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DO

UTS
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY

DOES EARLY FEEDBACK MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

A Dynamic Change To Student Evaluation

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SFS Review – Background and Outcomes

In 2014 a review of the UTS subject/teaching evaluation tool was carried out, in order to:

- *improve stakeholder engagement with the survey*
- *ensure continued relevance and usefulness to students, teaching staff*
- *better align content with current UTS Learning and Teaching strategies*

Two major recommendations:

1. Introduce early session questionnaire, the **Early Feedback Survey (EFS)**, to:
   - *identify any areas of concern early and allow in-session adjustments to be made (where necessary)*
2. Major structural overhaul of the **Student Feedback Survey (SFS)**, to:
   - *realign focus on student engagement and learning, and to allow customisation relevant to each subject's delivery mode*

New questionnaires from 2015

1. New formative **Early Feedback Survey (EFS)**:
    - *short survey = 3 core items + 1 comments item*
    - *short time in field = 1 week (during week 4 of session)*
    - *short turnaround = teaching staff receive results in week 5*

2. Revised summative **Student Feedback Survey (SFS)**:
    - *reduced core survey = 4 core items + 2 comments items*
    - *optional Learning Modes = choose up to 2 (each has 2 items)*
    - *same time in field as previous sessions = 4 weeks (extends into exams from 2016)*

Overall subject satisfaction item in both questionnaires.

New questionnaires from 2015

Early Feedback Survey (EFS)	Student Feedback Survey (SFS)
Core items	*Core items*
1. I know what is expected of me in this subject as stated in the subject outline.	1. The learning opportunities provided helped me meet the stated objectives of this subject.
2. I am making the most of my opportunities to learn in this subject.	2. I made the most of my opportunities to learn in this subject.
3. Overall I am satisfied with the quality of this subject so far.	3. Overall I am satisfied with the quality of this subject.
	4. Overall, I am satisfied with how this staff member facilitated my learning.
	Learning Mode items
	5-6. LM 1
	7-8. LM 2
	Optional items
	9-10.
Open-ended item	*Open-ended items*
Please enter any comments on your learning experience so far.	What did you particularly like about this subject?
	Please suggest any improvements that could be made to this subject.

Implementation and participation

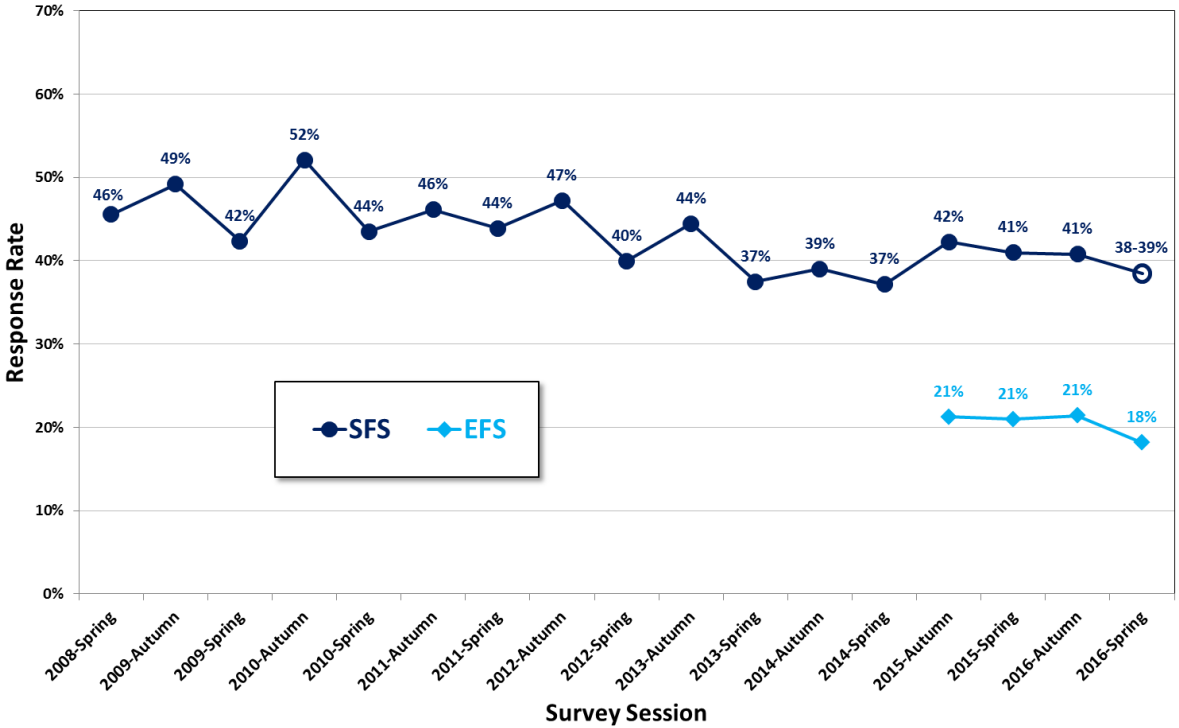
Challenges to implementing new survey schedule:

