HEALTH EDUCATION SERVICES AUSTRALIA

NPEC

2024 Summary

National Placement Evaluation Centre (NPEC)

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HEALTH EDUCATION SERVICES AUSTRALIA

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Acknowledgment of Country

Health Education Services Australia honors the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia. We acknowledge the continuing connection of traditional custodians to the land, waters, and sky. We are grateful to share these lands, waters and sky today, we express our sorrow for the costs of that sharing, and our hope and belief we can move to a place of equity, justice, and partnership together.

Executive Summary

The National Placement Evaluation Centre (NPEC), owned and managed by Health Education Services Australia (HESA), continues its work monitoring and improving clinical placements for nursing and midwifery students.

In 2024, we collected feedback from over 19,400 nursing students, 894 midwifery students, and 248 supervisors. Student satisfaction scores remained strong, with small improvements across the board:

- Nursing students: Average satisfaction score of 8.32/10
- Midwifery students: Average satisfaction score of 8.19/10
- Superviswors: Average satisfaction score of 8.76/10 (first year reported)

Overall, students told us they value placements where they feel supported, receive regular feedback, and can work closely with experienced staff. However, some ongoing challenges were again highlighted, including:

- Students not always feeling valued
- Inconsistent feedback
- Staff unwillingness to work with students
- Missed opportunities to learn from the broader healthcare team

Some students said negative placement experiences made them question whether to continue their studies. Supervisors also reported frustration with staff attitudes and student preparedness.

The 2024 results build on last year's findings, showing where the sector is doing well — and where we need to do better to support students and future health professionals.

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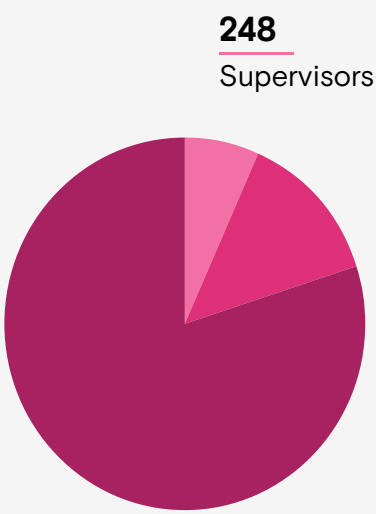
More than

20,000

evaluations received



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Introduction

Government, education and health service stakeholders continue to work to address the issues of quality in nursing and midwifery students' clinical learning (Australia, Department of Health, 2025). This follows earlier calls in a review of nursing education to implement national clinical placement monitoring programs (Schwartz, 2019). Commencing in 2022, the educational quality of Australian nursing student clinical placement learning has been monitored and reported using the validated evaluation survey PET-Nursing (Cooper et al., 2020). Midwifery students monitoring commenced in mid-2023 using the PET-Midwifery (Bogossian et al., 2025). The PET-Supervisor was initially distributed from December 2022 through health service providers. In December 2023 education providers were also asked to distribute PET-Supervisor, increasing response rates.

This report shows current performance and persistent trends, highlighting key challenges and enablers contributing to the quality of nursing and midwifery students' clinical placements. The report supports and extends the NPEC 2023 annual report, publications and national and international presentations.

As of December 2024:

37 of 38 nursing education providers are using NPEC tools.

17 of 23 midwifery education providers are participating.

460 individuals are registered to access evaluation data, including education and health service staff.

Snapshot of Results

PET-Nursing

- 37 of 38 nursing education providers registered.
- 19,404 nursing evaluations submitted (up from 17,705 in 2023).
- Students rated satisfaction with placements at 8.32/10.
- Fewer students gave low satisfaction scores (5.6% in 2024 vs. 6.0% in 2023).
- Placements in Emergency Departments (EDs) and Intensive Care Units (ICUs) continued to receive the highest ratings.
- Community and primary healthcare settings also rated highly.
- Students supervised by university educators reported lower satisfaction compared to those supervised by facility-based staff.
- Areas needing improvement included feeling valued and receiving regular, constructive feedback.

