



SCHOOL OF
ADVANCED STUDY
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON

Post-Graduate Taught Student Survey 2022

SCHOOL OF ADVANCED STUDY RESULTS

OCT 2022 |

2021-22 Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (2022 PTES) Report

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Introduction

The Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) is the largest sector-wide survey annually collecting feedback from taught-postgraduate students across the Higher Education sector about their learning and teaching experiences.

At the time of producing this report, the AdvancedHE report has not been published. As such, the comparative data included here remains confidential. This report is therefore not to be circulated outside the School.

The School report provides a detailed analysis of the SAS results of the 2022PTES survey which was held between April and June 2022. The analysis is benchmarked against past survey results as well as 2022 local and national results. Where student numbers are small, analysis has been adjusted to preserve anonymity. The analysis does not include feedback on ICS classes undertaken as part of the inter-collegiate agreement or the programmes managed in conjunction with UoLWorldwide.

The PTES survey organises questions around eight different areas of experience: *Quality of teaching and learning, Engagement, Assessment and Feedback, Dissertation or Major Project, Organisation and Management, Resources and Services, Skills Development, and Support*. Institutional specific questions were asked including on the matter of the student representation. Additional questions including student's experience from the management of the continuous effect of the Pandemic to considering their leaving the School. An overview of the results is shown in the main body of the report. The appendix provides details of trends per area of experience.

Demographic data has been considered in the analysis of the results, but the School respondents' profile does not allow for meaningful insight on ethnicity grounds.

Approval rate and improvements are highlighted in **dark red**; while lower satisfaction results and areas of concern are highlighted in **dark purple**.

Executive summary

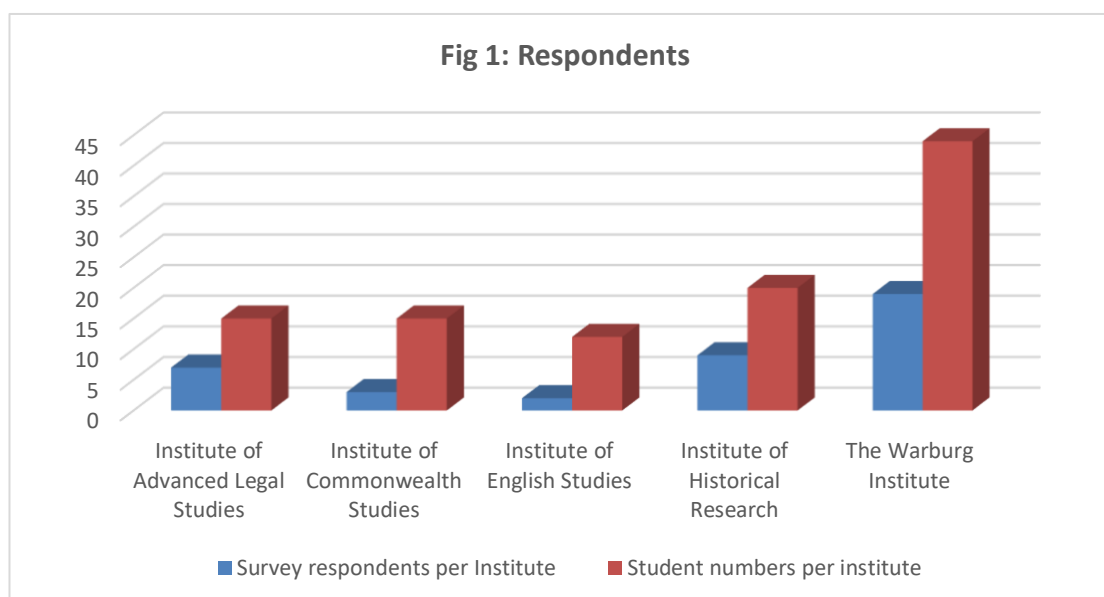
The key point of the School's results on the 2022 Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey are noted below:

- Nearly 40% of the student cohort responded to the survey, which is an increase from the response rate recorded in 2021.
- The School scored a significant **increase of 16%** in **overall satisfaction** rate: 98% (2% shy of the highest score possible). This is the highest score recorded over a 7-year period, during which time the School reached 93% (its second highest score).

