

University of Edinburgh

Disability Office

Student Service Evaluation 2009/10

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1 Summary

All students who declared a disability in 2009/10 (2084) were invited, through E-mail to complete one of two service evaluation questionnaires.

269 students who used the Disability Office completed a **user questionnaire** and 24 students who did not use the Disability Office completed a **non-user questionnaire**. The overall response rate was 14% which was a 4% drop from 2008/09 when it was 18%. The reason for this decrease could simply be normal variation in the yearly data, but with the downward trend evident in Overall Satisfaction (Ref. Sections 1.3 and 4.6) it may be worth investigating further.

Mailed (approx)	DO user replies	DO non-user replies	Overall response rate
2048	269	24	14%

Table 1: Response Rate to Disability Office Users' Survey

The questionnaires have been developed over several years. This year the five categories in the importance and satisfaction section have been set consistently with last year - that is:

- 1 Very Unimportant, 2 Unimportant, 3 Neutral, 4 Important, 5 Very Important.
- 1 Very Unsatisfied, 2 Unsatisfied, 3 Neutral, 4 Satisfied, 5 Very Satisfied

This has enabled the possibility of a direct comparison between all four surveys since 2006/07, and continues to be a rigorous measure of the Disability Office's performance.

1.1 User Survey

The user survey consisted of 15 closed questions concerning type and frequency of services used and the importance of, and satisfaction with, these services. In addition there was one mandatory question, plus two open questions where students were asked to provide suggestions for improvements and comment on positive aspects of the Disability Office. Four questions were used to determine the demographics of the participants i.e. School, age, year of study, and if the respondents were undergraduate or postgraduate students. And one question to determine how the students found out about the existence of the Disability office. In addition there was one extra question this year asking the users to vote on a new name for the Disability Office, if they didn't like any of the four names suggested then they had an opportunity to suggest their own.

Drop down boxes and choice lists were used to make the survey easy to fill in.

1.2 Pattern of Use

255 students answered the demographics questions. The majority of respondents 210 (82%) were Undergraduates with the largest group 53 (21%) being in their 1st year.

46 (18%) of respondents were Postgraduates with the majority (11%) of them in their first year. The remaining 7% (18 users) were spread through years 2 to 5.

Students ranged in age from 18 to 45+, with the majority of students in the 18-24 age range.

Students attended all 22 Schools within the University. The two highest represented schools were "Social and Political Studies" with 30 students, and "Biological Sciences" with 21 students.

The majority (53%) of students find out about the Disability Office from either a University staff member (34%) or by information issued from the university (21%) for example via emails, literature or the website

While the majority (28%) of the Disability Office users made use of it "in first year" of their course, 110 (24%) stated they made use of the it "ongoing" and another 108 (23%) said 'in subsequent years'.

"Examination arrangements" has shown to be the most popular service in 2009/10, being used by 76% of the respondents. This is closely followed by "Assessment of specific learning difficulties" (54%).

244 students (91%) using the Disability Office have been allocated a Learning Profile, 188 of whom were Undergraduates.

1.3 Importance and Satisfaction of Services

The main body of the survey explored whether each student received and was satisfied with their recommended Learning Profile adjustments. It also asked users for their opinion on the importance of each service offered by the Disability Office, including one mandatory question: "Usefulness of information given to you", and for their level of satisfaction with these services.

1.3.1 Learning Profile

130 students (57%) received all of the adjustments recommended in their Learning Profile in all of their courses. Another 34 students (15%) received some of their adjustments in all of their courses. 4 students (2%) did not receive any adjustments in any course.

"History, Classics and Archeology" was the most efficient course at implementing the actions recommended in their students' Learning Profiles. They fully implemented 12 (71%) of their 17 pupils' Learning Profiles.

A total of 78% of respondents were either very satisfied (44%) or satisfied (34%) with the adjustments they received in their Learning Profile.

1.3.2 Importance of Services

Services considered most and least important are given below. A scale of 5: very important to 1: very unimportant, was used.

Importance			
	Rank	Number of respondents	
Physical access	1	6	Most Important
Mental Health Mentor	2	12	
Finding support assistants	3	26	
Usefulness of information	11	249	Least Important
Study skills advise	12	52	
Fire evacuation procedures	13	5	

Table 2: Most Important / Least Important

1.3.3 Satisfaction with Services

Services the students were most and least satisfied with are given below. A scale of 5: very satisfied to 1: very dissatisfied, was used.

Satisfaction			
	Rank	Number of respondents	
Examination arrangements	1	201	Most Satisfied
Liaison with other staff	2	4	
DSA Application	3	122	
Study skills advise	11	52	Least Satisfied
Fire evacuation procedures	12	5	
Links with accom. services	13	3	

Table 3: Most Satisfied / Least Satisfied

1.4 Overall Satisfaction

When asked to express their overall satisfaction with the Disability Office a high proportion (82%) were either very satisfied (42%) or satisfied (40%). Only 7% (15 students) stated that they were unsatisfied

A combined 84% of respondents thought that the Disability Office had contributed positively to their experience at the University.

Students were asked to comment on the statement: “their complaints were handled constructively”. From the 54 students (23% of total users) who responded to this question 28 agreed, 22 were neutral and 8 people disagreed with the statement.

1.5 Open Questions

Respondents were asked if they could give a positive comment about the Disability Office and they were asked to offer any suggestions for improvement.

1.5.1 Positive Statement

Students were asked to make a positive statement about the Disability Office. 183 (73%) respondents were happy to make positive comments. With 5 students (3%) stating they had no positive comments to make.

Typical comments were:

“without them would not have achieved grades, once my learning disability had been assessed. they gave lots of useful advice and support”

“The staff, particularly my advisor, were always polite, friendly, and sympathetic”

“It's very important to have an outside and objective agency who will liaise with university staff on on'e behalf, saving personal embarassment and misunderstandings which are almost inevitable in personally requesting help with disability.”

1.5.2 Suggestions for Improvement

The four most common suggestions for improvement were:

- 23 requests for Liaising with other university staff/services including: enforcing agreements, raising awareness of various disabilities.
- 21 users asked to improve the efficiency/competency/personal communication skills of staff.
- 17 users requested improved advertising/clearer policies
- 17 requests to improve follow up support/ongoing communications with students.

Examples from the above four are:

“A firmer hand reminding lecturers and course administrators of their responicbility to provide students with learning disabilities with the help they need. Such as providing them with comprehensive notes rather than making students with the dispensation make their own anyway.”

“I was greatly disappointed by the lack of response to both e-mail and phone calls by my disability advisor. It took continious attempts on my part to talk to someone for work finally to get done. It was a hassle I really could have done without due to being fairly ill.”

“The only problem I had (being an ESALA student) was being sent to ECA and back and forth, so it would be very useful for future student if this was a clearer process with regards of who to contact etc.”

“If workload permitted, more follow-up support would be useful - as I gave up on a number of minor problems which my school failed to help with because I didn't want to keep pestering people myself.”

1.6 Renaming the Disability Office

We are considering renaming the Disability Office and asked our users if they liked any of the four names we suggested. Alternatively they could propose one of their own.

The most popular choice is "Support for Learning Service" with 125 votes. The closest option with 45 votes is "Access for All".

28 users supported retaining the current name "The Disability Office".

1.7 Non-User Survey

The non-user survey aimed to find out why students with a declared disability had not used the service. 24 students completed the non user survey.

1.7.1 Reasons for non use of DO service

The top reason students gave in this year's survey for not using the services of the Disability Office is that they did not believe that they needed the service (15 users, 65%). A further 39% (9) of respondents stated their school and/or college had not advised them.

1.7.2 Suggestions for making the Disability Office more accessible

There were 3 suggestions in response to the request for suggestions to make the Disability Office more accessible, they are:

"Perhaps it would be useful if you clarified on the UCAS form that you won't be contacting us!...or change what you do and contact us if we tick the box - i ticked 2 boxes!!!"

"More information in fresher's packs or in the union would be good."

"Is there any info for online/distance learning for support?"

1.8 Long Term Trends

There are seven trend graphs where a minimum of 3 years historical data is displayed on each graph. For clarity and relevance a number of the graphs are limited to the top 5 services.

1.8.1 Response Rate

There has been a drop of 4% in this year's Survey response rate, from 18% in 2008/09 to 14% in 2009/10. While this appears initially worrying the decline may be attributable to normal variation. Actively marketing the Survey could help reverse this downturn next year.

1.8.2 Pattern of Use

This year's data is showing a very similar pattern to last year's with some services showing a slight increase in percentage use e.g. "Ongoing use" up by 0.8%, and some services showing a slight fall in percentage use e.g. "Prior to starting course" which has dropped by 0.8%. This level of variation from year to year is not unusual.

1.8.3 Use of Services

There has been a general decline in the use of all services this year, when compared to 2008/09 and to 2007/08. "Examination arrangements" used by 209 students (25%) is the most popular

service in 2009/10, followed by “Assessment of Specific Learning Difficulties” (145, 21%) and then “DSA Application” (130, 18%)

1.8.4 Importance of Services

This year 4 of the top 5 most important services were voted so by small numbers of students. They are: “Physical Access” (6 users), “Mental Health Advisor” (12 users), “Finding Student Support Assistants” (26 users) and “Links with Accommodation Services” (3 users).

1.8.5 Satisfaction with Services

There has been an increase in satisfaction scores for 3 of the services voted in the top 5 most satisfying services. In particular “Liaison with other staff” rose from a satisfaction score of 4.26 in 2008/09 to 4.39 in 2009/10.

1.8.6 Satisfaction with Learning Profile

There have been a continually growing number of respondents with a Learning profile from 156 in 2007/08 to 222 in 2009/10. This year there has been a slight increase in the average satisfaction score which has risen from 4.07 in 2008/09 to 4.14 in 2009/10.

1.8.7 Overall Satisfaction

There is evidence of a slight downward trend developing in overall satisfaction, where it has gradually decreased from 88.5% in 2006/07 to 81.5% in 2009/10.

1.9 Conclusion and Recommendations

There have been a few changes to the reporting format for 2009/10. Some questions have been removed, some altered and one added. There have also been some changes made to the graphs to improve the numerical representation and aid understanding. The result is hopefully a cleaner, more streamlined report which will be of value to the Disability Office and its users.

The addition of the “Did you receive the recommended adjustments, by school” graph (Figure 9, Section 2.3.1) will help highlight which schools are efficient, at implementing the Learning Profile's of their students. This should be beneficial to the Disability Office in response to the top suggestion in section 2.4.5 “user suggestions on how the disability office could improve its service”.

With regard to section 2.4.5 “user suggestions on how the Disability office could improve its service”, 6 of the top 10 suggestions were in the last year's top ten too. Their recurrence suggests that they are very much ‘live’ issues and the service would benefit from these topics being investigated further.

While the Overall Satisfaction score is a very good 81.5%, once again showing that the majority of people who use the Disability Office are very satisfied with the service received, there is a worrying downward trend developing. This trend is worth investigating to test for any relationship with the declining survey response rate and the overall drop in the use of services. They may not be related but if there is some correlation it should be acted upon.

2 Detailed Analysis of Survey

2.1 Profile of Students

Each question has been analysed to determine the profile of respondents.

2.1.1 Age

Figure 1 gives a breakdown of the ages of students.

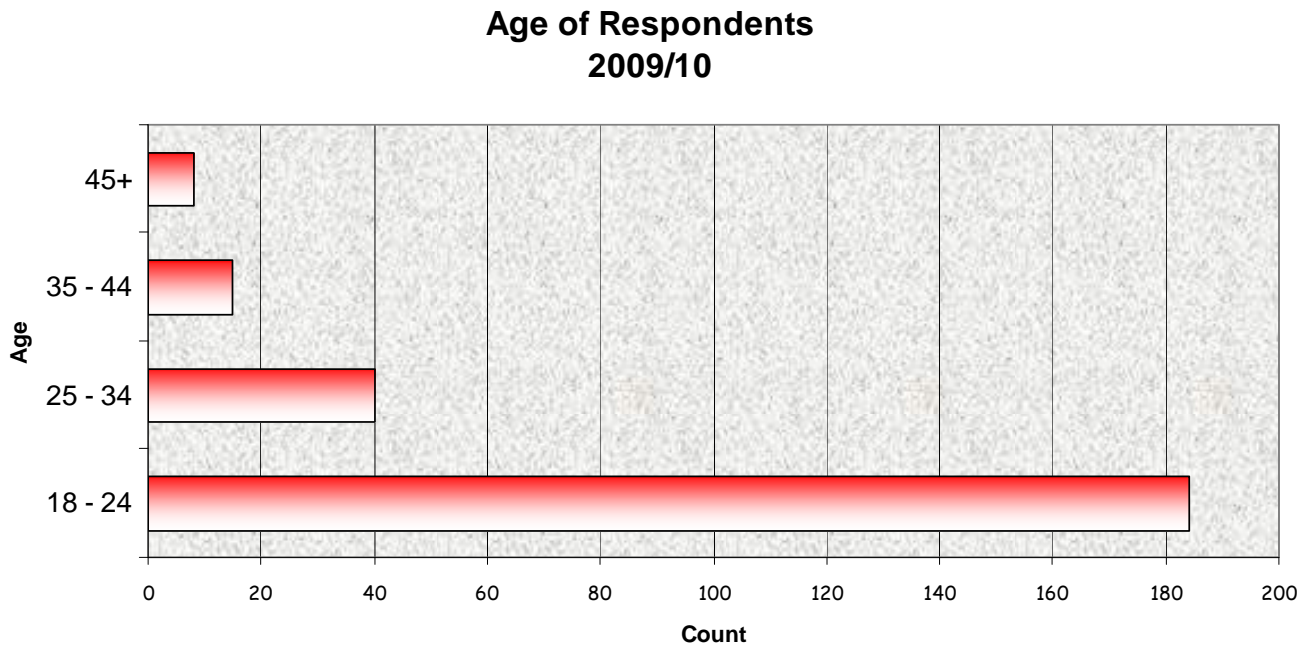


Figure 1: Age of Students

Figure 1 shows that respondents ranged in age from 18 to 45+, with the majority of students in the 18-24 age group.

