



# **The Future of Campus Life in a Blended Learning Landscape Within Higher Education.**

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## **ABSTRACT**

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Within the universities of the UK, the COVID pandemic necessitated a rapid change from face-to-face teaching to online learning. The affordances of this switch have been widely recognised by higher education institutes in terms of pedagogic and facilitative advantage. Most existing campuses are constructed to provide face-to-face experiences and tend not to be designed to deliver blended learning experiences. This thesis seeks to explore the demands of higher education in a blended learning landscape to offer some insight into what the campuses of tomorrow will look like.

An ontological constructivist approach was used to develop a methodology that sought to explore the motivations of people who had experienced or are experiencing higher education. An on-line survey was carried out that was promoted on the LinkedIn social media platform. This was supplemented with a series of semi-structured interviews with students and educationists about their experiences of higher education and how they saw the future of campus life developing. Edited versions of these interviews were posted as podcasts via an on-line podcast host called Podbean. Ninety-one on-line surveys were submitted complete, and five interviews were posted.

Findings showed the principal motivation for studying at university were transactional, in that most participants studied to give themselves advantage in the workplace. However, the social side of campus life education, although not a principal motivating force, was highly valued in respect to the experience of higher education and in choice of course. On-line education was seen as not as valuable as face-to-face education, a finding that was confirmed by a poll posted on LinkedIn. The extra curricula social side of campus life was not highly valued and had largely been replaced by social media and employment-based friendships. It is argued that a typical undergraduate learning experience now represents an emerging adult experience, rather than a full adult learning experience. The future of campus life in the UK is likely to support this trend away from self-actualisation by providing strong extra-academic support for students and developing facilities which support the education of emerging adults. The sustainability of the higher education sector at its current level of provision is by no means assured, but the future does not lie in increasing on-line provision.

Keywords: blended learning, on-line learning, face-to-face, self-actualisation.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS**

HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institute
PPSA	Private Purpose-Built Student Accommodation
TEF	Teaching Excellence Framework
TEL	Technology Enhanced Learning
UK	United Kingdom

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Blended learning is a term which is used frequently in higher education to describe a mixture of approaches within the same learning context (Hrastinski, 2019). Some educationists see blended education as a pedagogical destination, whilst others see it as only a transitional stage on the journey to fully digitalised education. During the recent COVID-19 pandemic some Higher Education Institutions (HEI) in the UK, rapidly embraced the advantages of on-line education by dramatically scaling-up their student populations. The University of Glasgow student population increased by more than 6,000 from 2018 to 2021, and the Open University increased its student population by nearly 30,000 students over the same period (HESA, 2022).

Many of the cultural conventions of learning on-line are still to be developed and are unlikely to be steadfast. Navigating these on-line landscapes can be challenging for both learners and educationists as subliminal cultural clues become too subtle to detect or are drowned out by the background noise of the internet. Moreover, integrating learning architecture with the on-line learning landscape into a blended learning experience is a challenge that may be beyond the power of individual educationists or their institutions. The goal of this thesis is to explore how HEI in the UK seek to address the future challenges of blended learning in higher education, within the physical learning spaces they are planning to build, and the blended learning experiences they aim to provide.

### 1.1 Aims and objectives.

The aim of this project is to explore the collective vision of campus users by interrogating higher education stakeholders at different HEI.

#### Objectives

1. To reflect with stakeholders their lived experience of higher education learning landscapes.
2. To explore with stakeholders their future vision of higher education architecture within a blended learning landscape.
3. To establish the desirable features of future learning experiences and the physical and virtual infrastructure required to support these.

## **2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Historical perspectives on the future of campus life within higher education in the UK**

“Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past.”

1984 (Orwell, 1949)

The twentieth century saw several waves of proliferation of higher education provision within the UK, usually in response to periods of great social change and the demand for improved access to elitist institutes. Before 1832, there were only two universities in England and five in Scotland, but a period of rapid industrialisation saw the establishment of a myriad of technological colleges and medical schools; the antecedents of the present 165 HEIs in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

The proliferation of UK universities has undoubtedly widened participation in higher education (Bolton, 2012). However, most universities are keen to promote a strong connection with a halcyon past, by appropriating the garb and traditions of medieval universities which seldom have provenance. There is also a concerted attempt to maintain the pre-1992 academic hierarchy with the establishment of elite cartels of Universities such as the Russell Group (The Russell Group, 2022).

For most learners, the primary point of seeking a degree at a HEI is to improve their career prospects (Hillman, 2017), however the lifetime advantage of gaining a degree in terms of earnings is variable. Russell Group universities succeed in attracting the most able applicants and produce graduates who earn on average 40% more during their working life than graduates from other universities (BBC, 2017). Graduates from other universities do less well (BBC, 2018) and in 20% of cases would have done better if they had entered employment directly and had not gained a degree (Britton, Dearden, Erve, & Waltmann, 2020). The economic advantages of studying for a degree are least for students who attend non-selective universities (Figure 1). Other motivations for attending higher education include a desire to participate in the social side of higher education. The Cathedral Group of 15 universities aspire to represent this more metaphysical view (The Cathedral Group, 2022).

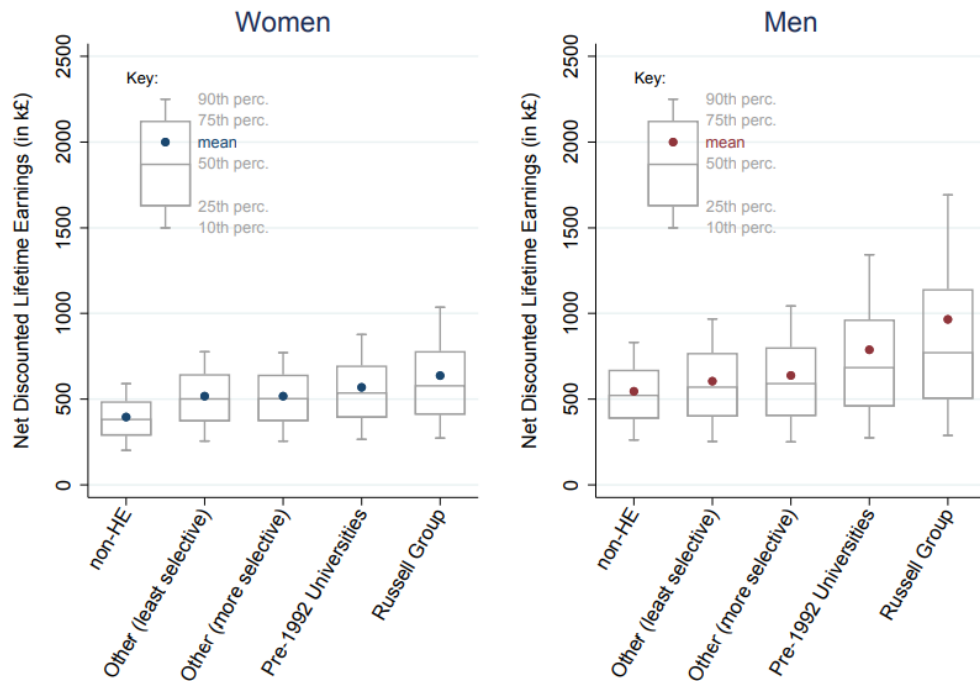


Figure 1: Net lifetime earnings by HEI type. Source: (Britton et al., 2020).

There was a general move amongst the already established HEI to resist the extension of grant degree awarding powers to aspiring vocational institutes. This was not seriously overcome until the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act (Further and Higher Education Act 1992, 1992), which allowed most of the UK's polytechnics to transform to universities. The rapid expansion in the number of universities during the 1990's was fuelled partly by the Conservative party's desire to liberalise the economy and open-up the education sector to more competition. Followed by the Labour party's subsequent 1998 abolishment of student grants and the establishment of tuition fees in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, paid for by soft student loans, which effectively liberated engagement with higher education from parental poverty (Politics, 2021).

These policies resulted in the effective consumerisation of HEI awards and have spawned a raft of league tables that ostensibly allow prospective consumers of higher education to make informed choices about which HEI to apply for.

Higher education institutes vie strongly for their position in these tables; however, analysis shows that learners' experiences while at university has minimal influence on the position of HEI in the tables. A summary of the 2022 Guardian



league table is shown in Table 1. This shows minor differences in the quality of experience of learners whilst studying at universities within different affiliations, but a large difference between entry qualifications, career destinations and earnings. The best predictors of Guardian league table rank were entry tariff ( $r^2 = 0.59$ ), career destination ( $r^2 = 0.47$ ) and estimated returns in earnings ( $r^2 = 0.22$ ). Satisfaction with the course and with teaching had minimal effect ( $r^2 = 0.17$  and  $0.01$  respectively).

The market mechanisms that controls the costs of higher education are not fully liberalised. Tuition fees are set by the devolved national governments and are subject to a nominal test of participation in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) scheme (Office for Students, 2020). Any institution that has a TEF award can charge up to the maximum tuition fees set by the devolved government (UCAS, 2014). In practice all HEI in the UK charge the maximum allowable fees, regardless of their TEF status award. Scottish universities generally do not participate in TEF (Office for Students, 2019), but do charge non-Scottish domicile students the maximum allowable fees in the student's home nation (Politics, 2021). Effectively, university students pay the same to study at a high-ranking HEI as they do a lower one. Obviously, decisions about where to study are more complicated than university ranking alone, factors including geographic location, choice of subject, desire to remain in or leave the parental home and availability of part-time jobs all influence choices. However, 72% of applicants who participated in a recent survey said that a university's TEF status was important to them (Hillman, 2017).

Will the move to more blended learning models remove some of these economic and social barriers to student mobility and give more students access to higher ranking universities?

Table 1. Analysis of UK university affiliations and their ranking in the Guardian 2022 league table.

Affiliation group	Mean					
	Guardian league table rank <sup>1</sup>	Estimated returns in earning at 29 years old (%) <sup>2</sup>	Satisfied with course (%) <sup>1</sup>	Satisfied with teaching (%) <sup>1</sup>	Average entry tariff <sup>1</sup>	Graduate career destination , after 15 months (%) <sup>1</sup>
Russell Group	23	41.0	79.8	83.0	167	87
Pre-1992 universities	58	27.5	79.6	81.7	134	80
Post-1992 universities	74	22.8	76.5	80.0	115	75
Other	83	18.0	77.0	81.1	114	71
Overall	61	26.6	78.0	81.3	130	78
Correlation coefficient with rank (r <sup>2</sup> )		0.31	0.17	0.01	0.59	0.47

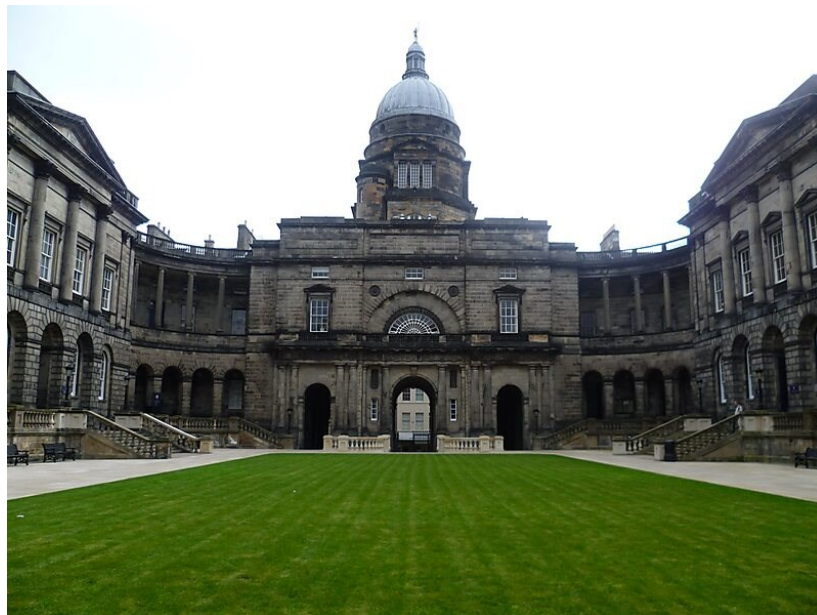
Sources: <sup>1</sup> (The Guardian, 2022), <sup>2</sup> (Department for Education, 2018)

## 2.2 The architecture of higher education

University campuses are simultaneously defined and confined by their architecture, they demarcate communities which are akin to villages or small towns (Edward, 2014). Although in theory open to the public, campuses of UK universities are intended to be cloistered with the dual-purpose of both fostering a sense of belonging and exclusion of non-members. The buildings of the campus need to provide facilities for a range of activities that occur on site including (amongst others) teaching, research, laboratories, libraries, sports, performance, administration, accommodation, clinical simulation, and refectories. All these roles are dynamic, and buildings can quickly become redundant as technology develops, research methods progress and tastes change. Grand plans or visions can be quickly unsettled as campuses expand outwardly or are remodelled inwardly (Edward, 2014).

Within UK universities there are essentially three styles of architecture which reflect the attitudes and aspirations of campus founders at the time of institutional inauguration or renaissance, these are neo-classical, post-modern brutalism and 21<sup>st</sup> century cathedralism. Most universities founded before the second world war aspire to demonstrate their neo-classical foundation by adopting a Palladian style of architecture, a fashion which had prevailed for at least three centuries (Picture 1 & 2).

Universities founded in the post-war era adopted the brutalist post-modern style, reflecting a revolution in building technologies and the philosophy of architecture at the time. Typically, these universities were on green-field sites (for example Stirling University, Herriot Watt University, and East Anglia University), aiming to establish self-contained campus experiences and distinguish themselves architecturally and philosophically from their neo-classical predecessors (Picture 3). This style was also employed on existing campuses where the trend for high-rise buildings fitted well into the limited space available (Picture 4). Interestingly, this architectural style was short lived and, in many cases, has already been replaced by more modern designs.



Picture 1: Old College, University of Edinburgh constructed 1789.  
(Source: The University of Edinburgh, 2023).



Picture 2: The Derwent Building, University of Hull constructed 1927. (Source: The University of Hull, 2020).



Picture 3: East Anglia University established 1966. (Source: University of East Anglia, 2023)





Picture 4: The Tech Cube formerly belonging to the University of Edinburgh constructed 1966 (Source: The University of Edinburgh, 2023).

The boom in the number of universities in the 1990's saw a second wave of modern architecture influence campus design. Typically, this involved former polytechnics shedding their utilitarian images for more dramatic 21<sup>st</sup> century cathedralist styles (Picture 5).



Picture 5: The Craiglockhart campus of Edinburgh Napier University, completed 2003 (Source: McManus, 2010)

Campus development in the UK tends to experience a boom-and-bust cycle, where periods of significant investment are followed by a make-do—and-mend approach. This is particularly true where universities have developed from mergers of smaller institutions resulting in a legacy of inappropriate and disbursed real-estate. Edinburgh Napier University is a good example of this, having undergone mergers with at least four other colleges in the first 30 years of its existence and having acquired various redundant buildings in the process, including two hospitals and a church (Edinburgh Napier University, 2021). These estates were eventually merged into three self-contained modern campuses after significant investment and reconstruction.

Predicting the future need for campus provision is problematic, veterinary education in the UK is a good example of this. In 1989 a report by the University Grants Committee on Veterinary Education recommended the closure of two of the UK's five veterinary schools (UGC Working Party, 1989), predicting a drop in demand for trained veterinarians. In fact, the demand for veterinary training grew massively and there are now eleven veterinary schools in the UK, most with brand new campuses and the expansion is likely to continue.

Planning for blended learning provision and emergent connectivist learning theory presents even recently completed campuses with some distinct challenges. Large, raked lecture theatres, for example, are designed to present to large groups of learners but prohibit interaction between students themselves and with teachers. They can be effectively replaced by streamed lectures that learners can follow from their own personal electronic devices at a time of their choosing, but what do you do with the redundant spaces and how do you preserve the social aspect of learning?

There are good examples of how spaces can be rethought to allow progressive learning methods to be employed, for examples repurposing the now available library spaces (resulting from the switch from printed to electronic resources) into social and collective learning areas. However, the glass and concrete cathedrals that are the preferred architectural style of campus' commissioners are not necessarily conducive to warm social exchange. Some thought is required to how these interactions can be facilitated in such noisy environments (Picture 6).



Picture 6: Creating microenvironments for social exchange on modern campuses (Source: Shedlock, 2019).

