

# INFO: UFG LV-FEEDBACK

## Feedback on lectures and courses held at the University of Art and Design Linz

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At UFG, student-provided feedback on lectures and classes plays a key part in quality assurance. Feedback was first collected in the summer term of 2008, when students were asked to submit feedback forms via ufg online.

Seeing as UFG aims to continuously improve its feedback mechanisms for lectures, a work group tasked with advancing these mechanisms was established. It is made up of members of the vice rectorate for teaching, quality management, the works council for artistic-scientific personnel and the Students' Union of the Art University Linz, and meets in person at least once per semester. This leaflet contains information on the results of the group's inaugural meeting – an improved system for the evaluation of lectures and classes.

Available in English and German at: [www.ufg.at/LV-Feedback](http://www.ufg.at/LV-Feedback)

### Feedback on UFG classes: reasoning and assessment - reaction - re-examination loop

#### Assessment

The main purpose of soliciting feedback on lectures is to gain an understanding of students' learning success: feedback helps lecturers learn more about how students learn best in their lessons.

Central concerns are:

- *Which factors facilitate effective learning?*
- *Which factors inhibit it?*
- *Which measures might contribute to increasing students' learning success?*

Feedback left by students allows teachers an insight into their position. Teaching itself but also underlying structural conditions can be more thoroughly evaluated by comparing the students' point of view to the teaching staff's own perspective. This also provides an opportunity to uncover strengths and weaknesses which might otherwise go unnoticed. With regard to systemic matters, feedback on lectures proves an important point of reference for the rectorate as well.

#### Reaction

Knowledge generated from feedback ought to elicit a response: any features which are working well should be held onto and built on whereas less satisfactory aspects need to be revised and improved upon. When assessing classes, students are encouraged to propose changes and to recommend betterments. This not only gives them a chance of getting involved and to help shape teaching – their ideas and suggestions also feed into the planning and implementation of tangible actions.

#### Re-examination

If adjustments have been made, it is of importance to evaluate their outcome to confirm they accomplished the desired intent. The routine collection of feedback also makes it possible to continually check everything is running smoothly, and to swiftly take corrective action when necessary.

### Tools for obtaining feedback

#### Quantitative feedback via online form

Near the end of each semester, students are given the opportunity to give feedback on every course they were enrolled in via an online form found on ufg online. The form is customarily made available one week prior to the end of the term and remains open for a period of three weeks. As soon as the form has gone live, students and teachers alike are sent an email by the vice rector for teaching to alert them to the fact it is awaiting students' responses.

Once five students have submitted feedback on a particular course, their answers are shared with their fellow students, their teacher, and the relevant head of department. To protect participating students' identities, no results are shared if fewer than five students chose to fill in the feedback form for a particular course.

When the three-week feedback period has elapsed, the vice rector for teaching and the staff member responsible for feedback on lectures and classes in Quality Management are given access to the results for each class for further evaluation. The same principle regarding protection of anonymity applies here: only courses which were evaluated by at least five students are taken into account.

It goes without saying that feedback on lectures is provided at the students' own discretion. However, for feedback to be a useful tool, students need to get actively involved in the process. Moreover, feedback is ideally not only left on classes which students felt dissatisfied with, but also given on those which made a positive impression, to help create a positive feedback culture.

## Qualitative feedback via feedback questionnaire

Qualitative feedback is gathered offline, on paper, using custom feedback questionnaires made available to teaching staff at ([Download: www.ufg.at/LV-Feedback](http://www.ufg.at/LV-Feedback)). While teachers are encouraged to ask for qualitative feedback on their classes, its collection happens on a voluntary basis. Results may also stay between teachers and students only – teachers are not required to share them with any third parties. In any case, teachers are always welcome to ask for support and guidance regarding any adjustments and improvements they are considering making to their lectures (see section on ‘Support’ below).

Qualitative feedback is collected while the term is still in session, approximately after half the lessons have been held. This way, teachers receive confirmation of which areas they do well in, and which they might need to revise and make modifications to while the semester is still ongoing.

Teachers who are considering asking their students for qualitative feedback are advised to let them know early on, preferably during the first in-person meeting.

The actual collection of feedback happens toward the end of a session – time of around twenty minutes should be set aside for the process. Students are asked to get together in groups of up to four people and to fill in the questionnaires together. Once they have been

handed the questionnaires, it is essential for the teacher to leave the room so the students can give their feedback anonymously and without pressure. Students also need to be instructed not to put their names on the printouts so as not to disclose their identities. At the end of the lesson, the completed questionnaires are returned to the teacher.

Later, when they are by themselves, the teacher studies the results and reflects on their teaching, incorporating these new points of view. It is recommended the teacher use a spare questionnaire to write out all the answers received for each individual question.

Questions they should ask themselves while considering their students’ responses include:

- *Which comments feel affirmative, in which ways should the class be kept as-is?*
- *Which aspects need more work, what needs to be changed?*
- *Which bits of feedback make me feel particularly happy?*

The outcome of their self-reflection as well as any potential adaptations to their teaching are presented during the next lesson. This is an integral part of the feedback process if teachers want to make their students feel heard. If appropriate or necessary, the presentation may be followed by a discussion with the students.

## Support regarding feedback mechanisms

Lecturers looking for guidance or assistance with respect to advancing their teaching practice or the implementation of new ideas in their classroom should first talk to their head of department to sound out potential solutions. If coaching sessions or a course might prove useful, teachers can take advantage of the professional development options offered at UFG.

The PD programme covers select courses on the subjects of teaching and didactics as well as courses focussing on interpersonal, social and cultural skills. Apart from these courses, there is also a budget for professional development (Weiterbildungskonto), with which personalised professional development options are funded.

Next to the individual department heads, the vice rector for teaching is the key person to consult with on all matters regarding teaching – for example in cases where members of staff cannot or do not wish to

talk to their department heads. Teachers must not fear any repercussions from talking to the vice rector directly. Quite the opposite is the case: teachers looking to develop their teaching further by their own volition are exemplary, and it is only in the vice rector’s best interest to listen to and take seriously any requests or misgivings they might express, and to try to support them in whichever way possible.

Negative assessments of classes (ratings of four and five) provided by students through the online survey will result in a personal conversation between the vice rector for teaching and the teacher whose lecture received negative feedback. Their first priority is to identify the cause for the evaluation. If necessary, any potential next steps are additionally discussed with the staff member responsible for feedback on lectures and classes in Quality Management as well as the works council for artistic-academic staff. The teacher may opt to already invite the works council along to the initial meeting with the rector.

## Contacts & support

**... regarding technical questions as well as the overall feedback collection process:**

Department of Art, Research, QM and PD  
QM, Quality Management  
[www.ufg.at/?id=8957](http://www.ufg.at/?id=8957)

**... regarding professional development opportunities and the budget for professional development (Weiterbildungskonto):**

Department of Art, Research, QM and PD  
PD, Professional Development  
[www.ufg.at/PE-Weiterbildung.8958.0.html](http://www.ufg.at/PE-Weiterbildung.8958.0.html)

**... regarding questions and concerns pertaining to feedback on individual lectures, feedback results, and/or actions taken in response to feedback:**

**For teaching staff:** vice rectorate for teaching  
[www.ufg.at/?id=1251](http://www.ufg.at/?id=1251)

**For students:** representatives of the Students’ Union of the Art University Linz  
[www.ufg.at/Deine-OEH.1933.0.html](http://www.ufg.at/Deine-OEH.1933.0.html)

### IMPRINT

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