Student Survey.ie

Irish Survey of Student Engagement National Report 2020

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HEA HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY AN tÚDARÁS um ARD-OIDEACHAS

iua IRISH UNIVERSITIES ASSOCIATION

thea TECHNOLOGICAL HIGHER EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

USI Union of Students in Ireland Aontas na Mac Léinn in Eirinn

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Executive Summary

Purpose

StudentSurvey.ie (the Irish Survey of Student Engagement; Suirbhé na hÉireann ar Rannpháirtíocht na Mac Léinn) has become an established feature of the higher education landscape in Ireland since its development in 2012-2013. StudentSurvey.ie asks students directly about their experiences of higher education, including their academic, personal, and social development. In 2020, 44,707 students in 26 higher education institutions participated.

For the purposes of StudentSurvey.ie, student engagement reflects two key elements. The first is the amount of time and effort that students put into their studies and other educationally beneficial activities. The second is how institutions deploy resources and organise curriculum and learning opportunities to encourage students to participate in meaningful activities linked to learning.

A unique partnership was established between the Higher Education Authority (HEA), the Irish Universities (IUA), the Technological Higher Education Association (THEA), and the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) to manage, direct, and implement the survey project. The partnership was extended through the national StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group, which maintains strategic direction for the survey project and consists of the aforementioned organisations, participating institutions, and the statutory quality assurance and qualifications agency, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI).

Interpretation of detailed results requires contextualising the results with information from each individual institution and understanding what the students in that institution are saying. Institutions are committed to interpreting and utilising StudentSurvey.ie data to enhance the experiences of their students and do not support the use of student engagement results for any overly simplistic purpose that could be perceived as ranking institutions.

Method

The focus of the survey is on student engagement with learning rather than solely student satisfaction. Student engagement with college life is important in enabling them to develop key capabilities, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, writing skills, team-work, and communication skills (Kuh, 2001[1]; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005[2]). The comprehensive survey consists of 67 questions, grouped by the engagement 'indicator' to which they relate. There is an additional body of questions that do not directly relate to a specific indicator, but that are included in the survey because of their contribution to a broad understanding of student engagement. Each indicator score is calculated from responses to the multiple questions that relate to that indicator. The indicators are:

- Higher-Order Learning
- Reflective and Integrative Learning
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Learning Strategies
- Collaborative Learning
- Student-Faculty Interaction
- Effective Teaching Practices
- Quality of Interactions
- Supportive Environment

The survey has generated a consistent dataset of results since 2014, which is facilitating time series analysis and inter-organisational analysis. Approximately 245,000 first year undergraduate, final year undergraduate and taught postgraduate students have participated in StudentSurvey.ie since the 2013 pilot and the national response rate has increased steadily from 10.9% in 2013 to 31% in 2020.

There is a second survey, which is designed for postgraduate research (PGR) students (Masters by research and doctoral degree students). The PGR StudentSurvey.ie runs every two years, with the next fieldwork period scheduled for February-March 2021.

1. Kuh, G.D. (2001). Assessing what really matters to student learning: Inside the National Survey of Student Engagement. *Change, 33*, 10-13.
2. Pascarella E. & Terenzini, P. (2005). *How College Affects Students: A Third Decade of Research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Summary of 2020 results

A total of 44,707 students responded to the 2020 survey, which represents a national response rate of 31%. This is the highest response rate to StudentSurvey.ie to date. The average indicator score for each indicator is presented below. The reader is directed to pages 20-21 for further information about how to interpret indicator scores.

The key points to remember are: a) indicator scores are scored out of a maximum of 60, b) indicator scores are NOT percentages and, c) due to the way they are calculated, it is not possible to compare indicator scores across different indicators, but d) it is possible to compare indicator scores for different groups within the same indicator.

Table 0.1 Indicator scores for all indicators by cohort

	All students	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Higher-Order Learning	**36.4**	**34.7**	**35.9**	**41.3**
Reflective and Integrative Learning	**31.5**	**29.6**	**31.7**	**36.2**
Quantitative Reasoning	**21.1**	**19.2**	**22.1**	**24.0**
Learning Strategies	**31.7**	**30.8**	**30.8**	**35.4**
Collaborative Learning	**31.3**	**30.3**	**33.1**	**30.7**
Student-Faculty Interaction	**13.9**	**11.5**	**15.8**	**16.9**
Effective Teaching Practices	**34.9**	**34.7**	**33.5**	**37.7**
Quality of Interactions	**38.5**	**38.5**	**37.0**	**41.4**
Supportive Environment	**28.0**	**29.7**	**25.5**	**27.9**

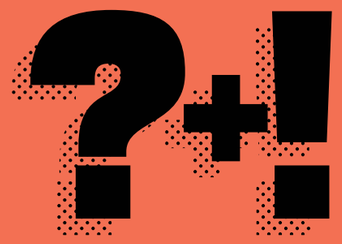
Particular attention is drawn to Chapter 4, which provides an initial investigation into the factors underlying first year undergraduates' engagement in higher education that may be most affected by the necessitated changes to the traditional on-campus education model due to public health measures in place in response to COVID-19. The aim was to consider the previous three fieldwork years of first year undergraduate students to establish a baseline of their experiences before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 0.2 Significant differences between groups of undergraduate first year undergraduate respondents by characteristics

	Collaborative Learning	*Student-Faculty Interaction*	*Quality of Interactions*	*Supportive Environment*
Fieldwork Year	**Some**	**Some**	**Some**	**Yes**
Gender	**No**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Mode of Study	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Age Group	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Domicile Group	**No**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Term-time Residence	**Some**	**No**	**No**	**Some**
Institution Type	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Some**	**Yes**
Programme Type	**Yes**	**Some**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Supportive Environment	**Some**	**Some**	**Some**	**Some**

Next steps

Significant resources are being directed at enabling all participating institutions to build on the extensive activity to date by conducting more analysis on the responses to StudentSurvey.ie, and also to achieve further impact on foot of those results. This work is being led by the recently established StudentSurvey.ie Analysis and Impact Group.



Achoimre Feidhmiúcháin

Cuspóir

Tá StudentSurvey.ie (the Irish Survey of Student Engagement; Suirbhé na hÉireann ar Rannpháirtíocht na Mac Léinn) ar an bhfód anois ón uair a forbraíodh in 2012-2013 é agus is gné seasta den earnáil ardoideachais in Éirinn é. Cuireann StudentSurvey.ie ceisteanna díreacha ar mhic léinn faoina n-eispéireas san earnáil ardoideachais, agus san áireamh leis sin tá a bhforbairt acadúil, phearsanta agus shóisialta. Ghlac 44,707 mac léinn in 26 institiúid ardoideachais páirt in 2020.

Chun críocha StudentSurvey.ie, léiríonn rannpháirtíocht na mac léinn dhá phríomheilimint. Ar an gcéad dul síos, léirítear an méid ama agus dua a chaitheann mic léinn lena gcuid staidéir agus le gníomhaíochtaí tairbheacha oideachais eile. Ar an dara dul síos, léirítear conas a bhaineann institiúidí feidhm as acmhainní agus conas a eagraíonn siad deiseanna curaclaim agus foghlama chun mic léinn a spreagadh páirt a ghlacadh i ngníomhaíochtaí fiúntacha atá nasctha leis an bhfoghlaim.

Cuireadh comhpháirtíocht uathúil ar bun idir an tÚdarás um Árd-Oideachas (HEA), Cumann Ollscoileanna na hÉireann (IUA), an Cumann Árd-Oideachais Teicneolaíochta (THEA) agus Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn (USI) chun an tionscadal suirbhé a bhainistiú, a stiúradh agus a chur chun feidhme. Rinne Grúpa Stiúrtha náisiúnta StudentSurvey.ie tuilleadh forbartha ar an gcomhpháirtíocht. Is é an Grúpa Stiúrtha a thugann stiúir straitéiseach don tionscadal suirbhé agus is iad na heagraíochtaí atá luaite cheana atá páirteach ann, mar aon leis na hinstitiúidí rannpháirteacha agus an ghníomhaireacht reachtúil um dhearbhú cáilíochta agus cáilíochtaí, Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann (QQI).

Nuair atáthar i mbun léirmhínithe ar thorthaí mionsonraithe, ní mór féachaint ar na torthaí i gcomhthéacs faisnéise ó gach ceann de na hinstitiúidí astu féin chomh maith le tuiscint a fháil air sin atá á rá ag na mic léinn san institiúid sin. Tá na hinstitiúidí tiomanta na sonraí ó StudentSurvey.ie a léirmhíniú agus a úsáid chun feabhas a chur le heispéiris a gcuid mac léinn, agus ní thacaíonn siad le haon úsáid róshimplí a bhaint as torthaí na rannpháirtíochta mac léinn a d'fhéadfadh a thabhairt le fios go bhfuiltear i mbun rangaithe ar na hinstitiúidí.

Cur chuige

Is ar rannpháirtíocht mac léinn leis an bhfoghlaim atá an suirbhé dírithe, agus ní díreach ar shástacht na mac léinn. Tá sé tábhachtach go mbeidh mic léinn rannpháirteach i saol an choláiste chun go ndéanfar éascaíocht dóibh bunchumais a fhorbairt cosúil le smaointeoireacht chriticiúil, réiteach fadhbanna, scileanna scríbhneoireachta, obair foirne agus scileanna cumarsáide (Kuh, 2001[1]; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005[2]). Tá 67 ceist sa suirbhé cuimsitheach seo, agus déantar iad a ghrúpáil de réir an 'táscaire' rannpháirtíochta a mbaineann siad leis. Tá sraith bhreise ceisteanna nach mbaineann go díreach le táscaire faoi leith agus atá curtha sa suirbhé mar go gcabhraíonn siad tuiscint níos leithne a fháil ar rannpháirtíocht mac léinn. Déantar an scór do gach táscaire a ríomh ó na freagraí a tugadh ar raon ceisteanna a bhain leis an táscaire sin. Seo a leanas na táscairí:

- Foghlaim Ardoird
- Foghlaim Mhachnamhach agus Chomhtháiteach
- Réasúnú Cainníochtúil
- Straitéisí Foghlama
- Foghlaim Chomhoibríoch
- Teagmháil idir an Mac Léinn agus an Dámh
- Cleachtais Teagaisc Éifeachtacha
- Caighdeán na gCaidreamh
- Timpeallacht Thacúil

Tá tacar sonraí comhsheasmhach cnuasaithe ó 2014 ag an suirbhé, agus éascaíonn na torthaí sin anailís amshraitheanna agus anailís idir-eagraíochta. Tá páirt glactha i StudentSurvey.ie ag thart ar 245,000 mac léinn fochéime na chéad bhliana, mac léinn fochéime na bliana deiridh agus mac léinn iarchéime múinte ón uair a seoladh an suirbhé píolótach in 2013 agus tháinig ardú leanúnach ar an ráta freagartha náisiúnta ó 10.9% in 2013 go 31% in 2020.

Tá an dara suirbhé ann ar dearadh é do mhic léinn taighde iarchéime (Mic léinn mháistreachta trí thaighde agus dochtúireachta). Reáchtáiltear PGR StudentSurvey.ie PGR gach dhá bhliain, agus tá an chéad tréimhse oibre allamuigh eile beartaithe do mhí Feabhra-mí an Mhárta 2021.

1. Kuh, G.D. (2001). Assessing what really matters to student learning: Inside the National Survey of Student Engagement. *Change, 33*, 10-13.
2. Pascarella E. & Terenzini, P. (2005). *How College Affects Students: A Third Decade of Research.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Achoimre ar thorthaí 2020

D'fhreagair 44,707 mac léinn san iomlán suirbhé 2020, agus is ionann sin agus ráta freagartha náisiúnta 31%. Tá an ráta freagartha seo ar an ráta freagartha is airde go dtí seo a bhí ag StudentSurvey.ie. Cuirtear i láthair thíos an meánscór do gach táscaire. Moltar don léitheoir féachaint ar leathanaigh 20-21 chun tuilleadh eolais a fháil faoin gcaoi na scóir táscaire a léirmhíniú. Seo a leanas na príomhphointí: a) is é 60 an t-uas-scór do tháscaire, b) ní céatadáin atá i gceist le scóir táscaire agus, c) ní féidir comparáid a dhéanamh idir scóir táscaire agus táscairí éagsúla eile i ngeall ar an gcaoi a ríomhtar iad, ach d) is féidir comparáid a dhéanamh idir scóir táscaire i gcás grúpaí éagsúla laistigh den táscaire céanna.

Tábla 0.1 Scóir táscaire do gach táscaire de réir cohóirt

	Gach mac léinn	An Chéad Bhliain	An Bhliain Deiridh	Mic Léinn Mhúinte Iarchéime
Foghlaim Ardoird	**36.4**	**34.7**	**35.9**	**41.3**
Foghlaim Mhachnamhach agus Chomhtháiteach	**31.5**	**29.6**	**31.7**	**36.2**
Réasúnú Cainníochtúil	**21.1**	**19.2**	**22.1**	**24.0**
Straitéisí Foghlama	**31.7**	**30.8**	**30.8**	**35.4**
Foghlaim Chomhoibríoch	**31.3**	**30.3**	**33.1**	**30.7**
Teagmháil idir an Mac Léinn agus an Dámh	**13.9**	**11.5**	**15.8**	**16.9**
Cleachtais Teagaisc Éifeachtacha	**34.9**	**34.7**	**33.5**	**37.7**
Caighdeán na gCaidreamh	**38.5**	**38.5**	**37.0**	**41.4**
Timpeallacht Thacúil	**28.0**	**29.7**	**25.5**	**27.9**

Déanann Caibidil 4 cur síos ar na fachtóirí sin a imríonn tionchar ar rannpháirtíocht mhic léinn fochéime na chéad bhliana san ardoideachas is mó a bheidh i gceist leis na hathruithe riachtanacha sin a thiocfaidh ar an múnla traidisiúnta oideachais ar an gcampas i ngeall ar na bearta sláinte poiblí atá glactha mar fhreagra ar COVID-19. Is é an aidhm a bhí ann cíoradh a dhéanamh ar na trí bliana oibre allamuigh a rinneadh ar mhic léinn fochéime na chéad bhliana chun go socrófaí bunlíne as ar féidir iniúchadh a dhéanamh ar a n-eispéiris sula raibh paindéim COVID-19 ann.

Tábla 0.2 Difríochtaí suntasacha idir grúpaí mac léinn fochéime sa chéad bhliain de réir tréithe

	Foghlaim Chomhoibríoch	*Teagmháil idir an Mac Léinn agus an Dámh*	*Caighdeán na gCaidreamh*	*Timpeallacht Thacúil*
Bliain na hOibre Allamuigh	**Roinnt**	**Roinnt**	**Roinnt**	**Tá**
Inscne	**Níl**	**Tá**	**Tá**	**Tá**
Modh Staidéir	**Tá**	**Tá**	**Tá**	**Tá**
Aoisghrúpa	**Tá**	**Tá**	**Tá**	**Tá**
Grúpa Sainchónaí	**Níl**	**Tá**	**Tá**	**Tá**
Lóistín i rith an téarma	**Roinnt**	**Níl**	**Níl**	**Roinnt**
Cineál Institiúide	**Tá**	**Tá**	**Roinnt**	**Tá**
Cineál Cláir	**Tá**	**Roinnt**	**Tá**	**Tá**
Réimse Staidéir	**Roinnt**	**Roinnt**	**Roinnt**	**Roinnt**

Na chéad chéimeanna eile

Tá acmhainní suntasacha á gcur i dtreo a chur ar chumas gach institiúid atá rannpháirteach forbairt a dhéanamh ar na gníomhaíochtaí ar fad ar tugadh fúthu go nuige seo trí a thuilleadh anailíse a dhéanamh ar na freagraí ar StudentSurvey.ie, agus tuilleadh tionchair a bhaint amach de bhun na dtorthaí sin. Tá an obair sin á stiúradh ag Grúpa Anailíse agus Tionchair StudentSurvey.ie a bunaíodh le gairid.

“Social distancing will change how we do things, but it does not mean having to completely change everything we do.

Chapter 1
Context for the Irish Survey of Student Engagement

StudentSurvey.ie (Irish Survey of Student Engagement; Suirbhé na hÉireann ar Rannpháirtíocht na Mac Léinn) invites responses from first year undergraduate, final year undergraduate and taught postgraduate students in 26 higher education institutions in Ireland.

There is a second survey, which is designed for postgraduate research (PGR) students (Masters by research and doctoral degree students). The PGR StudentSurvey.ie runs every two years.

The next fieldwork period of StudentSurvey.ie and PGR StudentSurvey.ie is scheduled for February–March 2021.

1.1 What is student engagement in learning?

The term 'student engagement' is used in educational contexts to refer to a range of related, but distinct, understandings of the interaction between students and the higher education institutions they attend. Most, if not all, interpretations of student engagement are based on the extent to which students actively avail of opportunities to involve themselves in 'educationally beneficial' activities and the extent to which institutions enable, facilitate, and encourage such involvement. StudentSurvey.ie focuses on students' engagement with their learning and their learning environments. It does not directly explore, for example, students' involvement in quality assurance or institutional decision-making.

Accordingly, for the purposes of StudentSurvey.ie, student engagement reflects two key elements. The first is the amount of time and effort that students put into their studies and other educationally beneficial activities. The second is how higher education institutions deploy resources and organise curriculum and other learning opportunities to encourage students to participate in meaningful activities that are linked to learning.

1.2 The value of StudentSurvey.ie for enhancement

StudentSurvey.ie has become an established feature of the higher education landscape in Ireland since its development in 2012–2013. Development and implementation of StudentSurvey.ie is driven by the intention to inform, support, and encourage enhancement discussions and activities throughout institutions, and to inform national policy.

The survey responses are securely collected for each participating higher education institution by a survey company. The data are anonymised and aggregated to national results and it is these national-level results that are presented in this report. The anonymous dataset of responses for each individual institution is returned to that institution for local analysis at the level of institution/ faculty/ school/ college/ department/ learning support unit, etc.

Year after year, there is greater variation in results within institutions than between institutions. This may be as expected, given the range of curriculum requirements and learning experiences across individual higher education institutions and different fields of study. The survey is comprehensive, and it seeks to explore many aspects of the student experience of higher education. Greatest benefit is realised when those exploring the data, both students and staff, have a deep understanding of the local context. Prioritisation of specific uses of the data is an institutional decision.

Higher education institutions have multiple sources of data about their students. The StudentSurvey.ie dataset is a valuable component of these sources, which are used in varying and increasingly sophisticated ways to identify good practice and plan for enhancement. The capacity to interpret the StudentSurvey.ie data in a timely manner remains variable between institutions.

At sectoral level, there is an increasing number of examples of effective uses of StudentSurvey.ie data, e.g. in Annual Institutional Quality Reports to Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), in strategic dialogue with the Higher Education Authority (HEA), by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, and in National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP) activities.

1.3 StudentSurvey.ie in light of COVID-19

All but five participating institutions had completed fieldwork for StudentSurvey.ie 2020 before the restrictions due to public health guidance related to COVID-19 were put in place and the pivot to emergency online delivery of teaching began. When interpreting the results for 2020, it is important to bear in mind that all questions require students to reflect on the academic year to date in its entirety. The value of the results of StudentSurvey.ie is therefore twofold. Firstly, they provide insightful feedback from students about wide-ranging aspects of their experience, which institutions can use to understand and improve the student experience and to measure the impact of recent interventions.

Secondly, and uniquely against the current backdrop, the results also provide us with a national and broad-based baseline of 44,707 students before their experience changed dramatically, with very little warning or time to plan for and adapt to the closure of campuses and emergency online environments. The StudentSurvey.ie National Report Editorial Group aims to establish this as a baseline, particularly in Chapter 4, and intends to return to the same questions in 2021 to evaluate the impact of the responses to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis on the cohort whose experience of student life is anticipated to be changed most fundamentally – first year undergraduate students.

1.4 The Union of Students in Ireland perspective

The Union of Students in Ireland (USI) was delighted to see 44,707 students taking the time to have their say and participate in StudentSurvey.ie 2020, the highest response to date. The continued increase in engagement with the survey tells a story of students who are keen to have their voices heard and to enhance the experience for themselves and their classmates. It is great to see continued collaboration between institutions and students' unions to encourage students to participate.

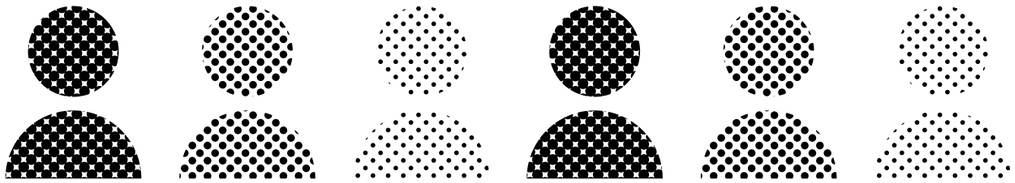
USI believes that this partnership works best when it extends beyond the fieldwork period so that students have the opportunity to take an active role in the analysis of the survey data at an institutional level. With so many students taking the time to have their voices heard, it is of vital importance that this is not a one-way process. Institutions must continue to endeavour to close the feedback loop and should work in partnership with student representatives to achieve this.

Existing structures where students are represented, such as programme boards and staff-student fora, are a perfect place for staff and students to come together to review feedback and agree actions that the institution can take in response to this feedback. The innovative approaches employed by institutions and students' unions during the fieldwork period to get the message out to students should be repeated when reporting back on the findings of the survey so that students have confidence that their feedback is being listened to and acted upon at an institutional level.

It is worth acknowledging that the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent closure of campuses took effect for some institutions in the final few weeks of this year's fieldwork period. As such, the majority of respondents completed the survey before their higher education institution campus closed and learning was forced to rapidly move online. As institutions work to adapt traditional ways of working to the new academic landscape, it has never been more important to hear the voice of students. This year's survey data are all the more important as they provide a comprehensive picture of the student experience in a (mostly) pre-COVID-19 context.

Social distancing will change how we do things, but it does not mean having to completely change everything we do. Rather, it offers us the opportunity to retain the things that work well, perhaps delivering them in a slightly different manner, and to reflect on the practices that we may wish to change. As institutions and students' unions work together over the coming year, the feedback from this year's survey will serve as a crucial reminder of what is most valued by their students and what should therefore be retained under new modes of delivery.

USI is committed to continuing to work with stakeholders across the higher education sector and with student representatives to ensure that the feedback from this year's survey leads to meaningful improvement to the student experience at both a local and national level.



1.5 Structure of the survey

The survey consists of 67 questions, grouped by the engagement 'indicator' to which they relate. The indicators are presented in Fig. 1.1 below. Most questions relate to a specific engagement indicator. There are also questions that do not directly relate to a specific indicator, but that are included in the survey because of their contribution to a broad understanding of student engagement. Each indicator score is calculated from responses to the multiple questions that relate to that indicator. These results are summarised in Chapter 2 and responses to all questions are available in Appendix 1 and on www.studentsurvey.ie for readers of the abridged report.

This report presents results from the 2020 StudentSurvey.ie fieldwork. The same set of questions has been used since 2016. The question set and survey process undergo periodic review, with the next periodic review expected to take place in 2021.

For further information about the statistical testing of the reliability and validity of the StudentSurvey.ie data, visit www.studentsurvey.ie.

Higher Order Learning

Reflective and Integrative Learning

Quantitative Reasoning

Learning Strategies

Collaborative Learning

Student-Faculty Interaction

Effective Teaching Practices

Quality of Interactions

Supportive Environment

Other (non-indicactor) Question Items

Fig 1.1 StudentSurvey.ie indicators

1.6 Notes for interpreting the data

Q: How is the indicator score for each indicator calculated?

Indicator scores are NOT percentages but rather represent relative performance. They are calculated scores to enable interpretation of the data at a higher level than individual questions, i.e. to act as signposts to help the reader to navigate the large data set. Responses to questions are converted to a 60-point scale, with the lowest response placed at 0 and the highest response placed at 60. The following question is used to illustrate this point.

Question	Responses			
During the current year, how much has your coursework emphasised evaluating a point of view, decision, or information source	Very little ⬇	Some ⬇	Quite a bit ⬇	Very much ⬇
Responses converted to 60-point scale	0	20	40	60

If a respondent selects "Quite a bit" as their response choice, their response converts to 40.

Indicator scores are calculated for a respondent when they answer all or almost all related questions. The exact number of responses required varies according to the indicator, based on psychometric testing undertaken for the North American National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)[3]. All responses are required for *Higher-Order Learning*, *Quantitative Reasoning*, *Learning Strategies*, *Collaborative Learning*, and *Student-Faculty Interaction*. All responses but one are required for *Reflective and Integrative Learning*, *Effective Teaching Practices*, *Quality of Interactions*, and *Supportive Environment*. The indicator score is calculated from the mean of (non-blank) responses given. Indicator scores for any particular student group – for example, the first year undergraduate cohort – are calculated as the mean of individual indicator scores.

Consequently, and crucially, indicator scores cannot be combined across indicators to calculate an average overall indicator score in any meaningful or statistically sound way.

Q: How can I best understand indicator scores for different groups?

Indicator scores provide greatest benefit when used as signposts to explore the experiences of different groups of students – for example, first year undergraduate students and final year undergraduate students, or Irish domiciled students and internationally domiciled students.

Indicator scores also provide an insight into the experiences of comparable groups over multiple datasets – for example, the experiences of 2020 first year undergraduate students relative to 2019 first year undergraduate students.

3. NSSE (www.nsse.indiana.edu)

Q: How can I best understand indicator scores for different indicators?

Different indicators should not be compared to each other. For example, there is no simple, direct link between indicator scores for *Higher-Order Learning* and indicator scores for *Reflective and Integrative Learning*. Fig. 1.2 is used to illustrate this point. No useful interpretation can be drawn from the fact that indicator scores for *Higher-Order Learning* are generally higher than indicator scores for *Reflective and Integrative Learning*.

However, the following differences could usefully be explored: *Higher-Order Learning* indicator scores for final year undergraduate students are higher than *Higher-Order Learning* indicator scores for first year undergraduate and taught postgraduate students; *Reflective and Integrative Learning* indicator scores appear notably lower for first year undergraduate students than *Reflective and Integrative Learning* indicator scores for final year undergraduate and taught postgraduate students. These results can be displayed visually, such as in Fig. 1.2, to communicate these comparisons.

To date, analysis of StudentSurvey.ie data demonstrates that greatest variation is evident within higher education institutions rather than between institutions. This has also been found to be the case in other countries that have implemented comparable surveys.

This reinforces the view that students and staff within individual higher education institutions are best placed to interrogate their local data. They best understand the local context and are well-placed to plan appropriate enhancement actions on that basis.

