



UNIVERSITY *of* LIMERICK

OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

**Module Satisfaction Survey:
Frequently Asked Questions for Academic Staff**

Revision 6, 4th October 2018

Module Satisfaction Survey Frequently Asked Questions for Academic Staff

It is best to consult this document in conjunction with the [MSS procedures document](#).

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General Questions about the MSS

Q1 What is the MSS?

The module satisfaction survey (MSS) is a short, online student survey designed to provide a mid-term barometer of students' levels of satisfaction with their modules. The specific questions included in the survey are given in the [MSS procedures document](#).

Q2 What is the purpose of the MSS?

The MSS can support lecturers and departments to assure and enhance the quality of a module. The questions focus on the module rather than the lecturer. The survey questions are designed to elicit student feedback on module design, content, delivery, supporting resources and assessment.

At an institutional level, the use of a systematic module satisfaction survey helps us meet national and international quality obligations, and aggregate data can serve as a useful starting point for discussions during institutional, faculty and departmental quality reviews.

Q3 What is the QSU's role in the MSS

The QSU is responsible solely for administering the survey instrument on behalf of the university, as well as generating and distributing the resultant MSS reports. The QSU has no role in follow-up actions, which are a matter for individual academics and/or the academic line management system, as appropriate. This scope of responsibility is in accordance with MSS procedures document, which states, "*The Quality Support Unit will administer the MSS. Department heads may liaise with academic staff in their own departments in relation to any follow-up enhancements or responses that may arise.*"

Q4 Are such module satisfaction surveys undertaken in other third-level institutions?

Yes. Systematic surveys designed to gather student opinion on courses and teaching are a growing feature of university life, both nationally and internationally.

Q5 Are all modules surveyed?

All modules listed in the UL Book of Modules that are scheduled to run in the semester in which the MSS is conducted are surveyed. In any given semester, this typically equates to approximately 1,300 modules undertaken by approximately 12,000 students.

Q6 My module has not started yet, will it be included in the MSS?

Although all modules that are listed in the UL Book of Modules are surveyed, in a small number of cases, some modules may not have started by the time the MSS is launched. If this is the case for a module that you teach, please contact MSS@ul.ie outlining the module code, module title, responsible module coordinator and when this module is due to start. If the module has not started prior to the launch of the MSS, it may be excluded. In week 3 of the semester that the MSS is due to run, all staff are sent an email that requests them to advise MSS@ul.ie of any modules that have not started prior to week 5.

Q7 Why is the MSS conducted in weeks 5 and 6?

Module student registration lists on the student information (SI) system are essentially complete by week 4. This allows the Quality Support Unit (QSU) to download an accurate list of students undertaking individual modules by the end of week 4 in preparation for the

launch of the survey in week 5. By weeks 5 and 6, most students will be in a position to provide meaningful opinions on the modules they are undertaking. Module coordinators will have access to preliminary results during week 6 and to final results by week 7. This provides direct student feedback to academic staff and allows staff to explore and address, as necessary, any issues raised while the module is still being delivered.

Q8 Who sees the results and are they confidential?

The results for any one module are made available to (a) the module coordinator, (b) the relevant HoD and (c) the relevant faculty dean. The module coordinator is expected to share the results with any other lecturer directly involved with the module. The results for any one module are confidential to this group of individuals.

MSS results may be used for reporting purposes only when presented in aggregate form at department, faculty or university level. Examples of such reports include the summary institutional-level report (available on the [Module Satisfaction Surveys](#) page of the QSU website), the aggregate report prepared for Executive Committee and aggregate reports that individual departments may wish to include in, for example, their quality review self-assessment report.

Q9 What do MSS reports look like?

Examples (generalized) of (a) an individual module report available to the module coordinator (b) a HoD report (which is copied to the relevant dean) and (c) a faculty-level aggregate report (sent to the relevant dean and integrated into a report to Executive Committee) are included in the appendix to this document. Previous institutional-level survey reports are publicly available on the [Module Satisfaction Surveys](#) page of the QSU website.

