



EDUCATE MCR

Insight Report



25/6

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Introduction

Educate MCR is a longitudinal research project designed to assess students' academic experience at the University of Manchester (UoM) over multiple academic years, with the latest iteration conducted in 2025/26. The project is conducted independently by the University of Manchester Students' Union (UMSU) to provide evidence-based insight into students' academic experiences and outcomes across the University.

The research undertaken as part of Educate MCR helps to inform the Students' Union's Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) Student Submission for 2027, contributing to the University's overall TEF assessment **[1]**. The TEF is a national scheme that encourages Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to investigate and improve upon areas of student experience and outcomes. In the 2023 TEF, UoM were awarded Silver for their provision regarding student experience and Gold for student outcomes. As in previous iterations, this report uses the Office for Students' (OfS) 'features of excellence', which provide indicators of key aspects of the student experience, to organise findings and guide recommendations.

The Educate MCR project is now in its third iteration and builds on the findings from 2023/24 **[2]** and 2024/25 **[3]**. Across these reports, students have highlighted the importance of personalised learning, quality and timeliness of assessment feedback and the academic advising process. By conducting this research annually, Educate MCR allows for longitudinal monitoring of student experience and will continue to be iterated until the 2027 TEF Student Submission. This iteration will go on to highlight the importance of personalised and inclusive teaching, improvements to assessment guidance and feedback practices, the academic advising process and stronger integration of employability within academic courses.

Introduction

This report focuses on undergraduate (UG) students in line with TEF guidance, though postgraduate taught (PGT) data is available on the dashboard. The findings presented below are taken from 2025/26 survey data and were analysed to guide directional insights for TEF indicators. These insights are followed with 'Next Steps' recommendations, outlining areas where UMSU aims to work with the University to support an excellent academic experience.

Furthering its contribution to TEF, Educate MCR 2025/26 also aligns with the University's Manchester 2035 Strategy, enabling UMSU to inform the institution's long-term ambitions. Several elements of the survey map directly onto the Strategy's Five Leaps: Flexible Learning, Research Impact, Innovation Powerhouse, Partner of Choice and Digital Inside and Out. As such, the report's findings can inform the University's priorities surrounding education, research, innovation, partnership, and digital transformation.

The report will also explore key differences between student demographic groups with a special focus on Black Heritage, Pakistani & Bangladeshi students, as these groups are part of the Access and Participation Plan (APP) at the UoM and within the SU [4]. An APP sets out provisions that will be meaningful and effective in promoting equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups, as determined by the OfS.

The research in Educate MCR 2025/26 considers quantitative data and qualitative feedback from students across the University's three faculties: Humanities (FoH), Biology, Medicine and Health (FBMH), and Science and Engineering (FSE). Therefore, the project highlights areas of satisfaction and opportunities for improvement, aiming to ensure that students at Manchester receive a high-quality academic experience consistent across faculties. Finally, while UMSU works alongside university staff, all analysis, conclusions, and recommendations are determined by UMSU to reflect the authentic voice of Manchester students.

Executive Summary

The quantitative data and qualitative feedback provided by undergraduates highlight the wide range of student experiences at UoM.

Numbers at a glance:



93.18%

report they are satisfied with their overall university experience.



73.51%

agree that their academic advisor is a useful source of information and support.



85.90%

agree that their curriculum represents a diverse range of experiences.



91.91%

report they are satisfied with Canvas and other learning platforms.



58.40%

agree that teaching on their course is personalised to their learning needs.



63.51%

agree that they feel confident using AI tools to support their learning.



69.63%

were satisfied that feedback is provided in a timely manner.



82.33%

agree that the University creates an environment where innovation is valued.



75.09%

were satisfied that assessment instructions are clear and help them perform well.



54.49%

agree that they can influence decisions taken by the University.



70.95%

agree that they feel a sense of community with others on their course.



84.91%

report that the Students' Union represents their academic interests very well.

Key Directional Insights:

1. Provide accessible, inclusive and personalised teaching that meets the learning needs of all students.
2. Ensure assessment instructions are transparent and easy to interpret across all modules and feedback is delivered consistently within appropriate timelines.
3. Integrate career information and opportunities and real-world application into teaching to enable students to understand the use of their degree beyond graduation.
4. Strengthen academic advising to ensure all students receive consistent and high-quality academic support across schools and faculties.

Demographics:

Collectively, 2985 Undergraduate (UG), Postgraduate Taught (PGT) and Postgraduate Research (PGR) students took part in the survey. Of the 2985 total respondents, 2128 were UG students; **46.60%** were from FoH, **29.90%** were from FBMH and **23.50%** were from the FSE. The proportion of respondents closely reflects the population size of the faculties.

All Schools across the University took part in the survey, with greatest number of participants from the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures (SALC) (n = 368) and the School of Social Sciences (SOSS) (n = 295). This ensures that findings reflect a range of student experiences across disciplines.

Out of the UG respondents, **48.82%** were in their first year of study, **35.71%** were in their second year, **11.04%** in their third year, and **4.43%** were in their fourth year or above. This positions Educate MCR a valuable source of insight into the student experience at the start of study, complementing data from the National Student Survey (NSS) which captures the views of final-year students [5].

Methodology

This report analyses the responses to the Educate MCR survey, collected from 3rd of November 2025 to 6th of February 2026. The data collection period spanned over the second half of Semester 1 teaching, the Christmas break, the winter exams and assessment period, and the first week of Semester 2 teaching. In total, 2985 students responded to the survey, with majority of responses collected within the first and last two weeks of the collection period.

The questions were kept mostly the same with the 2024/25 iteration of the project to enable direct comparison between data across years. Following feedback from last year's survey, questions were reworded and sections were made more explicit.

Some new questions were added to reflect the ever-changing landscape of higher education and to align with university strategies. The 2025/26 survey further includes questions on research impact, innovation culture, Students' Union representation, community belonging, updated service platforms, and a final institutional improvement prompt. One question, 'How well does the Students' Union represent student academic interests?', was included in line with the National Student Survey (NSS) to gain early insight into the University's positioning within the survey.

Communications

The survey was promoted through multiple channels, including emails to all UG and PGT students, digital screens across campus, promotion by academic representatives, and UMSU social media channels and website homepage.

The student consultation was advertised to academic school and course representatives, who were invited due to their involvement in academic enhancement, enabling them to identify key issues and potential areas for improvement.

Quantitative:

The 2025/26 survey questions were mostly based on the 2024-25 survey and were refined and finalised to further align with the UMSU strategy and to explore themes surrounding the Manchester 2035 strategy.

The survey was structured into key themes covering teaching and learning, assessment and feedback, course content and engagement, academic support and learning environment, student voice, employability and career readiness, professional services and student wellbeing. The Professional Services section was introduced in the 2024/25 iteration to assess student satisfaction regarding teaching and learning infrastructure and support available around the University. All but three questions were quantitative, with responses measured on a four-point Likert scale, with no option to respond 'neutral', consistent with the formatting of the NSS.

Qualitative:

Survey Questions

Three qualitative questions were included across the Student Experience, Professional Services, and Student Well-being sections. The questions were:

- Student Experience: "What can the University do to enhance your learning experience?" (n=1,069)
- Professional Services: "How could the above services be improved?" (n=761)
- Student Well-being: "What is one thing that the University or Union should do to help create a better student experience?" (n=696)

All qualitative responses were analysed using thematic analysis, with each comment assigned a code and subtheme. These are mapped on to the relevant TEF indicators explored in the report to support and triangulate the quantitative findings.

Student Consultation

Following analysis of the survey data, a student consultation was conducted focusing on the four key areas identified: personalised learning, quality and timeliness of assessment feedback, career readiness and academic advising. This was attended by four students, with two representatives from FoH and one representative from FSE and FMBH each.

The aim of this consultation was for students to create directional insights around each area to improve their academic experience. The directional insights in this report have been co-created with students and align with the feedback received in the consultation.

Student Experience

Student Experience (SE) is one of the two fronts in which the TEF approaches the evaluation of HEIs. It focuses on the excellent delivery of teaching, learning, assessment and the educational environment. This section of Educate MCR explores student feedback on the following measures of excellence:

- **SE1** - How well teaching, feedback and assessment practices support students' learning.
- **SE2** - How well course content and delivery engage students in their learning and stretches students to develop their knowledge and skills.
- **SE5** - How supporting the learning environment is, and how far students can access the Academic Support they need.
- **SE6** - How well physical and virtual learning resources support teaching and learning.
- **SE7** - How well the University engages with its students, leading to improvements to the experiences and outcomes of its students.

In the 2023 TEF, UoM were awarded Silver for their provision regarding student experience.

The 2023 Student Submission emphasised the need for ambitious action to ensure an excellent student experience for all students.

As mentioned previously, the 2023/24 and 2024/25 iteration of Educate MCR highlighted the importance of improving personalised learning, the quality and timeliness of assessment feedback and the academic advising process. The themes in this iteration focus on strengthening personalised and inclusive teaching practices, improving clarity and timeliness of assessment feedback, enhancing opportunities for student engagement with course content, and ensuring consistent access to academic support and learning resources.

This section seeks to further explore current student concerns as well as assessing any progress that has been made in the areas identified in the TEF Student Submission and the previous Educate MCR report.



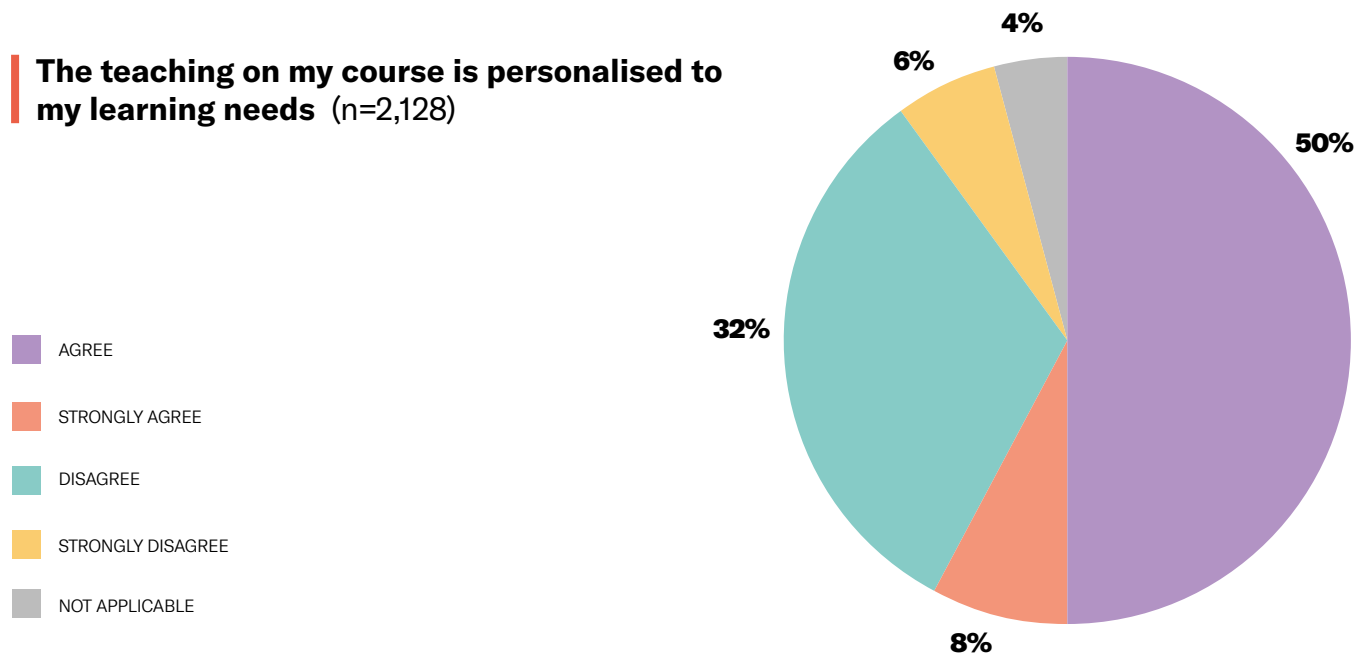
How well teaching, feedback and assessment practices support students learning.

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Teaching & Learning

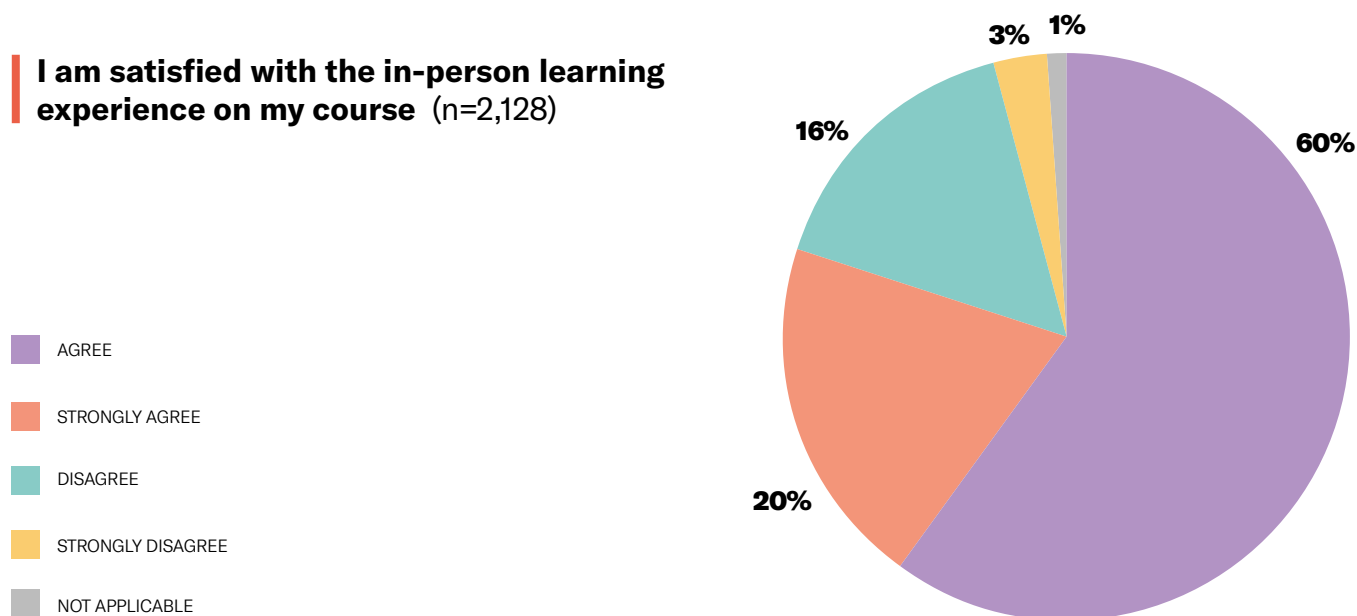


When asked whether teaching on their course is **personalised to their learning needs**, **58.40%** of UG students agreed or strongly agreed. This shows an improvement in comparison to 2024/25 (**49.80%**) indicating that progress has been made to create more tailored approaches to teaching and learning. However, **37.56%** of students report that they do not feel as though their teaching is tailored to their individual learning needs, particularly due to the large classroom sizes.

This highlights a significant gap in how effectively teaching practices are adapting to diverse learners. Qualitative data suggests that some students are unsure of what high-quality work looks like within their course. Students requested model answers and examples of first-class work, and indicated that this information is not as useful when provided retrospectively.

Looking at specific demographics, **50.99%** of neurodivergent students, **54.98%** of Bangladeshi students, **49.47%** of Pakistani students, and **45.31%** of Black Heritage students agreed that teaching was personalised. These lower rates show that underrepresented and neurodiverse students experience less tailored teaching. For neurodivergent students, this may reflect challenges in accessing learning strategies that accommodate their cognitive or sensory needs. For underrepresented groups, it may indicate that teaching practices are less responsive to diverse cultural or linguistic backgrounds.

This also represents a decrease from 2024/25 for specific demographics in which **54.64%** of neurodivergent students, **56.65%** of Bangladeshi students and **52.71%** of Pakistani students agreed that teaching was personalised. This suggests a decline in perceived personalisation and responsiveness of teaching for these groups over time.



89.37% of UG students agreed or strongly agreed that they felt satisfied with the **in-person learning experience** on their course. While satisfaction is generally high, **25%** of qualitative responses call for more interactive and practical teaching methods. Students expressed a preference for active learning approaches, such as workshops and problem-solving tutorials, over PowerPoint-led lectures.

Some suggested incorporating interactive tools to enhance motivation and understanding during sessions. They also emphasised the value of more accessible participation, for example *“providing a way for students to ask questions mid-lecture without disturbing the lecture”*, which would help foster open academic environments that encourage debate, engagement, and free thinking.

Satisfaction was particularly lower for students with physical or mobility impairments. Only **49.43%** were satisfied that their in-person learning experience met their expectations. This suggests that teaching and learning spaces may not consistently accommodate accessibility needs. These students may experience barriers to fully participating in certain academic sessions.