PET-Midwifery

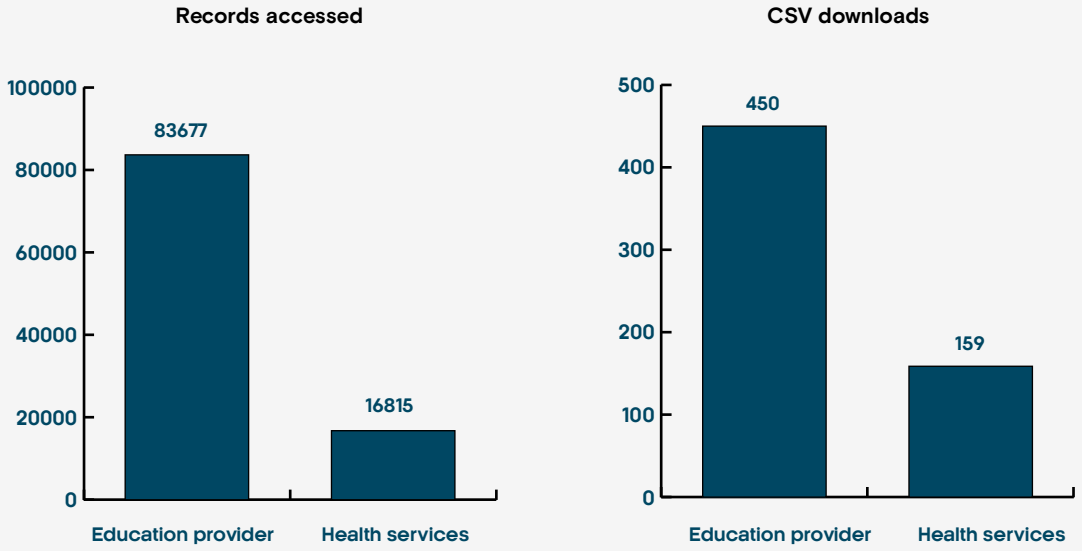
- 17 of 23 midwifery education providers registered.
- 894 midwifery evaluations submitted.
- Students rated satisfaction with placements at 8.19/10 (up from 8.10/10 in 2023).
- Dual degree students (nursing and midwifery) reported the highest satisfaction.
- International students rated placement quality higher than domestic students.
- Antenatal placements were rated highest; domiciliary placements rated lowest.
- Midwifery students identified high student-to-midwife ratios as a challenge.

PET-Supervisor

- 248 supervisor evaluations collected.
    - Supervisors rated satisfaction with clinical placements at 8.76/10.
        - Supervisors echoed student concerns: students aren't always valued, feedback can be lacking, and positive staff role models are sometimes missing.
            - Some supervisors also noted challenges with student preparedness and the assessment tools used.

2024 Outcomes

In 2024, there were 37 of the 38 education providers offering degree-level nursing programs and 17 of the 23 institutions offering midwifery programs leading to registration and actively collecting PET submissions. There were 181 education provider staff registered to download their datasets. Most institutions downloaded data between 1 and 62 times in 2024. The total number of records accessed from education providers was 83,677 from a total of 450 downloads. There are a further 279 health service providers who downloaded 17,405 records from a total of 159 downloads.



Records accessed, and data files downloaded by education provider and health service providers

On average users spent 5 minutes or more reviewing data each time they accessed the datasets. Visitors engaged with PET 28,223 times; PET-Nursing (n=26,462), PET-Midwifery (n=1,430) and PET-Supervisor (331) which includes students' completed submissions. Site visitors spend 45 seconds on PET-Supervisor, 3 minutes PET-Midwifery or 3.5 minutes PET-Nursing. Some students (18-20%) and supervisors (61%) completed more than one evaluation. Datasets were reviewed by either education provider or health service providers, a total of 2,910 times.

