

Identifying Graduate Coursework Student Satisfaction



Faculty of Engineering

Monash University 2024



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Executive summary

In April and May 2024, the Monash Graduate Association (MGA) conducted a survey of graduate students at Monash and nine other Australian universities.

Students were asked to rate the importance of various aspects of a graduate educational experience, and then to rate the satisfaction of those same aspects according to their own experiences at their university.

The main findings as they relate to graduate coursework students enrolled at in the Faculty of Engineering are summarised below:

Support services at Monash are appreciated

In relation to their course experience, Engineering respondents were most satisfied in relation to *support services*. Likewise, the gap between how important students found it and how satisfied they were with what was delivered was narrowest for *support services*.

Language support, IT support and library resources were particularly well-rated.

Non-Monash respondents more satisfied than Engineering students with quality of teaching

Respondents from outside Monash who were studying in the field of engineering were more satisfied with the quality of teaching than those enrolled through the Faculty of Engineering at Monash.

The distance between the two groups was wider still when eliminating those Monash Engineering students who were studying at Suzhou campus in China.

Australian-based Engineering respondents less satisfied than those studying in Suzhou

Repeatedly, Australian-based Engineering respondents recorded lower average satisfaction scores than those studying in Suzhou.

Only in the areas of orientation, facilities and library resources did Australian-based respondents record, on average, a higher satisfaction score.

Value for money linked to job readiness and academic quality

The average gap between importance and satisfaction was substantially wider among those who were not satisfied their course represented value for money. This was most notable in relation to *job readiness* and *academic quality*.

Dissatisfaction with job readiness was high, but not as high as in most other faculties

Of the six themes included in the survey, students ranked *job readiness* first for importance, but last for satisfaction. As such, the distance between importance and satisfaction was the widest.

However, compared to the other faculties, Engineering performed slightly better in this theme. The faculty had the equal second narrowest gap score for *job readiness*.

MGA engagement low with domestic students

Engagement with the Monash Graduate Association (MGA) was minimal among respondents who spoke fluent or advanced English, as well as men.

No students who was considering leaving or who was not satisfied that their course represented value for money had engaged with the MGA “a great deal” or “a lot.” Among thirteen cohorts analysed, these were the only two in which no one responded as such.

Introduction

The Monash Graduate Association (MGA) ran a survey of Monash graduate students in April and May 2024. In relation to graduate coursework students, the aim of the MGA's *National Postgraduate Student Satisfaction Survey* was to better understand what students' value in their courses and how their experiences measure up against their expectations.

The survey was advertised in the MGA newsletter, the MGA website, through MGA social media channels and through contacts with Monash faculty groups and associate deans, many of whom agreed to forward the advertising of the survey to their students. Participants were self-selecting, so an incentive scheme (comprising the opportunity to win one of 100 gift cards worth \$50 in value) was used to assist in attracting a representative sample.

A total of 92 Monash graduate coursework students from the Faculty of Engineering completed the survey (see *Appendix 1: Demographics*), which we estimate to be approximately 8-10% of enrolled graduate coursework students in the faculty.

With the support of colleagues at student associations across Australia, this survey was offered to postgraduate students at nine other universities. Respondents from the University of Queensland, Griffith University, Queensland University of Technology, Southern Cross University, Sydney University, University of New South Wales, University of Technology Sydney, Victoria University and Federation University are all represented in this survey. A total of 39 graduate coursework students across these universities indicated they were studying a course in the field of engineering.

Where appropriate, comparisons between Monash and non-Monash respondents, courses and demographic groups have been made.

Part 1 of this report presents quantitative data relating to the importance Engineering graduate coursework students place on specific course components and their satisfaction with the delivery of these components.

Respondents were asked to give a rating from 0 to 10 on a *LIKERT*-scale for how much importance they placed on a specific area relating to their course experience and then again for how satisfied they were with Monash's delivery of that area. A total of twenty-six areas were covered in this survey (see *Appendix 2: Wording of course experience questionnaire*).

The twenty-six areas were grouped into six themes: commencement (3), academic quality (6), academic delivery (6), support services (5), culture (3) and job preparation (3).

Areas and themes were ranked by the average level of importance, satisfaction and the distance between importance and satisfaction (gap).

The gap was calculated as below:

$$\text{Gap} = \frac{(\text{Satisfaction} - \text{Importance})}{\text{Importance} (\%)}$$

A narrow gap indicates that students are content with the offering or reality, whereas a wide gap suggests there is room for improvement.

The average collective importance, satisfaction and gap scores of each theme were calculated and ranked. The ranking of each of these (1st to 6th) are outlined at the start of each section.

Each area within the relevant theme is then individually explored through a comparison of select demographic groups. The average importance score of each demographic group is colour-coded from highest (green) to lowest (red). This is repeated for both satisfaction and gap (narrowest = green, widest = red).

Please note that other than “Non-Monash” and “STEM,” every demographic group mentioned encompasses Engineering graduate coursework students only. The “STEM” grouping refers only to Monash respondents from Engineering; Information Technology; Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences; Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences; Science; Monash Sustainable Development Institute; and, Monash University Accident Research Centre.

Part 2 of this report provides quantitative and qualitative insights into perceptions of course value and retention considerations.

Respondents were asked whether they believed their course represented value for money and if they had considered leaving their course in the last 12 months. If they had considered leaving their course, they were asked to elaborate on their reasons.

They were also asked if there was anything in relation to their course that they wanted their student association to know.

Part 3 of this report highlights the engagement of Engineering graduate coursework students with the Monash Graduate Association (MGA).

This research has been approved by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (Project ID: 41520).

Limitations

While this report provides valuable insights and findings in relation to graduate student satisfaction in Engineering, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations that may impact the interpretation of results. Two such limitations are outlined below.

Over- and under-representation of demographic groups

When considering results, it is important to acknowledge that the response rate is not consistent across demographic groups.

For example, according to the Department of Education, international students accounted for 48% of total graduate coursework enrolment at Monash University in 2022.¹ In this survey, international students accounted for 82% of total responses at Monash. As a result, international students are greatly over-represented and domestic students are greatly under-represented. This is true also of full-time (over-represented) and part-time (under-represented) students.

To account for these imbalances, effort has been made to isolate demographic groups where possible and analyse and report on each group's results. However, these over- and under-representations do impact the demographic analysis when they are not specifically isolated e.g. in the faculty comparisons (see *1.7 Faculty comparisons*).

Furthermore, when comparing Monash and Non-Monash results, the demographic make-up of respondents varied. International students made up 82.1% of Monash respondents, while they made up only 64.7% of Non-Monash respondents.

Positive-negative asymmetry (PNA) effect

Across the entire report, the responses of students have been taken at face-value. As such, it is important to reflect on the positive-negative asymmetry (PNA) effect. The PNA effect is two-part: firstly, it incorporates the positivity bias, which refers to an individual's inclination towards favourable perceptions of phenomena that are novel or do not directly impact them,² and, secondly, it incorporates the negativity bias which, in part, relates to how individuals are more curious about negative than positive stimuli and therefore are more mobilised by negative events.³ In the context of this report, this may mean that answers to the quantitative questions in the survey are disproportionately positive, while the responses to the qualitative (open-ended) questions are disproportionately negative, given that graduate students were not required to provide a response.

¹ "Student Enrolment Pivot Table 2022," Department of Education (Federal Government of Australia), published 18 December 2023, <https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-statistics/resources/student-enrolments-pivot-table-2022>.

² Maria Lewicka, Janusz Czapinski and Guido Peeters, "Positive-negative asymmetry or 'When the heart needs a reason'," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 22 (1992): 426.

³ Reanna M. Poncheri, Jennifer T. Lindberg, Lori Foster Thompson and Eric A. Surface, "A comment on employee surveys: negativity bias in open-ended responses," *Organizational Research Methods* 11, no. 3 (2008): 615-16.

Part 1: Importance and satisfaction

Question	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
<i>Commencement</i>			
Pre-enrolment	7.94	7.33	-7.7%
Enrolment	7.90	7.61	-3.7%
Orientation	7.71	7.60	-1.4%
<i>Academic quality</i>			
Clear criteria	8.05	7.36	-8.6%
Quality teaching	8.11	6.99	-13.8%
Engaging lectures	7.96	7.18	-9.8%
Academic access	7.96	7.71	-3.1%
Timely feedback	8.18	7.60	-7.1%
Academic feedback	8.29	7.40	-10.7%
<i>Academic delivery</i>			
Mixed delivery*	7.83	7.81	-0.3%
Balance of units	7.61	7.10	-6.7%
Elective variety	7.53	6.49	-13.8%
Class times	7.81	6.99	-10.5%
Assignment no.	7.99	7.22	-9.6%
Submission dates	8.14	7.40	-9.1%
<i>Support services</i>			
Facilities	8.19	7.64	-6.7%
Language support**	8.26	7.95	-3.8%
Library resources	8.27	7.78	-5.9%
IT support	7.67	7.78	1.4%
Learning support	7.83	7.64	-2.4%
<i>Culture</i>			
Grad community	7.57	7.27	-4.0%
Academic community	7.81	7.30	-6.5%
Sense of belonging	8.06	7.27	-9.8%
<i>Job readiness</i>			
Internship	8.11	7.00	-13.7%
Networking	8.32	7.25	-12.9%
Workforce entry	8.48	7.17	-15.4%
Overall average	7.98	7.38	-7.5%

*Only asked of students who selected their course attendance involved a "mix of on-campus and online study."

