

HEA

An tÚdarás um Ard-Oideachas
The Higher Education Authority

EUROSTUDENT SURVEY 9

REPORT ON THE SOCIAL AND LIVING
CONDITIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION
STUDENTS IN IRELAND 2025





Authors: Dr. Stephen Erskine | Mr. David Harmon

Insight Statistical Consulting

60 Merrion Square

Dublin 2, Ireland

www.insightsc.ie

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Foreword

Dr Alan Wall, Chief Executive of the Higher Education Authority

I am very pleased to introduce this report on the social and living conditions of higher education students in Ireland, based on findings from EUROSTUDENT Survey 9. This study represents the most comprehensive and detailed national picture of student life currently available and forms part of a long-standing European initiative designed to support evidence-informed higher education policy across more than thirty countries.

The survey, completed by approximately 16,000 students and weighted to reflect the national student population, offers valuable insight into who our students are, how they access higher education, and how they experience it in practice. Covering areas such as access routes, learning conditions, finances, accommodation, employment, well-being and discrimination, the report provides a robust and timely evidence base to inform policy development at both national and institutional level.

From a system-wide perspective, several findings stand out. First, the report confirms the continued expansion and diversification of Irish higher education. Participation has increased steadily in recent years, and while the traditional school-to-higher-education pathway remains dominant, it now operates alongside a growing number of more varied routes. Mature students, part-time learners and those transitioning from the labour market are a significant and visible part of the system, particularly within technological universities and institutes of technology. This diversity strengthens the sector, but it also demands flexibility in policy design, funding models and institutional practices.

Second, the findings highlight the generally positive experiences reported by students. Across institutions and disciplines, most students express a strong sense of belonging, satisfaction with their studies, and confidence in the value of their qualifications. Intentions to withdraw are low overall, suggesting that despite the pressures associated with academic workload, employment and living costs, students remain committed to completing their programmes. These findings speak to the quality and resilience of Ireland's higher education system and to the sustained efforts of institutions and staff to support student engagement and success.

At the same time, the report makes clear that these positive experiences are not evenly distributed. Financial pressures remain a defining feature of student life, with accommodation costs, in particular, playing a central role in shaping students' overall well-being. While severe financial hardship affects a minority of students, financial strain is closely associated with poorer mental health and perceived impacts on academic performance. The report also shows that student finances are typically built from a complex mix of employment, family support, public funding and savings, rather than from any single source. From a policy perspective, this underlines the importance of viewing student supports as part of a broader ecosystem rather than as stand-alone interventions.

The findings on mental health and well-being are particularly important. Anxiety and depression emerge as the most commonly reported difficulties, and while many students also report positive aspects of well-being, these often coexist alongside significant stress related to academic demands, financial pressures and, for some groups, experiences of discrimination. The report shows that supports are more often accessed outside higher education institutions than within them, raising important questions about capacity, coordination and accessibility of services.

Issues of equity and inclusion are also strongly evident throughout the report. Gender patterns at system level mask persistent segregation by field of study, while students with disabilities, caring responsibilities, or non-binary gender identities often report less positive experiences. Experiences of discrimination, while rarely severe, are relatively common in more subtle forms and are frequently unreported. These findings reinforce the importance of targeted access, participation and success initiatives and of continued progress in creating inclusive learning environments across the sector.

Importantly, the report situates student experiences within a wider European context, allowing Ireland to benchmark progress and challenges against those of comparable systems. This international perspective strengthens the utility of the findings and supports shared learning across jurisdictions at a time when higher education systems face common pressures linked to cost of living, demographic change and evolving labour market demands.

I would like to sincerely thank Dr Stephen Erskine and Mr David Harmon of Insight Statistical Consulting for their rigorous analysis and for the clarity with which these complex data have been presented. My thanks also extend to the staff of the HEA who supported the delivery of the survey, to the higher education institutions that facilitated student participation, and, most importantly, to the thousands of students who gave their time to share their experiences.

This report provides a vital evidence base to inform ongoing policy development, institutional planning and public debate about the future of higher education in Ireland. I strongly encourage policymakers, institutional leaders, staff, students and other stakeholders to engage with its findings and to use this rich body of evidence to support a system that is inclusive, responsive and centred on student success.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Wall', written in a cursive style.

Dr Alan Wall

Chief Executive

Higher Education Authority (HEA)

Key Findings

This section follows the order of chapters in the report and presents the key findings. All percentages reported are taken from the results of the survey unless otherwise stated. It should also be noted at the outset that these results are based on a sample of sixteen thousand students and not a census of all students. This sample has then been weighted to align with the known student population.

Demographics

- The proportion of students studying at Irish higher educational institutions has steadily increased in recent years. Since the last Eurostudent survey, which was conducted in 2022, the numbers of students enrolled has increased by 6.8 percent.
- While the gender balance at higher level is relatively even, a higher proportion of females were found in certain study areas, for example, in Education, and Health and Welfare. Male students by comparison were found more in the areas of Information and Communication Technologies, and Engineering, Manufacturing, and Construction.
- A higher proportion of female students attend Universities or Associate/Affiliate Colleges than male students.
- Mature students account for around 6 percent of the total undergraduate population.
- The survey indicates that 9 percent of the total student population have children. Of the full-time undergraduate population only 2 percent of students have children. Of the part-time undergraduate population, 42 percent have children.
- Of the total student population with children, the median age of the youngest child is 11.
- International students are typically older than Irish students.

College Entry Route, Transition and Access

- The Leaving Certificate remains the dominant entry route, confirming that direct transition from school continues to shape the majority of higher education participation.
- Part-time undergraduates, mature students and those with stronger labour-market attachment are much more likely to have later entry or non-standard qualifications.
- Family background matters: both higher parental education and greater perceived parental wealth are associated with more direct transition into higher education.
- Prior employment is closely linked to later entry, suggesting that financial necessity continues to influence educational pathways.
- Postgraduate education, particularly full-time Masters study, is markedly international, while part-time Masters students are more likely to enter higher education after a longer gap.

Course Experience

- Students generally report positive experiences of higher education, with strong levels of belonging, satisfaction and willingness to recommend their programme.
- Intentions to withdraw are low overall, suggesting that most students remain engaged despite academic or personal pressures.
- Students with non-binary gender identities appear more likely to report weaker belonging and stronger thoughts of leaving, pointing to a more fragile experience for this group.
- Evaluations of teaching are positive, but differ by institution type, formal status and programme level, with part-time and postgraduate students often more positive.
- Confidence in post-study employment is high overall but uneven across disciplines, with Arts and Psychology students notably less confident than students in strongly vocational fields.

Student Income and Expenditure

- Student finances are built from a complex mix of employment earnings, family support, savings, grants and transfers in kind rather than from a single dominant source for all groups.
- Employment income is the largest single source of average cash income, but its importance rises sharply for students living independently and for part-time students.
- Public support is concentrated among full-time undergraduates; most students receive no public grant, scholarship or loan.
- Accommodation is the largest expenditure item and is central to differences in financial pressure between students living at home and those living independently.
- Severe financial difficulty is reported by a minority, but financial strain is strongly associated with poorer mental health and perceived effects on academic performance.

Accommodation

- Nearly half of students live with their parents during term-time, reflecting both the cost of accommodation and the young age profile of many undergraduates.
- Living arrangements vary strongly by age and study mode: younger students are concentrated in the parental home or shared housing, whereas older and part-time students are more likely to live with partners or children.
- Student accommodation is primarily a feature of younger full-time study and is almost absent among part-time students.
- Commuting time reflects housing trade-offs: living at home reduces direct accommodation costs but is associated with much longer travel times, while student accommodation is associated with the shortest journeys.
- Accommodation choices are shaped jointly by financial constraints, geography and age rather than by a single factor alone.

Course Workload, Employment and Time Budget

- Formal status is the key determinant of time use: full-time students average 36 study hours per week, while part-time students average 21 hours but combine this with much heavier employment commitments.
- Workload differs substantially across disciplines, with Medicine, Pharmacy and Architecture among the most time-intensive programmes.
- Employment reduces time available for personal study, especially among full-time students, though the weekly differences appear modest rather than dramatic.
- Employment is widespread even among full-time students and is nearly universal among part-time students, showing that paid work is embedded in the student experience rather than peripheral to it.
- Students generally do not perceive employment as damaging their academic performance, but many would still prefer to spend less time working and more time studying.

Student Mobility

- Temporary study abroad remains uncommon, with only a small minority of students having undertaken a study period abroad and most others reporting no intention to do so.
- Mobility is socially patterned: it is more common among younger students, postgraduates and university students, and much less common among part-time and older students.
- Fields such as Languages and Humanities show relatively higher mobility, whereas more vocational or technically structured programmes show lower participation.
- Financial cost is the most important perceived obstacle to studying abroad, followed by the loss of paid work and, for some students, family separation.

Disability

- Disability, long-standing health conditions and functional limitations affect roughly one-third of students, making disability a major dimension of student diversity rather than a marginal issue.
- Mental health problems and learning disabilities are the most frequently reported conditions, outweighing visible physical or sensory impairments.
- The prevalence of disability varies by field of study, with particularly high levels in Arts, Humanities and Welfare.
- Different impairments affect students differently: mobility impairments weigh more heavily on everyday life, while mental health problems and learning disabilities affect study more directly.
- A substantial minority of students rate institutional support as insufficient, suggesting persistent gaps between need and support provision.

Mental Health and Well-being

- Student mental health problems are heavily concentrated in anxiety and depression, indicating that the dominant pattern is one of internalising distress rather than isolated specialist conditions.
- Although many students report positive mood, this coexists with much lower levels of calmness, energy and rest, pointing to an uneven well-being profile.
- Diagnosis and treatment are incomplete: many students have been diagnosed but are not in treatment, while a further minority remain undiagnosed.
- Support is more likely to come from external professionals and personal networks than from within higher education institutions.
- Academic demands and procrastination are the most prominent stressors, while financial stress affects a substantial minority and discrimination-related stress is concentrated among specific groups.

Experiences of Discrimination

- Severe forms of discrimination such as physical violence are rare, but more subtle interpersonal forms, including being treated as less capable, harassment and ridicule, are considerably more common.
- Female students, younger students and students who do not identify as male or female consistently report higher levels of discrimination across multiple domains.
- Age operates differently, with younger students more exposed to interpersonal harms and older students more likely to report certain forms of structural discrimination.
- Income-based discrimination stands out as socially significant, linking experiences of exclusion back to the financial inequalities identified earlier in the report.
- Most students who experience discrimination do not report it, indicating a substantial gap between lived experience and institutional response.

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Chapter 1:

The Demographic Profile of Students in Ireland



This report presents an overview of the social and living conditions of higher education students in Ireland. One of the primary purposes of the Eurostudent project is to collate comparable data to enable cross-national comparisons. As such, it is necessary for the student populations in each country (and there are over 30 in the current round of the survey) to be comparable. For the purposes of the Eurostudent project, the student population in a country is all students that are enrolled in higher education at the time of the survey. Higher education is defined as students undertaking programmes that correspond to ISCED level 5, 6 and 7, which in Ireland are programmes at NFQ Level 6, 7, 8, and 9 (UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2011, Quality and Qualifications Ireland 2021).

However, there are important exclusions which mean that the Eurostudent student population differs from the overall student population:

1. The population does not include students who have taken leave (official or otherwise) from their programme and interrupted their studies.
2. The Eurostudent population does not include short-term mobile students. Typically, this means Erasmus students who are studying in Ireland for a short period of time (rather than staying to complete a whole degree) for a small number of credits.
3. The Eurostudent population does not include ISCED Level 8 study programmes, which in Ireland corresponds to PhD and doctoral programmes, due to the cross-national variation in awarding these degrees.
4. In previous rounds of the survey, the Eurostudent population did not include distance learners who do not have some form of physical face-to-face contact with course providers during their lecture period; however, because of the Coronavirus pandemic, this stipulation was adjusted. As such, regardless of whether classes are face-to-face or entirely conducted online, these students are considered part of the Eurostudent population *as long as* they live in Ireland during their studies.

Approximately 16,000 valid student responses (from a population of approximately 240,000 students) were received during the data collection period. This represented a response rate of 6.6 percent of all students.

As with all sample surveys, there is some element of response bias in the data, i.e. certain cohorts are more likely to respond for various reasons. For example, the response rates by each of the key classification variables are:

Gender	ISCED Level	Status	Institution Type	Age
8 percent for female students, 5 percent for male students, and 7 percent for students who preferred not to assign themselves a gender.	5 percent for postgraduate students and 7 percent for undergraduate students.	8 percent for full-time students and 2 percent for part-time students.	6 percent for students from the Technological Universities or Institutes of Technology, and 7 percent for students from the Universities (including Associate and Affiliate Colleges and the Royal College of Surgeons Ireland).	7 percent for students aged less than 22 years old, 9 percent for students aged 22 to 24 years old, 6 percent for students aged 25 to 29 years old, and 4 percent for students aged 30 years and above.
				

In order to address these imbalances, all valid survey-responses were weighted to reflect the known population parameters of **inter-locked** gender, full-time/part-time status, ISCED level, age and type of institution¹. By this, we mean we took the known population and split it across the variables listed above. This provided us with an overview of the population and the size of the various sub-groups within it. The same procedure was then done for the sample. By comparing the size of each subgroup in the sample against the known population, we can see where respondents have higher or lower response rates. A series of weights were then calculated to reflect these different response rates. In weighting, it is assumed that the sample of students from the sub-populations is a representative sample from their respective populations.

Unless otherwise stated, all results quoted in the report are based on the weighted sample of responses.

¹ Population statistics provided from the Higher Education Authority's Student Record System database.

Table 1.1 provides an overview of the sample by ISCED Level and formal status (being either full-time or part-time students). While Eurostudent collects data on ISCED levels 5, 6 and 7, this report will only provide the results for ISCED levels 6 and 7, and ISCED Level 5 is excluded from any further analysis. ISCED Level 5 covers short-cycle tertiary education which in Ireland includes Advanced Certificates, Higher Certificates and Undergraduate Diplomas. In other European countries such as Denmark and France this forms a substantial proportion of the student population (Hauschildt *et al* 2025). However, as Table 1.1 shows, this group forms only 9 percent of the sample and is largely vocational in its focus.

In contrast, ISCED Levels 6 and 7 readily correspond with the traditional Irish undergraduate degree and postgraduate programmes. Level 6 contains undergraduate ordinary and honours degrees, and higher diplomas. Whereas ISCED Level 7 contains research and taught masters' degrees, postgraduate certificates and postgraduate diplomas.

Table 1.1: Overview of the student sample [N=16,000]

ISCED Level	Full-time student	Part-time student	Percent of Total	N ²
5	12%	88%	9%	1,325
6 (Undergraduate)	94%	6%	73%	12,371
7 (Postgraduate)	50%	50%	17%	2,304
Percent of Total	79%	21%	100%	
N	15,170	830		16,000

While referring to ISCED Levels makes sense when making cross-national comparisons, it is of less use here. As such, for the purposes of this report, 'undergraduate' and 'postgraduate' will be the short-hand nomenclature used for the broad range of programmes henceforth, as these are more readily understandable than the standardised international alternatives.

The Eurostudent target student population in higher education discussed in this report is primarily classified by the type of course being undertaken (undergraduate or postgraduate) and their formal status on their respective courses (being either full-time or part-time students). As noted already, students doing ISCED Level 5 courses form a minority of the overall target population. In contrast, undergraduate students form 73 percent of the total, and within this group the contrast in formal status across levels is striking as undergraduate study is overwhelmingly full-time, with 94 percent of students enrolled full-time, whereas postgraduate study is split evenly between full-time and part-time participation. Level 5 stands apart again, with 88 percent studying part-time.

This set of primary classifications is cross-referenced against several key student characteristics of the sample in Table 1.2³.

2 N used here and throughout this report provides the unweighted size of each group in the sample.

3 ISCED Level 5 respondents have been filtered out from this and all following analyses.

Table 1.2: The distribution of key student characteristics within the sample.

	Undergraduate		Postgraduate		Total	Valid N ⁴
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time		
Female	54%	45%	57%	58%	55%	9,683
Male	45%	55%	42%	41%	45%	4,905
Other	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	87
Universities ⁵	63%	17%	85%	70%	64%	9,346
Technological Universities/Institutes of Technology	37%	83%	15%	30%	36%	5,302
Domestic Student	89%	86%	59%	75%	85%	12,330
International Student ⁶	11%	14%	41%	25%	15%	2,294
Non-Mature Undergraduate	96%	63%			93%	14,436
Mature Undergraduate ⁷	4%	37%			7%	1,034
Non-Dublin institution	54%	73%	36%	34%	52%	7,779
Dublin institution	46%	27%	64%	66%	48%	6,869
Not a Grant/Scholarship Recipient	49%	73%	57%	69%	53%	5,157
Grant/Scholarship Recipient	51%	27%	43%	31%	47%	5,161
Overall	76%	5%	10%	10%	100%	

Some of the following features stand out when looking at this cross-tabulation of the distribution of student characteristics.

- Female students comprise 55 percent of the total target population. At undergraduate level 54 percent of full-time students and 45 percent of part-time students are female. At the postgraduate level this rises to 57 percent for full-time and 58 percent for part-time students.
- 83 percent of part-time undergraduate students attend Institutes of Technology or Technological Universities, whereas 63 percent of full-time undergraduate students attend Universities. At the postgraduate level, 85 percent of full-time students and 70 percent of part-time students attend Universities.
- International students are more prominent in full-time postgraduate courses.
- Of the students undertaking part-time undergraduate courses, 37 percent of them are mature students, whereas for full-time undergraduates only 4 percent of them are mature students.

4 The valid N total provided here for each category are the unweighted figures and are dependent on the number of respondents answering the question the category is based upon; thus, totals can vary marginally because of differing responses rates to different questions.

5 Unless explicitly stated, Universities and associate and affiliated colleges are considered together as one category of higher education institution. As such, when discussing universities, it can be safely assumed that this also refers to associate and affiliated colleges (cf. Appendix A for further details).

6 The classification of International Student is based on having a international leaving certificate equivalent qualification.

7 The classification of Mature Student is based on being an undergraduate aged 23 or over on the 1st of January of the year of first entry into higher education.

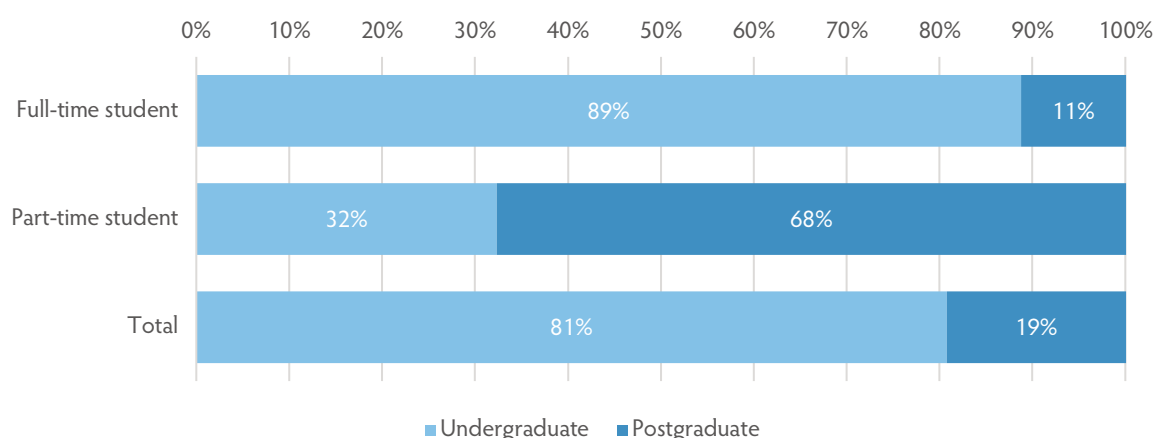
- 54 percent of full-time undergraduates are based in institutions outside of Dublin, whereas 66 percent of part-time postgraduates are studying in Dublin-based institutions.
- 51 percent of full-time undergraduate students, 43 percent of full-time postgraduate students, 27 percent of part-time undergraduate students, and 31 percent of part-time postgraduate students are in receipt of funding from a non-repayable national student source, for example, a Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) grant, or scholarship from Research Ireland.

The proportion of students studying at Irish higher educational institutions has steadily increased in recent years. For example, since the last Eurostudent survey, which was conducted in 2022, the numbers of students enrolled has increased by 6.8 percent (HEA 2025). The increased access to and uptake in higher education has contributed to the diversification of the student population as well as to the courses offered by the institutions. The rest of this chapter provides an overview of some of the socio-demographic characteristics of this student population under four main thematic headings: gender, age, location, and disability.

1.1 Gender profile

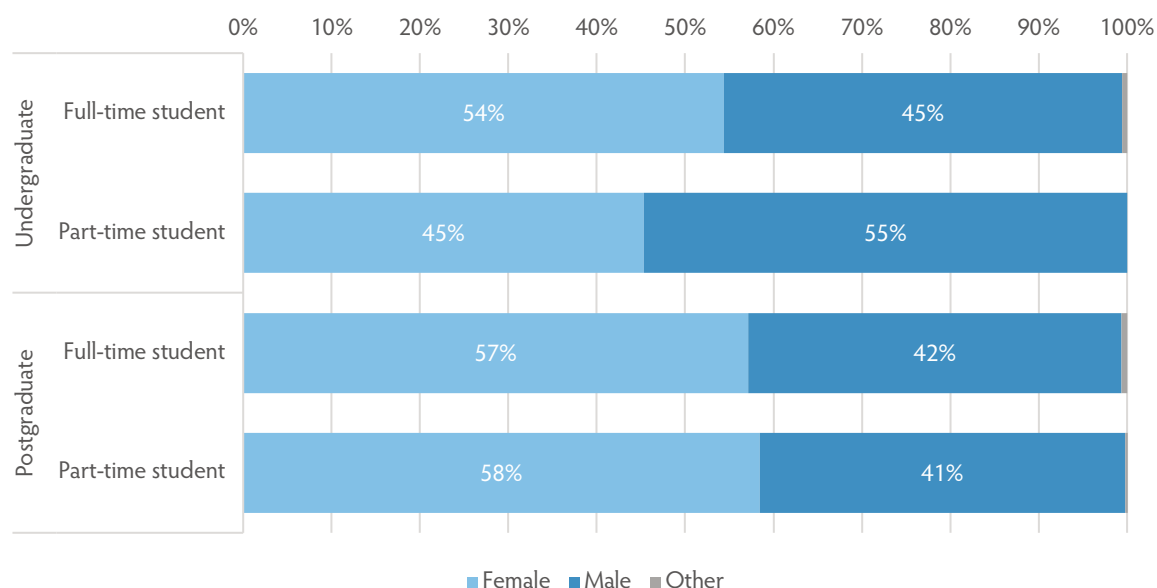
Figure 1.1 shows that the majority of students are undergraduates, who form 81 percent of the total population. Nineteen percent are doing postgraduate courses. When the distribution of part-time/full-time students across undergraduate/postgraduate courses is examined, almost ninety percent of undergraduates are full-time students whereas for postgraduate courses the pattern runs in the opposite direction, with 32 percent studying full-time and 68 percent studying part-time. This suggests that postgraduate education is more frequently combined with work or other responsibilities, while undergraduate study remains much closer to the traditional full-time model.

Figure 1.1: The distribution of full-time/part-time students across undergraduate/postgraduate courses for target student population [N=14,675].



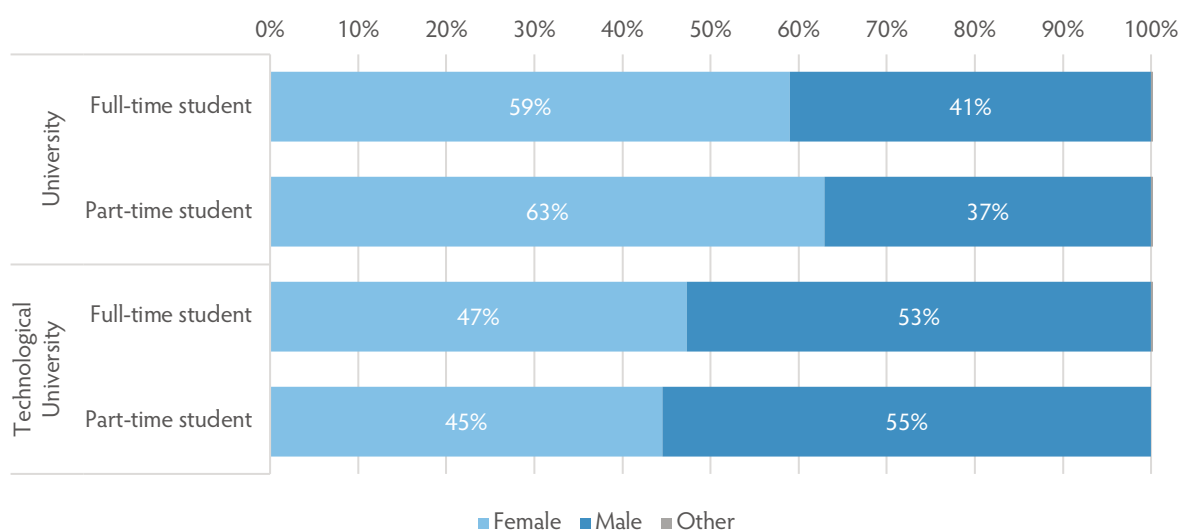
With regard to the distribution of genders across course type, it is seen from Figure 1.2 that at the undergraduate level the gender balance is relatively even, with 54 percent of full-time undergraduates and 45 percent of part-time undergraduates being female. At the postgraduate level this balance shifts towards greater representation of females, with 57 percent of full-time postgraduates and 58 percent of part-time postgraduates being female. Students who do not wish to describe themselves as male or female form around one percent of the full-time undergraduate and postgraduate populations.

Figure 1.2: The distribution of male/female/other students across undergraduate/postgraduate courses in target student population [N=14,675].



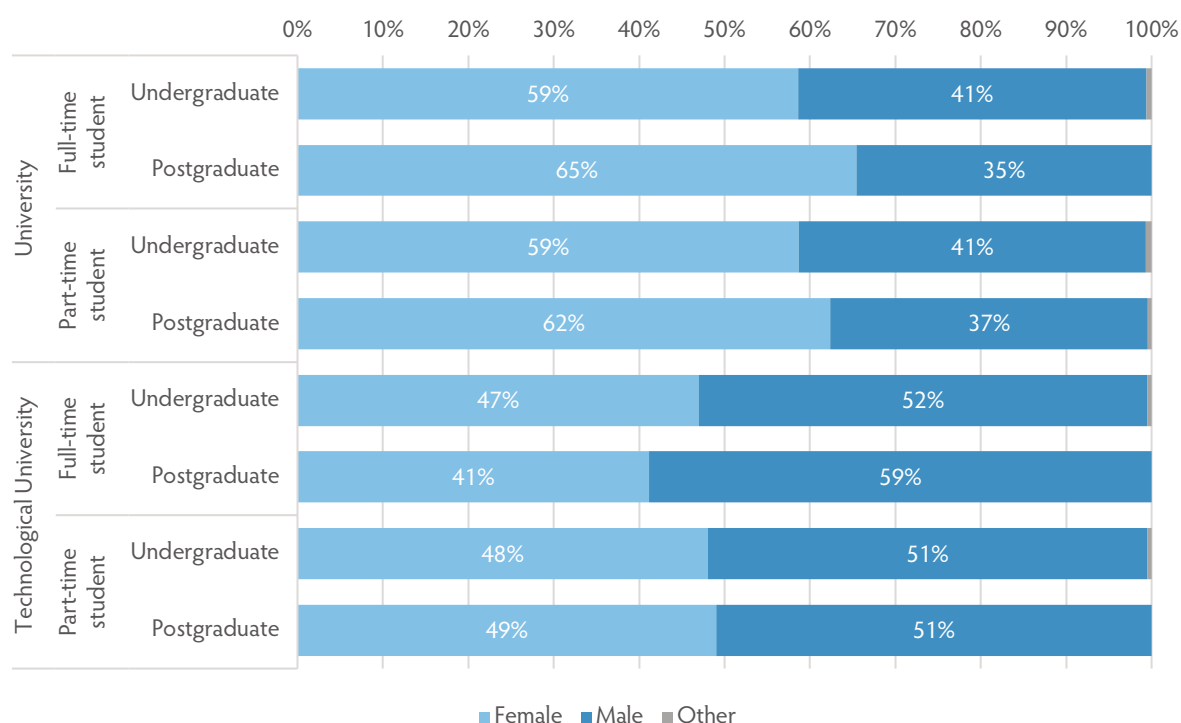
However, when the male/female gender division is examined across the type of institution attended, this difference becomes somewhat more pronounced with more females attending Universities (or associate/affiliated colleges) regardless of whether they are full or part-time students (59 percent and 63 percent respectively). In contrast, a higher proportion of males attend Technological Universities/Institutes of Technology, and again this pattern appears to hold regardless of whether they are full or part-time students (53 percent and 55 percent in these cases). This is illustrated in Figure 1.3.

Figure 1.3: The distribution of male/female/other students by institution [N=14,640].



Further variation in gender profile is shown when the type of degree being undertaken is examined. These patterns are illustrated in Figure 1.4, which shows that the gendered institutional pattern persists across both level and study mode. Within universities, women outnumber men in full-time undergraduate, part-time undergraduate, full-time postgraduate and part-time postgraduate study. In Technological Universities and Institutes of Technology, the reverse pattern is visible, with men forming the majority across the same categories. The consistency of this divide suggests that institutional gender balance is not driven by a single level of study but is instead rooted in the kinds of programmes and subject areas associated with each sector.

Figure 1.4: The distribution of male/female/other students by institution and degree type [N=14,640].



In the last iteration of the survey, the previously utilised 10 study fields derived from the ISCED-2013 classification were reworked to give greater precision when examining certain student groups. For the most part the previous schema was useful, but had some problematic elements. For example, when comparing the expected labour market positions of graduates of certain fields, 'Health and Welfare' was one of the most obvious as it contained medicine and social work graduates together. As such, Eurostudent developed a more comprehensive outline of study field which is presented in Table 1.3 below. This table splits the study fields into more internally homogenous fields reflecting the differences within existing categories to a higher degree.

Table 1.3: Main study area by discipline [N=14,351].

	Undergraduate		Postgraduate		Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	
Generic programmes	0%	0%	4%	96%	<1%
Education Science	35%	2%	17%	46%	2%
Teacher Training	81%	1%	9%	9%	6%
Arts	85%	2%	5%	9%	10%
Humanities	76%	3%	10%	11%	2%
Languages	71%	1%	16%	13%	2%
Social sciences, journalism and information	72%	2%	14%	12%	5%
Psychology	66%	3%	10%	21%	3%
Business and administration	61%	8%	18%	14%	12%
Law	86%	3%	9%	3%	4%
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	91%	2%	5%	2%	13%
ICT	76%	5%	13%	7%	8%
Engineering, manufacturing, construction	73%	11%	11%	4%	11%
Architecture and town planning	81%	0%	11%	7%	1%
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, veterinary	86%	10%	2%	2%	1%
Medicine, Dental Studies	90%	0%	5%	5%	5%
Health	76%	2%	9%	14%	8%
Pharmacy	84%	0%	16%	0%	1%
Welfare	58%	23%	8%	12%	3%
Services	80%	11%	1%	8%	2%
Total	75%	5%	10%	10%	100%

Table 1.3 shows that student enrolment is concentrated in a relatively small number of disciplines. Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics account for 13 percent of students, followed closely by Business and Administration at 12 percent, while Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction represent 11 percent and Arts 10 percent. At the other end of the distribution, Architecture and Town Planning, Agriculture, and Pharmacy each account for around 1 percent of students. The table also highlights important differences in programme structure across disciplines. 90 percent of Medicine and Dental Studies students are full-time undergraduates, while 46 percent of Education Science students are part-time postgraduates, suggesting this field is more closely tied to continuing professional development.

Table 1.4 provides a breakdown of the percentage of students in each discipline by gender, though students who classify themselves as Other have been excluded due to their overall numbers.

Table 1.4: Main study area by gender [N=14,277].

	Undergraduate		Postgraduate		Overall	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Generic programmes	0%	0%	48%	52%	48%	52%
Education Science	83%	17%	70%	30%	75%	25%
Teacher Training	78%	22%	78%	22%	78%	22%
Arts	61%	39%	68%	32%	62%	38%
Humanities	58%	42%	59%	41%	59%	41%
Languages	68%	32%	82%	18%	72%	28%
Social sciences, journalism and information	58%	42%	63%	37%	59%	41%
Psychology	71%	29%	65%	35%	69%	31%
Business and administration	46%	54%	51%	49%	48%	52%
Law	61%	39%	64%	36%	61%	39%
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	56%	44%	56%	44%	56%	44%
ICT	24%	76%	31%	69%	26%	74%
Engineering, manufacturing, construction	20%	80%	29%	71%	22%	78%
Architecture and town planning	48%	52%	55%	45%	50%	50%
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, veterinary	66%	34%	43%	57%	66%	34%
Medicine, Dental Studies	58%	42%	49%	51%	57%	43%
Health	79%	21%	78%	22%	79%	21%
Pharmacy	65%	35%	74%	26%	67%	33%
Welfare	85%	15%	96%	4%	87%	13%
Services	42%	58%	6%	94%	39%	61%
Total	54%	46%	58%	42%	55%	45%

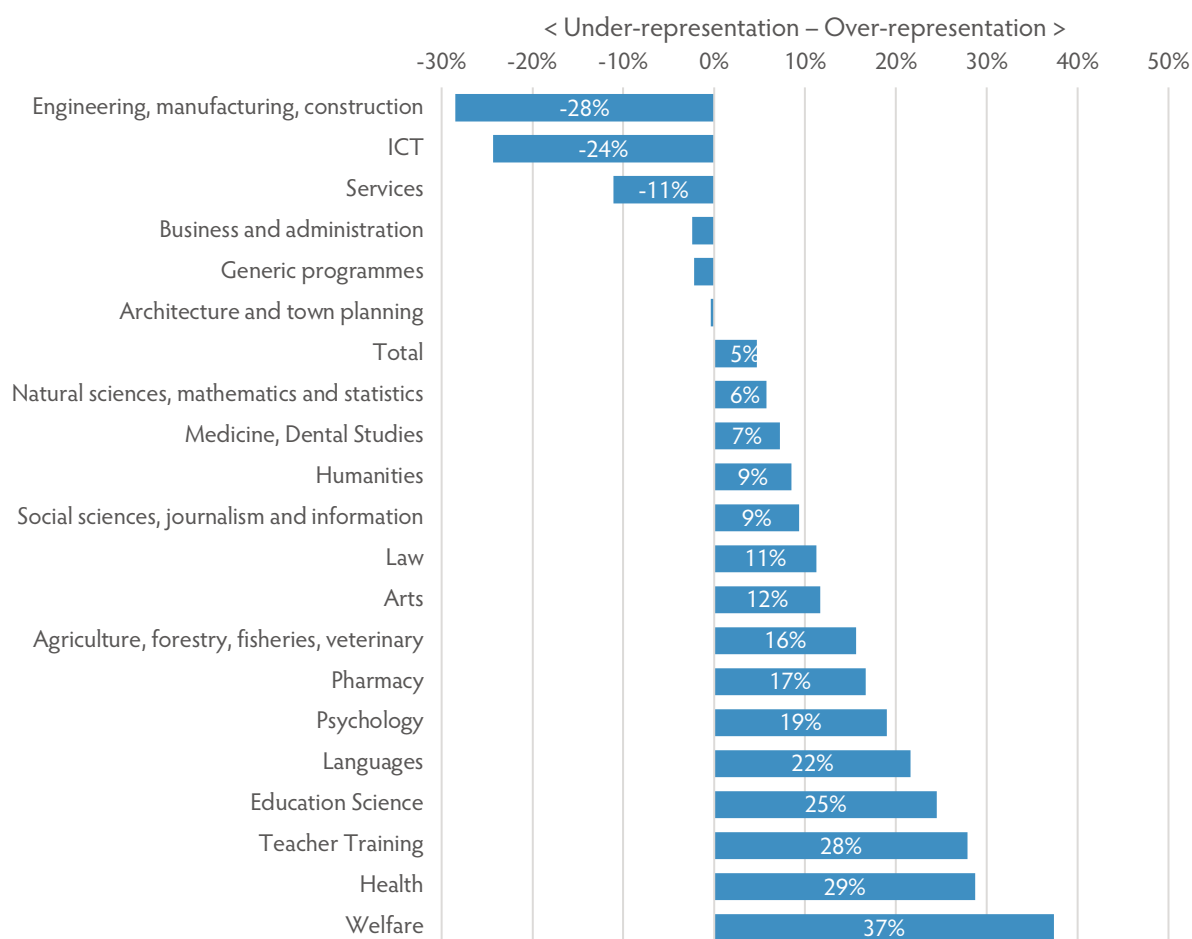
The total row shows that there are more females in higher education than males (cf. Figure 1.2). However, it is when we look at which disciplines each gender tends to gravitate towards that noticeable differences occur. For example, there are higher proportions of females at both undergraduate and postgraduate level in Education, Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Journalism and Information, Languages, Health, and Welfare. Conversely, there are a greater proportion of male students in Information and Communication Technologies, and Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction. These figures show that the near-balanced gender composition of higher education overall conceals very uneven subject choices.

If one was to estimate the proportions of each gender in each programme, without any prior information, then it follows that the best estimate would be that of the overall distribution of genders within the population. As such, without any further information in this regard, it would be feasible to expect to see each programme having close to a 50-50 split between the genders. However, this is not what is observed. Figure 1.5 shows the difference between gender parity and the observed levels of uptake for each programme for female students.

The figures for the differences between gender parity and the observed data have been calculated by subtracting fifty percent from the observed percentage of females in each study area. As such, positive values indicate female over-representation, negative values indicate female under-representation, and values close to zero indicate parity between males and females in that study area.

As one can see from this chart, Business and Administration, and Services come close to an equal division across the genders. For all other programmes one gender predominates in the fashion discussed above, with the greatest divisions being in Teacher Training, Welfare, Health, and Education Science where females are heavily over-represented, and Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction, and Information and Communication Technologies where we see a large under-representation of female students. What is notable here is that only a small number of fields sit close to parity; most lie clearly to one side or the other. The chart therefore reinforces the point that overall gender balance in higher education does not translate into balanced participation within disciplines.

Figure 1.5: Total percentage difference before gender parity across disciplines for female students [N=14,277].

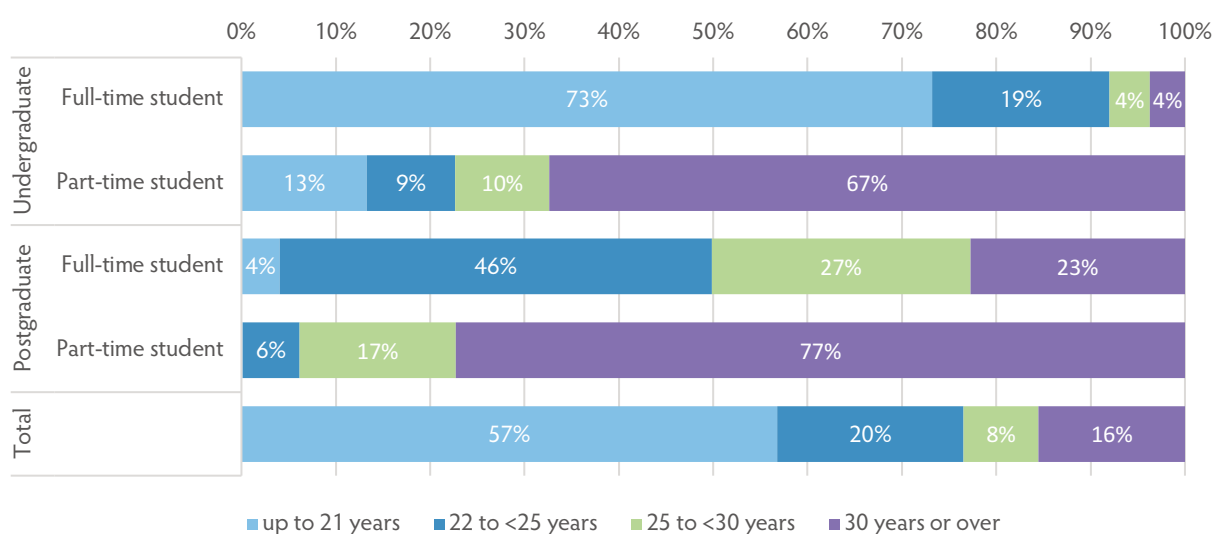


1.2 Age and background

Ireland has a relatively young student population with the median age for all respondents being 22. However, this single number disguises a lot of the variation across course type and status of study. Full-time undergraduates have a median age of 21 whereas for part-time undergraduates the median age is 36. This pattern is also evident at the postgraduate level with the median age for full-time postgraduates being 25, and for part-time students this is 40.

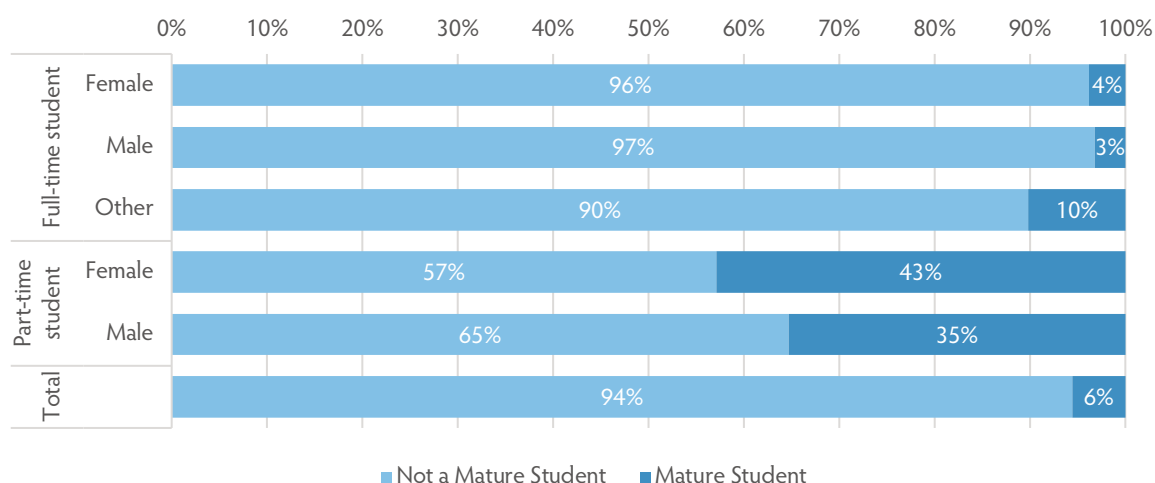
The age profile of each student cohort is illustrated in Figure 1.6 and follows the expected trend in that full-time undergraduate are predominantly under 22 years of age (73 percent) whereas part-time undergraduates are typically older (67 percent are over 30 years of age). At the postgraduate level, there are few very young students as it typically takes a number of years to gain the level of education to be allowed entry to postgraduate level, thus by this point have aged out of the youngest categories. For example, 4 percent of full-time postgraduates are under 22 whereas 46 percent are between 22 and 24 years of age. Part-time postgraduates are typically older than their full-time counterparts with 6 percent being between 22 and 25, and 77 percent being over 30 years of age. In short, these figures show that part-time study is associated with a distinctly older student profile across both undergraduate and postgraduate education.

Figure 1.6: Age distribution of students in higher education [N=14,677].



Mature students are defined as undergraduates who are 23 or over on the 1st of January of the year of entry into a higher education institution. By this criterion, mature students account for around 6 percent of the student population. When we examine the distribution of mature students by formal status, it is evident that the majority of the part-time student population are mature students (this is illustrated in Figure 1.7). In contrast, only around 4 percent of the full-time female and 3 percent of the male undergraduate student population are classified as mature. The pattern for mature students classed as having other gender identities run counter to what was observed above, in that 10 percent of them are full-time mature students, but there are no part-time mature students. Though it is also worth noting that these are based on very small figures (around 60 overall).

Figure 1.7: Percentage of mature students by formal status and gender [N=11,823; Undergraduates Only].

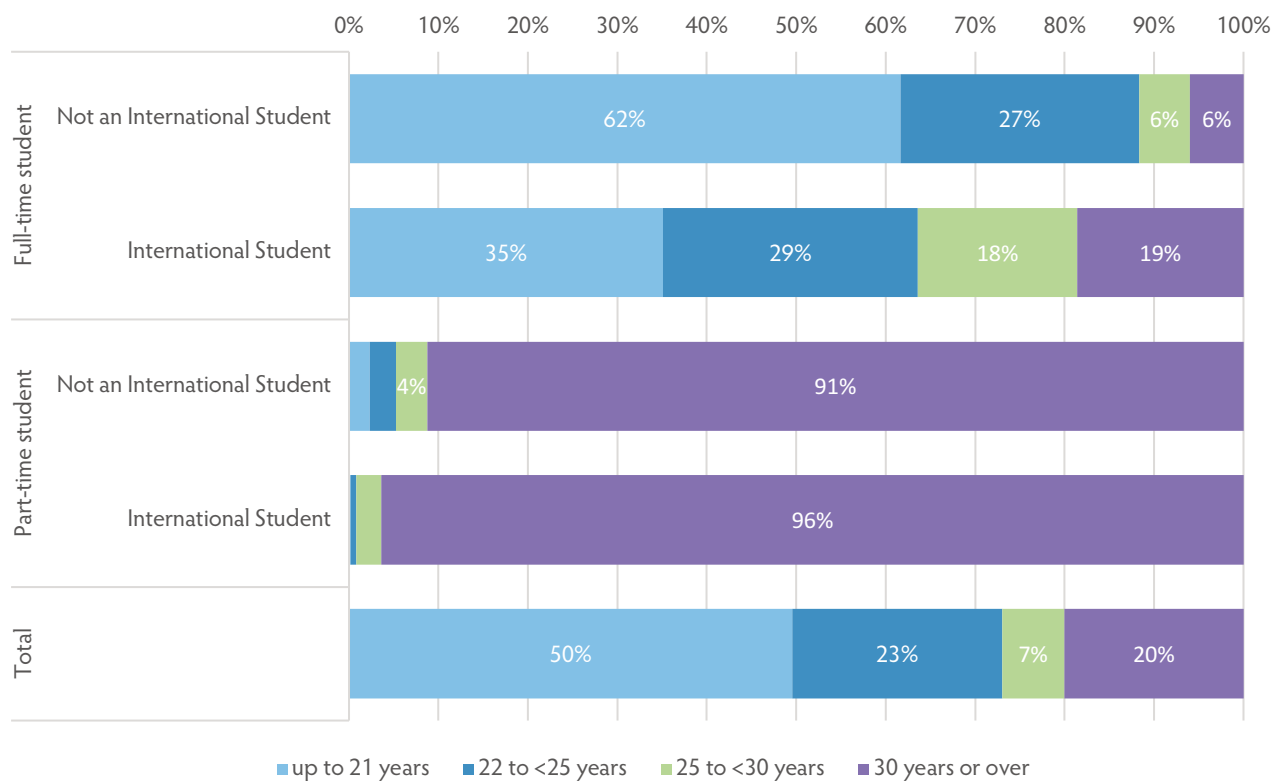


The survey indicates that approximately 9 percent of the total student population have children. Of the full-time undergraduate population only 2 percent of students have children. This increases to 45 percent of the part-time undergraduate population. For postgraduates, 9 percent of full-time students have children and 42 percent of part-time students have children. Of the total student population with children, 42.6 percent have two children, 25.3 percent have three, and 23.9 percent have one, and the median age of the youngest child is 11.

It stands to reason that there would be a relationship between mature student status and having children, and this is borne out by the results of the survey. Less than one percent of full-time non-mature undergraduates have children, whereas for full-time mature students this is 39 percent.

Before moving on to the next section, it is also worth examining the age profile of international students compared against Irish students. The classification of international students is based upon having an international leaving certificate equivalent that was obtained outside of Ireland. While it is an imperfect indicator, for example, Irish students could have studied abroad before entering higher education in Ireland, and equivalently non-Irish students could have done the Leaving Certificate in Ireland, it is a useful proxy for categorising students and is more suitable than other potential alternatives such as parental nationality.

Figure 1.8: Age profile of international students [N=14,591].



At the full-time level, 62 percent of non-international students are under 22, whereas for international students this is only 35 percent. As Figure 1.8 shows greater proportions of international students fall into the older categories than non-international students. At the part-time level, while 91 percent of non-international students are over 30, this increases to 96 percent for international students. Again, showing that international participation in Irish higher education is more heavily concentrated among older students, especially in full-time settings.

1.3 Location

Table 1.5 shows that 76 percent of the total student population are full-time undergraduates. Within this, 63 percent of them attend Universities or associate/affiliated colleges. In contrast, 83 percent of part-time undergraduates attend Institutes of Technology or Technological Universities, though this is part of a much smaller proportion of the total student population (5 percent). For postgraduates, the majority of both full-time and part-time postgraduates attend universities (85 and 70 percent respectively).

Table 1.5: The distribution of students across Universities and Technological Universities/Institutes of Technology [N=14,648].

	Undergraduate		Postgraduate		Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	
Universities	63%	17%	85%	70%	64%
Technological Universities/Institutes of Technology	37%	83%	15%	30%	36%
Overall	76%	5%	10%	10%	100%

However, it is worth examining if this distribution holds over the whole country or if it hides regional differences, with the largest division being Dublin, and the rest of the country.

Table 1.6 presents the distribution of students across Universities and Technological Universities outside of Dublin. As can be seen from this table, the sectoral balance is more even. Universities enrol 41 percent of full-time undergraduates and 65 percent of full-time postgraduates, but Technological Universities and Institutes of Technology account for 59 percent of full-time undergraduates and 89 percent of part-time undergraduates. Even among part-time postgraduates outside Dublin, only 44 percent study in universities. This indicates that outside the capital, Technological Universities are especially important in maintaining part-time and undergraduate access.

Table 1.6: The distribution of students across Universities and Technological Universities outside of Dublin [N=7,779].

	Undergraduate		Postgraduate		Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	
Universities	41%	11%	65%	44%	41%
Technological Universities/Institutes of Technology	59%	89%	35%	56%	59%
Overall	80%	6%	7%	6%	100%

Table 1.7 presents the distribution of students across Universities and Technological Universities within Dublin and as can be seen from this table, the Dublin pattern is much more university dominated. 90 percent of full-time undergraduates in Dublin study in universities. This rises to 97 percent for full-time postgraduates. At the part-time undergraduate level, 68 percent of students in Dublin study in Technological Universities/Institutes of Technology, whereas for part-time postgraduates, 84 percent study in universities. The contrast with Table 1.6 suggests that the regional structure of Irish higher education differs significantly, with Dublin much more concentrated in the university sector.

Table 1.7: The distribution of students across Universities and Technological Universities in Dublin [N=6,869].

	Undergraduate		Postgraduate		Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	
Universities	90%	33%	97%	84%	89%
Technological Universities/Institutes of Technology	10%	68%	3%	16%	11%
Overall	72%	3%	13%	13%	100%

This chapter has shown that Irish higher education is still anchored in full-time undergraduate study, but this overall pattern masks substantial variation by institution, discipline, age and study mode. Part-time undergraduate students are older, more likely to be mature, and much more concentrated in Technological Universities and Institutes of Technology. Postgraduate study is more international and more likely to be undertaken part-time. Although men and women are almost evenly represented overall, subject choice remains strongly gendered, with women concentrated in education, health and welfare and men in ICT and engineering.

These demographic patterns provide the context for understanding how students enter higher education. The next chapter therefore moves from the composition of the student population to the routes by which students arrive there, examining entry qualifications, later transitions, prior employment and parental background.

Chapter 2: **College Entry Route, Transition and Access**



2.1 Entry Qualifications

While in recent years Ireland has increased the level of participation in higher education, the majority of students in higher education still enter via the traditional route of completing Leaving Certificate examinations.

Of the total student population, 78 percent have a Leaving Certificate which has been obtained in Ireland, 16 percent have a qualification equivalent to the Leaving Certificate obtained abroad, and six percent do not have a Leaving Certificate.

Figure 2.1 presents this distribution across student-type and formal status and shows that 84 percent of full-time undergraduate students and 79 percent of part-time undergraduate students have a Leaving Certificate. This reduces to 43 percent for full-time postgraduate students and 67 percent for part-time postgraduate students. As has been shown already in Table 1.2, Ireland has a large cohort of international postgraduate students, thus it makes sense that 39 percent of full-time postgraduate students have an international equivalent of the leaving certificate which in part, may be an indication of the desirability of studying for a postgraduate qualification in Ireland.

Students without a Leaving Certificate remain a minority in all groups. For example, only four percent of full-time undergraduates and nine percent of part-time postgraduates do not have a Leaving Certificate, whereas for part-time undergraduates the figure is eight percent. This rises to 18 percent for full-time postgraduates.

Figure 2.1: Percentage of students with Leaving Certificate (or international equivalent) by formal status [N=14,638].

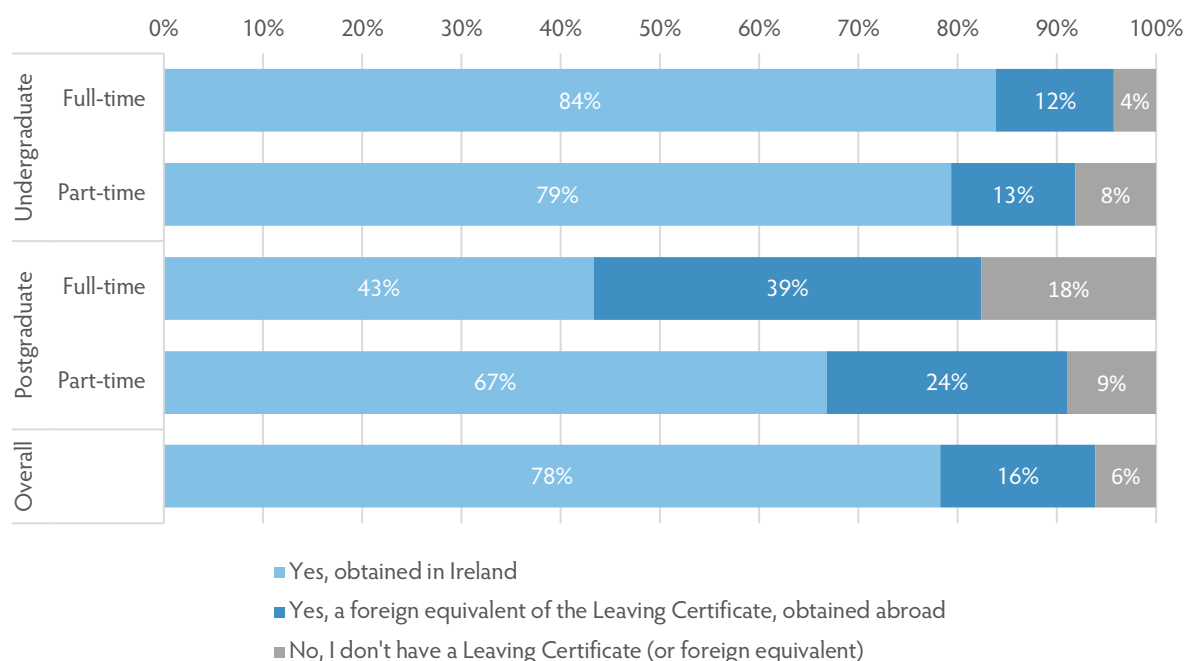
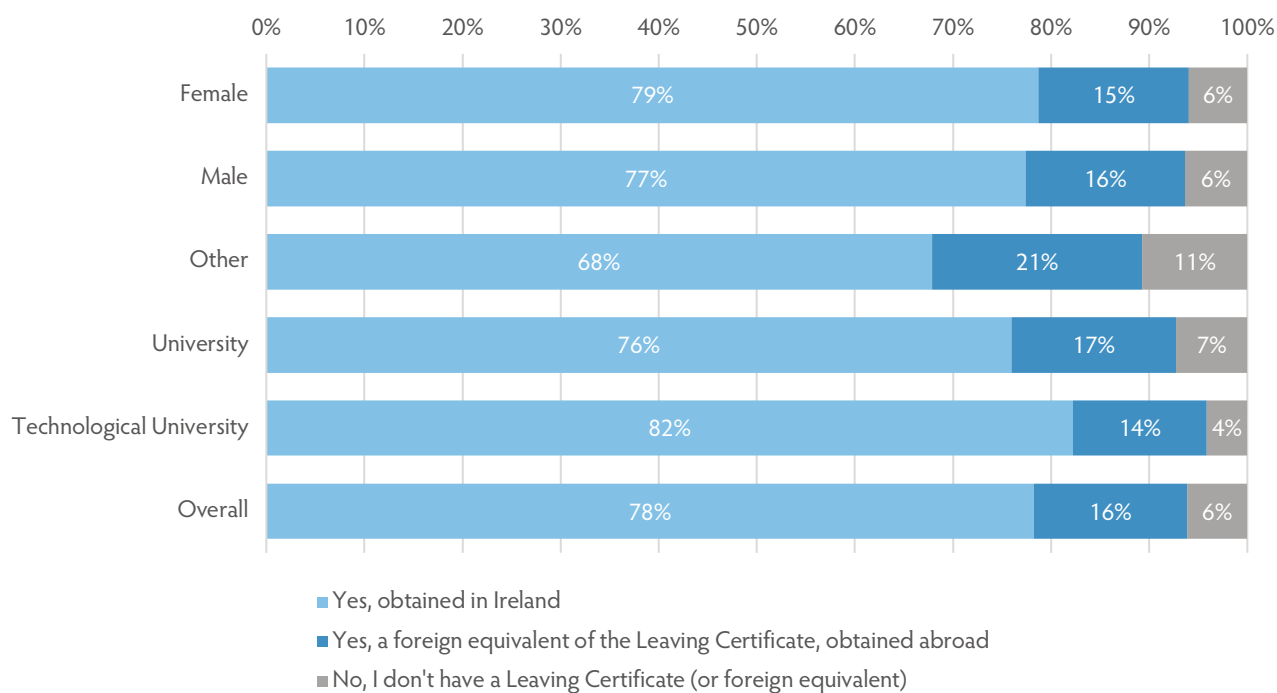


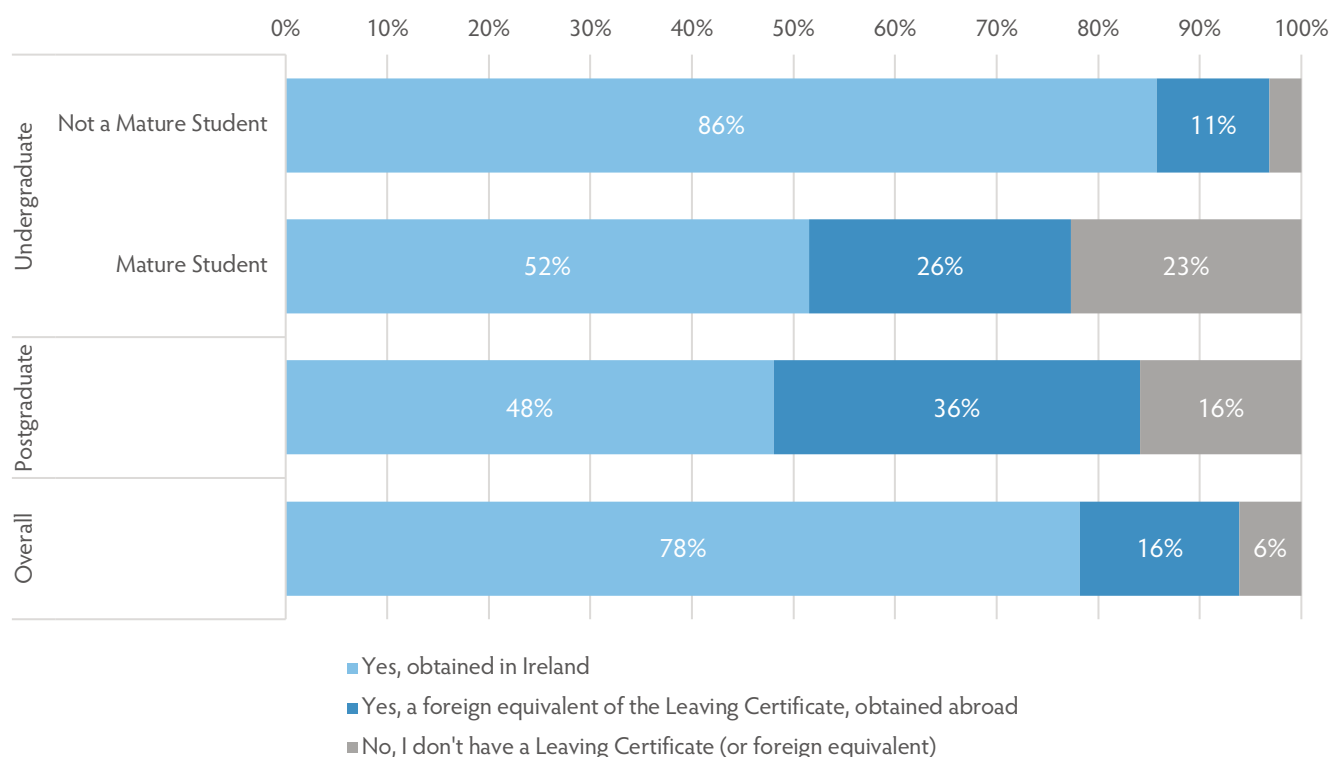
Figure 2.2 presents the distribution of entry qualifications across gender and higher education institution type. In this regard, the distribution is more uniform, in that there are no substantial differences between male and female students, and between students at Universities or Technological Universities/Institutes of Technology. The only notable point of difference is that there are more students in universities with an international equivalent of the leaving certificate than in Technological Universities (17 percent against 14 percent) and slightly more students who do not have a leaving certificate or equivalent in Universities than in Technological Universities (7 percent to 4 percent).