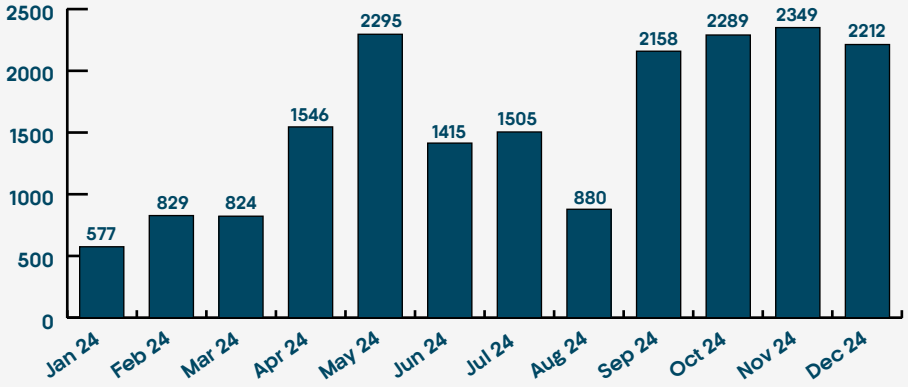
Website or Tool	Visits	Engaged Sessions	Active Users	Average Time Minute:sec
PET-Nursing	89,780	26,462	29,608	3:35
PET-Midwifery	4,388	1430	1,561	3:05
PET-Supervisor	1,715	331	1,166	0:45
Data reviews	2,910	967	389	4:47
Visits: Page has been viewed; Engaged session: interaction has occurred such as click/download or secondary page visit; Active user: Google Analytics has identified visitor as actively engaged with the website; Avg time: average engagement time on a page per active user				

Website and tool engagement

The tools continue to save time for education providers and health services, offering automated, real-time feedback to support improvements.

Nursing Students (PET-Nursing)

In 2024, 37 of the 38 education providers offering nursing courses actively engaged with the NPEC. PET-Nursing responses increased from 17,705 (2023) to 19,404 (2024). Most evaluations were received between June – December which is consistent with 2023 trends.



Monthly PET-Nursing submissions

PET-Nursing respondents

Most students who completed evaluations were female. Responses by male nurses (12.1%) and Indigenous nursing students (4%) reflect nationally reported workforce data. Respondents were predominantly aged between 20-29 years, enrolled as domestic students, and primarily spoke English at home. There were notable increases in responses from first year, second year and international students however evaluations received from Indigenous nursing students dropped slightly. Students evaluated PEP in every Australian state, mostly in New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria, in descending order. This year, submissions from Western Australia and South Australia decreased.

Indicators of PEP satisfaction and quality

Students rated their satisfaction with PEP from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 10 (extremely satisfied) with ratings grouped for reporting as; low (1-4), moderate (5-7) and high (8-10). In 2024, the mean score of all PET-Nursing evaluations shifted slightly upwards to 8.32/10. The low satisfaction group ratings (1-4) decreased from 6.0% to 5.6%.

Evaluations of acute medical, acute surgical and aged care placement sites are more common than any other site. This Figure compares total quality indicator ratings between learning environments which remain similar to 2023; aged care rated lower than emergency departments (ED) and intensive care units (ICU). Primary and community health settings also ranked highly behind ED and ICU.

There was a very slight improvement in total PET-Nursing quality ratings from 82.45 (2023) to 82.72. Looking at the two domains informing educational quality; learning environment and learning support, the indicator, 'Patient safety was fundamental to the work of the unit' remained the highest-rated in the learning environment group, while 'I felt valued during this placement' continued to receive the lowest ratings. For learning support, 'applying learning from this placement' maintained the highest score while, 'I received regular and constructive feedback' and 'learning from multi-disciplinary teams' were rated lowest.

Various student and placement characteristics were associated with quality and satisfaction ratings. Consistently, male students and those who do not speak English as their primary language at home are more satisfied and rate placement quality higher. International students also report higher ratings. Quality and satisfaction ratings appear to be higher for learning environments where students experience closer supervision from registered nurses. Regarding supervision models, ratings for educational quality were the same for facility clinical educators and facility registered nurses which was slightly higher compared to university educators. Further analysis showed that students rated lower quality and satisfaction when they were supervised by university educators, although only 20% of submissions indicated supervision by this model.

