

PTES 2012

National findings from the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey

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Executive summary

The national Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) collects feedback from taught postgraduate students across the UK about their experiences of their programmes. PTES ran for its fourth consecutive year in Spring 2012, with 54,640 students from 83 institutions taking part, and a national response rate of 24.7%. This represents a significant increase on previous years (38,756 students from 80 institutions had taken part in 2011, with a response rate of 17.8%).

In addition to the national dataset, eight benchmarking groups were provided to permit performance comparisons. These included, for the first time, groupings of million+ and University Alliance institutions.

Profile of respondents

The demographic profile of PTES respondents nationally is broadly similar to the national profile of all postgraduate taught students, although there is some under-representation of part-time students as well as students in Education. There is no difference in the propensity of UK Masters students to respond relative to those from outside the UK. 79.6% of respondents to PTES were taught Masters students, with a further 9.7% taking postgraduate certificates and 7.6% taking postgraduate diplomas.

Motivations

The most commonly cited reasons for choosing to take a taught postgraduate programme were 'to improve my employment prospects' (59.5%) and 'to progress in my current career path' (58.7%). Around half (50.2%) gave the motivation of 'for personal interest'.

The most frequently given reasons for choosing to study their particular qualification at their institution was 'the overall reputation of the institution' (46.5%), followed by 'the institution's reputation in my chosen subject area' (39.1%) and 'the location of the institution' (38.6%). Despite the importance of employment-related motivations, knowledge that 'graduates from this institution have good career and employment prospects' was only cited by 16.0% of respondents as a reason for choosing their particular qualification and institution.

Overall experience

PTES uses eight main multi-item experience scales and these show that postgraduate taught students in the UK can expect a positive experience across all dimensions of experience. Analysis suggests that staff is the most highly performing scale, closely followed by skills and personal development, and learning resources. Assessment and feedback, and organisation and management receive the least positive ratings but, even here, the average experience is still positive.

A similar pattern is found when students are asked to rate their experience relative to their expectations:

- 91.8% had expectations met or exceeded for skills and personal development;
- 86.1% had expectations met or exceeded for quality of teaching and learning;
- 79.2% had expectations met or exceeded for assessment and feedback;
- 88.6% had expectations met or exceeded for the overall experience of their course.

All aspects of experience have seen a marked improvement in the proportion of students having their expectations met or exceeded over the four years in which PTES has run.

Institution type: pre-1992 institutions perform slightly better on quality of teaching and learning, organisation and management, learning resources and overall experience, while post-1992 institutions do better on assessment and feedback, skills and personal development, and career and professional development. However, differences are small and mask diverse experience within each group

Mission group: a slightly greater proportion of students from participating 1994 group institutions have their expectations met or exceeded for quality of teaching and learning, assessment and feedback, organisation and management, and overall experience, than students from million+, Russell Group and University Alliance institutions. A slightly greater proportion of students from University Alliance institutions have their expectations met or exceeded for learning resources, skills and personal development, and career and professional development, than students from other groups.

Location: the proportion of students having their expectations met or exceeded is broadly the same in England and Wales, but slightly lower in Scotland for all dimensions of experience other than learning resources. However, these differences mask diverse experiences within each nation.

Impacts on overall experience: the dimensions of experience with the biggest impact on overall experience are quality of teaching and learning (and staff), and skills and personal development, followed by organisation and management, and career and professional development. Conversely, learning resources have no real impact on overall experience or may even make it more difficult to meet expectations.

Experience in detail

Quality of teaching and learning and staff: 80% or more of students agreed that teaching and learning methods were appropriate, the course was intellectually stimulating, and staff were enthusiastic and good at explaining things. However, agreement that there was sufficient contact time was notably lower at 68%.

Assessment and feedback: just over seven in ten students were happy with assessment arrangements and the detail of feedback they received, while slightly over six in ten were happy with the promptness of feedback or its use in developing learning. The latter received among the lowest levels of agreement in the survey.

Dissertation: over three-quarters of students agreed that standards were understood and supervisors had the necessary knowledge or skills, but less than 70% agreed positively with items on the quality and helpfulness of support and feedback received.

Organisation and management: there was relatively little variation within this scale, with between 71% and 75% of students happy with timetabling, organisation and the balance of their courses.

Learning resources: there were relatively high levels of agreement (80%) that library and IT facilities were accessible, but less agreement that there was suitable access to rooms, equipment and facilities (70% or just over), perhaps reflecting the high proportion of distance learners among taught postgraduates.

Skills and personal development: around four in five students agreed their programme had developed their research and transferable skills, whereas just over two-thirds agreed that their programme had helped them present themselves with confidence or develop their communication skills, perhaps reflecting the considerable prior experience of many taught postgraduates.

Career and professional development: almost 78% of students felt their employment prospects were now better, while around 73% agreed they were better prepared for employment.

Experience by discipline

There was relatively little variation between subjects in the proportion of students having their expectations met or exceeded, the vast majority having expectations met or exceeded in all subject areas. Taught postgraduate students were most likely to have their expectations met or exceeded in Law, Medicine and Dentistry, Agriculture and Related Subjects (all around 91% of students), and Mathematical Sciences (90% of students). Taught postgraduate students were least likely to have their expectations met or exceeded in Creative Arts and Design (85%), Biological Sciences and Geographical Studies (both 86% of students).

Experience by mode of study

Analysis of motivations by full-time and part-time study modes shows that over 50% of part-time students cite 'Delivery of the programme is flexible enough to fit around my life' compared with under 12% of full-time students. Full-time students are more likely to cite reputation and career prospects as reasons for choosing their course and institution.

Overall, the proportion of part-time and distance learners having their expectations met or exceeded is very slightly higher than full-time and face-to-face learners respectively. In part this may reflect differences in age and experience. On average, part-time and distance learners have a more positive experience across the scales, with the exception of learning resources where full-time students have a more positive experience, and dissertation where there is no difference. The differences are most pronounced for depth of learning, assessment and feedback, and career and professional development.

Experience by disability

5.4% of respondents reported having a disability, with the most commonly reported group of disabilities being specific learning difficulties. Overall, a smaller proportion of disabled students (83%) have their expectations met or exceeded compared with students without a disability (89%). However, the proportion of students with physical disabilities having their expectations met or exceeded is little different from students without disabilities on key dimensions such as quality of teaching and learning and assessment and feedback. Conversely, notably fewer students with specific learning difficulties and mental health conditions have their expectations met or exceeded in these areas.

Experience by domicile

Students from Africa (95%) and Asia (93%) are much more likely to have their expectations met or exceeded than those from North America (82%), the UK (87%), and Europe (88%). However, across all country groups relative experience of different dimensions of learning and teaching is fairly similar, with much higher proportions of students having their expectations met or exceeded on skills and personal development and learning resources, compared with assessment and feedback.

PTES and PRES 2013

Increasing attention is being paid in the sector to the experience of taught postgraduates and particularly to the availability of information about this. The Higher Education Academy will run PTES again in Spring 2013, together with the biennial Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES). Further details can be found at <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/student-experience-surveys> or by emailing surveys@heacademy.ac.uk

About the authors

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Paul Bennett is the Academic Lead for Surveys and Consultancy at the Higher Education Academy, where he oversees the delivery and analysis of the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey as well as the wider work of the HEA's Surveys team at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. Prior to joining the HEA in September 2011, Paul was a Senior Researcher and Analyst at the Scottish Government and, before that, Lecturer in Economic Geography at the University of Edinburgh for nine years, where he still occasionally teaches. Paul studied as a taught postgraduate at the University of Bristol, obtaining an MSc, and also holds a BA and DPhil from the University of Oxford.

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Gosia Turner worked as the Survey Co-ordinator for the Higher Education Academy, where she participated in creating PTES, PRES and other surveys. After she found out that UK postgraduate students have such a good experience, she left the HEA to pursue a PhD in Social Statistics at the University of Southampton and is currently a few months from submitting. Gosia is also a part-time statistical analyst in the Students Data Management team at the University of Oxford and runs her own consultancy business as educational statistician. Gosia holds an MA in Sociology and Economics from the University of Essex and a BA in Sociology from Collegium Civitas in Warsaw, Poland.

To contact the HEA about PTES or other student survey work, please email: surveys@heacademy.ac.uk

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1. Introduction to PTES 2012

The national Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) ran for its fourth consecutive year between February and June 2012. 54,640 taught postgraduates took part across the UK in 2012 representing a significant increase on previous years (38,756 had taken part in 2011, the previous highest response).

This report presents the national findings from PTES 2012, aggregating results from the 83 diverse and broadly representative higher education institutions (HEIs) that took part, and giving us the most comprehensive ever picture of the postgraduate taught experience in the UK.

1.1. The Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey

PTES is an annual UK-wide online survey designed to collect feedback from taught postgraduates about their experiences of their programme. Although taught Masters students constitute about 80% of respondents, the survey is also answered by students taking postgraduate certificates and diplomas.

PTES is run by the Higher Education Academy in conjunction with participating institutions. The HEA provides the national online template, as well as guidance, resources and support, while the survey is implemented locally, with institutions able to add their own bespoke questions and decide on survey timing within a four-month window. PTES is overseen by the PTES Advisory Group, whose members include both senior decision-makers and operational staff from HEIs and other sector bodies, including the National Union of Students. Participation in PTES is included as part of institutions' HEA subscriptions.

Key features

- National online survey
- Enhancement focus
- Institutions can add their own questions
- Flexible timing within 4-month window
- Implemented locally
- Included in HEA subscription
- Institutions' results are confidential
- Benchmarking groups

PTES is designed with **enhancement** in mind – findings from the survey are intended to help inform discussions and decisions within institutions about improvements to teaching and learning. While PTES contains some questions from the undergraduate National Student Survey – allowing institutions to compare the experience of their undergraduate and taught postgraduate provision – it also goes into more depth and detail, for example asking about students' motivations, their experience relative to their expectations, and the depth of learning they experience.

Institutional-level results are confidential, meaning they cannot be used to form league tables. This gives institutions the freedom to treat survey results as useful but partial initial indicators of where things might be going well and not so well. Their effective use in enhancement requires interpretation in conjunction with other more detailed (often qualitative) information from students and staff. This is particularly important at taught postgraduate level where the small and specialist nature of many courses leads to small samples and means care should be taken not to read too much into subject-level survey data in isolation.

Nonetheless, knowing how they are doing relative to others can help institutions understand where they need to improve. PTES allows benchmarking while keeping institutional level results confidential, through the creation of eight benchmarking groups. These allow participating institutions to compare their own performance with the average performance of the institutions in each group.

Benchmarking groups

Pre-1992	million+
Post-1992	1994 group
Small and Specialist	Russell Group
Scottish	University Alliance

1.2. PTES in 2012

All HEIs in the UK were invited to take part in PTES 2012, with 83 institutions from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland deciding to do so. These represent about half of all HEIs in the UK and were evenly split between pre-1992 and post-1992 institutions.

The PTES 2012 survey window opened on 15 February and closed on 14 June 2012, which was two weeks later than in previous years. Within this period, institutions could choose when to run PTES in their institution, provided they opened their survey by 19 April and kept the survey open for a period of three weeks or longer. Sixteen institutions took the opportunity to launch their survey in February, while 36 institutions kept their surveys open into June.

A copy of the questionnaire instrument can be found in Appendix 2. A Welsh language version of the survey was also made available. Only minor changes were made to the instrument in 2012, which included moving the questions on 'motivations' from the beginning to later in the survey (questions 16 and 17) and combining the 'depth of learning' questions into a single scale (question 4). As a result the question numbering differs from previous years.

As in previous years, PTES was delivered via the Bristol Online Surveys (BOS) website¹, which is also used to deliver other higher education surveys such as the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES)².

Structure of PTES 2012

A: Quality of teaching and learning
B: Assessment and feedback
C: Dissertation
D: Organisation and management
E: Learning resources
F: Skills and personal development
G: Career and professional development
H: Overall satisfaction
I: Further comments
Institutional questions
Motivations
You and your programme

The use of Survey Access Control was again compulsory to ensure that only those invited to participate in the survey could complete it, and that they could only complete it once. This helps to ensure the robustness of PTES, giving confidence in the data and the enhancement decisions that they inform.

1.3. Interpreting the results

1.3.1. Aggregation of results

This report presents the national aggregate results for the 82 institutions and 54,581 respondents included in the national dataset for PTES 2012³. The analysis gives an overview of the postgraduate taught experience across the UK. A summary of results is provided in Appendix 1. It should be remembered that most of the analysis aggregates the responses for all institutions across all subject areas, and institutions should take care when comparing their own results with the national aggregate results. For example, to avoid the impact of significant discipline effects, institutions should compare their results at subject level with the results for the same subject area at other institutions, and particularly with results for benchmarking groups of similar institutions. This analysis can be undertaken by participating institutions within the BOS system.

¹ <https://www.survey.bris.ac.uk/>

² <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/pres>

³ Although 83 institutions and 56,540 respondents took part in PTES 2012, the results of one Small and Specialist institution (59 responses) are not included in the national dataset as a different survey template was used.

1.3.2. Reporting ‘experience’

PTES experience questions generally have five answer options ranging from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’ (with a positive statement). For ease of reporting and interpretation, the results for individual items have been compressed into a three-point scale (‘agree’, ‘neutral’ and ‘disagree’).

‘Scale scores’ aggregate the answers for all question items relating to a key dimension of the student experience – for instance across the six individual items on assessment and feedback. Categories (from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’) are converted into numbers (from one to five) and averaged. This makes an assumption that the response categories are equally spaced, while a single mean score may be misleading where opinions are polarised. Nonetheless, scale scores can be a convenient shorthand for comparing key experiences and can be more reliable than relying on responses to a single question.

1.3.3. Types of analysis and trends

PTES also collects information about the student themselves – such as their age, gender, mode of study and discipline – allowing us to examine relationships between student characteristics and their experience. This analysis is mostly bivariate – for example, the relationship between mode of study (full-time/part-time) and experience. Note that a simple bivariate relationship does not reveal causality and there may be a range of other characteristics underpinning any observed differences in experience (for example, age, employment and source of funding in the case of mode of study).

At UK level, caution should be exercised in inferring trends over time because apparent trends may reflect changes in the institutions participating in PTES, rather than real change in experience. For this reason, only limited trend information is presented in this report.

1.3.4. Statistical significance

Statistical significance testing is used in parts of the analysis to suggest how confident we can be that different experiences among the survey sample reflect those of the wider taught postgraduate population. It should be noted that, in common with other student surveys, PTES does not use a random sampling method or a design approximating this. Rather it takes a ‘census’ approach in attempting to survey all taught postgraduates in participating institutions. This can make it more difficult to correct for non-response bias and means that caution should be exercised where a pattern is suggested to be statistically significant. Nonetheless, significance testing is a useful way of drawing attention to the dangers of reading too much into small differences, and error bars help to demonstrate why a simple comparison or ranking of individual institutions based on student survey scores is not meaningful.

1.3.5. Survey data are only the beginning

Even with the caveats and considerations above taken into account, it is important that survey data are not considered to be the last word on the student experience (a particular risk if results were ever to be published at institutional level). Surveys give extensive information that is useful as an initial indicator of where things are going well or not so well. However, a meaningful interpretation also requires an understanding of context. Further exploration of any apparent issues might be gained from looking at more detailed course feedback, but formal and informal discussions with students and with staff are also vital to understand the actual existence and nature of any problem (or best practice) and the types of enhancement that might be implemented.

2. Profile of respondents

2.1. Response rates

54,640 postgraduate taught students in 83 institutions took part in PTES 2012, representing 24.7% of all the students invited to take part in those institutions. This represents a major increase on the response rate in previous years, with Table 2.1 showing how response rates have changed over the four years of PTES.

Table 2.1: National response rates for PTES, 2009-2012

Year	HEIs	Responses	Rate
2009	30	14,421	17.7%
2010	76	32,638	14.8%
2011	80	38,756	17.8%
2012	83	54,640	24.7%

The top response rate for an individual institution was 62.6% and a quarter of institutions had response rates of 34.8% or higher in 2012, with more detail shown in Table 2.2. Although Small and Specialist institutions are over-represented in the top quarter of response rates, the top response rate for a larger institution was 48.2%. These increased response rates reflect a significant amount of work by PTES officers and their colleagues in institutions, as well as by academic staff in encouraging their students to respond.

Table 2.2 Institutional response rates for PTES 2012

	Rate
Top of the range	62.6%
Top of the range (non-Small and Specialist)	48.2%
Upper quartile	34.8%
Mean	26.6%
Median	25.0%
Lower quartile	17.3%

2.2. Profile and representativeness of respondents

Whatever the response rate, the representativeness of those who do respond is an important consideration to make in interpreting and acting on the results. There is no easy way of checking that the views of survey respondents are the same as the views of non-respondents. However, we can at least compare the demographic profile of PTES respondents with the demographic profile of all taught postgraduates (although it should be remembered that just because people have particular demographic characteristics does not mean they have the same views or experiences as non-responders with similar characteristics).

