



GOVERNMENT COLLEGE

An Autonomous Institution Since 2000 :: RAJAHMUNDRI, ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA



INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE CELL

STUDENT FEEDBACK POLICY

Executive summary

Over the years, a number of academic programs, departments and student support wings have asked for student feedback through their own student feedback mechanisms that were distinct from the student feedback questionnaires collected centrally by the GCRJY Internal Quality Assurance Cell (GCRJYIQAC). This policy recognizes the importance that Departments take responsibility for the provision of student feedback mechanisms throughout their programmes of study. Departments are the basic units offering range of programs and are encouraged to explore methods of feedback that would suit their learning and teaching environment and programmes of study. This aims not only to improve engagement but also to make the feedback more meaningful within the context in which it is being presented. Moreover, it will provide the quality assurance information that is necessary for the annual review of the programmes of study that are offered. At the same time, the student feedback questionnaires run centrally by GCRJYIQAC offer a harmonised quality assurance benchmark across all programmes offered by Departments. It is envisaged that these mechanisms should run in parallel and complement each other, while avoiding overlapping surveys. Every Department shall designate a coordinator for each of the Programme offered by it. The coordinators are to take into account the courses offered for the specific Program when determining the courses to be included for student feedback collection within Department in order to avoid replication and minimise survey fatigue.

- While recognising the importance of student anonymity throughout the feedback collection, analysis and reporting stages, the policy lists a number of responsibilities by which students should abide in their provision of feedback. These include the provision of objective, constructive and balanced feedback. It is important that positive engagement of both students and staff in the student feedback process are maintained. Confidentiality and respect for the rights and dignity of staff wherever student feedback identifies academic management issues are therefore as important as student anonymity, the transparency of the feedback processes to students and the communication of feedback outcomes to students.

- Finally, the spirit of the policy is rooted in both student empowerment and improving and assuring the quality of programmes within GCRJY. It can be clarified that student feedback is a circular process that also involves the academics relaying their own ideas back to the student, based in collegiality and discussion. The results of this process are maximised when both the student and the lecturer understand their part within this mechanism and when an environment of feedback is cultivated.

Student Feedback Policy Document

1.1 Introduction

The Government College (Autonomous) has a clear commitment to high quality in learning, teaching and postgraduate research and to enhancing the student experience at all levels of study and across programmes.

1.2. Students' feedback plays a critical role in the evaluation, development and enhancement of the quality of all programmes and student experience which encompasses learning, teaching and assessment. Student feedback is therefore important to:

- a. assess the effectiveness of all programmes of study;
- b. assess the overall educational experience from the students' viewpoint; and
- c. guide the adjustments required to sustain continuous improvement.

1.3 Aim of the policy

The aim of this policy is to define the approach of the institution to the systematic collection and analysis of student feedback, how the institution and the Departments, determine actions to be taken based on student feedback and how the student feedback outcomes is communicated to students.

1.4 Scope of the Policy

This policy is limited to the collection and evaluation of course wise student feedback on individual courses and programmes of study, and how this can be used to enhance the quality of teaching, learning resources and support available to students at the institution.

1.5 Principles

1.5.1 The College considers it important to create a culture and an environment that empowers student voice and active engagement throughout the institution.

1.5.2. The College is committed to work in partnership with Student community and the Student bodies within the Departments to provide opportunities for all students to give feedback on their learning experiences and to contribute to their continuous enhancement.

1.5.3. All conversations with students should recognize that our student body is diverse and that students will have varied views on issues. Course wise Student feedback

mechanisms must be inclusive and enable all students to participate so that as many student voices as possible may be captured.

1.5.4. The Course wise student feedback process must be respectful of the rights and dignity of both students and staff. Privacy, student anonymity and confidentiality must be maintained at all stages of the process.

1.5.3. The college is committed to listen to the students' voice captured at different levels and through different mechanisms, including but not limited to activities led by the Student Associations and Student Bodies.

1.5.4 The Course wise student feedback process must be transparent. The purpose of collecting student feedback, how the feedback data will be processed, its intended use, and how results and actions will be disseminated to students, should be clearly stated, especially at the point when feedback is being requested.

1.5.5. The college is committed to closing feedback loops and believes that feedback to students is as important as feedback from students. Students are to be informed of the results of feedback and of any actions taken in response to it or reasons why actions cannot be taken. Student feedback should always elicit a response, both when action or changes result from the feedback and when this is not possible.

1.5.6. The college is committed to student feedback processes that seek positive engagement of academic staff and students towards the continuous enhancement of the students' learning experience. Any student feedback that addresses academic management issues and academic conduct must be treated in confidence by the Department and Administration to ensure that the rights of academics to privacy and confidentiality are respected.

1.5.7 Students' feedback and student voice mechanisms are an essential part of the GCRJY Quality Assurance and Enhancement framework.

1.6 Student Feedback collection

1.6.1. Systematic collection of student feedback is required to record students' learning experiences in all study-units. Departments are responsible for implementing systematic collection of student feedback, allowing feedback mechanisms to be adapted to the needs of specific Courses offered in the Program.

