Working with "the SET process" to improve teachers' teaching and learners' learning

A gift approach

September 2020

Acknowledgements

Ko te tiimatanga o nga mea katoa me wehi ki te Atua

The beginning of all things is to pay homage to God

Mā te rongo, ka mõhio;	From listening comes knowledge
Mā te mõhio, ka mārama;	From knowledge comes understanding
Mā te mārama, ka mātau;	From understanding comes wisdom
Mā te mātau, ka ora	From wisdom comes well-being

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Executive Summary

Undertaking student evaluation of teaching (SET) is common practice in tertiary institutions worldwide. Initially, the purpose of SET was to enable educators to improve their teaching and consequently, learners would benefit. However, over decades, the reason for undertaking SETs has increasingly become an institutional tool for compliance. Also, as completing SET forms increasingly moved online, the percentage of students completing them has reduced significantly – typically to under 20%, and comments were brief. This raises the question, whose voice is being heard?

We did not accept the premise that low completion rates were because students did not care. Rather, we posited that low completion rates might be a result of students not understanding the purpose of the SET process. Consequently, we wished to explore the influence on student participation in this process when their knowledge about the process was increased. Drawing on our own previous research experience in the field and an updated literature review, an introduction to the purpose and role of the SET process, referred to as the Initial Briefing was developed. It included information about how student feedback could contribute as part of an institution's accreditation and quality assurance processes, an educator's reflective practice and professional growth, and, consequently, improved future learners' experience. Also covered were possible bias factors that inhibit students sharing what they really want to share and ways to overcome these. This Initial Briefing was presented by the same project member at the beginning of three semesters to students in an NZQF level 5 course in the three collaborating tertiary institutions.

In this report we describe our exploration of this process through hearing directly from those involved with these Initial Briefings: participating students through Focus Groups, and through an interview with the courses' educators. We also analysed completed SET forms from the participating students. We have honoured participant voice and included direct quotes for the reader to enjoy, much as a curator hangs art works in a gallery.

Most participants acknowledged the Initial Briefing as influential. In particular, they developed personalised ways to monitor evaluation of the teaching throughout the course, instead of waiting until the end of semester as had been their previous practice. They could then draw on these records at the time of completing the SET form.

The report concludes with a model for approaching the SET process as GIFT giving where GIFT is an acronym as follows:

- **G**uidelines to help both students and staff new to tertiary teaching understand the purpose and role of the SET process.

- **I**nstitutional Commitment and Caring for all participants involved in the SET process and to 'closing the loop' so that student responses to SET forms (gifts), are honoured, analysed and fed forward to improve teachers' teaching and learners' learning.

- **F**it for Purpose in that SET forms are designed so that students are well placed to respond to the questions and opportunities within them to rate a range of aspects of the teaching they have received.

- **T**ell stories and give examples throughout out the course – not just at the end of the course. The SET process is more effective if it is not viewed as a one-off event but rather educators to TELL stories and give examples of how they have engaged with previous SET feedback – received as a GIFT rather than judgement.

Introduction

The goal of this research project is to increase ways in which Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) processes can contribute to improvements in teachers' teaching and learners' learning. In other words, we wish to explore how SET processes can help "sustain a conversation about learning" (Serdyukova, Tatum & Serdukova, 2010, p. 181).

The reason why this is important to us is because we are committed to learners having access to the very best learning experiences possible. The SET process is an established institutional process which, initially at least, was aimed at the professional growth of tertiary educators (Barrow & Grant, 2016). There are many factors which can influence the effectiveness of the SET process – but the most influential factor is that the voice of all students is heard. Currently, that is not the case. Our own previous observations, supported by literature, demonstrate that since completion of SET forms went online, the number of students completing them has dropped significantly – typically within the 30% to 40% range (Adams & Umbach, 2012; Gupta et al., 2020; Standish et al., 2018; Young et al., 2019). The literature presents many reasons for this, including the possibilities that students just don't care or that they "… cannot be expected to understand or appreciate the significance of what they are doing in a course until later in their careers as their perspectives mature" (Jones, 2012, p. 50). We reject this possibility. The students we have had the privilege to teach – do care – about their own learning and also about the learning of others. We were aware that for some students from different ethnic backgrounds, providing evaluative feedback to an educator, one who is viewed as an expert or authority, is not acceptable. However, we had also observed that when provided with a different approach to SET that emphasised service and contribution for others' benefit, that some of these students were empowered to participate more fully (See Sanders, 2015).

Another critique of the SET process is that students tend to provide shallow responses without much thought (Lama et al., 2015; Rovai et al., 2007; Serdyukova et al., 2010). We had good reason to also reject this critique. A previous research project, Course Evaluations – What are Students Thinking? (Norsworthy & Ozanne, 2013) demonstrated that learners can articulate the reasons why they differentiate within Likert scale responses in SETs and that their responses can be informed by sophisticated insights into the learning process. This project rests on the belief that students are in the best position to speak about the teaching and learning they experience in their courses (Kogan et al., 2010).

Another reason why this project was important to us is found in the fact that, often the SET process does not "lead to any improvement in the quality of teaching" (Richardson, 2005, p. 392). One team member in particular had seen how rich information for educators to consider can be 'hidden' in SET data and it only becomes evident as a result of intentional analysis rather than cursory reading of student responses. Her observation identified a need for background information about the purpose of the SET process to be included in the induction programme for educators new to tertiary teaching.

This project is designed to explore the effect on SET responses and engagement which comes from building a growing awareness for learners (and in-situ for educators) to potentially improve and enrich teaching, learning and institutional practices.

Theoretical background

Student evaluations of teaching (SET) is a well-established process within tertiary institutions across the world (Abd-Elrahman et al., 2010; Beleche et al., 2010; Benton & Ryalls, 2016; Culver, 2010; Sanchez et al., 2020; Serdyukova et al., 2010). The reasons for their wide usage are many but predominately rest in a mixture of three categories: institutional quality assurance, staff performance appraisal, promotion and tenure; and to gain perspectives of the effectiveness of teaching (Backer, 2012; Brockx et al., 2011; Brown et al., 2015; Gruber et al., 2010; Jones, 2012; Palermo, 2013).

The literature on the topic is extensive and contentious. On the one hand there remain doubts and concerns about validity of the data and the way the data is (or is not) used. On the other hand, there is confidence that when resultant data is appropriate (i.e., relevant and a student can reasonably be expected to have sufficient knowledge to make a judgement) and carefully analysed, institutions, teachers and learners can benefit.

The level of acceptance of the SET process might be described as surprising given the ongoing concerns related to their reliability and the recognition of a wide range of bias factors which influence student engagement with SET surveys (Blair & Noel, 2014; Clayson & Halley, 2011; McClain, 2019; Sanchez et al., 2020; Stein et al., 2013). Bias factors may include:

- the way a learner feels about or relates to the educator particularly in terms of their perception of how easy the educator marks or grades their work (Benton & Ryalls, 2016; Clayson, 2016; Brockx et al., 2011; Griffin, 2004; Macfadyne at al., 2015; Stroebe, 2019)

- the degree to which the course meets learners' expectations (Adams & Umbach, 2012; Clayson, 2016; Jones, 2012)

- the instructor's gender (Fan et al., 2019; Maričić et al., 2019) or personality (Clayson & Sheffet, 2006; Kim & MacCann, 2018; Stark & Freishtat, 2014)

- learners' level of interest in the topic (Serdyukova et al., 2010)

- learners' perception about the effectiveness of SET (Brown, 2008; Chen & Hoshower, 2003; Gupta et al., 2020; McClain et al., 2018; Worthington, 2002; Young et al., 2019).

Research exists to show the "significant bias" which affective factors have at point of completing SET (Grimes et al., 2017). Anecdotally educators sense that often a learner's SET responses are indicative of what has happened for learners in the preceding two or three sessions. As learners are often called upon to make a SET response for each course they undertake in a semester within a particular week, the literature identifies the very real influence of 'participant fatigue' (Heinert & Roberts, 2016) or 'evaluation fatigue' (Jaquett et al., 2017).

While undertaking SETs is an integral component within institutional quality assurance processes the literature indicates that there is little evidence that it, does in fact, "lead to any improvement in the quality of teaching" (Richardson, 2005, p. 392; see also Blair & Noel, 2014; Golding & Adam, 2016; Kember et al., 2000; Palermo, 2013; Stein et al., 2013). The literature reviewed found no mention of tracking how changes made in the light of SETs influenced

future practice or learning. Notably," student evaluation data by itself is not sufficient to drive change" (Blair & Noel, 2014, p. 881). Both institutional and individual willingness to work with the data are necessary. In the cases where changes were made as a result of the analysis from student evaluations, the literature reviewed did not make any mention of how these were actually tracked in terms of their influence on future students' learning.

The SET process is typically viewed as a way to access student perceptions about effectiveness of teaching (Backer, 2012; Brockx et al., 2011; Brown et al., 2015; Frick et al., 2010; Jones, 2012). While some authors raise questions about whether or not a student can, in fact, make judgements about the quality of a teacher's teaching (Clayson, 2018; Fan et al., 2019; Jones, 2012), others such as Benton and Ryalls (2016, p. 1) argue that "inclusion of student voice is critical". A small study by Norsworthy and Ozanne (2013) demonstrated that when choosing a SET response for a particular criterion, students were both thoughtful and able to give reasons for their choices. There is agreement that SETs can, and do, "monitor student experience" (Fan et al., 2019, p. 1).

The majority of recent research in this field continues to focus on usage or validity of SET data (Clayson, 2018; McClain et al., 2018; Stroebe, 2019). An interesting New Zealand study by Barrow and Grant (2016), recognised by NZ Universities Academic Audit Unit focused on use of SET data across 20 years. This study found that "a technology that was initially created and implemented by academic development for one purpose was ultimately taken up by the institution for quite another: it became part of the audit machine" (p. 589). In other words, the purpose for the SET process had moved from an initial pastoral care approach for educator's academic development to one of compliance.

