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DECOLONISING AND DIVERSIFYING QUANTITATIVE METHODS TEACHING

PROJECT CONTRIBUTORS

Project Leads: Dr Minjie Gao & Dr Alison McFarland

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	Rebecca Rasapour	Heather Wu

BACKGROUND—WHY THIS PROJECT?

About the Module

- Quantitative Data Analytics: 2nd year core module for BSc Business Management & BSc International Management students.
- Ten week programme, with the goal of mastering regression (alongside other foundational statistical tests).
- Historic issues with student engagement and motivation.
- Wide variety in ability/disciplinary background.

Why Decolonise Quantitative Research Methods?

- Western methods dominate, and are often presented as universal or neutral, ignoring their socio-historical roots.
  - E.g. <1% of RM reading lists came from Global South authors (Munster, 2021)
- Data is seen as objective, when it is socially and culturally situated—students can't question what isn't made visible.
- We can't claim to teach 'global' business and only privilege a narrow range of approaches.
- Alienates diverse learners, if content doesn't reflect a range of lived experiences.

DEFINING DECOLONISATION AND DIVERSIFICATION

"Decolonisation entails dismantling colonial forms of educational practice and knowledge. Diversity is often about adding resources and examples to ensure teaching materials better reflect the staff and student body." (Everett et al., 2023)
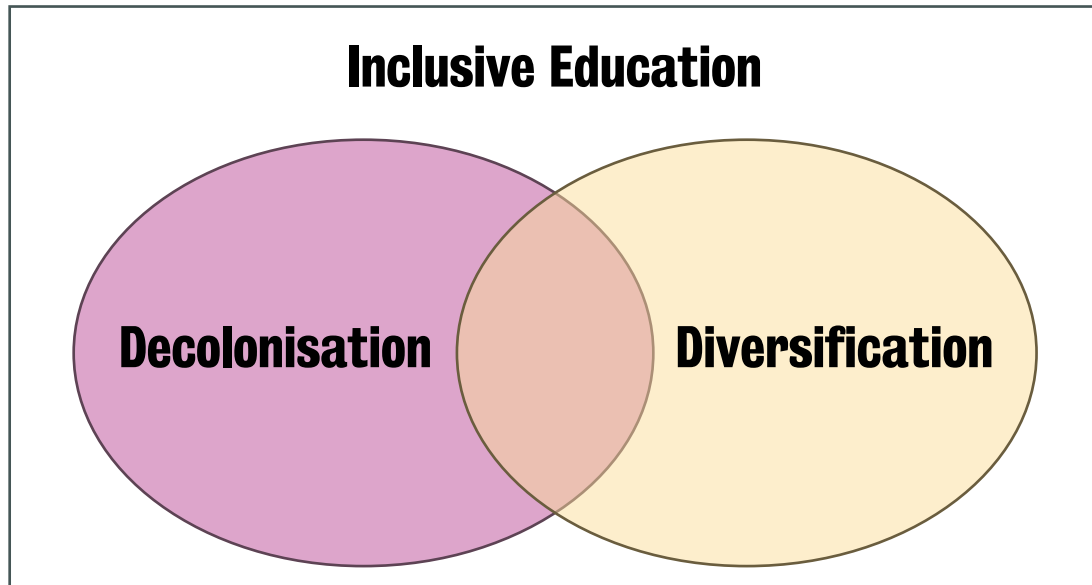
Our Project Principles:
- Reflexivity and positionality
- Decolonisation as ongoing and incomplete
- Centring student voice and co-creation
- Disrupting traditional research norms

Inclusive Education

How our students defined the project:

1. **Content diversity:** materials reflecting global and cultural diversity (particularly non-Western).
2. **Inclusive teaching practices:** interactive learning, consistent support from educators, learning accessible to all

QUANTCRIT FRAMEWORK (Gillborn et al., 2018)

The centrality of racism	Racism and systemic inequality are embedded in society and shape every aspect of the research process
Numbers are not neutral	Quantitative methods are often treated as value-free, but they reflect the assumptions, values, and biases of those who design and use them.
Categories are neither 'natural' nor given – they are socially constructed	Constructs like race, gender, and sexuality are not natural or fixed—they are shaped by dominant norms, political agendas, and researcher choices.
Voice and insight – data cannot speak for itself	Researchers must ask whose voices are included or excluded, and whose interests are served by the analytical decisions they make.
Social justice/equity orientation	Research is never apolitical. QuantCrit calls for methods to be explicitly oriented toward justice and the dismantling of structural inequalities.

QUANTCRIT IN A GROUP RESEARCH PROJECT

1. **Lecture introducing QuantCrit**
2. **Positionality statements**
3. **Asset-based research design**
4. **Evaluation of demographic categorisations in the project survey**
5. **QuantCrit assessed in end-of-module exam**

- "The list includes 'Arab', but some individuals from North Africa (e.g., Egypt, Algeria, Morocco) or the Middle East (e.g., Iran, Turkey, Kurdistan) may not identify as Arab. A separate 'Middle Eastern/North African (MENA)' category might improve representation."
- "The nationality list is not updated and should rather be taken from the current United Nation's website to reflect up to date country names."
- "need to explain about the non-binary/third gender or use only male/female to avoid confusion"

Deficit model: Why don't more women and people from global majority backgrounds apply for leadership positions in our company?

IVs: confidence, work ethic, caregiving responsibilities, etc.

Asset-based model: Why are leadership positions in our company less accessible to women and people from global majority backgrounds?

IVs: managerial support, perceived inclusivity of workplace culture, mentorship, etc.

QUANTCRIT ACROSS THE MODULE

1. **Unpacking the history of quantitative methods**
   - Acknowledging historical and epistemological roots, e.g. positivism
   - Problematising the 'founding fathers' of statistics by discussing their connection with the eugenics movement, and the use of statistics to promote this
2. **Criticality around research processes, including categorisation of variables**
   - Teaching students to evaluate how studies are designed and interpreted
   - Challenging binary categorisations (e.g. gender).
3. **Role of the researcher in interpreting data**
   - Demonstrating how framing and language influence findings interpretation.
   - New tutorial case added on reporting bias
4. **Diversification of reading lists**
   - Inclusion of texts on QuantCrit, statistics and eugenics, algorithmic bias and storytelling; incorporation of multimodal resources

STUDENT REACTIONS: A MIXED PICTURE

- Some engaged deeply with critical content
- Others focused on technical skill—a few inferred that critical material distracted from the main purpose of the module
- Students described the module as "inclusive" but often meant "fair and equal".
- Not all wanted or expected 'disruptive' content.
- Formal module evaluation scores were fairly static compared to the previous year.

Informal peer interviews

Inclusivity survey (T1, T2, T3)

Formal module evaluation survey

**Student interaction on Moodle**

Student performance

[One thing that has stuck with me is] "How data can be manipulated to tell different stories depending on the period of time being looked at and the context – how statistics can be used to shape narratives"

"I like being able to interpret things I used to skip in reports"
"I enjoyed getting to understand how to work with real data."
"SPSS is fun. I would prefer for the module to be more quantitative."

"I don't really understand how a module can be not inclusive actually, unless the professors go out of their way to make certain students feel excluded and unwelcome."

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A COMPLICATED BALANCING ACT!
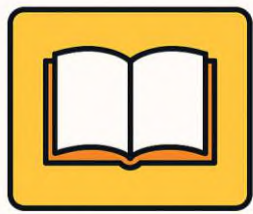
CONTENT

ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

CLASSROOM INTERACTIONS

STUDENT LEARNING JOURNEY

- Decolonisation involves multiple, sometimes conflicting, priorities
- Changing one area can negatively affect others—all equally important
- For example, adding decolonised **content** may:
  - Make **student learning journey** more complex
  - Require changes to **assessment and feedback**
  - Undermine **classroom interactions** (e.g., require shift towards more didactic lectures)
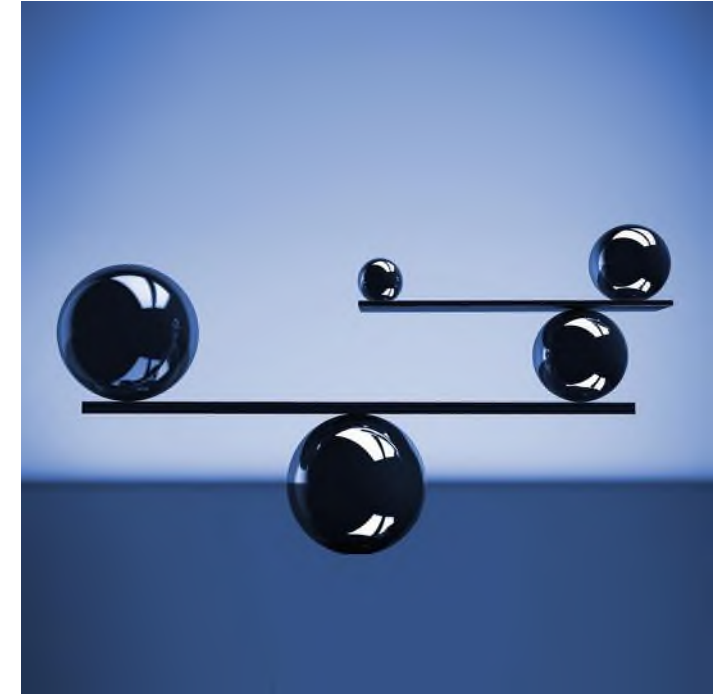
DECOLONISATION AS AN INSTITUTIONAL AND GLOBAL CHALLENGE: TWO REFLECTIONS

- When institutions claim to promote decolonisation, but don't provide meaningful space, time, funding or recognition to these kinds of efforts, it becomes 'decolonial washing' (Le Grange et al., 2020)
- As an academic community, if we continue to use the names of Pearson, Fisher, etc., in our statistical tests, our textbooks, and our classes, what kind of message does this communicate to our students?

ANY QUESTIONS?

Please come to our free in-person Workshop: Inclusive Education in Action

- Bush House, London, Thursday 10th July
- Panel of experts sharing decolonisation and diversification practice (Sally Everett, Danielle Tran, Caroline Chapain, Sami Safadi)
- Interactive activities for participants to reflect on and adapt their own teaching practices
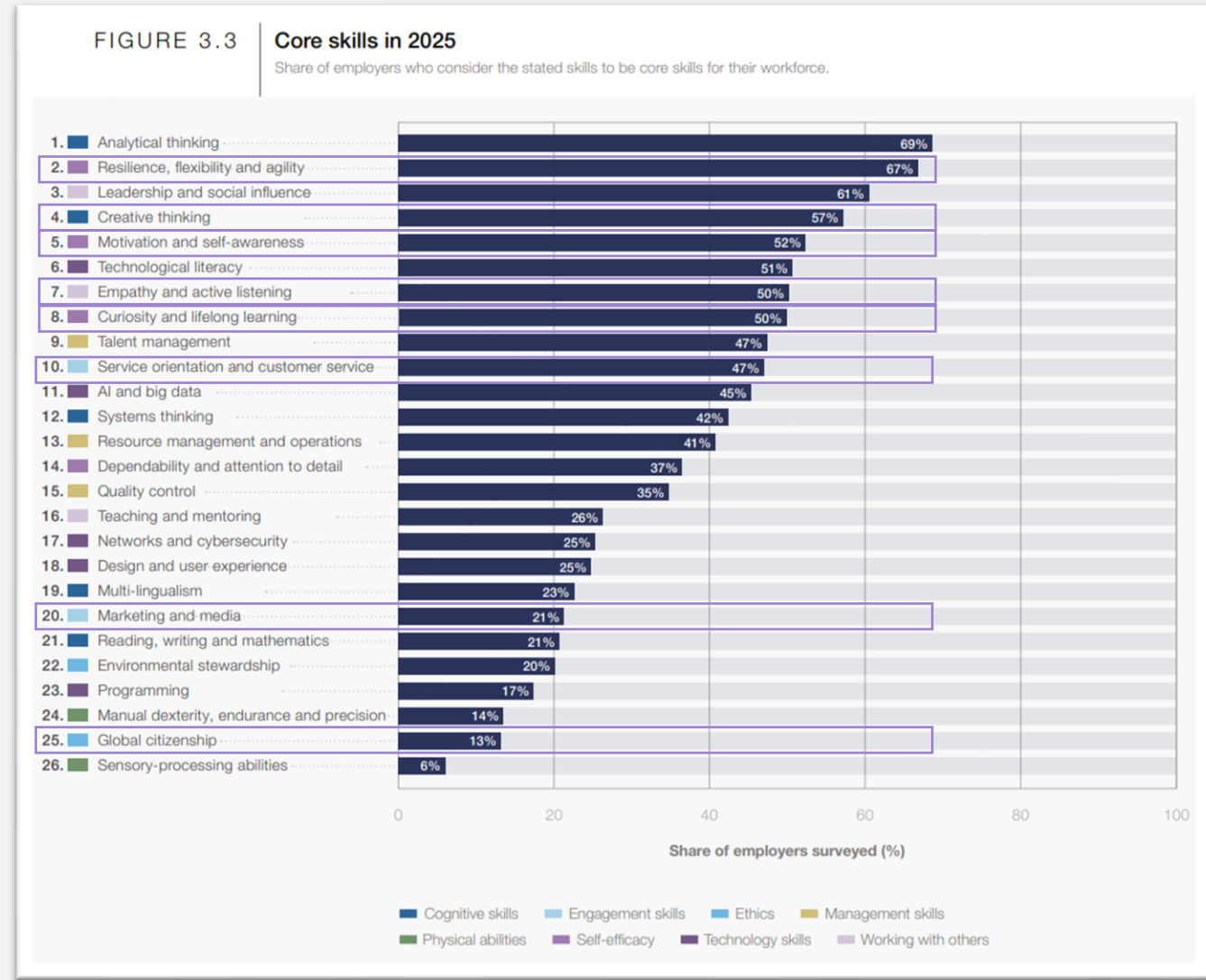
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Increasing employability through entrepreneurial skills development

Dr Ema Talam, CMBE FHEA FEEUK

Introduction

- Skills have social and economic benefits (UK Parliament, 2024):
  - Basic skills;
  - Essential skills;
  - Technical skills (UK Parliament, 2024);
- There are some evidences of increasing interest in entrepreneurship (Enterprise Nation, 2025);
- Team working, critical thinking and problem solving, communication, and entrepreneurial skills broadly are skills that employers indicated as important for employability (CMI, 2021);
- According to the research evidence that we have so far, enterprise education can successfully lead to entrepreneurial skills development.

FIGURE 3.3 | Core skills in 2025
Share of employers who consider the stated skills to be core skills for their workforce.

	Skill	Share of employers surveyed (%)
1.	Analytical thinking	69%
2.	Resilience, flexibility and agility	67%
3.	Leadership and social influence	61%
4.	Creative thinking	57%
5.	Motivation and self-awareness	52%
6.	Technological literacy	51%
7.	Empathy and active listening	50%
8.	Curiosity and lifelong learning	50%
9.	Talent management	47%
10.	Service orientation and customer service	47%
11.	AI and big data	45%
12.	Systems thinking	42%
13.	Resource management and operations	41%
14.	Dependability and attention to detail	37%
15.	Quality control	35%
16.	Teaching and mentoring	26%
17.	Networks and cybersecurity	25%
18.	Design and user experience	25%
19.	Multi-lingualism	23%
20.	Marketing and media	21%
21.	Reading, writing and mathematics	21%
22.	Environmental stewardship	20%
23.	Programming	17%
24.	Manual dexterity, endurance and precision	14%
25.	Global citizenship	13%
26.	Sensory-processing abilities	6%

Legend: Cognitive skills; Engagement skills; Ethics; Management skills; Physical abilities; Self-efficacy; Technology skills; Working with others

Source: World Economic Forum (2025)

The case for enterprise and entrepreneurship education

- Evidence suggests that enterprise and entrepreneurship education have a range of positive outcomes:
    - Perceived positive impact on employability (Sanusi et al., 2017);
    - Improved skills, knowledge and attitudes towards venture creation (Carpenter and Wilson, 2022; Cui and Bell, 2022; Maragh, 2024);
    - Increase in graduate business startups and overall job creation, which can in turn lead to economic growth and development (Carpenter and Wilson, 2022);
    - Entrepreneurial skills development (Maragh, 2024) and development of knowledge, skills and attitudes related to entrepreneurship (Kozlinska et al., 2020);
    - Increase in social capital (Maragh, 2024);
    - Increase in self-efficacy (Maragh, 2024);

- Entrepreneurial skills and mindsets can be developed by pedagogical interventions (Lindberg et al., 2017)

Seven Skills of an Entrepreneurial Mindset by King's Entrepreneurship Institute

- Developed by Rachel Stockey, Head of Skills at King's Entrepreneurship Institute, as a result of extensive research, and King's Entrepreneurship Institute's work within entrepreneurial ecosystem;
  - The key questions explored were:
    - What does it mean to be entrepreneurial?
    - What makes entrepreneurs different – how do they behave that's different to working as an employee?