Figure 2.2: Percentage of students with Leaving Certificate (or international equivalent) by gender and HEI [N=14,638].



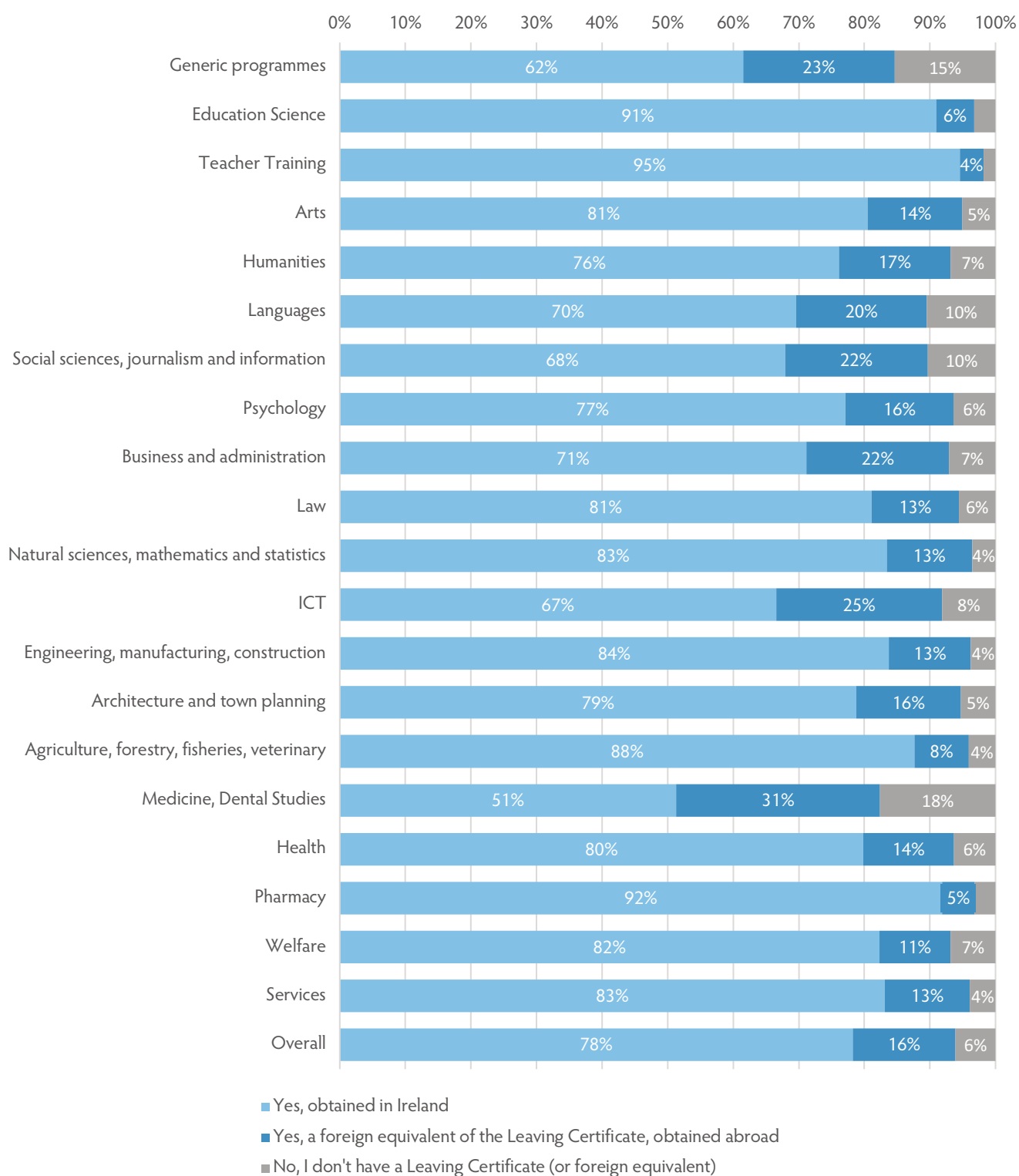
In this survey, approximately 6 percent of undergraduate students (cf. Figure 1.7) are classed as mature, that is being 23 or over on the 1st of January of the first year of entry into higher education. By definition, this group is older than the general student population, and it is also known from Chapter 1 that mature students are more likely to have children. From Figure 2.3 we can add another general characteristic of mature students, in that they are also more likely to enter higher education without a Leaving Certificate, as this chart shows that 23 percent of mature students do not have a Leaving Certificate, which can be compared against three percent in the rest of the undergraduate student population. This suggests mature students are much more likely to have followed non-standard educational pathways, such as access programmes, before entering higher education.

Figure 2.3: Percentage of students with Leaving Certificate (or international equivalent) by student type [N=14,638].



The distribution of entry qualifications by study area is shown in Figure 2.4. For the most part, the distribution of qualifications is relatively uniform. However, a few figures stand out. Some 95 percent of Teacher Training students entered their programme with a Leaving Certificate, this is closely followed by 92 percent of Pharmacy students. The highest proportion of students without a Leaving Certificate (or equivalent) is found in Medicine and Dental Studies with 18 percent of students. Medicine and Dental Studies also have the highest proportions of students with entry qualifications obtained outside of Ireland. This suggests that certain highly selective or internationally mobile fields draw from a more diverse qualification base.

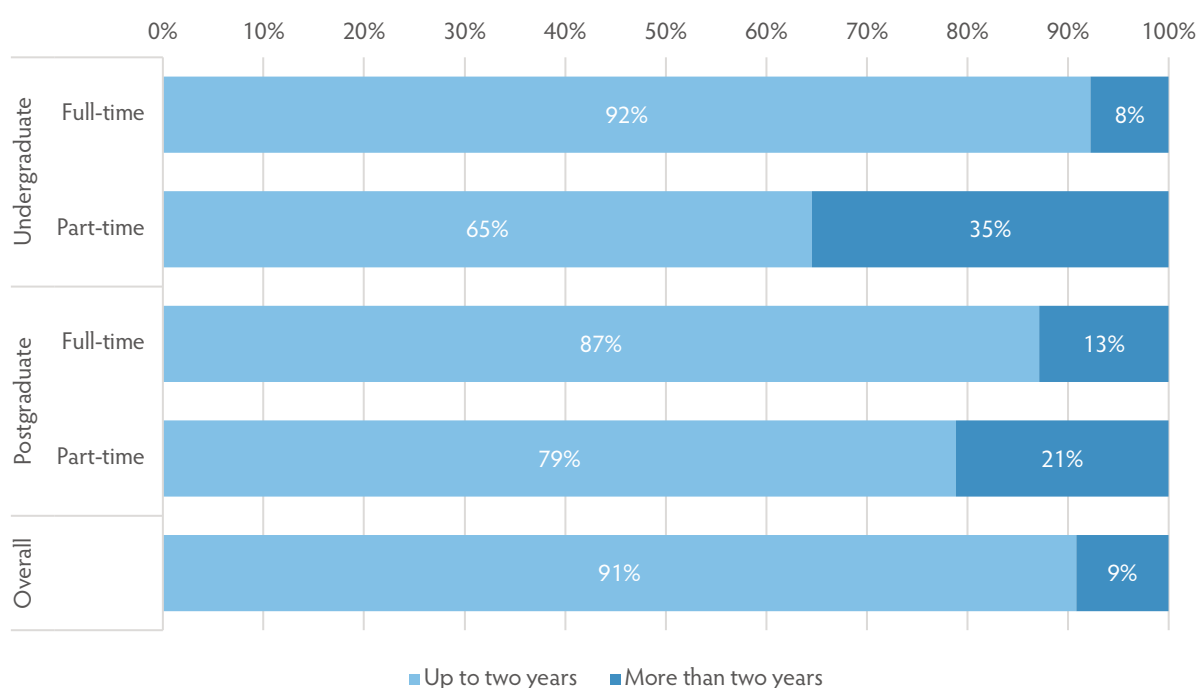
Figure 2.4: Entry qualifications by main study area [N=14,312].



2.2 Nature of Transition to Higher Education

Direct transition students are defined as those students who entered higher education for the first time within two years after graduating from school. In contrast, later transition students are defined as students who entered higher education for the first time more than two years after leaving the school system. Figure 2.5 presents the length of time between finishing school and entering higher education across student status.

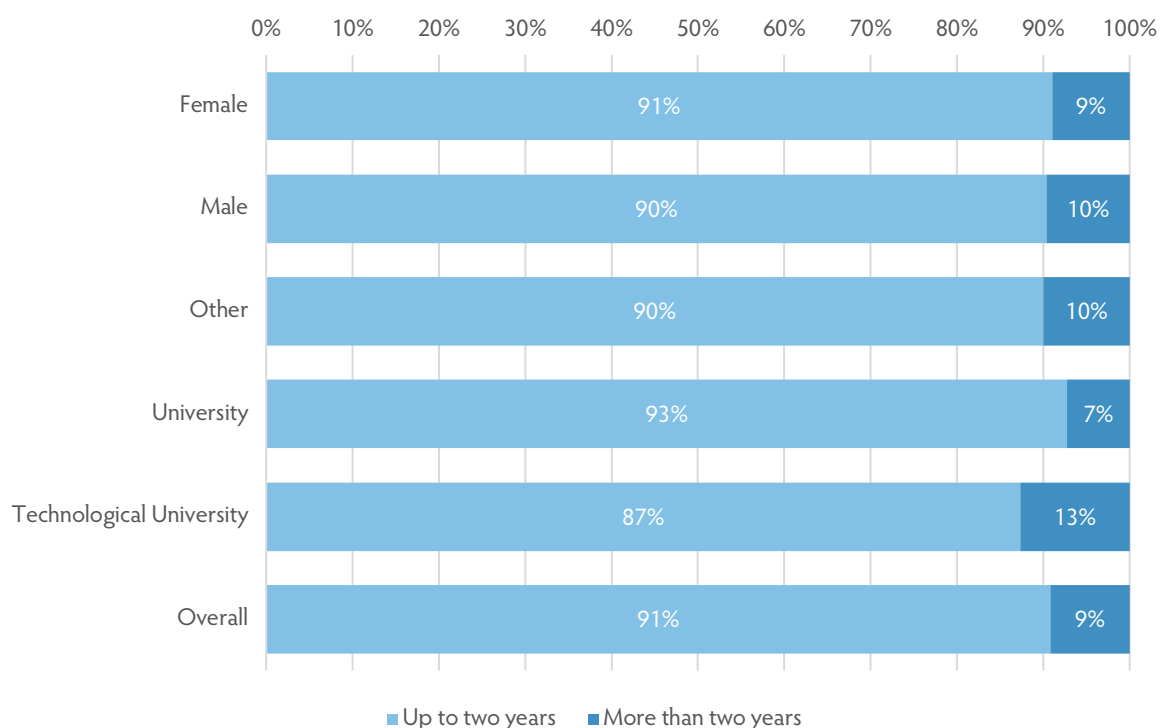
Figure 2.5: Length of time between school and higher education by formal status [N=14,078].



For full-time undergraduates and postgraduates, at least 87 percent of each group entered higher education within two years of finishing school. In contrast, for part-time postgraduates 79 percent entered higher education within two years of leaving school, but only 65 percent of part-time undergraduates entered within two years, while around 35 percent delayed entry for longer. This marks part-time undergraduate education as the main site of later transition into higher education.

Figure 2.6 presents the length of time between finishing school and entering higher education across gender and higher educational institution type.

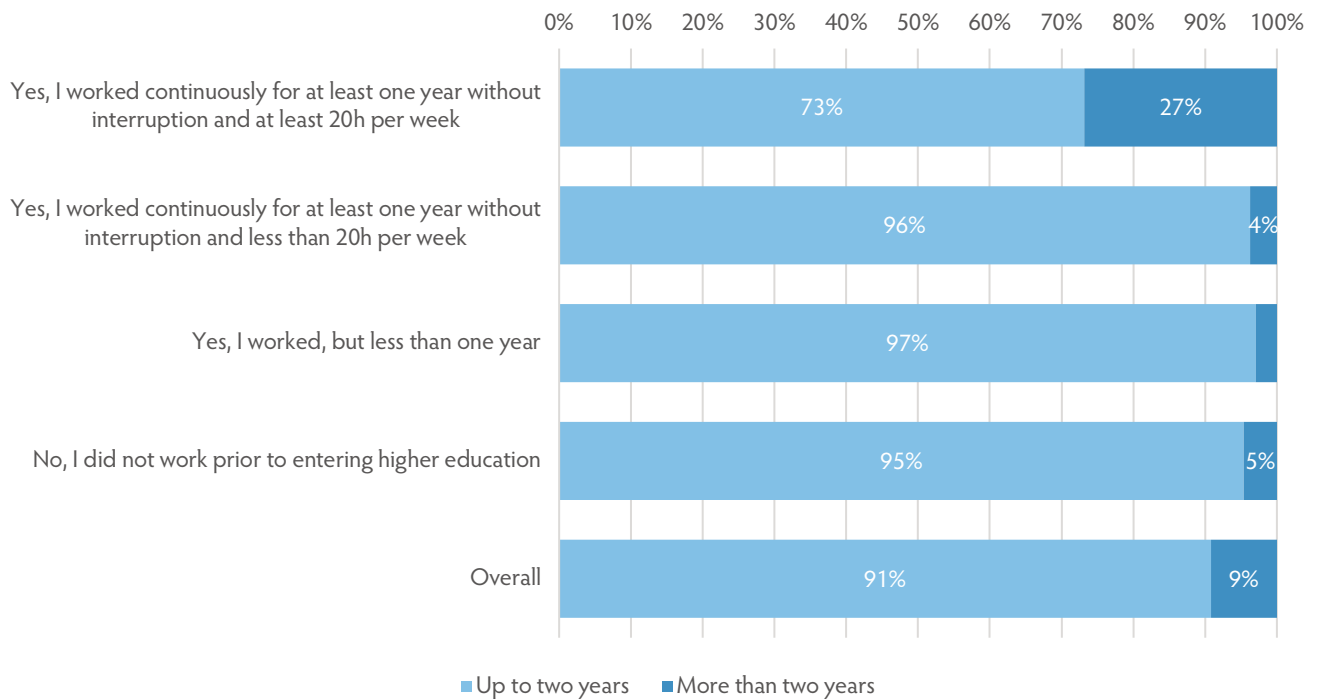
Figure 2.6: Length of time between school and higher education by gender and type of HEI [N=14,078].



Again, as would be expected there does not appear to be much of a substantial gender difference, as the proportions for male and female students are relatively similar. However, there does appear to be a difference across type of higher education institution. Some 93 percent of students at universities enter within two years of finishing school. In contrast, for Technological Universities this figure is 87 percent. Furthermore, 13 percent of students at Technological Universities delay entry for more than two years, compared against only seven percent for students at universities.

Figure 2.7 presents the relationship between pre-higher education employment and subsequent entry into higher education.

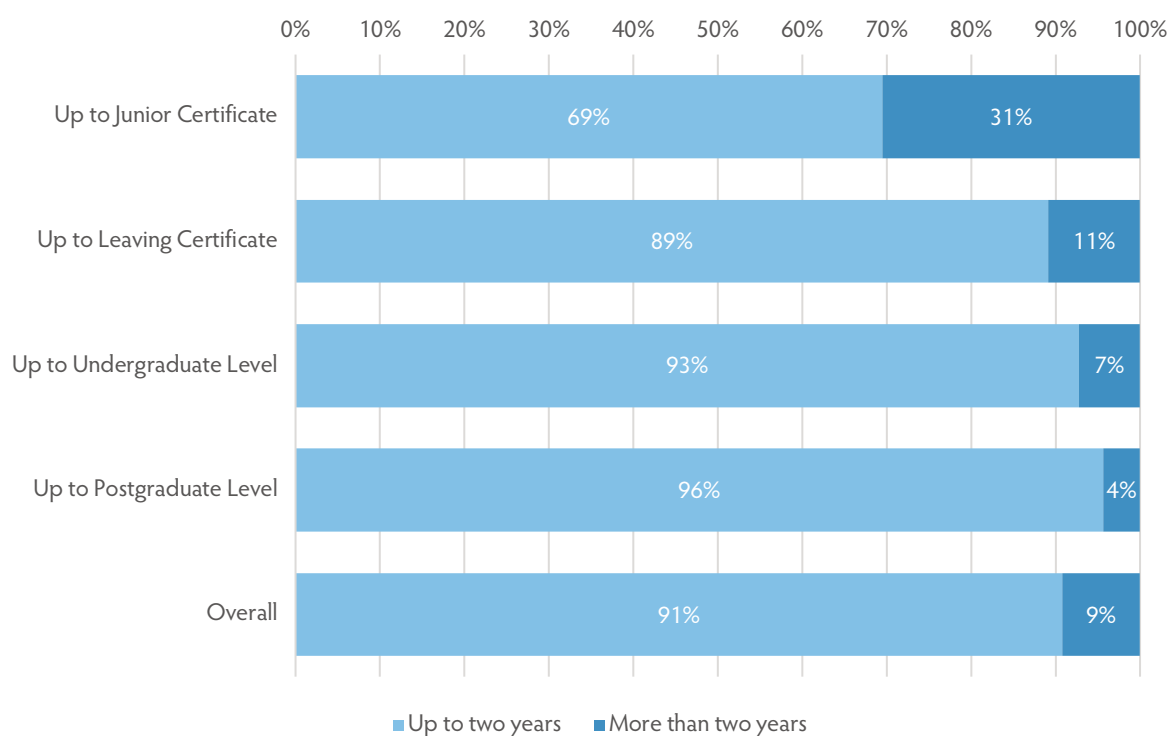
Figure 2.7: Length of time between school and higher education by employment [N=14,060].



As this chart shows, there appears to be a relationship between employment and later entry. For example, for students who did not work before entering higher education, 95 percent entered higher education within two years of finishing school and five percent delayed more than two years. In contrast, for students who worked continuously for at least a year and at least twenty hours a week, only 73 percent entered higher education within two years of finishing school and 27 percent delayed more than two years.

Figure 2.8 expands on the above and examines how parental education may affect entry into higher education.

Figure 2.8: Length of time between school and higher education by highest level of parental education [N=8,345].



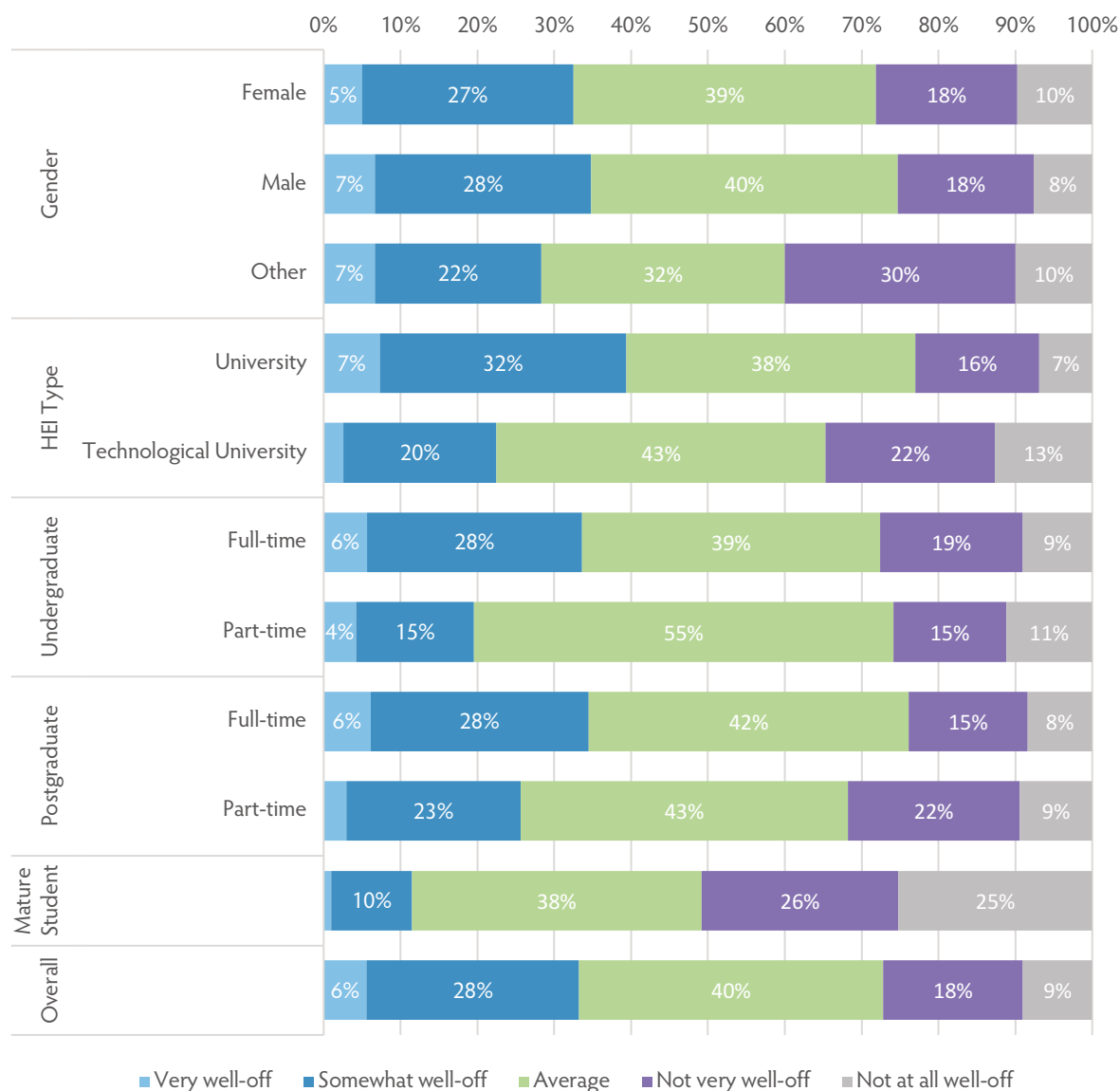
For students where the highest parental educational level was to Junior Certificate level, 31 percent of students delayed their transition to higher education for more than two years. This can be directly compared against students where the highest parental educational level is at the postgraduate degree level, and this figure is only four percent.

This chart appears to demonstrate that students from family backgrounds with higher levels of parental education are more likely to transition directly to higher education than students of families with lower levels of educational attainment. Likewise, students from family backgrounds of lower levels of parental education are more likely to delay their entry into higher education.

The effect that prior employment and level of parental education can have upon entry into higher education could potentially be explained by the intervening variable, wealth. For example, students would have less of a need to have employment to fund their studies if they were able to rely upon familial support. A similar case can be made for higher parental educational attainment, which is typically linked with higher income, and as such students with greater financial resources can draw upon these and move directly into higher education.

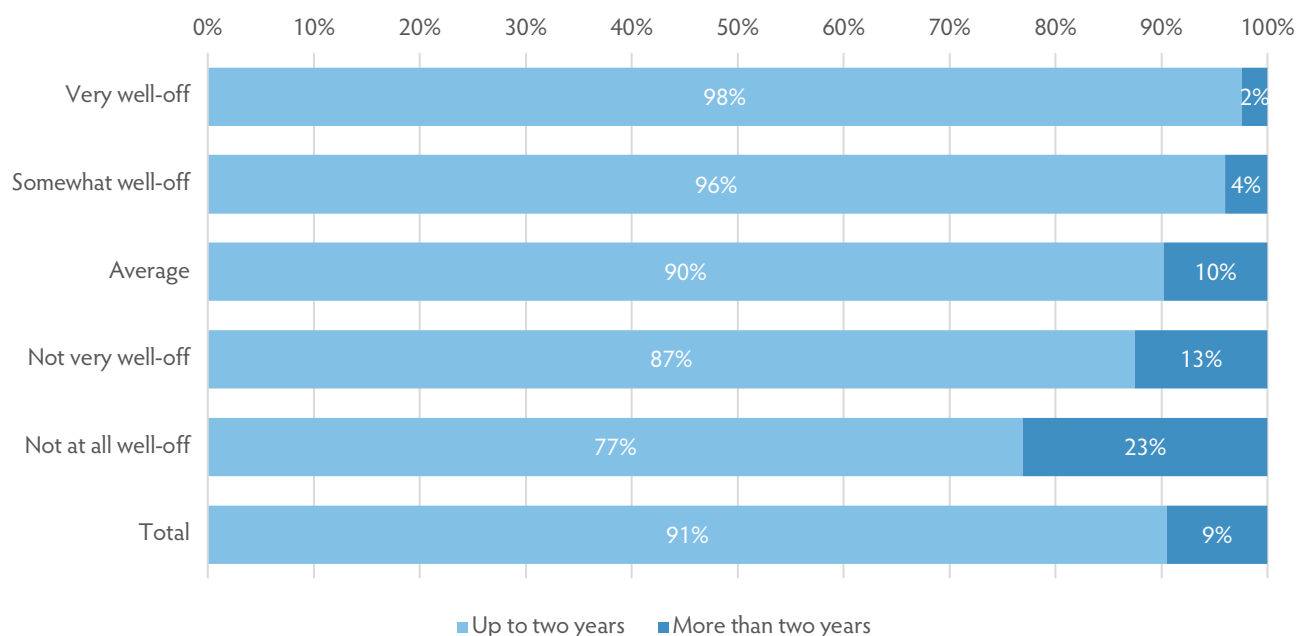
The survey asked how well-off financially students thought their parents were compared to other families, and Figure 2.9 presents a breakdown of this question across a number of key characteristics.

Figure 2.9: Responses to the question "How well-off financially do you think your parents (or guardians) are compared with other families?" across key characteristics [N=9,662].



This chart presents a remarkably uniform distribution of answers, with some minor variation between Universities and Technological Universities, and between mature students and the overall student population, and between full-time and part-time undergraduates. However, Figure 2.10 presents the results of this question when referenced with entry into higher education and shows that higher levels of parental wealth correspond with direct entry into higher education, whereas lower levels of parental wealth correspond with a higher level of later entry into higher education. The relationship between student income and familial support is further explored in Chapter 4.

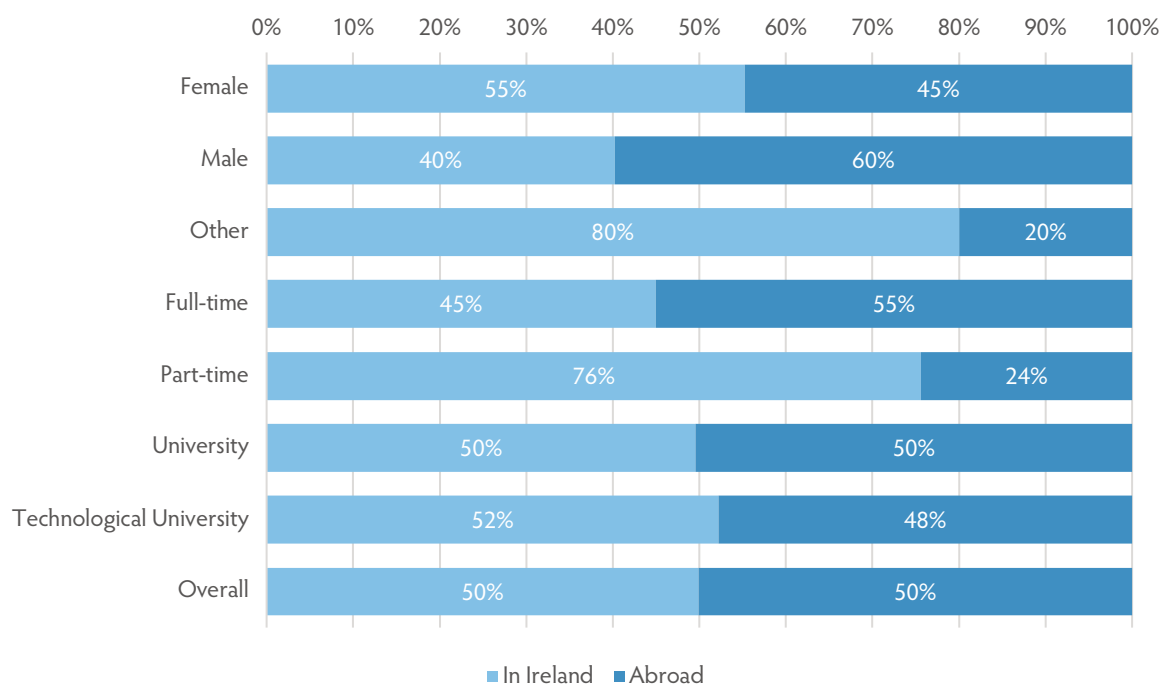
Figure 2.10: The relationship between parental wealth and entry into higher education [N=9,617].



2.3 Entry Profile of Masters' Students

Figure 2.11 presents where Masters' students completed their undergraduate programme by gender, formal status and higher education institution type. At the aggregate level, approximately 50 percent completed their undergraduate degree in Ireland, and 50 percent of students completed their undergraduate degree outside of Ireland. This reinforces themes already discussed about the international nature of postgraduate study in Ireland.

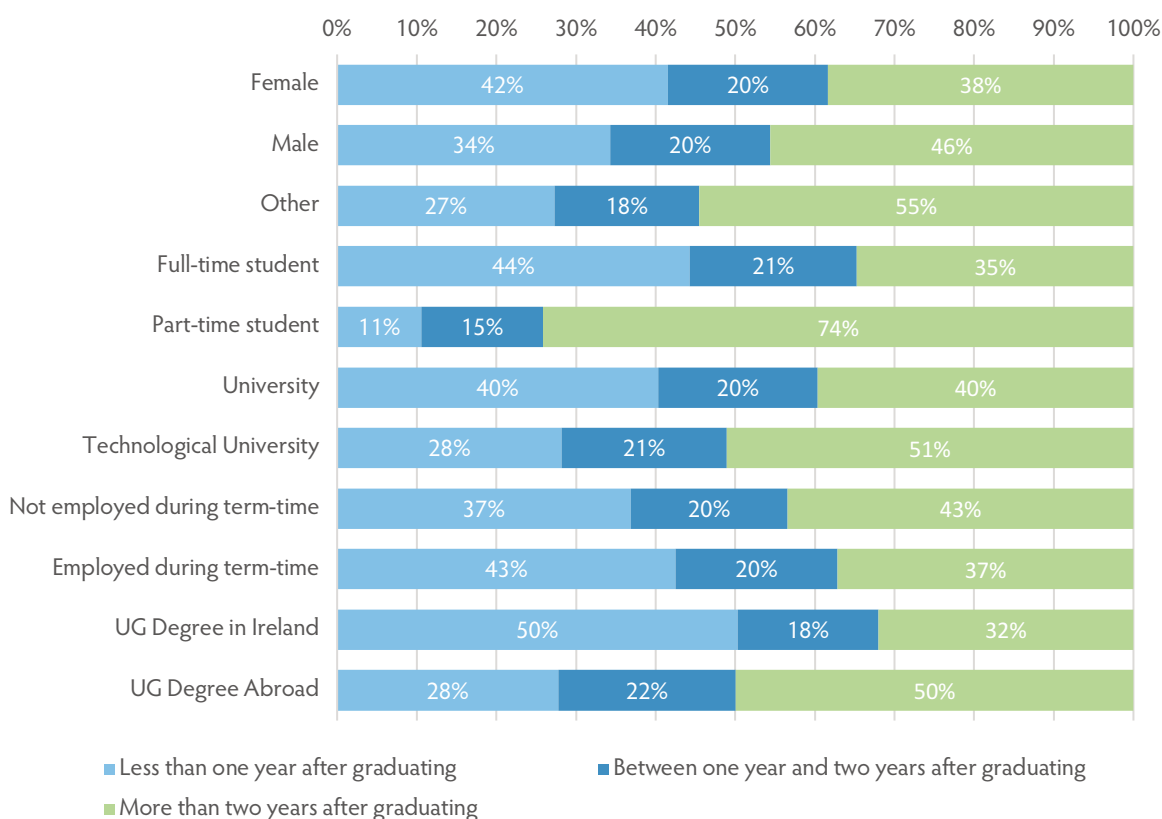
Figure 2.11: "In which country did you finish your degree leading to your current Masters programme?" [N=1,939, Postgraduates Only].



When we look at the distribution by formal status some differences emerge. For full-time postgraduates, 55 percent have completed their undergraduate degree abroad, and 45 percent completed it in Ireland. However, for part-time students only 24 percent have completed their undergraduate degree outside of Ireland and 76 percent completed their undergraduate degree in Ireland.

The final chart in this chapter, Figure 2.12, shows the length of time between Masters' students finishing their undergraduate programme and beginning their postgraduate study across a number of key characteristics. The first thing of note is female students appear to move into postgraduate study more quickly than male students as 42 percent do this within one year of graduating, compared to 34 percent of male students.

Figure 2.12: Length of time between undergraduate and postgraduate study by key student characteristics [N=1,823; Postgraduates Only].



Across formal status, full-time students appear to be more likely to move directly from undergraduate to postgraduate study as 44 percent do this within one year of graduating. Part-time students appear to take more time, as the chart shows, 74 percent have waited more than two years between their undergraduate (or other programme) and current postgraduate programme.

Finally, for students who completed their undergraduate degree in Ireland, it appears that 50 percent move directly into postgraduate study whereas 32 percent hold off entering for at least two years. In contrast, only 28 percent of master's students who completed their undergraduate degree outside of Ireland move into postgraduate study within a year. Instead 50 percent delay entry into postgraduate study for at least two years.

This chapter has shown that the traditional school-to-higher-education route remains dominant, but it coexists with a substantial minority of more varied pathways. Mature students, part-time undergraduates and students with stronger prior labour-market attachment are much more likely to have later entry or non-standard qualifications. Family background also matters: both parental education and perceived parental wealth are associated with faster transition into higher education. At postgraduate level, full-time Masters study stands out as especially international, while part-time Masters study is more likely to be taken up after a longer gap.

Having established how students enter higher education, the next chapter turns to their experiences once they arrive, and examines students' satisfaction with higher education, their relationship with teaching staff, and their confidence in post-study employment.

Chapter 3: **Course Experience**

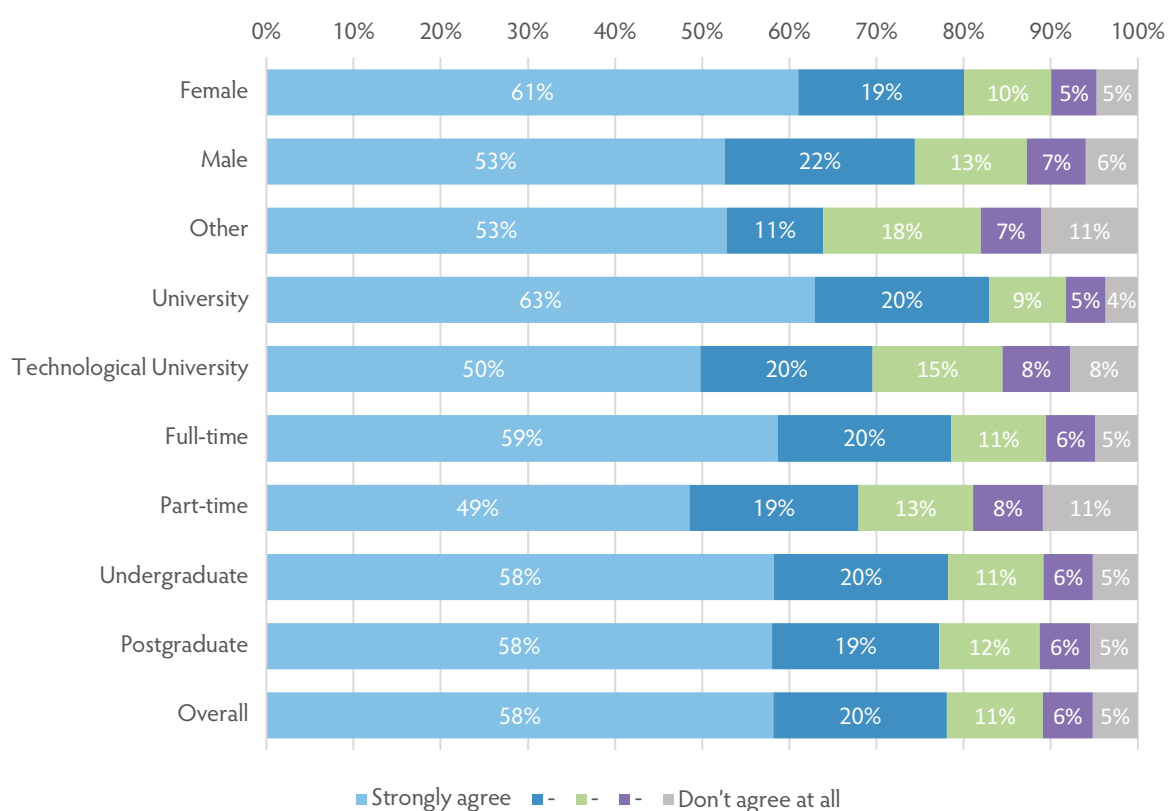


The last two chapters have presented an overview of the socio-demographic profile of the student population and have provided details about students' entry into higher education. This chapter moves on to how students feel about their experiences within higher education and their level of satisfaction with the courses they are taking. This chapter is structured in the following way. Section 3.1 looks at students' satisfaction with their general higher education experience. Section 3.2 examines students' specific experiences of higher education, with regard to the teaching staff in particular. Finally, Section 3.3 examines the degree to which students feel they will get a job upon entering the labour market after finishing higher education, and their attitudes towards different employment sectors.

3.1 Satisfaction with General Aspects of Higher Education

To begin, the survey asked the degree to which students agreed with several statements about their experiences in higher education. Figure 3.1 presents responses to the statement "It was always clear I would study in higher education" across key characteristics.

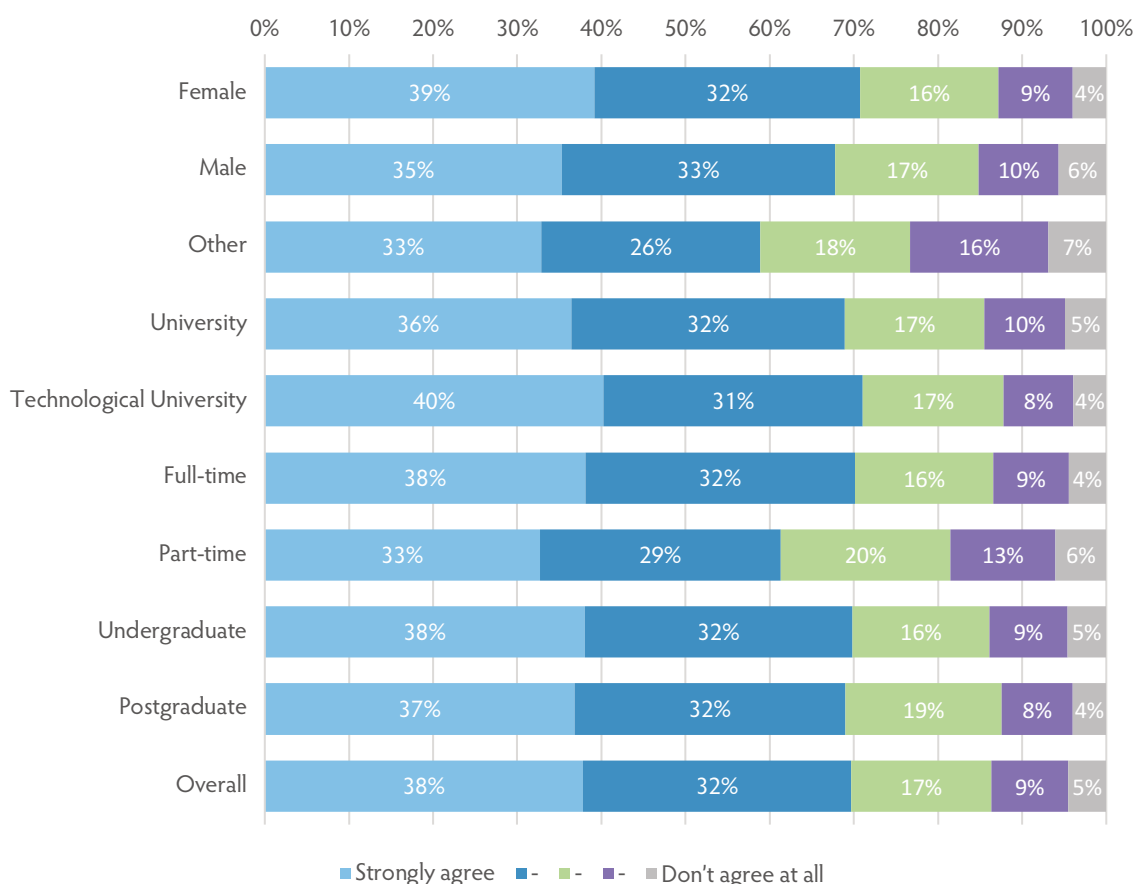
Figure 3.1: "It was always clear I would study in higher education one day" [N=13,322].



At the aggregate level, 78 percent of students either agree or strongly agree with this statement. The greatest level of support is found for this statement amongst University (83 percent) and female students (80 percent). Somewhat lower levels of support are found among students in Technological Universities/Institutes of Technology and part-time students. On the whole, this chart indicates that higher education is not seen as unobtainable to the vast majority of students.

When students were asked if they were able to discuss subject-related questions with other students, the vast majority of students agreed with this statement and the distribution was relatively uniform across key characteristics. However, lower levels of agreement were evident for part-time students where only 62 percent agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, which is understandable in that by virtue of them being part-time, spend less time on campus which may reduce the likelihood of being able to get to know other fellow students. The distribution of responses to this statement are shown in Figure 3.2.

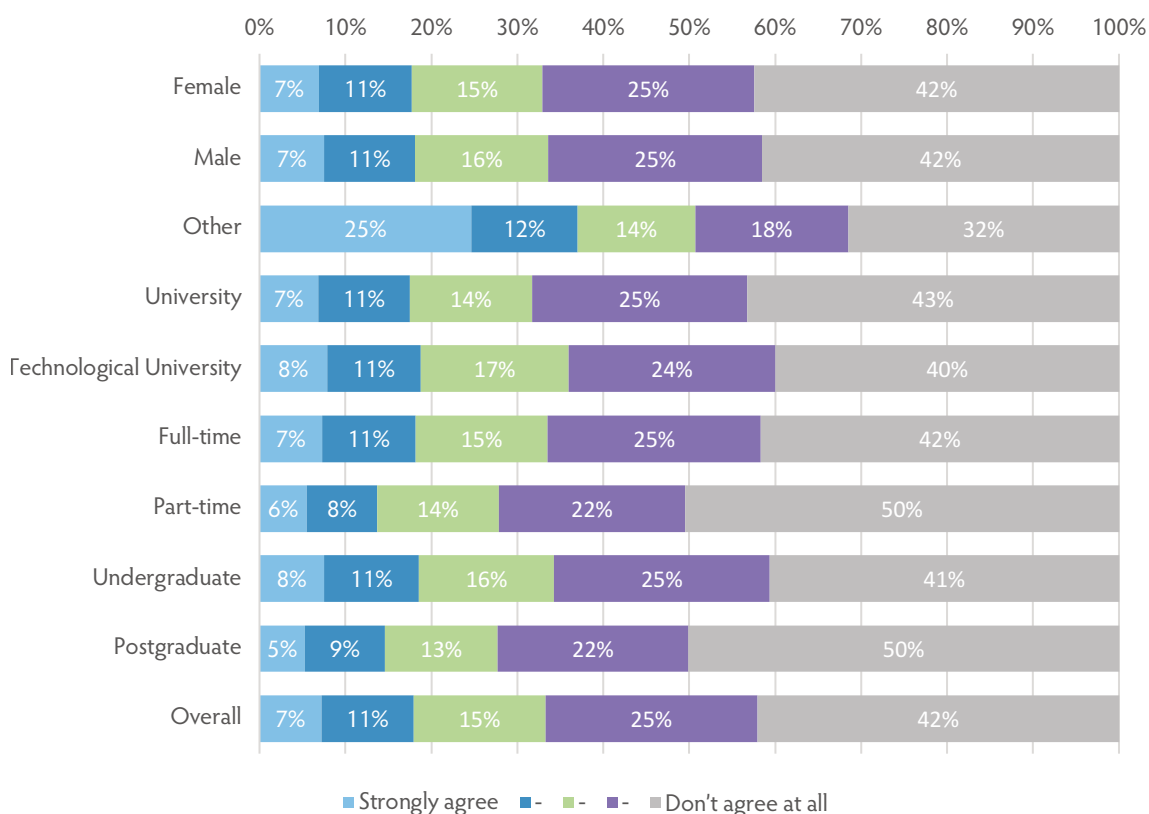
Figure 3.2: "I know a lot of fellow students with whom I can discuss subject-related questions" [N=13,323].



A feeling of 'belonging' with higher education could be seen as a consequence of feeling comfortable within your study programme and being able to share your experiences with other students, so that individual students do not feel isolated from their classmates. This appears to be supported by the results shown in Figure 3.3. Respondents in this chart were asked the degree to which they agreed with the statement "I often have the feeling I do not really belong in higher education". As is

shown in this chart, at the aggregate level 67 percent of students disagree or strongly disagree with this statement. The pattern is largely uniform across the key characteristics, though there are higher levels of agreement for students who have other gender identities.

Figure 3.3: "I often have the feeling that I don't really belong in higher education" [N=13,323].



Taken together Figures 3.1 to 3.3 show that higher education in Ireland appears to be a welcoming environment in which to study, as most students appear to be comfortable and do not feel out of place. All of which paints a broadly positive portrait of Irish higher education.

Figure 3.4 shows results pertaining to students' own programme rather than higher education as a whole and their responses to the statement "I would recommend my programme to other students". At the aggregate level, and consistently across key characteristics, most students agree or strongly agree with this statement.

Figure 3.4: "I would recommend my current (main) study programme" [N=13,320].

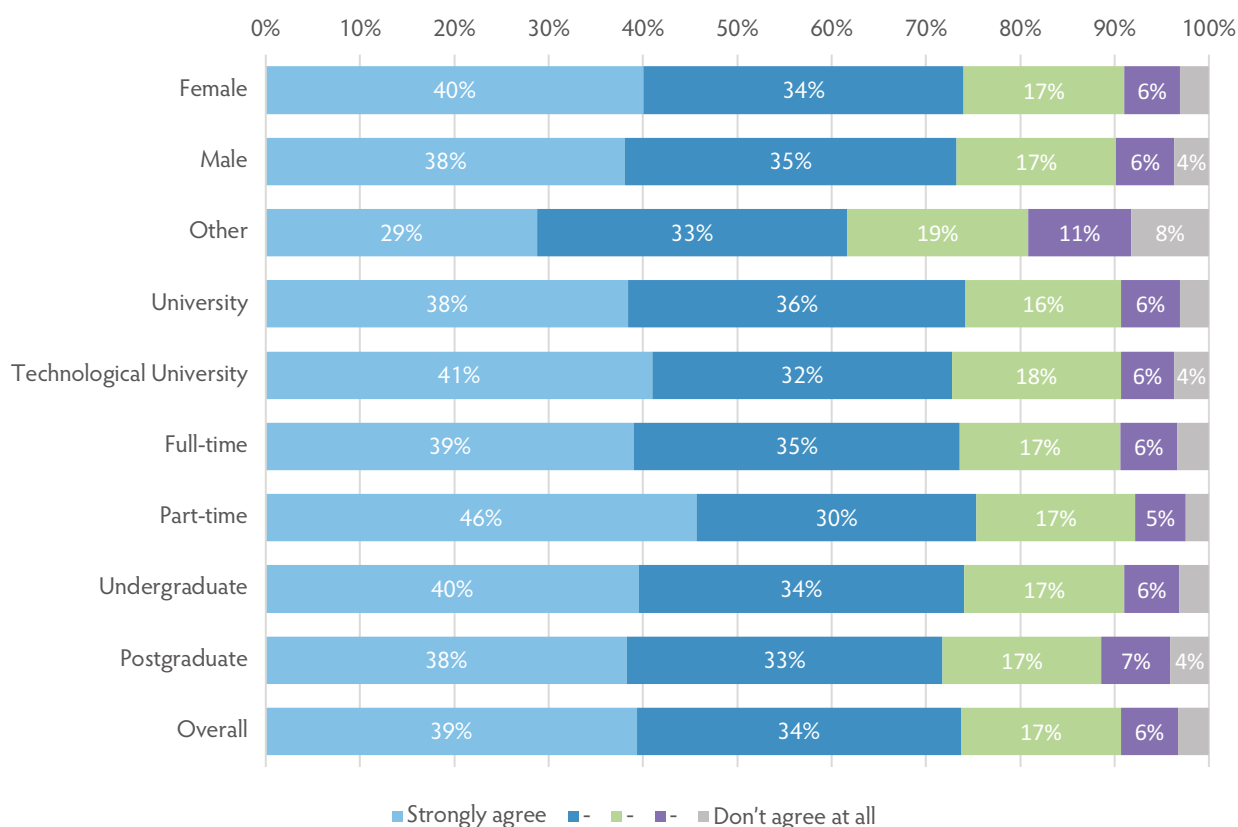
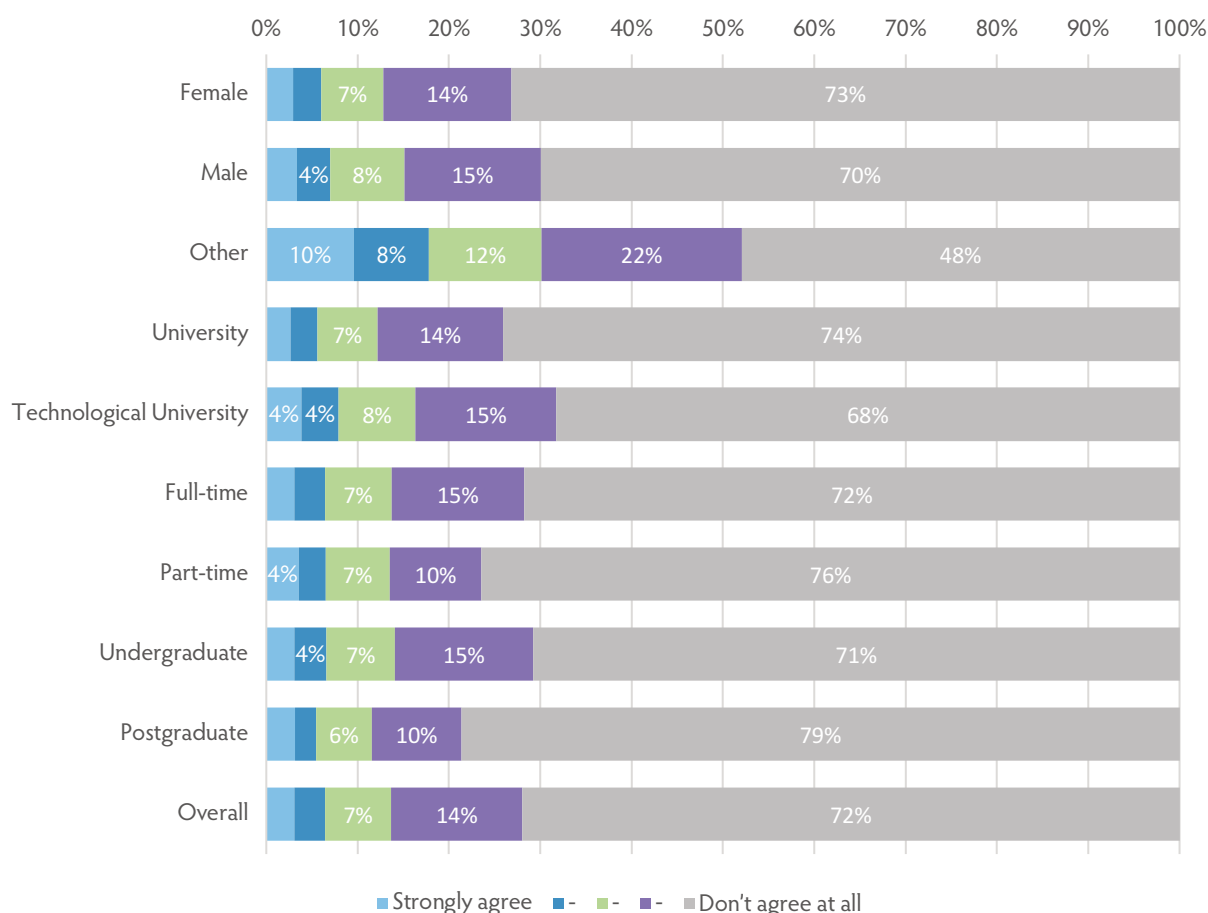


Figure 3.5 presents responses to the statements "I am seriously thinking of completely abandoning my higher education" across key characteristics. In this chart, the vast majority of students appear to not be thinking of dropping out of higher education. However, students with other gender identities appear to be more likely to be thinking of leaving their higher education studies, which when combined with Figure 3.3 presents a worrying picture for this small cohort of students.

Outside of this group, when broken down across key characteristics the results are remarkably uniform. As a result, one could make a case that although students experience a number of difficulties in higher education, for most these difficulties do not appear to significantly affect students' overall level of engagement with higher education, as most students appear to not seriously contemplate changing their study programme or leaving higher education altogether.

Figure 3.5: "I am seriously thinking of completely abandoning my higher education studies" [N=13,338].

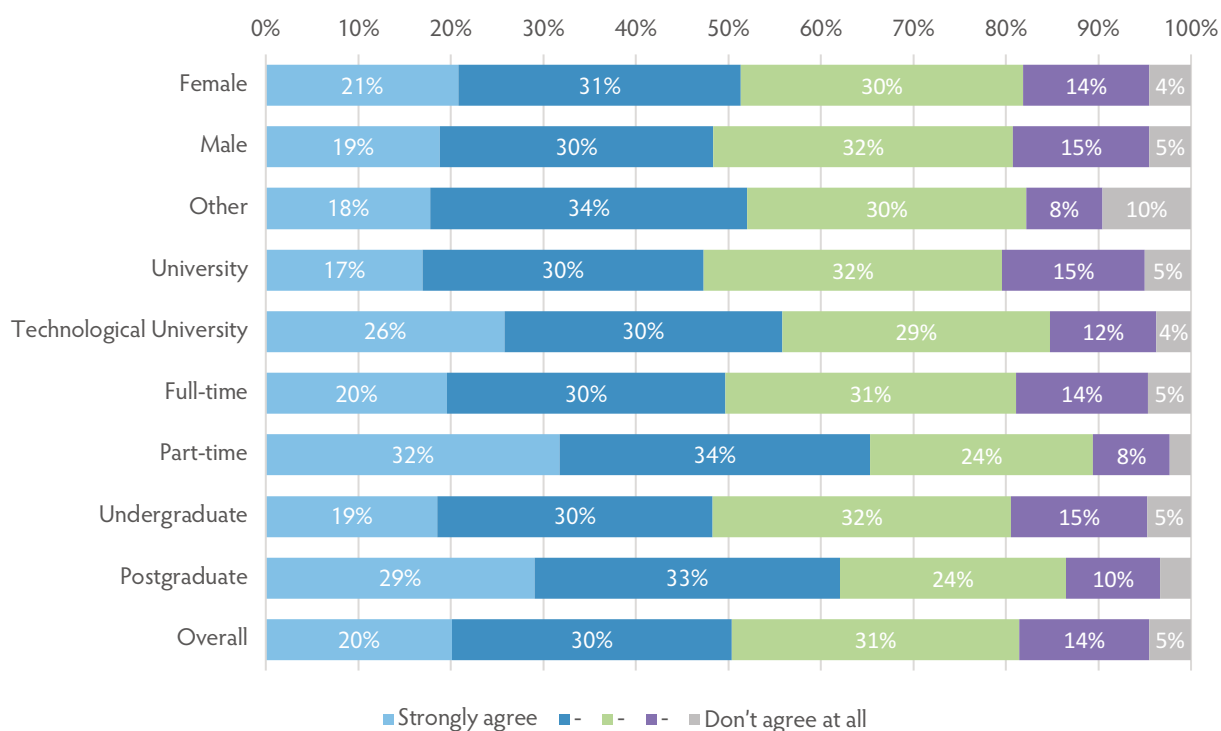


3.2 Satisfaction with Specific Aspects of Higher Education

The sets of statements discussed in Section 3.1 are intended to capture the feelings of students about their experiences in higher level education in general; this section provides an overview of the specific experiences' students have on their respective courses through their responses to a set of statements.