Characteristic	Quality	Satisfaction
Age	20-29 years	30-39 and over 40 years
Gender	Male or non-binary	Male
Language	English not primarily spoken at home	English not primarily spoken at home
Enrolment type	International	International
Degree type	Master of Nursing	Bachelor of Nursing
Placement settings	Emergency Department Intensive Care Unit Paediatric Primary/community healthcare	Emergency Department Intensive Care Unit Paediatric Primary/community healthcare Operating suites
Placement Duration	22-28 days	8-28 days
Supervision model	No impact	University educators strongly **negatively** impacted satisfaction

Characteristics significantly and positively associated with placement quality and satisfaction ratings
Note: No supervision model strongly positively impacted quality or satisfaction

Nursing student comments about PEP

Comments from 2,121 students who were extremely satisfied (10/10) and a further 187 who were very dissatisfied (1/10) were uploaded to the generative AI chatbot (CQU Copilot) for broad theming. Four themes provided insight into the education quality of PEP. Students appreciated inclusion and support, collaborative teams, learning opportunities and supervision. Frustration and disappointment occurred when there were too few learning opportunities, insufficient supervision and staff who openly indicated they did not wish to work with students.

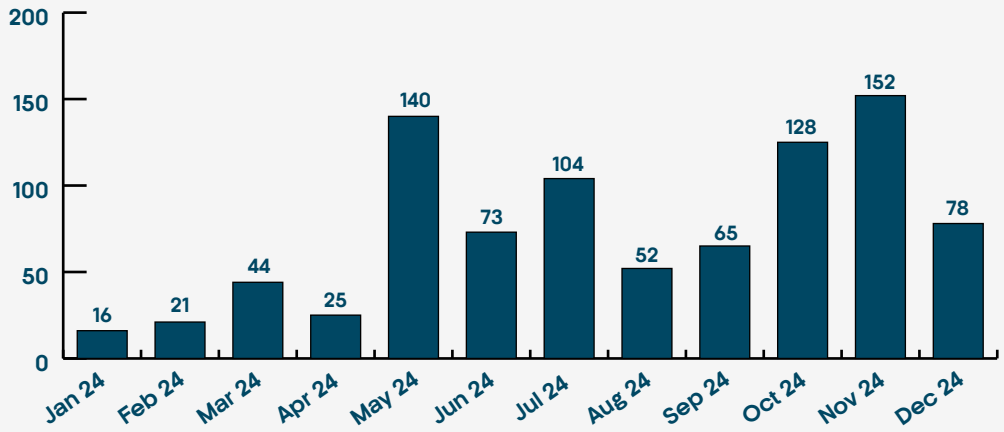
Theme	Comments
Inclusion and support	'The facilitator and nursing staffs made the environment comfortable to learn for students. They were approachable and guided us.' 'Staff treated me with respect and great tolerance. It was a very rewarding experience.'
Collaborative teams	'This experience added value to my learning both practical and technical knowledge. The staff were collaborative and approachable and gave constructive feedback that added value to the learning experience. They had good team culture.'
Learning opportunities	'I spent the majority of the each day doing obs, changing pillowcases, handing out lunch & stocking trolleys.' 'Despite my appreciation for the feedback provided, the manner in which it was delivered created a substantial emotional toll.... I felt my motivation to be at placement destroyed.'
Supervision	'We were not allocated each day with an RN and had to go around each day asking the RN's if they would be happy to have a student.' 'Facilitator wasn't present for the first 2 days, didn't even introduce herself.'

PET-Nursing low and high satisfaction group comments

Midwifery Students (PET-Midwifery)

In 2024, there were 17 of the 23 education providers offering midwifery programs registered with the NPEC. Three of these collected evaluations for the first time in 2024. Note that monitoring of midwifery student placements commenced mid 2023 with 577 evaluations submitted by December 2023. A total of 894 PET-Midwifery responses were submitted in 2024 representing all Australian states and territories.

Most evaluations were from first and second-year students. However, compared to 2023 there were significant increases in submissions this year from second and fourth-year students. First year submissions dropped compared to 2023. Most submissions were received in May (n=138) and November (n=153) with far fewer in the months January- March (n=81), indicating most midwifery students completed placements in the latter half of the year.



PET-Midwifery responses by month

PET-Midwifery respondents

Nearly all midwifery student respondents were female (98.6%) and, on average, 26 years of age. Ninety-nine percent were domestic students and 95.2% primarily spoke English at home. More than half of all respondents (53.9%) were enrolled in a Bachelor of Midwifery with a further 42% enrolled in a dual degree; Bachelor of Nursing/Bachelor of Midwifery. Of the 4.1% of students who identified as Indigenous, 2.1% identified as Aboriginal, 0.1% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and 1.9% were from 'other' Indigenous groups. No midwifery student respondents identified as Torres Strait Islanders.