As reported in Educate MCR 2024/25, the Students' Union developed the Student Model, which identified personalised and in-person learning as key predictors of University Experience [7]. Improving satisfaction in these areas supports overall experience and enables students to tailor their learning. Building on this, the University should continue expanding inclusive and personalised teaching, alongside increasing interactive opportunities and clearer examples of quality work to strengthen understanding and engagement.

Directional Insight

Strengthen inclusive and personalised teaching practices across all student groups.

Why this?

Only **58.40%** of students report personalised learning, with lower agreement for neurodivergent and underrepresented ethnic groups, indicating unequal accessibility of teaching approaches.

Next steps

Provide targeted training for staff on inclusive and adaptive teaching methods that support diverse learning needs.

Embed structured opportunities for students to engage with and clarify academic expectations during teaching sessions.

Directional Insight

Increase the use of active and interactive teaching approaches within in-person learning.

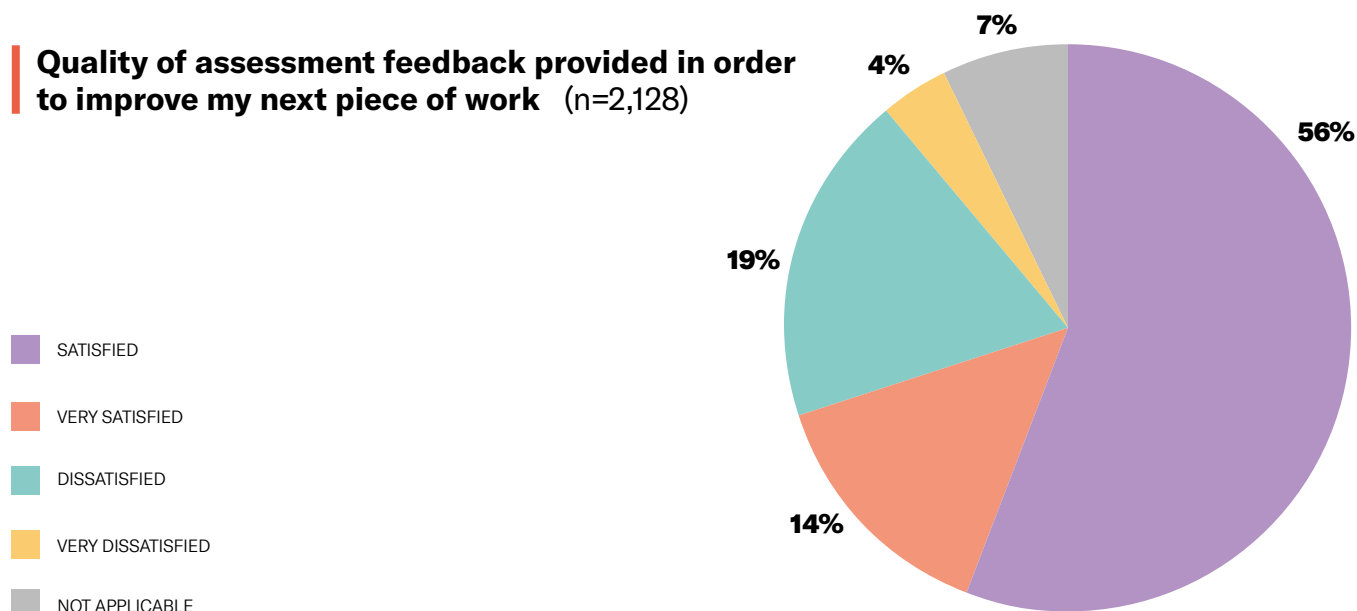
Why this?

Students request more engaging and practical teaching, despite high overall satisfaction with in-person learning.

Next steps

Encourage the integration of workshops, applied problem-solving and discussion-based learning within lectures and seminars.

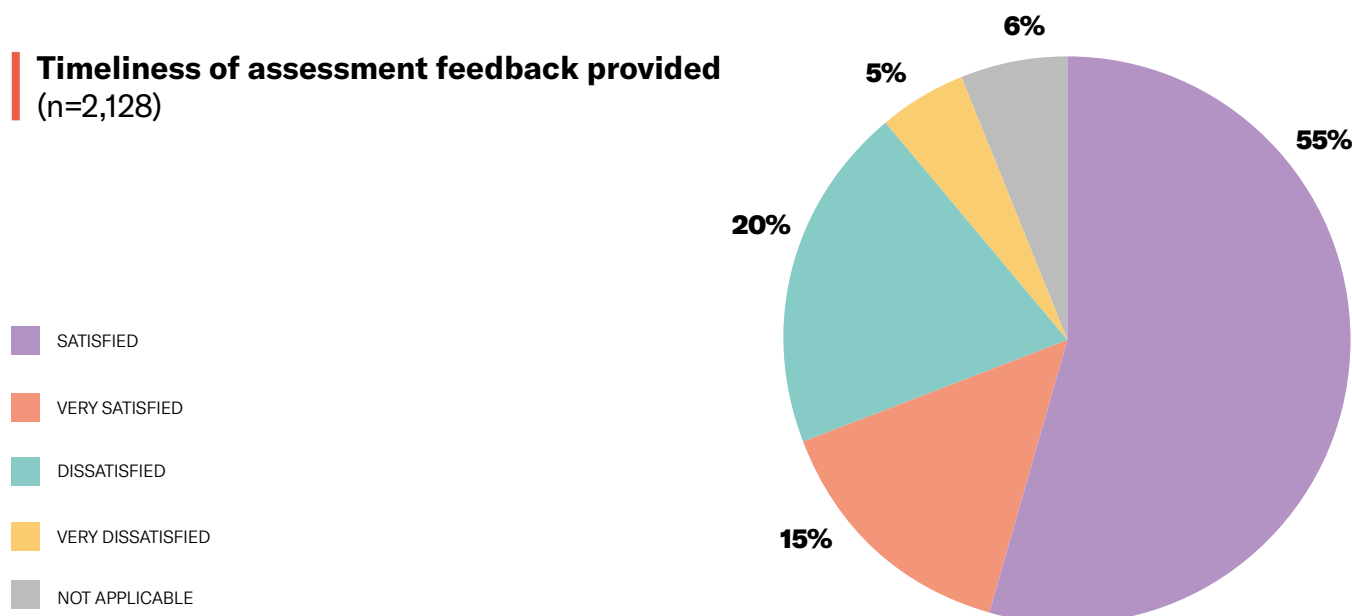
Assessment & Feedback



Assessment and Feedback is a key area of focus due to its underperformance highlighted in both Educate MCR 2023/24 and 2024/25, and its prioritisation in response to NSS outcomes.

Students were asked to rate their satisfaction with the **quality of assessment feedback provided to help improve future work** and **69.41%** of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied. This reflects an increase from **65.10%** in 2024/25. However, there still remains calls for feedback that is aligned with marking criteria to help students understand how to progress to a higher grade.

Across faculties, satisfaction was lowest in FBMH at **66.68%**, slightly higher in FSE at **68.11%**, and highest in FoH at **71.79%**. These differences show an inconsistency in feedback quality between faculties, indicating that the students experience of academic support vary depending on their school. Students also complained about grades received in error which negatively impacts students' learning experiences. Ensuring that feedback practices are standardised could help improve satisfaction and ensure consistency for all students' academic development.

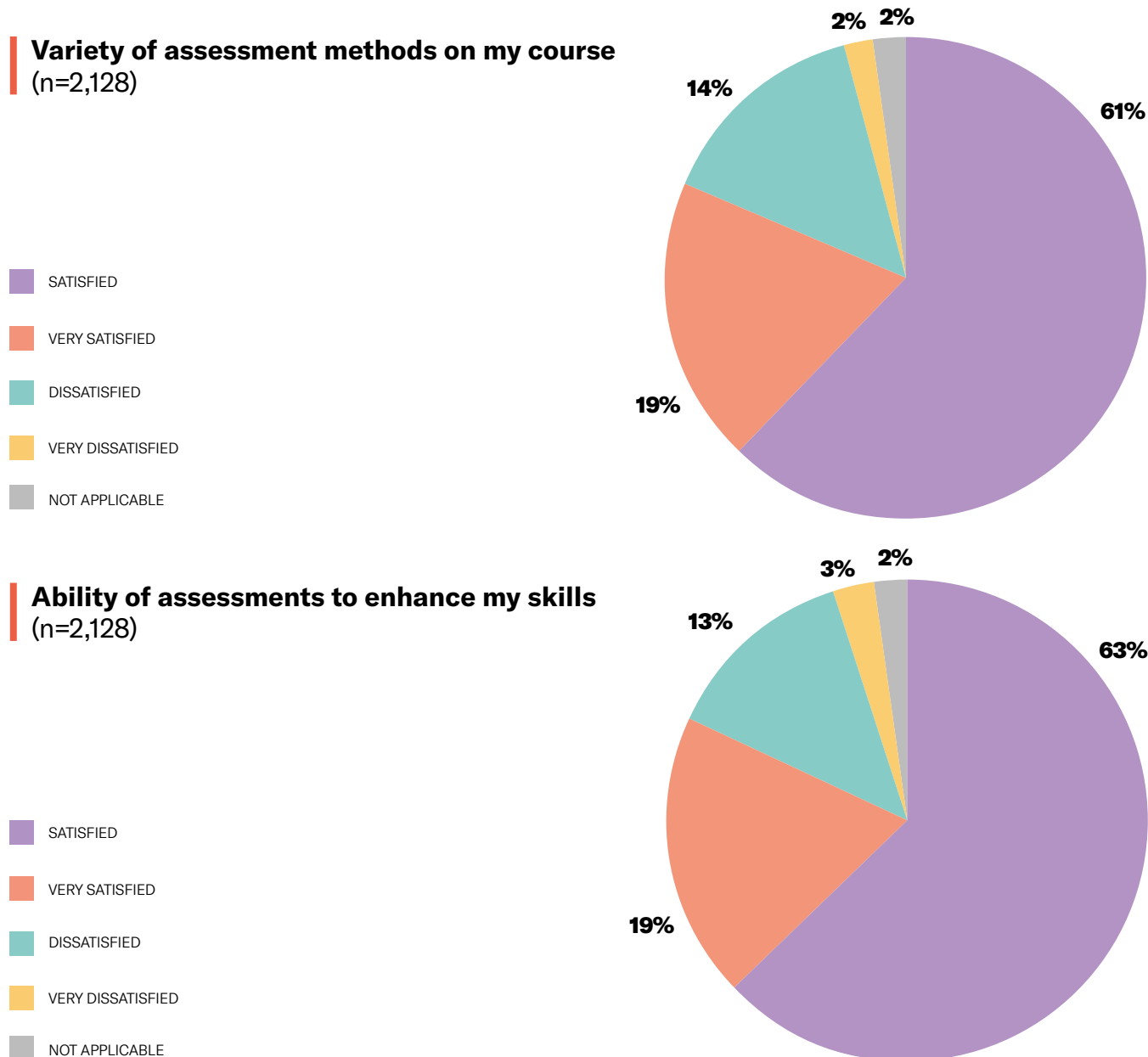


Comparably, **69.63%** were satisfied or very satisfied that **feedback was provided in a timely manner**, which performs higher than 2024/25 (**67.80%**) but remains lower than satisfaction levels seen in other areas of assessment. **19.74%** of students feel that they do not receive feedback within a timeframe that allows them to effectively apply it to future assessments.

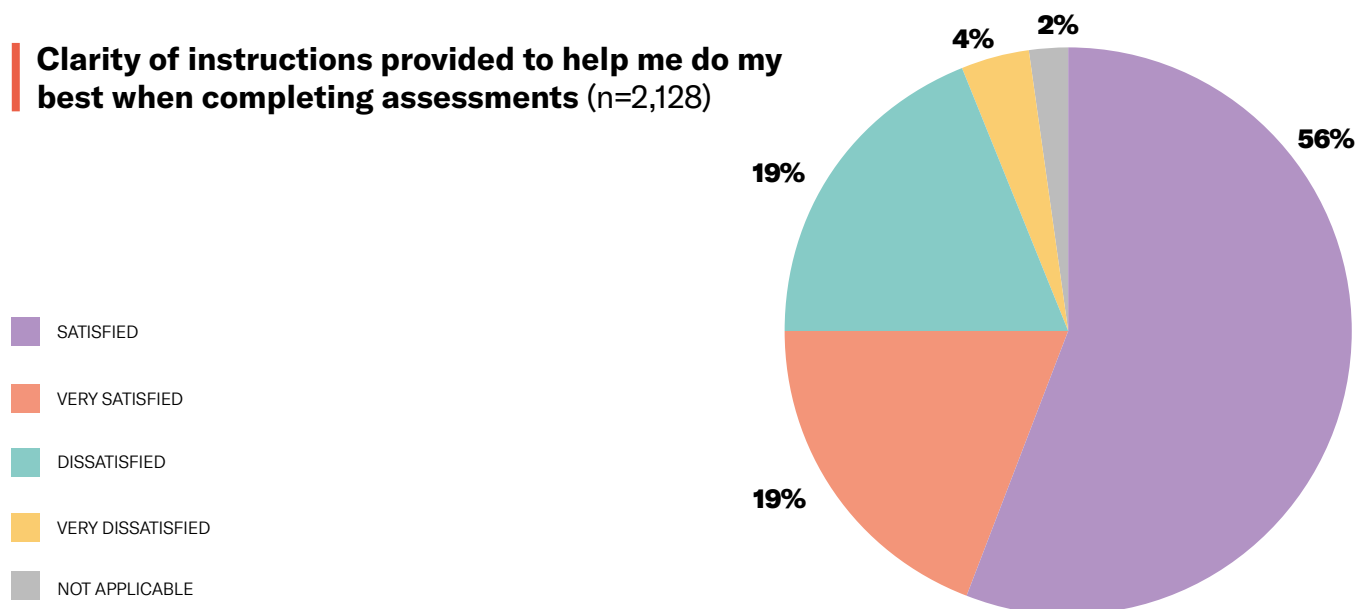
This can limit the developmental value of feedback and reduce its role as a tool for learning progression. A leading qualitative theme surrounds the delay of feedback, where students reported that feedback is provided several weeks after submission which limits its usefulness for future assessments.

Again, across faculties, satisfaction was lowest in FSE at **66.46%**, slightly higher in FBMH at **68.40%**, and highest in FoH at **71.99%**. These differences suggest that timely feedback is not consistent across faculties and further standardisation is needed to ensure all students can fairly act on feedback effectively and enhance their learning outcomes.

Previous iterations of Educate MCR have consistently identified the quality and timeliness of feedback as key areas for improvement. Educate MCR 2023/24 reported **80.60%** satisfaction with feedback quality but only **60.30%** with timeliness, highlighting concerns around delayed feedback. In 2024/25, satisfaction remained low, with **65.10%** for feedback quality and **67.80%** for timeliness. While both measures have slightly increased this year, there remains a continued need to improve the consistency and delivery of feedback.



80.75% of students report feeling satisfied or very satisfied with the **variety of assessment methods**, representing an improvement from 2024/25. Additionally, **82.31%** are satisfied or very satisfied that **assessments enhance their skills**, indicating recognition of development opportunities within current practices. However, thematic findings show clear dissatisfaction with 100% weighted summative assessments, with students calling for more formative, low-stakes opportunities to test their understanding without the pressure of formal assessment.



When asked about the clarity of **instructions provided to help them do their best when completing assessments**, **75.09%** were satisfied or very satisfied. While this reflects a majority, **23.22%** of students feel there is a lack of clarity around what is expected of them in their assessments. This uncertainty can contribute to increased anxiety, reduced confidence and difficulty in achieving higher grades.

6.40% of qualitative responses called for clearer guidance and “standardised marking criteria”, with many students unsure on assessment expectations and how to achieve higher marks. Students also highlighted the need for tailored guidance for different types of coursework, as examiners sometimes have varying expectations depending on the assignment. This suggests that although students are engaging with assignments, there is a lack of transparency in how the work is evaluated, contributing to stress and unpredictability surrounding assignments.

Additionally, around **16.10%** of comments received from students raised concerns relating to assessment structure, specifically the lack of practice opportunities. Students called for balanced assessment methods and increased formative exams. This would allow students to develop skills, identify gaps in their knowledge and build confidence before high-pressure assessments.

These findings highlight that, despite satisfaction with assessment variety and skill enhancement, improvements are still needed in the clarity of instructions and assessment structure. Expanding formative assessment opportunities would enable students to develop skills and build confidence ahead of summative assessments. The University should also continue improving the quality and timeliness of feedback so that students can confidently apply guidance to future work. Strengthening feedback practices will help ensure assessments continue to effectively support the student learning experience.

Directional Insight

Improve the clarity of assessment expectations and marking criteria.

Why this?

Students report uncertainty around expectations and how to achieve higher grades, with qualitative data further highlighting confusion around marking standards.

Next steps

Ensure assessment briefs and marking criteria are clearly explained and discussed with students.

Provide opportunities for students to review and engage with marking criteria through seminars or workshops.

Directional Insight

Enhance the timeliness and consistency of feedback across faculties.

Why this?

Delays in feedback limit its usefulness, with variation across faculties and continued dissatisfaction despite improvements.

