UCD Student Feedback Surveys

Evasys HE Roadshow, Maynooth University 25 May 2026

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Student Feedback Surveys at UCD – Presentation Overview

What was, what changed?

- Background to the surveys
- Rationale for change

What now?

- Module and teaching evaluation

What else?

- Beyond module evaluation

What next?

- The next phase of this project

Student Feedback Surveys – Our Journey

2011 - 2019

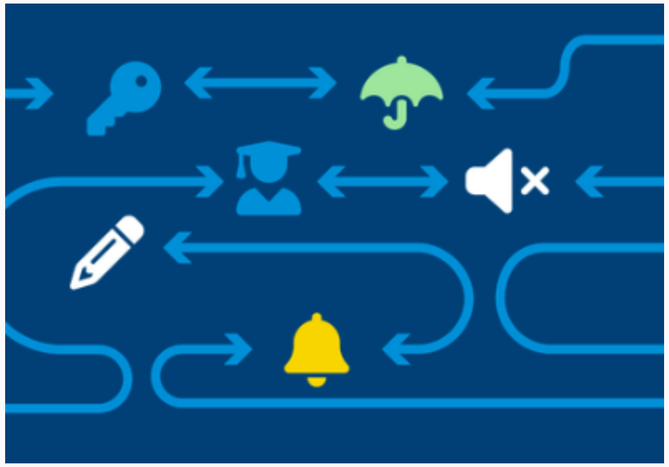
- Module Feedback Survey had been hosted in in-house system - Infohub
- Surveyed modules only. End of teaching trimester
- Reporting and access in the system
- UCD Strategy for Education and Student Success – review of current system

Consultation and review

- 2019 – comprehensive consultation: surveys, workshops, focus groups
- Close feedback loop
- Teaching AND module feedback
- Increase response rates

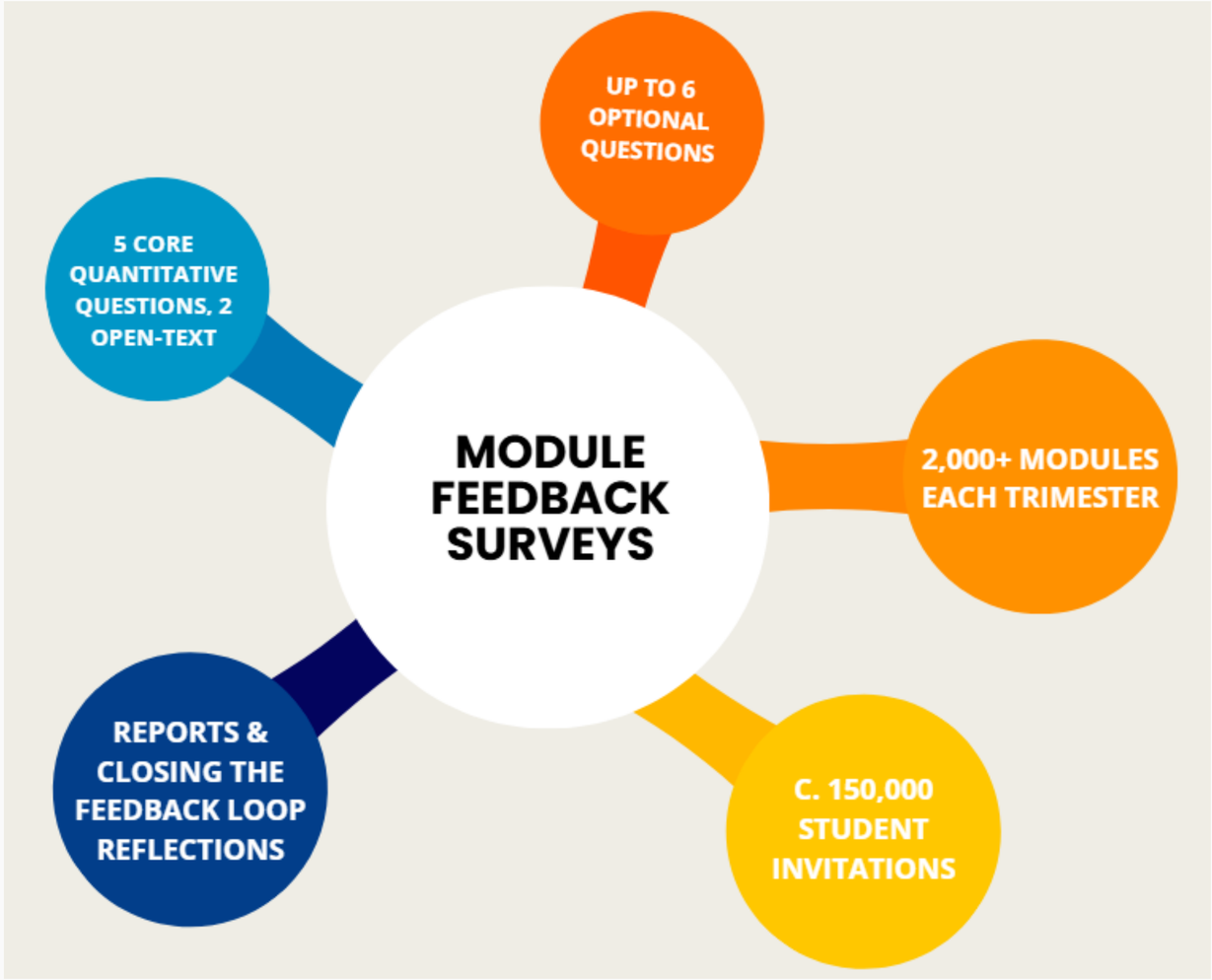
What's new?

