

STUDENT SURVEY.IE

The Irish Survey
of Student
Engagement (ISSE)
Results from 2014

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The project team wishes to acknowledge the importance of the national collaborative partnership in implementing the Irish Survey of Student Engagement in 2014.

In particular, the team expresses its appreciation to students who responded to the survey; to students' union officers and to institutions' staff who supported and promoted the survey locally; and to members of project working groups who continue to provide strategic direction and appropriate action.

www.studentsurvey.ie

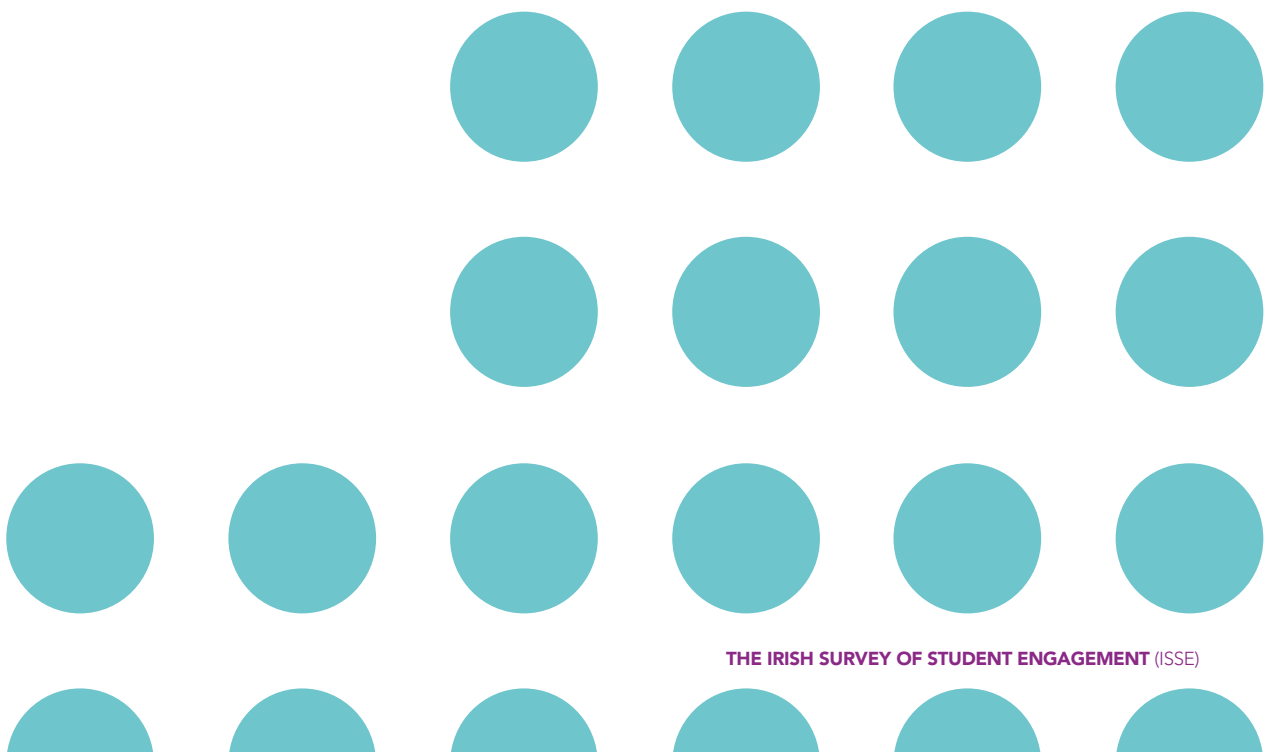
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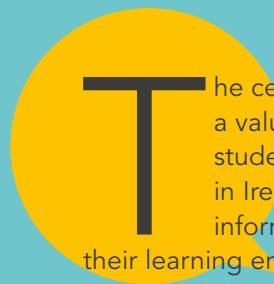
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INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This report presents results from the 2014 Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE). The 2014 survey follows a successful national pilot survey in 2013.

The survey seeks to collect information on student engagement in order to provide a more valuable and informed insight into the experience of students in higher education. Students' engagement with college life is important in enabling them to develop key capabilities such as critical thinking, problem-solving, writing skills, team work and communication skills.



The central aim of this project is to develop a valuable source of information about students' experiences of higher education in Ireland. The survey seeks to collect information on how students engage with their learning environments. The results of the survey are intended to add value at institutional level, and to inform national policy.

A detailed online survey was offered to first year undergraduates, final year undergraduates and postgraduate students on taught programmes. More than 19,800 students from thirty institutions responded to the survey which was undertaken in February – March 2014.

Overview of the report

CHAPTER 1 of the report outlines the reason for a focus on student engagement and highlights some of the extensive international research drawn upon to inform development of the ISSE. It lists the objectives for development and implementation of the ISSE and references the detailed report published as a result of the 2013 national pilot survey.

CHAPTER 2 provides a concise overview of the methodology adopted. It refers to the design and structure of the survey itself and lists the indices that provide an indication of student **engagement** or student **outcomes**. This chapter includes some guidance on how to interpret these indices.

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The Indices are:

ENGAGEMENT INDICES	OUTCOMES INDICES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Academic Challenge▪ Active Learning▪ Student-Staff Interactions▪ Enriching Educational Experiences▪ Supportive Learning Environment▪ Work Integrated Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Higher Order Thinking▪ General Learning Outcomes▪ General Development Outcomes▪ Career Readiness▪ Overall Satisfaction

CHAPTER 3 of the report provides details of student responses to each of the questions asked. These are presented as percentages of students selecting each response. Results are provided for all participating students and for each of the year group / cohorts i.e. first year undergraduate, final year undergraduate and taught postgraduate. Questions are grouped together according to the index to which they contribute.

CHAPTER 4 presents an analysis of indices relating to student **engagement** and student **outcomes**. This chapter includes charts illustrating index scores for various student groupings i.e. index scores presented by each year group / cohort, by institution-type, by mode of study (full-time or part-time) and by field of study. Some key observations follow each chart. Fuller understanding of what the data may tell us requires consideration of influencing factors.

CHAPTER 5 considers the results from ISSE 2014 in a wider context. This chapter presents main national results from 2014 alongside results from the 2013 national pilot survey. It also presents ISSE results alongside the most recent results available from comparable surveys in Australia, New Zealand

(AUSSE) and the US (NSSE). It is noted that review of results from AUSSE and from NSSE over a number of years identifies a general trend of increasing scores. It is, therefore, important to treat results from early iterations of ISSE with due care when considering these in an international context.

CHAPTER 6 represents an important and distinct section of the report. The earlier chapters present question responses and headline scores for each index. Chapter 6 examines two of the indices in more depth, looking into responses to individual questions and exploring the experiences of different student groups. The indices explored are *Supportive Learning Environment* and *Work Integrated Learning*. Key points identified in this chapter, for these two indices, include:

- Students report that they feel supported and get on very well with each other, with 82% indicating that other students are friendly and supportive and that they have a sense of belonging
- Students also get along well with their teachers, with two-thirds indicating that teachers are available, helpful and sympathetic

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- Students report their relationships with administrative staff to be weaker than they would like, with only half considering such staff to be available, considerate and flexible
- Nearly two-thirds (64%) of students report that they are well supported academically. First year students report that they are very well supported by their institutions academically (69%); final year students report that they are not receiving as much support, with 57% reporting that they are well supported academically
- Students report differing perceptions of whether they are supported enough to socialise with a third saying 'very little', a third saying they receive 'some' support and a third saying 'quite a bit' or 'very much'
- Part-time and older students report that more support could be offered by their institution in coping with work and family responsibilities
- Students report that their college experience is generally improving their employability and is providing them with the required knowledge and proficiency to gain employment. This varies notably by field of study
- Half of all final year undergraduate students have undertaken a work placement, with further numbers planning to do so by the time they graduate
- Certain fields of study, such as Education and Health and Welfare, are preparing students very well for future employment in a relevant sector of the economy, with 77% and 71% (respectively) indicating that they had explored how to apply learning in the workplace 'often' or 'very often'.

However, Arts and Humanities, and Science, Mathematics and Computing students report less preparation for the workplace and a lower perception of employability, with 27% and 22% (respectively) reporting that they had never explored how to apply learning in the workplace

- Part-time and older students also report that their institution is preparing them for the workplace more than younger or full-time students, although full-time students are more likely to undertake (or plan to undertake) work experience

The deeper exploration of specific indices, as undertaken in Chapter 6, points to the true value and additional benefits of implementing the ISSE over time. Individual institutions have gained a rich and detailed source of information on the experiences of their students and, potentially, can choose to explore any of the indices according to locally identified priorities. Future national reports will explore other indices to highlight issues of interest.

CHAPTER 7 signals the intention of the national project to support and encourage institutions to realise the potential illustrated by Chapter 6. A follow up report will be published, in early 2015, providing examples and guidance to support institutions providing effective feedback to students and to wider staff, and to demonstrate examples of utilisation of ISSE data to support enhancement activities.

CHAPTER 1

CONTEXT FOR THE

IRISH SURVEY OF

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

1.1

WHY IS STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IMPORTANT?

Engagement with college life is seen as important in enabling students to develop key capabilities such as critical thinking, problem-solving, writing skills, team work and communication skills. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005)¹ demonstrated that an educational environment that stresses student-staff interactions, encourages students to participate in the life of the college, involves students in classroom discussions and is concerned about the academic growth and development of students results in student persistence, degree completion and the increased development of critical thinking skills, analytical competencies, and intellectual development.

Other things being equal, the strongest evidence indicated that the greater the student's engagement in academic work or in the academic experience of the college, the greater his or her level of knowledge acquisition and general cognitive growth ... academic engagement reduced authoritarianism and dogmatism and increased autonomy and independence, intellectual orientation, and the use of principled moral reasoning (Pascarella and Terenzini, 2005).

Through 20 years of research, it has been identified that students who are engaged in the life of the college have a higher quality experience than those at institutions where engagement is not promoted (Kuh, 2001)². As Coates (2010)³ states, *'contemporary perspectives of student engagement now touch on aspects of teaching,*

the broader student experience, learners' lives beyond University, and institutional support'.

Student engagement with higher education is seen as being enhanced through exposing students to a high quality learning environment. Measuring engagement can provide a means to develop a fuller understanding of the student experience above and beyond that ascertained through student satisfaction surveys (Coates, 2010).

Student satisfaction is defined as a measure of the student's value of the higher education experience (Astin, 1993)⁴. A multitude of variables are used to measure students' satisfaction but generally they are grouped into the broad categories of satisfaction with level of contact and communication with the academic department, satisfaction with college administration, quality of student facilities and overall satisfaction with the higher education experience (Astin 1993, Skilbeck 2001)⁵.

Student satisfaction as an outcome measure is considered to be valuable in that, more than any other measure, it is not greatly influenced by the entering characteristics of students, only by the intervention of the higher education environment (Astin 1993). The ISSE seeks to collect data on student engagement and student outcomes, including satisfaction.

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1. Pascarella E., Terenzini P. (2005). *How College Affects Students: A Third Decade of Research*. Jossey-Bass. San Francisco
 2. Kuh, G.D. (2001) *Assessing What Really Matters to Student Learning: Inside the National Survey of Student Engagement*. Change
 3. Coates, H. (2010), *Development of the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement*. Higher Education, 60
 4. Astin A. (1993). *What Matters in College?: Four Critical Years Revisited*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco
 5. Skilbeck M. (2001). *The University Challenged: A Review of International Trends and Issues with Particular Reference to Ireland*. The Higher Education Authority, Dublin

Other things being equal, the strongest evidence indicated that the greater the student's engagement in academic work or in the academic experience of the college, the greater his or her level of knowledge acquisition and general cognitive growth... academic engagement reduced authoritarianism and dogmatism and increased autonomy and independence, intellectual orientation, and the use of principled moral reasoning

(Pascarella and Terenzini, 2005).



1.2 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The objectives for developing and implementing a national student survey are:

- To increase transparency in relation to the student experience in higher education institutions
- To enable direct student input on levels of engagement and satisfaction with their higher education experience
- To identify good practice that enhances the student experience
- To assist institutions to identify issues and challenges affecting the student experience
- To serve as a guide for continual enhancement of institutions' teaching and learning and student engagement
- To document the experiences of the student population, thus enabling year on year comparisons of key performance indicators
- To facilitate comparison with higher education institutions and systems internationally.

1.3 CONTEXT

The central aim of this project is to develop a valuable source of information about students' experiences of higher education in Ireland. The survey seeks to collect information on how students engage with their learning environments. The results of the survey are intended to add value at institutional level, primarily by enabling institutional leaders to consider the experiences of different groups of students within that institution.

In addition, it will be possible to consider local results in the larger context of similar institution-types, in the overall national context and relative to higher education systems in other countries that have implemented comparable surveys. Further details of the rationale, policy influences, development and testing of the survey are available in a detailed report from the 2013 national pilot survey.⁶ Development and implementation of the Irish Survey of Student Engagement is also included in a 2014 publication titled *"Engaging University Students: International Insights from System-Wide Studies"*⁷.

As stated in the report from the 2013 national pilot, greatest value will be derived when there are multiple datasets to consider. Analysis of these datasets will facilitate institutions to evaluate the impact of any specific initiatives or to identify local trends that may merit further exploration. This is an iterative process with increasing benefits from each additional implementation of the survey and analysis of resulting data. In addition, the survey provides a series of measures of the experience of students in different institution-types and nationally. Accordingly, this report of results from 2014 fieldwork contributes to the developing value of a new information source to inform institutional planning and national policy.

It is, of course, acknowledged that individual institutions already utilise a range of other instruments to collect data on the experiences of their students and that ISSE data should be examined locally in that wider context. Implementation of the ISSE complements existing practice by facilitating consideration of additional national and international contexts through the use of a consistent instrument.

6. http://studentsurvey.ie/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/ISSE_Survey_final2013.pdf

7. <http://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-981-4585-63-7>

CHAPTER 2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 DESIGN OF THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Research into international practice determined that a survey of student engagement would be most appropriate to meet the objectives of the project and that the Irish national survey should be based on the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE). The AUSSE has been in use in Australia and New Zealand since 2007 and was based on the extensively-used National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) which has been used in the US, and beyond, since 2000. The use of these surveys as the foundation for the ISSE enabled the national project to learn from extensive research, experience and testing of comparable surveys. A series of pre-testing activities was undertaken in nine Irish higher education institutions during the 2013 national pilot to ensure that the questions were appropriate to the national

context. Comprehensive post-fieldwork testing of the validity and reliability of the 2013 data is described in the 2013 report. Equivalent testing is being undertaken for 2014 data. Further details of the 2013 national pilot survey (and of logistical improvements adopted for 2014) are provided in the full reference report which is available at www.studentsurvey.ie.

Details of validity and reliability testing of 2014 data will be also published on this website.

Development and implementation of the Irish Survey of Student Engagement is also included in a 2014 publication titled *“Engaging University Students: International Insights from System-Wide Studies”*.

2.2 STRUCTURE OF THE SURVEY

The survey was delivered electronically to students from target cohorts. Students were asked to respond to more than one hundred questions⁸ about their experiences of higher education. The percentage of students selecting particular responses is provided in Chapter 3 of this report. In addition to this dataset, further interpretation is possible. Each question contributes to specific indices relating to student **engagement** or student **outcomes**.

8. <http://studentsurvey.ie/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/ISSE-2014-questions-web.pdf>

The Indices are:

Engagement Indices

- **Academic Challenge:** the extent to which expectations and assessments challenge students to learn
- **Active Learning:** students' efforts to actively construct knowledge
- **Student-Staff Interactions:** the level and nature of students' contact and interactions with teaching staff
- **Enriching Educational Experiences:** students' participation in broadening educational activities
- **Supportive Learning Environment:** students' feelings of support within the college community
- **Work Integrated Learning:** integration of employment-focused work experiences into study

Outcomes Indices

- **Higher Order Thinking:** participation in higher order forms of thinking
- **General Learning Outcomes:** development of general competencies
- **General Development Outcomes:** development of general forms of individual and social development
- **Career Readiness:** preparation for participation in the professional workforce
- **Overall Satisfaction:** students' overall satisfaction with their educational experience

2.3 TARGET STUDENT COHORT

The target student cohort for the ISSE was defined as all first-year and final-year undergraduate students pursuing programmes leading to qualifications included in the National Framework of Qualifications⁹ (NFQ) at levels 6, 7 and 8; and students pursuing taught postgraduate programmes leading to qualifications included in the NFQ at levels 8, 9 and 10. All modes of study were included (full-time, part-time, distance, e-learning or in-service). First year and final year undergraduate students are surveyed by AUSSE and by NSSE. Postgraduate students pursuing taught programmes are surveyed by AUSSE (using a postgraduate variant of the survey). The selection of these three student groups for ISSE enables Irish institutions to review local data in national and international contexts.

An extract from institutions' student records systems was used to provide certain limited contextual demographic data which were associated with student responses for high-level analysis. This approach meant that students were not required to input these data when participating in the survey, but that these data could enable analysis of subgroups, for example by demographic and contextual factors such as gender, full-time or part-time, broad field of study. Data returned to institutions was cleaned to remove any content that could potentially identify individuals.

9. www.nfq.ie



NOTES FOR INTERPRETING THE DATA

Q: Are index scores percentages? How is each index calculated?

Index scores are **not** percentages. They are calculated scores to enable interpretation of the data at a higher level than individual questions i.e. to act as signposts to help the reader to navigate large data sets.

Each question in the survey has between 4 and 8 possible responses. These are converted to a 100 point scale. To illustrate, if response 3 is chosen from 4 possible responses, this converts to a score of 66.67 as in the example below:

Question	Responses			
Asked questions or contributed to discussions in class, tutorials, labs or online	Never	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
Responses transformed to 100-point scale	0	33.33	66.67	100

Index scores are calculated for an individual student when he/ she provides responses to the majority of contributing questions. The exact number of responses required varies according to the index, based on psychometric testing undertaken by NSSE and AUSSE, but a majority is always required. For example, eleven questions contribute to the index *Academic Challenge*. Six of these must be answered in order to calculate the index score. Seven questions contribute to *Active Learning*. Four of these must be answered in order to calculate the index score. The index score is calculated from the mean of responses given, excluding non-responses.

Index scores for any particular student group, for example first years, are calculated as the mean of individual index scores.

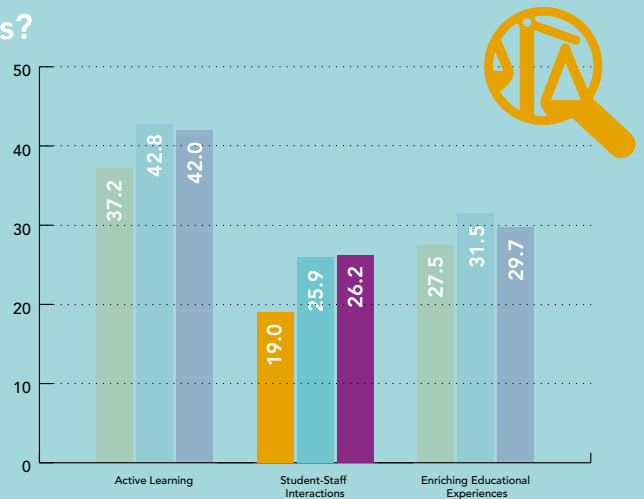
Q: How can I make best use of index scores?

Index scores provide greatest benefit when used as signposts to explore the experiences of different groups of students - for example, final year full-time students and final year part-time students. In particular, index scores provide greatest insight into the experiences of comparable cohorts over multiple datasets e.g. the experiences of 2014 first year students relative to 2013 first year students. If a particular index score prompts interest, it is most appropriate to investigate further by considering the number of responses (to check if the score can be regarded as representative of that group) and by reviewing the contributing questions.



Q: Should I compare scores for different indices?

Different indices should not be compared to each other. For example, there is no simple direct link between scores for *Active Learning* and scores for *Student-Staff Interactions*. This chart (right) is used to illustrate this point. **No useful interpretation can be drawn from the fact that scores for Active Learning are generally higher than the scores for Student-Staff Interactions.** However, the following differences may usefully be explored: *Active Learning* scores for final year students are higher than *Active Learning* scores for other cohorts; *Student-Staff Interactions* scores appear notably lower for first years than *Student-Staff Interactions* scores for other cohorts.



CHAPTER 3

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

OF THE 2014 ISSE

3.1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents results from implementation of the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) in 2014. It includes an overview of response rates and of the demographic profile of respondents. This is followed

by national-level results for individual questions. Responses to individual questions are presented in groups corresponding to the *Engagement or Outcomes* index to which they contribute.

3.2

RESPONSE RATES AND DEMOGRAPHICS

A total of 19,844 students responded to the 2014 survey. This produced an overall response rate of 15.6%. The sample includes 9,514 first year undergraduate students, 7,294 final year undergraduate students and 3,036 postgraduate students. Table 3.1 presents the demographic profile of respondents.

The fact that the profile of respondents closely matches the overall student population profile means that weighting of the data causes only very minor variation. Percentage responses provided in this chapter are unweighted and reflect raw data. The detailed analysis provided in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 uses weighted data. Those results are weighted by sex, mode of study and year / cohort to ensure that they are representative of the overall population. Further analysis of local data by institutions should consider the impact of weighting on their data to ensure that local responses are representative of the local student population.

It is positive to note that the number of responses nationally has increased from the significant sample size achieved in the 2013 pilot. A greater number of institutions participated in 2014. However, this alone does not account for the increased number of respondents.

The response rate increased for most institutions participating in 2013 and in 2014. For example, the response rate for Universities, overall, increased from 12.5% in 2013 to 14.0% in 2014. The response rate for Institutes of Technology, overall, increased from 8.9% in 2013 to 15.6% in 2014. (The grouping 'other institutions' does not correspond to a grouping used in 2013). Therefore, the ISSE has already generated a substantial dataset to inform discussion of the experiences of students in Irish higher education institutions. Nevertheless, it remains a key objective to increase response rates further in continuing implementation of the ISSE. This is critical to maximise the value of the survey as a tool for the enhancement of teaching and learning within each institution.

Experience from other jurisdictions demonstrates that greatest value is derived from consideration of data at field of study level, i.e. "broad faculty", and that greatest variation is evident *within* institutions rather than *between* institutions. Accordingly, participating institutions should continue to strive towards achieving sufficiently high response rates to enable reliable analysis of this data at local level.

Table 3.1 Demographic characteristics of respondents

Characteristic	Population		Responses		Response Rate (%)
National	127,545		19,844		15.6%
Age					
23 and Under	71,347	56%	12,103	61%	17.0%
24 and Over	56,198	44%	7,724	39%	13.7%
Gender					
Female	63,311	50%	11,795	59%	18.6%
Male	64,232	50%	8,049	41%	12.5%
Institution-type					
Universities	64,601	51%	9,033	46%	14.0%
Institutes of Technology	53,457	42%	8,346	42%	15.6%
Other institutions	9,487	7%	2,464	12%	26.0%
Mode of Study					
Full-time	102,015	80%	17,763	90%	17.4%
Part-time / remote	25,530	20%	2,081	10%	8.2%
Field of Study					
General Programmes	97	0%	6	0%	6.2%
Education & Training	8,673	7%	1,451	7%	16.7%
Arts & Humanities	16,041	13%	2,845	14%	17.7%
Social Science, Business & Law	34,664	27%	4,960	25%	14.3%
Science, Maths & Computing	20,439	16%	3,670	18%	18.0%
Engineering, Manufacturing & Construction	13,595	11%	1,813	9%	13.3%
Agriculture & Veterinary	2,234	2%	334	2%	15.0%
Health & Welfare	19,742	15%	3,157	16%	16.0%
Services	7,171	6%	984	5%	13.7%
Year/Cohort					
Undergraduate – First Year	54,426	43%	9,514	48%	17.5%
Undergraduate – Final Year	46,954	37%	7,294	37%	15.5%
Postgraduate (taught)	26,165	21%	3,036	15%	11.6%

3.3 RESPONSES TO INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

Each individual question contributes to specific engagement or outcomes indices. The scores for each index are calculated from responses to multiple questions

that contribute to that index. Percentage responses to each question are presented in the following section and are grouped under the relevant index title.

3.3.1

QUESTIONS CONTRIBUTING TO ACADEMIC CHALLENGE

Academic Challenge reflects the extent to which expectations and assessments challenge students to learn.

Question		All Students	Undergraduate Year 1	Undergraduate Final Year	Postgraduate
Worked harder than you thought you could to meet a teacher's/ tutor's standards or expectations (In your experience at your institution during the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	15.1	19.2	11.7	10.4
	<i>Sometimes</i>	41.4	44.4	40.2	34.7
	<i>Often</i>	31.6	26.9	35.3	37.0
	<i>Very Often</i>	11.9	9.4	12.8	17.9
Analysing the basic elements of an idea, problem, experience or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components (During the current academic year, how much has your coursework emphasised the following intellectual activities?)	<i>Very Little</i>	3.8	4.4	3.6	2.4
	<i>Some</i>	21.7	24.4	21.3	14.1
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	42.7	43.1	43.3	40.3
	<i>Very much</i>	31.8	28.2	31.7	43.2
Organising and synthesising ideas, information or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships (During the current academic year, how much has your coursework emphasised the following intellectual activities?)	<i>Very Little</i>	7.7	9.3	7.4	3.7
	<i>Some</i>	29.1	31.5	30.0	19.1
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	38.7	39.0	38.5	38.6
	<i>Very much</i>	24.5	20.2	24.1	38.6
Making judgements about the value of information, arguments or methods, (e.g. examining how others gather and interpret data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions) (During the current academic year, how much has your coursework emphasised the following intellectual activities?)	<i>Very Little</i>	9.1	11.0	8.5	4.9
	<i>Some</i>	28.3	31.6	27.9	18.8
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	37.0	36.7	36.9	37.9
	<i>Very much</i>	25.6	20.7	26.6	38.5
Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations (During the current academic year, how much has your coursework emphasised the following intellectual activities?)	<i>Very Little</i>	6.6	7.2	6.7	4.5
	<i>Some</i>	23.7	25.5	23.9	17.6
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	36.5	36.8	36.5	35.7
	<i>Very much</i>	33.2	30.5	32.9	42.1

CHAPTER 3 RESULTS AND FINDINGS OF THE 2014 ISSE

Question		All Students	Undergraduate Year 1	Undergraduate Final Year	Postgraduate
Assigned textbooks, books, book-length packs or journal articles of subject readings have you read? (During the current academic year approximately how many:)	None	9.5	13.2	7.4	2.8
	1 to 4	31.1	40.0	26.6	14.6
	5 to 10	20.6	22.3	20.1	16.1
	11 to 19	12.9	11.4	14.3	13.9
	More than 20	26.0	13.1	31.6	52.6
Assignments of fewer than 1,000 words or equivalent have you completed? (During the current academic year approximately how many:)	None	27.0	19.3	31.8	39.4
	1 to 4	43.6	47.9	41.5	35.0
	5 to 10	18.0	19.1	17.8	15.2
	11 to 19	6.9	8.1	5.7	6.0
	More than 20	4.6	5.7	3.3	4.5
Assignments of between 1,000 and 5,000 words or equivalent have you completed? (During the current academic year approximately how many:)	None	13.7	20.0	7.9	7.8
	1 to 4	49.1	54.6	44.2	43.7
	5 to 10	28.8	21.2	35.9	35.2
	11 to 19	6.7	3.3	9.5	10.4
	More than 20	1.8	0.9	2.5	2.8
Assignments of more than 5,000 words or equivalent have you completed? (During the current academic year approximately how many:)	None	64.4	85.3	44.6	46.3
	1 to 4	30.0	10.8	48.6	45.3
	5 to 10	4.0	2.5	4.8	6.4
	11 to 19	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.2
	More than 20	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.8
Preparing for class (e.g. studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work, analysing data, rehearsing and other academic activities) (About how many hours do you spend in a typical seven-day week doing each of the following?)	None	2.7	2.5	3.2	1.9
	1 to 5	35.3	39.5	33.8	25.7
	6 to 10	23.4	26.3	20.7	20.7
	11 to 15	14.5	13.7	14.4	17.2
	16 to 20	10.0	8.9	10.1	13.4
	21 to 25	5.8	4.3	7.1	7.5
	26 to 30	3.7	2.4	4.5	5.6
	Over 30	4.7	2.5	6.1	7.8
Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work (To what extent does your institution encourage each of the following?)	Very little	3.2	3.4	3.1	2.5
	Some	19.4	21.7	18.4	14.6
	Quite a bit	45.7	47.8	43.9	43.5
	Very much	31.8	27.1	34.6	39.4

3.3.2 QUESTIONS CONTRIBUTING TO ACTIVE LEARNING

Active Learning reflects students' efforts to actively construct knowledge.

