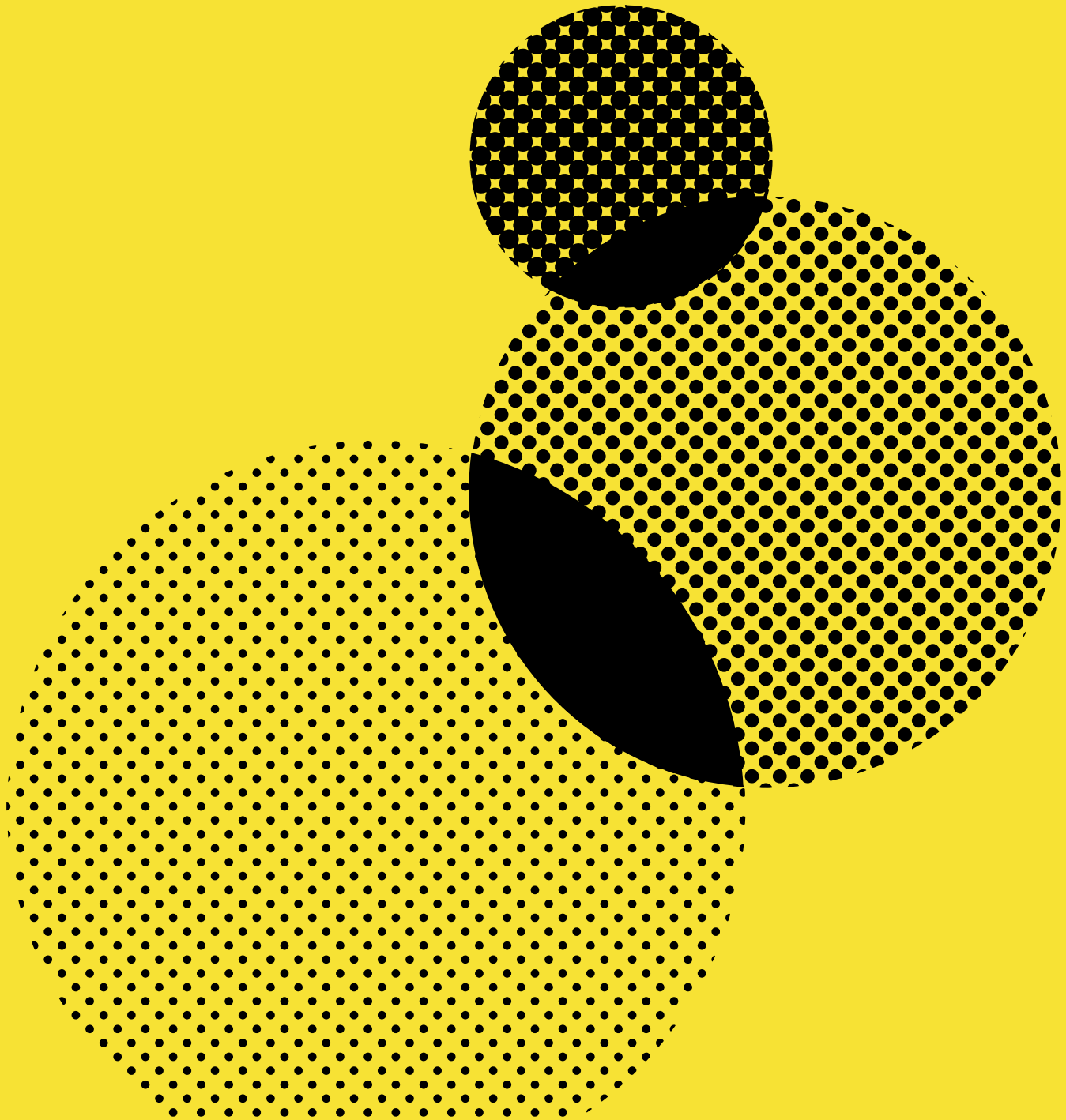




# Irish Survey of Student Engagement National Report 2019





# Irish Survey of Student Engagement National Report 2019

## Acknowledgements

The StudentSurvey.ie national report editorial group wishes to acknowledge the national collaborative partnership of the Higher Education Authority (HEA), the Irish Universities Association (IUA), the Technological Higher Education Association (THEA), the Union of Students in Ireland (USI), and the members of staff in each of these organisations who contribute their time and efforts to StudentSurvey.ie. In addition to the USI, the group thanks the Students' Unions in each of the participating higher education institutions and all of the students and student representatives who worked so closely with us on the 2019 fieldwork and on this report. The group wishes to acknowledge the members of the StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group, and also the StudentSurvey.ie Communications Group. We note the effort and support of the staff, faculty and senior executive in the participating higher education institutions, who continue to be instrumental to the success of StudentSurvey.ie and its positive impact on the higher education landscape in Ireland. Most importantly, the StudentSurvey.ie national report editorial group would like to thank the 40,558 students who gave their valuable time and insights in their participation in the 2019 StudentSurvey.ie, and whose views form the results of this report.

Go raibh míle maith agaibh go léir.

StudentSurvey.ie 2019/01  
October 2019

## Glossary

**Respondent** = any student who began the survey.

**Cohort** = respondents categorised by course year, i.e. first year undergraduate, final year undergraduate, or taught postgraduate.

**Institution type** = respondents categorised by type of higher education institution, i.e. University, Technological Higher Education Institution (Institutes of Technology and Technological University Dublin), or Other Institution.

**Mode of study** = respondents categorised by nature of enrolment, i.e. full-time or part-time/ remote.

**Programme type** = respondents categorised by type of qualification being pursued, i.e. undergraduate National or 2 year certificate, undergraduate Ordinary degree, undergraduate Honours degree, Graduate/ Postgraduate/ Higher diploma, and Masters degree.

**Field of study** = respondents categorised by broad ISCED field of study, i.e. Generic programmes and qualifications; Education; Arts and humanities; Social sciences, journalism and information; Business, administration and law; Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics; Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs); Engineering, manufacturing and construction; Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary; Health and welfare; or Services.



# Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>05</b>
<b>Chapter 1</b>	<b>11</b>
1.1 StudentSurvey.ie	12
1.2 What is student engagement?	12
1.3 Using StudentSurvey.ie to support enhancement	13
1.4 The students' view	14
1.5 Structure of the survey	15
<b>Chapter 2 – Results and findings of the 2019 StudentSurvey.ie</b>	<b>19</b>
2.1 Introduction	20
2.2 Response rates and demographics	21
2.3 Responses to individual questions	24
2.3.1 Questions relating to <i>Higher-Order Learning</i>	24
2.3.2 Questions relating to <i>Reflective and Integrative Learning</i>	25
2.3.3 Questions relating to <i>Quantitative Reasoning</i>	26
2.3.4 Questions relating to <i>Learning Strategies</i>	27
2.3.5 Questions relating to <i>Collaborative Learning</i>	28
2.3.6 Questions relating to <i>Student-Faculty Interaction</i>	29
2.3.7 Questions relating to <i>Effective Teaching Practices</i>	30
2.3.8 Questions relating to <i>Quality of Interactions</i>	31
2.3.9 Questions relating to <i>Supportive Environment</i>	33
2.3.10 Questions not relating to specific engagement indicators	35
<b>Chapter 3 – Engagement indicators at national level</b>	<b>39</b>
3.1 Introduction	40
3.2 Cohort	41
3.3 Institution type	42
3.4 Mode of study	43
3.5 Programme type	44
3.6 Field of study	46
3.7 Gender	49
3.8 Age group	50
3.9 Country of domicile	51

<b>Chapter 4 – Looking Deeper</b>	<b>53</b>
4.1 Introduction	54
4.2 Profile of internationally domiciled students	57
4.3 Changes to the profile of internationally domiciled respondents 2016–2019	62
4.4 Overview of <i>Collaborative Learning, Student-Faculty Interaction, Quality of Interactions</i> and <i>Supportive Environment</i> indicators	63
4.5 Delving deeper into <i>Collaborative Learning, Student-Faculty Interaction, Quality of Interactions</i> and <i>Supportive Environment</i>	65
4.6 Summary of results	71
4.7 Commentary	72
<b>Chapter 5 – Next steps</b>	<b>75</b>
5.1 Branding	76
5.2 Opportunities for recognition of impact of StudentSurvey.ie	77
5.3 Enhancing analysis and using the data	77
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>78</b>
Appendix 1 Project rationale and governance	78
Appendix 2 Membership of the StudentSurvey.ie national report editorial group	80
Appendix 3 Participation in the 2019 StudentSurvey.ie	81
Appendix 4 Questions relating to specific engagement indicators	82



83.5% of respondents, if they could start over again, would go to the same institution they are now attending

# Executive Summary

## Introduction

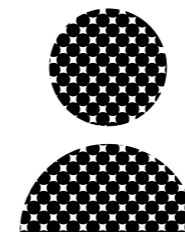
StudentSurvey.ie (Irish Survey of Student Engagement) invites responses from first year undergraduate, final year undergraduate, and taught postgraduate students in 27 higher education institutions in Ireland. There is a second survey, which is designed for postgraduate research (PGR) students (including Masters by research and doctoral degree students). The PGR StudentSurvey.ie runs every two years.

For the purposes of StudentSurvey.ie, student engagement reflects two key elements. The first is the amount of time and effort that students put into their studies and other educationally beneficial activities. The second

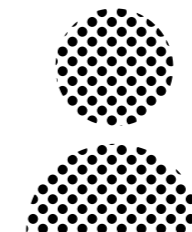
is how institutions deploy resources and organise curriculum and learning opportunities to encourage students to participate in meaningful activities linked to learning.

In interpreting the data that is provided by StudentSurvey.ie, higher education institutions should work collaboratively with students, ensuring that students are involved in translating the data that they have generated in the first instance. All institutions should ensure that they work with students to close the feedback loop through visible reporting on the findings of the previous years' surveys, if they are to continue to engage students in the process.

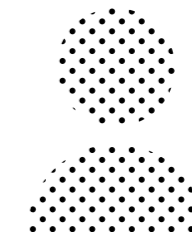
### Irish Survey of Student Engagement



First Year Undergraduate

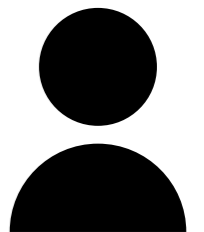


Final Year Undergraduate



Taught Postgraduate

### Irish Survey of Student Engagement for Postgraduate Research Students



Research Postgraduate

### Structure of the survey

The survey consists of 67 questions, grouped by the engagement indicator to which they relate. Most questions relate to a specific engagement indicator. The scores for each indicator are calculated from responses to the multiple questions that relate to that indicator. The indicators are listed in the graphic below. There are also questions that do not directly relate to a specific indicator but that are included in the survey because of their contribution to a broad understanding of student engagement.

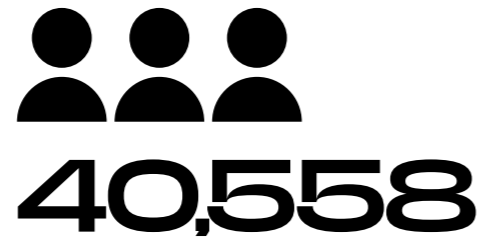
This report presents results from the latest fieldwork of StudentSurvey.ie. The same set of questions has been used since 2016. This current question set will be used for the foreseeable future, although there will be periodic reviews. Those interested in the statistical testing of the StudentSurvey.ie data, or in consulting the full set of questions, are directed to [www.studentsurvey.ie](http://www.studentsurvey.ie).

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

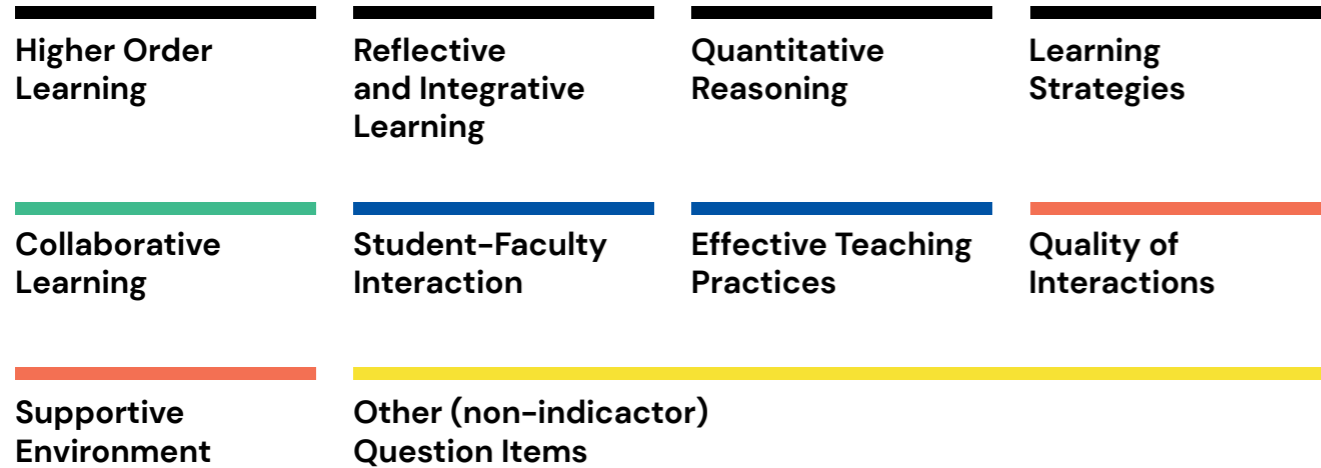
### Response rates and demographics

A total of 40,558 students responded to the 2019 survey, which represents a national response rate of 29.3%. This is the highest response rate to StudentSurvey.ie to date. The respondents consist of 19,557 first year undergraduate students, 13,951 final year undergraduate students and 7,050 taught postgraduate students.

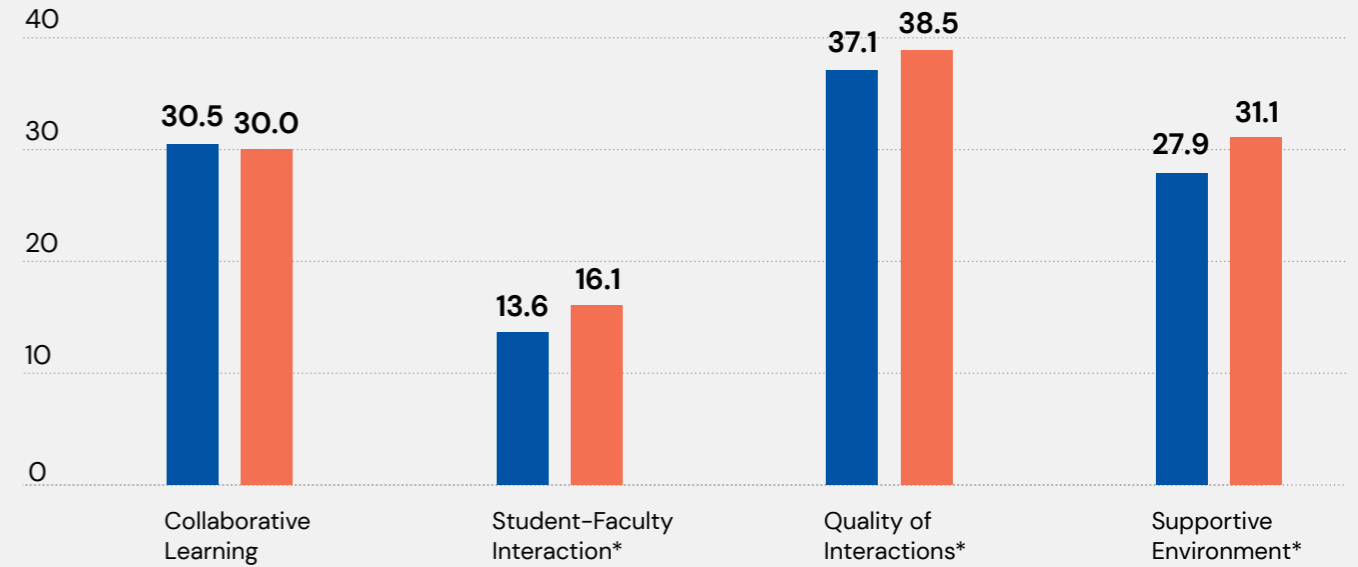
With regard to response rate, a key consideration is that students will respond to the survey when it is clear to them that their higher education institution as a whole and the staff they encounter on a regular basis value the resulting data and do something/ intend to do something with it. Communication of analysis undertaken, results considered, and actions taken are essential for the continued participation in and support for the survey by students.



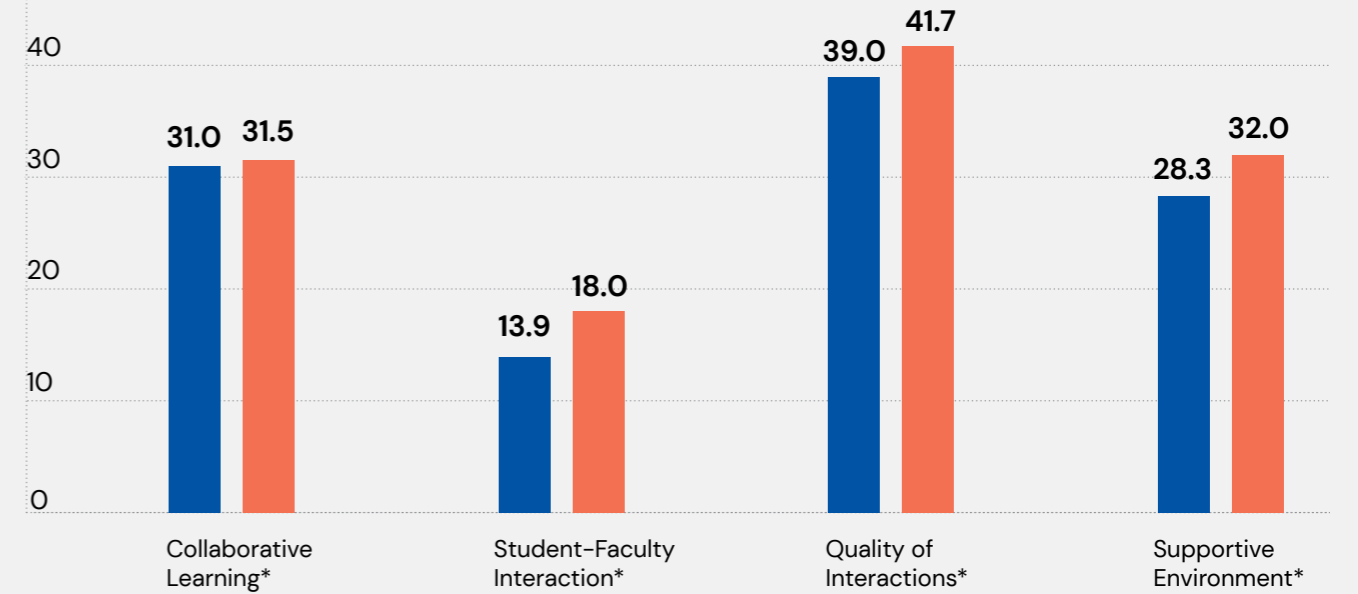
students responded to the 2019 survey



### 2016



### 2019



● Irish Domiciled ● Internationally Domiciled \*The difference is statistically significant.

Fig. 4.2 Irish domiciled and internationally domiciled students' scores for Collaborative Learning, Student-Faculty Interaction, Quality of Interactions and Supportive Environment, 2016 and 2019

## Results of the survey

### Chapter 2

Responses to related questions are presented for each engagement indicator in Chapter 2. Responses to questions that do not directly relate to a specific indicator but that are included in the survey because of their contribution to a broad understanding of student engagement are also presented here.

### Chapter 3

Chapter 3 builds on the national results of StudentSurvey.ie presented in Chapter 2 by exploring the differences between the groups of students by the following characteristics:

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

### Chapter 4

Chapter 4 provides an early investigation into the experience of internationally domiciled students in higher education in Ireland in 2016 and 2019. The focus on 2016 and 2019 is timely in that the two points coincide with the beginning and late stages of the current internationalisation strategy, *Irish Educated, Globally Connected – An International Education Strategy for Ireland 2016–2020*.

Chapter 4 builds on the interesting differences highlighted in Chapter 3 between Irish domiciled and internationally domiciled students in relation to the following engagement indicators:

1. *Collaborative Learning*: The extent to which students collaborate with peers to solve problems or to master difficult material, thereby deepening their understanding.
2. *Student–Faculty Interaction*: The extent to which students interact with academic staff.

3. *Quality of Interactions*: Students' experience of supportive relationships with a range of other people on campus, thereby contributing to students' ability to find assistance when needed and to learn from and with those around them.

4. *Supportive Environment*: Students' perceptions of how much their higher education institution emphasises services and activities that support their learning and development.

5. *Overall Experience*: Respondents' evaluation of their entire educational experience, and whether or not they would go to the same institution again.

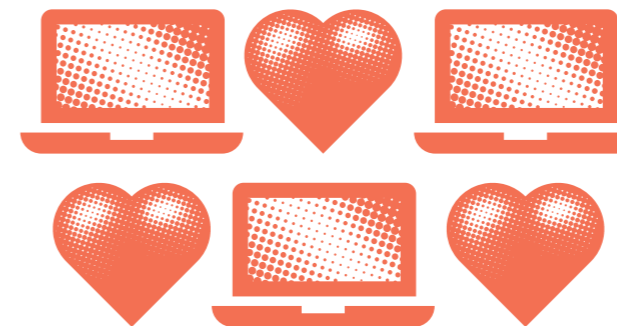
There were no statistically significant differences between Irish domiciled and internationally domiciled students for *Collaborative Learning* in 2016. In terms of *Student–Faculty Interaction*, internationally domiciled students had higher indicator scores than Irish domiciled students in both 2016 and 2019. While there is little difference for Irish domiciled students across these years (13.6 in 2016 compared to 13.9 in 2019), the average score of the internationally domiciled students increased from 16.1 in 2016 to 18.0 in 2019. For *Quality of Interactions*, increased indicator scores are noted for both Irish domiciled and internationally domiciled students over time. Lastly, in terms of *Supportive Environment*, the findings show that internationally domiciled students had higher indicator scores in 2016 and 2019 when compared to the Irish domiciled students. These findings suggest that internationally domiciled students are experiencing higher levels of engagement on these measures than their Irish domiciled peers, with increases noted over time.

