



University Experience Survey 2013

Sonia Whiteley, Eric Skuja (Social Research Centre)
Darren Matthews (Graduate Careers Australia)

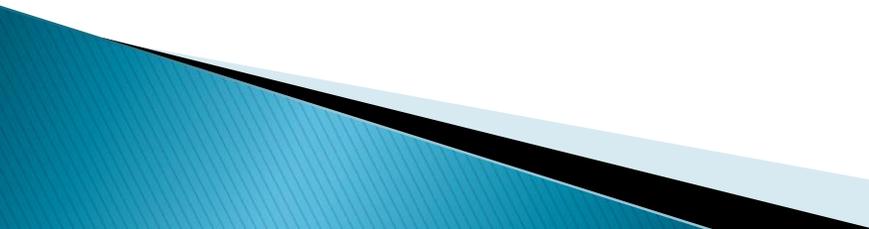
University Experience Survey (UES)

- ▶ What is the UES?
 - UES developed in 2011 to measure the levels of engagement and satisfaction of commencing and continuing undergraduate students at Australian universities
- ▶ Developed in 2011, inaugural in 2012, continuing 2013
- ▶ 2014?

UES 2013 History

- ▶ 17th May RFT was released for **Administration of the University Experience Survey 2013**
- ▶ GCA and the Social Research Centre (SRC) formed a consortium.
- ▶ Tender response submitted 11th June
 - ▶ Two addendums followed
 - ▶ Tender awarded on 26th June
 - ▶ Formalised a few days later

... this was around 4 months ago...



UES 2013

- ▶ Since June...
 - ▶ Project Advisory Group formed, July
 - ▶ Survey Manager Information Forum, Melbourne – July
 - ▶ Website developed, July
 - ▶ Universities engaged, ongoing
 - ▶ Questionnaire (UEQ) developed and deployed, July
 - ▶ Sample frame devised, July
 - ▶ Survey launched AUGUST 8
- 

UES 2013

- ▶ Since August...
 - ▶ 39 Universities completed their UES
 - ▶ 10 individual university data files complete
 - ▶ Report and data tables formats agreed
 - ▶ Continual Department feedback
 - ▶ **Continual** institutional communication
 - ▶ Final Reports in draft format for release by end of year
- 

UES 2013

▶ Aims:

- Transparency
- Consultative
- Build on 2012
- Make it sustainable

...while following recommendations from 2012 UES national report - where possible

GCA	Social Research Centre
Sector liaison	Sample Selection
Engagement materials	Instrument
Analysis and Reports	Data collection / coding /cleaning
UES Query	Datafiles / tables / dictionary
Documentation	

Were Our Aims Met?

- ▶ Transparency
- ▶ Consultative
 - As much as possible we have consulted each step of the way
 - Eg report content
- ▶ Made Sustainable
 - Technical reports will be a transition package for 2014
- ▶ Build on 2012
 - Some work to do, time restrictions in 2012



UES Documentation and Processes

Key Methodology Issues

- ▶ Survey of first and later year students
- ▶ Centralised survey
 - Some institutions send own communications
- ▶ Single mode survey: Online only
- ▶ Pilot of 6 CEQ scales from volunteer institutions
- ▶ Sample drawn from HEIMS data provided by DIICCSRTE

Institutional Liaison

- ▶ GCA and Social Research Centre, constant liaison
- ▶ Survey Managers Forum, Melbourne, July 2013
- ▶ AAIR SIG Forum, Blue Mountains, August, 20013
- ▶ AHEEF, Launceston, October 2013
- ▶ AAIR Forum, Perth, November 2013
- ▶ Planned Post-UES forum (watch your inbox)

Institutional Liaison comment?



