

Identifying Graduate Coursework Student Satisfaction



Faculty of Science

Monash University 2024



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Executive summary

In April and May 2024, the Monash Graduate Association (MGA) conducted a survey of graduate students at Monash and nine other Australian universities.

Students were asked to rate the importance of various aspects of a graduate educational experience, and then to rate the satisfaction of those same aspects according to their own experiences at their university.

The main findings as they relate to graduate coursework students enrolled in the Faculty of Science are summarised below:

Support services are appreciated in Science

In relation to their course experience, Science respondents were most satisfied in relation to *support services*.

The gap between how important students found it and how satisfied they were with what was delivered was also narrowest for the theme.

Science respondents more satisfied than their STEM colleagues and non-Monash respondents in the field of Science

Respondents from Science were consistently more satisfied with most areas related to their course experience and recorded narrower gap scores between importance and satisfaction than their colleagues in STEM and those from outside Monash who were studying in a similar field.

Link between higher course satisfaction and value for money inconsistent

Despite tending to be far more satisfied with the elements of their course, Science respondents were as likely as non-Monash respondents in the field to be satisfied or dissatisfied that their course represented value for money.

However, the higher course satisfaction among Science respondents compared to STEM respondents across Monash did translate to a higher proportion of Science students indicating their course represented value for money.

Dissatisfaction with job readiness high, but not as high as in most other faculties

Of the six themes included in the survey, respondents ranked *job readiness* third for importance and last for satisfaction. Indeed, the three lowest satisfaction scores across the faculty were the three areas that made up the theme of *job readiness*. As a result, the distance between importance and satisfaction was by far the widest.

However, compared to the other faculties, Science performed slightly better overall and had the narrowest gap score across the theme (equal first with Engineering).

MGA engagement levels with Science students has room for improvement

MGA engagement with Science respondents was slightly better than it was with STEM respondents across the University. However, overall engagement remained low. As such, there is certainly room for improvement.

Introduction

The Monash Graduate Association (MGA) ran a survey of Monash graduate students in April and May 2024. In relation to graduate coursework students, the aim of the MGA's *National Postgraduate Student Satisfaction Survey* was to better understand what students' value in their courses and how their experiences measure up against their expectations.

The survey was advertised in the MGA newsletter, the MGA website, through MGA social media channels and through contacts with Monash faculty groups and associate deans, many of whom agreed to forward the advertising of the survey to their students. Participants were self-selecting, so an incentive scheme (comprising the opportunity to win one of 100 gift cards worth \$50 in value) was used to assist in attracting a representative sample.

A total of 24 Monash graduate coursework students from the Faculty of Science completed the survey (see *Appendix 1: Demographics*), which we estimate to be approximately 5-6% of enrolled graduate coursework students in the faculty.

With the support of colleagues at student associations across Australia, this survey was offered to postgraduate students at nine other universities. Respondents from the University of Queensland, Griffith University, Queensland University of Technology, Southern Cross University, Sydney University, University of New South Wales, University of Technology Sydney, Victoria University and Federation University are all represented in this survey. A total of 35 graduate coursework students across these universities indicated they were studying a course in the field of science.

Where appropriate, comparisons between Monash and non-Monash respondents, courses and demographic groups have been made.

Part 1 of this report presents quantitative data relating to the importance Science graduate coursework students place on specific course components and their satisfaction with the delivery of these components.

Respondents were asked to give a rating from 0 to 10 on a *LIKERT*-scale for how much importance they placed on a specific area relating to their course experience and then again for how satisfied they were with Monash's delivery of that area. A total of twenty-six areas were covered in this survey (see *Appendix 2: Wording of course experience questionnaire*).

The twenty-six areas were grouped into six themes: commencement (3), academic quality (6), academic delivery (6), support services (5), culture (3) and job preparation (3).

Areas and themes were ranked by the average level of importance, satisfaction and the distance between importance and satisfaction (gap).

The gap was calculated as below:

$$\text{Gap} = \frac{(\text{Satisfaction} - \text{Importance})}{\text{Importance} (\%)}$$

A narrow gap indicates that students are content with the offering or reality, whereas a wide gap suggests there is room for improvement.

The average collective importance, satisfaction and gap scores of each theme were calculated and ranked. The ranking of each of these (1st to 6th) are outlined at the start of each section.

Each area within the relevant theme is then individually explored through a comparison of select demographic groups. The average importance score of each demographic group is colour-coded from highest (green) to lowest (red). This is repeated for both satisfaction and gap (narrowest = green, widest = red).

Please note that other than “Non-Monash” and “STEM,” every demographic group mentioned encompasses Science graduate coursework students only. The “STEM” grouping refers only to Monash respondents from Engineering; Information Technology; Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences; Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences; Science; Monash Sustainable Development Institute; and, Monash University Accident Research Centre.

Part 2 of this report provides quantitative and qualitative insights into perceptions of course value and retention considerations.

Respondents were asked whether they believed their course represented value for money and if they had considered leaving their course in the last 12 months. If they had considered leaving their course, they were asked to elaborate on their reasons.

They were also asked if there was anything in relation to their course that they wanted their student association to know.

Part 3 of this report highlights the engagement of Science graduate coursework students with the Monash Graduate Association (MGA).

This research has been approved by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (Project ID: 41520).

Limitations

While this report provides valuable insights and findings in relation to graduate student satisfaction in Science, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations that may impact the interpretation of results. Two such limitations are outlined below.

Over- and under-representation of demographic groups

When considering results, it is important to acknowledge that the response rate is not consistent across demographic groups.

For example, according to the Department of Education, international students accounted for 48% of total graduate coursework enrolment at Monash University in 2022.¹ In this survey, international students accounted for 82% of total responses at Monash. As a result, international students are greatly over-represented and domestic students are greatly under-represented. This is true also of full-time (over-represented) and part-time (under-represented) students.

