



# NUS/HSBC Student Experience Full Report 2010/11



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## **1 Introduction & Methodology**

This report discusses the second wave of a programme of research carried out by the NUS and HSBC in May 2010 into students' expectations and experiences of university. The research looked at a variety of areas, including accommodation, finances, assessment, teaching and resources. As such, this report focuses on the 'teaching and learning' element of the research.

The research programme was a quantitative approach and consisted of an online survey, which ran between 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 31<sup>st</sup> of June 2010 and the respondents were selected via a Student Panel. A total of 3863 students took part in the survey, fulfilling a variety of interlocking quotas including year of study, institution type and gender. The final results are weighted to ensure representativeness.

## 2 Executive Summary

- Students go to university for a bright future; with the top three reasons cited as being: 'to gain qualifications' (45%), 'it is necessary to have a university degree for the career I want to follow' (36%) and 'improve my earning potential' (27%).
- Nearly two thirds of students surveyed (65%) chose their course because it matched their interests and almost half (48%) said that the chosen course leads to or is a requirement for their intended career.
- The net satisfaction with teaching and learning experience has not changed since 2009, as again the majority of students, 91%, rated the quality of their teaching and learning experience as either 'excellent' or 'good', with only 4% rating it as 'poor'. However, there has been a significant decrease in the percentage of students rating their experience as excellent, from 20% in 2009 to 16% in 2010.
- On average students said they receive 13.4 contact hours a week; this has slightly decreased from the average number of hours received in 2009 (14.0).
- The majority of students (78%) said their contact hours are appropriate; however a small percentage (15%) said they are not. These students typically receive fewer contact hours (10.9) than those who think their hours are appropriate (13.9).
- Students said they undertake an average of 15.0 hours of private study a week, slightly less than the average in 2009 (15.4). However, the amount of study required (as reported by the students) has actually increased, from 25.2 hours (2009) to 27.1 hours (2010).
- As in 2009, the main thing that students said would improve the quality of their experience is 'more contact time', through group or individual teaching sessions, or time with a personal tutor.

- As with 2009, there is still a significant difference between the percentage who would like to be at least somewhat involved in shaping their course (87%), and the percentage that feel they are (59%).
- However, when students who wanted to be involved were asked how they would like to be involved, the most popular choice was providing feedback about the course (76%), which the vast majority of students (94% of the total) said they have the opportunity to do currently. It may be that this discrepancy may arise from the fact that of the students who have the opportunity to provide feedback, only 45% believe it is acted upon.
- For many students, the feedback they receive about their coursework is not in their preferred format: 67% would find individual verbal feedback the most useful, however only 24% receive feedback in this way.
- Those who receive verbal feedback individually are much more likely to say their feedback provides clear suggestions on improving their performance (80%) compared to those who receive written grades (59%) or comments (63%).
- Overall, only 58% of students said their feedback makes it clear how to improve their performance, although only just over half (52%) also said it motivates them to study.
- There is a visible demand for more feedback on exams: 88% of the students who received either no feedback or written grades only would like more feedback.
- Overall, only one quarter (23%) of students said that assessments help them to highlight areas they need to focus on.
- ICT continues to remain a large part of the university experience: penetration of Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) has increased from 71% (2009) to 78% (2010). However, despite this increased usage, the percentage of students who feel that ICT usage has enhanced their studies has significantly decreased, from 46% (2009) to 42% (2010).

- In fact, when asked if they felt that more teaching should be delivered online, a vast majority of students (75%) disagreed.
- Nearly two thirds of students, 62%, thought their course included a sufficient range of criticism and thought from around the world, although 19% of students disagreed, with significant differences depending upon course year and institution type.
- The majority of students, 83%, said they felt that UK higher education is valuable and recognised. Whilst 70% also felt their degree was transferrable abroad; this was significantly higher amongst students from Russell Group or 1994 Group institutions as well as International students, 85% of who felt it was transferrable.
- There is a difference between how integrated international students feel with domestic students when compared with how integrated domestic students feel with international students. 60% of international students say that they feel integrated compared to only 28% of domestic students.
- 16% of domestic students said they either had, or planned to, study abroad as part of their course, compared to only a few per cent that actually end up travelling abroad. However there are differences in opinion depending on the institution type, as students attending a Russell Group or a 1994 institution were significantly more likely to say they were planning this.
- The main reasons given for studying abroad were to gain greater confidence and to improve employment prospects, while the main reason students gave for not studying abroad was that it was not relevant to their course.
- Just under one third of students, 32%, said they belonged to a religion, with 59% saying they could freely practise their religion at university; this was down from the previous year (62%), and a slight increase – though not significant – in hostility

received from other people at university because of their religious views up from 9% to 11%.

- If university fees were increased, students are significantly more likely to be deterred from going to university; if fees were raised to £5,000 per annum over half (53%) state it would have deterred them from going to university. This proportion rises to 70% at £7,000 per annum and 78% at £10,000 per annum.
- Approaching half (47%) of students said they also received funding from family or friends an increase from 39% in 2008. Whilst 62% of students rely on support from home; with 60% of those students that do saying that they couldn't afford university without this support. The proportion of students receiving a funding from family and friends varies significantly by parents' socio-economic status and students' year of study with this source of income accounting for more than half (51%) of total living costs for those in socio-economic group A whilst only 15% for those in group D.
- When asked what was closest to their view of tuition fees 59% believed that they should not be expected to pay fees. Of those that did believe they should contribute the average level of contribution was about a fifth (21%) of total costs of tuition, estimated to be about £8,000 a year i.e. around £1,680 (compared to the current £3,225).
- Two out of five (42%) of students believed that if they had to contribute more to the costs of their tuition it should come through the income tax system, compared to only a quarter (24%) saying similar level of fees but with higher interest rates.
- Two-thirds (65%) of students surveyed mentioned that they would have even higher expectations of experience at university should the rate of fees rise this year be above of that for inflation.

- Third year students are the most concerned about their level of debt, with 37% being concerned and 29% of them say their current levels of debt are higher than expected.
- Approaching two-thirds (63%) of students said they either had, or intended to have, some form of paid employment during the current academic year. Of this a third (32%) said that they had worked during the term time and a further half (46)% worked, or intended to work, during the holidays.
- Within this, there are some significant behavioral differences by year of study, as first year students are significantly less likely to have paid employment during term time than second year or third year students. First and second year students are more likely to work during university holidays than third year students.
- Over a third of students cite “basic costs exceed the amount that they can borrow” (36%) as the reason for working and a third (33%) “to pay for books and other equipment”, this is again influenced by year of study. Third year students are significantly more likely than first year students to say that they work to meet their basic living costs, which appears to indicate a higher level of financial stress among final year students.
- Of those students working during term-time, one fifth (20%) work 17 or more hours a week. Within this group, 34% say that it has impacted on their studies. This is higher among third year students where 41% say that it has impacted on their studies.
- Four out of five (80%) of students surveyed thought that the current economic climate “had made it more difficult to find work”. Of those who are working, three-quarters (77%) undertake unskilled or hourly paid employment.



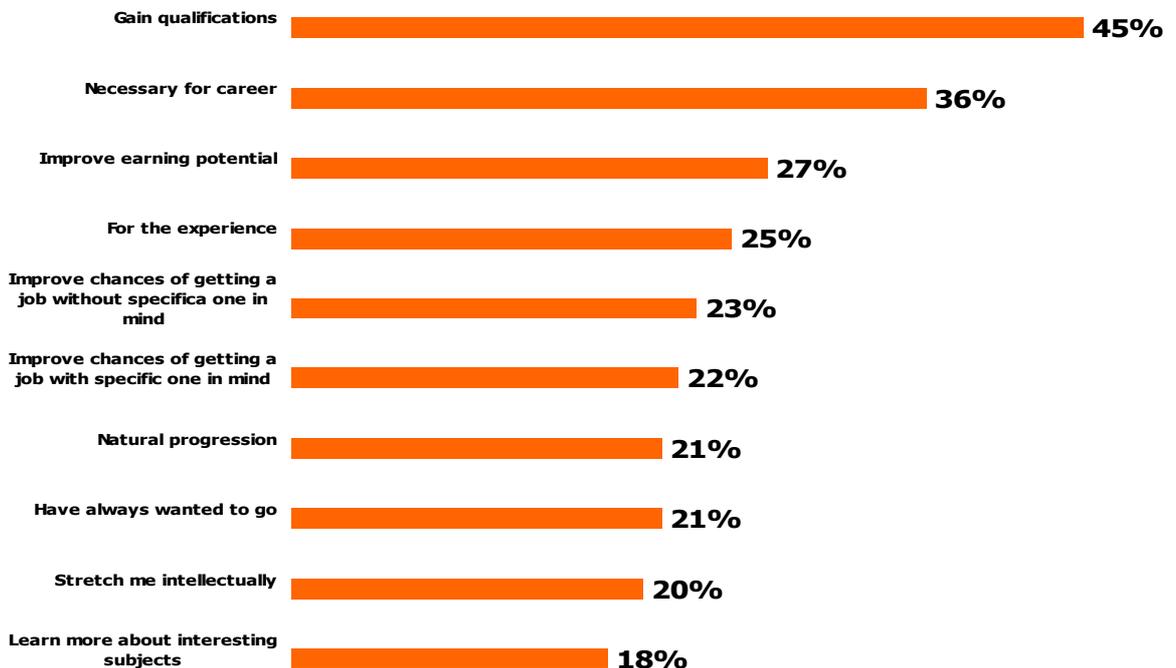
- The vast majority of final year students, 76%, mentioned that their plans after their current course of study were to get some form of paid employment. A significant minority, 33%, planned to do further studying. This has decreased from 38% last year. And finally almost a quarter (23%) of students surveyed also mentioned that they may travel after finishing university.
- Four out of five students surveyed (81%) said they were pleased they decided to go to university; though this has seen a significant fall from 85% in 2008.
- When asked which statement they were in more agreement with - 'I am a student engaged in a community of learning' or 'I am a customer and expect the service I paid for'; nearly half (48%) favoured the first statement and a further third (34%) favour the second.
- When given a fantasy pot of money to spend on areas at their university, overall students put the most into teaching (23%), followed by student finance (18%) and then learning facilities (17%); some differences to this by institution type were observed.

### 3 Choosing a University and a Course

When students were asked for the main reasons they wanted to go to university, the most popular responses were 'to gain qualifications' said by nearly half (45%), 'it is necessary to have a university degree for the career I want to follow' said by just over a third (36%) and 'to improve my earning potential' given by just over a quarter (27%) – see chart 1. These top three responses were almost mirrored by our quantitative work with school leavers, where nearly three quarters (71%) said 'to gain qualifications', over a third (39%) said 'to improve my earning potential' and finally two-fifths (42%) said 'to improve my chances of getting a job'.

#### Chart 1: Future Careers appear to drive reasons for going to university

*Q6. What were your main reasons for wanting to go to university?*



Base: All answering section 2 (1153)

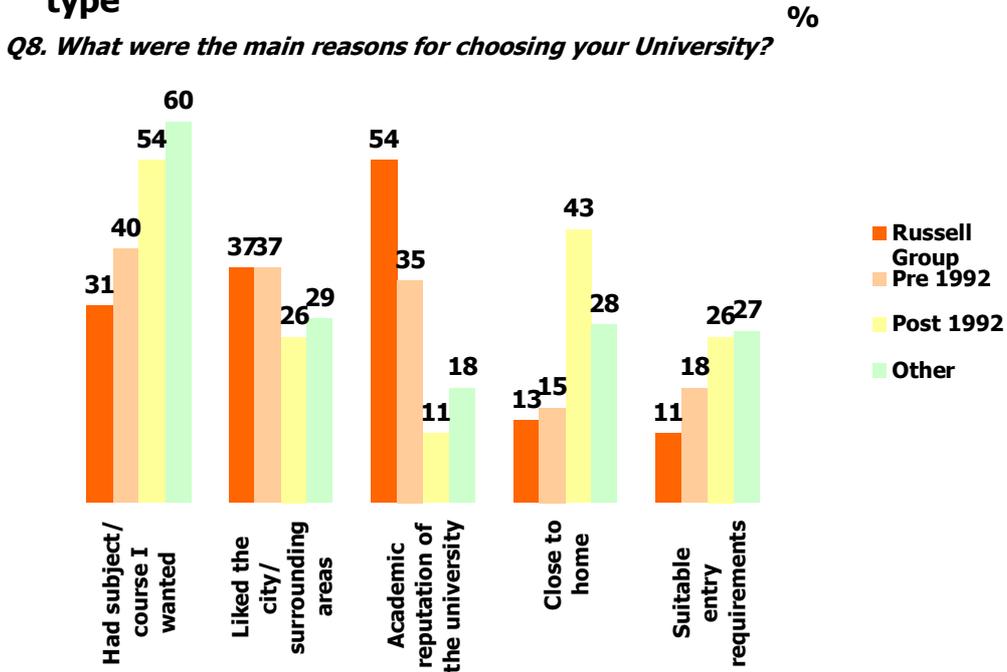
These findings are similar to those found in 2008, where once again students see university as a means to an end rather than an end itself, and a focus very much on what they want to achieve post-university.

These reasons do appear to be significantly affected by age and subject, with those aged 21 and older significantly more likely to have gone to university to improve their chances of getting a job without having a specific one in mind. Similarly with subject area, those studying biological sciences, or history and philosophical studies significantly more likely to go to university to learn more about interesting subjects – 32% and 34% respectively, as opposed to only 18% overall.

When students were asked what were the main reasons for choosing their course; nearly two thirds (65%) said 'course content matched my interests', nearly half (48%) also said 'course leads to/is a requirement for my intended career'. This was significantly affected by age as with reasons for wanting to go to university, where significantly more students aged 21 and older gave this reason, where it rose to nearly two thirds (66%).

Reasons for choosing their university remained fairly similar to 2008 with nearly half (48%) saying they chose the university because it had the subject or course they wanted. Geographical location of the university was seen as important to students with a third (32%) saying they liked the city/ surrounding areas and a quarter (26%) saying it was close to home, a further quarter (27%) also stated the academic reputation of the university as a reason for choosing a university, though this was significantly higher amongst those in social class group A. In contrast to this significantly more students from social class C2 stated it being close to home was a main reason for choosing the university. Reasons for choosing university was also significantly affected by institution type – see chart 2 – with those attending Russell group and Pre-1992 institutions stating the academic reputation of the university as main reasons for choosing it.

## Chart 2: Reasons for choosing university influenced by institution type



Base: Russell group (243); Pre 1992 (267); Post 1992 (337); Other institutions (307)

Students appear to get information about going to university from a wide range of sources. The most popular being UCAS (78%), followed by university publications, such as prospectuses (64%). Teachers, lecturers or trainers was given as a source of information for nearly half (45%), and friends or siblings for nearly a third (32%). However parents/grandparents/guardians are much lower down the list with less than a fifth (16%) going to them for information.

There are some significant differences by social class, notably that significantly more from social class A go to parents/grandparents/guardian for information (25% as opposed to 16% overall); though this is perhaps down to their parents having attended university, whereas those in lower social classes are perhaps less likely to have gone to university. Similarly, those in higher social classes (A, B and C1) are more likely to get information from newspaper or online league tables than those in C2 or D grades, where these students are perhaps looking for the prestige of a university.

## 4 Quality of the teaching and learning experience

A high percentage (91%) of the students interviewed described the quality of their teaching and learning experience as either good or excellent. This is similar to the percentage seen in 2009.

However, it appears that the percentage of students rating the quality as excellent has significantly decreased, from 20% in 2009 to 16% in 2010.

This is predominantly due to a decrease in the proportion of first years rating the quality as excellent. In 2009, first year students were the most likely to rate their experience as excellent, (14% in 2010 cf. 28% in 2009).

### Chart 3: First year students are significantly less likely to rate their experience as 'excellent', compared to 2009

*Q14. How would you rate the quality of the teaching and learning experience?*



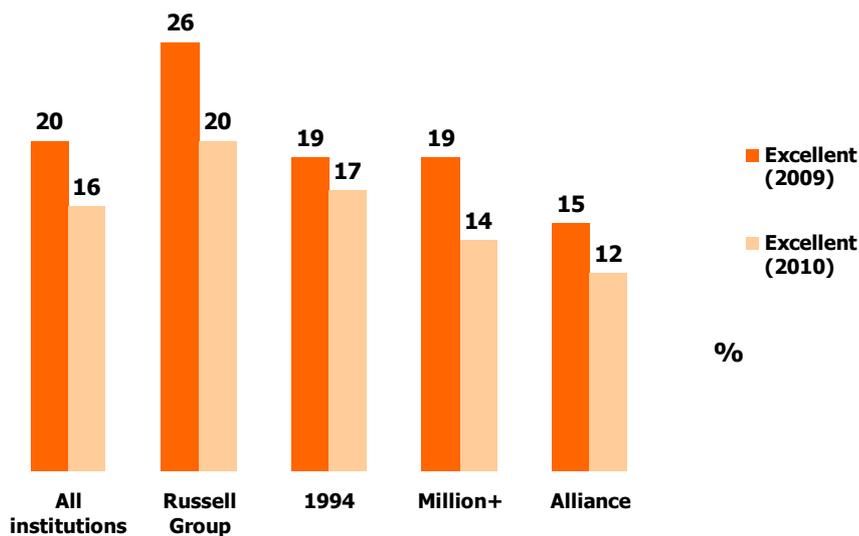
Base: First year 2009 (328); First year 2010 (1182)

Overall satisfaction with teaching is high across all institutions; however, students attending either Russell Group or 1994 Group institutions continue to be significantly more likely to rate the quality of their teaching as either good or excellent.

There have however been significant decreases in the percentages of Russell Group and Million+ students rating their experience as excellent. This percentage fell from 26% (2009) to 20% (2010) for Russell Group students and from 19% (2009) to 14% (2010) for Million+ students.

### Chart 4: Russell Group and Million+ students are much less likely to rate their experience 'excellent' than in 2009

*Q14. How would you rate the quality of the teaching and learning experience?*



Base: All Institutions 2009 (940); All Institutions 2010 (3181); Russell Group 2009 (244); Russell Group 2010 (800); 1994 2009 (141); 1994 2010 (505); Million+ 2009 (156); Million+ 2010 (517); Alliance 2009 (210); Alliance 2010 (694)

The fact that students were less likely to rate their experience as excellent, but just as likely to rate it positively overall, suggests that although students' basic expectations are being met, they are less likely to be delighted with their experience or to have had their expectations exceeded.

This could potentially arise either from university standards decreasing, or from students' expectations increasing, both of which are feasible possibilities. Increased funding pressures may have led universities to cut back on certain elements of teaching, while high media



coverage of the state of the graduate job market and potential future fee increases may have led students to pay greater attention to the value for money of their degrees.

This year, students were asked whether they think all higher education teaching staff should hold a teaching qualification; over two thirds (69%) agreed that they should. This suggests that students feel the quality of their teaching could be improved by their teaching staff holding qualifications: however, it is difficult to say whether this is due to a genuine dissatisfaction with the teaching ability of their staff, or just due to a belief in the importance of qualifications generally.

When looking at these results by institution type, we see that Russell Group students were significantly less likely to think teaching staff should hold teaching qualifications (62%) than students from 1994 Group (72%), Million+ (77%) and Alliance (71%) institutions.

## 5 Contact & Private Study Hours

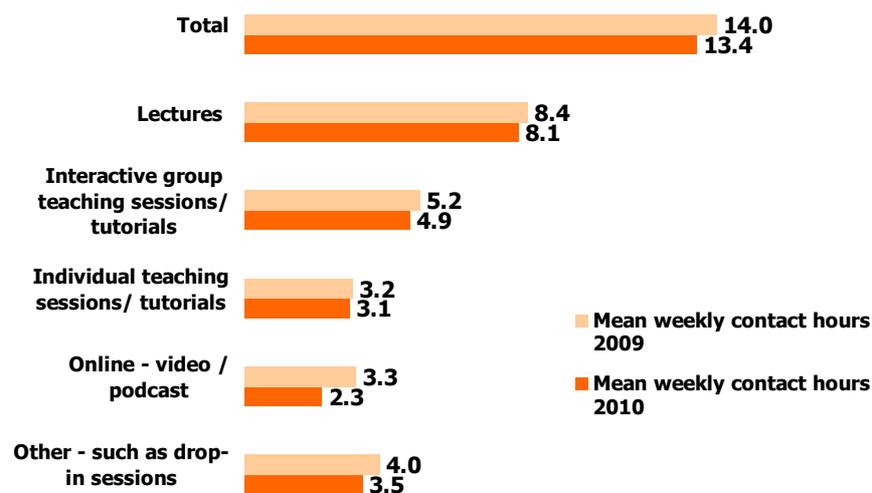
This year, students reported that they receive on average 13.4 contact hours a week, slightly fewer than reported in 2009 (14.0).

Lectures continue to contribute the greatest number of contact hours, with the average student who receiving lectures attending 8.1 hours' worth per week on average. Interactive group teaching sessions/tutorials are the second biggest contributors, providing students who receive them with 4.9 hours of contact time.

Overall, the number of contact hours has fallen slightly for all of the different forms of contact. For online teaching (videos/podcasts) the fall has been particularly noticeable, from 3.3 hours to 2.3 hours per week. Given that the last few years have seen an increase in usage of ICT for studies overall, this is perhaps a surprising finding.

### Chart 5: Average weekly contact hours have decreased to 13.4 per week

*Q15. On average, how many contact hours a week do you have at this stage of your course, and how are these split into:*



Base: All receiving teaching 2009 (939); All receiving teaching 2010 (3179)  
 \* Mean calculated excluding students who said none

In addition to the weekly contact hours displayed above, 28% of students receive contact hours with their personal tutor each term. These students received 2.0 hours on average.

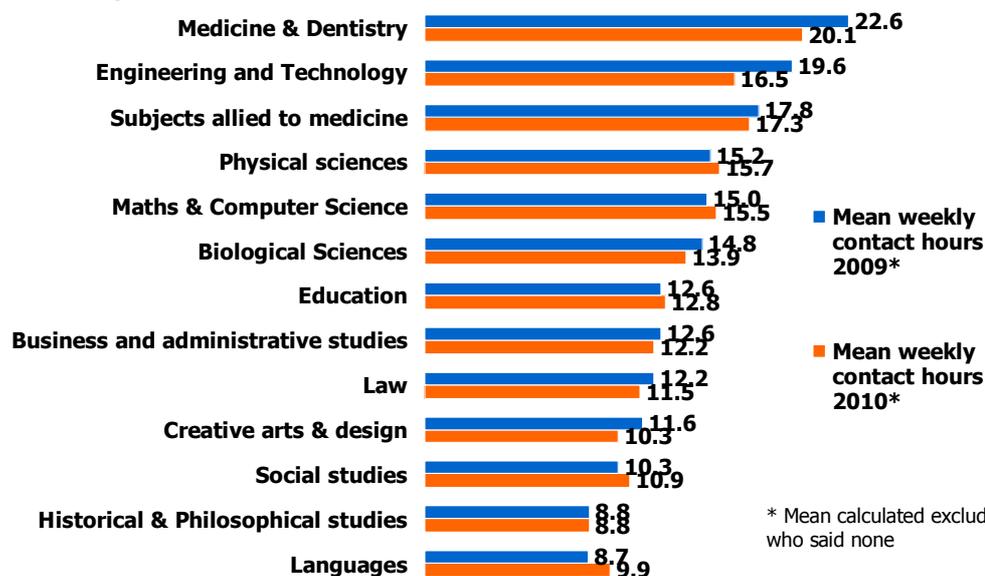
The number of contact hours students receive continues to be affected by subject area, institution type and year of study, with some subjects/institutions having experienced a larger decrease in contact time than others.

Students studying a science subject, medicine, engineering and technology or maths and computer studies reported receiving the highest number of contact hours, as reported in 2009. However, these students have also seen decreases in contact time that are proportionately larger than for those seen for other subjects. In particular, engineering and technology and medicine and dentistry students have had their contact hours decreased by 3.1 hours (-16%) and 2.5 hours (-11%) respectively.

The decrease in student contact hours has been similarly inconsistent across institution types, and has particularly affected students attending Russell Group institutions, whose contact hours fell from 15.6 to 14.7 hours (-6%). Alliance students and Million+ students also saw their contact hours decrease, from 13.1 to 12.6 (-4%) and from 12.6 to 12.4 (-2%)

### Chart 6: Students studying medicine and engineering/technology received the most weekly contact hours, but have experienced the largest decreases in contact hours since 2009

**Q15. On average, how many contact hours a week do you have at this stage of your course, and how are these split into:**



\* Mean calculated excluding students who said none

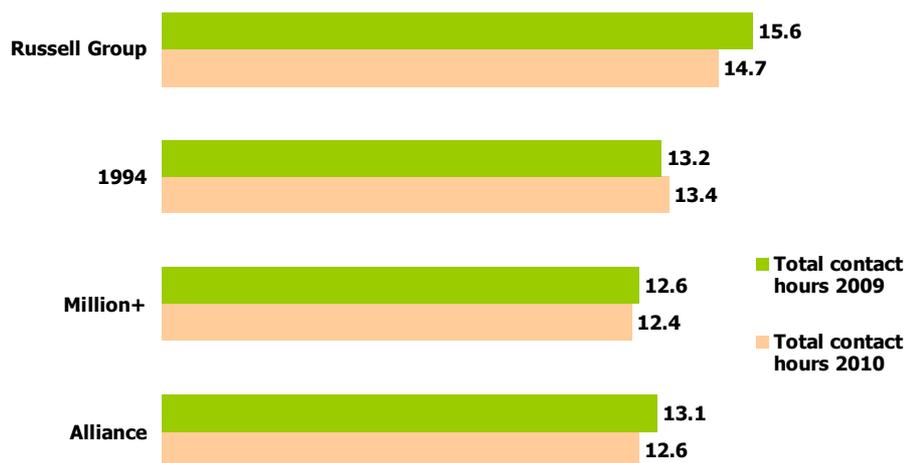
Base: Medicine 2009 (66), Medicine 2010 (170); Engineering/Technology 2009 (74), Engineering/Technology 2010 (232); Subjects allied to medicine 2009 (71), Subjects allied to medicine 2010 (197); Physical sciences 2009 (54), Physical sciences 2010 (202); Maths/Computer Science 2009 (80); Maths/Computer Science 2010 (260); Biological Sciences 2009 (80); Biological Sciences 2010 (280); Education 2009 (40); Education 2010 (152); Business/administrative studies 2009 (78); Business/administrative studies 2010 (248); Law 2009 (36); Law 2010 (119); Creative arts/design 2009 (81); Creative arts/design 2010 (317); Social studies 2009 (82); Social studies 2010 (287); Historical/Philosophical studies 2009 (47); Historical/Philosophical studies 2010 (182); Languages 2009 (55); Languages 2010 (195)

respectively. Conversely, students attending 1994 Group institutions saw their number of contact hours increase slightly, from 13.2 to 13.4 (+1%).

However, despite experiencing the greatest decrease in contact hours, Russell Group students still receive significantly more contact hours than Mission + and Alliance students, and also more (+2.4 hours) than 1994 Group students.

### Chart 7: Russell Group students receive the most contact hours, but have experienced the largest decrease in hours since 2009

*Q15. On average, how many contact hours a week do you have at this stage of your course, and how are these split into:*



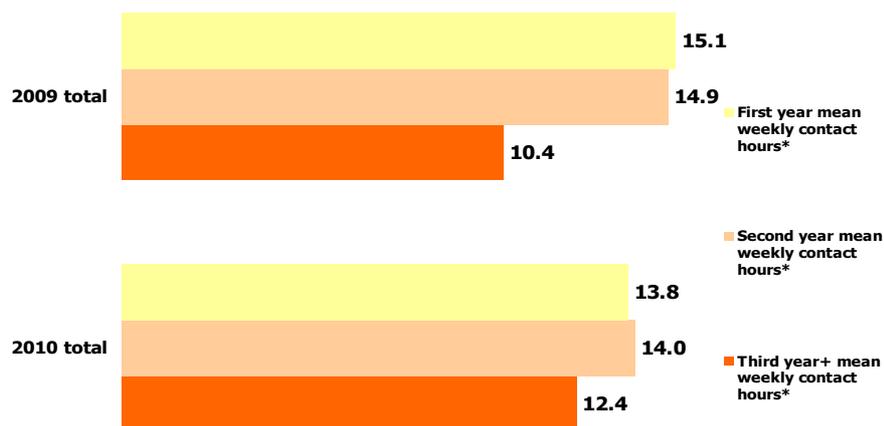
Base: All receiving teaching: Russell Group 2009 (244); Russell Group 2010 (799); 1994 2009 (141); 1994 2010 (504); Million + 2009 (156); Million+ 2010 (517); Alliance 2009 (209); Alliance 2010 (694)

\* Mean calculated excluding students who said none

The amount of contact hours students receive at each year of study varies. In 2009 it was seen that final year students received significantly fewer hours (10.4) than other years. However, in 2010 it appears that the contact hours received is more consistent across the year groups, with first, second and third year+ students receiving 13.8, 14.0 and 12.4 hours respectively. Presumably for third year+ this is due to more independent work such as final year projects or dissertations.

