



SCHOOL OF  
ADVANCED STUDY  
UNIVERSITY  
OF LONDON

# Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey – highlights

Academic Year 2023-24

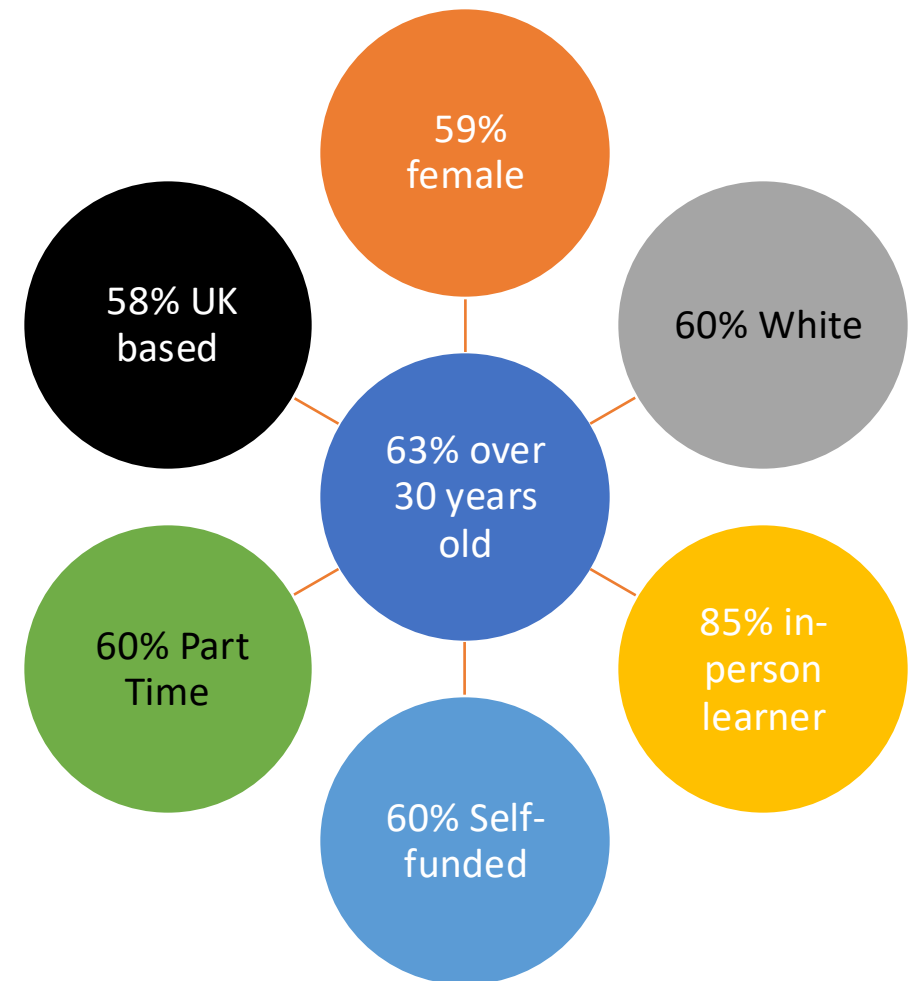
2024 PTES



# Respondents' Profile

**52 out of 119 students responded to the survey.**

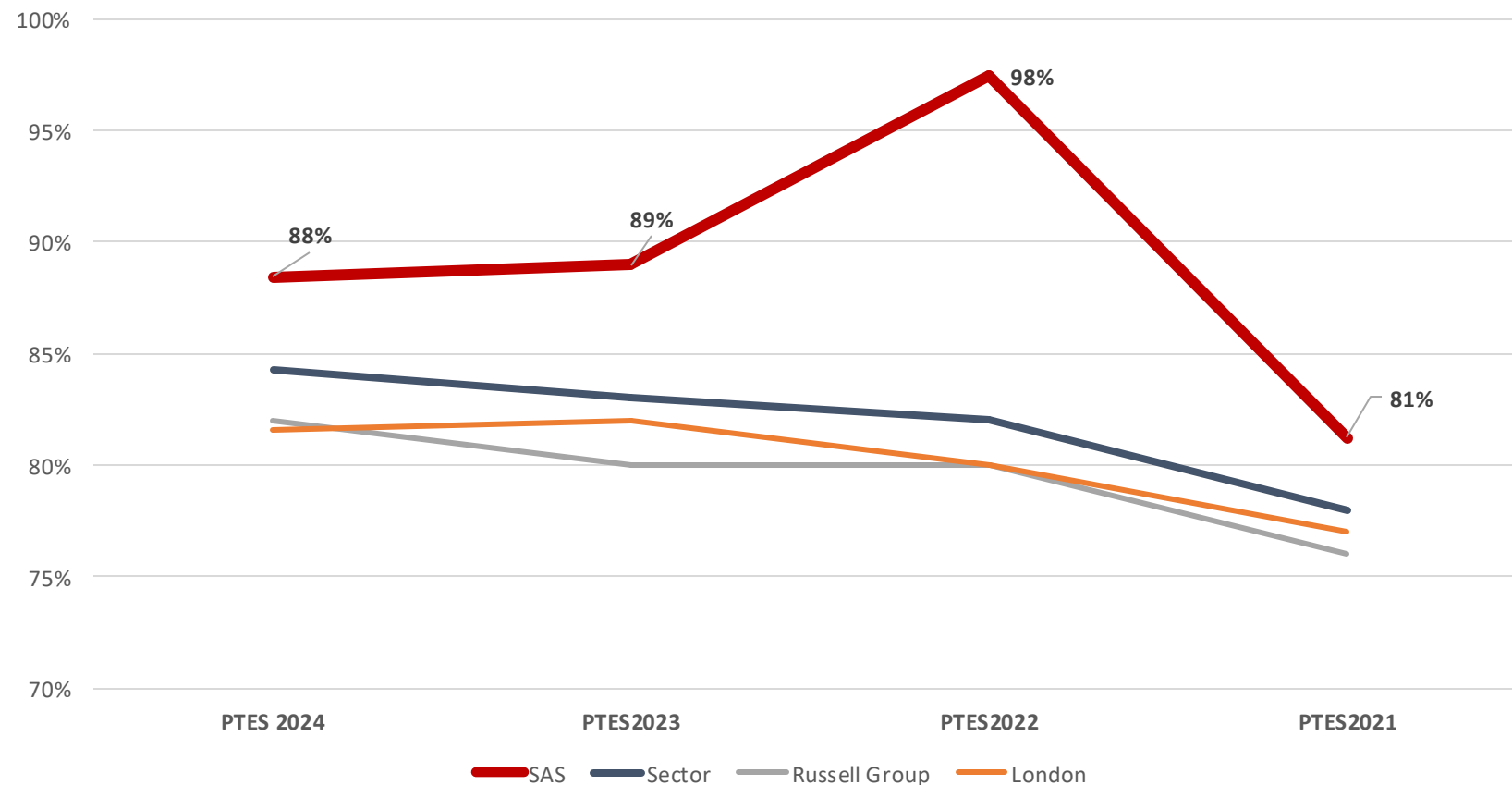
- This represents 43.70% of the School student cohort.
- The WI students again represented the largest component.
- 59% of the respondents were female, compared to 78% in the last survey.
- 60% of the respondents were part-time compared to 53% in the last survey.
- 60% were self-funded compared to 53% in the last survey
- 15% of the respondents, compared to 25% in the last survey, considered leaving the course. This is lower than the 16% recorded nationwide.



# Overall Satisfaction

**88%** (compared to 89% in 2022-23) of SAS respondents were satisfied with **the Quality of the Course**. This represents a **1% decrease** from the 2023 PTES

Fig 1: Q22\_1 Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the course  
Comparison since 2019



The highest satisfaction rates were registered with respondents of 56 years old or older (100%), male students (95%), UK based (93%), part-timers (90%) and mostly virtual (92%).

Comments include:

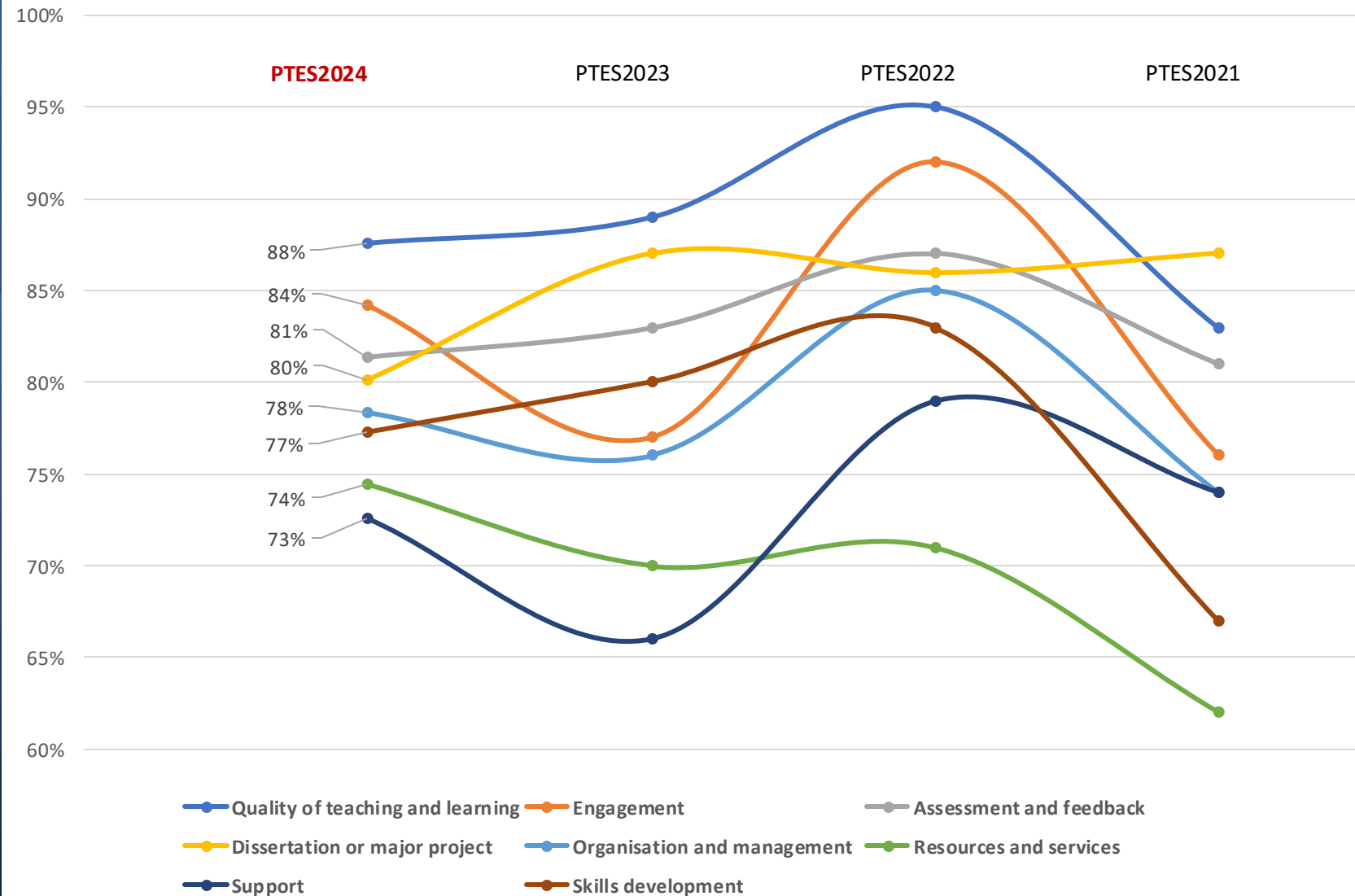
*The quality of teaching and expertise by my lecturers exceeded my expectations.  
The ability of my lecturers to help me grasp idea or support me to access resources. There is a good student-teacher relationship made possible by the lecturers' candour, simplicity and humility.  
Being with likeminded students and the knowledgeable and approachable teaching staff. I have been out of my comfort zone on a number of occasions but have learnt so much in the process.*