At the time of writing, the latest available data on the student body from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) are for the 2010-11 academic year, which means that a comparison with PTES 2012 respondents can only give a rough indication of demographic representativeness. Note that the HESA category of 'Higher degree (taught)' excludes students studying for a PGCE and other postgraduate

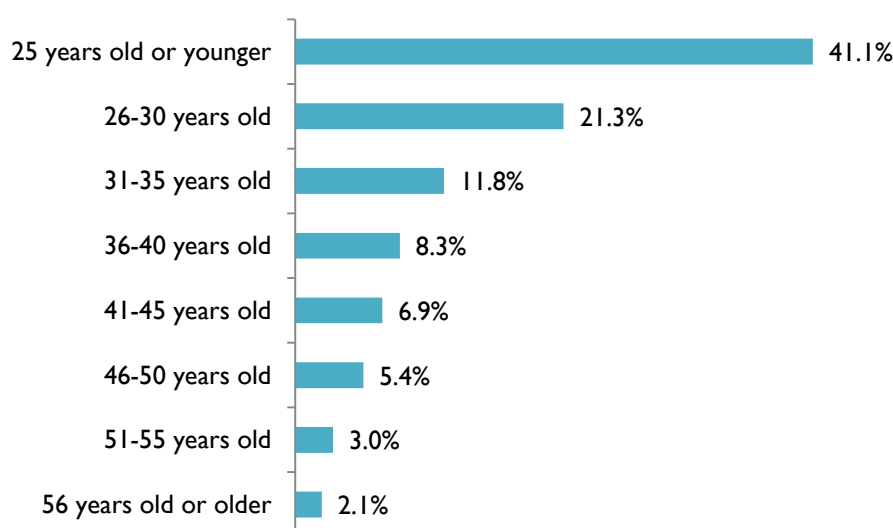
diplomas and certificates who take part in PTES⁴. Therefore, a comparison of the HESA data⁵ only with Masters students who respond to PTES is most useful.

Table 2.3 provides this comparison for the gender profile of PTES respondents and suggests that women are slightly over-represented among Masters students responding to PTES 2012 in comparison with their profile in the Higher degree (taught) student body in 2010-11. Females have a greater tendency to respond to social surveys and so this over-representation does not raise any particular concerns about PTES, but small gender effects may be present in the results.

Table 2.3: Profile of respondents, by gender

	PTES 2012 All	PTES 2012 Masters only	HESA 2010-11 Higher degree (taught)
Male	41.9%	44.1%	48.5%
Female	58.1%	55.9%	51.5%
N	53,704	42,443	345,295

In relation to age, Figure 2.1 shows that just over two in five of all PTES respondents are aged 25 years or younger.



N = 53,927

Figure 2.1: Profile of respondents, by age

In relation to domicile, Table 2.4 shows that the profile of PTES Masters respondents in 2012 is reflective of the student body, although Other EU students are slightly over-represented in PTES at the expense of Non-EU students. Non-UK students constitute a greater proportion of Masters students than they do PTES respondents as a whole.

⁴ Conversely, while the broader HESA category of 'Postgraduate (taught)' does include postgraduate diploma and certificate students, it also includes large numbers of students who are studying one or two modules in isolation for CPD purposes, and who are not invited to answer PTES. This category is therefore not used for comparison with the PTES profile.

⁵ HESA figures represent the number of Full Person Equivalent (FPE) postgraduates.

Table 2.4: Profile of respondents, by domicile

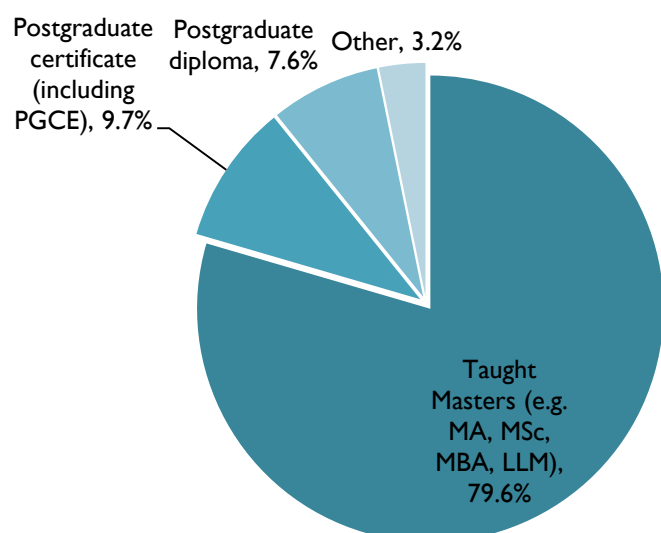
	PTES 2012 All	PTES 2012 Masters only	HESA 2010-11 Higher degree (taught)
Home	59.4%	53.6%	53.7%
Other EU	11.4%	12.8%	9.2%
Non EU	29.2%	33.6%	37.1%
N	53,025	41,914	345,295

Table 2.5 suggests that for mode of study, part-time students are under-represented in the PTES sample relative to their profile in the student body. Although this may reflect less availability to see the publicity and answer the survey, part-time students are also much more likely to study across more than one academic year, meaning they will have more than one opportunity to answer PTES and may have a similar (or even greater) propensity to respond as full-time students *at some point in their programme*. While this suggests we should not be overly concerned about how PTES appeals to students with different study modes, institutions will nonetheless need to bear in mind this under-representation in their analysis.

Table 2.5: Profile of respondents, by mode of study

	PTES 2012 All	PTES 2012 Masters only	HESA 2010-11 Higher degree (taught)
Full-time	64.3%	66.9%	57.2%
Part-time	35.7%	33.1%	42.8%
N	53,396	42,217	345,300

In relation to type of programme, Figure 2.2 shows that four in five PTES respondents are studying for a taught Masters degree. However, it is important to remember that PTES is also answered by students studying for postgraduate certificates (who make up almost 10% of the sample), diplomas and taught doctorates.



N = 53,700

Figure 2.2: Profile of respondents, by type of programme

Table 2.6 suggests that PTES respondents are broadly reflective of the previous year group by subject area (at JACS Level 1), though there are some exceptions, with students in Biological Sciences, Veterinary Science, Mathematical Sciences and Combined subject areas being over-represented in the PTES sample and students in Agriculture and Related Subjects, Computer Science and Education being under-represented, the latter even with PGCE students taken out of the comparison.

Table 2.6: Profile of respondents, by discipline

	PTES 2012 All	PTES 2012 Masters only	HESA 2010/11 Higher degree (taught)
Medicine and Dentistry	3.3%	2.6%	2.4%
Subjects Allied to Medicine	7.6%	6.5%	7.9%
Biological Sciences	7.2%	7.5%	5.0%
Veterinary Science	0.2%	0.3%	0.1%
Agriculture and Related Subjects	0.4%	0.4%	0.6%
Physical Sciences	2.5%	2.9%	2.3%
Mathematical Sciences	1.3%	1.4%	0.9%
Computer Science	2.9%	3.4%	5.0%
Engineering and Technology	6.9%	7.8%	8.4%
Architecture, Building and Planning	2.7%	2.8%	3.1%
Social Studies	10.1%	11.3%	9.3%
Law	4.6%	4.2%	3.8%
Business and Administrative Studies	21.8%	24.2%	28.2%
Mass Communications and Documentation	3.2%	3.6%	2.8%
Languages	3.5%	3.9%	3.1%
Historical and Philosophical Studies	3.1%	3.6%	2.8%
Creative Arts and Design	5.5%	6.1%	5.0%
Education	11.6%	5.9%	9.4%
Combined	1.5%	1.7%	0.0%
N	52,318	41,406	345,460

Overall, these comparisons suggest that the national sample of respondents to PTES 2012 is broadly reflective of the total population of taught postgraduates across the UK (in 2010-11) in relation to their gender, domicile and (with a few exceptions) subject area, but slightly under-represents the views of part-time students.

2.3. Motivations

PTES asks what motivated students to take their postgraduate programme and then why they chose to study for their qualification at their particular institution. Figure 2.3 shows that motivations are dominated by employment-related reasons, although half of students answered ‘for personal interest’. Interestingly, while the PGT study body is often assumed to be polarised between those taking programmes for employment reasons and those studying for academic reasons, over half of students selecting ‘for personal interest’ also selected an employment-related reason.

While the rank order of importance of motivations has remained constant across four years of PTES, the percentages attached to *each* motivation have all increased, and particularly in the last year. However, both ‘motivations’ questions were moved to a later point in the survey in 2012, which means students will have reflected more on the range of their experiences before giving their motivations. There was also some change in the profile of institutions participating.

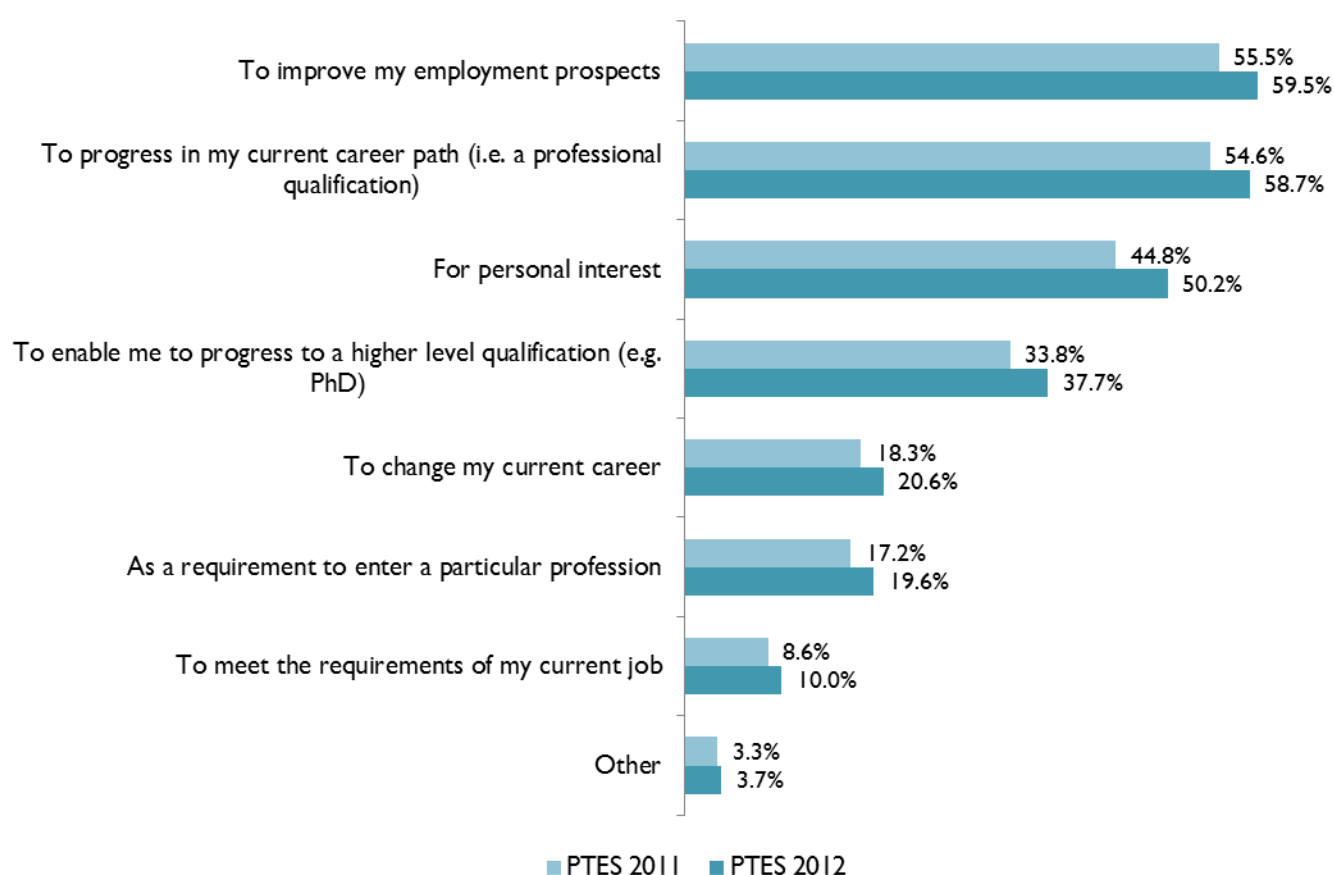


Figure 2.3: Motivations for taking programme (PTES 2011 and PTES 2012)

Figure 2.4 shows the reasons respondents cited for choosing to study their qualification at their institution. Once again, all percentages have increased on previous years but, in this case, institutional reputation has increased in importance from the third most cited reason in the three previous years of PTES to the most cited reason in PTES 2012. Again, this may reflect the changing profile of institutions participating and/or the change in the position of this question from the beginning to later in the survey. Despite the importance of employment-related motivations overall, knowledge that ‘graduates from this institution have good career and employment prospects’ was only cited by 16% of respondents as a reason for choosing their particular qualification and institution.

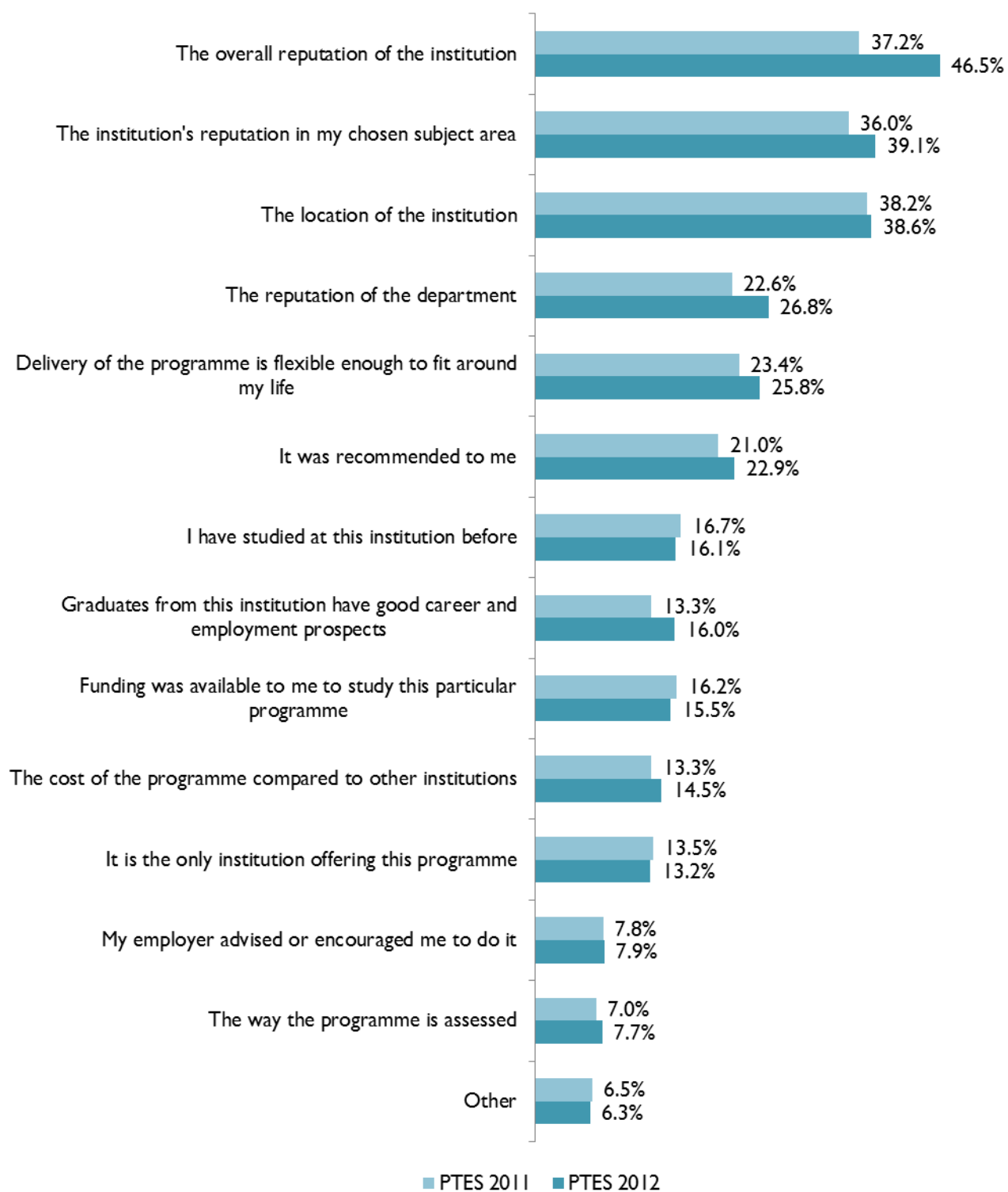


Figure 2.4: Reasons for studying this qualification at this institution (PTES 2011 and PTES 2012)

3. Overall experience

3.1. Main dimensions of experience

PTES contains eight main experience scales, each containing multiple positive statements with which students are asked to indicate their level of agreement (see Appendix 2 for a copy of the questionnaire). Responses are averaged across the statements in each scale (providing the student has responded to certain number of statements per scale) to provide an overall score for that dimension, where 1.00 would mean all students had responded 'strongly disagree' to every statement and 5.00 would indicate all students had answered 'strongly agree'. (For the limitations of using mean scale scores, please see Section 1.3.2). Table 3.1 shows the mean scale scores across the main eight dimensions of experience.

Table 3.1: Mean scale scores

Question scale	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Staff scale	4.05	.915	53,127
Skills and personal development scale	4.03	.821	52,937
Learning resources scale	4.01	.818	42,591
Career and professional development scale	3.99	.901	51,539
Dissertation scale	3.98	.926	30,525
Quality of teaching and learning scale	3.93	.921	54,181
Organisation and management scale	3.88	.852	52,292
Assessment and feedback scale	3.75	.916	52,290

Table 3.1 shows that, on average and across the dimensions of experience, postgraduate taught students can expect a positive experience in the UK. While mean scale scores can mask polarised views, the fact that all scores are towards the positive end of the scales is encouraging. Nonetheless, students are also rating some dimensions more positively than others, with assessment and feedback and organisation and management appearing to be weaker. Each dimension of experience is considered in more detail in Section 4.