- *increased administrative workload – almost doubled preparation/administration workload*
- *not all teaching staff information available at start of session (EFS)*
- *some resistance from staff – extra survey (EFS) + concerns about increased accountability*
- *SFS system development required for additional LM workflow step*
- *rebranding and increased promotion required*

Engagement with new surveys / effect on participation:

- *initial sessions for EFS showed encouragingly consistent participation of ~20%*
- *initial sessions for revised SFS showed increased participation from previous levels*

Historical SFS and EFS response rates



Scope of study and data used

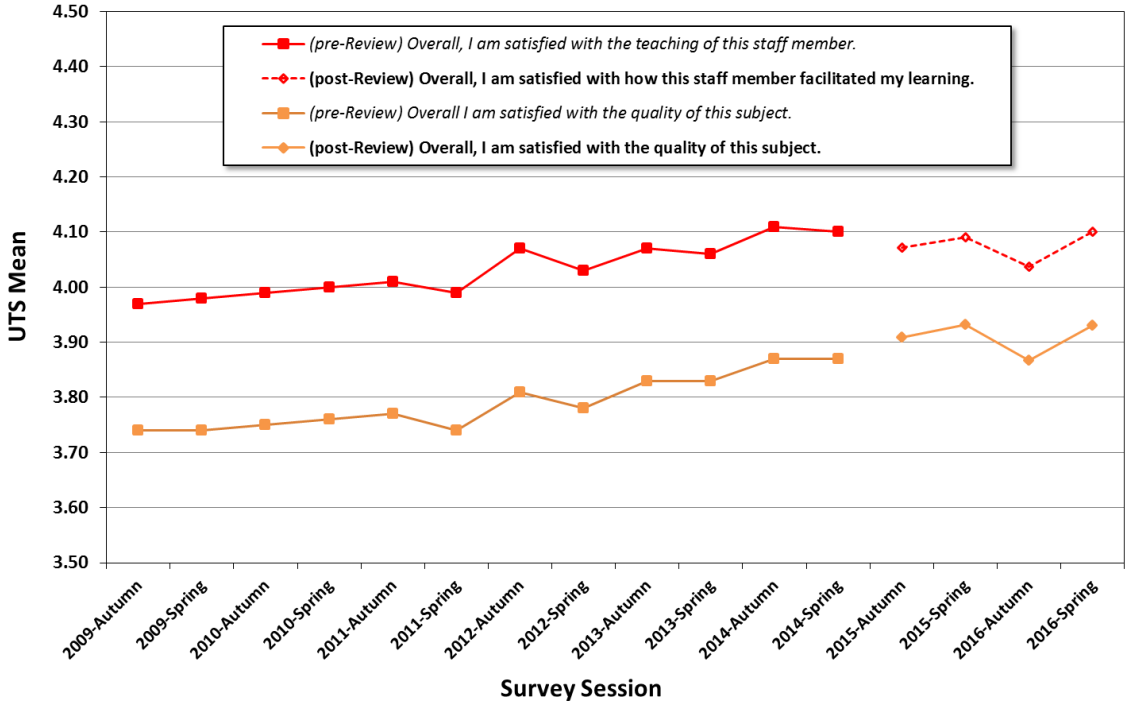
Research questions:

1. *Did the time series for the subject satisfaction item in the SFS remain unbroken?*
2. *Were there significant changes in EFS results between the pilot session and the full rollout?*
3. *Is there a link between subject satisfaction measured in the EFS and its corresponding performance in the SFS?*
4. *What is the relationship between Learning Modes and subject satisfaction?*

