



## Staff Survey 2008

**Bath Spa University**

**Summary Report**

August 2008

**CAPITA RESOURCING**  
PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT

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## CONTENTS

	Page
<b>Background</b>	1
Presentation of the Results	1
<b>Part A</b>	2
<b>Key positive issues</b>	2
<b>Key areas for improvement</b>	3
<b>Key Employee Engagement Indicators</b>	4
<b>Part B</b>	6
<b>Question Block 1: Work Life Balance</b>	6
<b>Question Block 2: Job Satisfaction</b>	7
<b>Question Block 3: Culture and Values</b>	19
<b>Question Block 4: Senior Management</b>	11
<b>Question Block 5: Your Role</b>	12
<b>Question Block 6: My Manager</b>	14
<b>Question Block 7: Appraisal/Review</b>	16
<b>Question Block 8: Leadership</b>	17
<b>Question Block 9: Pay and Conditions</b>	19
<b>Question Block 10: Physical Environment</b>	21
<b>Question Block 11: Health, Safety &amp; Welfare</b>	23
<b>Question Block 12: Work Related Stress</b>	25
<b>Question Block 13: Harassment &amp; Bullying</b>	31
<b>Question Block 14: Diversity &amp; Equality</b>	33
<b>Question Block 15: Communications</b>	38
<b>Question Block 16: Staff Involvement</b>	41
<b>Question Block 17: Learning &amp; Development</b>	43
<b>Question Block 18: Considering Leaving</b>	45
<b>Question Block 19: Managing Change</b>	48
<b>Question Block 20: Staff Comments</b>	51
<b>Question Block 21: About You</b>	52



# Bath Spa University

## Staff Opinion Survey 2008

### Background

In 2005 Bath Spa University undertook a survey designed to find out how people feel about working in the University. It was intended to repeat the survey periodically so that progress could be measured over time. The purpose of the questionnaire was to help the University take action to improve the quality of working life of all employees.

The survey used by the University was been developed by Capita People Development. The survey has already been used by a significant number of Higher Education Institutions who have found it a useful tool, and will help the University to measure it's results against those of other universities. During July and August 2008, the Survey Unit received completed questionnaires from 459 staff.

The largest group of participants in the survey (15%) was School of Education staff, with the next largest group participating being Bath School of Art and Design staff (8%).

The University response rate of 55% is higher than the average 48% achieved by the 32 other Higher Education Institutions in which the Survey Unit has undertaken surveys.

### Presentation of the Results

This report presents a summary of the results for the whole University i.e. everyone who participated in the survey, in narrative, chart and table format.

#### Part A includes:

- Top positive issues rated by staff, and the issues staff were least satisfied with.
- Key employee engagement indicators and other Universities comparisons.

#### Part B includes:

- A section by section presentation of the survey results in the same order as the questionnaire for ease of reference.

Each section displays questions in appropriate groups in chart format using percentages, with the number of staff responding displayed at the end of each question.

## **PART A**

### **Key positive issues**

- Most respondents feel they are interested in the University; to them it's not just a job.
- Most respondents feel they have a clear understanding about expected standards of behaviour and what they are expected to achieve in their job, and that they have a clear understanding about expected standards of performance and their role within the University.
- Most respondents felt their School or Department delivers a good quality service to students, other departments or BSU partners.
- Most respondents generally enjoy their work, think the University is a good place to work and say their motivation at work is generally high.
- Most respondents said that their line manager/supervisor is easy to talk to, is available when needed and supportive in a personal crisis. They also felt that their line manager/supervisor ensures they have the skills to be able to do their job well, gives them recognition for work done well, provides them with help and support to enable them to achieve their objectives, understands the technical aspects of their work and has sufficient authority to make decisions.
- Most respondents feel the University offers good pension schemes, and think that maternity entitlement and the sick pay scheme are good.
- Most respondents believe the University acts fairly with regard to recruitment and respects equally people of different nationality, ethnicity, religion, genders, ages, disability and sexual orientation.
- Most respondents said their work offers them the opportunity to use their abilities and initiative. They also said they are able to decide on their own how to go about doing their work and have clear, planned goals and objectives for their job.
- Most respondents feel their skills and experience are valued by their work colleagues and are satisfied with the support they receive from them. They also feel satisfied with the support they get from their immediate manager.
- Most respondents are able to work their regular working hours without difficulties and can approach their manager to talk openly about flexible working.
- Most respondents feel part of their Department or School.
- Most respondents feel if they want to put forward new ideas or suggestions for improvement, they know how to do so.
- Most respondents said they are not looking to leave the University as soon as they can find another job.

### **Key areas for improvement**

- Many respondents feel they have had to put in a lot of extra time in the last 12 months to meet the demands of their workload.
- Many respondents feel generally more could be done to help staff prepare for and cope with change and many also felt recent changes have not been well communicated or explained, or had a positive impact. Respondents also said that generally, change within the University is not managed well, and that they felt recent changes had not delivered business improvements.
- Many respondents do not feel that there are opportunities for career progression for them in the University.
- Many respondents feel that different parts of the University do not communicate effectively with each other, and that communication between senior management and staff is not effective.
- Many respondents do not feel the University is doing a good job of retaining its most talented people.
- Many respondents feel too many approvals are needed for routine decisions.
- Many respondents do not feel there is good communication or support for managers on people management and leadership.

### **Key Employee Engagement Indicators**

The following table compares some of the key results from the survey for the University and other HEIs. The table shows the key questions included in the survey that measure employee engagement. These questions and staff perceptions have been identified through Capita's research as being linked directly to the quality of services provided by staff within organisations.

Making comparisons helps put the results into context, and aids interpretation. However, just because the University may do well or poorly relative to other HEIs should not be the only factor which determines whether an issue is of significance and whether it should be prioritised for action. When deciding on what should be addressed in the University, the key issues identified by staff as requiring improvement (i.e. the most negative perceptions) must also be considered.

The table shows the positive percentages for the University and for other HEIs and indicates where the University percentage score is statistically significantly different i.e. a real difference<sup>1</sup> than the score for other HEIs.

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<sup>1</sup> In statistics a result is called **significant** if it is unlikely to have occurred by chance. "A statistically significant difference" simply means there is statistical evidence that there is a real difference; it does not mean the difference is necessarily large, important or significant in the usual sense of the word.

**Employee Engagement Questions: where a high score is a good result**

Question	Bath Spa University positive%	HEI positive %	Statistically Significant
The University is a good place to work	91%	86%	Yes
My motivation at work is generally high	92%	80%	Yes
I understand what the strategic objectives of the University are	77%	76%	No
The University Senior Management Team manage and lead the University well <sup>2</sup>	65%	62%	No
I am satisfied my current job and level of responsibility	75%	69%	Yes
My team leader/line manager/immediate supervisor keeps me informed about things I should know about	74%	69%	Yes
I feel fairly paid for the work I do	67%	48%	Yes
I feel safe and secure in my working environment	94%	90%	Yes
Do you know how to report accidents and incidents?	59%	70%	Yes
On the whole, communication in the University is effective	56%	58%	No
My immediate manager helps me find a good work-life balance	76%	69%	Yes
I feel the University delivers good quality service to students and/or other departments/BSU partners	84%	87%	No
Have you had an individual appraisal/review in the last 12 months?	77%	80%	Yes
I feel able to voice my opinions	83%	79%	Yes
I am satisfied with my current level of learning and development	73%	68%	Yes

**Employee Engagement Questions: where a low score is a good result**

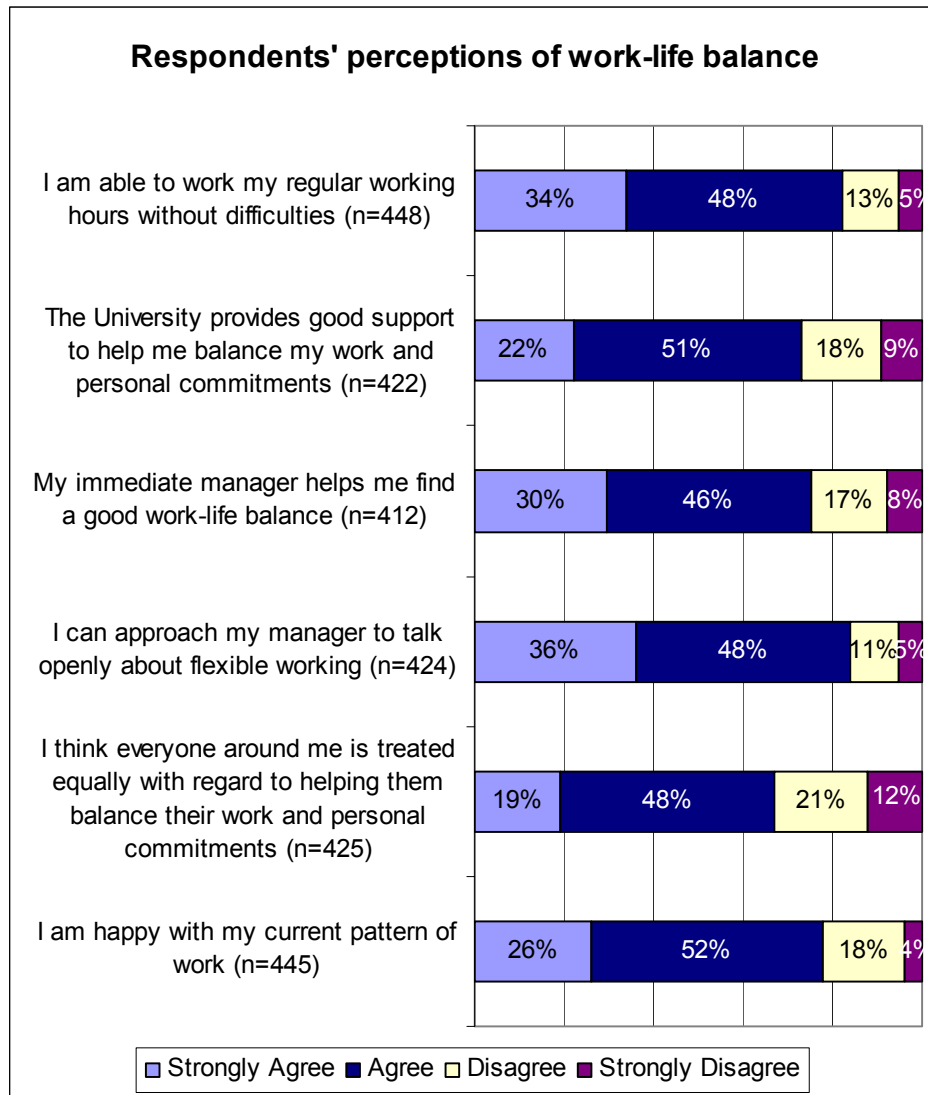
Question	Bath Spa University positive %	HEI positive %	Statistically Significant
Overall I feel unduly stressed at work	28%	40%	Yes
Are you <i>currently</i> being harassed or bullied at work?	6%	5%	No
Have you felt discriminated against at work in the last 12 months?	7%	12%	Yes
I often think about leaving the University	35%	41%	Yes
Generally, more could be done to help staff prepare for and cope with change.	73%	81%	Yes

<sup>2</sup> excludes those individuals who did 'not know'

## PART B

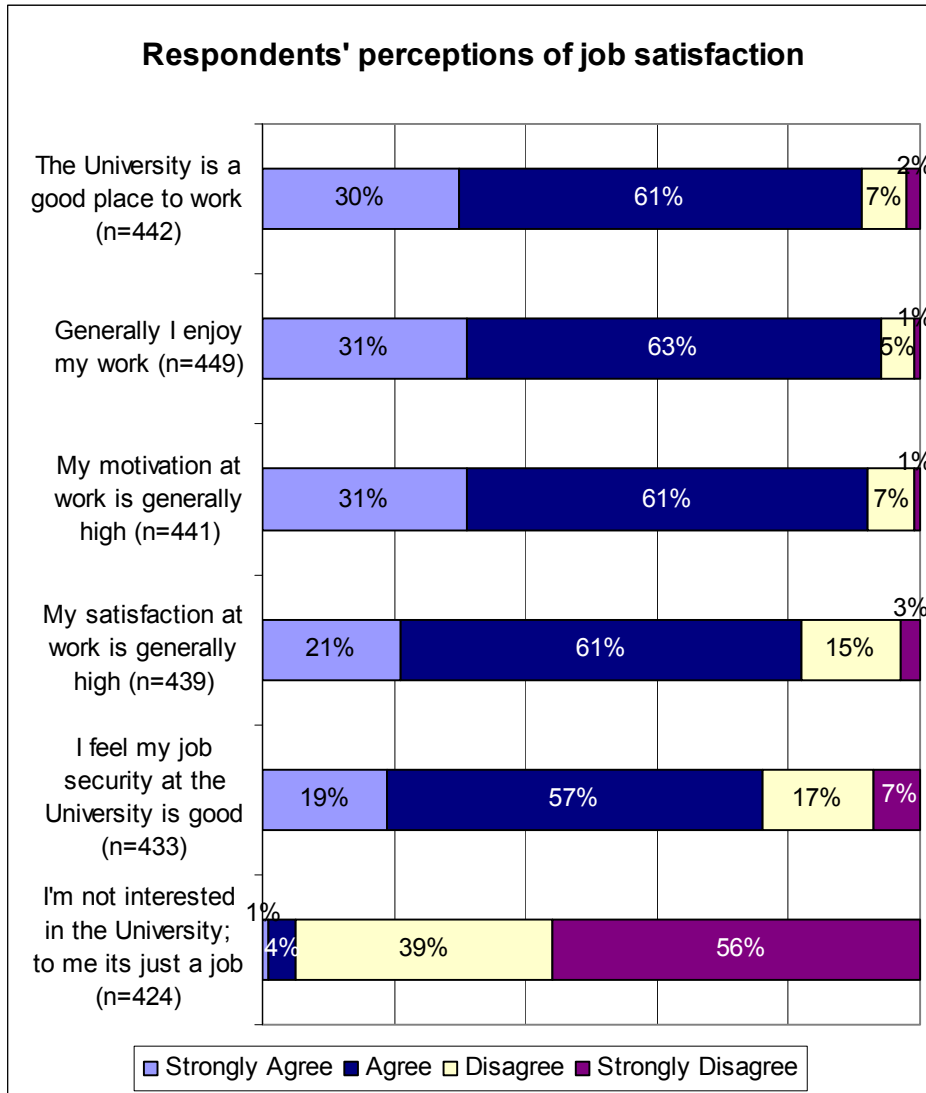
### Question Block 1: Work Life Balance

As shown in the chart below, the majority of respondents (84%) agreed that they are able to approach their manager to talk openly about flexible working, while 67% felt that everyone around them is treated equally with regard to helping them balance their work and personal commitments.

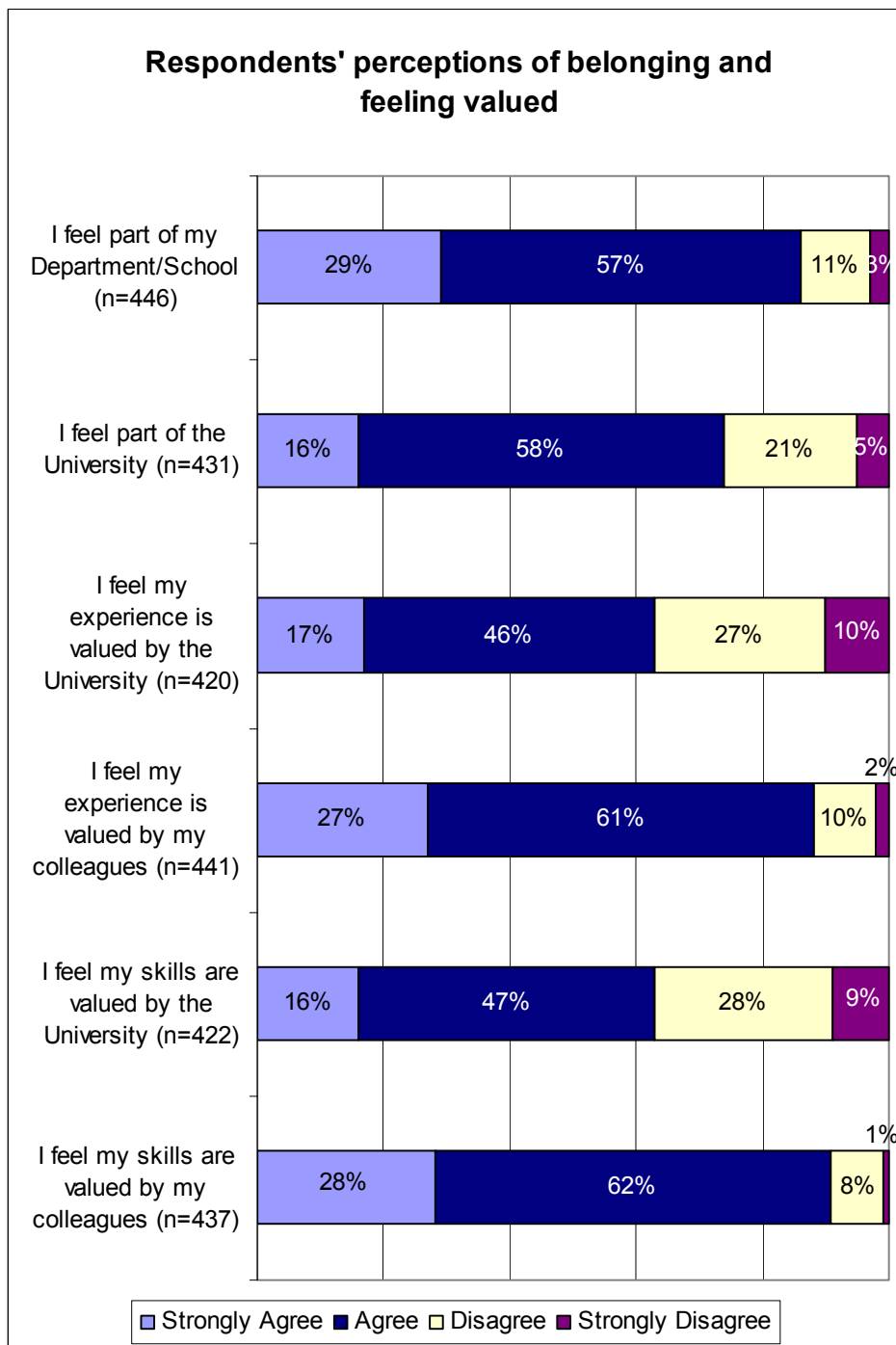


## Question Block 2: Job Satisfaction

As can be seen from the chart below, around 94% of respondents said that generally, they enjoy their work, while 76% said they feel their job security at the University is good.

