PC Dashboard User instructions

Datum
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This document is prepared for Programme Committee members to provide information on why the PC dashboard was developed and includes some instructions for optimal use of the PC dashboard.

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Background information

Development PC Dashboard

Programme Committees fulfil an important legal role within programmes as participatory bodies. To provide solicited and unsolicited advice to programme management, they rely on information and data. From conversations held with representatives of PCs, as part of the Effective Quality Assurance project and a subproject Evaluation and Optimization of UvA Q (in 2021), several points of attention emerged:

1. The execution of the tasks of PCs within programmes is not uniform across the institution. This also affects the type of information PCs receive.
2. PCs make extensive use of UvA Q results, but there is a greater need for more instruction and training on interpreting UvA Q results.
3. There is a need for tools to translate UvA Q results into concrete proposals for quality improvement to programme management.

The PC dashboard can therefore easily support PCs in the execution of their legal tasks with real-time data.

The implementation of the PC dashboard is expected to yield five benefits:

1. **Timely and up-to-date information provision** To provide PCs with the necessary information in a timely manner, PCs depend on programme directors, policy officers, and other support staff. The information must also be sent at the right time (well before a PC meeting). Through a PC dashboard, all PCs are provided with current and relevant information and data in real-time. Naturally, a PC can continue to request additional information from the programme.

2. **All PCs across UvA receive the same data** Not all PCs receive the same (amount of) data and information from OBP. The PC dashboard therefore provides all PCs with the same, current data that is relevant for solicited and unsolicited advice to programme management.

3. **More efficient use of limited available time** The PC must be able to oversee the execution of quality assurance and must be well-informed about the execution of quality assurance. For this, it is necessary to have access to historical data. The dashboard not only provides data that gives an overview of the basic quality of a course but also indicates the historical development of that quality. This allows a PC to quickly form an image of positive or negative outliers and discuss with programme management the actions taken by management to improve quality. Courses with consistently good results (UvA Q and course results) do not need to be scrutinized by a PC: there can be confidence that the instructors of this course have a good grip on educational quality. This contributes to a more efficient use of the limited available time of PC members.

4. **Data archiving directly arranged** Besides the fact that current information is directly available, the dashboard also provides an archiving function: data from previous academic years can also be easily accessed via the dashboard. When new members join, they can quickly access historical data. This data no longer needs to be stored in a decentralized location.

5. **Reduction of OBP workload** OBP often has the task of ensuring that the necessary information reaches the PC in a timely manner. With varying meeting schedules, this is an organizational puzzle for departments/faculties with many programmes and programme committees, which also costs OBP a lot of time. By making current information directly available at all times via the dashboard, less information needs to be circulated, reducing the workload of the involved OBP.

User Instructions

Review the Programme as a whole

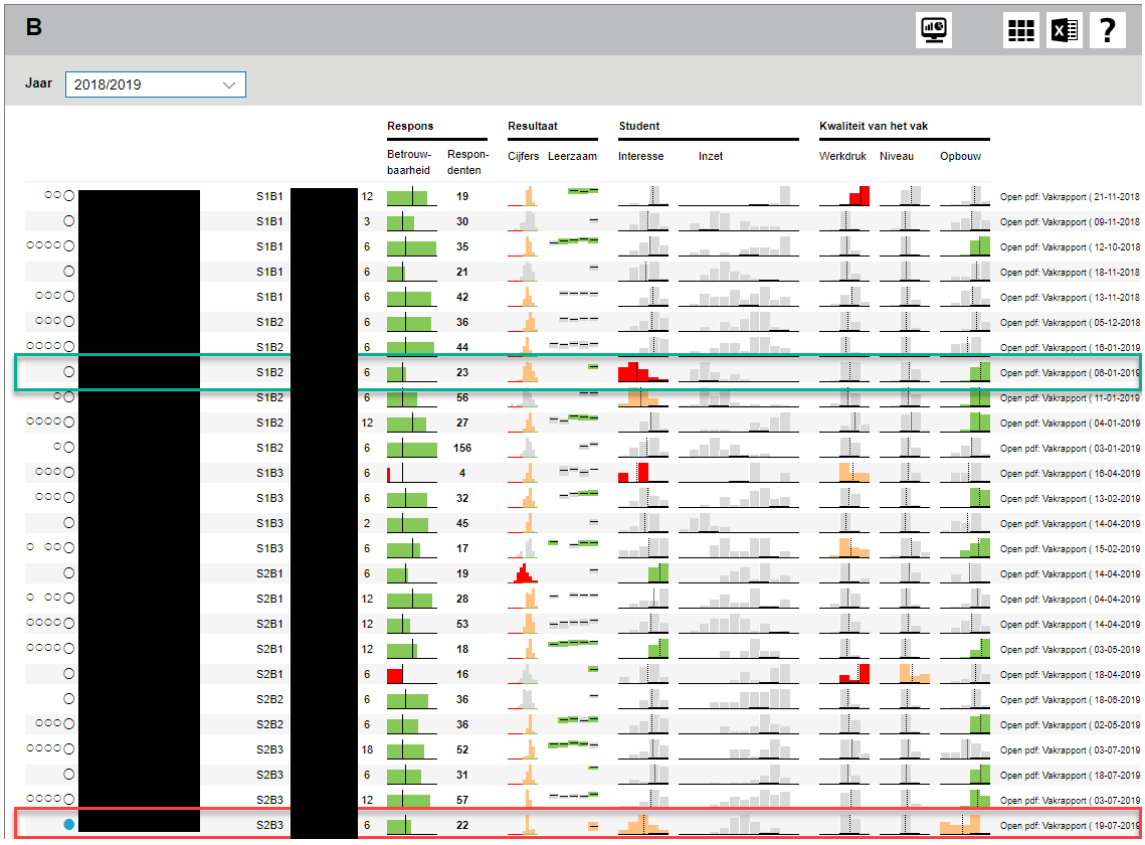
Because the dashboard provides an overview of all courses within the programme, all PC members can quickly see which courses stand out positively or negatively within the programme. PC members can then delve deeper into why a particular course receives good or less favorable feedback.