Recognising that experiences may be shaped by expectations, PTES also asks students to rate their experience relative to their expectations, with the results shown in Table 3.2

Table 3.2: Experience relative to expectations

	Below my expectations	Met my expectations	Exceeded my expectations	N
Skills and personal development	8.2%	18.5%	73.3%	53,953
Learning resources	9.6%	17.8%	72.6%	54,058
Career and professional development	11.5%	20.6%	67.9%	53,775
Quality of teaching and learning	13.9%	13.2%	72.9%	54,194
Organisation and management	19.2%	17.8%	63.0%	54,127
Assessment and feedback	20.8%	18.2%	60.9%	54,090
Overall experience of my course	11.4%	13.7%	74.9%	53,513

Ranked according to the extent to which experience was met or exceeded, the experience of each dimension appears consistent with the scale scores. Students are also asked to rate the overall experience of their course, and it is encouraging to see that three-quarters of students say their experiences have exceeded their expectations.

Figure 3.1 shows how experience (relative to expectations) has changed across the four years of PTES, based on the percentage who said their experience was met or exceeded. Again, it should be noted that the profile of institutions taking part has changed each year making it difficult to infer trends. However, the fact that experience ratings have now improved slightly every year that PTES has run across the range of dimensions, may allow us to be more confident that some genuine improvement is occurring, rather than this being a sample effect.

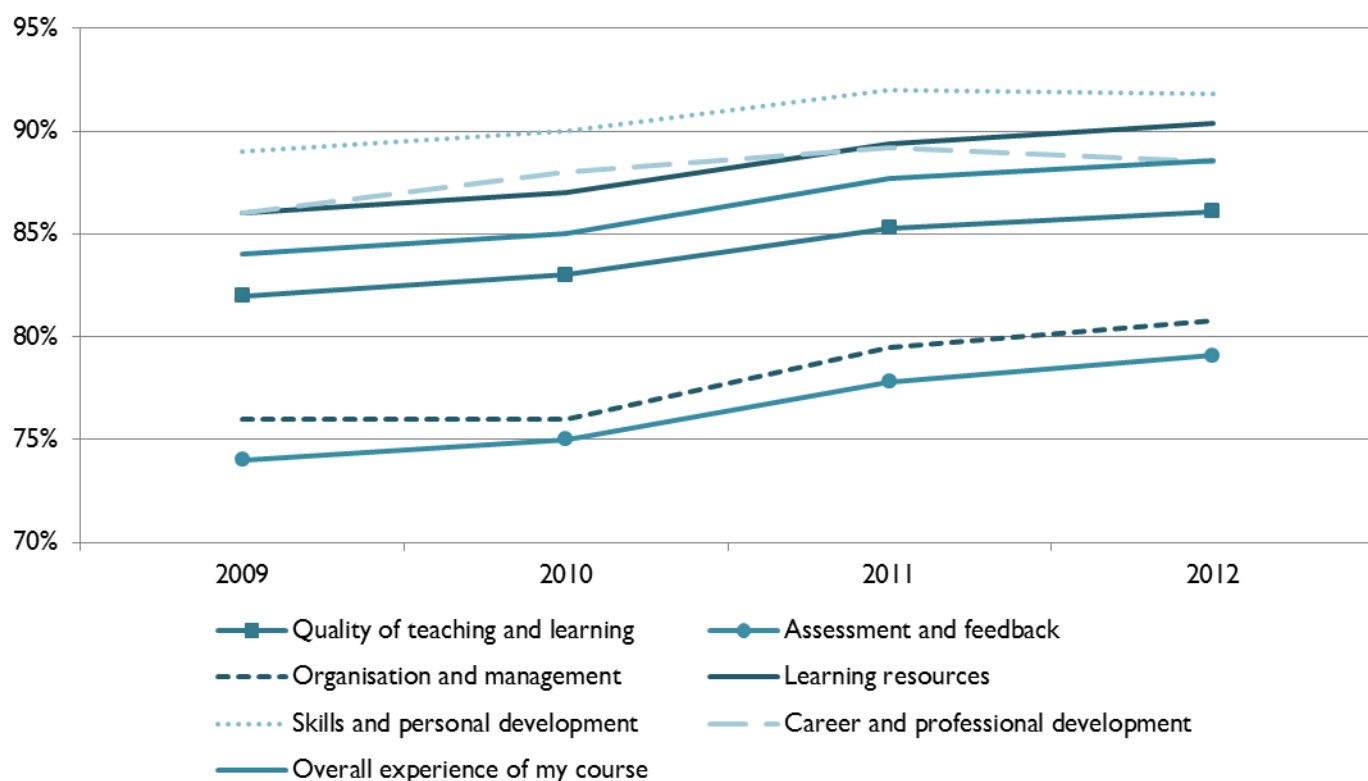


Figure 3.1: Experience met or exceeded expectations, trend since 2009

3.2. Overall experience by institution type and location

Although the scores for individual institutions are confidential to that institution, it is possible to compare experience (relative to expectations) at different types of institution across the UK. This analysis necessarily involves aggregating diverse experiences, while differences in survey responses between institutions (and between institution groups) may reflect the different profiles of students and disciplines in those institutions rather than differences in the quality of provision. The analysis is intended only to stimulate discussion and further investigation into what might be learnt to inform enhancement.

Table 3.3 breaks down the national dataset (apart from Small and Specialist institutions) by whether students are studying at a pre-1992 or post-1992 institution. Perhaps unsurprisingly given the diverse range of institutions within each group, overall differences between the two groups are relatively small, with pre-1992 institutions scoring slightly better on quality of teaching and learning, organisation and management, learning resources and overall experience, while post-1992 institutions do better on assessment and feedback, skills and personal development, and career and professional development.

Table 3.3: Experience met or exceeded expectations by broad type of institution

	Pre-1992	Post-1992
Skills and personal development	91.5%	92.2%
Learning resources	90.7%	89.8%
Career and professional development	88.0%	89.2%
Quality of teaching and learning	86.7%	84.9%
Assessment and feedback	78.5%	79.7%
Organisation and management	82.0%	78.3%
Overall experience of my course	89.1%	87.4%
N	33,994 - 33,563	17,852 - 17,629

Results can also be broken down by institution 'mission group' (Table 3.4). It should be noted that not every member of each mission group participated in PTES 2012, although over half of institutions in each group did so. The results show that a large majority of students in every mission group are having their expectations met or exceeded. Nonetheless, there are some interesting and possibly unexpected differences which could be explored further, and this confirms the value for an institution of comparing its scores with those of groups of similar institutions, as is possible in the PTES benchmarking groups.

Table 3.4: Experience met or exceeded expectations by 'mission group' of institution⁶

	million+	1994 Group	Russell Group	University Alliance
Quality of teaching and learning	83.9%	89.1%	86.5%	85.7%
Assessment and feedback	79.9%	82.0%	78.1%	80.3%
Organisation and management	78.0%	85.7%	81.8%	79.2%
Learning resources	88.7%	90.7%	91.0%	91.2%
Skills and personal development	91.8%	92.3%	91.4%	92.8%
Career and professional development	89.3%	88.8%	87.7%	89.9%
Overall experience of my course	86.7%	91.0%	89.1%	88.2%
N	7,879 - 7,780	7,924 - 8,005	21,621 - 21,921	8,168 - 8,069

⁶ Institutions moving from the 1994 Group to the Russell Group during 2012 are included in the results for both groups.

Table 3.5 shows the same questions, this time broken down by the location of institution in the UK. There is very little difference in the proportion of students having their expectations met or exceeded at institutions in England and Wales. However, the proportion of students having their expectations met or exceeded at institutions in Scotland is slightly lower, with the exception of learning resources. Note that a similar pattern is found when comparing the scale means by location of institution (not shown).

Table 3.5: Experience met or exceeded expectations by location of institution⁷

	England	Scotland	Wales
Quality of teaching and learning	86.5%	82.8%	86.4%
Assessment and feedback	79.6%	73.3%	79.5%
Organisation and management	81.0%	76.7%	81.3%
Learning resources	90.2%	90.9%	90.2%
Skills and personal development	91.9%	90.8%	92.0%
Career and professional development	88.6%	86.2%	89.5%
Overall experience of my course	88.9%	85.7%	88.8%
N	42,108 - 42,635	5,884 - 5,969	2,984 - 3,020

3.3. Relationships between aspects of experience

Analysis of PTES allows the relationship between the different dimensions of experience to be examined, as well as the influence of the different dimensions on experience overall. Table 3.6 shows the relationship between the scale scores previously summarised in Table 3.1, with the addition of the ‘depth of learning’ scale (which uses different rating categories). The strongest relationships appear to be between quality of teaching and learning and the experience of staff on the course, as well as between skills and personal development, and career and professional development. Stronger correlations suggest interesting relationships for further investigation, but there is no guarantee that improving one dimension of experience will lead to improvements in another dimension, even where the relationship appears strong.

While there are many possible influences on students’ overall experience of their course (some of which are not directly connected with teaching and learning and are outside the scope of the PTES questionnaire), it is nonetheless reasonable to expect that the different dimensions of experience, as measured by the question scales, have a sizeable influence on students’ overall experience. This was tested using a multiple regression model examining the impact of different dimensions of experience (as measured by the scale scores) on overall experience relative to expectations (as measured by question 13g).

The multiple regression found that the different dimensions of experience appear to explain 47%⁸ of the total variability of the overall programme experience, which is a good model fit and a strong effect of scales on the overall experience.

The standardised ‘Beta’ coefficients in Table 3.7 give an indication of the relative impact of each dimension on overall experience, although there is considerable overlap between them. The most important factors affecting the overall experience of the course are: learning and teaching, skills and personal development, organisation and management, and career and professional development. Note that the dissertation scale is very small (and not statistically significant at the 95% confidence level), perhaps reflecting the limited

⁷ The Open University and Queen’s University Belfast are not included. Some students included in this analysis may study at overseas campuses of the UK institution.

⁸ $R^2 = 0.468$.

experience of their dissertation at the point at which students often complete PTES (if they undertake a dissertation at all).

Table 3.6: Correlations between scale scores⁹

	Staff	Depth of learning	Assessment	Dissertation	Organisation	Learning resources	Skills	Career
Teaching	0.787	0.336	0.509	0.493	0.558	0.348	0.521	0.483
Staff		0.299	0.459	0.430	0.476	0.303	0.447	0.412
Depth of learning			0.336	0.307	0.319	0.198	0.411	0.369
Assessment				0.512	0.555	0.360	0.479	0.455
Dissertation					0.494	0.385	0.501	0.448
Organisation						0.458	0.545	0.505
Learning resources							0.442	0.388
Skills								0.681

Table 3.7: Influence of dimensions of experience on overall experience relative to expectations

	Beta	Sig.
Quality of teaching and learning scale	.182	.000
Skills and personal development scale	.181	.000
Organisation and management scale	.164	.000
Career and professional development scale	.158	.000
Assessment and feedback scale	.139	.000
Depth of learning scale	.107	.000
Learning resources scale	-.051	.000
Staff scale ¹⁰	-.031	.000
Dissertation scale	.010	.100

The staff scale and learning resources scale both have negative coefficients, which, although small, suggests improvements in these dimensions may slightly reduce overall experience relative to expectations. This may be plausible in the case of learning resources, which raise expectations to the extent that they are difficult to meet. However, the Beta value for staff is misleading and is an artefact of the very strong correlation between the quality of teaching and learning and staff scales. In fact, if the quality of teaching and learning scale is removed from the model, **a strong positive impact of the staff scale on overall experience becomes apparent.**

⁹ All correlations are statistically significant ($p < 0.01$, 2-tailed), but see note on statistical significance in Section 1.3.4.

¹⁰ Does not accurately reflect the impact of experience of staff on overall experience – see text.

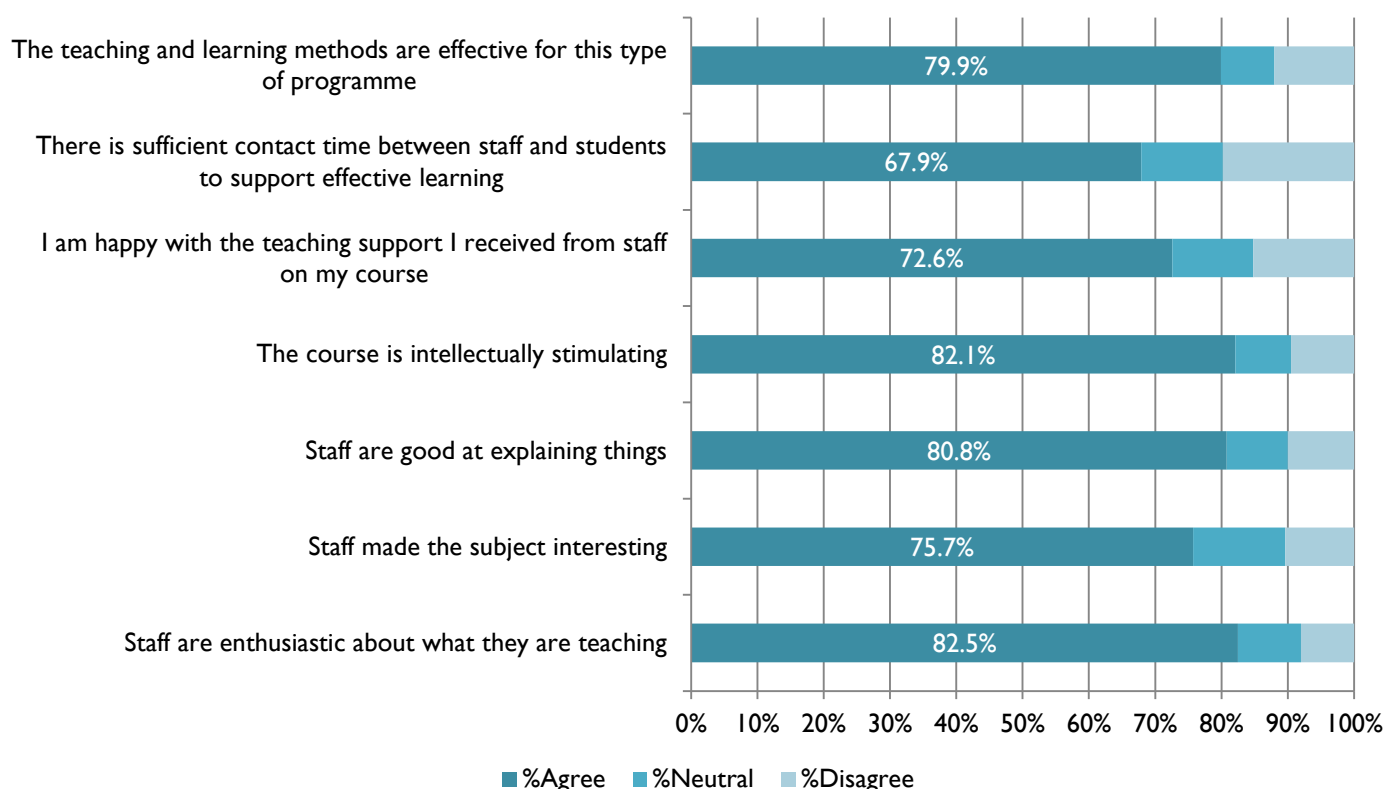
4. Experience in detail

This section examines the experience of taught postgraduates across the UK as measured by the individual experience items in PTES. For ease of interpretation, the five-point answer scales (ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree') are amalgamated into '% agree', '% neutral' and '% disagree'. A table of results can also be seen in Appendix A.

For some scales, overall scale scores, as reported in Section 3, are also broken down by institution (anonymously) showing the range of experience recorded by the survey.

4.1. Quality of teaching and learning

Figure 4.1 shows the results of the four individual experience items for the quality of teaching and learning scale together with the three items for the staff scale. Around four in five students respond positively to the majority of these items, but there is slightly less agreement that there is sufficient contact time to support effective learning or that students are happy with the teaching support received.



N = 53,393 - 54,217

Figure 4.1: Experience of quality of teaching and learning and staff

Figure 4.2 shows the mean scale scores for quality of teaching and learning (i.e. across the four teaching and learning items) by institution. The national mean was 3.93. It shows that while all institutions record a broadly positive response, there is some variation. The error bars show the range within which we would be 95% confident that the true level of satisfaction for that institution lies had a random sample been used

(see Section 1.3.4). The error bars demonstrate the danger of judging an institution's 'performance' based on survey scores alone and particularly in ranking institutions, as might happen in a league table.