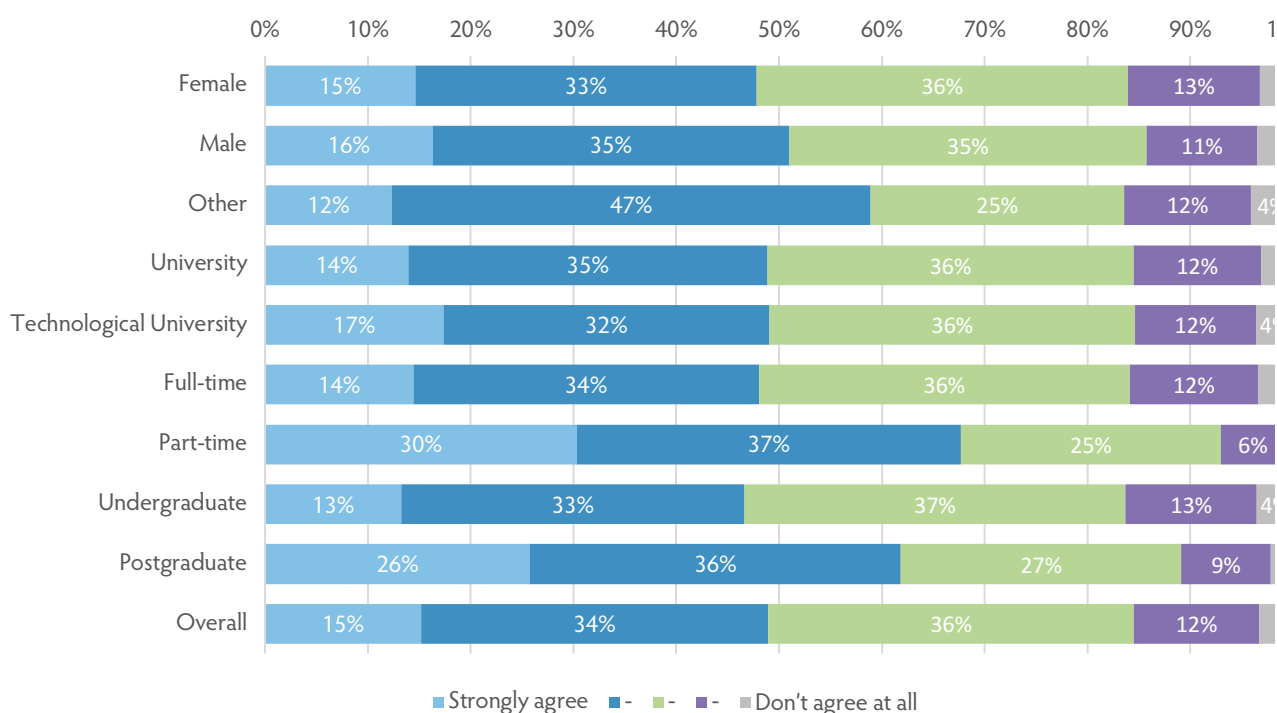
When students were asked for their level of agreement with the statement "The teaching staff motivate me to do my best work" as shown in Figure 3.6, 50 percent of students agree or strongly agree that teaching staff motivate them to do their best work, 31 percent are neutral, and 19 percent disagree or strongly disagree. However, the distribution across gender is rather uniform. However, for the other key characteristics, higher levels of agreement are found for students in Technological Universities/Institutes of Technology, part-time students, and for postgraduate students.

Figure 3.6: "The teaching staff motivate me to do my best work" [N=13,331].



A similar pattern to that seen in Figures 3.6 is evident when students were asked their level of agreement with the statement "The teaching staff are extremely good at explaining things". This is shown in Figure 3.7.

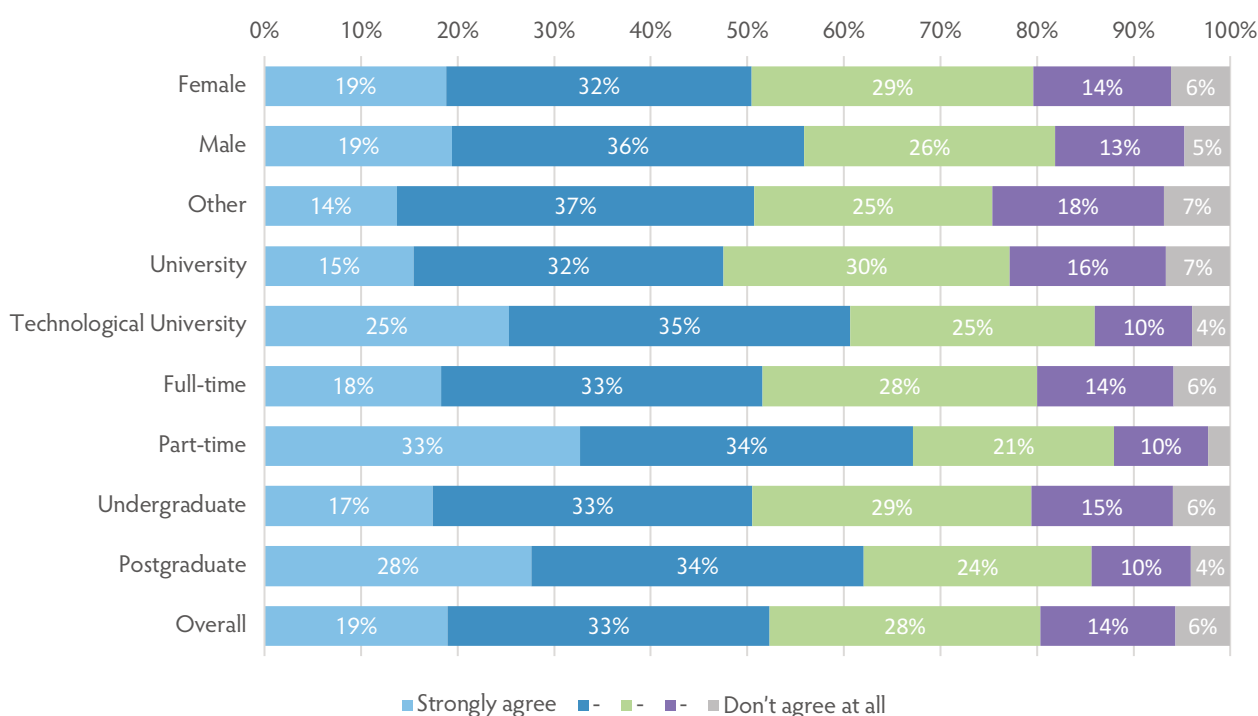
Figure 3.7: "The teaching staff are extremely good at explaining things" [N=13,318].



As one can see from Figure 3.8 when asked about the level of agreement students have with the statement “the teaching staff normally give me helpful feedback on how I am going”, the majority of students at the aggregate level (52 percent) agree or strongly agree with this statement, 28 percent are neutral, and 20 percent disagree or strongly disagree. There is also some interesting variation across key characteristics similar to that seen in the two figures above.

Gender appears to have little influence on evaluating this statement, as male, female, and other students demonstrate similar patterns at the aggregate level. In contrast, students in Universities, studying full-time, or at the undergraduate level are less likely to express high levels of agreement than their counterparts in Technological Universities/Institutes of Technology, part-time, or postgraduate level.

Figure 3.8: “The teaching staff normally give me helpful feedback on how I am going” [N=13,344].



3.3 Post-Education Employment

While some students may be motivated to undertake higher level education purely for the sake of education, they are most likely a minority. Rather, it is unlikely that most students would sign-up for the years of maintained effort that one must commit to when undertaking a course at a higher-level institution without there being some tangible benefits at its conclusion. As such, greater employability is often seen as a crucial reason for undertaking higher level education and the set of questions below asked students to rate their personal chances of “obtaining an adequate job on the labour market after graduating from your current study programme”.

Instead of presenting these results across key characteristics as done in the rest of this chapter, the charts below show students' evaluations of their likelihood of getting a job by field of study. Presumably, certain courses are chosen by students to qualify for specific Irish post-educational occupations for example, students taking a Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching are presumably looking to enter teaching in Ireland. Other courses lend themselves to providing skills which do not depend on

location, for example, a degree in Statistics should be of equal value in Ireland and elsewhere, as the underlying theoretical basis is independent of the context. Although, the job market itself may be different at international and national level for different fields of study.

Figure 3.9 shows students' evaluation of the likelihood of getting a job in the Irish labour market, and on the whole, these are positive. At the aggregate level, 60 percent of students feel well or very well prepared to enter the Irish labour market. The highest levels of 86 percent and 79 percent are for Pharmacy, and Medicine, Dental Studies respectively. Furthermore, the percentage of students who feel that their chances of obtaining a job in the national job market are poor or very poor is relatively low at only 16 percent of the total student population. However, this rises to 36 percent for Arts students and Psychology students.

Figure 3.9: "How do you rate your personal chances of obtaining an adequate job on the national labour market after graduating from your current study programme?" [N=11,518].

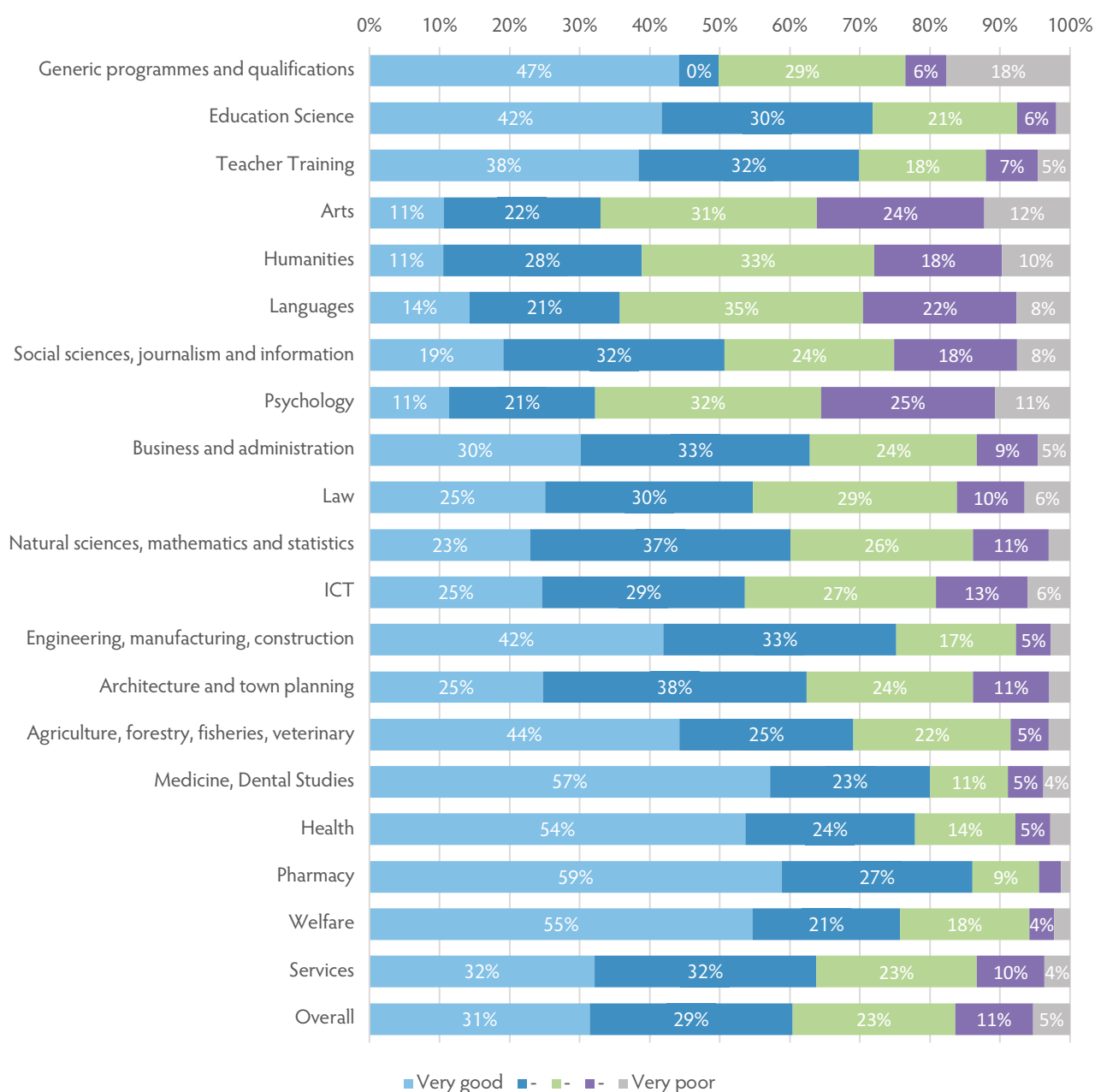
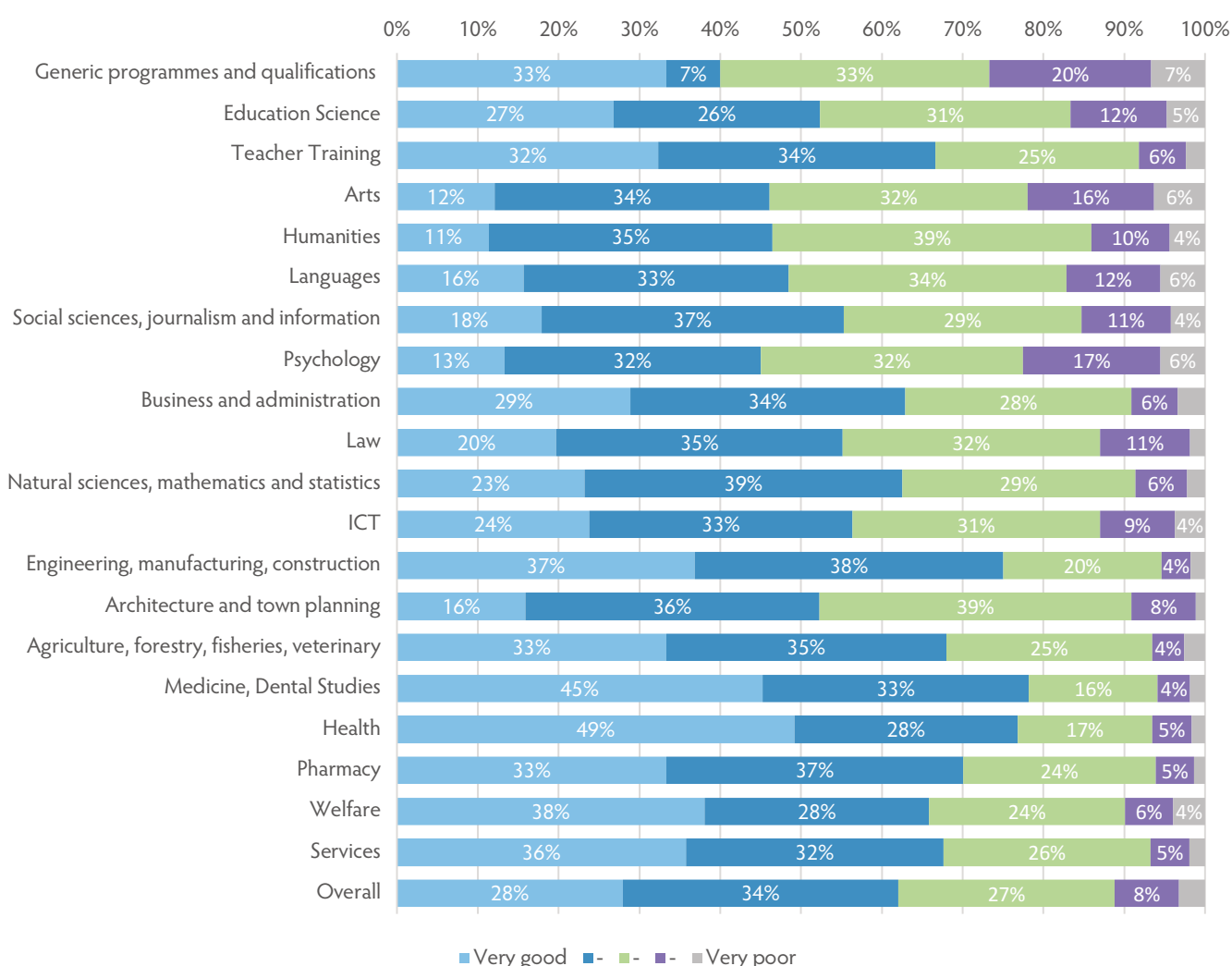


Figure 3.10 presents a similar picture in that more students feel that their chances of getting a job in the international labour market are good or very good than poor or very poor. At the aggregate level 62 percent of students feel that their chances are good or very good. The highest levels of 78 percent are for Medicine, Dental Studies students. Furthermore, the percentage of students who feel that they have a poor chance of obtaining a job in the international labour market is still relatively low at only 11 percent of the total student population. However, this rises to 27 percent for student on generic programmes, and 23 percent for Psychology students. What is striking in these charts is that for a large proportion of Arts and Psychology students feel that their chances of getting a job are poor in both the national and international labour markets.

Figure 3.10: "How do you rate your personal chances of obtaining an adequate job on the international labour market after graduating from your current study programme?" [N=11,411].



However, other interesting variation lies in the relative evaluations of students' likelihood of obtaining a job between the Irish and International labour markets. As such, the final chart in this chapter (Figure 3.11) presents the differences between students feeling they have a good or very good chance of obtaining a job in each labour market across field of study.

Figure 3.11: Relative evaluations by field of study of likelihood of getting a job post-graduation.

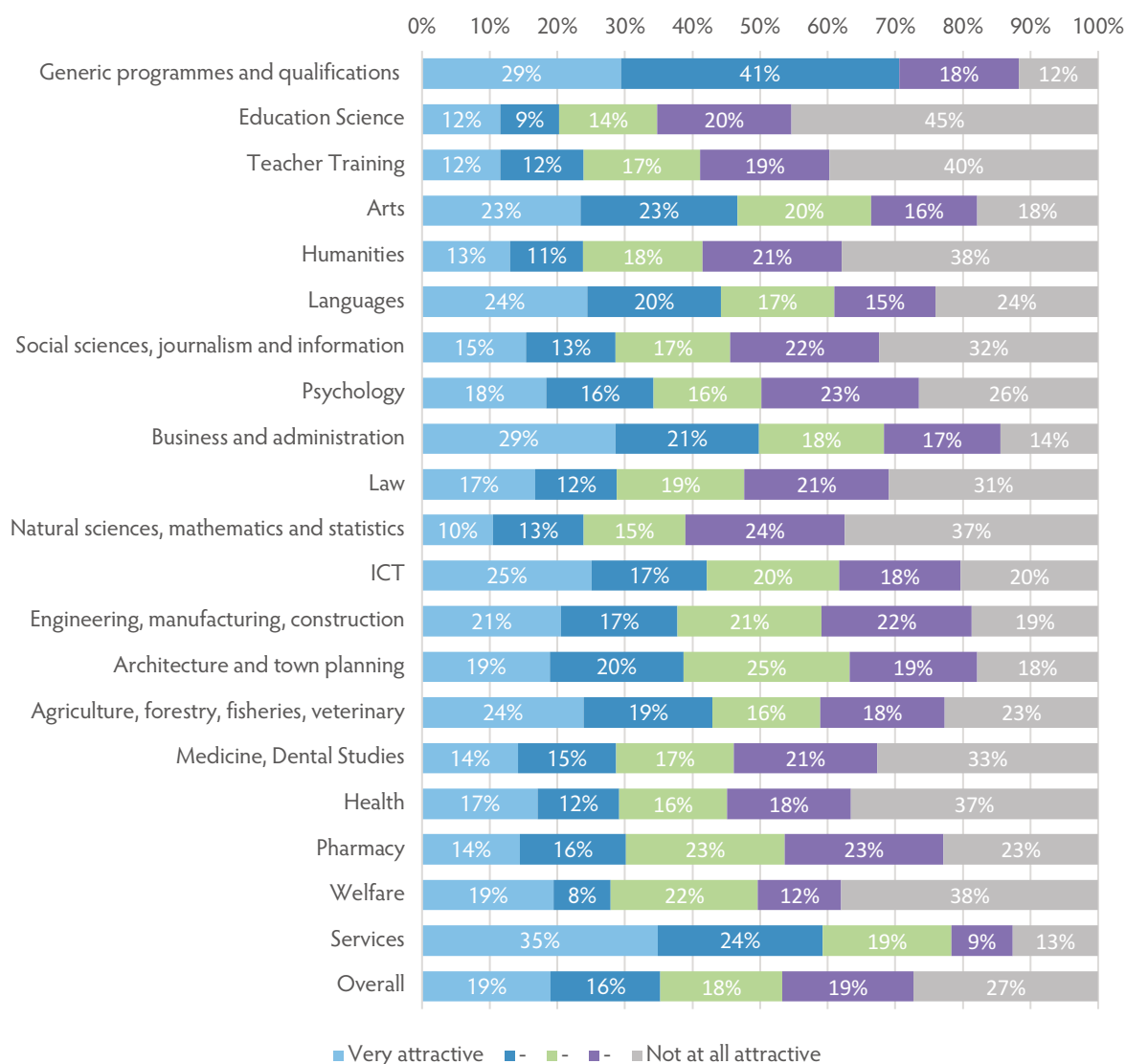


These differences are presented in rank order. Fields with a positive difference show that students studying in these fields have greater confidence in getting a job in the Irish labour market than the international labour market, whereas negative differences show that students studying in these fields have greater confidence in getting a job in the international labour market than the Irish labour market.

For almost every field of study, students feel that they are more likely to get a job in Ireland than elsewhere. This is very much the case for Pharmacy students who have a 16 percent difference between each market, which may be a demonstration of the strength of the pharmaceutical sector in Ireland. As already mentioned, doing a degree in Education lends itself to teaching in Ireland, and as such we should not be too surprised that Education students feel better prepared for the national labour market than the international labour market. Conversely, students studying languages feel that they are more likely to get a job in the international labour market, perhaps because the skills they have learned are particularly suitable to employment abroad.

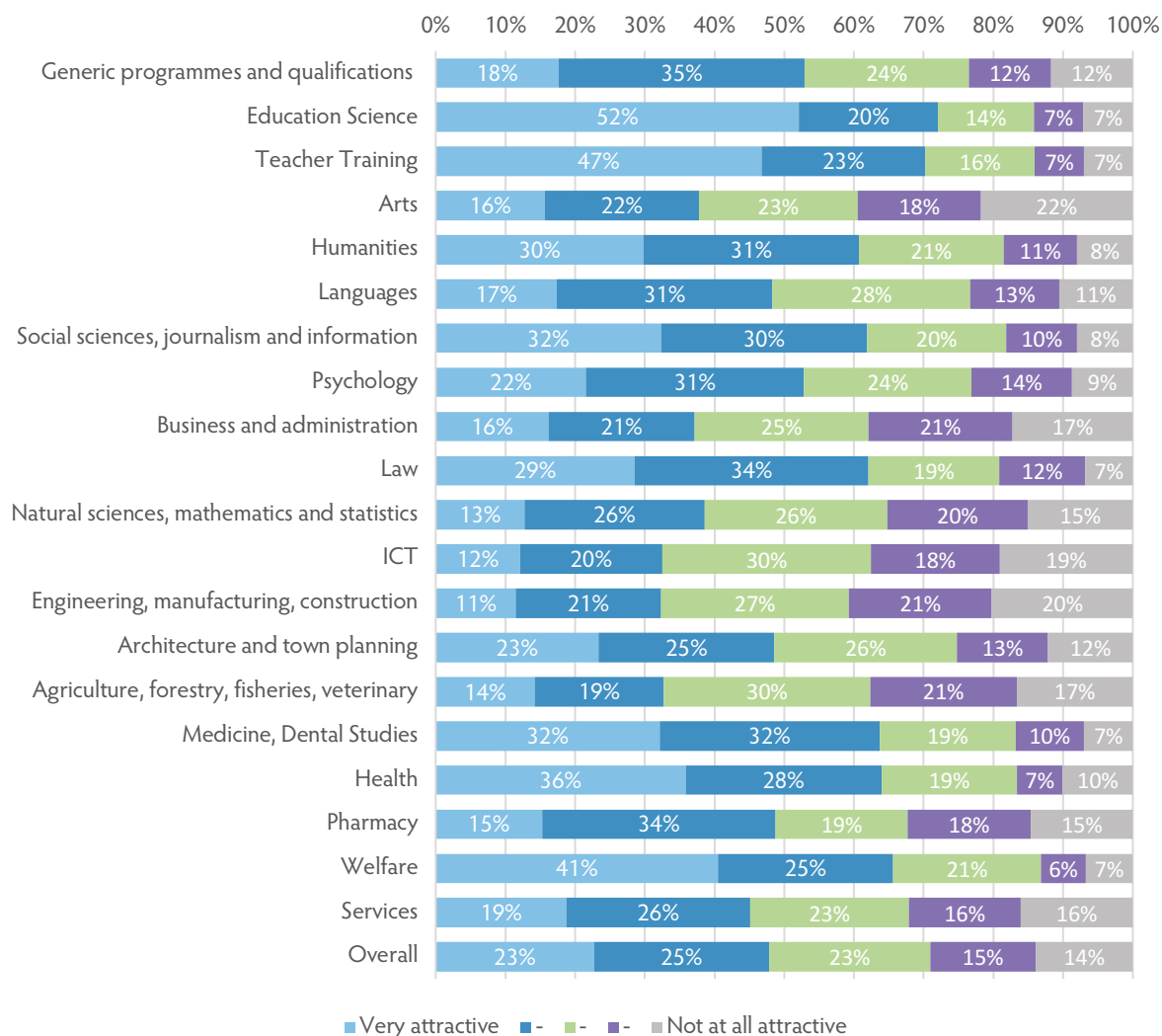
One of the topical modules in this iteration of the Eurostudent survey asked students for the relative attractiveness of different employment sectors to work in post-graduation and Figures 3.12 to 3.16 below present the results of these. Within this topical module students were first asked how attractive it would be to be self-employed, and Figure 3.12 presents the results across fields of study. For Business and Administration students this sector appears to be attractive with 50 percent recording that being self-employed would be attractive or very attractive. In contrast, students in natural science, education, medicine, health, and welfare do not appear to find this attractive at all.

Figure 3.12: Evaluations by field of study of self-employment [N=11,418].



Students were then asked how attractive it would be to work in the public sector and Figure 3.13 presents the results across fields of study. For Education/Teacher Training students, along with Social Sciences, Law, and Medicine students this sector appears attractive with at least 60 percent of students in each group reporting that working in the public sector would be attractive or very attractive. Conversely, students in Business and Engineering appear to be less likely to find this sector attractive.

Figure 3.13: Evaluations by field of study of working in the Public sector [N=11,432].



When asked how attractive it would be to work in the private sector, Business students again appear to find this sector attractive, closely followed by Pharmacy student. Figure 3.14 presents the results across fields of study. For Education/Teacher Training students this sector appears to be less appealing.

Figure 3.14: Evaluations by field of study of working in the Private sector [N=11,431].

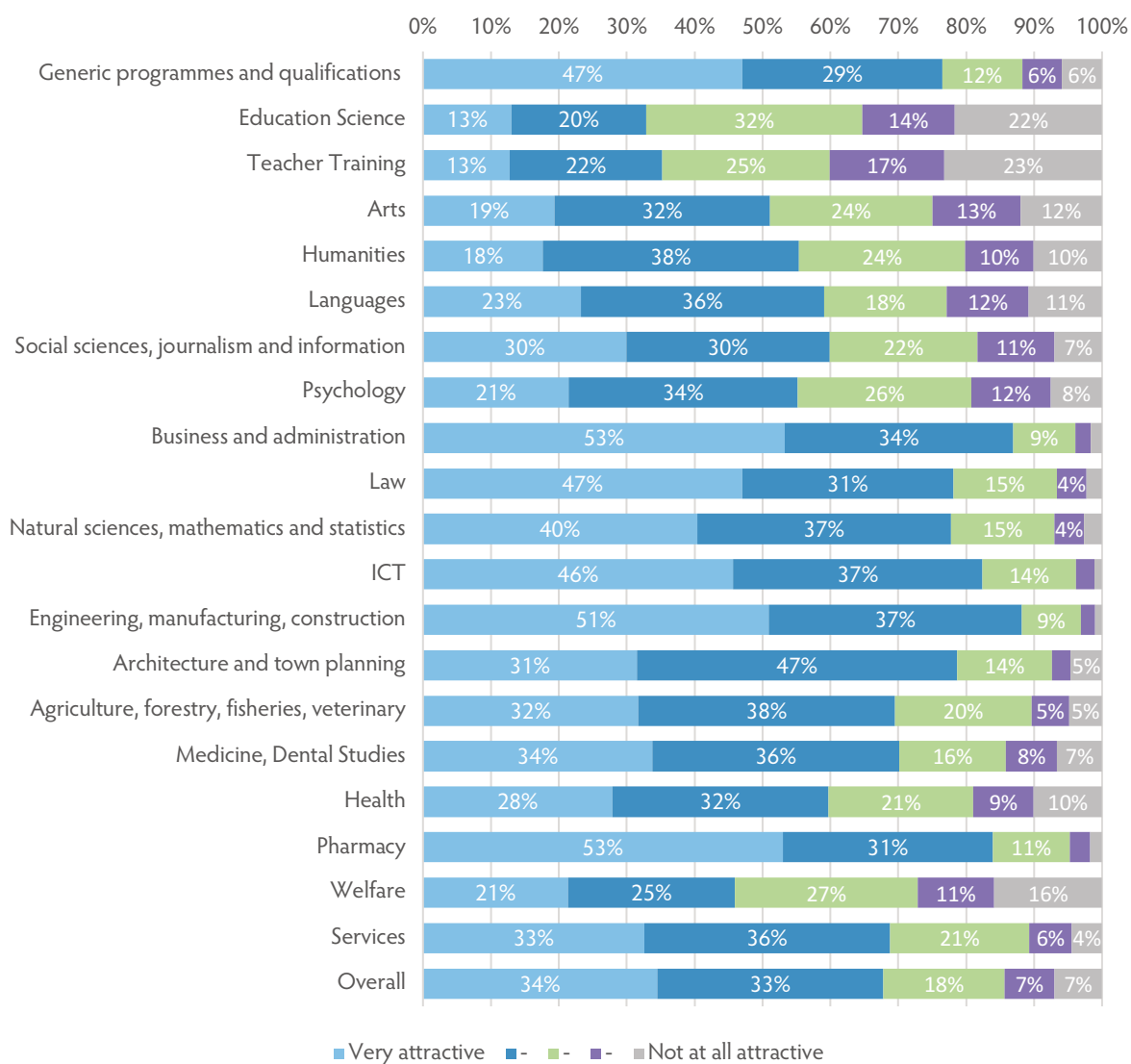
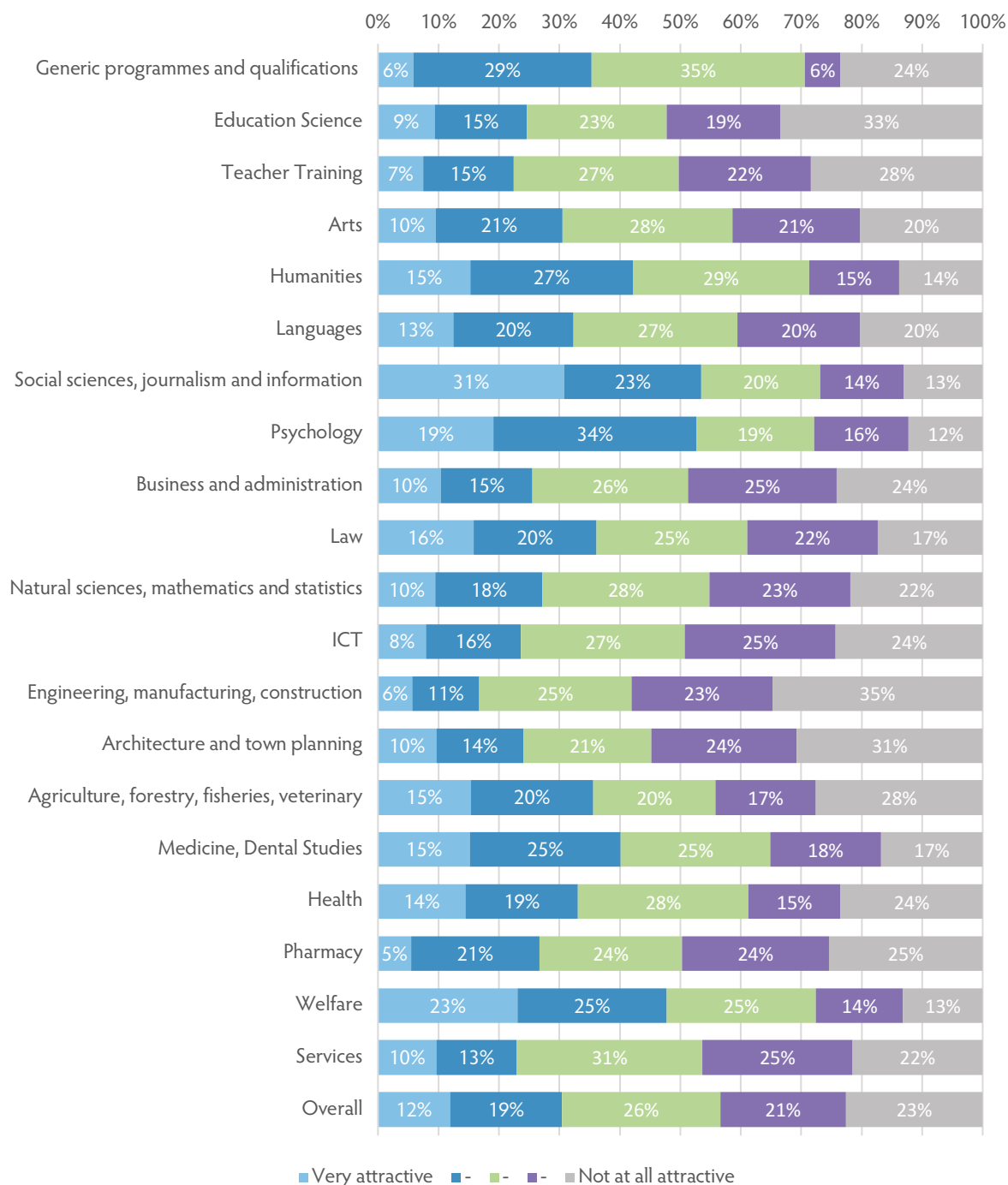


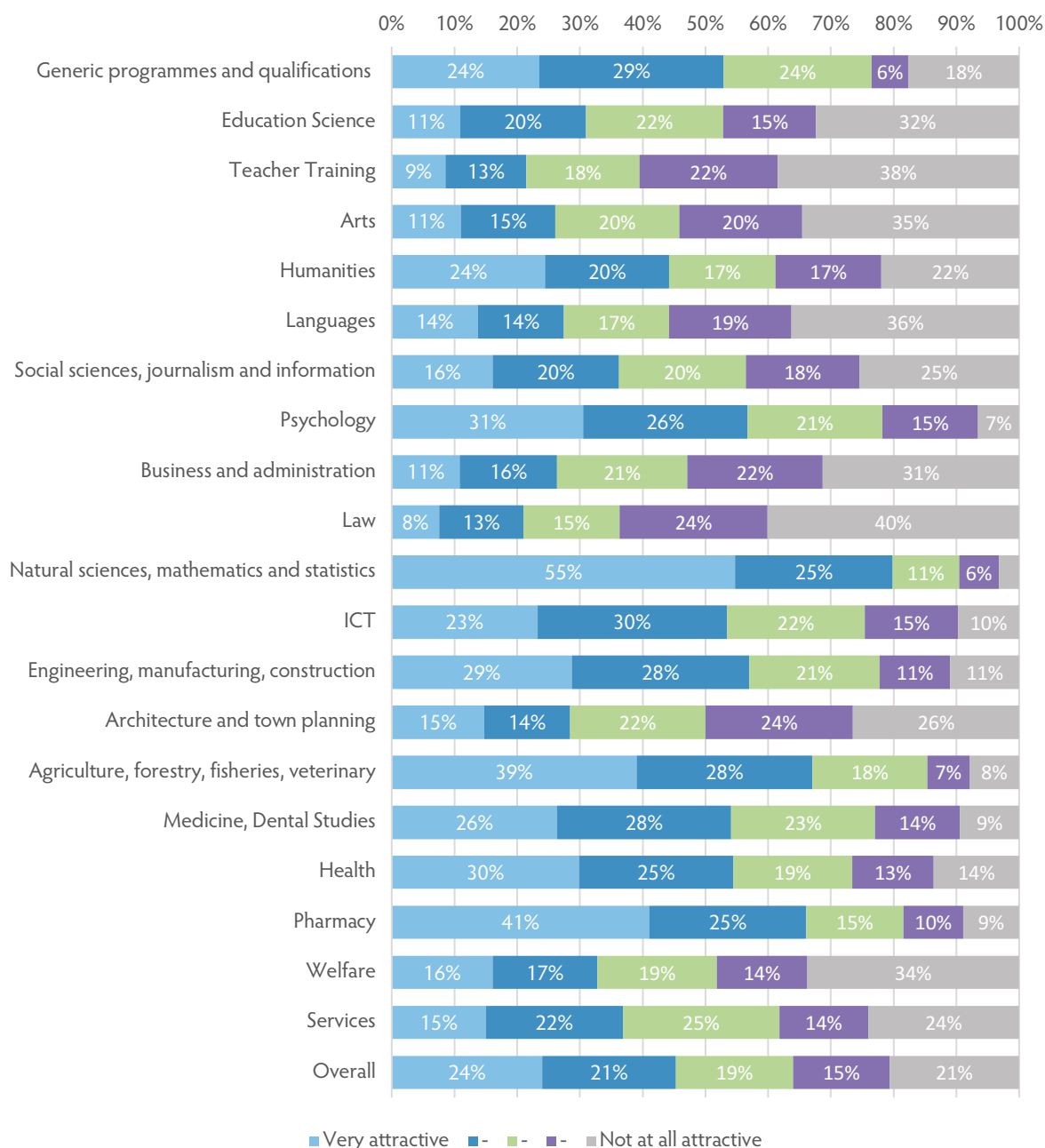
Figure 3.15 presents students evaluations of working in the Non-Profit sector, for example, working in a charity, NGO, or union, across fields of study, and again Business students appear to find this sector unattractive, but then so do Education and Teacher Training students. Rather it is Social Science, Journalism and Information students who are most likely to find this sector attractive, followed by Psychology, and Welfare students.

Figure 3.15: Evaluations by field of study of working in the Non-Profit sector [N=11,429].



Finally, Figure 3.16 presents how attractive working in research would be for students across fields of study, and understandably this sector is most attractive for Science, Maths and Statistics students.

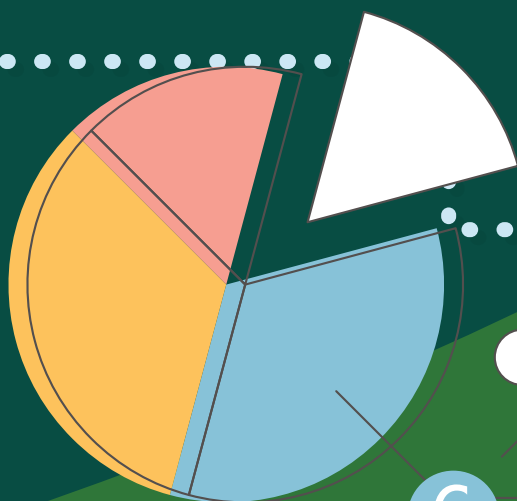
Figure 3.16: Evaluations by field of study of working in scientific research/research and development [N=11,377].



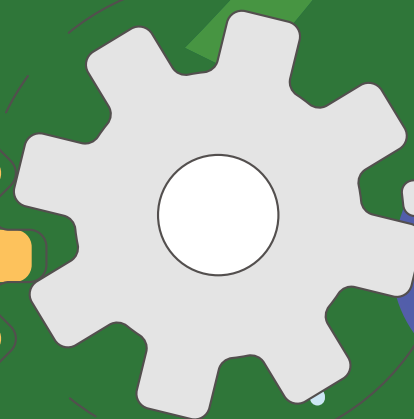
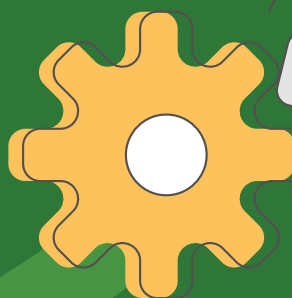
The findings in this chapter indicate that students generally report positive experiences within Irish higher education. High levels of satisfaction, strong engagement with programmes and positive relationships with teaching staff suggest that the academic environment is broadly supportive. However, the analysis also reveals variation across different dimensions of the student experience. Perceptions of workload, teaching quality and labour-market readiness differ across programmes and disciplines. These differences highlight the importance of institutional context and programme structure in shaping students' educational experiences.

While Chapter 3 has focussed on the academic and social dimensions of student life, the next chapter turns to the financial realities of higher education. Chapter 4 therefore examines how students finance their studies, their expenditure patterns and how financial pressures play a significant role in shaping their overall experience.

Chapter 4: **Student Income and Expenditure**



X



This chapter details the income and expenditure patterns of students in higher education in Ireland, analysing the effects that the inter-relationships of student-type, living arrangements and employment have upon the financial resources available to students. After this, the financial well-being of students is explored by examining the extent to which students are facing financial difficulties, and the effect certain student characteristics may have upon the likelihood of experiencing financial difficulties.

Before delving into the data itself, it is worth recognising the unique approach the Eurostudent survey takes to recording the financial situation of students. It is widely recognised that the income and expenditure section of the questionnaire is the hardest part of the survey, not only for students filling in the survey, but also from a research design perspective. As such, a considerable amount of time and cross-national expertise has been brought to bear on this problem in order to elicit good data about the students' financial situations. One methodological approach this section of the survey takes to avoid certain potential pitfalls is to ask not only about cash payments, but also transfers in kind.

This is done for the following reason: imagine two students sharing a flat. The rent for each is €500 per month. One student receives €500 each month from their parents and pays their share with it. The parents of the other student transfer the rent directly to the landlord. As such, if we were to ask only about cash payments, the first student would have €500 in revenue and €500 in expenses, the second would have €0 in revenue and €0 expenses. Thus, one student would appear "rich", the other "poor" although both are in an identical life situation. Because the survey explores students' living conditions, it must also try to capture non-cash transfers in order to treat these two students identically.

A further methodological problem arises when students leave an amount field empty within the survey. This may mean that they have:

1. No corresponding income or expenses; or
2. That they do not know, cannot, or do not want to estimate the amount.

For analysis though, the difference between these two situations is of critical importance as the distinction between someone having €0 to spend or leaving a zero because they do not want to provide a value affects key statistics, such as the overall mean.

This problem is alleviated by taking a two-step approach, first of all, the survey asked whether the student has received income from a pre-determined list of potential revenue sources. Secondly, after these questions the survey used a set of filters to only ask students to provide values for sources where they had said that they received income. As a result, we know when we see an empty field for actual income that these are missing values, as students were only asked for actual income from sources where they had initially indicated that they received income from these sources.

However, this still does not mean that all values entered by students can be taken at face value, as errors occur despite the best of intentions, especially when responses have been provided by thousands of students. As such, before conducting the analysis, the data goes through a number of intensive rounds of cleaning to ensure that potentially implausible values are found and removed, so that the overall quality of the data is not undermined.

4.1 Student Income

In this chapter, in contrast to other chapters where results are discussed across a set of key characteristics, the key determinants of overall income (and expenditure) are whether a student is in employment, and whether or not they live with their parents or guardians. As such, to present overall means without accounting for this variation can provide a distorted picture of students' financial situations. As a result of this, the tables in this chapter present disaggregated results, so that this variation across employment and residence is visible.

Finally, a further distinction needs to be made about employment. The tables below present the results across students employed throughout term-time and not employed throughout term-time, however, the category of students 'not employed throughout term-time' incorporates all students without employment and those who do work, but only sporadically. This clarification is necessary to distinguish between students who have continuous employment and work a consistent amount throughout the term, and everyone else. Chapter 6 goes into further detail about student employment, but it is worth noting here that for full-time students, 59 percent of undergraduates and 53 percent of postgraduates are employed. For part-time students, 91 percent of undergraduates and 88 percent of postgraduates are employed.

As noted above, before students were asked about the income they receive and in what amounts, they were asked a set of preliminary questions about the sources of their income. Tables 4.1 to 4.5 present these results.

Table 4.1: "Does your family and/or partner regularly provide you with cash?"

			Family	Partner	Neither family nor partner	N
Not employed throughout term	Full-time	UG	54%	3%	45%	3,781
		PG	51%	6%	45%	645
	Part-time	UG	20%	0%	80%	18
		PG	13%	21%	68%	44
Employed throughout term	Full-time	UG	34%	3%	65%	5,527
		PG	30%	5%	67%	725
	Part-time	UG	4%	7%	90%	147
		PG	6%	8%	87%	324
Overall			36%	4%	61%	11,211

Note: Respondents may receive funding from more than one source thus percentage totals can be greater than 100 percent.

Table 4.1 presents the results of the question "does your family and/or partner regularly provide you with cash?" As can be seen in this table, for the total student population 36 percent of students receive cash from their family, 4 percent receive cash from their partner, and 61 percent do not receive any cash from either source. However, when the data is further

disaggregated some interesting variation is visible. For example, for students that are not employed throughout the term, 54 percent of full-time undergraduates, and 51 percent of full-time postgraduates receive cash from their family, this falls to 13 percent for part-time postgraduates. Instead, a higher percentage of these students receive cash from their partners.

In contrast, for students employed throughout the term, 34 percent of full-time undergraduates, and 30 percent of full-time postgraduates receive cash from their family, this falls to 4 percent of part-time undergraduates and 6 percent of part-time postgraduates. Instead, the majority do not receive any cash from either their family or partners and instead are receiving cash through their employment.

Table 4.2: "Does your family and/or partner regularly pay your bills directly?"

			Family	Partner	Not family nor partner	N
Not employed throughout term	Full-time	UG	44%	3%	54%	3,781
		PG	30%	6%	65%	645
	Part-time	UG	6%	29%	71%	18
		PG	9%	24%	70%	44
Employed throughout term	Full-time	UG	46%	2%	53%	5,527
		PG	31%	9%	63%	725
	Part-time	UG	9%	11%	80%	147
		PG	5%	12%	84%	324
Overall			38%	4%	59%	11,211

Note: Respondents may receive funding from more than one source thus percentage totals can be greater than 100 percent.

Table 4.2 presents the results of the question "does your family and/or partner pay your bills directly?" As can be seen in this table, for the total student population 38 percent of students have their bills paid by their family, 4 percent have their bills paid by their partner, and 59 percent do not have their bills paid by either source. The disaggregated variation is similar to that seen in Table 4.1 in that for students that are not employed throughout the term, large proportions of full-time students have their bills paid by their family, whereas for part-time students a large proportion have their bills paid by their partners. In contrast, for students employed throughout the term (outside of full-time undergraduates) most students do not have their bills paid by their family or partners. A similar pattern is present in Table 4.3 which presents the results of the question "does your family and/or partner provide you with transfers in kind?"

Table 4.3: "Does your family and/or partner regularly provide you with transfers in kind?"

			Family	Partner	Not family nor partner	N
Not employed throughout term	Full-time	UG	37%	3%	61%	3,781
		PG	26%	6%	70%	645
	Part-time	UG	0%	18%	82%	18
		PG	14%	15%	73%	44
Employed throughout term	Full-time	UG	31%	5%	67%	5,527
		PG	25%	8%	71%	725
	Part-time	UG	9%	8%	85%	147
		PG	8%	8%	85%	324
Overall			29%	5%	68%	11,211

Note: Respondents may receive funding from more than one source thus percentage totals can be greater than 100 percent.

Table 4.4 presents the results of the question "are you receiving a public grant/scholarship or a public loan during the current term?" and shows that public support is important, but unevenly distributed. Overall, 34 percent of students receive SUSI, making it by far the most significant public funding source. SUSI is especially important for full-time undergraduates, whether employed (41 percent) or not employed (44 percent).

At the overall level, 34 percent of students receive financial support from SUSI (Student Universal Support Ireland), though this rises to 44 percent for full-time undergraduates not in employment and 41 percent of full-time undergraduates in employment. Less than 20 percent of full-time postgraduates (regardless of employment) receive funding from SUSI. Other sources of scholarships and grants appear to be of lesser importance to students as at the aggregate level; no other source is received by more than 9 percent of students.

Table 4.4: "Are you receiving a public grant/scholarship or a public loan during the current term?"

			SUSI (Student Universal Support Ireland)	Other public grant/ scholarship from Ireland	Other public student loan from Ireland	Public financial support from university attended	Public grant/ scholarship/ loan from another country	No public grant, scholarship or loan	N
Not employed throughout term	Full-time	UG	44%	8%	1%	7%	6%	44%	3,457
		PG	15%	12%	2%	7%	14%	54%	601
	Part-time	UG	0%	6%	0%	23%	0%	69%	17
		PG	2%	17%	2%	2%	6%	70%	41
Employed throughout term	Full-time	UG	41%	6%	1%	5%	1%	52%	5,084
		PG	16%	11%	3%	7%	8%	60%	683
	Part-time	UG	6%	15%	0%	5%	1%	75%	137
		PG	2%	19%	4%	7%	1%	69%	286
Overall			34%	9%	2%	6%	4%	53%	10,306

Note: Respondents may receive funding from more than one source thus percentage totals can be greater than 100 percent.

Overall, 53 percent report receiving no public grant, scholarship or loan, rising to 69–75 percent among most part-time groups. This suggests that public support is heavily concentrated in a relatively specific segment of the student population, particularly younger full-time undergraduates, rather than being a general feature of student finances.

Table 4.5 presents the results of the question "are you financing your living or study costs during the current term (partly) through savings?"

As can be seen in this table, 50 percent of students overall have savings from their previous jobs, 17 percent have other forms of savings, and 42 percent have no savings at all. The table is particularly revealing in relation to students not employed throughout term. Even among this group, savings from previous jobs remain significant: 42 percent of full-time undergraduates and 54 percent of full-time postgraduates rely on them. This supports the point developed later in Chapter 6, namely that many students alternate between periods of work and study and use prior earnings to support themselves during term time.

Table 4.5: "Are you financing your living or study costs during the current term (partly) through savings?"

			Savings from previous jobs	Other savings (e.g. inheritance, gifts of money, capital income, sales, prize money)	No savings	N
Not employed throughout term	Full-time	UG	42%	26%	44%	3,445
		PG	54%	27%	32%	600
	Part-time	UG	36%	27%	49%	15
		PG	34%	31%	39%	41
Employed throughout term	Full-time	UG	57%	12%	40%	5,059
		PG	61%	13%	34%	677
	Part-time	UG	40%	6%	57%	137
		PG	40%	8%	55%	286
Overall			50%	17%	42%	10,260

Note: Respondents may receive funding from more than one source thus percentage totals can be greater than 100 percent.

To move onto actual income received rather than just sources, Table 4.6 presents the average income for the total student population, and the percentage that each source forms of the total income received. For example, the average student receives €1,241 per month and of this €122 each month comes from their family, €654 from their employment and so on.

Table 4.6: Average income distribution profile (per month in Euros) [N=11,328].

	€	% of Total
Support from parental family	122	10%
Support from partner	10	1%
Non-repayable national state support for students	93	8%
Other national non-repayable state support	25	2%
Other national repayable state support	2	0%
Financial support from university	10	1%
Student support from another country	27	2%
Income from paid job during the current lecture period	654	53%
Savings from previous jobs used for living/studying	192	15%
Savings (not from previous jobs) used for living/studying	32	3%
Other income from public sources	51	4%
Other income (repayable or not) from private sources	24	2%
Overall Average Cash Income	1,241	100%

Though as previously noted, looking at the 'average' student is somewhat reductive, as certain characteristics have a large influence on students' financial circumstances. As such, presenting averages of the total student population masks a huge amount of variation. Therefore, Tables 4.7 to 4.10 present disaggregated figures that take into account whether students are studying full-time or part-time, are undergraduates or postgraduates, whether they are in employment or not, and whether they are living with their parents or guardians, or somewhere else.

Table 4.7 presents the average income distribution profile for students **not** living with their parents per month in Euros.

As can be seen from this table for students that are not employed consistently throughout the term, within each sub-category of student, the average monthly income ranges from €963 for full-time undergraduates to €2,490 for part-time postgraduates. Full-time undergraduate students on average receive €346 per month from their parents/families. Part-time students on average receive a marginal level of support from their parents/families, in contrast they receive a higher level of support from their partners. Though it is worth noting here that the sample size for part-time students not employed during term-time is very small compared to the other cohorts, so greater caution should be attached to these compared to the rest. For students consistently employed, within each sub-category of student, the average monthly income ranges from €1,228 for full-time undergraduates to €3,117 for part-time postgraduates. Part-time students earn considerably more than full-time students from their current employment.

Table 4.7: Average income distribution profile (in Euros cash) for students not living with their parents or guardians.

	Employed throughout term				Not employed throughout term			
	Full-time		Part-time		Full-time		Part-time	
	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG
Support from parental family	118	119	-	19	346	334	-	47
Support from partner	5	21	68	30	9	33	0	137
Non-repayable national state support for students	102	62	-	6	134	46	-	-
Other national non-repayable state support	27	70	14	20	27	88	-	241
Other national repayable state support	2	6	-	2	2	10	-	-
Financial support from university	12	13	-	5	15	23	853	-
Student support from another country	17	54	-	-	95	149	-	68
Income from paid job during the current lecture period	636	980	2,564	2,673	-	-	-	-
Savings from previous jobs used for living/studying	247	334	203	187	169	436	158	696
Savings (not from previous jobs) used for living/studying	14	66	2	49	49	78	-	337
Other income from public sources	33	22	121	95	81	88	687	641
Other income (repayable or not) from private sources	16	38	46	30	34	76	157	323
Total cash income	1,228	1,787	3,019	3,117	963	1,360	1,855	2,490
N	2,391	490	95	277	2,019	527	1,530	40

Table 4.8 presents the income distribution profile for students **not** living with their parents and shows how much each individual source forms as a percent of the total, thereby showing the relative importance of each source.

Table 4.8: Average income distribution profile (in percent) for students not living with their parents or guardians.

	Employed throughout term				Not employed throughout term			
	Full-time		Part-time		Full-time		Part-time	
	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG
Support from parental family	10%	7%	0%	1%	36%	25%	0%	2%
Support from partner	0%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	0%	5%
Non-repayable national state support for students	8%	3%	0%	0%	14%	3%	0%	0%
Other national non-repayable state support	2%	4%	0%	1%	3%	7%	0%	10%
Other national repayable state support	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Financial support from university	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%	2%	46%	0%
Student support from another country	1%	3%	0%	0%	10%	11%	0%	3%
Income from paid job during the current lecture period	52%	55%	85%	86%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Savings from previous jobs used for living/studying	20%	19%	7%	6%	18%	32%	9%	28%
Savings (not from previous jobs) used for living/studying	1%	4%	0%	2%	5%	6%	0%	14%
Other income from public sources	3%	1%	4%	3%	8%	6%	37%	26%
Other income (repayable or not) from private sources	1%	2%	2%	1%	4%	6%	8%	13%
N	2,391	490	95	277	2,019	527	1,530	40

Table 4.8 also clarifies the relative weight of each source in students' overall income. For employed students living away from home, employment income dominates, in that it accounts for 52 percent of total income for full-time undergraduates, 55 percent for full-time postgraduates, 85 percent for part-time undergraduates and 86 percent for part-time postgraduates.

The picture is very different for full-time students not employed throughout term. In this group, parental support makes up 36 percent of income for undergraduates and 25 percent for postgraduates, while state support contributes 14 percent for full-time undergraduates. Savings also matter, particularly for not-employed full-time postgraduates, where savings from previous jobs account for 32 percent of total income.

Table 4.9 presents the average income distribution profile for students living with their parents per month in Euros.

Table 4.9: Average income distribution profile (in Euros cash) for students living with their parents or guardians.

	Employed throughout term				Not employed throughout term			
	Full-time		Part-time		Full-time		Part-time	
	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG
Support from parental family	40	41	19	13	84	156	114	9
Support from partner	1	-	0	11	1	7	-	-
Non-repayable national state support for students	83	68	7	-	156	126	4	36
Other national non-repayable state support	10	20	-	8	20	44	-	-
Other national repayable state support	1	1	-	-	3	14	-	-
Financial support from university	3	1	-	-	9	-	-	-
Student support from another country	1	-	-	-	5	-	-	39
Income from paid job during the current lecture period	672	898	1,915	2,008	-	-	-	-
Savings from previous jobs used for living/studying	149	261	106	41	111	463	59	132
Savings (not from previous jobs) used for living/studying	10	3	-	8	39	212	-	-
Other income from public sources	10	4	-	49	51	43	1	540
Other income (repayable or not) from private sources	8	29	2	23	13	54	-	-
Total cash income	987	1,326	2,048	2,162	492	1,118	178	756
N	3,220	247	54	53	1,772	120	3	5

As can be seen from this table for students that are not employed consistently throughout the term, within each sub-category of student, the average monthly income ranges from €492 for full-time undergraduates to €1,118 for part-time undergraduates. Full-time undergraduate students on average receive €84 per month from their parents/families, and this rises to €16 for part-time undergraduate students. Part-time students on average receive a marginal level of support from their partners though one should note the low number of responses for these categories of students and again, not infer too much from them. For students consistently employed, within each sub-category of student, the average monthly income ranges from €987 for full-time undergraduates to €2,162 for part-time postgraduates. Part-time students also earn considerably more than full-time students from their current employment.

