

Student surveys and giving feedback on the course

Your feedback is **essential** for informing the development of the Tripos. Staff take it very seriously and every year it leads to real changes, for example:

- the introduction of the Dyson Centre
- the redesign of the Department's Library
- extending the Part IB exam period
- introducing more practical Part I lab sessions
- more staff training on supporting students with mental health difficulties.

We appreciate that it can feel like you are being bombarded with requests to complete surveys so this page gives details of the feedback mechanisms which the Department particularly values.

Summary of feedback mechanisms

Best for . . .	Examples	Feedback mechanism
Immediate action during a module or lecture course and/or quick fixes	Workload, pace, Moodle problems, presentation style, inappropriate behaviours etc	Fast feedback facility
Recommending more fundamental changes for future years and/or giving feedback on the year as a whole	Course content, assessment methods, supervision system, coursework, lectures etc	Annual course survey
Celebrating great lecturers	Most inspirational, clearest, funniest lecturer – you decide	Best lecturers awards
Influencing the public perception of the course (league tables, prospective students' views etc)	Overall satisfaction, learning resources, learning opportunities, organisation and management etc	NSS (IIB students only)

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Departmental surveys

[Annual course survey](#)

All students are **strongly encouraged** to complete the [online course survey](#) each year as it provides the detailed feedback on your courses which we need to make improvements for future years.

You can update your survey entry at any point until the survey closes at the end of the Easter Term: only the latest response will count. Answers are kept completely anonymous and no reference to the computer user is made in any output from the survey program.

This year's course surveys are available [online](#), together with an [archive of past survey results](#).

Lecture questionnaires

For all years, lecturers sometimes also issue a short questionnaire during lectures to obtain some running feedback on how their courses are going. Part IIA students also have their own [survey and fast feedback facility for supervisors](#).

Best lecturers awards

All students are encouraged to [vote online for their 'best' lecturers](#). You decide what 'best' means to you and you can update your choices until the end of Easter Term. In each year of the Tripos the three lecturers with the most votes per students taking the course are awarded a prize (a minimum of three nominations is required to be considered). From 2017/18 you can nominate up to three lecturers per year.

Fast feedback facility

The [Fast feedback facility \(FFF\)](#) can be used to send rapid messages to warn teaching staff of problems as they arise (or to complement them on a job well done). It's particularly effective for flagging issues which can be fixed straight away.

Messages sent to the FFF are automatically anonymised (email addresses are hidden). In order for the system to work, it is necessary to specify the general topic area of each comment using the menus at the top of the comment window. All fast feedback traffic is monitored (before anonymisation) by the Director of Undergraduate Education.

If you have any problems with the FFF please contact the [Director of Undergraduate Education](#).

University-wide surveys

Every year you will be asked to participate in one University-wide survey (either the Student Barometer or National Student Survey, depending on your year). The surveys allow the University to compare your experiences with those of students in other departments and other universities. It is particularly important for the Department that Part IIB students complete the NSS as we need a critical mass for the data to be meaningful and the results have a real impact on the public perception of your course.

As these are national surveys the questions may not be an ideal fit for the Cambridge context, e.g. much of the feedback that you'll receive on your performance will be via the supervision system so please consider this in your responses. See the [Department's statement on assessment types & expectations](#) for further info.

All responses are anonymised before they are seen by the Department.

	Student Barometer (SB)	National Student Survey (NSS)
Population	Part IA, IB and IIA students	Part IIB students
Timing	Michaelmas Term (mid-November-early December)	Lent Term (early January-early April)
Purpose	Tracking and comparing the decision-making, expectations, perceptions and intentions of students from application to the end of the BA.	The NSS provides IIB students with an opportunity to provide honest feedback about their experiences at CUED (from IA through to IIB).

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Use of data within the University	The Department's Faculty Board and Teaching Committee will scrutinise the results to see whether changes that we've made in response to your feedback have been effective and to identify where further actions are needed. The results are also scrutinized by the University's central bodies and any areas of concern are followed up with CUED.	The results play an important role in steering the evolution of the Tripos and are considered by the Faculty Board and Teaching Committee. The Teaching Office produces an action plan each year detailing how it will address any concerns. The results are also scrutinized by the University's central bodies and any areas of concern are followed up with CUED.
Use of data outside University	The SB allows for both national and international benchmarking but the data will not be made publically available.	Provided that >50% of the cohort complete the NSS the results (but no students comments) are published on www.unistats.com so that prospective students can make informed decisions about where and what to study. They are also used to inform various national league tables.
Result and action archive	CUED students will complete the SB for the first time in 2017. Results will be published here when they are available.	NSS results and action plans

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