### Chart 8: Final year students receive slightly fewer contact hours when compared to students in other years

*Q15. On average, how many contact hours a week do you have at this stage of your course, and how are these split into:*



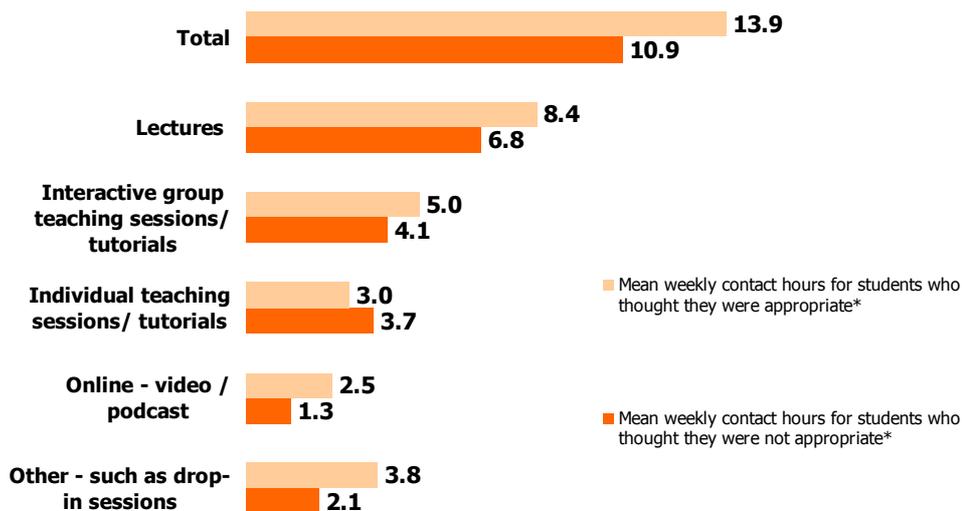
Base: All students receiving teaching: First year 2009 (328); First year 2010 (1181); Other year 2009 (404); Second year 2010 (1092); Final year 2009 (207); 3<sup>rd</sup> year+ 2010 (906)  
 \* Mean calculated excluding students who said none

When students were asked if they thought the amount of contact time they received was appropriate, 78% thought it was; however, 15% said it was not.

Students dissatisfied with their contact time typically received significantly fewer contact hours than those who were satisfied. Chart 7 shows that students who thought their contact hours were not appropriate received fewer contact hours for virtually all forms of contact, with the exception of individual teaching sessions/tutorials.

## Chart 9: Weekly contact hours are significantly lower among students who don't think they receive enough

**Q15. On average, how many contact hours a week do you have at this stage of your course, and how are these split into:**



Base: All who think contact hours are appropriate (2450); All who think they are not appropriate (497)

Students from Million+ and Alliance institutions were significantly more likely to say their contact hours were not appropriate, which is perhaps unsurprising given that they also reported fewer contact hours than Russell Group and 1994 Group students.

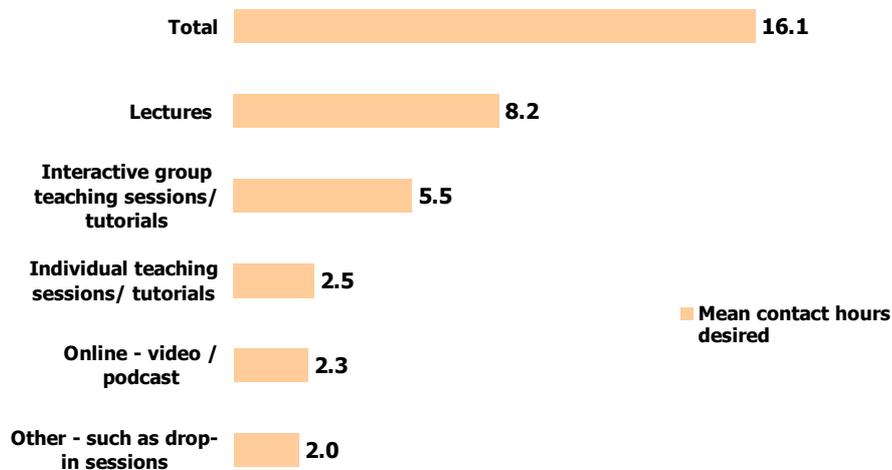
First year students were the most likely to agree that their contact hours were appropriate (83%), which is perhaps surprising given that their contact hours have decreased the most significantly since 2009, although of course first years will have no prior experience of university teaching to compare their current contact hours with.

When students who thought their hours were not appropriate were asked how many contact hours they would like, the answer was an average of 16.1 hours per week, an increase from 2009, when 15.4 hours was seen as ideal. Given that the average number of contact hours received by students has decreased from 14.0 to 13.4, this suggests that the discrepancy between the teaching hours that students would like and the teaching hours they actually

receive has increased between 2009 and 2010. This could potentially be a contributing factor to the decreased percentage of students rating their teaching experience as excellent.

### Chart 10: Students who didn't think their contact hours were appropriate, on average, said they would like 16.1 contact hours a week

**Q17. How many contact hours a week, and of what type, would you like at this stage of your course?**



Base: All who think contact hours are not appropriate (497)  
 \* Mean calculated excluding students who said none

Students report that the average number of private study hours that their course requires has increased, from 25.2 to 27.1, suggesting an increased dependence on self-study for courses. However, the number of hours of private study that students undertake per week has actually fallen slightly, from 15.4 to 15.0. The shortfall in students' private study hours has therefore increased between 2009 and 2010: from 9.8 hours difference to 12.1 hours difference.

The amount of private study undertaken continues to vary between year groups, with first, second and final year students undertaking 11.9, 13.4 and 18.8 hours of private study respectively.

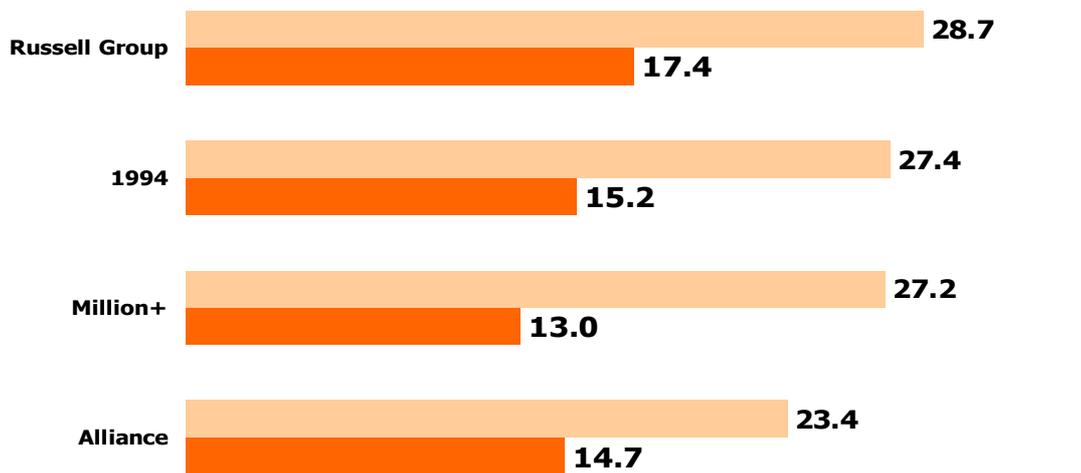
Russell Group students are expected to undertake the greatest amount of private study (28.7 hours), though this is not too dissimilar to students at 1994 Group, and Million+ institutions, who are expected to undertake 27.4, and 27.2 hours per week respectively. Although for Alliance institutions it was reported to be even lower at around 23.4 hours per week.

However, the number of hours that Russell Group students actually undertake (17.4) is significantly larger than the number completed by students from 1994 Group, Million+ and Alliance institutions (15.2, 13.0 and 14.7 hours respectively).

**Chart 11: Though the amount of private study required is fairly constant by institution, Russell Group students undertake more private study than students from other institutions**

*Q18. In addition to contact hours, how many hours per week do you spend on private study?*

*Q19. How many hours of private study does your course require?*



Base: All who receive teaching: Russell Group (799); 1994 (504); Million+ (517); Alliance (694)

\* Mean calculated excluding students who said none

■ Private study expected

■ Private study conducted

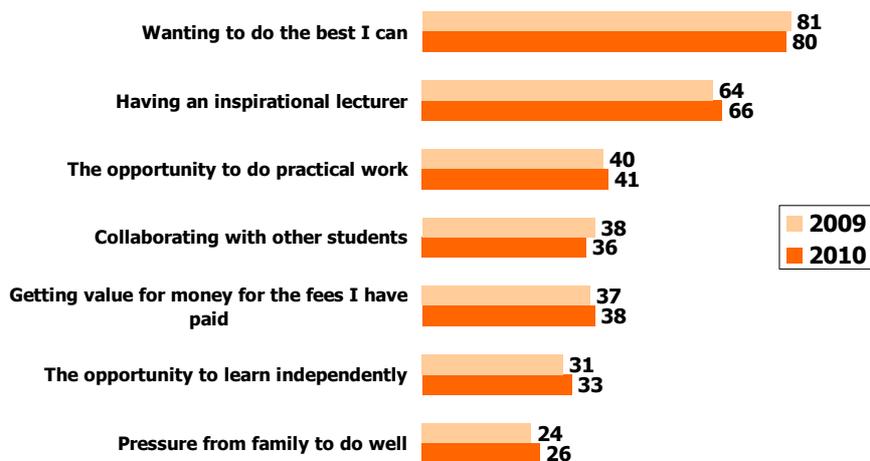
## 6 Nature of contact hours

As seen in 2009, over half of the contact hours that students receive (51%) are with lecturers. Students attending either Russell Group or 1994 Group institutions continue to be significantly more likely to receive contact time with professors.

When students were asked what motivated them to learn, the majority chose aspirational reasons: 'wanting to do the best I can' (80%) and 'having an inspirational lecturer' (66%) were the most popular choices.

### Chart 12: 'Wanting to do the best I can' continues to remain the main motivation to learn

*Q22. Which, if any, of the following motivates you to learn? Please select all that apply.*



Base: All answering Section 3: 2009 (940); 2010 (3181)

Given the intensive press coverage of university fee increases and the competitive graduate job market, it is perhaps surprising that the percentage of students saying they are motivated by getting value for money for the fees they have paid (38%) has only marginally increased since 2009 (37%). Although given the recent development, we may see this being a bigger motivation in years to come. An exception to this is seen for students attending Million+ institutions, who were much more likely to say they were motivated by obtaining value for money (50%) than they were in 2009 (35%), suggesting that these students are paying more attention to the value for money delivered by their courses.

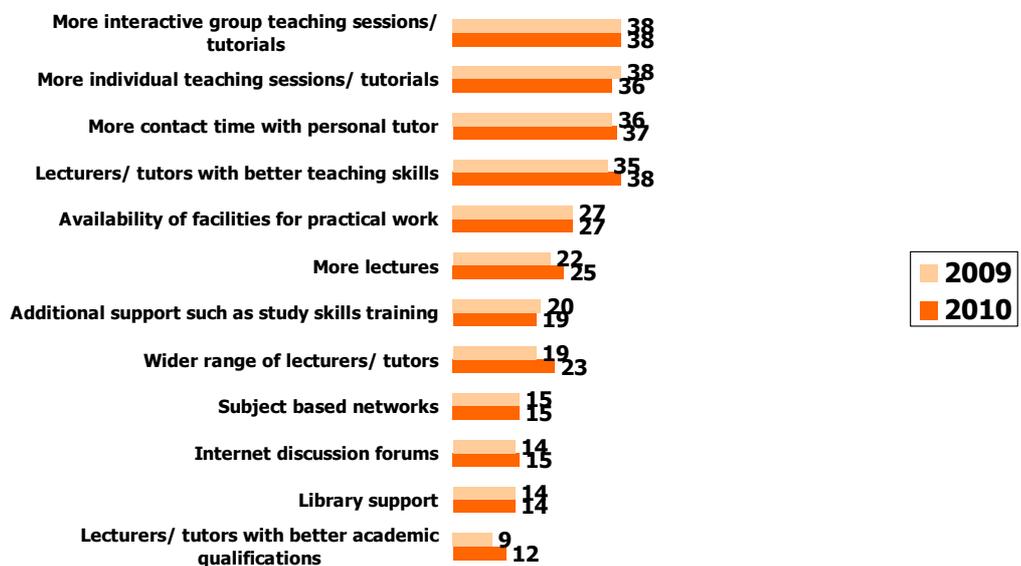
Conversely, Russell Group students were less likely to say that they are motivated by 'getting value for money for the fees paid' (32%) than they were in 2009 (34%), and were significantly less likely to say this than students from 1994 Group, Million+ or Alliance institutions. This suggests that for these students', obtaining value for money is less important than fulfilling their academic potential. Once again, it is clear that the difference in profile of students attending different university groups has an impact on their needs and motivations.

Students from Mission + and Alliance institutions were also significantly more likely to be motivated by the opportunity to do practical work' (50% and 45% respectively), while second and final year students were more likely to be motivated by an inspirational lecturer (66% and 72% respectively).

As the first wave of research in 2009 revealed, the main thing that students said would improve the quality of the experience is more contact time, through group or individual teaching sessions, or time with a personal tutor. There are no significant differences between the percentage of students who chose particular options between 2009 and 2010, with the exception of 'a wider range of lecturers/tutors', which was chosen by 23% of students this

### Chart 13: Students continue to say increased contact time would improve the quality of their teaching and learning experience

**Q24. What would improve the quality of the teaching and learning experiences at your university?**



year, compared to 19% in 2009.

The percentage of students who said 'availability of facilities for practical work' would improve their experience was significantly higher for Million + (33%) and Alliance (30%) students, compared to Russell Group (16%) and 1994 Group students (20%), where the facilities are better in comparison.

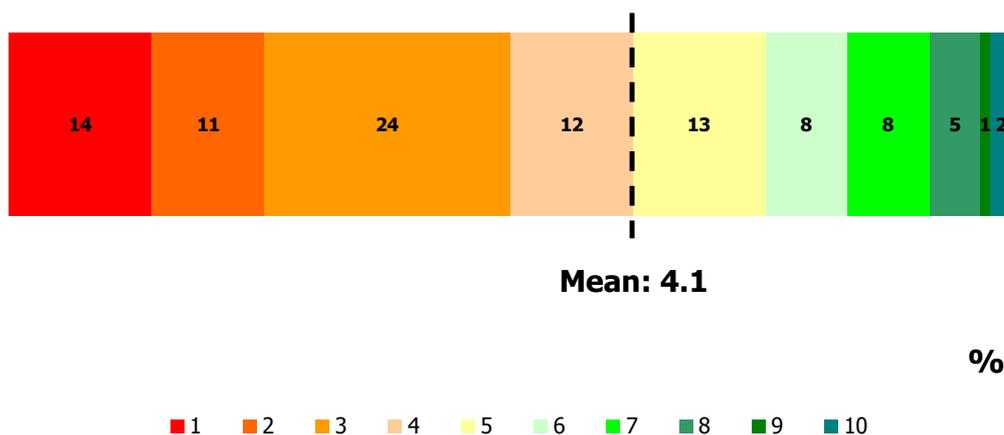
Students were also asked whether they thought universities should offer lots of different courses from one another in order to increase diversity, or whether they should all offer the same courses and curriculum so that results can be compared. On a scale of 1-10, the average score was 4.1 for this question: which suggests that students appear divided over the issue.

### Chart 14: Students opinions are balanced on whether universities should offer lots of different courses to increase diversity.

**Q24N. Please indicate on the scale below which statement you are more in agreement with.**

**1 = I believe that universities should offer lots of different courses from one another in order to increase diversity**

**10 = All universities should offer the same courses and curriculum so that results can be compared**



Base: All answering Section 3 (3181)

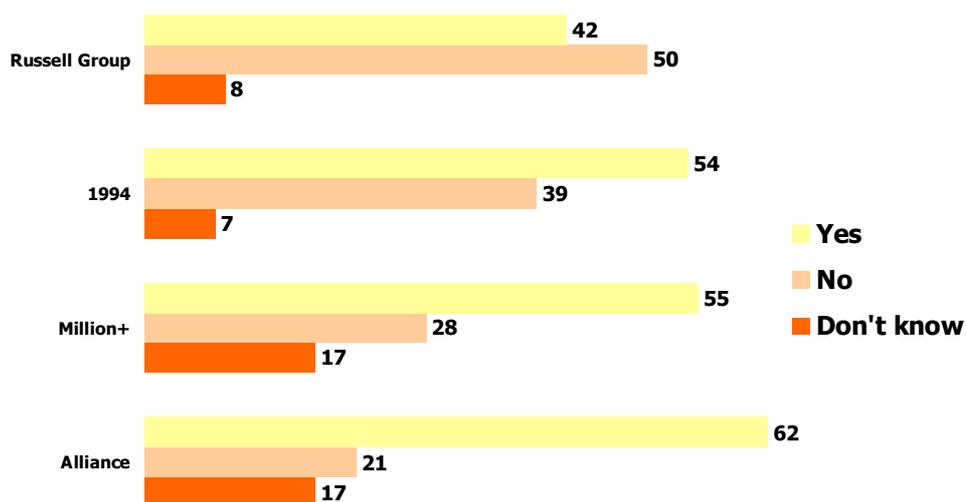
Average scores for this question did not vary greatly by year group, institution type or subject area.

Almost two-thirds of students (62%) are aware that the quality of their institution is assured by an external agency; a third (38%) is unaware. However, of the students who are aware, only half (49%) are happy with the arrangement, while 47% do not know what this means in practice. 4% of students are unhappy with this arrangement.

Students were also asked whether they thought a 2:1 from their university was broadly comparable with a 2:1 from any other university. Just over half (55%) agreed with this statement, while a third (32%) disagreed. Russell Group students were significantly more likely to disagree with this statement (50%), compared to students from 1994 Group (39%), Million+ (28%) or Alliance (21%) institutions. This belief may partly be due to the greater number of hours of private study Russell Group students undertake (17.1 hours), compared to 1994 Group, Million+ and Alliance students, as mentioned in section 4, where they see more work needing to be involved in order to achieve the classification they get.

### Chart 15: Students from Russell Group institutions are less likely to think a 2:1 from their university is broadly comparable to one from any other university

*Q25N. Do you think a 2:1 from your university is broadly comparable with a 2:1 from any other university?*



Base: Russell Group (800); 1994 (505); Million+ (517); Alliance (694)

Finally, students were asked about their living arrangements during term time. A quarter of students (24%) said they live on a university campus. These students were predominantly

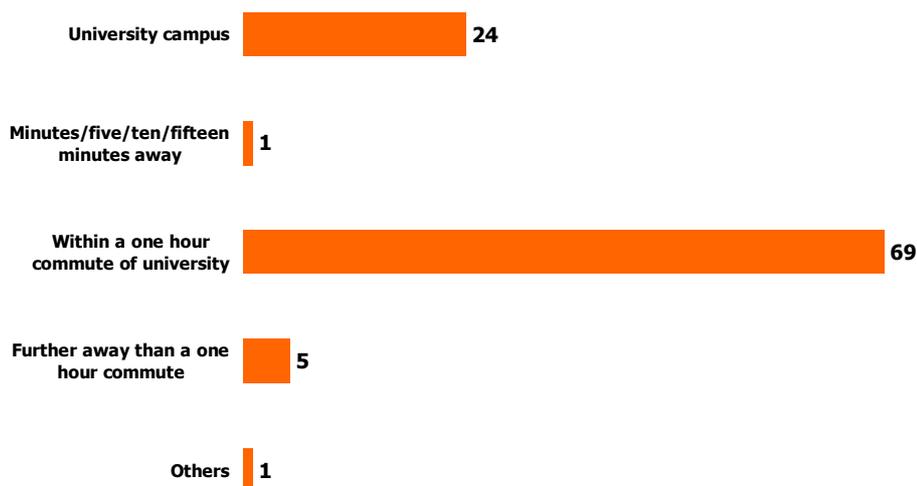
first years, 49% of whom reported living on campus, compared to 16% of second years and 12% of third years. Students from Russell Group and 1994 Group institutions are also significantly more likely to live on campus (31% and 38% respectively) than Million+ or Alliance students (14% and 22% respectively).

A small percentage (1%) reported living minutes away from university; however the majority of students (69%) said they live within a one-hour commute.

5% of students live more than an hour away, and this is significantly more likely to be the case for Asian students (15%) than for white students (4%). Only 5 students said they were living at home. Although the results from our school leavers survey indicate that with continued pressure on students with regards to funding of education, a fifth of the new breed of students would turn towards living at home with parents over the coming years during their course.

### Chart 16: The vast majority of students live within a one hour commute of university

*Q26N. And which of the following best describes your living arrangements during term time?*



Base: All answering Section 3 (3181)

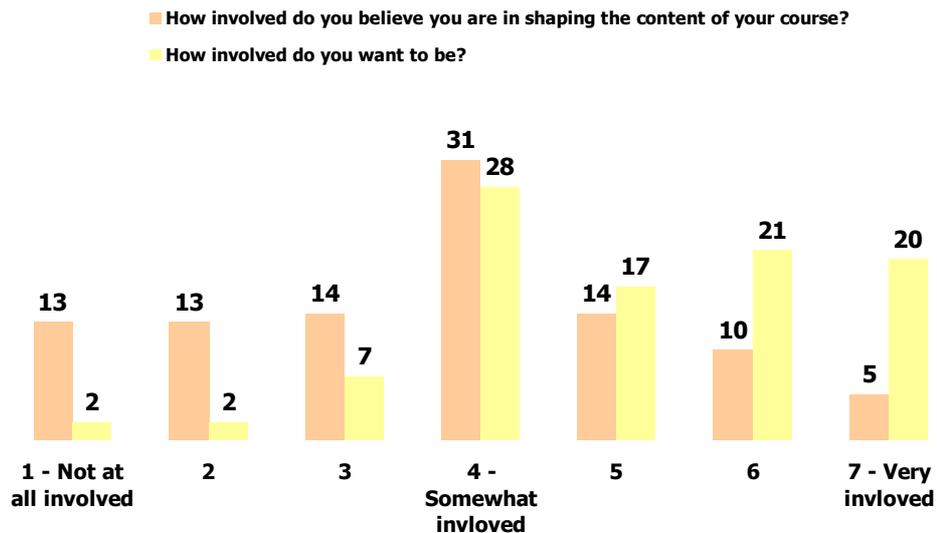
## 7 Personalisation

As found in 2009, there is a significant difference between how involved students believe they are in shaping their course, and how involved they would like to be. Nine out of ten (87%) students said they would like to be involved in shaping the content of their course; however, only three in five (59%) of students said that they are actually involved.

### Chart 17: There is still a disconnect between how involved students feel they are in shaping their course and how involved they want to be

*Q26. How involved do you believe you are in shaping the content, curriculum or design of your course?*

*Q27. How involved do you want to be in shaping the content, curriculum or design of your course?*



Base: All answering Section 4 (3179)

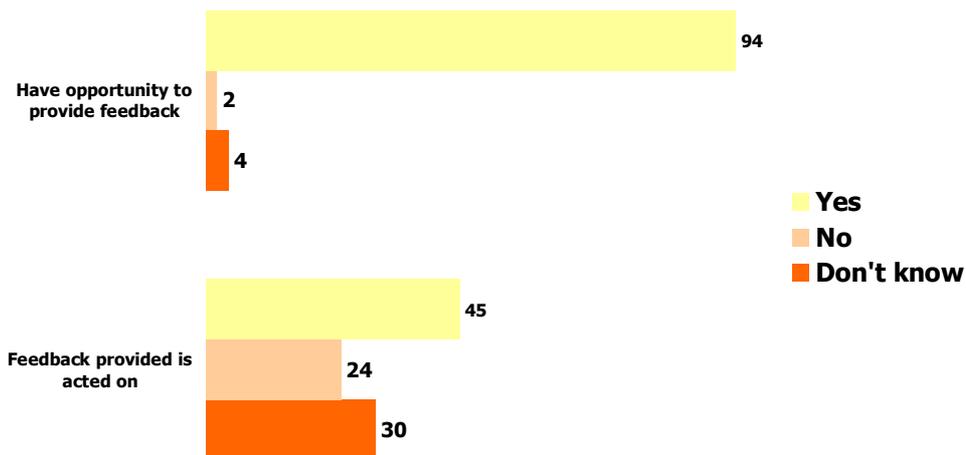
Students wanting greater involvement were asked how they would like to be involved; three quarters (76%) said their preferred option would be providing feedback on the course design. However, when subsequently asked if they had the opportunity to provide feedback about their course, almost all (94%) students said they did have this option.

The fact that a majority (94%) of students have the opportunity to provide feedback about their course, yet only three fifths (59%) feel they are involved with shaping it, suggests either that students are not taking up the opportunity to provide feedback (despite it being available), or that they do not feel that their feedback has had an effect in shaping the course. The latter argument is given weight by the fact that only 45% of those able to provide feedback said they believe their feedback was acted upon.

### Chart 18: The vast majority have the opportunity to provide feedback about their course, but less than half believe this is acted upon

**Q29. Do you have the opportunity to provide feedback to your University/faculty/department about your course?**

**Q30. Do you believe that the feedback you provide is acted upon?**



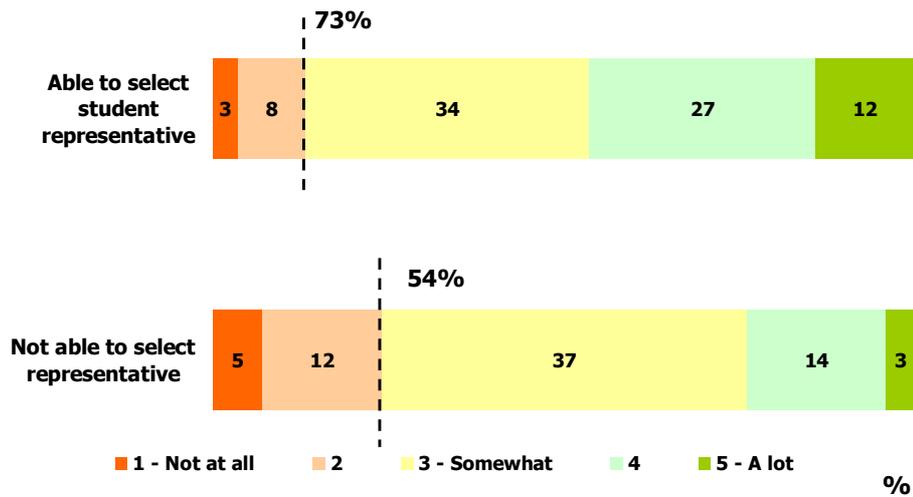
Base: All answering Section 4 (3179); All with opportunity to provide feedback (2977)

The vast majority of students, 88%, said their course has a student representative. Students from Russell Group (90%) and 1994 Group institutions (94%) are more likely to have a course representative (94%) than students from Million+ (85%) or Alliance institutions (86%).

Of the students who have a representative, 70% said they were able to select them. Those who chose their representative were significantly more likely to believe that their views are listened to (73%) than those who were not able to (54%).