# Overall Taught experience at SAS

With an overall satisfaction rate of 88%, the student experience remained almost the same as noted in the previous Survey. The results per areas of experience show however some variances, compared to PTES2023:

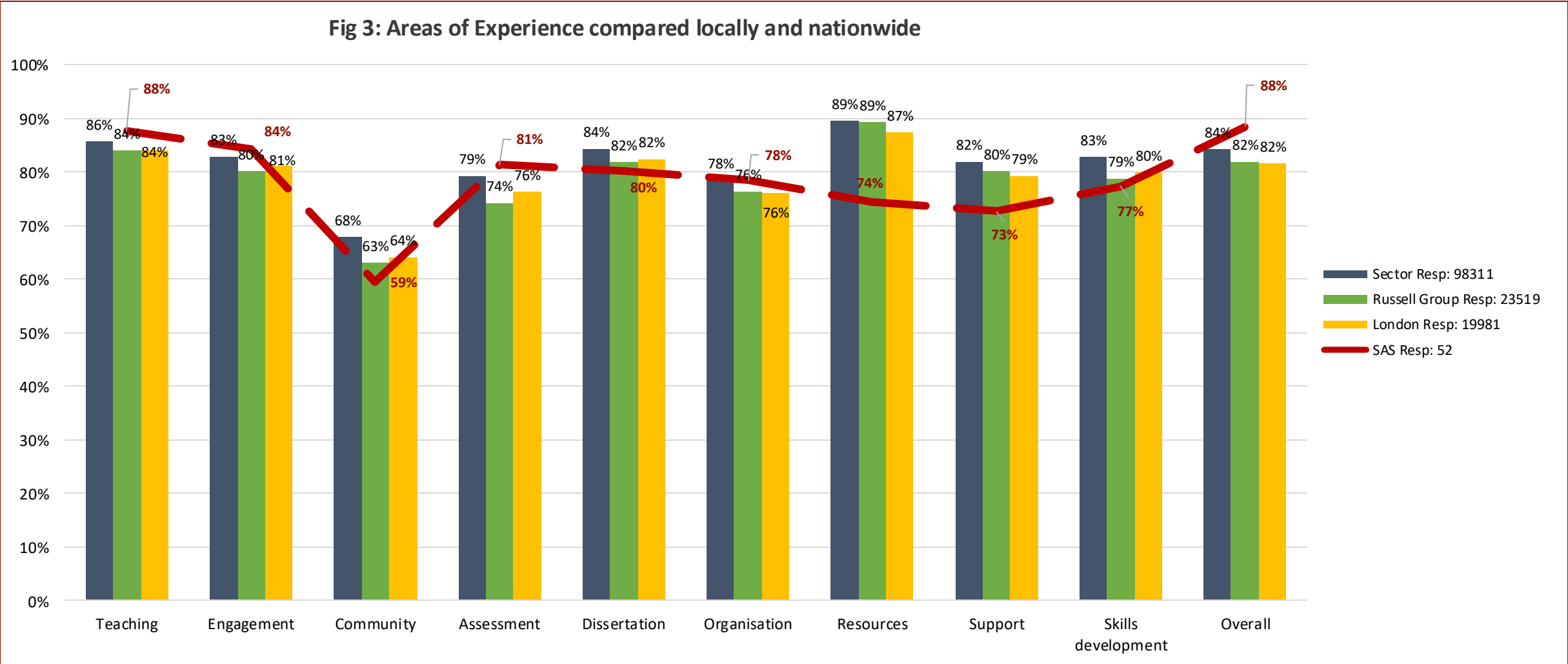
- While **Dissertation** showed a 7% decrease, **Support**, in comparison, had a 7% increase evening out the overall scores.
- **Community** recorded a 4% decrease, while **Resources & Services** increased by 4% since the 2023PTES.

Fig 2: Comparison of areas of experience over the last five surveys



SAS overall satisfaction rate is higher than the results recorded nationally, locally and when compared to the Russell Group.

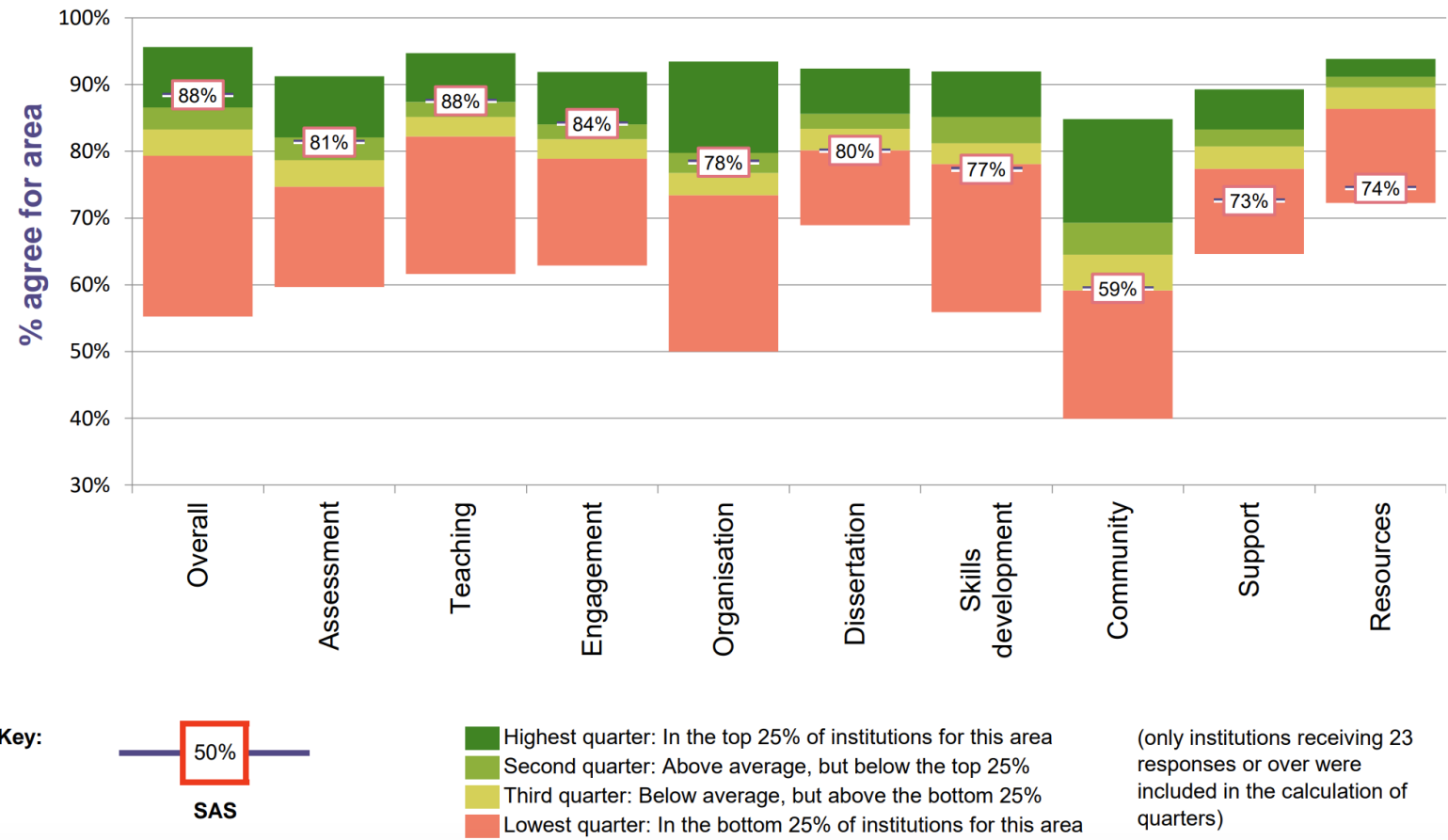
SAS scores per area of experience follow the overall national trend, with some exceptions: *Teaching and Assessment (positive variance above the sector benchmarks), Community, Resources, Support, and this year, Skills Development (negative variance, below the sector benchmarks).*



# SAS and the PGT experience benchmarked

Fig 4

The graph below shows the position of SAS in relation to institutions in the Sector benchmark. With a score of 88%, overall satisfaction for SAS was in the highest quarter. Across the different aspects measured by PTES, SAS was placed across a range of quarters.



In comparison with the sector, the School results are demonstrating an uneven student experience.

While *Quality of Teaching, Engagement* and *Assessment* remain strong, *Resources* and *Support* continue to be seen by the students who responded to the survey as the weakest part of SAS taught programme.

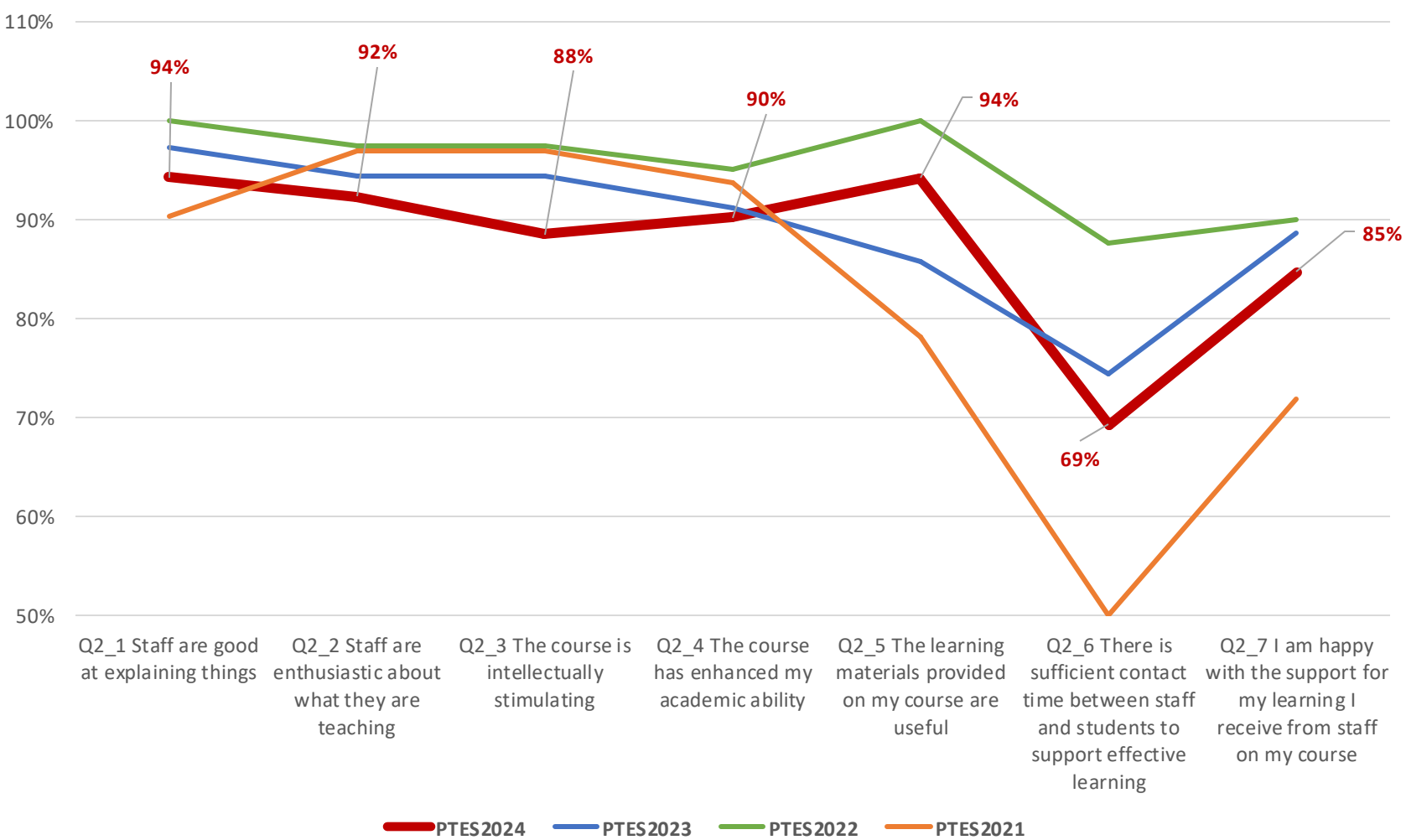
While *Organisation* remains below 80%, it was this year joined by *Skills Development* with 77%.