Question		All Students	Undergraduate Year 1	Undergraduate Final Year	Postgraduate
Asked questions or contributed to discussions in class, tutorials, labs or online (In your experience at your institution during the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	6.1	7.9	5.1	3.0
	<i>Sometimes</i>	43.9	49.9	41.4	30.9
	<i>Often</i>	29.6	27.6	30.9	32.7
	<i>Very Often</i>	20.4	14.7	22.5	33.4
Made a class or online presentation (In your experience at your institution during the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	21.0	28.8	12.1	17.6
	<i>Sometimes</i>	43.8	45.0	43.6	40.3
	<i>Often</i>	24.9	20.4	29.8	27.2
	<i>Very Often</i>	10.4	5.8	14.4	14.9
Worked with other students inside class to prepare assignments (In your experience at your institution during the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	13.3	12.9	11.9	18.1
	<i>Sometimes</i>	34.5	35.3	33.5	34.3
	<i>Often</i>	35.1	36.6	35.3	29.8
	<i>Very Often</i>	17.1	15.2	19.3	17.8
Worked with other students outside class to prepare assignments (In your experience at your institution during the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	19.6	20.8	16.5	23.5
	<i>Sometimes</i>	34.8	37.0	32.8	32.7
	<i>Often</i>	30.3	30.4	32.1	25.9
	<i>Very Often</i>	15.3	11.8	18.7	17.9
Tutored or taught other college students (paid or voluntary) (In your experience at your institution during the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	69.9	72.9	65.1	72.3
	<i>Sometimes</i>	20.5	18.6	24.2	17.7
	<i>Often</i>	6.7	6.1	7.6	6.1
	<i>Very Often</i>	2.9	2.3	3.2	3.9
Participated in a community-based project (e.g. volunteering) as part of your course (In your experience at your institution during the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	76.1	80.8	69.7	77.1
	<i>Sometimes</i>	13.9	11.4	17.5	12.8
	<i>Often</i>	6.1	4.8	7.8	5.9
	<i>Very Often</i>	3.9	3.0	4.9	4.3

Question		All Students	Undergraduate Year 1	Undergraduate Final Year	Postgraduate
Discussed ideas from your coursework or classes with teaching staff outside class (In your experience at your institution during the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	49.7	61.0	40.4	36.8
	<i>Sometimes</i>	36.3	29.6	42.5	42.3
	<i>Often</i>	10.8	7.4	13.3	15.3
	<i>Very Often</i>	3.2	2.0	3.8	5.6

3.3.3 QUESTIONS CONTRIBUTING TO STUDENT-STAFF INTERACTIONS

Student-Staff Interactions reflects the level and nature of students' contact and interactions with teaching staff.

Question		All Students	Undergraduate Year 1	Undergraduate Final Year	Postgraduate
Discussed your grades or assignments with teaching staff / tutors (In your experience at your institution during the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	34.1	41.1	26.8	29.9
	<i>Sometimes</i>	42.7	39.8	46.5	43.1
	<i>Often</i>	16.9	14.5	19.3	19.0
	<i>Very Often</i>	6.2	4.7	7.5	8.0
Talked about your career plans with teaching staff or career advisors (In your experience at your institution during the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	56.3	69.0	42.7	49.0
	<i>Sometimes</i>	31.7	23.6	40.7	35.5
	<i>Often</i>	9.0	5.5	12.7	10.9
	<i>Very Often</i>	3.1	1.9	3.9	4.6
Discussed ideas from your coursework with others outside class (e.g. students, family members, co-workers, etc.) (In your experience at your institution during the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	6.5	7.6	5.8	4.8
	<i>Sometimes</i>	32.8	32.6	33.7	31.4
	<i>Often</i>	36.5	36.3	37.3	35.4
	<i>Very Often</i>	24.2	23.5	23.2	28.5
Received timely written or oral feedback from teachers/tutors on your academic performance (In your experience at your institution during the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	20.0	23.3	18.3	13.9
	<i>Sometimes</i>	46.2	44.9	49.0	43.5
	<i>Often</i>	25.8	24.5	25.4	31.0
	<i>Very Often</i>	8.0	7.3	7.3	11.5

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Question		All Students	Undergraduate Year 1	Undergraduate Final Year	Postgraduate
Worked with teaching staff on activities other than coursework (e.g. committees, orientation, student organisations etc.) (In your experience at your institution during the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	72.8	77.6	67.0	71.7
	<i>Sometimes</i>	18.1	15.2	21.7	18.2
	<i>Often</i>	6.6	5.3	8.1	7.3
	<i>Very Often</i>	2.5	1.9	3.1	2.8
Work on a research project with a staff member outside of coursework requirements (Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution?)	<i>Do not know about</i>	23.6	27.0	21.3	18.4
	<i>Have not decided</i>	21.9	28.7	15.7	15.5
	<i>Do not plan to do</i>	33.3	22.1	44.3	41.8
	<i>Plan to do</i>	15.2	19.2	9.1	17.3
	<i>Done</i>	6.0	2.9	9.6	7.0

3.3.4 QUESTIONS CONTRIBUTING TO ENRICHING EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

Enriching Educational Experiences reflects students' participation in broadening educational activities.

Question		All Students	Undergraduate Year 1	Undergraduate Final Year	Postgraduate
Used an online learning system to discuss or complete an assignment e.g Moodle, Blackboard (In your experience at your institution during the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	13.3	12.2	12.9	17.6
	<i>Sometimes</i>	21.4	20.7	22.8	20.4
	<i>Often</i>	25.2	24.6	26.8	23.1
	<i>Very Often</i>	40.1	42.5	37.6	38.9
Had conversations with students of a different ethnicity/nationality than your own (In your experience at your institution during the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	9.3	7.9	10.1	11.7
	<i>Sometimes</i>	30.4	27.9	34.5	28.1
	<i>Often</i>	30.2	31.5	29.7	27.1
	<i>Very Often</i>	30.2	32.7	25.7	33.0

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Question		All Students	Undergraduate Year 1	Undergraduate Final Year	Postgraduate
Had conversations with students who are very different to you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions or personal values (In your experience at your institution during the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	11.7	10.7	12.7	12.3
	<i>Sometimes</i>	35.0	33.2	37.2	35.5
	<i>Often</i>	28.7	29.5	28.2	27.3
	<i>Very Often</i>	24.6	26.6	21.9	24.9
Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social and ethnic/national backgrounds (To what extent does your institution encourage each of the following?)	<i>Very little</i>	26.6	21.3	32.4	28.6
	<i>Some</i>	33.1	32.5	34.1	32.3
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	25.7	28.5	22.5	24.6
	<i>Very much</i>	14.7	17.6	11.0	14.6
Community service or volunteer work (Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution?)	<i>Do not know about</i>	9.4	8.5	10.0	10.4
	<i>Have not decided</i>	19.4	23.6	16.4	13.6
	<i>Do not plan to do</i>	19.6	11.2	24.1	34.8
	<i>Plan to do</i>	27.0	39.1	16.5	14.8
	<i>Done</i>	24.6	17.5	32.9	26.5
Internship, fieldwork or clinical placement (Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution?)	<i>Do not know about</i>	15.2	15.7	15.6	13.0
	<i>Have not decided</i>	16.5	20.2	14.3	10.1
	<i>Do not plan to do</i>	22.7	13.0	27.9	40.1
	<i>Plan to do</i>	31.2	45.5	17.8	18.8
	<i>Done</i>	14.4	5.6	24.4	18.0
Participate in a study group or learning community (Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution?)	<i>Do not know about</i>	14.4	13.5	16.1	13.4
	<i>Have not decided</i>	20.4	26.5	15.5	13.2
	<i>Do not plan to do</i>	25.2	15.5	33.1	36.0
	<i>Plan to do</i>	18.6	26.3	9.9	15.3
	<i>Done</i>	21.4	18.1	25.5	22.0
Study a foreign language (Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution?)	<i>Do not know about</i>	9.1	7.9	10.5	9.5
	<i>Have not decided</i>	13.3	16.2	10.9	10.0
	<i>Do not plan to do</i>	41.3	35.3	45.3	50.6
	<i>Plan to do</i>	17.4	20.5	14.6	14.2
	<i>Done</i>	18.8	20.0	18.7	15.5

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Question		All Students	Undergraduate Year 1	Undergraduate Final Year	Postgraduate
Study abroad or student exchange (Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution?)	<i>Do not know about</i>	10.1	8.7	11.7	10.9
	<i>Have not decided</i>	18.5	26.1	13.2	7.5
	<i>Do not plan to do</i>	42.3	26.4	53.7	64.4
	<i>Plan to do</i>	21.5	35.4	10.1	5.5
	<i>Done</i>	7.6	3.4	11.3	11.7
Culminating final-year experience (e.g. honours thesis, final year project, comprehensive exam, etc.) (Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution?)	<i>Do not know about</i>	12.6	18.6	7.5	6.3
	<i>Have not decided</i>	14.0	20.3	9.6	5.3
	<i>Do not plan to do</i>	8.6	4.6	11.3	14.5
	<i>Plan to do</i>	54.8	55.3	52.1	60.1
	<i>Done</i>	9.9	1.2	19.6	13.8
Independent study e.g. outside your course (Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution?)	<i>Do not know about</i>	8.7	10.7	7.7	5.3
	<i>Have not decided</i>	21.2	28.2	16.0	11.7
	<i>Do not plan to do</i>	20.5	13.8	26.7	26.1
	<i>Plan to do</i>	32.6	34.0	29.7	35.0
	<i>Done</i>	17.1	13.3	19.9	21.9
Participating in extracurricular activities (e.g. organisations, campus publications, student associations, clubs and societies, sports, etc.) (About how many hours do you spend in a typical seven-day week doing each of the following?)	<i>None</i>	27.6	24.5	29.4	34.0
	<i>1 to 5</i>	45.3	47.3	44.0	41.7
	<i>6 to 10</i>	15.8	16.7	15.1	14.3
	<i>11 to 15</i>	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.2
	<i>16 to 20</i>	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.2
	<i>21 to 25</i>	1.0	1.1	1.1	0.8
	<i>26 to 30</i>	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.4
	<i>Over 30</i>	0.9	0.8	1.0	0.5

3.3.5 QUESTIONS CONTRIBUTING TO SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Supportive Learning Environment reflects students' feelings of support within the college community.

Question		All Students	Undergraduate Year 1	Undergraduate Final Year	Postgraduate
Relationships with other students	<i>Unfriendly, unsupportive, sense of alienation</i>	1.0	1.1	1.2	0.5
	2	2.2	2.5	1.9	1.8
	3	4.6	4.7	4.8	3.8
	4	9.7	9.8	9.6	9.6
	5	20.5	20.4	20.1	21.9
	6	23.3	22.9	23.4	24.5
	<i>Friendly, supportive, sense of belonging</i>	38.7	38.7	39.0	38.0
Relationships with teaching staff	<i>Unavailable, unhelpful, unsympathetic</i>	1.4	1.2	1.7	1.1
	2	4.0	3.9	4.7	3.0
	3	9.2	10.4	8.9	5.9
	4	18.3	20.0	17.3	15.4
	5	26.4	27.0	26.2	24.5
	6	20.4	18.6	21.0	24.8
	<i>Available, helpful, sympathetic</i>	20.3	18.9	20.1	25.4
Relationships with administrative personnel	<i>Unavailable, inconsiderate, rigid</i>	4.2	3.6	5.6	3.1
	2	9.1	8.5	10.9	6.4
	3	14.1	14.9	14.5	10.7
	4	23.9	24.9	23.2	22.5
	5	21.6	22.3	20.6	21.5
	6	12.9	12.3	11.8	17.4
	<i>Available, considerate, flexible</i>	14.2	13.5	13.4	18.4

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Question		All Students	Undergraduate Year 1	Undergraduate Final Year	Postgraduate
Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically (To what extent does your institution encourage each of the following?)	Very little	6.6	4.8	9.1	6.5
	Some	29.4	25.8	33.5	31.0
	Quite a bit	41.2	41.7	40.7	41.0
	Very much	22.7	27.8	16.6	21.5
Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (e.g. work, family, etc.) (To what extent does your institution encourage each of the following?)	Very little	40.6	33.9	46.7	46.6
	Some	33.9	35.4	32.6	32.3
	Quite a bit	17.8	21.1	14.9	14.9
	Very much	7.7	9.7	5.8	6.2
Providing the support you need to socialise (To what extent does your institution encourage each of the following?)	Very little	31.0	22.2	37.2	43.2
	Some	35.3	34.9	36.2	34.6
	Quite a bit	23.8	29.3	19.9	16.1
	Very much	9.9	13.6	6.7	6.2

3.3.6 QUESTIONS CONTRIBUTING TO WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING

Work Integrated Learning reflects the integration of employment-focused work experiences into study.

Question		All Students	Undergraduate Year 1	Undergraduate Final Year	Postgraduate
Blended academic learning with workplace experience (In your experience at your institution during the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	37.2	49.4	27.9	21.5
	<i>Sometimes</i>	29.1	28.7	30.6	27.1
	<i>Often</i>	19.6	14.6	23.9	25.0
	<i>Very Often</i>	14.0	7.3	17.7	26.4
Improved knowledge and skills that will contribute to your employability (During the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	6.4	8.0	5.5	3.8
	<i>Sometimes</i>	30.6	33.9	29.9	21.8
	<i>Often</i>	40.4	39.1	41.0	43.1
	<i>Very Often</i>	22.6	19.0	23.6	31.3

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Question		All Students	Undergraduate Year 1	Undergraduate Final Year	Postgraduate
Explored how to apply your learning in the workplace (During the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	16.7	21.2	14.0	9.3
	<i>Sometimes</i>	33.3	36.3	31.7	27.9
	<i>Often</i>	31.6	28.8	34.0	34.7
	<i>Very Often</i>	18.4	13.7	20.3	28.1
Industry placement or work experience (Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution?)	<i>Do not know about</i>	10.6	10.1	10.7	11.8
	<i>Have not decided</i>	10.6	12.2	9.5	8.1
	<i>Do not plan to do</i>	12.6	4.6	16.5	28.4
	<i>Plan to do</i>	37.4	60.0	15.3	20.2
	<i>Done</i>	28.8	13.1	47.9	31.5
Acquiring job-related or work-related knowledge and skills (Has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas?)	<i>Very little</i>	12.7	15.6	10.7	8.6
	<i>Some</i>	29.5	34.3	26.0	23.0
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	33.0	31.0	34.7	34.8
	<i>Very much</i>	24.8	19.1	28.6	33.6

3.3.7 QUESTIONS CONTRIBUTING TO HIGHER ORDER THINKING

Higher Order Thinking reflects students' participation in higher order forms of thinking.

Question		All Students	Undergraduate Year 1	Undergraduate Final Year	Postgraduate
Organising and synthesising ideas, information or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships (During the current academic year, how much has your coursework emphasised the following intellectual activities?)	<i>Very Little</i>	7.7	9.3	7.4	3.7
	<i>Some</i>	29.1	31.5	30.0	19.1
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	38.7	39.0	38.5	38.6
	<i>Very much</i>	24.5	20.2	24.1	38.6
Making judgements about the value of information, arguments or methods, (e.g. examining how others gather and interpret data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions) (During the current academic year, how much has your coursework emphasised the following intellectual activities?)	<i>Very Little</i>	9.1	11.0	8.5	4.9
	<i>Some</i>	28.3	31.6	27.9	18.8
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	37.0	36.7	36.9	37.9
	<i>Very much</i>	25.6	20.7	26.6	38.5

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Question		All Students	Undergraduate Year 1	Undergraduate Final Year	Postgraduate
Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations (During the current academic year, how much has your coursework emphasised the following intellectual activities?)	<i>Very Little</i>	6.6	7.2	6.7	4.5
	<i>Some</i>	23.7	25.5	23.9	17.6
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	36.5	36.8	36.5	35.7
	<i>Very much</i>	33.2	30.5	32.9	42.1
Analysing the basic elements of an idea, problem, experience or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components (During the current academic year, how much has your coursework emphasised the following intellectual activities?)	<i>Very Little</i>	3.8	4.4	3.6	2.4
	<i>Some</i>	21.7	24.4	21.3	14.1
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	42.7	43.1	43.3	40.3
	<i>Very much</i>	31.8	28.2	31.7	43.2

3.3.8 QUESTIONS CONTRIBUTING TO GENERAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

General Learning Outcomes reflects the development of general competencies.

Question		All Students	Undergraduate Year 1	Undergraduate Final Year	Postgraduate
Acquiring job-related or work-related knowledge and skills (Has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas?)	<i>Very Little</i>	12.7	15.6	10.7	8.6
	<i>Some</i>	29.5	34.3	26.0	23.0
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	33.0	31.0	34.7	34.8
	<i>Very much</i>	24.8	19.1	28.6	33.6
Writing clearly and effectively (Has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas?)	<i>Very Little</i>	11.2	14.2	8.4	8.5
	<i>Some</i>	28.1	32.4	24.3	24.3
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	38.1	36.7	40.0	37.9
	<i>Very much</i>	22.6	16.7	27.3	29.2
Speaking clearly and effectively (Has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas?)	<i>Very Little</i>	12.9	15.3	10.1	12.3
	<i>Some</i>	28.8	31.0	26.6	27.4
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	37.4	37.0	38.3	36.2
	<i>Very much</i>	20.9	16.7	25.0	24.1

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Question		All Students	Undergraduate Year 1	Undergraduate Final Year	Postgraduate
Thinking critically and analytically (Has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas?)	<i>Very Little</i>	3.7	4.3	3.3	2.9
	<i>Some</i>	18.7	21.4	16.7	14.8
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	41.6	43.1	40.6	39.1
	<i>Very much</i>	36.1	31.2	39.4	43.1
Analysing quantitative problems (Has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas?)	<i>Very Little</i>	10.6	11.4	9.1	12.0
	<i>Some</i>	29.2	30.5	28.0	28.2
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	37.0	37.5	37.2	34.6
	<i>Very much</i>	23.2	20.5	25.7	25.2
Using computing and information technology (Has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas?)	<i>Very Little</i>	10.1	10.2	8.5	13.3
	<i>Some</i>	24.4	24.3	23.6	27.0
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	32.7	32.8	33.5	30.3
	<i>Very much</i>	32.8	32.8	34.4	29.4
Working effectively with others (Has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas?)	<i>Very Little</i>	6.7	6.5	5.9	9.2
	<i>Some</i>	23.5	24.0	21.5	26.4
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	39.3	40.7	39.2	35.4
	<i>Very much</i>	30.5	28.7	33.5	28.9
Learning effectively on your own (Has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas?)	<i>Very Little</i>	5.7	6.2	4.6	6.9
	<i>Some</i>	23.9	27.4	20.7	21.0
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	40.2	40.7	40.2	38.7
	<i>Very much</i>	30.2	25.8	34.5	33.4

3.3.9

QUESTIONS CONTRIBUTING TO GENERAL DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

General Development Outcomes reflects the development of general forms of individual and social development.

Question		All Students	Undergraduate Year 1	Undergraduate Final Year	Postgraduate
Voting in local, or national elections or referenda (Has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas?)	<i>Very Little</i>	60.0	60.0	55.6	70.3
	<i>Some</i>	22.2	22.6	24.0	16.7
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	11.0	11.3	12.0	7.7
	<i>Very much</i>	6.9	6.2	8.4	5.4
Understanding yourself e.g. self-reflection (Has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas?)	<i>Very Little</i>	14.6	16.5	13.4	11.8
	<i>Some</i>	27.8	29.9	26.5	24.2
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	32.6	32.2	33.0	32.6
	<i>Very much</i>	25.0	21.4	27.0	31.4
Understanding people of other racial, ethnic and national backgrounds (Has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas?)	<i>Very Little</i>	20.5	19.6	20.7	23.1
	<i>Some</i>	30.9	31.4	30.4	30.7
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	28.4	29.8	28.3	24.3
	<i>Very much</i>	20.2	19.2	20.7	21.8
Solving complex, real-world problems (Has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas?)	<i>Very Little</i>	15.5	16.8	14.9	12.9
	<i>Some</i>	32.1	33.5	31.5	29.4
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	32.7	31.7	33.4	34.3
	<i>Very much</i>	19.6	18.0	20.2	23.4
Developing a personal code of values and ethics (Has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas?)	<i>Very Little</i>	18.9	19.3	17.1	21.9
	<i>Some</i>	31.5	33.3	30.5	28.2
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	30.5	30.5	31.2	28.9
	<i>Very much</i>	19.1	16.9	21.1	20.9
Contributing to the welfare of your community (Has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas?)	<i>Very Little</i>	32.9	33.3	31.1	35.8
	<i>Some</i>	34.4	35.9	34.4	29.7
	<i>Quite a bit</i>	21.1	20.7	21.8	20.6
	<i>Very much</i>	11.7	10.2	12.7	14.0

3.3.10 QUESTIONS CONTRIBUTING TO CAREER READINESS

Career Readiness reflects students' preparation for participation in the professional workforce.

Question		All Students	Undergraduate Year 1	Undergraduate Final Year	Postgraduate
Spent time keeping your CV up-to-date (During the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	34.7	40.8	28.0	31.7
	<i>Sometimes</i>	37.4	35.2	40.0	38.0
	<i>Often</i>	18.3	16.1	20.8	19.2
	<i>Very Often</i>	9.6	7.9	11.2	11.1
Thought about how to present yourself to potential employers (During the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	17.2	22.0	11.4	16.3
	<i>Sometimes</i>	36.8	38.4	35.4	34.9
	<i>Often</i>	30.3	27.1	34.7	29.5
	<i>Very Often</i>	15.8	12.5	18.5	19.4
Explored where to look for jobs relevant to your interests (During the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	19.0	26.0	10.9	16.8
	<i>Sometimes</i>	35.6	37.1	34.2	34.7
	<i>Often</i>	28.9	24.9	34.3	28.3
	<i>Very Often</i>	16.5	12.1	20.7	20.2
Used networking to source information on job opportunities (During the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	31.9	39.7	23.1	28.4
	<i>Sometimes</i>	33.2	31.2	35.4	33.9
	<i>Often</i>	22.5	19.4	26.0	23.4
	<i>Very Often</i>	12.5	9.6	15.4	14.3
Set career development goals and plans (During the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?)	<i>Never</i>	27.0	32.9	21.5	21.7
	<i>Sometimes</i>	35.4	35.2	36.1	34.4
	<i>Often</i>	23.7	20.1	26.8	27.6
	<i>Very Often</i>	13.9	11.8	15.7	16.3

3.3.11

QUESTIONS CONTRIBUTING TO OVERALL SATISFACTION

Overall Satisfaction reflects students' overall satisfaction with their educational experience.

Question		All Students	Undergraduate Year 1	Undergraduate Final Year	Postgraduate
Overall, how would you evaluate the quality of academic advice that you have received?	<i>Poor</i>	5.7	4.2	7.8	5.1
	<i>Fair</i>	23.5	23.1	25.8	19.3
	<i>Good</i>	52.7	54.5	50.6	52.2
	<i>Excellent</i>	18.1	18.2	15.8	23.4
Overall, how would you evaluate your entire educational experience at your institution?	<i>Poor</i>	3.8	2.7	5.2	3.7
	<i>Fair</i>	16.4	14.2	19.3	16.0
	<i>Good</i>	52.4	53.4	51.7	51.1
	<i>Excellent</i>	27.5	29.8	23.8	29.2
If you could start all over again, would you go to the same institution?	<i>Definitely No</i>	4.1	2.6	6.2	3.7
	<i>Probably No</i>	13.5	11.9	16.4	11.6
	<i>Probably Yes</i>	41.2	39.8	42.7	41.6
	<i>Definitely Yes</i>	41.2	45.6	34.7	43.1

CHAPTER 4 NATIONAL-LEVEL ANALYSIS OF ENGAGEMENT AND OUTCOMES INDICES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Having provided detail of responses to individual questions in the previous chapter, this chapter presents an analysis of indices for students' engagement and outcomes from a variety of perspectives, including:

- By year/cohort
- By institution-type
- By mode of study
- By field of study

As outlined in Chapter 2, detailed testing of validity and reliability for 2014 data will be published on www.studentsurvey.ie.

The comparisons illustrated in the following charts are statistically different for most indices. A single asterisk (*) indicates those comparisons where this is not proven to 95% confidence or greater.

NOTES FOR INTERPRETING THE DATA



Index scores provide signposts to the experiences of students. These are NOT percentages.

Please refer to page 13 for explanatory notes on how to interpret the data



Compare scores WITHIN each index and NOT between indices.

4.2 YEAR/COHORT

4.2.1 Engagement - Year/Cohort (Overall)

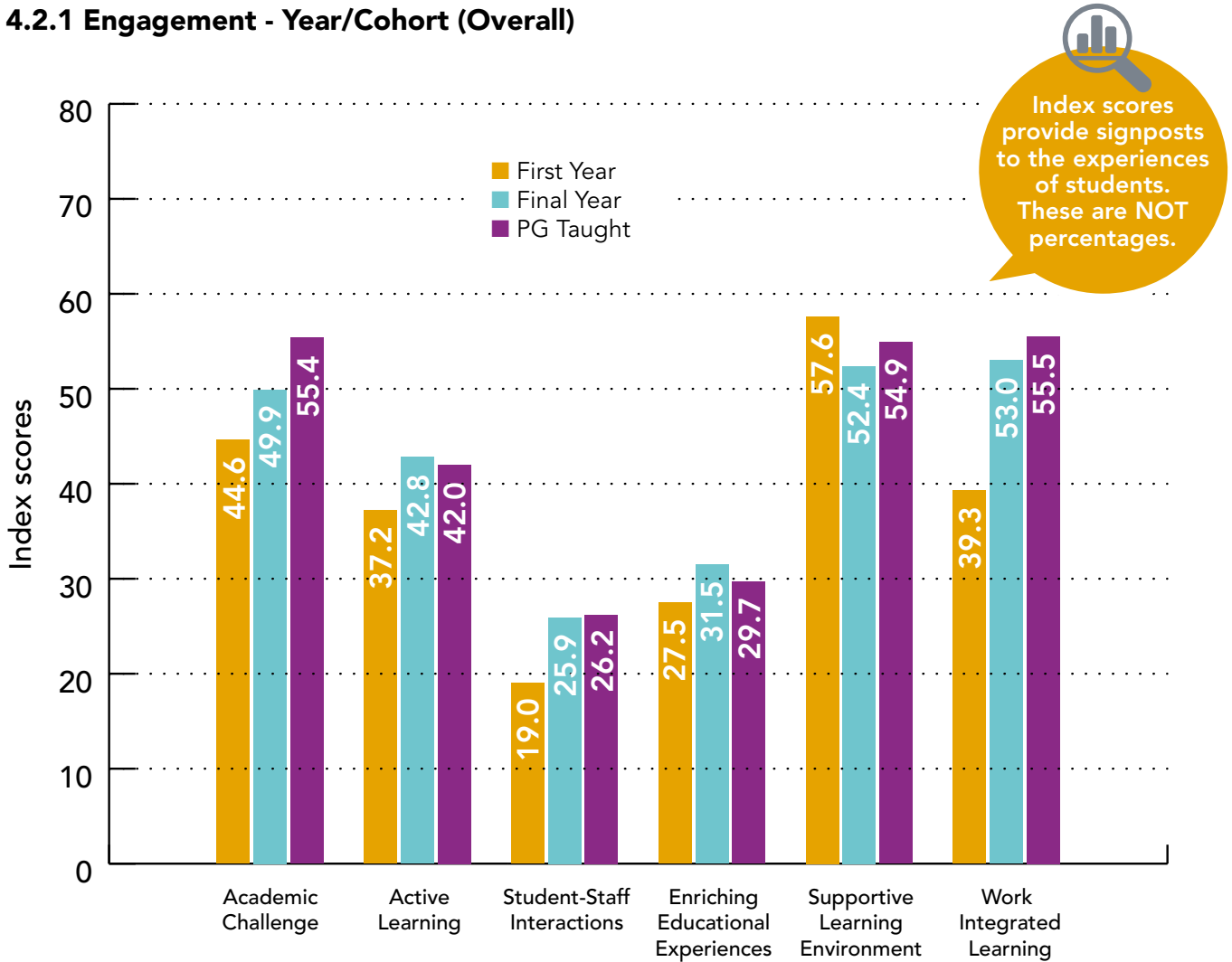


Figure 4.2.1 presents scores for engagement indices for all students from each year of study. It demonstrates that scores for *Academic Challenge* and *Work Integrated Learning* increase as stage of study progresses. There is a notably higher score for *Student-Staff Interactions* in the final year of study and at postgraduate level compared to the score for first year. There is a higher score for first years under *Supportive Learning Environment*, which reflects first year interaction with broader academic supports available on campus.