- New system - evasys
- New surveys - Teaching AND module feedback
- Close feedback loop functionality



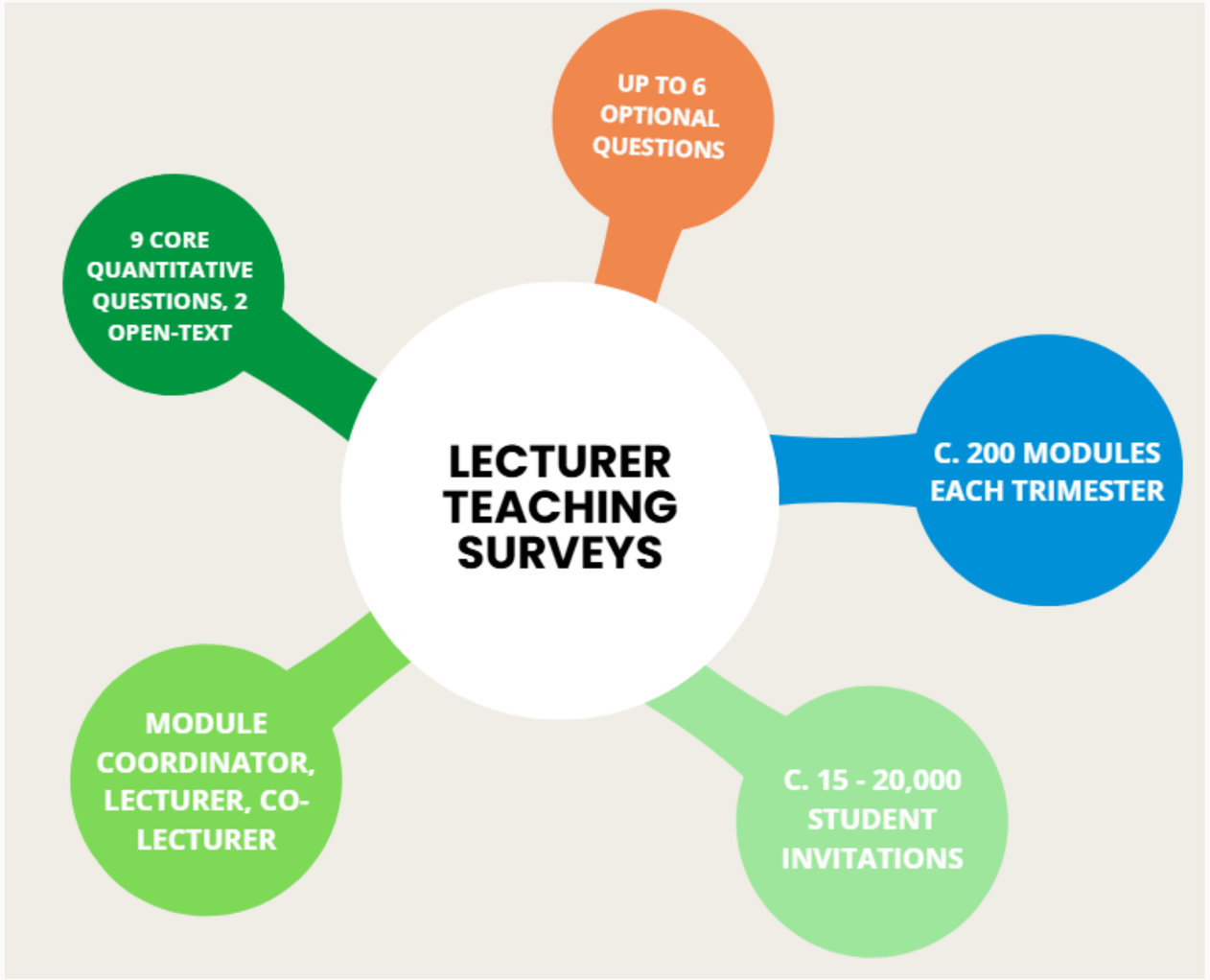
Module Feedback Surveys

- Longstanding survey in UCD
- Used for curriculum enhancement, professional development and quality review purposes
- Full feedback goes to the Module Coordinator only
- Quantitative question scores available to Head of School and Head of Teaching & Learning via dashboards
- Surveys hosted in evasys, modules and student population pulled in from our student and curriculum systems
- Can be used in promotion applications