2.1.2 Year of Study

Figure 2 gives a breakdown of year of study of respondents for both Postgraduates and Undergraduates. In 2009/10 the split between Postgraduate and Undergraduate students using the DO was 18% (Postgraduate) to 82% (Undergraduate). The graph shows, for Undergraduate respondents, the majority (21%) are in Year 1 of their course, closely followed by Year 3 (20%). Year 2 and Year 4 students each have 19% of the total students registered. The majority (11%) of Postgraduate respondents are in the first year of their course.

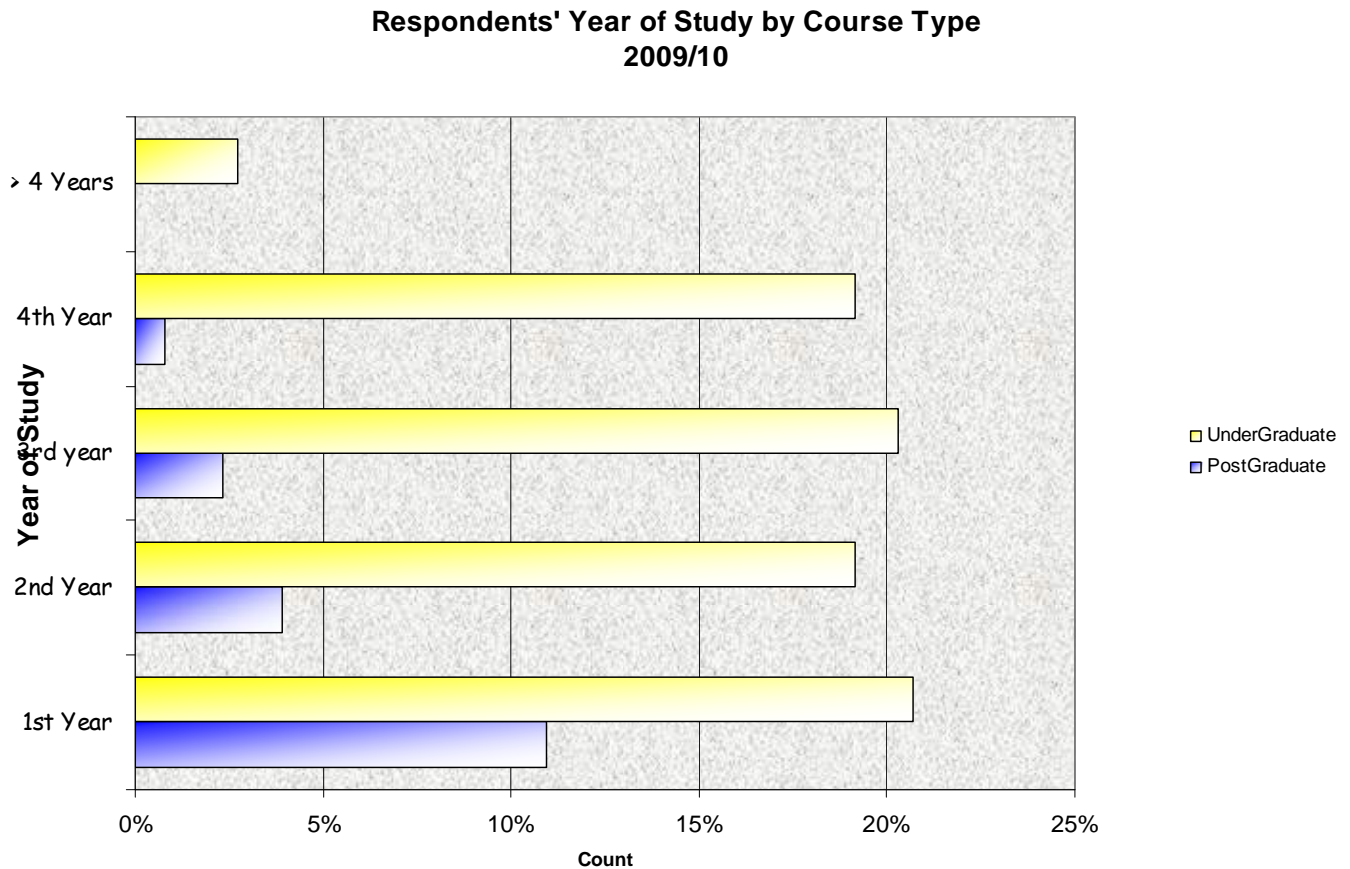


Figure 2: Respondents year of study

2.1.3 School Attended

Figure 3 illustrates that students using the Disability Office attended all 22 Schools within the University. The two highest represented schools were 'Social and Political Studies' with 30 students and 'Biological Sciences' with 22 students.

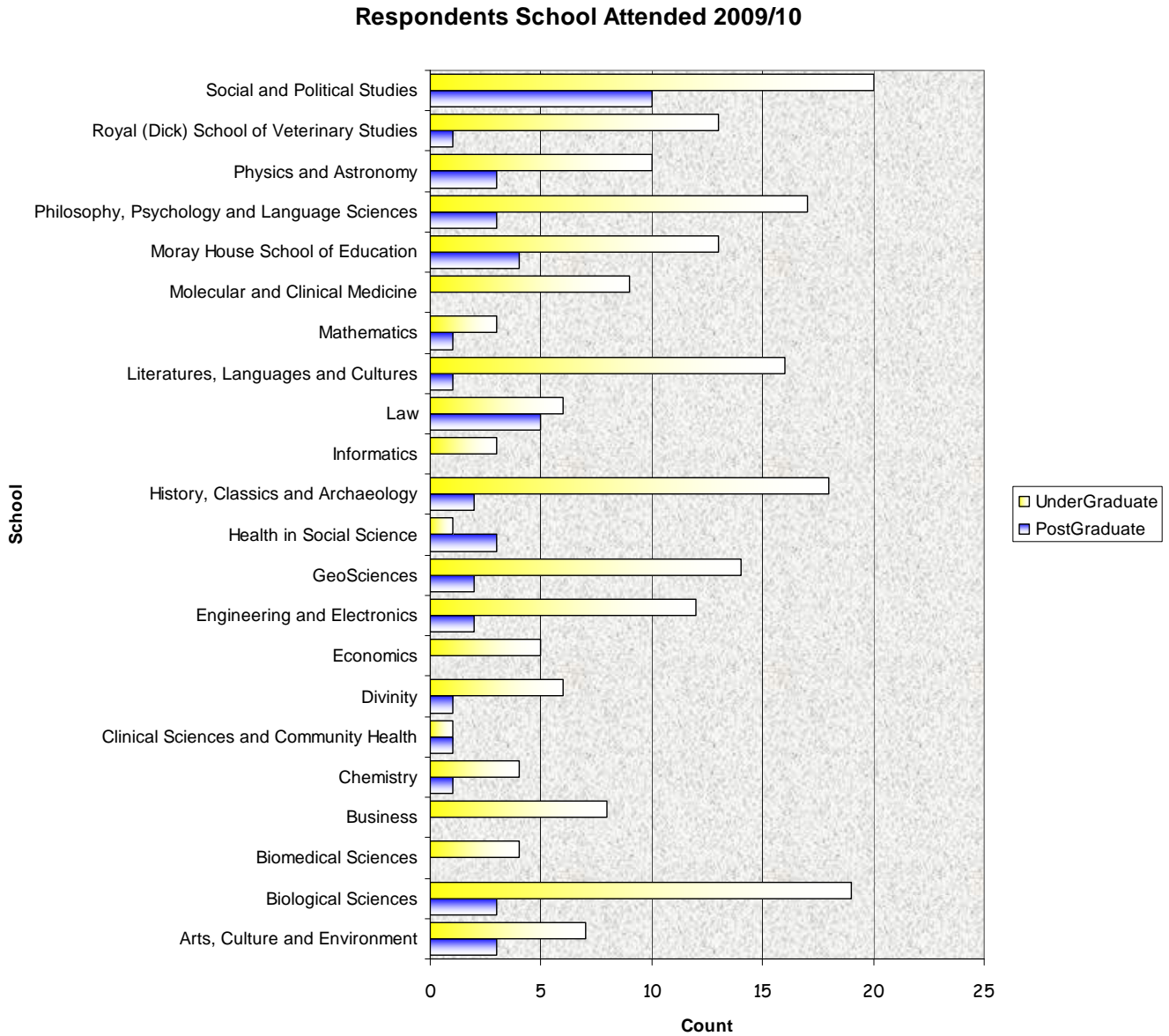


Figure 3: Respondents School Attended

2.1.4 How did you find out about the Disability Office?

This question was used to determine the source of how the students became aware of the DO's existence and services. The respondents were asked where they had found out about the Disability Office. Their responses are shown in Figure 4 below where any option prefixed with 'other' denotes a choice entered using the free text option which the student used when the 4 categories available were not applicable.

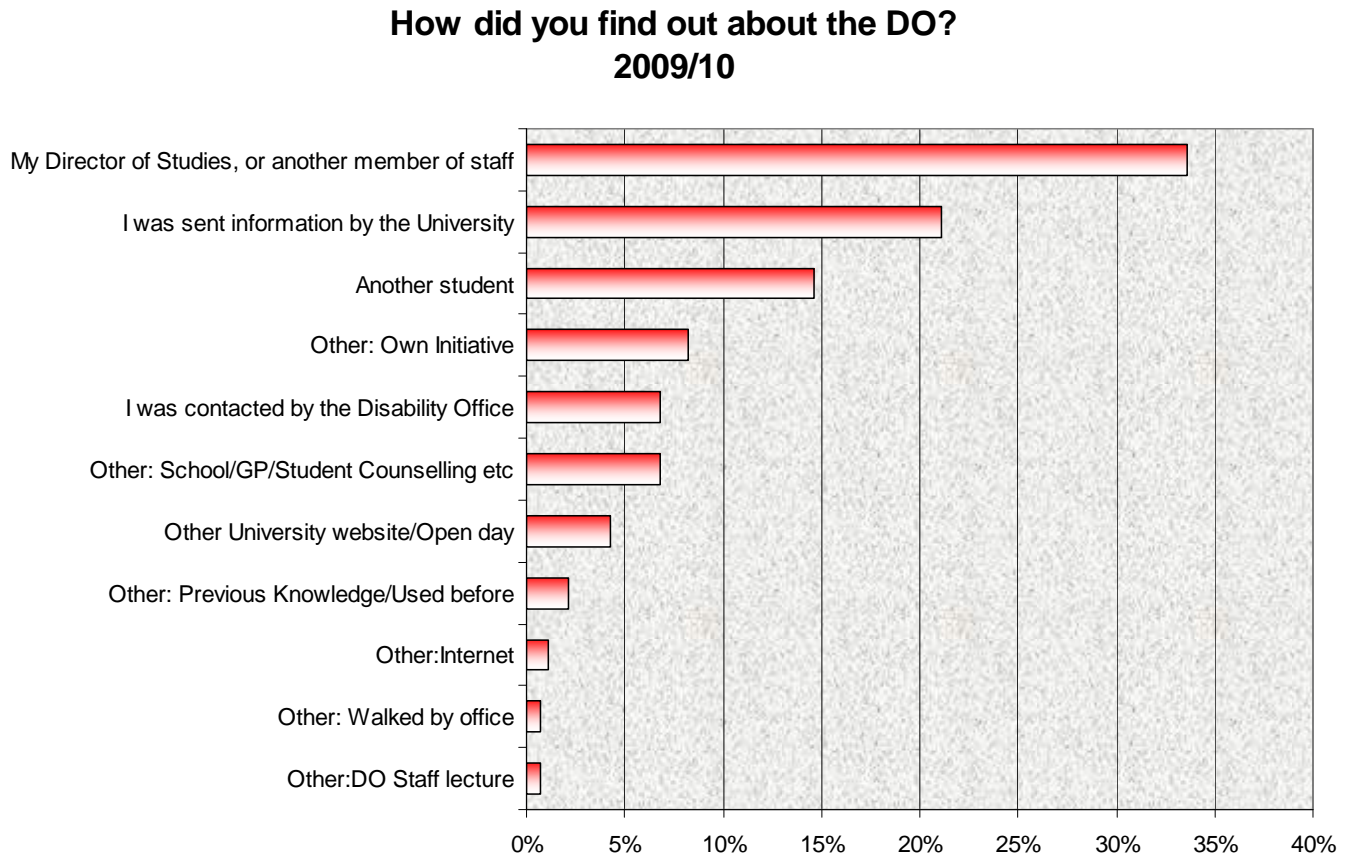


Figure 4: How did you find out about DO?

Figure 4 shows that the majority of students are informed about the services of the DO via the university itself, either by the Director of Studies or another member of staff (34%) or by information (literature, emails) being sent out (21%). 15% of students are directed to the service via existing students.

2.2 Use of service

2.2.1 When did you use our service?

Figure 5 shows the breakdown of responses for 2009/10 to the question “When did you use our service?” with respondents being asked to tick as many boxes as applicable. “in first year” remains the most popular response selected by 28% of users while “ongoing” and “in subsequent years” closely follow in second (24%) and third ((23%) place respectively.

