

# Postgraduate Research Experience Survey – highlights

Academic Year 2022-23

2023 PRES



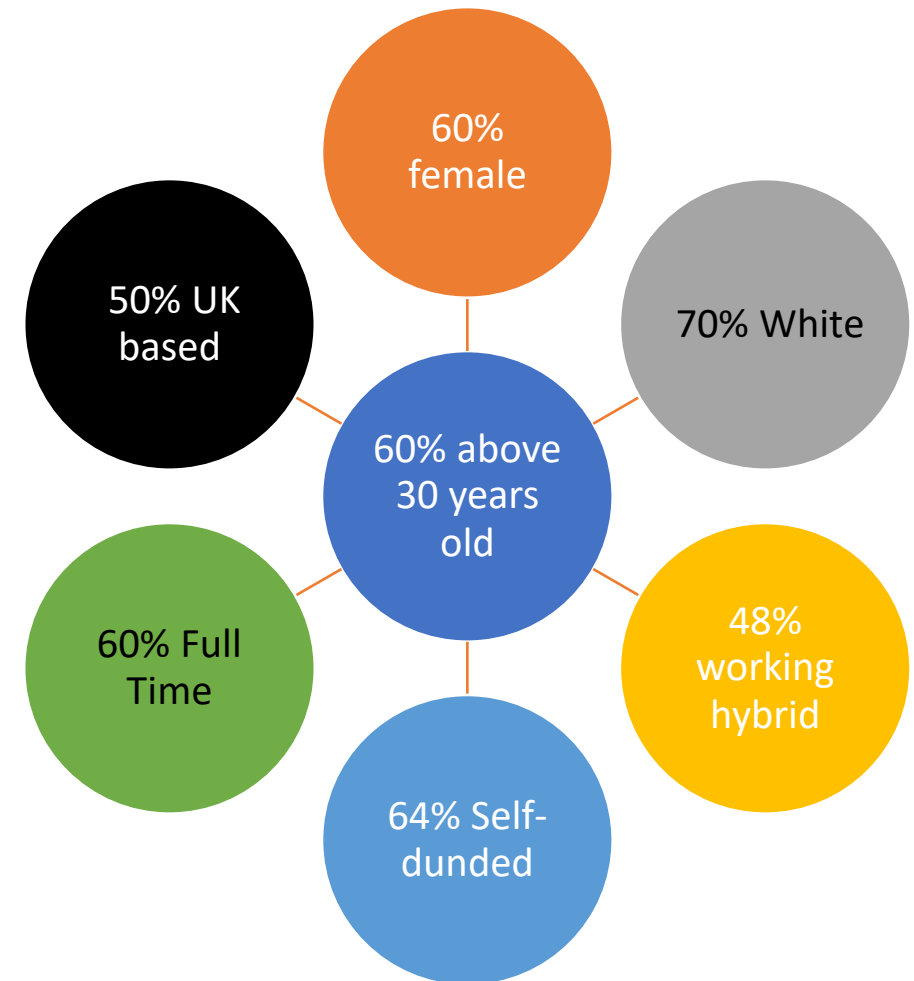
SCHOOL OF  
ADVANCED STUDY  
UNIVERSITY  
OF LONDON



# Respondents' Profile

**50 students (compared to 49 in 2021 and 58 in 2019) responded to the Survey.**

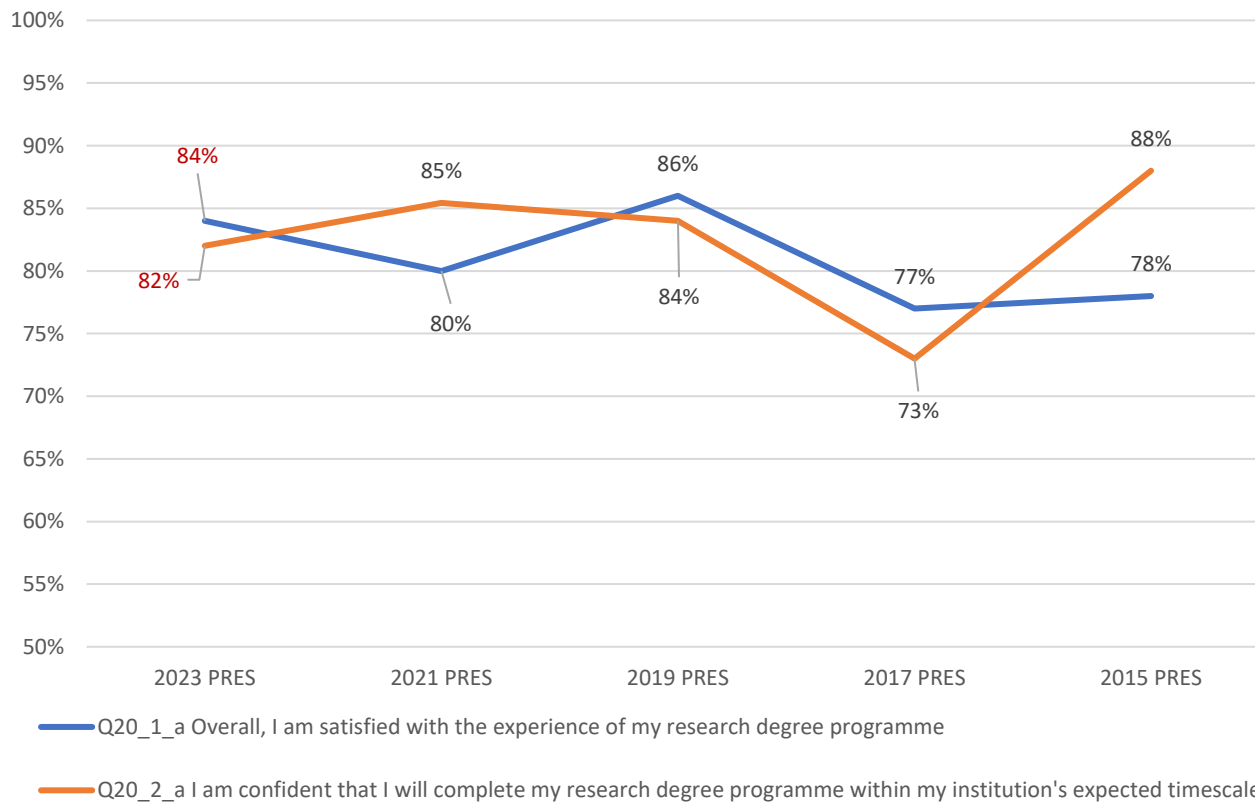
- This represents 33% of the School student cohort. (152)
- All disciplines were represented by the respondents: Law, History, Classics, Modern Languages and Sociology.
- 66% were MPhil students and 33% were PhD students.
- 25% of the respondents, compared to 15% in the last survey, considered leaving the course. This is above the 17% recorded nationwide.