Principal data sources:

- *Subject satisfaction item in both EFS and SFS*
- *Two full-rollout sessions = 803 subjects in Spring 2015 and 818 in Autumn 2016*

1. Subject satisfaction time series



2. EFS trial and full rollout comparison

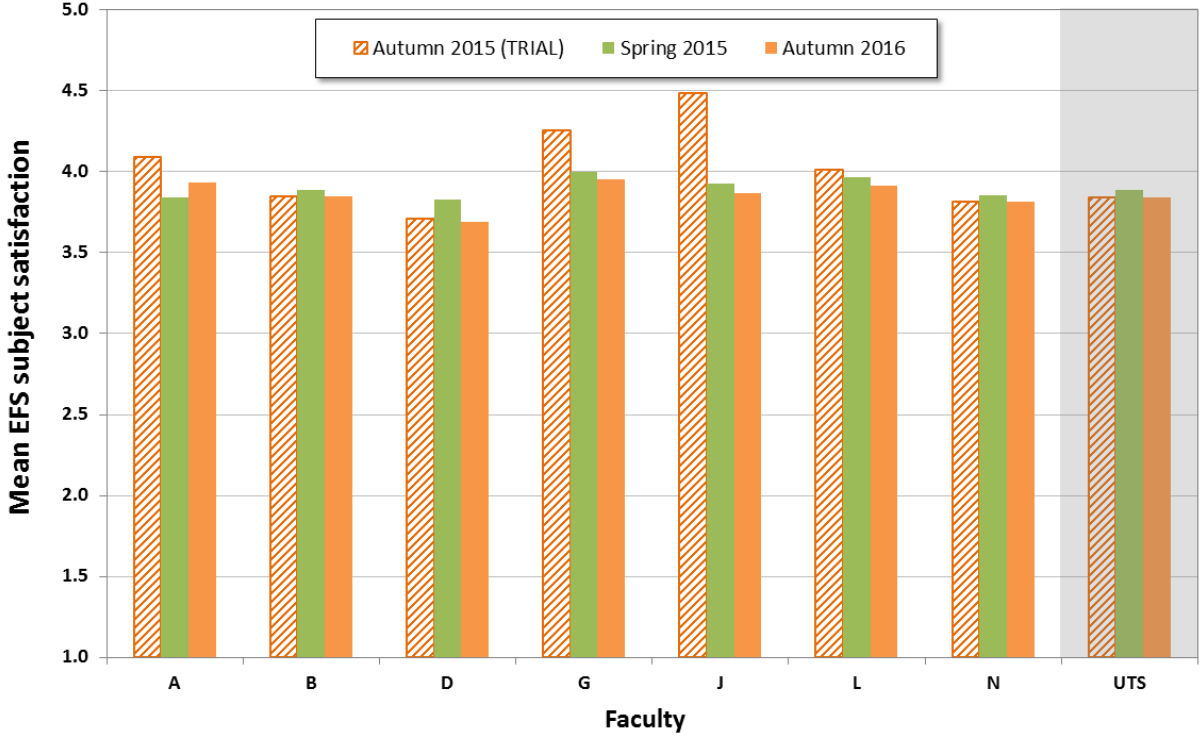
EFS trial in Autumn 2015:

- *4 faculties with partial rollout to selected subjects only – A, G, J and L*
- *3 faculties with full rollout to all subjects – B, D and N*

Comparison of faculty EFS responses in Autumn 2015 trial and full rollout sessions in Spring 2015 and Autumn 2016:

- *EFS overall subject satisfaction Q3 "Overall I am satisfied with the quality of this subject so far"*
- *Partial rollout faculties had higher trial results compared to full rollout*
- *Full rollout faculties generally had full rollout results similar to trial results*
- *Findings are consistent with EFS Q1 and Q2 comparisons*

2. EFS trial and full rollout comparison



3. How does EFS performance impact on the SFS?

Two *idealised* scenarios and the desired outcomes:

1. *high EFS = validation approach is working ⇒ continue good work = comparably high SFS*
2. *low EFS = issues flagged, need addressing ⇒ tweak approach = significantly improved SFS*