Responses to the *Community* area questions show a stronger dissatisfaction than what can be seen locally or nationally. It is the only area of experience for which SAS recorded a satisfaction rate below 60%, with 59%.

# Quality of Teaching and Learning

88% overall satisfaction rate  
(compared to 89% in 2023PTES)

Fig 5: Quality of Teaching & Learning Results - four year comparison



The results continue to show a high quality of SAS Teaching and Learning experience. Particular strengths are highlighted by the scores in staff ability to explain things, staff enthusiasm about their teaching, in SAS learning materials, and importantly in the Students' perception that SAS programmes have enhanced their academic ability.

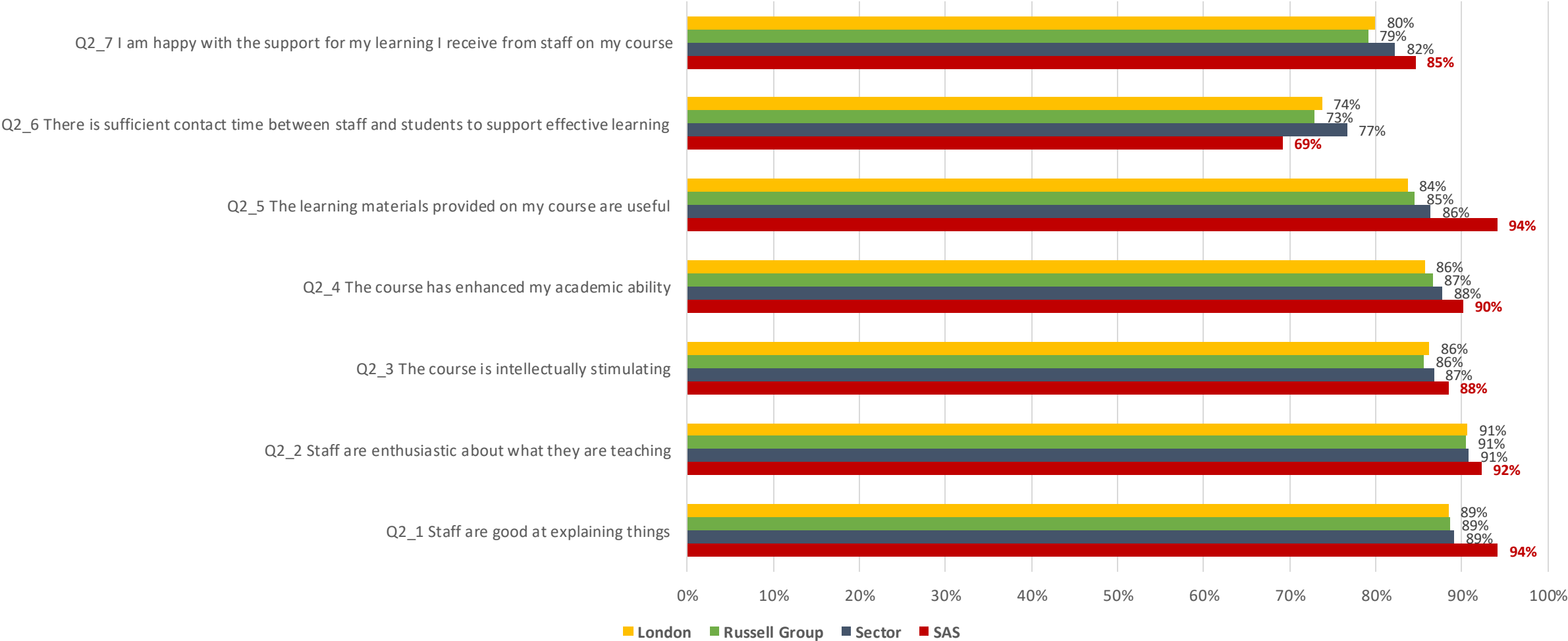
Despite the further decrease of Q2.6 score (from 74% in 2023PTES to 69%), the results were mostly the result of neutral answers (neither agree nor disagree) rather than strong disagreement (which was only expressed by 9% of the respondents).

The results are similar across gender and age. Differences appear between UK and overseas respondents, the latter demonstrating a more positive experience (with 92% as an overall satisfaction average in this area).

# Quality of Teaching and Learning

Except for Q2.6, the School results on the Quality of Teaching and Learning are overall more positive than the national (by 2%) or local (by 3%) benchmarks.

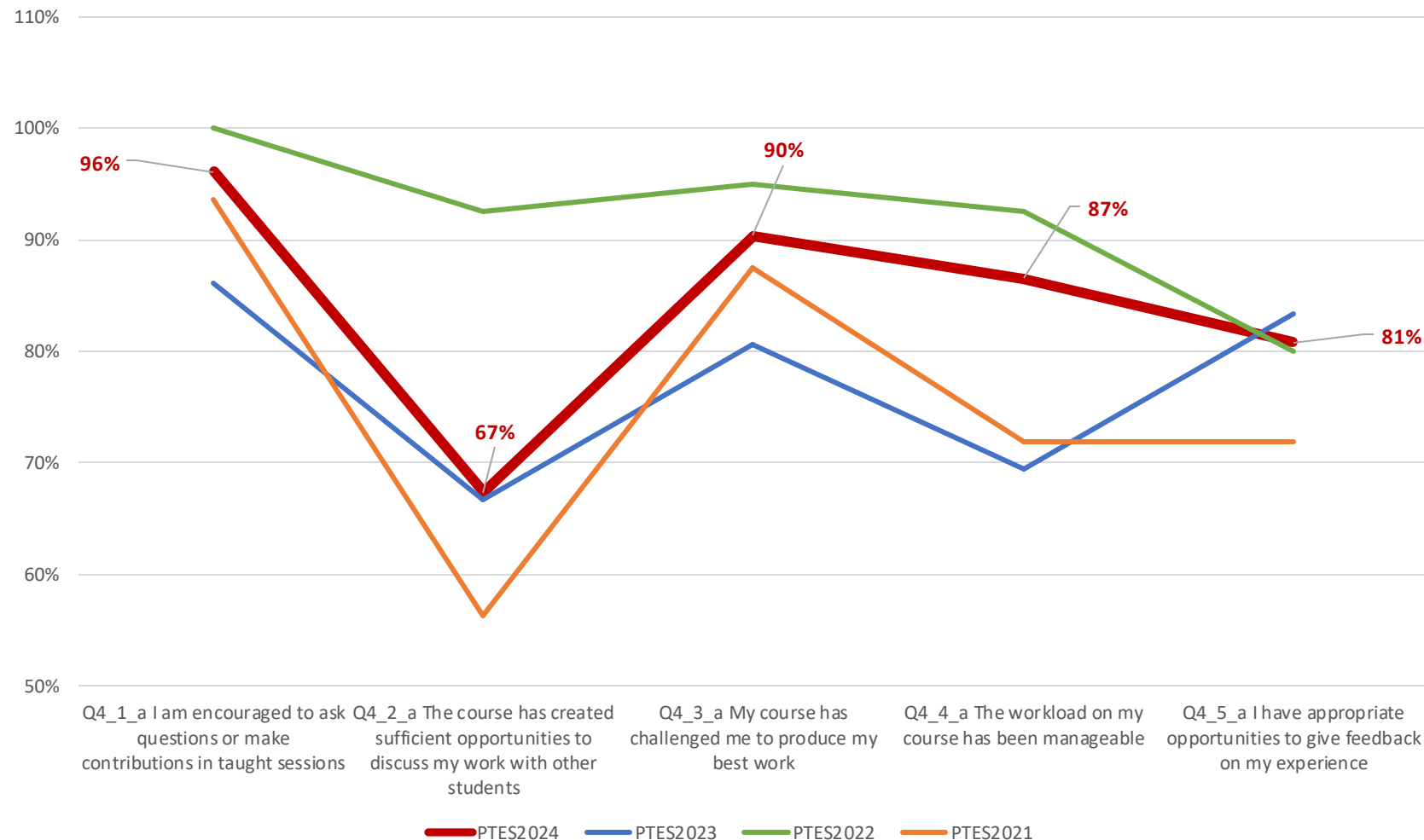
Fig 6: Teaching and Learning – comparison with sector benchmarks



# Engagement

This area has recorded an **overall 7% increase** (from 77% in 2023PTES to 84% in 2024PTES).

Fig 7: Engagement Results – four-year comparison



The increase can be noted across the area, between a 10% positive difference (Q4.1 and Q4.3) and 17% difference (Q4\_4). The reason that it did not entirely recover from its 15% decrease noted in PTES2023, is because Q4.2, which focused on having sufficient opportunities to discuss work with other students, remained at 67% for the second year running (compared to the high score of 93% noted in PTES2022).

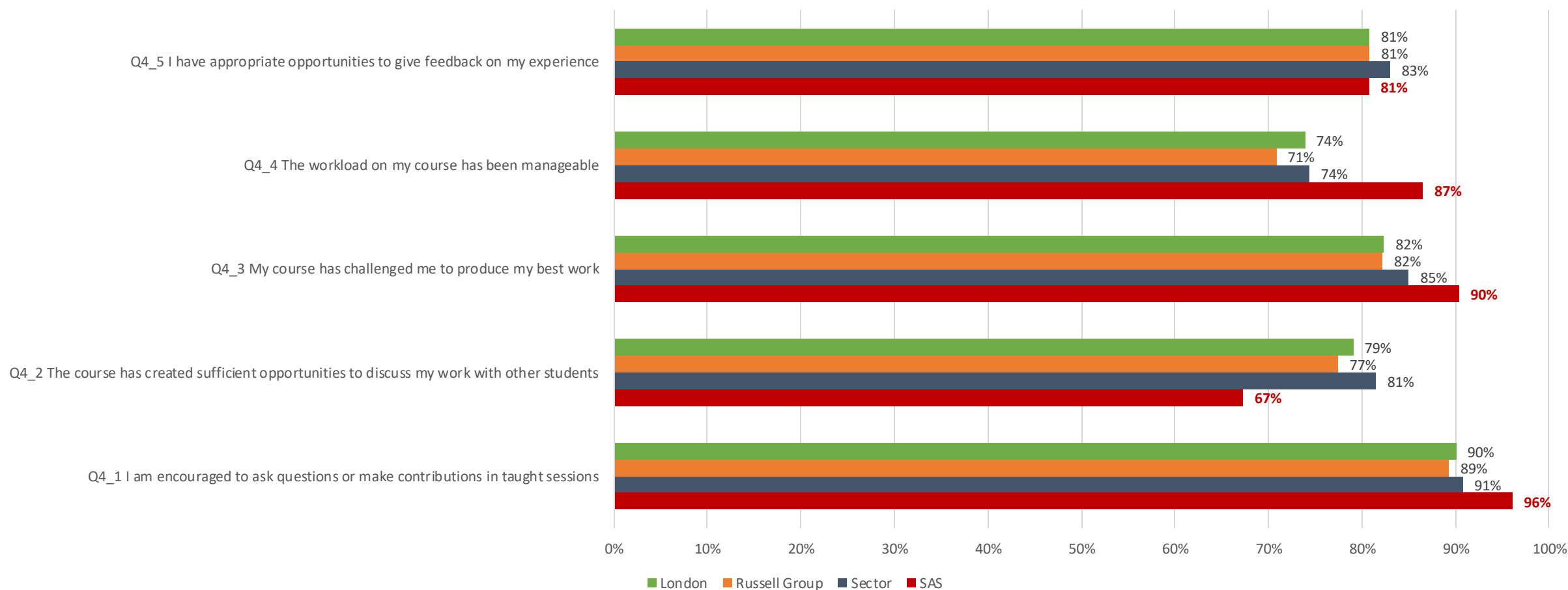
For Q4\_2, the results were mostly driven by the respondents over 31, UK-based, and part-time. Otherwise, students below 31 years of age felt more positive on the matter, with an overall satisfaction rate of 92%.