### **2.3 The experience of blended learning in the Higher Education landscape**

Higher education is an adult learning experience where learners are expected to be aiming for self-actualization, indeed some authors argue that this is the whole point of higher education (Cangemi, 1984). Bloom's widely adopted taxonomy of educational objectives maps the undergraduate journey through the milestones of knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, and synthesis (Krathwohl, 2002). Salmon et al. (2010) developed this concept, suggesting a five-stage model specifically aimed at on-line learners, with the steps shown in Figure 2.

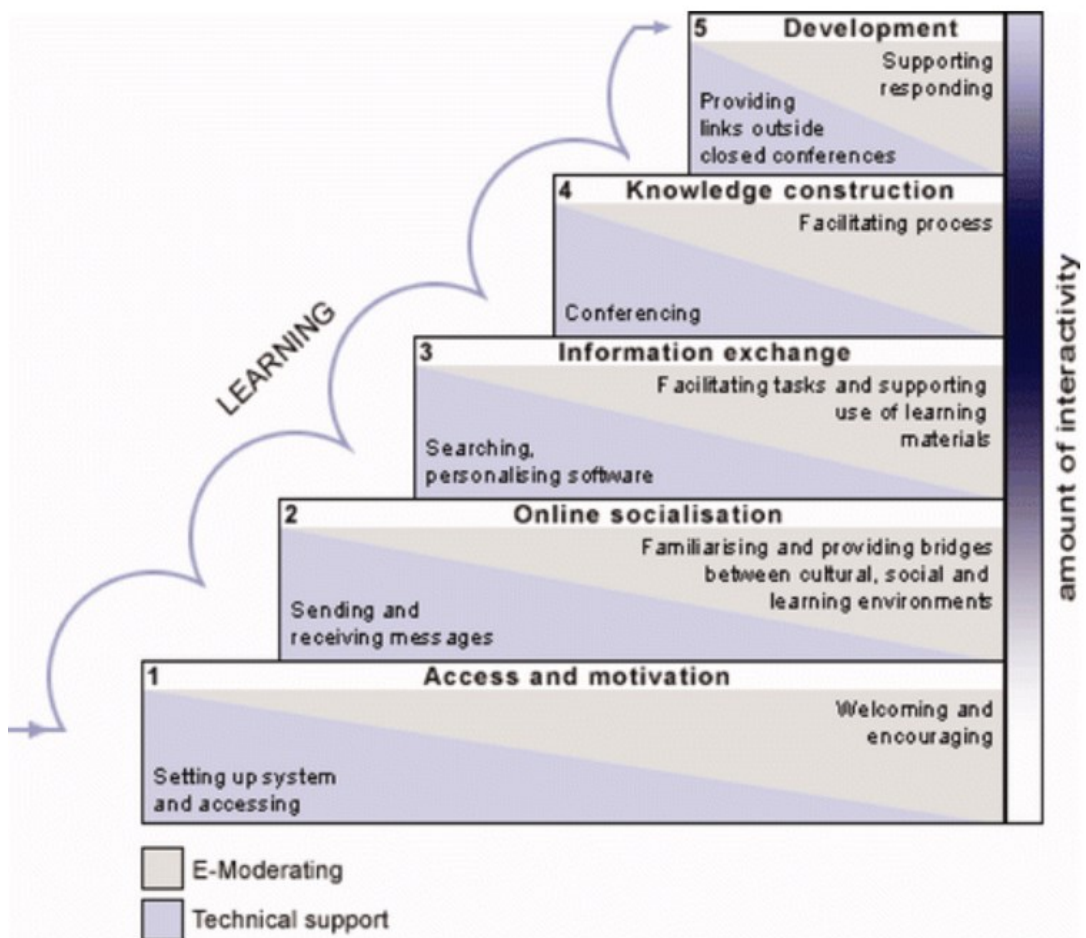


Figure 2: Five-stage model of teaching and learning online (Salmon, 2003).

The commitment to self-actualisation within HE is somewhat offset by its commoditization. Learners and their sponsors seek added value from their time during HE, both in terms of esteem and life-time financial advantage which is accompanied with an expectation of active teaching rather than active learning. Non-traditional HE learners from a further education or later-life joiners are slightly less likely to see the value-added of self-actualisation than traditional learners entering HE directly from compulsory full-time education (Shipunova, Berezovskaya, & Smolskaia, 2019).

Blended learning offers the opportunity for learners to consume learning material at their own pace, provides the opportunity to pause, rewind or fast-forward learning experiences and to shape learning around other life demands (Castro, 2019). For educationists, it provides the opportunity to weave a vast array of exogenous learning material into the learning experiences that they design



(Castro, 2019). Asynchronous activities eliminate time-zone differences between learners and educationists, allowing more equitable internationalisation of on-line learning experiences (Vaughan, 2007). However, this freedom can create issues of pace and depth of learning and can be difficult to navigate where links to exogenous material provide numerous nodes to other material which may or may not be relevant.

Blended learning is often a cause of existential angst amongst educationists. The move towards assembling educational experiences from what is available on the internet, rather than producing *de novo* learning materials is seen by many academics as a move away from the educator as artisan towards a more lowly operator status (Bennett & Lockyer, 2004). As the skills required to deliver Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) become more technical than academic, dedicated educationists within HE can struggle to find a place for themselves within universities that are more inclined to reward contributions to research than to teaching (Tierney, 2020).

On-line learning is now a feature of most learning experiences provided within formal education from an early age, but in most contexts, it is heavily scaffolded with traditional pedagogic roles and temporal structures (Salmon, 2019). Within HE on-line learning is much less scaffolded, partly because there is an assumption of direct equivalence between traditional library based self-directed learning and that which occurs on-line. However, traditional library resources are heavily filtered and sorted before learners get a chance to browse the shelves. The academic value of these assets is predetermined for readers, which is not the case for on-line resources where users must be equipped to determine the value of the resources themselves (Okaz, 2015).

Despite its affordances, on-line learning appears to be perceived by learners as having less intrinsic value than face-to-face teaching (BBC, 2023) and expect more from their university experience (BBC, 2021a). Universities are becoming under increasing pressure from regulators to justify their use of on-line learning (BBC, 2021b).

#### **2.4 Is undergraduate learning still an adult experience?**

It is a matter of some debate whether the age group of people who typically study at university [aged 18 – 22 years old (HESA, 2019)] consider themselves or are

considered by others as adults, instead representing an intermediary stage between adolescence and adulthood which can be referred to as 'emerging adulthood' (Arnett, 2000). Post-second world war data seems to point to an increase in the median age of attaining the five markers of adulthood (Redding, 2021), conversely the same author also points out that historically it may have been the Baby Boomers and the Silent Generation that attained these markers at an unusually young age. Many parents, on the other hand, seem keen to embrace the myth and carry on their parental responsibility for their children well beyond the age of majority, and perhaps many of the millennial and X generation are happy to watch them try.

Universities are coming under pressure to extend their duty of care beyond that which has been traditionally expected, especially in the early years of study. In 2018, Sam Gyimah the then Minister for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation suggested that Universities were in fact in *loco parentis* at least for their fresher students (Hillman, 2018). A recent survey showed that three-quarters of students felt that universities had a responsibility to inform their family or friends about any episodes of their own poor mental health. Although 81% of applicants were excited about going to university, 58% had recently experienced negative feelings (Hillman, 2017). It is the latter experience that university policy tends to focus on because of its direct effect on student retention and progression (Robotham & Julian, 2006).

Concern about stress levels in undergraduates is longstanding and is not a feature that can be solely attributed to the recent growth of on-line learning. Robotham identifies financial pressures as the main cause of this anxiety (Robotham, 2008). However, as the number of universities continue to increase and the number of eligible school leavers stagnates, higher education institutes must work harder to recruit, retain and progress students towards graduation. Grade inflation is one symptom of this pressure with 60% of the increase in first class degree awards been unexplainable by observable factors (Office for Students, 2022), and entry qualifications exhibiting the same affect (Weale & Adams, 2021). It is perhaps inevitable that the campus experience of learners between admission and graduation needs to be modified in order to promote successful completion of the student journey. Responsibility for learning is shifted away from self-actualisation towards more strongly guided studies.

## **2.5 Emerging stakeholders**

Democratization of higher education in the UK has led to the predominant view amongst students that gaining a university qualification is largely a transactional experience where better employment prospects are awarded in exchange for their fees (Hillman, 2017). Universities seek to add credence to their improved employability claims by consulting with employers and professional bodies during the programme planning process, this establishes these organisations as major stakeholders in the undergraduate experience (QAA, 2018a). Professional bodies that represent employers can have a large influence on the design of programmes of HE study, dictating content, assessment methods, class size and graduate attributes. In some cases, professional bodies have such strong authority over course design that specific programme exemptions from university regulations are required.

The process of funding of undergraduate education is largely derived from central government either in the form of direct grants to support infrastructure or by underwriting student loans. In order to justify this tax expenditure, governments create quality assurance agencies that aim to standardise the entry, progression and qualification experiences of students across the HE sector. In the UK, the organisation responsible for monitoring the quality of higher education is the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA, 2018b). Universities in the UK must successfully demonstrate that they comply with QAA standards at institutional, department and programme level through a process of quintennial review and new programme approval. Widening access to higher education has therefore introduced government as a major stakeholder in higher education.

Since the early 1990's and the advent of democratised higher education, parents have emerged as a significant force on shaping the experience of campus life. Although rarely given any overt recognition for their influence, parents are highly experienced consumers and are a predominant force in shaping their children's choices and expectations of campus life. Parents are the principal consumers of university league tables, a demand which has driven the development of the strongly influential league tables produced by the Guardian and Times Newspapers; each with its own political bent.

## **2.6 The future of higher education in a digitally enhanced world**

High ranking UK universities such as those that belong to the Russell Group have a strong brand, with a strong national and international appeal. These brands appear relatively robust to the views of current learners and promote themselves principally through their research prowess rather than their teaching reputation. These HEI maintain excellent entry standards and high standing with employers, both of which are key determinants to maintaining high rank. Traditionally cohort size has been limited by the physical capacity of campus facilities, but TEL allows this capacity to be expanded and economy of scales to be harnessed (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004). Better connectivity and asynchronicity of learning events remove international, social, and economic barriers to students applying to higher ranking universities.

Lower ranking universities offer marginal lifetime advantage to learners in terms of career prospects and earnings. Current tuition fees policy means that the cost of attending lower ranking HEI is similar to attending higher ranking institutes. The increasing expansion and expectation of blended learning within HEI learning landscapes poses a particular threat to lower ranking HEI. Where do these lower ranking universities find a place for themselves in the crowded market of UK HEI? Can we expect to see a contraction in the number of UK HEI as higher-ranking universities increase their domination?

The future of lower ranking HEI probably lies in remaining attractive to local communities and offering opportunities to learners for a more social encounter where face-to-face experiences are blended seamlessly with on-line meetings. Secondly, it also lies in improving inclusion of sectors of the population that have been traditionally excluded from HE. Thirdly, closer ties to local employers need to be established so that education programmes can be designed around local skill demands. But what will the campus of the future look like?

## **2.7 External factors affecting the future of campus life**

Factors which caused the rapid expansion of the number of universities in the UK during the last 30 years were largely politically motivated. Thatcherite philosophy in the 1980's of liberalising private home ownership and shares in public companies also applied to opening-up the previously elitist HEI's and

conveniently absorbed thousands of disaffected unemployed school leavers from the dole queues.

In the 2020's, Brexit has created many job vacancies as technically qualified EU citizens have left the UK to return to mainland Europe. The appeal of gaining a degree (and associated debt) which in 20% of cases may not give a future benefit is beginning to wane (BBC, 2017). Further education is beginning to have a greater appeal than higher education as a route for school leavers (Skills Development Scotland, 2019).

The next section of this thesis will go onto look at the challenges of developing methodologies appropriate to the study of blended learning environments within the existing campus architecture and how these environments are experienced by campus users.

### **3 METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Theoretical basis and assumptions**

In the previous section a summary of prevailing paradigms of current approaches to campus life in the UK were presented. Bryman, (2016) suggests that all social research should have a theoretical root in order that the research findings can be interpreted in context to relevant social phenomena.

The objective of the current study is to provide a practical understanding of what higher education stakeholders expect of campus life in the future. Thus an argument could be made that it inductively seeks only to connect the empirical with theories of the middle-range (Merton, 1949). However, a grander claim could also be made that this study aspires to connect with more abstract paradigms of transhumanist and connectivist philosophies. These describe technology in terms of facilitating a transcendental process to a posthuman condition (Lee, 2019). Inductive research approaches based on present human understanding may therefore prove less relevant than more exponential deductive approaches (Bryman, 2016a).

The strategies of universities are currently driven by policy makers with a positivist mind-set about the future of HE, their underlying assumptions can be summarised as follows:

- The expansion of the HE sector is assured through increased numbers of overseas students seeking to study in the UK;
- Current demand for HE within the UK population of school leavers will remain strong;
- HEIs will strive to compete with one another to attract the most able applicants to their universities;
- Blended learning landscapes will provide an inviting and engaging experience for learners;

It could be argued that an epistemological approach to understanding the future landscape of blended learning has limited application because of the unpredictability of developments in TEL and the demands of a new generation of HE learners. Moreover, this uncertainty makes a positivist approach particularly

inappropriate because understanding current reality may have little or no bearing on future demands or behaviour.

In contrast to epistemological positivism, ontological constructivism is concerned with an empathetic understanding of the human action and acknowledges that social phenomena (such as education) are in a constant state of revision and are themselves altered by the action of social actors (Bryman, 2016a). This approach may give a better understanding of how the HE education community will behave in the future, because whilst technological developments cannot be predicted, social and cultural motivation of human behaviour are unlikely to significantly transform.

### 3.2 Methodological rationale

The nature of the current study is speculative in that it refers to a future which can only be imagined and is itself informed by imagination. In the current context the traditional research process (Figure 3), defined by a circular series of eight discrete processes (IEduNote, 2020), is limiting because the stages are not self-informing. Moreover, they are filtered through stages of peer review, which detracts from the immediacy of the debate and restricts serendipitous collaborative thought.



Figure 3: The eight steps in the research process (IEduNote, 2020)

For this reason, it was decided to develop a methodological approach that harnessed the power of the internet and social media to stimulate debate and galvanise conversation about the future of campus life in the UK.

The first step in this process was to generate debate points through an option rich survey, that would provide participants with the opportunity to represent their lived experience through a mixture of closed and open questions that would be delivered through an on-line survey tool. Access to this survey was built around several professional network and discussion forums. Data from the survey which was judged to be thought-provoking was immediately posted on social media. This was accompanied with micro-surveys which provided an opportunity for wider responses to specific questions and allowed more detailed qualitative responses via the comments section of the posts.

Engagement with the debate by social media users was further enhanced by the production of a series of 20-minute podcasts. These were designed to be thought provoking and reflect the experience and speculations of stakeholders within higher education. These podcasts were published weekly and responses via the comments sections of the social media pages were used to enrich the project's qualitative evidence.

### **3.3 Quantitative characterisation of learning experiences**

An on-line survey was prepared on NOVI survey which was shared on LinkedIn professional network and student focused Facebook pages, that the author had access to. The survey questions were designed to elicit responses from participants about their most recent learning experiences in HE and provide demographic information which was pertinent to the formative experience of participants whilst studying at university. The questions in the survey also attempted to characterize commonly identified barriers to inclusion within HE, such as socioeconomic factors, age, disability, gender, and caring responsibilities.

Questions also aimed to establish a detailed profile of participant's experience of on-line education. The survey sought to interrogate participants about their social experience of HE, with the aim of establishing a list of desirable facilitative features that should be included in future designs of blended learning landscapes in terms of architectural provision and enabling policies. These suggestions



covered the whole HE experiences including ancillary services as well as academic and pedagogical provision. The list of questions is shown in annex 1. Information from this survey was collated and used to rank the importance of features within a blended learning landscape that current and past HE users found important. The survey was launched on 17 August 2022.

### **3.4 Qualitative assessment of participant comments**

In order to build a network of participants in a wider debate on the future of campus life, a LinkedIn group called “The future of campus life in Higher Education” (Smith, 2022a) was created. The aim of this group was to promote discussion amongst members about the future of higher education campuses. Extracted and simplified questions from the main survey were posted to promote participation in the main survey, with the aspiration of stimulating some deeper discussion within the group. The group was launched on 17 August 2022. Membership of the group was promoted using various on-line forums available through Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

### **3.5 Promoting engagement in on-line conversations**

It was postulated that “The future of campus life in Higher Education” LinkedIn group (Smith, 2022a) could be used both as a means of raising awareness of current topics in blended learning and also as a tool to stimulate conversation among members. It was proposed that selected stakeholders in the higher education sector would be invited to make podcasts about their vision for the future of campus life in the UK. These would be used as a source of qualitative data in themselves and once posted on LinkedIn would generate further qualitative comments from group members.