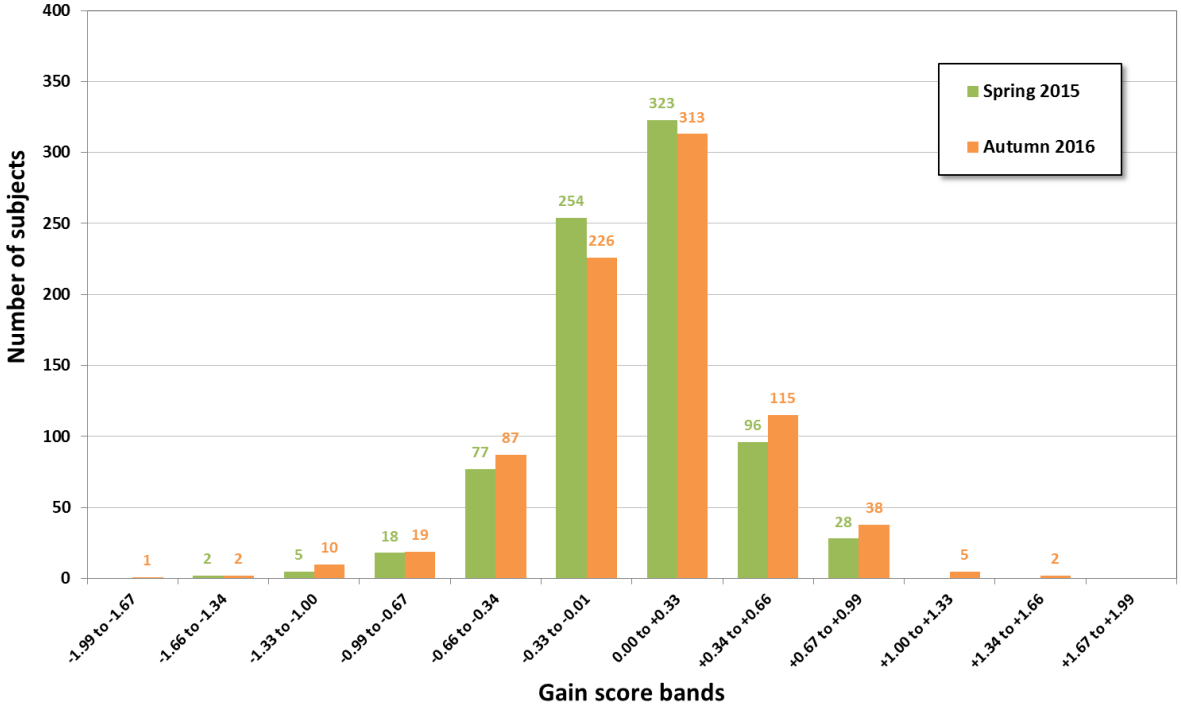
Measure used to quantify 'effect' of formative survey:

Gain *score*	=	***SFS*** *overall subject satisfaction*	–	***EFS*** *overall subject satisfaction*

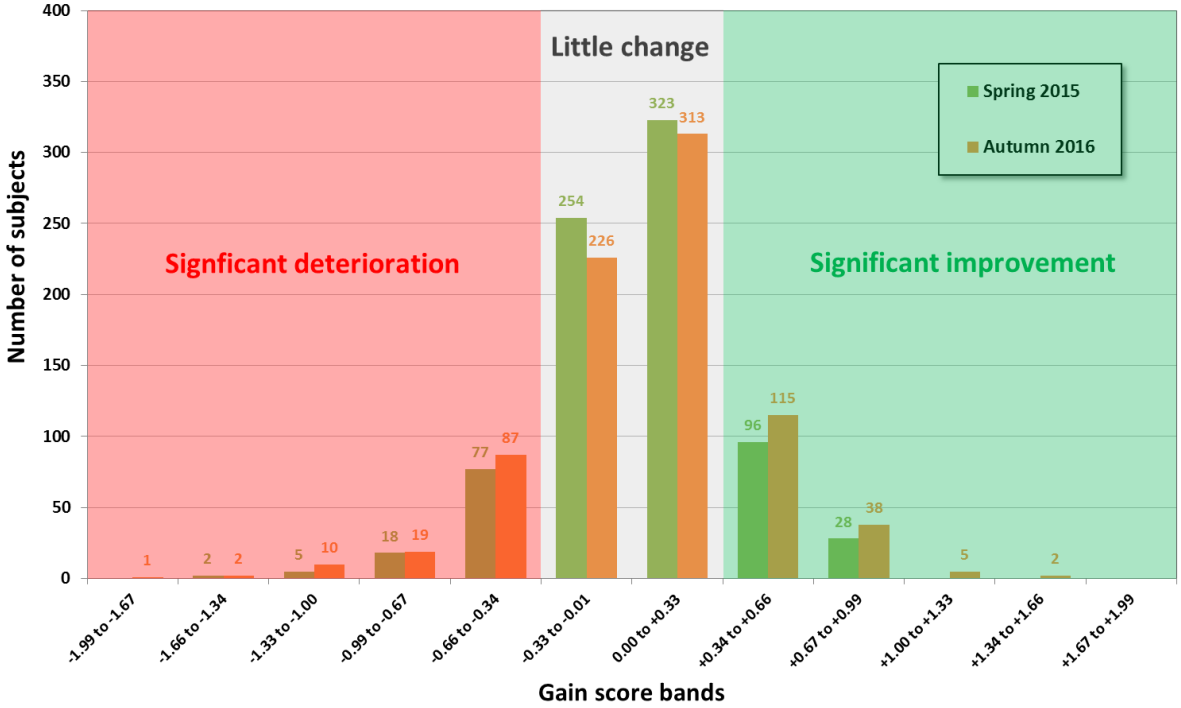
Gain scores for all subjects binned (1/3 response unit) and distribution plotted:

- *near normal distribution rather than idealised situation where all* ***Gain*** *scores* ≥ 0

3a. Distribution of *Gain* scores (UTS Level)

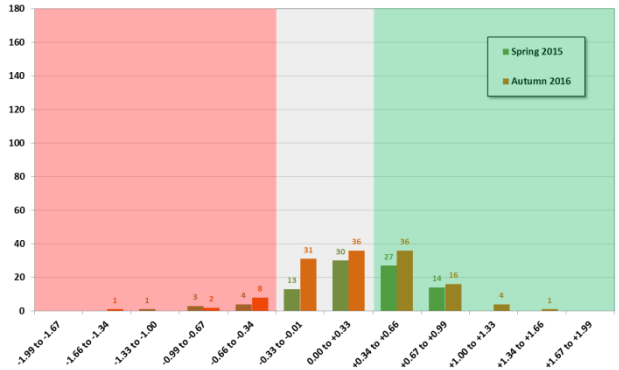


3a. Distribution of *Gain* scores (UTS Level)

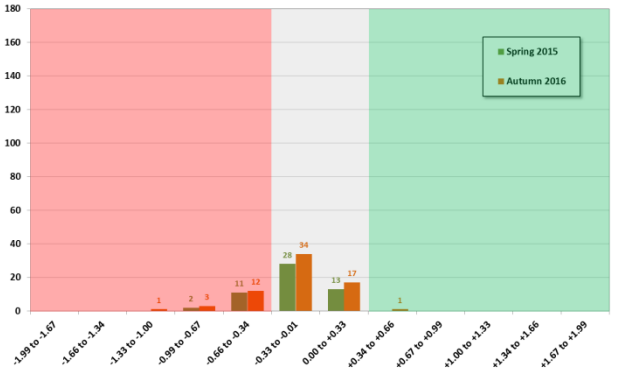


3b. … by EFS score range

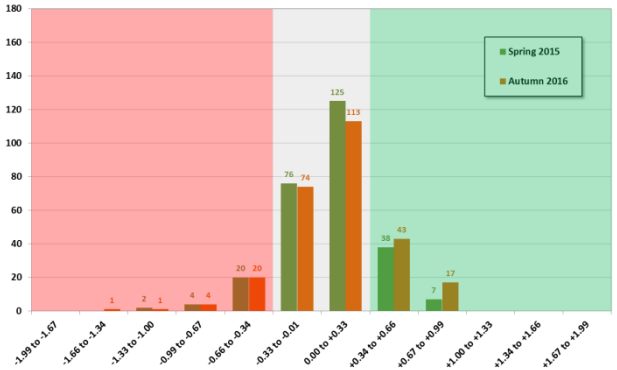
EFS score range = 3.00 to 3.49



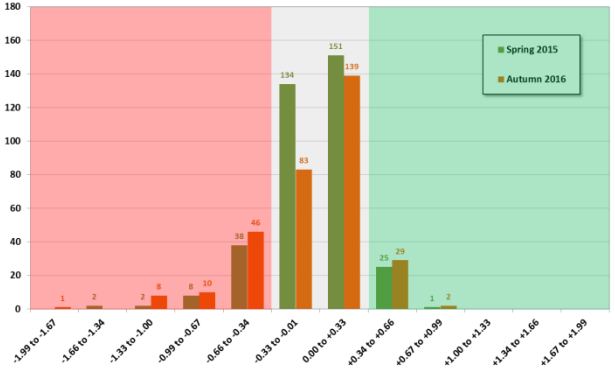
EFS score range = 4.50 to 5.00



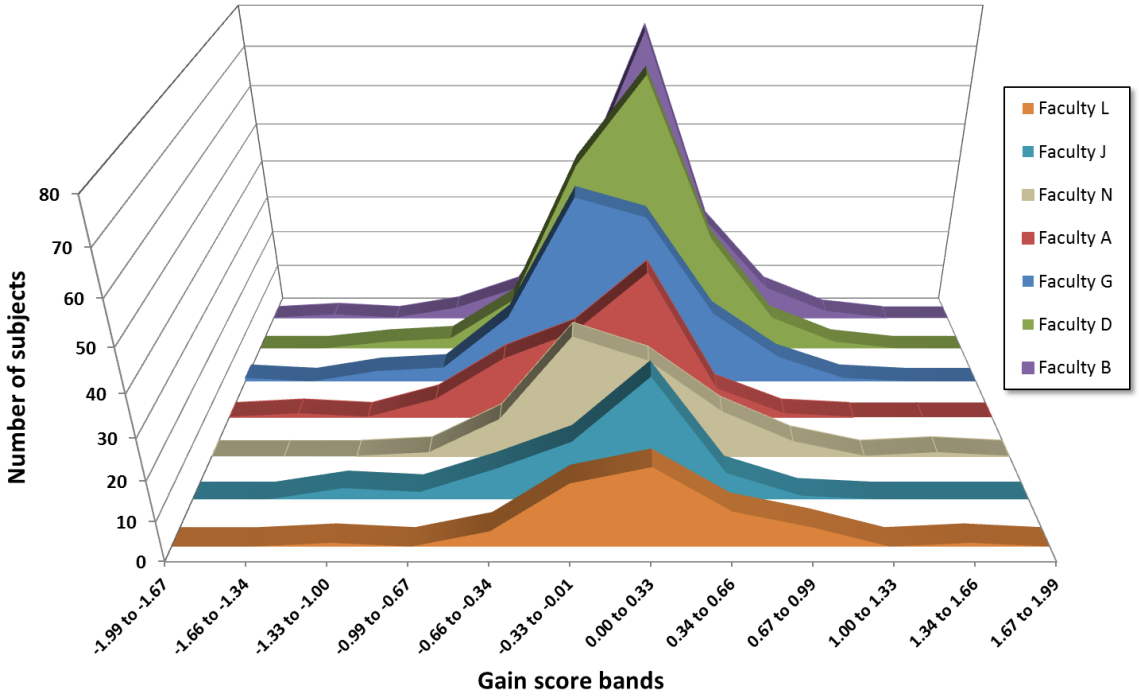
EFS score range = 3.50 to 3.99



EFS score range = 4.00 to 4.49



3c. Distribution of *Gain* scores (Faculty Level) – Autumn 2016



