**SES 2023 Guidance for staff**

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## **Summary – essential information**

#### **Survey duration**

**SES 2023 will run St George’s from** 6 February – 31 March 2023, with **main** **internal promotion**: 20 February – 3 March 2023 (see page 3 [here](#_Promotion_strategy))

#### **How should you promote the survey**

**NOTE: Read guidance on inappropriate influence on page 6** [**here**](#_Inappropriate_influence)

* Send out emails from course director to course teams on **6 February** to raise awareness among teaching and admin staff (suggested wording [here](https://sgul365.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/StudentExperienceTeam/EZP7izwAWvlAmvUiqZAetCUBUv0Lze33A0wQqPrao1mZaw?e=MZE4fL))
* Send out emails from course director to non-final-year students inviting them to complete SES 2022 on **13 February** (suggested wording [here](https://sgul365.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/StudentExperienceTeam/ETt4P7i7RDNNkCmjR1towjMBUAu5aZhvu_6nArLS9YldnQ?e=EvmLQG)), **27 February** (suggested wording [here](https://sgul365.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/StudentExperienceTeam/EcdxX9-b8pBHnan_v3f4pn8BTgVXr2Af_nHdEm1zZD2NrQ?e=XIkEJI)) and **13 March** (suggested wording [here](https://sgul365.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/StudentExperienceTeam/Ee314u45l-VJiYna5VyRr-IBZ9zgsOcs2M4C31-iSBbyWA?e=RdtkjI))
* Promote in teaching sessions (promotional slides [here](https://sgul365.sharepoint.com/:p:/s/StudentExperienceTeam/EQOTQUPxQ4RIhxwyJBK96HYBgnxvLBdyOwYpdkJDhx3FRg?e=VGbp7G))
* Run dedicated sessions for voluntary participation in SES 2023 – SE team suggest a simple way is to dedicated 10 minutes at the end or start of a teaching session
* Add SES 2023 promotional slides on course Canvas pages (for non-final year students ONLY)

## **What is the Student Experience Survey (SES)?**

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The Student Experience Survey (SES) is St George’s internal annual survey for all non-final year undergraduate students. The SES acts as a barometer of student experience, giving us early signs of what needs to be reviewed or changed. The SES mirrors the NSS survey and gives a reliable indication as to how non-final year students are likely to complete the NSS in future years and help us to understand what needs to be remedied to improve student satisfaction.

The SES is planned by the SE Team with the Student Experience Officer acting as the project manager for the survey.

### **Questionnaire**

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Like the NSS, there are **27 core questions**, relating to the following aspects of the student learning experience:

* + - Teaching on my Course
    - Learning Opportunities
    - Marking and Assessment
    - Academic Support
    - Organisation and Management
    - Learning Resources
    - Student Voice
    - Mental Wellbeing Services
    - Freedom of Expression

The SES also include the **optional banks of questions included in the NSS**. In SES 2023, these are

B6. Social Opportunities

1. I have had plenty of opportunities to interact socially with other students.
2. I am satisfied with the range of clubs and societies on offer.
3. I am satisfied with the range of entertainment and social events on offer.

B9 Welfare Resources and Facilities

1. There is sufficient provision of welfare and student services to meet my needs.
2. When needed, the information and advice offered by welfare and student services has been helpful.

B15 Employability and Skills

1. My Higher Education experience has helped me plan for my future career.
2. My institution offered activities and resources designed to prepare me for the next step in my career.
3. The skills I have developed during my time in Higher Education will be useful for my future career.

The SES also **mirrors the NSS institutional questions**

* 1. What did you value most about your experience at St George’s? (open comment)
  2. I would value more opportunities to learn with students from other courses. (scaled)

In addition, the SES includes the following questions:

* My personal tutor has been a useful source of guidance (scaled)
* Looking back on your experience, are there any particular positive aspects that you would like to highlight? (open comment)
* Are there any negative aspects that you would like to highlight? (open comment)
* What is the single most important thing that would have improved your university experience? (open comment)
* What is the best thing about St George’s, that you wouldn’t change? (open comment)

The SES also include a **marketing question**

* + What prompted you to fill in this survey?
    - Email from AD Student Experience
    - Email from course director
    - St George’s Website
    - St George’s social media
    - SU social media
    - Student newsletter
    - Canvas announcement
    - Poster/Digital screen
    - Prize draw
    - Friend
    - Year Rep invite
    - Other

**Full questionnaire can be found** [**here**](https://sgul365.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/StudentExperienceTeam/EahKi326aBdCpuZWQiyPct0BEmJf9ADWYH-832gk0zD7TA?e=vS8poz)**.**

### **Publication of results**

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The SES results are analysed by the Senior Planning Officer (quantitative data) and Student Experience Officer (qualitative data) and disseminated to course teams, University Business Area teams, senior staff. All reports (including an archive of previous years’ reports) can be found on the Student Survey Data MS Teams site [here](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/team/19%3a801433ee99514b15a76ed33669545ea7%40thread.tacv2/conversations?groupId=9c99b4c1-9277-4776-a747-5639ddab5364&tenantId=f66cbc6b-cdf7-4261-bd73-43db3b9ee2aa).

