

**The Higher Education Academy
Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey**

PTES 2009 REPORT

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Executive summary

The Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) ran for the first time in 2009. The survey was developed by the Higher Education Academy to collect feedback on their experiences from current taught postgraduate students in a systematic, user-friendly and comparative way. It uses the same methodology and approach as PRES (the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey).

A total of 14,421 students from 30 higher education institutions in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland took part in the survey, with an overall response rate of 17.7%. The demographic profile of respondents is not markedly different to that of the population of such students in the three nations, evidenced in HESA statistics.

Overall taught postgraduate students were very positive about their experiences; 84% agreed that their overall experience had met or exceeded their expectations. This is a similar proportion to final year undergraduates (evidenced by 2009 NSS results) and postgraduate research students (evidenced by 2009 PRES results). Taught postgraduate students' experiences met or exceeded expectations most strongly in terms of skills and personal development (89% agreed), career and professional development (86%), learning resources (86%) and quality of learning and teaching (82%), and least strongly in terms of organisation and management of the programme (76%) and assessment and feedback (74%).

The top two motivation factors for taking a taught postgraduate programme were to progress in current career path and to improve employment prospects, although the strength of these varied between disciplines and whether students were studying full-time or part-time.

The top motivation factors for those studying on a taught postgraduate programme at their particular institution were reputation (of the institution and department) and location.

Taught postgraduate students rated the quality of the teaching and learning very highly, being most positive (more than 80% agreement) about the intellectual stimulation of the course, staff enthusiasm about what they were teaching, staff being good at explaining things, and the effectiveness of teaching and learning methods for that type of programme.

Students rated assessment and feedback less highly, but three-quarters still agreed that the criteria used in marking had been made clear in advance, and assessment arrangements and marking had been fair. They were least positive about the timing of feedback and the extent to which feedback helped clarify things they did not understand.

In terms of organisation and management of the programme, half of the students thought the workload was more or less what they expected. Most (80%) agreed that the timetable fitted well with their other commitments. Students were very positive (over 70% agreement) about the effective communication of changes in the

programme or teaching, about the balance of core modules and options, and about the programme being well organised and running smoothly.

Students rated learning resources very highly; more than three out of four agreed they had been able to access general IT resources when they needed to, and that library resources were easily accessible and were good enough for their needs.

Students had quite mixed views about skills and personal development. They rated most highly (with over 75% agreement) the ways in which their programme had developed their research and transferable skills, and helped them to become more confident about independent learning. Less than two-thirds agreed that the programme had helped them to present themselves with confidence, and that their communication skills had improved.

In terms of career and professional development, students were most positive about having better employment prospects as a result of the programme (78%), but still also very positive about feeling better prepared for future employment (72%) and having been encouraged to reflect on their professional development needs (69%).

Students' views on advice and help they had received, and on the student support services available to them, were quite variable.

As in PRES, it is possible to group together responses to individual questions on particular themes into scales. Eight scales can be calculated for the PTES questions, and each has good reliability (judged by the Cronbach Alpha coefficient) - teaching (mean score of 3.88 out of 5), staff (3.98), assessment and feedback (3.65), dissertation (3.63), organisation and management (3.84), learning resources (3.95), skills and personal development (3.90) and career and professional development (3.93).

Multiple regression analysis shows that the two most important factors (scales) that affect the overall experience are teaching and skills and personal development. Seven scales together (the staff scale was excluded because it is not normally distributed) account for just over half of the variance in overall experience.

Feedback from users of PTES 2009 will be used to inform improvement of the questionnaire and timing for the 2010 survey, and steps are being taken to help increase the number of institutions and taught postgraduate students who take part in 2010. From 2010 PTES will be run every other year, with PRES run in the intervening year, as part of an integrated Academy postgraduate survey programme.

Further information about both PTES and PRES is available at:

www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/research/surveys

or contact surveys@heacademy.ac.uk

Section 1. The Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey

Introduction

This report summarises the development, operation and findings of the first national survey in the UK of what taught postgraduate students think about their experiences. The results provide a very useful snapshot of the taught postgraduate student experience, highlighting areas where students rated their experiences very positively and other areas where they rated them much less positively. The results have implications for policy and practice, both within individual HEIs and across the sector.

Participating institutions are able to analyse their own results and compare them with aggregate results from the whole survey and for particular mission groups. The focus in this report is on analysis of the aggregate results. Section 1 describes the purpose and development of the survey, Section 2 explains how the survey was run in 2009, and Section 3 summarises the main findings of the 2009 survey. Section 4 includes information about PTES 2010.

Objective

PTES is an online survey tool designed to collect feedback from current postgraduate taught students in a systematic, user-friendly and comparative way. The main objective is to help HEIs to enhance the quality of their postgraduate research degree provision, informed by evidence-based decision-making. PTES is *not* a student satisfaction survey; it offers HEIs an opportunity to find out what taught students think about their experiences, and the ability to benchmark their students' views against the national aggregate and against the views of students in particular mission groups through 'Benchmarking clubs'.

PTES is made available to any HEI that wishes to use it. The static snapshot offered by this first survey will, through time, be replaced with more of a moving picture, by tracking and comparing changes from year to year. Longitudinal comparisons will enable monitoring of the speed and direction of change, both within individual HEIs and across the sector, in response to initiatives designed to enhance the taught postgraduate student experience.

The need for a survey like PTES is clear, given three considerations:

- i. There has been no systematic way of collecting information about taught postgraduate students and what they think; whilst many HEIs have developed their own internal surveys, these do not allow comparisons to be made between HEIs and they are often not run on a regular basis.
- ii. There is growing interest across the UK in the overall nature of the student experience. It is increasingly acknowledged that the student voice should be heard and taken seriously. The National Student Survey (NSS)¹ operates at undergraduate level, the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES)²

¹ www.hefce.ac.uk/learning/nss and www.thestudentsurvey.com

² www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/research/surveys/pres

covers postgraduate research students, and PTES now provides a similar opportunity for taught postgraduate students.

- iii. There is growing commitment across the UK towards enhancing the student experience, and PTES allows evidence-based decision-making for enhancing the taught postgraduate student experience.

The Higher Education Academy is the natural “home” for PTES for three main reasons – it is neutral (not involved in quality assurance, performance management or funding of higher education institutions), it is national (and thus well-placed to help identify what is happening across the sector as well as identify and share effective practice), and its mission is to serve the sector and improve the quality of the student experience.

Development

The development of PTES has been informed by an understanding of the needs of HEIs, the nature of the taught postgraduate experience, and the potential of the Higher Education Academy to provide a service that helps HEIs to enhance the quality of the student experience.

In early 2007 the Academy commissioned York Consulting to design and carry out an exploratory survey of the taught postgraduate student experience in the UK. Development of the survey was steered by an Advisory Group which included representatives from the Academy and from higher education institutions in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The survey was based on an online questionnaire and focus groups involving students from a sample of thirty HEIs; 6,763 students volunteered to take part, an overall response rate of 12%. A report summarising the main findings was published on the Academy website.³ The York Consulting survey provided valuable information that informed the development of PTES.

As table 1 shows, the design principles behind PRES informed the development of PTES (Table 1).

³ www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/research/surveys/ptes

Table 1. Design principles behind PTES

The survey should be:

- a. Student-centred: it must listen to the student voice, and focus on enhancement of the student experience.
 - b. Easy to use: from the student's perspective, it must be in an accessible online format, easy to understand, quick to complete; from the institution's perspective, it must be easy to set up and administer, and easy to analyse and interpret the results.
 - c. Voluntary: institutions and their taught postgraduate students must be allowed and encouraged, but not required, to take part.
 - d. Flexible: while for comparative purposes it must have an agreed standard set of core questions, it must be possible for HEIs to add their own questions if they wish to. From 2010 it will also be possible for HEIs to choose when they run the survey within an approved 'window'.
 - e. Useful: it must provide information that is useful to HEIs and national bodies, and this includes a focus on the student experience and the opportunity for comparative analysis (benchmarking and longitudinal tracking).
 - f. Cost-effective: it must be economical for HEIs to run [the Academy met all central development and support costs]; the survey itself is free to users but participating HEIs need a Bristol Online Surveys (BOS) site licence.
 - g. Anonymous: the anonymity of student respondents and institutions taking part must be protected: all student responses are anonymous; a list of participating HEIs is not published.
 - h. Secure: participating HEIs must be confident that their institutional results will not be made available to any third party. Aggregate results are held on the BOS server; even the Academy cannot identify individual institutions by name in the aggregate results; aggregate results will not be released or sold to any third parties.
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A PTES Steering Group was established in 2007 to assist in the development of the survey. It was chaired by Chris Park (Lancaster University and HE Academy) and its members included Gosia Kulej (HE Academy), Ian Haines (London Metropolitan University and UK Council for Graduate Education), Elizabeth Grant (University College London), Alison Ashby (Open University), Gavin Muir (University of Glasgow), Denize McIntyre (University of Glamorgan), Rebecca Schneider (University of Northampton).

