



UFS·UV
101

Year Report 2014

MelodyM Consulting

In conjunction with the UFS101 Team

Contents

Executive Summary	ii
1. Introduction	1
2. Sample.....	4
3. Student Experience	6
4. Learning Facilitator/Teaching Assistant Experience	35
5. UFS101 Lecturer Perspectives.....	47

Executive Summary

UFS101 – the compulsory, credit-bearing undergraduate core curriculum module for first-year students at the University of the Free State – is a flagship initiative within the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and is at the forefront of implementing engaging teaching and learning in large class contexts.

The aim of UFS101 is to nurture the next generation of citizens and young academics that can take South Africa into the 21st century; equipped with the ability to understand and engage with complex human problems from multiple perspectives. Since its inception, UFS101 has taken a blended learning approach to delivery – drawing on the strengths of both contact sessions and online learning through Blackboard. However, in 2014 UFS101 broke new territory on the UFS campus by implementing a flipped classroom approach to the large class teaching environment referred to as the Flipped-Discussion-Teaching (FDT) model. The FDT model employs a blended learning design with a flipped classroom approach where students are required to watch a series of 5-15 minute “lecturettes” online for each unit and complete a set of readings (all provided in the innovative eGuide) linked to a multiple choice questionnaire (MCQ) prior to attending a small group face-to-face discussion class. Continued engagement after discussion classes is then facilitated in the form of blogs and online discussions.

During 2014, the module comprised of seven units presented by experts on each of the topics, and an information literacy unit for self-study. The first four units were presented in the first semester and the remaining three during the second semester. Each unit included an interactive student experience with the eGuide, two face-to-face discussion classes and a learning experience. All students were required to complete two integrated assessments during the course of the year, two Reflection journals and an online multiple choice question (MCQ) test prior to each discussion class. Each student was required to complete all five assessments (obtaining a subminimum of 45% to get a re-assessment and 50% average to pass the module). The integrated assessments were moderated by three external moderators, after which adjustments to mark allocations were made where necessary.

In addition to this requirement, students are required to attend 70% of the contact sessions (learning experiences and discussion classes) in order to pass the module¹. Students who do not pass the module are required to repeat the module in the following year.

The purpose of this report is to explore and describe the perspectives of the students, lecturers, Learning Facilitators (LFs) and Teaching Assistants (TAs) on the UFS101 module relating to the extent to which the teaching and learning outcomes of the module were attained, their overall satisfaction with the module, as well as their recommendations for the future improvement. Comprehensive sampling was employed to survey the entire population of students enrolled for UFS101 and Learning Facilitators and Teaching Assistants through two online surveys (one in each semester)². In addition to this, data for the analysis of attendance and assessment performance was obtained from the UFS101 team.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

DELIVERY of UFS101

Across campuses students are predominantly positive about the manner of delivery of UFS101³ and found it useful to access materials in the eGuide before class. However, in both these aspects more students on the QwaQwa campus displayed strong positive attitudes.

Furthermore, on the QwaQwa campus, around eight out of ten students agreed that the *manner of delivery in UFS101 enhanced their learning* and that their learning *would be enhanced if their other modules were presented in this way*, whilst Bloemfontein students were somewhat less convinced⁴ around these two points.

¹ Students with valid excuses were required to complete an appeal application in order to avoid penalisation.

² Actual response rates and population descriptions are detailed in the Sample section of this report.

³ Specifically, the question referred students to the following “eGuide, online videos, learning experiences, discussion classes”

⁴ Six out of ten students agreed their learning was enhanced; five out of ten agreed their learning would be enhanced if their other modules were presented in this way.

Also on a positive note, across all questions related to the delivery of UFS101, **TAs on the Bloemfontein campus and LFs on the QwaQwa campus were very positive about the manner of delivery**, with only a very small minority indicating that they did not like particular aspects of the module's delivery. The vast majority on both campuses strongly agreed that it was *helpful to access preparation materials before class* and almost all agreed to some extent that the way of delivery *enhanced their teaching*.

Lecturers typically displayed positive attitudes towards the flipped classroom approach to delivery in UFS 101. The approach was perceived as less logistically burdensome, more sustainable and a sensible solution to the mega-classroom challenges in previous years. Limited contact with students was however noted as a disadvantage by most lecturers interviewed.

LEVEL OF ACADEMIC CHALLENGE

Most students on both campuses agreed to some extent that the content of the module and the videos were pitched at an appropriate level of difficulty. The students who disagreed with this question indicated the content was pitched too high. Despite qualitative responses to a number of questions in the survey suggesting that UFS101 was significantly time consuming the vast majority of students on both campuses agreed that the amount of time allocated to each unit was appropriate.

A very high proportion of students on the QwaQwa campus and at least two-thirds of students on the Bloemfontein campus (during both evaluations) agreed that they have been challenged to examine difficult issues from different perspectives, to think in new ways about global issues and in particular to think about local issues in new ways.

MODULE CONTENT

The module **content was perceived to be of relevance to a higher proportion of students on the QwaQwa campus**, particularly in the second semester. Although only a small proportion of students on either campus did not think the content was relevant, almost one third of students on the Bloemfontein campus were neutral on the topic.

Those students who enjoyed the content found it to be “interesting”, “useful”, “helpful” and “enlightening”; those who did not enjoy the content found it “irrelevant”, “boring”, “too challenging” (or too easy) and too diverse a range of topics covered. The positive comments on the content were more than double the number of negative comments in this regard.

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Typically students on both campuses found all the learning experiences to be both *relevant and interesting*. This positive tone is confirmed by the finding that 28-36% and 36-40% (E1 to E2) of students on the Bloemfontein and QwaQwa campuses respectively said in their qualitative feedback that there was “Nothing” they did not like about the learning experiences.

Most students on the Bloemfontein campus found the “*Social Media and the Law*”, “*Multiculturalism in Business*”, and “*Love, Media and Relationships*” learning experiences both very relevant and very interesting. Although the “*Chem-Magic Show*” was a very interesting learning experience it was not rated highly on relevance. Students on the QwaQwa campus found the “*Love, Media and Relationships*” experience to be the most relevant and interesting learning experience. The “*Basotho Cultural Village*” visit was very interesting (with relatively high relevance) and the “*Social Media and the Law*” experience was noted as highly relevant (with relatively high ratings for how interesting it was).

On both campuses students found the *content of the learning experiences* “interesting”, “fun”, “informative and educational”, “entertaining” and “enlightening”. They also liked that the content exposed them to topics in other faculties or disciplines and covered a broad range of topics. In terms of the *manner of teaching and learning employed in the learning experiences*, students were very impressed by the quality of the presentations and speakers and a few noted they enjoyed the “mega” class environment. One in ten students liked the interactive nature of the learning experiences, specifically that they allowed them to ask questions, interact with experts, voice their opinions and meet new people.

Despite this positive tone, *time related concerns* featured strongly as an aspect students disliked about the learning experiences. Specifically, students on both campuses noted that the learning experiences clashed with their other

classes, many on the Bloemfontein campus said the learning experiences were time consuming and a number simply said they were a waste of their time. The *format, structure and presentation of the learning experiences* were also mentioned with a small percentage on both campuses noting that the learning environment was too large and a handful of students said they were intimidated by the large classes or too scared to ask questions. Very few students noted any logistical challenges related to the learning experiences.

DISCUSSION CLASSES

Although approximately **eight out of ten students on both campuses agreed that students were able to discuss content with one another during discussion classes**, substantially more students on the QwaQwa campus *strongly agreed* with this, during both evaluations. No clear preference for online or face-to-face discussion classes emerged, although it does appear as if students became more comfortable expressing their opinions face-to-face in the second semester. On both campuses, only a very small proportion of students felt that it was not easy for them to voice their opinions in any of the discussion classes across both evaluations.

The **vast majority of TAs and LFs agreed to some extent that the discussion class guide enabled them to prepare adequately for the discussion classes**. Typically, the TAs and LFs found it easier to facilitate the face-to-face discussions, although more than a handful found it equally easy to facilitate either.

Lecturers perceive the **nature and quality of discussion classes, as well as the alignment between the videos and the discussion class content, to be fundamental to the success of the flipped classroom** approach.

BLACKBOARD

A substantial proportion of students on both campuses in both evaluations (ranging from 47% to 67%) **had trouble, at least sometimes, accessing Blackboard (Bb)** – most of whom experienced technical issues with the learning platform and very few of whom had not attended the Bb training. Regardless, qualitative responses indicated an overall positive tone, with students noting that Bb is *user friendly, convenient, easy to access from anywhere, easy to navigate and helpful*.

Negative feedback regarding Bb centred mostly on technical issues, with students mentioning they struggled with remote access, struggled to submit, upload or save their assessments or had trouble with accessing either the attendance links or videos. During the second evaluation a larger number of students mentioned that accessing and viewing the videos was a problem. It does appear as if personal computer literacy plays some role in how students experience Bb in UFS101, although only a very small number of students noted that they lacked the needed skills to use Bb effectively. A limited number of QwaQwa students mentioned that Bb improved their computer literacy.

On the other hand, very few LFs or TAs emphatically stated in either evaluation that they had trouble assessing relevant tasks or information on Bb, and the majority frequently accessed the Teaching Assistant organisation in Bb in both semesters. Qualitative responses from the TAs and LFs were generally positive with most negative comments relating to technical issues. As was the case with the student experience, slightly more technical issues were reported with links during the second semester.

EGUIDES

Across campuses, students typically reported positive experiences with the eGuide, with most students indicating the eGuide is user friendly and few students struggling to access materials, videos or MCQ links during both evaluations. This positive experience is confirmed by the responses in the qualitative feedback where 32% in Evaluation one (E1) and 26% in Evaluation two (E2) of Bloemfontein campus and 40% (E1) and 31% (E2) of QwaQwa campus students said there was “Nothing” they did not like about the eGuide.

The vast majority of students on both campuses made use of the eGuide for all of the units, with only a handful of students not making use of the eGuide at all. This is also the case for the unit on information literacy. The *limited usefulness*⁵ of the eGuide and the *time consuming* nature of using the eGuide were mentioned most frequently as

⁵ Specifically, students noted they could complete the units without consulting the eGuide, the eGuide did not contain all the information they needed or that their own internet searches were more useful.

reasons students did not use the eGuide on both campuses and across both evaluations. A relatively small number of students preferred to still use hard copies.

Despite this, students mostly had positive user experiences with the eGuide and appreciated the materials and content provided. Students experienced the eGuide as easy to use and access, helpful, useful and informative, easy to understand and navigate, and convenient. Although there were students who found the eGuide difficult to use, unhelpful, or difficult to understand and navigate, this proportion was substantially lower than those with positive user experiences.

Connectivity (internet access) and access to appropriate devices to engage with the eGuide were mentioned by some students as reasons for not liking the eGuide. A few noted the computers they worked on had too little processing power or were too slow and others struggled with availability of computers in the lab. A handful of students were not able to use the eGuide on their device of choice – most mentioned Android tablets. However, similar number of students mentioned they liked the fact that they could access the eGuide on other devices (iPads and smartphones were noted).

Even though not a primary theme, a limited number of students liked the “flipped nature” of the eGuide because it allowed them to prepare better for class discussions, go back and review information/videos and engage with lecture materials on their own time. The videos in the eGuide appear to be well received, with only a very small proportion of students not liking this component. The videos were described as *fun, helpful, clear and interesting*.

In a similarly positive tone, across campuses TAs and LFs typically reported highly positive experiences with the eGuide. Although TAs and LFs were both very positive about the accessibility of the preparation materials, this was particularly true for the LFs on the QwaQwa campus. By far the vast majority of the TAs and LFs agreed that the videos were accessible in E1, however (as was the case with the students) on both campuses this percentage decreased somewhat in E2. The positive experience with the eGuide is confirmed by the responses in the qualitative feedback where 32% (E1) and 53% (E2) of TAs, as well as 40% (E1) and 46% (E2) of LFs said there was “*Nothing*” they did not like about the eGuide.

Those who reported positive experiences with the eGuide liked the fact that it was easy to use, materials were easy to access and that it was easy to navigate. In particular on the QwaQwa campus, the eGuide provided clear instructions to the LFs. Although some negative feedback was provided around the eGuide by TAs and LFs, the proportion was substantially lower than the positive feedback on each of the aspects.

Lecturers were overwhelmingly positive about the eGuide, and about their videos in the eGuide. Although the “*lecturing to nobody*” experience (on video) was uncomfortable for most lecturers, the support and logistical processes around the development of the eGuide and the videos was commended.

ASSESSMENTS

More than six out of ten Bloemfontein students and more than eight out of ten QwaQwa students agreed that (i) the MCQs helped them prepare for class, (ii) that the integrated assessment challenged them to apply the knowledge they’ve learned in the module, and (iii) that the assessment tasks enabled them to continue learning about the module. In the first semester it appears as if students on the QwaQwa campus did not find the assessment instructions easy to understand. This shifted substantially in the second semester.

Despite qualitative feedback in response to various questions regarding the time consuming nature of UFS101, the majority of students on both campuses were able to complete their MCQs on time. However, not surprisingly a number of students (ranging between 16 and 30% depending on campus and evaluation point) indicated that the MCQs interfered with their other academic responsibilities, and in the qualitative feedback the regular time investment required by UFS101 assessments was the aspect students disliked most about assessments.

Some frustrations were noted in the marking of assessments, namely that the marking was either not fair (or not done according to the rubric), the marking was too strict, or that marks were not available timeously. One in ten students who provided negative comments about the assessments felt that there was a disconnection between the number of marks allocated to the assessments and the effort required to complete them.

The instructions and rubrics for the Reflection journals and the integrated assessment were experienced less positively by LFs on the QwaQwa campus than by TAs on the Bloemfontein campus in the first semester. There was however a substantial shift in the second semester, with the majority of the LFs indicating that the instructions for both were easy to understand. The Reflection journals rubric appears to have remained somewhat more of a challenge for the LFs in the second semester. Having said this, very few LFs or TAs disagreed to any extent that the instructions and rubrics were easy to understand.

Facilitators provided qualitative feedback on two aspects, first, the marking of assessments, and secondly, the assessments in general. With regards to marking, responses showed a mixed view in terms of positive and negative feedback. Overall comments on assessments provided more negative comments and suggestions than positive comments.

The most frequently noted *negative aspect related to marking* appears to be the volume of work which has a knock-on effect for TAs and LFs, such as increased personal exam pressure. A few TAs and LFs noted there was limited time to complete the marking. Some TAs and LFs found the marking frustrating or challenging for various other reasons, including: students who showed a lack of interest or students not reading and following the instructions as well as students not understanding the content. Other negative aspects mentioned included a difficulty in interpreting students' work, their poor language use and excessive plagiarism.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

QwaQwa students are substantially more positive about their own learning than Bloemfontein students – between 80% and 90% of QwaQwa students strongly agreed with all of the statements related to their learning (during both evaluations), compared to less than three-quarters of Bloemfontein students (with the exception of learning to respect the views of others). Despite this difference, most students reported gains across most of the learning outcomes, and highly similar trends are noted on the two campuses regarding the learning outcomes that students perceive to be most highly and least attained.

On both campuses, the highest proportions of students agreed that they had learned to respect the views of others (even if they don't agree), that they have learned to appreciate both sides of an argument before making a decision, and that they had improved their interaction with diverse people from different ethnicities, backgrounds, disciplines and religions. Furthermore, on both campuses, the lowest proportion of students agreed that their academic argumentation skills and that their academic reading and writing skills had improved.

Across both evaluation points TAs and LFs were extremely positive about their own learning and development. All LFs on the QwaQwa campus agreed to some extent in both evaluations that they have gained in all of the learning outcomes. The only exception is learning to appreciate both sides of an argument before making a decision⁶.

The highest proportion of Bloemfontein TAs strongly agreed that they improved their interaction with diverse peoples from different ethnicities, backgrounds, disciplines, religions and that they had learned to reason above emotion; whilst the lowest proportion strongly agreed that their academic reading and writing skills and their academic argumentation skills had improved.

The highest proportion of QwaQwa LFs agreed that they had learned to respect the views of others, even if they don't agree and that they had improved their interaction with diverse peoples from different ethnicities, backgrounds, disciplines and religions; whilst the lowest proportion of LFs from the QwaQwa campus agreed that their academic reading and writing skills had improved and that they had changed their way of thinking about problems. The development of academic argumentation skills is also less pronounced than the other learning outcomes.

TEACHING ASSISTANTS/ LEARNING FACILITATORS

Students' perceptions of their TAs and LFs were overwhelmingly positive, although marginally more positive on the QwaQwa campus. Qualitative and quantitative data confirm this finding. TAs and LFs are in almost all cases considered to be prepared for their discussion classes, respectful towards all students, helpful and able to encourage discussion in

⁶ 93% strongly agreed

class. Only in a very limited number of cases were TAs or LFs noted as having language proficiency issues, being rude, showing favouritism, displaying arrogance or lacking in enthusiasm.

COMMUNICATION WITH AND SUPPORT FROM THE UFS101 TEAM

Email and in particular Blackboard were the most useful forms of communication for the students, whilst cellphone communication is substantially more useful to students on the QwaQwa campus than students on the Bloemfontein campus.

Qualitative feedback shows an overall positive tone regarding students' experience in communicating with the UFS101 team. The communication from the team was described as helpful, timeous and quick, as well as useful. Students frequently cited phrases such as *"Keep up the good work"*.

All of the **lecturers were unequivocally positive about the competency and efficiency of the UFS101 team**. Lecturers all reported receiving excellent support from the team throughout all activities they were involved in.

OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Encouragingly, a quarter of students on the Bloemfontein campus in E1 and 19% in E2, as well as four out of ten students on the QwaQwa campus (across both evaluations) indicated that there was nothing they *disliked* about UFS101. That said, it should be noted that, although the percentages were small, there were students on both the Bloemfontein and QwaQwa campuses who indicated that they liked nothing about UFS101.

Students particularly liked that they learned to respect and acknowledge the views of others, that their critical thinking skills had developed and that they had improved their interaction with diverse groups. This data serves to cross-validate the findings reported in the learning outcomes section, where the highest proportion of students agreed that they had learned to respect the views of others, and three quarters agreed they had improved their interaction with diverse groups. Students also liked that they learned new and interesting things, that the course covered a broad range of topics and that it was fun, challenging or something unique and *"out of the box"*.

Although noted by slightly fewer students, both the Bloemfontein and QwaQwa students mentioned the discussion classes and learning experiences as aspects of UFS101 that they liked. These students particularly liked that the discussion classes provided a non-judgmental space and that they were free to speak up in these classes.

Time related issues were the most salient aspect of UFS101 that students disliked on both the Bloemfontein and QwaQwa campuses. The most prominent issue on both campuses was that UFS101 was too time consuming. On the QwaQwa campus students particularly mentioned that the volume of work was overwhelming whilst on the Bloemfontein campus students felt that they could have used the time spent on UFS101 for other subjects. Furthermore, the weekly multiple choice question tests were disliked by some students on both campuses, again mostly due to their time consuming nature.

The relational learning aspect of being a TA or LF clearly stands out as being a highly positive component of the UFS101 experience. This is illustrated by the fact that the most positive experiences mentioned by TAs and LFs included aspects such as working with colleagues, hearing other's opinions, learning from the students, working with different types of people, engaging with students and the opportunity to work with students to challenge their perspectives. The opportunities for personal development and improvement of teaching skills are also highly positive experiences for the TAs and LFs.

Lack of student engagement, preparation and participation, as well as negative student attitudes were noted as the most common challenges experienced by the TAs and LFs on both campuses.

STUDENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND PERFORMANCE

More than eight out of ten students on both campuses met the minimum required attendance, but only a handful attended all of the required sessions. Attendance of discussion classes as a proportion of the number of enrolled students hovered between 70 and 80% on the Bloemfontein campus (with a steep decline only for the first online discussion class). On the QwaQwa campus attendance was typically slightly higher also with a steep decline at the first online discussion class (and again at the Unit five learning experience).

Although the performance of the Bloemfontein campus students in the MCQs was typically slightly higher than for the QwaQwa campus, the pattern of performance (i.e. which MCQs had higher or lower marks) was mostly similar. In contrast, the rates of non-completion of MCQs were consistently higher on the Bloemfontein campus.

Students on the Bloemfontein campus also performed better on the Reflection journals and the integrated assessments, although again patterns of performance were highly similar for the two campuses.

On both campuses, slightly more than seven out of ten students successfully completed the module when attendance and assessment criteria are taken into account. On the Bloemfontein campus one third of students passed with distinction and just under 10% of students on the QwaQwa campus obtained distinctions.

1. Introduction

UFS101 – the compulsory undergraduate core curriculum module for first-year students at the University of the Free State – is a flagship initiative within the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and is at the forefront of implementing engaging teaching and learning in large class contexts.

The aim of UFS101 is to nurture the next generation of citizens and young academics that can take South Africa into the 21st century, equipped with the ability to understand and engage with complex human problems from multiple perspectives.

This report details the feedback from students, teaching assistants (Bloemfontein Campus), learning facilitators (QwaQwa campus) and lecturers related to the UFS101 module during 2014.

1.1. Overview of UFS101 and Expansion in 2014

The module was first piloted in 2011, with full roll-out in 2012 and continued expansion in 2013 and 2014.

The module is compulsory and credit-bearing (16 credits) for mainstream students with an AP score of 30 and above, registering as first-time entering students for a first degree or diploma qualification, as well as for extended programme students in their second year of registration. On the Bloemfontein campus expansion in student numbers has more than doubled in a three year period. In 2012 approximately 2000 students enrolled for the module, in 2013 the module had 3613⁷ students and in 2014 a total of 4305⁸ students enrolled for the module. UFS101 further expanded in 2013 by implementing a pilot on the QwaQwa campus with 150 students in the Faculty of Education, and in 2014 all first year students on the QwaQwa campus were enrolled.

The pilot (2011) and the first year of implementation (2012) were evaluated and the findings of these evaluations were used to enhance and strengthen the module and its implementation during 2013. This report aims to detail the feedback related to UFS101 in 2014, but does not attempt to serve as a full evaluation of the module.

1.2. Module Outcomes

After completion of UFS101 students should demonstrate the ability to:

- Explain the value of different disciplinary perspectives;
- Apply different disciplinary perspectives as part of their critical thinking;
- Demonstrate basic reflective academic skills - reading, writing and argumentation skills; and
- Reflect on how higher education empowers citizens to engage with the challenges facing the 21st century world (locally and globally).

1.3. Module Delivery

UFS101 aims to create an innovative, 21st century learning space where students learn through a range of blended learning experiences. Since its inception, UFS101 has taken a blended learning approach to delivery – drawing on the strengths of both contact sessions and online learning (primarily through Blackboard). However in 2014 UFS101 broke new territory on the UFS campus by implementing a flipped classroom approach to the large class teaching environment referred to as the Flipped-Discussion-Teaching (FDT) model. The model was implemented to address some of the emerging and persistent challenges in UFS101 linked to the “mega-class” environment, in particular the lack of student engagement.

The FDT employs a blended learning design with a flipped classroom approach where students are required to watch a series of 5-15 minute “lecturettes” online for each unit and complete a set of readings (all provided in the innovative eGuide) linked to a multiple choice questionnaire (MCQ) prior to attending a small group face-to-face discussion class. The focus of the discussion classes, which are stripped of all technology, is on using inquiry based learning through discussion as a way of teaching to promote deep engagement and create opportunity for peer instruction. Continued

⁷ Final enrolments after a limited number of students deregistered.

⁸ Total number of students in final mark sheet provided by UFS101 team

engagement after discussion classes was intended to take place in the form of blogs and online discussions – this however did not materialise as intended and students did not make frequent use of this platform.

During 2014, the module comprised of seven units presented by experts on each of the topics. The first four units were presented in the first semester and the remaining three during the second semester (refer to Table 1 below for an exposition of the units presented during 2013). Each unit included videos and interactive material in the eGuide for preparation, two discussion classes (either face-to-face or online) and a learning experience. Online classes only took place when face-to-face could not take place due to venue restrictions or public holidays. The presentation of units was preceded by an official orientation for students. In addition, students had access to a UFS101 overview video on Blackboard to orientate them to the module content and an information literacy unit for self-study was introduced for the first time.