Some interesting insights emerge from recent research which is focused on the significant reduction in learner participation in the SET process which has resulted when institutions moved from Course Evaluation Surveys being completed face- to- face to the use of online platforms and technologies (Bacon, Johnson & Stewart, 2016; Capa–Ayin, 2016; Gómez–Rey et al., 2018; Macfadyen et al., 2016; Standish et al., 2019; Young et al., 2018). Research literature in the past five years appears to have an increased focus on factors which influence motivation to engage in SET process. Interestingly, the resulting literature review provided insight into what might be characteristics of a 'good model around SET'. These include aspects of institutional, educator, and learner practice.

Institutionally, it is important that time and effort is invested to check that its language, processes and communication ensure that the purpose and processes related to the SET cycle are valued and visible for all. Institutions can help educators engage with what learners record; helping them to process harsh messages and reject a tendency to see SET processes as times of judgement and identification of failure (Wong et al., 2014).

The literature reviewed noted that it is important that educators help students understand the SET process, particularly how the resultant data is used and by whom (Basset et al., 2017; Chapman & Joines, 2017; Heinert & Roberts, 2016; Mortenson & Sather, 2017; Young et al., 2018). However, none focused on supporting students to understand the purpose of the SET process. Increased

participation is likely when educators create a culture of respect and reciprocity (Chapman & Joines, 2017; Heinert & Roberts, 2016) within which to view SET processes as formative in nature (Golding & Adam, 2016; Heinert & Roberts, 2016; Jaquett et al., 2017; Lynch, 2019). There appears to be a reciprocal relationship between an educator's attitude to using SETs as part of their reflective practice and a tendency to demonstrate consistently that they care about learners and their learning throughout the semester (Chapman & Joines, 2017; Heinert & Roberts, 2016; Young et al., 2018). For example, a study by Golding and Adam (2016, p. 3) found that educators who are willing to use SETS to improve their teaching "… valued their students and want them to learn." It is clear that such educators view SETs as part of a reflective, iterative process in which they teach, evaluate and grow their practice (Hedges & Webber, 2014).

Finally, and perhaps most influential in learner motivation is their perception that their responses actually matter; that they are influential in "improving their overall learning experience" (Macfadyen et al., 2017, p. 836). In other words, students "find value in the course evaluation process" (Heinert & Roberts, 2016, p. 189; see also: Basset et al., 2017; Brandl et al., 2016; McClain et al., 2018). In particular, participants in a recent study by Gupta et al., (2020, p. 71) reported "being motivated to complete evaluations when they believe that their responses will be used to improve teaching and will result in real-time improvements in the course or in faculty behaviour"

All forms of SET reflect an epistemological framework. Currently, we are unaware of any research focused on how the SET process engages with different cultural epistemological frameworks. Recently we have been challenged by our realisation that our institutional approach to SETs is somewhat counter-cultural for Māori and Pasifika learners, for whom making judgement on a person in a position of leadership or authority is just not done. We know that Pasifika students have great respect for their teachers as expert and authoritative and therefore are reluctant to criticise their practice (Horrocks et al., 2012; Kalavite, 2010; Sanders, 2016). Evaluating the educator's practice, in fact even summarising a reading, can be challenging to learners given their belief that all the words in the reading are chosen by the author and the educator's teaching is similarly chosen and intentionally designed (Sanders, 2015). Consequently, it is deemed disrespectful to evaluate it. Also, in relation to knowledge curation, Māori and Pasifika students may be reticent to engage due to their concern about the implications a SET process might have for the mana of those who 'hold' or share the knowledge. We also know from research undertaken by Sanders (2015) that when Māori and Pasifika students understand a process (or the worldview which shapes such practice) differently, they are willing to change how they engage.

Methodology

At the heart of the research project is an exploration of the difference being knowledgeable about the purpose for course evaluation and feedback opportunities makes to student and educator engagement with the SET process. We chose to explore this through an intervention (Initial Briefing to course cohort) at three different tertiary institutions[1], use of existing institutional tools, post-course student focus groups and informal conversations with course educators. However, as Davidson and Tolich (1999) note, research projects do not always develop in the tidy, structured way outlined in proposals. As will become evident, while the intended methodology and process was clear when embarking on the project, challenges such as those presented by Covid-19 were not yet on the horizon.

Step One: Briefing students about the purpose and benefit of the SET process

The first step in 'the SET process' was designed to address two specific characteristics identified in the literature review. Firstly, the literature clearly identified bias factors which influence learner response to end of course evaluations (See page 7). We wondered what would happen if learners were aware of this fact and could find ways to self-manage or lessen the likelihood of their influence. Secondly, the literature indicated that students are more likely to be motivated with course evaluations if they understood the purpose of doing so (See page 8). For example, educators involved in Heinert and Roberts' research (2016, p. 191) reported "how ignorant students were about the purpose of course evaluations". But, how would they know, unless they are told? We wondered what the impact would be on both the number of students who completed end of course evaluation forms, and, the nature of that engagement if learners were more aware of the purposes of SET. For example, we were interested to know if the type of feedback students provided would be more specific – and therefore of more help as a basis for increased effectiveness or professional development than previously.

On the basis of the above, a member of the research team spoke face- to-face with each identified cohort of learners about both the purpose of the SET process and the likelihood of bias factors being at work. In order to increase the likelihood that each group of learners would receive the same information, the same research team member presented this initial talk to each cohort of students (See p. 18 for Initial Briefing outline). Students were invited to think of ways they might record ideas to feed forward to educators throughout the course e.g. helpful and unhelpful pedagogies, resources, etc. The idea was that students might then reference these ideas when completing the SET questionnaire.

Course educators also sat in on these presentations and were encouraged to remind the students from time to time throughout the course of the SET process. In this sense, the project could test Mortenson and Sathe's (2017, p.

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[1] Bethlehem Tertiary Institute (BTI), Laidlaw College (LC) and Faith Bible College (FBC)

47) belief that "a better understanding of SET will lead to better use of information from its feedback dimension".

Step Two: Students complete their institutions normal SET forms

At the end of their course, students completed their institution's SET form. While we recognised that ideally it would be beneficial if there was consistency in those forms, we understood that achieving such would be too ambitious, given the substantial institutional processes to achieve such. It seemed authentic to us to use what was already in place.

Step Three: Focus Group with Students

After the completion of the course evaluations and the course itself, focus groups were held with each student group to explore their expectations of, and experience with, 'the SET process' – particularly in light of the Initial Briefing.

Step Four: Interviews with Educators

Similarly, an interview was conducted with the course educator to ascertain observations and insights they had to share about 'the SET process'. Where appropriate, i.e. where the educator had taught the course in previous years, we were interested in any tentative differences about student or their own engagement with SET processes they might observe. Educators involved in the project were encouraged to feed forward any changes which emanated from the particular SET cycle, and feed back to the student cohort who gifted the insights that led to those changes.

To provide some consistency with student experience across institutions, the research team decided to concentrate on courses at NZQA Level 5. Three cycles of 'the SET process' were experienced: Semester One, 2019, Semester Two, 2019, and Semester One, 2020. As much as could be managed, we hoped that the cohort of students who participated in Semester Two, 2019 would include some who had participated in Semester One. This might give us some indication of how the hoped-for increase of understanding about the SET process may have an ongoing impact.

Ethical considerations

At the time of developing the proposal it was agreed that ethical approval for the project would be gained via the BTI Research Ethics committee in keeping with the BTI Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in Research and that other institutions would accept this process to meet their own requirements. Consequently, a formal ethics proposal was submitted to the BTI Research Ethics Committee and also submitted to Laidlaw College Chair of Research. After rigorous discussion, a further provision related to external communication with their course educator the project met requirements for both BTI and Laidlaw Ethical considerations. Faith Bible College, having no

Research Ethics Committee, accepted this process. [Research Approval 190502]

Of importance throughout this approval process was the issue of anonymity of student participants, particularly in terms of the possibility of conflict of interest between the potential roles of members of the research team and educators of the courses from which student participants were drawn. The care taken with this consideration meant that no members of the research team taught students who were in the cohort which provided the potential focus group.

In keeping with the BTI Ethics Guidelines, research and communication in this project was guided by a commitment to justice which is expressed in ways of being that:

1.   honour the Tiriti of Waitangi principles, of partnership, participation and protection

2.   respect and care for individuals, whanau and communities including engagement with questions around cultural safety and cultural responsiveness for both students and teachers

3.   respect and care for the natural environment

and in processes that:

- respect privacy and confidentiality

- minimise conflict of interest

- ensure informed and voluntary consent

- respect intellectual and cultural property ownership.

Specific ethical considerations included:

- Intellectual property from other institutions. This was addressed in two specific ways. (i) Team members were asked to make a commitment to respect the intellectual ownership of courses from other institutions, especially where those courses were in similar disciplines to their own; (ii) courses which were the context for the research were at different NZQA levels than those in which they typically taught.

- Engagement with questions around cultural safety and cultural responsiveness for both students and teachers.

- Respect for privacy and confidentiality. All team members will commit to respect privacy of all those involved and maintain confidentiality of information they gain about any student or aspect of an institution's processes and SET data outcomes.

- Avoid conflict of interest. This was addressed by organising the SET process so that team members were not involved in SETs with courses or students they teach during the duration of the project.

- Ensure informed and voluntary consent. Participant Information Letters and Consent Forms were included in the application for research ethical approval and were signed and received from all participants.