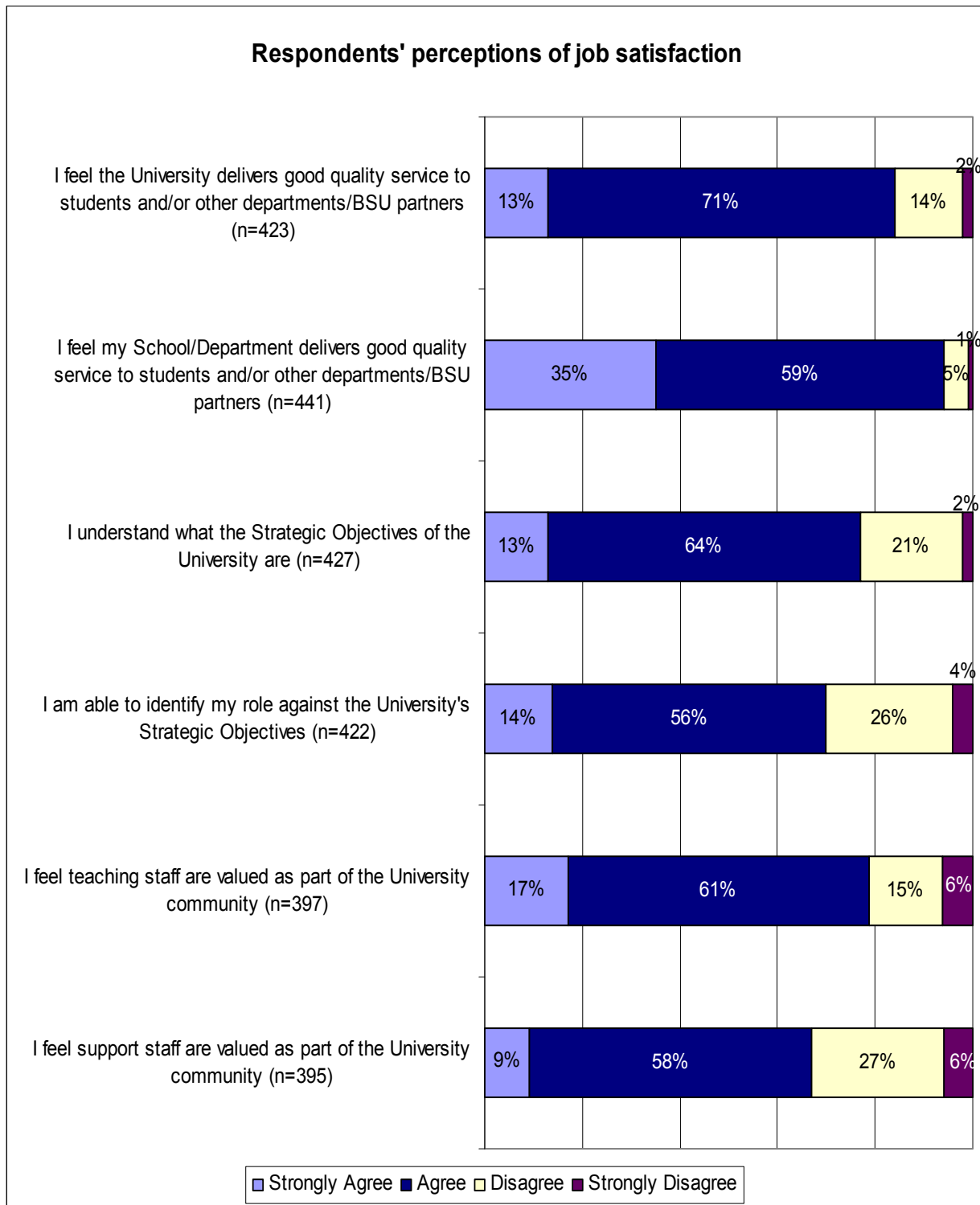


Ninety per cent of respondents said they feel their skills are valued by their colleagues, while 63% said they feel their skills and their experience (also 63%) are valued by the University.



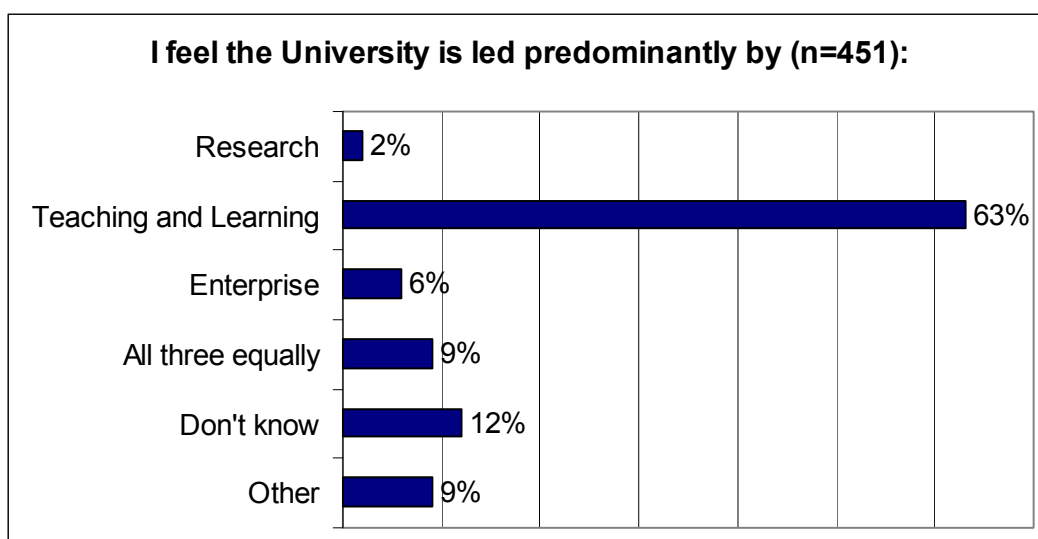
### Question Block 3: Culture and Values

Around 94% of respondents felt that their School or Department delivers good quality service to students and/or other departments/BSU partners.



The majority of respondents (73%) agreed that the University is doing a good job or retaining of recruiting the right people for its future, while 46% felt the University is doing a good job of retaining its most talented people.

Respondents were asked what they felt the University was predominantly led by. The highest proportion (63%) feel the University is predominantly led by teaching and learning, whilst 2% said the University is led by research.

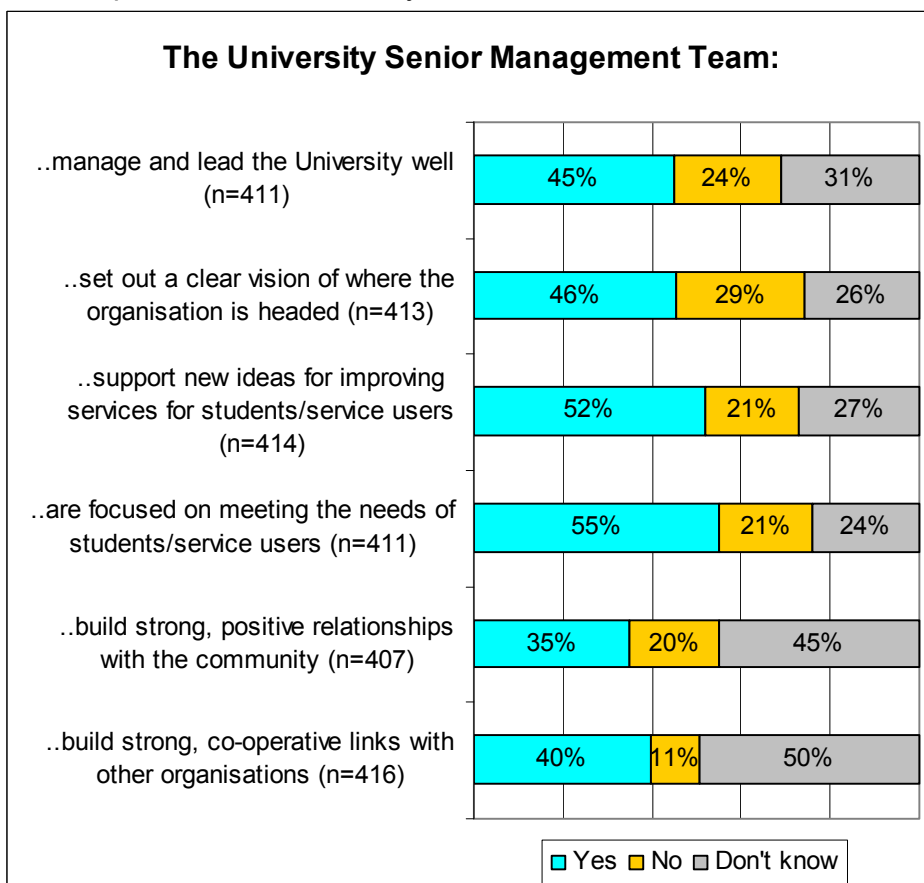


Respondents were invited to list other factors by which they feel the University is predominantly lead. Unless specified otherwise, the answers below were given by a single respondent:

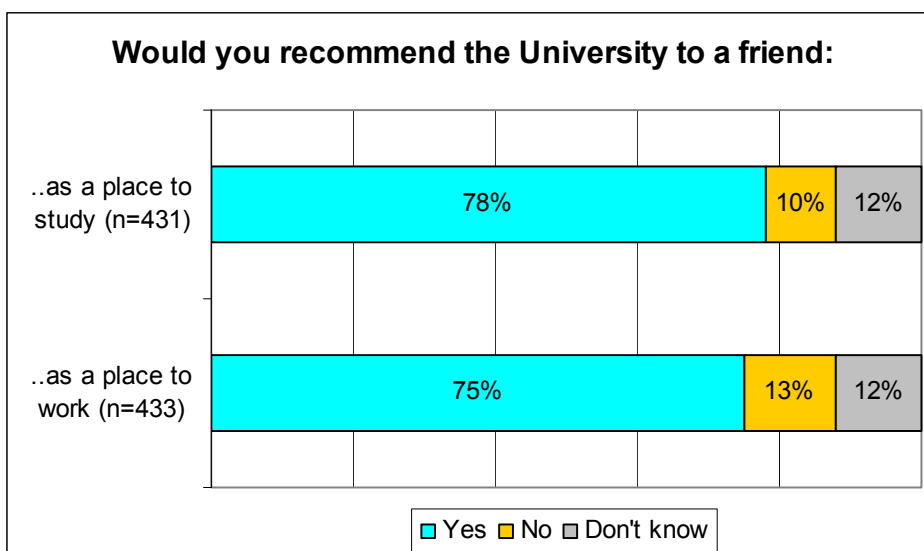
- Finance/funding (24 respondents)
- Unilateral decisions of senior staff (4 respondents)
- Combination of teaching and research (3 respondents)
- Government initiatives (2 respondents)
- Learning of both staff and students (2 respondents)
- Processes and methods that have previously proved successful (2 respondents)
- Retention of students
- Employability
- Image
- Focus is different for different individuals
- Inter-departmental politics
- League table ratings

## Question Block 4: Senior Management

Respondents were asked about the performance of the University Senior Management Team. Fifty-five per cent felt that Senior Management are focused on meeting the needs of students/service users, while thirty-five per cent felt that Senior Management build strong positive relationships with the community.

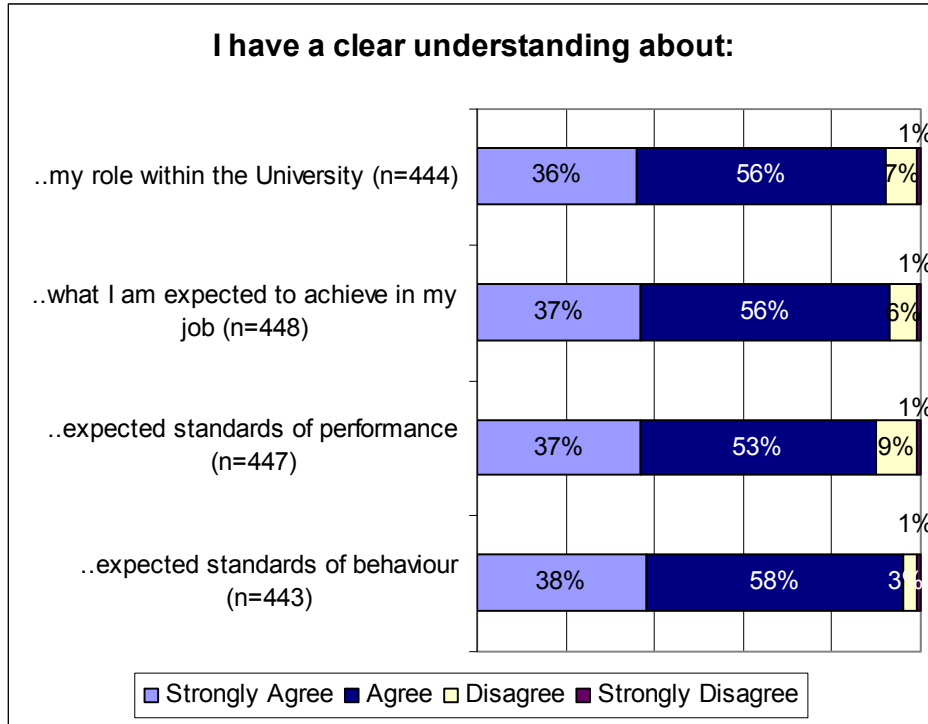


Around 78% of respondents would recommend the University to a friend as a place to study, and 75% would recommend the University as a place to work.

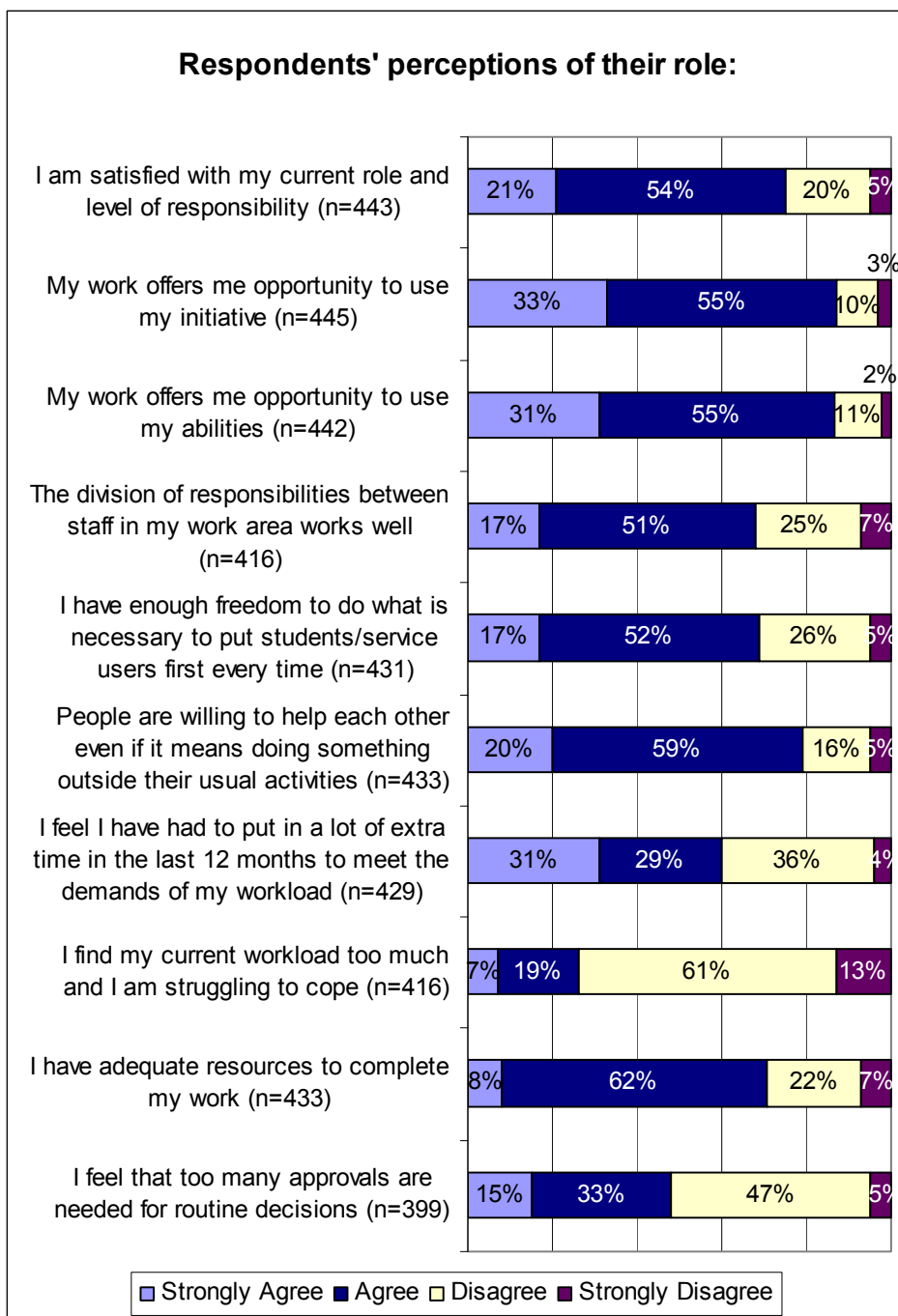


## Question Block 5: Your Role

As can be seen from the chart below, ninety-six per cent of respondents had a clear understanding of the standards of behaviour expected from them and 90% had a clear understanding of the standards of performance expected from them.

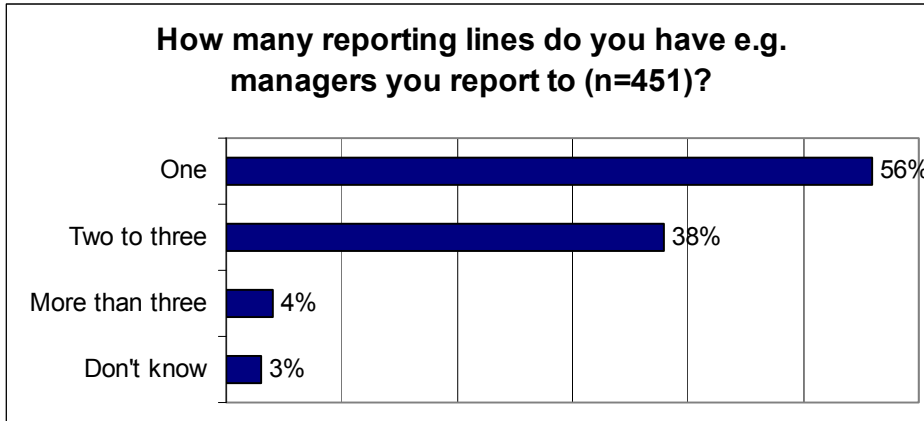


Respondents were asked their perceptions of their role. Eighty-eight per cent said their work offers them the opportunity to use their initiative, while 68% said the division of responsibilities between staff in their work area works well.