Next steps

Review and standardise feedback turnaround expectations across faculties.

Introduce standardisation for monitoring and accountability of feedback timelines.

Encourage follow-up discussions between students and staff to support usefulness and application of feedback.

Directional Insight

Increase opportunities for formative and low-stakes assessment.

Why this?

Students report pressure from high-stakes assessments and lack of practice opportunities to develop skills before summative assessments.

Next steps

Increase use of formative assessments, mock exams and practice tasks within modules.

Encourage balanced assessment design to reduce reliance on heavily weighted summative assessments.



How well course content and delivery engage and inspire students in their learning.

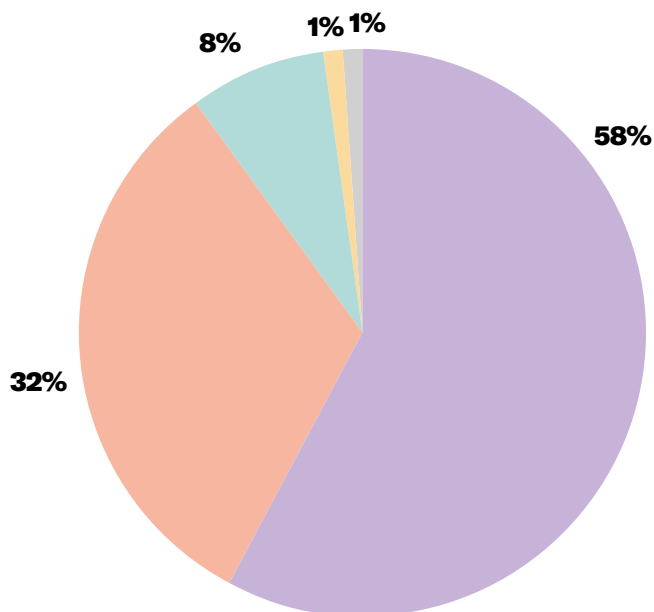
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Course Content & Intellectual Challenge

I feel challenged with the content taught on my course (n=2,128)

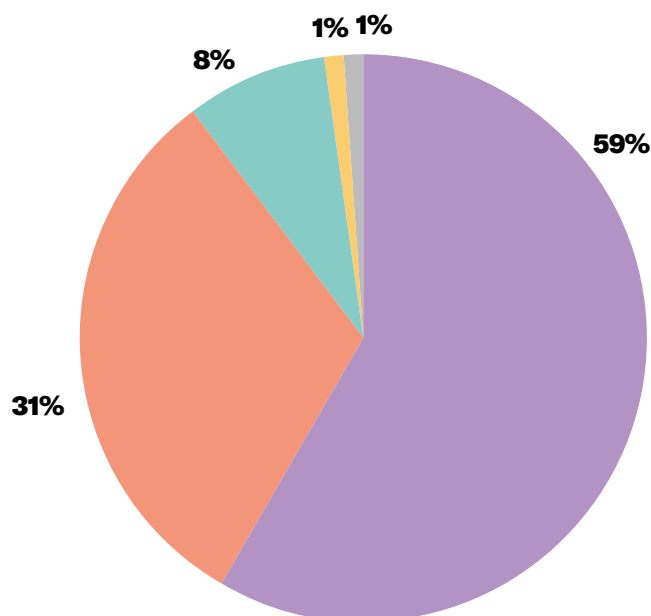


90.07% of UG respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they **feel challenged by the content taught on their course**, indicating that students are satisfied with the intellectual stretch provided by their course.

Agreement is consistently high across faculties, with FoH at **89.21%**, FBMH at **90.16%**, and FSE at **92.29%**. This indicates that students across disciplines experience a comparable level of academic challenge, suggesting a strong and consistent delivery of intellectual stretch across courses.

This level of challenge supports the development of key cognitive skills, such as critical thinking and problem-solving, which are essential for academic success and future progression. Ensuring that this challenge is supported by clear guidance and effective feedback will be important in enabling all students to fully benefit from their learning.

My teaching staff integrate real world applications and current, diverse research into my course content (n=2,128)



When asked if teaching staff **integrate real-world applications and current, diverse research** into course content, **89.87%** of students agreed or strongly agreed, suggesting that course content is generally perceived by students as relevant and grounded in modern practice.

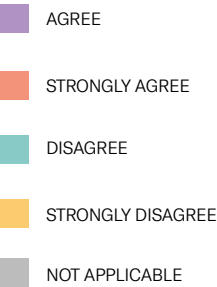
Across demographic groups, Pakistani students (**90.49%**), Black Heritage students (**92.42%**), and Bangladeshi students (**92.10%**) reported positively, indicating that the inclusion of diverse research resonates well across different student communities. These findings highlight the positive impact of current, diverse programmes in fostering equitable learning experiences across student groups.

However, qualitative findings suggest that this is not consistent across all areas. Approximately **5.50%** of responses stressed that some abstract concepts are not always linked to real-world applications, with students reporting greater motivation for learning when lecturers explain how taught knowledge is applied in practice. This is particularly relevant given the reported decline in confidence in securing employment compared to 2024/25, suggesting that clearer and more consistent articulation of applied relevance, alongside more detailed feedback and worked examples, could further strengthen students' understanding of how their learning translates into skills and employability outcomes.

Overall, most students report feeling intellectually challenged by their course content. The University should continue ensuring that academic material remains challenging while strengthening links between theoretical concepts and real-world applications. Doing so will help students to better understand the relevance of their learning and to maintain high levels of engagement with their studies.

Delivery & Engagement

I have collaborative discussions with my peers on my course (n=2,128)



When asked about learning on their course, **79.24%** of students agreed or strongly agreed that they **engage in collaborative discussions with their peers**, indicating that course delivery effectively fosters peer interaction. This level of peer engagement plays a key role in strengthening students’ sense of belonging and mattering.

As a core component of the **Student Voice Strategy**, belonging and mattering underpin the delivery of meaningful, co-created change between students and staff **[8]**. Empowering students through increased opportunities for collaborative learning can further strengthen this sense of belonging and can create space for students to actively contribute to and shape their academic experience, thus the University is encouraged to embed such practices more widely.

My teaching staff use a variety of teaching methods inclusive to all experiences (n=2,128)

69.34% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that **teaching staff use a variety of teaching methods inclusive to all student experiences**, notably lower than other areas of delivery. Thematic findings further indicate that approximately **30%** of student comments call for more engaging and varied teaching methods, with particular emphasis on interactivity and practical application. While the intellectual stretch of course content is viewed positively, improvements to delivery methods are needed to ensure teaching is consistently inclusive and accessible to all learners.

Agreement was lower among neurodivergent students (**55.22%**), suggesting that current teaching methods may not fully accommodate a range of learning styles and needs. This highlights an opportunity to enhance inclusivity through more diverse and flexible teaching methods to ensure all students can engage with their course material. Further internal research with these student groups could support a better understanding of their needs and inform targeted improvements.

Maintaining strong levels of collaborative learning will be important in sustaining student engagement. Expanding interactive teaching methods such as discussion-based seminars, group learning and applied activities could further enhance participation and ensure that teaching approaches remain inclusive to a range of learning styles.

Directional Insight

Strengthen connections between academic content and real-world application.

Why this?

Students report that some theoretical content lacks clear links to practical or career-related contexts, affecting engagement and perceived relevance

Next steps

Encourage use of case studies, applied examples and industry-relevant content within teaching.
Promote guest lectures and external engagement opportunities to contextualise learning.

Directional Insight

Expand opportunities for collaborative and discussion-based learning.

Why this?

To increase engagement with course content and support peer learning within the academic environment.

Next steps

Encourage teaching staff to incorporate structured discussions and group learning activities into seminars and workshops.
Provide guidance for staff on facilitating inclusive and effective collaborative learning.

Directional Insight

Enhance the inclusivity and variety of teaching delivery methods.

Why this?

Agreement is lower for this measure, with particularly low levels among neurodivergent students, suggesting teaching methods are not consistently experienced as inclusive.

Next steps

Encourage staff to diversify teaching delivery through a wider range of inclusive and accessible methods.
Provide guidance and support for inclusive teaching practice, particularly for neurodivergent learners.
Engage with students to better understand diverse learning needs and inform improvements.



How supportive the learning environment is, and how far students can access the academic support they need.

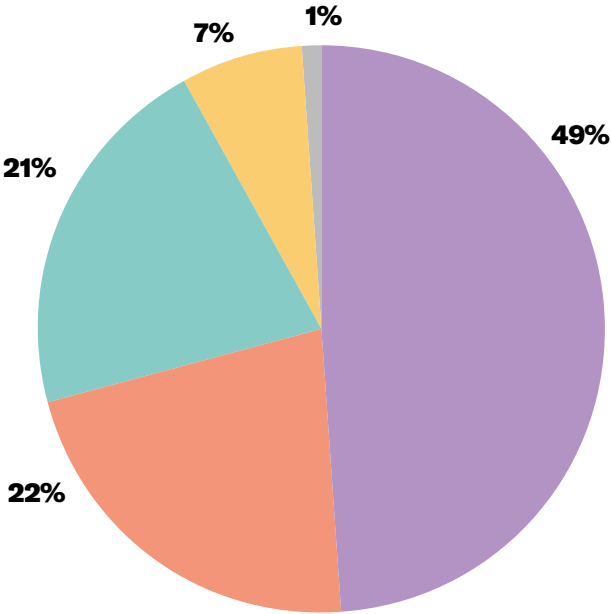
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Learning Environment & Community

I feel a sense of community with others on my course (n=1,964)



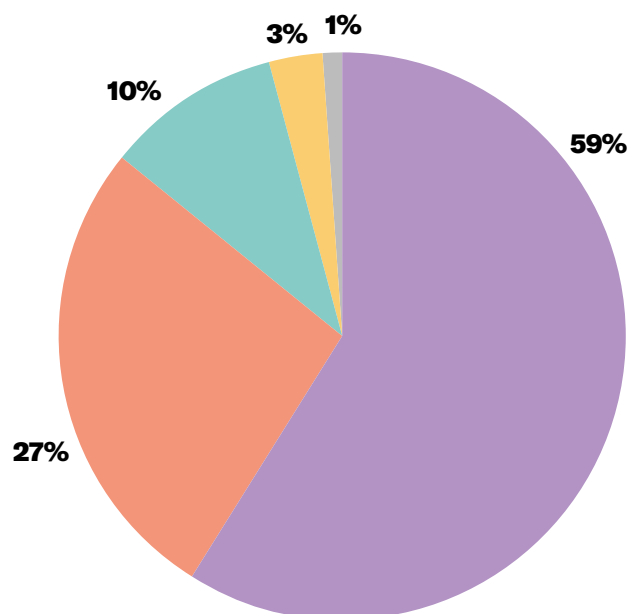
70.95% of UG respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they feel a **sense of community with others on their course**. While this represents a majority, **27.99%** of students disagreed. This is significant given the well-established link between belonging, engagement and student success.

While students report strong levels of peer interaction through collaborative learning (**79.24%**), this does not always translate into a consistent sense of belonging, highlighting the importance of fostering deeper academic community alongside engagement in teaching and learning activities.

In the qualitative data, students expressed a desire for more structured and course-based social events, alongside more ‘third spaces’ on campus beyond libraries and drinking environments. Encouragingly, agreement was generally high among focus demographic groups with Bangladeshi students (**74.54%**), Pakistani students (**71.52%**) and Black Heritage students (**81.72%**) reporting a strong sense of community.

This suggests that underrepresented groups are increasingly feeling represented within their courses. However, overall levels of agreement indicate there is still room for improvement. There remains an opportunity for the University to further develop course-related social activities and accessible ‘third spaces’ to strengthen sense of belonging across all student groups.

My curriculum represents a variety of experiences (n=2,128)



When asked if their **curriculum represents a diverse variety of experiences**, **85.90%** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed, highlighting the continued progress of integrating diversity within curricula.

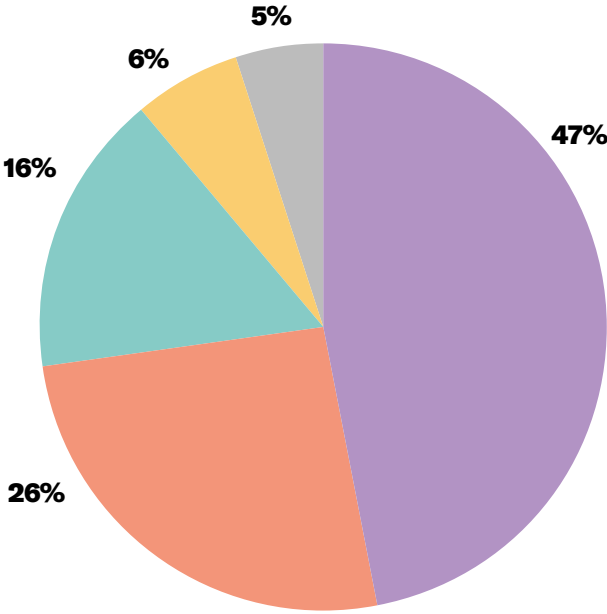
Bangladeshi students (**84.21%**), Pakistani students (**83.12%**), and Black Heritage students (**81.72%**) reported slightly lower but still strong agreement, suggesting that underrepresented groups feel their experiences are represented within the curriculum. These findings suggest that embedding diverse perspectives is having a positive effect; however, there remains scope to further ensure that all students can see themselves and their peers reflected in the curriculum.

Strengthening course-level communities will continue to play an important role in supporting student belonging. The University should work in partnership with the Students' Union to promote opportunities for peer interaction through collaborative learning, course-based activities and shared academic spaces.

These initiatives can help students feel more connected to their academic community and improve their overall learning experience. This could build on existing initiatives, such as SU's Decolonising the Curriculum, which encourages inclusive curriculum design and collaborative approaches within course-level communities.

Access & Quality of Academic Support

My academic advisor is a useful source of information and academic support (n=2,128)



73.51% of UG respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their **academic advisor is a useful source of information and support**. This remains consistent with Educate MCR 2024/25 (**73.60%**), indicating little improvement despite previous recommendations to improve the academic advising process and ensure advisors are equipped and available to support students’ academic and further educational needs.

Satisfaction was highest in FBMH (**79.05%**) compared with FoH (**70.71%**) and FSE (**72.61%**). These variations show that students may not be receiving a consistent level of guidance across areas of study. Addressing this variation through clearer, standardised guidance for advisors could help ensure all students receive equitable academic advice and support during their studies.

Around **15%** of student comments emphasised the need for better access to staff and academic support to enable them to ask questions and gain clarification. The academic advisor system was reported as inconsistent, with some students benefiting from regular support, while others felt they had to make considerable effort to arrange meetings. Students also highlighted a lack of clarity around academic advising, with many uncertain about what support they can expect, the responsibilities of their advisor and what types of issues they can raise. This lack of transparency can create additional barriers for students who may already feel hesitant to seek support.

Ensuring consistent academic support across faculties remains an important priority. The University should continue refining the academic advising system to ensure that all students receive accessible, reliable and high-quality guidance throughout their studies. Clear expectations and regular opportunities for advisor engagement could help strengthen the effectiveness of this support.

Directional Insight

Strengthen course-level community and belonging within academic courses.

Why this?

Nearly 30% of students do not feel a strong sense of community, with requests for more structured social and academic interaction.

Next steps

Encourage departments to organise course-based academic and social events.

Develop non-library, non-alcohol-based shared spaces for student interaction and collaboration.

Directional Insight

Improve consistency and accessibility of academic advising.

Why this?

Satisfaction with academic advising remains static, with qualitative feedback highlighting inconsistent experiences and access to support.

Next steps

Clarify expectations and responsibilities of academic advisors across faculties.

Ensure regular, structured opportunities for students to engage with advisors.

Provide training to academic advisors to support consistent delivery of academic guidance.



How well physical and virtual learning resources support teaching and learning.

