PTES 2013: Findings from the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey

Jason Leman, Gosia Turner and Paul Bennett

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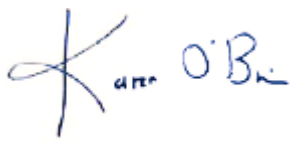
Foreword by Professor Karen O'Brien

Postgraduate taught students in the UK are a very varied group of students, with complex and differing motivations for study. Now, more than ever, as we move inexorably towards the graduations of the first generation of £9000 fee payers, we need to understand students' perspectives and needs. We need to consider how we are to meet the academic aspirations of students who have already invested so much in their education. For international students, postgraduate taught education in the UK has always been a huge step, and we in the HE sector must continue to reward their faith in us by offering the best quality education that we can deliver.

Our institutions compete, sometimes ferociously, for our share of this student market. But we also have a common stake in the UK's reputation for academic integrity; the PTES survey shows that we listen to feedback from our students, and that we continually strive to make improvements to our educational offering. The year-on-year increases in scores for assessment and feedback, skills, and career development demonstrate that, even without the spurs of publicity and competitive league tables, HEIs participating in this survey have listened, learned and made changes. However, mixed results for teaching and learning indicate more can still be done.

PTES is now in its fifth year and has captured its highest ever number of respondents, achieving validity and genuine representativeness in terms of its reporting of home and overseas students, full-time and part-time, masters and other kinds of postgraduate qualifications. The 58,679 students who responded to the survey are a diverse group, but there are patterns within this diversity: for example, part-time students, despite all the logistical difficulties they face, are usually more satisfied with their programmes than full-time students. While this may underline the benefits of education flexibly tailored to the needs of students, the continuing dissatisfaction of students who are disabled, compared to their peers, is a real concern and points towards the need for much greater flexibility and support on the part of educators.

PTES gathers information, not only about students' satisfaction with their educational experience, but also about their motivations for study, and their reasons for their choice of HEI. This year, the HEA team and the Advisory Group aim to work closely with the funding councils to support the concluding phase of their work on the "information needs" of prospective postgraduate taught students, and will aim to inform the new HEFCE agenda in relation to widening access to PGT education. We hope this will have relevance and value beyond England for all UK PGT students, and will enable us to understand the needs and perspectives of all categories of PGTs. We are also undertaking a major review of the survey, in the light of feedback from institutional users, in order to make it more effective as a tool for enhancement, action and change. We won't want to lose the backward comparability of some of the key measures, but we will want to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of educators and students alike.



Professor Karen O'Brien (King's College London)
Chair – PTES Advisory Group

Executive summary

The Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) collects feedback from taught postgraduate students across the higher education sector about their experiences of their programmes. PTES ran for its fifth consecutive year in the UK in Spring 2013, with 58,679 students from 89 institutions taking part, and a national response rate of 26.0%. This continues the increase from previous years (54,640 students from 83 institutions had taken part in 2012, with a response rate of 24.7%).

In addition to the national dataset, ten benchmarking groups were provided to permit performance comparisons. These included, for the first time, groupings of GuildHE and pre-92 non-aligned institutions.

PTES represents

With the largest response ever, and a broadly similar profile to the national postgraduate taught population, PTES is the most representative view available from postgraduates in the UK.

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 (34% part-time masters students in PTES compared with 42% in HESA 2011-12 population). Taught masters students accounted for 79% of respondents to PTES, with a further 10% taking postgraduate certificates and 8% taking postgraduate diplomas. Late responders to the survey do not have significantly different perceptions from those responding at the first invitation, indicating that results are unlikely to change as the response rate increases.

Motivations

Full-time and masters students were likely to be motivated to undertake postgraduate study to improve their employment prospects and change career, whereas part-time and diploma students were more likely to be motivated by career progression and meeting current job requirements. Career was more likely to be a motivation for students in Health Sciences and post-92 institutions, whilst personal interest was more likely to be a motivation for students in Arts and Humanities and pre-92 institutions. Motivation impacts on reported experience, with students motivated by personal interest giving more positive ratings of teaching and staff. Students who took the programme to progress in a career gave more positive ratings of career and professional development.

Motivation matters

The motivation of students to take postgraduate study impacts on their reported experience, for example, students motivated by personal interest to study are more positive about staff and teaching.

Reputation of institution (52%) and reputation in chosen subject area (43%) were the top reasons for full-time students to choose the course they were studying, followed by location (41%). Flexibility of delivery was the most common reason given by part-time students, half citing it as a reason for their choice, compared with 11% of full-time students. Among full-time UK taught masters students, reputation has been increasingly cited as a reason for choosing an 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. The most positive perceptions are around learning resources, staff, skills and personal development. Assessment and feedback receives the least positive ratings but, even here, the average experience is still positive and has increased over the past four years. Disappointingly there has been a slight downward trend in results for learning, teaching and staff.

Impacts on overall experience: The most important factors influencing overall experience is the quality of teaching and learning, development of skills, and organisation of the programme. Non-EU students place more weight on skills and personal development. Analysis found evidence that cohorts differ in the weighting they give different scales, but also that at least for some cohorts their experiences is better described by a separate 'teaching, and staff' factor, albeit strongly influenced by 'assessment and organisation', rather than a single overarching measure.

Experience in detail

Quality of teaching and learning and *staff:* 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 (65% of students agree) or that students are happy with the teaching support received (72% of students agree), perhaps reflecting the greater implied demand on teaching resources these statements reflect. The vast majority, 93%, stated that the quality of teaching was generally or consistently good.

Depth of learning: Part-time students typically report higher frequency of engagement with activities associated with depth of learning than full-time students. Full-time international students report less engagement in activities associated with depth of learning than full-time home students. There is considerable variation across discipline and item, for example 65% of students in Education frequently synthesise information compared with 79% of students in Historical and Philosophical Studies, yet for applying theories to practice the positions are reversed.

Assessment on the up (for most)

Assessment and feedback has shown the strong improvement over the last four years for home students, however many overseas students have not reported the same trend.

Assessment and feedback: All scores have increased from 2012 and the increase has been strongest for the items with the lowest levels of agreement, on promptness and timeliness of feedback, 64% of students agreeing with these items. Scores varied a great deal across disciplines, with Education significantly above average and Engineering and Technology significantly below. Assessment and feedback scores vary by mode of study, with part-time students significantly more positive across all items.

Dissertation: There were relatively high levels of disagreement with statements that students had received good guidance in topic selection (14% of students disagreeing) and their literature search (15% of students disagreeing). Conversely, over eight out of ten students indicated they agreed their supervisor had the skills and knowledge to adequately support their dissertation or major project. Across disciplines, there were significant differences, with perceptions relatively positive across the sciences.

Organisation and management: Items around communication and timetabling gained higher agreement than the other items, although levels of disagreement were consistent, around 13% of students disagreeing with the four items.

Learning resources: Overall, satisfaction is high with learning resources, fewer than one in ten students disagree with statements on learning resources being accessible and good enough for their needs. Students in Historical and Philosophical studies rated learning resources lowest despite being positive about many other areas of their experience.

Skills and personal development: This scale generally had high scores, with just over four in five students agreeing that their programme has developed their research and transferable skills. In general, where students have already got these skills through employment or experience, there is a greater likelihood for students to indicate 'neither agree nor disagree'.

Positive for careers

Students are very positive about the impact of postgraduate study on their career prospects, particularly those motivated to take study to progress their current career.

Career and professional development: 77.5% of students indicated that their future employment prospects were better as a result of their programme. Students taking postgraduate study in order to progress their career, or in disciplines strongly linked with vocations, were more likely to be positive about being better prepared for employment.

Experience by institutional group

Institution type: Pre-1992 institutions receive significantly higher scores than post-1992 institutions on all areas apart from Career and Professional Development. More investigation would be needed to establish whether these differences reflected differences in demography, discipline, or delivery.

Experience by discipline

Across disciplines the career and professional development scale shows most variation. For example, Education has particularly high scores for this scale. Assessment and Feedback also varies a great deal across disciplines, and Education is again significantly above average. While variation at the individual student level is the biggest factor, differences of 10% are common between discipline scores for individual items.

Experience by mode of study

Part-time students score a range of factors more highly than do full-time students. Full-time students were most likely to indicate that the library resources and services were not good enough for their needs, and distance learning students were most likely to indicate that the library resources and services were not easily accessible.
A significantly higher proportion of part-time learners agreed their programme was well organised compared with full-time students, across both face-to-face and distance learning, although the cause of this difference is not clear.

Inclusion not included?

Students with disabilities reported less positive experiences across a range of factors, in particular students with Asperger's.

Experience by disability

Overall, students who state they are disabled reported a significantly worse experience across most scales, particularly around learning resources. For depth of learning, scores were higher than for those with no declared disability. Among types of disability, students stating they have a social/communication impairment such as Asperger's had the most significantly negative perceptions of their experience, most particularly around skills and career development. This suggests that, at least in some key aspects of teaching and learning, institutions' provision can meet the needs of students with physical disabilities, but there is still some way to go in meeting the needs of those students with social/communication impairments, specific learning difficulties and mental health conditions.

Experience by domicile

Reputation was significantly more likely to drive choice for international students. Among country groupings students from Africa were most positive and most likely to state their expectations had been exceeded. Students from several country groups gave significantly lower scores for assessment than average. Trend analysis indicates that while UK students report steadily improved perceptions of assessment over the past four years, perceptions of overseas students have remained largely static.

Money counts

There have been significant changes to how students fund their studies, with increased reliance on self-funding making the cost of courses more important.

Funding

There have been significant increases in self-funding this year, caused by a fall in other sources of funding. For example, in Physical Science there has been a 9% increase in students stating they are self-funding from 2012. Self-funding is the most common way of students funding their studies and in arts and humanities subjects, for example Creative Arts and Design, over eight out of ten students rely on self-funding to undertake taught postgraduate study. For disciplines such as Education and Subjects Allied to Medicine other sources of support are much more prevalent and therefore more sensitive to funding changes.

PTES 2014

Going forward, we are now redesigning PTES to make the survey more effective for enhancement. Reflecting analysis of PTES 2009 to 2013, changes in the sector, and feedback from institutions, the new PTES will be easier to report on and act upon.

The Higher Education Academy will run PTES again in Spring 2014. Further details can be found at: http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/student-experience-surveys or by emailing surveys@heacademy.ac.uk

About the authors

Jason Leman

Jason Leman is Academic Development Officer for Surveys at the Higher Education Academy, and oversees the delivery and analysis of the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey. Before joining the HEA in September 2012, Jason was Senior Lecturer in Research and Evaluation at Sheffield Hallam University, where he worked for ten years on survey research, including on student engagement, interpretation of survey items, and reporting for enhancement. Jason has a Masters in Research in Social Policy and Sociology from Sheffield Hallam University and a BSc in Physics and Astronomy from the University of Sheffield.

Gosia Turner

Gosia 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. Gosia currently works as senior statistical analyst in the Student Data Management and Analysis team at the University of Oxford. She holds a PhD in Social Statistics from the University of Southampton, MA in Sociology and Economics from the University of Essex and a BA in Sociology from Collegium Civitas in Warsaw, Poland.

Paul Bennett

Paul Bennett is Head of Surveys at the HEA where he oversees the delivery and analysis of the HEA's postgraduate experience surveys, as well as the wider support, research and consultancy services that the HEA Surveys team provides to the higher education sector at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. He is regularly invited to speak about the use of student surveys and the implications for policy, practice and enhancement. Prior to joining the HEA, Paul was a senior researcher and analyst in the Scottish Government and, before that, Lecturer in Economic Geography for nine years at the University of Edinburgh, where he still occasionally teaches. He holds a BA and DPhil from the University of Oxford and an MSc from the University of Bristol.

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 2013

The Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) ran for its fifth consecutive year between February and June 2013. A total of 58,679 taught postgraduates took part across the UK in 2013 representing a continuing increase on previous years (54,640 had taken part in 2012, the previous highest response).

This report presents the national findings from PTES 2013, aggregating results from the 89 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 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 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 four-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 ten benchmarking groups. These allow participating institutions to compare their own performance with the average performance of the institutions in each group.
PTES is also available for use internationally, allowing participants to compare their own results with those of the UK higher education sector and, in due course, international benchmarking will be made available.

Benchmarking groups	
Pre-1992	Pre-92 non-aligned
Post-1992	Russell Group
1994 group	Scottish
GuildHE	Small and Specialist
million+	University Alliance

1.2. PTES in 2013

All HEIs in the UK were invited to take part in PTES 2013, with 89 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. Because a number of institutions participate biennially, this figure arguably under represents the reach of PRES. In the last two years 104 institutions have participated in PTES at least once.

The PTES 2013 survey window opened on 1 February and closed on 17 June 2013. Within this period, institutions could choose when to run PTES in their institution, with 17 institutions waiting until the deadline of 18 April before launching. Twenty five institutions took the opportunity to launch their survey in February, while 49 institutions kept their surveys open into June.

Institutions had to keep the survey open for a minimum of three weeks, although on average institutions left the survey open for 11 weeks.

Structure of PTES 2013
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

A copy of the questionnaire instrument can be found in Appendix 2. A Welsh language version of the survey was also made available. Some minor changes were made to the instrument in 2013, aiming to make the responses more robust. This involved rewriting the subject question to include more guidance, both general and specific. Concerns about incorrect responses to the dissertation section led to a 'Too Soon To Say' option being added.

As in previous years, PTES was delivered via the Bristol Online Surveys (BOS) website[1], which was also used to deliver the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES)[2].

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 89 institutions and 58,679 respondents included in the national dataset for PTES 2013. 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 or by using the standard benchmarking reports provided by the HEA Surveys Team.

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, these subjects are further grouped into 20 subject areas[3] in this report.

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). As institutions that participate in PTES change year on year, several run PTES as a biennial survey, any trend analysis presented uses a subset of 42 institutions that have

[1] https://www.survey.bris.ac.uk/
[2] http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/pres
[3] JACS Level 1, plus 'Geographical studies' as used in the NSS.

participated in PTES since 2010. This means that the trend data will not exactly match the overall data, but provides a more robust guide to genuine changes over time.

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 give a guide to what may be a meaningful as opposed to random difference. Error bars describe the range within which we would be 95% confident that the true figure for that factor lies had a random sample been used

Where a difference is said to be 'significantly' different then that will have been statistically tested and will be significantly different to at least $p<0.05$ (although the level of significance typically meets at least $p<0.001$ for the differences quoted). In general, differences are only referred to if test have indicated they are significantly different from a reference group. Depending on the type of variables being tested, different statistical tests have been employed. The chi-square test provides information whether two categorical variables, eg part-time/full-time and agree/neutral/disagree, are independent (there is no relationship between the two) or not (there is a relationship between the two). Several further tests have been used in this report – Kruskal-Wallis and ANOVA tests are used here to explore the relationship between multiple categorical variables and derived variables. In simple terms, both tests work in the same way by comparing the variability within the group (for example, mean scales scores variability among distant learners and mean scale scores variability among face-to-face learners) with the variability between the groups (difference between all distant learners and face-to-face learners). The test result shows if the scale scores are statistically significantly different between the groups. Two different tests are used to give greater confidence, as the derived variables depart by a significant margin from a normal distribution assumed by ANOVA.

Because of the large sample size for PTES, many of the results are statistically significant even where observed differences are very small. Where possible, effect sizes have been calculated and are quoted as the variance accounted for, R^2. R^2 is calculated directly using ANOVA (often termed eta squared) or Mann-Whitney U, or derived from Cohen's d (a measure of effect size related to the standard deviation). It should be noted that while an effect size is an indicator of the strength of association, it is not a confirmation of causality. R^2 gives an indication of the substantive importance of differences between groups. An R^2 value of between 0.01 and 0.06 indicates the effect size is relatively small, between 0.07 and 0.25 as medium, and over 0.25 as large, effectively explaining 25% of the variance in the variable being examined. A value of less than 0.01 (which would indicate the variable explains less than 1% of variance in experience) is regarded as a negligible effect, even where it is statistically significant.

Typically the values of R^2 quoted in the report are small, for example analysis indicates that overall demographic, discipline, institution and motivation each contribute less than 1% to the variation in teaching and learning scores. It is known that there is a great deal of within-course variation in surveys of this type, to the extent that the variability in student response within any one programme is greater than the variation described by the different cohort classifications, eg discipline, mode, and institution. This is at least partly due to large variation at student level. However, we can measure consistent differences between cohorts that give confidence to their importance, even if the overall effect is relatively small.

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. 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 may 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

In total, 58,679 postgraduate taught students in 89 institutions took part in PTES 2013, representing 26.0% of all the students invited to take part in those institutions. This represents a continued increase on the response rate in previous years, with Table 2.1.1 showing how response has changed over the five years of PTES.

Table 2.1.1	National response rates for PTES, 2009-2013		
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%
2013	89	58,679	26.0%

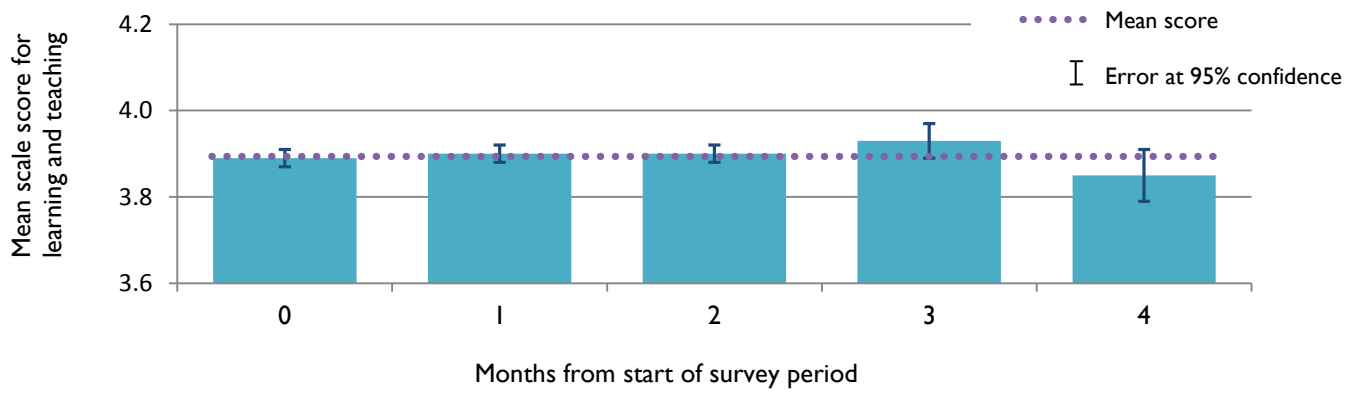
The top response rate for an individual institution was 82% and a quarter of institutions had response rates of 35% or higher in 2013, with more detail shown in Table 2.1.2. Although Small and Specialist institutions are over represented in the top quarter of response rates, the top response rate for a larger institution was 55%. 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 2.1.2	Institutional response rates for PTES 2013
	Rate
Top of the range	82%
Top of the range (non-Small and Specialist)	55%
Upper quartile	35%
Mean	26%
Median	27%
Lower quartile	17%

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. One way of testing this is to gauge the responses of those completing the survey after successive reminders against those who completed the survey shortly after it opened, the assumption being that those responding late would bear some similarity to non-respondents. Figure 2.2.1 indicates that there are no significant effects due to completion date. This applies across all the question scales and for PTES 2012. While this does not confirm that non-respondents' views are the same, it does suggest that an increasing response rate is not associated with a change in views.

Figure 2.2.1 Mean scale score for learning and teaching by time of completion of survey



At the time of writing, the latest available data on the student body from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) are for the 2011-12 academic year[4], which gives a reasonable indication for the current demographic population. The most comparable population is for masters-level students. This is because HESA data for the broader population of taught postgraduate includes students studying for institutional postgraduate credits who are not asked to complete PTES[5]. Overall comparisons suggest that the national sample of respondents to PTES 2013 is broadly reflective of the total population of taught postgraduates across the UK (in 2011-12) in relation to their age, gender, disability, domicile and (with a couple of exceptions) subject area, but slightly under-represents the views of part-time students.

In relation to age, Figure 2.2.2 shows that 56% of PTES respondents are 26 years old or over. The profile broadly matches that for the HESA population, with a slightly higher proportion of younger students. Interestingly, the population of taught postgraduates generally is getting younger, at least over the past three years according to HESA statistics and reflected in the PTES survey over time. Therefore, what disparity exists may be partly explained by existing trends.

Table 2.2.3 provides this comparison for the gender and disability profile of PTES respondents. The table suggests that women are slightly over-represented among masters students responding to PTES 2013 in comparison with their profile in the Higher degree (taught) student body in 2011-12. Women 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. The sample of respondents who are disabled broadly matches the overall HESA population and is representative.

In relation to domicile, Table 2.2.3 shows that the profile of PTES Masters respondents in 2013 is representative of the student body, although Other EU students are slightly over-represented in PTES at the expense of Non-EU students. For mode of study, part-time students are under-represented in the PTES sample relative to their profile in the student body.

Under-representation of part-time students is likely to be due to three effects. First, part-time students are less likely in general to respond to the survey, for example due to being harder to reach and being under greater time pressures. Second, some institutions selectively sample part-time students at a single point in their programme only, excluding first-year part-time students from the survey. Third, non-response rates are known to be higher from part-time students in the first year of study, where they may consider they have not had sufficient experience to response. The lower response from part-time students is not a serious concern for the survey process, but does need to be borne in mind when interpreting overall results.

[4] HESA figures represent the number of Full Person Equivalent (FPE) postgraduates.

[5] The HESA category of 'Higher degree (taught)' excludes students studying for a PGCE and other postgraduate diplomas and certificates who take part in PTES. Conversely, the broader HESA category of 'Postgraduate (taught)' does include postgraduate diploma and certificate students, but 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.

Figure 2.2.2 Profile of respondents, by age

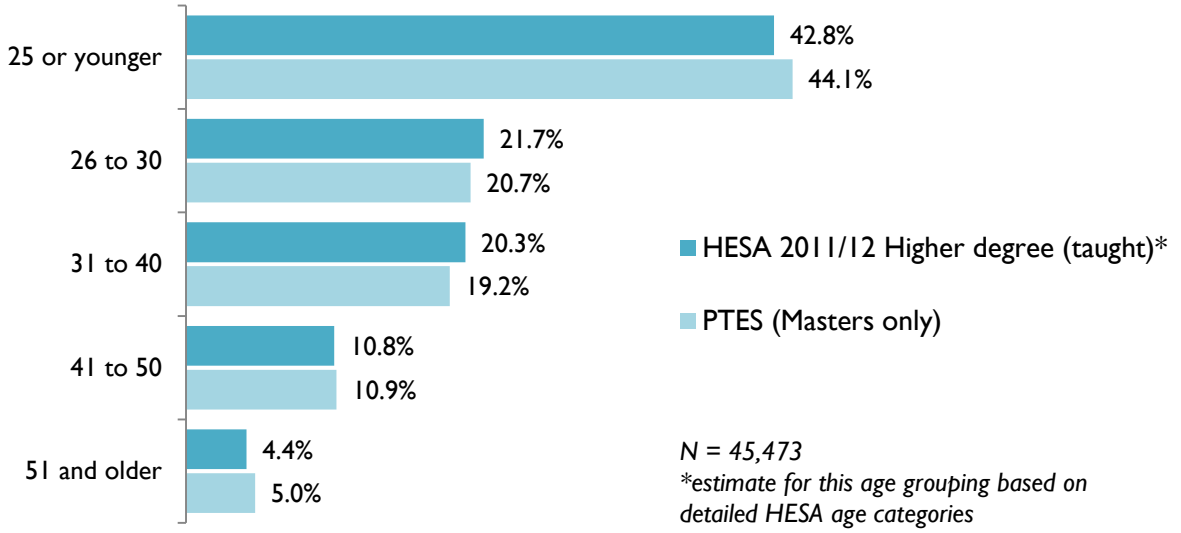


Table 2.2.3 Profile of respondents, by gender, disability, domicile and mode of study

	PTES 2013 All	PTES 2013 Masters only	HESA 2011/12 Higher degree (taught)	Difference
Female	58.2%	56.1%	53.4%	2.7%
Male	41.8%	43.9%	46.6%	-2.7%
N	57,183	44,971	334,290	
Disabled	6.0%	5.8%	5.3%	0.5%
No known disability	94.0%	94.2%	94.7%	-0.5%
N	57,641	45,329	334,045	
Home	59.8%	54.0%	53.7%	0.3%
Other EU	10.7%	11.9%	9.4%	2.5%
Non EU	29.6%	34.2%	37.0%	-2.8%
N	57,092	44,836	334,290	
Full-time	63.8%	66.2%	58.0%	8.2%
Part-time	36.2%	33.8%	42.0%	-8.2%
N	57,470	45,197	459,445	

In relation to type of programme, Figure 2.2.4 shows that four in five PTES respondents are studying for a taught Masters degree. Students studying for postgraduate certificates make up almost 10% of the sample, with the remainder studying diplomas and taught doctorates. Table 2.2.5 indicates the distribution of participation across type of programme has remained broadly stable since 2010, although there is a slight increasing trend in the proportion taking a postgraduate diploma.