Table 4.9 also shows that students living with their parents have lower total cash incomes than those living independently, reflecting the fact that some of their living costs are absorbed within the family household.

Employment remains the largest single source of income for employed students, but parental transfers are smaller in cash terms than among students living away from home. For example, employed full-time undergraduates living at home receive only €40 per month from parents in cash, compared with €118 among those living independently. This suggests that support for students living at home is often delivered indirectly, through reduced living costs or transfers in kind, rather than through direct cash transfers.

Table 4.10 presents the income distribution profile for students living with their parents and shows how much each individual source forms as a percent of the total, thereby showing the relative importance of each source.

As can be seen for students that are not consistently employed throughout term, less than 20 percent of their income is provided by their families. Much like in Table 4.11 full-time undergraduates also rely quite heavily on state support such as that provided by SUSI. In contrast, for students that are employed throughout term most of their income comes from their employment and very little is provided by their family or partners.

Table 4.10: Average income distribution profile (in percent) for students living with their parents or guardians.

	Employed throughout term				Not employed throughout term			
	Full-time		Part-time		Full-time		Part-time	
	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG
Support from parental family	4%	3%	1%	1%	17%	14%	64%	1%
Support from partner	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Non-repayable national state support for students	8%	5%	0%	0%	32%	11%	2%	5%
Other national non-repayable state support	1%	2%	0%	0%	4%	4%	0%	0%
Other national repayable state support	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Financial support from university	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%
Student support from another country	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	5%
Income from paid job during the current lecture period	68%	68%	93%	93%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Savings from previous jobs used for living/studying	15%	20%	5%	2%	22%	41%	33%	17%
Savings (not from previous jobs) used for living/studying	1%	0%	0%	0%	8%	19%	0%	0%
Other income from public sources	1%	0%	0%	2%	10%	4%	0%	71%
Other income (repayable or not) from private sources	1%	2%	0%	1%	3%	5%	0%	0%
N	3,220	247	54	53	1,772	120	3	5

Table 4.10 confirms that income from employment dominates the finances of employed students living at home. It accounts for 68 percent of total income for both employed full-time undergraduates and postgraduates, and 93 percent for employed part-time students. This shows that living at home does not eliminate the importance of employment; rather, it allows earned income to stretch further because living costs are lower.

For students not employed throughout term, parental support remains important but does not dominate to the same extent as might be expected. Among full-time undergraduates not employed throughout term, parental support accounts for 17 percent of income, while state support contributes 32 percent and savings from previous jobs 22 percent. For full-time postgraduates in the same category, savings are especially important, accounting for 41 percent of total income. These figures suggest that students living at home still rely on a mix of resources rather than parental support alone.

4.2 Student Expenditure

On the expenditure side, Table 4.11 shows the average monthly expenses (split by expenses covered by students and expenses paid for by others).

Table 4.11: Average expenditure distribution profile for all students [N=11,328].

	Cash	TIK	Both	Cash	TIK	Both
	€			% of Overall Total		
Accommodation	374	422	798	37%	54%	44%
Food	165	84	249	16%	11%	14%
Transportation	90	18	109	9%	2%	6%
Communication	21	12	33	2%	2%	2%
Health (e.g. medical insurance)	20	19	39	2%	2%	2%
Childcare	8	3	10	1%	0%	1%
Debt payment (except mortgage)	27	4	31	3%	1%	2%
Social and leisure activities	99	15	114	10%	2%	6%
Other regular living costs	69	16	86	7%	2%	5%
Total Regular Living Costs	896	595	1507	89%	76%	82%
Fees	100	195	295	10%	25%	16%
Contributions to student unions/associations etc	4	6	11	0%	1%	1%
Other regular study-related costs	6	2	9	1%	0%	0%
Total Regular Study-Related Costs	109	191	323	11%	24%	18%
Overall Total	1006	786	1830	100%	100%	100%

The overall average monthly expenditure for all students was €1,507 of which €896 of this amount was met by the students themselves, with the remaining €595 being provided by others (such as their partners or parents). Accommodation is the largest single expenditure which accounts for 44 percent of all expenditure, and the average spend on accommodation was €798. To compare against the previous Eurostudent report, the overall monthly expenditure for all students was €1,340 of which €813 of this amount was met by the students themselves, with the remaining €501 being provided by others.

Accommodation was also the largest single expenditure which accounted for 35 percent of all expenditure, and the average spend on accommodation was €469. Though as noted throughout this chapter, overall averages present a distorted picture as certain student characteristics heavily influence both the income and expenditure of various groups of students. It is also worth noting that the totals in all the tables in this chapter are the average of all the individual expenditure components for all students who answered the question, rather than the sum of the averages for each expenditure component, thus the sum of each average component may differ slightly from the average total. Table 4.12 presents the average expenditure profile per month in Euros for students not living with their parents.

Table 4.12: Average expenditure distribution profile (in both cash and transfers in kind) for students **not** living with their parents or guardians.

	Employed throughout term				Not employed throughout term			
	Full-time		Part-time		Full-time		Part-time	
	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG
Accommodation	767	841	1,184	1,187	849	949	535	941
Food	204	264	432	470	238	254	344	483
Transportation	99	84	217	194	66	56	229	87
Communication	29	32	56	60	29	27	33	41
Health (e.g. medical insurance)	33	36	65	99	27	39	30	120
Childcare	6	14	55	70	6	9	-	-
Debt payment (except mortgage)	23	53	117	130	12	23	-	21
Social and leisure activities	111	99	148	192	95	91	42	109
Other regular living costs	74	75	171	183	63	69	19	51
Total Regular Living Costs	1,322	1,469	2,445	2,606	1,380	1,518	1,322	1,916
Fees	241	919	155	320	334	1,054	221	267
Contributions to student unions/associations etc	12	11	12	5	12	11	3	5
Other regular study-related costs	9	11	8	16	10	10	2	9
Total Regular Study-Related Costs	270	942	176	349	356	1,091	219	241
Overall Total	1,592	2,411	2,621	2,955	1,736	2,609	1,541	2,157
N	2,391	490	95	277	2,019	527	1,530	40

For students that are not employed consistently throughout the term, within each sub-category of student, the average monthly expenditure ranges from €1,541 for part-time undergraduates to €2,609 for full-time postgraduates. For students consistently employed, within each sub-category of student, the average monthly expenditure ranges from €1,592 for full-time undergraduates to €2,955 for part-time postgraduates. As can be seen from this table regardless of employment status accommodation appears to be largest expenditure each month followed by fees and food.⁸

Table 4.13 presents the average expenditure profile per month in Euros for students who live with their parents.

Table 4.13: Average expenditure distribution profile (in both cash and transfers in kind) for students living with their parents or guardians.

	Employed throughout term				Not employed throughout term			
	Full-time		Part-time		Full-time		Part-time	
	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG
Accommodation	571	609	519	728	559	570	700	50
Food	223	251	309	361	189	195	50	307
Transportation	121	128	163	166	93	84	35	54
Communication	32	32	47	46	30	28	18	20
Health (e.g. medical insurance)	33	42	32	114	25	32	96	72
Childcare	1	3	-	28	2	7	-	-
Debt payment (except mortgage)	18	29	147	65	6	31	153	-
Social and leisure activities	123	142	141	182	78	82	16	198
Other regular living costs	88	97	152	143	57	65	-	61
Total Regular Living Costs	1,290	1,386	1,595	1,733	1,132	1,094	889	948
Fees	178	495	194	261	184	601	33	278
Contributions to student unions/associations etc	10	7	15	4	13	8	-	8
Other regular study-related costs	8	12	3	16	7	10	-	11
Total Regular Study-Related Costs	195	533	195	285	205	643	33	381
Overall Total	1,485	1,919	1,790	2,018	1,337	1,737	922	1,329
N	3,220	247	54	53	1,772	120	3	5

For students that are not employed consistently throughout the term, within each sub-category of student, the average monthly expenditure ranges from €922 for part-time undergraduates to €1,737 for full-time postgraduates. For students consistently employed, within each sub-category of student, the average monthly expenditure ranges from €1,485 for full-time undergraduates to €2,018 for part-time postgraduates. In contrast to Table 4.12, students who live at home spend much less on their accommodation.

⁸ Fees are typically paid as one lump sum or as a few instalments rather than monthly, but to assess the relative overall expenditure for students, the amount spent on fees are presented here as a monthly amount.

Table 4.14: The percentage of expenditure in transfers in kind for students **not** living with their parents or guardians.

	Employed throughout term				Not employed throughout term			
	Full-time		Part-time		Full-time		Part-time	
	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG
Accommodation	79%	71%	34%	17%	86%	76%	0%	100%
Food	45%	48%	21%	23%	59%	51%	99%	79%
Transportation	16%	11%	4%	8%	36%	33%	99%	0%
Communication	45%	33%	40%	17%	61%	58%	76%	100%
Health (e.g. medical insurance)	67%	56%	25%	17%	76%	82%	72%	100%
Childcare	70%	100%	0%	0%	58%	100%		
Debt payment (except mortgage)	12%	19%	0%	50%	45%	75%	100%	
Social and leisure activities	6%	11%	3%	1%	27%	26%	0%	0%
Other regular living costs	19%	22%	3%	6%	45%	52%		0%
Total Regular Living Costs	54%	51%	21%	18%	69%	70%	0%	44%
Fees	73%	59%	49%	29%	86%	68%	100%	92%
Contributions to student unions/associations etc	65%	34%	40%	28%	77%	42%		100%
Other regular study-related costs	30%	14%	0%	0%	51%	24%		0%
Total Regular Study-Related Costs	71%	57%	49%	28%	85%	69%	100%	91%
Overall Total	56%	52%	24%	19%	72%	69%	4%	57%
N	3,220	247	54	53	1,772	120	3	5

When the expenditure for each group of students is compared against their income it is quickly evident that expenditure largely outstrips income. This would be worrying if students' income was the only financial resource available to students. We know from the start of this chapter that students rely to a greater or lesser extent, depending on the type of student, on transfers in kind from their family, or partner, or even both. Tables 4.14 and 4.15 show the percentage of expenditure in transfers in kind for all groups of students discussed so far in this chapter. These percentages indicate the average percentage of the total that is paid by someone other than the student. Thus, for full-time undergraduates not employed throughout term, 66 percent of the costs of accommodation are typically paid by someone other than the student (for example, their parents and/or partners).

Table 4.15: The percentage of expenditure in transfers in kind for students living with their parents or guardians.

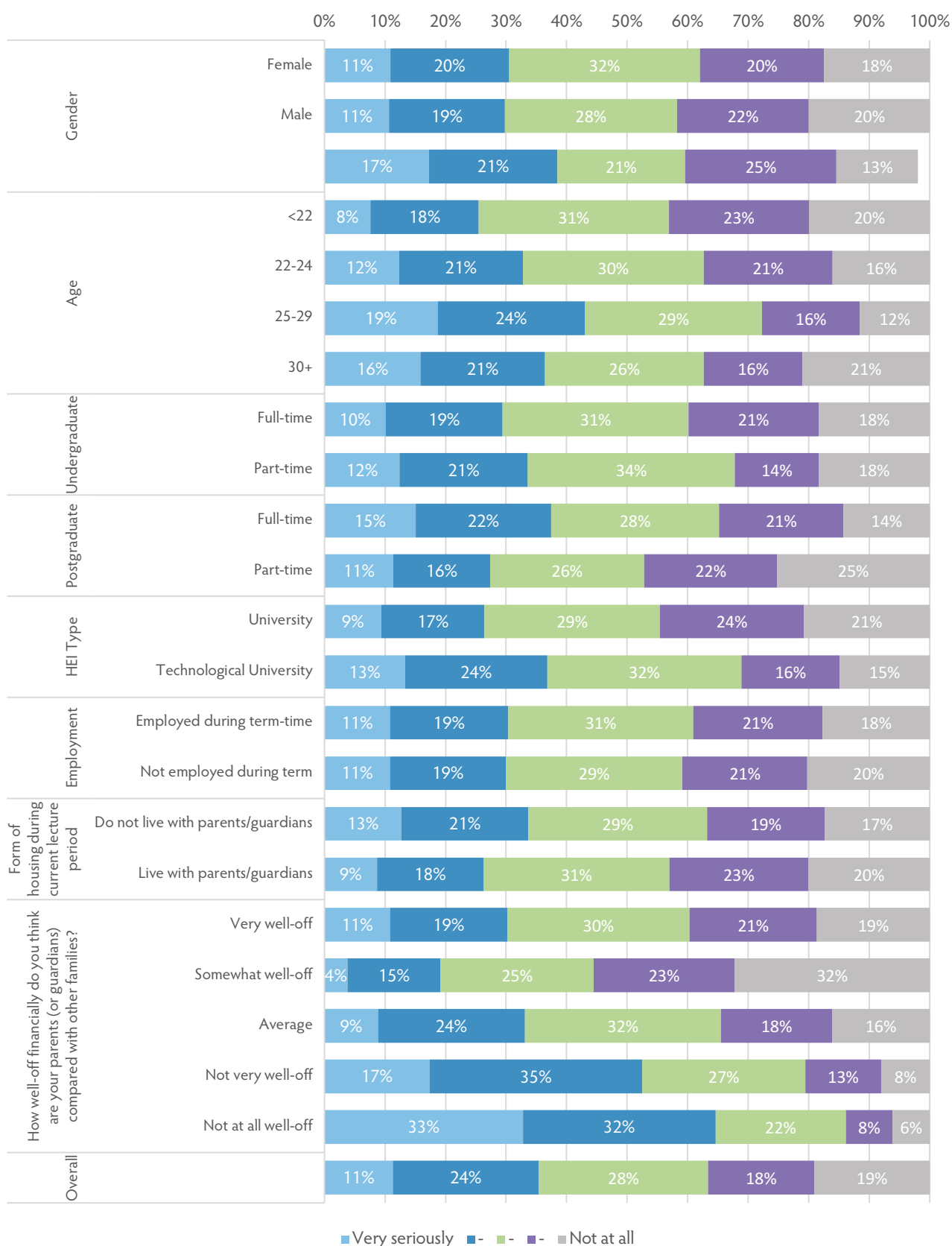
	Employed throughout term				Not employed throughout term			
	Full-time		Part-time		Full-time		Part-time	
	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG	UG	PG
Accommodation	79%	71%	34%	17%	86%	76%	0%	100%
Food	45%	48%	21%	23%	59%	51%	99%	79%
Transportation	16%	11%	4%	8%	36%	33%	99%	0%
Communication	45%	33%	40%	17%	61%	58%	76%	100%
Health (e.g. medical insurance)	67%	56%	25%	17%	76%	82%	72%	100%
Childcare	70%	100%	0%	0%	58%	100%		
Debt payment (except mortgage)	12%	19%	0%	50%	45%	75%	100%	
Social and leisure activities	6%	11%	3%	1%	27%	26%	0%	0%
Other regular living costs	19%	22%	3%	6%	45%	52%		0%
Total Regular Living Costs	54%	51%	21%	18%	69%	70%	0%	44%
Fees	73%	59%	49%	29%	86%	68%	100%	92%
Contributions to student unions/associations etc	65%	34%	40%	28%	77%	42%		100%
Other regular study-related costs	30%	14%	0%	0%	51%	24%		0%
Total Regular Study-Related Costs	71%	57%	49%	28%	85%	69%	100%	91%
Overall Total	56%	52%	24%	19%	72%	69%	4%	57%
N	3,220	247	54	53	1,772	120	3	5

Transfers in kind appear to mostly used by full-time undergraduate students who do not work consistently during the term. In addition, the largest percentages are for items which have the highest monthly cost, i.e. accommodation and fees. For other expenses such as food, transport, and communication costs, these appear to be largely paid by students themselves. As noted above, the sample size in each table for part-time students not employed during the term is much smaller than that of other groups, so these are likely to be less certain and should not be used to infer too much compared against the other groups.

4.3 Financial Well-Being

The sections above have outlined the income and expenditure of students and found that the expenses of students often outstrip their incomes, and that certain groups of students are heavily reliant upon external financial support from the parents or partners. In the survey, students were asked about the extent to which they were experiencing financial difficulties on a five-point scale ranging from 'not at all' to experiencing 'very serious financial difficulties'. Figure 4.1 presents these results across a range of student characteristics.

Figure 4.1: Percentage of students experiencing financial difficulties across key characteristics [N=10,000].

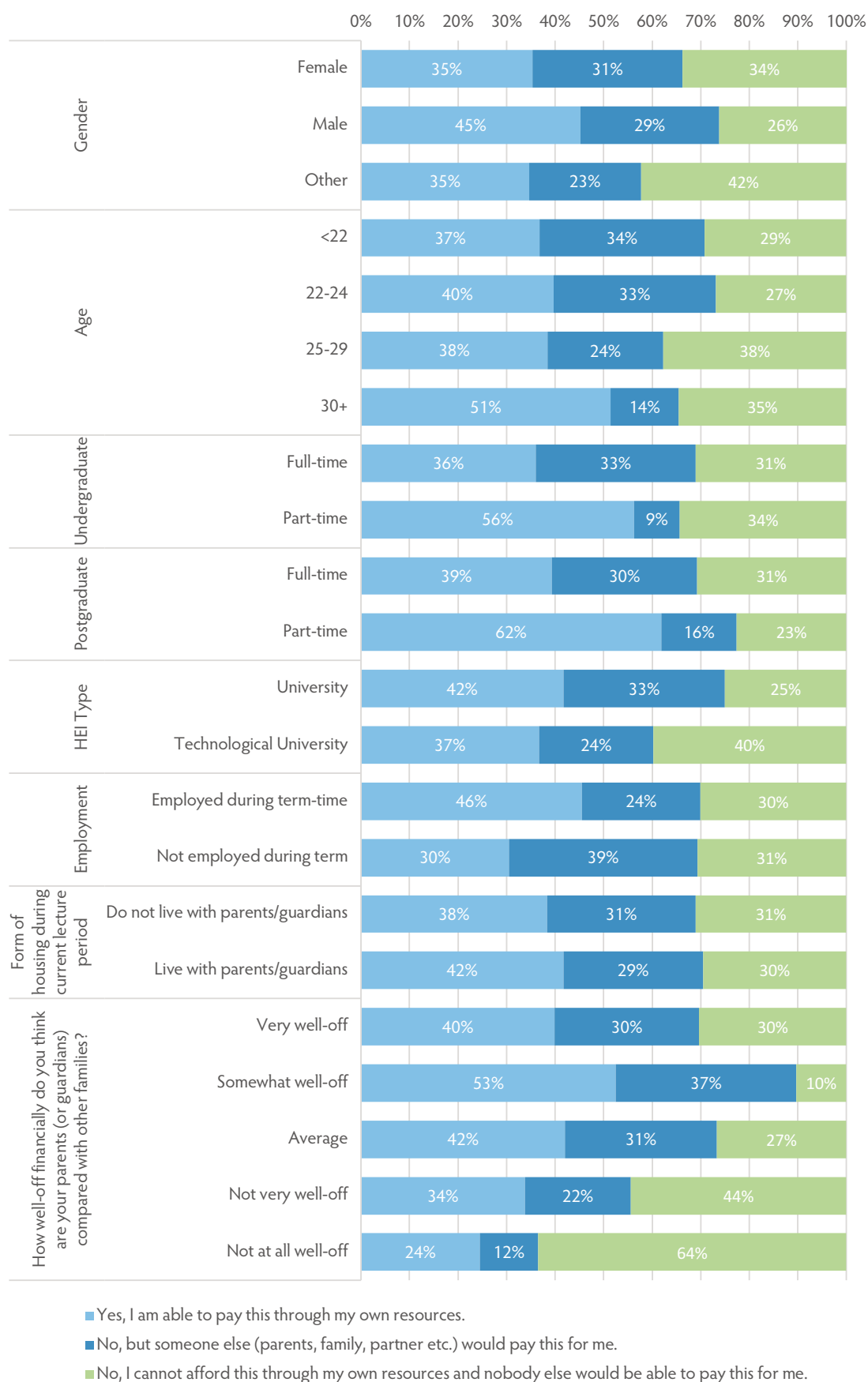


At the aggregate level, only eleven percent of students say that they are experiencing serious financial difficulties, and at the other end of the scale 19 percent of students are having no financial difficulties. This is very similar to the previous Eurostudent report, where ten percent of students reported experiencing serious financial difficulties and 21 percent had no financial difficulties at all. As would be expected, male and female students appear to experience financial difficulties to the same extent. With regard to age, older students appear to be more likely to experience financial difficulties. Furthermore, students in Technological Universities/Institutes of Technology appear to be slightly more likely to experience financial difficulties than students in universities.

One may expect students who work during the semester to experience lower levels of financial difficulties than students who do not work. However, contrary to our expectations, there does not appear to be a significant difference here. This of course, could be related to other external financial supports, such as students who are not employed still being able to rely on their families to alleviate any potential financial difficulties. This is reinforced by the relationship evident between the level of parental affluence and the extent to which students feel financially secure; with higher levels of parental affluence corresponding with lower levels of financial insecurity.

Figure 4.2 presents the distribution of responses when students were asked if they would be able to pay an unexpected expense of €500 and provides a more precise picture of financial resilience.

Figure 4.2: Percentage of students able to pay an unexpected expense of €500 across key characteristics [N=9,869].

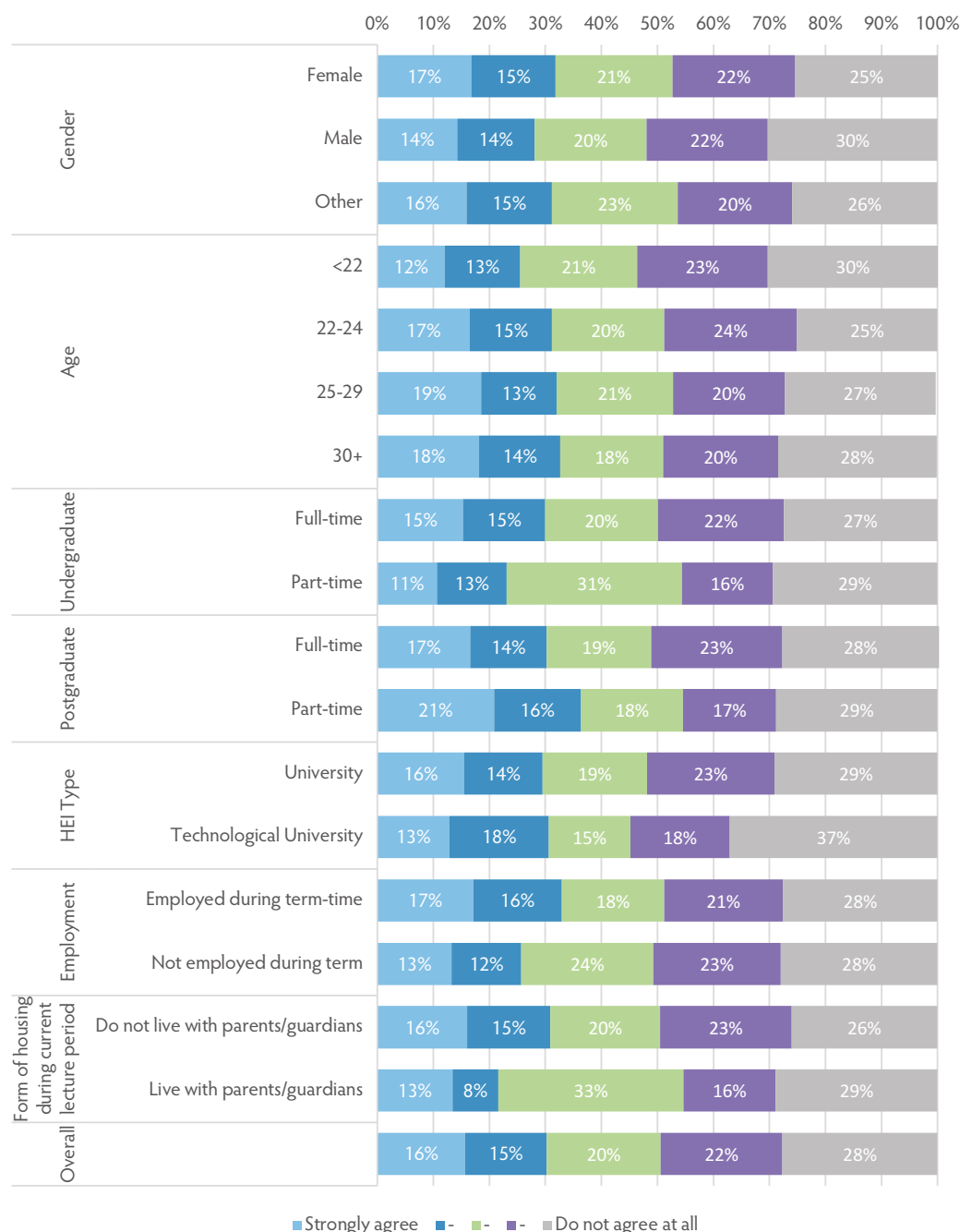


While the chart presents a similar story to that of Figure 4.1, it is worth noting which groups of students would be able to pay this expense through their own resources and those who would not be able, but someone else i.e. their parents, partner and so on, would be able to. As mentioned above, the lack of differentiation in financial security between students that are employed throughout term and those that are not is presumably due to unemployed students being able to draw on external resources. The results in Figure 4.2 support this as only 30 percent of unemployed students would be able to pay an expense of €500 through their own resources, compared against 39 percent who would be able to have someone else pay this for them. In contrast, for employed students 46 percent would pay this themselves and only 24 percent would be able to have someone else pay this for them.

Similarly, although there appeared to be little variation in financial security across undergraduate and postgraduate full and part-time students, Figure 4.2 provides us with a clearer picture of what could be happening. While each group of student feels financially secure, Figure 4.2 presents a picture that full-time students' security is based on others being able to support them, whereas for part-time students their security is based upon their own ability to support themselves.

Students who said that they were currently experiencing financial difficulties were asked an additional battery of questions on the impact of the financial difficulties they were experiencing through the extent to which they agreed with a set of statements. Figure 4.3 presents the first of these, where students were asked to what extent they agreed with the statement 'I am not able to pay all essential bills on time'.

Figure 4.3: "I am not able to pay all essential bills on time" [N=3,160].



Overall, 31% agree with the statement (16% strongly agree and 15% agree), compared with 50% who disagree (22% disagree and 28% strongly disagree), while 20% remain neutral. This suggests that financial strain exists for a notable minority, but the majority report managing their essential expenses. Differences appear across groups. Females (32%) are slightly more likely than males (28%) to agree that they struggle to pay bills, while males are more likely to strongly disagree (30%). By age, agreement is highest among those aged 25–29 (32%) and lowest among those under 22 (25%), who are also most likely to strongly disagree (30%). Students at Technological Universities show lower agreement (31%) and higher strong disagreement (37%) than University students (30% agree; 29% strongly disagree), suggesting somewhat less perceived financial difficulty. Employment status shows a small effect, with students employed during term-time slightly more likely to report difficulty (33%) than those not employed (25%). Housing also matters: those not living with parents/guardians are more likely to agree (31%) than those living at home (21%), who instead show a large neutral share (33%).

Figure 4.4: "My grades are worse than they could be" [N=3,168].

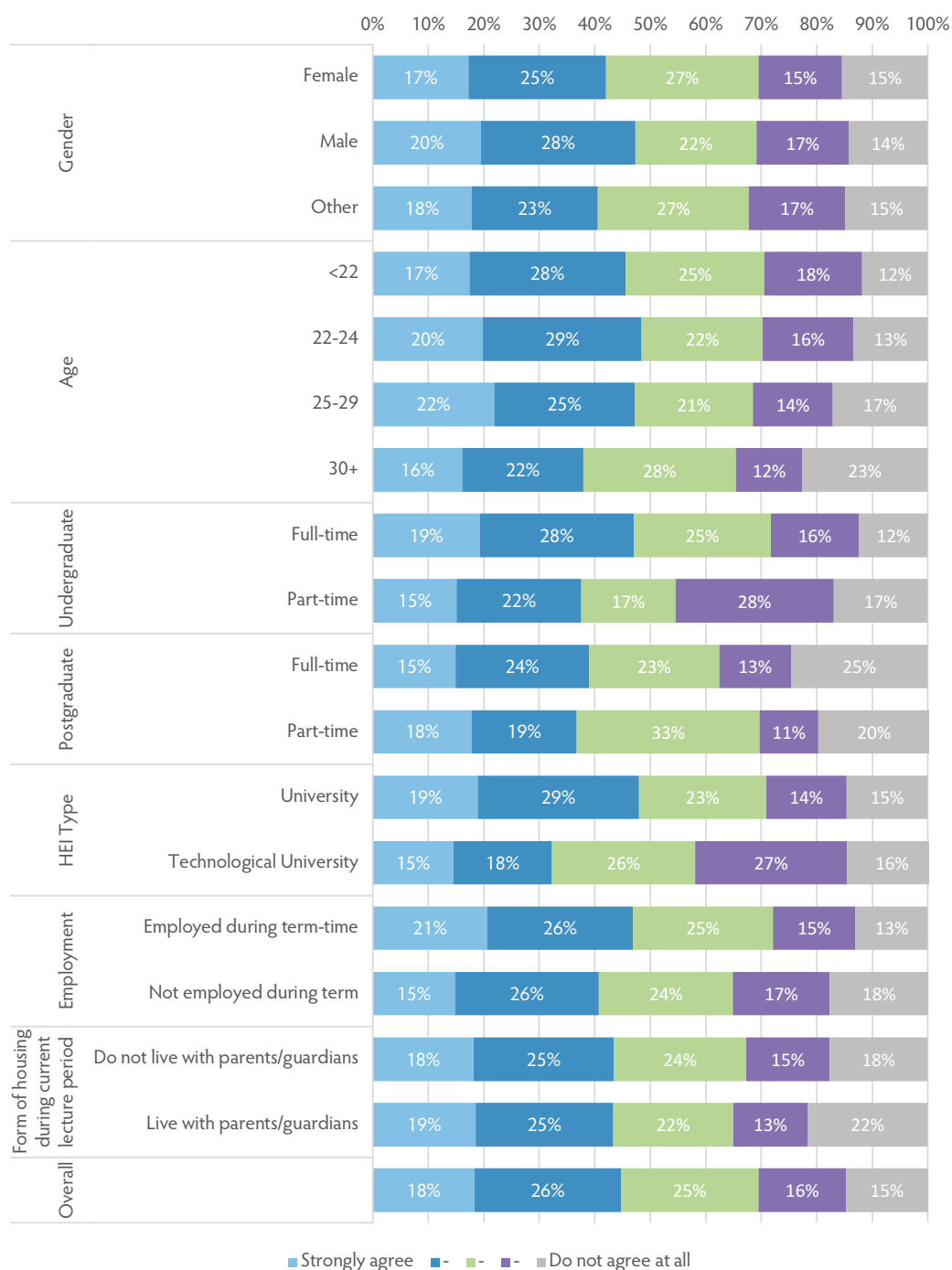


Figure 4.4 suggests that financial strain is often perceived as affecting academic performance. Overall, 44 percent agree that their grades are worse than they could be (18% strongly agree and 26% agree), compared with 31% who disagree (16% disagree and 15% strongly disagree), and 25% remain neutral. When Figures 4.3 and 4.4 are viewed together they appear to suggest that financial pressure may be experienced less as an inability to pay bills and more as a drag on academic focus and performance.

The pattern is somewhat stronger among men (48 percent) than women (42 percent), and among students aged 22–24 and 25–29 (49 percent and 47 percent respectively). Employment status also appears relevant: students employed during term-time (47 percent) are more likely than non-employed students (41 percent) to feel that their grades are suffering. This aligns with the time-use evidence in Chapter 6, where employment reduces the hours available for personal study.

Figure 4.5: "I will graduate later than originally planned" [N=3,154].

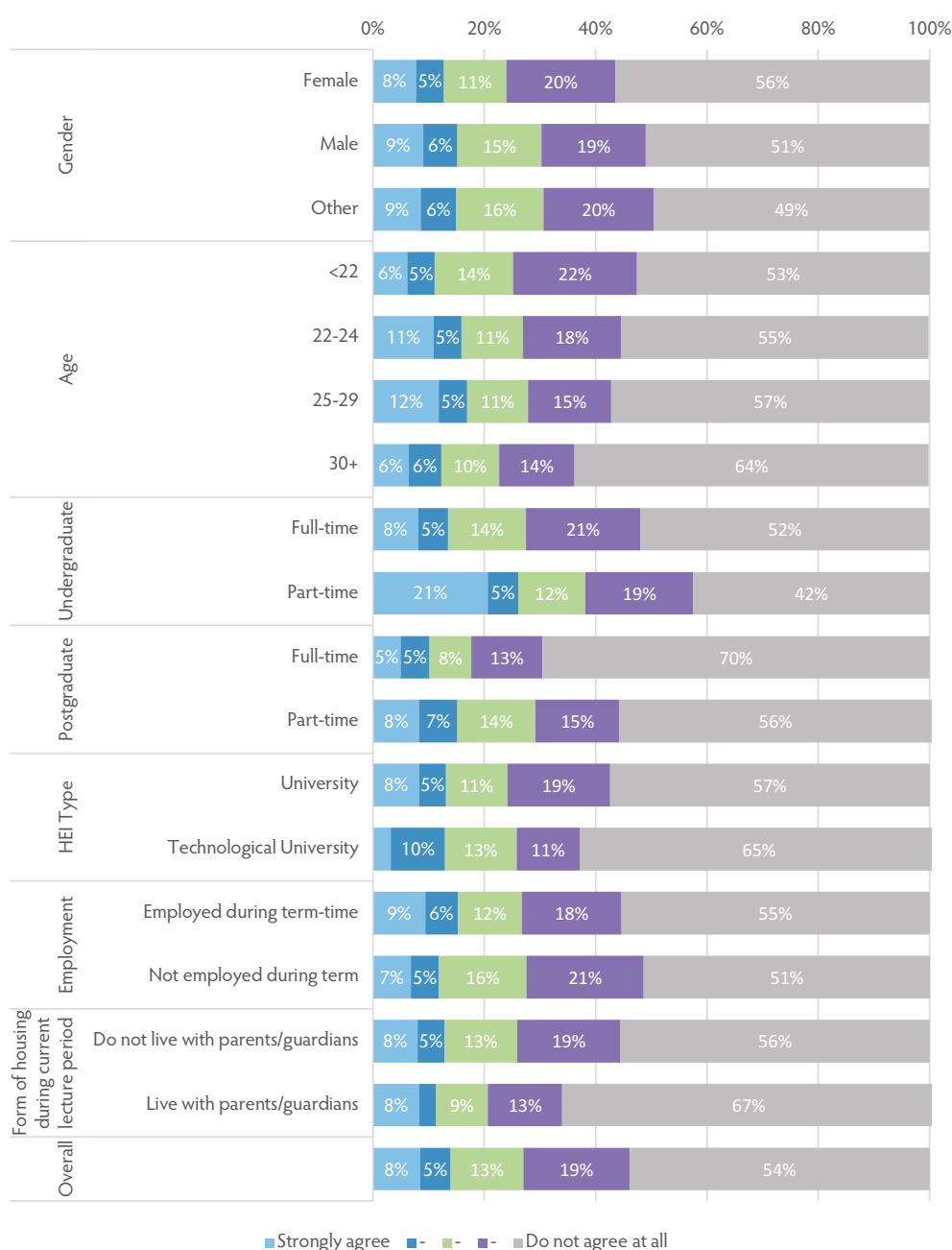


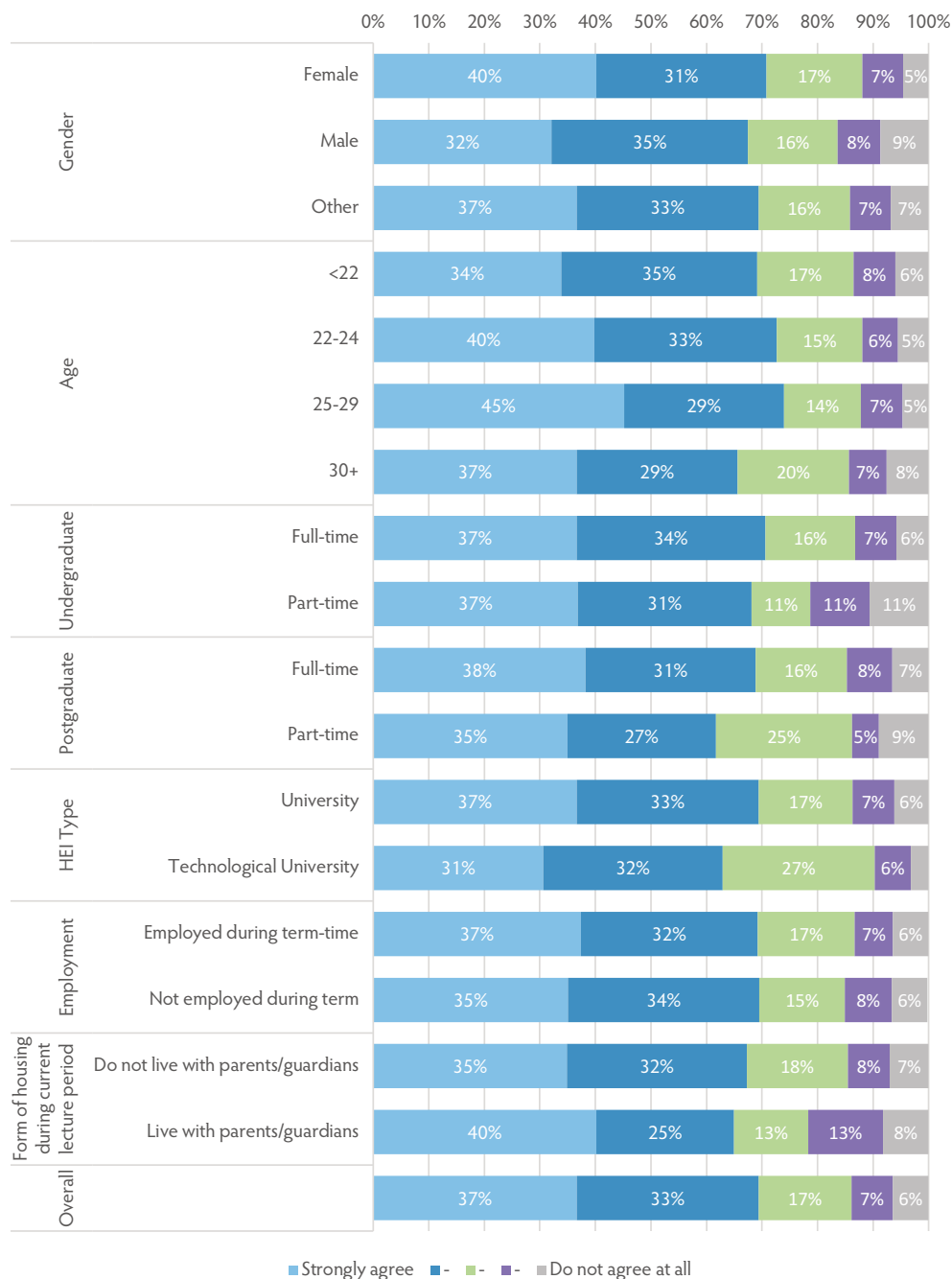
Figure 4.5 captures the extent to which financial pressure is seen as affecting progression rather than just short-term experience, though only 8 percent of students strongly agree with this statement, and in contrast 54 percent do not agree with the statement at all.

While most students do not appear to think that financial pressures will extend their time in higher education. Students do appear to be suffering negative health implications from financial stress. Figure 4.6 and 4.7 presents students evaluations of the statements 'my mental health is suffering' and 'my physical health is suffering'.

Figure 4.6 points to a very strong association between financial difficulty and mental health strain. Overall, 70 percent of students experiencing financial difficulties agree that their mental health is suffering, including 37 percent who strongly agree. Only 13 percent disagree. This makes mental health the most widely reported consequence of financial pressure in this section.

The levels are high across almost all groups, but especially among women (71 percent) and students aged 25–29 (74 percent). Agreement is somewhat lower in Technological Universities (63 percent) than in universities (70 percent), though the overall pattern remains one of widespread distress. Unlike some of the earlier outcomes, employment status makes little difference here: 69 percent of both employed and non-employed students agree. This suggests that financial strain affects mental well-being broadly, regardless of whether students are currently in paid work.

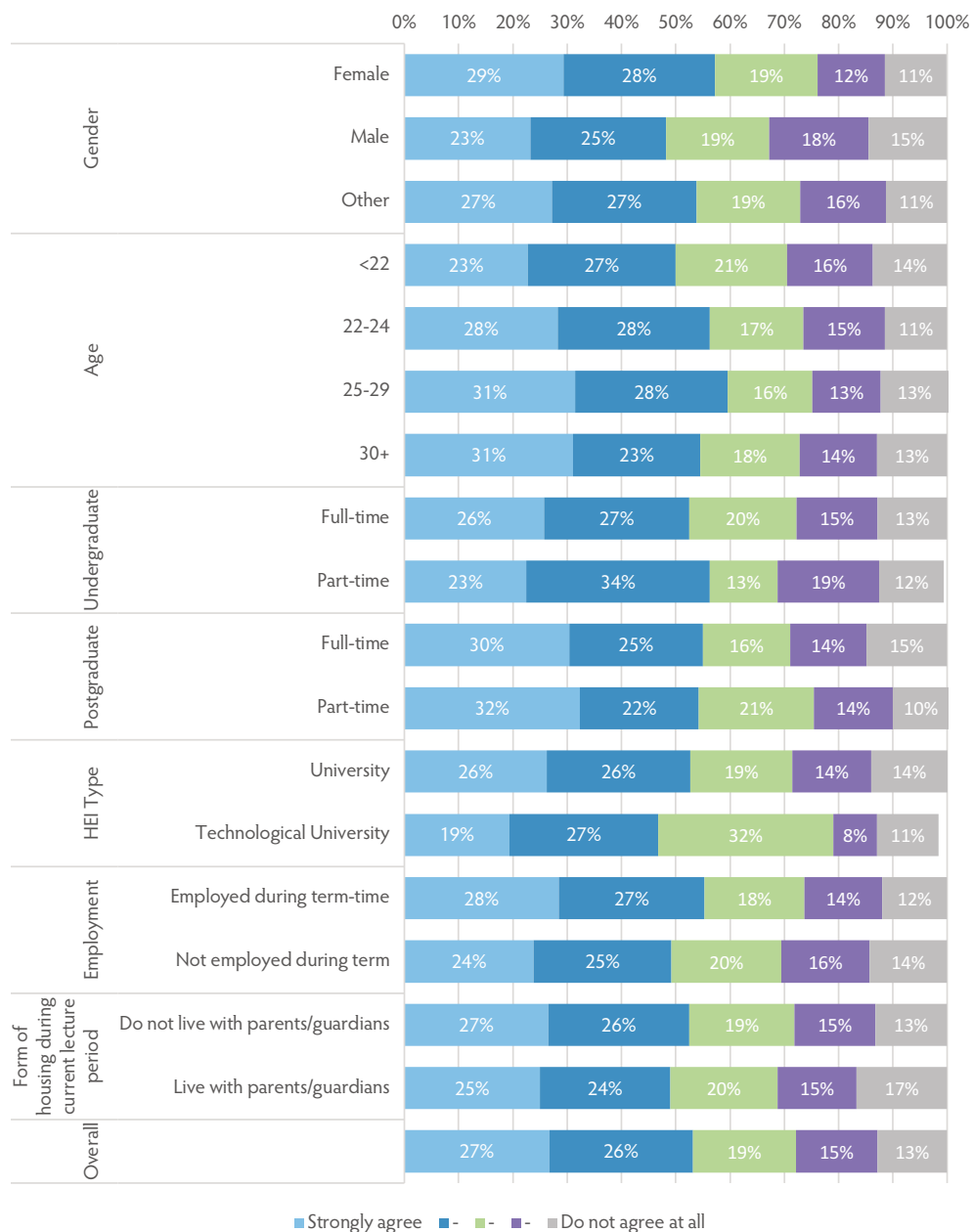
Figure 4.6: "My mental health is suffering" [N=3,178].



The effect on physical health presented in Figure 4.7 is also substantial, though less pronounced than for mental health. Overall, 53 percent agree that their physical health is suffering, while 28 percent disagree. This indicates that financial pressure is not only an economic problem but one that spills over into everyday well-being.

Women report higher levels of agreement (57 percent) than men (48 percent), and students at Universities appear more likely to report physical health impacts than those at Technological Universities. Unlike mental health, the effect on physical health is more mixed, with a larger share neutral or disagreeing. This suggests that while financial stress has a strong effect on mental health across the student population, its physical effects are somewhat less uniform.

Figure 4.7: "My physical health is suffering" [N=3,168].



This chapter has shown that student finances are built from a complex mix of earnings such as family support, savings, grants, and transfers in kind. Employment income is the single largest component of average cash income, but its importance varies sharply depending on whether students live with their parents and whether they work consistently during term-time. Students living independently face much higher expenditure, especially for accommodation, and often rely on a combination of employment income and indirect support to meet these costs. Financial well-being is therefore shaped not only by the level of cash income students receive, but by the availability of external support. Severe financial difficulties are reported by a minority, but the effects of financial stress are visible in perceived academic performance, and especially in their reported mental health.

The financial patterns outlined here help explain why accommodation is such a central issue in student life. The next chapter turns from the structure of income and expenditure to the question of where students live, with whom, and how those living arrangements affect their costs and daily experience of higher education.

Chapter 5: **Student Accommodation**



5.1 Student Accommodation Overview

In recent years, both the cost of property and the rent charged for accommodation has increased substantially (Lyons 2025). In the last chapter it was shown that the cost of accommodation was students' largest regular expense. For students not living with their parents this cost accounts for 44 percent of students' total expenditure. Because of these factors, the cost of accommodation can force students to make difficult choices about whether to live. They could live close to their campus but may pay a premium for this, or live further from campus in cheaper locations, for example, living in their family home, but this may involve a lengthy commute to their higher education institution. This chapter focuses on where students choose to live, with whom, and the distance between their accommodation and HEI.

In the survey, students were first asked who they live with during term-time. Table 5.1 shows the proportions of students in each category (note that students could provide more than one answer thus percentages can sum to greater than 100 percent).

Table 5.1: "Who do you live with during term-time (Monday to Friday)?" [N=11,386].

		Parents/ guardians (or grandparents, uncles, aunts, or similar)	Partner/ spouse	My child(ren)/my partner's child(ren)	With (an)other person(s) not mentioned above (students, friends, etc.)	I live alone
Undergraduate	Full-time	53%	6%	3%	35%	9%
	Part-time	34%	42%	31%	6%	6%
Postgraduate	Full-time	27%	11%	4%	42%	22%
	Part-time	16%	53%	32%	13%	13%
Gender	Female	47%	9%	5%	37%	9%
	Male	51%	8%	2%	31%	13%
	Other	51%	7%	3%	39%	10%
Age	< 22y	59%	2%	0%	35%	8%
	22-24y	47%	5%	0%	42%	10%
	25-29y	31%	17%	2%	38%	18%
	> 30y	10%	43%	36%	17%	17%
HEI Type	University	48%	8%	3%	35%	12%
	TU/IoT	49%	10%	6%	34%	8%
Dublin-based HEI?	HEI outside of Dublin	46%	9%	5%	38%	9%
	HEI based in Dublin	51%	8%	4%	31%	12%
Employed (continually) during term?	No	52%	10%	4%	32%	8%
	Yes	42%	7%	4%	39%	14%
Disability or impairment?	No	47%	8%	4%	35%	11%
	Yes	48%	10%	4%	37%	9%
Overall		48%	9%	4%	35%	10%

Of the total student population, 48 percent live with their parents or other relatives, 35 percent live with other people (most often other students), nine percent of students live with their partners or spouses, four percent live with their children, and six percent live by themselves.

This distribution across the total student population hides the interesting variation that is observed when the distribution is split across key characteristics. For example, for full-time undergraduates, 53 percent live with their parents and 35 percent live with other people. However, for part-time undergraduates only 34 percent live with their parents and six percent live with other people, instead 42 percent live with their partner or spouse, and 31 percent live with their children. What we observe here, and the trend seen at postgraduate level, could be a function of age, as noted in Chapter 1, full-time undergraduate students are younger than all other students, and part-time undergraduates tend to be older than all other groups of students. The distribution seen across age in Table 5.1 lends support to this as 59 percent of students under the age of 22 live with their parents, and this proportion decreases as age increases, and the proportion living with their partners or spouses increases as age goes up.

As would be expected, gender and type of higher educational institution do not appear to have an effect on where students live. Similarly, there does not appear to be much variation across disability, and this remains the case when type of disability is further broken down (not presented here). Finally, students who have continuous employment throughout term-time appear to be less likely to live with their parents – only 42 percent report this compared against 52 percent for students who do not have continuous employment.

Students who indicated that they did not live with their parents or guardians during term-time were asked if they lived in student accommodation.

Table 5.2: “Do you live in student accommodation, e.g. halls of residence?” [N=5,872].

		Do not live in student accommodation	Live in student accommodation
Undergraduate	Full-time student	51%	49%
	Part-time student	98%	2%
Postgraduate	Full-time student	65%	35%
	Part-time student	98%	2%
Gender	Female	55%	45%
	Male	59%	41%
	Other	39%	61%
Age	<22y	36%	64%
	22-24y	55%	45%
	25-29y	75%	25%
	>30y	92%	8%
HEI Type	University	56%	44%
	TU/loT	58%	42%
Dublin-based HEI?	HEI outside of Dublin	57%	43%
	HEI based in Dublin	54%	46%
Employed (continually) during term?	No	62%	38%
	Yes	50%	50%
Disability or impairment?	No	56%	44%
	Yes	58%	42%
Overall	Overall	59%	41%

Table 5.2 presents these results and show that 49 percent of full-time undergraduates and 35 percent of full-time postgraduates live in student accommodation. In contrast only two percent of part-time undergraduates and postgraduates do the same. Furthermore, younger students are much more likely to live in student accommodation than older students and much like that seen in Table 5.1, type of HEI, and disability appear to have little or no effect on living in student accommodation as similar proportions are found across each.

Table 5.3 presents summary statistics of the time taken by students on a typical day to get from their accommodation to their HEI across key characteristics.

Table 5.3: "On a typical day during term, how much time (in minutes) does it take you to get from your home to your higher education institution?" [N=14,675].

		Mean	Median
Undergraduate	Full-time	45	40
	Part-time	54	45
Postgraduate	Full-time	41	30
	Part-time	58	50
Gender	Female	47	40
	Male	45	40
	Other	48	40
Age	<22y	46	40
	22-24y	41	30
	25-29y	46	35
	>30y	53	45
HEI Type	University	48	40
	Technological University	43	30
Dublin-based HEI?	HEI outside of Dublin	40	30
	HEI based in Dublin	53	45
Employed (continually)during term?	No	48	40
	Yes	44	35
Disability or impairment?	No	45	35
	Yes	49	40
Live with Parents?	No	34	25
	Yes	60	60
Live in student accommodation?	No	43	30
	Yes	20	15

As noted above, students who live in student accommodation, which is typically located in close proximity to campus, appear to have the shortest distance to travel, taking on average 20 minutes to get from their home to their HEI. Students who live with their parents appear to have the longest commutes as on average their travel time is 60 minutes. However, as has been repeatedly noted, the longer commute is counter-balanced by the lower cost of accommodation. In addition, students who attend Dublin-based HEIs also appear to have longer commutes (on average, 53 minutes) than students who attend HEIs outside of Dublin (on average, 40 minutes).

As would be expected, gender and type of HEI have little to no apparent effect on journey time. However, disabled students appear to face longer commutes than other students.

The findings in this chapter show that accommodation arrangements vary substantially across the student population. Nearly half of all students live with their parents during term-time, reflecting both the cost of accommodation and the younger age profile of many undergraduates. However, older and part-time students are far more likely to live with partners or children, indicating that they combine higher education with family responsibilities. Student accommodation plays an important role primarily for younger full-time students, particularly those under the age of 22. Commuting times are strongly influenced by living arrangements and institutional location, with students living at home travelling significantly longer distances than those in student accommodation. These patterns illustrate how financial constraints, age and institutional geography interact to shape where and how students live during their studies.

The living arrangements described in this chapter also shape how students organise their time during the academic year. Where students live, how far they travel, and whether they live independently or with family all affect the time available for study, employment and other commitments. The next chapter picks up on these themes and examines how students allocate their time between taught study, personal study and paid work.

Chapter 6:

Course Workload, Student Employment, and Time Budget



This chapter is about the amount of time students record spending on their studies, the time spent in employment, and the balance between the two for students who work on top of their studies. This chapter has three sections, each discussing one of these topics.

6.1 Course Workload

This section looks at the amount of time that students report as spending on their studies. The survey distinguishes between time spent in taught studies (for example, timetabled classes, lectures, and seminars), time spent on personal study, and the total time spend in study related activities which is the sum of these two.

The key delineator in the amount of time spent studying appears to be the formal status of the student; whether they are full or part-time. Part-time students, by definition, spend less time in the formal learning environment of attending lectures and seminars. As such, to look only at the workload of the total student population would present biased averages. Therefore, the tables below present the average weekly workload for full and part-time students separately.

The average weekly workload for full-time students is presented in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Average weekly workload (in hours) for full-time students [N=14,005].

		Total time spent on taught studies in typical week	Total time spent on personal study time in typical week	Total time spent on study related activities during week in lecture period (in hours)	Total hours spent on study- related activities and paid jobs in typical week
Gender	Female	18	19	37	46
	Male	19	17	36	44
	Other	16	20	37	41
Age	< 22	19	16	35	43
	22-24	17	22	38	48
	25-29	18	20	38	47
	30 +	18	22	40	49
Level	Undergraduate	19	17	36	45
	Postgraduate	14	23	37	47
HEI Type	University	17	19	36	44
	Technological University	22	16	37	47
Study programme	Generic programmes	11	28	39	61
	Education Science	19	16	35	47
	Teacher Training	18	17	35	44
	Arts	16	18	33	41
	Humanities	13	18	31	40
	Languages	13	16	30	39
	Social sciences, journalism and information	13	18	31	40
	Psychology	14	19	32	42
	Business and administration	16	15	31	42
	Law	12	18	31	40
	Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	20	18	38	45
	ICT	19	19	38	45
	Engineering, manufacturing, construction	22	18	40	49
	Architecture and town planning	22	24	46	52
	Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, veterinary	22	16	38	47
	Medicine, Dental Studies	23	26	49	52
	Health	22	17	39	51
	Pharmacy	27	21	48	55
	Welfare	20	16	36	49
	Services	20	12	32	43
Living with Parents/Guardians	No	18	19	37	45
	Yes	18	17	35	45
Employment	Not employed	19	19	38	38
	Employed	18	17	35	50
Overall		18	18	18	45

Note: Differences between total and the sum of individual components are due to rounding.

Of full-time students, the average weekly time spent in study related activities is 36 hours. This is itself broken down into 18 hours spent in taught studies and 18 hours spent on personal study time. While this overall balance suggests a broadly structured workload, important variation emerges across programme level and discipline.

1. While there does not appear to be any substantial differences in the amount of time male and female students spend in taught studies, male students appear to spend slightly less time in personal study.
2. The contrast between undergraduate and postgraduate study is clear. Undergraduate students spend more time in structured teaching (19 hours) than postgraduate students (14 hours), but this difference is offset by the much greater emphasis placed on independent learning at postgraduate level, where students spend 23 hours per week on personal study, compared with 17 hours among undergraduates.
3. Disciplinary differences are among the most pronounced in the table. Programmes such as Medicine (49 hours total study time), Pharmacy (48 hours) and Architecture (46 hours) impose very high time demands, driven by both intensive teaching schedules and substantial independent work. In contrast, students in Languages (30 hours), Humanities (31 hours) and Social Sciences (31 hours) report significantly lower workloads, indicating more flexible or less contact-intensive structures.
4. Although the overall average time spent studying per week is 37 hours, there are some notable differences across institution type. Students appear on average to spend more time in taught studies in Technological Universities than in Universities. However, the opposite is the case when we look at personal study as students in Universities spend three hours more per week on this than students at Technological Universities.
5. Research has shown a negative correlation between the amount of time spent in employment whilst at in higher education and overall grades achieved (Tessema et al 2014; Pike et al 2008). The research suggests that students who are employed while also studying have distinct pressures on their time and are less able to devote significant amounts of time to their own education. There is some evidence to suggest that here, but it is not as strong as the research implies. The amount of time spent in taught studies as noted above is relatively even and as such there are no substantive differences between employed students and students not in employment.

However, when we look at the amount of time they spend on personal study, there is a two-hour difference. Students not in employment spend on average 19 hours per week on personal study. For employed students this is only 17 hours. This may appear to be relatively minor, but it should be borne in mind that over the course of a semester the cumulative effect of this gap is more than twenty-four hours⁹.

Table 6.2 highlights the fundamentally different time structure of part-time study. Part-time students spend an average of 21 hours per week on study, considerably less than the 36 hours recorded for full-time students. This reduced workload reflects the design of part-time programmes, which are intended to accommodate other commitments, particularly employment.

The balance between taught and independent study also differs slightly from that observed among full-time students. Part-time students spend 8 hours in taught study and 13 hours on personal study, indicating a stronger reliance on independent learning relative to scheduled teaching time.

⁹ A typical semester is twelve weeks in length. 2 times 12 is 24 hours.

Variation across groups is relatively limited compared with full-time students, but some patterns are evident. Part-time undergraduates spend slightly more time in taught study (10 hours) than postgraduates (7 hours), while postgraduates compensate with marginally higher personal study time (14 hours vs 12 hours). Differences across subject areas are present but less pronounced, with most disciplines clustering around similar total workloads.

The most significant variation arises from employment. Employed part-time students report a combined workload of 55 hours per week (study plus employment), compared with 26 hours for those not employed. This illustrates the intensity of balancing part-time study with work and highlights the dual role many part-time students occupy as both workers and learners.

Table 6.2: Average weekly workload (in hours) for part-time students [N=670].