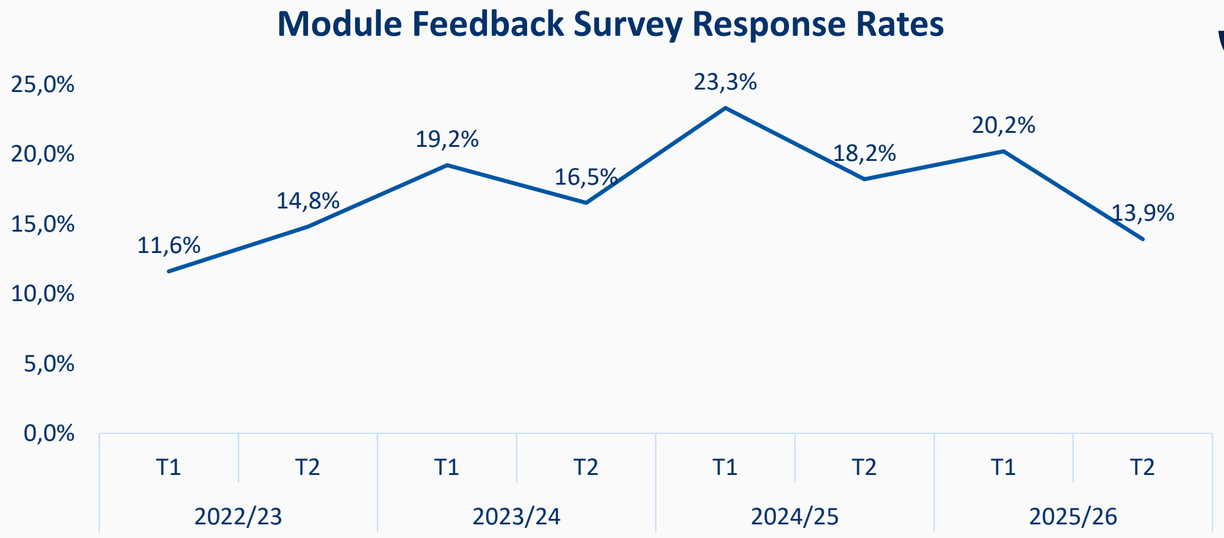
Lecturer Teaching Survey

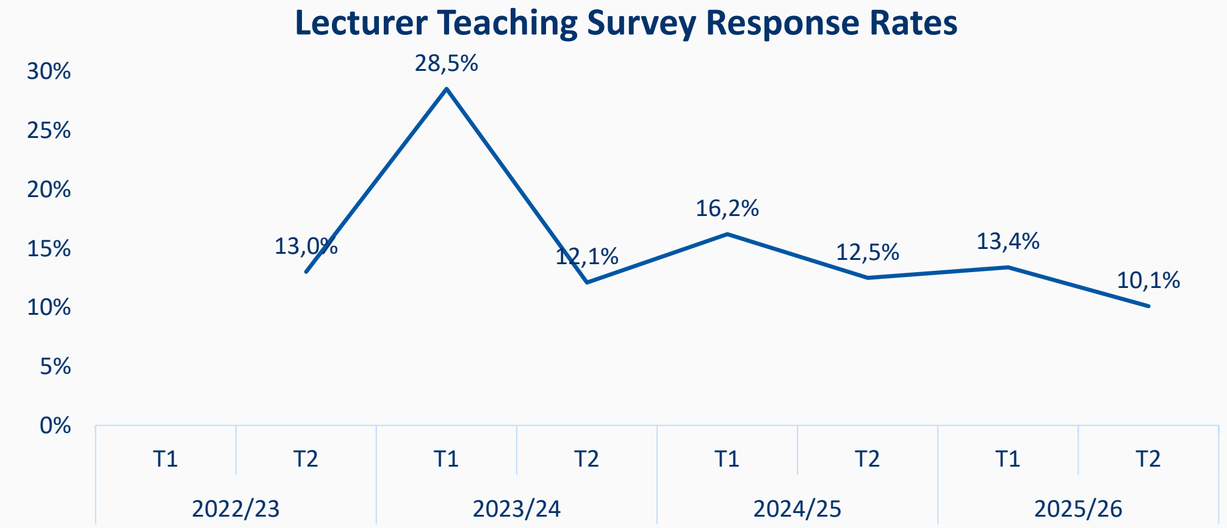
- Voluntary, opt-in survey
- Available to module coordinators, lecturers and co-lecturers
- Provides an opportunity for staff who don’t have a module coordinator role to get feedback on their teaching that is separate to the module
- New feature in evasys+ allows teaching staff to opt-in and set up the survey themselves. This is important because of the large number of modules and teaching staff