- Framework that underpins all of King's Entrepreneurship Institute's programming, and allows us to track entrepreneurial skills development of students, and brings entrepreneurial skills closer to the students

CO **M** PEL

GET **I** T DONE

THI **N** K LEAN

VALI **D** ATE

DI **S** RUPT

BUILD T **E** AMS

COMMIT **T** O GROWTH

Gamechangers programme

- Individuals can face internal and external barriers to entrepreneurship:

  - Internal: fear of failure, lack of self-confidence, lack of motivation, unsupportive network, etc.;

  - External: lack of wider support from state, chambers of commerce, etc. (Khanin, 2021);

- Entrepreneurial opportunities and outcomes can be impacted by individual's backgrounds, including economic and ethnic background (British Business Bank, 2020);

- Gamechangers programme – unique internship-like opportunity for students from underrepresented backgrounds

Evaluation of Gamechangers programme

- Assessment of skills development, through pre- and post-programme questionnaires;

- Semi-structured interviews with programme participants following the completion of the programme

Changes in confidence in relation to Seven Skills of an Entrepreneurial Mindset – Gamechangers programme 2024
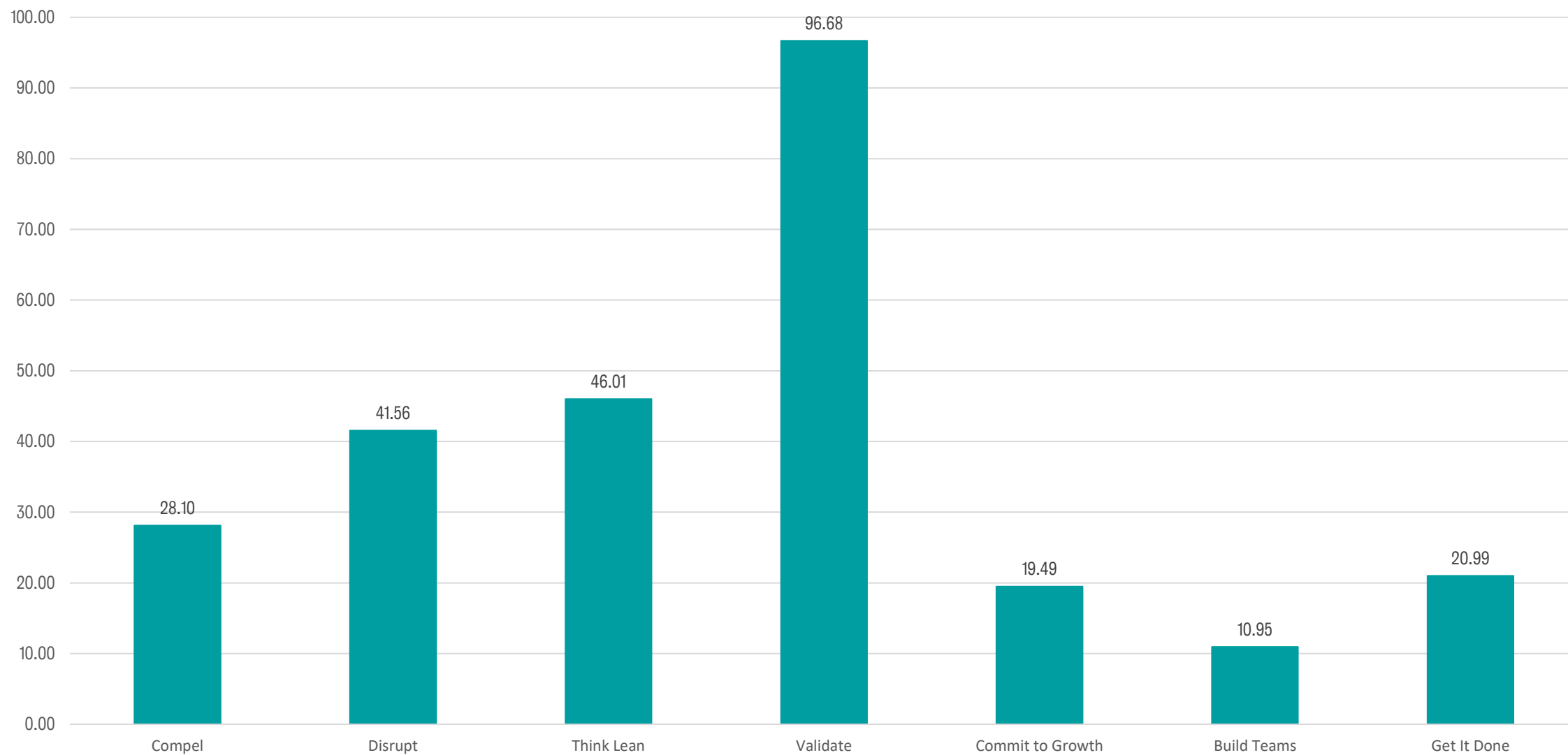
Evaluation of Gamechangers programme

- Key themes that emerged in the thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews:

  - Motivations to join the programme

  - Skills development that occurred during the programme

  - Exposure to entrepreneurship as a result of the programme

  - Programme delivery

Evaluation of Gamechangers programme

- Motivations to join the programme:

    - Uniqueness of the opportunity;
        - "I might not get an opportunity to go on the programme like this again,..., whereas I could probably get another internship to work for someone." (Interviewee 2)

    - Drive to focus on idea or develop pre-existent idea;

    - Paid opportunity;
        - "If it was not funded, I wouldn't have been able to take part." (Interviewee 4);
        - "...it made learning process more easier and more motivating" (Interviewee 6)

Evaluation of Gamechangers programme

- Skills development that occurred during the programme:

  - Range of skills were developed, including communication and public speaking skills, decision making skills, opportunity recognition and validation, and entrepreneurial skills broadly
    - "... it is an opportunity to get a set of skills which, ..., at university, they don't really teach you." (Interviewee 3)

  - Transferability of skills into work and part time opportunities
    - "... entrepreneurial skills are transferable" (Interviewee 3)

  - Framework used
    - "... I really found it helpful because it made it easier to understand" (Interviewee 6)

Evaluation of Gamechangers programme

- Exposure to entrepreneurship as a result of the programme:

  - No or limited exposure to entrepreneurship before;

  - Shift in perceptions about entrepreneurship;
    - "Before the programme, it was this faraway thing that only people who have generational wealth are able to participate in." (Interviewee 4)

Conclusion

- Enterprise and entrepreneurship education leads to a number of tangible benefits, that extend beyond skills, behaviours and knowledge related to entrepreneurship;

- External and internal barriers to entrepreneurship exist;

- Gamechangers programme – unique internship-like opportunity available to King's students – was successful in skills development, and removing barriers to entrepreneurship

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KING'S College LONDON

KING'S BUSINESS SCHOOL

I-LEAD
REIMAGINING BUSINESS EDUCATION

REIMAGINING EDUCATION
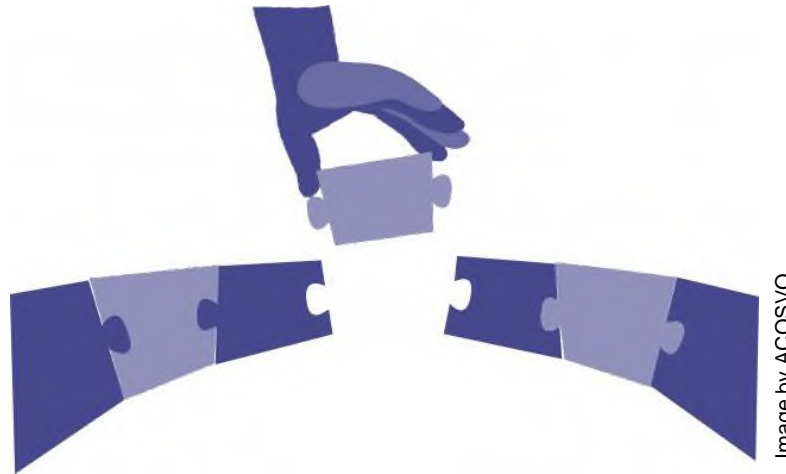## THE FUTURE OF LEARNING & TEACHING

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Reimagining education

Effectively Bridging the Secondary and Tertiary Education Divide

Supporting Students to Succeed Using their Voice via a Pre arrival Academic Questionnaire

Image by ACOSVO

Dr Michelle Morgan
Dean of Students
University of East London

X @it_se

Jonathan Neves
Head of Research & Surveys
Advance HE

University of East London

Jisc

AdvanceHE

Aims and Objectives

- Challenges facing the sector and institutions

- Understanding our student body and learning requirements

- Identifying the stages in the study lifecycle and developing a whole university integrated framework

- What we need to think about

- Proactive approaches and interventions using the Pre-arrival academic questionnaire

What I saw..........

- Concentration on 'first 2 weeks' then later 'first year' on the first year of a traditional degree - in practice and literature

- Them and us- administrative vs academic

- Silo practices between faculties and the centre

- Increased student diversity but limited awareness of different learning and support requirements

Reduced academic scaffolding

Progression

Personal support

Academic support

Increased personal scaffolding

Source: Morgan, 2012

What I realised..........

Students   Administrators   Academics   Professional Service Staff   Management   Board of Governors

Role and level of engagement dictated by role
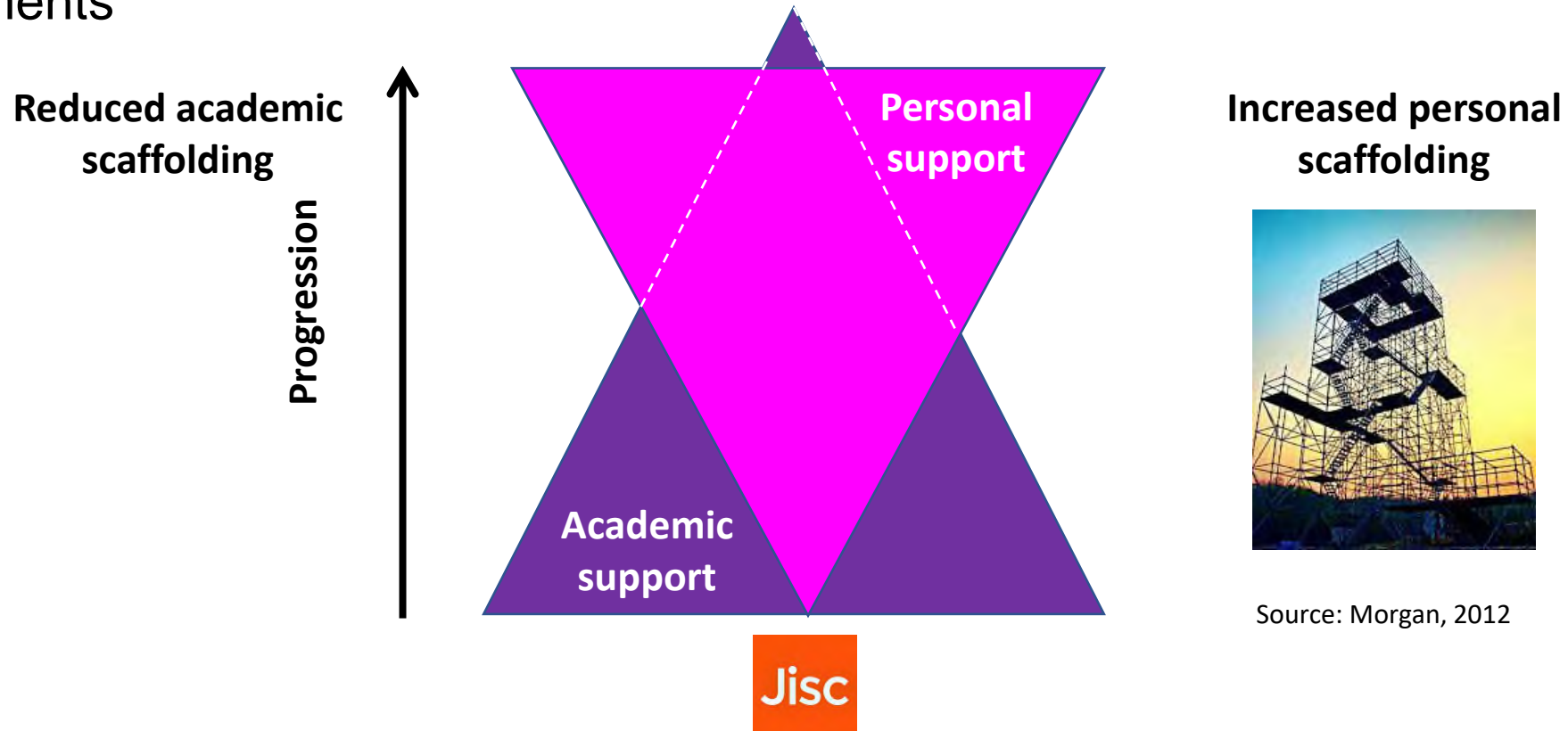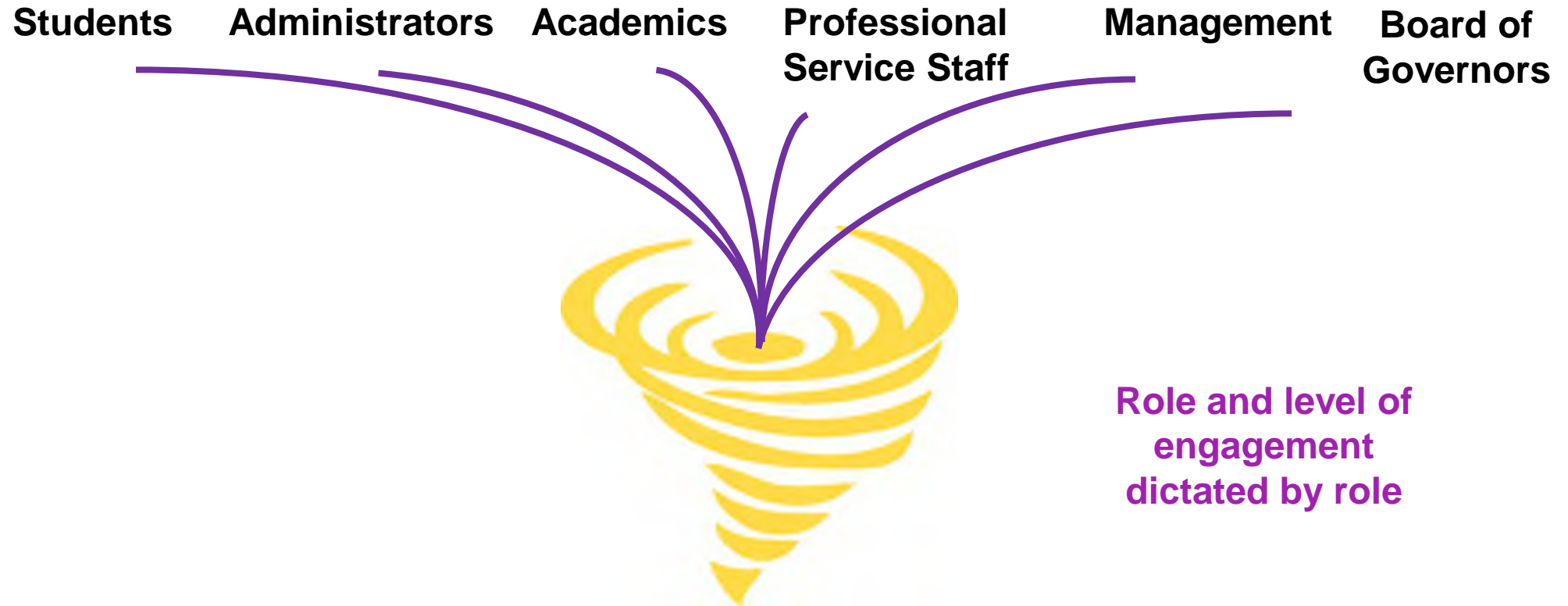
All servants of the study imperative

Recruitment, retention, progression and attainment of students via the delivery of a high quality student experience in, through and out of the study journey

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Things to consider in achieving a whole integrated institutional approach through collaboration

- Shared understanding and collaboration for the need to super proof
- Student experience
- Retention, progression and success

Sector changes and challenges

Increased student diversity

Social changes and challenges

Understanding transitions

Engagement, belonging and compassionate leadership

Sector changes and challenges

Challenges for staff

UK driven by metrics

TEF
REF
KEF
NSS
PTES
GOS (LEO)

Evening Standard

ESS | EVENTS | ES MONEY | CULTURE | INSIDER | THE ESCAPIST | THE REVELLER | THE OPTIM

Clampdown on 'Mickey Mouse' degrees in major funding overhaul

Minimum entry requirement and a cap on student numbers are proposed

Voices of dissent
Phil Baty

The pressure on everyone is immense in this 'brave new world' of HE

Reduced funding

High student expectations

Academic pressure to be a teacher, researcher, administrator

Increase in student numbers

Declining resources

Increased administrative tasks

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Sector challenges

- Focus on metrics and league tables

- Reduced resources and funding

- Not allowing metrics to negatively drive evolution of offerings and experience

- Institutional

- Lack understanding about changing student body and prior experiences.