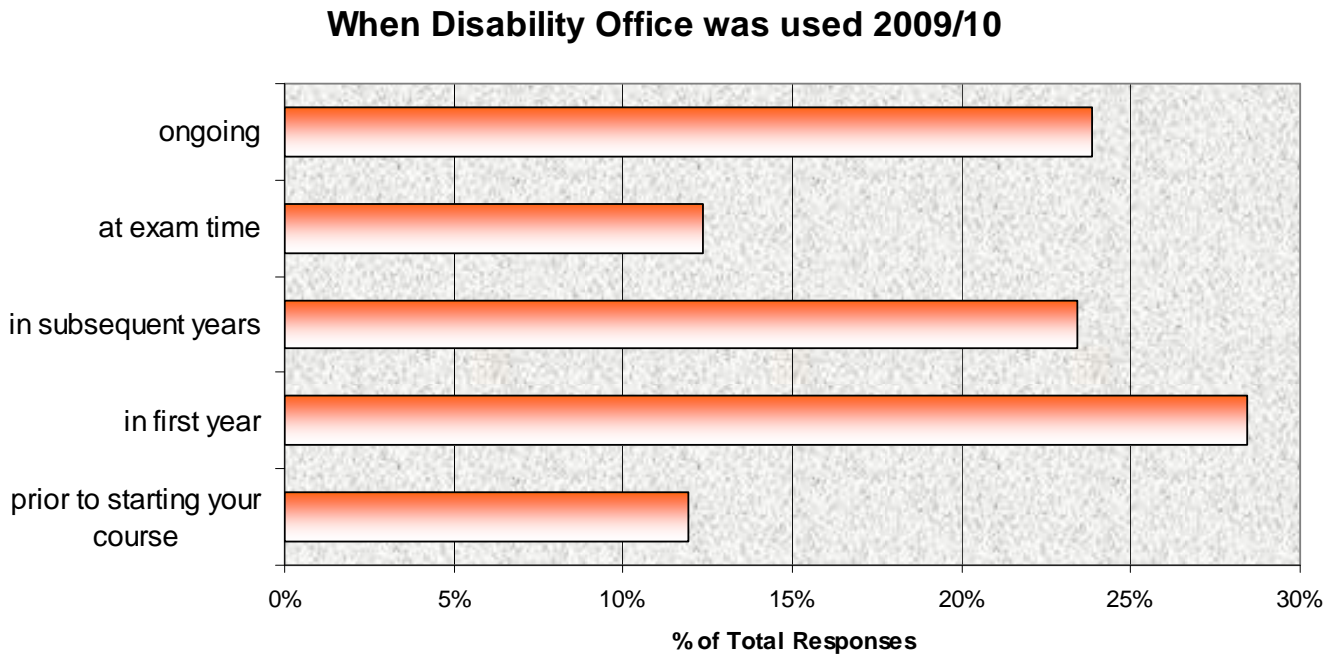


Figure 5: When students used the service

2.2.2 Which services did you use?

The breakdown of support provided by the Disability Office is given in Figure 6. "Examination arrangements" has shown to be the most popular service in 2009/10 being used by 76% of the respondents. This is closely followed "Assessment of specific learning difficulties" (54%). The next three services were all used by between 21% and 48% of the users, they are: "DSA application" (48%), "IT equipment advice" (30%) and "Study skills advice" (21%). The remaining services were all utilised by 15% or less of respondents

Areas of Student Support 2009/10

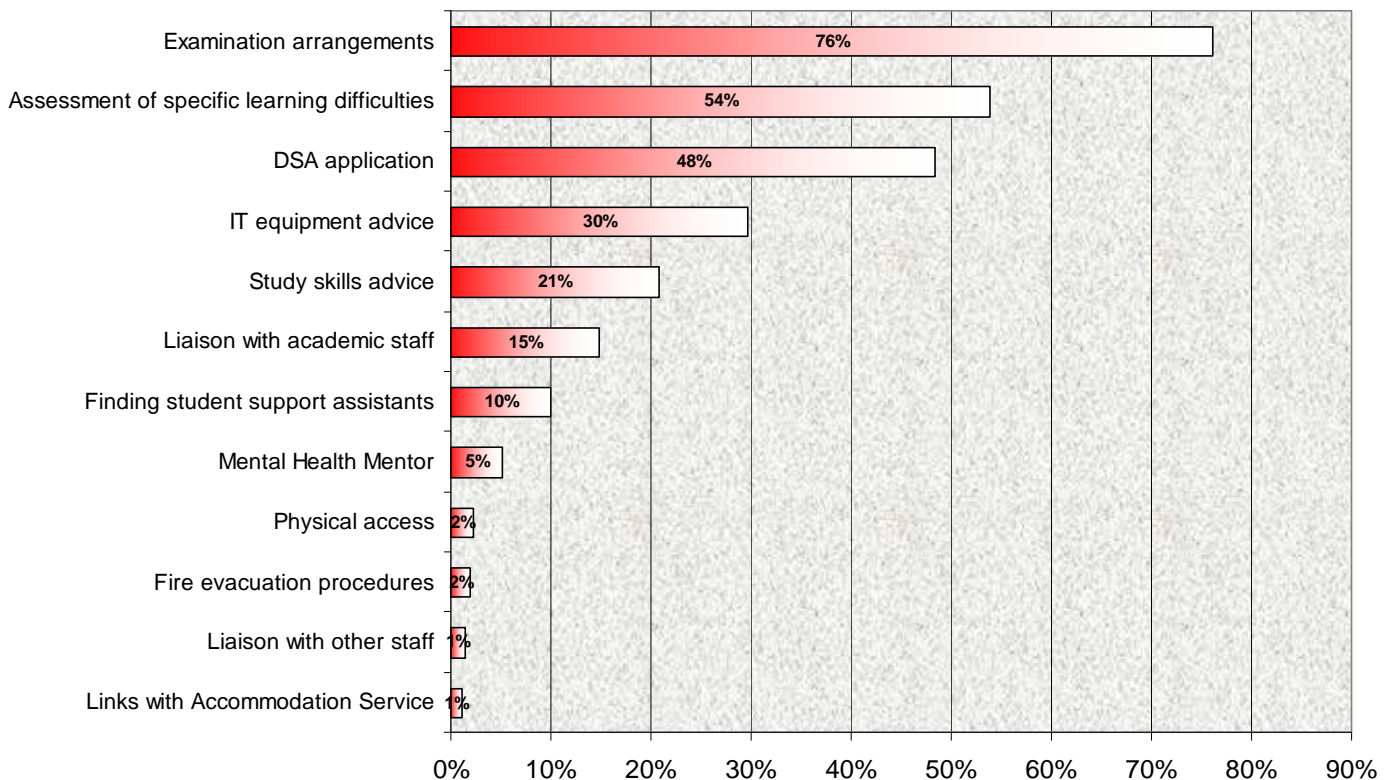


Figure 6: Areas of student support (percentage values)

2.2.3 Do you have a Learning Profile?

This is a new question for 2009/10 added to determine how many students have been allocated a Learning Profile. A Learning Profile is a list of recommended adjustments such as extra time in exams.

Figure 7 represents the response to this question. It clearly shows that 91% of all students using the Disability Office have been allocated a Learning Profile. Both the "Yes" and "No" columns have been further divided to show the split between Undergraduate and Postgraduate students and also those users who omitted to select a student type.

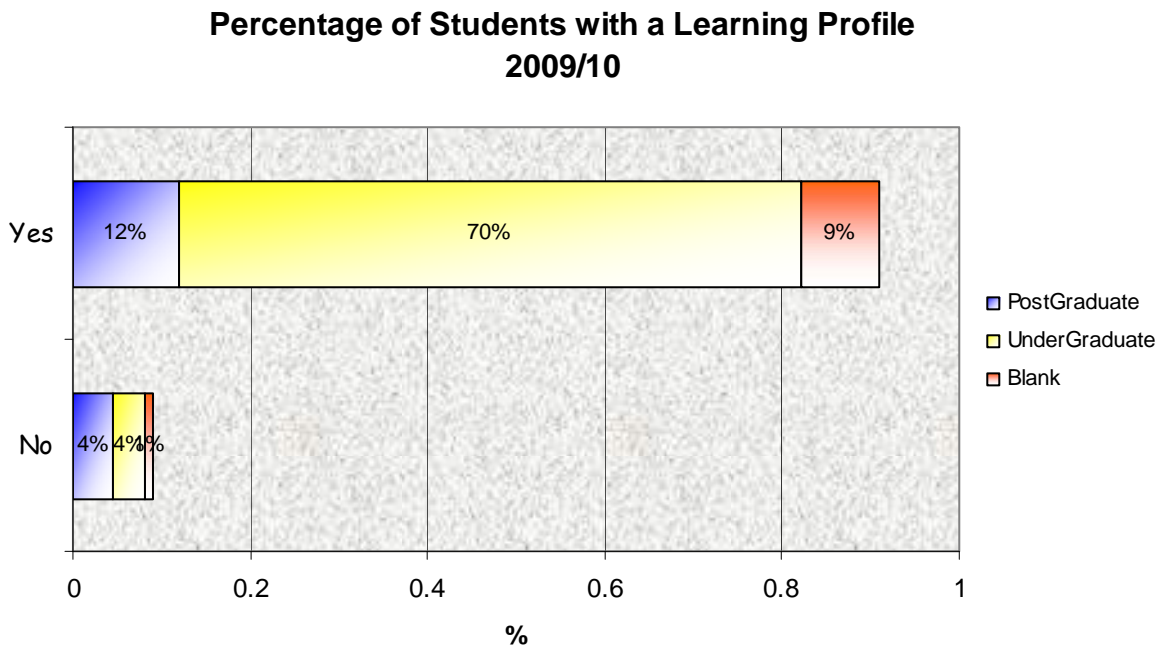


Figure 7: Do you have a Learning Profile?

2.3 Importance and Satisfaction

2.3.1 Learning Profile

2.3.1.1 Did you receive the recommended Adjustments?

Figures 8 and 9 show the responses to the question “Did you receive the adjustments recommended in your Learning Profile?” Figure 8 displays the results differentiated by student type and Figure 9 by the school they are attending, as a percentage of the total students per school.

In Figure 8 both the Undergraduate and Postgraduate students have the majority of their responses (47% Undergraduates, 7% Postgraduates) in “I received all adjustments in all courses”. The second most popular answer for Undergraduates with 14% is “I received some adjustments in all courses” and for Postgraduates with 2% it is “I received some adjustments in some courses”.

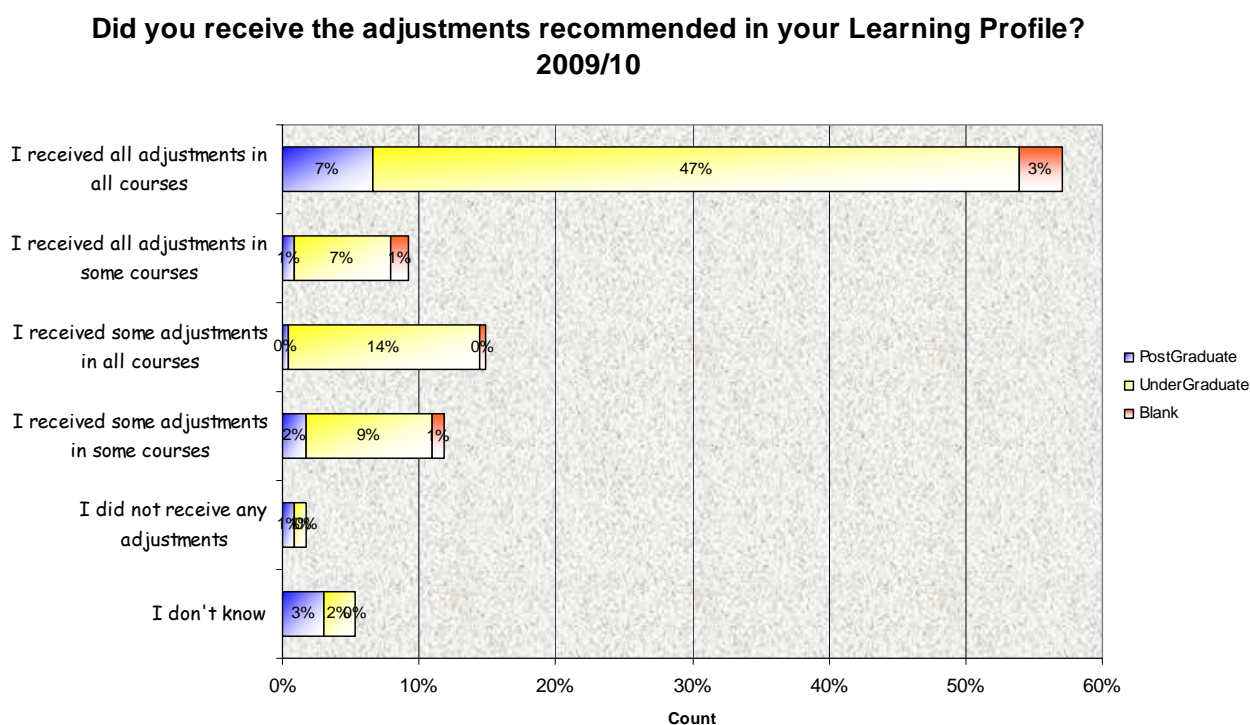


Figure 8: Did you receive the recommended adjustments by Student Type?

The graph displayed in Figure 9 has been designed to show which schools are most efficient at implementing their students’ Learning Profile recommendations. The graph is sorted by the number of students in descending order. For context, a reference table is available in *Appendix 3* which details how many students are on each course.

The graph shows that on all courses with 10 or more students, with the exception of Moray House School of Education, a minimum of 50% of pupils received all of their adjustments. A total of 4 students, in 4 courses (1 per course) did not receive any adjustments. “History, Classics and Archaeology” was the most efficient course at implementing their students’ Learning Profile. They implemented 71% of 17 students.