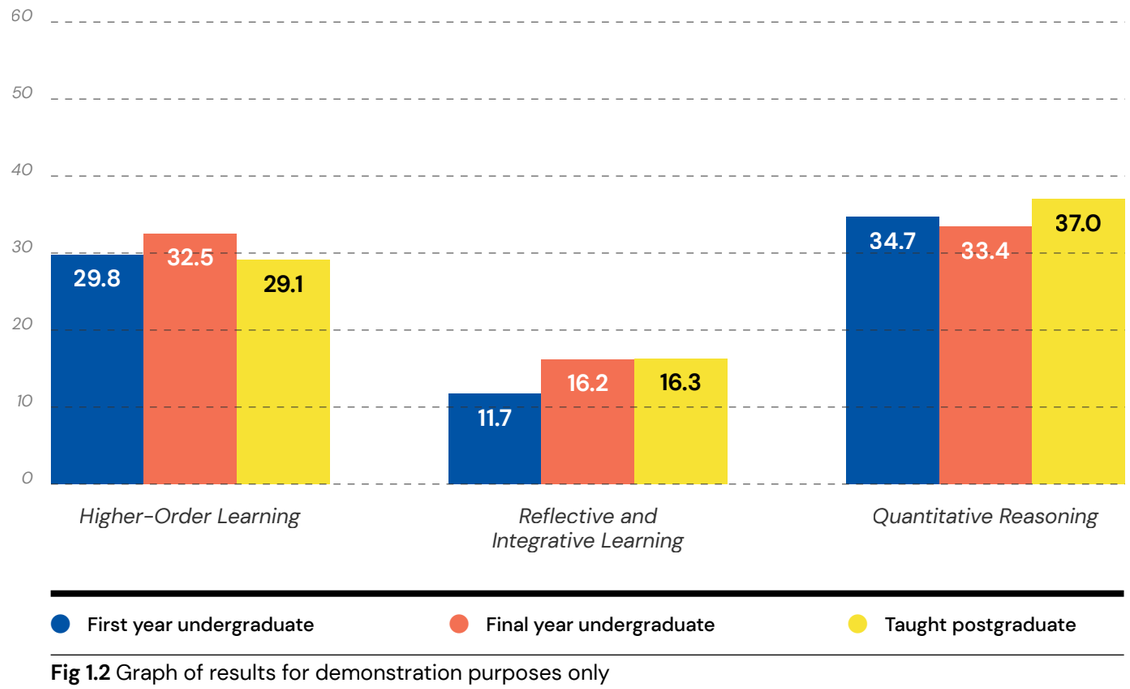


Fig 1.2 Graph of results for demonstration purposes only

“

56% of students tried to better understand someone else’s views by imagining how an issue looks from their perspective

Chapter 2
Results and findings of the 2020 StudentSurvey.ie

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents results from 2020 fieldwork for StudentSurvey.ie. The following pages provide an overview of response rates for different groups of students and of the demographic profile of respondents. The StudentSurvey.ie Results 2020 pull-out presents responses to the questions for each engagement indicator, along with the responses for the non-indicator items. Tables containing the results for all questions are provided in Appendix 1 and on www.studentsurvey.ie for readers of the abridged report.

2.2 Response rates and demographics

A total of 44,707 students responded to the 2020 survey, which represents a national response rate of 31%. This is the highest response rate to StudentSurvey.ie to date. The respondents consisted of 21,873 first year undergraduate students, 14,131 final year undergraduate students, and 8,703 taught postgraduate students. Table 2.1 presents the demographic profile of the national student population. The profile of the 2020 StudentSurvey.ie respondents is also presented. It closely matches the national student population profile, as it has done in previous years.

All results presented in this report, other than the demographic data presented in Tables 2.1 and 4.1, have been weighted by gender, mode of study and cohort. The use of weighting is regarded as standard practice with survey data because it improves the extent to which respondents match the national student population profile.

It is significant that 20 of the 26 participating higher education institutions achieved response rates of 25% or greater (17 achieved this in 2019), and that 14 institutions achieved response rates greater than 30% (14 in 2019 also). This is very positive, as the value of the survey as a tool for the enhancement of learning and teaching within each higher education institution is greatest when the data enable reliable analysis for groups, such as for a faculty/ department/ learning support unit.

The average response rate for Universities increased from 25% in 2019 to 29% in 2020. The response rate for Technological Higher Education Institutions (Institutes of Technology and Technological University Dublin) stayed the same at 35%. The response rate for Other Institutions decreased from 29% in 2019 to 27% in 2020.

The response rates for any one year should not be taken as a direct indication of the effort expended to promote participation within individual higher education institutions in that year. Factors such as timing of the fieldwork or other major events within the institution (or even a global emergency) can influence the response rate. Nevertheless, any institution that notes consistently low response rates should reflect on the nature, tone, and visibility of feedback activities.

Some higher education institutions may find it challenging to continue to increase response rates on an annual basis and may observe a plateau in their response rate. The co-sponsoring organisations leave to the discretion of individual institutions the decision to continue to focus on increasing response rates or, possibly, to sustain this plateau while increasing the emphasis on interpretation of the data and decision-making based on this analysis. A realistic aim may be to ensure that the number of responses is sufficient to enable reliable analysis of the subsets of the data that correspond to the institutional structures that are likely to make greatest use of this analysis.

It is important that all institutions continue to act meaningfully on the data they have available, rather than "wait" for some target response rate. Students will respond to the survey when it is clear to them that their institution as a whole and the staff they encounter on a regular basis value the resulting data and do something or intend to do something with it. This is likely the primary factor that will have greatest impact on the number of responses and, accordingly, enable reliable analysis of increasingly disaggregated data. Communication of analysis undertaken, results considered, and actions taken are essential for continued participation in StudentSurvey.ie by students.

Chapter 2

Table 2.1 Demographic profile

Characteristic	National student population		All respondents		Response rate
	144439		**44707**		**31%**
Cohort					
First year undergraduate	56491	39%	21873	49%	**39%**
Final year undergraduate	50048	35%	14131	32%	**28%**
Taught postgraduate	37900	26%	8703	19%	**23%**
Institution type					
Universities	76295	53%	21988	49%	**29%**
Technological Higher Education Institutions (IoTs and Technological University Dublin)	54357	38%	19059	43%	**35%**
Other Institutions	13787	10%	3660	8%	**27%**
Mode of study					
Full-time	112125	78%	39471	88%	**35%**
Part-time/ remote	32314	22%	5236	12%	**16%**
Programme type					
Undergraduate Certificate/ Diploma	11965	8%	2378	5%	**20%**
Undergraduate Ordinary Degree	13706	9%	4477	10%	**33%**
Undergraduate Honours Degree	80868	56%	29149	65%	**36%**
Graduate Certificate/ Diploma	11060	8%	1641	4%	**15%**
Masters Taught	26840	19%	7062	16%	**26%**
Field of study					
Generic programmes and qualifications	282	0%	97	0%	**34%**
Education	10450	7%	2691	6%	**26%**
Arts and humanities	19197	13%	6236	14%	**32%**
Social sciences, journalism, and information	9137	6%	2751	6%	**30%**
Business, administration, and law	33779	23%	9804	22%	**29%**
Natural sciences, mathematics, and statistics	12007	8%	4619	10%	**38%**
Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	13238	9%	3846	9%	**29%**
Engineering, manufacturing, and construction	15796	11%	4943	11%	**31%**
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and veterinary	2074	1%	799	2%	**39%**
Health and welfare	23372	16%	7044	16%	**30%**
Services	5107	4%	1877	4%	**37%**
Gender					
Female	75955	53%	26342	59%	**35%**
Male	68387	47%	18330	41%	**27%**
Undeclared	97	0.0007%	35	0.0007%	**36%**
Age group					
23 and under	81153	56%	29717	66%	**37%**
24 and over	63286	44%	14990	34%	**24%**
Country of domicile					
Irish domiciled	125061	87%	38445	86%	**31%**
Internationally domiciled	19378	13%	6262	14%	**32%**

2.3 Responses to individual questions

The indicator scores for each indicator are calculated from responses to multiple questions that relate to that indicator. Most questions relate to a specific engagement indicator, which are:

- Higher-Order Learning
- Reflective and Integrative Learning
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Learning Strategies
- Collaborative Learning
- Student-Faculty Interaction
- Effective Teaching Practices
- Quality of Interactions
- Supportive Environment

This report also includes responses to questions that do not directly relate to a specific indicator, but that are included in the survey because of their contribution to a broad understanding of student engagement.

Percentage responses to each question for all respondents nationally are presented in Appendix 1 and on www.studentsurvey.ie for readers of the abridged report, grouped by the relevant indicator. They also display disaggregated results by cohort (first year undergraduate, final year undergraduate and taught postgraduate).

The following StudentSurvey.ie Results 2020 pull-out contains some of the results of StudentSurvey.ie 2020.

This document is available as downloadable and editable infographic on the StudentSurvey.ie website in the Make an Impact section, and can be customised quickly and easily with an institution's own results for use in print and/or online.


#HaveYourSay
PGR
Student
Survey.ie
Student
survey.ie
Daniel Sogaolu
City Campus
2019/20

Higher-Order Learning

68.2% of students believed that their coursework emphasised quite a bit/ very much applying facts, theories, or methods to practical problems or new situations

62.3% of students believed that their coursework emphasised quite a bit/ very much analysing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts

61.8% of students believed that their coursework emphasised quite a bit/ very much evaluating a point of view, decision, or information source

67.1% of students believed that their coursework emphasised quite a bit/ very much forming an understanding or new idea from various pieces of information

Reflective and Integrative Learning

57.9% of students often/ very often combined ideas from different subjects / modules when completing assignments

45.8% of students often/ very often connected their learning to problems or issues in society

30.2% of students often/ very often included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ ethnic, gender, etc.) in discussions or assignments

49.3% of students often/ very often examined the strengths and weaknesses of their own views on a topic or issue

55.9% of students often/ very often tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from their perspective

61.7% of students often/ very often learned something that changed the way they understand an issue or concept

66.6% of students often/ very often connected ideas from their subjects / modules to their experiences and knowledge

Quantitative Reasoning

35.5% of students often/ very often reached conclusions based on their analysis of numerical information (numbers, graphs, statistics, etc.)

26.8% of students often/ very often used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.)

22.6% of students often/ very often evaluated what others have concluded from numerical information

Learning Strategies

51.5% of students often/ very often identified key information from recommended reading materials

53.4% of students often/ very often reviewed their notes after class

50.5% of students often/ very often summarised what they learned in class or from course materials

Collaborative Learning

43.7% of students often/ very often asked another student to help them understand course material

48.1% of students often/ very often explained course material to one or more students

48.6% of students often/ very often prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students

57.7% of students often/ very often worked with other students on projects or assignments

Student-Faculty Interaction

16.5% of students often/ very often talked about career plans with academic staff

10.5% of students often/ very often worked with academic staff on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.)

19.1% of students often/ very often discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with academic staff outside of class

18.0% of students often/ very often discussed their performance with academic staff

Effective Teaching Practices

70.7% of students believed that lecturers/ teaching staff clearly explained course goals and requirements

69.7% of students believed that lecturers/ teaching staff taught in an organised way

74.1% of students believed that lecturers/ teaching staff used examples or illustrations to explain difficult points

45.7% of students believed that lecturers/ teaching staff provided feedback on a draft or work in progress

45.5% of students believed that lecturers/ teaching staff provided prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments

Quality of Interactions

57.3%
of students indicated as excellent (6/7 or 7/7) the quality of interactions with students

34.1%
of students indicated as excellent (6/7 or 7/7) the quality of interactions with academic advisors

40.9%
of students indicated as excellent (6/7 or 7/7) the quality of interactions with academic staff

34.7%
of students indicated as excellent (6/7 or 7/7) the quality of interactions with support services staff (career services, student activities, accommodation, etc.)

34.5%
of students indicated as excellent (6/7 or 7/7) the quality of interactions with other administrative staff and offices (registry, finance, etc.)

Supportive Environment

58.0%
of students believed that their institution emphasised quite a bit/ very much providing support to help students succeed academically

55.1%
of students believed that their institution emphasised quite a bit/ very much using learning support services (learning centre, computer centre, maths support, writing support, etc.)

43.0%
of students believed that their institution emphasised quite a bit/ very much contact among students from different backgrounds (social, racial/ ethnic, religious, etc.)

52.6%
of students believed that their institution emphasised quite a bit/ very much providing opportunities to be involved socially

51.4%
of students believed that their institution emphasised quite a bit/ very much providing support for their overall well-being (recreation, health care, counselling, etc.)

27.4%
of students believed that their institution emphasised quite a bit/ very much helping them manage their non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)

Supportive Environment (cont.)

43.3%
of students believed that their institution emphasised quite a bit/ very much attending campus activities and events (special speakers, cultural performances, sporting events, etc.)

32.9%
of students believed that their institution emphasised quite a bit/ very much attending events that address important social, economic, or political issues

Non-Indicator items (part 1)

48.7%
of students often/ very often asked questions or contributed to discussions in class, tutorials, labs, or online

19.0%
of students often/ very often came to class without completing readings or assignments

38.4%
of students often/ very often made a presentation in class or online

63.7%
of students often/ very often improved knowledge and skills that will contribute to their employability

45.6%
of students often/ very often explored how to apply their learning in the workplace

40.2%
of students often/ very often exercised or participated in physical fitness activities

40.6%
of students often/ very often blended academic learning with workplace experience

37.6%
of students often/ very often worked on assessments that informed them how well they were learning

50.1%
of students often/ very often memorised course material

43.0%
of students plan to do/ have done/ were in the process of working with academic staff on a research project

45.6%
of students plan to do/ have done/ were in the process of doing community service or volunteer work

Non-Indicator items (part 2)

69.4%
of students believed that their institution emphasised quite a bit/ very much spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work

55.9%
of students believed that their experience at their institution contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development quite a bit/ very much in writing clearly and effectively

54.1%
of students believed that their experience at their institution contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development quite a bit/ very much in speaking clearly and effectively

74.8%
of students believed that their experience at their institution contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development quite a bit/ very much in thinking critically and analytically

50.1%
of students believed that their experience at their institution contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development quite a bit/ very much in analysing numerical and statistical information

58.3%
of students believed that their experience at their institution contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development quite a bit/ very much in acquiring job- or work-related knowledge and skills

68.0%
of students believed that their experience at their institution contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development quite a bit/ very much in working effectively with others

51.5%
of students believed that their experience at their institution contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development quite a bit/ very much in solving complex real-world problems

43.7%
of students believed that their experience at their institution contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development quite a bit/ very much in being an informed and active citizen (societal/ political/ community)

80.1%
of students would evaluate their entire educational experience at their institution as good/ excellent

84.0%
of students, if they could start over again, would probably/ definitely go to the same institution they are now attending

Chapter 3
Engagement indicators at national level

3.1 Introduction

This chapter builds on the national results of StudentSurvey.ie by exploring the differences between the groups of students by the following characteristics:

- Cohort
- Institution type
- Mode of study
- Programme type
- Field of study
- Gender
- Age group
- Country of domicile

Selected results are presented in the following pages, and all results are available in Appendix 2 and on www.studentsurvey.ie for readers of the abridged report. While not published in this report, results of reliability and validity testing of the 2016 question set still being used in 2020 have been published on www.studentsurvey.ie.

Notes for interpreting the data

- Indicator scores provide signposts to the experiences of students.
- These are NOT percentages.
- Please refer to notes for interpreting the data on pages 20-21.
- Compare scores WITHIN each indicator and NOT between indicators.

Effect Size

Effect size = any measure of the strength of a relationship between two variables. Large numbers of respondents make it more likely that any small difference will be statistically significant. Effect size attempts to measure real-world significance. The NSSE-proposed reference values for the interpretation of effect sizes from NSSE benchmark comparisons are[4]:

Small	0.1
Medium	0.3
Large	0.5
Very Large	0.7

4. NSSE (2007). *Contextualizing NSSE Effect Sizes: Empirical Analysis and Interpretation of Benchmark Comparisons.* Retrieved on 16 July 2020 from https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/35a1/604af3043e9347e8238f10a403d24f3ceab6.pdf

3.2 Cohort

A profile of steadily increasing indicator scores across the cohorts from first year undergraduate to final year undergraduate to taught postgraduate was evident for *Higher-Order Learning*, *Reflective and Integrative Learning*, *Quantitative Reasoning* and *Student-Faculty Interaction*. There was a significant increase in indicator score for *Learning Strategies* from undergraduate to postgraduate responses, though the difference between first year undergraduate and final year undergraduate was not statistically significant.

A different profile emerged for *Effective Teaching Practices* and *Quality of Interactions*. In both cases, the indicator score was significantly lower for final year undergraduate respondents compared to first year undergraduate and taught postgraduate respondents, though indicator scores were significantly higher for taught postgraduate than first year undergraduate. Similarly, a lower indicator score for final year undergraduate respondents was seen for *Supportive Environment* but in this case the indicator score for first year undergraduate was higher than for taught postgraduate.

Finally, for *Collaborative Learning*, final year undergraduate respondents had the highest indicator scores, and had indicator scores that were significantly higher than first year undergraduate and taught postgraduate respondents.

3.3 Institution type

Respondents from Universities had higher indicator scores for *Higher-Order Learning*, *Reflective and Integrative Learning*, *Quantitative Reasoning*, *Learning Strategies*, and *Supportive Environment*.

Respondents from institutions categorised as Other (including private colleges, colleges of education and RCSI) aligned with the higher indicator scores of the Universities for *Higher-Order Learning, Reflective and Integrative Learning,* and *Learning Strategies*, and aligned with the lower indicator scores of the THEIs for *Quantitative Reasoning* and *Supportive Environment*.

Respondents from Technological Higher Education Institutions (THEIs) had higher indicator scores for *Collaborative Learning*, *Student-Faculty Interaction*, *Effective Teaching Practices*, and *Quality of Interactions*.

Respondents from institutions categorised as Other aligned with the higher indicator scores of the THEIs for *Collaborative Learning* and *Quality of Interactions,* while their profile was aligned with the Universities for *Effective Teaching Practices*, with lower indicator scores on these indicators. *Student-Faculty Interaction* was an exception. Respondents from Other institutions had higher indicator scores than Universities, but the indicator scores for respondents from THEIs were significantly higher than indicator scores for respondents from Other Institutions.

3.4 Mode of study

There was a statistically significant difference between the full-time respondents and the part-time/ remote respondents for all indicators. Full-time respondents had higher indicator scores for *Quantitative Reasoning, Collaborative Learning, Student-Faculty Interaction,* and *Supportive Environment*. Part-time/ remote respondents had higher indicator scores for *Higher-Order Learning*, *Reflective and Integrative Learning*, *Learning Strategies, Effective Teaching Practices,* and *Quality of Interactions*.

A large effect size was found for *Collaborative Learning* (0.583), and a medium effect size was found for *Supportive Environment* (0.370), indicating that the biggest differences between these groups were for these two indicators. For all other significant differences, the effect size was small.

3.5 Programme type

Respondents pursuing a Masters Taught degree had the highest indicator scores for most indicators, and in many comparisons the difference between these respondents and respondents in other programme types was significant. The exceptions were, firstly, *Collaborative Learning*, where respondents pursuing an Ordinary Degree had statistically significantly higher indicator scores than respondents pursuing a Masters Taught degree. The second exception was *Effective Teaching Practices*, where the indicator score for respondents pursuing a Masters Taught was only 0.2 points lower than those pursuing an Undergraduate Certificate/ Diploma, but the difference was not statistically significant.

The next highest indicator scores group tended to be Graduate Certificate/ Diploma students, again with the exception of *Collaborative Learning,* though their indicator scores were also lower than other groups for *Student-Faculty Interaction* and *Supportive Environment*.

The indicator scores for respondents pursuing an Undergraduate Certificate/ Diploma tended to fall in the middle of the spread of indicator scores regardless of which programme type occupied the highest or lowest end of the spread of indicator scores. The exceptions to that pattern were for *Effective Teaching Practices*, where respondents pursuing an Undergraduate Certificate/ Diploma had the highest indicator scores, and for *Quantitative Reasoning* and *Student-Faculty Interaction*, where respondents pursuing an Undergraduate Certificate/ Diploma had the lowest indicator scores.

The indicator scores for respondents pursuing an Undergraduate Ordinary Degree or Undergraduate Honours Degree varied the most. For *Higher-Order Learning*, *Reflective and Integrative Learning*, *Learning Strategies*, *Effective Teaching Practices,* and *Quality of Interactions* they had the lowest indicator scores. *Collaborative Learning* presented a different profile, where respondents pursuing an Undergraduate Ordinary Degree or Undergraduate Honours Degree had the highest indicator scores. The indicator scores for respondents pursuing an Undergraduate Ordinary Degree or Undergraduate Honours Degree varied relative to other programme types for *Quantitative Reasoning, Student-Faculty Interaction,* and *Supportive Environment*. In the case of *Quantitative Reasoning*, respondents pursuing an Undergraduate Certificate/ Diploma had lower indicator scores than respondents pursuing an Undergraduate Ordinary Degree or Undergraduate Honours Degree. In the case of *Student-Faculty Interaction*, only the respondents pursuing a Masters Taught degree had higher indicator scores than respondents pursuing an Undergraduate Ordinary Degree or Undergraduate Honours Degree. Finally, for *Supportive Environment*, only the respondents pursuing a Masters Taught degree had higher indicator scores than respondents pursuing an Undergraduate Ordinary Degree or Undergraduate Honours Degree.

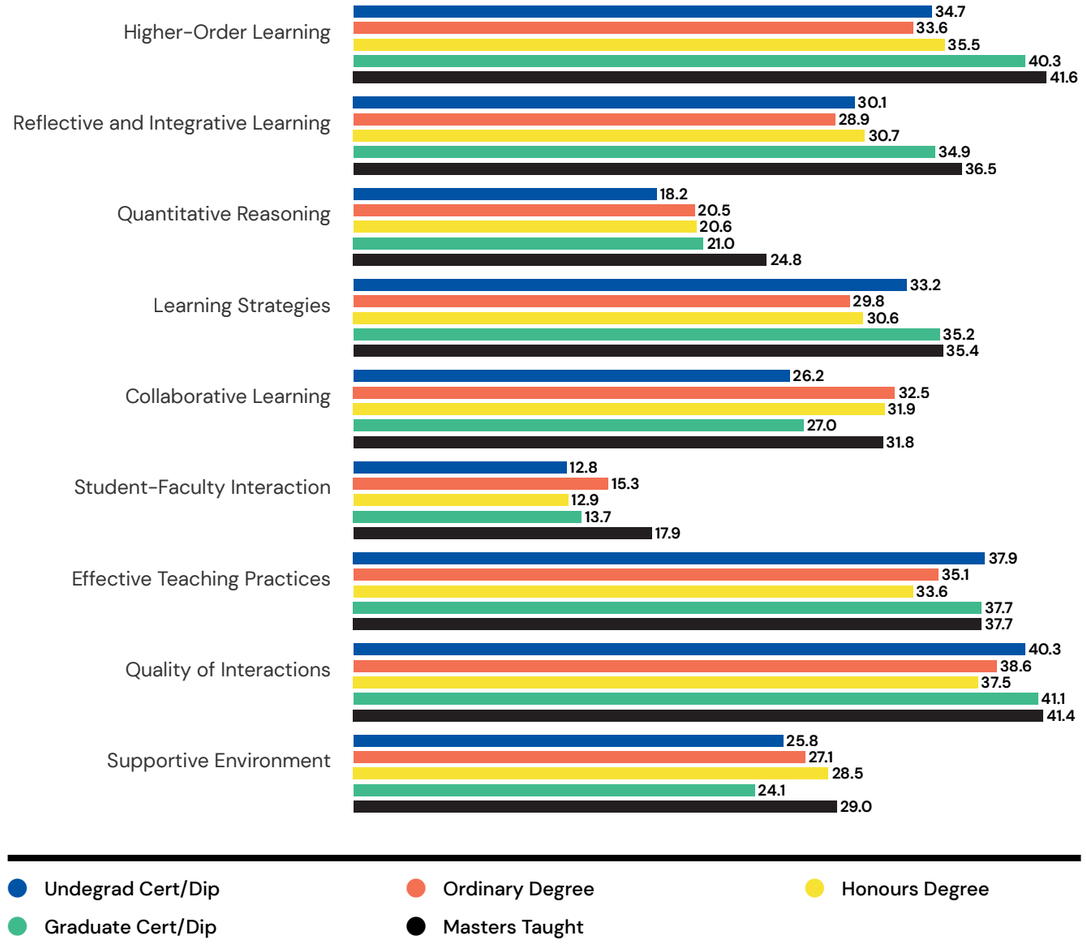


Fig. 3.1 Indicator scores by programme type

3.6 Field of study

For *Higher-Order Learning*, Social sciences, journalism, and information students had significantly higher indicator scores than all groups with the exception of Health and welfare students. Health and welfare students had the next highest indicator score for this indicator. The remaining fields of study formed two clusters. Education students, Arts and humanities students, and Business, administration, and law students formed one cluster and their indicator scores were lower (but not statistically significantly lower) than Health and welfare students, but higher than the second cluster formed by Natural sciences, mathematics, and statistics students, ICT students, Engineering, manufacturing, and construction students, Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and veterinary students, and Services students, who in most instances did not differ significantly from each other and were the lowest scoring cluster for this indicator.

A very similar pattern emerged for *Reflective and Integrative Learning*. Social sciences, journalism, and information students had significantly higher indicator scores than all other groups. Education students, Arts and humanities students, and Health and Welfare students had the next highest indicator scores and they differed from all other fields of study. Business, administration, and law students' indicator scores were significantly lower than this cluster, but also significantly higher than the remaining fields of study. Natural sciences, mathematics, and statistics students, ICT students, Engineering, manufacturing, and construction students, Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and veterinary students, and Services students made up the lowest scoring cluster for this indicator.

Indicator scores differed substantially for *Quantitative Reasoning*. Natural sciences, mathematics, and statistics students had the highest indicator scores and they were significantly higher than all other groups except Engineering, manufacturing, and construction students. Engineering, manufacturing, and construction students had the second highest indicator scores of all fields of study, but only in some instances were their indicator scores significantly higher than a cluster formed by Social sciences, journalism, and information students, ICT students, and Business, administration, and law students. Services students clustered with Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and veterinary students and Health and welfare students, as they had indicator scores in the middle of the range of indicator scores for this indicator. Education students had lower indicator scores and they were significantly lower than all other groups. Arts and humanities students had the lowest indicator scores and they were significantly lower than all other groups.

For *Learning Strategies*, Health and welfare students had significantly higher indicator scores than nearly all groups. Education students, Arts and humanities students, Social sciences, journalism, and information students, Business, administration, and law students, Natural sciences, mathematics, and statistics students, and Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and veterinary students clustered together and did not differ significantly from each other. Their indicator scores were significantly higher than the lowest scoring cluster formed by ICT students, Engineering, manufacturing, and construction students, and Services students.

For *Collaborative Learning*, the only differences were for Business, administration, and law students and Engineering, manufacturing, and construction students, who had significantly higher indicator scores than Natural sciences, mathematics, and statistics students and ICT students, though the indicator scores for Business, administration, and law students were also higher than Health and welfare students. Arts and humanities students and Social sciences, journalism, and information students had significantly lower indicator scores than all other groups.

For *Student-Faculty Interaction*, most fields of study clustered together. The exceptions were the significantly higher indicator scores for Services students compared to all other groups, and the significantly lower indicator scores for Social sciences, journalism, and information students and Natural sciences, mathematics, and statistics students compared to nearly all other groups.

For *Effective Teaching Practices*, all fields of study clustered together. Within the cluster, the indicator scores for Arts and humanities students were the highest, and they were significantly higher than Natural sciences, mathematics, and statistics students and Engineering, manufacturing, and construction students, whose indicator scores were in the lower range of the cluster.

For *Quality of Interactions*, all fields of study clustered together. Within the cluster, the only significant difference was for ICT students, whose indicator scores were significantly higher than Natural sciences, mathematics, and statistics students.

For *Supportive Environment*, all fields of study clustered together. The outlier was Education students, whose indicator scores were significantly lower than Arts and humanities students, Social sciences, journalism, and information students, Business, administration, and law students, Natural sciences, mathematics, and statistics students, ICT students, and Health and welfare students. Additionally, the indicator scores for Engineering, manufacturing, and construction students were significantly lower than Arts and humanities students and Business, administration, and law students.