## Next steps

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

There are many more possibilities for further analysis of the data than can be carried out by participating institutions and/ or the central StudentSurvey.ie project management function. Third-party researchers/ organisations and other interested parties are encouraged to contact the Project Manager at [info@studentsurvey.ie](mailto:info@studentsurvey.ie) to discuss these possibilities or to propose ideas for future research. Additionally, the StudentSurvey.ie datasets are archived annually with the Irish Social Sciences Data Archive and may be accessed by request.

The rebranding of Irish Survey of Student Engagement and Irish Survey of Student Engagement for Postgraduate Research Students to StudentSurvey.ie and PGR StudentSurvey.ie (respectively) was completed and launched in October 2019. The website now contains a profile for each higher education institution, which includes information such as survey dates, contact details for the leaders of StudentSurvey.ie on campus, and a repository of good practice for survey fieldwork, data analysis and closing the feedback loop to emerge from that institution. This will showcase the work being done by students and staff, and will provide all StudentSurvey.ie practitioners with ideas, inspiration and cautionary tales that they can apply in their own institutions.



## Brand New

Our new brand and website launched in October 2019, [studentsurvey.ie](http://studentsurvey.ie)



**Engagement with college life is seen as important to facilitate in students the ability to develop key capabilities such as critical thinking, problem-solving, writing skills, teamwork and communication skills.**

## **Chapter 1**

### **Context for the Irish Survey of Student Engagement**

## 1.1 StudentSurvey.ie

**StudentSurvey.ie** (Irish Survey of Student Engagement) invites responses from first year undergraduate, final year undergraduate and taught postgraduate students in 27 higher education institutions in Ireland.

There is a second survey, which is designed for postgraduate research (PGR) students (including Masters by research and doctoral degree students).

The PGR StudentSurvey.ie runs every two years.

## 1.2 What is student engagement?

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

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

## 1.3 Using StudentSurvey.ie to support enhancement

Seven years on, StudentSurvey.ie continues to provide an invaluable insight into the experiences of students in higher education in Ireland. Development and implementation of StudentSurvey.ie is driven by the intention to inform, support and encourage enhancement discussions and activities throughout institutions, and to inform national policy.

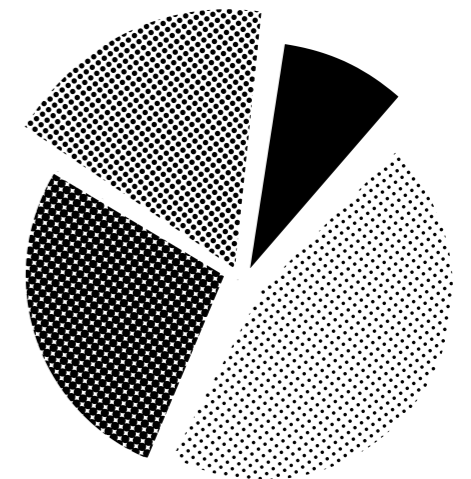
The survey responses are collected for each participating higher education institution by a survey company. The data are aggregated to national results and it is these national-level results that are presented in this report. Responses for each individual institution are returned to that institution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

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

The aim of the central StudentSurvey.ie project management function is to encourage and support higher education institutions (and/or units within institutions) to progress through the stages of:

- collecting data,
- analysing and understanding data, and
- making decisions based on analysis of the data that lead to impact at local level.

Higher education institutions have multiple sources of data about their students. The StudentSurvey.ie dataset is a valuable component of these sources, which are used in varying and increasingly sophisticated ways to identify good practice and to plan for enhancement activities. The capacity to interpret the StudentSurvey.ie data in a timely manner remains variable between institutions. At sectoral level, there is an increasing number of examples of effective uses of StudentSurvey.ie data, e.g. in Institutional Quality Reports to Quality and Qualifications Ireland<sup>1</sup>, in strategic dialogue with the Higher Education Authority<sup>2</sup>, by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning<sup>3</sup>, and in National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP)<sup>4</sup> activities.



1. Quality and Qualifications Ireland ([www.qqi.ie](http://www.qqi.ie))
2. Higher Education Authority ([www.hea.ie](http://www.hea.ie))
3. National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning ([www.teachingandlearning.ie](http://www.teachingandlearning.ie))
4. National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP; [www.studentengagement.ie](http://www.studentengagement.ie))

## 1.4 The students' view



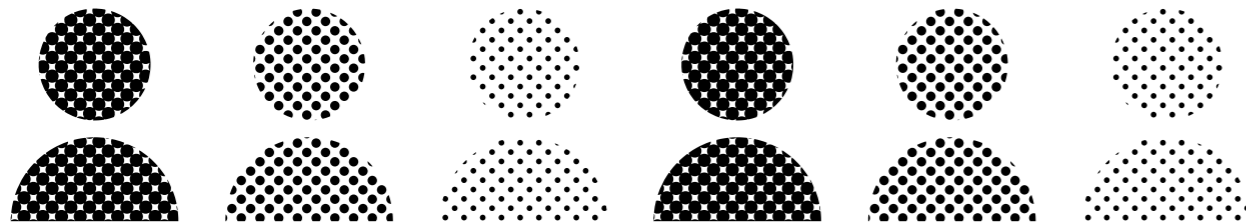
In interpreting the data provided by StudentSurvey.ie, it is imperative that higher education institutions work collaboratively with students, ensuring that students are involved in translating the data that they have generated in the first instance. Furthermore, the collection of data through the survey must not be viewed as the end of the survey lifecycle. All institutions must ensure that they work with students to close the feedback loop through visible reporting on the findings of the previous years' surveys, if they are to continue to engage students in the process.

It is the belief of the USI that a final year student is much more likely to respond to the survey if they have previously responded in their first year and have received feedback from their institution on how their data was used to improve their learning experience. In order to maximise their response rates, institutions should ensure that data are published in an easy-to-interpret format for all students, and should work with their Students' Unions to develop annual action plans, progress of which can be reported back to the student body at regular intervals.

Quality assurance structures in Ireland are held up as an example of best practice internationally in many regards. Quality assurance can be a vehicle for the strengthening of the student voice. However, this cannot be properly achieved

without the development of mechanisms for the student voice to be heard throughout all stages of institutional governance. For StudentSurvey.ie, this means ensuring that students have a seat at the table when discussing the data stemming from the survey, and ensuring that representatives are adequately trained to engage with and interpret survey data.

Students' Unions continue to work as equal partners with their higher education institutions to support the promotion of StudentSurvey.ie, but the meaningful involvement of Students' Unions in the communication of results to the student body and the formulation of appropriate institutional responses continue to present challenges. Students' Unions are eager to use the valuable StudentSurvey.ie data to further improve the student experience. As we move forward with the survey and with the rebrand to StudentSurvey.ie, the core message remains unchanged – students must be engaged at all stages of its lifecycle if it is to remain an effective tool for capturing the student experience and for placing it at the heart of quality enhancement in higher education institutions.



## 1.5 Structure of the survey

The survey consists of 67 questions, grouped by the engagement indicator to which they relate. Most questions relate to a specific engagement indicator. The scores for each indicator are calculated from responses to the multiple questions that relate to that indicator. The indicators listed below are used, and responses to related questions are presented for each indicator in Chapter 2. There are also questions that do not directly relate to a specific indicator, but that are included in the survey because of their contribution to a broad understanding of student engagement. The responses to these are also presented in Chapter 2.

This report presents results from the latest fieldwork of StudentSurvey.ie. The same set of questions has been used since 2016. This current question set will be used for the foreseeable future, although there will be periodic reviews. Those interested in the statistical testing of the StudentSurvey.ie data, or in consulting the full set of questions, are directed to [www.studentsurvey.ie](http://www.studentsurvey.ie).

Higher Order Learning

Reflective and Integrative Learning

Quantitative Reasoning

Learning Strategies

Collaborative Learning

Student-Faculty Interaction

Effective Teaching Practices

Quality of Interactions

Supportive Environment

Other (non-indicator) Question Items

## Notes for interpreting the data



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

Indicator scores are not percentages but rather represent relative performance. They are calculated scores to enable interpretation of the data at a higher level than individual questions, i.e. to act as signposts to help the reader to navigate the large data set. Responses to questions are converted to a 60-point scale, with the lowest response placed at 0 and the highest response placed at 60. The question in the table below is used to illustrate this point. If response 3 is chosen from the 4 possible responses, this response converts to a score of 40.

Indicator scores are calculated for a respondent when they answer all or almost all related questions. The exact number of responses

required varies according to the indicator, based on psychometric testing undertaken for the North American National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)<sup>5</sup>. All responses are required for *Higher-Order Learning*, *Quantitative Reasoning*, *Learning Strategies*, *Collaborative Learning*, and *Student-Faculty Interaction*. All responses but one are required for *Reflective and Integrative Learning*, *Effective Teaching Practices*, *Quality of Interactions*, and *Supportive Environment*. The indicator score is calculated from the mean of (non-blank) responses given. Indicator scores for any particular student group – for example, the first year undergraduate cohort – are calculated as the mean of individual indicator scores.

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

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

Indicator scores provide greatest benefit when used as signposts to explore the experiences of different groups of students – for example, final year undergraduate full-time students and final year undergraduate part-time/ remote

students. Indicator scores also provide an insight into the experiences of comparable groups over multiple datasets, e.g. the experiences of 2019 first year undergraduate students relative to 2018 first year undergraduate students.

5. NSSE ([www.nsse.indiana.edu](http://www.nsse.indiana.edu))

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

Different indicators should not be compared to each other. For example, there is no simple, direct link between scores for *Higher-Order Learning* and scores for *Reflective and Integrative Learning*. Fig. 1.1 is used to illustrate this point. No useful interpretation can be drawn from the fact that scores for *Higher-Order Learning* are generally higher than scores for *Reflective and Integrative Learning*.

However, the following differences could usefully be explored: *Higher-Order Learning* scores for final year undergraduate students are higher than *Higher-Order Learning* scores for first year undergraduate and taught postgraduate students; *Reflective and Integrative Learning* scores appear notably lower for first year undergraduate students than *Reflective and Integrative Learning* scores for

final year undergraduate and taught postgraduate students. These results can be displayed visually, such as in Fig. 1.1, to communicate these differences.

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

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

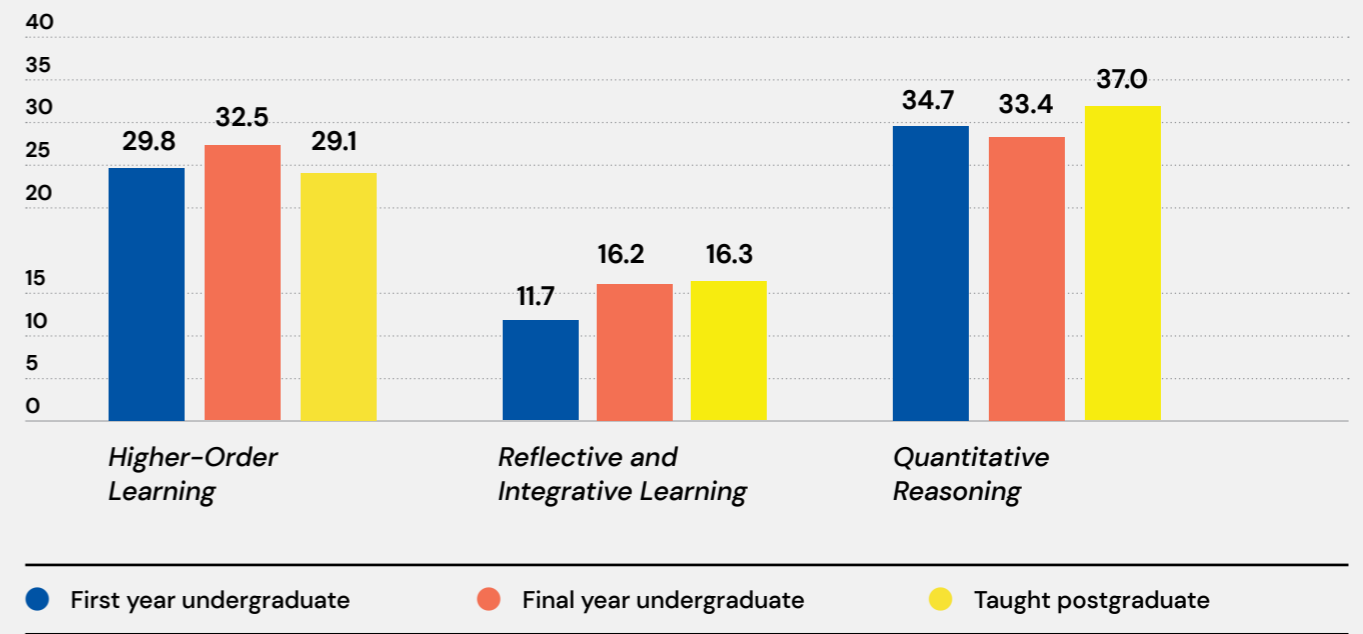


Fig. 1.1 Graph of results for demonstration purposes only



**53.2% of respondents agreed very much/ quite a bit that their institution emphasises providing support for their overall well-being (recreation, health care, counselling, etc.)**

## **Chapter 2**

### **Results and findings of the 2019 StudentSurvey.ie**

## 2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents results from 2019 fieldwork for **StudentSurvey.ie** (Irish Survey of Student Engagement). The first section provides an overview of response rates for different groups of students and of the demographic profile of respondents. The second section presents national-level percentage responses for individual questions. Questions are grouped by the engagement indicator to which they relate. Questions that do not directly relate to a specific indicator are presented in section 2.3.10.

## 2.2 Response rates and demographics

A total of 40,558 students responded to the 2019 survey, which represents a national response rate of 29.3%. This surpassed the response rate of 28% in 2018, and is the highest response rate to StudentSurvey.ie to date. The respondents consist of 19,557 first year undergraduate students, 13,951 final year undergraduate students and 7,050 taught postgraduate students. Table 2.1 presents the demographic profile of the national student population. The profile of the 2019 StudentSurvey.ie respondents is also presented. It closely matches the national student population profile, as it has done in previous years.

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

The response rate for Universities, overall, decreased slightly from 26.1% in 2018 to 25.1% in 2019. The response rate for Technological Higher Education Institutions (i.e. Institutes of Technology and Technological University Dublin) increased from 30.8% in 2018 to 35.0% in 2019. The response rate for Other Institutions also increased in 2019, in this case from 26.5% to 29.1%.

It is significant that 17 of the 27 participating higher education institutions achieved response rates greater than 25% (21 achieved this in 2018), and that 14 institutions achieved response rates greater than 30% (10 in 2018). This is very positive, as the value of the survey as a tool for the enhancement of teaching and learning within each higher education institution is greatest when the data enable reliable analysis for groups, such as for a faculty/ department/ learning support unit.

However, some higher education institutions may find it challenging to continue to increase response rates on an annual basis and may observe a plateau in their response rate. The co-sponsoring organisations recognise that this is a

possibility and leave to the discretion of individual institutions the decision to continue to focus on increasing response rates or, possibly, to sustain this plateau while increasing the emphasis on interpretation of the data and decision-making based on this analysis. A realistic aim in the medium term may be to ensure that the number of responses is sufficient to enable reliable analysis of the subsets of the data that correspond to the institutional structures that are likely to make greatest use of this analysis. Depending on the size and structure of a higher education institution, this may equate to faculty/ school/ department/ programme or other units, and institutions are encouraged to do whatever is right for their local context. Regardless of the circumstances, it is important that all institutions continue to act meaningfully on the data they have available rather than “wait” for some target response rate.

A key consideration highlighted in previous reports and reiterated here is that the response rates for any one year should not be taken as a direct indication of the effort expended to promote participation within individual higher education institutions in that given year. Factors such as timing of the survey, timing of other major events in the institutional calendar, and even weather can influence the response rate achieved. Nevertheless, any institution that notes a pattern of consistent decrease in response rate should reflect on the nature, tone, and visibility of feedback activities.

Students will respond to the survey when it is clear to them that their higher education institution as a whole and the staff they encounter on a regular basis value the resulting data and do something/ intend to do something with it. This is the primary factor that will have greatest impact on the number of responses and, accordingly, enable reliable analysis of increasingly disaggregated data. Communication of analysis undertaken, results considered, and actions taken are essential for the continued participation and support for the survey by students.

Table 2.1 Demographic profile

Characteristic	National student population		All respondents		Response rate
	138,227		40,558		29.3%
<b>Cohort</b>					
First year undergraduate	54778	39.6%	19557	48.2%	35.7%
Final year undergraduate	49578	35.9%	13951	34.4%	28.1%
Taught postgraduate	33871	24.5%	7050	17.4%	20.8%
<b>Institution type</b>					
Universities	73329	53.0%	18419	45.4%	25.1%
Technological Higher Education Institutions*	55226	40.0%	19328	47.7%	35.0%
Other Institutions	9672	7.0%	2811	6.9%	29.1%
<b>Mode of study</b>					
Full-time	106943	77.4%	35890	88.5%	33.6%
Part-time/ remote	31283	22.6%	4668	11.5%	14.9%
<b>Programme type</b>					
National or 2 year certificate (NFQ Level 6)	12461	9.0%	2199	5.4%	17.6%
Ordinary degree (NFQ Level 7)	14674	10.6%	4960	12.2%	33.8%
Honours degree (NFQ Level 8)	77221	55.9%	26349	65.0%	34.1%
Graduate/ Postgrad/ Higher diploma (NFQ Level 9)	9449	6.8%	1305	3.2%	13.8%
Masters degree taught (NFQ Level 9)	24422	17.7%	5745	14.2%	23.5%
<b>Field of study</b>					
Generic programmes & qualifications	411	0.3%	47	.1%	11.4%
Education	9802	7.1%	2729	6.7%	27.8%
Arts & humanities	19435	14.1%	6076	15.0%	31.3%
Social sciences, journalism & information	8118	5.9%	2049	5.1%	25.2%
Business, administration & law	31969	23.1%	9292	22.9%	29.1%
Natural sciences, mathematics & statistics	11469	8.3%	3942	9.7%	34.4%
Information & Communication Technologies (ICTs)	11529	8.3%	3345	8.2%	29.0%
Engineering, manufacturing & construction	15662	11.3%	4360	10.8%	27.8%
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries & veterinary	2162	1.6%	622	1.5%	28.8%
Health & welfare	21923	15.9%	6077	15.0%	27.7%
Services	5747	4.2%	2019	5.0%	35.1%

\*Institutes of Technology and Technological University Dublin

Table 2.1 Demographic profile (continued)

Characteristic	National student population		All respondents		Response rate
	138,227		40,558		29.3%
<b>Gender</b>					
Female	72279	52.3%	23841	58.8%	33.0%
Male	65907	47.7%	16709	41.2%	25.4%
Undeclared	41	0.03%	8	0.02%	19.5%
<b>Age group</b>					
23 and under	76887	55.6%	26708	65.9%	34.7%
24 and over	61340	44.4%	13850	34.1%	22.6%
<b>Country of domicile</b>					
Irish domiciled	122257	88.4%	36149	89.1%	29.6%
Internationally domiciled	15970	11.6%	4409	10.9%	27.6%

## 2.3 Responses to individual questions

Most questions relate to a specific engagement indicator. The scores for each indicator are calculated from responses to multiple questions that relate to that indicator. Percentage responses to each question are presented in this section, grouped by the relevant indicator. The following tables display the responses for all respondents nationally. They also display disaggregated results

by cohort (first year undergraduate, final year undergraduate and taught postgraduate). This report also includes responses to questions that do not directly relate to a specific indicator, but that are included in the survey because of their contribution to a broad understanding of student engagement. These are presented in section 2.3.10.