UCAS application, accepted and entry rate

- December 2024 – 2.9% increase in acceptances to university in 2024 compared to 2023
- Number of UK applications is down for Levels 4 and 5 by 12% but mainly at Level 5.

End of cycle analysis 2024

752,210 Applicants

564,940 Accepted applicants

36.4% Entry rate

Population of 18 years olds increases until 2030 but growth not reflected in UCAS applications

Continuation in decline of 21+ age groups

Increase in UK 18 year old applicants found a new course after releasing themselves from a previously held choice
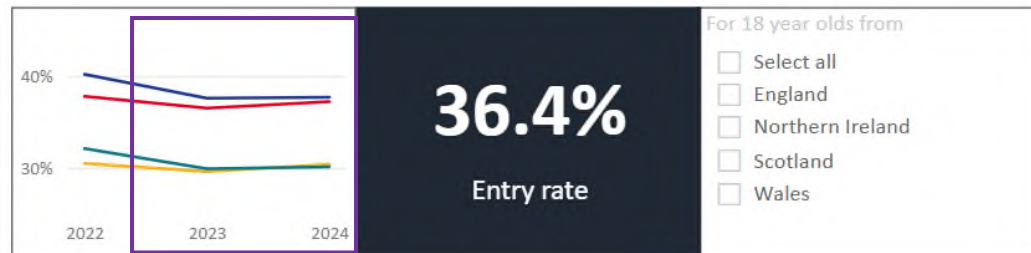
More students are entering clearing

Things to consider
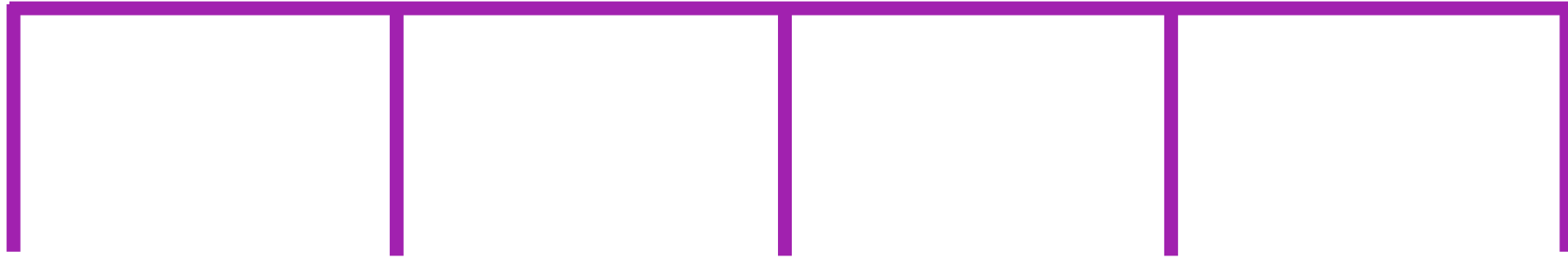
Increased student diversity

Challenges of managing expectations

Be mindful that students need 'real' models not just 'role' models

Fun in study.......
But a common issue is not getting on with your study group

Happy flat mates.......
But a common issue is with living with new people and not getting on with them

'A degree is a rung on the ladder of lifelong learning'

Prof Sir D Watson

Fun in free time...
Students don't always get the time

Land a dream career.......
Disappointment can be experienced

What we know about incoming students

Student characteristics including those that are 'protected' and type of entry qualification, impact on UG (and PGT) retention, progression and success. Many of these are in the Office for Students report on *UK domiciled Student characteristics data: Student outcome*s report

Care experience

Recent Reports & Outputs
| Research website (drzoebaker.co.uk)

Disability

Estrangement

Ethnic minorities

Free meals

Generational status

Mode of study

Polar and Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

Sex

Sexual orientation

Socio-economic background

High levels of diverse entry qualifications but university still revolves around traditional ones
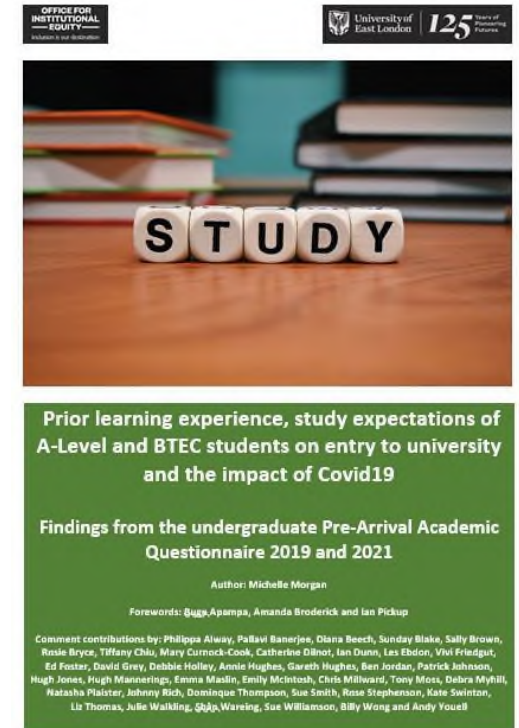
OFFICE FOR INSTITUTIONAL EQUITY — Inclusion is our destination

University of East London | 125 Years of Pioneering Futures

STUDY

Prior learning experience, study expectations of A-Level and BTEC students on entry to university and the impact of Covid19

Findings from the undergraduate Pre-Arrival Academic Questionnaire 2019 and 2021

Author: Michelle Morgan

Forewords: Buga Apampa, Amanda Broderick and Ian Pickup

Prior learning experience, study expectations of A-Level and BTEC students on entry to university and the impact of Covid19 | Advance HE (advance-he.ac.uk)

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The complex lives of students

UG UK domiciled, English Second Language, Direct Entry

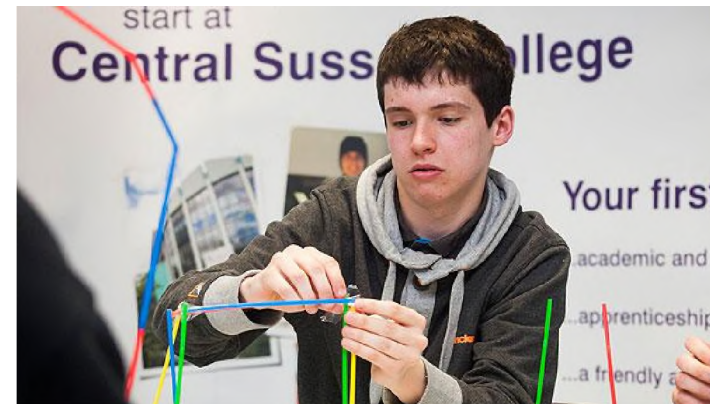**UG Mature, Disability (dyslexia), single parent**

PGT International, transgender

UG, Visiting, International

Mature, Veteran, Commuter, Carer of Elderly Parents
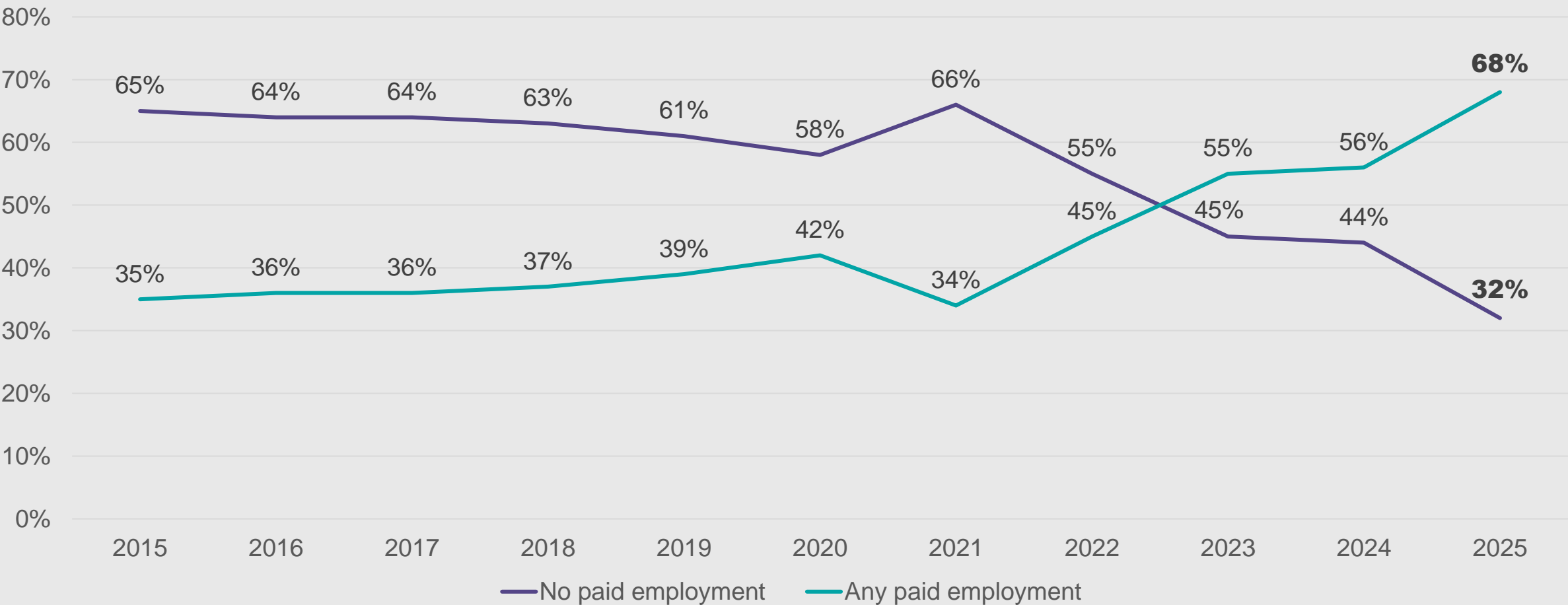
Disabled, Postgraduate, Part-time, BAME

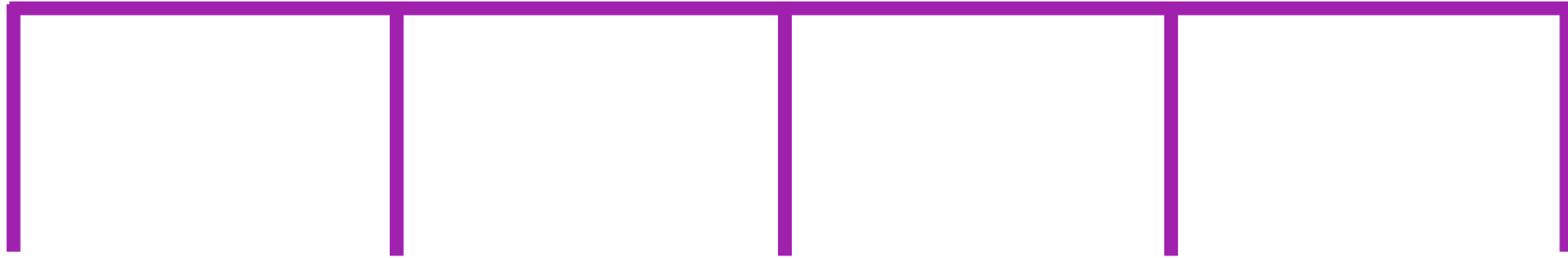**UG Young Learner, Care Leaver Disability (Mental Health)**

UG, part-time, Work-Based Learning

As a likely link to cost concerns, paid employment during term time has become the norm rather than the exception

AdvanceHE **hepi**

Students in paid employment in term time

No paid employment — **Any paid employment**

No paid employment values: 65%, 64%, 64%, 63%, 61%, 58%, 66%, 55%, 45%, 44%, 32%

Any paid employment values: 35%, 36%, 36%, 37%, 39%, 42%, 34%, 45%, 55%, 56%, 68%

