

# NSS Response

2014



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# Introduction

This is our fourth annual National Student Survey (NSS) Response - an important event in our ongoing dialogue with College and our members about continually improving education at Imperial College London.

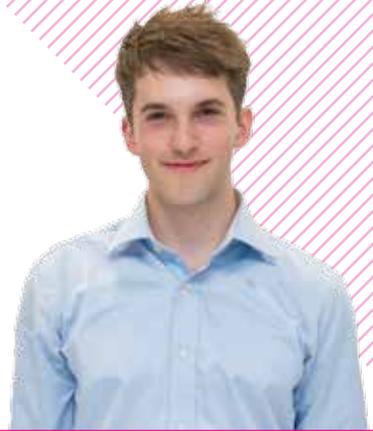
Imperial College Union has a vital role to play in amplifying the student voice, ensuring our members' views and opinions are heard and are acted upon across the entire College. The NSS asks final-year Undergraduates to reflect upon their whole experience at Imperial, and as a result offers a wealth of insights into the lived experiences of our members across their entire degree.



## **A constant theme of past NSS Responses is student dissatisfaction with the feedback they receive**

A constant theme of past NSS Responses - as well as our PTES Response, Rep Week suggestions and the Academic Representation Network - is student dissatisfaction with the feedback they receive on their coursework and exams.

Reflecting the importance of this issue, we have themed this whole Response around feedback. Our position on feedback is set out at the start of the document, and in each



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chapter, we have included a brief discussion on how the aspect of academic quality covered in that chapter can relate to feedback quality. We have also clearly highlighted any recommendations that could benefit feedback. Some of our recommendations are reiterated from previous responses. This doesn't mean however that other recommendations from previous reports have been successfully implemented or trialled and we encourage the College to continue working on these.

We hope that this document is useful to academic and professional staff in many regards, and provides a useful toolkit for any College staff member or student representative who wants to address feedback across the institution.

## QUALITY Feedback

Assessment and Feedback remains Imperial's weakest area. Satisfaction varies widely between departments, and the institution languishes near the bottom of the national league table for this measure.

The roots of Imperial's poor feedback scores go deep. Contributing factors include courses with high workloads, pressures on staff time, course designs in need of fundamental review, the long-term effects of departmental and faculty restructures, and in some isolated cases, a culture that considers giving late and cursory feedback to students to be unfortunate, but acceptable. To ascribe dissatisfaction solely to student perceptions and unrealistic expectations is a failure to address a very real problem.

It is a longstanding belief of Imperial College Union that any course which consistently returns late or cursory feedback to its students is, by definition, poorly designed and in need of change. The importance of formative feedback to student learning cannot be overestimated, and our members - Undergraduate and Postgraduate - have made this point at every opportunity they have been given for several years.

Feedback problems are not confined to one department or faculty. In only one department does it reach the levels of satisfaction the other NSS chapters achieve as standard. In each of the Faculty of Medicine and Department of Life Sciences, less than half of their students agree their work has been given prompt feedback. Only Bioengineering and Earth Science & Engineering have over 75% of their students agree.

Imperial does not face this problem alone; many of the UK's leading universities are in the same situation. But the fact that feedback is considered chronically poor across the Russell Group should not be seen as comfort to College. It is shortsighted to look at feedback at our peer institutions and adopt the reassuring beliefs that poor feedback is somehow an unavoidable consequence of excellent research, or intensive teaching, or high-performing students. We should reject a culture that says dissatisfaction with feedback is the price we pay for what makes us excellent in other areas.

Instead, feedback should be seen as a both a challenge and an opportunity - a space in which College can assert itself publicly as a seat of learning that demonstrates excellence in all areas.

Imperial's research is world-class, and there is no reason Imperial's feedback should be any different.

For a digital copy of this report and  
accompanying information go online to

**[imperialcollegeunion.org/nss2014](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/nss2014)**



All information correct  
at the time of going to  
print November 2014.

