



Mid-Semester Check-in

Has it ever happened to you that, after finishing a study-unit and talking with your students, you thought, “If only I'd known this earlier, I could have done something about it”? Do you find it tricky to gauge your students' experience of the study-unit? The mid-semester check-in can give you valuable insights into student learning and the chance to make some timely adjustments.

Unlike the end of [study-unit feedback](#), asking students for feedback midway through the semester gives you the opportunity to ‘check the pulse’ of your class and make adjustments before the study-unit ends. While not all changes may be possible in the short term, there could still be some quick wins that make a real difference, enhancing the students’ experience and helping them get more out of the study-unit.

In addition to improving the students’ experience, the mid-semester check-in can boost the students’ morale and enhance their rapport with you. When students feel heard and valued, their connection with you grows, and their engagement with the study-unit increases. You will also be modelling reflective practice, encouraging students to pause and reflect on their own learning progress in the study-unit and practice metacognition.

It is important to note that collecting mid-semester feedback is not the same as receiving a detailed to-do list from students. Often, what may seem like a collection of surface-level comments can, when analysed, reveal underlying themes. While you may want to address these themes, it may not always be in the exact way students suggest.

For example, if students ask for “less readings”, it could mean that the reading load is too heavy, but it might also suggest that the texts are too difficult or students are struggling to see their relevance. Instead of reducing the readings, a more suitable response might be to provide reading questions to help students engage with the material or to allocate more class time for discussing the texts. The mid-semester check-in, therefore, will enable you to open a dialogue with your students about the study-unit and their learning experience. This dialogue will also help students better understand the changes that you can and cannot make to the study-unit.

Collecting mid-semester feedback

You should aim to collect feedback early enough to make meaningful changes, when students have experienced a significant amount of teaching. Typically, 4 or 5 weeks into the semester is a good time to gather feedback though some academics find that collecting feedback at multiple points throughout the semester, not just at the mid-point, also works well for them.

It is recommended that you collect feedback in class to increase the response rate. Dedicate 10 minutes at the start of the lecture to administer a short survey - three or four questions that can be answered in 1–3 sentences each.

A simple mid-semester survey used in many universities consists of three questions:

1. What can we **start** doing in this class that would *help you learn*?
2. What should we **stop** doing that *isn't helping you learn*? If so, please explain.
3. What should we **continue** doing that is *helping your learning*?

Note that the questions give your students an opportunity to reflect on their learning. You can use a [Google form](#) (refer to end of this document for [instructions](#)), a class polling tool or [pen-and-paper](#) to collect feedback. It is recommended that you run this anonymously.

Before you present the feedback questions, it is a good idea to explain to students that you are asking their feedback to improve their learning experience, and assure them that their responses will remain confidential. If you are opting to collect feedback via a Google form, you can assure them that their responses would also be anonymous.

You might also share with students what types of comments would be most useful and remind them to focus on factors within your control (e.g., the lecture time likely cannot be changed).

Analysing & responding to feedback

Before reading student feedback, take time to reflect on your own perceptions of the study-unit - what is working well, what could be improved, and how you think students are performing. This helps ground your expectations and makes it easier to interpret feedback objectively.

As you review the students' responses, look for recurring themes by organising comments into categories like lecture organisation, content, learning aids, and class interactions. This allows you to focus on feedback related to learning rather than personal remarks or individual preferences. Negative feedback can naturally trigger an emotional response. If you find it challenging to process or interpret the feedback, consider discussing with a colleague to explore the issue from a more neutral perspective.

Once you have identified key themes, reflect on your teaching in the light of the students' feedback and identify realistic changes that you can make this semester. Summarising the feedback will also prepare you to share your response with your students.

You can communicate the student feedback summary through a short presentation in class or a VLE announcement. It is helpful to organise your response into three categories:

- What you will keep doing to support student learning
- What you will change to enhance learning (either now or in a future semester)
- What you have heard but will not change, and why

If you received contradictory feedback, sharing this with your students can also encourage them to think critically about their learning and consider different perspectives.

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Instructions to use the Mid-Semester Check-in Google Form

Where does the copied form go? When you click the [Make a copy](#) button, the copied Google Form is saved in your Google Drive under My Drive as "Copy of Mid-Semester Check-in".

Finding the copied form

1. Go to [Google Drive](#).
2. Search for **Copy of Mid-Semester Check-in** or check the **Recent** section. You can rename the form and edit it. The copied form is not linked to the original form.

References & Further Reading

Boston University Center for Teaching & Learning, (2021). *Mid-semester feedback*. Boston University. Retrieved March 17, 2025, from <https://www.bu.edu/ctl/2021/10/mid-semester-feedback/>

Harvard Vice Provost for Advances in Learning. (n.d.). *The importance of gathering and incorporating mid-semester student feedback*. Harvard University. Retrieved March 17, 2025, from <https://www.vpal.harvard.edu/importance-gathering-and-incorporating-mid-semester-student-feedback>

Instructional Design Collaborative, (2022). *Interpreting student feedback*. University of Wisconsin-Madison. Retrieved March 17, 2025, from <https://idc.ls.wisc.edu/ls-design-for-learning-series/interpreting-student-feedback/>

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