The Steering Group agreed a draft questionnaire which was then piloted on a sample of seven volunteer institutions during 2008; 2,238 students volunteered to take the survey, a response rate of 13%. The results were analysed, feedback on the survey was collected from the PTES officers in the volunteer HEIs, and the Steering Group agreed a revised set of questions for the first national PTES survey early in 2009. Feedback from the pilot survey also guided the preparation of appropriate guidance for participating institutions for the main 2009 survey.

Methodology

PTES uses the same method as the Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS), which has been used successfully by HEIs across the UK in recent years for collecting feedback from research staff⁴, and the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) for collecting feedback from research students⁵. Both surveys are based on online questionnaires that are delivered via the Bristol Online Surveys (BOS)⁶ website.

Participating institutions use their own BOS accounts to run PTES. Many HEIs already had BOS site licences because they were participating in CROS and/or PRES, and using it for other online surveys. Those who didn't have a BOS site licence needed to buy one (at relatively low cost) to use PTES. Information about the site licence can be obtained from BOS⁷.

Each institution was given an electronic template of the PTES questionnaire before the survey went live, which they could modify by adding institution-specific questions (such as what school or department the student belongs to).

The participating institutions were responsible for contacting their taught postgraduate students by email to invite them to take part in PTES. No student details were shared with the Academy.

The BOS website allows the PTES Officers to monitor their own institutional results and the aggregate results in real time, while the survey was open and after it closed.

The questionnaire

PTES was based on a standard set of questions seeking students' views on a range of aspects of their student experience. The questionnaire also included free text boxes, and participating institutions were able to add as many of their own specific questions as they wished (for example, to collect feedback on particular services, initiatives, policies or practices). Appropriate questions from NSS and PRES were also included in PTES, to allow comparisons of students' views of their experiences through the ladder of higher education qualifications.

The core PTES questionnaire is included in the Appendix, and a copy can be downloaded in PDF format from the PTES website.⁸ A Welsh language version of the questionnaire will be provided in 2010 if any Welsh institutions decide to take part.

The questions were structured in nine main sections:

Section A. Motivations

Section B. Quality of Teaching and Learning

Section C. Assessment and Feedback

⁴ www.cros.ac.uk

⁵ www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/research/surveys/pres

⁶ www.survey.bris.ac.uk

⁷ www.survey.bris.ac.uk/support/sign-up-instructions and email survey-help@bristol.ac.uk

⁸ www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/research/surveys/ptes

Section D. Dissertation
Section E. Organisation and Management
Section F. Learning Resources
Section G. Skills and Personal Development
Section H. Career and Professional Development
Section I. Overall Satisfaction

There were also questions specifically for campus based learners and distance learners, and for international students, and questions relating to student support services.

A series of demographic questions were included to allow analysis of patterns of responses for different types of student. Students were asked about the degree they were registered for, their age and gender, their discipline (using 41 JACS codes), the date they started their course, mode of study, domicile, employment situation, their main source of funding for the course, and their highest qualification on entry.

Benchmarking

Like PRES, PTES was designed to allow participating institutions to benchmark their results against the aggregate results of all participating HEIs, and against aggregate results for particular mission groups (Russell Group, 1994-Group, Post-92 and Pre-92). An institution is allowed to see all mission group aggregate results if it volunteers to join one of the mission-group based benchmarking clubs. They can see aggregate results only, not those for individual HEIs, and it is not possible to download aggregate datasets for independent analysis.

Ownership and anonymity

Students who took part in the survey were informed that “All data collected in this survey will be held anonymously and securely. Each institution will be able to see its own survey results and an overall report will be available to the Higher Education Academy. All results will be presented in an aggregated and anonymised form. Demographic data collected at the end of the survey will only be used for the purposes of this survey and will not be used to identify any individuals.”

Institutional results remain confidential to the institution. The list of institutions participating in PTES remains confidential to these institutions and the Academy.

Each institution remains the owner of its own institutional data and it can publish its own PTES results internally and externally. The Steering Group decided that institutions should not publish aggregated PTES data for their institution, until after the Academy has published the national data in this report.

The Academy has access to the aggregate dataset with individual institution-level data. Institution names and free text replies have been removed from this dataset, to make it impossible for the Academy to identify particular institutions (and thus protect the anonymity of institutions).

Section 2. Operation of the 2009 PTES

The Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) ran for the first time in 2009.

Survey dates

The survey was open from 20th April to 30th July 2009. All institutional PTES surveys were launched within the first week of administration.

Academy support

The Academy offered a range of types of support to participating institutions during and after the survey, including documentation (*How to set up PTES*; *How to analyse PTES data*; and *How to set up a PTES benchmarking club*), a regular PTES email bulletin, a Frequently Asked Questions sheet, the dedicated website, and *ad hoc* support by telephone and email whenever necessary. The Academy also arranged technical support from the BOS team, and ran a PTES Officers meeting in Birmingham on 5th August 2009 to share good practice and collect feedback from institutions.

Institutions and respondents

All HEIs in the UK were invited to take part on a voluntary basis, so the sample of participating institutions was self-selecting. A total of 30 institutions took part in the survey, comprising 26 from England, three from Scotland and one from Northern Ireland.

A total of 14,421 students responded to the survey out of the 81,686 who were invited to take part by the participating institutions, producing an overall response rate of 17.7%. The profile of respondents is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2. Profile of respondents who took part in PTES 2009

Age	A third (34%) were 25 years old or younger, over half (55%) were 30 or younger, and 6% were aged over 50. A more detailed breakdown of respondents by age is shown in Figure 1.
Gender	Just over half (57%) were female, and just under half (43%) were male.
Full-time/part-time	Just over half (53%) were registered as studying on a full-time basis, and just under half (43%) were part-time (the rest had just completed their programme and were not currently registered). Most of the students who were studying full-time were aged below 30; in the 30+ age range students studying part-time outnumbered those studying full-time (Figure 2)
Mode of study	Three-quarters (72%) were primarily face-to-face learners, and just over a quarter (28%) were primarily distance learners.
Domicile	Two-thirds (67%) were registered for fees purposes as home students, a tenth (11%) as EU and a quarter (23%) as

	overseas.
Year of study	Six out of ten students (62%) had started their taught postgraduate programme within the current academic year, and 18% had started the previous year.
Degree registered for	Three-quarters (78%) were registered for a taught Masters, a tenth for a Postgraduate Certificate (including PGCE) and just under a tenth for a Postgraduate Diploma.
Discipline	Relatively large numbers of respondents were studying five particular disciplines, all vocational in nature – management (12%), business (8%), educational studies (7.4%), law (5.4%) and teacher training (4.6%). The rest were widely distributed between many other disciplines.
Source of funding	more than half (59%) of the students were self-funded, a fifth (20%) were funded by their employer, and one in twelve (8%) were funded by their institution (for example through a bursary or scholarship).
Employment	just over half (55%) were in paid employment at the time of the survey. Of those who were in paid employment, two-thirds (69%) worked more than 30 hours in a typical week during term time, and a tenth (9%) worked up to 10 hours a week.
Highest qualification on entry	nearly three-quarters (71%) had an undergraduate degree or equivalent, and nearly a fifth (18%) already had a postgraduate degree (such as a MA).