# Overall Satisfaction by

**AERONAUTICAL  
ENGINEERING**

**87%**

**CHEMICAL  
ENGINEERING**

**92%**

**BIOENGINEERING**

**92%**

**PHYSICS**

**90%**

**MATHEMATICS**

**89%**

**COMPUTING**

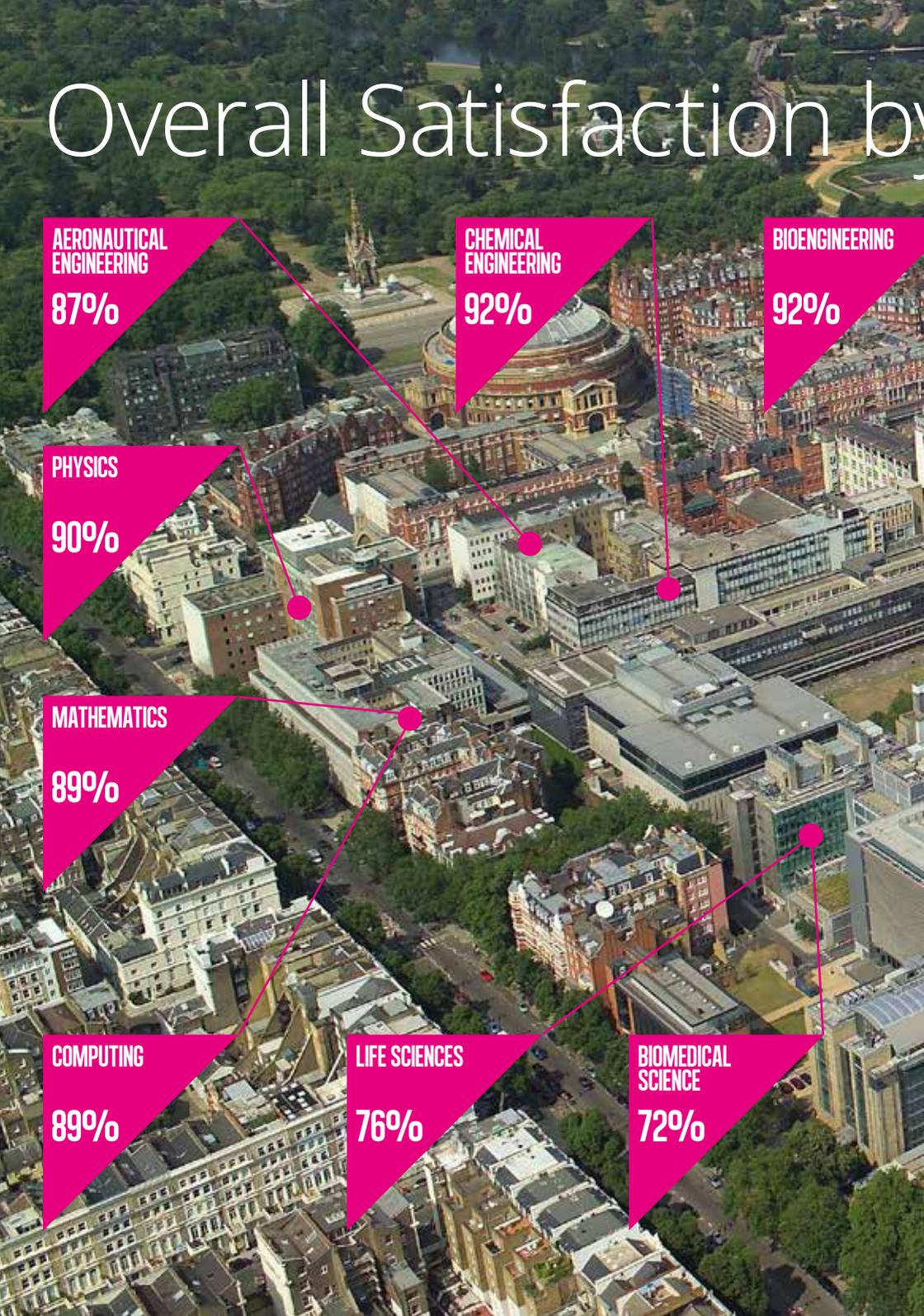
**89%**

**LIFE SCIENCES**

**76%**

**BIOMEDICAL  
SCIENCE**

**72%**



# y Department

**MATERIALS**

**90%**

**MECHANICAL  
ENGINEERING**

**88%**

**EARTH SCIENCE  
ENGINEERING**

**97%**

**CIVIL  
ENGINEERING**

**91%**

**ELECTRICAL  
ENGINEERING**

**90%**

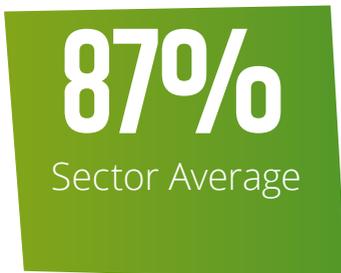
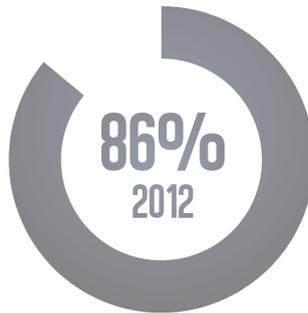
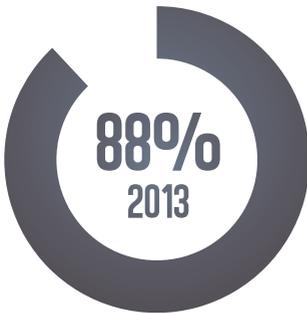
**MEDICINE**