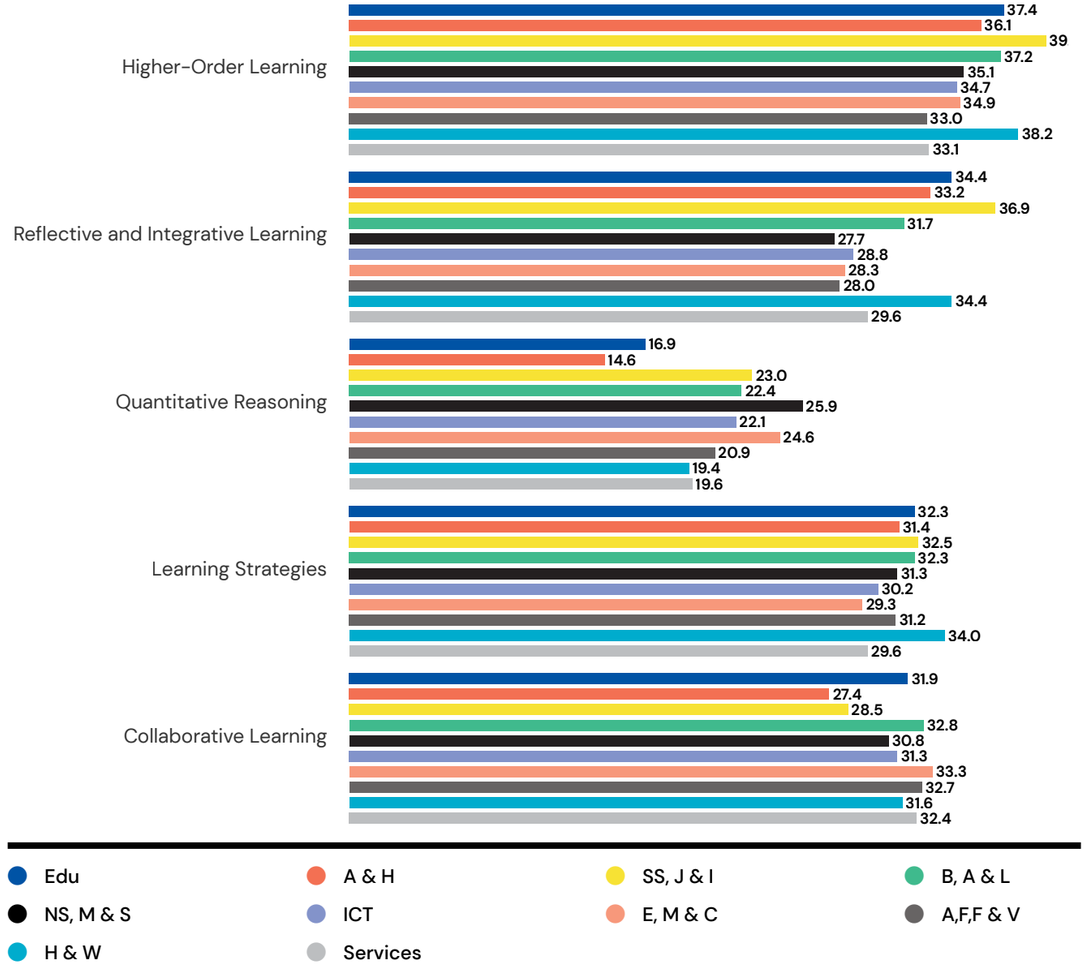


Fig. 3.2a Indicator scores by field of study

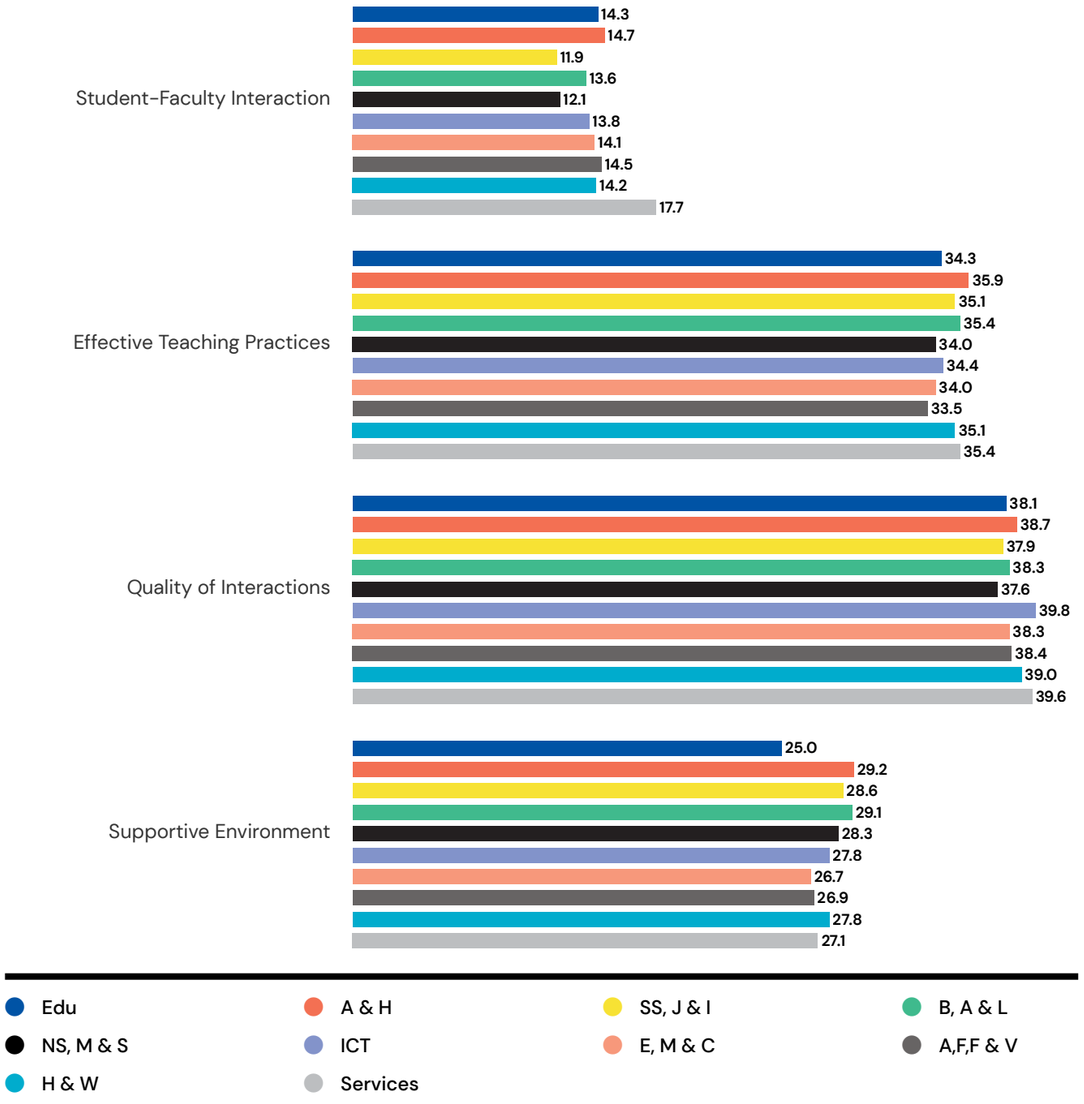


Fig. 3.2b Indicator scores by field of study

3.7 Gender

For the purposes of StudentSurvey.ie, gender is coded as male, female, prefer not to say, or gender non-binary. Due to the relatively very low numbers in the latter two categories compared to the large number in the former two categories, they are collapsed into one category named 'Undeclared'. As the number of respondents in this category in 2020 made up less than 1% of the total, it is inadvisable to include them in the statistical analysis by gender and the very small number of respondents are therefore excluded from this specific analysis. However, it remains beneficial to capture these responses in the survey to enable collation of data over multiple fieldwork periods and potential future analysis.

There were no statistically significant differences for *Collaborative Learning*, *Effective Teaching Practices,* or *Supportive Environment*. Indicator scores for female students were higher than those for male students for *Higher-Order Learning*, *Reflective and Integrative Learning,* and *Learning Strategies*. Indicator scores for male students were higher for *Quantitative Reasoning*, *Student-Faculty Interaction*, and *Quality of Interactions*. For all significant differences, the effect size was small.

3.8 Age group

There was a statistically significant difference between the respondents aged 23 and under and the respondents aged 24 and over for all indicators. Respondents aged 24 and over had higher indicator scores for *Higher-Order Learning*, *Reflective and Integrative Learning*, *Quantitative Reasoning, Learning Strategies, Student-Faculty Interaction, Effective Teaching Practices,* and *Quality of Interactions*. Respondents aged 23 and under had higher indicator scores for *Collaborative Learning* and *Supportive Environment*. A medium effect size was found for *Reflective and Integrative Learning* (0.336) and *Learning Strategies* (0.310), indicating the biggest differences between these cohorts. For all other significant differences, the effect size was small.

3.9 Country of domicile

There was a statistically significant difference between the Irish domiciled respondents and the internationally domiciled respondents for all indicators. In all cases, the internationally domiciled respondents had higher indicator scores than the Irish domiciled students. A medium effect size was found for *Quantitative Reasoning* (0.343) and *Student-Faculty Interaction* (0.386), indicating the biggest differences between these groups. For all other significant differences, the effect size was small.

“

The impact of public health guidance on the traditional on-campus experience is expected to be greatest for first year undergraduate students, the majority of whom will have had no other higher education experience.

Chapter 4
Looking Deeper:
What does Studentsurvey.ie data tell us about the factors most important for on-campus engagement in higher education?

4.1 Introduction

The public health measures put in place in response to the COVID-19 pandemic mean that first year undergraduate students entering higher education in the 2020-2021 academic year will likely have a substantially different experience than their predecessors. The impact of public health guidance on the traditional on-campus experience is expected to be greatest for first year undergraduate students, the majority of whom will have had no other higher education experience.

The purpose of this chapter is to investigate the engagement of first year students in higher education in Ireland over the past three years, which will establish a baseline for future comparisons, including the comparisons the StudentSurvey.ie National Report Editorial Group intends to carry out in the 2021 National Report. In particular, the investigation of first year students' engagement will focus on the factors that may be most affected by necessitated changes to the traditional on-campus higher education model. Selected results are presented in the following pages, and all results are available in **Appendix 3** and on www.studentsurvey.ie for readers of the abridged report.

The following indicators in StudentSurvey.ie (the Irish Survey of Student Engagement) capture the aspects of student engagement in which on-campus attendance plays an important role:

- Collaborative Learning
- Student-Faculty Interaction
- Quality of Interactions
- Supportive Environment

These indicators will be examined by exploring the differences between first year undergraduate respondents across their mode of study, term-time residence, undergraduate programme type, institution type and field of study. In addition, respondents' demographic characteristics of gender, age, and country of domicile will be examined.

The analyses reveal that differences across mode of study and age groups were significant for each of the indicators above. In addition, there were significant differences in all four of the indicators between at least some groups of respondents, such as between groups attending different institution types, pursuing different programme types, or in different fields of study.

In addition to analysing indicators, the StudentSurvey.ie dataset allows for a detailed analysis of the individual questions that relate to each engagement indicator. The sections that follow will present the responses to selected questions that comprise each indicator to further investigate the results.

This chapter considers the pooled average of student responses over the past three fieldwork years the survey was conducted (2018, 2019, and 2020) to establish a baseline of first year students' higher education experiences[5]. In total, there are 59,984 first year undergraduate responses to the survey over these years, which represents a significant evidence base.

Note on comparing full-time, part-time, and remote respondents

Public health guidance related to COVID-19 has necessitated a move away from the traditional on-campus higher education model towards a remote and blended/ hybrid model in the 2020-2021 academic year. Investigating the differences in the experiences of students who had previously chosen to study full-time, part-time, and remotely over the last three fieldwork years will provide a strong baseline from which to draw future comparisons.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that the data examined here relate to previous years of first year undergraduate students who had *chosen* their mode of study. This contrasts with incoming first year undergraduate students in 2020-2021, for whom public health measures will play a large role in determining their attendance patterns. It is also worth reiterating that the 2020 fieldwork was mostly completed before the shift to emergency online teaching at the end of the 2019-2020 academic year. Furthermore, all questions require respondents to reflect on their experiences of the academic year to date in its entirety.

Any comparison of the engagement profile and practices of part-time and remote students in 2018-2020 with future students must consider that institutions may take additional measures to facilitate the necessary remote and blended/ hybrid model in the forthcoming academic year. Nonetheless, StudentSurvey.ie represents a significant evidence base to establish a baseline of previous first year undergraduate respondents' experiences in higher education.

5. The data pools together three cross-sectional fieldwork years. Hence, the results in this chapter are pooled averages across three fieldwork years. Furthermore, the results are weighted in each fieldwork year by gender, mode of study, and cohort. The results in this chapter can be interpreted as weighted pooled averages.

Demographic profile of first year undergraduate respondents

Table 4.1 shows the programme and demographic characteristics for the population and sample of first year undergraduate respondents over three fieldwork years (2018-2020). In total, 59,984 first year undergraduate students responded to the survey over the three years. The response rate for first year undergraduate respondents increased in recent fieldwork years, rising from 33% in 2018 to 39% in 2020.

The profile of first year undergraduate respondents together across all three fieldwork years generally matched the national first year undergraduate student population profile[6]. Some larger differences were observed between the proportion of survey respondents and the proportion of the national population for mode of study and gender:

- The majority of first year undergraduate respondents attended full-time, rather than part-time or remotely. Eighty seven percent of the population attended full-time compared to 95% of the combined sample[7]. Eleven per cent of the population study part-time compared to 5% of the sample. Remote students comprise 433 (or 1%) of respondents to the surveys over the last three years. This shows the value of merging three survey fieldwork years in this analysis, as it enables some limited analysis of smaller sub-groups in the overall pool of respondents. Some of the analysis in the following sections will disaggregate the responses from part-time and remote respondents to gain further insights into their experiences.
- There are slightly more female than male first year undergraduate respondents in the national population over the three fieldwork years. Fifty two per cent of the population are female compared to 59% of the survey respondents[8].

These differences are considered in the calculation of the survey weights that are used in the remainder of the chapter.

Smaller differences between the population and the survey respondents include that half of first year undergraduate students attend Universities and they comprise 47% of all respondents. Forty three per cent of students attend Technological Higher Education Institutions and they make up 46% of all survey respondents. First year undergraduate students are most likely to be enrolled in Honours Degree programme and make up 74% of the first year undergraduate population and 80% of the sample.

The largest field of study for first year undergraduate students is Business, administration, and law, which accounts for 21% of the population and 20% of the respondent sample over the three fieldwork years. Detailed results for students studying Generic programmes and qualifications are not presented in the remainder of this chapter due to the small number of respondents from this field of study.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, first year undergraduate respondents are more likely to be in the younger age category. Seventy nine per cent of the population and 85% of the sample are aged 23 years and under. First year undergraduate respondents are also more likely to be Irish domiciled and they comprise 93% of both the population and the sample.

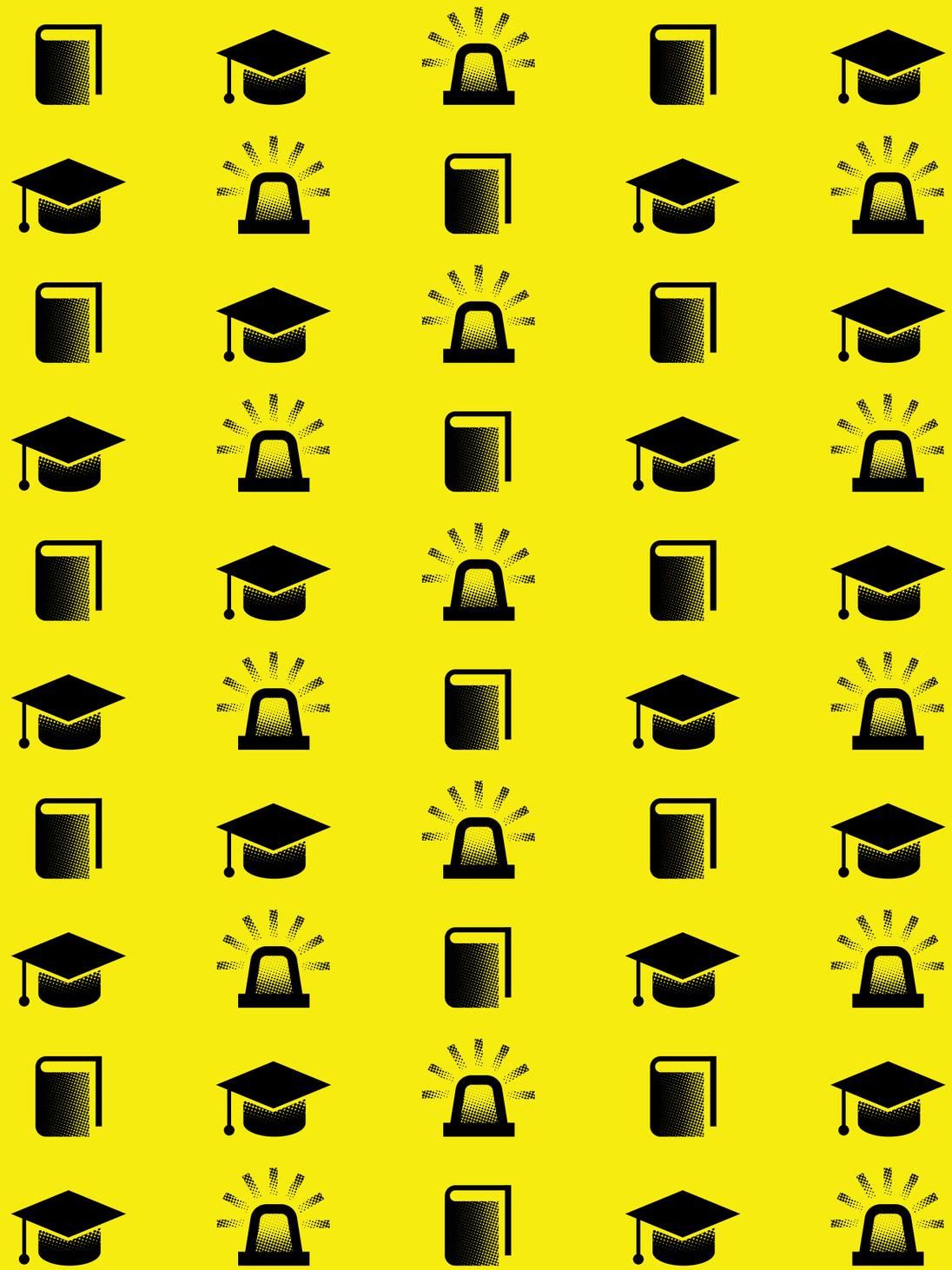
Term-time residence information was not provided, for the purposes of StudentSurvey.ie, by the institution for about half (46%) of first year undergraduate respondents. Where this information was provided, most live with their parents (25% of the population and sample), followed by those living in rented accommodation (13% of the population and 14% of the sample) and those living on-campus (11% of the population and sample). Smaller groups of respondents live in their own home and in other accommodation. For the remainder of this chapter, when respondents' term-time residence is investigated, the analysis focuses on the three largest groups, as these are most likely to capture the living arrangements of most incoming 2020-2021 first year undergraduate students (that is, those living with their parents, those living in rented accommodation, and those living on-campus). Groups of respondents whose results are not presented are still included in all other aggregate calculations in the remainder of this chapter.

Table 4.1 Demographic profile of first year undergraduate respondents 2018-2020

Characteristic	National Y1 student population		All Y1 respondents		Response rate
	167802		**59984**		
Fieldwork year					
2018	56533	34%	18554	31%	**33%**
2019	54778	33%	19557	33%	**36%**
2020	56491	34%	21873	36%	**39%**
Institution type					
Universities	83385	50%	28072	47%	**34%**
Technological Higher Education Institutions (IoTs and Technological University Dublin)	72310	43%	27879	46%	**39%**
Other Institutions	12107	7%	4033	7%	**33%**
Mode of study					
Full-time	145466	87%	56780	95%	**39%**
Part-time	19205	11%	2771	5%	**14%**
Remote	3131	2%	433	1%	**14%**
Programme type					
Undergraduate Certificate/ Diploma	23820	14%	4301	7%	**18%**
Undergraduate Ordinary Degree	20454	12%	7785	13%	**38%**
Undergraduate Honours Degree	123528	74%	47898	80%	**39%**

6. The results in Table 4.1 have not been weighted.
7. Survey weights take mode of study into account in the remainder of the chapter.
8. Survey weights take gender into account in the remainder of the chapter.

Characteristic	National Y1 student population		All Y1 respondents		Response rate
Field of study					
Generic programmes and qualifications	748	0%	125	0%	**17%**
Education	8111	5%	3163	5%	**39%**
Arts and humanities	29930	18%	10479	17%	**35%**
Social sciences, journalism, and information	8782	5%	2901	5%	**33%**
Business, administration, and law	35609	21%	11868	20%	**33%**
Natural sciences, mathematics, and statistics	16780	10%	6913	12%	**41%**
Information and Communication Technologies	11035	7%	4204	7%	**38%**
Engineering, manufacturing, and construction	19680	12%	6662	11%	**34%**
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and veterinary	2932	2%	1043	2%	**36%**
Health and welfare	26121	16%	9683	16%	**37%**
Services	8074	5%	2943	5%	**36%**
Gender					
Female	86716	52%	35327	59%	**41%**
Male	81044	48%	24642	41%	**30%**
Undeclared	42	0%	15	0%	**36%**
Age group					
23 and under	132462	79%	51213	85%	**39%**
24 and over	35340	21%	8771	15%	**25%**
Country of domicile					
Irish domiciled	155278	93%	55838	93%	**36%**
Internationally domiciled	12524	7%	4146	7%	**33%**
Term-time residence					
With parents	42669	25%	15255	25%	**36%**
Rented accommodation	21933	13%	8343	14%	**38%**
On-campus	18182	11%	6514	11%	**36%**
Own home	5208	3%	1400	2%	**27%**
Other	1812	1%	624	1%	**34%**
Not Specified	77998	46%	27848	46%	**36%**



4.2 Overview of first year undergraduate respondents' collaborative learning with their peers

This section focuses on the extent to which respondents collaborate with their peers to solve problems or learn material by focusing on the *Collaborative Learning* indicator.

Analysis in Chapter 3 shows that the vast majority of first year undergraduate respondents collaborate with their peers on coursework at least some of the time.

Analysing *Collaborative Learning* indicator scores

Fig. 4.1 shows the *Collaborative Learning* indicator scores for first year undergraduate respondents across a wide range of student characteristics.

The analysis shows that the *Collaborative Learning* indicator was broadly similar (and not statistically significant) between first year undergraduate respondents in relation to their gender and domicile group[9]. However, there were significant differences between other groups of first year undergraduate respondents, which include mode of study, age group, term-time residence, institution type, programme type, and field of study[10]:

- Full-time respondents reported much higher scores than part-time/ remote respondents.
- Respondents aged 23 years and under reported working collaboratively with their peers more frequently compared to those aged 24 and older.
- First year undergraduate respondents living in rented accommodation were less likely to report working collaboratively with their peers compared to respondents living with their parents or living on-campus. However, there were no significant difference between respondents living with their parents and living on-campus.
- First year undergraduate respondents at Universities reported lower scores for *Collaborative Learning* than their peers in Technological Higher Education Institutions and Other Institutions.
- First year undergraduate respondents pursuing a Certificate/ Diploma were much less likely to report working with their peers compared to respondents pursuing an Ordinary Degree or Honours Degree.
- The fields of study where first year undergraduate respondents reported the highest *Collaborative Learning* scores were Engineering, manufacturing, and construction students and ICT students, while Arts and humanities students had the lowest scores.

9. T-statistics are computed to determine whether the difference between two groups (such as domicile group and age group) is statistically significant. One-way analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA) is conducted to determine whether the difference between more than two groups (such as institution type) is statistically significant. For these characteristics, pairwise significance between each group are then tested. In relation to field of study, the text commentary only refers to pairs of scores where the difference is statistically significant due to the number of groups involved.
10. Some pairwise differences between fieldwork years, term-time residence, and fields of study are not statistically significant.

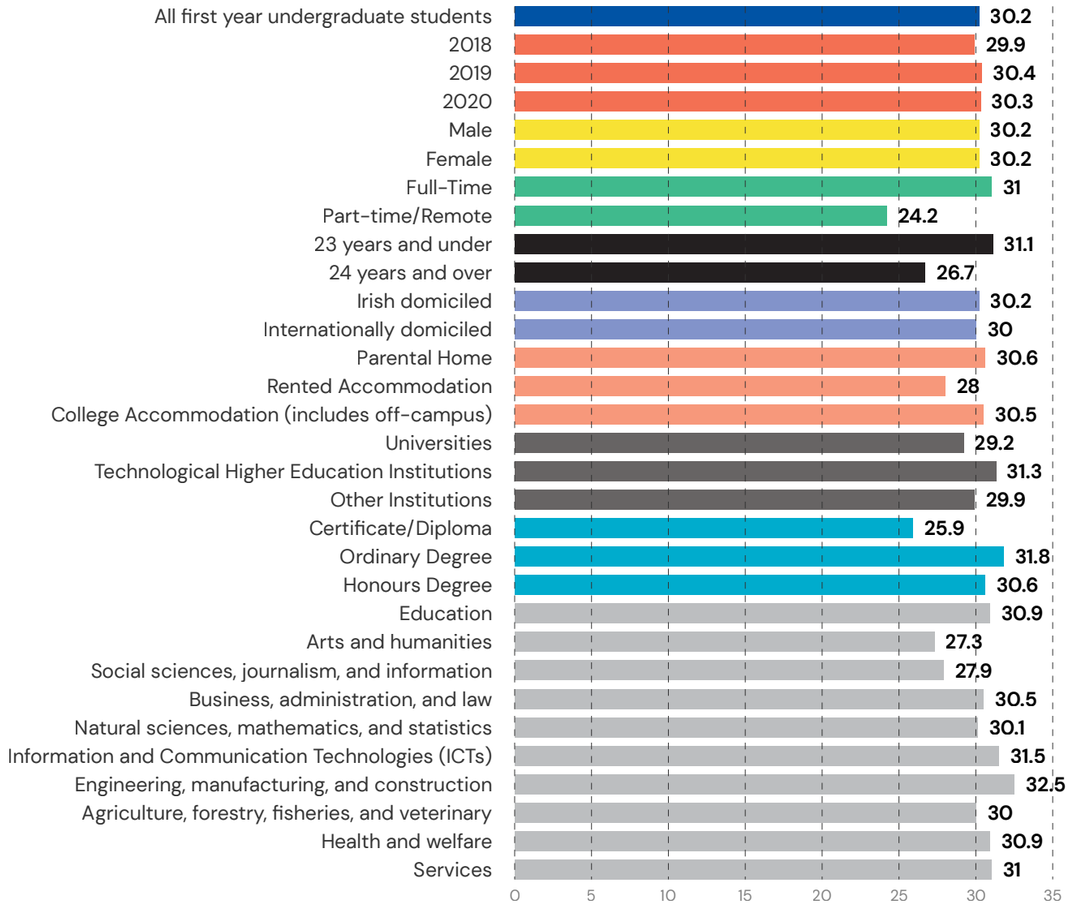


Fig. 4.1 *Collaborative Learning* scores for first year undergraduate respondents across three years (2018-2020)

Significant differences between groups for *Collaborative Learning*:

Gender	**No**	Term-time Residence	**Some**
Mode of Study	**Yes**	Institution Type	**Yes**
Age Group	**Yes**	Programme Type	**Yes**
Domicile Group	**No**	Field of Study	**Some**

The following sections will present the responses to a selection of questions that comprise each indicator to further investigate the results. To investigate these findings further, the following sections will select two of the questions that contribute to the *Collaborative Learning* indicator. These are:

- **Q1:** How often have you worked with other students on projects or assignments?
- **Q2:** How often have you prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students?