- The School scored 95% satisfaction rate on the **Quality of its Teaching and Learning**, which represents a significant **13% increase** from the 2021 PTES.
- The School scored 92% satisfaction rate on the **Engagement of its course**, which represents a significant **16% increase** from the 2021 PTES.
- The school scored 87% satisfaction rate on the **Assessment and Feedback approach** to its programme, which represents a **6% increase** from the 2021 PTES
- The School scored 87% satisfaction rate, which is close to the 2021 score (86%) by 1%, on its Dissertation and Major Project support.
- The School's score shows an **11% increase** from 74% recorded in 2021 to 85% in 2022, on its organisation and management of its teaching and learning programme.
- The School scored 71% satisfaction rate, which represents a **9% increase** from the 2021 PTES, on the resources and services provided.
- The School scored 83% satisfaction rate in Skills Development, which represents a **6% increase** from the 2021 PTES
- The School scored 79% satisfaction rate for its support provision, which represents a **4% increase** from the 2021 PTES
- Only 15% of the respondents considered leaving the School during the academic year. This is a **16% decrease** from 2021 survey (which recorded 31%)

1. Profile of respondents

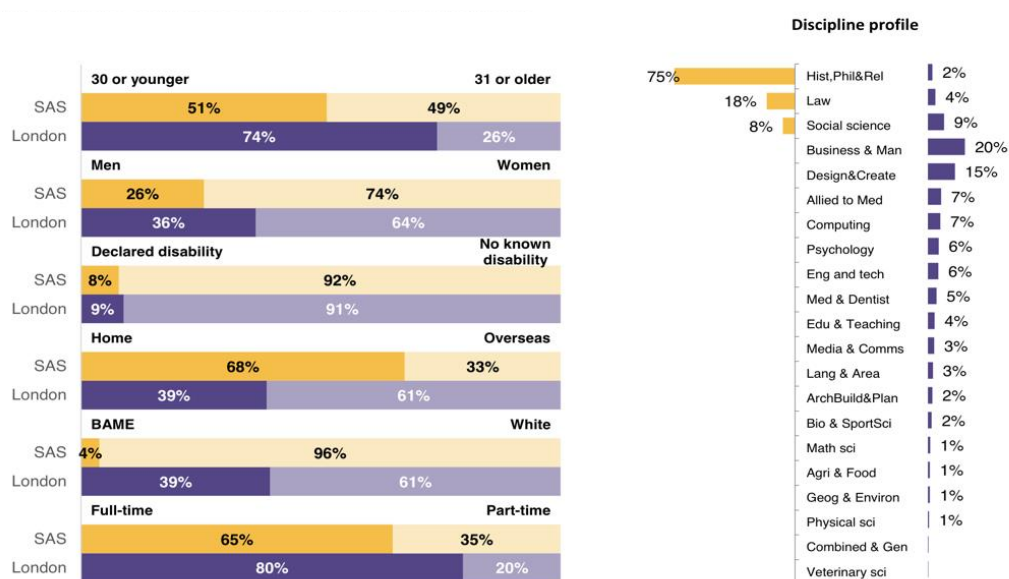
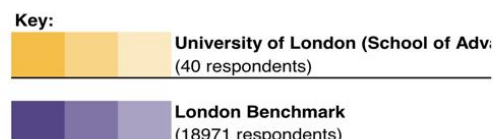
40 out of 106 SAS PGT students responded to the Student Survey (compared to 32 out of 94 SAS in 2021). This represents 38% the 2021-22 student cohort (compared to 34% in 2020-21).