Figure 1. Breakdown of respondents by age

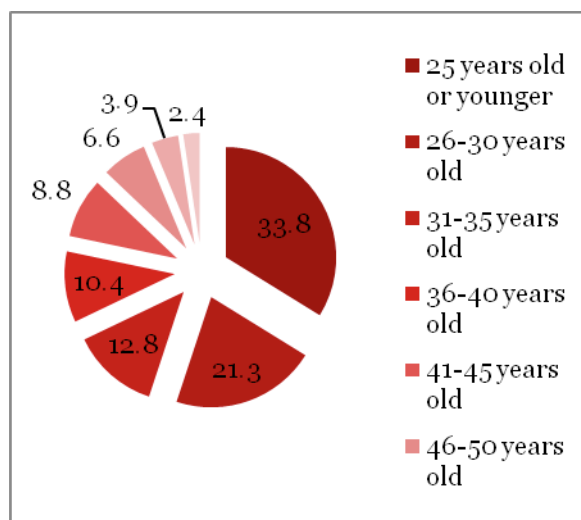
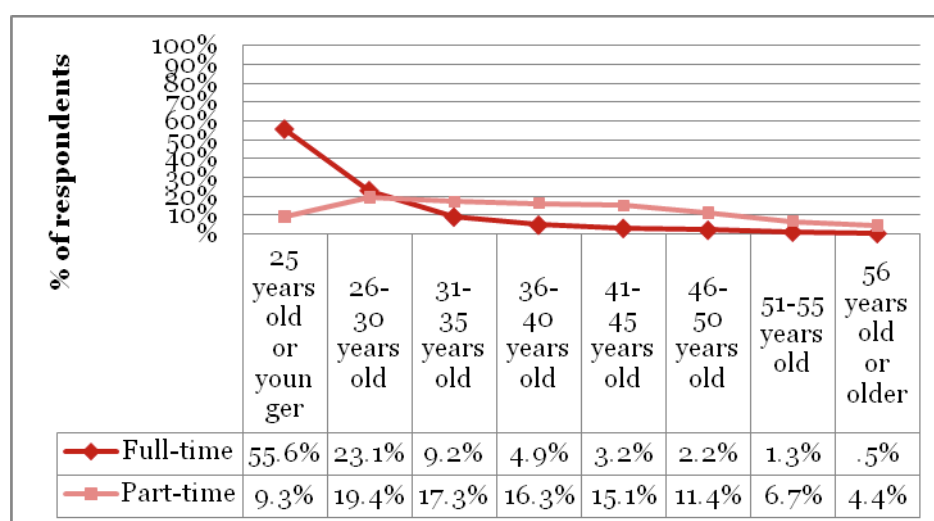


Figure 2. Variation in full-time vs part-time study by age



How representative PTES is of the UK taught population can be judged by comparing their profile with that of the sector overall, using the most recent HESA data (2007-08)⁹.

Table 3a. Profile of respondents by gender

Gender	HESA	PTES
Male	49%	43%
Female	51%	57%

The PTES sample is broadly similar to the HESA profile in terms of gender (Table 3a), but males are slightly under-represented which is quite typical for these sorts of surveys (males are often more reluctant to reply to online surveys).

Table 3b. Profile of respondents by mode of study

Mode	HESA	PTES
Full-time	52%	55%
Part-time	48%	45%

The PTES sample is very similar to the HESA profile in terms of mode of study (Table 3b).

⁹ *Students in Higher Education Institutions 2007/08*, Tables: 1.c and 1.g for England, Northern Ireland and Scotland

Table 3c. Profile of respondents by domicile

Domicile	HESA	HESA (30 PTES HEIs only)	PTES
Home	58%	61%	67%
Other EU	9%	9%	11%
Non EU	33%	31%	22%

In terms of domicile (for fees purposes), home students are over-represented in the PTES sample and overseas (non EU) students are under-represented (Table 3c) compared with the HESA profile overall, but the disparity decreases slightly if the comparison is made with HESA data for only the 30 participating HEIs. Overall, the profile of PTES participating institutions in respect to domicile differs slightly to the national profile.

Table 3d. Profile of respondents by discipline

Discipline	HESA	PTES
Medicine & dentistry	2.3%	3.0%
Subjects allied to medicine	8.6%	6.0%
Biological sciences	5.1%	6.8%
Veterinary science	0.1%	0.2%
Agriculture & related subjects	0.6%	0.3%
Physical sciences	2.2%	2.0%
Mathematical sciences	1.0%	1.0%
Computer science	5.2%	3.0%
Engineering & technology	7.8%	7.7%
Architecture, building & planning	3.8%	2.7%
Social studies	9.6%	10.7%
Law	4.3%	5.4%
Business & administrative studies	27.6%	23.2%
Mass communications & documentation	2.6%	2.4%
Languages	3.2%	4.2%
Historical & philosophical studies	3.0%	3.8%
Creative arts & design	4.7%	4.0%
Education	8.2%	12.0%
Combined	0.3%	1.6%

In terms of discipline, the PTES sample is on the whole fairly well representative of the HESA profile, although education is over-represented, and business and administrative studies is under-represented (Table 3d).

Overall, it is clear that despite the rather low response rate, the PTES sample is broadly representative of the postgraduate taught student population in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

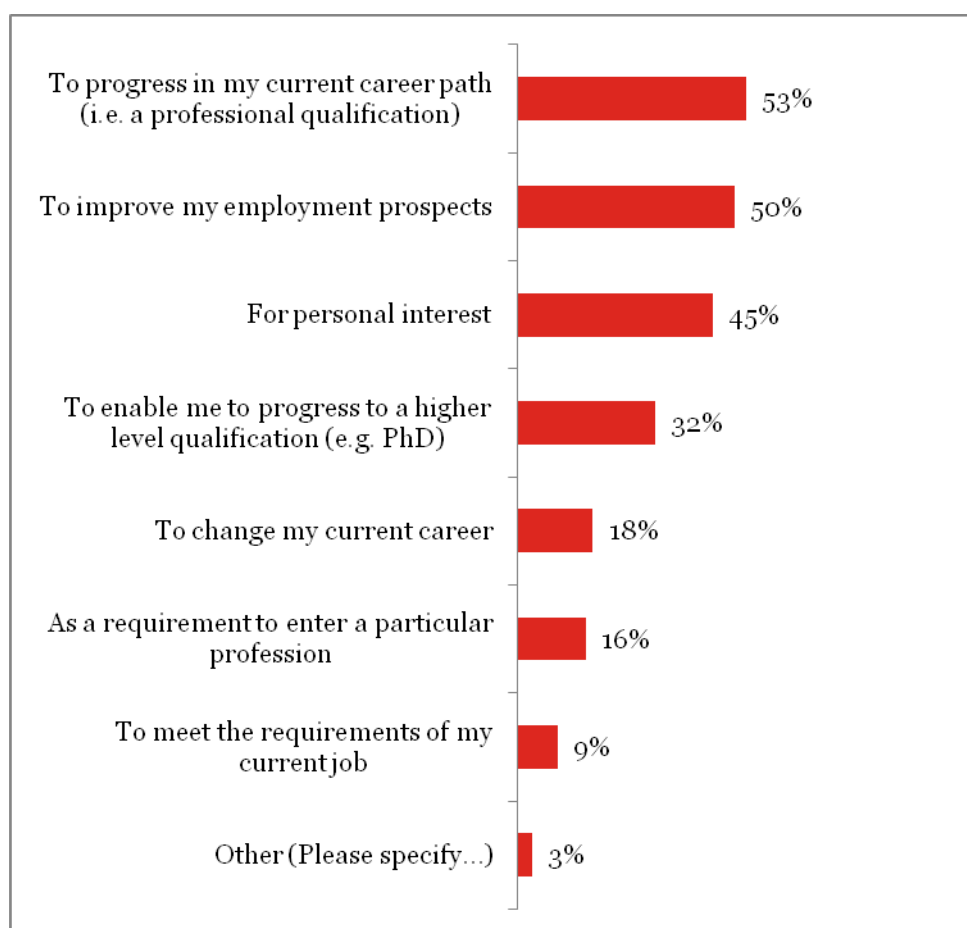
Section 3. Summary of main findings

This section summarises the main findings of PTES 2009. In the tables and text that follow, ‘% Agree’ refers to the combined percentage of respondents who chose the ‘Mostly agree’ and ‘Definitely agree’ options within individual questions, and those who chose the ‘Not applicable’ option are excluded (i.e. only replies from options 1 to 5 are included), unless stated otherwise.