To account for these imbalances, effort has been made to isolate demographic groups where possible and analyse and report on each group's results. However, these over- and under-representations do impact the demographic analysis when they are not specifically isolated e.g. in the faculty comparisons (see 1.7 Faculty comparisons).

Furthermore, when comparing Monash and Non-Monash results, the demographic make-up of respondents varied. International students made up 82.1% of Monash respondents, while they made up only 64.7% of Non-Monash respondents.

Positive-negative asymmetry (PNA) effect

Across the entire report, the responses of students have been taken at face-value. As such, it is important to reflect on the positive-negative asymmetry (PNA) effect. The PNA effect is two-part: firstly, it incorporates the positivity bias, which refers to an individual's inclination towards favourable perceptions of phenomena that are novel or do not directly impact them,² and, secondly, it incorporates the negativity bias which, in part, relates to how individuals are more curious about negative than positive stimuli and therefore are more mobilised by negative events.³ In the context of this report, this may mean that answers to the quantitative questions in the survey are disproportionately positive, while the responses to the qualitative (open-ended) questions are disproportionately negative, given that graduate students were not required to provide a response.

¹ "Student Enrolment Pivot Table 2022," Department of Education (Federal Government of Australia), published 18 December 2023, <https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-statistics/resources/student-enrolments-pivot-table-2022>.

² Maria Lewicka, Janusz Czapinski and Guido Peeters, "Positive-negative asymmetry or 'When the heart needs a reason'," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 22 (1992): 426.

³ Reanna M. Poncheri, Jennifer T. Lindberg, Lori Foster Thompson and Eric A. Surface, "A comment on employee surveys: negativity bias in open-ended responses," *Organizational Research Methods* 11, no. 3 (2008): 615-16.

Part 1: Importance and satisfaction

Question	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
<i>Commencement</i>			
Pre-enrolment	9.00	8.39	-6.8%
Enrolment	8.74	8.30	-5.0%
Orientation	8.52	8.17	-4.1%
<i>Academic quality</i>			
Clear criteria	8.91	8.23	-7.6%
Quality teaching	9.27	8.55	-7.8%
Engaging lectures	8.55	8.45	-1.2%
Academic access	8.59	8.82	2.7%
Timely feedback	8.32	8.36	0.5%
Academic feedback	8.64	8.18	-5.3%
<i>Academic delivery</i>			
Mixed delivery*	8.43	9.00	6.8%
Balance of units	8.10	7.95	-1.9%
Elective variety	8.67	7.86	-9.3%
Class times	8.24	7.48	-9.2%
Assignment no.	8.19	8.29	1.2%
Submission dates	8.29	8.05	-2.9%
<i>Support services</i>			
Facilities	8.24	8.33	1.1%
Language support**	8.62	8.31	-3.6%
Library resources	8.95	9.00	0.6%
IT support	8.00	8.48	6.0%
Learning support	8.14	8.71	7.0%
<i>Culture</i>			
Grad community	8.43	8.14	-3.4%
Academic community	7.95	7.62	-4.2%
Sense of belonging	8.62	7.86	-8.8%
<i>Job readiness</i>			
Internship	8.29	7.24	-12.7%
Networking	8.48	7.19	-15.2%
Workforce entry	8.52	7.33	-14.0%
Overall average	8.49	8.17	-3.7%

*Only asked of students who selected their course attendance involved a "mix of on-campus and online study."

**Only asked of students who indicated that their proficiency in English was not "fluent."

1.1 Commencement

Of the six themes included in the survey, respondents ranked *commencement* first for importance and third for satisfaction, while the distance between importance and satisfaction was the fourth tightest.

Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
1st	3rd	4th

The *commencement* section comprised of three areas on which respondents provided feedback. These areas were worded as below:

Pre-enrolment - *Having clear information about the course prior to my enrolment.*

Enrolment - *A user-friendly enrolment process.*

Orientation - *The orientation experience.*

1.1.1 Pre-enrolment

Q. *Having clear information about the course prior to my enrolment.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science (n.23)	9.00	8.39	-6.8%
Non-Monash (n.35)	8.41	6.84	-18.7%
STEM (n.287)	8.50	7.32	-13.9%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability (n.11)	9.00	8.11	-9.9%
Fluent/Adv. English (n.13)	9.00	8.00	-11.1%
Inter./Elementary English (n.10)	9.00	8.90	-1.1%
Under 30 (n.15)	8.93	8.27	-7.4%
30 and over (n.8)	9.13	8.63	-5.5%
On-campus (n.15)	9.20	8.27	-10.1%
Multi-modal (n.8)	8.63	8.63	0.0%
Men (n.8)	9.25	9.25	0.0%
Women (n.15)	8.87	7.93	-10.6%
Had not considered leaving (n.11)	9.36	8.91	-4.8%
Considered leaving (n.10)	8.60	7.60	-11.6%

- Science respondents were far more satisfied with the pre-enrolment information than were their equivalents across the other participating universities, while they were also more satisfied than their STEM colleagues at Monash.

1.1.2 Enrolment

Q. *A user-friendly enrolment process.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.74	8.30	-5.0%
Non-Monash	8.05	7.70	-4.3%
STEM	8.25	7.61	-7.8%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	8.36	7.55	-9.7%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.46	8.00	-5.4%
Inter./Elementary English	9.10	8.70	-4.4%
Under 30	8.67	8.47	-2.3%
30 and over	8.88	8.00	-9.9%
On-campus	8.80	8.27	-6.0%
Multi-modal	8.63	8.38	-2.9%
Men	9.25	9.13	-1.3%
Women	8.47	7.87	-7.1%
Had not considered leaving	9.36	8.82	-5.8%
Considered leaving	8.00	7.50	-6.3%

- Students 30 years of age and over recorded a wider gap score than those under 30.
- Master of Environment and Sustainability respondents were less satisfied than their colleagues across the faculty.