- Can be used in promotion applications



Response Rates

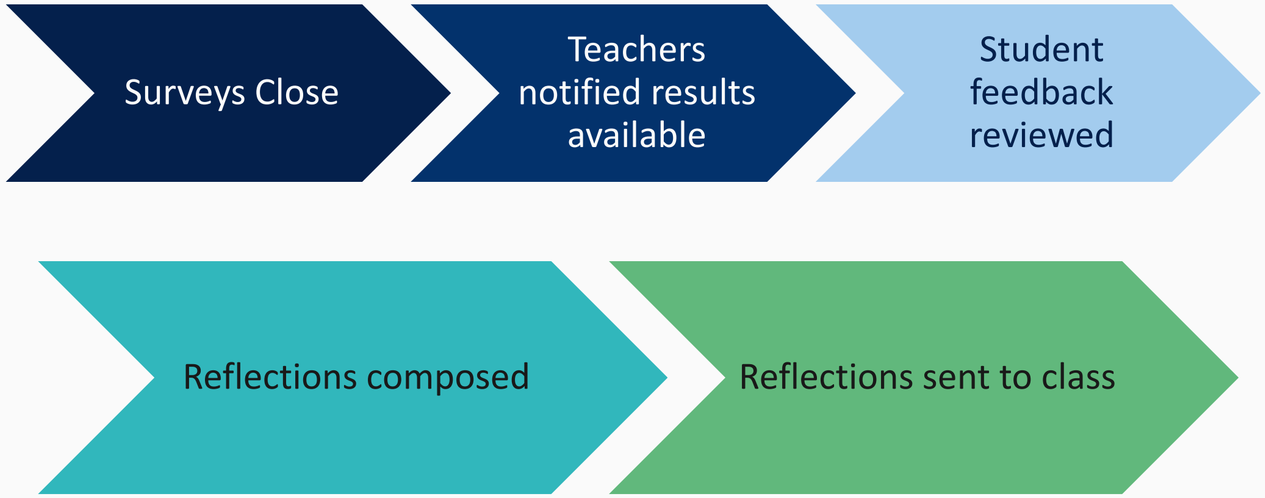
- Response rates have been higher than in the previous system
- Emails, response rate notifications, student portal and Brightspace have all been effective
- Module Feedback Surveys have highest response rates, and engagement is higher in trimester 1
- Lecturer Teaching Surveys have lower response rates – a mystery!