Q10 What is a module coordinator?

A module coordinator is associated with each module in the SI database. Appointed by the relevant HoD, this individual typically contributes in part or in full to the delivery of the module and coordinates the administrative tasks associated with the module (e.g., entering the exam results into the module grade entry system). If a module is delivered by a single lecturer, this person is invariably the module coordinator. If several individuals deliver the module, the HoD will usually appoint one of these people as the module coordinator.

Q11 I'm the module coordinator for a module whose results are disappointing. Although I'm only one of several lecturers involved in delivering the module, the disappointing results are linked to my name. Is this fair?

The MSS results are sent to the coordinating lecturer in their capacity as an administrative contact point for the module. It is not valid for any party to automatically assume that the student feedback reflects one way or the other on the coordinator. The exact involvement of the coordinator will be understood locally by the team delivering the module and by the HoD. Moreover, the MSS report received by the HoD (and copied to the dean) lists the module name and code but does not include the name of the module coordinator.

Q12 I'm the module coordinator for a module whose MSS results for 'schedule', 'resources' and 'rooms and facilities' were poor. These issues are not under my control yet the disappointing results are linked to my name. Is this fair?

The MSS questions are designed to elicit the level of student satisfaction with the module as a whole rather than with module delivery in isolation. It is not valid for any party to interpret feedback on elements of the module that are outside the control of the lecturer as reflecting on the lecturer. Module coordinators and HoDs are requested to pass on feedback pertaining to such aspects of the module to the appropriate UL office or officer.

Q13 Any advice for lecturers in relation to interpreting and following up on the MSS results?

MSS results for a module should not be considered as an end point but rather as a starting point in terms of reflecting upon, evaluating and enhancing the quality of the module. When interpreting the results, the absolute number of respondents and the percentage response rate achieved should be considered. Of course, it would be unsafe to assume that a handful of responses could be considered to be a reliable indicator of overall student satisfaction levels within a large class. However, it would be equally inappropriate to automatically dismiss survey feedback on the basis of a low response rate. Whatever the response rate/respondent numbers recorded, a follow-up conversation with the students can only help clarify their feedback and, in turn, allow you to respond to that feedback. A class conversation could, for example, be incorporated into the next lecture. You might also find it useful to talk to the HoD or a trusted colleague or to contact the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) for advice or support.

Finally, you are asked to pass on MSS feedback pertaining to aspects of module satisfaction outside of your direct control (e.g., scheduling/facilities/resource issues) to the relevant individual or office.

Q14 Any advice for heads of department in relation to interpreting and following up on the MSS results?

The HoD report provides a tabular overview of MSS results for all modules associated with the department. The scores are colour-coded to highlight modules whose average scoring approaches or indicates dissatisfaction (see the second page of the appendix). The [MSS procedures document](#) covers follow-up by the HoD. With local knowledge of the module's context and delivery, you (i.e., the HoD) are best placed to determine what follow-up action is appropriate. Where student feedback suggests a significant degree of dissatisfaction, you should immediately discuss this with the relevant academic staff member(s). If the staff members have not themselves initiated an exploratory discussion with the students, it is appropriate that you request that they do so. Depending on the circumstances, you may feel it appropriate to explore the issues independently. In consultation with relevant academic staff, you may wish to avail of assistance from the CTL, course directors or course boards, the faculty dean or the faculty Assistant Dean Academic Affairs.

Finally, you are asked to pass on MSS feedback pertaining to aspects of module satisfaction outside of

your control (e.g., scheduling/facilities/resource issues) to the relevant individual or office.

Q15 Can I include MSS reports as part of my CV, academic portfolio or promotion application?

