**Methods to evaluate your teaching**

This resource highlights some of the different approaches that you can use to evaluate your teaching. Many of these approaches are quick to implement and can generate useful information to inform your teaching practice, whether you are teaching in-person and/or online.

You may also be interested in our guidance on [Designing evaluation questions](https://ctl.ox.ac.uk/designing-evaluation-questions).

**‘Keep/add/discard' (also known as 'stop/start/continue')**

Ask students to tell you what they would 'keep, add and discard' from your lesson/tutorials/paper/online resources/course etc. It gives them a chance to tell you something positive, something that’s not working for them, and to give you a new idea. You can adopt this technique by handing out using pieces of paper to your students (perhaps different coloured paper for each of their keep/add/discard responses), or you can use an [online polling tool.](https://www.ctl.ox.ac.uk/polling-tools)

**Classroom assessment techniques (CAT)**

Classroom assessment techniques (CATs) are a range of quick evaluation questions. They can be used little and often to very powerful effect either individually or in combination, and they have the advantage that they can be designed to be completed anonymously by students. Examples of CAT questions include:

**CAT 1: Most important point(s)**

Ask your students what the most important one (or more) points are that they take away from your class/online session/lecture/tutorial etc. These can be noted on a piece of paper, entered into a polling tool (for larger groups) or done verbally (eg in a tutorial). This CAT enables you to find out what your students are gaining from your teaching (and if it matches your priorities) and it provides them with an opportunity to summarise their understanding.

**CAT 2: Muddiest point(s)**

Ask your students what their ‘muddiest point(s)’ is from the class/lecture/tutorial etc, ie the aspect they had most difficulty understanding. This can provide a timely opportunity for students to tell you where they need further clarification before the end of a session/suite of classes etc. You may, however, not have time in class to address the points raised by students, so you could respond to them in the next session, or via email/sending an announcement in Canvas.

**CAT 3: Any remaining questions?**

Ask students what remaining questions they may have about the issue/subject/class/topic etc? You might wish to answer these on the spot or start the following class/lecture etc with them, or you could set them as work to be investigated by students before you next meet, either face-to-face or online.

**Evaluation form (paper/online)**

Evaluation forms (surveys) are common and can be as short or long as you wish to make them. Well-constructed, they can help you to gather a large number of opinions on the aspects of your teaching/course which matter to you, whilst retaining student anonymity. Forms can be designed to be completed on paper or online. Online tools make the collation of responses very easy, but if you aren't able to administer the form in a class setting (ie when the students are present), **you should expect a low response rate (and sometimes no response rate at all).**

**Online survey tools**

The following online survey tools are in use at the University. A new project (the Inclusive Teaching Project) is evaluating survey tools that will integrate into Canvas. The advantage of this will be that your students should already be enrolled in your Canvas course and it will not be necessary to give them access to an external tool.

The Medical Sciences Division provides a [summary of possible survey tools](https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/4730/pages/collecting-feedback-from-students) to use (including the three mentioned below), along with some advantages and disadvantages.

**MS Forms**

Within MS Teams, you can use the Forms app: [Create and edit Forms](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/work-with-colleagues-to-create-edit-and-review-forms-in-microsoft-teams-333b97a3-41d9-48bc-a1cb-84a96bd44e14). These surveys are quick and easy to set up, although the question types are limited to multiple-choice, text answer, rating scale and date. This video shows how to use Forms: [Microsoft Forms - Full tutorial](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-OzDE6XE0T4).

**JISC Online Surveys**

What was previously called ‘Bristol Online Surveys’ is now managed and operated by JISC (and renamed as JISC Online Surveys). IT Services manages a University-wide licence for the tool: [Information and support about using JISC Online Surveys](https://help.it.ox.ac.uk/jisc-online-surveys). This tool has some disadvantages, in that it is not integrated with Canvas and so you need to either distribute a public URL to respondents, or set up access controls within the tool.

