Enhancing
Teaching and Learning Environments
in Undergraduate Courses

ETL project

Learning and Studying Questionnaire (LSQ)
Experiences of Teaching and Learning Questionnaire (ETLQ)

The Learning and Studying Questionnaire and the Experiences of Teaching and Learning Questionnaire have been produced, and are currently being used, as part of the Enhancing Teaching-Learning Environments in Undergraduate Courses Project. The project is funded as part of the ESRC's Teaching and Learning Research Programme, and runs from January 2001 to December 2004. It is designed to explore ways of strengthening the teaching-learning environments experienced by students taking degree-level courses, so as to enhance their achievement. Revised versions of these questionnaires will be produced as one of the outcomes of the project. In the meantime you are welcome to use the questionnaires, provided that the project is acknowledged. Unfortunately, due to the number of requests we receive, members of the project team are not in a position to provide individual guidance in using the questionnaires or support for analysing the results. Towards the end of the project we will be developing more detailed guidelines to help staff to use the revised questionnaires independently. We may also run workshops in this area if there is sufficient demand.

Learning and Teaching Questionnaire (LSQ)

This questionnaire consists of three sections, the first two of which contain items covering reasons for taking the degree programme (learning orientations) and reasons for taking a particular course unit or module. The third section is an inventory which produces five scale scores (composites of several items) describing differences in students' approaches to learning and studying.

Experiences of Teaching and Learning Questionnaire (ETLQ)

This questionnaire consists of four sections, the first of which is a short version of the inventory used in the LSQ to explore students' approaches to learning and studying. The second section is a newly developed set of items designed to describe aspects of students' perceptions of their teaching-learning environment in a particular course unit or module, which are expected to influence the ways in which they go about learning and studying. The third and fourth sections respectively explore students' perceptions of the demands made on them by their course units and their perceptions of what they have learned in these course units.

Scoring Procedure

For most of the items in the questionnaires, students respond on a 1 – 5 scale (5=high). Subscales are formed by adding together the responses on the items in that subscale. Scoring can be carried out by computer, using a program such as SPSS. Each item is set as a variable and then a subscale total is produced by creating a new variable by summing the items.

Further Information

For further information about how these questionnaires were developed, see the ETL Project's *Occasional Report 1: Approaches to Studying and Perceptions of Teaching-Learning Environments: Concepts, Measures and Preliminary Findings*, which you can download from the project web site at http://www.ed.ac.uk/etl

Key to Scales and Items

Learning and Studying Questionnaire

Learning orientations (LSQ)

verystrongly = 5, fairly strongly = 4, somewhat/not sure = 3, rather weakly = 2, very weakly/not at all = 1

   Intrinsic orientation (4 item scale)
   a. I want to develop knowledge and skills I can use in a career.
   g. I want to study the subject in depth by taking interesting and stimulating courses.
   b. I hope the things I learn will help me to develop as a person and broaden my horizons.
   f.   I want to learn things which might let me help people, and/or make a difference in the world.

Single orientation items
   h. I mainly need the qualification to enable me to get a good job when I finish.
   e. I'm mainly here because it seemed the natural thing: I'd done well academically in the past.
   i.   I want an opportunity to prove to myself or to other people what I can do.
   c.   I'm focused on the opportunities here for an active social life and/or sport.
   d. I hope the whole experience here will make me more independent and self-confident.
   j.   When I look back, I sometimes wonder why I ever decided to come here.

Reasons for taking course unit (LSQ)

verystrongly = 5, fairly strongly = 4, somewhat/not sure = 3, rather weakly = 2, very weakly/not at all = 1

   Intrinsic reason (3 item scale)
   a. It's something I expect to find interesting.
   d.   It should help me to understand the subject better.
   e. It's an area I will need to know about for my career.

   Extrinsic reason (5 item scale)
   b. It's supposed to be a fairly easy course unit.
   c. It should look good on my CV.
   f.   It's not what I would have chosen but it's compulsory.
   h. People I know and like are also taking this unit.
   i.   It fits in well with the rest of my timetable.

   Single reason item
   g.   I understand it's a course unit that's particularly well taught.

Approaches to learning and studying (LSQ)

(The sub-scales indicate the origins of the items, but are not long enough to be scored separately.)

agree = 5, agree somewhat = 4, unsure = 3, disagree somewhat = 2, disagree = 1

   Deep approach (8 item scale)
   Intention to understand for oneself (2 items)
   1. I usually set out to understand for myself the meaning of what we have to learn.
   33. When I'm reading for a course, I try to find out for myself exactly what the author means.
   Relating ideas (including constructivist learning) (4 items)
   6. I try to make sense of things by linking them to what I know already.
   13. Ideas I come across in my academic reading often set me off on long chains of thought.
   15. I try to relate ideas I come across to other topics or other courses whenever possible.
   27. In making sense of new ideas, I often relate them to practical or real-life contexts.
   Use of evidence (2 items)
   24. It's important for me to follow the argument, or to see the reason behind things.
   35. I look at evidence carefully to reach my own conclusion about what I'm studying.