The [MSS procedures document](#) states that individual academic staff members may, at their own discretion, use MSS results for whatever purpose they wish. Therefore, individual lecturers may include MSS-related data in material such as their CV, portfolios and promotion applications in the same way they can decide to include SET (student evaluation of teaching) results in these documents. This can be a straightforward personal decision for a lecturer if he/she is the only one delivering the module. However, if more than one lecturer was involved in delivery (up to the point the MSS was deployed), there is little point in including MSS-related data because the survey results do not distinguish between the contribution of individual lecturers.

Q16 How do I access past MSS reports for modules on which I taught?

When the MSS closes, individual module reports are automatically generated by Sulis for module coordinators. Only the module coordinator listed on SI when the MSS is launched can access these reports. The QSU recommends that the module coordinators download a copy of the reports for their records. As module reports are system generated for the module coordinator, the QSU will not be in a position to provide lecturers with individual module reports.

Because the HoD reports contain individual module findings in tabular form, you can request that data from your HoD.

Q17 What is the difference between the MSS and the SET?

The SET (student evaluation of teaching) is an online student survey designed to provide useful information to lectures on students' experiences of their modules. The SET is conducted by the CTL upon request from a lecturer (i.e., the lecturer signs up to the process voluntarily), and the results are confidential to the lecturer who requested it.

The MSS is a short, online student survey designed to measure students' levels of satisfaction with their modules. It is undertaken systematically by the QSU and is conducted for every module running in the semester in question (i.e., the process is mandatory). The results for each module are made available to the lecturer(s) involved and to the relevant HoD and dean.

Q18 I have ideas to improve the MSS. Who do I talk to?

Please send your suggestions to MSS@ul.ie or you can fill out our online feedback form [here](#).

Q19 Will the MSS process be reviewed?

As process owner, instigation of a review will be at the behest of the VPAA&SE.

Technical and Sulis-related FAQs

Q20 How do I login to Sulis?

You login to Sulis by clicking on the following link <https://sulis.ul.ie/portal> and enter your network username (firstname.surname) and password. This is the same username and password that you use to login to your PC on campus – you do not need to add “@ul.ie”

Q21 I can't login to Sulis

If you have tried to login to Sulis (see previous FAQ) and cannot, please log a call with the ITD service desk service.deskitd@ul.ie

Q22 I don't use Sulis for my module; can students still complete the MSS?

Yes. You do not need to use Sulis for your module for the student to be able to complete the MSS. You do not need to publish your module site on Sulis.

Q23 I am the module coordinator, how do I access the results for my module on Sulis?

You will need to login to Sulis to view your results. Please see Q4 in the Appendix for detailed step-by-step instructions on how to login and access the results. Note: there must be at least 3 responses for full reports to be made available through Sulis. If the number of responses is below 3, you will be given limited information.

Q24 I am the module coordinator, when can I view the results for my module on Sulis?

You can view your results on Sulis when there are at least 3 responses for your module.

Q25 The number of students registered for my module (MSS sample size) seems incorrect – why is this?

The sample size used is based on the number of official student registrations by module on SI at the start of week 5. On Sulis, there may be a slight variation in the reported sample size, if a lecturer has had reason to manually add additional students. A decision as to the appropriateness of recalculating the response rate would need to be taken in context by each individual lecturer.

Q26 I don't have the evaluation tool on my module site on Sulis, do I need to add this?

No. The evaluation tool does not need to be added to your module site.

Q27 I am not the module coordinator but I do teach on the module and wish to access the MSS results. Who do I contact?

Contact the module coordinator. Even if you are an instructor on Sulis, you will not be able to access the results via Sulis; only the module coordinator that is listed on SI when the MSS is launched can access the results on Sulis.

Q28 I am a module coordinator and I want to give another lecturer who teaches on the module access to the MSS results on Sulis. How do I do this?

Only the module coordinator that is listed on SI when the MSS is launched can access the results on Sulis. Please share the results with any colleagues who may also be involved in the delivery of the module as appropriate. You will need to download a PDF copy of the results from Sulis and share these with the other lecturer. Detailed instruction on how to download a PDF copy of the results are given in the appendix. *Note: even if other lecturers are instructors on the Sulis site, they will not be able to access the results directly on Sulis.*

Appendix: MSS Reports and Instructions on Accessing Results

Sample (generalised) MSS individual module report made available to coordinating lecturer.