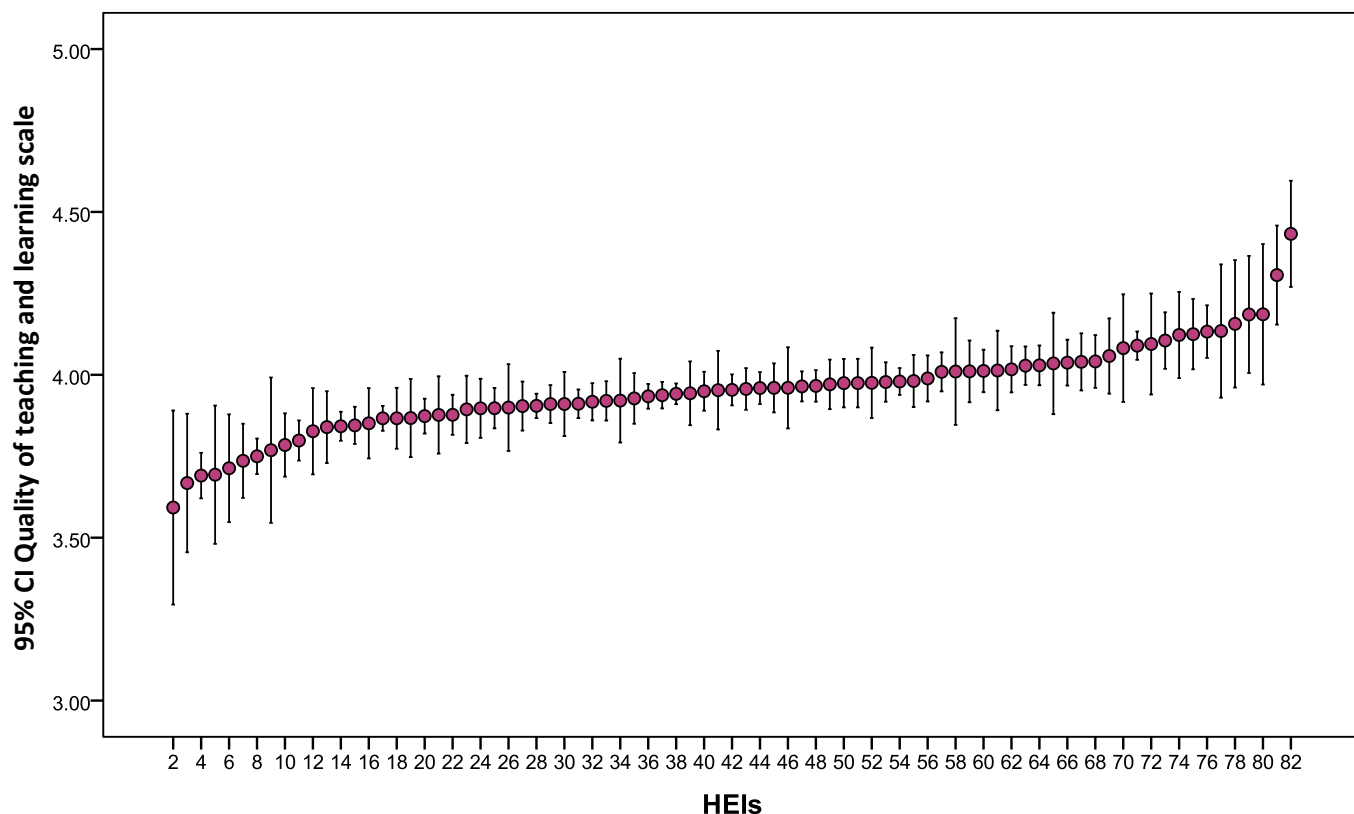
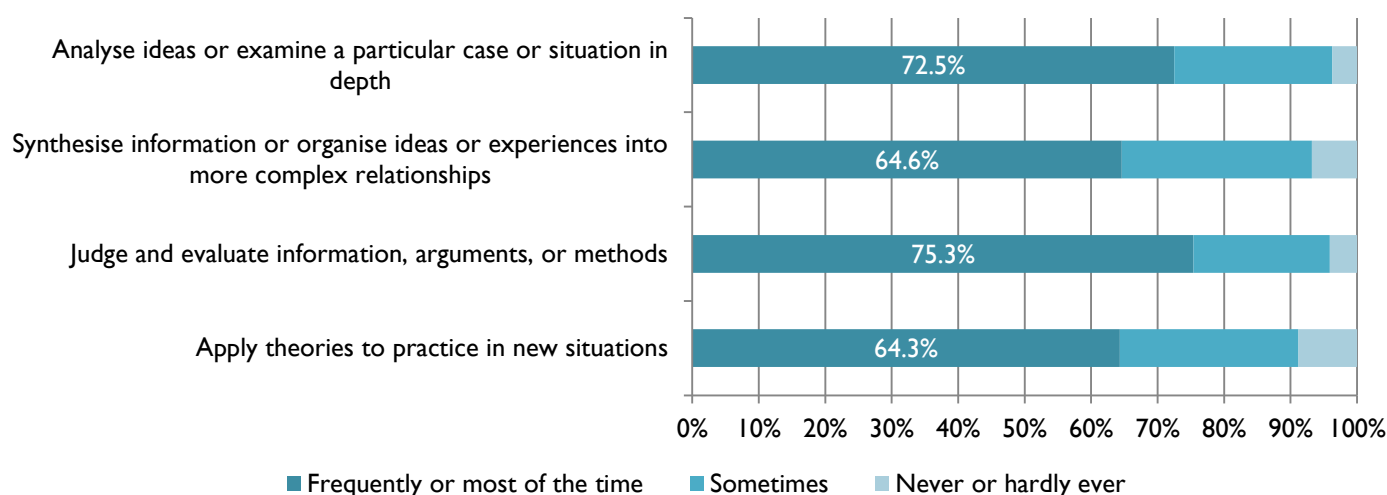


Figure 4.2: Mean scale scores for quality of teaching and learning, by institution

Question 4 of PTES examines the depth of learning experienced by students during their course. Encouragingly, as shown in Figure 4.3, three-quarters of students at least frequently experience being required to judge and evaluate information, arguments or methods as part of their course, while almost two-thirds are frequently required to apply theories and practice to new situations. While requirements will vary naturally between subject areas, particularly in relation to applied work, these questions are designed to be meaningful to all discipline areas and institutions may wish to explore further in cases where few students are reporting these experiences.

The proportion of students answering 'frequently' or 'most of the time' for all four depth of learning items has increased slightly compared with PTES 2011, by around three percentage points for items b, c and d. However, it should be remembered that question 4 formed a single four-item scale in PTES 2012, while it had been four separate questions in PTES 2011, and this change to a format that is similar to that for other questions may have had an influence on some responses.



N = 54,006 - 54,184

Figure 4.3: Depth of learning experienced (% experiencing activity frequently or more often)

Figure 4.4 shows institutional variation in the percentage of students experiencing item 4c ('Judge and evaluate information, arguments, or methods') frequently or more often in their course. This may reflect differences in the mix of subjects between institutions, however, and benchmarking for these questions may be better undertaken at subject level. Again, the error bars warn against simple comparisons of institutional survey scores.

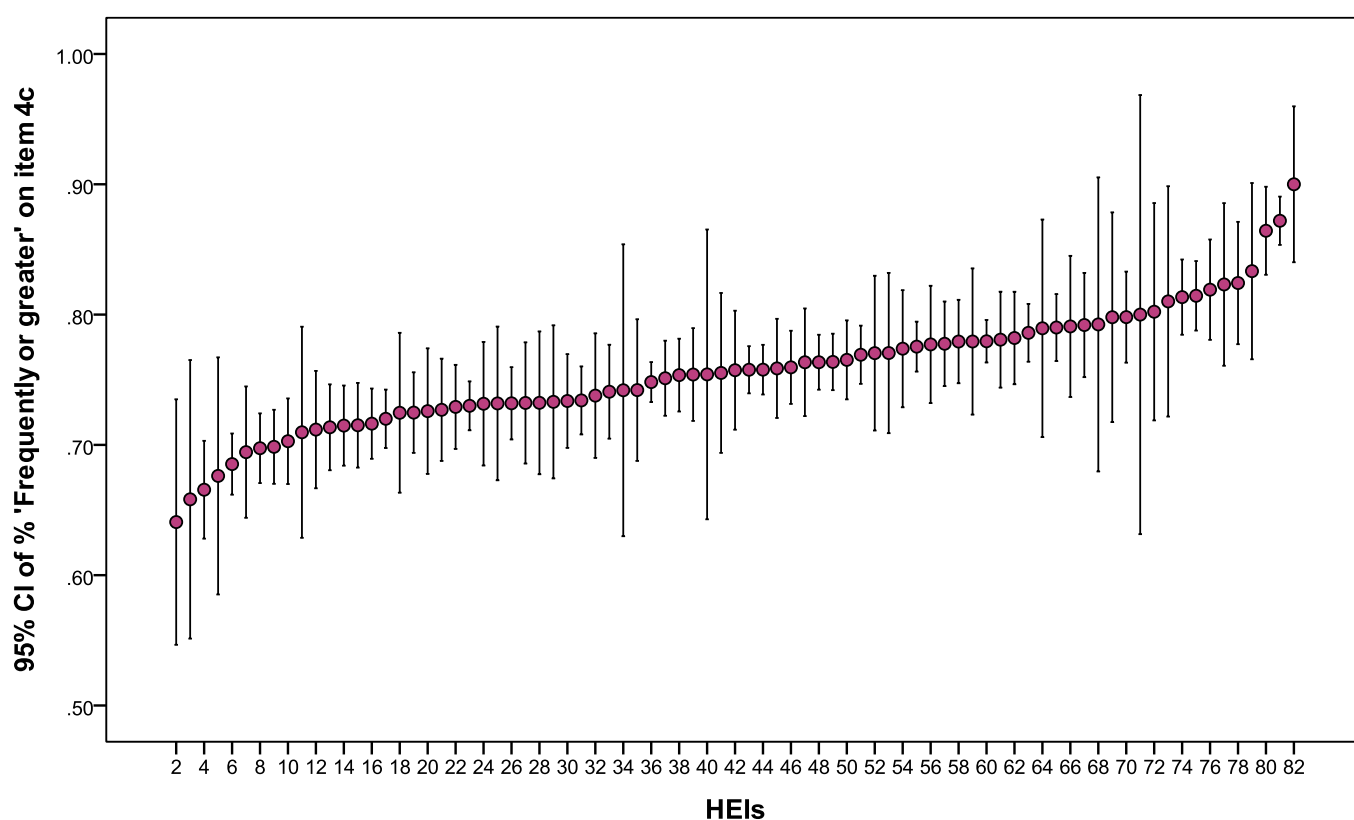
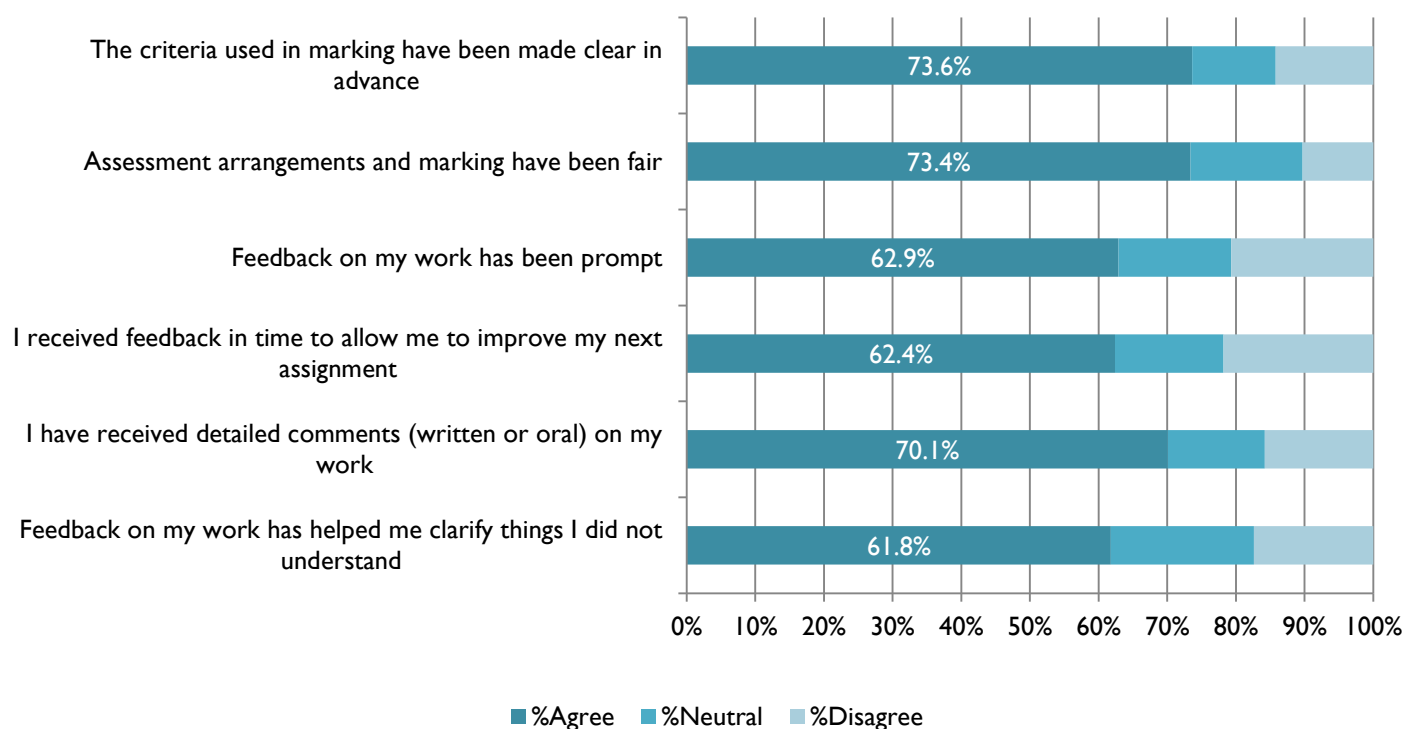


Figure 4.4: Percentage of students who frequently or more often are required to judge and evaluate information, arguments, or methods, by institution

4.2. Assessment and feedback

The percentage in agreement with the assessment and feedback items has increased slightly on every item compared with PTES 2011, most notably on the two items around the timeliness of feedback (recognising of course that the profile of institutions responding is slightly different in 2012). Overall, though, these two items have among the weakest levels of agreement of the items in PTES, as does 'Feedback on my work has helped me clarify things I did not understand'. It is also interesting to note that 'Feedback on my work has been prompt' and 'Feedback on my work has helped me clarify things I did not understand' received the lowest levels of positivity across the UK in the undergraduate National Student Survey 2011.



N = 51,705 - 53,619

Figure 4.5: Experience of assessment and feedback

Figure 4.6 shows how the mean scale score for assessment and feedback (UK mean of 3.75) varies between institutions, showing the potential for sharing of best practice between institutions, although the error bars remind us that we cannot always be confident that many of the differences in experiences of those answering the survey in each institution are actually reflective of differences in experience of all PGT students.

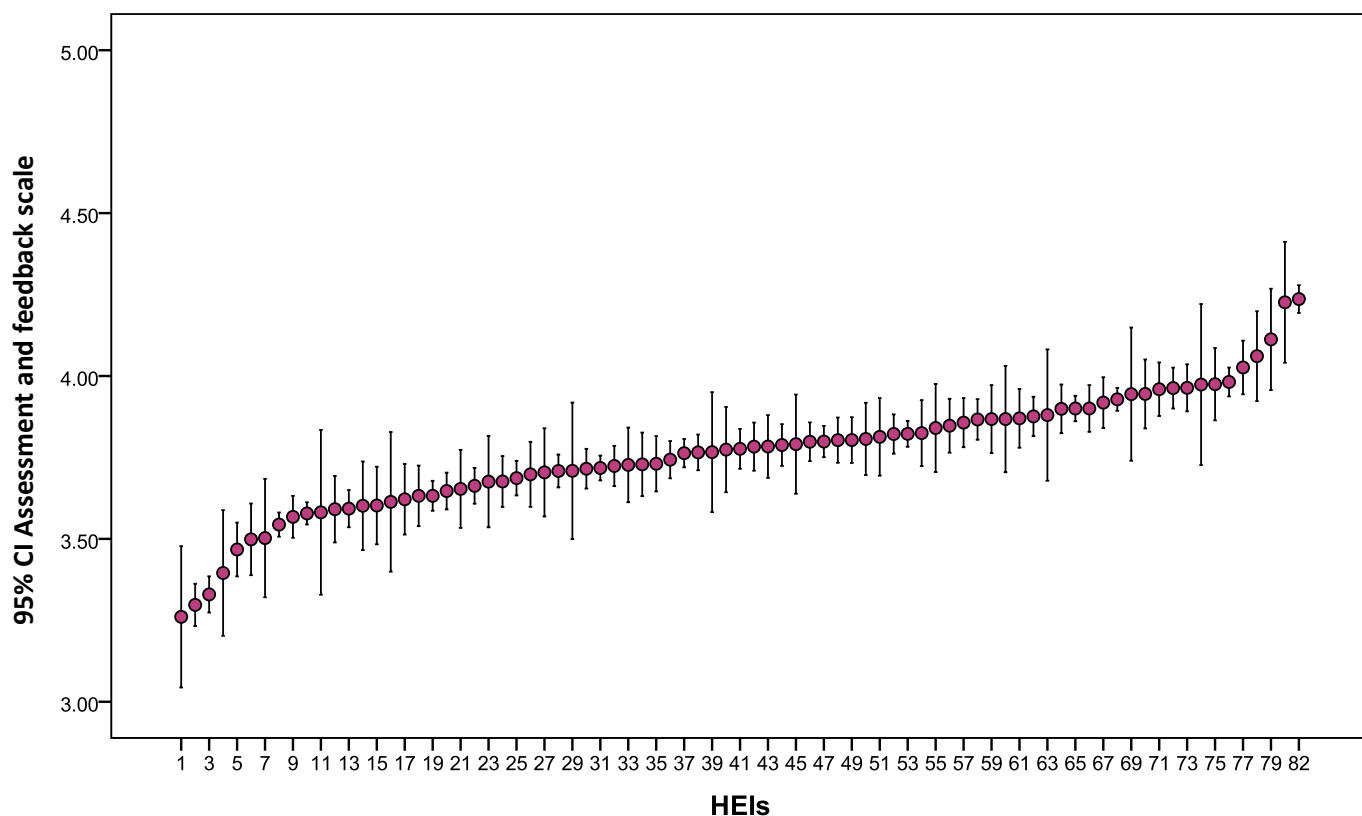
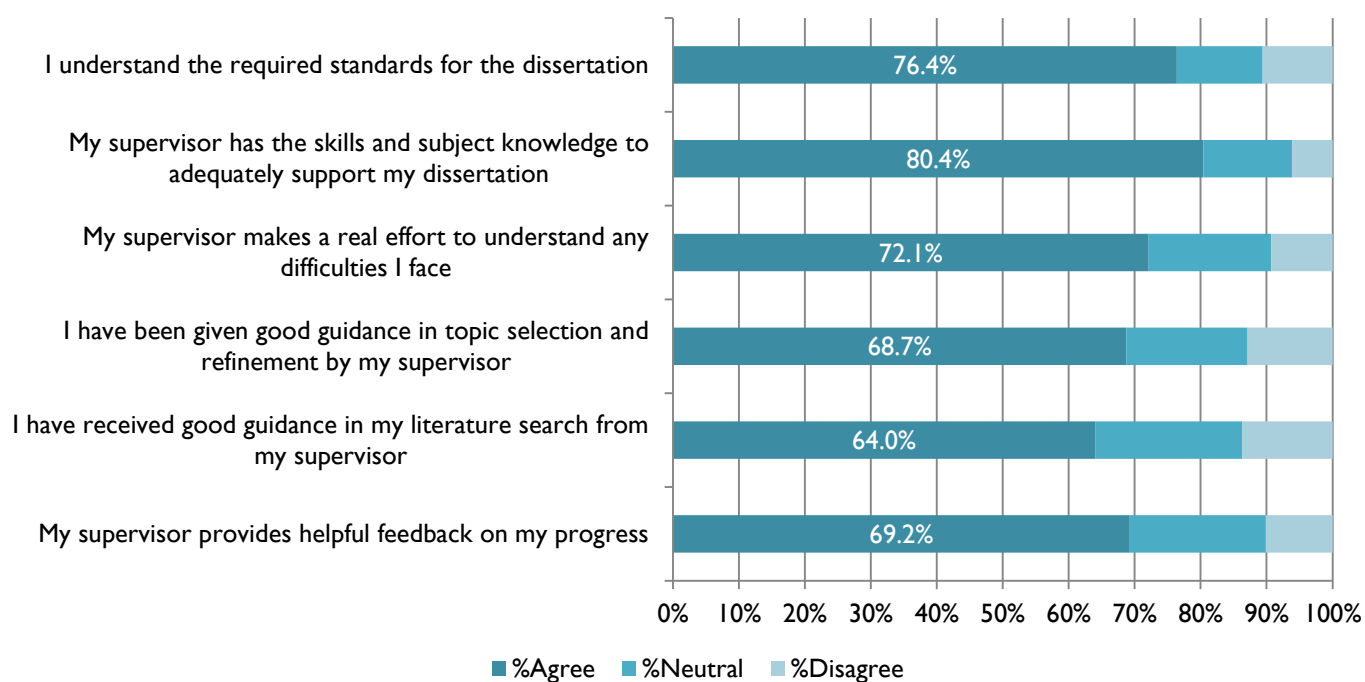