4.2.2 Outcomes - Year/Cohort (Overall)

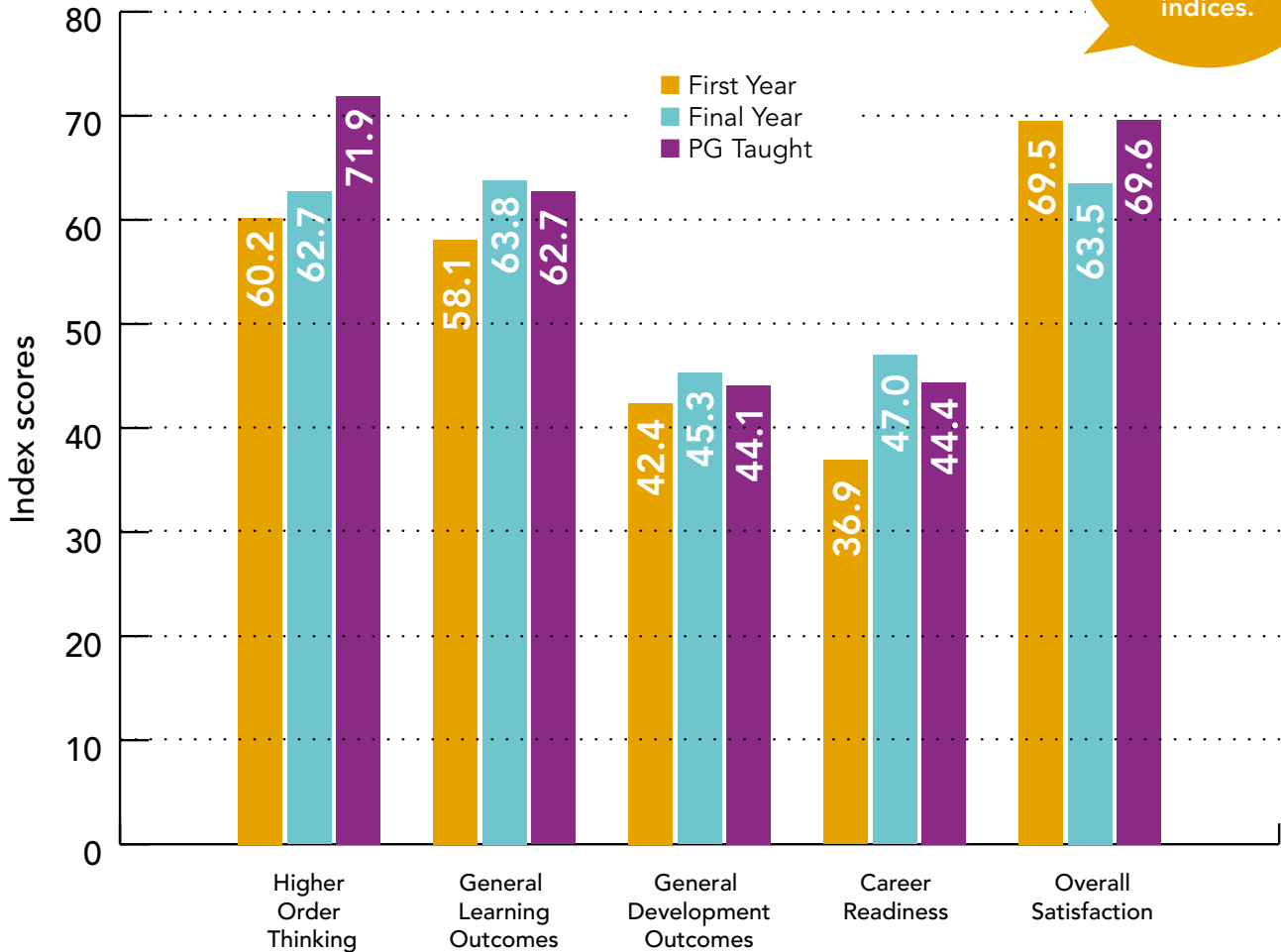


Figure 4.2.2 presents scores for outcomes indices for all students from each year of study. It illustrates that scores for *Higher Order Thinking* increase as stage of study progresses. The score for *Career Readiness* is notably higher for final years than for first years. The index score for *Overall Satisfaction* is lowest for final year undergraduates. This may be influenced by the timing of the survey relative to competing demands on these students.

4.3 INSTITUTION-TYPE

This section examines the national engagement and outcomes indices by institution-type. The institution-types are: Universities, Institutes of Technology and

Other Institutions. Participating institutions are listed under these groupings in Appendix 2. The results are presented for the full cohort of students.

4.3.1 Engagement - Institution Type (Overall)

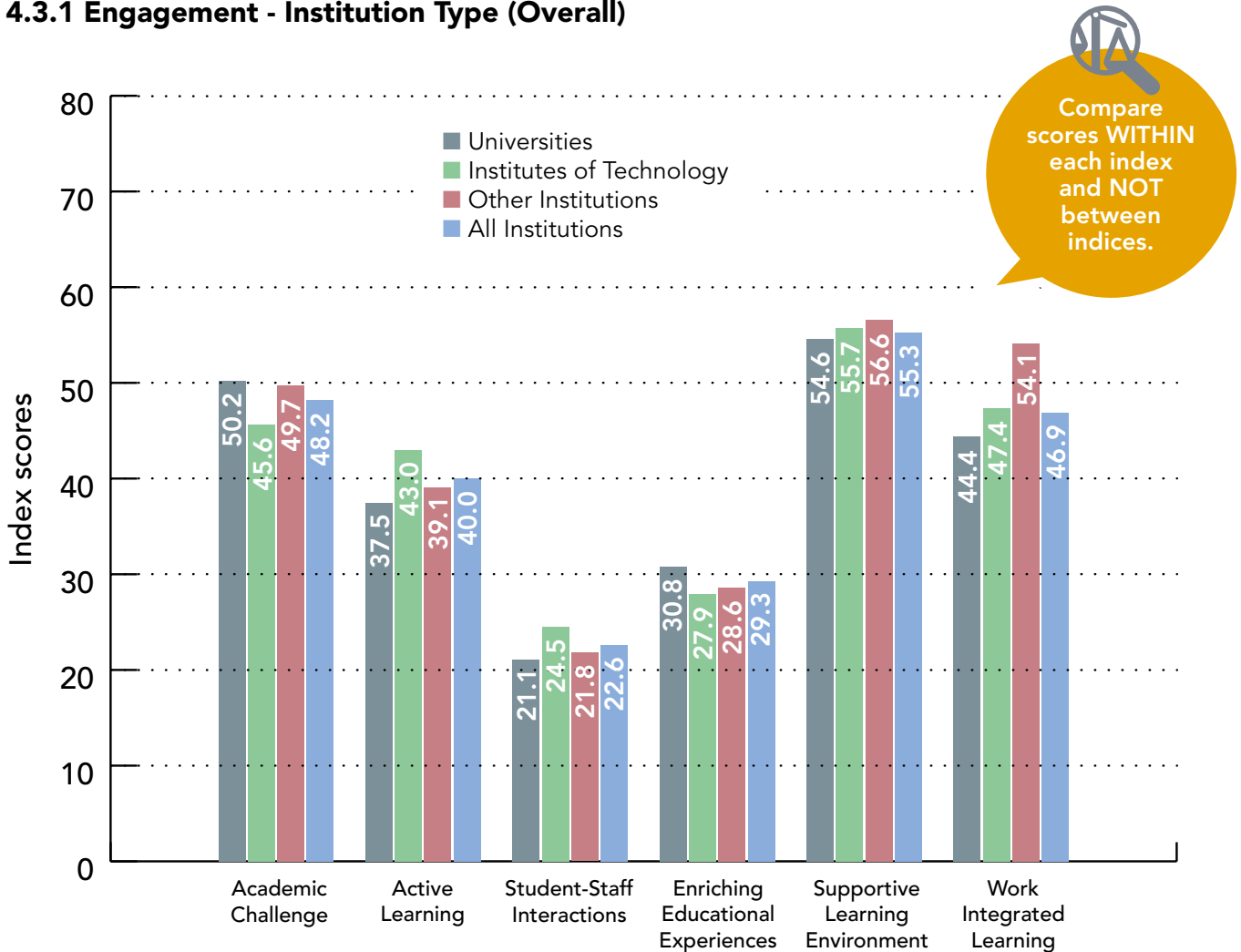


Figure 4.3.1 presents scores for engagement indices for all students in each institution-type. It illustrates that engagement index scores are broadly similar for all three institution-types. The index scores for *Active Learning* are highest in Institutes of Technology. Scores for *Enriching Educational Experiences* are highest in Universities. Index scores for *Work Integrated Learning* are notably higher in ‘other institutions’.

These include the colleges of education and other relatively specialised institutions, which may indicate the nature of programme provision and the work placement element of programmes.

Broadly, these scores appear to reflect the nature and focus of each institution-type.

4.3.2 Outcomes - Institution Type (Overall)

Index scores provide signposts to the experiences of students. These are NOT percentages.

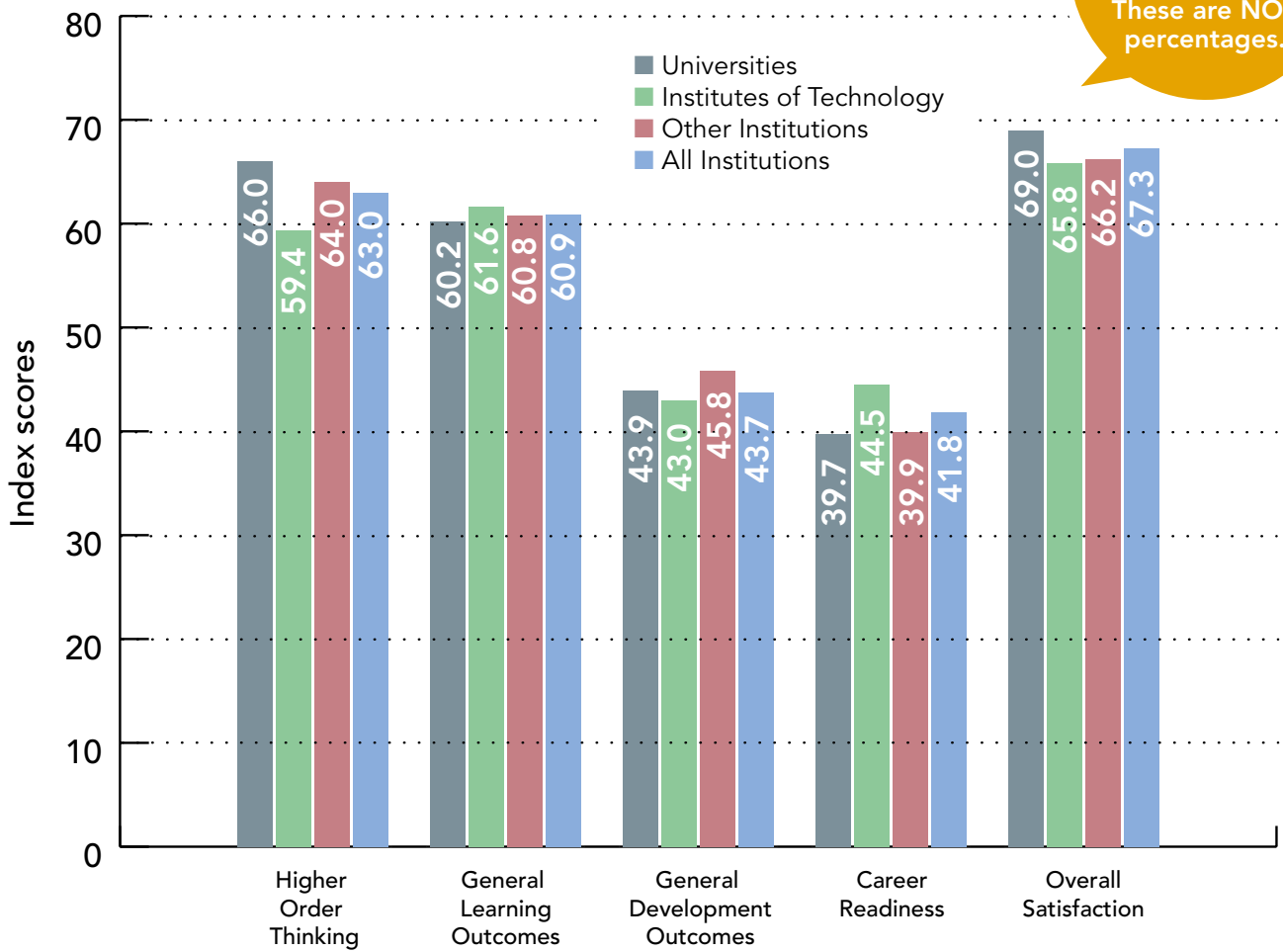


Figure 4.3.2 presents scores for outcomes indices for all students in each institution-type. It illustrates that scores for these indices are comparable across all institution types. Scores for *Higher Order Thinking* are higher in Universities than in Institutes of Technology whereas scores for *Career Readiness* are higher in Institutes of Technology than in Universities.

4.4 MODE OF STUDY

This section outlines engagement and outcome index scores by mode of study for all institution-types and all cohorts.

4.4.1 Engagement - Mode of Study (Overall)

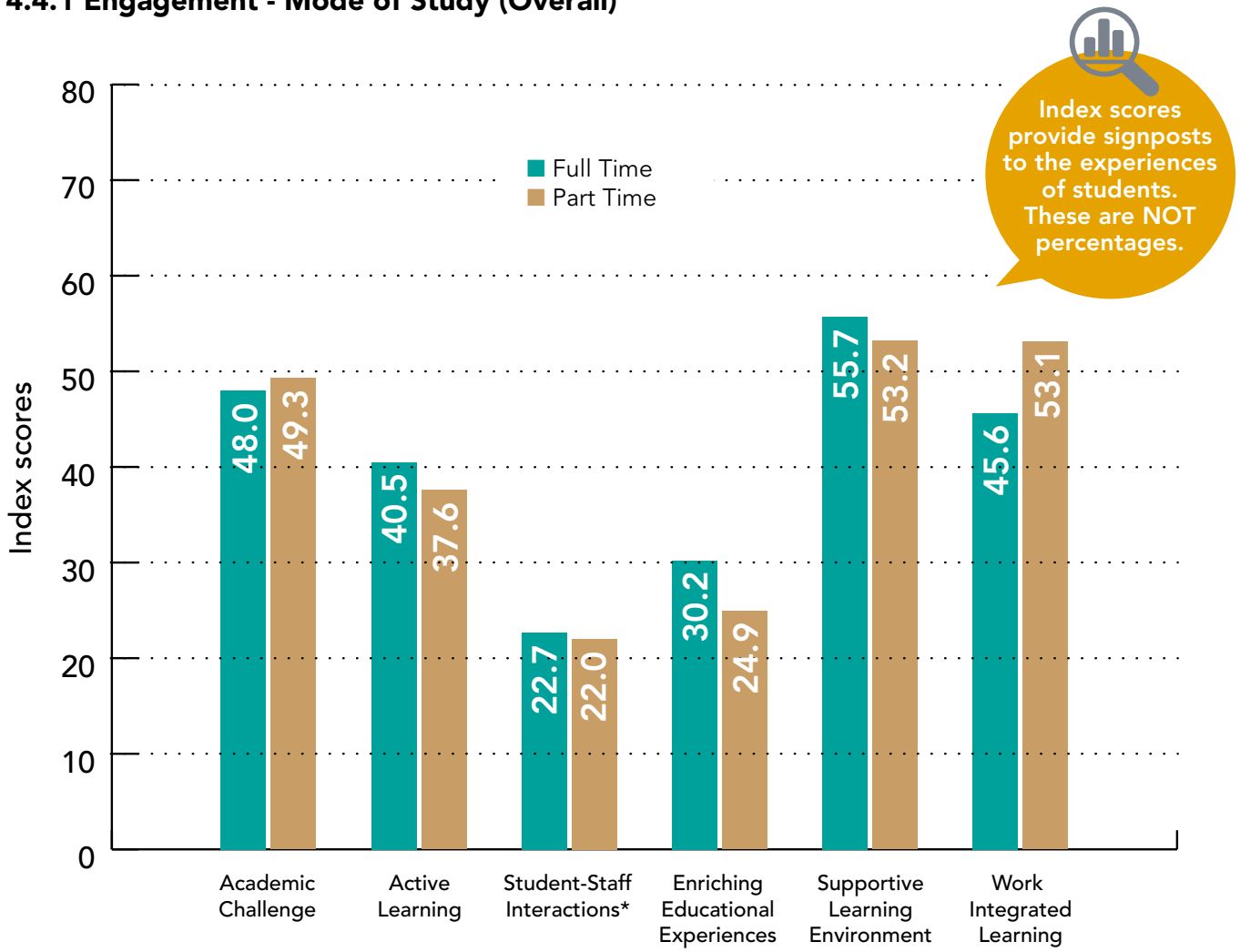


Figure 4.4.1 presents scores for engagement indices for full-time and part-time students. It illustrates that scores for *Academic Challenge* are similar for full-time and part-time students. Full-time students score higher on *Enriching Educational Experiences*, perhaps reflecting the greater amount of time spent on campus

and interacting with their fellow students. Index scores for *Work Integrated Learning* are higher for part-time students. This may reflect the fact that part-time students often combine work and study and tend to have greater flexibility to do so.

* Statistical difference not proven to 95% confidence or greater.

4.4.2 Outcomes - Mode of Study (Overall)

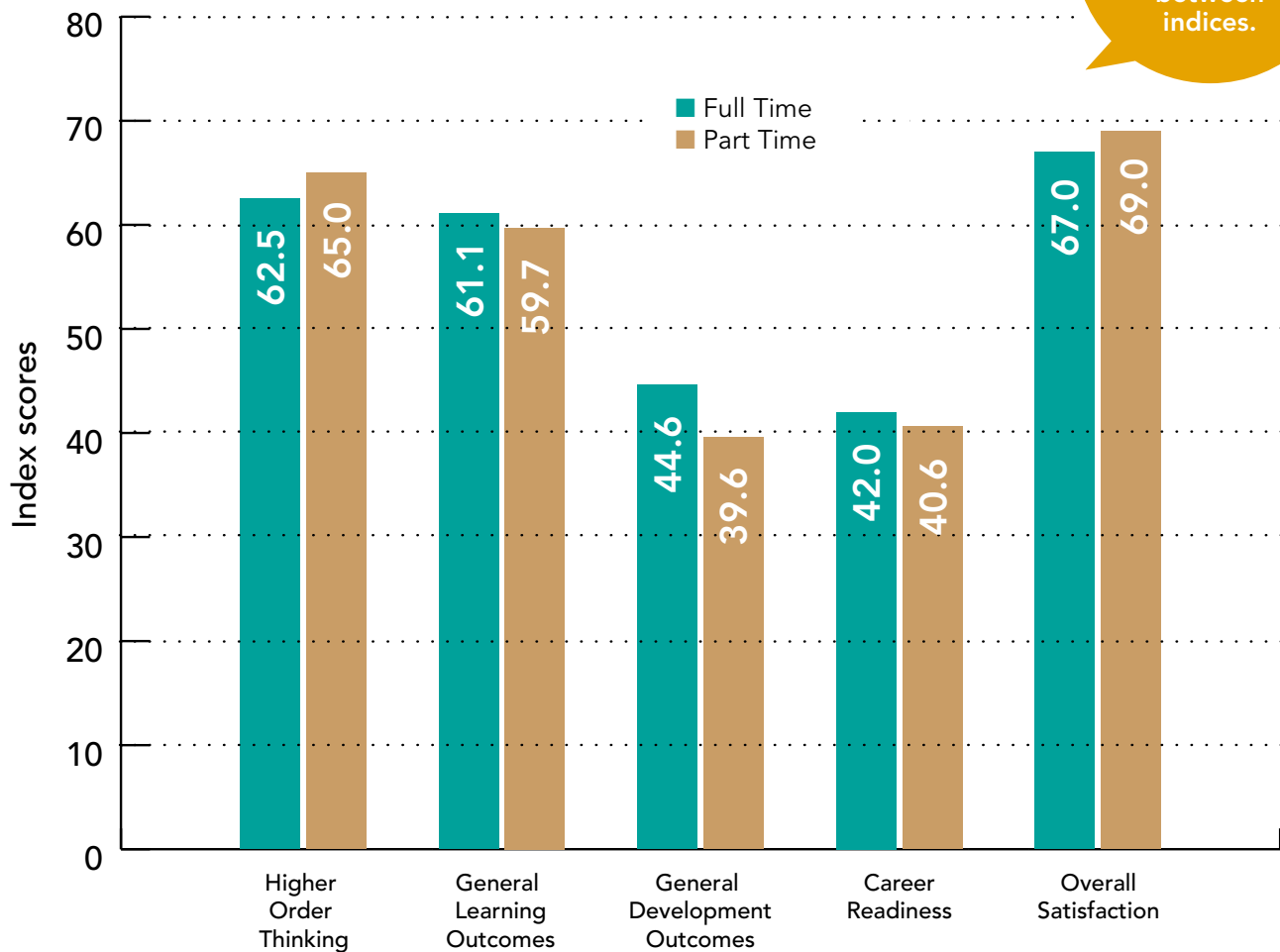


Figure 4.4.2 presents scores for outcomes indices for full-time and part-time students. It demonstrates that scores for these indices are generally comparable across the modes of study. Scores for *General Development Outcomes* are higher for full-time students.

4.5 PROGRAMME TYPE

This section provides scores for engagement and outcomes indices by programme-type (i.e. programmes leading to Higher Certificate, Ordinary Bachelor Degree, Honours Bachelor Degree /

Higher Diploma, Masters Degree / Postgraduate Diploma, qualifications at levels 6 to 9 of the National Framework of Qualifications) for all cohorts, modes of study and institution-types.

4.5.1 Engagement - Programme Type (Overall)

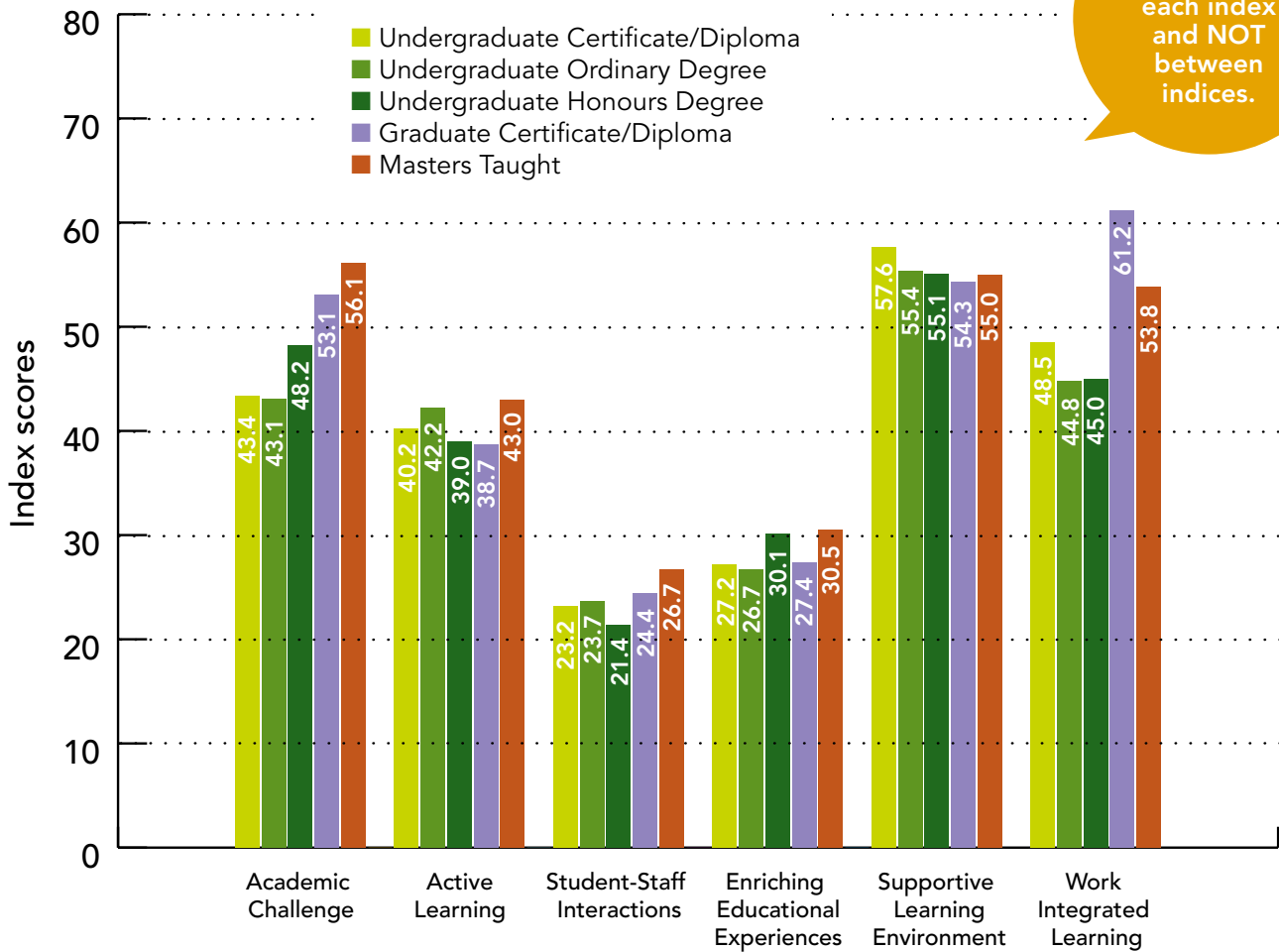


Figure 4.5.1 presents scores for engagement indices for different programme types. It demonstrates that scores for *Supportive Learning Environment* are consistent for all programme types. The scores for *Academic Challenge* increase from Ordinary Degree to Masters Degree. The score for *Work Integrated Learning* is notably higher for Graduate Certificate / Graduate Diploma students than for other groups.

Index scores provide signposts to the experiences of students. These are NOT percentages.

4.5.2 Outcomes - Programme Type (Overall)

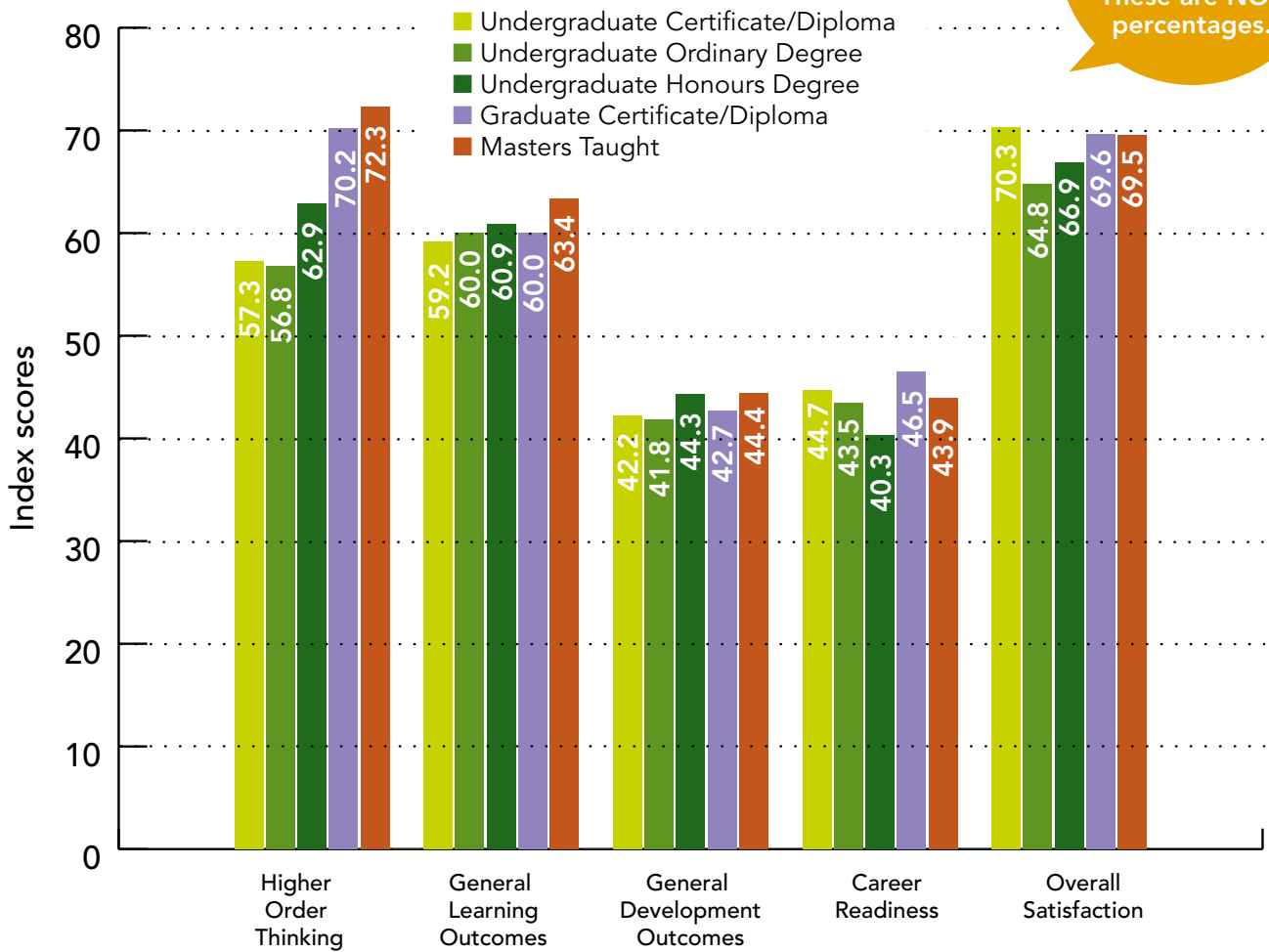


Figure 4.5.2 presents scores for outcomes indices for different programme types. It illustrates that the score for *Higher Order Thinking* increases from Ordinary Degree to Masters Degree. The index score for *Overall Satisfaction* is highest for Undergraduate Certificate/Diploma students.

4.6 FIELD OF STUDY

This section provides the scores for engagement and outcomes indices by field of study for all years of study, modes of study and institution-type.