Years: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

Things to consider

**Social changes
and challenges**

Impact of Covid19 -Where we are and what we know

5 broad learning experiences of new entrants from school/college in 2024/25
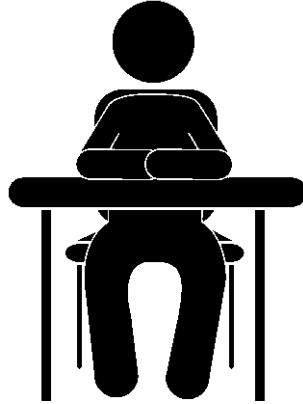
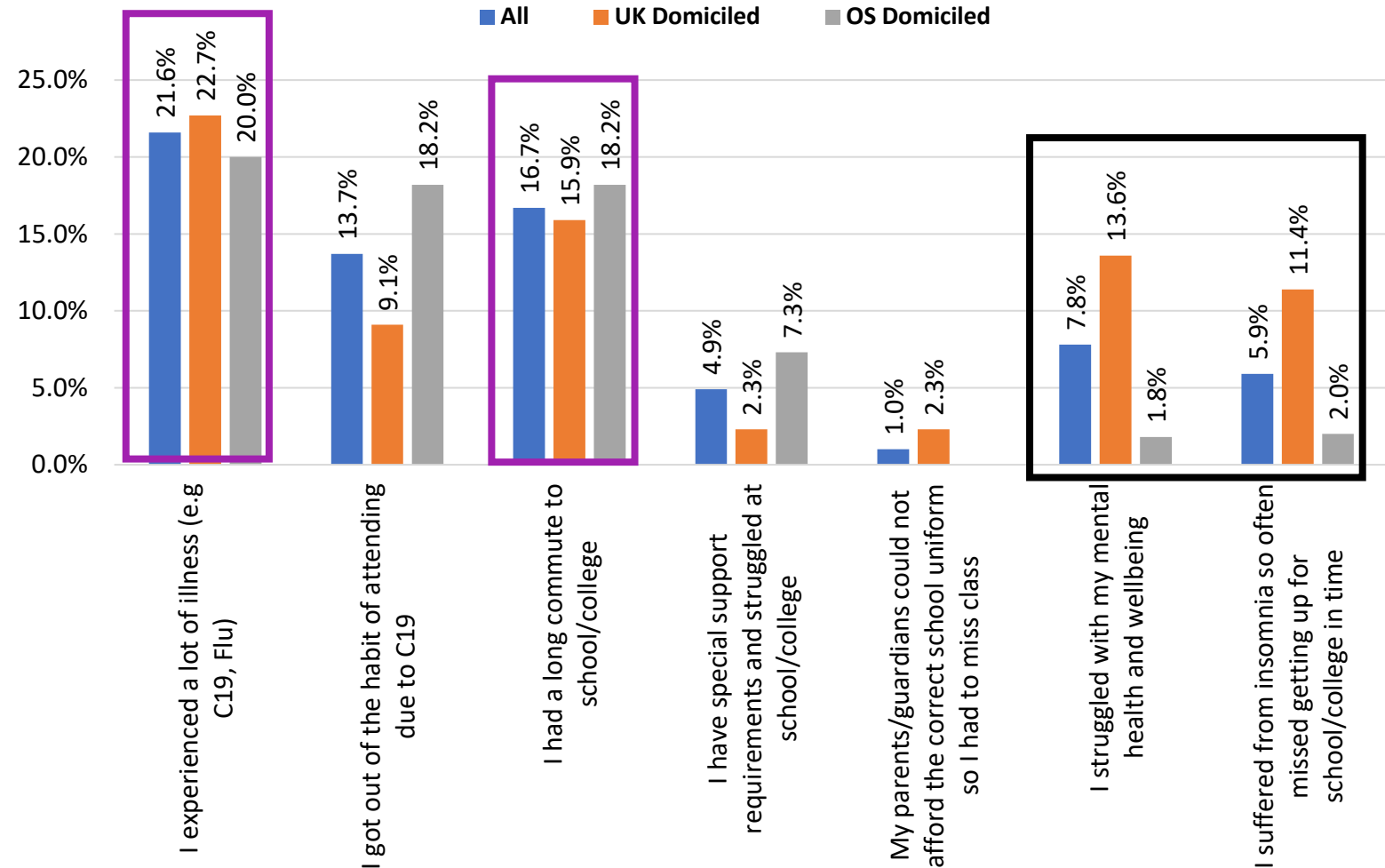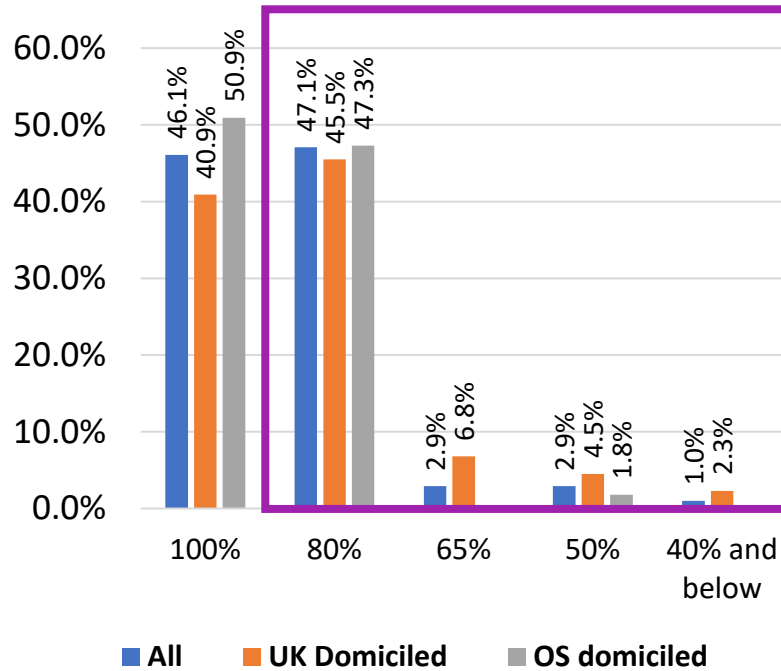| During covid Phase 1 2019/20	During Covid Phase 2 2020/21	'New normal' Phase 3 2021/22	Impact of Phase 4 2023/24	Impact of Phase 5 2024/25
Choosing subjects for GCSE, Nationals, SVQs	GCSE, Nationals, SVQs Yr 1 2021	GCSE, Nationals SVQs Yr 2 2022	A-Level BTECs/HNC/HND Yr 1 2023	A-Level BTECs/HNC/HND Yr 1 2024
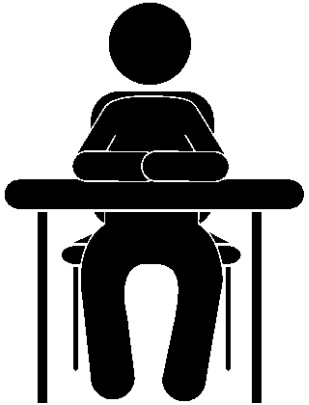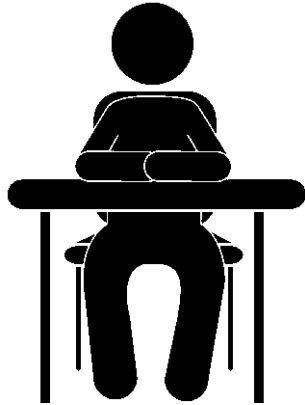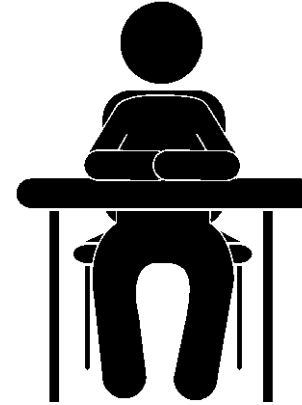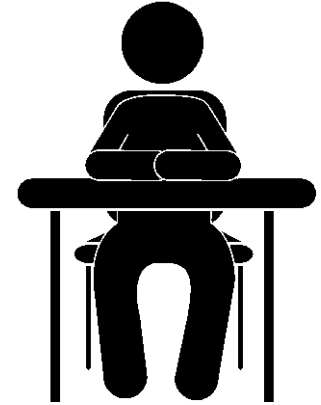
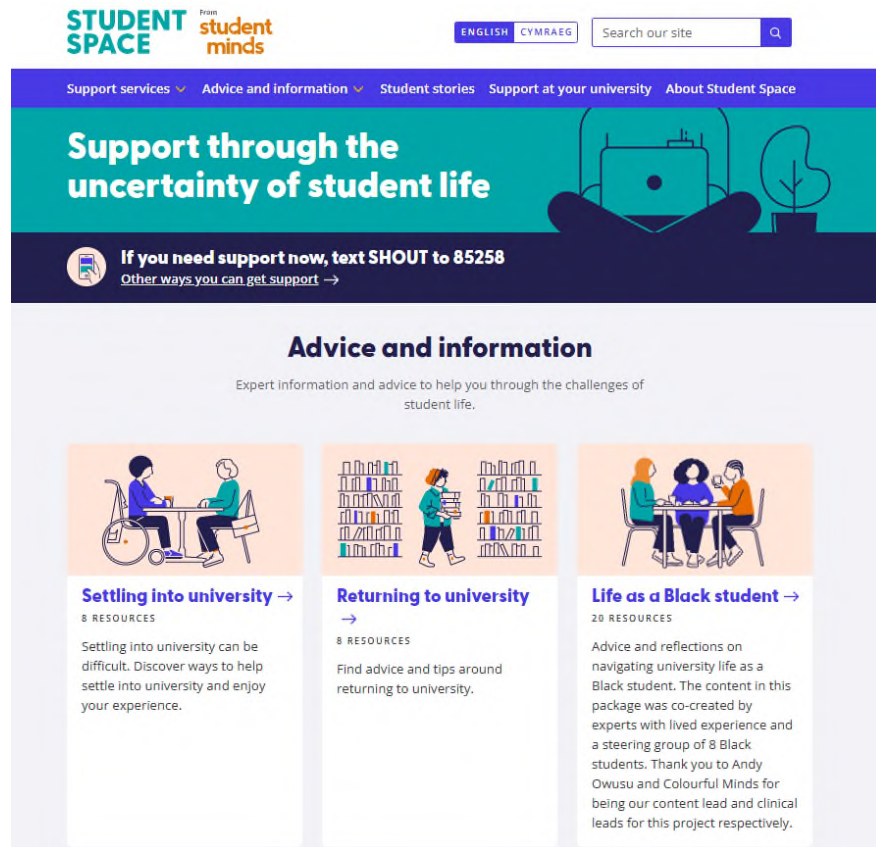# So if you knew…..School and college attendance of your UG entrants

Mental health

- **Engineering, medicine and dentistry** courses have the lowest declaration

- **Women are 2.2 times more likely to declare** a mental health condition than men.

- Some **LGBT+ students - six times** more likely to share a mental health condition

- **Care experienced students – almost three times as likely.**

- One in five students research support specifically for an existing mental health condition before they apply
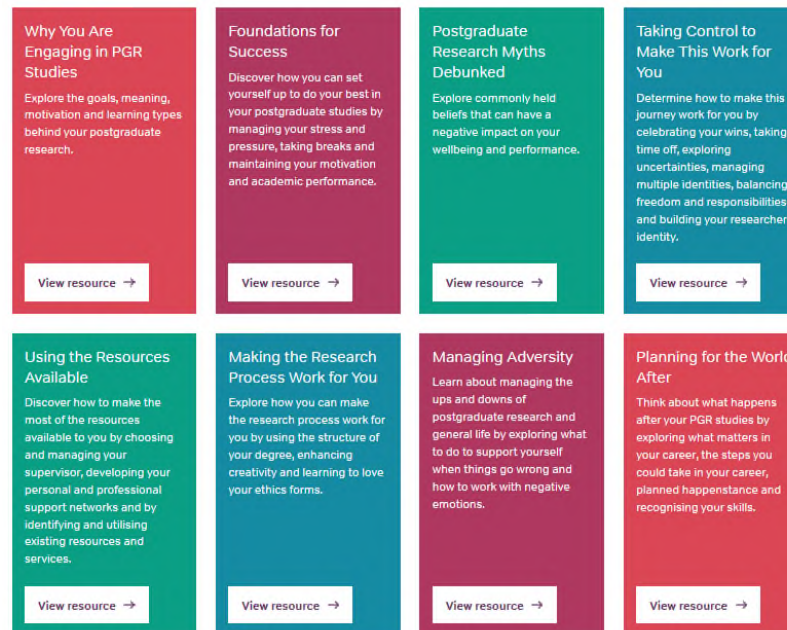
- Childhood abuse, trauma, or neglect

- Social isolation or loneliness

- Experiencing discrimination and stigma, including racism

- Social disadvantage, poverty or debt

- Unemployment or losing your job

- Bereavement (losing someone close to you)

- Severe or long-term stress

- Having a long-term physical health condition

- Homelessness or poor housing

- Being a long-term carer for someone

- Drug and alcohol misuse

- Domestic violence, bullying or other abuse as an adult

- Significant trauma as an adult, such as military combat, being involved in a serious incident in which you feared for your life, or being the victim of a violent crime

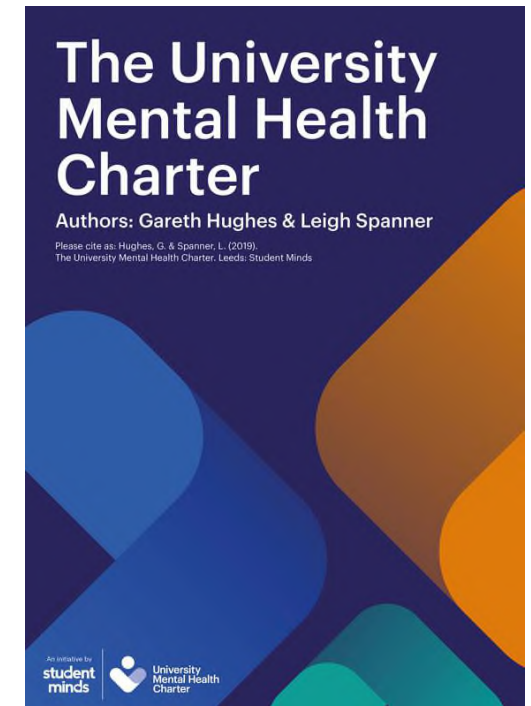- Physical causes – for example, a head injury or a neurological condition

450% increase in student mental health declarations over last decade but progress still needed to address declarations stigma | Undergraduate | UCAS

Integrated whole approaches

University management teams, staff and students should **engage** with
the University Mental Health Charter and Student Minds – Home resources.
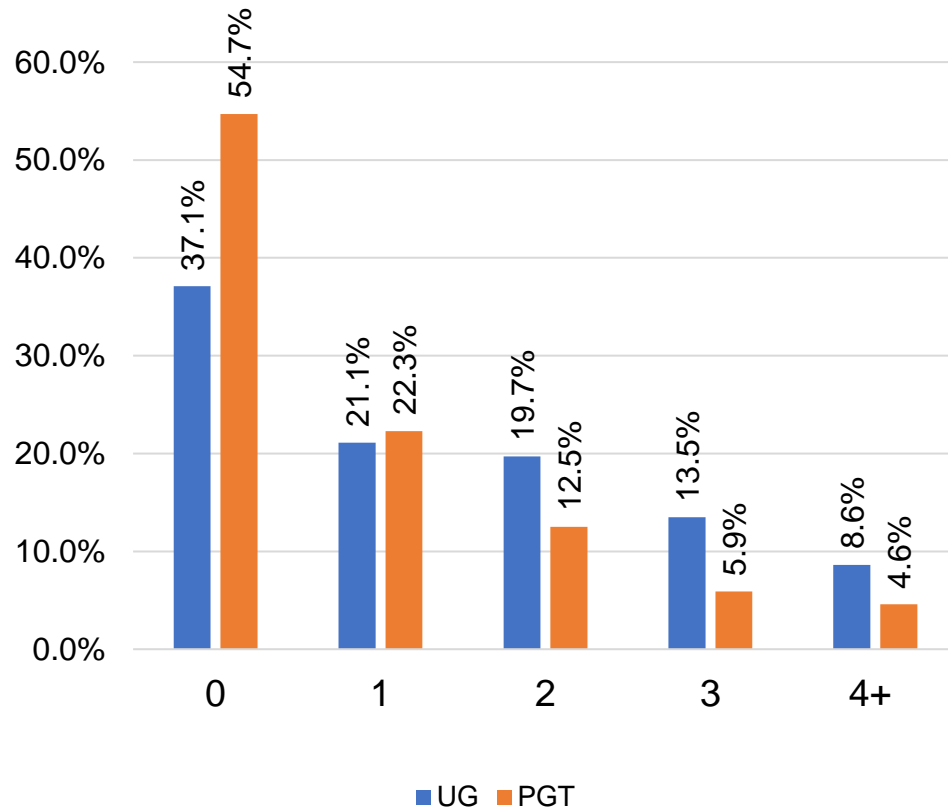

https://thewellbeingthesis.org.uk/

https://www.studentminds.org.uk/charter.htm

https://studentspace.org.uk/

So if you knew- concerns September 2024 UEL

UG top 10 concerns		PGT top 10 concerns	
Fitting in with new classmates	**37.4%**	**Lack of information about how to study at university**	31.3%
Coping with the level of study	**37.4%**	Getting used to living in a new country	25.8%
Lack of information about how to study at university	**37.1%**	**Cost of living**	**25.1%**
Mental health and wellbeing	**29.9%**	**Coping with the level of study**	**20.1%**
Concerns about cost of living	**27.4%**	**Accommodation costs**	**19.8%**
Lack of confidence about ability to study	26.5%	**Fitting in with the university culture**	**16.6%**
Getting on with fellow students	**25.0%**	**Mental health and wellbeing**	**15.8%**
Getting into debt	**21.0%**	**Cost of travel to university**	**15.0%**
Obtaining/having sufficient funding	**19.6%**	Having a long commute	13.7%
Concerns about knowledge gaps due to prior learning	**17.8%**	**Fitting my study around work commitments**	**12.0%**

So if you knew - Visits to a university before choosing and starting a course

Number of visits by UK domiciled entrants

Bar chart showing number of visits (0, 1, 2, 3, 4+) by UG and PGT:
- 0: UG 37.1%, PGT 54.7%
- 1: UG 21.1%, PGT 22.3%
- 2: UG 19.7%, PGT 12.5%
- 3: UG 13.5%, PGT 5.9%
- 4+: UG 8.6%, PGT 4.6%