Figure 4.6: Mean scale scores for assessment and feedback, by institution

4.3. Dissertation

The experience of studying for the dissertation is shown in Figure 4.7. PTES 2012 ran in a window in the Spring, with the last possible close date of 14 June, so not all students will have had a full experience of their dissertation (if, indeed, they take one) by the time they answered PTES. 38,101 respondents said that they needed to complete a dissertation (73.2% of those who answered question 6). Of these, 36,863 responded to item 7a ('I understand the required standards for the dissertation'), but by item 7f ('My supervisor provides helpful feedback on my progress') the response had dropped to 29,925 students, which is to be expected as students would need to have their dissertation in progress to meaningfully answer this question. Overall, responses suggest that the areas that most require attention nationally are to do with the guidance and feedback provided by supervisors, with under 70% of students reporting a positive experience.

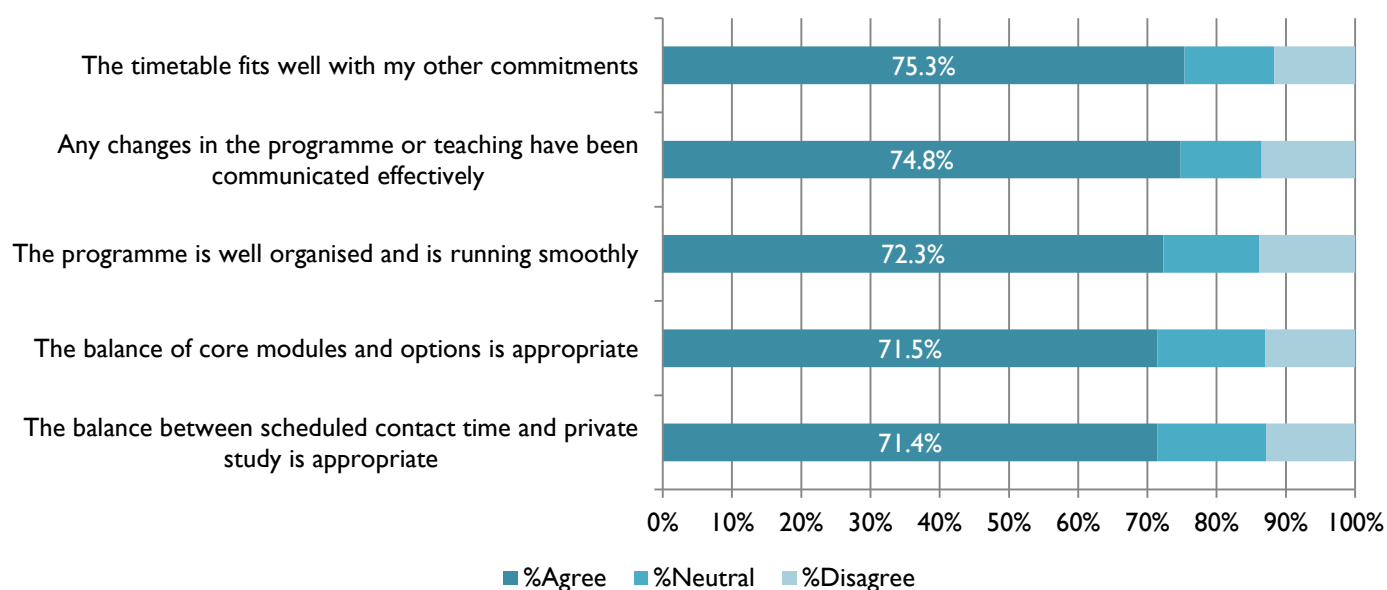


N = 29,925 - 36,863

Figure 4.7: Experience of undertaking a dissertation

4.4. Organisation and management

Figure 4.8 shows how students report their experience of the organisation and management of their course. As a whole this is one of the lower performing scales, although no individual items really stands out with over 70% of students agreeing with each statement. Further analysis of this scale in Section 6 (Experience by mode of study) examines the difference in experience of organisation and management for full-time and part-time students, given the importance of flexible learning to the latter.

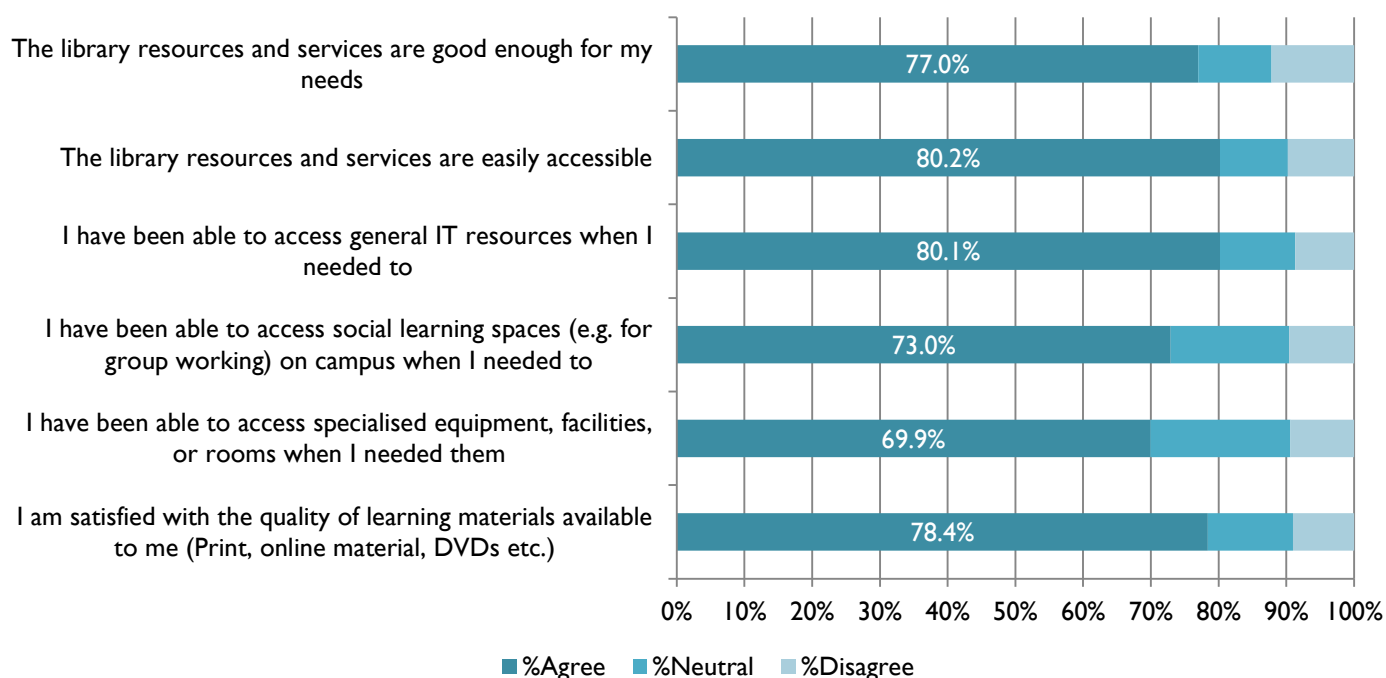


N = 47,135 - 53,791

Figure 4.8: Experience of organisation and management

4.5. Learning resources

Overall, satisfaction is high with learning resources, although the four items asking about ‘access’ to resources have notably more agreement among face-to-face learners than for distance learners, explored in greater detail in Section 6. The answers of distance learners do not wholly explain the lower scores for the two items referring to access to social learning spaces and specialised equipment, facilities or rooms, which also have lower levels of agreement among face-to-face learners than the other items. However, there are a large percentage of students answering ‘neither agree nor disagree’ for these items, possibly indicating that this option has been used instead of the ‘not applicable’ option by some respondents.



N = 37,325 – 52,848

Figure 4.9: Experience of learning resources

4.6. Skills and personal development

Skills and personal development is one of the scales with highest levels of agreement with just over four in five students agreeing that their programme has developed their research and transferable skills. There is less agreement (and more ambivalence) around whether programmes have helped improve confident self-presentation and communication skills. These items are both similar to items in the undergraduate national student survey where agreement is higher at around 80%, but it may be that these questions are thought to be less appropriate for postgraduate taught students who have already developed these skills through undergraduate study and, in many cases, through significant career experience.

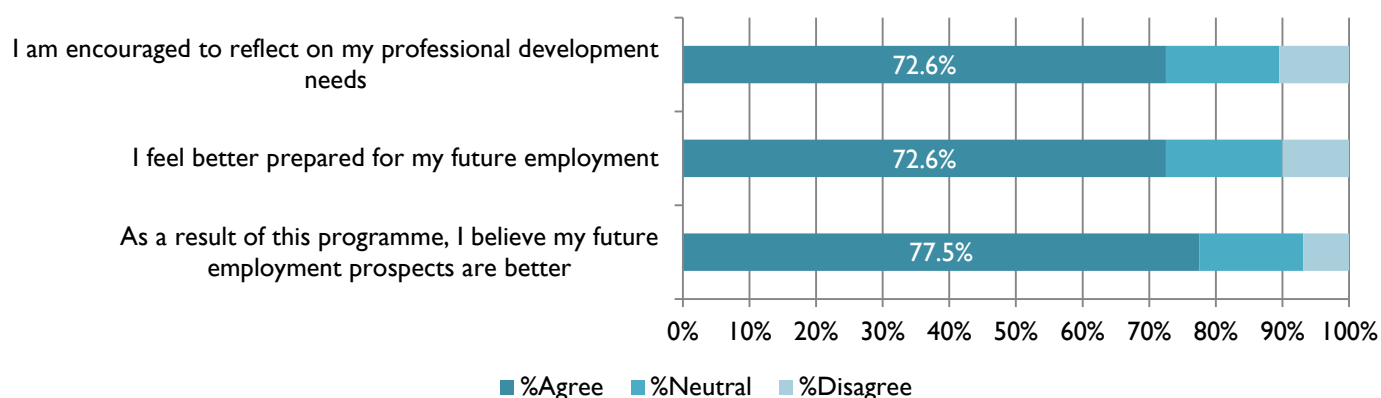


N = 52,928 - 53,319

Figure 4.10: Experience of skills and personal development

4.7. Career and professional development

Career and professional development is the final experience scale with around three in four students in agreement with the items, with the item on perceived better employment prospects the strongest.



N = 52,491 - 52,783

Figure 4.11: Experience of career and professional development

5. Experience by discipline

PTES allows data to be analysed by 41 different subject groupings (JACS Level 2) allowing participating institutions to benchmark performance at institutional level within the Bristol Online Surveys system. For ease of reporting here, these subjects are further grouped into 20 subject areas¹¹. Table 5.1 summarises how the motivations for taking a PGT programme vary by subject area.

Table 5.1: Summary profile of motivations by discipline

Motivation (average)	Summary
To improve my employment prospects (59.5%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chosen most often by students of Geographical Studies and Mass Communications and Documentation (both 69.7%), followed by Business and Administrative Studies (68.6%). Chosen least often by students of Medicine and Dentistry (45.3%), Education (46.2%) and Historical and Philosophical Studies (46.8%).
To progress in my current career path (i.e. a professional qualification) (58.7%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chosen most often by students of Medicine and Dentistry (72.1%), Architecture, Building and Planning (70.8%) and Veterinary Science (70.0%). Chosen least often by students of Historical and Philosophical Studies (30.7%), Languages (41.9%) and Mathematical Sciences (44.5%).
For personal interest (50.2%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chosen most often by students of Historical and Philosophical Studies (76.5%), Languages (69.2%) and Combined programmes (64.8%). Chosen least often by students of Education (39.1%), Architecture Building and Planning (42.7%) and Engineering and Technology (45.6%).
To enable me to progress to a higher level qualification (e.g. PhD) (37.7%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chosen most often by students of Historical and Philosophical Studies (53.4%), Biological Sciences (52.2%) and Physical Sciences (51.8%). Chosen least often by students of Education (27.9%), Law (32.0%) and Business and Administrative Studies (32.8%).
To change my current career (20.6%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chosen most often by students of Veterinary Science (30.0%), Combined programmes (25.2%) and Business and Administrative Studies (24.5%). Chosen least often by students of Medicine and Dentistry (10.2%), Law and Historical and Philosophical Studies (both 13.8%).
As a requirement to enter a particular profession (19.6%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chosen most often by students of Education (33.4%), Architecture, Building and Planning (29.2%) and Biological Sciences (26.4%). Chosen least often by students of Medicine and Dentistry (9.9%), Business and Administrative Studies (14.2%) and Historical and Philosophical Studies (14.6%).
To meet the requirements of my current job (10.0%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chosen most often by students of Subjects Allied to Medicine (19.5%), Medicine and Dentistry students (17.3%) and Veterinary Science (12.3%). Chosen least often by students of Historical and Philosophical Studies (2.0%), Creative Arts and Design (4.1%) and Languages (4.6%).

Table 5.2 looks at responses to question 13g, measuring overall experience relative to expectations. Those subjects with the greatest proportion of respondents having their expectations met or exceeded were Law, Medicine and Dentistry, and Agriculture and Related Subjects (all around 91% of students having

¹¹ JACS Level 1, plus 'Geographical studies' as used in the NSS.

expectations met or exceeded), with the lowest levels in Creative Arts and Design, Biological Sciences and Geographical Studies (85-86% of students having expectations met or exceeded). Differences between the subjects are thus relatively small with the great majority of students having their expectations met or exceeded nationally in all subject areas. Those subjects leading to professional qualifications are slightly more likely to have expectations met.

Table 5.2: Overall experience relative to expectations, by discipline

	Below my expectations	Met my expectations	Exceeded my expectations	N
Medicine and Dentistry	9.3%	12.3%	78.4%	1,678
Subjects Allied to Medicine	10.6%	15.7%	73.7%	3,929
Biological Sciences	14.1%	13.3%	72.7%	3,739
Veterinary Science	10.9%	14.7%	74.4%	129
Agriculture and Related Subjects	9.3%	12.6%	78.1%	183
Physical Sciences	11.9%	13.9%	74.2%	581
Geographical Studies	14.1%	15.4%	70.5%	1,022
Mathematical Sciences	9.8%	14.1%	76.0%	651
Computer Science	12.4%	11.2%	76.4%	1,512
Engineering and Technology	10.6%	12.9%	76.5%	3,543
Architecture, Building and Planning	11.6%	15.2%	73.2%	1,412
Social Studies	11.3%	13.9%	74.8%	4,873
Law	8.9%	13.9%	77.2%	2,373
Business and Administrative Studies	10.1%	13.6%	76.3%	11,222
Mass Communications and Documentation	13.2%	13.3%	73.5%	1,655
Languages	12.3%	13.5%	74.2%	1,774
Historical and Philosophical Studies	11.6%	12.6%	75.8%	1,597
Creative Arts and Design	15.2%	13.0%	71.8%	2,815
Education	11.3%	14.0%	74.6%	5,995
Combined	12.3%	15.0%	72.7%	758

Table 5.3 gives the percentage of students in each discipline area saying their expectations were met or exceeded for different dimensions of their learning experience. The three highest levels are highlighted for each dimension. Here some wider differences emerge, possibly suggesting opportunities for learning between subject areas.

