

FACULTY OF SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND COMPUTING

Kingston University

Understanding the impact of prior learning experiences on new postgraduate taught (PGT) science, engineering and computing students' expectations and attitudes towards PGT level study at Kingston University (KU)

Social Mobility Findings Interim Report - By Michelle Morgan

Introduction

There has been a dramatic expansion in the postgraduate taught (PGT) student body in the UK in the past 10 years. Extensive research has been undertaken in the field of the student experience and learning and teaching at UG level but there is limited research in the area of PGT study (Wakeling, 2005¹; Stuart et.al, 2008²). The Higher Education Academy (HEA) is at the forefront in investigating the PG student experience. Although there is an increasing body of literature looking at the postgraduate student experience, there is a lack of research and knowledge in understanding the impact of PGT students' prior learning, teaching, assessment and feedback experiences on their postgraduate study, and, their expectations of studying at PGT level.

Aims of the research

Research undertaken in the Faculty of Engineering in 2010/11 then in the newly created Faculty of Science, Engineering and Computing in 2011/12 partially explored the previous learning, teaching, assessment and feedback experiences of new PGT students as well as investigating the expectations of new PGT students of studying at postgraduate level in the Faculty at Kingston University (KU). The findings in this report are part of a larger research project being undertaken in 2012/13 that builds on the previous research. The project is being part funded by an Individual Teaching and Development grant from the Higher Education Academy.

The objectives of the current research are to record new PGT students previous learning, teaching, assessment and feedback experiences in more detail; to determine to what extent these previous experiences shape a new postgraduate student's approach, attitude, interaction and engagement in their upcoming study; to identify any particular issues that impact on successful engagement; and to determine what interventions or activities that can

¹ Wakeling, P., (2005) La noblesse d'etat anglaise? Social class and progression to postgraduate study. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*. 26 (4), 505-22.

² Stuart, M., Lido, C., Morgan, M., Solomon, L. and Akroyd, K. (2008) *Widening participation to postgraduate study: decisions, deterrents and creating success* York: HEA

be put in place to manage student expectations and improve the postgraduate taught student experience. The questions being posed in this research are important contributions to the current PGT debate looking at developing and expanding PGT provision and ensuring its sustainability. The project is both quantitative and qualitative and is being undertaken in three phases. Phase one is the survey completion stage, phase 2 comprises of the focus groups and phase three is the dialogical conference that is being held in May 2013.

The findings in this interim report focus on reporting social mobility related issues only. These findings along with discussion around implications will be included in the final report due in June, 2013.

Data collection

The questionnaire was distributed and completed during the orientation period in September 2012. Students were informed about the purpose of the survey in the general welcome session and were given the opportunity to complete it during their school specific sessions.

The questionnaire was voluntary and it was explained to all respondents that the survey had two aims. Firstly, it had been designed to provide the Faculty with data to contribute to understanding and improving the postgraduate experience. Secondly, it would act as a personal development activity for them as they would be asked to reflect on how they had previously learnt and how they wanted to, or, expected to learn at postgraduate level at Kingston University. The questionnaire was anonymous but students could complete a separate form that entered them into a prize draw for Amazon vouchers. There were 50 book vouchers of £20 allocated across the 8 schools in the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Computing.

Data was only collected from respondents studying at PGT level at KU and not partner institutions. The questionnaire included open-ended and closed questions (e.g. those using a five-point Likert-type scale). Questions were developed following an analysis of the literature and the findings from the previous two year pilot project. The questionnaire was distributed as a hard copy survey to maximise completion rates within specific timescales.

Methods

The research utilised a quantitative questionnaire that collected demographic variables and key factors of interest. Across the eight schools, 233 questionnaires were completed. This accounted for approximately 77 per cent of those who attended the main Welcome and Orientation programme in September 2012 across the eight schools. The responses collected

were entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and a range of tests were run on the data. The statistics reported are the valid percentages.

Variables compared

In this interim report generational, gender, domiciled status and age are examined. Generational status refers to whether a respondent is the first in their family to go to university (first generation) or whether their parent/s has attended university prior to them (second generation). Data on whether siblings have attended university was not collected.

Headline results

Entry route in to PGT study

Of all first generation respondents, 43.5% (47) have enter PGT level study straight from work which represents the largest percentage. For second generation respondents, the largest percentage is direct from University with 41.7% (50).

Reasons for undertaking a PGT qualification

Improving knowledge of the subject (68.7%) is the most cited reason for undertaking PGT level study followed by provide more career options (55.%).

Reason for choosing a university at which to study a PGT qualification

Course content followed by cost of fees then teaching reputation are the three main reasons provided by the respondents as important when choosing a university at which to undertake PGT level study.

Fee levels

The fee levels are slightly more important for first than second generation respondents in this study. Fee levels not being important or important at all is higher amongst second generation respondents.

Funding

Of all respondents, the primary method of paying their study fees for 41.2% (96) is parental assistance. Of these 53.7% (51) are coming straight from university and 25.3% (24) from work. Respondents from all age groups are receiving parental assistance. Second generation students significantly receive more assistance than first generation respondents.

Quality of study

A significant number of respondents expect a high level of service, value for money and an individualised PGT level study experience. UK domiciled students are more likely to understand what to expect at PGT level compared to EU and Non UK/EU respondents. Approximately one fifth of all respondents do not know what to expect.

Feedback

Respondents understand what is meant by the term 'feedback'. Approximately one quarter of all respondents did not approach a tutor in their previous studies regarding feedback. Women are slightly more likely to approach a tutor for feedback. Embarrassment and not think about asking for feedback are reasons cited for not approaching a tutor. First generation respondents state they are less likely to approach a tutor compared to second generation ones. Feedback preference for respondents at PGT level are 'face to face' followed by 'paper' then 'email'

Anxiety levels

Of the sample 70.2% (163) are anxious or very anxious about their PGT studies. Anxiety levels are highest amongst those coming straight from work and in females. Coping with the standard of work is the primary anxiety for respondents followed by managing money and the demands of travelling to university. Anxiety levels for EU and Non EU/UK in non academic areas are significantly higher than for UK respondents.

Strengths

The majority of respondents state that their academic skills are 'strong' rather than 'very strong'. Women are significantly less likely to state that their skills are 'very strong'.

Value of a PGT qualification

Of all the respondents, 85.0% state that they believe employers do value a PGT level qualification more than an undergraduate one, and 93.0% believe it will enhance and develop their key skills valued by employers.

English as a first language

Of the sample, 42.9% state that English is their first language. Of all UK domiciled respondents 40.8% state that English is not their first language. Of the EU and Non EU/UK respondents, 10.8% and 37.7% state that it is their first language.