Did you receive the adjustments recommended in your Learning Profile?
2009/10

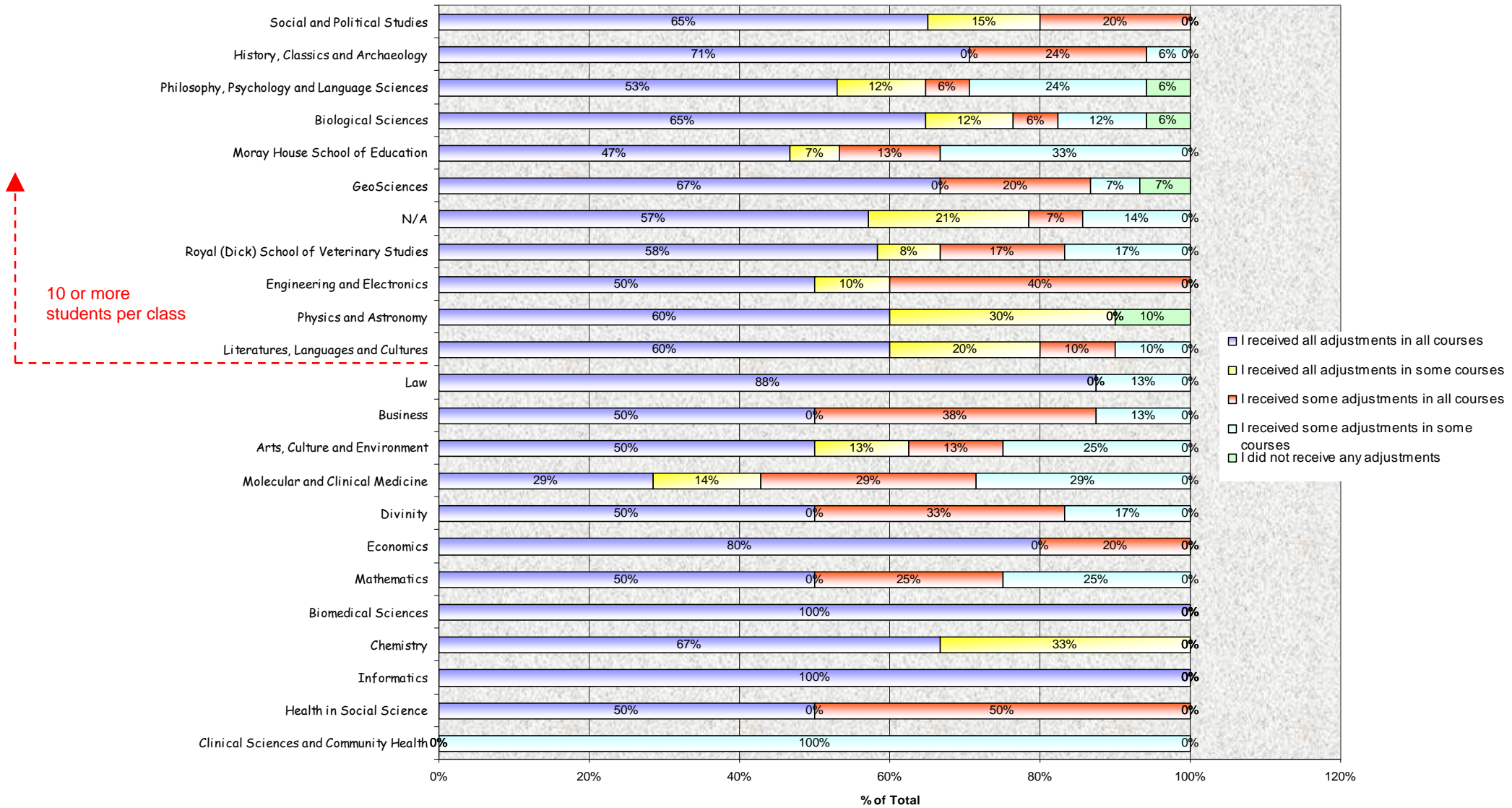


Figure 9: Did you receive the recommended adjustments by School?

2.3.1.2 Were you satisfied with the adjustments?

As illustrated in Figure 10 78% of respondents were either very satisfied (44%) or satisfied (34%) with the adjustments they received and 8% were either unsatisfied (7%) or very unsatisfied (1%). The remaining 14% of students were neutral. The graph clearly shows the split between Postgraduate and Undergraduate students.

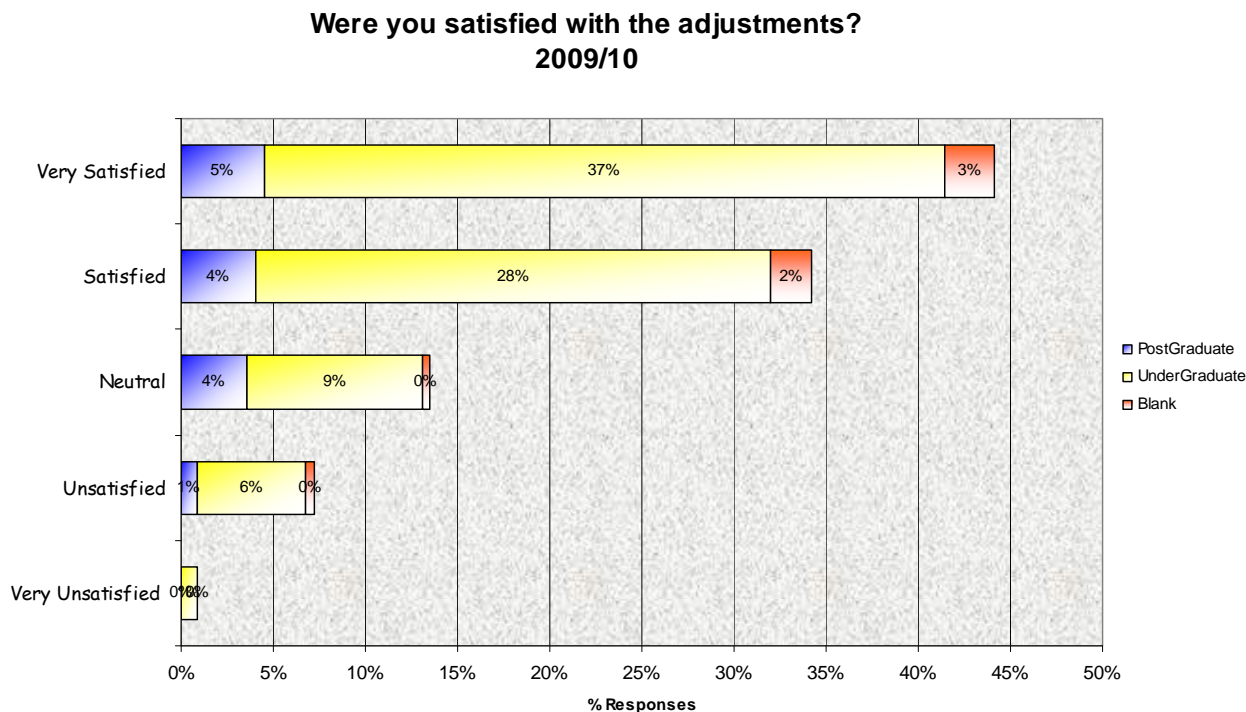


Figure 10: Were you satisfied with the adjustments?

2.3.2 Services received

2.3.2.1 Importance of Services received

The respondents were asked to rate 13 different aspects of the service, including one mandatory question: 'Usefulness of information given to you' for both importance of, and satisfaction with, each applicable aspect.

Tables 4 and 5 show the results for 2008/09 with each table summarising every question as follows:

- Number of responses (N)
- Average value on a 1-5 scale
- Rank of the item
- Percentage of responses in each category.

The tables are sorted in ascending ranked order and the labels used in the table are cross referenced to the full question wording in Appendix 1.

	Number of respondents	Average	Rank	% Very Unimportant	% Unimportant	% Neutral	% Important	% Very Important
Importance 2009/10								
Physical access	6	5.00	1	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Mental Health Mentor	12	4.83	2	0.00%	0.00%	8.33%	0.00%	91.67%
Finding student support assistants	26	4.81	3	0.00%	0.00%	3.85%	11.54%	84.62%
Examination arrangements	202	4.77	4	0.00%	0.50%	0.50%	20.79%	78.22%
Links with Accommodation Services	3	4.67	5	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	66.67%
Assessment of specific learning difficulties	140	4.64	6	0.00%	0.00%	6.43%	23.57%	70.00%
DSA application	123	4.60	7	0.00%	0.81%	4.07%	29.27%	65.85%
Liaison with academic staff	38	4.58	8	0.00%	2.63%	5.26%	23.68%	68.42%
Liaison with other staff	4	4.50	9	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	50.00%	50.00%
IT equipment advice	77	4.38	10	0.00%	1.30%	11.69%	35.06%	51.95%
Mandatory: Usefulness of information given to you	249	4.27	11	0.00%	1.20%	11.65%	46.59%	40.56%
Study skills advice	52	4.06	12	0.00%	1.92%	21.15%	46.15%	30.77%
Fire evacuation procedures	5	4.00	13	0.00%	20.00%	0.00%	40.00%	40.00%

Table 4: Summary of Importance ranking and rating

The service rated most important was “Physical Access” and while it was only selected by 6 respondents it is obviously of top priority for each of the 6 students. Similarly the second top rated service “Mental Health Advisor” was selected by a relatively small (12) number of students, while the service rated third most important “Finding student support assistants” was selected by 26 students.

2.3.2.2 Satisfaction with Services received

	Number of respondents	Average	Rank	% Very Unimportant	% Unimportant	% Neutral	% Important	% Very Important
Satisfaction 2009/10								
Examination arrangements	201	4.53	1	0.50%	2.99%	4.48%	26.87%	65.17%
Liaison with other staff	4	4.50	2	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	50.00%	50.00%
DSA application	122	4.39	3	2.46%	2.46%	5.74%	32.79%	56.56%
Assessment of specific learning difficulties	139	4.25	4	1.44%	4.32%	7.91%	40.29%	46.04%
Finding student support assistants	25	4.20	5	4.00%	8.00%	0.00%	40.00%	48.00%
IT equipment advice	75	4.17	6	0.00%	2.67%	20.00%	34.67%	42.67%
Mental Health Mentor	12	4.08	7	16.67%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	58.33%
Mandatory: Usefulness of information given to you	245	3.96	8	2.04%	6.94%	18.78%	37.14%	35.10%
Liaison with academic staff	38	3.74	9	10.53%	7.89%	15.79%	28.95%	36.84%
Physical access	6	3.67	10	16.67%	0.00%	16.67%	33.33%	33.33%
Study skills advice	52	3.63	11	3.85%	11.54%	21.15%	44.23%	19.23%
Fire evacuation procedures	5	3.60	12	0.00%	0.00%	60.00%	20.00%	20.00%
Links with Accommodation Services	3	3.00	13	33.33%	0.00%	33.33%	0.00%	33.33%

Table 5: Summary of Satisfaction ranking and rating

2.3.2.3 Most and least important and satisfactory items

Top 3 items by **importance** rating (1-5 scale: 1 Very unimportant – 5 Very important)

1	Physical access	5
2	Mental Health Mentor	4.83
3	Finding student support assistants	4.81

Bottom 3 items by **importance** rating (1-5 scale)

12	Usefulness of information given	4.27
13	Study skills advice	4.06
14	Fire Evacuation procedures	4.00

Top 3 items by **satisfaction** rating (1-5 scale: 1 Very unsatisfied – 5 Very satisfied)

1	Examination arrangements	4.53
2	Liaison with other staff	4.50
3	DSA Application	4.39

Bottom 3 items by **satisfaction** rating (1-5 scale)

12	Study skills advice	3.63
13	Fire evacuation procedures	3.60
14	Links with Accommodation Services	3.00

The students are generally happy with the services provided; 9 of the 13 services have been rated, on average, greater than 3.7. The lowest average rating of satisfaction was 3 (neutral), awarded to “Links with Accommodation Services”, which had only 3 users.

2.4 Overall Satisfaction

Two open and three closed questions were asked in this section. These responses are summarised in Figures 11 to 16.

2.4.1 Contribution to Educational Experience

Figure 11 shows the response to whether the respondents felt the Disability Office had made a positive contribution to their educational experience. A combined 84% of students either agreed (42%) or strongly agreed (42%) while 5% either disagreed (3%) or strongly disagreed (2%). 2% of students had no opinion and 9% stated they were neutral.

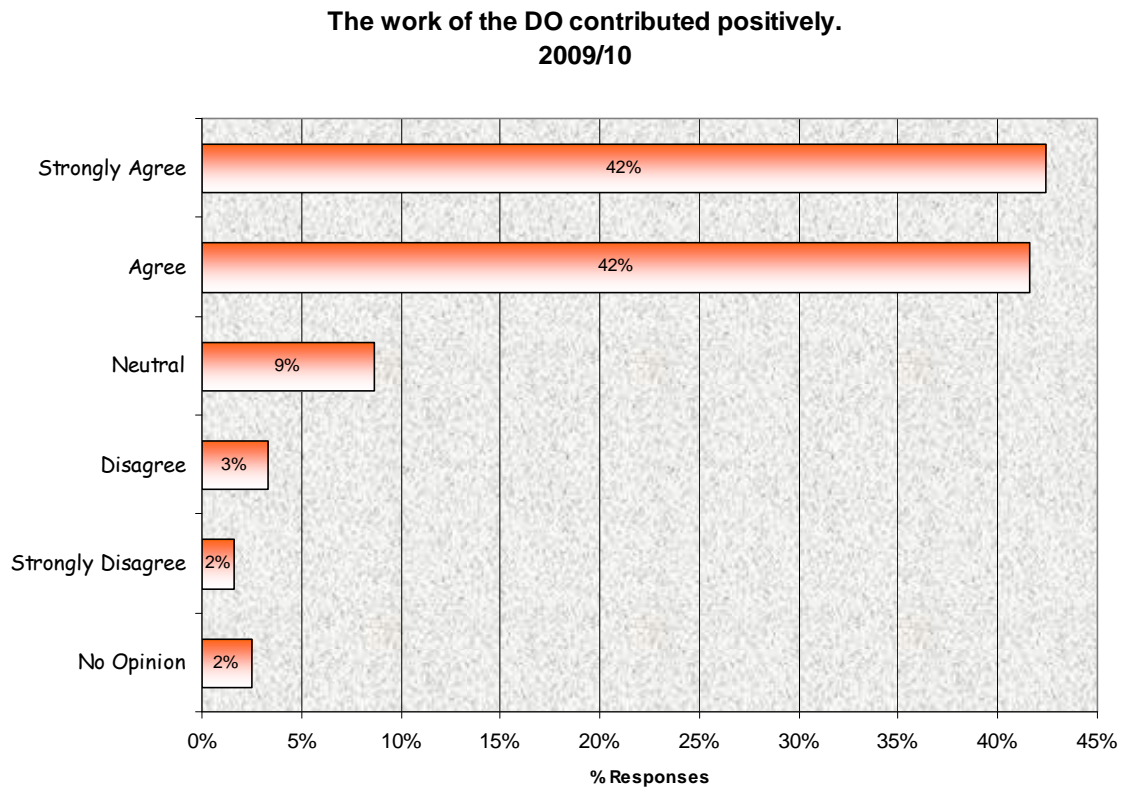


Figure 11: Disability Office contribution to educational experience

2.4.2 Overall Satisfaction

The overall satisfaction rating, displayed in Figure 12, shows that 82% percent of respondents are either very satisfied (42%) or satisfied (40%) and that only 7% in total are either dissatisfied (5%) or very dissatisfied (2%) with the Disability Office services overall. 1% of students stated they had no opinion, while another 12% are neutral.