**Only asked of students who indicated that their proficiency in English was not "fluent."

1.1 Commencement

Of the six themes included in the survey, respondents ranked *commencement* fourth for importance and second for satisfaction, while the distance between importance and satisfaction was the second tightest.

Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
4th	2nd	2nd

The *commencement* section comprised of three areas on which respondents provided feedback. These areas were worded as below:

Pre-enrolment - *Having clear information about the course prior to my enrolment.*

Enrolment - *A user-friendly enrolment process.*

Orientation - *The orientation experience.*

1.1.1 Pre-enrolment

Q. *Having clear information about the course prior to my enrolment.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering (n.83)	7.94	7.33	-7.7%
Non-Monash (n.39)	7.90	6.77	-14.3%
STEM (n.287)	8.50	7.32	-13.9%
M. Civil Engineering (n.10)	8.80	7.00	-20.5%
M. Engineering (n.27)	7.30	7.33	0.4%
M. Prof. Engineering (n.21)	8.52	7.29	-14.4%
M. Transportation Systems (n.10)	7.40	7.10	-4.1%
Australia (n.32)	8.22	6.78	-17.5%
Suzhou (n.50)	7.76	7.66	-1.3%
Fluent/Adv. English (n.32)	8.31	7.25	-12.8%
Inter./Elementary English (n.51)	7.71	7.37	-4.4%
On-campus (n.34)	7.71	7.74	0.4%
Multi-modal (n.48)	8.17	7.06	-13.6%
Men (n.57)	7.68	7.33	-4.6%
Women (n.24)	8.38	7.29	-13.0%
Not value for money (n.17)	7.24	6.06	-16.3%
Considered leaving (n.31)	7.45	6.48	-13.0%

- Engineering students were largely more-satisfied with pre-enrolment than were their non-Monash equivalents.
- Master of Civil Engineering respondents recorded a wide gap between importance and satisfaction.

1.1.2 Enrolment

Q. *A user-friendly enrolment process.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	7.90	7.61	-3.7%
Non-Monash	8.46	7.44	-12.1%
STEM	8.25	7.61	-7.8%
M. Civil Engineering	8.60	7.70	-10.5%
M. Engineering	8.00	7.67	-4.1%
M. Prof. Engineering	7.95	7.52	-5.4%
M. Transportation Systems	6.70	7.20	7.5%
Australia	7.91	7.41	-6.3%
Suzhou	7.90	7.74	-2.0%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.25	7.78	-5.7%
Inter./Elementary English	7.69	7.51	-2.3%
On-campus	7.94	7.71	-2.9%
Multi-modal	7.92	7.58	-4.3%
Men	7.72	7.58	-1.8%
Women	8.21	7.79	-5.1%
Not value for money	7.18	6.29	-12.4%
Considered leaving	7.45	6.90	-7.4%

- Satisfaction with enrolment largely matched the importance Engineering respondents placed on it.
- Satisfaction within the faculty matched satisfaction within STEM faculties at Monash – despite importance being higher outside Engineering.

1.1.3 Orientation

Q. *The orientation experience.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	7.71	7.60	-1.4%
Non-Monash	7.67	7.26	-5.3%
STEM	7.81	7.78	-0.4%
M. Civil Engineering	8.00	7.30	-8.8%
M. Engineering	8.04	7.52	-6.5%
M. Prof. Engineering	7.57	8.00	5.7%
M. Transportation Systems	6.70	7.10	6.0%
Australia	7.53	7.63	1.3%
Suzhou	7.82	7.58	-3.1%
Fluent/Adv. English	7.63	7.81	2.4%
Inter./Elementary English	7.76	7.47	-3.7%
On-campus	7.97	7.94	-0.4%
Multi-modal	7.56	7.40	-2.1%
Men	7.58	7.58	0.0%
Women	7.96	7.58	-4.8%
Not value for money	7.53	6.53	-13.3%
Considered leaving	7.26	6.61	-9.0%

- Engineering respondents were marginally more satisfied with their orientation experience than were non-Monash respondents.
- Satisfaction levels within Australia and at the Suzhou campus were similar.

1.2 Academic quality

Of the six themes included in the survey, respondents ranked *academic quality* second for importance and third for satisfaction, while the distance between importance and satisfaction was the fifth tightest.

Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
2nd	3rd	5th

The *academic quality* section comprised of six areas on which respondents provided feedback. These areas were worded as below:

Clear criteria	<i>Clear learning outcomes and assessment criteria.</i>
Quality teaching	<i>High quality teaching.</i>
Engaging lectures	<i>Lectures are engaging.</i>
Academic access	<i>Lecturers are accessible for answering my questions/having a discussion.</i>
Timely feedback	<i>Timely feedback on assessments/assignments.</i>
Academic feedback	<i>Constructive feedback on assessments/assignments.</i>

1.2.1 Clear criteria

Q. *Clear learning outcomes and assessment criteria.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	8.05	7.36	-8.6%
Non-Monash	7.92	7.49	-5.4%
STEM	8.76	7.40	-15.5%
M. Civil Engineering	8.20	6.90	-15.9%
M. Engineering	7.59	7.22	-4.9%
M. Prof. Engineering	8.43	7.14	-15.3%
M. Transportation Systems	7.60	7.40	-2.6%
Australia	8.13	6.97	-14.3%
Suzhou	8.00	7.60	-5.0%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.47	7.50	-11.5%
Inter./Elementary English	7.78	7.27	-6.6%
On-campus	7.88	7.44	-5.6%
Multi-modal	8.23	7.35	-10.7%
Men	7.74	7.28	-5.9%
Women	8.63	7.46	-13.6%
Not value for money	7.35	5.47	-25.6%
Considered leaving	7.55	6.45	-14.6%

- Respondents from the Master of Transportation Systems recorded the narrowest gap between importance and satisfaction.
- Master of Civil Engineering and Master of Professional Engineering recorded relatively wide gap scores.
- Respondents who were not satisfied their course represented value for money were notably less satisfied than their peers.

1.2.2 Quality teaching

Q. High quality teaching.

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	8.11	6.99	-13.8%
Non-Monash	8.46	7.73	-8.6%
STEM	8.85	7.28	-17.7%
M. Civil Engineering	8.30	6.20	-25.3%
M. Engineering	7.70	7.00	-9.1%
M. Prof. Engineering	8.71	6.33	-27.3%
M. Transportation Systems	7.40	7.60	2.7%
Australia	8.22	6.25	-24.0%
Suzhou	8.04	7.44	-7.5%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.41	7.03	-16.4%
Inter./Elementary English	7.92	6.96	-12.1%
On-campus	7.76	7.18	-7.5%
Multi-modal	8.35	6.85	-18.0%
Men	7.89	6.82	-13.6%
Women	8.46	7.29	-13.8%
Not value for money	7.82	5.12	-34.5%
Considered leaving	7.55	6.29	-16.7%

- Master of Civil Engineering and Master of Professional Engineering were less satisfied than their peers and recorded wide gap scores.
- Respondents in Australia were less satisfied with the quality of the teaching than their Suzhou colleagues.
- Outside of *job readiness*, the -34.5% gap score recorded by those who were not satisfied their course represented value for money was this group's widest.

1.2.3 Engaging lectures

Q. *Lectures are engaging.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	7.96	7.18	-9.8%
Non-Monash	7.84	7.08	-9.7%
STEM	8.43	7.22	-14.4%
M. Civil Engineering	8.20	6.70	-18.3%
M. Engineering	7.52	7.44	-1.1%
M. Prof. Engineering	8.43	6.29	-25.4%
M. Transportation Systems	7.50	7.70	2.7%
Australia	7.88	6.31	-19.9%
Suzhou	8.02	7.72	-3.7%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.31	7.03	-15.4%
Inter./Elementary English	7.75	7.27	-6.2%
On-campus	7.97	7.74	-2.9%
Multi-modal	8.04	6.88	-14.4%
Men	7.72	7.04	-8.8%
Women	8.38	7.50	-10.5%
Not value for money	7.53	5.59	-25.8%
Considered leaving	7.29	6.39	-12.3%

- As with quality teaching, respondents in Australia were less satisfied with the quality of the teaching than their Suzhou colleagues and recorded a far wider gap score.
- Engineering respondents, however, were as satisfied with the engaging nature of lectures as their STEM colleagues and non-Monash equivalents from other Australian universities.