4.6.1 Engagement - Field of Study (Overall)

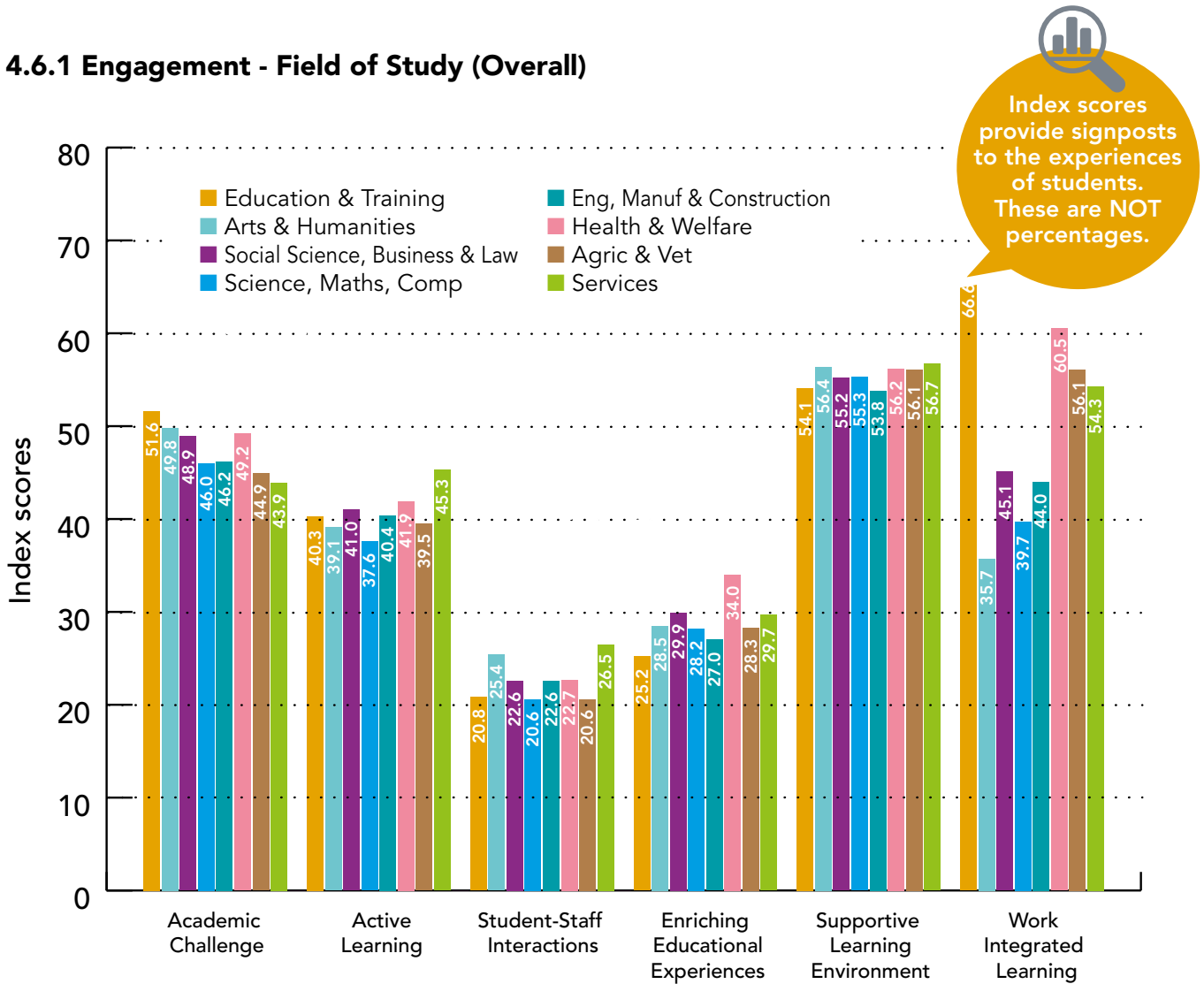


Figure 4.6.1 presents scores for engagement indices for different fields of study. It demonstrates that *Work Integrated Learning* scores are highest in Education and Training and Health and Welfare, reflecting the ‘on the job’ aspects of programmes in both disciplines. *Work Integrated Learning* scores are lowest in Arts and Humanities, whereas *Student-Staff Interactions* are higher in Arts and Humanities than in many

other disciplines. *Supportive Learning Environment* scores are similar across the fields of study. *Academic Challenge* scores for Science, Mathematics and Computing, and for Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction are somewhat surprising, and may be related to the extent to which questions captured the experiences of students pursuing disciplines with significant practical, non-written elements.



4.6.2 Outcomes - Field of Study (Overall)



Figure 4.6.2 presents scores for outcomes indices for different fields of study. It demonstrates that scores for *Higher Order Thinking* vary across fields of study, with Education scoring the highest and Agriculture and Veterinary scoring the lowest. Scores for *General Learning Outcomes* are reasonably similar across

all fields of study. Scores for *General Development Outcomes* are highest in Health and Welfare and lowest in Science, Mathematics and Computing. *Career Readiness* scores are highest in Services and lowest in Arts and Humanities. Index scores for *Overall Satisfaction* are similar across all fields of study.

4.7 STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

The final section of this chapter examines scores for engagement and outcomes indices according to the following selected student characteristics:

- Gender
- Age
- Domiciliary

Further detailed analysis of this data may be of merit to explore the extent to which particular modes of study or gender may be over- or under-represented in specific fields of study.

4.7.1 Gender

4.7.1.1 Engagement - Gender (Overall)

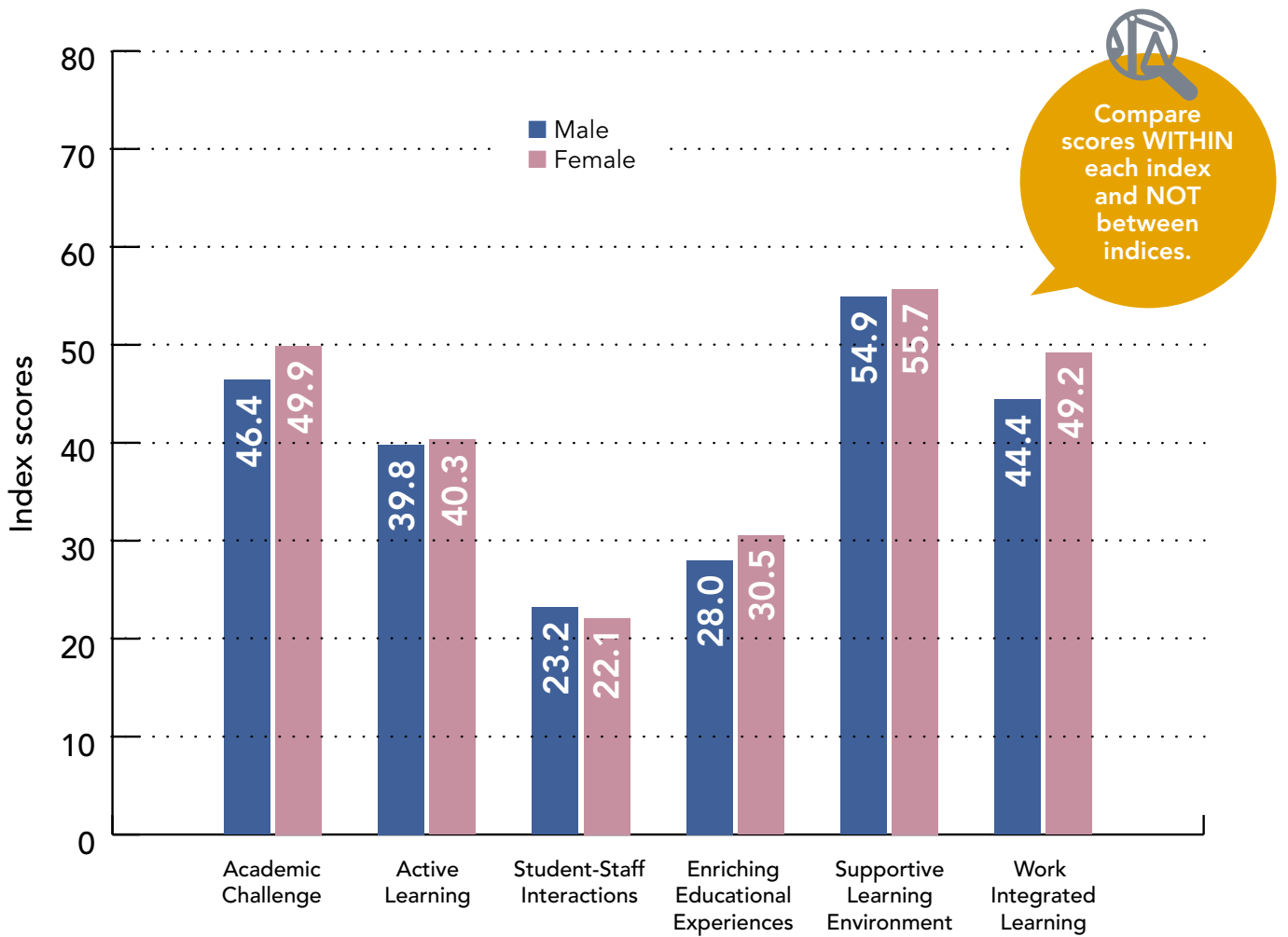


Figure 4.7.1.1 presents scores for engagement indices for male and female students. It demonstrates that index scores are broadly equivalent for male and female students.

However, scores for *Academic Challenge*, *Enriching Educational Experiences* and *Work Integrated Learning* are somewhat higher for female students.

4.7.1.2 Outcomes - Gender (Overall)

Index scores provide signposts to the experiences of students. These are NOT percentages.

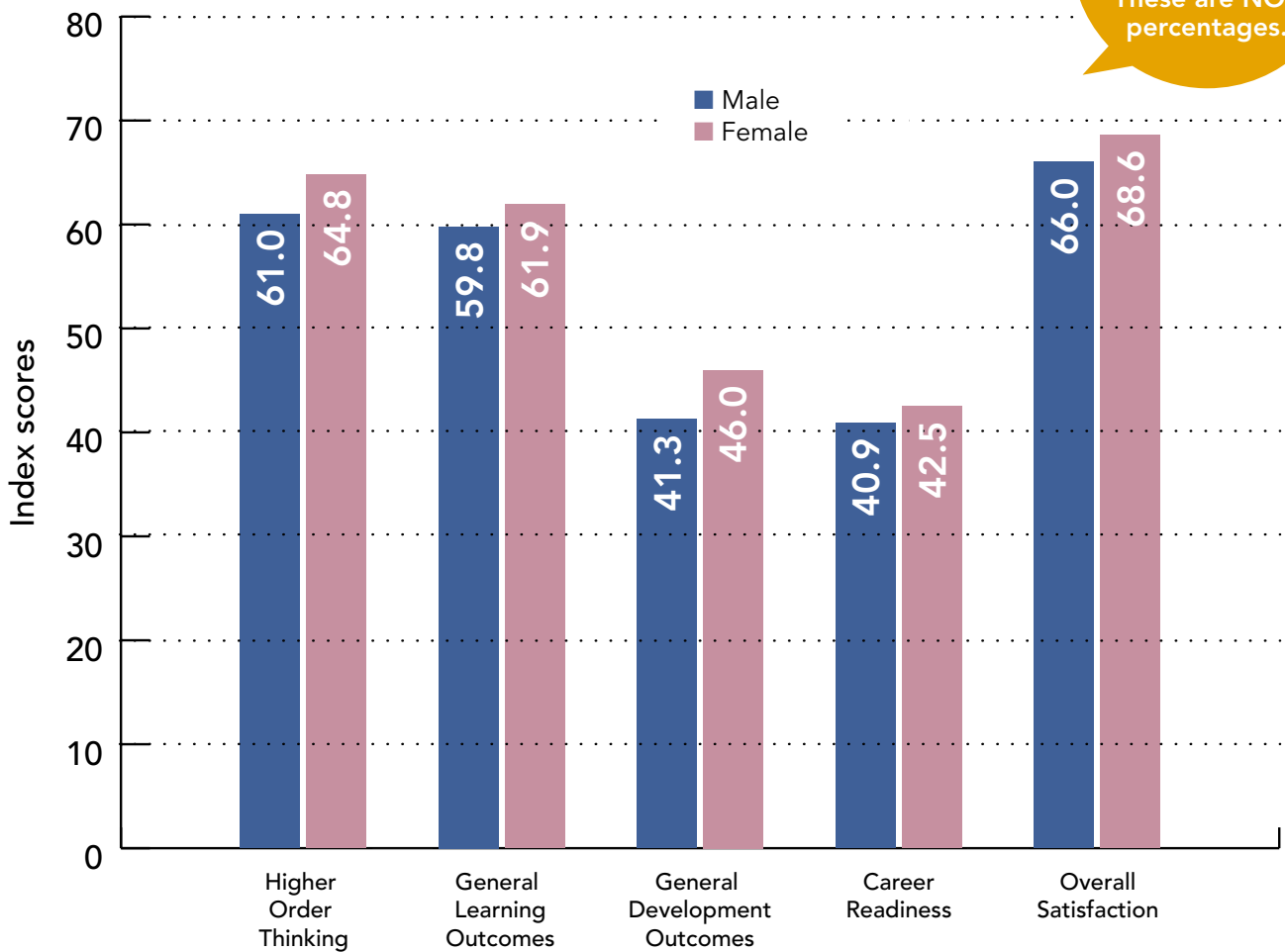


Figure 4.7.1.2 presents scores for outcomes indices for male and female students. It illustrates that index scores are broadly similar for male and female students, with the greatest difference being seen in *General Development Outcomes*.

4.7.2 Age

4.7.2.1 Engagement - Age (Overall)

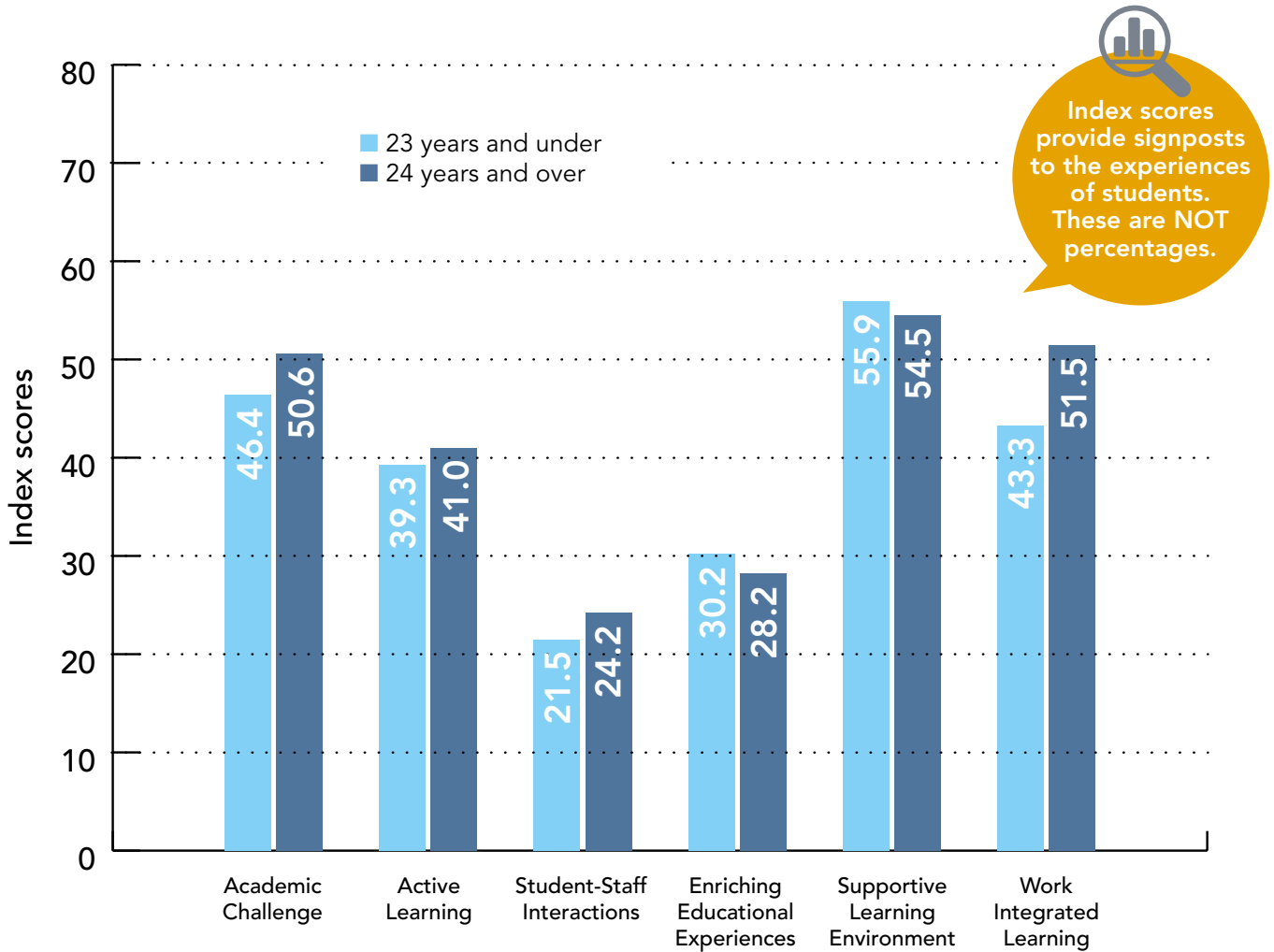


Figure 4.7.2.1 presents scores for engagement indices for students 23 years and under and for students aged 24 years and over. It demonstrates that students 24 years of age and over score higher on *Academic Challenge*, *Student-Staff Interactions* and *Work Integrated Learning* than students aged 23 and under.



Compare scores WITHIN each index and NOT between indices.

4.7.2.2 Outcomes - Age (Overall)

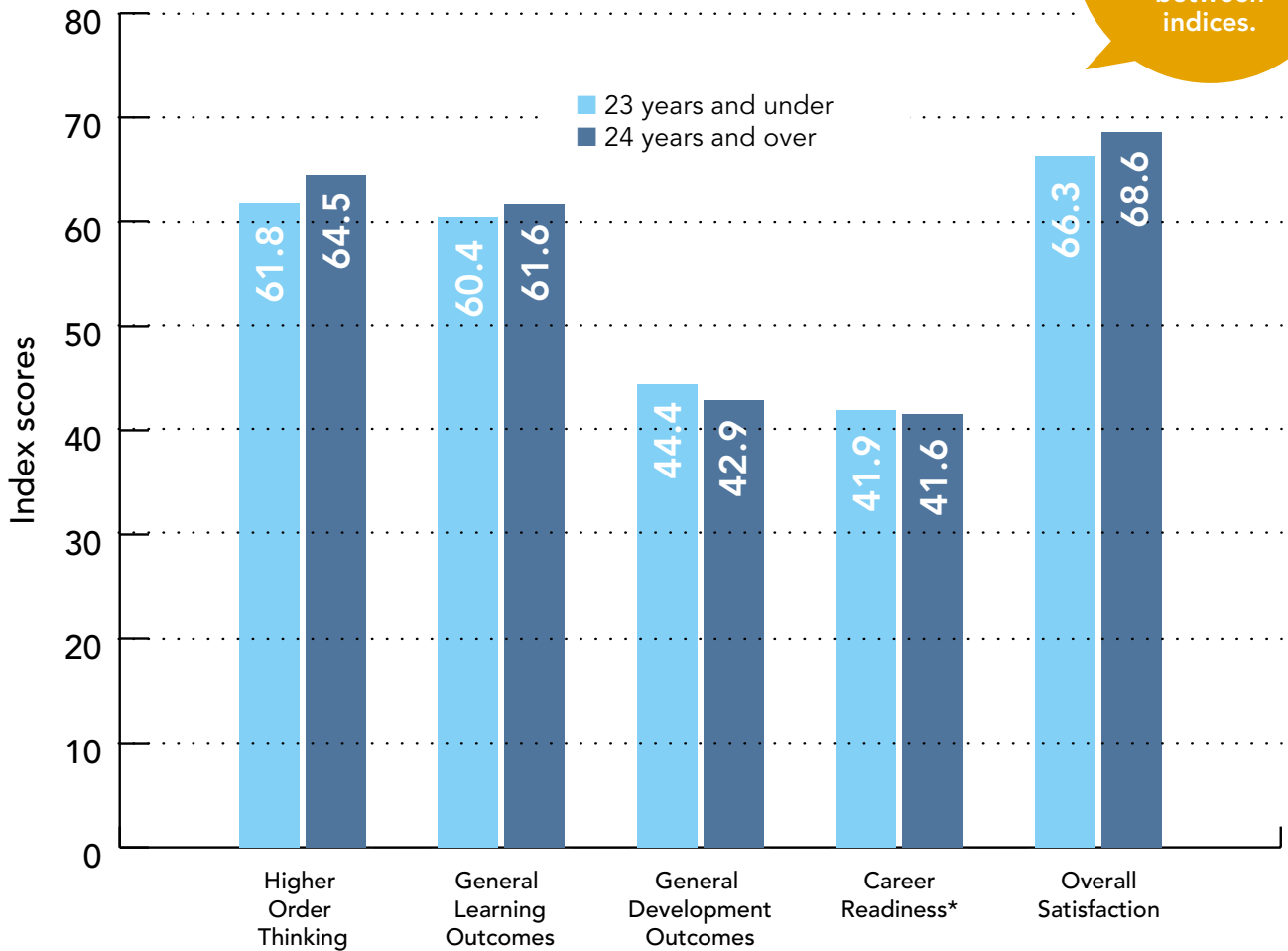


Figure 4.7.2.2 presents scores for outcomes indices for students 23 years and under and for students aged 24 years and over. It demonstrates that students aged 24 years and older scored higher on *Higher Order Thinking* than those 23 years and under. Scores for *Overall Satisfaction* are also slightly higher.

Index scores presented in the preceding charts suggest that the experience of students aged 23 years and under, who form the majority of entrants to higher education, merits continued attention as illustrated by the ongoing focus on transition from secondary school to higher education.

* Statistical difference not proven to 95% confidence or greater.

4.7.3 Domicile

4.7.3.1 Engagement - Domicile (Overall)

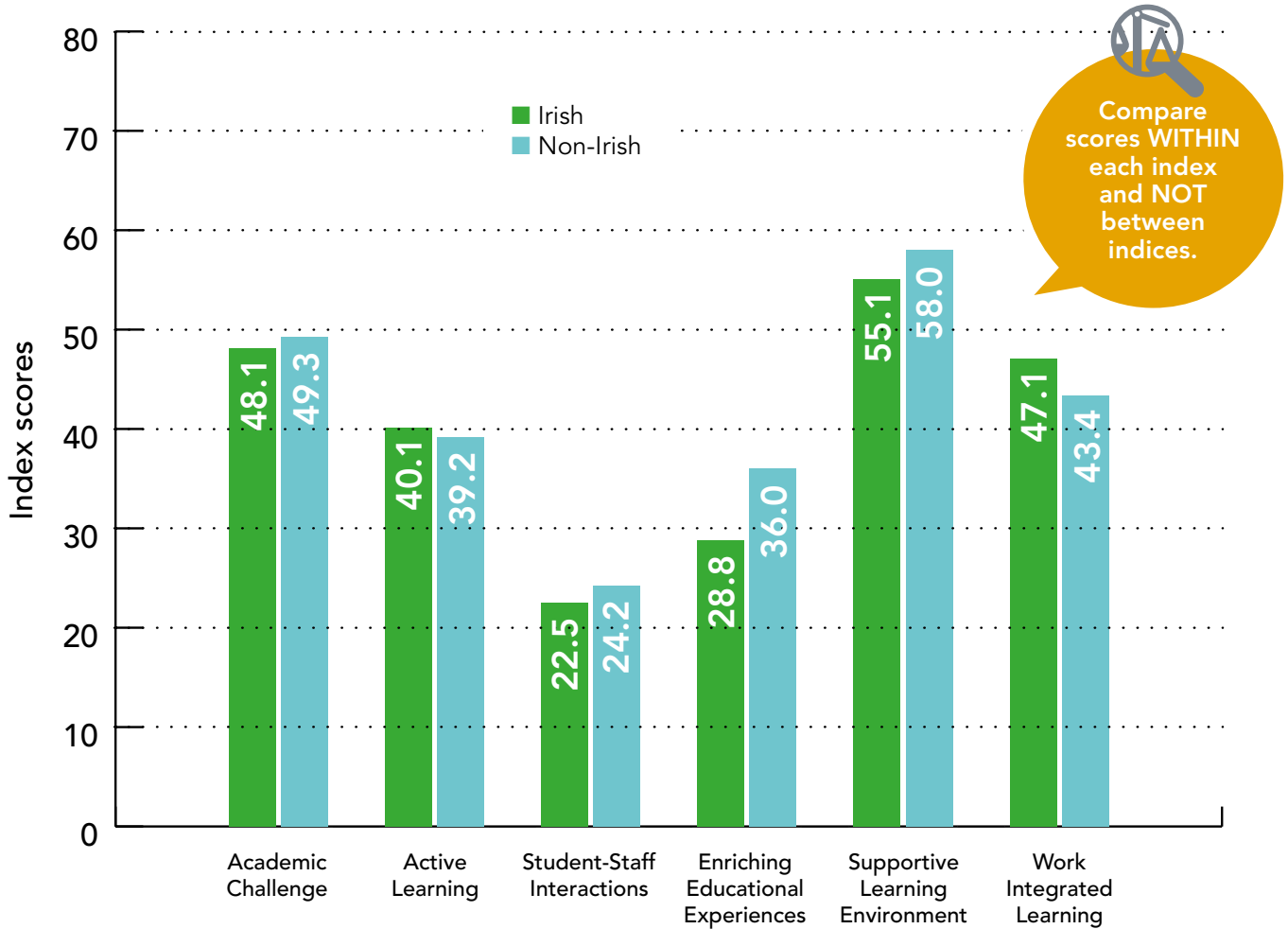


Figure 4.7.3.1 presents scores for engagement indices for Irish and non-Irish students. It demonstrates that engagement scores are general higher for non-Irish students than for Irish students. This is particularly apparent in relation to *Enriching Educational Experiences*. This may reflect specific support provision for non-Irish students.

4.7.3.2 Outcomes - Domicile (Overall)

Index scores provide signposts to the experiences of students. These are NOT percentages.

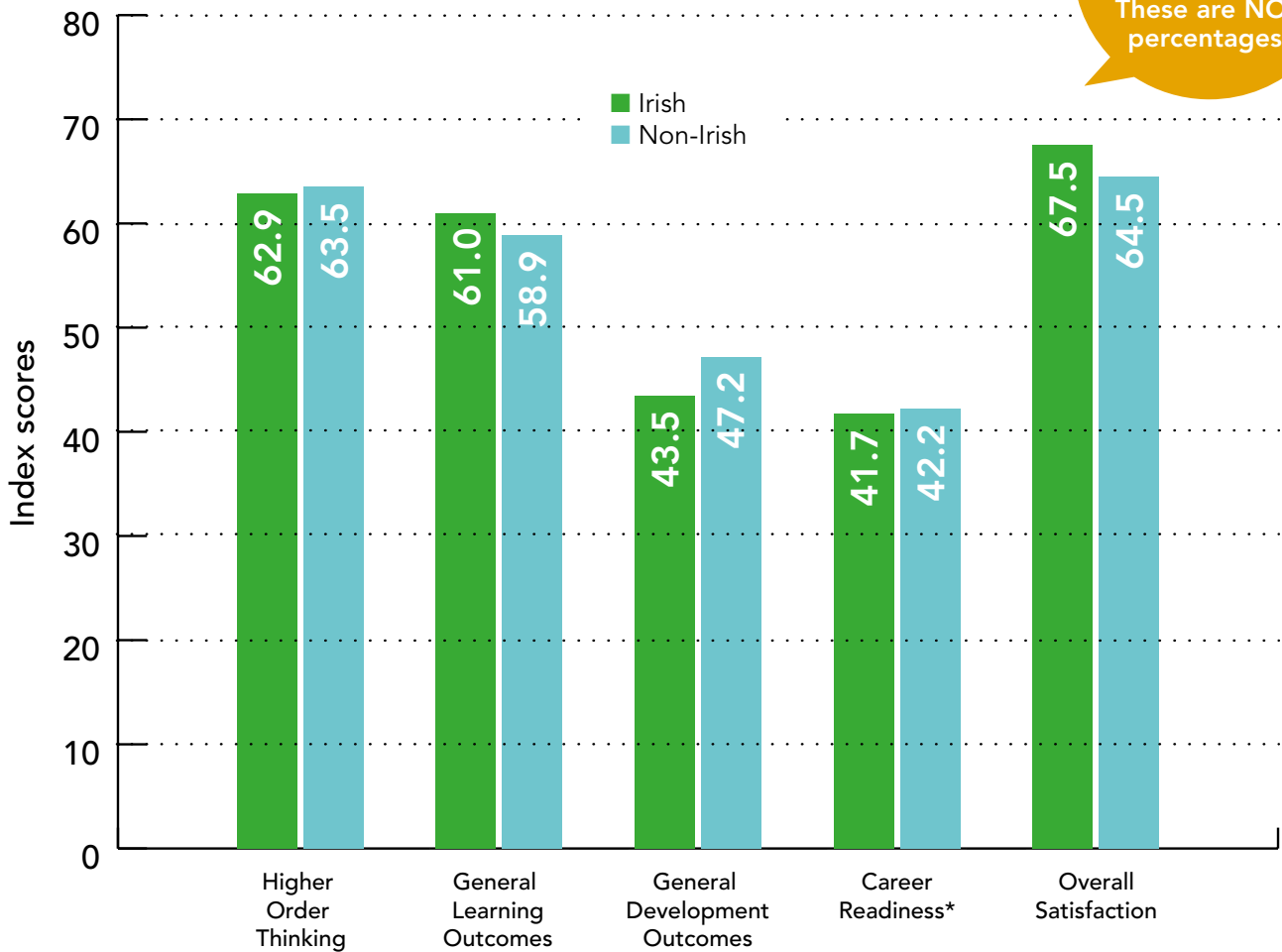


Figure 4.7.3.2 presents scores for outcomes indices for Irish and non-Irish students. It demonstrates that scores for *General Development Outcomes* are higher for non-Irish students. Scores for *Overall Satisfaction* are higher for Irish students.

* Statistical difference not proven to 95% confidence or greater.

CHAPTER 5 NATIONAL RESULTS IN CONTEXT

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, results from ISSE 2014 are presented alongside results from the 2013 national pilot survey. Results from ISSE 2014 are also presented alongside results from the most recent data from comparable international surveys i.e. Australasia (Australia & New Zealand combined) and, subsequently, alongside the data for participating institutions in the United States. This is possible to do because the ISSE is modelled closely on the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE) which in turn was based on the US National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).