Table 1. Module outline 2014

Unit	Topic	Discipline	Presenter	Learning Experience	Semester
1	How to become democratic and cultivated citizens?	Anthropology and Social Psychology	Mr. M Serekoane and Mr. P. Mdunge	Sculpture Walk	1
2	My rights vs. your rights?	Law	Mr. W. Ellis	Social Media and the Law	1
3	Why is the financial crisis global?	Economics	Dr A. van Niekerk	Multiculturalism in business	1
4	How green is green?	Chemistry	Prof. A. Roodt	Chem-Magic Show	1
5	How should we deal with our violent past?	History and Pedagogy	Prof J.D. Jansen	Dealing with Battle Scars: Video documentary and virtual tour	2
6	Are we alone?	Astronomy and Biophysics	Prof. M.J.H. Hoffman & Prof. E. van Heerden	Astronomy Fair	2
7	How do people change?	Social Psychology	Dr J.F. Strydom	Love, Media and Relationships	2

Learning support was offered by means of the learning management system, Blackboard, which formed the main learning platform, complemented by the eGuide. Students were expected to attend UFS101 specific Blackboard training prior to the commencement of the module, in order to equip them to fully engage with the module content. Blackboard was used to convey important information and contained learning material and links to additional sources of information, e.g. videos. Additional communication about the module took place through email, text messages and Facebook. Students could also contact the UFS101 team by email or visit their offices during consultation hours.

1.4. Module Assessment

Students were evaluated through two integrated assessment tasks and two Reflection journals which spanned across units, along with a multiple choice quiz prior to each discussion class (to ensure adequate engagement with the eGuide and preparation of the discussion classes). Detailed instructions for each assessment were provided in the module guide and Blackboard.

Each student was required to complete all five assessments (obtaining a subminimum of 45% to get a re-assessment and 50% average to pass the module). All assessments were moderated by three external moderators, after which adjustments to mark allocations were made where necessary.

In addition to this requirement, students were required to attend 70% of the contact sessions (learning experiences and discussion classes) in order to pass the module. Students who do not pass the module are required to repeat the module in the following year. Attendance was tracked through the use of biometric scanners. Students who were unable to attend due to valid reasons (including timetable clashes, test-timetable clashes, illness, death in the family or provincial, national and international sport/cultural events) were given the opportunity to appeal and were not penalised.

1.5. UFS101 Human Resource Capacity

Staff

At the start of 2014, UFS101 was coordinated by a team of four full-time staff members based in the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) with five part-time assistants. During 2014 a new coordinator was appointed whose responsibilities included the oversight of UFS101.

Teaching Assistants and Learning Facilitators

A team of 38 teaching assistants (TAs) were selected for the Bloemfontein campus from 50 applicants for 2014. The team of TAs mainly consisted of senior and postgraduate students. They worked on a one-year contract basis (25 hours per week) and were provided with laptops and data to enable them to communicate regularly with students and do their marking. Each TA was responsible for approximately 120-130 students (for marking) and was responsible for five discussion classes per week. A prerequisite for appointment was a minimum of two years previous facilitation experience and NATP tutorial training. This new model for TAs on the Bloemfontein campus was implemented for the first time in 2014, and sought to overcome some of the challenges experienced in 2013 when 108 Learning Facilitators were appointed on an ad hoc basis for the module.

There were 15 learning facilitators (LFs) selected for the QwaQwa campus. They were appointed on an ad hoc basis and not in a similar fashion to the Bloemfontein campus due to the significantly lower student numbers on the campus. Each LF was expected to present one discussion class per week and was responsible for marking 20-25 students' work.

TAs and LFs received five days of training at the beginning of 2014, which included an orientation to UFS101, the content of the first semester, Blackboard training and Difficult Dialogues training. Additional training was held prior to the start of the second semester for five days to cover the content of the lectures to be presented in the second semester and assessment training. Meetings including the external moderators were arranged prior to the marking of each assessment to prepare the learning facilitators adequately for marking the assessments.

1.6. Methodology

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the perspectives of the students, TAs/LFs and lecturers on the UFS101 module relating to the extent to which the teaching and learning outcomes of the module were attained, their overall satisfaction with the module, as well as their recommendations for the future improvement of the module. In order to understand the above, feedback from students, TAs and LFs was obtained on the following:

- To what extent were the overall module outcomes attained?
- What was the extent of effectiveness and quality of the:
 - eGuide?
 - Discussion classes?
 - Learning experiences?
 - Learning materials?
 - Platform for learning (Blackboard)?
 - Logistical processes?
- What was the extent of student success in UFS101?
- What recommendations do students and learning facilitators have for the future improvement of the module?

Population, Sampling and Data Collection

Comprehensive sampling was employed as the entire population of students enrolled for UFS101 and all TAs and LFs involved in the module during 2014 were invited to participate. Actual response rates are detailed in the Sample section of this report.

Data was collected from students and LFs/TAs on both campuses through two online mixed-method surveys – one in each semester. Data for the analysis of attendance and performance was obtained from the UFS101 team. Response rates were markedly higher for the first online survey than the second. All lecturers were invited to participate in a face-to-face interview. A total of six lecturer interviews were conducted.

2. Sample

2.1. Students

The number of students enrolled for UFS101 on the Bloemfontein campus at the end of 2014 was 4305 and on the QwaQwa campus was 383. The summary graphs in Figure 1 below illustrate the demographic profile of the students responding to the two survey evaluations (E1 and E2).

The majority of respondents on both campuses were female, and female students were slightly overrepresented on each campus at both evaluation points (population 62% female). The overwhelming majority of students responding from the QwaQwa campus were Black African (99%), compared to almost 50% of students on the Bloemfontein campus. Black African students were slightly underrepresented on Bloemfontein campus (population 56% Black African).

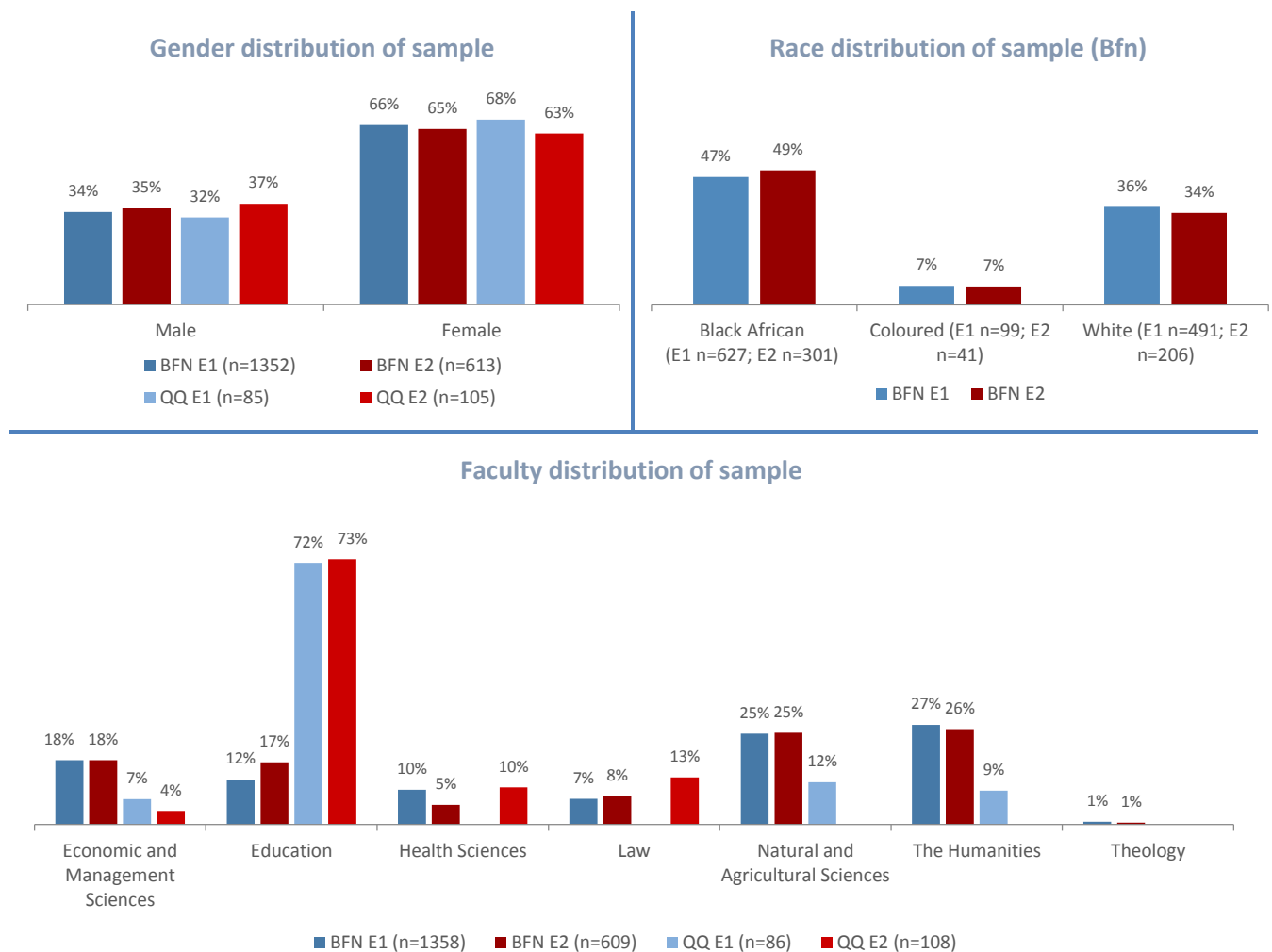


Figure 1. Demographic profile of students

2.2. Teaching Assistants and Learning Facilitators

There were 38 TAs on the Bloemfontein campus and 15 LFs on the QwaQwa campus. The summary graphs in Figure 2 on the following page illustrate the demographic profile of the TAs/LFs *responding* to the two survey evaluations (E1 and E2).

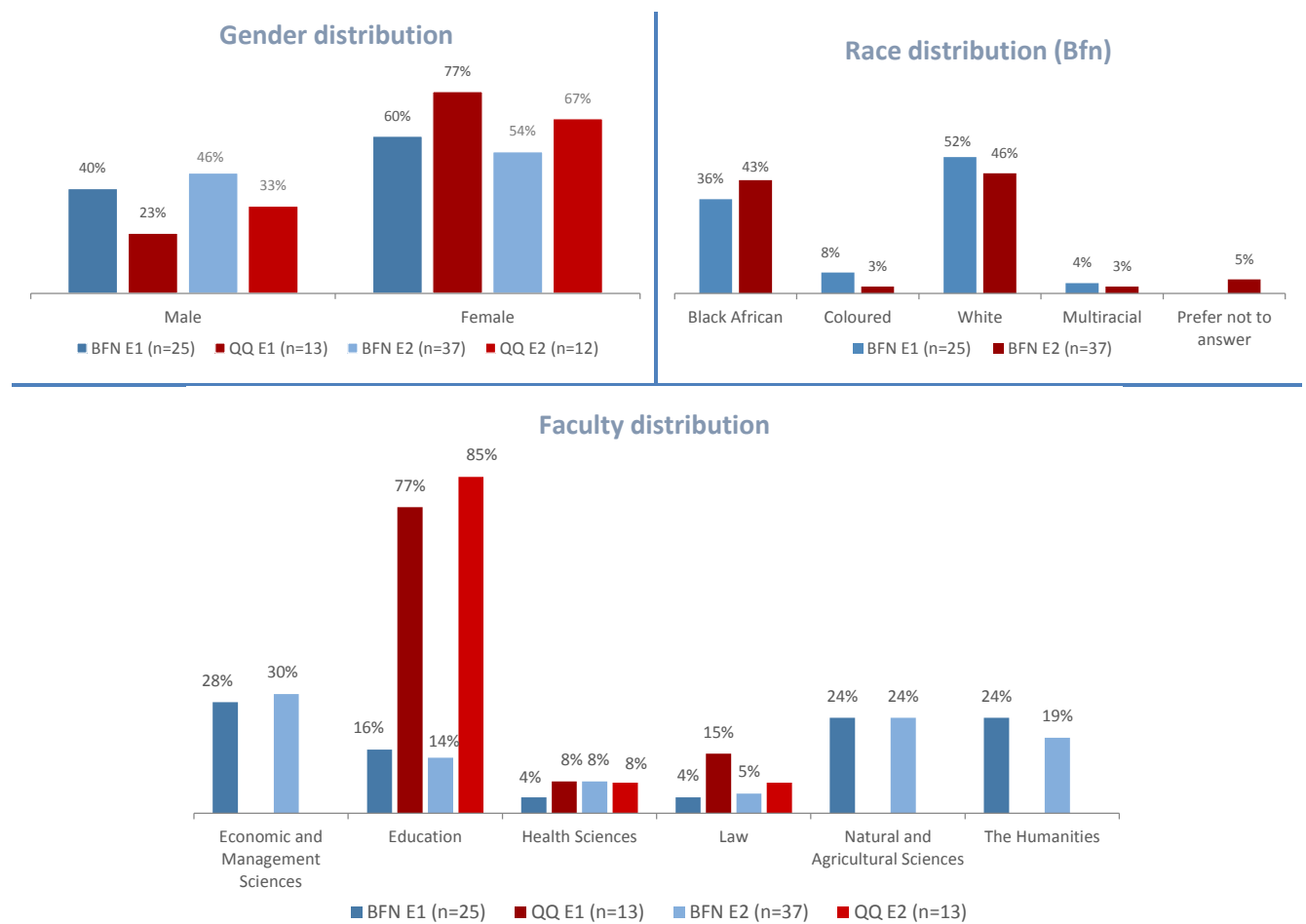


Figure 2. Demographic profile of TAs/LFs

3. Student Experience

3.1. DELIVERY of UFS101

Across all questions related to the delivery of UFS101, students on the **QwaQwa campus** clearly display more positive responses than students on the **Bloemfontein campus** (see Figure 3 below). Despite this, across campuses students are predominantly positive about the manner of delivery of UFS101⁹, with hardly more than 10% of students indicating that they did not like the way of delivery in UFS101.

More than 50% of students on the **QwaQwa campus**, during both evaluations, strongly agreed the manner of delivery *enhanced their learning* and that it was *helpful to access materials before class*. This was only true for approximately a quarter and one third of **Bloemfontein campus students**, during both evaluations.

Three-quarters of the **QwaQwa students**, during Evaluation one¹⁰ (E1) agreed that their learning would be enhanced if their *other modules were presented in the same way*; this increased slightly during the second evaluation (E2)¹¹, compared to just more than half of **Bloemfontein campus students** who agreed with this statement at both evaluation points.

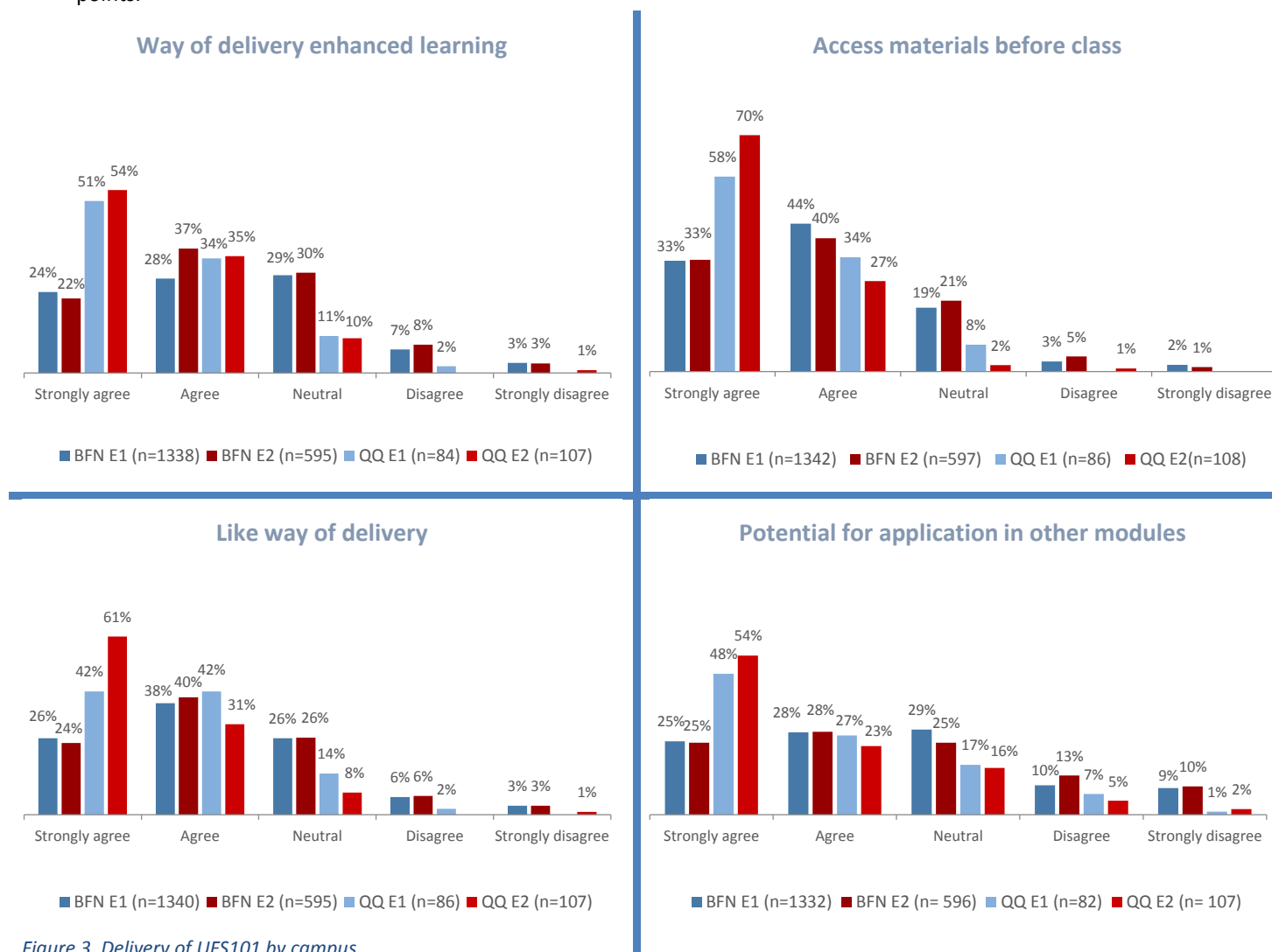


Figure 3. Delivery of UFS101 by campus

⁹ Specifically, the question referred students to the following “eGuide, online videos, learning experiences, discussion classes”

¹⁰ Evaluation conducted at the end of semester one

¹¹ Evaluation conducted at the end of the module

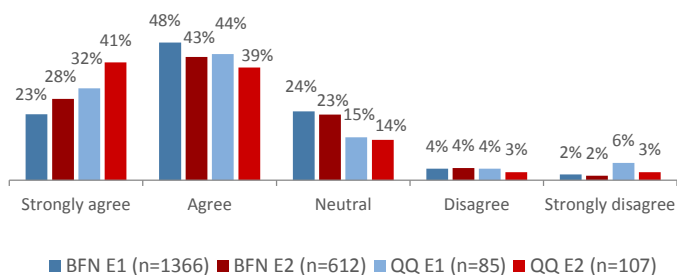
3.2. LEVEL OF ACADEMIC CHALLENGE

Most students on both campuses agreed to some extent that the content of the module and the videos were pitched at an appropriate level of difficulty. Of those who disagreed, most indicated the *content* was pitched too high (BFN E1 83% n=76, E2 60% n=21; QQ: E1 88% n=8, E2 67% n=4). However, of those who disagreed that the *videos* were pitched appropriately, somewhat fewer said the videos were pitched too high (BFN: E1 66% n=73, E2 48% n=15; QQ E1 43% n=7, E2 57% n=4).

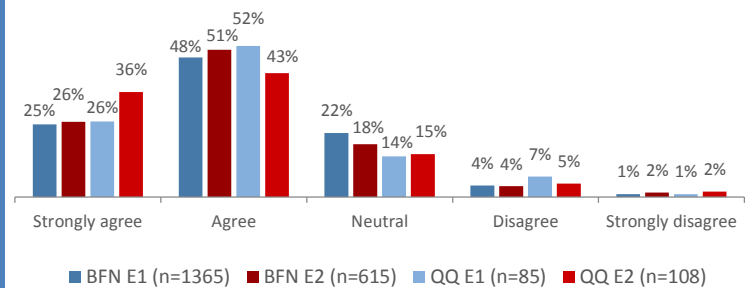
Despite qualitative responses to a number of questions in the survey suggesting that UFS101 was significantly time consuming, less than 20% of students on the **Bloemfontein campus** and less than 10% of students on the **QwaQwa campus** for both evaluations disagreed that the amount of time allocated to each unit was appropriate.

A very high proportion of students on the **QwaQwa campus** (during both evaluations) agreed that they have been challenged to examine difficult issues from different perspectives, to think in new ways about global issues and in particular to think about local issues in new ways. Although around one in five **Bloemfontein campus** students were neutral about the topic during both evaluations, at least two-thirds of students agreed that they had been challenged to examine difficult issues from different perspectives and to think in new ways about global and local issues (see Figure 4 below).

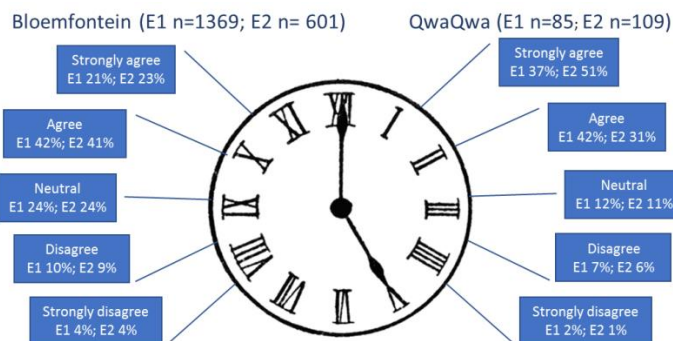
Appropriateness of difficulty: Content



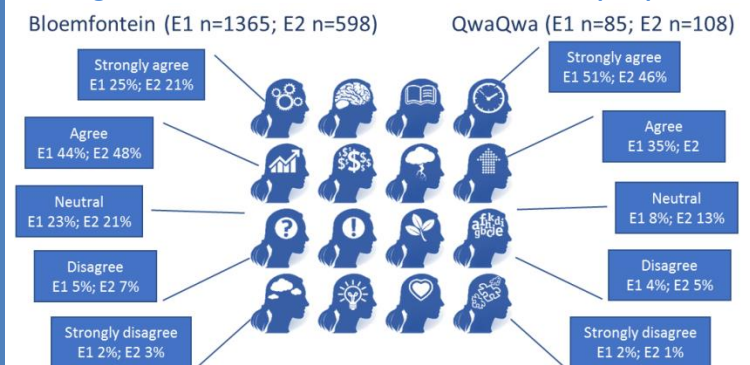
Appropriateness of difficulty: Videos



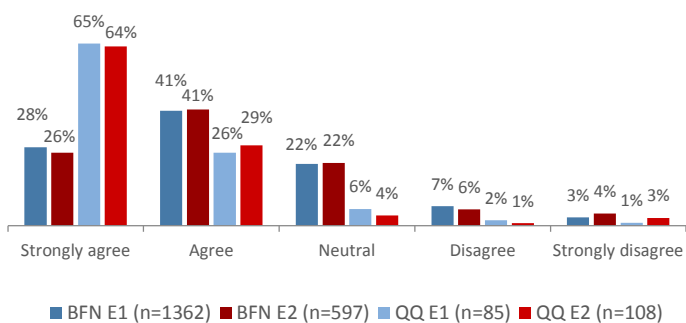
The amount of time allocated to work through each unit is appropriate for first-year students



Challenged to examine difficult issues from different perspectives



Think in new ways: Local challenges



Think in new ways: Global challenges

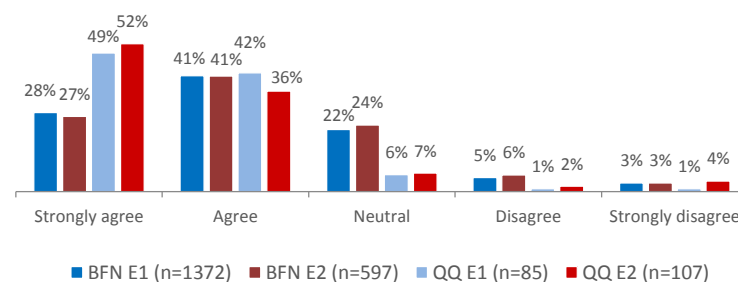


Figure 4. Level of academic challenge by campus

3.3. MODULE CONTENT

Slightly more than half of the students on **Bloemfontein campus** (during both evaluations) agreed to some extent that the content of UFS101 had personal relevance for students; almost two-thirds of **QwaQwa campus** students agreed with this statement during E1 and more than 80% agreed during E2 (see Figure 5 below).