Figure 2.2.4 Profile of respondents, by type of programme

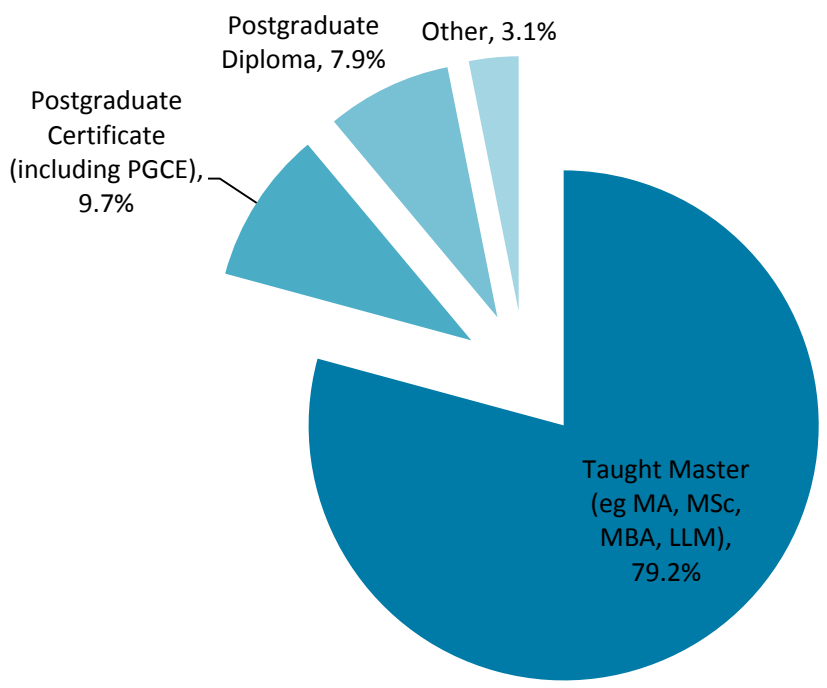


Table 2.2.5 Profile of respondents, by type of programme and survey year

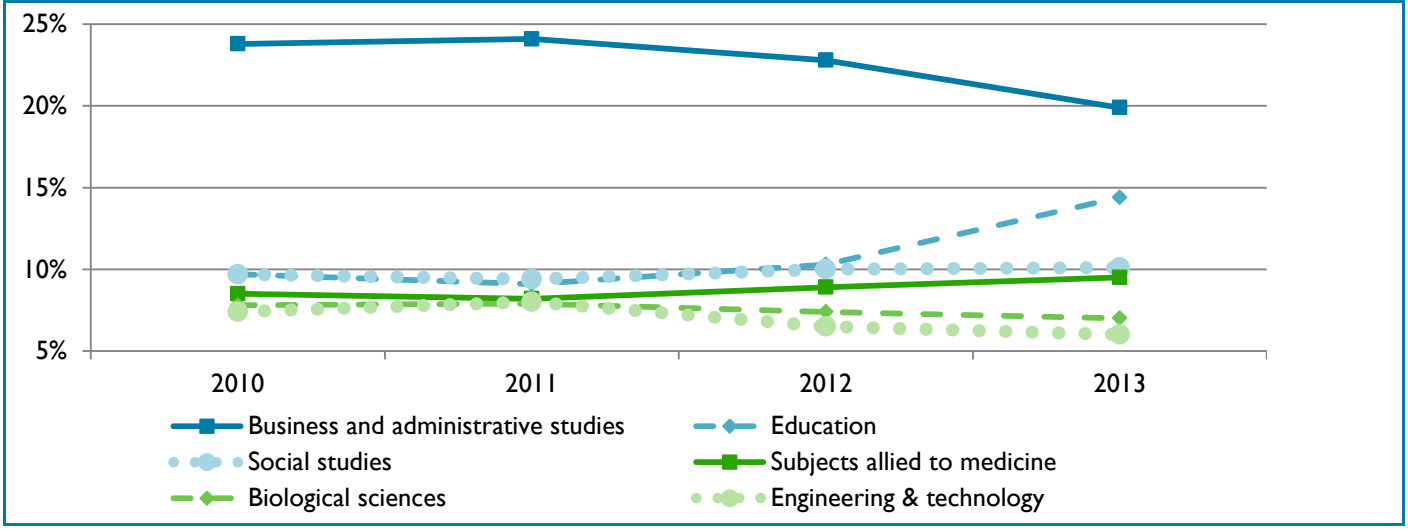
	2010	2011	2012	2013
Taught Master (e.g. MA, MSc, MBA, LLM)	78.8%	79.2%	78.7%	78.2%
Postgraduate Certificate (including PGCE)	8.9%	9.0%	8.9%	9.2%
Postgraduate Diploma	8.6%	8.5%	9.3%	9.6%
Other	3.7%	3.3%	3.0%	3.1%
N	18652	24218	30543	30941

Table 2.2.6 suggests that PTES respondents are broadly reflective of the previous year group by subject area (at JACS Level 1). Revisions to PTES 2013 have made self-selected subject more robust by clarifying subject area choices, with the impact for the major disciplines shown in Figure 2.2.7. This has improved the match for Education but produced a larger gap for Business and Administrative studies. This is possibly explained by the HESA statistics allowing for multiple coding of courses and with many M-level taught courses including business and management components, it is to be expected that a self-selected subject focussing on the major subject only would not reflect the management component. As in 2012, PTES continues to over-represent students in Biological Sciences and Social studies compared with the national population.

Table 2.2.6 Profile of respondents, by discipline

	PTES 2013 All	PTES 2013 Masters only	HESA 2011/12 Higher degree (taught)	Difference
Medicine and Dentistry	3.2%	2.5%	2.5%	0.0%
Subjects Allied to Medicine	8.9%	7.7%	8.1%	-0.4%
Biological Sciences	7.2%	7.8%	5.4%	**2.4%**
Veterinary Science	0.3%	0.3%	0.1%	0.2%
Agriculture and Related Subjects	0.9%	1.0%	0.6%	0.4%
Physical Sciences	2.3%	2.7%	2.2%	0.5%
Mathematical Sciences	1.5%	1.8%	0.9%	0.9%
Computer Science	3.0%	3.6%	4.1%	-0.5%
Engineering and Technology	5.7%	6.7%	7.7%	-1.0%
Architecture, Building and Planning	2.5%	2.5%	2.9%	-0.4%
Social studies	10.0%	11.4%	9.7%	**1.7%**
Law	4.6%	3.9%	3.8%	0.1%
Business and Administrative studies	20.2%	23.0%	28.8%	**-5.8%**
Mass Communications and Documentation	2.2%	2.5%	2.7%	-0.2%
Languages	3.2%	3.7%	3.2%	0.5%
Historical and Philosophical studies	2.7%	3.2%	3.0%	0.2%
Creative Arts and Design	3.5%	4.0%	5.4%	**-1.4%**
Education	16.4%	9.6%	8.8%	0.8%
Combined	1.6%	1.9%	0.0%	**1.9%**
N	55,259	43,326	334,290	

Figure 2.2.7 Profile of respondents, by selected disciplines and survey year

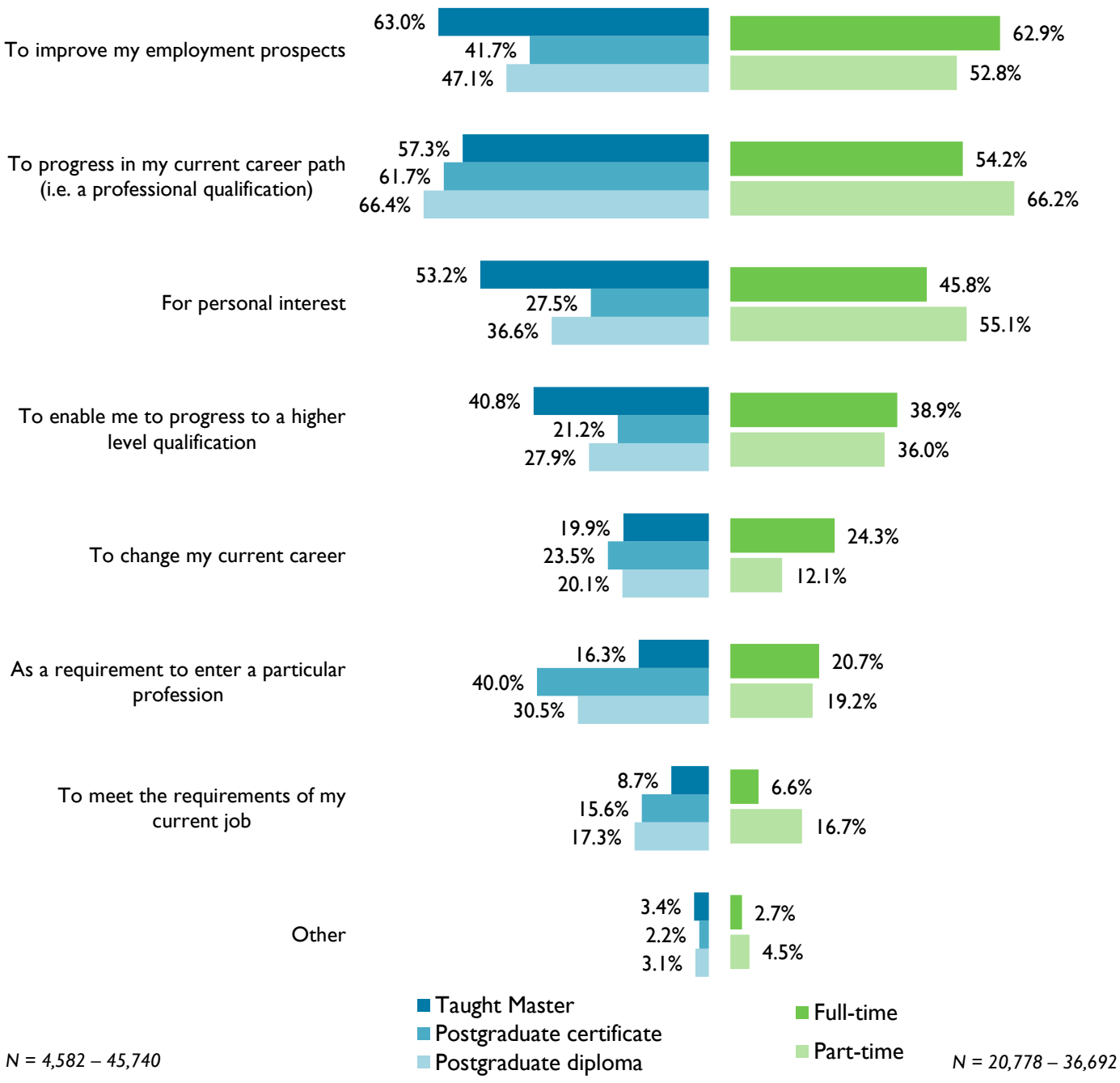


2.3. Motivations

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 2.3.1 shows that motivations are dominated by employment-related reasons, although motivations reflect the nature of qualification, current employment and career goals. Full-time and masters students were more likely to be motivated by improving their employment prospects and looking for a change of career, whereas part-time and diploma students were more likely to indicate career progression and meeting current job requirements as a motivation.

Over half (53%) of taught masters students answered 'for personal interest' compared with just 27.5% of those studying for a postgraduate certificate. A third of students indicated they were motivated to take the programme both for personal interest and to improve their employment prospects, indicating that for an appreciable proportion their career ambitions matched intellectual goals. Motivations are significantly correlated with wider perceptions of the course, see Section 6 for more details.

Figure 2.3.1 Motivations by type of programme and mode of study



N = 4,582 – 45,740

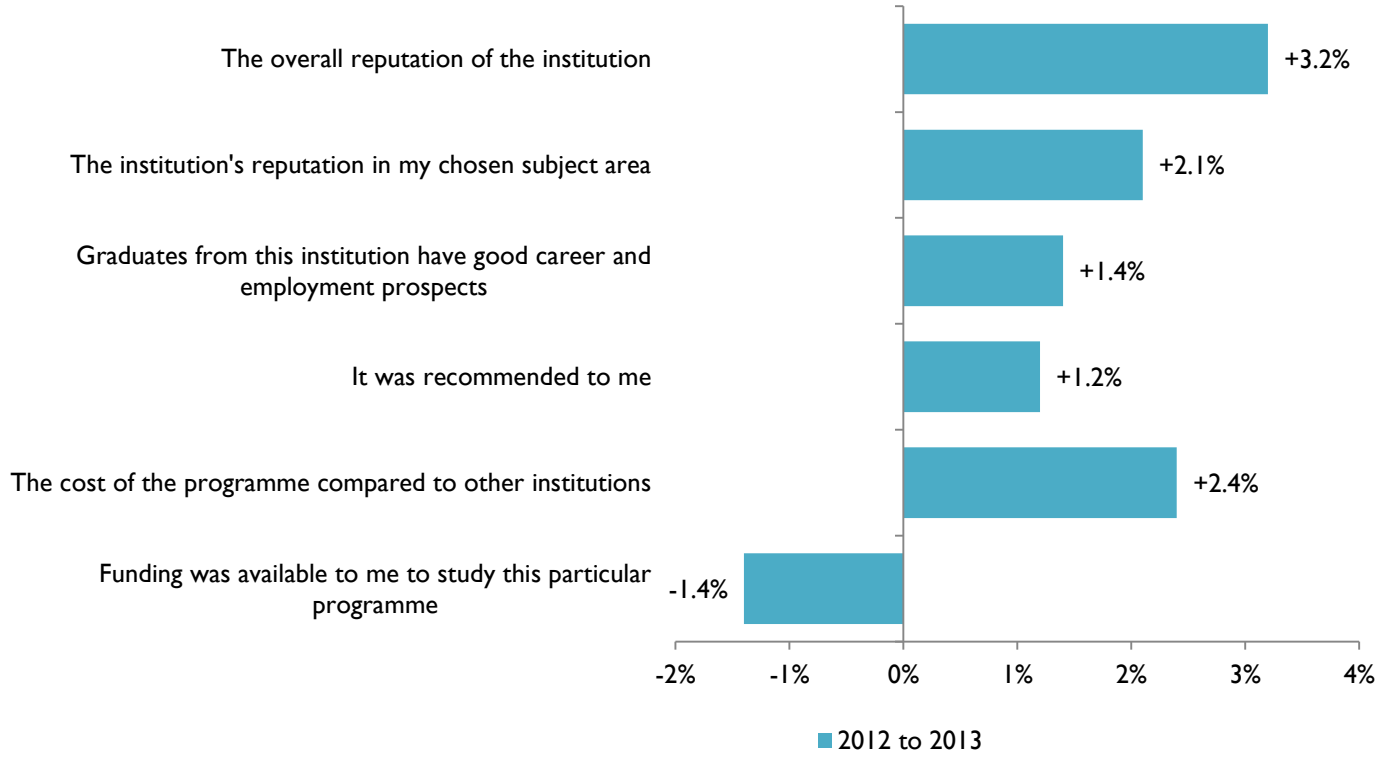
N = 20,778 – 36,692

Figure 2.3.3 describes respondents' reasons for choosing to study their qualification at their institution. Despite the importance of employment-related motivations overall, knowledge that 'graduates from this institution have good career and employment prospects' was only cited by 21% of full-time students as a reason for choosing their particular qualification and institution. Reputation of institution (52%) and reputation in chosen subject area (43%) were the top reasons for full-time students, followed by location (41%). However, flexibility of delivery was the most common reason given by part-time students, half citing it as a reason for their choice, compared with 11% of full-time students. Distance learning students, across both full-time and part-time modes, were also more likely to cite flexibility of delivery as important.

As might be expected, employer encouragement is a more common reason for part-time students than for full-time students, as is the availability of funding. Interestingly, location is the most important factor for over half (53%) of part-time UK face-to-face learners, more than for any other group, reflecting the importance of study fitting in with other factors such as work and family. Overseas students were more likely to be concerned with reputational issues and by the employment prospects of graduates.

There were few clear trends in motivations to take postgraduate study across years, however there do appear to be informative trends in reasons for studying a particular qualification at a particular institution[6]. Figure 2.3.2 indicates that among full-time UK taught masters, reputation is increasingly cited as a reason for choosing an institution. Career and employment prospects are also more likely to be cited. Perhaps unsurprisingly, cost of programme has significantly[7] increased as a reason in the past year, as available funding decreases (see Section 10 for more on this). However, this is a selection of results from quite a mixed picture and longer-term trends would need to be observed to be confident about these changes.

Figure 2.3.2 Reasons for studying this qualification at this institution, trend between 2012-13 (Full-time UK taught masters only, selected items)

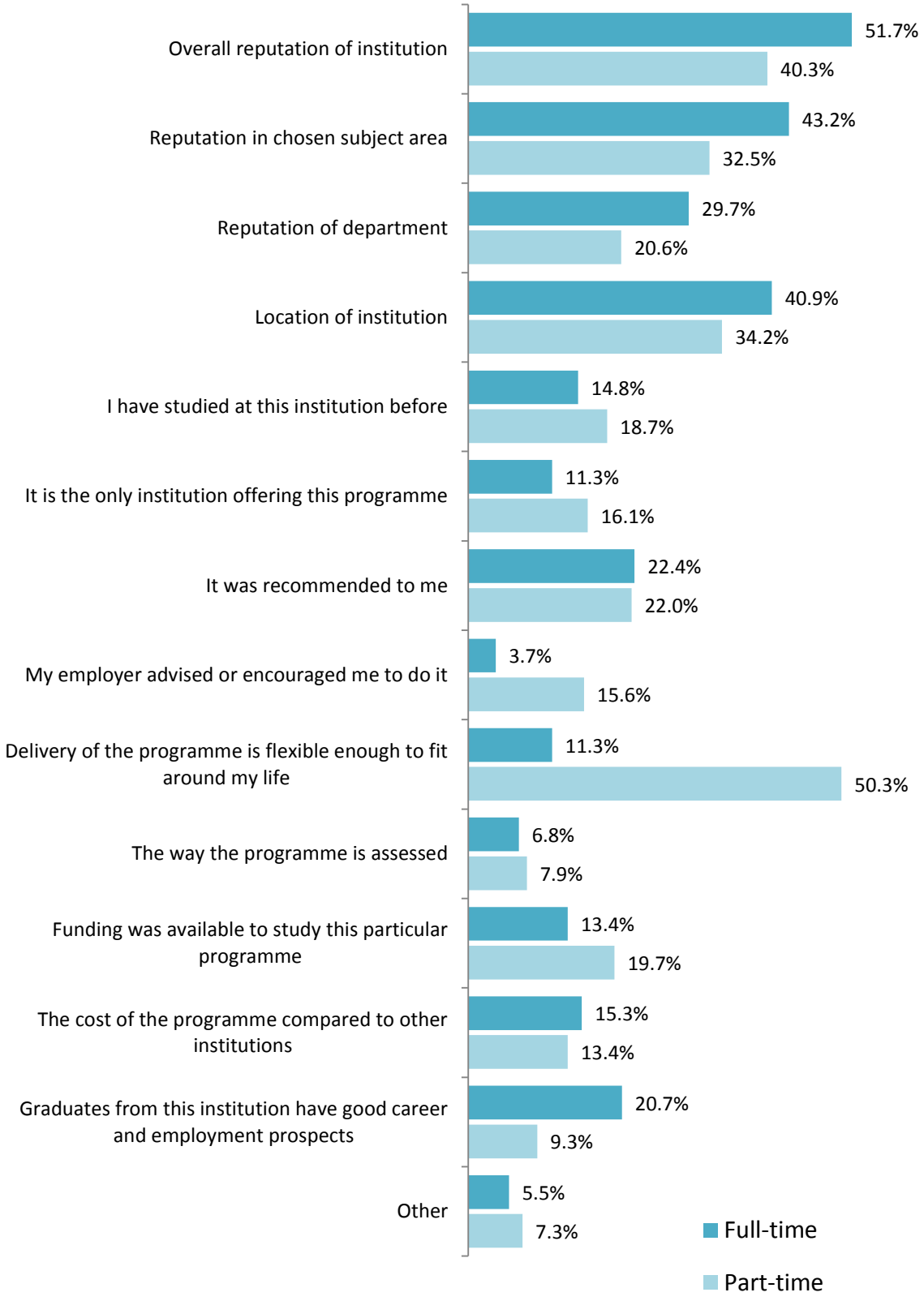


N=21,614

[6] Due to the sections on motivation and reasons for study moving on the questionnaire the results are not directly comparable between 2011 and 2012. This comparison was carried out using a subset of 42 institutions that have participated in PTES from 2010 to 2013.

[7] Where differences are stated to be 'significantly' different, this has been tested to establish that the difference is significant to at least $p<0.05$. In most cases the difference is far more significant, being to $p<0.0002$ in this case. For that reason the effect size, R^2, is quoted where possible to estimate the importance of the difference.

Figure 2.3.3 Reasons for studying this qualification at this institution, by mode of study



N = 20,778 – 36,692

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 3.1.1 shows the mean scale scores across the main eight dimensions of experience, along with the average proportion of students who agreed with the statements.

Table 3.1.1 Mean scale scores

	Mean	Standard Deviation	% agree	N
Learning resources scale	4.03	0.829	77.8%	45,008
Staff scale	4.01	0.977	78.2%	57,596
Skills and personal development scale	4.01	0.832	74.7%	56,902
Dissertation scale	3.99	0.964	73.3%	32,298
Career and professional development scale	3.99	0.900	74.4%	55,706
Quality of learning and teaching scale	3.89	0.973	74.0%	58,351
Organisation and management scale	3.88	0.861	73.4%	56,470
Assessment and feedback scale	3.77	0.928	67.9%	56,239

Table 3.1.1 shows that, on average and across the dimensions of experience, postgraduate taught students can expect a positive experience in the UK. 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 receiving lower scores, reflecting differences observed at the undergraduate level in the NSS. 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 3.1.2.