When interpreting international comparisons, there are two key points to bear in mind.

The first refers to the general trajectory of improvement over time that has been observed in both the US and

Australasia. In these systems, comparable surveys have been run on a regular basis since 2000 and 2007, respectively. There are indications of increased index scores for ISSE 2014 compared to the 2013 national pilot. However, while these increases might suggest that experiences from other jurisdictions may be relevant for Ireland, it is important to realise that it would be premature to draw conclusions in the national context until there are additional data sets arising from multiple iterations.

The second important point refers to the implementation of NSSE in the US where the context is significantly different. The ISSE data is collected from the entire publicly-funded higher education system whereas NSSE data is generated from a self-selecting group of institutions.

NOTES FOR INTERPRETING THE DATA



Index scores provide signposts to the experiences of students. These are NOT percentages.

Please refer to page 13 for explanatory notes on how to interpret the data



Compare scores WITHIN each index and NOT between indices.

5.2 ISSE 2014 AND ISSE PILOT 2013

The following charts present scores for student engagement and outcomes indices for the entire cohort of students participating in 2014 and the 2013 national pilot.

5.2.1 Engagement (Overall)

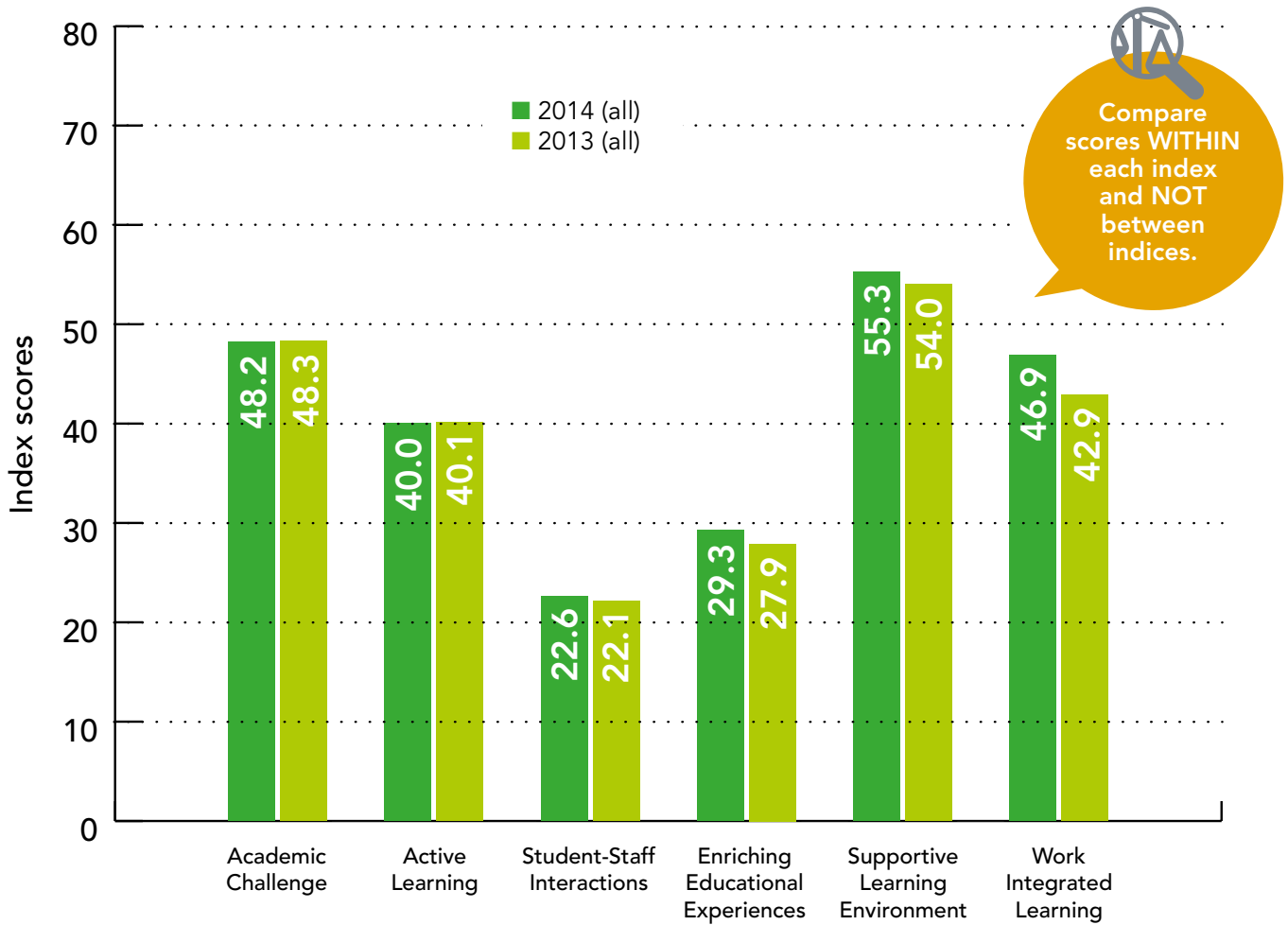


Figure 5.2.1 presents scores for engagement indices for all ISSE respondents in 2014 and in 2013. The index scores for *Enriching Educational Experiences*, *Supportive Learning Environment* and *Work Integrated Learning* are higher in 2014 than in 2013. Scores for other engagement indices are very similar.



5.2.2 Outcomes (Overall)

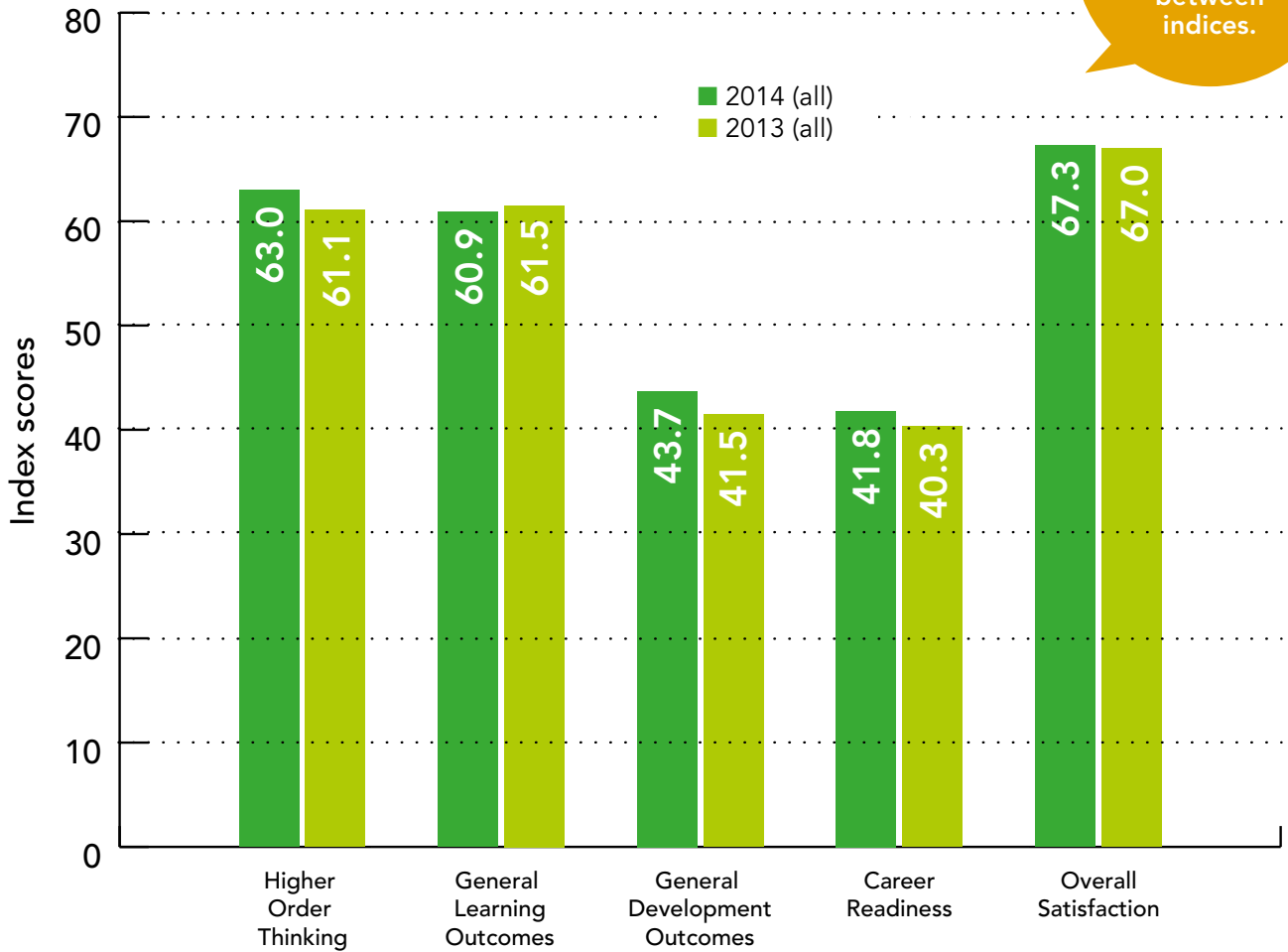
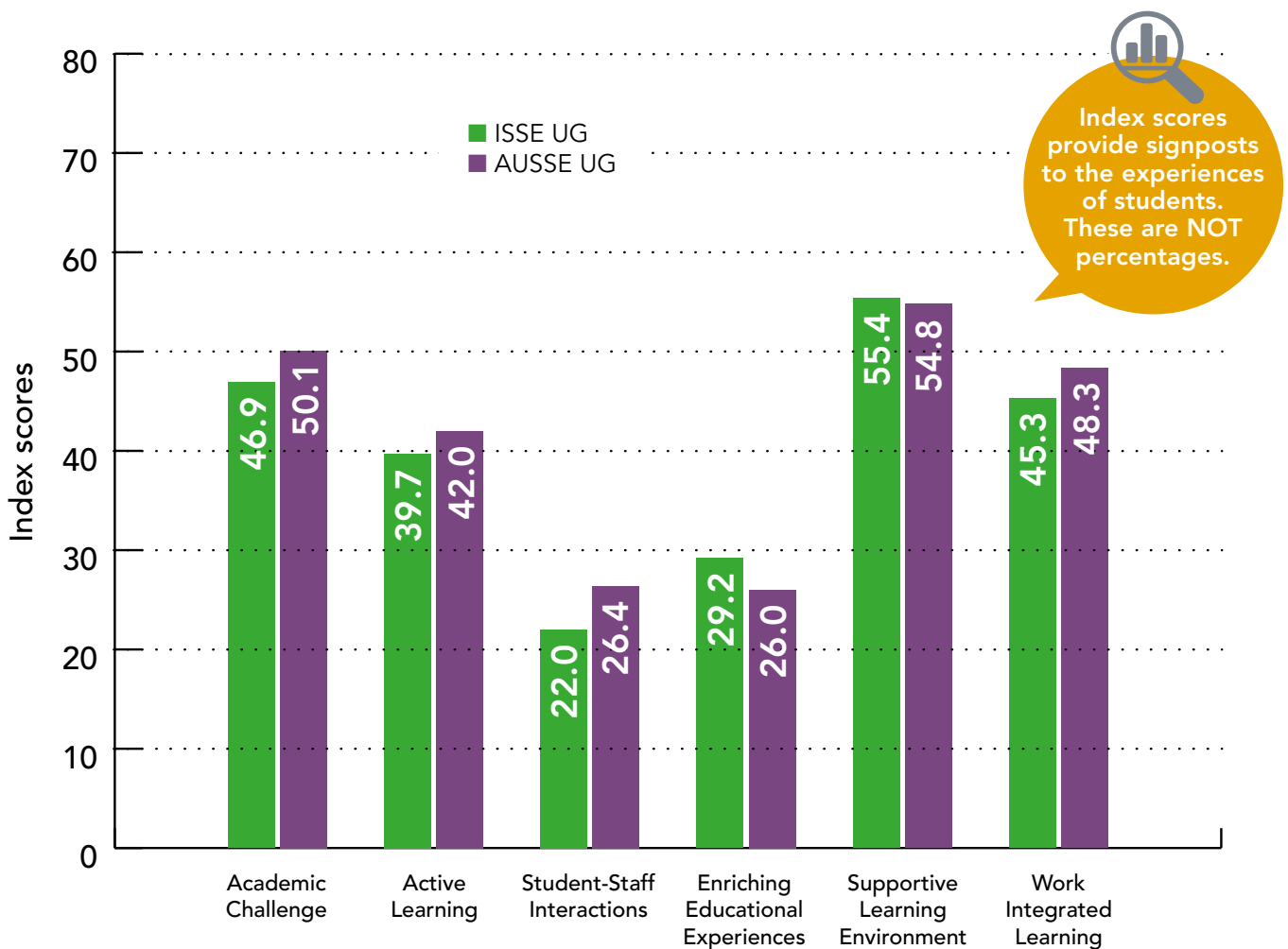


Figure 5.2.2 presents scores for outcomes indices for all ISSE respondents in 2014 and in 2013. The scores for Higher Order Thinking, General Development Outcomes and Career Readiness are higher in 2014 than in 2013.

5.3 ISSE 2014 AND AUSSE 2012

The following charts present ISSE 2014 results alongside the most recently available results from international surveys, i.e. AUSSE 2012 and NSSE 2012. Please note that, to support international comparability, data for Ireland represents combined undergraduate scores (first year and final year students together). These figures do not appear elsewhere in this report.

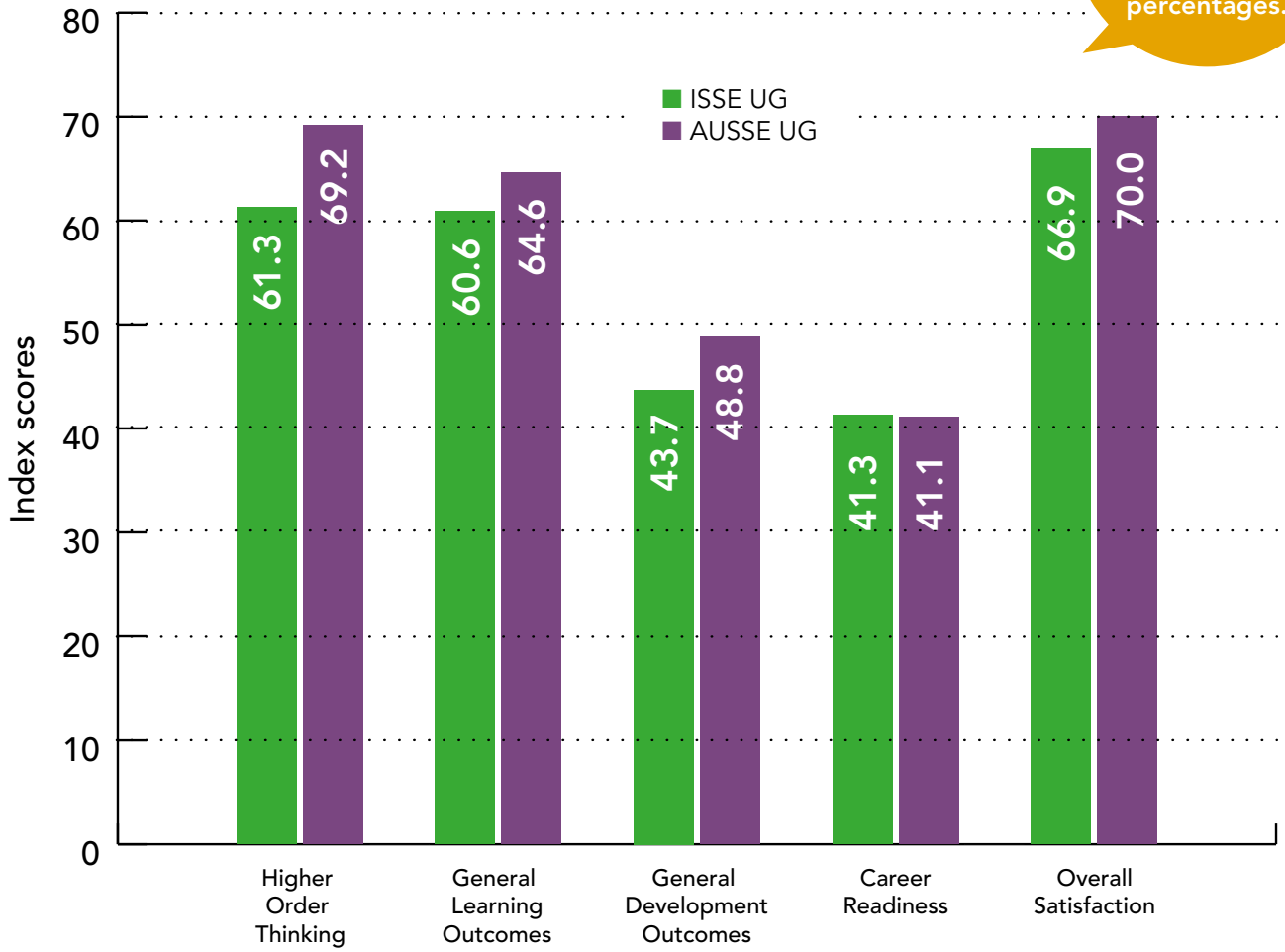
5.3.1 Engagement (Combined UG)





Index scores provide signposts to the experiences of students. These are NOT percentages.

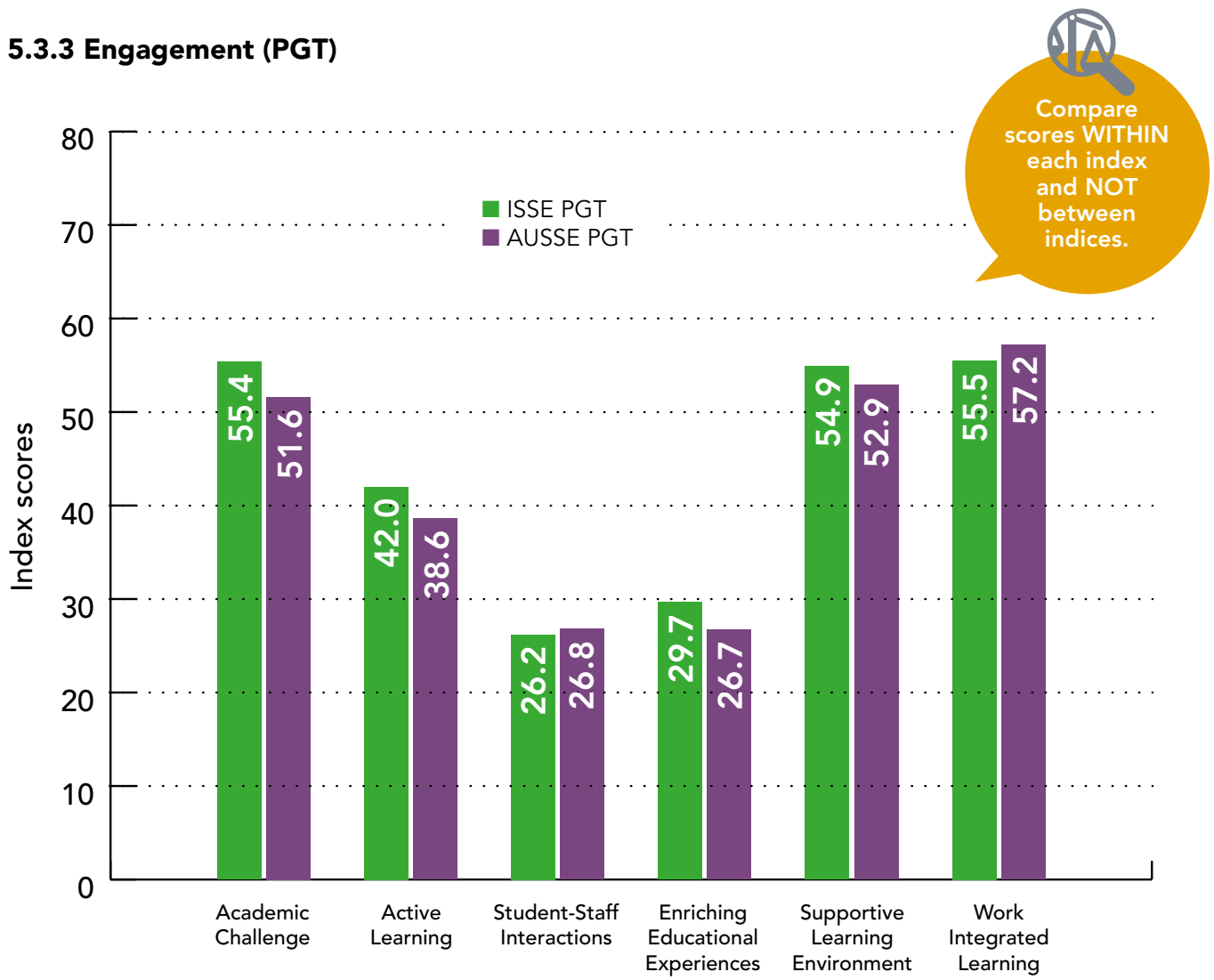
5.3.2 Outcomes (Combined UG)



Figures 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 provide index scores for combined undergraduate students (first year plus final year) for ISSE and for AUSSE. They illustrate that scores for undergraduates in Ireland are broadly comparable to those for AUSSE, taking account of the generally

upward trajectory noted in section 5.1 and outlined in more detail in the report of the 2013 national pilot. Scores for *Enriching Educational Experiences* are higher for Ireland than for Australasia whereas most other indices are slightly lower.

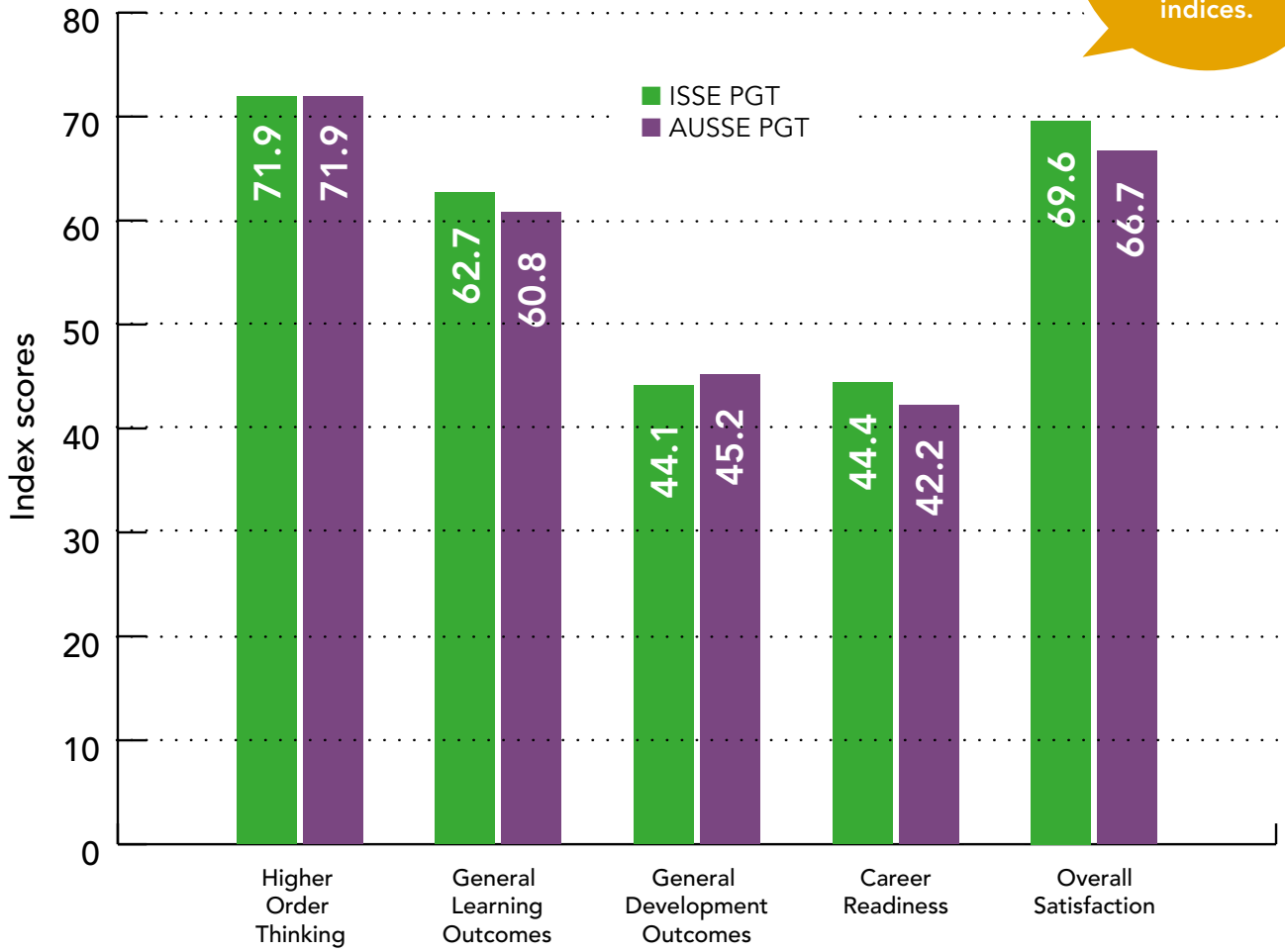
5.3.3 Engagement (PGT)





Compare scores WITHIN each index and NOT between indices.

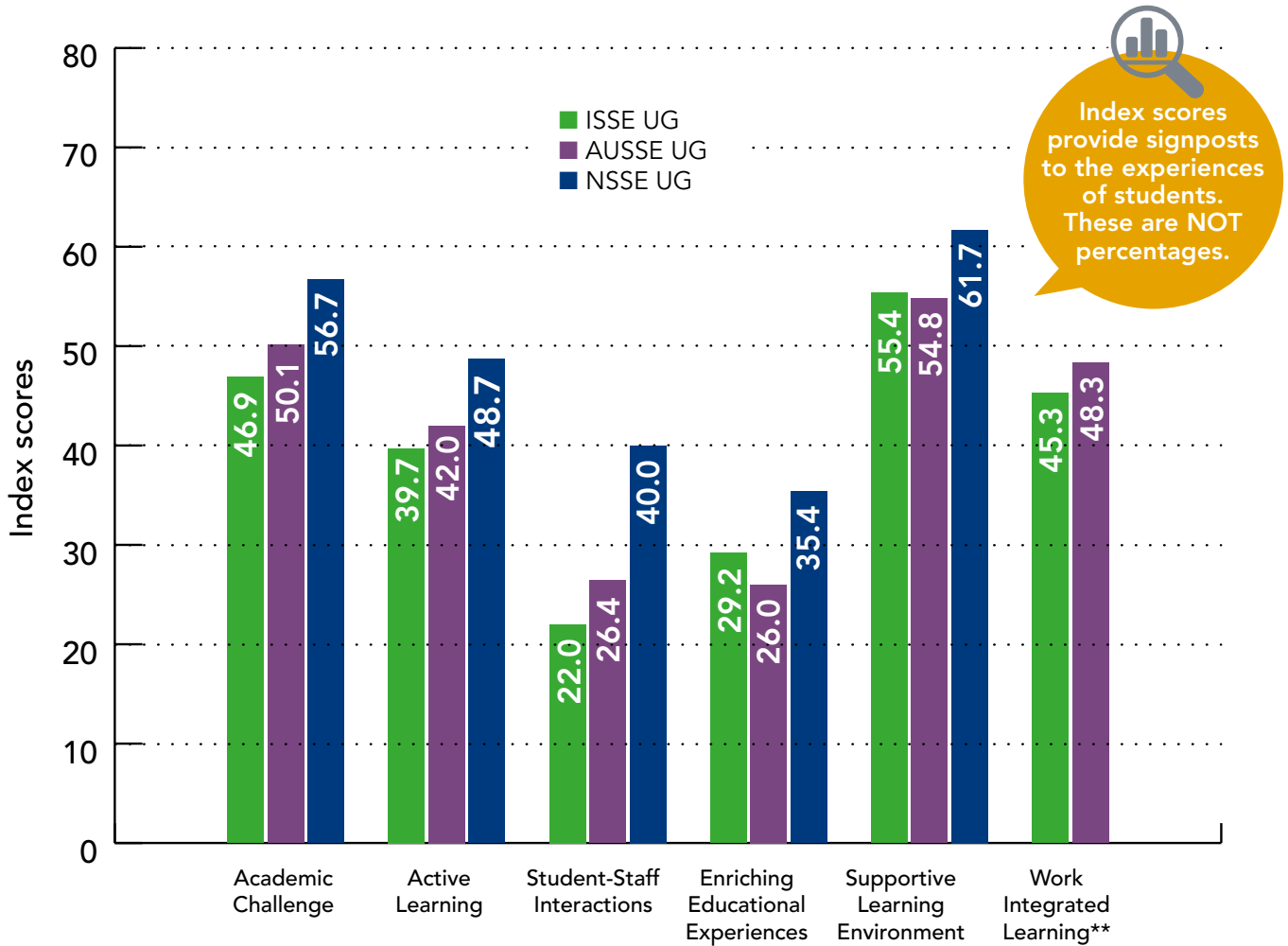
5.3.4 Outcomes (PGT)



Figures 5.3.3 and 5.3.4 provide Index scores for postgraduate students. Scores for Ireland are broadly comparable to those for Australasia. Index scores for *Academic Challenge*, *Active Learning*, *Enriching Educational Experiences*, *Supportive Learning Environment* and *Overall Satisfaction* are higher in Ireland.