Most MPE were between 1 and 21 days. Only 8% of students evaluated placements 29 days or more. Placement evaluations were mostly on antenatal, intrapartum, or postnatal units (76.8%). This year 68 (8%) of submissions evaluated a combination of antenatal, intrapartum, and postnatal units on one placement.

Most students completed a rostered unit placement model (92.2%). Two thirds of students reported supervision from facility registered midwives, nearly one third from facility clinical educators and a small minority (2%) were supervised by university educators. Some students (0.2%) were supervised by facility registered nurses.

Indicators of MPE satisfaction and quality

The PET-Midwifery survey uses a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) to assess 19 quality indicators across two areas: clinical learning environment and learning support. From 2023 to 2024, the total PET rating improved slightly (80.61 to 81.34/95). The final item in the survey asks students to rate their satisfaction from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 10 (extremely satisfied). In 2024, the total mean satisfaction of all PET-Midwifery evaluations shifted slightly upwards from 8.10 to 8.19/10. However, 4.5% of students continue to be dissatisfied with placement experiences (rating 1-4).

Regarding quality indicators the 'Women's and newborn safety were fundamental to the work of the unit(s)' remained the highest rated, followed by 'I anticipate being able to apply my learning from this placement'. There was a slight improvement in the quality indicator 'I received regular and constructive feedback' however it again returned the lowest mean rating (4.03/5.0), indicating improvements in MPE learning support are imperative. The quality indicator, 'I felt valued during this placement' rated lowest of all items in 2024 (3.98/5.0) which is similar to 2023.

There were several placement characteristics associated with quality and satisfaction ratings. Students who were 19 years or younger; students enrolled in a dual degree (Bachelor of Midwifery and Bachelor of Nursing), completing placement in an antenatal setting and being on placement for 1-7 days were most likely to return higher quality ratings in 2024. Enrolment in dual degree and placement lasting 1-7 days were associated with satisfaction while age and placement setting were not.

Characteristic	Quality	Satisfaction
Age	19 or younger	No impact on satisfaction
Degree type	Dual degree, Bachelor of Midwifery and Bachelor of Nuring	Dual degree, Bachelor of Midwifery and Bachelor of Nursing
Placement settings	Antenatal	No impact on satisfaction
Placement duration	1-7 days	1-7 days

Characteristics significantly and positively associated with placement quality and satisfaction ratings.

Midwifery student comments about MPE

There were 322 comments provided by midwifery students. Twenty-eight were from students who reported low satisfaction with MPE (1-4) with most (n=241) from students who reported high satisfaction (7-10). Of these 69 reported being extremely satisfied (10/10). All comments were read to understand students' experiences. Three key themes were revealed: 1) supervision and support, 2) opportunity to learn and 3) integration with the team.

Theme	Comments
Supervision and support	'No clinical educator support, staff were unsure how to support me. No awareness of objectives and often lacked an interest.' 'The midwives were very supportive in teaching me and letting me run the appointments by myself under their supervision and encouraging me to do education.'
Opportunity to learn	'I had many learning opportunities taken away from me due to prioritising post graduate students who weren't even working on the birth suite at times.' 'There are far too many students. Every time I arrived on the ward the team leader would always say "I have more students than midwives."' 'Constructive feedback encourages me to practice my skills. I am grateful for all those kind midwives who knew how to provide constructive feedback to students in a nice and friendly manner and hope for those who didn't to get some very much needed training in this regard!'
Integration with the team	"Felt extra welcome when the staff had announced who we were working with at the handover each morning." "The midwives were often rude and did not respect students. By not using our names or remembering who we were - referring to us as the student."

PET-Midwifery low and high satisfaction group comments

Supervisors (PET-Supervisor)

This is the first report on the national data set of PET-Supervisor responses. PET-Supervisor surveys collected from December 2022 to December 2024 total 248. Supervisor evaluations were collected from 23 of the registered 37 education providers and together evaluated more than 100 different health service provider facilities in six Australian states and the Australian Capital Territory were evaluated. There were no PET-Supervisor reports on Northern Territory placement sites. Most evaluations were submitted by NSW supervisors.