**90%**

**CHEMISTRY**

**82%**

# Teaching





Minimal support and guidance from staff concerning careers, especially comparing to other less intellectually demanding courses at the university, which ensure all students undergo an internship during the four years, highly increasing their employability. There is absolutely no focus on this in these departments

AERONAUTICS STUDENT



Full details of exact assessment structure and procedures not given at start of degree (and start of each year). Too frequent practical coursework deadlines. Decisions about course options having to be made with very little time and no warning (and sometimes with very little information) Content and/or assessment of optional lecture courses changing with no prior announcement. Not clear explanation of amount of coursework content of degree e.g. in UG prospectus. No actual teaching of any practical laboratory, lab notebook or report writing skills.

AERONAUTICS STUDENT



Too much work in terms of quantity. Not enough feedback for students on their work. Lecturers should concentrate on the students they are teaching and be supporting them rather than just turn up for a lecture and never be contactable after

BIOLOGY STUDENT



In parts, the course has been poorly organised, leading to an uneven distribution of work throughout the year. One of the worst examples of this was in our third year of study, when the department rearranged some course modules leaving us with a high number of assignments to complete in our spring term and very few in the preceding autumn term. The high workload took its toll on a lot of students, morale among us was generally low and some students were struggling to cope, degrading into serious depression in some cases.

CHEMISTRY STUDENT

Imperial College Union's Student Academic Choice Awards (SACAs) have created a large resource of student testimonials on excellent teaching. Since 2013, approximately 80,000 words have been written by our members about what they consider 'excellence' in a number of areas, including teaching and feedback.

We are interested in exploring possible uses of this information with departments, faculties and other College services. For example, we are working with the Educational Development Unit to use SACA information in the annual Education Day, and potentially as learning material in their various modules for academics.

Other possible uses of the data include creating case studies of excellence, as best practice resources for departments, and as material for faculty education strategies.

## Recommendation

For College & ICU to jointly use the results of the Student Academic Choice Awards to support and inform efforts to improve teaching quality.



**QUALITY**  
Feedback

## Recommendation

Key elements of course structure, including timetables, assessment methods, and module choice deadlines, should be consistently communicated at the start of the year.

Student comments highlight a number of issues that arise from unclear course structures. Complaints include 'squeeze points', where several coursework deadlines are packed together, and on occasion a lack of time to make informed module choices.

This means that students often struggle with conflicting coursework deadlines, which unnecessarily degrades the quality of their work and increases stress. 'Squeeze points' also contribute to poor feedback by creating heavy marking loads for staff at busy times, leading to late return of work.

**QUALITY  
Feedback**

Class sizes and one to ones are a concern of students at Imperial, with certain courses having lectures which might contain upto a few hundred students.

Students can feel that they rarely see their tutor on a one to one basis, which causes concern in later years as employers expect detailed references from personal tutors. Specific recommendations on the personal tutoring system are given in the Academic Support chapter.

## Recommendation

For large class sizes to be balanced by effective personal tutoring.



**QUALITY  
Feedback**

Placements are popular amongst Imperial students, and 80% agree that they were adequately prepared for them through effective teaching. There is room for improvement in this score; departmental efforts to review and improve placement selection and preparation processes may improve satisfaction and maximise the educational value of the placement itself.

## Recommendation

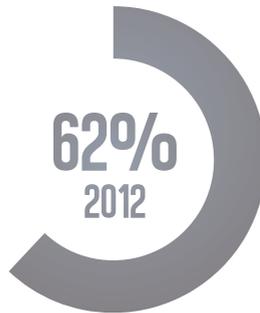
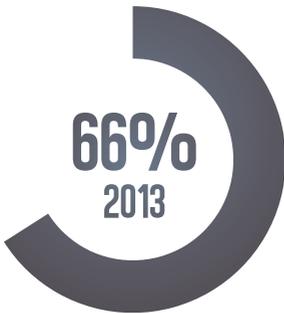
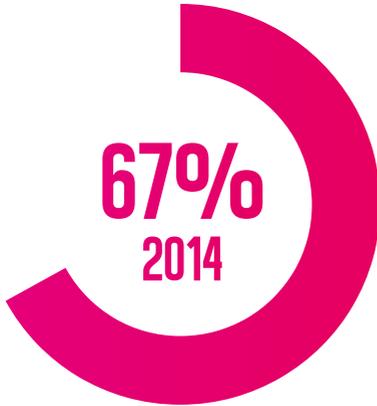
For students to be debriefed after placements, to capture best practice and identify opportunities for improvement.

## How does Teaching relate to Feedback?

Effective teaching leads to intellectual stimulation, not just the ability to complete coursework. Over-assessment can destroy a student's interest in their subject and lower the quality of their work, meaning they rely more heavily on feedback for understanding their progress.