The profile of the 2022PTES SAS respondents remains overall older than the local or national averages. The respondents were overwhelmingly female, slightly higher than recorded locally and nationally. SAS respondents continued to be predominantly white and UK based. The proportion of part-time and full-time students is less balanced than previously reported. 72% (compared to 66% in 2020-21) were self-funded (including family or other contributions or loans).

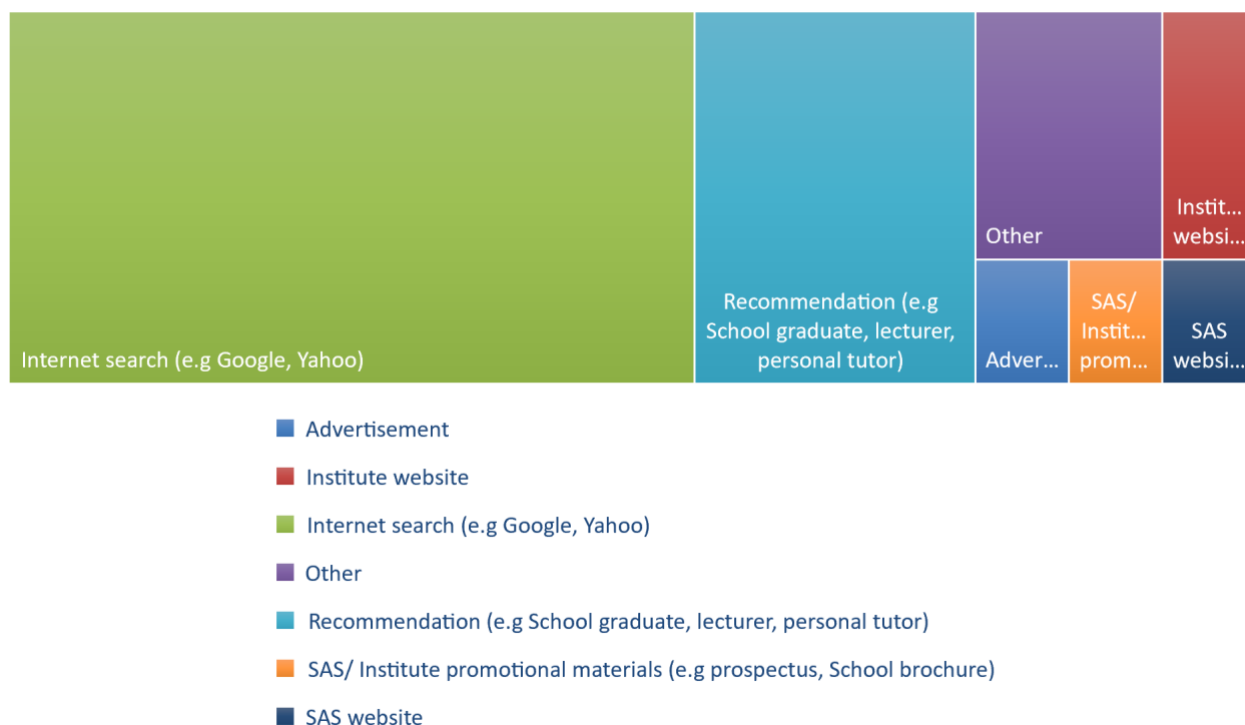
Student profile comparison

Fig 2



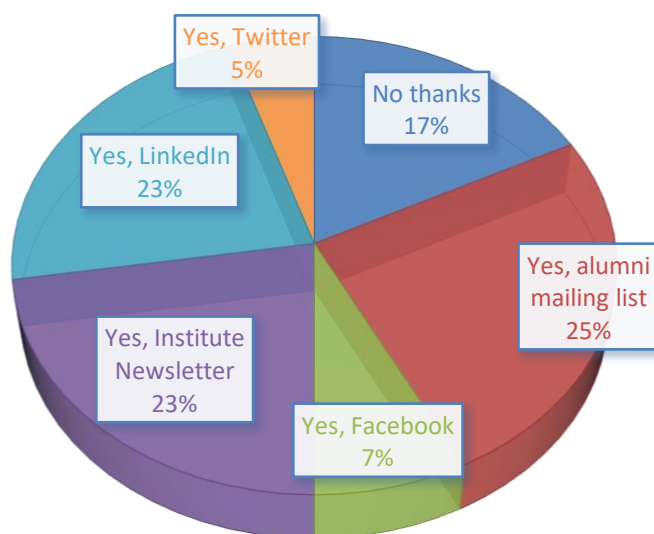
When asked how they found out about their degree programme, most respondents continued to indicate that they used the internet search engines.