1.2.4 Academic access

Q. *Lecturers are accessible for answering my questions/having a discussion.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	7.96	7.71	-3.1%
Non-Monash	8.35	8.16	-2.3%
STEM	8.64	7.88	-8.8%
M. Civil Engineering	8.20	7.20	-12.2%
M. Engineering	7.63	7.74	1.4%
M. Prof. Engineering	8.38	7.86	-6.2%
M. Transportation Systems	7.40	7.40	0.0%
Australia	8.00	7.31	-8.6%
Suzhou	7.94	7.96	0.3%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.00	7.81	-2.4%
Inter./Elementary English	7.94	7.65	-3.7%
On-campus	7.53	7.59	0.8%
Multi-modal	8.29	7.81	-5.8%
Men	7.68	7.58	-1.3%
Women	8.54	7.92	-7.3%
Not value for money	7.24	6.18	-14.6%
Considered leaving	7.39	6.71	-9.2%

- Engineering respondents were marginally less satisfied with the accessibility of their lecturers than were non-Monash respondents.
- Multi-modal respondents were marginally more satisfied with academic access than were on-campus respondents; however, they placed much greater importance on this and, thus, recorded a wider gap score.

1.2.5 Timely feedback

Q. Timely feedback on assessments/assignments.

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	8.18	7.60	-7.1%
Non-Monash	8.41	7.68	-8.7%
STEM	8.38	7.42	-11.5%
M. Civil Engineering	7.90	6.40	-19.0%
M. Engineering	7.93	7.67	-3.3%
M. Prof. Engineering	8.62	7.38	-14.4%
M. Transportation Systems	7.80	8.10	3.8%
Australia	8.38	7.16	-14.6%
Suzhou	8.06	7.88	-2.2%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.50	7.50	-11.8%
Inter./Elementary English	7.98	7.67	-3.9%
On-campus	7.97	7.74	-2.9%
Multi-modal	8.35	7.52	-9.9%
Men	7.88	7.33	-7.0%
Women	8.75	8.13	-7.1%
Not value for money	7.71	6.00	-22.2%
Considered leaving	7.87	7.23	-8.1%

- Engineering respondents were as satisfied as non-Monash respondents with the timeliness of their assessment feedback.
- Master of Civil Engineering respondents continues their trend of being less satisfied than their colleagues and recorded a wide gap score.
- Women were more satisfied than men, but also placed greater importance on this. As a result, their gap scores were similar.

1.2.6 Academic feedback

Q. *Constructive feedback on assessments/assignments.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	8.29	7.40	-10.7%
Non-Monash	7.92	7.32	-7.6%
STEM	8.59	7.21	-16.1%
M. Civil Engineering	8.00	6.10	-23.8%
M. Engineering	8.04	7.44	-7.5%
M. Prof. Engineering	8.76	7.14	-18.5%
M. Transportation Systems	7.50	7.60	1.3%
Australia	8.44	6.84	-19.0%
Suzhou	8.20	7.74	-5.6%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.53	7.25	-15.0%
Inter./Elementary English	8.14	7.49	-8.0%
On-campus	8.06	7.53	-6.6%
Multi-modal	8.50	7.31	-14.0%
Men	8.16	7.26	-11.0%
Women	8.46	7.63	-9.8%
Not value for money	7.59	5.53	-27.1%
Considered leaving	7.81	7.00	-10.4%

- Engineering respondents were as satisfied as non-Monash respondents with the constructive nature of the feedback they received; however, they were marginally more satisfied than STEM respondents within Monash.
- Master of Transportation Systems respondents recorded a higher satisfaction score than importance score. As such, they had a positive gap score.
- Master of Civil Engineering and Master of Professional Engineering respondents recorded relatively wide gap scores, as did respondents from an Australian campus.

1.3 Academic delivery

Of the six themes included in the survey, respondents ranked *academic delivery* fifth for importance and fifth for satisfaction, while the distance between importance and satisfaction was the fourth tightest.

Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
5th	5th	4th

The *academic delivery* section comprised of six areas on which respondents provided feedback. These areas were worded as below:

Mixed delivery*	<i>Appropriate mix of online and in-person course delivery.</i>
Balance of units	<i>Appropriate balance of compulsory units and electives.</i>
Elective variety	<i>Appropriate variety of electives to choose from.</i>
Class times	<i>Acceptable variety of tutorial/studio/lab times to choose from.</i>
Assignment no.	<i>The number of assessments/assignments for the course is appropriate.</i>
Submission dates	<i>Assessments/assignments submission dates are appropriately spaced.</i>

* Only asked of students who selected that their course attendance involved a “mix of on-campus and online study.”

1.3.1 Mixed delivery

Q. *Appropriate mix of online and in-person course delivery.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	7.83	7.81	-0.3%
Non-Monash	8.00	8.38	4.8%
STEM	8.17	7.76	-5.0%
M. Civil Engineering			
M. Engineering	8.53	8.87	4.0%
M. Prof. Engineering	7.29	7.35	0.8%
M. Transportation Systems			
Australia	7.71	7.67	-0.5%
Suzhou	7.96	7.96	0.0%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.10	8.25	0.02
Inter./Elementary English	7.64	7.50	-1.8%
On-campus			
Multi-modal	7.83	7.81	-0.3%
Men	7.69	7.66	-0.4%
Women	8.13	8.07	-0.7%
Not value for money	6.78	5.78	-14.7%
Considered leaving	7.78	7.44	-4.4%

- Engineering respondents studying multi-modal recorded a satisfaction rating on par with their importance rating.
- Non-Monash respondents were slightly more satisfied than Engineering respondents.

1.3.2 Balance of units

Q. *Appropriate balance of compulsory units and electives.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	7.61	7.10	-6.7%
Non-Monash	8.03	7.08	-11.8%
STEM	7.86	7.27	-7.5%
M. Civil Engineering	7.10	6.50	-8.5%
M. Engineering	7.37	7.52	2.0%
M. Prof. Engineering	7.81	6.19	-20.7%
M. Transportation Systems	7.20	7.10	-1.4%
Australia	7.19	6.31	-12.2%
Suzhou	7.88	7.58	-3.8%
Fluent/Adv. English	7.44	6.75	-9.3%
Inter./Elementary English	7.73	7.31	-5.4%
On-campus	7.65	7.32	-4.3%
Multi-modal	7.65	6.96	-9.0%
Men	7.25	6.93	-4.4%
Women	8.29	7.46	-10.0%
Not value for money	6.53	5.24	-19.8%
Considered leaving	7.16	6.65	-7.1%

- Master of Professional Engineering respondents recorded a relatively wide gap score compared to their colleagues, while Master of Engineering respondents recorded a positive gap score.
- Engineering respondents from an Australian campus were far less satisfied than those from Suzhou.

1.3.3 Elective variety

Q. *Appropriate variety of electives to choose from.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	7.53	6.49	-13.8%
Non-Monash	7.69	7.19	-6.5%
STEM	7.73	7.06	-8.7%
M. Civil Engineering	6.90	6.00	-13.0%
M. Engineering	7.96	7.85	-1.4%
M. Prof. Engineering	7.14	5.43	-23.9%
M. Transportation Systems	6.90	6.50	-5.8%
Australia	7.09	5.44	-23.3%
Suzhou	7.80	7.14	-8.5%
Fluent/Adv. English	7.63	6.16	-19.3%
Inter./Elementary English	7.47	6.71	-10.2%
On-campus	8.18	7.18	-12.2%
Multi-modal	7.10	5.98	-15.8%
Men	7.25	6.30	-13.1%
Women	8.08	6.88	-14.9%
Not value for money	7.41	5.18	-30.1%
Considered leaving	7.13	6.23	-12.6%

- Master of Professional Engineering respondents and respondents from an Australian campus recorded wide gap scores in relation to the variety of electives, while Master of Engineering and Master of Transportation Systems recorded narrow gap scores.
- Engineering respondents were less satisfied than non-Monash respondents and had a wider gap score.

1.3.4 Class times

Q. *Acceptable variety of tutorial/studio/lab times to choose from.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	7.81	6.99	-10.5%
Non-Monash	8.03	6.86	-14.6%
STEM	8.17	6.85	-16.2%
M. Civil Engineering	7.60	7.00	-7.9%
M. Engineering	8.07	7.15	-11.4%
M. Prof. Engineering	7.67	6.10	-20.5%
M. Transportation Systems	7.30	6.90	-5.5%
Australia	7.47	6.00	-19.7%
Suzhou	8.02	7.60	-5.2%
Fluent/Adv. English	7.78	6.63	-14.8%
Inter./Elementary English	7.82	7.22	-7.7%
On-campus	8.29	7.59	-8.4%
Multi-modal	7.48	6.58	-12.0%
Men	7.56	6.86	-9.3%
Women	8.29	7.13	-14.0%
Not value for money	7.24	5.88	-18.8%
Considered leaving	7.45	6.58	-11.7%

- Respondents from Suzhou were the most-satisfied with their class times, while Engineering respondents from Australia were not very satisfied and recorded a wide gap score.
- Multi-modal respondents were less satisfied than on-campus respondents, but did not place as great a level of importance on class times.