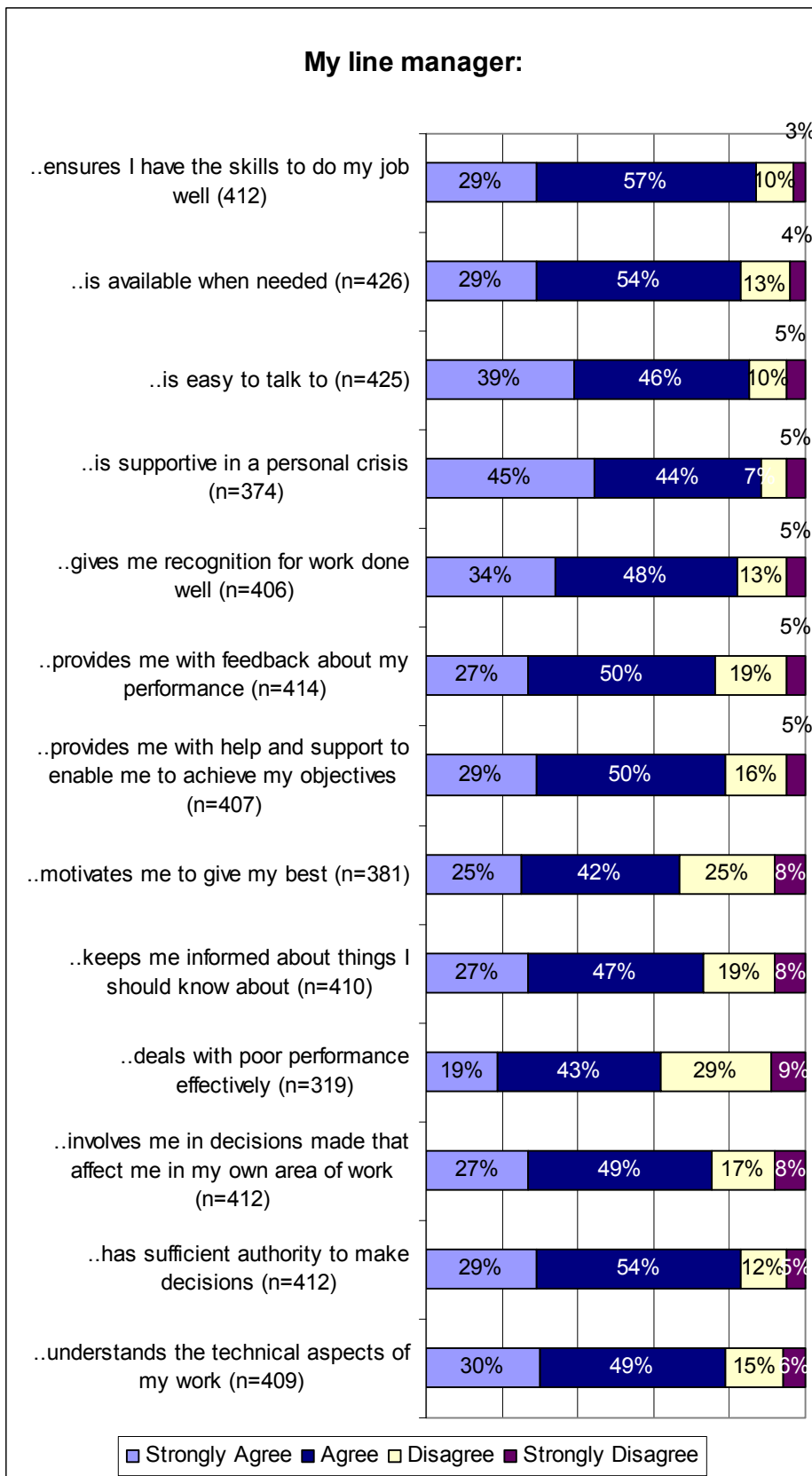


## Question Block 6: My Manager

As can be seen from the charts below, 4% of respondents reported to more than three managers, whilst 56% report to a single manager.

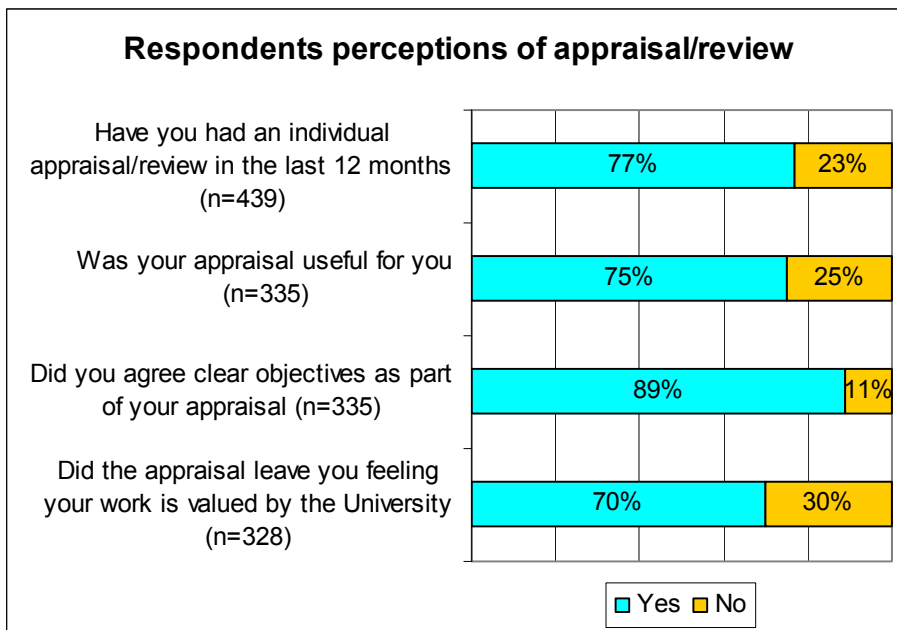


Respondents were also asked their perceptions of their team leader, line manager or immediate supervisor. Eighty-nine per cent said their manager is supportive in a personal crisis, while 62% said their manager deals with poor performance effectively.

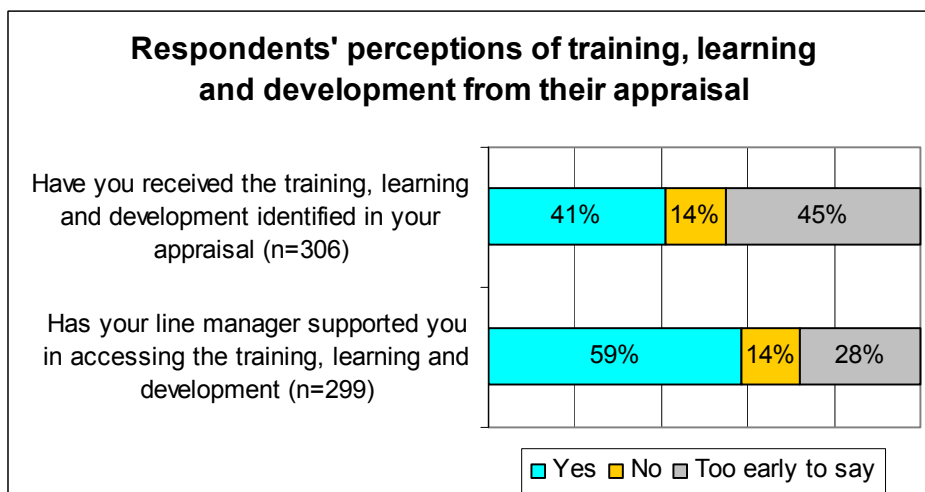


## Question Block 7: Appraisal/Review

Respondents were asked for their perceptions of appraisal within the University. Seventy-seven per cent said they had had an individual appraisal/review in the last 12 months. Around 89% said they had agreed clear objectives as part of their appraisal, while 70% said their appraisal left them feeling their work is valued by the University.

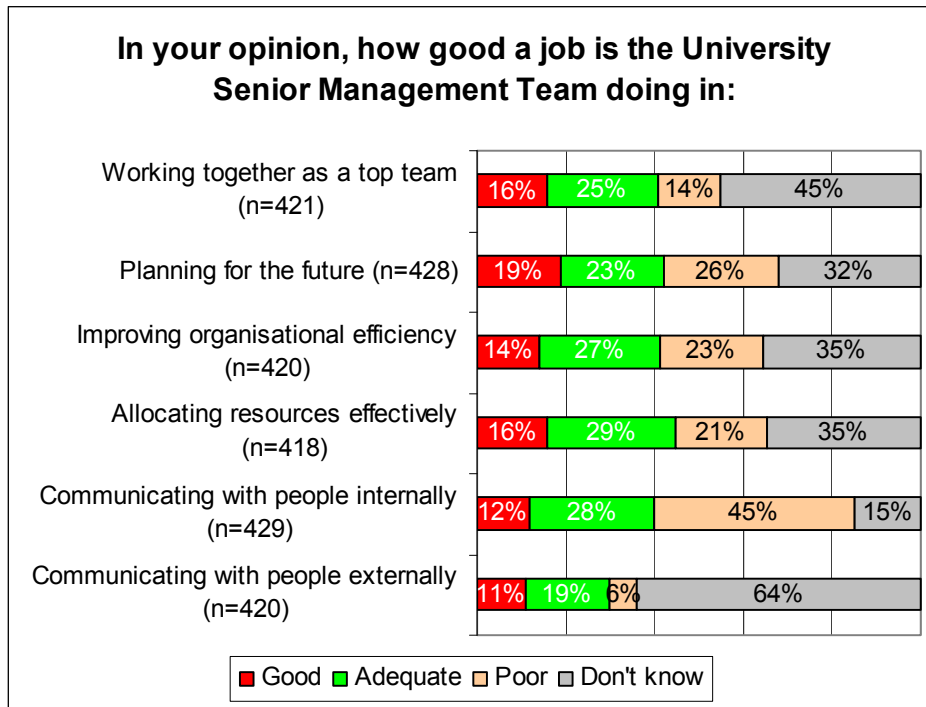


Around 41% of respondents said they have received the training, learning and development identified in their appraisal, while 59% said their line manager has supported them in accessing the training, learning and development.

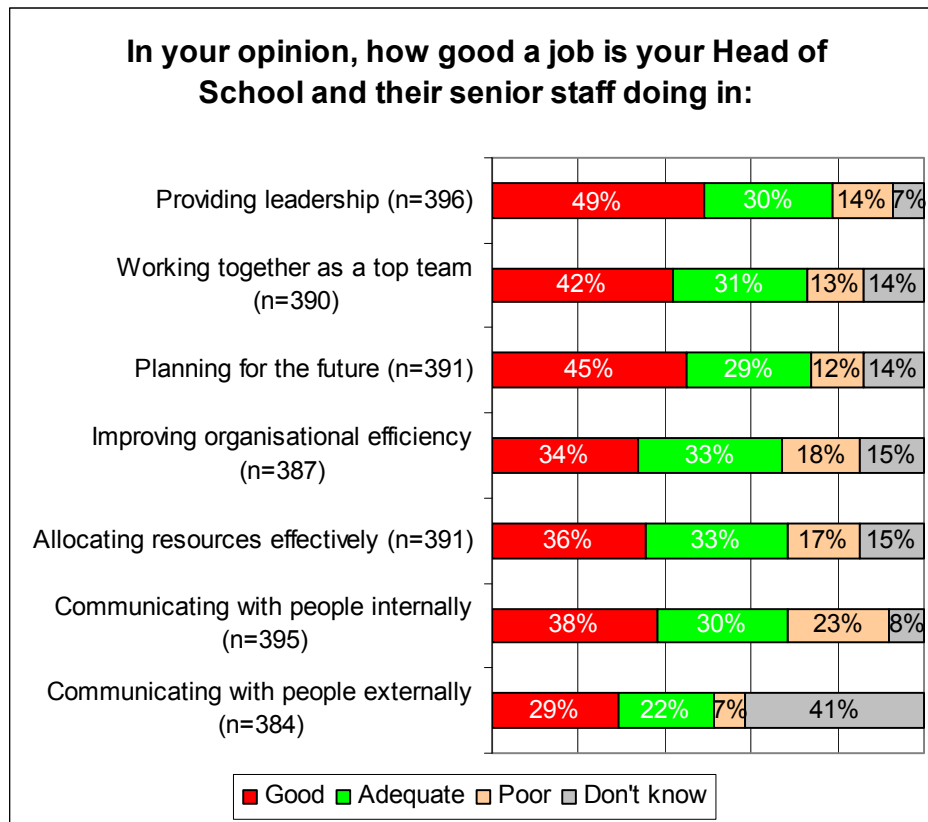


## Question Block 8: Leadership

Respondents were asked for their perceptions of leadership within the University. Forty-five per cent of respondents feel that the University Senior Management Team is doing a good or adequate job of allocating resources effectively. Around 30% of respondents feel that the University Senior Management Team is doing a good or adequate job of communicating with people externally.

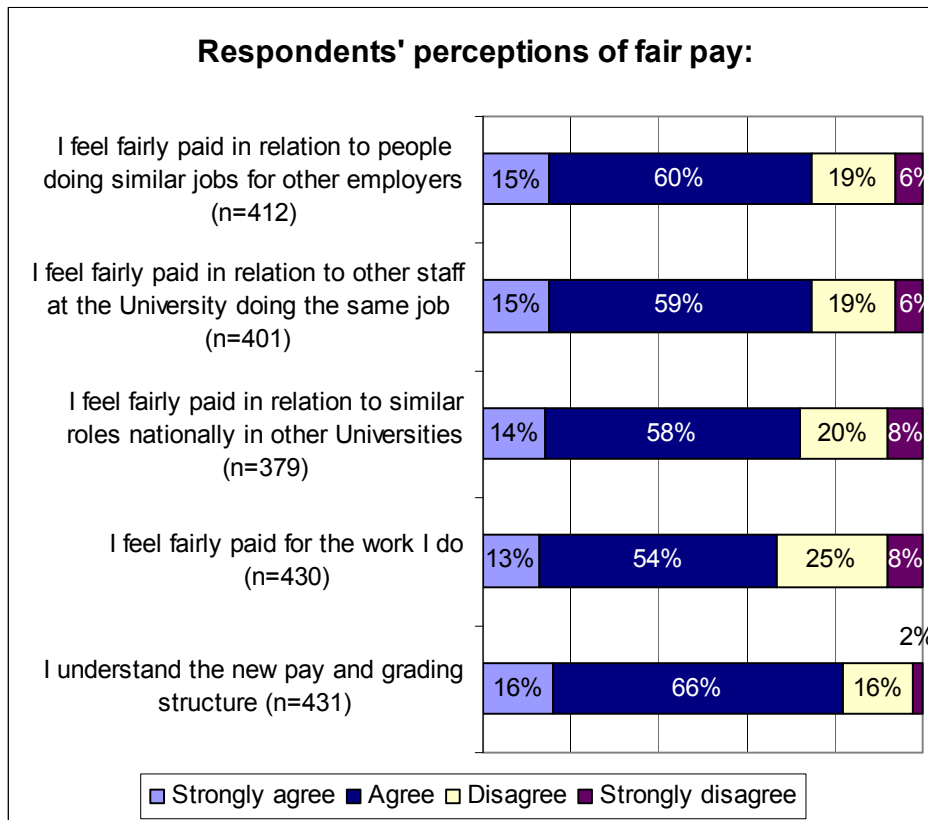


Respondents were also asked about their Head of School and their senior staff. Seventy-nine per cent felt their Head of School and senior staff are doing a good or adequate job of providing leadership and 51% felt that the Head of School and senior staff are doing a good or adequate job of communicating with people externally.

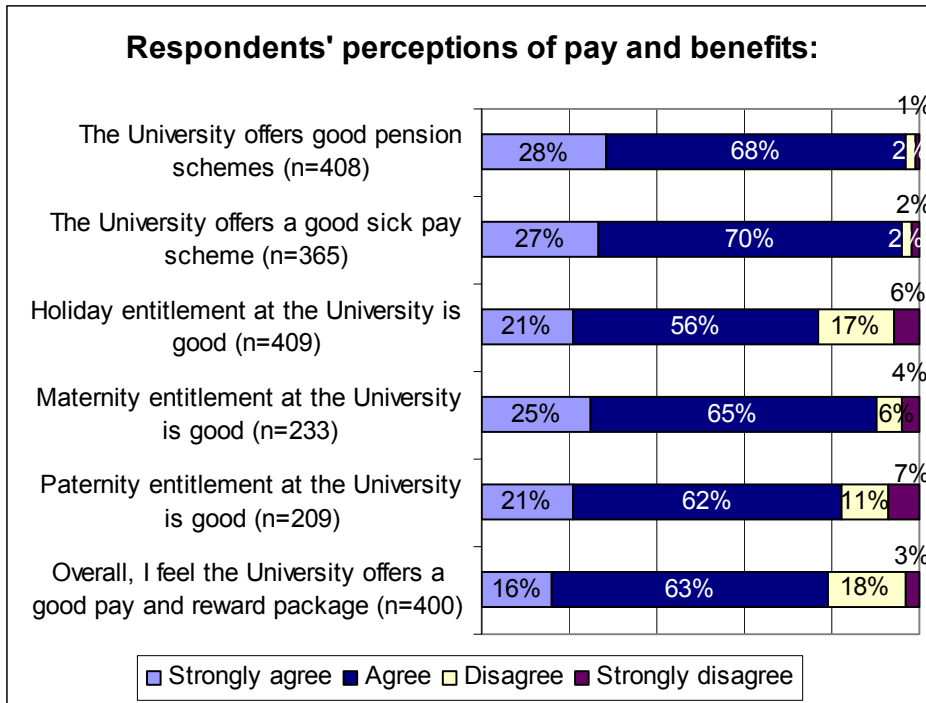


## Question Block 9: Pay & Conditions

Respondents were asked a number of questions relating to fairness of pay. As can be seen from the chart below, 82% of respondents understand the new pay and grading structure, while a lower percentage (67%) feel fairly paid for the work they do.

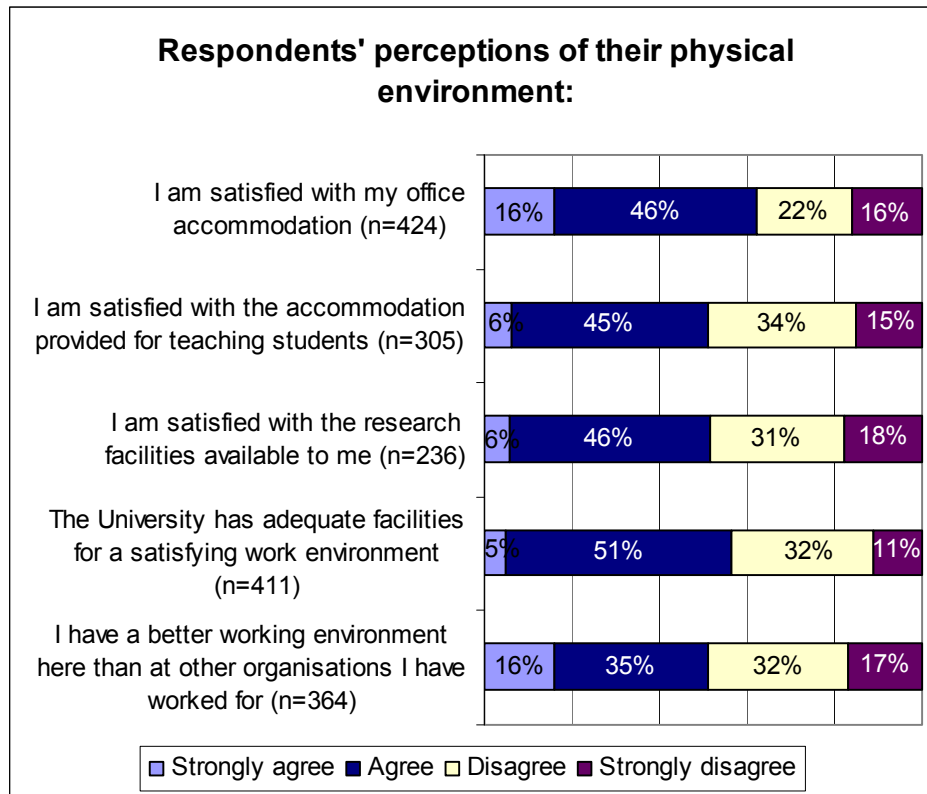


The survey also asked respondents for their perceptions of pay and non pay benefits. As can be seen from the following chart, 97% of respondents feel that the University offers a good sick pay scheme, while 77% feel that holiday entitlement at the University is good.