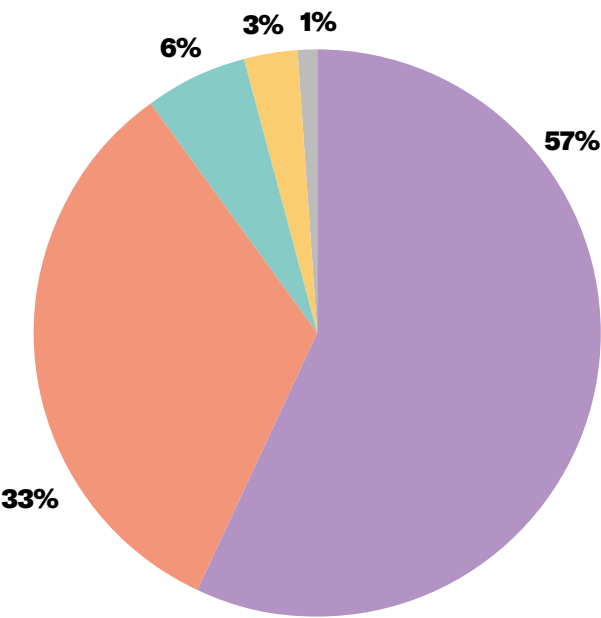
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IT & Library Resources

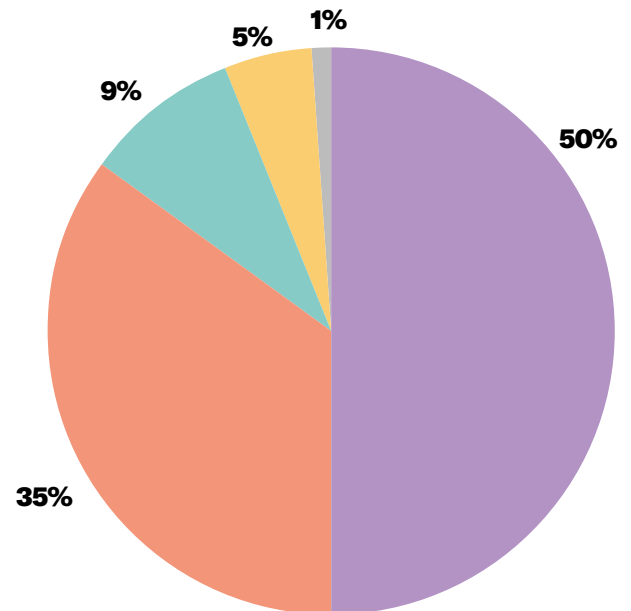
IT resources and facilities are useful in supporting my learning (n=2,128)



When asked about **IT resources and facilities**, **89.58%** of UGs agreed or strongly agreed that these support their learning, highlighting this as a key strength in provision.

However, qualitative feedback highlighted ongoing concerns around Wi-Fi reliability, with students reporting inconsistent connectivity in certain buildings and accommodation. This can be particularly stressful during coursework and online assessments and therefore remains an area of ongoing focus. The University is actively working to improve digital infrastructure through initiatives such as **Network 2030 [9]** to enhance reliability and student experience.

Library resources (My Learning Essentials, reading materials, workshops) are useful in supporting my learning (n=2,128)

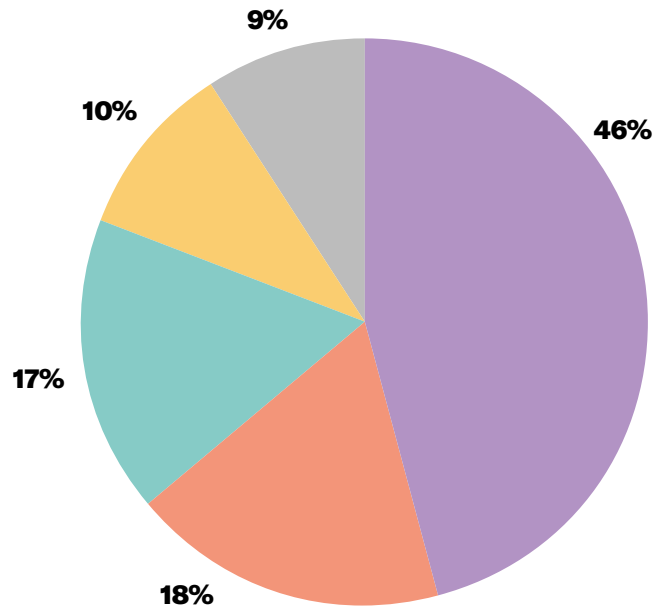


Similarly, **84.97%** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that **library resources support their learning**, highlighting the importance of both digital and physical resources within the academic experience. At the University, students benefit from access to several libraries across campus, 24/7 study spaces and a wide range of digital resources including journals and databases.

Strong satisfaction with digital and library resources demonstrates the importance of reliable learning infrastructure. The University should continue investing in digital systems and physical learning resources to ensure that students can consistently access the tools they need to support their academic work. Addressing connectivity issues will further strengthen this provision.

Generative AI

I feel confident in using generative AI (e.g. ChatGPT) to supplement my learning (n=2,128)



With tools such as **ChatGPT** becoming increasingly popular among students in recent years, generative AI has emerged as a relatively new addition to student life. While there is currently no direct link to TEF indicators, it is important to understand how students are engaging with generative AI and ensure they are supported in using it effectively and in line with university policies.

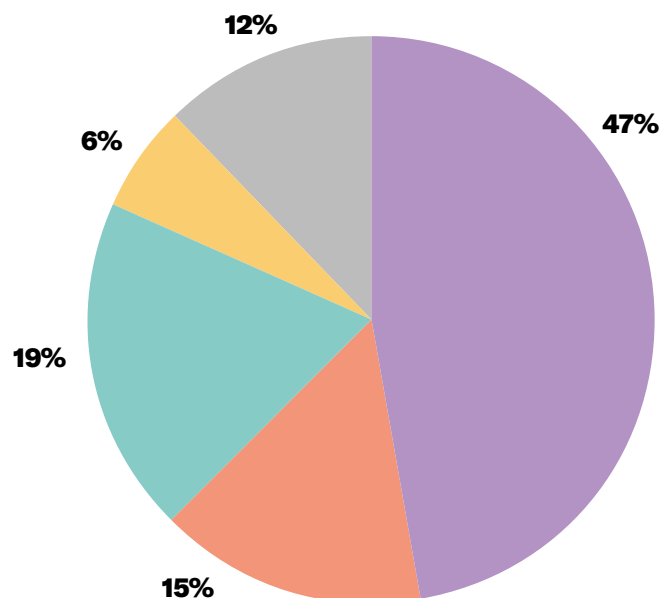
In 2025/26, **63.51%** of undergraduate respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they feel **confident using generative AI tools such as ChatGPT to supplement their learning**. However, this indicates that a notable proportion of students still lack confidence in this area, highlighting an opportunity to further develop guidance and teaching to strengthen confident, effective, and policy-compliant use across courses.

The University's recent partnership with Microsoft, which will provide **Microsoft 365 Copilot access** and training to all students and staff before the end of 2026, demonstrates a strategic commitment to addressing gaps in AI confidence. By ensuring equitable access and structured training across the university, this initiative aims to strengthen students' confidence in using generative AI tools and support their effective and responsible. As reflected in Educate MCR, earlier discussions focused primarily on tools such as ChatGPT, prior to the introduction of Microsoft Copilot, highlighting how this new provision builds on and extends existing engagement with generative AI in teaching and learning.

As generative AI tools become increasingly integrated into student learning, the University should continue developing clear guidance and training to help students use these technologies effectively and responsibly. Strengthening AI literacy will ensure students can confidently engage with emerging digital tools while maintaining academic integrity.

Extra Costs

The extra costs incurred on my course are manageable (i.e. study texts, trips, etc.) (n=2,128)



When asked whether **extra costs involved in completing their course are manageable**, **62.31%** of UG respondents agreed or strongly agreed, indicating that a significant proportion of students experience financial strain related to course costs.

There are clear differences across student demographics; students in receipt of the **Manchester Bursary** reported slightly lower agreement at **60.12%**, suggesting that even with financial support, many still find course-related expenses difficult to manage. There is a bigger gap for students who are the first in their family to attend university, where agreement drops to **56.43%**. This indicates that first-generation students may face additional financial pressures or have less access to informal financial support networks when managing course costs.

These findings highlight the importance of reviewing and clearly communicating financial support available for course-related expenses, as well as ensuring that programmes consider affordability when designing learning activities that require additional spending.

Strengthening targeted support for bursary recipients and first-generation students could help reduce financial barriers and improve equitable access to learning opportunities across the student body. In addition, students should receive information about any additional costs associated with their programme at the beginning of their studies to enable them to plan accordingly. Furthermore, students should have opportunities to express concerns related to this with relevant programme directors and schools.

For students from low-income families, the existence of extra costs creates an access barrier that frequently results in a lack of belonging and unequal exposure to opportunities and experiences. Additionally, a significant number of students would be adversely impacted by additional expenses given the ongoing cost of living problem in the UK.

These extra costs disproportionately affect students from underrepresented groups, hence these expenses need to be reviewed and reduced where possible. To close the opportunity gap and guarantee that every student has equal possibilities, more funding and assistance should be made accessible to students wherever possible.

Reducing financial barriers to participation remains important for ensuring equitable access to learning opportunities. The University should continue to review course-related costs and strengthen financial support mechanisms to enable students from all backgrounds to fully engage with their studies without experiencing disproportionate financial strain.

Directional Insight

Develop student confidence and capability in using generative AI tools.

Why this?

Over one-third of students lack confidence using AI tools to supplement their learning, despite their increasing relevance in academic study.

Next steps

Provide clear guidance to students on appropriate and ethical use of generative AI to support learning on their course.

Integrate AI literacy into digital skills training and curriculum where appropriate.

Directional Insight

Reduce financial barriers associated with course-related costs.

Why this?

Only **62.31%** of students find course costs manageable, with lower agreement among bursary recipients and first-generation students.

Next steps

Review course-related costs to identify opportunities for reduction or removal.

Improve communication and accessibility of financial support available to students.

Target additional support towards underrepresented and financially vulnerable groups.



How well the University engages with its students, leading to improvements to the experiences and outcomes of its students.

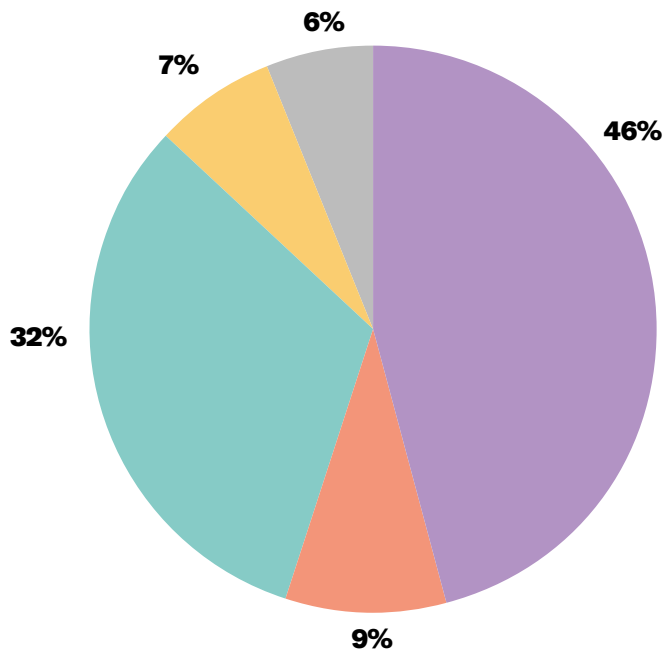
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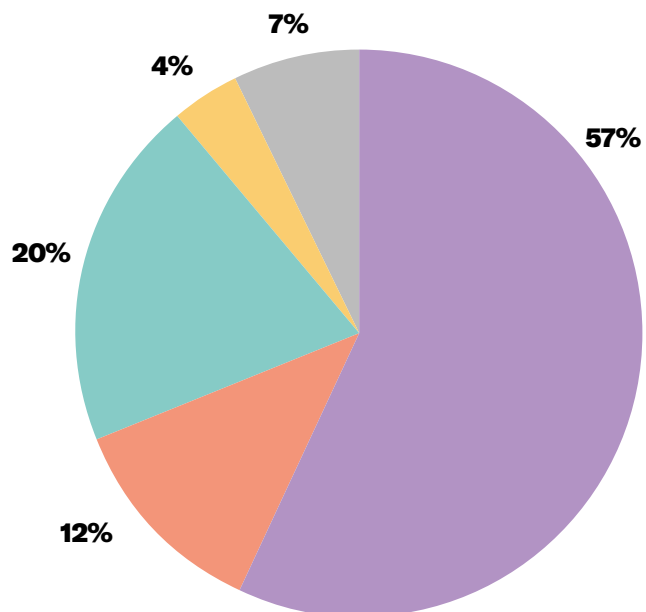
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Student Voice

I can influence decisions taken by the University (n=2,128)



My feedback is taken into consideration and influences decisions on a course level (n=2,128)



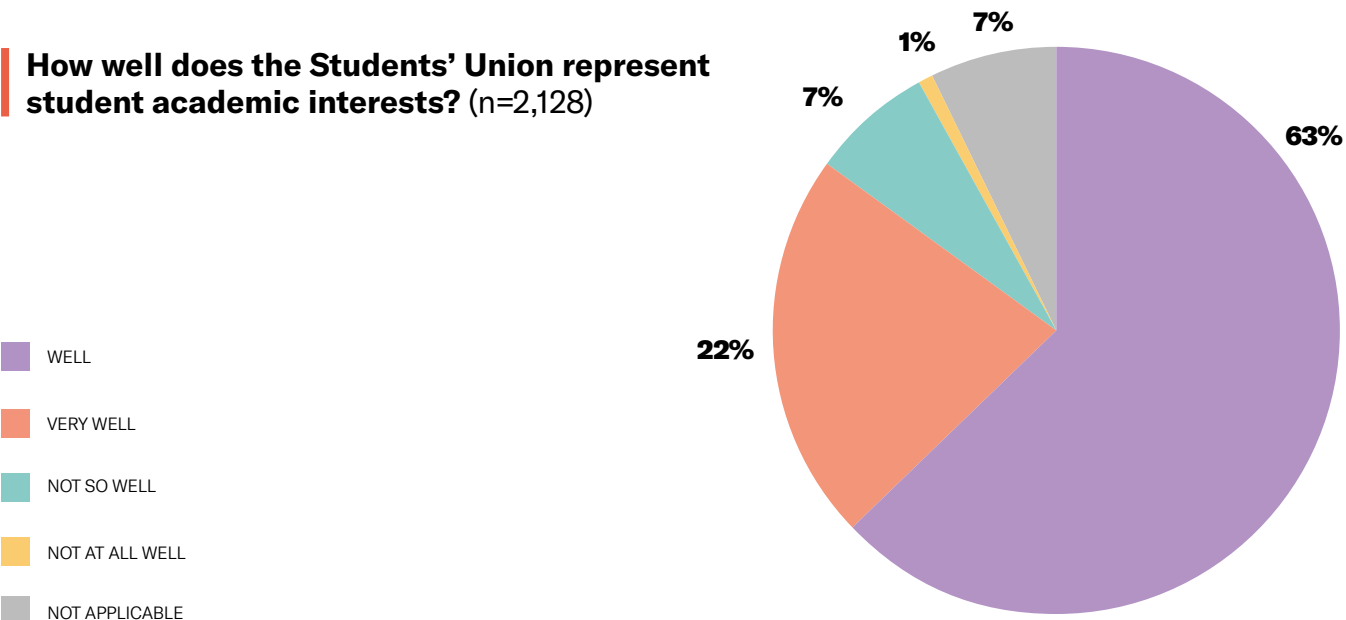
Just over half of respondents (**54.49%**) agreed or strongly agreed that they can **influence decisions taken by the University**. Notably, **39.57%** disagreed indicating that a significant proportion of students do not feel they have a meaningful influence on institutional decision-making. While this represents an improvement compared to 2024/25 (**46%**), it remains one of the lower-performing indicators.

At course level, **68.81%** of UG respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their feedback influences decisions, suggesting students feel more able to influence change within their own programmes than at institutional level.

By year group, agreement was broadly similar between non-finalists (**68.62%**) and final year students (**70.32%**), indicating only marginal variation in perceived influence. However, these findings suggest an opportunity to strengthen student voice earlier in the student journey by improving the visibility, accessibility, and communication of feedback mechanisms. Enhancing awareness and confidence in how feedback is used could help ensure students feel able to contribute meaningfully from the outset of their studies.

More opportunities for students to directly influence University decision-making are needed, alongside more robust feedback systems to ensure that student voice is consistently heard and acted upon. It would be beneficial for students to continue to be consulted on a wide range of issues, particularly those that directly impact their studies. One recent example includes student engagement in the development of the Manchester 2035 Strategy. As a Students' Union, we strive to embed student voice within our daily operations and strategic decision-making, and we would welcome continued collaboration with the University to further strengthen this.

How well does the Students' Union represent student academic interests? (n=2,128)



When asked how well the **Students' Union represents student academic interests**, **84.91%** responded well or very well, indicating strong confidence in SU academic representation. This aligns with the NSS measure of how well students' unions represent academic interests.

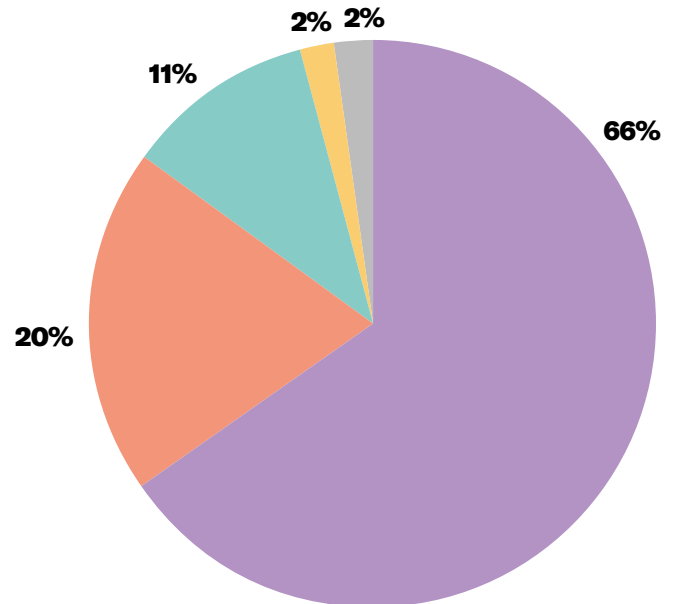
UMSU achieved a positivity score of **76.80%** in 2024/25, an increase of **4.40%** from 2023/24. The higher satisfaction reported in the 2025-26 Educate MCR survey reflects the ongoing work of Academic Course and School Representatives, SU Executive Officers, the SU Education Team, and others in supporting and strengthening student voice across the University.