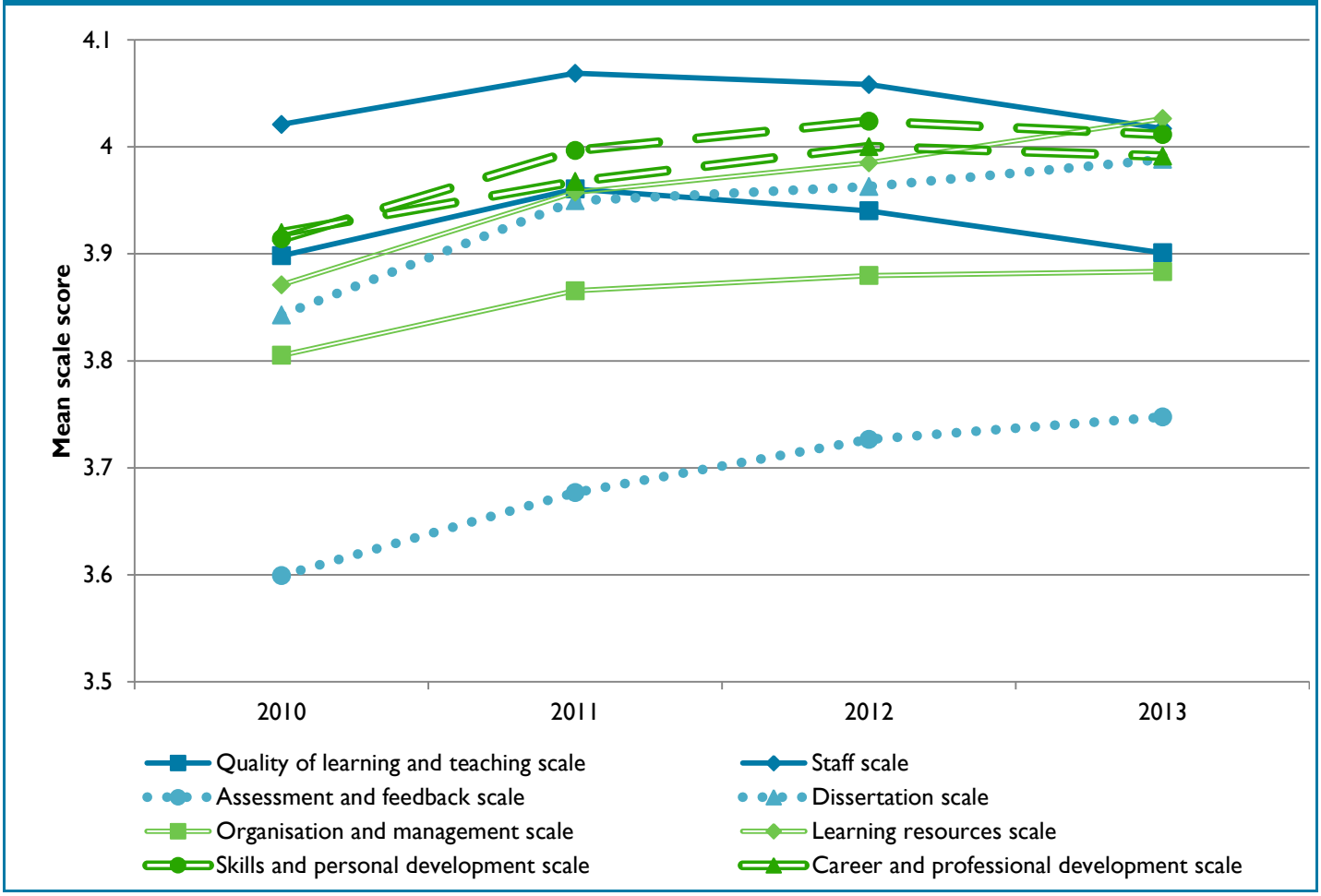
Table 3.1.2 Experience relative to expectations

	Below my expectations	Met my expectations	Exceeded my expectations	N
Learning resources	8.9%	17.7%	73.4%	58,354
Quality of teaching and learning	13.7%	13.5%	72.8%	58,489
Skills and personal development	8.2%	19.3%	72.4%	58,280
Career and professional development	11.8%	21.6%	66.6%	58,143
Organisation and management	19.2%	18.0%	62.9%	58,413
Assessment and feedback	20.0%	18.6%	61.4%	58,358
Overall experience of my course	11.8%	13.7%	74.6%	58,410

Ranked according to the extent to which experience was met or exceeded, the experience of each dimension is broadly 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 3.1.3 shows how the mean scale scores have changed for the 42 institutions that have taken part in PTES since 2010. Of particular note is the strong increase in scores around assessment and feedback, dissertation, and learning resources. Assessment and feedback has also shown strong improvements at undergraduate level, and preliminary analysis has indicated some joint improvement at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. Organisation and management, skills and career development have also observed sustained increases. Disappointingly this positive picture is not reflected in results for learning, teaching and staff, where there has been a slight downward trend over the past three years. There is no clear demographic, expectation or discipline effect that could account for this, but it also seems unlikely that it is accounted for by changes in delivery given that the trend is observed within a range of institutions. Further investigation is needed to understand the trend.

Figure 3.1.3 Mean scale scores, trend since 2010



3.2. 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 3.2.1 shows the relationship between the scale scores previously summarised. 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. Evidence indicates that each dimension covers multiple facets of the student experience, some of which overlap with other dimensions, some of which do not. Some of the overlap will be due to expectations and perceptions located within the student, rather than external factors around delivery.

Table 3.2.1 Correlations between scale scores

	Staff	Depth of learning	Assessment	Dissertation	Organisation	Learning resources	Skills	Career
Teaching	0.82	0.322	0.505	0.518	0.536	0.351	0.492	0.456
Staff		0.290	0.462	0.464	0.452	0.311	0.426	0.389
Depth of learning			0.334	0.32	0.327	0.209	0.415	0.38
Assessment				0.561	0.56	0.382	0.479	0.456
Dissertation					0.532	0.416	0.534	0.479
Organisation						0.484	0.561	0.512
Learning resources							0.468	0.412
Skills								0.688

Association of aspects of experience to overall experience and expectations

Using the item on how experience has met expectations for the 'overall experience of your course' we can assess how the different scales contribute to the variation in this item. The analysis indicates that around 44% of variation in overall experience relative to expectations is explained by the scale scores. Table 3.2.2 shows how scales contribute to variation of the expectations item, with learning resources slightly negatively related and skills and personal development most strongly related. This method is only useful as a general guide as the scale scores are significantly correlated, hence the low contribution for the staff scale score. The measures are also not normally distributed and are related to a single overall item, which will have more random variation than a scale. Finally, because the overall item relates experience to expectations it is strongly influenced by domicile, which may further skew results. Despite these caveats, we can be fairly confident that the student experience of skills, organisation and teaching have a fairly strong influence on the overall experience to expectations item.

Table 3.2.2 Influence of dimensions of experience on overall experience relative to expectations

	Beta	Sig.
Skills and Personal Development scale	0.209	0.00
Organisation and Management scale	0.191	0.00
Quality of Learning and Teaching scale	0.172	0.00
Career and Professional Development scale	0.146	0.00
Depth of learning scale	0.144	0.00
Assessment and Feedback scale	0.102	0.00
Dissertation scale	0.016	0.01
Staff scale	-0.080	0.00
Learning resources scale	-0.088	0.00

The core 'student experience'

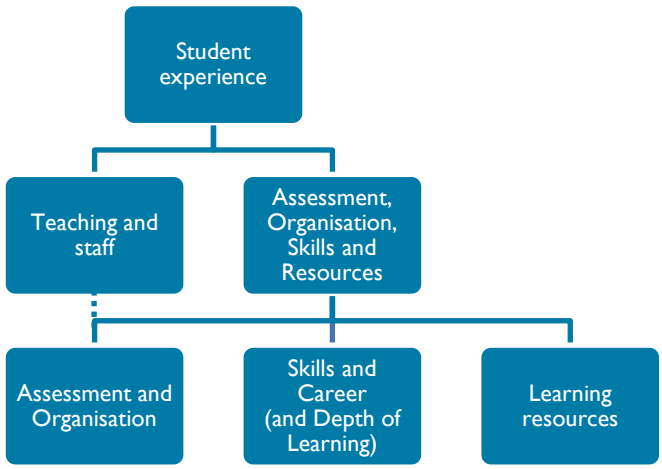
An alternative method of gauging importance of different factors is to hypothesise a core 'student experience' factor responsible for the scales varying up or down together. The drawback to this method is that any factor influencing the overall student experience not measured by the survey will not be accounted for. Using Principal Axis factor analysis[8] a single 'student experience' factor emerges which explains 42% of the variance across the summary scales. Table 3.3.3 indicates that the most influential scale score on this factor is the quality of teaching and learning. Skills & personal development and organisation are also highly influential. Depth of learning is not apparently influential, however this may be due to differences in how the depth of learning scale is constructed and the balance of items within it. Considering only those students who took a dissertation, the influence of the dissertation measure is increased.

Analysis of full-time overseas cohorts indicates some differences in weighting, for example greater weight placed on skills and career development by full-time non-EU students. This indicates that to be most effective enhancement needs to reflect the priorities of cohorts, rather than assuming a single aspect is most important for all students. Figure 3.3.4 describes a possible structure of student experience indicated by the factor analysis. Analysis for home (UK) students and part-time students found that rather than one overall experience, perceptions were better explained by a separate 'teaching, and staff' factor, albeit strongly influenced by 'assessment and organisation'. Rather than relying on a single variable to summarise the 'student experience', it may be more instructive to report on perceptions teaching and staff separately to other factors.

Table 3.3.3 Factor weighting (and rank) for summary scales, by overall, dissertation and full-time overseas

	Overall	Dissertation	Full-time Other EU	Full-time Non-EU
Quality of Learning and Teaching scale	0.758 (1)	0.771 (2)	0.767 (1)	0.757 (2)
Skills and Personal Development scale	0.746 (2)	0.800 (1)	0.753 (2)	0.797 (1)
Organisation and Management scale	0.729 (3)	0.769 (3)	0.668 (4)	0.753 (3)
Career and Professional Development scale	0.686 (4)	0.738 (7)	0.688 (3)	0.746 (4)
Staff scale	0.677 (5)	0.702 (6)	0.667 (5)	0.686 (6)
Assessment and Feedback scale	0.676 (6)	0.725 (5)	0.637 (6)	0.688 (5)
Dissertation scale	0.547 (7)	0.697 (7)	0.449 (8)	0.597 (7)
Learning resources scale	0.496 (8)	0.558 (8)	0.445 (9)	0.595 (8)
Depth of learning scale	0.465 (9)	0.468 (9)	0.549 (7)	0.469 (9)
N	58,679	25,137	4,544	14,601

Figure 3.3.4 Factorial structure of student experience as measured in PTES



[8] Principal axis factoring produced one factor, no rotation was required. For the overall analysis, determinant of the correlation matrix = 0.023, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy = 0.862, Bartlett's test was significant ($p<0.001$), indicating factor analysis was suitable. Summary scales are not factor weighted averages, however previous analysis indicates they are robust as factors and a weighted summary scale would not differ by any significant amount. Missing data were replaced with mean scores except for the 'dissertation' analysis where cases were excluded listwise.

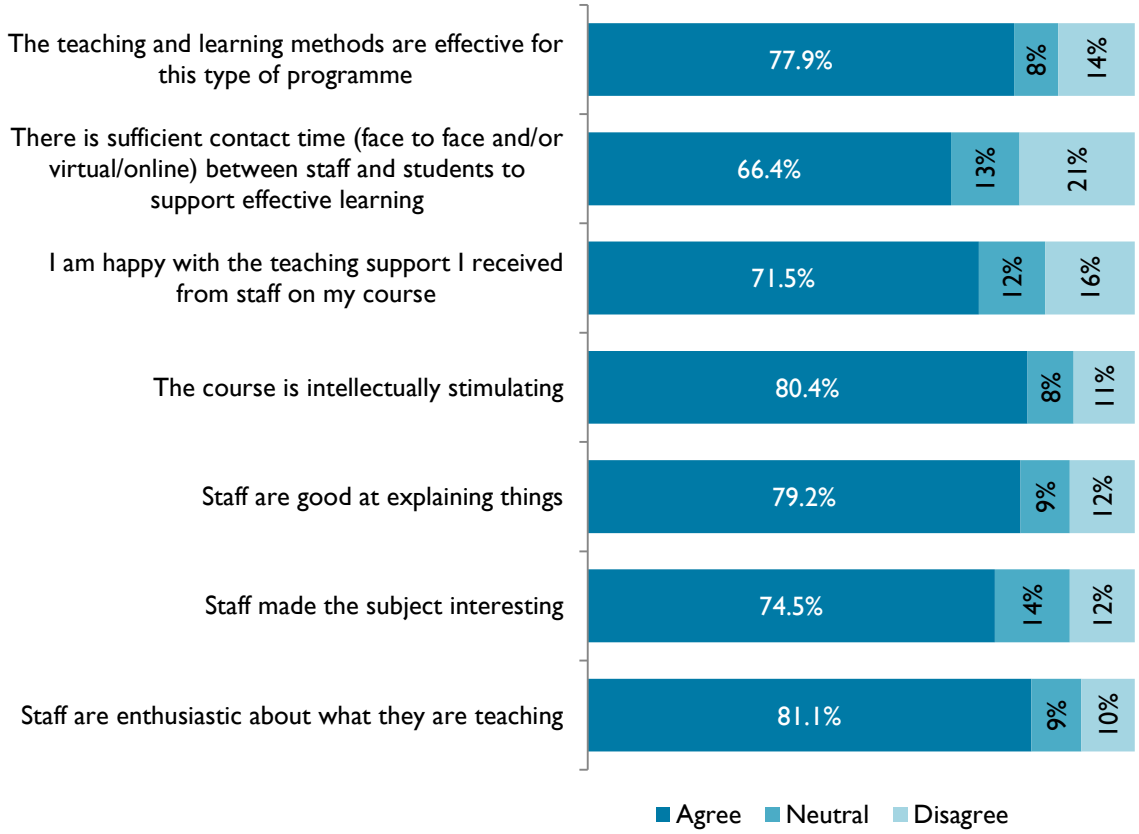
4. Experience in detail

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 1.

4.1. Quality of teaching and learning

Figure 4.1.1 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. This perhaps reflects the greater demands implied by these statements, which go beyond general course delivery to activities that require more interaction between students and staff. The proportion of students agreeing with all of these items has fallen over the past two years, which persists when controlling for institution and discipline.

Figure 4.1.1 Experience of quality of teaching and learning and staff

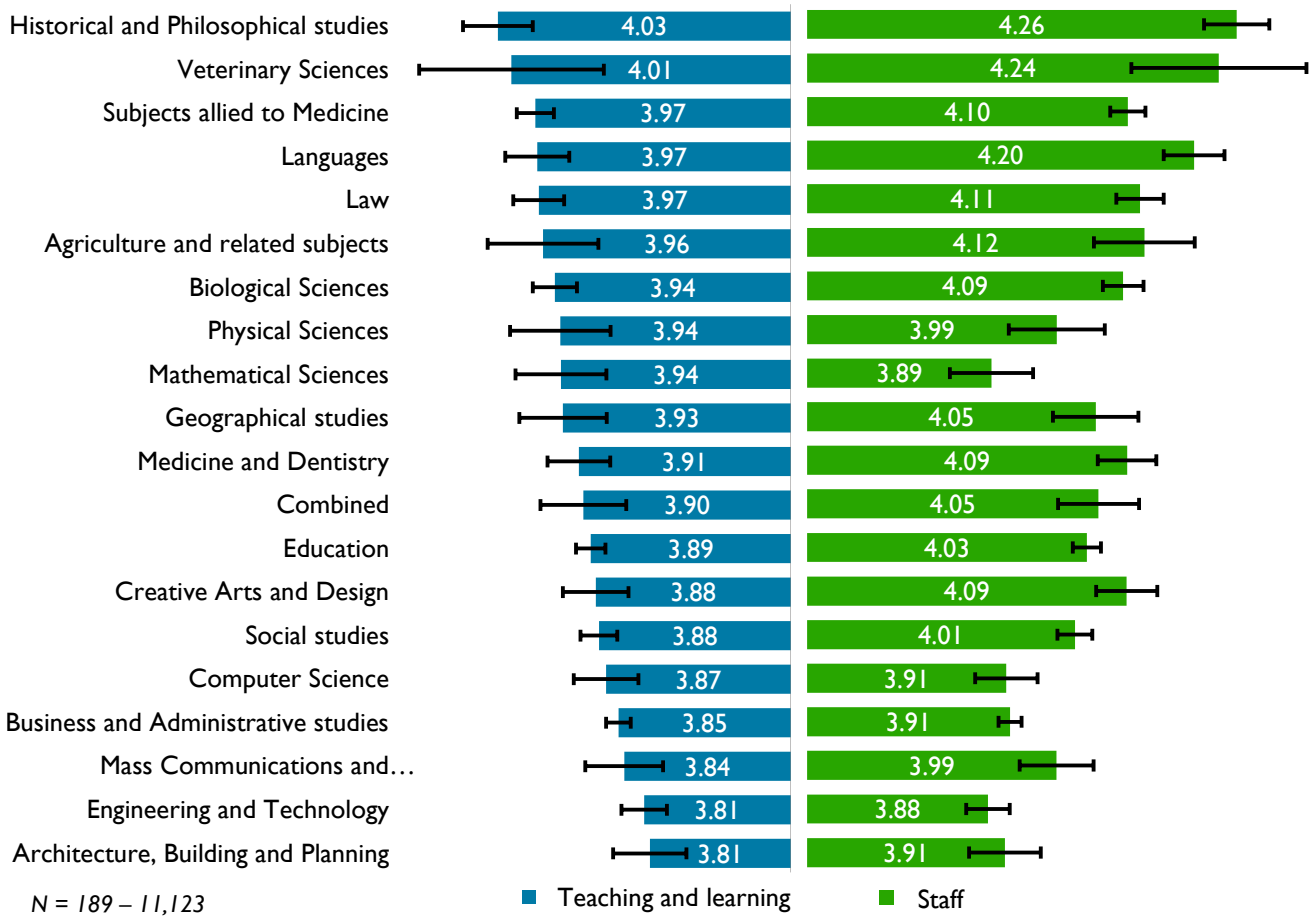


N = 57,871 – 58,414

Figure 4.1.2 indicates discipline scores are significantly different; for example, Historical and Philosophical studies and Subjects Allied to Medicine gain scores significantly higher than Mass Communications, or Architecture on both learning & teaching and staff scales. However, discipline is not a significant reason why scores vary (R^2=0.003). Comparing the two scales, they broadly correlate across discipline (r = 0.82) but with some exceptions. Mathematical Sciences and Physical Sciences receive lower mean staff scores than would be expected from perceptions of learning and teaching. Conversely, Creative Arts and Design, and Mass Communications have relatively positive perceptions of staff compared with perceptions of learning and teaching.

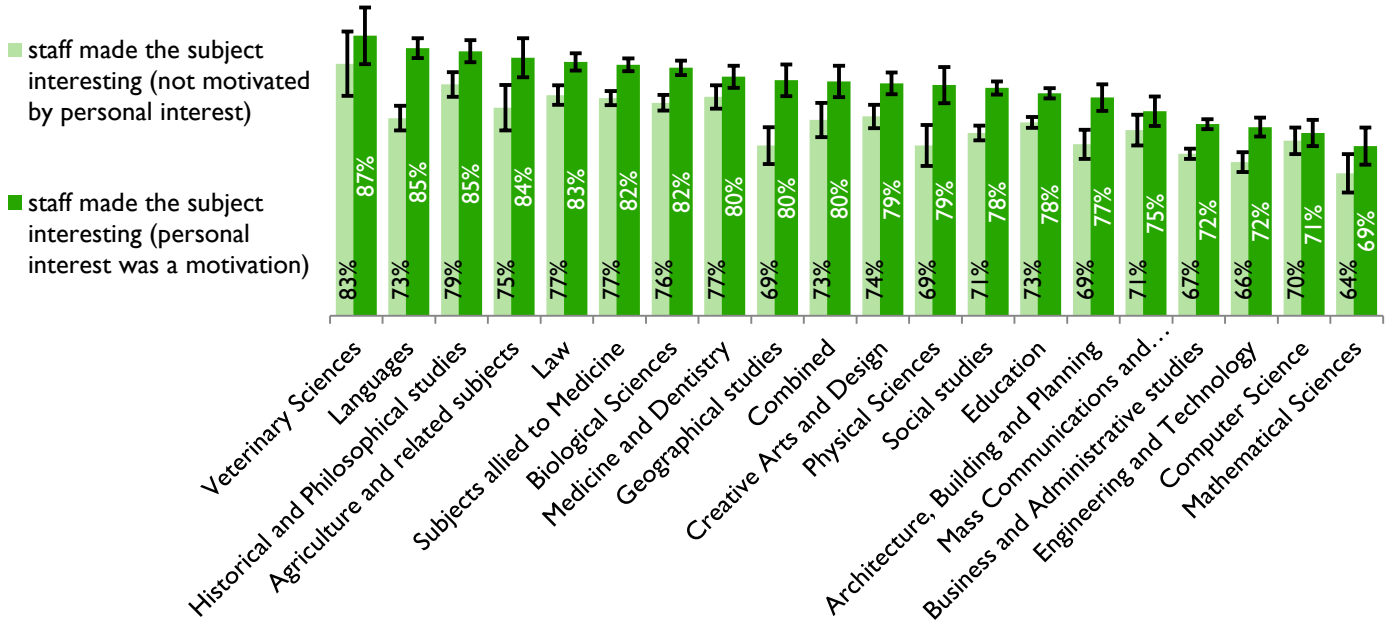
There are significant differences across delivery modes, for example whether the student is studying full-time or part-time (see Section 7), demographic factors such as disability (see Section 8) and domicile (see Section 9). As discussed in Section 1.3.4, variation within any cohort is greater than that between cohorts. What is important is the consistency of effects. For example where students are motivated by personal interest to take postgraduate study they consistently have more positive perceptions of staff across disciplines. Figure 4.1.3 illustrates this, with differences between those who took the subject for personal interest and those not motivated by personal interest always in the same direction and ranging up to 12 percentage points (Languages).

Figure 4.1.2 Mean scale scores for quality of teaching and learning and staff, by discipline



N = 189 – 11,123

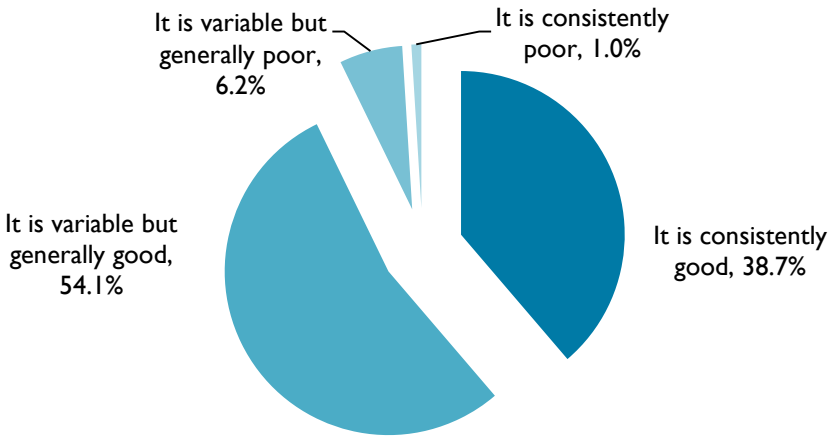
Figure 4.1.3 % agree that 'Staff made the subject interesting' by discipline and personal interest



N = 81 – 5,995

Figure 4.1.4 indicates that the vast majority of students thought that the teaching on the course was generally good or consistently good, with just 7.2% stating it is generally or consistently poor. Sixty per cent of students reported the teaching was variable, making overall judgements about teaching quality more open to variation. For example, while one student might discount a poor teaching experience from a single tutor, another may focus on that in their overall judgement. This is a possible source of some of the varation observed between different cohorts.