Motivation for taking a postgraduate programme

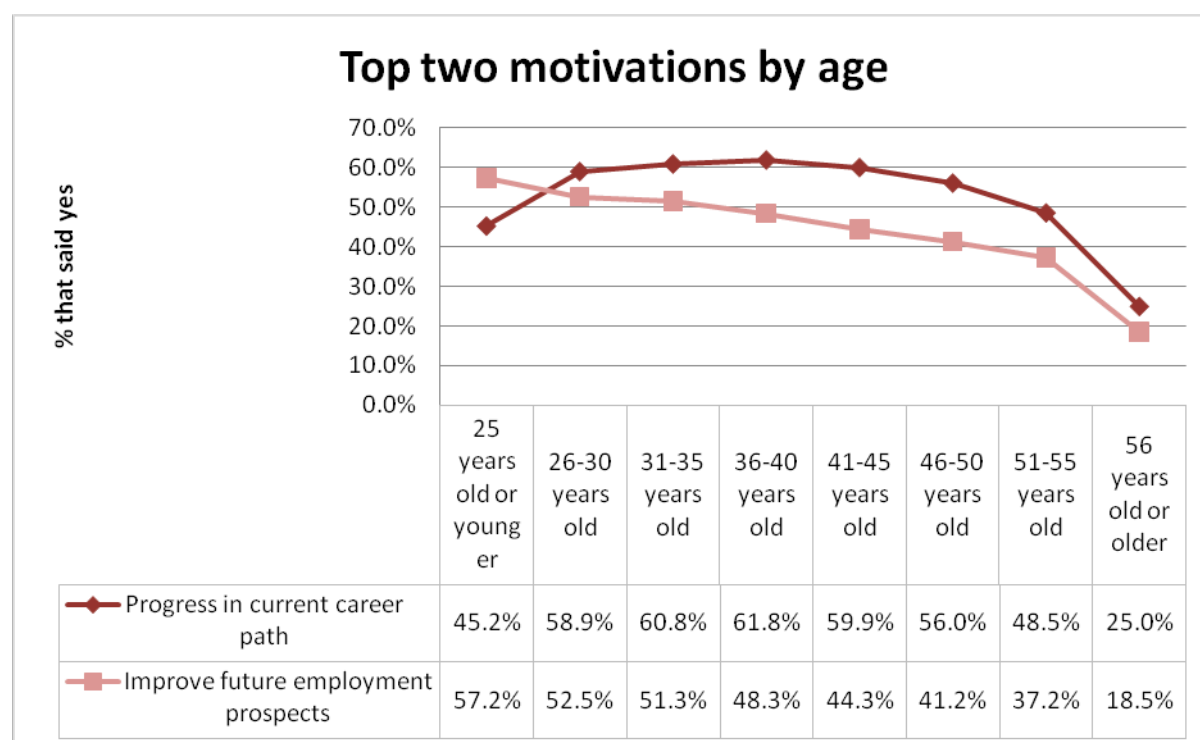
Students were asked what their main motivations were for taking their postgraduate programme (Q1 in the PTES questionnaire; see Appendix 1); they could select any number from a list of 8 possible motivations (so the percentages shown add up to more than 100%). The results are summarised in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Students’ main motivations for taking their postgraduate programme



The two most important motivation factors for taking the postgraduate taught programme were ‘to progress in current career path’ (i.e. professional qualification) (53%) and ‘to improve my employment prospects’ (50%). These two items are not correlated which means that for students it is either one or another. Not surprisingly the latter is more important to younger students while the former is more important to middle-age groups of students (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Variations in the top two motivations by age



At discipline level, for students studying life sciences (medicine and veterinary) progress in current career path is the most important (68% on average) motivator. This is the least important factor for maths students and students of languages, history and philosophy (only 31% on average).

Improving future employment prospects is the most important for students studying physics, computer science and business and administration (61% on average), and the least important to students studying veterinary sciences, education and maths (39% on average).

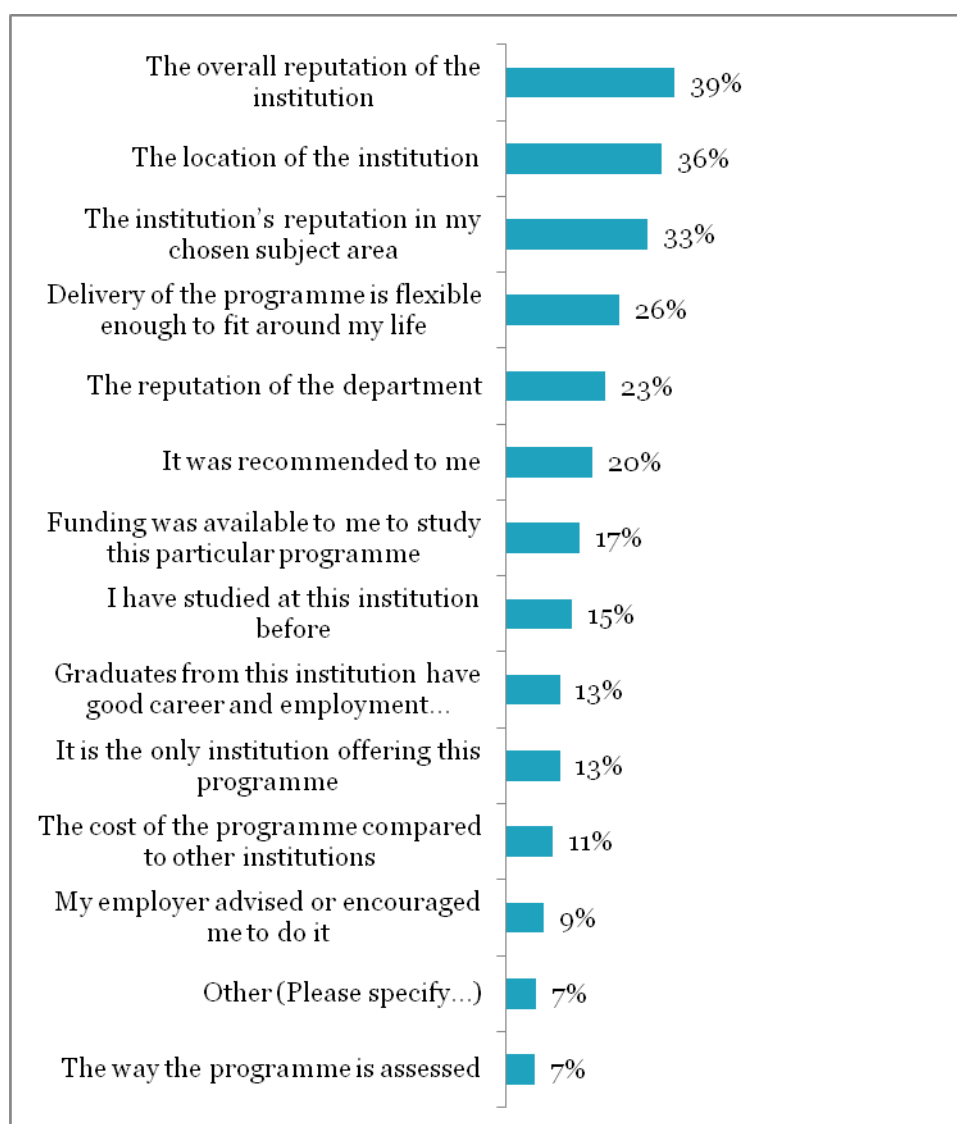
Those who are primarily distance learners are more often motivated by current career progression – 64% mentioned it as a factor whereas only 49% of the face-to-face learners did. This is because distance learners are usually older and more often are in paid employment already. Not surprisingly the same pattern can be observed for part-time and full-time students.

When it comes to domicile there is no significant relationship between place of residence and motivation to progress in current career path. At the same time, non-UK students tend to agree by 10% more than UK students that they are motivated by improving their employment prospects.

Motivation for studying at that institution

Students were asked (Q2) why they had chosen to study for their postgraduate taught qualification at that particular institution, and again they could select any number from a list of 14 possible reasons. The results are summarised in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Reasons why students chose to study at that institution



The three reasons mentioned most frequently were reputation, location (36%) and flexibility of programme delivery (26%). In terms of reputation, institutional reputation was rated highest (39%), closely followed by the institution's reputation in their chosen subject area (33%); reputation of department came much lower (23%).

Perhaps surprisingly, financial factors were rated relatively low; the availability of funding was ranked only seventh, with only one in six (17%) students rating it as a reason for their choice of institution, and the cost of the programme compared to other institutions was ranked eleventh (11%).

Quality of teaching and learning

Students were asked how they would rate the quality of the teaching on their taught postgraduate programme (Q5); 38% rated it as consistently good, and 53% rated it as variable but generally good. Only 2% rated it as consistently poor.