Closely-packed deadlines also increase the likelihood of late or cursory feedback by overloading both staff and students with coursework or marking, which can in turn reduce the time a lecturer can spend preparing a course.

# Assessment & Feedback





The feedback was never on time for the first two years of the course.

BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE STUDENT



Imperial always state that it is their aim to create “scientific, independent minds for a future of research” and yet they would discourage us from really getting stuck into our coursework (the independent research!) because it is worth so little mark wise [10% of the module mark].

BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE STUDENT



Workload incredibly high at times, often so much that getting marks comes before actual understanding of topics.

ESE STUDENT



Workload and deadlines all peak at the same time, some experiments would take place before the course content had taken place, so a reshuffle of some of the module coursework deadlines is required

AERONAUTICS STUDENT



When GTAs are assigned for lab work, it is expected that they are familiar with the material that they are required to observe, but it is ridiculous how often the GTAs themselves do not understand the material.

EEE STUDENT



No objective criteria for marking are made available to students. Students are unable to improve their marks as a result. Marks awarded for coursework really depend on the marker.

PHYSICS STUDENT



Sometimes the workload can be excessive. It would be helpful if members of staff were more aware of other project deadlines before setting more work.

CHEMICAL ENGINEERING STUDENT



It would be nice to know when assignments will be returned after we had them in so that we can learn from feedback before the next assignment is due in, not after

LIFE SCIENCES STUDENT

# Assessment & Feedback

As stated in the Introduction to this Response, we have themed this whole document around Feedback. We believe that a step-change in feedback quality across the whole institution is one of College's greatest challenges and opportunities - and as an institution-wide conversation, listening to the voice of students is critical.

Changing the quality of feedback at Imperial requires the participation of every academic and professional staff member involved in education - no matter how small their contribution.

Solving the feedback challenge will also pave the way for Imperial's coming challenges - preparing a student-centred academic offering fit for 2020 and onwards, safeguarding our position at the top of national and global league tables against intensifying competition, and tackling the growing problem of academically-driven student stress and mental illness.

## Section satisfaction by department:

Aeronautics	69
Bioengineering	85
Biomedical Science	46
Chemical Engineering	74
Chemistry	67
Civil Engineering	75
Computing	78
Earth Science & Engineering	97
Electrical & Electronic Engineering	71
Life Sciences	48
Materials	79
Mathematics	72
Mechanical Engineering	70
Medicine	56
Physics	65

## Recommendation

As touched upon in the Introduction, we believe that poor feedback arises from structural deficiencies, such as over-assessment, closely-packed deadlines, miscommunication between modules and academics, and course structures that are not regularly reviewed 'from the bottom up'.

We suggest that any course with chronically poor feedback scores should be reviewed from its most fundamental principles, with modules, deadlines, and coursework practices challenged and questioned.

Department leaders should take a holistic approach to understanding the roots of bad feedback - from the creation and planning of courses to their delivery and evaluation.

We fully commend that academic staff have GTAs helping out in labs and in marking assessments, however they need to ensure that each GTA receives enough training to help out efficiently. Students find it highly frustrating to receive contradictory help or feedback from GTAs.

## Recommendation

For departments to ensure that GTAs receive sufficient training.

This recommendation is repeated from our 2013 Response, in which we noted that students are still receiving feedback too late for it to be of any formative educational value. This problem is still present in the 2014 survey results, and is one of the reasons we have themed this Response around feedback.

## Recommendation

College policy to be developed to require that no new deadline can be enforced before sufficient time has passed since adequate feedback on a previous piece of related work have been received.

As recommended in 2013, College should actively encourage individual academics to experiment and innovate in how they give feedback. As lecture delivery methods and online resources become more sophisticated and reliant on technology, feedback should follow.

Institutions such as the Open University have been using video or screengrab feedback for students for a number of years. Benefits of such feedback are greater clarity for students on the quality of their work through verbal comments, increased accessibility for dyslexic students, and potentially a net time saving for academics

## Recommendation

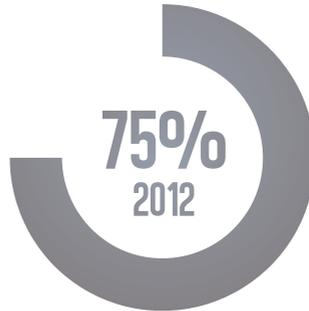
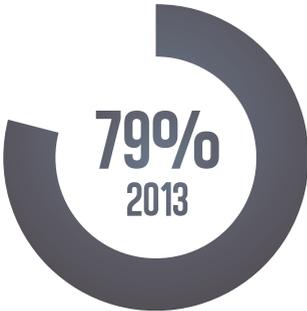
For College to incentivise and support the introduction of innovative feedback methods, such as video recording or screencasting.