## **When does SES 2023 take place?**

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St George’s will run the SES **campaign between 6 February and 31 March**.

## **How does it work?**

### **Students’ access to SES**

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The SES can be completed online via the link students receive in an email invitation or via Canvas in the Teaching feedback section.

### **Monitoring response rates**

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The Student Experience Officer will monitor overall response rates and reminders will be sent to course teams to encourage students to fill in the SES.

### **Promotion strategy**

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#### **St George’s SES 2023 promotion timeline**

The promotion campaign at St George’s will used multiple channels to raise awareness and increase response rate.

* Announcements in student and staff newsletters
* Invitation emails from the Associate Dean for Student Experience and course leads
* Briefing videos for students
* A4 and A3 posters
* Digital screens
* Promotion during teaching sessions
* Stalls in Hunter and Jenner to promote NSS and SES

In addition, a **prize draw consisting of 5 prizes of £200 each has been chosen as the incentive for SES 2023.**

**All surveys running this year have been mapped to a Communications Plan, which you can view** [**here**](https://sgul365.sharepoint.com/:x:/s/StudentExperienceTeam/EXcGYpxMXyVCpWP3d3ZYZowBQpk7x6bi4c9XA28etArhWA?e=3cb5p6)**.**

## **Inappropriate influence**

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Guidelines from the NSS have been used to prepare this section with the purpose of cultivating good practice. Course teams should communicate with students and ensure they give their honest feedback on their learning experience. Communications and promotional materials must not attempt to sway the opinion of students in any way.

### **What is inappropriate influence?**

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UK funding and regulatory bodies and the Office for Students define inappropriate influence as **any activity or behaviour that may encourage students to reflect anything other than their true opinion of their experiences during their course in their responses to surveys**

**Inappropriate influence can emerge in several ways**, for example:

1. Explicit or implicit instruction on the type of responses students should make, including the provision of standard or example responses.
2. Explaining how the survey is presented to students and drawing attention, explicitly or implicitly, to the consequences of negative responses, with regard to:
   1. conflation with other surveys undertaken by providers whether internal or external
   2. league tables, the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) or Quality Assessment processes
   3. employers’ perceptions of positive and negative outcomes.
3. Instruction on how the response scale is understood by third parties.
4. Encouraging students to avoid a particular point on the response scale.
5. Failure to ensure that methods to encourage participation in the survey, such as campaigns, the use of promotional materials (either explicitly or implicitly) or incentivisation methods (such as prize draws), do not bias responses.
6. Holding compulsory sessions at which the SES **must** be completed.

### **Avoiding Inappropriate Influence – Dos and Don’ts**

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#### **Do:**

* **Run a neutral campaign that focuses solely on boosting responses in the SES.**.
* **Provide examples of where SES feedback has resulted in particular improvements in previous years.**Demonstrating how feedback from the SES has led to tangible changes at the provider can be a powerful way to promote the survey. For example: “Your feedback counts – in a previous SES, students expressed that library opening hours were an issue. Since then, we introduced a 24-hour central library.”
* **Encourage eligible students to participate.**All eligible students should be targeted in promotional campaigns.
* **Allow students to give their feedback regardless of their opinion.**If promoting the SES, providers should encourage all students to participate regardless of their opinion of the provider or course.
* **Be wary of tone and use of language when discussing the SES and asking students to complete it.**If you opt to promote the SES, be sure to keep promotion of the SES as neutral as possible. Staff can explain the importance of the SES, improvements that their feedback has led to in previous years, and how it will help prospective students. Do not link the SES to league tables, a provider’s performance in the TEF or to the perceived value of students’ degrees.
* **Target promotion in departments or courses with low response rates.**
* **Inform students that they are free to interpret the survey questions how they wish.**Questions for the SES are self-explanatory. Students should be encouraged to answer the survey questions however they interpret them.
* **Hold voluntary SES completion sessions.**Organising completion sessions is an effective way to encourage students to complete the survey. However, these sessions must be voluntary.
* **Ensure students have total privacy when completing the survey.**Students must not feel pressured to respond in any particular way. Therefore, staff should respect students’ privacy when they are taking the survey.
* **Use incentives or a prize draw to promote the survey.**Incentives and prize draws are both proven to be effective in improving response rates. This can form a part of the promotional campaign. Students should be made aware that there is no link between how they respond and their chances of winning a prize.
* **Ensure that all staff are aware of the guidelines.**