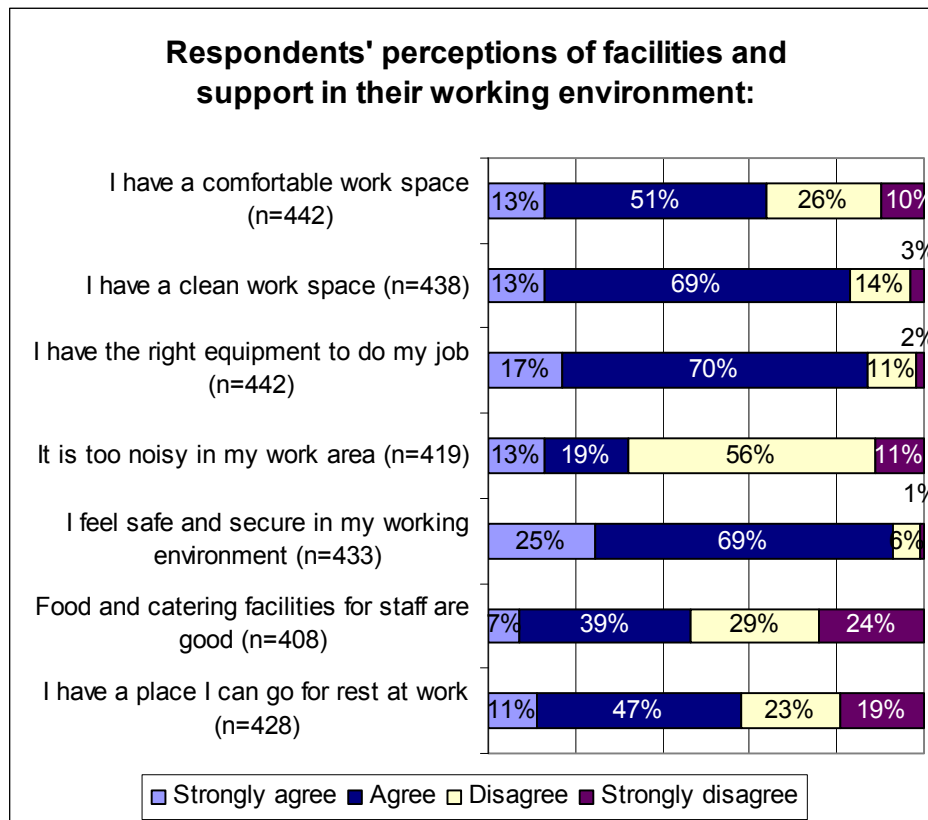


## Question Block 10: Physical Environment

Respondents were asked for their perceptions of their physical environment at work. Around 62% of respondents said they are satisfied with their office accommodation, while 51% said they are satisfied with the accommodation provided for teaching students and that they have a better working environment at the University than at other organisations they have worked for.

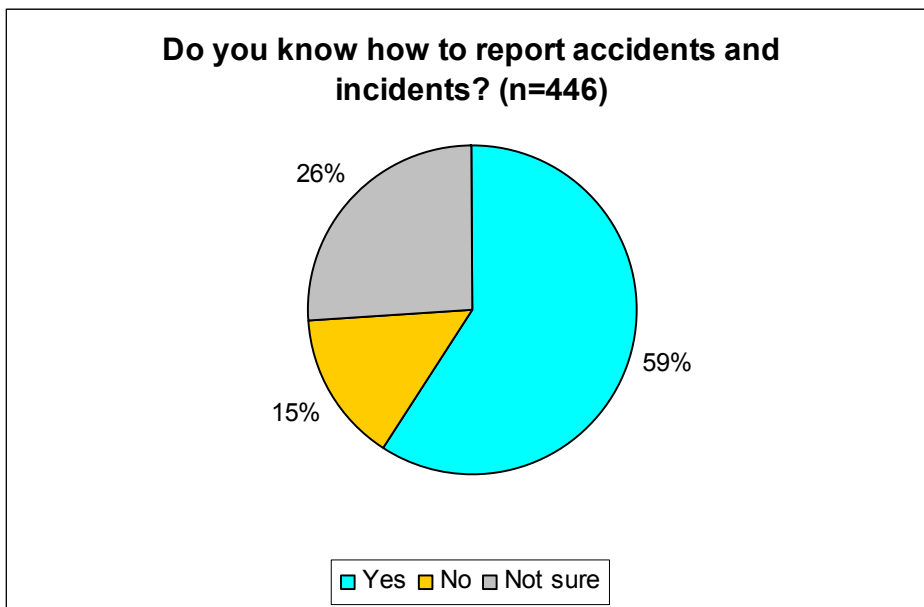


Respondents were also asked about facilities and support in their working environment. Ninety-four per cent of respondents said they feel safe and secure in their working environment, while 46% said they feel that food and catering facilities for staff are good.

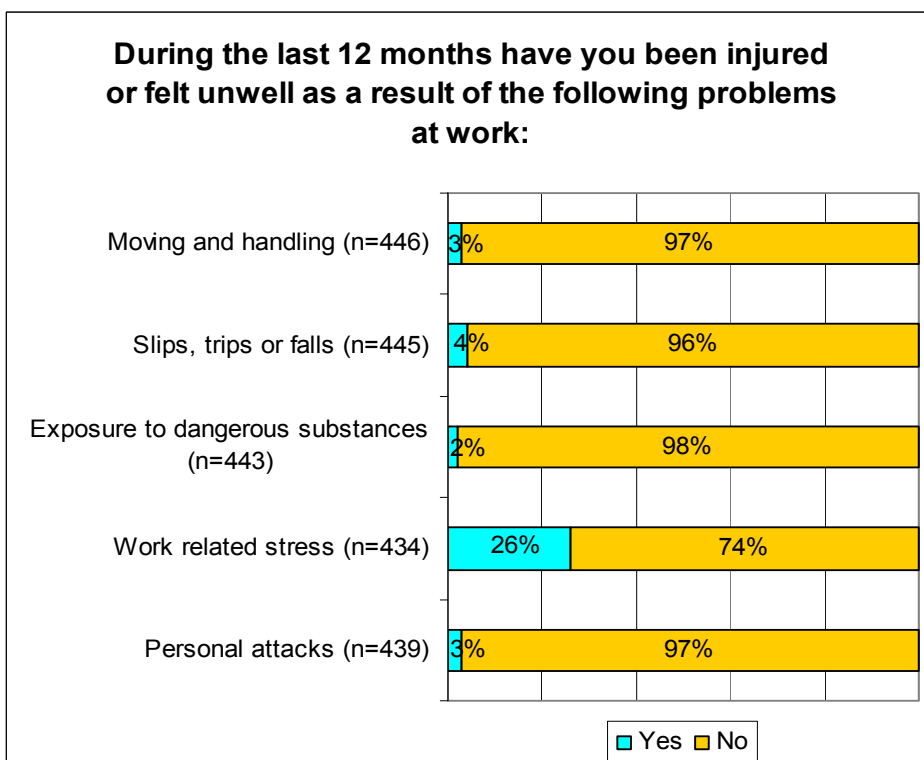


## Question Block 11: Health, Safety and Welfare

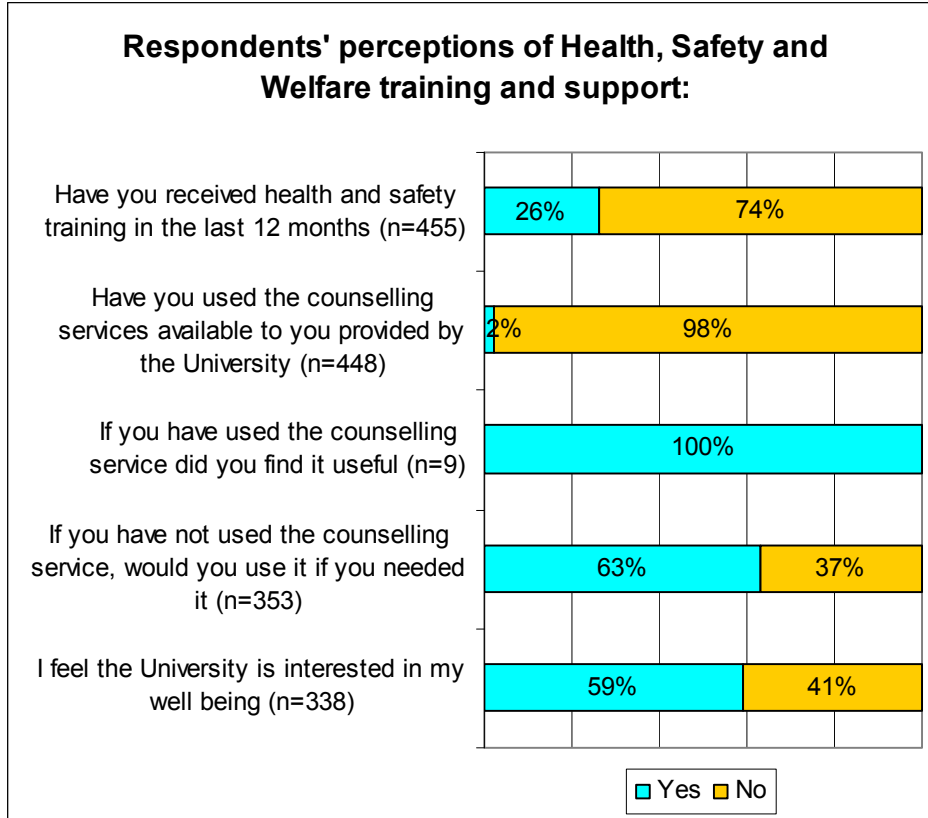
Respondents were asked about health, safety and welfare within the University. As can be seen from the chart below, 59% said they know how to report accidents and incidents, 15% of respondents do not and 26% were not sure.



Respondents were asked whether, during the last 12 months, they had been injured or felt unwell as a result of problems at work. Twenty-six per cent of respondents said they had felt unwell as a result of work-related stress, while 2% said they had been injured or felt unwell as a result of exposure to dangerous substances.

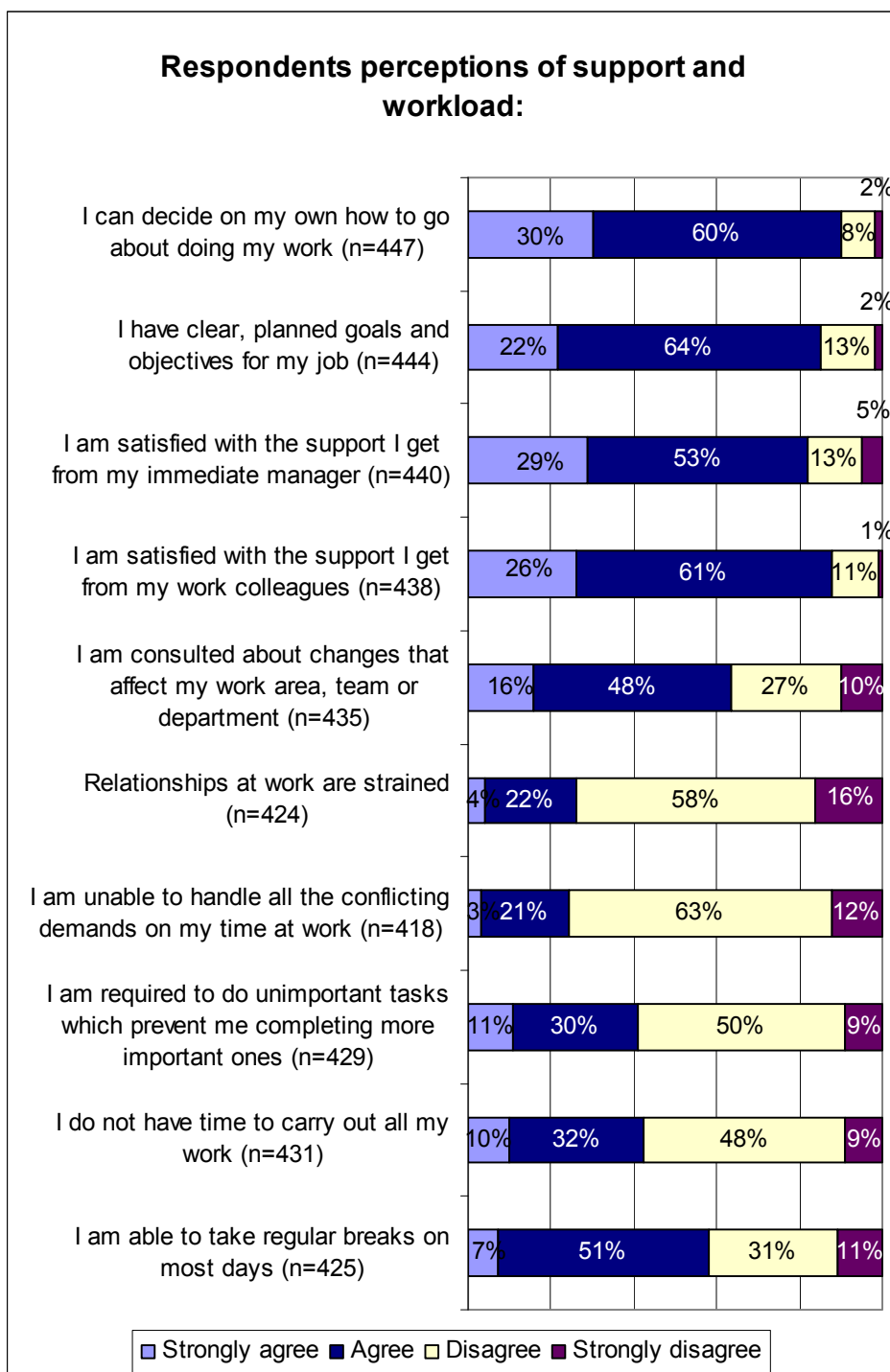


Respondents were asked for their perceptions of health, safety and welfare training and support. Two per cent of respondents said they had used the counselling serviced provided to them by the University, and all respondents who had used the counselling service said that they found it useful.

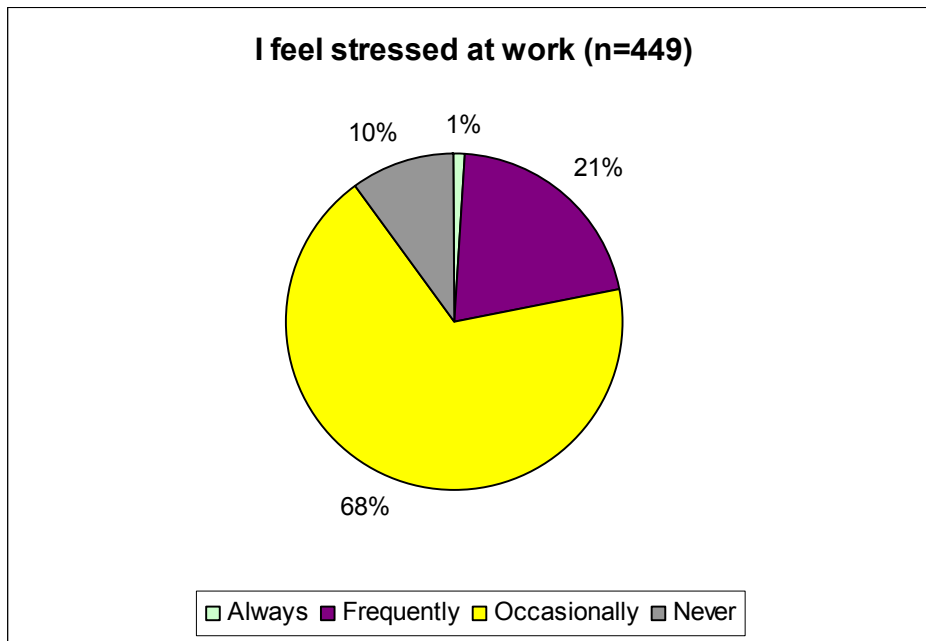


## Question Block 12: Work Related Stress

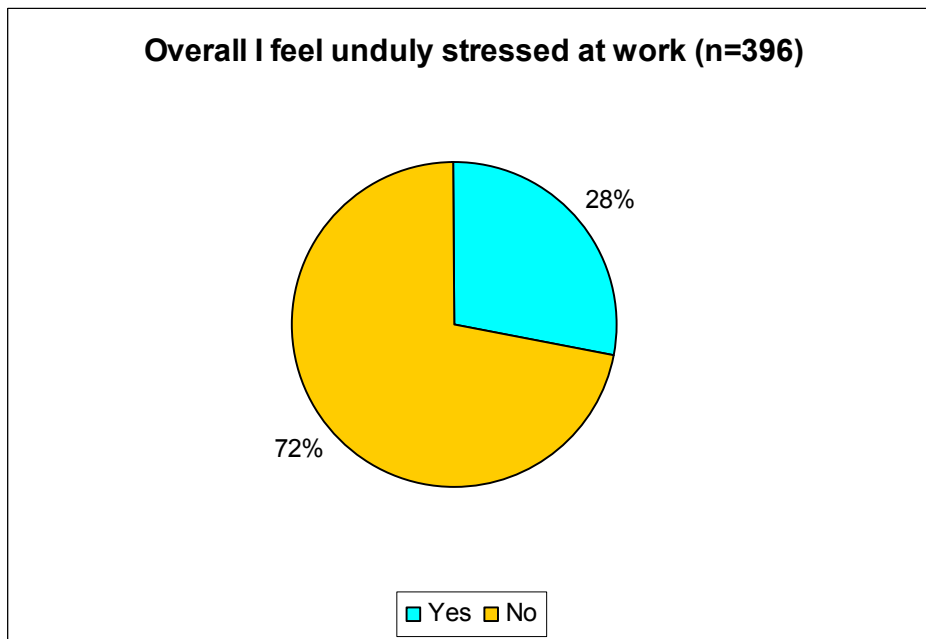
Respondents were asked for their perceptions of workload and support available to them. Ninety per cent of respondents said they can decide on their own how to go about doing their work, while 57% of respondents said that they have time to carry out all their work.