**Chart 19: Students able to select their student representative are still more likely to say their views are listened to**

*Q33. To what extent are their views listened to?*



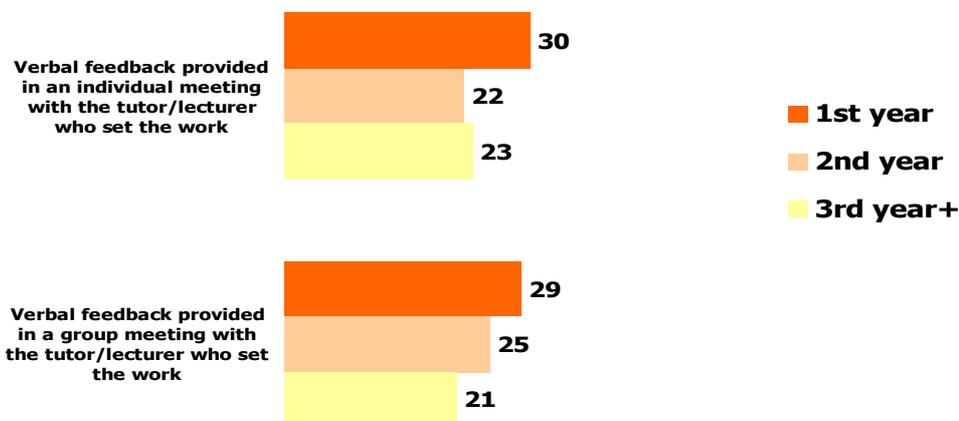
Base: Those able to choose representative (1998); Those not able to choose representative (598)

## 8 Coursework & Exam Feedback

The most frequently used forms of feedback continue to be written grades and comments, which are received by 88% and 81% respectively. Verbal feedback is also common, with 24% of students receiving it in an individual meeting, and 24% receiving it in a group meeting. Only 1% of students said they do not receive any feedback on their coursework.

### Chart 20: First years are more likely to receive verbal feedback in both group and individual meetings than the other years are

Q34. How do you receive feedback on your coursework?



Base: First year (1148); Second year (1108); Third year+ (895)

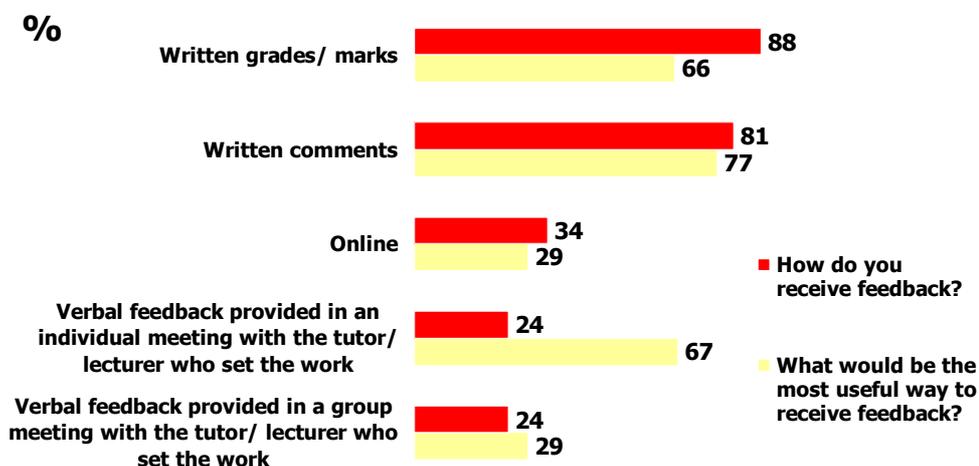
When asked what the most useful way(s) to receive feedback on coursework would be, the most popular response was written comments (77%).

Verbal feedback was also popular, with 67% saying that verbal feedback in an individual meeting would be useful. However, as seen above, only 24% of students actually receive feedback in this way.

### Chart 21: The percentage of students who would like individual verbal feedback is still much larger than the percentage which receives feedback that way

Q34. How do you receive feedback on your coursework?

Q36. What would be the most useful way for you to receive feedback on your coursework?

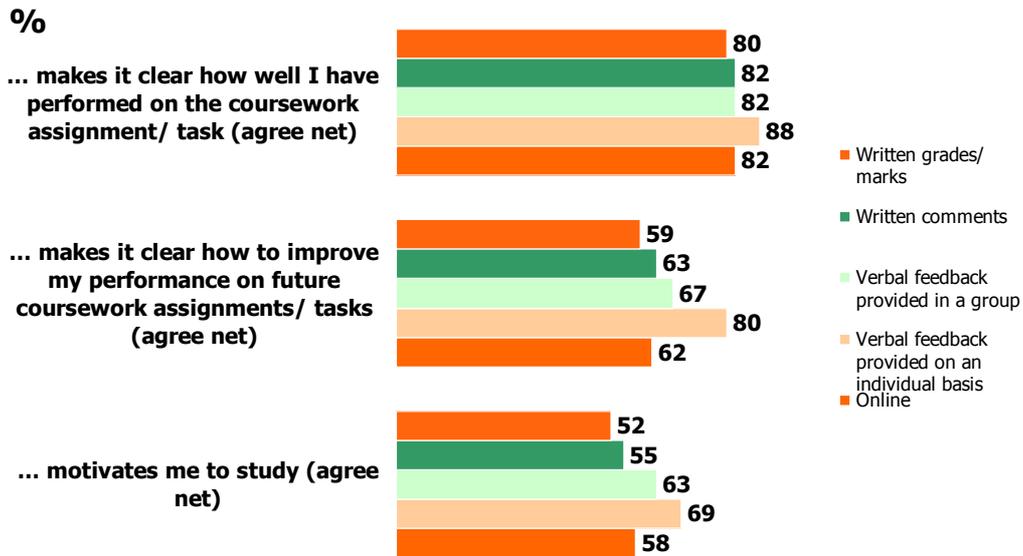


Base: All answering Section 5 (3151)

Of the students receiving individual verbal feedback, 80% said their feedback makes it clear how to improve their performance in future coursework/tasks. This is significantly more than the percentage of students who agreed with this statement when evaluating written grades/marks (59%), written comments (63%), verbal feedback in a group meeting (67%) or online feedback (62%).

## Chart 22: Students receiving individual verbal feedback were more likely to say their feedback makes it clear how to improve their future performance

**Q35. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about feedback you receive? The feedback I receive .....**

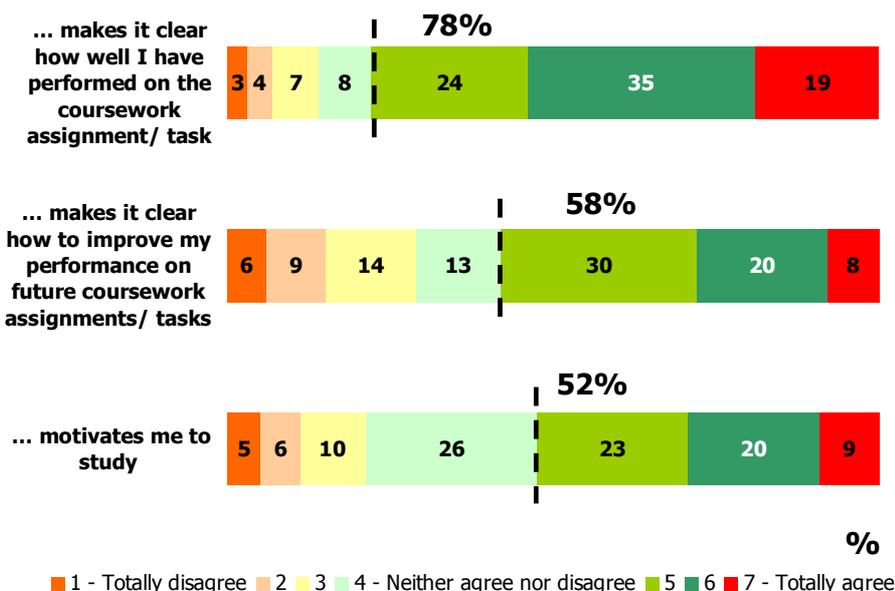


Base: All who receive verbal feedback in a group (786); All who receive verbal feedback on an individual basis (807); All who receive written comments (2594); All who receive written grades/ marks (2805); All who receive feedback online (1047)

Taking all of the feedback methods into account, only 58% of students overall said their feedback makes it clear how to improve their performance. Additionally, only 52% said it motivates them to study; however, a fifth (22%) of students disagreed that the feedback they receive makes it clear how well they have performed.

## Chart 23: Just over half (52%) of students said their feedback motivates them to study

Q35. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about feedback you receive? The feedback I receive .....



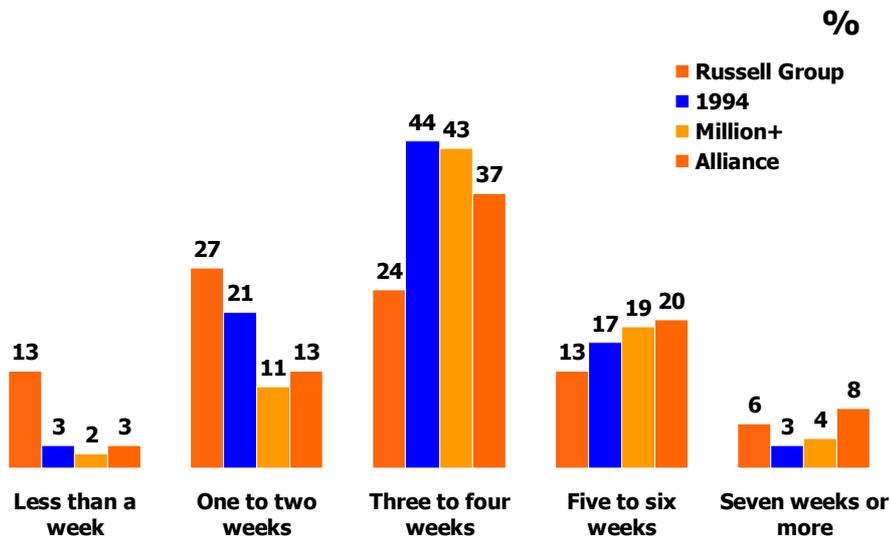
Base: All receiving feedback (3120)

These findings suggest that students continue to find their feedback limited. Those who receive verbal feedback appear more satisfied than average; however, the vast majority of students do not receive this type of feedback, despite showing an interest in receiving it. Increasing the availability of verbal feedback could therefore be a way of increasing students' satisfaction with their feedback, and potentially with their learning experience overall.

When asked how long it takes for them to receive feedback on their coursework, a quarter (23%) said they receive it within 2 weeks and a further third (34%) said they receive it within four weeks. Although a quarter (24%) reported having to wait five weeks or more for feedback. The findings were more favourable for Russell Group students, who were significantly more likely to receive their feedback within a week (13%) or two weeks (40%).

### Chart 24: Russell Group students are much more likely to receive coursework feedback within two weeks

Q37. How long – on average – does it take for you to receive feedback on your coursework?

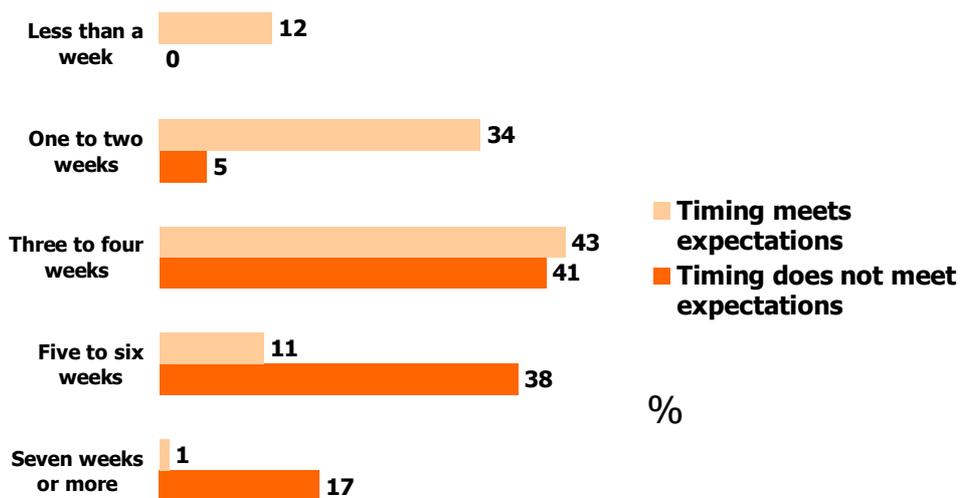


Base: Russell Group (806); 1994 (498); Million+ (504); Alliance (685)

Perceptions of these feedback times varied: 55% of students said the timing of their feedback meets their expectations, while 39% said it does not.

### Chart 25: Students satisfied with their feedback time are much more likely to receive feedback within 2 weeks than students who are dissatisfied

*Q37. How long – on average – does it take for you to receive feedback on your coursework?*



Base: Those whose timing does not meet expectations (1453); Those whose timing does not meet expectations (1001)

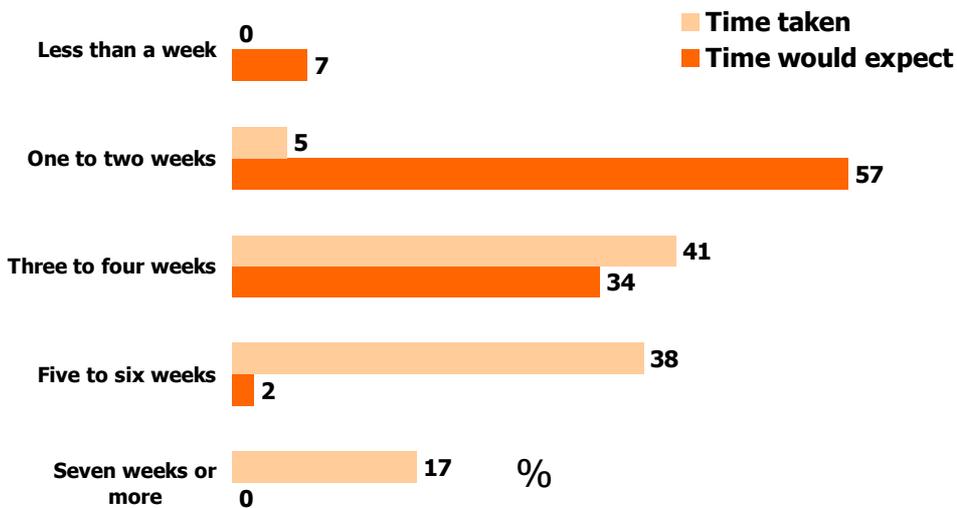
As demonstrated by Chart 23, students who are satisfied with the time taken to receive feedback are significantly more likely to receive feedback within 2 weeks (46%) than students who are dissatisfied (5%).

Students dissatisfied with the timing of their coursework feedback were asked how long they would reasonably expect it to take to receive feedback. Of these students, 64% expect feedback within two weeks, while 98% expect it within four weeks. This is substantially more than the percentage who currently receive feedback within two (5%) or four (46%) weeks.

**Chart 26: The majority of students dissatisfied with their coursework feedback timings expect to receive feedback within two weeks, but only 5% receive it in this time**

*Q37. How long – on average – does it take for you to receive feedback on your coursework?*

*Q39. How long would you reasonably expect it to take to receive feedback on your coursework?*

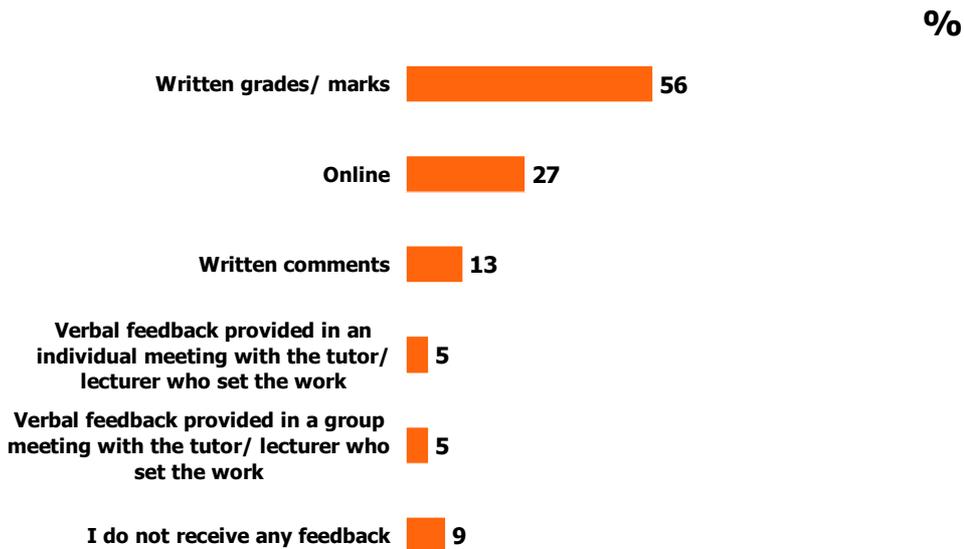


Base: Those whose timing does not meet expectations (1001)

When asked what feedback they receive on exams, just over half of the students surveyed said they receive written grades (56%), while 27% receive online feedback and 13% receive written comments. 5% of students reported receiving verbal feedback individually, while the same percentage receive feedback in a group. Interestingly, 9% said they do not receive any feedback.

## Chart 27: Written grades/marks are the most commonly used methods for exam feedback

Q40. What feedback do you receive on exams?



Base: All answering Section 5 (3151)

These results demonstrate that the feedback students receive on exams is less detailed than the feedback they receive on coursework. However, it seems that students would like more detailed feedback: 88% of the students who receive either no feedback or written grades only said they would like more feedback.

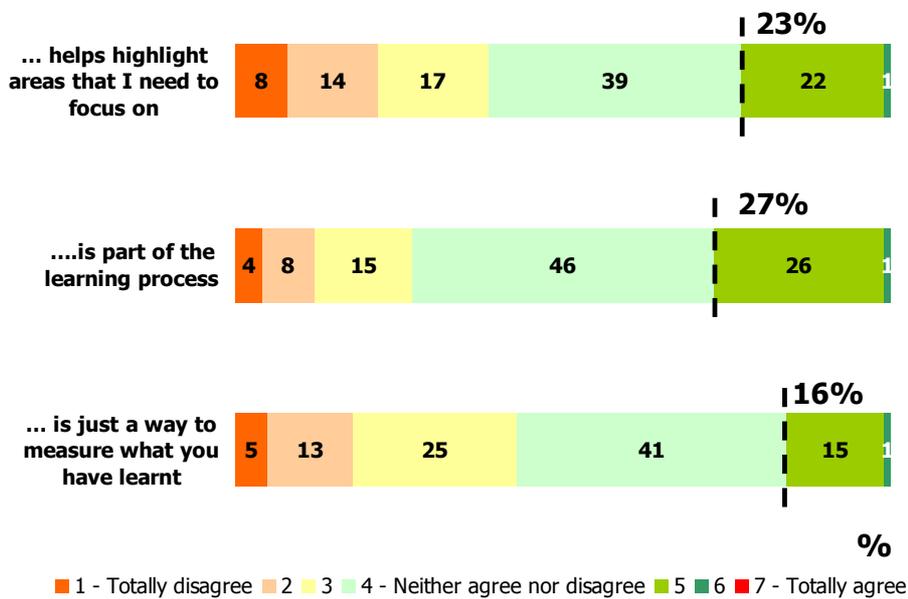
Of the students who receive more than written grades on their exams, just over half (52%) said this feedback is useful, however a large proportion (38%) said it isn't. Satisfaction with the feedback given has therefore decreased slightly since 2009, when 56% said it was useful.

The negative perceptions of the feedback received are echoed in students' attitudes about assessments in general. Only a quarter (23%) of students agree that the assessments they undertake help to highlight areas they need to focus on. Additionally, only 27% of students

think that assessments are part of the learning process. 16% of students think assessments are 'just a way to measure what you have learnt'.

### Chart 28: Less than a quarter of the students said assessments help to highlight areas they need to focus on

Q43. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about assessment being part of the learning process? The assessment I receive .....



Base: All answering Section 5 (3151)

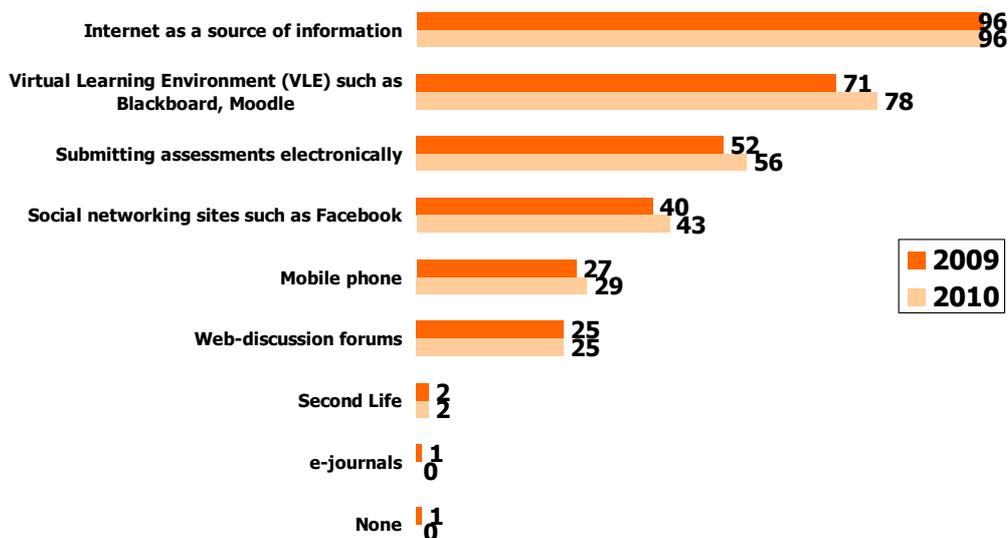
## 9 ICT Usage

ICT usage has continued to increase, to the point where only a handful of students surveyed (16 students) said they do not use any form of ICT for their studies. The internet remains the most widely used ICT facility, with 96% of students making use of it, and 71% of this group using it every day.

Certain facilities have particularly grown in usage between 2009 and 2010. It appears, 56% of students are now submitting assignments electronically, compared with 52% in 2009. Additionally, the percentage using a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) has increased significantly from 71% to 78%.

### Chart 29: Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) are used by a significantly larger percentage than used them in 2009

*Q47. Which of the following ICT (Information and Communication Technology) facilities do you use as part of your studies? Select all that apply*

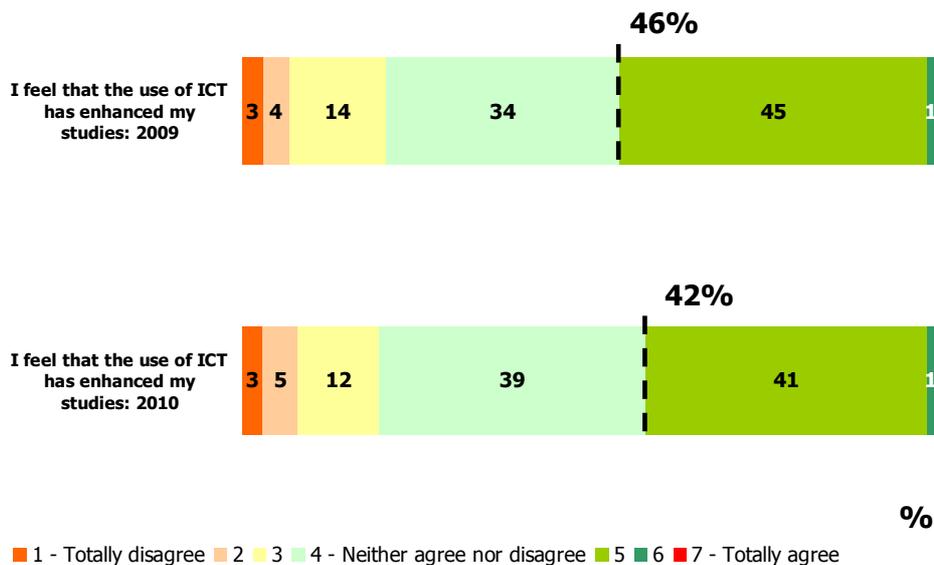


VLEs are also being used more frequently: 52% of the students using a VLE now use it daily, compared to 45% in 2009.

It is interesting to note, however, that despite the increase in ICT usage between 2009 and 2010, the percentage of students who feel that ICT usage has enhanced their experience of studying has actually decreased, from 46% in 2009 to 42% in 2010.

### Chart 30: Students are less likely to feel that ICT usage has enhanced their studies than they were in 2009

**Q50. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the information and communication technology at university?**

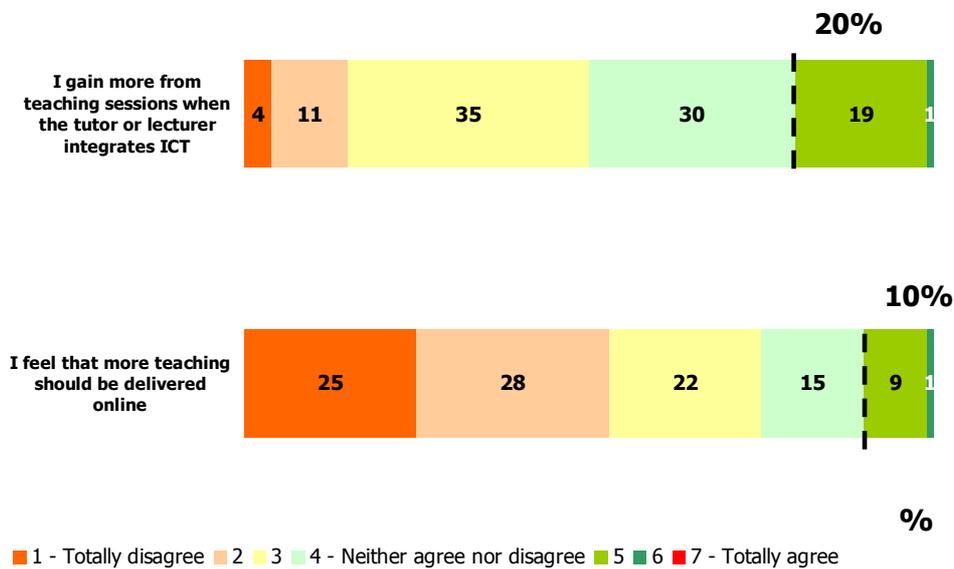


Base: All answering Section 5: 2009 (1003); 2010 (3186)

In fact, when asked whether they gain more from teaching sessions when the tutor or lecturer integrates ICT, half (50%) of the students disagreed, while only 21% agreed. Additionally, when asked if they felt that more teaching should be delivered online, the vast majority (75%) disagreed, and only a small minority (10%) agreed.

### Chart 31: Uncertainty over the benefits of ICT integration leads the vast majority of students to disagree that more teaching should be delivered online

**Q50. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the information and communication technology at university?**



Base: All answering Section 6 (3186)

Students from Russell Group and 1994 Group institutions were significantly more likely to disagree with the statement 'I gain more from teaching sessions when the tutor or lecturer integrates ICT' (53% and 56% respectively), compared to Million+ (40%) and Alliance (47%) students.

On the whole, these findings indicate that using IT for studies more frequently does not necessarily lead to an increase in student satisfaction. It also indicates that students do not always feel that integrating IT into studies is beneficial. As 75% of students believe that IT should not be further integrated into their studies, it perhaps suggests that the optimum IT

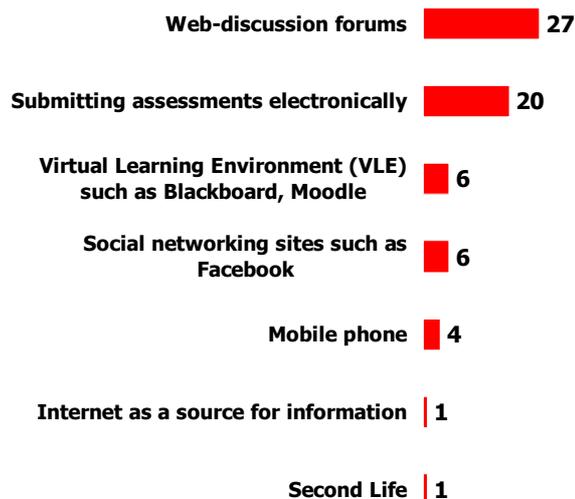
integration has already been reached (if not exceeded), and therefore that further IT integration may well decrease student satisfaction.

