

2007 Student and Graduate Opinion Surveys

Summary of University-wide Results

Demographics

- In 2007 the response rate in the Graduate Survey was the highest ever achieved at Otago University with 50% of graduates surveyed responding either online or by mail. Responses rates were also good for the two Student Opinion Surveys. The Student Opinion Survey: Academic Experience had a 56% response rate and the Student Opinion Survey: Support Services a slightly lower response rate of 43%.
- In the Graduate Survey there was a continuing trend towards a higher proportion of international graduates (11% of respondents) than in previous years, and English as a second language (15%).
- Graduates tended to be less likely to be in full-time employment and to earn lower salaries than last year probably because of the selection of programmes surveyed last year (refer to the 2006 summary).
- Academic reputation continues to be the most popular reason for studying at Otago.

University Support Services

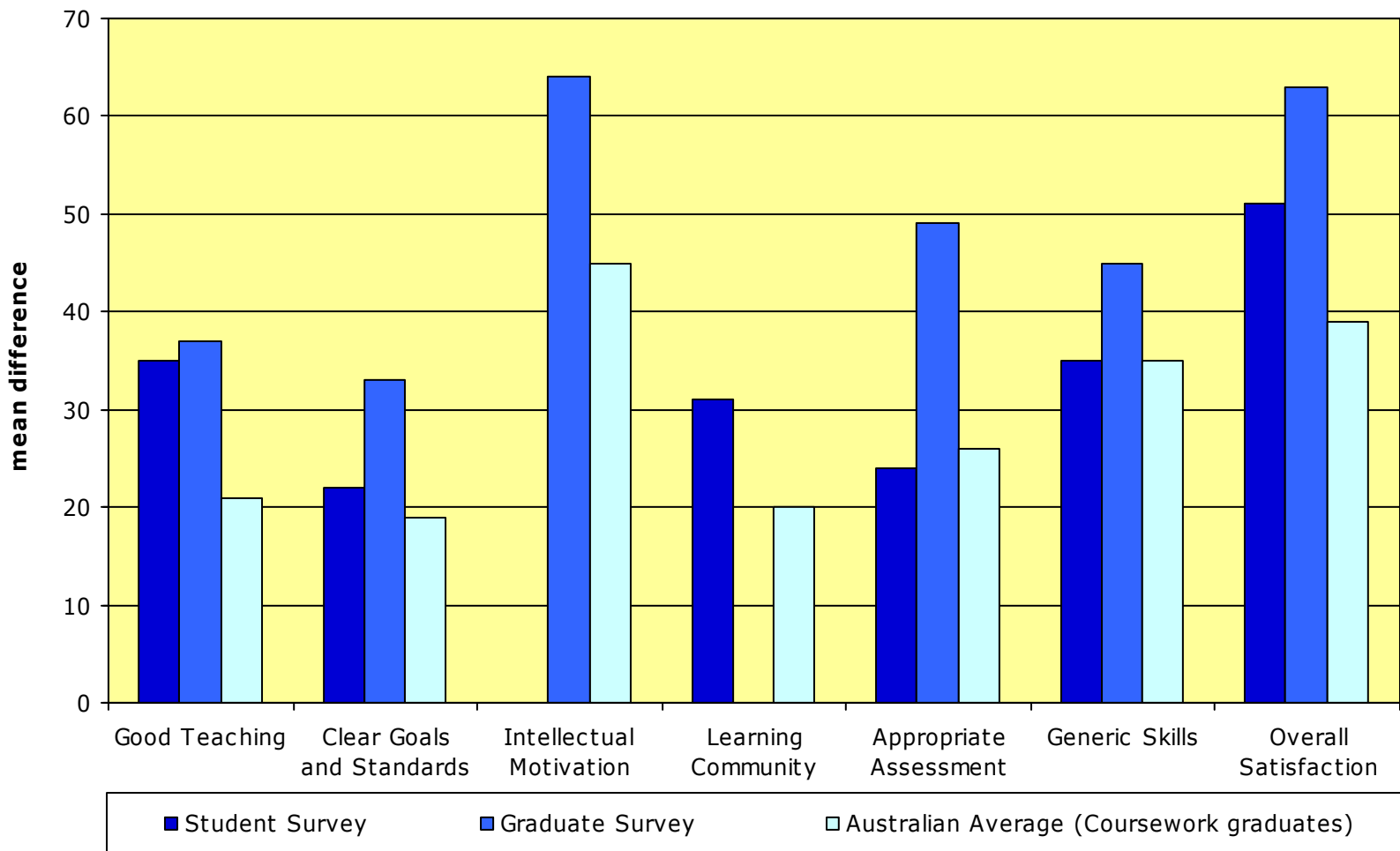
- Libraries, information technology and teaching facilities rated highly improving their 2006 results. Helpfulness of library and computing resource staff rated particularly highly. In the information technology area, training in the use of computers continued to show a marked improvement on previously slightly low ratings.
- Access to study spaces in the libraries showed a clear progression even if the items scores are still relatively low. The score on the access to computers/network ports was the lowest library related item in 2007 despite the introduction of the wireless network.
- The campus environment and personal safety on campus rated very highly even improving their already high scores in 2006. There was also remarkable improvement in the ratings for the University Union.
- Administrative and support service ratings were generally improving compared to 2006, and generally very good.
- Similarly to the previous year Residential colleges, the helpfulness of staff, the

Guide to Enrolment booklet and examination procedures all rated particularly highly

- The Postgraduate/Higher Degrees administration in the Research office, the Pacific Islands Centre and the International Office showed the most improvement from 2006.
- Disabilities support ratings were reasonably good, but down slightly on 2006 on several items.

Course Experiences

The chart below shows results for the Student and Graduate Opinion Surveys, compared to data from all Australian universities (Coursework graduates). 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, learning community and generic competencies scales were slightly down on 2006 ratings, while the good

teaching and clear goals and standard scales showed some improvement.

Postgraduate Supervision and Support

Postgraduate results compared to 2006 were as follows:

	Graduate Survey	Student Survey
Honours	Increase in Support ratings, similar ratings for Supervision	Slight decrease in supervision ratings and slight increase in support ratings
Postgraduate Certificates	Insufficient responses	Insufficient responses
Postgraduate Diplomas	Very slight increase in Support ratings, very slight decrease in Supervision.	Increase in Support Mean, similar ratings for supervision.
Masters	Slight increase in Supervision ratings and increase in Support ratings.	Slight decrease in Supervision, similar ratings in Support.
PhD	Very slight decrease in PhD Supervision ratings, similar ratings for Support.	Insufficient responses

For supervision:

- As in 2005 and 2006, 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.
- Once again 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, the provision of a climate supportive for postgraduate research by departments, the overall satisfaction with the quality of support received and the access to information technology support services needed.
- 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 both surveys.

Course Outcomes

Most measured attributes were applied more post-graduation than they were developed during study. Written communication skills and analytical skills were developed more during study than applied post-graduation. Graduates considered a willingness to learn,

the skills to plan one's own work and the ability to solve problems as the attributes most applied in post-graduation life.

The most developed attributes were:

- Written communication skills
- Analytical skills
- A willingness to learn
- The skills to plan one's own work

The largest discrepancies between development and application were for:

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