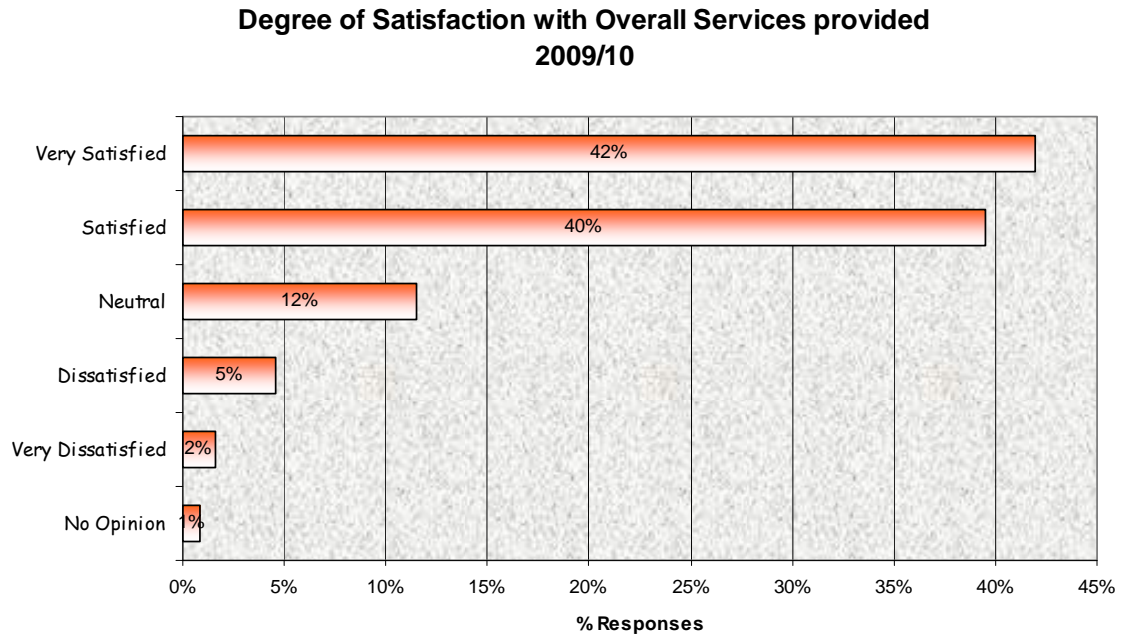


Figure 12: Overall satisfaction

2.4.3 Positive Statements

Respondents were asked to make a positive statement about the Disability Office. A total of 188 students answered this question with 183 positive comments made. Figure 13 shows the pattern of replies.

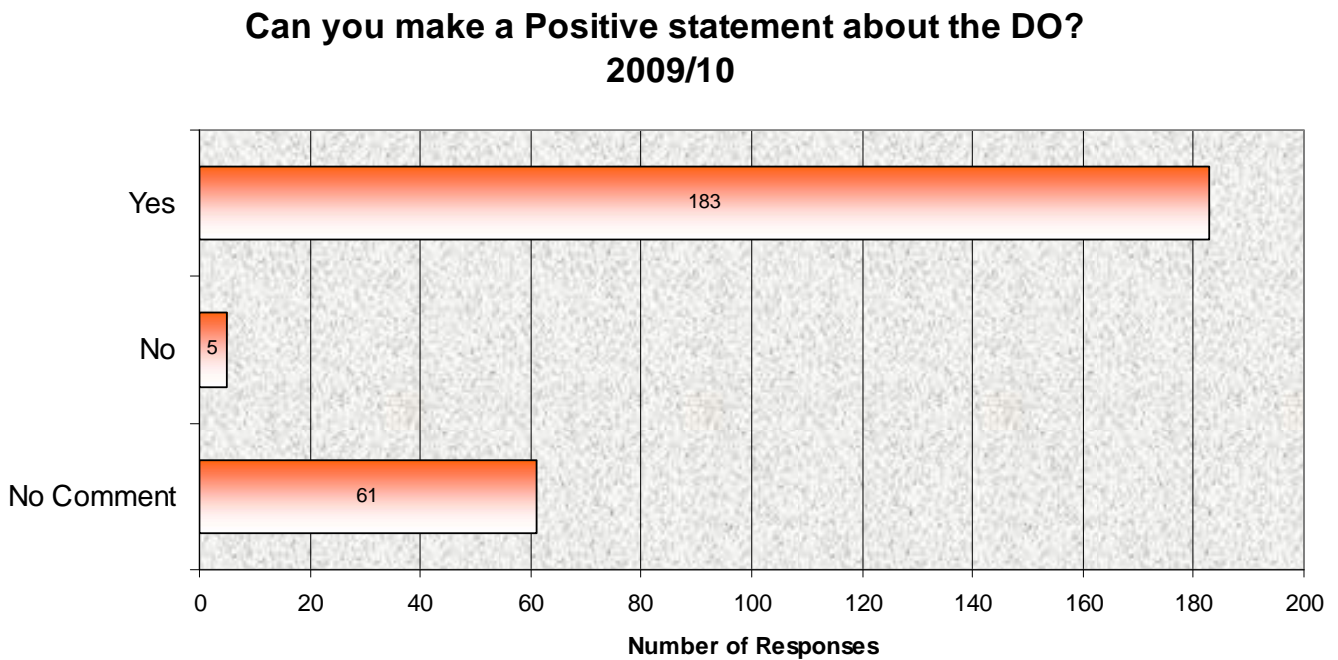


Figure 13: Positive Statement about Disability Office

Similar to previous years the focus of the answers was mainly concerned with the positive attitudes and capabilities of the staff. As before the words “helpful, friendly, dedicated, efficient, supportive, caring, approachable, organised and positive” were frequently used. Here follows a few quotes from the 183 made:

“without them would not have achieved grades, once my learning disability had been assessed. they gave lots of useful advice and support”

“The staff, particularly my advisor, were always polite, friendly, and sympathetic”

“It's very important to have an outside and objective agency who will liaise with university staff on on'e behalf, saving personal embarassment and misunderstandings which are almost inevitable in personally requesting help with disability.”

“The Disability office have been very helpful to me in the last couple of months since I had an initial appointment. They are friendly and non-judgemental and have really helped me to be less stressed about my studies here - it helps me a lot to have an extra port of call for when my health problems are causing problems with my studies and getting on top of me, and also to have advice about my year abroad and other things.”

2.4.4 Complaint handling

Students were asked how complaints were handled and the results are shown in Figure 14. The majority (77% or 191 students), did not complain and so found this question 'not applicable'. The remaining 23% (54 students) was split into 28 who agreed, 22 who are neutral and 8 people who disagreed.

Once again the pattern is similar for Undergraduates and Postgraduates.

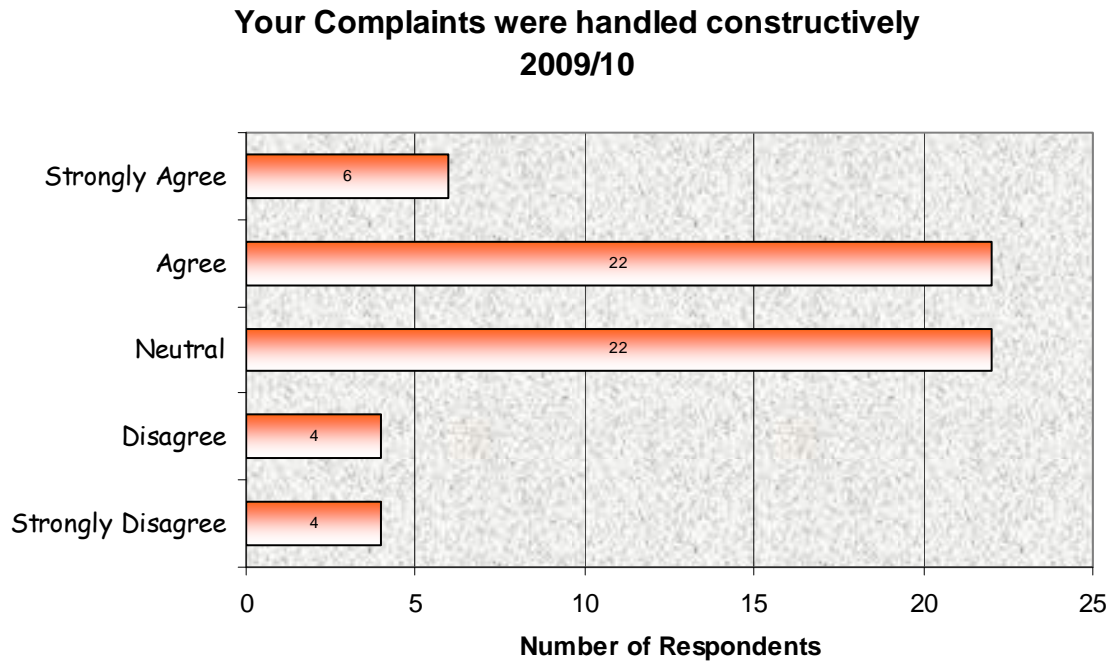


Figure 14: Complaint handling

2.4.5 Suggestions about how the Disability Office could improve its service.

As in previous years respondents were asked to suggest improvements. Figure 15 below shows the results of the question.

The top ten most common answers were:-

- 23 requests for Liaising with other university staff/services including: enforcing agreements, raising awareness of various disabilities.
- 21 users asked to improve the efficiency/competency/personal communication skills of staff.
- 17 users requested improved advertising/clearer policies
- 17 requests to improve follow-up support/ongoing communications with students
- 14 users asked for a more personalised/less generic service
- 13 users asked for speedier processes
- 13 users requested an improved appointment system for meeting with DO staff.
- 11 users have suggested that there is no improvement needed.
- 10 users asked for improved location of staff.
- 7 users see a benefit in the DO offering seminars /training on specific disabilities.

6 of the top ten suggestions were in the top ten suggestions in the 2008/09 DO survey

Suggested Improvements 2009/10

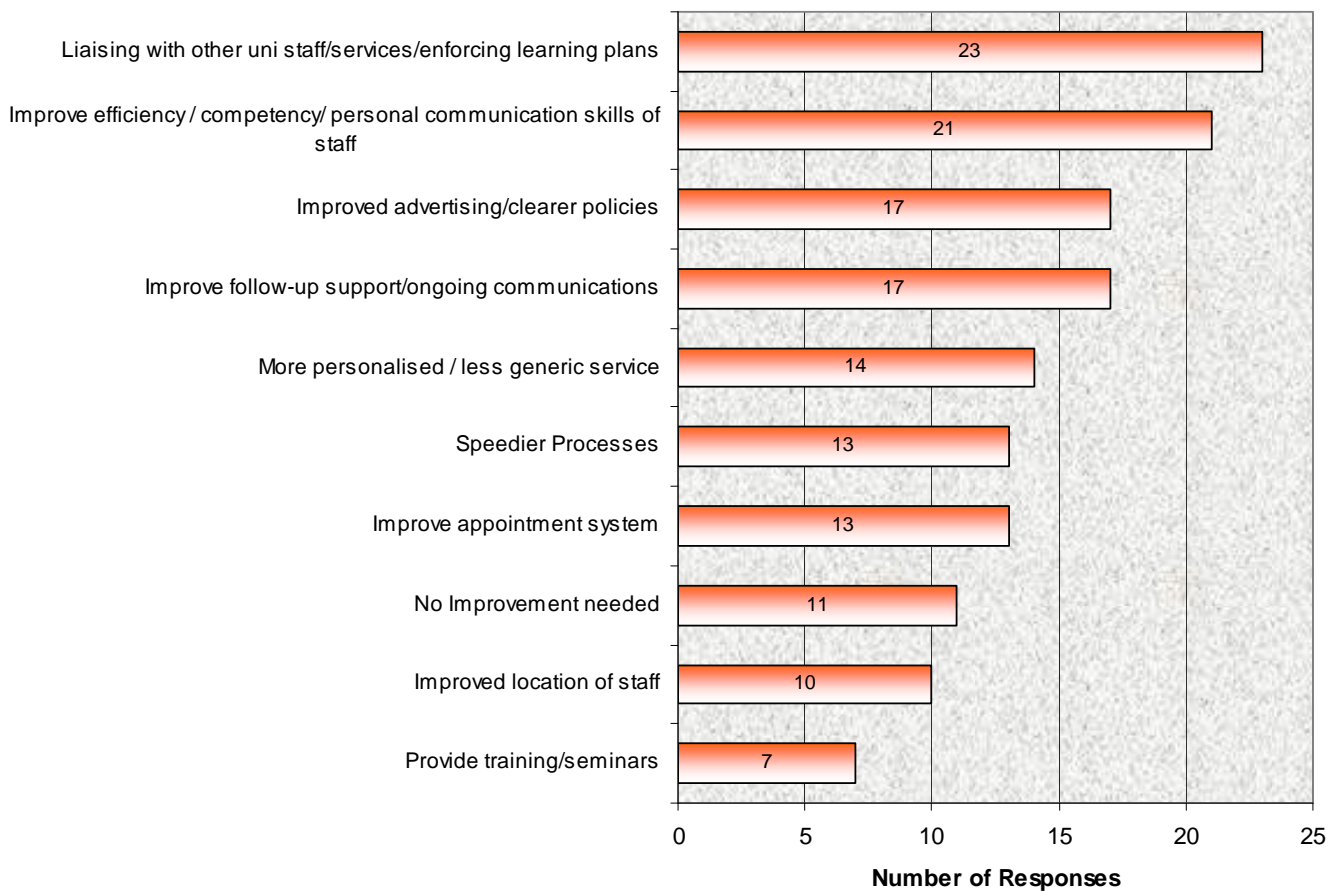


Figure 15: Areas suggested for improvement

2.4.6 Specific quotes concerning the top 4 suggestions for improvement

2.4.6.1 Liaising with other Uni staff/services

In 2009/10 there were 23 suggestions which all involved the Disability Office working closer with the other departments to emphasise the necessity of implementing their learning Profile recommendations. This was the top suggestion last year too. Here are some example quotes:

“As I see it the disability office is more of an advice service then a service for disabled. They advise staff and student how best to get about being in the university with a disability and do not act to improve disability relations within the university or discipline on bad practice of disability in the university, if the disability department made more of a effort to iron out the politics of disability within the university; for example the fact that the learners profile never gets properly implemented and no staff are given specialist disabilities training every year, there is very little follow up on any of this it makes me scared to talk about it freely as mostly I feel I get ignored as a radical nut.”