1.1.3 Orientation

Q. The orientation experience.

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.52	8.17	-4.1%
Non-Monash	8.00	7.51	-6.1%
STEM	7.81	7.78	-0.4%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	8.09	8.00	-1.1%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.31	7.77	-6.5%
Inter./Elementary English	8.80	8.70	-1.1%
Under 30	8.67	8.20	-5.4%
30 and over	8.25	8.13	-1.5%
On-campus	8.53	7.93	-7.0%
Multi-modal	8.50	8.63	1.5%
Men	8.63	8.63	0.0%
Women	8.47	7.93	-6.4%
Had not considered leaving	8.82	8.73	-1.0%
Considered leaving	8.30	7.50	-9.6%

- Science respondents were more satisfied than their non-Monash contemporaries and their colleagues across STEM.
- On-campus respondents were less satisfied than multi-modal respondents.

1.2 Academic quality

Of the six themes included in the survey, respondents ranked *academic quality* second for importance and second for satisfaction, while the distance between importance and satisfaction was the third tightest.

Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
2nd	2nd	3rd

The *academic quality* section comprised of six areas on which respondents provided feedback. These areas were worded as below:

Clear criteria	<i>Clear learning outcomes and assessment criteria.</i>
Quality teaching	<i>High quality teaching.</i>
Engaging lectures	<i>Lectures are engaging.</i>
Academic access	<i>Lecturers are accessible for answering my questions/having a discussion.</i>
Timely feedback	<i>Timely feedback on assessments/assignments.</i>
Academic feedback	<i>Constructive feedback on assessments/assignments.</i>

1.2.1 Clear criteria

Q. *Clear learning outcomes and assessment criteria.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.91	8.23	-7.6%
Non-Monash	8.47	7.14	-15.7%
STEM	8.76	7.40	-15.5%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	8.73	8.09	-7.3%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.67	7.75	-10.6%
Inter./Elementary English	9.20	8.80	-4.3%
Under 30	8.93	8.00	-10.4%
30 and over	8.88	8.63	-2.8%
On-campus	9.20	8.20	-10.9%
Multi-modal	8.29	8.29	0.0%
Men	9.13	9.13	0.0%
Women	8.79	7.71	-12.3%
Had not considered leaving	9.36	8.73	-6.7%
Considered leaving	8.50	7.60	-10.6%

- Science respondents were more satisfied than their non-Monash contemporaries and their colleagues across STEM.

1.2.2 Quality teaching

Q. High quality teaching.

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	9.27	8.55	-7.8%
Non-Monash	9.31	7.61	-18.3%
STEM	8.85	7.28	-17.7%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	9.36	8.55	-8.7%
Fluent/Adv. English	9.33	8.25	-11.6%
Inter./Elementary English	9.20	8.90	-3.3%
Under 30	9.14	8.43	-7.8%
30 and over	9.50	8.75	-7.9%
On-campus	9.53	8.60	-9.8%
Multi-modal	8.71	8.43	-3.2%
Men	9.25	9.00	-2.7%
Women	9.29	8.29	-10.8%
Had not considered leaving	9.55	9.09	-4.8%
Considered leaving	9.00	7.90	-12.2%

- Respondents who self-identified as having an intermediate or elementary level of English were more satisfied with the quality of teaching than those who were fluent or spoke advanced English.
- Those who had considered leaving their course in the last 12 months were noticeably less satisfied than those who had not.

1.2.3 Engaging lectures

Q. *Lectures are engaging.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.55	8.45	-1.2%
Non-Monash	8.83	7.39	-16.3%
STEM	8.43	7.22	-14.4%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	8.27	8.00	-3.3%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.08	7.92	-2.0%
Inter./Elementary English	9.10	9.10	0.0%
Under 30	8.29	8.07	-2.7%
30 and over	9.00	9.13	1.4%
On-campus	8.73	8.47	-3.0%
Multi-modal	8.14	8.43	3.6%
Men	9.38	9.25	-1.4%
Women	8.07	8.00	-0.9%
Had not considered leaving	9.27	9.27	0.0%
Considered leaving	7.90	7.50	-5.1%

- Science respondents were far more satisfied than their non-Monash contemporaries and their colleagues across STEM.
- Those who had considered leaving their course were less satisfied than those who had not; however, they also placed less importance on this area.

1.2.4 Academic access

Q. *Lecturers are accessible for answering my questions/having a discussion.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.59	8.82	2.7%
Non-Monash	8.81	8.11	-7.9%
STEM	8.64	7.88	-8.8%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	8.45	8.64	2.2%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.17	8.75	7.1%
Inter./Elementary English	9.10	8.90	-2.2%
Under 30	8.43	8.57	1.7%
30 and over	8.88	9.25	4.2%
On-campus	8.93	8.87	-0.7%
Multi-modal	7.86	8.71	10.8%
Men	9.13	9.38	2.7%
Women	8.29	8.50	2.5%
Had not considered leaving	9.27	9.36	1.0%
Considered leaving	8.00	8.20	2.5%

- Multi-modal respondents were particularly satisfied with their access to academics.

1.2.5 Timely feedback

Q. *Timely feedback on assessments/assignments.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.32	8.36	0.5%
Non-Monash	8.11	7.25	-10.6%
STEM	8.38	7.42	-11.5%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	8.18	8.27	1.1%
Fluent/Adv. English	7.67	8.08	5.3%
Inter./Elementary English	9.10	8.70	-4.4%
Under 30	8.14	8.07	-0.9%
30 and over	8.63	8.88	2.9%
On-campus	8.53	8.67	1.6%
Multi-modal	7.86	7.71	-1.9%
Men	9.13	9.13	0.0%
Women	7.86	7.93	0.9%
Had not considered leaving	9.09	8.82	-3.0%
Considered leaving	7.60	7.80	2.6%

- Science respondents were again more satisfied than their non-Monash contemporaries and their colleagues across STEM.