Students who undertook their degree mostly virtually were very satisfied (100%) on questions of contribution (Q4\_1) and how challenging the course was (Q4\_3).

# Engagement

The School scores are higher than the ones recorded locally (+3%) or nationally (+1%) except for Q4\_2 (lack of opportunities).

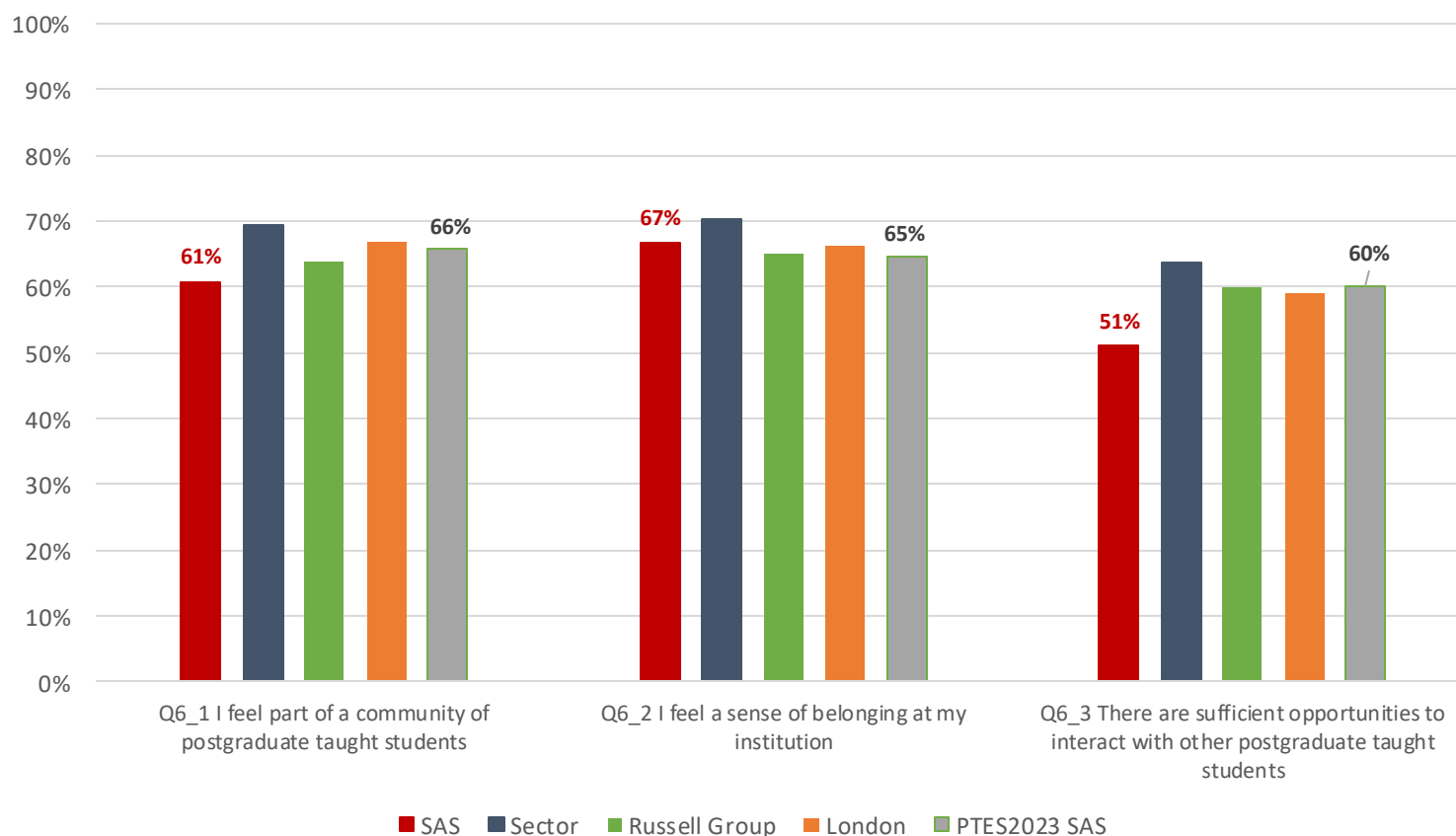
Fig 8: Engagement comparison with sector benchmarks



# Community

The School recorded an average satisfaction rate of 59% (4% decrease from 2022-23 : 63%)

Fig 9: Community – Comparison with Sector Benchmarks and SASPTES2022



It is only the second year that the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey includes questions that focus on students' sense of community, of belonging to the institution.

67% of SAS respondents felt a sense of belonging at the institution but struggled to have the same sense of community with their own counterparts and were particularly missing interactions with other students.

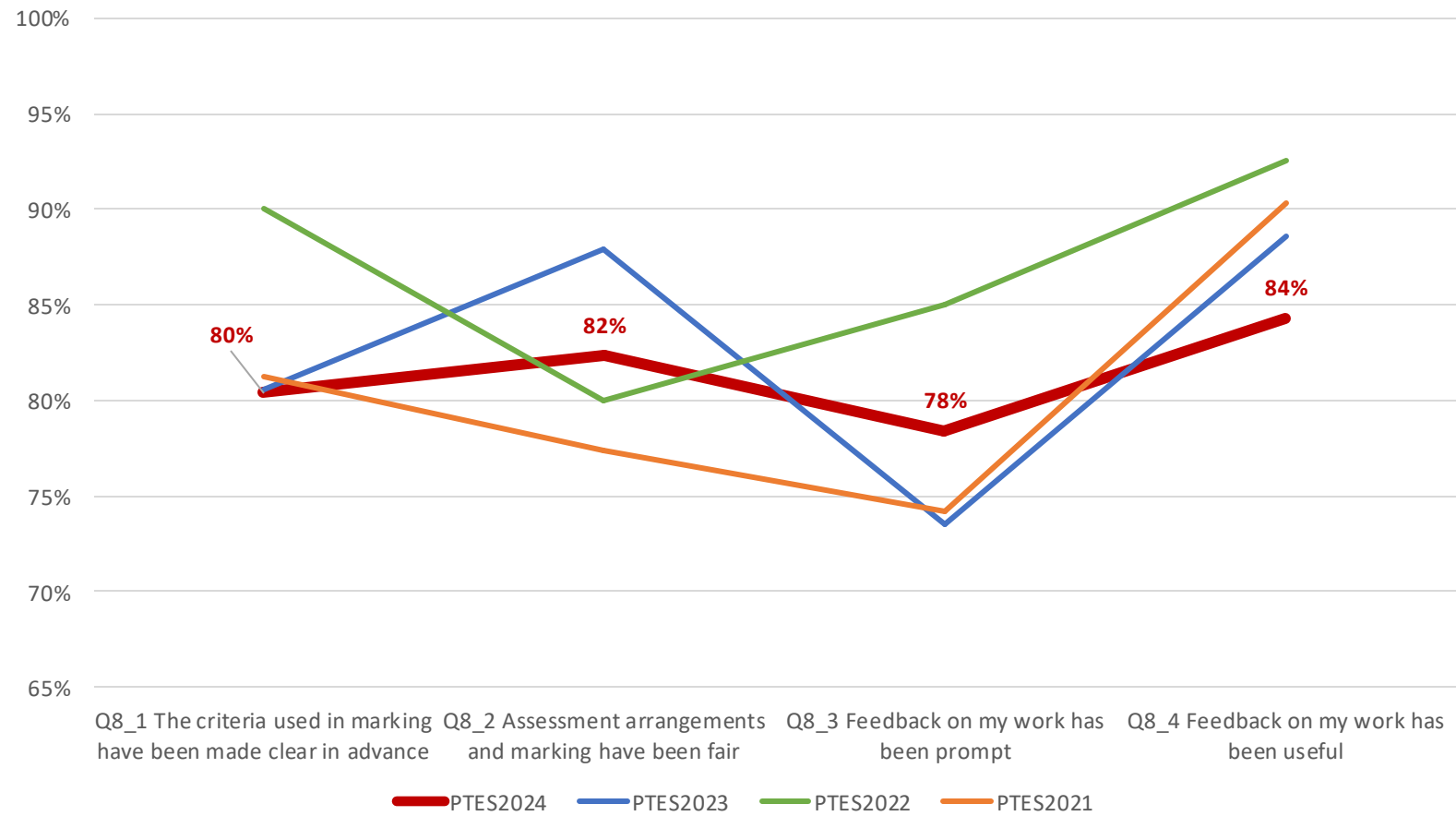
The most positive answers were from students of 25 years old and below (average of 87%), while their older peers felt gradually less positive. (30 and below = 73%, 31 and above = 52% ; 56 and above = 40%)

There is not much difference between UK and overseas students' responses. But there is a large difference in experience between full time (77% approval rate) and part-time students (48%).

# Assessment and Feedback

*Assessment and Feedback* saw its overall satisfaction rate **decrease by 2%** from 83% in PTES2023 to 81% in PTES2024.