Table 5.3: Experience met or exceeded expectations, by discipline

	Quality of teaching and learning	Assessment and feedback	Organisation and management	Learning resources	Skills and personal development	Career and professional development	N
Medicine and Dentistry	88.7%	81.7%	85.1%	91.1%	92.5%	92.7%	1,681 - 1,694
Subjects Allied to Medicine	87.8%	78.9%	78.3%	90.9%	94.1%	92.8%	3,954 - 3,973
Biological Sciences	84.6%	75.0%	76.9%	89.2%	90.6%	86.6%	3,744 - 3,769
Veterinary Science	84.6%	64.6%	76.9%	87.6%	90.0%	86.9%	129 - 130
Agriculture and Related Subjects	90.2%	76.1%	85.9%	94.5%	93.5%	89.6%	183 - 184
Physical Sciences	86.3%	74.5%	75.6%	89.2%	92.6%	88.5%	582 - 586
Geographical Studies	83.8%	72.3%	77.4%	89.2%	90.1%	85.4%	1,041 - 1,048
Mathematical Sciences	85.0%	77.0%	86.3%	91.5%	90.1%	89.1%	654 - 659
Computer Science	85.6%	78.8%	83.2%	93.1%	90.8%	87.5%	1,518 - 1,529
Engineering and Technology	86.2%	77.1%	83.8%	93.0%	92.4%	89.5%	3,545 - 3,569
Architecture, Building and Planning	83.9%	75.5%	77.1%	89.8%	91.5%	87.8%	1,420 - 1,429
Social Studies	85.9%	79.7%	81.0%	88.7%	90.7%	86.2%	4,907 - 4,930
Law	88.1%	78.4%	82.1%	90.1%	92.1%	89.6%	2,384 - 2,398
Business and Administrative Studies	86.6%	80.6%	84.7%	92.6%	92.4%	89.1%	11,285 - 11,355
Mass Communications and Documentation	84.2%	79.6%	79.6%	88.6%	90.7%	85.4%	1,656 - 1,678
Languages	86.7%	81.0%	79.6%	88.0%	90.5%	84.9%	1,788 - 1,803
Historical and Philosophical Studies	88.6%	78.7%	78.4%	84.8%	89.4%	85.3%	1,611 - 1,627
Creative Arts and Design	81.1%	78.4%	70.7%	87.4%	89.6%	81.7%	2,821 - 2,847
Education	87.0%	82.5%	80.5%	90.1%	93.7%	92.7%	6,018 - 6,058
Combined	86.3%	76.6%	78.3%	90.3%	90.7%	86.0%	772 - 776

6. Experience by mode of study

This section examines differences in the experience of part-time and full-time students, as well as those who are primarily distance learners and those who are primarily face-to-face learners.

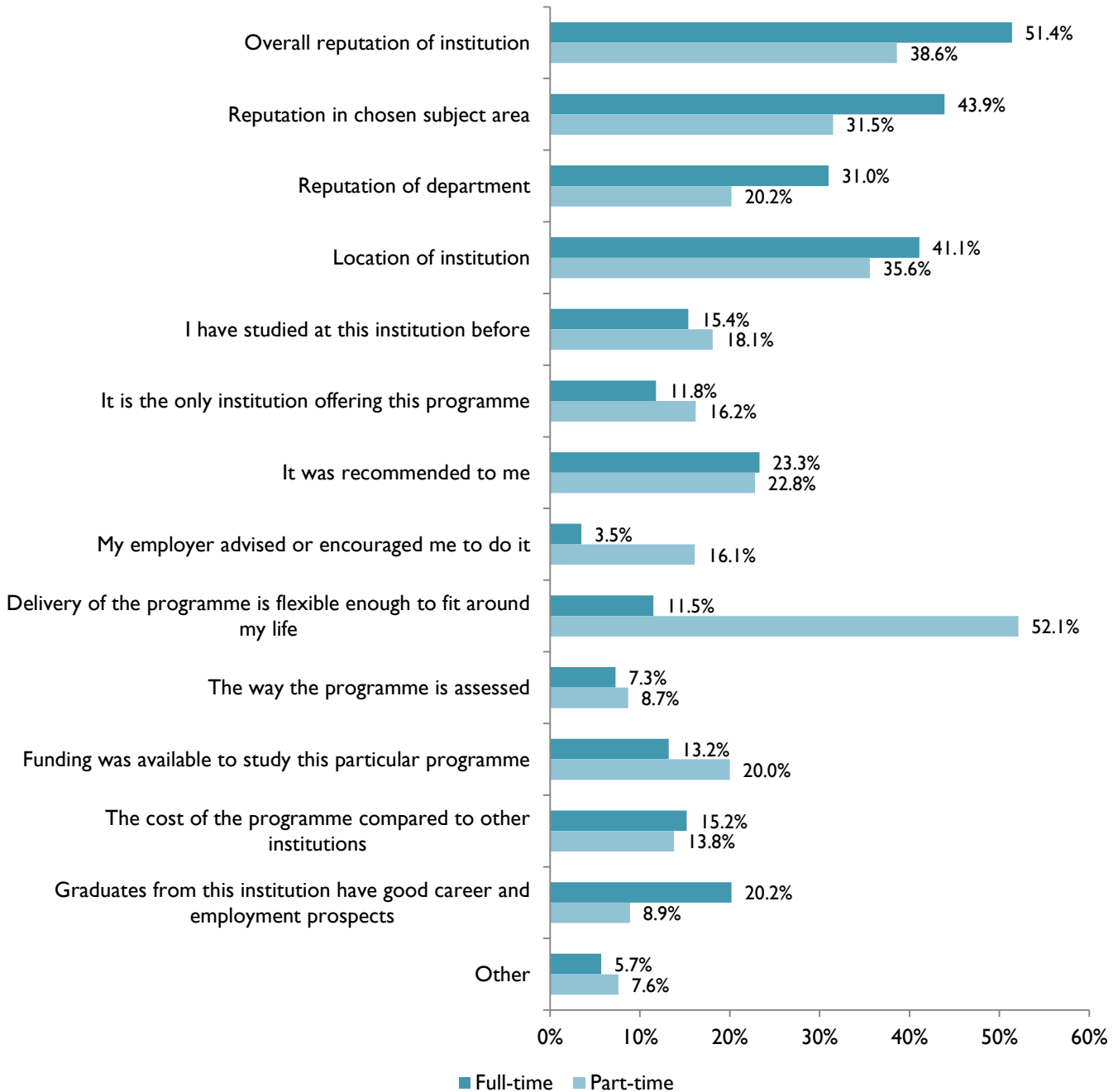
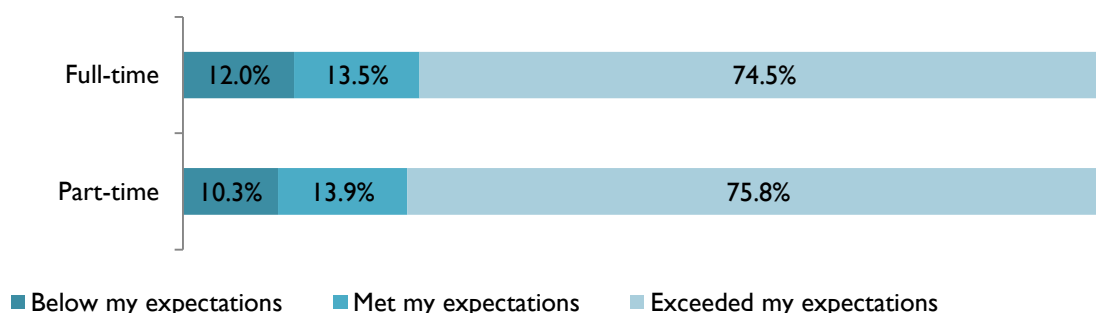


Figure 6.1: Reasons for studying this qualification at this institution, by mode of study

Figure 6.1 shows how reasons for choosing an institution and course vary between part-time and full-time students. The most striking difference here lies in the importance of flexible programme delivery, which is cited as a reason for programme and institution choice by over half of part-time students compared with just over one in ten full-time students. As might be expected, employer encouragement is chosen by a significantly greater proportion of part-time students than by full-time students, as is the availability of

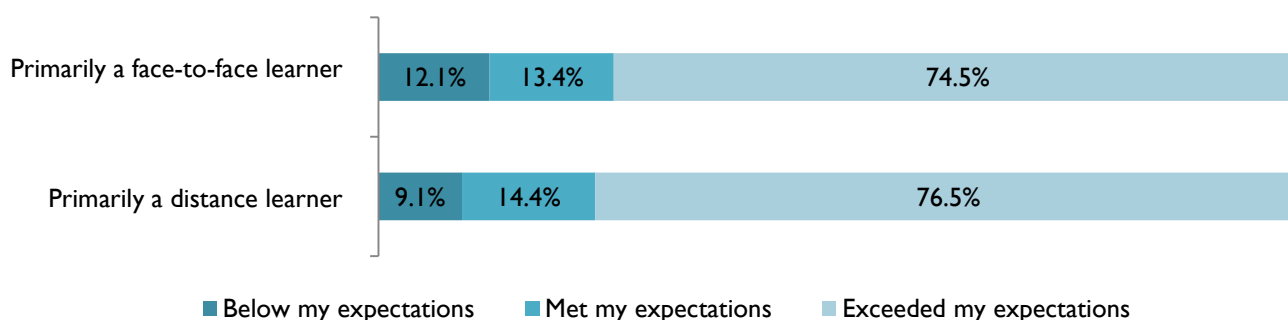
funding. Interestingly, the location of institution is less important for part-time students, reflecting the greater proportion of these students who are distance learners (though it should be noted that location is important for more part-time face-to-face learners than for any other group). More full-time students are concerned with reputational issues and by the employment prospects of graduates, perhaps reflecting the fact that full-time students are less likely to already be in graduate employment

Figures 6.2 and 6.3 examine differences in experience by mode of study and mode of delivery respectively. Differences are relatively small but part-time students are slightly more likely to have their expectations met than full-time students and distance learners are slightly more likely to have their expectations met than face-to-face learners. Part-time and distance learners are more likely to be older and more likely to be in employment, so the slight differences in experience may be primarily related to factors other than mode of study per se.



N = 52,497

Figure 6.2: Experience met or exceeded expectations, by mode of study



N = 51,789

Figure 6.3: Experience met or exceeded expectations, by mode of delivery

Table 6.1 gives the mean scale scores for mode of study and mode of delivery. Ratings by part-time and distance learners are all notably higher than for full-time and face-to-face learners respectively with the exception of learning resources (which full-time and face-to-face learners rate more highly) and dissertation, for which there is no meaningful difference. Although institutions do need to ensure that appropriate learning resources are provided and tailored for all study modes, the lower scores for part-time and distance learners are in large part an artefact of some of the survey questions that ask about access to physical spaces and facilities.

Table 6.1: Scale scores by mode of study and mode of delivery

	Full-time	Part-time	N	Face-to-face	Distance	N
Quality of teaching and learning scale	3.90	4.00	53,120	3.92	3.98	52,406
Staff scale	4.01	4.14	52,114	4.04	4.11	51,391
Depth of learning scale	3.82	3.99	53,127	3.84	4.00	52,416
Assessment and feedback scale	3.67	3.91	51,294	3.70	3.94	50,614
Dissertation scale	3.97	3.99	29,937	3.98	3.97	29,500
Organisation and management scale	3.84	3.95	51,304	3.86	3.96	50,592
Learning resources scale	4.03	3.95	41,797	4.04	3.86	41,176
Skills and personal development scale	4.01	4.06	51,935	4.01	4.08	51,246
Career and professional development scale	3.93	4.09	50,563	3.94	4.16	49,886

Given the importance of flexible programme delivery to part-time students (as shown in Figure 6.1), Table 6.2 analyses the experience of organisation and management for both part-time and distance learners. In relation to the timetable fitting with other commitments there is little difference in agreement between full-time and part-time students, which is encouraging, although it is also concerning that 25% of part-time students are not in agreement with this. Significantly more part-time and distance learners agree that their programme is well organised and the balance of core and optional modules is appropriate compared with their full-time and face-to-face counterparts. It might be worth exploring whether some of the course organisation and design principles used in courses with a high proportion of part-time and distance learners hold lessons for perhaps more traditional courses more often studied full-time and/or face-to-face.

Table 6.2: Experience of organisation and management, by mode of study and by mode of delivery

	Full-time	Part-time	N	Face-to-face	Distance	N
The timetable fits well with my other commitments	75.3%	75.5%	52,242	75.9%	74.1%	51,540
Any changes in the programme or teaching have been communicated effectively	74.1%	76.1%	51,251	74.0%	77.6%	50,548
The programme is well organised and is running smoothly	69.9%	76.6%	52,763	70.6%	77.9%	52,057
The balance of core modules and options is appropriate	68.9%	76.4%	46,195	69.9%	77.3%	45,564
The balance between scheduled contact time and private study is appropriate	71.0%	72.5%	50,970	72.1%	69.8%	50,250

7. Experience by disability

5.4% (2907) of respondents reported having a disability. Figure 7.1 shows the types of disabilities experienced by respondents (more than one option could be selected), with the most common disability reported being specific learning difficulty, followed by mental health condition and long-standing illness or health condition.

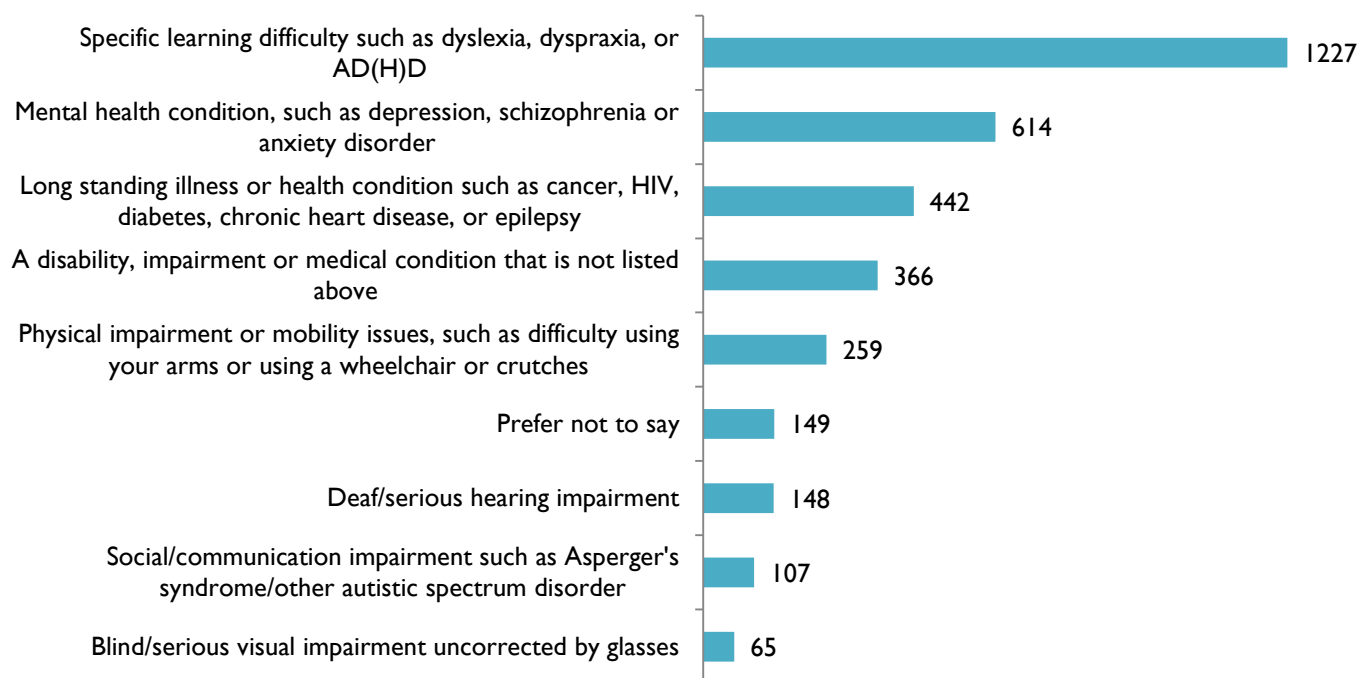


Figure 7.1: Types of disability experienced by respondents

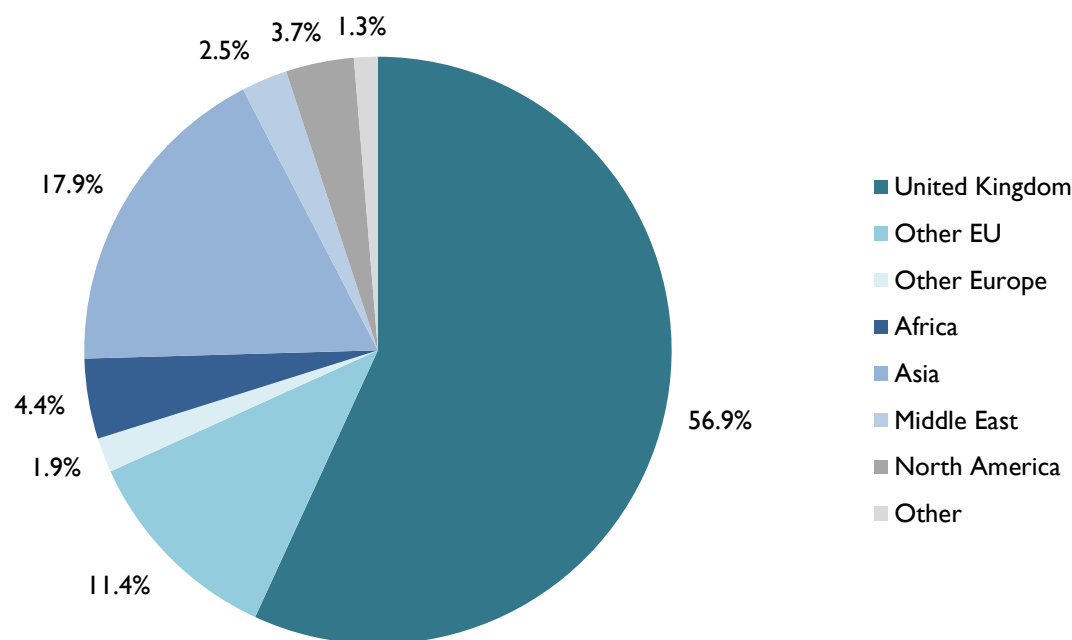
Table 7.1 examines the proportion of students reporting that their expectations were met or exceeded by whether or not they had a disability, and by the broad type of disability reported. The table shows that fewer disabled students have their expectations met or exceeded on the quality of teaching and learning, assessment and feedback, and overall experience, compared with those students without a disability. However, there are also some interesting patterns by type of disability. Those students with physical disabilities and long-standing illnesses generally report a better experience than those with other types of disability such as mental health conditions and specific learning difficulties (and, with the exception of quality of teaching and learning, social and communication impairments). Indeed, the proportion of students with physical disabilities having their expectations met or exceeded is often little different from that of students without a disability, though importantly this doesn't hold true for overall experience nor for blind or visually impaired students in relation to assessment and feedback. This suggests that, at least in some key aspects of teaching and learning, institutions' provision is often meeting the needs of students with physical disabilities, but that there is still some way to go in meeting the needs of those students with specific learning difficulties and mental health conditions.