Relevance of UFS101 content to students

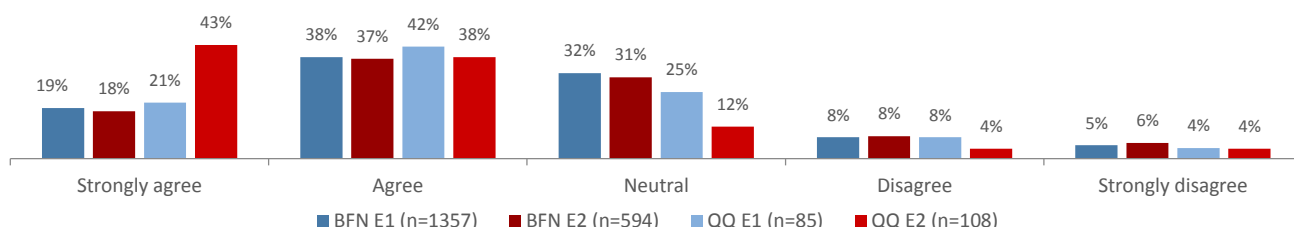


Figure 5. UFS101 content relevance by campus

A limited number of students made specific¹² positive comments about the content of UFS101, whilst far fewer made negative comments regarding the content (see Table 2 below for summary of positive and negative aspects noted by students regarding content).

Table 2. Positive and negative aspects of module content

POSITIVE ASPECTS				
	BFN E1 (n=69)	BFN E2 (n=73)	QQ E1 (n=11)	QQ E2 (n=30)
Relevant	25	6	1	-
Interesting	9	13	-	3
Useful	5	2	2	1
Educational	5	-	-	-
Informative outside of study field	5	2	-	-
Helpful	5	1	4	-
Enlightening	2	1	1	-
NEGATIVE ASPECTS				
	BFN E1 (n=25)	BFN E2 (n=14)	QQ E1 (n=3)	QQ E2 (n=5)
Irrelevant	8	4	1	1
Boring	6	1	1	-
Too challenging	3	2	1	3
Too easy	5	2	1	-
Too much work covered	1	2	-	-
Too time consuming	3	1	-	-

Some suggestions were made regarding the content of UFS101; however no one suggestion stood out as being mentioned by a large proportion of the students.

- The most frequently mentioned suggestion was the request for hard copy materials (BFN: E2 n= 12; QQ: E2 n=4)
- A few students on the Bloemfontein campus noted the need to improve the relevance of the module to students' studies (BFN: E1 n=3, E2 n=4), the workplace (BFN: E1 n=2, E2 n=1) and modern day life (BFN E1: n=3, E2 n=3).
- A very limited number of students in E1 requested additional or new topics to be covered, including a theology related unit (n=2), a campus history unit (n=1) and a unit about education (n=1).

¹² It appears as if students did not understand the question clearly, a number of other qualitative responses were given, but were not related to the content of the module.

- None of the students suggested that the content should be made more challenging; three on the Bloemfontein campus and one on the QwaQwa campus suggested the content should be simplified and that simpler language should be used (BFN: E1 n=4; QQ: E1, E2 n=1).
- Although two students would have preferred more contact sessions (one each per evaluation point), four asked for either more online discussions (BFN: E2 n=3) or for the whole module to be delivered only online (BFN: E1 n=1).
- Not surprisingly, students suggested ways to decrease the amount of time required to successfully complete the module, including less reading (n=3) and decreasing the amount of time required to complete each unit (n=3).
- A handful of students on the Bloemfontein campus (BFN: E1 n=6, E2 n=3) suggested that the content should not focus as much on issues of race and/or apartheid.
- Three students requested the materials be made available in Afrikaans. (BFN E1 n=2, E2 n=1).

3.4. LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Typically students on both campuses found all the learning experiences to be both *relevant and interesting* (see summary graphs in Figure 6 on the following pages). This positive tone is confirmed by the finding that 28-36% and 36-40% (E1 to E2) of students on the Bloemfontein and QwaQwa campuses respectively said in their qualitative feedback that there was “Nothing” they did not like about the learning experiences.

Most students on the **Bloemfontein campus** found the “*Social Media and the Law*”, “*Multiculturalism in Business*”, and “*Love, Media and Relationships*” learning experiences all very relevant and very interesting. Although the “*Chem -Magic Show*” was a very interesting learning experience it was not rated highly on relevance; the “*Sculpture Walk*” and the “*Astronomy Fair*” were rated comparatively low on both aspects.

- In their qualitative feedback, a number of **Bloemfontein students** mentioned specific learning experiences which they liked (BFN: E1 17%, n= 152, E2 15% n=61). Of these most mentioned the “*Chem-Magic Show*” (n=67) in the first semester and “*Love, Media and Relationships*” (n=34) in the second semester. A number mentioned the “*Social Media and the Law*” (n=45) in E1, in many cases specifically because it made them aware of the potential pitfalls of social media. In E2 the “*Astronomy Fair*” also featured strongly (n=22).
- In the qualitative feedback on what they disliked very few students mentioned the “*Social Media and the Law*” (n=9) and “*Multiculturalism in Business*” (n=10) sessions in E1; slightly higher numbers mentioned the “*Chem Magic Show*” (n=28). In E2 a number of students mentioned the “*Astronomy Fair*” (n=22) and the “*Movie Hour*” (n=18). Students specifically mentioned that the “*Movie Hour*” was boring or uninteresting (n=5), irrelevant to their lives (n=7) and that it stirred negative emotions (n=6).
- Despite somewhat lower ratings in the quantitative questions, 39 students mentioned they liked the “*Sculpture Walk*” as it made them more aware of campus and helped them see the value and meaning of the sculptures. Not surprisingly, the majority of students who mentioned specific learning experiences they did not like, noted the “*Sculpture Walk*”.

Students on the **QwaQwa campus** found the “*Love, Media and Relationships*” experience to be the most relevant and interesting. The “*Basotho Cultural Village*” visit was very interesting (with high relevance) and the “*Social Media and the Law*” experience was noted as highly relevant (with relatively high ratings for how interesting it was). Although students were least positive about the “*Chem Magic Show*”, only slightly more than 10% said it was not interesting or relevant.

- In their qualitative feedback, a number of **QwaQwa students** mentioned specific learning experiences which they liked (E1 20%, n= 16, E2 22%, n=22). Of these most mentioned either the “*Basotho Cultural Village*” (n=8) or the “*Chem Magic Show*” (n=7) for E1 and the “*Astronomy Fair*” (n=16) for E2. No trends emerged in the qualitative feedback regarding specific sessions they disliked.

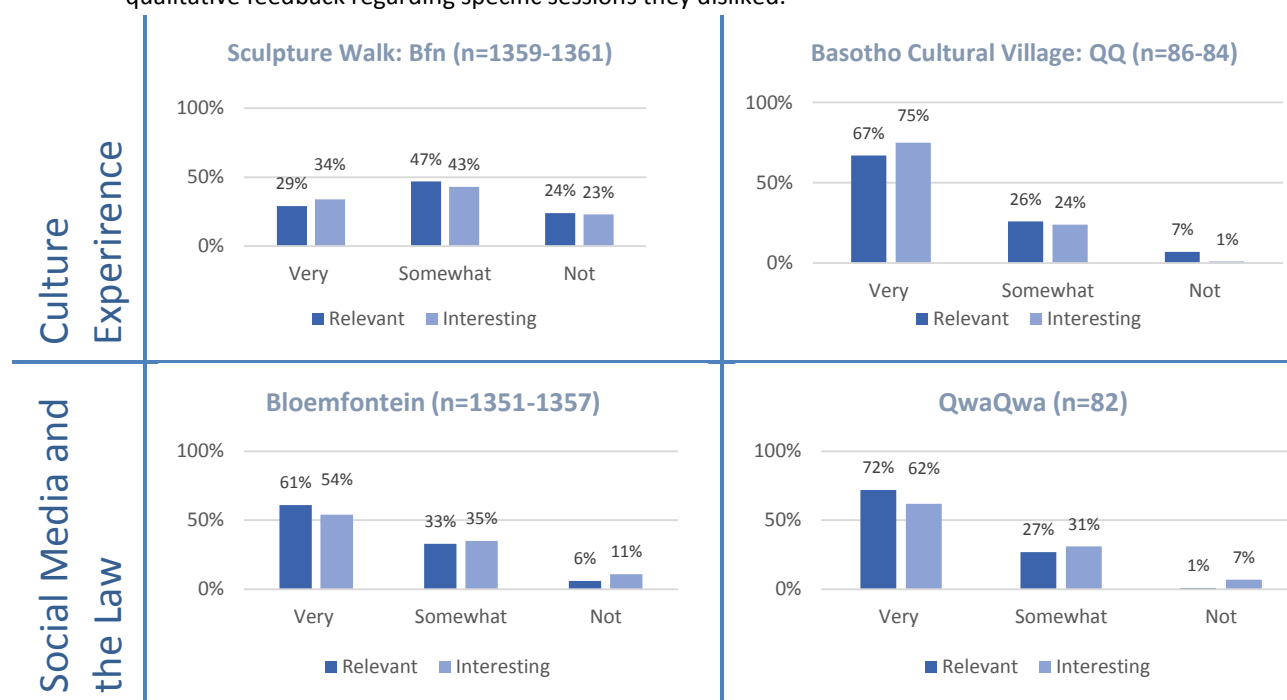




Figure 6. Interest in and relevance of learning experiences

The qualitative feedback of 998 students in E1 and 510 students in E2 confirmed the predominantly positive experiences students had in the learning experiences (see summary graph in Figure 7 below).

What did you like about the learning experiences?

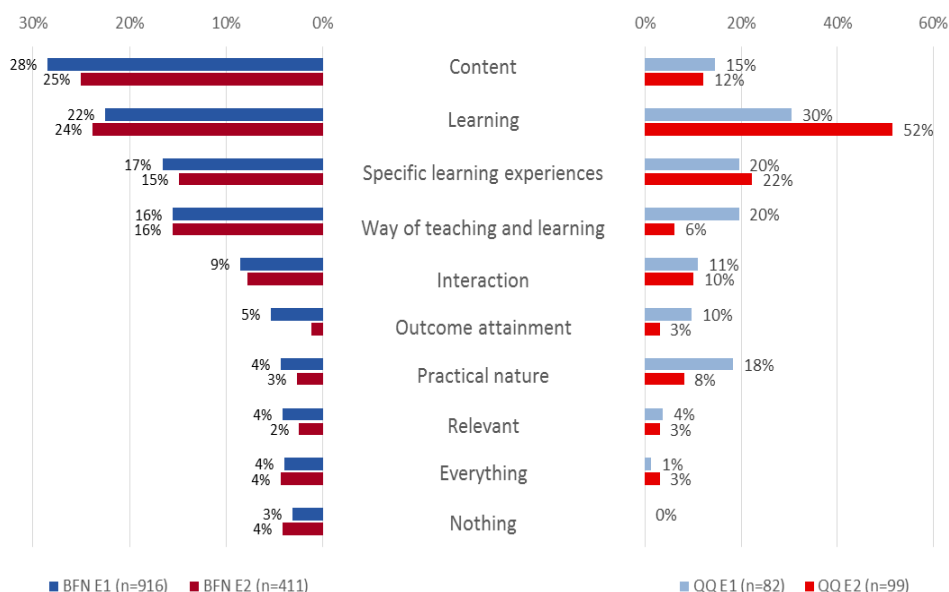


Figure 7. Positive aspects of learning experiences

On the **Bloemfontein campus** students liked the *content* of the learning experiences (E1 28% n=261, E2 25% n=103), what they *learned* from the experiences (E1 17% n=206, E2 24% n=98) and the *way of teaching and learning* (E1 16% n=142, E2 16% n=64).

- Students found the *content* “interesting” (E1 n=118, E2 n=46), “fun” (E1 n=56, E2 n=21), “informative and educational” (E1 n=32, E2 n=24), “entertaining” (E1 n=16) and “enlightening” (E1 n=7). They also liked that the content exposed them to topics in other faculties or disciplines (E1 n=20, E2 n=3), covered a broad range of topics (E1 n=15, E2 n=3) and that the content was relevant (E1 n=10, E2 n=13).
- Students enjoyed what they *learned from the experiences*, specifically that they learned new things (E1 n=112, E2 n=53), their general knowledge was broadened (E1 n=32, E2 n=11) and that they were exposed to new and useful information (E1 n=20, E2 n=9).
- In terms of the *manner of teaching and learning*, students were very impressed by the quality of the presentations and speakers (E1 n=54, E2 n=22), they enjoyed the interactive nature of the presentations (E1 n=29, E2 n=12) and a few noted they enjoyed the “mega” class environment (E1 n=10, E2 n=3). The fact that the learning experiences are different to their normal classes (E1 n=1, E2 n=8), that they were face-to-face in nature (E1 n=5, E2 n=1) and made concepts easy to understand (E1 n=5, E2 n=1) was also appreciated by a smaller number of students. During E2 students also expressed their satisfaction with the visual or audio aspects (E1 n=2, E2 n=10) and the videos (E1 n=2, E2 n=8) used in lectures.

On the **QwaQwa campus**, there was a significant overlap with the **Bloemfontein campus** in terms of what students liked about UFS101 with 30% (n=25) in E1 and 52% (n=51) in E2 mentioning *what they learned* from the module and 20% in E1 (n=16) mentioning the *manner of teaching and learning*. Although the content of the learning experiences was less outstanding for the QwaQwa students (although still mentioned E1 15% n=12 and E2 12% n=12), it appears that the *practical nature of the experiences* was particularly appreciated by this group of students (emerged as one of the top three themes for the campus mentioned by 18% (n=15) of the students in E1).

- As was the case with the Bloemfontein students, QwaQwa students enjoyed what they *learned from the experiences*, specifically that they learned new things (E1 n=15, E2 n=25), their general knowledge was broadened (E1 n=5, E2 n=7) and that they were exposed to new and useful information (E1 n=3, E2 n=5).
- In terms of the *manner of teaching and learning*, students liked the fact that the UFS101 learning experiences were different from their usual lectures (E1 n=3). Some enjoyed the fact that videos were used (E1 n=3, E2 n=1) and others liked the face-to-face nature of the experiences (E1 n=3).

- One in ten **Bloemfontein** and **QwaQwa** students liked the interactive nature of the learning experiences, specifically that it allowed them to ask questions, interact with experts, voice their opinions and meet new people.
- On both the **Bloemfontein** and **QwaQwa** campuses, a relatively small proportion of students noted examples of how the learning experiences helped them to attain specific module outcomes¹³ (BFN: E1 5%, E2 10%; QQ E1 1%, E2 3%)

The qualitative feedback of 853 students in E1 and 451 students in E2 in response to the question “What did you dislike about the learning experiences?” served as additional confirmation of the positive manner in which the learning experiences were received overall. As many as 36% of students on **Bloemfontein campus** in E1 and 28% in E2, as well as 40% of students on **QwaQwa campus** in E1 and 34% in E2 said there was “Nothing” they did not like about the learning experiences (see summary graph in Figure below).

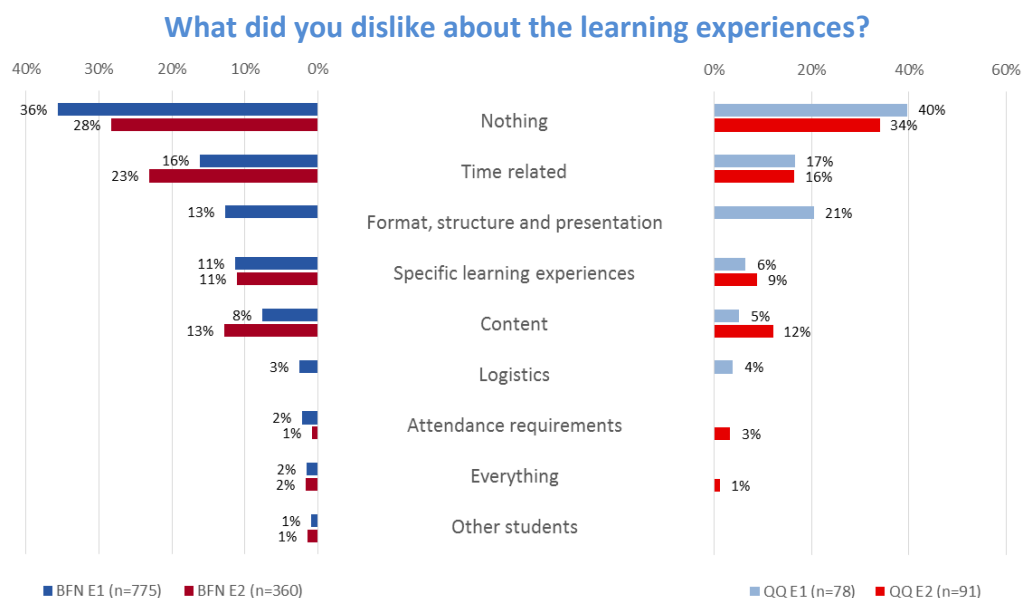


Figure 8. Negative aspects of learning experiences

- Time related concerns** featured strongly as a theme on both campuses as an aspect students disliked about the learning experiences (BFN: E1 16% n=126, E2 23% n=83; QQ E1 17% n=13, E2 16% n=15).
 - Specifically, students on both campuses noted that the learning experiences clashed with their other classes¹⁴, many on the Bloemfontein campus said the learning experiences were too time consuming (E1 n=40, E2 n=22) and a number simply said they were a waste of their time (E1 n=19, E2 n=8).
- The format, structure and presentation of the learning experiences** were also mentioned by the students during the first evaluation (BFN: E1 13% n=98; QQ: E1 21% n=16). Specifically, on both campuses a small percentage mentioned that the learning experience environment was too large. Some thought the sessions were too short and others thought the sessions were too long, although slightly more students thought sessions were too long.
- A handful of students said they were intimidated by the large classes or too scared to ask questions (n=6) and two students disliked the fact that the presentations were only done in English.
- The few students who disliked the logistical aspects of the learning experiences (n=23 across campuses) noted the overcrowded venues (n=17), the poor sound quality, high noise levels (n=7) and problems around notification systems (n=1) (logistical aspects were not mentioned during E2).

¹³ During E1, on the Bloemfontein campus this included 14 students who said the learning experiences helped them see both sides of an argument or see other perspectives, eight who said the learning experiences improved interaction between diverse groups of people and four each who said it improved their critical thinking skills or made them aware of 21st century issues. During E2 only three individuals mentioned that their critical thinking skills were improved and one mentioned that the learning experiences changed their way of thinking about problems and made them aware of 21st century issues.

During E1, on the QwaQwa campus this included three students who said the learning experiences helped them see both sides of an argument or see other perspectives, two who said it improved their critical thinking skills and three who said it made them aware of 21st century issues. During E2, only two students mentioned that their critical thinking skills were improved, and one mentioned that the LE's made them aware of 21st century issues.

¹⁴ All but two of the QwaQwa students who had time related concerns mentioned class clashes in E1 and four students mentioned the same in E2.

3.5. DISCUSSION CLASSES

Although approximately eight out of ten students on both campuses agreed that students were able to discuss content with one another during discussion classes, substantially more students on the **QwaQwa campus** strongly agreed with this, during both evaluations (see summary graph in Figure 9 below).

- On the **Bloemfontein campus** approximately one third of students in both evaluations felt that it was easy to express their opinions in both the online and face-to-face discussion classes. During E1, 43% felt it easier to express their opinions in the online discussion classes, but only 28% expressed this same sentiment in E2.
- In contrast, on the **QwaQwa campus**, somewhat equal proportions of students felt at ease expressing their opinions in the face-to-face discussions (36%), in the online discussions (33%) and in both platforms (27%) during E1. During E2, however, there was a significant shift in opinions, where approximately 60% preferred face-to-face discussions and only 8% found it easier to express themselves in online discussions.
- On both campuses, only a very small proportion of students felt that it was not easy for them to voice their opinions in any of the discussion classes across both evaluations.

Students able to discuss content with one another during discussion classes?

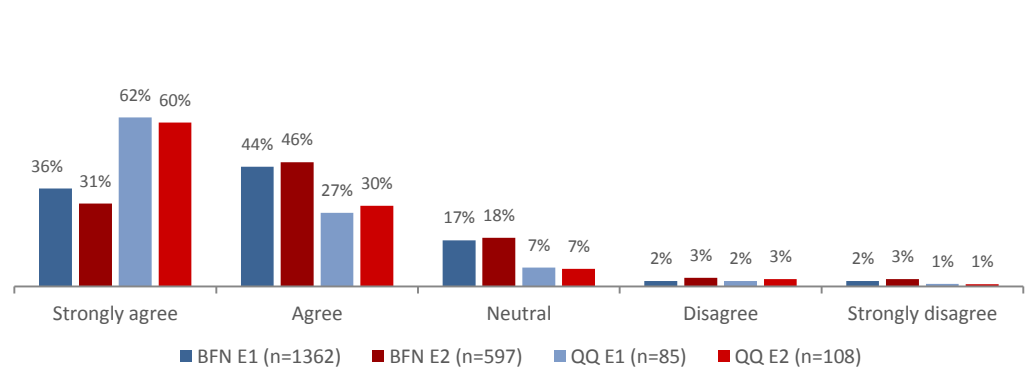


Figure 9. Discussion of content during discussion classes

3.6. TEACHING ASSISTANTS/ LEARNING FACILITATORS

Students' perceptions of Teaching Assistants (TAs) and Learning Facilitators (LFs) were overwhelmingly positive, although marginally more positive on the **QwaQwa campus**. Qualitative data largely confirms the positive experiences with the TAs and LFs (see Figure 10 below).