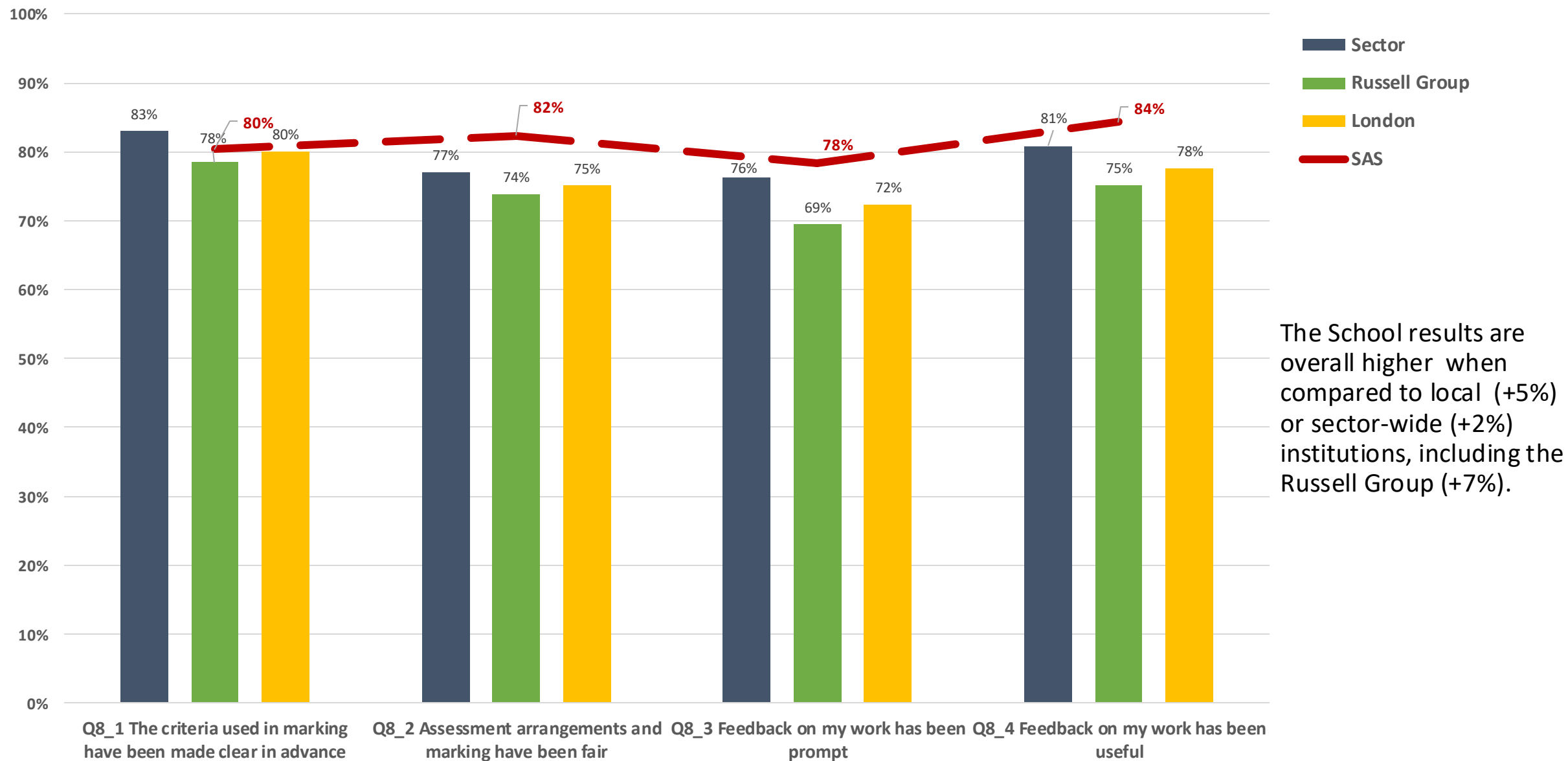
Fig 10: Assessment and Feedback – four-year comparison



While satisfaction on marking criteria and arrangements remains above 80%, opinion on feedback shows some small variances in the levels of satisfaction.

Students’ experience in this area seems to have been the same across gender, nationality, status or age. The only thing to note is from respondents who studied mostly virtually who recorded a high overall approval rate in this area of 93%.

Fig 11: Assessment and Feedback - Comparison with sector benchmarks

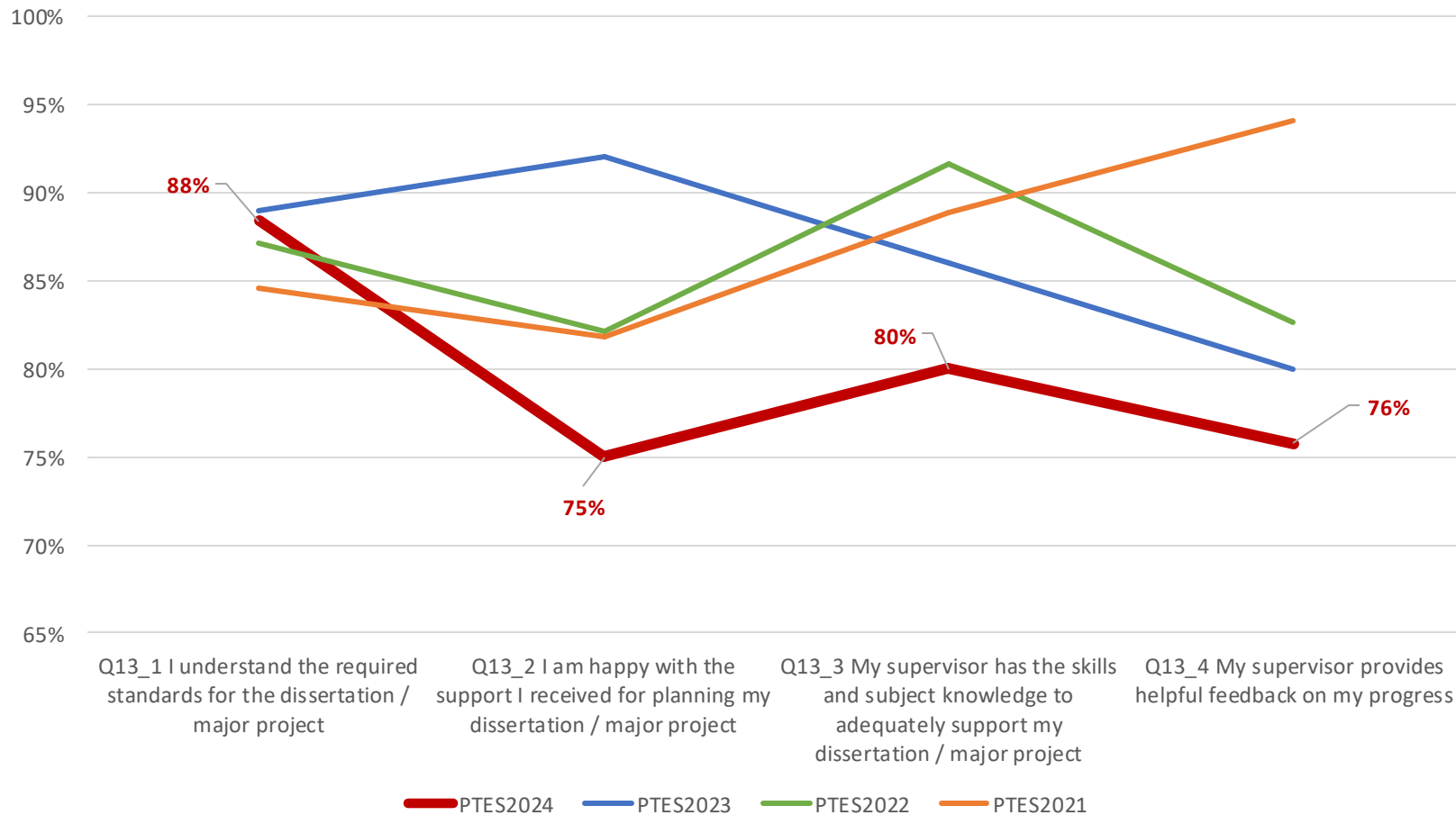


# Assessment and Feedback

# Dissertation or major project

The overall satisfaction rate has decreased by 7% (compared to 87% in PTES2023), with 80% in PTES2024.

Fig 12: Dissertation and major project – four-year comparison



The low satisfaction response is mainly due to the results in Q13\_2 (which shows a 17% decrease (from 92% in PTES2023, to 75% in PTES2024). However, this is not reflective of a strong disapproval, but rather a more neutral stance from the respondents (17.5% neither agree/nor disagree). Only 7.5% of the students were strongly unhappy with their planning support.

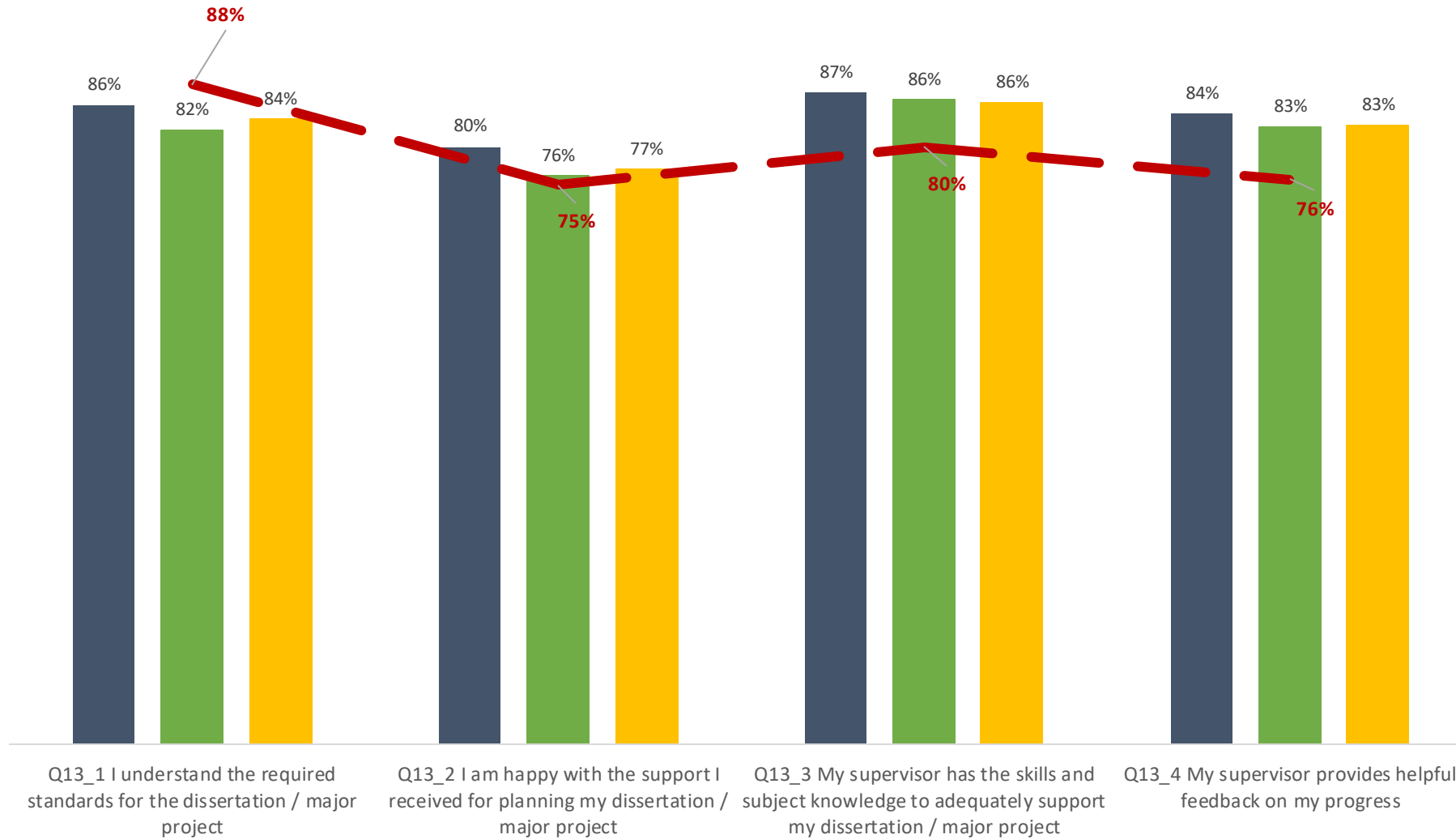
Respondents showed also their lack of satisfaction with their supervisor's feedback highlighting a concerning increasing disapproval (the responses from the past surveys showed 94% satisfaction rate in 2021, then 83% in 2022, followed by 80% in 2024 and finally reaching 76% in 2024). However, once again the results were due to neutral responses (21% neither agree/ nor disagree) rather than demonstrating a strong disapproving statement.

Female respondents were more positive in this area (with 86% overall satisfaction rate) than their male counterparts (with 71% overall satisfaction rate).

23% of the respondents were either currently doing or had completed their dissertation.