### **3.6 Methodological development**

#### **Stage 1. Growth of LinkedIn professional network**

In order to increase the potential number of participants in the activities that would be posted in “The future of campus life in Higher Education” LinkedIn group (Smith, 2022a), the researcher’s professional network was expanded with the aim of linking with approximately 1000 connections and followers.

In order to improve the efficiency of the connection process, LinkedIn members who had at least 10 mutual connections, were invited to connect with the

researcher. This process was continued for a period of days until the number of connections approached 1000. Other individuals targeted for connection requests included current members of Edinburgh Napier University staff and alumni of the University. Current students were encouraged to connect through posts made on departmental Learning Management Systems pages and student facing Facebook pages.

### **Stage 2. Preparation of podcast content**

Podcast interviewees were individuals known to the researcher who had a particular insight into a specific experience of being a campus user, for example a returning learner with a full-time job and parental responsibilities or an advanced entry learner with learning support needs.

### **Stage 3. Recording podcast content**

Interviewees were provided with a theme of discussion that the podcast was going to cover, with the aim of providing around 20 minutes of engaging and informative conversation. The interviews were recorded using Microsoft Teams, and the spoken words were auto-transcribed. Video was recorded, but only the audio part of the conversation was presented on the subsequent podcast, "The future of university campus life: a podcast by David Smith" which was published in LinkedIn via the Podbean podcast server (Smith, 2022b).

At the start of the recording, all podcast interviewees were asked to confirm that they consented to be interviewed and recorded. They were also reminded that they had the right to withdraw their consent at any point and had the final say about what was included in the posted podcast. Material that was removed from the published final edited version was retained for thematic analysis.

## **3.7 Data analysis**

### **Quantitative data**

Data from the NOVISurvey® (NOVISurvey, 2022) was analysed using the packages report function that summarised responses from each question in the survey. This data was transferred to Microsoft® Excel® (Samanro, 2022) for first order analysis in which responses to questions were summarised by various narrative and graphical means. Second order analysis was carried out on the summarised dataset in order to explore more complex relationships between independent variables and dependant data using NOVISurvey® reporting tools.

### Qualitative data

Transcripts from the podcasts were transcribed using Microsoft® Stream® software (Samanro, 2022) which automatically parsed footage into sound bites with a mean length of 3(s.e.±0.1) seconds. Files were downloaded in Web Video Text Tracks (WebVTT) format, then manually converted with Microsoft® Word® to comma separated values format that were then uploaded into Microsoft® Excel® for further processing. Consequently, each parsed sound bite represented one row of spreadsheet data.

Once uploaded into the spreadsheet, verbal data was checked for meaning against the original sound recording and any errors were corrected. Any data that participants had requested to be omitted or any nonconsequential preamble was permanently deleted from the transcripts. Each row of the transcribed data was then manually attributed to a speaker, podcast episode and described to the role of either “interviewer”, “educationist” or “student”. Simplified data sets (including only the start timing of the sound bite, name of speaker, role of speaker, and verbatim text content) from all interviews were then stacked into a single spreadsheet table.

Thematic analysis was carried out on the verbal data initially by attributing an impressionist one-word code to describe the content of each sound bite. As this process progressed, existing codes were used judiciously, and new codes added sparingly in order to avoid an excessively long coding catalogue. Once primary coding was complete, the verbal data was checked for complex meaning and a secondary and tertiary code from the same code catalogue attributed if necessary. Consequently, each 3 second sound bite was described by up to three descriptive codes. In order to simplify the coding catalogue, primary coding word count analysis of the code list was carried out using Microsoft® Access® software (Samanro, 2022). Any code that appeared less than 10 times in the coding catalogue was reattributed to another code that was a close synonym.

Thematic analysis was continued by attributing each code to one of eight themes which were: “Experience”, “Social”, “Technology”, “Motivation”, “Stakeholders”, “Barriers” and “Facilities” (Table 2).

Table 2: Classification of codes into themes and their number of occurrences.

Theme and associated codes (number of occurrences)		
<p><u>Affordance</u>            Advantage (39),            Assessment (35),            Capacity (19), Change (72), Democratise (20),            Face-to-Face (50),            Future (50), On-line (159), Pedagogy (181),            Scaling (63), Signposts (20), Solutions (17).</p> <p><u>Facilities</u>            Accommodation (93),            Campus (251),            Amenities (85), Planning (36), Space (72),            Transport (120).</p> <p><u>Stakeholder</u>            Corporate (35), Parents (18), Students (10),            Teacher (53).</p>	<p><u>Barriers</u>            Access (47), Difficulties (25), Conflict (22),            Economic (100),            Employment (67),            Funding (23).</p> <p><u>Motivation</u>            Actualisation (115),            Autonomy (63),            Challenge (200),            Employability (19),            Expectations (17),            Independence (115),            Inspiration (237),            Profession (129),            Training (165),            Transaction (41),            Transformative (184),            Vocational (243).</p>	<p><u>Experience</u>            Academic (88),            Attendance (81),            Engagement (104),            Reflection (628), Part-time (55), Resilience (39).</p> <p><u>Social</u>            Balance (43),            Community (146),            Cultural (106), Elitism (30), Family (29),            Identity (126), Inclusion (11), Interaction (36),            Isolation (12), Politics (92), Public (95),            Radicalism (35),            Collective (262),            Societies (15).</p> <p><u>Technology</u>            Technology (245).</p>

Coded verbal evidence derived from the transcripts of the podcast interviews was transferred into NVivo® qualitative data analysis software package (QSR International, 2022). Various visualisation tools of NVivo® were used to present the data, including word frequency analysis and word clouds.

## **4 FINDINGS**

### **4.1 Analysis of on-line survey results**

The on-line survey was opened to participants on 17 August 2022, and closed on 13 December 2022. Ninety-one participants completed the survey, the completion rate was 47%. Only completed surveys were included in the subsequent analysis.

#### **Demographic and educational experience**

Question P2Q4 showed that in terms of gender balance 76% (n= 68) of respondents identified as female and the remaining 24% of respondents identified as male (n = 22). One participant did not wish to share their gender identity. The apparent gender imbalance is probably a reflection of the gender distribution of the undergraduate population in which the survey was most heavily promoted. Responses to question P2Q1 and P2Q2 reflects the age of participants at the time of the survey and when they started their most recent studies (Figure 4). The median age range of participants both at the time of the survey and their age range when they started their most recent studies was 18-22 years old. People who started studying their most recent degree at an age greater than 28-years-old, represented 17% of the participants. Participants who were less than 18-years-old when they started study, represented 15% of the population.

The participants were mostly qualified to high school level (49%) with 15% having further education qualifications and 31% were graduates or had postgraduate qualifications (Question P2Q5). Similarly, most participants (47%) had joined higher education straight from school, 17% after gaining further education qualifications, 11% after completing other higher education qualifications and 11% returning to education after employment (Question P2Q7). Most participants (91%) entered their most recent course of study at the start of the course (Question P2Q8) rather than gaining advanced entry. Similarly, 81% of participants had only experienced full-time study with 18% having had some experience of part-time study (Question P2Q11).

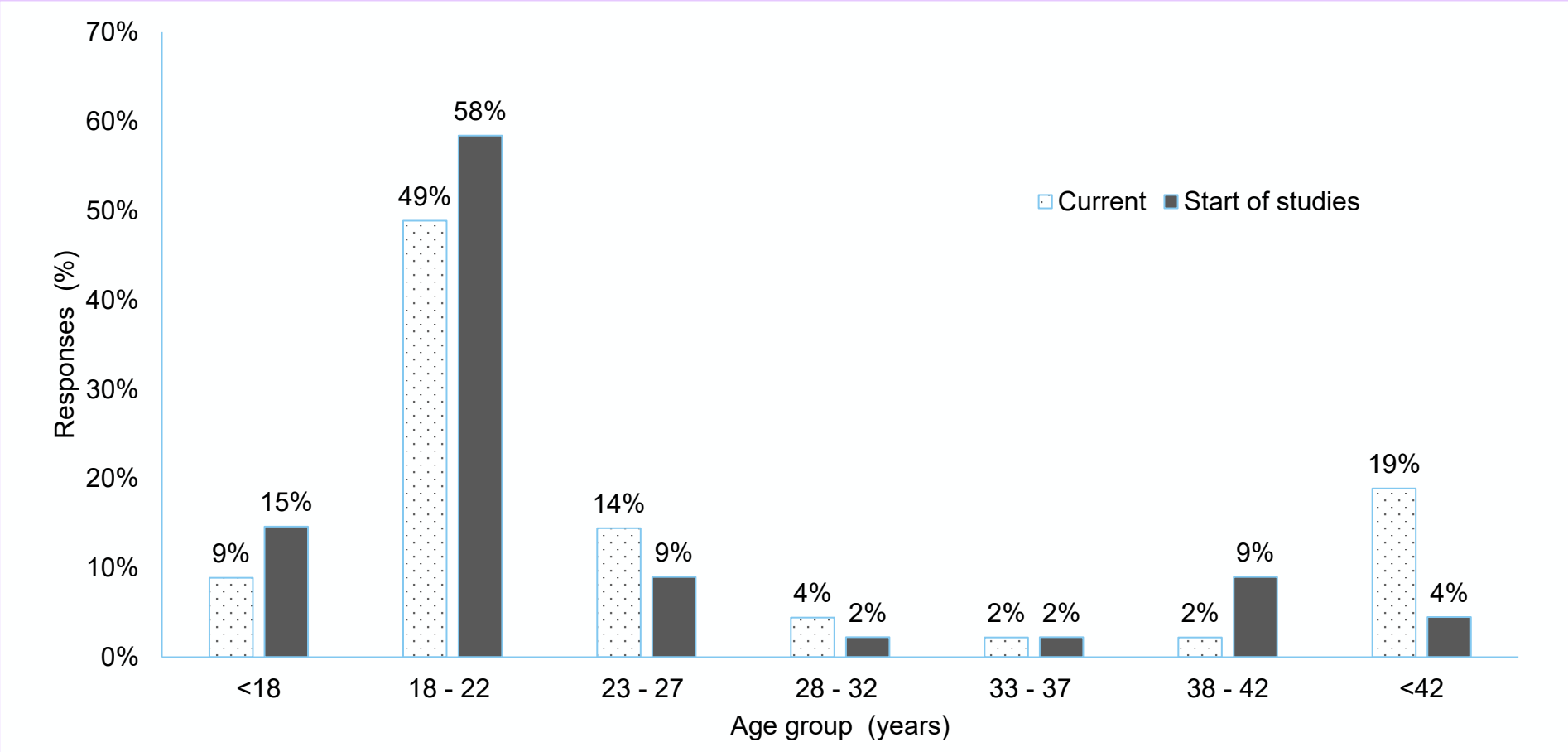


Figure 4: The current age of survey participants and their age when they started their most recent studies (Questions P2Q1 and P2Q2).

### Disability and inclusion

Sixty-five percent of participants had no experience of discrimination relating to the nine protected characteristics defined in UK law (Question P3Q1). The most common type of discrimination reported was age (9 participants). All the participants who reported gender discrimination were male (4 participants) and all the participants who reported disability discrimination were female (4 participants). An equally reported discrimination was 'Other' (9 participants), textual responses indicate that these related to mental health and childcare provision.

Most participants (77%) did not have any caring responsibilities whilst studying at university (Question P3Q2). Four participants reported having responsibility for caring for pre-school children whilst at university, seven reported caring for school age children and seven participants reported full or part-time adult caring responsibilities. Most participants (66%) had to work to support their standard of living during higher education studies; 20% of participants did not have to work (Question P3Q3).

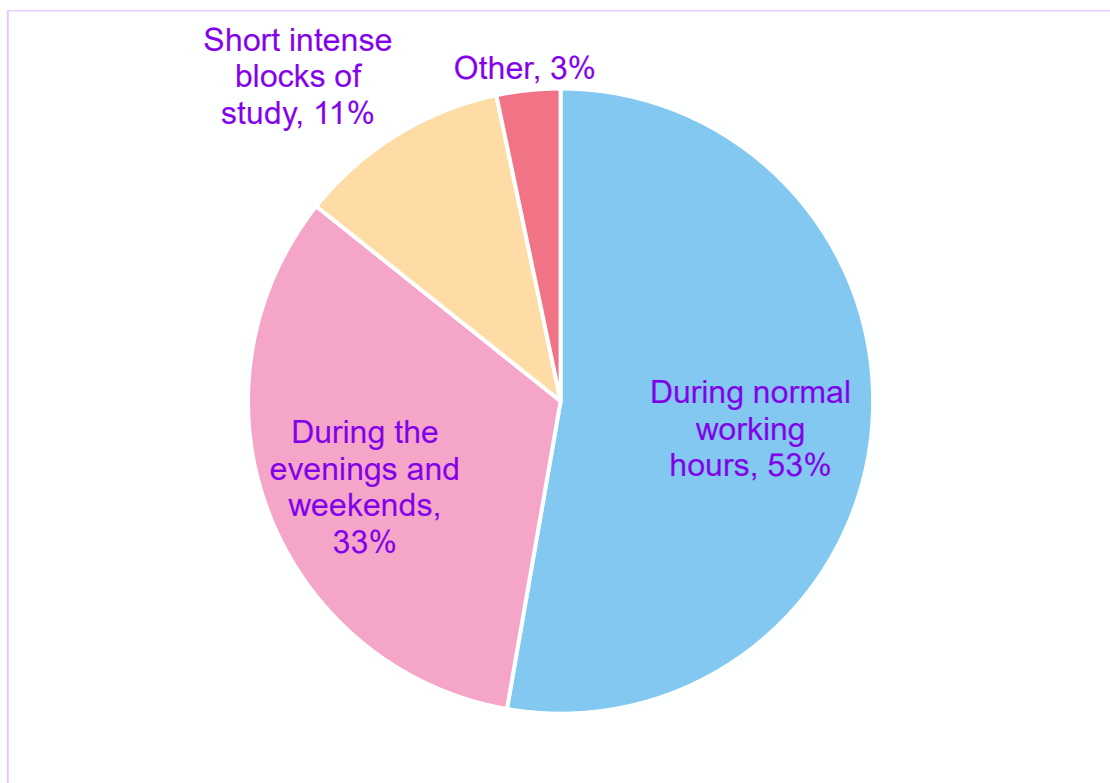


Figure 5: Participants expected time commitment to studying at higher education (Question P3Q4).

Question P3Q4 (Figure 5) showed that most participants expectations of time commitment to studying was during normal working hours and only 33% expected to do academic work at evenings and weekends. Intensification of study into blocks was not the expectation of most participants (11%).

In question P3Q5, most participants (78%) felt immediately welcome to their new learning community when they joined university. Textual comments of the 22% of participants who did not feel immediately welcome to their learning community relate mostly to on-line learning and post-graduate study (Quote 1-3).

Quote 1:

*“... everything was online and even if the uni did try to put an effort, it was very lonely during the first to [two] years.”*

Quote 2:

*“The majority of the students male and female were married/partner and had families”*

Quote 3:

*“I felt part of the learning community at graduate level but didn't at post graduate level”*

### Motivation, attendance, and engagement

Question P4Q1 (Figure 6) shows that the most important motivation for attending university was the desire to become more employable; 96% of participants ranked “the desire to gain professional qualifications” most highly. The desire to gain subject specific employability skills was also highly ranked (75%). Gaining generic employability was less highly ranked (56%). Factors relating to immediate and long-term social motivations were ranked only as co-factors by most participants (Figure 6). More complex motivations such as supporting development of other aspects of life were generally ranked as irrelevant (Figure 6). Similarly, in Question P4Q2, participants gave low rank to campuses as centres of social activity (12%), with 49% seeing campuses as an important place to study and 30% only using campuses during timetabled hours.