		Total time spent on taught studies in typical week	Total time spent on personal study time in typical week	Total time spent on study related activities during week in lecture period (in hours)	Total hours spent on study- related activities and paid jobs in typical week
Gender	Female	8	14	21	51
	Male	9	12	21	53
	Other	3	13	15	45
Age	< 22	8	13	21	52
	22-24	9	11	20	44
	25-29	10	11	21	46
	30 +	7	15	22	54
Level	Undergraduate	10	12	21	52
	Postgraduate	7	14	21	51
HEI Type	University	7	14	21	50
	Technological University	9	12	21	54
Study programme	Generic programmes	7	12	19	48
	Education Science	9	12	21	49
	Teacher Training	7	17	24	53
	Arts	7	16	23	46
	Humanities	5	13	18	35
	Languages	5	12	17	36
	Social sciences, journalism and information	7	13	20	47
	Psychology	7	13	20	54
	Business and administration	9	13	22	53
	Law	7	12	19	51
	Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	9	13	22	51
	ICT	9	13	22	51
	Engineering, manufacturing, construction	9	11	20	54
	Architecture and town planning	8	9	17	55
	Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, veterinary	5	8	13	51
	Medicine, Dental Studies	8	15	23	63
	Health	8	15	23	58
	Pharmacy	.	.	.	.
	Welfare	9	12	21	51
	Services	9	10	19	61
Living with Parents/Guardians	No	8	13	21	52
	Yes	8	14	22	51
Employment	Not employed	8	18	26	26
	Employed	8	12	21	55
Overall		8	13	21	52

Note: Differences between total and the sum of individual components are due to rounding.

A recent study used data from Eurostudent III and IV to examine the amount of time Irish students living in student accommodation spent on personal study (Gormley 2016). Theoretically, because student accommodation tends to be close to the campus, students who live in halls of residence should have fewer obstacles to their study, which as a result should lead to them spending more time on personal study. Research cited by Gormley (2016) conducted in the United Kingdom and the United States has indicated this is the case in these countries, but Gormley found the opposite to be the case in Ireland. This study found that students living in student accommodation spent a lower amount of time on personal study than the average student living elsewhere.

Table 6.3: Summary of the effect key student characteristics have upon time spent on personal study [N=10,499].

Live in student accommodation	0.03 (0.29)
(Ref: All other accommodation)	
Female	1.09 (0.23) ***
(Ref: Male)	
Age	0.11 (0.02) ***
Full-time student	7.36 (0.46) ***
(Ref: Part-time student)	
University	2.52 (0.25) ***
(Ref: Institutes of Technology)	
Undergraduate student	-3.33 (0.35) ***
(Ref: Postgraduate student)	
Continuously employed during term-time	-2.56 (0.24) ***
(Ref: Not continuously employed during term-time)	
Intercept	5.13 (0.84) ***
Adjusted R-squared	0.07

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. Standard errors in parentheses. Dependent Variable: the number of hours per week spent in personal study.

As this is an interesting finding which runs counter to what is found in other countries, we have examined this pattern in the last three Eurostudent reports and it is worth repeating to see whether this is still the case in Ireland using the latest Eurostudent data. Table 6.3 above presents a regression model of the effect that living in student accommodation has upon the amount of time spent on personal study, along with a number of control variables, mostly in the form of indicator variables.

This model shows that students living in student accommodation do not spend significantly fewer hours on personal study than students living elsewhere, as this coefficient is not significant. Furthermore, these results appear to be robust to the inclusion of numerous controls which could feasibly be behind the difference found between students that live in student accommodation, and those living elsewhere.

Instead, what is evident is that while living in student accommodation does not appear to have an effect here, a host of other factors can affect the amount of time spent in personal study. For example, being one or more of the following factors: female, older, a full-time student, a postgraduate student, unemployed during term-time, or studying at a university, appear to have significant positive effects on the number of hours spent on personal study.

In contrast, being employed during term-time significantly and negatively affects the amount of time spent in personal study. However, employment by and of itself should not be seen as a negative. The next section goes into more detail about student employment.

6.2 Student Employment

Working can give students a better understanding of what they are being taught (if they are working in an area related to their studies), assist in their choice of career-path, and alleviate any financial strain that they may encounter across the academic year. On the other hand, working while studying may lead to greater absence from lectures, and as noted already, reduced time for personal study, which could result in poorer overall levels of academic achievement. This is supported by existing research which has shown a negative correlation between the amount of time spent in employment whilst in higher education and overall grades achieved (Tessema et al 2014; Pike et al 2008, Keute 2017). The causal relationship this strand of research proposes is that students who are employed while also studying have distinct pressures on their time and are less able to devote significant amounts of time to their own education.

Before continuing, much like the overall amount of time students have available to themselves for study, the key delineator in whether students are employed appears to be the formal status of the student, whether they are full or part-time. Part-time students, by definition, have more time available to spend outside of the structured learning environment, and as has been previously noted, tend to be older and more likely to have children, which means they are less likely to be dependent upon their parents for financial support and more likely to have dependents themselves and as such, need employment to maintain their studies. Full-time students which as noted in Chapters 4 and 5 are more likely to rely upon financial support from their parents and/or live with their parents and thus have less of a need for additional finances and instead can concentrate (if they so wish) upon their studies. Because of this, these two sub-groups within the population have very different experiences of employment and to examine them together would mask how each group evaluates their employment. Because of this, this section discusses the results pertaining to these two sub-groups separately. All students were asked if they had a paid job (or paid internship) during the current semester. Table 6.4 presents the level of employment for full-time students across a number of student characteristics.

Table 6.4: Level of employment across key student characteristics – full-time students only [N=10,772].

		Yes, I work during the whole term	Yes, I work from time to time during term-time	No, I don't work during term-time
Gender	Female	44%	17%	39%
	Male	37%	19%	44%
	Other	20%	13%	67%
Age	< 22	42%	17%	41%
	22-24	44%	18%	38%
	25-29	34%	19%	48%
	30 +	27%	19%	54%
Level	Undergraduate	42%	17%	41%
	Postgraduate	31%	22%	47%
HEI Type	University	40%	18%	42%
	Technological University	43%	17%	40%
Living with Parents/Guardians	No	33%	19%	47%
	Yes	47%	16%	37%
Employment	Employed	70%	30%	0%
	Not employed	0%	0%	100%
Overall		41%	18%	42%

Table 6.4 shows that employment is widespread even among full-time students. Overall, 59 percent work during term-time, with 41 percent working continuously and 18 percent working occasionally. This indicates that combining study with employment is a common feature of full-time higher education.

Gender differences are relatively modest but consistent. Female students are more likely to work throughout the term (44 percent) than male students (37 percent), while male students are more likely not to work at all (44 percent vs 39 percent). Employment also declines with age among full-time students, suggesting that younger students are more likely to take on part-time work alongside their studies.

Table 6.5 presents the level of employment for part-time students across a number of student characteristics.

Table 6.5: Level of employment across key student characteristics – part-time students only [N=541].

		Yes, I work during the whole term	Yes, I work from time to time during term-time	No, I don't work during term-time
Gender	Female	84%	5%	11%
	Male	82%	6%	11%
	Other	100%	0%	0%
Age	< 22	86%	4%	10%
	22-24	84%	7%	9%
	25-29	85%	8%	7%
	30 +	82%	5%	12%
Level	Undergraduate	82%	9%	9%
	Postgraduate	83%	4%	12%
HEI Type	University	82%	5%	13%
	Technological University	84%	7%	9%
Living with Parents/Guardians	No	83%	5%	12%
	Yes	84%	9%	6%
Employment	Employed	94%	6%	0%
	Not employed	0%	0%	100%
Overall		83%	6%	11%

The table above shows that employment is nearly universal among part-time students. Eighty-nine percent work during term-time, with 83 percent working continuously. This reflects the structural nature of part-time study, which is typically undertaken alongside employment rather than in place of it.

Unlike full-time students, employment rates among part-time students show very little variation across demographic or institutional categories. This consistency suggests that employment is not a supplementary activity for part-time students but a defining characteristic of their educational experience.

Table 6.6 presents the average amount of time spent working by students who are employed during term-time and highlights the stark contrast in working hours between full-time and part-time students. Full-time students who work spend an average of 9 hours per week in employment, whereas part-time students work around 30 hours per week. This difference illustrates the fundamentally different role that employment plays in each group.

Variation across categories is limited, though older students tend to work slightly longer hours than younger students. Students at Technological Universities also report marginally higher working hours than those at universities. Overall, however,

the dominant pattern is the clear divide between relatively low-intensity employment among full-time students and near full-time employment among part-time students.

Table 6.6: Average time (in hours) spent on paid jobs per week during term-time [N=13,973].

		Full-time	Part-time
Gender	Female	9	29
	Male	9	31
	Other	5	30
Age	< 22	8	25
	22-24	9	25
	25-29	9	32
	30 +	9	31
Level	Undergraduate	9	30
	Postgraduate	9	30
HEI Type	University	8	29
	Technological University	10	31
Living with Parents/Guardians	No	8	31
	Yes	10	30
Employment	Employed	15	34
	Not Employed	0	0
Overall		9	30

So far, two patterns have emerged, in that full-time students are less likely to be in employment during term-time than part-time students, and these patterns hold up over a range of potential mediating characteristics. However, this is not the only period of time in which students could have been employed. The survey asks students if they had a job before entering higher education, and also asks if they have had a job during a lecture-free period (i.e. outside of term-time) over the last year. Table 6.7 presents the degree to which full-time students were employed before entering higher education for the first time.

Table 6.7: Paid job(s) prior to entering higher education for the first time – full-time students only [N=13,645].

		Yes, I worked continuously for at least one year without interruption and at least 20h per week	Yes, I worked continuously for at least one year without interruption and less than 20h per week	Yes, I worked, but less than one year	No, I did not work prior to entering higher education
Gender	Female	20%	19%	29%	32%
	Male	21%	14%	30%	36%
	Other	22%	9%	38%	32%
Age	< 22	12%	19%	32%	36%
	22-24	23%	15%	30%	32%
	25-29	50%	9%	15%	26%
	30 +	61%	7%	9%	22%
Level	Undergraduate	18%	18%	30%	34%
	Postgraduate	37%	11%	20%	33%
HEI Type	University	18%	18%	30%	34%
	Technological University	24%	15%	28%	33%
Living with Parents/Guardians	No	25%	15%	29%	30%
	Yes	15%	18%	30%	38%
Employment	Employed during term	24%	23%	30%	23%
	Not employed throughout term	14%	7%	29%	50%
Overall		20%	17%	29%	34%

Of the total full-time student population, 34 percent of students did not work before entering higher education for the first time, 29 percent had occasional employment for less than a year, and 37 percent were employed for over a year (17 percent worked less than 20 hours per week and 20 percent worked more than 20 hours per week). For undergraduates, the trend appears to be for entry into higher education without any substantive experience of employment. For postgraduates however, 37 percent say that they have worked continuously for over a year (and more than 20 hours per week) before beginning. This is perhaps due to the need to save money before starting their postgraduate programme.

For students not living with their parents, 25 percent have worked continuously for over a year (and more than 20 hours per week) before entering higher education. This suggests that without the financial support of their parents (through the reduced cost of accommodation and potential transfers in kind), they are more likely to work before entering higher education to save money to provide themselves with a source of income while studying.

Table 6.8 presents the percentages of part-time students who were employed before entering higher education for the first time.

Of the total part-time student population, only 27 percent of students did not work before entering higher education for the first time, 16 percent had occasional employment for less than a year, and 58 percent were employed for over a year (9 percent worked less than 20 hours per week and 49 percent worked more than 20 hours per week).

Table 6.8: Paid job(s) prior to entering higher education for the first time – part-time students only [N=648].

		Yes, I worked continuously for at least one year without interruption and at least 20h per week	Yes, I worked continuously for at least one year without interruption and less than 20h per week	Yes, I worked, but less than one year	No, I did not work prior to entering higher education
Gender	Female	46%	10%	18%	26%
	Male	52%	9%	12%	27%
	Other	0%	0%	0%	100%
Age	< 22	31%	7%	45%	18%
	22-24	37%	12%	24%	27%
	25-29	42%	9%	18%	31%
	30 +	52%	9%	12%	26%
Level	Undergraduate	64%	10%	12%	14%
	Postgraduate	41%	9%	17%	32%
HEI Type	University	41%	10%	19%	30%
	Technological University	57%	9%	12%	23%
Living with Parents/Guardians	No	51%	10%	15%	25%
	Yes	40%	9%	19%	32%
Employment	Employed during term	49%	10%	15%	26%
	Not employed throughout term	40%	2%	26%	33%
Overall		49%	9%	16%	27%

From this table, undergraduates appear to be more likely to have worked for over a year and for over 20 hours per week. Again, as noted elsewhere part-time undergraduates are more likely to be older and not reliant upon financial support from their parents. As such they require employment to support themselves and save money before entering higher education. This is also supported by the pattern found across the age and not living with parents' categories. Male students also appear to be more likely to have worked for over a year and for over 20 hours per week than female students. The same appears to be the case for students at Technological Universities compared to students at Universities.

Table 6.9: Employment during a lecture-free period over the last 12 months [N=11,224].

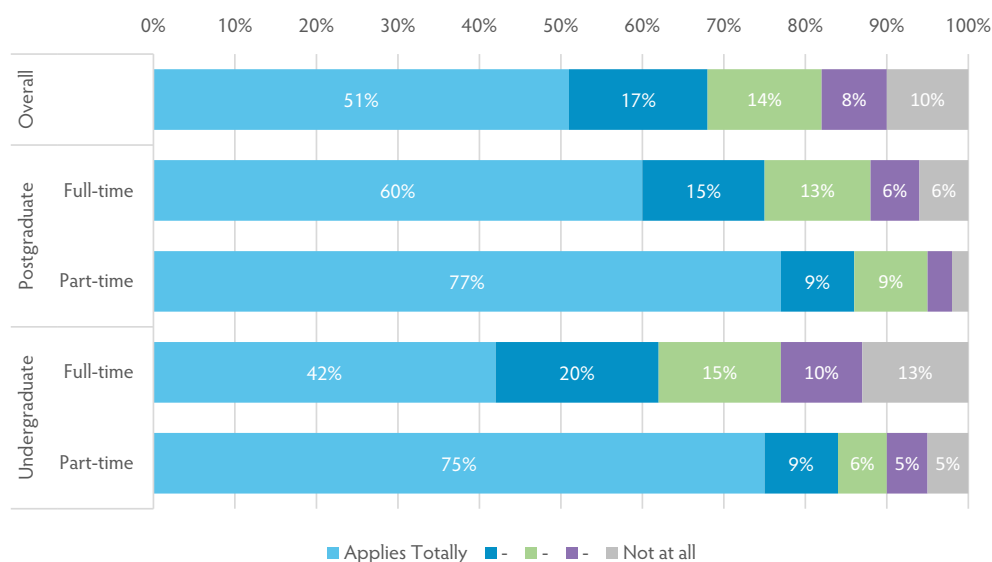
		Full-time		Part-time	
		No	Yes	No	Yes
Gender	Female	29%	71%	12%	88%
	Male	32%	68%	12%	88%
	Other	43%	57%	0%	100%
Age	< 22	30%	70%	10%	90%
	22-24	24%	76%	2%	98%
	25-29	43%	57%	7%	93%
	30 +	49%	51%	14%	86%
Level	Undergraduate	29%	71%	13%	87%
	Postgraduate	41%	59%	11%	89%
HEI Type	University	30%	70%	13%	87%
	Technological University	31%	69%	10%	90%
Living with Parents/Guardians	No	34%	66%	13%	87%
	Yes	27%	73%	8%	92%
Employment	Employed during term	8%	92%	4%	96%
	Not employed throughout term	61%	39%	73%	27%
Overall		30%	70%	12%	88%

Table 6.9 presents the degree to which full-time and part-time students were employed during a lecture-free period over the last year. Of the total full-time student population, approximately 70 percent of students worked during a lecture-free period. As noted in Table 6.4 only 41 percent of full-time students work throughout term-time. As such, this suggests that these students tend to work outside of term-time, and during the academic year focus on their studies. In contrast, 88 percent of part-time students worked during a lecture-free period, which is marginally higher than the 83 percent that work during term-time (cf. Table 6.5). As such, this suggests that part-time students balance work and study together, rather than alternating between the two depending on the time of year as full-time students appear to do.

6.3 Study – Employment Balance

All students who had a paid job within the current semester were asked to what extent a series of statements applied to them, Figure 6.1 illustrates the results across full and part-time students at both the undergraduate and postgraduate level.

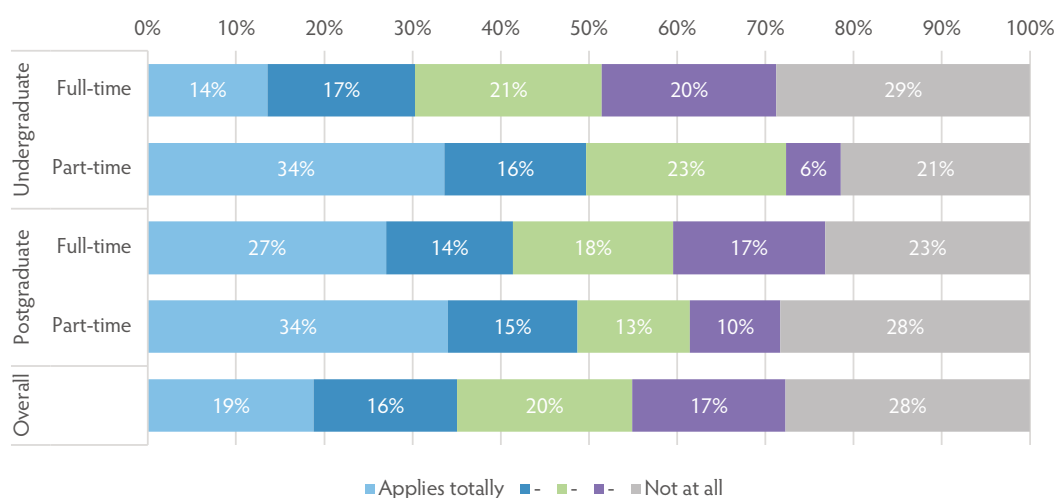
Figure 6.1: Level of agreement with the statement – “I work to cover my living costs” [N=6,764].



Of the students that work, on average 42 percent of full-time undergraduates and 60 percent of full-time postgraduates agree totally with the statement, “I work to cover my living costs”. This increases to 75 percent and 77 percent for part-time undergraduates and postgraduates respectively.

The distribution of responses for the second statement, “I work to gain experience on the labour market” is shown in Figure 6.2.

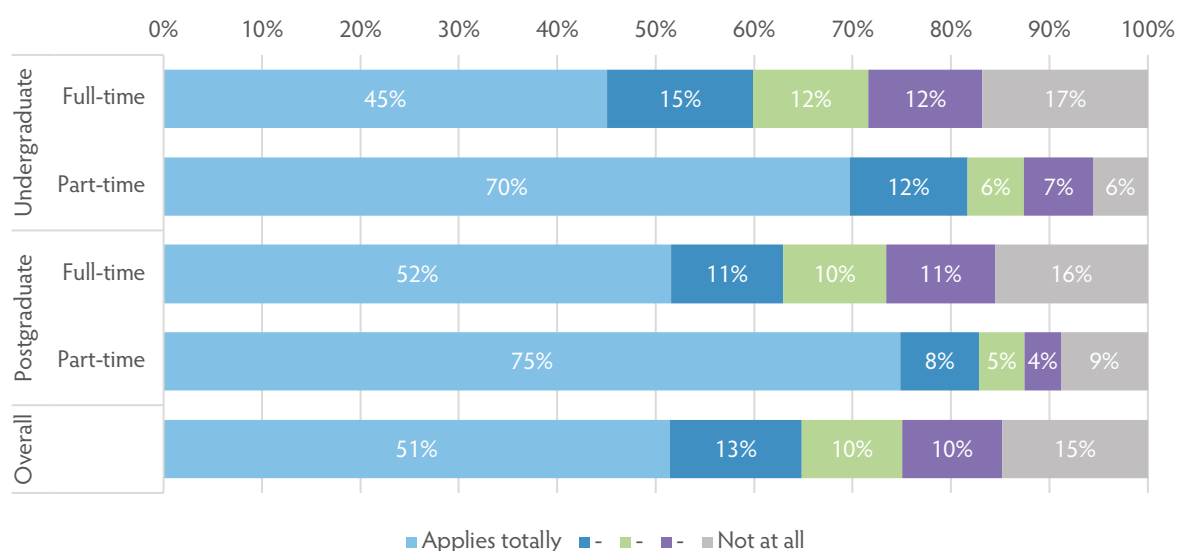
Figure 6.2: Level of agreement with the statement – “I work to gain experience on the labour market” [N=6,725].



This chart shows a similar pattern with 14 percent of full-time undergraduates and 27 percent of full-time postgraduates totally agreeing with the statement, and large proportions of both groups saying that the statement does not apply to them at all. In contrast, 34 percent of part-time undergraduates and part-time postgraduates each totally agree with the statement.

The third statement, “without my paid job, I could not afford to be a student” is shown in Figure 6.3.

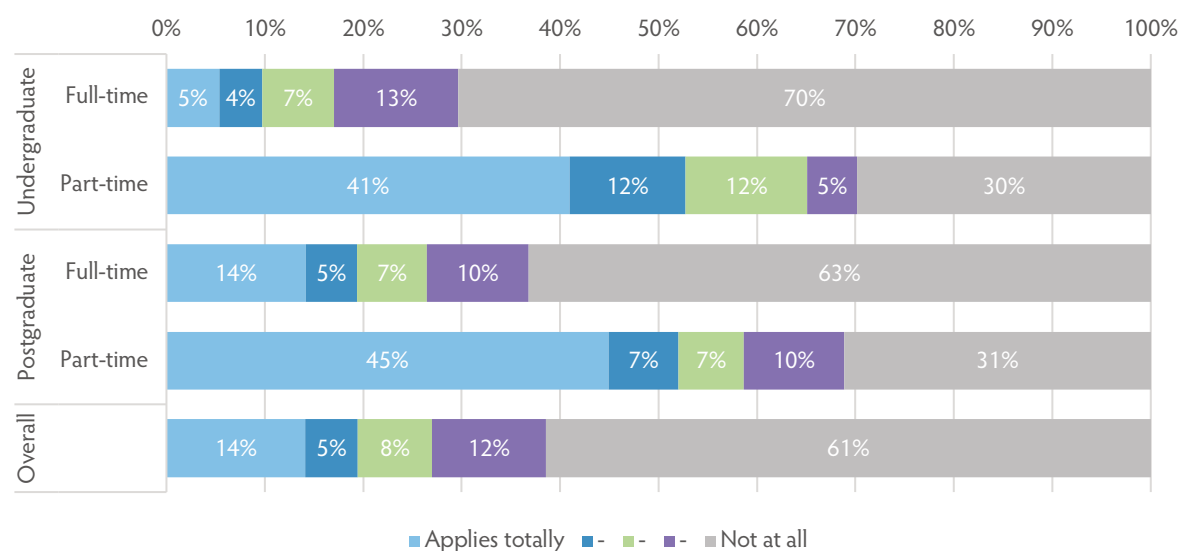
Figure 6.3: Level of agreement with the statement – “Without my paid job, I could not afford to be a student” [N=6,747].



This statement is supported totally by 45 percent of full-time undergraduates and 52 percent of full-time postgraduates. This rises to 70 percent for part-time undergraduates and 75 percent of part-time postgraduates.

The fourth statement “I work because I have to support others financially” is shown in Figure 6.4.

Figure 6.4: Level of agreement with the statement – “I work because I have to support others financially (children, partner, parents etc.)” [N=6,754].

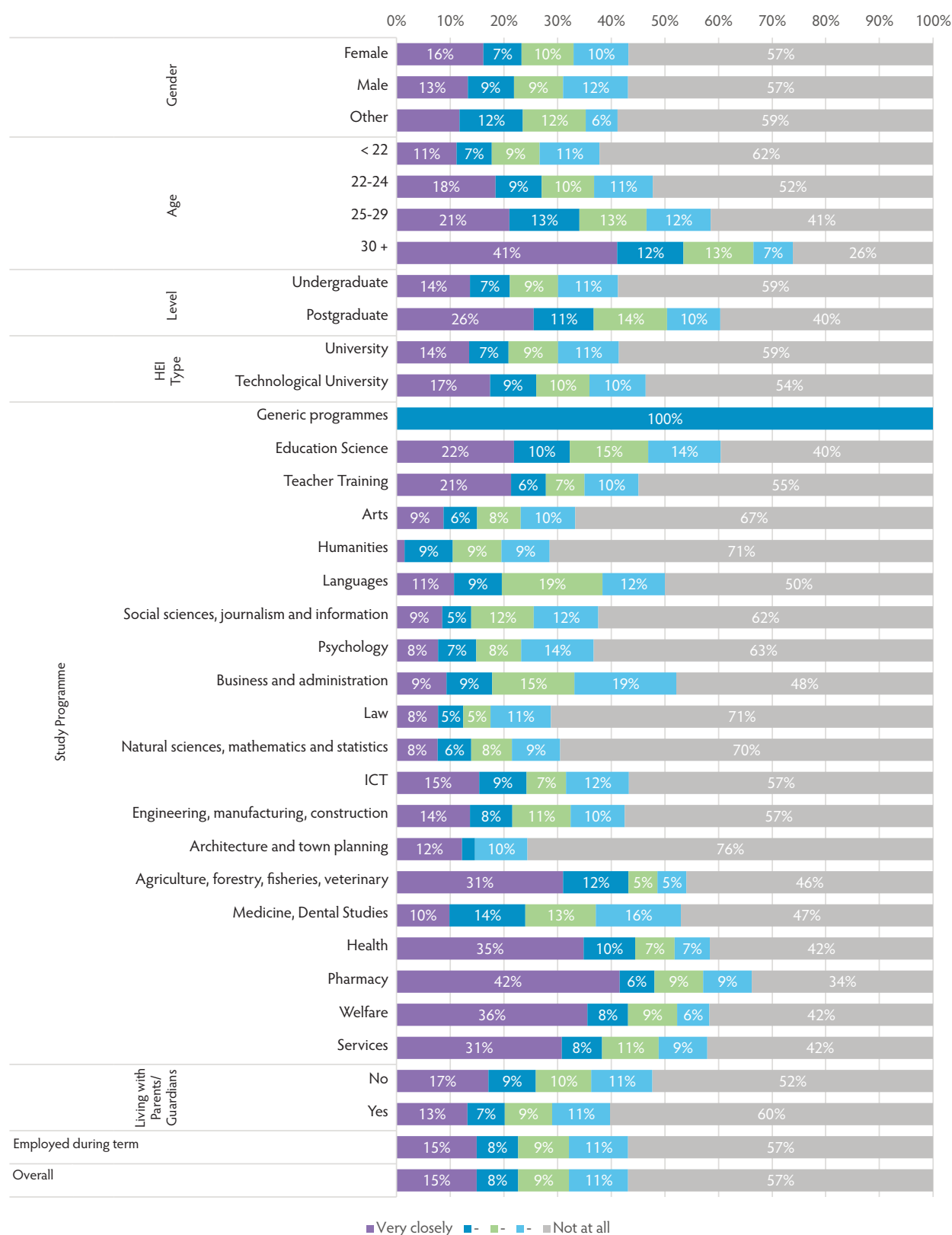


This statement shows the greatest degree of variation across part-time and full-time students as 70 percent of full-time undergraduates and 63 percent of full-time postgraduates say that this does not apply to them at all. However, the opposite appears to be the case for part-time students as 41 and 45 percent of part-time undergraduates and postgraduates respectively totally agree with this statement.

Once again, reactions to these statements appear to be related to the formal status of students and the corresponding characteristics they are likely to exhibit. For example, we already know that part-time students tend to be older, and less reliant on their parents to support them financially, as such these students tend to display a greater need to work to support both themselves and others.

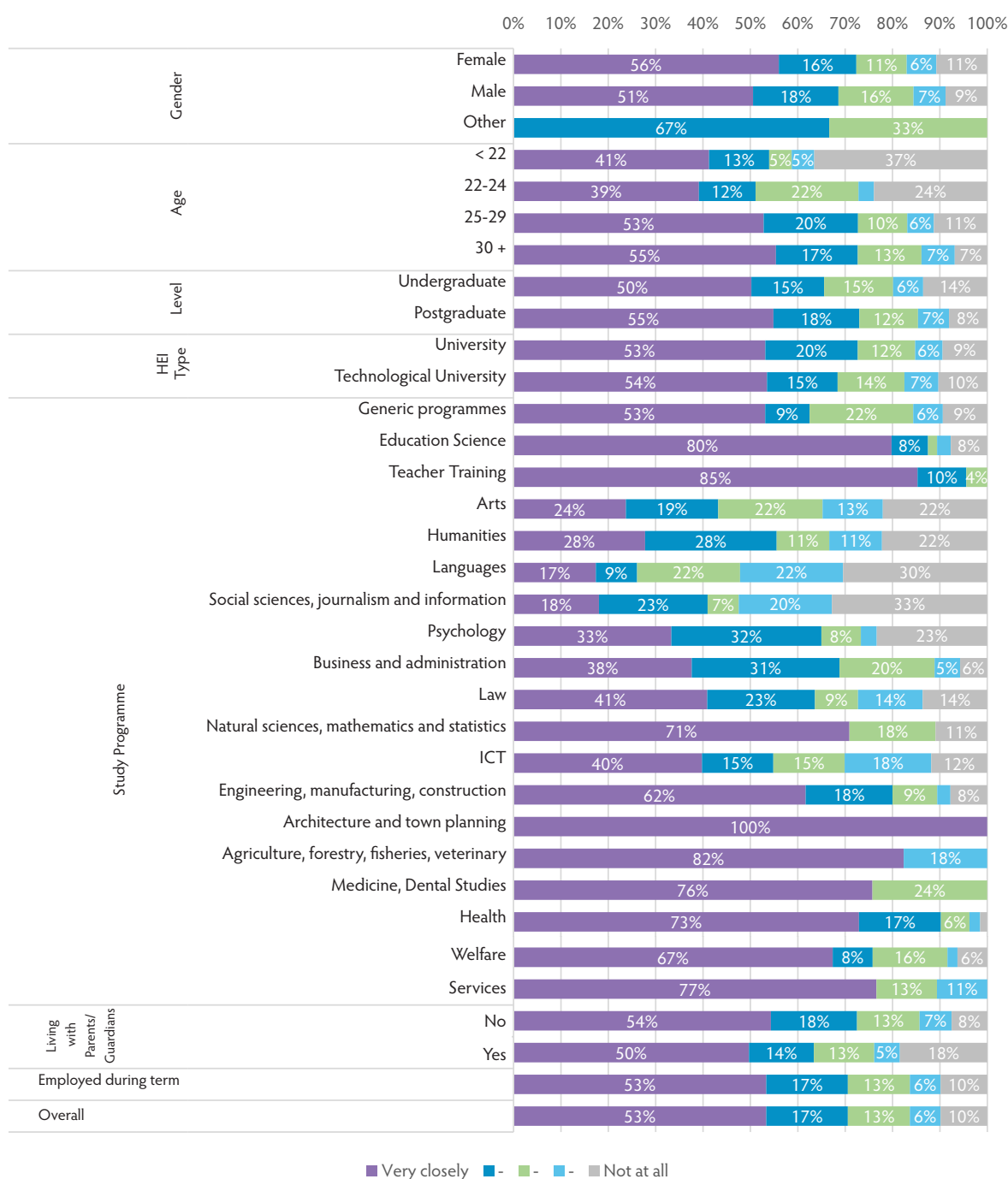
Figures 6.5 and 6.6 present how closely students' jobs relate to the content of their study programmes for full-time and part-time students separately.

Figure 6.5: Degree to which job is related to content of study programme – full-time students only [N=6,287].



For full-time students across the categories of interest, the trend appears to be for jobs to have little to no relation to their study programme. For part-time students however as shown in Figure 6.6, the opposite appears to be the case, in that their studies are more often closely related to their employment.

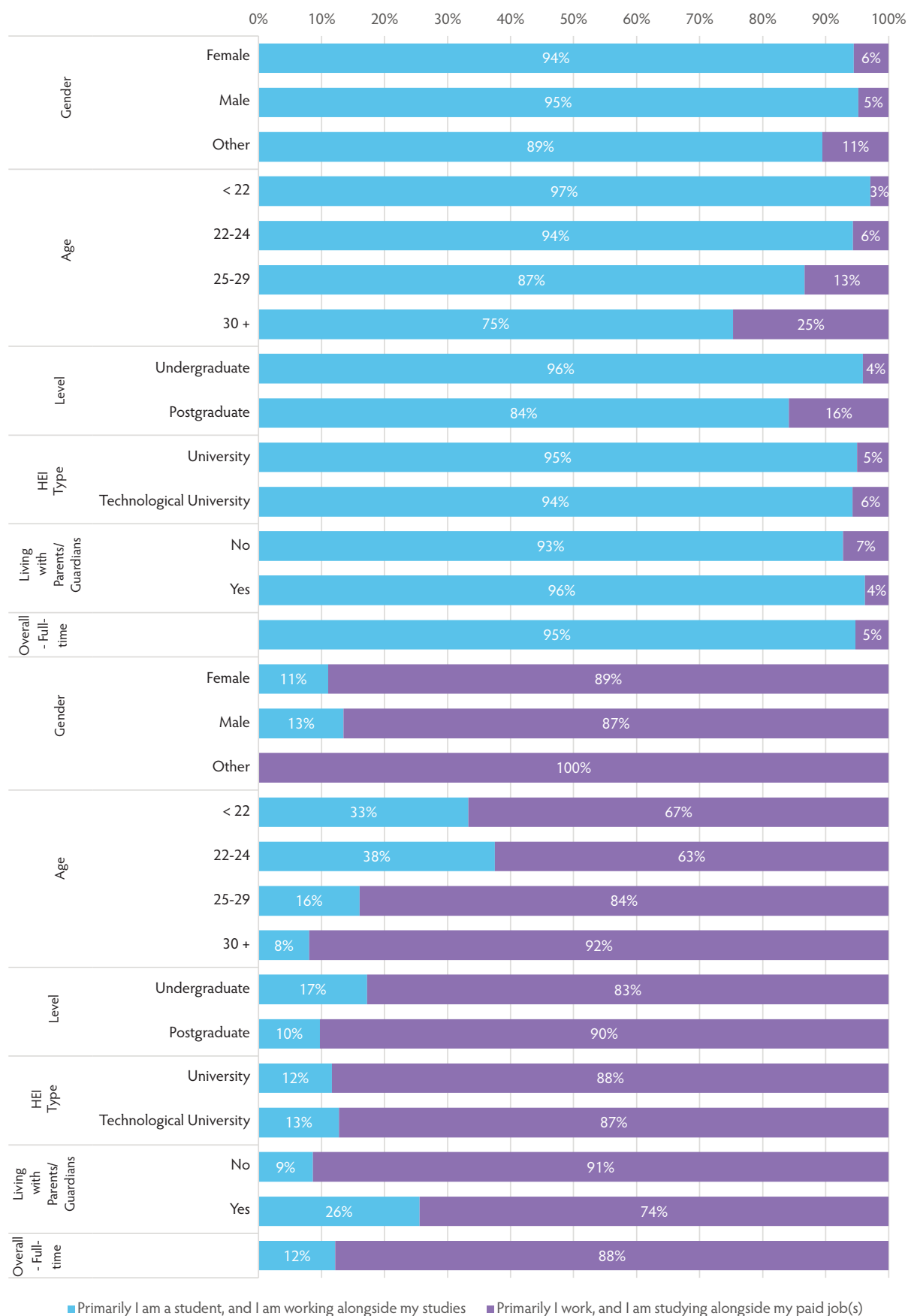
Figure 6.6: Degree to which job is related to content of study programme – part-time students only [N=474].



These distinct patterns suggest that full-time students are employed solely to support themselves and are prepared to work in a field that bears little to no relation to their overall field of interest. In contrast, part-time students' employment appears to be closely related to their field of study which suggests that they are choosing vocational study programmes that closely align with their current jobs, potentially to further develop their skills in these fields, assist their professional development, and further their chosen careers.

This is further supported by Figure 6.7 which shows the degree to which students' think of themselves as primarily a student or someone who works.

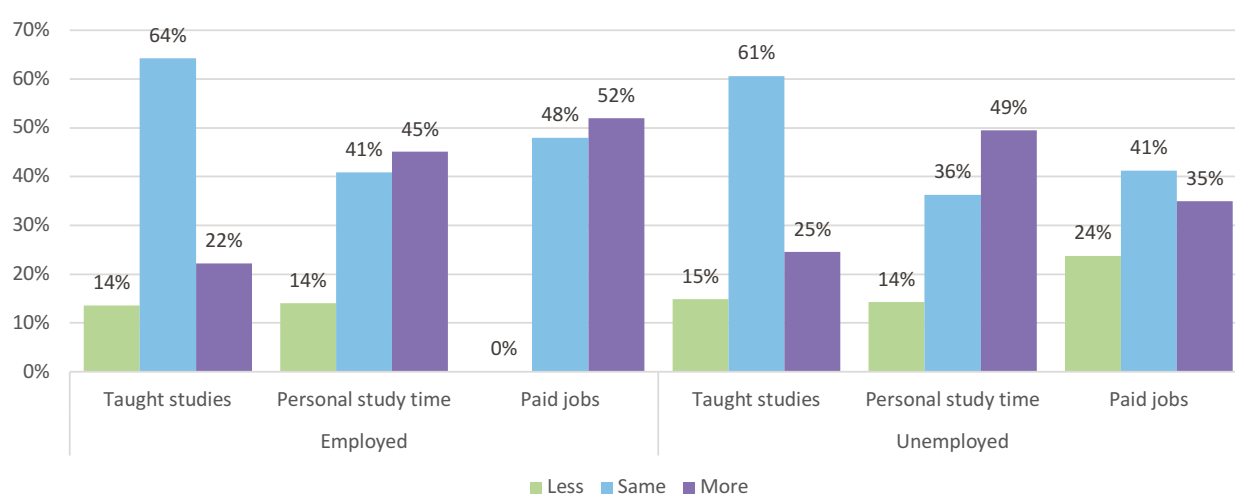
Figure 6.7: Degree to which students see themselves as a student or worker [N=6,728].



Of the total full-time student population, 95 percent of students said that they thought of themselves as a student first, and they work alongside their studies. However, of the total part-time student population 88 percent said that they thought of themselves as working first, and that they study alongside their job. Furthermore, these responses are very consistent across categories of students, with only younger part-time students and those that live with their parents deviating from the overall trend.

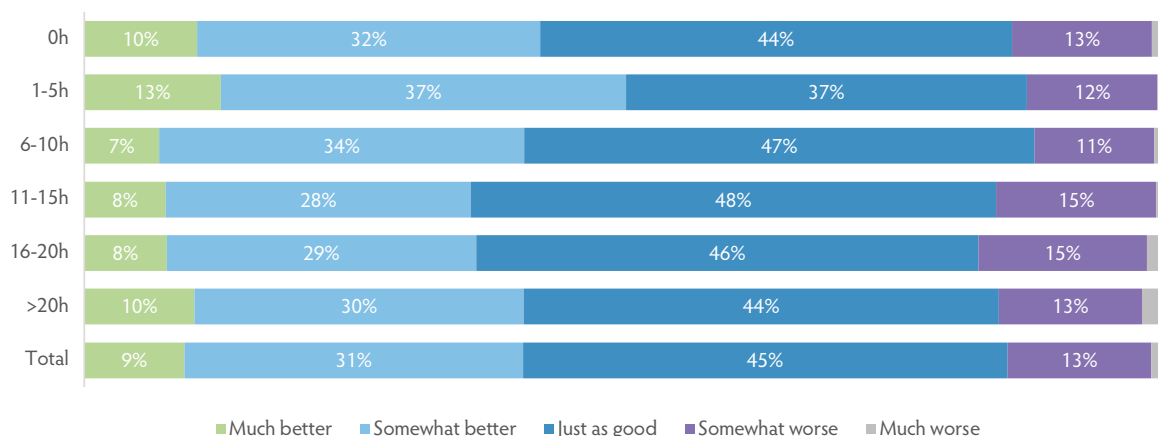
The allocation of students' time on personal study, taught studies and employment is presented in Figure 6.8.

Figure 6.8: Potential balance between time studying and employment by employment status [N=11,257].



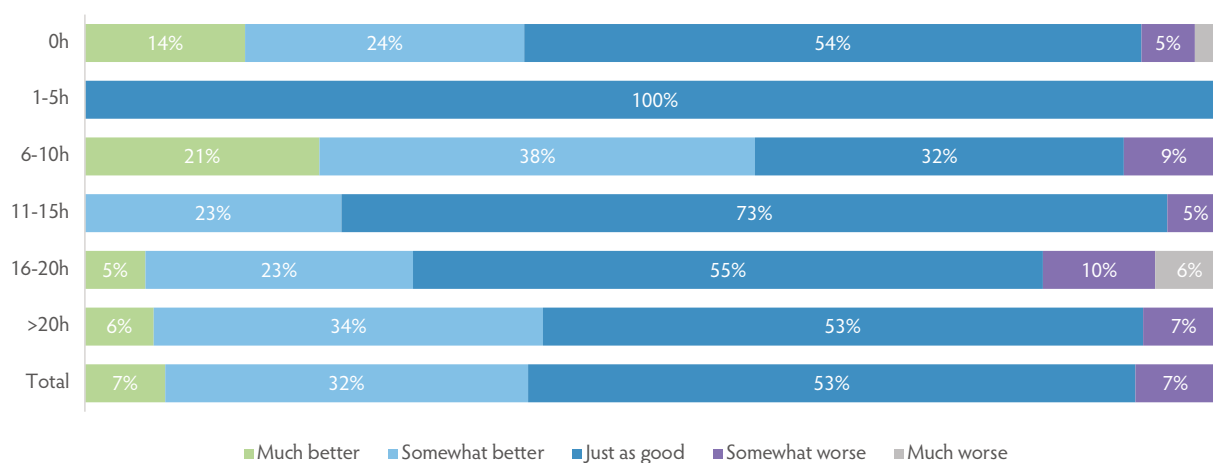
This chart shows how students would want to spend their time across employment status. Regardless of whether students are employed or not, most students (between 61 and 64 percent) would not change the amount of time they allocate to taught studies. However, across the time students would like to spend on personal study and employment, there is an interesting pattern. The majority of students who are employed during term-time would like to devote more time to personal study (45 percent), and a large proportion would like to spend less time working (14 percent). In contrast, a large proportion of students who are not in employment would like to devote more of their time to employment (35 percent). As such, these patterns point to some dissatisfaction by students on their work-study balance in that students who are working would like to spend more time on their studies, whereas students who are not in employment and have more time to spend on their studies, would like to spend more of their time in employment.

Figure 6.9: "How would you rate your performance so far in your current (main) study programme in comparison to that of your fellow students?" by time spent in employment per week – Full time Only [N=10,683].



Finally, to return to a theme touched upon a number of times in this chapter, a large number of research studies have shown a negative correlation between the amount of time spent in employment whilst at in higher education and overall grades achieved (Tessema et al 2014; Pike et al 2008, Keute 2017). However, students themselves do not appear to feel that employment affects their performance relative to other students. Figure 6.9 and 6.10 presents students' own rating of the performance on their study programme by time spent in employment.

Figure 6.10: "How would you rate your performance so far in your current (main) study programme in comparison to that of your fellow students?" by time spent in employment per week – Part time Only [N=535].



If students who are in employment were under pressure to keep up with other students due to them having less time to devote to studying, then we would expect to see a trend towards higher proportions of students rating themselves somewhat worse or worse as the amount of time in employment goes up. However, that is not what is shown here. Instead, regardless of the amount of time spent in employment students' self-evaluation of their performances remain very stable.

Chapter 6 has shown that students' time use is shaped primarily by formal status and employment. Full-time students devote substantial time to study, while part-time students combine reduced study hours with extensive employment commitments. Employment is widespread and often essential, particularly for part-time students. Although working reduces the time available for personal study, students generally maintain stable perceptions of their academic performance. The chapter highlights the complex balancing act students face in managing competing demands on their time.

The findings in Chapter 6 highlight the competing demands on students' time, particularly the balance between academic study and paid employment. While many students are able to manage these demands, the extent to which they can do so effectively is closely linked to their broader living conditions and well-being.

The next chapter shifts focus to students who have chosen to study abroad at some point in their education, and their reasons for doing so. Along with the constraints that preclude other students from taking up similar opportunities.

Chapter 7: **Student Mobility**



There are many advantages for students who choose to study abroad. Student mobility contributes to personal development, enhances linguistic competency, and cultural understanding; all of which can also positively influence future employability. In this report, 'studying abroad' refers only to those students who move outside of Ireland and do so temporarily on an accredited basis. The position of students who study abroad for their entire degree is not captured by the Irish portion of the Eurostudent survey as the survey is conducted only on students within Irish higher education institutions.

This chapter analyses the extent to which students in Irish higher education institutions have studied, or plan to study, abroad across the different classifications of student, their study programmes and key characteristics. Other study-related activities are examined, and the length and location of these activities are profiled. Finally, the potential obstacles to studying abroad for students are also considered.

7.1 Studying Abroad

The survey asked students about studying abroad in two ways; firstly, the survey asked all respondents if they had already studied abroad for a period of time. Secondly, for students who had not been abroad, the survey asked if they had any intentions of going to study abroad for a period of time. Table 7.1 presents an overview of the first component broken down across key characteristics and study programme.

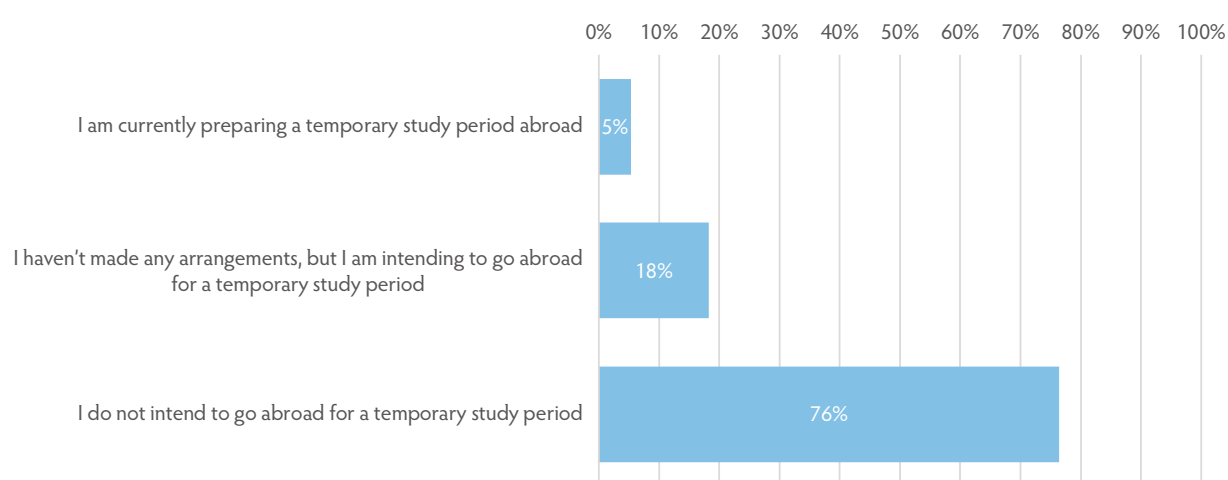
Table 7.1: "Have you ever taken part in a temporary study period abroad since you first entered higher education in Ireland (e.g. semester abroad)? [N=9,786].

		No	Yes
Gender	Female	93%	7%
	Male	94%	6%
	Other	92%	6%
HEI Type	University	93%	7%
	Technological University	95%	5%
Status	Full-time student	94%	6%
	Part-time student	92%	8%
Level	Undergraduate	95%	5%
	Postgraduate	89%	11%
Age of respondent	<22y	97%	3%
	22-24y	86%	14%
	25-29y	90%	10%
	>30y	94%	6%
Employed?	No	93%	7%
	Yes	95%	5%
Study programme	Generic programmes	100%	0%
	Education Science	93%	7%
	Teacher Training	94%	6%
	Arts	92%	8%
	Humanities	87%	13%
	Languages	87%	14%
	Social sciences, journalism and information	89%	11%
	Psychology	91%	9%
	Business and administration	91%	9%
	Law	91%	10%
	Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	96%	4%
	ICT	95%	5%
	Engineering, manufacturing, construction	95%	5%
	Architecture and town planning	88%	12%
	Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, veterinary	96%	3%
	Medicine, Dental Studies	96%	4%
	Health	97%	3%
	Pharmacy	97%	3%
	Welfare	99%	2%
	Services	97%	3%
Overall		94%	6%

As is evident from this table, at the aggregate level only 6 percent of students have taken a temporary study period abroad, and 94 percent had not. Across all the key characteristics, studying abroad has minimal variation, with the exception of a few study programmes such as languages, and humanities.

For the ninety-four percent of students who said that they had not taken part in any study programme abroad, a follow-up question asked their future intentions to studying abroad and Figure 7.1 presents the overall breakdown.

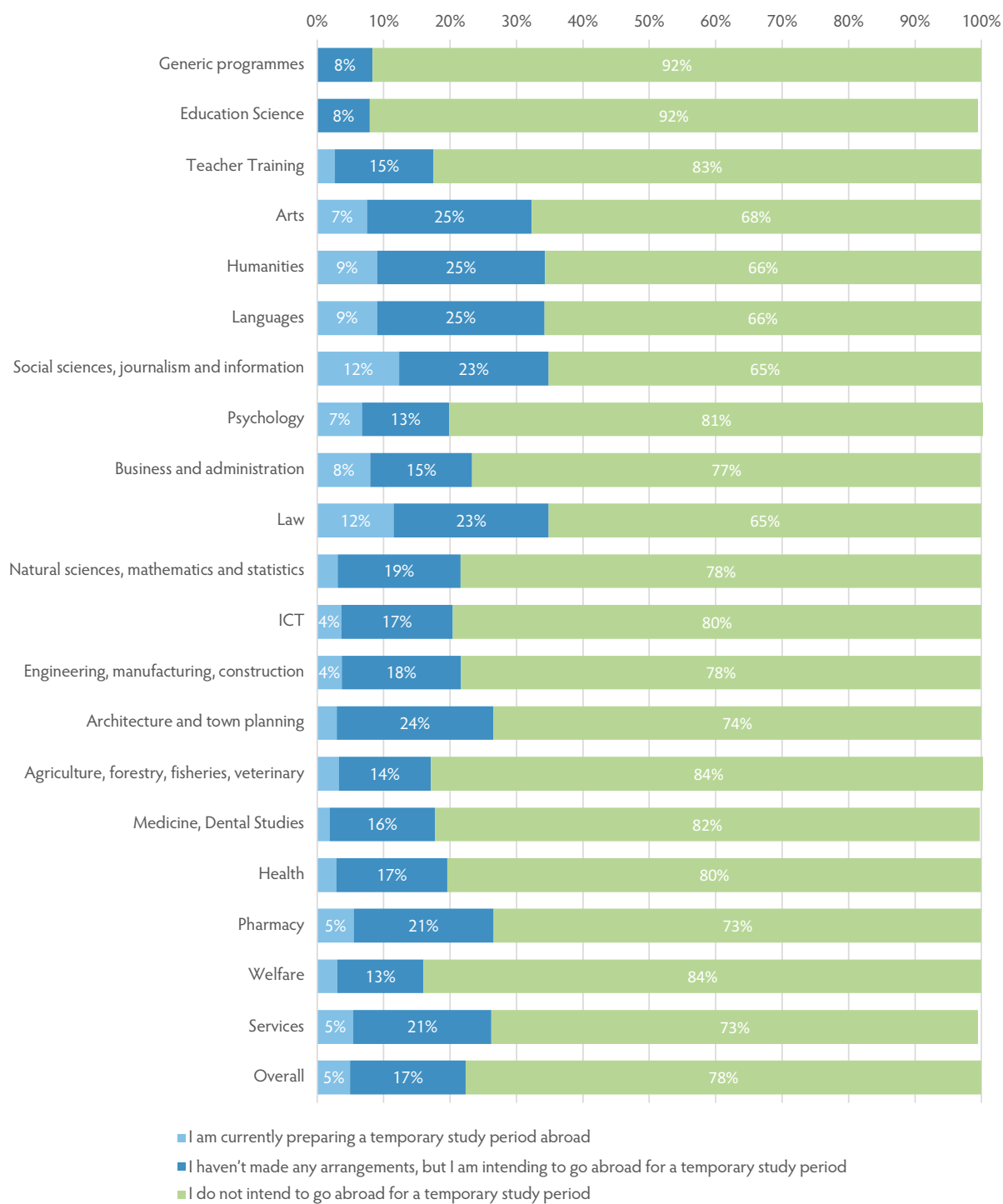
Figure 7.1: "Taking a closer look at temporary study periods abroad, how would you best describe your intentions?" [N=9,048].



This chart reinforces what is shown in Table 7.1 as 76 percent of students report that they have no intentions of studying abroad. In contrast, only 5 percent are in the process of preparing to go abroad, and a further 18 percent intend to study abroad at some point.

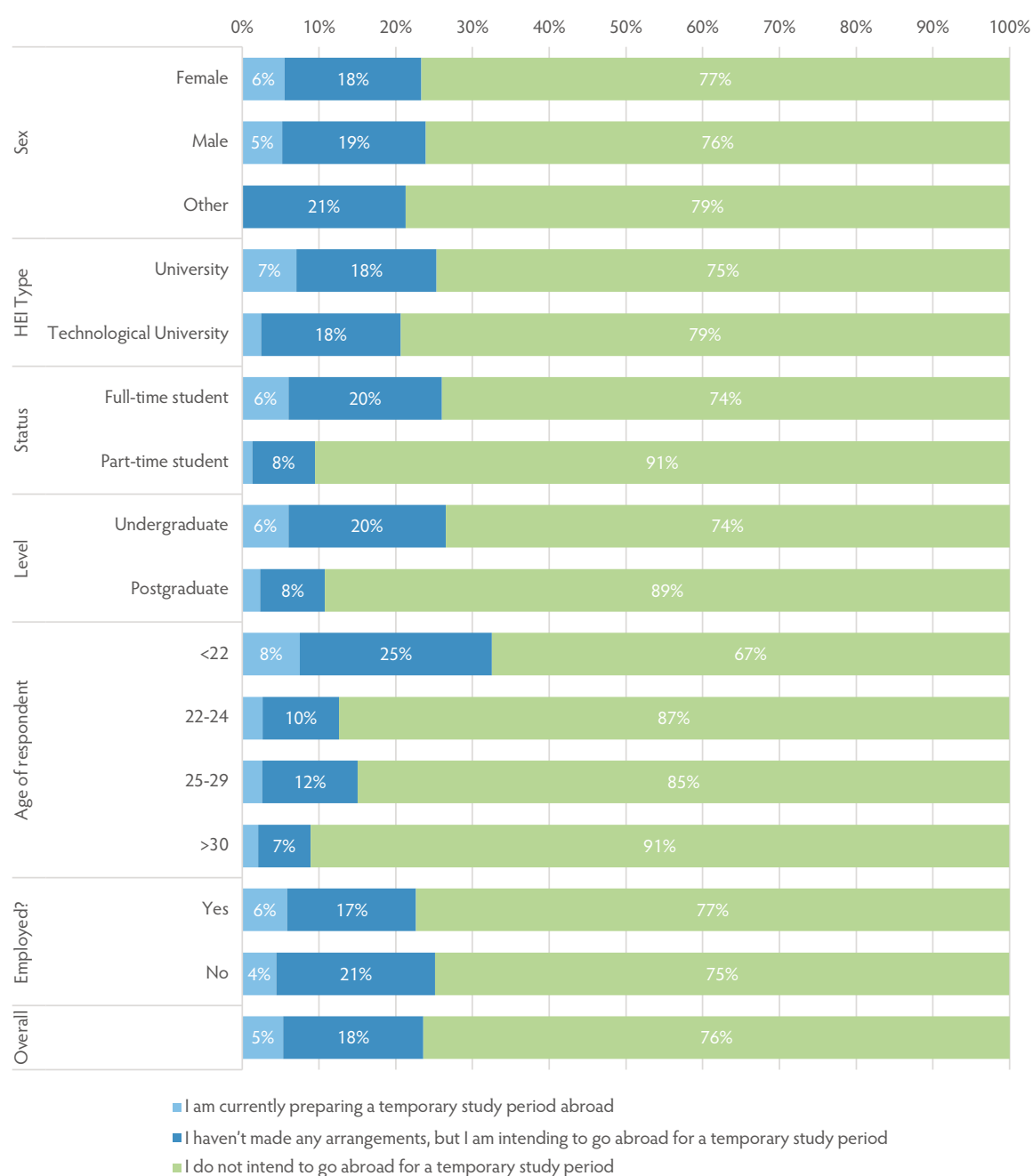
Figure 7.2 provides the distribution of students' intentions to study abroad across study programme.

Figure 7.2: "Taking a closer look at temporary study periods abroad, how would you best describe your intentions?" by study programme [N=8,867].



Similar to that seen in Table 7.1, most students appear to have the little to no intention of enrolling as a student abroad. Figure 7.3 illustrates the distribution of students' intentions to study abroad across key student characteristics.

Figure 7.3: "Taking a closer look at temporary study periods abroad, how would you best describe your intentions?" by key characteristics [N=9,048].



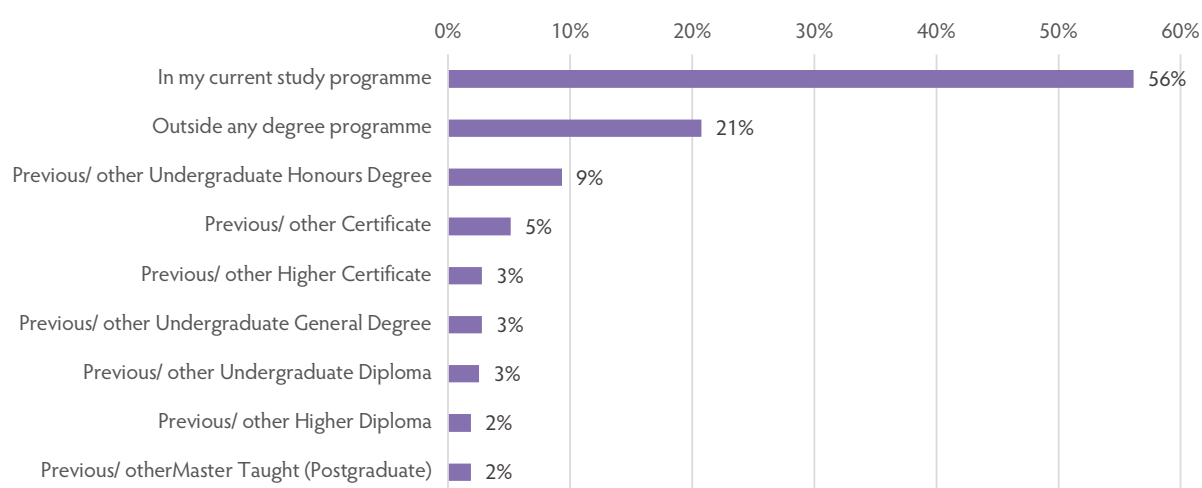
As one may expect, gender does not appear to substantively affect intentions to study abroad. However, age does appear to have an effect as students under the age of 22 have the highest proportion of intentions to study abroad (8 percent) and the lowest proportion of not planning to go abroad (67 percent), and the proportion of students who do not plan to study abroad increases across the age categories. Students at University have over three times the rate of currently preparing to go abroad (7 percent) than Technological Universities/Institutes of Technology (2 percent), while the intentions to study abroad across types of HEI are broadly similar (18 percent for both). Finally, part-time students appear to be more resistant to studying abroad than full-time students, as 91 percent of part-time students have no intention to study abroad compared against 74 percent of full-time students.