Table 7.1: Experience met or exceeded expectations, by disability

	Quality of teaching and learning	Assessment and feedback	Overall experience of my course	N
1. Social/communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome/other autistic spectrum disorder	84.9%	71.7%	80.0%	105-106
2. Blind/serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses	86.2%	73.8%	84.4%	64-65
3. Deaf/serious hearing impairment	89.2%	80.8%	86.9%	145-148
4. Long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy	83.4%	75.1%	84.9%	436-439
5. Mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder	79.6%	69.3%	80.5%	604-614
6. Specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, or AD(H)D	80.1%	69.3%	81.8%	1,208-1,217
7. Physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using your arms or using a wheelchair or crutches	84.9%	80.6%	86.6%	253-259
8. A disability, impairment or medical condition that is not listed above	81.6%	72.7%	82.5%	361-365
9. Prefer not to say	75.8%	68.9%	75.7%	148-149
All disabled students	81.9%	72.2%	83.2%	2,858-2,892
All students without a disability	86.4%	79.6%	89.0%	49,795-50,430

8. Experience by domicile

Figure 8.1 shows the breakdown of PTES 2012 respondents' place of residence by major country group, showing that 57% of respondents normally live in the UK while 18% are from Asia and just over 11% are from other EU countries. For ease of reporting, the 'Other' category includes categories with less than 1% of respondents, including South America (0.6%) and Australasia (0.3%).



N = 54,581

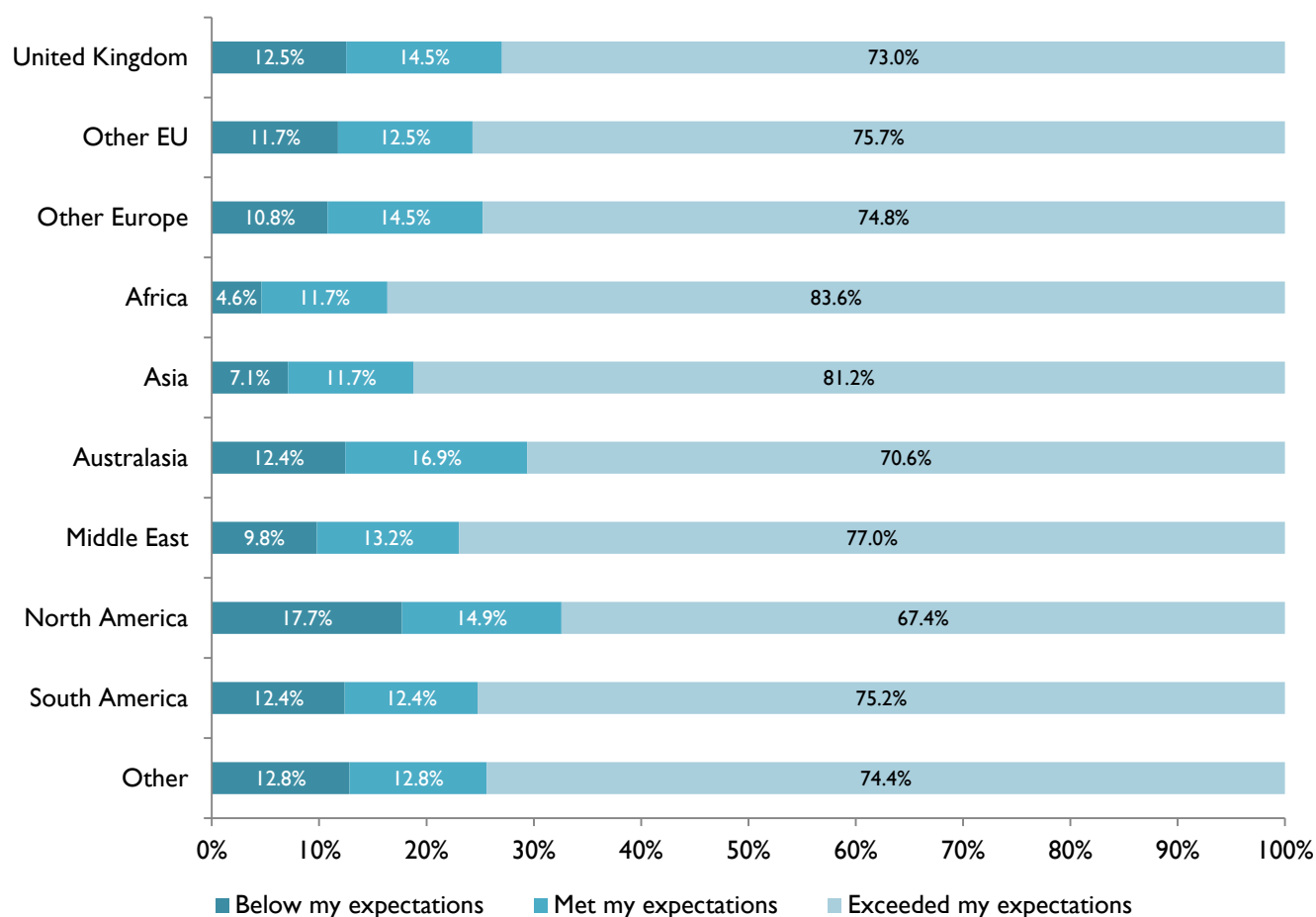
Figure 8.1: Place of residence, by major country group

Figure 8.2 shows considerable differences in experience relative to expectations between students with different places of residence. In particular, students from Africa and Asia are much more likely to have their expectations met or exceeded than those from North America, Australasia, the UK, South America and Europe¹².

Table 8.1 shows the percentage of students from major country groups¹³ saying their experience met or exceeded expectations of different dimensions of the learning experience. More students from every country group say their expectations of skills and personal development, and learning resources have been met or exceeded compared with other dimensions of experience. Fewer students from every country group (except the UK, though only just) say their expectations of assessment and feedback have been met or exceeded compared with other dimensions of experience. One third of North American students do not have their expectations of assessment and feedback met.

¹² There were only 180 respondents from Australasia and 339 from South America.

¹³ Only country groups with more than 1,000 responses are shown.



N = 51,436

Figure 8.2: Overall experience relative to expectations, by major country group

Table 8.1: Experience met or exceeded expectations, by major country group

	United Kingdom	Other EU	Africa	Asia	Middle East	North America
Quality of teaching and learning	85.4%	83.9%	92.9%	90.7%	85.5%	79.5%
Assessment and feedback	77.6%	77.0%	88.1%	87.5%	77.2%	67.8%
Organisation and management	77.3%	80.7%	93.3%	90.6%	86.8%	72.8%
Learning resources	89.1%	90.0%	95.7%	94.1%	91.6%	86.3%
Skills and personal development	91.7%	91.1%	96.2%	93.3%	91.9%	86.0%
Career and professional development	89.0%	87.7%	94.3%	88.6%	89.9%	80.9%

9. Taking enhancement forward

The national report for PTES 2012 gives an overview of the taught postgraduate experience across the UK. This can be used by policy makers and sector bodies to inform their priorities and design support around the postgraduate taught experience, and by participating institutions to benchmark their results and consider whether the experiences and patterns reported nationally are reflective of their own students' experience.

However the results are used, it is important to remember that survey results are not the last word on the student experience but an indication of possible areas of best practice and areas for enhancement. The key strengths of student surveys come from their extensive breadth of coverage, both in relation to the student population and the range of issues addressed, and in the relative efficiency of analysis, presentation and comparison of results. However, depth of understanding and context are also vital to inform enhancement activity. It is always important to drill down into the results through further investigation, including more detailed course-specific feedback, qualitative investigation such as student (and staff) focus groups, and through partnerships that involve students in the analysis and dissemination of results and discussions about enhancement.

The current review of PTES is collecting examples of how institutions have used PTES to inform enhancements to the experience of taught postgraduates with a view to sharing this good practice across the sector. If you would like to tell us about work undertaken at your institution that has been informed by PTES, please contact us at surveys@heacademy.ac.uk

Going forward, this is an interesting time for surveying and enhancing the taught postgraduate experience, with HEFCE having recently commissioned work to explore the information needs of taught postgraduates and the feasibility of a public national satisfaction survey of taught postgraduates. These developments could have important implications for the use of surveys for enhancement and, indeed, a key motivation is the idea that competition for informed students will help drive that enhancement. However, it will be important to make sure that published data from any new survey can be robust and meaningful enough to fairly inform this competition. It is also to be hoped that any new survey will continue to provide institutions with the range, type and detail of information needed to inform enhancement.

The HEA will provide PTES again to the sector in 2013, ideally timed as interest in enhancing the postgraduate taught experience grows in importance. The biennial Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) will also run at the same time. Institutions will be asked to express their interest in participating in these surveys from September 2012. More information about the HEA's surveys work and related enhancement resources can be found at <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/student-experience-surveys>

The HEA also provides bespoke consultancy around the use of student surveys for enhancement – please contact surveys@heacademy.ac.uk to discuss your requirements.

Appendix I: Results tables

A1.1 Main experience scales

	%Disagree	%Neutral	%Agree	N
Quality of teaching and learning				
1.a The teaching and learning methods are effective for this type of programme	12.0%	8.1%	79.9%	54,217
1.b There is sufficient contact time between staff and students to support effective learning	19.8%	12.3%	67.9%	53,955
1.c I am happy with the teaching support I received from staff on my course	15.2%	12.2%	72.6%	53,995
1.d The course is intellectually stimulating	9.5%	8.4%	82.1%	53,851
2.a Staff are good at explaining things	10.0%	9.2%	80.8%	53,872
2.b Staff made the subject interesting	10.4%	13.9%	75.7%	53,612
2.c Staff are enthusiastic about what they are teaching	8.0%	9.5%	82.5%	53,393
Assessment and feedback				
5.a The criteria used in marking have been made clear in advance	14.2%	12.2%	73.6%	53,619
5.b Assessment arrangements and marking have been fair	10.3%	16.3%	73.4%	52,374
5.c Feedback on my work has been prompt	20.7%	16.4%	62.9%	52,537
5.d I received feedback in time to allow me to improve my next assignment	21.8%	15.8%	62.4%	51,705
5.e I have received detailed comments (written or oral) on my work	15.8%	14.1%	70.1%	52,567
5.f Feedback on my work has helped me clarify things I did not understand	17.4%	20.8%	61.8%	52,144
Dissertation				
7.a I understand the required standards for the dissertation	10.6%	13.0%	76.4%	36,863
7.b My supervisor has the skills and subject knowledge to adequately support my dissertation	6.1%	13.5%	80.4%	32,929
7.c My supervisor makes a real effort to understand any difficulties I face	9.3%	18.6%	72.1%	31,499
7.d I have been given good guidance in topic selection and refinement by my supervisor	12.9%	18.4%	68.7%	31,700
7.e I have received good guidance in my literature search from my supervisor	13.7%	22.3%	64.0%	30,662
7.f My supervisor provides helpful feedback on my progress	10.1%	20.6%	69.2%	29,925

Organisation and management				
8.a The timetable fits well with my other commitments	11.7%	12.9%	75.3%	53,259
8.b Any changes in the programme or teaching have been communicated effectively	13.5%	11.7%	74.8%	52,241
8.c The programme is well organised and is running smoothly	13.8%	13.9%	72.3%	53,791
8.d The balance of core modules and options is appropriate	13.0%	15.6%	71.5%	47,135
8.e The balance between scheduled contact time and private study is appropriate	12.8%	15.7%	71.4%	51,941
Learning resources				
10.a The library resources and services are good enough for my needs	12.2%	10.8%	77.0%	52,848
10.b The library resources and services are easily accessible	9.8%	10.0%	80.2%	52,729
10.c I have been able to access general IT resources when I needed to	8.7%	11.1%	80.1%	50,562
10.d I have been able to access social learning spaces (e.g. for group working) on campus when I needed to	9.6%	17.5%	73.0%	41,514
10.e I have been able to access specialised equipment, facilities, or rooms when I needed them	9.4%	20.7%	69.9%	37,325
10.f I am satisfied with the quality of learning materials available to me (Print, online material, DVDs etc.)	9.0%	12.6%	78.4%	52,404
Skills and personal development				
11.a The programme has developed my research skills	7.0%	11.5%	81.5%	53,259
11.b The programme has developed my transferable skills	5.8%	13.3%	80.9%	53,243
11.c As a result of the programme I am more confident about independent learning	6.7%	14.9%	78.4%	53,319
11.d The programme has helped me to present myself with confidence	8.7%	21.2%	70.1%	52,956
11.e As a results of the programme my communication skills have improved	9.0%	22.9%	68.0%	52,928
11.f As a result of the programme, I feel confident in tackling unfamiliar problems	7.5%	20.4%	72.1%	53,138
Career and professional development				
12.a I am encouraged to reflect on my professional development needs	10.5%	17.0%	72.6%	52,783
12.b I feel better prepared for my future employment	10.0%	17.5%	72.6%	52,491
12.c As a result of this programme, I believe my future employment prospects are better	6.9%	15.6%	77.5%	52,636

A1.2 Overall satisfaction relative to expectations

	Below expectations	Met expectations	Exceeded expectations	N
13.a Quality of teaching and learning	13.9%	13.2%	72.9%	54,194
13.b Assessment and feedback	20.8%	18.2%	60.9%	54,090
13.c Organisation and management	19.2%	17.8%	63.0%	54,127
13.d Learning resources	9.6%	17.8%	72.6%	54,058
13.e Skills and personal development	8.2%	18.5%	73.3%	53,953
13.f Career and professional development	11.5%	20.6%	67.9%	53,775
13.g Overall experience of my course	11.4%	13.7%	74.9%	53,513

A1.3 Additional experience items

	It is consistently good	Variable but generally good	Variable but generally poor	It is consistently poor	N
3. Overall, how would you rate the teaching quality on your programme?	38.3%	54.3%	6.4%	1.0%	52,228

	Never or hardly ever	Sometimes	Frequently or most of the time	N
4.a Analyse ideas or examine a particular case or situation in depth	3.7%	23.8%	72.5%	54,184
4.b Synthesise information or organise ideas or experiences into more complex relationships	6.8%	28.6%	64.6%	54,011
4.c Judge and evaluate information, arguments, or methods	4.1%	20.5%	75.3%	54,006
4.d Apply theories to practice in new situations	8.8%	26.9%	64.3%	54,022

	Much higher than expected	Higher than expected	More or less as expected	Lower than expected	Much lower than expected	N
9. Overall, the workload on the programme is:	10.1%	31.5%	51.7%	5.3%	1.3%	52,901

Appendix 2: PTES 2012 Questionnaire



Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey – PTES 2012

Welcome

The national Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) is run by the Higher Education Academy together with your institution. The survey asks about your experiences of your taught postgraduate programme. The results help to improve the experience of students both in your institution and nationwide.

The survey is divided into several sections which ask about:

- Your experiences of your programme
- Your motivations for taking your programme
- Anonymous information about you and your programme, to help us compare the experience of different students.

It is important that you **complete all sections of the survey** for your views to be included. **The data will not be used to identify any individuals.**

The survey is on six pages and it is not possible to return to a page once it has been completed. When you arrive at the final 'thank you' page, you will know that your responses have been recorded on our database.