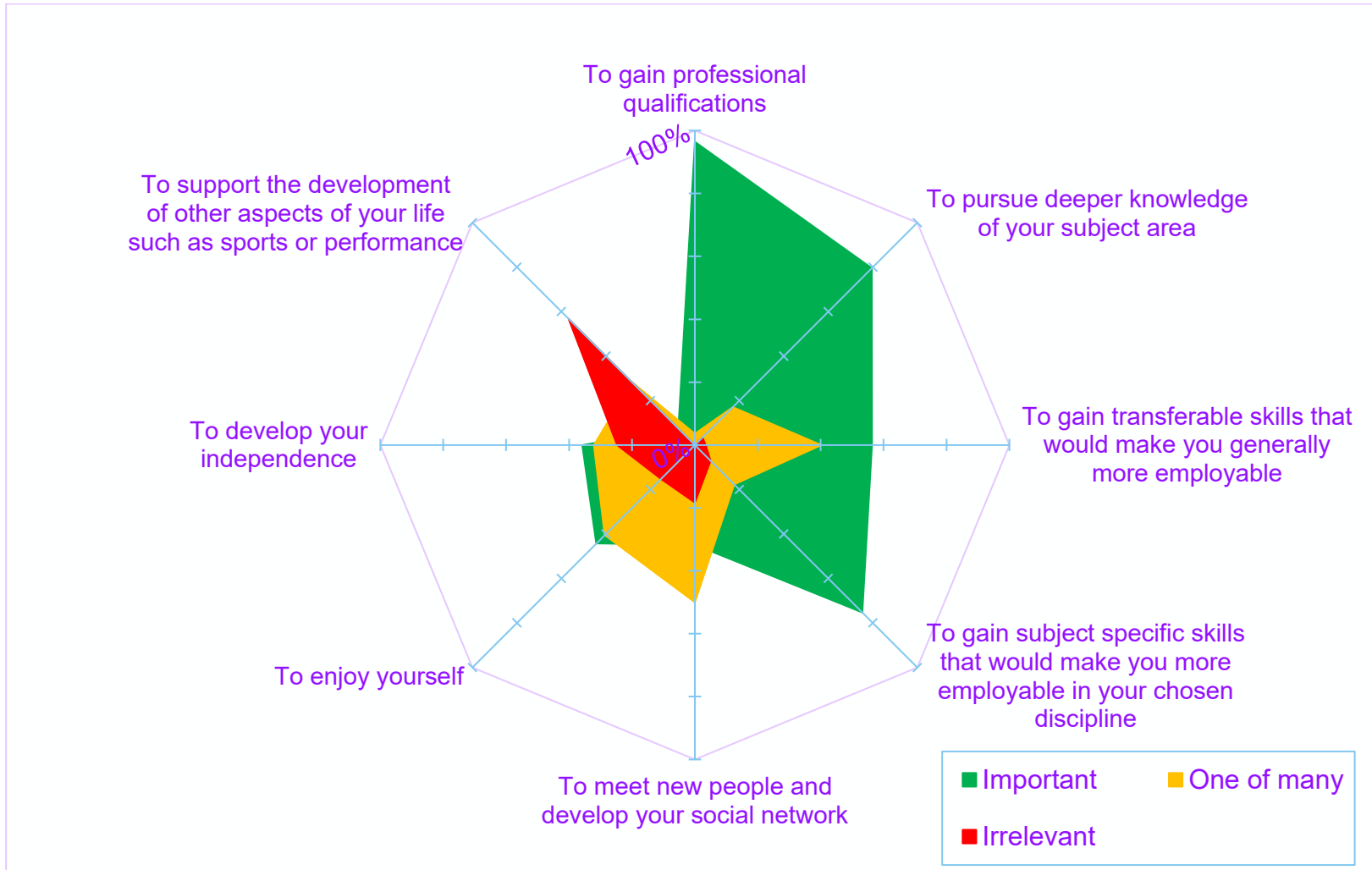


Figure 6: Motivational factors for attending university ranked as “important,” “one of many” or “irrelevant” (Question P4Q1).

Question P4Q3 indicated that participants had a subtle perception between the idea of attendance and that of engagement. Most participants (57%) rated their attendance as excellent, whilst only 18% rated their engagement in the same category. Overall, 86% of participants rated their attendance as good or better, whilst only 66% of participants rated their engagement as good or better. Few participants (17%) rated their attendance as average or less, whilst 35% of participants rated their engagement as average or worse.

Question P4Q4 illustrated that type of learning event strongly influenced the likelihood of attendance (Figure 7). Recording lectures decreased the likelihood of attendance. Student centred learning activities appeared to increase the likelihood of attendance. Interestingly, work experience even when it was accredited was the least likely learning activity to be attended (Figure 7), with one participant expressing dissatisfaction with the expectation of unpaid work experience (Quote 4):

Quote 4

*“I don't believe in unpaid work anymore. I understand that a beginner needs to start somewhere but work should be paid, even if paid less than a fully qualified and experienced professional.”*

Responses to Question P4Q5 and P4Q6 indicated a transactional attitude of participants to attendance as they were more likely to show-up to sessions where their attendance formed part of an assessment (90%) and if their attendance was recorded (74%).

The most likely reasons for not attending classes were explored in Question P4Q7 (Figure 7). The most common reasons selected related to personal and family wellbeing (68% respectively). Work (36%) and family commitments (26%) were also commonly cited as reasons for not attending classes. Operational reasons for not attending classes such as late timetable changes (58%), poor transport (36%) and class start times (19%) were cited generally less frequently than family and personal reasons (Figure 7).

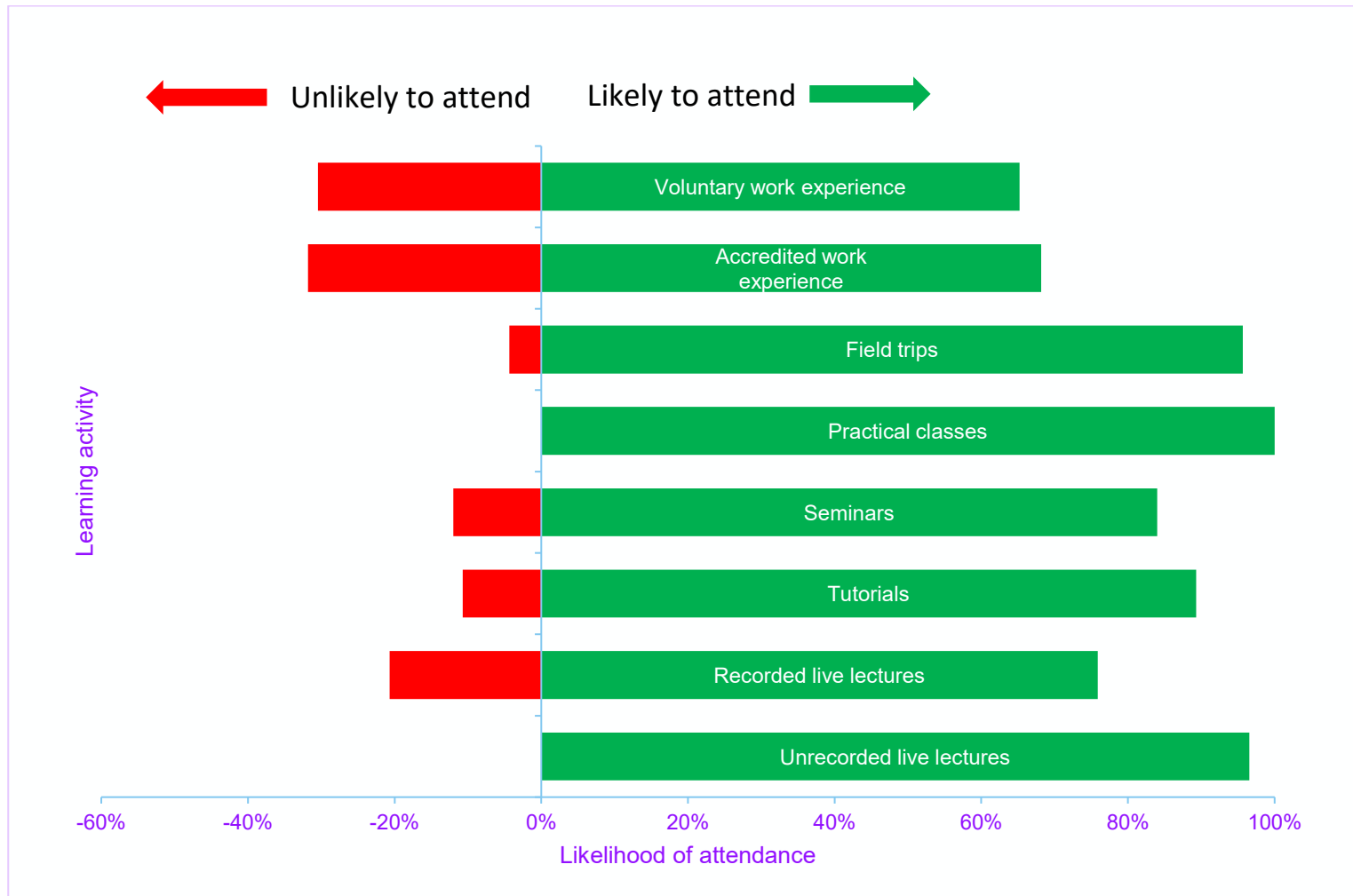


Figure 7: Participants likelihood of attending different types of learning events (Question P4Q4).

Question P4Q8 showed that most participants (78%) lived independently from their parents during their time studying, with only 14% living in the parental home. Most participants relied heavily on public transport to get them to and from campus, 73% of participants used buses or trams to get to classes and 20% used private cars, only 4% of participants walked or cycled (Question P4Q9). Thirty-five percent of participants travelled more than 10 km to their campus and 51% lived more than one kilometre away (Question P4Q10). The importance of adequate car parking was emphasized in one of the textual comments at the end of the survey.

Quote 5

*“Parking is an absolute must! I travel for sometimes 1.5 hours during rush hour to get to uni, only to have to park about 1-1.5 miles away and then walk just in order to get to class!”*

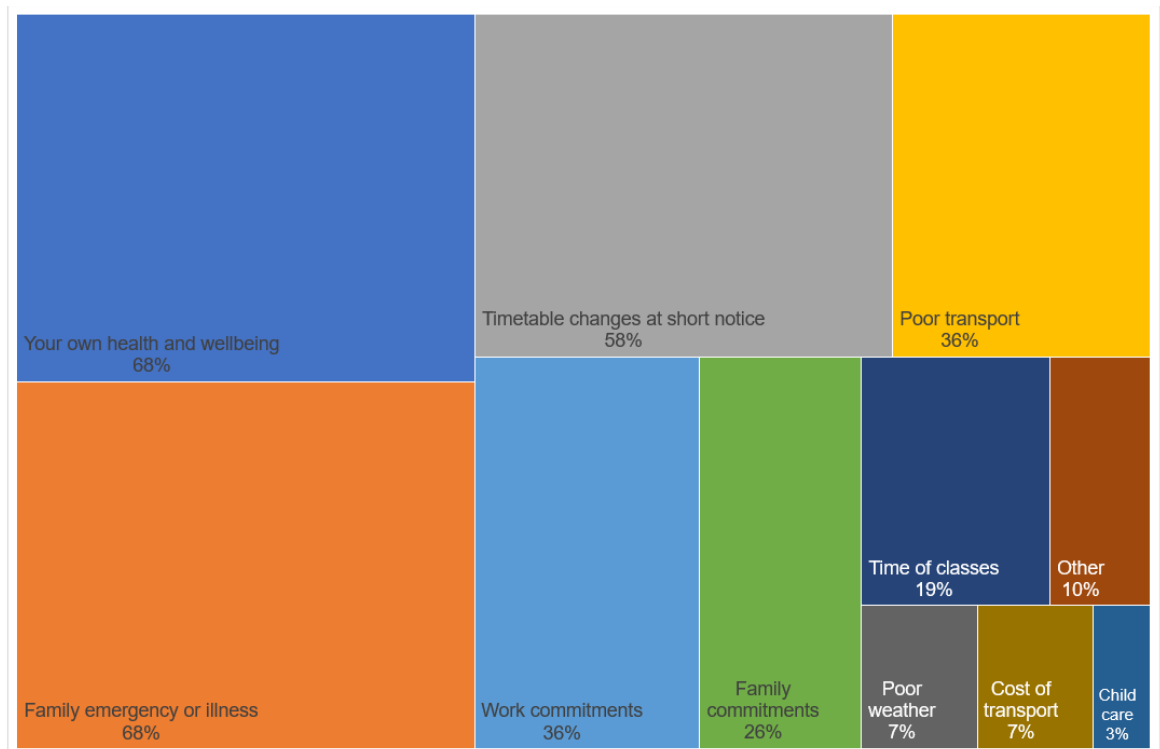


Figure 8: The most likely reasons for not attending classes (Question P4Q7).

### Participant appraisal of the blended learning experience

Question P5Q1 sought to gain an understanding of what participants understood by the term blended learning (Table 3). Most participants (50%) understood the term to be an undesigned experience comprising of a mixture of face-to-face and on-line learning material. This suggests they were not anticipating a seamless integrated experience of the two media. A significant number of participants (31%) had higher expectations believing that blended learning should give them a hybrid experience, with a choice of engaging either on-line or face-to-face. Few participants (19%) considered the widely accepted definition of a designed experience employing the most appropriate media to achieve the pedagogic aim, to conform to their understanding of the term blended learning.

Table 3: Participants response to the question “What do you understand by the term blended learning in a higher education context?” (Question P5Q1)

Multichoice responses	Count	Percentage
An ad hoc mixture of face-to-face classes and on-line learning materials presented through a learning management system	45	50%
A designed experience using the most appropriate learning approach to the context	17	19%
A hybrid experience where the learner has free choice between face-to-face or on-line learning	28	31%
Other	0	0%

Figure 9 shows the perceived relative negative and positive aspects of on-line and face-to-face learning which is a summary of responses from questions P5Q3 – P5Q6. Social aspects of learning were the most highly ranked positive advantages of face-to-face learning, whilst cost and time management were the most highly ranked positive advantages of on-line learning. Conversely, the greatest disadvantages of face-to-face learning centred around cost and time management, and in the case of on-line learning centred around social isolation, availability of study space and structured experience.

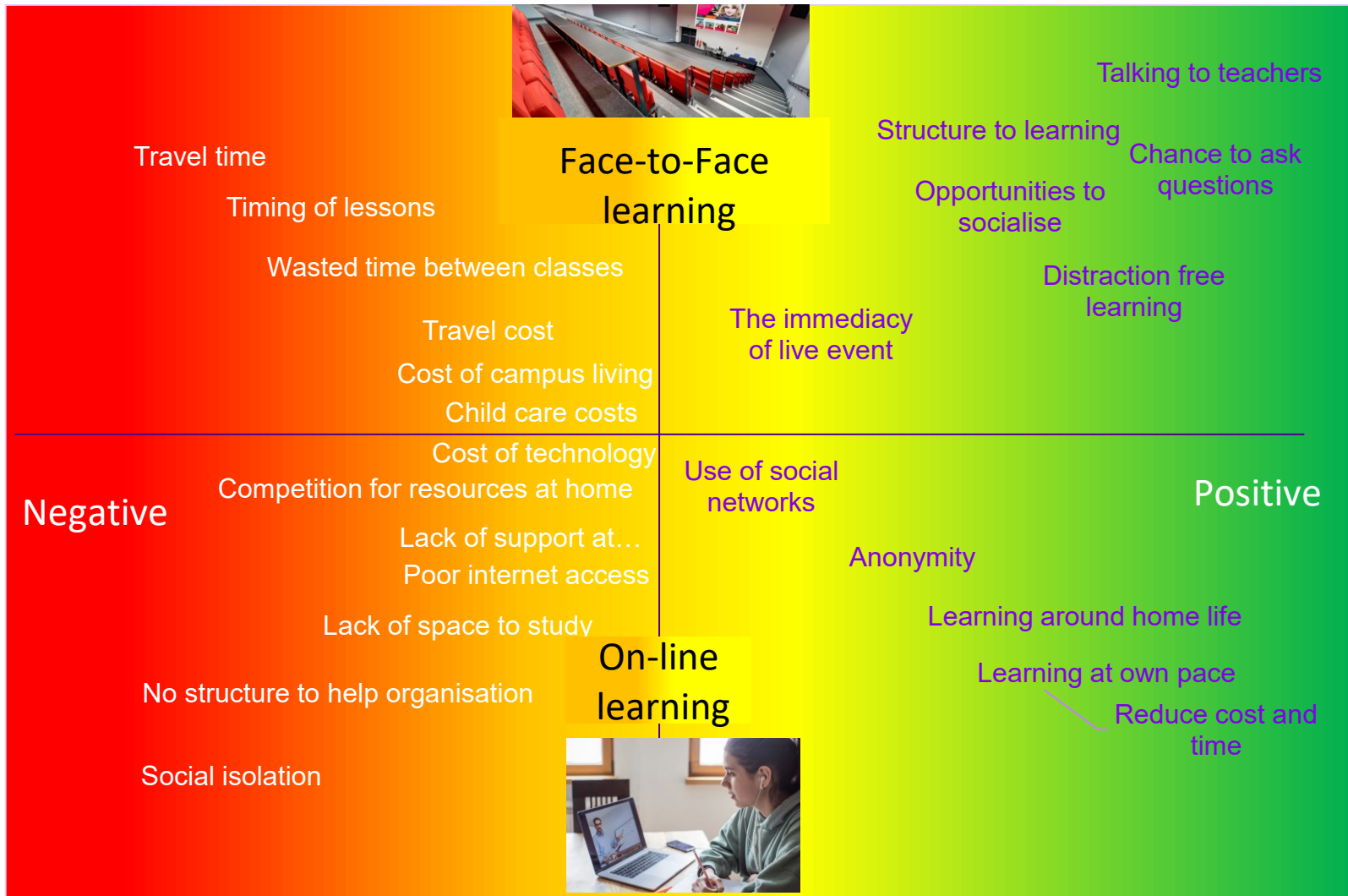


Figure 9: Perceived relative negative and positive aspects of on-line and face-to-face learning by participants (Questions P5Q3 – P5Q6).