Each question is presented as shown below. The mean score corresponds to the MSS score. A PDF version can also be downloaded by the module coordinator, see Q5 below.

MSS, Semester 1, 2017/8

[Hide All Text Responses](#)

Viewing Groups:

Course/Group Items:

1. All things considered, how do you feel about this module?	62 responses
very dissatisfied	1 (2%)
dissatisfied	2 (3%)
neutral	16 (26%)
satisfied	33 (53%)
very satisfied	10 (16%)

62 answers, mean = 3.79

MSS
score

All things considered, how do you feel about each of the following aspects of this module?

2. Content	58 responses
very dissatisfied	0 (0%)
dissatisfied	5 (9%)
neutral	10 (17%)
satisfied	33 (57%)
very satisfied	10 (17%)

58 answers, mean = 3.83

Sample (generalised) MSS report made available to head of department

2016 Module Satisfaction Survey - Department Results Sheet - STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Total respondents for department	462
Total surveyed in department	1320
Response rate by department	35%
Average score for Q1 (by module)	3.9

Background RED - question average score less than 3.0
 Background ORANGE - question average score from 3.0 to 3.3

Department Averages

Department:

Average score for Q2 (by module)

3.9	4.0	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.9	4.1
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Key to modules below.

Highlighted in BLUE - less than TEN students enrolled, response rate less than 20%

Module DATA

Dept. Code	Department Name	Module Code	Module Name	Student enrolment	Respondents	Response Rate %	Q1	Average	Q2.1 Content	Q2.2 Difficulty	Q2.3 Resources	Q2.4 Delivery	Q2.5 Assessment Model	Q2.6 Schedule	Q2.7 Rooms & Facilities
				9	1	11%	2.0	3.1	4.0	4.0	2.0	2.0	5.0	2.0	3.0
				9	1	11%	2.0	2.4	2.0	3.0	3.0	2.0	3.0	1.0	3.0
				35	17	49%	2.8	3.5	3.4	3.9	3.4	2.7	2.5	4.2	4.2
				18	5	28%	3.4	4.0	3.6	4.2	4.0	3.2	4.4	4.2	4.2
				104	24	23%	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.1	4.2	3.5
				202	76	38%	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.5	3.5	3.7	3.3	3.7	4.0
				113	35	31%	3.6	3.9	3.9	3.7	3.8	3.2	4.1	4.2	4.2
				28	7	25%	3.7	3.8	4.2	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.5	4.0
				10	4	40%	3.8	3.8	3.8	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.3	4.0	3.8
				68	36	53%	3.8	3.9	3.6	3.6	4.2	4.4	3.9	3.8	4.1
				87	22	25%	3.8	3.6	3.6	3.3	3.8	4.1	3.6	3.7	3.1
				53	26	49%	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.6	3.9	3.9	3.4	3.9	4.2
				119	39	33%	3.9	4.0	3.9	3.7	3.9	4.1	3.8	4.1	4.2
				10	4	40%	4.0	3.7	3.5	3.8	3.5	3.8	3.8	3.8	4.0
				21	10	48%	4.0	3.8	4.1	3.9	4.0	3.9	3.5	3.4	4.1
				19	12	63%	4.0	4.2	4.4	3.8	4.4	3.9	3.7	4.3	4.8
				1	1	100%	4.0	3.7	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0
				32	10	31%	4.1	4.0	4.2	3.9	3.9	3.8	4.1	4.1	4.1
				64	18	28%	4.1	4.1	4.1	3.6	4.3	4.3	3.9	4.0	4.2
				21	14	67%	4.1	4.1	4.4	3.5	4.4	4.5	4.4	3.6	3.6
				19	5	26%	4.2	4.0	4.0	3.2	4.4	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.4
				62	17	27%	4.2	4.2	4.1	3.9	4.0	4.4	4.2	4.5	4.1
				85	30	35%	4.4	4.4	4.3	3.9	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.5
				10	4	40%	4.5	3.9	4.3	4.0	3.8	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.5
				56	23	41%	4.6	4.3	4.7	4.2	4.4	4.7	3.4	4.4	4.4
				21	14	67%	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.2	4.6	4.8	4.5	4.5	4.6
				19	5	26%	4.8	4.4	4.4	4.2	4.4	4.3	4.2	4.4	4.4
				12	1	8%	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
				13	1	8%	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0