Participants:

As indicated earlier, participants in this study were from three Private Tertiary Institutes: Bethlehem Tertiary Institute in Tauranga offers professional preparation and postgraduate study for those in fields of teaching, counselling and social practice as well as a NZQA level 4 qualification for Preparation for Academic Study. As the key researchers were involved with the teacher education programmes, participants in this study came from the School of Social Practice (i.e. Counselling and Social Work). Laidlaw College in Auckland offers Christian ministry and training programmes from NZQA level 4 –10 as well as professional preparation in fields of counselling and teaching. Faith Bible College in Tauranga offers Christian ministry and mission programmes at NZQA levels 4 and 5. As for Bethlehem Tertiary Institute, in both Laidlaw College and Faith Bible College, no cohorts/courses involved in the project were taught by project team members.

When referring to data, we have resisted referring to these institutions by their name or using a pseudonym. We have used descriptors such as "in another institution" to clearly identify when data is coming from a different context. In terms of students, the available cohorts of participants were at the discretion of the particular institution – though in keeping with the research team's choice of a NZQA level 5 course.

The Initial Briefing (20 mins, see) was made face to face to students enrolled in the course and present at the beginning of a face to face class. In the case of Bethlehem Tertiary Institute where many students study by distance, this meant the presentation was made during the relevant onsite intensive.

The Initial Briefing was made to 141 students over three semesters and nine courses.

Date	Initial Briefing	n=
22.03 19	Bethlehem Tertiary Institute (Csg and SW)	25
3.04. 19	Faith Bible College	6
30.04.19	Laidlaw College	20
16.08.19	Bethlehem Tertiary Institute (Csg and SW)	25
20.9 19	Faith Bible College	5
19.09.19	Laidlaw College	20
2.03.20	Bethlehem Tertiary Institute (SW only)	8
2.03.20	Faith Bible College	12
16.03.20	Laidlaw College	20

Table 1 – Participant numbers for Initial Briefing

Participation in the post course evaluation survey was controlled by the individual institutional approach. A total of 159 students submitted SET forms as follows:

End of Semester	Group	n=	% response
Semester One, 2019	Bethlehem Tertiary Institute Course One	31	50%
Semester Two, 2019	Bethlehem Tertiary Institute, Course Two	34	52%
Semester Three, 2020	Bethlehem Tertiary Institute Course One	29	42%*
Semester One, 2019	Laidlaw College, Course One	12	60%
Semester Two, 2019	Laidlaw College, Course Two	20	100%**
Semester One, 2020	Laidlaw College, Course Three	10	50%
Semester One, 2019	Faith Bible College, Course One	6	100%***
Semester Two, 2019	Faith Bible College, Course Two	5	100%
Semester One, 2020	Faith Bible College, Course Three	12	100%

Table 2 – Participant numbers for submitting End of Course SET form

*This is for the combined Counselling/Social Work group. It includes 63% of those who attended Initial Briefing.

**This is an unusually high completion rate for what is normally a voluntary and online process. Explanatory comments can be found on p. 28.

***SET forms are completed and handed in during the final course session,

A total of 35 students engaged with the Focus Group questions: 29 students participated in face-to-face post course student focus groups and six others provided feedback to the focus group questions via email. Participants in student focus group were:

date	Focus group/Written feedback	n=
23.8 19	Faith Bible College	3
26.9.19	Bethlehem Tertiary Institute	6
19.09.19	Laidlaw College	8
10.12. 19	Bethlehem Tertiary Institute	5 (+6)*

18.06.20	Faith Bible College	6
19.06.20	Laidlaw College ZOOM	1

Table 3 – Student Participant Numbers for End of Course Focus Group

*Six students who were not able to attend the Focus Group sent responses to the Focus Group questions by email.

Focus Group discussions were typically 45 minutes in length and explored the following foci:

- the influence of the Initial Briefing on students' understanding of the SET process

- what, if anything, students did differently throughout the course duration

- what, if anything, students did differently when completing SET form

- if the SET forms enabled them to communicate what they wanted to, and, what sort of feedback statements students thought might be useful to educators

- what students thought would happen with the feedback they had provided.

Focus Group discussions were audio recorded and transcribed in preparation for analysis. In keeping with ethical approval, no identifying information is included for specific contributions cited.

Participation in an educator interview

Participation in these interviews was voluntary. Seven educators took part in the project with two educators teaching two separate courses in their institution. Five educators were interviewed (one could not be interviewed due to life-threatening medical reasons and one was not available due to inordinate institutional demands). Those educators who taught two different courses in different semesters were interviewed twice.

Challenges:

Covid-19

The effect of Covid-19 has been three-fold. Clearly it influenced the ability to have face- to- face focus groups with students and, unfortunately planned ZOOM meetings did not occur. The more important influence relates to the need for educators to be fully focused on being available for students – often through digital technologies which needed a rethinking of pedagogies and ways of relating to students. This influenced availability for conversations. Finally, it is important to acknowledge that evaluations of courses in Semester One 2020 are for very different experiences to those in other years. For this reason, it would not be appropriate to make any comparisons with those from 2019.

Across institutional alignment

From the outset the research team understood that there would be differences in institutional approaches to the SET process. However, we underestimated how challenging it would be to manage the project so that all participants received the same experience in terms of the Initial Briefing about the purpose and nature of the SET process. Organising sessions at the beginning of courses required a great deal of liaising with busy institutions, to organise a suitable day, any travel required, space in class time, food for the participants and a clearly constructed message about the importance of the SET process at several levels.

The three institutions involved in the study, although sharing a similar philosophy, operate in a very different manner. For example, for the first cycle, one institution provided an onsite class (approximately 25), another nominated a blended class of onsite and distance students (approximately 45) and the third offered a class of five students. All classes had a mix of ages, and ethnicities.

The initial idea was to follow the same three classes into the second semester of the study. However, no group remained *exactly* the same, with new members entering the class and some previous students not present for a second semester. There was less consistency in student groups than originally anticipated.

Another consideration is the very different SET forms being used by the institutions. Two institutions used online SET forms and one used paper-based evaluation sheets. While all three used a combination of rating questions and open questions, different foci for feedback were presented. Interestingly the online forms included more items than the paper-based form. For example, one on-line form asked for eleven ratings (and comments) about various aspects of content and delivery, followed by two key questions which were answered quite fully; while another simply asked five questions, which were usually answered with only one or two words. One institution asked students to also rate their own involvement, while another asked if the stated learning goal for the course had been achieved. As a result of ongoing consideration of the SET form, one institution introduced a new form for Semester 1, 2020.

In one institution the tutors involved were contracted for particular courses. This meant that once teaching the course was completed, they were no longer present on campus. This made it more difficult to follow up with them after the conclusion of their course as they were not easily accessible. The impact of the experience or transfer of knowledge gained from the experience is unknown – though, for the particular institution there is a significant level of stability with the contract staff for particular courses.

Each institution had different nomenclature for those who teach (e.g., educators, instructors, teachers, tutors). For simplicity and a way of valuing institutional autonomy, any direct quotes from participants use their terminology but otherwise the word educator is used. Similarly, both 'course' and 'paper' are used to describe an individual unit within a programme. The terminology used by participants is retained in any direct quotes.

Changes in personnel

At the time the project was proposed it was appropriate to assume that personnel would be available for the duration of the project. While one may expect some change in staff responsibilities or foci, it feels as if this project has had more than what might normally be expected. Several nominated team members began their doctoral journey, resulting in one case their institution excusing them from the project and in another institution the person was less available. Several team members moved to similar roles in other institutions. This was particularly challenging for communication and organisation when changes were with personnel who were the Project's or QA contact for an institution.

Serving Māori and Pasifika students

One of the aspirational goals included in our original proposal related to the potential to better serve Māori and Pasifika students. The project has not worked with a specific group of Māori, or Pasifika students. However, the groups of students engaged in the project have represented a broad range of ethnic backgrounds including Māori, Pasifika, European Pakeha, Korean, Chinese, South African, Papua New Guinean. One cohort at an Initial Briefing was 50% Pakeha and 50% Māori and Pasifika. While another cohort did not include any Māori students, it did include the following ethnic representations:

NZ European/Pakeha	14/28	50%
Samoa	4/28	14%
Tonga	3/28	11%
Korean	2/28	7%
Fijian	1/28	3.6%
Other Pacific Peoples	1/28	3.6%
Chinese	1/28	3.6%
Other Asian	1/28	3.6%
Other European	1/28	3.6%

Initial Briefing

As indicated in the methodology section, for the purpose of consistency, this briefing and following discussion was presented to all learner cohorts by Dr Marion Sanders. It always took place in the presence of the course educator and was structured as follows:

Thanks for opportunity to speak

- Introductions
  - Of self – mihi, waiata
  - Ako Aotearoa
  - Research team

Research team– personnel from BTI, FBC, LC

Explanation of SET process: its purpose; the importance of genuine and specific comments and crucially, the opportunity SET responses provide for tutors' professional development, and course refinement.

The research foci – interested in student evaluations as:

- feedback for tutor
- adjustments to course for next group of students
- a requirement for Institutional Accreditation.

Influences on how you approach completing the evaluation form – engaging with identified bias factors in the literature.

Research shows that:

- Often low return rate – whose voice is being heard; reasons why students may not complete forms.
- Often refers more to whether the students like the tutor than whether the students have grown in their understanding of the content and embedded that new understanding in their practice.
- Often relates to the last couple of sessions.

We learned from the first cycle:

- Responses are influenced by cultural beliefs.
- Regularly thinking about the end of course SET is likely to help your concentration in class.
- Increased contribution to after-class critique and discussion(s) with tutor.
- Return rates increased in two of the institutions (for 2nd or 3rd session).

You are invited to participate in a focus group discussion at the end of the course/paper/semester.

Invite sharing of possible strategies that would enable you to give informed evaluation at end of paper.

At the time of each briefing, individual students offered possible ways to keep an ongoing record of their experiences in class, in readiness to complete the SET form at the end of the semester. Participant suggestions included:

- attaching a page at back of the course outline where notes could be recorded. A suggestion was that such a page could include a grid for each session

- allowing time at the end of each session to record key learning, helpful activities, key growth, challenge, heart response, etc.