   Surface approach (8 item scale)
   Memorising without understanding (2 items)
   9. Often I have to learn over and over things that don't really make much sense to me.
   17. I often have trouble in making sense of the things I have to remember.

Unreflective studying (2 items)

19. I'm just going through the motions of studying without seeing where I'm going.

31. I tend to just learn things without thinking about the best way to work.

Fragmented knowledge (2 items)

4. Topics are presented in such complicated ways I often can't see what is meant.

21. Much of what I've learned seems no more than lots of unrelated bits and pieces in my mind.

Unthinking acceptance (2 items)

11. I tend to take what we are taught at face value without questioning it much.

29. I don't think through topics for myself, I just rely on what we're taught.

Monitoring studying (8 item scale)

Monitoring study effectiveness (2 items)

5. When I've finished a piece of work, I check to see it really meets the requirements.

23. I think about what I want to get out of my studies so as to keep my work well focused.

Monitoring understanding (3 items)

14. If I'm not understanding things well enough when I'm studying, I try a different approach.

26. I go over the work I've done to check my reasoning and see that it makes sense.

36. I pay careful attention to any advice or feedback I'm given, and try to improve my understanding.

Monitoring generic skills (3 items)

2. When I'm communicating ideas, I think over how well I've got my points across.

12. For an essay or report, I don't just focus on the topic, I try to improve my writing skill.

34. I try to find better ways of tracking down relevant information in my subject.

Organised studying (6 item scale)

Study organisation (2 items)

8. On the whole, I'm quite systematic and organised in my studying.

10. I'm quite good at preparing for classes in advance.

Time management (4 items)

3. I'm pretty good at getting down to work whenever I need to.

16. I carefully prioritise my time to make sure I can fit everything in.

25. I organise my study time carefully to make the best use of it.

32. I work steadily during the course, rather than just leaving things until the last minute.

Effort management (6 item scale)

Effort (4 items)

7. I try really hard to do just as well as I possibly can.

18. I generally keep working hard even when things aren't going all that well.

22. I generally put a lot of effort into my studying.

28. Whatever I'm working on, I generally push myself to make a good job of it.

Concentration (2 items)

20. Concentration is not usually a problem for me, unless I'm really tired.

30. When I find something boring, I can usually force myself to keep focused.

Experiences of Teaching and Learning Questionnaire

Approaches to learning and studying (ETLQ)

(The sub-scales indicate the origins of the items, but are not long enough to be scored separately.)

agree = 5, agree somewhat = 4, unsure = 3, disagree somewhat = 2, disagree = 1

Deep approach (6 item scale)

Intention to understand for oneself (2 items)

3. I have usually set out to understand for myself the meaning of what we had to learn.

16. In reading for this course, I've tried to find out for myself exactly what the author means.

Relating ideas (including constructivist learning) (2 items)

6. In making sense of new ideas, I have often related them to practical or real life contexts.

8. Ideas I've come across in my academic reading often set me off on long chains of thought.

Use of evidence (2 items)

9. I've looked at evidence carefully to reach my own conclusion about what I'm studying.

12. It has been important for me to follow the argument, or to see the reasons behind things.

Surface approach (4 item scale)

Memorising without understanding (1 item)

    1. I've often had trouble in making sense of the things I have to remember.

Unreflective studying (1 item)

    17. I've just been going through the motions of studying without seeing where I'm going.

Fragmented knowledge (1 item)

    5. Much of what I've learned seems no more than lots of unrelated bits and pieces in my mind.

Unthinking acceptance (1 item)

    13. I've tended to take what we've been taught at face value without questioning it much.

Monitoring studying (4 item scale)

Monitoring study effectiveness (0 items)

Monitoring understanding (2 items)

    2. I've been over the work I've done to check my reasoning and see that it makes sense.

    18. If I've not understood things well enough when studying, I've tried a different approach.

Monitoring generic skills (2 items)

    10. When I've been communicating ideas, I've thought over how well I've got my points across.

    14. I've tried to find better ways of tracking down relevant information in this subject.

Organised studying and effort management (4 item scale)

Organised studying (1 item)

    7. On the whole, I've been quite systematic and organised in my studying.

Time management (1 item)

    11. I've organised my study time carefully to make the best use of it.

Effort (1 item)