Findings

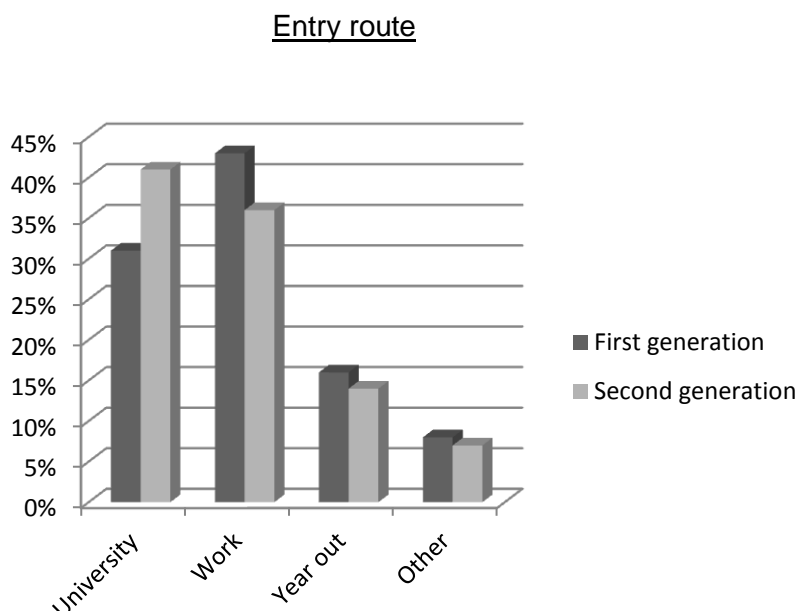
Starting university

1. Entry route into PGT study

Of the sample, 39.5% (92) of the respondents are coming from work into study, 36.5% (85) straight from university and 16.35 % (38) from having taken a year out. The number of respondents who classified themselves as 'other' was and 7.7% (18).

First generation respondents account for 46.7% (108) of the sample and second generation for 53.3% (123). There is little generational difference of those entering PGT study from the 'year out' and 'other' categories. However, amongst the first generation respondents, those coming from 'work' account for the largest entry route with 43.5% (47) whereas for second generation respondents it is from 'university' with 41.7% (50).

Figure 1

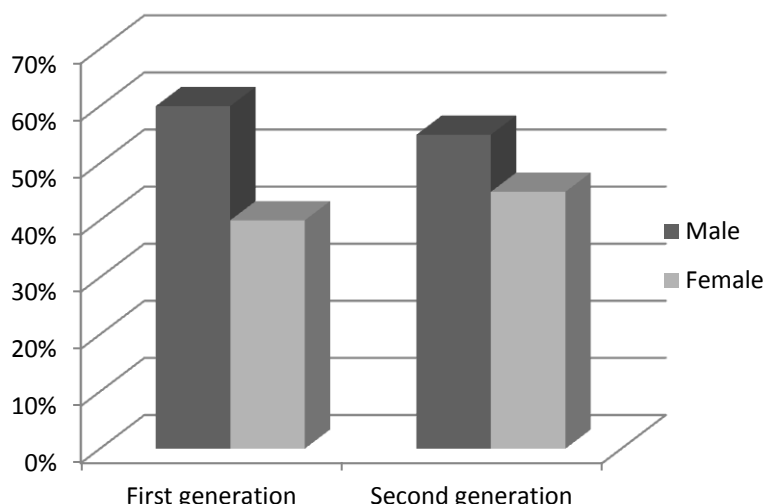


Of the sample who provided their gender status, 42.7% (99) are female and 57.3% (133) male.

When gender is analysed with generational status, first generation female participation is 39.8% (43) compared to 44.7% (55) for females in the second generation sample.

Figure 2

Generational and Gender variables



2. What are your reasons for undertaking a Postgraduate qualification?

Of the sample, the primary reason cited for undertaking a postgraduate qualification is to *'improve their knowledge of their subject'* with 68.7% (160). The second reason cited with 55.2% (111) is to provide *'more career options'* and the third is to *'improve their chances of getting a graduate job'* with 26.5% (43).

There are no significant generational differences when looking at the reasons for undertaking PGT study and they reflect the sample findings. *'Improving their knowledge of their subject'* is the primary reason cited by both generational groups (see table 1). Reason 2 for undertaking PGT study cited by first generation respondents is to *'provide more career options'* and to *'improve chances of getting a job'* is the third reason. For second generation respondents, the second reason provided is to *'improve the chances of getting a graduate job'* and reason 3 is that it is *'required for their chosen career'*.

Table 1

Reasons for undertaking PGT level study

Primary reason	First Generation	Second Generation	Sample responses
Improve knowledge of subject	68.5% (74)	67.5% (81)	68.7% (160)
Provides more career options	21.3% (23)	22.5% (27)	21.5% (50)
Improve chances of getting a graduate job	2.8% (3)	4.2% (5)	3.4% (8)
Delay going into the job market	3.7% (4)	-	1.7% (4)
Desire to remain in HE	0.9% (1)	0.8% (1)	0.9% (2)
Required for career	1.8% (2)	3.3% (4)	2.6% (6)
Encouraged by university staff	0.9% (1)	-	0.4% (1)
Family expectation	-	1.7% (2)	0.9% (2)

3. What was important to you when choosing a University for your postgraduate study?

For both first and second generation respondents, '*course content*' is the primary reason for choosing a university at which to study at PGT level (see table 2). The '*cost of fees*' is cited as the second reason by both but it is slightly more important for first generation respondents (see table 3). Reason 3 is the '*university's teaching reputation*'. The '*university's research reputation*' is not deemed a significant factor for the PGT sample even when examined on a subject basis.

Table 2 Reason one for choosing a University

Reason 1	First Generation	Second Generation	Sample responses
Course content	72.2% (78)	68.6% (83)	70.1% (64)
University research reputation	3.7% (4)	6.6% (6)	5.1% (12)
Cost of fees	7.4% (8)	7.4% (9)	7.7% (18)
University teaching reputation	5.6% (6)	4.1% (5)	4.7% (11)
Campus facilities	0.9% (1)	2.5% (3)	1.7% (4)
Where I studied as an UG	2.8% (3)	0.8% (1)	2.1% (5)
My home town university	5.6% (6)	4.1% (5)	4.7% (11)
Reputation for social life	-	1.7% (2)	0.9% (2)
Student grant/scholarship available	0.9% (1)	-	0.4% (1)
Other	0.9% (1)	4.1% (5)	2.6% (6)