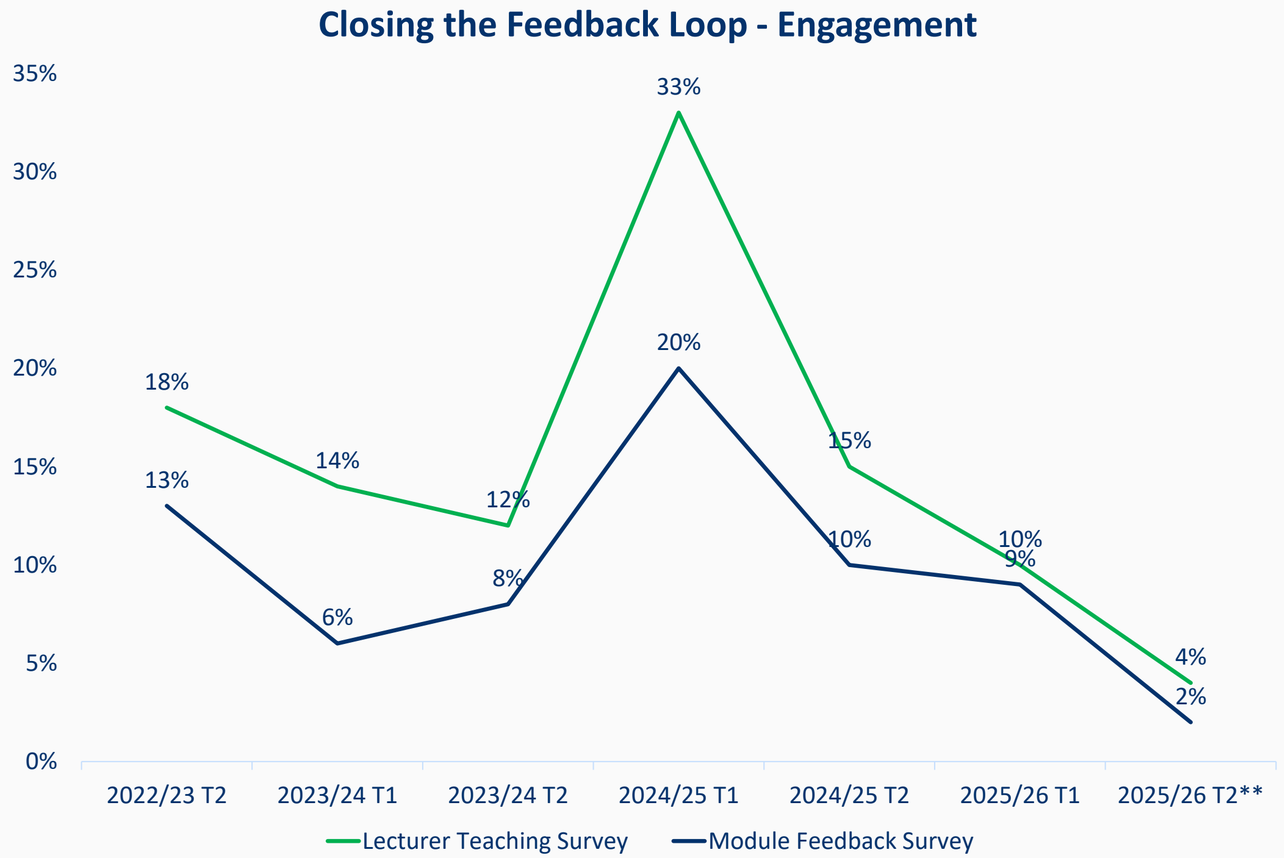
Closing the feedback loop - process

- Closing the feedback loop with students, i.e. acknowledging and responding to the feedback they have given, is one of the most important aspects of the process
- Students tell us that they really value receiving these reports. Receiving a reflection from their instructor shows them that their feedback is being read and listened to – not ‘disappearing into a black hole’
- **Students tell us that receiving these reports would make them more likely to complete their surveys in future**



Engagement with Closing the Loop

- Engagement has been variable
- Highest engagement from lecturers who have run a teaching survey
- Looking at ways to promote and increase engagement



Full circle feedback…what students say

Areas of good practice

Practical Application and Real-World Relevance: Students highly valued the use of real-world case studies, industry guest speakers, and hands-on problem-solving that made the content relevant to their future careers.

High-Quality, Accessible Resources: Students consistently highlighted the usefulness of well-structured Brightspace pages, comprehensive lecture slides, and recorded lectures.

Engaging and Approachable Teaching: Students praised teachers enthusiasm, approachability, and ability to create a safe, supportive environment where students felt comfortable asking questions.

Interactive Learning and Formative Assessment: Students appreciated modules that incorporated interactive elements like MCQs, weekly quizzes, etc.

Areas for Development

Faster and More Detailed Feedback: Students frequently requested that feedback on continuous assessments be provided *before* their next assignment was due to apply learning

Assessment Load and Timing: Common suggestions included spreading out deadlines to avoid end-of-trimester bottlenecks, reducing the weight of 100% final exams in favour of continuous assessment