# Overall Satisfaction

**84% of SAS respondents were overall satisfied** with the experience of their research degree programme. This represents a 4% increase from the 2021 PRES results.

**Fig 1: Overall satisfaction over the last 5 surveys**



**Table 1: Comparison of Overall and Completion**

	Q20_1_a Overall, I am satisfied with the experience of my research degree programme	Q20_2_a I am confident that I will complete my research degree programme within my institution's expected timescale
SAS PRES	84%	82%
Global results	79%	81%
Russell Group	80%	81%
London	79%	83%

The School's satisfaction rate continues to be higher than the results recorded at local or national levels (by 4%-5%)

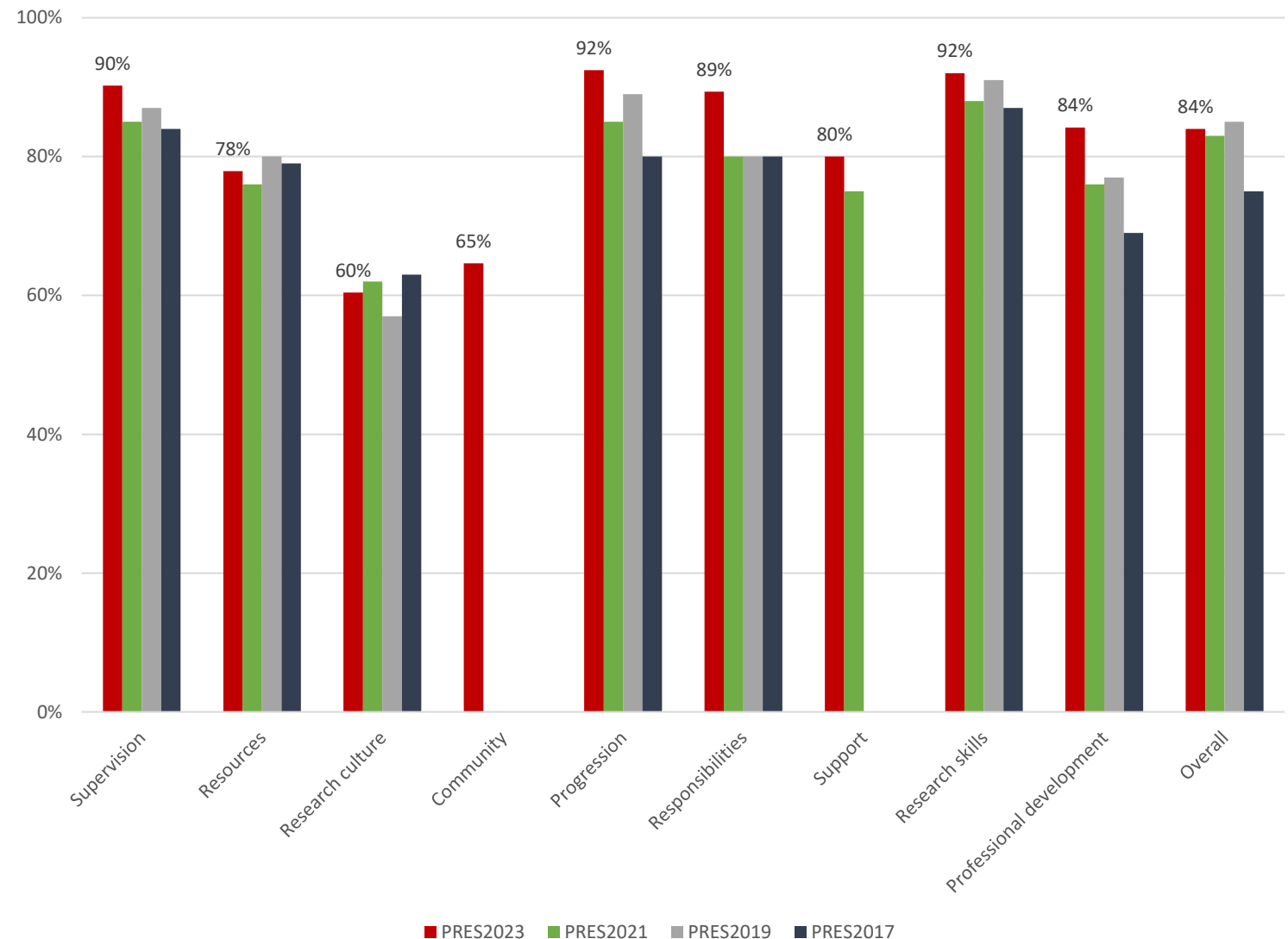
- *This [programme] has opened up opportunities for in-depth, specialised research on a topic of great interest and to develop scholarly skills (translation, transcription, researching, presenting, project-management) . I have been able to put into practice in an independent project supported by feedback and advice from my supervisors.*
- *The Institute profile and culture suits me really well, in the sense that it is very conducive to the research I want to carry out. It is an intellectually diverse, open, and stimulating environment.*

# Overall Satisfaction per areas of PGR experience

The overall results show a positive experience of the School's Research Programme. Only three areas, below 80%, outline some challenges:

- Research Culture (60%): Respondents requested more frequent opportunities to discuss their research with other research students, creating a deeper research ambience.
- Community (65%): more than half of the respondents felt part of the community. The results are higher than the sector benchmark.
- Resources (78%): results continue to show inconsistency of access and provision of both online and physical resources.