“The only problem I have had in this area, was not the fault of the disability office, it was faculty staff not correctly reading my adjustments and applying them in class tests.”

“A firmer hand reminding lecturers and course administrators of their responicbility to provide students with learning disabilities with the help they need. Such as providing them with comprehensive notes rather than making students with the dispensation make their own anyway.”

2.4.6.2 Improve the efficiency/competency/personal communication skills of staff

There were 21 recommendations to improve the skills of staff within and out with the Disability Office.

“I was greatly disappointed by the lack of response to both e-mail and phone calls by my disability advisor. It took continious attempts on my part to talk to someone for work finally to get done. It was a hassle I really could have done without due to being fairly ill.”

“The psychologist who assessed me made me feel like a fraud, and questioned my degree choice as it is rare for a dyslexic student to be doing languages at this level. Instead of treating it as a positive of my ability she suggested that as the course got more challenging I might want to change. This knocked my confidence in a subject that I am very good at.”

“Some staff need to be much more friendly especially on the fornt desk. Staff must be trained in a wider breadth of disabilities and learning difficulties for instance my own- dyscalculia. There must also be tutors for these other learning difficulties as I was was told that although tutoring was on my learning profile, I couldn't be given one as there was noone suitable.”

2.4.6.3 Improved advertising / clearer policies

“ a more comprehensive list of the things provided my the university as support. for example i only found out i could get double time in reserve books in my 3rd year of uni which would have been very helpful before this point.”

“The only problem I had (being an ESALA student) was being sent to ECA and back and forth, so it would be very useful for future student if this was a clearer process with regards of who to contact etc.”

“It would be good if you could make sure that students were made aware of how simple a procedure it is and how helpful you are.”

2.4.7 Improve follow-up support / ongoing communications

“I find they say they are going to do something for example provide a proof reader or another service and it takes months for them, if not longer to get round to doing anything about it.”

“I think there should be a continuity in one adviser dealing with the same student through out the student's university education when and if possible. In my case, change of the adviser resulted in some additional work to explain the new adviser all the arrangements etc.”

“If workload permitted, more follow-up support would be useful - as I gave up on a number of minor problems which my school failed to help with because I didn't want to keep pestering people myself.”

2.4.7.1 Other useful suggestions

“Create a supportive student network were they can communicate and discuss any problems specially for people who are 'diagnosed' for example with dyslexia at university”

“Be more proactive in contacting students who have indicated on their application form that they consider themselves to have some kind of disability. Don't wait for the student to contact the DO themself, as some may not feel comfortable "taking the first step".”

2.5 Suggested improvements to the survey

A number of improvements have been made this year. It is recommended that these are appraised and if approved left to settle before making any other immediate changes.

3 Non user survey

A smaller survey of non-users of the Disability Office was carried out consisting of one closed question with 8 options asking why the service had not been used and one open question asking for suggestions on how to make the Disability Office more accessible.

A total of 24 students answered this second questionnaire.

3.1 Reasons for non use of DO service

Respondents were given 8 options and asked to tick as many of the 8 boxes that applied to them. Figure 16 shows the results with Table 5 presenting a cross-reference table to match the graph category to the actual question asked.

While the top reason appears to be “Not needed” (15 users), 9 of the respondents stated that their “School /college not advised” with another 5 stating “Tutors not advised”. 6 users stated “Own support” while 4 said “Not aware” and another 3 stating “Unsure of support”. 2 students selected “UCAS box ticked” and 2 students state that they had “No information”.

Reasons for not contacting Disability Office 2009/10

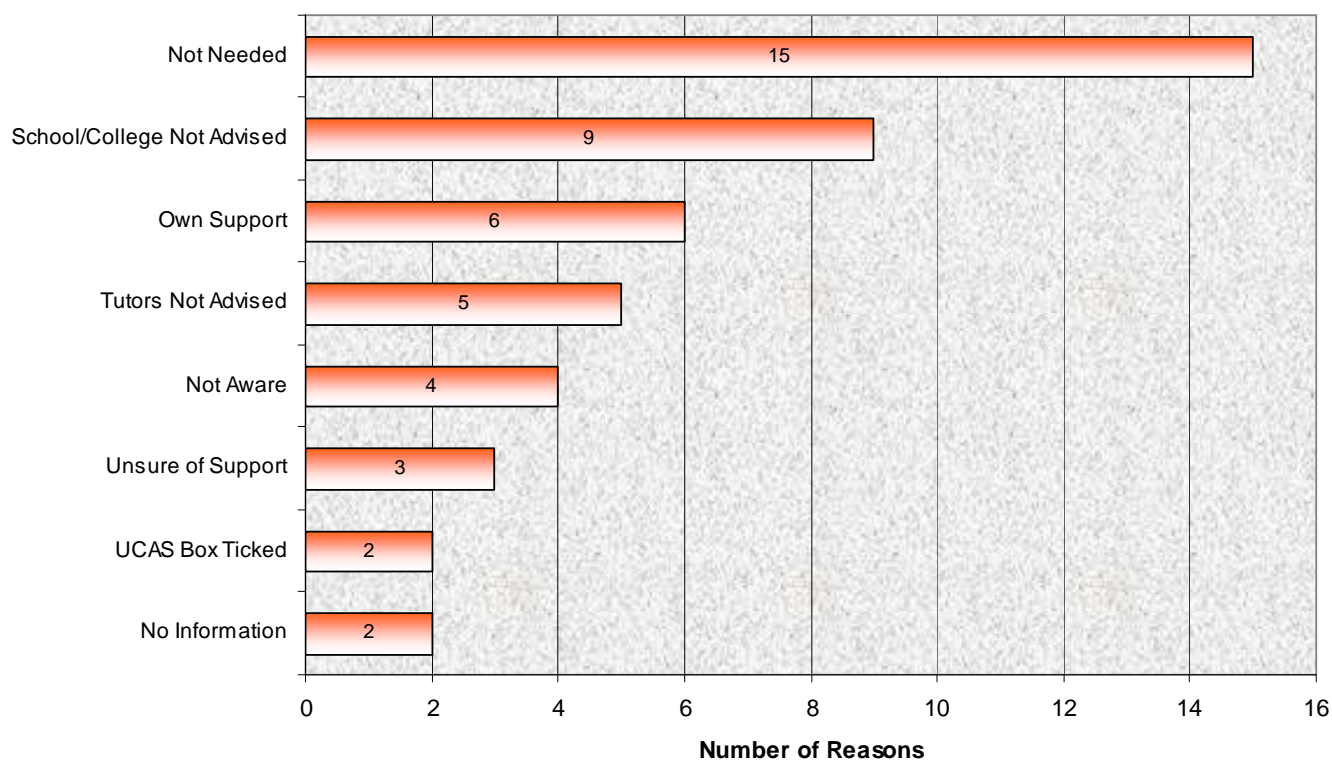


Figure 16: Reasons for non-contact with the Disability Office

Label	Questionnaire wording	No Students
Not Needed	I did not believe that I required support from the Disability Office.	15
Unsure of Support	I was not sure what support was available.	3
Tutors Not Advised	None of my academic tutors advised me to contact the Disability Office.	5
No Information	I have not come across any information about the services offered by the Disability Office.	2
School/College Not Advised	My School/College did not advise me that the Disability Office services would be available.	9
Own Support	I prefer to arrange my own support.	6
UCAS Box Ticked	I ticked the box on the UCAS form and thought the Disability Office would contact me.	2
Not Aware	I was not aware of the existence of the Disability Office.	4

Table 5: Cross-reference for labels for non-contact options.

3.2 Suggestions for making the Disability Office more accessible

There were 3 suggestions received. The suggestions are:

“Perhaps it would be useful if you clarified on the UCAS form that you won't be contacting us!...or change what you do and contact us if we tick the box - i ticked 2 boxes!!!”

“More information in fresher's packs or in the union would be good.”

“Is there any info for online/distance learning for support?”

4 Renaming the Disability Office

We are considering renaming the Disability office and respondents were asked if they liked any of four names suggested, or alternatively to suggest one of their own. Figure 17 below, shows the popularity of the four offered choices, these are above the red-line. It also depicts the top 6 respondents' suggestions. There were 72 suggestions in total, which were grouped where possible.

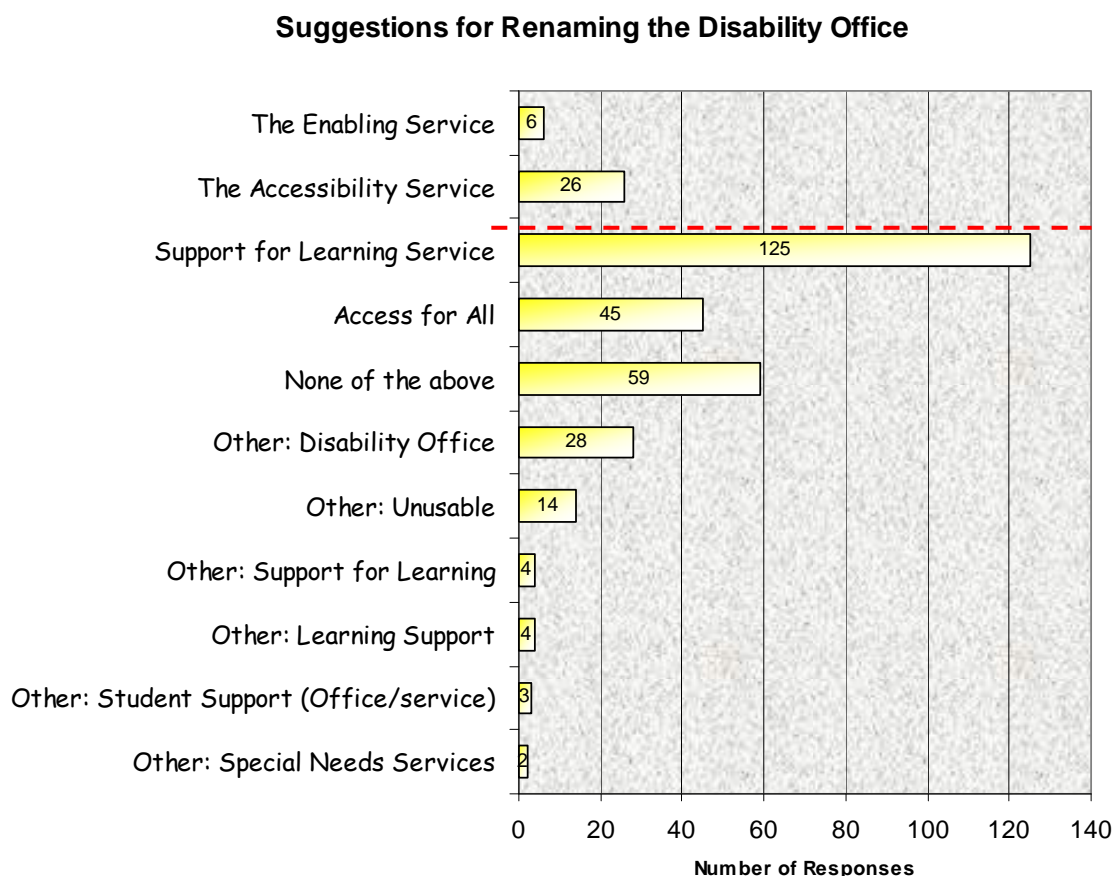


Figure 17: Areas suggested for improvement

The most popular choice from the Disability Office's suggested names is "Support for Learning Service" with 125 votes. There were an additional 8 people who suggested variations on this for example: "Support for Learning" (4) and "Learning Support" (4).

While there were 6 supporters for “The Enabling Service” there were a separate 6 who requested quite strongly not to use this name.

28 users actively requested that the Disability Office keep its current name as “it does what it says on the tin”, prevents confusion and is easily found in a search engine. It is worth noting that the 4th popular answer to “How did you find out about the Disability Office” is “Own Initiative” and 15 of those respondents stated they actively sought out the Disability Office.

A complete list of suggestions and comments can be found in *Appendix 6*

5 Long term Trend

This section, added in 2007/08, is beneficial for 2 reasons. Firstly it allows the reader to compare the current year’s performance to the recent past and secondly, it allows the Disability Office to focus its improvement activity where needed, while assessing the effects of past actions.

For clarity and relevance some of the following trend graphs have been derived from the last three years data. Where relevant, the graphs will only depict the top 5 Services.

5.1 Response Rate

Figure 18 shows the response rate for each year plotted on the y-axis (line graph) and the number of surveys issued on the secondary y-axis (column graph). This gives perspective on the percentages and allows for a more robust analysis.

While there has been an increase in the number of students registering as disabled with the office, 166 more than in 2008/09, the survey response rate for 2009/10 has dropped by 4% to 14% this year.