1.2.6 Academic feedback

Q. Constructive feedback on assessments/assignments.

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.64	8.18	-5.3%
Non-Monash	8.56	7.06	-17.5%
STEM	8.59	7.21	-16.1%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	8.45	7.55	-10.7%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.42	7.92	-5.9%
Inter./Elementary English	8.90	8.90	0.0%
Under 30	8.50	8.14	-4.2%
30 and over	8.88	8.25	-7.1%
On-campus	8.93	8.33	-6.7%
Multi-modal	8.00	7.86	-1.8%
Men	9.13	8.88	-2.7%
Women	8.36	7.79	-6.8%
Had not considered leaving	9.27	8.73	-5.8%
Considered leaving	8.10	7.50	-7.4%

- Master of Environment and Sustainability were less satisfied with the constructive nature of their feedback than were Science respondents in general.

1.3 Academic delivery

Of the six themes included in the survey, respondents ranked *academic delivery* sixth for importance and fourth for satisfaction, while the distance between importance and satisfaction was the second tightest.

Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
6th	4th	2nd

The *academic delivery* section comprised of six areas on which respondents provided feedback. These areas were worded as below:

Mixed delivery*	<i>Appropriate mix of online and in-person course delivery.</i>
Balance of units	<i>Appropriate balance of compulsory units and electives.</i>
Elective variety	<i>Appropriate variety of electives to choose from.</i>
Class times	<i>Acceptable variety of tutorial/studio/lab times to choose from.</i>
Assignment no.	<i>The number of assessments/assignments for the course is appropriate.</i>
Submission dates	<i>Assessments/assignments submission dates are appropriately spaced.</i>

* Only asked of students who selected that their course attendance involved a “mix of on-campus and online study.”

1.3.1 Mixed delivery

Q. *Appropriate mix of online and in-person course delivery.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.43	9.00	6.8%
Non-Monash			
STEM	8.17	7.76	-5.0%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability			
Fluent/Adv. English			
Inter./Elementary English			
Under 30			
30 and over			
On-campus			
Multi-modal	8.43	9.00	6.8%
Men			
Women			
Had not considered leaving			
Considered leaving			

- Relevant respondents from Science were more satisfied with the mix of online and in-person course delivery than were their STEM colleagues across Monash.

1.3.2 Balance of units

Q. *Appropriate balance of compulsory units and electives.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.10	7.95	-1.9%
Non-Monash	7.94	7.26	-8.6%
STEM	7.86	7.27	-7.5%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	7.90	7.40	-6.3%
Fluent/Adv. English	7.18	7.27	1.3%
Inter./Elementary English	9.10	8.70	-4.4%
Under 30	8.31	7.54	-9.3%
30 and over	7.75	8.63	11.4%
On-campus	8.21	8.29	1.0%
Multi-modal	7.86	7.29	-7.3%
Men	8.75	9.13	4.3%
Women	7.69	7.23	-6.0%
Had not considered leaving	9.00	8.18	-9.1%
Considered leaving	7.10	7.70	8.5%

- Science respondents were more satisfied than their non-Monash contemporaries and their colleagues across STEM.
- Multi-modal respondents were less satisfied with the balance of units than were on-campus respondents.
- Master of Environment and Sustainability respondents were less satisfied than their colleagues.

1.3.3 Elective variety

Q. *Appropriate variety of electives to choose from.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.67	7.86	-9.3%
Non-Monash	8.46	6.29	-25.7%
STEM	7.73	7.06	-8.7%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	8.50	8.00	-5.9%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.09	7.09	-12.4%
Inter./Elementary English	9.30	8.70	-6.5%
Under 30	8.69	7.46	-14.2%
30 and over	8.63	8.50	-1.5%
On-campus	9.14	8.07	-11.7%
Multi-modal	7.71	7.43	-3.6%
Men	9.25	8.88	-4.0%
Women	8.31	7.23	-13.0%
Had not considered leaving	9.27	8.64	-6.8%
Considered leaving	8.00	7.00	-12.5%

- Science respondents were substantially more satisfied than their contemporaries across the other Australian universities with elective variety.

1.3.4 Class times

Q. *Acceptable variety of tutorial/studio/lab times to choose from.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.24	7.48	-9.2%
Non-Monash	7.94	6.63	-16.5%
STEM	8.17	6.85	-16.2%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	7.50	7.40	-1.3%
Fluent/Adv. English	7.45	6.27	-15.8%
Inter./Elementary English	9.10	8.80	-3.3%
Under 30	8.46	7.31	-13.6%
30 and over	7.88	7.75	-1.6%
On-campus	8.57	7.43	-13.3%
Multi-modal	7.57	7.57	0.0%
Men	8.75	8.38	-4.2%
Women	7.92	6.92	-12.6%
Had not considered leaving	8.45	8.27	-2.1%
Considered leaving	8.00	6.60	-17.5%

- Class times were likely a factor in why respondents had considered leaving with those who reported they had considered leaving recording a wide gap score for this area.
- Science respondents were more satisfied than their non-Monash contemporaries and their colleagues across STEM.

1.3.5 Assignment numbers

Q. *The number of assessments/assignments for the course is appropriate.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.19	8.29	1.2%
Non-Monash	8.11	6.83	-15.8%
STEM	8.40	6.87	-18.2%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	7.80	8.10	3.8%
Fluent/Adv. English	7.45	8.00	7.4%
Inter./Elementary English	9.00	8.60	-4.4%
Under 30	8.15	8.08	-0.9%
30 and over	8.25	8.63	4.6%
On-campus	8.64	8.71	0.8%
Multi-modal	7.29	7.43	1.9%
Men	9.13	9.13	0.0%
Women	7.62	7.77	2.0%
Had not considered leaving	8.82	8.91	1.0%
Considered leaving	7.50	7.60	1.3%

- Again, Science respondents were far more satisfied than their non-Monash contemporaries and their colleagues across STEM.
- Multi-modal respondents were less satisfied than on-campus students, but they also recorded a much lower importance score. Indeed, both cohorts satisfaction exceeded importance.