#### **Do not:**

* **Explicitly or implicitly advise students on how to interpret the survey.**It is very important that students are not influenced on how they interpret the survey questions or response scale. These are self-explanatory and students should be left to interpret them in a way they see fit. Therefore, staff are not permitted to explain the meanings of questions or responses. This includes defining ‘neither agree nor disagree’ as a negative response or comparing the response scale to another scale with a different purpose (e.g. assignment marking schemes).
* **Advise or request students to respond in a certain way.**Staff are not permitted to recommend that students respond in a certain way, e.g. ‘I recommend that you select agree or mostly agree’ or provide standard or example responses.
* **Link the SES to league tables, job prospects and the perceived value of students’ degrees.**Staff are not permitted to tell students that negative responses could make their degrees look bad to future employers. There should be no link made between completion of the survey and employers’ perceptions of positive and negative outcomes. This includes links between the SES and university league tables or the TEF.
* **Say that the survey is compulsory.**Participation in the SES, while beneficial to the university, is completely voluntary for students.
* **Make it a requirement or pressure students to attend dedicated SES sessions.** Arranging these sessions is allowed however staff should not enforce them or make students feel there may be consequences if they do not attend.
* **Take students through the survey on an individual basis.**Staff should not stand or sit beside students when they are completing the survey or take them through their responses question-by-question. Students should be given due privacy so they can respond with honesty. Staff and students must always abide by the relevant provider’s Covid-19 safety measures.
* **Complete the survey on behalf of the student.**The survey should not be accessed or completed on behalf of the student. The SES is a confidential student feedback survey and should only be completed by the eligible student.

## **How can you support SES 2023 and increase response rates?**

### **(Course Directors) Sending out emails to course teams to raise awareness and promote in teaching sessions**

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Course Directors are encouraged to contact their course teams early, both teachers and admin staff, to:

* disseminate supporting materials such as the guide about Inappropriate influence and promotional materials
* discuss the promotion of SES 2023 in teaching sessions using the promotional materials provided

*Please include a copy of this Guidance to Staff document in emails to your course team.*

**See suggested wording for email** [**here**](https://sgul365-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/aapostu_sgul_ac_uk/EmdxOsh8hcRJjB4Z2kpOOKsBTLz-sdcvzWXmWRLlUegzPA?e=OLGFyk)

### **(Course Directors) Sending out emails inviting students to complete the SES 2023**

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Previous years have shown that students are more likely to fill in the survey when a member of their course team, such as the course director, invites them to fill in the survey.

**See email 1 to be sent on 13 February 2023 to non-final year UG students - suggested wording** [**here**](https://sgul365.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/StudentExperienceTeam/ETt4P7i7RDNNkCmjR1towjMBUAu5aZhvu_6nArLS9YldnQ?e=7lszdx)

**See email 2 to be sent on 27 February 2023 to non-final year UG students – suggested wording** [**here**](https://sgul365.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/StudentExperienceTeam/EcdxX9-b8pBHnan_v3f4pn8BTgVXr2Af_nHdEm1zZD2NrQ?e=P9Ts9i)

**See email 3 to be sent 13 March 2022 to non-final year UG students - suggested wording** [**here**](https://sgul365.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/StudentExperienceTeam/Ee314u45l-VJiYna5VyRr-IBZ9zgsOcs2M4C31-iSBbyWA?e=1cNVDm)

**In addition to this, emails will be sent from the Associate Dean for Student Experience as an initial invitation to take part in the survey, and a final reminder to be sent on 23 March 2023.**

### **Promote in teaching sessions**

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Teaching staff are encouraged to dedicate 5 minutes of their teachings sessions between 20 February and 3 March with final year students to promote the SES 2023.

Promotional slides to use in teaching sessions can be found [here](https://sgul365.sharepoint.com/:p:/s/StudentExperienceTeam/EQOTQUPxQ4RIhxwyJBK96HYBQPyRCmdEhJ50zx_pw1SfYw?e=xveCbb)

### **Running Dedicated Sessions**

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Staff can run dedicated sessions where time is set aside to allow eligible students to complete the survey. These sessions should be completely optional for students to attend and they should be encouraged to give their honest opinion.

Staff and students must always abide by the relevant provider’s Covid-19 safety measures.

Please note that staff should not be ‘standing over students’ while they are completing the survey. Staff should make it clear that they are there to provide support on technical issues and not to monitor responses.

Dedicated sessions can be held at any time during the survey fieldwork. Students can access the SES either by searching for the invitation in their university email mailbox or via Canvas in the Teaching Feedback session.

Please note these sessions should **not** be compulsory for students to attend.

### **Adding SES 2023 promotional materials on course Canvas pages (only for non-final year undergraduate students)**

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Course teams can raise awareness about the SES 2023 by posting promotional material on Canvas pages, as long as these pages address **non-final year undergraduate students** only.

## **Supporting materials**

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Course teams are encouraged to work together in promoting the SES. The Student Experience team has prepared a pack of materials available in a shared folder [**here**](https://sgul365.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/StudentExperienceTeam/EgcphWrXnDJAhblCTNuAvNoBeaOqMQXhSE1---huyffeJw?e=uGlgcG); the pack contains slides, graphics, suggested [wording to assist course teams](https://sgul365.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/StudentExperienceTeam/Erm9gDLyxDpDms2EsdWb6t4BBdb22NfY87X1eUSktKAHeg?e=Xd1Rwo). The Student Experience team is always happy to offer further support and advice – just email the Student Experience Officer, Laura Dickens at [ldickens@sgul.ac.uk](mailto:ldickens@sgul.ac.uk)

Additionally, the Student Experience Team have set up a webpage full of key information and resources on all student surveys – which is available [here](https://www.sgul.ac.uk/for-staff/teaching-and-student-experience/student-surveys).