☹️ ☹️ 😊 ☹️ 😊

★ ALL ★

≡ OPINIONS ≡

MATTER

UES University Experience Survey

WATCH YOUR INBOX AFTER AUGUST 12



Student Engagement and Response Maximisation

Student Engagement

- ▶ Engagement model not based on invitation
 - Engage – not invite
- ▶ Two initial approaches
 - Focus on “coming soon” prior to deployment
 - E.g. watch your inbox after August 12th
 - Focus on “has arrived” following deployment
 - E.g. go check your inbox



agement

☹️ 😐 😊 😞 😄

★ ALL ★

≡ OPINIONS ≡

MATTER

UES University Experience Survey

WATCH YOUR INBOX AFTER AUGUST 12

UES University Experience Survey

MAKE YOUR MARK

WATCH YOUR INBOX AFTER AUGUST 12

UES University Experience Survey

ALL ★ OPINIONS ★ MATTER

WATCH YOUR INBOX AFTER AUGUST 12

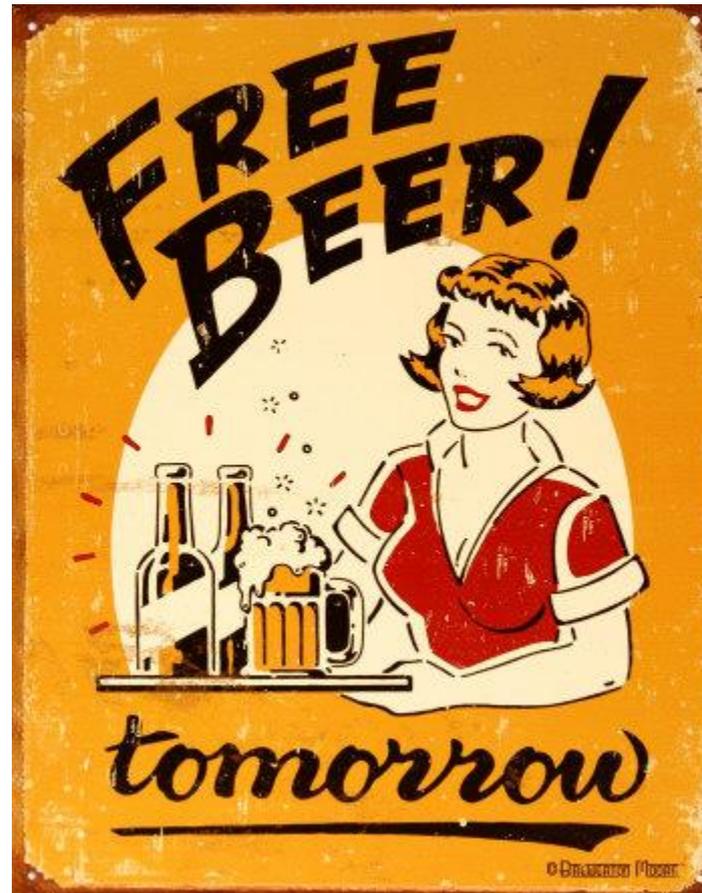
Additional Engagement

- ▶ Low responders
 - Males
 - Engineering
 - Business

WHAT DO MALES LIKE?

WHAT APPEALS TO ENGINEER AND BUSINESS STUDENTS?

Additional Engagement



Student Engagement



Further Student Engagement

- ▶ Pre-survey emails from institutions
- ▶ Social Media
- ▶ Lecture slides
- ▶ Video advertisements
- ▶ Website