1.6.2. College-wide student feedback collection will be carried out by GCRJYIQAC as part of the GCRJY'S institutional level quality assurance. This centralised form of student feedback, carried out through a standard questionnaire for a sample of course across programs offered by the College. This provides a harmonised quality assurance benchmark.

1.6.3. The student feedback process run by GCRJYIQAC will therefore complement the student feedback collected at Department level.

1.6.4. All activities related to student feedback collection, storage, analysis and results presentation must adhere to the provisions of data protection legislation.

1.7. GCRJY wide student feedback collection

1.7.1. The College emphasises the need for the involvement of students in the quality assurance of higher education. This requires that students are recognised as collaborators in, rather than merely receivers of, learning and teaching.

1.7.2. The College is to ensure that mechanisms are in place for students to provide feedback both with regard to the Specific Courses under the Program they are pursuing their degree, and also with regard to their experience at the GCRJY once they have completed the entire programme of study.

This feedback is conducted by GCRJY through the Program-wise course evaluation survey and the end-of-programme survey.

1.7.3. The College shall provide appropriate fora and opportunities to celebrate and share good practices emerging from the outcomes of student feedback.

1.8 Program wise Courses feedback FAQs

1.8.1 How is the courses wise student feedback obtained?

The courses wise student feedback survey is conducted twice a year through a questionnaire which consists of 19 close-ended questions and a free-text section which allows you to comment on any aspect you wish. You can decide to submit your feedback either before or after your assessments, and can do so either via the GCRJY App or your e-SIMS portal.

1.8.2 Why is my feedback important?

Your feedback and recommendations are important considerations for the Programme Review which each Department is required to undertake at annually and periodically. The Ad-hoc Sub-Committee which is tasked with reviewing a particular programme of study should take into consideration the feedback provided by students vis-a-vis each study-unit. Was the service provision satisfactory? Were any strengths and/or weaknesses identified? Have any concerns been raised by students? What actions have been or will be taken to remedy situations identified as problematic?

1.8.3 The Program wise course study is now over. Why should I still give feedback?

The feedback is used by Department, student support wings and Administration to enable the college to identify good practice and areas which need improvement. Your feedback can result in a review of the teaching methodologies, methods of assessments, and/or learning material.

1.8.4 Is feedback anonymous?

The online course evaluation system provides security and confidentiality that far exceeds that which is possible with traditional paper and pencil methods. The online format adopted is more conducive to maintaining student anonymity, since traditional paper and pencil methods require open-ended comments to be handwritten. In addition to this,

students are able to provide their feedback in privacy, rather than during class time and in the presence of lecturers and other students. Once the feedback session is over the lecturers receive only a general report of the outcome and a list of open-ended comments which cannot be linked to individual responses.

1.8.5 If I submit feedback will it affect my results?

Student response data is grouped together for the entire class for the purpose of data analysis. Program wise courses with less than 5 students enrolled are not included for evaluation. It is therefore impossible to associate comments and responses provided with any individual student.

1.8.6 Who has access to results and can the lecturer see the study-unit feedback?

The Program wise Course feedback reports are made available to Deans, Heads of Departments and Lecturer/s concerned after the assessment results for the entire student cohort has been published. It is useful to note that the feedback reports summarise all the feedback submitted by students collated as percentage values. This means therefore that access to the responses submitted by individual students is not possible.

1.8.7 How and when are suggestions made by students taken into consideration?

The outcomes/results of the Program wise Course feedback are presented to the Dean, Head of department and lecturers and when areas for improvement are identified the lecturer concerned is asked to indicate the actions to be taken. Whilst every suggestion is valuable, the importance of statistical significance cannot be overlooked. It is for this reason that students are strongly encouraged to submit their feedback.

1.8.8 Why are not all the Program wise Courses selected? / How are Program wise Courses selected?

In order to avoid having to answer a large number of questionnaires, only one third of the Program wise Courses from each Program are selected. These are randomly selected however the exercise is cyclical in nature and aims to ensure that all Program wise Courses would have been assessed over a period of time. Program wise Courses which have less than five students registered on them are not included in the student feedback exercise.

1.9 End Program Feedback FAQs

1.9.1 What is the aim?

The end-of-programme survey is a quality assurance tool that provides information about the students learning experience throughout the course. The data gathered feeds into Periodic Programme Review and is used to improve existing programmes.

1.9.2 How is Program wise Courses feedback obtained?

For the purpose of this exercise, SurveyMonkey is used to collect feedback from students. End-of-programme feedback is conducted after publication of the students final classification and continues up until the graduation period.

1.9.3 Why is my feedback important?

Through the end-of-programme survey, the College is able to assess the quality of the learning experience of the students and how well students feel prepared for the world of work.

1.9.4 Is feedback anonymous?

Similar to the Program wise Courses evaluation process, students who complete the questionnaire are not asked at any stage for their names or any other personal details. The reports which are generated through SurveyMonkey do not include any personal details and cannot be traced back to the students.

1.9.5 Who has access to results and how are the suggestions implemented?

Results are compiled into reports which are then sent to Heads of Departments. Suggestions are considered during meetings of boards of studies to improve the programmes as part of the Annual and Periodic Programme Review.