Negative aspects of face-to-face learning such as the cost of transport, childcare and campus living did not rank highly. Similarly, aspects of on-line learning such as poor access to technology and poor internet access were lowly ranked.

*The future of campus life*

Question P6Q1 showed an overwhelming 86% of participants felt that face-to-face teaching should remain an important element of the higher education experience. Fourteen percent of participants were more equivocal, responding that face-to-face teaching did not necessarily have to be part of a higher education experience. No respondents believe that face-to-face learning should not be a part of a higher education experience. Textual elaboration of offered responses included Quotes 6 to 9.

Quote 6

*“It depends on the course, the content, the aim of course and the availability of education. I think face to face is important but may not be appropriate for all cases.”*

Quote 7

*“I think while being an important aspect of learning, face2face attendance is not always possible and it may not be a good point to rely on.”*

Quote 8

*“Blended learning is a good approach as it gives the individual choice to go to class or not. I know personally I have missed classes at the end of the month due to not having enough money for petrol to get into uni... living almost 20 miles from uni and traveling on the bypass in rush hour is a lot especially for only a one or two hour class that could have been online anyway.”*

Quote 9

*“It should be mandatory to attend classes that teach practical skills such as labs and trips.”*

The vast majority of participants (91%) felt that on-line learning was intrinsically less valuable than face-to-face teaching and should cost less in terms of fees (Question P6Q2). Data summarised in Figure 10 supports the findings that on-line courses are intrinsically less attractive than ones with a face-to-face element (Question P6Q3). The type of course that was most likely to influence choice of

programme were ones that either had minimal on-line content (81%) or only some on-line content (94%).

Factors that would improve attendance and engagement were explored in Question P6Q4. The most common response was related to running classes outwith peak travel times (36%) and avoiding classes on a Monday and a Friday (26%). Timing classes to run at evenings and weekends was not a popular option (10%) nor was intense blocked activity weeks (13%). Avoiding classes on Wednesday afternoons (a period traditionally dedicated to sports and club activities at UK universities) was also not a popular option (8%).

Questions P7Q1, P7Q2 and P7Q3 related to the facilities and support for face-to-face and on-line learning. Participants were given wish lists and asked to judge the relative importance of each of the listed features. The wish list for Question P7Q1 referred to learning on campus and the ranked result for this question are shown in table 4. The wish list for Question P7Q2 referred to on-line learning and the ranked result for this question are shown in table 5. The wish list for Question P7Q3 referred to life on campus learning and the ranked result for this question are shown in table 6. Ranking was calculated by subtracting the percentage of participants who felt a feature was irrelevant from the percentage of participants who felt it was important, and then ranking the features on the product of this calculation.



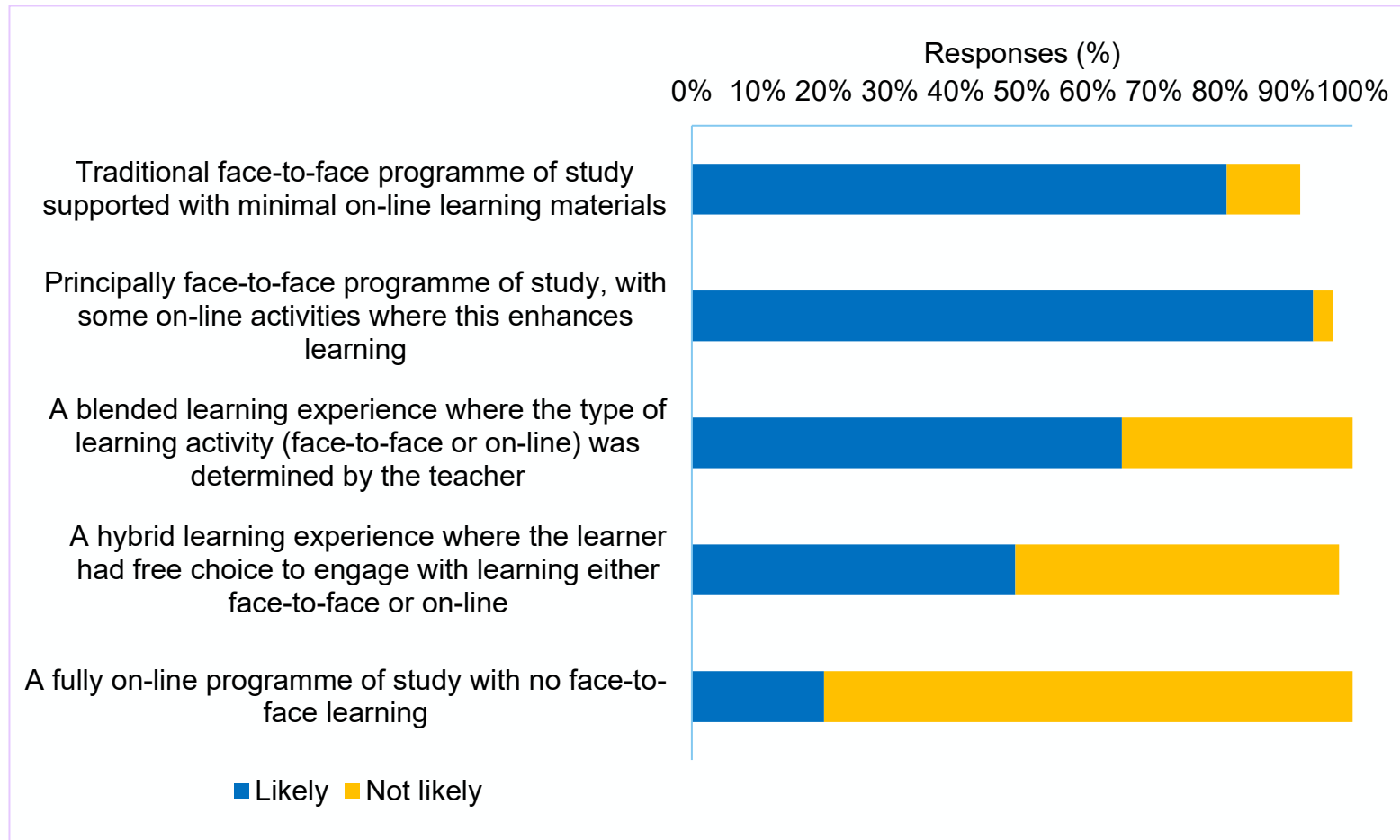


Figure 10: Participant responses to the question “Which of the following types of programmes of study are most likely to positively influence your choice of higher education institute?” (Question P6Q3).

Table 4: Participant responses to the question “Which of the following facilities and services do you feel should be designed into the campus learning of the future (Question P7Q1)?”.

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Feature</b>	<b>Irrel- e- vant</b>	<b>Neu- tral</b>	<b>Important</b>
1	Comfortable environment which facilitates learning	0%	4%	96%
1	Appropriate practical facilities such as laboratories, studios and workshops	0%	0%	96%
1	Audio visual equipment that allows live recording of presentations	0%	4%	96%
4	Access for people with disabilities	0%	9%	91%
5	Hybrid learning spaces that allow distant learners to participate fully in learning events	0%	12%	88%
5	Safe external environment	0%	8%	88%
7	Secure 24-hour access to computing facilities on campus	0%	16%	84%
8	A library well stocked with plenty of printed reading material	4%	9%	87%
9	Availability of computers within learning spaces	0%	17%	79%
10	Dedicated space for social learning activities	0%	31%	69%
11	Flat learning spaces that allow teachers and learners to interact easily	4%	23%	72%
12	Dedicated space for on-line learning on campus	4%	23%	72%
13	Quiet technology-free study spaces	4%	34%	62%
14	Interior and exterior chill-out and exercise spaces	9%	31%	60%
15	An attractive modern building	31%	19%	43%
16	Large capacity auditoria capable of seating more than 100 people	27%	42%	31%

Table 5: The ten most common participant responses to the question “Which of the following facilities and services do you feel should be designed into the on-line learning environment of the future (Question P7Q2)?

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Feature</b>	<b>Irrelevant</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Important</b>
1	Acknowledgment of the parity of on-line and face-to-face teaching	0%	4%	92%
2	Adequate IT equipment to loan and take home	0%	4%	91%
2	Active support for on-line learning communities	0%	4%	91%
2	Well managed social media networks	0%	4%	91%
5	Good availability of on-line books and journals	0%	12%	88%
6	Paperless submission systems	0%	15%	85%
7	Adequate IT equipment available on campus	0%	16%	84%
8	Well managed blended learning provision	0%	20%	80%
9	Well supported information hubs	4%	12%	84%
9	Free WiFi dongles	4%	12%	84%

Table 6: The ten most common participant responses to the question “Which of the following facilities and services do you feel should be designed into on-campus living of the future (Question P7Q3)?

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Feature</b>	<b>Irrelevant</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Important</b>
1	Well-lit corridors and good outdoor lighting	0%	8%	92%
2	24 hour security provision	4%	4%	91%
3	Safe and frequent transport links	9%	0%	91%
4	Secure parking for bicycles	4%	15%	80%
5	Adequate canteen capacity at busy times	9%	4%	83%
6	Hot food always available during the day	8%	8%	79%
7	Cafes and bars on campus	9%	15%	72%
8	Secure parking for cars	8%	19%	69%
9	After hours social events	17%	12%	71%
10	On-campus shops	14%	21%	61%

## 4.2 Analysis of qualitative evidence from podcast interviews

### Visual quantification of thematic analysis

In order to temper the tendency of qualitative data to implicitly inflate the significance of cited anecdotes (Bryman, 2016b) a frequency analysis was carried out on the number of times a code was assigned during the thematic analysis process (Figure 11). The significance of themes and narrative extracts in the following section should be interpreted with this quantification exercise in mind.

Visualise quantification was also achieved by constructing word clouds from the word frequency of contributors collated by role (interviewer, student, and educationist), produced in NVivo® (QSR International, 2022). To improve clarity, only the 50 most commonly occurring words were included in the diagrams. Where reflective interjections and ambiguous discourse fillers and hedges, (which are common in the spoken language of adolescent or unconfident speakers) appeared in the word clouds they were added to the word stop-list and the NVivo® query re-run to exclude these from the final version of the diagrams shown in Figures 12 - 14.

Data from the word frequency analysis for students and educationists were compared by ranking the ten most frequently cited words in the interviewer transcripts and then comparing these to the rank of the same words where they appeared in student and educationist transcripts. The word frequency ranking of the ten words common to student and educationist transcripts was then used to construct a scatter plot of word frequency ranking (Figure 15). This figure indicates the relative importance of words used by students and educationists and indicates the agreement of rank between the two roles by the proximity of the ranks to the line of parity indicated on Figure 15.

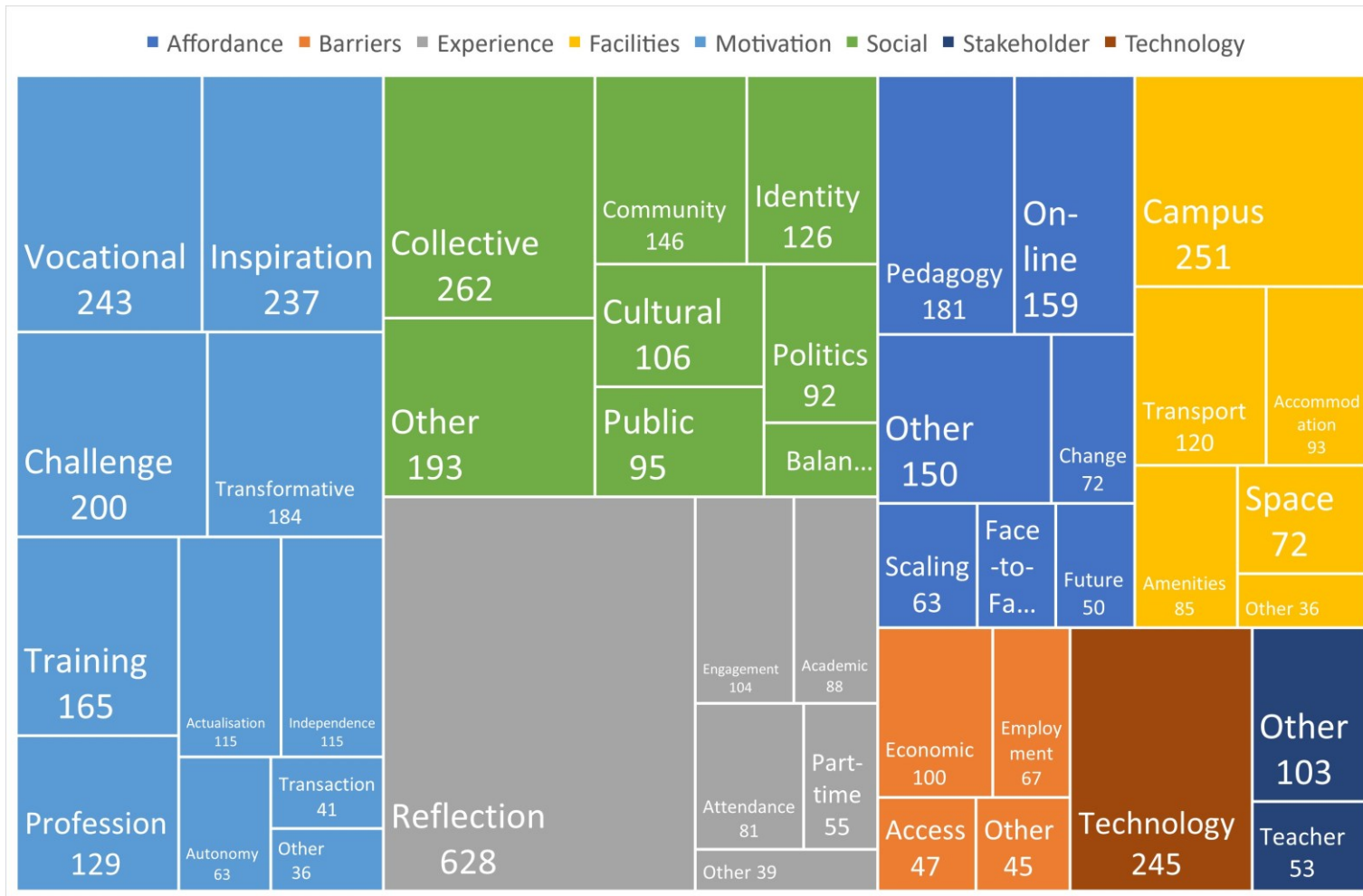


Figure 11: Frequency analysis of codes and their parent themes of overall verbal dataset.