As already touched upon, a common specific complaint about feedback is the packing of deadlines into a short period. Alongside reviews of the total amount of assessed coursework, departments should ensure deadlines are appropriately spaced out, and should work with Academic Representatives to agree reasonable time periods between deadlines.

## Recommendation

For departments to ensure internal communication about deadlines, and ensure they are appropriately distributed.

# Academic Support





The restructure in Life Sciences, where some of the best lecturers were made redundant...I feel sorry for younger students taking this course.

BIOCHEMISTRY STUDENT



Some excellent support staff for our course. We had staff who were very helpful and quick to respond to calls for help.

BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING STUDENT



I would improve the pastoral care for the students because some students encounter several problems and are often not given the right support or advice.

PHYSICS STUDENT



There is a constant sense of pressure to succeed and do well, and it can cause a high level of stress and anxiety.

MATHEMATICS STUDENT



I feel as though more could be done to address student welfare, in particular those who struggle with the pressures of exam periods/stressful terms. I am aware that there are workshops for this kind of thing, but more people struggle with it than meets the eye and I sometimes felt as though we were perceived/treated as high achieving students when in reality we are human beings who are affected by the course in all sorts of intangible ways.

CIVIL ENGINEERING STUDENT



There is zero tolerance on late coursework, which is very harsh considering the pressures of the course. The only exception is for extreme illness or personal problems, but sometimes the amount of work is overwhelming, and a more sympathetic line would be appreciated

MECHANICAL ENGINEERING STUDENT

This chapter has shown improvement since last year - it is no longer Imperial's second-weakest area, having overtaken Organisation & Management, and shows a strong trajectory of improvement since 2012. Students believe they are adequately supported in making study choices, and in being able to contact staff when they need to.

However, dissatisfaction with the personal tutor system continues, as shown in the student comments. Effective and individual personal tutoring is important for educational, developmental and pastoral reasons, and even a small proportion of students receiving poor tutoring is a cause for concern.

Staff must also be supported in understanding the changing nature of student pastoral problems, and in identifying and addressing what can be very personal issues. Co-curricular and pastoral care for students has been part of the role of academics for as long as universities have existed, and it is important to emphasise to academics that the expansion of non-academic support services does not mean their role is diminishing or disappearing.

## Recommendation

For the Personal Tutor role description to have a clear, student-facing list of 'Personal Tutor Promises', which set out competencies, expectations and standards for Personal Tutors that they must meet.

Across almost all departments, a small minority of students reported that their personal tutors were unresponsive to emails, and generally unhelpful. Through the NSS results and the Academic Representation Network, many students regularly report that they have met a personal tutor an average of once a year throughout their degree. In some cases, expectations of personal tutors are so low that students are unaware of the negative consequences poor tutoring is having on them.

Before students can assess if their personal tutor is good enough, they must have a clear understanding of what a personal tutor must offer as a minimum level of service. Once such a baseline is made clear, students can measure if their support is adequate, and take steps to address poor tutoring.



**QUALITY  
Feedback**

Creating a reliable method for identifying underperforming Personal Tutors has been an Imperial College Union priority for several years, and we welcome College's positive attitude to this task.

ICT projects such as Starfish are encouraging, and we look forward to working with College to create the surrounding processes that will identify poor personal tutors and either improve their skills, or help them leave the personal tutoring system.

## Recommendation

For Imperial College Union to work with faculties and departments to create a 'Poor Personal Tutor' alert system, which notifies the Senior Tutor and Academic Representatives if a student is not receiving adequate support.

## Recommendation

For College to produce resources for academics to help them understand the presence of mental illness at College, how to spot and support troubled students, and how to reduce unnecessary stress and anxiety through course design and communication.

In 2013, we recommended that “the Union and College work together to develop research into student mental wellbeing”. This was in response to the survey finding, in an optional question bank, that an average of only 61% of students felt they had enough time to understand everything they had to learn. Many students commented on the negative effects that excess academic pressure had on their mental health and their enjoyment of their subject.

Since then, the issue of student mental health has been heavily discussed - in the media, and in the student body. Within College, a Wellbeing Task Group has led institutional discussions at the highest level. It is encouraging that College are engaging with this critical issue at the highest levels; we look forward to working with College leaders to ensure that awareness of mental health quickly and effectively spreads to frontline academics and support staff as well. To support that process, we recommend that accessible resources are produced for academics that provide a briefing on mental health issues, explain College’s strategy, and give tips on how to support students experiencing mental health issues.

We hope that over time, students and College staff alike are equipped to recognise and understand the causes, symptoms and effects of stress, and the mental illnesses it can cause or exacerbate. Mental illness is a disability like any other; the College community should be comfortable with discussing it, and making the reasonable adjustments to cater for it that we would provide for any other disability.