In 2009 the European Commission set a target for 20 percent of graduates from higher education institutions in Europe to have experience of studying or training abroad by 2020 (Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué, 2009, Only three EU countries were able to meet this target (Luxembourg, Cyprus, and the Netherlands) the rest falling short European (Education and Culture Executive Agency 2020). Nevertheless, compared against this goal, Ireland has a very low rate of actual student mobility. Only six percent of students in Ireland have enrolled in higher education abroad at some point, and of the other 94 percent, 76 percent of these students have no intention of studying abroad at any point as part of their programme. Section 7.3 returns to this and examines the potential obstacles as students see them to studying abroad for any length of time. The next section, however, examines the small cohort of students who have spent a temporary study period abroad.

7.2 Students who have Studied Abroad

Figure 7.4 only includes students who have spent part of their programme abroad and shows the programme they were on when they went abroad.

Figure 7.4: Temporary study period abroad by study programme [N=469].



Some 56 percent of students who had studied abroad did it as part of their current programme, and 21 percent went abroad outside of their degree programme.

Table 7.2 presents the programmes under which students' study period abroad was organised by some key characteristics. Of the total student population who have been abroad, 57 percent of students organised their study abroad independently without any programme, and 19 percent through an Erasmus programme. In terms of credits gained studying abroad.

Table 7.2: Programme under which study abroad was organised [N=477].

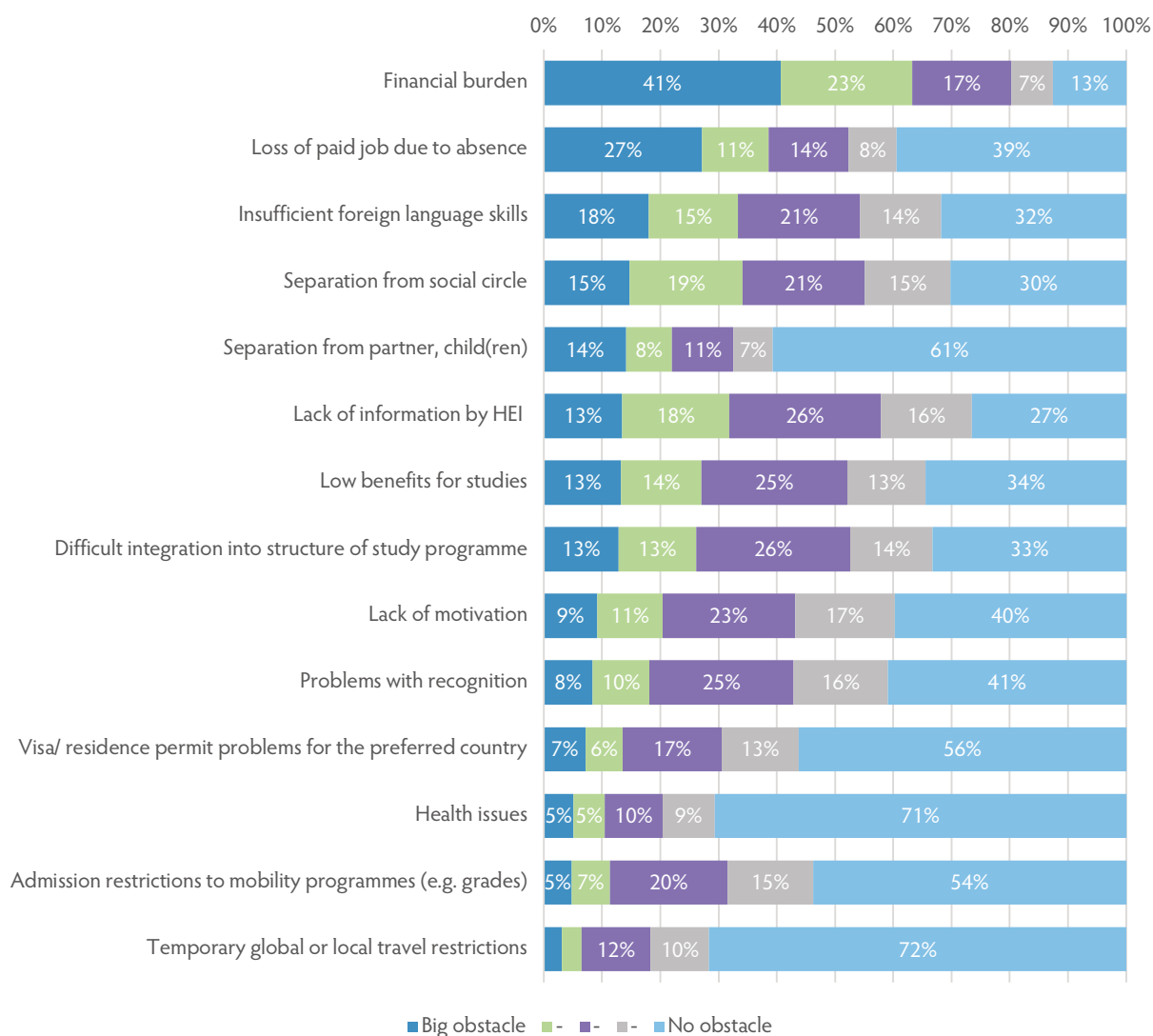
		Erasmus	Other EU-programme	Other programme (national, regional)	Independently organised, without any programme
Gender	Female	16%	4%	18%	62%
	Male	23%	6%	19%	53%
	Other	0%	0%	67%	33%
HEI Type	University	14%	2%	19%	64%
	Technological University	35%	11%	17%	36%
Status	Full-time student	18%	3%	19%	60%
	Part-time student	21%	2%	20%	57%
Level	Undergraduate	20%	5%	14%	60%
	Postgraduate	18%	2%	30%	50%
Age of respondent	<22y	18%	1%	15%	65%
	22-24y	21%	2%	20%	57%
	25-29y	23%	4%	20%	52%
	>30y	13%	18%	27%	42%
Employed?	Yes	23%	8%	23%	47%
	No	15%	1%	15%	68%
Overall		19%	5%	19%	57%

7.3 Obstacles to Studying Abroad

As shown in this chapter, international mobility of Irish students compares poorly to that of students in other Eurostudent countries (Hauschildt et al 2025). It is therefore important to investigate the obstacles to studying abroad experienced by Irish students and the key determinants to students actually being able to relocate for a period to another country.

The survey asked all students the degree to which a number of factors posed an obstacle to them studying abroad, which could be placed on a scale from one to five, with one being the factor posed no obstacle and five being a big obstacle. Figure 7.5 presents the distribution for each potential obstacle across the total population of students. The chart is rank order from the factor that presented the greatest obstacle to the factor that presented the smallest obstacle to study abroad.

Figure 7.5: "To what extent are or were the following aspects an obstacle to you for enrolment abroad?" [N=9,076].



In this chart, the main obstacle for all students appears to be the additional financial burden that studying abroad poses as 41 percent of students see this as a big obstacle. In second place, the loss of a paid job was seen as a big obstacle for 27 percent of students. Having insufficient skills in a foreign language ranked third as a big obstacle to study abroad. Interestingly, separation from partner, children and so on was seen by students as both a big obstacle (ranked fifth with 14 percent of students) and also not an obstacle (with 61 percent of students). Further analysis of this shows that how students evaluated this as an obstacle was highly dependent on circumstances. Students without children see familial separation for a period as not an obstacle. However, students with children see separation as a big obstacle (not presented here).

The last Eurostudent report examined an article by Mairéad Finn and Merike Darmody (2017) which used Eurostudent VII data to examine factors that led to students deciding to remain in Ireland, rather than spending some of their study programme abroad. Their research provided a method to look the obstacles to studying abroad and was used as a template

to examine the relative lack of student mobility in Ireland. This method is replicated here to investigate if the factors found in the last report still have an impact on students' choices.

Table 7.3 presents a logistic regression model of a number of factors discussed already in this chapter which can be posited to have an effect upon the likelihood of students studying abroad, along with a number of other control variables. As can be theorised, the ability to overcome any financial burden to studying abroad, and age are expected to affect their willingness to relocate for a period abroad. With younger students (who are less likely to have long-term partners or dependents), and students with financially well-off families being the most likely to study abroad. The dependent variable in this model is a binary variable constructed from the survey questions "have you ever been enrolled abroad since you first entered higher education?" and "Taking a closer look at temporary study periods abroad: How would you best describe your intentions?". Students that had gone or plan to go abroad are coded as one, and those that had not and did not plan to be, were coded as zero. As such the coefficients present in this model present the effect the independent variables have on the likelihood of a student studying abroad.

Table 7.3: Summary of the effect student characteristics have on studying abroad [N=8,175].

	Odds Ratio
Female	-0.04 (0.05)
(Ref: Male)	
Age:	
Less than 22	1.07 (0.12) ***
22 to 24	0.58 (0.12) ***
25 to 29	0.50 (0.13) ***
(Ref: Over 30)	
Full-time student	0.03 (0.01)
(Ref: Part-time student)	
Undergraduate	-0.06 (0.08)
(Ref: Postgraduate)	
University or Associate/Affiliate College	0.24 (0.05) ***
(Ref: Technological University)	
Highest level of parental education:	
Up to Leaving Certificate	-0.07 (0.10)
Higher education	0.09 (0.10)
Further Education	0.24 (0.10) *
(Ref: Up to Junior Certificate)	
Perceived financial security:	
Average	-0.33 (0.06) ***
Well-off	-0.17 (0.52) **
(Ref: Not well-off)	
Intercept	-1.77 (0.13) ***
Pseudo R-squared	0.06
Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. Standard errors in parentheses. Dependent Variable: Have studied abroad	

.From this model, it appears that undergraduate status, gender, and full-time status have no effect on the likelihood of studying abroad. Being in a university appear to positively affect the likelihood of studying abroad. Age appears to negatively affect the likelihood of studying abroad, as the model shows that younger students (less than 22) are more likely to enrol abroad when compared against students that are over 30 years of age (significant at the 0.001 level), and this effect decreases as students get older (also significant at the 0.001 level).

As a result, the model presented here finds similar results to that of Finn and Darmody and the last Eurostudent report, and as such reinforces their theory about the influences certain socio-economic factors have upon the low levels of Irish student mobility.

The patterns identified in this chapter highlight how students' choices to study abroad (or not) are shaped by a range of structural and personal factors. However, these patterns cannot be fully understood without considering students' health and functional capacity. The next chapter therefore examines the prevalence and nature of disabilities and long-standing health conditions among students and explores how these factors shape both their everyday life and engagement with study.

Chapter 8: **Disability**



The Eurostudent survey asked students if they had a disability, impairment, long-standing health problem, functional limitation, or learning disability, where a long-standing health problem is defined as a health problem that has lasted or is likely to last for at least six months. The proportion of students indicating that they had one of these is approximately 34 percent of this student population, compared with 32 percent in the previous Eurostudent report¹⁰. This is broken down into 36 percent of all full-time undergraduates, 30 percent of all part-time undergraduates, 28 percent of all full-time postgraduates, and 31 percent of all part-time postgraduates. The profile of each category of disability by their student status is presented in Figure 8.1 (note that students can have more than one disability).

Figure 8.1: Percentage of students with impairments across categories [N=9,612].

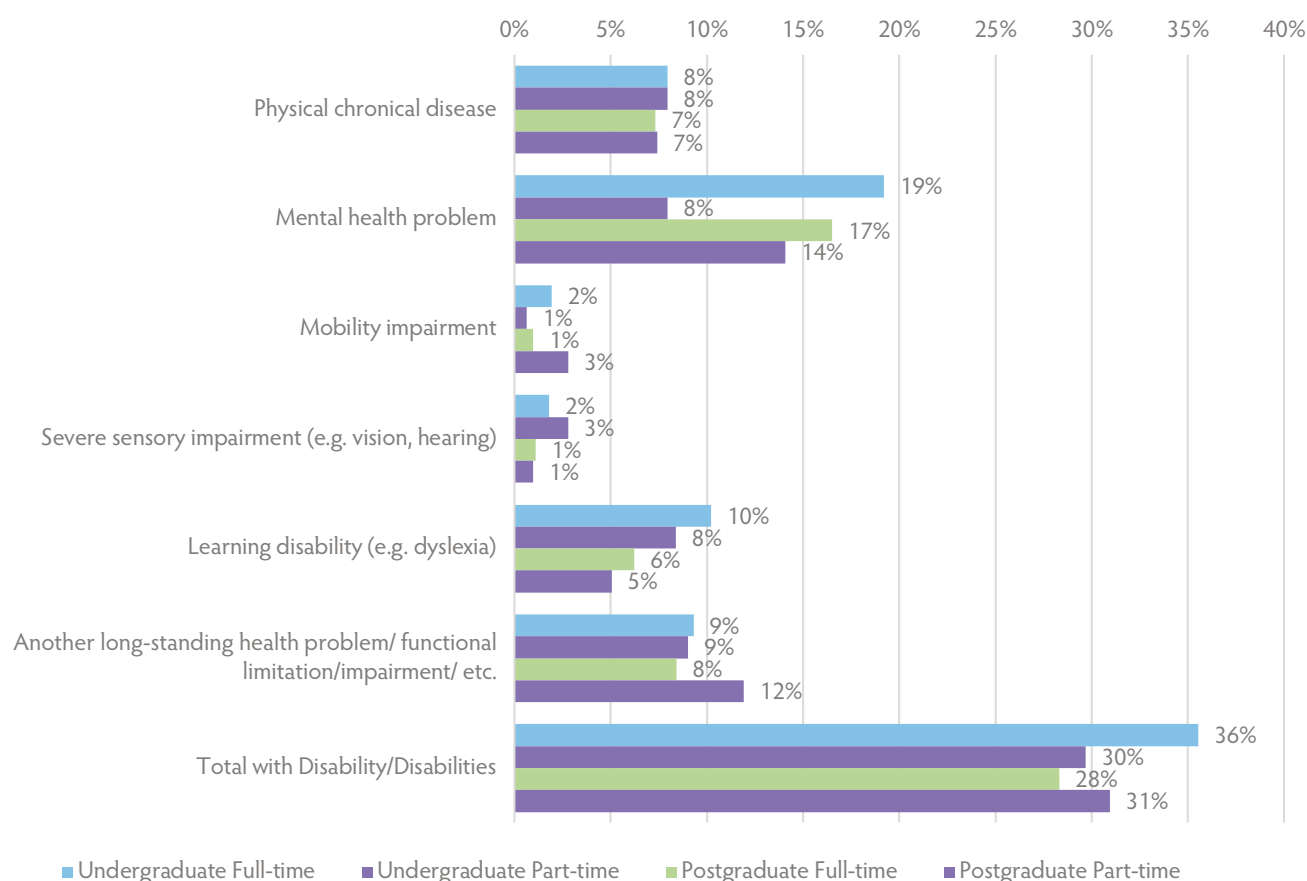


Table 8.1: Main study area and disability status [N=10,095].

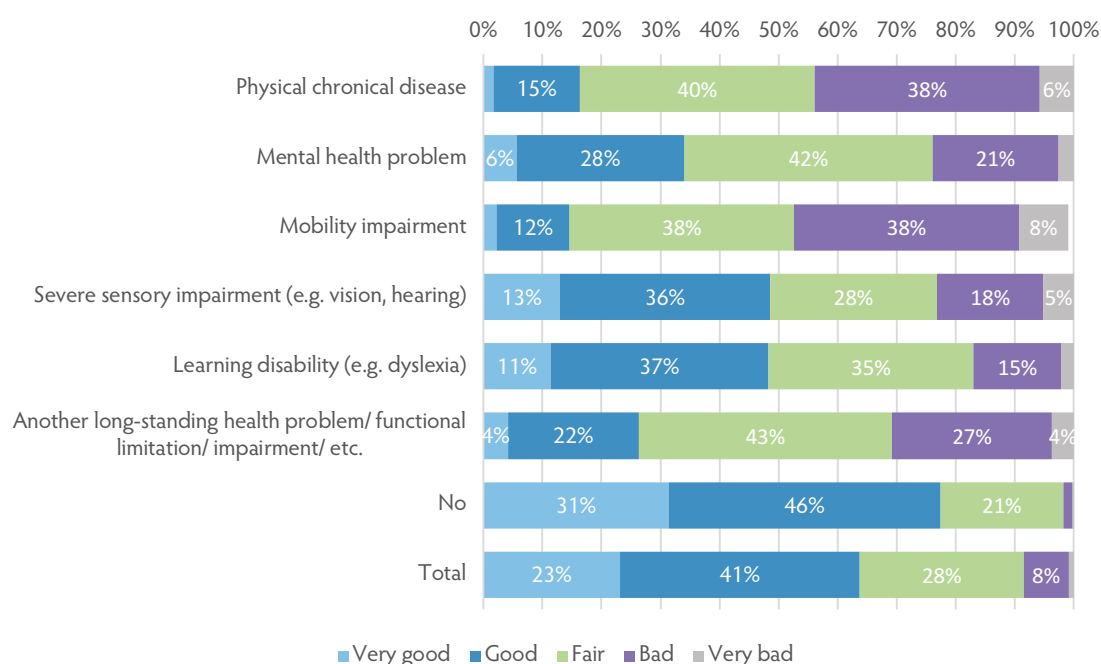
	Physical chronic disease	Mental health problem	Mobility impairment	Sensory impairment (e.g. vision, hearing)	Learning disability (e.g. dyslexia)	Another long-standing health problem/functional limitation/impairment/etc.	No disability or impairment
Generic programmes	2%	8%	0%	5%	12%	5%	70%
Education Science	5%	13%	1%	0%	7%	11%	70%
Teacher Training	9%	17%	2%	2%	9%	10%	66%
Arts	11%	29%	3%	2%	13%	14%	54%
Humanities	11%	28%	4%	2%	6%	14%	54%
Languages	12%	24%	2%	2%	5%	8%	64%
Social sciences, journalism and information	8%	29%	2%	3%	11%	12%	57%
Psychology	11%	24%	1%	1%	11%	14%	59%
Business and administration	7%	12%	1%	1%	7%	8%	72%
Law	10%	19%	2%	1%	9%	10%	62%
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	8%	19%	4%	1%	8%	10%	65%
ICT	6%	16%	2%	2%	9%	9%	69%
Engineering, manufacturing, construction	5%	13%	1%	2%	11%	7%	71%
Architecture and town planning	9%	18%	5%	3%	8%	6%	66%
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, veterinary	9%	14%	2%	1%	10%	6%	74%
Medicine, Dental Studies	11%	15%	2%	2%	7%	9%	70%
Health	9%	14%	1%	1%	8%	9%	67%
Pharmacy	8%	13%	0%	1%	5%	5%	76%
Welfare	10%	22%	4%	4%	14%	12%	54%
Services	2%	13%	6%	2%	10%	10%	73%
Total	8%	18%	2%	2%	9%	10%	66%

Table 8.1 shows marked variation in disability prevalence across fields of study. The study areas with the highest proportions of students with any of the disabilities provided were Arts, and Humanities (46 percent for both). The study areas with the lowest proportions of students with any of the disabilities provided were Pharmacy (24 percent), Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and veterinary (26 percent) and Services (27 percent).

Mental health problems are the most frequently reported impairment across the table, accounting for 18 percent of students overall. Their prevalence is especially high in Arts (29 percent), Humanities (28 percent) and Social Sciences (29 percent). Learning disabilities are also relatively common, affecting 9 percent of students overall and rising to 14 percent in Welfare and 13 percent in Arts. By contrast, mobility and sensory impairments remain much less common, each affecting around 2 percent of students overall. This pattern suggests that the dominant profile of disability within higher education is shaped less by visible physical impairment, than by mental health conditions and learning-related difficulties.

Figure 8.2 illustrates the distribution of responses from students where they were asked to rate their health in general. Of all students, 23 percent report their health being very good and 41 percent rate their health as good. Only around nine percent rate their health as bad or very bad. However, the pattern shifts markedly when attention is restricted to students with disabilities. The figure indicates that students with mobility impairments report the lowest levels of health, with 46 percent rating their health as bad or very bad. Students with physical chronic diseases also appear to rate their health substantially less positively than the student body overall. By contrast, students with sensory impairments or learning disabilities report somewhat better general health than those with mobility impairments or chronic diseases. This highlights the importance of distinguishing between impairment types: disability is not a single experience, and different forms of impairment have very different implications for students' wider sense of physical well-being.

Figure 8.2: The degree to which students' rate their health in general impairments [N=10,406].



The survey asked two questions about the degree to which their impairments affect the lives of students.

Figure 8.3: The degree to which students' impairments impedes their everyday activities [N=3,709].

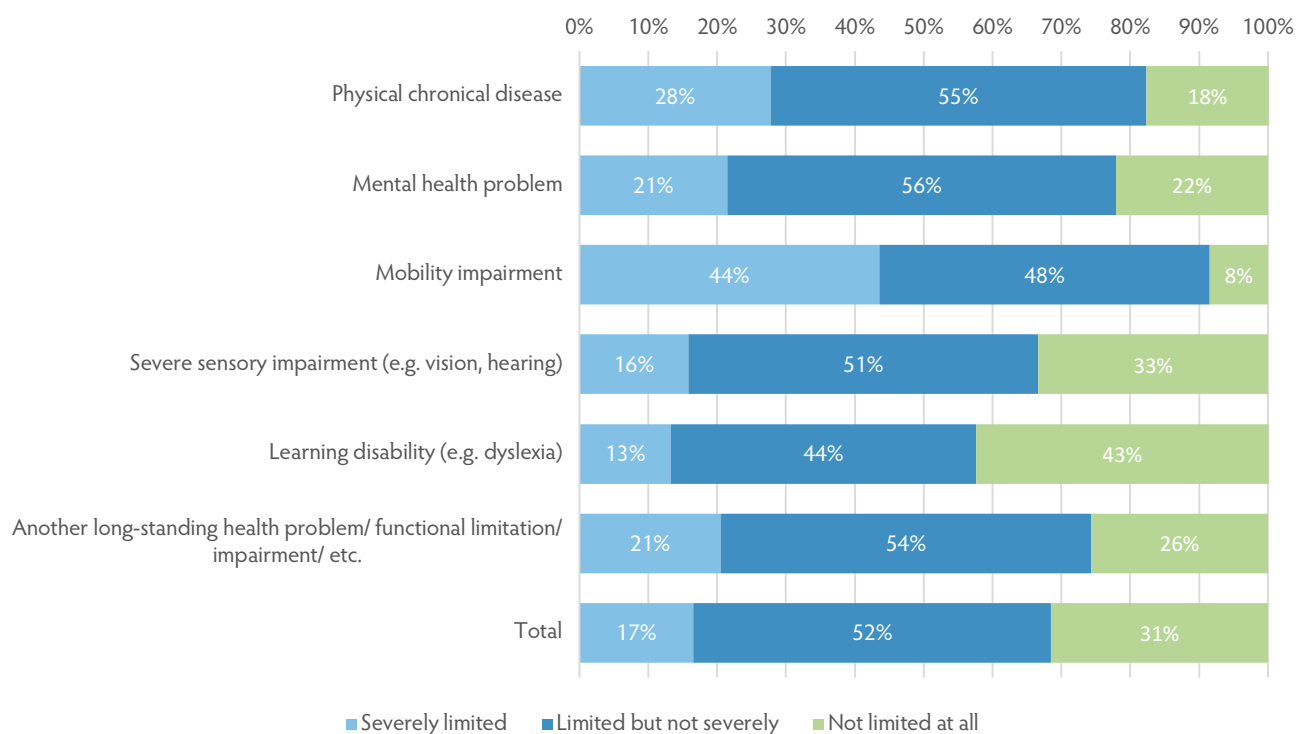
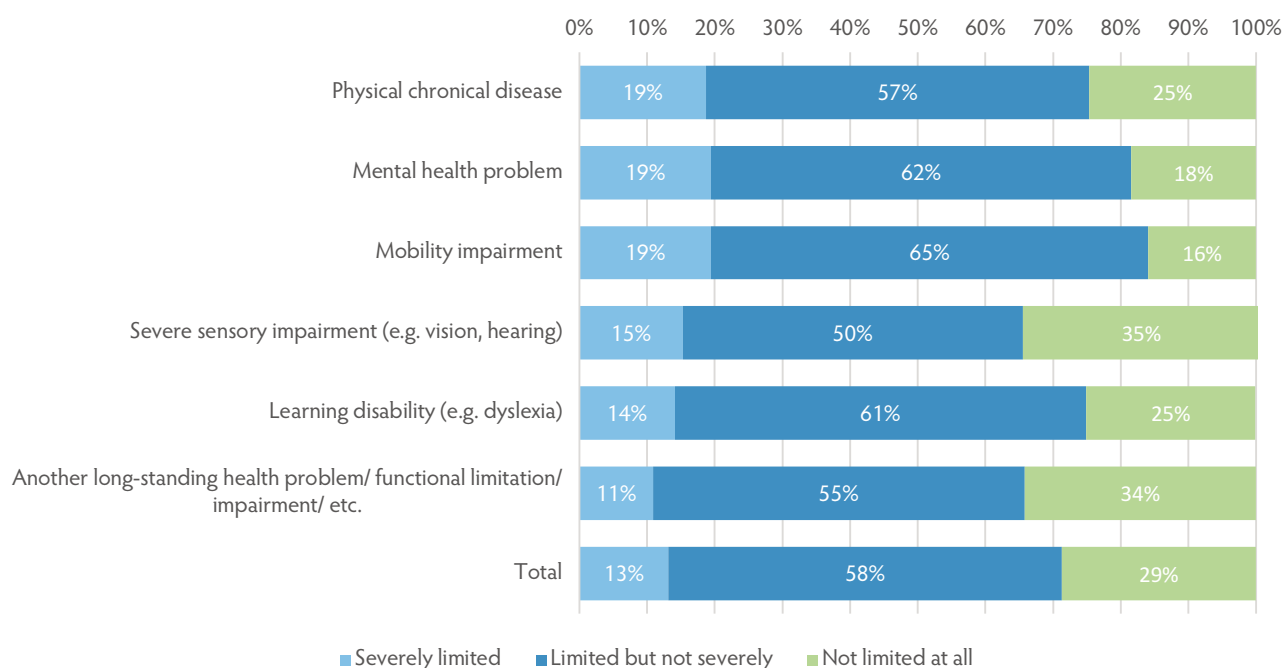


Figure 8.3 suggests that most students with disabilities experience at least some constraint in their everyday lives, although the severity of that effect varies considerably. At the aggregate level, 31 percent of students with an impairment report that it is not limiting at all in relation to daily activities, while 52 percent say it is moderately limiting and 17 percent describe it as severely limiting. The dominant category is therefore moderate rather than severe limitation, but only a minority report no limitation.

The averages conceal strong differences across impairment types. Students with mobility impairments appear to face the greatest restrictions in daily life, with 44 percent reporting that their condition severely limits everyday activities. By contrast, only 16 percent of students with sensory impairments say the same. This suggests that the practical and environmental barriers associated with mobility difficulties remain particularly significant in shaping the day-to-day experience of higher education students.

In contrast to the above, Figure 8.4 illustrates the degree to which students' impairments limit their studies. In this regard, 29 percent of students with at least one form of disability considered their disability to not be limiting at all to their studies, whereas 13 percent considered their impairment to be severely limiting. The disability that was reported as the biggest obstacle to studies was having a mobility impairment, where 84 percent of respondents said that this limited or severely limited their ability to study. 82 percent of students with a mental health problem also said that this limited or severely limited their ability to study. Intriguingly, a relatively high proportion of students with sensory impairments (35 percent) considered these impairments to be no obstacle to study.

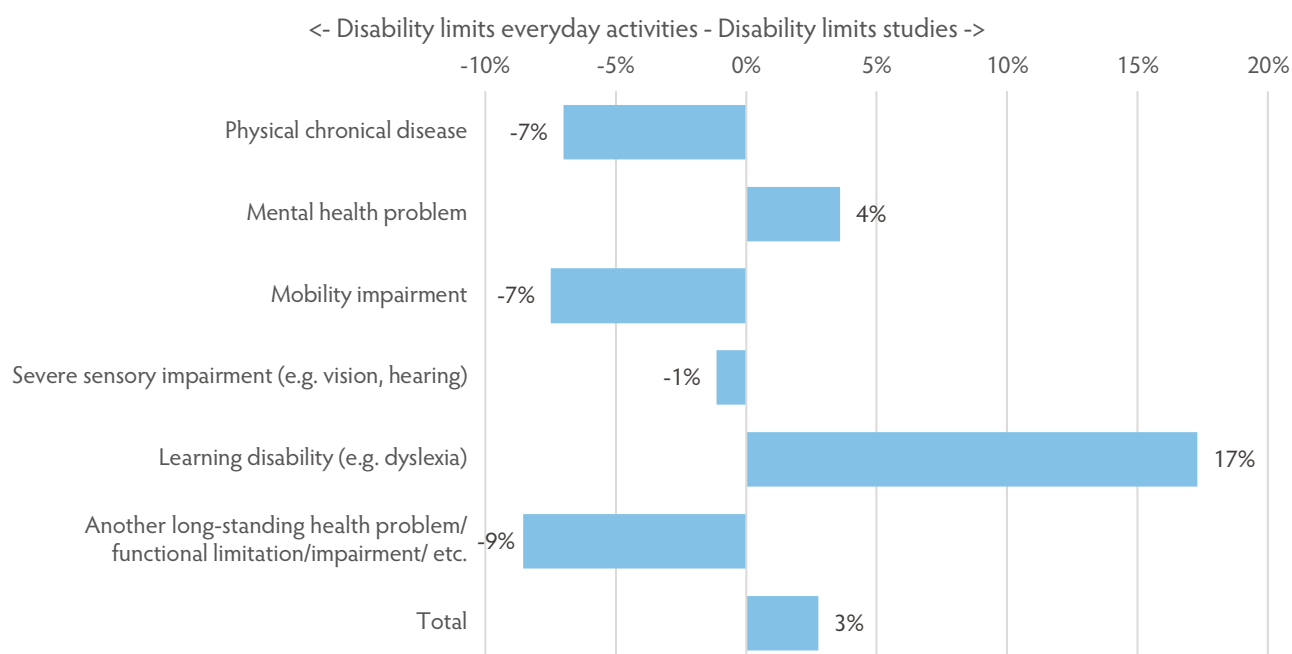
Figure 8.4: The degree to which students' impairments impedes their ability to study [N=3,721].



While these charts are in themselves interesting, it is possible to use these responses to calculate the degree to which different disabilities affect students, and crucially, if different impairments have a greater effect on studying or on everyday activities. Figure 8.5 presents this through subtracting the percentage of responses given by students who feel that their disability limits or severely limits their everyday activities from the percentage of responses given by students who feel that their disability limits or severely limits their studies.

As a result, negative values indicate that a form of disability affects everyday life more than studies, and positive values indicate that a form of disability affects studying more than everyday life. A value close to zero indicates that this form of disability equally affects everyday life and studies.

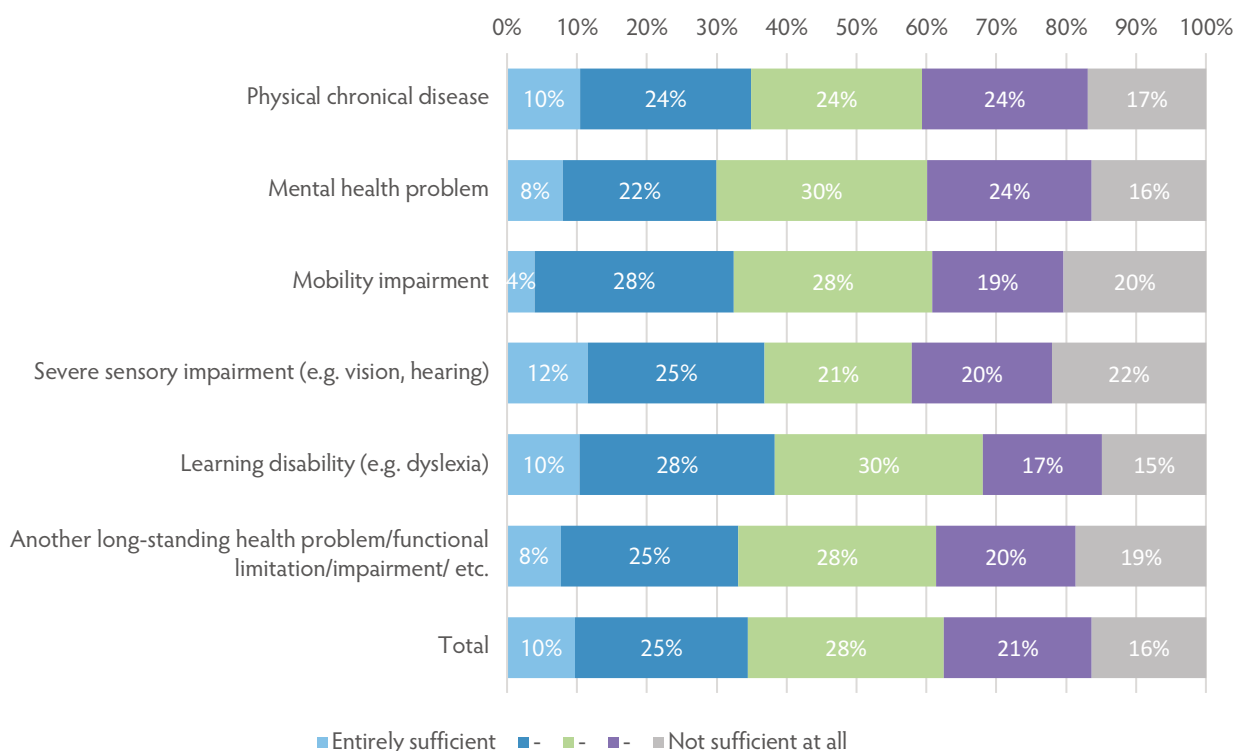
Figure 8.5: The difference between impairments limiting everyday activities versus studies.



From the chart, it is evident that mobility impairment appears to impose a greater burden on everyday activities than on academic work. By contrast, mental health problems and learning disabilities show clear positive values, indicating that they interfere more with studying than with general day-to-day life. This is an important distinction: it suggests that the main challenges associated with these impairments are concentrated within the demands of academic work itself, such as concentration, reading, assessment and sustained engagement. Sensory impairments, meanwhile, appear much closer to zero, implying a more balanced effect across both domains.

Figure 8.6 turns from the experience of impairment to students' assessments of the support they receive. The most notable feature of the chart is that all groups appear relatively dissatisfied with institutional support with around 40 percent of each group rating the support they receive as poor or not sufficient at all. At the same time, the figure is based only on students who were able to rate the support they receive, which likely excludes some students who do not access support at all. This means that the figure may understate the scale of unmet need. Even so, it points clearly to the importance of support provision as a factor shaping whether students can overcome or manage the limitations associated with disability during higher education.

Figure 8.6: Ratings of the support students receive to overcome their limitations by impairment [N=2,745].



This chapter has shown that disability, long-standing health conditions and functional limitations affect a substantial share of students in Irish higher education. Around one-third of students report at least one impairment, but the prevalence and nature of disability vary considerably across disciplines and impairment types. Mental health problems and learning disabilities are the most common conditions and, crucially, they appear to have the strongest effect on students' ability to study. Mobility impairments, by contrast, seem to affect everyday life more strongly than academic work. Students with disabilities also report poorer health overall than the wider student population, and a significant minority across all groups, view institutional support as insufficient.

The analysis in this chapter has shown that disability and long-standing health conditions – particularly mental health problems and learning difficulties, play a significant role in shaping students' experiences of both everyday life and study. However, while this chapter has examined the prevalence and impact of these conditions, it has not explored in detail how students experience their mental health on a day-to-day basis. The next chapter therefore focuses specifically on mental health and well-being, examining the types of mental health issues students face, the extent to which they are diagnosed and supported, and how these challenges manifest in students' overall well-being and sources of stress.

Chapter 9:

Mental Health and Well-being



In the last round of the Eurostudent survey, a number of topical modules were introduced to supplement the core questionnaire. This chapter and the next cover the questions asked in the topical module sections of the survey, with this chapter covering mental health and well-being and the following covering students' experiences of discrimination.

As has been seen already in Chapter 8, mental health issues are a large issue for many students as eighteen percent of students who report that they have a disability or impairment, say that they experience mental health issues. To begin this section, respondents who indicated that they had a mental health problem in the prior question were asked to specify their mental health problem, whether it was diagnosed or not, from a list.

Figure 9.1 provides an overview of the distribution of the mental health issues students' experience, and shows that the profile of mental health issues among students is highly concentrated in a small number of conditions. Anxiety disorders (65 percent) and depression (64 percent) dominate the distribution, indicating that the student mental health landscape is shaped primarily by internalising conditions rather than more acute or less common disorders. The near parity between these two categories also suggests a high degree of overlap, with many students likely experiencing both simultaneously.

Figure 9.1: "Please specify your mental health problem(s)" [N=1,629].

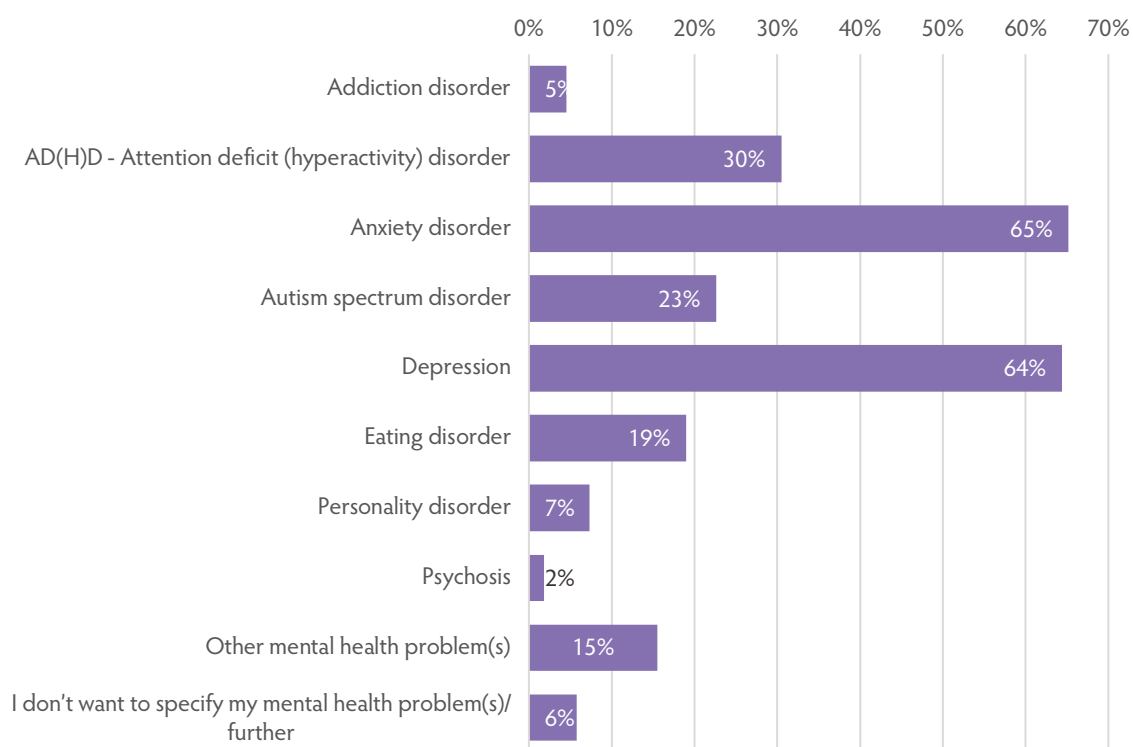


Figure 9.2 highlights a critical distinction between experiencing mental health difficulties and receiving formal recognition or treatment. While 47 percent of students report that their condition has been diagnosed and is being treated, a further 33 percent have received a diagnosis but are not in treatment. This indicates that a substantial proportion of students have engaged with medical services but are not currently receiving ongoing support.

In addition, 19 percent remain undiagnosed, suggesting that a notable group of students may be experiencing mental health issues without formal recognition. The variation across age groups, with older students more likely to be diagnosed and treated, may reflect both greater engagement with healthcare systems and potentially greater severity or persistence of conditions over time. The gender differences, with female and non-binary students more likely to be diagnosed and treated, may also reflect differences in help-seeking behaviour rather than underlying prevalence alone.

Figure 9.2: "Has your mental health problem been diagnosed by a medical professional (psychotherapeutic, psychiatric, neurological or psychological)?" [N=1,628].

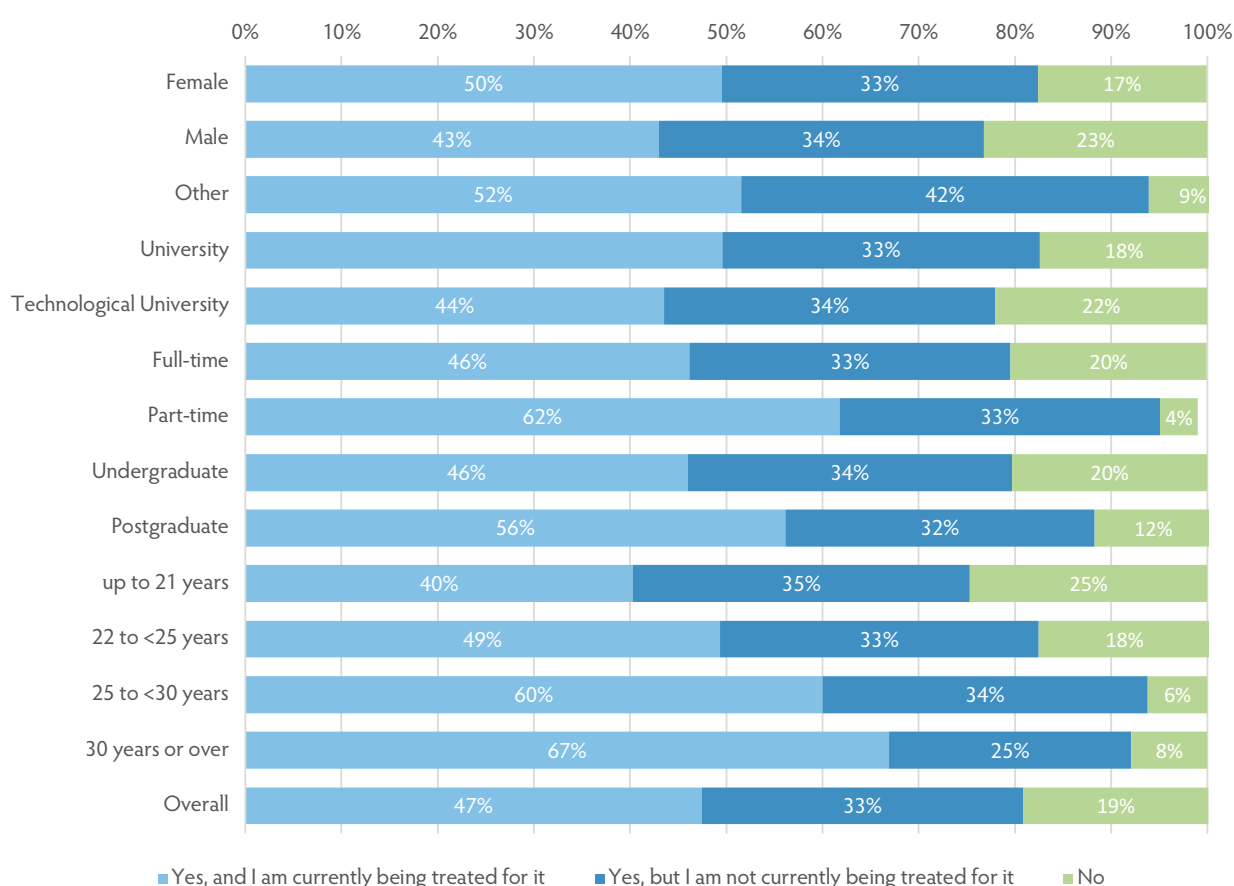
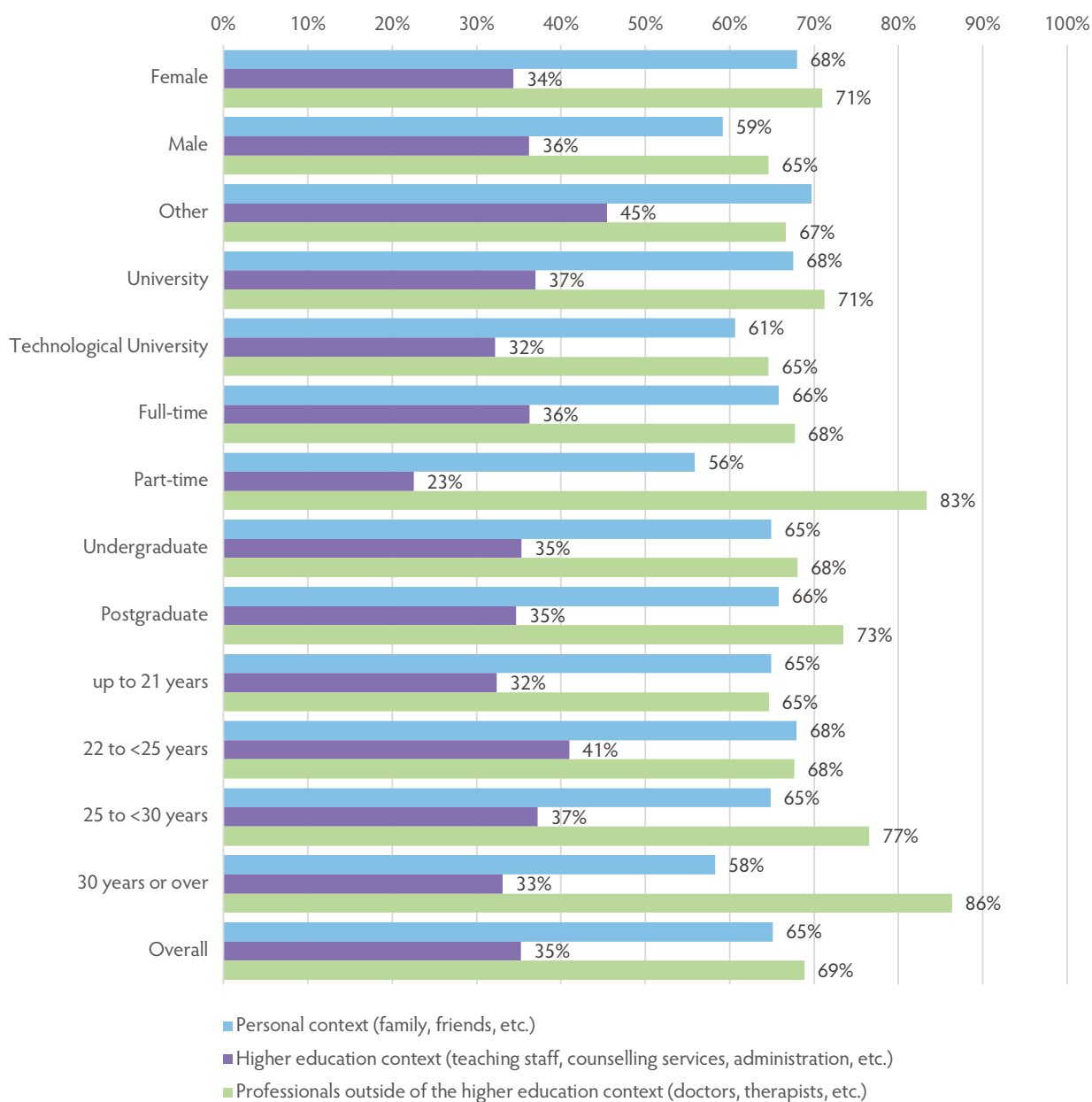


Figure 9.3 shows that support for mental health is drawn from multiple domains, but with a clear hierarchy in terms of reliance. The majority of students (69 percent) receive support from external professionals, while 65 percent rely on family and friends, indicating that informal and formal non-institutional supports are central to how students manage their mental health.

In contrast, only 35 percent report receiving support from within a higher education context. This gap suggests that while institutions play a role, they are not the primary source of support for most students. When considered alongside Figure 9.2, this may indicate that even students who are diagnosed and treated are more likely to engage with external healthcare systems than institutional services. This raises important questions about the accessibility, visibility, or perceived effectiveness of supports within higher education settings.

Figure 9.3: "Please indicate from which of the following sources you are receiving/have received support regarding your mental health" [N=1,628].



Following this, students were asked to examine a set of statements about their well-being and rate how often they had felt each of these in the last two weeks. Figure 9.4 to 9.8 present the results of these.

Figure 9.4: "Over the past 2 weeks: I have felt cheerful and in good spirits" [N=9,646].

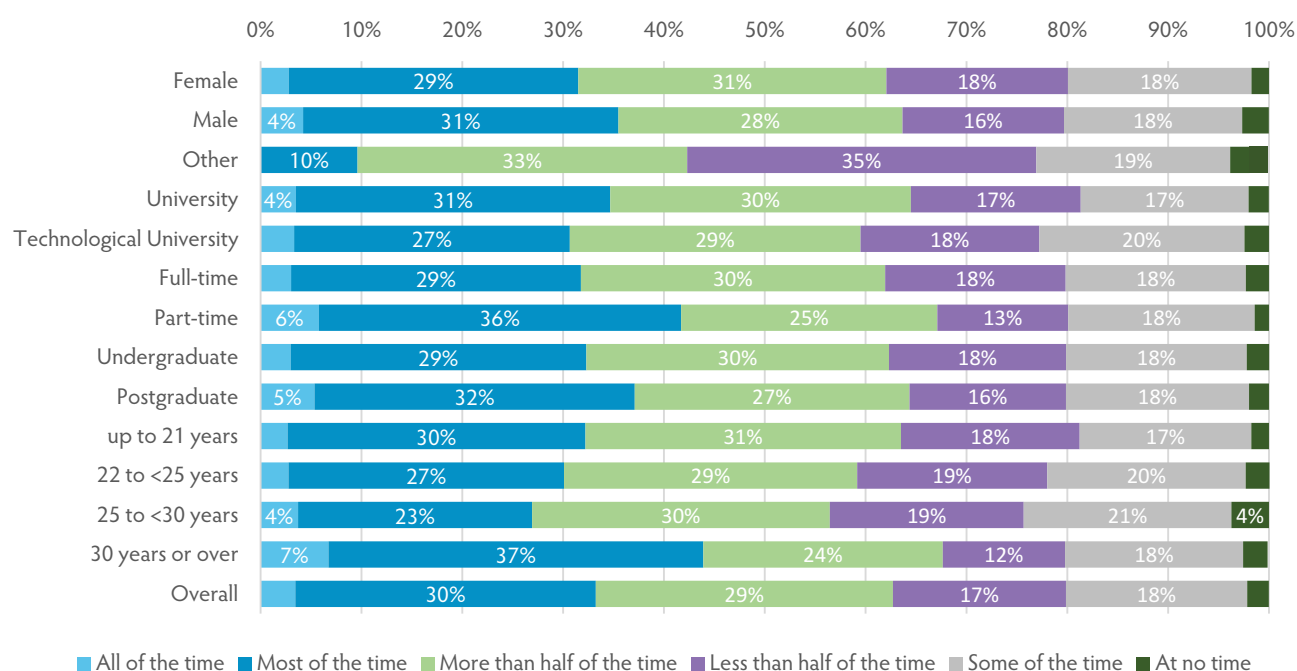


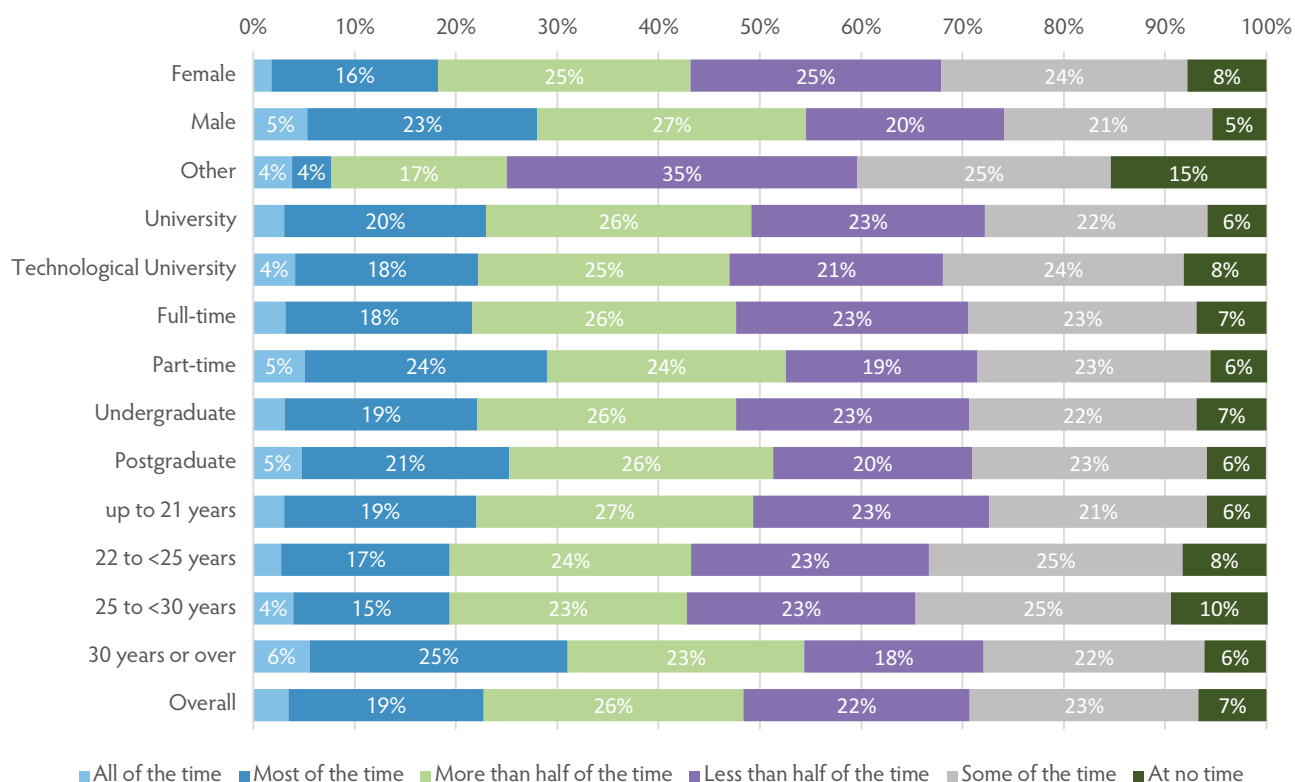
Figure 9.4 provides a more positive perspective on student well-being, with 62 percent of students reporting that they felt cheerful and in good spirits at least half of the time over the previous two weeks. This suggests that despite the prevalence of stressors and mental health difficulties identified elsewhere, a majority of students still experience regular positive emotional states.

However, this relatively high level of reported positivity should be interpreted alongside later figures showing lower levels of calmness, restfulness and energy. The coexistence of positive mood with other indicators of strain suggests that student well-being is not uniform, but rather characterised by fluctuation between positive and negative states.

Figure 9.5 shows students' responses to 'over the last two weeks, I have felt calm and relaxed', and shows a notable drop compared to Figure 9.4, with only 48 percent of students feeling calm and relaxed at least half of the time. This indicates that while students may still experience positive emotions, a much smaller proportion experience sustained states of relaxation.

The gap between feeling "cheerful" and feeling "calm" suggests that students' well-being may be characterised by underlying tension or pressure, even when overall mood remains positive. The higher levels of reported stress among non-binary students further highlight how experiences of well-being can differ significantly across groups, pointing to uneven distributions of psychological strain within the student population.

Figure 9.5: "Over the past 2 weeks: I have felt calm and relaxed" [N=9,644].



At the aggregate level, only 48 percent of respondents have felt calm and relaxed at least half of the time. The distribution across groups is broadly similar across the key student characteristics, though students who do not identify as male or female are more likely to report not feeling calm or relaxed at any time.

Figure 9.6 shows students' responses to 'over the last two weeks, I have felt active and vigorous' and continues this pattern, with 46 percent of students reporting feeling active and vigorous at least half of the time. This relatively low proportion suggests that many students experience reduced energy levels, which may be linked to the cumulative effects of academic pressure, employment demands (as discussed in Chapter 6), and broader well-being challenges.

The higher reported levels among part-time, postgraduate and older students are notable, as these groups were also shown in earlier chapters to have different patterns of time use and employment.

Figure 9.6: "Over the past 2 weeks: I have felt active and vigorous" [N=9,629].