    4. I have generally put a lot of effort into my studying.

Concentration (1 item)

    15. Concentration has not usually been a problem for me, unless I've been really tired.

Perceptions of the teaching-learning environment (ETLQ)

agree = 5, agree somewhat = 4, unsure = 3, disagree somewhat = 2, disagree = 1

Organisation, structure and content (3 item scale)

    1. It was clear to me what I was supposed to learn in this course unit.

    2. The topics seemed to follow each other in a way that made sense to me.

    4. The course unit was well organised and ran smoothly.

Alignment (3 item scale)

    6. What we were taught seemed to match what we were supposed to learn.

    18. How this unit was taught fitted in well with what we were supposed to learn.

    33. I could see how the set work fitted in with what we were supposed to learn.

Integration of teaching and learning materials (3 item scale)

    9. The handouts and other materials we were given helped me to understand the unit

    14. The different types of teaching (lectures, tutorials, labs, etc.) supported each other well.

    15. Plenty of examples and illustrations were given to help us to grasp things better.

Choice (2 item scale)

    3. We were given a good deal of choice over how we went about learning.

    5. We were allowed some choice over what aspects of the subject to concentrate on.

Encouraging high quality learning (5 item scale)

    10. On this unit I was prompted to think about how well I was learning and how I might improve.

    12. We weren't just given information; staff explained how knowledge is developed in this subject.

    13. The teaching encouraged me to rethink my understanding of some aspects of the subject.

    16. This unit has given me a sense of what goes on 'behind the scenes' in this subject area.

    17. The teaching in this unit helped me to think about the evidence underpinning different views.

Clarity and feedback about assessment (5 item scale)

    31. It was clear to me what was expected in the assessed work for this course unit.

    32. I was encouraged to think about how best to tackle the set work.

    35. The feedback given on my work helped me to improve my ways of learning and studying.

    37. Staff gave me the support I needed to help me complete the set work for this course unit.

    40. The feedback given on my set work helped to clarify things I hadn't fully understood

Assessment for understanding (4 item scale)

    34. You had to really understand the subject to get good marks in this course unit.

    36. Doing the set work helped me to think about how evidence is used in this subject.

    38. To do well in this course unit, you had to think critically about the topics.

    39. The set work helped me to make connections to my existing knowledge or experience.

Staff enthusiasm and support (4 item scale)

    23. Staff tried to share their enthusiasm about the subject with us.

    25. Staff were patient in explaining things which seemed difficult to grasp.

    27. Students' views were valued in this course unit.

    28. Staff helped us to see how you are supposed to think and reach conclusions in this subject.

Support from other students (3 item scale)

    21. Students supported each other and tried to give help when it was needed.

    24. Talking with other students helped me to develop my understanding.

    29. I found I could generally work comfortably with the other students on this unit.

Interest, enjoyment and relevance (5 item scale)

    8. I can imagine myself working in the subject area covered by this unit.

    11. I could see the relevance of most of what we were taught in this unit.

    19. This unit encouraged me to relate what I learned to issues in the wider world.

    22. I found most of what I learned in this course unit really interesting.

    26. I enjoyed being involved in this course unit.

Doubtful generality or not easy to place (single items)

    7. We were encouraged to look for links between this unit and others.

    20. The web pages provided by staff helped me to understand the topics better.

    30. This course unit provided plenty of opportunities for me to discuss important ideas.

Demands made by unit (ETLQ)

very easy = 5, fairly easy = 4, unsure/not applicable = 3, fairly difficult = 2, very difficult = 1

Acquiring knowledge and subject-based skills (5 item scale)

    a. What I was expected to know to begin with.

    b. The rate at which new material was introduced

    c. The ideas and problems I had to deal with

    d. The skills or technical procedures needed in this subject

    e. The amount of work I was expected to do

Organising and communicating (5 item scale)

    f. Working with other students

    g. Organising and being responsible for my own learning

    h. Communicating knowledge and ideas effectively

    i. Tracking down information for myself

    j. Information technology/computing skills (e.g. WWW, email, word processing)

Learning achieved (ETLQ)

a lot = 5, quite a lot = 4, unsure/not applicable = 3, not much = 2, very little = 1

Acquiring knowledge and subject-based skills (3 item scale)

    a. Knowledge and understanding about the topics covered

    b. Ability to think about ideas or to solve problems

    c. Skills or technical procedures specific to the subject.

Organising and communicating (5 item scale)

    d. Ability to work with other students

    e. Organising and being responsible for my own learning

    f. Ability to communicate knowledge and ideas effectively

    g. Ability to track down information in the subject area

    h. Information technology/computing skills (e.g. WWW, email, word processing)