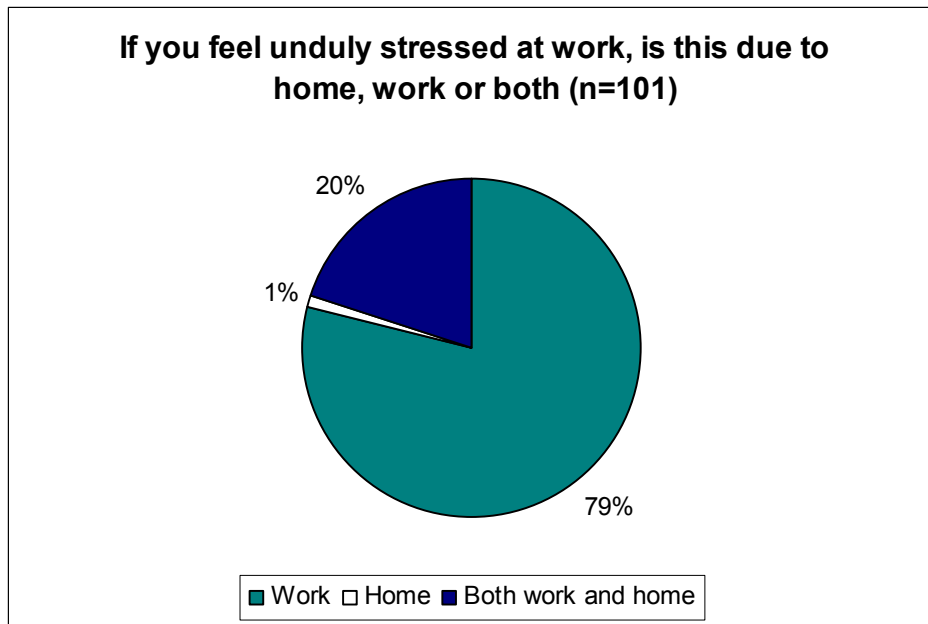
Around 22% of respondents said they always or frequently feel stressed at work, while 68% said they occasionally feel stressed at work and 10% said they never feel stressed.



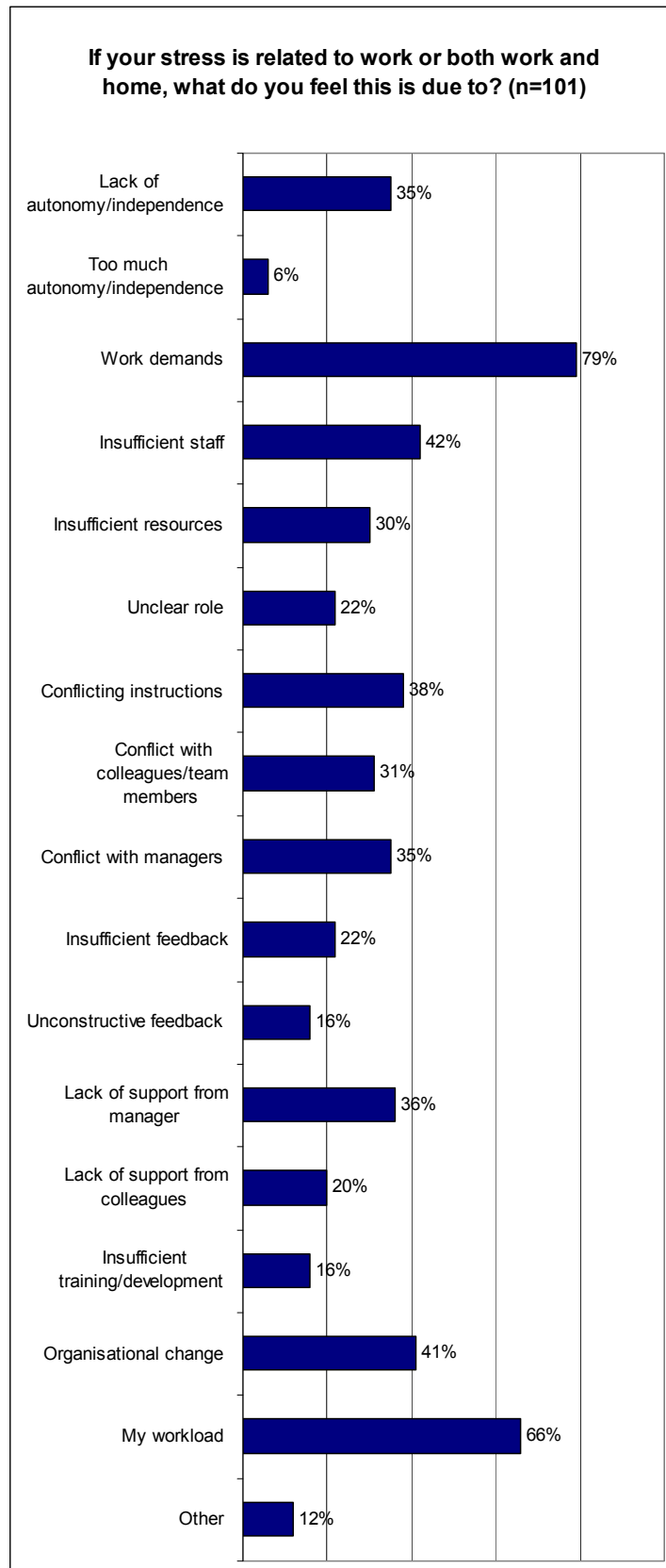
Twenty-eight per cent of respondents said that overall, they feel unduly stressed at work, while 72% do not.



Seventy-nine per cent of respondents said their stress was related to work, while 20% said it was related to both work and home.



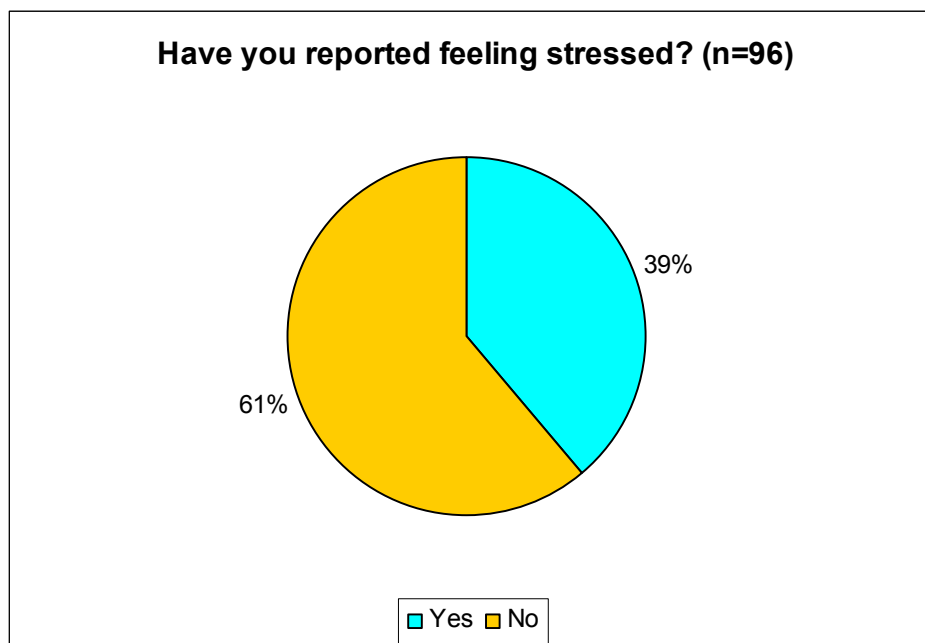
Respondents were asked if their stress was related to work or both work and home, what it was due to. Seventy-nine per cent said it was due to work demands and 6% said it was due to too much autonomy/independence.



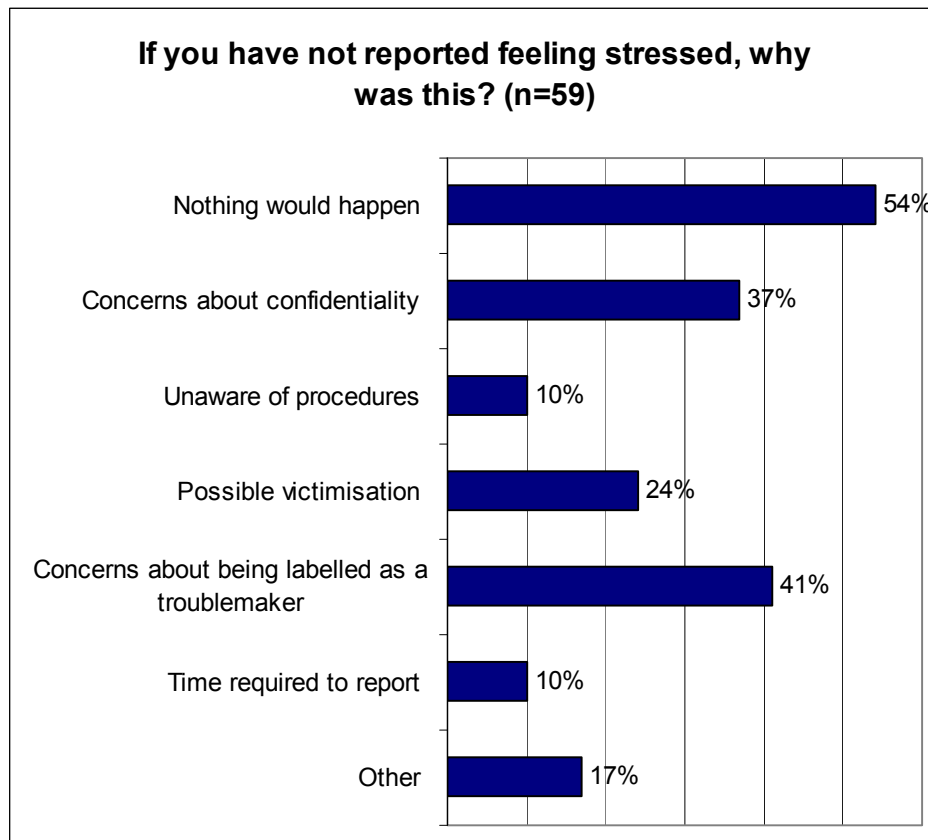
Respondents gave a number of other factors causing work, or work and home related stress. These included the following (comments were made by one respondent unless otherwise stated):

- Numerous accommodation changes (2 respondents)
- Inadequate job security (2 respondents)
- Lack of consultation on important issues (2 respondents)
- Being called upon to work above the level of own job role
- Focus of responsibility
- Issues with work life balance
- Insufficient clerical support
- Lack of communication from senior management
- Insufficient opportunities for promotion
- Managers allocated too many teams to manage
- Opinions are not taken seriously
- Poor working environment with no windows
- Excessively complex timetabling
- Personal problems
- Managers with poor managerial skills
- Working too closely to statistics and targets
- Work space insufficient for teaching
- Lack of support from the University overall
- Retention of staff who under perform
- Volatile working environment

Thirty-nine per cent of respondents said that they have reported feeling stressed, while 61% have not.



Respondents were asked, if they had not reported feeling stressed, why this was. Fifty-four per cent of respondents said it was because they felt nothing would happen, while 10% said they were unaware of procedures. A further 10% said it was because of the time required to report.



Respondents gave a number of other reasons for not reporting feeling stressed, these included the following.

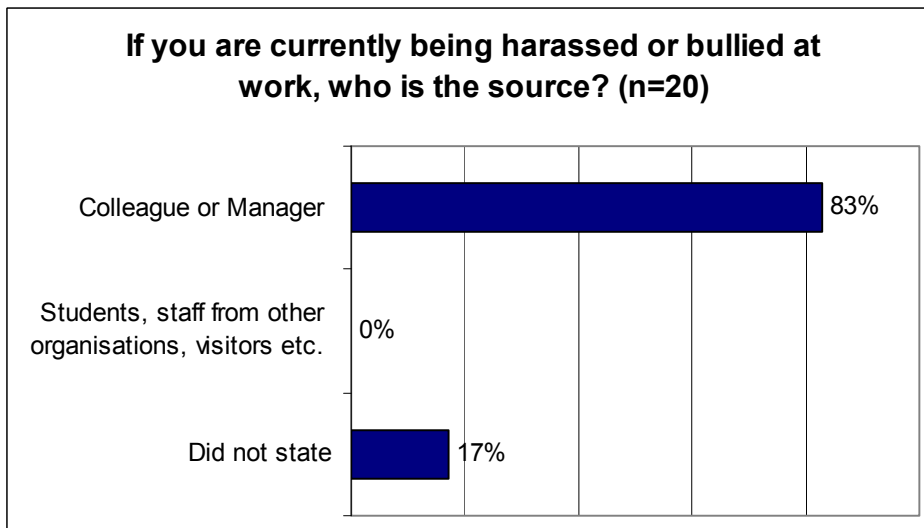
- Do not want to be seen as unable to cope (3 respondents)
- Dealing with it personally (2 respondents)
- Concerns about impact on future job prospects/career (2 respondents)
- It is part of the job (2 respondents)
- There would not be a sympathetic response
- Everyone is feeling stressed
- Management do not care about the wellbeing of staff
- It may improve over time
- The stress is not excessive
- Total lack of support

### Question Block 13: Harassment and Bullying

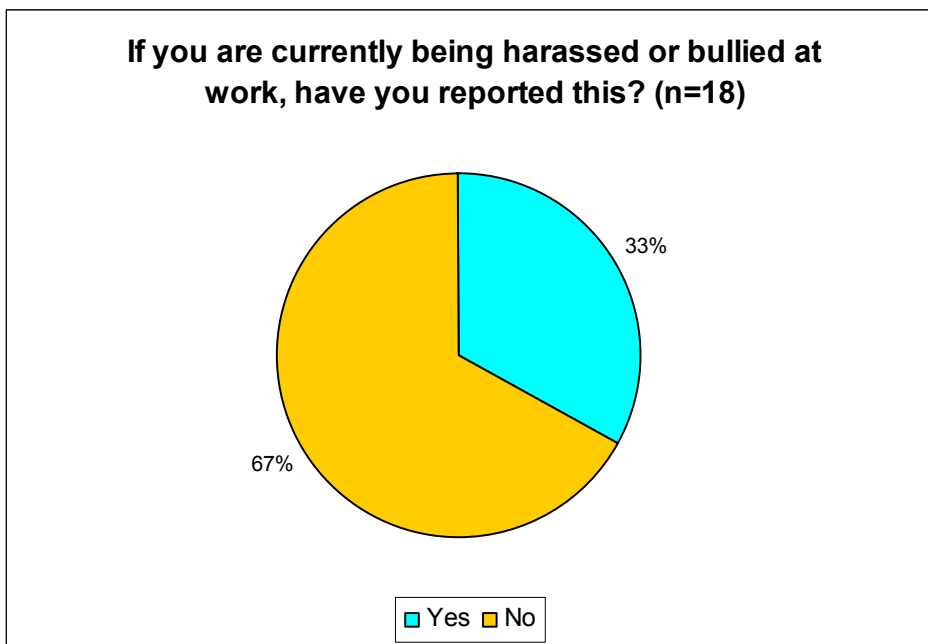
Six per cent of respondents said that they are currently being harassed or bullied at work, while 94% said they are not.



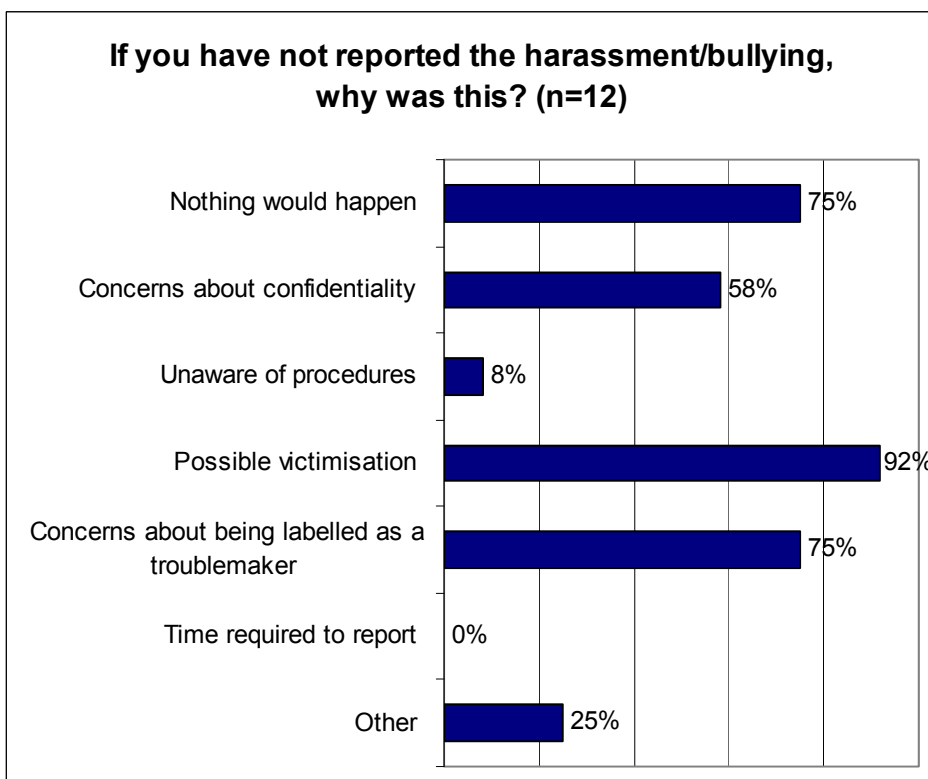
Respondents said that the main source of harassment or bullying is a colleague or manager (83%).



Thirty-three per cent of respondents said that they have reported being harassed or bullied at work, while 67% have not.



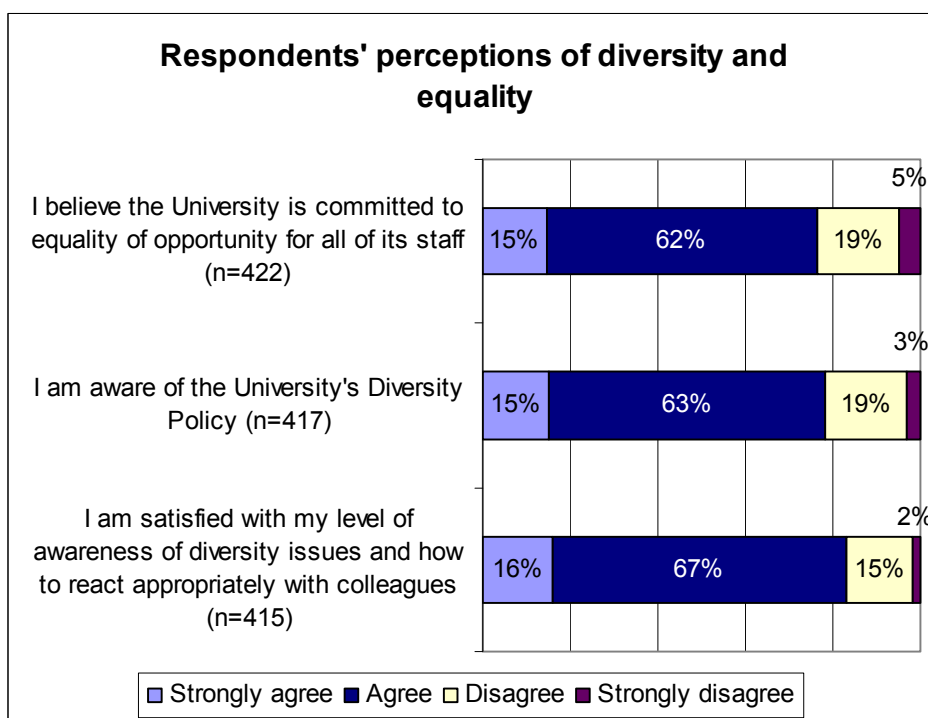
Ninety-two per cent of respondents said they had not reported the harassment or bullying due to concerns about possible victimisation, while 8% cited being unaware of procedures as the reason for not reporting the harassment or bullying.