Students were asked to what extent they agreed with a series of questions relating to the teaching and learning on their programme, (Q3) and the staff on their programme (Q4). The results are summarised in Table 4, ranked in descending order.

Table 4. Students' views on teaching and learning, and staff

Question	% Agree
3d. The course is intellectually stimulating	84%
4c. Staff are enthusiastic about what they are teaching	83%
4a. Staff are good at explaining things	83%
3a. The teaching and learning methods are effective for this type of programme	81%
4b. Staff made the subject interesting	77%
4d. Staff are available/accessible when I need them	71%
3c. I am happy with the teaching support I received from staff on my course	71%
3b. There is sufficient contact time (face to face and/or virtual/online) between staff and students to support effective learning	67%

Students generally had very positive views about teaching and learning and about staff on their programme. More than four out of five agreed that their course is intellectually satisfying, staff are enthusiastic and good at explaining things, and effective teaching methods are used; nearly as many agreed that staff made the subject interesting. Slightly fewer, but still nearly three-quarters, agreed that staff were available/accessible when they needed them, and that they were happy with the teaching support they receive from staff on the course. Postgraduate students' very positive views about the quality of the teaching on their programmes were very similar to those of undergraduates, evidenced through the 2009 NSS results¹⁰, which show agreement levels of at least 80%.

The lowest score in this section, but still with two-thirds of students agreeing, related to sufficiency of contact time to support effective learning.

Assessment and feedback

Students were asked to what extent they agree with a series of statements regarding assessment and feedback on their programme (Q6). The results are summarised in Table 5, ranked in descending order.

¹⁰ www.hefce.ac.uk/news/hefce/2009/nss.htm

Table 5. Students' views on assessment and feedback

Question	% Agree
6a. The criteria used in marking have been made clear in advance	74%
6b. Assessment arrangements and marking have been fair	74%
6e. I have received detailed comments (written or oral) on my work	68%
6f. Feedback on my work has helped me clarify things I did not understand	58%
6c. Feedback on my work has been prompt	57%
6d. I received feedback in time to allow me to improve my next assignment	57%

Students were generally very positive about assessment but much less so about feedback. Three-quarters agreed that marking criteria had been made clear in advance, and that assessment arrangements and marking had been fair. Levels of agreement about feedback were amongst the lowest of any of the questions in the survey; just over half agreed that feedback had helped them clarify things they did not understand (58%), had been prompt (57%) or had been received in time to allow them to improve their next assignment (57%). Postgraduate students' views about assessment and feedback on their programmes were very similar to those of undergraduates, evidenced through the 2009 NSS results¹¹.

Dissertation

Just under three-quarters (72%) of the students had to write a dissertation as part of their programme (Q7), but many of them will have been either just starting it or still working on it when they completed the survey. Those who had to write a dissertation were asked to what extent they agreed with a series of statements relating to the dissertation and supervision (Q8). The results are summarised in Table 6, ranked in descending order.

¹¹ www.hefce.ac.uk/news/hefce/2009/nss.htm

Table 6. Students' views on the dissertation and supervision

Question	%Agree
8b. My supervisor has the skills and subject knowledge to adequately support my dissertation	80%
8a. I understand the required standards for the dissertation	77%
8c. My supervisor makes a real effort to understand any difficulties I face	70%
8g. My supervisor is available when I need him/her	70%
8f. My supervisor provides helpful feedback on my progress	66%
8d. I have been given good guidance in topic selection and refinement by my supervisor	65%
8e. I have received good guidance in my literature search from my supervisor	60%

Students generally had positive views about the dissertation and supervision. More than three quarters agreed that their supervisor has the skills and subject knowledge to adequately support their dissertation (80%) and that they understood the required standards for the dissertation (77%). More than two thirds agreed that their supervisor was available when needed (70%) and made a real effort to understand any difficulties they face (70%). Over half agreed that their supervisor provided helpful feedback on progress (66%) and gave them good guidance in topic selection and refinement (65%) as well as good guidance in their literature search (60%). The taught postgraduate students' views on dissertation and supervision were broadly similar to those of the research students who took part in PRES 2009¹².

Organisation and management

Students were asked how they found the workload on their programme relative to what they had expected (Q10); just over half (52%) agreed it was more or less what they expected, just under a third (31%) that it was higher than expected), and tenth (10%) that it was much higher than expected. They were also asked to what extent they agreed with a series of statements relating to the organisation and management of their programme (Q9). The results are summarised in Table 7, ranked in descending order.

¹² www.vitae.ac.uk/CMS/files/upload/Vitaeconference2009-A1-PRES.pdf

Table 7. Students' views on organisation and management

Question	% Agree
9a. The timetable fits well with my other commitments	80%
9b. Any changes in the programme or teaching have been communicated effectively	74%
9d. The balance of core modules and options is appropriate	70%
9c. The programme is well organised and is running smoothly	70%
9e. The balance between scheduled contact time and private study is appropriate	69%

Overall, students were very positive about the organisation and management of their programme. Four out of five (80%) agreed that the timetable fitted well with their other commitments, and three-quarters (74%) agreed that any changes in the programme or teaching had been communicated effectively. More than two-thirds agreed that the balance of core modules and options was appropriate (70%), the programme was well organised and ran smoothly (70%), and there was an appropriate balance between scheduled contact time and private study (69%). Postgraduate students' views about the organisation and management of their programmes were slightly more positive than those of undergraduates, evidenced through the 2009 NSS results¹³.

Learning resources

Students were asked to what extent they agreed with a series of statements relating to the learning resources on their programme (Q11). The results are summarised in Table 8, ranked in descending order.

Table 8. Students' views on learning resources

Question	% Agree
11c. I have been able to access general IT resources when I needed to	78%
11b. The library resources and services are easily accessible	77%
11a. The library resources and services are good enough for my needs	75%

Students were very positive about the learning resources on their programme; three-quarters agreed that they had been able to access general IT facilities when they needed to (78%), and that library resources and services were easily accessible (77%) and good enough for their needs (75%). Postgraduate students' views about

¹³ www.hefce.ac.uk/news/hefce/2009/nss.htm

learning resources on their programmes were slightly less positive than those of undergraduates, evidenced through the 2009 NSS results¹⁴.

Campus-based learners: students who defined themselves as campus-based learners were asked to what extent they agreed with two statements relating to learning resources on their programme (Q17). The results are summarised in Table 9, which shows that three-quarters of them had been able to access social learning spaces (75%) and specialised equipment, facilities or rooms (72%) when they needed to.

Table 9. Campus-based learners' views on learning resources

Question	% Agree
17a. I have been able to access social learning spaces (e.g. for group working) on campus when I needed to	75%
17b. I have been able to access specialised equipment, facilities, or rooms when I needed them	72%

Distance learners: students who defined themselves as distance learners were asked to what extent they agreed with two statements relating learning resources on their programme (Q18). The results are summarised in Table 10, which shows that more than three-quarters (78%) were satisfied with the quality of learning materials, and more than two-thirds (67%) were happy with the proportion of e-learning elements in their programme.

Table 10. Distance learners' views on learning resources

Question	% Agree
18a. I am satisfied with the quality of learning materials available to me (Print, online material, DVDs etc.)	78%
18b. I am happy with the proportion of e-learning elements used in the programme (online resources, Virtual Learning Environment)	67%

Skills and personal development

Students were asked to what extent they agreed with a series of statements relating to skills and personal development gained on their programme (Q12). The results are summarised in Table 11, ranked in descending order.

¹⁴ www.hefce.ac.uk/news/hefce/2009/nss.htm

Table 11. Students' views on skills and personal development

Question	% Agree
12a. The programme has developed my research skills	79%
12b. The programme has developed my transferable skills	77%
12c. As a result of the programme I am more confident about independent learning	75%
12f. As a result of the programme, I feel confident in tackling unfamiliar problems	66%
12d. The programme has helped me to present myself with confidence	65%
12e. As a result of the programme my communication skills have improved	61%

Students rated most highly the impact of the programme on their development of research skills (79%) and transferable skills (77%), and on developing their confidence about independent learning (75%). Levels of agreement were lower in relation to feeling confident about tackling unfamiliar problems (66%), presenting themselves with confidence (65%), and improving their communication skills (61%). On both improvement of communication skills and feeling confident in tackling unfamiliar problems, postgraduate students' views about personal development on their programmes were much less positive (more than 10% lower) than those of undergraduates, evidenced through the 2009 NSS results¹⁵.