www.ues.edu.au

Student Engagement Consultation

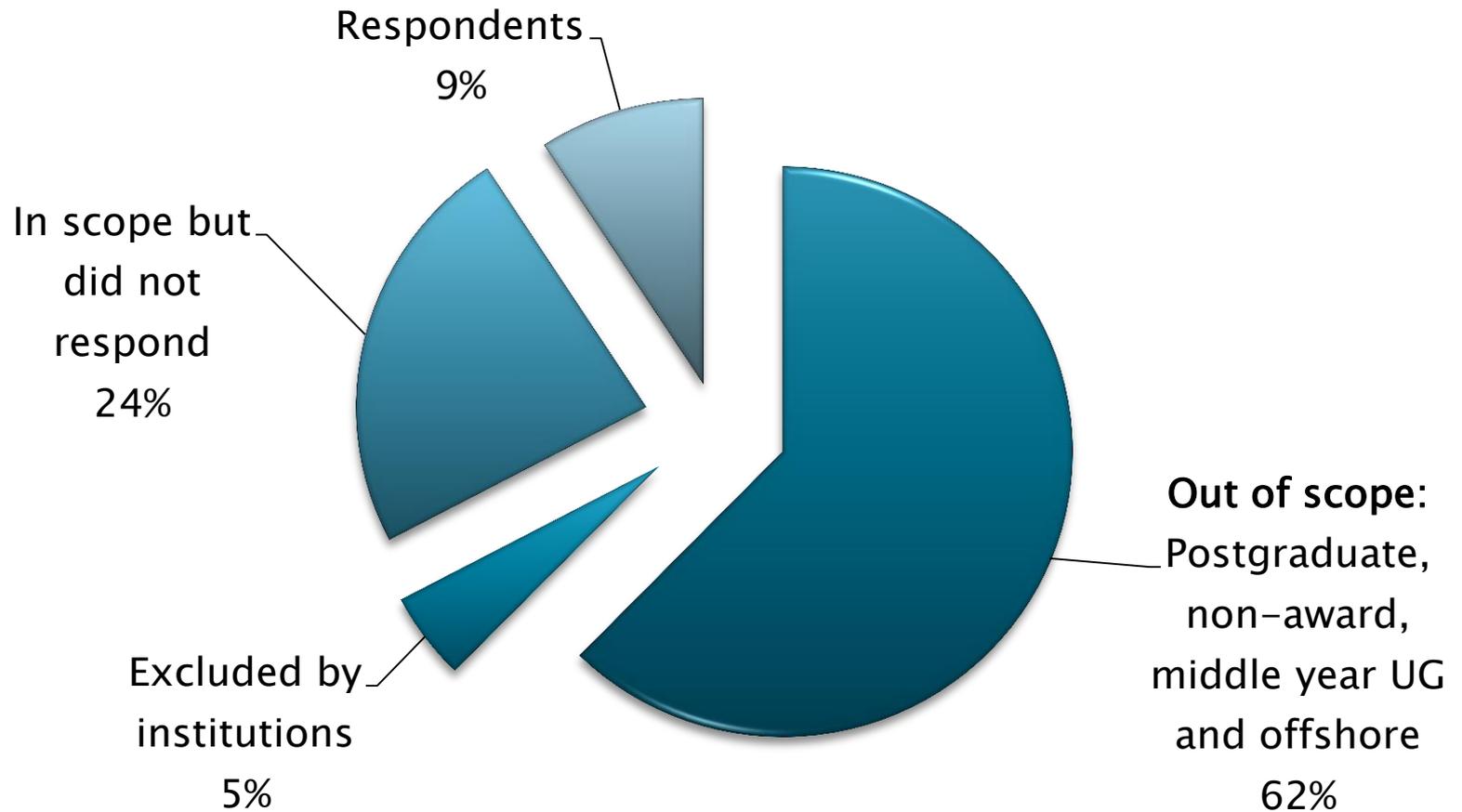
- ▶ Which campaign did you use?
- ▶ Did anyone not use one?
- ▶ What other engagement did you use?

Sampling approach

Sampling philosophy

- ▶ Top-down (2013) vs bottom-up (2012) aiming to
 - Improve transparency
 - Facilitate replicability
 - Ensure consistency
 - Reduce institutional burden
- ▶ Leverage off existing processes and procedures used to create HEIMS data
- ▶ Submission 1 or Submission 2?

Population (N=1,053,964)



Sample frame exclusions

- ▶ Enrolled in a postgraduate or non-award course
- ▶ Offshore undergraduates
- ▶ Onshore students in the middle year of an undergraduate course
- ▶ Onshore undergraduates enrolled concurrently in the first or last year of another course
- ▶ Onshore undergraduates in strata with six or fewer students
- ▶ Onshore undergraduates randomly excluded from very large strata

Contents of the sample file

- ▶ Course-related variables were required to develop the sample frame and to pre-populate sections of the survey.
- ▶ Student address details were only used to send letters to students who did not respond the email invitation.
- ▶ Student background variables will be used for reporting purposes and to verify the representativeness of the sample.

Defining final year students

- ▶ The ratio of 'EFTSL completed successfully' (E355) and 'currently in progress' (E339) to the total EFTSL for the course (E350) represented a student's progression to date.
- ▶ The standard solution adjusted for attendance mode (E330) and course duration (E350) and required a greater proportion of cumulative EFTSL for longer courses.
- ▶ Final year enrolment estimates for 2013 accorded reasonably well with course completions in 2012

Did the sampling strategy work?