- recording a sentence after each class session; adding a comment into the reflections journal already being kept

- noting highlights and lowlights

- noting examples of personal and professional growth

- noting an enjoyable teaching approach

- evaluating three aspects of the session: course content and learning activities, tutor's input, student's self-assessment of engagement

- having a mid-course mini-evaluation form which could lead into the end of course evaluation form

- having a fortnightly mini-evaluation form

- making the SET end of course form available to students from the beginning of the course

- being given more time to complete the evaluation form so that students can look back through notes, etc. before completing it.

The Initial Briefing provided opportunities to engage with apparent bias factors. Consequent discussion confirmed barriers faced by Māori, Pacifica peoples, Korean and some Christian students for whom the process feels counter-cultural in that it positions them in what they perceive to be non-acceptable or disrespectful roles in relationship to educators.

Here is an example of one such discussion.

> Student 1: I am not willing to critique the teacher. That would be an act of arrogance on my part. The teacher will recognise my handwriting and be offended. I love my teacher. I love all of my teachers. I cannot assume to know how they should do their job.

> Initially Student 2 agreed with Student 1.

> Dr Sanders engaged the group in a conversation about why a teacher might give feedback to a student and what the outcome of that process was. Those students present mentioned ideas such as: contribute to their growth, they care that students improve, they change their understanding…

> Dr Sanders then made the links between that process from teacher to student to how a student may also contribute to the teacher.

> After this discussion, Student 2 changed his mind. Student 1 however remained adamant that she would not share areas that she thought the

teacher could improve. She was encouraged to continue to affirm the helpful practices.

Findings

These findings result from analysis of data from the previously identified three phases of data collection:

1. Focus groups (ranging from three to eight individuals, 1 ZOOM conversation and six student email responses) involving a total of 35 students, with a range of ages, ethnicities and both genders represented.

2. Individual interviews with seven educators.

3. End of course SET forms from a total of 149 students.

Focus Group Data Analysis

Most participants acknowledged a positive influence on their behaviour, particularly, as keeping a record of their evaluation of teaching throughout the paper meant they took more note of what was happening in class and what worked well for them and their learning. They also paid more attention to what their peers were noticing. The general appreciation for the presentation is captured by one student who commented that "the introductory discussion helped me understand how evaluations contribute to the development of courses", and highlighted the importance of student voice within what she named as a "bi-directional learning environment". No negative comments were made about the Initial Briefing. Only two Focus Group participants reported that they had not changed the way they approached the SET process. A more representative response is captured in this comment from a student who approached Dr Sanders immediately after the introductory presentation to express her appreciation, stating that the "presentation allowed her to more fully appreciate the importance of the evaluation process".

The analysis is organised in themes as they emerged from the Focus Group transcripts and participant comments are drawn from all Focus Groups at the three participating institutions in terms of the influence of the Initial Briefing.

Theme 1: The influence on students' *understanding* of the SET process.

Increased motivation to participate:

With understanding the purpose for the evaluations came motivation for engaging with the process – e.g., "I found the explanation and reasoning behind the evaluations motivating in the sense I saw greater importance in evaluations than previously". Several students from different institutions commented that they appreciated having "the bigger picture". Typically, this led to a change of focus from perceiving the SET forms as an isolated event, to contributing to the good of the institution or educator. For example, in terms of the institution: "it's not just a little survey, it's something I should be a part of". In particular participants drew attention to understanding the potential for contributing to the institution as "a new side", or the need to have "more of an

institutional mindset, not just a course". While literature identifies lack of understanding of the SET process as a barrier to participation (Gupta et al., 2020) none of the reviewed literature focused specifically on understanding its purpose.

Helps learners to provide feedback which includes critique.

One student shared how, recognising that educators "put a lot of effort into preparing classes" had previously meant that she had tended "to be quite lenient in my critique… but what you're saying is don't feel like you're judging teachers like that". Not only did increased understanding of the purpose of the SET process change motivation, it also "gave me confidence to voice a couple of concerns as well as say positive things". The Initial Briefing "assured me that it was okay/safe to be transparent"; that "our honest feedback, both good and critical, would be gratefully received". It appears to make a difference to student motivation to engage in the SET process when participants understand the value of their evaluative feedback, particularly regarding the notions of "helping rather than judging" and that it is right for student to recognise/reward the effort educators put into teaching the paper with helpful feedback. It calls for them to "give diligence and proper consideration". For one student, understanding that it was helpful to give feedback to the tutor was recognised as an opportunity to entertain the idea that failure to learn might be linked to the teacher's approach. Perhaps there is a growing realisation that "it's important to teach it in a way that the student gets it". Communicating when this is not the case therefore becomes very important.

Helps learners to adopt broader perspectives and responsibilities

The realisation of "how important evaluation at the end is and how it makes a difference to future classes and other people and of course the tutors as well" meant that some students saw the SET process very differently and with others' benefit in mind. The focus moved from the immediate to "the next generation so it's worthwhile". For one participant, "The most obvious reason" to "hand in a student evaluation, would be to help the tutor grow and know if they are meeting the students where they are at". One way this could occur was linked to the fact that the teacher would have insight into "the way the students are learning or interpreting what they're teaching at the time".

Understanding the iterative and reciprocal nature of the SET process, in that "our feedback has made an impact or that other people's feedback has impacted us" is a way to "build a community feel and that would motivate me to then write more". Another student valued "the importance of student voice and creating a bidirectional learning environment that had the interest and success of students at its core".

One motivation to contribute to the SET process could be understood in terms of justice in that one voice does not get to dominate. This is illustrated in the two following quotes:

> I know there are certain people who are more inclined to speak up than others and sometimes they don't share the opinion of the entire class so the more people who fill in the form, the more accurate the information will be because if one person or two people say that they had a problem

with something and the rest of the class really liked it but didn't say anything.

And,

> Especially if you have had a really challenging course, with particularly challenging assignments where your entire class has found it challenging, and quite often they won't speak up so that you know that you have the responsibility of speaking up.

The influence on students' practice throughout the duration of a paper.
For the majority of participants, the Initial Briefing was influential. Only two students specifically noted that it had no influence on their practice. Two other participants indicated that "The discussion created awareness but when I think back … I cannot remember much detail". Most participants described behaviours which they attributed to the Initial Briefing.

Increased noticing
It appeared that the Initial Briefing contributed to students taking more notice of their practice throughout a course. Comments students reported include:

> "I have reflected periodically";
> "taking note of a few things at different times throughout the course";
> "We took a few notes in classes and later referred back to them in other classes to see if they had improved";
> Throughout the paper I compiled ideas about "things I have valued most about the class or struggled with".

Several participants reported that they were aware that the way they approached the SET process throughout the course "…was a little different for me". It appears that not only did learners notice more, but their 'noticing' was "… for the betterment of success", or "… for the aid of future students".

Increased self-awareness
For one student they became aware in Semester One that they "usually write down the bad things" or that they found themselves "writing the same thing all the time so gave up". Another commented "it's easier to give feedback face-to-face straight away during the actual tutorial" accompanied with the belief that "I think they (tutors) find that quite useful".

Evidence of increased awareness throughout the duration of the course is a theme throughout participant focus group data. For example:

> "Throughout the course I gave time to considering what comments and recommendations I would make to aid future students";

> Or, when "things popped up during our courses, I thought about mentioning it later in the SET process".

What is interesting about the above comment is that it suggests that the changed awareness was not limited to the course which was the context for this research, but rather something the participant was thinking about for all of their courses.

Several participants noted that though they "did not record much feedback during the course" they "found I was more mentally aware of positive/negatives" , or "I knew the SET form was coming and reminded myself every now and again about what I would put on the form".

Theme 2: The influence on students' *practice* when completing the SET form.

Participants were more thoughtful about their contributions.

Students perceived that they were more thoughtful about their feedback "I spent more time considering what I wrote down", or "I spent more time considering what to contribute and wrote in more detail". It is interesting that in this statement the participant has positioned themselves as making a contribution. No longer were they "ticking a box" but rather understood that "giving feedback … was a valuable contribution to BTI". Another student shared that they had "… tried to make sure I was more specific about topics", "wrote in more detail", "extended my answers to make sure I shared my thoughts accurately", and, they did this "at different times throughout the course, not just at the end at evaluation time". Several students noted that the recording of thoughts, observations and responses through the year "was useful" when it came to completing the end of course evaluations.

Participants approached activity with different attitude

There was an indication of change of attitude toward the process of completing the SET form. Where, "in the past I found the SET form annoying" or, "it's just a little bit of a chore", participants indicated that "I will be more thoughtful than in the past". In most cases this change is specifically linked to an increase sense of responsibility to those who followed and/or to the acceptability of providing critique. A change in approach was due to a new perception of the SET process giving "more responsibility to those who are leaving… to leave something behind for the other students that may go through the course". This same participant returns to this theme at another time in the Focus Group, affirming what appears to be for them a new insight – "knowing that it's okay to be looking for those things, that it's actually good and okay to be evaluating what we're learning and how it's being taught". Once again, this insight is linked to understanding that "it's a good thing to be able to do for the class behind us". A Māori student reported "I made a lot of suggestions directly to tutors. I had more confidence".

Participants linked SET form design to their increased desire to provide most helpful feedback

Overall students appreciated that the SET forms were "generally well thought out". However, they did have suggestions and comments which related to the content of the form. These included: where a course had two tutors – being able to comment on each because "I wanted to rate them differently"; including the opportunity "to feedback on the video conferencing side of things as well". The wording of the questions, or the categorisation of the questions, "didn't make it easy" to share exactly what was desired. On the other hand, some participants were more proactive and "even extended some of my answers to make sure I shared my thoughts accurately". Questions

which were perceived as 'very surface' were also viewed as "of very little value". A participant who had just completed six SET forms noted that "the questions are very shallow, very surface and I don't think they help me give any useful feedback unless I am prepared to make long comments in the comments box". The fact that for one institution, "there is a lot of 1–5 tick boxes …" followed by an extra comments box was viewed as duplicating – "it's like yes but what do you want me to say?". Participants had a preference for clear, singularly focused questions.