1.3.6 Submission dates

Q. *Assessment/assignments submission dates are appropriately spaced.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.29	8.05	-2.9%
Non-Monash	8.23	6.03	-26.7%
STEM	8.57	6.79	-20.8%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	8.10	8.00	-1.2%
Fluent/Adv. English	7.73	7.45	-3.6%
Inter./Elementary English	8.90	8.70	-2.2%
Under 30	8.31	7.54	-9.3%
30 and over	8.25	8.88	7.6%
On-campus	8.86	8.50	-4.1%
Multi-modal	7.14	7.14	0.0%
Men	9.13	9.25	1.3%
Women	7.77	7.31	-5.9%
Had not considered leaving	8.82	9.09	3.1%
Considered leaving	7.70	6.90	-10.4%

- Science avoided the wide gap scores recorded among other faculties in relation to submission dates.
- Women were less satisfied than men, but also placed less importance on this area. The same was true of those under 30 years of age in relation to those over 30.

1.4 Support services

Of the six themes included in the survey, respondents ranked *support services* fourth for importance and first for satisfaction, while the distance between importance and satisfaction was the tightest.

Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
4th	1st	1st

The *support services* section comprised of five areas on which respondents provided feedback. These areas were worded as below:

Facilities	<i>Adequate facilities for your field of study.</i>
Language support**	<i>English language support.</i>
Library resources	<i>Easily accessible books and journals (online or hard copy).</i>
IT support	<i>IT support.</i>
Learning support	<i>Learning skills support e.g. academic writing, referencing, time management.</i>

** Only asked of students who indicated that their proficiency in English was not “fluent”.

1.4.1 Facilities

Q. *Adequate facilities for your field of study.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.24	8.33	1.1%
Non-Monash	8.43	7.20	-14.6%
STEM	8.51	7.74	-9.0%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	8.20	8.60	4.9%
Fluent/Adv. English	7.82	8.27	5.8%
Inter./Elementary English	8.70	8.40	-3.4%
Under 30	8.00	7.77	-2.9%
30 and over	8.63	9.25	7.2%
On-campus	8.71	8.79	0.9%
Multi-modal	7.29	7.43	1.9%
Men	9.13	9.50	4.1%
Women	7.69	7.62	-0.9%
Had not considered leaving	9.18	9.00	-2.0%
Considered leaving	7.20	7.60	5.6%

- Science respondents were more satisfied with their facilities than were non-Monash respondents.
- Multi-modal respondents were less satisfied than online students, but both groups' satisfaction scores exceeded their importance scores.

1.4.2 Language support

Q. English language support.

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.62	8.31	-3.6%
Non-Monash	8.67	7.53	-13.1%
STEM	7.67	7.86	2.5%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability			
Fluent/Adv. English			
Inter./Elementary English	8.60	8.20	-4.7%
Under 30			
30 and over			
On-campus	9.75	9.25	-5.1%
Multi-modal	6.80	6.80	0.0%
Men			
Women	8.00	7.17	-10.4%
Had not considered leaving	9.38	8.88	-5.3%
Considered leaving	7.40	7.40	0.0%

- Science respondents were more satisfied than non-Monash respondents in relation to language support.

1.4.3 Library resources

Q. *Easily accessible books and journals (online or hard copy).*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.95	9.00	0.6%
Non-Monash	8.80	7.97	-9.4%
STEM	8.53	8.09	-5.2%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	8.80	9.00	2.3%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.82	9.09	3.1%
Inter./Elementary English	9.10	8.90	-2.2%
Under 30	9.15	8.77	-4.2%
30 and over	8.63	9.38	8.7%
On-campus	9.14	9.43	3.2%
Multi-modal	8.57	8.14	-5.0%
Men	9.50	9.38	-1.3%
Women	8.62	8.77	1.7%
Had not considered leaving	9.64	9.36	-2.9%
Considered leaving	8.20	8.60	4.9%

- Science respondents were more satisfied than their non-Monash contemporaries and their colleagues across STEM.

1.4.4 IT support

Q. *IT support.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.00	8.48	6.0%
Non-Monash	8.20	8.37	2.1%
STEM	8.09	7.93	-2.0%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	7.60	8.30	9.2%
Fluent/Adv. English	7.27	8.55	17.6%
Inter./Elementary English	8.80	8.40	-4.5%
Under 30	8.00	8.62	7.7%
30 and over	8.00	8.25	3.1%
On-campus	8.14	8.64	6.1%
Multi-modal	7.71	8.14	5.6%
Men	8.63	9.38	8.7%
Women	7.62	7.92	3.9%
Had not considered leaving	8.73	9.00	3.1%
Considered leaving	7.20	7.90	9.7%

- Science respondents were as satisfied as non-Monash respondents in relation to IT support, but more satisfied than their STEM colleagues across the University.

1.4.5 Learning support

Q. *Learning skills support e.g. academic writing, referencing, time management.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.14	8.71	7.0%
Non-Monash	8.00	7.54	-5.8%
STEM	8.10	7.84	-3.2%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	7.70	9.10	18.2%
Fluent/Adv. English	7.36	8.64	17.4%
Inter./Elementary English	9.00	8.80	-2.2%
Under 30	8.00	8.38	4.8%
30 and over	8.38	9.25	10.4%
On-campus	8.14	9.14	12.3%
Multi-modal	8.14	7.86	-3.4%
Men	9.25	9.25	0.0%
Women	7.46	8.38	12.3%
Had not considered leaving	9.00	9.36	4.0%
Considered leaving	7.20	8.00	11.1%

- Science respondents were more satisfied than their non-Monash contemporaries and their colleagues across STEM.
- Multi-modal respondents were less satisfied than on-campus students, but only recorded a narrow gap score.