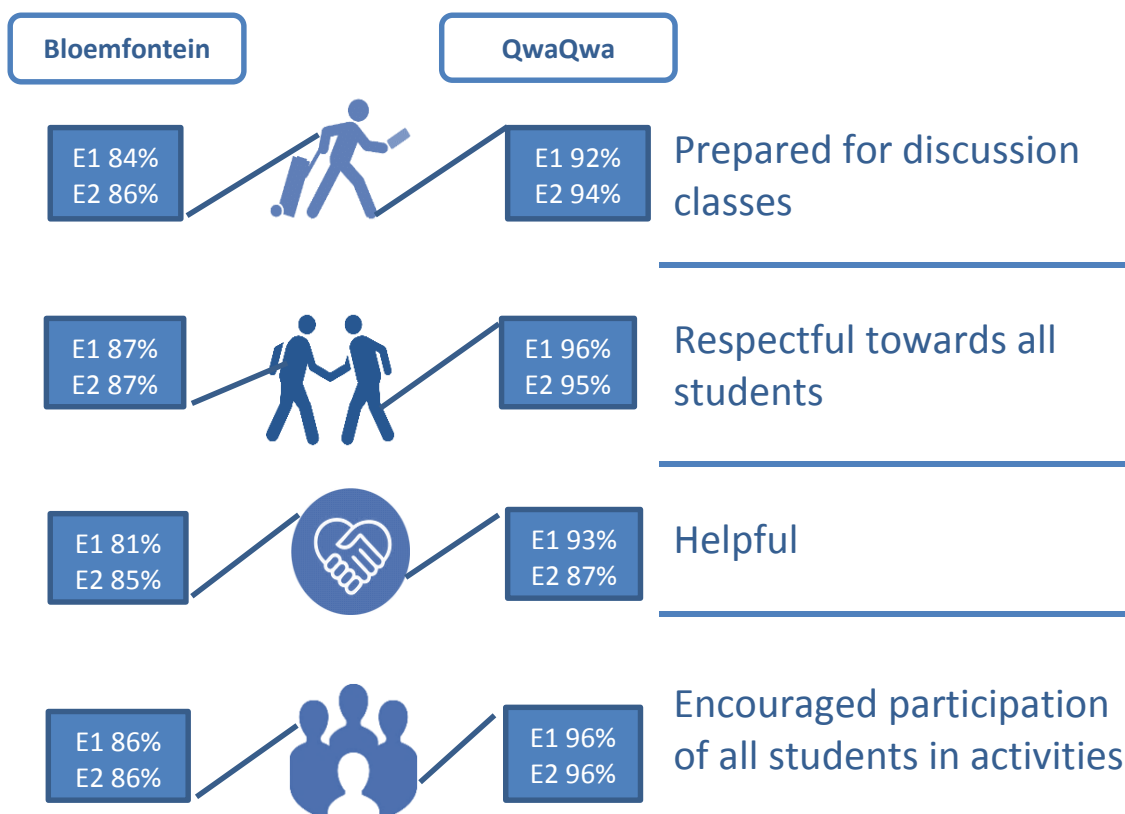
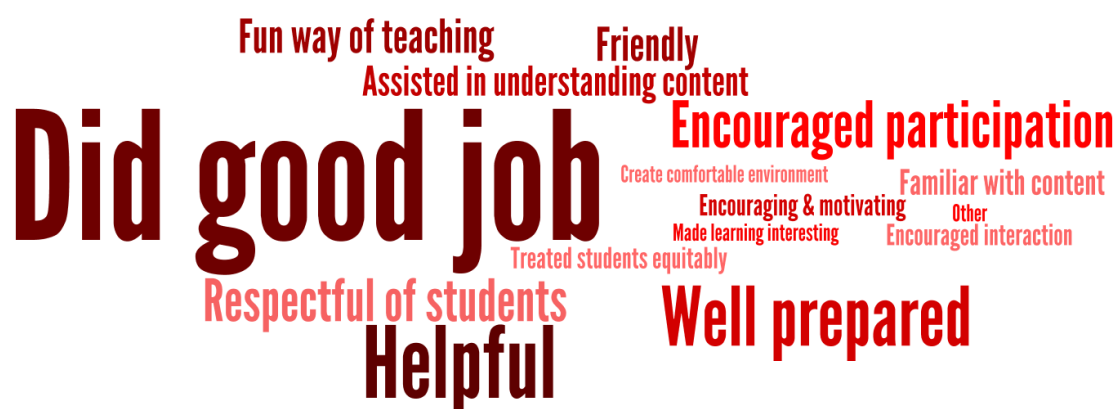


Figure 10. Student perceptions of TAs/LFs

On the **Bloemfontein campus**, the majority of students providing qualitative feedback (E1 n=709, E2 n=365) gave no additional comments or suggestions regarding their TAs, one third provided positive comments and less than 5% in both evaluations provided negative comments.

On the **QwaQwa campus**, 63% of students during E1 and 28% of students during E2 provided positive comments about their LFs. No negative comments were provided.

A total of 288 students on both campuses in E1 provided positive feedback on their TAs/LFs, while 153 students provided positive feedback in E2. The word clouds below show the 15 most frequently used positive words and phrases (based on the coded responses) for E1 (blue) and E2 (red). Words and phrases associated with "Did a good job" were mentioned most frequently (167 times in E1 and 94 times in E2). The next most frequently mentioned phrases were "Helpful" (E1 n=45, E2 n=18) and "Well prepared" (E1 n=28, E2 n=15).



No clear trends emerged in the negative comments provided by the students. Negative comments provided included: TAs/LFs had language proficiency issues (E1 n=2), were rude (E1 n=3; E2 n=2), showed favouritism (E1 n=1) encouraged racism (E1 n=1, E2 n=1), were arrogant (E1 n=2) or were not enthusiastic about the subject (E1 n=1, E2 n=1).

A summary of suggestions provided by the students on how the TAs/LFs can improve their performance and contribution is provided in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Student suggestions for improved TA/LF performance

SUGGESTIONS: TEACHING ASSISTANTS/LEARNING FACILITATORS	Bloemfontein E1 (n=94)	Bloemfontein E2 (n=58)	QwaQwa E1 (n=10)	QwaQwa E2 (n=10)
Should be well / better prepared	13	6	-	1
Should not force interaction	13	5	2	-
Should present in more interesting / engaging / fun manner	10	2	1	-
Show more interest / enthusiasm for subject presented	9	3	2	1
Do not deviate from language of instruction	5	2	-	1
Should encourage better interaction / participation	5	10	1	1
Must be more patient with students	4	4	-	-
Rotate TAs/LFs	3	-	-	1
Bring in more TAs/LFs	2	1	-	-
Have a dress code for TAs/LFs	1	-	1	-

3.7. BLACKBOARD

As many as 58% (E1) and 55% (E2) on the Bloemfontein campus and 67% (E1) and 47% (E2) on the **QwaQwa campus** said they (at least sometimes) had trouble accessing Blackboard (Bb). Those students who had trouble accessing Blackboard were asked to indicate where they *usually* accessed the platform. No distinct patterns emerged on the **Bloemfontein campus**, although four out of ten students with Bb access troubles indicated they typically accessed Bb on-campus in a computer lab, this was true for both evaluations. On **QwaQwa campus** however, 90% (E1) and 86% (E2) indicated they accessed Bb at the campus computer labs. Most students stated the reason for their Bb troubles was technical issues (BFN: E1 59%, E2 72%; QQ: E1 55%, E2 71%) with around 5% indicating they had troubles because they did not attend the Bb training.

Qualitative responses were obtained from 219 students (BFN: n=183 and QQ: n=36) regarding Bb in E1, of which 37% were positive comments, 23% were suggestions with regards to Blackboard and 28% were negative comments. In E2 a total of 418 students provided responses (BFN n=328 and QQ n=90), of which 19% were positive comments, 4% were suggestions with regards to Blackboard and 14% were negative comments.

- Most positive comments were general (“I am satisfied”, “Everything was fine”, “I did not encounter problems”), whilst a handful of **Bloemfontein** students each mentioned that Bb is user friendly (E1 n=7; E2 n=10), it is convenient and easy to access it from anywhere (n=7 in both evaluations), it is easy to navigate (n=2 in both evaluations) and it is helpful (E1 n=3; E2 n=6). A limited number of **QwaQwa** students mentioned that Bb improved their computer literacy (E1 n=4; E2 n=3), it is user friendly (n=3 in both evaluations) and it is helpful (E1 n=1; E2 n=9).
- Bloemfontein** students’ negative feedback around Bb focused mostly on the *technical issues* they experienced (E1 n=35; E2 n=37). There was no one particular technical issue that stood out as being problematic during the first evaluation. A few students each mentioned: struggling with remote access (n=2 in both evaluations), struggling to submit, upload or save their assessments (n=3 in both evaluations), trouble with accessing either the attendance links (E1 n=8) or accessing the videos (E1 n=4). A few students also mentioned that Bb was slow and unresponsive (E1 n=6; E2 n=5). During E2, a larger number of students (n=20) mentioned that accessing and viewing the videos was a problem. A handful mentioned they had *trouble accessing Bb* as there was a lack of space in the computer labs (E1 n=2; E2 n=1) or that the computers in the lab were slow/problematic (E1 n=4).
- QwaQwa** students also mentioned *technical issues* experienced (E1 n=4; E2 n=11) and problems with the videos (E2 n=7). A few other problems mentioned by one individual each were: slow system response, struggling to submit, upload or save assessments and lack of computer literacy.

It does appear as if personal computer literacy plays some role in how students experience Bb in UFS101, although only a very small number of students (five students on BFN campus and two on QQ campus) noted that they lacked the needed skills to use Bb effectively, and nine students (six on BFN and three on QQ) noted that using Bb was really challenging at first, but that they became better over time.

A few suggestions for improving Bb were provided (see Table 4 below).

Table 4. Student suggestions for improvement of Blackboard

SUGGESTIONS: BLACKBOARD	Bloemfontein E1 (n=42)	Bloemfontein E2 (n=15)	QwaQwa E1 (n=8)	QwaQwa E2 (n=3)
More Bb training	11	3	4	3
Improve user-friendliness	6	-	-	-
Improved notification and reminder systems*	9	3	-	-
Improved access – general/unspecified	4	-	3	-
Improved navigation function	3	-	1	-
Improve access via alternative devices and systems	3	5	-	-
Provide clearer instructions around using Bb	2	-	-	-
Allow students to do assessments in “hard” format	2	-	-	-

* including better or more reminders of due dates for tests, notifications when marks are posted and notification/acknowledgement of receipt when assignments have been submitted online.

3.8. EGUIDES

Across campuses, students typically reported positive experiences with the eGuide, with most students indicating the eGuide is user friendly and few students struggling to access materials, videos or MCQ links during both evaluations. This positive experience is confirmed by the responses in the qualitative feedback where 32% (E1) and 26% (E2) of **Bloemfontein campus** and 40% (E1) and 31% (E2) of **QwaQwa campus** students said there was “Nothing” they did not like about the eGuide (in contrast to the 1% of students on the Bloemfontein campus who said they disliked “Everything”).

The vast majority of students on both campuses made use of the eGuide for all of the Units, with only a handful of students not making use of the eGuide at all, for both E1 and E2 (see Figure 11 below). This is also the case for the Unit on information literacy.

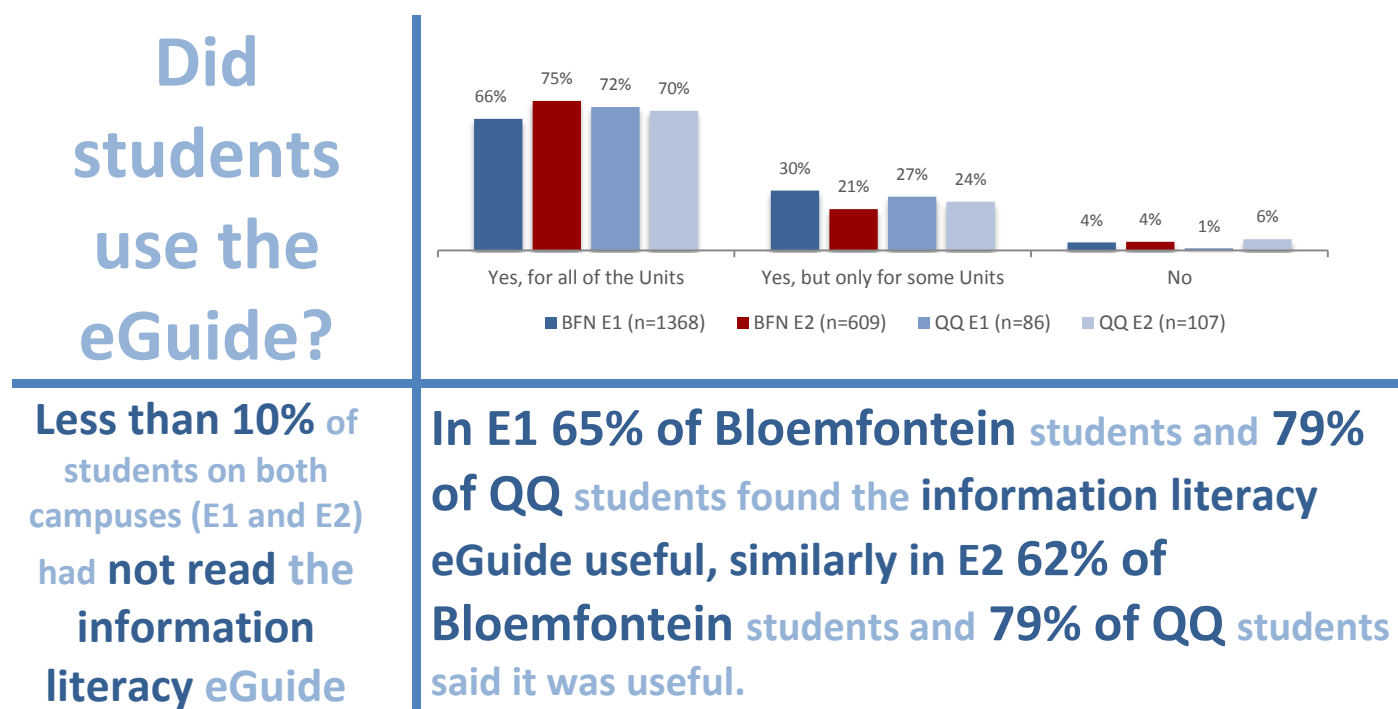


Figure 11. Student usage of the eGuide

Students who did not use the eGuide cited various reasons for not doing so in their qualitative feedback (see also summary graph in Figure 12 on the following page). The *usefulness* of the eGuide and the *time consuming* nature of using the eGuide were mentioned most frequently as reasons on both campuses and across both evaluations.

- Specifically, students noted the *limited usefulness* of the eGuide, as they could complete the Units without consulting the eGuide (BFN: E1 n=22; QQ: E1 n=2), the eGuide did not contain all the information they needed (BFN: E1 n=11, E2 n=3; QQ: E2 n=3) or that their own internet searches were more useful (BFN n=5 both evaluations).
- A relatively small proportion of students in E1 (BFN: 12% and QQ: 5%) preferred to use the *hard copies*.
- The few students who experienced *technical problems* noted that the eGuide did not work (BFN: E1 n=5, E2 n=2), was slow or non-responsive (BFN: E1 n=5) and that they could not access the eGuide on their preferred device¹⁵ (BFN: E1 n=2, E2 n=1).
- During E1, those students who indicated the eGuide was *not user friendly*, found it complicated and difficult to use, and three students indicated that they lacked the personal computer literacy skills to use the eGuide effectively. During E2, all Bloemfontein students who commented on user friendliness found the eGuide complicated and difficult to use (n=7).

¹⁵ One student noted lack of compatibility on their cellphone and one on their Android tablet.

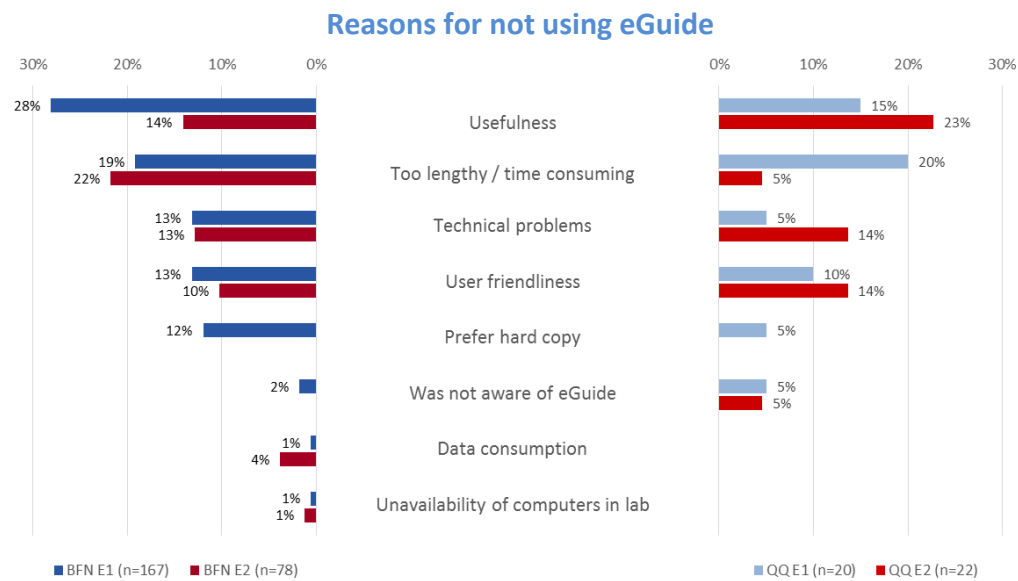


Figure 12. Student reasons for not using the eGuide

Overall, students who used the eGuide typically found it to be user friendly and the vast majority were easily able to access the videos, MCQ links and preparation materials (see Figure 13 on the next page).

- In E1, around three out of four students on the **Bloemfontein campus** agreed that the eGuide was *user friendly* and that both the videos and preparation materials were easily accessible. All of these proportions were slightly higher during E2. Furthermore around 80% agreed that the MCQ links were easily accessible (E1 and E2).
- On **QwaQwa campus**, eight out of ten students agreed that the eGuide was *user friendly* and that the videos were easily accessible. Around 85% agreed that the MCQ links were easily accessible and the preparation materials were user friendly.

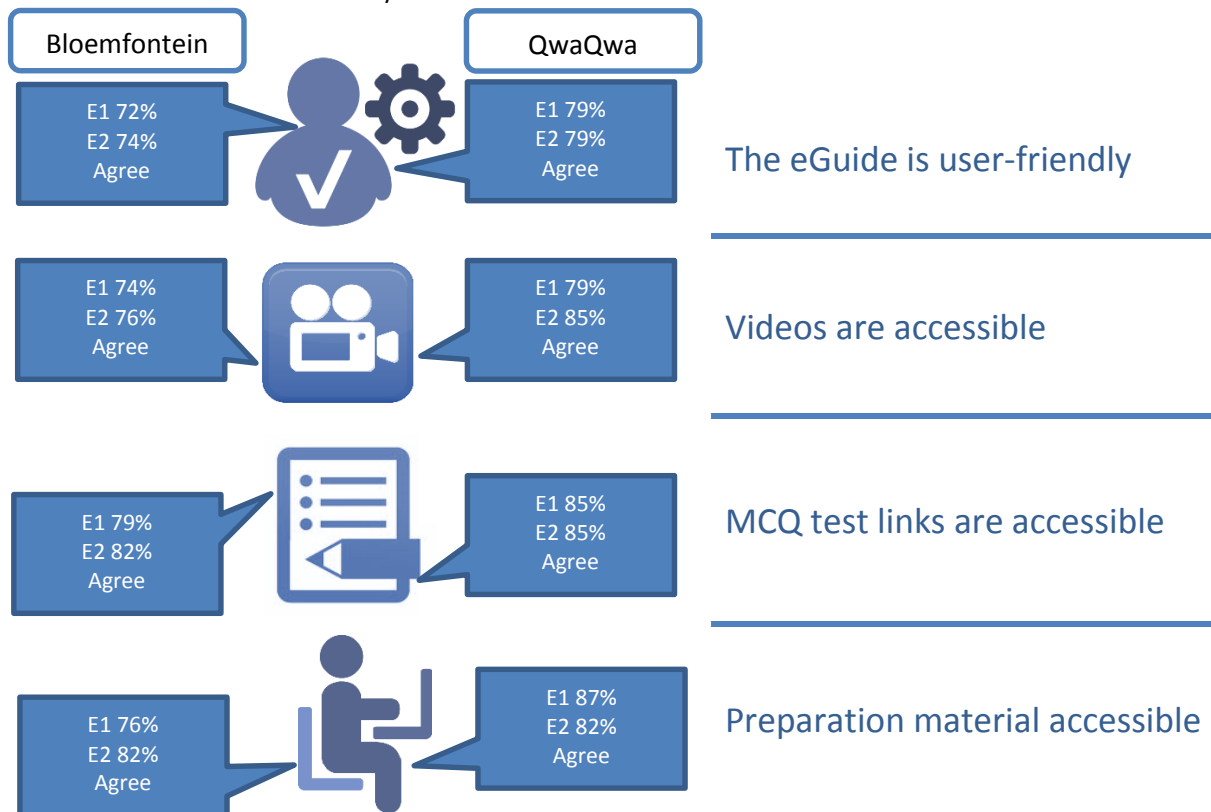
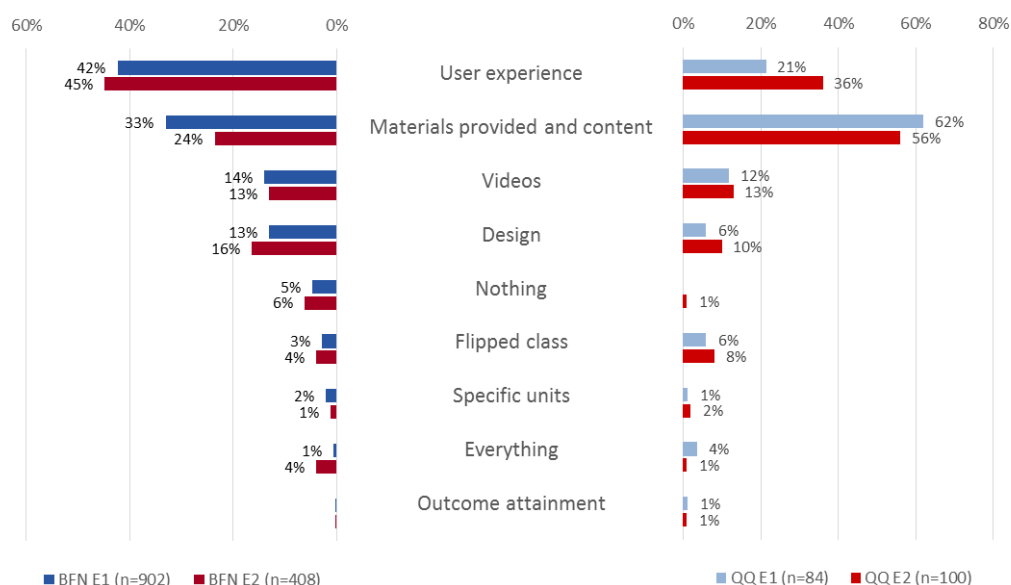


Figure 13. Student experience with the eGuide

Overall, the qualitative data confirm the positive tone of the quantitative data regarding the eGuide. Students reported positive user experiences and liked the material provided in the eGuide, particularly the videos (see summary graphs in Figure 14 of what students liked and disliked below and on the following page).

What did you like about the eGuide?



What did you dislike about the eGuide?

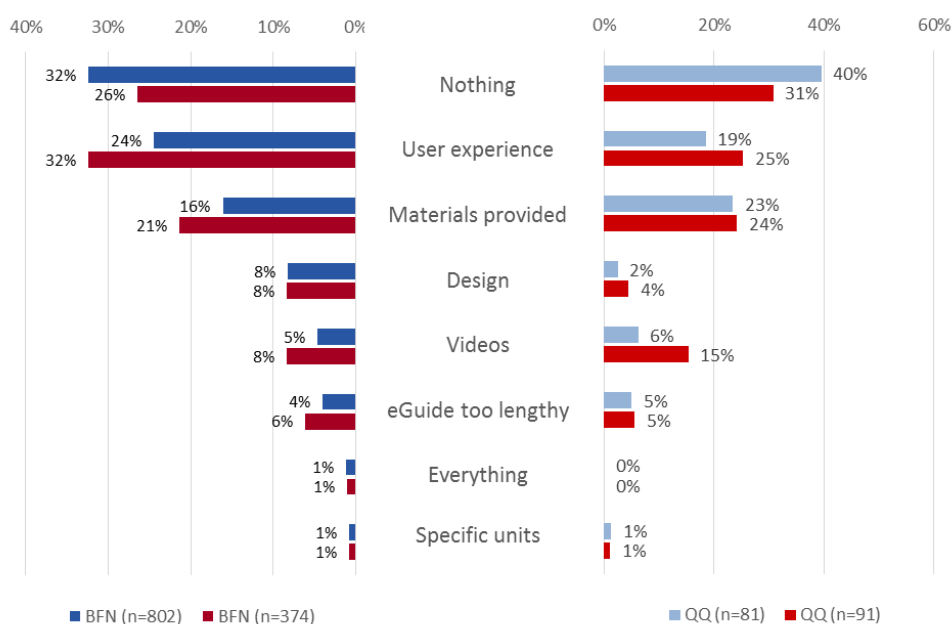


Figure 14. Positive and negative aspects of the eGuide

The positive user experience when working with the eGuide was the aspect which was liked by the highest proportion of students on the **Bloemfontein campus** for both evaluations, whilst the actual materials provided and content of the eGuide was liked by the most **QwaQwa students** for both evaluations (see Table 5 on next page for more detailed outlay of “User experience” and “Materials and content”). Having said this, user experience related issues were also the most frequently cited reason students on the **Bloemfontein campus** did not like the eGuide – the proportion of students is substantially lower.