Students were also asked which facilities that they don't use at the moment should be more integrated into their studies, and the most popular facilities were web forums (27%) and submitting assignments electronically (20%) - see chart 32.

### **Chart 32: Of the facilities not used, web-discussion forums were seen to be the most useful facilities that could be integrated into studies**

*Q49. Which ICT do you think should be more integrated into your studies?*

%



Base: All answering Section 6 (3186)

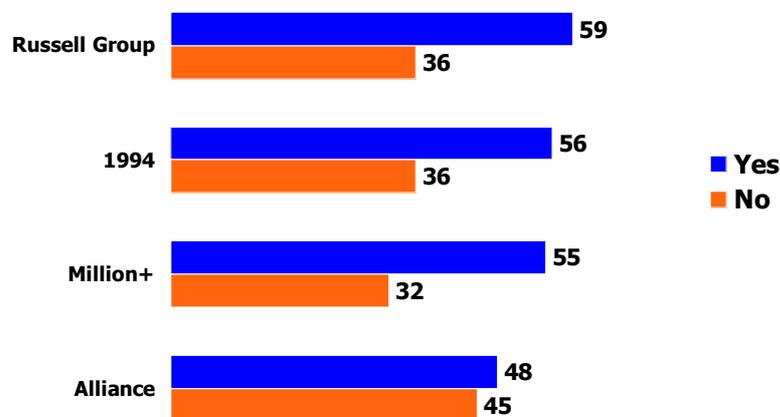
Students generally reported being well equipped with ICT facilities: 87% of students said that they can 'normally' or 'always' access a computer when they need to, and 84% said that the opening hours for their computer facilities are long enough.

However, students were less likely to have been offered ICT training, with only just over half (57%) of students saying they have been offered this. Students from Russell Group

institutions were significantly more likely (59%) to have been offered training than students from Alliance institutions (48%).

### Chart 33: Russell Group students are the most likely to have been offered ICT training

*Q51. Have you been offered ICT training while at university?*



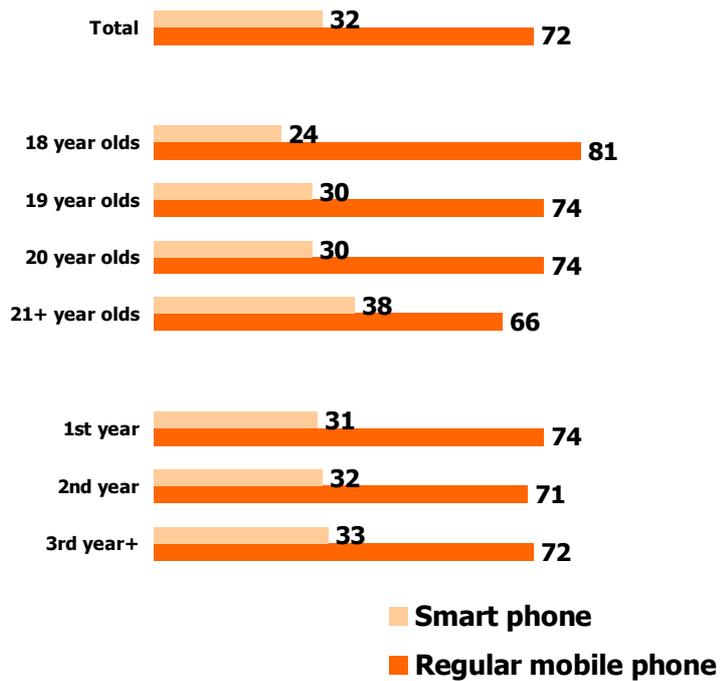
Base: Russell Group (819); 1994 (504); Million+ (502); Alliance (695)

This year, students were also asked about their mobile phone ownership: 72% of students said they own a regular mobile phone, and 32% own a smart phone. Only a handful of those surveyed (8 students) do not own a mobile phone.

Access to smart phones appears to vary by age, with 21+ year olds being significantly more likely to own a smart phone (38%), compared to 18, 19 and 20 year olds (24%, 30% and 30% respectively). Interestingly, a significant difference is not shown across the different year groups, which would have been expected to show the same trend as age group.

### Chart 34: The percentage of students with smart phones increases with age

*Q57N. Do you personally own any of the following:*



Base: All answering Section 6: Total (3186); 18 years (196); 19 years (654); 20 years (755); 21+ years (1581); First year (1184); Second year (1108); Third year+ (894)

Differences are also shown across ethnicities, with Asian students being significantly more likely to own a smart phone (45%) than white students (31%).

Finally, students from Alliance institutions were significantly more likely to own a smart phone (38%) than Russell Group students (30%).



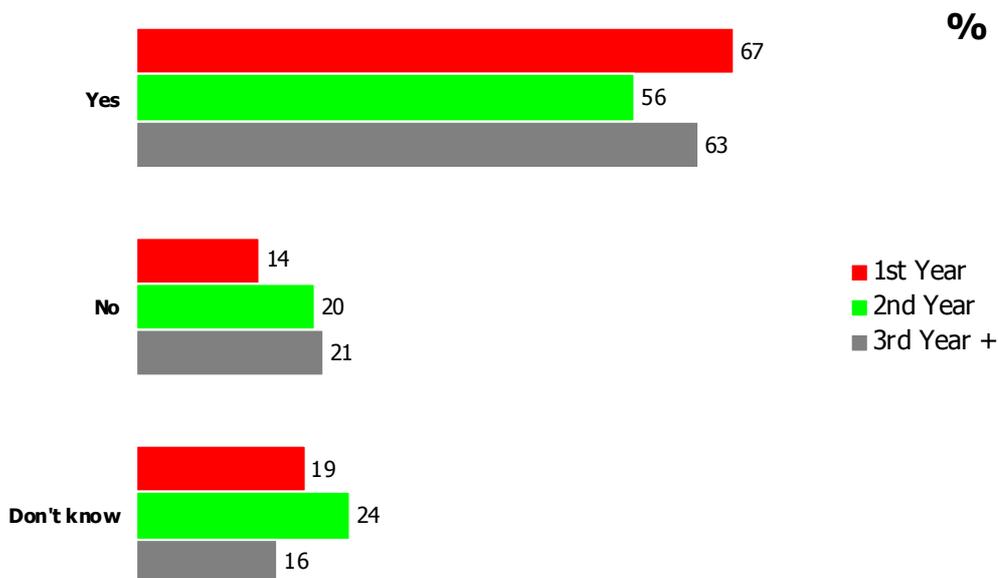
## 10 Internationalisation & International Students

### Internationalising the curriculum

Nearly two thirds of students, 62%, thought their course included a sufficient range of criticism and thought from around the world. Only 19% of students said they didn't think their course included a sufficient range of criticism from around the world. Interestingly, this is significantly affected by course year and institution type, as students attending either a Russell Group institution, or a Pre-1992 institution, are significantly more likely to say they thought their course included a sufficient range of criticism from around the world than those at a Post-1992 institution. Similarly, those in second year or further are significantly more likely to say they thought their course did not include a sufficient range of criticism – see chart 37.

**Chart 37: Students in either the second or third year plus feel significantly more that their course does not include sufficient criticism from around the globe.**

*Q59. Thinking about the content on your course, do you feel the curriculum includes a sufficient range of criticism and thought from around the globe?*

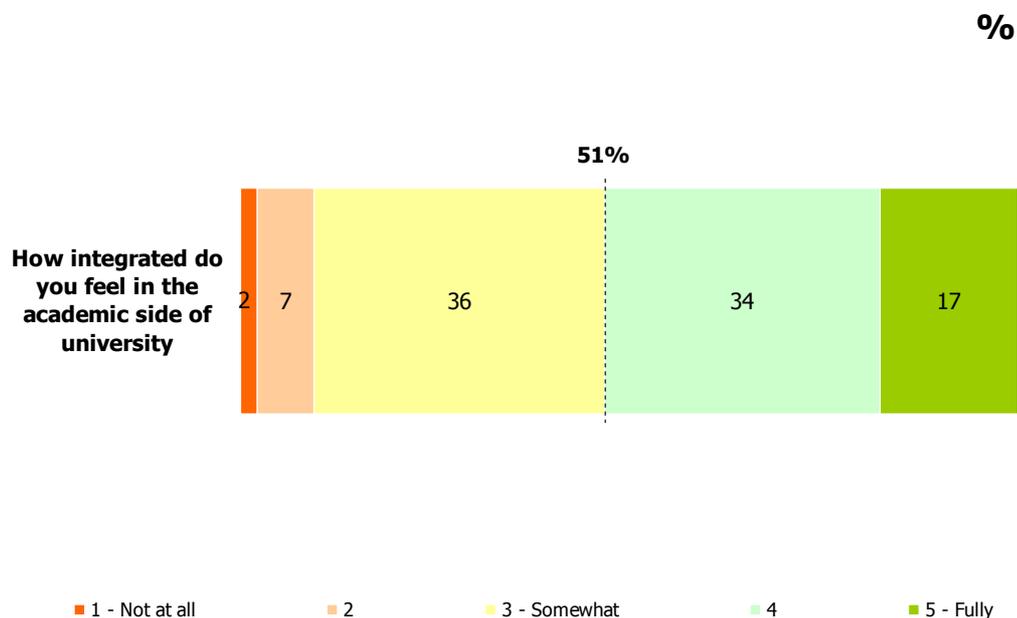


Base: 1<sup>st</sup> Year (911); 2<sup>nd</sup> Year (1076); 3<sup>rd</sup> Year+ (1263)

When students were asked how integrated they feel in the academic side of university, over half, 51%, said more than somewhat integrated – see chart 38. Whilst only 9% said they did not feel integrated in the academic side. It’s interesting when looking in a bit more depth, that this is significantly affected by social class; with those in social class E feeling significantly less integrated academically than those in higher social grades, ABC1C2. It appears also affected by course year, with significantly more first year students saying they feel full integrated than 2<sup>nd</sup> years or later. We also see differences between domestic and international students, with half (50%) of domestic students feeling integrated into the

**Chart 38: The majority of students said they feel at least somewhat integrated in the academic side of university**

*Q60. How integrated do you feel in the academic side of university?*



Base: All answering section 7 (3250)

academic side of university, rising to 60% of international students who feel integrated.

As with last year, when looked at by the type of institution there are significant differences.

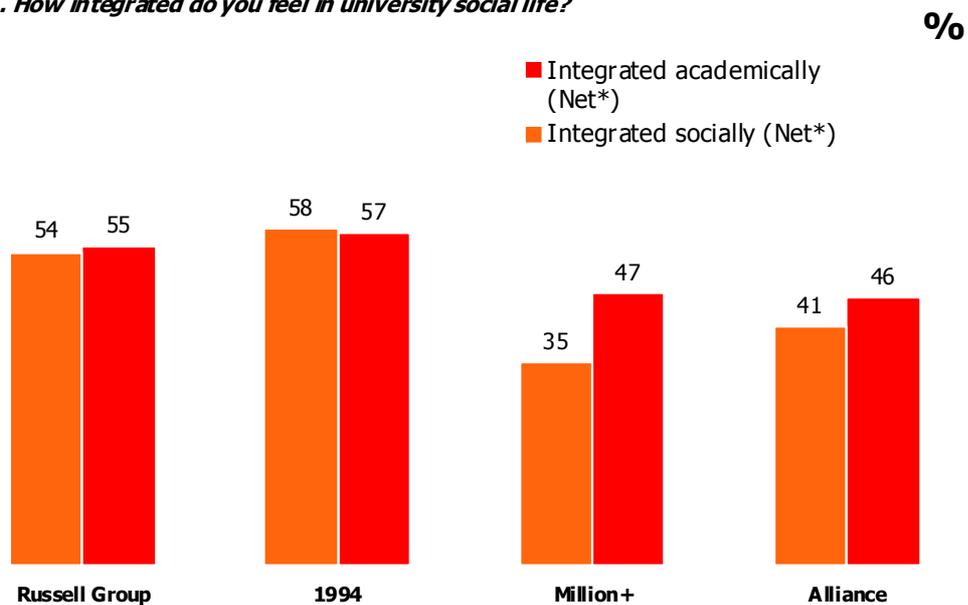
As can be seen in chart 39, students attending either a Russell Group institution or a 1994

Group institution were significantly more likely to say they feel integrated in both the academic and the social side of university.

**Chart 39: Student attending either a Russell Group or a 1994 institution were significantly more likely to say they feel integrated in the university’s academic and social life**

*Q60. How integrated do you feel in the academic side of university?*

*Q61. How integrated do you feel in university social life?*



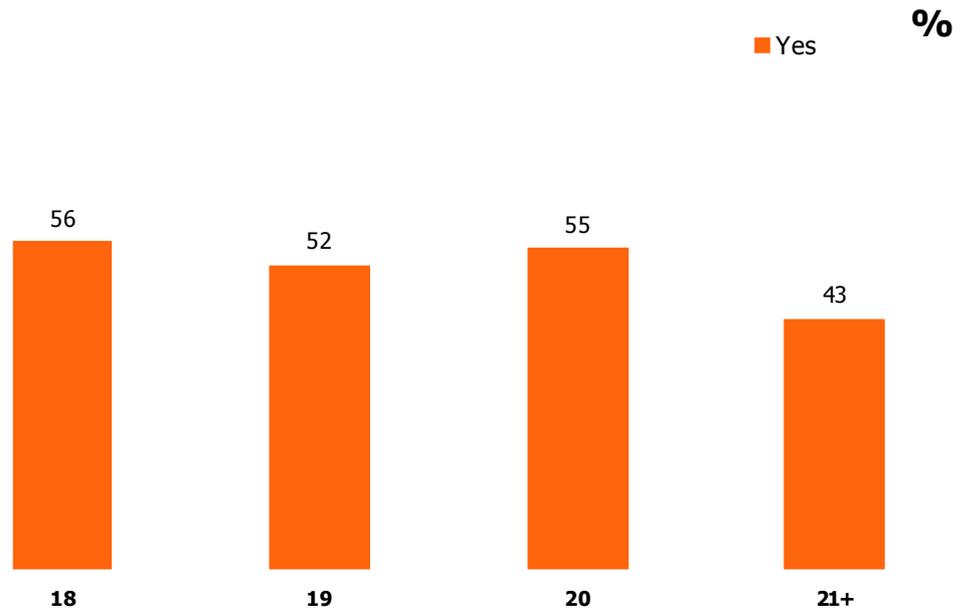
Base: Russell Group (733); 1994 (454); Million+ (544); Alliance (469)

\* Combines codes 4 and 5 on a five point scale (1 – Not at all; 2; 3 – Somewhat; 4; 5 – Fully)

When students were asked if they were a member of any university clubs or societies, half of students, 50%, said they were. This is however influenced by both gender and age, with males significantly more likely to be members of clubs or societies as well as those aged 18-20; in regards to age, this is presumably down to academic work pressures as well as job or family commitments.

### Chart 40: Older students are less likely to be part of a university club or society.

Q62. Are you a member of any university clubs or societies?

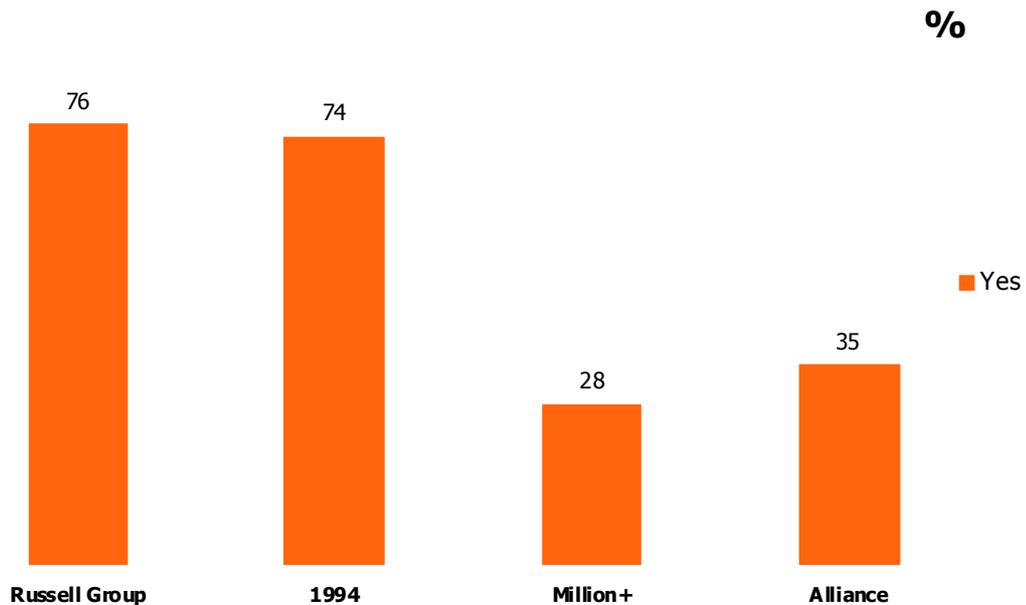


Base: 18 (437); 19 (792); 20 (955); 21 plus (1066).

Again, when looked at by institution type, there is a significant difference between students attending either a Russell Group or a 1994 Group institution and students attending a Million+ or Alliance institution. As can be seen in chart 5, students attending a Russell Group or a 1994 Group institution were significantly more likely to be a member of a university club or society. This is likely partly to explain the high level of integration that students from these institutions felt.

**Chart 41: Student attending either a Russell Group or a 1994 institution were significantly more likely to be a member of a university club or society**

*Q62. Are you a member of any university clubs or societies?*



Base: Russell Group (733); 1994 (454); Million+ (544); Alliance (469)

**Recognition of UK qualifications**

When asked, the majority of students, 83%, said they felt that UK higher education is valuable and recognised, only 11% said they didn't. There is a difference by institution type. As with previous questions, students attending a Russell Group or a 1994 Group institution were significantly more likely to feel UK higher education is valuable and recognised. It also appears affected by subject, with significantly more students studying Creative Arts & Design (24%) saying they did not feel confident that UK HE is valuable and recognised.

When asked, 70% of students said they thought their degree would be transferable abroad – a very slight increase on the previous year. Whilst the proportion of those who felt it would be transferrable dropped slightly to just over two-thirds (68%) of domestic students; it rose significantly to 85% of International students. In addition, there is a similar difference by institution type to the one highlighted in previous questions, as students attending a Russell Group or a 1994 Group institution are significantly more likely than students attending a Million+ or Alliance institution to think their degree is transferable abroad. 81% of students attending a Russell Group institution and 77% of students attending a 1994 Group institution thought their degree was transferable abroad, this compares to 56% of students attending a Million+ institution and 61% of students attending an Alliance institution.

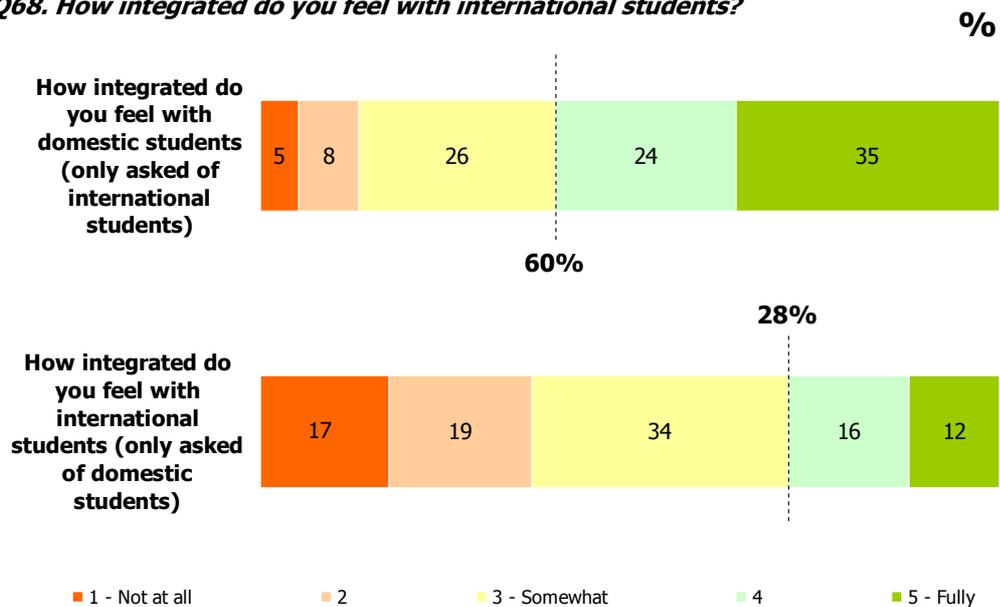
### **Integration of home and international students**

When looking at the levels of integration between domestic and international students there is a difference between how integrated international students feel with domestic students when compared with how integrated domestic students feel with international students. As can be seen in chart 42 international students were significantly more likely to say they feel integrated with domestic students than *visa versa*. In part this may be explained by the fact that there are fewer international students than domestic students and therefore domestic students are less likely to meet and consequently feel integrated with international students. However, the disparity between the two has got slightly larger since 2009. As with many other questions, we see significant differences in Institution type. With domestic students from Russell, 1994 Group and Million+ saying they are significantly more likely to feel integrated with international students than those at Alliance institutions.

## Chart 42: International students were significantly more likely to say they felt integrated with domestic students

*Q65. How integrated do you feel with domestic students?*

*Q68. How integrated do you feel with international students?*



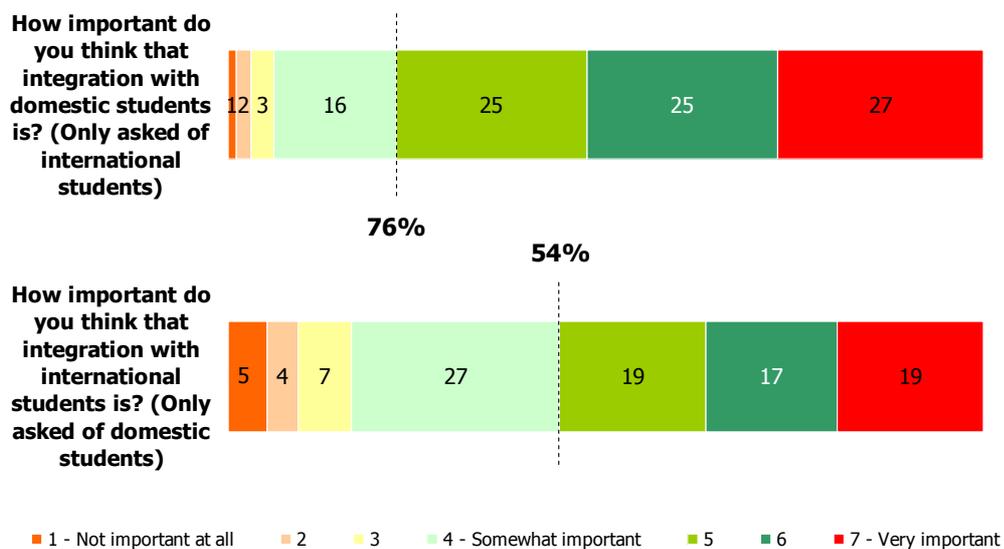
Base: All international students (360); All domestic students (2890)

In addition, when these two groups were asked how important they think integration is, a similar difference appears. A significantly higher proportion of international students thought that integration with domestic students was important when compared to the proportion of domestic students who thought that integration with international students was important – see chart 43.

### Chart 43: International students were significantly more likely to think that integration with domestic students was important

Q66. How important do you think that integration with domestic students is?

Q69. How important do you think that integration with international students is? %



Base: All international students (360); All domestic students (2890)

When asked, the vast majority of international students, 85%, said that they didn't experience any difficulties getting a visa to study in the UK.

### Students studying abroad

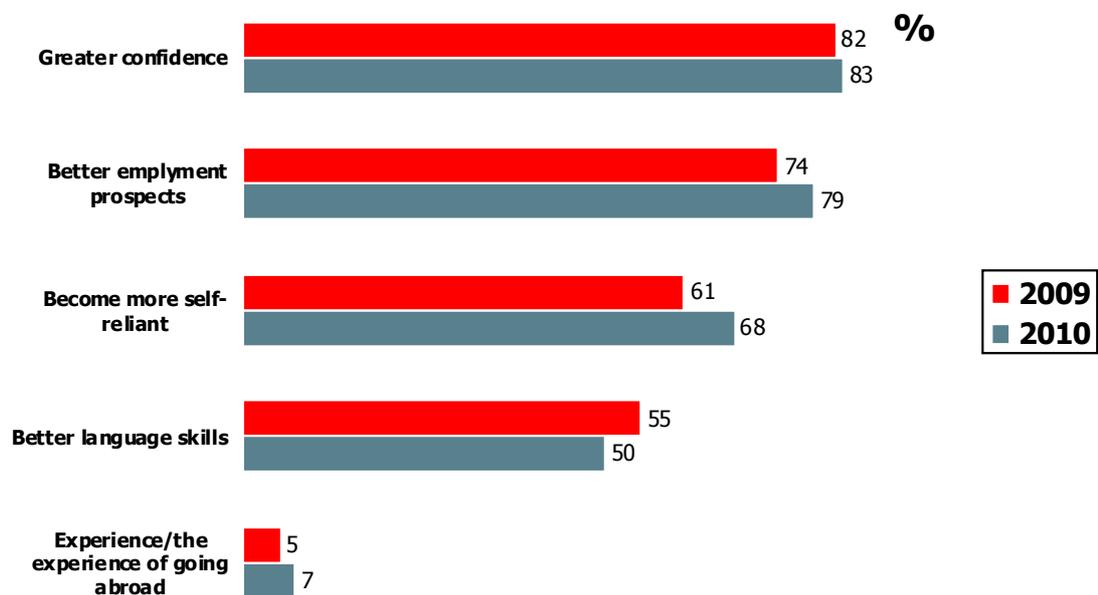
16% of domestic students said they either had, or planned to, study abroad as part of their course. However this is affected by both age and gender; with females significantly more likely to say they had planned to or had studied abroad than males (78% compared with only 70% for males). And those aged 20 or 21+ are significantly more likely to not have studied abroad nor have planned to. Interestingly, Medicine and Dentistry students are significantly

more likely to saying they have or are planning to study abroad, 58% compared with 16% overall.

When students who have, or were planning to, study abroad were asked what they were hoping to gain from this, the most popular response, as with the previous year, was 'greater confidence' – see chart 44. Better employment prospects were also cited by almost three quarters, 74%, of students. The only interesting differences we see for reasons to study abroad are seen in subject area. Particularly those who study medicine or dentistry who are significantly more likely to say they would do it for 'experience of going abroad/travel experience' which may be a result of their career choice, where they may not get another

### Chart 44: Students are motivated to study abroad in order to gain greater confidence or improve their employment prospects

*Q71. What did you gain, or are you hoping to gain, as a result of studying abroad?*



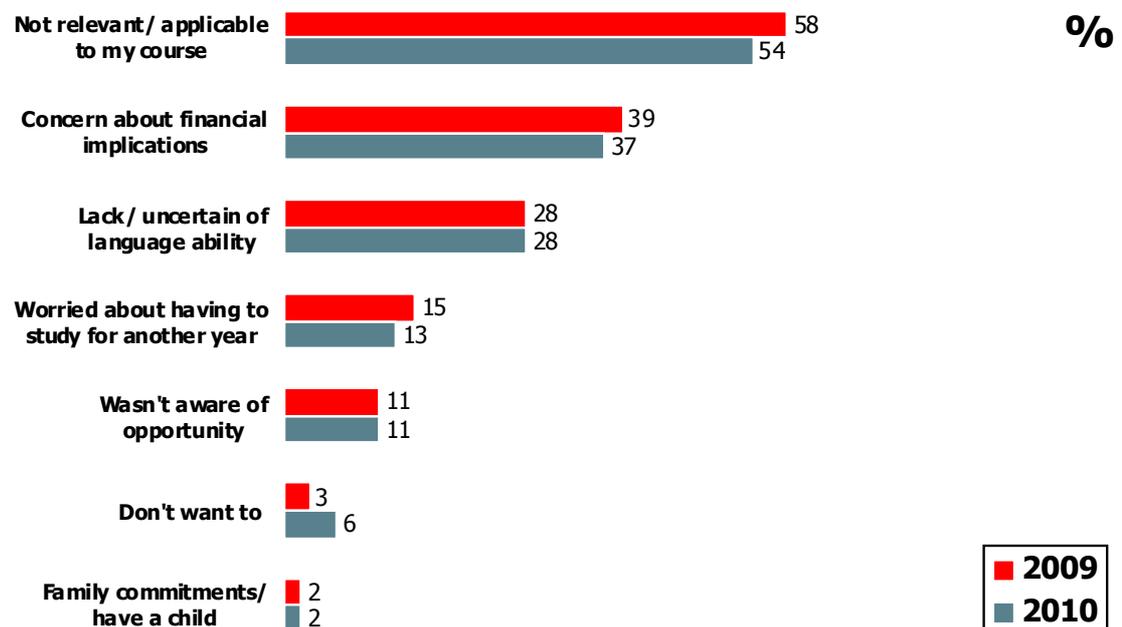
Base: All domestic students who have, or are planning to, study abroad 2009 (128); All domestic students who have or are planning to study abroad 2010 (465)

chance to travel once they graduate being such a demanding career.