Fig 13: Dissertation - Comparison with sector benchmarks

■ Sector ■ Russell Group ■ London ■ SAS



The overall SAS satisfaction rate in this area is lower than the sector average by 5% (nationwide) or 2% (London, Russell Group).

It is interesting to note that SAS students were more aware of the required standards for their dissertation than their counterparts across the UK.

While London and Russell Group institutions are closed to SAS approval rate regarding planning support (Q13\_2), their students were still more positive about their supervisor support than SAS students.

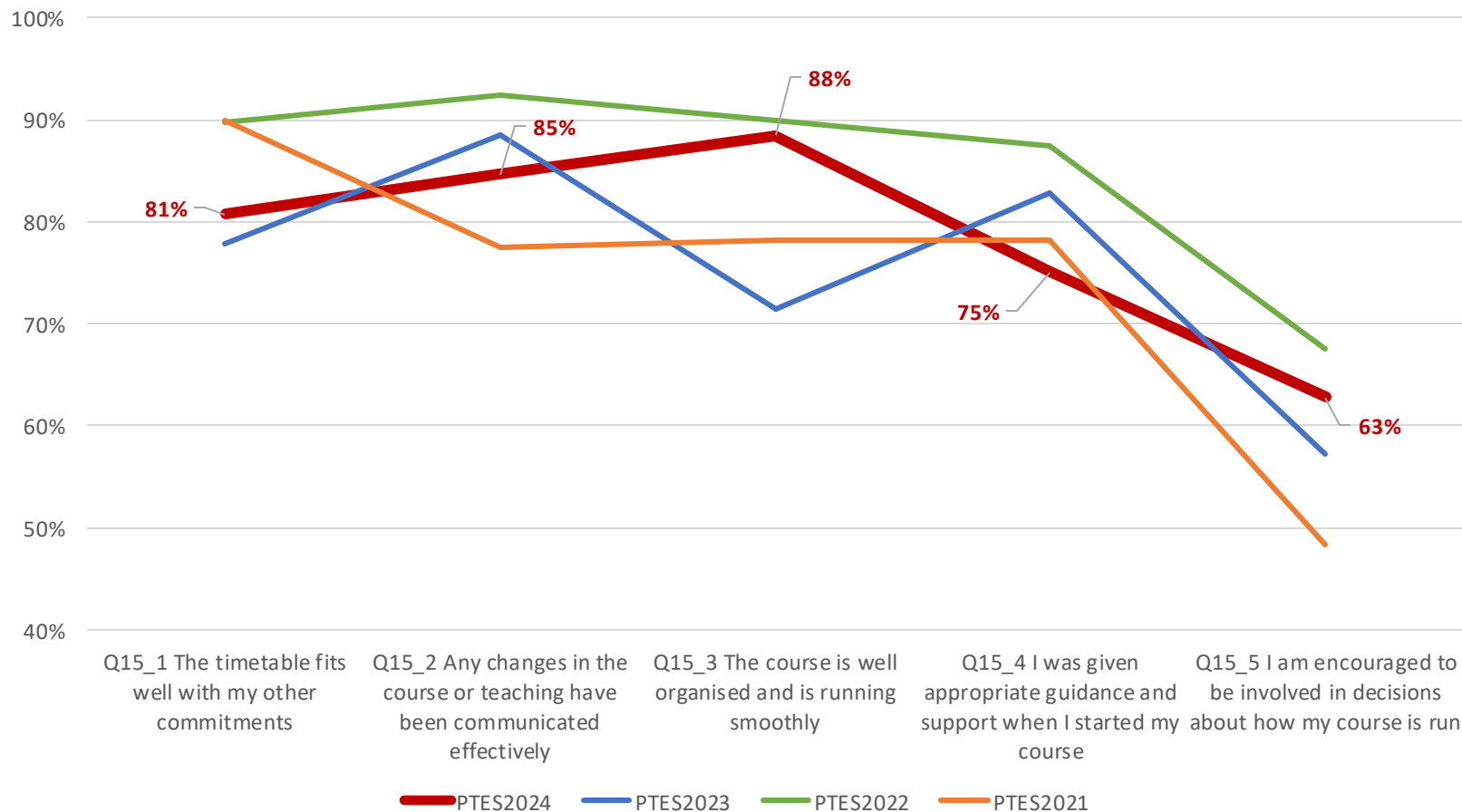
Compared to the 23% of SAS respondents, 54% of the respondents across the UK were either currently doing or completed their dissertation.

# Dissertation or major project

# Organisation and Management

This area shows a 2% increase in satisfaction rate, from 76% in 2023 to 78% in 2024

Fig 14: Organisation and Management – four-year comparison

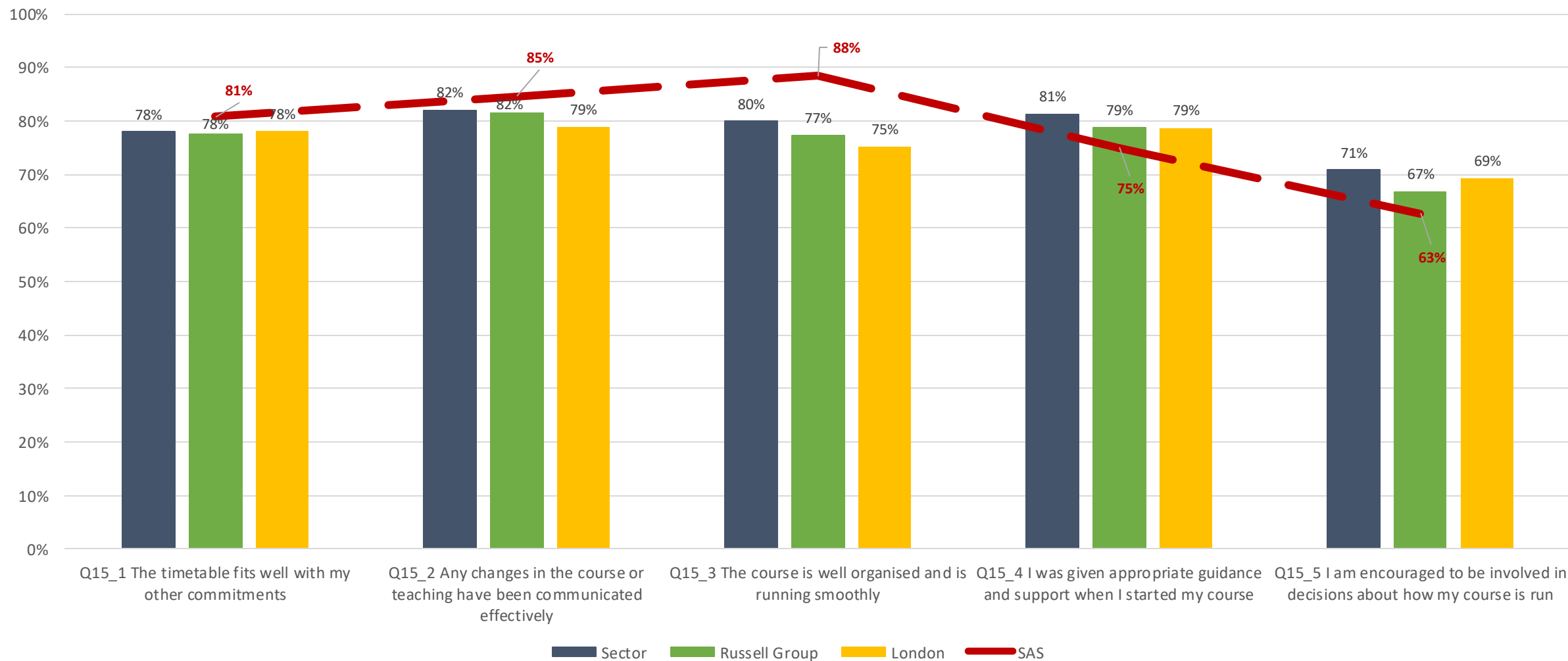


This area continues to show inconsistency of approval ratings in 2023-24 and an even larger fluctuation across the years.

It should be recognised that students were more satisfied with the way the course was organised with a 17% increase since PTES2023 (81%). They also felt more encouraged to be involved with the running of their course (with an increase of 6% compared to PTES2023). However, they indicated that they received less guidance when they started than the students who responded in the last surveys, showing a departure in the expected trend for this particular aspect of the Organisation & Management of SAS taught courses. 15% of SAS respondents neither agreed nor disagreed on the matter, while 10% were clearly dissatisfied.

Male respondents, younger than 30 years old, from overseas who worked full time, had a more positive experience with an overall satisfaction rate of 81%, than their female counterparts.

Fig 15 – Organisation and Management – Sector benchmark comparison



The School's overall satisfaction rate is similar to the sector's, with 78%. SAS overall satisfaction rate is however higher by 2% than the ones recorded by London and Russell Group institutions (78%).

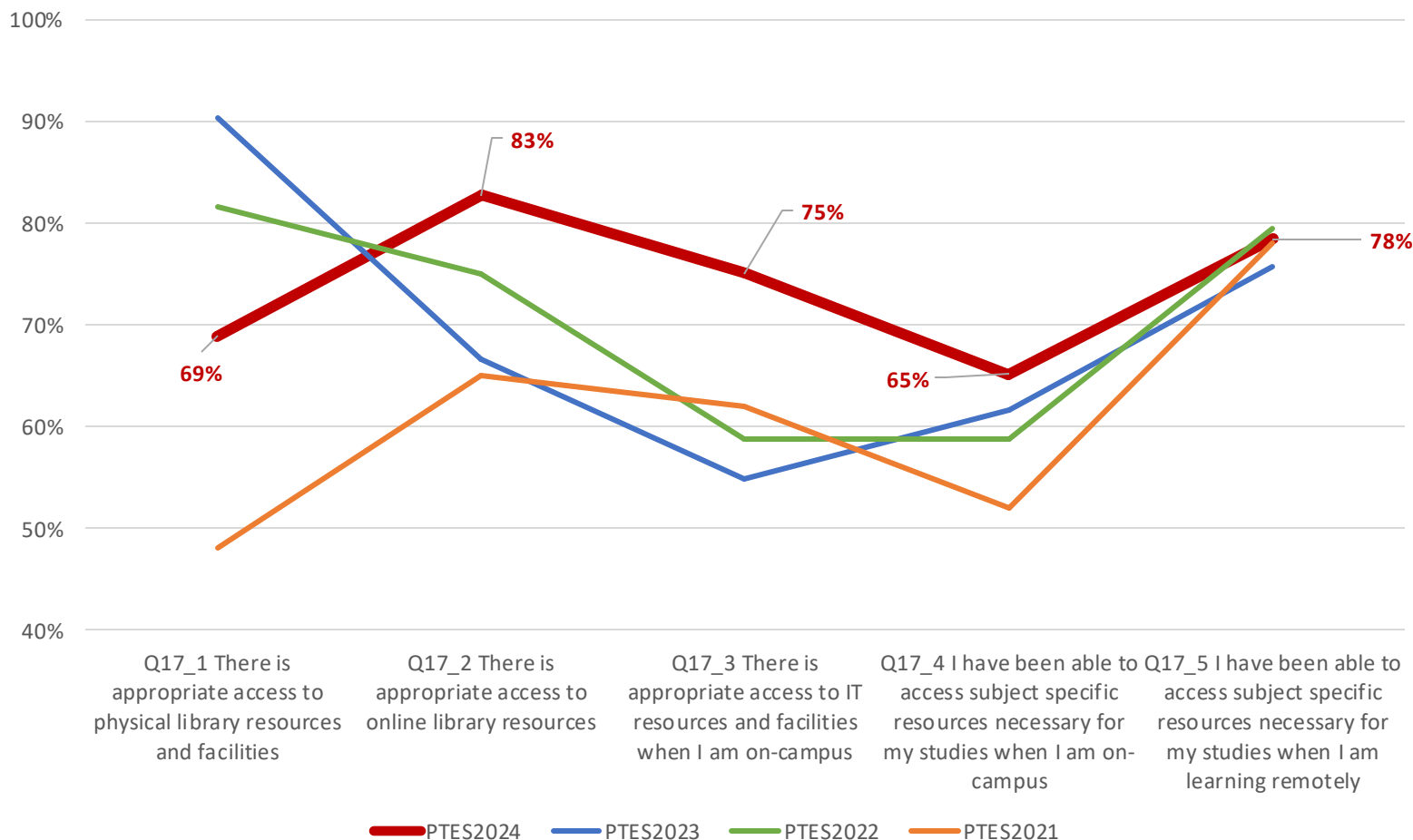
SAS result for Q15\_4 is a departure from previous survey results. The score for Q15\_5 is still lower than the sector benchmark, even if it improved by 6% in this survey (from 57% in PTES2023).