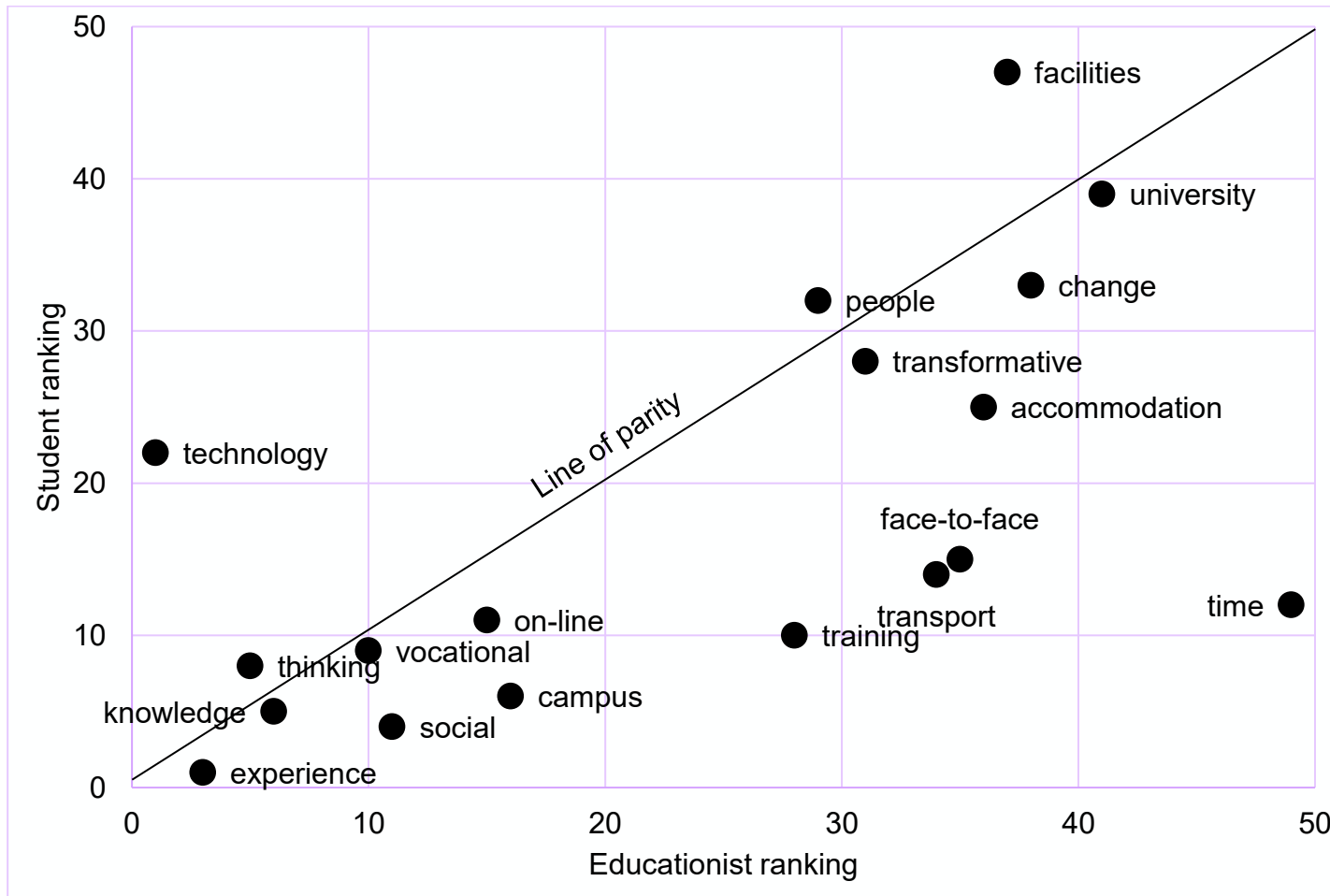


Figure 15: Scatter plot of the ranks of the 10 most frequent words used in the interviews of educationists and students. Proximity to the line of parity indicates the closeness of agreement between the word frequency of students and educationists.

### 4.3 Thematic analysis

#### Affordance

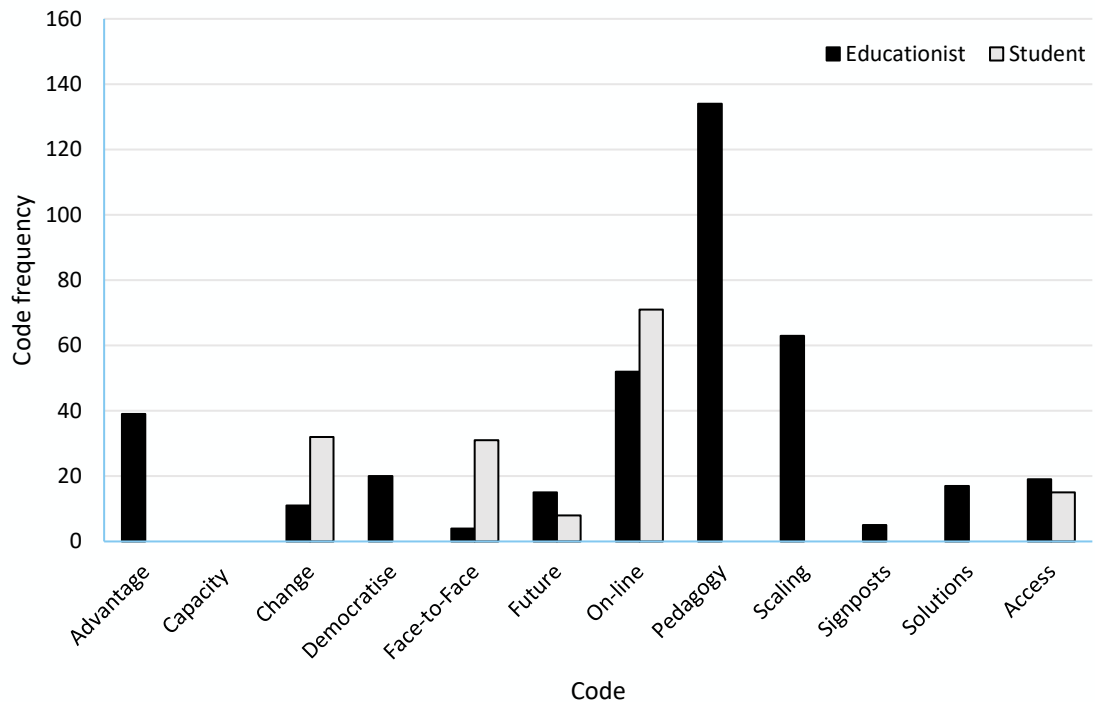


Figure 16: Frequency analysis of codes within the affordance theme showing differences between student and educationist responses.

The affordance theme was defined as a group of codes that described potential costs and benefits of face-to-face, blended, and on-line learning. This theme was more often attributed to the verbal narrative of educationists than students (Figure 16).

Educationists generally recognised the advantages of blended learning in terms of student engagement, quality of learning experience and wider social benefits. For example, Educationist M, suggests that we can derive advantages in student engagement and quality of learning by judicious choice of pedagogic approach (Quote 10).



Quote 10

*“I think there's kind of a fundamental flaw in the approach there in thinking in terms of trying to take what you do face to face and put it online. See what the way I view this is online, as got affordances that don't exist in the face to face and some real advantages, but some drawbacks and the same the exactly the same the other way round ... If you got 700 students or of several 100 however many. Part of me is saying is getting all of those people to turn up on the same day at the same time in the same place. That's a really silly ...What's the advantage of that?”*

Educationist M.

Educationist A was also not especially perturbed by the movement towards more on-line teaching but was worried about the change in the higher education experience from a transitional experience to a more transactional one (Quote 11).

Quote 11

*“So we teach online. So, everybody gets taught online. I don't think there's a problem with that. That that's fine what I do worry about. Is that we're changing the university experience from a kind of whole life experience to a training program. And I think higher education needs to be more than a training program that that would be, that would be the thing that would worry me.*

Educationist A

Students seemed less concerned about the affordances of blended learning within higher education and more troubled by the perceived value of the on-line learning versus face-to-face teaching (Quote 12).

Quote 12

*“Yeah, I think I don't think you can get the same experience online. I think if you want to do an online course, there are online courses out there by especially for my masters. I'm looking for something that's gonna be in person. I'm looking for something at least with a fieldtrip.”*

Student A

Barriers

Figure 17 shows that barriers to participation in blended education were not perceived as being particularly significant in terms of the frequency of codewords relating to the theme. Interestingly, educationists perceived economic reasons been a major barrier to participation in blended learning and students did not (Figure 17). Students perceived employment as the biggest single barrier to participation in blended learning (Figure 17). Economic and employment barriers represent opposite sides of the same coin in the sense that economic pressures on students make it necessary for them to work, and the resultant employment then restricts full engagement with higher education. Employment is a solution to the economic barriers to higher education but is not without its own set of problems.

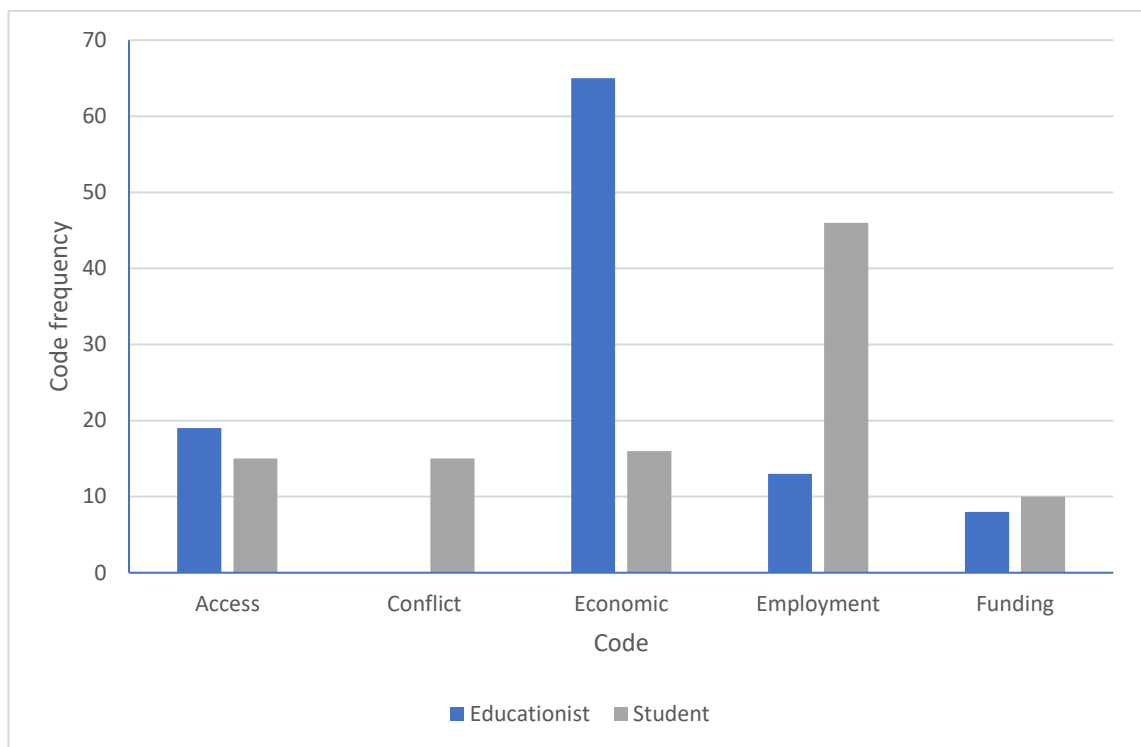


Figure 17: Frequency analysis of codes within the barriers theme showing differences between student and educationist responses.

Student A regretted employment coming in the way of the more social aspects of higher education, but still did well in her studies (Quote 13).

#### Quote 13

*“No, no, I think that's what I struggled with the most within my studies. And I think like I, I did, I did very well. I got a first-class degree, but I think I could have enjoyed myself a bit more and enjoyed learning about all these different topics so much more if I didn't have the added pressure of 'I have to do it right now because I have to work tomorrow'. And very often I would be up late until 11 midnight studying for the next day.”*

Student A

Educationist A was troubled by the demands of full-time work and the prevailing economic conditions (Quote 14).

#### Quote 14

*“The working part time, some of them are working full time. I don't know how they can possibly be full-time students if they're working the hours that they're working. You know, I have to leave because I have a job I need to go to. I need to go to my job because I need to pay my rent. Yeah. You know, and and. I'll be honest with you, I'm quite worried about students for this winter because I think a lot of them are are going to suffer a lot. I've seen a lot about universities opening up like food larders and stuff like that.”*

Educationist A

#### Experience

The experience theme was the second most common cited theme (Figure 18), with reflection been by far the most cited code in this theme (Figure 18). Comments range from factual accounts of interviewees to more wistful contemplations. Older students who were interviewed (Students P and S) expressed some melancholy over their first experience of higher education. Their subsequent revisiting of the experience in later life seemed to be largely informed by the desire to make amends for the initial vain experience (Quote 15). Whilst younger students felt privileged by their more recent experiences (Quote 16).

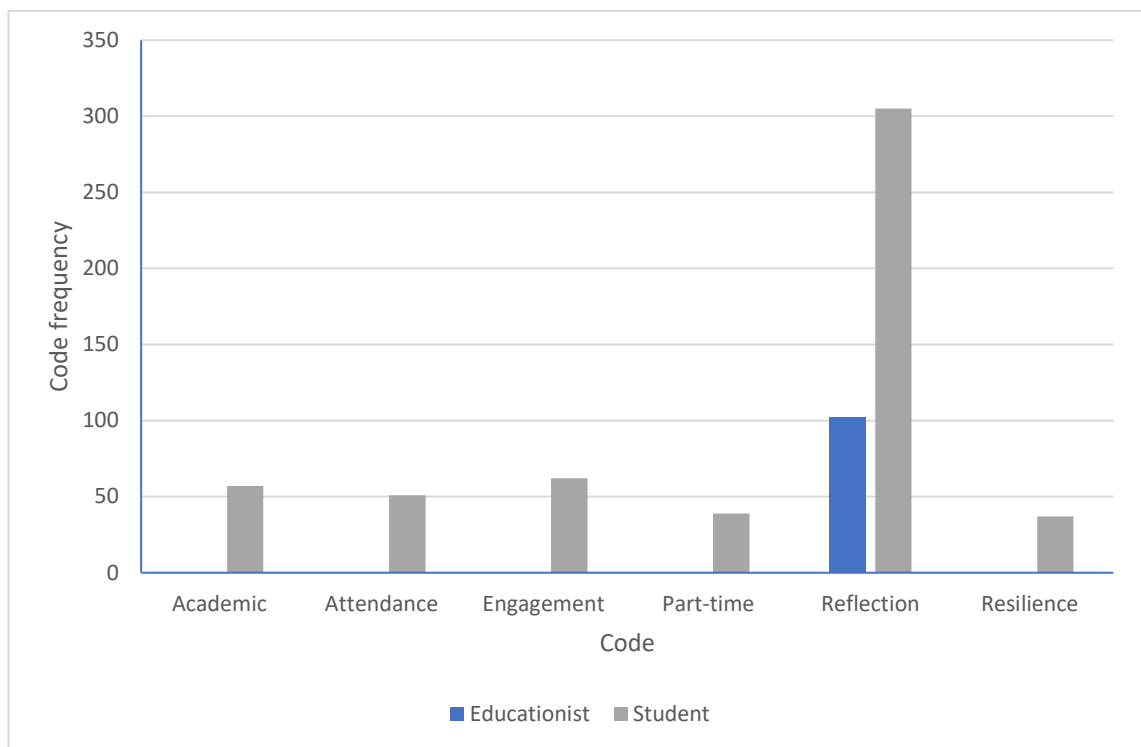


Figure 18. Frequency analysis of codes within the experience theme showing differences between student and educationist responses.

Quote 15

*The first time round I didn't even do the bare minimum... my attendance rate. must have been diabolical. So I didn't even know what I was supposed to be doing let alone not doing it. You know I wasn't even aware that I wasn't aware what I was not doing if that makes sense. Yeah, I was a pillock....This grated.*

Student P

Quote 16

*Umm, I think I'm. I've been. I was very lucky with my university experience. I was able to have a job and kind of like not necessarily dictate my shifts but influence when I could work and they took that on and were able to accommodate me. So, I was able to get to the lectures...*

Student P.

## Facilities

Figure 19 shows that facilities were the fifth most discussed theme during the interviews. The transcripts of students were more likely to be coded with one of the codes belonging to this theme than were educationists (Figure 19). Students ranked codes belonging to this theme such as “campus” and “transport” more highly than educationists (Figure 19).

Students appeared more beguiled by the quality and services of the physical space than did educationists (Quote 17 and 18). Educationist A appeared a little unimpressed by the promise of a new building that is part of her department’s future plans (Quote 19).