1.3.5 Assignment numbers

Q. *The number of assessments/assignments for the course is appropriate.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	7.99	7.22	-9.6%
Non-Monash	8.17	7.00	-14.3%
STEM	8.40	6.87	-18.2%
M. Civil Engineering	8.20	6.90	-15.9%
M. Engineering	7.85	7.52	-4.2%
M. Prof. Engineering	7.90	6.86	-13.2%
M. Transportation Systems	7.80	6.50	-16.7%
Australia	7.56	6.63	-12.3%
Suzhou	8.26	7.58	-8.2%
Fluent/Adv. English	7.94	7.22	-9.1%
Inter./Elementary English	8.02	7.22	-10.0%
On-campus	8.15	7.44	-8.7%
Multi-modal	7.90	7.04	-10.9%
Men	7.77	6.93	-10.8%
Women	8.33	7.75	-7.0%
Not value for money	7.47	6.00	-19.7%
Considered leaving	7.71	6.45	-16.3%

- Engineering respondents were slightly more satisfied than STEM respondents in relation to the number of assignments. They also placed less importance on this. As such, they recorded a narrower gap score.

1.3.6 Submission dates

Q. *Assessment/assignments submission dates are appropriately spaced.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	8.14	7.40	-9.1%
Non-Monash	8.36	6.78	-18.9%
STEM	8.57	6.79	-20.8%
M. Civil Engineering	8.30	6.90	-16.9%
M. Engineering	7.74	7.22	-6.7%
M. Prof. Engineering	8.52	7.38	-13.4%
M. Transportation Systems	7.80	7.70	-1.3%
Australia	8.09	6.78	-16.2%
Suzhou	8.18	7.78	-4.9%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.53	7.69	-9.8%
Inter./Elementary English	7.90	7.22	-8.6%
On-campus	8.09	7.76	-4.1%
Multi-modal	8.23	7.15	-13.1%
Men	7.96	7.33	-7.9%
Women	8.42	7.38	-12.4%
Not value for money	7.94	6.24	-21.4%
Considered leaving	7.65	6.65	-13.1%

- Just like with assignment numbers, Engineering responders were more satisfied than STEM respondents in relation to submission dates and recorded a far narrower gap score.
- Master of Transportation Systems respondents were notably satisfied, as were on-campus students.

1.4 Support services

Of the six themes included in the survey, respondents ranked *support services* third for importance and first for satisfaction, while the distance between importance and satisfaction was the tightest.

Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
3rd	1st	1st

The *support services* section comprised of five areas on which respondents provided feedback. These areas were worded as below:

Facilities	<i>Adequate facilities for your field of study.</i>
Language support**	<i>English language support.</i>
Library resources	<i>Easily accessible books and journals (online or hard copy).</i>
IT support	<i>IT support.</i>
Learning support	<i>Learning skills support e.g. academic writing, referencing, time management.</i>

** Only asked of students who indicated that their proficiency in English was not “fluent”.

1.4.1 Facilities

Q. *Adequate facilities for your field of study.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	8.19	7.64	-6.7%
Non-Monash	8.29	7.86	-5.2%
STEM	8.51	7.74	-9.0%
M. Civil Engineering	8.40	7.00	-16.7%
M. Engineering	8.24	7.68	-6.8%
M. Prof. Engineering	8.33	8.19	-1.7%
M. Transportation Systems	7.40	6.90	-6.8%
Australia	8.26	7.84	-5.1%
Suzhou	8.14	7.52	-7.6%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.61	8.19	-4.9%
Inter./Elementary English	7.92	7.30	-7.8%
On-campus	8.21	7.88	-4.0%
Multi-modal	8.21	7.51	-8.5%
Men	8.04	7.61	-5.3%
Women	8.39	7.61	-9.3%
Not value for money	7.76	6.88	-11.3%
Considered leaving	7.61	6.87	-9.7%

- Master of Transportation Systems respondents and Master of Civil Engineering respondents were less satisfied than their colleagues in relation to facilities.
- On-campus respondents were slightly more satisfied than multi-modal respondents.

1.4.2 Language support

Q. English language support.

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	8.26	7.95	-3.8%
Non-Monash	7.43	7.24	-2.6%
STEM	7.67	7.86	2.5%
M. Civil Engineering	8.70	8.30	-4.6%
M. Engineering	8.17	7.87	-3.7%
M. Prof. Engineering	7.67	8.00	4.3%
M. Transportation Systems			
Australia	7.44	7.67	
Suzhou	8.57	8.06	-6.0%
Adv. English ⁴	8.67	8.80	1.5%
Inter./Elementary English	8.14	7.70	-5.4%
On-campus	8.31	7.96	-4.2%
Multi-modal	8.29	8.00	-3.5%
Men	8.12	7.91	-2.6%
Women	8.40	7.95	-5.4%
Not value for money	6.67	6.67	0.0%
Considered leaving	7.52	7.00	-6.9%

- Respondents who reported they spoke advanced English recorded a positive gap score in relation to the English language support service, while those who reported they spoke intermediate or elementary English were less satisfied with the service.

⁴ Please note, respondents who indicated that their English proficiency was “fluent” were not asked to respond to this question.

1.4.3 Library resources

Q. *Easily accessible books and journals (online or hard copy).*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	8.27	7.78	-5.9%
Non-Monash	7.91	8.34	5.4%
STEM	8.53	8.09	-5.2%
M. Civil Engineering	8.90	7.00	-21.3%
M. Engineering	8.52	7.92	-7.0%
M. Prof. Engineering	7.95	8.10	1.9%
M. Transportation Systems	7.40	7.00	-5.4%
Australia	8.00	7.87	-1.6%
Suzhou	8.44	7.72	-8.5%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.35	7.97	-4.6%
Inter./Elementary English	8.22	7.66	-6.8%
On-campus	8.18	7.70	-5.9%
Multi-modal	8.38	7.87	-6.1%
Men	8.11	7.70	-5.1%
Women	8.52	7.96	-6.6%
Not value for money	7.35	6.82	-7.2%
Considered leaving	7.55	7.06	-6.5%

- Master of Civil Engineering respondents recorded a wide gap score in relation to library resources.
- Engineering respondents were less satisfied than non-Monash respondents and STEM respondents from the University.

1.4.4 IT support

Q. *IT support.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	7.67	7.78	1.4%
Non-Monash	7.54	7.94	5.3%
STEM	8.09	7.93	-2.0%
M. Civil Engineering	8.20	7.60	-7.3%
M. Engineering	7.92	8.04	1.5%
M. Prof. Engineering	7.19	7.76	7.9%
M. Transportation Systems	6.90	7.10	2.9%
Australia	7.29	7.68	5.3%
Suzhou	7.90	7.84	-0.8%
Fluent/Adv. English	7.49	7.94	6.0%
Inter./Elementary English	7.78	7.68	-1.3%
On-campus	7.64	7.85	2.7%
Multi-modal	7.70	7.77	0.9%
Men	7.43	7.75	4.3%
Women	8.04	7.83	-2.6%
Not value for money	6.47	7.00	8.2%
Considered leaving	7.26	7.03	-3.2%

- Engineering respondents recorded a higher satisfaction than important rating, as did non-Monash respondents.
- Gap scores were relatively narrow, if not positive, across the demographic groups.

1.4.5 Learning support

Q. *Learning skills support e.g. academic writing, referencing, time management.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	7.83	7.64	-2.4%
Non-Monash	7.69	7.80	1.4%
STEM	8.10	7.84	-3.2%
M. Civil Engineering	8.60	7.60	-11.6%
M. Engineering	7.84	8.00	2.0%
M. Prof. Engineering	7.33	7.24	-1.2%
M. Transportation Systems	7.50	7.00	-6.7%
Australia	7.39	7.19	-2.7%
Suzhou	8.10	7.92	-2.2%
Fluent/Adv. English	7.58	7.45	-1.7%
Inter./Elementary English	7.98	7.76	-2.8%
On-campus	7.94	7.76	-2.3%
Multi-modal	7.79	7.60	-2.4%
Men	7.48	7.45	-0.4%
Women	8.48	8.00	-5.7%
Not value for money	6.00	6.41	6.8%
Considered leaving	7.23	6.94	-4.0%

- As with IT support, gap scores were relatively narrow (or positive) across the demographic groups in relation to learning support.

1.5 Culture

Of the six themes included in the survey, respondents ranked *culture* last for importance and fourth for satisfaction, while the distance between importance and satisfaction was the third tightest.

Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
6th	4th	3rd

The *culture* section comprised of three areas on which respondents provided feedback. These areas were worded as below:

Grad community *Feeling part of a postgraduate social community.*

Academic community *Feeling part of an academic community.*

Sense of belonging *Feeling a sense of belonging to my university.*

1.5.1 Graduate community

Q. *Feeling part of a postgraduate social community.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	7.57	7.27	-4.0%
Non-Monash	7.44	7.06	-5.1%
STEM	7.42	7.25	-2.3%
M. Civil Engineering	8.00	6.80	-15.0%
M. Engineering	7.52	7.36	-2.1%
M. Prof. Engineering	6.95	6.76	-2.7%
M. Transportation Systems	7.50	7.60	1.3%
Australia	7.03	6.39	-9.1%
Suzhou	7.90	7.82	-1.0%
Fluent/Adv. English	7.65	7.06	-7.7%
Inter./Elementary English	7.52	7.40	-1.6%
On-campus	8.03	7.58	-5.6%
Multi-modal	7.28	7.09	-2.6%
Men	7.21	7.25	0.6%
Women	8.30	7.26	-12.5%
Not value for money	6.53	5.29	-19.0%
Considered leaving	7.10	6.35	-10.6%

- Although they were equally as satisfied, feeling part of a postgraduate community was more important to women than men. **As such, women recorded a wide gap score.**

1.5.2 Academic community

Q. *Feeling part of an academic community.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	7.81	7.30	-6.5%
Non-Monash	7.38	6.71	-9.1%
STEM	7.56	7.16	-5.3%
M. Civil Engineering	8.30	6.80	-18.1%
M. Engineering	7.76	7.60	-2.1%
M. Prof. Engineering	7.33	6.81	-7.1%
M. Transportation Systems	7.40	6.80	-8.1%
Australia	7.39	6.77	-8.4%
Suzhou	8.08	7.62	-5.7%
Fluent/Adv. English	7.77	7.06	-9.1%
Inter./Elementary English	7.84	7.44	-5.1%
On-campus	8.06	7.58	-6.0%
Multi-modal	7.68	7.13	-7.2%
Men	7.55	7.27	-3.7%
Women	8.26	7.30	-11.6%
Not value for money	6.71	5.59	-16.7%
Considered leaving	7.48	6.45	-13.8%

- Engineering respondents were more satisfied than non-Monash respondents that they felt part of an academic community.
- Master of Civil Engineering respondents recorded a wide gap score.

1.5.3 Sense of belonging

Q. *Feeling a sense of belonging to my university.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	8.06	7.27	-9.8%
Non-Monash	7.74	7.09	-8.4%
STEM	7.95	7.22	-9.2%
M. Civil Engineering	8.40	6.90	-17.9%
M. Engineering	8.24	7.68	-6.8%
M. Prof. Engineering	7.86	6.52	-17.0%
M. Transportation Systems	7.20	7.30	1.4%
Australia	8.00	6.77	-15.4%
Suzhou	8.10	7.58	-6.4%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.23	7.32	-11.1%
Inter./Elementary English	7.96	7.24	-9.0%
On-campus	7.94	7.64	-3.8%
Multi-modal	8.19	7.04	-14.0%
Men	7.98	7.38	-7.5%
Women	8.09	6.96	-14.0%
Not value for money	7.41	5.12	-30.9%
Considered leaving	7.74	6.42	-17.1%

- **Women recorded a gap score almost twice as wide as men.**
- Those who were not satisfied that their course represented value for money also recorded a wide gap score.

1.6 Job readiness

Of the six themes included in the survey, respondents ranked *job readiness* first for importance and last for satisfaction, while the distance between importance and satisfaction was the widest.

Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
1st	6th	6th

The *job readiness* section comprised of three areas on which respondents provided feedback. These areas were worded as below:

Internship	<i>Placement/internship opportunities.</i>
Networking	<i>Links to industry/professional networking.</i>
Workforce entry	<i>Being ready to enter the workforce when I graduate</i>

1.6.1 Internships

Q. *Placement/internship opportunities.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	8.11	7.00	-13.7%
Non-Monash	7.29	5.79	-20.6%
STEM	8.53	6.57	-23.0%
M. Civil Engineering	8.70	7.70	-11.5%
M. Engineering	7.60	7.28	-4.2%
M. Prof. Engineering	8.67	5.81	-33.0%
M. Transportation Systems	7.00	7.10	1.4%
Australia	8.39	5.87	-30.0%
Suzhou	7.94	7.70	-3.0%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.42	6.61	-21.5%
Inter./Elementary English	7.92	7.24	-8.6%
On-campus	7.85	7.79	-0.8%
Multi-modal	8.32	6.47	-22.2%
Men	7.86	7.07	-10.1%
Women	8.61	6.74	-21.7%
Not value for money	7.47	4.76	-36.3%
Considered leaving	7.58	5.81	-23.4%

- Engineering respondents were more satisfied than their non-Monash equivalents; however, the responses of Australian-based students were largely on-par with non-Monash respondents.
- Master of Professional Engineering respondents recorded a wide gap score.

1.6.2 Networking

Q. *Links to industry/professional networking.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	8.32	7.25	-12.9%
Non-Monash	7.85	6.41	-18.3%
STEM	8.56	6.69	-21.8%
M. Civil Engineering	8.60	7.50	-12.8%
M. Engineering	8.08	7.20	-10.9%
M. Prof. Engineering	8.52	6.48	-23.9%
M. Transportation Systems	7.70	7.60	-1.3%
Australia	8.42	6.32	-24.9%
Suzhou	8.26	7.82	-5.3%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.39	6.97	-16.9%
Inter./Elementary English	8.28	7.42	-10.4%
On-campus	8.03	7.58	-5.6%
Multi-modal	8.55	7.04	-17.7%
Men	8.04	7.30	-9.2%
Women	8.87	6.96	-21.5%
Not value for money	7.82	4.94	-36.8%
Considered leaving	7.77	5.97	-23.2%

- Australian-based Engineering respondents recorded a wide gap score in relation to networking, which was largely on par with that recorded across STEM.
- Women recorded a gap score over twice as wide as men.

1.6.3 Workforce entry

Q. *Being ready to enter the workforce when I graduate.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Engineering	8.48	7.17	-15.4%
Non-Monash	8.35	6.41	-23.2%
STEM	8.87	7.04	-20.6%
M. Civil Engineering	8.80	7.50	-14.8%
M. Engineering	8.16	7.12	-12.7%
M. Prof. Engineering	8.76	6.24	-28.8%
M. Transportation Systems	8.20	8.10	-1.2%
Australia	8.77	6.42	-26.8%
Suzhou	8.30	7.64	-8.0%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.71	7.06	-18.9%
Inter./Elementary English	8.34	7.24	-13.2%
On-campus	8.42	7.91	-6.1%
Multi-modal	8.57	6.70	-21.8%
Men	8.41	7.25	-13.8%
Women	8.52	6.91	-18.9%
Not value for money	8.24	5.00	-39.3%
Considered leaving	8.10	6.48	-20.0%

- Master of Professional respondents were less satisfied than most of their colleagues and recorded a wide gap score.
- Those who were not satisfied their course represented value for money recorded a wide gap score. Indeed, this was the widest gap score recorded within any of the areas of the survey among the Engineering cohort.

1.7 Faculty comparisons

Every faculty's average importance and satisfaction score, and average gap differential, for each theme, is included and compared in this section.

Please note, an important consideration here is the demographic over- and under-representations (see *Limitations*). Factors such as study load, citizenship etc., across which average responses can vary significantly, have not been dissected or considered.

1.7.1 Importance

The following table details the average importance score for each theme recorded in every faculty – excluding the Faculty of Law.

Theme	MADA	Arts	BusEco	Edu	Eng	IT	MNHS	Pharm	Sci
Commencement	7.88	8.19	8.14	8.22	7.85	7.98	8.25	8.35	8.75
Academic quality	8.55	8.87	8.59	8.76	8.09	8.48	8.64	8.82	8.71
Academic delivery	7.94	8.25	8.36	8.03	7.82	8.19	8.00	8.50	8.32
Support services	7.71	8.32	8.34	8.27	8.04	7.85	8.30	8.64	8.39
Culture	7.46	7.71	7.97	7.41	7.81	7.84	7.48	7.21	8.33
Job readiness	8.34	8.49	8.57	8.47	8.30	8.63	8.72	8.64	8.43
Overall	8.02	8.36	8.36	8.25	7.98	8.18	8.26	8.44	8.49

1.7.2 Satisfaction

The following table details the average satisfaction score for each theme recorded in every faculty – excluding the Faculty of Law.