3d. High *Gain* subjects

High ***Gain*** subjects were defined as those with scores ≥ 0.67. Thus 70 subjects were identified.

Do any characteristics unite these (good practice) subjects?

- *faculties proportionally represented*
- *70% used Assessment LM (higher than proportion of all subjects using it = 62%), 31% Inquiry-based (higher … 23%), 20% Professional Practice (same), 10% Research-integrated (same)*
- *~50% are first year subjects*

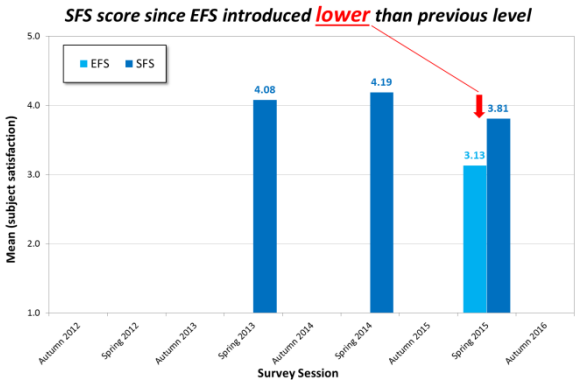
Did the EFS results lead to in-session changes which then produced improved SFS scores?
Or would the same SFS scores have resulted without the EFS in place?