- ▶ We received very helpful feedback from a number of institutions about the sampling strategy which made the process easier and improved accuracy.
- ▶ Turn around times for sample file checking were very quick and most reported that it was relatively straight forward to update and append.
- ▶ Approximately 1% of students were out-of-scope (ie graduated, deferred etc) which indicates that the sampling and checking processes were very accurate and the sample was very clean.
- ▶ Compared to 2012??

Data Collection

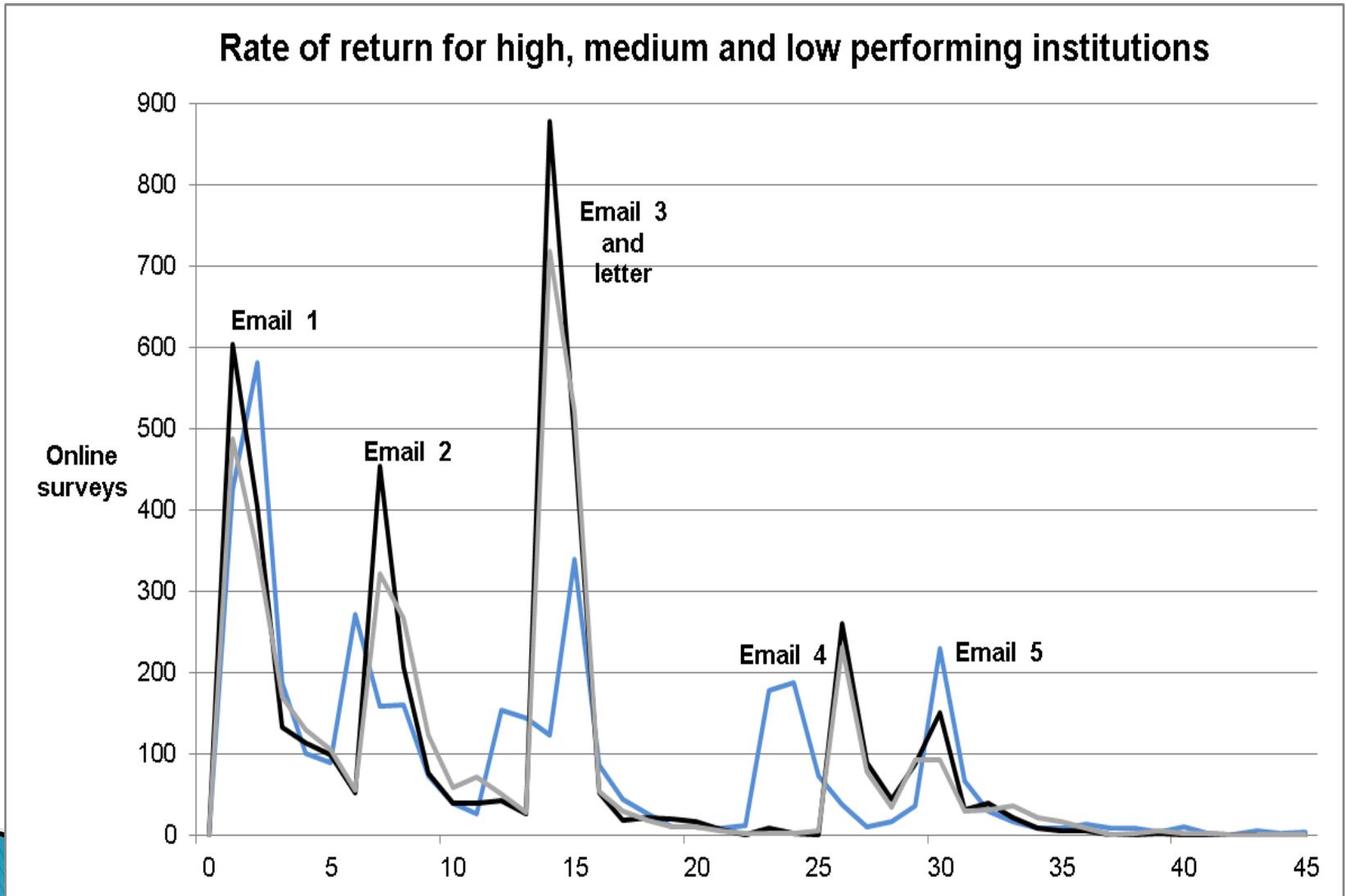
Data collection process

- ▶ HEIMS data validated by institutions, out-of-scope students flagged where possible
- ▶ Survey tested & live & reporting link live
- ▶ Email 1 sent
- ▶ Non-responder email 2 sent
- ▶ Letter posted to non-responders
- ▶ Non-responder email 3 sent to coincide with letter
- ▶ Targeted email 4 sent to underperforming Subject Areas
- ▶ Targeted email 5 sent to underperforming Subject Areas