Subsequently, the PC may identify trends in the data concerning all courses and provide advice for the programme as a whole, not just for a specific course.
In the past, some PCs have divided the courses among PC members, who then report what they have noticed. With the dashboard, there is no need to unnecessarily look at the detail level of a course unless there is a direct reason to do so.

Also focus on positive points within the dashboard

When student feedback is received in the PC Dashboard, PCs often focus on the courses within the programmes that perform less well compared to other courses. The programme committee can indeed provide advice on this, but it is even more interesting to look at courses that perform very well and why. This way, advice can be given to programme management to highlight the "best practices" within the programmes and implement them in other courses. A good example is a course where students were initially not very interested but learned a lot from it.

Example: A course marked with a green bar indicating low initial interest but good structure and students found it educational.



Prepare for the PC meeting

Before having a PC meeting, it is useful to look at the PC dashboard in advance to identify important issues that are good to discuss. This can be prepared by a few PC members, for example. As a PC chair, you can also identify trends visible in the PC dashboard and put them on the agenda.

Additionally, it can prevent time being spent logging in and only identifying trends in the dashboard during the meeting. Good preparation thus saves the valuable time of PC members.

Elective courses not visible within the PC Dashboard

As a PC, you are responsible for the courses within your own programme, and therefore only the primary courses are available in the dashboard. It may be that a particular course is frequently chosen as an elective by students within your own programme, but it will not be available in the PC dashboard for your PC.

This course naturally falls under the responsibility of another PC that oversees the quality of the programme to which this course belongs. If you are still curious about the data of this course or want input about it, then engage in conversation with the other PC to exchange information.

Handle information securely (cannot be downloaded)

The data in the PC dashboard contains real-time information about the courses within your programme. It is therefore up to the PC members to handle this data carefully and not to distribute it outside the PC. A PC member sees confidential documents, such as course evaluations in which an individual instructor is evaluated. Everything discussed during the meeting must therefore be treated confidentially, even if it is not explicitly stated that the documents are confidential.

Since switching to the new student feedback system Evalytics, the new reports are no longer downloadable for improved data protection (the old reports before using Evalytics are still downloadable but strongly discouraged). The data is only intended for individuals who have received rights to view the PC dashboard via the registration form.

Retreive information from students and teachers (your constituency)

As a PC member, you are appointed or elected to discuss the quality of the programme with other PC members and provide advice to programme management. The PC dashboard provides valuable input to the PC, but it should not be used without critical thinking. Therefore, it is also good to engage in conversations with students and instructors about how the programme can be improved.

Based on trends in the PC dashboard, you can, for example, organize an afternoon with instructors and students to delve deeper into why students experience high workload in certain courses.

Do not adress teachers yourself

The PC can influence the quality of the programme through the programme director, the dean, and the TER at a strategic level. This can be done by analyzing trends via the dashboard or by talking to instructors and students, as described above, and then providing advice to the programme management, who are authorized to implement the improvements.

PCs are therefore strongly discouraged from providing advice to an teacher or addressing them based on the information they obtain. This can be problematic because a student member may still receive lessons from the teacher, or because an PC staff-member also has to collaborate with this other teacher. It is the responsibility of the programme director to engage in conversations with instructors if improvements are necessary.

More information

For more information, how to act as a PC(member), check the general PC guidelines on the UvA website.