Connectivity and access to appropriate devices to engage with the eGuide were mentioned by some students. A few noted the computers they worked on had too little processing power or were too slow (BFN: E1 n=10, E2 n=2) and six

students (across evaluations) mentioned that they struggled with availability of computers in the lab. A quarter of the students (BFN: E1 n=50, E2 n=9) who mentioned user experience problems commented on the issue of slow internet connection and slow download speeds. A few indicated they did not always have internet access (BFN: E1 n=11; QQ: E1 n=5, E2 n=2), and some noted the high data consumption of engaging with the eGuide (BFN: E1 n=9, E2 n=5; QQ: E2 n=2). During E2 the most predominant limiting factor of the eGuide was that some videos did not open or play (BFN: n=29; QQ: n=8), and a number of individuals had issues with downloading (BFN: n=22; QQ: n=5) or accessing content (BFN: n=17; QQ: n=1). There were 14 students (across evaluations) on the **Bloemfontein campus** who were not able to use the eGuide on their device of choice – most mentioned Android tablets. However, there were also 11 students in E1 who mentioned they liked the fact that they could access the eGuide on other devices (iPads and smartphones were noted).

Table 5. eGuide user experience positive and negative aspects

USER EXPERIENCE¹⁶				
POSITIVE ASPECTS				
	BFN E1 (n=382)	BFN E2 (n=183)	QQ E1 (n=84)	QQ E2 (n=36)
Easy to use	197	84	5	5
Easy to access	68	39	4	8
Helpful, useful and informative	60	24	5	13
Clear instructions	28	-	0	-
Easy to understand	22	27	2	11
Easy to navigate	21	21	3	-
Convenient	14	5	2	2

NEGATIVE ASPECTS				
	BFN E1 (n=196)	BFN E2 (n=121)	QQ E1 (n=15)	QQ E2 (n=23)
Not easy to use	37	7	2	1
Access problems	21	17	4	1
Not helpful, not useful	0	0	0	0
Instructions not clear	4	4	0	0
Difficult to understand	0	0	0	0
Not easy to navigate	17	9	1	1
Inconvenient	0	0	0	0

In terms of the materials and content provided in the eGuide (see also Table 6 on the following page), students liked the eGuide because it helped them to complete their assessments. In many cases students referred specifically to the fact that the eGuide helped them complete the MCQs. Some students did not manage to find all the information they needed for the MCQs in the eGuide (E1 n=42; E2 n=14). This number is however substantially fewer than those who were able to do so.

The eGuide was also appreciated as it enhanced students' understanding (E1 n=41, E2 n=19), was comprehensive (E1 n=23, E2 n=3), made everything available in one place (E1 n=23, E2 n=9) and enabled students to learn new and interesting things (E1 n=16, E2 n=3). During E2, students were also specifically appreciative of the relevance of the topics and the exposure to new information (BFN: n=13, QQ: n=10). On the other hand, slightly more students found the information provided in the eGuide to be irrelevant (E1 n=34, E2 n=24) and some noted that it was too much to read (E1 n=19, E2 n=37).

¹⁶ User experience aspects noted by at least ten students

Table 6. Positive and negative aspects regarding eGuide learning materials and content

LEARNING MATERIALS PROVIDED AND CONTENT¹⁷

POSITIVE ASPECTS				
	BFN E1 (n=298)	BFN E2 (n=96)	QQ (n=52)	QQ E2 (n=56)
Helped complete assignments	100	36	22	33
Information provided	57	15	10	12
Enhanced understanding	35	15	6	4
Comprehensive	22	2	0	1
Everything in one place	21	7	2	2
Glossary	17	1	6	3
Learned new and interesting things	13	3	3	0

NEGATIVE ASPECTS				
	BFN E1 (n=129)	BFN E2 (n=80)	QQ (n=19)	QQ E2 (n=22)
Inadequate information for tests	35	8	7	6
Information provided irrelevant	31	17	3	7
Content difficult to understand*	13	15	3	2
Information not detailed enough	6	6	1	2
Too much reading	18	34	1	3
Glossary inadequate	2	0	1	2
Too easy and not challenging	2	0	0	0

* includes content of module and terminology/language used

Design aspects which were appreciated by students were the organised and structured layout of the eGuide; the extensive use of visuals and the “Quick Search” functionality (see also Table 7 below). It does however appear that not all students are aware of the search functionality as more students said it was hard to find information than those who said they liked that they could search for key words/specific topics.

Table 7. Positive and negative aspects regarding eGuide design

DESIGN				
POSITIVE ASPECTS				
	BFN E1 (n=117)	BFN E2 (n=67)	QQ (n=5)	QQ E2 (n=10)
Structure and layout organised	38	26	4	0
Use of visuals	29	11	2	2
Quick search functionality	25	2	1	1
Electronic / online nature	12	5	0	1
NEGATIVE ASPECTS				
	BFN E1 (n=66)	BFN E2 (n=31)	QQ (n=2)	QQ E2 (n=4)
Layout complicated	19	11	0	2
Not visual enough	1	2	0	0
Prefer hard copy	7	11	0	2
Hard to search for information	30	3	1	0

Even though not a primary theme, a limited number of students liked the “flipped nature” of the eGuide because it allowed them to prepare better for class discussions (E1 n=16, E2 n=18), go back and review information/videos (E1 n=7,

¹⁷ Learning materials and content aspects noted by at least ten students

E2 n=1) and allowed them to engage with lecture materials on their own time (E1 n=2, E2 n=5). Although very limited in number (E1 n=8, E2 n=5), a few students noted that they did not like that the eGuide was only available in English.

In addition, the videos in the eGuide appear to be well received, with only a very small proportion of students not liking this component of the eGuide. The videos were described as fun, helpful, clear and interesting. Those students who did not like the videos noted that they were too long (E1 n=19, E2 n=12) and that the resolution (E1 n=4, E2 n=6) or the audio (E1 n=3, E2 n=14) was poor. As noted earlier, there appear to have been some challenges regarding accessing the videos in the second semester.

Very few students mentioned specific Units they either liked or disliked in the eGuide, thus offering very little insight into any particular concerns with, or strengths of, specific units.

3.9. ASSESSMENTS

As is seen in the responses to various other questions, **QwaQwa students** showed higher levels of agreement with the various statements regarding assessment, with more than 40% *strongly agreeing* in each case that (i) the MCQs helped them prepare for class, (ii) that the integrated assessment challenged them to apply the knowledge they've learned in the module, and (iii) that the assessment tasks enabled them to continue learning about the module. Furthermore, these proportions were substantially higher during the second evaluation. Typically on **Bloemfontein campus**, around one-quarter of students *strongly agreed* and a further 40% *agreed* with all the statements regarding assessments (see Figure 15 below). A further quarter chose to remain neutral regarding these statements in both evaluations. In the first semester it appears as if students on the QwaQwa campus did not find the assessment instructions easy to understand. This shifted substantially in the second semester.

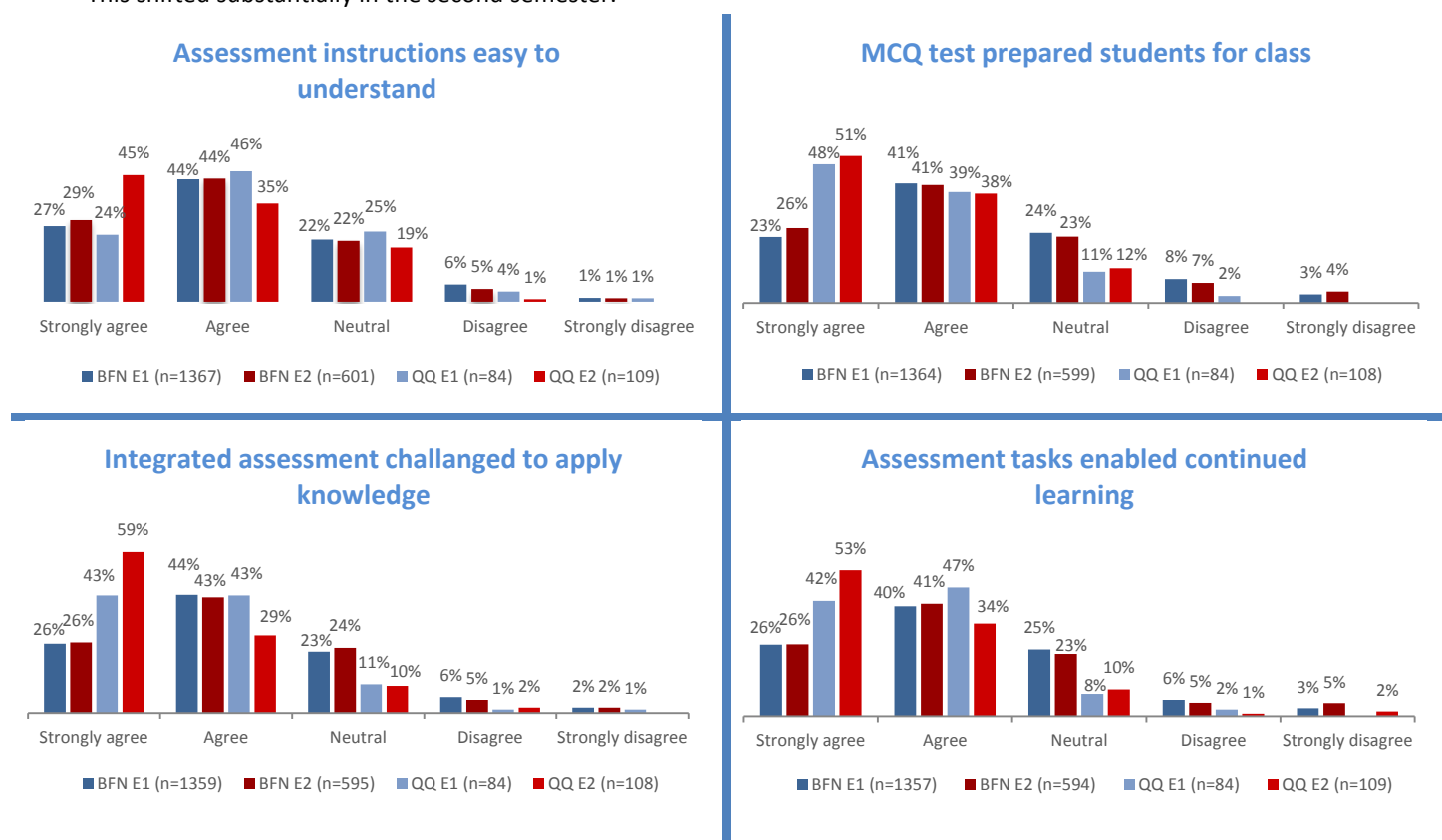


Figure 15. Student perceptions and experiences with assessments

Despite qualitative feedback in response to various questions regarding the time consuming nature of UFS101, three-quarters of **Bloemfontein students** and around 90% of **QwaQwa students** were able to complete their MCQs on time (as indicated during both evaluations). See summary diagram in Figure 16 regarding MCQs on the page below for further details regarding MCQs. However, not surprisingly around 30% on the **Bloemfontein campus** (both evaluations), and 16% (E1) and 26% (E2) of **QwaQwa students**, indicated that the MCQs interfered with their other academic responsibilities. Only a relatively small proportion of students thought that the MCQs were irrelevant or uninteresting (one in five on **Bloemfontein campus** and less than 10% on **QwaQwa campus**, during both evaluations).



I managed to complete MCQs on time

79% of E1 Bloemfontein students
79% of E2 Bloemfontein students
91% of E1 QwaQwa students
84% of E2 QwaQwa students



They interfered with other academic responsibilities

32% of E1 Bloemfontein students
35% of E2 Bloemfontein students
16% of E1 QwaQwa students
26% of E2 QwaQwa students

	They are irrelevant to 21 st century students	20% of E1 Bloemfontein students 23% of E2 Bloemfontein students 7% of E1 QwaQwa students 7% of E2 QwaQwa students
	They are uninteresting to 21 st century students	19% of E1 Bloemfontein students 21% of E2 Bloemfontein students 5% of E1 QwaQwa students 9% of E2 QwaQwa students

Figure 16. Student perceptions of MCQs

Negative feedback regarding the assessments¹⁸ related to the time investment, assessment requirements, the marking of assessments and the assessment instructions.

Mostly, students did not like the regular time investment required by UFS101 assessments, with many noting that they took too long to complete or that the research required was very time consuming (E1 n=24, E2 n=28). A handful felt the assessments were a waste of time (n=4 in both evaluations) and a few (E1 n=8, E2 n=3) said there were too many assessments. There was only one student who said the number of assessments was reasonable. On the other hand, seven students in E1 and six in E2 noted that there was sufficient time to complete the assessments, and four in E1 and two in E2 said that the due dates were fair. Although numbers are limited, there were students who experienced the assessments as interesting (E1 n=6; E2 n=1), useful (E1 n=5; E2 n=10) and academically challenging (E1 n=5; E2 n=9).

A few students (E1 n=21, E2 n=10) noted that the instructions for the assessments were too difficult or too vague. This included half of the students from **QwaQwa campus** who provided negative comments – confirming the finding in the quantitative data above.

Some frustrations were noted in the marking of assessments, namely that the marking was either not fair (or not done according to the rubric) (E1 n=3; E2 n=5)¹⁹, the marking was too strict (E1 n=3), or that marks were not available timeously (E1 n=3). One in ten students in E1 who provided negative comments about the assessments felt that there was a disconnection between the number of marks allocated to the assessments and the effort required to complete them.

No clear patterns or trends emerged from the students' suggestions. Not surprisingly, a number related to reducing the amount of time required to complete assessments – including extending deadlines and providing students with more time to complete assessments (E1 n=7, E2 n=17) and integrating assessments more to reduce their number (E1 n=3, E2 n=5). Students also requested better communication around assessments, in particular instituting a reminder system (E1 n=4) and providing the assessment schedule at the beginning of the module (E1 n=1).

¹⁸ There were 246 students in E1 and 423 students in E2 who provided qualitative feedback on the assessments, with 114 E1 and 65 E2 negative comments, 47 E1 and 57 E2 positive comments and 51 E1 and 49 E2 suggestions.

¹⁹ Only two students said that the marking was fair and the rubric was used in E1, while four students said so in E2.

3.10. COMMUNICATION WITH THE UFS101 TEAM

Email and Blackboard were the most useful forms of communication for the students; cellphone communication is substantially more useful to students on the **QwaQwa campus** than students on the **Bloemfontein campus**. This finding is confirmed in the qualitative feedback where students specifically mentioned email (n=9) and Blackboard (n=8) as preferred platforms for communication. Facebook was not mentioned once, and SMS was mentioned by only two students (see Figure 17 below).



33-40% (E1 to E2) of students on BFN campus, and 44-52% (E1 to E2) on QQ campus did not use Facebook to receive communication from UFS101.

Fewer than 20% of students on either campus during E1 and E2 said communication via Facebook was **VERY USEFUL**.

In the qualitative feedback five students requested that Facebook be used more for communication, whilst one suggested it should not be used at all.



Almost three-quarters of students on QQ campus found cellphone communication with UFS101 **VERY USEFUL** in both evaluations, compared to only 21% of students on BFN campus.

Approximately one third of students on BFN campus did not use their cellphones to receive communication from the UFS101 team.

In the qualitative feedback 12 students requested that SMS be used more for communication.



Five out of ten students on BFN campus and **56-58%** of students on the QQ campus during E1 and E2, said communication via email was **VERY USEFUL**.

Only 10% and 8% on BFN campus and 5% and 13% on QQ campus, respectively for E1 and E2, did not use email to receive communication from UFS101.

In the qualitative feedback five students requested that email be used more for communication, whilst one suggested it should be used less frequently.



Seven out of ten students on BFN campus and **nine out of ten** students on the QQ campus said communication on Bb was **VERY USEFUL**, during both evaluations.

Only 4% on Bloemfontein campus did not use Bb to receive communication from UFS101.

In the qualitative feedback eight students requested that Blackboard be used more for communication, whilst none suggested it should be used less frequently.

Figure 17. Communication with UFS101 team

Qualitative feedback shows an overall positive tone²⁰ regarding students' experience in communicating with the UFS101 team. The communication from the team was described as helpful (BFN: E1 n=8, E2 n=10, QQ E1 and E2 n=11), timeous and quick (BFN: E1 n=4, E2 n=5) and useful (BFN: E1, E2 n=2; QQ E1 n=1, E2 n=3). Students frequently cited phrases such as *"Keep up the good work"*.

Most of the negative feedback that was provided was about the platform for communication, a limited number of students mentioned that they did not like (or experienced difficulties with) the communication on Facebook (E1 n=3, E2 n=3), via SMS (E1 n=2, E2 n=3) or via email (E1 n=4, E2 n=3).

²⁰ During E1, 60 positive comments were provided compared to only 19 negative comments by **Bloemfontein** campus students, while 28 positive versus one negative comment was provided by **QwaQwa** campus students. During E2, 50 positive comments were provided compared to only 15 negative comments from **Bloemfontein** campus students, while 47 positive versus four negative comments were provided by **QwaQwa** campus students.

3.11. STUDENT LEARNING

QwaQwa students are substantially more positive about their own learning than **Bloemfontein students** – between 80% and 90% of **QwaQwa students** agreed with all of the statements (during both evaluations), compared to less than three-quarters of **Bloemfontein students** (with the exception of learning to respect the views of others). There was also a consistent 15-25% of **Bloemfontein campus** students who responded “Neutral” to this set of questions. The summary diagram in Figure 18 below details the percentage of students by evaluation and campus who agreed with each of the statements regarding learning.

By participating in UFS101, I have....

	...learned to respect the views of others, even if I don't agree	83% of E1 Bloemfontein students agree 82% of E2 Bloemfontein students agree 98% of E1 QwaQwa students agree 95% of E2 QwaQwa students agree
	...improved my interaction with diverse peoples from different ethnicities, backgrounds, disciplines, religions	75% of E1 Bloemfontein students agree 77% of E2 Bloemfontein students agree 95% of E1 QwaQwa students agree 98% of E2 QwaQwa students agree
	...learned to reason above emotion	74% of E1 Bloemfontein students agree 72% of E2 Bloemfontein students agree 94% of E1 QwaQwa students agree 93% of E2 QwaQwa students agree
	...improved my critical thinking	72% of E1 Bloemfontein students agree 71% of E2 Bloemfontein students agree 93% of E1 QwaQwa students agree 97% of E2 QwaQwa students agree
	...changed my way of thinking about problems	67% of E1 Bloemfontein students agree 64% of E2 Bloemfontein students agree 95% of E1 QwaQwa students agree 93% of E2 QwaQwa students agree
	... have learned to appreciate both sides of an argument before making a decision	78% of E1 Bloemfontein students agree 77% of E2 Bloemfontein students agree 95% of E1 QwaQwa students agree 95% of E2 QwaQwa students agree
	...improved my academic augmentation skills	64% of E1 Bloemfontein students agree 62% of E2 Bloemfontein students agree 92% of E1 QwaQwa students agree 89% of E2 QwaQwa students agree
	...learned to clearly express ideas	72% of E1 Bloemfontein students agree 71% of E2 Bloemfontein students agree 91% of E1 QwaQwa students agree 93% of E2 QwaQwa students agree
	...improved my academic reading and writing	57% of E1 Bloemfontein students agree 51% of E2 Bloemfontein students agree 94% of E1 QwaQwa students agree 85% of E2 QwaQwa students agree
	... been exposed to new ways of learning through learning experiences	71% of E1 Bloemfontein students agree 66% of E2 Bloemfontein students agree 93% of E1 QwaQwa students agree 91% of E2 QwaQwa students agree

Figure 18. Student perceptions of learning

The highest proportion of **Bloemfontein students** agreed that they had learned to respect the views of others, even if they don't agree (E1 83% and E2 82%), that they have learned to appreciate both sides of an argument before making a decision (E1 78% and E2 77%), and that they had improved their interaction with diverse people from different ethnicities, backgrounds, disciplines and religions (E1 75% and E2 77%). The lowest proportion of students from the **Bloemfontein campus** agreed that their academic argumentation skills (E1 64% and E2 62%) and their academic reading and writing skills (E1 57% and E2 51%) had improved.

The highest proportion of **QwaQwa students** agreed that they had learned to respect the views of others, even if they don't agree (E1 98% and E2 95%), that they have learned to appreciate both sides of an argument before making a decision (95% for E1 and E2) and that they had improved their interaction with diverse people from different ethnicities, backgrounds, disciplines and religions (E1 95% and E2 98%). The lowest proportion of students from the **QwaQwa campus** agreed that their academic argumentation skills (E1 92% and E2 89%) and their academic reading and writing skills (E1 94% and E2 85%) had improved.

3.12. OVERALL EXPERIENCE²¹

Encouragingly, a quarter of students on the **Bloemfontein campus** in E1 and 19% in E2, as well as four out of ten students on the **QwaQwa campus** (across both evaluations) indicated that there was nothing they *disliked* about UFS101. That said, it should be noted that, although the percentages were small, there were students on both the **Bloemfontein** and **QwaQwa campuses** who indicated that they liked nothing about UFS101 (BFN: E1 8%, E2 11%; QQ: E1 and E2 1%) (see Figure 19 below).

What did you like about UFS101?

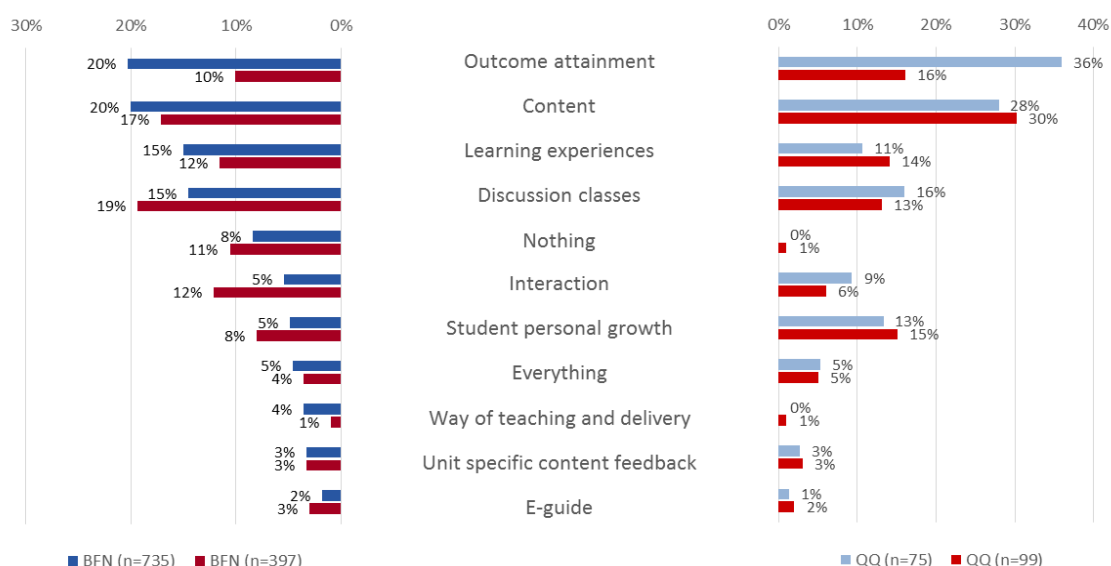


Figure 19. Overall impression of UFS101

The attainment of module outcomes (see also Table 8 on the following page) and the content of the module were the most salient aspects of what students liked about the module on both the **Bloemfontein** and **QwaQwa campuses**.

A number of students on both the **Bloemfontein** (E1 n=149, E2 n=40) and **QwaQwa** (E1 n=27, E2 n=16) campuses provided qualitative feedback regarding specifics of outcomes attainment. Students particularly mentioned that they learned to respect and acknowledge the views of others (BFN: E1 n=38, E2 n=1; QQ: E1 n=5, E2 n=4). Students on both campuses also noted that UFS101 helped them to improve their critical thinking skills (E1 n=38, E2 n=36) and improved their interaction with diverse groups (E1 n=28, E2 n=7). This data serves to cross-validate the findings reported in the student learning section, where the highest proportion of students agreed that they had learned to respect the views of others, and three quarters agreed they had improved their interaction with diverse groups.