Fig 3 - Q34. How did you first find out about your degree programme?



Respondents were keen on staying in touch with the School, preferably via the alumni mailing lists (compared to the institute newsletter which was the preferred means last year).

Fig 4: Q44. Would you be interested in staying in touch through social networking sites and email?



2. Overall Satisfaction

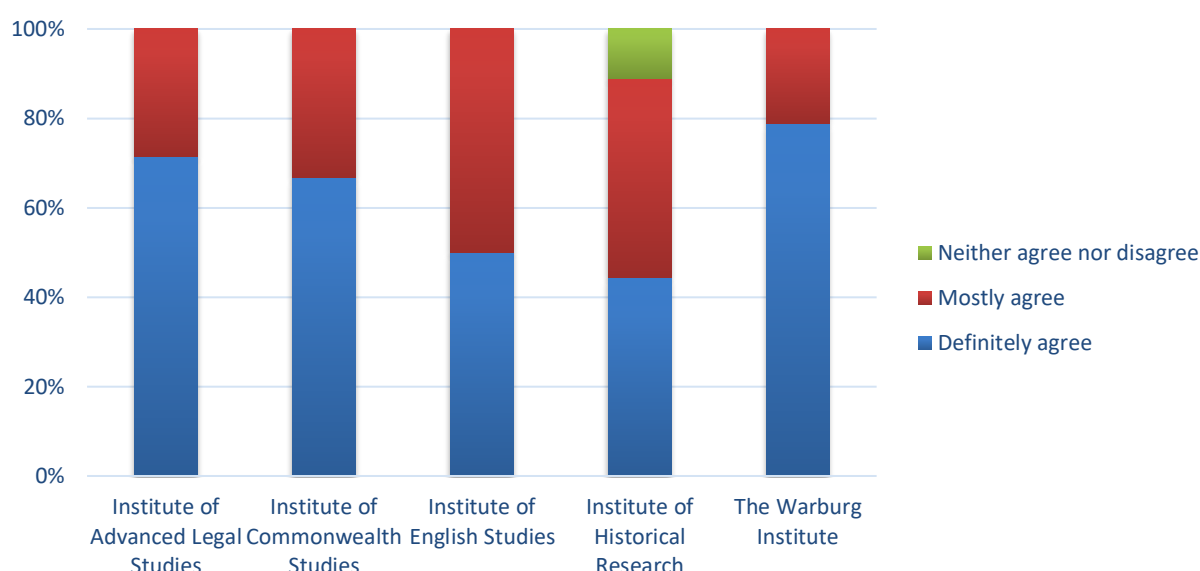
98% (compared to 81% in 2020-21) of SAS respondents were satisfied overall with the quality of the course. This represents a **16% increase (97.5%)** from the 2021PTES (81.25%) , and **the highest score ever** recorded over nearly 10 years.

The positive score is made of 67.5% (compared to 38% in 2020-21) of respondents who *definitely agree* and 40% (compared to 44% in 2020-21) who *mostly agree*. All institutes show an overall agreement. It is also composed of **100%** of the male respondents and **97%** of their female counterparts. All respondents outside the UK (**100%**) were satisfied with the quality of their course, while **96%** of the full-time respondents and **100%** of the part-time respondents were satisfied.