1.5 Culture

Of the six themes included in the survey, respondents ranked *culture* fifth for importance and fifth for satisfaction, while the distance between importance and satisfaction was the fifth tightest.

Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
5th	5th	5th

The *culture* section comprised of three areas on which respondents provided feedback. These areas were worded as below:

Grad community *Feeling part of a postgraduate social community.*

Academic community *Feeling part of an academic community.*

Sense of belonging *Feeling a sense of belonging to my university.*

1.5.1 Graduate community

Q. *Feeling part of a postgraduate social community.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.43	8.14	-3.4%
Non-Monash	8.00	6.91	-13.6%
STEM	7.42	7.25	-2.3%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	8.40	7.50	-10.7%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.18	7.64	-6.6%
Inter./Elementary English	8.70	8.70	0.0%
Under 30	8.38	8.00	-4.5%
30 and over	8.50	8.38	-1.4%
On-campus	8.86	8.36	-5.6%
Multi-modal	7.57	7.71	1.8%
Men	8.38	8.63	3.0%
Women	8.46	7.85	-7.2%
Had not considered leaving	8.64	8.45	-2.2%
Considered leaving	8.20	7.80	-4.9%

- Master of Environment and Sustainability respondents were less satisfied than the average Science respondent and recorded a wider gap score.
- Science respondents were generally more satisfied than non-Monash and STEM respondents.

1.5.2 Academic community

Q. *Feeling part of an academic community.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	7.95	7.62	-4.2%
Non-Monash	8.09	6.54	-19.2%
STEM	7.56	7.16	-5.3%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	7.40	6.50	-12.2%
Fluent/Adv. English	7.27	6.64	-8.7%
Inter./Elementary English	8.70	8.70	0.0%
Under 30	7.92	7.31	-7.7%
30 and over	8.00	8.13	1.6%
On-campus	8.14	7.71	-5.3%
Multi-modal	7.57	7.43	-1.8%
Men	7.88	8.50	7.9%
Women	8.00	7.08	-11.5%
Had not considered leaving	8.18	8.00	-2.2%
Considered leaving	7.70	7.20	-6.5%

- Master of Environment and Sustainability respondents were less satisfied than the average Science respondent and recorded a wider gap score.
- Science respondents were more satisfied than non-Monash and STEM respondents.

1.5.3 Sense of belonging

Q. *Feeling a sense of belonging to my university.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.62	7.86	-8.8%
Non-Monash	8.20	6.80	-17.1%
STEM	7.95	7.22	-9.2%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	8.60	7.40	-14.0%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.27	7.00	-15.4%
Inter./Elementary English	9.00	8.80	-2.2%
Under 30	8.31	7.46	-10.2%
30 and over	9.13	8.50	-6.9%
On-campus	9.14	7.71	-15.6%
Multi-modal	7.57	8.14	7.5%
Men	9.13	9.00	-1.4%
Women	8.31	7.15	-14.0%
Had not considered leaving	9.00	8.64	-4.0%
Considered leaving	8.20	7.00	-14.6%

- Respondents from Science were more satisfied than non-Monash and STEM respondents.
- Respondents who indicated they were fluent or spoke advanced English recorded a wider gap score than those who spoke intermediate or elementary English.
- Women recorded a far wider gap score than men, while those who had considered leaving also recorded a relatively wide gap score.

1.6 Job readiness

Of the six themes included in the survey, respondents ranked *job readiness* third for importance and last for satisfaction, while the distance between importance and satisfaction was the widest.

Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
3rd	6th	6th

The *job readiness* section comprised of three areas on which respondents provided feedback. These areas were worded as below:

Internship	<i>Placement/internship opportunities.</i>
Networking	<i>Links to industry/professional networking.</i>
Workforce entry	<i>Being ready to enter the workforce when I graduate</i>

1.6.1 Internships

Q. *Placement/internship opportunities.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.29	7.24	-12.7%
Non-Monash	8.11	5.17	-36.3%
STEM	8.53	6.57	-23.0%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	7.80	7.40	-5.1%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.64	6.82	-21.1%
Inter./Elementary English	7.90	7.70	-2.5%
Under 30	8.77	6.69	-23.7%
30 and over	7.50	8.13	8.4%
On-campus	8.79	7.93	-9.8%
Multi-modal	7.29	5.86	-19.6%
Men	7.88	8.25	4.7%
Women	8.54	6.62	-22.5%
Had not considered leaving	8.00	8.27	3.4%
Considered leaving	8.60	6.10	-29.1%

- Although the gap score recorded here was the third-widest in Science, it was still far narrower than that recorded among non-Monash and STEM respondents.
- Those who had considered leaving their course were substantially less satisfied and recorded a far wider gap score than those who had not.

1.6.2 Networking

Q. *Links to industry/professional networking.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.48	7.19	-15.2%
Non-Monash	8.06	4.91	-39.1%
STEM	8.56	6.69	-21.8%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	8.40	7.20	-14.3%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.55	6.55	-23.4%
Inter./Elementary English	8.40	7.90	-6.0%
Under 30	8.62	6.54	-24.1%
30 and over	8.25	8.25	0.0%
On-campus	9.07	7.64	-15.8%
Multi-modal	7.29	6.29	-13.7%
Men	8.75	8.88	1.5%
Women	8.31	6.15	-26.0%
Had not considered leaving	8.91	8.09	-9.2%
Considered leaving	8.00	6.20	-22.5%

- Although the gap score recorded here was the widest in Science, it was still far narrower than that recorded among non-Monash and STEM respondents.
- Those who had considered leaving their course were substantially less satisfied and recorded a far wider gap score than those who had not. Although, the margins were not as dramatic as they were in relation to internships and workforce entry.