This is facilitated through student surveys and faculty-level forums delivered in collaboration with the University, enabling students to raise and discuss academic issues. In addition, Academic Course and School Representatives are trained to gather feedback from their peers and work with staff to support change, while the Students' Union also engages with the University's Senior Leadership Team and other relevant staff as needed to advocate for student needs.

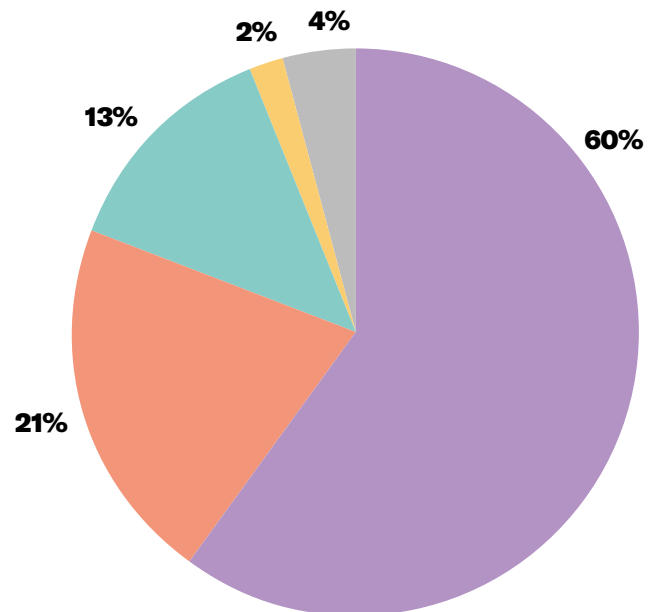
Progress in student influence is encouraging, but continued development of participatory decision-making will further strengthen student engagement. The University should continue expanding opportunities for students to contribute to institutional discussions and ensure that feedback mechanisms remain visible, transparent and impactful.

Student Belonging

My experience and opinions are valued by my peers (n=1,964)



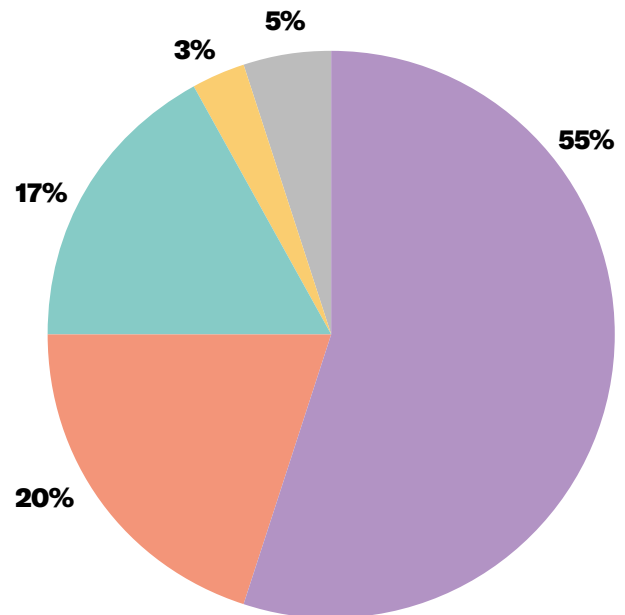
My experience and opinions are valued by teaching staff on my course (n=1,964)



When asked if their **experience and opinions are valued by their peers**, **85.26%** agreed or strongly agreed, indicating a strong sense of mutual respect and recognition within student cohorts. Similarly, **80.79%** agreed or strongly agreed that their **experience and opinions are valued by teaching staff**, suggesting that staff-student relationships are generally positive and supportive of student voice.

SE7 - (Student Belonging)

I feel part of a community that supports impactful research/academic work (n=1,964)



74.94% agreed or strongly agreed that they **feel part of a community that supports impactful academic work**. While this still represents a clear majority, it is notably lower than perceptions of feeling valued by peers and staff.

This suggests that although interpersonal belonging is strong, there is comparatively less consistency in how this translates into a shared academic community that actively supports learning and intellectual engagement. This may indicate that students do not always see the impact or purpose of their academic work beyond the classroom.

Strengthening opportunities for students to apply their learning in meaningful contexts, including involvement in research activity and opportunities to showcase their work, could help reinforce a stronger sense of academic belonging and purpose.

Sustaining a strong sense of belonging will remain key to a positive academic experience. The University should continue fostering environments where students feel their perspectives are valued by both peers and staff, helping to strengthen confidence, participation and academic engagement across the student community.

Further breakdown of all student demographics for this, and all other areas, are available on the PowerBI Dashboard [6].

Directional Insight

Strengthen student influence in institutional decision-making.

Why this?

Only **54.49%** of students feel able to influence university decisions, despite improvements from previous years.

Next steps

Expand opportunities for students to participate in institutional consultation and decision-making processes.

Increase visibility of student representation structures and how to engage with them.

Directional Insight

Improve transparency of how student feedback leads to change.

Why this?

Students report higher influence at course level than institutionally, suggesting a lack of visibility of impact at higher levels.

Next steps

Increase opportunities for students to participate in faculty, school and University-level meetings.

Provide regular updates on actions taken in response to student feedback.

Student Outcomes

Student Outcomes (SO) is the second front TEF uses to evaluate HEIs. SO seeks to evaluate the extent to which students succeed in their studies and beyond graduation. In 2023, UoM were awarded a Gold accreditation in this area. This section explores student feedback on the following measures of excellence:

- **SO1** - How well the University supports its students to succeed and progress beyond their studies.
- **SO4** - What educational gains the University intends its students to achieve, and how relevant these are to students.
- **SO5** - How well the University supports its students to achieve these gains.
- **SO6** - Evaluation of Educational Gains.



How well the University supports its students to succeed and progress beyond their studies.

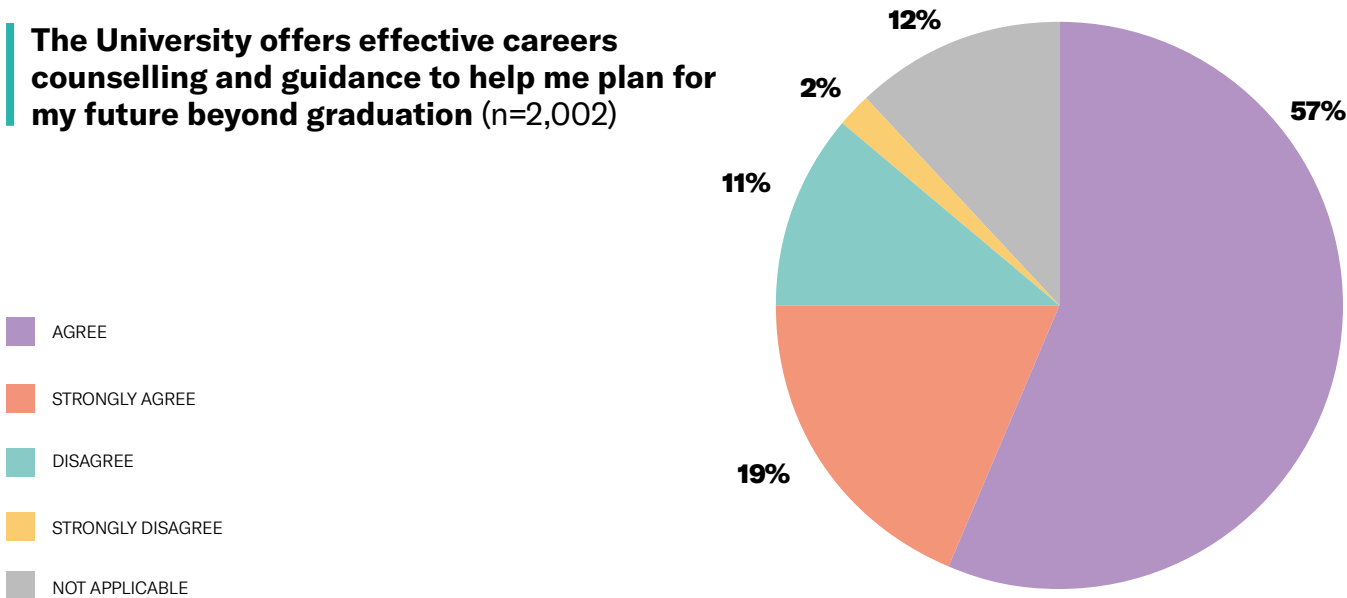
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Career Readiness

The University offers effective careers counselling and guidance to help me plan for my future beyond graduation (n=2,002)

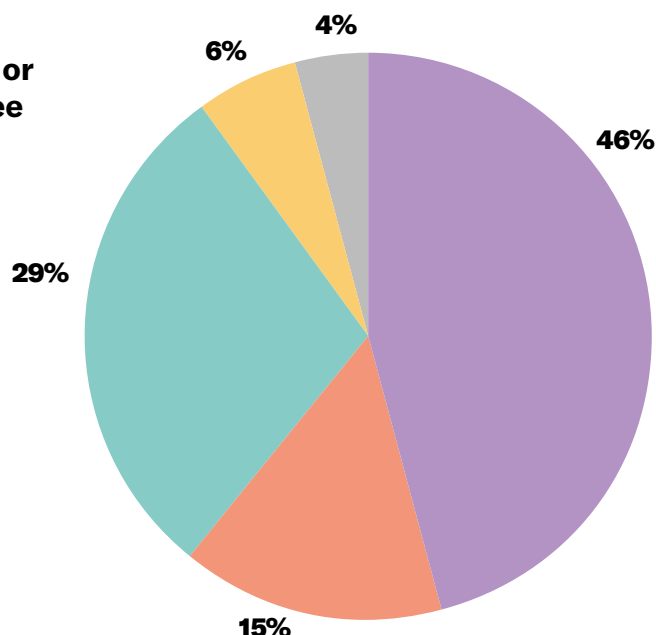


SO1 explores a variety of topics related to a student’s continuation and completion of their time in university. This covers how successfully teaching and learning prepare students for their goals after graduation by incorporating skill sets into their course content, as well as the practical assistance provided by the university for job development and advancement. Every student’s definition of success after graduation is different, and there are numerous options, including further education or finding employment.

Within the **Student Model**, career readiness is evaluated using two success indicators: a students’ confidence in their ability to transition beyond graduation and their perceived preparedness for future employment or further study. Here, ‘success’ refers to students’ readiness to navigate these post-graduation outcomes.

When asked if the University offers **effective careers counselling and guidance to help them plan for their future beyond graduation**, **75.96%** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. This highlights an improvement when compared to 2024/25 (**69.90%**), suggesting that careers provision is becoming more visible and effective but still requires attention.

I feel confident in my ability to secure a job or pursue further study as a result of my degree
(n=2,002)

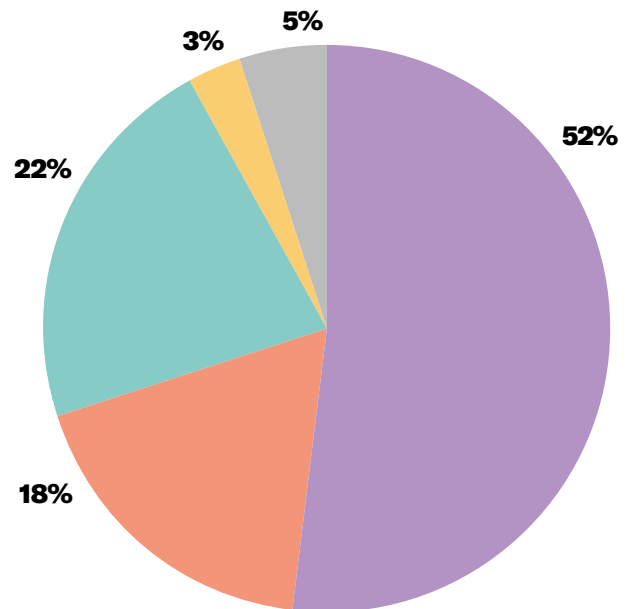


60.30% of UG students agreed or strongly agreed that they **feel confident in their ability to secure a job or continue further study as a result of their degree**. This shows a decrease when compared to 2024/25 (66.3%), suggesting that while the university's careers service is viewed more positively, individual confidence in securing post-graduate outcomes has declined.

This may reflect broader uncertainty regarding labour market conditions, which heavily shape student perceptions regarding employability. Feedback from the student consultation indicates that involvement in leadership or job roles within the University and Students' Union can help build confidence by developing skills and providing practical experience.

This highlights an opportunity to increase access to such opportunities to ensure students are supported to engage in such activities alongside their academic studies. Qualitative findings suggest that career advice is not fully embedded within some courses. Students are requesting industry opportunities, course-specific internships and employability modules (such as CV writing) integrated within their course rather than being delivered separately.

My course features information about relevant employment opportunities (n=2,002)



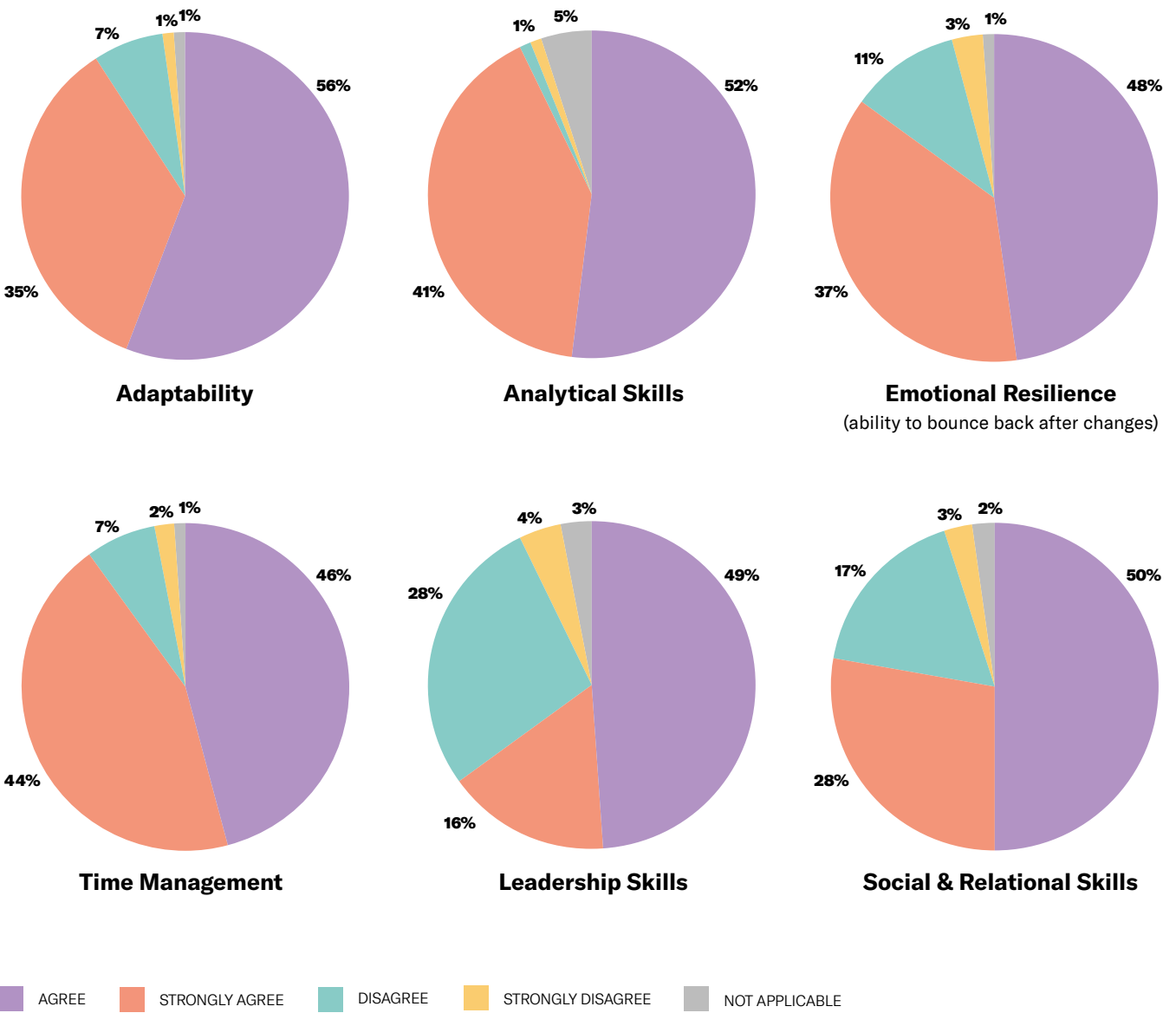
69.95% agreed or strongly agreed that their **course features information about relevant employment opportunities**. While most students receive course related employability content, nearly one third of student feel that relevant employment opportunities are not integrated within their course.