'Workflow' & lapsed time

Activity	
Population file sent for verification	-15
Data elements verified, student email address appended	-5
Email invitation template (E1) sent to institutions	Launch
Non-response email (E2)	4
Physical letter mailed	8-10
Non-response email (E3)	11
Non-response email (E4)	16
Non-response email (E5)	20
Prize draw closes	20

Rate of return



Field reporting

- ▶ Field reporting was live throughout the data collection process.
- ▶ Subject areas were closely monitored to maximise representativeness and the number that were reportable on the My Universities website
- ▶ <https://ues.srcentre.com.au/ECU/admin.html>

Current data collection status

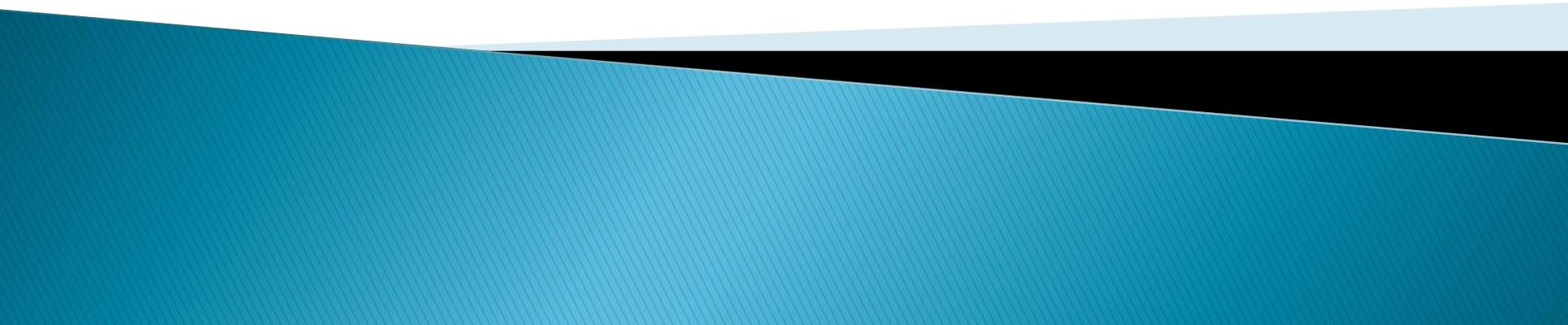
- ▶ 37 of 40 universities have completed data collection
- ▶ 302,455 letters and 1,514,143 emails sent
- ▶ 28.5% response rate (approx. 97,000 students), compared with a 21.1% online response rate to the 2012 survey
- ▶ Six institutions exceeded a 35% response rate

Did the data collection strategy work?

- ▶ While we didn't reach the stretch target of 35%, the online response rate increased more than seven percentage points and exceeded the total response rate for the 2012 UES by four percentage points.
- ▶ An online response rate of more than 35% is possible, we just need to identify the response maximisation strategies that will work for specific students at specific institutions.
- ▶ Formal opt-outs were extremely low, less than 0.2%, indicating that students were comfortable with the data collection approach.



UES



UES

- ▶ Consists of the UEQ and the CEQ for the 14 participating institutions
- ▶ Three institutions included additional items
- ▶ <http://ues.srcentre.com.au/ECU/login.html>

Did the UES work?

- ▶ From an survey administration perspective, yes it did.
- ▶ The data 'are' still being analysed – we will keep you posted.
- ▶ The change in the focus from students to courses, to accommodate those in double degrees, created all sorts of operational complexities.
- ▶ The GCA team will be assessing the UEQ and the CEQ to make recommendations for the 2014 data collection.



Next steps for the 2013 UES

We still have plenty to go on with...

- ▶ Draft data files are being sent progressively to institutions – we are still trying to resolve coding issues with some early finishers
- ▶ Report mock-ups have been approved
- ▶ Institutional reports will be ready by...
- ▶ Final data files will be sent to institutions when the National Report analysis has concluded