Table 8. Module outcome attainment

MODULE OUTCOMES	Bloemfontein E1 (n=149)		Bloemfontein E2 (n=40)		QwaQwa E1 (n=27)		QwaQwa E2 (n=16)	
Improved interaction with diverse groups	25	17%	7	18%	3	11%	0	0%
Changed my way of thinking about problems	6	4%	6	15%	1	4%	1	6%
Improved argumentation skills	5	3%	6	15%	0	0%	1	6%
Improved critical thinking skills	29	19%	21	53%	9	33%	15	94%
See both sides of an argument or see other perspectives	18	12%	3	8%	2	7%	1	6%
Reason above emotion	5	3%	4	10%	2	7%	0	0%
Learned to express own ideas	16	11%	1	3%	6	22%	0	0%
Learned to respect/acknowledge the views of others	38	26%	1	3%	5	19%	4	25%

²¹ A total of 735 students in E1 and 397 students in E2 from the **Bloemfontein campus**, and 75 students in E1 and 99 students in E2 from the **QwaQwa campus** responded to the "What did you like about UFS101?" question. In addition, 707 students in E1 and 377 students in E2 from the Bloemfontein campus, and 71 students in E1 and 92 students in E2 from the **QwaQwa campus** responded to the "What did you dislike about UFS101?" question

Made aware of 21st century issues	15	10%	4	10%	1	4%	0	0%
Global specifically	6	4%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Local specifically	3	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

One in five students on **Bloemfontein campus** in both evaluations, and 28-30% (E1 - E2) of students on **QwaQwa campus** indicated that they liked the content of UFS101. Students on both campuses particularly liked that they learned new and interesting things (E1 n=64, E2 n=40). Students also mentioned that they liked the fact that the course covered a broad range of topics (E1 n=37, E2 n=24). A few students in E1 described UFS101 as fun or challenging – something unique and “out of the box” (approximately ten students in each case).

Although noted by slightly fewer students, both the **Bloemfontein** and **QwaQwa** students mentioned the discussion classes and learning experiences as aspects of UFS101 that they liked. Qualitative responses on discussion classes mostly came from students on the Bloemfontein campus (E1 n=107, E2 n=77). These students particularly liked that the discussion classes provided a non-judgmental space (E1 n=11, E2 n=5), and that they were free to speak up in these classes (E1 n=1, E2 n=17). In addition, 18 students mentioned specifically that they liked the online discussion classes.

Of the students on the **Bloemfontein campus** who provided feedback regarding which learning experiences they liked (E1 n=110 and E2 n=46), 21 particularly liked the “Chem Magic Show”; whilst eight mentioned that they liked the cultural experience. On the other hand, seven out of the 11 students on the **Bloemfontein campus** who provided qualitative feedback regarding which learning experiences they *disliked* indicated that they did not like the cultural experience, whilst two indicated that they disliked the “Chem Magic Show”. A handful of students noted that they liked the unit on “Social Media and the Law” (n=3), as well as the unit on “Multiculturalism in business” (n=4).

Time related issues were the most salient aspect of UFS101 that students disliked on both the **Bloemfontein** (E1 27%, n=194, E2 26% n=99) and **QwaQwa** (E1 21% n=15, E2 15% n=14) campuses (see also summary diagram below). The most prominent issue on both campuses was that UFS101 was too time consuming (E1 n=114, E2 n=58). On the **QwaQwa campus** students also particularly mentioned that the volume of work was overwhelming; (E1 n=4, E2 n=5), whilst on the Bloemfontein campus students felt that they could have used the time spent on UFS101 for other subjects (E1 n=38, E2 n=31). Also noteworthy is that 21 students in E1 and 12 in E2 on the **Bloemfontein campus** felt that UFS101 was a waste of time, whilst none of the students on the **QwaQwa campus** mentioned this.

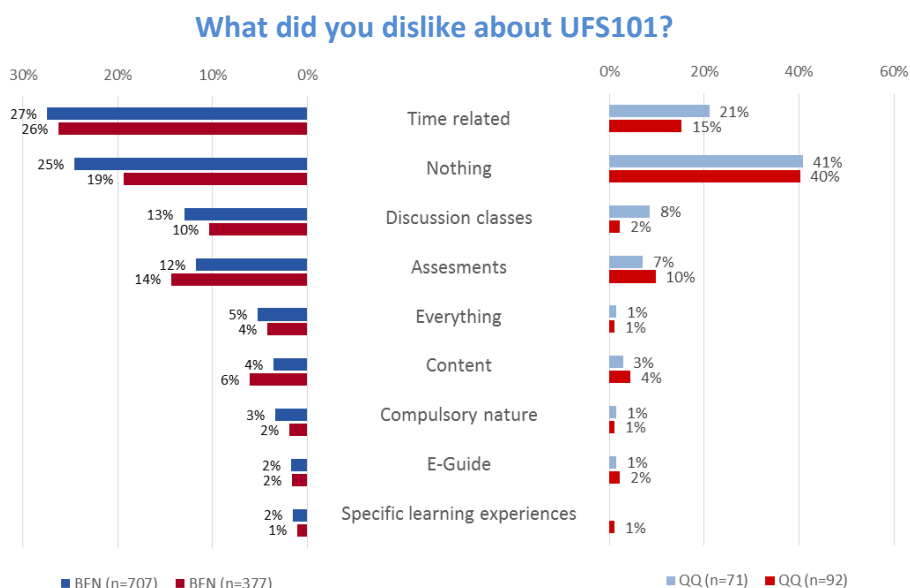


Figure 20. Negative aspects of UFS101

A number of students on both campuses also noted they disliked the discussion classes and the assessments (see summary diagram in Figure 20 above). Qualitative responses around what students disliked about the discussion classes mostly came from students on the **Bloemfontein campus** (E1 13% n=92, E2 10% n=39). Online vs. face-to-face discussion classes may be a matter of personal preference with 13 students indicating they did not like the online discussion classes

and 11 indicating they did not like the face-to-face discussion classes. In addition, some students disliked the forced interaction in discussion classes (n=6). On the **QwaQwa campus**, only six students in E1 and two in E2 provided qualitative feedback regarding discussion classes, with two of them mentioning that the discussion classes were too short. With regards to assessment, the weekly multiple choice question tests were disliked by some students on both campuses (E1 n=51, E2 n=31), mostly due to their time consuming nature. A couple of students on the **Bloemfontein campus** also disliked the integrated assessment in the form of an essay (E1 n=12, E2 n=2).

3.13. Enrolment, Attendance and Academic Performance

Student Attendance

In order to pass UFS101, students are required to attend a minimum of 70% of the discussion classes and learning experiences. On the Bloemfontein campus, 81% of the students met this criterion as did 87% of the students on the QwaQwa campus. Only a small minority of students (12% on the Bloemfontein campus and 14% of students on the QwaQwa campus) attended all of the required sessions. More than a quarter of the students on the Bloemfontein campus attended more than 90% of the sessions, whilst 35% of the QwaQwa students did so.

The sections below detail the lecture attendance, as well as the tutorial and learning experience attendance by campus for each unit.

Figure 21 below indicates the percentage of the registered students attending each of the discussion classes and learning experiences by campus.

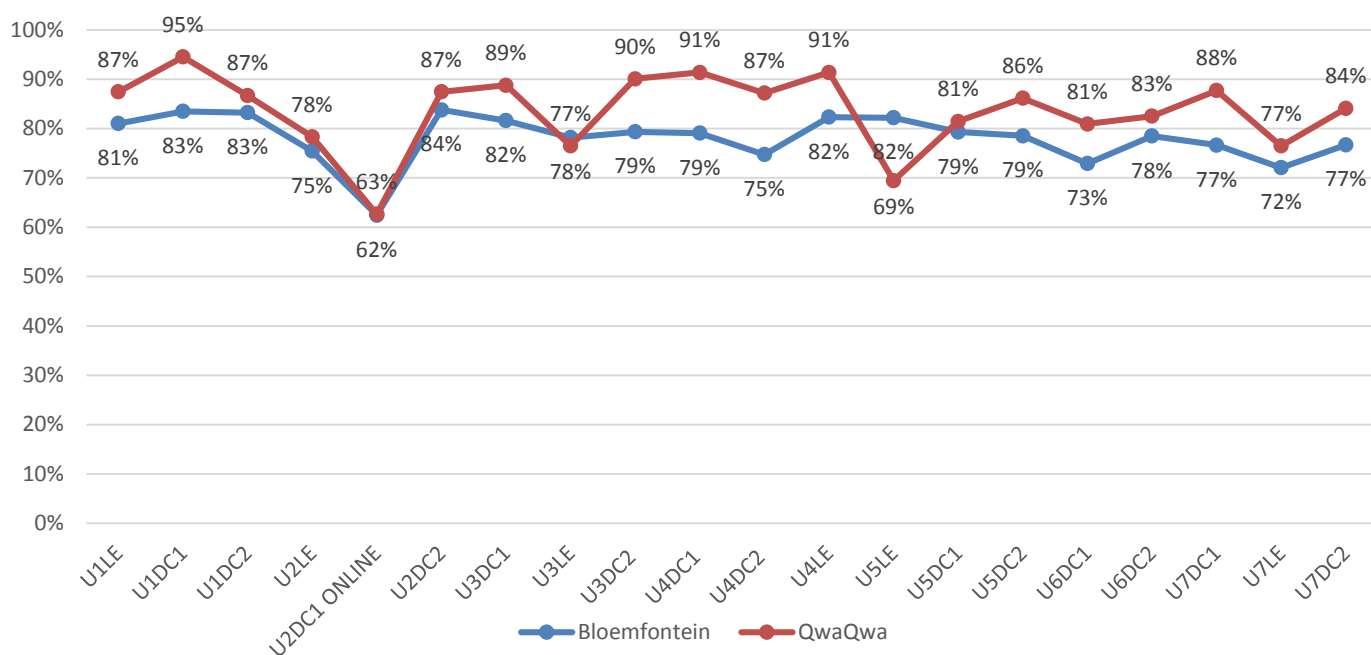


Figure 21. Attendance of discussion classes and learning experiences

*Unit three Discussion class two was online for the Bloemfontein campus students, as were both discussion classes for Unit four.

As is seen in Figure 21 above, for the most part attendance on the Bloemfontein campus hovered around 70-80% for the learning experiences and discussion classes. The attendance pattern was relatively stable, with only a steep decline in attendance for the second discussion class of Unit two which was the first of the online discussion classes.

On the QwaQwa campus the attendance pattern was somewhat more erratic (although typically slightly higher), with peaks and dips at various points in the semesters. The lowest attendance was for the same class where attendance was lowest on the Bloemfontein campus, namely discussion class one of Unit two.

Student Academic Performance

Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) Tests

Students were required to complete multiple choice question (MCQ) tests prior to each lecture. The average overall for the MCQ tests on the Bloemfontein campus was 54% with 102 students who did not complete any of the MCQ tests. On the QwaQwa campus, the average for the MCQ test was 54% and there were no students who did not complete any of the MCQ tests. Figure 22 below illustrates, by campus, the average percentage for each of the MCQ tests and the percentage of students who did not submit each MCQ test.

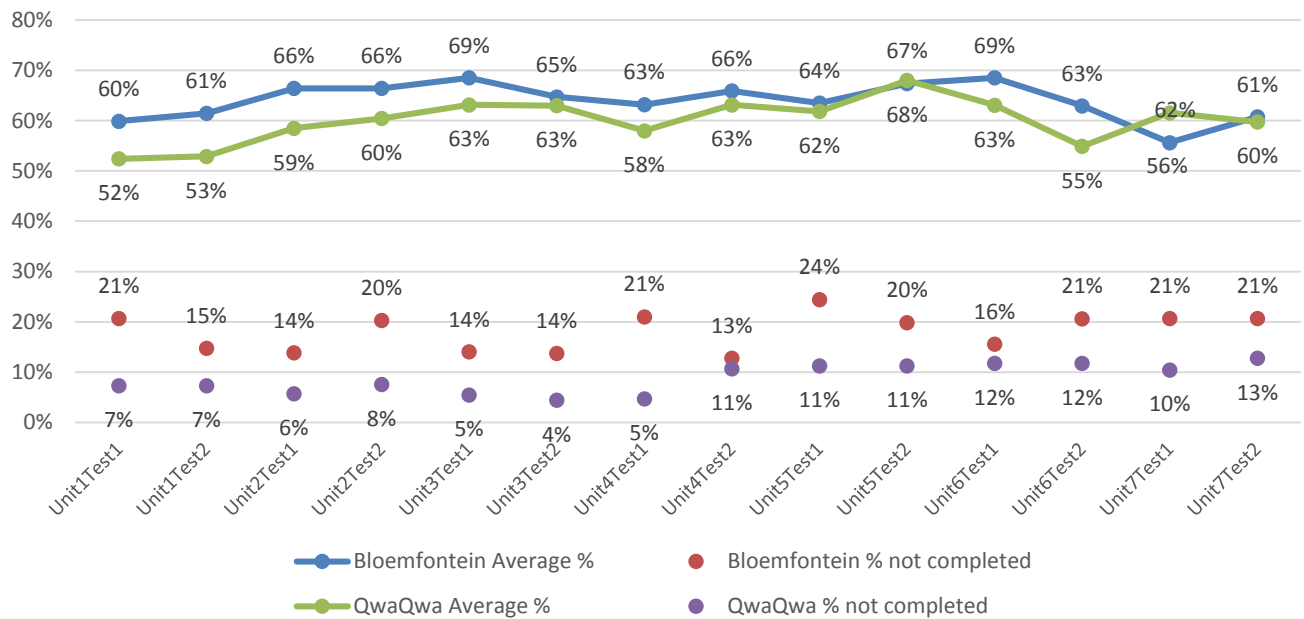


Figure 22. Student performance on MCQs

*Averages based on the number of students submitting the MCQ

As can be seen from Figure 22 above, the performance patterns for the MCQ tests were very similar across the two campuses, although students on the Bloemfontein campus did on average achieve higher marks than students on the QwaQwa campus. The biggest difference between the campuses can be seen for Tests one and two of Unit two, and Test two of Unit six. For each of these tests students on the Bloemfontein campus achieved higher marks. There were, however, two tests where the students on the QwaQwa campus achieved higher marks, namely Test two of Unit five and Test one of Unit seven.

However, in contrast, the non-completion of MCQ tests was consistently higher (proportionally) for students on the Bloemfontein campus. For the QwaQwa students, non-completion ranged from a low of 7% to a maximum of 13%, with a trend of higher non-completion in the later units. In contrast, on the Bloemfontein campus the lowest percentage of non-completion was 13%, while the highest percentage was 24%. Unlike the slight rise in non-completion on the QwaQwa campus towards the later units, non-completion on the Bloemfontein campus showed no particular pattern.

The average performance of the students on both campuses for the MCQ tests was 50% or higher. On the QwaQwa campus, students did particularly well in Test two of Unit five, with an average of 68%. On the Bloemfontein campus, test marks were relatively stable throughout all the units; with the only exception being poorer performance on Test one of Unit seven (students obtained an average of 56% for this test).

Assessments

In addition to the MCQs, students were also required to complete four additional assessments during the course of the year which consisted of two Reflection journals in addition to two integrated assessments. Figure 23 below details the average performance of the students across campuses for the two Reflection journals and the two assessments, and indicates the percentage of students who did not submit the assessments. Students who plagiarised were automatically given a mark of zero. The conditions for plagiarism were the absence of a bibliography or in-text referencing – these conditions were lenient because of the first-year level of the module. The figure also indicates the final assessment average for each campus, after taking re-assessments into account (including the MCQ tests).

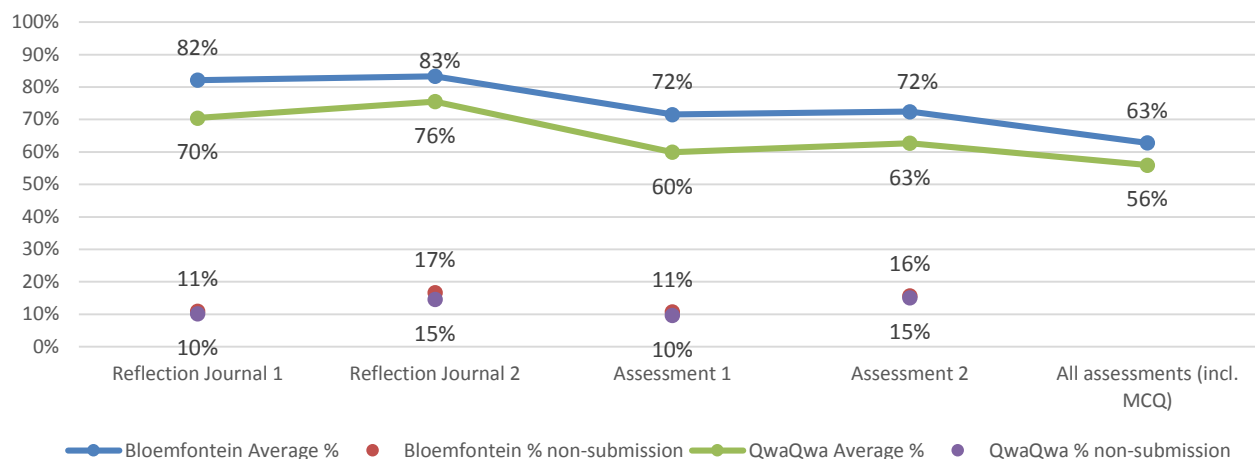


Figure 23. Student performance on assessments

As can be seen in Figure 23, Bloemfontein students performed better on both Reflection journals and both assessments than the students on the QwaQwa campus. However, the performance pattern was the same on the two campuses, with both QwaQwa and Bloemfontein campus students achieving higher marks for the portfolios than for the assessments. Bloemfontein students also performed better than the QwaQwa students when all assessments were taken into account, although the difference was not great (63% versus 56%). It should be noted that the overall average was calculated by only including students who completed the module and thus obtained a mark higher than zero. When all students are taken into account, the average percentage for the module drops to 61% on the Bloemfontein campus, and 55% on the QwaQwa campus. As was the case with the MCQ tests, more students on the Bloemfontein campus failed to submit their assignments and Reflection journals, although the difference was so slight that it could be seen as negligible.

Student Success

On both the Bloemfontein and QwaQwa campuses, just more than seven out of ten students (73% on each campus) successfully completed the module when the attendance and assessment criteria (as described earlier) were applied. There were more than 1400 students (34%) on the Bloemfontein campus that passed with distinction; whilst on the QwaQwa campus only 9% of students passed with distinction (see Figure 24 below).

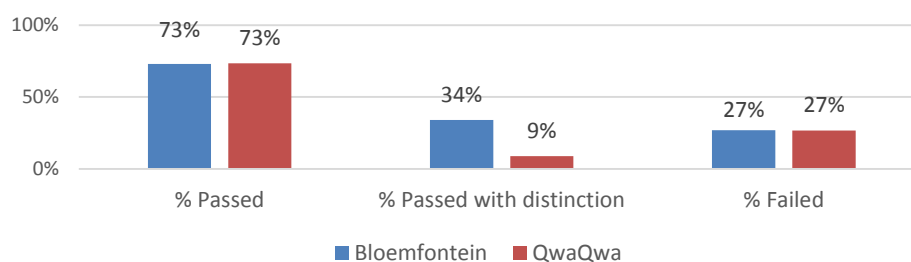


Figure 24. Overall student performance in UFS101

There were 139 students on the Bloemfontein campus who qualified for a re-assessment, of which more than half passed (57%), and 17% obtained distinctions. Nearly a fifth (19%) of the students who qualified did not submit a re-assessment. On the QwaQwa campus there were 20 students who qualified for a re-assessment. Of these, 55% passed, with two students obtaining distinctions. Three students (15%) did not submit a re-assessment.

Of the 1162 students on the Bloemfontein campus who failed, more than half (54%) failed based on assessment and attendance criteria; slightly more than a quarter (28%) failed based on assessment criteria alone and only 18% failed due to lack of attendance. Of the 102 students who failed on the QwaQwa campus, 53% failed based exclusively on assessment criteria, and 45% failed on both assessment and attendance criteria. Only one student failed based on attendance criteria alone.

4. Learning Facilitator/Teaching Assistant Experience

4.1. TRAINING OF LEARNING FACILITATORS

Learning Facilitators (LFs) and Teaching Assistants (TAs) were asked during the second evaluation whether they found the Difficult Dialogues training, which took place in January, to be helpful to them throughout the year. All of the QwaQwa LFs indicated that they found the training helpful, and 89% (n=33) of the TAs did.

Qualitative responses regarding the training on dealing with difficult dialogues²² (only assessed during E2) was predominantly positive, with only five negative comments emerging in total, all from the Bloemfontein campus.

TAs on the **Bloemfontein campus** were positive about having learned to deal with various situations which may arise (n=19; 58%), as well as the fact that they had been given guidelines to conduct their discussion classes (n=8; 24%). Negative comments about the training included the fact that it did not take into account the reactions the students might have, it was a repetition for previous TAs, some tools were not helpful and that the information was not relevant or useful.

Similarly, LFs on the **QwaQwa campus** were positive about having learned to deal with various situations which may arise (n=5; 45%), as well as the fact that they had been given guidelines to conduct their discussion classes (n=6; 55%). There were no negative aspects mentioned.

LFs and TAs were asked to mention what they liked about all the training they had received in general for both evaluation points, as well as what they disliked²³.

While responses were fairly spread out, most TAs on the Bloemfontein campus felt that the training was informative and helpful (E1 n=6, 24%; E2 n=3, 8%), that they had learned new techniques (E1 n=6, 24%; E2 n=1, 3%), had met new people (E1 n=5, 20%) and enjoyed working with the UFS101 team (E2 n=3, 8%). During E2, TAs and LFs were pleased with the practical nature of the learning (i.e. that they had a mock discussion class) (E1 n=2, 8%; E2 n=16, 43%), with the fact that they were aware of what was expected of them (E1 n=2, 8%; E2 n=6, 16%) and with the duration of the training (E1 n=1, 4%; E2 n=5, 14%). TAs and LFs also mentioned that they appreciated running through the details of the discussion classes (E1 n=3, 12%; E2 n=3, 8%), that the trainers were competent (E1 n=2, 8%; E2 n=4, 11%), that the training aided in preparing them to hold discussion classes (E2 n=3, 8%) and that their questions were answered (E2 n=3, 8%).

LFs on the **QwaQwa campus** appreciated knowing what was expected of them (E1 n=7, 50%), the fact that they could freely voice their opinions (E1 n=3, 21%; E2 n=1, 7%), the practical method of the training (E1 n=2, 14%; E2 n=6, 43%) and their training on dealing with difficult dialogue (E1 n=2, 14%; E2 n=1, 7%). E2 also brought to light appreciation of the training duration (E2 n=2, 14%), team work (E2 n=2, 14%) and the fact that the training was informative and helpful (E1 n=1, 7%; E2 n=3, 21%).

The majority of TAs/LFs on both campuses and across both evaluations said that they disliked “*Nothing*” (BFN E1 n=8, 32%; E2 n=16, 43%; QQ E1 and E2 n=11, 79%), reinforcing the fact that training was a positive experience. The most predominant negative factor that arose was that, for some, the training was too lengthy (BFN E1 n=15, 60%; E2 n=7, 19%; QQ E1 n=1, 7%). Other negative aspects mentioned each in a very limited number of cases were the fact that the material was irrelevant, repetitive from previous years, that there were too many breaks, there were problems with the venue (chairs couldn’t be moved to create discussion groups), that the sessions started too early and were slow paced. A few LFs on the **QwaQwa campus** specifically mentioned that the training was too short (E2 n=2, 14%), that the air conditioning was too cold (E1 and E2 n=1, 7%), that the science unit was too complicated (n=1) and there was too much material to prepare (n=1).

²² A total of 33 facilitators from the Bloemfontein campus and 11 from the QwaQwa campus provided responses to this question.

²³ A total of 25 TAs responded in E1 and 37 responded in E2, while 14 LFs from the QwaQwa campus responded for both E1 and E2, and for both questions.

4.2. DELIVERY of UFS101

Across all questions related to the delivery of UFS101, TAs on the Bloemfontein campus and LFs on the QwaQwa campus were very positive about the manner of delivery of UFS101²⁴, with only a very small minority indicating that they did not like particular aspects of the module's delivery (see summary diagrams in Figure 25 below). LFs on QwaQwa campus appear to be slightly more positive about the manner of delivery.

The vast majority on both campuses strongly agreed that it was *helpful to access preparation materials before class* and almost all agreed to some extent that the way of delivery enhanced their teaching. TAs on the Bloemfontein campus were slightly less positive about the manner of delivery and its impact on their teaching effectiveness in the second evaluation (E2).