FoH reported the lowest agreement at **67.31%**, compared with FBMH at **71.87%** and FSE at **72.78%**. This suggests that students in FoH may have fewer, or are less aware of, opportunities that connect their course content with career opportunities. Students mention wanting to receive course-specific career support within each faculty. This highlights the need for improved employability integration within course content and clearer guidance on how academic learning progresses onto postgraduate opportunities.

Strengthening the connection between academic learning and future career pathways will remain important in supporting student confidence beyond graduation. The University should continue embedding employability discussions, industry engagement and career guidance within academic programmes to help students better understand how their degree supports their future ambitions.

Skill Enhancement & Future Value

To what extent do you agree that your course helps you enhance the following skills?
(n=2,002)



A key aspect of student outcomes relates to the development of transferable skills through teaching, learning and assessment.

Students reported strong development of key organisational skills, with high levels of agreement that their course helped them to enhance **time management (90.22%)**, **analytical skills (92.43%)** and **adaptability (91.11%)**. These consistently high scores indicate that the academic experience at UoM effectively supports the development of core organisational and cognitive competencies. This pattern is consistent with 2024/25 findings, where time management and analytical skills were also the highest-rated outcomes, suggesting sustained strength in this area.

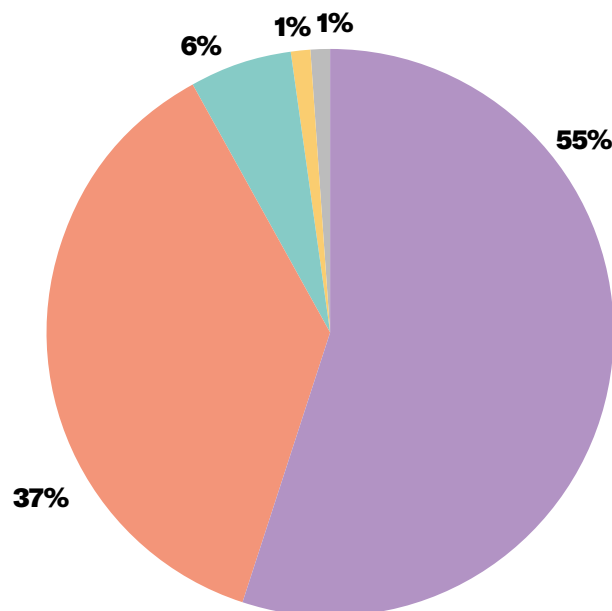
In addition, students reported positive development of **emotional resilience (84.37%)** and **social and relational skills (78.26%)**. However, leadership skills remain the lowest-rated outcome (65.31%), although this has improved compared to 2024/25 (**60.94%**). Despite this progress, leadership development continues to lag behind other graduate skills.

Encouragingly, students in committee positions or representative roles report stronger leadership development, including **Diversity and Inclusion Officers (75.11%)**, **Social Media Officers (77.99%)** and **Academic Representatives (70.79%)**. This suggests that leadership skills are most effectively developed through structured, responsibility-based roles where students can actively apply and practise them.

While the University already provides a range of leadership development opportunities through student representation roles, mentoring schemes, Careers Service programmes and Stellify, these are not always embedded within the academic curriculum.

Expanding opportunities for course-based leadership experiences could help ensure broader and more equitable access to leadership development, particularly for students who may not independently engage with extracurricular roles.

I believe what I learn will be beneficial to my future (n=1,964)



When UG students were asked whether they believe **what they learn will be beneficial to their future**, **92.45%** agreed or strongly agreed, reinforcing strong perceptions of the long-term value of their degree. This remains significantly higher than confidence in securing employment or further study, suggesting that while students recognise the relevance of their learning, external factors may be influencing their confidence in post-graduation outcomes.

This indicates a potential disconnect between perceived academic value and progression confidence, highlighting the importance of strengthening employability support and clearer articulation of how academic skills translate into career pathways. Enhancing opportunities for applied learning, career integration within the curriculum, and clearer links between study and progression routes could help bridge this gap and further support students to succeed beyond their studies.

The strong development of transferable skills highlights the value of the academic experience at Manchester. The University should continue supporting opportunities for students to develop leadership, collaborative and professional skills alongside academic knowledge to further strengthen graduate outcomes.

Directional Insight

Strengthen student confidence in securing employment after graduation.

Why this?

While careers support satisfaction is high, student confidence in securing employment has declined.

Next steps

Develop and deliver tailored employability support to help students navigate the current job market and make informed career decisions.

Embed employability skills, activities and reflection more explicitly within core modules.

Directional Insight

Feature relevant employment opportunities and career pathways within courses.

Why this?

Around one-third of students report limited exposure to employment opportunities within their course.

Next steps

Encourage teaching staff to highlight career pathways related to course content.

Increase use of alumni engagement and guest speakers to demonstrate career progression linked to degree programmes.



What educational gains the University intends its students to achieve, and how relevant these are to students.

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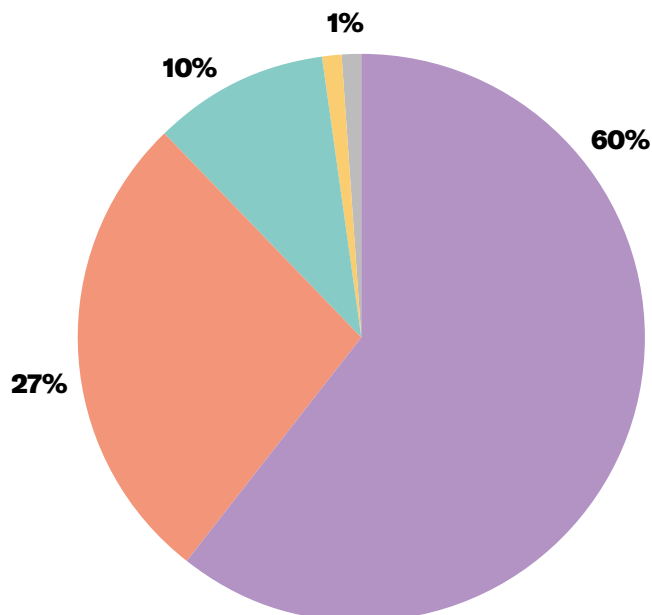
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Educational Gains

The OfS has not provided an exact definition of educational gains, allowing institutions to interpret them according to their own purposes. In the University of Manchester's 2023 TEF submission, educational gains were described as a strategy that matched institutional characteristics for students to *"be curious, connected, and courageous."* These are also connected to students' employability, as they reflect the development of transferable skills that are linked to positive graduate outcomes.

SO4 considers how clearly these educational gains are communicated to students and how well they understand the intended learning outcomes of their course.

The University has clearly communicated the educational goals and learning outcomes expected of students on my course (n=1,964)



87.68% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the **University has clearly communicated the educational goals and learning outcomes expected of students on their course**. This represents an increase from 2024/25 (**83.00%**), indicating an improvement in how effectively educational aims are communicated. Clear articulation of intended learning outcomes helps students understand how their studies contribute to both academic development and broader professional skills.

This positive finding is consistent across faculties, with high levels of agreement in **FBMH (90.39%)**, **FoH (86.22%)** and **FSE (87.87%)**, suggesting a broadly consistent approach to communicating course expectations across the University. Overall, this indicates that most students have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and what they are working towards, supporting their ability to engage with and succeed in their studies.

However, within SO1, this clarity of academic purpose is not fully reflected in progression confidence, with only **60.30%** of students feeling confident in securing a job. This suggests a gap between understanding learning outcomes and translating these into perceived employability. Strengthening how educational gains are explicitly linked to career pathways may help bridge this gap and further support students to succeed beyond their studies.

Clear communication of educational goals supports students in understanding the purpose and direction of their studies. The University should continue ensuring that learning outcomes remain transparent and accessible so students can confidently track their academic development throughout their course.



**How well the University
supports its students to achieve
these gains.**

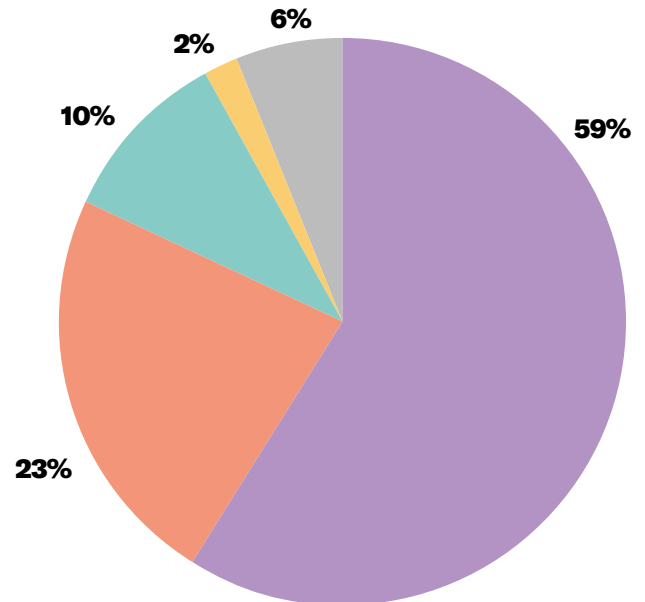
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Structures & Environment

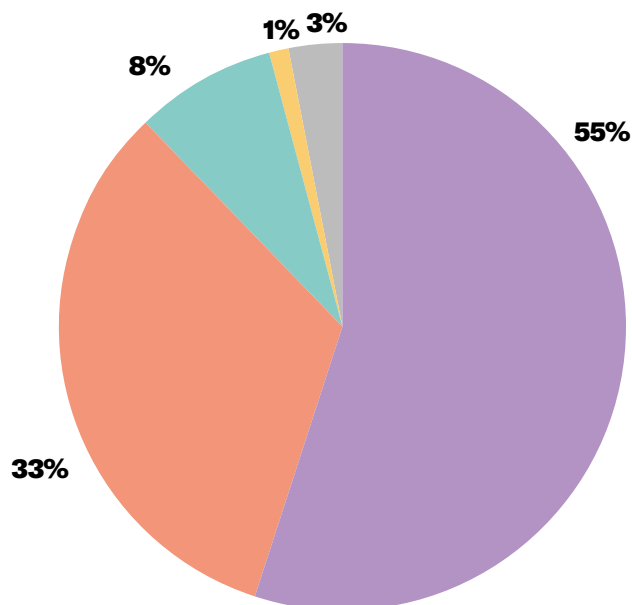
The University creates an environment where innovation is valued (n=2,002)



SO5 evaluates the structures and environment in place within HEIs to allow students to achieve educational gains. This includes university culture, opportunities for engagement with research, and whether students feel supported to develop personally and academically within their learning environment.

When asked whether the **University creates an environment where innovation is valued**, **82.33%** of students agreed or strongly agreed. This suggests that most students not only recognise but also experience a culture that actively encourages new ideas, critical thinking, and creativity within their learning environment. It indicates that innovation is embedded within the academic experience rather than being seen as an abstract or institutional concept.

Being at Manchester connects me to a wider community of excellence and impact
(n=2,002)

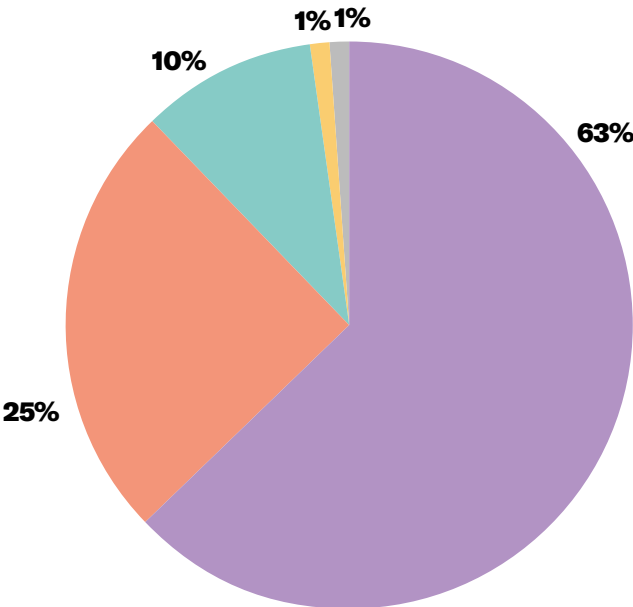


Similarly, **88.49%** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that **being at Manchester connects them to a wider community of excellence and impact**. This reflects a strong perception among students that they are part of an institution with a clear identity centred on research excellence, global influence, and meaningful societal contribution. Feeling connected to this broader community can play an important role in shaping students' sense of belonging and purpose within their studies.

Taken together, these findings highlight a clear alignment between institutional identity and student perception. Students appear to internalise the University's values around innovation, excellence, and impact, which provides a strong foundation for fostering engagement, ambition, and academic confidence. This also creates an opportunity to strengthen how these values are embedded within the student experience, particularly by making clearer links to students' personal development and future aspirations.

I feel able to fulfil my potential on my course
(n=1,964)

- AGREE
- STRONGLY AGREE
- DISAGREE
- STRONGLY DISAGREE
- NOT APPLICABLE



When considering personal progression, **87.93%** agreed or strongly agreed that they **feel able to fulfil their potential on their course**. This indicates that many students feel supported in their academic journey and are confident in their ability to succeed within their programme.

This positive perception suggests that students generally experience an environment that enables academic development and progression, with appropriate levels of challenge and support. It reflects a strong foundation for student growth, where most learners feel able to meet the demands of their course and achieve their academic goals.

However, the fact that a proportion of students do not share this view highlights the importance of continued focus on inclusive teaching practices, personalised support, and accessible academic guidance. Strengthening consistency in support across programmes may help ensure that all students are equally able to realise their potential and fully benefit from their studies.

The perception that Manchester provides an environment that values innovation and impact is a positive foundation. The University should continue to foster this culture by further creating opportunities for creativity and collaboration within teaching and learning environments. Further strengthening these practices will help ensure that all students can fully benefit from the University's supportive academic environment.



Evaluation of Educational Gains.

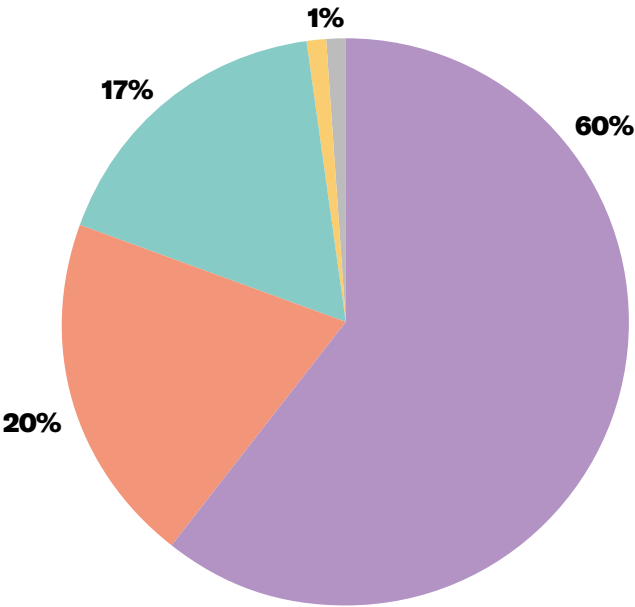
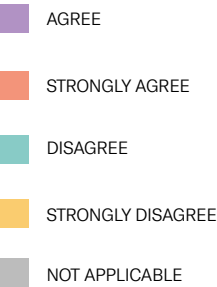
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Evaluation of Educational Gains

I am provided opportunities to reflect on skills I have learnt and areas where I need to improve (n=1,964)



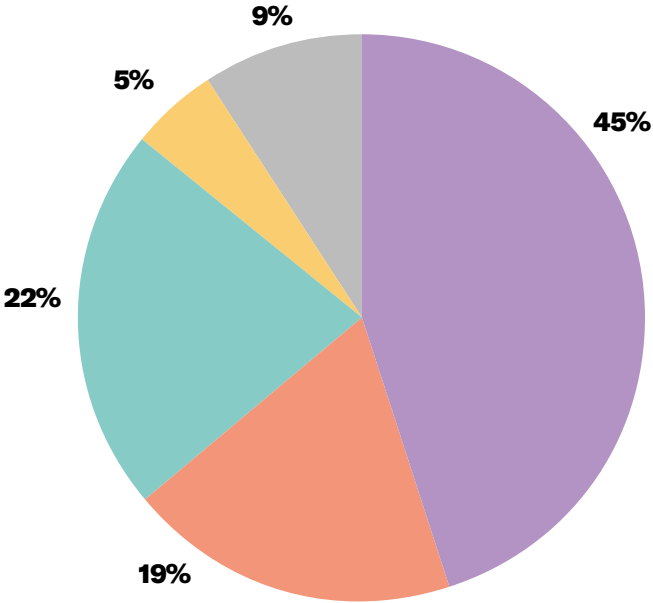
SO6 explores how students reflect on their own development within their education context.

