

UQ Student Voice

HaBS Student Forum

What are the main aims of the forum? How does it function in a practical sense?

The HaBS Faculty Executive Dean Student Forum is held annually and allows the Faculty as well as our Schools, to gain insights about our program directly from students, both positive and negative. It's also an opportunity for the Faculty to promote to students the initiatives and objectives of the Faculty and how it relates to them.

The forum is attended by student representatives from all of our schools as they will typically have a good understanding of the issues within their discipline and cohort. Senior staff from the faculty are also in attendance and includes the Executive Dean, Associate Dean (Academic) and Senior Manager Student and Academic Administration.

The forum is facilitated by the Executive Dean in an informal session with no set agenda. Discussions are primarily led by the students but the Executive Dean may ask broad questions to prompt students. Issues and comments are registered so they can be fed back to respective schools, however, specific students are never identified. Catering is also provided as the forum is normally held around lunch time to minimise disruptions to our students.

Why is the student voice so critical to the school / faculty? How is this gained from the forum?

The Faculty and our schools values the input and insights from students. The Faculty's Student Forum provides another avenue for students to express their voice directly to senior faculty management. The Faculty aims to continually improve and look for opportunities to enhance the student experience. Gaining feedback directly from students is vital as they are the ones who will be most affected by decisions made by the Faculty.

Many of our programs lead to professional registration and so our students associate more with their School and discipline rather than the Faculty. The forum also allows the Faculty to bridge the disconnect and understand what is occurring at the coal face.

How do both staff members and students benefit from this forum? Would you recommend this to other schools / faculties?

The forum is facilitated by the Executive Dean in an informal format, which allows students to openly and

freely express their views. The forum allows students who are normally uncomfortable sharing their experience (particularly if it's negative) to discuss with someone who isn't directly involved in their program or school. Staff also benefit as this candid feedback may otherwise not have been available.

Other benefits for students include being able to network with their peers from other schools, hear each other's thoughts and share ideas. It also allows students a rare opportunity to meet in person with senior faculty management.

The Faculty consolidates issues and concerns for further follow-up by the school, if required. To close the feedback loop, we report back at the Student Forum in the following year to advise actions and improvements that were undertaken. Students have certainly valued this update as they felt their voice had been heard but more importantly, acted upon.

Other benefits for staff include being able to uncover issues spanning across different schools. These issues would be difficult to identify or remain unreported if not for the Student Forum.

Our schools who also hold similar events have all found it to be an invaluable two way communication tool for both staff and students. We highly recommend any area looking to foster a positive relationship with students to hold similar events.

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For further details, please contact:

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