### 2.3.1 Questions relating to *Higher-Order Learning*

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

**Table 2.2** *Higher-Order Learning*

During the current academic year, how much has your coursework emphasised...		All respondents	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Applying facts, theories, or methods to practical problems or new situations	Very little	5.8%	6.5%	6.1%	3.5%
	Some	26.3%	28.5%	27.0%	18.8%
	Quite a bit	42.1%	41.9%	41.4%	44.0%
	Very much	25.8%	23.2%	25.5%	33.8%
Analysing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts	Very little	7.4%	8.5%	7.5%	3.8%
	Some	30.1%	33.5%	30.6%	20.2%
	Quite a bit	39.4%	38.4%	39.3%	42.4%
	Very much	23.1%	19.6%	22.7%	33.5%
Evaluating a point of view, decision, or information source	Very little	7.6%	8.7%	7.9%	3.9%
	Some	29.9%	33.3%	30.3%	19.7%
	Quite a bit	40.2%	39.3%	40.1%	43.0%
	Very much	22.3%	18.7%	21.7%	33.5%
Forming an understanding or new idea from various pieces of information	Very little	5.7%	6.3%	6.1%	3.5%
	Some	27.5%	30.0%	28.7%	18.6%
	Quite a bit	41.6%	41.2%	41.8%	42.2%
	Very much	25.1%	22.5%	23.4%	35.7%

### 2.3.2 Questions relating to *Reflective and Integrative Learning*

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

**Table 2.3** *Reflective and Integrative Learning*

During the current academic year, about how often have you...		All respondents	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Combined ideas from different subjects/ modules when completing assignments	Never	5.8%	7.9%	4.5%	2.9%
	Sometimes	37.5%	41.1%	36.3%	29.7%
	Often	39.2%	37.3%	39.9%	43.2%
	Very often	17.5%	13.7%	19.3%	24.3%
Connected your learning to problems or issues in society	Never	17.2%	20.7%	16.3%	9.4%
	Sometimes	40.7%	43.6%	40.9%	32.4%
	Often	28.4%	25.2%	29.4%	35.5%
	Very often	13.6%	10.5%	13.4%	22.8%
Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in discussions or assignments	Never	33.4%	36.9%	33.1%	24.4%
	Sometimes	37.2%	37.6%	36.8%	36.8%
	Often	20.3%	18.1%	20.7%	25.7%
	Very often	9.0%	7.3%	9.3%	13.1%
Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue	Never	10.9%	13.3%	10.7%	4.8%
	Sometimes	41.3%	43.4%	42.1%	33.7%
	Often	35.8%	33.3%	35.4%	43.3%
	Very often	12.0%	9.9%	11.8%	18.2%
Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from their perspective	Never	8.1%	9.4%	7.9%	4.7%
	Sometimes	38.9%	40.5%	39.6%	33.1%
	Often	37.3%	35.8%	37.2%	41.8%
	Very often	15.7%	14.3%	15.4%	20.4%
Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept	Never	3.5%	3.9%	3.4%	2.3%
	Sometimes	35.6%	37.0%	37.7%	27.6%
	Often	43.3%	42.9%	42.5%	45.9%
	Very often	17.6%	16.2%	16.3%	24.2%
Connected ideas from your subjects/ modules to your prior experiences and knowledge	Never	3.2%	3.9%	3.2%	1.5%
	Sometimes	31.4%	34.8%	32.6%	19.5%
	Often	42.3%	41.6%	42.7%	43.7%
	Very often	23.1%	19.8%	21.5%	35.3%

### 2.3.3 Questions relating to *Quantitative Reasoning*

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

**Table 2.3** *Quantitative Reasoning*

During the current academic year, about how often have you...	All respondents	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate	
<b>Reached conclusions based on your analysis of numerical information (numbers, graphs, statistics, etc.)</b>	Never	24.8%	27.9%	22.2%	21.4%
	Sometimes	41.4%	42.0%	41.5%	39.5%
	Often	24.2%	22.4%	25.2%	27.2%
	Very often	9.6%	7.8%	11.1%	11.8%
<b>Used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.)</b>	Never	36.4%	40.1%	34.3%	30.5%
	Sometimes	39.1%	38.9%	39.3%	39.4%
	Often	18.0%	15.9%	19.2%	21.1%
	Very often	6.5%	5.2%	7.2%	9.0%
<b>Evaluated what others have concluded from numerical information</b>	Never	35.3%	38.3%	33.0%	31.8%
	Sometimes	43.2%	42.9%	43.8%	42.5%
	Often	17.2%	15.4%	18.1%	20.6%
	Very often	4.3%	3.4%	5.1%	5.1%

### 2.3.4 Questions relating to *Learning Strategies*

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

**Table 2.5** *Learning Strategies*

During the current academic year, about how often have you...	All respondents	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate	
<b>Identified key information from recommended reading materials</b>	Never	9.9%	12.8%	9.1%	3.2%
	Sometimes	39.7%	43.8%	39.9%	28.2%
	Often	36.6%	33.0%	37.2%	45.4%
	Very often	13.8%	10.4%	13.8%	23.1%
<b>Reviewed your notes after class</b>	Never	8.1%	7.3%	10.1%	6.2%
	Sometimes	41.4%	41.4%	43.6%	36.8%
	Often	35.0%	35.0%	32.7%	39.8%
	Very often	15.5%	16.3%	13.6%	17.1%
<b>Summarised what you learned in class or from course materials</b>	Never	9.1%	9.2%	10.1%	7.0%
	Sometimes	42.5%	43.2%	43.3%	39.1%
	Often	35.1%	34.5%	34.2%	38.5%
	Very often	13.2%	13.0%	12.4%	15.4%

### 2.3.5 Questions relating to *Collaborative Learning*

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

**Table 2.6** *Collaborative Learning*

During the current academic year, about how often have you...		All respondents	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Asked another student to help you understand course material	Never	10.7%	9.2%	10.7%	14.9%
	Sometimes	46.3%	46.2%	44.2%	50.9%
	Often	29.8%	31.2%	30.5%	24.7%
	Very often	13.2%	13.4%	14.6%	9.5%
Explained course material to one or more students	Never	6.8%	6.6%	6.1%	8.6%
	Sometimes	45.5%	46.5%	43.0%	47.4%
	Often	33.4%	33.7%	34.2%	31.1%
	Very often	14.3%	13.2%	16.7%	12.9%
Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students	Never	16.4%	17.0%	13.6%	20.5%
	Sometimes	36.1%	38.4%	33.9%	34.1%
	Often	30.1%	30.1%	30.5%	29.7%
	Very often	17.3%	14.5%	22.0%	15.7%
Worked with other students on projects or assignments	Never	10.3%	10.1%	9.1%	13.5%
	Sometimes	32.7%	35.5%	28.9%	32.1%
	Often	32.6%	34.6%	32.1%	27.9%
	Very often	24.4%	19.8%	29.9%	26.5%

### 2.3.6 Questions relating to *Student-Faculty Interaction*

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

**Table 2.7** *Student-Faculty Interaction*

During the current academic year, about how often have you...		All respondents	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Talked about career plans with academic staff	Never	49.3%	57.1%	40.1%	45.8%
	Sometimes	33.9%	29.6%	38.9%	35.3%
	Often	12.5%	10.1%	15.5%	13.4%
	Very often	4.4%	3.2%	5.4%	5.4%
Worked with academic staff on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.)	Never	65.8%	69.6%	61.8%	63.7%
	Sometimes	23.2%	21.2%	25.4%	24.2%
	Often	8.4%	7.3%	9.6%	9.0%
	Very often	2.6%	2.0%	3.2%	3.1%
Discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with academic staff outside of class	Never	41.7%	49.9%	35.6%	31.5%
	Sometimes	38.5%	34.2%	42.1%	43.3%
	Often	14.8%	12.0%	16.7%	18.8%
	Very often	5.0%	3.9%	5.6%	6.5%
Discussed your performance with academic staff	Never	38.1%	44.6%	32.1%	32.5%
	Sometimes	43.3%	39.8%	46.9%	45.5%
	Often	14.6%	12.3%	16.6%	17.2%
	Very often	4.0%	3.3%	4.4%	4.9%

### 2.3.7 Questions relating to *Effective Teaching Practices*

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

**Table 2.8** *Effective Teaching Practices*

During the current academic year, to what extent have lecturers/teaching staff...		All respondents	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Clearly explained course goals and requirements	Very little	5.9%	5.8%	6.5%	4.8%
	Some	25.5%	26.4%	27.0%	20.0%
	Quite a bit	42.1%	42.0%	42.7%	41.5%
	Very much	26.5%	25.8%	23.8%	33.7%
Taught in an organised way	Very little	4.6%	3.6%	5.9%	4.5%
	Some	25.7%	25.1%	29.0%	20.4%
	Quite a bit	43.9%	45.0%	43.2%	42.3%
	Very much	25.9%	26.3%	21.9%	32.7%
Used examples or illustrations to explain difficult points	Very little	4.5%	4.2%	5.4%	3.9%
	Some	22.7%	22.3%	25.3%	18.7%
	Quite a bit	40.9%	40.7%	41.3%	40.5%
Provided feedback on a draft or work in progress	Very much	31.8%	32.8%	28.0%	36.9%
	Very little	20.4%	20.4%	20.9%	19.5%
	Some	32.7%	33.9%	32.3%	30.0%
	Quite a bit	29.0%	29.0%	29.2%	28.4%
Provided prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments	Very much	18.0%	16.7%	17.5%	22.2%
	Very little	20.4%	18.8%	23.5%	18.6%
	Some	33.0%	33.9%	33.1%	30.4%
	Quite a bit	29.0%	30.0%	27.7%	28.9%
Very much	17.6%	17.3%	15.7%	22.0%	

### 2.3.8 Questions relating to *Quality of Interactions*

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

**Table 2.9** *Quality of Interactions*

At your institution, please indicate the quality of interactions with...		All respondents	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Students	Poor	1.9%	1.4%	2.4%	2.2%
	2	2.4%	2.2%	2.8%	2.1%
	3	5.2%	4.7%	6.1%	4.9%
	4	11.6%	11.2%	12.6%	10.6%
	5	20.3%	21.1%	20.2%	18.0%
	6	22.4%	22.3%	22.4%	22.6%
	Excellent	36.3%	37.1%	33.5%	39.7%
Academic advisors	Poor	5.5%	5.0%	6.7%	4.3%
	2	6.3%	6.4%	6.7%	4.9%
	3	11.5%	12.2%	12.4%	7.4%
	4	17.9%	19.0%	18.2%	14.6%
	5	21.4%	22.4%	20.7%	20.1%
	6	18.2%	17.2%	17.9%	21.7%
	Excellent	19.2%	17.8%	17.4%	27.1%
Academic staff	Poor	3.5%	3.3%	4.1%	3.1%
	2	4.7%	4.7%	5.5%	3.4%
	3	9.2%	9.8%	10.0%	6.0%
	4	16.6%	17.3%	17.4%	12.8%
	5	22.0%	23.1%	21.8%	19.7%
	6	21.1%	20.5%	20.4%	24.1%
	Excellent	22.9%	21.4%	20.9%	30.9%

At your institution, please indicate the quality of interactions with...		All respondents	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Support services staff (career services, student activities, accommodation, etc.)	Poor	7.4%	5.8%	9.5%	7.5%
	2	7.8%	6.8%	9.7%	6.6%
	3	11.3%	10.9%	12.8%	9.2%
	4	17.1%	17.6%	17.7%	14.5%
	5	19.3%	19.6%	18.8%	19.1%
	6	17.3%	18.0%	15.0%	20.2%
	Excellent	19.8%	21.3%	16.6%	22.9%
Other administrative staff and offices (registry, finance, etc.)	Poor	7.4%	6.4%	9.3%	6.1%
	2	7.8%	7.4%	9.1%	6.4%
	3	11.4%	11.4%	12.6%	9.1%
	4	17.4%	17.9%	17.7%	15.2%
	5	19.7%	20.4%	18.9%	19.6%
	6	17.1%	17.1%	15.8%	19.8%
	Excellent	19.2%	19.5%	16.5%	23.8%

### 2.3.9 Questions relating to *Supportive Environment*

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

**Table 2.10** *Supportive Environment*

How much does your institution emphasise...		All respondents	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Providing support to help students succeed academically	Very little	8.9%	6.7%	11.6%	9.5%
	Some	31.8%	29.0%	35.4%	32.1%
	Quite a bit	38.5%	39.8%	36.6%	39.0%
	Very much	20.8%	24.5%	16.4%	19.4%
Using learning support services (learning centre, computer centre, maths support, writing support, etc.)	Very little	15.4%	12.6%	18.7%	16.4%
	Some	28.7%	25.8%	31.9%	30.1%
	Quite a bit	33.4%	34.7%	31.6%	33.7%
	Very much	22.4%	26.9%	17.7%	19.8%
Contact among students from different backgrounds (social, racial/ ethnic, religious, etc.)	Very little	22.9%	19.4%	27.3%	23.5%
	Some	34.3%	34.3%	35.5%	32.0%
	Quite a bit	28.0%	30.0%	25.3%	28.2%
	Very much	14.8%	16.4%	11.9%	16.3%
Providing opportunities to be involved socially	Very little	15.2%	10.9%	18.5%	20.3%
	Some	32.2%	29.8%	34.5%	34.1%
	Quite a bit	33.4%	36.0%	31.4%	30.3%
	Very much	19.2%	23.4%	15.6%	15.3%
Providing support for your overall well-being (recreation, health care, counselling, etc.)	Very little	15.2%	10.8%	18.9%	20.0%
	Some	31.6%	29.1%	34.0%	33.3%
	Quite a bit	32.8%	35.5%	30.5%	30.1%
	Very much	20.4%	24.6%	16.7%	16.5%

How much does your institution emphasise...		All respondents	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
Helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	Very little	37.7%	32.0%	44.3%	40.1%
	Some	33.9%	36.1%	31.8%	32.3%
	Quite a bit	20.0%	22.3%	17.2%	19.7%
	Very much	8.3%	9.6%	6.7%	7.9%
Attending campus activities and events (special speakers, cultural performances, sporting events, etc.)	Very little	19.1%	15.9%	21.9%	22.1%
	Some	35.0%	33.3%	37.2%	34.8%
	Quite a bit	31.2%	33.8%	28.8%	28.9%
	Very much	14.8%	17.0%	12.1%	14.2%
Attending events that address important social, economic, or political issues	Very little	26.1%	22.2%	30.5%	28.0%
	Some	36.4%	36.6%	36.6%	35.6%
	Quite a bit	25.9%	28.1%	23.4%	25.0%
	Very much	11.5%	13.1%	9.5%	11.4%

### 2.3.10 Questions not relating to specific engagement indicators

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

**Table 2.11** Non-indicator questions

(Different question stems are used)		All respondents	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
During the current academic year, about how often have you... Asked questions or contributed to discussions in class, tutorials, labs or online	Never	9.2%	11.6%	8.9%	3.3%
	Sometimes	41.4%	45.2%	41.7%	30.2%
	Often	29.9%	27.7%	30.3%	35.0%
	Very often	19.5%	15.5%	19.2%	31.5%
During the current academic year, about how often have you... Come to class without completing readings or assignments	Never	31.2%	32.4%	27.5%	35.2%
	Sometimes	48.4%	47.7%	48.4%	50.3%
	Often	14.3%	13.9%	16.7%	10.4%
	Very often	6.1%	6.0%	7.4%	4.1%
During the current academic year, about how often have you... Made a presentation in class or online	Never	18.3%	22.9%	13.0%	15.8%
	Sometimes	44.8%	47.9%	42.4%	41.2%
	Often	24.4%	20.9%	28.0%	26.9%
	Very often	12.5%	8.3%	16.6%	16.1%
During the current academic year, about how often have you... Improved knowledge and skills that will contribute to your employability	Never	5.6%	7.2%	4.7%	3.2%
	Sometimes	30.7%	34.0%	30.3%	22.5%
	Often	40.8%	39.1%	41.7%	43.3%
	Very often	22.9%	19.8%	23.3%	31.0%
During the current academic year, about how often have you... Explored how to apply your learning in the workplace	Never	18.8%	24.7%	15.2%	9.5%
	Sometimes	36.1%	37.3%	37.4%	30.3%
	Often	29.9%	26.2%	31.6%	36.4%
	Very often	15.3%	11.8%	15.8%	23.8%
During the current academic year, about how often have you... Exercised or participated in physical fitness activities	Never	30.0%	28.8%	29.9%	33.8%
	Sometimes	29.7%	29.2%	29.8%	30.5%
	Often	20.0%	20.5%	19.9%	18.9%
	Very often	20.3%	21.5%	20.4%	16.7%

(Different question stems are used)		All respondents	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
During the current academic year, about how often have you... Blended academic learning with workplace experience	Never	26.9%	36.0%	20.5%	14.6%
	Sometimes	32.6%	32.6%	34.6%	28.9%
	Often	25.3%	20.7%	28.3%	31.8%
	Very often	15.2%	10.7%	16.6%	24.7%
During the current academic year, about how often have you... Worked on assessments that informed you how well you are learning	Never	21.8%	20.9%	24.3%	19.4%
	Sometimes	42.7%	44.2%	43.5%	37.0%
	Often	27.5%	27.2%	25.5%	32.2%
	Very often	8.0%	7.7%	6.6%	11.4%
During the current academic year, about how often have you... Memorised course material	Very little	15.7%	12.2%	11.9%	32.5%
	Some	33.9%	35.8%	31.3%	34.2%
	Quite a bit	34.4%	37.0%	36.1%	23.9%
	Very much	16.0%	15.1%	20.6%	9.4%
Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution... Work with academic staff on a research project	Have not decided	33.5%	46.2%	22.5%	21.1%
	Do not plan to do	23.6%	17.3%	32.8%	22.5%
	Plan to do	26.4%	33.0%	15.2%	31.3%
	Done or in progress	16.4%	3.5%	29.5%	25.2%
Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution... Community service or volunteer work	Have not decided	27.5%	29.9%	25.1%	26.1%
	Do not plan to do	25.8%	15.9%	34.9%	34.3%
	Plan to do	29.4%	40.5%	18.4%	21.2%
	Done or in progress	17.3%	13.7%	21.7%	18.4%
How much does your institution emphasise... Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	Very little	4.9%	5.6%	4.7%	3.2%
	Some	26.1%	29.7%	23.8%	20.8%
	Quite a bit	46.2%	46.2%	45.6%	47.3%
	Very much	22.9%	18.6%	25.8%	28.7%
How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas... Writing clearly and effectively	Very little	12.7%	15.3%	10.7%	9.3%
	Some	31.1%	35.2%	28.2%	26.0%
	Quite a bit	36.8%	35.0%	38.7%	37.9%
	Very much	19.4%	14.5%	22.4%	26.8%
How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas... Speaking clearly and effectively	Very little	13.7%	15.4%	11.4%	13.7%
	Some	30.7%	33.4%	28.8%	27.5%
	Quite a bit	36.8%	35.7%	38.7%	36.1%
	Very much	18.8%	15.5%	21.2%	22.7%

(Different question stems are used)		All respondents	First year undergraduate	Final year undergraduate	Taught postgraduate
How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas... Thinking critically and analytically	Very little	4.3%	4.8%	4.1%	3.4%
	Some	22.1%	25.1%	20.3%	17.4%
	Quite a bit	42.2%	43.6%	41.6%	39.8%
	Very much	31.4%	26.5%	34.0%	39.3%
How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas... Analysing numerical and statistical information	Very little	19.9%	21.4%	17.8%	20.2%
	Some	31.4%	32.5%	30.7%	29.8%
	Quite a bit	30.4%	30.5%	30.6%	29.5%
	Very much	18.3%	15.5%	20.8%	20.5%
How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas... Acquiring job- or work-related knowledge and skills	Very little	12.0%	14.0%	11.0%	8.9%
	Some	29.6%	32.2%	28.7%	24.2%
	Quite a bit	34.8%	33.5%	35.5%	37.1%
	Very much	23.5%	20.3%	24.7%	29.8%
How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas... Working effectively with others	Very little	6.9%	6.6%	6.0%	9.4%
	Some	24.8%	25.2%	23.8%	25.4%
	Quite a bit	39.7%	40.5%	40.5%	36.2%
	Very much	28.6%	27.7%	29.7%	29.0%
How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas... Solving complex real-world problems	Very little	15.7%	17.5%	14.9%	12.4%
	Some	33.8%	35.1%	33.9%	29.7%
	Quite a bit	32.8%	31.7%	33.0%	35.5%
	Very much	17.8%	15.7%	18.2%	22.4%
How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills and personal development in the following areas... Being an informed and active citizen (societal/ political/ community)	Very little	22.9%	23.6%	23.7%	19.7%
	Some	34.7%	36.5%	33.7%	31.8%
	Quite a bit	27.5%	26.8%	27.4%	29.5%
	Very much	14.9%	13.1%	15.2%	19.1%
How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?	Poor	3.0%	1.8%	4.4%	3.4%
	Fair	16.2%	14.2%	19.7%	14.7%
	Good	50.5%	52.0%	50.4%	46.9%
	Excellent	30.2%	32.0%	25.5%	34.9%
If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?	Definitely no	4.2%	2.4%	6.4%	4.4%
	Probably no	12.3%	10.0%	15.8%	11.6%
	Probably yes	42.8%	42.6%	43.6%	41.7%
	Definitely yes	40.7%	45.0%	34.2%	42.3%



**46.6% of respondents agreed very much/ quite a bit that, during the current academic year, lecturers/ teaching staff provided prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments.**

## **Chapter 3**

### **Engagement indicators at national level**

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter builds on the national results of **StudentSurvey.ie** (Irish Survey of Student Engagement) presented in Chapter 2 by exploring the differences between the groups of students by the following characteristics:

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

In this chapter, where results are presented as being statistically significant, this indicates that the difference between two or more groups is statistically significant where  $p < .05$ , which means that the result can be interpreted with 95% confidence or greater<sup>6</sup>. While not published in this report, results of reliability and validity testing of the 2016 question set still being used in 2019 have been published on [www.studentsurvey.ie](http://www.studentsurvey.ie)



#### Notes for interpreting the data

- Indicator scores provide signposts to the experiences of students.
- These are NOT percentages.
- Please refer to notes for interpreting the data on pages 16–17.
- Compare scores WITHIN each indicator and NOT between indicators.

6. While the data are ordinal when collected as survey data, the calculation of the indicator scores renders these data into continuous variable. The data are analysed using t-tests, where two groups are being compared, or ANOVA where more than two groups are being compared.

