



## Using Topical Modules in StudentSurvey.ie 2022

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) in the USA and Canada remains of key relevance to StudentSurvey.ie, as the StudentSurvey.ie survey instrument is rooted in NSSE and contains many of the same questions. A new direction for StudentSurvey.ie explored by the StudentSurvey.ie Survey Review Group was to incorporate NSSE “Topical Modules” into the survey instrument used in Ireland.

Topical Modules are short sets of pre-tested standardised questions on designated topics such as academic advising, civic engagement, development of transferable skills, experiences with diverse perspectives, learning with technology, and experiences with writing.

The Survey Review Group considered all of the available Modules. Five Topical Modules were tested with students in October 2021, and four were retained for rolling out in the form of a national pilot study in fieldwork 2022. The four optional Topical Modules being piloted in 2022 are:

Topical Module 1: Career & Workforce Preparation

Topical Module 2: Civic Engagement

Topical Module 3: Experiences with Online Learning

Topical Module 4: Inclusiveness and Engagement with Diversity

### How are the Topical Modules being used?

Individual institutions will determine whether to offer a Topical Module to their own students. Institutions may select no more than **one** to add for all students as part of the pilot study in 2022. This selection is communicated to i-graduate (the survey company) via the In Touch platform for survey preparation information no later than three weeks before the beginning of fieldwork.

A group of institutions may decide to select a Topical Module to run in a given year and agree to their data being combined and analysed centrally to understand students’ responses across the group of institutions. An additional possibility would be for all institutions to agree to run the same Topical Module to allow for national analysis of the data and a national set of results. This would require agreement across all participating institutions and the StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group no later than the end of November in advance of the next fieldwork period in the springtime.

### Why should I add a Topical Module?

Topical Modules give institutions the flexibility to get rich data from a large number of students in their institution on a specific topic in one year without having to write the questions and run a separate survey on the topic. Institutions can choose a different Module every year to inform institutional strategies, planning, concerns and priorities. Topical Modules will also be useful to inform institutions’ annual or cyclical quality assurance reviews with QQI or other agencies, and this could inform the decision making around which Topical Module to include.

### Next Steps

The impact of the Topical Modules in terms of value added, data generated, ease of use and impact on response rate, among other factors, will be evaluated after the pilot study. This evaluation will inform a larger consideration by the StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group of the operating principles for optional questions in StudentSurvey.ie, included but not limited to the existing Topical Modules and future Modules on other topics relevant to the higher education system in Ireland.

## Topical Module 1: Career & Workforce Preparation (14 items)

To what extent do the following apply to you?

		Very little	Some	Quite a bit	Very much
1	Your experience at this institution has helped clarify your career plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	You have received supportive feedback from faculty, career advisers or other advisers about your career plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How much confidence do you have in your ability to do the following?

		Very little	Some	Quite a bit	Very much
1	Demonstrate effective work habits (punctuality, working productively with others, time and workload management, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Network with alumni or professionals to make potential career connections	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Communicate your knowledge, skills, and experiences to potential employers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Use career-specific technology (devices, programs, or tools used by those in the field)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Work effectively with people of other backgrounds (economic, racial, ethnic, political, religious, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Which of the following have you done, or do you plan to do at this institution before you graduate (whether in person or online)?

		Have not decided	Do not plan to do	Plan to do	Done or in progress
1	Take a career exploration, planning, or development course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Attend a talk, panel discussion, or workshop about careers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Interview, shadow or network with someone in a career that you are considering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Participate in a career-related co-curricular activity (student organisation, professional society, co-curricular award, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Use resources and information (database or other digital tools, videos, guides, books, etc.) from career services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Meet with career services staff to explore your interests and future plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Is there anything this institution could do better to help students develop their career plans or gain work-related skills? Please describe.</b>
---

--

## Topical Module 2: Civic Engagement (7 items)

How much does your institution emphasize the following?

		Very little	Some	Quite a bit	Very much
<input type="text" value="1"/>	Discussing important social, economic, or political issues with others	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text" value="2"/>	Being involved in an organization or group focused on important social, economic, or political issues	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text" value="3"/>	Voting in campus, local, or national elections	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text" value="4"/>	Encouraging free speech and expression	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

How much do you feel encouraged addressing important social, economic, or political issues in the following?

		Very little	Some	Quite a bit	Very much
<input type="text" value="1"/>	In course assignments	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text" value="2"/>	In course discussions	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text" value="3"/>	Outside of class	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

### Topical Module 3: Experiences with Online Learning (20 items)

During the current academic year, how comfortable have you been doing the following in your entirety or partly online courses?

		Not at all comfortable	Somewhat comfortable	Very comfortable	Not applicable
1	Participating in online discussion boards, forums, or other discussion tools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Participating in live course discussions online	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Taking proctored (invigilated/ monitored) online exams	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Interacting with other students in the course online	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Interacting with your lecturer/ teaching staff to discuss course topics, ideas, or concepts online	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Using learning support services (tutoring services, writing center, etc.) online	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Seeking feedback and guidance from your lecturer/ teaching staff online	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Turning camera on while online	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

To improve the online course-taking experience, how important is it that your institution do the following?

		Not at all important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important
1	Increase interactions between students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Increase interactions with lecturer/ teaching staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Improve responsiveness of lecturer/ teaching staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Improve online tools for student collaboration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Provide more online learning support services (tutoring services, writing center, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Increase availability of recorded lectures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Considering your experience taking partly or entirely online courses during the current academic year, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Internet service (availability, speed, reliability, etc.) where you live has been sufficient to participate in the course.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	The hardware (computer, tablet, mobile phone, printer, etc.) and software where you live have been sufficient to participate in the course.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Study spaces where you live have been sufficient for your needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Technology support has been available.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	The online course platform has been user-friendly (available when needed, easy to access and navigate, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<b>Please describe one way online learning at your institution could be improved and one thing that should <u>not</u> be changed.</b>

## Topical Module 4: Inclusiveness and Engagement with Diversity (12 items)

During the current academic year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following?

		Very little	Some	Quite a bit	Very much
1	Developing the skills necessary to work effectively with people from various backgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Recognizing your own norms and biases	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Learning about other cultures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Respecting the expression of diverse ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How much does your institution emphasize the following?

		Very little	Some	Quite a bit	Very much
1	Demonstrating a commitment to diversity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Providing students with the resources needed for success in a multicultural world	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Providing information about anti-discrimination and harassment policies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Taking allegations of discrimination or harassment seriously	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Helping students develop the skills to confront discrimination and harassment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

During the current academic year, about how often have you done the following?

		Never	Sometimes	Often	Very often
1	Attended events, activities, or presentations (including online) that reflect an appreciation for diverse groups of people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Participated in activities related to the inclusion of specific groups (racial, ethnic, LGBTQ+, religious, gender, age, socio-economic group, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Participated in a demonstration for an inclusion-related cause (rally, protest, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>