5.4 ISSE 2014, AUSSE 2012 AND NSSE 2012

5.4.1 Engagement - (Combined UG)



In general, index scores reflect relatively well on the Irish higher education system. This is particularly so given the generally upward trajectory noted in other jurisdictions where similar surveys have been in operation for many years. The experience of undergraduate students in self-selecting institutions in the US does not offer a direct comparison to

the experiences of students in Irish institutions. Nevertheless, the data provides an increased evidence base for further discussions.

As observed earlier, greatest value will be derived when there are multiple Irish data sets to inform these discussions.

** The index *Work Integrated Learning* does not feature in NSSE.

CHAPTER 6 LOOKING DEEPER - WHAT DOES ISSE DATA TELL US ABOUT THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE?

As described in Chapter 3, responses to survey questions are combined to create the six engagement and five outcomes indices. These indices provide an overview of the student experience, such as the extent to which students are challenged to learn in the *Academic Challenge* index, and the level and nature

of students' contact with teaching staff in the Student Staff Interactions index. **Exploration of two of the indices in greater detail offers an insight into the potential of the ISSE to inform consideration of the experience of students in Irish higher education.**

KEY POINTS

Students have good relationships with each other and their teachers / academic staff. Their relationships with administrative staff are not as strong, although this may reflect differing levels of contact. Students feel well supported academically, and many feel supported to socialise. However, some students feel that more support is required to cope with work and family responsibilities.

- Students report that they feel supported and get on very well with each other, with 82% indicating that other students are friendly and supportive and they have a sense of belonging
- Students also get along well with their teachers, with two-thirds indicating that teachers are available, helpful and sympathetic
- Students report their relationships with administrative staff to be weaker than they would like, with only half considering such staff to be available, considerate and flexible
- Nearly two-thirds (64%) of students report that they are well supported academically. First year students report that they are very well supported by their institutions academically (69%); final year students report that they are not receiving as much support, with 57% reporting that they are well supported academically
- Students report differing perceptions of whether they are supported enough to socialise with a third saying 'very little', a third saying they receive 'some' support and a third saying 'quite a bit' or 'very much'
- Part-time and older students report that more support could be offered by their institution in coping with work and family responsibilities

continued over

continued

Students report that their college experience is generally improving their employability and is providing them with the required knowledge and proficiency to gain employment. This varies notably by field of study.

- Half of all final year undergraduate students have undertaken a work placement, with further numbers planning to do so by the time they graduate
- Certain fields of study, such as Education and Health and Welfare, are preparing students very well for future employment in a relevant sector of the economy, with 77% and 71% (respectively) indicating that they had explored how to apply learning

in the workplace 'often' or 'very often'. However, Arts and Humanities, and Science, Mathematics and Computing students report less preparation for the workplace and a lower perception of employability, with 27% and 22% (respectively) reporting that they had never explored how to apply learning in the workplace

- Part-time and older students also report that their institution is preparing them for the workplace more than younger or full-time students, although full-time students are more likely to undertake (or plan to undertake) work experience.

NOTES FOR INTERPRETING THE DATA



Index scores provide signposts to the experiences of students. These are NOT percentages.

Please refer to page 13 for explanatory notes on how to interpret the data



Compare scores WITHIN each index and NOT between indices.

In this chapter, we consider two of the indices in greater detail. These are: *Supportive Learning Environment*, which measures students' feelings of support within their college community, and *Work Integrated Learning*, which measures the integration of employment-focused work experiences into study. In future reports, other engagement and outcomes indices will be explored.

This should provide the reader with a greater understanding of the indices and how different groups of students respond to the component questions for each index.

The analysis which follows explains the reason for choosing the two indices above. It breaks down all of the questions asked under each index, and summarises the answers given by different groups of students. In doing so, it identifies areas in which institutions are providing students with a positive experience and areas where a focus on improvement may be beneficial.

It should be noted that, in the analysis that follows, responses are weighted to take account of the population profile in each institution. Therefore, the percentage question responses differ very slightly from those presented in Chapter 3.

6.1 SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

In order for students to remain in, progress through, and complete their programme of higher education, they benefit from a sense of support from their institution not just to cope with academic challenges and workloads, but also with work commitments and personal issues like health and family. Institutions strive to provide high levels of assistance for students across a range of academic areas: they provide academic help through centres for teaching and learning, drop-in support centres, and peer assistance programmes. Students' relationships with their lecturers and teachers are particularly important in fostering a sense of support from the institution. Financial assistance and help with childcare are also increasingly required by students. In addition, institutions provide personal support in the areas of counselling, chaplaincy and health. Sports clubs and societies also help students become more involved and engaged in their college community and increase the levels of personal engagement students feel through developing friendships with other students.

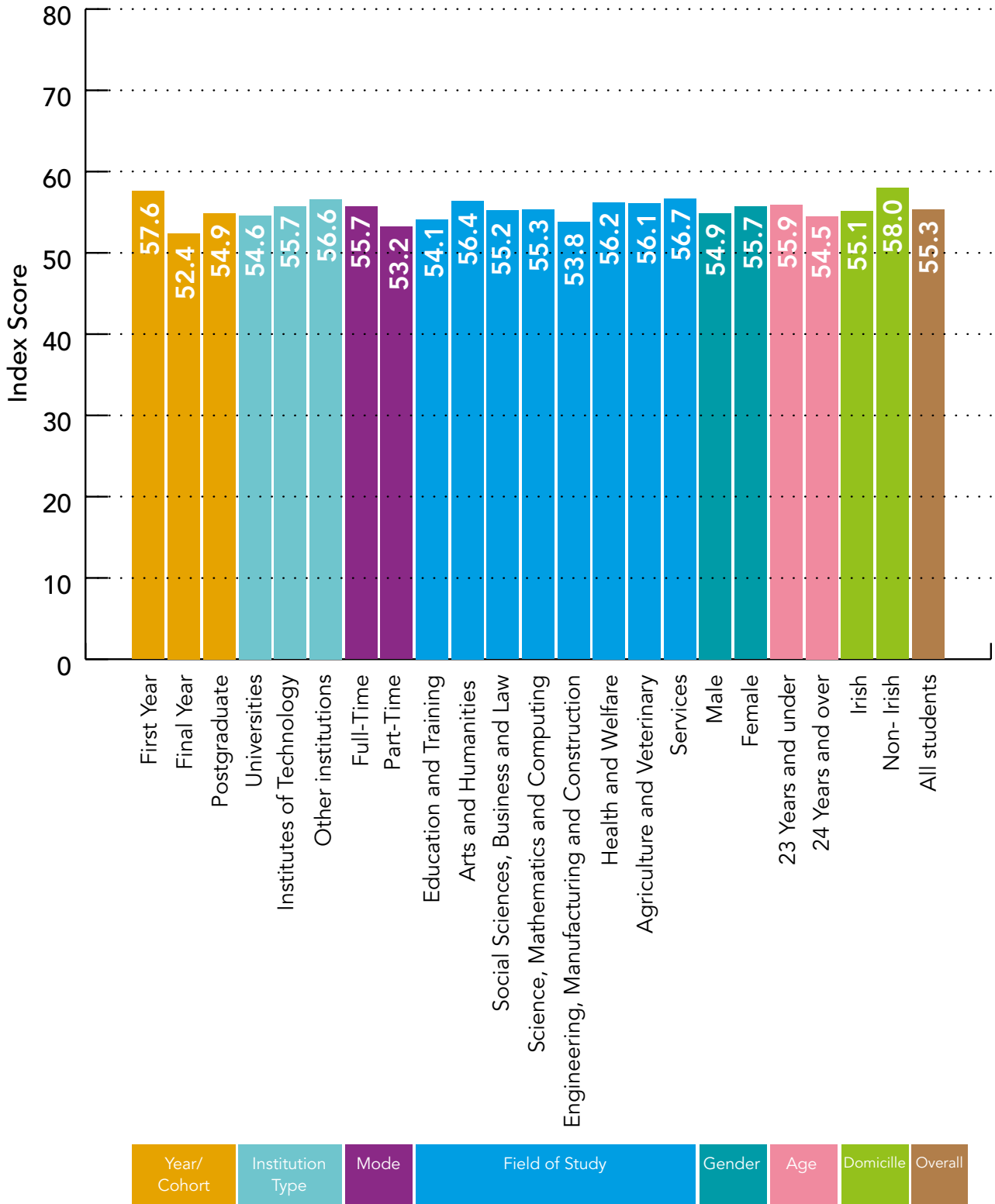
There are two main national policy drivers to support the learning environment for students: the first is the **National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning**, established in 2012. The National Forum is the key system-level infrastructure for the enhancement of teaching and learning in Irish higher education. Its aim is to enhance the quality of the learning experience for students at third level by developing teachers and learners, and by identifying and building on best practice in teaching and learning.

The second is the process of **Transitions reform**, which aims to ensure that the second and third level systems connect with one another so that students can move from one level to another smoothly. As part of these reforms, Universities have committed to offering fewer and broader entry routes to undergraduate honours degrees, and Institutes of Technology have committed to ensuring a mixed portfolio of undergraduate programmes with denominated and generic entry. Other areas being developed include the first year experience and foundation skills, and greater clarity on course content and learning outcomes of higher education programmes.

The engagement index *Supportive Learning Environment* reflects students' feelings of support within their college community. It takes account of students' sense of the support they receive from their institution to succeed academically, socialise and cope with their other responsibilities like work and family. It also takes account of the quality of relationships they have with other students, their teachers and administrative staff.

The results for *Supportive Learning Environment* have been given across different types of institutions, programmes and students in Chapter 4. The results can also be combined as follows.

SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT



CHAPTER 6 LOOKING DEEPER

The overall index score (for all respondents) is 55.3. The highest index scores for sub-groups are for non-Irish students (58.0), first year students (57.6) and students undertaking Services programmes (56.7) - with these students reporting that they receive greatest support within their institution. The lowest scores relate to final year students (52.4), part-time students (53.2) and students undertaking Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction programmes (53.8) - with these students reporting that they receive less support and have less positive relationships with others.

The above index scores are calculated from responses to six particular questions in the survey. Students were asked:

- If they were being provided with the support required to:
 - o succeed academically;
 - o cope with non-academic responsibilities like work and family;
 - o socialise;and they could give answers on a scale from 'very little', 'some', 'quite a bit', to 'very much'.
- About their relationships with other students on a scale of 1 (unfriendly, unsupportive, sense of alienation) to 7 (friendly, supportive, sense of belonging).
- About their relationships with teaching staff on a scale of 1 (unavailable, unhelpful and unsympathetic) to 7 (available, helpful and sympathetic).
- About their relationships with administrative personnel on a scale of 1 (unavailable, inconsiderate and rigid) to 7 (available, considerate and flexible).

This section explores these questions in more detail, in order to find out which types of students report feeling supported and in which ways. It also identifies some areas where there may be opportunities for improvement or enhancement.

6.1.1 Summary results (Supportive Learning Environment)

Most students report that they are supported academically, but report that there are not enough supports for them to cope with work or family responsibilities. Students are divided on whether they receive enough supports to socialise. Students have excellent relationships with each other and very positive relationships with teaching staff, but weaker relationships with administrative staff in their institutions.

First year undergraduates generally report that they are provided with higher levels of support than other students whether academically, coping with work and family, or socialising; although their relationships with teaching staff are not as positive as they are for postgraduate students. Postgraduates report that they receive high levels of academic support but little support in coping with family and work or socialising. Postgraduates tend to have the most positive relationships with teaching and administrative staff. Final year undergraduates report that they receive the least support of all cohorts of student: they have the lowest sense of academic, work, family and socialising supports. They also have the least positive relationships with administrative staff. All cohorts report similar perceptions in terms of positive relationships with other students. It is worth noting that these variations may reflect expectations of each cohort i.e. many would expect increasing student independence as they progress through undergraduate studies, whereas opportunities for interaction with academic staff are often notably greater for postgraduate taught programmes.

Large differences are seen between full-time/younger students, and part-time/older students in terms of supports: full-time and younger students report that they receive more academic supports, more supports in terms of work and family, and in socialising than part-time students. Conversely, part-time and older students tend to have a more positive relationship with teaching and administrative staff than full-time and younger students. It is interesting to note, however, that these differences in perceived support and relationships with the staff of the institution are not reflected in terms of relationships with other students; all of these groups express similar positive relationships with other students.

In terms of fields of study, students on Health and Welfare programmes report most academic support and those undertaking Services programmes report most support in terms of work and family. Students on Education programmes report that they are the least supported academically, in terms of work and family and socialising; although they rate their relationships with other students more highly than students in any other field of study. Agriculture and Arts and Humanities students report that they are most supported in terms of socialising. Arts and Humanities students do not experience as positive relationships with other students as students in other fields of study, but have the most positive relationships with teaching staff. Agriculture students have the least positive relationships with teaching staff but report that they are well supported by administrative staff.

Both Irish and non-Irish students experience similar levels of academic support, but non-Irish students report that they are more supported in work, family and in socialising, and have more positive relationships with administrative staff than Irish students. Irish students have better relationships with other students. Whilst these findings may mirror expectations to some extent, nevertheless they are worthy of further exploration.

There is little difference in results for different institution-types (Universities, Institutes of Technology and other institutions) and for male and female students, although students in Institutes of Technology tend to report more positive relationships with teaching staff, and female students tend to rate their relationships with other students more highly than males.

6.1.2 Detailed results (Supportive Learning Environment)

Support to succeed academically

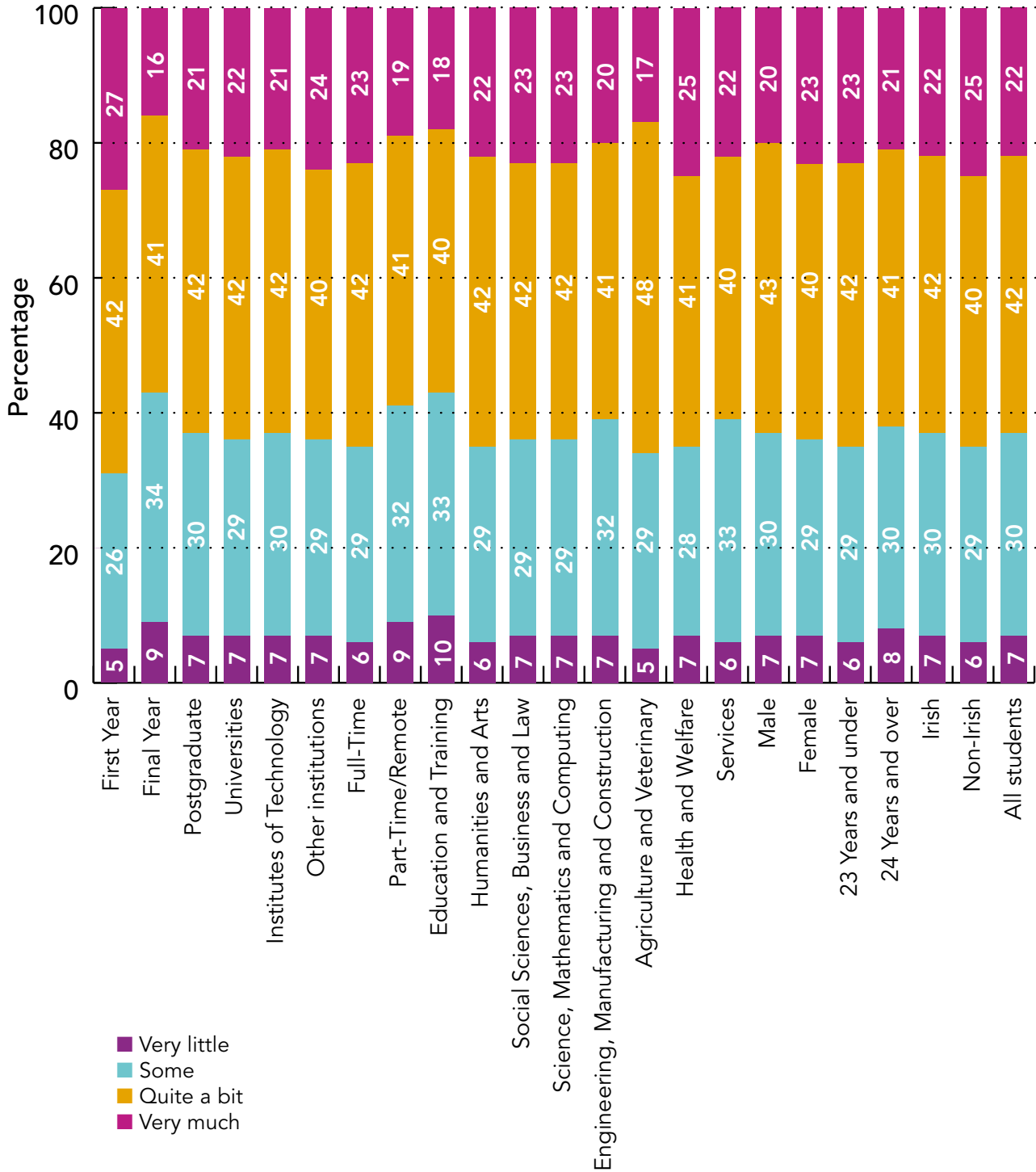
Students report that they are **supported academically**: nearly two thirds (64%) consider that they are supported 'quite a bit' or 'very much'. Only 7% consider they receive 'very little' academic support.

This sense of support varies notably according to the year of study: 69% of first year students report that they are supported 'quite a bit' or 'very much', as do 63% of postgraduate students, but only 57% of final year students agree. As outlined in the previous section, this may or may not reflect expected increased independence.

Full-time students report that they are more academically supported than part-time students, with 64% considering they are supported quite a bit or very much, compared with 59% of part-time students. Similarly, students aged 23 or under report that they are slightly more supported, with 65% considering they are supported quite a bit or very much. This figure is 62% for students aged 24 or above.

Students pursuing Health and Welfare programmes report that they are the most supported, with 25% indicating that they are supported 'very much'. Only 17% of students on Agriculture programmes and 18% of students on Education programmes report that they receive this level of support. Education students report that they receive the least support, with 10% indicating that they receive very little academic support (compared to 7% on average).

SUPPORT TO SUCCEED ACADEMICALLY



Support to cope with other responsibilities (e.g. work, family)

The next chart illustrates that students report that greater support is required to cope with **work and family responsibilities**, with 41% indicating that they receive 'very little' support in this area. Only 7% of students report that they are 'very much' supported.

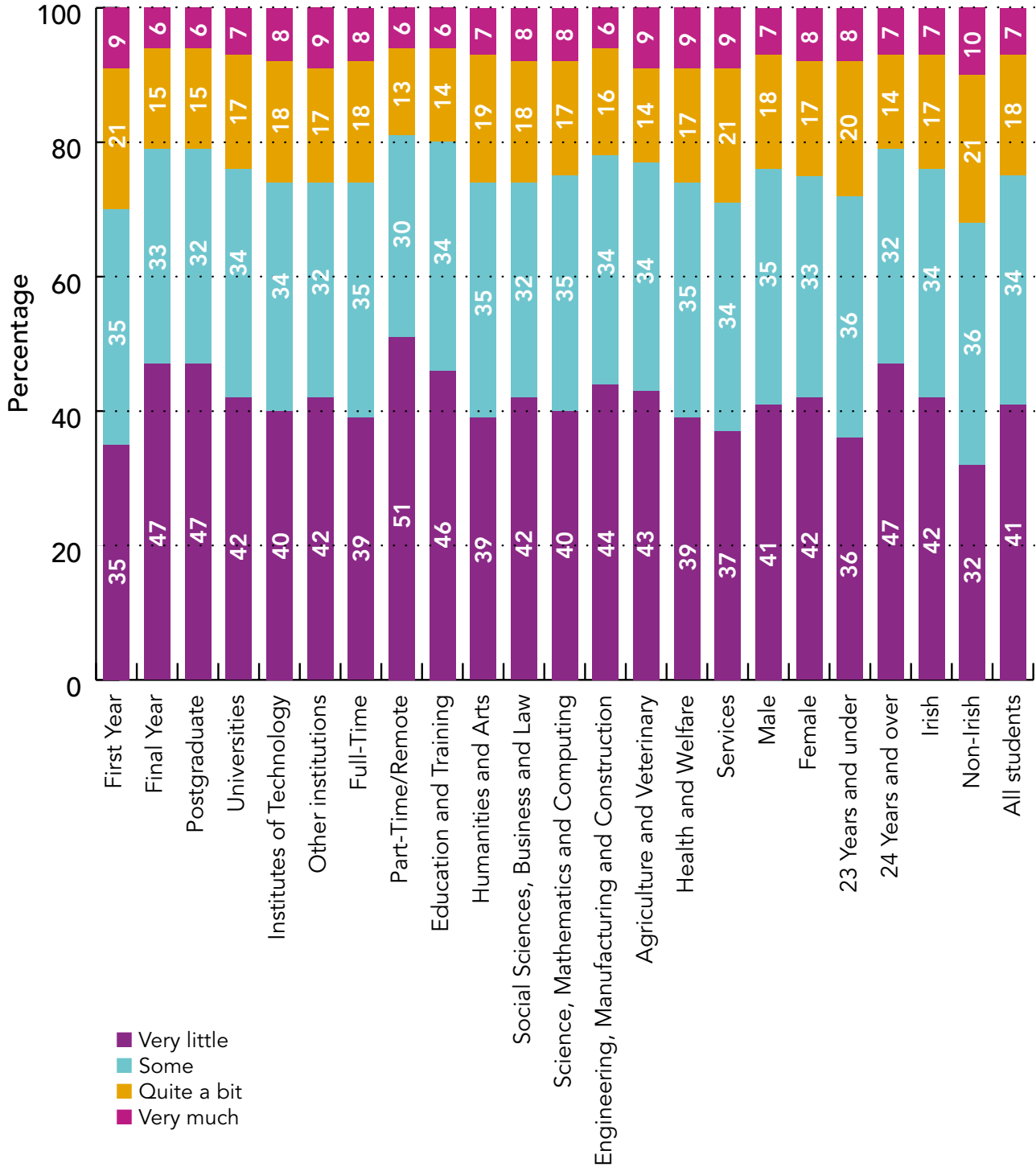
The proportion of students reporting 'very little' support is 35% for first year students, but 47% for both final year and postgraduate students.

There is a notable difference between Irish and non-Irish students. Only 32% of non-Irish students report that they receive 'very little' support, compared with 42% of Irish students. 31% of non-Irish students report that they are supported 'quite a bit' or 'very much' compared with 25% of Irish students.

The starkest differences are seen between part-time and full-time students, and younger and older students. Over half (51%) of all part-time students indicated that they receive 'very little' support with work or family responsibilities (compared with 39% of full-time students). Similarly nearly half of older students (47%) indicated that they receive 'very little' support with work or family responsibilities (compared with 36% of full-time students).

There are differences across fields of study, with students from Education programmes reporting that they receive the least support with work and family responsibilities (46% indicating 'very little' support). Students from Services programmes report the most support with 29% indicating that they are supported 'quite a bit' or 'very much' with work and family.

SUPPORT TO COPE WITH OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES (E.G. WORK, FAMILY)



Support to socialise

Students are divided on the extent to which their institutions provide support to help them **socialise**. Overall, a third (32%) of students said they receive 'very little' support. Just over a third (35%) of students report that they receive 'some' support and another third (32%) report that they are supported 'quite a bit' or 'very much'.

This figure of 'very little' support is 24% for first year students, 38% for final year students and 45% for postgraduate students.

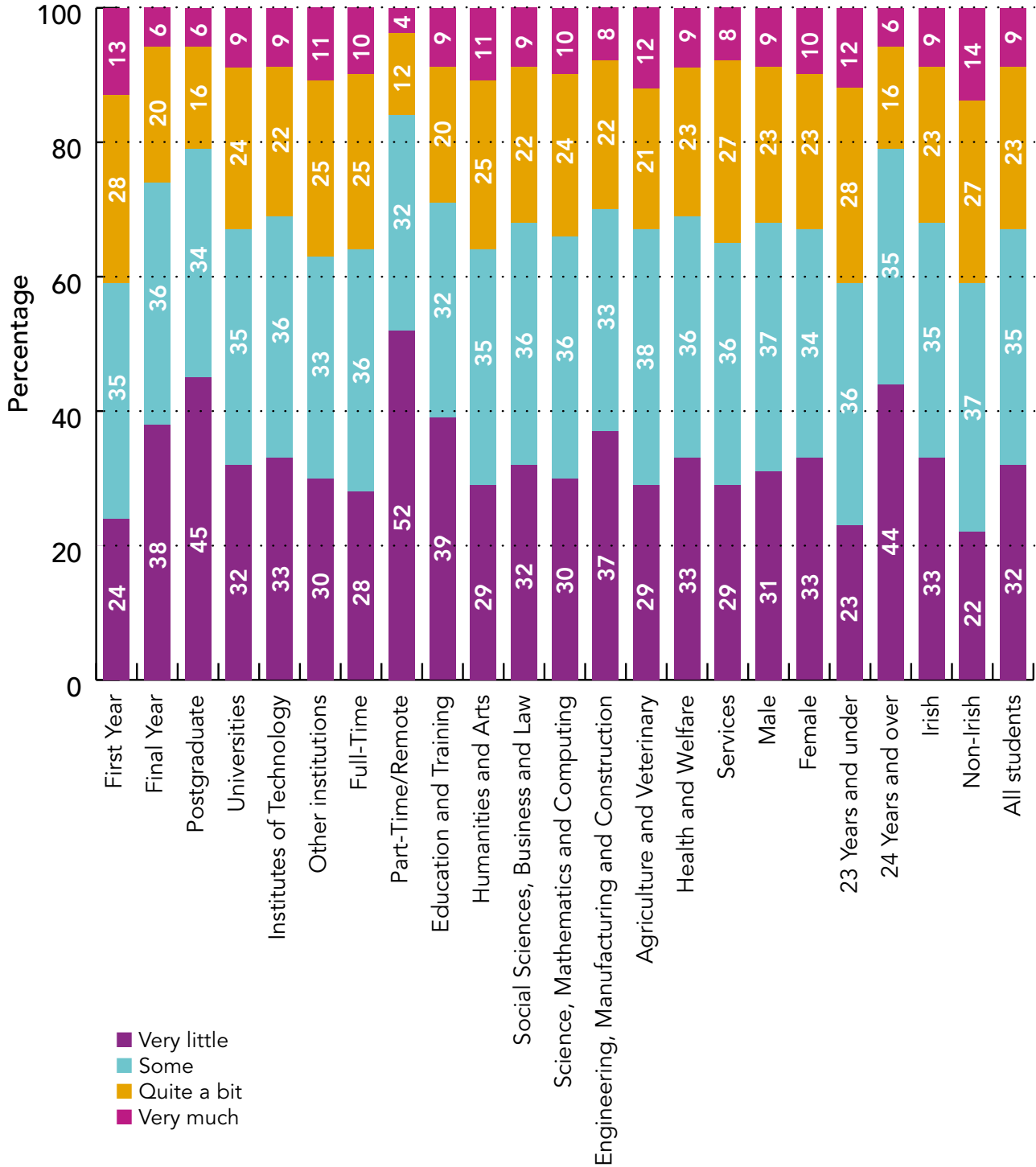
There is a difference between Irish and non-Irish students: 41% of non-Irish students report that they are supported 'quite a bit' or 'very much' to socialise, compared with 32% of Irish students.

Notable differences are found between full-time and part-time students: over half (52%) of part-time students report that they receive 'very little' support to socialise, compared with 28% of full-time students. Similarly, 36% of full-time students report that they are supported 'quite a bit' or 'very much' to socialise, compared with 16% of part-time students.

A similar difference is also evident among older and younger students: 44% of older students report that they receive 'very little' support to socialise, compared with 23% of younger students. Similarly, 41% of younger students report that they are supported 'quite a bit' or 'very much' to socialise compared with 22% of older students.

Students pursuing Education programmes report that they are the least supported in this area, with 39% indicating that they receive 'very little' support to socialise, compared with 29% of students pursuing Agriculture or Art and Humanities programmes.

SUPPORT TO SOCIALISE



Relationships with other students

In general, students have excellent **relationships with other students**. Overall, 82% of students give a score of 5 or higher (on a range from 1 to 7) in terms of their relationships with other students, where a high score indicates that their relationships are friendly and supportive and they have a sense of belonging. Only 8% give a score of 3 or lower.