### Quote 17

*“I was gonna say that like Hull university, the campus is really plush. It's like the toilets in the library, like I'll choose. I'll choose where to go, so I'll go to the Arts cafe for my cup of tea because it comes in a really nice cup and saucer. And then I'll go to the loos and the library because they're amazing. ... It is a nice places. There's a lot of money being spent on it”.*

Student S

### Quote 18

*Hull University's changed massively, but just in the last three or four years as there's not quite tower blocks but there's like 4 or 5 storey buildings and that and all the halls of residents now pretty much are on site. Ohh the University's got a Wetherspoon [A popular chain of high street pubs offering cheap drinks and food along with faux 'olde worlde' charm]”*

Student P

## Quote 19

*“If the future of campuses? Why are universities spending literally 10s of £1,000,000 on glossy new buildings? So that they must think They are going to build a new teaching hub here at some point. I don't know when? Oh, actually, I know where it's going to be built. And it can't actually be all that big, to be honest, because it's not all that much space. But anyway, we're getting some kind of new teaching hub, so they must think that there is a future in campus education.”*

Educationist A.

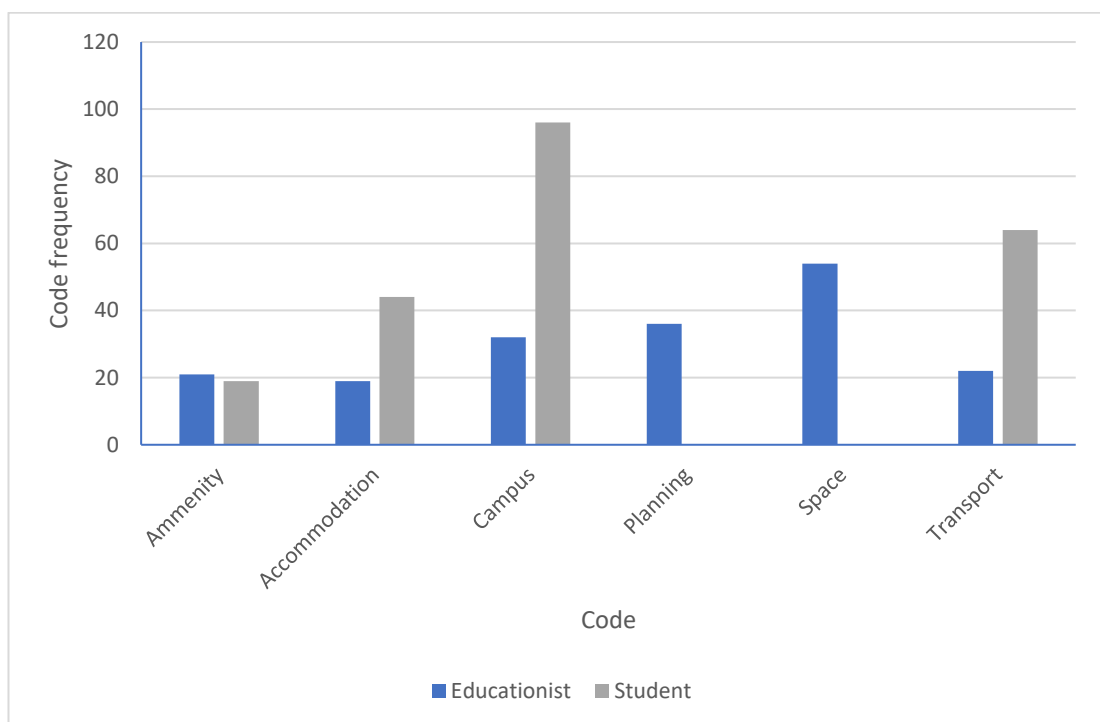


Figure 19: Frequency analysis of codes within the facilities theme showing differences between student and educationist responses.

## Motivation

Codes attributed to the motivation theme were the most often cited (Figure 20), and where these did appear in the ranking of the most frequently used word by students and educationists, they showed close order of

importance. Students were more likely to talk about issues cited under the motivation theme than educationists (Figure 13 and 14).

Whilst there was some convergence in opinion about the declared motivation for study being “Transformative” or “Transactional”, all students recognised that learning in higher education was more than just training (Figure 20). Student S (a mum whose studies were been funded by her employer – Quote 20) and Student A (currently without caring responsibilities and ready to self-fund her postgraduate studies – Quote 21) exhibited quite diverse motivations from each other. Both recognised that they required more from themselves than the minimum needed to pass the course. Student P, recognised that his first opportunity to study at university was strongly influenced by parental pressure to study a subject with good employability (Quote 22).

Quote 20

*“It's it's quite demanding so I have to be quite alert, and I have to be active in my own learning and It's hard ... but there is an expectation for us to to come home from work and study. It it it does literally take over our lives. Yeah. I think it's like because work are paying for it. Paying for my course. They're giving me two days out of of work to do it. I have to do really well, with an expectation that I'll come out very clever”.*

Student S

Quote 21

*“... Yeah... No, I I think I've grown as a person. The course overall was everything I kind of needed it to be and it's kind of opened me up to like different passions and being a lot more passionate about the environment, I was already a bit like the strange person who loved going outdoors and hugging trees and talking constantly about animals, but this kind of changed it into like I'm now very interested in restoration and I think in a lot of the environmental*



*space there's talk of like people and then saving space for nature.”*

Student A

Quote 22

*I was persuaded by parents to do sciences because they're saying that's the way to go. No way was I a scientist and I was cajoled and forced into doing stuff that I did not want to do. You know I'd have been better off just doing history, geography, or sociology somewhere*

Student P

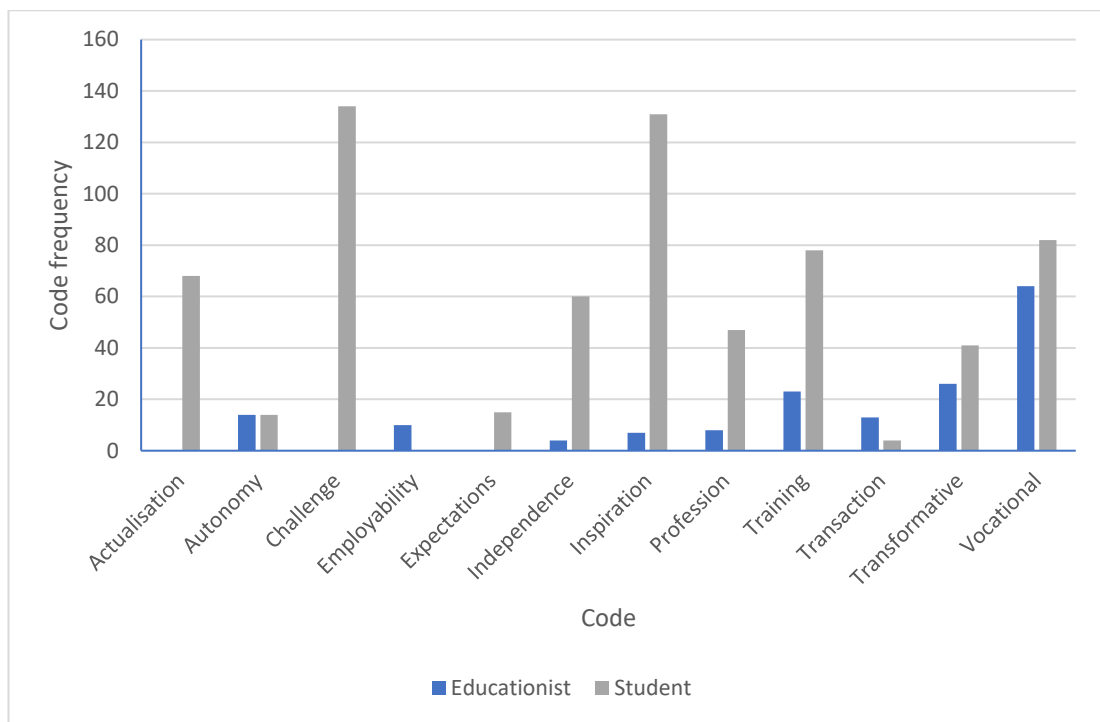


Figure 20: Frequency analysis of codes within the motivation theme showing differences between student and educationist responses.

### Social

Codes assigned to the social theme were the third most cited (Figure 21). Codes included in this theme were amongst the most diverse and divisive in terms of responses from educationists and students (Figure 21). Social

affordances of higher education were widely recognised both in the survey and the interviews as one of the many benefits of face-to-face learning and the principal reason why it was a preferred method of engagement to on-line learning. Significantly cited codes in this theme were “Collective”, “Community”, “Identity”, “Public” and “Politics” (Figure 21). The frequent occurrence of the code “Politics” amongst students was more likely a reflection to the response to the interviewer’s line of questions rather than a spontaneous development in conversation.

Student A, recognised both the social and educational value of talking to teachers (Quote 23) but lamented the loss of social time due to the economic pressures of needing to work (Quote 13).

Quote 23

*“Getting to spend time with the professors as well as something that I really appreciated and the lab classes as well and just being able to speak to people like the lab technicians who are very helpful”*

Student A

The code “Public” was frequently cited mainly in connection with the discussion with Educationist M (Quote 24). He pointed out the difference between the UK and Finland in the concept of the commons in relation to property in public ownership. In the UK, universities are mostly public owned, but few have open-door policies to those other than ID card displaying staff and students.

Quote 24

*“I think this is an area where there’s a real difference between Finland and the UK in terms of the Commons. I noticed that with schools, universities and libraries (in Finland) these are publicly owned spaces ... people can just walk in to the Tamk, University campus or any university campus. When there’s a doctoral defence, anybody can go to that.”*

Educationist M

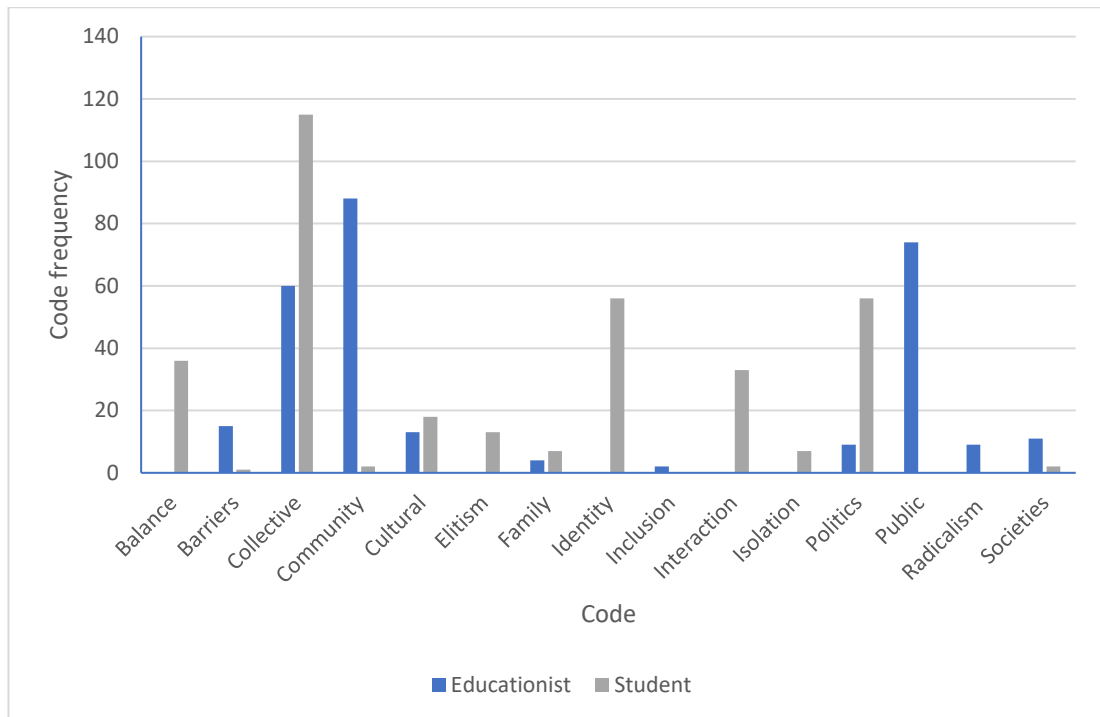


Figure 21: Frequency analysis of codes within the social theme showing differences between student and educationist responses.

Few students or educationists mentioned “Societies” or “Radicalism” as features of campus life and usually only in response to direct questions by the interviewer.

Other themes

The stakeholder theme and its associated codes was cited rarely in the thematic analysis (Table 2). In retrospect this theme could have been omitted from the analysis.

Technology was a widely cited theme (Table 2) mostly relating to the transcripts of educationist in response to specific questions by the interviewer. Aspects relating to technology such as barriers to inclusion and engagement were covered by other codes.

**4.4 Summary of engagement with social media**

The principal method of engaging with social media was via the professional social network LinkedIn. By the end of the data collection

period (13/12/2022) the researcher had built up a network of 914 followers and had 908 connections. The “Future of campus life” group which was setup by the researcher had 22 members. Other social media platforms such as Facebook and Reddit were used to promote the survey and to raise awareness of the podcasts.

The “Future of campus life” group was not generally successful at promoting engagement with the podcasts or promoting anything more than impression responses such as “Likes”. In order to promote the podcasts more widely the researcher joined other LinkedIn groups concerned with higher education which had many more followers. These groups included “Teacher Training and Education” (149,596 members), “Learning in Higher Education” (17,657 members), “Educational Leadership: System & School Improvement to Increase ALL Students’ Growth & Achievement” (106,456 members), “Advance HE” (17,127 members), “Bright Red Triangle” (528 members), “Learning, Education, and Training Professionals Group” (349,625 members), “LGBTQ+ Professionals in Higher Education” (27,306 members) and “Lean in Higher Education” (3,215 members).

Posts linked to the podcasts were posted to these groups at roughly weekly intervals. Although the potential reach through these groups was enormous (>500K), the process of posting and gathering responses was very inefficient, firstly because it was not very clear if posts had survived the moderation process and secondly because collecting the reaction data was laborious and information poor. Posting on Reddit groups potentially gave access to large communities of higher education students and school students but posts seldom survived the auto-moderation process.

The engagement of people interested in the future of campus life through social media cannot be considered successful as the number of reactions were extremely low and the process yielded little rich data. More work in this area is required particularly in the membership of the self-moderated groups such as the “Future of campus life”, and possibly in exploring other platforms where members are more committed to the topic in question.

## 5 DISCUSSION

### 5.1 The demise of campuses as centres of youth culture

A key change in the experience of higher education by interviewees was the shift over the past 30 years of campuses from centres of youth culture and radicalism to places almost devoid of social or political challenge (Bristow, 2012). No doubt this is a feature of the democratisation and commercialisation of the higher education experience with more students needing to succeed at university because of the cost by which that success is afforded. Question P3Q3 shows that most students (66%) must work during their studies at university, and this impinges on their freedom to engage in the social activities of universities such as participation in societies, clubs, and teams (Figure 21), some students regretted this absence of university social life (Quote 13). Work and social media also tend to detract from the incentive to make new friends at university (Quote 25).

Quote 25

*“I had a lot of work friends, and I did manage to make a very close friend at university, but I don't think I had a big social group and I don't know if it's the campus which is quite a small campus... “*

Student A

The university student population of the UK, continues to be dominated by 18-22 year olds (HESA, 2019) which is reflected in the data from the survey in this study (Figure 4). This age group are among the most digitally literate of the population, particularly in the use of emerging social media (Polizzi, 2020). Unlike in previous generations of students, joining university no longer represents the social wrench that it once did, as on-line communities of friends are mobile, and friendships are as likely to be made in the student's workplace as they are in the classroom. Most students therefore no longer see campuses as a focus of their non-academic social lives (Question P4Q2), which shows only 12% of respondents see campuses as the centre of their social lives).

Bristow (2012) laments the domestication of critique and the departure of radicalism from academia which she argues is principally driven by the desire for professional survival. Moreover, since 2015, UK universities have been legally obliged to do what they can to prevent extreme religious radicalism developing on campus (McGlynn & McDaid, 2019). Additionally, mainstream political parties fail to attract younger people whose ideology is most often dominated by issue politics and direct action (Mycock & Tonge, 2012). These factors possibly drive the general absence of political activity from campuses (which was so common during the 1960s, 70s and 80s) much to the probable relief of many a vice-chancellor.

Student unions which were once hubs of student autonomy and the centre of vibrant campus life, are now mostly professionalised advice centres with few if any on-campus activities. For example, Student A didn't know there was a student union bar at her university until she was invited to final year drinks by her professor (Quote 26).

