

Learning & Teaching Showcase 2017

Scholarship of Learning & Teaching Grants (SoLT)



Built Environment

International Students @BE: Experience, Performance & Satisfaction

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About the Course

This project was supported with a 2016 SoLT Grant. It included analysis and reporting of comparative International student performance in BE programs. Student consultation sessions are ongoing in 2017 to gain further insights into student experience and satisfaction. Some of our BE teaching programs have proportions of international students near or exceeding 50%, so it is important we understand and respond to international student perspectives and differences in performance.

Redesign Aims

The project aimed to address two main questions:

1. What is the current academic performance of international students at UNSW Built Environment as compared to domestic students? If there is a performance gap? What contributes to this?
2. What is the current academic experience of our international students? How satisfied are they with the learning environment, teaching strategies, etc?

These aims support a larger purpose of informing development of events and programs for international students in BE.

Approach

15 courses were sampled from years 1 and 3 across all 7 BE undergraduate programs. Results and student origin (local or international and, if international, did pathway include UNSW Foundation Studies?) were analysed for each course – a total of 1,305 student results.

Consultation sessions were planned and advertised for November 2016 but postponed at that time due to low attendance. Consultation is ongoing in 2017.

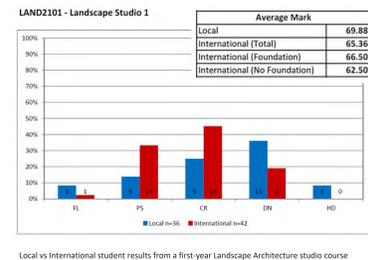
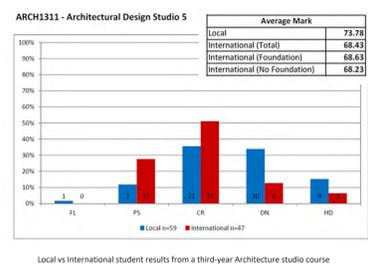


Outcomes

The 'headline' results of the statistical analysis were:

- In every course, international students received lower average marks than local students. The total range was between 1% and 13% lower for international students.
- A higher percentage of local students received distinctions and high distinctions than international students in 11 of the 12 courses reviewed.
- Average marks of international students who had completed a UNSW foundation year did not demonstrate a clear benefit over international students who had not.

At the same time, results of the International Student Barometer survey (2016), with 188 BE student respondents, shows an increase in international student satisfaction at BE from 2014-2016.



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