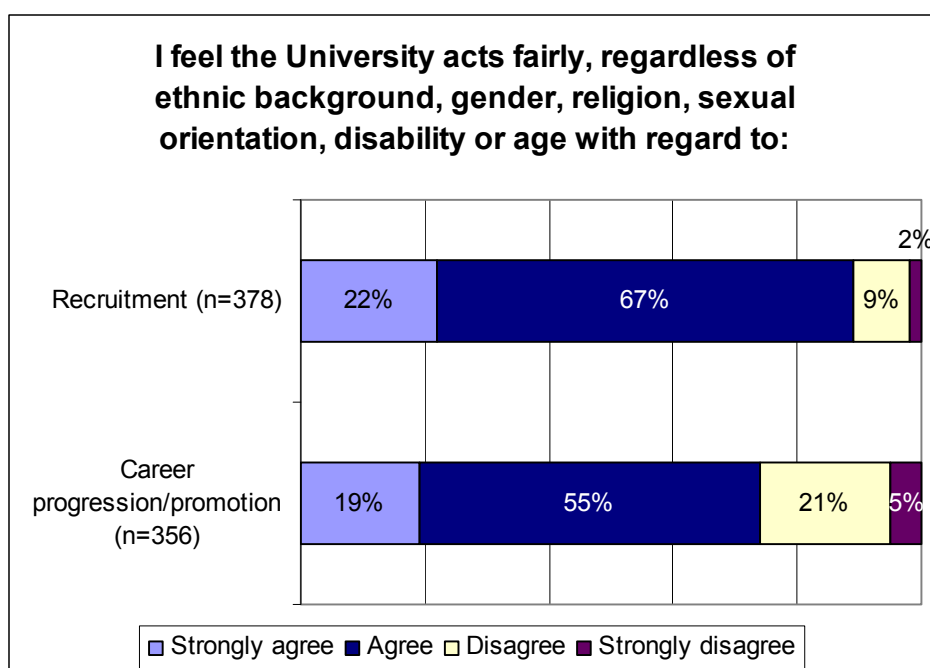
Respondents also mentioned fear of conflict and previous negative experience of reporting as reasons for not reporting the harassment or bullying.

## Question Block 14: Diversity and Equality

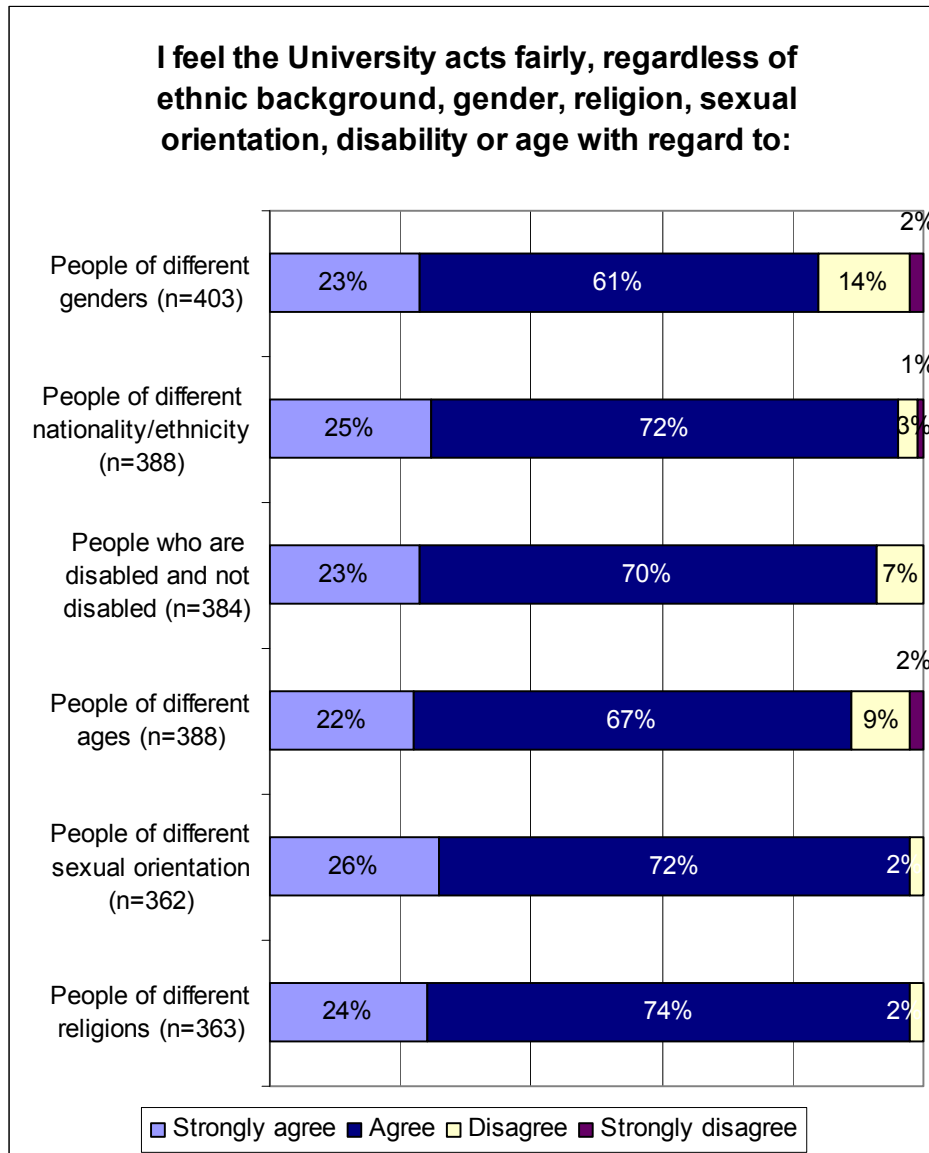
Respondents were asked for their perceptions of diversity and equality in the University. Most respondents (83%) said they are satisfied with their level of awareness of diversity issues and how to react appropriately with colleagues, while fewer respondents (77%) said they believe the University is committed to equality of opportunity for all of its staff.



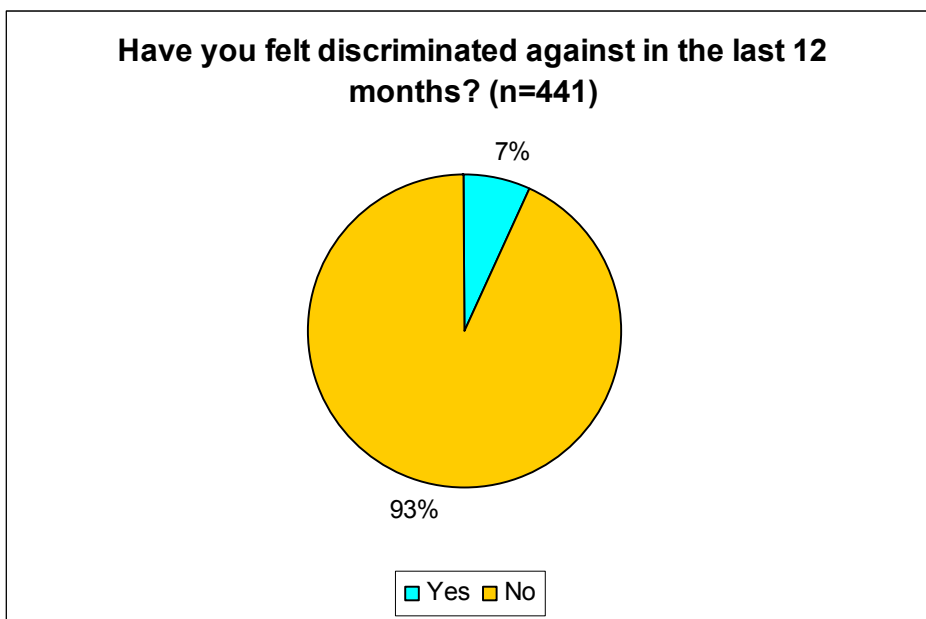
Eighty-nine per cent of respondents said that they feel the University acts fairly with regard to recruitment, and 74% feel the University acts fairly with regard to career progression/promotion.



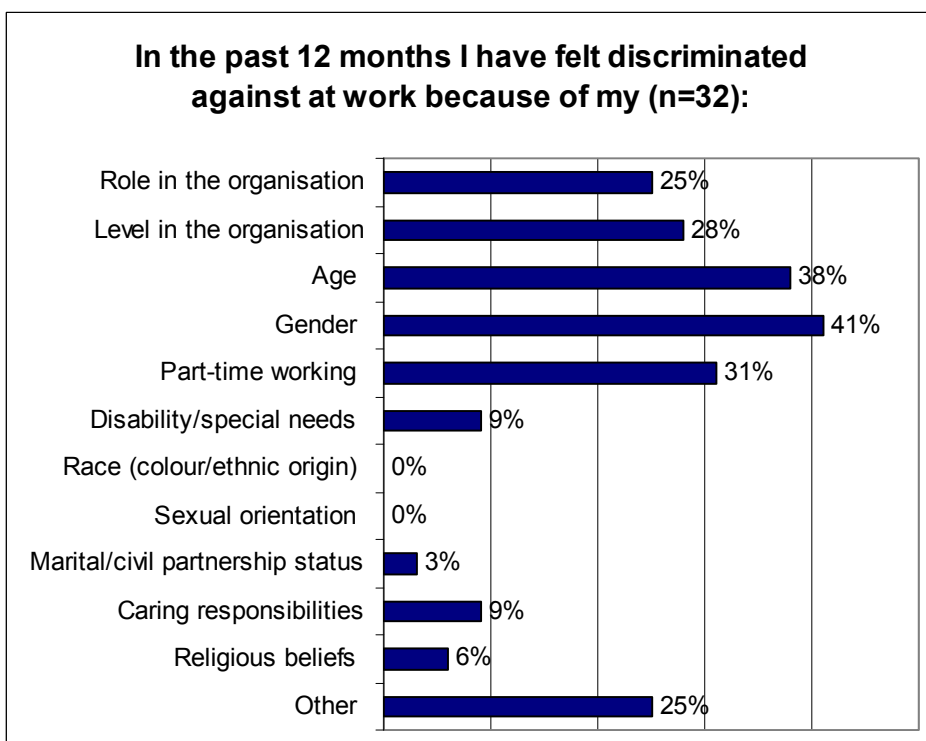
Ninety-eight per cent of respondents said that they feel the University acts fairly with regard to people of different sexual orientation, and people of different religions (also 98%). Fewer respondents (84%) said that they feel the University acts fairly with regard to people of different genders.



Around 7% of respondents said they have felt discriminated against in the last 12 months, while 93% said they had not.



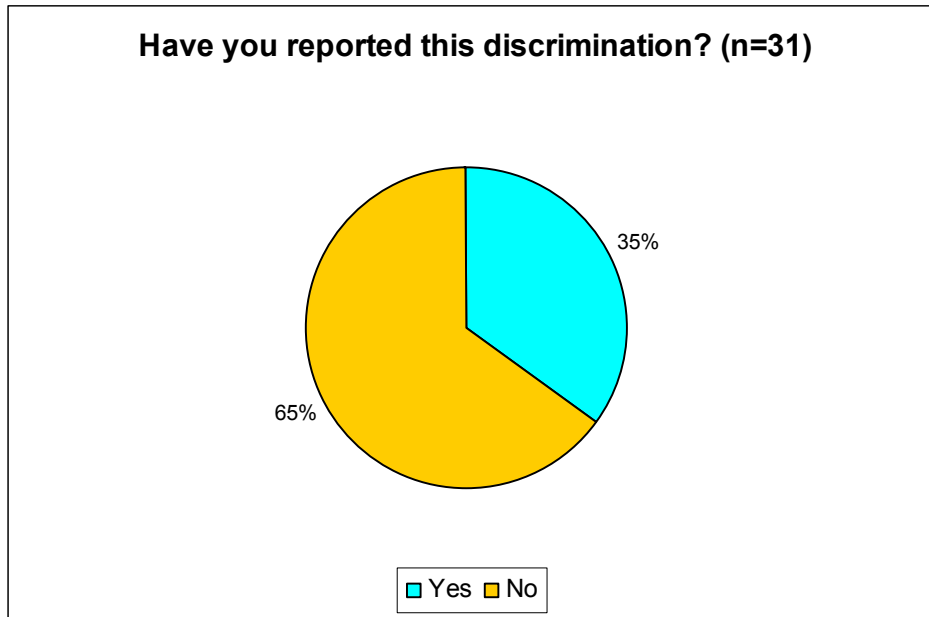
The main reasons respondents gave for feeling discriminated against at work were gender (41%) and age (38%).



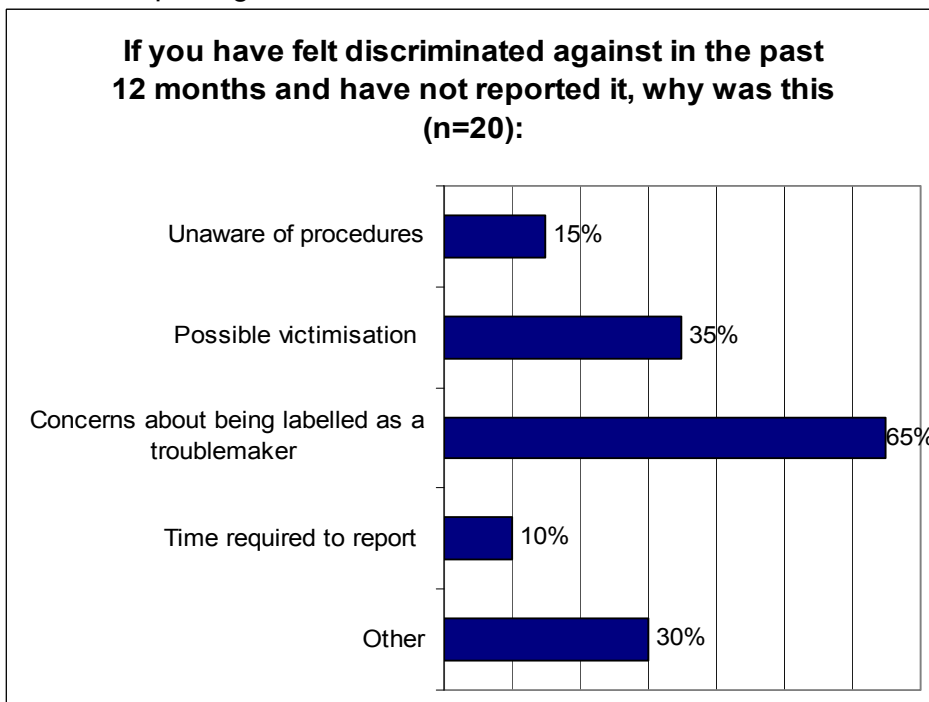
Other reasons for feeling discriminated against given by respondents included:

- Personal differences (2 respondents)
- Salary scale and inequality of pay (2 respondents)
- Not having children (2 respondents)
- Not being allocated sufficient office accommodation

Thirty-five per cent of respondents said they have reported the discrimination, while 65% have not.



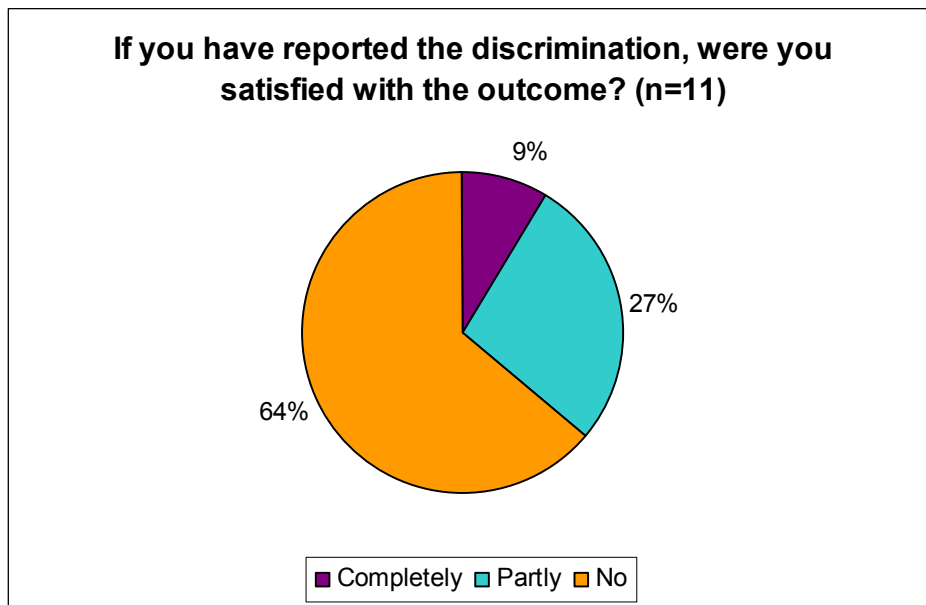
The main reason given by respondents for not reporting the discrimination was concern about being labelled as a troublemaker (65%), while 10% of respondents gave time required to report as the reason for not reporting.