### 3.2 Cohort

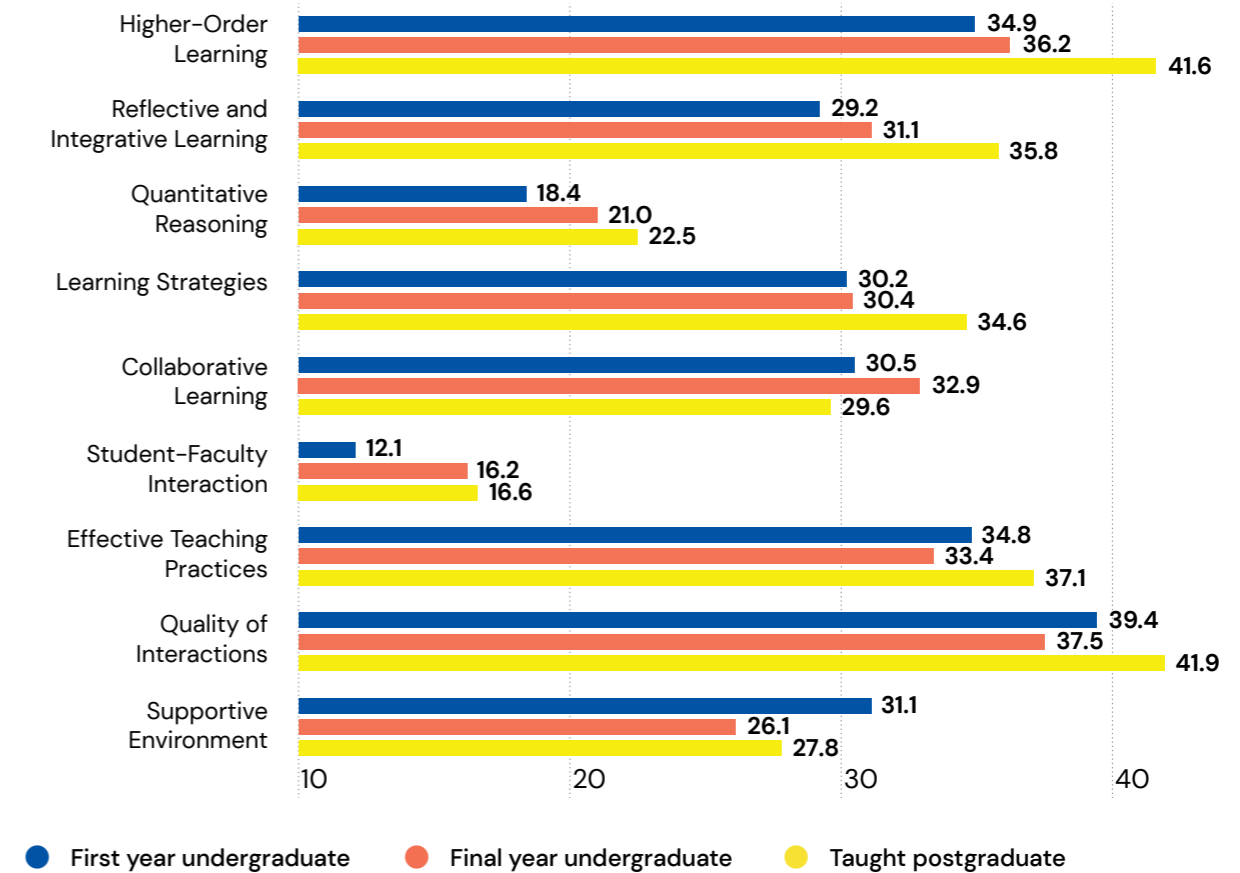


Fig. 3.1 Indicator scores by cohort

Fig. 3.1 presents indicator scores results by cohort. There is a steady increase in indicator scores across the cohorts from first year undergraduate to final year undergraduate to taught postgraduate for *Higher-Order Learning*, *Reflective and Integrative Learning*, and *Quantitative Reasoning*. There is a significant increase in indicator score for *Learning Strategies* from undergraduate to postgraduate responses, though the difference between first year undergraduate and final year undergraduate is not statistically significant. There is a significant increase in indicator score for *Student-Faculty Interaction* from undergraduate to postgraduate responses also, although here the difference between first year undergraduate and taught postgraduate is not significant.

A different profile emerged for *Effective Teaching Practices* and *Quality of Interactions*. In both cases, while there was a significant increase in

indicator score from first year undergraduate to taught postgraduate, the score fell significantly for final year undergraduate respondents in both instances. The result for *Supportive Environment* differed. Here, the indicator score fell significantly for final year undergraduate respondents compared to first year undergraduate and taught postgraduate respondents, though in this case the indicator score for first year undergraduate was higher than for taught postgraduate.

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

### 3.3 Institution type

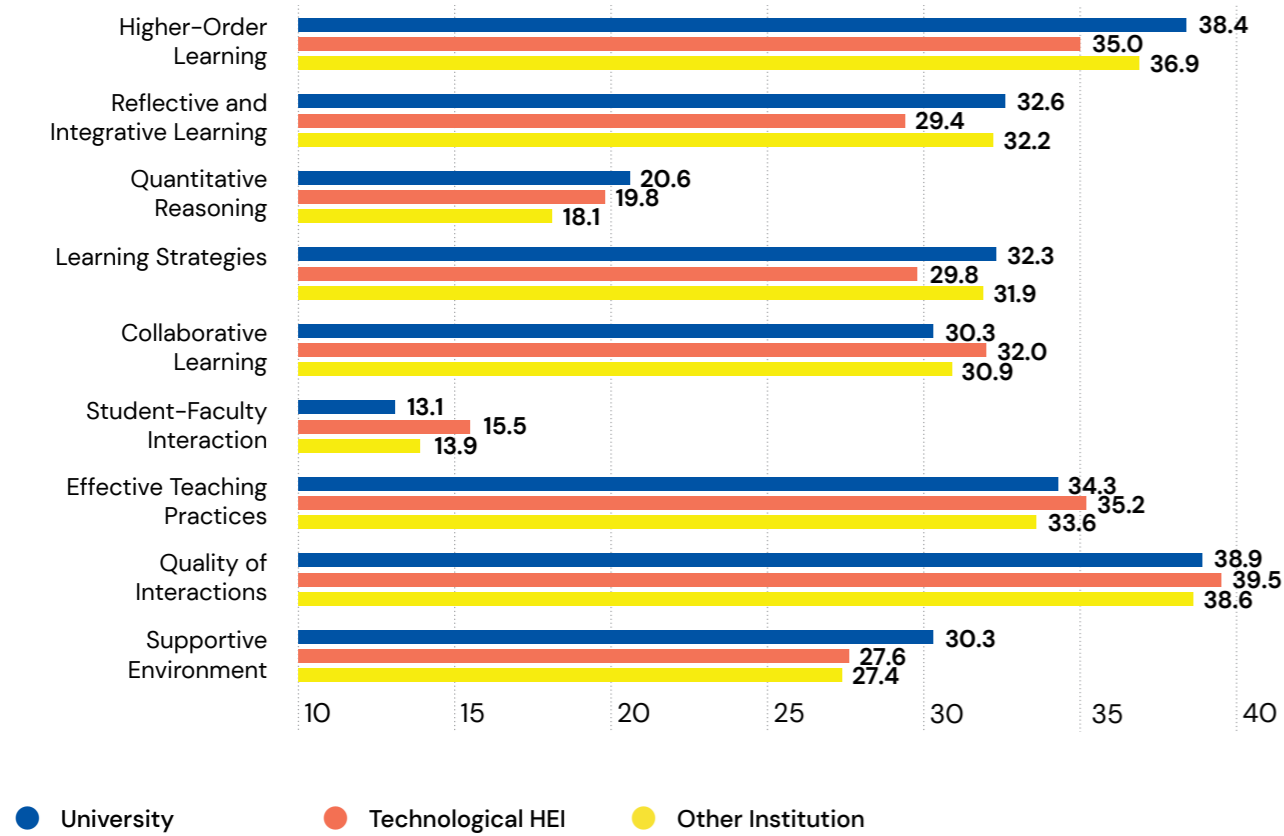


Fig. 3.2 Indicator scores by institution type

Fig. 3.2 presents indicator scores by institution type. The higher education institution types are: University, Technological Higher Education Institution (Institutes of Technology and Technological University Dublin; abbreviated to Technological HEI), and Other Institutions. The corresponding 27 participating institutions are listed in Appendix 3.

There was some variability in the results here. In the case of *Higher-Order Learning*, *Quantitative Reasoning* and *Supportive Environment*, respondents from Universities indicated higher indicator scores than Technological HEIs and Other Institutions. For *Reflective and Integrative Learning* and *Learning Strategies*, Universities received significantly higher indicator scores than Technological HEIs but the difference between Universities and Other Institutions was not significant. Remaining with these indicators, in the case of *Quantitative Reasoning*, the scores for

Technological HEIs were significantly higher than the scores for students in Other Institutions. However, in the case of *Higher-Order Learning*, *Reflective and Integrative Learning* and *Learning Strategies*, the indicator scores for Other Institutions were significantly higher those for Technological HEIs. The difference between students in Technological HEIs and students in Other Institutions for *Supportive Environment* was not significant.

Conversely, for *Collaborative Learning*, *Student-Faculty Interaction*, *Effective Teaching Practices* and *Quality of Interactions*, respondents from Technological HEIs indicated significantly higher indicator scores than those from Universities and Other Institutions in each case. The only significant difference between Universities and Other Institutions was for *Student-Faculty Interaction*, where respondents from Other Institutions had significantly higher indicator scores than respondents from Universities.

### 3.4 Mode of study

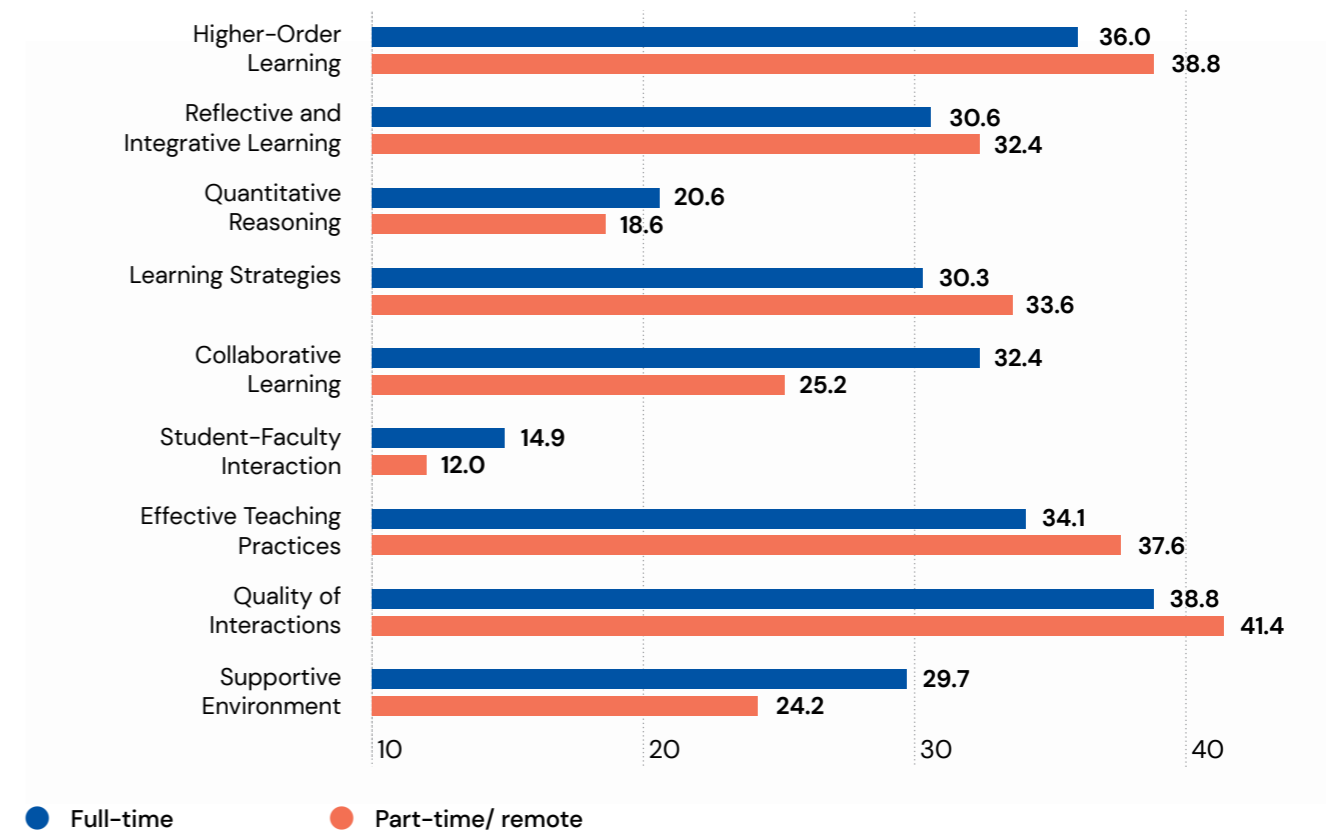


Fig. 3.3 Indicator scores by mode of study

Fig. 3.3 presents indicator scores for full-time and part-time/ remote students. It illustrates that full-time students showed higher indicator scores for *Quantitative Reasoning*, *Collaborative Learning*, *Student-Faculty Interaction* and *Supportive Environment* than did the part-time/ remote students. Conversely, part-time/ remote students had higher indicator scores relating to *Higher-Order Learning*, *Reflective and Integrative Learning*, *Learning Strategies*, *Effective Teaching Practices* and *Quality of Interactions*.

### 3.5 Programme type

Fig. 3.4 presents indicator scores by programme type (i.e. National or 2 year certificate, Ordinary degree, Honours degree, Graduate/ Postgrad/ Higher diploma, and Masters degree taught) for qualifications at Levels 6 to 9 of the National Framework of Qualifications.

Students pursuing a Masters degree taught had significantly higher indicator scores than those pursuing all other degree types for *Higher-Order Learning*, *Reflective and Integrative Learning*, *Quantitative Reasoning* and *Student-Faculty Interaction*. They are followed by Graduate/ Postgrad/ Higher diploma students, then Honours degree students as the next two significantly highest scoring groups<sup>7</sup> in each case except for *Student-Faculty Interaction*. For the remaining indicators, those pursuing a Masters degree taught consistently had a score nearly as high as the highest, with the exception of *Collaborative Learning*.

The scores for respondents pursuing a National or 2 year certificate or Ordinary degree tended to fall in the middle of the spread of scores regardless of which programme type occupied the highest or lowest end of the spread of scores, though National or 2 year certificate had the highest scores for *Effective Teaching Practices* and lowest for *Quantitative Reasoning* and *Student-Faculty Interaction*, while Ordinary degree had the highest score for *Collaborative Learning* and lowest for *Higher-Order Learning*, *Reflective and Integrative Learning* and *Learning Strategies*.

Nearly all of the indicator scores for the programme types were significantly different except for a small number of comparisons.

Fig. 3.4 References

- National or 2 year certificate (NFQ Level 6)
- Ordinary degree (NFQ Level 7)
- Honours degree (NFQ Level 8)
- Graduate/ Postgrad/ Higher diploma (NFQ Level 9)
- Masters degree taught (NFQ Level 9)

7. For *Higher-Order Learning*, *Reflective and Integrative Learning*, and *Quantitative Reasoning*, these two groups differed significantly from each other and every other group with the following exceptions: the difference between Honours degree and National or 2 year certificate was not significant for *Higher-Order Learning*, the difference between Honours degree and Graduate/ Postgrad/ Higher diploma was not significant for *Quantitative Reasoning*, nor was the difference between Honours degree and Ordinary degree.

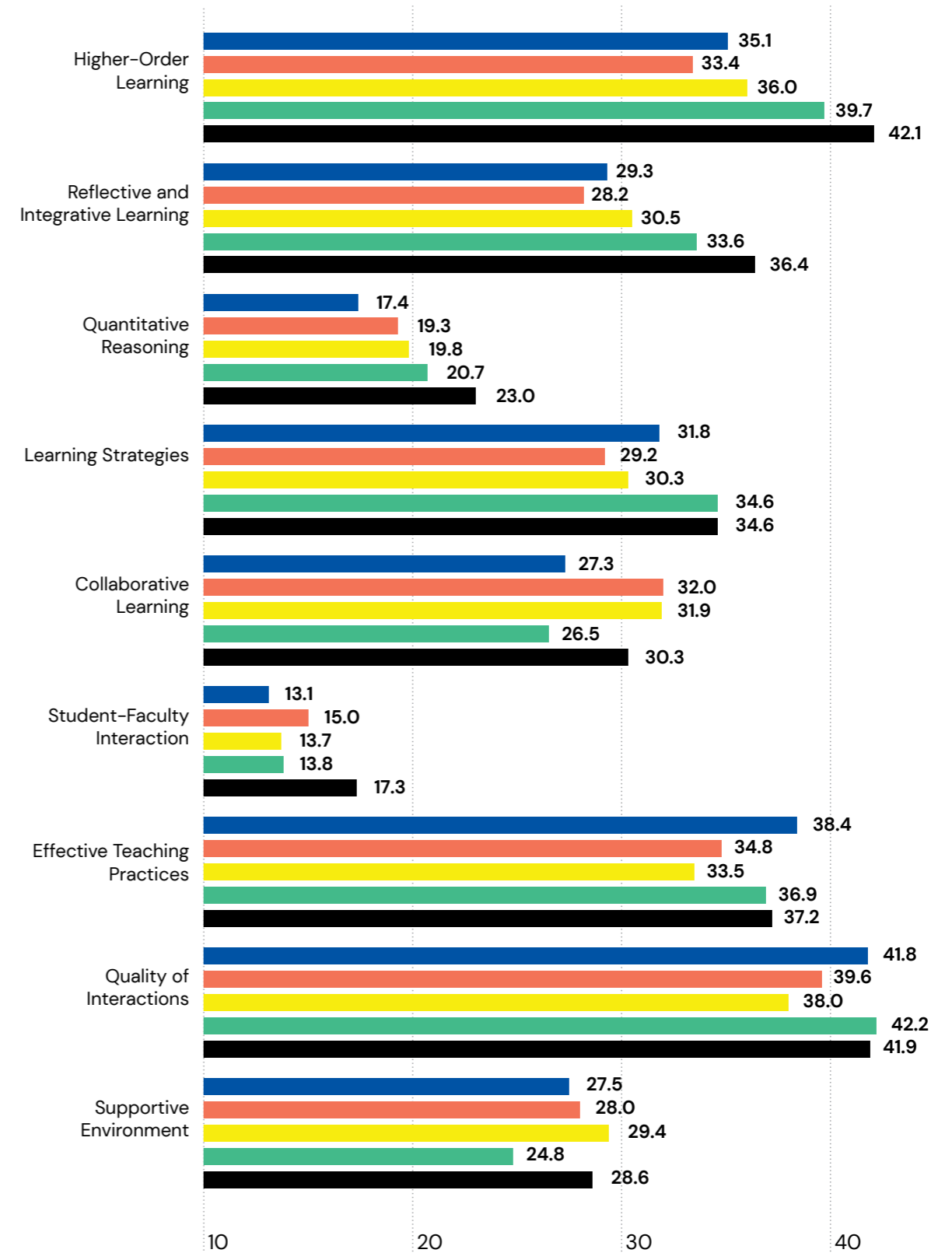


Fig. 3.4 Indicator scores by programme type

### 3.6 Field of study

**Fig. 3.5a** presents indicator scores by field of study, using broad fields of study as defined by the International Standard Classification of Education<sup>8</sup>. Looking first to *Higher-Order Learning* and *Reflective and Integrative Learning*, students studying Social sciences, journalism and information, and Health and welfare had the highest indicator scores and were not significantly different from each other. Health and welfare also had significantly higher scores for *Learning Strategies* than all other groups except for Social sciences, journalism and information. The rest of the fields of study had similar scores for this indicator and most did not differ significantly.

The results for *Quantitative Reasoning* were more varied. All groups of students differed by field of study with some exceptions. Those in fields related to Natural science, mathematics and statistics had the highest scores on this indicator, followed by Social sciences, journalism and information, and Engineering, manufacturing and construction. These groups of students did not differ significantly from each other and formed one cluster. Students studying Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), Business, administration and law, and Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary did not differ significantly from each other and formed a second cluster. Finally, Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary, Health and welfare, and Services did not differ significantly from each other and formed a related but distinct third cluster.

No single group emerged as having higher scores for *Collaborative Learning*; respondents studying Business, administration and law, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary, Health and welfare, Services, and Engineering, manufacturing and construction all had high indicator scores and did not differ significantly from each other in nearly all pairings. Arts and humanities and Social sciences, journalism and information had significantly lower scores than other groups<sup>9</sup> and did not differ significantly from each other.

**Fig. 3.5b** demonstrates that *Student-Faculty Interaction* also showed little significant variation, though Services had significantly higher indicator scores than all other fields of study. There was also little variability evident in responses to *Effective Teaching Practices*, except for respondents in Arts and humanities, who had significantly higher scores than respondents in Education, Business, administration and law, Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), and Engineering, manufacturing and construction.

Respondents studying Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) had the highest indicator scores for *Quality of Interactions*, and the difference between them and Education, Arts and humanities, Business, administration and law, Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics, Engineering, manufacturing and construction, Health and welfare, and Services was significant in each case.