2. Student Feedback collection by Departments and responsibilities.

2.1. Feedback from students is used by academics to consider both how to enhance students' learning and how to develop their own teaching practice. As partners with the academics involved in their education, students should have the opportunity to comment on the teaching they receive, and to be kept informed of any action taken (or not taken) arising from the feedback they supply.

2.2. Department should make provision for feedback across all study-units within each programme of study. Feedback should be provided anonymously and on a regular basis, and such initiatives should be well-publicised so that all students have an opportunity to provide feedback.

2.3. The programme coordinator for each programme of study shall liaise with lecturers and coordinate the collection of feedback from students for the purpose of the Annual Programme Review. The coordinators for each program shall ensure to obtain the feedback link from GCRJYIQAC. The GCRJYIQAC shall generate a link from its source to ensure uniqueness, enhance quality and anonymity in collecting information from students.

2.4. Boards of Studies are to review student feedback analysis reports and discuss actions arising from student feedback in matters pertaining to program wise Course content, learning outcomes, and methods of learning, teaching and assessment, within the remit of the Boards of Studies.

2.5. It is recommended that the Departments concerned, appoint a committee to oversee student feedback collection methodology within the Department and disseminate student feedback best practices suitable for Program wise Courses offered by the Department amongst the academic staff. Where appropriate Department can assign these roles to an existing committee tasked with the quality assurance of its programmes of study.

2.6. Feedback processes should incorporate strategies to maximise student participation and should take into account the length of the unit and the numbers of students enrolled. These may include but are not limited to, Program wise Course questionnaires, focus groups or interviews, in-lecture temperature checks in the form of small group instructional diagnosis (SGIDs), intercept surveys, online feedback portals or mid-quarter feedback which would allow the lecturer to ‘check-in’ with students with enough time to tweak teaching prior to the end of the study.

2.7. Departments are encouraged to engage with students in the design of feedback collection and explain how students can provide feedback on their programme and/or study-unit.

3. Student Responsibilities

3.1. Students are at the heart of the feedback process, and its ultimate intended beneficiaries. Through the collection of feedback, the students’ voice can inform subsequent action taken at Department level, as well as more broadly across the UM.

3.2. Students should provide open and constructive feedback that respects the dignity of students and staff and abides by ethical standards.

3.3. Students should provide honest and balanced feedback that identifies strengths in program wise course content and delivery where this is appropriate as much as it identifies weaknesses and areas for improvement where this is necessary.

3.4. Students are encouraged to liaise and collaborate with their student representatives, student associations and student societies in delivering collective feedback where prompt action is required to improve their student experience.

3.5. Student representatives are encouraged to participate in and take advantage of relevant training opportunities in relation to how feedback is collected, analyzed, interpreted, used, and presented.

3.6. Student societies are encouraged to liaise with Departments, Faculty, Boards of Studies, Deans, Heads of Departments, program coordinators and/or student representatives to design and implement feedback processes such as questionnaires and to present the analysis and outcomes to the Faculty Board and/or Board of Studies.

4. Communicating Student Feedback outcomes

4.1. Collecting, analysing and responding to evidence are fundamental features of the college quality Assurance.

4.2. Relevant feedback should be shared with student representatives, allowing them to be discussed within the Departments in fora such as Boards of Studies.

4.3. Students or their representatives are to be informed of any action that has been taken in response to feedback received, giving details if appropriate.

4.4. There are a number of mechanisms which may be used to directly communicate to students the actions taken as a result of feedback. These include but are not limited to:

- E-mails from Dean, Head of Department, programme coordinator, etc.
- Regular ‘You Said, We Did’ campaigns which may be supported by student representatives or societies.
- Social media

5. Quality Assurance and Enhancement

5.1. The College has in place institutional monitoring and feedback systems for assuring the quality and standards of all the learning and teaching that it provides throughout a student’s program experience. This monitoring and feedback should be complemented and permeated within Departments.

5.2. The National Quality Assurance Framework for Further and Higher Education (2015), which reflects the European Standards & Guidelines (2015) highlights the need to continuously engage the student’s voice as a way of improving the quality of the learning and teaching environment. It sets out the expectation that students are actively engaged, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience. This includes engaging students in the development, assurance and enhancement of the quality of their educational experience.

5.3. All Departments are expected to set out their approach to program and Program wise Course feedback and these approaches are to be agreed with student representatives as part of Department Board and/or Board of Studies discussions.

5.4. Feedback approaches and outcomes are to feature in the Annual Programme Review performed by Department. This will also contribute to the Department’s commitment that students are achieving the learning outcomes.

Further references:

Further useful information on study-unit evaluation and SU evaluation methods can be found from the following references:

1. Harvard University Online Resources - Getting Feedback
2. University College London Teaching and Learning Resources - Student Voice and Surveys
3. University of Washington - Gathering Student Feedback
4. Victoria University Learning and Teaching Resources - Evaluation for Improving Practice
5. E. Keane, I. Mac Labhrainn, "Obtaining Student Feedback on Teaching & Course Quality", Briefing Paper, Centre for Excellence in Learning & Teaching, 2005

***The End ***