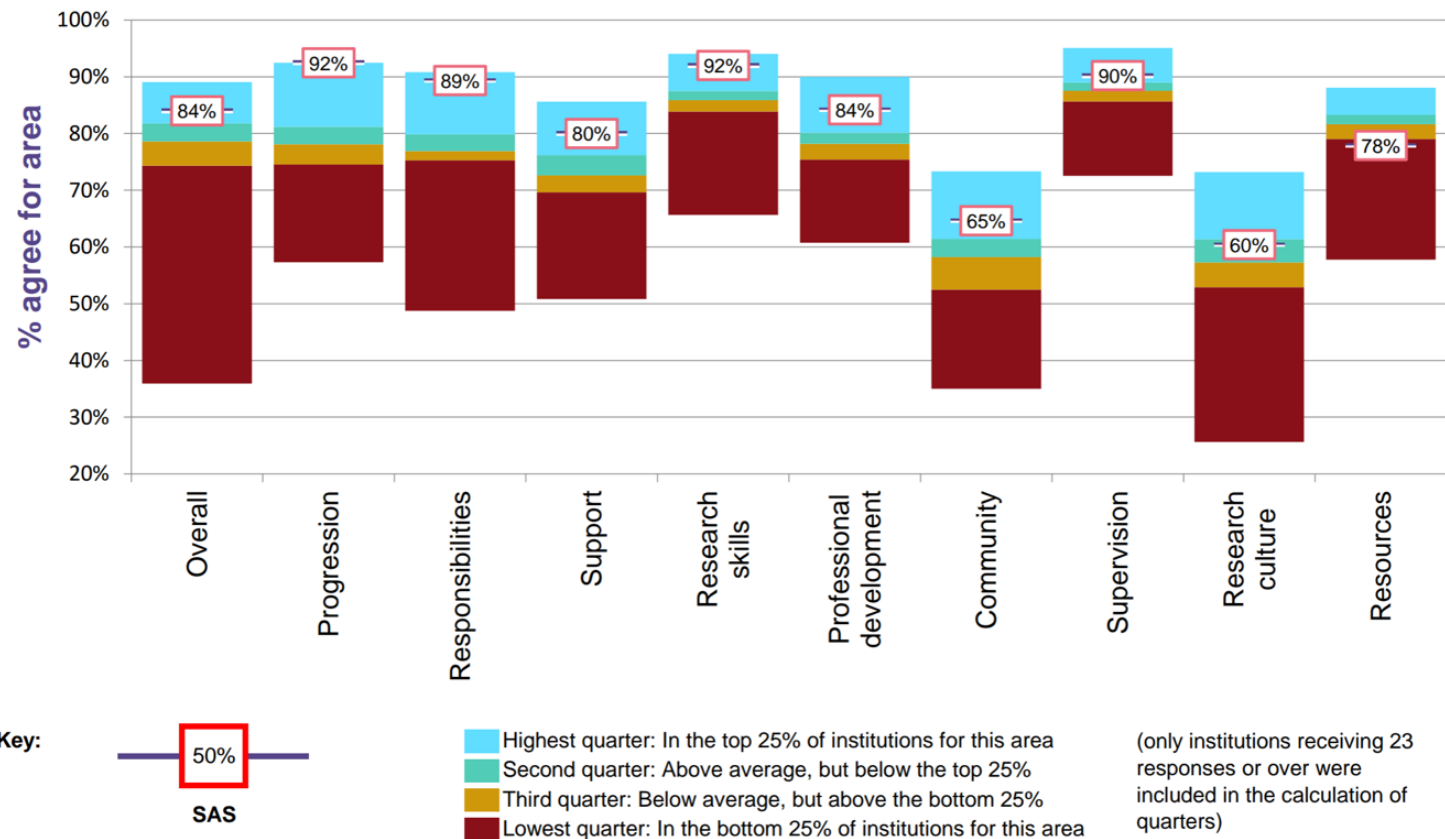
Fig 2: Comparison of 2023 overall performance per areas of experience with the last three surveys



# SAS and the PGR experience benchmarked

Fig 3

The graph below shows the position of SAS in relation to institutions in the Global benchmark. With a score of 84%, overall satisfaction for SAS was in the highest quarter. Across the different aspects measured by PRES, SAS was mostly in the highest quarter.



In comparison with the global or local benchmarks, the School results demonstrate a more positive experience in all areas but 1 (Resources).

The *Resources area* is showing a small 4% negative difference from national and local benchmarks. While the School results on the *Community area* seem low, they are 5% higher than the Global benchmark. The School results on *Research Culture* may seem low but they align with the national trend.

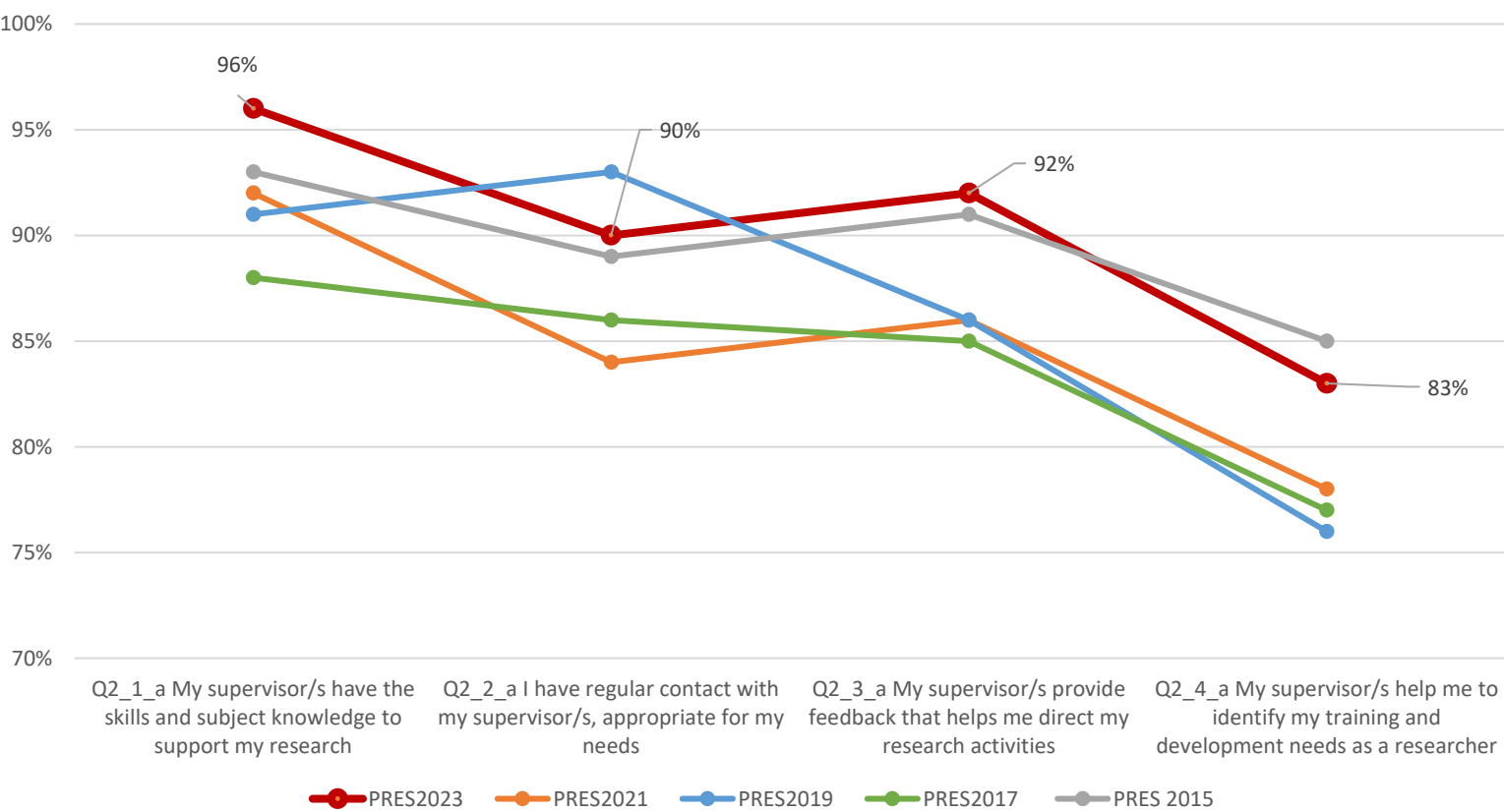
The strong results confirm the robust management and successful delivery of the School's research degree programmes.