The main reason domestic students cited for not studying abroad was that it was not relevant to their course – see chart 45. In addition, just a third of students, 37%, said their reason for not studying abroad was because they were concerned about the financial implications. This was significantly affected by social class, with those in social classes C2, D and E significantly more likely to cite concerns about financial implications than those in higher social grades.

### Chart 45: The main reason students cited for not studying abroad was that it was not relevant to their course

*Q72. Why haven't you, or why aren't you planning, to study abroad?*



Base: All domestic students who haven't, or aren't planning to, study abroad 2009 (591); All domestic students who haven't, or aren't planning to, study abroad 2010 (2138)

## 12 Religion

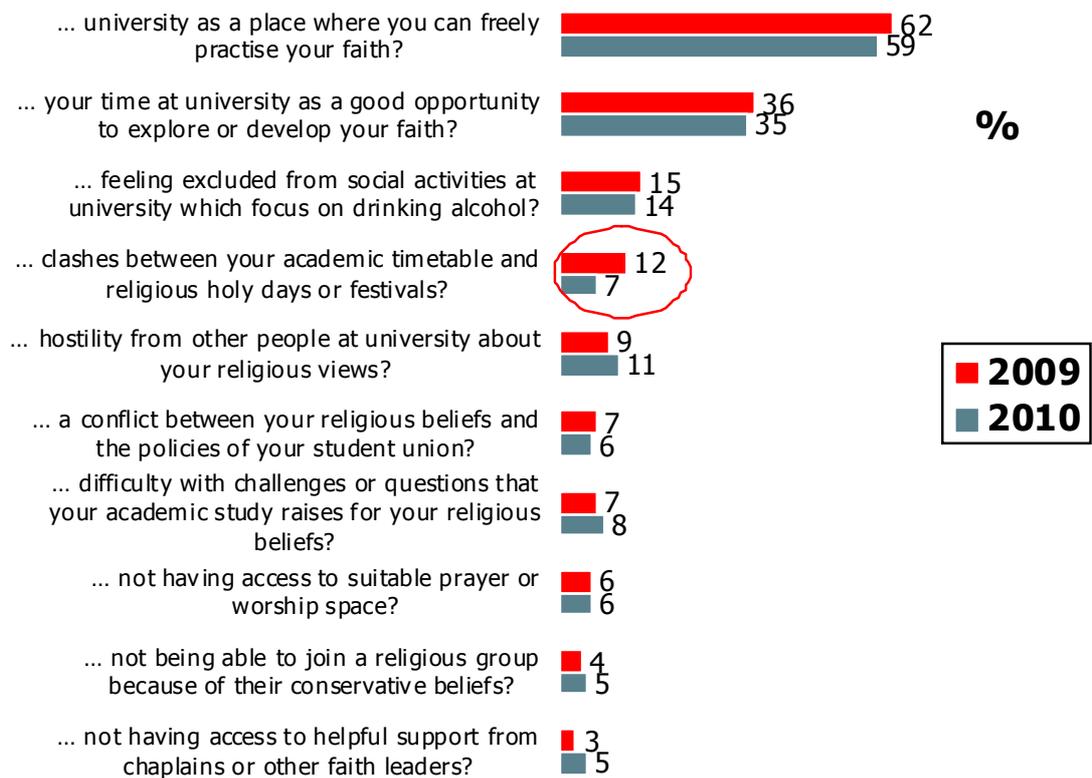
Just under one third of students, 32%, said they belonged to a religion, with the majority, 65%, saying they did not belong to a religion. Broken down by religion, the largest proportion are those are Christian (with no denomination) with 29%, followed by Roman Catholic with 18% and Church of England at 17%; after this, the only religion occupying more than 5% are Sunni Muslims with 6%.

Students who said they had belonged to a religion were then asked a number of statements regarding their religion and their time at university – see chart 46.

Overall, the picture is very similar to last year, with minor changes. For example, there has been a slight fall in those who said university was a place where they could freely practice their religion from 62% last year to 59% this year; and a slight increase – though not significant – in hostility received from other people at university because of their religious views up from 9% to 11%. Whilst these changes would appear alarming, they are not statistically significant. The only significant change is a positive one, where significantly fewer students this year said there are clashes between their academic timetable and religious holy days or festivals, presumably this has come about with greater exposure and awareness to religions outside of Christianity

## Chart 46: The majority of religious students said they could freely practise their religion at university

*Q108. Have you experienced...*



Base: All students who said they belonged to a religion 2009 (309); All students who belong to a religion 2010 (1017)

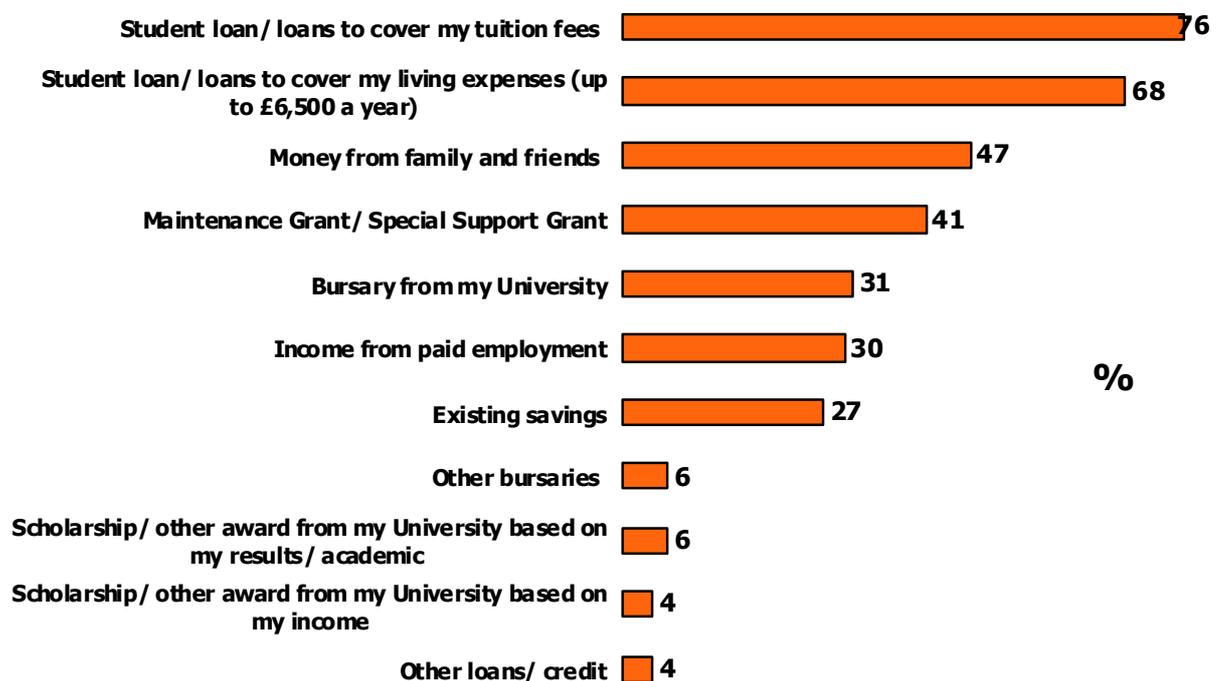
### 13 Finances, Banking & Debt

#### Sources of funding<sup>1</sup>

The most common source of funding that students receive is a student loan, either to cover tuition fees or living expenses such as accommodation, course costs, food and other expenses – see chart 47. 76% of students said they received a student loan to cover their tuition fees and 68% said they received a student loan to cover their living expenses.

#### Chart 47: Student loans are the most popular source of funding

*Q73. Which of the following sources of funding do you use/ receive? Please select all that apply*



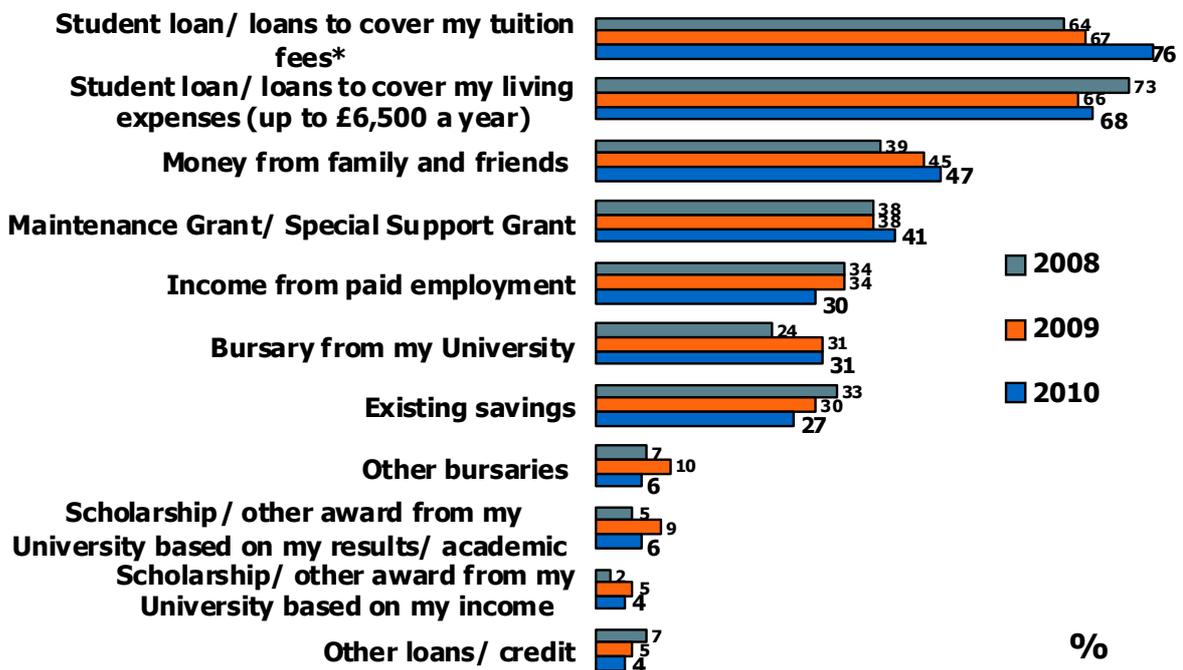
Base: All UK students (2926)

<sup>1</sup> The data presented in this section for the 2008, 2009 and 2010 surveys, has been filtered to show UK students only.

Comparing the results on sources of funding between this year’s study and the last two years of study shows a steady increase in student loan/ loans to cover tuition fees (to now be the most popular source) and money from family and friends as well as a steady decrease in the use of existing savings – see chart 48. While last year had not seen any impact on student funding despite a major deterioration in the economy, this year we do see perhaps a heavier reliance on money from family and friends whilst savings and income from paid employment fall in response to the economy.

### Chart 48: Sources of funding have remained similar since 2008

**Q73. Which of the following sources of funding do you use/ receive? Please select all that apply**



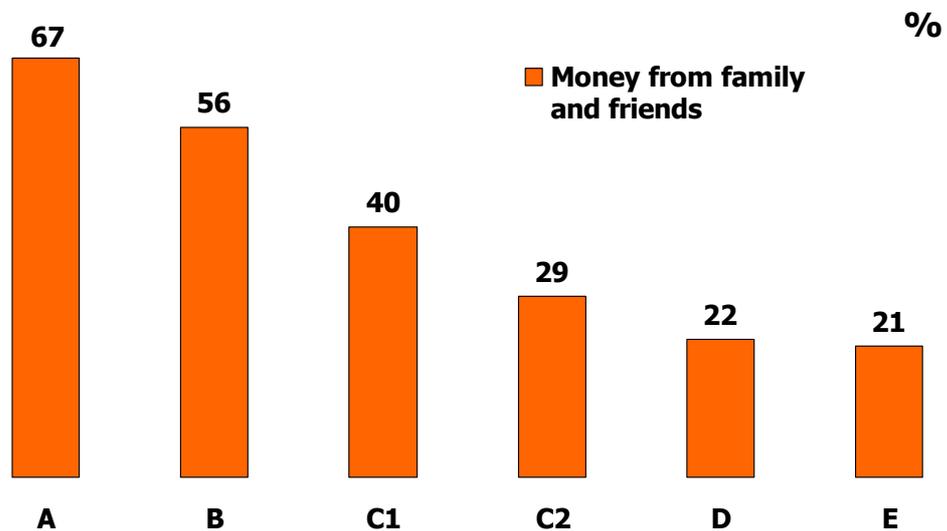
Base: 2008 UK students (2133); 2009 UK students (789); 2010 UK students (2926)

\*Due to a change in the financial system, the data for 2008 excludes final year students

Whilst money from either family or friends which almost half, 47%, of students said they received, is popular; this is still significantly affected by socio-economic status with students whose parents are in higher socio-economic groups significantly more likely to receive funding from their family or friends than those in lower socio-economic groups – see chart 49. Indeed, of students who are in the highest two socio-economic groups, over half said that they received funding from their family or friends, nearly twice as many as those in the lowest three socio-economic groups.

**Chart 49: Students whose parents are from higher socio-economic groups are significantly more likely to receive financial help from family and friends**

*Q73. Which of the following sources of funding do you use/ receive? Please select all that apply*



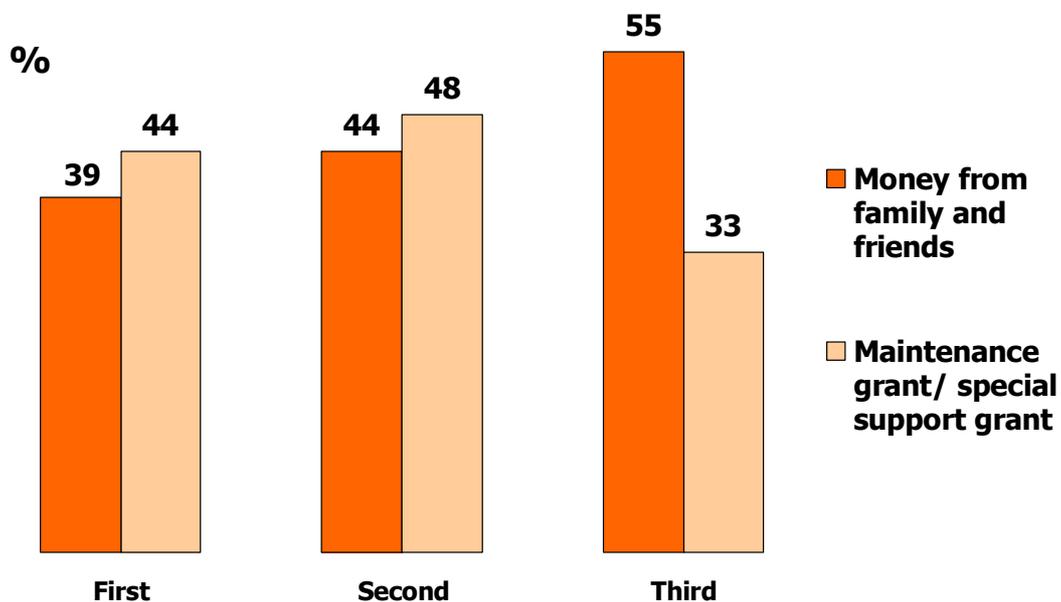
Base: A (537); B (973); C1 (723); C2 (399); D (214\*); E (80\*)  
 \* Small base

Similarly, we found that money from friends and family (as well as maintenance grants) are significantly affected by year of study – see chart 50 – with third year students significantly more likely to rely on money from family and friends, but less likely to rely on maintenance grants. This seems to suggest that students’ financial situations deteriorate during their time at university and they become reliant on family members or friends for a source of funding.

There are also some significant differences when looking at sources of funding by subject area. Students studying subjects allied to medicine are significantly more likely to receive funding from other bursaries than students in other subject areas.

### **Chart 50: Third year students are more likely to rely on money from family and friends, and less likely to use grants**

***Q73. Which of the following sources of funding do you use/ receive? Please select all that apply***

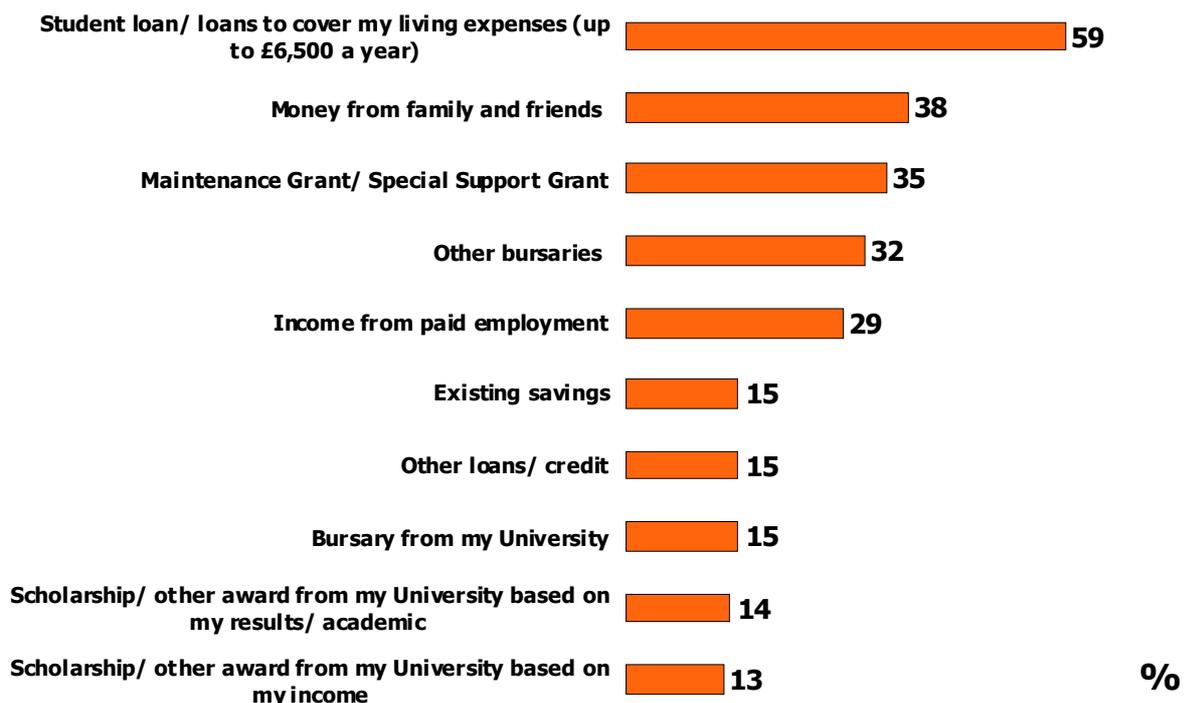


Base: First (804); Second (978); Third (1144)

When looking at the proportion of living costs met by various sources of funding, student loans can be seen to meet more than half, 59%, of student’s living costs – see chart 51. However this still leaves a large proportion of living costs that need to be met by other sources of funding. Again, money from family and friends is used to meet a large proportion of living costs among those students who receive it. In addition, there are some sources of funding, which while not received by a large number of students, are vital to those that do receive them. For example, other bursaries are only used by 6% of students (though almost a third of those studying subjects allied to medicine), within that 6%, they are used to meet nearly a third, 32%, of these students’ living costs. When looking again at the sources of funding in more detail; this time against socio-economic group, we can see that money from family and friends accounts for slightly over half, 51%, of total living costs for those in socio-economic group A, whilst only 15% for those in group D.

## Chart 51: Sources of funding as a proportion of total living costs

*Q74. What % (approximately) of your total cost of living comes from your ...*



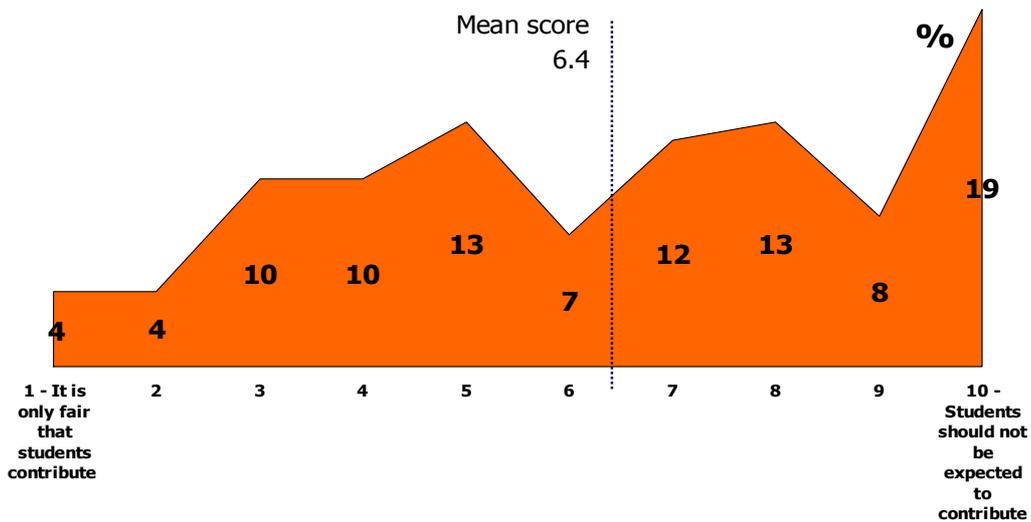
Base: Student loan/ loans to cover my living expenses (1977); Money from family and friends (1362); Maintenance Grant/ Special Support Grant (1198); Other bursaries (168); Income from paid employment (878); Other loans/ credit (114); Existing savings (779); Bursary from my University (898); Scholarship/ other award from my University based on my income (127); Scholarship/ other award from my University based on my results/ academic (173)

### Contribution to cost of tuition

When students were asked where they stood between the two statements - 'It is only fair that students contribute towards the cost of their tuition' and 'Students should not be expected to contribute towards the cost of their tuition' - it was found that overall, students edged slightly towards the feeling that they should not be expected to contribute, and almost five times as many students saying they should not as saying it's fair that they do – see chart 52. Looking at these figures in slightly more detail; whilst not significantly different, it was seen that as students got older (from 18 to 21 plus) we see a slight decrease in this feeling that they should not be expected to contribute.

### Chart 52: Students on the whole feel mildly that they should not be expected to contribute to the cost of their tuition.

*Q74N. Please indicate on the scale which of the following statements is closest to your point of view on tuition fees?*

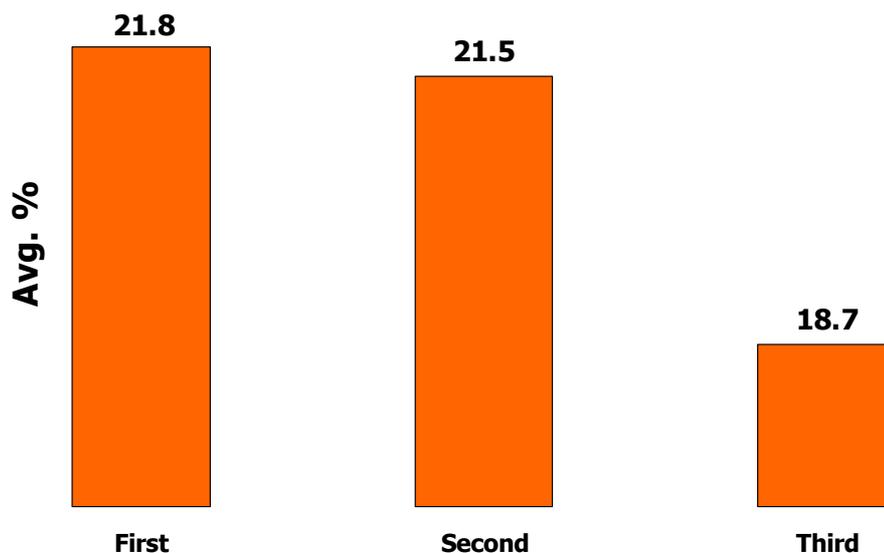


Base: All answering section 8 (3176)

For those students who felt that it was fair for students to contribute, we then asked the proportion they think they should pay themselves. We found that the mean proportion given was just over a fifth of the cost, 21%, ie around £1,680 (compared to the current £3,225 in England) and that this did not vary much between demographics, institution type or subject area. However, it did fall as they spent more time at university – see chart 53; though this

**Chart 53: Third year students feel that they should, on average, contribute less to the cost of their tuition.**

*Q75N. The average cost of running a university course is about £8,000 a year per person. What proportion of this cost do you think students should pay themselves?*



Base: First (554); Second (642); Third (674)

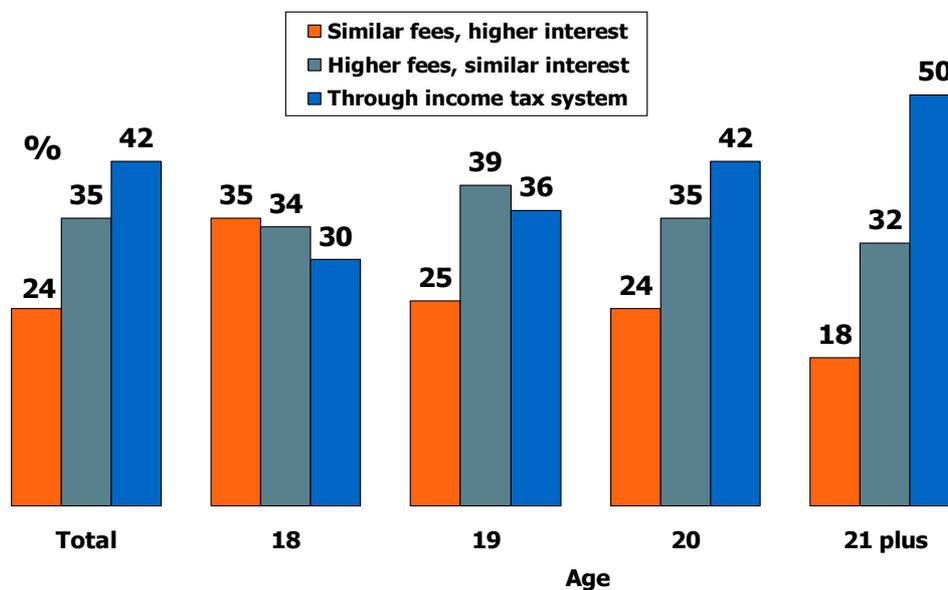
may actually be a reflection on their potentially deteriorating finances and a realisation of the actual cost of university.