Table 1: SAS Overall Satisfaction Rate over the years

2022	98%
2021	81%
2020	84%
2018	84%
2017	93%
2016	74%
2015	78%
2014	90%
2013	81%

Fig 5: 23.1.a. Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the course



The School's results continue to be **much higher than the ones** recorded nationally or locally: (also 16%)

Table 2: Comparison with national and local results

PTES 2022	Survey sample	Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the course
SAS	40	98%
Sector	79591	82%
Russell Group	21401	80%
London	18971	80%

Respondents were asked to comment on two particular points in reference to their overall satisfaction of the course: the one thing that they enjoyed the most (a) and the one thing that merited improvements (b).

a) The analysis of the responses shows that **the teaching of the course** was the aspect of their programme which the respondents enjoyed the most (split between **the delivery of the**

teaching 16% and the **staff** 29%). This represents a 9% positive difference from the scores recorded nationally (from 44% to 35%). The comments on staff were particular positive showing a 13% difference from the comments recorded across the UK. **Learning opportunities**, and in particular the **type and breadth of course content**, were areas which received positive comments, slightly above the national rates.

Comments included:

- *The passion and enthusiasm of my professors has been excellent.*
- *I have enjoyed the opportunity to learn from experts in the field. Field trips have also been a highlight of the course.*
- *The teachers of the modules I have taken have been excellent well prepared, enthusiastic and stimulating.*
- *The passion of the professors, it is crystal clear that they care a lot and this allows the students to be constantly engaged and challenged*
- *I have enjoyed the opportunity to learn from experts in the field. Field trips have also been a highlight of the course.*
- *I've enjoyed meeting and learning from leading academic experts in my field through this course.*
- *The interdisciplinary nature of the course has been its greatest strength. I have enjoyed engaging with such a wide range of subjects.*
- *The field trips we went on last summer were helpful and most instructive.*
- *It has been a very intense learning experience. This has both been a joy and a challenge but has been supported in times of need. I would wish it no other way.*

b) **Contact time with staff**, as well as part of **Assessment and Feedback, Organisation & Management** and **Learning Resources** were areas which respondents felt that the School needed to improve on. **Organisation & Management** still attracted more positive comments than nationally. Whereas the comments on **Learning resources** reinforced the lowest results received, compared with national results, confirming this is an area which require focused improvement.

Comments included:

- *Perhaps more variation in the assignments - not just 4000 word essays.*
- *I have never queried the marks received, but I found sometimes that the comments were of poor quality and therefore unhelpful. Especially so, when the markers, by their comments and their own misquotes, revealed that they were quite unfamiliar with the any of the works on the booklist and authors quoted.*
- *The admin/organisation of the course, mainly in terms of the VLE working as it should and being up to date. For example, I had some trouble accessing lecture slides that should have been uploaded, or finding accurate submission dates for assessments in advance.*
- *I would improve communication about assignment expectations and guidance.*
- *Access to more digital resources - this is because I worked full time whilst studying so not always that easy to physically visit the library. Having said that all tutors made weekly reading material available online which was a huge help and very much appreciated.*
- *The access across different resources such as online libraries should be more streamlined and easier to access. Frequent frustration at not being able to access something due to crossed wires or a site not responding, (despite being extremely computer literate)*
- *It took as long as three weeks for some students to receive ID cards, which contain a barcode number that allows us to access library resources remotely. We could not complete our initial readings because we could not access all articles online.*