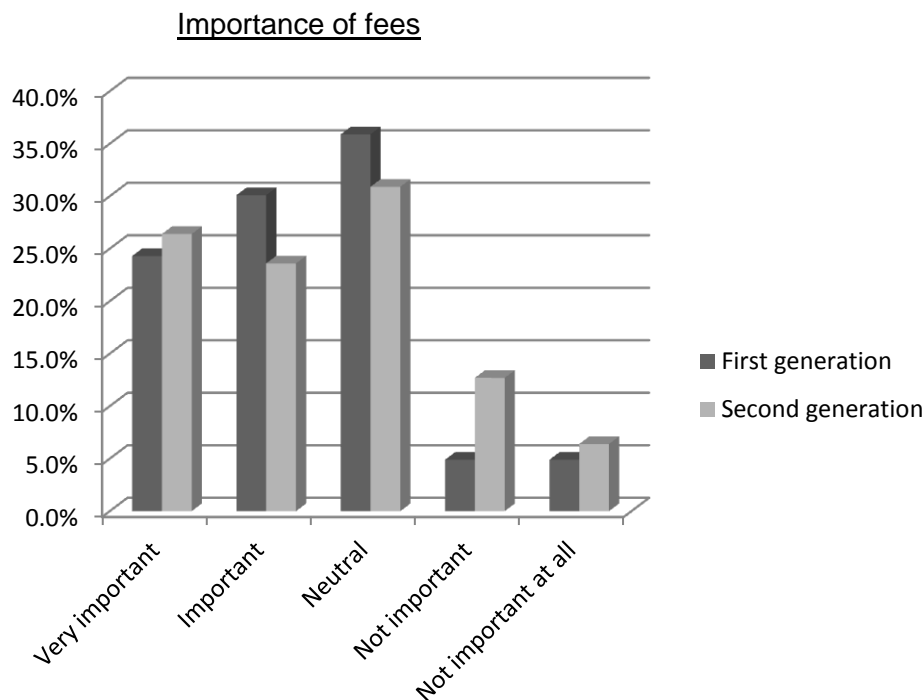
Table 3 Reason two for choosing a University

Reason 2	First Generation	Second Generation	Sample responses
Course content	10.9% (11)	10.6% (12)	11.0% (24)
University research reputation	15.8% (16)	15% (17)	15.6% (34)
Cost of fees	37.6% (38)	31.0% (35)	33.5% (73)
University teaching reputation	23.8% (24)	22.1% (25)	22.9% (50)
Campus facilities	3.0% (3)	5.3% (6)	4.1% (9)
Where I studied as an UG	3.0% (3)	3.5% (4)	3.7% (8)
My home town university	-	8.8% (10)	4.6% (10)
Reputation for social life	1.0% (1)	0.9% (1)	0.9% (2)
Student grant/scholarship available	2.0% (2)	0.9% (1)	1.4% (3)
Other	3.0% (3)	1.8% (2)	2.3% (5)

4. How important were the fee levels in making your postgraduate course choice?

The issue of fee levels are important to the respondents. Of the sample, 52.3% (114) state that the fee levels are '*very important*' or '*important*' in the decision making process with 33.5% (73) unsure. There is little significant difference between the two generational groups but fee levels '*not being important or important at all*' is more prevalent amongst the second generation respondents.

Figure 3



5. How are you funding your postgraduate studies?

A large percentage of the sample cites parental assistance as the primary method of funding their PGT study. Of the respondents, 41.2% (96) state that their parents are helping them fund their studies. The second most cited method is savings with 31.7% (38) and the third is a salary with 23.4% (18)

It is logical to conclude that those coming straight from 'university' are the ones receiving assistance from parents. This assumption is reflected in the sample findings. Of the respondents who state that their parents are helping them fund their studies, 53.7% (51) are coming straight from 'University'. However, 25.3% (24) who are coming straight from 'work' and 13.7% (13) who are coming from a 'year out' also state that they are receiving parental support for the cost of their PGT study.

When the age of the respondent and how they are funding their PGT study is examined, a significant pattern emerges. The younger the student, the more likely they are to receive parental help. However, findings demonstrate that the assistance continues through the different age groups although it does decrease in percentage. It is significant factor that a quarter of all 30-35 year olds, who could be expected to have accrued savings, have access to loans or have an established career and would pay their own fees, are relying on parental support to fund PGT study.

Respondents from the age groups 18-25 and 26-30 years of age may not have been working long enough to accrue savings or qualify for a loan of any kind to help fund their PGT study.

Percentage in each age group whose primary source of funding is by parents

18-24 year olds = 60.5% (52)

25-29 year olds = 44.6% (33)

30-35 year olds = 22.9% (8)

36-45 year olds =4.8% (1)

46+ year olds =12.5% (1)

When the relationship between generational status and the funding of fees is examined, another interesting finding appears. A significantly higher percentage of the second generation respondents are receiving support from parents.

Table 4 Primary method of funding fees

Primary method	First Generation	Second Generation
Overdraft	4.6% (5)	1.7% (2)
Loan	12.0% (13)	15.0% (18)
Parents/guardians	35.2% (38)	47.5% (57)
Salary	13.0% (14)	11.7% (14)
Spouse/partner	10.2% (11)	4.2% (5)
Savings	16.7% (18)	13.3% (16)
University scholarship	0.9% (1)	1.7% (2)
Employer	-	1.7% (2)
Sponsorship	4.6% (5)	1.7% (2)
Other	2.8% (3)	0.8% (1)

When gender, generational status and funding is examined, the picture is further complicated.

Within the first generation group, of the first generation female sample, 41.9% (18) state that they are getting help with their fees from parents compared to 30.8% (20) of first generation males.

Of the second generation female sample, a similar percentage to first generation females is found with 40.7% (22). However, parental contribution for second generation males is substantially higher than first generation males with 53.0% (35).

Parental funding for females regardless of generation status appears to be similar but for males, a second generation student is more likely to receive parental funding than their first generation counterparts.

In terms of domiciled status, respondents who declared themselves as EU or Non-EU/UK domiciled were noticeably more likely to receive parental assistance with PGT level funding than those who were UK domiciled. For UK domiciled respondents it is 33.6% (36), for EU domiciled 55.3% (21) and for Non EU/UK it is 48.1% (37).

6. Do you intend undertaking paid work during your postgraduate studies and what will the mode be?

There is no significant generational or gender difference when examining the respondents' intention to work during their studies (see table 5). Of the sample, 55.2% (128) intend working throughout the year with 82.1% (138) stating it will be on a part-time basis. Of the sample, 17.9% (30) intend working fulltime but most of these respondents are studying part-time and working full-time.