Students noted that timing of SET forms is typically an issue – especially if they are required to be completed before final assignments are marked and returned. It is clearly difficult for students to provide comment about the effectiveness of an educator's marking when a significant component or proportion of that was not yet received. In making a case for this, one participant noted, "we are asked to give feedback on our marking and assignments. It seems sensible to do this once we have received our feedback and had time to reflect on whether we understood what was being asked and our learning".

Evidence in participant Focus Group contributions of evaluation fatigue (see p. 7) can be seen in comments such as: "Also, at the end of semester many of us full timers were exhausted! I think we would give more thoughtful feedback after this had time to settle and clear". One participant noted that they had "done 6 now".

Theme 3: The influence on students' *expectations* about what would happen with the feedback they had provided.

On the whole participants were very positive about the influence their feedback would have in 'leading to change'. There was confidence in the institution being "responsive to feedback" and that "tutors want to grow their practice". Their assurance that their ideas would be received and acted on, encouraged them to "give due diligence and proper consideration" to the task. An interesting theme which emerged in this section was the recognition that participants gave to changes being linked to "learning intentions", "fosters student success", or "adds value to the course". They expected that SET responses would be "collated and checked against quality measures and course goals and changes made to future teaching where deemed appropriate", or, take notice if students "identify any learning intentions not adequately covered".

Several picked up on the multi-layers of evaluation: the course content and delivery for the benefit of the tutor's professional development, changes in the course outline for the benefit of future students, evidence of student voice within an institution meeting auditing requirements for the benefit of the institution. The full significance of the process became even clearer on hearing the talk a second time.

While a participant might report that the Initial Briefing "assured me that my feedback, both good and critical, would be gratefully received", concerns about ramifications continue. Another participant voiced their hope that the educator would "be encouraged" by the positive comments and consider "the

couple of concerns I voiced". It appears that their responses were shaped by accepting a key point from the Initial Briefing that "tutors are open to feedback" because for this participant, "what I would hate to happen is for any tutor to feel hurt, discouraged, or to hold a grudge against me for voicing a concern". However, for one student, at the end of the day any change which occurred would be limited to those "that the tutor thinks is necessary".

A few in-depth responses indicate the level of self-awareness which participants demonstrate about what occurs in the duration of a paper. They are particularly attuned to the messages educators give 'in the moment'. Typically courses are developed and critiqued through institutional quality assurance processes before the educator meets the students. This can result in an educator new to teaching a course, receiving an outline prepared by a different educator. One participant picked up on this and thought that the result of the feedback process may indeed lead to "courses might be slightly more personalised by the actual tutor. Some of our courses have been written in previous years … and they (educator) are looking and going, I wouldn't have done that, in the middle of class. So maybe reforming a little bit more to the tutor's perspectives they have now…"

Interestingly, one participant noted how, at the time of the Focus Group, their understanding of their own feedback had emerged. They had (as do many first year students) commented on how difficult the readings were, but "I look at now and think some of the readings I thought were a bit difficult were just because it was a new concept to me and now it would be easier".

Other influences on motivation to engage with SET process

a. The nature of the connection between student and educator

    One participant's response demonstrates the power of bias factors such as relationship with the lecturer. "My relationship with the lecturer heavily impacts my ability to concentrate and participate in class… So, for me, how much I like the lecturer does come into it a lot". They noted that even in light of the Initial Briefing and educators' regular reminders to "write down notes for the SET form" and their attempt "…to think less about how much I liked or disliked the lecturer" in the end "I just approached it as I always do – I did the SET form as I always did". Participants' responses indicate that they are aware of how they approach the SET forms. For example, where responses are in the form of a rating scale "I tend to always go in the middle. It has to feel really strong to go to the other side so I'm not sure that's very helpful".

On the other hand, participants noted they were more willing to engage in the SET process when what they heard "the lecturer openly say throughout the whole course "I believe in you", or "there is a lot of potential in this class". When they knew that the educator was "for me" then "there was no fear, awkwardness or embarrassment".

b. Giving examples of how previous feedback has changed the current course builds confidence in educator and SET process.

Another way motivation to engage was built came from understanding the iterative and reciprocal nature of the SET process in that "I do like the idea that we hear that our feedback has made an impact or that other people's

feedback has impacted us". This participant imagined that this is a way to "build a community feel and that would motivate me to then write more". Participants gave examples of educator's regular reference to the role student feedback has in course design and how such encouraged them to contribute to the SET process. Evidence of the effect previous student feedback has had "encourage[s] me that the impact of other students has changed the course and my impact would help others". Similar examples included noting when or how assignments, readings or teaching approaches were changed.

Three students from one institution thought that they would be able to engage with the SET process better if there were changes to the way they were scaffolded to complete the form. These students were from a range of non-European backgrounds – one Asian, one Pasifika, and one Māori. They had concerns with the questions, finding them "hard to understand", or, "I don't know what they mean". One student thought it strange that there were only two questions about the teacher. These students clearly wanted to participate and would have dearly appreciated "more guidance, more details" or help because "We have no idea what we should expect so it's sometimes hard to evaluate".

Educator Data Analysis

Interviews with local educators were face-to-face and, for those at a distance by phone. All educators reported that they appreciated receiving constructive feedback from students. The data is organised in terms of a perceived influence on educators, changes educators observed; firstly in student behaviour and, secondly, in SET form responses.

Influence of Initial Briefing on educators:

Several educators reported that at various times throughout the course they would remind students to record ideas they wanted to feedback to them. One educator developed the practice that, when a student would give feedback or ask for clarification about a section of the class session, he would remind them to record their comments in readiness for the SET form at the end of the Semester.

Educators embraced a range of ways to keep the importance of the SET process before students. For example, one educator reported how, at different points in the course, they gave examples of how courses had been updated. Another educator shared how "most times I allocated space at the end of a session for students to record ideas about the activities/teaching in readiness for the SET at the end of the semester… I reminded them that I value the feedback. If students made anecdotal comments to me during/after class I asked them to note that on their feedback page." Another educator reported that as well as asking for feedback about his teaching two or three times during the course, sometimes he would use the questions in the SET form as the basis for a class discussion. One advantage of doing this made him more aware of the questions. In response to this increased awareness he suggested that it would be beneficial to "add a few more guidelines to the SET form so students have an idea of the breadth of comments hoped for". Interestingly, some students from the same institution agreed with his assessment (See p.

26). This educator also "encouraged students to feedback at the time of their idea". He described the rationale for doing this "so I can pick up anything I can address or change immediately".

A common theme in educator comments was their intention to "tell the next class what changes resulted from the previous SET process". One educator shared how they were "now considering the idea of also going back to previous class to inform them of changes resulting from their feedback".

There is some indication that educators may have been more attentive to the student feedback: "from reading the responses I saw the feedback was meaningful and constructive". In this case, the educator noted that the feedback motivated them to seek professional support from an expert related to "learning online"; something which was commonly identified in the SET responses b their students. Some educators gave examples of changes they had already made to their teaching approach – particularly in terms of catering for "differing preferences evident".

Changes observed in student behaviour:

Hearing examples of how previous students' feedback had influenced papers appeared to give students "more confidence". One educator believed that the students had embraced the messages within the Initial Briefing and consequently been more active in providing feedback to them throughout the course itself. Another educator observed that "Most [students] had a specific page within their notebooks for this [i.e. noting evaluations or feedback]. Students are more motivated to give feedback if they have data to draw on".

One educator noted that, after the Initial Briefing about SET processes, there was an increase in willingness for students to give immediate feedback after a session. He also observed students reminding each other to record their views about the effectiveness of sessions. He also allocated time at the end of a teaching session for writing their evaluative comments about the session. He noticed that many students had a specific page at the back of their notebooks for this purpose, and those using devices had a specific file as their record. Despite all these positive signs the tutor was disappointed to find no significant increase in completion rate over previous years. However, it should be noted the response was still just over fifty percent.

It appears that these educators now see value in not only telling the new class about changes made based on SET responses, but also reporting back to the contributing class after the changes are made.

Influence on end of course SET responses

At one institution, students complete the one-page SET forms in class and consequently response rates are very high. However, for the other two institutions, the forms are online and completed (or not) voluntarily. One educator was thrilled to note that, while the SET response rate for their paper was at 50% and he would have liked it to be higher, it was double the response rate he had previously had for that paper. He not only recognised a marked increase in the number of submissions of the online SET task, but also commented about an increased quality in the feedback of students; including both positive aspects and those that were perceived to need further development. Consequently, he had a clear indication from the students about

how to further improve both delivery and content of the course. This educator was excited about the outcomes and offered the comment that he "will definitely encourage other staff to make more of SET at the beginning of, and during the semester".

On noticing that response rates for another course was 100%, we invited the course educator to provide his take on why this might be so. He reported that he had sought written feedback from the class mid-point and welcomed student feedback and questions after class. He was also proactive in that at the end of the final class he reminded students of the three outcomes that could come from their contribution (as noted in the Initial Briefing) and encouraged them to be 'brutally honest'. He finished that class session early while encouraging students to stay until they had completed the online SET form. This same educator reported that he observed that "more students were adding additional comments rather than just answering the Likert Scale section". In this way, the educator was receiving feedback which was more specific and, therefore, more helpful.

Based on the quality of evaluations he received, one educator commented that he believed that including the Initial Briefing "showed you did the right thing". He believed that students had embraced its message. In particular, the presentation had "helped students know that they could evaluate' and that they gained a "heightened awareness of possibility of influencing the course". This educator, had clear ideas of how he planned to build on this experience into all his future courses, including highlighting the process at the beginning of his next course and providing regular 'in class' time for students to jot down their ideas.