# Supervision

The overall average rate has increased by 5%, from 85% in 2020-21 to 90% in 2022-23.

Fig 4: Comparison with the last four surveys



The School results are once again above local and national benchmarks (87%). (by 3%)

The results show a consistency of experience across the board, with strong and decisive statements of satisfaction (all questions received a very high ‘definitely agree’ percentage – above 67%, with only one exception Q2\_4).

The lower score for Q2\_4 is the result of a high number of neutral responses (neither agree nor disagree) rather than strong disagreement.

There was a higher satisfaction rate from from MPhil Students (92%) overseas respondents (93%), from hybrid working students (95%) and Year 2 students (98%).

# Resources

The average satisfaction rate for this area remains the same as in the previous report (77%)

**Table 2: Comparison under the Resources Area of Experience**

Institution / Mean (average)	Q4_1_a I have a suitable working space when I am on campus	Q4_2_a I have a suitable working space when I am studying remotely	Q4_3_a There is appropriate access to physical library resources and facilities	Q4_4_a There is appropriate access to online library resources	Q4_5_a There is appropriate access to IT resources and facilities when I am on-campus	Q4_6_a I have access to the specialist resources necessary for my research when I am on campus	Q4_7_a I have access to the specialist resources necessary for my research when I am studying remotely
<b>2023 PRES</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>79%</b>
<b>2021 PRES</b>	87%	78%	75%	79%	75%	72%	67%
<b>Comparison</b>	<b>-11%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>-3%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>-9%</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>2019 PRES</b>	78%	70%	89%				82%
<b>2017 PRES</b>	85%	68%	87%				75%
<b>Global Results</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>78%</b>
<b>Russell Gp</b>	80%	77%	88%	90%	82%	81%	79%
<b>London</b>	76%	78%	85%	87%	81%	78%	77%

The national and local benchmarks show an overall satisfaction average that is higher than the School's by 5% (from 82% to 79%), demonstrating a different experience from SAS.

The main changes from the 2021 PRES concern:

- the availability of working space (satisfaction rate decreased by 11%, (from 87% to 76% in 22-23),
- and the availability of specialist resources when on campus (9% decrease, from 72% to 63% in 22-23).

On the other hand, access to library materials and resources online have increased, as demonstrated by a 10% increase in satisfaction rate (Q4\_2).

The results overall reflect a high number of neutral responses, as opposed to strong disagreement.

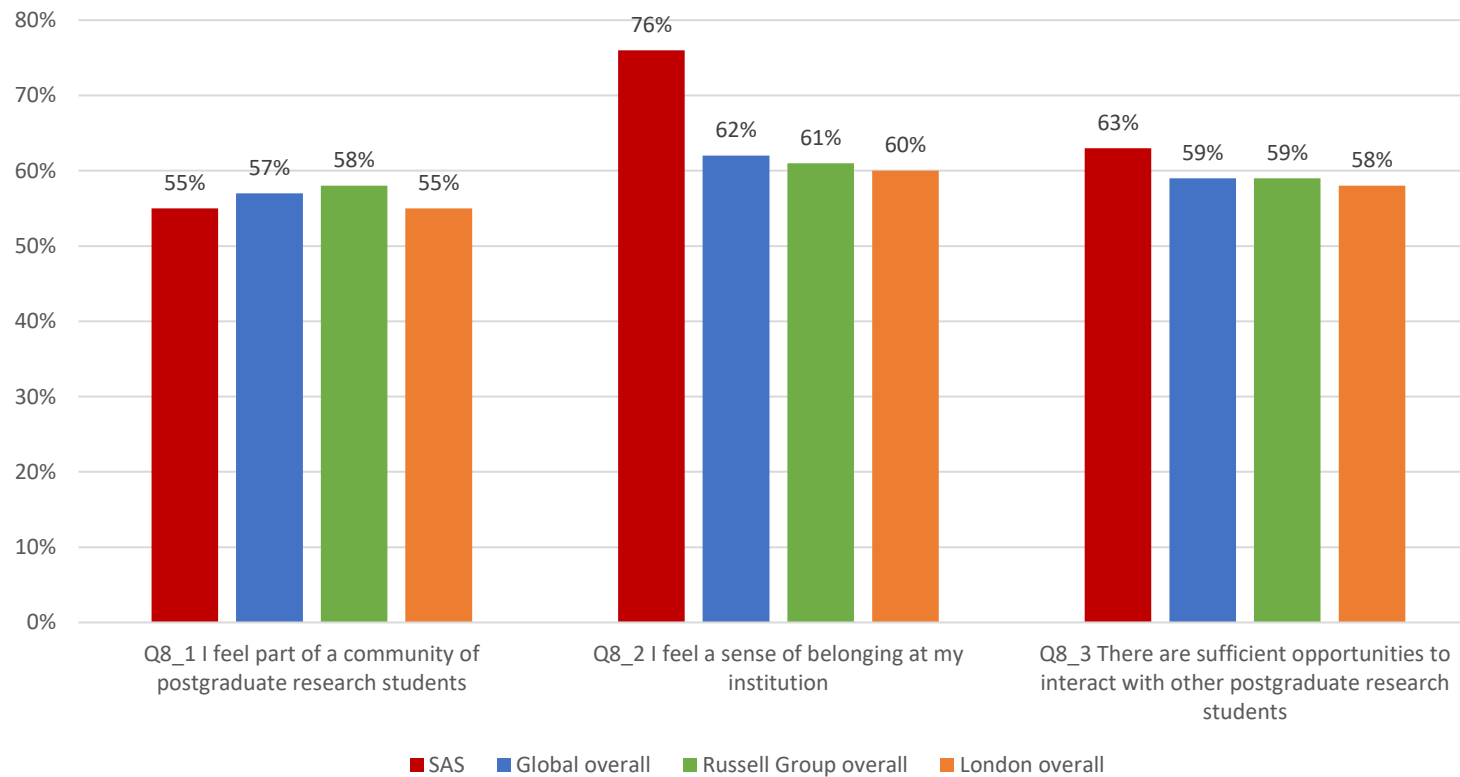
There is no real discernible pattern between the respondents that would indicate any particular problem at local/institute level.

# Community

## New Question

The School recorded an average satisfaction rate of 63%

Fig 5: Comparison with local and national benchmarks



The results are low but comparable to the ones recorded nationwide.