Figure 4.1.4 Mean scale scores for quality of teaching and learning and staff, by discipline

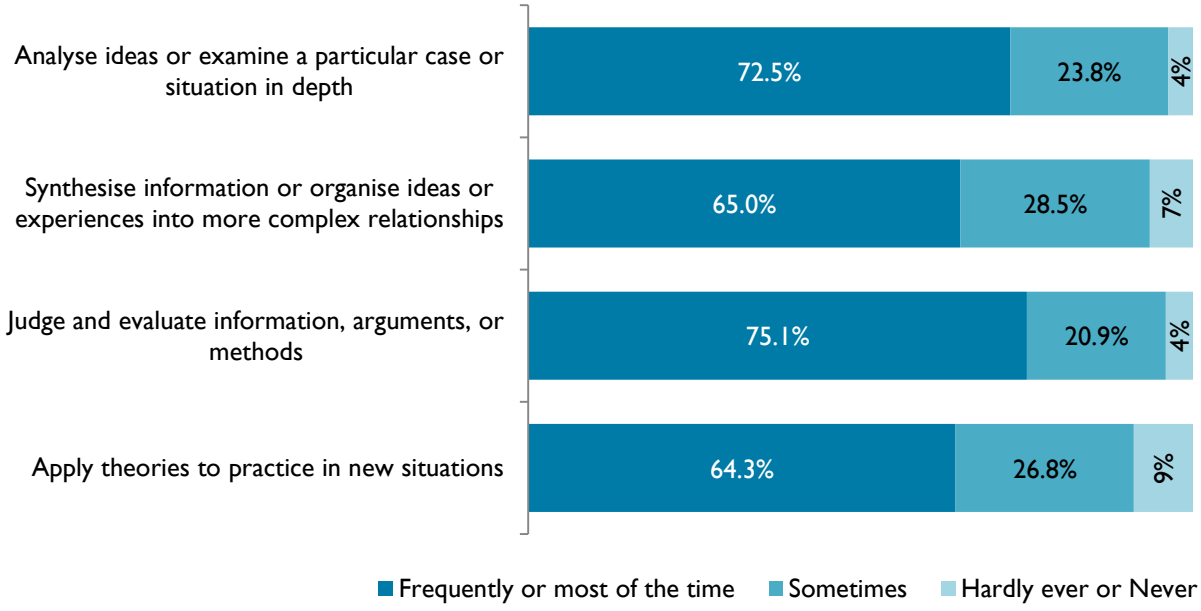


N = 55,733

4.2. Depth of learning

Question 4 of PTES examines the depth of learning experienced by students during their course. Encouragingly, as shown in Figure 4.2.1, 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. Requirements will vary naturally between subject areas, particularly in relation to applied work, however institutions may wish to examine where the frequency of engagement does not match the pedagogy being employed.

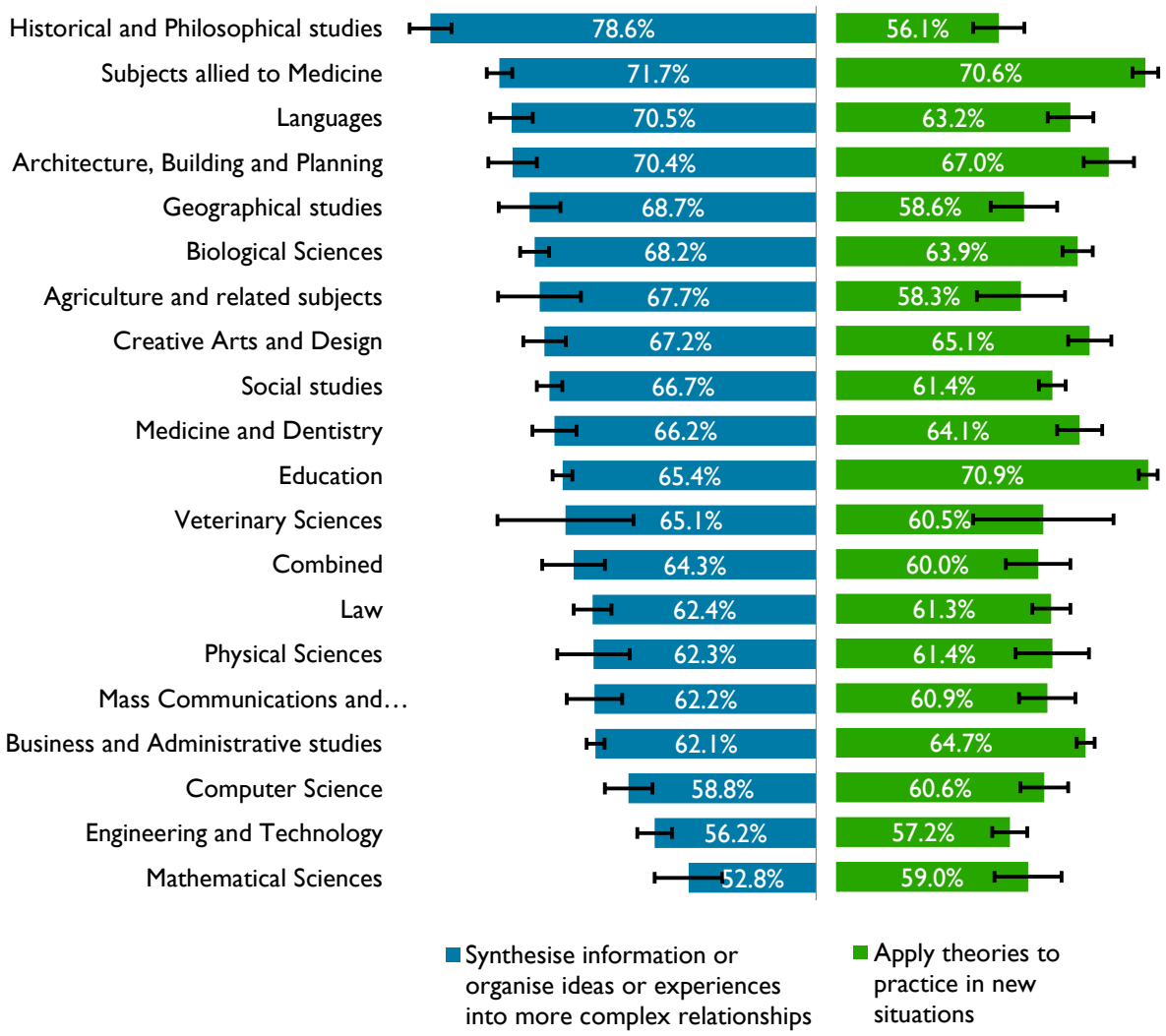
Figure 4.2.1 Depth of learning experienced (% experiencing activity frequently or more often)



N = 58,225 – 58,467

Across disciplines the response is fairly similar across the first three items, with Historical and Philosophical studies consistently the highest and Mathematical Sciences consistently the lowest. However, the response to the fourth item, Q4d, is very different, focussing as it does on the practical application of theory. Here, History receives the lowest scores while the very practically orientated subjects of Education and Subjects Allied to Medicine score highly. Figure 4.2.2 indicates how different responses are to item Q4b, on synthesis and organisation of information, and Q4d on practical application[9]. For example 65% of students in Education frequently synthesise information compared with 79% of students in Historical and Philosophical studies, yet for applying theories to practice the positions are reversed, with 71% of students in Education stating they do this compared to 56% in Historical and Philosophical studies.

Figure 4.2.2 Aspects of depth of learning, by discipline



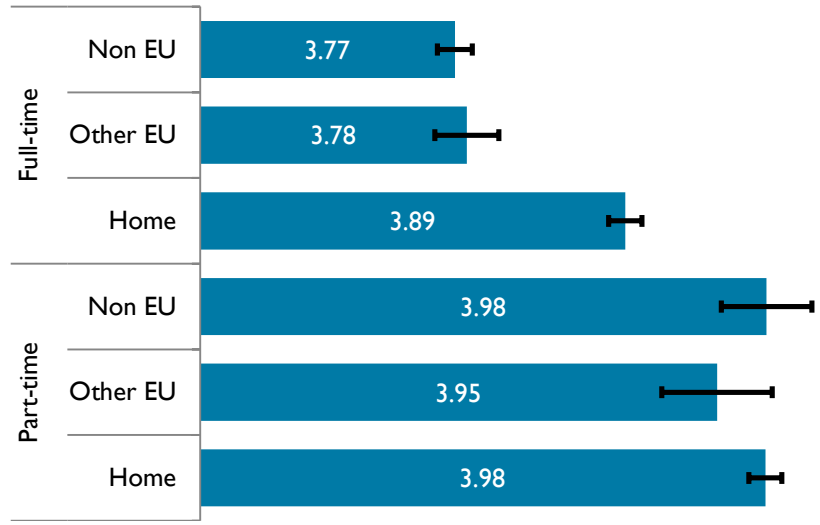
N = 189 – 11,120

Scores for depth of learning vary significantly across mode of study and domicile (R^2=0.02). Figure 4.2.3 shows part-time students typically report higher frequency of engagement with activities associated with depth of learning. This applies across all items in the depth of learning scale. Given depth of learning measures frequency with which activities are undertaken, that part-time students perceive the activities as more frequent may be to some extent an artefact of the mode of study, with their 'study time' more tightly defined than full-time students and therefore any activity taking up a greater part of it.

For international students the part-time scores are dominated by distance learning students, who typically also give higher scores across all four items. For full-time students, most of whom study face-to-face, home students report the activities significantly more frequently than overseas students. This is partly due to a significantly higher proportion of home students agreeing that they apply theories to practice (66.5%) than overseas students (56.6%), although the reasons for this are not clear.

[9] The item on synthesis and organisation of information is chosen for comparison as analysis of the scale indicates it has the highest communality within the first three items.

Figure 4.2.3 Mean Depth of Learning scale, by domicile and mode of study

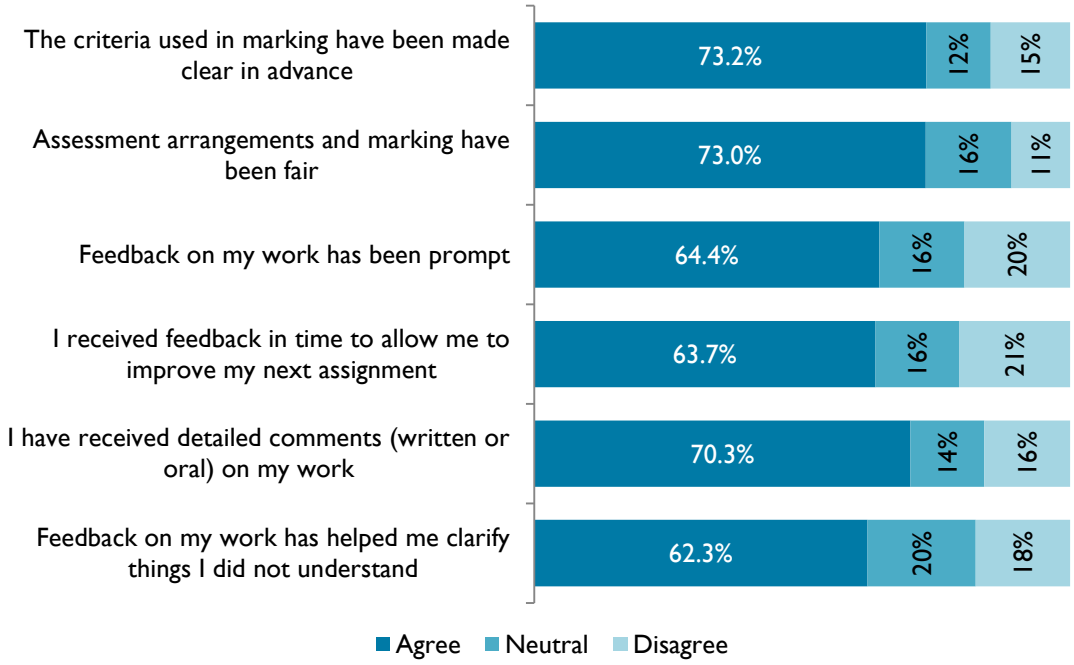


N = 1,459 – 16,931

4.3. Assessment and feedback

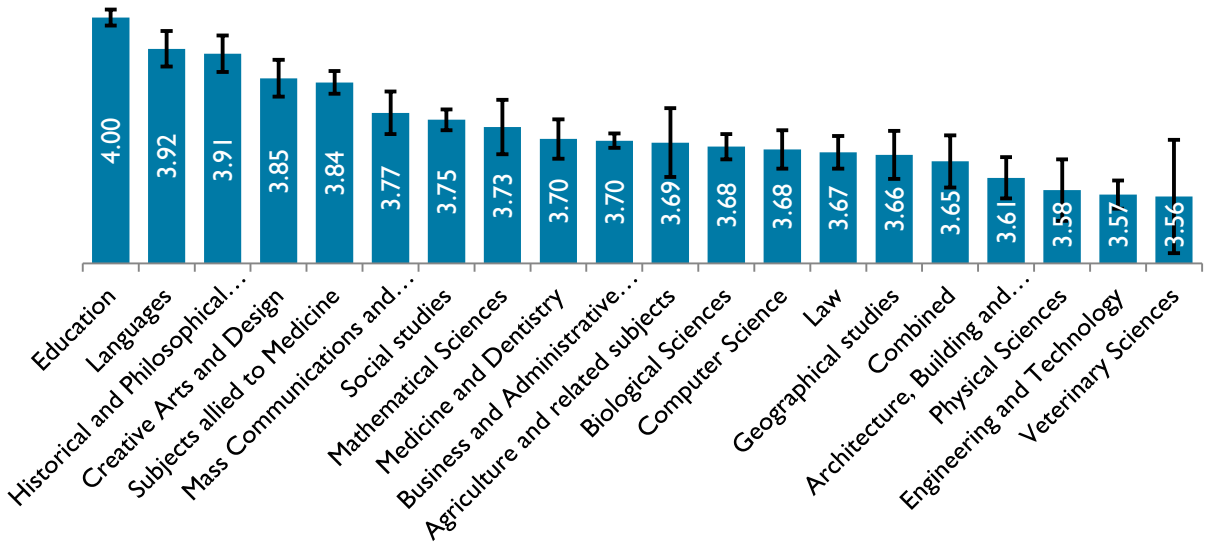
The percentage in agreement with the assessment and feedback items has increased on most items compared with PTES 2012, with promptness and timeliness sustaining strong improvement. Figure 4.3.1 indicates that the item on clarification of understanding receives the lowest agreement (62%), although the item on timeliness of feedback still receives the highest level of disagreement (21%). Figure 4.3.2 indicates disciplines are significantly different from each other (R^2 = 0.02). Interestingly there are significant differences between broadly cognate STEM disciplines such as Mathematical Sciences and Physical Sciences.

Figure 4.3.1 Experience of assessment and feedback



N = 55,597 – 57,891

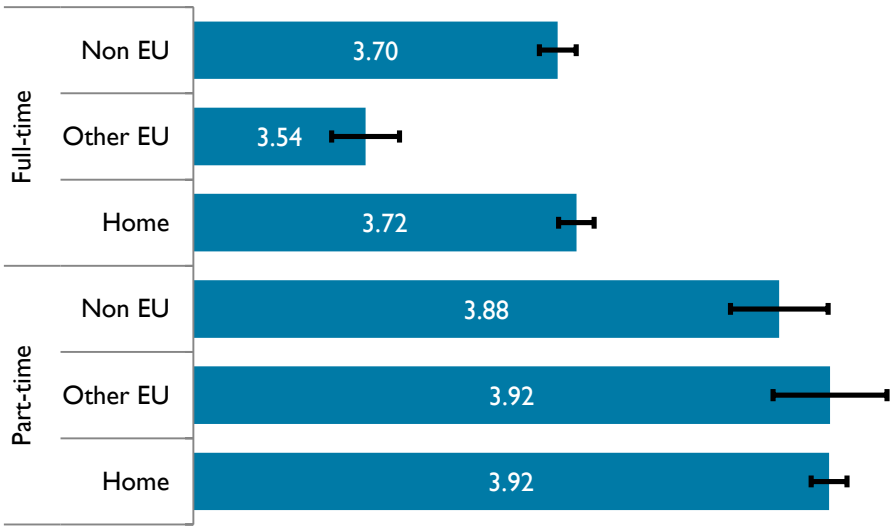
Figure 4.3.2 Mean assessment scale, by discipline



N=180 – 10,851

There are significant differences between scores given by students in different modes of study (R^2 = 0.03), with Figure 4.3.3 indicating part-time students are much more positive than full-time students. The figures for overseas part-time students are strongly influenced by distance learning students. Non-EU students gave items on assessment similar scores to UK students, particularly driven by positive evaluation of assessment by students from Asia and Africa. By contrast, other EU students scored assessment significantly lower than UK students.

Figure 4.3.3 Mean Assessment and Feedback scale, by domicile and mode of study

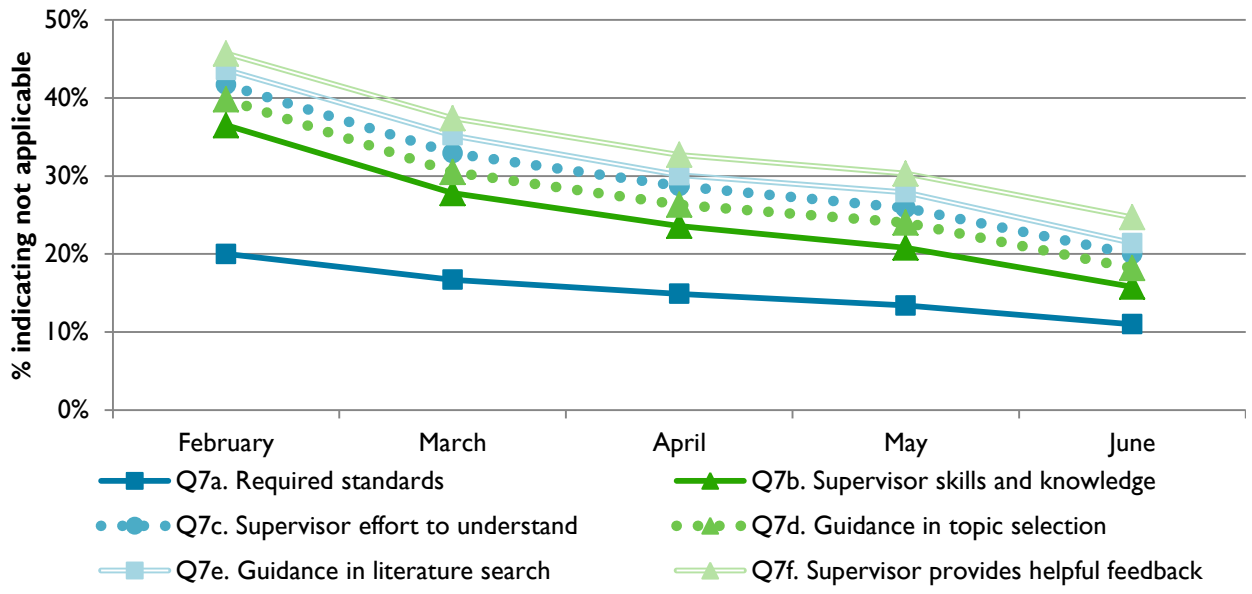


N=213 – 14,771

4.4. Dissertation

80.1% of all students participating in the survey said that they need to produce a dissertation or major project as a part of their programme (N = 42,619). Out of those 84% (N=36,085) answered at least one of the following dissertation questions. Many students did not complete all the questions because it was too soon to say, which was particularly evident towards the start of the survey window. For example, Figure 4.4.1 indicates that of students answering the survey in February 2013, 42% indicated they could not answer the question 'My supervisor makes a real effort to understand any difficulties I face', which dropped to 20% by June 2013.

Figure 4.4.1 Proportion of students stating questions not applicable, by month of survey completion



One of the associated difficulties with interpreting the results is that although they were guided to indicate the not applicable option, respondents may tick the 'neither' option to indicate they do not yet have a view on the topic, as suggested by the high proportion of neither responses early in the survey window (Figure 4.4.2). We therefore need to use caution in interpreting the results of the dissertation section to minimise the effect of date of completion. One way is to focus both on agreement and the proportion who actively disagree with a statement, which analysis indicates is not correlated with perceptions of non-applicability.

Figure 4.4.2 Proportion of students responding 'neither agree nor disagree', by month of survey completion

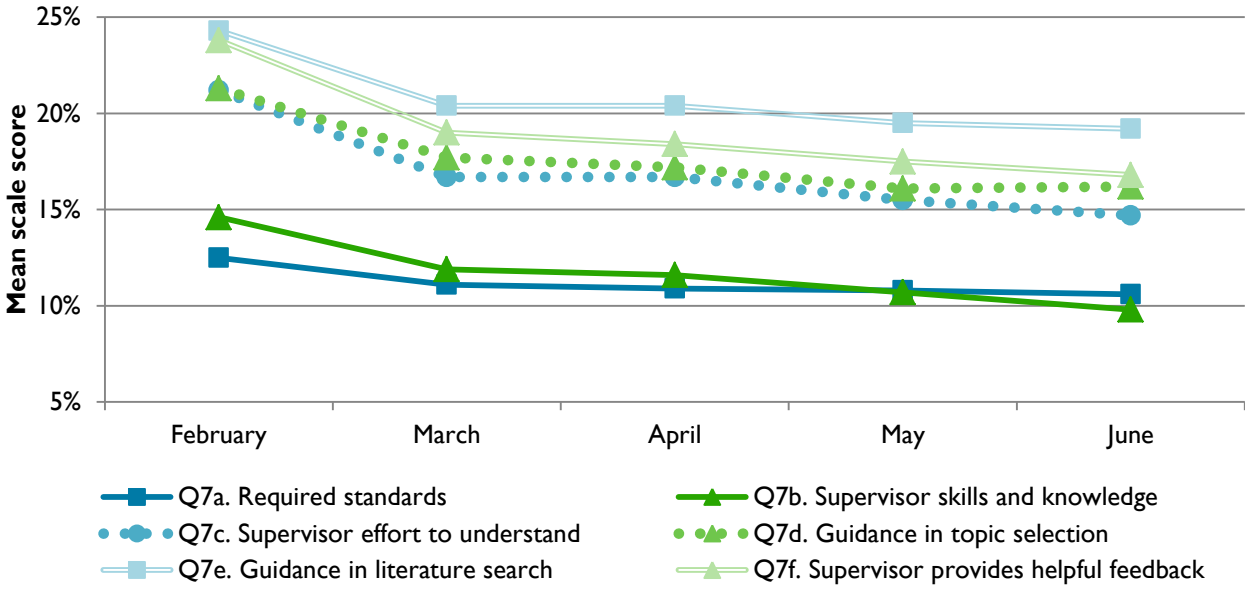
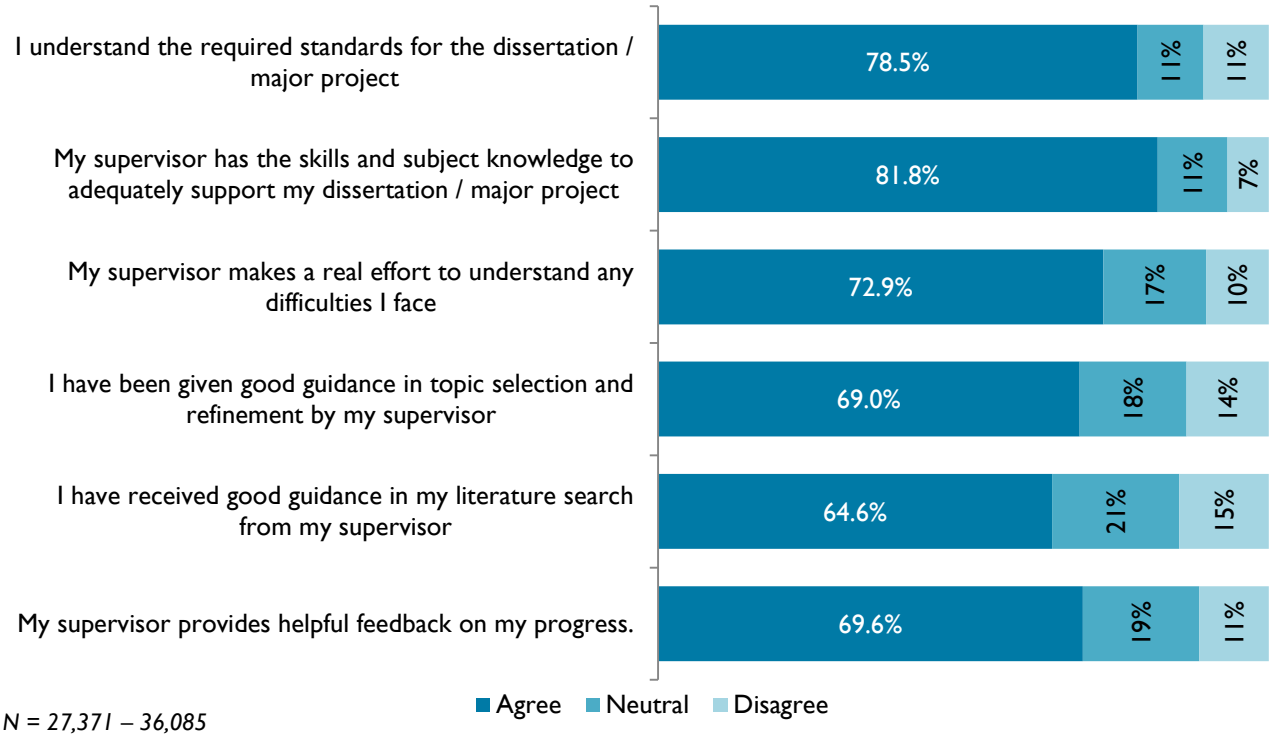