Table 5 Mode of work

Work mode	Responses
Not at all	29.3% (68)
Only during term time	7.3% (17)
Only during vacations	8.2% (19)
Throughout the year	55.2% (128)

Postgraduate Study Expectations

7. Quality of study

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each of the following statements (see figure 4). In figure 4, the ‘*strongly agreed*’ and ‘*agreed*’ responses are combined. First generation respondents have higher expectations in terms of the quality of learning and teaching they expect, how they feel they should be treated and in receiving value for money at PGT level in comparison to the second generation respondents.

Figure 4

Quality of Study statements

	Strongly agree/agree		
	First generation	Second generation	Sample responses
<i>My expectations in terms of the quality of delivery and service at postgraduate level will be higher than at undergraduate level</i>	94.5% (102)	85.7% (102)	90.1% (209)
<i>Should be treated in a manner that Reflects my academic achievement</i>	71.1% (76)	59.3% (70)	64.4% (148)
I expect to learn in a more independent manner	77.6% (83)	77.3% (92)	76.2% (94)
I will be less tolerant of poor quality learning and teaching at postgraduate level than at undergraduate level	65.7% (69)	64.4% (76)	64.5% (147)
<i>I expect more value for money at postgraduate level than at undergraduate level</i>	74.1% (80)	68.9% (82)	70.7% (164)
I expect a more individualised study experience at postgraduate level	86.0% (92)	79.8% (95)	83.1% (192)
I do not know what to expect when studying at postgraduate level	21.3% (23)	21.2% (25)	21.6% (50)

When gender and statement responses are analysed, there are only two statements where there are noticeable differences. Of all the males respondents, 75.9% (114) ‘*strongly agreed/agreed*’ with the statement that they ‘*expected higher service delivery*’ compared to 93.8% of all women (91). In the female sample, 58.1% (54) ‘*strongly agreed/agreed*’ that

they would be *'less tolerant of poor quality L&T at PGT level'* compared to 69.4% (91) of men.

When the statements are examined by domiciled status, other interesting findings arise. Of all UK domiciled respondents, 86.7% (91) *'strongly agree/agree'* that they *'expect to learn in a more independent way'* compared to 65.8% (25) of all of EU domiciled and 68.9% (53) of Non UK-EU domiciled respondents.

Of all UK domiciled respondents, 74.0% *'strongly agreed/agreed'* that they would *'not tolerate poor quality L&T compared'* to 54.9% (22) of EU domiciled and 57.4% (46) of Non UK-EU domiciled respondents.

It appears that UK domiciled respondents are more likely to *'know what to expect at PGT level'* with only 15.1% (16) *'strongly agreeing/agreeing'* with the statement that they *'do not know what to expect'* compared to 29.0% (11) for EU domiciled and 27.6% of Non UK-EU domiciled respondents.

When the data is examined within each age group, statement responses appear to increase with age. This is noticeable in statements relating to *'service delivery'* and *'value for money'* (see table 6).

Table 6 Age and quality of statements

	18-24	25-29	30-35	36-45	46+
Expectations of service delivery will be higher at PG level than UG level	87.1% (75)	89.2% (66)	94.3% (33)	95.0% (19)	87.5% (7)
I expect more value for money at PG level than UG	70.9% (61)	68.9% (51)	71.5% (25)	80.0% (16)	87.5% (7)

Regardless of age, domiciled status and gender, a substantial number of respondents do not appear to fully understand what to expect at PGT level.

Your previous learning experiences

8. Briefly state what you understand by the term feedback.

Respondents were asked what they understood by the term feedback. Generally, most of the respondents regardless of domiciled status understood what the term feedback meant. Only a small handful provided confusing answers and of these, there was no correlation between the responses given and domiciled status (i.e. not understanding the question).

9. In your previous studies, how did you receive your feedback for any of the work you submitted and which did you prefer?

'Paper feedback' is cited as the most common method of providing feedback in the respondents' previous studies with 77.1% (182). This is followed closely by 71.3% (77) citing *'face to face feedback'* and 28.4% (67) citing *'email'* as a method utilised. Interestingly, second generation students report a higher level of receiving feedback via *'email'* and the *'intranet'*.

There are no generational differences in terms of previous feedback preference. The method preferred by the majority of the sample is *'face to face'* feedback followed by *'paper'*. The only gender difference in terms of feedback preference is 22.1% (25) of all males cite *'intranet feedback'* as their preferred method compared to 16.1% (14) of females.

10. In your previous institution of study, did you ever approach a tutor to discuss the feedback given to you about your work?

There are no significant generational, domiciled status or gender differences when examining which respondents approached a tutor to discuss feedback in their previous institution of study. The responses indicate that women are slightly more likely to approach a tutor to discuss feedback than males (see table 7).

Table 7

Approaching a tutor to discuss feedback

	Male		Female		Sample responses	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
First generation	70.8% (46)	29.2% (19)	76.7% (33)	23.3% (10)	80.0% (68)	20.0% (17)
Second generation	71.6% (48)	28.4% (19)	75.9% (41)	24.1% (13)		

It is interesting that just over one quarter of the full sample chose not to approach a lecturer regarding feedback, and that the level is higher amongst males than females (see table 7).

11. If yes, under what circumstances did you approach your lecturer to discuss feedback?

Respondents were asked to state under what circumstances they had approached their lecturer to discuss feedback in their previous studies. Where there are generational or gender differences, these are highlighted below but there are no domiciled differences. The findings below highlight that in the respondents' previous studies, a high proportion of them did not seek assistance when they received feedback even when they failed.

I passed but wished to improve my grade

Of the sample, 72.5% (111) '*strongly agreed/agreed*' that they did approach their tutor even though they had passed. For first generation respondents, this figure is 75.7% (53) compared to 70.1% (56) of second generation respondents.

I failed and did not understand the content of the feedback

Of the sample, 26.5% (39) '*strongly agreed/agreed*' that they did approach their tutor if they had failed and did not understand the feedback. For first generation respondents, this figure is 21.0% (13) compared to 30.6% (22) for second generation respondents.

I failed and did not understand why

Of the sample, 27.7% (39) '*strongly agreed/agreed*' that if they had failed and did not understand why, that had approached a tutor to discuss the feedback. For first generation respondents this figure is 21.9% (14) and for second, 31.1% (23).

Only one significant gender difference is highlighted by the respondents and this relates to wanting clarification on their feedback. Of all male respondents, 57.5% (50) state that they

did seek feedback 'if they passed but wanted clarification' compared to 71.2% (47) of all females.

12. If no, why did you decide not to approach your tutor?

The reasons cited by the respondents for not approaching their tutor include embarrassment; they got the grade they expected and they did not think about asking for feedback. Only 5.2% (3) of the sample stated that they did not approach their tutor because they did not agree with the feedback.