Regardless of their point of view on students’ contribution to tuition fees, if they were to have to contribute more, we asked them how would they prefer to do it – see chart 54. The preferred method (42%) was through the income tax system, however, there were some

differences between demographics. Most notably that a significantly higher proportion of older students preferred this method, with half (50%) of those aged 21 and over choosing this as the method, compared with 30% of 18 year olds, who in contrast chose similar fees but with higher interest charge as their preferred method. This would suggest that around 19

**Chart 54: Third year students feel, on average, that they should contribute less to the cost of their tuition.**

*Q76N. If you had to contribute more, how would you prefer to do this?*



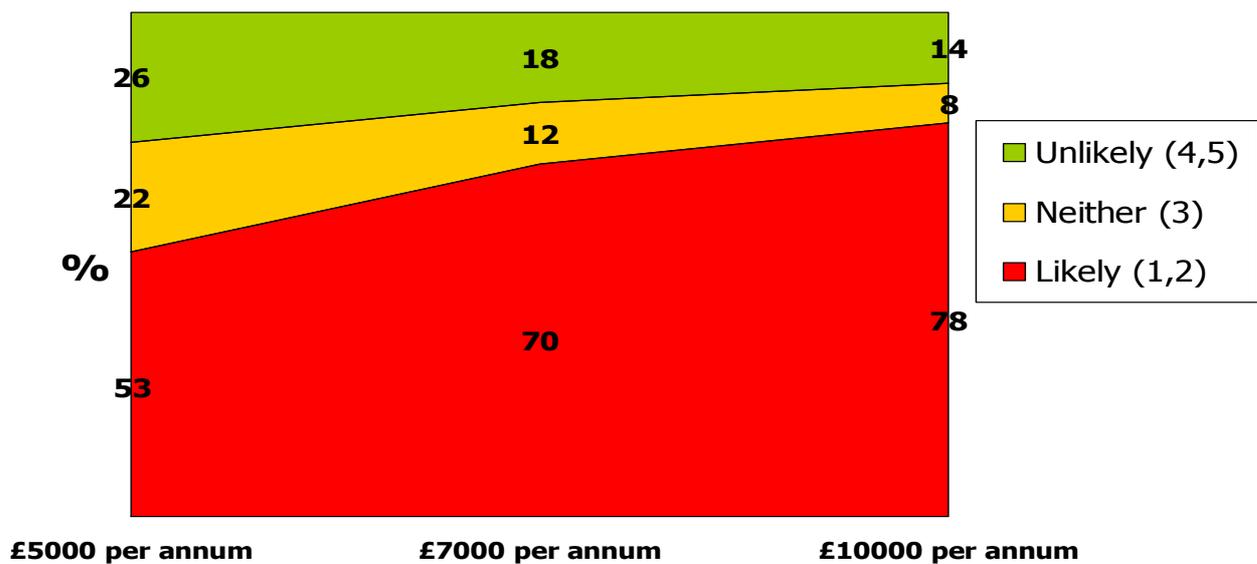
Base: Total (3201); 18 (438); 19 (800); 20 (927); 21 plus (1036)

years old, students begin to change their views on this, with perhaps a greater look at both their current finances and future potential earnings for a way of helping them through their university time.

When asked if their expectations of their experience would increase if fees were increased above inflation beyond the current £3225 per annum, nearly two thirds, 65%, said it would significantly increase, whilst only 18% said that it would not they therefore expect 'more-for-their-money' as a result.

**Chart 55: Over three quarters of students would have been deterred from attending university if fees were £10000 pa.**

*Q74N. If tuition fees were increased to XXXX, how likely would this be to have deterred you from going to university?*



Base: All answering section 8 (3201)

When we come to look at how likely students would be to be deterred from going to university if the fees were increased, we can see that, unsurprisingly, as the cost of fees increases the level of likely deterrence also increases – see chart 55. With 53% of students likely to put off going to university if fees rise to £5,000, increasing to 78% if fees rise to £10,000.

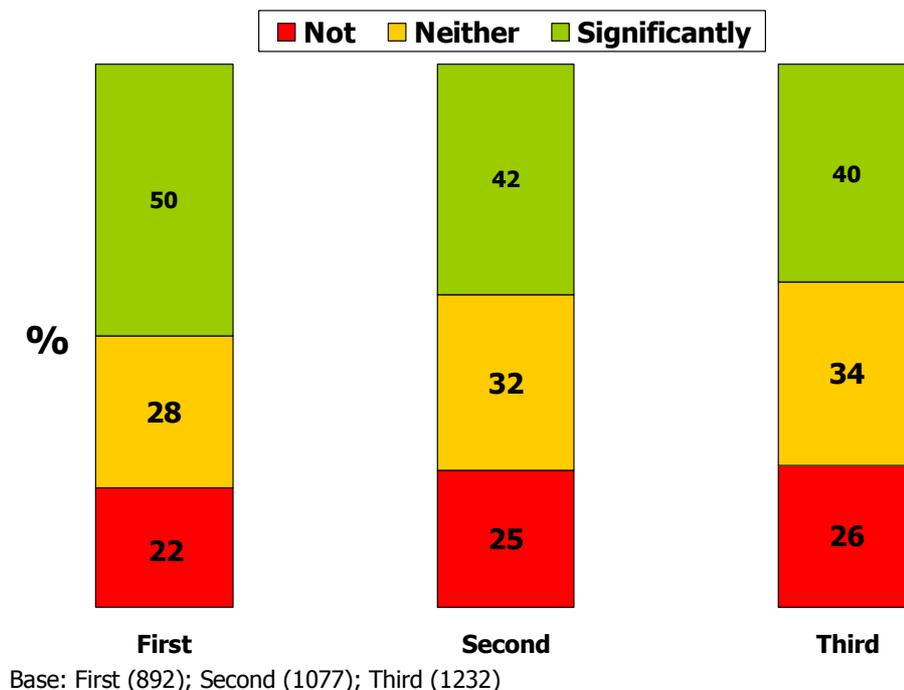
When looking at mean scores by socio-economic group and subject, we can see that those in the socio-economic group A are significantly more unlikely to be deterred by these higher tuition fees, and we see this at all tuition fee points (£5000: 2.95; £7000: 2.46; and £10000: 2.08), however with this group also more likely to rely on money from family and friends as a

source of funding for university, we would also perhaps see greater financial pressures put on the families as these students would look to these to fund this extra tuition.

Finally, students were asked on a scale of 1 to 5; where 1 was very significantly and 5 was not at all, whether they considered their time at university to represent good value for money. It was discovered that as a whole, students felt it just about represented good value for money – a mean score of 2.75, - however over a quarter (26%) of third year students, having experienced most of their university course, believing that it did not represent value for money. As with likelihood on not attending university with increase in tuition fees, we see significant differences between subject areas, with significantly more students studying medicine and dentistry and subjects allied to medicine saying they feel it 'very significantly'

**Chart 56: More first year students feel their time at university does significantly represent good value for money.**

*Q77N. Do you consider your time at university to represent good value for money?*



represents good value for money; 56% and 54% respectively – which, if studying these prestigious degrees and therefore a higher earning potential, is as expected.

In contrast to this, significantly more mathematical and computer sciences students (16% compared to 9% overall) feel it does not at all represent good value for money.

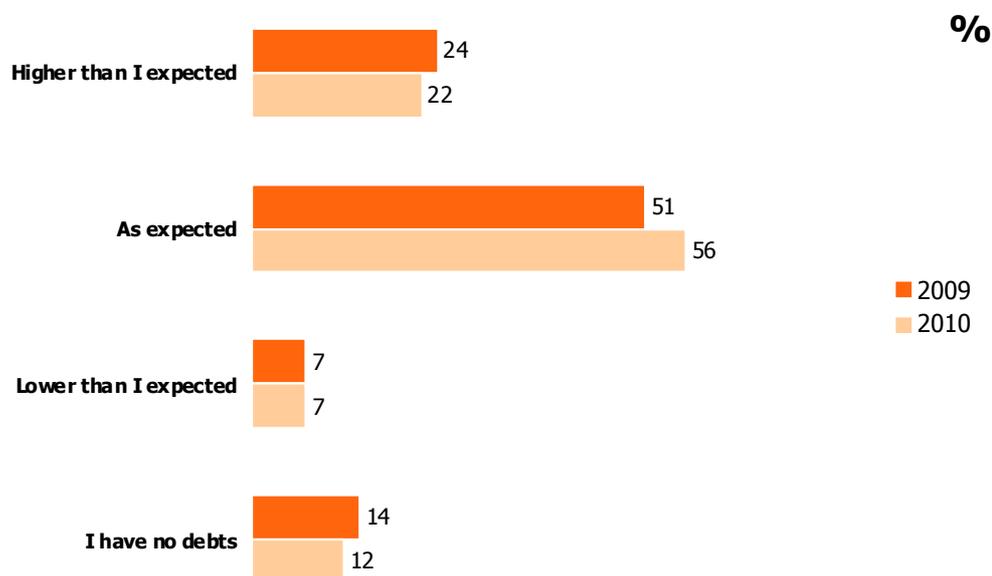
### Debt

When asked 78% of students said that their debt was either as high as they expected or even higher. The percentage of students anticipating their level of debt accurately is significantly higher than in 2009 (51%), which may suggest that students are increasingly giving more thought to their finances before starting university, potentially due to the current economic conditions. As such, the percentage of students finding their debt is higher than anticipated (22%) is slightly less than was seen in 2009 (24%) – see chart 57.

A slightly smaller percentage reported having no debts (12%) than in 2009 (14%), which again may be a reflection of the current economic conditions, though the difference here is not large enough to be considered statistically significant.

**Chart 57: Students’ expectations of their debt are more reflective of the reality than they were in 2009**

*Q84. Are your current levels of debt about what you expected, or higher or lower?*

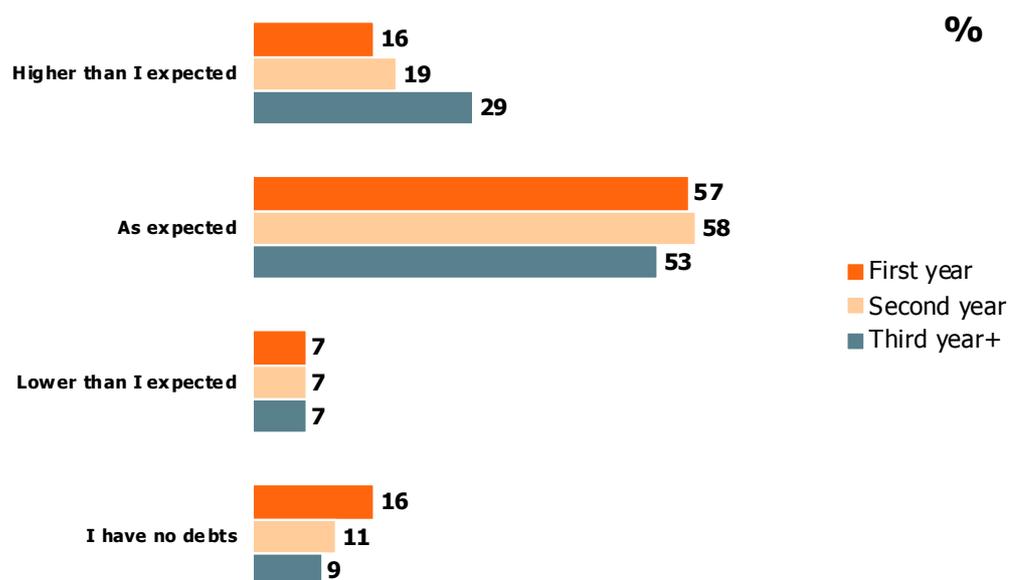


When the data is broken down by different groups, a number of differences can be seen between the groups.

In 2009 it was seen that first years were significantly less likely to have higher debts than expected (17%) than either second (29%) or third years (28%). In 2010, first years are still the least likely to have higher than expected debts (16%), however the percentage of second years reporting this has fallen substantially to 19%, decreasing the difference between the two. We therefore now see that third years are significantly more likely to have higher than expected debt (29%) than either of the other two year groups – see Chart 58. It is perhaps possible that the unfavourable economic conditions encouraged last year’s first years (this year’s second years) to take a more realistic approach to financial planning than previous

### Chart 58: Third year students are significantly more likely to have debts higher than they expected

Q84. Are your current levels of debt about what you expected, or higher or lower?



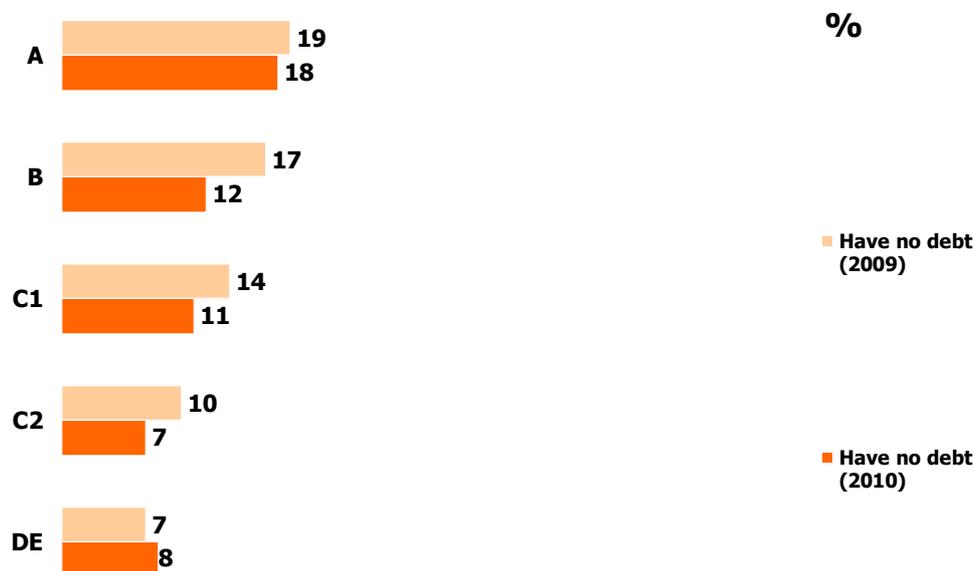
Base: First year (892); Second year (1077); Third year+ (1232)

students' finances deteriorate as they progress through university, leading them to accumulate more debt in later years. Unsurprisingly the difference can therefore also be seen by age, with 20 and 21+ year olds being more likely to have higher than expected debt (25% and 26% respectively) than 18 (13%) or 19 (18%) year olds.

Socio-economic group can also be seen to affect the debt accumulated by students – see Chart 59. As discussed above, students are less likely to have no debt (12%) than in 2009 (14%). This decrease has primarily arisen from students in groups B, C1, C2 and DE becoming much less likely to have no debt than students in group A, who are now significantly more likely to have no debt (18%) than students in any other year group.

### Chart 59: Students in socio-economic groups other than A are much less likely to have no debt than in 2009

**Q84. Are your current levels of debt about what you expected, or higher or lower?**



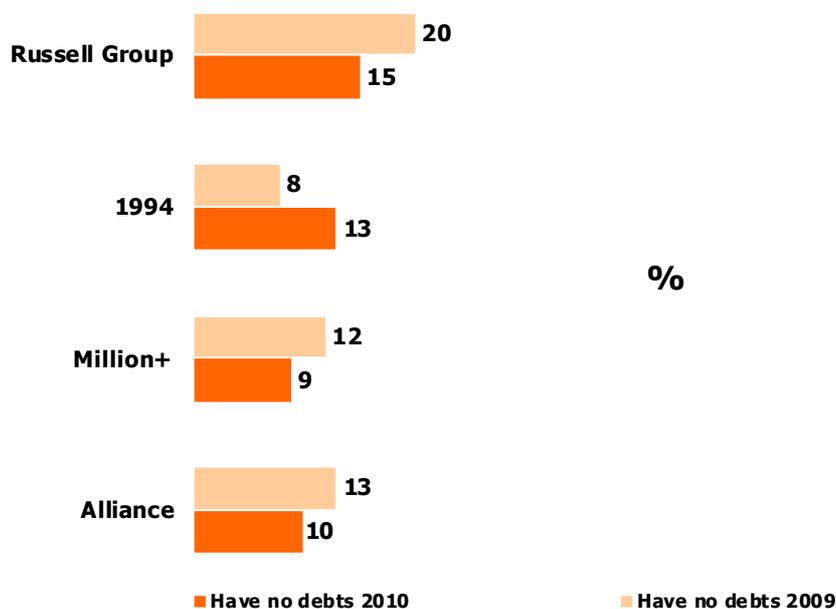
Base: A 2009 (181); A 2010 (607); B 2009 (260); B 2010 (1092); C1 2009 (146); C1 2010 (781); C2 2009 (125); C2 2010 (413); DE 2009 (85); DE 2010 (309)

Last year, students in the lowest socio-economic groups were significantly more likely to say their debts were higher than expected. In 2010, it appears that the percentage of students saying this is fairly consistent across the socio-economic groups, suggesting that students of all groups are getting better at anticipating their financial requirements.

As in 2009, Russell Group students are still the most likely to say they have no debt (15%). However, while in 2009 Russell Group students were significantly more likely to say this, in 2010 the difference by institution type has narrowed – see chart 60. This is due firstly to a decrease in the percentage of Russell Group students reporting holding no debt (15% from 20%), and secondly to students attending 1994 institutions being significantly more likely to say they have no debt (13%) than they were in 2009 (8%). Students attending Million+ and Alliance institutions were both slightly less likely to say they have no debt than they were in 2009.

### Chart 60: Students attending Russell Group institutions are still more likely to have no debt, but the difference between institution type has narrowed

*Q84. Are your current levels of debt about what you expected, or higher or lower?*

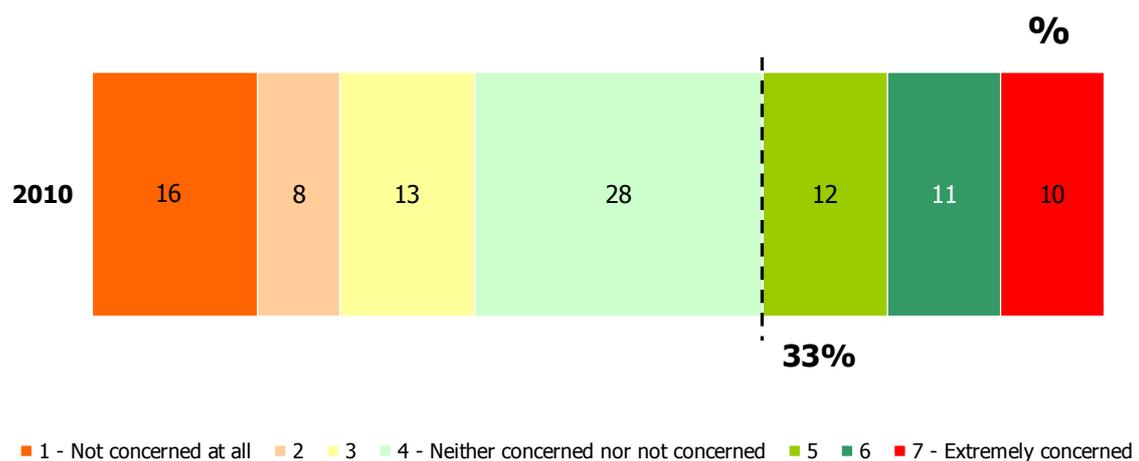


Base: Russell Group 2009 (244); Russell Group 2010 (709) 1994 2009 (133) 1994 2010 (465); Million+ 2009 (179); Million+ 2010 (515); Alliance 2009 (218); Alliance 2010 (474)

Finally, as seen in 2009, Asian students are significantly more likely to say they have no debt (24%) than white students (10%). However, while in 2009 Asian students were less likely to say they had higher debt than expected than white students, in 2010 they are approximately as likely to say their debt is higher than expected (23%) than white students (22%).

### Chart 61: Students are split on being concerned about levels of debt.

**Q85. Are you concerned about your current levels of debt?**



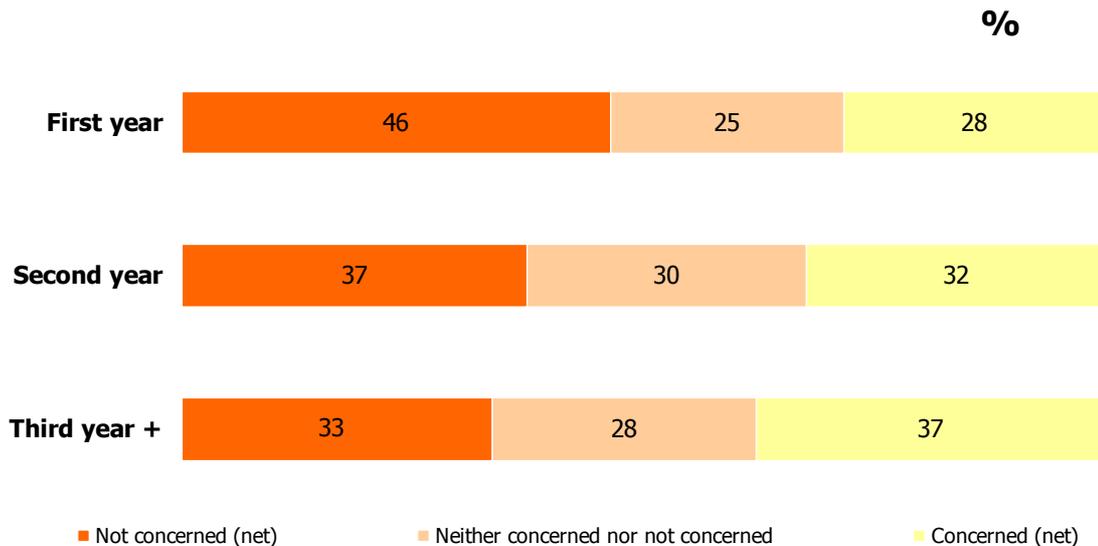
Base: All with debts 2010 (2825)

However it is worrying that when students who were in debt were asked how concerned they were with their current levels of debt a third of students (33%) said that they were concerned – see Chart 61.

We see – Chart 62 – that 37% of third year students are concerned about their levels of debts – perhaps linking to their increasingly sceptical views relating to the value for money of their degree.

## Chart 62: Final year students are still the most likely to be concerned about their levels of debt

*Q85. Are you concerned about your current levels of debt?*



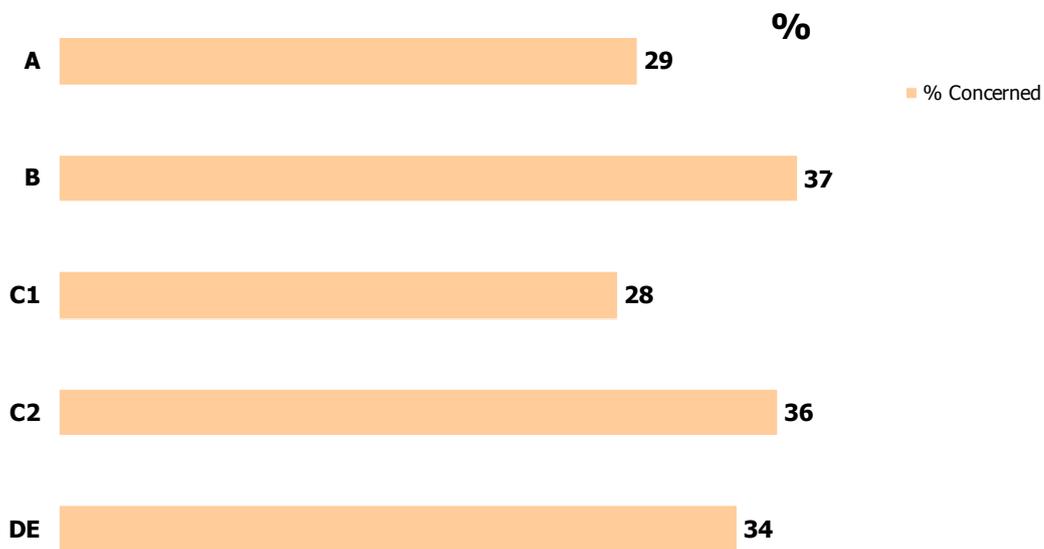
Base: All first year students with debts (746); All second year students with debts (956); All third year+ students with debts (1122)

It seems possible that second years' increased optimism about their debt levels could arise from them having taken a more careful and considered approach to their finances, due to concern over the economic climate.

Socio-economic group can also be seen to affect students' concern about their levels of debt – see Chart 63. Last year it was found that students in the highest socio-economic groups (A

### **Chart 63: Those in socio-economic group B are more likely to be concerned about their debt levels; while those in group C1 are less likely to be concerned**

*Q85. Are you concerned about your current levels of debt?*



Base: All with debts: A 2010 (500); B 2010 (965); C1 2010 (692); C2 2010 (384); DE 2010 (283)

and B) were the least likely to be concerned about their levels of debt. This year, we find that students in group A are still relatively more likely to be unconcerned about their levels of debt; however, we also find that students in group B are much more likely to be concerned about their levels of debt (37%) than they were last year (27%). In fact, students in group B are the most likely to say they are concerned, out of all of the socio-economic groups. This fits in with the finding outlined above, that students in group B are much less likely to have no debt (12%) than they were in 2009 (17%).

Finally, concern over debt levels can also be seen to vary depending on subject studied. In particular, it can be seen that engineering students are significantly more likely to say they are not concerned by their levels of debt (53%) than students are on average (38%). A possible explanation for this is that these students are significantly more likely to receive sponsorship from business (10%) than students are on average (2%), and perhaps that they are in higher demand in the national workforce for when they finally graduate.

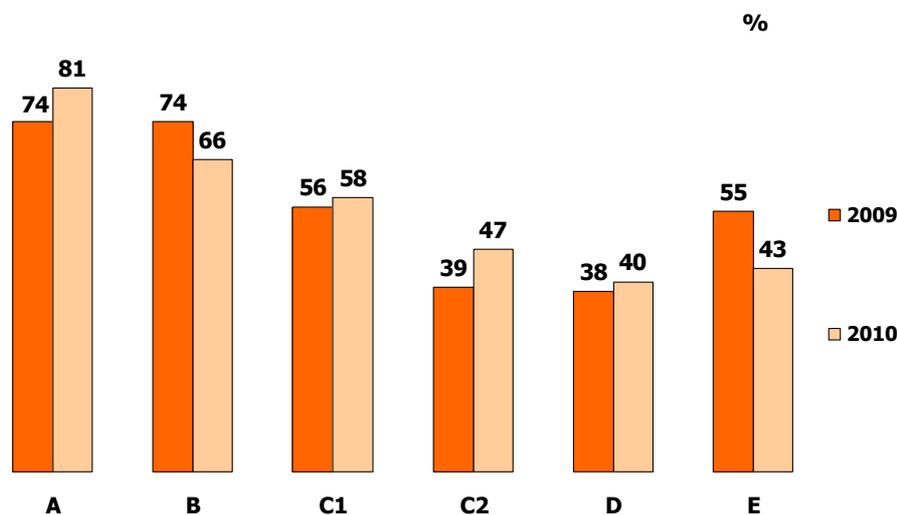
### Support from Home

When students were asked if they relied on support from home to help them through university, 62% said they did (see chart 66), increasing from 59% in 2009. This is potentially a result of students' income from paid employment and existing savings falling in response to the economic conditions, as discussed in section 3.1.

As seen in 2009, students in higher socio-economic groups are more likely to say they receive support from home – see Chart 64. However, while students in group A are more likely to receive support from home, students in group B are significantly less likely to receive support

**Chart 64: Students in higher SEGs are more likely to receive support from home to help them through university**

*Q87. Do you rely on support from home to help you through university?*



Base: A 2009 (186); A 2010 (607); B 2009 (263); B 2010 (1092); C1 2009 (149); C1 2010 (781); C2 2009 (120); C2 2010 (413); D 2009 (67\*); D 2010 (226\*); E 2009 (16\*\*); E 2010 (83\*)  
 \* Small base; \*\* Very small base ineligible for sig. testing

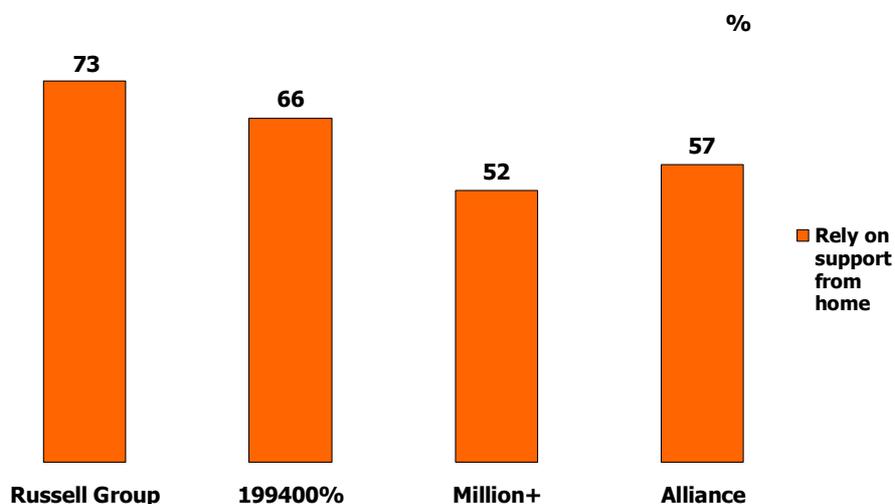
from home (66%) than they were in 2009 (74%). This could be a contributing factor to students in group B being more likely to be concerned about their levels of debt than they were in 2009, as discussed above. Conversely, students in group C2 are much more likely to receive support from home (47%) than they were in 2009 (36%).