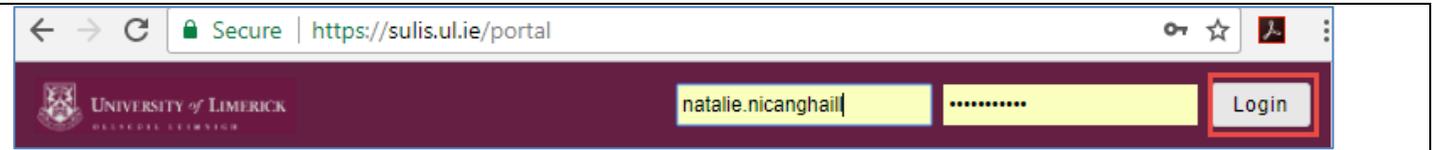
Sample (generalised) MSS faculty-level aggregate report

Faculty name	Dept 1	Dept 2	Dept 3	Dept 4	Dept 5
Responses received	589	749	626	719	518
Responses requested	1161	2304	2353	2235	2145
Response rate (%)	51%	33%	27%	32%	24%
Q1 average (by module)	3.9	3.7	3.5	4.1	3.6
Q2 average (by aspect)	3.8	3.7	3.5	4.1	3.7
Q2.1 - Content	3.9	3.7	3.6	4.1	3.8
Q2.2 - Difficulty	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.9	3.6
Q2.3 - Resources	3.9	3.7	3.4	4.1	3.7
Q2.4 - Delivery	3.9	3.8	3.3	4.1	3.8
Q2.5 - Assessment Model	3.6	3.5	3.3	4.0	3.6
Q2.6 - Schedule	3.8	3.6	3.5	4.1	3.6
Q2.7 - Rooms & Facilities	3.7	3.7	3.7	4.3	4.0

Instructions for module coordinator on how to access MSS results on Sulis

Please follow the instructions below to access you results.

1. Go to <https://sulis.ul.ie/portal>
2. Enter your UL username (firstname.surname) and password and click on 'Login' button.