Respondents aged 31 or older were much less satisfied than their younger counterparts (44% only were satisfied vs 82% of 30 or younger).

Respondents domiciled in the UK were much less satisfied than their counterparts from overseas (55% only in the UK vs 85% overseas).

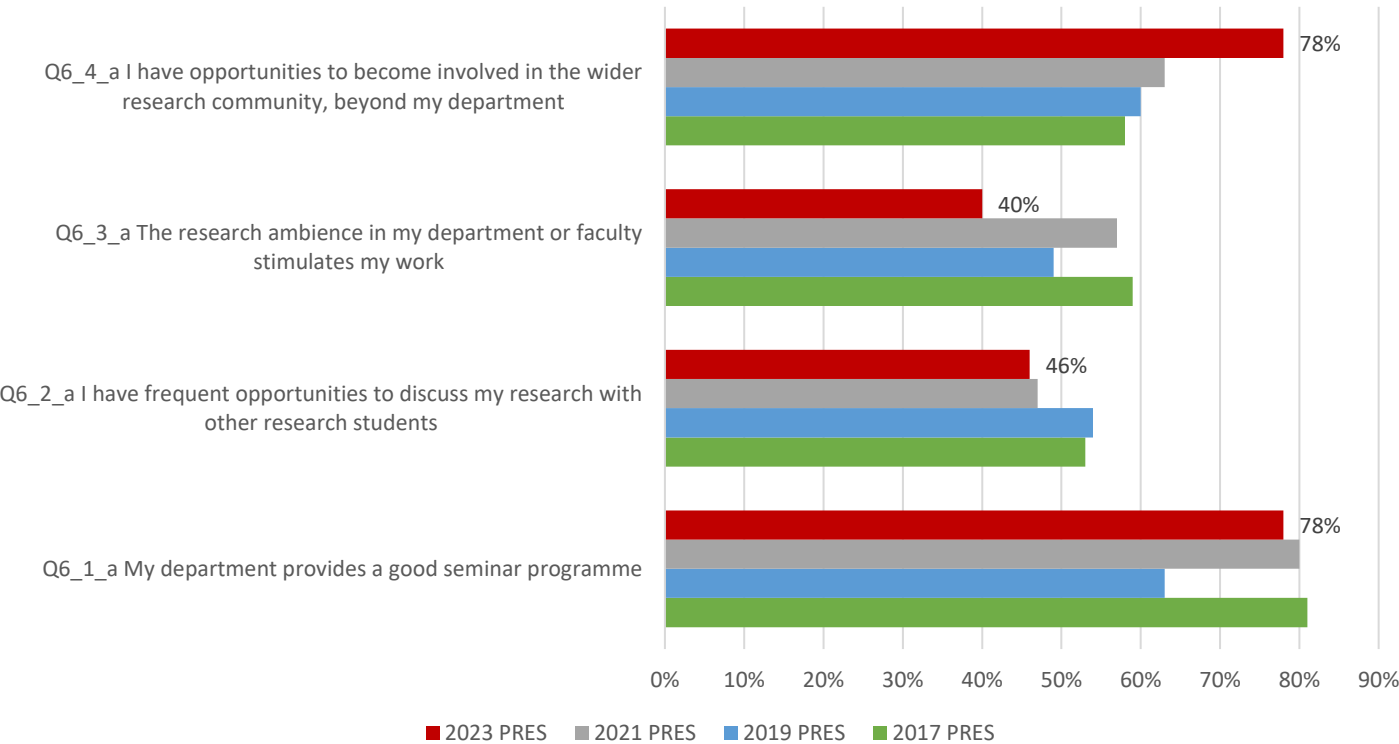
69% of the respondents who attended the course mostly in person were more satisfied than students who studied in hybrid conditions (54%).



# Research Culture

The average satisfaction rate for this area remains the same as in the previous report (61%)

Fig 6: Comparison over the last four surveys

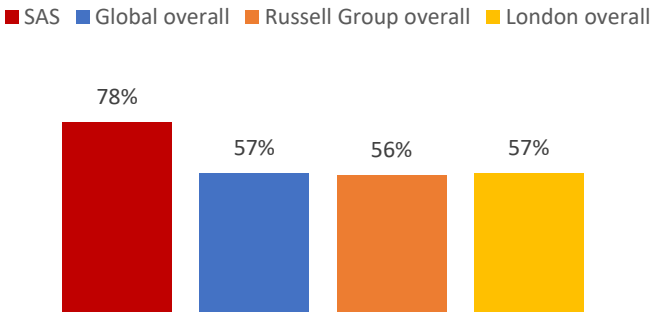


Student experience is inconsistent in this area: the differences compared to the 2021 PRES vary between -17% (Q6\_3) to +15% (Q6\_4).

The lack of higher positive score reflects the unusually high neutrality of the respondents in this area (neither agree nor disagree).

The results are strikingly different from the ones recorded locally or nationally, representative of the large range of events taking place in the School as well as the size of the institution and the student cohort.