1.6.3 Workforce entry

Q. *Being ready to enter the workforce when I graduate.*

	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Science	8.52	7.33	-14.0%
Non-Monash	8.37	5.51	-34.2%
STEM	8.87	7.04	-20.6%
M. Enviro. & Sustainability	8.30	7.30	-12.0%
Fluent/Adv. English	8.73	6.64	-23.9%
Inter./Elementary English	8.30	8.10	-2.4%
Under 30	8.62	6.85	-20.5%
30 and over	8.38	8.13	-3.0%
On-campus	9.21	7.64	-17.0%
Multi-modal	7.14	6.71	-6.0%
Men	8.38	8.63	3.0%
Women	8.62	6.54	-24.1%
Had not considered leaving	8.27	8.27	0.0%
Considered leaving	8.80	6.30	-28.4%

- Although the gap score recorded here was the second-widest in Science, it was still far narrower than that recorded among non-Monash and STEM respondents.
- Those who had considered leaving their course were substantially less satisfied and recorded a far wider gap score than those who had not.

1.7 Faculty comparisons

Every faculty's average importance and satisfaction score, and average gap differential, for each theme, is included and compared in this section.

Please note, an important consideration here is the demographic over- and under-representations (see *Limitations*). Factors such as study load, citizenship etc., across which average responses can vary significantly, have not been dissected or considered.

1.7.1 Importance

The following table details the average importance score for each theme recorded in every faculty – excluding the Faculty of Law.

Theme	MADA	Arts	BusEco	Edu	Eng	IT	MNHS	Pharm	Sci
Commencement	7.88	8.19	8.14	8.22	7.85	7.98	8.25	8.35	8.75
Academic quality	8.55	8.87	8.59	8.76	8.09	8.48	8.64	8.82	8.71
Academic delivery	7.94	8.25	8.36	8.03	7.82	8.19	8.00	8.50	8.32
Support services	7.71	8.32	8.34	8.27	8.04	7.85	8.30	8.64	8.39
Culture	7.46	7.71	7.97	7.41	7.81	7.84	7.48	7.21	8.33
Job readiness	8.34	8.49	8.57	8.47	8.30	8.63	8.72	8.64	8.43
Overall	8.02	8.36	8.36	8.25	7.98	8.18	8.26	8.44	8.49

1.7.2 Satisfaction

The following table details the average satisfaction score for each theme recorded in every faculty – excluding the Faculty of Law.

Theme	MADA	Arts	BusEco	Edu	Eng	IT	MNHS	Pharm	Sci
Commencement	7.21	7.35	7.68	7.41	7.51	7.26	7.65	7.76	8.29
Academic quality	7.42	7.64	7.71	7.44	7.37	6.79	7.77	7.40	8.43
Academic delivery	6.75	7.19	7.59	7.07	7.17	6.60	7.43	6.97	8.11
Support services	7.47	7.69	7.95	7.81	7.76	7.43	8.18	7.93	8.57
Culture	6.45	6.78	7.26	6.81	7.28	7.11	7.37	6.55	7.87
Job readiness	5.68	6.66	6.59	6.39	7.14	5.93	7.34	6.91	7.25
Overall	6.94	7.30	7.54	7.23	7.38	6.86	7.62	7.29	8.17

1.7.3 Gap

The following table details the average gap score for each theme recorded in every faculty – excluding the Faculty of Law.

Theme	MADA	Arts	BusEco	Edu	Eng	IT	MNHS	Pharm	Sci
Commencement	-8.5%	-10.2%	-5.7%	-9.9%	-4.3%	-9.0%	-7.2%	-7.1%	-5.3%
Academic quality	-13.3%	-13.9%	-10.2%	-15.1%	-8.9%	-19.9%	-10.1%	-16.1%	-3.2%
Academic delivery	-15.0%	-12.9%	-9.2%	-11.9%	-8.3%	-19.5%	-7.1%	-17.4%	-2.6%
Support services	-3.2%	-7.5%	-4.7%	-5.6%	-3.6%	-5.4%	-1.4%	-8.2%	2.1%
Culture	-13.5%	-12.0%	-8.9%	-8.2%	-6.8%	-9.2%	-1.5%	-9.1%	-5.5%
Job readiness	-32.0%	-21.6%	-23.1%	-24.5%	-14.0%	-31.3%	-15.8%	-20.0%	-14.0%
Overall	-13.2%	-12.6%	-9.7%	-12.0%	-7.5%	-15.7%	-7.3%	-13.4%	-3.7%

Part 2: Evaluating perceptions of course value and retention considerations

This section provides insight into perceptions of course value and retention considerations.

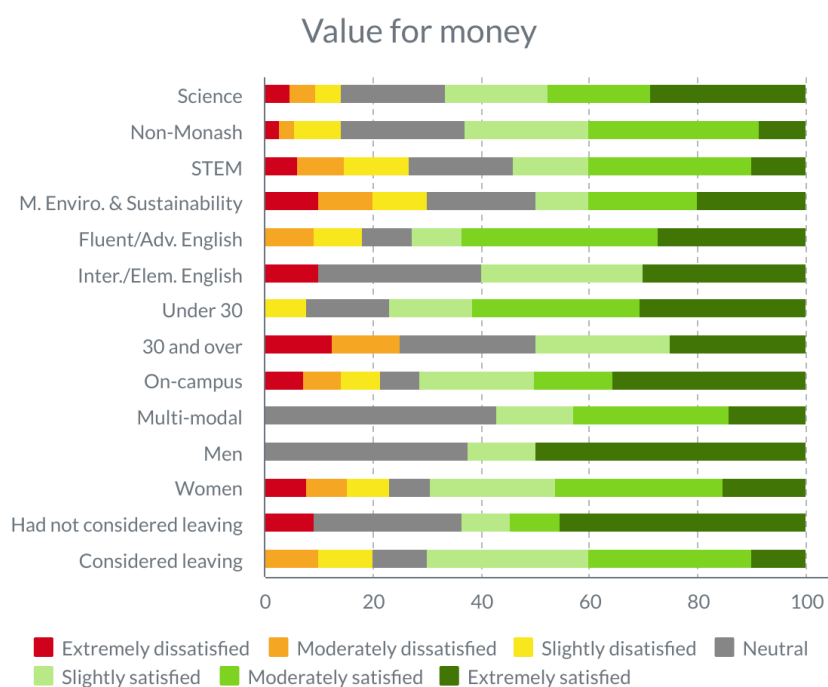
In the survey, participants were asked whether they believed their course represented value for money and if they had considered leaving their course in the last 12 months. If they had considered leaving their course, they were asked to elaborate on their reasons.