Several departments have introduced heavy penalties for the late submission of coursework - with a mark of 0% being given, no matter how late the submission. In the context of students complaining that coursework deadlines are unnecessarily bunched, we fear that this creates unnecessary stress for students and causes more problems than it solves.

We also believe that this policy has reduced the ability of academics to exercise discretion and flexibility for individual students, taking their circumstances into account. In line with our recommendations about recognising stress and mental health, we believe that staff should understand the importance of offering flexibility to students, and are aware of under what circumstances they can overrule the late coursework policy.

## Recommendation

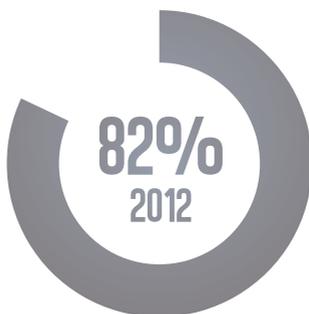
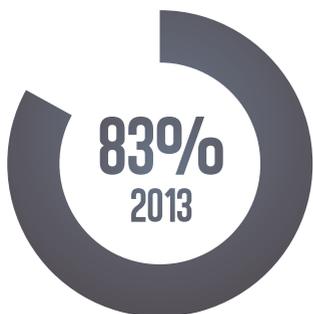
College and the Union work together to review the impact and effectiveness of the late coursework penalty policy.

## How does Academic Support relate to Feedback?

The importance of personal tutoring to formative feedback should be recognised. An effective personal tutoring system is a prerequisite for students being able to access high-quality advice and feedback from a member of staff familiar with their academic progress.

Face-to-face discussions about coursework, educational choices and addressing weaknesses, amongst other things, should be a regular occurrence for all students.

# Organisation & Management





The restructure in Life Sciences, where some of the best lecturers were made redundant...I feel sorry for younger students taking this course.

BIOCHEMISTRY STUDENT



Some excellent support staff for our course. We had staff who were very helpful and quick to respond to calls for help.

BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING STUDENT



I would improve the pastoral care for the students because some students encounter several problems and are often not given the right support or advice.

PHYSICS STUDENT



There is a constant sense of pressure to succeed and do well, and it can cause a high level of stress and anxiety.

MATHEMATICS STUDENT



I feel as though more could be done to address student welfare, in particular those who struggle with the pressures of exam periods/stressful terms. I am aware that there are workshops for this kind of thing, but more people struggle with it than meets the eye and I sometimes felt as though we were perceived/treated as high achieving students when in reality we are human beings who are affected by the course in all sorts of intangible ways.

CIVIL ENGINEERING STUDENT



There is zero tolerance on late coursework, which is very harsh considering the pressures of the course. The only exception is for extreme illness or personal problems, but sometimes the amount of work is overwhelming, and a more sympathetic line would be appreciated

MECHANICAL ENGINEERING STUDENT

Students are generally satisfied with the organisation within their departments. The negative comments were usually centred on short-notice timetabling or late notice of changes to existing timetables. The long-term effects of course and department restructures are also evident, demonstrating the importance of student consultation and clear communication of the effects of such major changes.

## Recommendation

Although work is currently undertaken by the College, it is necessary to stress the importance of providing timetables more than just a few days before and ensuring that students don't just have one lecture in the morning and one in the afternoon. We are aware that in many cases these difficulties occur due to a lack of available rooms and therefore we support the College in their work of improving this situation.

For departments to provide timetable timely in advance and ensuring that modules are spread evenly.

**QUALITY  
Feedback**

A strong theme through responses from Life Sciences and Biomedical Sciences students was considerable dissatisfaction with rearranged or cancelled lectures - including ones where no lecturer ever turned up. These two departments are a full twenty points of dissatisfaction below the third-last department (Aeronautics) for organisation and smooth running.

This may be a result of the restructure of Life Sciences a number of years ago. This demonstrates the overwhelming importance of student consultation and participation in decisions, particularly large-scale, strategic changes. Any time or simplicity benefits from not consulting students adequately are massively outweighed by the risk of student dissatisfaction and anger at the changes happening to them over which they had no say.

## Recommendation

For any future restructures and reorganisations of courses to consider student views and the impact on teaching quality and consistency.