Of the first generation respondents, 29.6% (8) state that they did not approach their tutor because they were 'too embarrassed' to ask. This figure is 25.9% (8) for second generation respondents.

There is a noticeable generational difference in asking for feedback if the respondent 'received the grade they expected'. Of all first generation students, 85.2% (23) state that they did not approach their tutor if they got the grade they expected compared to only 53.1% (17) of second generation respondents.

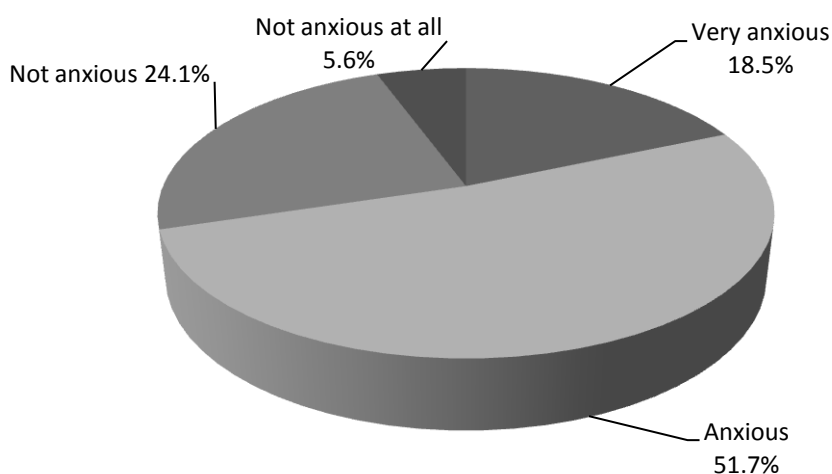
Of the first generation respondents who answered this question, 25.9% (7) state that they did not approach their tutor as they 'did not think of asking for feedback on the feedback'. Surprisingly, the figure for second generation respondents was higher with 45.2% (14).

13. How anxious overall are you entering University as a postgraduate student?

Respondents were asked to rate their overall anxiety level in starting PGT study.

The anxiety level for the sample is quite high with 70.2% (163) respondents stating that they are 'anxious or very anxious' (see figure 5).

Figure 5 Level of Anxiety entering PGT level study



There are no generational differences in terms of anxiety levels but there are gender and entry route differences. Of all female respondents, 78.6% (77) state they are ‘*very anxious/anxious*’ compared to 63.0% of males (82).

Anxiety levels are lowest amongst respondents coming from ‘*university*’ into PGT study with 64.2% (54) stating they are ‘*very anxious/anxious*’. It is highest in those who had classified themselves in the ‘*other*’ category with 82.4% (14). Of those coming from ‘*work*’, 72.9% (67) state that they are ‘*very anxious/anxious*’ and for those who have taken a ‘*year out*’, it is 71.1% (27)

14. How do you feel about coping with different aspects of PGT level study?

Respondents were asked to rate how they felt about the following aspects of starting university at PGT level study. In this question, the ‘*not anxious*’ option was removed and replaced with ‘*slightly anxious*’ in order to ascertain more accurately their level of anxiety.

The ‘*anxious and very anxious*’ responses are the most critical responses. When these are combined, coping with the ‘*standard of work*’ is the primary concern of the respondents. However, 28.5% (61) of all respondents are concerned about ‘*coping with the travelling to university*’ and 39.7% (85) ‘*managing their money*’. These two aspects are known reasons for student withdrawal at undergraduate level.

Table 8 Level of anxiety for aspects of PGT level study

	Not anxious at all	Slightly anxious	Anxious	Very Anxious
Coping with the standard of work	9.3% (20)	37.0% (80)	39.8% (86)	13.9% (30)
Getting involved in Uni life	53.1% (45)	22.1% (47)	21.1% (45)	3.8% (8)
Making friends	54.2% (115)	19.3% (41)	20.8% (44)	5.7% (12)
Managing my money	33.6% (72)	26.6% (57)	25.2% (54)	14.5% (31)
Finding accommodation	75.2% (158)	3.8% (8)	12.9% (27)	8.1% (17)
Looking after myself	70.8% (150)	12.7% (27)	13.7% (29)	2.8% (6)
Coping with the travelling to university	54.7% (117)	16.8% (36)	21.5% (46)	7.0% (15)

There are no generational differences when combining the *'anxious and very anxious'* responses listed in Table 8 but there are gender differences. These are highlighted in Table 9 below.

Female responses suggest that they are more concerned about *'coping with the standard of work'*, *'getting involved in university life'* and *'managing money'* than males. Males are more concerned about *'looking after themselves'* than females.

Table 9 Anxious and very anxious gender responses

	Male	Female
Coping with the standard of work	41.8% (51)	62.2% (56)
Getting involved in Uni life	21.6% (26)	32.6% (29)
Managing my money	39.4% (48)	43.1% (38)
Managing my money	39.4% (48)	43.1% (38)
Looking after myself	17.3% (21)	12.6% (11)

The domiciled status differences are highlighted in Table 10. Interestingly, EU and Non EU domiciled respondents did not report any higher levels of anxiety regarding *'coping with the standard of work'* or *'travelling to University'* than UK domiciled respondents. However, anxiety levels relating to non-academic issues for EU and Non EU respondents are noticeably higher than for UK domiciled respondents.

Table 10 Anxious and very anxious domiciled responses

	UK domiciled	EU domiciled	Non UK/EU domiciled
Getting involved in Uni life	16.1% (16)	34.3% (12)	38.3% (28)
Making friends	19.2% (19)	29.4% (10)	35.3% (24)
Managing my money	32.3% (32)	51.5% (18)	46.3% (40)
Finding accommodation	3.1%	21.1% (7)	20.6% (14)
Looking after myself	11.2% (11)	25.8% (9)	17.3% (12)

15. What specific help or information would help you in your studies?

All respondents were asked to suggest specific help or information that would help reduce the anxieties in their studies.

The respondents' suggestions fell into four broad themes: learning and teaching, communication, information and support with learning and teaching being the most populated theme.