Institutional SET form analysis

As mentioned earlier, the different institutions have very different forms, different foci in those forms and a range of ways in which students can complete the forms.

Background information about SET forms

For students in one institution completing the SET form is voluntary and typically submitted online. They are invited to register a response to characteristics of a course in terms of agree, disagree and neutral. Questions were:

- That the student: found the course challenging and stimulating; understood subject materials.

- That the lecturer: had a genuine interest in the students, was adequately accessible and responsive to students; was enthusiastic about teaching the course.

- That feedback on assessments was valuable; methods of evaluating work were fair and appropriate.

- That course material: was well prepared, encouraged to think, aided spiritual growth.

- Overall satisfaction with the course.

Students then have the opportunity to provide comments in terms of which characteristics of the course have been most valuable to their learning, and which are most important to improve on.

In another institution, students complete the form during their final face-to-face class. It is a one-page form which uses the language of the particular course's learning aims. Each question is within a bordered space where students enter their response. Questions are:

- Has this module helped you understand the "learning intention aim"?

- How could the course be improved?

- Was the amount of course work, readings and assessment/assignments appropriate, relevant and manageable?

- Was the module taught effectively? If yes, how? If not, why not (please describe the teaching of the course, teaching style, presentation teaching aids, etc.)

- How would you rate your satisfaction on the teaching of this module? (*please circle with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highes*t).

- The key learning outcome of this module is to: [specific course learning outcome].

- Upon completion of the course, have you achieved the learning outcome of this module? Yes/No. Please comment:

- How would you rate your overall satisfaction of this module? (*please circle with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highes*t).

NB: All students completing this SET form indicated they had achieved the learning outcome and with only one exception, each student gave the same rating for both components – i.e., if they rated teaching of course as a 4, they also rated their overall satisfaction with the course as a 4.

Finally, students in the remaining institution completed the SET form online. It asks the student to choose a rating from 1 to 4 (1 the lowest, 4 the highest) focused on:

- Student self-assessment in terms of how they made the most of the learning opportunities available to them in the course; what about their own learning experience were they most pleased with, and, what they would change were they to do the course again.

- About the educator: clear communication intentions and expectations; demonstrated knowledge of subject matter, gave timely responses to queries.

- About educator's teaching style:, enhanced my learning, safe but challenging willingness to explore bias, valued questions, challenged to think and take ownership of my thinking and were appropriate for content.

- About assignments, marking and feedback: feedback contribute to development, assignments were marked and returned in time to contribute to ongoing learning/next assignment.

- About alignment with the institutions values – particularly that educators and their teaching 'integrated biblical principles into learning and teaching experience', and, 'engaged with unique nature of living in Aotearoa New Zealand'.

- Overall satisfaction.

Students then have an open-ended question which relates to the course's specific aim and another which states "We take your feedback seriously, please make any further comments about or suggestions for this course".

Within the returned SET forms for this institution, no student gave a 1 for any of the components (though this has happened before) with the majority of responses (97.5%) across the three courses being a 3 (22%) or 4 (75.5%).

Changes to SET forms during research project:

Two institutions changed their SET forms in Semester One, 2020 and one has indicated an intention to change them for 2021. One added the following questions in response to COVID-19 and the institution's move to fully online teaching.

- Your overall experience of online delivery?

- How did the interaction with the lecturer online affect your learning?

- How did the interaction with the classmates online affect your learning?

- What online practices and resources enhanced your learning?

- What online practices and resources could have been improved?

The other institutional change was an already planned phase as part of an ongoing QA process.

Focus for analysis of SET form data

At the beginning of this study, it was not our intention to make comments about the effectiveness of each institution's course SET form design. The data we were particularly interested in related to what students identified as important to them to communicate to their educators and institutions. We were also interested to observe how what they identified as important reflected concerns in the literature review around students' ability to provide thoughtful and helpful feedback that was more than their personal perception of their learning experience (though surely this would be of interest too). In this section data is presented in terms of the following common themes within student responses:

- Students want to grow and they are conscious of factors which both empower and disempower them.

- The course educator's personal characteristics, knowledge, teaching style and willingness to model faith informed learning and life, influence the confidence a student has to be safe and secure, to fully participate in the course – and in the SET process itself.

- Students seek connection: connection with the educator, with their peers and importantly with their current context, including their culture, their professional field.

Students want to grow

The language in the SET forms clearly indicated that uppermost in students' considerations is the desire to grow and they are conscious of factors which both empower and disempower them. They appreciated learning experiences which gave "a new sense of understanding" or built an ability to "read with new eyes". They do not shy away from challenge, critique or provocation to think more deeply and appreciated educator choices which helped them do so. Particularly evident within the comments was being challenged to think more deeply – be that through questions, comments or critique on forum postings or assignment feedback. Some examples of this are: "Assignments were really thought provoking", "really appreciated the super clear critique on assignments".

A student wrote, "For me, the real learning seems to happen when I am forced to grapple with an overarching narrative in the assignments – found those really helpful! After that, the lectures began to make the most sense!". Another noted their enjoyment, "particularly the reflections journal where I dared to write what I really thought". Students appreciate the educator being willing and able to manage a range of opinions or positions on a topic and they don't like it if they perceive the educator "is very biased in his opinions and does not seem to allow room for disagreements, by subtly making it seem like all agree". Another student made the same kind of comment about some course readings which they thought were "not terribly appropriate – heavily biased and rather opinionated rather than academic. Improving the quality of readings is my main recommendation".

Clarity of written and oral communication is identified as important to students' learning, whether this is in terms of the course outline, session outlines which identified critical ideas or assignment questions or broadly speaking, course expectations. For example: "I did think the questions for the essays and assignments weren't very clear", "course material was very vague and overall, not very helpful". On the other hand, where clarity and scaffolding were present, they were seen to "build their ability to learn". It appears that students appreciated aspects of a course which fed forward into their future – specifically as a learner. They noted things about which they could now do and that a sense of clarity engenders confidence and means a student does not become confused or anxious about whether they are doing the right thing. For example, one student reported, "I often had the course outline, readings and then the online material next to each other and found it very confusing at times to make sure all was done".

SET form responses included insightful comments about the way educators sequenced the material or content as it enabled them to concentrate on learning. As well as noting what they liked in this regard (e.g., the paper being "very thoughtfully put together", the assessment outlines made sense"), they had suggestions about what might improve the work flow – especially in the light of COVID-19: "I think this course would function better spread out across two separate sessions or classes. The volume of content was a lot to take in in one lengthy session". On the other hand, they were not impressed when "Material needed for essays was not covered in class, or it was covered after we'd already written the essay". In terms of sequencing course components, one student was thinking of future students, reporting that it may be advantageous "… maybe if we did the final assignment first? That might help the students who don't have such a solid understanding of [the topic] already to then be able to absorb more of the content from class".

Throughout a course, students have one eye on whether or not the educator's choices are going to enable them to "get through the content". Another noted, "I fretted about being behind in the material". A common idea across SET form responses from the three institutions was that they get anxious when educators share from their recognised, extensive knowledge kete in a way which students perceive reduces needful engagement with other course components. One example of this is "I know the lecturer has a lot to talk about from his own experience and knowledge, but if it could be cut short so we don't fall behind on our notes". This remains the case even when it involved "stuff that was fascinating". The same idea was noted when educators tell wonderful stories, if the telling of those stories has ramifications for course coverage. Then students "feel it would be better to stick strictly to the time for course content or questions about assignments".

A regular focus for critique within SET responses was related to assignment marking and feedback. As noted above, students appreciate educators provoking them to think more deeply or wider. They don't appreciate when this doesn't happen. While some comments were generic ("feedback could be more helpful") often it was linked to this sense of desired growth ("would be idea to have more feedback on how I could have improved my grade". Several students commented that marking came across as harsh, or "it did think his marking was harsh in some areas" but didn't give further information as to why

they thought that. Perhaps it was linked to a desire for encouragement, "Perhaps in addition to critique, just a little more encouragement (but not too much) would've gone down well".

In a SET form which invited students to comment about their own engagement and what they would change if they were to have the opportunity over again, a student wrote "If I could change anything it would be to be braver about speaking up in discussions and giving answers, without worrying what I have to say might be wrong (this isn't a reflection on the atmosphere of class, just something I need to work on)". Other similar comments were: "I wish I had spoken my mind more when it came to the discussions in the smaller groups" and a "I found that I should have been a bit more active in the forums". It is important for educators to think about these experiences for those who have English as a second or third language, and within faith-based institutions for the student who is not immersed in scriptural knowledge or who, in terms of their own faith journey, is still a seeker. The following SET form entry exemplifies such a person.

> "The scriptures is something I am not too familiar with but it has really brought my understanding to a whole new level. I found it really hard to be honest I had no idea we will be learning about the scriptures at the level that we have. It has been really enjoyable though if only there was more time to learn deeper into the readings so to get a clearer understanding. It was really hard for me to respond to forums sometimes in the fear that I would say something wrong or that I may offend someone whom has more knowledge than I, in the Bible. I also found that because of the language barrier it was quite challenging to comprehend many of the exercises and readings which is why it took me quite some time to respond".

One student concluded her long SET response in the 'any other comment' section (>240 words) with the words, "Thank you for so many opportunities to grow and learn and be".

The course educator influences students' confidence

Within these SET form responses, the course educator's personal characteristics, knowledge, teaching style and willingness to model reflective learning and doing life informed by faith, influence the confidence a student has to be safe and secure, to fully participate in the course – and in the SET process itself. Personal characteristics which were valued included: being gracious, being open about their faith journey, humility, patient, approachable, supportive, warmth, caring, relational, funny, consistently encouraged reflective learning, encouraged self-care.