Legend: UG, PGT

<u>Most likely to have come through clearing as had not applied to university before</u>

- Mature students

- Those who obtained their highest entry qualification earlier

- Students with caring responsibilities

- Students who have an impairment or disability

<u>Most likely to not visit any university in-person before deciding where to go before or after confirmation</u>

- Mature students

- Students with NO impairment or disability

- White ethnic group

- Those with siblings who have all been to university before them
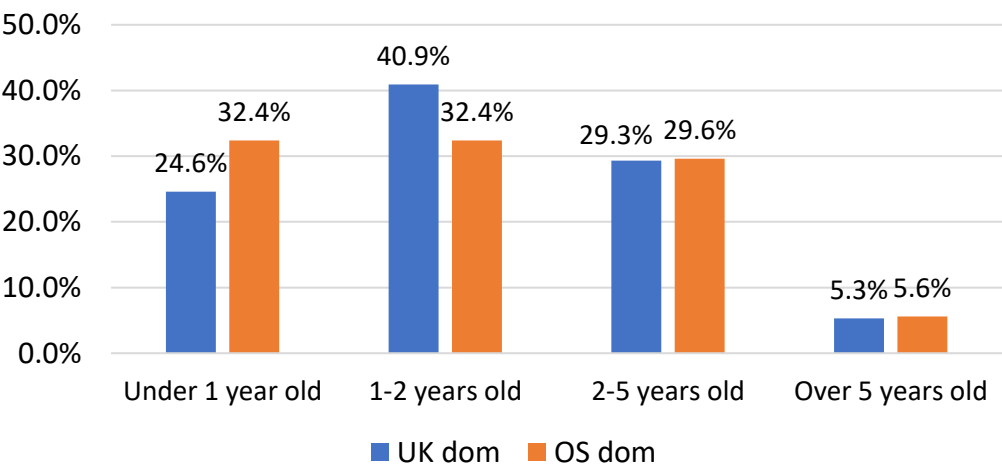
- Staying at home and studying

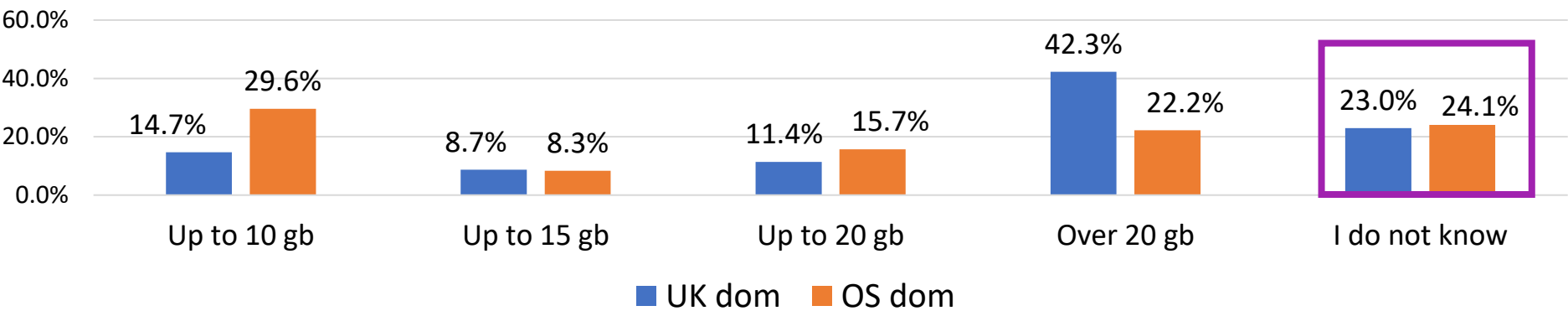# So if you knew-Type of mobile phone and data
(UEL Sept 2024 PAQ)

Type of phone by domiciled status

	Android		iOS	
	UG	PGT	UG	PGT
UK	26.0%	35.0%	**71.2%**	**60.0%**
OS	**54.0%**	**60.3%**	44.0%	38.8%

Age of mobile phone by level of study

Bar chart showing:
- Under 1 year old: UK dom 24.6%, OS dom 32.4%
- 1-2 years old: UK dom 40.9%, OS dom 32.4%
- 2-5 years old: UK dom 29.3%, OS dom 29.6%
- Over 5 years old: UK dom 5.3%, OS dom 5.6%

■ UK dom ■ OS dom

Monthly data package by level of study

Bar chart showing:
- Up to 10 gb: UK dom 14.7%, OS dom 29.6%
- Up to 15 gb: UK dom 8.7%, OS dom 8.3%
- Up to 20 gb: UK dom 11.4%, OS dom 15.7%
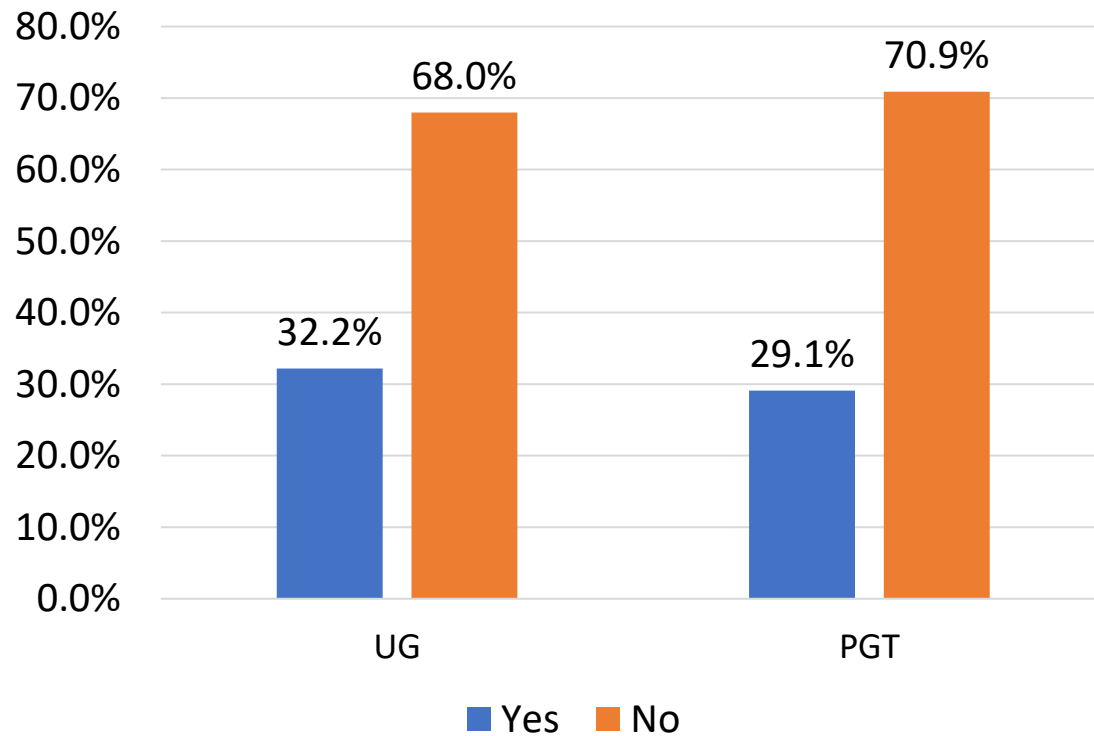- Over 20 gb: UK dom 42.3%, OS dom 22.2%
- I do not know: UK dom 23.0%, OS dom 24.1%

■ UK dom ■ OS dom

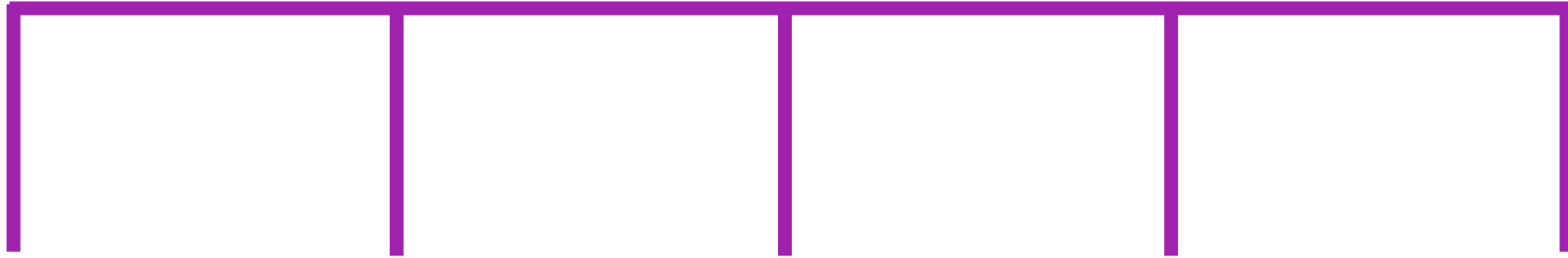# So if you knew- Experience of using Generative AI

Experience of Generative AI
such as ChatGPT, DALL-E, Microsoft Copilot, Google Gemini, Grammarly, Quillbot, CLAUDE
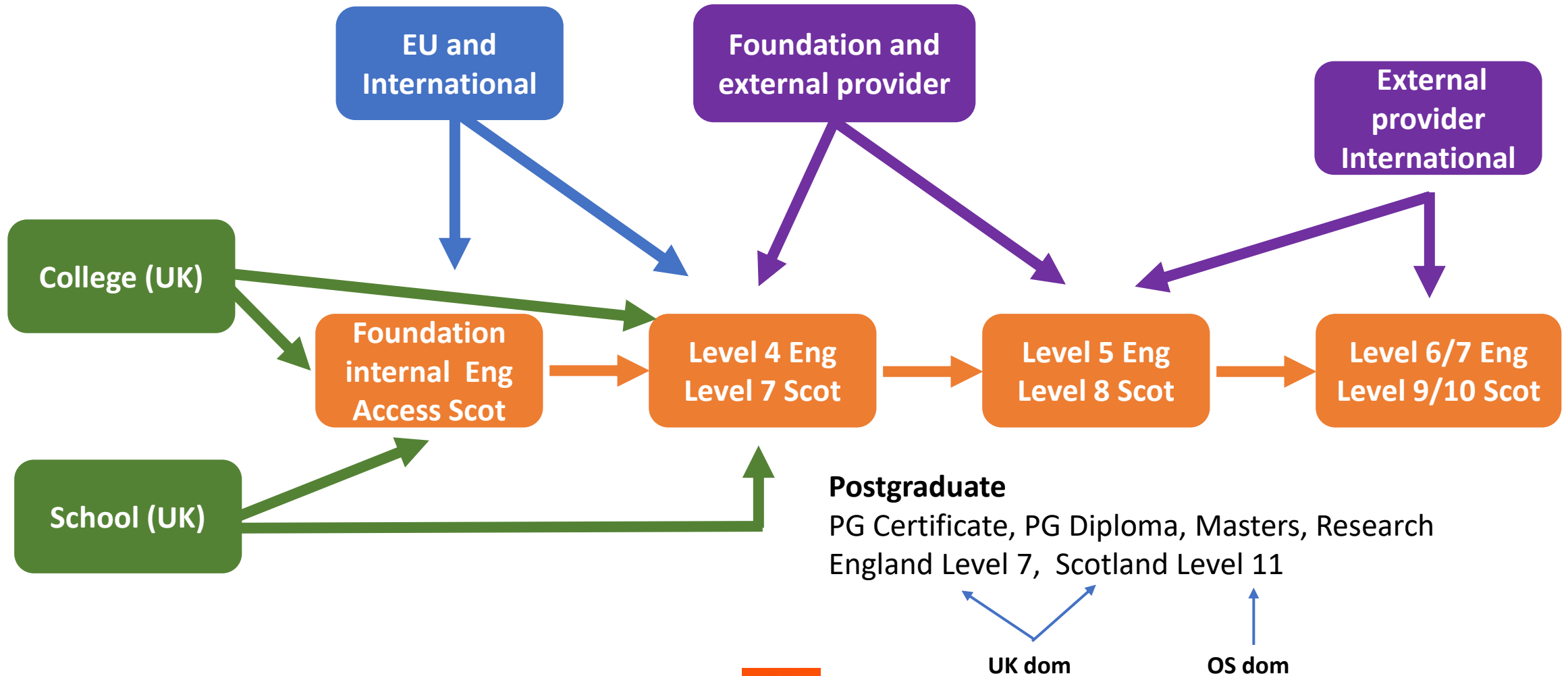
What we need to think about student learning

- Increase in **mental health declarations**

- Increase in **poor attendance at school/college**

- **Use of digital resources in school and college** generally reverted back to patterns pre-pandemic so don't assume digitally learning experienced

- **Cost of living crisis** is affecting secondary students as well as tertiary

- **Knowledge gaps** as a result of the pandemic and ongoing illness

- **Lack of confidence** about ability to study at tertiary level

- **Prior learning experiences** will be different to university

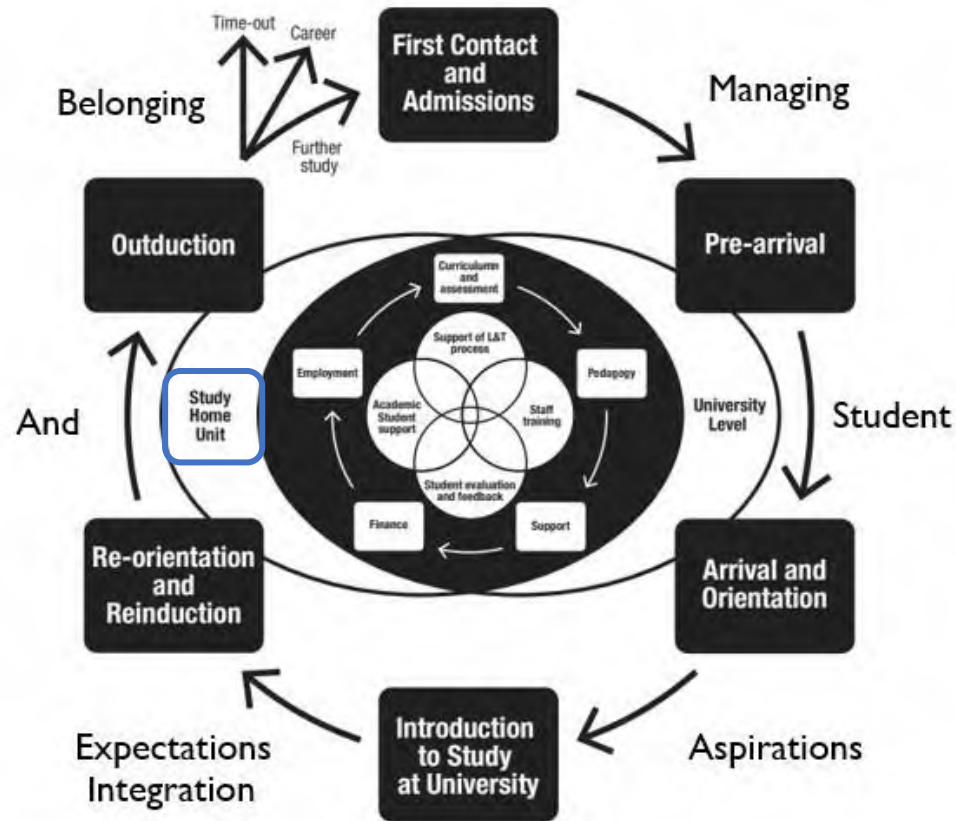- **Digital poverty** impacting on learning

Things to consider

**Understanding
transitions**

Where do our students come from?