Responses to these questions are analysed by the characteristics that have the largest differences in the indicator scores (and not necessarily all the characteristics for which the differences are statistically significant). These are mode of study, age group, term-time residence, institution type, programme type, and field of study. In addition, mode of study is further broken down into separate categories for full-time, part-time, and remote respondents to gain further insight into the experiences of respondents who previously chose to study remotely.

Q1: How often have you worked with other students on projects or assignments?

Over half (54%) of all first year undergraduate respondents worked with peers on project or assignments either 'often' or 'very often'. Only 10% reported that they 'never' work with other respondents, while 36% 'sometimes' do.

Part-time and especially remote respondents were much less likely to work collaboratively with other students. Nearly two in five (39%) respondents who study remotely 'never' worked collaboratively with other students, while one in five (21%) part-time respondents 'never' did. Only 8% of full-time respondents 'never' worked with others.

More respondents aged 23 years and under reported working collaboratively with other students 'often' or 'very often' (57%), compared to only 42% of respondents aged 24 years and over. This is also true for respondents living with their parents; 55% of these respondents worked with their peers 'often' or 'very often', compared to 50% who live on-campus and only 44% who live in rented accommodation.

Respondents studying at Technological Higher Education Institutions were more likely to report working collaboratively with others 'often' or 'very often' (60%) compared to those studying in Universities (48%). First year undergraduate respondents pursuing an Ordinary Degree were most likely to work collaboratively with others 'often' or 'very often' (61%). This was followed by respondents pursuing an Honours Degrees (54%) and those pursuing an Undergraduate Certificate/ Diploma (44%).

Engineering, manufacturing, and construction students, Business, administration, and law students, and Services students most often worked with their peers, with 26%, 24% and 23% respectively doing so 'very often'. The respondents least likely were Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and veterinary students, where only 11% work with others 'very often'.

Q2: How often have you prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students?

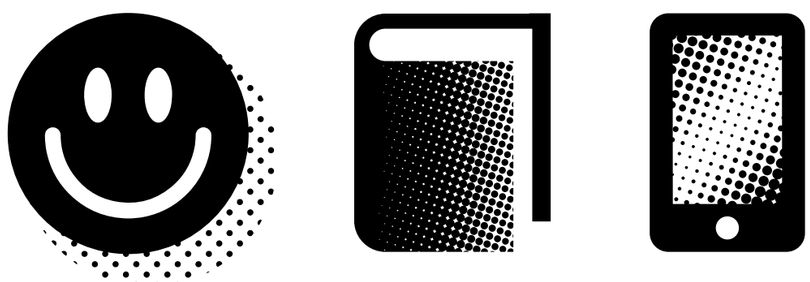
Most first year undergraduate respondents prepared for exams with their classmates, with 83% doing so at least 'sometimes'. This was broken down into 38% who did so 'sometimes', 30% 'often', and 14% 'very often'.

Part-time and especially remote respondents were much less likely to have prepared for exams by working with their classmates. Over one-third (35%) of respondents who study remotely 'never' prepared for exams with other respondents, while one-in-four (24%) part-time respondents 'never' did. This compares to just 16% of full-time respondents who 'never' prepared for exams with others.

A greater proportion of respondents aged 23 years or under prepared for exams with their classmates 'often' or 'very often' (46%) compared to their peers aged 24 years and over (40%). This is also true for respondents living on-campus, where 47% of respondents prepared for exams with their peers 'often' or 'very often' compared to 44% living with their parents and only 40% who live in rented accommodation.

Respondents attending Universities were slightly less likely to prepare for exams with their classmates 'often' or 'very often' (43%) compared to those in Technological Higher Education Institutions (46%). This in turn was less than for those in Other Institutions (48%).

Respondents pursuing an Ordinary Degree were more likely to report preparing for exams with other respondents 'often' or 'very often' (47%) compared to respondents pursuing an Honours Degree (45%) or Undergraduate Certificate/ Diploma (37%). Education students and Health and welfare students were most likely to have prepared for exams with their classmates 'often' or 'very often' (48% each). Arts and humanities students and Social sciences, journalism, and information students (38% and 40% respectively) were least likely to do this.



4.3 Overview of first year undergraduate respondents' relationship with academic staff

This section focuses on how respondents view their relationship with academic staff by focusing on a selection of questions from the *Student-Faculty Interaction* indicator.

Analysis in Chapter 3 shows that first year undergraduate respondents' scores for the *Student-Faculty Interaction* indicator were lower than final year undergraduates and postgraduate taught respondents. The analysis in Chapter 2 shows that few respondents reported that they interact with academic staff outside the classroom 'often' or 'very often'. However, it is interesting to note, also in Chapter 2, that respondents reported high scores for *Quality of Interactions* with academic staff.

Analysing *Student-Faculty Interaction* indicator scores

Fig. 4.2 shows the *Student-Faculty Interaction* scores for first year undergraduate respondents across a wide range of student characteristics.

The analysis shows that the *Student-Faculty Interaction* indicator was not statistically different for first year undergraduate respondents living in different types of term-time accommodation. However, there were significant differences between all other groups of first year undergraduate respondents, which includes their gender, mode of study, age, country of domicile, institution type, programme type, and field of study[11]:

- Male first year undergraduate respondents had higher indicator scores than female respondents.
- Full-time respondents had higher indicator scores compared to part-time/ remote respondents.
- Respondents aged 24 and over also had higher indicator scores compared to their peers aged 23 and under.
- Internationally domiciled respondents had higher indicator scores for interacting with faculty compared to their Irish domiciled counterparts.
- First year undergraduate respondents at Universities had much lower scores in relation to interacting with faculty members than their peers in Technological Higher Education Institutions and Other Institutions.
- First year undergraduate respondents pursuing an Ordinary Degree had the highest scores for interacting with faculty, while respondents pursuing an Honours Degree had the lowest scores. The difference in the indicator scores was not statistically different between respondents pursuing a Certificate/ Diploma and an Ordinary Degree.
- Services was the field of study where first year undergraduate respondents reported the highest *Student-Faculty Interaction* scores, while Social sciences, journalism, and information students and Natural sciences, mathematics, and statistics students had the lowest scores.

11. Some pairwise differences between fieldwork years, programme type and fields of study are not statistically significant.

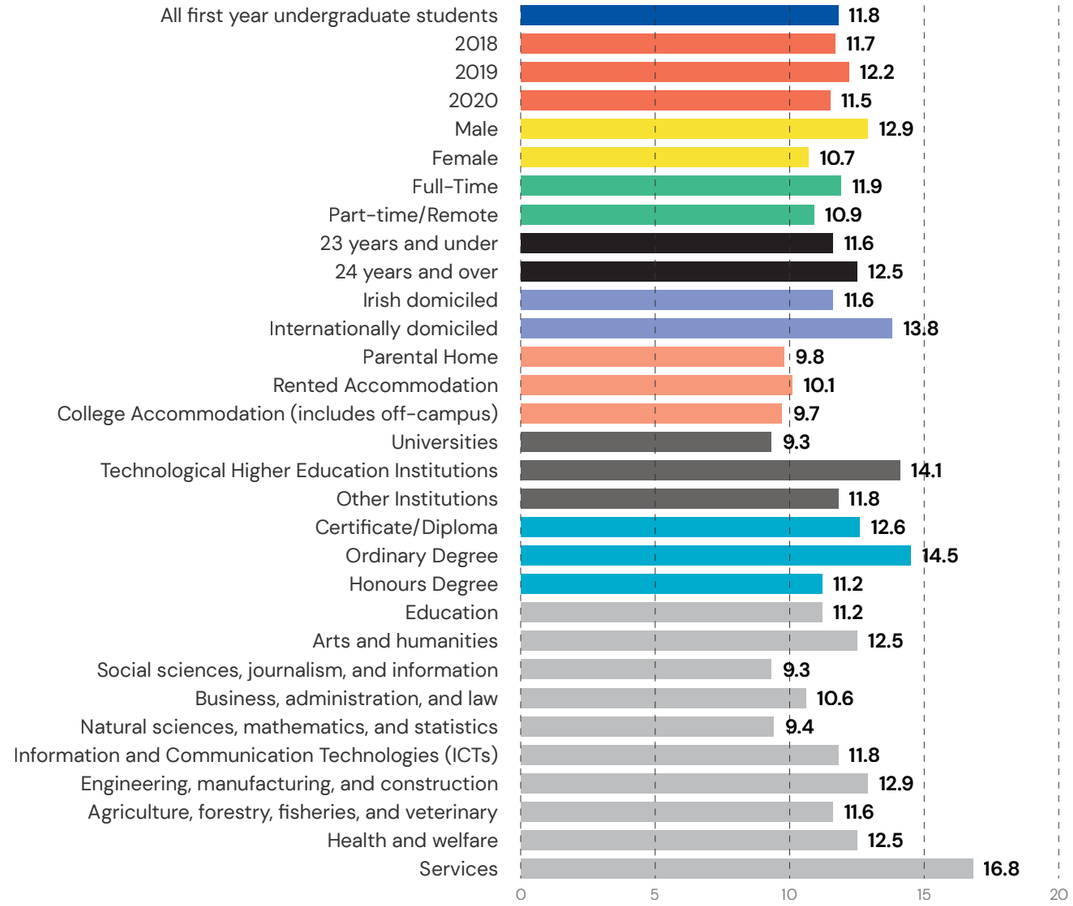


Fig. 4.2 *Student-Faculty Interaction* indicator scores for first year undergraduate respondents across three years (2018-2020)

Significant differences between groups for *Student-Faculty Interaction*:

Gender	**Yes**	Term-time Residence	**No**
Mode of Study	**Yes**	Institution Type	**Yes**
Age Group	**Yes**	Programme Type	**Some**
Domicile Group	**Yes**	Field of Study	**Some**

The two questions explored in detail from the *Student-Faculty Interaction* indicator are those that may be more affected by moving away from the traditional full-time on-campus model:

- **Q1:** During the current academic year, how often have you discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with academic staff outside of class?
- **Q2:** During the current academic year, how often have you worked with academic staff on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.)?

Responses to these questions are analysed by the characteristics that have the largest difference in the indicator scores above (and not necessarily all the characteristics for which the differences are statistically significant). These are their gender, mode of study, country of domicile, institution type, programme type, and field of study. In addition, mode of study is further broken down into separate categories for full-time, part-time, and remote respondents to gain further insight into the experiences of respondents who previously chose to study remotely.

Q1: How often have you discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with academic staff outside of class?

Just over half (51%) of first year undergraduate respondents 'never' discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts outside of class with academic staff. Thirty four per cent did so 'sometimes', 12% did so 'often' while 4% did so 'very often'.

Over half (56%) of first year female undergraduate respondents 'never' consulted academic staff outside of class compared to 46% of males. First year undergraduate respondents with different modes of study engaged in discussions with academic staff outside of class to a similar extent. Around half of full-time, part-time, and remote respondents 'never' did so. Over half (52%) of Irish domiciled respondents reported 'never' discussing course topics with academic staff compared to 42% of internationally domiciled respondents.

Respondents attending Universities were more likely to participate in course discussions with academic staff outside of class at least sometimes (41%) compared to those attending Other Institutions (48%) and Technological Higher Education Institutions (56%). Respondents pursuing an Ordinary Degree were most likely to discuss coursework with academic staff at least 'sometimes' (58%). This was followed by respondents pursing an Undergraduate Certificate/ Diploma (54%) and those pursing an Honours Degree (46%).

First year undergraduate respondents studying Services most often engaged in course-related discussions with staff outside of class, with nearly two-thirds (64%) doing so at least 'sometimes'. The respondents least likely were Social sciences, journalism, and information students (42%) and Natural sciences, mathematics, and statistics students (43%).

Q2: How often have you worked with academic staff on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.)?

Most first year undergraduate respondents (71%) reported never working with academic staff on activities other than coursework. However, 21% of respondents reported working with academic staff outside the classroom `sometimes', with 8% reporting this interaction 'often' or 'very often'.

One-third (34%) of first year male undergraduate respondents reported working with academic staff outside the classroom at least 'sometimes', compared to one-quarter of females. More full-time respondents reported working with staff outside of the classroom at least 'sometimes' (31%) compared to those studying part-time (21%) or remotely (17%). Internationally domiciled respondents were more likely to work with staff outside the classroom at least `sometimes' (40%) compared to their Irish domiciled peers (29%).

When institution type is analysed, first year undergraduates attending Universities were more likely to report 'never' working with academic staff outside the classroom (76%) compared to respondents attending Other Institutions (71%) and Technological Higher Education Institutions (65%). Respondents pursing an Honours Degree or an Undergraduate Certificate/ Diploma were more likely to 'never' work with academic staff outside the classroom (72% and 73% respectively) compared to those pursing an Ordinary Degree (63%).

Respondents in the Services field of study were most likely to report working with academic staff on activities other than coursework at least 'sometimes' (46%). Social sciences, journalism, and information students and Natural sciences, mathematics, and statistics students were the least likely (23% and 24% respectively).

4.4 Overview of first year undergraduate respondents' quality of interactions with others

This section focuses on respondents' scores for the *Quality of Interactions* with a range of other people on campus.

Analysing *Quality of Interactions* indicator scores

Fig. 4.3 shows the *Quality of Interactions* indicator scores for first year undergraduate respondents across a wide range of student characteristics. There were significant differences between groups on all characteristics for first year undergraduate respondents, except for respondents' term-time accommodation[12]:

- Male respondents had slightly higher indicator scores compared to females.
- Part-time/ remote respondents had higher indicator scores compared to those studying full-time. This contrasts the findings compared to the other indicator scores examined in this chapter so far.
- Respondents aged 24 and over had higher indicator scores compared to their peers aged 23 and under.
- Internationally domiciled respondents had higher indicator scores compared to their Irish domiciled counterparts.
- First year undergraduate respondents at Technological Higher Education Institutions and Other Institutions had higher scores than their peers in Universities. However, the difference was not significant between Technological Higher Education Institutions and Other Institutions.
- First year undergraduate respondents pursuing a Certificate/ Diploma also had higher scores compared to respondents pursuing an Ordinary Degree, who in turn had higher scores compared to respondents pursuing an Honours Degree.
- The fields of study where first year undergraduate respondents had the highest *Quality of Interactions* scores were ICTs students and Services students, while Business, administration, and law students had the lowest scores.

12. Some pairwise differences between fieldwork years, institution types and fields of study are not statistically significant.

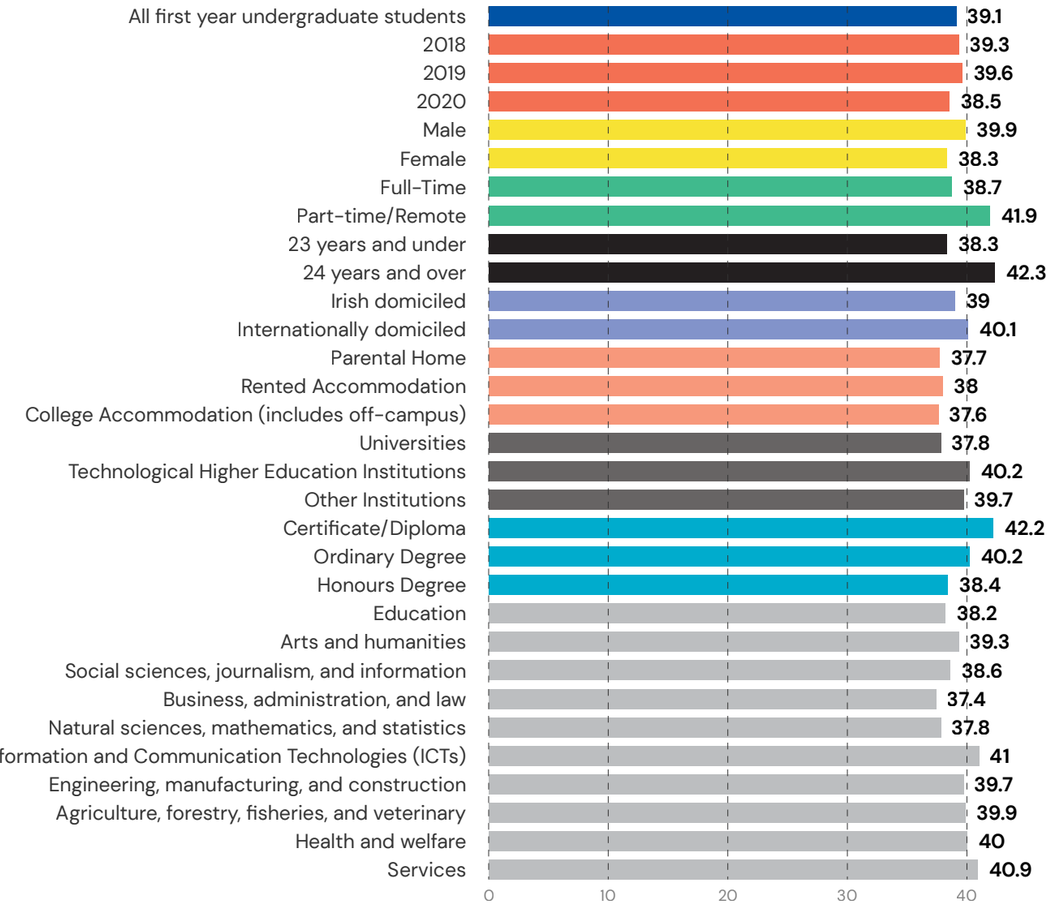


Fig. 4.3 *Quality of Interactions* indicator scores for first year undergraduate respondents across three years (2018-2020)

Significant differences between groups for *Quality of Interactions*:

Gender	**Yes**	Term-time Residence	**No**
Mode of Study	**Yes**	Institution Type	**Some**
Age Group	**Yes**	Programme Type	**Yes**
Domicile Group	**Yes**	Field of Study	**Some**

The questions explored in this section are:

- **Q1:** At your institution, please indicate the quality of interactions with: Academic staff
- **Q2:** At your institution, please indicate the quality of interactions with: Students

Responses to these questions are analysed by the characteristics that have the largest difference in the indicator scores above (and not necessarily all the characteristics for which the differences are statistically significant). These are their mode of study, age, institution type, programme type, and field of study. In addition, mode of study is further broken down into separate categories for full-time, part-time, and remote respondents to gain further insight into the experiences of respondents who previously chose to study remotely.

Q1: At your institution, please indicate the quality of interactions with: Academic staff

The majority (64%) of first year undergraduate respondents rated *Quality of Interactions* with academic staff at a '5' or above, with one in five rating them as 'excellent'. Only 18% rated their interactions at a '3' or below. This is despite analysis in the previous section showing that few first year undergraduate respondents interact with academic staff 'often' or 'very often'.

Part-time respondents were most likely to rate their interactions with academic staff as 'excellent', with 36% doing so. This is followed by respondents studying remotely, of whom 26% rated their interactions as 'excellent', and respondents studying full-time, of whom 18% did so. Respondents 24 years and over were much more likely to rate their interactions with academic staff as 'excellent' (35%) compared to respondents 23 years and under (16%). Respondents at Technological Higher Education Institutions were also more likely to rate their interactions with academic staff as 'excellent' (24%) compared to respondents at Other Institutions (20%) or Universities (15%).

Respondents pursuing a Certificate/ Diploma responded most positively regarding their interactions with academic staff, with 36% rating their interactions as 'excellent'. This is followed by respondents pursuing an Ordinary Degree, of whom 24% rated their interactions as 'excellent', and respondents pursuing an Honours Degree, of whom 17% did so. ICTs students and Services students reported the highest *Quality of Interactions* with academic staff, while Natural sciences, mathematics, and statistics students reported the lowest.

Q2: At your institution, please indicate the quality of interactions with: Students

The majority (81%) of first year undergraduate respondents rated the *Quality of Interactions* with their fellow students at a '5' or above, with 35% rating them as 'excellent'. Only 8% rated their interactions at a '3' or below.

Part-time respondents were most likely to rate their interactions with students as 'excellent', with 43% doing so. Thirty four per cent of respondents studying full-time rated their interactions as 'excellent', while 28% of respondents studying remotely did so. Respondents 24 years and over were more likely to rate their interactions with their fellow students as 'excellent' (39%) compared to respondents 23 years and under (34%).

The results were broadly similar across respondents who attended different types of institutions, but respondents attending Universities were slightly less likely to report 'excellent' interactions with their fellow students (33%) compared to those attending Technological Higher Education Institutions and Other Institutions (36% each). Respondents pursuing a Certificate/ Diploma responded most positively regarding their interactions with other students, with two in five (40%) rating their interactions as 'excellent'. This was followed by respondents pursuing an Ordinary Degree, of whom 36% rated their interactions as 'excellent', and respondents pursuing an Honours Degree, of whom 34% did so.

Health and welfare students and Services students reported the highest *Quality of Interactions* with their fellow students, while Social sciences, journalism, and information students reported the lowest.

4.5 Overview of first year undergraduate respondents' perception of their institutions' emphasis on activities that support their learning and development

This section focuses on respondents' perceptions of how much their higher education institution emphasises services and activities that support their learning and development by focusing on a selection of questions from the *Supportive Environment* indicator.

Analysing *Supportive Environment* indicator scores

Fig. 4.4 shows the *Supportive Environment* indicator scores for first year undergraduate respondents across a wide range of student characteristics. There were significant differences between groups on all characteristics for first year undergraduate respondents[13]:

- Female respondents had slightly higher scores than males.
- Full-time respondents had much higher scores compared to part-time/ remote respondents.
- Respondents aged 23 years and under had higher scores than their peers aged 24 and older.
- Internationally domiciled respondents had higher scores compared to Irish domiciled respondents.
- Respondents living on-campus reported slightly higher scores compared to those living with their parents and in rented accommodation. The difference was not significant between the latter two term-time residency types.
- First year undergraduate respondents at Universities had higher scores than their peers in Technological Higher Education Institutions and Other Institutions.
- First year undergraduate respondents pursuing an Honours Degree also had higher scores compared to their peers pursuing a Certificate/ Diploma or Ordinary Degree.
- The fields of study where first year undergraduate respondents reported the highest *Supportive Environment* scores were Arts and humanities students and Social sciences, journalism, and information students, while Education students reported the lowest scores.

13. Some pairwise differences between groups of term-time residence and field of study are not statistically significant.

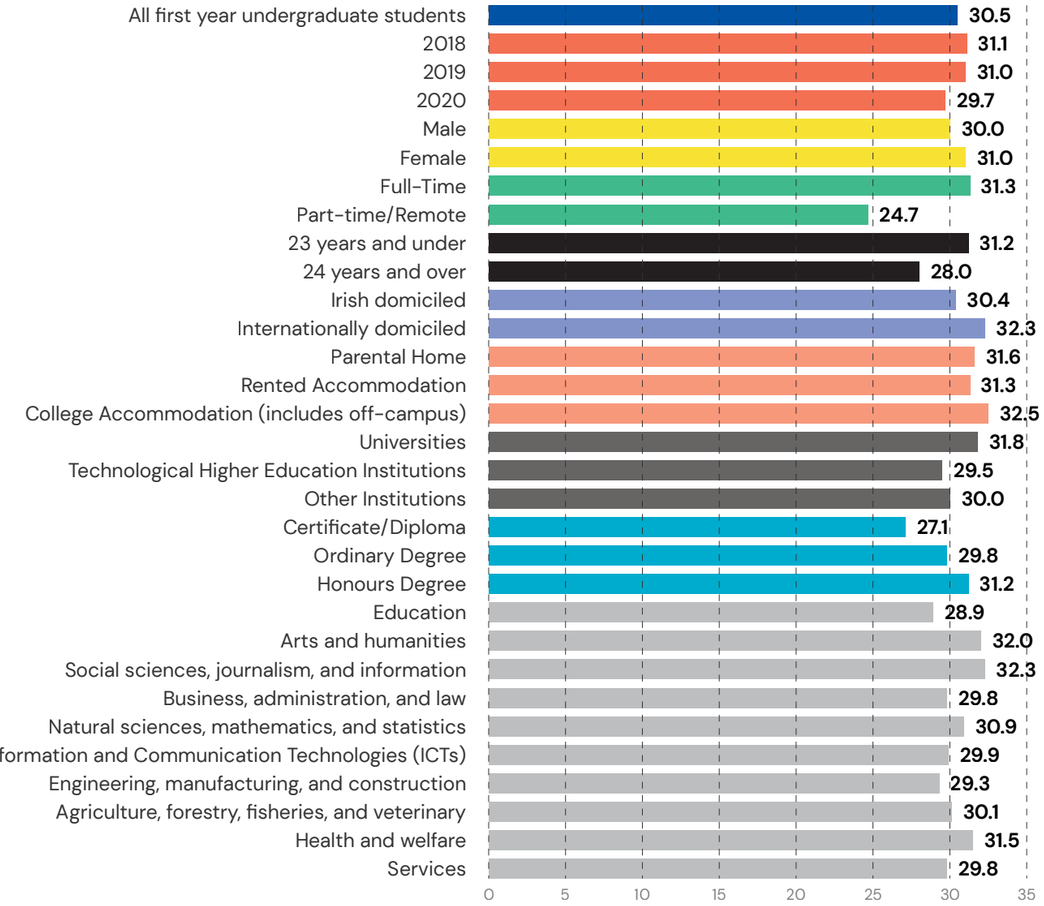


Fig. 4.4 *Supportive Environment* indicator scores for first year undergraduate respondents across three years (2018-2020)

Significant differences between groups for *Supportive Environment*:

Gender	**Yes**	Term-time Residence	**Some**
Mode of Study	**Yes**	Institution Type	**Yes**
Age Group	**Yes**	Programme Type	**Yes**
Domicile Group	**Yes**	Field of Study	**Some**

The questions explored in this section are those that may be more affected by moving away from the traditional full-time on-campus model:

- **Q1:** How much does your institution emphasise providing support to help students succeed academically?
- **Q2:** How much does your institution emphasise using learning support services (learning centre, computer centre, maths support, writing support, etc.)?
- **Q3:** How much does your institution emphasise providing support for your overall well-being (recreation, health care, counselling, etc.)?
- **Q4:** How much does your institution emphasise providing opportunities to be involved socially?

Responses to these questions are analysed by the characteristics that show the largest difference in the indicator scores above (and not necessarily all the characteristics for which the differences are statistically significant). These are their mode of study, age, programme type, institution type, and field of study. In addition, mode of study is further broken down into separate categories for full-time, part-time, and remote respondents to gain further insight into the experiences of respondents who previously chose to study remotely.

Q1: How much does your institution emphasise providing support to help students succeed academically?

The majority (63%) of first year undergraduate respondents believed that their institution emphasised provision of academic supports 'quite a bit' or 'very much'. Only 7% believed that their institution did 'very little', while 30% believed that their institution did 'some'.

Respondents studying remotely were less likely to believe that their institution provided academic supports 'very much' (17%) compared to full-time and part-time respondents (23% and 22% respectively). Results were broadly similar across different age groups, although those aged 24 and over were slightly more likely to believe that their institution emphasised provision of academic supports 'very much' (25%) compared to respondents 23 years and under (23%).

Respondents attending Other Institutions were most likely to report that their institution provides academic supports 'very much' (26%) compared to Universities (24%) and Technological Higher Education Institutions (22%). Results were broadly similar across different programme types.

Social sciences, journalism, and information students, Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and veterinary students, and Health and welfare students were most likely to report that their institution provided supports to help them academically. Twenty six per cent of respondents in these fields of study believed their institutions provided these supports 'very much'.

Q2: How much does your institution emphasise using learning support services (learning centre, computer centre, maths support, writing support, etc.)?

Most first year undergraduate respondents (61%) believed that their institution emphasised provision of learning support services 'quite a bit' or 'very much'. Twenty six per cent of respondents believed that their institution emphasised learning support services to 'some' extent, while 13% believed that they did 'very little'.

Full-time respondents were more likely to select that their institution emphasised learning support services 'very much' (27%) compared to respondents studying part-time (21%) and remotely (18%). By contrast, there was no statistical difference between age groups.