Pacing and Content Overload: Students felt that lectures moved too quickly or that the volume of reading and slide content was overwhelming.

More Worked Examples and Exam Prep: Students asked for more time to be spent going through worked examples, sample exam questions, and practical solutions

Group Work Friction: Complaints about unequal contributions among team members and a lack of clarity regarding group project instructions.

Full-circle feedback...teachers respond

Gratitude, Validation, and Relief: teachers express gratitude for the feedback, describing it as "rewarding," "motivating," and "heartening" to read.

Willingness to Adapt and Collaborate: Teachers are generally receptive to constructive criticism and show a willingness to adapt. When students suggest practical instructors frequently agree and commit to implementing these changes

Frustration with Attendance and Low Survey Engagement: teachers express frustration with the disconnect between student complaints and student attendance as attendance drops significantly as the trimester progresses. They lament very low survey response rates, pointing out that it makes it difficult to know if the feedback is truly representative of the class or just the opinions of a vocal minority.

Defending Pedagogical Choices and Standards While instructors are open to making changes, they also push back against student requests that they feel compromise academic rigor.

Explaining Logistical and Institutional Constraints Teachers often express helplessness regarding student complaints that are entirely out of their control, e.g. timetabling, room locations etc.

The Reality of Grading and AI Challenges: teachers express frustration over the difficulty of providing faster or highly individualized feedback on continuous assessments. They point out that grading takes time, especially for large classes. They also express concerns about Generative AI, with a necessity for supervised, in-person final exams to combat AI misuse and ensure academic integrity