Career and professional development

Students were asked to what extent they agreed with a series of statements relating to career and professional development as a result of their programme (Q13). The results are summarised in Table 12, ranked in descending order.

Table 12. Students' views on career and professional development

Question	% Agree
13c. As a result of this programme, I believe my future employment prospects are better	78%
13b. I feel better prepared for my future employment	72%
13a. I am encouraged to reflect on my professional development needs	69%

Views on career and professional development were generally high. More than two-thirds of the students agreed that their future employment prospects had improved by taking the programme (78%), that they felt better prepared for future employment (72%), and that they had been encouraged to reflect on their professional

¹⁵ www.hefce.ac.uk/news/hefce/2009/nss.htm

development needs (69%). Students who were motivated by improving their employment prospects (Figure 3) tended to agree more with these statements. It is also important to remember that improving employment prospect was one of the main motivations for students to undertake the postgraduate taught programme (Figure 3).

Student support services

Students were asked to what extent they agreed with a series of statements relating to advice and support on their programme (Q20). The results are summarised in Table 13. Just over half agreed they had received sufficient advice and support with their studies (64%) and their institution provided them with adequate help (62%), but for each question a quarter of the students gave neutral responses.

Table 13. Students' views on advice and help

Question	%Agree	%Neutral
20b. I have received sufficient advice and support with my studies	64%	24%
20a. My institution provided me with adequate help to prepare me for studies at this level	62%	26%

Twenty nine percent of the respondents said they used student support services (Q21). Those who had were asked to what extent they agreed with a series of statements relating to the student support services available to them (Q22). The results are summarised in Table 14, ranked in descending order (by agreement).

Table 14. Students' views on student support services

Question	% Agree	% Neutral
22d. The student support services were readily accessible	76%	17%
22a. I have received effective support with my study skills (e.g. taking notes, avoiding plagiarism)	71%	20%
22c. The student support services were effective in addressing my needs	67%	23%
22b. The level of careers support was appropriate for my needs	60%	24%

The great majority of the students who had used student support services had positive views about them, particularly in terms of accessibility (76%), effective support with study skills (71%) and effectiveness in addressing needs (67%); the lowest level of agreement was with the level of careers support (60%). As with students' views on advice and help (Table 14), many students gave neutral answers to the questions on student support services.

The 2009 PTES questionnaire also included two questions (23a and 23b) relating to language support for students for whom English is not their first language. The

questions were found to be too generic to yield meaningful results in the core part of the questionnaire. It is suggested that in 2010 these questions should be included in the institutional questions section of the questionnaire.

Scales

The groups of individual questions on specific themes can be grouped together to form scales, which provide a useful way of comparing themes. The approach taken in constructing the scales in PTES is the same as that in PRES, based on testing the internal reliability of a group of questions on a given theme, using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient¹⁶. The higher the Alpha score, the more internally reliable (robust) the group of questions when taken together. As a rule of thumb, a scale with an Alpha coefficient of 0.8 and higher is considered to be robust (i.e. the scale measures what it is supposed to be measuring).

Eight scales can be calculated for the PTES questions, one for each major theme. Mean scores and Alpha coefficients for these scales are listed in Table 15.

Table 15. PTES scales – mean scores and Alpha coefficients

Scales	Question Nos	Mean	Alpha
Teaching	3a, 3b, 3c, 3d	3.88	0.841
Staff	4a, 4b, 4c, 4d	3.98	0.865
Assessment and feedback	6a, 6b, 6c, 6d, 6e, 6f	3.65	0.880
Dissertation	8a, 8b, 8c, 8d, 8e, 8f, 8g	3.63	0.932
Organisation and management	9a, 9b, 9c, 9d, 9e	3.84	0.840
Learning resources	11a, 11b, 11c	3.95	0.829
Skills and personal development	12a, 12b, 12c, 12d, 12e, 12f	3.90	0.912
Career and professional development	13a, 13b, 13c	3.93	0.834

Only normally distributed variables can legitimately be included in parametric statistics (such as multiple regression); including one or more non-normally distributed variables violates the assumptions of a parametric statistical test. Each of the scales in Table 15 is normally distributed except the Staff scale, which is not included in any further analysis.

There are statistically significant (at the 99.9% significance level) correlations between each of the scales (excluding Staff) (Table 16), the strongest being between teaching and organisation.

¹⁶ www.joe.org/joe/1999april/tt3.php

Table 16. Correlations between the PTES scales

	Teaching	Organisation	Skills	Career	Assessment	Dissertation	Learning resources
Teaching	1	.680	.609	.569	.609	.534	.321
Organisation		1	.548	.506	.580	.438	.365
Skills			1	.651	.464	.447	.328
Career				1	.449	.399	.288
Assessment					1	.485	.282
Dissertation						1	.250
Learning resources							1

Overall satisfaction – experience against expectation

Students were asked to rate their experience of their postgraduate taught programme compared with their expectations (Q14g). 84% agreed that their overall experience had met or exceeded their expectations. This compares comfortably with the 81-86% of undergraduate students in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland who reported in the 2009 NSS¹⁷ that they were satisfied with the quality of their course, and the 84% of postgraduate research students who reported in the 2009 PRES¹⁸ that their overall experience had met or exceeded their expectations.

Students rated three areas higher than overall experience in terms of experience against expectation (Table 17) – skills and personal development (89%), career and personal development (86%) and learning resources (86%). They rated experience versus expectations lowest in two areas – organisation and management (76%) and assessment and feedback (74%) – although in each case at least three-quarters of students rated their experience as having at least met expectations. Figure 6 shows the distribution of students’ ratings of experience against expectation, by theme.

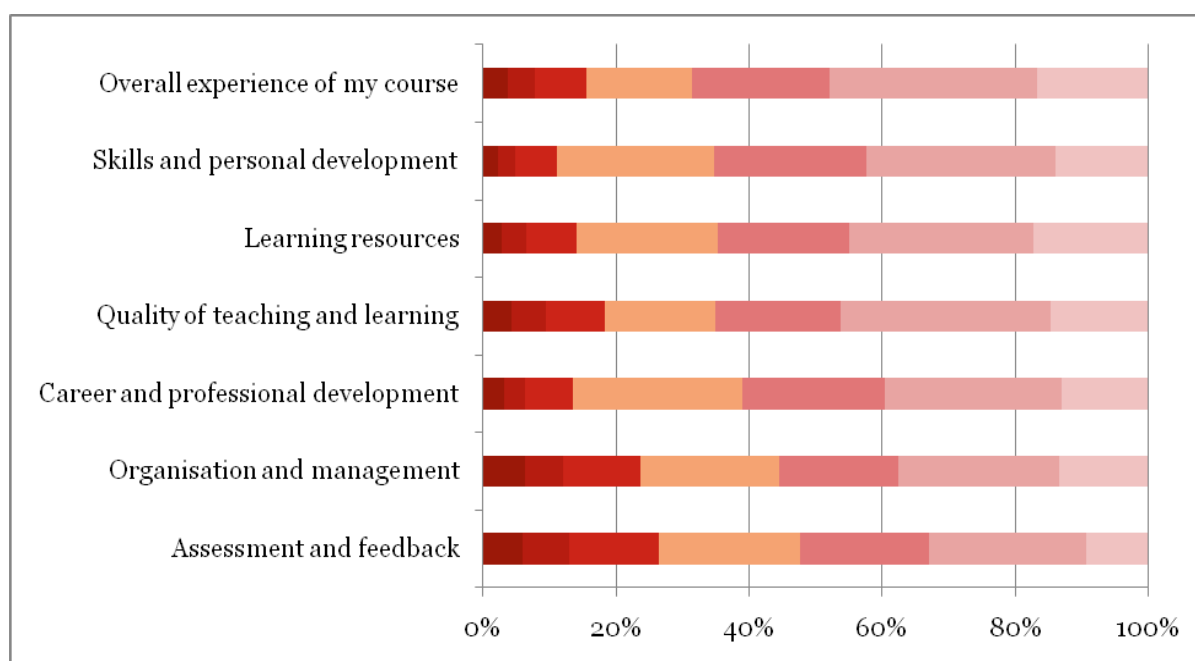
¹⁷ www.hefce.ac.uk/news/hefce/2009/nss.htm

¹⁸ www.vitae.ac.uk/CMS/files/upload/Vitaeconference2009-A1-PRES.pdf

Table 17. Students' views on their experience against expectation

Question	% Agree met or exceeded
14e. Skills and personal development	89%
14f. Career and professional development	86%
14d. Learning resources	86%
14a. Quality of learning and teaching	82%
14c. Organisation and management	76%
14b. Assessment and feedback	74%

Figure 6. Students' ratings of experience against expectation



Note: -3 (extreme left) it has definitely not met my expectations, 0 (centre) it has met my expectations, +3 (extreme right) it has definitely exceeded my expectations

Multiple regression analysis¹⁹ was used to determine which factors (of those included) affect overall experience the most (Table 18). The seven scales (Table 15) combined account for 52% of the variance in students' evaluations of the whole programme. This is considered to be a medium effect. It means that factors that were included in the survey explain or account for half of the variations in the postgraduate taught student experience; the rest is explained by other factors (such

¹⁹ www.statsoft.com/TEXTBOOK/stmulreg.html

as personal circumstances, campus facilities etc.) that were not measured by the PTES survey.