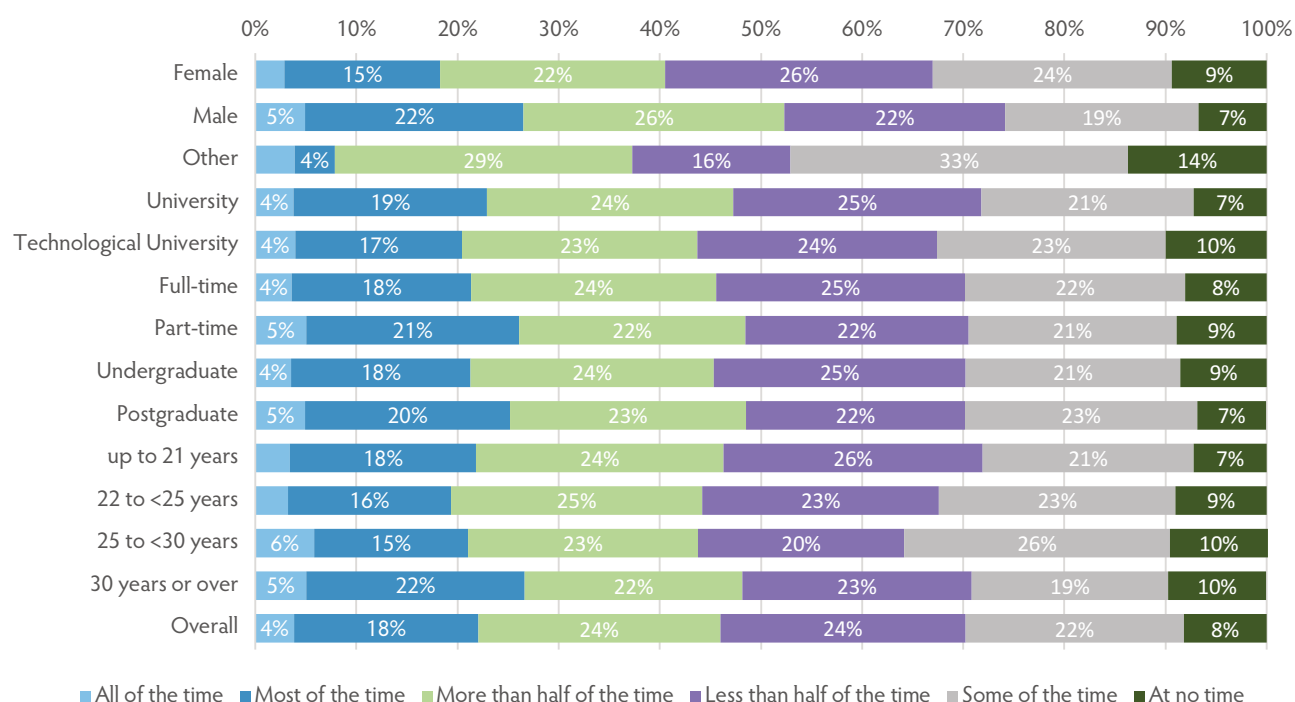
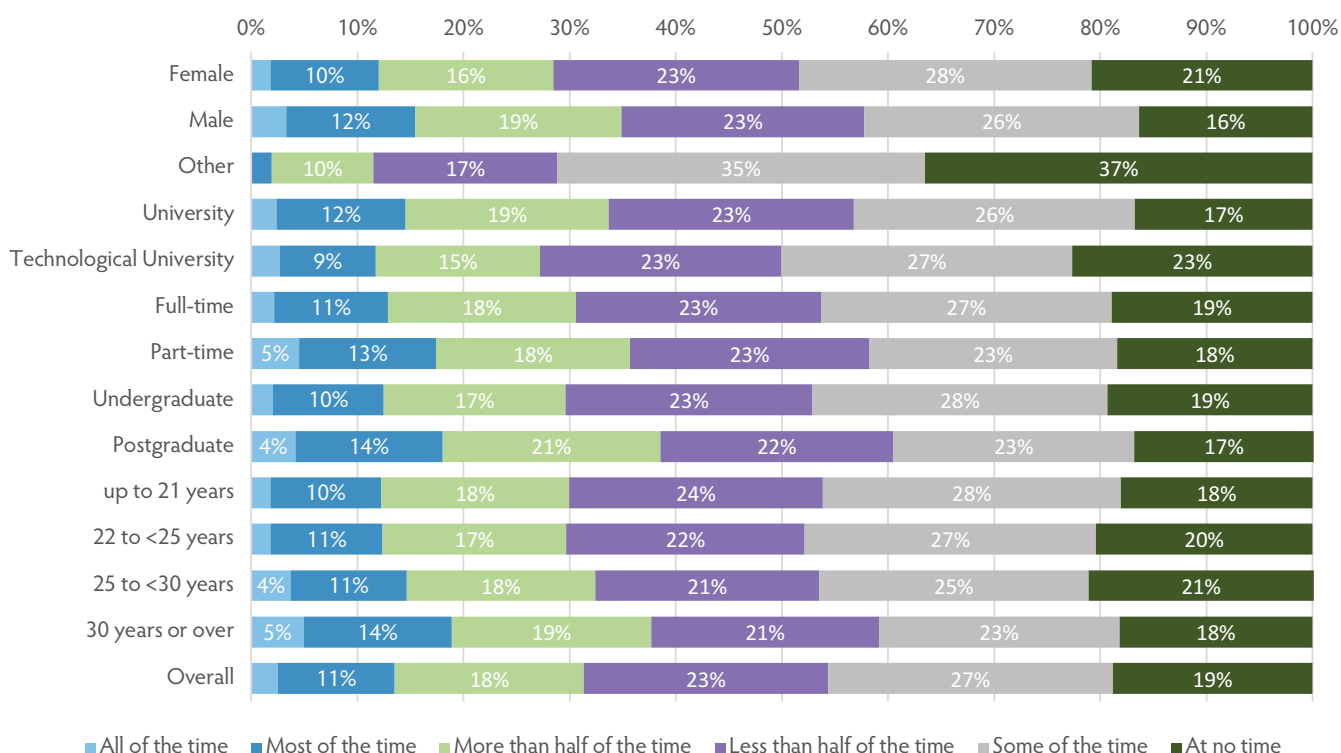


Figure 9.7 shows students' responses to 'over the last two weeks, I have woken up feeling fresh and rested' and presents one of the most striking findings in the chapter. Only 31 percent of students report waking up feeling fresh and rested at least half of the time, indicating that the majority of students experience persistent fatigue or poor-quality rest.

The presence of a considerable cohort who report never feeling rested is particularly significant, as it suggests that sleep and recovery may be a structural issue within the student experience. This aligns with earlier findings on workload (Chapter 6), where students, especially those balancing study and employment, may have limited time for rest. The consistency of this pattern across groups indicates that this is not confined to a specific subgroup but rather reflects a widespread issue.

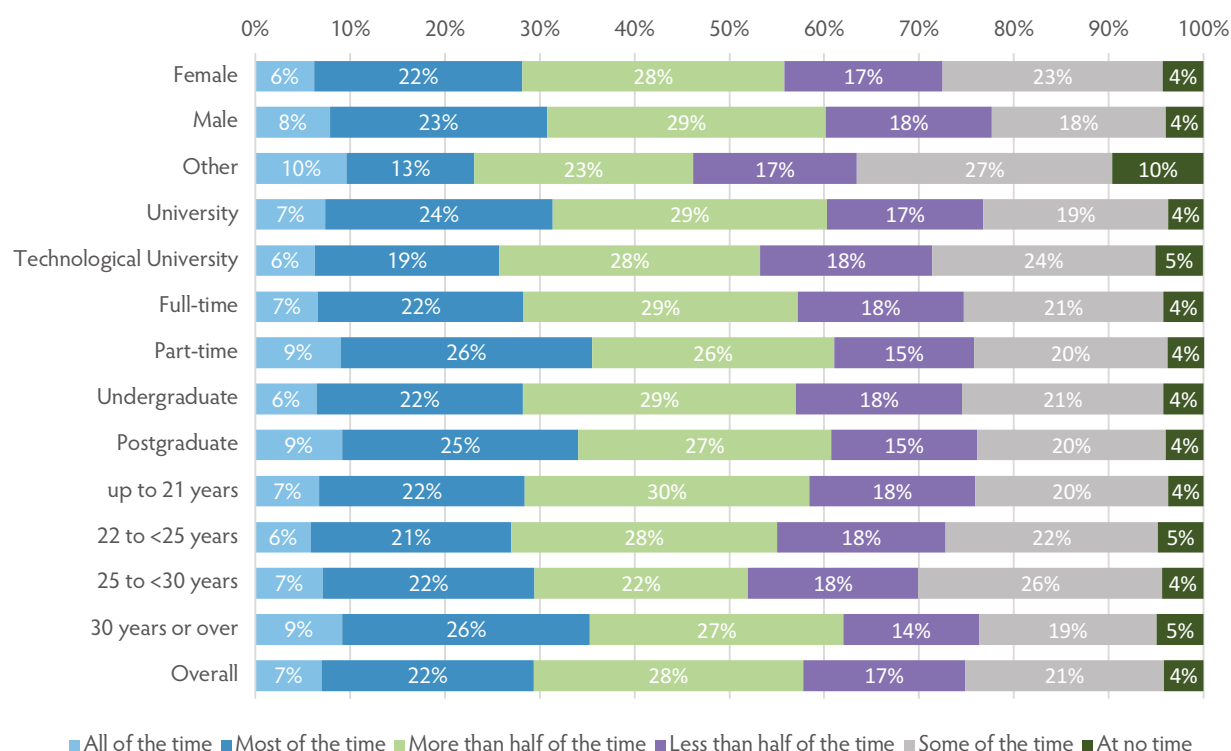
Figure 9.7: "Over the past 2 weeks: I woke up feeling fresh and rested" [N=9,637].



Finally, Figure 9.8 shows students' responses to 'over the last two weeks, my daily life has been filled with things that interest me'. At the aggregate level, 57 percent of respondents have felt their daily life has been filled with things that interest them at least half of the time. The distribution across groups is broadly similar across the key student characteristics, though part-time students, postgraduate students and students over 30 appear to have experienced somewhat higher levels of this than students in other groups. However, at the aggregate level 21 percent of respondents reported that in their daily life in the last two weeks has at no time had anything that interested them.

This is particularly notable when considered alongside Figures 9.6 and 9.7, as low energy and fatigue may contribute to reduced engagement. Together, these figures suggest that while many students remain engaged with their daily lives, a significant minority may be experiencing a more detached or disengaged form of participation in higher education.

Figure 9.8: "Over the past 2 weeks: My daily life has been filled with things that interest me" [N=9,648].



The final block of questions on well-being looked at sources of stress for students. Figure 9.9 shows that academic or coursework demands were widely reported as a significant source of stress, with three-quarters of respondents experiencing this either constantly (37 percent) or frequently (38 percent). The fact that only 4 percent report no stress from this source highlights the centrality of academic pressure in shaping the student experience.

Stress levels were higher among females and respondents identifying as other than male or female than males, and were more pronounced among full-time students than part-time students. Undergraduates reported slightly higher stress levels than postgraduates, while differences by institution type were minimal. Age patterns showed that stress was highest among those aged 22–24 and generally declined with age, with students aged 30 or over reporting the lowest levels. The decline in stress with age also suggests that experience, coping mechanisms, or changes in expectations may reduce the perceived intensity of academic demands over time.

Figure 9.9: Source of stress – Academic/coursework demands [N=9,643].

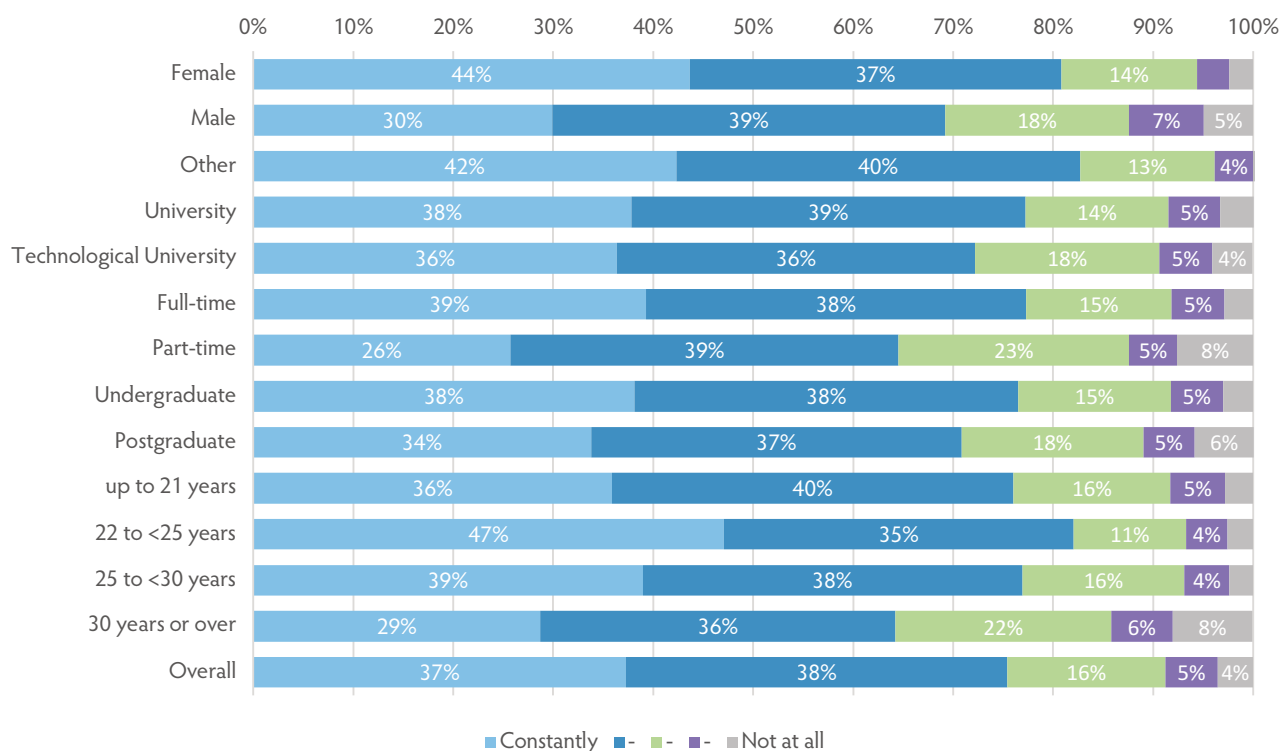


Figure 9.10 shows that procrastination was another a common source of stress, with nearly two-thirds of respondents reporting that they experienced it constantly (34 percent) or frequently (29 percent), while only 7 percent said they did not experience this stressor at all. Females and respondents identifying as other reported higher levels of constant stress than males, and full-time students were substantially more likely than part-time students to report persistent stress. Undergraduates likewise showed higher constant stress levels than postgraduates. Age differences were pronounced: respondents under 25 reported the highest levels of constant stress, while those aged 30 or over reported the lowest and were most likely to say they did not experience procrastination as a stressor.

Figure 9.10: Source of stress – Procrastination [N=9,615].

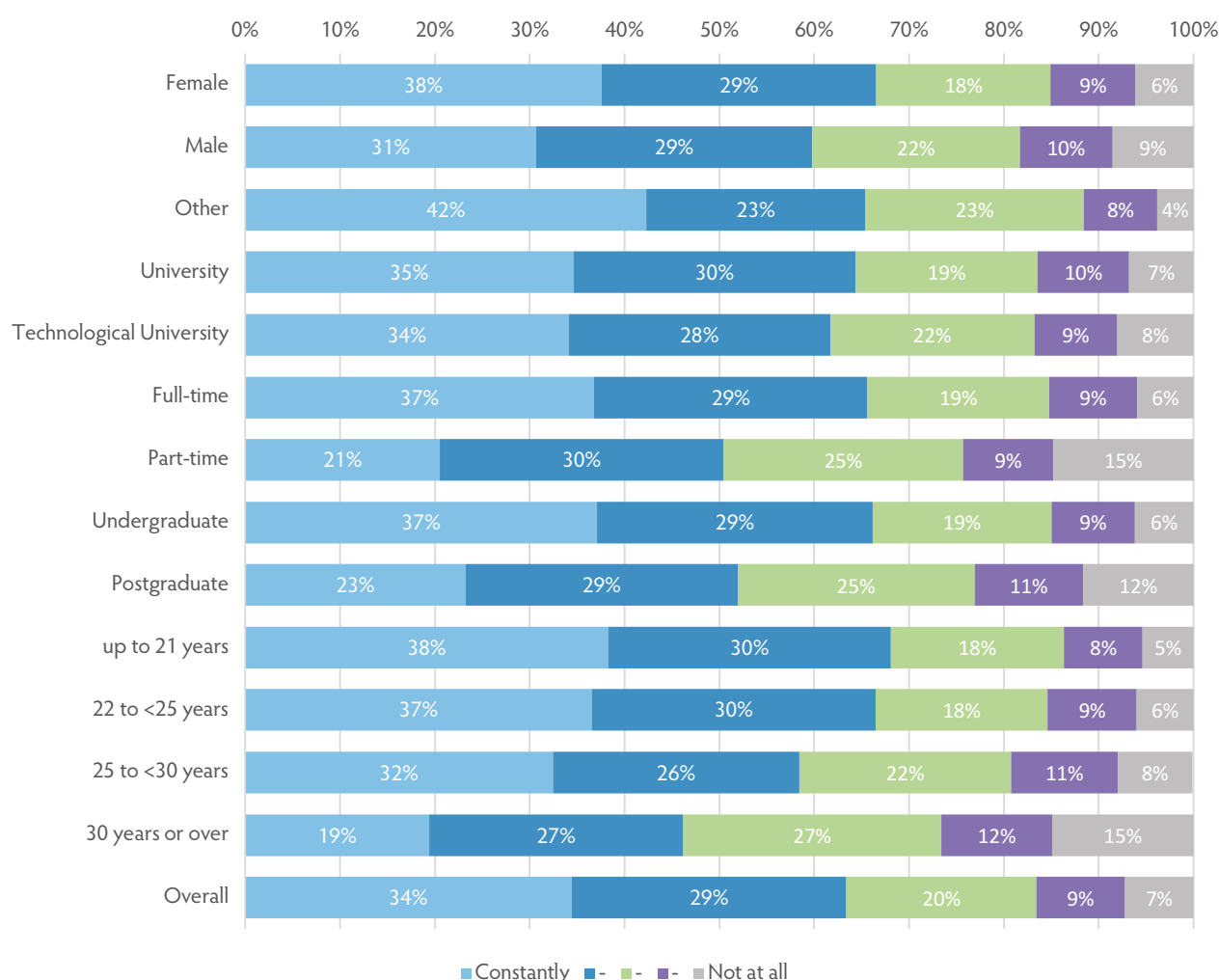


Figure 9.11 shows that financial and money-related issues were a moderate but widespread source of stress, with 40 percent of respondents reporting they experienced this constantly (19 percent) or frequently (21 percent), while an almost equal proportion experienced it rarely (19 percent) or not at all (19 percent). Differences by gender were relatively small, although respondents identifying as other genders reported somewhat higher levels of constant stress. Students attending Technological Universities showed slightly higher levels of frequent or constant financial stress than those at universities. Stress levels were broadly similar between full-time and part-time students and between undergraduates and postgraduates. Age differences were more pronounced: respondents aged 25–29 reported the highest levels of constant financial stress, while those aged 30 or over were among the most likely to report no financial stress.

When considered alongside Chapter 4, where financial pressures were shown to vary significantly by living arrangements and employment status, this figure reinforces the idea that financial stress is unevenly distributed rather than a uniform experience. The higher stress levels among students aged 25–29 may reflect increased financial independence and associated responsibilities.

Figure 9.11: Source of stress – Finances and money problems [N=9,623].

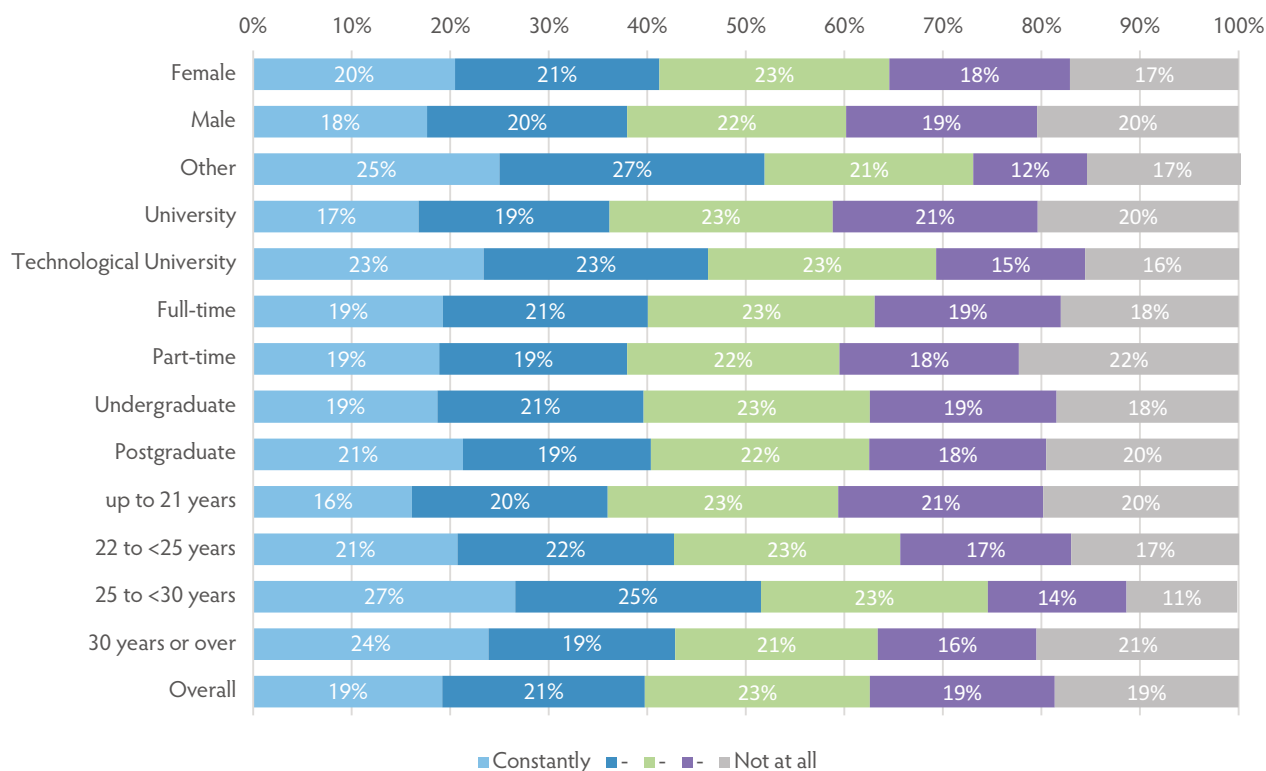
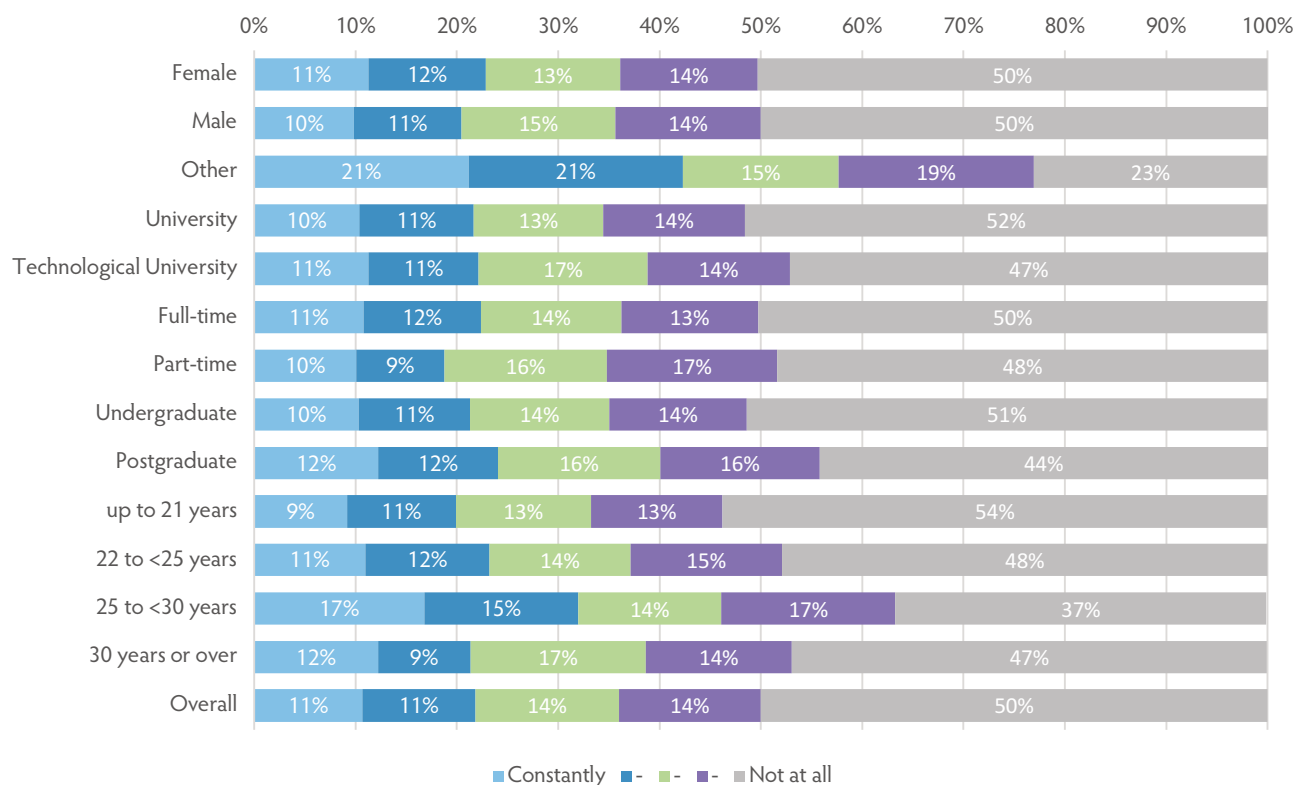


Figure 9.12 presents an interesting contrast to earlier findings on the cost of accommodation. Despite accommodation being one of the largest expenditure items (as shown in Chapter 4), 50 percent of students report no stress from housing, and only 11 percent experience it constantly, with most key student characteristics appearing to follow a similar pattern.

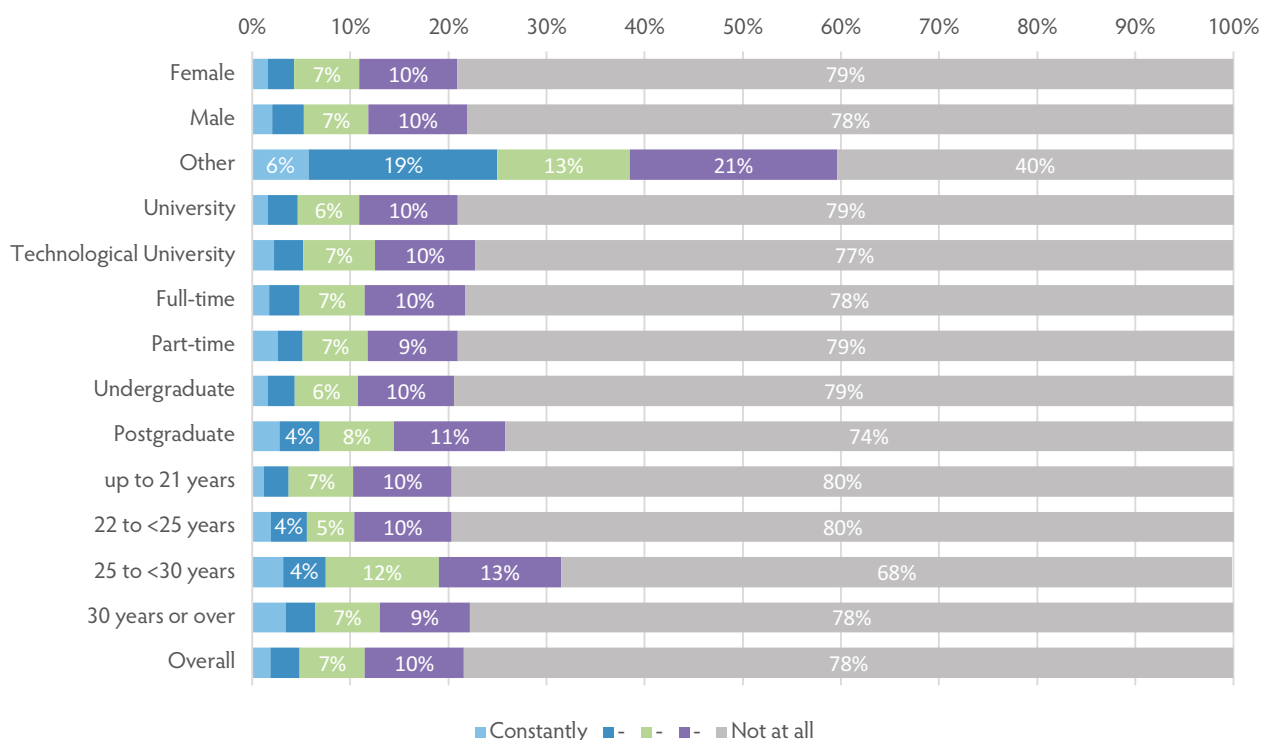
As we noted already in Chapters 4 and 5, accommodation is expensive, and might be captured in Figure 9.11 rather than in Figure 9.12, as once you have accommodation it may be less of a source of stress, but the cost of keeping it may be a recurring issue.

Figure 9.12: Source of stress – Housing/accommodation [N=9,608].



The final figure in this chapter ties into the theme of the next chapter, discrimination and shows that largely, most students do not experience stress from discrimination, with 78 percent at the aggregate level reporting that they do not stress about this at all. In addition, this pattern holds across most key student characteristics, however, this increases sharply for students who do not identify as male or female with 25 percent being stressed by discrimination constantly or most of the time. This suggests that while discrimination may not be widespread across the entire student population, it is highly concentrated among specific groups. This is explored further in the next chapter.

Figure 9.13: Source of stress – Discrimination [N=9,610].



This chapter has shown that while many students report experiencing positive emotions such as cheerfulness, this coexists with lower levels of calmness, energy and rest, indicating a complex and uneven picture of well-being. Anxiety and depression dominate the profile of mental health conditions, and although many students receive support, this is more likely to come from external or personal networks than from within higher education institutions. Academic demands and procrastination emerge as the most significant sources of stress, while financial pressures affect a substantial minority of students. Overall, the findings suggest that student well-being is characterised by a balance between positive engagement and persistent underlying strain, with notable variation across different groups.

While this chapter has focused on students' mental health and sources of stress, it has also highlighted that certain groups experience higher levels of strain than others. The next chapter builds on this by examining students' experiences of discrimination.

Chapter 10: **Experiences of Discrimination**



The final chapter in this report covers the last topical module: students' experiences of discrimination. To begin, students were asked if because of who they are, had they been subjected to physical violence, had they ever been treated as if they were less smart or capable than others, ever experienced sexual harassment, or ridicule from their contemporaries. Figures 10.1 to 10.4 present students' responses to each of these in turn.

From the outset, it is important to note that students who do not identify as male or female report the highest levels of discrimination from students and staff for every form of discrimination. However, these findings are based on a relatively small number of responses (approximately 50), compared with more than 9,000 responses from other students. Because of this sample size, results can be magnified by a small number of respondents. This is not to say that the experiences of this cohort are not valid, rather from a statistical point of view a larger sample of students who do not identify as male or female would have been preferable to ensure that inferences made about this group were more robust.

Figure 10.1: "Would you say that because of who you are: you have been subjected to physical violence" [N=9,602].

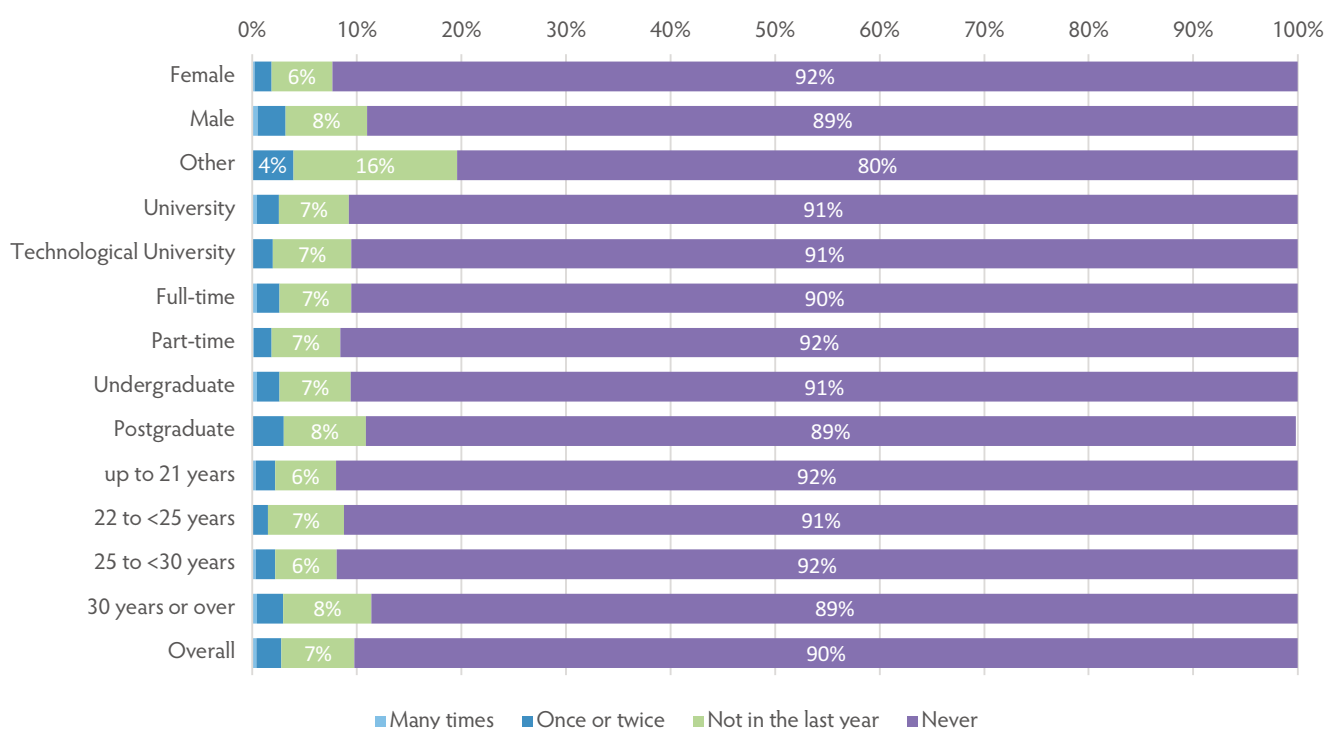


Figure 10.1 shows that experiences of physical violence are relatively rare within the student population, with 90 percent of students reporting that they have never been subjected to physical violence because of who they are. This suggests that, in general, higher education environments are not characterised by widespread physical threat.

However, the elevated reporting among students who do not identify as male or female is notable. Although the absolute numbers are small, the consistency of this pattern across the chapter suggests that this group may face a distinct set of risks not experienced by the wider student population.

Figure 10.2: "Would you say that because of who you are: you have been treated as if you are less smart or capable than others" [N=9,616].

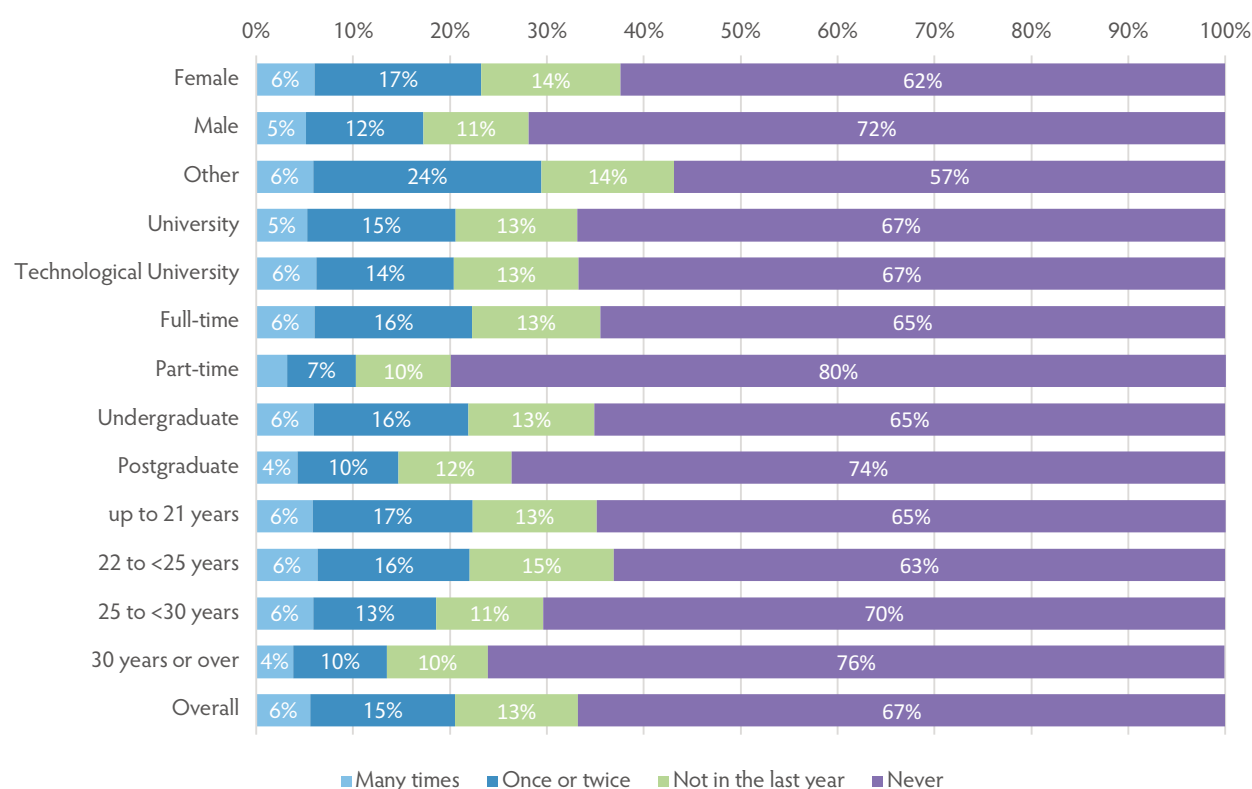


Figure 10.2 reveals a more widespread and subtle form of discrimination, with clear differences across groups. 38 percent of female students report having been treated as less smart or capable, compared with 28 percent of male students, indicating a gendered pattern in perceptions of competence.

The higher prevalence among younger students, full-time students and undergraduates suggests that these experiences may be linked to both age and stage of study. Given that these characteristics overlap, the pattern likely reflects a broader dynamic in which younger students, are more likely to encounter dismissive or undermining attitudes. This contrasts with Figure 10.1, highlighting that while overt forms of discrimination may be rare, more subtle forms remain relatively common.

Figure 10.3: "Would you say that because of who you are: you have experienced sexual harassment" [N=9,612].

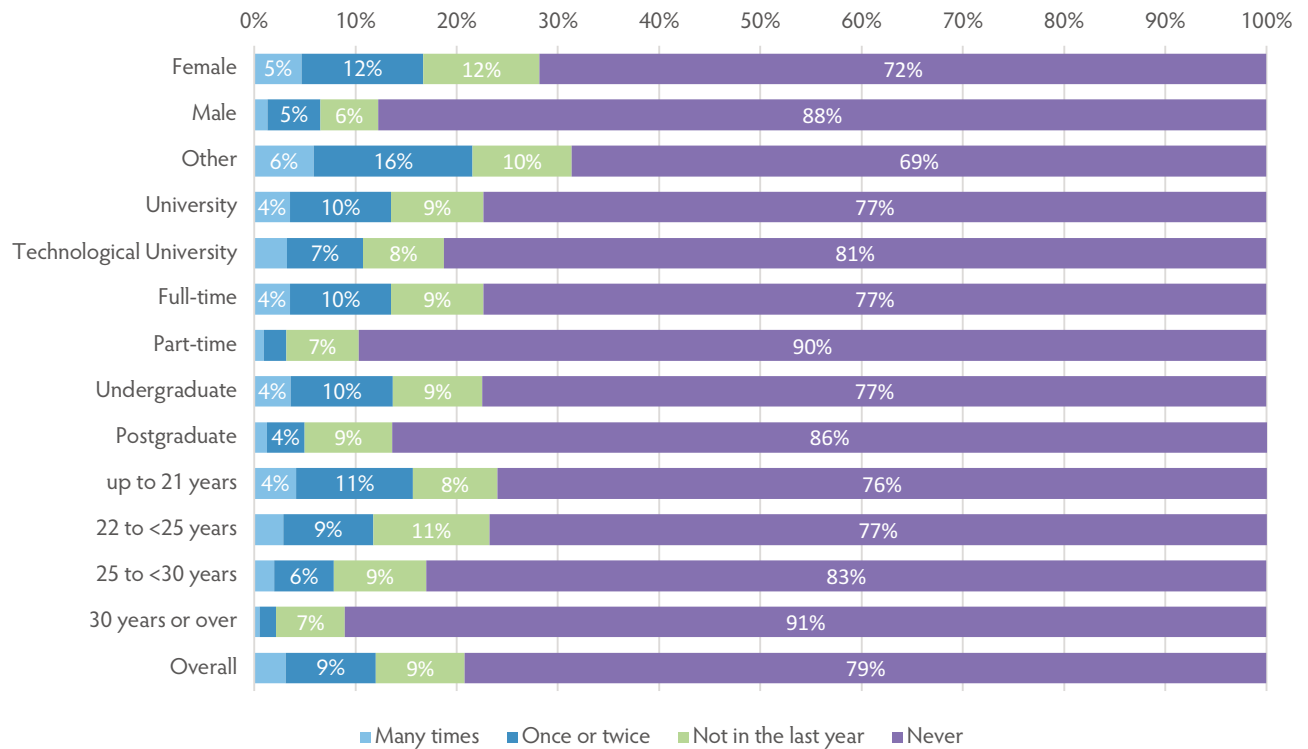


Figure 10.3 shows one of the most pronounced disparities in the chapter. 28 percent of female students' report having experienced sexual harassment, compared with 12 percent of male students, while 31 percent of students identifying as other also report such experiences. This indicates that sexual harassment is both highly gendered and unevenly distributed across the student population.

The presence of a similar age gradient to that observed in Figure 10.2 suggests that younger students may be particularly vulnerable. When considered alongside Chapter 9, where non-binary students reported higher stress related to discrimination, this reinforces the notion that certain groups experience a disproportionate burden of negative social interactions within higher education environments.

Figure 10.4: "Would you say that because of who you are: you have heard, saw, or read others joking about or laughing at you" [N=9,618].

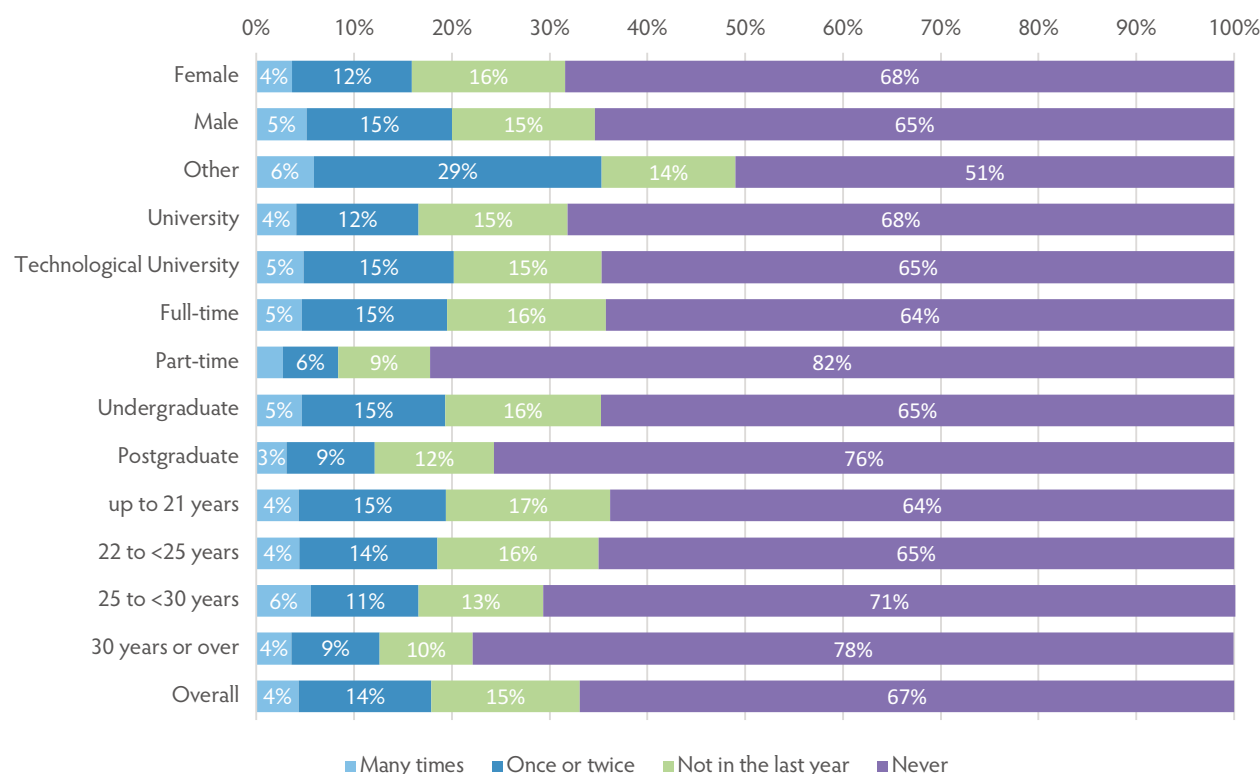


Figure 10.4 indicates that while 67 percent of students report never experiencing ridicule or being laughed at, a significant minority do encounter this behaviour. Compared to physical violence, this form of negative interaction appears more common, though still not universal.

Again, students who do not identify as male or female report higher exposure, reinforcing a consistent pattern across the chapter. The age gradient observed here suggests that such experiences may diminish over time, possibly as students become more socially integrated or develop coping mechanisms. This figure highlights that everyday social interactions can be a meaningful source of discomfort or exclusion, even where more severe forms of discrimination are less common.

The next block of questions asked students if they had ever felt discriminated against in the context of their studies, by other students, by teaching staff, and by other staff within their HEI (shown in Figures 10.5 to 10.13).

Figure 10.5: Discrimination due to gender [N=9,585].

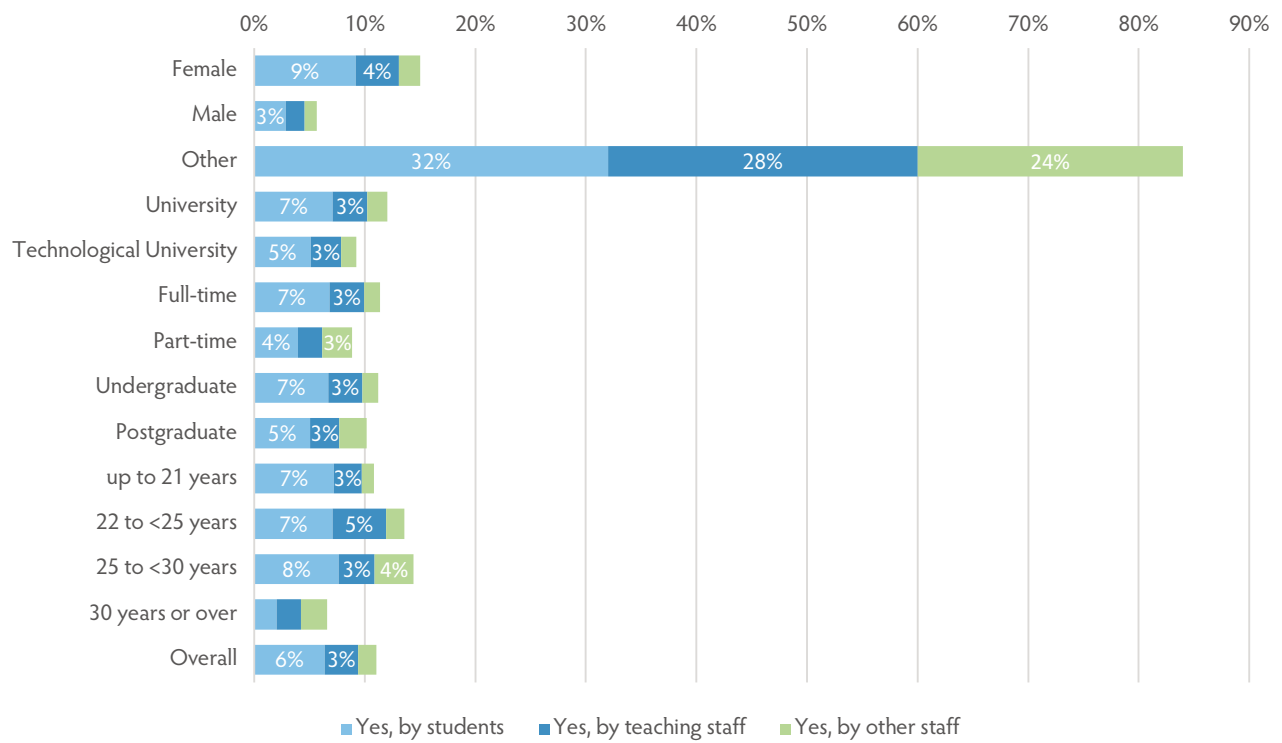


Figure 10.5 shows that gender-based discrimination is most commonly reported by female students, particularly in interactions with other students rather than staff. This suggests that peer environments may be a more significant site of gender-based bias than formal institutional interactions.

Figure 10.6: Discrimination due to age [N=9,578].

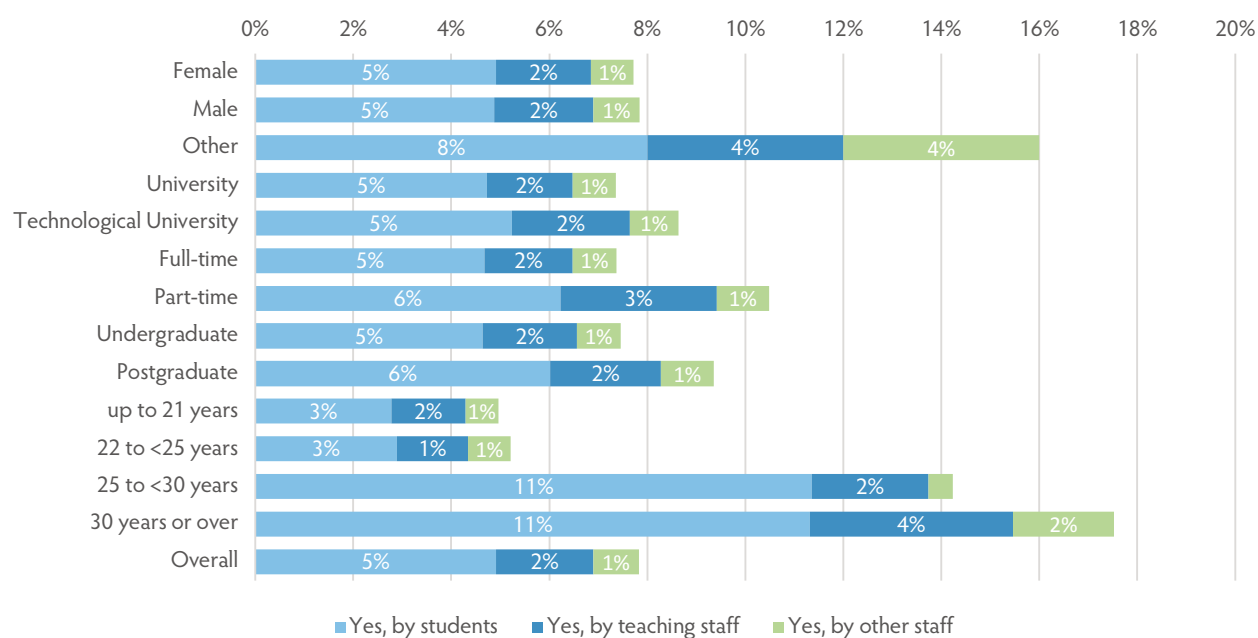


Figure 10.6 demonstrates a clear age-related pattern, with older students more likely to report experiencing discrimination. This is consistent with the broader narrative across the report that part-time and mature students, who are often older, have distinct and different experiences within higher education to younger students.

Figure 10.7: Discrimination due to ancestry/nationality [N=9,593].

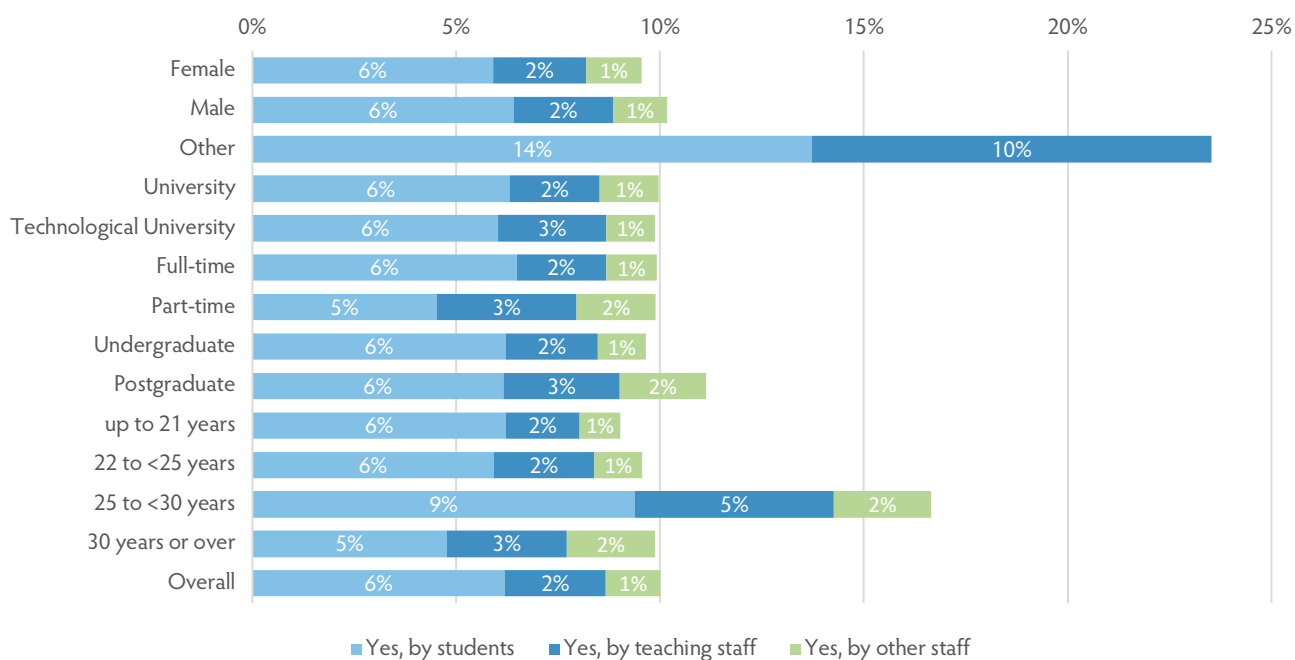


Figure 10.7 shows that discrimination related to ancestry or nationality is also more frequently reported by older students, suggesting that this form of discrimination may intersect with other characteristics such as migration background or international status.

Figure 10.8: Discrimination due to sexuality [N=9,576].

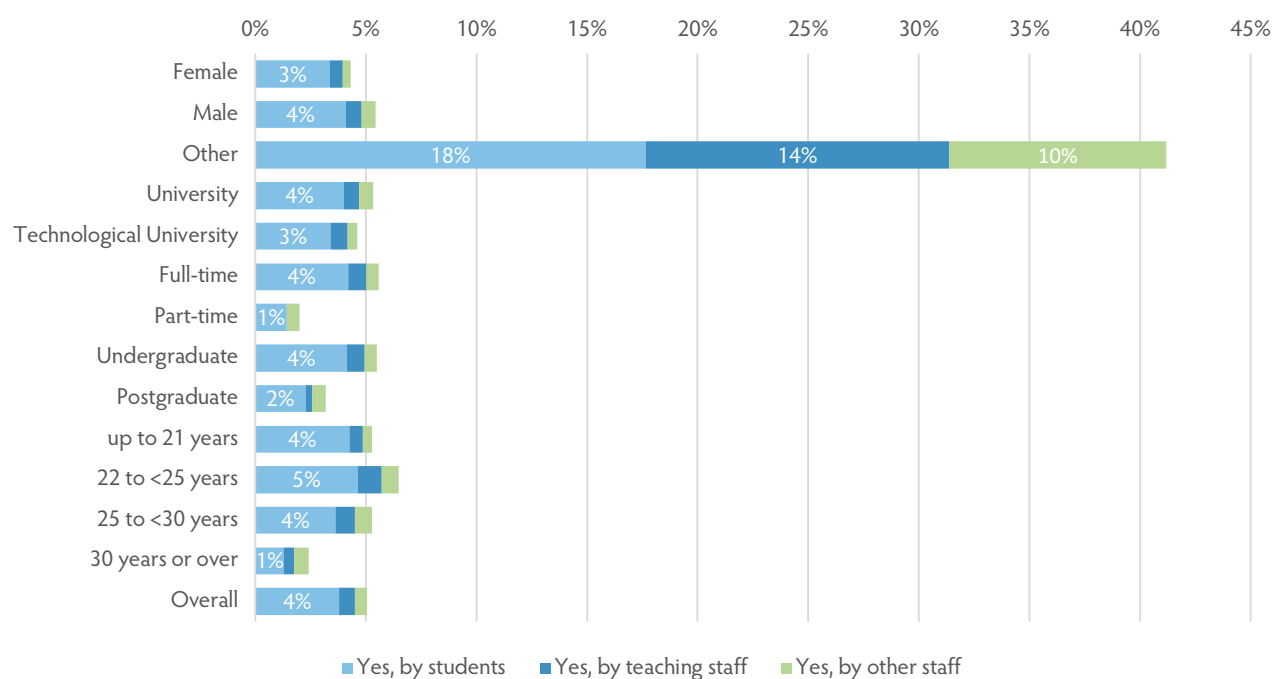
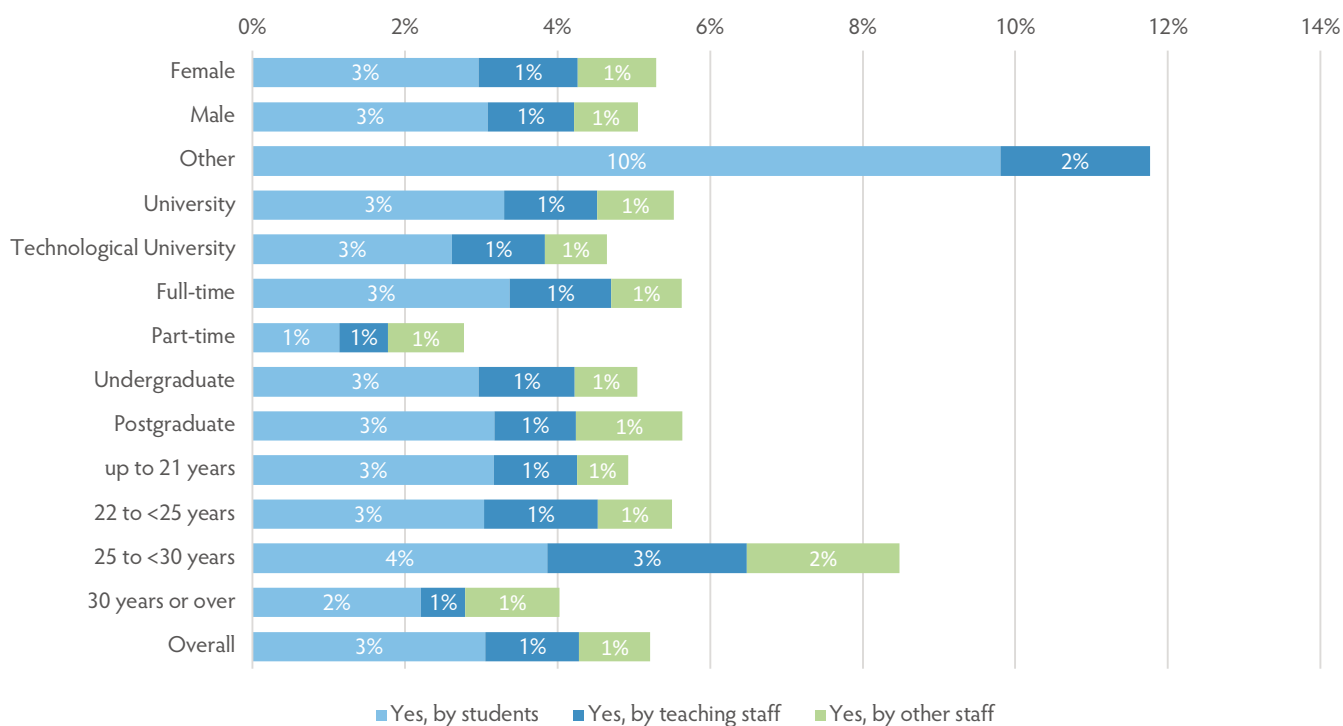


Figure 10.8 presents a somewhat unexpected pattern, with male, full-time undergraduates marginally more likely to report discrimination based on sexuality. The concentration among full-time undergraduates again points to the role of peer environments and social contexts in shaping experiences of discrimination.