Learning and teaching

Good lecturers

Access to all lecture notes and slides

Access to published journals

Copies of lecture notes

Availability to lecturers

Face to face time with lecturers

Face to face feedback

Full reading list

Module information before the course starts

Good supervisor for the project

Completion of coursework feedback in a timely manner

Hard copy lecture notes

Get study information well in advance of starting

Short tests to show development and progress

Study skill advice and support

Communication

Clear communication from all staff

Friendly atmosphere

Being informed about expectations

Assignment requirements

Information

- Direction on where to find any information
- Information earlier on all aspects of study
- Information on how the academic year works

Support

- Advice on what support is available
- Good one to one support
- Support on how to study in a different language
- Assistance in finding work during studies and after
- Help with language support

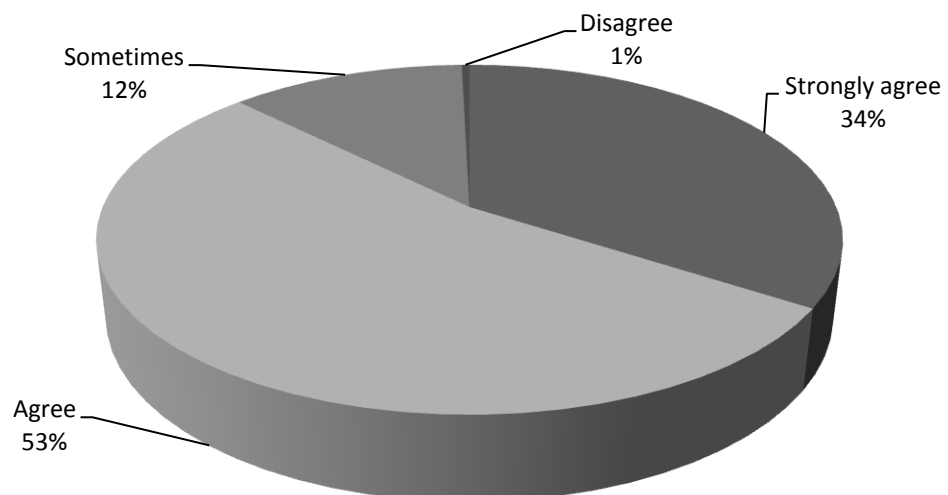
Your current learning expectations

16. Awareness of when feedback is being given

Of the sample, 87.4% (198) state that they *'are aware'* when Feedback is being provided with less than 4% (5) stating that they *'do not feel the need'* to read feedback. Of the respondents, 96% state that they will use to the feedback to help them in other assignments.

Figure 6

Awareness of when feedback is being given



17. As a Postgraduate student, how would you like to receive your feedback?

For each feedback method, respondents were asked to rate their preference by selecting either '*most preferred method*', '*an acceptable method*' or '*least preferred method*'. The findings in Table 11 cite the '*most acceptable method*' provided by the respondents.

For the sample, '*face to face*' is the most popular method followed by '*paper*' then '*email*'. '*Audio*' was the least most preferred method.

Table 11 Feedback preference at PGT level study

Method	Most preferred method
Paper	45.9% (100)
Email	42.4% (92)
Intranet	19.4% (39)
Audio	3.4% (7)
Face to Face	66.7% (148)

When the findings are analysed on a gender and generational basis, there are a number of findings worth noting (see table 12).

Table 12 Feedback preference at PGT level study by generational and gender status

	Male		Female	
	First generation	Second generation	First generation	Second generation
Paper	50.8% (30)	34.8% (23)	47.4% (18)	50.9% (27)
Email	44.3% (27)	39.3% (24)	35.9% (14)	50.0% (27)
Intranet	23.2% (13)	21.1% (12)	13.9% (5)	18% (9)
Audio	6.7% (4)	1.7% (1)	-	4.1% (2)
Face to Face	75.0% (48)	73.8% (13)	68.3% (28)	48.1% (26)

'*Face to face*' feedback is the most popular method for first generation male and females and second generation males but not for second generation females. '*Paper*' feedback is the lowest '*most preferred*' preference by second generation males.

18. How quickly do you expect written feedback to be given back to you after handing in an assignment?

Of the sample, 80.7% (188) state they expect to get their feedback '*within 2 weeks*' of handing in their assignment, 18.9% (44) '*within 4 weeks*' and 0.4% (1) '*within 6 weeks*'.

It is important to note that a substantial percentage of the sample are undertaking courses where modules are delivered in a 1 week block style way and this may have influenced the responses.

Table 13 Generational attitude towards the return of written feedback

	First generation	Second generation
Within 2 weeks	77.8% (84)	83.7% (103)
Within 4 weeks	22.2% (24)	15.4% (19)
Within 6 weeks	-	0.8% (1)

19. How many contact hours (face to face) do you expect to have with tutors?

Of the sample, 42.9% (100) are unsure of the amount of contact hours they will have each week. When this is examined on a generational basis, 46.3% (50) of first and 39.0% (48) of second generation respondents are unsure of the contact hours to expect. Age, domiciled status and gender do not impact on expectation.

23. How many hours do you expect to study independently each week on top of your contact hours?

Of the sample, the majority respondents expect to study more than 10 hours of independent study each week (see table 14). Age, domiciled status and gender do not impact on the responses.

Table 14 Expectation of independent study hours

	Percentage of sample
5-10 hours	9.4% (22)
11-20 hours	39.5% (92)
21 plus	34.8% (81)
Not sure	16.3% (38)

24. What do you regard as your strengths?

Respondents were asked to rate their skills in terms of ‘*very strong*’, ‘*strong*’, ‘*weak*’ or ‘*very weak*’. In the overall sample, the majority of respondents state that their skills are ‘*strong*’. When the data is examined using generational, gender, age and discipline variables, interesting patterns emerge.

First and second generation and gender

When the ‘*very strong*’ and ‘*strong*’ responses are examined on a generational basis, the second generation responses are significantly higher than those of the first generation (see table 15). Only in the ‘*quick assimilation of ideas*’ and ‘*study skill*’ statements are first generation responses higher.

Table 15 Generational ‘very strong’ and ‘strong’ responses for skills

	First generation	Second generation	Sample responses
Quick assimilation of ideas	83.0% (98)	71.9% (104)	83.8% (192)
Ability to organise my study independently	58.9% (94)	81.7% (98)	84.3% (193)
My study skills	76.2% (90)	66.7% (94)	81.9% (186)
Knowledge of subject studying at University	65.1% (82)	84.0% (100)	80.6% (183)
Literacy skills	58.9% (79)	75.2% (91)	73.9% (170)
Numeracy skills	58.9% (87)	86.0% (104)	83.9% (193)

However, when the data is examined by first generation and gender, looking only at the ‘*very strong*’ responses, a number of interesting findings emerge (see table 16).

- First generation respondents are generally less likely to say their skills are ‘*very strong*’ compared to second generation respondents.
- Women, regardless of generation status, are less likely to say their skills are ‘*very strong*’ compared to men.
- The areas where women say they have ‘*very strong*’ skills, and are higher than males, are in ‘*study skills*’ and ‘*ability to organise*’.
- Second generation women appear more confident than first generation women in terms of the strength of their ‘*knowledge*’ and ‘*assimilation of ideas*’.