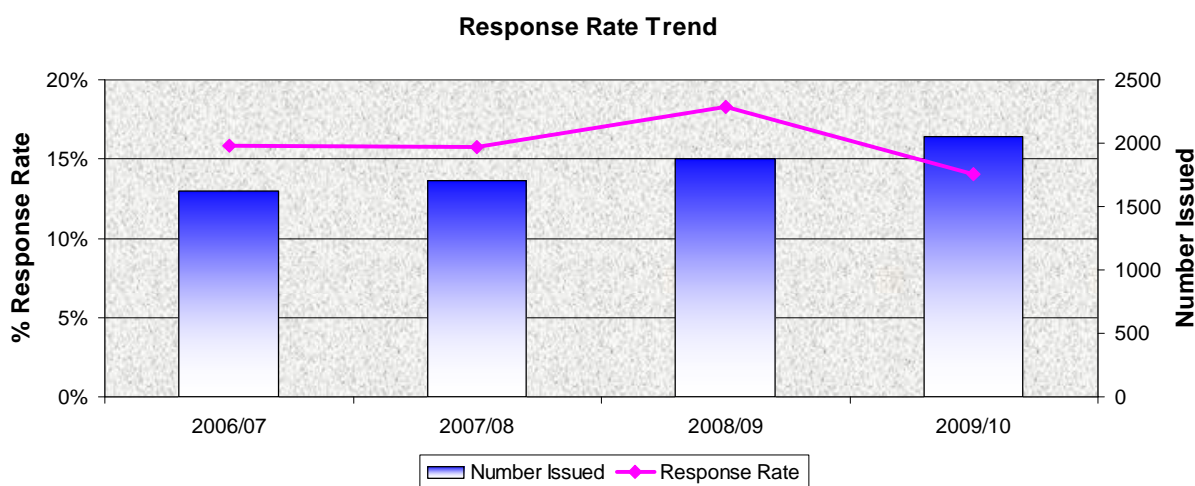


Figure 18: Response Rate Trend

5.2 Pattern of Use

Figure 19 shows the trend in how the Disability Office's services are used over the past three years. The data is presented as a percentage of the total number of DO users for the appropriate year.

The graph shows a very similar pattern to last year with some services showing a slight increase in use e.g. "Ongoing use" up by 0.8%, and some showing a slight fall in percentage use e.g. "Prior to starting course" which has dropped 0.8%. This movement is what you would expect to see in a normal process from year to year.

When Service was Used

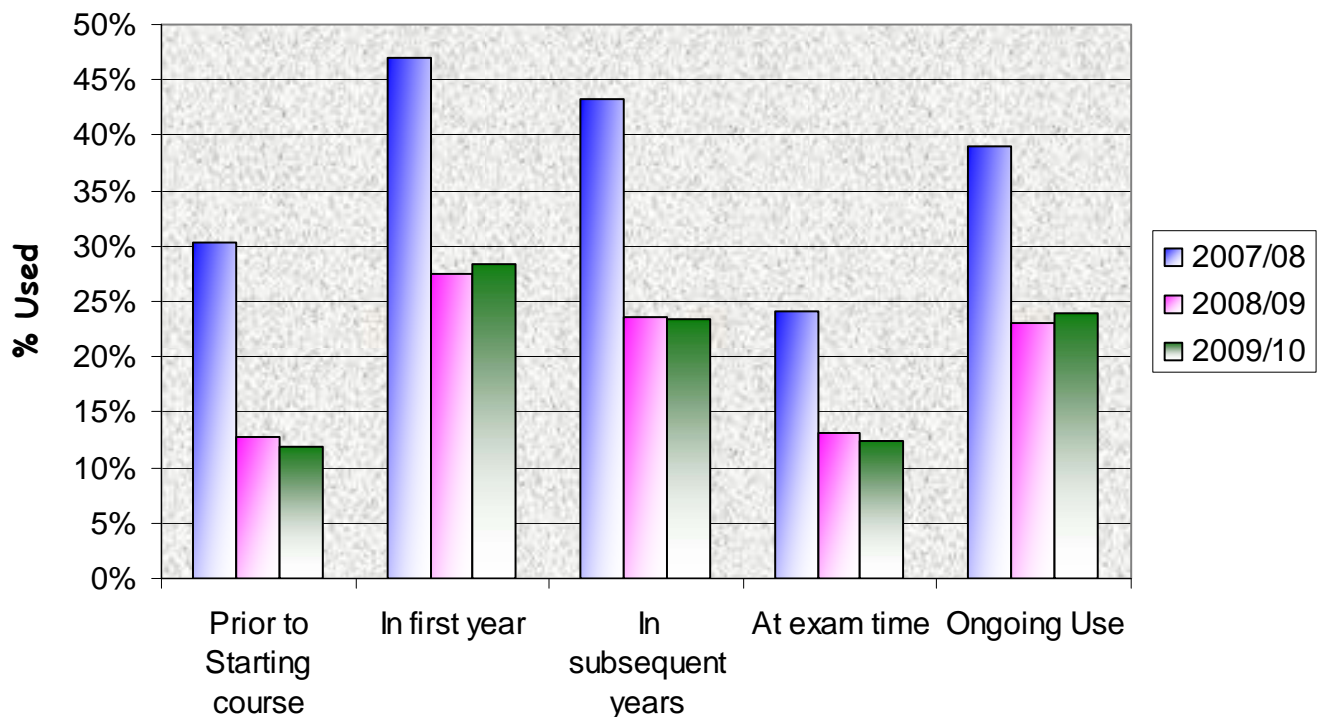


Figure 19: When Service was used

5.3 Use of Services Trend

The Use of Services trend is presented in Figure 20. It has been sorted into the top 5 services used for 2009/10 and then presented with the same services for the previous 2 years. While there has been an overall drop in the frequency of use for all services, “Examination Arrangements” appears to have been the most frequently used in 2009/10.

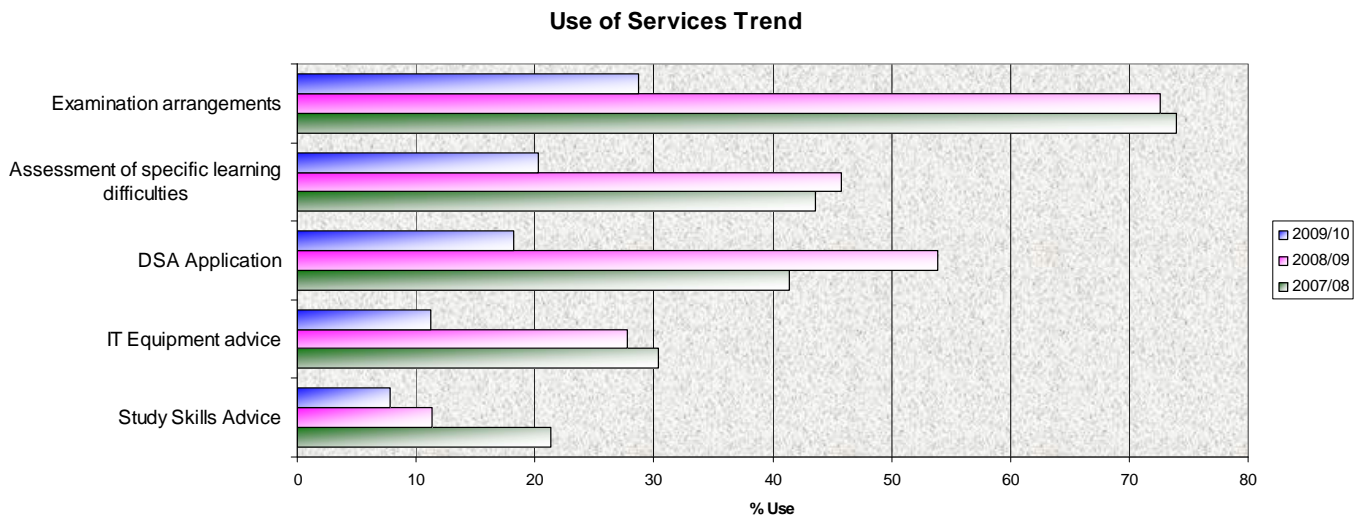


Figure 20: Use of Services Trend

5.4 Trend in Importance and Satisfaction scores

Figures 21 and 22 show the trend in importance and satisfaction scores for each service. They are formatted as follows: ‘Average Score’ is shown as a line graph and is plotted on the primary y-axis; ‘No of Replies’ is in column format and is plotted on the secondary y-axis. This is shown to add context when analysing the importance and satisfaction of each service.

The graphs are sorted in descending order of importance/satisfaction, using average score, for the current year (2009/10).

5.4.1 Importance of Services

In the case of the graph in Figure 21 the number of respondents is irrelevant. If a service is not needed by a user it will not be selected and thus the average score will not be affected. This is evident as 4 of the top 5 services are rated highly important by a very small group of users. The exception being “Examination arrangements”, which is a service seen as important by 202 respondents. The number of respondents should not be considered a factor, as each service is highly important to the user who selected it.

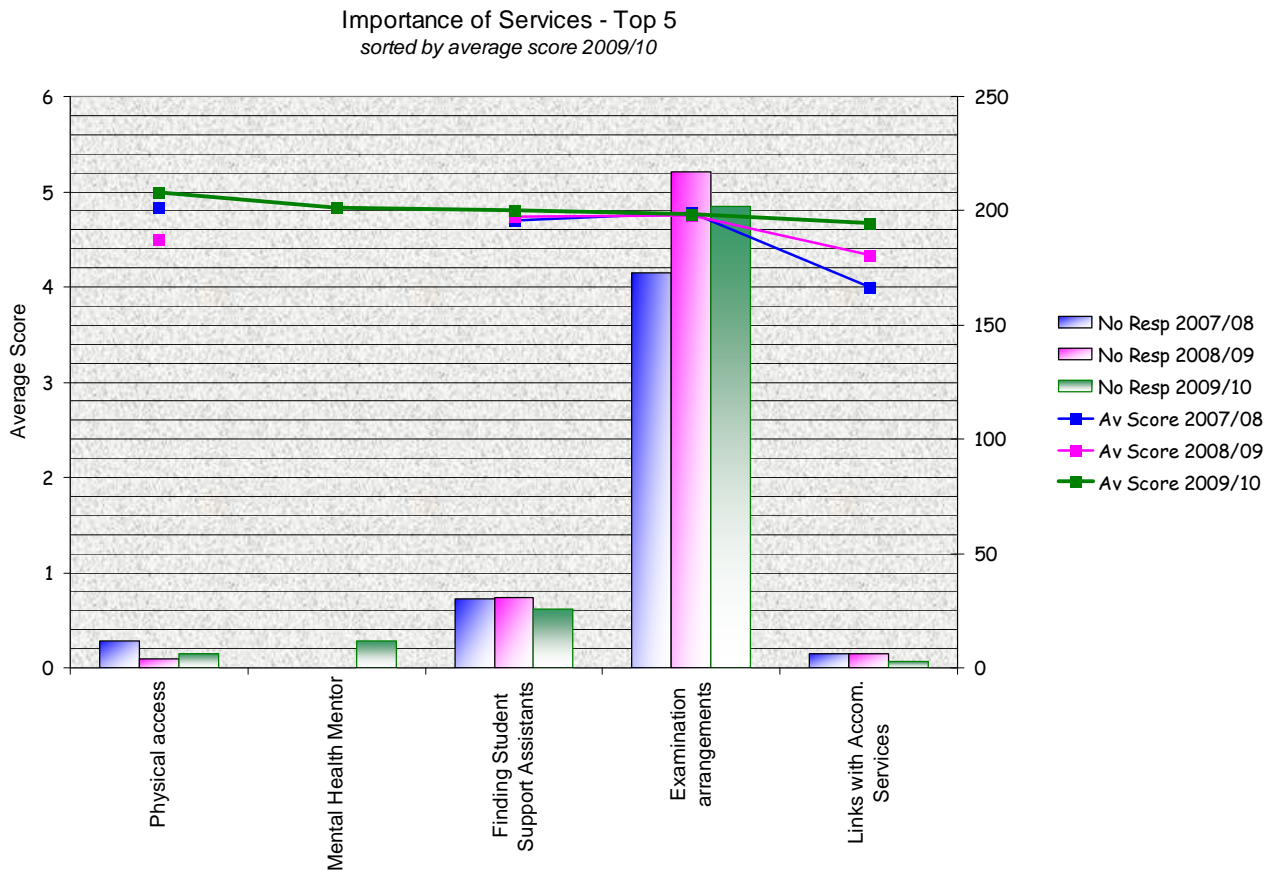


Figure 21: Importance of Services Trend

5.4.2 Satisfaction with Services

Figure 21 shows a more meaningful trend as it rates the satisfaction of the DO services when used, however the closeness of the average scores can make the graph difficult to interpret. Increased satisfaction is evident where the 2009/10 (green) trend-line is above the 2008/09 (pink) line. The graph shows the top 5 services which respondents are most satisfied with. One area where there has been the greatest improvement from 2008/09 is in “Liaison with other staff” where there was an increase of 1.5 in the average score.