- *Best option = get direct feedback from teaching staff **BUT** very sensitive issue*
- *Fall-back option = carry out time series analyses of SFS scores pre- and post-EFS*

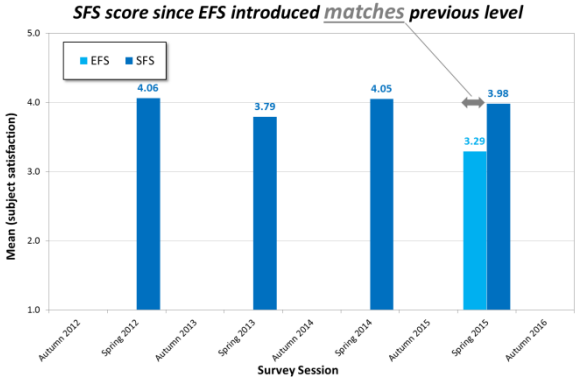
3d. Time series of High *Gain* subjects

From time series of 70 subjects, 3 distinct patterns emerged:

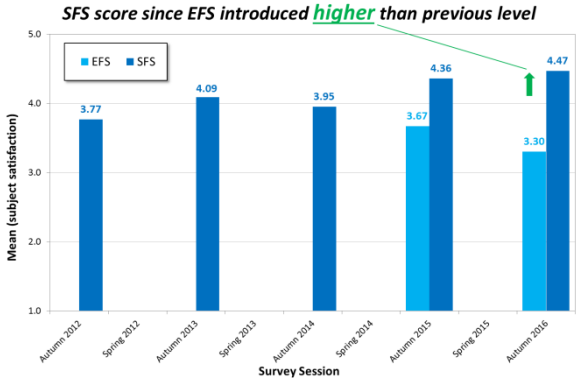
10% of High *Gain* subjects



30% of High *Gain* subjects



50% of High *Gain* subjects



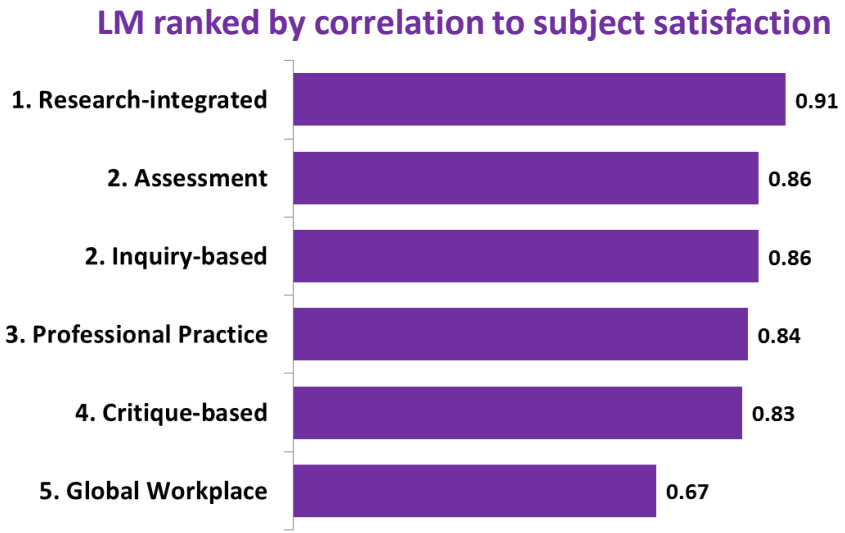
4a. Drivers of overall subject satisfaction

To determine which Learning Modes (LM) most strongly drive overall subject satisfaction, Pearson correlation analyses of subject level data were carried out.