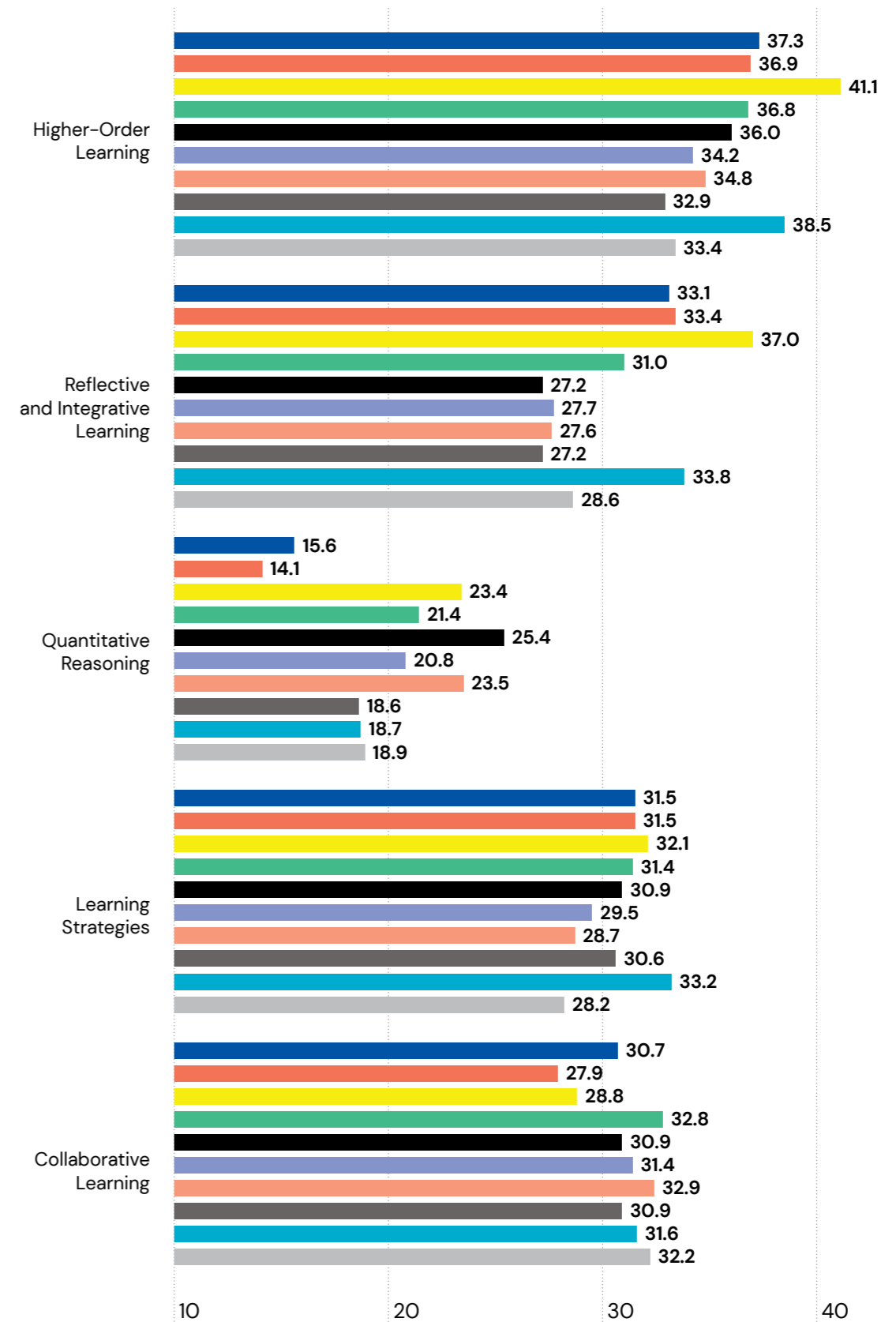
Results for *Supportive Environment* were quite varied. The highest indicator scores were for respondents in Arts and humanities, Social sciences, journalism and information, Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics, and Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary, who did not differ significantly from each other. The lowest scores were for respondents in Education, whose scores differed significantly from all other groups except for Engineering, manufacturing and construction.

**Fig. 3.5a** References

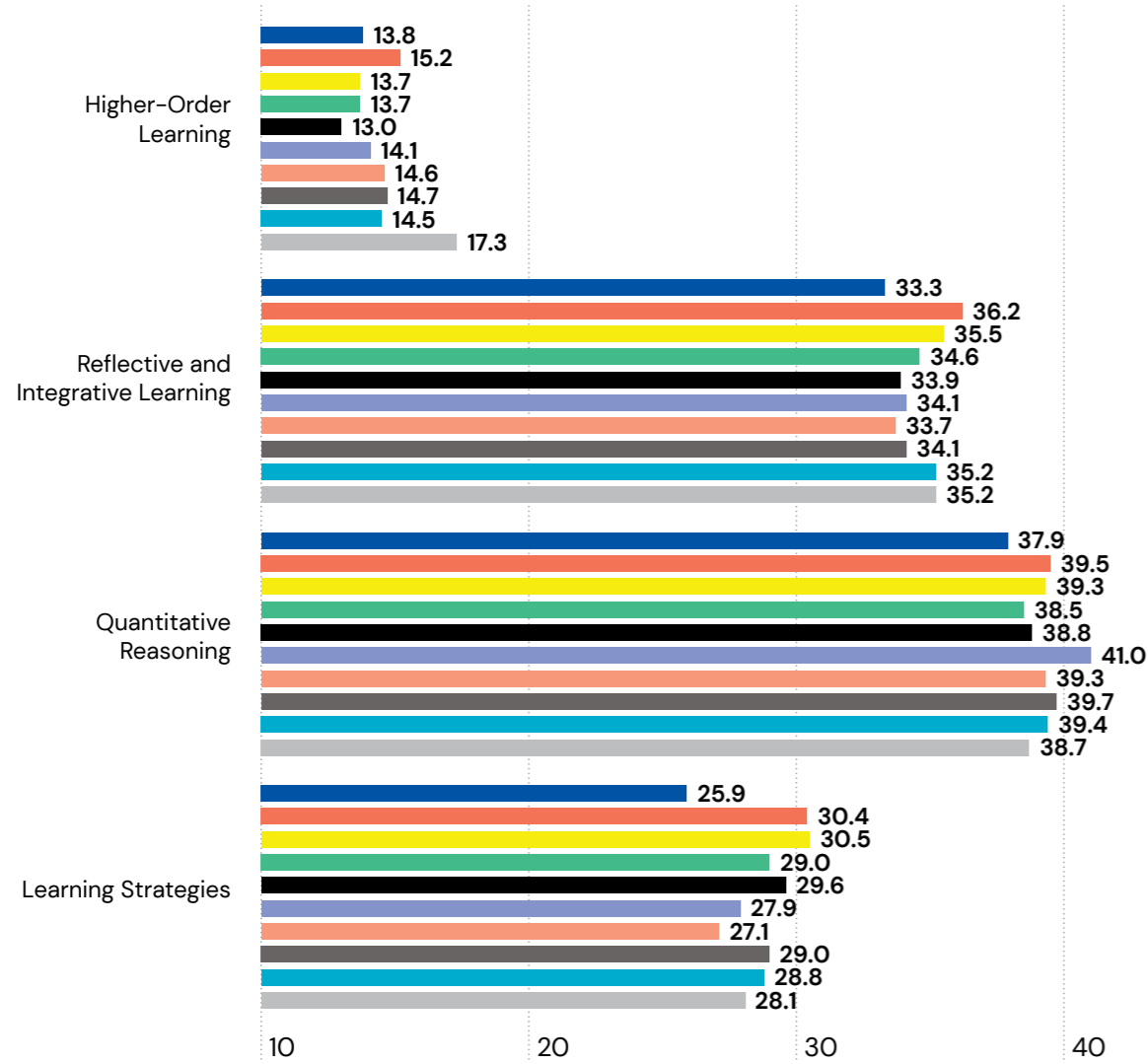
- Education
- Arts and humanities
- Social sciences, journalism and information
- Business, administration and law
- Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics
- Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)
- Engineering, manufacturing and construction
- Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary
- Health and welfare
- Services

8. ISCED [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/International\\_Standard\\_Classification\\_of\\_Education\\_\(ISCED\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/International_Standard_Classification_of_Education_(ISCED))

9. The single exception was that the difference between Social sciences, journalism and information did not differ significantly from Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary.



**Fig. 3.5a** Indicator scores by field of study



- Education
- Arts and humanities
- Social sciences, journalism and information
- Business, administration and law
- Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics
- Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)
- Engineering, manufacturing and construction
- Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary
- Health and welfare
- Services

Fig. 3.5b Indicator scores by field of study

### 3.7 Gender

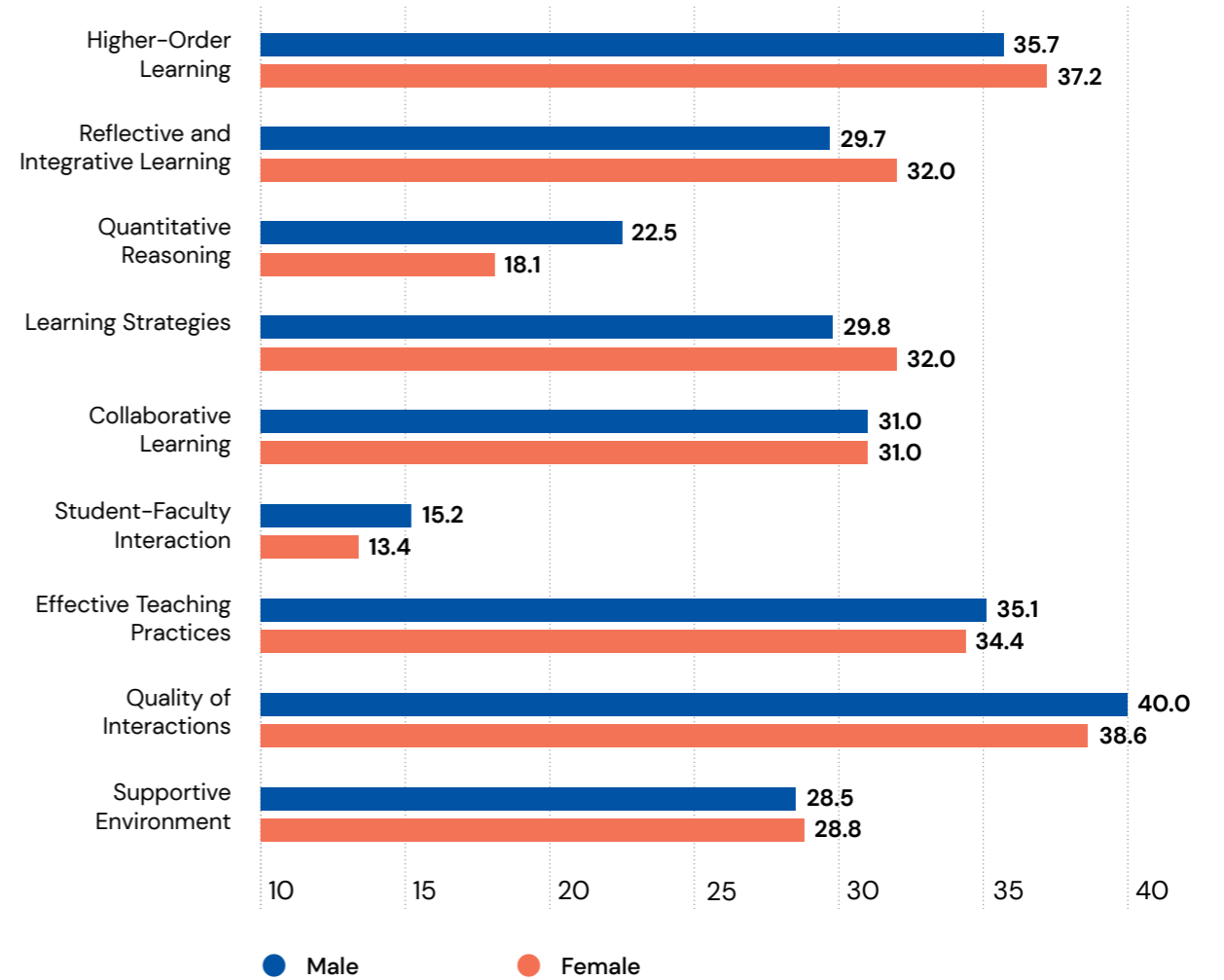


Fig. 3.6 Indicator scores by gender

As part of the non-sensitive demographic information securely transferred by the participating higher education institutions to the survey company prior to fieldwork, institutions indicate the gender of each student as it appears on their records. The four options are male, female, prefer not to say and gender non-binary. Due to the relatively low numbers in the latter two categories compared to the large number in the former two categories, the survey company collapsed the latter two categories into one category named 'Undeclared'. As the number of respondents in this category in 2019 was less than 10, it was deemed inadvisable to include them in the statistical analysis.

Fig. 3.6 presents engagement indicator scores by gender. It illustrates that scores for most indicators are broadly similar for male and female students. There is no statistically significant difference for *Collaborative Learning* or for *Supportive Environment*.

Indicator scores for female students are higher than those for male students for *Higher-Order Learning*, *Reflective and Integrative Learning* and *Learning Strategies*. Indicator scores for male students are higher for *Quantitative Reasoning*, *Student-Faculty Interaction*, *Quality of Interactions*, and *Effective Teaching Practices*.

### 3.8 Age group

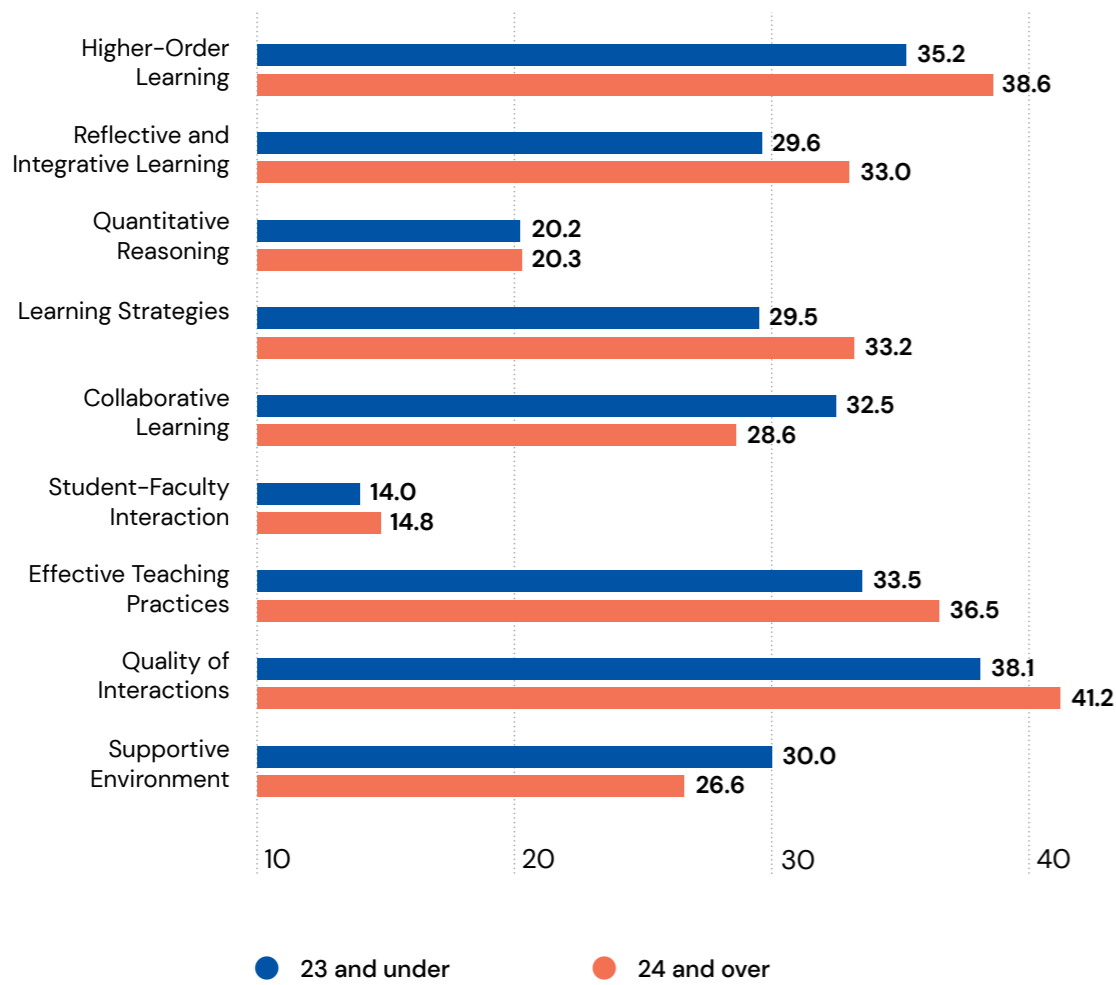


Fig. 3.7 Indicator scores by age group

Fig. 3.7 contains indicator scores by age group. Respondents aged 24 years and over demonstrated higher indicator scores for *Higher-Order Learning*, *Reflective and Integrative Learning*, *Learning Strategies*, *Effective Teaching Practices*, *Quality of Interactions*, and *Student-Faculty Interaction* than for respondents aged 23 years and under. Respondents aged 23 years and under had higher indicator scores for *Collaborative Learning* and *Supportive Environment*. The difference in scores for *Quantitative Reasoning* between the two age groups was not statistically significant.

### 3.9 Country of domicile

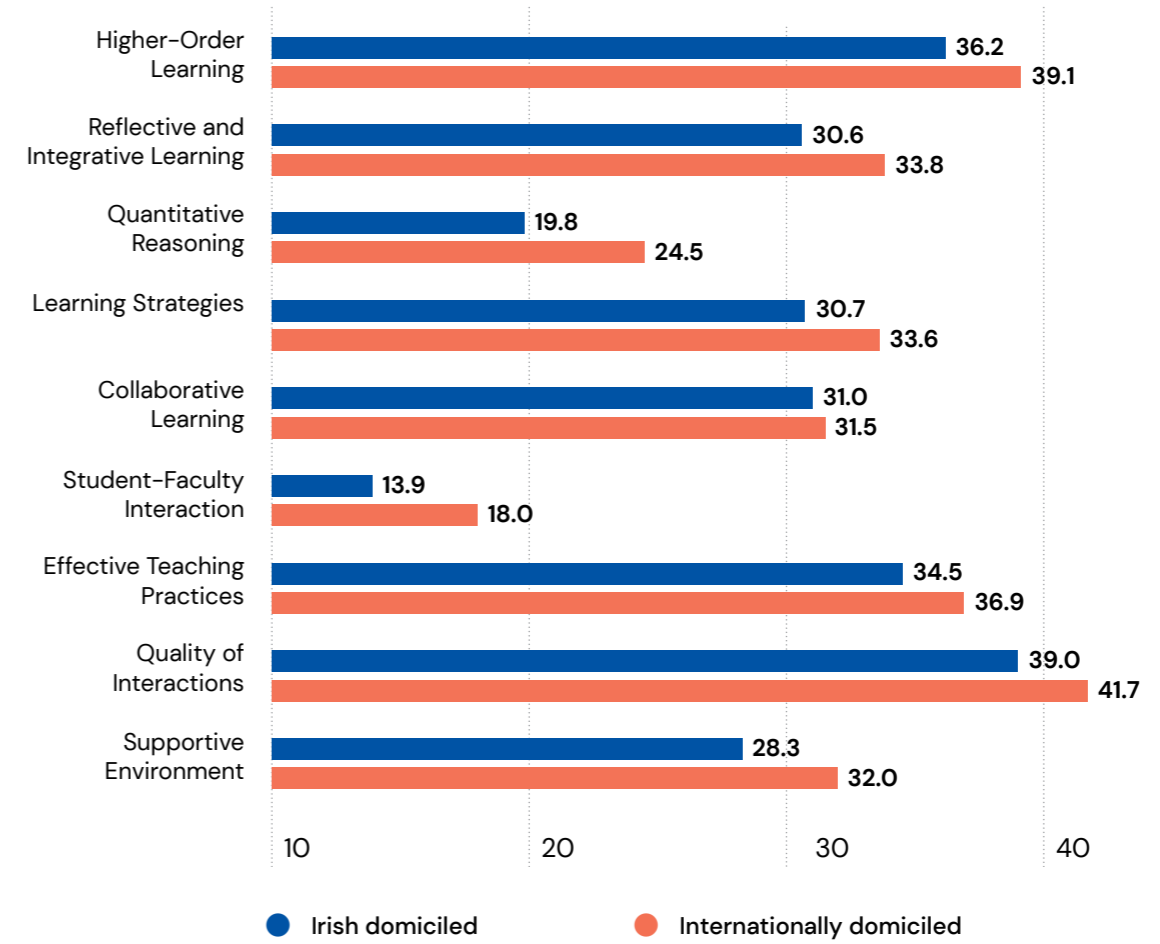


Fig. 3.8 Indicator scores by country of domicile

Country of domicile refers to a student’s country of permanent address prior to entry to their programme of study. A dichotomous variable that makes a distinction between Irish (including Northern Irish) students and all other internationally domiciled students is used. If the student has been residing in Ireland (including Northern Ireland) for three of the five years previous to registering for their current programme of study, their country of domicile is recorded as Ireland.

Although it is not an exact match, this can be used to some extent as a proxy to distinguish between Irish students and international students. However, it is important to note that it is not the same as a student’s nationality and that it does not change as they progress through their academic career. Furthermore, groups such as students on Erasmus

and Junior Year Abroad are not included, as they are not invited to take part in StudentSurvey.ie due to the temporary nature of their time in the higher education institution (and they tend not to be in first or final year when in Ireland).

Respondents for whom Ireland is their country of permanent address prior to entry to their programme of study are referred to as Irish domiciled students in this report. Those for whom another country is their country of permanent address are referred to as internationally domiciled students.

The results presented in Fig. 3.8 illustrate that internationally domiciled students showed significantly higher indicator scores across all nine of the engagement indicators.



**In 2019, 78.6% of internationally domiciled students rated their entire educational experience at their institution as good or excellent. This compares to 81% of Irish domiciled students.**

## **Chapter 4**

**Looking Deeper:**

**An early investigation into the experience of internationally domiciled students in higher education in Ireland**

## 4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an early investigation into the experience of internationally domiciled students in higher education in Ireland in 2016 and 2019, as interpreted from the results of **StudentSurvey.ie** (Irish Survey of Student Engagement). The focus on 2016 and 2019 is timely in how the two points coincide with the current internationalisation strategy, *Irish Educated, Globally Connected – An International Education Strategy for Ireland 2016–2020*<sup>10</sup>. The year 2016 coincided with the beginning of the internationalisation strategy and, in 2019, discussions are taking place on the successor internationalisation strategy.

As part of its overall vision, *Irish Educated, Globally Connected* emphasises that internationalisation will be pursued as “an inclusive and holistic strategy for the enhancement of the quality of the student–learning experience” and that higher education institutions should “continue to ensure that all graduates are equipped with the skills and attributes required of global citizens by incorporating an international and intercultural

dimension into their curricula”<sup>11</sup>. Importantly, the strategy also highlights that the success of international education in Ireland will not merely be measured by an increasing number of international students in higher education, but also by the quality of academic learning. Furthermore, it asserts that the Irish higher education sector should seek to provide a multicultural environment to enhance the delivery of the international campus experience.