Figure 10.9 shows that full-time students are more likely to report discrimination due to skin colour compared to part-time students.

Figure 10.9: Discrimination due to skin colour [N=9,607].



Figures 10.10 to 10.12 show relatively low reported levels of discrimination based on religion, weight and mental health, though none are entirely absent. The persistence of age-related differences across these figures reinforces the broader pattern identified earlier, where older students consistently report higher levels of discrimination.

The relatively lower prevalence of these forms of discrimination compared to others should not obscure their significance, particularly given the cumulative impact that multiple forms of disadvantage may have on individual students.

Figure 10.10: Discrimination due to religion [N=9,587].

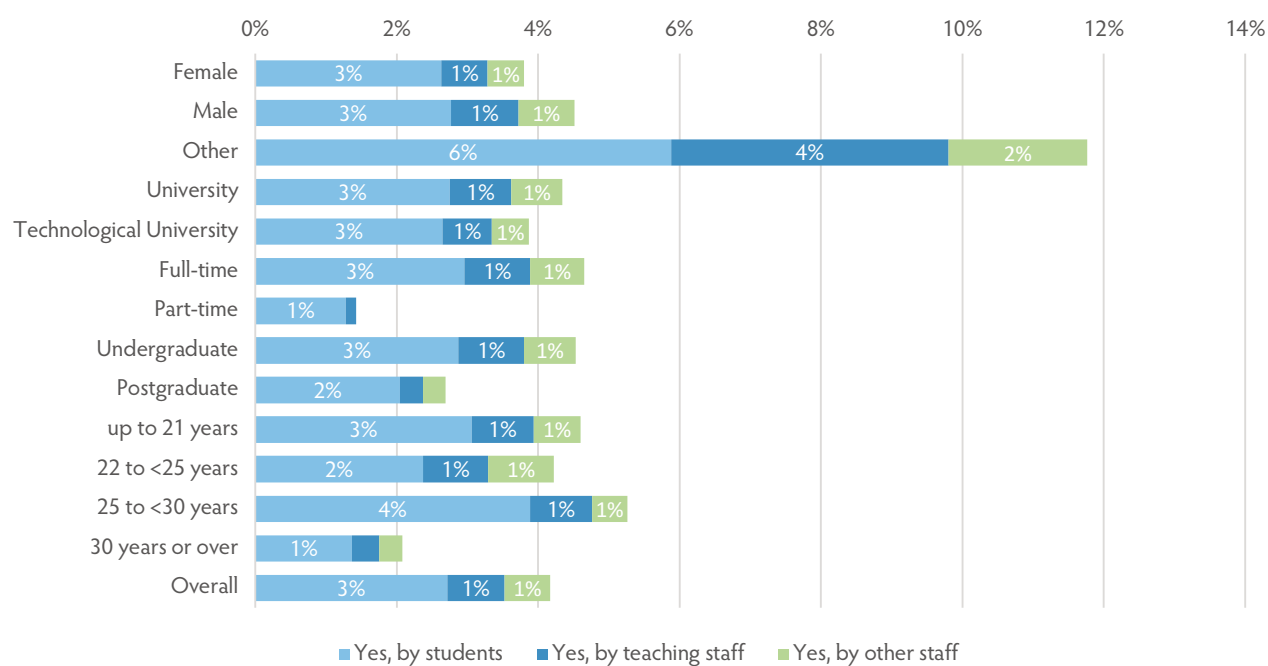


Figure 10.11: Discrimination due to weight [N=9,581].

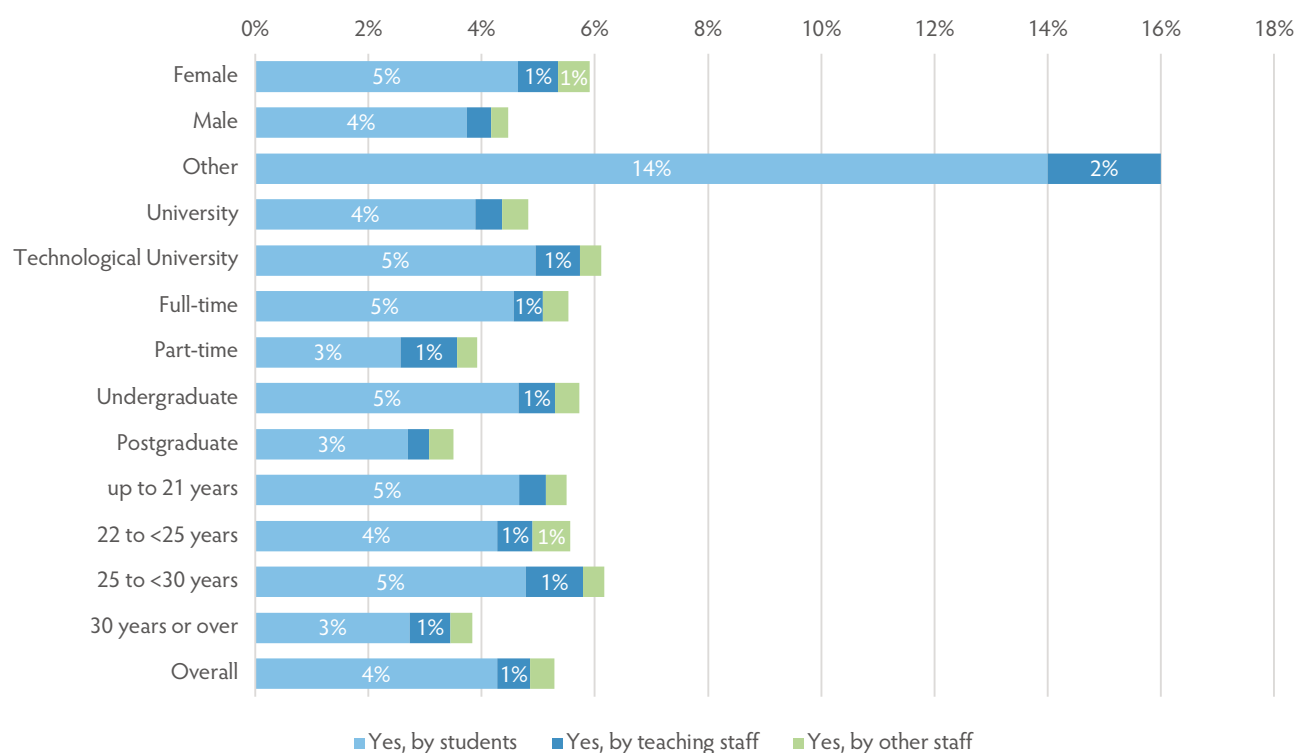


Figure 10.12: Discrimination due to mental health [N=9,582].

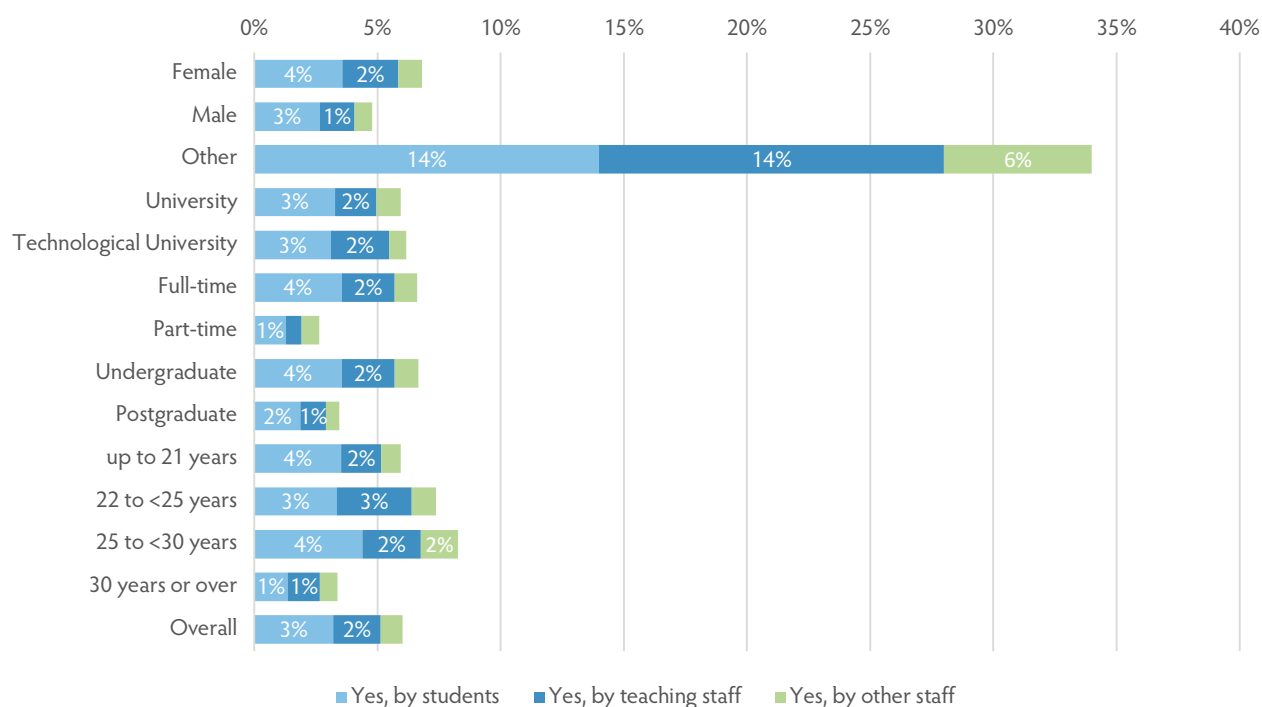
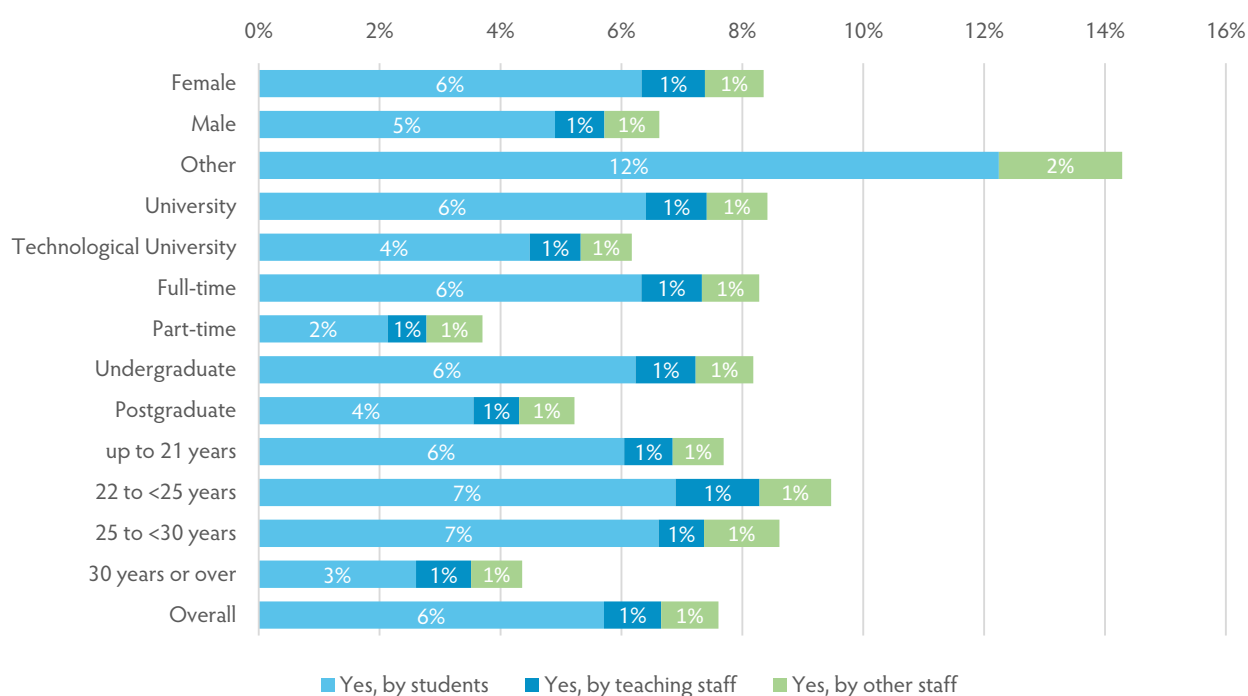


Figure 10.13 highlights income-based discrimination as one of the more prominent forms identified in the chapter. A notable proportion of students report experiencing this, particularly from other students, suggesting that socio-economic differences are visible and socially meaningful within student communities.

This finding links directly back to Chapter 4, where substantial variation in students' financial resources was identified. The presence of income-based discrimination suggests that these financial differences are not only structural but are also experienced socially, potentially contributing to feelings of exclusion or inequality.

Figure 10.13: Discrimination due to income [N=9,586].

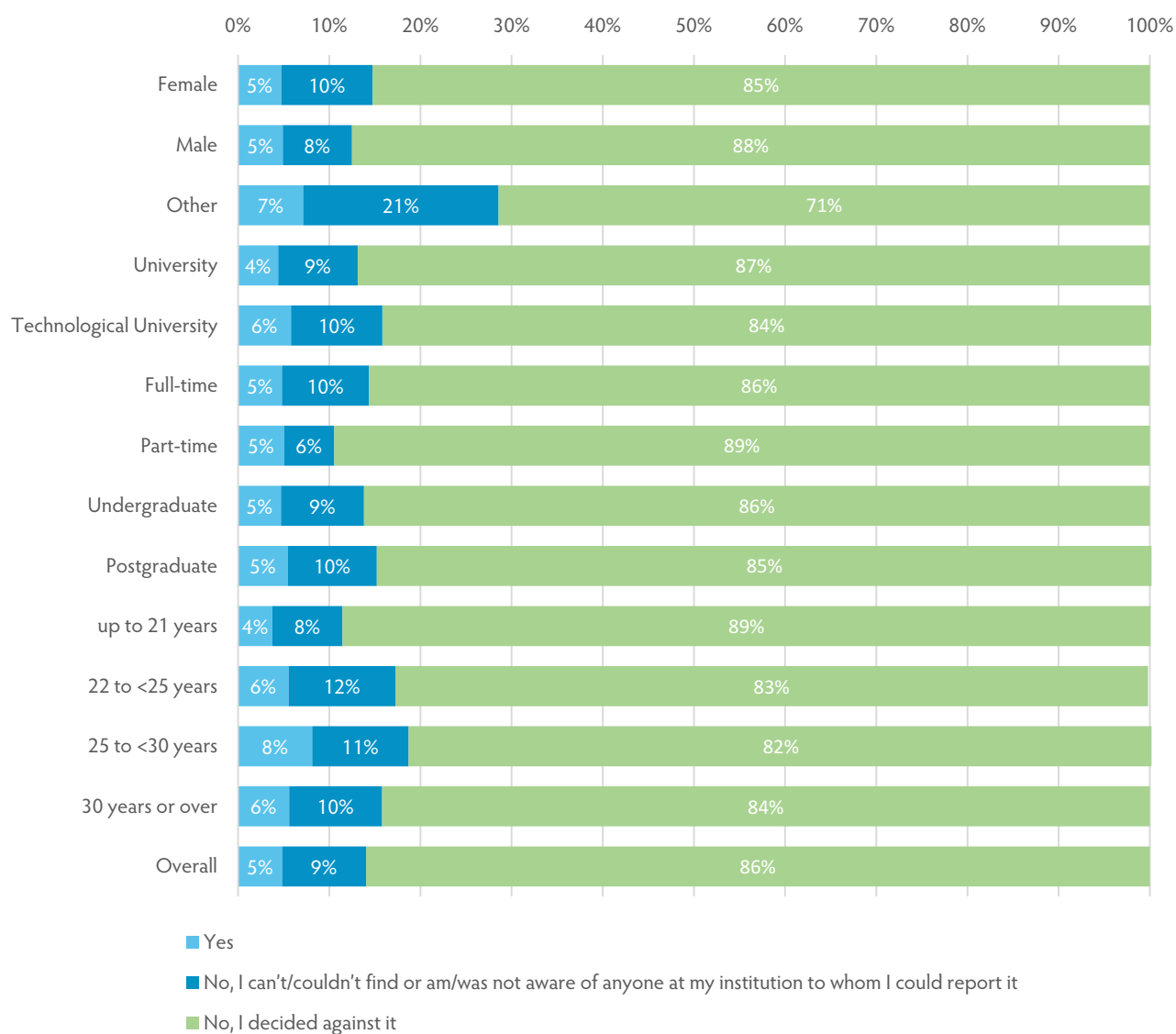


In addition, it is important to note that students who do not identify as male or female report the highest levels of discrimination from students and staff for every form of discrimination. Though as noted at the start of this chapter, it should be highlighted that figures here are based on around 50 responses compared to over 9,000 for other respondents. So, it is worth interpreting these results cautiously.

The final question in this block asked respondents who reported that they had experienced discrimination if they had reported it to their institution, and Figure 10.14 presents one of the most important findings in the chapter. Despite the presence of various forms of discrimination, 86 percent of students do not report their experiences, while only 5 percent do so. A further 9 percent report not knowing how or where to report discrimination.

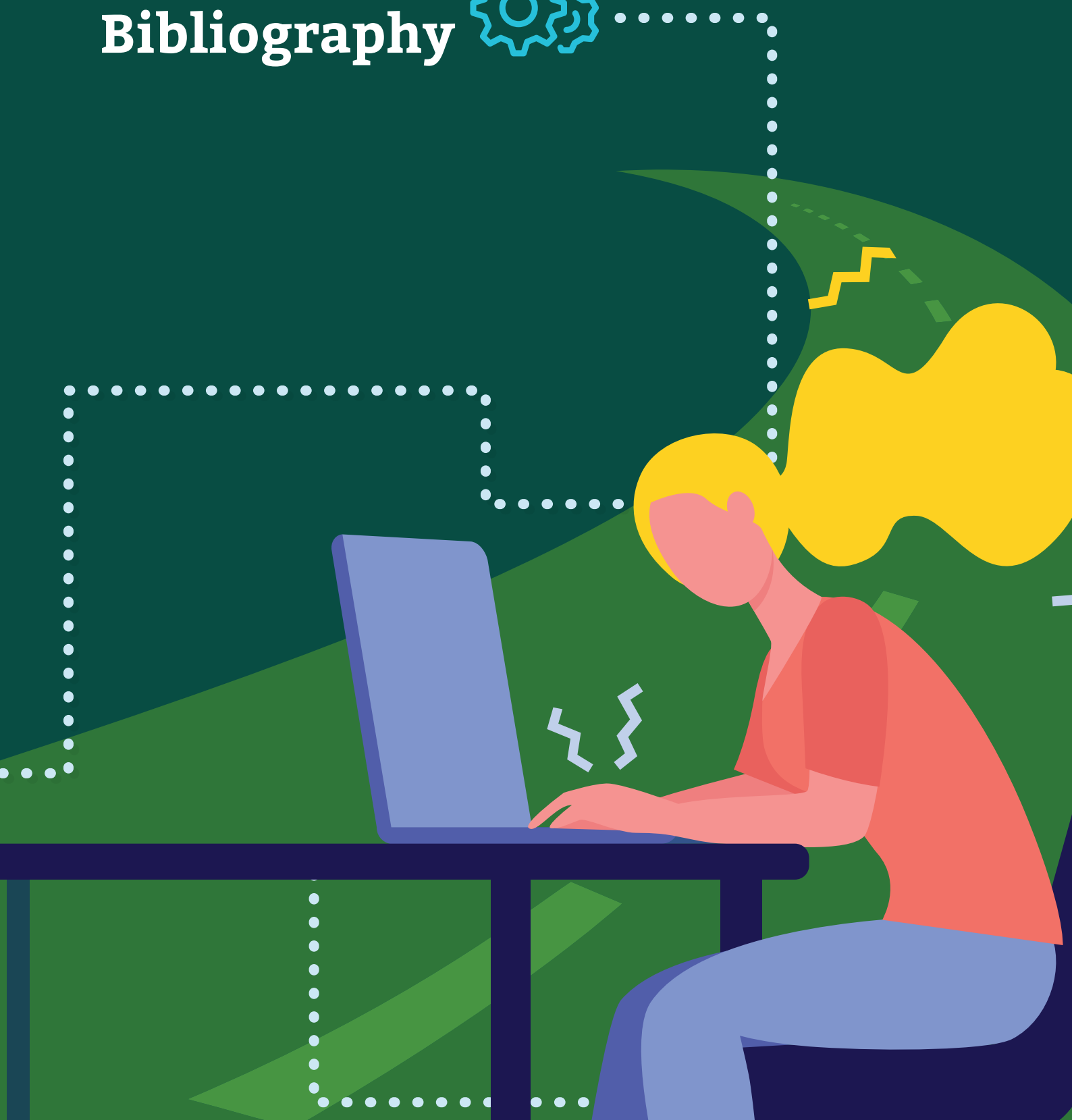
This indicates a substantial gap between experiencing discrimination and engaging with institutional reporting mechanisms. The consistency of this pattern across all groups suggests that barriers to reporting are systemic rather than group-specific. These may include lack of awareness, perceived ineffectiveness of reporting systems, or reluctance to engage with formal processes. The result is that institutional data on discrimination may significantly underrepresent the true extent of students' experiences.

Figure 10.14: "Did you report/are you planning to report your discrimination experience(s) to your higher education institution?"
[N=2,812].



This chapter has shown that while severe forms of discrimination such as physical violence are relatively rare, more subtle and interpersonal forms – such as being treated as less capable, experiencing harassment, or encountering socio-economic bias – are more widespread. These experiences are not evenly distributed, with female students, younger students, and those who do not identify as male or female consistently reporting higher levels of discrimination across multiple domains. Age also emerges as an important factor, with older students more likely to report certain forms of discrimination. Importantly, the vast majority of students who experience discrimination do not report it, pointing to a significant gap between lived experience and institutional response.

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Appendices



Appendix A: Background

The main aim of the EUROSTUDENT project is to collate comparable data on the social dimension of European higher education. It focuses on the socio-economic background and on the living conditions of students. It also investigates other interesting aspects of student life such as international mobility and employment during term-time. The core project provides reliable and insightful cross-country comparisons (disseminated through www.eurostudent.eu). The survey is co-ordinated through a consortium of members. The members of this consortium are the *German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies* (DZHW), the *Austrian Institute for Advanced Studies* (IHS), *ResearchNed* in the Netherlands, the *Praxis Centre for Policy Studies* in Estonia, the *Lithuanian Government Strategic Analysis Center*, the *Maltese National Commission for Further and Higher Education* (NCFHE), and the *Swiss Federal Statistical Office* (FSO).

Ireland is one of 30 countries which participated in the Eurostudent 9 survey, and this report provides results from almost 16,000 students attending higher education institutions in Ireland. and continues the initiative of previous Eurostudent reports through extensively analysing the characteristics of students studying in Ireland by examining the demographic profile of the student population, the courses they are undertaking, their income and expenditure, their accommodation and employment, the route they took into higher education and the extent to which they study abroad as part of their programme.

Each institution that participated (HEIs in italics declined to participate) began the data collection period by issuing an invitation email (and set of follow up emails or reminders) to each qualifying student throughout the data collection campaign (March-May 2025). These emails contained either a generic or unique link to the online portal that the survey was conducted through. The usage of either generic or unique link depended on the choice of each HEI. The benefits of the unique link allowed students the ability to pause and resume at a later stage, it also ensured that students who already participated did not receive a reminder. However, the unique link also involved additional administrative time to process so not all institutions opted to issue the unique link due to resource constraints. Approximately sixty percent of the institutions opted to issue the unique link. In addition, within the email, students were encouraged to respond through an incentive in the form the chance to win one of three HP Laptops, one of five Apple AirPods, or one of fifty Amazon vouchers to the value of €25.

The following institutions were invited to participate in Eurostudent 9:

Universities including Associate and Affiliate Colleges	
	Dublin City University
	Mary Immaculate College
	Maynooth University
	National College of Art & Design
	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences
	Trinity College Dublin
	University College Cork
	University College Dublin
	<i>University of Galway</i>
	University of Limerick
Technological Universities/Institutes of Technology	Atlantic Technological University
	Dundalk Institute of Technology
	Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art and Design & Technology
	South East Technological University
	Atlantic Technological University
	Munster Technological University
	TU Dublin
	TU Shannon

Appendix B:

Copy of the Eurostudent Questionnaire

EUROSTUDENT 9

Integrated Questionnaire

(CORE QUESTIONNAIRE & TOPICAL MODULES)

1 Current Study Situation

1.1 Are you actively pursuing your studies in the current #lecture period in # country?

Single choice.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Yes, but only temporarily for one or two semesters (e.g. on Erasmus)
- ☐ No, I am (temporarily) studying at a higher education institution abroad, not in #country (e.g. on Erasmus)
- ☐ No, I am currently interrupting my studies (either officially or not)
- ☐ No, I have stopped studying
- ☐ No, I already graduated, and I am not studying anymore.

If category "Yes" → respondent should continue with question 1.2.

If categories 2 to 6 → respondent is not part of the standard target group – please direct respondent to a specific exit page.

[Remark on multiple study programmes]

The following questionnaire refers to "your current # (main) study programme", unless otherwise specified.

*# If you are enrolled in more than one study programme, please pick one as your main study programme (the one which is **currently** more important for your studies).*

*# If you are enrolled in a study programme which is formally a combination of several (equally important) sub- programmes, please pick one of these sub-programmes as your main study programme (the one which is **currently** more important for your studies).*

*# If your main study programme is organised by more than one higher education institution (joint degree), please refer to the higher education institution which is **currently** more important for your study programme.*

1.2 Is your current #(main) study programme formally defined as a distance learning programme?

*"Distance learning programmes" are study programmes which **do not provide any** physical face-to-face interaction during lectures. **Formally** refers to the design of the programme and not your actual behaviour or temporal measures (e.g. in response to a pandemic). Single choice.*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

1.3 What is your main country of residence?

Please refer to the country where you mainly live during the current lecture period.

Single choice.

Country of residence: _____ [Drop-down menu]

If "Yes" indicated in 1.2 and 1.3 is not #country à respondent is not part of the standard target group – please direct respondent to a specific exit page.

1.4 At what type of higher education institution are you studying in the current #lecture period?

Please refer to your current #(main) study programme.

Single choice.

- ☐ At a #university
- ☐ At a #non-university type 1
- ☐ At a #non-university type 2
- ☐ ...

1.5 Where are you studying?

Please refer to your current #(main) study programme.

Single choice.

Name of the city/town/place: _____

Name of the higher education institution: _____ [Drop-down menu]

1.6 With which degree does your current #(main) study programme conclude?

Single choice.

- ☐ #Short cycle degree [ISCED 5]
- ☐ #Bachelor degree [ISCED 6]
- ☐ #Short national degree [up to 3 years, ISCED 6]
- ☐ #Master degree [ISCED 7]
- ☐ #Long national degree/ integrated Master [more than 3 years, ISCED 7]
- ☐ #Other postgraduate degree [ISCED 7]
- ☐ #PhD/ Doctoral degree [ISCED 8]
- ☐ #Other, e.g. single subjects

If PhD/ Doctoral degree à respondent is not part of the standard target group – please direct respondent to a specific exit page.

1.7 What is your current #(main) study programme?

Single choice.

Name of the (main) study programme _____ [Drop-down menu]

1.8 What is your current formal status as a student?

Please refer to your current #(main) study programme.

Single choice.

- ☐ Full-time student
- ☐ #Part-time student
- ☐ #Other (e.g. correspondence student)

[Only if 1.6 "#Master degree [ISCED 7]", not "#Long national degree/ integrated Master [more than 3 years, ISCED 7]"]

1.9 In which country did you finish your degree leading to your current Master programme (e.g. Bachelor)?

Single choice.

- ☐ #country
- ☐ [drop down with list of (other) countries]
- ☐ #I haven't finished any previous study programme

[Only if 1.6 "#Master degree [ISCED 7]", not "#Long national degree/ integrated Master [more than 3 years, ISCED 7]" & 1.9 "I haven't finished any previous study programme" is 0]

1.10 How long after graduating from your previous study programme did you start your current Master programme?

Single choice.

- ☐ Less than one year after graduating
- ☐ Between one year and two years after graduating
- ☐ More than two years after graduating

2 Study background – Access

2.1 Do you have a #SMAR or foreign equivalent?

Single choice.

- ☐ Yes, obtained in #country
- ☐ Yes, #SMAR equivalent obtained abroad (not in #country)
- ☐ No, I don't have a #SMAR

If "Yes, obtained in #country" or "Yes, obtained abroad" — please go to question 2.2.

If "No, I don't have a #SMAR" — please go to question 2.3.

[Only students with #SMAR]

2.2 When did you obtain your #SMAR?

Single choice.

- ☐ Upon leaving upper secondary school (within 6 months)
- ☐ Later in life (#via bridging courses, #second chance routes, etc.)

Please go to question 2.4.

[Only student without #SMAR]

2.3 Where did you last attend the #regular school system?

#Explanation of national #regular school.

Single choice.

- ☐ In #country
- ☐ Abroad (not in #country)

2.4 Did you have any paid job(s) prior to entering higher education for the first time?

Please **include** also paid #apprenticeships or paid internships.

Please **exclude** compulsory military service or equivalent.

First entry in higher education regardless of whether in #country or abroad.

Single choice.

- ☐ Yes, I worked continuously for at least one year without interruption and at least 20h per week
- ☐ Yes, I worked continuously for at least one year without interruption and less than 20h per week
- ☐ Yes, I worked, but less than one year
- ☐ No, I did not work prior to entering higher education

2.5 How long after leaving the #regular school system for the first time did you enter higher education for the first time?

"Leaving the #regular school system for the first time" refers to the first time you left the #regular school system (with or without graduation), even if this was not when you gained the higher education entrance qualification, e.g. #SMAR.

First entry in higher education regardless of whether in #country or abroad.

Single choice.

- ☐ Up to two years
- ☐ more than two years

2.6 When did you enter higher education for the first time?

Month _____ Year _____

2.7 When did you start your current #(main) study programme?

If you continue to study on Master level, please refer to the start of this programme even if your study subject remains the same.

- ☐ Same as first enrolment
- ☐ Other than first enrolment: Month _____ Year _____

2.8 Have you ever officially or unofficially interrupted your current #(main) study programme?

Please **count as interruptions** both official as well as unofficial interruptions of your studies (i.e. #semesters in which you were not officially enrolled at a higher education institution or semesters in which you did not participate in any lectures and exams).

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes, for _____ [Drop-down menu] semesters in total

2.9 Thinking of your #school grades in your final year, how would you rate your performance in school in comparison to that of your former classmates?

Overall, my performance was ...

Much better	Somewhat better	Just as good	Somewhat worse	Much worse
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In my last school year with maths classes, my performance in maths was ...				
Much better	Somewhat better	Just as good	Somewhat worse	Much worse
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3 Study Conditions

3.1 Generally, to what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding your studies?

	Strongly agree				Do not agree at all
The #lecturers normally give me helpful feedback on how I am going.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The #lecturers motivate me to do my best work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The #lecturers are extremely good at explaining things.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I know a lot of fellow students with whom I can discuss subject related questions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would recommend my current #(main) study programme.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I often have the feeling that I don't really belong in higher education.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It was always clear I would study in higher education one day.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am seriously thinking of completely abandoning my higher education studies.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3.2 How many hours do you spend in taught courses and on personal study time in a typical week during the current #lecture period?

Try to fill in the number of hours per day for each day of the week, including the weekend.

#Add a '0' if no hours were spent on an activity on the respective day.

In case lectures do not take place weekly (e.g. 8hrs-seminars on three days of the semester), please average out the total time spent accordingly.

Please refer to hours of 60min here.

	MO	TU	WE	TH	FR	SA	SU
Taught studies (lessons, seminars, labs, tests, live online courses of your study programme, etc.)	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Personal study time (like preparation, studying, homework, unpaid internships, etc.)	___	___	___	___	___	___	___

M3.2 How attractive is an occupation in the field of scientific research/research and development to you personally?

Very attractive					Not at all attractive	Unable to rate
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4 Living Conditions

4.1 Who do you live with during the current #lecture period (Monday to Friday)?

Multiple answers possible.

Parents/#guardians (or grandparents, uncles, aunts, or similar)

- ☐ Partner/spouse
- ☐ My child(ren)/my partner's child(ren)
- ☐ With (an)other person(s) not mentioned above (students, friends, siblings, etc.)
- ☐ I live alone

Students living with parents (or grandparents, uncles, aunts, or similar) (cat. 1), irrespective of other answer categories ticked à please go to question 4.3.

Students not living with parents (or grandparents, uncles, aunts, or similar) (cat. 2 – 5) à please go to question 4.2.

[Only students who do not live with their parents/ #guardians (or grandparents, uncles, aunts, or similar)]

4.2 Do you live in #student accommodation, #e.g. dormitory or halls of residence?

Single choice.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

4.3 On a typical day, how much time does it take you to get from your home to your higher education institution during the current #lecture period?

Home is your place of living during #lecture period (Monday until Friday).

One way _____ minutes on average

4.4 Do you have (a) paid job(s) during the current #lecture period?

Please also **include** paid internships and self-employment.

Single choice.

- ☐ Yes, I work during the whole #lecture period.
- ☐ Yes, I work from time to time during the #lecture period.
- ☐ No, I don't work during the #lecture period.

If "Yes, I work during the whole #lecture period" or "Yes, I work from time to time during the #lecture period" — please go to question 4.5.

If "No, I don't work during the #lecture period" — please go to question 4.9.

[Only students who work during the #lecture period]

4.5 How many hours do you spend on your paid job(s) in a typical week in the current #lecture period?

Paid job(s): _____ h/week

[Only students who work during the #lecture period]

4.6 To what extent do the following statements apply to your situation?

Please refer to your paid job(s) during the current #lecture period.

[Only students who work during the #lecture period]

	Applies totally				Does not apply at all
I work to cover my living costs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I work to gain experience on the labour market	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Without my paid job, I could not afford to be a student	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I work because I have to support others financially (children, partner, parents etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I work so I can afford things I otherwise would not buy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4.7 How closely related is/are your paid job(s) to the content of your current study programme?

Please refer to your paid job(s) during the current #lecture period.

Very closely					Not at all				
○		○		○		○		○	

[Only students who work during the #lecture period]

4.8 Which of the following describes your current situation best?

Single choice.

- ☐ Primarily I am a student, and I am working alongside my studies
- ☐ Primarily I work, and I am studying alongside my paid job(s)

4.9 Did you have (a) paid job(s) during the #lecture-free period/holidays during the last 12 months?

Please also *include* paid internships and self-employment.

Single choice.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

4.10 What kind of financial support do you receive regularly from your family and/or partner?

#parental family: your parents, siblings, relatives.

Cash/ #Bank transfers could be any money used for living or studying (incl. for fees).

Bills paid directly (money is transferred directly from your family/partner's account to the creditor's account and not through your account) could be e.g.: rent, electricity, heating, tuition or other fees, phone bill, subscriptions, public transport, or similar bills.

#transfers in kind could be e.g.: free accommodation, food, clothes, phone, car use, or similar goods provided by your family/partner.

Please check all that apply.

	... regularly provides me with money in cash/ #bank transfers	... pays bills for me regularly and directly	... regularly provides me with any #transfers in kind
My #parental family ...	☐	☐	☐
My current partner (no payments from ex-partner) ...	☐	☐	☐

4.11 What are your average expenses for the following items during the current #lecture period?

[If indicated in 4.10] You have indicated that your family/partner regularly pays some of your bills directly and/or that you regularly receive #transfers in kind: Please enter the approx. amount (i.e. sum of bills and #transfers in kind) in the second column.

[If indicated in 4.10] Please try to estimate only cost your family pays **additionally** for you, e.g. for your food. If your parents would rent the same apartment without you living with them, they would not be paying any extra rent for you (hence enter 0), but you may be consuming **additional** electricity or other operating cost.

[If indicated in 4.10] Please try to estimate only cost you pay for yourself and enter in the second column only cost your partner pays **additionally** for you. E.g. if you as a couple divide the accommodation cost, please enter your part of the accommodation cost in the first column and 0 in the second column. If your partner pays the total accommodation cost, please enter 0 in the first column and the share your partner pays for you in the second column.

If other persons (e.g. children, parents, partner) are financially dependent on you, please treat them as part of your own cost (e.g. if you pay the food for yourself and a child, please enter the total cost for both of you).

#semester=#6 months

Add a '0' if no money was spent on a certain type of costs.

Regular monthly costs during the current #lecture period	I pay out of my own pocket	Paid by others directly for me (bills or transfers in kind)	
My accommodation costs (rent/mortgage including utilities, water, electricity etc.)	_____	_____	per month
Food	_____	_____	per month
Transportation	_____	_____	per month
Communication (telephone, internet, etc.)	_____	_____	per month
Health cost (e.g. medicine, medical insurance)	_____	_____	per month
Childcare	_____	_____	per month
Debt payment (except mortgage)	_____	_____	per month
Social and leisure activities (going out, streaming, sports, books, music, fitness centre, theatre, cinema, etc.)	_____	_____	per month
Other regular living costs (clothing, toiletries, tobacco, pets, insurance [except medical insurance]) or alimony	_____	_____	per month
#Total (automatically calculated by programme)	_____	_____	per month
Tuition fees or other fees for studying paid per #semester			
#University tuition fees	_____	_____	per #semester
Other #university fees (e.g. registration/ administration)	_____	_____	per #semester
Other study-related costs (e.g. field trips, books, photocopying, private tutoring, contribution to student union)	_____	_____	per #semester

[if others pay the fees directly as indicated in 4.11]

4.12 Who is paying your #university fees directly?

Multiple answers possible.

- ☐ Parents/#guardians (or grandparents, uncles, aunts, or similar)
- ☐ Partner/spouse
- ☐ Employer
- ☐ Foundation/ NGO
- ☐ Other

4.13 Are you receiving a public grant/scholarship or a public loan during the current #lecture period?

*#Please indicate the **current** nature of this support and neglect potential future transformation from loan to grant or vice versa.*

Multiple answers possible.

- ☐ Yes, #[name of **public** student support in country]
- ☐ #Yes, #[name of **public** student support in country, if more than 1]
- ☐ #Yes, #[name of **public** student support in country, if more than 2]
- ☐ #Yes, #[name of **public** student support in country, if more than 3]
- ☐ Yes, other public grant/scholarship from #country
- ☐ Yes, other student loan from #country
- ☐ #Yes, financial support from my #university [only if possible in #country]
- ☐ Yes, grant/scholarship/loan from another country (not from #country)
- ☐ No

4.14 Are you financing your living or study costs during the current #lecture period (partly) through savings?

Multiple answers possible.

- ☐ Yes, through savings from previous jobs (e.g. earned during holidays)
- ☐ Yes, through other savings (e.g. inheritance, gifts of money, capital income, sales, prize money)
- ☐ No

4.15 What is the average monthly amount available to you in cash or via #bank transfers from the following sources during the current #lecture period?

"Available to you" is the money which is meant for monthly consumption, no matter when it was received. Bills paid directly for you or #transfers in kind are not "available to you" and should not be included here.

Please try to estimate the monthly amounts, even if income is not received monthly.

[In an online questionnaire, the following lines will only be visible, if respondents ticked the respective question above.]

	Average amount	
[If indicated in 4.10] From #parental family: Cash or transfer to my bank account	_____	per month
[If indicated in 4.10] From partner: Cash or transfer to my bank account	_____	per month
[If indicated in 4.13] #[name of student support in country]	_____	per month
[If indicated in 4.10] #[name of student support in country; add as many as in question 4.13]	_____	per month
[If indicated in 4.13] #(Other) Public grant/scholarship from #country	_____	per month
[If indicated in 4.13] #(Other) Student loan from #country	_____	per month
[If indicated in 4.13] #Financial support from my #university [only if possible in #country]	_____	per month
[If indicated in 4.13] Student support from another country (grant/scholarship/loan)	_____	per month
[If indicated in 4.4, either 1 or 2] Net income from paid job during the current #lecture period	_____	per month
[If indicated in 4.14] Savings from previous jobs used for living/studying during the current #lecture period	_____	per month
[If indicated in 4.14] Savings (not from previous jobs) used for living/studying during the current #lecture period	_____	per month
Other income from public sources (e.g. child benefit, housing benefit, pension, unemployment benefits, support for orphans)	_____	per month
Other income (repayable or not) from private sources (e.g. alimony, private scholarship, income from capital, property, occasional income from sales, gifts, loan, private borrowing)	_____	per month
#Total (automatically calculated by programme)	_____	per month

4.16 To what extent are you currently experiencing financial difficulties?

Very seriously				Not at all	
○	○	○	○	○	

M2 Financial Deprivation

[Only students who have chosen category 1 "very serious" or category 2 "serious" financial difficulties in 4.16]

M2.1 What is the impact of the financial difficulties you are experiencing

	Strongly agree				Do not agree at all
My grades are worse than they could be	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I will graduate later than originally planned	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My mental health is suffering	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My physical health is suffering	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I need to limit my meals in quantity and/ or variety	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am not able to pay all essential bills on time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

M2.2 Can you afford the following things financially (regardless of whether you want it)?

	Yes	Someone else (parents, family, partner etc.) pays/would pay this for me	No, I cannot afford this through my own resources and nobody else would be able to pay this for me
A meal with meat/ chicken, fish or vegetarian equivalent every other day	☐	☐	☐
Required study resources (laptop, books, licenses, print-outs, etc.)	☐	☐	☐
Travel/commute to my higher education institution as needed	☐	☐	☐
Necessary medical expenses except health insurance (e.g., medications, treatments, physical therapy, psychotherapy)	☐	☐	☐
Keeping your home adequately warm	☐	☐	☐
Regular participation in a leisure activity (that costs money) outside the home (e.g., theatre, cinema, sports)	☐	☐	☐
Spending a small amount of money most weeks on myself, for my own pleasure (buying/doing something for myself)	☐	☐	☐
Replacing furniture (bed, sofa/dresser, cupboard) when worn out or damaged	☐	☐	☐

4.17 Would you be able to pay for an unexpected, required expense of XXXX#€?

- ☐ Yes, I am able to pay this through my own resources
- ☐ No, but someone else (parents, family, partner etc.) would pay this for me
- ☐ No, I cannot afford this through my own resources and nobody else would be able to pay this for me

M2.3 In the last twelve months, were you ever unable to pay the following on time due to financial difficulties?

	Yes, once	Yes, twice or more	No	I do not pay this / Someone else pays this for me
rent/mortgage payment	☐	☐	☐	☐
utility bills (e.g. heating, electricity, gas, water, waste disposal, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other monthly expenses (internet, phone bills, insurance, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐

4.18 Have you done any internships (of at least one week, mandatory or voluntary) since you first entered higher education in #country?

#Internship: main purpose is gaining practical experience on the labour market.

#Exclude #practical courses or #lab exercises at the higher education institution.

Multiple answers possible.

- ☐ Yes, one or more internship(s) in #country (à please go to question 4.19)
- ☐ Yes, one or more internship(s) not in #country (à please go to question 5.1)
- ☐ No (à please go to question 5.6)

[If internship done in #country]

4.19 Was your most recent internship in #country ...

Single choice.

- ☐ Mandatory part of the curriculum
- ☐ Voluntary (=not part of the curriculum).

[If internship done in #country]

4.20 Was your most recent internship in #country paid or unpaid?

Single choice.

- ☐ Paid
- ☐ Unpaid

5 International Mobility

[If internship done abroad indicated in 4.18]

5.1 Within which of the following organisational frameworks was your most recent internship abroad organised?

Single choice.

- ☐ Erasmus(+)
- ☐ Other EU-programme (e.g. #EU programme 1, #EU programme 2)
- ☐ Other programme (e.g. #national programmes, #regional programmes)
- ☐ Independently organised, without any programme

[If internship done abroad indicated in 4.18]

5.2 Was your most recent internship abroad ...

Single choice.

- ☐ Mandatory part of the curriculum
- ☐ Voluntary (=not part of the curriculum)

[If internship done abroad indicated in 4.18]

5.3 Was your most recent internship abroad paid or unpaid?

Single choice.

- ☐ Paid
- ☐ Unpaid

[If internship done abroad indicated in 4.18]

5.4 During which degree programme in #country did you go abroad for your most recent internship?

Multiple answers possible.

- ☐ In my current study programme
- ☐ Previous/ other #short cycle degree [ISCED 5]
- ☐ Previous/ other #Bachelor degree [ISCED 6]
- ☐ Previous/ other #short national degree [up to 3 years, ISCED 6]
- ☐ Previous/ other #Master degree [ISCED 7]
- ☐ Previous/ other #long national degree/ integrated Master [more than 3 years, ISCED 7]
- ☐ Previous/ other #other postgraduate degree [ISCED 7]
- ☐ Previous/ other #PhD/Doctoral degree [ISCED 8]
- ☐ Previous/ other #other, e.g. single subjects
- ☐ Outside any degree programme

[If internship done abroad indicated in 4.18]

5.5 Was your most recent internship abroad recognised in the form of ECTS towards your study programme in #country?

Single choice.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know (yet)

5.6 Have you ever taken part in a temporary study period abroad since you first entered higher education in #country (e.g. #semester abroad)?

abroad = outside of #country

Please exclude full study programmes undertaken abroad.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If "Yes" — continue with question 5.7.

If "No" — continue with question 5.10.

The following questions focus on your *temporary study period abroad*.

If you did more than one temporary study period abroad, please refer to the most recent stay.

[Only students who did a study period abroad (5.6)]

5.7 Within which of the following organisational frameworks was your most recent temporary study period abroad organised?

Single choice.

- ☐ Erasmus(+)
- ☐ Other EU-programme (e.g. #EU programme 1, #EU programme 2)
- ☐ Other programme (e.g. #national programmes, #regional programmes)
- ☐ Independently organised, without any programme

[Only students who did a study period abroad (5.6)]

5.8 During which degree programme in #country did you temporarily study abroad most recently?

Multiple answers possible.

- ☐ In my current study programme
- ☐ Previous/ other #short cycle degree [ISCED 5]
- ☐ Previous/ other #Bachelor degree [ISCED 6]
- ☐ Previous/ other #short national degree [up to 3 years, ISCED 6]
- ☐ Previous/ other #Master degree [ISCED 7]
- ☐ Previous/ other #long national degree/ integrated Master [more than 3 years, ISCED 7]
- ☐ Previous/ other #other postgraduate degree [ISCED 7]
- ☐ Previous/ other #PhD/ Doctoral degree [ISCED 8]
- ☐ Previous/ other #other, e.g. single subjects

[Only students who did a study period abroad (5.6)]

5.9 Were the credits (ECTS, competences, certificates) you gained in your most recent temporary study abroad period recognised towards your study programme in #country?

Single choice.

- ☐ Yes, all credits were recognised
- ☐ Yes, the credits were partly recognised
- ☐ No, none of the credits were recognised
- ☐ I did not gain any credits
- ☐ I don't know (yet)

Please go to question 5.11.

[Only students who have not done a temporary study period abroad yet (5.6)]

5.10. Taking a closer look at temporary study periods abroad: How would you best describe your intentions?

Single choice.

- ☐ I am currently preparing a temporary study period abroad
- ☐ I haven't made any arrangements, but I am intending to go abroad for a temporary study period
- ☐ I do not intend to go abroad for a temporary study period

5.11 To what extent are or were the following aspects an obstacle to you for enrolment abroad?

If you have been enrolled abroad, please consider to which extent the following aspects were real obstacles to the planning and implementation of the period abroad.

If you have not been enrolled abroad (yet), please consider to which extent the following aspects currently deter you from going abroad.

	Big obstacle				No obstacle
Insufficient skills in foreign language	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of information provided by my higher education institution	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Separation from partner, child(ren)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Separation from social circle (friends, parents, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Additional financial burden	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Loss of paid job due to absence	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of motivation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Low benefit for my studies at home	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Difficult integration of enrolment abroad into the structure of my home study programme	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Problems with recognition of results achieved abroad	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Visa/ residence permit problems for the preferred country	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Admission restrictions to mobility programmes (e.g. grades)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My health status/disability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Temporary global or local travel restrictions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5.12 Have you ever been abroad for other study-related activities?

Multiple answers possible.

Yes, for research/a fieldtrip

- ☐ Yes, for a #Summer/winter school
- ☐ Yes, for a language course
- ☐ Yes, for another activity: _____ (please specify)
- ☐ No

6 Personal Details

6.1 When were you born?

Please provide month and year of your birthday.

Month _____ Year _____

6.2 What is your #gender?

Single choice.

Transgender is an umbrella term for people whose sex assigned at birth does not match their current gender identity.

- ☐ Woman
- ☐ Man
- ☐ Transgender/Intersex/Non-binary
- ☐ Other gender identity
- ☐ #I prefer not to assign myself into the above-mentioned categories

#In order to be able to statistically compare the survey data with the official student statistics we would be grateful if you could provide the following information.

6.3 With which #sex are you officially registered at your current higher education institution?

Single choice.

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ [if existing as official category in #country] #Other

6.4 In which country were you and your parents (or those who raised you) born?

Please refer to **current** national borders.

	Country	Don't know
You	[Drop-down]	☐
Mother/#guardian	[Drop-down]	☐
Father/#guardian	[Drop-down]	☐

6.5 Do you and your parents (or those who raised you) have the #country citizenship?

	Yes	No	Don't know
You	☐	☐	☐
Mother/ #guardian	☐	☐	☐
Father/ #guardian	☐	☐	☐

[Only students who have not been born in #country according to 6.4]

6.6 When entering #country, were you seeking asylum/protection as a refugee?

A refugee is defined as someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion (Definition of 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees).

Single choice.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

6.7 What is the highest level of education your mother/#guardian and father/#guardian have obtained?

	Mother/ #guardian	Father/ #guardian
#Up to lower secondary (ISCED 0, 1, 2)	☐	☐
#Upper secondary (ISCED 3)	☐	☐
#Post-secondary non-tertiary (ISCED 4)	☐	☐
#Short-cycle tertiary education (ISCED 5)	☐	☐
#Bachelor or equivalent (ISCED 6)	☐	☐
#Master or equivalent (ISCED 7)	☐	☐
#PhD/ Doctoral or equivalent (ISCED 8)	☐	☐
Do not know/ not applicable	☐	☐

6.8 How well-off financially do you think your parents (or #guardians) are compared with other families?

If one or both of your parents is/ are deceased, please refer to their most **recent** financial situation. If your parents/#guardians are separated/ divorced, please try to **average** the financial situation of your parents/#guardians (who raised you).

Single choice.

Very well-off	Somewhat well-off	Average	Not very well-off	Not at all well-off
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

6.9 Do you have children?

Single choice.

☐ Yes, _____ child(ren)

☐ No

If "Yes" — continue with question 6.10.

If "No" — continue with question 6.12.

[Only students who have children (6.9)]

6.10 How old is your youngest child?

_____ year(s) of age

[Only students who have children (6.9)]

6.11 How many hours do you spend on childcare in a typical week in the current #lecture period?

Childcare refers to active care given to your child(ren) (e.g. feeding or playing).

Childcare: _____ h/week

6.12 How is your health in general? Is it ...

Single choice.

Very good	Good	Fair	Bad
☐	☐	☐	☐

6.13 Please indicate if you have a disability, impairment, long-standing health problem, functional limitation or learning disability.

"Long-standing health problem" describes a health problem that has lasted or is likely to last for at least 6 months.

Multiple answers possible.

- ☐ Physical chronic disease
- ☐ Mental health problem
- ☐ Mobility impairment
- ☐ Severe sensory impairment (e.g. vision, hearing)
- ☐ Learning disability (e.g. dyslexia)
- ☐ Another long-standing health problem/ functional limitation/ impairment/ etc.
- ☐ No

[Only students who have indicated an impairment in 6.13]

The following questions are directed at students with disabilities, impairments, physical chronic diseases, mental health problems, learning disabilities, other long standing health problems or functional limitations.

To keep the texts brief, we use the term "impairment" as an umbrella term. We hope you will understand this decision, even if you personally prefer the use of another term.

[Only students who have indicated an impairment in 6.13]

6.14 For at least the past 6 months, to what extent have you been limited because of your health problem(s)?

	Severely limited	Limited but not severely	Not limited at all
... in your studies?	☐	☐	☐
... in activities people usually do?	☐	☐	☐

If "in your studies" = "not limited at all" — continue with [Topical Modules], irrespective of answer regarding "activities people usually do".

[Only students who have indicated an impairment that is severely limiting their studies or limiting their studies but not severely in 6.14]

6.15 Please think of the limitations you face in your studies due to your impairment: How would you rate the public and institutional support you receive to overcome these limitations?

Single choice.

Entirely sufficient				Not sufficient at all	I do not need/ want any support
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

M3 Mental Health and Well-being

[Only students who have indicated "Mental health problem" in 6.13 that is severely limiting their studies or limiting their studies but not severely in 6.14]

M3.1 Please specify your mental health problem(s) – whether it is medically diagnosed or not.

Multiple answers possible.

- ☐ Addiction disorder
- ☐ AD(H)D – Attention deficit (hyperactivity) disorder
- ☐ Anxiety disorder
- ☐ Autism spectrum disorder
- ☐ Depression
- ☐ Eating disorder
- ☐ Personality disorder
- ☐ Psychosis
- ☐ Other mental health problem(s)
- ☐ I don't want to specify my mental health problem(s) further

[Only students who have indicated "Mental health problem" in 6.13 that is severely limiting their studies or limiting their studies but not severely in 6.14]

M3.2 Has your mental health problem been diagnosed by a medical professional (psychotherapeutic, psychiatric, neurological, or psychological)?

- ☐ Yes, and I am currently being treated for it
- ☐ Yes, but I am not currently being treated for it
- ☐ No

M3.6 In general, to what extent have the following aspects been a source of stress in the past month?

	Constantly				Not at all
Academic/coursework demands	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Procrastination [#and/ or national term/explanation]	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Finances and money problems	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Paid job	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Study-life balance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Housing/accommodation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mental health problems	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Physical health problems	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
[only students with children]					
Childcare/parenting issues	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Discrimination	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Language/cultural issues	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

M3.7 Have you ever felt discriminated against in the context of your studies due to your ...*Multiple answers possible.*

	Yes, by fellow students	Yes, by teaching staff	Yes, by other university staff	No
... skin colour?	☐	☐	☐	☐
... ancestry/nationality?	☐	☐	☐	☐
... religion?	☐	☐	☐	☐
... gender?	☐	☐	☐	☐
... sexuality/sexual orientation?	☐	☐	☐	☐
... age?	☐	☐	☐	☐
... weight?	☐	☐	☐	☐
... disability?	☐	☐	☐	☐
... mental health?	☐	☐	☐	☐
... income?	☐	☐	☐	☐
... parents' education?	☐	☐	☐	☐

[only students reporting any discrimination experience in M3.7]

M3.8 Did you report/are you planning to report your discrimination experience(s) to your higher education institution?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No, I can't/couldn't find or am/was not aware of anyone at my institution to whom I could report it
- ☐ No, I decided against it
- ☐ I do not know (yet)

[only students who indicated yes in M3.8]

M3.9 How satisfied are you with the way your higher education institution handled/is handling your report?

Very satisfied	Not at all satisfied	I do not know yet
☐	☐	☐

M3.10 In the context of your studies: Because of who you are, have you ...

	Yes, many times in the past year	Yes, once or twice in the past year	Yes, but not in the past year	Never
... heard, seen, or read others joking about or laughing at you?	☐	☐	☐	☐
... been treated as if you are less smart or capable than others?	☐	☐	☐	☐
... been exposed to unwanted sexual attention (i.e. comments, unwanted physical touching or kisses)?	☐	☐	☐	☐
... been subjected to physical violence?	☐	☐	☐	☐

The logo for the Higher Education Authority (HEA) consists of the letters 'HEA' in a bold, white, sans-serif font. A vertical white line is positioned to the right of the letters, separating them from the text to the right.

An tÚdarás um Ard-Oideachas
The Higher Education Authority

Higher Education Authority
3 Shelbourne Buildings
Crampton Avenue
Shelbourne Road
Ballsbridge
D04 C2Y6

Contact

Phone: +353 1 231 7100

Lo-Call Number: 1890 200 637

Fax: +353 1 231 7172

Email: info@hea.ie

www.hea.ie

[X @hea_irl](#)