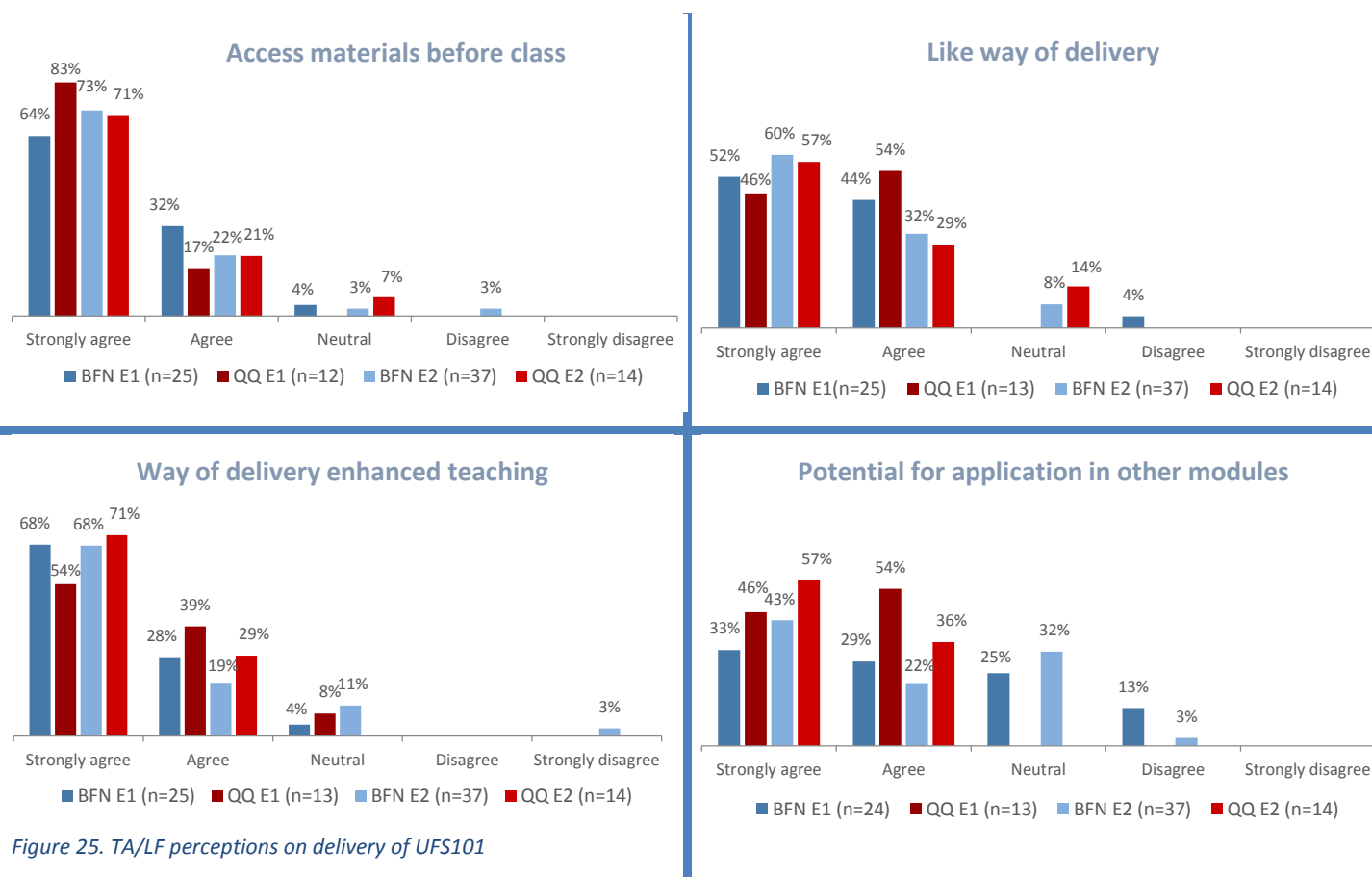


Figure 25. TA/LF perceptions on delivery of UFS101

Facilitators were asked to provide qualitative comments on the delivery of UFS101²⁵. A number of general positive comments were made across both campuses and evaluations (BFN E1 n=4, 20%; E2 n=2, 24%; QQ E1 n=2, 17%; E2 n=5, 38%). TAs and LFs also mentioned they learned a lot from the experience (BFN E1 n=5, 25%; E2 n=4, 14%; QQ E1 n=2, 17%; E2 n=5, 38%), that their critical thinking improved (E1 n=2, 10%; E2 n=1, 3%) and that they grew personally (E2 n=2, 7%). TAs were positive, specifically about the discussion classes (BFN E1 n=2, 10%; E2 n=4, 14%; QQ E2 n=1, 8%) and the learning experiences (E1 n=2, 10%).

A few negative comments also arose from the TAs (mostly related to the students), including their lack of preparation (E2 n=3, 10%) and interest (E2 n=1, 3%) and the fact that they did not use the eGuide (E2 n=1, 3%) and resorted to plagiarism (E2 n=1, 3%).

²⁴ Specifically, the question referred TAs/LFs to the following "eGuide, online videos, learning experiences, discussion classes"

²⁵ A total of 20 and 29 facilitators (E1 and E2) responded for Bloemfontein campus and 12 and 13 respectively for QwaQwa campus. Responses were predominantly positive.

Suggestions from the **Bloemfontein campus TAs** were to apply this way of teaching and learning to other modules (E1 n=1; 5%) and to provide a hard copy guide (E2 n=2, 7%) so that students could be better prepared for class.

Comments from the **QwaQwa LFs** were predominantly positive. They appreciated that the manner of delivery helped them to learn how to respect or accept other's views, see both sides of an argument or reason above emotion (E1 n=2, 17% and E2 n=2, 15% in each case). Some LFs noted a shift in their cultural interactions and critical thinking skills as a result (E1 n=2, 17% or E2 n=2, 15% in each case). A limited number noted an improvement in their teaching skills, communication skills and confidence (E1 n=2, 17%; E2 n=2, 15%).

4.3. DISCUSSION CLASSES

The vast majority of TAs and LFs agreed to some extent that the discussion class guide enabled them to prepare adequately for the discussion classes (see Figure 26 below). Although the proportion of TAs who strongly agreed that this was the case decreased between the two evaluation points, the proportion of TAs who disagreed did not increase. In other words, the shift occurred primarily from strongly agree to agree.

Typically, the TAs and LFs found it easier to facilitate the face-to-face discussions (84% and 77% respectively), although 16% and 23% found it equally easy to facilitate either.

The discussion class guide supplied was sufficient for discussion class preparation?

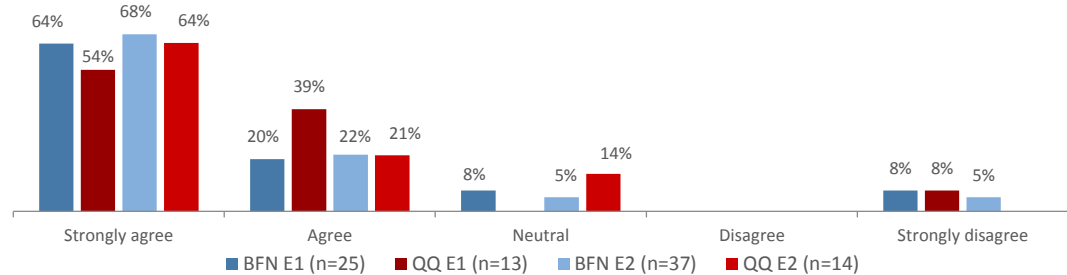


Figure 26. TA/LF perceptions on discussion class guide

4.4. BLACKBOARD

Five percent or less of **Bloemfontein TAs** and none of the LFs on **QwaQwa campus** emphatically stated in either evaluation that they had trouble assessing relevant tasks or information on Blackboard (Bb). However, 20% (E1) and 24% (E2) of TAs, as well as 45% (E1) and 50% (E2) of LFs sometimes had trouble.

The majority of TAs and LFs frequently accessed the Teaching Assistant organisation on Bb in both semesters (see Figure 27 on the following page).

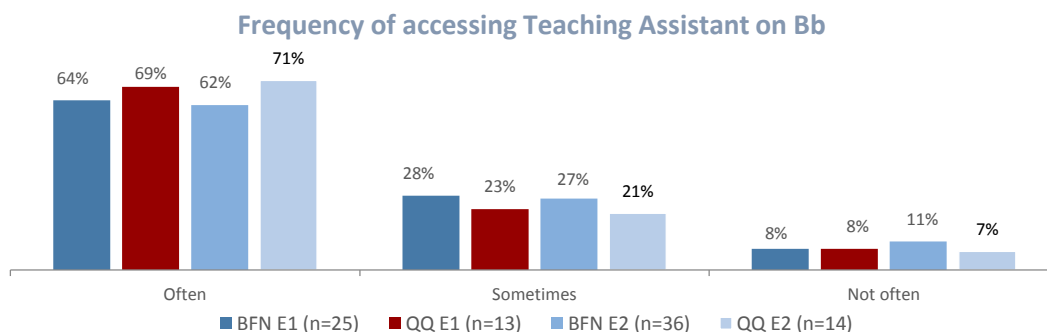


Figure 27. TA/LF access to Teaching Assistant on Blackboard

Qualitative responses regarding Bb were obtained²⁶ from which a number of positive and negative comments surfaced, with only a few suggestions for improvement.

In E1, positive comments were mentioned only once each and included comments on ease of accessibility, the fact that Bb was helpful or useful, ease of navigation, appreciation for the adequate Bb training as well as the ability to keep track of student performance. During E2 the most often mentioned positive comment was the user-friendliness of Bb (BFN n=3, 11%; QQ n=3, 27%). Other positive comments mentioned in E2 (mentioned only once each) included ease of access, the UFS101 team's availability to assist, the well-structured layout and positive experiences on the teaching assistant portal.

During E1, negative comments related only to a technical issue, (BFN E1 n=2, 11%) namely broken or missing links (BFN E1 n=2, 11%). Slightly more negative comments were made in E2 (BFN n=5, 18%; QQ n=2, 18%), mostly relating to technical problems (BFN n=2, 7%; QQ n=2, 18%). Technical problems reported were issues with the marking system (BFN n=1, 4%) and attendance links (BFN n=1, 4%), as well as accessing or viewing videos (QQ n=1, 9%) and the blog (QQ n=1, 9%).

Suggestions (mentioned only once each) included the need to improve the user-friendliness, more Bb training, clearer instructions for how to use Bb and making hard copy tasks available in the event of system crashes.

4.5. EGUIDES

Across campuses TAs and LFs typically reported highly positive experiences with the eGuide (see summary diagram in Figure 28 on the following page), with more than 85% of TAs and LFs (in both evaluations) indicating that the eGuide was user-friendly. Although TAs and LFs were highly positive about the accessibility of the preparation materials, this was particularly true for the LFs on the QwaQwa campus. More than 90% of TAs and LFs agreed that the videos were accessible in E1, however on both campuses this percentage decreased by more than 15% in E2.

Nine out of ten LFs used the glossary provided throughout the year, whilst only six to seven out of ten TAs did so (with a decrease in use in the latter part of the year).

The positive experience with the eGuide is confirmed by the responses in the qualitative feedback where 32% (E1) and 53% (E2) TAs, as well as 40% (E1) and 46% (E2) LFs of said there was *"Nothing"* they did not like about the eGuide.

In their qualitative feedback, LFs and TAs reported positive user experiences with the eGuide and liked the material provided— particularly the videos. They were also positive about the design of the eGuide.

²⁶ A total of 19 and 28 TAs, for E1 and E2 respectively on the Bloemfontein campus and 11 LFs in both E1 and E2 for the QwaQwa campus.

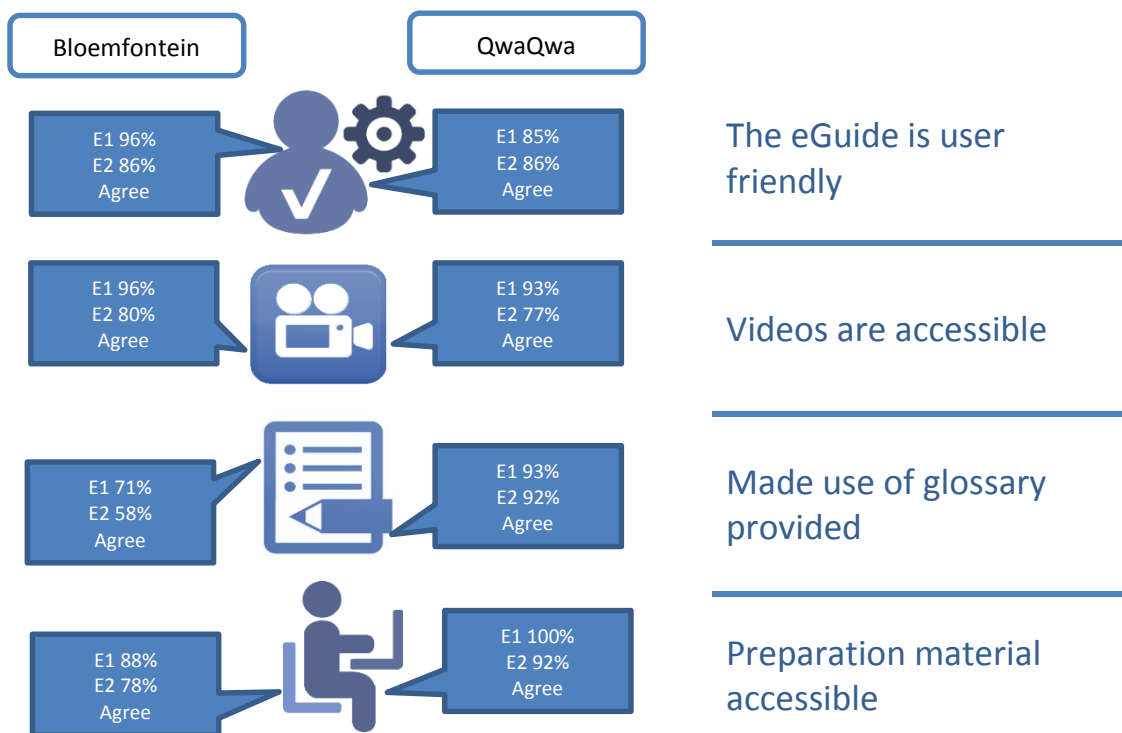


Figure 28. TA/LF experiences with the eGuide

The positive user experience when working with the eGuide was the aspect which was liked by the highest proportion of TAs and LFs on the **Bloemfontein and QwaQwa campuses** for both evaluations (see Figure 29 below). Materials and content were also experienced positively by a large proportion of people on both campuses and across evaluations (see Table 9 on the following page for more detailed outlay of “User experience” and “Material provided and content” aspects).

What did you like about the eGuide?

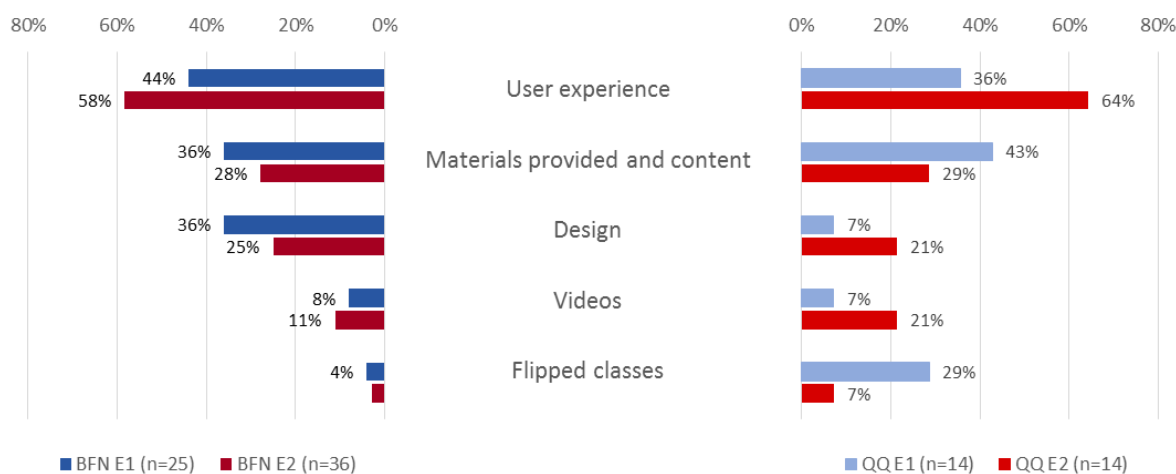


Figure 28. TA/LF perceptions on positive aspects of the eGuide

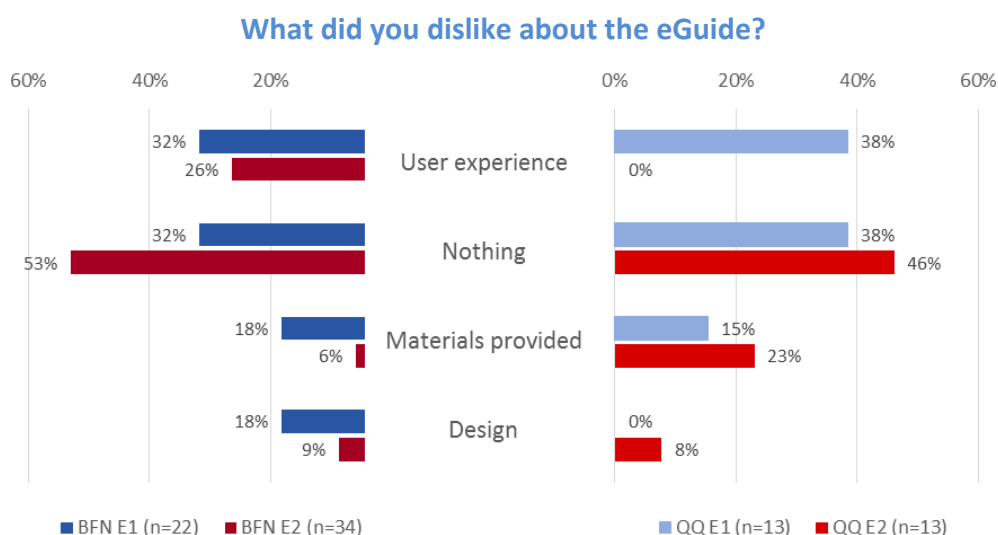


Figure 29. TA/LF perceptions on negative aspects of the eGuide

Although user experience related issues were also the most frequently cited reason facilitators on the **Bloemfontein campus** did not like the eGuide, the proportion of students is substantially lower than those who liked the eGuide for this reason (see Figure 30 above). These results from the TAs and LFs show strong similarities to those reported by the students on both campuses.

Those who reported positive experiences with the eGuide liked the fact that it was easy to use, materials were easy to access within the eGuide and that it was easy to navigate. In particular on the QwaQwa campus, the eGuide provided clear instructions to the LFs (see Table 9 below).

Table 9. TA/LF perceptions on user experience and materials and content of the eGuide

POSITIVE ASPECTS				
	BFN E1 (n=25)	BFN E2 (n=36)	QQ E1 (n=14)	QQ E2 (n=14)
USER EXPERIENCE	11	21	6	9
Easy to use	9	12	6	1
Easy to access	2	9	1	3
Easy to navigate	1	4	2	1
Clear instructions	-	1	-	4
MATERIALS PROVIDED AND CONTENT	9	10	6	4
Information - general	2	4	1	2
Everything in one place	2	3	-	-
Comprehensive	2	2	-	1
NEGATIVE ASPECTS				
	BFN E1 (n=22)	BFN E2 (n=34)	QQ E1 (n=13)	QQ E2 (n=13)
USER EXPERIENCE	7	9	5	0
Not easy to use	3	2	-	-
Access problems	1	1	1	-
Not easy to navigate	-	1	-	-
MATERIALS PROVIDED	4	2	2	3
Too much reading	2	1	-	1
Content difficult to understand	2	1	2	1

When asked what they disliked about the eGuide, most facilitators said “*Nothing*”, thus reinforcing their positive experience. However, some facilitators were dissatisfied with the user experience (BFN E1 n=7, 32%; E2 n=9, 26%; QQ E1 n=5, 38%), the materials provided (BFN E1 n=4, 18%; E2 n=2, 6%; QQ E1 n=2, 15%; E2 n=3, 23%), and the design (BFN E1 n=4, 18%; E2 n=3, 9%; QQ E2 n=1, 8%) of the eGuide.

With regards to user experience, the most commonly mentioned drawbacks were the user-friendliness of the eGuide, accessibility to the eGuide, links not working within the eGuide, trouble accessing the eGuide from other devices, slow internet connection and the failure of some videos to play. Each of these aspects was noted by fewer than five persons per campus in each evaluation.

In terms of the materials provided, a few TAs and LFs found it hard to manage the large amount of reading required, found the content difficult to understand, they thought some of the materials were irrelevant and experienced the glossary to be incomplete. Each of these aspects was noted by fewer than five persons per campus in each evaluation.

With regards to design, a few TAs and LFs noted a preference for hardcopy materials (vs the online nature), found some of the font hard to read and not all were able to search the eGuide effectively. Each of these aspects was noted by fewer than five persons per campus in each evaluation.

4.6. MODULE CONTENT

When asked to provide qualitative feedback on the content of UFS101, a number of positive (BFN E1 n=12, 52%; E2 n=8, 26%; QQ E1 n=5, 45%; E2 n=8, 67%) and negative comments (BFN E1 n=7, 30%; E2 n=13, 42%; QQ E1 n=3, 27%; E2 n=3, 25%) surfaced, while only a few suggestions were made for improvements (BFN E1 n=4, 17%; E2 n=2, 6%; QQ E1 n=4, 36%).

Negative comments focused mostly on the nature of the content (BFN E1 n=4, 17%; E2 n=4, 13%; QQ E2 n=3, 25%), including the fact that it is too challenging or complex, that the preparation material for facilitators was difficult to understand or that it was boring and vague. In an equally limited number of cases TAs and LFs thought that inadequate material for discussions was provided or that too much material for discussion was provided. LFs and TAs also mentioned that, at times, students appeared uninterested in the content leading to uninteresting discussion classes that did not fully cover the topic at hand.

Positive comments were also mainly regarding the nature of the content (BFN E1 n=9, 39%; E2 n=4, 13%; QQ E1 n=3, 27%; E2 n=3, 25%), including that topics were relevant (BFN E1 n=4, 17%), interesting (BFN E1 n=2, 9%; E2 n=1, 3%; QQ E1 n=1, 9%; E2 n=1, 8%) and clear (BFN E1 n=2, 9%; E2 n=3, 10%; QQ E1 n=1, 9%; E2 n=2, 17%). Other positive comments mentioned (only once in each case) included how the content facilitated growth in the TA/LF with regard to their own critical thinking skills, leadership skills and knowledge outside of their field of study.

Suggestions provided (mentioned once each) included requests for the addition of more videos, removing the class on abortions (Unit two), adding topics about IT, improving the relevance of the content to modern day life and including more examples and activities.

4.7. ASSESSMENTS

The instructions and rubrics for the Reflection journals and the integrated assessment were experienced less positively by LFs on the **QwaQwa campus** than by TAs on the **Bloemfontein campus** in the first semester (see summary diagram in Figure 31 on the following page). There was however a substantial shift in the second semester, with the majority of the LFs indicating that the instructions for both were easy to understand. The Reflection journal rubric appears to have remained somewhat more of a challenge for the LFs in the second semester. Having said this, very few LFs or TAs disagreed to any extent that the instructions and rubrics were easy to understand.