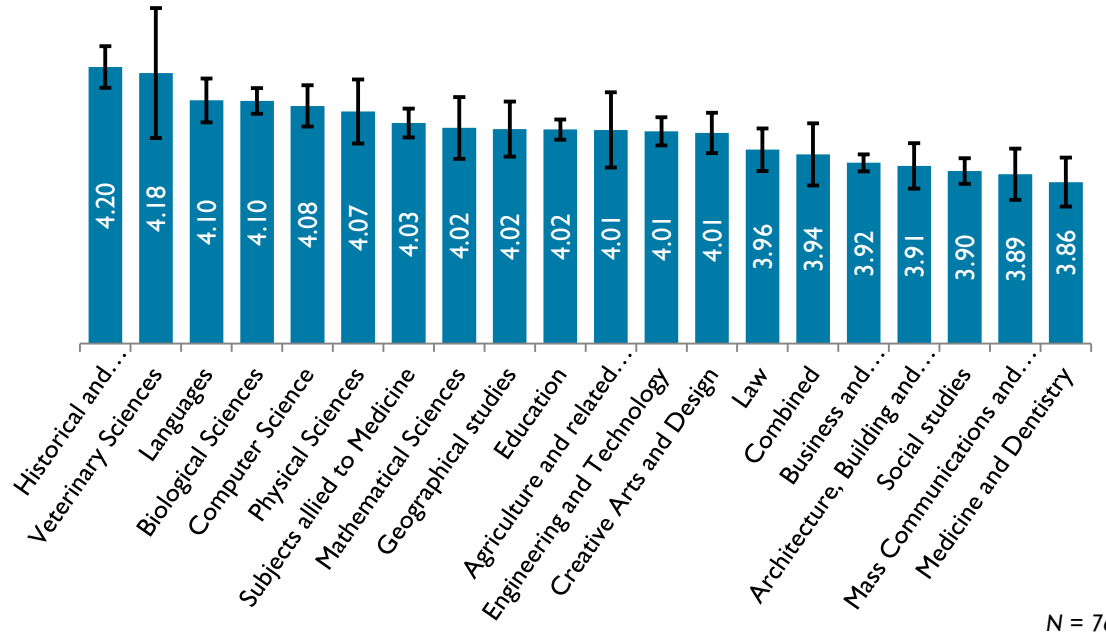
Figure 4.4.3 indicates there were relatively high levels of disagreement with statements that students had received good guidance in topic selection (14% of students disagreeing) and literature search (15% of students disagreeing). Conversely, over eight out of ten students indicated they agreed their supervisor had the skills and knowledge to adequately support their dissertation or major project. There were significant differences in scores for dissertation across disciplines ($R^2 = 0.01$), with perceptions relatively positive across the sciences, see Figure 4.4.4.

Figure 4.4.3 Experience of undertaking a dissertation



N = 27,371 – 36,085

Figure 4.4.4 Mean dissertation scale score by discipline

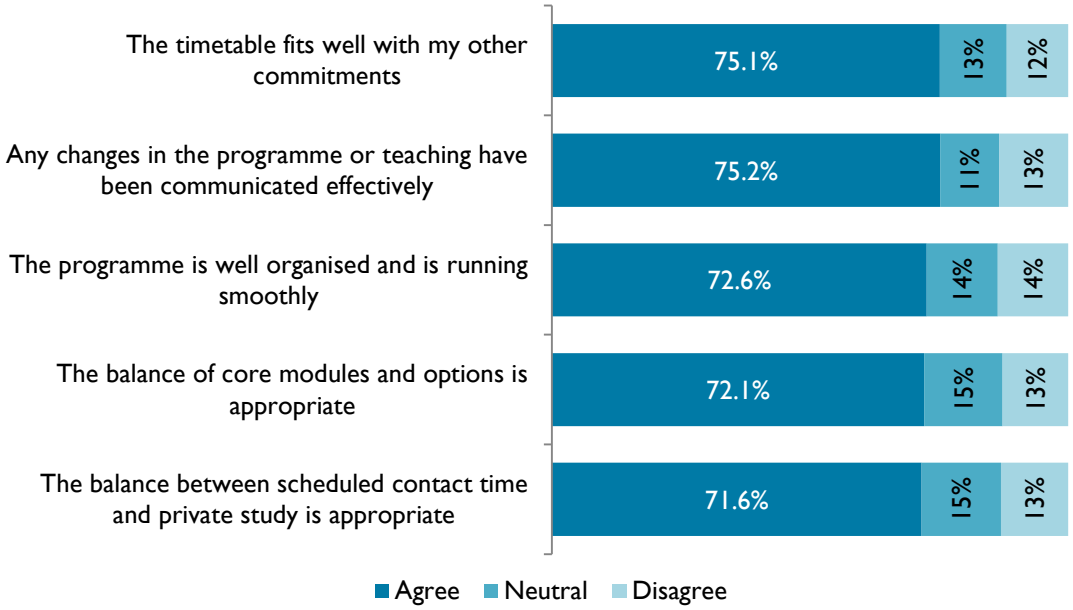


N = 76 – 6,326

4.5. Organisation and management

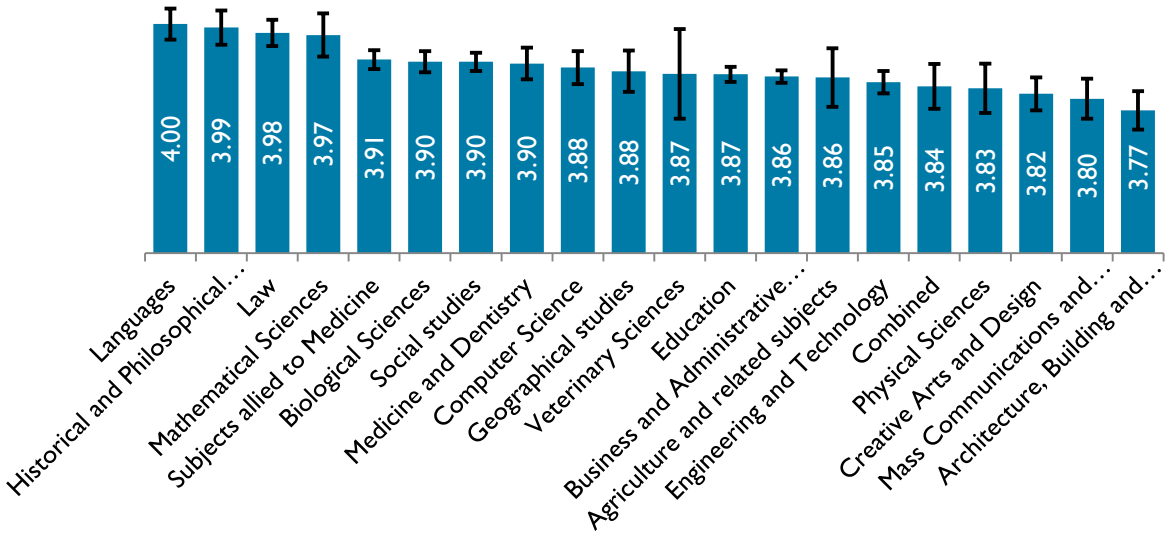
Figure 4.5.1 shows how students report their experience of the organisation and management of their course. A higher proportion of students agree with the items on communication and timetabling than for the other items, although levels of disagreement are quite consistent across the four items. Part-time and distance learning students tend to be more positive about aspects of organisation and management (see Section 7 for more on this). Figure 4.5.2 indicates that whilst some discipline scores are significantly different to each other, there was less variation across disciplines than for several other scales.

Figure 4.5.1 Experience of organisation and management



N = 51,035 – 58,156

Figure 4.5.2 Mean organisation and management scale score by discipline



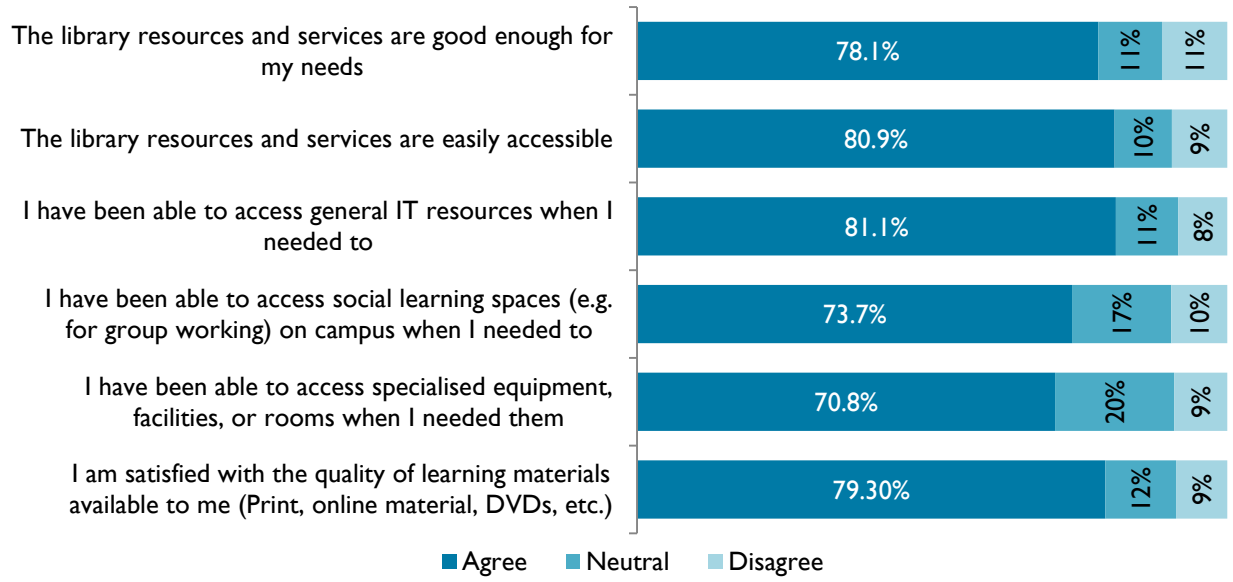
N = 190 – 11,186

4.6. Learning resources

Overall, satisfaction is high with learning resources; Figure 4.6.1 shows that fewer than one in ten students disagree with statements on learning resources being accessible and good enough for their needs. Learning resources scores vary less than other scales between disciplines, perhaps reflecting that within institutions they are generally the same for students across disciplines. However, there are still some significant differences; Figure 4.6.2 indicates students in Historical and Philosophical studies gave significantly lower scores than average (R^2 = 0.01) despite positive ratings of several other aspects of experience.

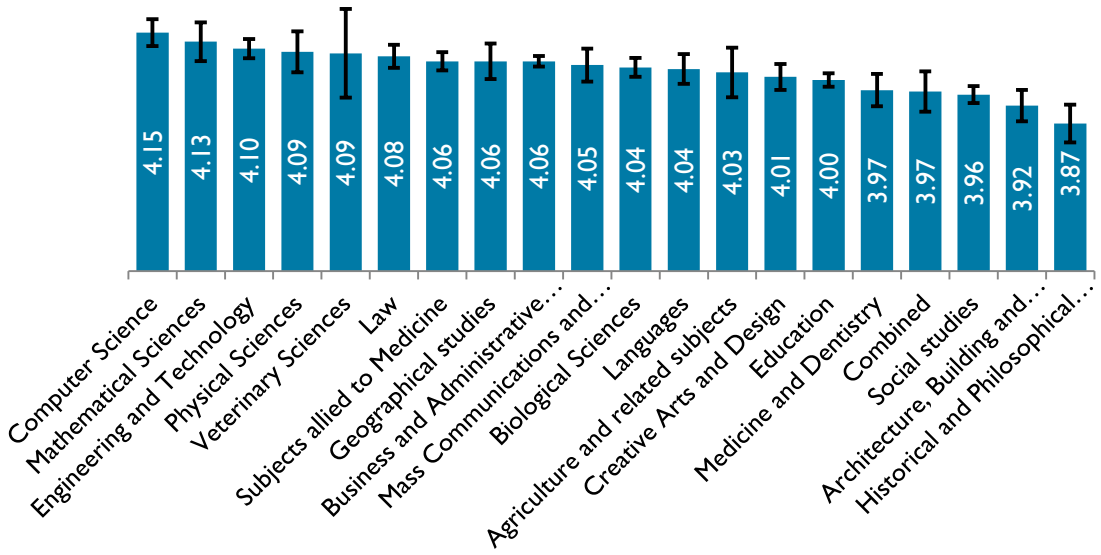
Full-time students are far more likely to agree with the four items asking about 'access' to resources than part-time students, however the differences appear to be because part-time students answered 'neither agree nor disagree' as an indication that they did not use these facilities, instead of selecting the 'not applicable' option (see Section 7 for more details). This also explains the 'excess' of the middle option for items on social learning spaces and specialised equipment, facilities or rooms.

Figure 4.6.1 Experience of learning resources



N = 38,896 – 56,903

Figure 4.6.2 Mean learning resources scale score by discipline



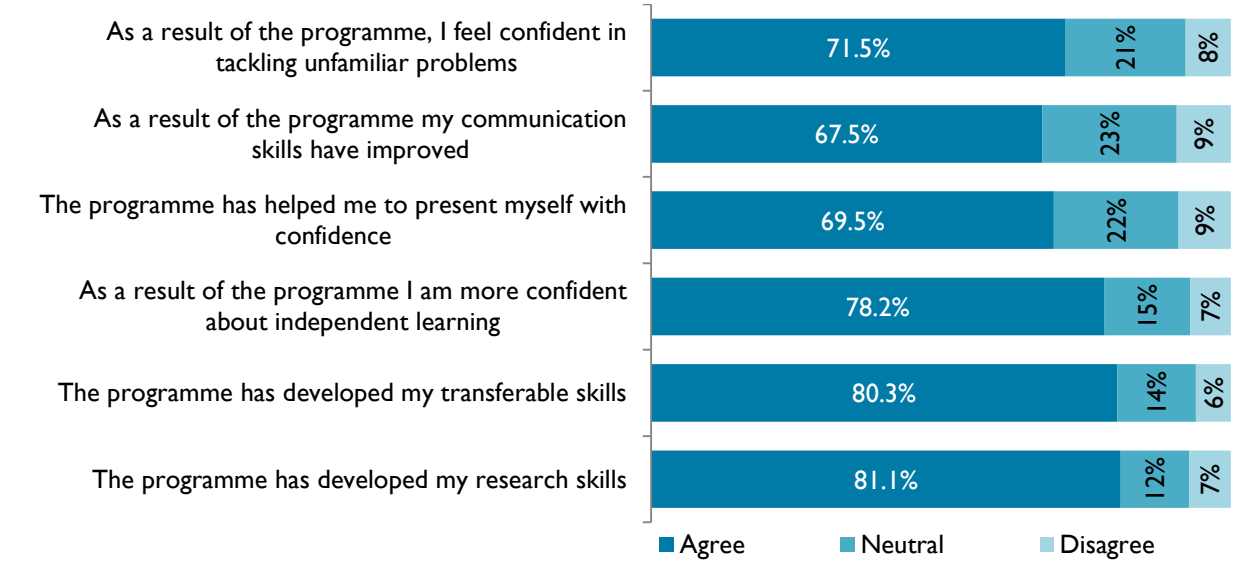
N = 109 – 9,540

4.7. Skills and personal development

Skills and personal development is one of the scales with highest levels of agreement, with Figure 4.7.1 indicating that just over four in five students agree that their programme has developed their research and transferable skills. Of all the scales it varied least with discipline, but was strongly associated with the core student experience factor (see Section 3.2). Across discipline some variation is likely to reflect pedagogy, for example Figure 4.7.2 shows that research skills were least likely to be developed in disciplines such as Law and Education, which are more vocationally orientated.

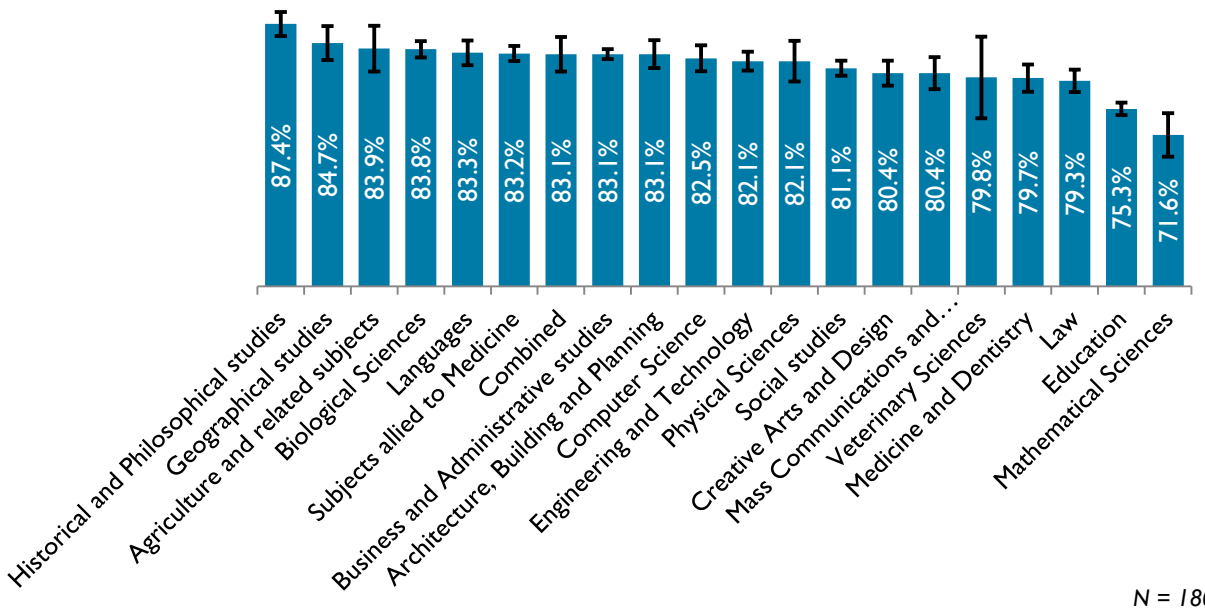
Younger students and those who studied full-time were also more likely to be positive about skills and personal development. There are indications that older students did not find questions around confidence, communications skills and problem solving relevant. In general, where students have already got these skills through employment or experience, there is a greater likelihood for students to indicate 'neither agree nor disagree'. The design of these questions is being reviewed in advance of PTES 2014 to ensure they are meaningful and relevant to all student groups who answer PTES.

Figure 4.7.1 Experience of skills and personal development



N = 56,848 - 57,453

Figure 4.7.2 The programme has developed my research skills, % agree by discipline



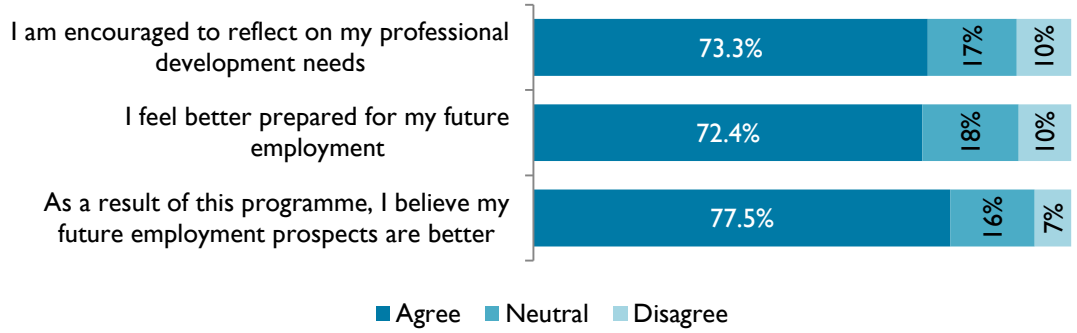
N = 180 – 10,966

4.8. Career and professional development

Career and professional development is the final experience scale with around three in four students in agreement with the items, as shown in Figure 4.8.1. Despite many already being in employment, part-time students tended to be more positive about these items. There was also strong variation across disciplines. Figure 4.8.2 shows that mean scores for Education and Subjects Allied to Medicine were significantly higher than those for Languages and Historical and Philosophical studies.

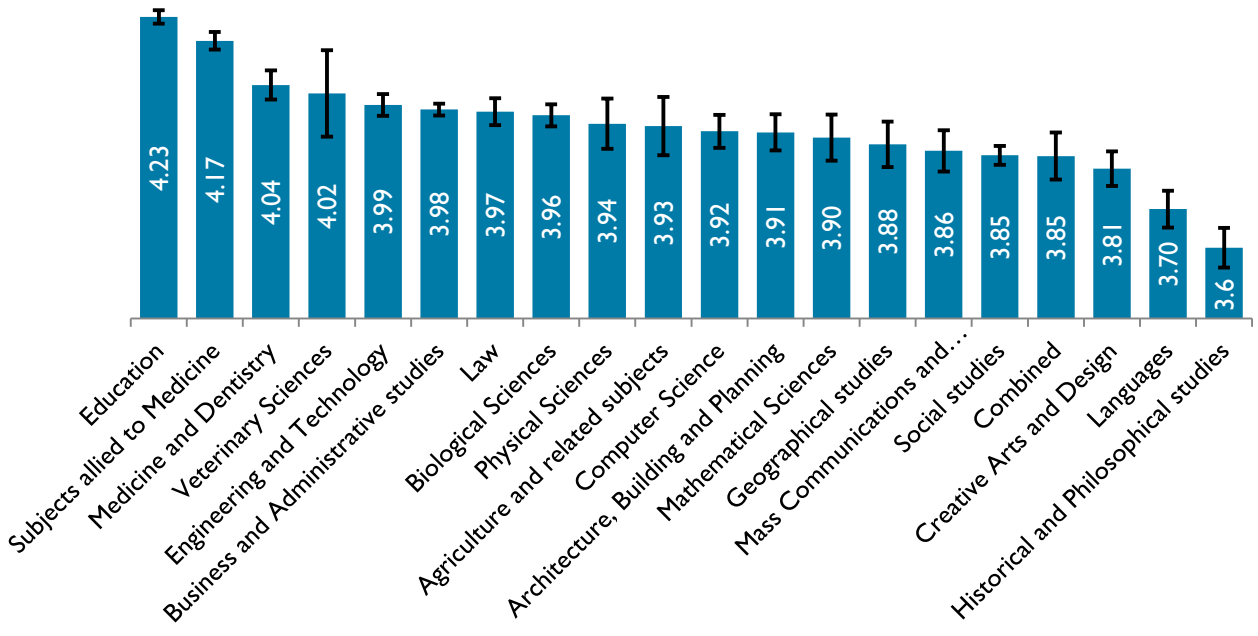
One important factor contributing to differences is the motivation towards career, being the strongest association of any motivation with a scale (R^2 = 0.02). Figure 4.8.3 shows that students are more likely to say their studies have prepared them for future employment where career is a motivation, but also that in highly vocational disciplines, such as Education, even those not motivated primarily by career are more likely to agree they are better prepared for employment. Conversely, those who are motivated by progressing in their career but who are in less vocational disciplines such as Languages, are less likely to agree that they are better prepared. This could indicate that disciplines without strong vocational ties are not as effective at meeting the employment needs of their students, possibly also reflecting more diverse career needs in less vocationally directed disciplines.