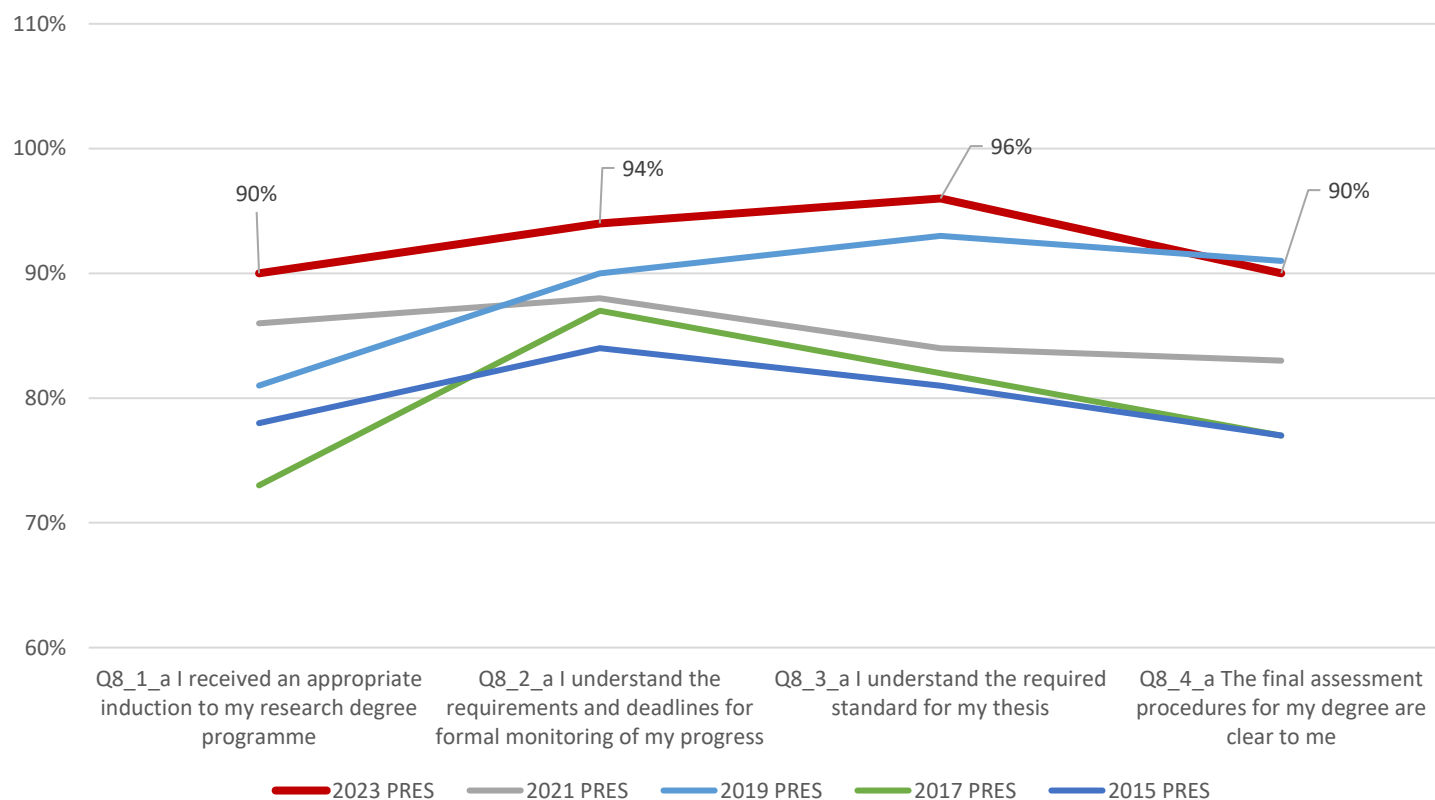
Fig 7: Q6\_4 – Comparison with Global and local benchmarks



# Progression

The overall satisfaction rate in this area is 93%, 7% higher than the 85% recorded in the previous survey, the highest recorded over the last 8 years.

Fig 8: Comparison with the last four surveys

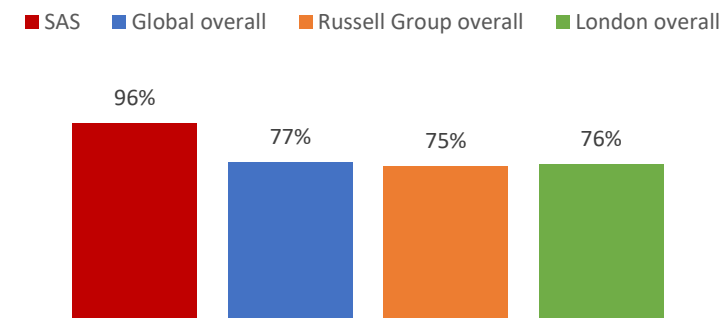


All the results are above 90%, with a positive difference from the 2021 PRES results varying between +4% to +12% .

Male respondents were much more satisfied, showing the highest score possible (100%) in three areas out of 4. (average satisfaction rate is 99%). Equally overseas students' responses showed also some of highest scores in Q9\_2 and Q9\_3).

The School outperformed the sector benchmark and the London institutions by 16%, making this area of experience particularly strong.

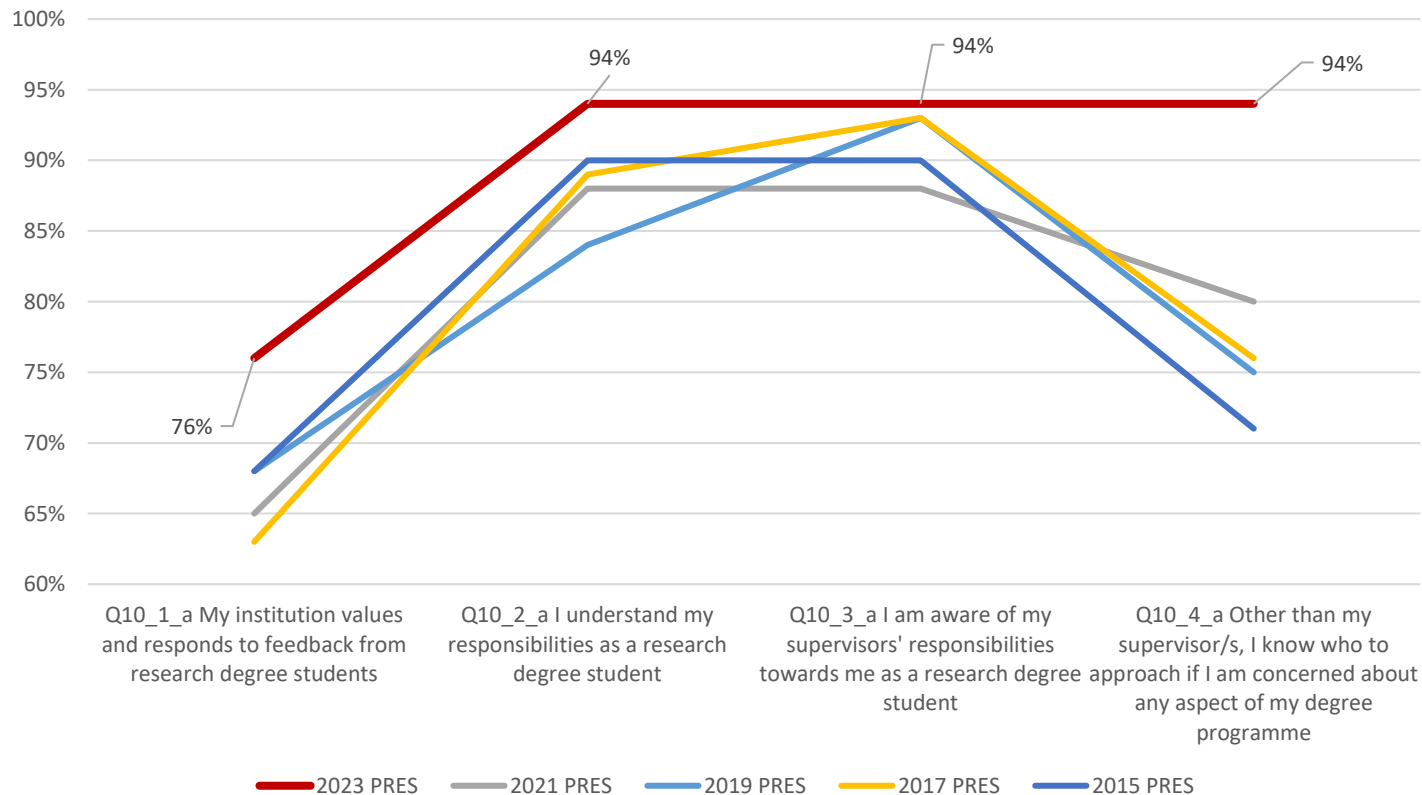
Fig 9: Q9\_3 I understand the required standard for my thesis



# Responsibilities

The overall average satisfaction rate for this area has increased by 10%, from 80% in 2021 PRES to 90%.