3. Click on 'Evaluation System' in the left navigation menu under My Workspace.

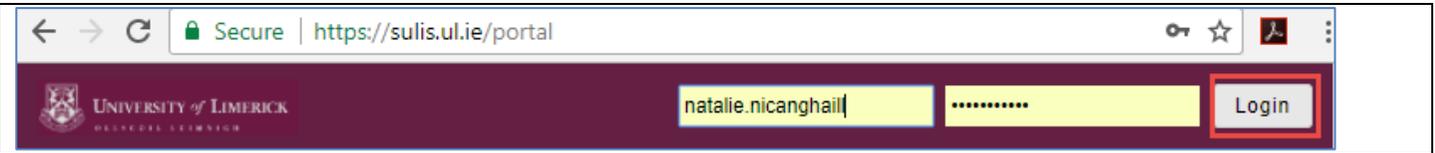
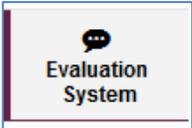
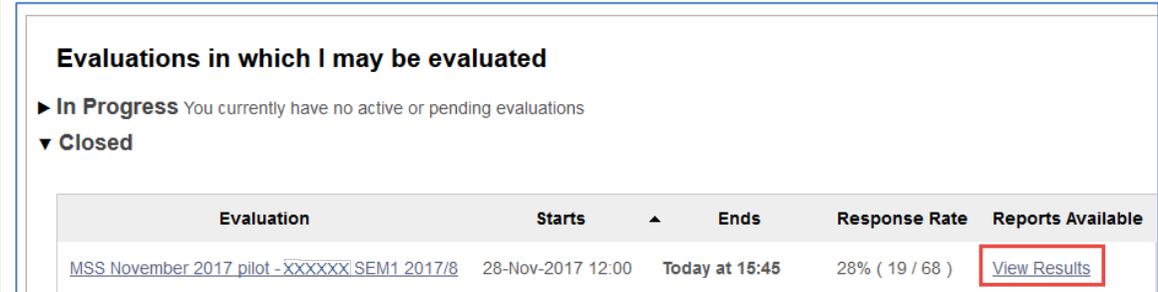
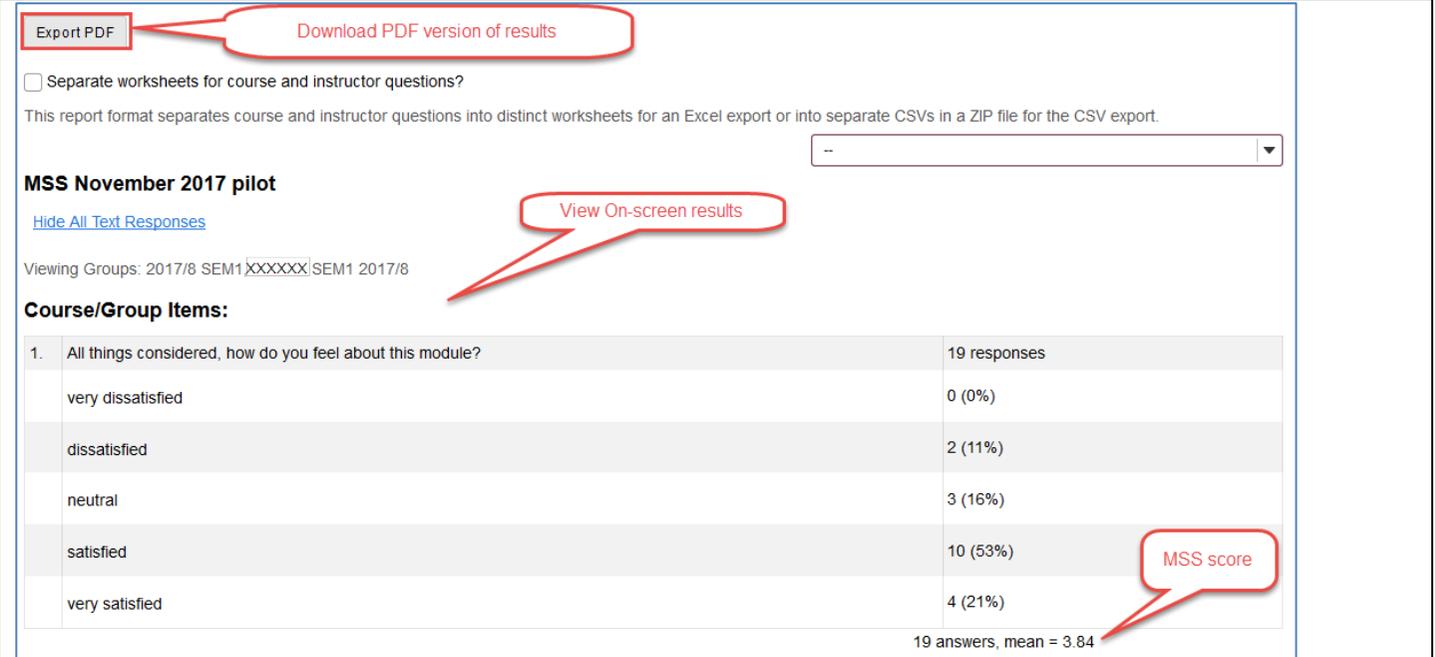