# Organisation and Management

# Resources and Services

Experiences of *Resources and services* has increased overall by 4% (from 70% average in 2022-23, to 74% in 2023-24)

Fig 16: Resources & Services – four-year comparison

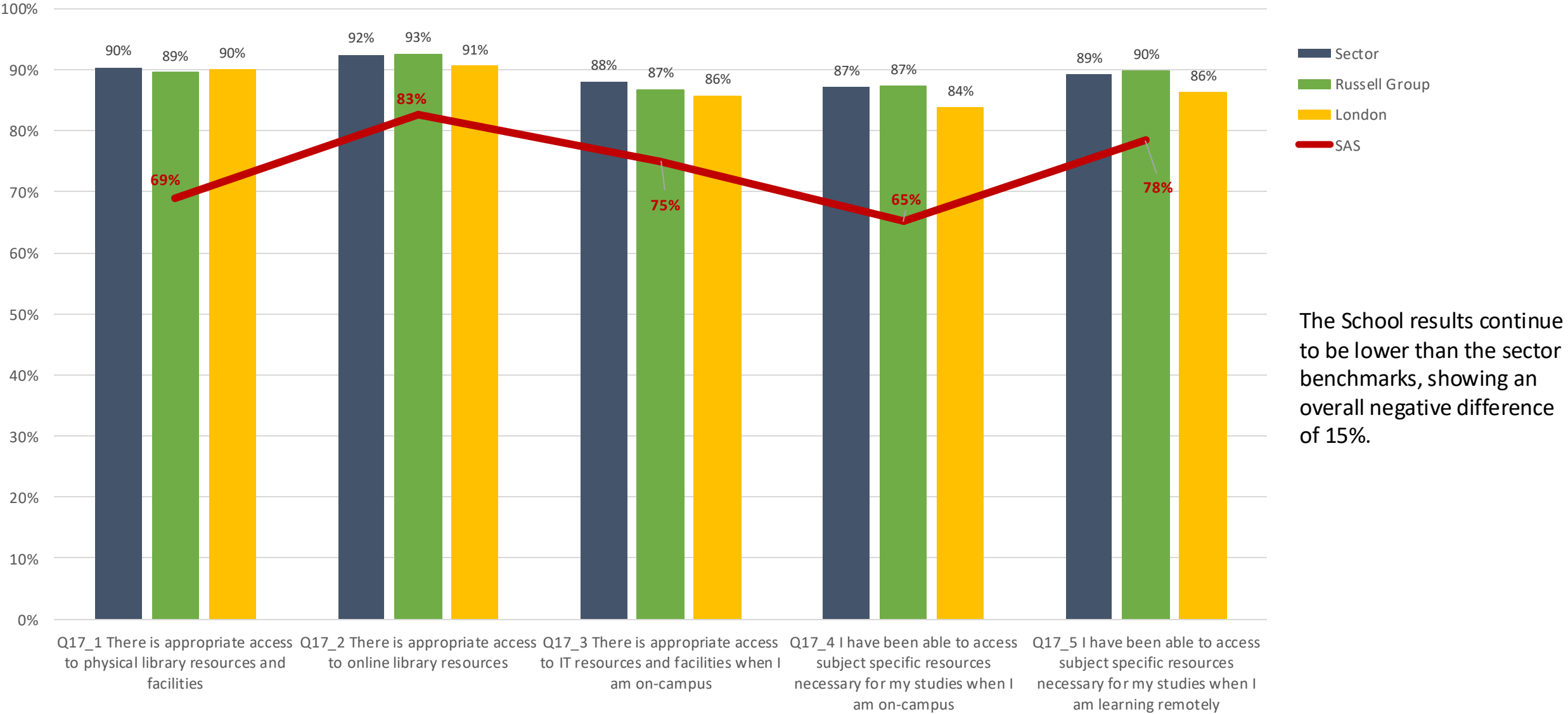


As more students come back to Senate House, the challenges surrounding access to physical resources and facilities (including seats) becomes more prominent than access to online library resources and IT resources:

- Q17\_1 shows a 21% decrease in satisfaction rate
- Q17\_2 shows a 16% increase in satisfaction rate)
- Q17\_3 shows a 20% increase in satisfaction rate)

With the exception of Q17\_3, where strong disapproval was driven by Warburg Institute's building works, the general trend was the same across gender, status fee, age and study modes.

Fig 17: Resources & Services – Sector benchmark comparison

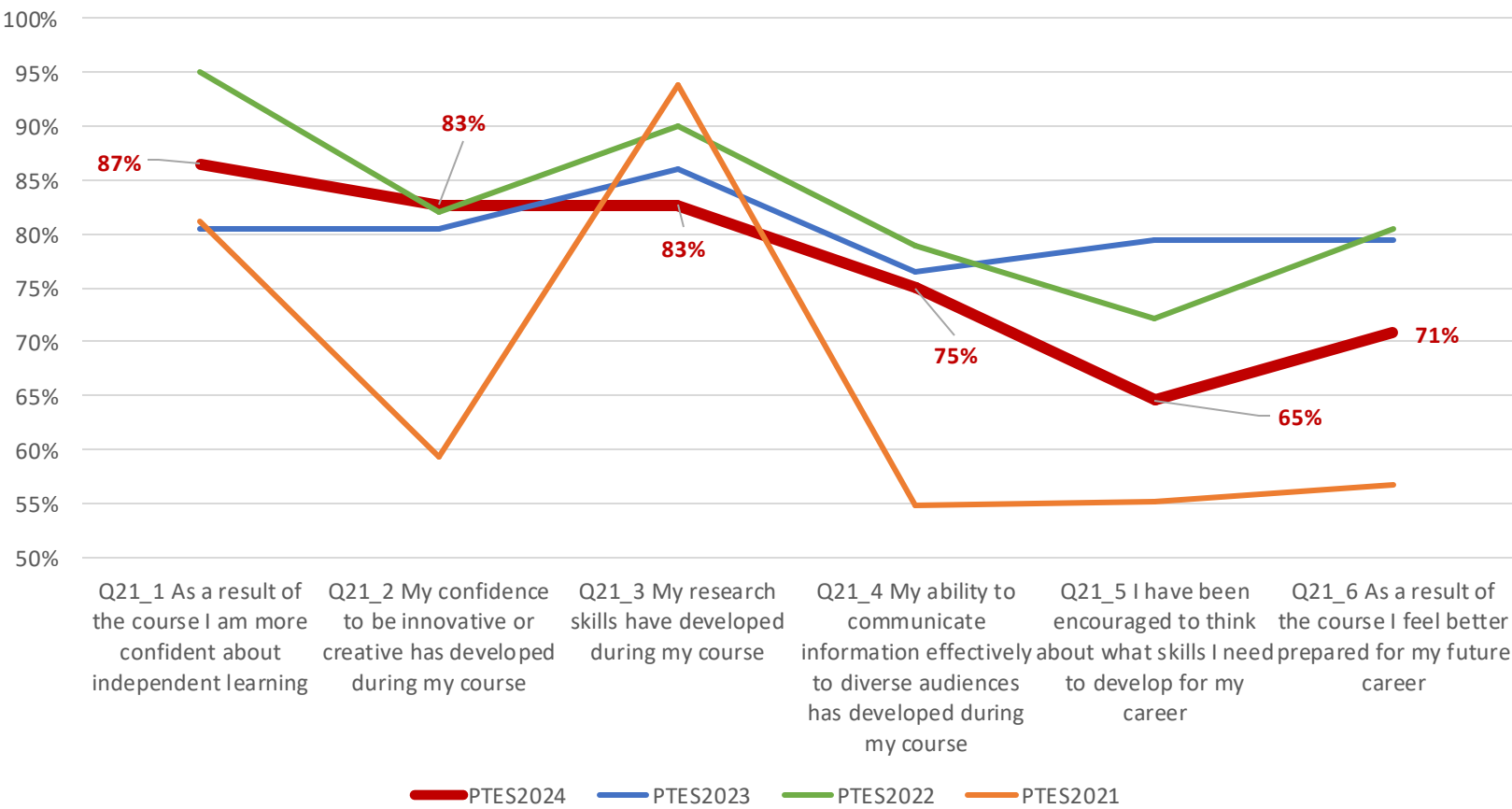


# Resources and Services

# Skills Development

*Skills development* recorded another 3% decrease, losing the gains made during PTES2022.