10. Irish Educated, Globally Connected – An International Education Strategy for Ireland 2016–2020. Department of Education (DES), 2016 ([www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/International-Education-Strategy-For-Ireland-2016-2020.pdf](http://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/International-Education-Strategy-For-Ireland-2016-2020.pdf))

11. Ibid., 23.

A recent study commissioned by the HEA through the Irish Research Council (IRC)<sup>12</sup> explored the extent to which Irish higher education institutions have become internationalised and the range of strategies and approaches developed to attract and retain international students<sup>13</sup>. The findings show that, while international students were generally positive about their teaching and learning experiences, there were several concerns highlighted by both international and domestic students, including:

- Some international students found it difficult to make friends in the classroom context, as there were so many different class groups present.
- There was evidence of a divide between international students and Irish students. For example, international students had noticed a tendency for Irish students to go home at weekends instead of staying on campus and had also observed that when international activities were organised, Irish students did not attend.
- The findings highlight the importance of the international and domestic student voice in providing greater insights into issues around provision of supports, cultural differences and integration.
- Irish students who had gone abroad had gained many insights into the experiences of international students on their campuses and were more likely to actively support international students as a result. Further to this, “the active involvement of international and domestic students in the organisation of activities is required to promote successful integration”.

It is widely acknowledged that the internationalisation of higher education in Ireland enhances the quality of learning, teaching and research in higher education campuses and contributes significantly to both the student experience and society at large<sup>14 15</sup>. In Ireland, there has been a clear policy commitment to facilitate and support the development of higher education institutions as international education centres for over twenty years. However, despite this, relatively little is known about how international students integrate with and experience higher education in Ireland. Existing research focusing on the experiences of international students tends to be qualitative in nature. Where quantitative studies have been carried out, research with a focus on how international students engage with their studies while abroad has remained sparse<sup>16 17</sup>.

Addressing the paucity of research and building on the differences highlighted between Irish domiciled and internationally domiciled students in Chapter 3, here we aim to address this gap in knowledge by utilising the huge potential offered by the StudentSurvey.ie dataset to conduct a longitudinal examination of the experience of internationally domiciled students alongside Irish domiciled students.

12. Irish Research Council ([www.research.ie](http://www.research.ie))

13. Clarke, M., Hu Yang, L. & Harmon, D. (2018). *The Internationalisation of Irish Higher Education*. Dublin: HEA/ IRC.

14. Knight, J. (2003). Updating the definition of internationalisation. *International Higher Education*, 33, 2–3.

15. Warwick, P. & Moogan, Y. J. (2013). A comparative study of perceptions of internationalisation strategies in UK universities. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 43(1), 102–123.

16. Finn, M. & Darmody, M. (2017). What predicts international higher education students' satisfaction with their study in Ireland? *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 41(4), 545–555

17. Harmon, D. & Foubert, O. (2010). Eurostudent Survey IV. *Report on the Social and Living Conditions of Higher Education Students in Ireland 2009/2010*. Dublin: Higher Education Authority.



### Notes on definitions

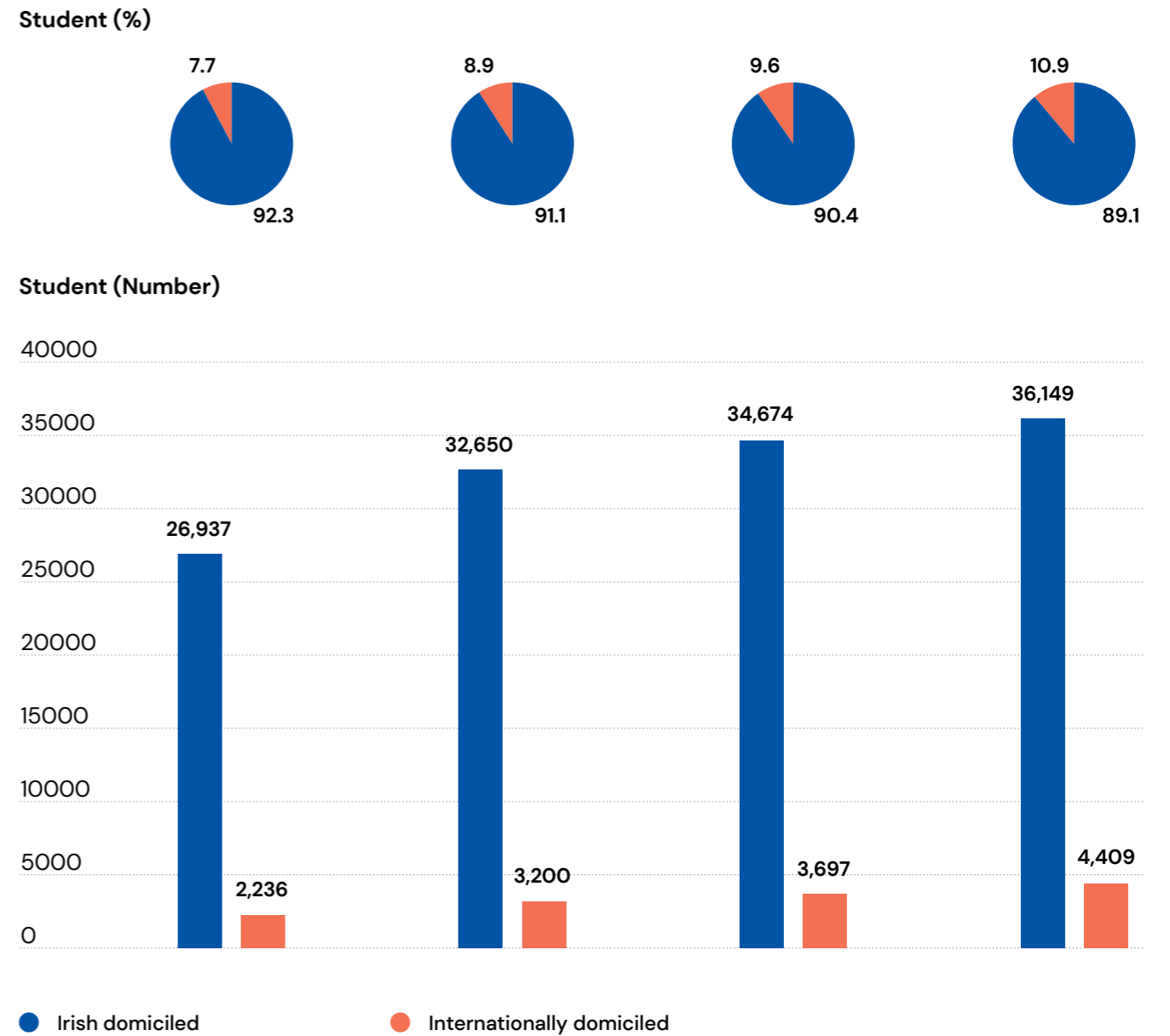
Country of domicile refers to a student's country of permanent address prior to entry to their programme of study. A dichotomous variable that makes a distinction between Irish (including Northern Irish) students and all other internationally domiciled students is used. If the student has been residing in Ireland (including Northern Ireland) for three of the five years previous to registering for their current programme of study, their country of domicile is recorded as Ireland.

Although it is not an exact match, this can be used to some extent as a proxy to distinguish between Irish students and international students. However, it is important to note that it is not the same as a student's nationality and that it does not change

as they progress through their academic career. Furthermore, groups such as students on Erasmus and Junior Year Abroad are not included, as they are not invited to take part in StudentSurvey.ie due to the temporary nature of their time in the higher education institution (and they tend not to be in first or final year when in Ireland).

Respondents for whom Ireland is their country of permanent address prior to entry to their programme of study are referred to as Irish domiciled students in this report. Those for whom another country is their country of permanent address are referred to as internationally domiciled students.

## 4.2 Profile of internationally domiciled students



**Fig. 4.1** Trend of Irish domiciled and internationally domiciled students, 2016–2019

As shown in Fig. 4.1<sup>18</sup>, there has been a notable increase in the proportion of survey respondents since 2016 who are internationally domiciled. In 2016, 2,236 internationally domiciled students responded to the survey, representing almost 7.7%

of all respondents. This figure increased to 3,200 (or 8.9%) in 2017, and increased further to 3,697 (or 9.6%) in 2018. In 2019, 4,409 internationally domiciled students responded to the survey, representing 10.9% of all respondents.

18. The data presented in Fig. 4.1 and Table 4.1 have not been weighted.

Table 4.1 shows the profile of internationally domiciled students and respondents for 2016 and 2019. This table also provides further disaggregation by the characteristics included in Chapter 3. This allows the reader to identify how the characteristics of respondents differ between groups and over time.

**Table 4.1** Demographic profile of internationally domiciled students in 2016 and 2019

2016					
Characteristic	All responses			Sample Responses Breakdown	
	Internationally domiciled population	Internationally domiciled respondents	Internationally domiciled response rate	Irish domiciled	Internationally domiciled
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,406</b>	<b>2,236</b>	<b>19.6%</b>	<b>26,937</b>	<b>2,236</b>
<b>Cohort</b>					
First year undergraduate	3826	792	20.7%	49.3%	35.4%
Final year undergraduate	3466	690	19.9%	37.0%	30.9%
Taught postgraduate	4114	754	18.3%	13.7%	33.7%
<b>Institution type</b>					
Universities	3254	1,241	38.1%	43.4%	55.5%
Technological Higher Education Institutions	6989	637	9.1%	45.7%	28.5%
Other institutions	1163	358	30.8%	10.9%	16.0%
<b>Mode of study</b>					
Full-time	10239	2,114	20.6%	88.3%	94.5%
Part-time/ remote	1167	122	10.5%	11.7%	5.5%
<b>Programme type</b>					
National or 2 year certificate	329	41	12.5%	7.8%	1.8%
Ordinary degree	1083	210	19.4%	14.4%	9.4%
Honours degree	5880	1,231	20.9%	62.5%	55.1%
Graduate/ Postgrad/ Higher diploma	445	55	12.4%	3.4%	2.5%
Masters degree taught	3669	699	19.1%	11.9%	31.3%

**Table 4.1** Demographic profile of internationally domiciled students in 2016 and 2019 (continued)

2019					
Characteristic	All responses			Sample Responses Breakdown	
	Internationally domiciled population	Internationally domiciled respondents	Internationally domiciled response rate	Irish domiciled	Internationally domiciled
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,412</b>	<b>4,409</b>	<b>30.6%</b>	<b>36,149</b>	<b>4,409</b>
<b>Cohort</b>					
First year undergraduate	3984	1,274	32.0%	50.6%	28.9%
Final year undergraduate	3717	989	26.6%	35.9%	22.4%
Taught postgraduate	6711	2,146	32.0%	13.6%	48.7%
<b>Institution type</b>					
Universities	8817	2,386	27.1%	44.4%	54.1%
Technological Higher Education Institutions	3858	1,536	39.8%	49.2%	34.8%
Other institutions	1737	487	28.0%	6.4%	11.0%
<b>Mode of study</b>					
Full-time	12410	4,143	33.4%	87.8%	94.0%
Part-time/ remote	2002	266	13.3%	12.2%	6.0%
<b>Programme type</b>					
National or 2 year certificate	699	104	14.9%	5.8%	2.4%
Ordinary degree	1079	322	29.8%	12.8%	7.3%
Honours degree	5923	1,837	31.0%	67.8%	41.7%
Graduate/ Postgrad/ Higher diploma	624	96	15.4%	3.3%	2.2%
Masters degree taught	6087	2,050	33.7%	10.2%	46.5%

**Table 4.1** Demographic profile of internationally domiciled students in 2016 and 2019 (continued)

2016					
Characteristic	All responses			Sample Responses Breakdown	
	Internationally domiciled population	Internationally domiciled respondents	Internationally domiciled response rate	Irish domiciled	Internationally domiciled
<b>Field of Study</b>					
Generic programmes & qualifications	0	0	N/A	0.1%	0.0%
Education	98	33	33.7%	9.3%	1.5%
Arts and humanities	2059	367	17.8%	16.7%	16.4%
Social sciences, journalism and information	731	160	21.9%	5.4%	7.2%
Business, administration & law	2636	473	17.9%	18.7%	21.2%
Natural sciences, mathematics & statistics	768	160	20.8%	10.5%	7.2%
Information & Communication Technologies (ICTs)	1157	208	18.0%	8.1%	9.3%
Engineering, manufacturing & construction	1201	266	22.1%	10.0%	11.9%
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries & veterinary	80	7	8.8%	1.3%	0.3%
Health & welfare	2404	500	20.8%	13.8%	22.4%
Services	272	62	22.8%	6.1%	2.8%
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	5436	931	17.1%	60.4%	41.6%
Female	5970	1,305	21.9%	39.6%	58.4%
Undeclared*	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Age</b>					
23 years and under	5289	1,129	21.3%	64.4%	50.6%
24 years and over	6117	1,104	18.0%	35.6%	49.4%

\*Undeclared was not a response category in the 2016 dataset

**Table 4.1** Demographic profile of internationally domiciled students in 2016 and 2019 (continued)

2019					
Characteristic	All responses			Sample Responses Breakdown	
	Internationally domiciled population	Internationally domiciled respondents	Internationally domiciled response rate	Irish domiciled	Internationally domiciled
<b>Field of Study</b>					
Generic programmes & qualifications	157	13	8.3%	0.1%	0.3%
Education	229	59	25.8%	7.4%	1.3%
Arts and humanities	1601	471	29.4%	15.5%	10.7%
Social sciences, journalism and information	1111	284	25.6%	4.9%	6.4%
Business, administration & law	3645	1,257	34.5%	22.2%	28.5%
Natural sciences, mathematics & statistics	874	324	37.1%	10.0%	7.3%
Information & Communication Technologies (ICTs)	1927	650	33.7%	7.5%	14.7%
Engineering, manufacturing & construction	1412	468	33.1%	10.8%	10.6%
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries & veterinary	114	43	37.7%	1.6%	1.0%
Health & welfare	3052	712	23.3%	14.8%	16.1%
Services	290	128	44.1%	5.2%	2.9%
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	6809	1,921	28.2%	60.6%	43.6%
Female	7603	2,488	32.7%	39.3%	56.4%
Undeclared*	9	0	0.0%	0.02%	0.0%
<b>Age</b>					
23 years and under	5757	1,905	33.1%	68.6%	43.2%
24 years and over	8655	2504	28.9%	31.4%	56.8%

### 4.3 Changes to the profile of internationally domiciled respondents 2016–2019

**Table 4.2** Region and top countries of permanent address of internationally domiciled respondents in 2016 and 2019

2016		2019	
Region		Region	
EU*	29%	EU*	22%
Non-EU	71%	Non-EU	78%
Top countries of permanent address		Top countries of permanent address	
USA	11%	India	22%
Great Britain**	10%	China	11%
China	9%	USA	9%
Malaysia	8%	Great Britain**	7%
India	6%	Canada	5%
Germany	4%	Malaysia	5%
Saudi Arabia	4%	Nigeria	4%

\*EU students are defined according to current HEA reporting and includes EEA countries (e.g. Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) as well as Switzerland. Those grouped as 'other' and 'unknown' have been removed from the analysis.

\*\*Great Britain refers to England, Scotland and Wales.

The profile of internationally domiciled respondents changed considerably between 2016 and 2019. A larger proportion of 2019 internationally domiciled respondents are studying at postgraduate level (48.7%) when compared to 2016 (33.7%). Of the internationally domiciled respondents, 34.8% are attending Technological Higher Education Institutions in 2019, compared to 28.5% in 2016. Another notable change is that the proportion of internationally domiciled respondents aged 24 years and over has increased from 49.4% in 2016 to 56.8% in 2019. This corresponds with the greater proportion of internationally domiciled students undertaking taught postgraduate degrees as noted, and the decrease in the

number of internationally domiciled students who are registered in first year undergraduate.

The profile of internationally domiciled respondents has changed in relation to region and country of permanent address also. While in 2016, 29% of internationally domiciled respondents were from the EU, this decreased to 22% in 2019. The proportion of internationally domiciled respondents from India, for instance, has increased from 6% in 2016 to 22% in 2019, making it the country of permanent address of the greatest proportion of internationally domiciled students to take the survey.

### 4.4 Overview of Collaborative Learning, Student-Faculty Interaction, Quality of Interactions and Supportive Environment indicators

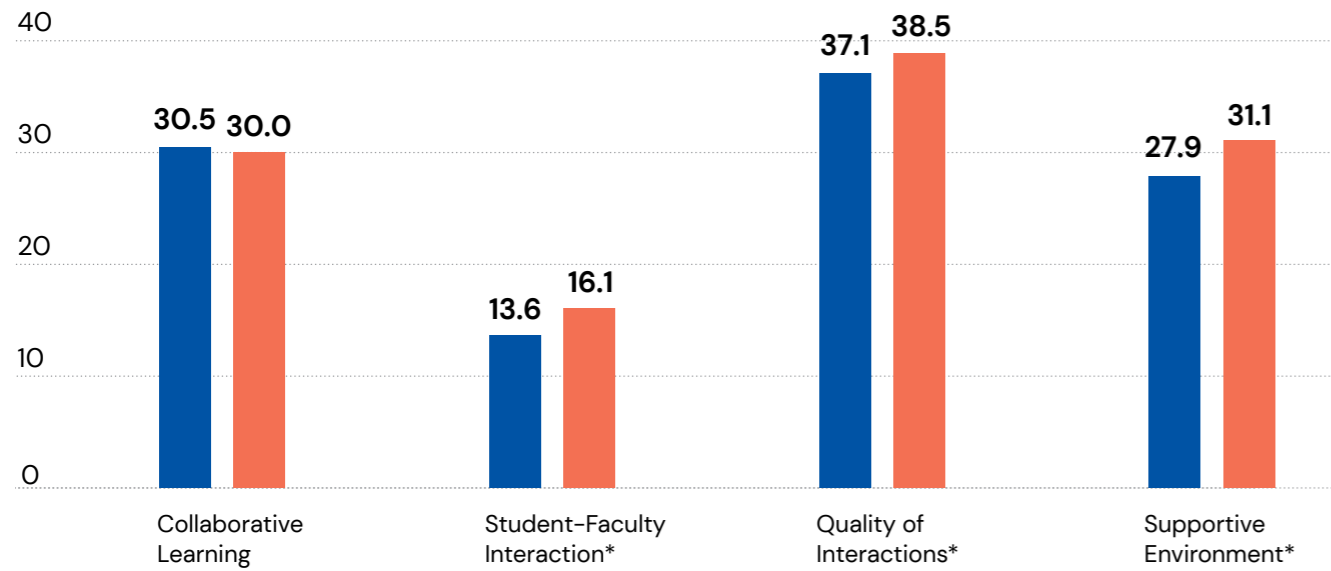
This chapter will focus on the experience of internationally domiciled students in higher education over two points in time in relation to these engagement indicators:

1. *Collaborative Learning*: The extent to which students collaborate with peers to solve problems or to master difficult material, thereby deepening their understanding.
2. *Student-Faculty Interaction*: The extent to which students interact with academic staff.
3. *Quality of Interactions*: Students' experience of supportive relationships with a range of other people on campus, thereby contributing to students' ability to find assistance when needed and to learn from and with those around them.

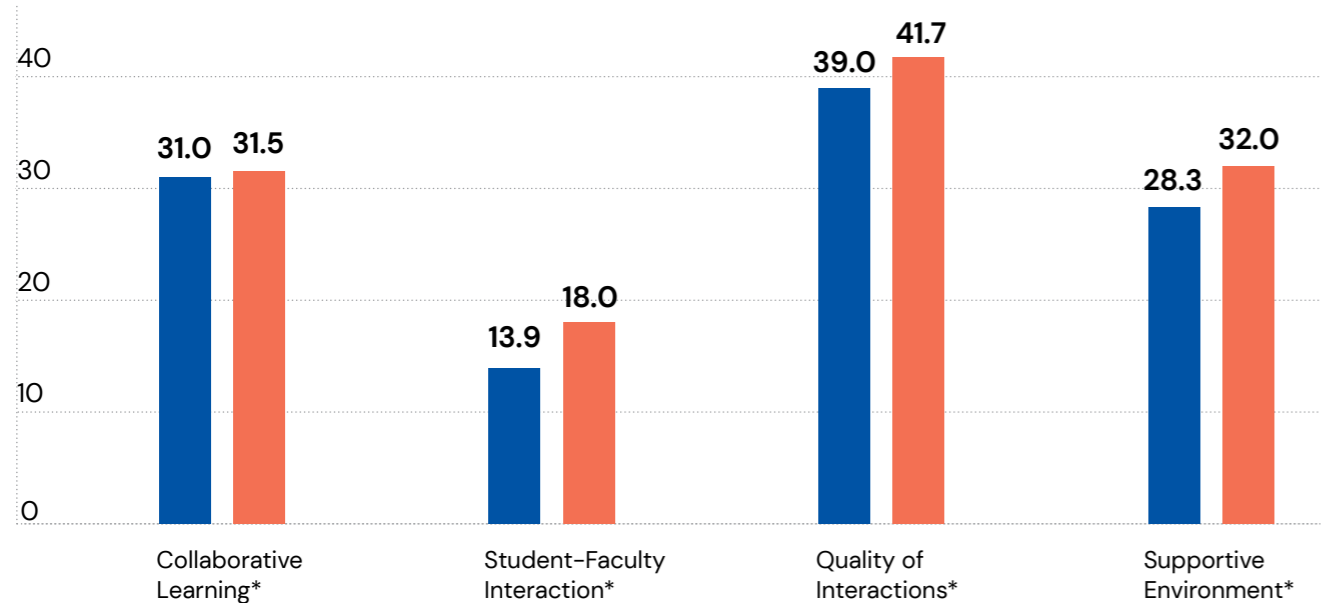
4. *Supportive Environment*: Students' perceptions of how much their higher education institution emphasises services and activities that support their learning and development.