80.14% of UG respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they are **provided with opportunities to reflect on the skills they have developed and areas for improvement**. Reflection is an important aspect of evaluating educational gains, as it enables students to identify strengths and areas for development, supporting them in consolidating and progressing their learning journey.

SO6 - (Evaluation of Educational Gains)

I feel my research or academic work has the potential to make real world impact
(n=2,002)

- AGREE
- STRONGLY AGREE
- DISAGREE
- STRONGLY DISAGREE
- NOT APPLICABLE



In contrast, **62.22%** agreed or strongly agreed that their **research or academic work has the potential to make a real-world impact**, which is comparatively lower than other educational gain indicators. This suggests that while students may feel part of an innovative and impactful institutional environment, they are less certain about how their own academic work contributes to real-world outcomes.

These differences between perceptions of institutional impact (SO5) and personal impact (SO6) suggest that opportunities for applied and real-world learning may not be consistently embedded across all courses, or that these links are not always made explicit to students.

Supporting students to reflect on their development remains an important part of educational gain. The University should continue providing opportunities for reflection while strengthening connections between student research and real-world impact, helping students recognise the wider value of their academic work.

Further breakdown of all student demographics for this, and all other areas, are available on the PowerBI Dashboard [6].

Directional Insight

Strengthen clarity on how educational gains link to future pathways

Why this?

While educational goals are clearly communicated (**87.68%**), students may be less clear on how these translate into future pathways beyond their studies.

Next steps

Embed clearer links between learning outcomes and future pathways within course content and assessment.

Support academic staff to highlight how skills developed through modules connect to progression opportunities.

Directional Insight

Enhance opportunities for students to connect their academic work to real-world impact.

Why this?

Only **62.22%** of students feel their work has real-world impact, indicating a gap between institutional research culture and student experience.

Next steps

Highlight real-world applications of student work within modules.

Promote community-based and applied research opportunities.

Professional Services

Professional services are a crucial aspect of the student experience and underpin teaching, learning, progression, and wellbeing. Educate MCR 2025-26 survey findings indicate that satisfaction with these services varies across different areas, highlighting both key strengths and opportunities for improvement.

Timetable Scheduling

How satisfied are you with timetable scheduling?
(n=1,976)



74.58% of UG respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with **timetable scheduling**. This indicates that timetabling remains one of the weaker areas of professional services. Approximately **15%** of qualitative comments highlight calls for improved timetabling, fewer disruptions and a reliable digital system to help students manage their academic timetabling more effectively.

Commuter students expressed their frustration with “*5-to-6-hour gaps between lectures*” and the fact that they may have “*only 1hr of teaching per day*” as these are barriers to both productivity and social engagement. This highlights how timetable scheduling has wider implications for the equity of student experience.

Canvas and other Learning Platforms

How satisfied are you with Canvas and/or other learning platforms?
(n=1,942)



Canvas and other learning platforms were viewed as particularly efficient, with **91.91%** of respondents satisfied or very satisfied. This is a considerable improvement compared to 2024/25, where satisfaction with learning platforms such as Blackboard was notably lower at **77.10%**.

This increase in satisfaction reflects a successful transition to Canvas as the University's new learning platform. Previous feedback on Blackboard highlighted usability challenges, including inconsistent organisation, limited search functionality, and difficulties navigating resources. The current satisfaction levels suggest that many of these issues have been addressed through the move to Canvas.

However, some students continue to identify areas for refinement, including requests such as improved integration via Shibboleth access and greater consistency in module layout across courses and teaching staff. Overall, the introduction of Canvas appears to have significantly enhanced students' perceptions of digital learning tools, while indicating opportunities to further improve consistency and system integration to strengthen the user experience.

SEAtS

How satisfied are you with SEAtS?
(n=1,938)



63.88% of students were satisfied or very satisfied with the **Student Engagement and Attendance System (SEAtS)** making it one of the lower-performing digital services. As a relatively new attendance monitoring system, this reflects an ongoing period of adjustment for both students and staff.

Qualitative feedback highlights concerns around administrative and digital tools, particularly in relation to attendance tracking and communication processes. Students report experiencing stress when marked absent despite attending timetabled sessions, with system glitches contributing to perceptions of unfairness and reduced confidence in its reliability. While guidance is available online to support students in using SEAtS, these recurring technical issues suggest a need for continued refinement and improved communication to strengthen trust in the system.

Wi-Fi Services

How satisfied are you with Wi-Fi services?
(n=1,964)



72.15% of student respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with **Wi-Fi services**. This aligns with qualitative feedback highlighting issues with digital reliability, particularly during high-usage periods, alongside broader technical difficulties such as unstable connections and challenges accessing learning materials.

Together, these findings suggest that while overall satisfaction is moderate, digital services are not yet consistently reliable. Disruptions in this area can have a disproportionate impact on student stress, academic performance, and the overall student experience.

Careers Service

How satisfied are you with the Careers Service? (n=1,639)



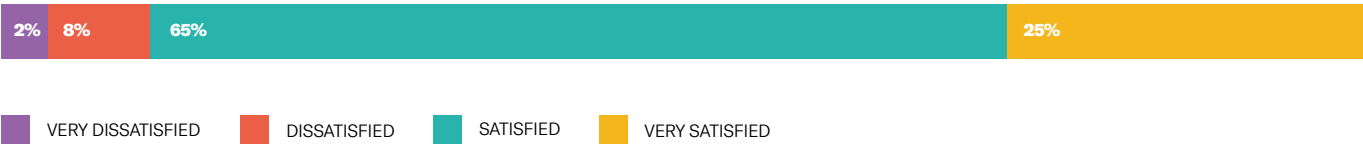
83.40% were satisfied or very satisfied with the **Careers Service**. Although satisfaction with the Careers Service is high, student confidence in securing employment remains lower. As previously outlined, only **60.30%** of students reported confidence in their ability to secure a job or further study, representing a decline from the previous year. This reinforces a theme across the report in which positive perceptions of support do not necessarily map onto confidence in outcomes.

There is a disconnect between students' perceptions of careers provision and their confidence in achieving graduate outcomes. As discussed in the employability section, this may reflect broader job market uncertainty, which can influence student confidence despite institutional support.

Strengthening the integration of careers support within academic courses is important in ensuring that positive perceptions of support are matched by improved student confidence in their postgraduate outcomes. Providing opportunities for students to discuss their concerns around employability is important as confidence may be influenced by factors including labour market conditions, visa requirements and lack of perceived or actual skills.

Student Support Hubs

How satisfied are you with Student Support Hubs?
(n=1,621)



When asked about the **Students Support Hub**, **89.94%** were satisfied or very satisfied with the service. This indicates that support hubs are effective points of central access to student support.

Still, qualitative responses relating to academic support, skills, and feedback highlight a desire for clearer guidance on how to achieve top grades, alongside more academic skills workshops. Feedback related to wellbeing and student support services emphasise the need for more proactive welfare checks, stronger mental health provision, and continued support beyond high-pressure periods such as examinations. More broadly, students also call for improved communication, transparency, and institutional responsiveness, with a need for clearer information about available services and greater visibility of how student feedback is acted upon.

This suggests that while support is strong, its impact may be limited by how easily students can engage with it. Improving communication could enhance the effectiveness of existing support. Strengthening communication and responsiveness within the Support Hubs could therefore help address multiple areas of student concern and improve the overall student support experience.

Course Administration

How satisfied are you with the Course Administration? (n=1,845)

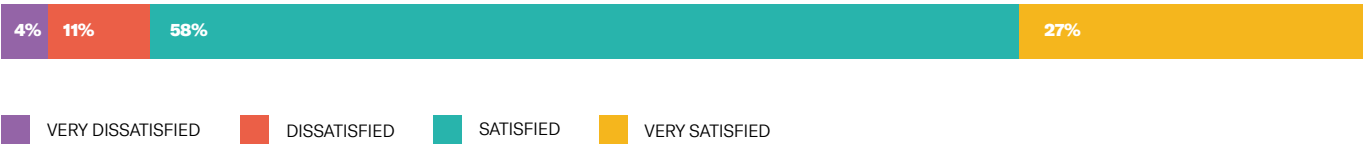


When asked about **course administration**, **89.81%** of UG students reported being satisfied or very satisfied, reflecting strong overall performance in this area. However, qualitative feedback highlights some ongoing concerns around clarity of communication and response times, suggesting that experiences are not fully consistent across all students.

This highlights a gap between overall service quality and consistency of delivery. While many students have a positive experience, variability in communication can create uncertainty for others. Ensuring more consistent standards across departments would help to maintain high satisfaction levels and improve the reliability of the student experience.

Counselling and Mental Health Service

How satisfied are you with the Counselling Service?
(n=1,037)



84.76% of UG students were satisfied or very satisfied with the **Counselling and Mental Health Service**. However, qualitative feedback highlights a continued demand for more accessible, proactive, and longer-term mental health support. Students report that accessing services can sometimes feel slow or difficult, and that stigma around mental health may further discourage seeking help.

There is also a perception among some students that support is limited to listening, with insufficient follow-up or ongoing intervention. These concerns are particularly important given the impact that mental health and wellbeing can have on students’ academic engagement, motivation, and confidence about their future.

In response, the University’s Mental Health Support Team is planning to launch a new self-referral form to improve accessibility. Developed through student consultation facilitated by the Students’ Union, this system will replace the previous ‘First Step’ appointment model and will offer a more flexible approach to referral and triage. By allowing students to submit information over a longer period, it aims to improve accessibility and create a more responsive and efficient pathway into support services.

Disability Advisory Support Service (DASS)

How satisfied are you with the Disability Advisory Support Service? (n=1,816)



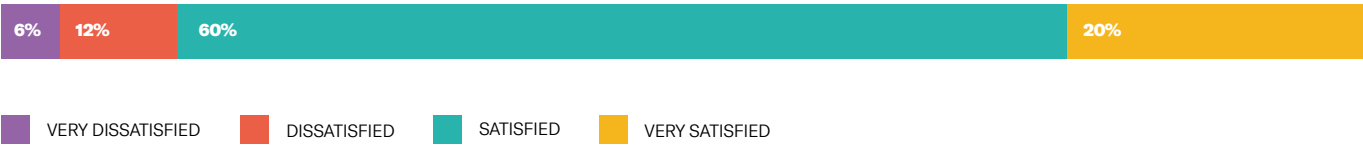
When asked about their experience of the **Disability Advisory and Support Service (DASS)**, **88.23%** of UG students reported being satisfied or very satisfied. Satisfaction was consistently high across different support needs, including students with learning difficulties (**90.00%**), physical/mobility issues (**92.31%**), and mental health conditions (**89.83%**).

However, some students highlighted challenges in accessing support. In particular, the process of contacting DASS and arranging an appointment was described as “lengthy” and “requiring a lot of effort”, which can be especially burdensome for disabled students.

This suggests an opportunity to review and simplify the initial access pathway, with a focus on reducing administrative steps, improving clarity of guidance, and ensuring faster routes into support where possible, in order to enhance accessibility and ease of engagement.

University Accommodation Office

How satisfied are you with the University Accommodation Office?
(n=1,241)



82.35% of students were satisfied or very satisfied with the service provided by the **University Accommodation Office**. However, accommodation emerged as the most prominent theme in the qualitative data (around **25%**), with a substantial proportion of responses raising concerns around cost, availability, and maintenance.

Students highlighted increasing financial pressure due to rising accommodation costs, with one student noting that their *“maintenance loan doesn’t even cover half of the rent, let alone living costs”* and calls for accommodation to be more affordable or subsidised. Concerns were also raised about maintenance and living conditions, including issues such as broken heating and pest problems. Delayed responses and poor communication were common frustrations, with one student commenting that issues were *“often not fixed”* and they were *“never contacted by the maintenance team.”*

These findings suggest that while overall satisfaction is relatively high, improvements to affordability, maintenance responsiveness, and communication could significantly enhance the student accommodation experience.

Student Finance Support

How satisfied are you with student finance support? (n=1,334)



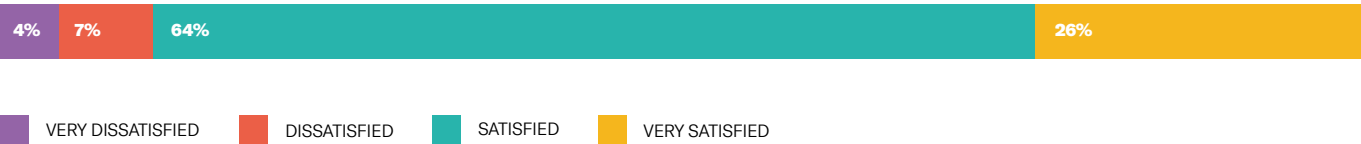
81.71% of UG students reported feeling satisfied or very satisfied with **student finance support**. Satisfaction is notably higher among students in receipt of the Manchester Bursary or other financial support, with **91.84%** reporting positive experiences, suggesting that financial assistance helps to alleviate financial pressures and shape more positive perceptions of support.

Satisfaction remains high across fee status groups, with UK students reporting the highest levels (**83.06%**), followed by EU students (**82.76%**), and slightly lower satisfaction among international students (**78.42%**). This lower satisfaction may reflect challenges associated with visa-related costs and more limited access to funding opportunities.

These findings align with qualitative feedback, where students call for clearer, more flexible financial support systems and guidance tailored to individual circumstances, indicating an opportunity to improve accessibility and communication across provision.

Visa & Immigration Support

How satisfied are you with visa and immigration support?
(n=635)



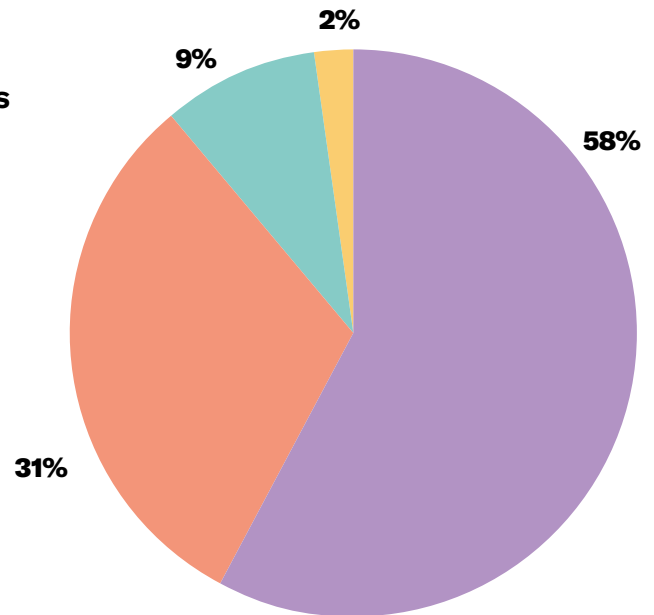
Of the UG students using **visa and immigration support services**, **89.45%** reported being satisfied or very satisfied. This high level of satisfaction highlights the importance of timely and accessible support in helping international students navigate complex immigration processes, including visa applications, renewals, and compliance requirements. Such provision plays a key role in enabling international students to focus on their academic experience.

Across professional services, high satisfaction indicates that key support systems are functioning effectively. The University should continue ensuring that these services remain responsive, accessible and clearly communicated, while improving areas such as timetabling, digital reliability and administrative communication to further enhance the student experience.

Further breakdown of all student demographics for this, and all other areas, are available on the PowerBI Dashboard [6].

Student Wellbeing

I believe in my own abilities to overcome challenges and achieve my educational goals
(n=1,964)



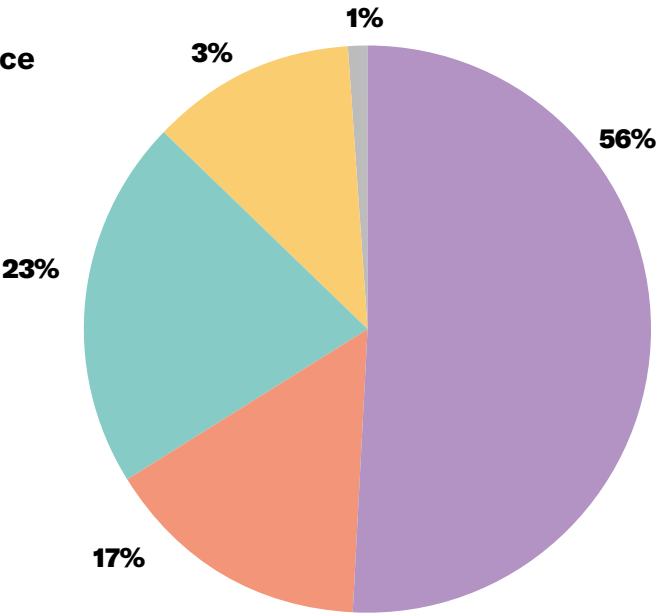
89.11% of UG respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they believe in their **ability to overcome challenges and achieve their educational goals**, reflecting strong levels of confidence and resilience among students at UoM.