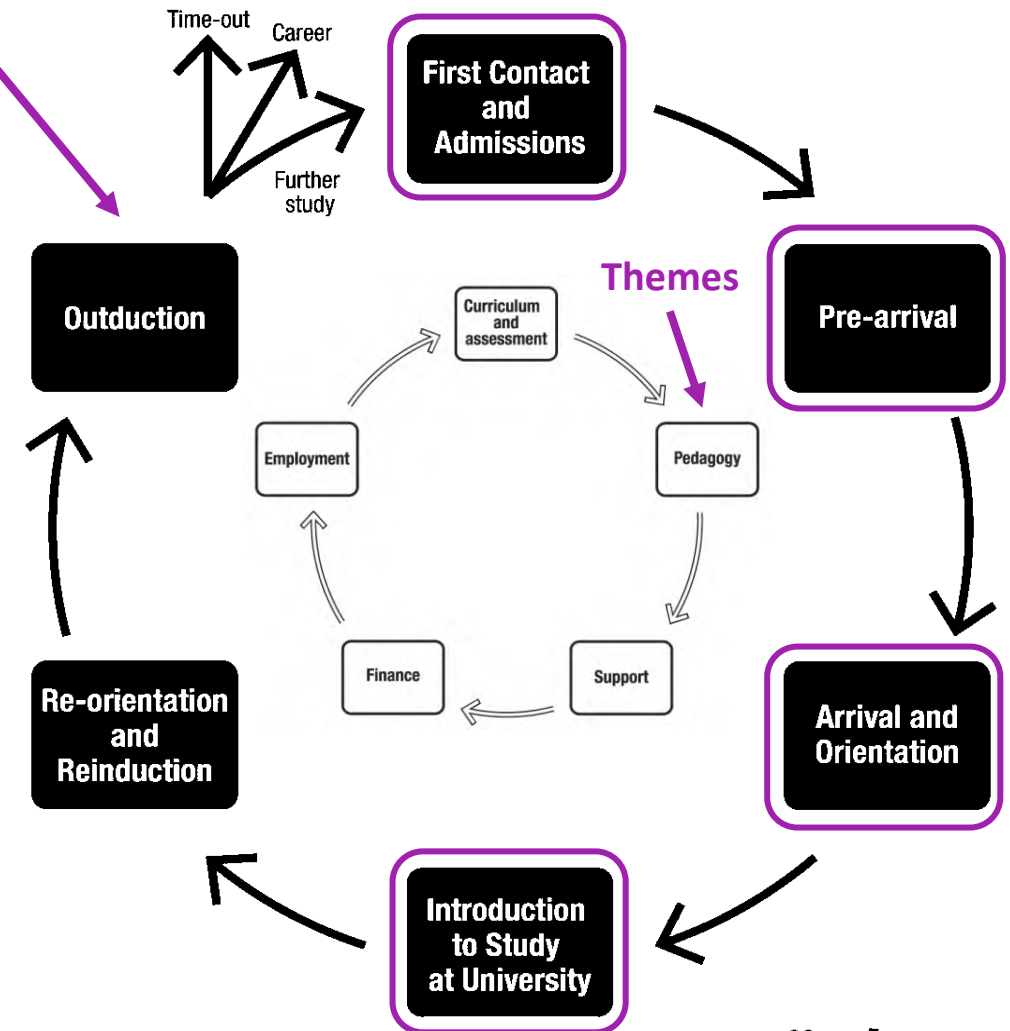# Why supporting Student Experience Transitions is so important

- Course at the heart
- Avoid top down
- CL key

Improving the Student Experience by Michelle Morgan - Official Website

What we need to think about
First contact and Admissions

Admissions

- Setting expectations

- Managing expectations and aspirations

- Academic integration

- Social integration.

- Why should I go to university?

- How and why will university study be different to previous types of study?

- What is expected of me as a university student?

- How are students treated at university?

- What happens in each academic level of study?

- What support advice and help is available both academically and personally throughout the lifecycle?

- Is university suitable for me?

- What will the university experience give me in terms of benefits?

- What are my options after university?

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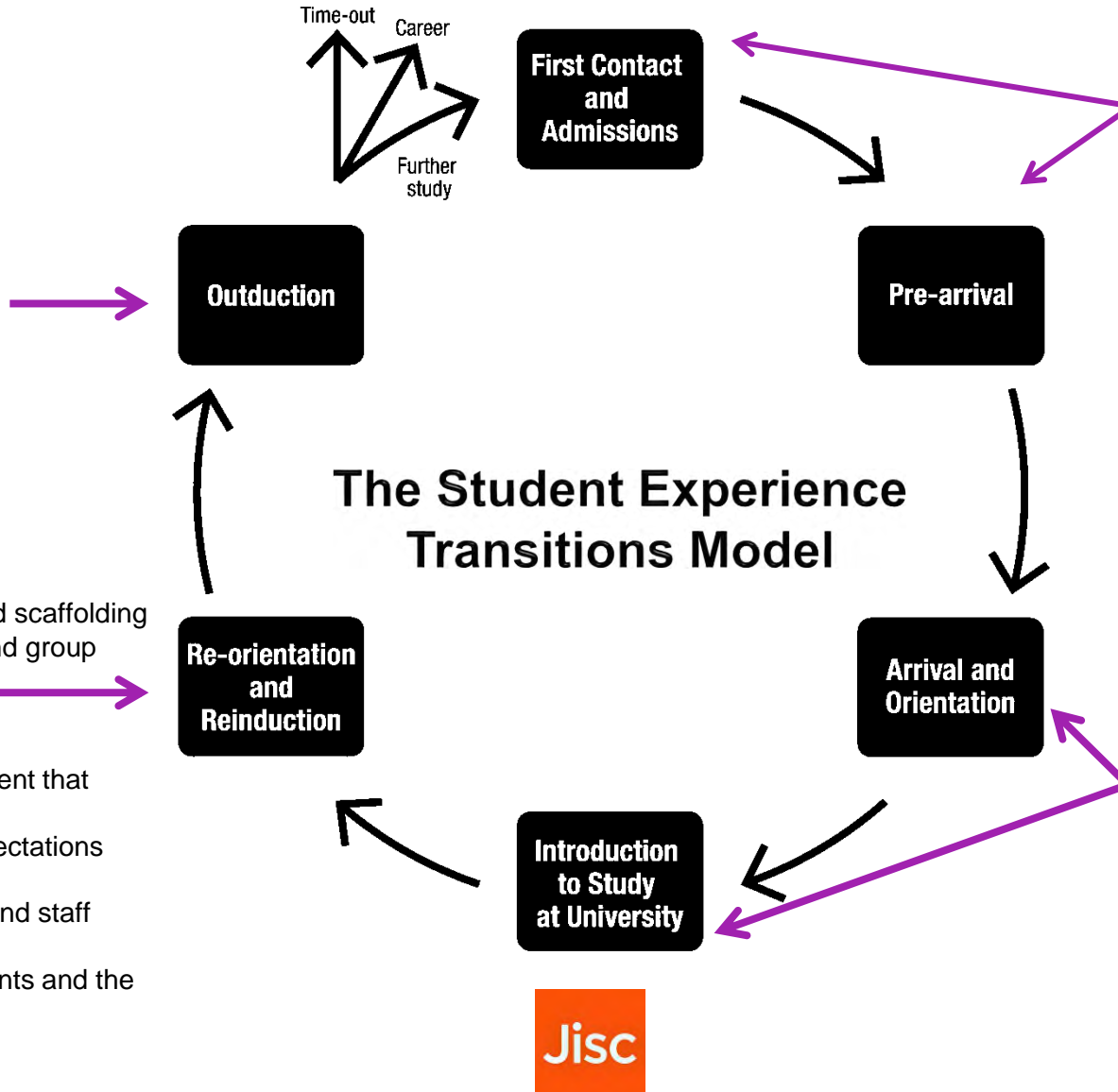AdvanceHE

What we need to think about
Key pinch points for an undergraduate student?

Preparing to leave
- Worried about results
- Sense of loss
- Not sure if an in-person graduation will take place
- Issues of moving from a structured, safe place to the unknown
- Loss of direction
- Challenges with the employment market
- Family expectations that a university degree will lead to improved chances
- Uncertainty about how employers will view a Covid19 degree?
- Concern that that teaching wasn't able to cover everything need.

Start preparing
- Unsure what to expect
- Knowing what questions to ask
- Worrying about not fitting in
- Finding accommodation
- Sorting out financial issues
- Undertaking pre-enrolment
- Will applicants feel able to come with cost of living rise?
- Will they want to defer?
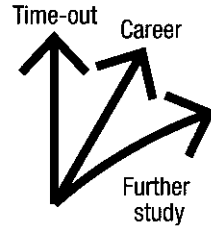- Retake pre-entry exams?

Later years
- Reduction in structured learning and scaffolding
- Increase in independent learning and group assessment
- Mid-term blues
- End of year exhaustion
- Coping with workload and assessment that 'counts'
- University life being different to expectations
- Timing of activities disrupted
- Relationships with fellow students and staff challenged by blended learning
- Anxiety about alternative assessments and the impact on marks
- Impact on placement availability

The first year
- Learning how to study in HE
- Learning how to live with strangers
- Coping with independence
- Transitions issues- personal, finance, balancing workloads
- Wobble week (3-6)
- First formal feedback
- Placement activity for courses in the first year
- Coming back after the Xmas break
- Exams and results
- Sorting out accommodation for year 2
- Dealing with illness or family illness bereavement
- Managing technology and social relationships online

Time-out Career

First Contact and Admissions

Further study

Outduction

Pre-arrival

The Student Experience Transitions Model

Re-orientation and Reinduction

Arrival and Orientation

Introduction to Study at University

University of East London

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Staff pinch points

HE not just about knowledge but preparing individuals for work

Chasing metrics NSS/PTES/DHLE/LEO

One size fits all approach due to pro cess demands

Shift to e-Learning-Technology and digital innovation

Expectation of having a teaching qualification/Fellowship of HEA

Balancing research with teaching

Obtaining funding for research

Time-out
Career
Further study

First Contact and Admissions

Outduction

The Student Experience Transitions Model

Pre-arrival

No 'troughs' anymore, just 'peaks'

Re-orientation and Reinduction

Arrival and Orientation

Introduction to Study at University

Bridging gaps between school/college and HE
Increasing UG and PGT student numbers

Increased administration and lack of support

The student as consumer/rising expectations

Increase in OS students

Operating in a global context

Semesterisation challenges

Increased QA processes

Lack of resources

Rising costs and shifting funding

Feedback issues

Things to consider

Engagement, belonging and compassionate leadership

Who is more engaged with their university?

All are full-time students

Student 1	Student 2
Attends all lectures and seminars	Attends 80% of all lectures and seminars
Is not involved in extra curricula activity	Is a course representative
Lives on campus	Lives 15 miles away and uses public transport
Does limited extra reading	Does all of the extra reading
Has 25 hours contact time a week	Has 12 hours contact time a week
Timetable split over 2.5 full days	Timetable split over 4 days
	• One day has 1 lecture at 9am and another has 1 seminar
Do not undertake paid work	Undertakes 15 Hours paid work a week
Dyslexic	No disability
Single and 20 years old	23 Years old care leaver

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••AdvanceHE

Attendance does not = engaged

Who has the greatest 'belonging'?

Building Belonging

A Change Impact Programme to support institutions in promoting student belonging

[Building Belonging | Advance HE (advance-he.ac.uk)](#)

UK Engagement Survey (UKES)

The UK Engagement Survey (UKES) is the only nationwide undergraduate survey to focus on student engagement.

https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/reports-publications-and-resources/student-surveys/uk-engagement-survey-ukes

- **Every student's engagement and sense of belonging is unique to them**

- **Covid19 and the coming academic year will impact on 'sense of belonging'.**

Student 1

Attends all lectures and seminars

Is not involved in extra curricula activity

Lives on campus

Does limited extra reading

Has 25 hours contact time a week

Timetable split over 3 full days

Do not undertake paid work

Dyslexic

Single and 20 years old

Student 2

Attends 80% of all lectures and seminars

Is a course representative

Lives 15 miles away and uses public transport

Does all of the extra reading

Has 12 hours contact time a week

Timetable split over 4 days

* One day has 1 lecture at 9am and another has 1 seminar

Undertakes 15 Hours paid work a week

Wheelchair user

23 Years old care leaver

Whole Provider Approach: Toolkit
Liz Thomas and Mike Hill

The enabling environment consists of four dimensions:

•Institutional and senior leadership and commitment to diversity and success, which is explicit, clearly communicated and demonstrated.

•Institutional policies and processes (structure) aligned to support widening access and student success, and the coordination of work across the higher education provider.

•All staff and students understand the institutional commitment, and have the relevant skills, knowledge and support to engage with the agenda, and effective communication facilitates engagement.

•Widening access and student success work is underpinned by data, evidence, evaluation and learning.

Enabling Environment
Institutional and senior leadership commitment

S t r u c t u r e

Student Experience
Pre-entry engagement, application and admission
Academic experience
Personal wellbeing
Professional development
Social engagement
Employment and support
Thriving and belonging
Progression

C u l t u r e

Data, evidence, evaluation and learning

[What is a whole provider approach to widening access and student success? | Wonkhe](#)

Things to consider in achieving a whole integrated institutional approach through collaboration

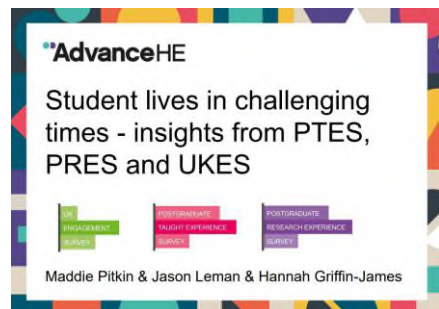**Sector changes and challenges**

Increased student diversity

Social changes and challenges

Understanding transitions

Engagement, belonging and compassionate leadership

**If we are to
Reimagine Education
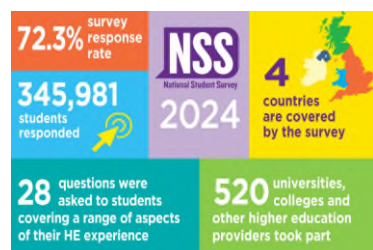we need the right information to
inform change**

Student lives in challenging times - insights from PTES, PRES and UKES

UK ENGAGEMENT SURVEY · POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT EXPERIENCE SURVEY · POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH EXPERIENCE SURVEY

Maddie Pitkin & Jason Leman & Hannah Griffin-James

Student Surveys | Advance HE (advance-he.ac.uk)

TURBOCHARGING THE FUTURE

The Interim Report of the UPP Foundation Student Futures Commission

Turbocharging the future (upp-foundation.org)

Pearson

UCAS
DATA AND ANALYSIS
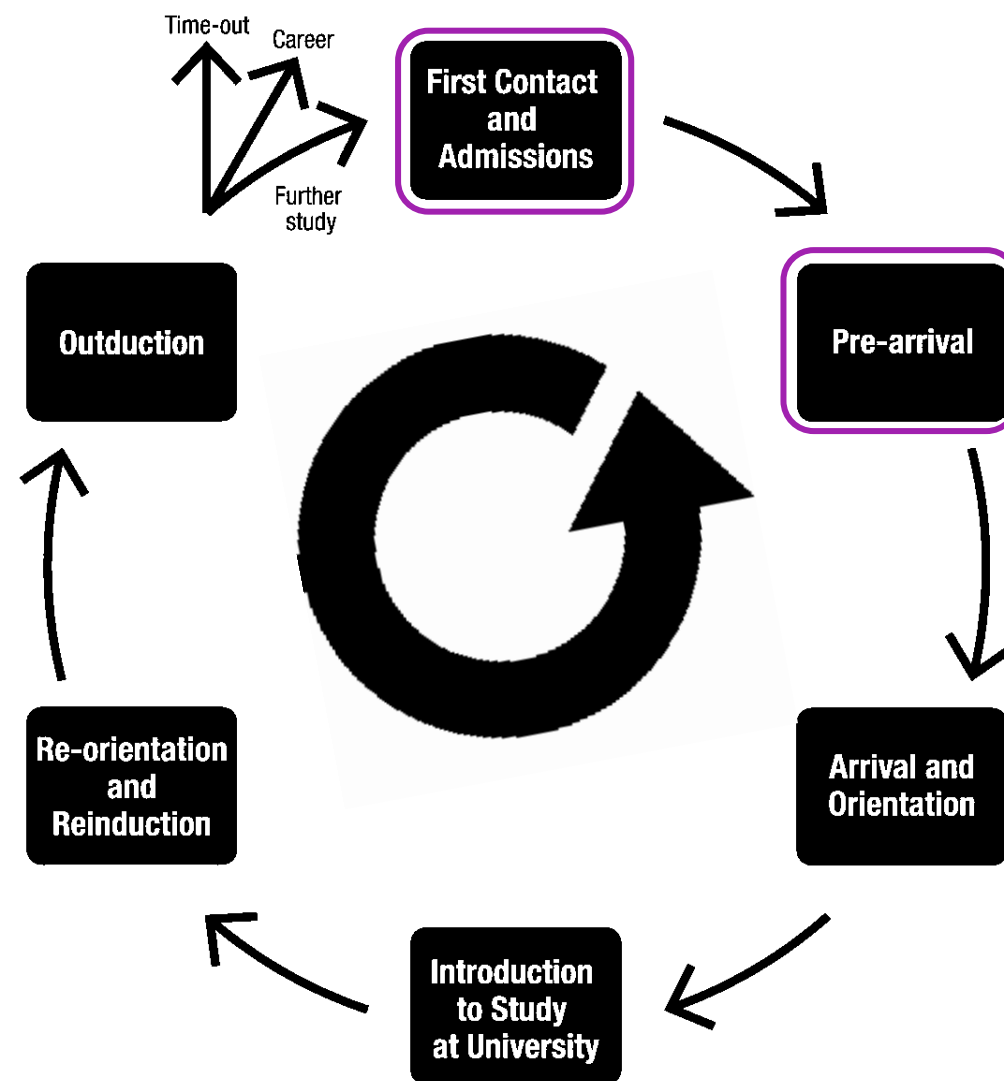
Data and analysis | | UCAS

Students' perceptions of belonging and inclusion at university

February 2022

Belonging-and-inclusion-survey-Wonkhe-Pearson-Feb-22.pdf

72.3% survey response rate
NSS National Student Survey 2024
4 countries are covered by the survey
345,981 students responded
28 questions were asked to students covering a range of aspects of their HE experience
520 universities, colleges and other higher education providers took part

Understanding prior learning experiences, expectations and concerns of new entrants

Pre-arrival Academic Questionnaire

The Student Experience Transitions Model

Time-out · Career · Further study

First Contact and Admissions

Pre-arrival

Outduction

Arrival and Orientation

Re-orientation and Reinduction

Introduction to Study at University

Source: M Morgan (2011) Improving the Student Experience- the practical guide for universities and colleges, Oxon:Routledge.