The educator's attitude and demeanour are influential in terms of creating an environment in which students are willing and feel safe to express their opinion, concerns or queries. Such educators "are very caring in their approach to teaching, creating a safe place to learn and bring a strength of knowing the course content really well". One Focus Group participant noted:

> "I'm not afraid to express my opinion if they don't ask for it, because particularly with [Educator's Name], he asks if we have any questions throughout the lectures as well and he's not afraid to answer any question, he's very open. Even if he doesn't know he will go and find out

and tell us next week"… "He will check, do you guys get this? He'll just check to see we're on track".

There were many comments which identified that an educator's passion for the subject and expert knowledge resulted in students' "confidence in her sharing what we needed to know to get through the required learning". Comments included appreciation for "educator's teaching style and knowledge", "clearly passionate and knowledgeable about his subject", "at ease with the subject matter".

In terms of the educator's teaching style, students reported that they enjoy variation , storytelling, visuals "whether it be pictures of grapes on the white board", or, "going to the trouble of setting out pathways of information [a timeline] on the classroom floor so we could interact with each other and learn about the treaty and the effects on health, finance, community and culture overall". Also valued were carefully chosen relevant and reliable videos; particularly helpful were "videos that are able to help describe what we are learning and put it in a way that I could understand". The valuing of this variation is not for its own sake but because it is understood as the educator's commitment to the student's learning and it helps their learning and therefore contributes to their desire to grow.

Students want to grow and indicated appreciation when educators provoked them to think more deeply. For example, an educator was affirmed for the way they "answers questions in a punchy way and makes me think critically". Similarly, [Educator's Name] "was excellent in his online response and feedback. He was very professional and asked thought-provoking questions in such a way that created a safe online environment where I could be open and honest about my thoughts and feelings in regards to the coursework". A student valued feedback which "contributed to my development", and resulted in them "personally felt challenged in my thinking". The following comment was included as a response to a question related to what had been effective? "I was often challenged throughout this course to look at why I believed something. In my forums the educator often asked questions which helped draw out what I was thinking even more". Students appreciated and looked forward to "feedback, responses and questions" which were "always so thought provoking and interesting". Once again the link is to growth: "This helped me to give further thought about some of the things I had written as well as being more insightful", and safety: [Educator's Name] was very focused and clear and was willing to challenge my thinking (which I appreciated). The fact that he gave a mix of encouraging and extending feedback meant I was able to express what I was thinking/feeling, without having to be guarded. It felt as though he was really willing to hear what was going on for us, the good, bad and ugly. It was a refreshing and empowering forum".
Students also commented on what can be described as the way the course was scheduled and students were scaffolded. For example, "[Educator 's Name] did a fantastic job of breaking the required reading and journaling down across the semester – was very helpful"

Students seek connection:

Students seek, in fact "need" connection with the educator, with their peers and importantly with their current context, including their culture, their

professional field and their personal journey. A sense of connection is equated with being valued as a student. "You can tell [Educator's Name] looks further into the heart of the student behind the words". Several students registered disappointment when this connection with an educator was absent. This appears to be particularly so for the student who finds it "tough getting back into study". This connection is sought by both face to face and online students and is appreciated as a source of enriched learning. For those students used to face to face teaching they "missed being able to chat to the lecturer after class or during beaks to clarify any confusion I was having". In terms of implications from COVID-19, there was much appreciation for the educator who "…absolutely went out of his way to assist us in the "lockdown" situation meaning the course had to be adapted with ZOOM lectures. He recorded lectures as well delivering them live; and always responded promptly to questions". Another student "liked [EDUCATOR]'s use of breakout groups", and another noted, "having live lectures was a big plus". All of these emphasise the value placed on synchronous connection. Once again, the reason they are valued is due to the fact that engagement with the educator enables engagement with the course. This idea is noted by a student who was concurrently undertaking other classes – "I like that we still had live lectures. Another course I did, we had only recorded lectures and in the context of lockdown I found it much harder to engage with the other course".

It is not just connection with the educator which is sought. Connection with their peers through synchronous online tutorials or discussions is seen to help learning and it is appreciated when "we were asked intentionally to connect with other students" and "Often you learn so much more by talking to people". One student's focus for improving a course was "Maybe some sharing, with the whole group, of some of the ideas that surfaced after assignment 1. I think for many (as for me) this was a huge learning curve – almost revolutionary for some. Therefore, maybe an optional forum on what students learned or how they were impacted by learning about who God is, might be an idea"

Neither is It just people to people connection that is valued. The student's comment that they expected "preparation before a field trip and debriefing after it so learning can be maximised and shared across all students" indicates that connections which maximise learning for all are sought – and valued. Similarly, students noted how helpful it was when educators used examples which connect to their personal world: e.g., in terms of ethnicity – "examples the Pasifika community could grasp and understand".

Another way in which connection is understood is through the educator's presence in the online context. One student noted how they "really liked the presence of the tutors online in this course, and another noted how such comments "made me feel like we were a part of a group rather than just left to own devices". Another student reported that, "I really like the feedback from [Educator's Name] every week under the forum posts. I really like the way [Educator's Name] highlighted and took note of quotes, key points, sayings or main ideas and thoughts that I had written in posts and reflected some of those things back to me in feedback. This helped me to give further thought about some of the things I had written as well as being more insightful".

It is not unusual when students have been in a course which included group work, to find that they comment about an aspect of its challenges. For example, one student wrote, "I became a little frustrated with being with a group of people who nearly always either hadn't done the reading or for some reason didn't contribute". For an educator reading feedback such as this, it is a reminder to ensure that students understand how critical it is that all prepare or contribute if everyone is going to grow – as they know they want to.

It is obvious that the very same event can be seen by some students as positive and by others as negative. An interesting example of this related to a course where under positive components a student had written, "application to modern contexts was interesting" and under needing to be improved, another student wrote, "application to modern context was often negative in tone and didn't look at the positives". The way a student experiences course components depends on the experiences which inform their critique.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The project indicates that students benefit when an Initial Briefing related to the nature and purpose of the SET process is included early in their course. The literature review undertaken for this project did not identify any research which explored such an intervention. Literature tends to focus on the SET process, rather than the purpose for that process.

An additional review of literature also did not identify research which focused on ensuring that learners understand the purpose for SETs but we did find one study (Wong et al., 2014) where the educators raised concerns about "the lack of clarity for both clinical coaches and students and the intended purpose of SET and the non-compulsory requirement for completion of SET" (pp. 405–406). These educators thought that professional development about the purposes of SET together with "engaging them in the SET feedback loop" would "enable them to use SET feedback more effectively" (p. 406). They suggested that it would be "useful" if the School of Medicine could make a presentation to them "at the beginning of the year in relation to how the SET would operate for the year" and "how to interpret SET feedback" (p. 406).

Another group of studies (Brandl et al., 2017; Stalmeijer et al., 2016) involved student teams in processes related to increasing student voice and providing avenues to strengthen the feedback/feedforward process. The student teams may be involved in focus groups or act as an ad hoc committee and may focus on one particular course or a suite of courses for a particular cohort. In all cases, "student confidence that their feedback was valued" increased and therefore rates of engagement in the SET process also increased. As these processes involved students dialoguing with educators and finding ways to deal with the power differential, "Students appreciated the opportunity to learn how to give and receive feedback and to help shape the curriculum" (Brandl et al., 2017, p. 226) as well as "contribute to internal quality assurance processes" (Stalmeijer et al., 2016, p. 53).

It is clear that the educator's attitude to the SET process is an important factor for the effectiveness of SETs. This is especially so in terms of ownership of the process. For example, the educators in Anderson's (2006) study

approached the SET process in terms of being assessed by students compared with educators in the above mentioned study by Wong et al., (2014) who received feedback from a constructive, critical reflective perspective – to the point that if "there was a consistent negative comment" they would seek additional feedback from the students (p. 403).

We contend that the data from Student Focus Groups, Educator interviews and SET forms support the development of a model for the SET process which can be understood as a GIFT giving where GIFT is an acronym as follows:

- **G**uidelines to help both students and staff new to tertiary teaching understand the purpose and role of the SET process.

- **I**nstitutional Commitment and Caring for all participants involved in the SET process and to 'closing the loop' so that student responses to SET forms (gifts), are honoured, analysed and fed forward to improve teachers' teaching and learners' learning.

- **F**it for Purpose in that SET forms are designed so that students are well placed to respond to the questions and opportunities within them to rate a range of aspects of the teaching they have received.

- **T**ell stories and give examples throughout out the course – not just at the end of the course. The SET process is more effective if it is not viewed as a one-off event but rather educators to TELL stories and give examples of how they have engaged with previous SET feedback – received as a GIFT rather than judgement.

Student evaluation of teaching for a particular course is a gift from the student to the institution and educator and when educators curate that gift appropriately, it becomes a gift back to the next group of students who enrol in the course as well as to institutional due diligence.

There is much value in not seeing the SET process as a 'one off' event.

Institutionally

Institutions need to ensure that clear processes which "close the loop" are in place to ensure that feedback from SET processes is valued and influential and that participants are made aware of how this occurs. While the literature refers to the fact that most students do not understand the purpose for SETs, it appears that it cannot be taken for granted that educators either understand this process or appreciate their role in it. It appears critical that time is invested for each new cohort of learners to be thoroughly engaged with the purpose and benefits within the SET process for the institution, learners and educators – similar to that included in the Initial Briefing. For those students, it remains important that they be reminded of these things in each course in which they are enrolled and that educators continue to share examples of how they have engaged with SET feedback.

It would appear important to include a thorough introduction to the SET process – its purpose, benefits and effective characteristics as part of educator induction.

In terms of the SET forms, we observe that at both the institutional and educator level it is important to pay attention to the questions asked. This is particularly so in terms of evaluating them on two related fronts: Firstly, it is important to consider if students actually have the information to answer a question. For example, if the question asks if the educator used appropriate teaching styles, students don't necessarily feel equipped to answer such a question. On the other hand, if the question is phrased in terms of the way an educator's teaching approaches helped or hindered their learning – this the student is well positioned to answer. Another example cited by students related to having to comment about the educator's feedback when they were yet to receive such.