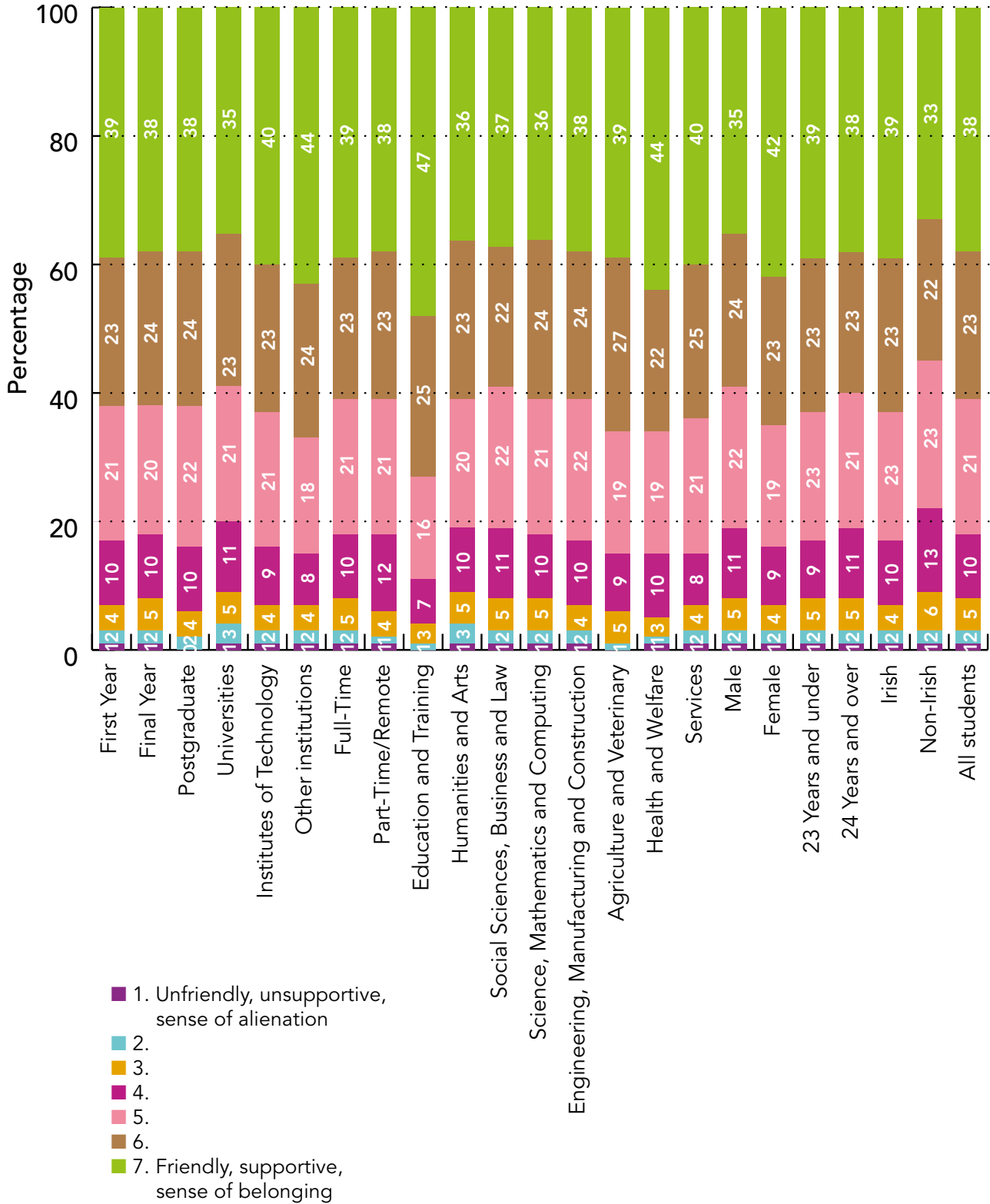
This result is consistent across Universities, Institutes of Technology and other institutions, with students of other institutions reporting the best relationships with each other. 44% of students in other institutions rate their relationships with other students at the maximum value of 7 on the scale, compared with 40% in Institutes of Technology and 35% in Universities.

Females tend to have a better relationship with other students than males with 42% of relationships rated at the maximum value of 7. Only 35% of males give this rating. Irish students tend to have a better relationship with other students than non-Irish students, with 39% giving the maximum rating of 7 to their relationships. This compares with 33% for non-Irish students.

There is little difference in responses to this question between full-time and part-time students, or older or younger students, or between different programme types.

Students undertaking Education programmes have the best relationships with other students, with 88% giving a score of 5 or higher. Nearly half (47%) gave the maximum score of 7. On the other hand, Arts and Humanities students give lower but still very positive scores: 80% rate their relationships at 5 or higher and 36% give the maximum rating of 7.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER STUDENTS



Relationships with teaching staff

Results are also positive for **relationships with teaching staff**: two thirds of all respondents (67%) rate their relationships at 5 or higher, indicating that teaching staff are available, helpful and sympathetic. 14% selected a score of 3 or lower.

This good relationship is most evident in Institutes of Technology with nearly three-quarters (72%) rating their relationships with teaching staff in this way. This compares with 64% in Universities and 67% in the other institutions. This finding is likely to be reflective of the differences in class size and contact hours between institution-types.

Overall, there is a more positive relationship with teaching staff at postgraduate level (75% rating relationships at 5 or higher) than at undergraduate level (65-67%). This differential is most explicit in Universities and other institutions: in Universities 58% of first years give a score of 5 or higher, but 74% of postgraduate students give this score.

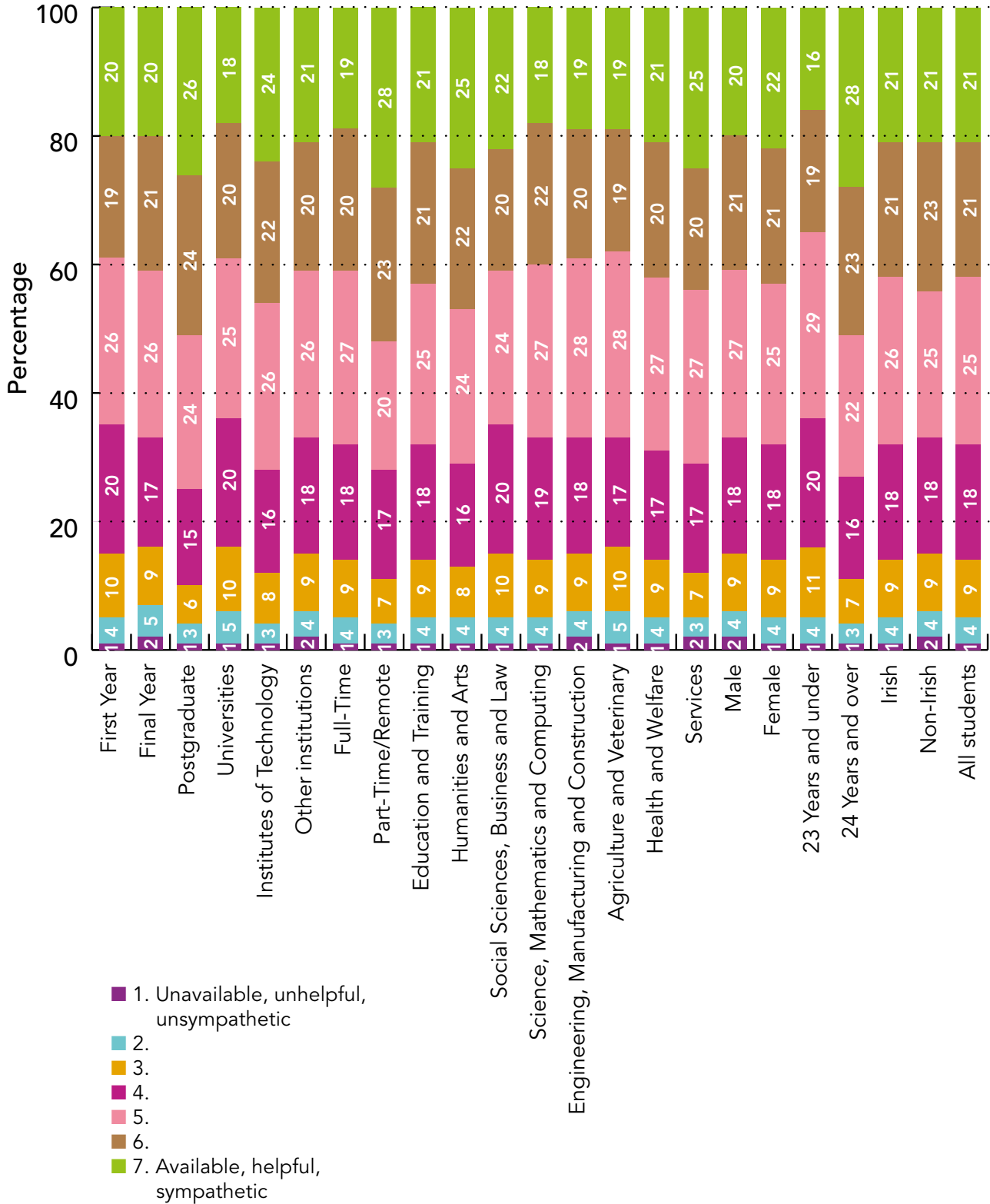
There is little difference in responses to this question between males and females, and Irish and non-Irish students.

Part-time students indicate a better relationship with teaching staff with 72% giving a rating of 5 or higher. This compares with 67% of full-time students. Older students tend to have a better relationship with teaching staff, with 73% giving a 5 or higher rating and 63% of younger students giving this rating.

Postgraduate students tend to have better relationships with teaching staff than undergraduates with 75% of masters students giving a rating of 5 or higher. Undergraduate honours degree students report least positive results, with 15% giving a rating of 3 or lower.

Students in Humanities and Arts and Services have the best relationships (71% rating their relationships at 5 or higher), while Agriculture students are the least positive with 16% giving a score of 3 or lower.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH TEACHING STAFF



Relationships with administrative personnel

Relationships with administrative personnel are not as positive as relationships with teaching staff: under half (49%) of respondents rate their relationships at 5 or higher and over a quarter (27%) give a score of 3 or lower.

The results for this question do not vary notably between males and females or by institution-type.

Postgraduate students report most positive relationships with administrative staff: 58% rate the relationship at 5 or higher. Final year students report the least positive relationships with 30% giving a score of 3 or lower.

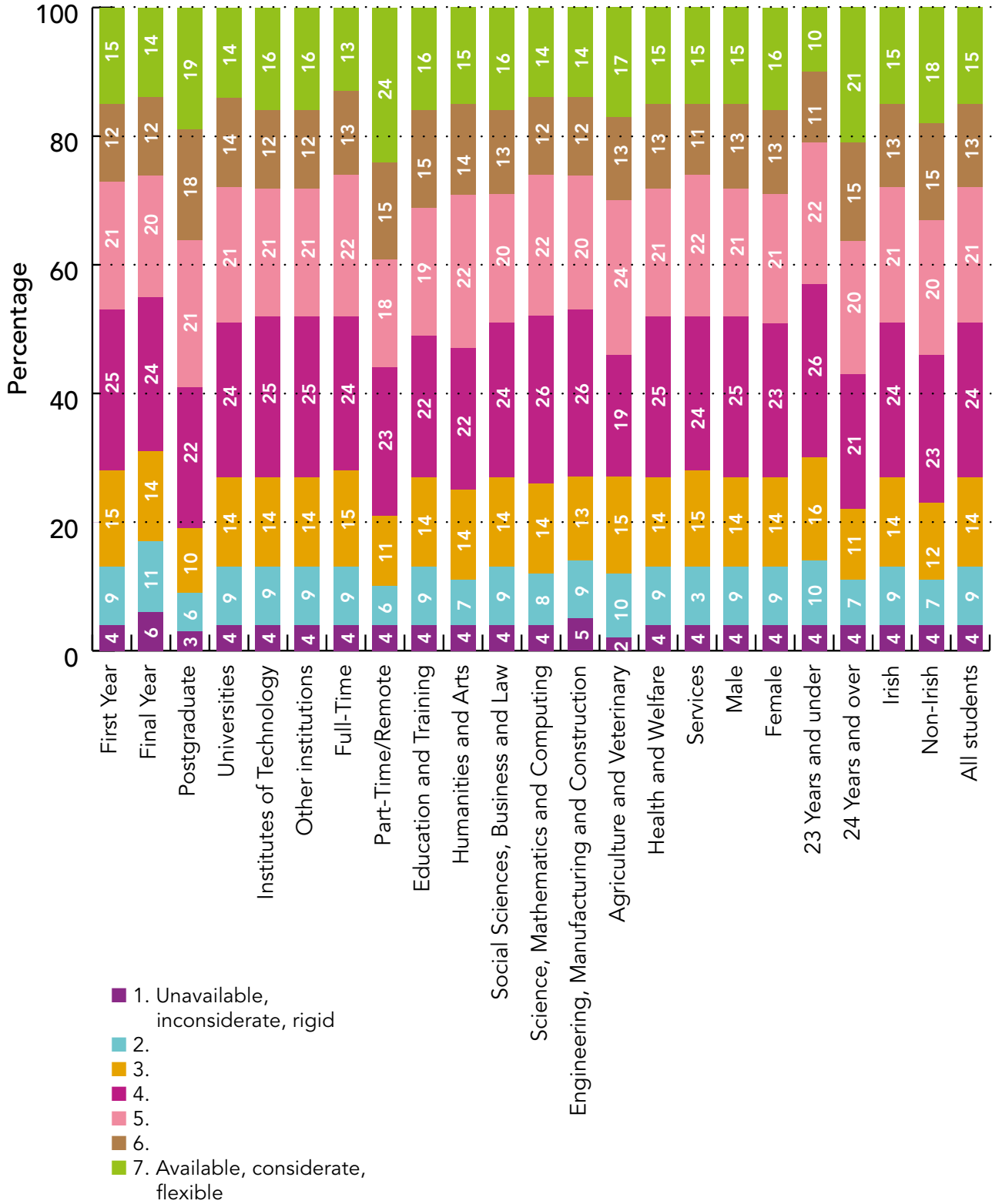
Non-Irish students report more positive relationships with administrative staff with 54% giving a 5-7 rating, compared with 49% of Irish students.

Part-time students also report more positive relationships than full-time students, with 57% giving a 5+ rating. 28% of full-time students give a rating of 1-3.

Older students (those 24 or older) report considerably more positive relationships with administrative staff than others: 56% rate the relationships at 5 or higher, compared with 43% of students 23 or under.

Students pursuing Agriculture programmes report the most positive relationships with administrative staff, 54% giving a rating of 5-7. Students on Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction programmes are less positive, with 47% giving a rating of 5-7.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL



6.2 WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING

The *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030* recommends that undergraduate students should be encouraged to spend some time in a work or service situation and that both undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes should develop “the generic skills needed for effective engagement in society and in the workplace”.

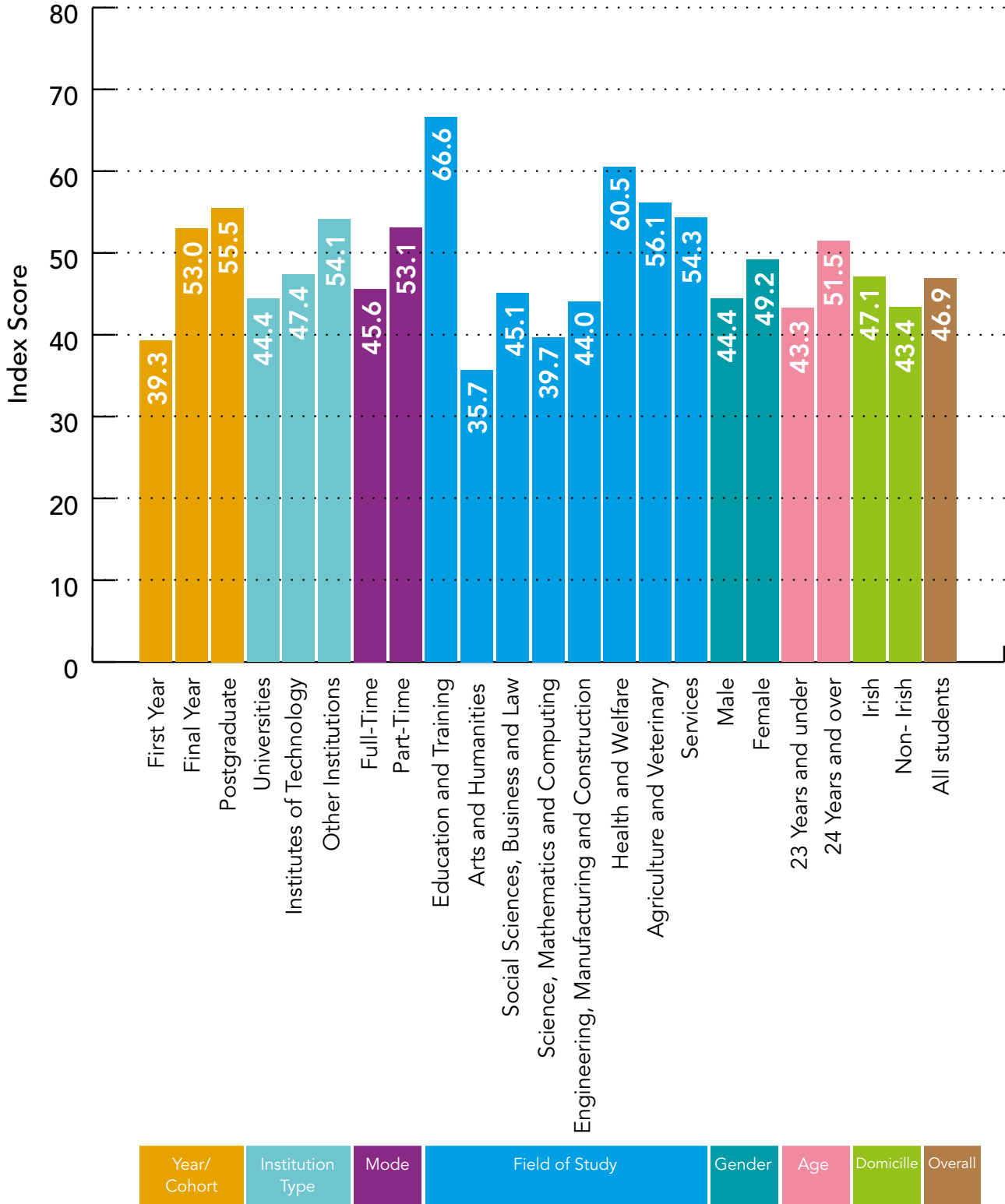
The HEA report, “*What do Graduates Do 2012*”, noted that 52% of bachelor degree graduates and 72% of postgraduate degree graduates were in employment nine months after graduation, and these figures represented a continuing increase on previous years. The report looked at the relevance of a graduate’s employment to their field of study and found that 69% of degree graduates (and 77% of postgraduate graduates) considered that their area of employment was relevant to their field of study while in college. These figures varied according to field of study: Health and Welfare, Computer Science, and Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction graduates were most likely to have found employment relevant to their field of study. Graduates of Arts and Humanities were least likely to have found relevant employment.

The *Eurostudent V* survey, carried out in 2013, found that 90% of students rated professional or career-development as either ‘important’ or ‘very important’ in choosing their course. The survey also found that 32% of students work during the whole semester and 16% work from time to time during the semester. A notable percentage of students (43%) rated their job as not related closely at all to their course.

The engagement index *Work Integrated Learning* reflects the integration of employment-focused work experiences into study. It takes account of how students have combined academic and workplace learning, how their studies have contributed to their employability, and whether they have explored how to apply learning in the workplace. It also explores whether they have completed or intend to undertake an industry placement or work experience.

The results for *Work Integrated Learning* have been given across different types of institutions, programmes and students in Chapter 4. The results can be combined as follows.

WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING



CHAPTER 6 LOOKING DEEPER

The overall index score (for all respondents) for *Work Integrated Learning* is 46.9. The scores for different groups of students vary significantly. The highest scores are reported from Education (66.6), Health and Welfare (60.5) and Agriculture and Veterinary (56.1) students, followed by postgraduate students (55.5) and students of other institutions (54.1): these students experience a high level of integration of employment-focused work experience in their programmes. The lowest scores are reported from Arts and Humanities students (35.7), first year undergraduates (39.3) and Science, Mathematics and Computing students (39.7): these students experience lower levels of integration of work experience in their studies.

Work experience or placement is a compulsory element of some of these programmes so it may be appropriate, in future studies, to explore programmes where this is non-compulsory.

The above scores were calculated from responses to the following five questions which contribute to this index. Students were asked:

- During the current academic year, how often had they:
 - o Blended academic learning with workplace experience;
 - o Improved knowledge and skills that will contribute to your employability;
 - o Explored how to apply your learning in the workplace;with answers ranging from 'never', 'sometimes', 'often', to 'very often'.
- Which of the following had they done or planned to do before graduating:
 - o Industry placement or work experiencewith answers ranging from 'do not know about', 'have not decided', 'do not plan to do', 'plan to do', to 'done'.
- Has their experience at the institution contributed to their knowledge, skills and personal development in:
 - o acquiring job-related or work-related knowledge or skillswith answers ranging from 'very little', 'some', 'quite a bit', to 'very much'.

6.2.1 Summary results (Work Integrated Learning)

The majority of students report that their college experience is generally improving their employability and is providing them with the required knowledge and proficiency to obtain employment. When asked more specifically about work placements or work experience, some students are less certain that their learning prepares them for specific employment in a relevant sector of the economy and a notable number report that they have never combined their academic learning with workplace experience.

As the years of study progress, students increasingly report that they feel prepared for the workplace. Most first year students have not yet had the opportunity to undertake a placement or work experience, nor the opportunity to incorporate work-based learning in their studies as much as final year or postgraduate students. By the time the student has reached final year, half have undertaken a work placement and more plan to do so by the time they graduate.

Differences in index scores for *Work Integrated Learning* are greatest between fields of study. Lowest scores relate to students undertaking Arts and Humanities, and Science, Mathematics and Computing programmes. Education, Health and Welfare, Services, and Agriculture and Veterinary students report being most prepared for the workplace. This finding is as expected, as most programmes in these areas require teaching, clinical or practical placements as part of the curriculum. This is also reflected in students in the other institutions (colleges of education and other specialist providers), who report being the most prepared for the workplace. University students report being less prepared and are less likely to undertake an industry placement or work experience than students in Institutes of Technology.

Although males and females report equally that they are developing their knowledge and skills for employment, it is female students (who are more likely to be studying in the applied areas of Education and Health¹⁰) who report that they have been given support to engage with the workplace more than males and who are more likely to have completed a work placement.

Part-time and older students also report that their institution is preparing them for the workplace more than younger or full-time students, although full-time students are more likely to have undertaken or to have planned to undertake work experience.

Irish students are slightly more positive about their experiences in this area and are more likely to have undertaken a work placement than non-Irish students.

10. 10% of females respondents were studying Education programmes, compared with 3% of males. 21% of female students were studying Health and Welfare courses, compared with 8% of males.

6.2.2 Detailed results (Work Integrated Learning)

Blended academic learning with workplace experience

Overall, a third of students (34%) report that they have **blended academic learning with workplace experience** 'often' or 'very often'. Over a third (36%) state that they have 'never' done so.

This varies notably by year of study. Only 23% of first years report they have blended academic learning with workplace experience 'often' or 'very often' with nearly half (48%) saying they have 'never' done so. For final year students, 41% give a response of 'often' or 'very often' and this figure is 53% for postgraduate students.

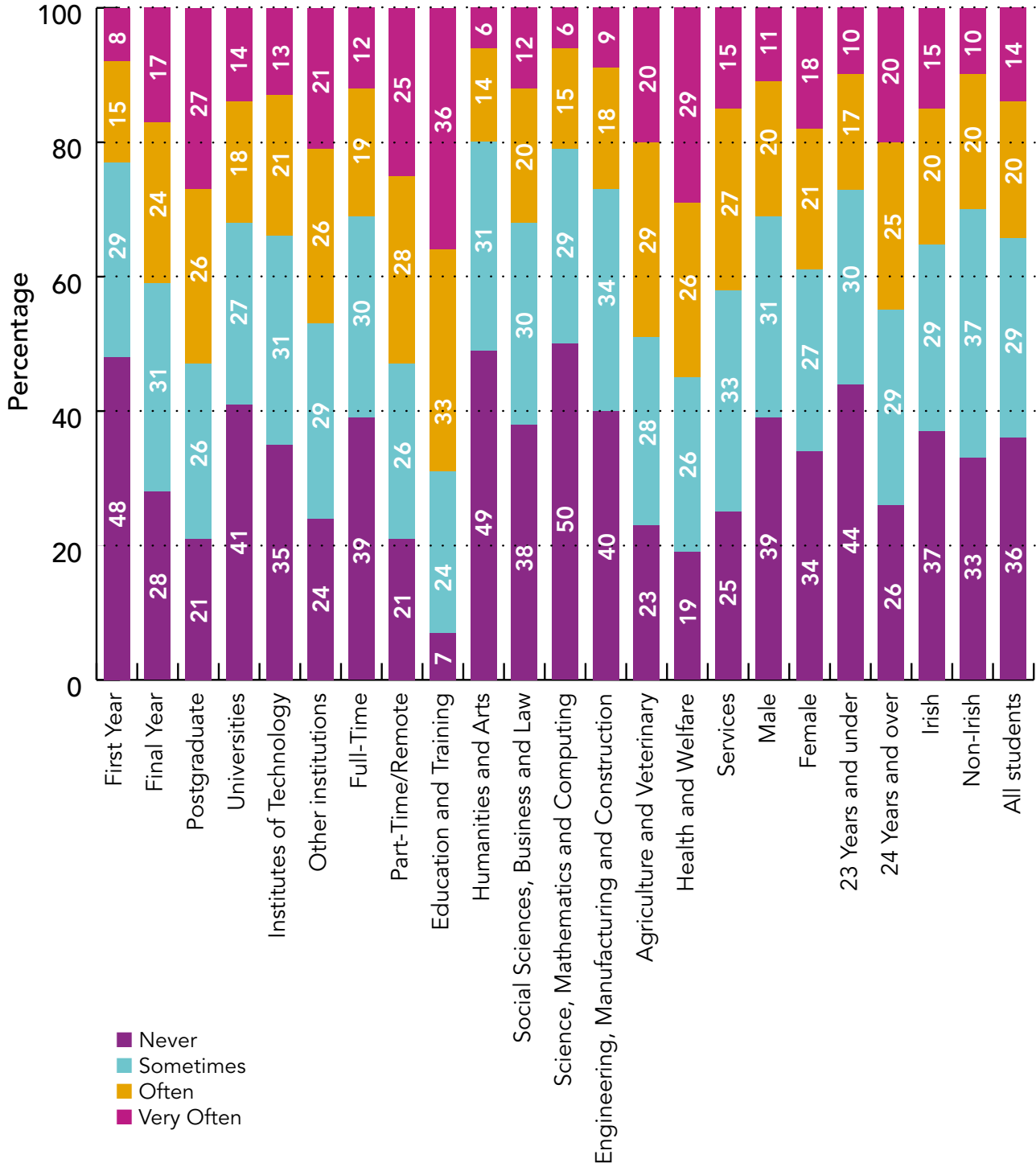
These figures also vary by institution-type. Nearly half (47%) of the students of other institutions, which include colleges of education and other specialist providers, indicate that they have blended academic learning with workplace experience 'often' or 'very often', compared with 32% in Universities and 33% in Institutes of Technology.

More female students (38%) indicate that they have blended academic learning with workplace experience 'often' or 'very often' than male students (30%). There is an apparent contradiction in relation to the domiciliary of students. More Irish students (37%) said they have 'never' combined academic learning with workplace experience, than non-Irish students (33%), but more Irish students (35%) give the answer of 'often' or 'very often' than non-Irish students (31%).

There are notably different answers given to this question by full-time and part-time students. Overall 21% of part-time students say they have 'never' combined academic learning with workplace experience, compared with 39% of full-time students. Over half (53%) of part-time students give the answer of 'often' or 'very often', compared with 31% of full-time students.

There are also notable differences seen in terms of field of study. Science, Mathematics and Computing (50%) and Humanities and Arts (49%) students are by far the most likely to indicate that they have 'never' combined academic learning with workplace experience. Education (70%) and Health and Welfare (55%) students give the highest frequency of answers of 'often' or 'very often' to the question.

BLENDING ACADEMIC LEARNING WITH WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE



Improved knowledge and skills that will contribute to your employability

The next question asked students in a more general sense about employability and how their studies gave them the proficiency and understanding required for employability. Nearly two thirds of students (64%) believe that they have **improved knowledge or skills that contribute to employability** 'often' or 'very often'.

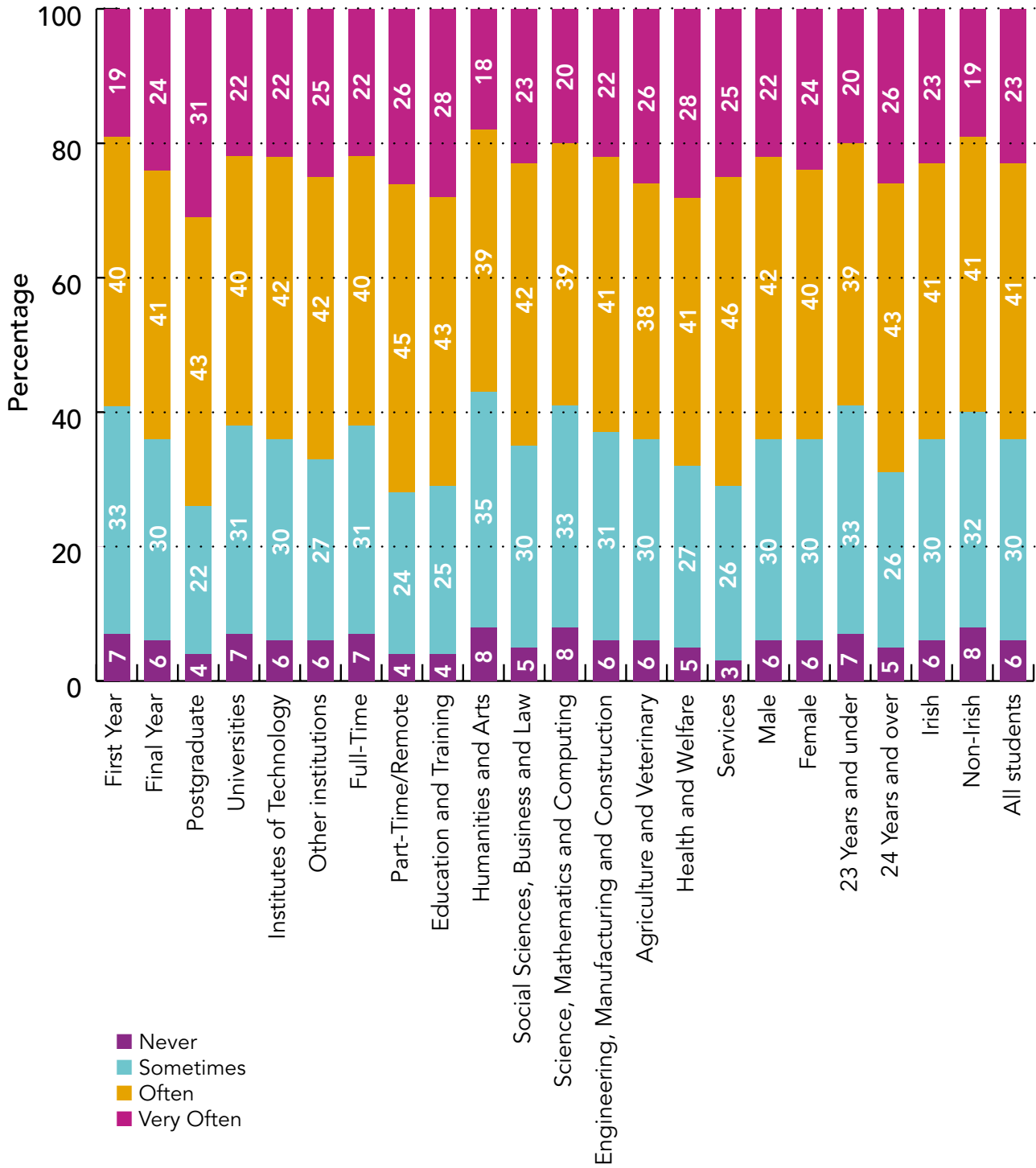
This figure stands at 75% for postgraduates, 65% for final year students and 59% for first year students. Interestingly, the answer of 'never' does not vary as notably between year of study, with 7% of first years reporting that they have 'never' done so compared with 6% of final year students and 4% of postgraduate students.