Figure 4.8.1 Experience of career and professional development



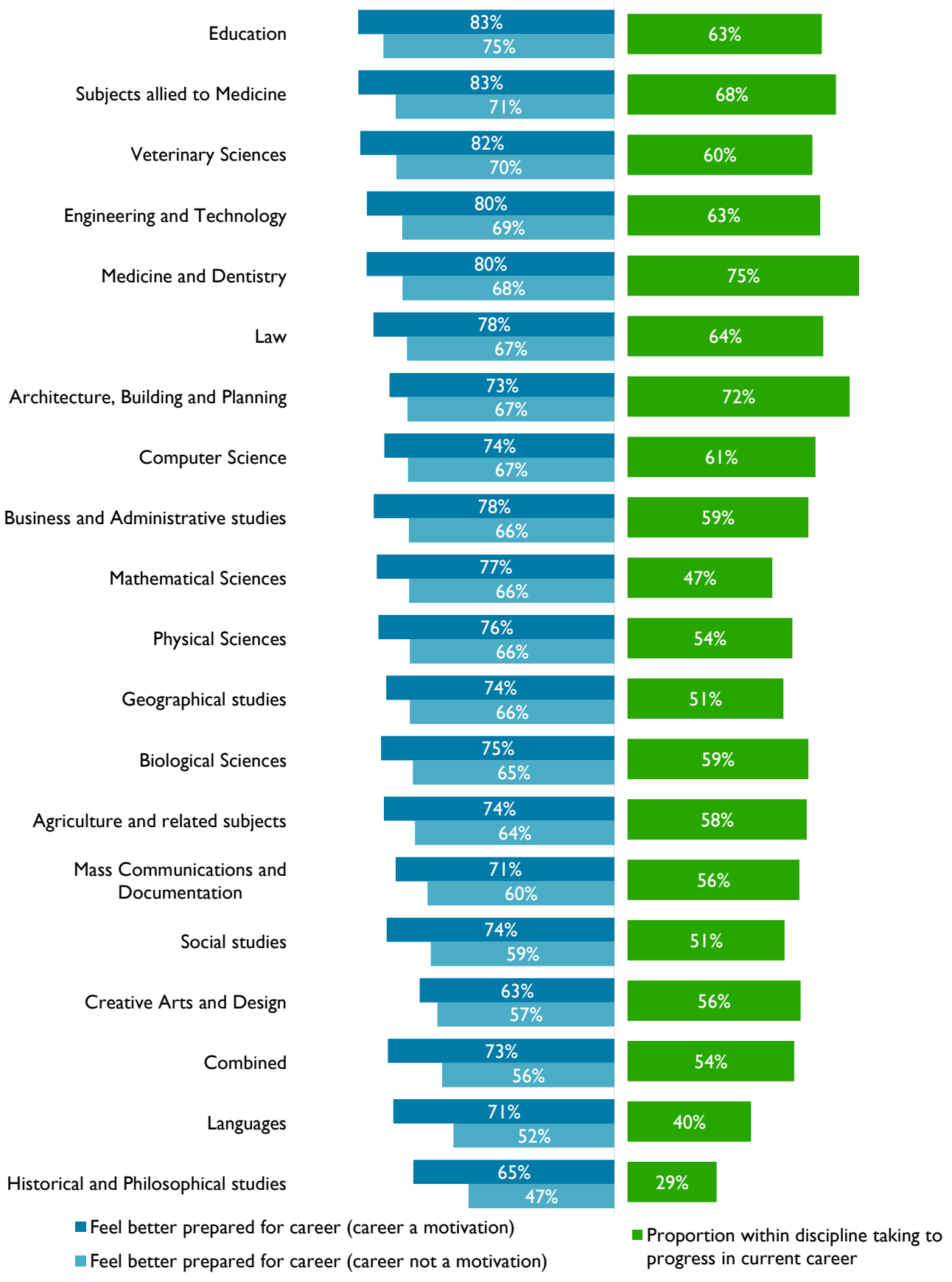
N = 56,787 – 57,175

Figure 4.8.2 Mean career and professional development scale score by discipline



N = 56,787 – 57,175

Figure 4.8.3 Proportion of students who agree they feel better prepared for their career by motivation and discipline, and, the proportion taking a postgraduate degree to progress in their current career by discipline



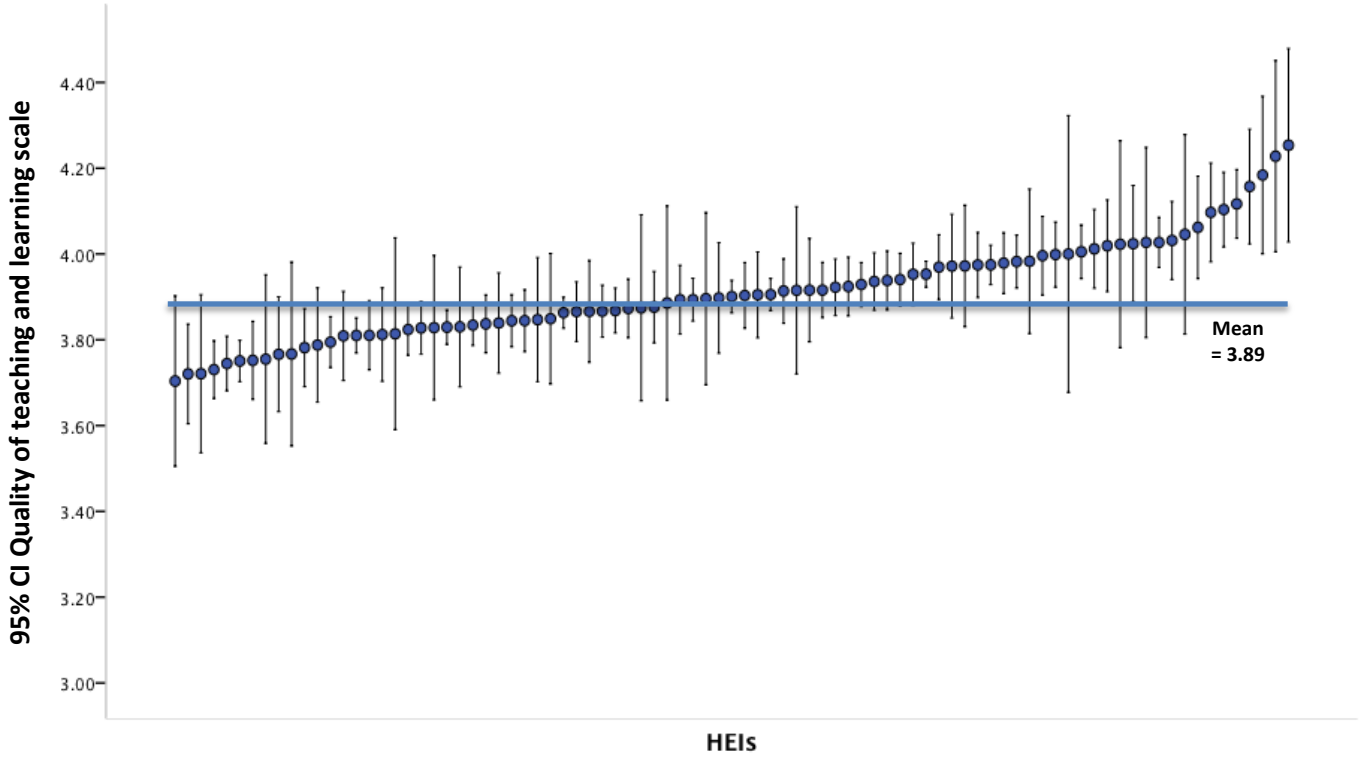
N = 56,787 – 57,175

5. Experience by institution type

Although the scores for individual institutions are confidential to that institution, it is possible to compare student experience 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, as has been highlighted in some of the previous analysis. The analysis is intended only to stimulate discussion and further investigation into what might be learnt to inform enhancement.

Figure 5.1 shows the mean scale scores for quality of teaching and learning (ie across the four teaching and learning items) by institution. The national mean was 3.89. The figure shows that while all institutions record a broadly positive response, there is significant variation. Apart from the caveats around discipline and demographics, the error bars (see Section 1.3.4) show that many institutions are not significantly different from the mean.

Figure 5.1 Mean scale scores for quality of teaching and learning, by institution



N = 42 – 3,833. 2 HEIs removed due to small number of students

To reduce this variation we can explore different groups of institutions. Table 5.2 breaks down the national dataset by whether students are studying at a pre-1992 or post-1992 or Small and Specialist institution. Pre-1992 institutions receive higher scores (statistically significant at 95% confidence level) than pre-1992 institutions on all areas apart from Career and Professional Development. Results can also be broken down by institution 'mission group' (Table 5.3). It should be noted that not every member of each mission group participated in PTES 2013, although over half of institutions in each group did so. The results show that across all mission groups the student experience is generally positive. There are some significant differences between the groups.

That there are significant differences is unsurprising given the very different demography of students and disciplines covered in the groups. For example, Table 5.4 shows that students studying at post-92 institutions were more likely to be motivated by personal interest compared with those studying at pre-1992 institutions. Conversely students studying at post-92 institutions were more likely to be motivated by career. We would expect this to have an impact on scales such as learning, teaching, staff, skills development and career development, where these motivations have an impact. Investigation across a range of such factors would be needed to establish whether differences between university groups reflected differences in demography, discipline, or delivery.

Table 5.2 Summary scales by broad type of institution			
	Pre-92	Post-92	Small and specialist
Quality of Learning and Teaching scale	4.044	3.886	4.024
Staff scale	4.203	4.012	4.188
Depth of learning scale	4.048	3.913	4.034
Assessment and Feedback scale	3.955	3.825	3.878
Dissertation scale	4.128	3.983	4.166
Organisation and Management scale	3.891	3.865	3.846
Learning resources scale	4.075	4.009	4.067
Skills and Personal Development scale	4.092	4.016	4.074
Career and Professional Development scale	4.028	4.039	4.032
N	20083-36654	10537-18935	338-653

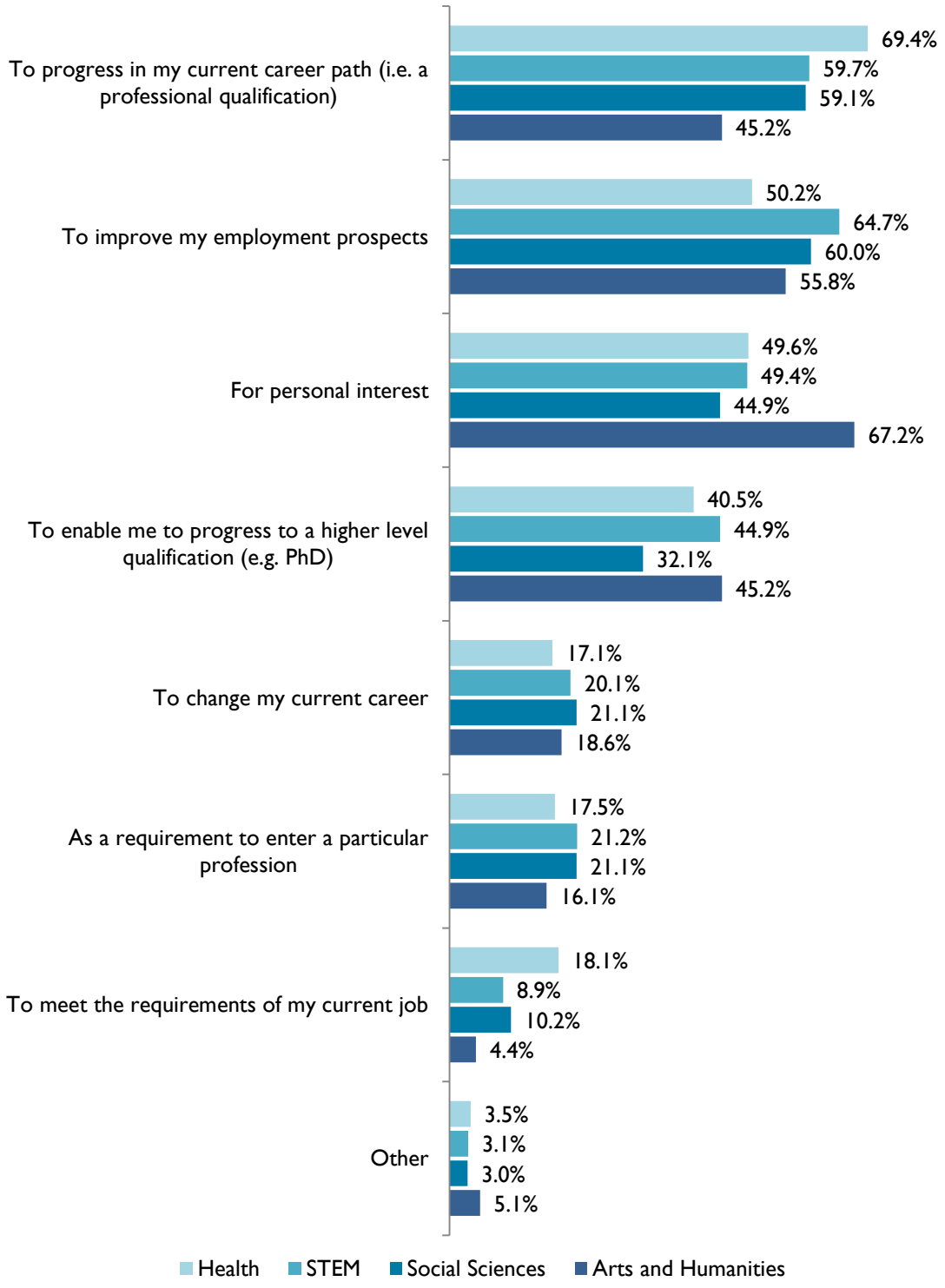
Table 5.3 Mean summary scale scores by 'mission group' of institution				
	Russell Group	1994 Group	Million+	University Alliance
Quality of Learning and Teaching scale	3.88	3.92	3.91	3.86
Staff scale	4.02	4.03	4.02	3.98
Depth of learning scale	3.84	3.88	3.94	3.93
Assessment and Feedback scale	3.70	3.84	3.86	3.88
Dissertation scale	3.96	4.02	4.00	3.99
Organisation and Management scale	3.88	3.94	3.91	3.84
Learning resources scale	4.05	4.01	3.99	4.04
Skills and Personal Development scale	3.98	4.02	4.05	4.03
Career and Professional Development scale	3.93	4.00	4.09	4.02
N	12799-23092	3372-6193	2928-5620	5866-10553

Table 5.4 Motivation by broad type of institution			
	Pre-92	Post-92	Small and specialist
To improve my employment prospects	60.1%	55.4%	52.8%
To progress in my current career path (i.e. a professional qualification)	57.0%	60.9%	60.3%
For personal interest	50.7%	44.9%	52.1%
To enable me to progress to a higher level qualification	37.4%	37.4%	37.4%
To change my current career	19.2%	21.6%	22.0%
As a requirement to enter a particular profession	18.6%	21.7%	18.8%
To meet the requirements of my current job	9.2%	12.2%	10.4%
N	36848	19399	655

6. Experience by discipline

The results for disciplines reflect differences in the institutions that teach them and the individuals motivated to study them. However, because they also reflect differences in pedagogy and delivery, discipline is a key factor in understanding the results. Table 6.1 summarises how the motivations for taking a PGT programme vary by discipline cluster. Students in Health were more likely to be motivated by progression in a current career path and meet the requirements of their current job than other students. Arts and Humanities students were more likely to be entering postgraduate study for personal interest or to progress to a higher level qualification. As seen in Sections 4.1 and 4.8, motivation has a significant impact on scale scores.

Figure 6.1 Profile of motivation by discipline cluster

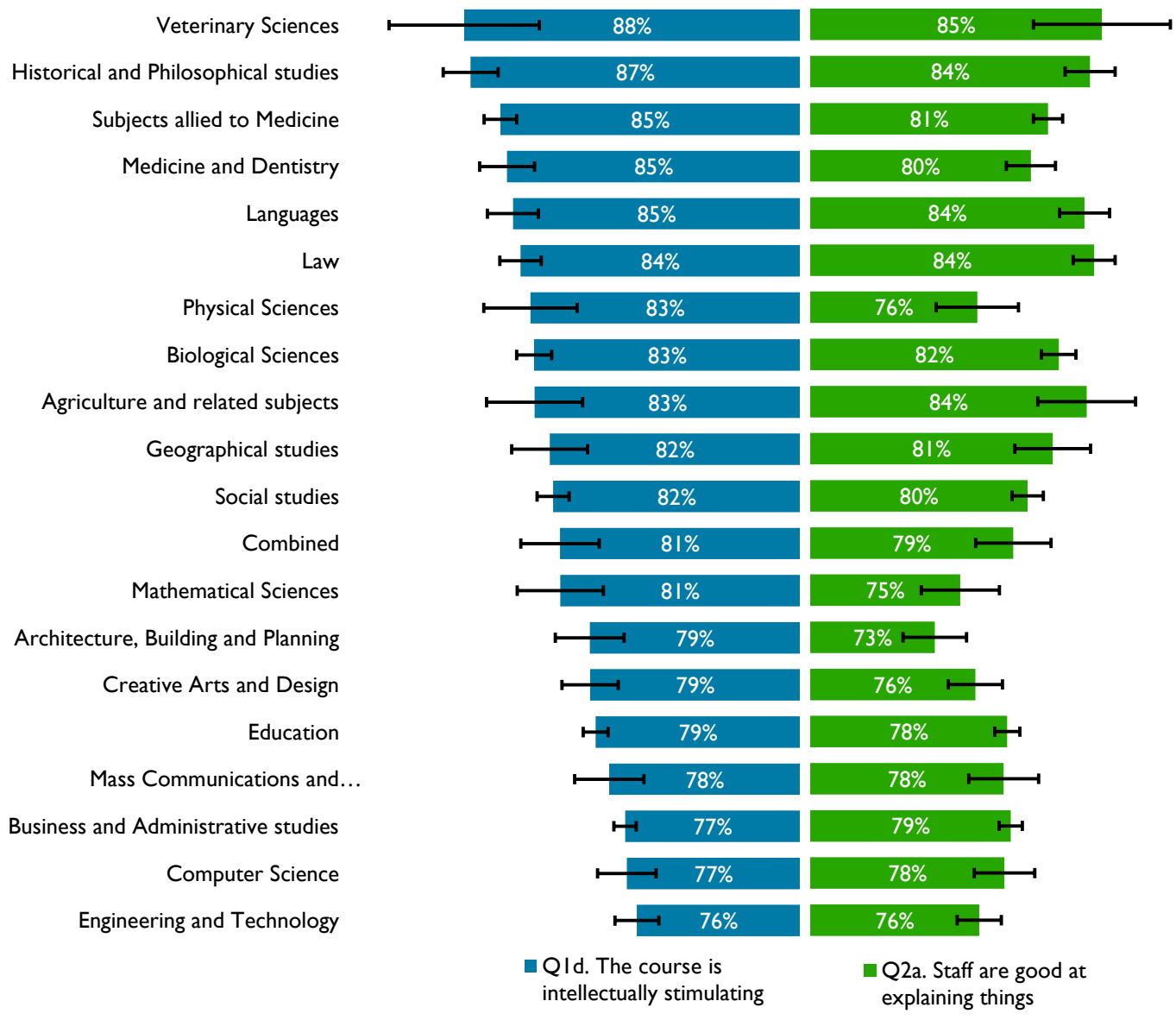


The effect sizes for factors such as discipline are relatively small compared to variation at student level. However, this does not mean that effects are negligible. For example, Figure 6.2 compares questions on course or staff across disciplines and evidences that differences of up to ten percentage points can be observed between any two disciplines. Whether this is due to variations in how students in different disciplines interpret questions or differences in quality of experience, factors such as discipline, motivation and others considered in the following sections produce differences that should inform any interpretation.

Table 6.3 gives the mean scores of students in each discipline for the summary scales. While the differences are all significant, the career and professional development scale varies most significantly across disciplines. As discussed previously, motivation has a measurable impact on this. For example, Education has significantly higher scores for this scale than average ($R^2 = 0.02$). While some of this is due to the 41% of this discipline taking PGCEs, taught masters students in Education also score career and professional development significantly above average, with two-thirds of these students stating progression in their career was a motivation. Despite scoring significantly above average on several other scales, Historical and Philosophical studies scores significantly below average on the Career and Professional Development scale ($R^2 = 0.05$), and also has the lowest proportion of students who state career progression is a motivation (29%).

Assessment and Feedback also varies a great deal across disciplines and Education is again significantly above average, both for taught masters and PGCEs ($R^2 = 0.02$). Engineering and Technology has significantly lower than average scores on several scales, but particularly on the depth of learning scale ($R^2 = 0.02$). Mathematical Sciences is also significantly below average on the depth of learning scale ($R^2 = 0.03$).

Figure 6.2 Agreement with 'The course is intellectually stimulating' and 'Staff are good at explaining things' by discipline



N = 190 – 11,124

Table 6.3 Mean summary scales, by discipline (colour coded by effect size compared with average mean score)

	Quality of Learning and Teaching	Staff	Depth of learning	Assessment and Feedback	Dissertation	Organisation and Management	Learning resources	Skills and Personal Development	Career and Professional Development	N
Medicine and Dentistry	3.91	4.09	3.84	3.70	3.86	3.90	3.97	4.01	4.04	849-1778
Subjects allied to Medicine	3.97	4.10	4.00	3.84	4.03	3.91	4.06	4.09	4.17	2122-4879
Biological Sciences	3.94	4.09	3.94	3.68	4.10	3.90	4.04	4.05	3.96	2622-3970
Veterinary Sciences	4.01	4.24	3.89	3.56	4.18	3.87	4.09	4.00	4.02	76-190
Agriculture and related subjects	3.96	4.12	3.85	3.69	4.01	3.86	4.03	4.03	3.93	290-495
Physical Sciences	3.94	3.99	3.76	3.58	4.07	3.83	4.09	4.00	3.94	419-690
Geographical studies	3.93	4.05	3.89	3.66	4.02	3.88	4.06	4.04	3.88	576-866
Mathematical Sciences	3.94	3.89	3.64	3.73	4.02	3.97	4.13	3.89	3.90	389-843
Computer Science	3.87	3.91	3.75	3.68	4.08	3.88	4.15	4.00	3.92	1003-1651
Engineering and Technology	3.81	3.88	3.70	3.57	4.01	3.85	4.10	4.03	3.99	2050-3151
Architecture, Building and Planning	3.81	3.91	3.95	3.61	3.91	3.77	3.92	4.02	3.91	880-1376
Social studies	3.88	4.01	3.90	3.75	3.90	3.90	3.96	3.95	3.85	2893-5220
Law	3.97	4.11	3.88	3.67	3.96	3.98	4.08	4.01	3.97	1002-2561
Business and Administrative studies	3.85	3.91	3.85	3.70	3.92	3.86	4.06	4.05	3.98	6326-11154
Mass Communications and Documentation	3.84	3.99	3.82	3.77	3.89	3.80	4.05	3.95	3.86	734-1190
Languages	3.97	4.20	3.94	3.92	4.10	4.00	4.04	3.97	3.70	920-1762
Historical and Philosophical studies	4.03	4.26	4.08	3.91	4.20	3.99	3.87	3.99	3.60	842-1491
Creative Arts and Design	3.88	4.09	3.92	3.85	4.01	3.82	4.01	3.99	3.81	1216-1904
Education	3.89	4.03	3.91	4.00	4.02	3.87	4.00	3.98	4.23	4552-9038
Combined	3.90	4.05	3.87	3.65	3.94	3.84	3.97	4.00	3.85	489-904

7. 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. Mode of study is a particularly important factor in analysing PTES because of the very different expectations and experiences of the students across a variety of factors.