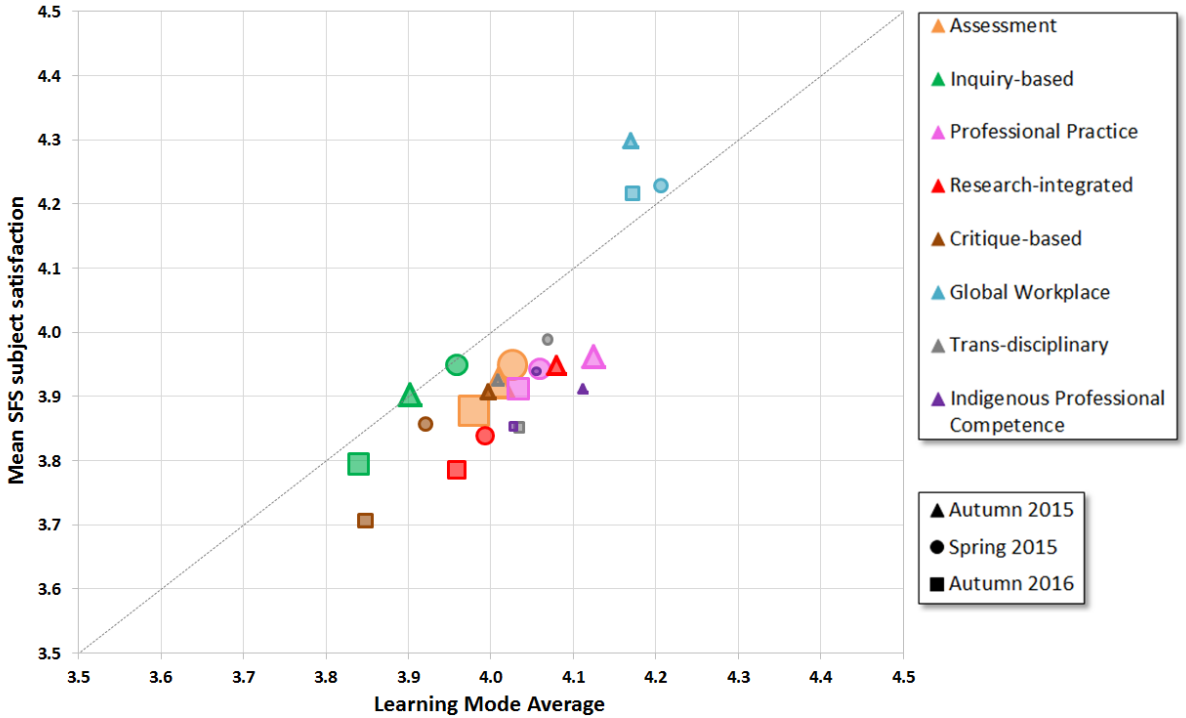
All LM items showed middling to very strong positive correlation. Results consistent across the two sessions, with only small differences between each LM's two items.

Strongest drivers = ***Research-integrated*** items:

> "*I now understand current knowledge, theories and practices related to this subject*"
>
> *"The subject's learning opportunities made me aware of research in this area"*



4b. LM scores vs overall subject satisfaction



Summary of findings

Answers to research questions:

1. **Did the time series for the subject satisfaction item in the SFS remain unbroken?**

   YES

   Continuation of upwards trend for first two sessions since introduction in 2015.

2. **Were there significant changes in EFS results between the pilot session and the full rollout?**

   YES

   … <u>but</u> only for those faculties that chose to only use a subset of subjects in pilot session.
   All but 1 of 4 of these faculties' results significantly decreased when the full rollout took place.

Summary of findings

3. Is there a link between subject satisfaction measured in the EFS and its corresponding performance in the SFS?

Moderate correlation

… between EFS and SFS subject satisfaction, r = 0.7

Normal distribution of Gain scores with a small positive median.

70% of subjects won't undergo significant deviation from initial EFS score.

For those with low starting EFS scores (between 3.0-4.0) are 3 times as likely to significantly improve than to significantly deteriorate.

4. What is the relationship between Learning Modes and subject satisfaction?

Strong correlation

… between most LM and subject satisfaction, highest for Research-integrated items.

Moving forward

Future work:

- *Direct feedback from teaching staff on use of EFS results*
- *Qualitative data analysis of EFS and SFS*

Unresolved issues:

- *Balanced teaching periods – reduced session time*
- *Disengagement with EFS – extra survey burden, low response rates*
- *Disengagement with SFS – negative association with performance management*
- *SFS period extending into exam period – contentious, participation negatively affected*

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