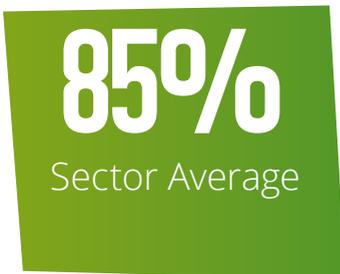
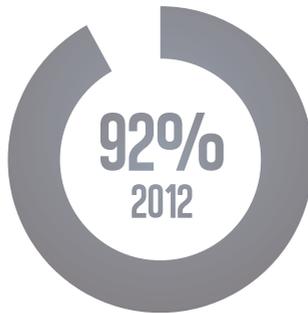
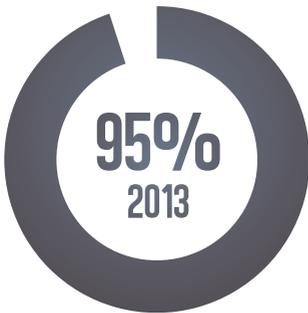
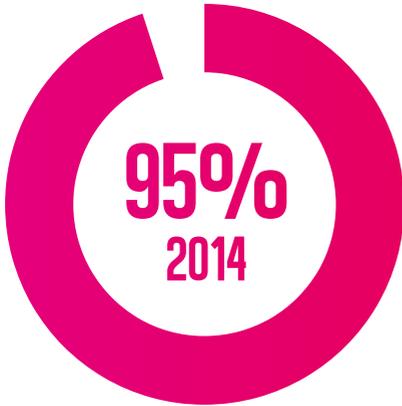
**QUALITY**  
Feedback

## How does Organisation & Management relate to Feedback?

Poor organisation causes poor feedback. If courses and lectures are changed without effective communication, staff and students cannot plan their work effectively. Introducing and embedding peer feedback

is also made difficult if timetables and groups are unclear and students are already frustrated.

# Learning Resources





Almost all the lectures are accompanied by a good set of notes that are available on the web and normally in printed handouts.

COMPUTING STUDENT



The lecturers should give out handouts instead of asking us to copy notes from the board every lecture.

MATHEMATICS STUDENT



I would make all lectures video recorded. This would help me gain more understanding of my course material. I learn more through videos as I can look back at. Lecture notes/slides are less productive for me as I have dyslexia.

CHEMICAL ENGINEERING STUDENT



The guidance, support and resources made available to me during my MSci project were flawless.

ESE STUDENT



The disability support offered by the college is not fantastic. I felt that more could have been done to help me deal with the issues of having a specific learning disability.

MATERIALS STUDENT



Facilities and IT resources are excellent, as is the library.

EEE STUDENT



The resources at Imperial College London are excellent, including the library resources and lab equipment.

BIOCHEMISTRY STUDENT



Provision for student with a learning disability or other unique situations should find it easier to secure the necessary support and help.

MEDICINE STUDENT

# Learning Resources

Learning resources is once again a success story for College, with a consistently high score and an impressively uniform rating across all questions and departments. The lowest score present at Imperial is 85% satisfaction within Life Sciences for specialised equipment, facilities and rooms - a score which matches the national average satisfaction score for this chapter.

When the satisfaction rates of students with disabilities are isolated, they remain high; 96% of students with learning disabilities and 92% of students with other disabilities are satisfied. The work of departments, the Library, Disabilities Advisory Service and other College support services should be commended for this results.

An annual impact review of new and increased charges for disability assessments, including tests for dyslexia and attention disorders, should be made. While there are funding options in place for poorer students, we are concerned that misunderstanding may lead to students - disproportionately those from lower socio-economic backgrounds - taking fewer tests, and consequently facing unnecessary academic difficulty.

## Recommendation

For an annual review of the impact of charges for disability assessments to be made.

Students bring a wide diversity of learning styles to College, and many - dyslexic or not - learn more effectively from audio/visual resources (such as live/recorded lectures or podcasts) than written resources, such as handouts or online worksheets.

Lecture recording has been proven to be an effective and popular idea - after all, lectures as a teaching format are still standard worldwide - and is an extremely popular service for students, when offered. Departments that have not yet fully implemented lecture recording should consider the effect this may have on disabled students.

## Recommendation

For departments to communicate to their academics the importance of recording lectures for students with dyslexia or other specific learning disorders.

## Recommendation

Faculties should consider the feasibility of releasing lecture notes, handouts or videos online in advance of lectures.

The winner of the 2014 Student Academic Choice Award for Best Innovation was Dr David Dye in the Department of Materials. His 'flipped classroom' method - in which students watch his videos in advance of lectures, then discuss as groups what they have already learnt - has proved popular with students and effective as a teaching method.