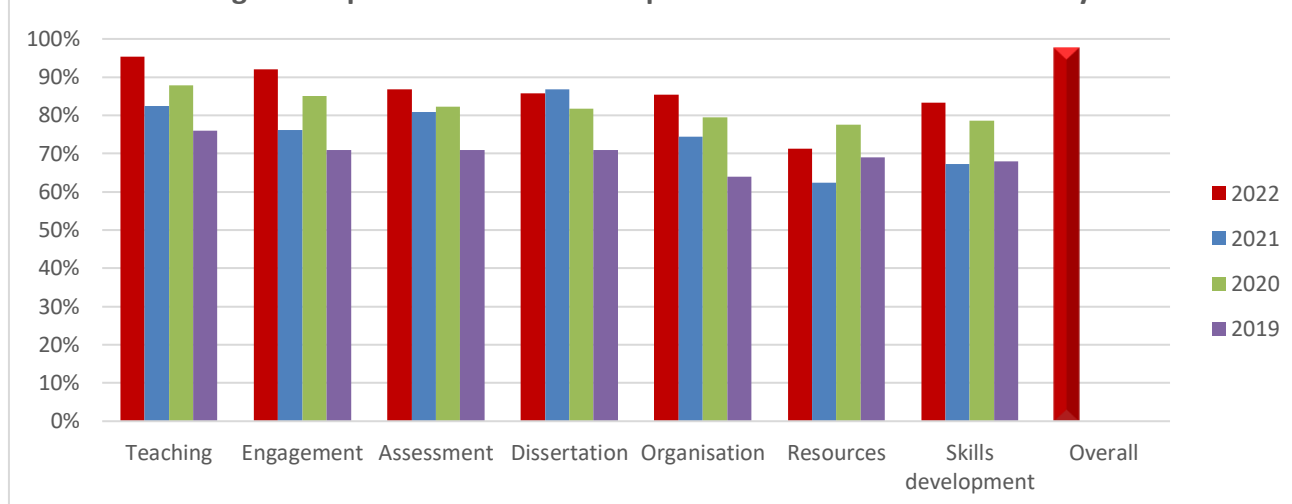
3. Trends per areas of experience

- a) The combined satisfaction rate (based on the average score of all areas of experience put together) shows an average **increase of 10%** (from 75% in 2021 to 85% overall average). This is due to the results shown in the **Quality of Teaching and Learning, Engagement, Organisation & Management** as well as **Skills Development** areas, which recorded a significant **increase up to 16%** since the 2021 PTES.

Table 3: Comparison of SAS satisfaction averages per area of experience

Areas	PTES 2022	PTES 2021	Comparison with 2021	PTES 2020	PTES 2019	PTES 2018	PTES 2017	PTES 2016	PTES 2015	PTES 2014
Quality of Teaching and Learning	95%	83%	13%	88%	76%	81%	91%	80%	83%	93%
Engagement	92%	76%	16%	85%	71%	78%	87%	77%	75%	86%
Assessment and Feedback	87%	81%	6%	82%	71%	76%	81%	68%	69%	67%
Dissertation or major project	86%	87%	-1%	82%	71%	85%	89%	76%	75%	67%
Organisation and Management	85%	74%	11%	79%	64%	71%	80%	73%	69%	69%
Resources and services	71%	62%	9%	78%	69%	70%	79%	66%	72%	78%
Skills Development	83%	67%	16%	79%	68%	73%	80%	73%	68%	73%
Support [New]	79%	74%	5%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Fig 6: Comparison of areas of experience over the last four surveys



The **highest average satisfaction increase (+16%)** is showing in 2 areas: **Engagement and Skills Development**, demonstrating the highest results to date. Male and overseas respondents had a more positive expenditure:

- **Engagement:** the results are due to the fact that the respondents felt they had more opportunities to discuss with their peers and were more satisfied that their workload was manageable. (details available in the appendix)
- **Skills Development:** the results are led by an overall increase in satisfaction across all the elements of this area, and in particular by the fact that the respondents felt more positive about the development of their confidence, that they were able to communicate more, feeling better prepared for the future. (details available in the appendix)

Two areas showed satisfaction levels **below 80%: Resources & Services and Support:**

- *Resources & Services:* the reasons were focused on the lack of appropriate IT resources and facilities on campus as well as having had difficulty accessing specific resources (both showed a satisfaction rate below 60%) (details available in the appendix)
- *Support:* *the overall satisfaction in this area is consistently below 80%, brought further down by the lack of support using IT to access resources to meet the students' needs.* (details available in the appendix)

Some interesting variances can be seen when looking at the responses **through the gender lens.**

While male and female respondents overall agree on the quality of teaching, engagement and assessment, they do differ when it comes to *the management of their courses or the support of the School:*

- While 98% of the male respondents were satisfied with the organisation and management of the programme, only 81% of the female respondents felt the same.
- A bigger gap can be seen when reporting on the School's support, whereby 90% of the of the male respondents were satisfied with the organisation and management of the programme, only 75% of the female respondents felt the same.