Table 7.1 gives the mean scale scores for mode of study and mode of delivery. The differences are all significant apart from dissertation scale and mode of delivery, although in general effect sizes are small indicating that mode is not a strong influence on the scales. The scores for learning resources are lower, this is discussed in more detail below.

Table 7.1 Scale mean scores, by mode of study and mode of delivery

Scale	Full-time	Part-time	N	R^2*	Face-to-face	Distance	N	R^2*
Quality of Learning and Teaching	3.86	3.97	57,168	0.00	3.88	3.94	56,772	0.00
Staff	3.96	4.12	56,439	0.01	4.00	4.09	56,044	0.00
Depth of learning	3.83	3.98	57,297	0.01	3.85	4.00	56,911	0.01
Assessment and Feedback	3.69	3.92	55,123	0.02	3.72	3.93	54,733	0.01
Dissertation	3.98	4.02	31,626	0.00	3.99	3.98	31,384	0.00(ns)
Organisation and Management	3.85	3.95	55,357	0.00	3.87	3.92	54,962	0.00
Learning resources	4.06	3.96	44,126	0.00	4.07	3.85	43,714	0.01
Skills and Personal Development	3.99	4.05	55,780	0.00	4.00	4.05	55,397	0.00
Career and Professional Development	3.94	4.09	54,598	0.01	3.94	4.15	54,228	0.01

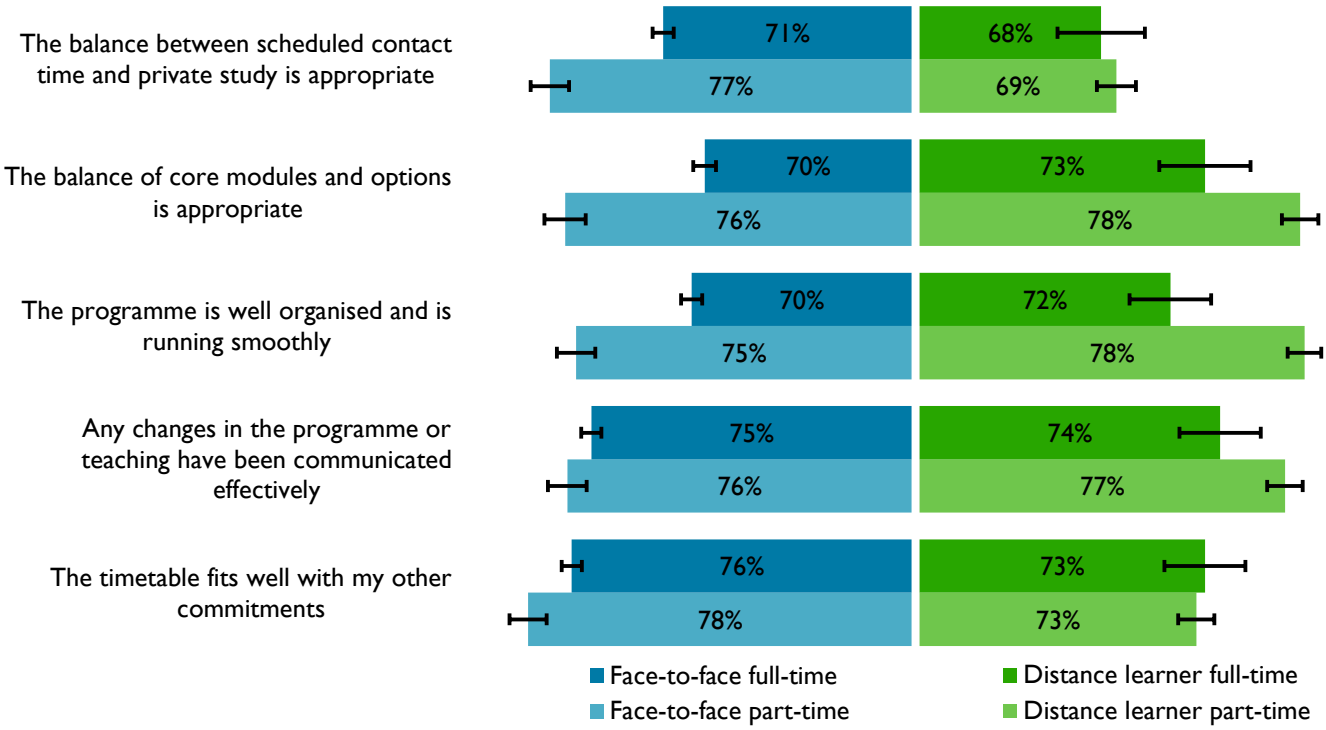
*estimated variance derived from Mann-Whitney U test statistic, all differences significant at $p<0.001$ apart from (ns)

Given the importance of flexible programme delivery to part-time students (as shown in Figure 2.3.3), Figure 7.2 analyses the experience of organisation and management for both part-time and distance learners. Significantly more part-time learners agree that their programme is well organised and the balance of core and optional modules is appropriate compared with their full-time counterparts. This applies across face-to-face and distance learning. It is not clear if this is due to differences in programme delivery resulting in improved organisation and choice, or differences in perception caused by part-time students having less opportunity to experience organisational difficulties and so less likely to refer to them.

Questions on library resources can be difficult or impossible for part-time and distance learning students to answer. Unfortunately the students may often tick the middle 'neither agree nor disagree' instead of 'not applicable' when the question does not apply. Therefore, we have to interpret the results carefully and consider the ratio of % agree and % disagree figures. At first glance the main story of Table 7.3 is the excess of 'neither' responses, reaching 38% for access to specialised equipment for part-time distance learning students. Distance learning students are most likely to perceive the questions as not applicable to them, and in general questions on social learning spaces and specialised equipment gain higher than expected middle responses.

However, there are other results of interest in Table 7.3. Full-time students are most likely to indicate that the library resources and services are not good enough for their needs, and distance learning students most likely to indicate that the library resources and services are not easily accessible. This latter result, not associated with any particular excess of 'neither' responses, indicates that distance learning students are more likely to perceive difficulty in accessing the resources they need for their studies.

Figure 7.2 Organisation and management items, by mode of study and mode of delivery



N=1699 - 33752

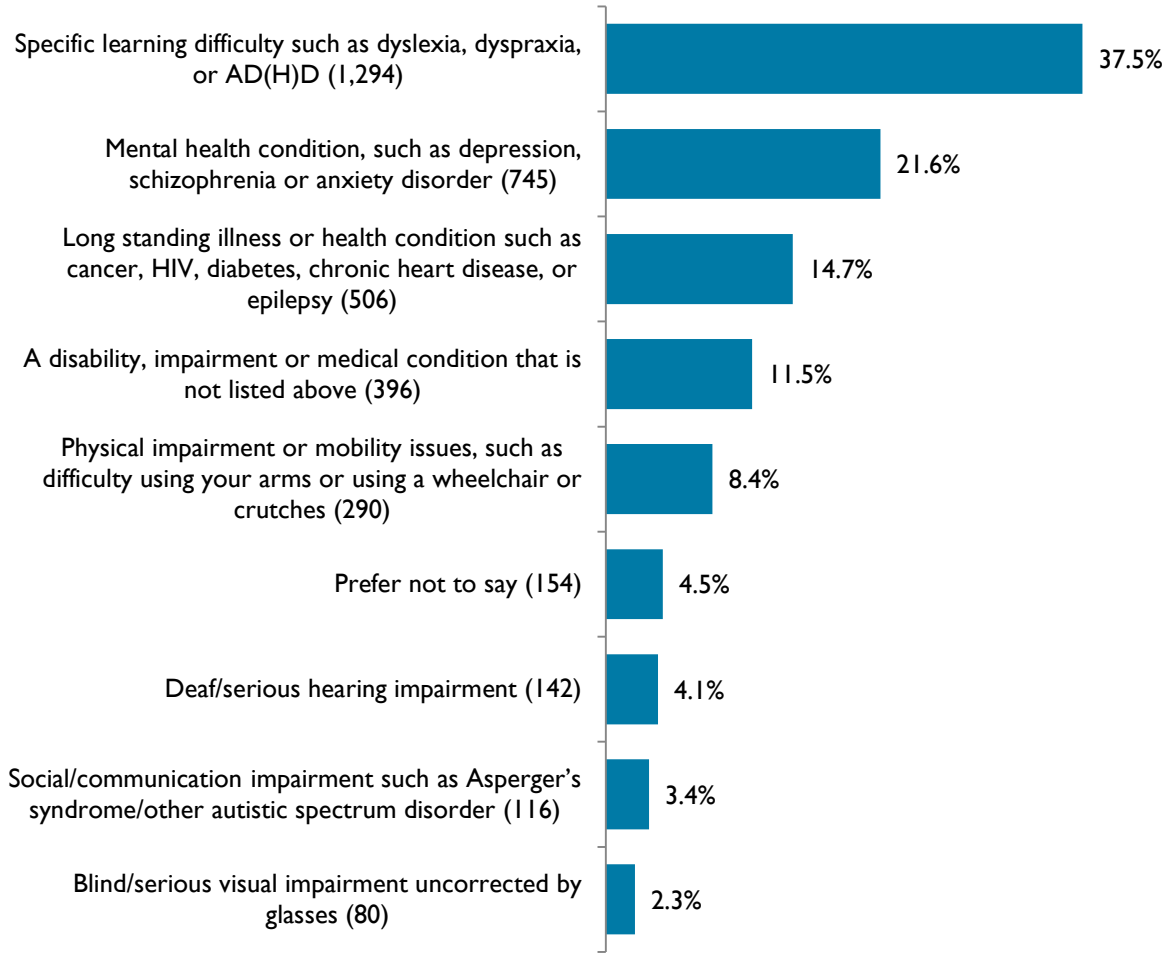
Table 7.3 Library resources by mode of study and mode of delivery

	Part-time			Full-time		
Face-to-face learner	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
The library resources and services are good enough for my needs	9.6%	9.5%	80.9%	**12.0%**	9.7%	78.3%
The library resources and services are easily accessible	8.4%	8.9%	82.8%	8.0%	8.2%	83.8%
I have been able to access general IT resources when I needed to	8.2%	10.4%	81.4%	7.6%	9.1%	83.3%
I have been able to access social learning spaces (e.g. for group working) on campus when I needed to	8.7%	19.9%	71.4%	9.3%	13.8%	76.9%
I have been able to access specialised equipment, facilities, or rooms when I needed them	8.8%	23.6%	67.6%	8.5%	16.6%	74.9%
I am satisfied with the quality of learning materials available to me (Print, online material, DVDs, etc.)	7.6%	11.4%	81.0%	8.7%	11.5%	79.9%
Distance learner						
The library resources and services are good enough for my needs	9.3%	14.4%	76.3%	11.9%	12.1%	75.9%
The library resources and services are easily accessible	13.8%	14.2%	72.1%	12.8%	13.1%	74.1%
I have been able to access general IT resources when I needed to	9.9%	14.9%	75.3%	10.6%	13.1%	76.3%
I have been able to access social learning spaces (e.g. for group working) on campus when I needed to	11.1%	28.7%	60.2%	11.0%	19.2%	69.8%
I have been able to access specialised equipment, facilities, or rooms when I needed them	12.1%	37.6%	50.3%	9.8%	26.2%	64.1%
I am satisfied with the quality of learning materials available to me (Print, online material, DVDs, etc.)	9.4%	13.2%	77.3%	9.7%	13.2%	77.1%

8. Experience by disability

Six per cent of students (3,452) stated that they consider themselves to have a disability. The type of disability among these students is presented in Figure 8.1.

Figure 8.1 Type of disability



N = 3,452 (Numbers in brackets next to the disability categories represent the number of respondents. The percentages do not sum up to 100 because it was a multiple response question)

Table 8.2 examines the experience across different scales of students who are disabled and those with no known disability. Overall, students who state they are disabled report a significantly worse experience across most scales, apart from depth of learning where scores are higher than for those with no declared disability. In particular, learning resources has lower scores across all types of disability (R^2 ~ 0.02), reflecting relatively high disagreement with all statements in the learning resources scale for students with a disability.

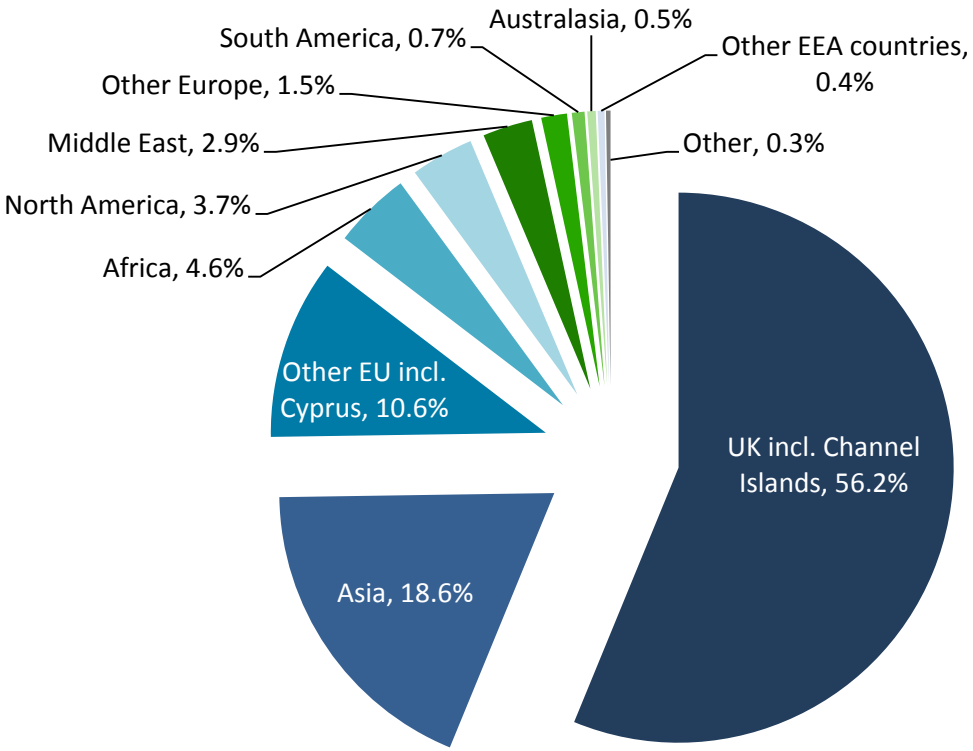
Among types of disability, students stating they have a social/communication impairment such as Asperger's have the most significantly negative perceptions of their experience, most particularly around skills development (R^2 = 0.06) and career development (R^2 = 0.04). Students with mental health conditions are also particularly negative about their experience on these scales (R^2 = 0.02). Students who are deaf indicate that on the whole their experience is average or relatively positive across most scales. This suggests that, at least in some key aspects of teaching and learning, institutions' provision can meet the needs of students with physical disabilities, but there is still some way to go in meeting the needs of those students with social/communication impairments, specific learning difficulties and mental health conditions.

Table 8.2 Mean summary scale scores, by disability (colour coding of effect size relative to 'no disability' group)										
	Quality of Learning and Teaching	Staff	Depth of learning	Assessment and Feedback	Dissertation	Organisation and Management	Learning resources	Skills and Personal Development	Career and Professional Development	N
Social/communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome/other autistic spectrum disorder	3.72	3.86	3.66	3.64	3.67	3.61	3.85	3.61	3.65	83-133
Blind/serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses	3.80	3.92	3.9	3.64	3.93	3.75	3.74	3.92	3.81	54-91
Deaf/serious hearing impairment	3.97	4.11	3.99	3.87	4.15	3.87	3.81	4.01	4.03	66-153
Long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy	3.85	4.00	3.91	3.77	3.94	3.79	3.8	3.91	3.93	292-565
Mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder	3.78	4.02	3.91	3.62	3.90	3.72	3.84	3.79	3.71	433-787
Specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, or AD(H)D	3.77	3.97	3.94	3.64	3.81	3.72	3.88	3.94	3.94	784-1394
Physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using your arms or using a wheelchair or crutches	3.89	4.03	3.91	3.84	3.99	3.74	3.85	4.00	3.93	160-307
A disability, impairment or medical condition that is not listed above	3.84	4.02	3.95	3.79	3.94	3.78	3.81	3.90	3.87	221-429
Prefer not to say	3.70	3.89	3.82	3.44	3.80	3.58	3.75	3.72	3.75	168-291
Disability	3.82	4.01	3.91	3.7	3.91	3.77	3.87	3.89	3.88	1853-3397
No disability	3.90	4.02	3.88	3.78	4.00	3.89	4.05	4.02	4.00	29193-52969

9. Experience by domicile

Figure 9.1 shows the breakdown of PTES 2013 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.

Figure 9.1: Place of residence, by major country group

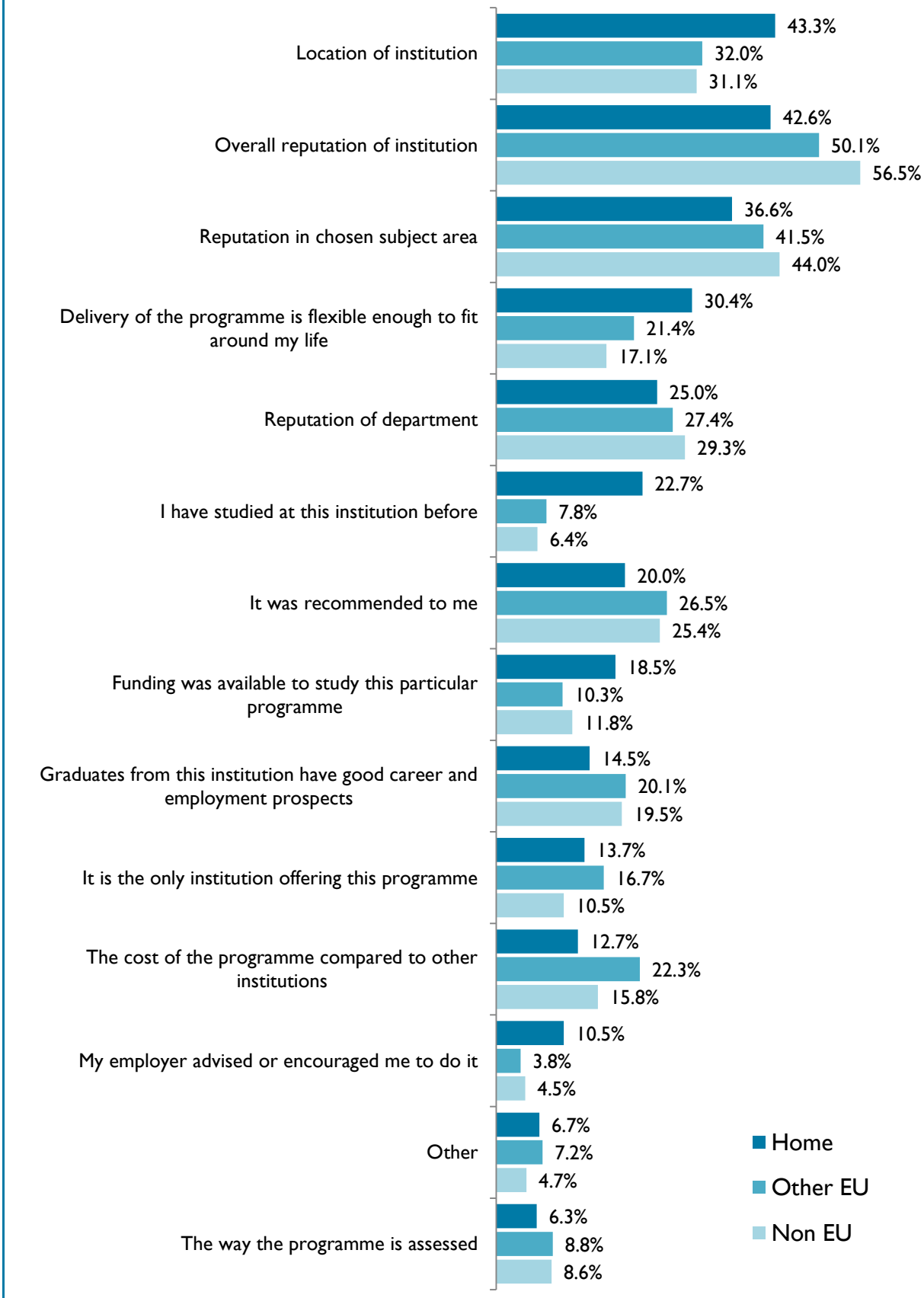


N = 56,458

While all students were likely to give reputational factors as a reason, Figure 9.2 indicates reputation is significantly more likely to drive choice for international students ($R^2 = 0.02$). Conversely, factors such as having studied at the institution before ($R^2 = 0.05$), location ($R^2 = 0.01$), and funding being available ($R^2 = 0.01$), were more likely to be given as factors by home students. Location was still an important factor for some groups of overseas students, 34% of full-time face-to-face non-EU students selecting it as a reason.

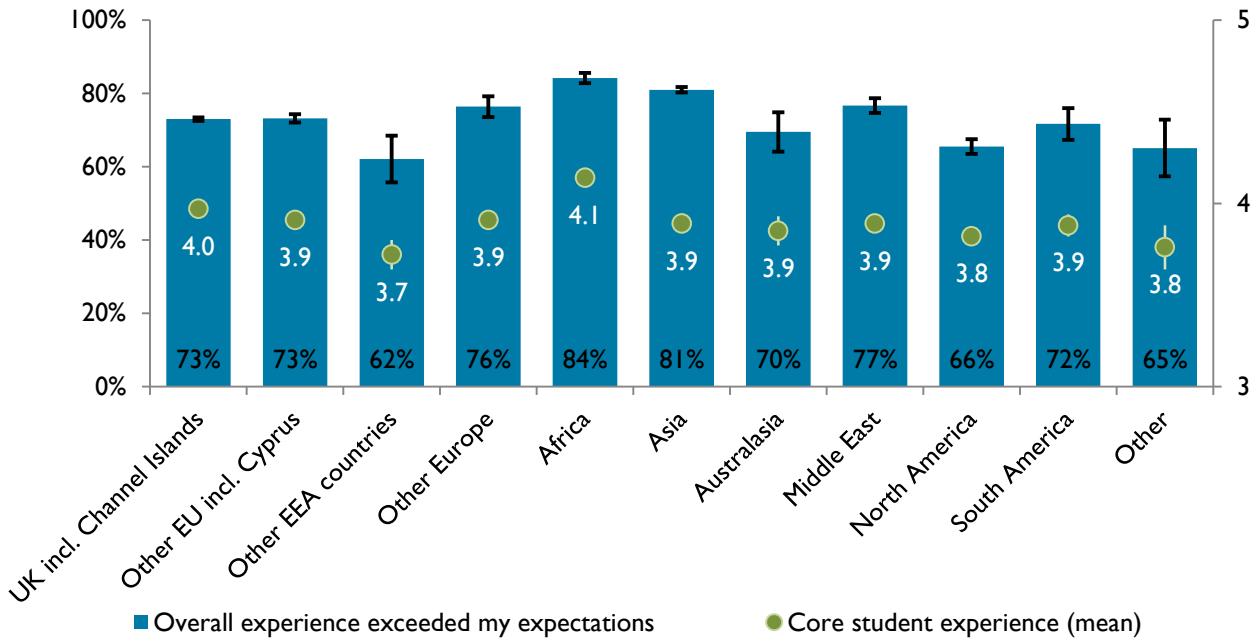
Figure 9.3 shows that overall expectations and experience were broadly similar across domicile. Among country groupings students from Africa were most positive, and were most likely to state their expectations had been exceeded. Figure 9.4 indicates that their rating of experience was the highest of any country grouping across all scales, and significantly above average, particularly for skills and career development ($R^2 = 0.03$). Conversely, students from Norway and Iceland (Other EAA) gave scores significantly lower for several scales, particularly around assessment and feedback ($R^2 = 0.03$). Students from several country groups gave significantly lower scores for assessment than average ($R^2 \sim 0.02$). Trend analysis indicates that while UK students have reported steadily improved perceptions of assessment, perceptions of overseas students has remained largely static, especially around promptness and timeliness of feedback.