Third year students were much more likely to receive support from home (68%) than first or second year students (60% and 57% respectively), probably again a result of students' finances deteriorating over the course of their university course. Medical students were also much more likely to receive support from home (78%) than average (62%).

Students from Russell Group (73%) or 1994 (66%) institutions were also significantly more likely to receive support from home than students from Million+ (52%) or Alliance (57%) institutions – see Chart 65. This is perhaps due to the fact that students from such institutions tend to be from higher socio-economic groups on average.

**Chart 65: Students attending Russell Group institutions are the most likely to rely on support from home to help them through university**

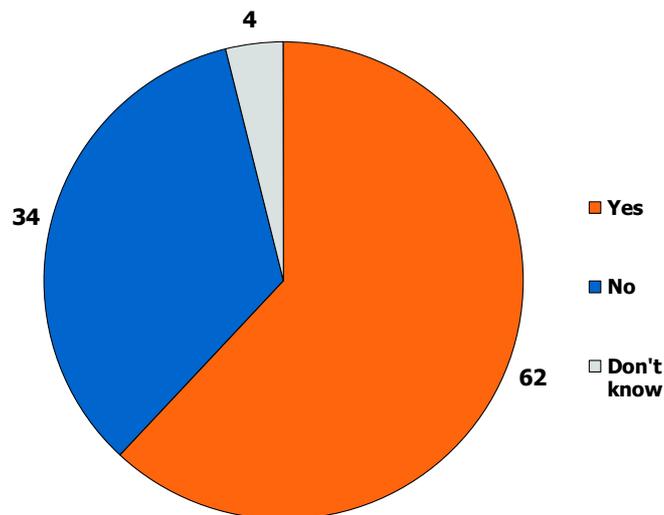
*Q87. Do you rely on support from home to help you through university?*



Base: Russell Group (709); 1994 (465); Million+ (515); Alliance (474)

**Chart 66: More than half of students rely on support from home to help them through university.**

*Q87. Do you rely on support from home to help you through university?*

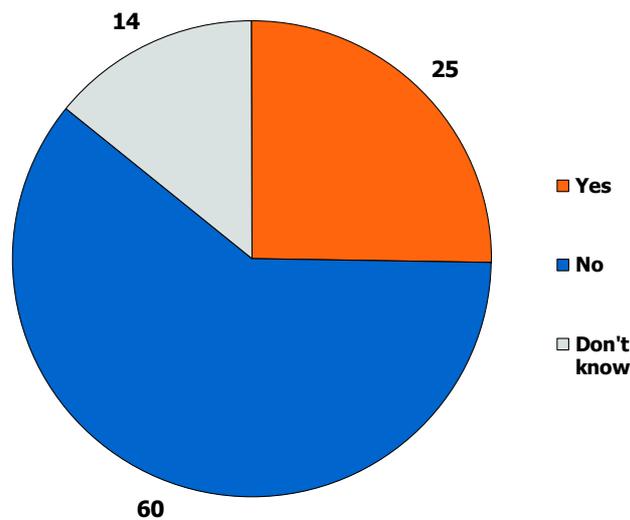


Base: All respondents (3201)

Of the students who receive support from home, 60% said that if they didn't receive this they wouldn't be able to afford to go to university – see chart 67. This is slightly higher than the percentage that said this in 2009 (57%). Again, this is potentially a result of students' ability to generate income from paid employment and existing savings falling in response to the economic conditions, as discussed in earlier sections.

**Chart 67: Of those who rely on support, a majority could not afford university without it.**

*Q88. If you didn't have support, would you be able to afford to go to university?*



Base: All who rely on support from home (1984)

There are some interesting variations by subject area. Engineering and Technology students are much more likely to say they would be able to go to university without this support (42%) than students were on average (25%). Again, this is potentially due to the fact that these students are significantly more likely to receive sponsorship from business (10%) than students are on average (2%).

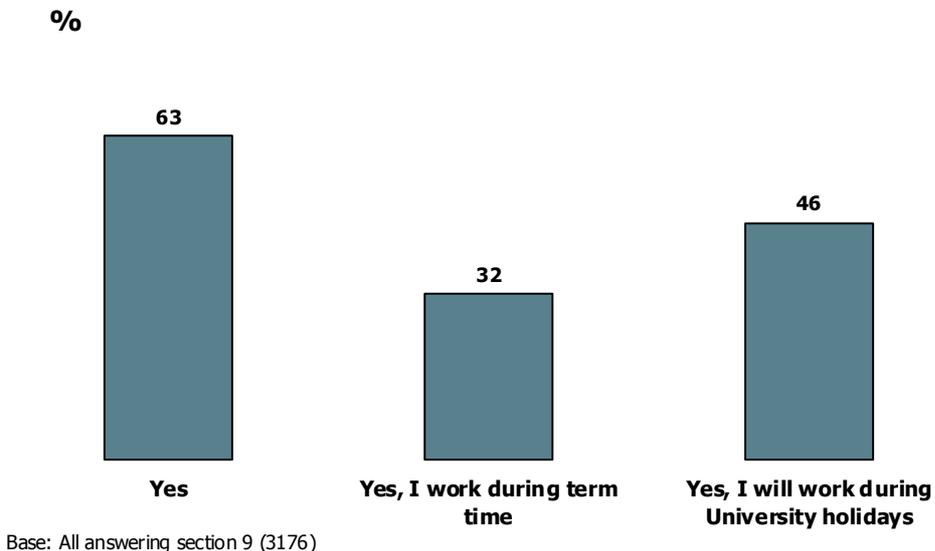
Interestingly, female students are significantly more likely to say they would not be able to go to university without such support (66%) than male students (55%); perhaps due to greater financial worry for females than for males who are, potentially, more blasé about their money.

## 14 Current Employment

The majority of students, 63%, either had, or intended to have, some form of paid employment during the current academic year. When this is split between work during the term time and work during the holidays, a higher proportion of students, 46%, worked or intended to work during the holidays; though almost a third of students, 32%, said that they worked during the term time. When students were asked if they thought that the current economic climate has made it more difficult to find work, the overwhelming majority, 80%, said yes they thought it had.

### Chart 68: Majority of students either have, or intend to arrange, paid employment during the current academic year

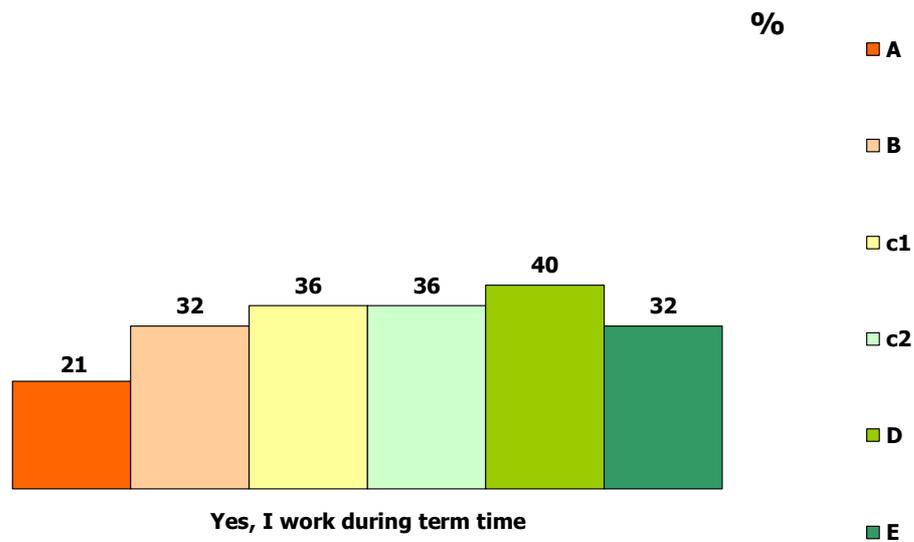
*Q89. Do you currently have any form of paid employment or intend to arrange any in the current academic year, including the summer holidays? Please select all that apply*



When the number of students working during the term time is looked at by socio-economic group a number of statistically significant differences appear. Students in the lower socio-economic group, E, are more likely to not work than students in the middle-higher groups; B, C1 and C2, perhaps due to access to grants and bursaries. And those students in socio-economic group A are significantly less likely to work during term time than all those in other socio-economic groups, bar group E – see chart 69.

### Chart 69: Term time paid employment significantly influenced by socio-economic status

*Q89. Do you currently have any form of paid employment or intend to arrange any in the current academic year, including the summer holidays? Please select all that apply*

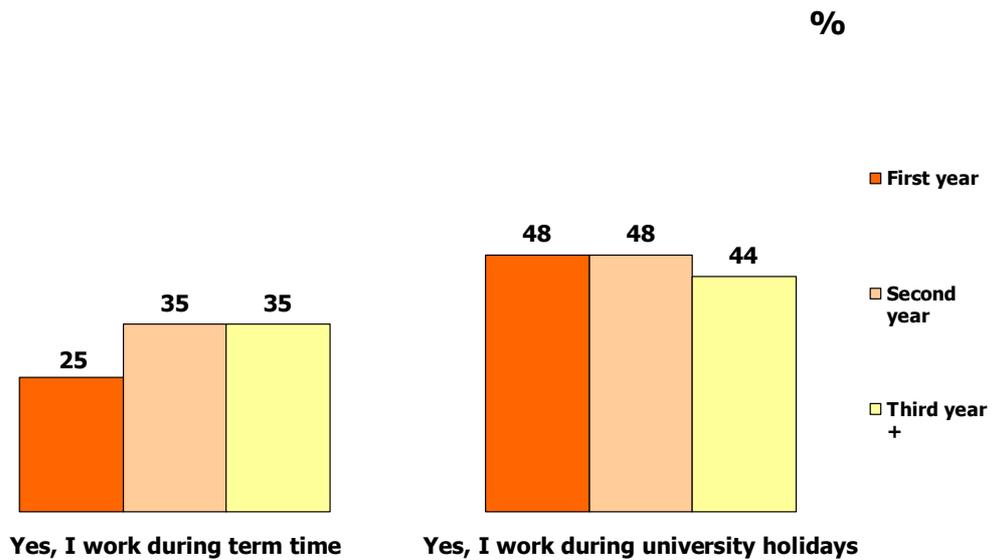


Base: A (622); B (1033); c1 (808); c2 (422); D (221); E(70)

In addition, when employment is looked at by year of study an interesting difference appears, as first year students are less likely than final year students, or students in interim years, to have paid employment during the term time – see chart 70 - and more likely not to work at all; 36% of first years, compared with 31% and 25% for second and third years respectively. This is surprising as you may expect students in the later stages of their studies and with a heavier academic workload to be the least likely to work during the term time. In part this may be explained by the finding, identified below, that students in the later stages of their studies appear to be under more financial pressure (they are significantly more likely to cite meeting basic living costs as a reason for work – see chart 76). Therefore, while students in the later stages of their studies may have less time available to undertake paid employment, financial pressures may force them into work. Having said this, final year students are also more likely to take work related to their intended career – see chart 74 – which may also be a contributing factor in final year students, or students in interim years, taking paid employment during the term time. When looking at students who work by subject, it is with no surprise that we see few differences except for those studying Medicine & Dentistry, where half (49%) said they do not have or intend to arrange any paid employment, obviously with such an intense and work-load heavy course, it is unlikely many students get time to work.

**Chart 70: First year students are the least likely to work during the term time.**

*Q89. Do you currently have any form of paid employment or intend to arrange any in the current academic year, including the summer holidays? Please select all that apply*



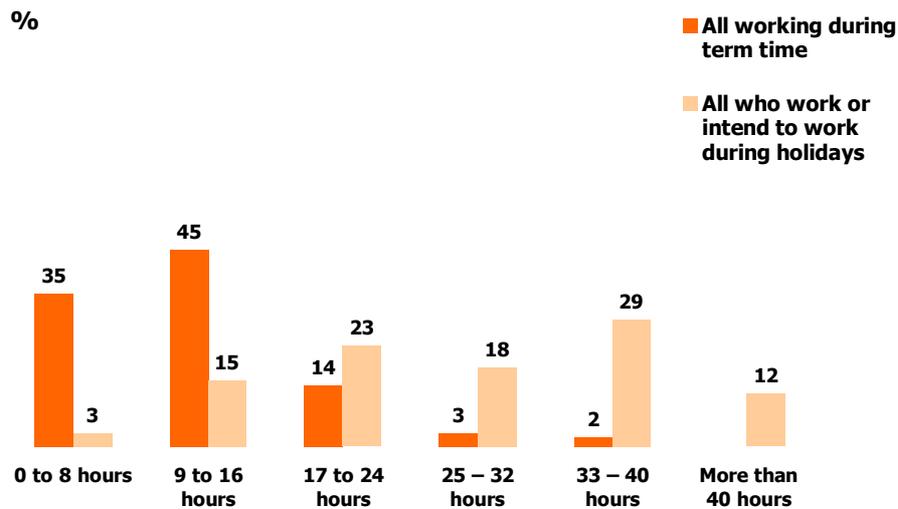
Base: First year (863); Second year (1059); Third year + (1254)

Unsurprisingly, when looking at the number of hours a week that students work there is a large difference between term time work and holiday work – see chart 71. In the term time students work on average 11.6 hours a week, compared to an intended 27.8 hours in university holidays.

## Chart 71: Student likely to work longer hours during the holidays

*Q90 How many hours a week do you work during term time?*

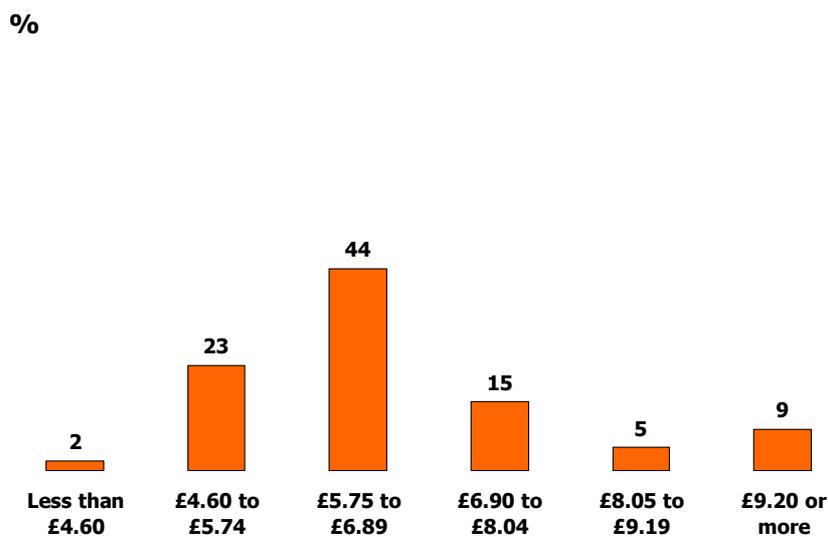
*Q91 How many hours a week do you work, or intend to work, during the holidays?*



Base: All working during term time (1019); All working/planning to work during holidays (1459)

On average students that work earn £7.01 per hour. Compared to last year's results this average rate has increased from £6.57. This is above both the development rate minimum wage of £4.83 per hour (for workers aged 18-21) and the minimum wage for workers aged 22 years and older of £5.80 per hour.

**Chart 72: Approximate hourly pay of students working**  
*Q93. Approximately how much do you get paid per hour?*



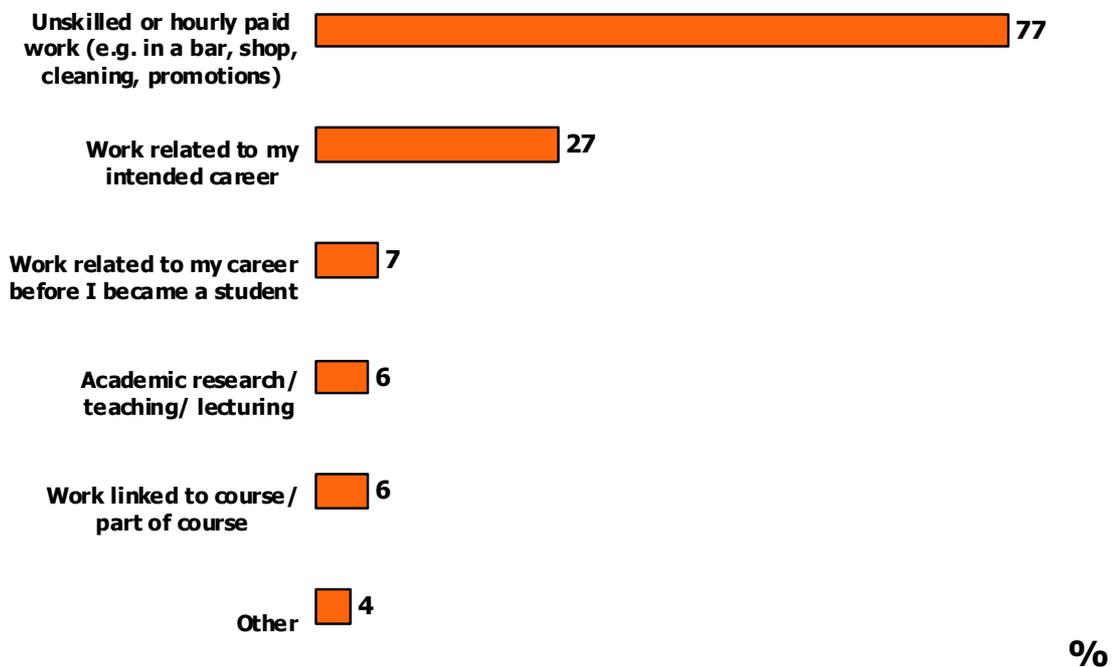
Base: All who work (2001)

The vast majority of students, 77%, do unskilled or hourly paid work and there are no significant differences in the type of work when this is split by those that work during the term time and those that work during the university holidays. Despite the fact that most students do unskilled work, one quarter of students said that their work was related to their intended career. When breaking this down by age, we see that younger students are significantly more likely to do unskilled work (91% of 18 year olds), whereas those students 21 plus are significantly more likely to do work related to career before they became a student (15% of 21 plus students compared with 7% overall). There are also interesting findings when breaking it down by subject, where we see significantly more students studying Medicine & Dentistry, and Physical Sciences doing academic research, teaching or

lecturing as their paid work, obviously typified by subjects which require strong interests in to study.

### Chart 73: Majority of students do unskilled or hourly paid work

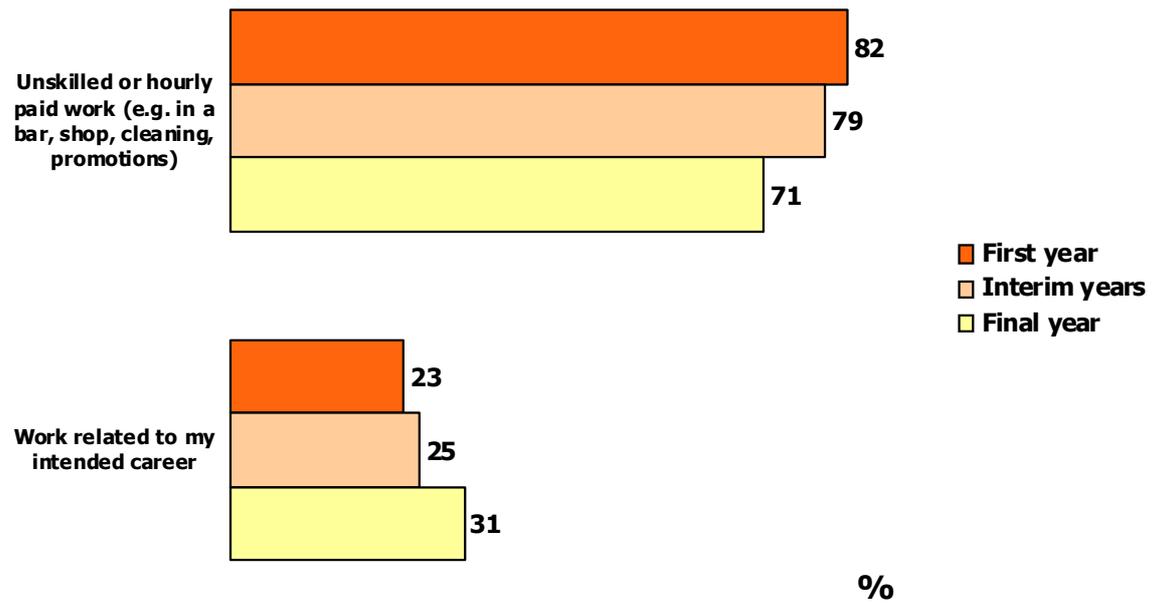
*Q92. What type(s) of paid work do you do? Please select all that apply*



Base: All who work (2001)

### Chart 74: Type of work significantly influenced by year of study

Q92. What type(s) of paid work do you do? Please select all that apply

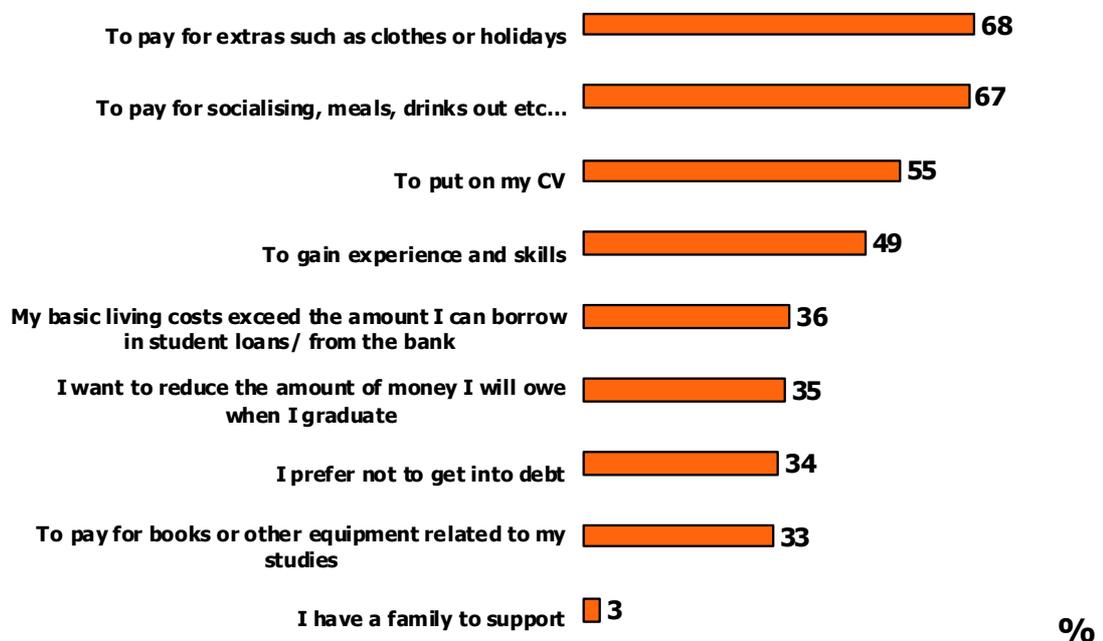


Base: All first years who work (539); All second years who work (698); All third + years who work (764)

Among those students that work, the most common reasons for working are 'to pay for extras such as clothes or holidays' (68%) and 'to pay for socialising, meals and drinks out' (67%) - see chart 8. Therefore for some students paid employment seems to be geared towards paying for luxuries rather than meeting their living expenses. Having said this, over a third of students that work, 36%; said that they worked because their basic living costs exceeded the amount they can borrow and 33% said they worked to pay for books or equipment related to their studies. Therefore, while many students may use paid employment to buy luxuries, for a significant minority paid employment seems to be an essential part of funding their studies.

### Chart 75: Most common reasons cited for working are to pay for extras such as clothes or holidays or to pay for socialising

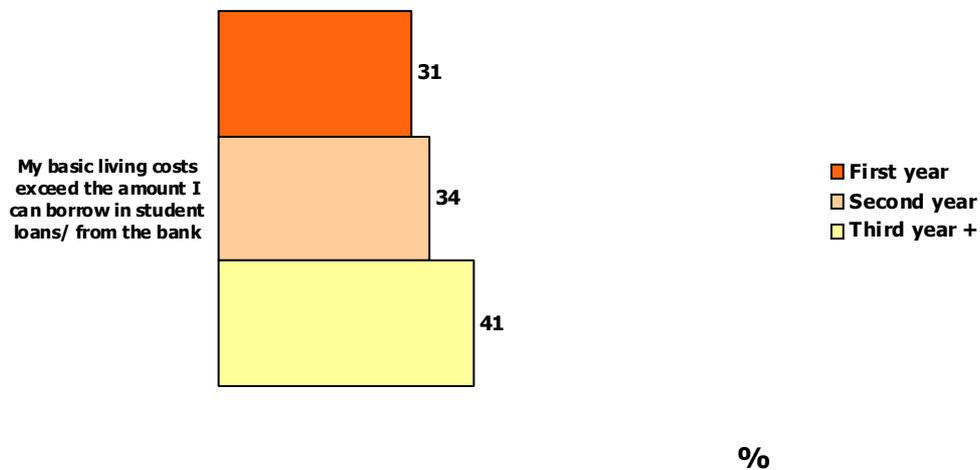
*Q94. Why do you work?*



Base: All who work (2001)

**Chart 76: Final year students are significantly more likely than first year students to work to meet their basic living costs**

*Q94. Why do you work?*



Base: All first years who work (539); All second years who work (698); All third years + who work (764)

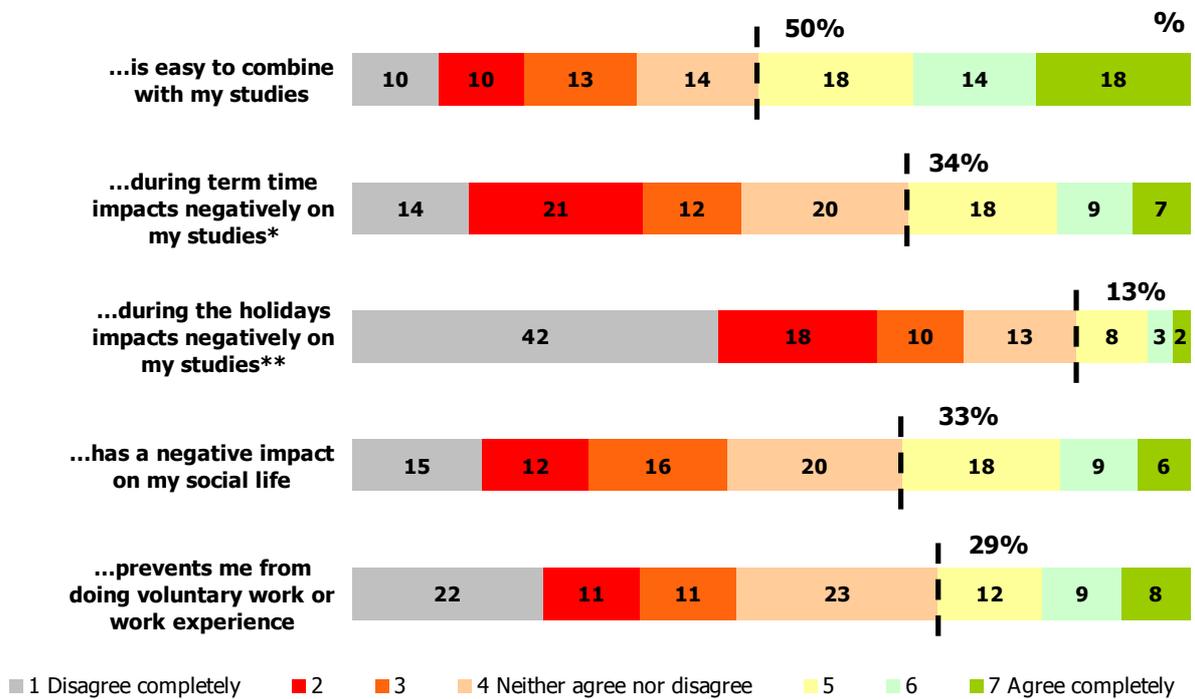
In chart 76, we see that final year students are also significantly more likely than first year students to work in order to meet basic living costs; this is supported by findings in the previous report, where we saw paid employment being used to a greater extent by third years as sources of funding for university. It also indicated the deteriorating finances of students as they progressed through university. However they are doing something to address that. When we look at the breakdown by subject area, we see significantly more language and business and admin studies students doing to work to gain experience and skills, presumably so they are able to use the language they study, and get experience working in admin or an office environment.