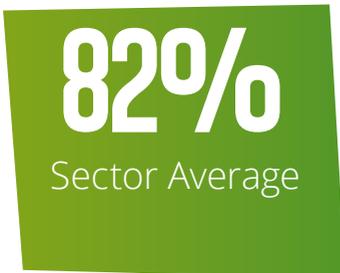
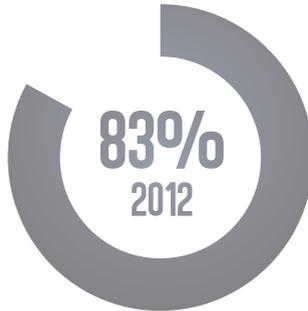
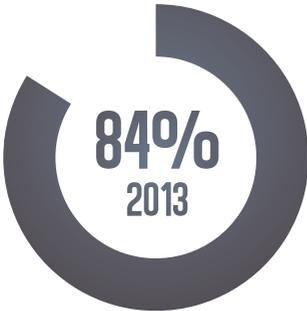
We encourage departments and individual academics to experiment with new methods such as this, and to consider releasing their learning materials ahead of lectures and increasing the time given to answering student questions.

## How does Learning Resources relate to Feedback?

Feedback must also be given in accessible formats on request, for students with disabilities.

As mentioned previously, video or screengrab feedback could simplify feedback for the staff member while making it more effective for disabled students.

# Personal Development





Professional skills, especially the use of presentations and group work, have helped with my personal development. The wide range of courses have helped me broaden my horizons and realise that physics was not a narrow, focused area of science, but a very broad subject with cross over with a lot of other fields.

PHYSICS STUDENT

# Personal Development

Satisfaction in this area remained steady, with Imperial remaining above both the Russell Group and the sector average.

Last year we gave no recommendations in this area, but commended the Horizons programme for broadening the outlook of undergraduate students.

## Recommendation

For the affordability of UROP and IROP schemes to be reviewed, to ensure fair access to all students.

Undergraduate and International Research Opportunity Placements are popular programmes for giving students a taste of doctoral research. We welcome these programmes and encourage departments and researchers to support them.

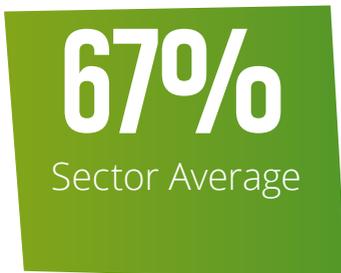
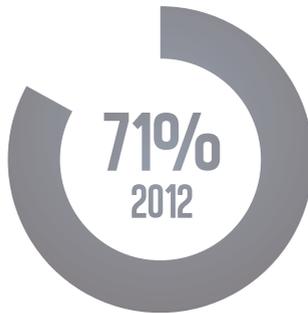
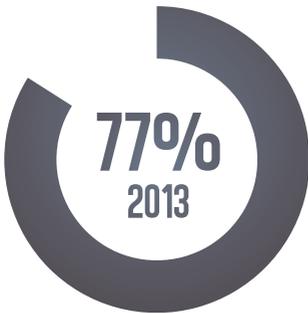
However, there is a growing concern that they may become the 'unpaid internships' of science - offering excellent personal and professional development opportunities, but only accessible to those with enough money to forgo a summer's earnings. To ensure UROPs and IROPs don't become an exclusionary step in academic progression that penalises poorer students, College should review how funding can be made available without discouraging the creation of new research placement opportunities.

## How does Personal Development relate to Feedback?

Feedback covers academic competencies as well as scientific knowledge. Using feedback to highlight routes to improvement and signposting ways to develop research

and science communication skills can help students identify personal development priorities.

# Question 23





University Life and involvement in the Union has improved my personal skills - not my course at all.

AERONAUTICS STUDENT



The best part of Imperial for me was Imperial College Union. I have never found an organisation so willing to do anything possible to benefit its members.

PHYSICS STUDENT



Make socials less heavily based around alcohol to promote more participation.

PHYSICS STUDENT



To have more social events that was not to do with drinking.

MECHANICAL ENGINEERING STUDENT



Some more college events or trips not involving the union or a night of excessive drinking. As much as I enjoy drinking, these outings are easily arranged without the help of the union. I know there are trips within societies and Halls of Residences, but maybe a general uni one.

BIOLOGY STUDENT

# Question 23

Satisfaction with Imperial College Union slipped back two percentage points this year, although we remained well clear of sector and Russell Group averages.

As in previous years, student comments were generally positive, with many students considering their extra-curricular activities as the highlight of their time at Imperial. Many students also felt that they had missed out by not participating in more activities earlier in their degree, rather than focusing excessively on academic work.

Through the NSS and other routes, we are aware that a number of students were not satisfied with the proportion of events that involved alcohol consumption, even at a low level. The constituency of students who are not interested in alcohol-based events is not solely international or religious students, and this group is growing.

To better reflect our changing membership, we will continue to engage with Departmental Societies, Constituent Unions and College departments to ensure that welcome events - including those organised by ICU, by Halls of Residence, and by College staff - do not centre on the consumption of alcohol.

## Recommendation

For Imperial College Union and its Constituent Unions to continue embedding non-alcohol-focused events in Welcome Week and beyond.

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