Table 16

Generational and gender 'very strong' responses for skills

	First generation		Second generation	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Quick assimilation of ideas	25.0% (10)	7.0% (3)	16.4% (11)	11.1% (6)
Ability to organise my study independently	32.8% (21)	23.3% (10)	19.4% (13)	26.4% (14)
My study skills	12.7% (8)	4.8% (2)	9.1% (6)	14.8% (8)
Knowledge of subject studying at University	15.9% (10)	7.0% (3)	20.9% (14)	13.5% (7)
Literacy skills	17.2% (11)	11.6% (3)	23.9% (16)	25.9% (14)
Numeracy skills	26.6% (17)	16.3% (7)	31.3% (21)	20.4% (11)

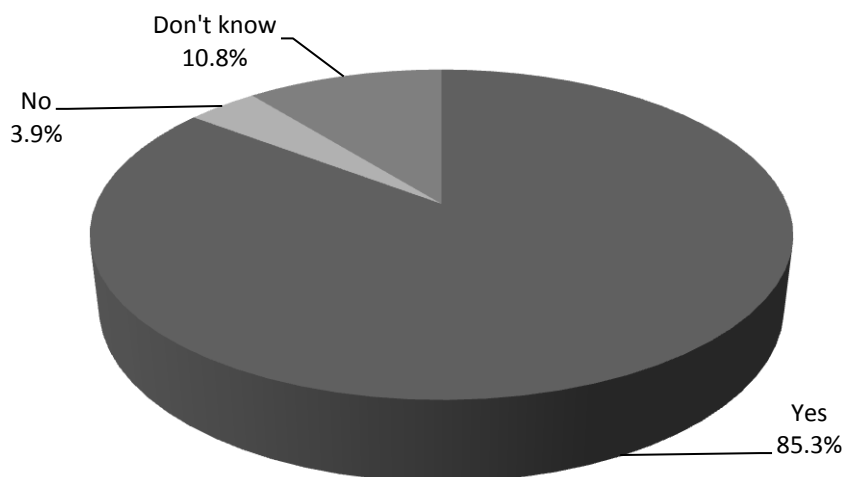
Attitudes to postgraduate study

25. Do you think employers value a postgraduate qualification more than an undergraduate one?

Of the sample, 85.3% (198) state that they think employers do value a PGT qualification more than an undergraduate one. The reasons provided include it enhances your skills and knowledge, and develops higher level skills which are important to employers.

Figure 7

Value of a PGT qualification by employers

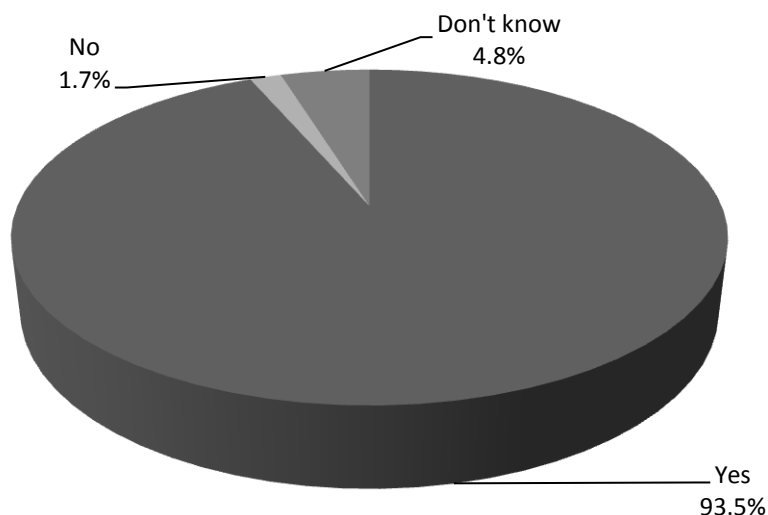


26. Do you think your PGT qualification will enhance your skills in the following areas?

Of the sample, 93.5% (216) feel that the PGT qualification will enhance their skills in the following areas.

Self management Team working Business awareness Problem solving
 Communication Numeracy IT Leadership

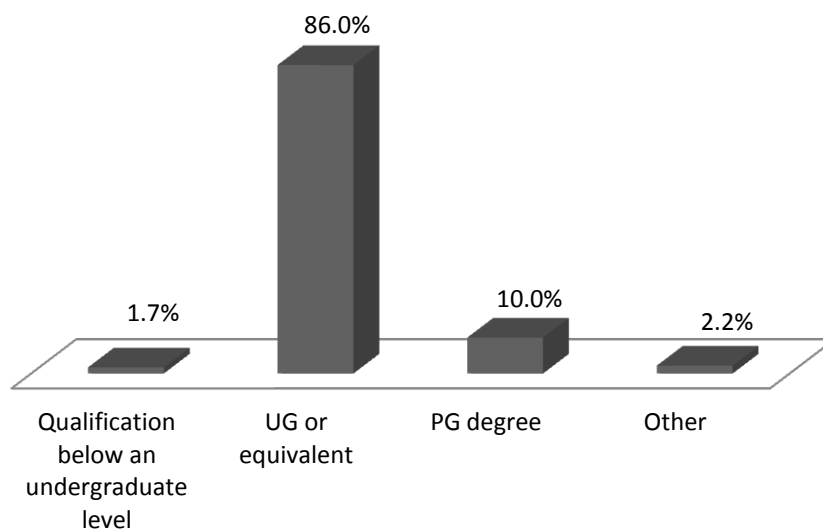
Figure 7 PGT qualification enhancing skill base



27. What is your highest qualification on entry to your postgraduate course??

Of the sample, 92.6% (213) state that their last place of study was a 'university' and for the remainder it was 'college'. When entry qualifications to PGT study are examined, it is not a surprising finding that the majority of respondents have an undergraduate degree (197) or an equivalent qualification.

Figure 8 Entry qualifications to PGT level study

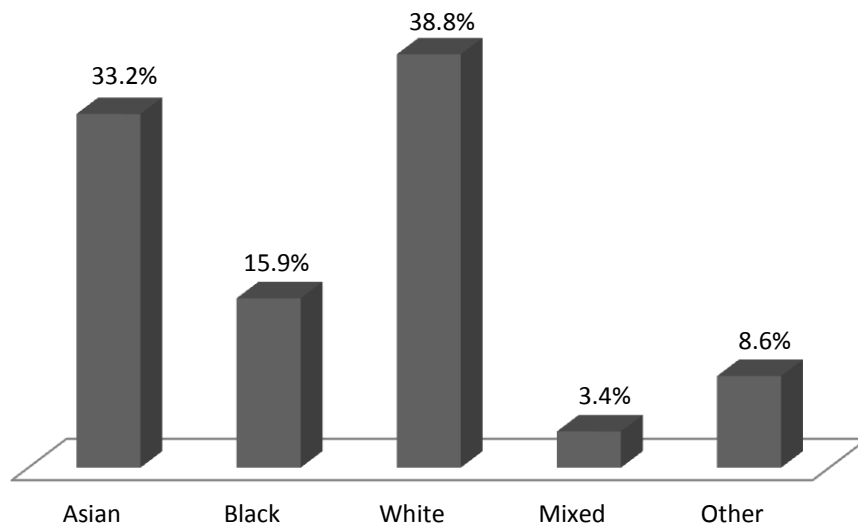


28. What ethnic group do you belong to?

Over two thirds of the sample classified themselves as belonging to two Ethnic groups: Asian and White.