Fig 10: Comparison with the last four surveys



The School results demonstrate a significant growth since the 2015 PRES. The positive difference compared to the previous survey results (2021 PRES) vary between +6% to +14%.

The results show a consistent approach, despite Q10\_1a, which continues to be about 20% lower than the other questions. It is however worth noting that the respondents did not actually completely disagree that the School didn't value or failed to respond to their feedback. They simply chose to keep a more neutral stance. (neither agree nor disagree).

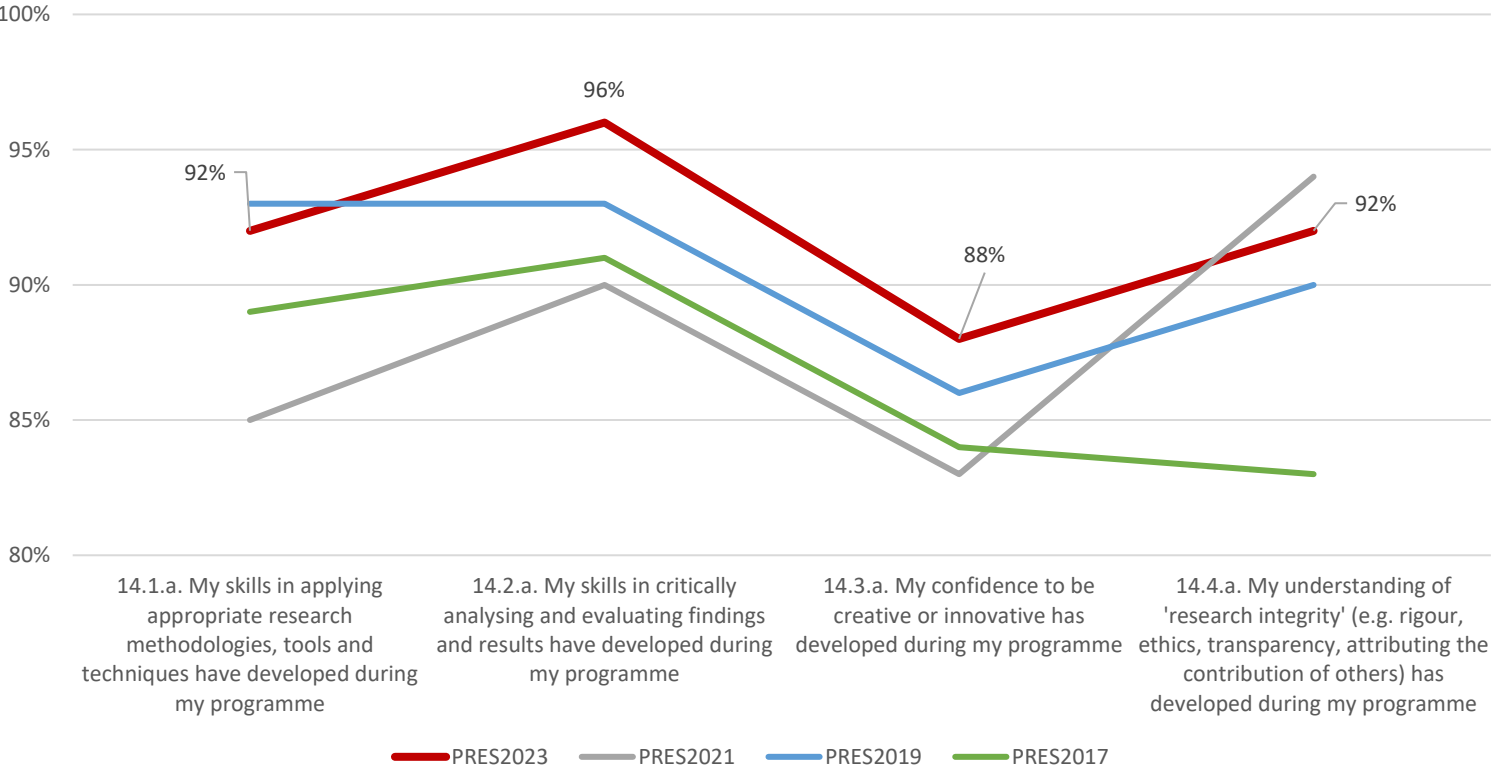
The highest scores were provided by male (95%), overseas (92%) and PhD (92%) respondents.

All the School results in this area are much higher than the local and national average (by 13%).

# Research Skills

The aggregate score for this area of experience continues to be high, at 92%, 4% higher than recorded in 2021-22 (88%).

Fig 11: Comparison with the last three surveys

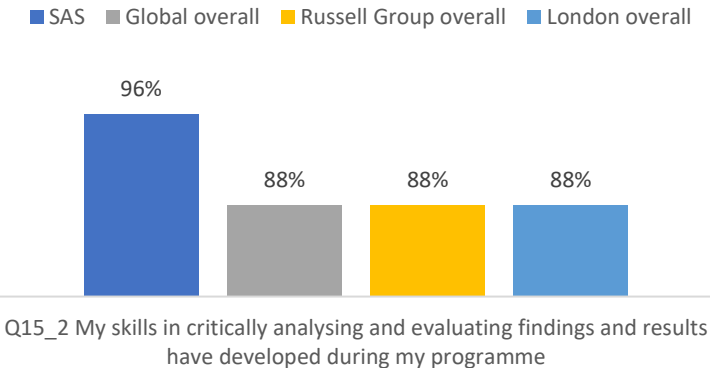


This is the highest score recorded over the last 8 years, reflecting very positive student experience: *Creativity and innovation is the School's strength.*

The entire male cohort was satisfied that their skills had developed (Q15\_2) and all part-time students agreed that their understanding of 'research integrity' had developed during their programme (Q15\_4)

The results are higher than the local or sector benchmarks by 7%.

Fig 12: Comparison with local and national scores



# Professional Development

The overall satisfaction rate for this area has **increased by 8%**, from (76% to 84% in 2022-23).

This is the highest satisfaction rate recorded over the last eight years.