It is worth noting that 100% of the male respondents were overall satisfied with the quality of their course, compared to 97% of the female respondents. Female students represented the vast majority of the respondents (75%). The responses are the same across the age profile but do differ when analysed **by fee status**. For example 100% of the overseas students were overall satisfied with their course, while 96% of the home students felt the same. The only other difference worthy of note is the experience reported on the School's support: while 77% of the home students approved of the School's support, 83% of the overseas students approved. The trend does match the one reported nationwide.

- b) The survey continued to allow students to report on their experience of the **Pandemic**. In 2021-22, on average 80% of the respondents were satisfied with the School's support (the same average as noted in the previous survey):
- 82% felt that *Communications from [the School] in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic were appropriate and clear* (compared to 84% in the previous survey)
 - 81% felt that they had *received the support [they needed] from [the School] in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic* (compared to 83% in the previous survey)
 - **77%** felt that the School had *worked to ensure the quality of [their] academic experience during the Covid-19 pandemic* (compared to 72% in the previous survey)

More male respondents (93%) felt more positive on the *School support in relation to issues brought on by the Pandemic* than their female counterparts (77%). While the response by male students was comparable to the sector, SAS female respondents' response demonstrates a less positive experience than the female respondents across the UK (85% were satisfied with their institutions' support).

Comments were overall positive:

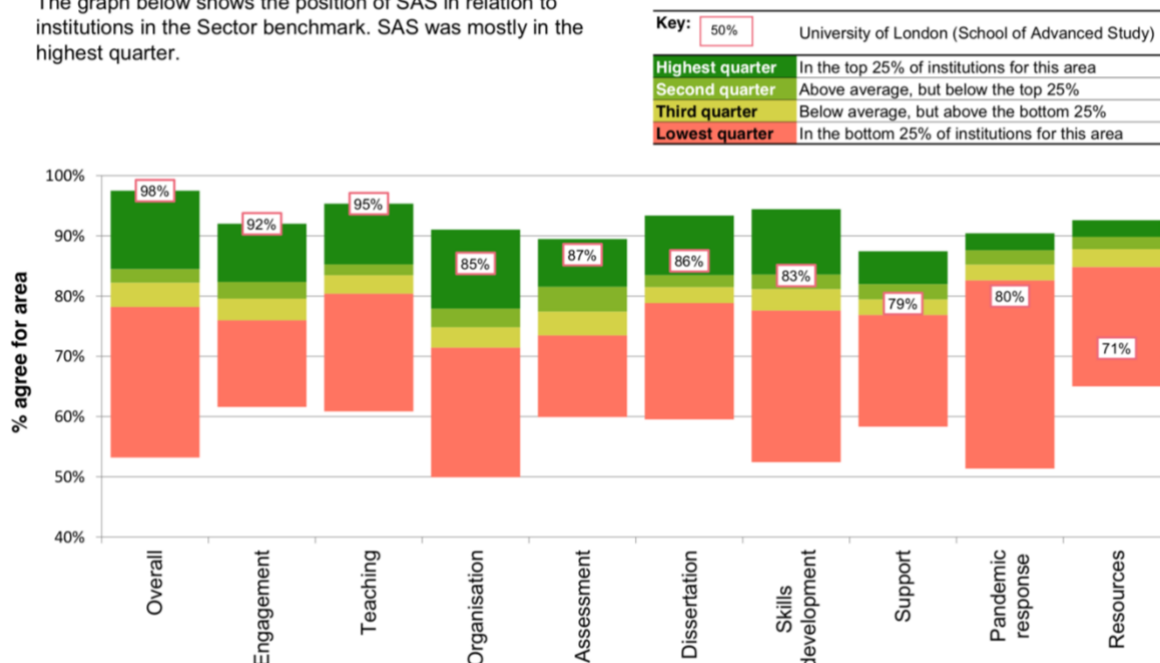
- *I am extremely grateful that there was good compliance with Covid regulations and in person teaching was possible*
- *Despite the challenging circumstances, staff did their best. The library were very cautious, only returning to in-person events relatively recently. This has certainly made the social side of the course more challenging, but perhaps for good reasons.*