Figure 9

Ethnic group status



When ethnic groups are examined on a generational basis (see table17), there are more first generation Asian respondents than second generation Asians. Of those respondents who classified themselves as White, there are more second generation White respondents than first generation.

Table 17

Generational and Ethnicity relationship

	First generation	Second generation
Asian	39.8% (43)	27.6% (34)
Black	13.9% (15)	17.9% (22)
White	34.3% (37)	42.3% (52)
Mixed	2.8% (3)	4.1% (5)
Other	9.3% (10)	8.1% (10)

29. What is the distance you travel from home to Kingston University?

A substantial percentage of the sample commutes more than 5 miles to university. A slightly higher percentage of first generation respondents compared to second generation commute more than 16 miles.

Table 18

Distance travelled to University

Distance	First generation	Second generation
Under 5 miles	25.5% (26)	38.3% (46)
6-15 miles	35.3% (36)	32.5% (39)
16-25 miles	14.7% (15)	13.3% (16)
26-35 miles	10.8% (11)	5.8% (7)
Over 35 miles	13.7% (14)	10.0% (12)

30. Age

There are noticeably more second generation respondents in the 18-24 year old age group than first generation but slightly more first generation respondents than second in the 30-35 year old age group.

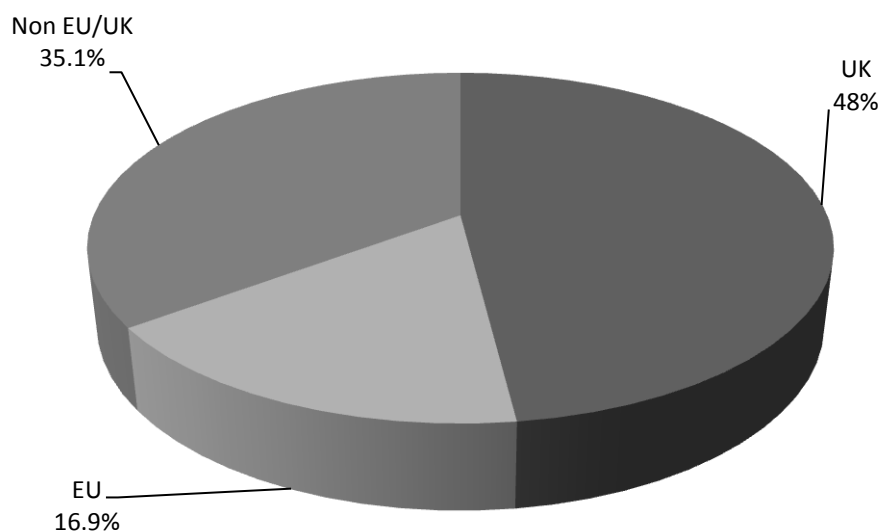
Table 19

Age groupings

Age	First generation	Second generation
18-24	33.0% (35)	43.3% (52)
25-29	34.9% (37)	30.8% (37)
30-35	18.9% (20)	13.3% (16)
36-45	8.5% (9)	10.0% (12)
46+	4.7% (5)	2.5% (3)

31. What is your domiciled status? (permanent residency)

Of the sample, 48.0% (108) were UK domiciled ,16.9% (38) EU and 35.1% (79) domiciled outside of the EU and UK.



32. Do you consider English to be your first language? (Please tick relevant box)

Of the sample, 42.9% state that English is their first language. When domiciled status is also examined, it is interesting to note that of respondents who state they are UK domiciled, 40.8% (42) state that English is not their first language. Of respondents who classify themselves as EU and Non UK/EU domiciled status, 10.8% (4) and 37.7% (23) respectively state that English is their first language. Within the sample, 42 different languages (excluding English) are reported as a first language (see table 20).

Figure 10

English as a first Language

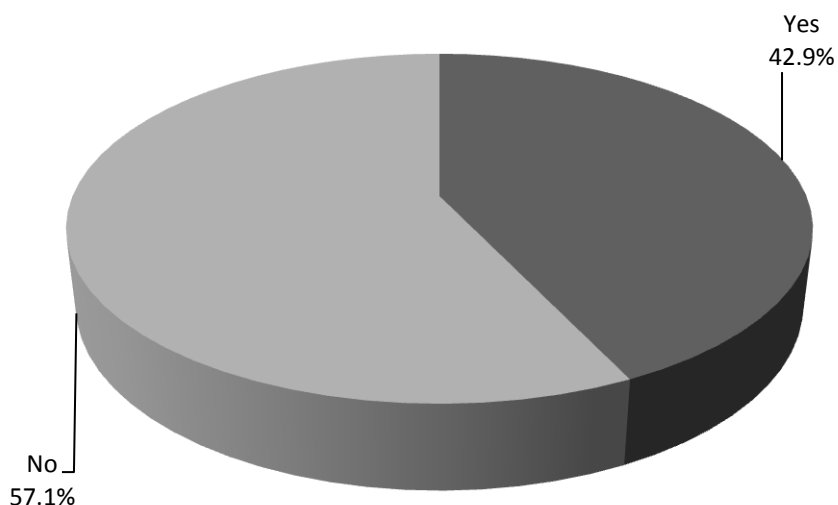


Table 20

First languages

Albanian	1	German	2	Punjabi	1
Amharic	2	Greek	13	Romanian	1
Arabic	6	Gujarati (India)	2	Singhalese	1
Bahasa	1	Hindi	2	Sinhala	1
Bangla	1	Igbo	1	Spanish	6
Bengali	2	Italian	4	Swahili	1
Bulgarian	2	Kazakh, Russian	1	Tagalong(Filipino)	1
Cantonese	1	Krio	2	Tamil	4
Danish	1	Kurdish	2	Thai	1
Daxi	1	Malay	2	Tigrinya	1
Dutch	2	Norwegian	3	Turkish	5
Farsi	8	Persian	1	Twi	1
Filipino	1	Polish	1	Urdu	5
French	5	Portuguese	5	Yoruba	1

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