Theme	MADA	Arts	BusEco	Edu	Eng	IT	MNHS	Pharm	Sci
Commencement	7.21	7.35	7.68	7.41	7.51	7.26	7.65	7.76	8.29
Academic quality	7.42	7.64	7.71	7.44	7.37	6.79	7.77	7.40	8.43
Academic delivery	6.75	7.19	7.59	7.07	7.17	6.60	7.43	6.97	8.11
Support services	7.47	7.69	7.95	7.81	7.76	7.43	8.18	7.93	8.57
Culture	6.45	6.78	7.26	6.81	7.28	7.11	7.37	6.55	7.87
Job readiness	5.68	6.66	6.59	6.39	7.14	5.93	7.34	6.91	7.25
Overall	6.94	7.30	7.54	7.23	7.38	6.86	7.62	7.29	8.17

1.7.3 Gap

The following table details the average gap score for each theme recorded in every faculty – excluding the Faculty of Law.

Theme	MADA	Arts	BusEco	Edu	Eng	IT	MNHS	Pharm	Sci
Commencement	-8.5%	-10.2%	-5.7%	-9.9%	-4.3%	-9.0%	-7.2%	-7.1%	-5.3%
Academic quality	-13.3%	-13.9%	-10.2%	-15.1%	-8.9%	-19.9%	-10.1%	-16.1%	-3.2%
Academic delivery	-15.0%	-12.9%	-9.2%	-11.9%	-8.3%	-19.5%	-7.1%	-17.4%	-2.6%
Support services	-3.2%	-7.5%	-4.7%	-5.6%	-3.6%	-5.4%	-1.4%	-8.2%	2.1%
Culture	-13.5%	-12.0%	-8.9%	-8.2%	-6.8%	-9.2%	-1.5%	-9.1%	-5.5%
Job readiness	-32.0%	-21.6%	-23.1%	-24.5%	-14.0%	-31.3%	-15.8%	-20.0%	-14.0%
Overall	-13.2%	-12.6%	-9.7%	-12.0%	-7.5%	-15.7%	-7.3%	-13.4%	-3.7%

Part 2: Evaluating perceptions of course value and retention considerations

This section provides insight into perceptions of course value and retention considerations.

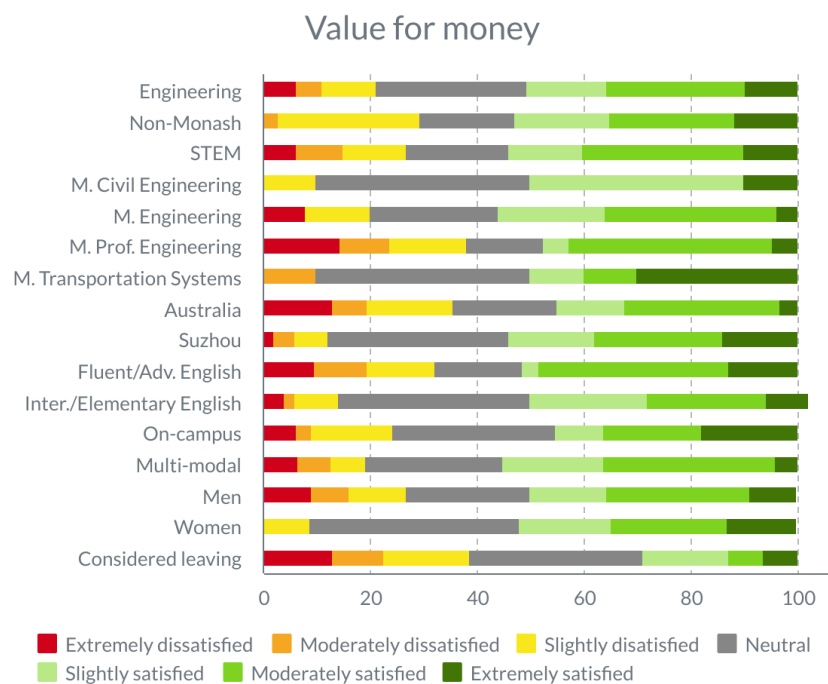
In the survey, participants were asked whether they believed their course represented value for money and if they had considered leaving their course in the last 12 months. If they had considered leaving their course, they were asked to elaborate on their reasons.

Participants were also asked if there was anything in relation to their course that they wanted their student association to know.

2.1 Value for money

Respondents were asked to respond to the question *how satisfied are you that your course provides value for money?*

Below is a graph of how Engineering students responded:



Master of Professional Engineering respondents, Australian-based students and those who had considered leaving their course, were the most-likely to be dissatisfied that their course represented value for money.

On the other hand, Master of Engineering respondents and multi-modal respondents were the most-likely to be satisfied that their course did represent value for money.

2.1.1 Value for money – Importance and Satisfaction

To gain further insight into what students' value in their course, a comparison was run of the average results of those who were satisfied that their course represented value for money (Value) and those who were not satisfied (No Value).

The table below breaks down average scores by theme for Engineering respondents:

Theme	Importance		Satisfaction		Gap	
	Value	No value	Value	No value	Value	No value
Commencement	8.32	7.32	8.20	6.29	-1.4%	-14.1%
Academic quality	8.59	7.64	8.30	5.65	-3.4%	-26.0%
Academic delivery	8.43	7.32	7.99	5.71	-5.2%	-22.0%
Support services	8.58	6.85	8.42	6.76	-1.8%	-1.3%
Culture	8.24	6.88	8.14	5.33	-1.2%	-22.5%
Job readiness	8.71	7.84	8.18	4.90	-6.0%	-37.5%
Overall	8.48	7.31	8.20	5.77	-3.2%	-20.6%

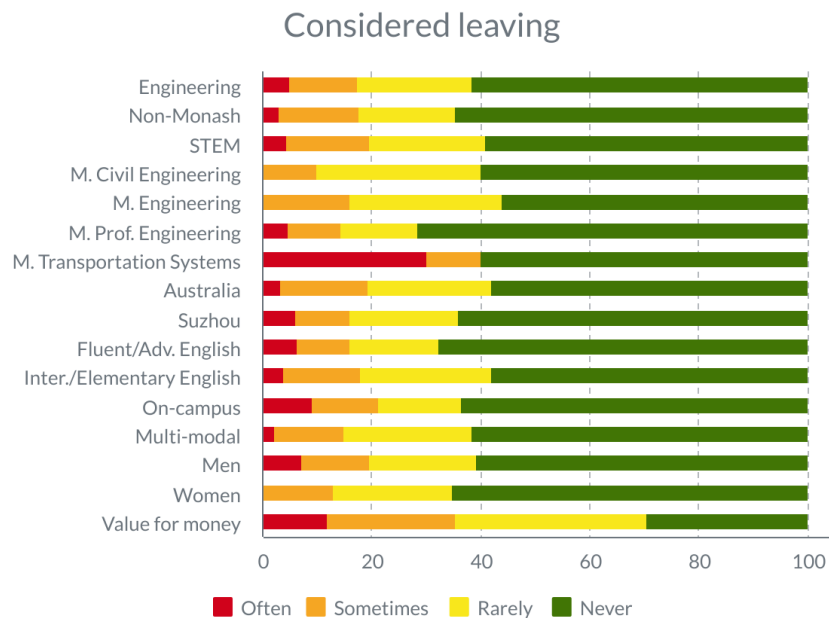
With the exception of *support services*, respondents who were not satisfied that their course represented value for money recorded much wider gap scores than those who did feel their course was value for money.

This was especially true in relation to *job readiness* and *academic quality*.

2.2 Considered leaving in the last 12 months

Participants were asked to respond to the question *have you considered leaving your course in the last 12 months?*

Below is a graph of how Engineering students responded:



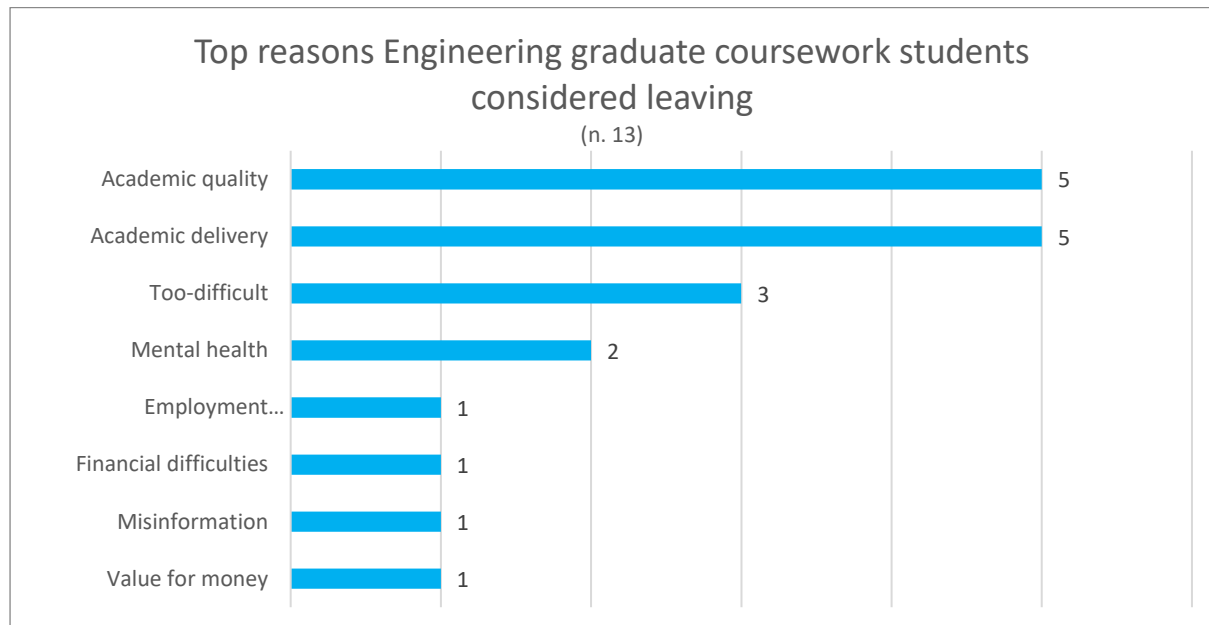
Those who were dissatisfied that their course represented value for money were, by a distance, the most-likely to have considered leaving their course in the last 12 months, while Master of Professional Engineering students were the least likely to have considered leaving.

Master of Transportation respondents were the most-likely to have considered leaving their course “often.”

2.2.1 Reasons for considering leaving in the last 12 months

In order to gather direct insight into why graduate coursework students consider leaving their course, participants who had indicated that they had considered it in the last 12 months were asked the question, *in 2-3 sentences, why did you consider leaving your course?*

Below is a summary of their responses:



The primary reason Engineering graduate coursework students considered leaving their course in the last 12 months were issues with the academic quality within their course. Comments included:

“Because their methods of teaching are not as good as we expected. They are not even helpful beyond the class. 2 courses are great by teaching methods but the rest is jut...”

“Unhappy with how the classes are conducted and the assessments are graded.”

“I think some parts of the tutorial make me confused. I cannot understand how to deal with those assignment after finishing the teaching content. I don't think I can handle the assignment by the confusing tutorial, and the assignments are too difficult.”

Academic delivery was another common theme among these responses. Comments included:

“There are no elective subjects to choose from, rather the course focuses more on core subjects.....I think there should be a balance between core and elective subjects, they can reduce some core subjects and allow us to choose more elective subjects.”

“Too much homework, too little prep time.”

Other interesting comments included:

“It is too difficult for me, and the assignment is complex.”

“I am tired.”

“Because it was too expensive and even though Monash is a top ranked university, in the eyes of an Australian employer University background rarely matters.”

“Financial burdens of tuition fee for international students.”

2.2.2 Considered leaving – Importance and Satisfaction

To gain further insight into what may cause a student to consider leaving their course, a comparison was run on the average results of those who had considered leaving their course in the last 12 months (Exit) and those who had never considered leaving (Stay).

The table below details the average scores by theme:

Theme	Importance		Satisfaction		Gap	
	Exit	Stay	Exit	Stay	Exit	Stay
Commencement	7.39	8.13	6.66	8.01	-9.9%	-1.4%
Academic quality	7.58	8.52	6.68	7.88	-11.9%	-7.5%
Academic delivery	7.42	8.09	6.51	7.51	-12.3%	-7.2%
Support services	7.43	8.41	6.98	8.23	-6.1%	-2.2%
Culture	7.44	8.05	6.41	7.82	-13.8%	-2.8%
Job readiness	7.82	8.61	6.09	7.79	-22.1%	-9.5%
Overall	7.51	8.30	6.56	7.87	-12.7%	-5.1%

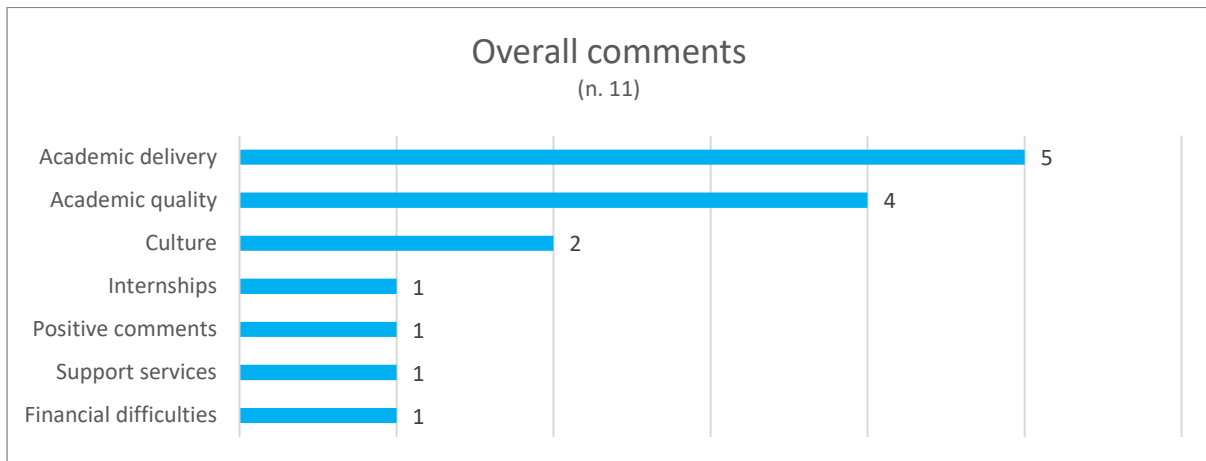
With the exception of *job readiness*, the gap scores recorded by Stay respondents were relatively narrow across the remaining themes.

On the other hand, Exit respondents reported wide gap scores for all themes except *support services*. The widest gap score for Exit respondents was for *job readiness*, but it was the difference between Exit and Stay on this theme was arguably less dramatic here than across the other themes.

2.3 Anything you want your student association to know about your course

Participants were asked *is there anything about your course that you want your student association to know?*

Below is a summary of the main responses from Engineering respondents:



The primary response theme related to perceptions of a lack of academic delivery within their course. These included:

“Making the schedule a little less hectic than now, as every unit has its own coursework set which has to be done equal dedication. Also, more exposure to student societies and clubs during and after semesters and an easier process for internship opportunities.”

“In one of my units, the recorded lectures go through the week's slides. Then the live lecture does more of the same. In my opinion, going through the applications would be more beneficial.”

“I expect to be able to stagger the submission of assignments for each course. For example, in the midterm assignments just recently, the final submission of assignments for almost all four classes was clustered into one week.”

Academic quality was another popular comment theme. These included:

“The graduate programs at the university are mainly focused on research, the quality of the master's degree by coursework is low, far below the level I expected.”

“I fail to see why MGF5020 is included as an option for Engineering electives. The unit is too heavily theory-based, gives out too many scholarly materials to read every week, and most of the assignments are all essays. I am very unsatisfied with this unit.”

Other interesting comments included:

“Make more like-minded people especially international students to connect through events to make them believe they have people have to rely on.”

“Overall it has been a great experience.”

“We want more scholarships instead of events every other day. Convince Monash to use money to help students and not just entertain them.”

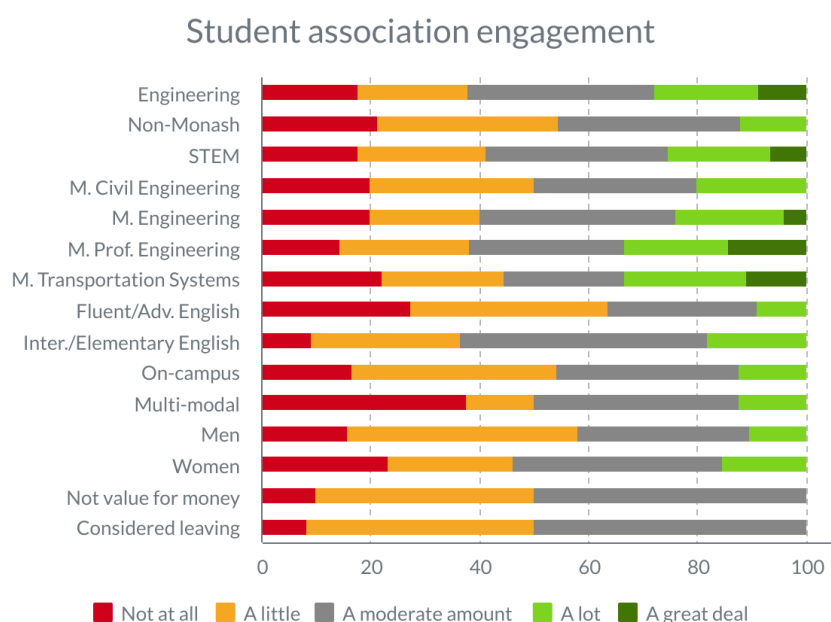
Part 3: Engagement with the Monash Graduate Association (MGA)

This section highlights the engagement levels that Engineering graduate coursework students have with their representative body - the Monash Graduate Association (MGA).