However, agreement was lower among students with a mental health condition (**78.14%**), indicating that this group may face additional barriers in overcoming challenges and achieving their goals. This highlights the importance of accessible, proactive wellbeing support, alongside tailored guidance to help students manage stress and build resilience.

Improving awareness of, and support for, registering with the Disability Advisory and Support Service (DASS) may also enable students to better access appropriate support and articulate their individual needs, helping to ensure all students have an equitable opportunity to succeed.

I am satisfied with my academic performance and achievements (n=1,964)

- AGREE
- STRONGLY AGREE
- DISAGREE
- STRONGLY DISAGREE
- NOT APPLICABLE

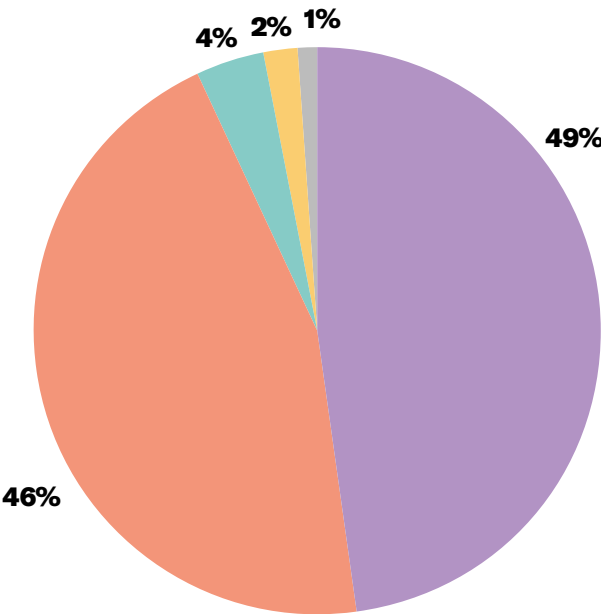


72.84% of students reported being satisfied with their **academic performance and achievements**, while 94.98% agreed or strongly agreed that they feel **happiness and fulfilment when acquiring knowledge and skills**. Qualitative findings suggest a disconnect between academic capability and overall wellbeing with students describing feeling academically capable but emotionally exhausted. Factors such as financial strain, housing instability, and loneliness were identified as key contributors.

Students called for more proactive support systems to reduce isolation and prevent burnout, alongside improvements in responsiveness when addressing serious or ongoing issues. Digital and administrative barriers were also highlighted as sources of frustration, including unreliable Wi-Fi in halls, complex online systems, and difficulties contacting accommodation services or accessing timely support.

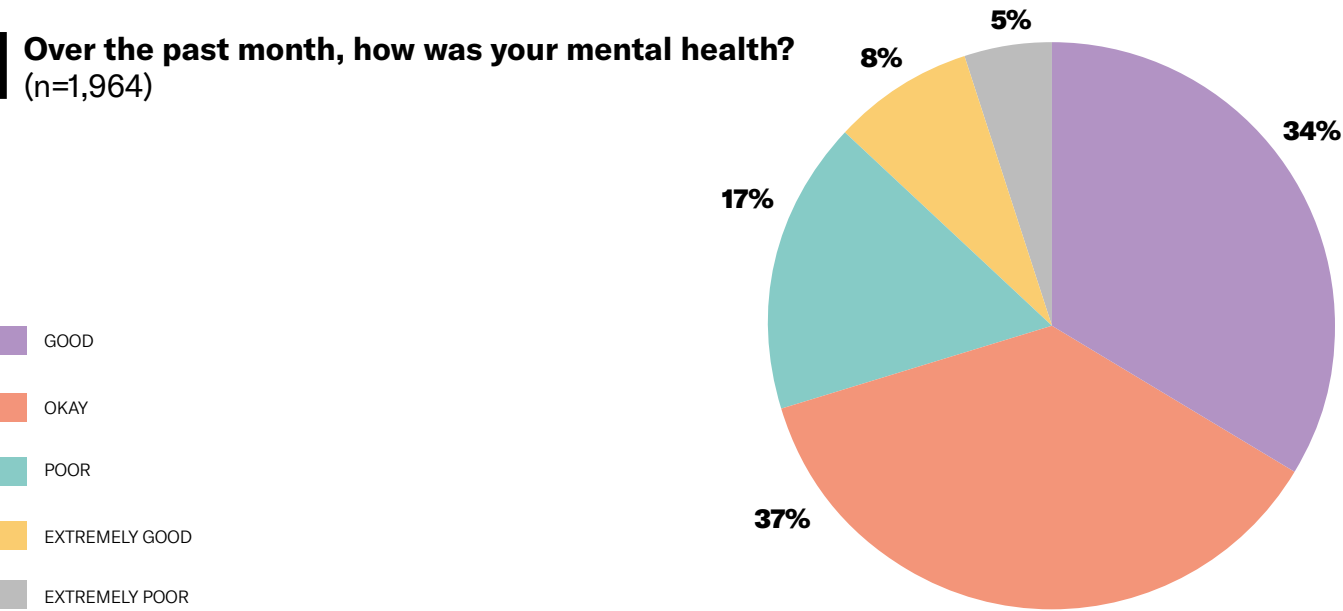
I feel happiness and fulfilment when I acquire knowledge and skills (n=1,964)

- AGREE
- STRONGLY AGREE
- DISAGREE
- STRONGLY DISAGREE
- NOT APPLICABLE



Agreement was slightly lower among students with a mental health condition (**89.13%**), indicating that wellbeing challenges may limit their sense of fulfilment. These findings suggest that academic success alone is not sufficient to ensure holistic student wellbeing, highlighting the need for a more integrated approach that addresses both academic and personal challenges to support all students in achieving a positive and fulfilling experience.

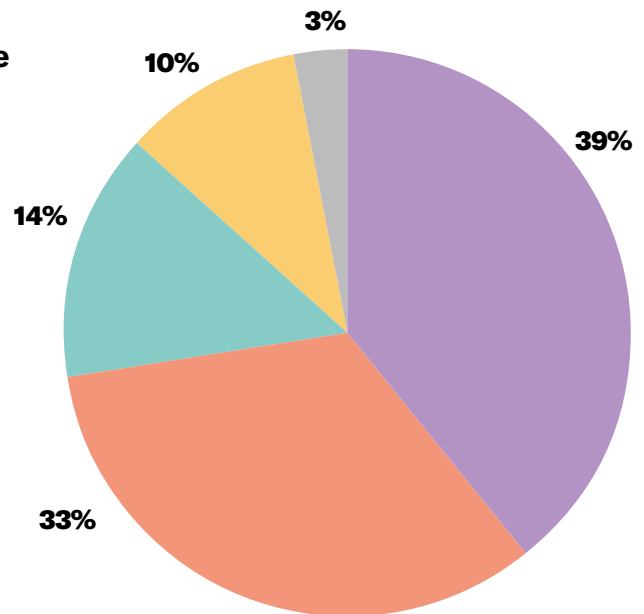
Over the past month, how was your mental health?
(n=1,964)



41.77% of UG students described their **mental health** over the past month as good or extremely good. Among students with a mental health condition, this drops significantly to **17.73%**, highlighting the additional challenges this group faces in managing wellbeing alongside academic demands. Differences are also evident across demographic groups, with Bangladeshi students reporting **39.19%** positive mental health, Pakistani students **44.15%**, and Black Heritage students **54.54%**, indicating variation in wellbeing across student communities. These patterns suggest that factors such as social isolation, cultural barriers, and academic pressure may impact students' mental health.

These findings align with qualitative feedback calling for improved mental health and disability support, alongside stronger community integration. Students emphasised the importance of feeling supported both academically and socially, particularly when managing wellbeing or disability-related challenges, and highlighted the need for more inclusive opportunities to foster connection and belonging across the University.

Over the past month, how would you describe your general wellbeing (e.g. eating habits, activity levels, socialising etc.) (n=1,964)



Similarly, **48.97%** of students described their **general wellbeing** (e.g. eating habits, activity levels, and socialising) as good or extremely good. This was notably lower among certain groups; for example, only **28.73%** of students with a mental health condition reported positive wellbeing, highlighting the challenges this group faces in maintaining healthy routines and social connections. Slightly lower levels were also reported among some demographic groups, including Bangladeshi (**46.98%**), Pakistani (**48.32%**), and Black Heritage students (**33.39%**), indicating variation in wellbeing across student communities.

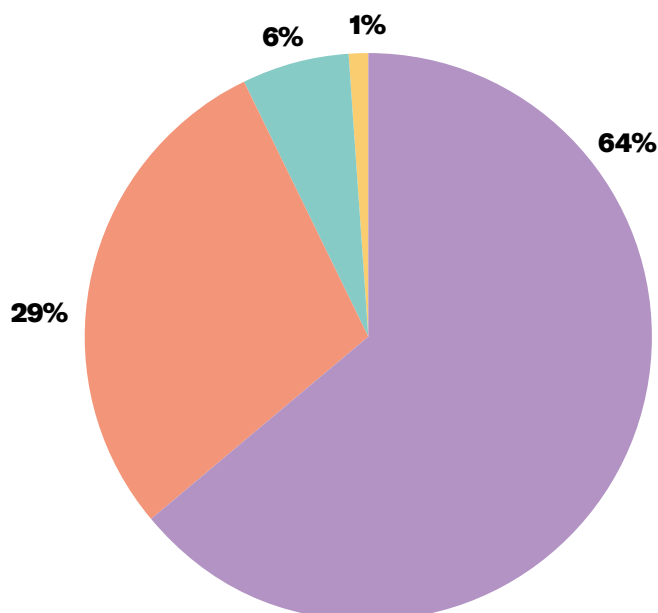
This highlights the importance of support strategies that address not only academic and mental health needs, but also lifestyle, social engagement, and opportunities for connection to help students sustain their wellbeing during their studies.

Overall, these findings suggest that fewer than half of students report positive wellbeing in the short term. This contrasts with the high levels of academic confidence and intellectual fulfilment reported elsewhere, indicating that while students feel academically capable, wellbeing challenges persist.

Qualitative feedback reinforces this with students describing difficulties navigating support systems. Building on the strong levels of academic confidence, there is an opportunity for the University to further prioritise holistic wellbeing provision, ensuring students are supported to thrive both academically and personally.

Overall Experience

Overall, how satisfied are you with your University experience? (n=1,964)



Overall, **93.25%** of respondents reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their university experience. This high level of satisfaction reflects positive perceptions across key areas including teaching and learning, academic support, belonging, employability, and student voice.

Within **SE1** and **SE2**, high levels of agreement regarding intellectual challenge (**90.07%**), the use of diverse teaching methods and the relevance of course content contribute positively to the overall academic experience. However, lower agreement regarding personalised learning (**58.40%**) and the quality (**69.41%**) and timeliness (**69.63%**) of feedback suggests that improvements in these areas could further strengthen student satisfaction.

Indicators relating to **SE5** and **SE6** also support positive perceptions of the learning environment. Most students report feeling part of a course community (**70.95%**) and view academic advising as a useful source of support (**73.51%**). Additionally, strong satisfaction with digital and learning resources, including IT services and learning platforms, indicates that the University's infrastructure effectively supports student learning.

Within **SE7**, students report feeling valued by teaching staff (**80.79%**), although fewer believe they can influence institutional decision-making (**54.49%**), highlighting an opportunity to strengthen mechanisms for student voice.

Across SO indicators, most students report strong development of transferable skills and believe their degree will benefit their future (**92.45%**). However, confidence in securing employment or further study remains lower (**60.30%**), suggesting that employability integration within courses could be strengthened.

LEAP:

Manchester 2035 Strategy Alignment

This year, Educate MCR contributes directly to the University's Manchester 2035 Strategy by providing a student-led perspective on its progress towards the five institutional "Leaps." Relevant TEF indicators were aligned with each Leap to highlight how UG students perceive UoM's progress towards the aim and where there are opportunities for further development.

Leap 1 & Leap 5:

Flexible, Personalised and Digitally Enabled Learning / Digital Inside and Out

The ambition to deliver flexible and digitally enabled learning is reflected in student responses. Just over half of respondents (**58.40%**) feel that their teaching is personalised to their learning needs, suggesting there remains further opportunity to enhance student-centred and personalised approaches. In contrast, **89.87%** agree that a variety of teaching methods are used, indicating that flexibility in learning is moving in a positive direction.

Digitally enabled learning is a clear institutional strength. Most students report that IT services (**89.58%**) and library resources (**84.97%**) effectively support their learning, and the successful implementation of Canvas has been widely welcomed by students. However, confidence in using generative AI tools is lower (**63.51%**), suggesting a need to further develop students' digital capabilities, particularly in navigating emerging technologies responsibly and effectively.

Variation in satisfaction with other digital systems, including SEAtS (**63.88%**) and Wi-Fi services (**72.15%**), indicates that the overall digital user experience remains a key factor in delivering this Leap. Ensuring consistency, reliability, and confidence across all digital platforms will be important in fully realising the ambition of flexible and digitally enabled learning.

Leap 2: Research Excellence to Impact

Manchester's commitment to research is recognised by students; however, there is an opportunity to strengthen perceptions of individual contribution and impact. While **74.94%** of students feel part of a community that supports impactful academic work, only **62.22%** believe their own research has real-world impact.

This suggests that although students value the University's wider research culture, they are less consistently able to see how their own academic work connects to real-world applications. Enhancing opportunities for students to engage in applied research and clearly demonstrating the impact of student work could help strengthen this link.

Leap 3: A Powerhouse of Innovation

Students generally perceive Manchester as an innovative environment, with **82.33%** of UG respondents agreeing that innovation is valued. Positive development of analytical and adaptability skills suggests that courses are effectively building capabilities aligned with an innovative culture. However, leadership development remains comparatively lower (**68.00%**), indicating an opportunity to further strengthen students' ability to take initiative, influence outcomes, and apply leadership skills within their academic experience.

Leap 4: The University to Partner With

This Leap focuses on fostering collaboration to ensure students feel connected to the University's research and wider societal impact. Findings are generally positive, with **88.49%** of students feeling connected to a wider community of excellence and impact, **70.95%** reporting a sense of community on their course, and **80.79%** feeling that their views are valued by teaching staff. These results reflect strong levels of academic belonging and align with Manchester's commitment to translating knowledge into public impact.

However, qualitative feedback highlights a need for stronger integration and interaction across the student experience. Students called for more course-based social activities, inclusive events, and interactive teaching approaches. They also highlighted the need for clearer academic guidance and skills development, particularly around academic writing and research skills.

Feedback in response to the question *"What is one thing the University or Union should do to help create a better University and Research experience for you?"*, highlights four key themes:

Connectedness and Community

Students want stronger social and academic connections through course-based events, group work, mentoring, and peer networks, particularly for mature, international, and commuter students.

Research and Career Preparation

Students want clearer routes into research opportunities and stronger links between academic content, real-world impact, and employability.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Priorities include improved access to support, greater awareness of services, and more proactive wellbeing provision, alongside manageable workloads and assessment spacing.

Digital and Physical Environment

Reliable digital systems (IT, Wi-Fi, SEAtS) and improved study spaces are key priorities, alongside more accessible facilities and clearer digital guidance.

Key Takeaways:

The data from Educate MCR 2025/26 continues to reflect a student experience with strong levels of satisfaction in the academic experience, alongside a clear demand for further improvement in teaching, assessment, and support.

While there have been improvements since 2024/25, several key issues remain consistent, particularly around assessment clarity and feedback, academic advising, and the integration of employability within courses. These insights build on previous findings and highlight priority areas for continued collaboration between UMSU and the UoM.

Personalised and Inclusive Learning

Students report some improvement in teaching being tailored to their learning needs. However, many still do not experience their learning as personalised. There is a continued call for more inclusive and varied teaching approaches, alongside accessible resources that better support different learning styles. Ensuring teaching is consistently adaptable to diverse student needs remains a key priority.

Assessment Clarity and Feedback

Assessment remains a key area for development. While there has been progress in the timeliness of feedback, a large proportion of students still report delays that limit their ability to apply feedback to future work. Students also highlight a lack of clarity in assessment instructions. Many are unsure of what is expected to achieve high grades. There is a clear need for more guidance, including access to model answers and examples of high-quality work.

Employability and Real-World Application

Despite positive perceptions of careers support, student confidence in progressing to employment or further study has declined. Students report that employability is not consistently embedded within the curriculum and would benefit from more structured opportunities to develop skills and experience. Extracurricular opportunities, such as committee roles and Students' Union positions, are recognised as valuable for building confidence and transferable skills, highlighting the need for more equitable access to these experiences within academic programmes.

Academic Advising

Academic advising shows limited improvement, with many students still not perceiving it as consistently reliable or accessible. There is also a lack of clarity around what support is available and how to engage with it. Improving consistency across faculties, alongside clearer communication of expectations and access routes, is essential to ensure all students can benefit fully from this support.

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University of Manchester Students' Union



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