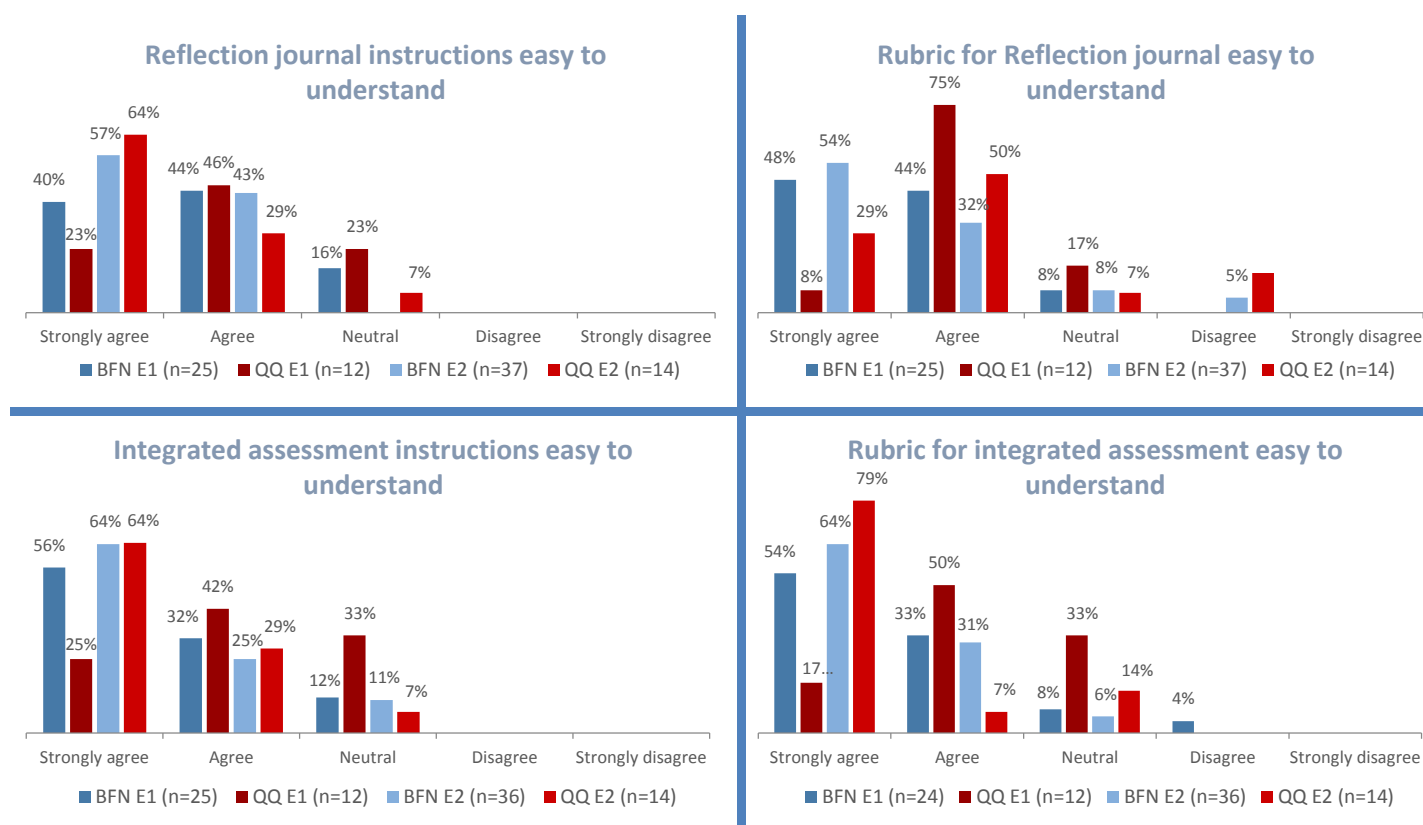


Figure 30. TA/LF perceptions regarding instructions and rubrics of assessments

TAs and LFs were asked to provide qualitative feedback on two aspects, first, the marking of assessments, and secondly, the assessments in general. With regards to marking, responses showed a mixed view in terms of positive and negative feedback. Overall comments on assessments provided more negative comments and suggestions than positive comments.

The most frequently noted *negative aspect related to marking* appears to be the volume of work (BFN E1 n=4, 16%; E2 n=3, 8%; QQ E1 n=1, 8%) which has a knock-on effect for TAs and LFs, such as increased personal exam pressure (BFN E1 n=3, 12%). A few TAs and LFs noted there was limited time to complete the marking (BFN E1 n=1, 4%; E2 n=4, 11%).

Some TAs and LFs found the marking frustrating or challenging for various other reasons, including: students who showed a lack of interest or students not reading and following the instructions (BFN E1 n=2, 8%; E2 n=4, 11%; QQ E1 n=1, 8%; E2 n=3, 23%) as well as students not understanding the content (BFN E1 n=2, 8%; E2 n=1, 3%; QQ E1 n=2, 15%; E2 n=1, 8%). Other negative aspects mentioned (by only a very limited number in each case) included a difficulty in interpreting students' work, their poor language use and excessive plagiarism.

In a very limited number of cases, TAs/LFs found the rubric complicated to use, or they struggled to allocate marks with the rubric (they were not able to give 0). It was also mentioned (although only in a very limited number of cases) that the rubric did not correspond to the answers. Confirming the quantitative finding above, specifically the marking of Reflection journals, was experienced as complicated by some (BFN E1 n=1, 4%; BFN E2 n=2, 6%; QQ E2 n=1, 8%). However, on a positive note, many facilitators mentioned that the rubric was clear, easy to use and understand (BFN E1 n=6, 24%; E2 n=9, 25%; QQ E1 n=4, 31%; E2 n=1, 8%) and typically facilitators found that marking was simple and understandable (BFN E1 n=5, 20%; E2 n=8, 22%), even enjoyable (BFN E1 n=2, 8%; QQ E1 n=1, 8%).

More specifically, those TAs/LFs with previous UFS101 experience felt the marking process was an improvement on previous years (BFN E1 n=3, 12%), that the guidelines given were clear (BFN E1 n=2, 8%; QQ E1 n=1, 8%) and that students tried harder (BFN E2 n=2, 6%).

Other positive aspects about the marking of assessments (mentioned only once each) included access to the electronic moderator rubric, the exposure marking provided for their future career of choice, the assistance received from the UFS101 team and the usefulness of the training provided in the marking process.

With regards to *general feedback about assessments*, positive comments featured minimally, whilst negative comments and suggestions were more prominent.

The positive assessment comments (in response to the general question) focused primarily on the marking (BFN E1 n=4, 19%; E2 n=1, 3%; QQ E2 n=2, 18%). The following were noted: the rubric was well explained, clear guidelines were given to mark assessments and assessments were well-organised. Facilitators felt students knew what to expect from the assessments and they enjoyed reading student responses; also they felt that the assessments were fair and reliable. Each of these aspects was only mentioned once.






Negative assessment comments (in response to the general question) (BFN E1 n=6, 29%; E2 n=9, 30%; QQ E2 n=1, 9%) centred on issues related to students, the Reflection Journals and problems with marking the assessments. Facilitators felt students were lazy or uninterested, did not follow instructions and some did not know what to expect from the assessments. Some facilitators had difficulty with the Reflection journal rubric and some mentioned that the Reflection journal itself was an unnecessary part of UFS101. Problems with the marking of assessments mainly focused on the length of the assessments and the fact that the assessments were spaced close together, causing increased time pressure and clashes with other responsibilities. LFs and TAs also struggled with late submissions.

Suggestions again focused mainly on marking (BFN E1 n=6, 29%; E2 n=13, 43%; QQ E1 n=10, 77%; E2 n=6, 55%), with the most common being that more time was required (BFN E1 n=1, 5%; E2 n=6, 20%; QQ E1 n=1, 8%). Other suggestions (mentioned only once each) included the need to make assessment topics more interesting, to simplify the questions and to give the students clear guidelines for documents (with regards to font, line spacing, etc.). Other suggestions included requests for extensive training on marking, clearer rubrics and a plagiarism checker.

4.8. LEARNING

Across both evaluation points TAs and LFs were extremely positive about their own learning and development (see Figure 32 below). All LFs on the QwaQwa campus agreed to some extent in both evaluations that they have attained all the learning outcomes to some degree. The only exception is learning to appreciate both sides of an argument before making a decision (93% of LFs agreed in E2).

By participating in UFS101, I have....

	...learned to respect the views of others, even if I don't agree	76% of E1 Bloemfontein TAs strongly agree 78% of E2 Bloemfontein TAs strongly agree 100% of E1 QwaQwa LFs strongly agree 86% of E2 QwaQwa LFs strongly agree
	...improved my interaction with diverse peoples from different ethnicities, backgrounds, disciplines, religions	92% of E1 Bloemfontein TAs strongly agree 84% of E2 Bloemfontein TAs strongly agree 85% of E1 QwaQwa LFs strongly agree 86% of E2 QwaQwa LFs strongly agree
	...learned to reason above emotion	88% of E1 Bloemfontein TAs strongly agree 84% of E2 Bloemfontein TAs strongly agree 69% of E1 QwaQwa LFs strongly agree 71 % of E2 QwaQwa LFs strongly agree
	...improved my critical thinking	80% of E1 Bloemfontein TAs strongly agree 76% of E2 Bloemfontein TAs strongly agree 85% of E1 QwaQwa LFs strongly agree 79% of E2 QwaQwa LFs strongly agree
	...changed my way of thinking about problems	72% of E1 Bloemfontein TAs strongly agree 68% of E2 Bloemfontein TAs strongly agree 66% of E1 QwaQwa LFs strongly agree 64% of E2 QwaQwa LFs strongly agree

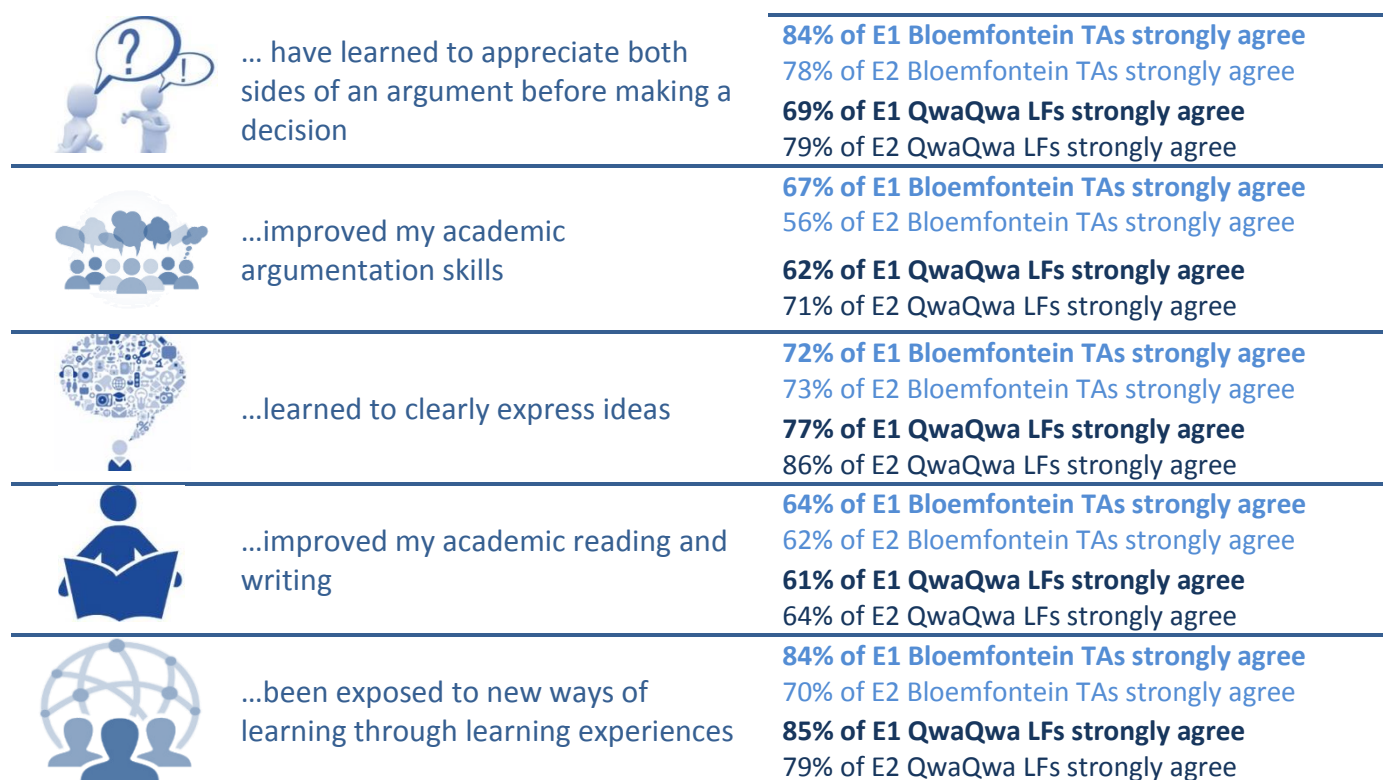


Figure 31. TA/LF perceptions regarding their own learning and development

The highest proportion of **Bloemfontein TAs** strongly agreed that they improved their interaction with diverse peoples from different ethnicities, backgrounds, disciplines, religions (92% E1, 84% E2) and that they had learned to reason above emotion (88% E1, 84% E2). A high proportion also strongly agreed that they had learned to appreciate both sides of an argument before making a decision (84% E1, 78% E2) and had been exposed to new ways of teaching and learning (84% E1, 70% E2).

The lowest proportion of **Bloemfontein TAs** strongly agreed that their academic reading and writing skills (64% and 62% for E1 and E2) and their academic argumentation skills (67% and 56% for E1 and E2) had improved.

The highest proportion of **QwaQwa LFs** agreed that they had learned to respect the views of others, even if they don't agree (100% and 86% for E1 and E2) and that they had improved their interaction with diverse peoples from different ethnicities, backgrounds, disciplines and religions (85% and 86% for E1 and E2).

The lowest proportion of LFs from the **QwaQwa campus** agreed that their academic reading and writing skills (61% and 64% for E1 and E2) had improved and that they had changed their way of thinking about problems (66% and 64% for E1 and E2). The development of academic argumentation skills (62% and 71% for E1 and E2) is also less pronounced than the other learning outcomes.

4.9. MOST POSITIVE EXPERIENCE AND BIGGEST CHALLENGE

Facilitators were asked to indicate their most positive experience and biggest challenge during their time as a TA/LF in UFS101.

The relational learning aspect of being a TA clearly stands out on the **Bloemfontein campus** as being a highly positive component. This is illustrated by the fact that the most common positive experience mentioned by TAs in E1 on the **Bloemfontein campus** (see Table 10 on the following page) was learning from the students (n=4; 16%), followed by the opportunity to meet new people (n=3; 12%). In addition to this, working with colleagues, hearing other's opinions, personal growth and the positive feedback received from students were each mentioned by a small number of TAs (n=2, 8% each). The most commonly mentioned positive experience in E2 for the **Bloemfontein campus** was the opportunity to teach students (n=8; 22%), engaging with students (n=8; 22%), followed by the opportunity to work with students to challenge

their perspectives (n=5; 14%). Having positive relationships with the students (n=4; 11%), working with different types of people (n=3; 8%) and interacting with different racial and cultural groups (n=3; 8%) were also noted.

Patterns in the responses for **QwaQwa facilitators** were far less pronounced. The only positive experience really standing out was the opportunity to hear other's opinions (QQ E1 n=3, 21%; E2 n=3, 21%). Other positive experiences (mentioned only once or twice each) included engaging with students, teaching students, developing critical thinking skills, learning new things, improving teaching skills, interacting with various races and cultures and improving presentation skills.

Table 10. Most positive experiences of TAs/LFs

MOST POSITIVE EXPERIENCE				
	BFN E1 (n=25)	BFN E2 (n=36)	QQ E1 (n=14)	QQ E2 (n=14)
Learning from the students	4	3	-	1
Meeting new people	3	1	-	-
Colleagues	2	-	-	-
Hearing other's opinions	2	2	3	3
Personal growth	2	1	-	-
Positive comments from students	2	-	-	-
Teaching students	1	8	2	1
Engaging with students	1	8	1	2
Challenging student's perspectives	1	5	-	1
Relationship with students	1	4	-	1
Working with different people	1	3	-	-
Discussion classes	1	2	-	-
Developed critical thinking skills	1	1	-	2
Learned new things	1	-	-	2
Improved teaching skills	-	1	2	-
Interaction with different races/cultures	-	3	2	1
Open environment for discussions	-	4	-	-
Learning to accept others' opinions	-	2	-	-
Improved presentation skills	-	1	-	2

The most common challenge mentioned by TAs (see Table 11 on the following page) in E1 on the **Bloemfontein campus** was student engagement (n=6; 24%), which was also frequently mentioned during E2 (n=6; 17%). Other challenges were mentioned in E1, however with less frequency. These were the lack of student participation in online discussions (n=3; 12%), negative/poor student attitudes (n=3; 12%), classes with too many students, the challenge of preparing content outside of the TAs scope of learning and time management (n=2, 8% in each case).

The most commonly mentioned challenge in E2 for the **Bloemfontein campus** was negative and poor student attitudes (n=11; 31%) and the lack of student preparation (n=6; 24%). Other challenges (mentioned less frequently) were marking assessments (n=3; 8%) and time management (n=2; 6%). Managing issues related to racism was mentioned by two TAs (n=2; 6%).

The only challenge really standing out on the **QwaQwa campus** was problems with student engagement (QQ E1 n=5, 36%). Presenting classes or the lack of LF presentation skills was also mentioned as a challenge by two people in E1 and three people in E2. Other challenges (mentioned by a very limited number of LFs) included negative student attitudes, the need to prepare content outside of the facilitator's scope of learning and the challenge of remaining neutral on controversial topics during discussions.

Table 11. Biggest challenges faced by facilitators

	BIGGEST CHALLENGE			
	BFN E1 (n=25)	BFN E2 (n=36)	QQ E1 (n=14)	QQ E2 (n=14)
Student engagement	6	6	5	-
Lack of participation in online discussions	3	1	1	-
Student attitude	3	11	2	2
Preparing content out of scope of learning	2	1	-	2
Presenting classes/presentation skills	2	1	2	3
Time management	2	2	-	-
Too many students	2	-	-	-
Student preparation	-	6	1	1
Marking assessments	-	3	-	-
Racism	-	2	-	-
Remaining neutral on topics	-	-	-	2

5. UFS101 Lecturer Perspectives

A total of seven lecturers availed themselves for interviews with the evaluator. Concise, semi-structured interviews of approximately 20-30 minutes were conducted with each lecturer and focussed on the lecturers' perspectives on the flipped classroom approach, the experience and process of making the videos, the quality of the eGuides, as well as any other matters of interest/importance the individual lecturer wanted to discuss.

Overall it is evident that all of the lecturers interviewed are champions of UFS101 (even in the face of negativity towards the module by some colleagues and students), who are passionate about their disciplines and about teaching. Typically positive sentiments and experiences were shared about UFS101 2014, for example one lecturer described UFS101 as a "positive and enriching experience". Lecturers genuinely appear to enjoy being part of UFS101, in fact all of the lecturers interviewed have been involved in UFS101 prior to 2014.

5.1. THOUGHTS AND PERSPECTIVES ON THE FLIPPED CLASSROOM APPROACH

In principle there is strong support for the flipped classroom approach in UFS101, particularly given the challenges experienced with student disengagement in the "mega-classroom" approach. Lecturers felt the approach "makes sense". The flipped classroom is perceived by the lecturers to be less logistically burdensome (to the lecturers) and more sustainable in the future, and noted clear advantages to the students – for example the fact that they can listen to a recording multiple times or they can manage their own time more flexibly.

A distinct disadvantage of the approach for the lecturers was that contact with students was very limited – specifically in the instances where the lecturer was not involved in presenting the learning experience. It was evident that the group of lecturers enjoyed face-to-face interaction with the students, and missed the interactive nature of a "traditional lecture". Lecturers in UFS101 essentially serve as "volunteers" with very little tangible incentive to participate (other than their own personal passion for their discipline and the development of students). For this reason, additional responsibilities that require even more time from lecturers to be involved in UFS101 should be limited. Having said this, mechanisms to involve lecturers in activities that will facilitate interaction with students should be considered. For example, lecturers could be invited to attend one (or a few) discussion classes – or even act as the facilitator for a discussion class. Alternatively, greater involvement in the learning experiences is an option.

It was noted by a few of the lecturers that the flipped classroom's effectiveness is closely linked to the nature and the quality of the discussion classes, and the alignment of the videos with the discussion class content. In 2014, lecturers did not have the opportunity to meet with and prepare for the units as in previous years. Although TAs and LFs were required to have previous experience with UFS101, lecturers would have preferred the opportunity to engage with the TAs and LFs with regards to their units – specifically to help focus discussions in a way that supplements the videos most effectively. Furthermore, the feedback loop from discussion classes (i.e. TA and LF experiences) to the lecturers is currently lacking. Mechanisms to elicit feedback from both students and TAs/LFs on the content and delivery of each unit shortly after the delivery of the unit (not only in the evaluation report) would be appreciated by the lecturers.

5.2. UFS101 VIDEOS

For most (if not all) of the lecturers it was their first experience "lecturing to nobody" which was an uncomfortable experience for almost all of the lecturers, and a nerve-wrecking experience for some. For the most part, lecturers were satisfied with the outcome of the videos for their unit – again noting the potential for tweaking and improving with each year. Only one lecturer mentioned that they had not viewed their videos.

Lecturers liked the fact that the videos build in greater mobility (i.e. they do not have to be physically present on the day of lecture delivery), but did not find the process significantly less time consuming than preparing for and delivering the lectures. One lecturer in particular indicated that it was particularly difficult to accommodate the video making process in their schedule at the time. This may be only because it is the first year of recording the videos, and that time saving will be evident in 2015 when videos only need tweaking and editing.

One aspect of the videos that lecturers did not like was that it limited their contact with the students, and that they were unable to “get a feel for” how students were experiencing the materials which were presented to them.

It was also challenging for lecturers (particularly those in the natural sciences) to communicate all the necessary content students needed to understand the unit within the short-time frame of the video. Achieving the balance between necessary information for understanding and interesting information is a challenge. Lecturers would appreciate the opportunity to be more involved in the video editing process, having greater inputs on which sections are cut/included to ensure that materials are not misrepresented.

The support from the UFS101 team in facilitating the video making process was “outstanding”, with no logistical problems reported by the lecturers. Support from the UFS101 team is outstanding; a logistically smooth and effective process. The production crew were also complimented on their professionalism.

5.3. QUALITY OF THE EGUIDE

Lecturers were mostly satisfied with the quality, interactiveness, look-and-feel and content of their eGuides. The eGuide development was seen as an iterative process of continuous improvement from year to year, with no lecturers expressing dissatisfaction with the quality of their current eGuide. Only one lecturer was not aware of what their eGuide looked like.

Although the UFS101 team did the majority of the “hard labour” to compile the eGuides, lecturers were involved in the process of determining content. This was at times time consuming, as lengthy study guides had to be condensed into essential content only. The support provided by the UFS101 team in the design process was highly appreciated and often commended.

The potential of the eGuide for broader application within the UFS is evident, and positive ad hoc feedback from other higher education institutions outside the Free State is indicative of the quality of the product that has been produced. The UFS101 eGuide has opened up possibilities in the module make-over project at the UFS, serving as an exemplar to other lecturers of what is possible. More in-depth investigation into what elements of the eGuide are essential to its success would be of value in understanding how eGuides can be most effectively used to enhance learning.

5.4. THE UFS101 TEAM

All of the lecturers were unequivocally positive about the competency and efficiency of the UFS101 team. Lecturers all reported receiving excellent support from the team throughout all activities they were involved in. Phrases such as “on the ball”, “they go out of their way”, “brilliant” and “fantastic” were used.

It is evident across lecturer feedback on all of the aspects of UFS101 that the efficiency and effectiveness with which the UFS101 team implements the module plays a critical and fundamental role in many of the successes achieved.

5.5. CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIC ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

UFS101 continues to evolve on an annual basis, and in 2015 the module will move towards a first year experience type model with academic support skills presented in the first semester and the current units offered in the second semester (with students choosing to do only 3(???) of the units). This element of choice is welcomed by the lecturers, and it is hoped that this will contribute positively to student attitudes toward the module.

As one lecturer put it, the “elephant in the room” is what (if anything) can be (or should) be done about the prevailing negativity towards the module from some students and staff on campus. Some lecturers think that greater integration and embeddedness in faculties/departments is needed to help overcome the idea that UFS101 is an add-on, whilst others felt the module should not be presented to first years (who are already overwhelmed and struggle to appreciate the value of the module). Focus group discussions with lecturers, CTL leadership, the UFS101 team and other campus stakeholders may shed light on possible alternatives.

Although there is principle support for the approach and lecturers were positive about the model and its potential for application in other modules on campus, numerous practicalities limit possibilities in this regard. Significant funding, infrastructure limitations and logistical support were noted as success factors in UFS101 that limit the possibility of scaling up the approach in other modules. Despite these limitations, a tremendous amount of organisational learning currently lies “locked up” in UFS101. It would be expedient to investigate how this knowledge can be drawn upon and shared towards the betterment of teaching and learning at the UFS.