UCD Strategy

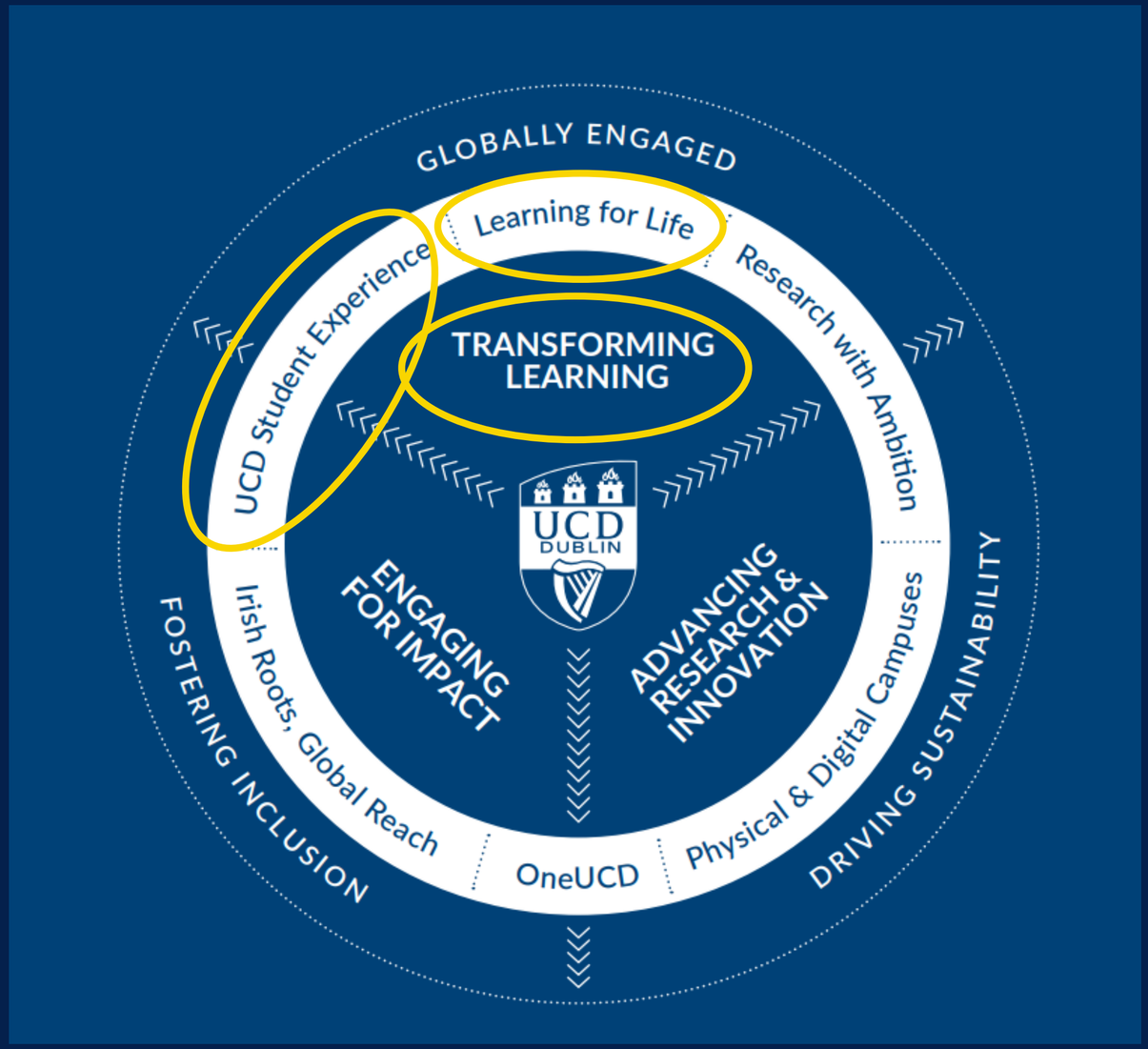
UCD in 2030 will be…

- an exemplar in supporting student experience, wellbeing and sense of belonging

Pillar: Transforming Learning

Cross-cutting initiatives:

- Learning for life
- UCD Student Experience



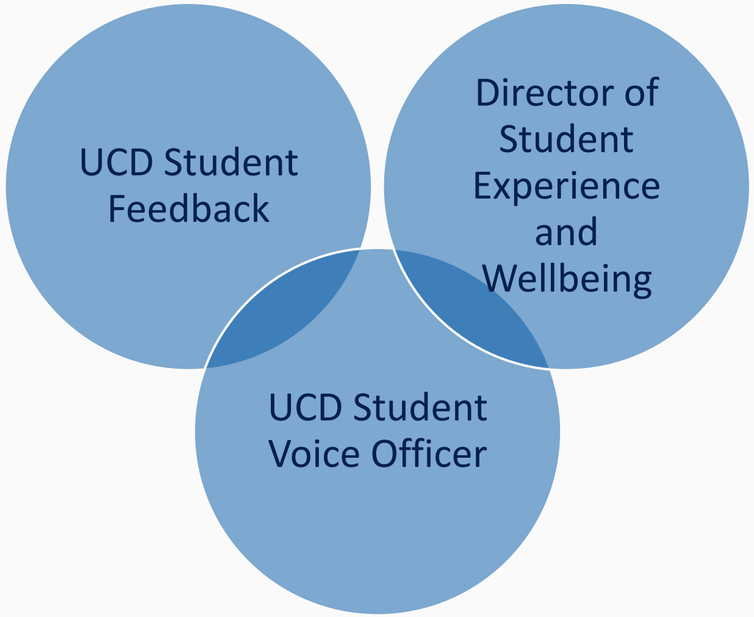
What next? Strategy and student voice

Student Feedback surveys inform curriculum and teaching excellence

Supports academic professional development

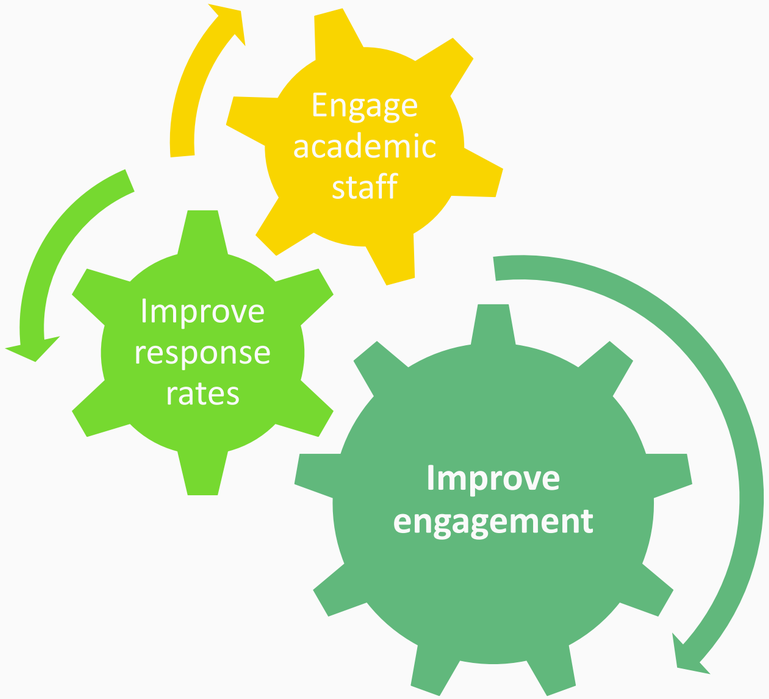
Improve student experience and wellbeing

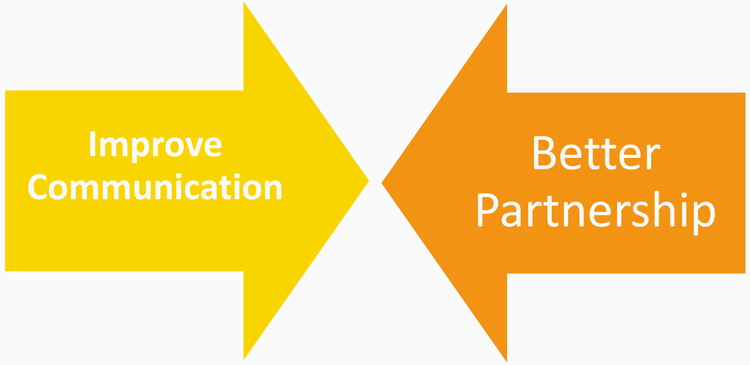
- Evasys as a ‘one-stop-shop’
- Student Union elections
- National Student Survey
- UCD Timetabling Survey



UCD Student Voice Project

Student Voice project is funded through the university's strategic funding efforts. A project to deliver student centred initiatives aimed at enhancing education and overall student experience.





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Thank you!