Fig 18: Skills Development – four-year comparison

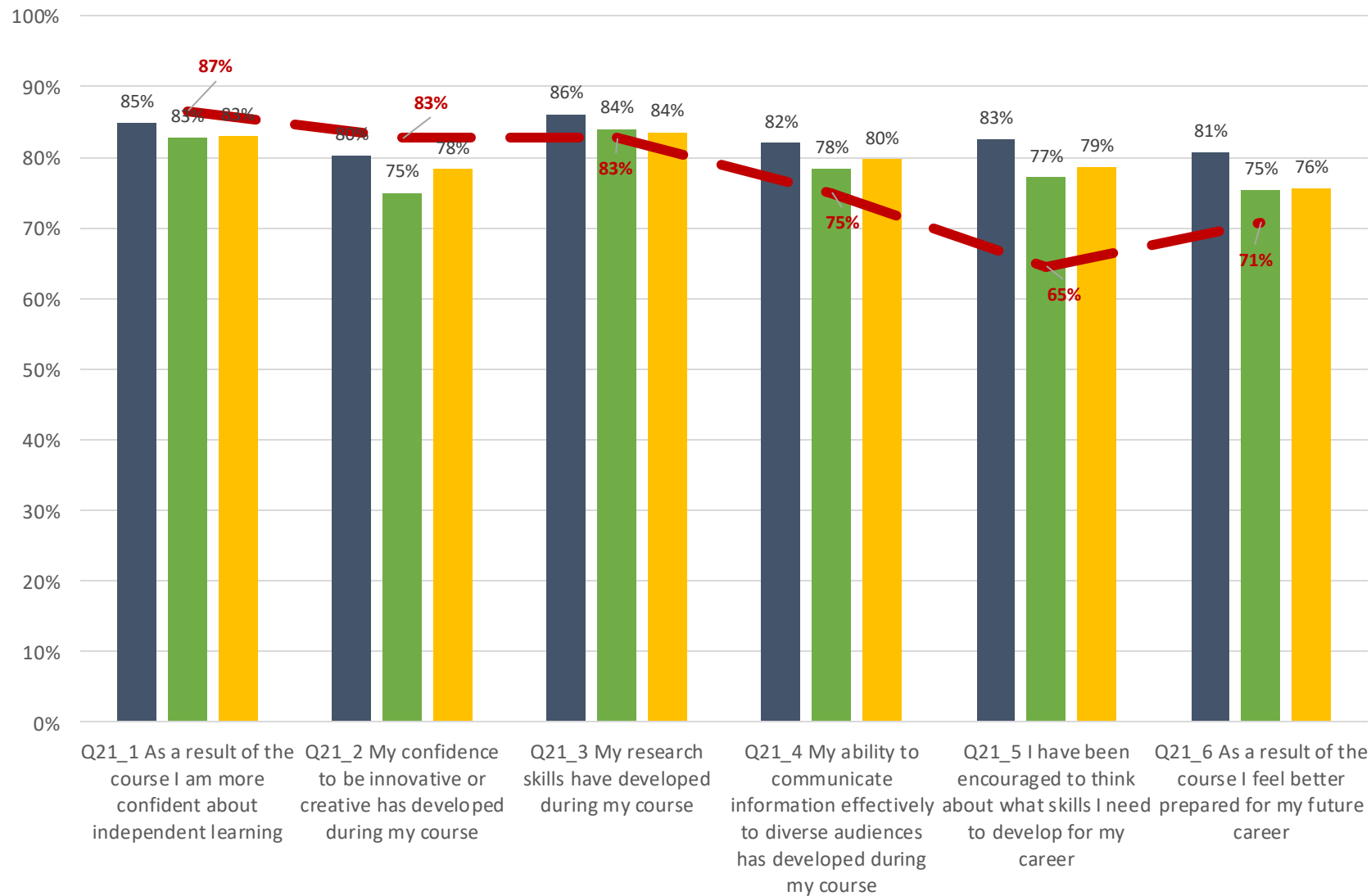


Despite the 6% increase in satisfaction rate demonstrated by the students’ confidence about their independent learning (from 81% in 2022-23 to 87% in 2023-24), students were less satisfied with the level of encouragement they received (-15% from 79% in PTES2023 to 65% in PTES2024) and how prepared they felt for the future (-9% from 79% in 2022-23 to 71% in 23-24).

A review of the degree of satisfaction demonstrates that the results are led by a high number of neutral opinions (neither agree or disagree) rather than being the result of negative experiences.

The scores seem to be driven by UK-based female students, in particular part-timers and those mostly on campus.

Fig 19: Skills Development – Sector benchmarks comparison



■ Sector  
■ Russell Group  
■ London

The School results show inconsistency in this area compared to local and national benchmarks.

SAS overall satisfaction rate in this area was 77%, which is lower than the national or local averages:

- the sector recorded a satisfaction average of 83%
- the Russell Group 79%
- and London institutions 80%,

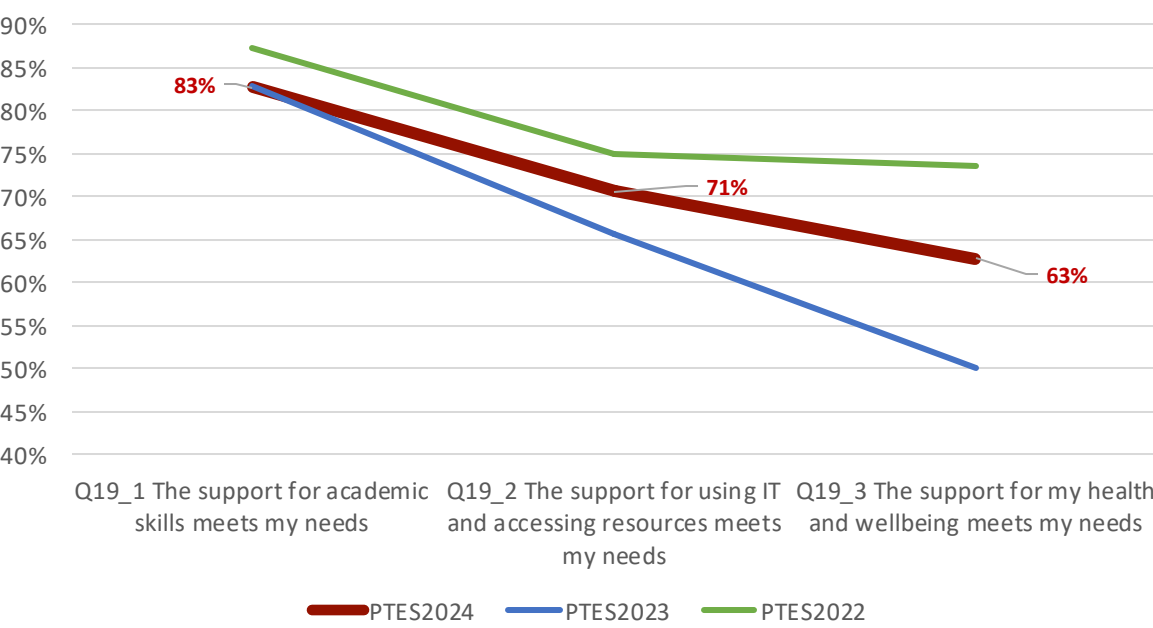
This is mainly driven by the low scores in Q21\_5 and Q21\_6 (as explained in the previous slide). The score below 80% for Q21\_4 on the lack of confidence in developing communication skills had also an impact, albeit small.

# Skills Development

# Support

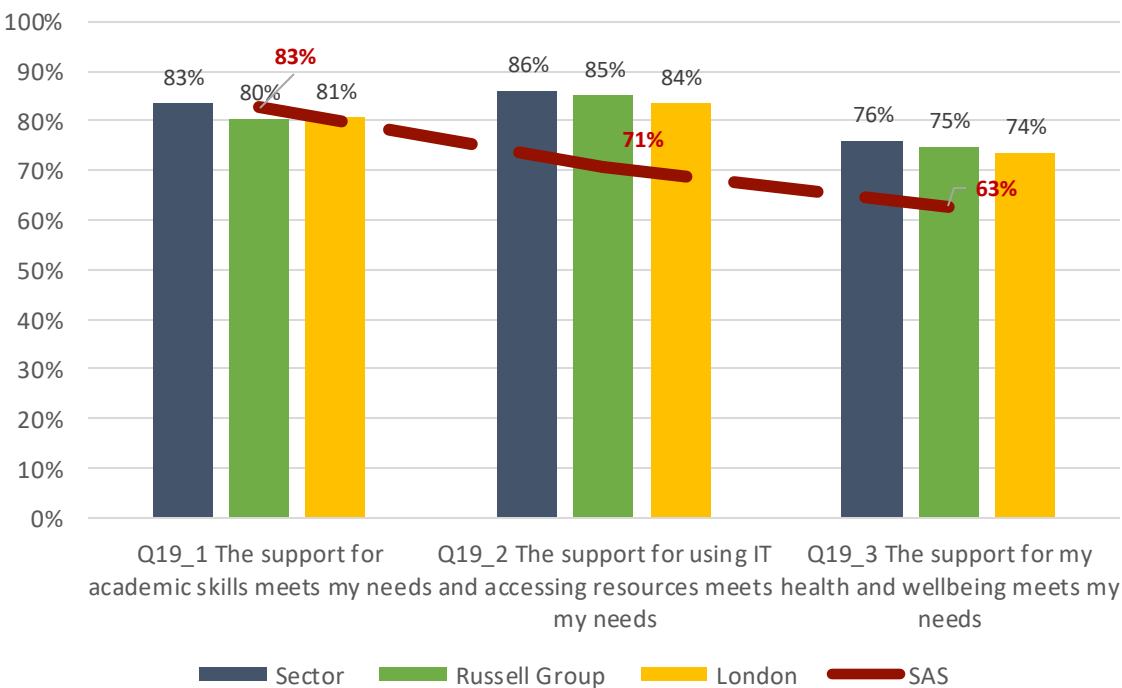
Satisfaction averaged **72%** (a 6% increase from **66%** recorded in 2022-23)

Fig 20: Support – three-year comparison



The results are driven by the increase in satisfaction on the level of IT support received (5% increase from 66% in 22-23 to 71% in 23-24) as well as the support on health and wellbeing needs (increased by 13%, from 60% in PTES 2023 to 63% in PTES2024).

Fig 21: Support: sector benchmark comparison

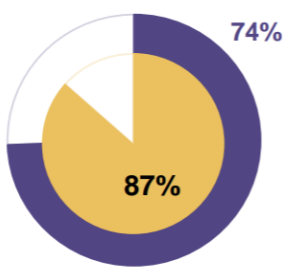


Despite the noticeable increase in satisfaction rate, the School scores are still lower than what is recorded locally or nationally (with a negative difference up to 10% overall; varying in Q19\_2 and Q19\_3 from 11% to 15%).

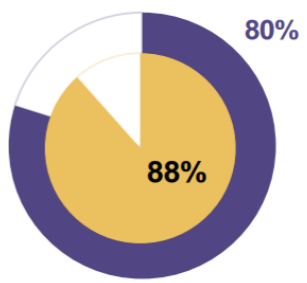
# Conclusion

The School has an overall satisfaction rate on the quality of its programme of 88% (higher than the 84% sector-wide). The average rate combining the scores across all the areas of experience is however 77% (compared to 81% sector wide)

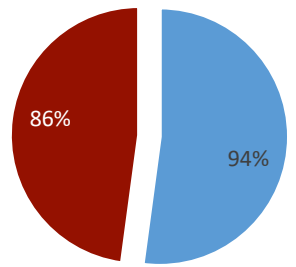
## Best practice



The proportion of SAS PGTs who agreed the workload was manageable was 87%, 13% above Sector average. (Engagement)



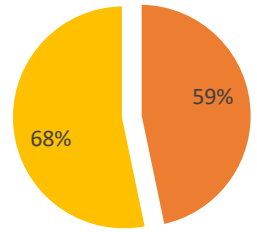
88% of SAS PGTs agreed that their course was well organized, this was 8% above Sector average. (Organization)



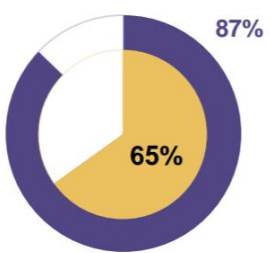
86% of SAS PGTs agreed that their learning materials were useful. (Teaching)

Stable positive experience continues to be recorded on the quality of SAS Teaching and Learning, as well as Assessment, Engagement and Organisation of SAS courses. With only a few instances where improvements would be welcomed.

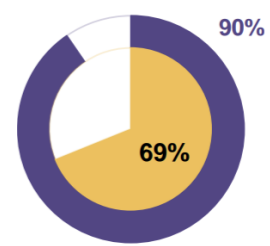
While the scores related to students' feeling of **Community** or **belonging to** their institutions remain low across the UK, this should be regarded as **an area of concern for SAS**, with 59%, 9% below sector average.



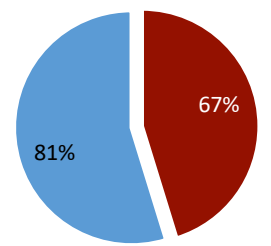
## Areas of Improvement



65% of SAS PGTs agreed that they were able to access resources necessary for their studies. This was 22% below Sector average. (Resources)

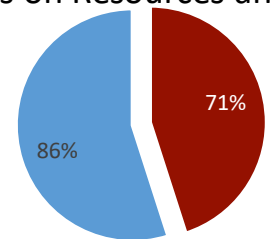


69% of SAS PGTs agreed that there was appropriate access to physical library resources. This was 21% below Sector average. (Resources)



67% of SAS PGTs agreed that the course created sufficient opportunities to discuss their work with other students. This was 14% below Sector average. (Engagement)

The School continues to score lower than UK institutions on Resources and Support (below 75%).



71% of SAS PGTs thought that UOL IT and accessing resources met their needs, 15% below sector average (Support)