3.1 Student association engagement

Participants were asked to respond to the question *how engaged do you feel with your student association or union or guild?*⁵

Below is a summary of how students in Engineering responded:



The MGA achieved limited engagement respondents who spoke fluent or advanced English, as well as men.

The student association was better at engaging students from the Master of Professional Engineering and Master of Transportation Systems.

No students who was considering leaving or was dissatisfied that their course represented value for money had engaged with the MGA “a great deal” or “a lot.”

⁵ Participants enrolled through Suzhou campus were not asked this question.

Conclusion

The results of the MGA's *National Postgraduate Student Satisfaction Survey* have provided valuable insights into what graduate coursework students in the Faculty of Engineering value in regard to their educational experience, as well as how satisfied they are with the structure and delivery of their degrees.

Key findings

English proficiency is low in Engineering

Although the Faculty of Engineering graduate coursework population is mostly international students, and the majority of this survey's respondents were from Suzhou campus, English proficiency was low among respondents. Only 20% of Engineering respondents indicated that they were "fluent" compared to 39% of graduate coursework respondents from Monash.

Indeed, 62% of Engineering respondents reported that their English proficiency was "intermediate" or lower compared to 33% of overall graduate coursework respondents from Monash.

In relation to satisfaction, results were mixed when comparing English proficiency; however, in relation to language support, those who spoke better English were notably more satisfied with existing services.

Job readiness satisfaction is an area of concern

Collectively, students ranked *job readiness* first for importance, but last for satisfaction, while the distance between importance and satisfaction was the widest.

The gap between satisfaction and importance was exaggerated among those who had considered leaving their course or indicated that their course did not represent value for money.

While this appears to be a part of a wider trend in graduate coursework education within Australia, it was certainly prominent among Engineering respondents. However, it was less prominent among respondents from the faculty than it was among most other faculties.

Monash support services are well-received

Satisfaction with *support services* was relatively high amongst Engineering respondents. Each of the five areas that made up the theme of support services ranked in the top seven for satisfaction.

Language support (1st), IT support and library resources (both equal 3rd) were particularly well-rated.

Satisfaction scores consistently lower in Master of Civil Engineering and Master of Professional Engineering

Respondents from the Master of Civil Engineering and Master of Professional Engineering consistently reported, on average, lower satisfaction ratings and wider gap scores than those of their colleagues. This was perhaps most notable in relation to quality teaching and, for Master of Professional Engineering respondents only, in relation to *job readiness*.

Assessment submission dates better in Engineering than across STEM

Engineering responders were more satisfied than STEM respondents across the University in relation to submission dates and recorded a gap score less than half as wide.

Assignment numbers were also better-received in the Faculty than they were by STEM respondents across the University.

Women seek greater belonging, but are less satisfied with culture

In relation to feeling a sense of belonging to the University, Monash respondents recorded a gap score almost twice as wide as men.

It was also more important to them that they felt part of a postgraduate community.

MGA engagement low with domestic students

Engagement with the Monash Graduate Association (MGA) was minimal among respondents who spoke fluent or advanced English, as well as men.

No students who was considering leaving or who was not satisfied that their course represented value for money had engaged with the MGA “a great deal” or “a lot.”

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the MGA's *National Postgraduate Student Satisfaction Survey*, the MGA has recommended actions for the Faculty, the University and ourselves that would potentially improve the graduate coursework student experience, increase satisfaction and improve retention rates.

Renewed focus on graduate students' perceptions of preparedness to enter the workforce

- Bi-annual or annual industry graduate job fair.
- Guest lectures and workshops with industry professionals.
- Career counselling and support.
 - Annual group information sessions (by course) with Monash Career Connect representative.
- Alumni mentoring program.
- Career resource hub, by course, accessible through Moodle.

Action: Faculty; Career Connect; MGA

Encourage greater utilisation of language support services to those in need of it

- Renewed focus on advertising existing English Connect support services.

Action: Faculty; English Connect

MGA to investigate ways to improve engagement with domestic part-time and online students

- Improve outreach to Engineering students.
- Work with faculties and course coordinators to interact with traditionally difficult to reach cohorts.

Action: MGA

Appendix 1: Demographics

Course type	Respondents
Masters by coursework	84 (91%)
Graduate diploma/certificate	8 (9%)

Course	Respondents
Master of Advanced Engineering	4 (5%)
Master of Civil Engineering	10 (12%)
Master of Engineering	29 (34%)
Master of Professional Engineering	21 (24%)
Master of Transportation Systems	10 (12%)
other	12 (14%)

Campus	Respondents
I do not regularly attend campus	2 (2%)
Clayton	32 (35%)
Caulfield	4 (4%)
Suzhou	53 (58%)
other	0 (0%)

Domestic/International	Respondents
Local student (Australian or New Zealand citizen/permanent resident)	1 (1%)
International student	85 (99%)

Study load	Respondents
Full-time	89 (97%)
Part-time	3 (3%)
On leave from study	0 (0%)

Study location	Respondents
Entirely on-campus	35 (41%)
Multi-modal	49 (57%)
Entirely online	2 (2%)
other	0 (0%)

Time since last degree	Respondents
Less than 1 year	53 (62%)
1-5 years	32 (37%)
6-10 years	1 (1%)
11+ years	0 (0%)

Course progress	Respondents
First year	76 (88%)
Second year	6 (7%)
Third year	4 (5%)

Study hours	Respondents
Less than 5	1 (1%)
6-10	11 (13%)
11-20	17 (20%)
21-30	26 (30%)
31-40	16 (19%)
Over 40 hours	15 (17%)

English proficiency	Respondents
Fluent	17 (20%)
Advanced	16 (19%)
Intermediate	41 (48%)
Elementary	12 (14%)
Beginner	0 (0%)

Gender	Respondents
Woman	25 (29%)
Man	59 (69%)
Non-binary/gender diverse	0 (0%)
Prefer to self-describe	0 (0%)
Prefer not to say	2 (2%)

LGBTIQA+	Respondents
Yes	3 (3%)
No	73 (85%)
Prefer not to disclose	10 (12%)

Indigenous (domestic students only)	Respondents
Yes	0 (0%)
No	1 (100%)
Prefer not to disclose	0 (0%)

Disability	Respondents
Yes	0 (0%)
No	86 (100%)
Prefer not to disclose	0 (0%)

Age	Respondents
24 or under	61 (71%)
25-29	23 (27%)
30-39	2 (2%)
40 and over	0 (0%)

Employment status	Respondents
Full-time	6 (7%)
Part-time	7 (8%)
Casual	13 (14%)
Unemployed and looking for work	17 (19%)
Not employed and not looking for work	47 (52%)

Work hours	Respondents
Less than 5	8 (31%)
6-10	4 (15%)
11-20	6 (23%)
21-30	5 (19%)
31-40	2 (8%)
More than 40	1 (4%)

Appendix 2: Wording of course experience questionnaire

Question	Wording
<i>Commencement</i>	
Pre-enrolment	Having clear information about the course prior to my enrolment
Enrolment	A user-friendly enrolment process
Orientation	The orientation experience
<i>Academic quality</i>	
Clear criteria	Clear learning outcomes and assessment criteria
Quality teaching	High quality teaching
Engaging lectures	Lectures are engaging
Academic access	Lecturers are accessible for answering my questions/having a discussion
Timely feedback	Timely feedback on assessments/assignments
Academic feedback	Constructive feedback on assessments/assignments
<i>Academic delivery</i>	
Mixed delivery*	Appropriate mix of online and in-person course delivery
Balance of units	Appropriate balance of compulsory units and electives
Elective variety	Appropriate variety of electives to choose from
Class times	Acceptable variety of tutorial/studio/lab times to choose from
Assignment no.	The numbers of assessments/assignments for the course is appropriate
Submission dates	Assessments/assignments submission dates are appropriately spaced
<i>Support services</i>	
Facilities	Adequate facilities for your field of study
Language support**	English language support
Library resources	Easily accessible books and journals (online or hard copy)
IT support	IT support
Learning support	Learning skills support e.g. academic writing, referencing, time management
<i>Culture</i>	
Grad community	Feeling part of a postgraduate social community
Academic community	Feeling part of an academic community
Sense of belonging	Feeling a sense of belonging to my university
<i>Job readiness</i>	
Internship	Placement/internship opportunities
Networking	Links to industry/professional networking
Workforce entry	Being ready to enter the workforce when I graduate

*Only asked of students who selected their course attendance involved a "mix of on-campus and online study"

**Only asked of students who indicated that their proficiency in English was not "fluent"