PET-Supervisor respondents

Supervisors identified as university educators (112), facility clinical educators (80) or facility registered nurses/midwives (56). This is interesting because most nursing and midwifery students reported supervision models as facility clinical educator and facility registered nurse/midwife. More evaluations from facility registered nurses/midwives and facility clinical educators are needed. The responses evaluated seventeen (17) different PEP and MPE settings that are listed here ranging from most evaluated to least evaluated; aged care, acute medical and surgical, community health and primary healthcare, mental health a variety of specialty/high acuity settings, rehabilitation units, neonatal, intrapartum, domiciliary, postnatal and antenatal. In 2024, the PET-Supervisor mean satisfaction score was 8.76/10.

Indicators of satisfaction and quality

The PET-Supervisor is the same tool as the PET-Nursing and PET-Midwifery, using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) to assess 19 quality indicators across two areas: clinical learning environment and learning support. Supervisors rated the total educational quality mean at 84.45.

Supervisors rated the clinical environment indicator ‘Patient safety was fundamental to the work of the unit’ highest. Supervisors also rated “I anticipate students will be able to apply their learning from this placement’ and gave high ratings for ‘students were supported to work within their scope of practice’. Of note, supervisors rated the indicator ‘students were valued during this placement’ low, echoing the results for both PET-Nursing and PET-Midwifery. Staff willingness to work with students and acting as positive role models were the two lowest rated items across the tool.

Supervisor comments about PEP/MPE

Of the 248 submissions, 132 supervisors provided additional commentary. Because we anticipate an increase in evaluations for future reports, no analysis was performed. Each contribution was read and a sample of comments tabulated below.

PEP clinical supervisors
The team introduce themselves and refer to students by name. Students will consistently say that this is the best placement they have ever had.
The staff loved having students. The students were support [ed in] their learning and with the total support and respect of all staff. I have never seen students so happy and nurtured on placement.
Staff were willing to provide feedback both positive and constructive in a professional manner.
Students needed to be better prepared for placement as some had not even read their workbooks, prepared SMART goals, had no idea on learning objectives
I felt very unwelcome and not able to be at the bedside working with the students.
Most of my time at the facility was mitigation and resolution of issues.
I felt that some students had unrealistic expectations of what they would be permitted to do within the limits of their scope and the available preceptors
MPE clinical supervisors
The clinical feedback forms were not conducive to setting goals and objectives that reflect the Australian Midwifery Standards. Supervising midwives had difficulty providing targeted feedback.
Staff very supportive, kind and facilitated learning in so many ways. Excellent ward standards of practice outstanding ensuring only the best care is provided for these women.
Midwifery staff are very informative and approachable. Students feel welcomed and valued.

PET-Supervisor comments on PEP and MPE

Plaudits and Publications

In 2025, the NPEC began a third full year of operation.

Feedback from users showed the tools are saving significant time for education providers and health services by:

- Streamlining data collection,
- Supporting evidence for program accreditation,
- Making student feedback visible in real-time, helping providers respond quickly.

Most users reported that the automated reporting and alerts were very helpful. Some suggested the website and data reporting could still be made even easier to use — which NPEC will work on improving in 2025.

Seven publications based on the 2023 data are now available on the NPEC website. Additional research based on cumulative data will be published in:

- Higher degree studies,
- Research projects,
- And a post-doctoral study.

Key Messages

- The NPEC continues to play a key role in monitoring and improving nursing and midwifery clinical placements across Australia.
- Student satisfaction ratings in both nursing and midwifery increased slightly compared to 2023.
- However, challenges remain - students not feeling valued, inconsistent feedback, and missing role models are ongoing issues.
- Around 5.6% of nursing students and 4.5% of midwifery students reported being dissatisfied with their placements.
- Supervisor feedback largely matched student concerns.
- Indigenous nursing students continued to report lower satisfaction compared to non-Indigenous students, while Indigenous midwifery students rated experiences more highly than in 2023.
- Placements in emergency departments, ICUs, and community health settings continue to be rated very positively.
- Supervision models need further exploration — particularly lower ratings when supervised by university educators.
- NPEC will focus on boosting student and supervisor engagement with the tools and making the system even more user-friendly in 2025.
- We strongly encourage readers to also review the 2023 NPEC Annual Report and related publications to see the bigger picture.

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