- Sudden cancellations of classes was sometimes frustrating, if somewhat understandable, unless it was on the day as not all students live in London.

Areas of experience by quarters

The graph below shows the position of SAS in relation to institutions in the Sector benchmark. SAS was mostly in the highest quarter.

Fig 7



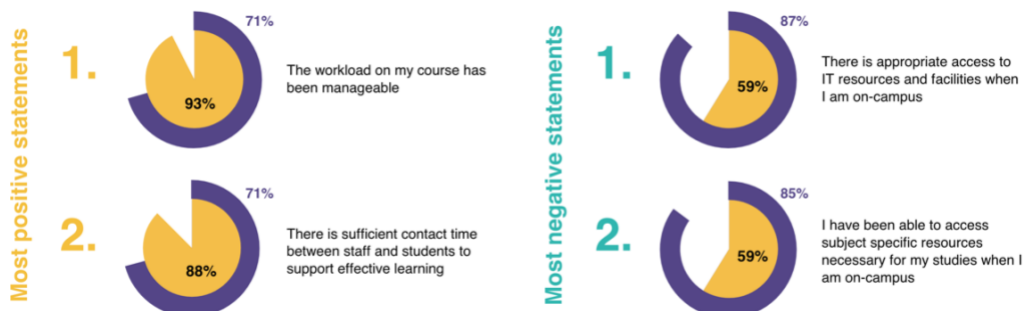
c) In comparison with **the global or local benchmarks**, the School is exhibiting a more positive experience across the areas, except for *Resources and Services* and approach to the Pandemic. *Resources and Services* area showed a 17% negative, below the sector, while the *Pandemic response* showed a 5.2% negative difference, below the Sector. *Teaching* is the area which showed the most positive significant difference with 12.2% above the Sector. The scores shown under *Resources and Services* have been the same for years and reflect some continuous limitations including lack of access to online academic and practical materials.

Fig 8: Comparison Most Positive and Negative Statements

Overview

At SAS there were 40 respondents to PTES 2022. The overall satisfaction they had with their studies was 98%, this was 16% higher than the score for the sector.

93% of students stated the workload on the course was manageable, 21% above the sector. Less positively, relative to the benchmark, just 59% of respondents stated there was appropriate access to IT resources and facilities when on-campus.



d) Only 15% of the respondents considered leaving their course, which represents a 16% decrease from the 31% recorded in 2021. It is the lowest score noted in over 6 years, and 2% lower than the national or local results (which recorded that 17% of their respondents considered leaving).

Table 4: Comparison of SAS results on Retention	
Institution/ mean average	Considered leaving or suspending course [Yes]
SAS 2022PTES	15%
SAS 2021PTES	31%
SAS 2020PTES	21%
SAS 2019PTES	33%
SAS 2018PTES	28%
SAS 2017PTES	21%
Sector	

The main reason remained the struggles of balancing study and other commitments.

Conclusion

The 2021-22 overall student experience (2022 PTES) shows a significant increase from the 2020-21 experience. Some results have improved because we have opened our campuses following the pandemic. One example has been the positive feedback for students due to having more opportunities to discuss things with their peers. Resources and Support services continue to require improvements, but the overall average of the student experience show a much higher satisfaction rate than with the national and local benchmarks.