



Utilising the Student Experience of Learning and Teaching (SELT) to Respond to Student Learning Needs in Secondary Schools

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One of the most significant changes in the landscape of education over recent years is the democratisation of the teaching and learning process. Once the preserve of educational administrators in universities and schools, this has filtered down to classrooms where teachers and students participate regularly and meaningfully in shaping the learning environment. Thousands of studies have been conducted in universities across the world associated with the statistical validity and efficacy of student evaluations of teaching and learning via University-Student Evaluation of Teaching (U-SETs), but there has been a paucity of attention, research and development at the school level. This study developed a new instrument – the Student Experience of Learning and Teaching (SELT), which incorporates five scales relevant for the secondary school setting – Learning, Knowledge, Participation, Management and Assessment. The instrument was administered to a sample cohort of 1,741 students in 156 classes in Years 7, 8 and 10 to provide accurate and immediate feedback to teachers. Factor analysis of the instrument demonstrated support for the a priori 5-factor structure, and Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used with each scale reporting good reliability. Thus, the instrument holds statistical validity and coherence. SELT data revealed that there were significant differences in classroom experiences, both within the same subject and across different subjects, and, that discussions between teachers and Heads of Faculty hold the potential to improve learning environments through measured intervention. Integral to the data, the analytics associated with it and effective use of the data, is a policy platform to ensure that teachers are supported and developed in their practice, rather than the object of performance management when discordant profiles are registered. This instrument and the data elicited from it has wide applicability for secondary schools, based upon scales and items that are believed to have relevance in every learning context.