

A Paper to Modernise and Improve the SOLE Survey

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Union Notes:

1. Changing the SOLE Survey is up to the discretion of the College and not down to individual academic departments despite multiple differences between them.
2. The College is reluctant to change SOLE significantly as they feel any major alteration in the format makes it harder to draw comparisons with submissions from previous academic years. This is despite changes in how we complete online surveys.

Union Believes:

1. The SOLE Survey itself is desktop orientated and does not work well on smartphones or tablets. This contributes to the participation rates being very low.
2. The size and formatting of the text can make it difficult to access.
3. Some people find the navigation system on the website off-putting.
4. SOLE's colour scheme makes it hard to read text when completing the survey on lower contrast screens or reading screens.
5. Most students do not know every single one of their lecturers by name.
6. Too often the survey is crowded with names not relevant to the lecturers who taught the course.
7. Some departments do not always look at the responses from the check boxes and only focus on the written feedback. Therefore, the question is raised "why fill the survey out in the first place?". Especially when the quality and specificity of each question is low and vague, such that no reliable conclusion can be drawn from it.
8. SOLE's questions are vague at best and often due to the way it is asked it can be difficult to determine if information should be put in the lecturer feedback section or in the course feedback section.
9. The form should not show incomplete until all the module sections have been responded to. This creates confusion and causes responders to not bother finishing the survey due to multiple arduous sections.
10. The SOLE Survey can take too long to complete.
11. In the event a responder wants to change their mind after submitting, it is impossible to do so even if submitted in error.
12. The SOLE Survey has no incentive to complete or for lecturers to do better as the way in which the results are published to students gives little to no indication of how the course was.

Union Resolves:

1. Re-evaluate, slim down, modernise and optimise the SOLE Survey to improve accessibility, user friendliness and so that it works properly on mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets.
2. Include photos of the lecturers beside their names so that responders to the survey can identify them more easily.
3. Allow separate completion for each module section instead of just consistently showing incomplete while filling out the whole survey.
4. Allow repeat SOLE submissions right up until the final deadline of the survey.