**Table 3: Comparison under the Professional Development Area of Expertise**

Institution / Mean (average)	Q17_1 My ability to manage projects has developed during my programme	Q17_2 My ability to communicate information effectively to diverse audiences has developed during my programme	Q17_3 I have developed contacts or professional networks during my programme	Q17_4 I have increasingly managed my own professional development during my programme
2023 PRES	<b>82%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>94%</b>
2021 PRES	75%	80%	72%	77%
Comparison	<b>7%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>17%</b>
2019 PRES	74%	77%	78%	79%
2017 PRES	70%	64%	64%	79%
2015 PRES	69%	71%	70%	84%
Global Results	<b>81%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>82%</b>
Russell Group	82%	80%	70%	81%
London	82%	80%	70%	82%

The positive difference varies from +2% to a significant +17% (Q17\_4).

It is good to note that SAS students felt very confident in the management of their own professional development (Q17\_4), demonstrated by the high positive difference (+12%) (SAS = 94%, Sector benchmark 82%).

Male students' responses were more positive, with an overall satisfaction average of 90% than their female counterparts (80%).

Overseas students equally felt they had a more positive experience (89%) than home students (80%). Students who were working mostly remotely did feel less satisfied, in particular on the matter of developing professional networks (71%).

The School scores are higher than the national benchmarks (78%) and London institutions' scores (79%).



# Professional Development (ctd)

The overall satisfaction rate in this sub-area is **54%**, compared to 52% in the previous survey (**2% increase**) .

This area is supplemented by a series of sub-questions on:

- skills training and advice
- development opportunities including teaching opportunities
- feeling ready to start their career

**Skills training and Advice:** the overall satisfaction rate is 54%, compared to 52% in the previous survey (2% increase). It is higher than the national average which recorded a 50% overall average.

**Development Opportunities:** The overall satisfaction rate remains the same as recorded in the previous survey (37%). Respondents found it particularly difficult to engage with non-academic partners (decrease of 9% satisfaction rate since PRES 2021). Coaching or mentoring scores have also decreased by 10%, from 26% in 2021 PRES to 16% in 2022-23. The overall average in this area is similar to that experienced in other UK institutions, whether in London or nationwide.

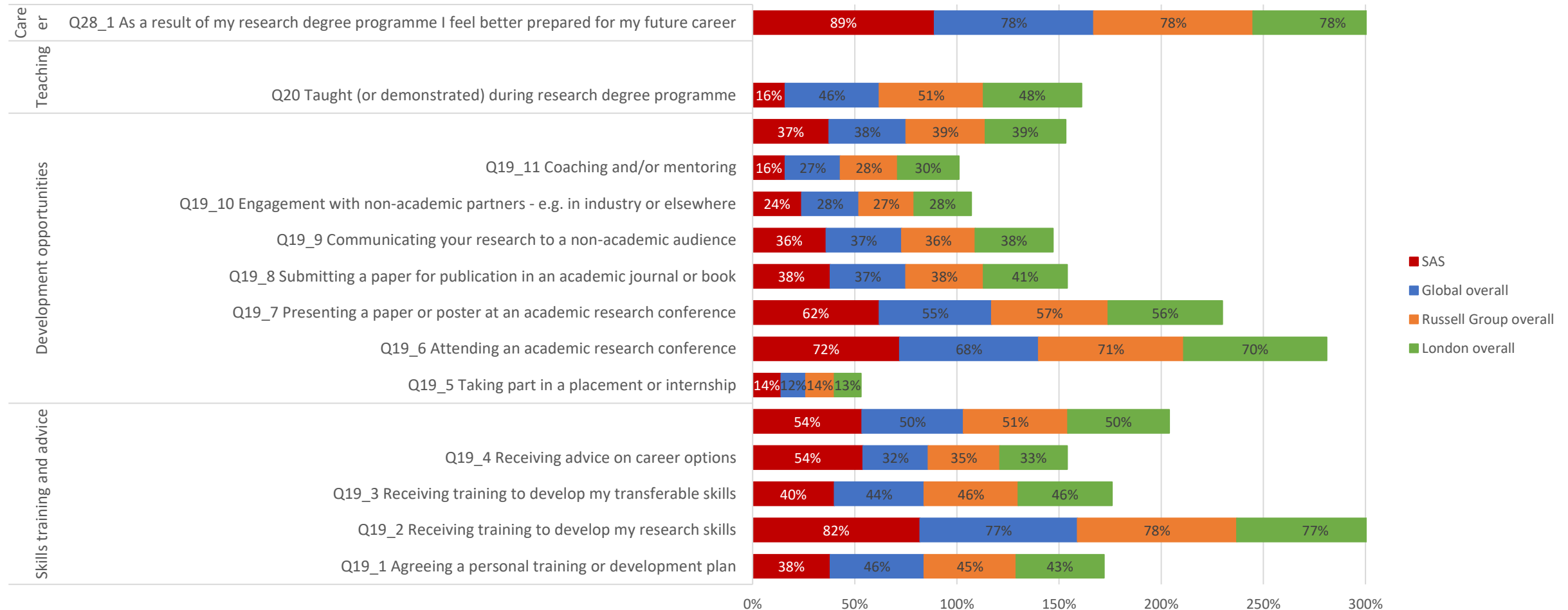
**Teaching Opportunities:** 16% of the respondents, compared to 25% (in 2020-21) confirmed that they received formal teaching training. (9% less than in the previous survey). This represents a significant negative difference from local and national benchmarks.

**Career Preparations:** Despite the lack of teaching experience, SAS respondents were very positive when assessing their preparedness to their future career: 89% compared to 81% in 2021PRES. This 8% positive difference can also be noted when comparing the sector benchmark which recorded 78% only.

# Professional Development (ctd)

- skills training and advice
- development opportunities including teaching opportunities
- feeling ready to start their career

**Fig 13 : Comparison with local and national benchmarks**



# Support

The overall satisfaction rate averaged **80%** (5% higher than in 2021 PRES).

**Table 4: Comparison under Support**

Institution / Mean (average)	Q12_1_a The support for academic skills meets my needs	Q12_2_a The support for using IT and accessing resources meets my needs*	Q12_3_a The support for my health and wellbeing meets my needs**
2023 PRES	82%	82%	76%
2021 PRES	78%	77%	70%
Global results	75%	80%	63%
Russell Group	75%	81%	63%
London	75%	79%	62%

Questions around Support were redesigned to be more comprehensive, and cover within one single area of experience, academic, resources and well-being needs.

Unlike in the previous survey, SAS scored much higher than the local or national average, having secured an overall satisfaction average of 80%, 7% higher than the national average (and 5% higher than what SAS recorded in the 2021PRES).

Some questions continued to allow students to report on the School support towards the impact of the **Pandemic**. The overall results were much higher **by 8%** than recorded in 2021PRES, with an average satisfaction rate of 88% and **19% higher** than the sector benchmark (69% average satisfaction rate).

**Fig 14: Scores by gender, mode of study and fee status**