Secondly, educators or institutional quality assurance staff would do well to consider how a student's response to each question might contribute to improved teaching and learning – rather than just satisfying Quality Assurance requirement that these occur. Students indicated that they would appreciate knowing the types of comments which are helpful to educators. One student suggested that when a broad, open question is included, that some possible starter ideas are also provided. The reason for this was so that students were not second guessing what the SET form designer is looking for. Students made it clear that they do not like the pattern of having to respond to a question with a Likert scale and then always being asked for a related comment. They would rather have a series of questions with Likert scale responses and the opportunity to make comments at the end. It is likely that, if institutions could find a way to shorten SET forms and to spread the timing out somewhat, the rate of response may be increased.

Educators

Educators who approach the SET process as a GIFT which gives iteratively and reciprocally take care to attend to the following:

1. Remain focused on the learner and their learning: being relational, responsive and continually and consistently communicating and demonstrating how they care about the students' learning. For this reason, they will welcome the learners' feedback as a gift to help them grow and, consequently, serve the learner better.

2. Talk about the importance of course evaluations in class and online communication throughout the course duration. They will tell stories of what they have learned through the process, how they have changed courses/pedagogies/assessments, etc. They will prepare and present examples from their practice which will strengthen student confidence and engagement. They will link what they notice from SET forms and what actions they took in light of their observations. For example, they may share how they noticed that some students communicated that they "wished they had participated more in class discussions" and then outline what actions they have taken to more easily enable this occur.

3. Model how you engage with feedback.

    One important factor that makes a difference in using SET to improve teaching is "the teacher's approach to their evaluations" (Golding & Adam,

2016, p. 6). Educators should be encouraged to approach the SET process with humility and an improvement attitude or what Dweck (2006) calls a Growth Mindset. They will demonstrate a non-defensive but reflective approach, showing they too are a learner - in words and actions. When the educator has a reflective approach and views SET data as formative feedback, not judgement, they will improve their teaching more and therefore learners will learn better (Wong et al., 2014). It is about keeping the learners' learning at the centre of the process. A key question is, how well have my students learned; how have they benefitted from the course?

When they understand the purpose and have confidence that their voice will be heard, students give amazing treasures to educators. Educators need to treat these treasures with respect and seek to learn as much as is possible from them. For example, thinking about the comments related to the "application to modern contexts" scenario (see p. 36), it is clear that the way a student experiences course components depends on the experiences which inform their critique. For this reason, it is advantageous if at all possible, to have a post SET form completing discussion with students.

Similarly, when a student is vulnerable and shares how they wish they had been more proactive or brave in participating in class (See p. 33), a reflective, responsive educator will think about how they might better enable such a student to be the type of student they wish to be.

Students

The findings from this project demonstrate that students are also most capable of giving effective, specific feedback. It is also possible that educators can help students to do that even more effectively by increasing their knowledge about the purpose of the SET process.

In order for students to approach the SET process as GIFT which gives iteratively and reciprocally it is important that they understand:

1.   The purpose and role of SET – for each of the following:

   ▪   Learner – a vehicle to let their voice be heard and to contribute to future students' learning experiences.

   ▪   Teacher – a gift to help them grow as educators.

   ▪   Institution – a gift to help them meet their institutional responsibilities.

2.   The idea of bias factors and possible ways to counteract them.

Gaining the most helpful insights from students requires ensuring a safe space in which together they can explore assumptions which shape their willingness to provide evaluative feedback. It is important to keep the initiative and power with the student, focusing on what is best for their learning.

Suggestions for further research

The fact that the original intention to follow the same three classes into the second and third semesters of the study was not fully realised has had minor

influence on the project. In part this is due to the fact that the influence of CoVid-19 meant that numbers in focus groups were impacted and we weren't able to intentionally collect the stories of the few students who did experience the process two or three times. We believe it would be beneficial to repeat the use of an Initial Briefing with students and more deliberately track its impact on learners through one course into the next multiple times. This would be particularly interesting if it could identify what practices helped learners to be engaged as contributors and participants in the SET process through the metaphor of the GIFT lens.

We believe we have served students with differing epistemologies. However, we also acknowledge that our initial wording in the proposal sought to have all students change behaviour to fit in with a western valuing of time efficiency and individual responses. A different approach might be to explore the challenge of how the SET process would look, sound and be experienced if it was designed congruently with different worldviews. For example, we recognise the potential that rests inside collaborative ways of decision making such as *talanoa* (Tonga) or *so'a lau pule* (Samoan). Muliaina (2018, p. 519) reminds us that "any social or educational change or development that is not anchored in the knowledge and value system of the target population is destined to fail".

Another possibility for further research would be to explore the impact of involving learners in the development of the SET form – or at least a part of it. This could occur as part of the Initial Briefing process – and then be revisited in discussion at the end of the SET process itself. This may have particular value in terms of designing SET forms which are more appropriate and appealing to learners with differing epistemological lenses.

In conclusion, at the commencement of this research project, we hoped to contribute to the perceived gap in the literature and therefore, to improve both teaching and learning. We believe there is potential in this SET model to go some way to restore the broken link identified by Barrow and Grant (2016, p. 599) to SET as a pastoral endeavour with academic development, rather than audit, at its heart.

In a snapshot, the GIFT approach to the SET process acknowledges the importance of:

> **G**uidelines –It is important to provide guidelines to ALL participants, to ensure students and staff understand the purpose of the SET process and therefore what type of feedback is most helpful. Students appreciate guidance in terms of the foci and breadth of comments which are most helpful to educators. Doing this helps change student focus from "What's in it for me" to making contributions which will be helpful for the betterment of future students and their learning.

> **I**nstitutional Care and Commitment   to ensure that all those who engage with the process can be confident that the gifts that are given will be 'unwrapped' and analysed so that each of institution, student and educator can benefit.

Fit for purpose – so that:

> a) institutions ensure that the questions asked and invitations to rate aspects of the teaching process are 'fit for purpose'. In other words, SET items identify areas of the teaching/learning process that students are well placed to evaluate

> b) students understand characteristics of the type of comments which are helpful – i.e., as gifts to educators.

Tell the story – It is important to continually, but in a variety of ways, keep telling the story of the benefits of the SET process to all participants. In this way, all are invited to participate in the GIFT giving process.

We argue that if educators approach the SET process as GIFT, they will be more likely to improve their teaching and students improve their learning.

Mā te whiritahi, ka whakatutuki ai ngā pūmanawa ā tāngata

Together weaving the realisation of potential

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Appendix 1 NPF 19-004 Dissemination Plan

1. Ako Aotearoa Symposium Booklet entry and PowerPoint presentation [completed]

2. HERDSA – abstract Enriching the Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) process to improve tertiary teaching and learning, submitted, accepted on 11 March, but 18 March conference postponed until July 2021. ABSTRACT included on following page. Presentation has been accepted for HERDSA 2021.

3. Plan for Half Day (3 hour) Workshop for Ako Aotearoa –Maximising the SET process for educators, students and institution - An Under-Utilised Gift

   This workshop would address:

   - the multiple ways SET information can be used

   - the nature and content of talking to students at beginning of course

   - multiple ways to overcome bias

   - ways to encourage students to critique and engage with what they are experiencing

   - findings - result when students specifically are thoughtful of each session – they become more engaged, potential to contribute to refining/reshaping of courses

   - identifying and addressing preconceptions about authority – particularly for Pasifika students, but also some faith based (expectations of those with knowledge and we are here to learn)

   - giving specific feedback to educators – more frequent feedback from students at end of session

   - developing the SET form to maximise gaining quality student voice. Quality questions

   - Contributing to institutional QA.

4. STUDENT RESOURCE: short PowerPoint show presentation, YouTube clip (or similar) that institutions could use as part of their student induction and a pamphlet to give to students after induction.

5. EDUCATOR RESOURCE: short PowerPoint presentation, YouTube clip (or similar) that institutions could use as part of new educators with starter questions for discussion. For induction of new staff and also to remind existing educators of 'unused potential' within the SET process.

6. Collaboration with Ako Aotearoa in development of PLD related to working with SET in tertiary sector [in progress].

HERDSA Abstract – according to their template:

Enriching the Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) process to improve tertiary teaching and learning: A GIFT approach

Introduction. The SET process, designed to access perceptions about effectiveness of teaching, is influenced by various 'bias factors' which limit learners' contributions. Despite this, the fact that analysis of SET data suggested that rich insights are hidden or not captured within the SET process motivated this inter-institutional, inter disciplinary research.

Aims. Two aims from the overall project are being reported. Firstly, we were interested to ascertain if increasing student awareness of the role the SET process has at the institutional level made any difference to their engagement in that process. Secondly, we were keen to observe student response to engagement with the knowledge of bias and inhibiting factors.

Methods. At the beginning of a first-year tertiary course, one team member engaged students in a short (20 min) introduction to the SET process. In particular, the idea of their engagement as 'a gift' to institutional improvement, and the existence of particular bias factors were noted. Students were invited to record their thoughts related to SET foci regularly throughout the course with the idea that these 'jottings' would inform their final SET response. At the end of the semester, students were invited to participate in a focus group and educators interviewed to gain insights from their participation.

Results. Participants developed various techniques to capture perceptions of teaching and learning throughout the course. However, when it came to completing the SET questionnaire, they reported that the questions did not enable them to communicate what they wanted to share. A model for the SET process was developed using the GIFT metaphor where students, educators and institutions are gift givers and receivers.

Discussion. Understanding the role SET processes have for future students, educators and the institution is helpful for both students and educators and therefore should be part of orientation and induction programmes. Students reported increased purposeful engagement with the process. Educators also reported an increased willingness to engage with student feedback more regularly.