Table 18. Multiple regression analysis summary

Scales	Beta	Significant?	Rank
Teaching	.346	Yes (.000)	1
Skills and personal development	.211	Yes (.000)	2
Organisation and management	.120	Yes (.000)	3
Career and professional development	.117	Yes (.000)	4
Assessment and feedback	.050	Yes (.000)	5
Dissertation	.017	No (.078)	6
Learning resources	-.003	No (.076)	7

The importance of each scale (its strength in explaining variance in the students' evaluations) is expressed by the beta coefficient; the higher the beta value, the more important the scale. The multiple regression analysis shows (Table 18) that the most important scales²⁰ that affect the overall experience (Q14.g) are teaching (0.346) and skills and personal development (0.211). Learning resources is the least important scale in this multiple regression model, which is perhaps surprising given its high mean score as a scale (Table 15) and the positive views students had of it (Table 8); its low importance here may arise from the fact that, provided students feel that their access to learning is at least adequate, other factors (particularly teaching, and skills and personal development) might be more variable and have a more direct impact on their overall experience.

²⁰ Recall that the staff scale is not normally distributed and so is not suitable for inclusion in the multiple regression analysis

Section 4. Developing PTES further

The PTES 2009 results, which are summarised in the Executive Summary and outlined in Section 3, are very positive and show that students on taught postgraduate programmes rate their overall experience as highly as final year undergraduate students (evidenced by NSS) and postgraduate research students (evidenced by PRES).

PTES ran for the first time in 2009, and whilst it proved successful both methodologically and operationally, it is clear that it can be further improved to increase its usefulness both to individual HEIs and to the sector as a whole. This final section summarises the issues arising from the 2009 PTES survey and outlines the main changes being introduced into PTES 2010.

Sources of feedback

Valuable user feedback on PTES 2009 was collected both formally and informally. Formal feedback was collected at a PTES Officers Meeting (which included 15 institutional representatives) held in Birmingham on 5 August 2009, and a meeting of the PTES Steering Group held in York on 10 September 2009. Informal feedback was collected by Gosia Kulej, in the form of email contacts and discussions with PTES Officers, and questions received from them, during the course of the survey. The feedback was very positive and constructive, and has helped to identify areas where improvements may be made.

Improving the questionnaire

User feedback has informed a number of improvements to the PTES questionnaire for 2010 onwards, including moving questions about students' services and language support to the institutional questions section. Also an open question will be now split into two, allowing students to enter positive and/or negative comments. Questions about discipline and feedback will benefit from additional information to clarify the questions.

Participation rates – institutions and students

The total number of institutions taking part (30) was lower than the number which took part in the first year of PRES (56 in 2007), and the overall response rate in PTES (17.7%) was lower than in PRES 2007 (25.2%) or PRES 2009 (28.6%). However, for an optional survey run at a busy time of year for HEIs, it nonetheless represents a good start. The survey captured the views of more than 14,000 taught postgraduate students in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, and the demographic profile of respondents is not markedly different to that of the three nations overall so the findings have broad applicability.

To help increase the number of participating HEIs and students in PTES 2010, the Academy has developed a communication plan which identifies key stakeholder groups to target, states what type and form of communication is most appropriate for each group, and allocates responsibilities.

Reminders to students

User feedback identified the problem of how to remind students to take part in the survey without annoying them by pestering them too much. The Bristol Online Survey (BOS) team are developing an add-on tool for their online surveys that will enable participating HEIs to only send email reminders to students who have not yet responded to the survey; the Academy will provide information on this BOS add-on option to HEIs that express an interest in taking part in PTES 2010.

Timing of the survey

Feedback from participating institutions indicated that the timing of the period when the survey was open did not suit all HEIs, mainly because of variations in how taught postgraduate programmes are structured. This feedback has informed the decision to revise the timing of PTES 2010 to make it easier for HEIs to take part, and thus hopefully help raise participation rates (number of HEIs and students).

From 2010 onwards there will be a flexible survey period, allowing HEIs to carry out the survey at a time that better fits their own institutional context. Changes include:

- The survey will be open between February and May in 2010
- Participating HEIs can choose when they start and finish the survey for their own students, but the survey must be kept open for at least three weeks. The survey could be open for the whole period if an HEI wanted it to be
- Participating HEIs can continue to access their own institutional results from the BOS website, and see aggregate and benchmark club aggregate results, in real time
- There will be a fixed end date (end of May) so that institutions can compare their own results with aggregate and benchmark club aggregate results on a meaningful basis.

To meet this revised timetable, the Academy will begin promotion of PTES 2010 from October 2009 onwards. The Academy will also run a workshop on 'How to analyse PTES data' for PTES Officers before the end of the survey period, to enable them to complete their institutional analyses as soon as the aggregate data is available if they wish to.

Why should your institution take part in PTES?

- HEIs are able to benchmark their own results against sector and mission group results.
- Results are useful in informing internal enhancement activities, and do not feed into national league tables.
- Additional questions can be added by each HEI.
- PTES offers very good value for money.
- PTES is user-friendly, both for the institutional staff administering and analysing the survey, and for students to complete.

- The Academy offers a variety of support including the provision of guidelines on how to set up the survey, how to analyse results, examples of good practice, and support meetings for institutional PTES officers.
- PTES is part of a wider Academy postgraduate survey programme, alongside PRES.

For further information about the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey, please go to www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/research/surveys/ptes

HEIs wishing to take part in PTES 2010 should email surveys@heacademy.ac.uk to register an interest, before **30 November 2009**.

Appendix. The PTES 2009 questionnaire

SECTION A: MOTIVATIONS

1. My main motivations for taking this postgraduate programme were: *(select all that apply)*
 - ✓ To enable me to progress to a higher level qualification (e.g. PhD)
 - ✓ To progress in my current career path (i.e. a professional qualification)
 - ✓ To change my current career
 - ✓ To improve my employment prospects
 - ✓ As a requirement to enter a particular profession
 - ✓ To meet the requirements of my current job
 - ✓ For personal interest
 - ✓ Other *(Please specify...)*.....

2. I am studying for this qualification at this particular institution because of: *(select all that apply)*
 - ✓ The overall reputation of the institution
 - ✓ The institution's reputation in my chosen subject area
 - ✓ The reputation of the department
 - ✓ The location of the institution
 - ✓ I have studied at this institution before
 - ✓ It is the only institution offering this programme
 - ✓ It was recommended to me
 - ✓ My employer advised or encouraged me to do it
 - ✓ Delivery of the programme is flexible enough to fit around my life
 - ✓ The way the programme is assessed
 - ✓ Funding was available to me to study this particular programme
 - ✓ The cost of the programme compared to other institutions
 - ✓ Graduates from this institution have good career and employment prospects
 - ✓ Other *(Please specify...)*.....

SECTION B: QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

3. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding teaching and learning on your programme?

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not applicable
a. The teaching and learning methods are effective for this type of programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. There is sufficient contact time (face to face and/or virtual/online) between staff and students to support effective learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. I am happy with the teaching support I received from staff on my course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. The course is intellectually stimulating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding staff on your programme?