Quote 26

*"I only found out about the Union bar in the last year because Professor H. organized some drinks for us all... [Interviewer Q. What's the Union bar like?] ... It's a student bar. It was fine, but it's in town, so it's not near here at all".*

Student A

This transition in campus life may reflect a wider change in society from a masculinized pub culture to a more feminized coffee-shop culture. There has been a 25% drop in the number of pubs in the UK since 2000 (Foley, 2019), and a doubling in the number of coffee shops (Daily Mail Online, 2023). Female students at university represent 57% of the undergraduate population and 64% of the postgraduate population (HESA, 2019). It therefore may be prudent for universities to offer a campus experience that appeals to female undergraduates in the hope that they continue onto lucrative postgraduate studies. Students do seem to be drawn to the quality of the coffee-shop experience (Quote 27).

#### Quote 27

*I'll go to the Arts cafe for my cup of tea because it comes in a really nice cup and saucer.*

Student S

Another traditional method of socialising at university is through membership of various clubs, societies, and sports teams. Traditionally Wednesday afternoons were dedicated to these social activities and the teaching timetable was kept free of lessons so students could attend team events. Universities seem under some pressure from the student body to keep (or revive) this tradition (Warwick Students' Union, 2018). Observance seems to be patchy (The Student Room, 2011) and institutional commitment to the policy is often equivocal (University of Dundee, 1999). However, only 8% of respondents to the survey (P6Q4) consider Wednesday afternoons as sacrosanct.

The importance of campuses in the non-academic social life of students will no-doubt continue to diminish as on-line media continues to be the preferred method of social communication amongst young people. In an academic setting, students appear acutely aware of the quality of social experiences as measured by the importance of branded food and drink outlets on campus (Quote 18). In terms of blended education what does this mean for the campuses of the future?

## **5.2 Disneyfication of campus life**

Universities are coming under increasing pressure to retain the applicants they recruit until the point of graduation and young people who enter universities are arguably less ready for an adult education experience (Arnett, 2000). Universities are highly sensitive to their position in league tables, which are influenced by results from the national student survey, which all final year students in the UK are eligible to participate in. This has tended to result in the erosion of the ambition of self-actualisation for individuals studying at university and is manifest in the campus experience of students.

Student pastoral, academic and accommodation support services are becoming increasingly professionalised and offer students wrap-around

help and often insulate them from adult responsibility. Private purpose-built student accommodation (PPSA) now represents more than 50% of the accommodation stock available to students and is replacing shared private accommodation that was common in the later years of students' study (Pigeon, 2019). The poor quality of private accommodation in shared flats during the 1980's and 1990's was legendary and was mentioned by several interviewees (Quotes 28 -30).

Quote 28

*My flat was alright, it was OK. There was ice on the inside of the window in the winter and stuff, but it was it was OK. But yeah, I I had friends who just lived about 5 minutes' walk away and it was like a scene from The Young Ones. .*

Student P

Quote 29

*My student flat in my second year of art school, there was like water running down my bedroom wall. And just freezing because we couldn't afford to put the heating on. Because we were poor. Ohh awful if mould everywhere and we had to sit on bean bags that one of the house mates bought. So yeah, horrible.*

Student S

Quote 30

*I don't think we ever stayed in a flat that had proper working heating. And so you would go to bed like would like 10 layers on and hot water bottles and a hat and stuff like that... It's absolutely ridiculous that you are living like that. Yeah, that's that's what we did.*

Educationist A



Whilst the provision of good, safe, and comfortable accommodation can be seen as highly conducive to effective study, the growing dominance of PPSA in the later years of a student's journey, does remove the adult experiences of taking responsibility for your own finances, locating your own accommodation, and sharing responsibilities. Students also seem to favour pedagogic interventions which either commoditise their engagement (for example, 90% of students are more likely to attend classes if they know the subject matter will be assessed - Question P4Q5) or provides punitive feedback such as attendance monitoring (P4Q6).

The response of universities to the perception that studying at higher education is uniquely stressful for its participants, is generally to reduce the challenge which may in itself result in self-actualisation. This generates a sheltered experience which is likely to limit the development of adult behaviour towards both education and the wider world.

A typical undergraduate experience at a UK university could be described as been Disneyfied, in that it is not an authentic experience of adult life, but one in which the student is protected from the worst effects of their own decisions through a network of guidance and support which deny them the opportunity to self-actualise. As universities struggle to attract students to their courses the suitability of entrants continues to be eroded by grade inflation of entrance qualifications. The likely effect on campus life is to create ever fewer challenging environments where more gain the highest grades but fewer attain the associated attributes of an adult graduate.

### **5.3 The perceived value of on-line and face-to-face teaching**

Although participants in the survey identified the advantages and disadvantages of on-line and face-to-face learning (Figure 9), they still had a strong preference for face-to-face teaching (Figure 10) and see on-line teaching as intrinsically less valuable than face-to-face teaching (Question P6Q2). This is despite the time demands that part-time employment places on students and the flexibility that on-line learning provides in this regard. In the wider population, students seem to prefer face-to-face learning than on-line learning (BBC, 2021a). Providing on-line recorded

lectures also seems to have only marginal effects on the intention to attend (Figure 8).

The main advantage of face-to-face teaching appear to be related to its social benefits and social isolation is the greatest disadvantage of on-line learning (Figure 9). Hillman found new entrants arrive at university ready to make new friends (Hillman, 2017), both in their accommodation and in the classroom. Fewer people from lower socio-economic groups and the LGBTQ+ community are comfortable with the idea of new social relationships.

Educationists that were interviewed generally seem more positive about online teaching (Quote 10 and 11) than the participants in the on-line survey and student interviewees (Quote 12). This may be due to the initial expectation of learners and the perceived lower value of on-line learning. Face-to-face teaching in a HE context has a long pedigree and tradition is an important aspect of campus life, it may be that learners attribute higher value to this experience because it is seen as the “proper way” of doing things despite the practical advantages of on-line learning.

#### **5.4 The role of technology in blended learning**

It is difficult to predict how technological developments will affect the future of campus life within a blended learning landscape, partly because we do not know what the future affordances will be. Virtual reality is a technology that has had several false dawns in terms of its predicted impact on learning (Helsel, 1992), and still does not find wide acceptance amongst learning communities (Freina & Ott, 2015). Portable electronic devices such as tablets and smart phones have put digital browsing and interactive capability in the hands of all but the most luddite student. Access to technology due to costs or availability of wi-fi are not identified by survey participants as major disadvantages of on-line learning (Figure 9). Although a digital divide between households of different economic groups does appear to be significant (Holmes & Burgess, 2020), pre-pandemic data from 2020 shows that 96% of households have access to at least smart phone technology (Coleman, 2021).

Universities are generally slow to adopt new technology in the classroom, partly because of the expense of the infrastructure but also because many staff members are sluggish to apply TEL innovations and are generally poorly trained in its use. After all it was not until the COVID 19 pandemic that there was widespread shift to live lecture streaming, a technology that had already existed for several years. Students also seem to have an affection for traditional face-to-face approaches (Figure 10).

However, technology presents other problems which may eventually negate its use. Educationist M, pointed to the challenges that the recent developments in natural language processors presented to the authenticity of learning (Quote 31). Many universities now struggle to cope with the sheer number of academic conduct cases (Marsh, 2018) identified by the use of anti-plagiarism software (QAA, 2016).

Quote 31

*“Which is interesting because then if you think about it, what’s happening is if the student takes that feedback and feeds it into their natural language processor, the learning that’s going on is actually between the natural language process. This machine learning going on rather than the heads of the professor or the student ... I could see some academics pushing to bring back more and more pen, paper and pencil exams”*

Educationist M.

Technological developments are likely to have some impact on higher education in the way it is experienced, the way it is taught and the way that it is assessed. However, on-line teaching is strongly identified by survey participants as a poor cousin to face-to face teaching and the value of tradition and authenticity may trump rapid progress towards more on-line learning at universities.

## **5.5 Limitations of study**

This thesis has tried to investigate the future of university campus life in the UK by exploring the prevailing attitudes and values of people who have

studied or are studying at higher education. Since it seeks to explore the future, it is inevitably speculative.

In terms of methodological veracity, the study has had limited success in attracting participants to the on-line survey and stimulating debate through on-line forums. A variety of approaches were used to stimulate debate including the production of podcasts and the use of on-line micro surveys. The target number of people in the author's network was 1000 connections, a figure that was closely approached. The use of other LinkedIn groups vastly increased the number of people who could be reached through this on-line media. However, there was not a great contribution to the debate via this method. This may have been due to the author's inexperience of using social media or may have been due to the transient nature of this type of media, which may not widely provoke deep thought or engagement with the subject.

The results from this study can be considered to shed some light on the values and expectations of people who have experience of higher education. However, it would be useful to continue the study to extend the sample size and promote debate through more formal academic routes of dissemination.

## **5.6 Is there a future for campus life?**

The democratisation of higher education in the UK has revolutionised the experience of learners over the last 30 years. Millions of people have been given the experience of campus life, who would have otherwise been denied the opportunity. For most people the reason that they want to attend university is to gain better employment. However, the spectre of student loans, the demands of part-time work and the demise of youth culture have detracted from the experience of the campus as a hub of social activity.

The social context of university life remains a strong driver for engagement in higher education. Learners value face-to-face teaching and on-campus attendance and see this as an essential part of being a student. Students join universities willing to make friends and widen their social circle, despite having mobile friendship groups available through social media.

The intellectual and social challenge of campus life has diminished as universities respond to grade inflation of entry qualifications by reducing the academic demands of their own programmes and inflating their own graduation classifications. Retention and progression are promoted by a raft of professionalised services that seek to ensure a positive outcome for the maximum number of students, but increasingly deny graduates the opportunity to self-actualise. Similarly, social challenge is diminished, by the growth of PPSA, which reduce the onus of independent living and adult responsibility. The overall effect is to Disneyfy the overall campus experience so that students cannot exhibit adult attributes, especially in the early years of study.

The assumption that growth in the HE sectors at undergraduate level can be sustained is undermined by the effects of Brexit, which has created the twin pressures of reducing the recruitment of EU applicants and created a demand for entry level employment of UK school leavers within industry.

Many universities have seized the opportunity to capitalize on the affordances offered by on-line education, by increasing the amount of teaching that is done on-line, thereby reducing the demands on staff time and scaling-up class sizes. Students recognize these experiences as intrinsically less valuable than traditional higher education journeys.

## **5.7 Outputs**

1. An on-line survey and semi-structured interviews were carried out to allow stakeholders to reflect on their lived experience of higher education learning landscapes, these reflections were concurrently shared via the social media platform LinkedIn and through podcasts hosted by Podbean. More responses to the on-line survey are required and additional interviews are necessary to capitalise on the network that has been built up during the project, with the aim of submitting a journal article for publication.
2. Similarly, stakeholders' future vision of higher education campus life within a blended learning landscape were explored using the on-line survey and semi-structured interviews. Because the future is by nature unpredictable, participants values and motivation were explored as a

proxy to asking for explicit predictions. A series of podcasts were posted on Podbean and disseminated through LinkedIn groups (Annex 3).

3. Desirable features of future learning experiences and the physical and virtual infrastructure required to support these were elicited from participants using the on-line survey and semi-structured interviews. These desires often centred around the need for social interaction as part of the learning process. On-line learning appears to be intrinsically less valued by learners. Students were generally less excited about the future affordances that TEL may bring to learning than educationists. These results will be disseminated in articles submitted to international peer reviewed journals.

## **5.8 Conclusion**

Income from undergraduate education has plateaued and may decline over the coming years. Alternative income stream such as recruiting more fee-paying international students, expanding postgraduate taught provision, and increasing research revenue need to be developed. The ability of lower ranking universities to carry out this hatrick, is by no means certain and could lead to the dramatic contraction of the higher education sector over the coming decades.

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## APPENDICES

### Annex 1. On-line survey questionnaire

https://tuni-

my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/david\_smith\_tuni\_fi/EXVbVFGC3J5Jo  
FNJKnmpOqcBOCJblAmGBZoCJb9Dy-qjFA?e=KU0Xvx

### The future of educational architecture in a blended learning landscape within higher education.



This survey forms part of a thesis being prepared by Dr. David Smith as part of his studies for an MBA in Educational Leadership at Tampere University of Applied Science, Finland.

We would like you to take the opportunity to share with us your experience of higher education in the UK, and let us know your views on what the university campuses of the future should look like.

Traditional higher educational architecture is becoming obsolete as technology enhanced learning continues to erode the necessity of on-campus attendance by both students and staff. The sustainability of social and support services is undermined by this trend, which further detracts from the appeal of physical attendance on campus. However, face-to-face educational encounters are still highly valued by all higher education stakeholders, not least for the social enrichment that this affords.

1. Do you have experience of studying at a higher education institute (HEI) in the UK?  
*Higher education institutes in the UK are universities and colleges that primarily offer qualifications to at least Higher Education Diploma level.*

Yes, I am currently studying at a HEI in the UK  
 Yes, I have previously studied at a HEI in the UK  
 No, I don't have any experience of studying at a HEI in the UK

2. Information about this survey

Show me more  Show me less

**Why is this study being carried out?**

Because we need to be able to predict the future of learning environments now to design the campuses of the future.

*"We shall create the opportunities that no one can yet imagine. We must also help to develop sustainable solutions to the major challenges we will face in the future, both nationally and globally, in areas such as the environment, inequality, democracy, health and cultural coexistence."*

*Hanne Leth Andersen, Rector, Roskilde University"*

**Who is asking the questions?**

A team of researchers from the School of Applied Science at Edinburgh Napier University, Scotland and Tampere University of Applied Science, Finland.

**Who can take part?**

Any one who has current or past experience of studying higher education. We really hope that you will take part and answer every question. However, you do not have to answer any of the questions provided, but the more you tell us, the more we will understand about your experience. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can withdraw from the research at any point.

**Will what I say be confidential?**

Yes, you will not be asked to give your name and your answers will be anonymous.

**How long will it take?**

The focus group will take between 30 - 40 minutes to complete.

**What will happen to the information I give?**

The anonymous results will be collected and analysed by the research team led by Dr. Dave Smith. The collated information may be disseminated through conference presentations, publications, and university reports. All data will be stored securely on a secure repository and

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## Annex 2. Survey raw data

[https://tuni-](https://tuni-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/david_smith_tuni_fi/EaDU22nTJ51BpaGdHqLdOkwBMu1SRJgOAKUPhigP5RxxBA?e=IN4IC0)

[my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/david\\_smith\\_tuni\\_fi/EaDU22nTJ51BpaGdHqLdOkwBMu1SRJgOAKUPhigP5RxxBA?e=IN4IC0](https://tuni-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/david_smith_tuni_fi/EaDU22nTJ51BpaGdHqLdOkwBMu1SRJgOAKUPhigP5RxxBA?e=IN4IC0)

1.

### 1.1. P1Q1

Do you have experience of studying at a higher education institute (HEI) in the UK?

Question type: Multiple choice

Number of responses: 91

Number of respondents: 91

Answer	Count	Percent answer
Yes, I am currently studying at a HEI in the UK	55	60.4%
Yes, I have previously studied at a HEI in the UK	17	18.7%
No, I don't have any experience of studying at a HEI in the UK	19	20.9%
Not answered	0	0%

### 1.2. P1Q2

If you would like to take part in future surveys and focus groups, please provide an email address (optional)

Question type: Open ended

Number of responses: 3

Number of respondents: 91

Not answered: 88

Date	Respondent	Answer
26/10/2022	10329344	I.forerorincon.20@abdn.ac.uk
30/11/2022	10349440	Cath.59@hotmail.co.uk
05/12/2022	10351873	Marinaclarke5@gmail.com

## **Annex 3. Podcast transcriptions and link to podcasts**

### **5.8.1 [Podcast interview transcripts](#)**

<https://tuni->

[my.sharepoint.com/:x:/g/personal/david\\_smith\\_tuni\\_fi/Eb090nDEhtdPjaWnbtEKSn4BaJg57\\_-4m2cc3xnoftOAPw?e=f4Ru9P](https://tuni-my.sharepoint.com/:x:/g/personal/david_smith_tuni_fi/Eb090nDEhtdPjaWnbtEKSn4BaJg57_-4m2cc3xnoftOAPw?e=f4Ru9P)

### **5.8.2 [The future of campus life podcasts](#)**

<https://www.podbean.com/pu/pbblog-p26ff-92464f>