Other reasons for not reporting given by respondents included:

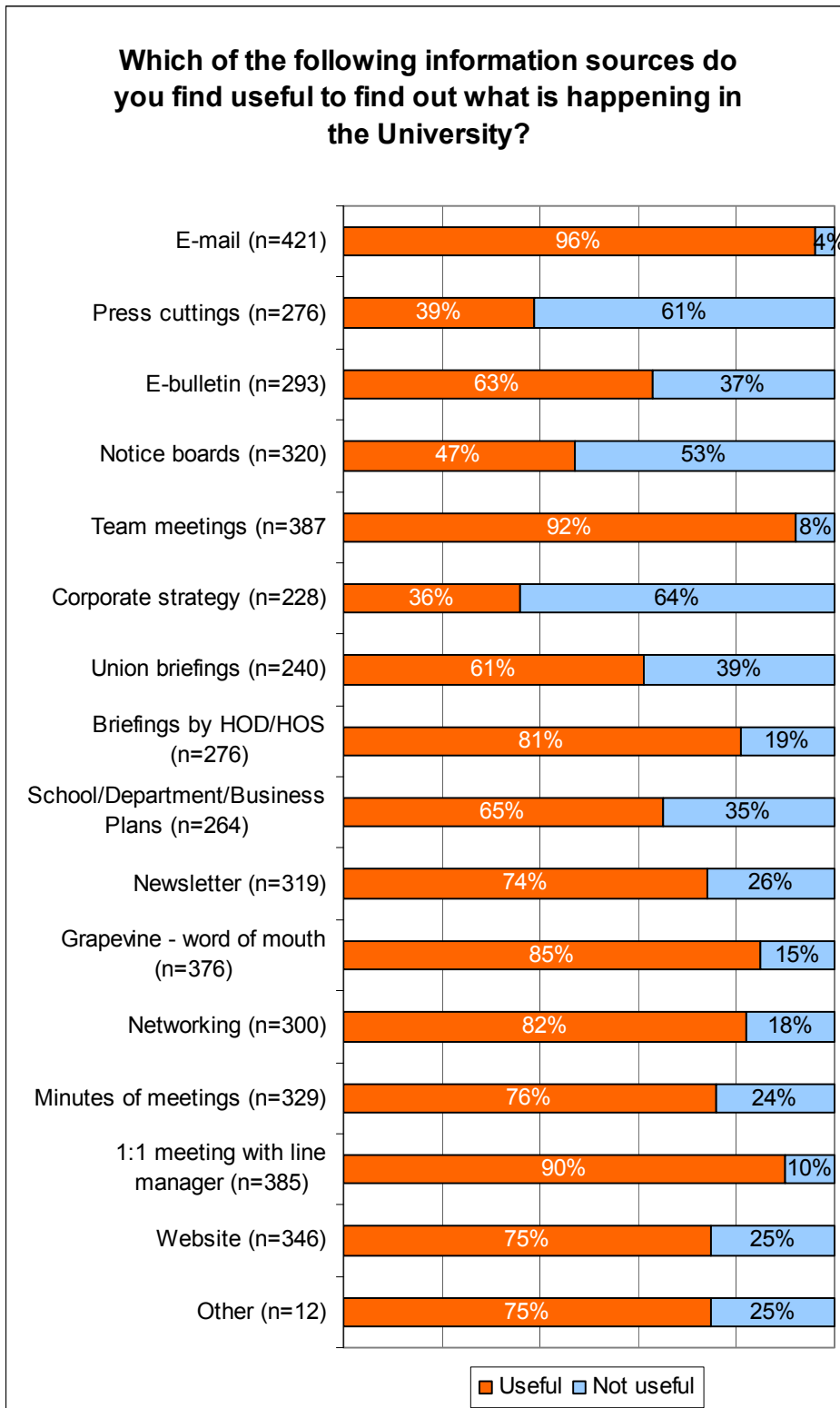
- Nothing would happen (3 respondents)
- Observed negative results from others reporting
- It would not be taken seriously
- Too difficult to report

Respondents were also asked, if they have reported the discrimination, if they were satisfied with the outcome. Nine per cent said they were completely satisfied, 27% said they were partly satisfied and 64% said they were not satisfied.



## Question Block 15: Communications

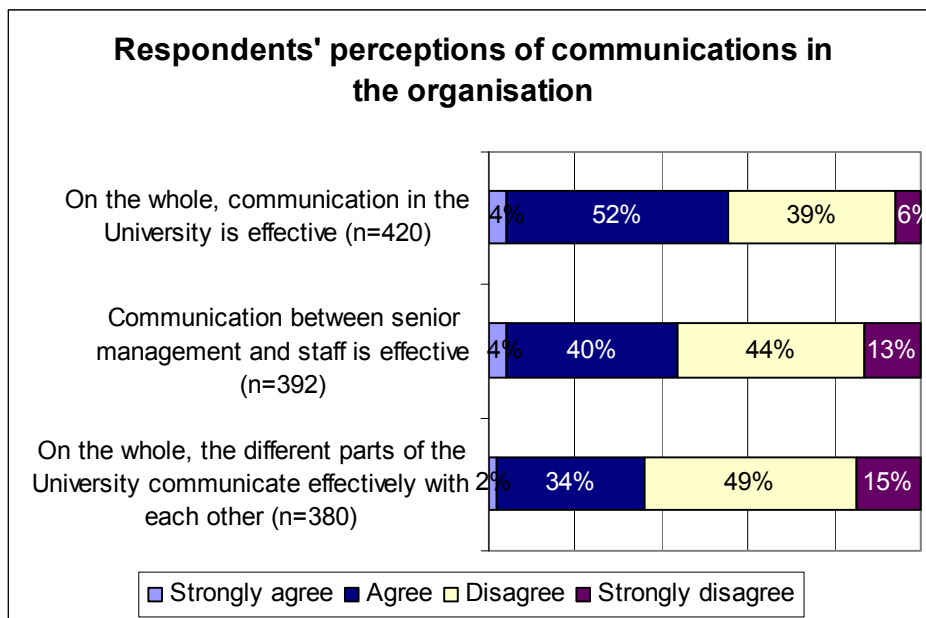
Respondents were asked which information sources they find useful to find out what is happening in the University. As the following chart shows, most respondents (96%) find e-mail useful to find out what is happening, while fewer respondents (36%) find corporate strategy useful.



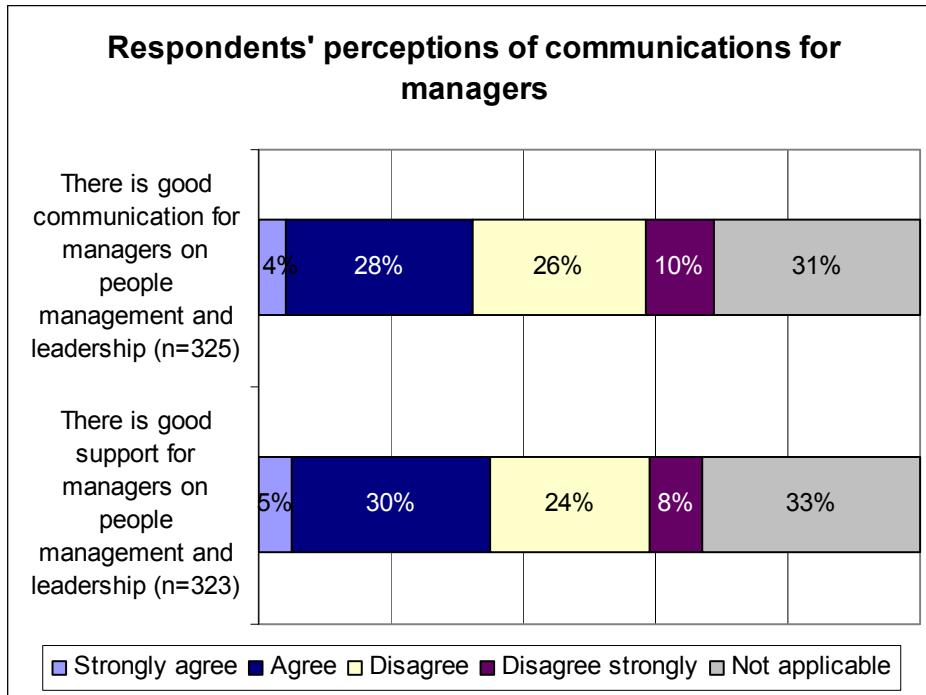
Respondents mentioned a number of other information sources they find useful, which included the following (all comments were made by one respondent unless otherwise specified).

- Online networking (2 respondents)
- One to one meetings with colleagues
- Departmental meetings
- Informal meetings with colleagues
- Training sessions
- Membership of professional organisations
- Talking to admin staff

Respondents were also asked about their perceptions of communications in the organisation. Fifty-six per cent of respondents said that on the whole, communication in the University is effective, although fewer respondents (36%) said that on the whole, the different parts of the University communicate effectively with each other.

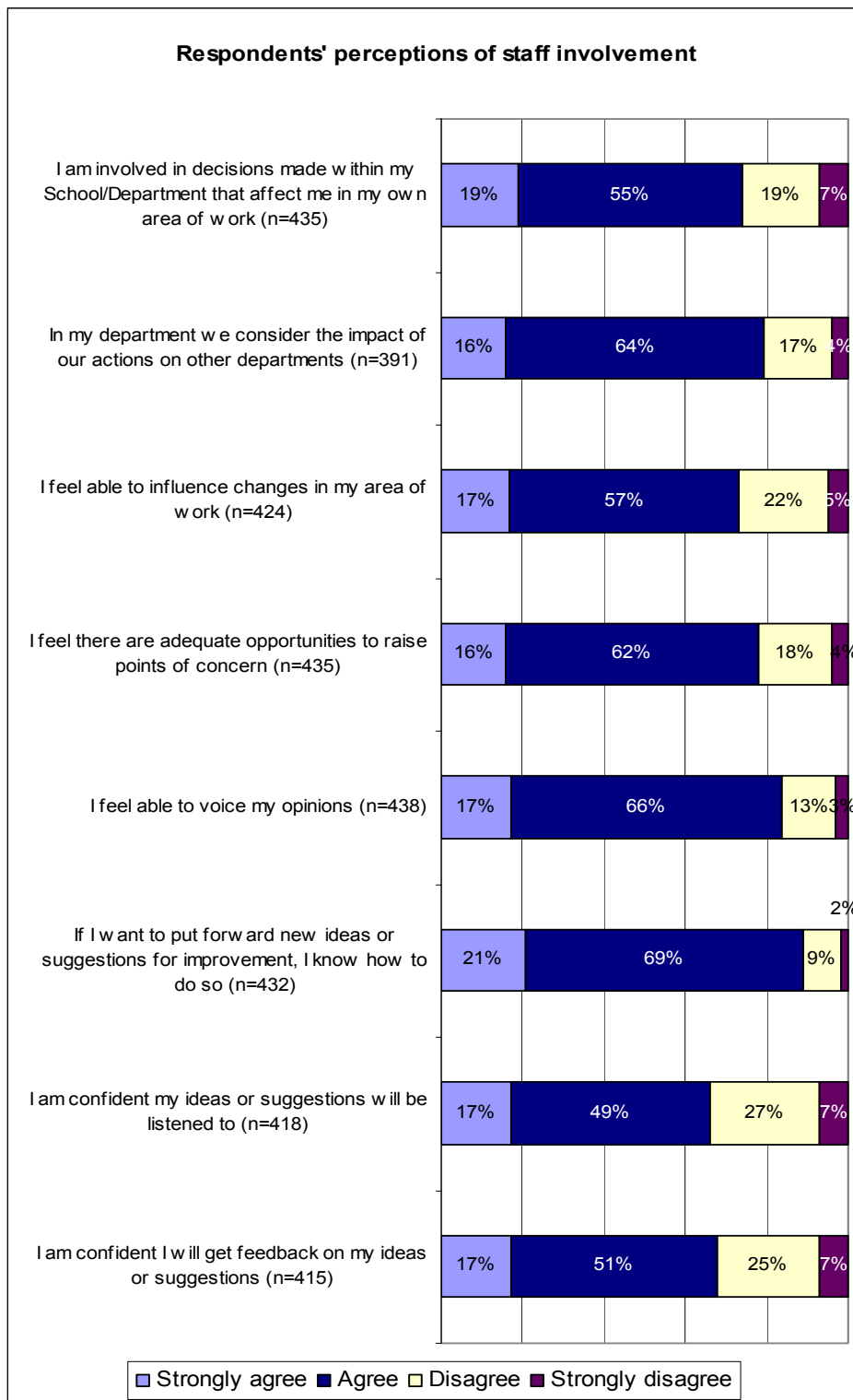


The survey asked respondents about communications in relation to managers. Around 36% of respondents agreed that there is good support for managers on people management and leadership, while 32% agreed that there is good communication for managers on people management and leadership.

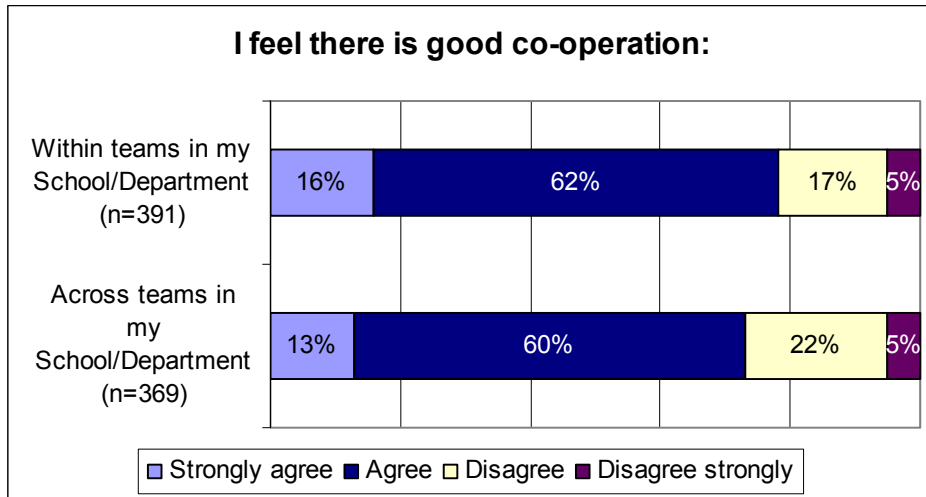


## Question Block 16: Staff Involvement

The survey asked respondents for their perceptions of staff involvement in the University. The highest percentage of respondents (90%) said that if they want to put forward new ideas or suggestions for improvement, they know how to do so. Fewer respondents 66% said they are confident their ideas or suggestions would be listened to.

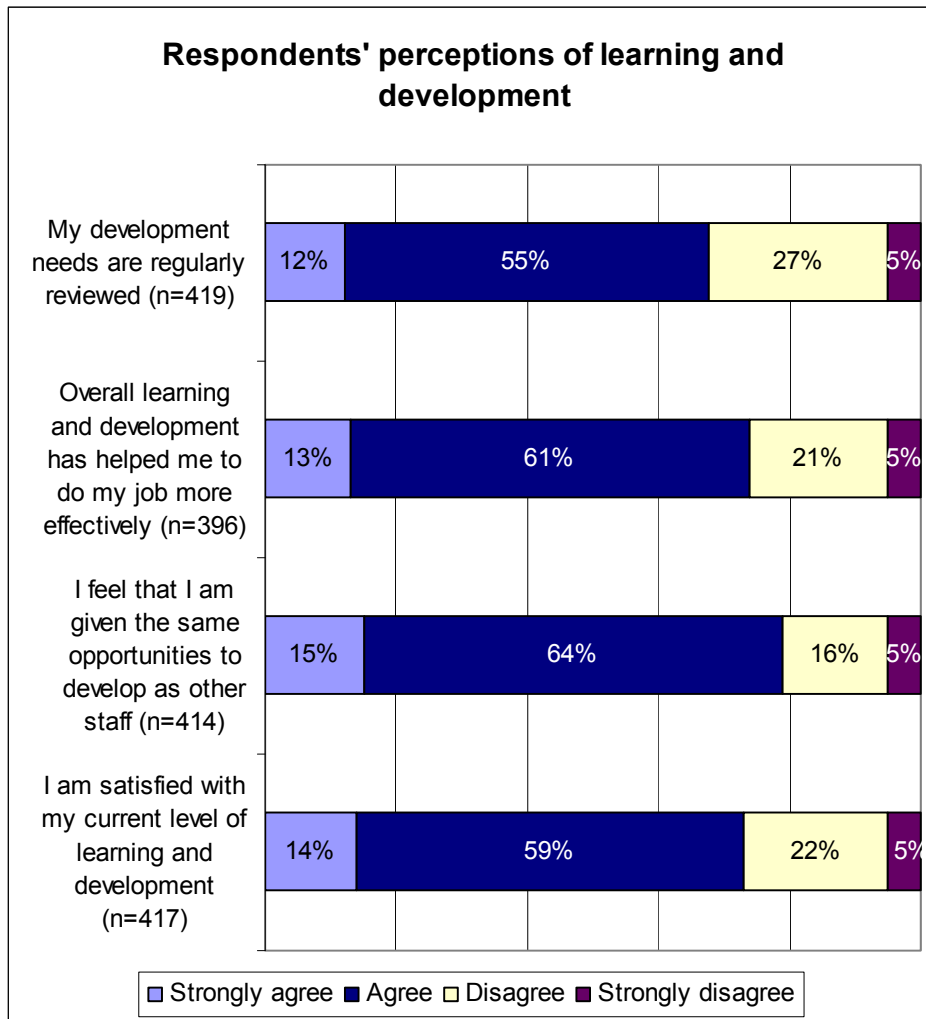


Respondents were also asked about co-operation within the University. Seventy-eight per cent of respondents said they feel there is good co-operation within teams in their School or Department, and 73% said they feel there is good co-operation across teams in their School or Department.

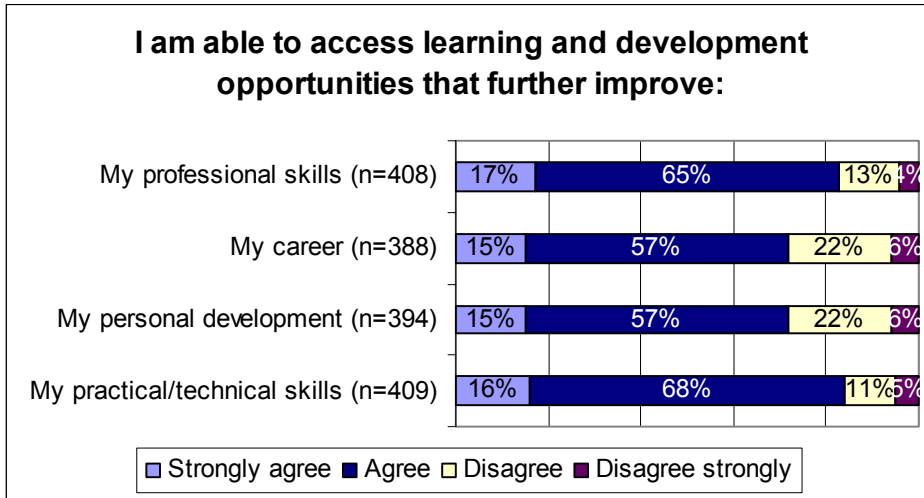


## Section 17: Learning and Development

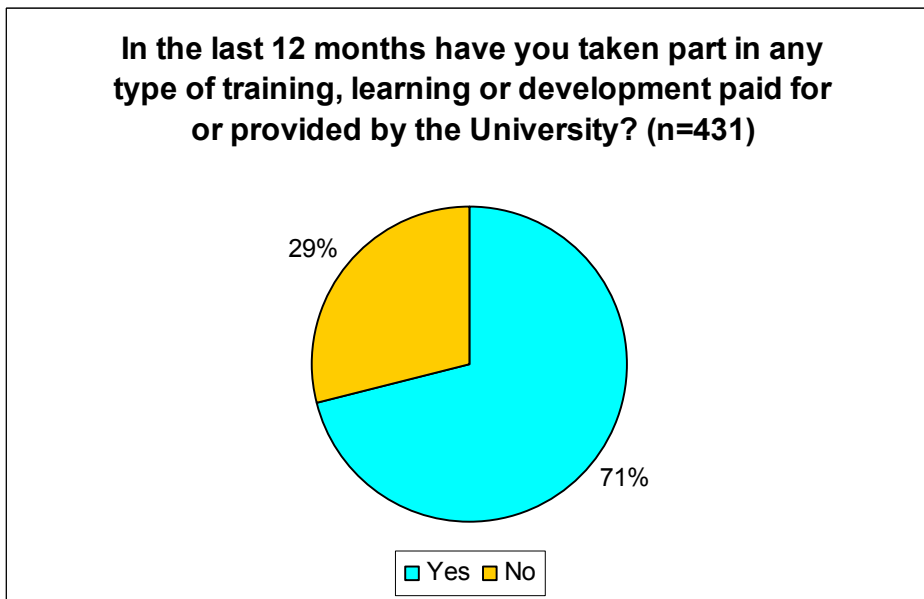
The survey asked respondents for their perceptions of learning and development in the University. Around 74% of respondents said that overall, learning and development has helped them to do their job more effectively and 67% said their development needs are regularly reviewed. A further 79% said that they feel they are given the same opportunities to develop as other staff.



