed the most improvement from 2005. Ratings were down somewhat for Student Health and Counselling, with waiting times during winter months an issue evident in comments made by respondents.
- Disabilities support ratings were reasonably good, but down slightly on 2005.

## Course Experiences

The chart below shows results for the Student and Graduate Opinion Surveys, compared to data from all Australian universities. Note that Australian graduates are surveyed relatively soon after graduation (approximately six months), while Otago graduates are surveyed 18 months to two years after graduation, and Otago students are surveyed at various levels of study.



Changes from previous years were small, and may have been based on the mix of programmes being surveyed in 2006. The appropriate assessment scale was slightly down on 2005 ratings, while the learning community and generic skills scales showed some improvement.

## Postgraduate Supervision and Support

Postgraduate results compared to 2005 were as follows:

	Graduate Survey	Student Survey
Honours	Increase in supervision ratings, similar ratings for support	Increase in supervision ratings, similar ratings for support
Postgraduate Certificates	Increase in supervision and support ratings	Insufficient responses
Postgraduate Diplomas	Increase in supervision ratings, similar for support	Slight increase in supervision, similar ratings for support
Masters	Very slight light decrease in supervision and support ratings	Slight decrease in supervision and support ratings
PhD	Slight increase in supervision ratings and large increase in support ratings (compared with 2004)	Not surveyed

For supervision:

- As in 2005, supervisor friendliness rated highest, followed by items relating to supervisor knowledge of, and interest in, the student's research area, and supervisor understanding work problems. Overall satisfaction with supervision also rated very highly.
- The only supervision item that rated truly lowly was 'My supervisor discussed the University's guidelines on supervision with me'. This is consistent with previous years.

For support:

- Highest rated were the provision of library services, necessary equipment and suitable working space.
- The lowest-rated items related to the University's provision of financial support, which was consistent with previous years. Induction into postgraduate study, including statement of the responsibilities of, and support available to, postgraduate students, also rated lower than other items in the graduate survey, although these items show a positive trend.

### **Course Outcomes**

All measured attributes were applied more post-graduation than they were developed during study, with the exception of academic rigour. Graduates considered the ability to solve problems, the skills to plan one's own work, and oral communication skills as the attributes most applied in post-graduation life.

The most developed attributes were:

- Analytical skills
- The ability to solve problems
- Independent judgement.

The largest discrepancies between development and application were for:

- Teamwork skills
- Oral communication skills
- Self-confidence.