4. Under 'Evaluations' navigate to 'Module Satisfaction Survey – MODULE CODE' and click on the 'View Results' link.

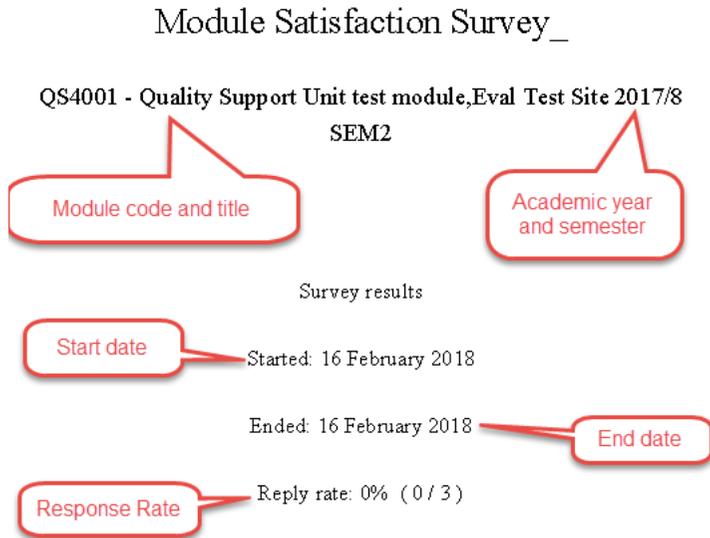
Evaluation	Starts	Ends	Response Rate	Reports Available
MSS November 2017 pilot - XXXXXX SEM1 2017/8	28-Nov-2017 12:00	Today at 15:45	28% (19 / 68)	View Results

Instructions for module coordinator on how to access MSS results on Sulis (inc. PDF download)

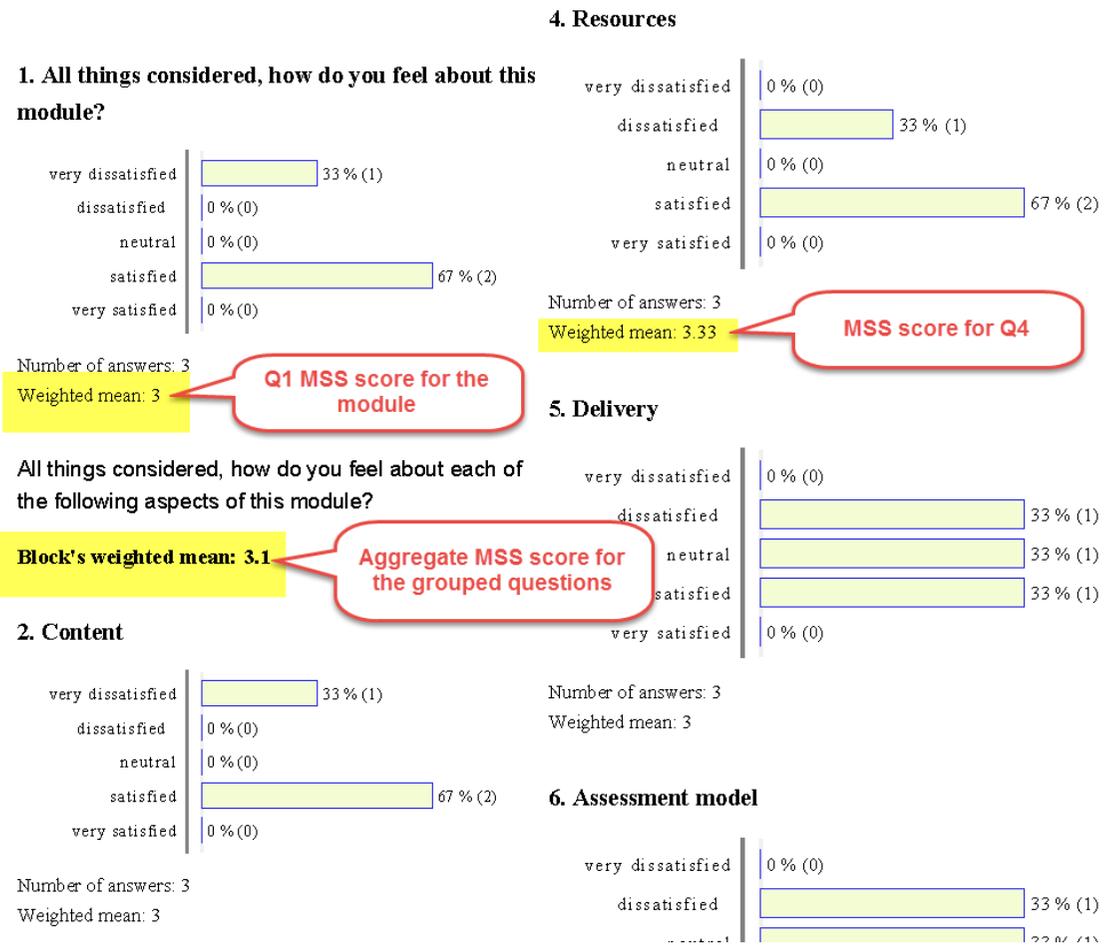
You will receive an automated email when the survey closes containing a direct link to the results for your module. If the link in this email does not work for you or if you no longer have the email, please follow the instructions below.