Figure 9.2 Reasons to study this programme at this institution by domicile



N = 6,087 – 34,133

Figure 9.3 Overall experience relative to expectations and core student experience* by domicile



*the 'core student experience' is a weighted measure of summary scales, calculated as an average of separate factor weightings for home, EU and non-EU students. Where values for over three summary scales were missing, the measure was not calculated.

Figure 9.4 Table of mean scale scores, by major country groups (colour coded by effect size, relative to average)

	Quality of Learning and Teaching	Staff	Depth of learning	Assessment and Feedback	Dissertation	Organisation and Management	Learning resources	Skills and Personal Development	Career and Professional Development	N
UK incl. Channel Islands	3.93	4.08	3.95	3.82	4.00	3.88	4.01	4.01	4.04	15723-31448
Other EU incl. Cyprus	3.91	4.00	3.83	3.65	3.97	3.90	4.08	3.97	3.94	3275-5946
Other EEA countries	3.66	3.74	3.69	3.42	3.87	3.82	3.82	3.75	3.76	104-220
Other Europe	3.87	3.93	3.80	3.66	3.90	3.93	4.09	4.01	3.97	478-844
Africa	4.10	4.09	4.04	3.87	4.18	4.11	4.20	4.32	4.32	1420-2498
Asia	3.82	3.90	3.73	3.81	3.97	3.90	4.07	4.02	3.86	7089-10256
Australasia	3.82	4.05	3.93	3.48	3.87	3.83	3.80	3.90	3.93	129-274
Middle East	3.83	3.87	3.72	3.59	3.94	3.84	3.98	4.13	4.09	957-1612
North America	3.79	3.98	3.89	3.49	3.95	3.78	3.94	3.89	3.81	1144-2073
South America	3.77	3.96	3.81	3.48	3.97	3.81	4.17	3.99	4.02	233-419

10. Funding – trends and cross-sector differences

Analysis of trends over time indicates that 2013 has witnessed the most significant change in funding in the period 2010 to 2013, with a greater proportion of students stating they are self-funding for 2013 in 32 out of the 42 JACS disciplines. This has been concurrent with drops in other sources of funding, particularly from employers, Government and institutions. Figure 10.1 shows a selection, such as Physical Science, where there has been a 9% increase in students stating they are self-funding. In Business there has been a 4% year-on-year increase in the proportion of students self-funding.

Self-funding is common in arts and humanities subjects, for example Figure 10.2 indicates that in Creative Arts and Design over eight out of ten students rely on self-funding. For disciplines such as Education and Subjects Allied to Medicine other sources of support are much more prevalent, with 29% of students in Subjects Allied to Medicine receiving funding from their employer and 17% of students in Education gaining funding from UK Government. These disciplines are likely to be more sensitive to future changes in funding.

Figure 10.1 Proportion self-funded by discipline and survey year, selected disciplines (JACS2 level)

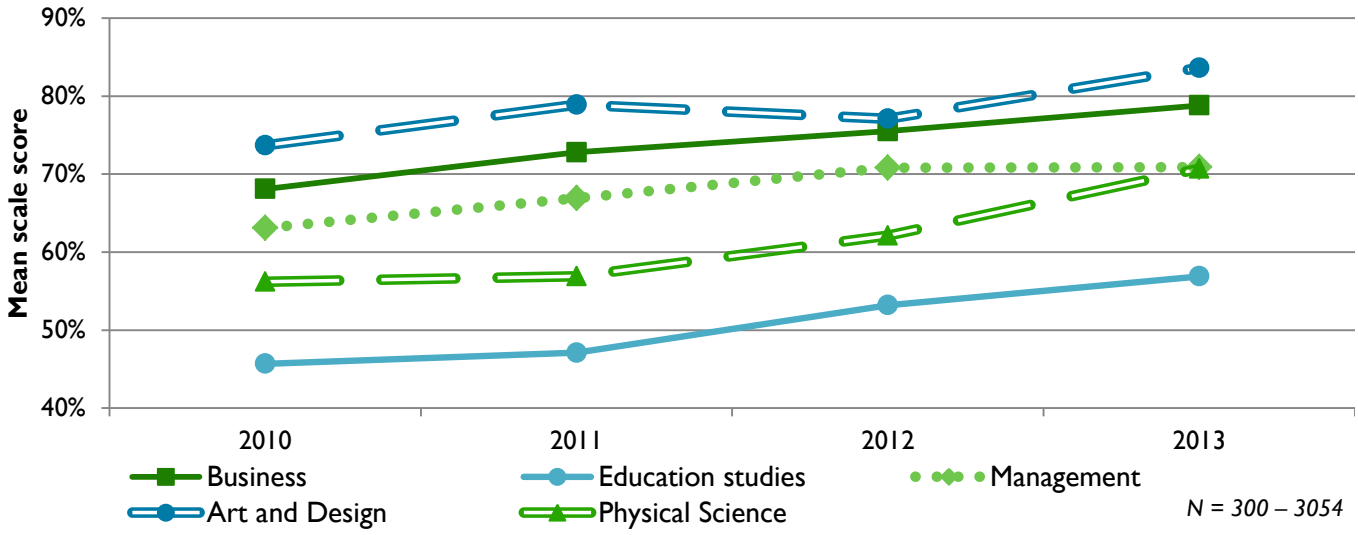
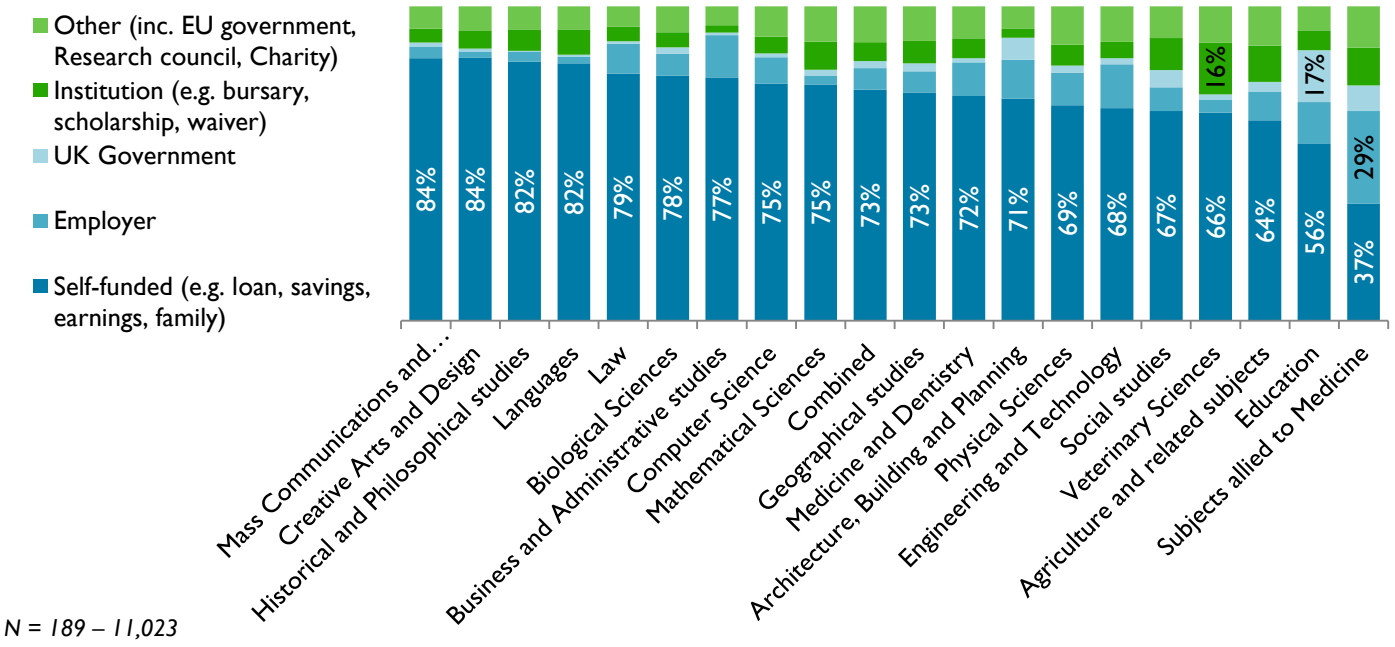


Figure 10.2 Source of funding by discipline (JACS1 level)



11. Taking enhancement forward

The national report for PTES 2013 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, their reliability, 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.

We always welcome 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, we are now redesigning PTES to make the survey more effective for enhancement. Reflecting changes in the sector as well as feedback from institutions, the new PTES will be easier to respond to, report on and act upon. The HEA is leading the way in designing robust surveys directed towards encouraging and enabling enhancement.

The HEA will provide PTES again to the sector in 2014 at a time when the focus is increasingly upon the taught postgraduate experience.

11.1 Further support

The Higher Education Academy provides resources, events and bespoke consultancy to help departments, institutions and sector bodies use survey data to inform enhancement. These include:

Making it Count: Reflecting on the National Student Survey in the process of enhancement: While focused on the use of the undergraduate National Student Survey (NSS), institutions may also find many of the practices in this 2012 report applicable to the effective use of PTES. The report is available at: www.heacademy.ac.uk/nss

Surveys for Enhancement Conference: Our annual conference each May is an opportunity to hear about the latest research, developments and practices in student surveys at all levels. Over 150 delegates attended the Surveys for Enhancement Conference in Manchester in May 2013. To see resources from this and previous events, please visit: www.heacademy.ac.uk/postgraduate-enhancement

Consultancy: The HEA Surveys team provides bespoke support to institutions and sector bodies on all aspects of student surveys, including: advice on survey design, operation, analysis and reporting; the creation of bespoke survey reports; follow-up research and analysis; the development of strategies for evidence informed enhancement; and the delivery of staff development workshops. To discuss your requirements, please contact: surveys@heacademy.ac.uk or call 01904 717500.

Appendix 1: 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	14.0%	8.1%	77.9%	58,414
1.b There is sufficient contact time between staff and students to support effective learning	21.1%	12.5%	66.4%	58,071
1.c I am happy with the teaching support I received from staff on my course	16.4%	12.1%	71.5%	58,102
1.d The course is intellectually stimulating	11.2%	8.4%	80.4%	57,961
2.a Staff are good at explaining things	11.9%	9.0%	79.2%	58,238
2.b Staff made the subject interesting	11.9%	13.7%	74.5%	57,991
2.c Staff are enthusiastic about what they are teaching	9.8%	9.1%	81.1%	57,871
Assessment and feedback				
5.a The criteria used in marking have been made clear in advance	14.8%	12.0%	73.2%	57,891
5.b Assessment arrangements and marking have been fair	10.9%	16.0%	73.0%	56,520
5.c Feedback on my work has been prompt	19.7%	15.9%	64.4%	56,465
5.d I received feedback in time to allow me to improve my next assignment	20.7%	15.6%	63.7%	55,597
5.e I have received detailed comments (written or oral) on my work	16.0%	13.8%	70.3%	56,524
5.f Feedback on my work has helped me clarify things I did not understand	17.6%	20.2%	62.3%	56,187
Dissertation				
7.a I understand the required standards for the dissertation	10.7%	11.1%	78.3%	41,553
7.b My supervisor has the skills and subject knowledge to adequately support my dissertation	6.9%	11.5%	81.6%	36,641
7.c My supervisor makes a real effort to understand any difficulties I face	10.2%	16.6%	73.2%	34,114
7.d I have been given good guidance in topic selection and refinement by my supervisor	13.2%	17.3%	69.5%	35,010
7.e I have received good guidance in my literature search from my supervisor	14.3%	20.4%	65.3%	33,147
7.f My supervisor provides helpful feedback on my progress	11.3%	18.7%	70.1%	31,905

Organisation and management	% Disagree	% Neutral	% Agree	N
8.a The timetable fits well with my other commitments	11.9%	12.9%	75.1%	57,584
8.b Any changes in the programme or teaching have been communicated effectively	13.4%	11.4%	75.2%	56,191
8.c The programme is well organised and is running smoothly	13.6%	13.8%	72.6%	58,156
8.d The balance of core modules and options is appropriate	12.7%	15.2%	72.1%	51,035
8.e The balance between scheduled contact time and private study is appropriate	13.0%	15.4%	71.6%	56,101
Learning resources				
10.a The library resources and services are good enough for my needs	11.1%	10.8%	78.1%	56,903
10.b The library resources and services are easily accessible	9.4%	9.7%	80.9%	56,839
10.c I have been able to access general IT resources when I needed to	8.3%	10.6%	81.1%	54,379
10.d I have been able to access social learning spaces (e.g. for group working) on campus when I needed to	9.5%	16.8%	73.7%	44,191
10.e I have been able to access specialised equipment, facilities, or rooms when I needed them	9.0%	20.2%	70.8%	38,896
10.f I am satisfied with the quality of learning materials available to me (Print, online material, DVDs etc.)	8.7%	12.0%	79.3%	56,379
Skills and personal development				
11.a The programme has developed my research skills	7.2%	11.8%	81.1%	57,240
11.b The programme has developed my transferable skills	6.0%	13.6%	80.3%	57,313
11.c As a result of the programme I am more confident about independent learning	7.0%	14.9%	78.2%	57,453
11.d The programme has helped me to present myself with confidence	9.0%	21.5%	69.5%	56,902
11.e As a results of the programme my communication skills have improved	9.3%	23.2%	67.5%	56,848
11.f As a result of the programme, I feel confident in tackling unfamiliar problems	7.8%	20.7%	71.5%	57,146
Career and professional development				
12.a I am encouraged to reflect on my professional development needs	10.1%	16.6%	73.3%	57,175
12.b I feel better prepared for my future employment	9.8%	17.9%	72.4%	56,787
12.c As a result of this programme, I believe my future employment prospects are better	6.8%	15.7%	77.5%	57,027

A1.2. Overall satisfaction relative to expectations

	% Below expectations	% Met expectations	% Exceeded expectations	N
13.a Quality of teaching and learning	13.7%	13.5%	72.8%	58,489
13.b Assessment and feedback	20.0%	18.6%	61.4%	58,358
13.c Organisation and management	19.2%	18.0%	62.9%	58,413
13.d Learning resources	8.9%	17.7%	73.4%	58,354
13.e Skills and personal development	8.2%	19.3%	72.4%	58,280
13.f Career and professional development	11.8%	21.6%	66.6%	58,143
13.g Overall experience of my course	11.8%	13.7%	74.6%	58,410

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?	38.7%	54.1%	6.2%	1.00%	55,733

	% 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%	58,467
4.b Synthesise information or organise ideas or experiences into more complex relationships	6.5%	28.5%	65.0%	58,225
4.c Judge and evaluate information, arguments, or methods	4.1%	20.9%	75.1%	58,298
4.d Apply theories to practice in new situations	8.9%	26.8%	64.3%	58,304

	% 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:	10.5%	32.4%	51.0%	4.90%	1.20%	57,390

Appendix 2: PTES 2013 Questionnaire

Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey – PTES 2013

Welcome

This survey asks about your experiences of your taught postgraduate programme. Your responses will be combined with those of others to help inform your institution about the experience of taught postgraduates. This will help improve future support for the learning of postgraduates like you. The results are also used nationally to help advise policy and help improve learning and teaching of taught postgraduates across the sector.

Please answer all the questions that apply to you. The questionnaire should take **around fifteen minutes** to complete. Please note that 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 (Head of Surveys, Higher Education Academy)
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 internally or externally, 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: 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	○	○	○	○	○	○
b. There is sufficient contact time (face to face and/or virtual/online) between staff and students to support effective learning	○	○	○	○	○	○
c. I am happy with the teaching support I received from staff on my course	○	○	○	○	○	○
d. The course is intellectually stimulating	○	○	○	○	○	○

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	○	○	○	○	○	○
b. Staff made the subject interesting	○	○	○	○	○	○
c. Staff are enthusiastic about what they are teaching	○	○	○	○	○	○

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	○	○	○	○	○
b. Synthesise information or organise ideas or experiences into more complex relationships	○	○	○	○	○
c. Judge and evaluate information, arguments, or methods	○	○	○	○	○
d. Apply theories to practice in new situations	○	○	○	○	○

Thank you. You have completed: **teaching and learning**. The next two pages focus on **assessment**. Remaining are sections on **organisation**, **resources**, **your development**, **overall views**, **institutional** and **demographic** questions.

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	○	○	○	○	○	○
b. Assessment arrangements and marking have been fair	○	○	○	○	○	○
c. Feedback on my work has been prompt	○	○	○	○	○	○
d. I received feedback in time to allow me to improve my next assignment	○	○	○	○	○	○
e. I have received detailed comments (written or oral) on my work	○	○	○	○	○	○
f. Feedback on my work has helped me clarify things I did not understand	○	○	○	○	○	○

SECTION C: DISSERTATION OR MAJOR PROJECT

If you are unsure what Dissertation or Major Project refers to, it would include a long-essay, independent research project, or other major supervised assessment task that forms an important part of your overall programme.

6. Do you need to produce a dissertation or major project as part of your programme?

   - ✔ Yes (Please answer the question below)
   - ✔ No (Please skip the question below and continue to the next page)

7. If yes, to what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding your supervisor and your dissertation / major project? (if you have not had experience of an item then please select 'Not applicable or Too soon to say')

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

Thank you! You have completed: **teaching and learning** and **assessment**. The next two pages focus on **organisation** and **learning resources**. Remaining sections are on **your development**, **overall views**, **institutional** and **demographic** questions.

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	○	○	○	○	○	○
b. Any changes in the programme or teaching have been communicated effectively	○	○	○	○	○	○
c. The programme is well organised and is running smoothly	○	○	○	○	○	○
d. The balance of core modules and options is appropriate	○	○	○	○	○	○
e. The balance between scheduled contact time and private study is appropriate	○	○	○	○	○	○

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	○	○	○	○	○	○
b. The library resources and services are easily accessible	○	○	○	○	○	○
c. I have been able to access general IT resources when I needed to	○	○	○	○	○	○
d. I have been able to access social learning spaces (e.g. for group working) on campus when I needed to	○	○	○	○	○	○
e. I have been able to access specialised equipment, facilities, or rooms when I needed them	○	○	○	○	○	○
f. I am satisfied with the quality of learning materials available to me (Print, online material, DVDs, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○	○

Thank you. You have completed: **teaching and learning**, **assessment**, **organisation** and **learning resources**, the next two pages focus on **your development**. Remaining sections cover your **overall views**, **institutional** and **demographic** questions.

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	○	○	○	○	○	○
b. The programme has developed my transferable skills	○	○	○	○	○	○
c. As a result of the programme I am more confident about independent learning	○	○	○	○	○	○
d. The programme has helped me to present myself with confidence	○	○	○	○	○	○
e. As a results of the programme my communication skills have improved	○	○	○	○	○	○
f. As a result of the programme, I feel confident in tackling unfamiliar problems	○	○	○	○	○	○

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	○	○	○	○	○	○
b. I feel better prepared for my future employment	○	○	○	○	○	○
c. As a result of this programme, I believe my future employment prospects are better	○	○	○	○	○	○

Thank you. Having gained your views in depth across different aspects of your programme, the next two pages ask for an **overview** of how these aspects met your expectations and your comments on your programme. Remaining are the **institutional** and **demographic** questions.

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	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
b. Assessment and feedback	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
c. Organisation and management	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
d. Learning resources	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
e. Skills and personal development	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
f. Career and professional development	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
g. Overall experience of my course	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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]

Thank you, nearly there. This page has two questions about **motivations**. The following pages contain **demographic** questions about you and your programme.

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)*……..

Thank you. The next three pages include **demographic** questions that will help your institution and researchers at the Higher Education Academy better understand the experience of students like you.

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
- Prefer not to say
- Other (Please specify)…….

1. 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. **Please note** that **a)** if you are undertaking teacher training, you should select 'Teacher Training' rather than the discipline you aim to teach; **b)** if you are studying management or business in relation to a particular discipline then you should select that discipline (e.g. nursing, tourism, computer science):

- ==========
- Teacher Training (please indicate this if you are undertaking Teacher Training, not the discipline that you teach)
- Education studies (including Research Skills in Education, and Academic Studies in Education)
- Social Work (including Child Care and Community Work)
- ==========
- Medicine and Dentistry
- Medical Science and Pharmacy (including Anatomy, Neuroscience, Pharmacology, Physiology and Pathology)
- Nursing (including Midwifery)
- Other subjects allied to Medicine (for example: Aural and Oral sciences, Nutrition, Public Health, Medical Technology)
- ==========
- Biology and related Sciences (including Biochemistry, Ecology, Genetics, and Microbiology)
- Sports Science (including Sport Coaching, Sport Development, Sport Studies)
- Psychology
- Veterinary Sciences (for example: Pre-Clinical and Clinical Veterinary Medicine)
- Agriculture and related subjects (for example: Food & Beverage Studies, Animal Science, Environmental Conservation)
- ==========
- Physical Science (for example: Physics, Chemistry, Forensic and Archaeological Science, Geology)
- Physical Geography and Environmental Science
- Mathematical Sciences (including Statistics and Operations Research)
- Computer Science
- Mechanically-based Engineering (including Aerospace Engineering, Production & Manufacturing Engineering)
- Electronic and Electrical Engineering
- Civil and Chemical Engineering (and other Engineering not covered above)
- Technology (for example: Biotechnology, Maritime Technology, and Materials Technology)
- ==========
- Architecture, Building and Planning
- Human and Social Geography
- Sociology, Social Policy and Anthropology
- Politics (including International Studies)
- Law
- Economics
- ==========
- Business (including Marketing)
- Management (including Human Resource Management)
- Finance and Accounting
- Tourism, Transport, Travel (and others in Business and Administrative studies not covered above)
- ==========

- Media studies (including Media Production)
- Communications and Information studies (including Publishing and Journalism)
- English-based studies (for example: English Language, English Literature, Scots Literature)
- European Languages and Area studies
- Other Languages and Area studies
- History and Archaeology
- Philosophy, Theology and Religious studies
- ==========
- Art and Design
- Performing Arts (including Music, Dance, and Drama)
- Other Creative Arts (for example: Cinematics, Photography, Crafts)
- ==========
- 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 2013
- 1 September 2012 – 31 December 2012
- 1 September 2011 – 31 August 2012
- Before 1 September 2011

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
- United Kingdom – Northern Ireland
- United Kingdom – Scotland
- United Kingdom – Wales
- Afghanistan
- Åland Islands

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

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