Respondents were also asked about access to learning and development within the University. Eighty-four per cent of respondents said they are able to access learning and development opportunities that further improve their practical/technical skills, while 72% said they are able to access learning and development opportunities that further improve their career and their personal development (also 72%).

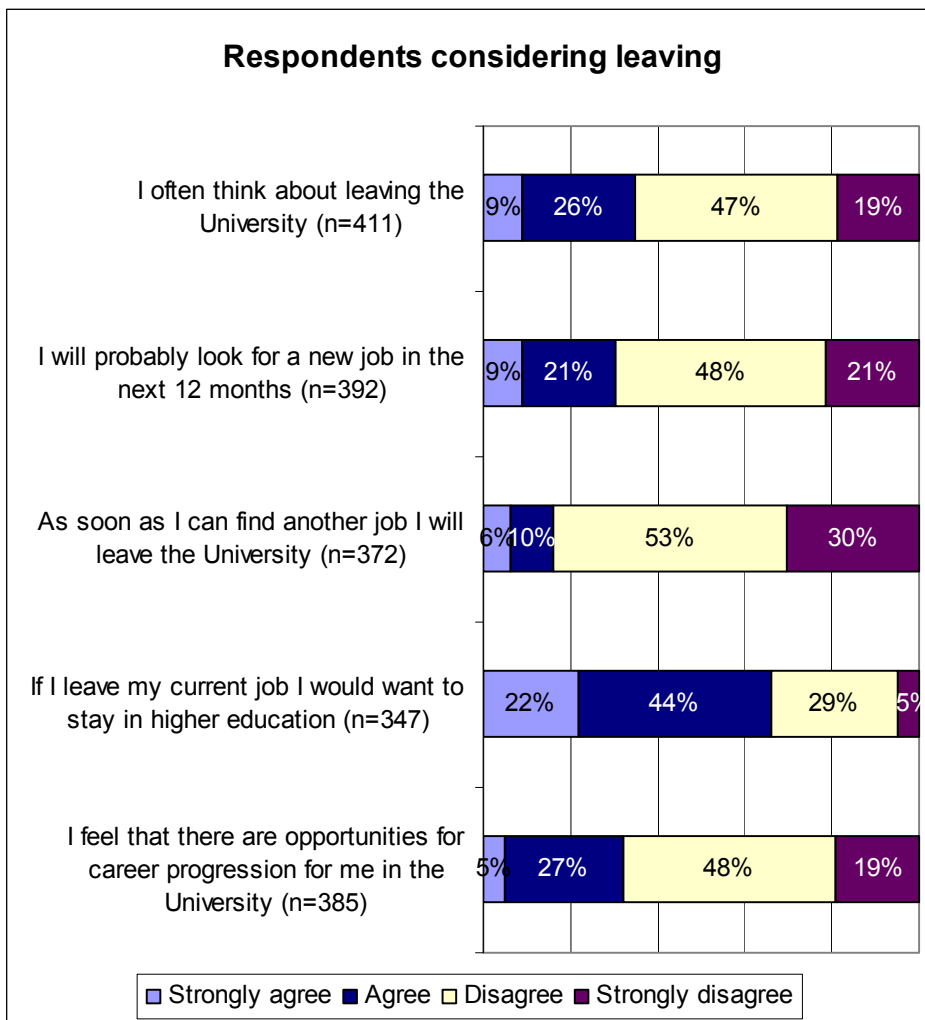


Seventy-one per cent of respondents said that, in the last 12 months, they have taken part in training, learning or development paid for or provided by the University.

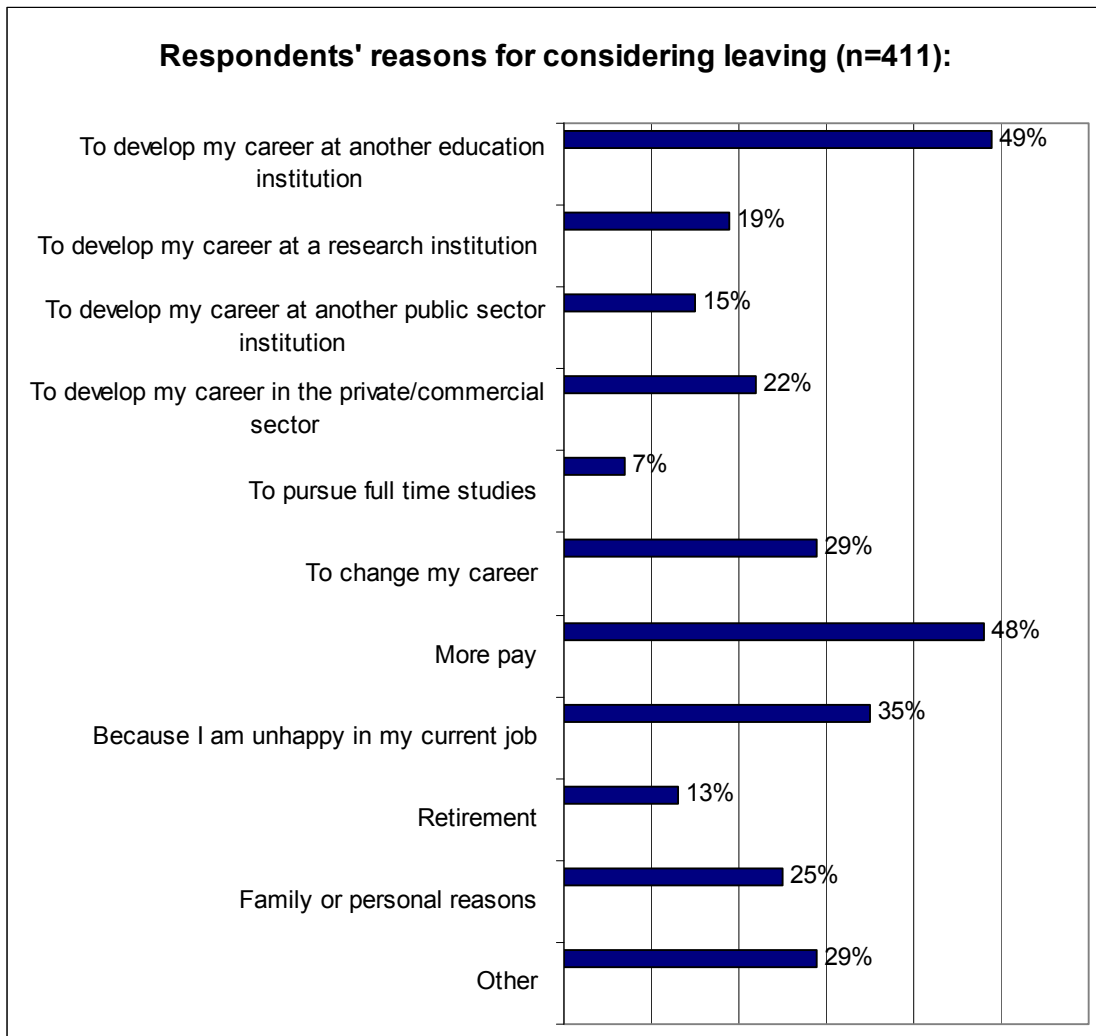


## Question Block 18: Considering Leaving

Respondents were asked about considering leaving the University. Around 66% of respondents said that if they leave their current job, they would want to stay in higher education. Sixteen per cent said that as soon as they can find another job, they will leave the University.



The main reasons given by respondents for considering leaving the University were to develop their career at another education institution (49%) and for more pay (48%).

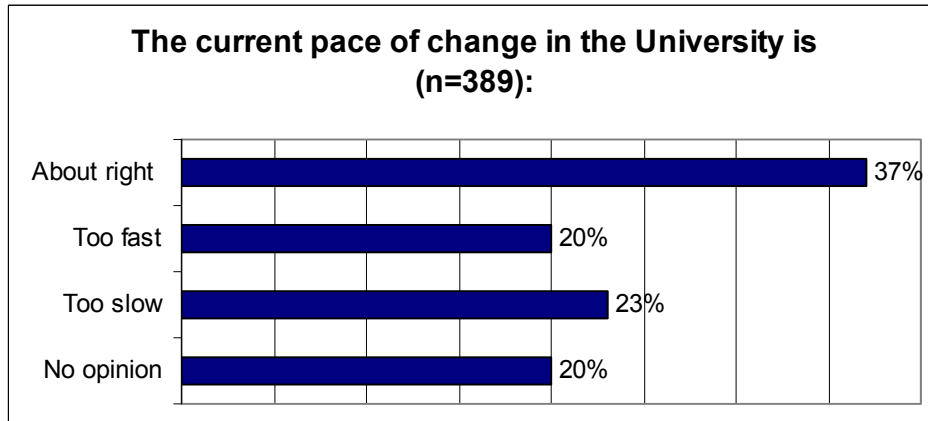


The main reasons given for considering leaving, other than those in the survey, were as follows:

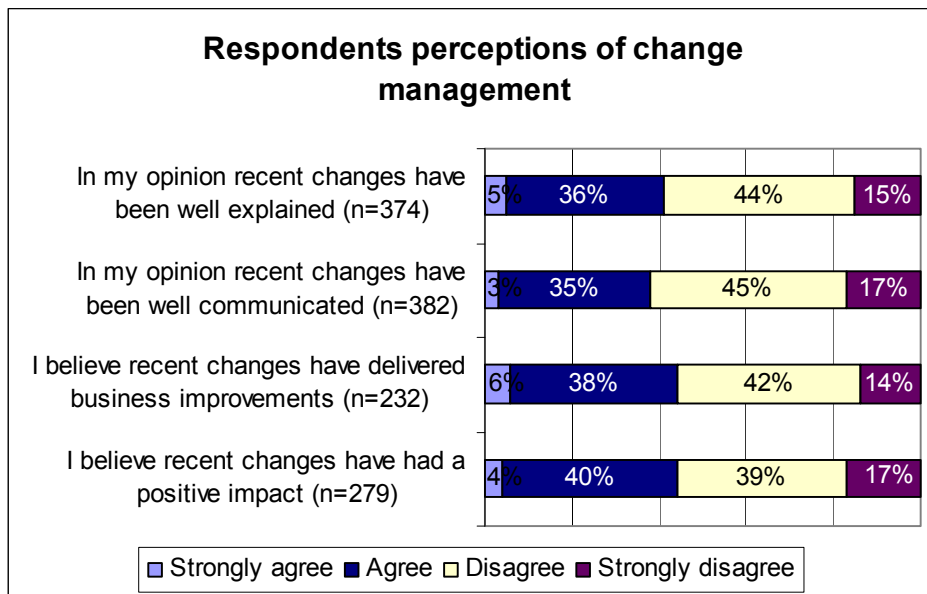
1. Contract/secondment/temporary work is ending (7 respondents)
2. Wish to develop career (5 respondents)
3. Conflict with colleagues/line managers (4 respondents)
4. Seeking increased job security (4 respondents)
5. To work in an organisation which is better run (4 respondents)

## Section 19: Managing Change

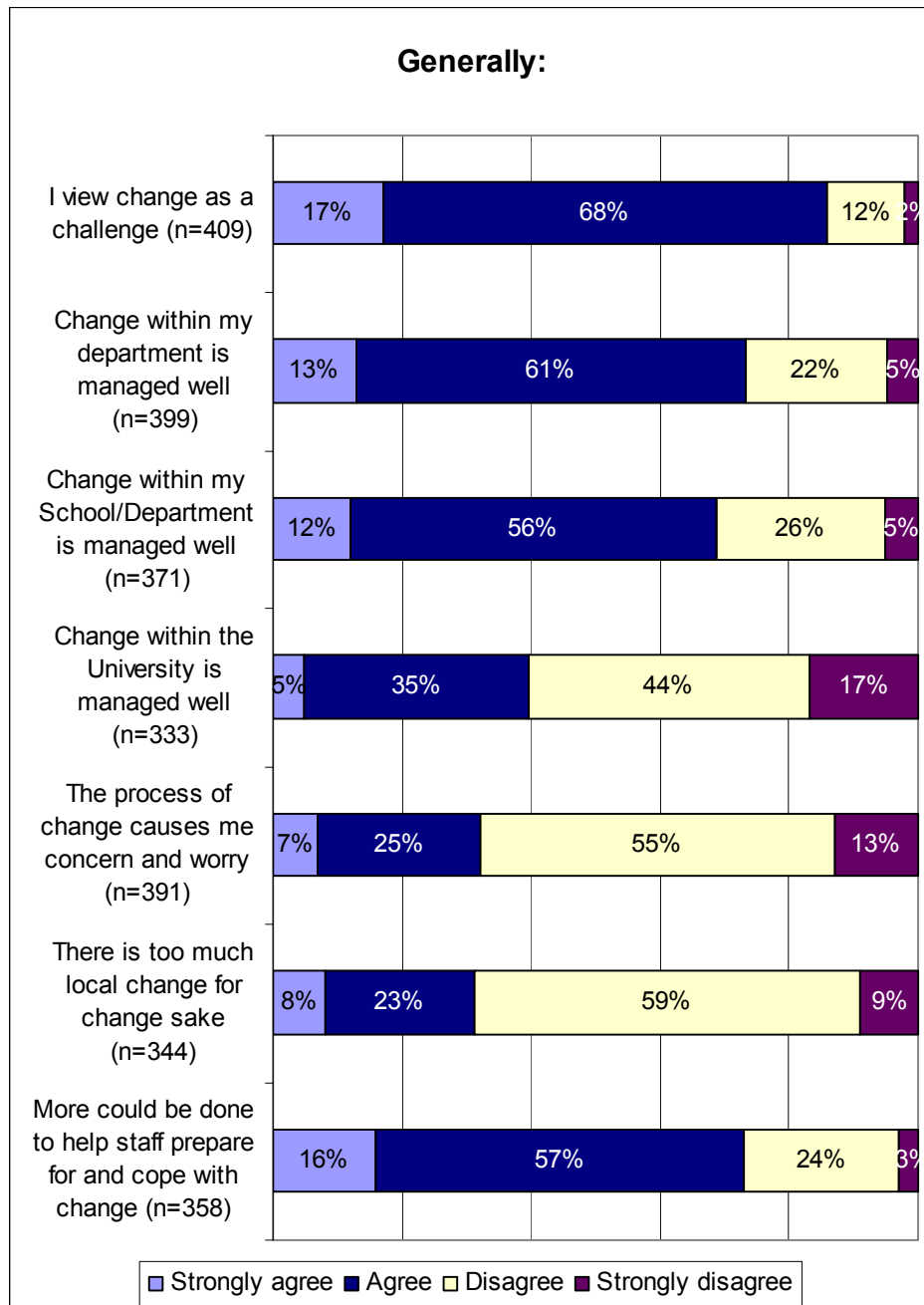
Respondents generally felt that the current pace of change in the University is about right (37%). Around 23% felt it is too slow and 20% said it is too fast.



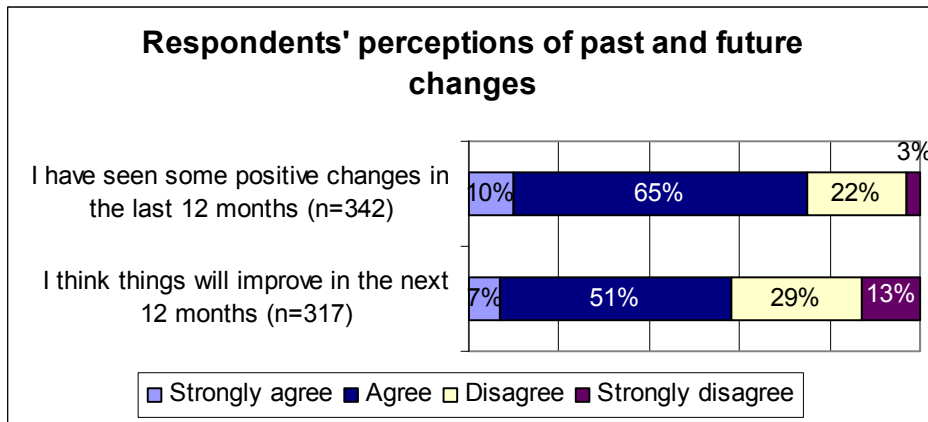
Respondents were also asked for their perceptions about change management in the University. Around 44% of respondents said they believe recent changes have had a positive impact, while fewer respondents 38% said that in their opinion, recent changes have been well communicated.



The survey asked respondents for their overall views of change in the University. As can be seen from the following chart, the highest proportion of respondents (85%) said that they view change as a challenge. Forty per cent of respondents said that change within the University is managed well.



Seventy-five per cent of respondents said they have seen some positive changes in the last 12 months, while 58% think that things will improve in the next 12 months.



## **Section 20: Comments**

### **Positive Comments**

The top five things that staff feel are good about working for Bath Spa University are:

1. Attractive surroundings (125 respondents)
2. Friendship/camaraderie of team/colleagues (124 respondents)
3. There is a happy/friendly working atmosphere/environment (98 respondents)
4. Job satisfaction derived from working with students (91 respondents)
5. Working time flexibility is good (56 respondents)

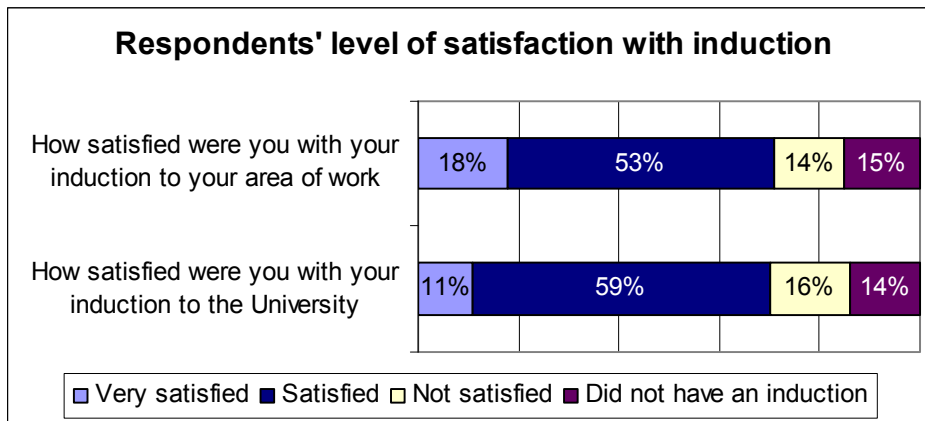
### **Areas for Improvement**

The top five things that staff feel could be improved in the University are:

1. Improve condition/size of working environment (49 respondents)
2. Improve communication from management/senior level staff (39)
3. Improve communication overall (38 respondents)
4. Improve management (30 respondents)
5. Improve/introduce catering facilities (30 respondents)

## Section 21: About You

Respondents who had joined the University in the last 12 months were asked about the induction process. As the following chart shows, 71% of respondents said they were satisfied with their induction to their area of work, while 70% were satisfied with their induction to the University.



The participation profile for this section can be found in the Technical Report.