Respondents attending Universities were more likely to believe that their institution emphasised provision of learning support services 'quite a bit' or 'very much' (65%) compared to respondents attending Technological Higher Education Institutions (58%) and Other Institutions (56%).

Respondents pursuing an Honours Degree were most likely to select that their institution emphasised using learning support services 'quite a bit' or 'very much' (63%), compared to 58% of respondents pursuing an Ordinary Degree and 56% pursuing a Certificate/ Diploma. Natural sciences, mathematics, and statistics students, Social sciences, journalism, and information students, and ICTs students were most likely to report that their institution emphasised learning support services 'very much' (31%, 30%, and 29% respectively). This compared to 21% of Education students and Services students.

Q3: How much does your institution emphasise providing support for your overall well-being (recreation, health care, counselling, etc.)?

The majority (59%) of first year undergraduate respondents believed that their institution supported their overall well-being at least 'quite a bit'. Only 11% believed that their institution did 'very little', while 30% believed that their institution did 'some'.

Results were broadly similar for respondents studying part-time and remotely, but these respondents were less likely to believe that their institution provided well-being supports at least 'quite a bit' compared to full-time respondents. Thirty nine per cent of part-time respondents and 41% of remote respondents thought their institute supported their well-being 'quite a bit' compared to 61% of full-time respondents.

Just half of respondents aged 24 years and over believed that their institution provided well-being supports at least 'quite a bit', compared to over three in five (61%) of those aged 23 years and under.

Respondents attending Universities and Other Institutions were more likely to believe that their institution supported their overall well-being 'very much' (26% each) compared to respondents at Technological Higher Education Institutions (21%). Health and welfare students were most likely to report that their institution supported their overall well-being 'very much' (29%) compared to 19% respondents studying Engineering, manufacturing, and construction students and Services students.

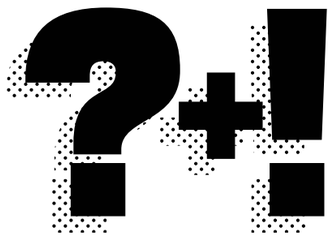
Q4: How much does your institution emphasise providing opportunities to be involved socially?

The majority (59%) of first year undergraduate respondents believed that their institution emphasised social opportunities 'quite a bit' or 'very much'. Twenty nine per cent of respondents believed that their institution emphasised social activities to 'some' extent, while 11% believed that they did 'very little'.

There was a marked difference in responses between respondents studying full-time and both part-time and remote respondents. The majority (63%) of full-time respondents believed that their institution provided social opportunities 'quite a bit' or 'very much'. By comparison, only 39% of part-time respondents believed this to the same extent. These beliefs were somewhat lower again for respondents studying remotely, where only one in three (32%) believed this to the same extent.

Respondents aged 23 and under were more likely to believe that their institution emphasised social opportunities compared to those aged 24 and over. Sixty three per cent of respondents 23 and under believed this 'quite a bit' or 'very much' compared to 47% of respondents aged 24 and over. More respondents studying at Universities (64%) reported that their institution provided social activities 'quite a bit' or 'very much' compared to Other Institutions (58%) and Technological Higher Education Institutions (55%).

Respondents pursuing an Honours Degree were most likely to report that their institution provided social activities 'quite a bit' or 'very much' (63%), compared to 56% of respondents pursuing an Ordinary Degree and 45% pursuing a Certificate/ Diploma. Arts and humanities students (65%) and Social sciences, journalism, and information students (63%) were most likely to report that their institution emphasised social activities 'quite a bit' or 'very much'.



4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an initial investigation into the factors underlying first year undergraduate students' engagement in higher education that are expected to be most affected by the necessitated changes to the traditional on-campus education model due to public health measures in place in response to COVID-19. The aim was to consider the previous three fieldwork years of first year undergraduate respondents to establish a baseline of their experiences before the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings can also inform institutions in implementing a remote and blended/ hybrid learning environment for the current academic year.

Table 4.2 below summarises the statistically significant differences between groups of first year undergraduate respondents across the characteristics analysed in this chapter. The analysis revealed that there were significant differences for each of the indicators examined in this chapter between respondents in different age groups and between respondents studying full-time and part-time/ remotely.

In addition, there were significant differences in all four of the indicators between at least some groups of respondents, such as between groups attending different institution types, pursuing different programme types, or different fields of study.

Differences across gender and domicile group were significant for three out of the four indicators analysed in this chapter. There were significant differences across only some groups of respondents' term-time residence for just two out of the four indicators.

The StudentSurvey.ie National Report Editorial Group intends to return to the same questions in 2021 to evaluate the impact of the COVID-19 public health measures on the first year undergraduate respondents, predominantly for whom the 2020-2021 academic year will have been their only experience in higher education.

Table 4.2 Significant differences between groups of first year undergraduate respondents by characteristics

	Collaborative Learning	Student-Faculty Interaction	Quality of Interactions	Supportive Environment
Fieldwork Year	Some	Some	Some	Yes
Gender	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mode of Study	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Age Group	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Domicile Group	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Term-time Residence	Some	No	No	Some
Institution Type	Yes	Yes	Some	Yes
Programme Type	Yes	Some	Yes	Yes
Supportive Environment	Some	Some	Some	Some

We are depending on you once again to ensure that students in your institution are given the opportunity and encouragement to make their voices heard.

Chapter 5
Next steps

5.1 Introduction

StudentSurvey.ie remains a valuable component of the Irish higher education sector and has the power to improve the lived experience of current and future undergraduate and postgraduate students. This would contribute to an improved environment for all members of the higher education community.

The *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030*, from which StudentSurvey.ie emerged, recommended that every higher education institution put in place a comprehensive, anonymous student feedback system. Great success has been achieved in this endeavour, as all publicly funded and an increasing number of private colleges use StudentSurvey.ie as an essential mechanism to amplify the student voice. As we look to the future of StudentSurvey.ie, our focus and energy shift to making greater strides in the second component of what the *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030* called for, which are accessible, strong, and responsive structures to ensure that action is taken promptly in relation to student concerns.

5.2 Enhancing analysis and using the data

The StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group remains committed to increasing transparency with regard to the data generated by the survey whilst maintaining its focus on continued enhancement of the experiences of students. The latest example of these parallel objectives is demonstrated by the establishment of an Analysis and Impact Group to elevate the analysis of StudentSurvey.ie data.

The objectives of the Analysis and Impact Group include investigating ways of achieving a baseline level of analysis of the StudentSurvey.ie data within all participating institutions and collaborating with the StudentSurvey.ie Communications Group to find effective ways of disseminating the results of the analyses in order to better close the feedback loop. Membership includes co-sponsoring organisations, other stakeholder organisations, and staff and student representatives in participating institutions who have experience and expertise in data analysis and using StudentSurvey.ie data to achieve impact.

Within weeks of their first meeting, members of the Analysis and Impact Group prepared and presented a session at the StudentSurvey.ie Practitioners Forum 2020, published a *User Guide* for the In Touch data visualisation platform, and began advising the StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group on matters related to data analysis and impact. Planned deliverables over the coming year include:

- Reporting templates for StudentSurvey.ie results for use by participating institutions.
- Data visualisation tools for StudentSurvey.ie for use by participating institutions.
- Funding of projects to analyse the qualitative data and report the results.
- A review of the functionality of the In Touch platform (which has functionality such as data storage and data visualisation) and the ACUnit1 and ACUnit2 fields in the demographic data submission in advance of fieldwork and resulting outputs.
- Time Series reports, which aim to examine results over time and along a number of dimensions, such as by field of study
- The ongoing publication of a growing collection of uses of StudentSurvey.ie results to enhance the student experience in participating institutions.

Corresponding resources for the PGR StudentSurvey.ie are also being planned.

There are many more possibilities for further analysis of the data than can be carried out by participating institutions and/ or the central StudentSurvey.ie project management function. Contact the Project Manager at info@studentsurvey.ie to discuss these possibilities or to propose ideas for future research. Additionally, the anonymised StudentSurvey.ie dataset (anonymised at the level of individual respondent and individual institution) is archived with the Irish Social Sciences Data Archive[14] annually and may be accessed by request.

14. Irish Social Sciences Data Archive (www.ucd.ie/issda)

5.3 StudentSurvey.ie fieldwork 2021

The unprecedented change brought about by the COVID-19 global crisis has affected us all and cannot be overlooked. Nevertheless, now more than ever, feedback from a national survey is needed from students navigating this landscape. StudentSurvey.ie fieldwork 2021 is scheduled to place in February-March 2021, in keeping with the normal scheduling of previous years. The StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group wishes to take this opportunity to express its gratitude to the staff and student representatives who work with us on this project. We are depending on you once again to ensure that students in your institution are given the opportunity and encouragement to make their voices heard. The feedback from the thousands of students will provide, as always, valuable insights into the breadth of the student experience, which institutions can use to improve this student experience, and which can inform national discussions about student engagement. Uniquely in 2021, the results will also provide a national and broad-based study of the experiences of thousands of students in what will likely be a continuation of the emergency online and blended learning environment, which institutions can use to inform local decisions, practices and strategies, and which can also be used at a national level.

The PGR StudentSurvey.ie (Irish Survey of Student Engagement for Postgraduate Research Students; Suirbhé na hÉireann ar Rannpháirtíocht na Mac Léinn do Mhic Léinn Taighde Iarchéime) is scheduled to return in February-March 2021. All PhD students and Masters by Research students in StudentSurvey.ie participating institutions are invited to participate. This survey now runs on a biennial survey cycle; therefore, it is all the more important that these students participate in 2021.

5.4 Final comments

To conclude, the StudentSurvey.ie National Report Editorial Group offers some statements that we take as truths:

The results of StudentSurvey.ie 2020, and previous years' results, are valuable.

The insights provided by the approximately 245,000 respondents to StudentSurvey.ie over the last seven years are a rich source of inspiration and challenge. Some are presented annually in the national reports, particularly in the Looking Deeper chapters, and their value to individual institutions and at a national level needs to continue to be mined in creative and constructive ways. However, there are more results and more data than are published in the national report, such as the qualitative data from the open-ended questions in the survey. Data such as these could easily be accessed and analysed locally by Programme Directors, service managers, SU representatives, etc., or nationally by external researchers, representative organisations, etc. The results contain so much value for current analysis and potential for future analysis.

The results are robust.

They are reliable, valid, drawn from a large and representative sample of the student population, and are consistent over time.

These results require action.

While the consistency of the results over the past seven years has provided assurance of the reliability of the survey, it is time to see a gradual increase in indicator scores over the coming years. At present, in some institutions, the feedback generated by students participating in StudentSurvey.ie remains a step removed from those same students. There remains so much potential for the results of StudentSurvey.ie to provide precious fuel to institutions as they achieve their ambitions, be they in providing the best student experience they can, in complying with quality assurance requirements, or in creating an environment that is inclusive, vibrant, and authentic, to name but a few of those ambitions.

The results, and indeed this report, are all part of a bigger cycle.

This report was launched at a significant virtual event organised in collaboration with QQI and NStEP called "Empowerment and partnership in student engagement" in November 2020. This represents only one of the ways in which StudentSurvey.ie results are integrated into the work being carried out by vested stakeholder groups such as QQI and NstEP, the co-sponsoring organisation HEA, IUA, THEA, USI, and other stakeholders, such as the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, the National Forum of the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, and other interested parties. We now look to the future, where student voices continue to be amplified by StudentSurvey.ie and listened to by institutions and national organisations to bring about enhanced student experiences and a better environment for all members of the higher education community.

Appendices

Appendix 1
Tables to accompany Chapter 2

Questions relating to *Higher-Order Learning*

These questions explore the extent to which students' work emphasises challenging cognitive tasks, such as application, analysis, judgement, and synthesis.

Table 6.1 Higher-Order Learning

During the current academic year, how much has your coursework emphasised...		All Students	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Applying facts, theories, or methods to practical problems or new situations	Very little	**5.8**	6.1	6.6	3.7
	Some	**26.0**	28.6	26.1	19.4
	Quite a bit	**42.5**	42.1	42.2	44.1
	Very much	**25.7**	23.1	25.2	32.8
Analysing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts	Very little	**7.4**	8.3	8.2	3.9
	Some	**30.3**	34.1	30.6	20.8
	Quite a bit	**39.8**	38.9	39.9	41.8
	Very much	**22.5**	18.7	21.3	33.5
Evaluating a point of view, decision, or information source	Very little	**8.2**	9.6	8.5	4.3
	Some	**30.0**	33.9	30.1	20.3
	Quite a bit	**40.1**	39.1	39.8	42.7
	Very much	**21.8**	17.4	21.6	32.7
Forming an understanding or new idea from various pieces of information	Very little	**5.7**	6.2	6.4	3.5
	Some	**27.2**	30.2	27.8	18.9
	Quite a bit	**41.3**	41.4	41.4	41.0
	Very much	**25.8**	22.2	24.3	36.6

Questions relating to *Reflective and Integrative Learning*

These questions explore the extent to which students relate their own understanding and experiences to the learning content being used.

Table 6.2 Reflective and Integrative Learning

During the current academic year, about how often have you...		All Students	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Combined ideas from different subjects/ modules when completing assignments	Never	**5.7**	7.8	4.3	3.0
	Sometimes	**36.3**	40.8	34.5	28.1
	Often	**40.1**	37.8	41.6	43.4
	Very often	**17.9**	13.6	19.7	25.5
Connected your learning to problems or issues in society	Never	**14.9**	18.7	13.3	8.0
	Sometimes	**39.2**	42.3	39.9	30.5
	Often	**30.9**	27.7	31.7	37.7
	Very often	**14.9**	11.2	15.1	23.8
Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ ethnic, gender, etc.) in discussions or assignments	Never	**31.9**	35.0	32.0	24.0
	Sometimes	**37.9**	38.9	37.5	36.0
	Often	**21.0**	19.0	21.1	26.1
	Very often	**9.1**	7.1	9.4	13.8
Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue	Never	**9.6**	11.8	9.5	4.3
	Sometimes	**41.1**	44.2	41.7	32.2
	Often	**37.3**	34.3	37.3	44.8
	Very often	**12.0**	9.7	11.6	18.7
Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from their perspective	Never	**7.1**	8.3	6.8	4.4
	Sometimes	**37.0**	39.2	37.8	30.0
	Often	**39.5**	37.9	38.7	44.6
	Very often	**16.5**	14.6	16.6	21.0
Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept	Never	**3.3**	3.9	3.0	2.0
	Sometimes	**35.0**	37.5	35.6	27.6
	Often	**44.0**	42.8	44.8	45.5
	Very often	**17.8**	15.7	16.5	24.9
Connected ideas from your subjects/ modules to your prior experiences and knowledge	Never	**2.9**	3.7	2.7	1.5
	Sometimes	**30.4**	34.1	31.7	19.1
	Often	**43.0**	42.6	43.5	43.5
	Very often	**23.6**	19.6	22.2	35.9

Questions relating to *Quantitative Reasoning*

These questions explore students' opportunities to develop their skills to reason quantitatively – to evaluate, support, or critique arguments using numerical and statistical information.

Table 6.3 Quantitative Reasoning

During the current academic year, about how often have you...		All Students	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Reached conclusions based on your analysis of numerical information (numbers, graphs, statistics, etc.)	Never	**23.6**	27.0	21.3	19.1
	Sometimes	**40.8**	42.4	39.8	38.6
	Often	**25.4**	22.8	27.2	29.0
	Very often	**10.1**	7.8	11.7	13.4
Used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.)	Never	**33.5**	37.1	31.9	27.4
	Sometimes	**39.6**	40.2	39.5	38.3
	Often	**19.7**	17.2	20.8	23.9
	Very often	**7.2**	5.5	7.8	10.4
Evaluated what others have concluded from numerical information	Never	**33.7**	37.1	31.4	28.9
	Sometimes	**43.7**	43.9	44.0	42.7
	Often	**18.0**	15.5	19.3	22.3
	Very often	**4.6**	3.5	5.3	6.1

Questions relating to *Learning Strategies*

These questions explore the extent to which students actively engage with and analyse course material, rather than approaching learning passively.

Table 6.4 Learning Strategies

During the current academic year, about how often have you...		All Students	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Identified key information from recommended reading materials	Never	9.3	12.2	8.8	2.9
	Sometimes	39.2	43.6	39.5	27.8
	Often	37.3	33.5	37.9	45.8
	Very often	14.2	10.7	13.8	23.5
Reviewed your notes after class	Never	7.5	6.5	9.9	5.9
	Sometimes	39.1	39.7	41.6	33.7
	Often	36.6	36.4	34.2	41.1
	Very often	16.8	17.4	14.3	19.3
Summarised what you learned in class or from course materials	Never	8.7	8.9	9.8	6.7
	Sometimes	40.7	41.9	41.6	36.4
	Often	36.4	35.4	35.7	40.2
	Very often	14.1	13.8	13.0	16.7

Questions relating to *Collaborative Learning*

These questions explore the extent to which students collaborate with peers to solve problems or to master difficult material, thereby deepening their understanding.

Table 6.5 Collaborative Learning

During the current academic year, about how often have you…		All Students	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Asked another student to help you understand course material	Never	10.1	9.4	9.6	13.0
	Sometimes	46.1	45.7	43.9	50.7
	Often	30.4	31.5	31.2	26.0
	Very often	13.4	13.4	15.2	10.3
Explained course material to one or more students	Never	6.8	6.9	6.2	7.9
	Sometimes	45.0	47.3	41.3	45.2
	Often	33.8	33.2	35.6	32.2
	Very often	14.4	12.6	16.9	14.6
Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students	Never	15.6	16.6	12.5	18.2
	Sometimes	35.8	38.2	33.5	33.3
	Often	30.7	30.4	31.4	30.2
	Very often	17.9	14.8	22.6	18.2
Worked with other students on projects or assignments	Never	10.1	10.3	8.3	12.4
	Sometimes	32.2	36.2	29.3	27.1
	Often	33.3	34.6	33.0	30.4
	Very often	24.4	18.9	29.5	30.1

Questions relating to *Student-Faculty Interaction*

These questions explore the extent to which students interact with academic staff. Interactions with academic staff can positively influence students' cognitive growth, development, and persistence.

Table 6.6 Student-Faculty Interaction

During the current academic year, about how often have you…		All Students	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Talked about career plans with academic staff	Never	**50.0**	59.3	40.5	42.0
	Sometimes	**33.5**	28.5	39.4	36.7
	Often	**12.4**	9.3	15.2	15.4
	Very often	**4.1**	2.9	4.9	5.8
Worked with academic staff on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.)	Never	**67.0**	71.5	63.3	61.7
	Sometimes	**22.5**	20.1	24.8	24.7
	Often	**8.0**	6.5	9.1	10.1
	Very often	**2.5**	1.8	2.8	3.6
Discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with academic staff outside of class	Never	**43.4**	52.5	37.1	31.1
	Sometimes	**37.4**	32.8	41.4	42.6
	Often	**14.6**	11.4	16.5	19.5
	Very often	**4.5**	3.3	5.0	6.7
Discussed your performance with academic staff	Never	**40.0**	47.2	33.9	32.0
	Sometimes	**41.9**	38.5	45.3	44.9
	Often	**14.1**	11.5	16.2	17.5
	Very often	**3.9**	2.8	4.6	5.6

Questions relating to *Effective Teaching Practices*

These questions explore the extent to which students experience teaching practices that contribute to promoting comprehension and learning.

Table 6.7 Effective Teaching Practices

During the current academic year, to what extent have lecturers / teaching staff…		All Students	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Clearly explained course goals and requirements	Very little	**4.8**	4.7	5.6	3.9
	Some	**24.4**	25.2	26.1	19.9
	Quite a bit	**42.8**	43.8	42.9	40.1
	Very much	**27.9**	26.3	25.3	36.0
Taught in an organised way	Very little	**4.3**	3.4	5.7	4.4
	Some	**26.0**	25.7	29.3	21.4
	Quite a bit	**43.7**	45.4	43.3	40.2
	Very much	**26.0**	25.5	21.7	34.1
Used examples or illustrations to explain difficult points	Very little	**4.0**	3.7	4.7	3.3
	Some	**22.0**	21.6	24.4	19.2
	Quite a bit	**41.1**	41.5	42.2	38.2
	Very much	**33.0**	33.2	28.7	39.3
Provided feedback on a draft or work in progress	Very little	**20.7**	21.4	21.4	17.9
	Some	**33.6**	34.8	34.3	29.7
	Quite a bit	**27.8**	27.8	27.6	28.4
	Very much	**17.9**	16.1	16.7	24.1
Provided prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments	Very little	**21.0**	20.2	23.7	18.4
	Some	**33.5**	34.8	34.6	28.4
	Quite a bit	**27.9**	28.7	26.2	28.8
	Very much	**17.6**	16.3	15.5	24.4

Questions relating to *Quality of Interactions*

These questions explore student experiences of supportive relationships with a range of other people and roles on campus, thereby contributing to students' ability to find assistance when needed and to learn from and with those around them. While 'Not applicable' is available as a response option, such responses have been removed from these results.

Table 6.8 Quality of Interactions

At your institution, please indicate the quality of interactions with…		All Students	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Students	1=Poor	**1.7**	1.3	2.2	2.0
	2	**2.2**	2.0	2.6	2.0
	3	**5.1**	5.0	5.4	5.0
	4	**11.5**	11.3	12.0	11.3
	5	**22.1**	22.7	22.6	19.9
	6	**25.0**	25.6	24.7	24.1
	7=Excellent	**32.3**	32.1	30.4	35.8
Academic advisors	1=Poor	**5.6**	5.1	6.9	4.8
	2	**6.8**	6.9	7.9	4.6
	3	**12.0**	12.8	12.3	9.4
	4	**19.2**	20.4	20.0	14.7
	5	**22.4**	23.6	22.3	19.7
	6	**17.3**	16.7	16.0	20.7
	7=Excellent	**16.8**	14.5	14.6	26.1
Academic staff	1=Poor	**3.4**	3.1	4.1	3.0
	2	**4.9**	5.0	5.3	4.2
	3	**9.5**	9.9	10.5	6.8
	4	**17.4**	18.7	18.0	13.4
	5	**23.8**	25.1	23.7	20.8
	6	**20.9**	20.6	19.9	23.1
	7=Excellent	**20.0**	17.6	18.3	28.7

At your institution, please indicate the quality of interactions with...		All Students	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Support services staff (career services, student activities, accommodation, etc.)	1=Poor	**7.8**	6.4	10.3	7.1
	2	**8.0**	7.6	9.2	7.0
	3	**11.8**	11.9	13.3	8.9
	4	**17.7**	18.1	18.2	15.9
	5	**19.9**	21.1	18.9	18.6
	6	**16.6**	16.9	14.7	19.3
	7=Excellent	**18.1**	18.0	15.3	23.2
Other administrative staff and offices (registry, finance, etc.)	1=Poor	**7.4**	6.4	9.5	6.3
	2	**8.4**	8.0	9.8	6.9
	3	**11.6**	12.0	12.9	8.7
	4	**17.7**	18.6	18.0	15.3
	5	**20.4**	21.5	19.8	18.9
	6	**16.5**	16.6	14.3	20.0
	7=Excellent	**18.0**	16.9	15.8	23.9

Questions relating to *Supportive Environment*

These questions explore students' perceptions of how much their higher education institution emphasises services and activities that support their learning and development.

Table 6.9 Supportive Environment

How much does your institution emphasise...		All Students	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Providing support to help students succeed academically	Very little	**9.1**	7.1	12.0	9.2
	Some	**33.0**	31.5	36.2	31.3
	Quite a bit	**38.6**	40.1	36.8	37.9
	Very much	**19.4**	21.4	15.0	21.6
Using learning support services (learning centre, computer centre, maths support, writing support, etc.)	Very little	**15.8**	13.5	19.2	16.2
	Some	**29.0**	27.1	32.3	28.5
	Quite a bit	**33.4**	34.2	31.9	33.9
	Very much	**21.7**	25.2	16.6	21.4
Contact among students from different backgrounds (social, racial/ ethnic, religious, etc.)	Very little	**21.7**	19.1	26.5	20.4
	Some	**35.3**	35.7	36.8	32.2
	Quite a bit	**28.3**	29.6	25.8	29.4
	Very much	**14.6**	15.6	11.0	18.1
Providing opportunities to be involved socially	Very little	**15.4**	11.7	18.1	20.1
	Some	**32.0**	29.9	34.8	32.6
	Quite a bit	**33.7**	36.1	32.2	30.4
	Very much	**18.9**	22.4	14.8	16.9
Providing support for your overall well-being (recreation, health care, counselling, etc.)	Very little	**16.0**	12.2	19.3	20.0
	Some	**32.6**	31.0	34.8	33.0
	Quite a bit	**32.5**	34.6	30.9	30.0
	Very much	**18.9**	22.2	15.0	17.0
Helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	Very little	**38.4**	34.4	44.7	37.7
	Some	**34.2**	36.2	32.4	32.4
	Quite a bit	**19.4**	20.8	16.6	20.4
	Very much	**8.0**	8.6	6.2	9.5
Attending campus activities and events (special speakers, cultural performances, sporting events, etc.)	Very little	**21.2**	18.6	23.5	24.1
	Some	**35.5**	34.7	37.6	34.0
	Quite a bit	**29.7**	31.3	28.4	27.8
	Very much	**13.6**	15.4	10.5	14.1
Attending events that address important social, economic, or political issues	Very little	**29.8**	27.7	33.0	29.4
	Some	**37.3**	37.7	38.1	35.2
	Quite a bit	**23.5**	24.4	21.6	24.4
	Very much	**9.4**	10.1	7.3	10.9

Questions not relating to specific engagement indicators

These questions do not directly relate to a specific engagement indicator but are included in the survey because of their contribution to a broad understanding of student engagement.