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Stops assumptions being made

Formalised through the 11 University, HEFCE funded Postgraduate Experience Project

(PAQ formerly called Entry to Study Survey)

Widening and sustaining postgraduate taught (PGT) STEM study in the UK: a collaborative project

Postgraduate-Experience-Report-Final-Kingston.pdf (makingthemostofmasters.ac.uk)

Bridging the gap between secondary and tertiary education

Findings from the Undergraduate Level 4 Pre-Arrival Academic Questionnaire (PAQ)

A case study from a Post 1992 University

Dr Michelle Morgan
February 2020

Bridging_the_gap_between_secondary_and_tertiary_education-Morgan_2020.pdf (improvingthestudentexperience.com)
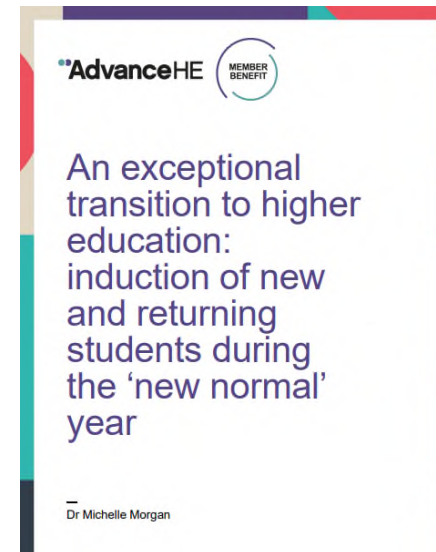

Financial concerns and working intentions of incoming Level 4 students

The potential implications for applicants and students in 2020/21 due to Covid19

Dr Michelle Morgan   3 August 2020

Financial_concerns_and_working_intentions_of_incoming_Level_4_university_students-_implications_of_C19.pdf (improvingthestudentexperience.com)

An exceptional transition to higher education: induction of new and returning students during the 'new normal' year

Dr Michelle Morgan

An exceptional transition to higher education: induction of new and returning students during the 'new normal' year | Advance HE (advance-he.ac.uk)
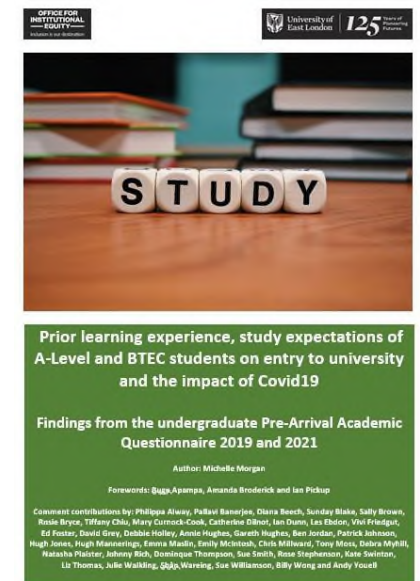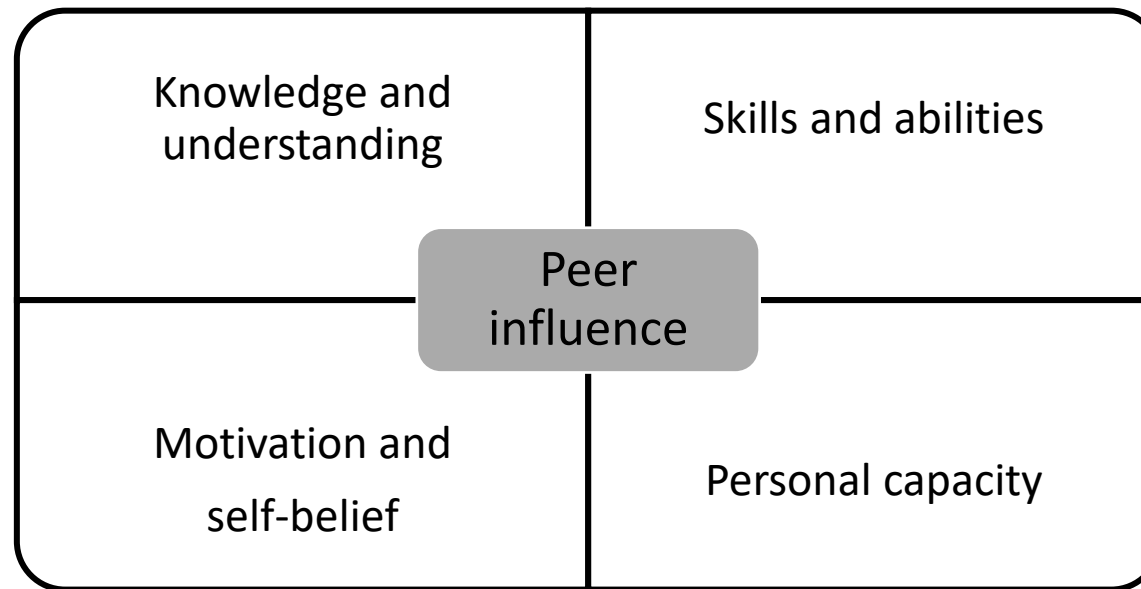

Prior learning experience, study expectations of A-Level and BTEC students on entry to university and the impact of Covid19

Findings from the undergraduate Pre-Arrival Academic Questionnaire 2019 and 2021

Author: Michelle Morgan

Prior learning experience, study expectations of A-Level and BTEC students on entry to university and the impact of Covid19 | Advance HE (advance-he.ac.uk)

Reduce Engagement 'Poverty'

The Joseph Rowntree Trust define poverty when *'a person's resources are not sufficient to meet their minimum needs'* (Joseph Rowntree Trust, 2014).

Resources needed for engagement

Knowledge and understanding	Skills and abilities
Motivation and self-belief	Personal capacity

(Peer influence — centre)

Source: Foster, 2023

Foster, E. (2023) *A new model of student engagement- Aspects of engagement.* Available online: A New Model of Student Engagement – Living Learning Analytics Blog

Goulden, C. and D'Arcy, C. (2014) *Anti-poverty strategies for the UK: A definition of poverty*, York: Joseph Rowntree Trust.

Rationale for the PAQ at institutional level

- A **meaningful pre-arrival/arrival course activity** that provides a parity of initial academic experience for all students across courses.

- To provide staff across academic and professional support spheres with **vital information that will assist them in developing and evolving their provision in real time** to bridge the perceived and actual skill and knowledge gaps of students.

- **Students get feedback within 3 weeks** of starting with headline findings and advice

Feedback is critical

7 core sections

Previous study qualifications

Previous study experience

Motivations and expected challenges of study being

undertaken

Student expectations

Current learning expectations

Attitudes towards the level of study being undertaken

Biographical/ demographic details

[Pre-arrival questionnaire (PAQ) national pilot](#)
AdvanceHE and JISC

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Partnership collaboration and interventions

- Shared understanding for the need to super proof
  - Student experience
  - Retention, progression and success
  - Identifying upcoming issues such as student diversity and social changes and challenges

- Shared understanding of purpose
  - Institutional needs
  - Sector needs
  - Importance of leadership
  - Research and evidence led
  - Identifying good practice

Rationale for the PAQ at sector level

There are a range of overarching objectives for this OfS EOO Innovation funded project.

- **To establish consistency** in how the sector collects and acts upon information from students upon arrival around their learning styles, expectations, challenges and requirements.

- **To drive dedicated activity at local level** to close the gap between expectations, requirements and the actual experience upon arrival.

- **To provide robust data-led evidence** to enable institutions to address inconsistencies in how different groups of students (for example by social background, qualification type, geography and demographics) begin their learning and develop a platform to progress to good outcomes.

- **To create a fuller understanding** across the sector of the Pre-arrival experience, providing evidence for wider policy making and cross-sector activity**.**

- **Support providers** in delivering a range of practical outcomes across different student groups, including improved wellbeing and belonging, improved continuation and attainment. Earlier and preventative intervention should further contribute to higher progression to further study or employment.

Purpose and scope of the National Pilot PAQ Project

- Implementation of the UG and PGT surveys across 2 waves

- We anticipate working with around 20-30 providers in England for each year of the survey. Participation in both years is desirable but not essential.

- Should the volume of expressions of interest exceed these numbers, the delivery partners reserve the right to make decisions around final participation in order to achieve a cohort that is as representative as possible.

- Should any institutions not be selected for year 1, we would be happy to discuss participation in year 2 as capacity allows.

- Free participation for the duration of the project (until June 2027).

Purpose and scope of the National Pilot PAQ (2)

- Institutions will receive their own results in a fast turnaround after the close of the survey – for their own analysis.

- Institutions will receive analysis by AdvanceHE similar to Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) that will focus on providing anonymised benchmark comparison across all participating institutions

- Resources will be provided on how to share the key relevant findings with students, and staff.

- Membership of a facilitated participation network to access support and advice from peers.

- Free conference attendance for each year of participation to share best practice.

- Access to sector specific reports and published papers based on the overall findings.

- Institutions are required to hold a valid Jisc Online Surveys licence (paid for by institutions directly) for each year of their participation.

Inclusive and Collaborative Steering and Working Groups

- The Project Steering Group comprises of sector stakeholders involved in policy and strategy at a national level. Steering group made up of sector policy bodies including NUS, TASO, GuildHE, JISC, AdvanceHE, UKCGE, UCAS, NUS, SSAT, EPC, Unite Group, NEON.

- The Working Group will comprise of sector practitioners and research experts across a range of student experience areas including Learning and Teaching, Generative AI, Belonging, Mental Health and Wellbeing.

Outline timescales (year 1)

- April – June 2025: Confirm institutional participation

- April - July 2025: Confirm question sets, ethics, methodology – through working and advisory group

- August -September 2025: Survey set up

- Late September – early November: Survey window wave 1

- November – topline institutional data received

- December/ January – benchmarking data

- January 2026 onwards – working group members receive anonymised raw data for own analysis

- April 2026: Sector reports produced. Instititional case studies

- May 2026: Wave 1 dissemination event

- Year 2 timings will broadly match this into 2026/2027

Selection of participating institutions

Rationale for selection
- Reasons for participation
- Who submitted expression of interest
- Representation of type of institution and region

60 expressions of interest (4 duplicates)
- 12 only in 2025
- 5 only in 2026
- 38 both years
- 11 only UG

**Type of institution expressing an interest 2025 (n=50)**
- 26 Post -92s
- 8 Russell
- 9 Small and Specialist
- 3 Colleges
- 4 Pre-92s

Region of the 50 expressing an interest in 2025

1	East
3	East Midlands
2	West Midland
13	London
9	North East
8	North West
6	South East
8	South West

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Ethical and technical areas

- Ethical approval

- AdvanceHE and JISC Terms & conditions, & Data Protection Agreement

- Institutional access to the survey
    - Same as PTES, SAES, UKES
        - Downloaded template that is locked
        - Text and logos can be added
        - Faculty/Department/school and course questions can be added at the end

- Student access
    - Public facing
    - Applicant student ID will be requested
        - An institutional check
        - Enable extra student characteristic data to be added
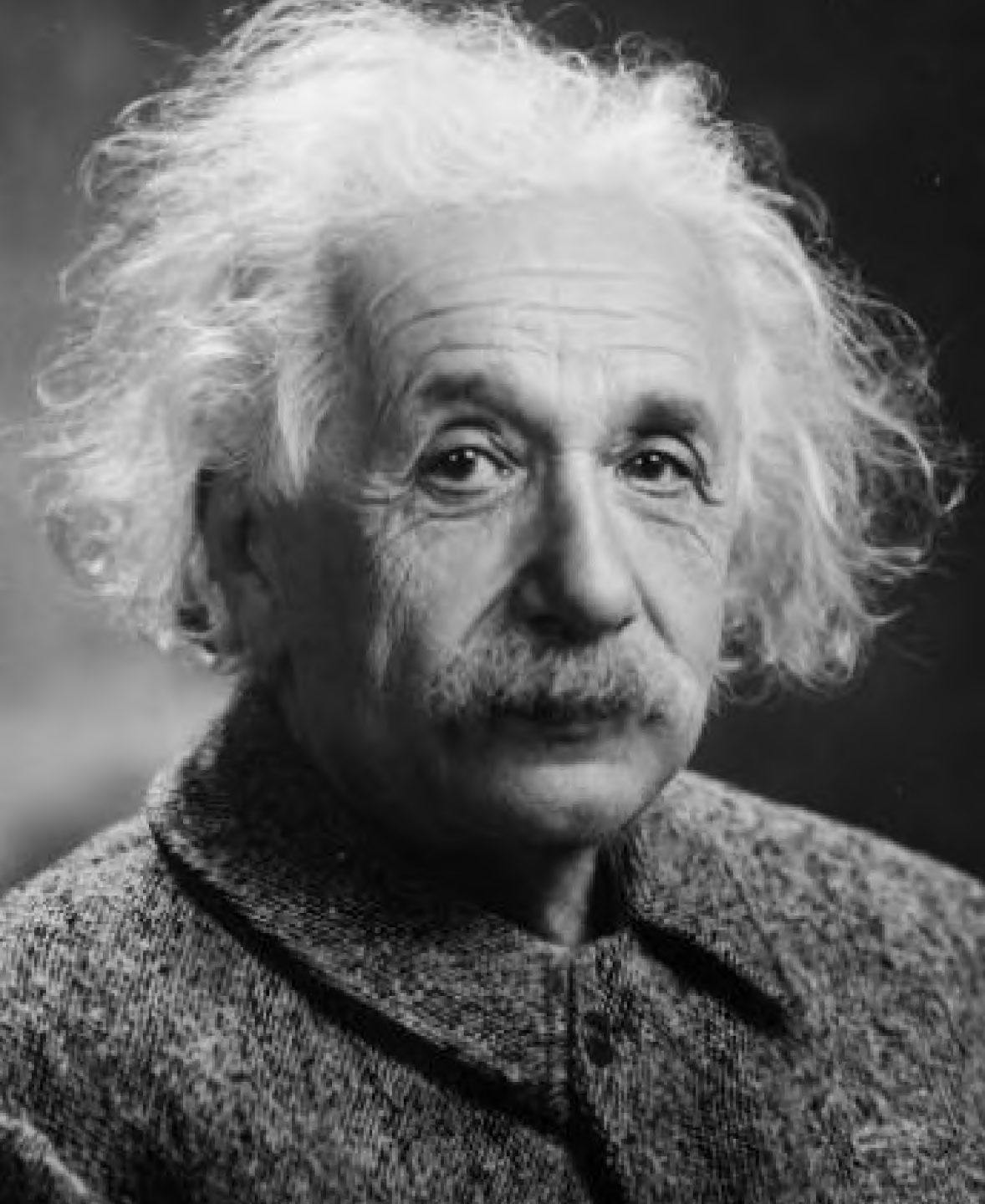
We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.