Students of other institutions gave slightly more positive responses, with 67% answering 'often' or 'very often' to the question, compared with 64% of institute of technology students and 62% of university students. These figures do not vary by gender. Irish students give slightly more positive answers to this question than non-Irish.

There are different answers given to this question by full-time and part-time/remote students. The majority (71%) of part-time students give the answer of 'often' or 'very often', compared with 62% of full-time students.

There are also differences seen in terms of field of study. Science, Mathematics and Computing (8%) and Humanities and Arts (8%) students are the most likely to indicate that they have 'never' improved knowledge or skills that contribute to employability. Education, Services (71%) and Health and Welfare (69%) students give the highest frequency of answers of 'often' or 'very often' to the question.

IMPROVED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS THAT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR EMPLOYABILITY



Explored how to apply your learning in the workplace

When asked how often students had **explored how to apply learning in the workplace**, 50% of all respondents answered 'often' or 'very often'.

A total of 43% of first year students answered 'often' or 'very often', compared with 54% of final year students and 64% of postgraduate students. The answer of 'never' also varies notably between year of study, at 20% for first years, 14% for final years, and 9% for postgraduates.

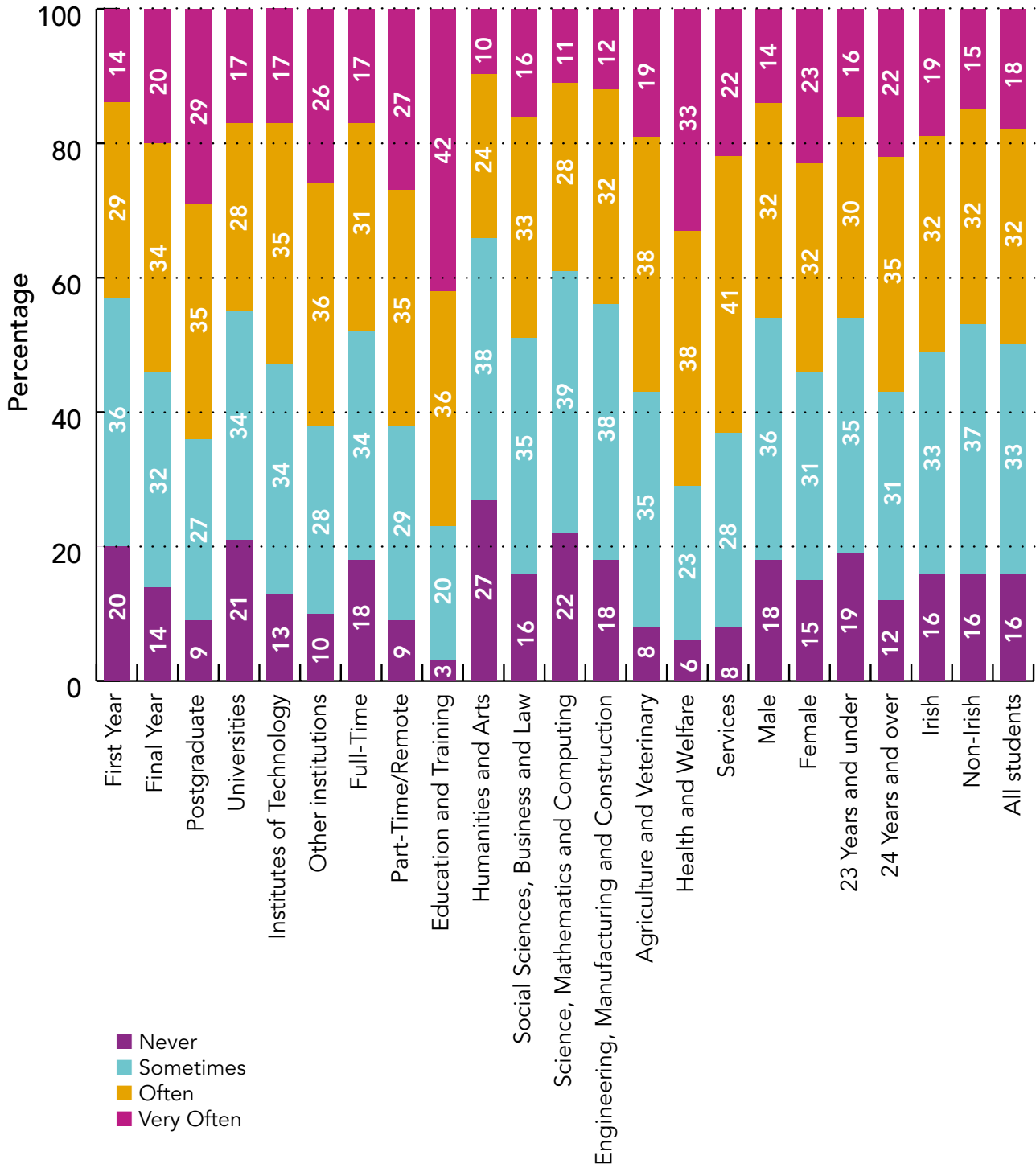
These figures vary by institution-type, with 62% of 'other institution' students answering 'often' or 'very often', compared with 52% of Institute of Technology students and 45% of University students.

Female students are far more likely to answer 'very often' than males (23% vs 14%) and Irish students gave slightly more positive answers to this question than non-Irish students.

There are different answers given to this question by full-time and part-time/remote students. The majority (61%) of part-time students give the answer of 'often' or 'very often', compared with 48% of full-time students.

There are also differences seen in terms of field of study. Humanities and Arts (27%) and Science, Mathematics and Computing (22%) students are the most likely to indicate that they have 'never' explored how to apply learning in the workplace. Education (77%) and Health and Welfare (71%) students give the highest frequency of answers of 'often' or 'very often' to the question.

EXPLORED HOW TO APPLY YOUR LEARNING IN THE WORKPLACE



Industry placement or work experience

Overall, nearly half of all final year students (47%) have **completed an industry placement or work experience**. In 'other institutions', this figure is 59% for final year students. Roughly 11% of students across the different levels of study indicated that they are unaware of such placements or work experience. Overall, 14% of students do not plan to undertake such an experience: this figure is 6% for first year students, 17% for final year students and 30% for postgraduate students.

These figures are very similar for other institutions and Institutes of Technology with 69% of students of other institutions indicating they have done or plan to do a placement, compared with 67% of Institute of Technology students. The equivalent figure for University students is 61%.

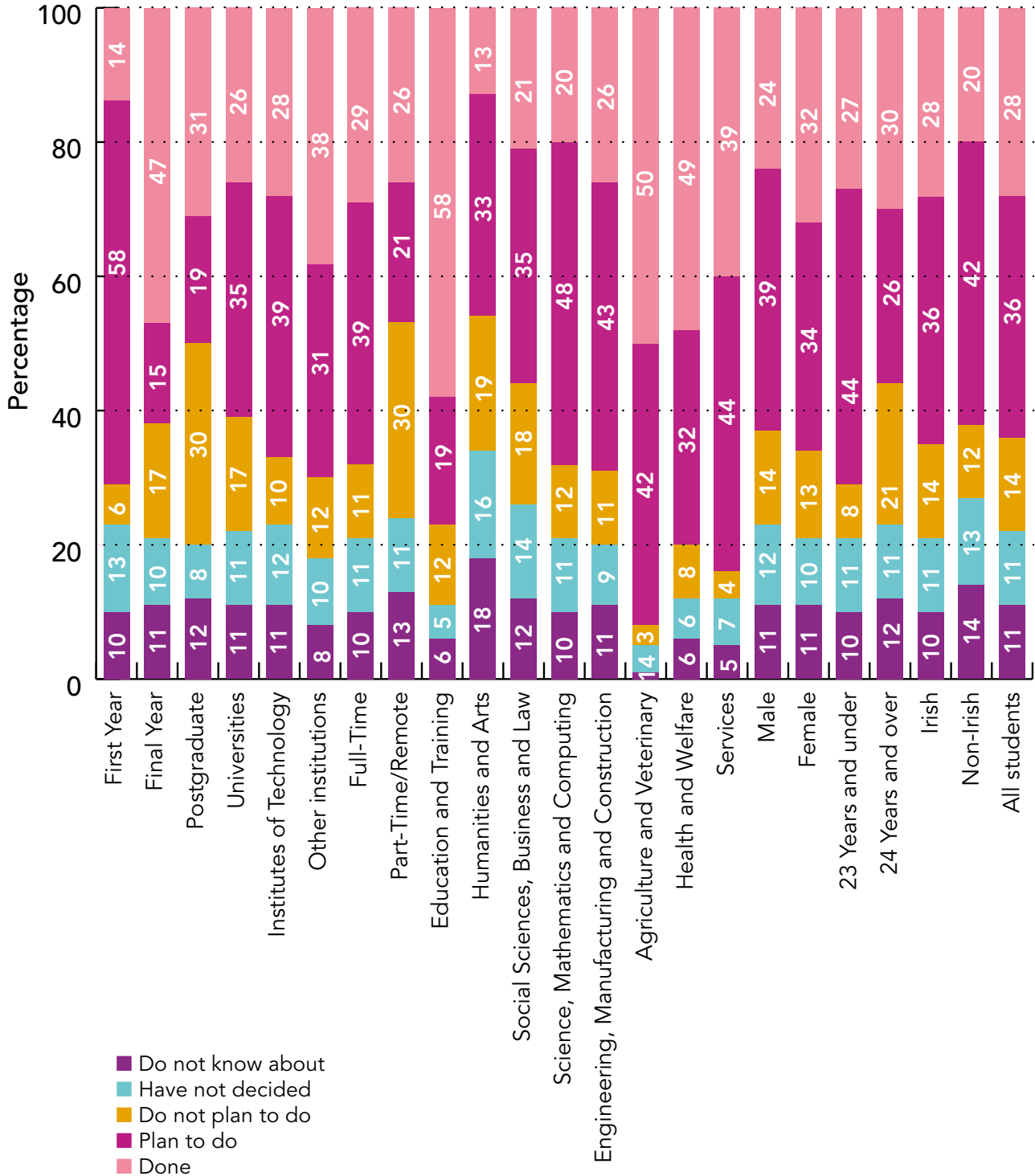
One in three female students (32%) have completed a work placement compared with one in four (24%) of males. More male students (39%) stated that they plan to complete a work placement than females (34%). These findings may reflect the proportion of male and female students pursuing particular fields of study.

More Irish students have completed a work placement (29%) than non-Irish students (20%). Non-Irish students show less awareness of such experience with 14% saying they do not know about such opportunities compared with 10% of Irish students.

There are different answers given to this question by full-time and part-time/remote students, and this may reflect the integration of work placements in full-time programmes and the increased probability that a part-time student is already in an employment situation. Over two thirds (68%) of full-time students plan to complete or have completed a work placement, compared with 46% of part-time students. Nearly a third (30%) of part-time students do not intend to take part in a work placement compared with 11% of full-time students.

There are also differences seen in terms of field of study. Over half of Education (58%), Agriculture (50%) and Health and Welfare (49%) students indicated that they have undertaken a work placement. Over half of Humanities and Arts (54%) students indicated that they do not know about, do not plan to or have not decided about a work placement.

INDUSTRY PLACEMENT OR WORK EXPERIENCE



Has your experience at your institution contributed to acquiring job-related or work-related knowledge and skills?

When asked whether their experience has contributed to **acquiring job-related or work-related knowledge or skills**, 58% of students answered 'quite a bit' or 'very much'. As with other questions that contribute to the *Work Integrated Learning* index, the figures vary by year of study, with 51% of first years providing this response, compared with 63% of final year students and 69% of postgraduates. Overall, 13% of students consider that their experience has contributed 'very little' to acquiring job-related or work-related knowledge or skills.

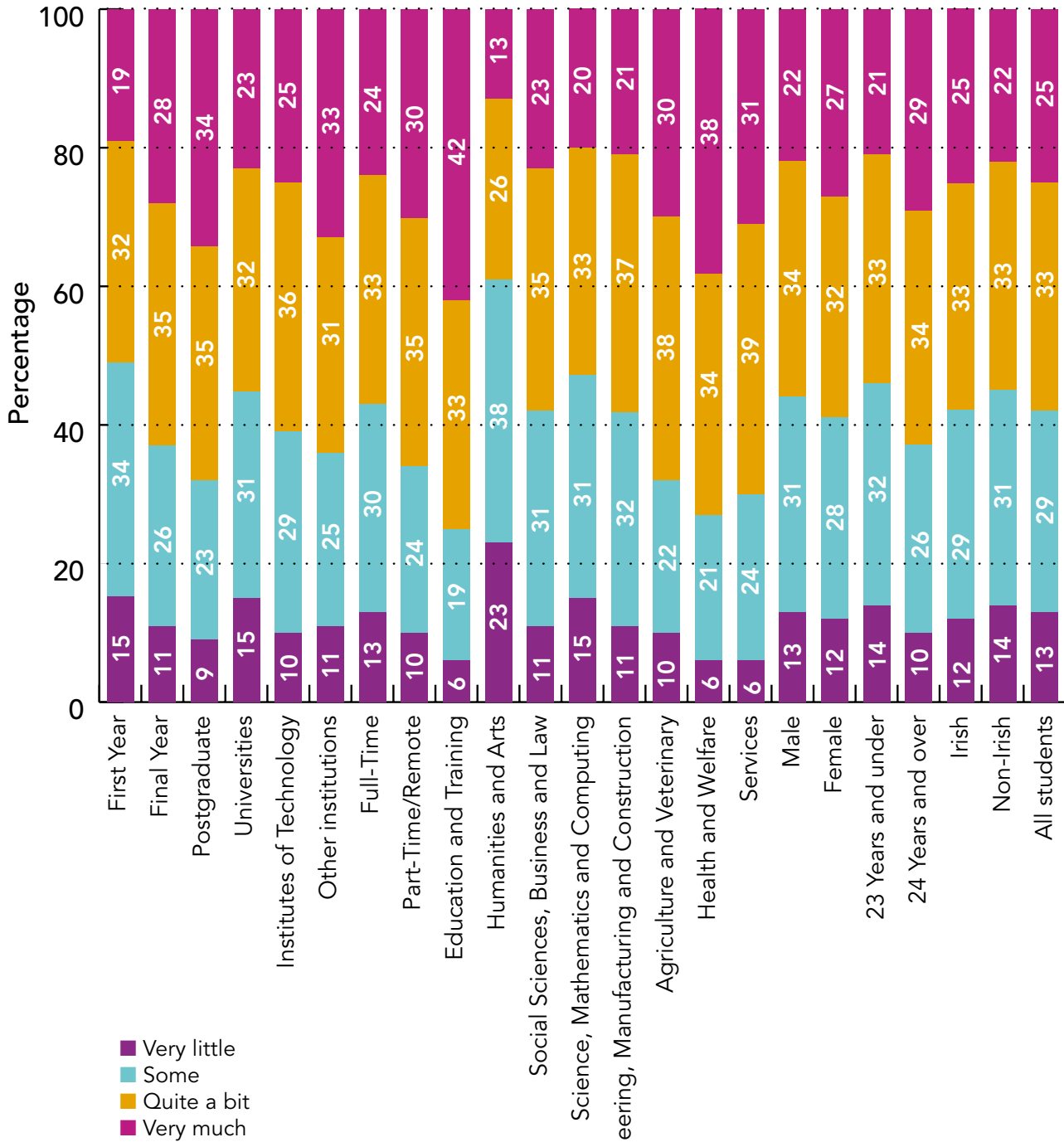
There is a difference between institution-types, with 61% of students of Institutes of Technology answering 'quite a bit' or 'very much', compared with 54% of students in Universities. Nearly two-thirds (64%) of students in other institutions consider that their experience has contributed to acquiring job-related or work-related knowledge or skills 'quite a bit' or 'very much'.

Female students report that their experience has contributed to acquiring job-related or work-related knowledge or skills slightly more than male students with 60% of females selecting the answer of 'quite a bit' or 'very much' (compared with 56% of males). Irish students also provided slightly more positive answers than non-Irish students.

There were differences between full-time/younger students and part-time/older students. 66% of part-time students report that their experience has contributed 'quite a bit' or 'very much' to acquiring job-related or work-related knowledge or skills, compared to 57% of full-time students. Similarly 63% of older students give the answer of 'quite a bit' or 'very much', compared with 54% of younger students.

As with the other questions that make up this index, it is field of study where the most acute differences are seen. Education (76%), Health and Welfare (72%) and Agriculture and Veterinary (68%) give the highest levels of response to the options 'quite a bit' or 'very much'. The lowest levels of response to these options are given by Humanities and Arts (39%) students. Nearly a quarter (23%) of Humanities and Arts students consider that their experience has contributed 'very little' to acquiring job-related or work-related knowledge or skills.

HAS YOUR EXPERIENCE AT YOUR INSTITUTION CONTRIBUTED TO ACQUIRING JOB-RELATED OR WORK-RELATED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS?



6.3 GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

For *Supportive Learning Environment*, we have seen that most students report that they are supported and get on very well with each other and with their teachers. First year students, in particular, report being very well supported by their institutions, both academically and in the social arena. This reflects the level of investment, both financial and otherwise, in the development of actions that support engagement in first years. Furthermore, students who come from outside of Ireland report comparable, if not higher, levels of support to Irish students and this reflects the provision made to assist these students in our institutions.

A number of areas can be identified for further exploration and /or possible improvement:

- Relationships with administrative staff of the institution: students tend to consider administrative staff to be less available than they would like
- The experience of final year undergraduates: given the timing of survey fieldwork, final year students are likely to face considerable competing demands for their time. The capacity for these students to cope and to engage in social activities must naturally be restricted. It may also be expected that final year students should be more independent than first year students. However, these students report that they experience low levels of support
- Support for part-time and older students: these students are far more likely than younger or full-time students to have other responsibilities relating to work or family and there may be challenges to combine these duties with academic work. Such students report that more support could be offered by their institution.

For *Work Integrated Learning*, it is encouraging to see that half of all final year undergraduate students have undertaken a work placement, with further numbers planning to do so by the time they graduate. This result provides a sound basis for expansion in this area in the future. Certain fields of study, such as Education and Health and Welfare, are preparing students very well for future employment in a relevant sector of the economy.

A number of areas can be identified for further exploration and /or possible improvement:

- It is clear that Arts and Humanities, and Science, Mathematics and Computing students report lower perceptions of preparation for the workplace and of their sense of employability. Institutions may wish to explore the perceptions of these students and the extent to which current ISSE questions reflect expectations for these programmes
- Further, 11% of students indicated that they are unaware of work placement opportunities. Institutions could explore possibilities of advertising these opportunities more prominently, particularly for non-Irish students, who are less aware and less likely to undertake such a placement.

CHAPTER 7

USING ISSE TO SUPPORT ENHANCEMENT

The development and implementation of a consistent national survey of student engagement represents a significant milestone for higher education stakeholders. It demonstrates the response to a recommendation of the *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030* which called for the establishment of systems to capture student feedback. Perhaps more importantly, it also provides an opportunity for institutional leaders, subject leaders, teaching and learning advocates and quality officers to review, as appropriate, the experiences of local students in the contexts of similar institution-types, of national data and of international systems utilising similar surveys.

This report provides details of results from ISSE implementation in 2014 and, therefore, builds upon similar data published from the 2013 national pilot survey. As noted in Chapter 3, the number of responses has increased from the significant sample size achieved in the 2013 pilot. The ISSE has already generated a substantial dataset to inform discussion on the experience of students in Irish higher education institutions. Nevertheless, it remains a key objective to increase response rates further in continuing implementation of the ISSE. This is critical to maximise the value of the survey as a tool for enhancement of teaching and learning within each institution.

“Closing the feedback loop”

It is important that feedback is provided to students and to staff across each institution to ensure that all parties develop a better understanding of the potential value of ISSE data. The nature of the survey results leads to a detailed dataset. This dataset reflects the richness of the higher education experience. However, due to the level of detail, it can prove challenging to interpret the data to identify priority areas for further consideration, whether these reflect

examples of best practice or areas that would benefit from improvement. Chapter 6 of this report begins to address this issue by looking deeper into a selection of the data. The detail provided in this chapter illustrates the richness of evidence gathered and is intended to assist the reader to appreciate what the data may tell us. Subsequent reports will examine other indices.

Follow up report – “effective feedback and utilisation of ISSE data”

It is important to ensure that this valuable source of information is harnessed to inform enhancement. To support this aim, a second report will be published during the academic year (expected January 2015). This report will provide details and examples of effective feedback from Irish higher education institutions and from other jurisdictions. It will also demonstrate examples of how institutions are utilising 2014 ISSE data to inform planning, development and review activities. As such, the next report in this series will provide an informative insight, for all stakeholders, into the true potential value of implementing the ISSE.

National support to realise the potential of the ISSE

Higher education institutions are complex organisations with multiple priorities. The national project is committed to supporting institutions to realise the potential of the ISSE data to become another valuable information source. Much of this support will present itself as opportunities for existing institutional expertise and experience to be shared more widely, for example, through discussion workshops.

APPENDIX 1

PROJECT RATIONALE AND GOVERNANCE

The *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030*, published in 2011, recommended that higher education institutions should put in place systems to capture feedback from students to inform institutional and programme management, as well as national policy. It also recommended that every higher education institution should put in place a comprehensive anonymous student feedback system, coupled with structures to ensure that action is taken promptly in relation to student concerns. This recommendation was informed by legislation (namely, reference to the involvement of students in evaluating the quality of their educational experience in the *Universities Act, 1997*, and the *Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999*) and other key policy drivers such as *Standards and Guidance for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, (ENQA 2005 and 2009)*, and *Common Principles for Student Involvement in Quality Assurance/Quality Enhancement (IHEQN 2009)*. The National Strategy report noted in 2011 that “substantial progress (in this area) has been made” but also stated that “students still lack confidence in the effectiveness of current mechanisms and there remains considerable room for improvement in developing student feedback mechanisms and in closing feedback loops.”

In 2012, a national project structure was established which was representative of all institutions, relevant agencies and the Union of Students in Ireland. This project team implemented a pilot national student survey in 2013 involving all Universities, Institutes of Technology and most Colleges of Education. The national pilot was regarded as successful, with 12,732 students from twenty six institutions responding to the survey. It was agreed to proceed to first full implementation in 2014. A full report on implementation of the 2013 national pilot is published at www.studentsurvey.ie.

Implementation of the Irish Survey of Student Engagement is funded by the Higher Education Authority as a shared service for participating institutions. The project is co-sponsored by the Higher Education Authority (HEA), Institutes of Technology Ireland (IOTI), the Irish Universities Association (IUA) and the Union of Students in Ireland (USI).

The governance and management structures for the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) were designed to ensure wide representation of partner higher education institutions and sponsoring organisations. A Project Plenary Advisory Group was established with representatives from Universities, Institutes of Technology and the project co-sponsors (HEA, IOTI, IUA and USI). This Plenary Group is responsible for the overall management of the project. There are a number of working groups addressing specific aspects of the project. These include survey design, technical, communications and reporting. Each of the sub groups was chaired by a member of the Plenary Group and members were nominated by participating organisations. A full-time project manager was appointed to lead developments and to ensure coherence and consistency between the various elements of the project.

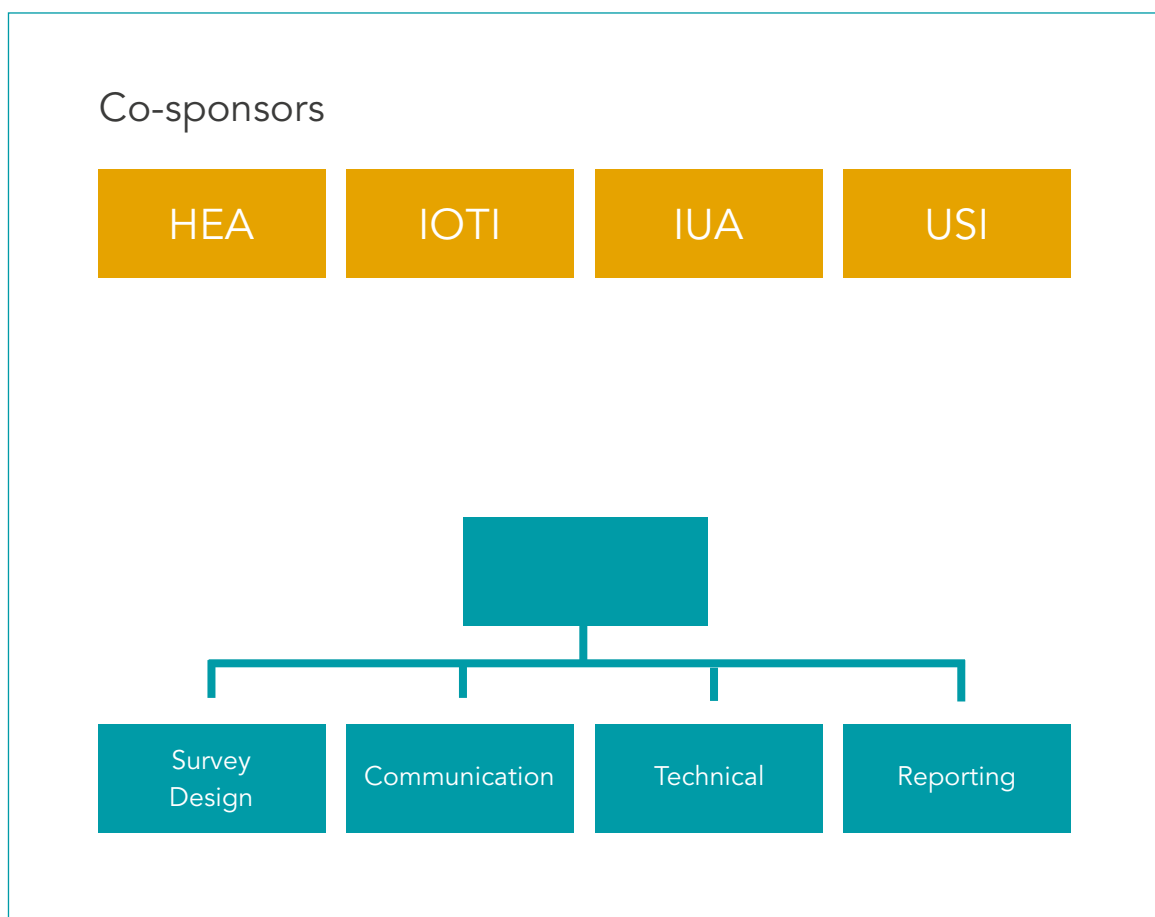


Figure 1. Project working group structures

APPENDIX 2

PARTICIPATION IN

ISSE 2014

The following institutions participated in ISSE 2014. Percentage figures represent the proportion of target student cohorts that responded to at least some survey questions.

UNIVERSITIES

Dublin City University	15.2%
Maynooth University	14.9%
National University of Ireland Galway	16.2%
Trinity College Dublin	16.5%
University College Cork	9.3%
University College Dublin	15.0%
University of Limerick	12.1%

INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY

Athlone Institute of Technology	41.2%
Cork Institute of Technology	11.9%
Dublin Institute of Technology	8.7%
Dundalk Institute of Technology	15.5%
Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology	16.2%
Institute of Art, Design and Technology	20.8%
Institute of Technology Blanchardstown	20.7%
Institute of Technology Carlow	9.4%
Institute of Technology Sligo	10.7%
Institute of Technology Tallaght	19.3%
Institute of Technology Tralee	19.0%
Letterkenny Institute of Technology	12.0%
Limerick Institute of Technology	27.7%
Waterford Institute of Technology	10.9%

OTHER INSTITUTIONS

Church of Ireland College of Education	45.0%
Marino Institute of Education	35.3%
Mary Immaculate College, Limerick	16.3%
Mater Dei Institute of Education	38.1%
National College of Art and Design	32.3%
National College of Ireland	20.8%
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	32.8%
St. Angela's College, Sligo	13.2%
St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra	33.6%

NOTES