Table 6.10 Non-indicator items

(Different question stems are used to prefix these items)		All Students	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Asked questions or contributed to discussions in class, tutorials, labs, or online	Never	**9.3**	11.7	8.9	3.8
	Sometimes	**42.0**	46.6	41.8	30.8
	Often	**30.6**	28.2	31.0	35.7
	Very often	**18.2**	13.5	18.3	29.7
Come to class without completing readings or assignments	Never	**31.6**	33.0	27.2	35.4
	Sometimes	**49.3**	48.8	49.5	50.6
	Often	**13.7**	13.1	16.5	10.6
	Very often	**5.3**	5.1	6.9	3.4
Made a presentation in class or online	Never	**18.3**	24.0	11.2	15.5
	Sometimes	**43.3**	46.7	41.8	37.1
	Often	**25.5**	21.5	29.9	28.3
	Very often	**12.9**	7.7	17.1	19.2
Improved knowledge and skills that will contribute to your employability	Never	**5.5**	7.3	4.4	2.7
	Sometimes	**30.8**	34.6	30.0	22.7
	Often	**40.9**	39.1	42.5	42.8
	Very often	**22.9**	19.0	23.2	31.8
Explored how to apply your learning in the workplace	Never	**18.5**	24.9	15.2	8.2
	Sometimes	**35.9**	37.4	36.8	30.5
	Often	**30.1**	26.3	31.6	37.1
	Very often	**15.5**	11.5	16.3	24.2
Exercised or participated in physical fitness activities	Never	**30.9**	29.8	30.2	34.8
	Sometimes	**28.9**	28.5	29.5	29.0
	Often	**20.0**	19.8	20.3	19.8
	Very often	**20.2**	21.9	20.1	16.4
Blended academic learning with workplace experience	Never	**27.7**	37.7	20.8	14.1
	Sometimes	**31.7**	32.1	33.1	28.5
	Often	**25.1**	19.7	28.5	33.0
	Very often	**15.5**	10.5	17.6	24.5
Worked on assessments that informed you how well you are learning	Never	**20.1**	19.5	23.7	15.6
	Sometimes	**42.3**	44.2	42.8	36.9
	Often	**28.7**	28.3	25.9	34.4
	Very often	**8.9**	8.0	7.6	13.1
Memorising course material	Very little	**16.0**	12.7	12.2	30.2
	Some	**33.9**	35.4	31.0	35.0
	Quite a bit	**34.4**	36.9	36.1	25.6
	Very much	**15.7**	15.0	20.8	9.2
Work with academic staff on a research project	Have not decided	**33.4**	45.7	21.5	22.5
	Do not plan to do	**23.6**	17.7	33.7	21.7
	Plan to do	**27.5**	33.8	14.8	32.0
	Done/ in progress	**15.6**	2.8	29.9	23.8
Community service or volunteer work	Have not decided	**29.9**	32.6	27.1	28.1
	Do not plan to do	**24.5**	15.1	34.2	31.7
	Plan to do	**30.5**	40.6	18.7	24.7
	Done/ in progress	**15.1**	11.7	20.0	15.5
Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	Very little	**4.2**	4.8	3.7	3.4
	Some	**26.4**	30.6	23.2	21.5
	Quite a bit	**46.4**	46.6	46.4	45.9
	Very much	**23.0**	17.9	26.8	29.1
Writing clearly and effectively	Very little	**12.9**	16.4	10.4	8.2
	Some	**31.2**	36.4	26.9	25.6
	Quite a bit	**36.9**	34.1	39.5	39.8
	Very much	**18.9**	13.1	23.1	26.4
Speaking clearly and effectively	Very little	**14.6**	17.5	11.4	12.4
	Some	**31.3**	34.1	29.1	28.2
	Quite a bit	**36.0**	34.3	38.1	36.6
	Very much	**18.1**	14.1	21.4	22.8

Appendices

(Different question stems are used to prefix these items)		All Students	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Thinking critically and analytically	Very little	**3.8**	4.4	3.4	3.1
	Some	**21.3**	24.5	19.0	17.4
	Quite a bit	**42.8**	44.5	41.5	40.7
	Very much	**32.0**	26.6	36.1	38.8
Analysing numerical and statistical information	Very little	**19.2**	20.6	17.5	18.6
	Some	**30.7**	32.8	29.0	28.4
	Quite a bit	**30.5**	30.2	31.3	29.9
	Very much	**19.6**	16.4	22.2	23.0
Acquiring job- or work-related knowledge and skills	Very little	**12.5**	15.1	10.8	8.7
	Some	**29.2**	32.8	26.6	24.7
	Quite a bit	**34.4**	32.4	36.2	36.1
	Very much	**24.0**	19.7	26.4	30.5
Working effectively with others	Very little	**7.3**	7.4	6.1	8.6
	Some	**24.7**	26.5	22.7	23.6
	Quite a bit	**39.3**	39.6	39.9	37.7
	Very much	**28.7**	26.5	31.3	30.1
Solving complex real-world problems	Very little	**15.5**	18.1	14.0	11.7
	Some	**33.0**	35.1	32.4	29.0
	Quite a bit	**32.6**	30.6	33.7	35.5
	Very much	**18.9**	16.2	19.9	23.9
Being an informed and active citizen (societal / political / community)	Very little	**22.0**	23.1	22.7	18.2
	Some	**34.3**	36.1	33.2	31.6
	Quite a bit	**27.5**	26.7	27.5	29.7
	Very much	**16.2**	14.2	16.6	20.5
How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?	Poor	**2.9**	1.8	4.4	3.4
	Fair	**16.9**	15.4	20.0	15.8
	Good	**50.7**	52.5	50.2	47.3
	Excellent	**29.4**	30.3	25.4	33.4
If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?	Definitely no	**3.6**	2.2	5.4	3.9
	Probably no	**12.4**	10.4	15.7	11.8
	Probably yes	**43.9**	43.2	45.4	43.2
	Definitely yes	**40.1**	44.1	33.5	41.0

Appendix 2
Figures to accompany Chapter 3

Cohort

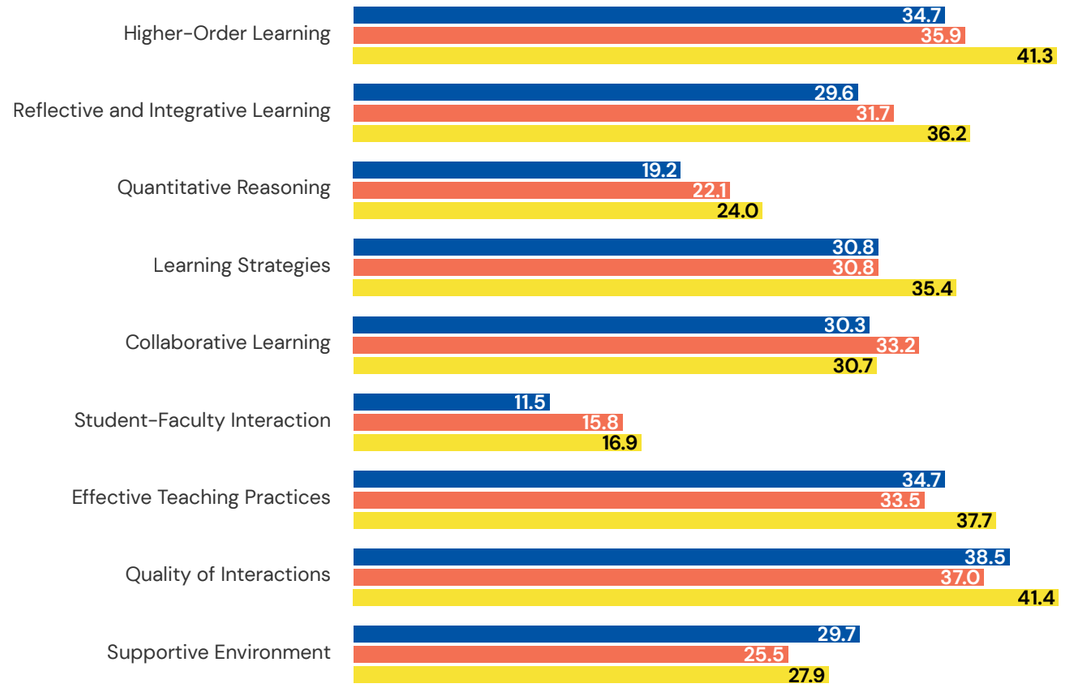


Fig. 6.1 Indicator scores by cohort

Results of tests of statistical significance of differences between groups

Higher-Order Learning, $F(2) = 607.82$, $p = .000$; Post-hoc, where $p = .001$: Y1 < FY; FY < PGT; Y1 < PGT

Reflective and Integrative Learning, $F(2) = 1143.93$, $p = .000$; Post-hoc, where $p = .001$: Y1 < FY; FY < PGT; Y1 < PGT

Quantitative Reasoning, $F(2) = 374.06$, $p = .000$; Post-hoc, where $p = .001$: Y1 < FY; FY < PGT; Y1 < PGT

Learning Strategies, $F(2) = 418.84$, $p = .000$; Post-hoc, where $p = .001$: Y1 = FY; FY < PGT; Y1 < PGT

Collaborative Learning, $F(2) = 222.06$, $p = .000$; Post-hoc, where $p = .001$: Y1 < FY; FY > PGT; Y1 = PGT

Student-Faculty Interaction, $F(2) = 792.41$, $p = .000$; Post-hoc, where $p = .001$: Y1 < FY; FY < PGT; Y1 < PGT

Effective Teaching Practices, $F(2) = 223.3$, $p = .000$; Post-hoc, where $p = .001$: Y1 > FY; FY < PGT; Y1 < PGT

Quality of Interactions, $F(2) = 225.55$, $p = .000$; Post-hoc, where $p = .001$: Y1 > FY; FY < PGT; Y1 < PGT

Supportive Environment, $F(2) = 333.25$, $p = .000$; Post-hoc, where $p = .001$: Y1 > FY; FY < PGT; Y1 > PGT

Institution type

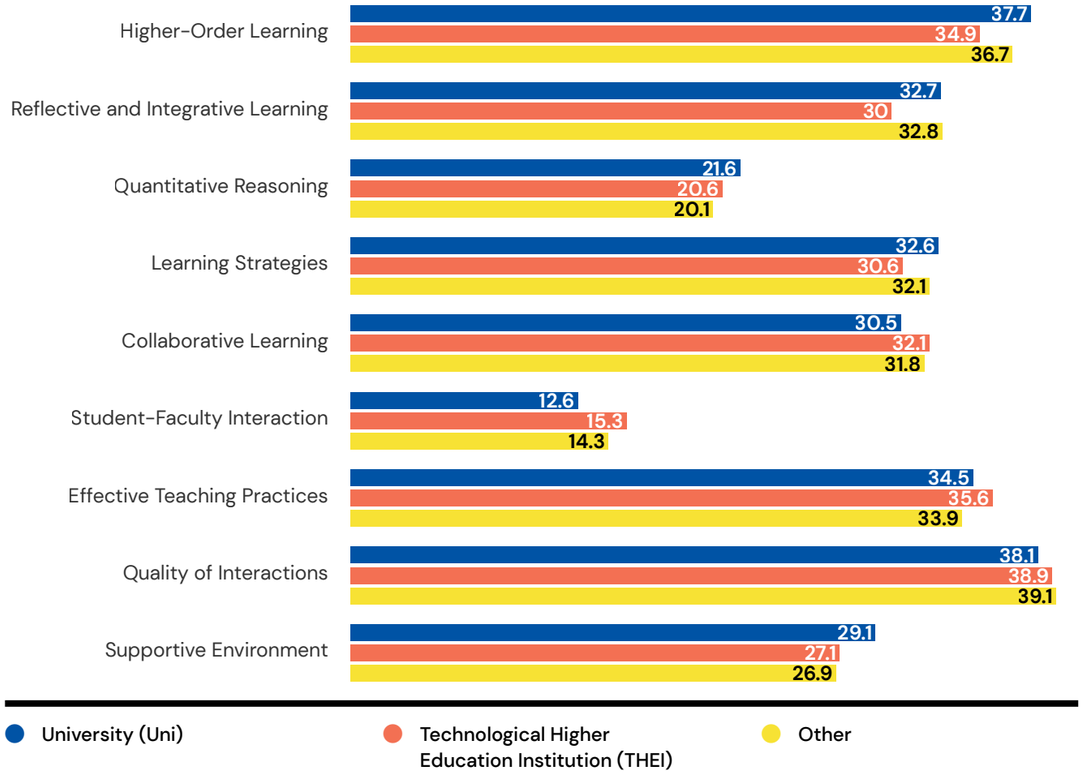


Fig. 6.2 Indicator scores by institution type

Results of tests of statistical significance of differences between groups

Higher-Order Learning, $F(2) = 176.22$, $p = .000$; Post-hoc, where $p = .001$: Uni > THEI; THEI < Other; Uni = Other

Reflective and Integrative Learning, $F(2) = 333.6$, $p = .000$; Post-hoc, where $p = .001$: Uni > THEI; THEI < Other; Uni = Other

Quantitative Reasoning, $F(2) = 26.53$, $p = .000$; Post-hoc, where $p = .001$: Uni > THEI; THEI = Other; Uni > Other

Learning Strategies, $F(2) = 115.61$, $p = .000$; Post-hoc, where $p = .001$: Uni > THEI; THEI < Other; Uni = Other

Collaborative Learning, $F(2) = 83.31$, $p = .000$; Post-hoc, where $p = .001$: Uni < THEI; THEI = Other; Uni < Other

Student-Faculty Interaction, $F(2) = 225.41$, $p = .000$; Post-hoc, where $p = .001$: Uni < THEI; THEI > Other; Uni < Other

Effective Teaching Practices, $F(2) = 38.94$, $p = .000$; Post-hoc, where $p = .001$: Uni < THEI; THEI > Other; Uni = Other

Quality of Interactions, $F(2) = 17.96$, $p = .000$; Post-hoc, where $p = .001$: Uni < THEI; THEI = Other; Uni = Other

Supportive Environment, $F(2) = 97.19$, $p = .000$; Post-hoc, where $p = .001$: Uni > THEI; THEI = Other; Uni > Other

Mode of study

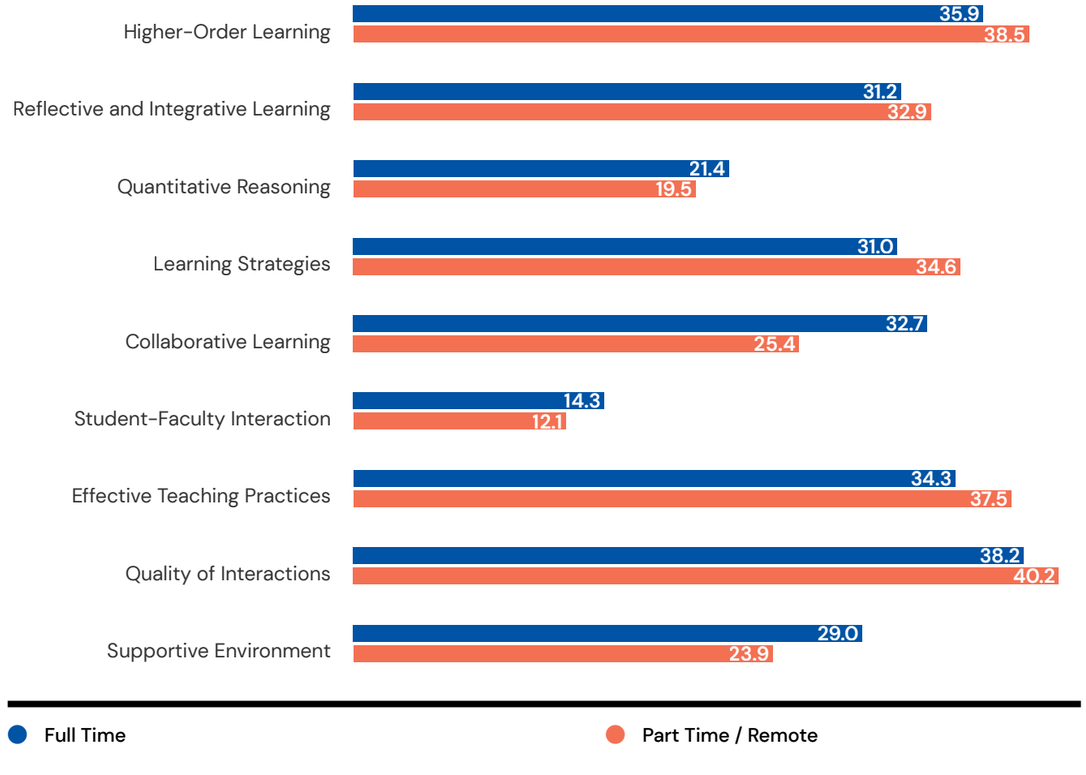


Fig. 6.3 Indicator score by mode of study

Results of tests of statistical significance of differences between groups

Higher-Order Learning, $t(10728) = 13.59$, $p = .000$; Effect size = 0.183 (small)

Reflective and Integrative Learning, $t(12311) = 11.99$, $p = .000$; Effect size = 0.150 (small)

Quantitative Reasoning, $t(40812) = 10.54$, $p = .000$; Effect size = 0.133 (small)

Learning Strategies, $t(40843) = 22.6$, $p = .000$; Effect size = 0.284 (small)

Collaborative Learning, $t(12104) = 45.97$, $p = .000$; Effect size = 0.583 (large)

Student-Faculty Interaction, $t(13157) = 15.13$, $p = .000$; Effect size = 0.175 (small)

Effective Teaching Practices, $t(10260) = 16.64$, $p = .000$; Effect size = 0.233 (small)

Quality of Interactions, $t(7548) = 9.07$, $p = .000$; Effect size = 0.144 (small)

Supportive Environment, $t(10585) = 27.39$, $p = .000$; Effect size = 0.37 (medium)

Programme type

Results of tests of statistical significance of differences between groups

Higher-Order Learning, $F(4) = 309.76$, $p = .000$

Reflective and Integrative Learning, $F(4) = 526.27$, $p = .000$

Quantitative Reasoning, $F(4) = 151.18$, $p = .000$

Learning Strategies, $F(4) = 245.61$, $p = .000$

Collaborative Learning, $F(4) = 228.4$, $p = .000$

Student-Faculty Interaction, $F(4) = 225.89$, $p = .000$

Effective Teaching Practices, $F(4) = 165.8$, $p = .000$

Quality of Interactions, $F(4) = 120.0$, $p = .000$

Supportive Environment, $F(4) = 70.49$, $p = .000$

The combinations of significant paired differences in the post-hoc analyses are presented in the table on the following page.

Table 6.11 Post-hoc analyses for programme type

		Undergrad Cert/Dip	Ordinary Degree	Honours Degree	Grad/PG/ Higher Dip	Taught Masters
Higher-Order Learning	Undergrad Cert/Dip				*	*
	Ordinary Degree			*	*	*
	Honours Degree		*		*	*
	Grad Cert/Dip	*	*	*		
	Masters Taught	*	*	*		
Reflective and Integrative Learning	Undergrad Cert/Dip		*		*	*
	Ordinary Degree			*	*	*
	Honours Degree		*		*	*
	Grad Cert/Dip	*	*	*		*
	Masters Taught	*	*	*	*	
Quantitative Reasoning	Undergrad Cert/Dip		*	*	*	*
	Ordinary Degree	*				*
	Honours Degree	*				*
	Grad Cert/Dip	*				*
	Masters Taught	*	*	*	*	
Learning Strategies	Undergrad Cert/Dip		*	*	*	*
	Ordinary Degree	*			*	*
	Honours Degree	*			*	*
	Grad Cert/Dip	*	*	*		
	Masters Taught	*	*	*		
Collaborative Learning	Undergrad Cert/Dip		*	*		*
	Ordinary Degree	*			*	
	Honours Degree	*			*	
	Grad Cert/Dip		*	*		*
	Masters Taught	*				
Student-Faculty Interaction	Undergrad Cert/Dip		*			*
	Ordinary Degree	*		*	*	*
	Honours Degree		*			*
	Grad Cert/Dip			*		*
	Masters Taught	*	*	*	*	
Effective Teaching Practices	Undergrad Cert/Dip		*	*		
	Ordinary Degree	*		*	*	*
	Honours Degree	*	*		*	*
	Grad Cert/Dip		*	*		
	Masters Taught		*	*		
Quality of Interactions	Undergrad Cert/Dip		*	*		
	Ordinary Degree	*		*	*	*
	Honours Degree	*	*		*	*
	Grad Cert/Dip		*	*		
	Masters Taught		*	*		
Supportive Environment	Undergrad Cert/Dip			*		*
	Ordinary Degree			*	*	*
	Honours Degree	*	*		*	
	Grad Cert/Dip		*	*		*
	Masters Taught	*	*		*	

** Denotes a significant difference, where p = 0.001.*

Field of study

Edu	Education	**ICT**	Information and Communication Technologies
A & H	Arts and humanities	**E, M & C**	Engineering, manufacturing, and construction
SS, J & I	Social sciences, journalism, and information	**A,F,F & V**	Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and veterinary
B, A & L	Business, administration, and law	**H & W**	Health and welfare
NS, M & S	Natural sciences, mathematics, and statistics	**Services**	Services

Results of tests of statistical significance of differences between groups

Higher-Order Learning, $F(9) = 59.52$, $p = .000$

Reflective and Integrative Learning, $F(9) = 325.07$, $p = .000$

Quantitative Reasoning, $F(9) = 270.56$, $p = .000$

Learning Strategies, $F(9) = 56.81$, $p = .000$

Collaborative Learning, $F(9) = 108.44$, $p = .000$

The combinations of significant paired differences in the post-hoc analyses are presented in the table on the following page.

Table 6.12 Post-hoc analyses for Field of study (part 1)

		Edu	A&H	SS,J&I	B,A&L	NS,M&S	ICT	E,M&C	A,F,F&V	H&W	Services
Higher-Order Learning	Edu			*		*	*	*	*		*
	A & H			*						*	*
	SS, J & I	*	*		*	*	*	*	*		*
	B, A & L			*		*	*	*	*		*
	NS, M & S	*		*	*					*	
	ICT	*		*	*					*	
	E, M & C	*		*	*					*	
	A,F,F & V	*		*	*					*	
	H & W		*			*	*	*	*		*
	Services	*	*	*	*					*	

** Denotes a significant difference, where p = 0.001.*

		Edu	A&H	SS,J&I	B,A&L	NS,M&S	ICT	E,M&C	A,F,F&V	H&W	Services
Reflective and Integrative Learning	Edu			*	*	*	*	*	*		*
	A & H			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	SS, J & I	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	B, A & L	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*
	NS, M & S	*	*	*	*					*	*
	ICT	*	*	*	*					*	
	E, M & C	*	*	*	*					*	
	A,F,F & V	*	*	*	*					*	
	H & W		*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*
	Services	*	*	*	*	*				*	
		Edu	**A&H**	**SS,J&I**	**B,A&L**	**NS,M&S**	**ICT**	**E,M&C**	**A,F,F&V**	**H&W**	**Services**
Quantitative Reasoning	Edu		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	A & H	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	SS, J & I	*	*			*				*	*
	B, A & L	*	*			*		*		*	*
	NS, M & S	*	*	*	*		*		*	*	*
	ICT	*	*			*		*		*	*
	E, M & C	*	*		*		*		*	*	*
	A,F,F & V	*	*			*		*			
	H & W	*	*	*	*	*	*	*			
	Services	*	*	*	*	*	*	*			
		Edu	**A&H**	**SS,J&I**	**B,A&L**	**NS,M&S**	**ICT**	**E,M&C**	**A,F,F&V**	**H&W**	**Services**
Learning Strategies	Edu						*	*		*	*
	A & H							*		*	
	SS, J & I						*	*			*
	B, A & L						*	*		*	*
	NS, M & S							*		*	
	ICT	*		*	*					*	
	E, M & C	*	*	*	*	*				*	
	A,F,F & V									*	
	H & W	*	*		*	*	*	*	*		*
	Services	*		*	*					*	
		Edu	**A&H**	**SS,J&I**	**B,A&L**	**NS,M&S**	**ICT**	**E,M&C**	**A,F,F&V**	**H&W**	**Services**
Collaborative Learning	Edu		*	*							
	A & H	*			*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	SS, J & I	*			*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	B, A & L		*	*		*	*			*	
	NS, M & S		*	*	*			*			
	ICT		*	*	*			*			
	E, M & C		*	*		*	*			*	
	A,F,F & V		*	*							
	H & W		*	*	*			*			
	Services		*	*							

Field of study

Edu	Education	**ICT**	Information and Communication Technologies
A & H	Arts and humanities	**E, M & C**	Engineering, manufacturing, and construction
SS, J & I	Social sciences, journalism, and information	**A,F,F & V**	Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and veterinary
B, A & L	Business, administration, and law	**H & W**	Health and welfare
NS, M & S	Natural sciences, mathematics, and statistics	**Services**	Services

Results of tests of statistical significance of differences between groups

Student-Faculty Interaction, $F(9) = 39.28$, $p = .000$

Effective Teaching Practices, $F(9) = 10.55$, $p = .000$

Quality of Interactions, $F(9) = 8.11$, $p = .000$

Supportive Environment, $F(9) = 28.03$, $p = .000$

The combinations of significant paired differences in the post-hoc analyses are presented in the table on the following page.

Table 6.13 Post-hoc analyses for Field of study (part 2)

		Edu	A&H	SS,J&I	B,A&L	NS,M&S	ICT	E,M&C	A,F,F&V	H&W	Services
Student-Faculty Interaction	Edu			*		*					*
	A & H			*		*					*
	SS, J & I	*	*		*		*	*		*	*
	B, A & L			*		*					*
	NS, M & S	*	*		*		*	*		*	*
	ICT			*		*					*
	E, M & C			*		*					*
	A,F,F & V										*
	H & W			*		*					*
	Services	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
Effective Teaching Practices	Edu					*		*			
	A & H										
	SS, J & I										
	B, A & L										
	NS, M & S		*								
	ICT										
	E, M & C		*								
	A,F,F & V										
	H & W										
	Services										
Quality of Interactions	Edu										
	A & H										
	SS, J & I										
	B, A & L										
	NS, M & S						*				
	ICT					*					
	E, M & C										
	A,F,F & V										
	H & W										
	Services										
Supportive Environment	Edu		*	*	*	*	*			*	
	A & H	*						*			
	SS, J & I	*									
	B, A & L	*						*			
	NS, M & S	*									
	ICT	*									
	E, M & C		*		*						
	A,F,F & V										
	H & W	*									
	Services										

** Denotes a significant difference, where p = 0.001.*

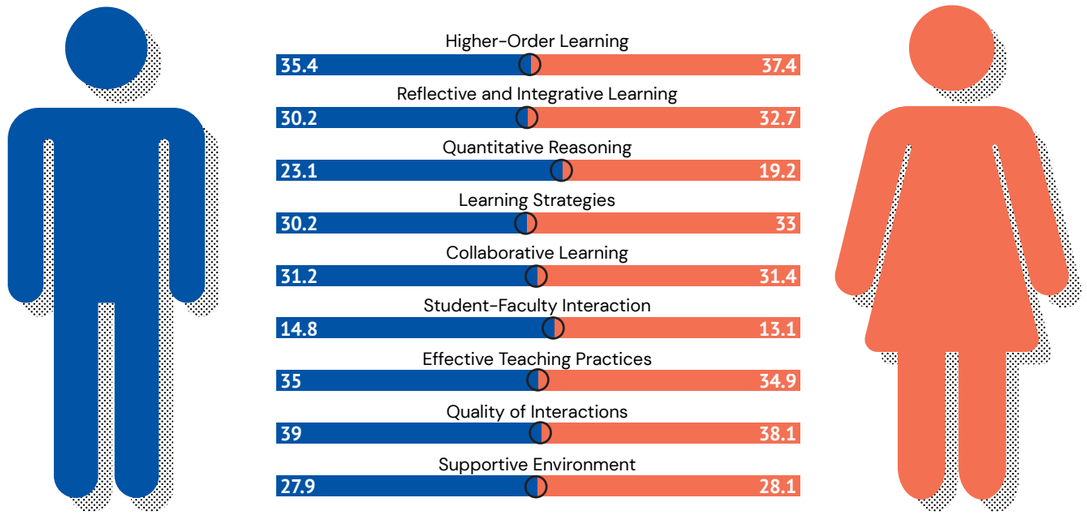


Fig. 6.4 Indicator scores by gender

Results of tests of statistical significance of differences between groups

Higher-Order Learning, *t*(37896) = 13.94, *p* =.000; Effect size = 0.143 (small)

Reflective and Integrative Learning, *t*(44392) = 23.9, *p* =.000; Effect size = 0.226 (small)

Quantitative Reasoning, *t*(40340) = 27.39, *p* =.000; Effect size = 0.272 (small)

Learning Strategies, *t*(40822) = 21.33, *p* =.000; Effect size = 0.211 (small)

Collaborative Learning, *t*(44302) = 1.9, *p* =.057; Effect size = 0.018 (small)

Student-Faculty Interaction, *t*(39864) = 13.68, *p* =.000; Effect size = 0.136 (small)

Effective Teaching Practices, *t*(37950) = .862, *p* =.389; Effect size = 0.009 (small)

Quality of Interactions, *t*(33522) = 6.11, *p* =.000; Effect size = 0.067 (small)

Supportive Environment, *t*(37978) = 1.28, *p* =.2; Effect size = 0.01 (small)