When students were asked about the impact that paid employment has on their studies, 50% of students said that it is easy to combine paid employment with their studies, while 33% said that it was not. However, when students who worked during the term time were asked if they agreed that work impacts negatively on their studies 34% agreed. This was significantly affected by year of study, as third year plus students were significantly more likely to agree with this statement than first year students (41% of final year students agreed with this statement compared to 24% of first year statements; though both figures are less than the previous year). As is to be expected, a much lower proportion of students who planned to work during the holidays thought that it would negatively affects their studies, among students planning to work during the holidays, only 13% agreed that paid employment during the holidays impacts negatively on their studies. Interestingly this figure is significantly increased for students in social class group A (20%), compared with 11% for both group B and C1.

Interestingly, 33% of students that worked agreed with the statement 'my paid employment has a negative impact on my social life' and 29% agreed that 'my paid employment prevents me from doing voluntary work or work experience' – interestingly this is significantly higher amongst females than males (33% compared with 24% for males). This suggests that it is not just studying that can be negatively affected by working, but also other areas of students lives. It may also explain why many employed students are drawn to bar work, as this is seen as a more social form of employment; resulting in less of a negative impact on their social life.

### Chart 77: Paid work during the term time is more likely to have a negative impact on studies compared to work during the holidays

Q95. My paid employment...

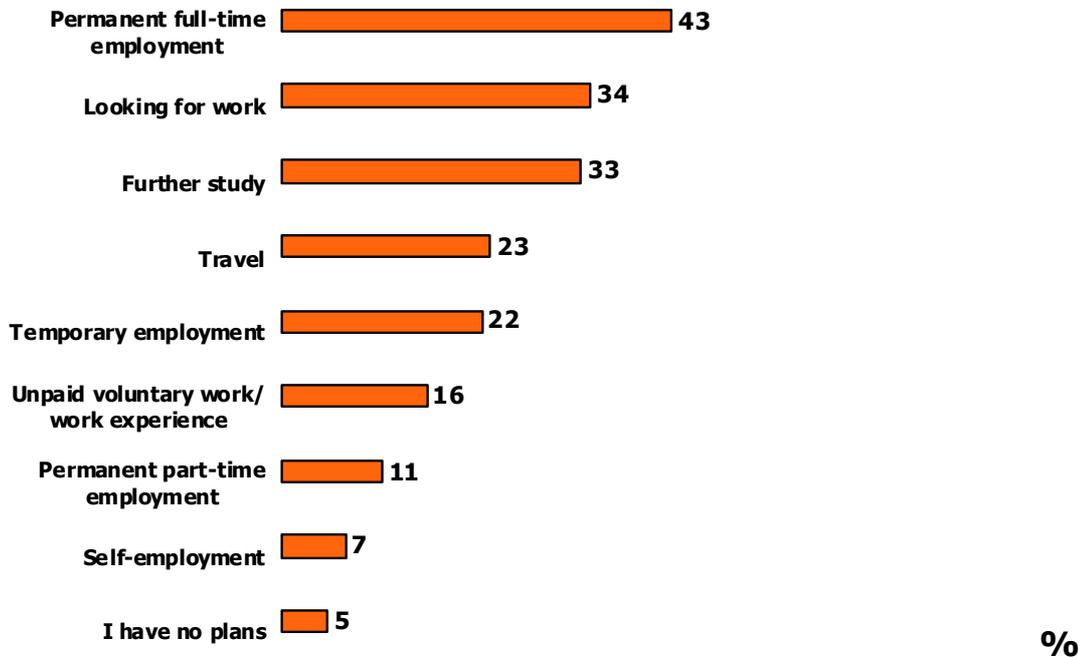


## 15 Post Course Plans

When students in their final year were asked what best describes their plans after their current course of study more than three quarters, 76%, said paid employment (either full time, part time, temporary or self employment or looking for work). The most popular response was 'permanent full-time employment' which was identified by 43% of these students. Additionally, just under one quarter, 23%, of final year students said that they planned to travel after their current course of study.

### Chart 78: Almost half of final year students plan to enter permanent full time employment after their current course of study

*Q97. Which of the following best describes your plans after your current course of study?*

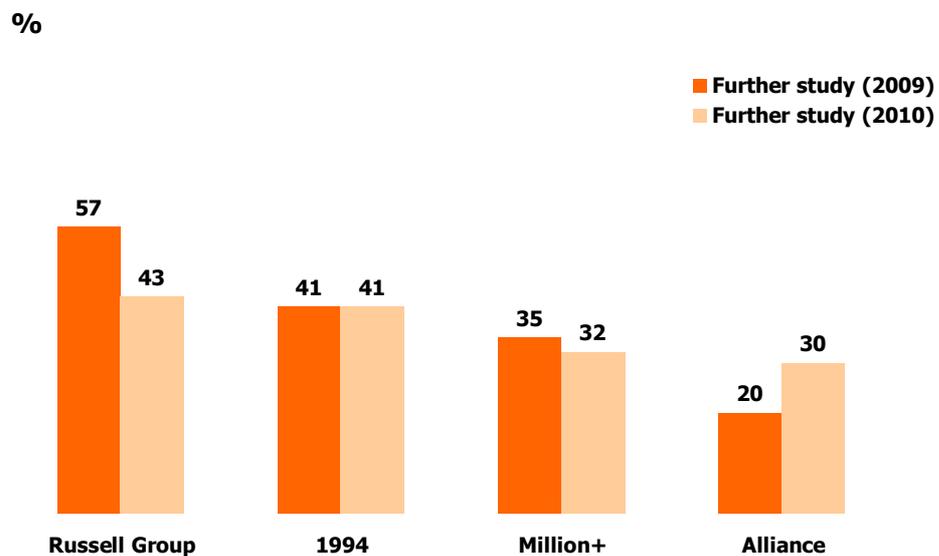


Base: All final year students (951)

A large proportion of final year students, 33%, said they planned to undertake further study after their current course had finished. This has decreased since last year's study, where 38% said that they planned to undertake further study. This could be due to the fact that the economic climate seems to have improved since 2009, and is making students more confident about their ability to find work. However, given that 70% of students say they are concerned about the economic climate (see below), it seems more likely that media coverage of the high competition for places on undergraduate and postgraduate courses is leading students to no longer see further study as a safer option.

**Chart 79: Students attending Russell Group institutions are the most likely to be planning to do further studying, but are much less likely to be planning this than they were in 2009**

*Q97. Which of the following best describes your plans after your current course of study?*



Base: Russell Group 2009 (60); Russell Group 2010 (211); 1994 2009 (48); 1994 2010 (146); Million+ 2009 (55); Million+ 2010 (149); Alliance (61) 2009; Alliance 2010 (156)

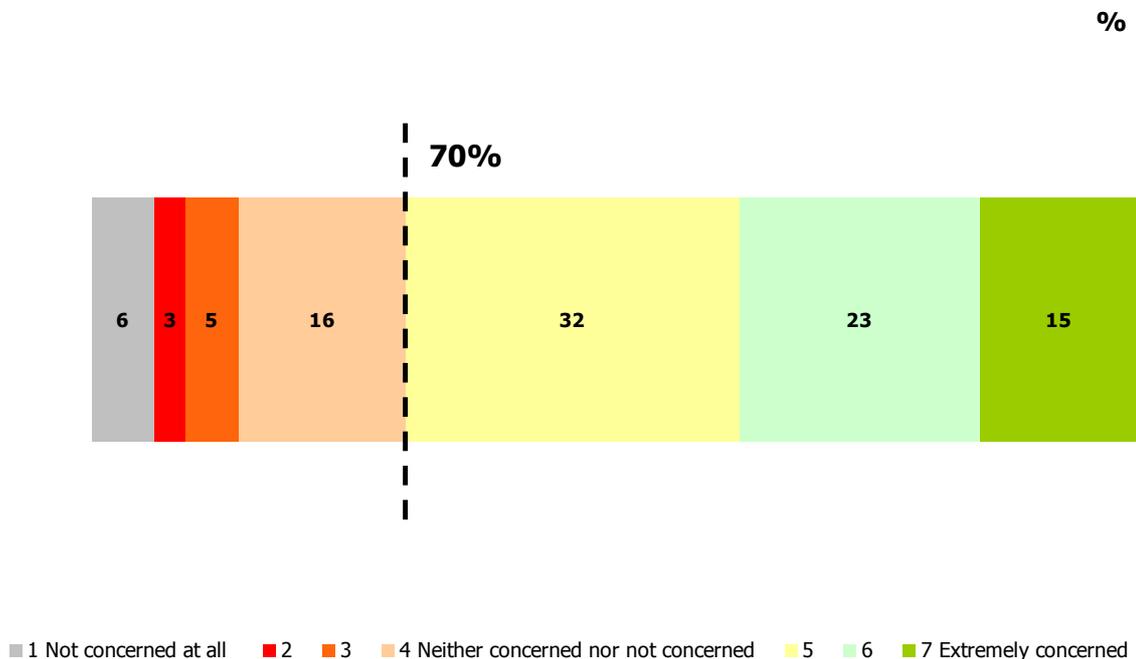
The percentage of students planning to undertake further study continues to be affected by institution type. Students attending either Russell Group or 1994 institutions are still more likely than those attending Million+ or Alliance institutions to say they plan to do further

study. However, the difference is less marked, as Russell Group students are much less likely to say they plan to undertake further study (43%) than they were in 2009 (57%). Conversely, Alliance+ students are much more likely to plan to undertake further study (30%) than they were in 2009 (20%).

Among final year students there is a high level of concern about the current economic climate, with 70% of students saying they are concerned – see chart 80. This is more than the percentage saying they were concerned, 67%, in 2009. Interestingly, females are significantly more likely to be concerned (77%) than males (62%).

**Chart 80: The majority of students are worried about the current economic climate**

*Q98. How worried are you about the current economic climate?*

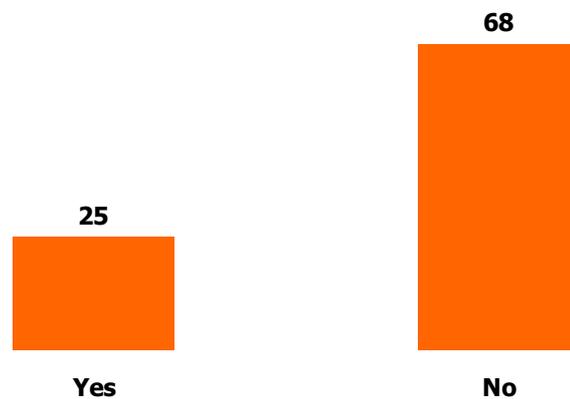


Base: All final year students (951)

For the majority of students, this concern about the economic climate does not appear to have affected their plans after studying. Among those students concerned about the economic climate, one quarter said they had changed their plans as a result of the economic climate – see chart 81. This means that over all the final year students surveyed, just under one fifth, 18%, have changed their plans due to the economic climate.

**Chart 81: Among those students concerned about the economic climate, one quarter said they have changed their plans as a result of the economic downturn**

**Q99. IF CONCERNED Have you changed your plans after studying as a result of the current economic climate?**  
%



Base: All final year students concerned about economic climate (663)

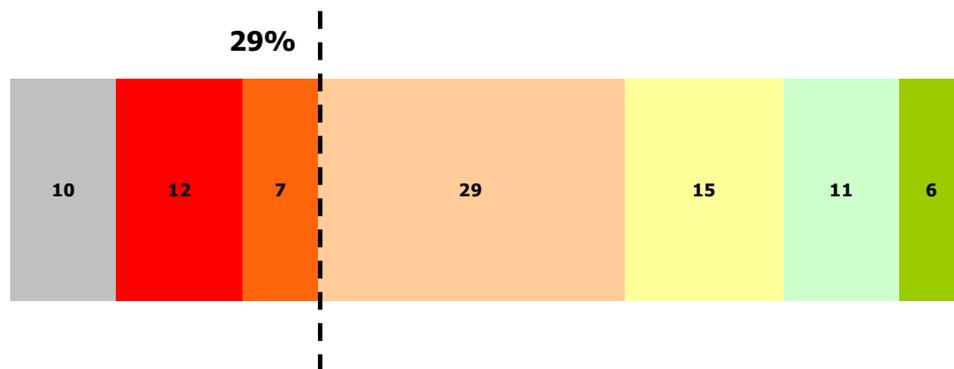
Students from socio-economic group C2 are much more likely to have changed their plans due to the economic climate. Of the C2 students concerned about the economic climate, nearly half, 42%, have changed their plans.

When final year students were asked if their university's advice about careers and future study meets their needs over one quarter, 29%, said that it didn't meet their needs – see chart 82. This is significantly higher than the percentage who said it did not meet their needs in 2009, 23%. As it seems unlikely that the facilities provided by universities have changed substantially since 2009, this suggests that students' expectations of careers services have increased, potentially due to increased concern about the economic climate leading them to better recognise the need for adequate preparation before leaving university.

**Chart 82: More than a quarter of final years students said the advice provided by their university about careers and future study does not meet their needs**

*Q100. To what extent does advice provided by your university about careers and future study meet your needs?*

%



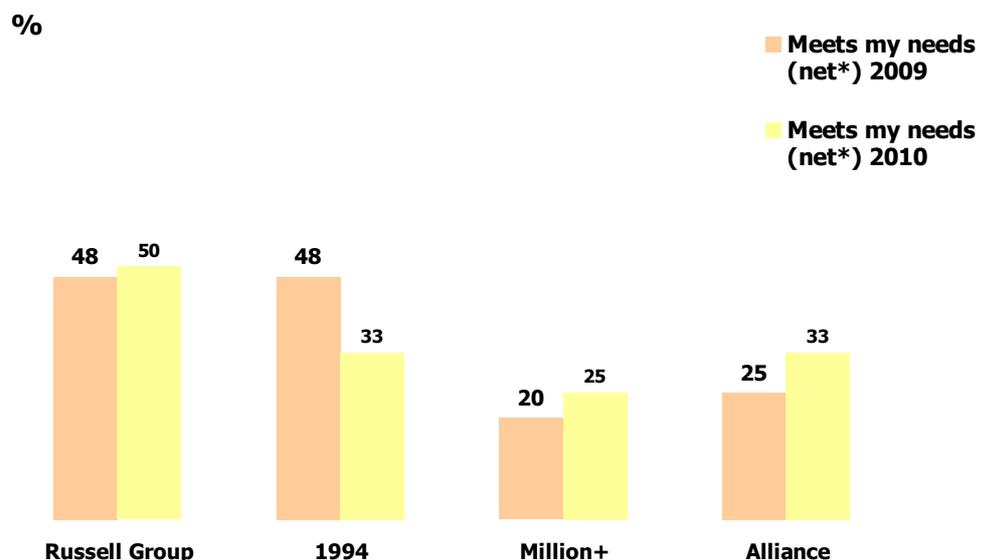
■ 1 Does not meet my needs at all ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 Partly meets my needs ■ 5 ■ 6 ■ 7 Meets my needs completely

Base: All final year students (951)

However, when this is looked at by institution type, a number of differences appear. In 2009 it was found that students attending either Russell Group or 1994 institutions were significantly more likely to say their university’s advice about careers and future study meets their needs than students attending Million+ or Alliance institutions. However in 2010, the percentage of 1994 Group students saying their university’s advice meets their needs has decreased substantially, from 48% to 33%, and is now similar to the percentage of Million+ and Alliance students saying this. Students attending Russell Group institutions are therefore significantly more likely to say their careers advice meets their needs than students from any of the other institution types.

**Chart 83: Students attending Russell Group institutions were significantly more likely to say that the careers advice provided by their university meets their needs**

*Q100. To what extent does advice provided by your university about careers and future study meet your needs?*



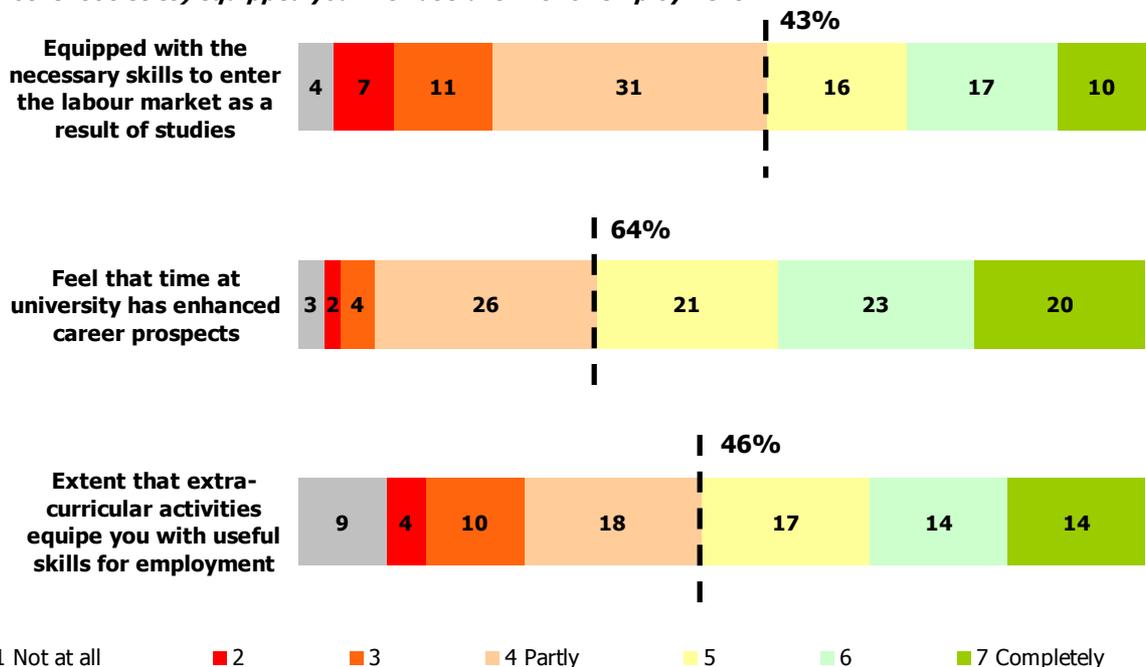
Base: Russell Group 2009 (60); Russell Group 2010 (211); 1994 2009 (48); 1994 2010 (146); Million + 2009 (55); Million+ 2010 (149); Alliance 2009 (61); Alliance 2010 (156)

\*Sum of codes 1, 2 and 3 on a 7 point scale

When final year students were asked about how they felt their studies, time at university and extra-curricular activities had equipped them with useful skills for employment and enhanced their career prospects, significantly more thought that their time at university had enhanced their career prospects compared with the number who felt their studies equipped them with the necessary skills to enter the labour market. This suggests that for many students while a degree is seen as generally enhancing your career prospects it does not necessarily provide you with vocational skills.

**Chart 84: A much higher proportion of final year students feel that university has enhanced their career prospects than feel equipped with the necessary skills to enter the labour market**

*Q101. Do you feel equipped with the skills necessary to enter the labour market as a result of your studies?*  
*Q102. To what extent do you feel that your time at university has enhanced your career prospects?*  
*Q103. To what extent have your extra-curricular activities (such as volunteering, representation, sports clubs and other societies) equipped you with useful skills for employment?*



Base: All final year students (951)



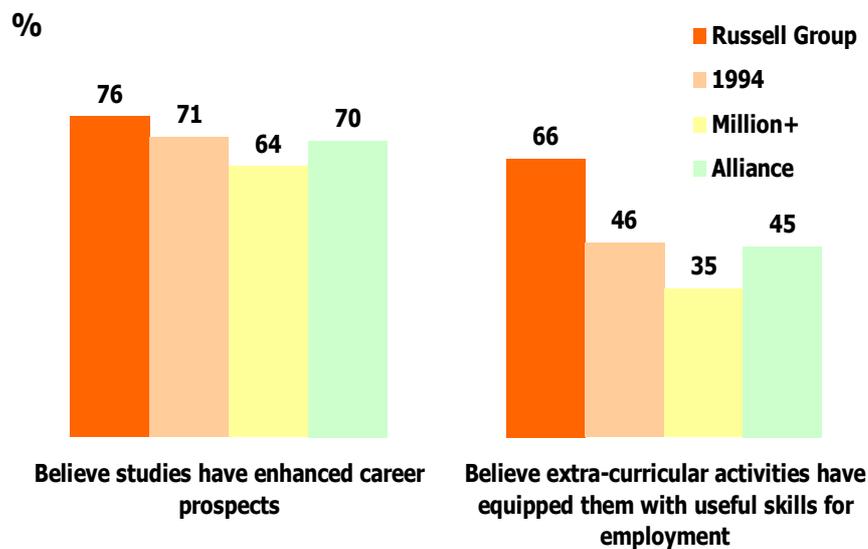
The results also indicate that this year students are more pessimistic about the benefits of their degree than they have been in previous years. The percentage believing their time at university has enhanced their career prospects has decreased significantly, from 75% in 2009 to 64% in 2010. Approximately one quarter, 26%, say that university has partly enhanced their career prospects, while just under one tenth, 9%, say that it has not enhanced their career prospects. Russell Group students are the most likely to say that their studies have enhanced their career prospects, with 76% saying this, compared to 71%, 64% and 70% of 1994 Group, Million+ and Alliance students respectively.

The percentage believing extra-curricular activities have equipped them with useful skills for employment has also decreased, from 51% to 46%, less than half of final year students. Here, Russell Group students are significantly more likely to believe that extra-curricular activities have equipped them with useful skills, with two thirds, 66%, saying this, compared to 46%, 35% and 45% of 1994 Group, Million+ and Alliance students respectively.

**Chart 85: Students attending Russell Group institutions are the most likely to believe their studies have enhanced their career prospects**

**Q102. To what extent do you feel that your studies have enhanced your career prospects?**

**Q103. To what extent have your extra-curricular activities (such as volunteering, representation, sports clubs and other societies) equipped you with useful skills for employment?**



Base: Russell Group (211); 1994 (146); Million+ (149); Alliance (156)

Finally, the percentage thinking they are equipped with the necessary skills to enter the labour market has decreased significantly, from 50% in 2009 to 43% in 2010. Just over one fifth, 22%, say they do not feel equipped.

These findings suggest that students this year are more concerned about the economic climate, and less likely to believe that their degree has equipped them for finding employment in it. A possible explanation for this is that the negative press coverage of the competitive state of the graduate job market has led students to doubt whether their degree alone will be enough to secure the future employment they are looking for, having heard case studies of students from previous years who have struggled to find work.

## 16 Overall feelings about university

When students were asked how pleased they were that they decided to go to university, 81% said they were pleased, with nearly half (48%) saying they were extremely pleased. However the overall proportion saying they were pleased has fallen significantly since 2008, where 85% had said they were pleased. Once again 1<sup>st</sup> year students were significantly more pleased than 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year students.

Similarly this perception was also affected by institution type, with significantly more students from Russell Group universities saying they were extremely pleased (58% up from 48% overall), and with those saying they were pleased in general rising to 88%.

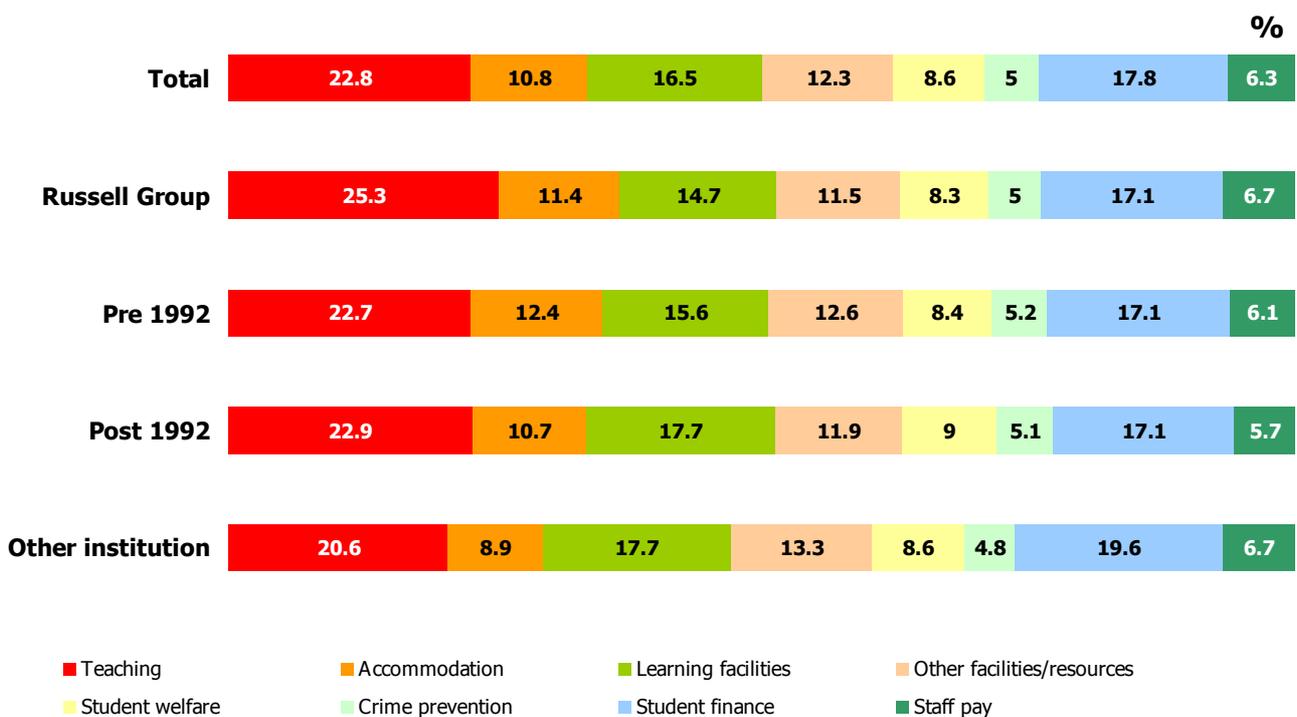
When students were asked where they felt they sat on a 10 point scale between the statements 'I am a student engaged in a community of learning' and 'I am a customer and expect the service I have paid for'; it was split with 48% saying they were more in agreement with the first statement (community of learning; 1-4), 18% saying they were in the middle (5) and finally a third (34%) saying they were more in agreement with the second statement (customer; 6-10). This also seemed significantly affected by institution type, with those from Russell Group universities agreeing significantly more with 'I am a student engaged in a community of learning' than in Post-1992 and other institutions, whilst significantly more students from Post-1992 institutions agreed with 'I am a customer and expect the service I have paid for'.

Students were then asked to imagine they have a pot of money to use to improve their university and how they would allocate this based on eight different attributes; Teaching, accommodation, learning facilities, other facilities, student welfare, crime prevention, student finance and finally staff pay – overall students were more likely to put this into teaching

(23%), followed by student finance (18%) and then learning facilities (17%) - see chart 86.

## Chart 62: Allocation of funding

*Q104. Please imagine you have a pot of money to use to improve your university. How would you allocate it? Please indicate what % you would allocate to each area/ aspect of your university*



Base: All answering section 12 (2407)

In terms of differences across the institution types, we see that those at Russell Group would put more money into teaching, whilst putting less into the facilities in general.



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