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not applicable
a. Staff are good at explaining things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Staff made the subject interesting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Staff are enthusiastic about what they are teaching	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Staff are available/accessible when I need them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. Overall, how would you rate the teaching quality on your programme?
- ✓ It is consistently good
 - ✓ It is variable but generally good
 - ✓ It is variable but generally poor
 - ✓ It is consistently poor

SECTION C: ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

6. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding assessment and feedback on your programme?

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not applicable
a. The criteria used in marking have been made clear in advance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Assessment arrangements and marking have been fair	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Feedback on my work has been prompt	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. I received feedback in time to allow me to improve my next assignment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. I have received detailed comments (written or oral) on my work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Feedback on my work has helped me clarify things I did not understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION D: DISSERTATION

7. Do you need to write a dissertation as part of your programme?

- ✓ Yes
- ✓ No (If no, please go to the next section)

8. If yes, to what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding your dissertation and supervisor?

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not applicable
a. I understand the required standards for the dissertation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. My supervisor has the skills and subject knowledge to adequately support my dissertation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. My supervisor makes a real effort to understand any difficulties I face	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. I have been given good guidance in topic selection and refinement by my supervisor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. I have received good guidance in my literature search from my supervisor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. My supervisor provides helpful feedback on my progress.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. My supervisor is available when I need him/her	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION E: ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

9. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding organisation and management of your programme?

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not applicable
a. The timetable fits well with my other commitments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Any changes in the programme or teaching have been communicated effectively	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. The programme is well organised and is running smoothly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. The balance of core modules and options is appropriate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. The balance between scheduled contact time and private study is appropriate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Overall, the workload on the programme is:

- ✓ Much higher than I expected
- ✓ Higher than I expected
- ✓ More or less as I expected
- ✓ Lower than I expected
- ✓ Much lower than I expected

SECTION F: LEARNING RESOURCES

11. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding learning resources on your programme?

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not applicable
a. The library resources and services are good enough for my needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. The library resources and services are easily accessible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. I have been able to access general IT resources when I needed to	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION G: SKILLS AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

12. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding skills gained on your programme?

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not applicable
a. The programme has developed my research skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. The programme has developed my transferable skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. As a result of the programme I am more confident about independent learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. The programme has helped me to present myself with confidence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. As a result of the programme my communication skills have improved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. As a result of the programme, I feel confident in tackling unfamiliar problems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION H: CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

13. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding professional development on your programme?

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not applicable
a. I am encouraged to reflect on my professional development needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. I feel better prepared for my future employment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. As a result of this programme, I believe my future employment prospects are better	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION I: OVERALL SATISFACTION

14. Please rate the following broad aspects of your postgraduate taught programme in terms of how your experience of those aspects has met with your expectations (-3 it has definitely not met my expectations , 0 it has met my expectations, +3 it has definitely exceeded my expectations)

	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
a. Quality of teaching and learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Assessment and feedback	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Organisation and management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Learning resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Skills and personal development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Career and professional development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. Overall experience of my course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. Please use this space if you wish to comment further on these aspects of your taught programme:

.....

SECTION J: CAMPUS BASED LEARNERS

16. Are you a campus based learner?

- ✓ Yes
- ✓ No (If no, please go to the next section)

17. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding learning resources on your programme?

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not applicable
a. I have been able to access social learning spaces (e.g. for group working) on campus when I needed to	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. I have been able to access specialised equipment, facilities, or rooms when I needed them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION K: DISTANCE LEARNERS

18. Are you a distance learner e.g. OU student?

- ✓ Yes
- ✓ No (If no, please go to the next section)

19. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding learning resources on your programme?

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not applicable
a. I am satisfied with the quality of learning materials available to me (Print, online material, DVDs etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. I am happy with the proportion of e-learning elements used in the programme (online resources, Virtual Learning Environment)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION L: STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

20. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding advice and support on your programme?

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not applicable
a. My institution provided me with adequate help to prepare me for studies at this level	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. I have received sufficient advice and support with my studies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

21. Have you made use of any student support services (e.g. career support, visa support, health)

- Yes
- No (If no, please go to the next section)

22. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding student support services?

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not applicable
a. I have received effective support with my study skills (e.g. taking notes, avoiding plagiarism)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. The level of careers support was appropriate for my needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. The student support services were effective in addressing my needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. The student support services were readily accessible.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION M: INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

If your first language is English then please skip this question and go to the next section.

23. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding language support on your programme?

	Definitely agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Definitely disagree	Not applicable
a. I have received adequate support for my general English language needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. I have received adequate support for my discipline/subject specific English language needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SECTION N: FURTHER COMMENT

24. Please provide further information about your experience of your taught degree programme. For example, what would further improve your experience?

.....

Space for institutional questions

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

25. I am registered as doing a:
- ✓ Taught Master (e.g. MA, MSc, MBA, LLM)
 - ✓ Postgraduate Certificate (including PGCE)
 - ✓ Postgraduate Diploma
 - ✓ Other (*Please specify...*)

26. What is your age?
- ✓ 25 years old or younger
 - ✓ 26-30 years old
 - ✓ 31-35 years old
 - ✓ 36-40 years old
 - ✓ 41-45 years old
 - ✓ 46-50 years old
 - ✓ 51-55 years old
 - ✓ 56 years old or older

27. What is your gender?

- ✓ Male
- ✓ Female

28. Please indicate, which of the following most closely matches your discipline:

- ✓ Medicine and Dentistry
- ✓ Medical Science and Pharmacy
- ✓ Nursing
- ✓ Other subjects allied to Medicine
- ✓ Biology and related Sciences
- ✓ Sports Science
- ✓ Psychology
- ✓ Veterinary Sciences
- ✓ Agriculture and related subjects
- ✓ Physical Science
- ✓ Physical Geography and Environmental Science
- ✓ Mathematical Sciences
- ✓ Computer Science
- ✓ Mechanically-based Engineering
- ✓ Electronic and Electrical Engineering
- ✓ Civil, Chemical and other Engineering
- ✓ Technology
- ✓ Architecture, Building and Planning
- ✓ Economics
- ✓ Politics
- ✓ Sociology, Social Policy and Anthropology
- ✓ Social Work
- ✓ Human and Social Geography
- ✓ Law
- ✓ Business
- ✓ Management
- ✓ Finance and Accounting
- ✓ Tourism, Transport, Travel and others in Business and Administrative studies
- ✓ Media studies
- ✓ Communications and Information studies
- ✓ English-based studies
- ✓ European Languages and Area studies
- ✓ Other Languages and Area studies
- ✓ History and Archaeology
- ✓ Philosophy, Theology and Religious studies
- ✓ Art and Design
- ✓ Performing Arts
- ✓ Other Creative Arts
- ✓ Teacher Training

- ✓ Education studies
- ✓ Combined

29. *** Which Department do you belong to? *** *This is a question for each institution to map their departmental structure. The format of this question is a drop down list and question wording can be changed or deleted.*

30. When did you start your course?

- ✓ After 1 January 2009
- ✓ 1 September 2008 – 31 December 2008
- ✓ 1 September 2007 – 31 August 2008
- ✓ Before 1 September 2007

31. What are you currently registered as?

- ✓ Full-time
- ✓ Part-time
- ✓ Currently not registered (e.g. finished the course) was full-time
- ✓ Currently not registered (e.g. finished the course) was part-time

32. I am:

- ✓ Primarily a face to face learner [e.g. based at my institution]
- ✓ Primarily a distance learner [e.g. work based learner, OU student]

33. For fees purposes, is your normal place of residence registered as:

- ✓ Home
- ✓ Other EU
- ✓ Non EU

34. Are you currently in paid employment?

- ✓ Yes
- ✓ No

If yes, how many hours of paid employment do you undertake in a typical week (term time)?

- ✓ 1-10 hours
- ✓ 11-20 hours
- ✓ 21-30 hours
- ✓ More than 30 hours

35. What is your main source of funding for this course?

- ✓ Self-funded (e.g. loan, family)
- ✓ Charity
- ✓ Research council
- ✓ Institution (e.g. bursary, scholarship)
- ✓ Employer
- ✓ UK Government
- ✓ EU Government
- ✓ Overseas Government
- ✓ *Other (Please specify...).....*

36. Your highest qualification on entry:

- ✓ Qualifications below undergraduate degree
- ✓ Undergraduate degree or equivalent
- ✓ Postgraduate degree (e.g. MA)
- ✓ No academic qualifications but professional experience
- ✓ *Other (Please specify...).....*