<p>1. Go to https://sulis.ul.ie/portal</p> <p>2. Enter your UL username (firstname.surname) and password and click on 'Login' button.</p>															
<p>3. Click on 'Evaluation System' in the left navigation menu under My Workspace.</p>  <p>4. Under 'Evaluations In which I may be evaluated' navigate to 'MSS November 2017 pilot' and click on the 'View Results' link.</p>															
<p>5. You can</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> view the results on-screen or download to PDF by clicking the Export PDF button 	 <p>Export PDF Download PDF version of results</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Separate worksheets for course and instructor questions? This report format separates course and instructor questions into distinct worksheets for an Excel export or into separate CSVs in a ZIP file for the CSV export.</p> <p>MSS November 2017 pilot Hide All Text Responses</p> <p>Viewing Groups: 2017/8 SEM1 XXXXXX SEM1 2017/8</p> <p>Course/Group Items:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Item</th> <th>Responses</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. All things considered, how do you feel about this module?</td> <td>19 responses</td> </tr> <tr> <td>very dissatisfied</td> <td>0 (0%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>dissatisfied</td> <td>2 (11%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>neutral</td> <td>3 (16%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>satisfied</td> <td>10 (53%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>very satisfied</td> <td>4 (21%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>19 answers, mean = 3.84 MSS score</p>	Item	Responses	1. All things considered, how do you feel about this module?	19 responses	very dissatisfied	0 (0%)	dissatisfied	2 (11%)	neutral	3 (16%)	satisfied	10 (53%)	very satisfied	4 (21%)
Item	Responses														
1. All things considered, how do you feel about this module?	19 responses														
very dissatisfied	0 (0%)														
dissatisfied	2 (11%)														
neutral	3 (16%)														
satisfied	10 (53%)														
very satisfied	4 (21%)														

6. The downloaded PDF report will consist of a **cover page**, detailing the Dates the survey ran, the module code and name, the response rate and number of respondents



7. The **body of the report** will give the MSS score per question. It will also give the aggregate MSS scores for grouped questions in Q2-Q8



Revision History

Rev.	Date	Approved by	Details of changes
1	28 Sept 2016	Director of Quality	Initial release document
2	2 Feb 2018	Director of Quality	Change in survey software
3	16 Feb 2018	Director of Quality	Addition of relevant FAQs
4	27 Feb 2018	Director of Quality	Addition of relevant FAQs
5	5 June 2018	Director of Quality	Addition of relevant FAQs
6	4 Oct 2018	Director of Quality	Addition of relevant FAQs