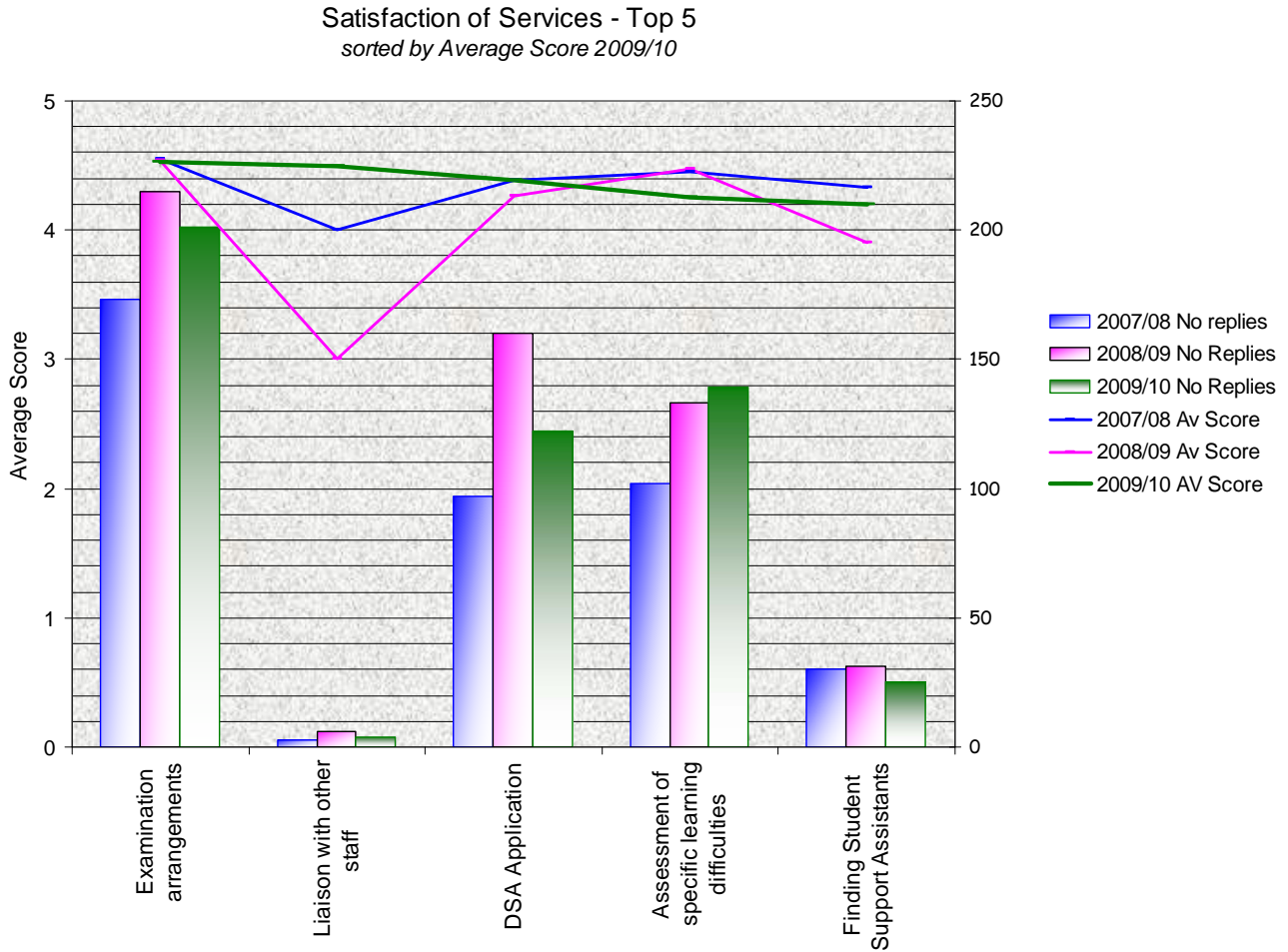


Figure 22: Satisfaction of Services Trend

5.5 Trend in Satisfaction with Learning Profile

Figure 23 tracks the level of satisfaction with the Learning Profile services received (pink line graph plotted on primary y-axis) from year to year and shows the number of respondents (blue bar graph plotted on secondary y-axis) to aid interpretation.

The graph shows that from 2007/09 to 2009/10 there has been a growing number of respondents with a Learning Profile and that while the average satisfaction score dropped from 2007/08 (4.68) to 2008/09 (4.07) it is showing a slight increase in 2009/10 (4.14).

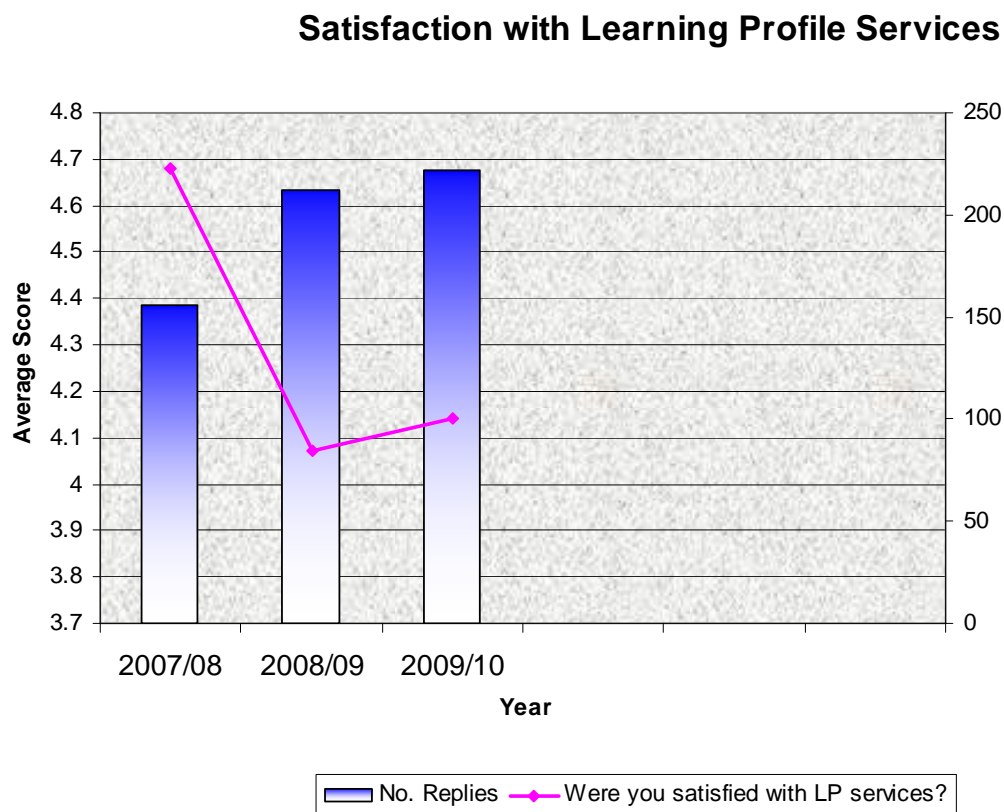


Figure 23: Trend in Satisfaction with Learning Profile

5.6 Trend in Overall DO Satisfaction

Figure 24 shows a 4 year trend (there was a change in category names in 2006/07) for the percentage of students who state they are either satisfied or very satisfied with the overall services of the Disability Office. The third trend-line is a combined satisfaction score which is a summation of these two categories and a clearer indicator of overall satisfaction.

The percentage of students who are “Very Satisfied” with the Disability Office has very slightly fallen from 42.4% in 2008/09 to 42% this year and those who are “Satisfied” has fallen 4% from 43.5% (2008/09) to 39.5% (2009/10). This has contributed to the overall trend line showing a slight negative trend declining from 88.5% in 2006/07 to 81.5% this year.

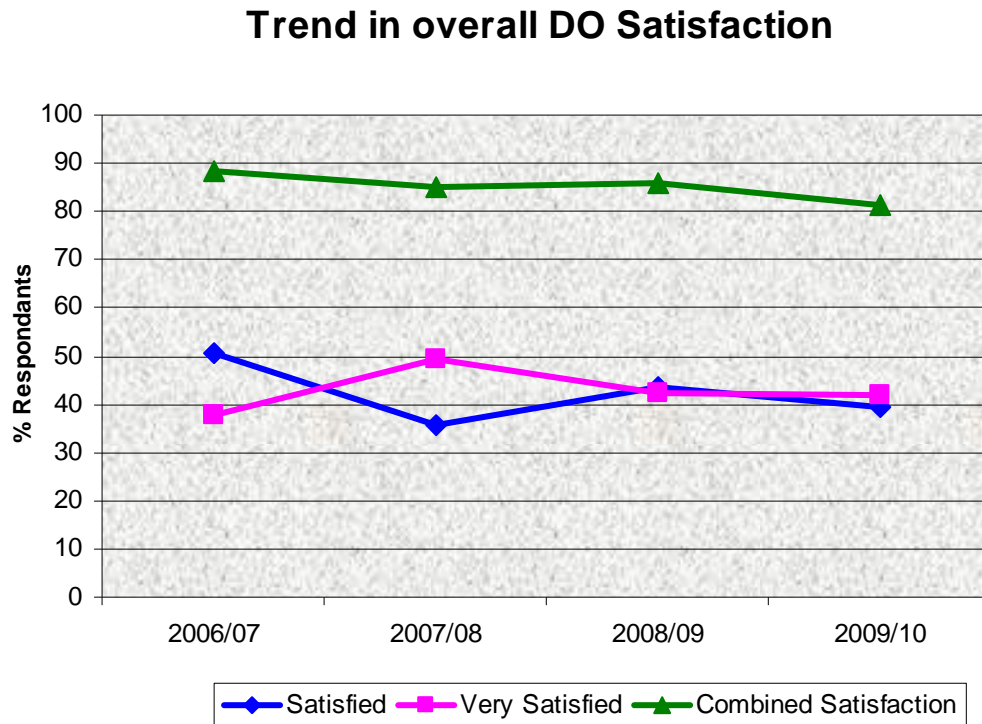


Figure 24: Trend in Overall Satisfaction

Appendix 1: Questions in User Questionnaire.

Disability Office Student Evaluation

Part 1 of 5: Use of service

1. How did you find out about the Disability Office?
 - a. I was sent information by the University
 - b. I was contacted by the Disability Office
 - c. From my Director of Studies, or another member of staff
 - d. From another student.
 - e. Other - please specify

2. When did you use our service? (tick as many boxes as appropriate)
 - a. Prior to starting your course
 - b. In first year
 - c. In subsequent years
 - d. At exam time
 - e. Ongoing.

3. Which services did you use?
 - a. Examination arrangements
 - b. Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) application
 - c. Assessment of specific learning difficulties
 - d. Study skills advice
 - e. Links with Accommodation Services
 - f. IT equipment advice
 - g. Physical access
 - h. Finding student support assistants (e.g. notetakers)
 - i. Liaison with academic staff
 - j. Liaison with other staff (e.g. Parking)
 - k. Fire evacuation procedures
 - l. Mental health mentors service

4. Do you have a Learning Profile (a list of recommended adjustments such as extra time in exams)
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

Part 2 of 5 - Importance and Satisfaction

5. Did you receive the adjustments recommended in your Learning Profile?
 - a. blank.
 - b. I received all adjustments in all courses
 - c. I received all adjustments in some courses
 - d. I received some adjustments in all courses
 - e. I received some adjustments in some courses

- f. I did not receive any adjustments
- g. I don't know

6. Depending on Answers in Q3:

Examination arrangements

Importance

- a. Blank
- b. Very Important
- c. Important
- d. Neutral
- e. Unimportant
- f. Very Unimportant.

Satisfaction

- a. Blank
- b. Very Satisfied
- c. Satisfied
- d. Neutral
- e. Dissatisfied
- f. Very Dissatisfied.

Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) application

Importance

- a. Blank
- b. Very Important
- c. Important
- d. Neutral
- e. Unimportant
- f. Very Unimportant.

Satisfaction

- a. Blank
- b. Very Satisfied
- c. Satisfied
- d. Neutral
- e. Dissatisfied
- f. Very Dissatisfied.

Assessment of specific learning difficulties

Importance

Satisfaction

Study skills advice

Importance
Satisfaction

Links with Accommodation Services
IT equipment advice
Physical access
Finding student support assistants (e.g. notetakers)
Liaison with academic staff⁵
Liaison with other staff (e.g. Parking)
Fire evacuation procedures
Mental health mentors service

Part 3 of 5 - Overall Satisfaction

6. The work of the Disability Office contributed positively to my educational experience at the University of Edinburgh.

- a. Strongly Agree
- b. Agree
- c. Disagree
- d. Strongly Disagree
- e. No opinion

7. Please indicate your degree of satisfaction with the overall services provided by the Disability Office.

- a. Very Satisfied
- b. Satisfied
- c. Neutral
- d. Dissatisfied
- e. Very Dissatisfied
- f. No opinion

8. Please make a positive statement about the Disability Office?

9. If you had cause to complain were your complaints handled constructively.

- a. Strongly Agree
- b. Agree
- c. Disagree
- d. Strongly Disagree
- e. No opinion

10. We would be grateful if you would make suggestions about how the Disability Office could improve its service.

Part 4 of 5 - Renaming the Disability Office

11. We are considering renaming the Disability Office. Please indicate if you like any of the following names.

- a. The Enabling Service
- b. The Accessibility Service
- c. Support for Learning Service
- d. Access for All
- e. None of the above
- f. Other - please give us your suggestions.

Part 5 of 5 - About You

12. School

13. Age

14. Undergraduate/Postgraduate

- a. Undergraduate
- b. Postgraduate – Taught
- c. Postgraduate – Research
- d. Other

15. Year of study:

- a. First year
- b. Second year
- c. Third year
- d. Fourth year
- e. More than 4 years into course

Optional Information

16. Name.

17. Email Address.

18. Can we contact you to follow up on any issues?

- c. Yes
- d. No

Part 4 of 4 - About You

School:

Age:

Undergraduate/Postgraduate:

Year of study:

Appendix 2: Options to the question School – Enter School

Economics
Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies
Arts, Culture and Environment
Biological Sciences
Chemistry
Clinical Sciences and Community Health
Divinity
Engineering and Electronics
GeoSciences
Health in Social Science
History, Classics and Archaeology
Informatics
Law
Literatures, Languages and Cultures
Mathematics
Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences
Physics and Astronomy
Social and Political Studies
Moray House School of Education
Biomedical Sciences
Molecular and Clinical Medicine
Business

Appendix 3: Count of Users with a Learning Profile implemented by school

Count of Did you receive the adjustments recommended in your Learning Profile?	Did you receive the adjustments recommended in your Learning Profile?					Grand Total
	I received all adjustments in all courses	I received all adjustments in some courses	I received some adjustments in all courses	I received some adjustments in some courses	I did not receive any adjustments	
Clinical Sciences and Community Health					1	1
Health in Social Science				1		2
Informatics	3					3
Chemistry	2	1				3
Biomedical Sciences	4					4
Mathematics	2			1	1	4
Economics	4			1		5
Divinity	3			2	1	6
Molecular and Clinical Medicine	2	1		2	2	7
Arts, Culture and Environment	4	1		1	2	8
Business	4			3	1	8
Law	7				1	8
Literatures, Languages and Cultures	6	2		1	1	10
Physics and Astronomy	6	3				10
Engineering and Electronics	5	1		4		10
Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies	7	1		2	2	12
N/A	8	3		1	2	14
GeoSciences	10			3	1	15
Moray House School of Education	7	1		2	5	15
Biological Sciences	11	2		1	2	17
Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences	9	2		1	4	17
History, Classics and Archaeology	12			4	1	17
Social and Political Studies	13	3		4		20
Grand Total	130	21	34	27	4	216