Once you click 'continue' you will be directed to the first section of the survey.

Many thanks for your participation.

Dr. Paul Bennett (Higher Education Academy) and Professor Karen O'Brien (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education), University of Birmingham; Chair of the PTES Advisory Group)

Data Protection

All data collected in this survey will be held securely.

Results are confidential to your institution, though your institution may choose to share or publish aggregated, anonymous results. All participating institutions have agreed not to identify any individuals when reporting their results, and to use their best efforts to ensure that no individuals can be identified by implication.

The full PTES dataset will be available to the Higher Education Academy in order to conduct national level analysis, and all results will be reported in an aggregated and anonymised form.

SECTION A: QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

1. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding teaching and learning on your programme?

	Definitely disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Definitely agree	Not applicable
a. The teaching and learning methods are effective for this type of programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. There is sufficient contact time (face-to-face and/or virtual/online) between staff and students to support effective learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. I am happy with the teaching support I received from staff on my course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. The course is intellectually stimulating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding staff on your programme?

	Definitely disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Definitely agree	Not applicable
a. Staff are good at explaining things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Staff made the subject interesting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Staff are enthusiastic about what they are teaching	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. Overall, how would you rate the teaching quality on your programme?

- ✓ It is consistently good
- ✓ It is variable but generally good
- ✓ It is variable but generally poor
- ✓ It is consistently poor

4. To what extent have you been expected to undertake the following activities on your programme?

	Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Frequently	Most of the time
a. Analyse ideas or examine a particular case or situation in depth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Synthesise information or organise ideas or experiences into more complex relationships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Judge and evaluate information, arguments, or methods	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Apply theories to practice in new situations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION B: ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

Feedback includes oral and written feedback given in both formal and informal contexts.

5. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding assessment and feedback on your programme?

	Definitely disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Definitely agree	Not applicable
a. The criteria used in marking have been made clear in advance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Assessment arrangements and marking have been fair	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Feedback on my work has been prompt	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. I received feedback in time to allow me to improve my next assignment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. I have received detailed comments (written or oral) on my work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Feedback on my work has helped me clarify things I did not understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION C: DISSERTATION

6. Do you need to write a dissertation as part of your programme?

- ✓ Yes
- ✓ No (If no, please go to the next section)

7. If yes, to what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding your dissertation and supervisor?

	Definitely disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Definitely agree	Not applicable
a. I understand the required standards for the dissertation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. My supervisor has the skills and subject knowledge to adequately support my dissertation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. My supervisor makes a real effort to understand any difficulties I face	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. I have been given good guidance in topic selection and refinement by my supervisor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. I have received good guidance in my literature search from my supervisor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. My supervisor provides helpful feedback on my progress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION D: ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

8. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding organisation and management of your programme?

	Definitely disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Definitely agree	Not applicable
a. The timetable fits well with my other commitments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Any changes in the programme or teaching have been communicated effectively	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. The programme is well organised and is running smoothly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. The balance of core modules and options is appropriate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. The balance between scheduled contact time and private study is appropriate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. Overall, the workload on the programme is:

- ✓ Much higher than I expected
- ✓ Higher than I expected
- ✓ More or less as I expected
- ✓ Lower than I expected
- ✓ Much lower than I expected

SECTION E: LEARNING RESOURCES

10. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding learning resources on your programme?

	Definitely disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Definitely agree	Not applicable
a. The library resources and services are good enough for my needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. The library resources and services are easily accessible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. I have been able to access general IT resources when I needed to	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. I have been able to access social learning spaces (e.g. for group working) on campus when I needed to	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. I have been able to access specialised equipment, facilities, or rooms when I needed them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. I am satisfied with the quality of learning materials available to me (Print, online material, DVDs, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION F: SKILLS AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

11. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding skills gained on your programme?

	Definitely disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Definitely agree	Not applicable
a. The programme has developed my research skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. The programme has developed my transferable skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. As a result of the programme I am more confident about independent learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. The programme has helped me to present myself with confidence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. As a result of the programme my communication skills have improved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. As a result of the programme, I feel confident in tackling unfamiliar problems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION G: CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

12. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding professional development on your programme?

	Definitely disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Definitely agree	Not applicable
a. I am encouraged to reflect on my professional development needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. I feel better prepared for my future employment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. As a result of this programme, I believe my future employment prospects are better	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION H: OVERALL SATISFACTION

13. Please rate the following aspects of your postgraduate taught programme in terms of how your experience has met with your expectations (-3 it has definitely not met my expectations, 0 it has met my expectations, +3 it has definitely exceeded my expectations)

	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
a. Quality of teaching and learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Assessment and feedback	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Organisation and management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Learning resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Skills and personal development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Career and professional development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. Overall experience of my course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION I: FURTHER COMMENTS

Looking back over your experience of your taught degree programme, are there any particularly positive or negative aspects you would like to highlight?

14. POSITIVE

.....

.....

.....

.....

15. NEGATIVE

.....

.....

.....

.....

[Space for institutional questions]

MOTIVATIONS

16. My main motivations for taking this postgraduate programme were: *(select all that apply)*

- ✓ To enable me to progress to a higher level qualification (e.g. PhD)
- ✓ To progress in my current career path (i.e. a professional qualification)
- ✓ To change my current career
- ✓ To improve my employment prospects
- ✓ As a requirement to enter a particular profession
- ✓ To meet the requirements of my current job
- ✓ For personal interest
- ✓ Other *(Please specify)*.....

17. I am studying for this qualification at this particular institution because of: *(select all that apply)*

- ✓ Overall reputation of institution
- ✓ Reputation in chosen subject area
- ✓ Reputation of department
- ✓ Location of institution
- ✓ I have studied at this institution before
- ✓ It is the only institution offering this programme
- ✓ It was recommended to me
- ✓ My employer advised or encouraged me to do it
- ✓ Delivery of the programme is flexible enough to fit around my life
- ✓ The way the programme is assessed
- ✓ Funding was available to study this particular programme
- ✓ The cost of the programme compared to other institutions
- ✓ Graduates from this institution have good career and employment prospects
- ✓ Other *(Please specify)*.....

YOU AND YOUR PROGRAMME

18. I am registered for the qualification of:

- ✓ Taught Master (e.g. MA, MSc, MBA, LLM)
- ✓ Postgraduate Certificate (including PGCE)
- ✓ Postgraduate Diploma
- ✓ Other (*Please specify*).....

19. What is your age?

- ✓ 25 years old or younger
- ✓ 26-30 years old
- ✓ 31-35 years old
- ✓ 36-40 years old
- ✓ 41-45 years old
- ✓ 46-50 years old
- ✓ 51-55 years old
- ✓ 56 years old or older

20. What is your gender?

- ✓ Male
- ✓ Female

21. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

- ✓ Yes
- ✓ No

If yes, please choose one or more from the following options:

- ✓ Social/communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome/other autistic spectrum disorder
- ✓ Blind/serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses
- ✓ Deaf/serious hearing impairment
- ✓ Long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy
- ✓ Mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder
- ✓ Specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, or AD(H)D
- ✓ Physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using your arms or using a wheelchair or crutches
- ✓ A disability, impairment or medical condition that is not listed above
- ✓ Prefer not to say

For the next question, please respond in relation to the taught postgraduate programme you are currently studying.

22. Please indicate, which of the following most closely matches your discipline area:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ✓ Medicine and Dentistry | ✓ Sociology, Social Policy and Anthropology |
| ✓ Medical Science and Pharmacy | ✓ Social Work |
| ✓ Nursing | ✓ Human and Social Geography |
| ✓ Other subjects allied to Medicine | ✓ Law |
| ✓ Biology and related Sciences | ✓ Business |
| ✓ Sports Science | ✓ Management |
| ✓ Psychology | ✓ Finance and Accounting |
| ✓ Veterinary Sciences | ✓ Tourism, Transport, Travel and others in Business and Administrative studies |
| ✓ Agriculture and related subjects | ✓ Media studies |
| ✓ Physical Science (includes Physics, Chemistry, Forensic and Archaeological Science, Astronomy, Geology) | ✓ Communications and Information studies |
| ✓ Physical Geography and Environmental Science | ✓ English-based studies |
| ✓ Mathematical Sciences | ✓ European Languages and Area studies |
| ✓ Computer Science | ✓ Other Languages and Area studies |
| ✓ Mechanically-based Engineering | ✓ History and Archaeology |
| ✓ Electronic and Electrical Engineering | ✓ Philosophy, Theology and Religious studies |
| ✓ Civil, Chemical and other Engineering | ✓ Art and Design |
| ✓ Technology | ✓ Performing Arts |
| ✓ Architecture, Building and Planning | ✓ Other Creative Arts |
| ✓ Economics | ✓ Teacher Training |
| ✓ Politics | ✓ Education studies |
| | ✓ Combined |

23. *** Which Department do you belong to? *** *This is a question for each institution to map their departmental structure. The format of this question is a drop-down list and question wording can be changed or deleted. If you wish to compare your results with previous years in BOS, please test your question wording carefully to make sure that you can access the information you need.*

24. When did you start your course?

- ✓ After 1 January 2012
- ✓ 1 September 2011 – 31 December 2011
- ✓ 1 September 2010 – 31 August 2011
- ✓ Before 1 September 2010

25. What are you currently registered as?

- ✓ Full-time
- ✓ Part-time
- ✓ Currently not registered (e.g. finished the course) was full-time
- ✓ Currently not registered (e.g. finished the course) was part-time

26. I am:

- ✓ Primarily a face-to-face learner [e.g. based at my institution]
- ✓ Primarily a distance learner [e.g. work based learner, OU student]

27. For fees purposes, is your normal place of residence registered as:

- ✓ Home
- ✓ Other EU
- ✓ Non EU

28. Where is your normal place of residence?

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| ✓ United Kingdom – England | ✓ Channel Islands |
| ✓ United Kingdom – Northern Ireland | ✓ Chile |
| ✓ United Kingdom – Scotland | ✓ China |
| ✓ United Kingdom – Wales | ✓ China, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region |
| ✓ Afghanistan | ✓ China, Macao Special Administrative Region |
| ✓ Åland Islands | ✓ Colombia |
| ✓ Albania | ✓ Comoros |
| ✓ Algeria | ✓ Congo |
| ✓ American Samoa | ✓ Cook Islands |
| ✓ Andorra | ✓ Costa Rica |
| ✓ Angola | ✓ Côte d'Ivoire |
| ✓ Anguilla | ✓ Croatia |
| ✓ Antigua and Barbuda | ✓ Cuba |
| ✓ Argentina | ✓ Cyprus |
| ✓ Armenia | ✓ Czech Republic |
| ✓ Aruba | ✓ Democratic People's Republic of Korea |
| ✓ Australia | ✓ Democratic Republic of the Congo |
| ✓ Austria | ✓ Denmark |
| ✓ Azerbaijan | ✓ Djibouti |
| ✓ Bahamas | ✓ Dominica |
| ✓ Bahrain | ✓ Dominican Republic |
| ✓ Bangladesh | ✓ Ecuador |
| ✓ Barbados | ✓ Egypt |
| ✓ Belarus | ✓ El Salvador |
| ✓ Belgium | ✓ Equatorial Guinea |
| ✓ Belize | ✓ Eritrea |
| ✓ Benin | ✓ Estonia |
| ✓ Bermuda | ✓ Ethiopia |
| ✓ Bhutan | ✓ Faeroe Islands |
| ✓ Bolivia (Plurinational state of) | ✓ Falkland Islands (Malvinas) |
| ✓ Bosnia and Herzegovina | ✓ Fiji |
| ✓ Botswana | ✓ Finland |
| ✓ Brazil | ✓ France |
| ✓ British Virgin Islands | ✓ French Guiana |
| ✓ Brunei Darussalam | ✓ French Polynesia |
| ✓ Bulgaria | ✓ Gabon |
| ✓ Burkina Faso | ✓ Gambia |
| ✓ Burundi | ✓ Georgia |
| ✓ Cambodia | ✓ Germany |
| ✓ Cameroon | ✓ Ghana |
| ✓ Canada | ✓ Gibraltar |
| ✓ Cape Verde | ✓ Greece |
| ✓ Cayman Islands | ✓ Greenland |
| ✓ Central African Republic | ✓ Grenada |
| ✓ Chad | |

- ✓ Guadeloupe
- ✓ Guam
- ✓ Guatemala
- ✓ Guernsey
- ✓ Guinea
- ✓ Guinea-Bissau
- ✓ Guyana
- ✓ Haiti
- ✓ Holy See
- ✓ Honduras
- ✓ Hungary
- ✓ Iceland
- ✓ India
- ✓ Indonesia
- ✓ Iran (Islamic Republic of)
- ✓ Iraq
- ✓ Ireland
- ✓ Isle of Man
- ✓ Israel
- ✓ Italy
- ✓ Jamaica
- ✓ Japan
- ✓ Jersey
- ✓ Jordan
- ✓ Kazakhstan
- ✓ Kenya
- ✓ Kiribati
- ✓ Kosovo
- ✓ Kuwait
- ✓ Kyrgyzstan
- ✓ Lao People's Democratic Republic
- ✓ Latvia
- ✓ Lebanon
- ✓ Lesotho
- ✓ Liberia
- ✓ Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
- ✓ Liechtenstein
- ✓ Lithuania
- ✓ Luxembourg
- ✓ Macedonia, the former Yugoslav Republic of
- ✓ Madagascar
- ✓ Malawi
- ✓ Malaysia
- ✓ Maldives
- ✓ Mali
- ✓ Malta
- ✓ Marshall Islands
- ✓ Martinique
- ✓ Mauritania
- ✓ Mauritius
- ✓ Mayotte
- ✓ Mexico
- ✓ Micronesia (Federated States of)
- ✓ Monaco
- ✓ Mongolia
- ✓ Montenegro
- ✓ Montserrat
- ✓ Morocco
- ✓ Mozambique
- ✓ Myanmar
- ✓ Namibia
- ✓ Nauru
- ✓ Nepal
- ✓ Netherlands
- ✓ Netherlands Antilles
- ✓ New Caledonia
- ✓ New Zealand
- ✓ Nicaragua
- ✓ Niger
- ✓ Nigeria
- ✓ Niue
- ✓ Norfolk Island
- ✓ Northern Mariana Islands
- ✓ Norway
- ✓ Occupied Palestinian Territory
- ✓ Oman
- ✓ Pakistan
- ✓ Palau
- ✓ Panama
- ✓ Papua New Guinea
- ✓ Paraguay
- ✓ Peru
- ✓ Philippines
- ✓ Pitcairn
- ✓ Poland
- ✓ Portugal
- ✓ Puerto Rico
- ✓ Qatar
- ✓ Republic of Korea
- ✓ Republic of Moldova
- ✓ Réunion
- ✓ Romania
- ✓ Russian Federation
- ✓ Rwanda
- ✓ Saint-Barthélemy
- ✓ Saint Helena
- ✓ Saint Kitts and Nevis
- ✓ Saint Lucia
- ✓ Saint-Martin (French part)
- ✓ Saint Pierre and Miquelon
- ✓ Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- ✓ Samoa
- ✓ San Marino
- ✓ Sao Tome and Principe
- ✓ Saudi Arabia
- ✓ Senegal
- ✓ Serbia
- ✓ Seychelles
- ✓ Sierra Leone
- ✓ Singapore
- ✓ Slovakia
- ✓ Slovenia
- ✓ Solomon Islands
- ✓ Somalia
- ✓ South Africa
- ✓ Spain
- ✓ Sri Lanka
- ✓ Sudan
- ✓ Suriname
- ✓ Svalbard and Jan Mayen Islands
- ✓ Swaziland
- ✓ Sweden
- ✓ Switzerland
- ✓ Syrian Arab Republic

- ✓ Taiwan
- ✓ Tajikistan
- ✓ Thailand
- ✓ Timor-Leste
- ✓ Togo
- ✓ Tokelau
- ✓ Tonga
- ✓ Trinidad and Tobago
- ✓ Tunisia
- ✓ Turkey
- ✓ Turkmenistan
- ✓ Turks and Caicos Islands
- ✓ Tuvalu
- ✓ Uganda
- ✓ Ukraine
- ✓ United Arab Emirates
- ✓ United Republic of Tanzania
- ✓ United States of America
- ✓ United States Virgin Islands
- ✓ Uruguay
- ✓ Uzbekistan
- ✓ Vanuatu
- ✓ Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
- ✓ Viet Nam
- ✓ Wallis and Futuna Islands
- ✓ Western Sahara
- ✓ Yemen
- ✓ Zambia
- ✓ Zimbabwe
- ✓ Other (*Please specify*)

29. Are you currently in paid employment?

- ✓ Yes
- ✓ No

If yes, how many hours of paid employment do you undertake in a typical week (term time)?

- ✓ 1-10 hours
- ✓ 11-20 hours
- ✓ 21-30 hours
- ✓ More than 30 hours

30. Who pays the fees for your programme?

- ✓ Self-funded (e.g. loan, savings, earnings, family)
- ✓ Charity
- ✓ Research council
- ✓ Institution (e.g. bursary, scholarship, waiver)
- ✓ Employer
- ✓ UK Government
- ✓ EU Government
- ✓ Overseas Government
- ✓ Other (*Please specify*)

31. Your highest qualification on entry:

- ✓ Qualifications below undergraduate degree
- ✓ Undergraduate degree or equivalent
- ✓ Postgraduate degree (e.g. MA)
- ✓ No academic qualifications but professional experience
- ✓ Other (*Please specify*)

Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your answers have now been recorded on our database.