5. *Overall experience*: Respondents' evaluation of their entire educational experience, and whether or not they would go to the same institution again.

2016



2019



● Irish Domiciled ● Internationally Domiciled \*The difference is statistically significant.

Fig. 4.2 Irish domiciled and internationally domiciled students' scores for Collaborative Learning, Student-Faculty Interaction, Quality of Interactions and Supportive Environment, 2016 and 2019

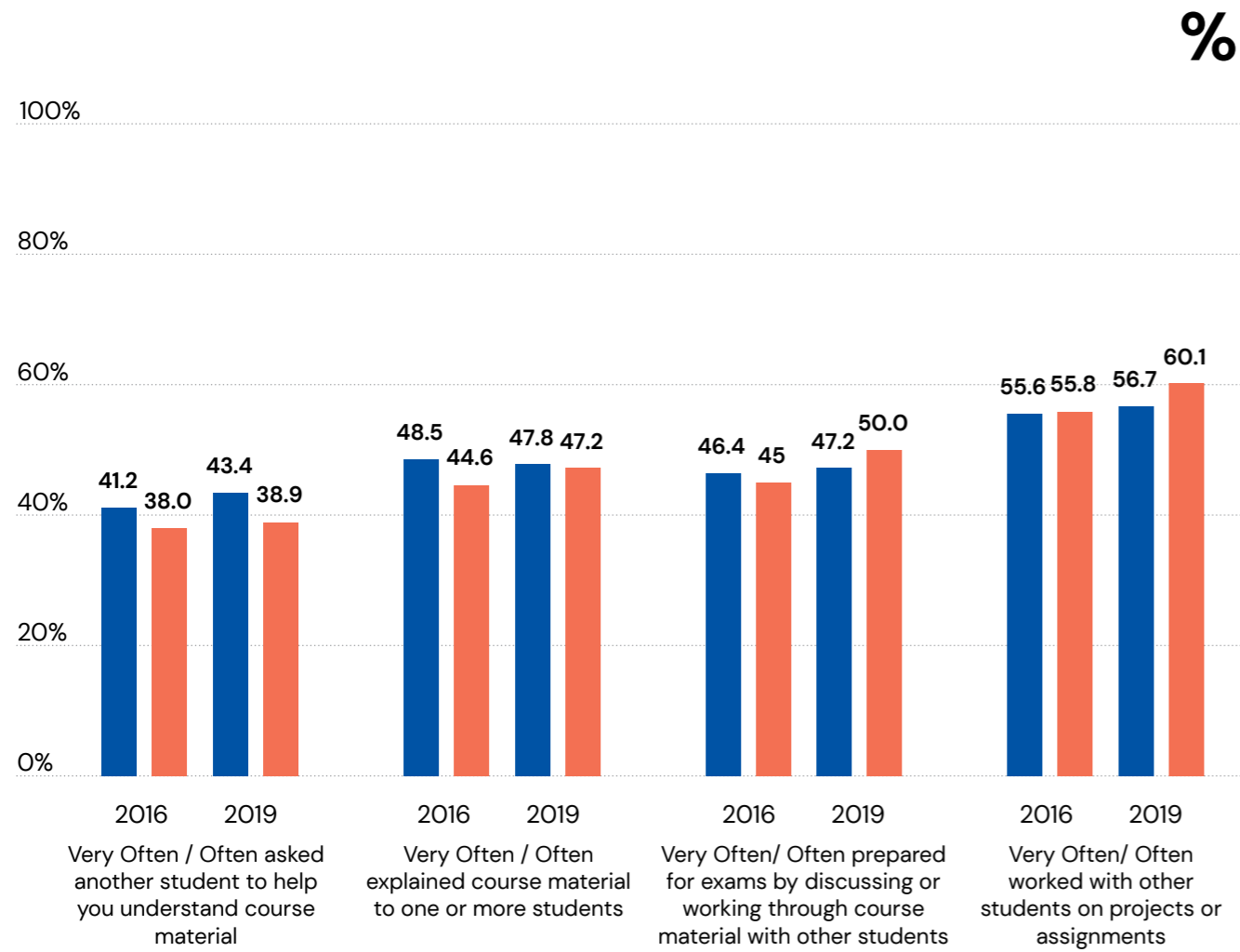
There were no statistically significant differences between Irish domiciled and internationally domiciled students for Collaborative Learning in 2016. In terms of Student-Faculty Interaction, internationally domiciled students had higher indicator scores than Irish domiciled students in both 2016 and 2019. While there is little difference for Irish domiciled students across these years (13.6 in 2016 compared to 13.9 in 2019), the average score of the internationally domiciled students increased from 16.1 in 2016 to 18.0 in 2019.

For Quality of Interactions, increased indicator scores are noted for both Irish domiciled and internationally domiciled students over time. Lastly, in terms of Supportive Environment, the findings show that internationally domiciled students had higher scores in 2016 and 2019 when compared to the Irish domiciled students. These findings suggest that internationally domiciled students are experiencing higher levels of engagement on these measures than their Irish peers, with increases noted over time.

### 4.5 Delving deeper into Collaborative Learning, Student-Faculty Interaction, Quality of Interactions and Supportive Environment

In addition to analysing indicators, the StudentSurvey.ie dataset allows for a detailed analysis of the individual questions that relate to each engagement indicator. The following sections will graphically present the responses of Irish domiciled and internationally domiciled students to each question. This is followed by a summary of the results for each engagement indicator. The chapter will conclude with a commentary on these results.

**Collaborative Learning**

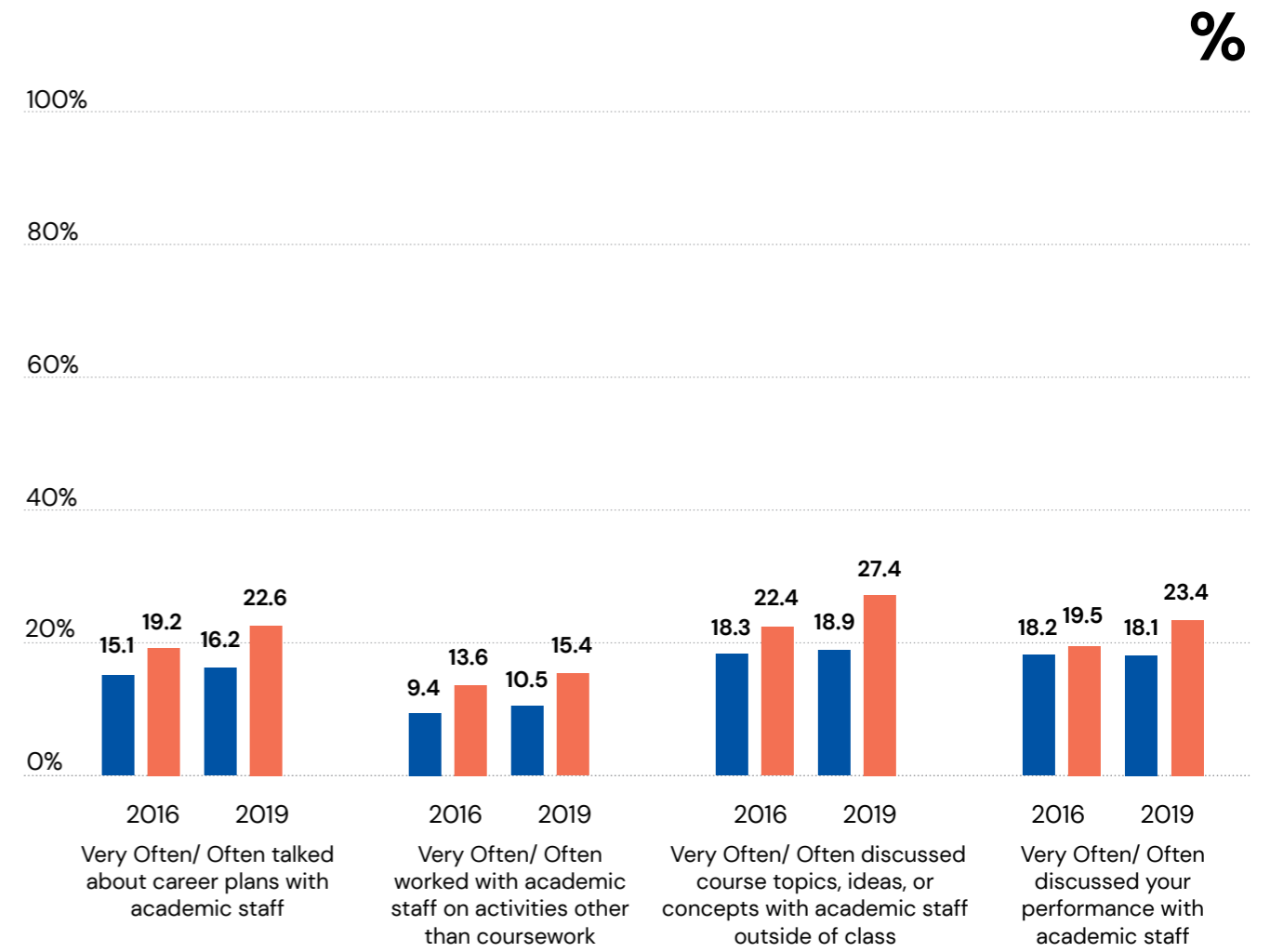


Note: These figures are percentage responses.

● Irish Domiciled ● Internationally Domiciled

**Fig. 4.3** Responses to questions relating to *Collaborative Learning* for Irish domiciled and internationally domiciled students in 2016 and 2019

**Student-Faculty Interaction**

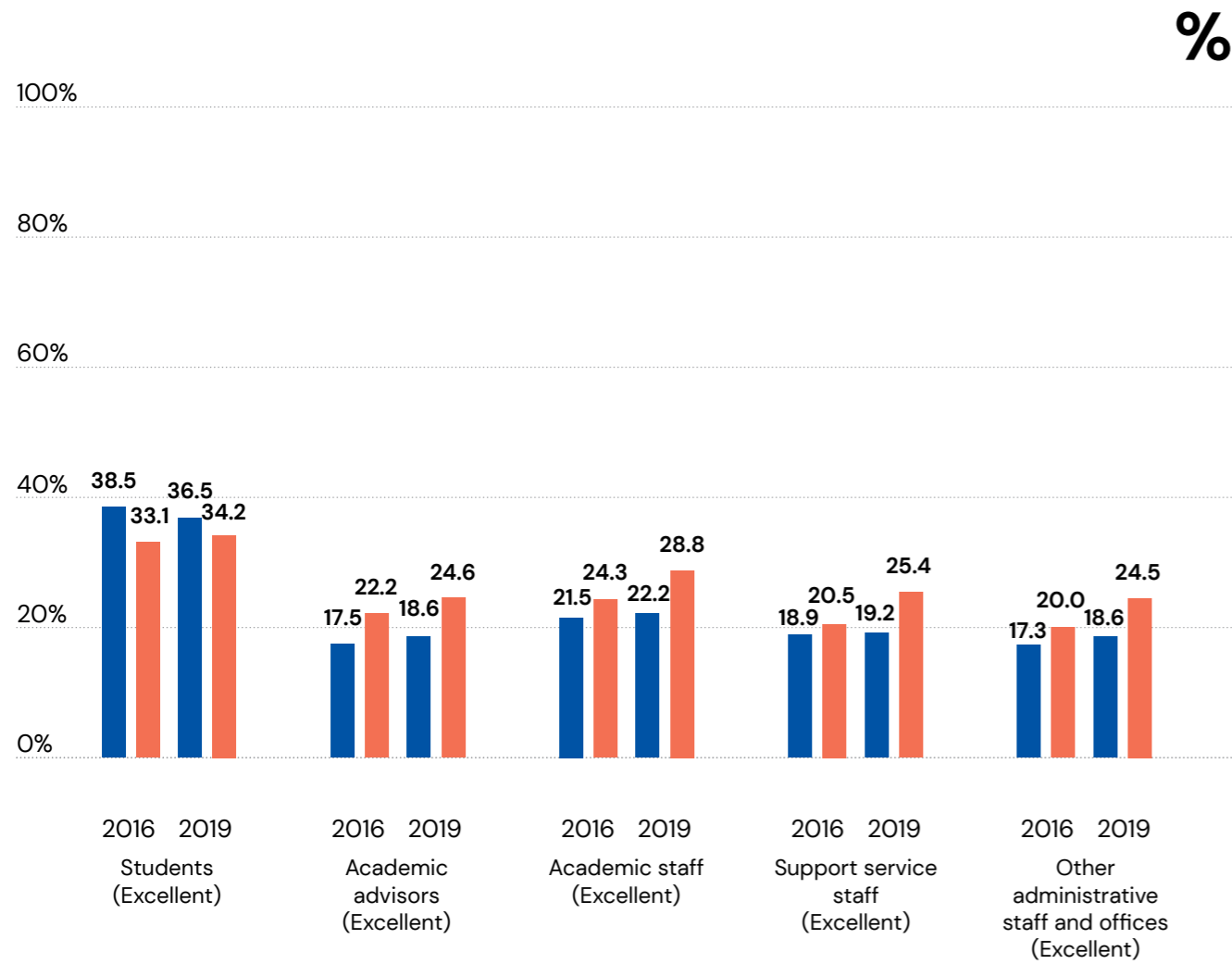


Note: These figures are percentage responses.

● Irish Domiciled ● Internationally Domiciled

**Fig. 4.4** Responses to questions relating to *Student-Faculty Interaction* for Irish domiciled and internationally domiciled students in 2016 and 2019

Quality of Interactions

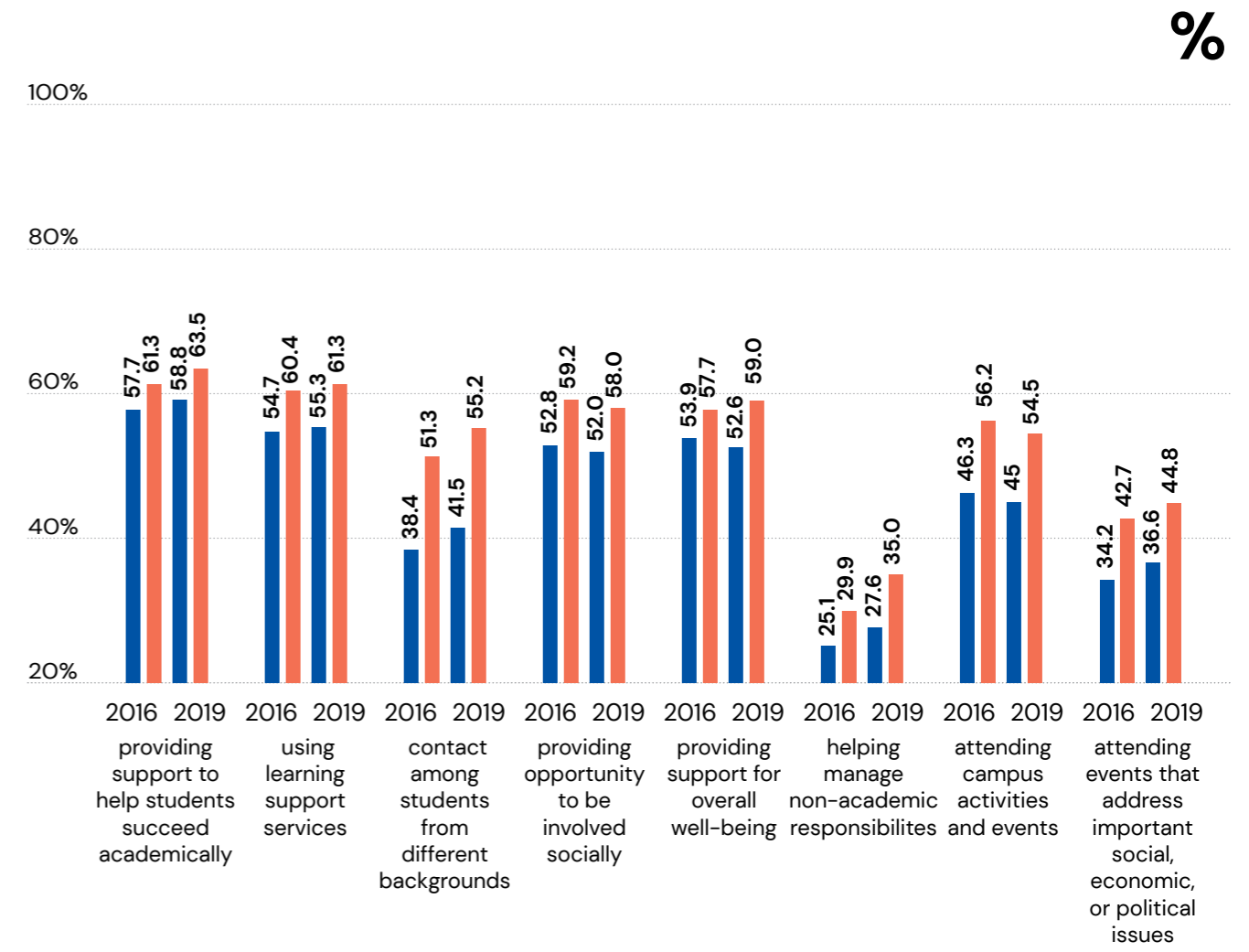


Note: These figures are percentage responses.

● Irish Domiciled ● Internationally Domiciled

Fig. 4.5 Responses to questions relating to *Quality of Interactions* for Irish domiciled and internationally domiciled students in 2016 and 2019

Institution emphasises Very much / Quite a bit...

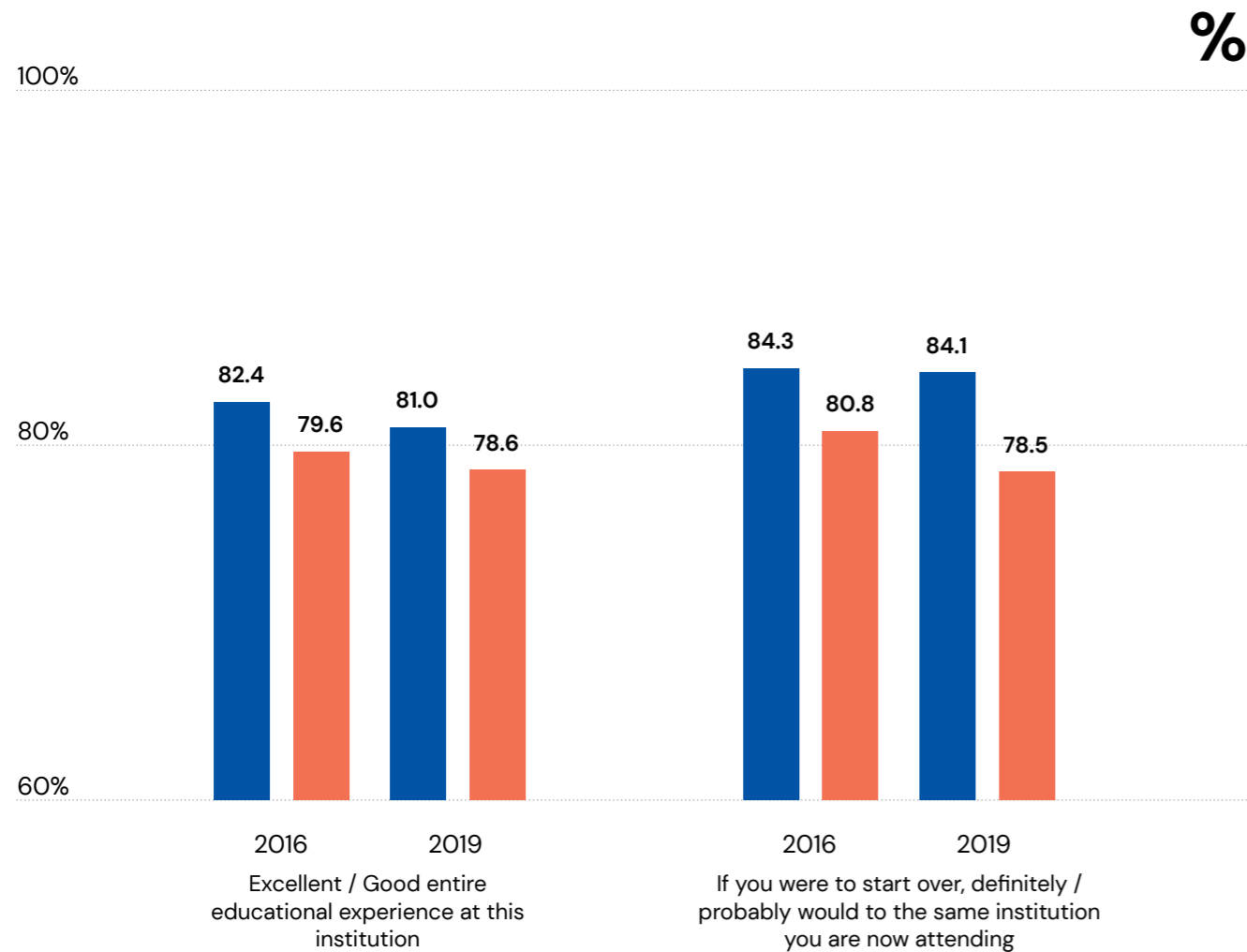


Note: These figures are percentage responses.

● Irish Domiciled ● Internationally Domiciled

Fig. 4.6 Responses to questions relating to *Supportive Environment* for Irish domiciled and internationally domiciled students in 2016 and 2019

Overall Experience



Note: These figures are percentage responses.