~ Albert Einstein

Thank you for listening
Any questions?

Dr Michelle Morgan

Dean of Students

University of East London

Jonathan Neves

Head of Research & Surveys

Advance HE
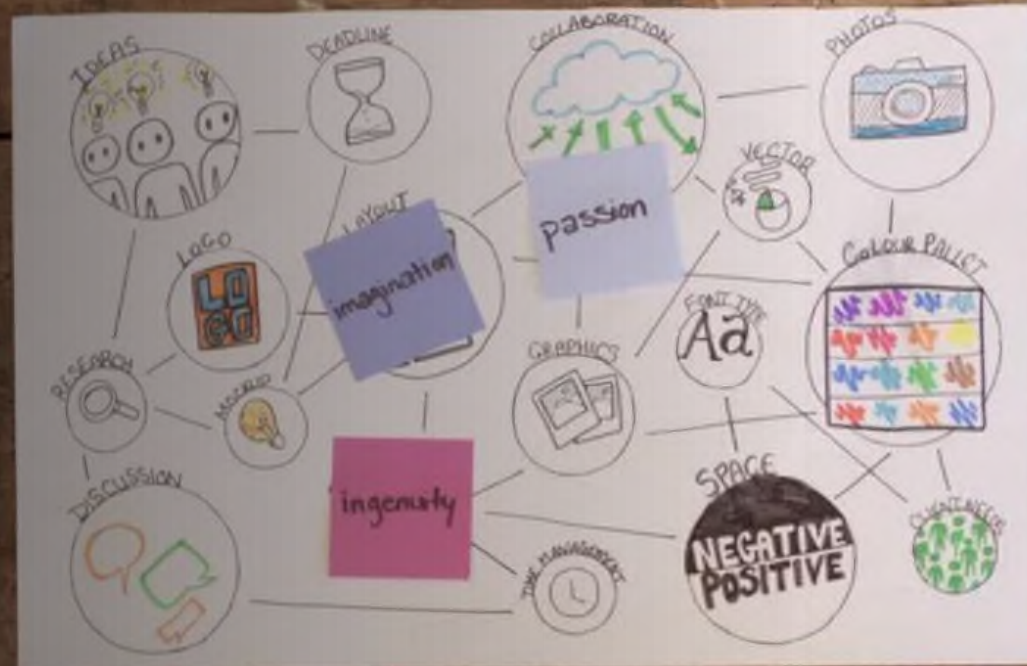
What is this session about?

- **A new perspective on design thinking for teaching and learning**
  - **A transformative mindset shift for students** – Reframe learning around **empathy, creativity, agility**
  - **A transformative mindset shift for educators** – the classroom as a design challenge with the student at its heart.

Would You Buy This Assignment?

Think of a recent assignment you gave. If it were a product, would anyone buy it?

This was our assessment:

Write a 2000-word persuasive essay on a subject which can be approached academically. Use expert sources, evidence, and academic perspectives to support your argument.

⟶

✅ Clear goals, but overly abstract

🚫 Audience = instructor only

🚫 Disconnected from students' lives or cultural knowledge

🚫 Fixed format & linear process

🚫 One-and-done final product

🚫 Emphasis on compliance over creativity or engagement

Enter: Design Thinking as a Mindset not a Process
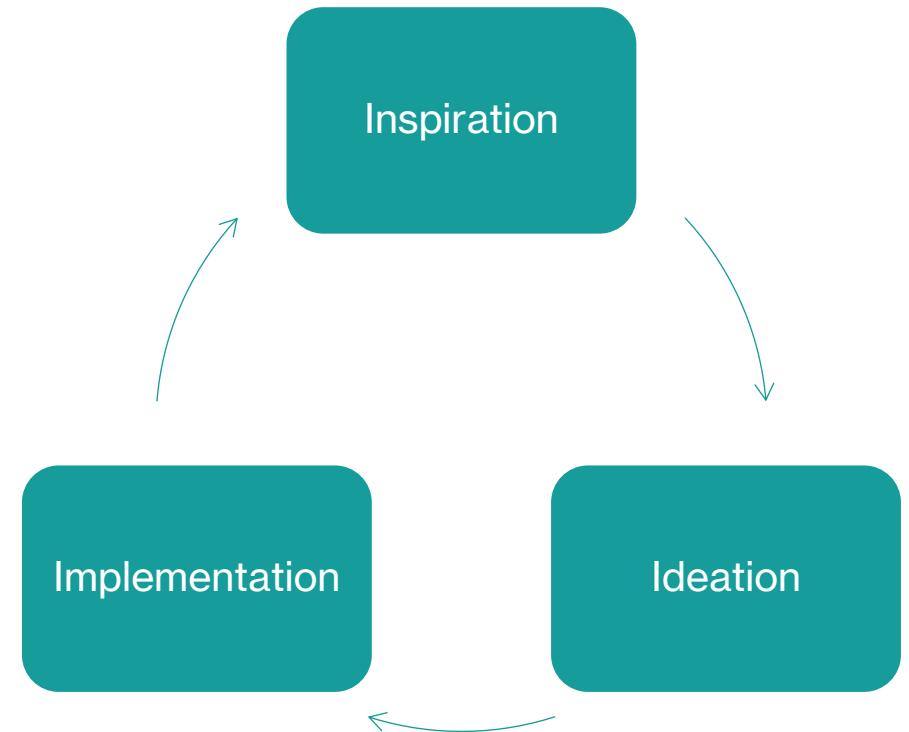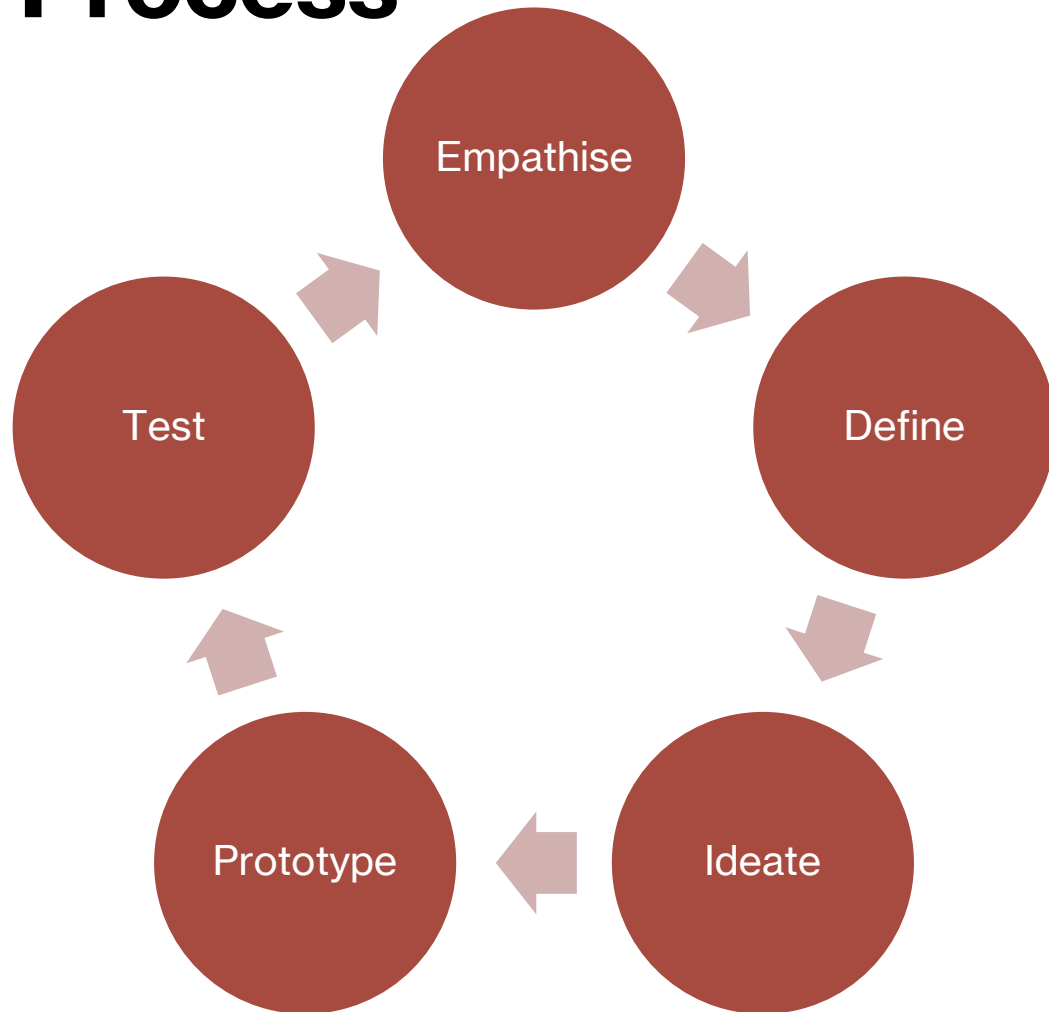
Why Design Thinking?

Our Inspirations:

Olin College - Engineering for Humanity: Openness as mindset to design AND learning

Smith College - Design Thinking Initiative: Inclusive, creative, interdisciplinary learning

IDEO's Design Thinking for Educators Toolkit, D.School Design Thinking Bootleg, Design Thinking Business Literature (Knapp, Kelley)

Our Students:

Diverse • Multilingual • Multicultural cohorts

- Our Goal: Reframe learning around **empathy, creativity, agility**

- The Mindset Shift: **Curious • Open • Collaborative • OK with getting things wrong**
  - From knowing → doing, theoretical → applicable, passive → active, individual → relational
  - Bringing play back into the classroom (thinking made tangible, aliveness and realness)

- **The activities enable the mindset shift we're really after both in the classroom and in our approach *to* the classroom.**

What was our Design Challenge?

What students said	What we observed
" This class felt like a box to tick"	Writing felt like a performative task rather than a meaningful process. Wrestling with "Acadamese"
"I'm a STEM major so what use is a writing class to me?"	Students struggled to see connections between writing and their disciplinary or career paths. This was because there was a lack of context.
"Writing is boring"	Students didn't feel emotionally or intellectually invested. They were under-challenged.
"I didn't know who I was writing for. Just the teacher, I guess. It felt like I was guessing what they wanted to hear"	They weren't developing writing skills like critical thinking or voice, they were performing correctness.
"I kept wondering if the way I was explaining things made sense here"	Multilingual and culturally diverse students felt silenced or marginalised by rigid academic norms.

Empathy in Action

Name: Lina Haddad	Background:	Current Challenges:
Age: 19	Lina is confident in conversations, but she's often self-conscious about her written English. She writes fluently in Arabic and French but finds academic English vague and indirect. She's brilliant at connecting ideas, yet avoids participating in class discussions when writing is involved.	• Has never written an argumentative essay in English before.
Country of Origin: Lebanon		• Struggles to understand implicit expectations in "criticality" or "structure."
Language Background: Arabic (first language), English (School and University), Additional language: French		• Feels she's constantly "translating herself" rather than expressing.
Major: Media and Communication		• Worries she sounds "immature" or "wrong" in academic tone.
Years in UK: Less than 1 year		• Feels her stories and metaphors don't "belong" in academic writing.
Status: International Student		

Learning by Designing

What do our students wish we understood?

Design Thinking (Mindset) as a Meta-Pedagogical Tool

Empathy: Preparing for the students we have, not the students we wish we had (or we were)

Defining: Student voice, observations, assessments

Diversity: Honouring the perspectives of our diverse teaching team

Curious, Open, Collaborative: Letting go of sole ownership of assessment or instructional design and 'my idea'

Active, Doing: Course Assessment Design Days

Iteration, Pivoting: Virtual and actual spaces for ongoing collaboration for instructional design pivots and trouble shooting & marking and moderation.

First-Year Writing Studio (Design-Inspired)

Write a personal essay	**Narrative Essay as Experience** Imagine you're entering a New York Review of Books competition. Inspired by Zadie Smith, you explore "joy" through ambiguity, subtlety, and story.
Write an expository essay	**Expository Essay as Journalistic Writing** Write a topical, research-informed article for The Conversation UK, including a professional pitch. Audience: intelligent readers beyond academia.
Write a persuasive essay	**Research Project as Scholarly Contribution** Respond to an interdisciplinary Call for Papers on "Disruption, Intelligence, and Resilience." Include a reflective commentary documenting your process, insights, and feedback loops

do men not notice gender or do they not notice the discrepancies?

Men do not notice gender

I disagree with the statement that men do not notice gender because I think gender is one of the main things someone, especially men, notice

If men don't notice gender than why are there so many problems with gender names and equalization

focus on ability and interest rather than gender when raising children

If we keep gender+ have we perceive it as a whole, how can we expect gender roles+ norms to change?

process of normalisation— in relation to raising kids the same way) with no change

Process of normalisation ... from the ... of an

if the happen over ... norm...

...of human rights in general ... uman rights is to deny the specific and

...uld tell from his tone – the same tone with ...u're a supporter of terrorism.'"

...ys in how we raise them. We stifle the ...asculinity in a very narrow way. ..., and we put boys inside this cage.

...e raised not to link masculinity and ...as not 'the boy has to pay', but rather, ... Of course, because of their historical ...will have more today. But if we start ...w years, in a hundred years, boys ... their masculinity by material ... by making them feel ...ragile egos. The

Stereotypical idea of what it is ... part of human right+ ... a problem

I disagree with the statement that men do not notice gender... I think gender is one of the main things someone... especially men... not...

Feminism is, of course, part of human rights in general – but to use the vague expression human rights is to deny the specific and particular problem of gender."

It was not a compliment. I could tell from his tone – the same t... which a person would say, 'You're a supporter of terrorism.'"

We do a great disservice to boys in how we raise them. We stifle... humanity of boys. We define masculinity in a very narrow way. Masculinity is a hard, small cage, and we put boys inside this ca...

What if both boys and girls were raised not to link masculinity a... money? What if their attitude was not 'the boy has to pay', but... 'whoever has more should pay'? Of course, because of their his... advantage, it is mostly men who will have more today. But if w... raising children differently, then in fifty years, in a hundred ye... will no longer have the pressure of proving their masculinity b... means. But by far the worst thing we do to males – by making... they have to be hard – is that we leave them with very fragile... harder a man feels compelled to be, the weaker his ego is.

That many men do not actively think about gender or notice g... many men say, like my friend Louis did, that things might hav... in the past but everything is fine now. And that many men do... change it. If you are a man and you walk into a restaurant an... greets just you, does it occur to you to ask the waiter, 'Why h... greeted her?' Men need to speak out in all of these ostensibly... situations.

Gender and class are different. Poor men still have the privile... men, even if they do not have the privileges of being wealthy...

If we do something over and over again, it becomes normal... same thing over and over again, it becomes normal. If we se... thing over and over again, it becomes normal.

"feminist" ... connotation... ...pliment"

the man has to pay

Set Pieces = Deliberate Relational Interventions

Provide varied diet of engagement (UDL)

- Big Paper (annotating in silence)
- Gallery Walk
- Lightning Demos

Model constructive collaboration, feedback and negotiation

- I wish/ I like
- How might we?
- Crazy 8s

Design thinking activities in the class teach new skills but they also communicate a set of values:

- Everyone has something worth saying
- Your voice shapes real world conversations
- Writing is a collaborative exploratory act

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