Training course offered by the IT Learning Centre: [Surveys – Introduction to JISC Online Surveys and Microsoft Forms](https://cosy.ox.ac.uk/accessplan/LMSPortal/UI/Page/Courses/book.aspx?courseid=PP025W)

**WebLearn Survey tool**

The [WebLearn Surveys tool](https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/12009/files/2094168/download?wrap=1) is still operational, and should be until a new tool is procured and implemented by the Inclusive Teaching Project. A survey can be built in your Survey Dashboard in WebLearn and made available to all those who have the link. The link can then be inserted into a Canvas page. A powerful advantage of the WebLearn tool is that at any stage (even while the survey is still open), you can ‘View Results’, which provides a well-formatted PDF report, as well as the raw data in Excel for further analysis.

**Polling tools**

Polling tools allow you to ask CAT-type questions or to administer evaluation forms in the classroom, using students' own devices to respond (eg mobile phones, laptops). There are several different versions of software you can use at Oxford. Free tools available include [Poll Everywhere](https://www.polleverywhere.com/), [ParticiPoll](https://www.participoll.com/how-to/) and [Vevox](https://www.vevox.com/). Further information on using Vevox is available on the [Centre for Teaching and Learning](https://www.ctl.ox.ac.uk/polling-tools) website.

One of the most important features provided by polling software is the ability for students to contribute anonymously to a discussion. This enables students’ contributions to be considered without being filtered through any lenses/ assumptions the other students in the room may have (eg that person always dominates/they always make the same type of contributions/I can't hear what the person is saying etc).

Polling can be used for evaluation as well as actively engaging students in their learning in-class. It also scales up very well, supporting large lecture groups.

**Essay (or assignment) cover sheets**

Ask students to fill in a short form to submit with their work which includes a CAT-type question(s) and/or you might ask them to identify the one or two points/aspects of their work that they would particularly like your feedback on. This, in turn, can help to turn the assignment-feedback experience into more of a dialogue between you and your students. You could ask students specific questions about their work, for example, ‘what do you think are the strengths of your piece of work?’; ‘what did you find most challenging about this assignment?’; ‘what did you find most enjoyable about researching this assignment?’ etc.

Examples of cover sheets can be found in [Engaging students in feedback](https://ctl.ox.ac.uk/students-feedback).

**Letter to next year's students**

Ask your students to write a brief anonymous letter to next year's students on the course, telling them things they could usefully know in advance. For example, what to expect (in terms of teaching/workload etc), how best to prepare for the course, and anything they wish they’d known before the course started that would have benefitted them etc. This provides you with an indirect evaluation of your course, and you could use the information to show to next year's students. One advantage of this form of evaluation is that it focuses students on the course, rather than on you as a teacher.

**Focus group or discussion session**

A focus group or a discussion session with your students is likely to take more time than the approaches detailed above. It is important to bear in mind this approach does not provide students with anonymity and it may be dominated by more confident students. However, this approach can support a more detailed dialogue between you and your students. For example, it can enable you to seek clarification on students’ perspectives, to establish how widespread their learning issues are, and to discuss alternative ways of supporting your students’ learning etc.

**Journey plots/course drawings**

Ask your students to draw a timeline on a piece of paper or on-screen to represent the duration of the course/your teaching, then ask them to indicate their personal high and low points across this timeline. Students can be asked to label these points in time and/or write about their experience of the course. Journey plots can enable students to write or draw very personal versions of their experience on your course, so it is important to consider how you can provide options for retaining student anonymity.

**Critical incident questionnaire (CIQ)**

This is a short set of five questions designed by Dr Stephen Brookfield which aim to understand your students’ learning experiences to help shape future teaching sessions. You can think of the CIQ as a mid-way point between the very short classroom assessment techniques (CATs) and a longer evaluation form. A link to the questionnaire is provided here as a PDF document: [Brookfield’s Critical Incident Questionnaire](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5738a0ccd51cd47f81977fe8/t/5750e567f699bbceac6e97f5/1464919400130/CIQ.pdf).