Welcome to the first Issue of CES Fact Sheet. This series of papers will target key areas of interest to explain concepts, diffuse myths and offer tips on how you can get the most out of the CES.

One of the most important aspects of data collection of surveys is ensuring an adequate sample size. In order for the CES to be useful for your course, a reasonable number of forms need to be completed. The question is, what is reasonable?

**What is a sample?**
A sample is made up of two parts:
- Population
- Sample

In our case, the Population is the total number of students enrolled in that course. When talking about samples and sample sizes, this refers to the number of students who completed a CES form from a course.

**Why is a good response rate important?**
A good response rate is essential in ensuring the information obtained in the CES is reliably representative of the whole course. The more students in the course that are sampled, the less error in the scores you receive. On the other hand, the poorer the response rate, the less reliable the data.

**How does a poor response rate affect my GTS score?**
A poor response rate makes your GTS score far less reliable. You may have an unexpected increase or decrease in GTS from year to year if only a small proportion of the students are completing the survey. There is also the issue of determining why only a small portion of students were present in class that day. Is this usual?

It has been shown that results of CES scores provide a good indicator into CEQ responses. The CEQ evaluates how students felt about their whole program and determines how funding is allocated to Universities in Australia.

**Example.** Dr. Lupin and Dr. Umbridge are colleagues who teach similar sized courses of approx 60 students. They discussed their CES results with each other and found they had both received a GTS of 75%. During their discussions, Dr. Lupin explained that he had told his class that the CES was coming up, and that he really valued their feedback as he uses it to improve the course for the next semester. 54 of the 60 students attended class and elicited valuable written comments. Meanwhile, Dr. Umbridge confessed that she was just having optional revision lectures in weeks 10-12 and didn’t mention the forthcoming CES survey to her students. She had a sample of 18 of the 60 students filling in the CES.

The difference in reliability of these samples can be seen by graphing the means of the GTS questions with their 95% Confidence intervals.

Dr. Lupin has a good chance of getting a GTS of 75% again next year, in replicated sampling conditions. His score is highly reliable which is contributed to by the large sample size. The Confidence Intervals for Dr. Umbridge’s course are wide which is predominantly due to the low sample size. When sampled again, her GTS could vary greatly from 75%.

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**Q.** Dr. Snape teaches a class of 30 students and had 18 students complete CES forms. Dr. McGonagall teaches a lecture of 140 students and had 80 students complete CES forms. Whose CES data is more reliable?

**A.** Looking at the reliability graph, McGonagall’s sample is more reliable as it falls above the sample size guideline. Snape’s sample size falls below the guideline, he needed 24 students to improve the reliability of his data.

Dr. Snape had made changes to the tute sheets and changed his method of presentation from overheads to PowerPoint and was eager to hear what the students had to say. When he received the report back from Survey Services and found that there were only 18 surveys, he realised that this was not representative of his whole class. Dr. Snape wondered why many of his students were not there that day.

**Example.** Dr. Trelawney regularly teaches a second year course to about 20 students. Previously, her GTS for the course was 52% but this semester it increased to 85%. Initially she was rapt but knew she hadn’t changed much in the course which might explain such an increase. When she looked at the forms, she found that only 7 of the 20 enrolled students attended class the day of the CES. This data is less reliable as an indication of how the whole class found the course. Had more students been there that day, Dr. Trelawney may have received more valuable and reliable feedback.

**Tips: How to get a better response rate.**
- At least the week before, tell students that the CES is forthcoming.
- Throughout the semester, mention where you have used CES feedback from previous years. This demonstrates to students that you use and value their feedback.
- When a student has an issue or compliment during the semester, encourage them to remember it and write it on the CES forms. This heightens the value of the survey to everyone.

**Simple things you can do to make your data more accurate:**
- Write the program codes on the board on the day of the CES. Even though students often can’t remember their program codes, they can usually identify it from a list.
- Check with admin (or request) whether the CES is to be done in the lecture or the tute classes. Once you know this, advise the students who they should be reviewing when completing the survey, and indicate that they may include comments about the remaining staff in the written section.