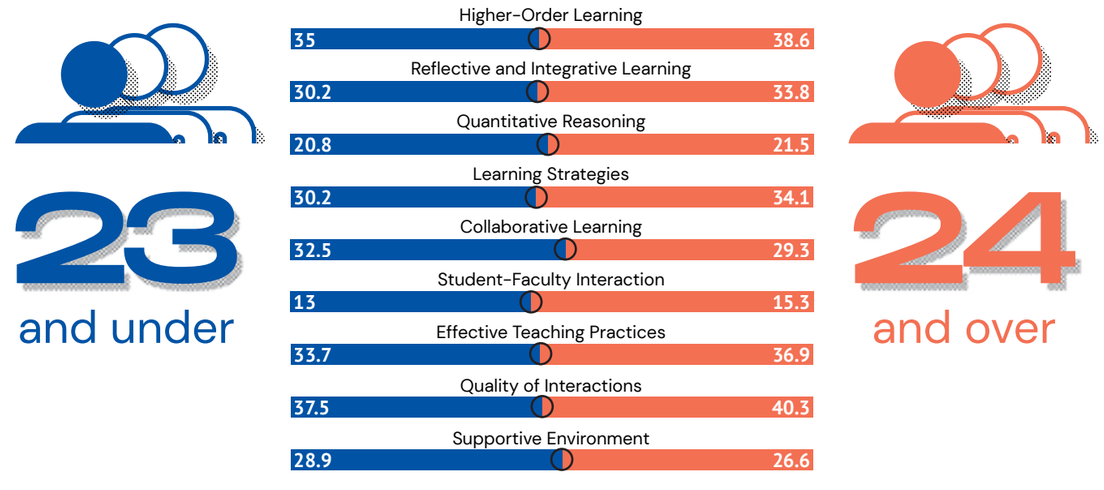


Fig. 6.5 Indicator scores by age group

Results of tests of statistical significance of differences between groups

Higher-Order Learning, *t*(29733) = 23.58, *p* =.000; Effect size = 0.252 (small)

Reflective and Integrative Learning, *t*(33342) = 33.7, *p* =.000; Effect size = 0.336 (medium)

Quantitative Reasoning, *t*(31975) = 4.96, *p* =.000; Effect size = 0.051 (small)

Learning Strategies, *t*(40843) = 30.48, *p* =.000; Effect size = 0.310 (medium)

Collaborative Learning, *t*(32636) = 24.89, *p* =.000; Effect size = 0.250 (small)

Student-Faculty Interaction, *t*(40838) = 17.96, *p* =.000; Effect size = 0.182 (small)

Effective Teaching Practices, *t*(28441) = 21.8, *p* =.000; Effect size = 0.236 (small)

Quality of Interactions, *t*(24290) = 17.73, *p* =.000; Effect size = 0.205 (small)

Supportive Environment, *t*(29029) = 15.44, *p* =.000; Effect size = 0.17 (small)

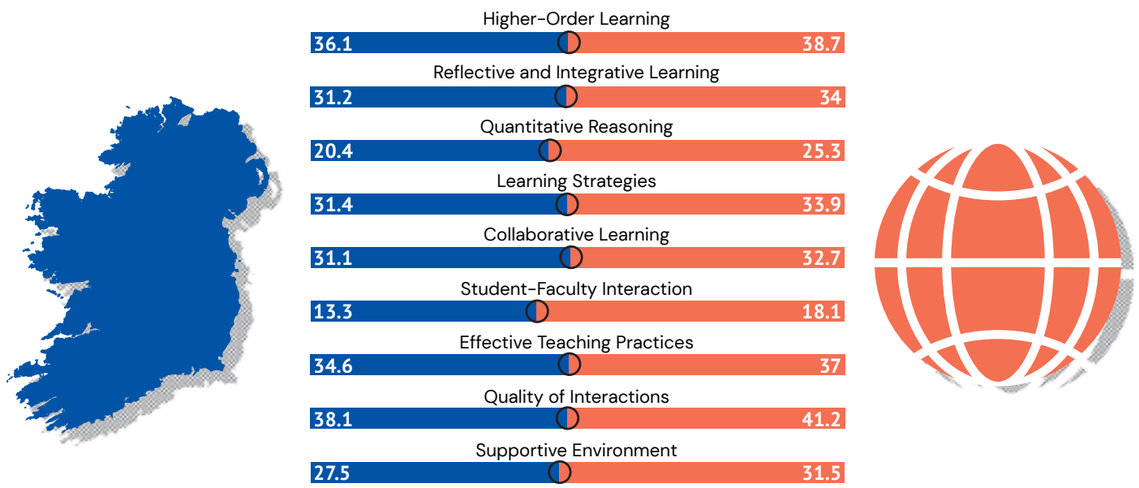


Fig. 6.6 Indicator scores by country of domicile

Results of tests of statistical significance of differences between groups

Higher-Order Learning, $t(6424) = 11.77$, $p = .000$; Effect size = 0.182 (small)

Reflective and Integrative Learning, $t(44538) = 18.28$, $p = .000$; Effect size = 0.258 (small)

Quantitative Reasoning, $t(6817) = 22.89$, $p = .000$; Effect size = 0.343 (medium)

Learning Strategies, $t(6973) = 13.31$, $p = .000$; Effect size = 0.194 (small)

Collaborative Learning, $t(7567) = 8.9$, $p = .000$; Effect size = 0.124 (small)

Student-Faculty Interaction, $t(6540) = 24.1$, $p = .000$; Effect size = 0.386 (medium)

Effective Teaching Practices, $t(6323) = 10.81$, $p = .000$; Effect size = 0.172 (small)

Quality of Interactions, $t(33867) = 14.66$, $p = .000$; Effect size = 0.232 (small)

Supportive Environment, $t(6315) = 18.28$, $p = .000$; Effect size = 0.29 (small)

Appendix 3 Figures to supplement Chapter 4

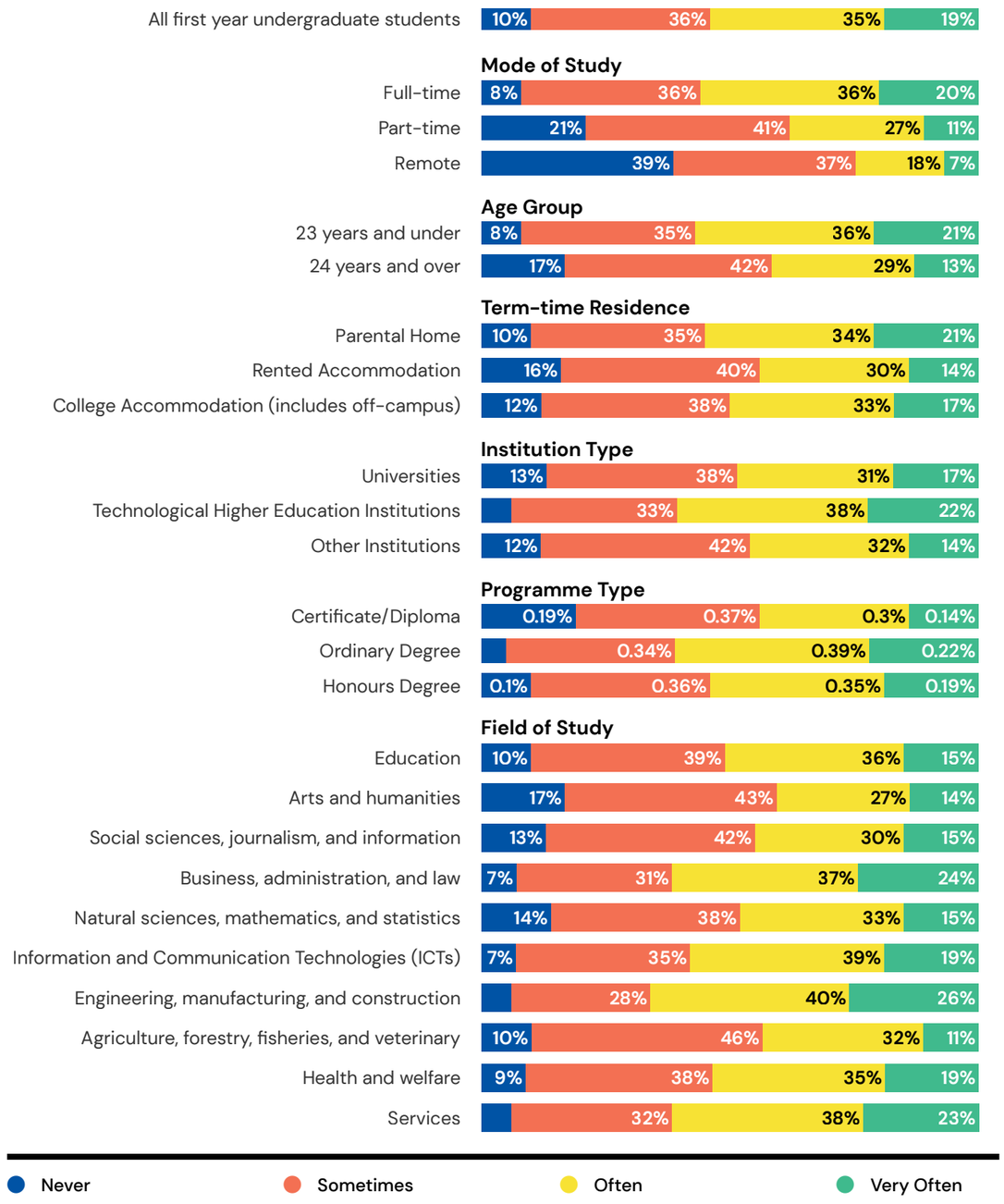


Fig. 6.7 *Collaborative Learning* Q1 scores for first year undergraduate respondents across three years (2018-2020)

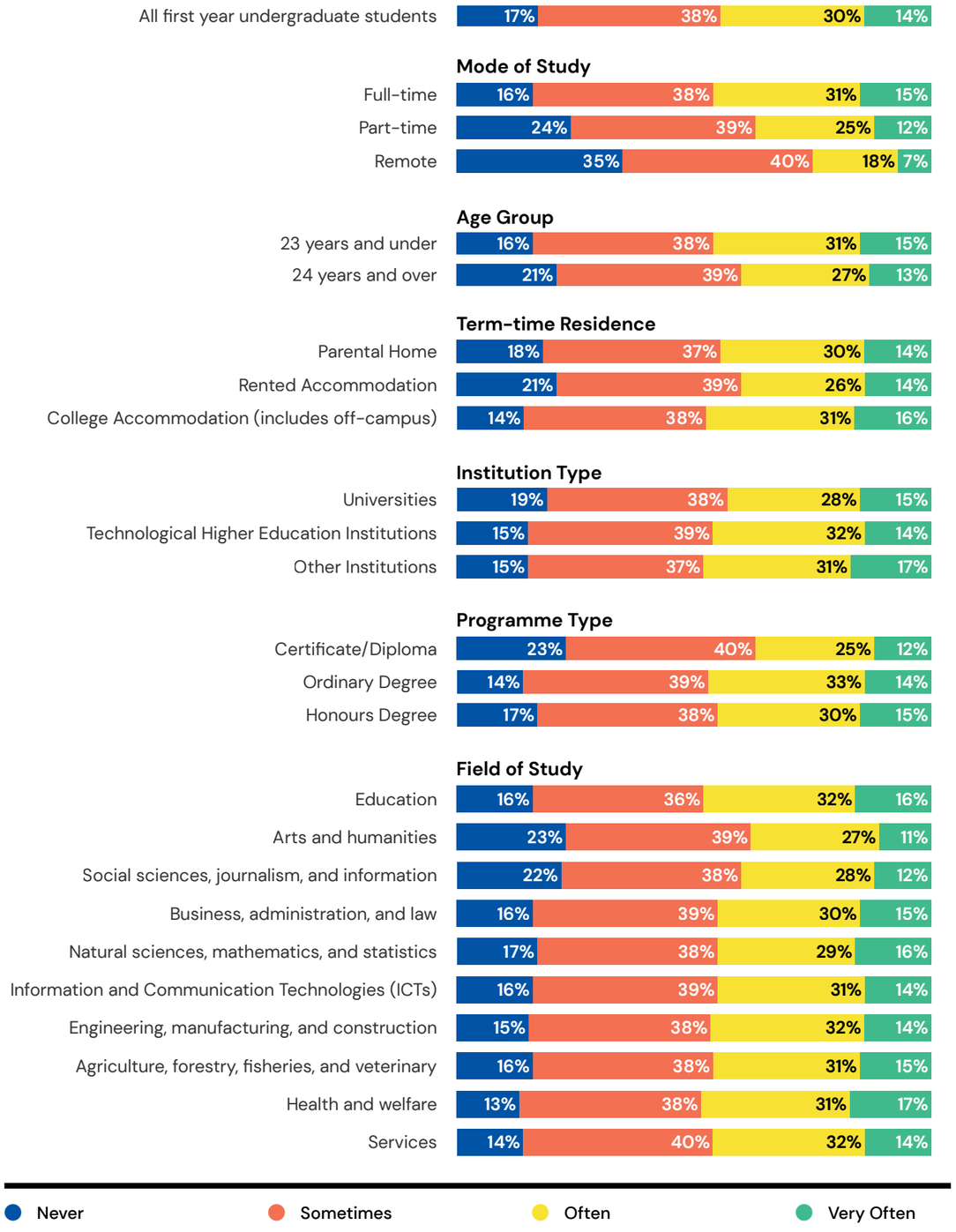


Fig. 6.8 *Collaborative Learning* Q2 scores for first year undergraduate respondents across three years (2018-2020)

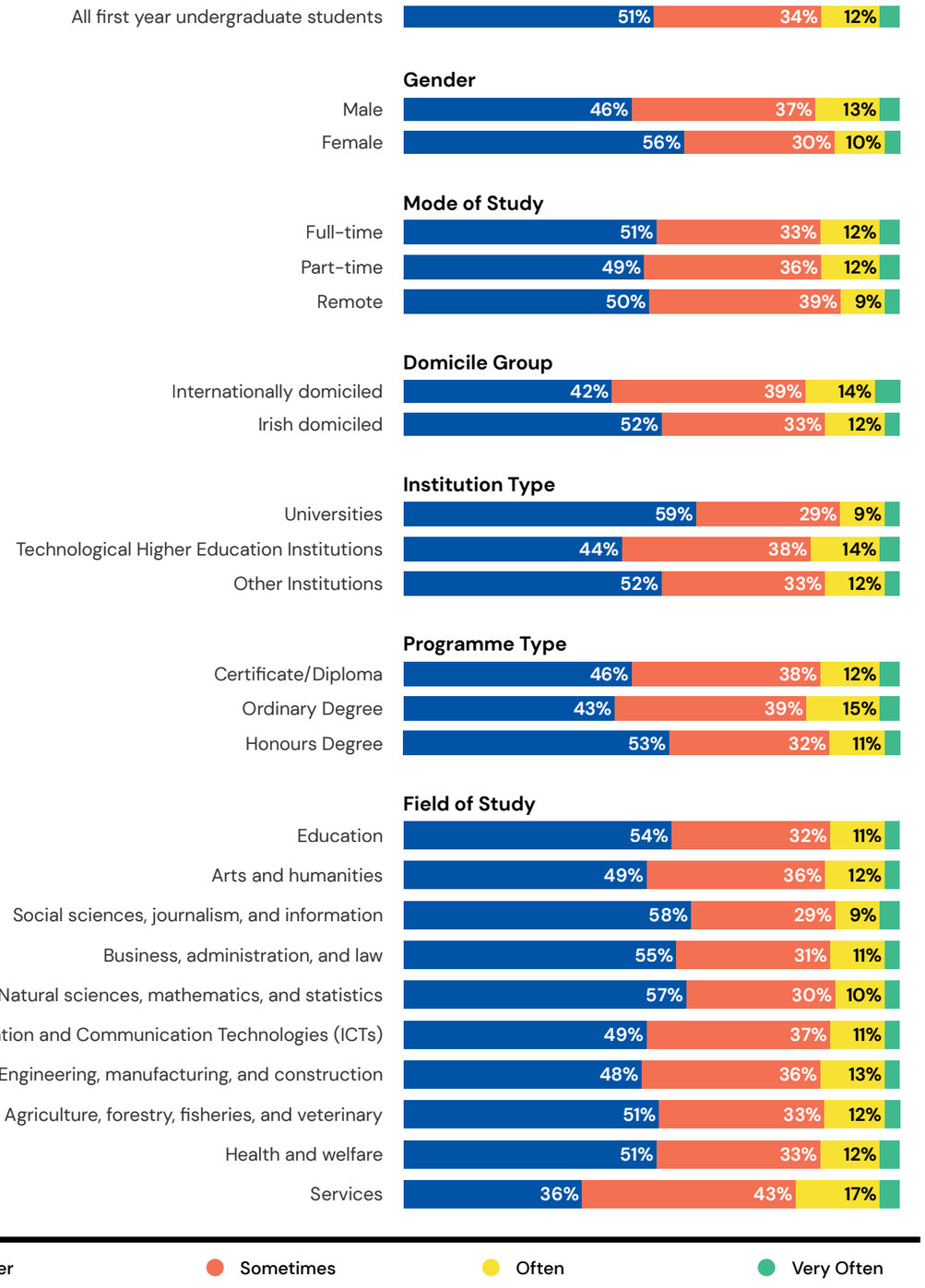


Fig. 6.9 *Student-Faculty Interaction* Q1 scores for first year undergraduate respondents across three years (2018-2020)

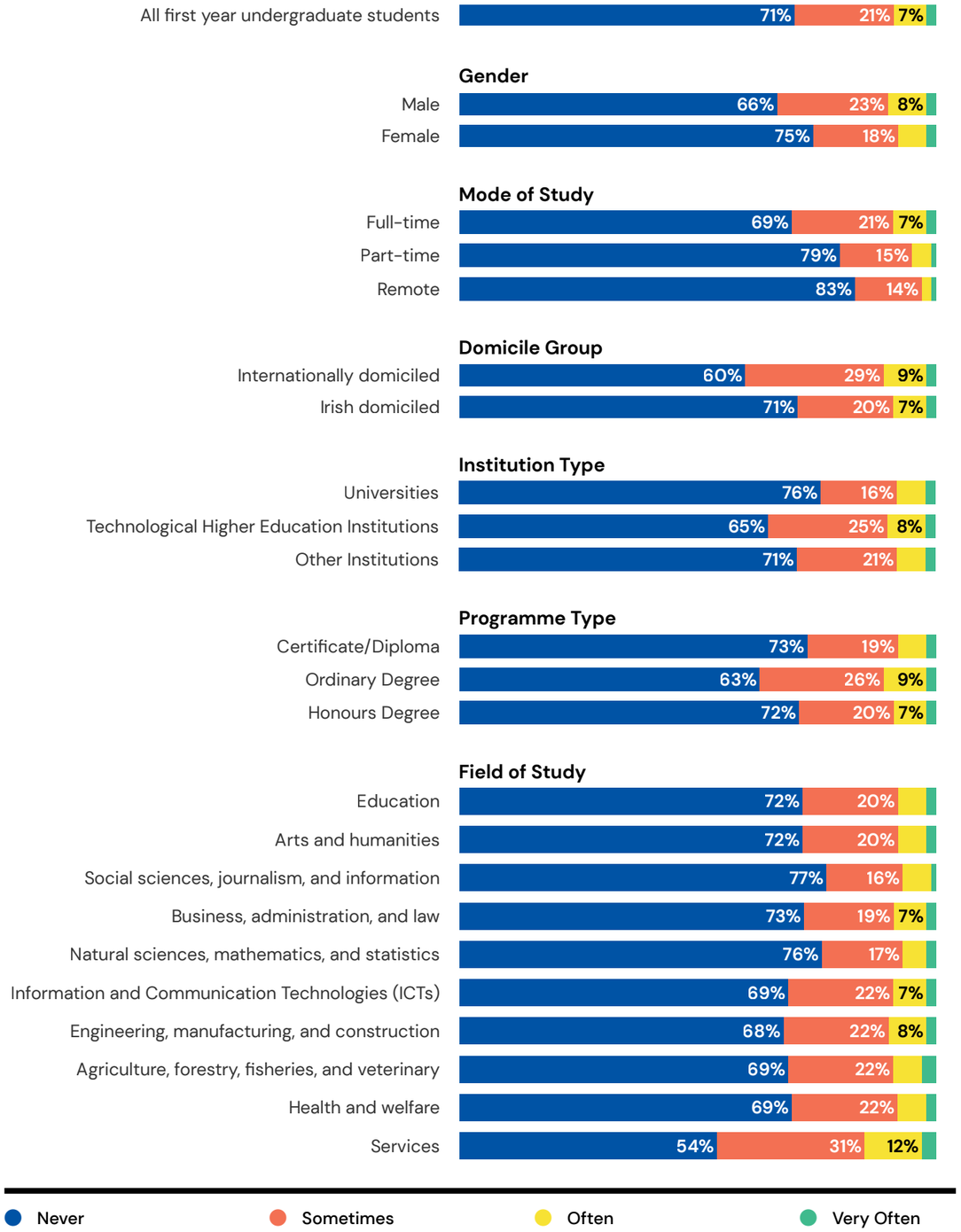


Fig. 6.10 *Student-Faculty Interaction* Q2 scores for first year undergraduate respondents across three years (2018-2020)

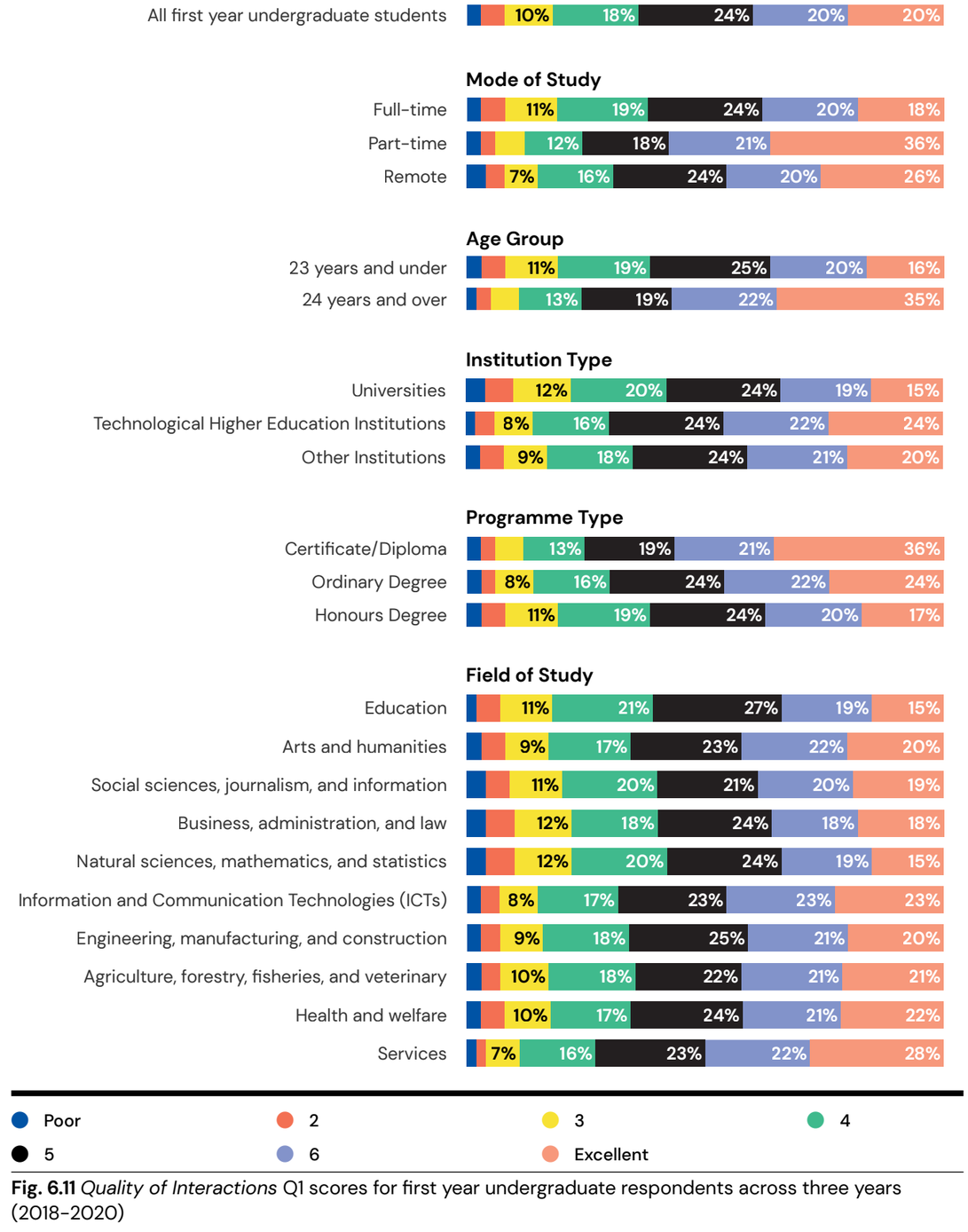


Fig. 6.11 *Quality of Interactions* Q1 scores for first year undergraduate respondents across three years (2018-2020)

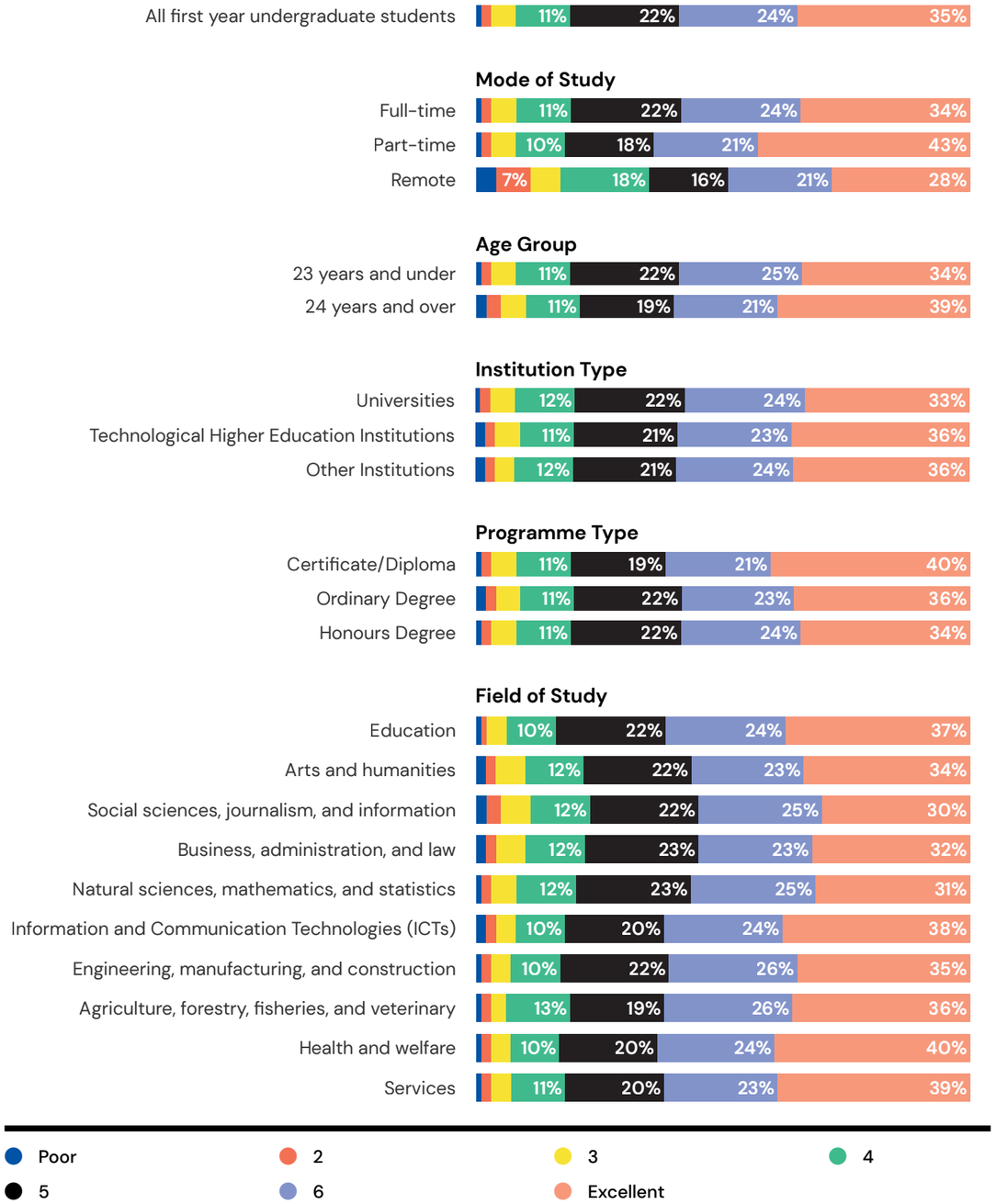


Fig. 6.12 *Quality of Interactions* Q2 scores for first year undergraduate respondents across three years (2018-2020)