● Irish Domiciled ● Internationally Domiciled

Fig. 4.7 Responses to questions relating to Overall Experience questions for Irish domiciled and internationally domiciled students in 2016 and 2019

## 4.5 Summary of results

*Collaborative Learning* was the first indicator analysed. The analysis revealed broad similarities between the groups in relation to country of domicile over time from 2016 to 2019. The difference between the groups in how they answered the question ‘prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students’ was not significant in 2016. However, in 2019, internationally domiciled students were significantly less likely than Irish domiciled students to report ‘never’ preparing for exams in this way (14% compared to 17%). Similarly for ‘worked with other students on projects or assignments’, the difference between the groups was not significant in 2016, but in 2019, 8% of internationally domiciled and 11% of Irish domiciled students reported ‘never’ working with other students on projects or assignments and this difference was significant.

Analysis of questions relating to *Student-Faculty Interaction* shows that internationally domiciled students are significantly more likely than Irish domiciled students to have ‘very often’ and ‘often’ ‘talked about career plans with academic staff’, ‘worked with academic staff on activities other than coursework’, ‘discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with academic staff outside of class’, and ‘discussed performance with academic staff’ in 2016 and 2019. Looking over time, internationally domiciled students in 2019 agreed more strongly with these statements than internationally domiciled respondents did in 2016, and the magnitude of this difference was greater than the difference between the Irish domiciled students in 2016 and 2019.

Analysis of questions relating to *Quality of Interactions* shows that for all measures except interaction with students, internationally domiciled students showed significantly higher levels of ‘excellent’ quality interactions than their Irish domiciled peers. The findings show that, in line with the literature, Irish domiciled students (39% and 37% respectively) are significantly more likely than internationally domiciled students (33% and 34% respectively) to report ‘excellent’ interactions with students in 2016 and 2019. While the percentage of internationally domiciled students

selecting ‘excellent’ *Quality of Interactions* with students increased between 2016 and 2019, Irish domiciled students are reporting lower scores on this question over the same time period. There is also some statistically significant evidence that the *Quality of Interactions* with other members of the higher education community have improved since 2016, particularly for internationally domiciled students. For instance, 25% of internationally domiciled students reported ‘excellent’ interactions with academic advisors in 2019 compared to 22% in 2016. In 2019, 19% of Irish domiciled students reported ‘excellent’ interactions with academic advisors and this represents a significant increase from 18% in 2016.

Analysis of questions relating to *Supportive Environment* shows the following:

- For questions relating to the extent to which higher education institutions emphasise ‘academic support’, ‘learning support services’ and help to manage ‘non-academic responsibilities’, significantly higher proportions of internationally domiciled students than Irish domiciled students are indicating ‘very much’. While these responses have remained the same over time for Irish domiciled students, there have been significant increases in scores for internationally domiciled students in 2019.
- For questions relating to the extent to which higher education institutions emphasise ‘contact among students from different backgrounds’ and attending events that ‘address important social, economic or political issues’, internationally domiciled students are significantly more likely to report ‘very much’ than Irish domiciled students, and were also significantly more likely to do this in 2019 than they were in 2016.
- Internationally domiciled students are also significantly more likely than Irish domiciled students to report that their institution ‘very much’ emphasises ‘opportunities to be involved socially’, ‘providing support for overall wellbeing’, and attending ‘campus activities and events’; however, there have been no changes over time.

Finally, in relation to questions relating to *Supportive Environment*, the findings demonstrate that internationally domiciled respondents are showing significantly higher scores than Irish domiciled respondents. Increases in scores for internationally domiciled students between 2016 and 2019 can be noted for almost all questions. Scores for Irish domiciled students changed less from 2016 to 2019.

One final result is highlighted here. Despite internationally domiciled students reporting higher scores than Irish domiciled students

for *Student-Faculty Interaction, Quality of Interactions* (except for quality of interactions with students) and *Supportive Environment*, analysis of questions relating to *Overall Experience* shows significantly higher scores among Irish domiciled students. This was found for their evaluation of higher education experience and their choice to attend the same institution, in 2016 and 2019. However, it must also be noted that the score for *Overall Experience* decreased significantly among both groups between 2016 and 2019.

## 4.6 Commentary

This chapter has presented an initial analysis of the experience of students in higher education institutions in Ireland whose country of permanent residence is not Ireland (including Northern Ireland). It included an examination of responses to the 2016 and 2019 surveys, a period in which there has been a very substantial change in the number and composition of internationally domiciled students responding to StudentSurvey.ie.

*Irish Educated, Globally Connected – An International Education Strategy for Ireland 2016–2020* echoed the *Investing in Global Relationships 2010–2015* strategy in its concern that “growth [in international student numbers] must not take place faster than the necessary supports can be put in place to ensure a high-quality experience”<sup>19</sup>. Over the period 2016 to 2019, the size of the internationally domiciled student population grew by 26.4% (11,406 in 2016 to 14,412 in 2019), considerably more than the 5.4% growth in the number of Irish domiciled students (131,161 in 2016 to 138,227 in 2019).

In addition to changes in the number of internally domiciled students studying in Ireland between 2016 and 2019, it is important to note the considerable

changes in their profile. In broad terms, the profile of the Irish domiciled students has not changed substantially over that period. This is in contrast to the internationally domiciled students, among whom the distribution of students between undergraduate and postgraduate study has seen substantial change, alongside sizeable differences in country of permanent domicile and the age profile of internationally domiciled students.

Notwithstanding the marked change in composition of respondents to the surveys, the responses at both points in time provide a good deal of reassurance about the experience of this group in Irish higher education institutions. The results of the measures of engagement for internationally domiciled students point to a level of engagement that compares very favourably with Irish domiciled students.

Across all indicators of student engagement, the difference between the internationally domiciled students and Irish domiciled students was statistically significant. In most instances, this difference was due to the internationally domiciled students agreeing more strongly than the Irish domiciled students with statements

pertaining to their engagement with their institution and the opportunities offered by that institution. The internationally domiciled students themselves respond positively about their experiences, even more strongly than do the Irish domiciled students.

These findings provide valuable insight, particularly in the context of the impending introduction of a new regulatory regime, which, on foot of the passage of new legislation<sup>20</sup> and in line with the *Irish Educated, Globally Connected* strategy, is intended “to safeguard Ireland’s reputation internationally” and “to enhance our quality framework for international education”<sup>21</sup>. It suggests that higher education institutions in Ireland are already delivering an educational experience to internationally domiciled students of comparable quality to that experienced by Irish domiciled students. It also suggests that they are well placed to meet their obligations under a new regulatory regime, which will include a revised, statutory code of practice for providers delivering programmes to international learners and the related International Education Mark.

Finally, the growth in internationally domiciled students has varied noticeably between individual higher education institutions. It follows that the aggregate numbers as presented in this chapter may mask a complex picture of engagement, and further, more sophisticated analysis will be required to build on this early investigation into the experience of internationally domiciled students in higher education in Ireland, as interpreted from the results of StudentSurvey.ie.

## Possible directions for future research include:

- Exploration of the reasons for change in the experience of internationally domiciled students over time in order to ascertain if this is due to enhancements made in higher education institutions or if it could be attributed to changes in the profile of internationally domiciled students since 2016.
- Further disaggregation of the internationally domiciled student data, for example EU and non-EU, to pinpoint key differences and indicators most influenced by country of permanent address.
- Research on the ‘lived experience’ of both international and domestic students attending higher education in Ireland to explore processes, such as the internationalisation of the home campus as well as the impact of internationalisation on Irish domiciled students.
- Local-level analysis of StudentSurvey.ie data to better understand the engagement of Irish domiciled and internationally domiciled students in individual higher education institutions.
- Multivariate statistical modelling to further explore the influence of domicile of origin on engagement with higher education while controlling for individual and institutional factors.

For further information on accessing StudentSurvey.ie data for research purposes, please contact Dr. Siobhán Nic Fhlannchadha (Project Manager) at [info@studentsurvey.ie](mailto:info@studentsurvey.ie).

19. *Investing in Global Relationships 2010–2015* ([www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Ireland-s-International-Education-Strategy-2010-2015-Investing-in-Global-Relationships.pdf](http://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Ireland-s-International-Education-Strategy-2010-2015-Investing-in-Global-Relationships.pdf)) (p.23)

20. Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act 2019, available at: <https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/act/2019/32/eng/enacted/a3219.pdf>

21. *Irish Educated, Globally Connected – An International Education Strategy for Ireland 2016–2020* (p. 42)



**Over 200,000 first year, final year and taught postgraduate students have responded to StudentSurvey.ie since it was introduced in 2013.**

## **Chapter 5**

### **Next steps**

**StudentSurvey.ie** is a valuable component of the Irish higher education sector and has the power to improve the lived experience of current and future undergraduate and taught postgraduate students. This would contribute to an improved environment for all members of the higher education community. The large and growing dataset can and should be interrogated at national and local level by those working in the areas of policy, funding, communications, student support services, and academia and by students themselves, to name only a few who could benefit from using this rich source of information. Considerable efforts have been made by those who implement the survey in the participating higher education institutions, including staff and students, to make the 2019 survey an operational success. The next steps for the survey are necessarily focused on applying similar efforts to interrogate and draw meaning from the results, particularly in considering trends and patterns in student engagement over time.

## 5.1 Branding

The rebranding of the Irish Survey of Student Engagement and the Irish Survey of Student Engagement for Postgraduate Research Students to StudentSurvey.ie and PGR StudentSurvey.ie (respectively) was completed and launched in October 2019. The primary goals of the rebranding were:

- To create a more cohesive identity for StudentSurvey.ie;
- To modernise and future-proof as much as possible the look and feel of the brand;

- To apply the brand across all social, online, and physical promotional materials and communications;
- To update the appearance and functionality of the [www.studentsurvey.ie](http://www.studentsurvey.ie) website; and
- To ensure that all of the materials associated with StudentSurvey.ie are accessible, suitable for the diverse range of audiences and stakeholders, and fit for purpose.

This rebranding was led by the StudentSurvey.ie Communications Group in partnership with Piquant, a branding and marketing agency based in Limerick.

## 5.2 Opportunities for recognition of impact of StudentSurvey.ie

A major topic of consideration at the inaugural StudentSurvey.ie Practitioners Forum was recognising the impact of the survey on campus. At this well-attended event, which took place in May 2019, three higher education institutions presented information about how they have made strides in recognising the impact of StudentSurvey.ie in their institutions. The presenters discussed making the data more accessible and visually understandable for all members of staff (GMIT), the value of extensive communication campaigns relating to fieldwork and dissemination of the results (NUI Galway), and the experience of establishing a Survey Working Group (Mary Immaculate College). The session highlighted the opportunities that exist for higher education institutions to give greater recognition to the existence of StudentSurvey.ie data within their institutions, the fruits of the efforts made to analyse those data, and the enhancements to the student experience those results have brought about.

In the first instance, the Practitioners Forum demonstrated the power of sharing good practice and experience among colleagues, both students and staff. The StudentSurvey.ie Project Manager and Steering Group were delighted to provide the opportunity for this sharing to take place and are keen to continue to provide such opportunities into the future.

Secondly, one of the enhancements included in the overhaul of the StudentSurvey.ie website was in relation to the information provided about each participating higher education institution. The website now contains a profile for each institution, which includes information such as survey dates, contact details for the leaders of StudentSurvey.ie on campus, and a repository of good practice for survey fieldwork, data analysis, and closing the feedback loop to emerge from that institution. This will showcase the work being done by students and staff and will provide all StudentSurvey.ie practitioners with ideas, inspiration, and cautionary tales that they can apply in their own institutions.

## 5.3 Enhancing analysis and using the data

The substantial growth in the dataset generated by StudentSurvey.ie facilitates an invigorated consideration of the lived experience of first year undergraduate, final year undergraduate and taught postgraduate students in higher education in Ireland. In the first instance, seven years of experience with StudentSurvey.ie has led to massive strides in how higher education institutions analyse the data and incorporate it into other institutional data and research.

Secondly, higher education institutions in Ireland, regardless of their size, are centres of expertise in research and data analysis. Institutions are encouraged to channel this expertise towards interrogation of the StudentSurvey.ie data where possible and feasible, and to involve the whole community in closing the feedback loop.

The inaugural Practitioners Forum highlighted, as expected, gaps in the lifecycle of both of the StudentSurvey.ie surveys related to data analysis and closing the feedback loop. Accordingly, the central StudentSurvey.ie function, including the Project Manager and the Steering Group, are intent on providing institutions with additional and innovative tools to support them in their analysis. This will include an improved online platform for hosting and analysing the data, physical and virtual data analysis tutorials, and further opportunities for sharing of good practice and innovations across institutions.

There are many more possibilities for further analysis of the data than can be carried out by participating institutions and/ or the central StudentSurvey.ie project management function. Third-party researchers/ organisations and other interested parties are encouraged to contact the Project Manager at [info@studentsurvey.ie](mailto:info@studentsurvey.ie) to discuss these possibilities or to propose ideas for future research. Additionally, both of the StudentSurvey.ie datasets are archived with the Irish Social Sciences Data Archive<sup>22</sup> annually and may be accessed by request.

22. Irish Social Sciences Data Archive ([www.ucd.ie/issda](http://www.ucd.ie/issda))

# Appendices

## Appendix 1

### Project rationale and governance

The *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030*<sup>23</sup>, published in 2011, recommended that higher education institutions put in place systems to capture feedback from students to inform institutional and programme management, as well as national policy. It also recommended that every higher education institution put in place a comprehensive anonymous student feedback system, coupled with structures to ensure that action is taken promptly in relation to student concerns. This recommendation was informed by legislation (namely, reference to the involvement of students in evaluating the quality of their educational experience in the *Universities Act, 1997*, and the *Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999*) and other key policy drivers, such as *Standards and Guidance for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*<sup>24</sup> and *Common Principles for Student Involvement in Quality Assurance/Quality Enhancement*<sup>25</sup>. The National Strategy report noted in 2011 that “substantial progress (in this area) has been made” but also stated that “students still lack confidence in the effectiveness of current mechanisms and there remains considerable room for improvement in developing student feedback mechanisms and in closing feedback loops.”

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

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

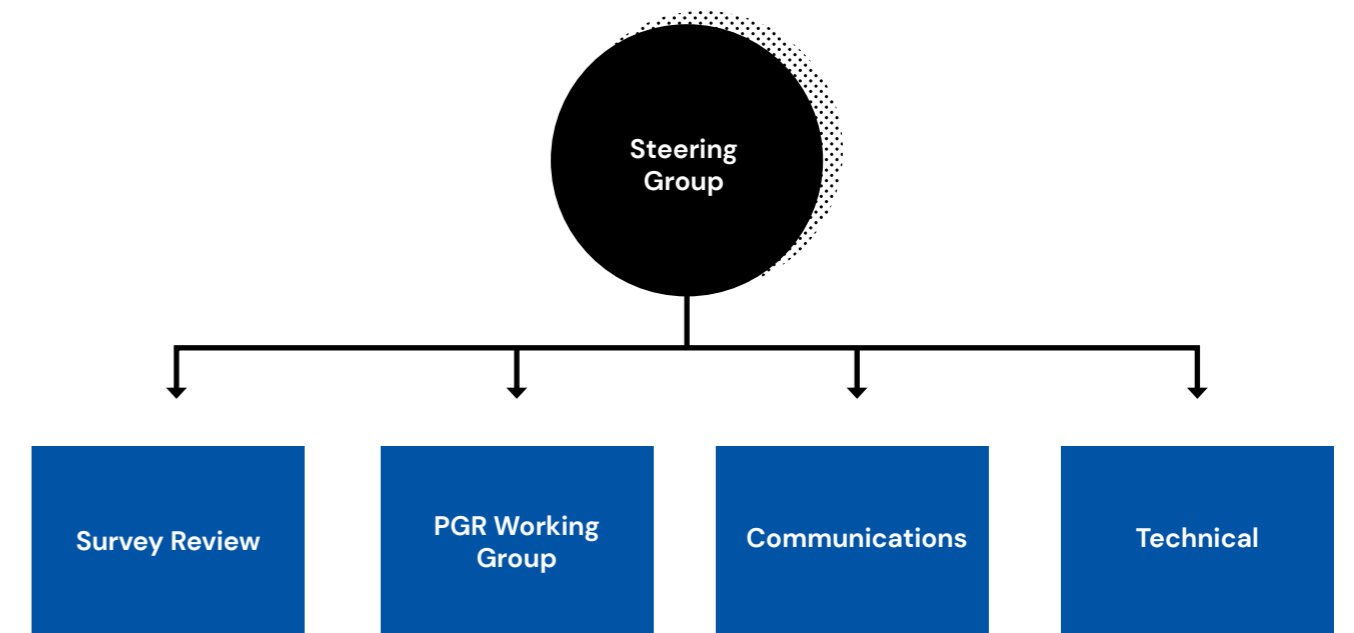
The Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) and the Irish Survey of Student Engagement for Postgraduate Research Students (ISSE-PGR) were rebranded in 2019 and are now known as StudentSurvey.ie and PGR StudentSurvey.ie (respectively). Additionally, the website and the brand were updated.

Implementation of StudentSurvey.ie and PGR StudentSurvey.ie is funded by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) as a shared service for participating institutions. The project is co-sponsored by the HEA, Irish Universities Association (IUA), Technological Higher Education Association (THEA), and Union of Students in Ireland (USI) (Fig. 6.1).

A representative national Steering Group maintains strategic direction for the project. In 2019, this

group was reduced in number and the primary focus on strategic direction re-affirmed. It now consists of a representative of each of the co-sponsoring organisations, two representatives from the university sector, two representatives from the technological higher education sector, one representative from Quality and Qualifications Ireland, and the StudentSurvey.ie Project Manager. Following the re-branding, the group is now called the StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group.

In addition, there are a number of Working Groups addressing specific elements of the project (Fig. 6.1). Each of the groups is chaired by a member of the Steering Group. A full-time StudentSurvey.ie Project Manager leads developments and ensures coherence and consistency between the various elements of the project.



Co-sponsoring organisations



**Fig. 6.1** Governance and management, including co-sponsoring organisations, of StudentSurvey.ie

23. National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 ([www.heai.ie/assets/uploads/2017/06/National-Strategy-for-Higher-Education-2030.pdf](http://www.heai.ie/assets/uploads/2017/06/National-Strategy-for-Higher-Education-2030.pdf))

24. Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area ([www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG\\_2015.pdf](http://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf))

25. Student Involvement in Quality Assurance/Quality Enhancement ([www.iheqn.ie/\\_fileupload/File/IHEQN\\_Common\\_Principles\\_for\\_Student\\_Involvement\\_December\\_2009\\_17833832.pdf](http://www.iheqn.ie/_fileupload/File/IHEQN_Common_Principles_for_Student_Involvement_December_2009_17833832.pdf))

## Appendix 2

### Membership of the StudentSurvey.ie national report editorial group

**Denise Frawley**  
HEA & StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group

**Suzanne Guerin**  
UCD & StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group

**Billy Kelly**  
DCU & StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group

**Kevin McStravock**  
USI & StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group

**Jim Murray**  
THEA & StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group

**Siobhán Nic Fhlannchadha**  
StudentSurvey.ie Project Manager

**Lewis Purser**  
IUA & StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group

**Nora Trench Bowles**  
IUA & StudentSurvey.ie Steering Group

.....

## Appendix 3

### Participation in the 2019 StudentSurvey.ie

The following higher education institutions participated in the 2019 StudentSurvey.ie. Percentage figures represent the respondents as a percentage of the student population invited to take the survey in each institution, i.e. the response rate.

Universities	Response rate
Dublin City University	33%
Maynooth University	21%
National University of Ireland Galway	37%
Trinity College Dublin	22%
University College Cork	18%
University College Dublin	23%
University of Limerick	22%
Technological Higher Education Institutions (Institutes of Technology and Technological University Dublin)	Response rate
Athlone Institute of Technology	69%
Cork Institute of Technology	37%
Dundalk Institute of Technology	30%
Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology	42%
Institute of Art, Design and Technology	21%
Institute of Technology Carlow	29%
Institute of Technology Sligo	29%
Institute of Technology Tralee	31%
Letterkenny Institute of Technology	28%
Limerick Institute of Technology	62%
Technological University Dublin, Blanchardstown*	34%
Technological University Dublin, Grangegorman & city*	35%
Technological University Dublin, Tallaght*	34%
Waterford Institute of Technology	16%
Other institutions	Response rate
Marino Institute of Education	46%
Mary Immaculate College, Limerick	42%
National College of Art and Design	31%
National College of Ireland	22%
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	24%
St. Angela's College, Sligo	22%

\*The three campuses of the Technological University Dublin were treated as three separate institutions for fieldwork in 2019. They will be treated as one institution from 2020 onwards.

## Appendix 4

### Questions relating to specific engagement indicators

#### Higher-Order Learning

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

- Applying facts, theories, or methods to practical problems or new situations
- Analysing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts
- Evaluating a point of view, decision, or information source
- Forming an understanding or new idea from various pieces of information

#### Reflective and Integrative Learning

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

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

#### Quantitative Reasoning

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

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

#### Learning Strategies

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

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

#### Collaborative Learning

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

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

#### Student-Faculty Interaction

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

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

#### Effective Teaching Practices

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

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

#### Quality of Interactions

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

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

#### Supportive Environment

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

- Providing support to help students succeed academically
- Using learning support services (learning centre, computer centre, maths support, writing support etc.)
- Contact among students from different backgrounds (social, racial/ethnic, religious, etc.)
- Providing opportunities to be involved socially
- Providing support for your overall well-being

- (recreation, health care, counselling, etc.)
- Helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)
- Attending campus activities and events (special speakers, cultural performances, sporting events, etc.)
- Attending events that address important social, economic, or political issues

#### Questions not Relating to Specific Engagement Indicators

In addition, 22 other questions that do not directly relate to a specific indicator, but that are included in the survey because of their contribution to a broad understanding of student engagement, are listed in section 2.3.10.





[studentsurvey.ie](https://studentsurvey.ie)