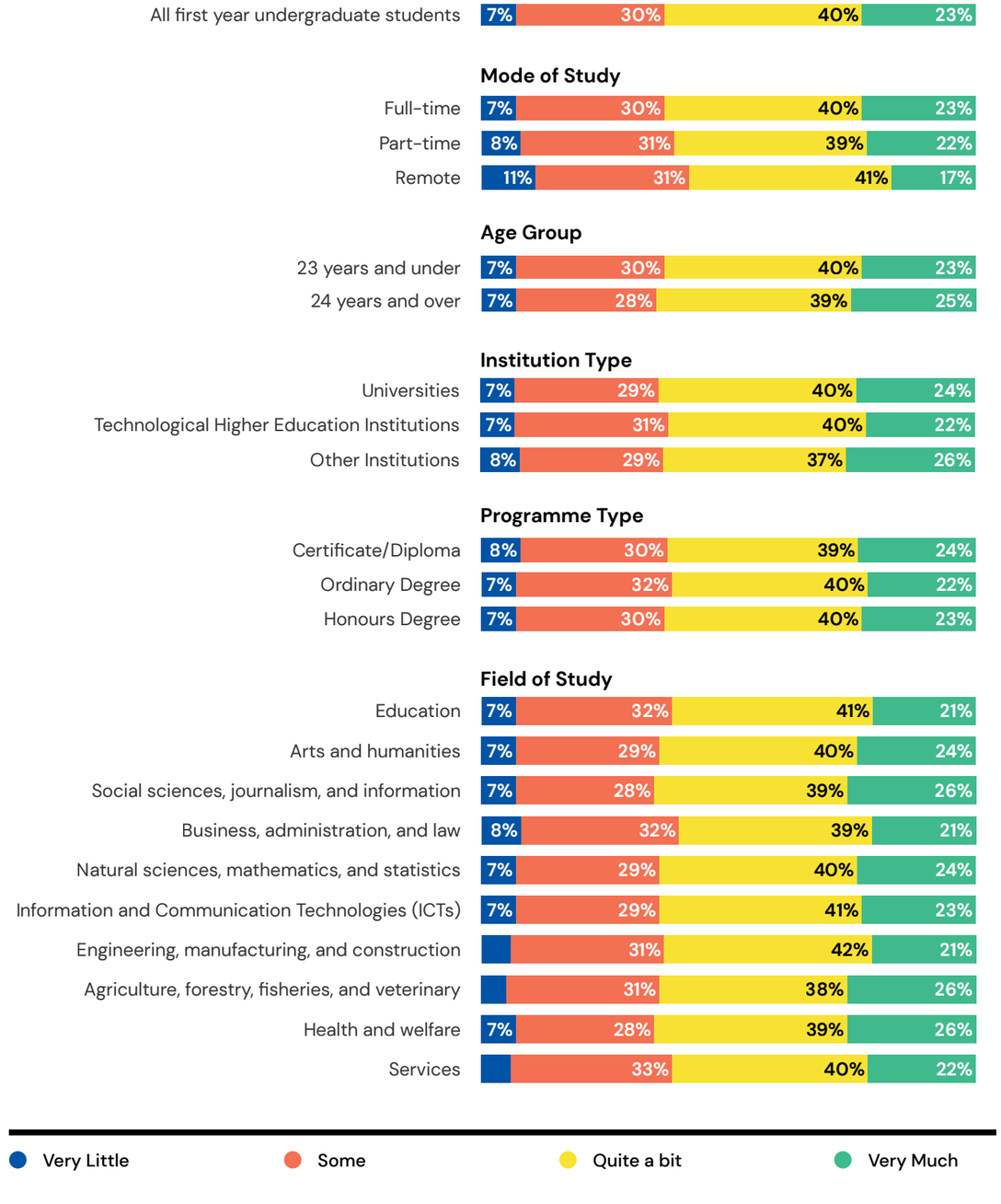


Fig. 6.13 *Supportive Environment* Q1 scores for first year undergraduate respondents across three years (2018-2020)

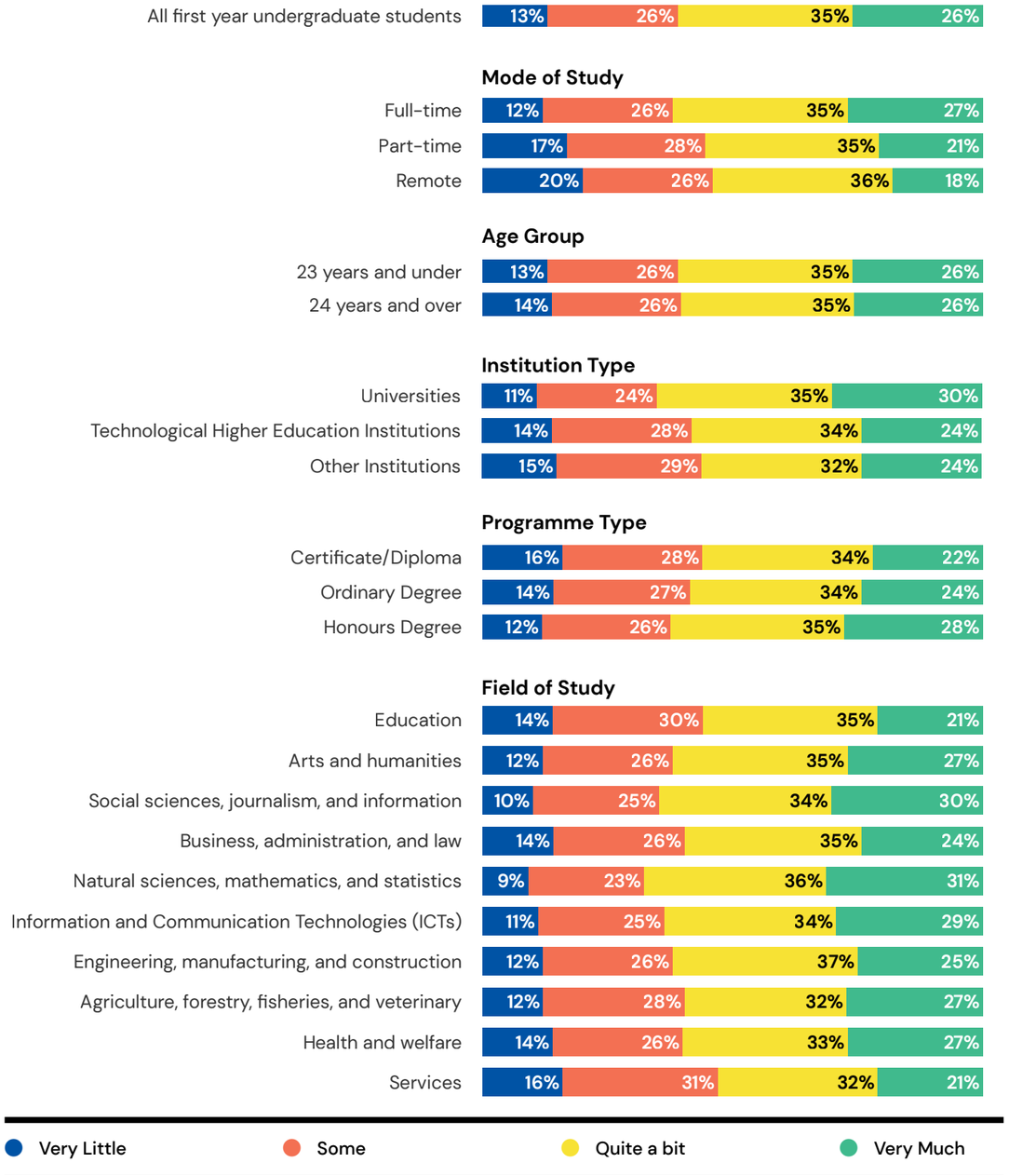


Fig. 6.14 *Supportive Environment* Q2 scores for first year undergraduate respondents across three years (2018-2020)

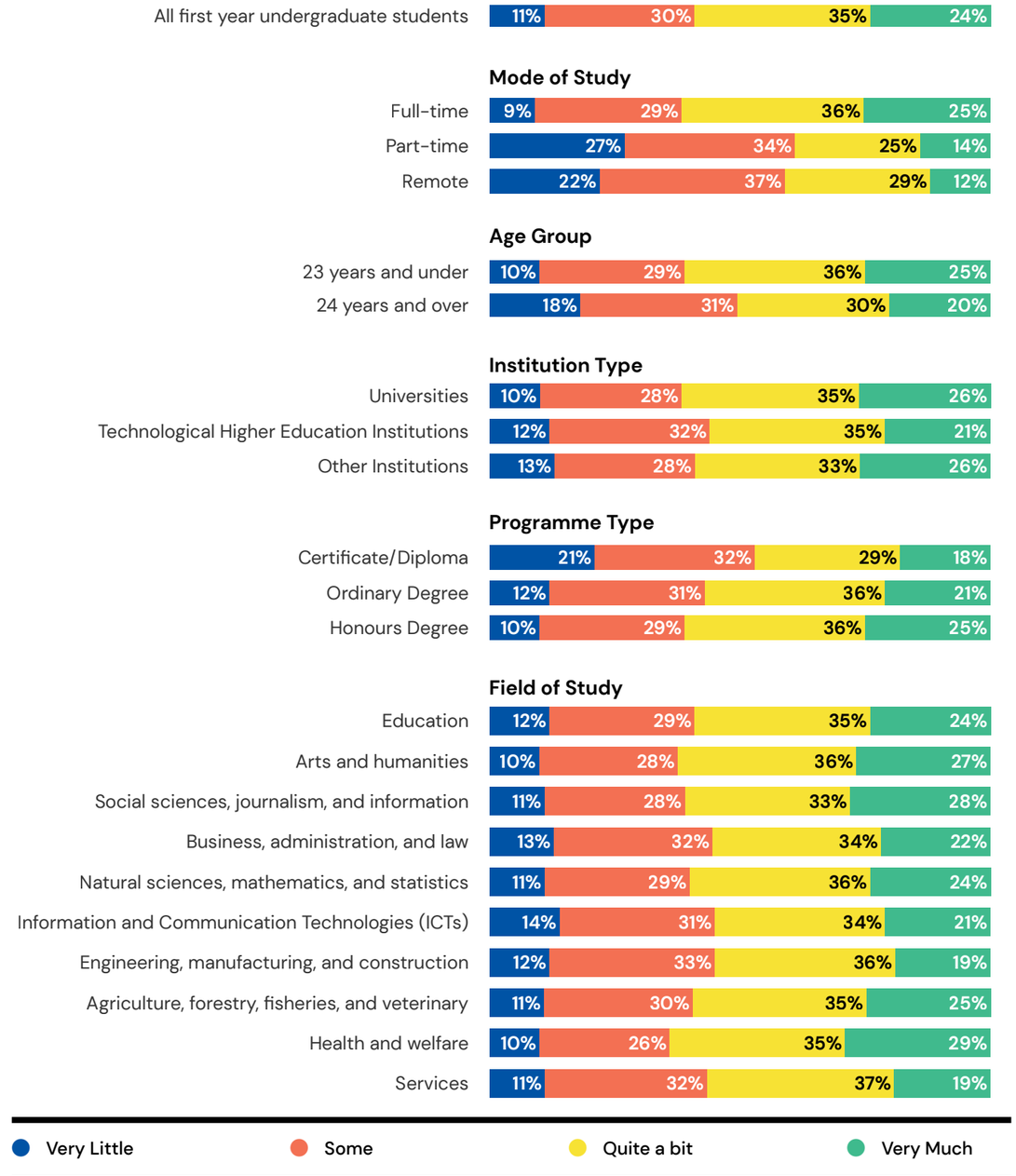


Fig. 6.15 *Supportive Environment* Q3 scores for first year undergraduate respondents across three years (2018-2020)

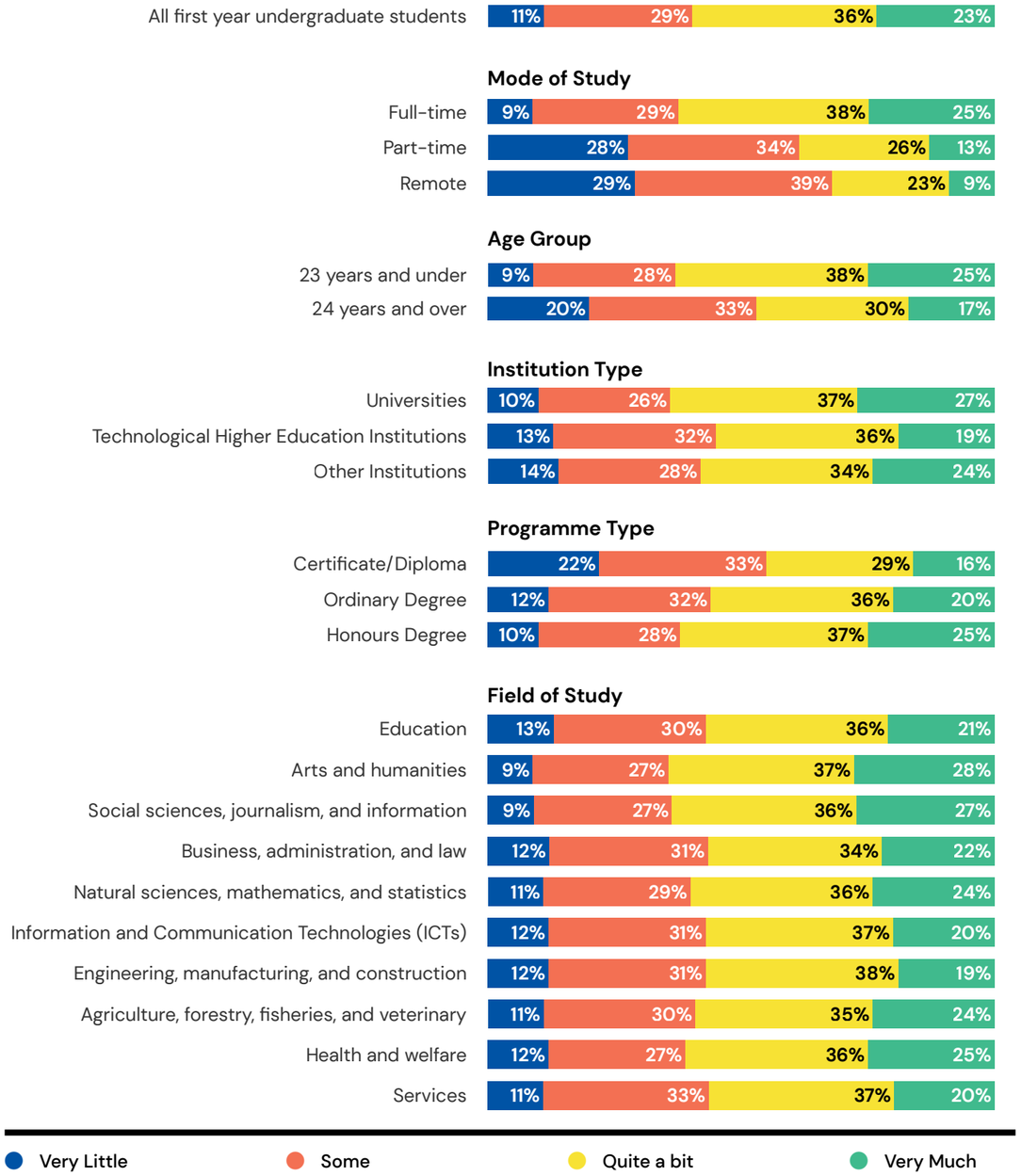


Fig. 6.16 *Supportive Environment* Q4 scores for first year undergraduate respondents across three years (2018-2020)

Appendix 4
Project rationale and governance

The *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030*[15], published in 2011, recommended that higher education institutions put in place systems to capture feedback from students to inform institutional and programme management, as well as national policy. It also recommended that every higher education institution put in place a comprehensive anonymous student feedback system, coupled with structures to ensure that action is taken promptly in relation to student concerns. This recommendation was informed by legislation (namely, reference to the involvement of students in evaluating the quality of their educational experience in the *Universities Act, 1997*, and the *Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999*) and other key policy drivers, such as *Standards and Guidance for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*[16] and *Common Principles for Student Involvement in Quality Assurance/Quality Enhancement*[17]. The National Strategy report noted in 2011 that "substantial progress (in this area) has been made" but also stated that "students still lack confidence in the effectiveness of current mechanisms and there remains considerable room for improvement in developing student feedback mechanisms and in closing feedback loops."

In 2012, a national project structure was established, which was representative of higher education institutions and relevant organisations, including the Union of Students in Ireland. This project team implemented a pilot national student survey called the Irish Survey of Student Engagement in 2013, involving all Universities, Institutes of Technology, and most Colleges of Education. The national pilot was regarded as successful, leading to an agreement to proceed to full implementation in 2014 and future years. A full report on implementation of the 2013 national pilot and other resources and results from subsequent years' implementation are published on www.studentsurvey.ie.

A significant development was achieved in 2018 with the pilot Irish Survey of Student Engagement for Postgraduate Research Students. This discrete question set was offered to the body of students enrolled on programmes leading to postgraduate research degrees. The questions draw extensively from the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) used in the UK. The StudentSurvey.ie PGR Working Group continues to oversee the bedding down of the survey.

The Irish Survey of Student Engagement and the Irish Survey of Student Engagement for Postgraduate Research Students were rebranded in 2019 and are now known as StudentSurvey.ie and PGR StudentSurvey.ie respectively.

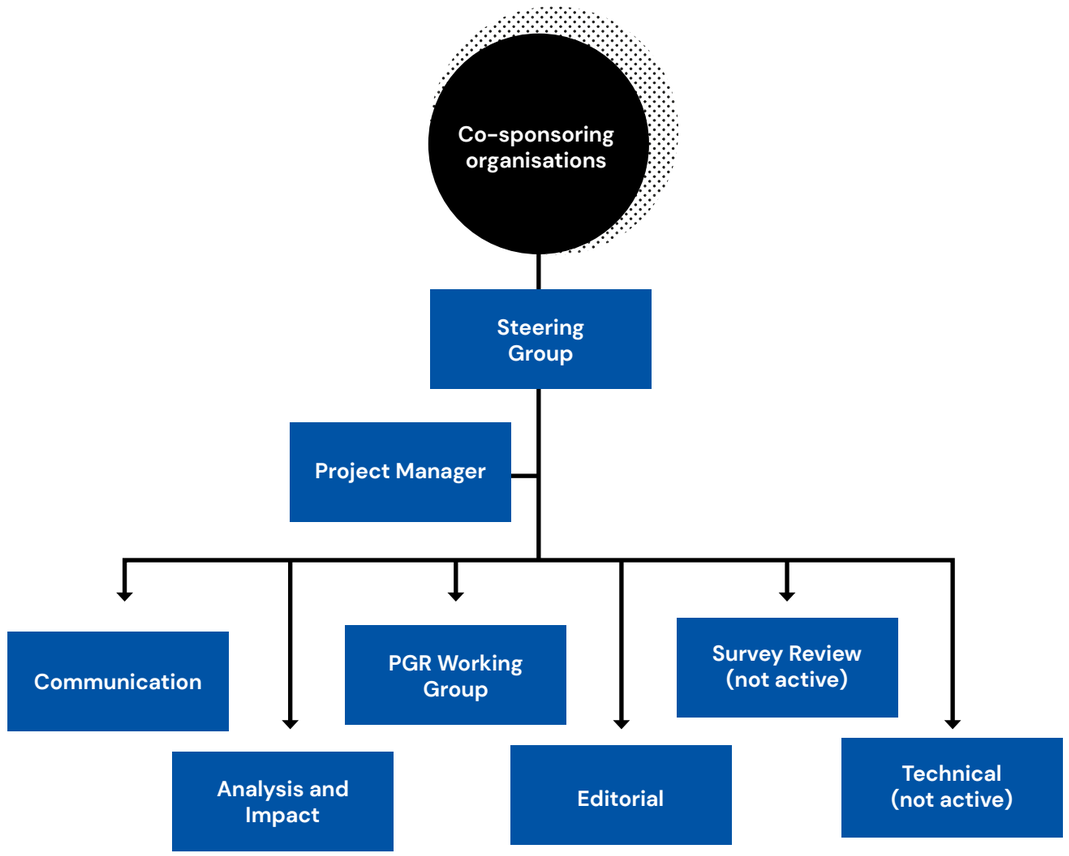
Implementation of StudentSurvey.ie and PGR StudentSurvey.ie is funded by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) as a shared service for participating institutions. The project is co-sponsored by the HEA, Irish Universities Association (IUA), Technological Higher Education Association (THEA), and Union of Students in Ireland (USI) (Fig. 6.17).

A representative national Steering Group maintains strategic direction for the project. In 2019, this group was reduced in number and the primary focus on strategic direction re-affirmed. It now consists of a representative

15. National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (www.hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/06/National-Strategy-for-Higher-Education-2030.pdf)
16. Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf)
17. Student Involvement in Quality Assurance/Quality Enhancement (https://www.ucd.ie/t4cms/iheqncommonprinciplesstudentinvolvementdec2009.doc.pdf)

of each of the co-sponsoring organisations, two representatives from the university sector, two representatives from the technological higher education sector, one representative from Quality and Qualifications Ireland, and the StudentSurvey.ie Project Manager. The group is called the StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group.

In addition, there are a number of Groups addressing specific elements of the project (Fig. 6.17). Each of the groups is chaired by a member of the Steering Group. A full-time StudentSurvey.ie Project Manager leads developments and ensures coherence and consistency between the various elements of the project.



Co-sponsoring organisations

Fig. 6.17 Governance and management, including co-sponsoring organisations, of StudentSurvey.ie

Appendix 5
Membership of the StudentSurvey.ie National Report Editorial Group 2020

Martin Grehan
DCU and StudentSurvey.ie Analysis and Impact Group

Sue Hackett
QQI and StudentSurvey.ie Analysis and Impact Group

Kevin McStravock
USI and StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group

Michelle Millar
NUI Galway and StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group

Siobhán Nic Fhlannchadha
StudentSurvey.ie Project Manager

Róisín O'Connell
THEA and StudentSurvey.ie Communications Group

Sean O'Reilly
THEA and StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group

Brian Stanley
HEA

Nora Trench Bowles
IUA and StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group

Appendix 6
Questions relating to specific engagement indicators

HIGHER-ORDER LEARNING

During the current academic year, how much has your coursework emphasised... [very little, some, quite a bit, very much]

Applying facts, theories, or methods to practical problems or new situations

- Analysing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts
- Evaluating a point of view, decision, or information source
- Forming an understanding or new idea from various pieces of information

REFLECTIVE AND INTEGRATIVE LEARNING

During the current academic year, about how often have you... [never, sometimes, often, very often]

- Combined ideas from different subjects/ modules when completing assignments
- Connected your learning to problems or issues in society
- Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ ethnic, gender, etc.) in discussions or assignments
- Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue
- Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from their perspective
- Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept
- Connected ideas from your subjects/ modules to your prior experiences and knowledge

QUANTITATIVE REASONING

During the current academic year, about how often have you... [never, sometimes, often, very often]

- Reached conclusions based on your analysis of numerical information (numbers, graphs, statistics, etc.)
- Used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.)
- Evaluated what others have concluded from numerical information

LEARNING STRATEGIES

During the current academic year, about how often have you... [never, sometimes, often, very often]

- Identified key information from recommended reading materials
- Reviewed your notes after class
- Summarised what you learned in class or from course materials

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

During the current academic year, about how often have you... [never, sometimes, often, very often]

- Asked another student to help you understand course material
- Explained course material to one or more students
- Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students
- Worked with other students on projects or assignments

STUDENT-FACULTY INTERACTION

During the current academic year, about how often have you... [never, sometimes, often, very often]

- Talked about career plans with academic staff
- Worked with academic staff on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.)
- Discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with academic staff outside of class
- Discussed your performance with academic staff

EFFECTIVE TEACHING PRACTICES

During the current academic year, to what extent have lecturers/ teaching staff... [very little, some, quite a bit, very much]

- Clearly explained course goals and requirements
- Taught in an organised way
- Used examples or illustrations to explain difficult points
- Provided feedback on a draft or work in progress
- Provided prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments

QUALITY OF INTERACTIONS

At your institution, please indicate the quality of interactions with... [Poor, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, Excellent, N/A]

- Students
- Academic advisors
- Academic staff
- Support services staff (career services, student activities, accommodation, etc.)
- Other administrative staff and offices (registry, finance, etc.)

SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

How much does your institution emphasise... [very little, some, quite a bit, very much]

- Providing support to help students succeed academically
- Using learning support services (learning centre, computer centre, maths support, writing support etc.)
- Contact among students from different backgrounds (social, racial/ ethnic, religious, etc.)
- Providing opportunities to be involved socially
- Providing support for your overall well-being (recreation, health care, counselling, etc.)
- Helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)
- Attending campus activities and events (special speakers, cultural performances, sporting events, etc.)
- Attending events that address important social, economic, or political issues

QUESTIONS NOT RELATING TO SPECIFIC ENGAGEMENT INDICATORS

In addition, 22 other questions that do not directly relate to a specific indicator, but that are included in the survey because of their contribution to a broad understanding of student engagement, are listed in Chapter 2.

Appendix 7
Participation in the 2020 StudentSurvey.ie

The following higher education institutions participated in the 2020 StudentSurvey.ie. Percentage figures represent the respondents as a percentage of the student population invited to take the survey in each institution, i.e. the response rate.

Universities	Response Rate
Dublin City University	28%
Maynooth University	25%
National University of Ireland Galway	38%
Trinity College Dublin	34%
University College Cork	22%
University College Dublin	34%
University of Limerick	18%
Technological Higher Education Institutions (Institutes of Technology and Technological University Dublin)	
Athlone Institute of Technology	68%
Cork Institute of Technology	36%
Dundalk Institute of Technology	32%
Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology	40%
Institute of Art, Design and Technology	26%
Institute of Technology Carlow	35%
Institute of Technology Sligo	30%
Institute of Technology Tralee	29%
Letterkenny Institute of Technology	34%
Limerick Institute of Technology	51%
Technological University Dublin	33%
Waterford Institute of Technology	18%
Other Institutions	
Dublin Business School	25%
Marino Institute of Education	41%
Mary Immaculate College, Limerick	40%
National College of Art and Design	28%
National College of Ireland	23%
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	20%
St. Angela's College, Sligo	20%

Notes

studentsurvey.ie

HEA HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY
AN tÚDARÁS um ARD-OIDEACHAS

iua IRISH UNIVERSITIES ASSOCIATION

thea TECHNOLOGICAL HIGHER EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

USI Union of Students in Ireland
Aontas na Mac Léinn in Eirinn