Participants were also asked if there was anything in relation to their course that they wanted their student association to know.

2.1 Value for money

Respondents were asked to respond to the question *how satisfied are you that your course provides value for money?*

Below is a graph of how Science students responded:



Science respondents were more likely than their colleagues across STEM to indicate that their course represented value for money.

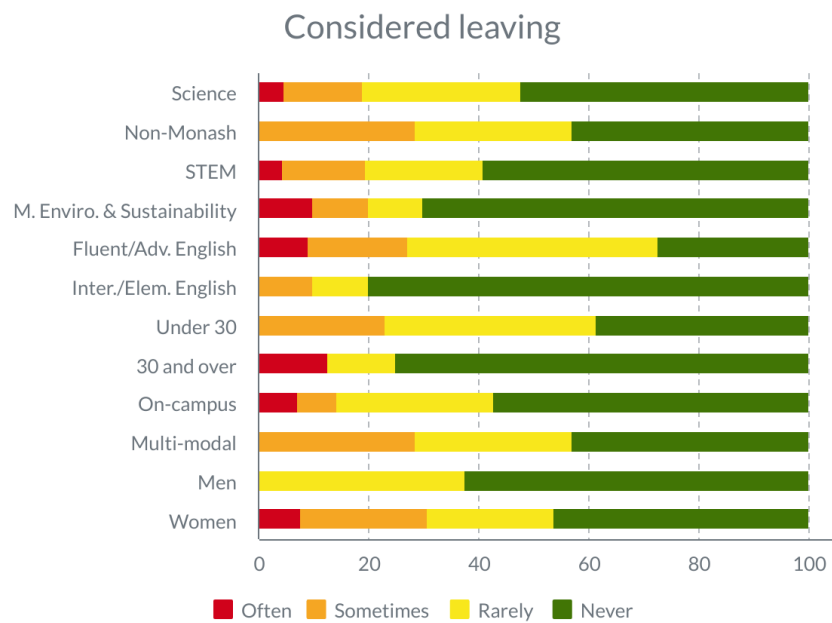
Despite tending to be more satisfied with the elements of their course (see *Part 1: Importance and Satisfaction*), Science respondents were as likely as non-Monash respondents in the field to be satisfied or dissatisfied that their course represented value for money.

Respondents from the Master of Environment and Sustainability were the most-likely to be dissatisfied that their course represented value for money, while respondents under 30 were the most-likely to be satisfied.

2.2 Considered leaving in the last 12 months

Participants were asked to respond to the question *have you considered leaving your course in the last 12 months?*

Below is a graph of how Science students responded:



Science respondents were less likely than non-Monash respondents, but more likely than their STEM colleagues at Monash, to have considered leaving their course in the last 12 months.

Meanwhile, respondents who indicated that they were fluent or spoke advanced English were most-likely to have considered leaving, while those who spoke intermediate or elementary English were the least-likely.

2.2.1 Reasons for considering leaving in the last 12 months

In order to gather direct insight into why graduate coursework students consider leaving their course, participants who had indicated that they had considered it in the last 12 months were asked the question, *in 2-3 sentences, why did you consider leaving your course?*

There were seven comments left by Science respondents. These included:

“Due to the limited internship opportunities and because of not doing enough research before deciding to do the course.”

“Most of the learning happens on my own time rather than in class. If I wanted to learn that way, I could do it myself without paying the ridiculously high fees for grad school. I can find a much cheaper program to just get the degree; I went with Monash for the full package experience. Monash has terrible communication and overall is not meeting my expectations. I'm having a hard time justifying the high price for what I'm getting.”

“Not focus, disengage with industrial need.”

“It is hard to achieve the minimum graduation requirements.”

“It is too hard.”

“Money cost too much. It is difficult to earn such a paramount of money.”

“I felt quite unsure about what my expectations were. I have never had to do a research project for this long and I feel like the people in charge of running the course weren't particularly supportive. I do understand that this is a relatively new degree, and there aren't many students enrolled, but it feels like the masters students are a second thought compared to the honours and PhD students.”

2.2.2 Considered leaving – Importance and Satisfaction

To gain further insight into what may cause a student to consider leaving their course, a comparison was run on the average results of those who had considered leaving their course in the last 12 months (Exit) and those who had never considered leaving (Stay).

The table below details the average scores by theme:

Theme	Importance		Satisfaction		Gap	
	Exit	Stay	Exit	Stay	Exit	Stay
Commencement	8.30	9.18	7.53	8.82	-9.3%	-3.9%
Academic quality	8.18	9.30	7.75	9.00	-5.3%	-3.2%
Academic delivery	7.66	8.95	7.16	8.74	-6.5%	-2.4%
Support services	7.44	9.19	7.90	9.12	6.2%	-0.7%
Culture	8.03	8.61	7.33	8.36	-8.7%	-2.8%
Job readiness	8.47	8.39	6.20	8.21	-26.8%	-2.2%
Overall	8.01	8.94	7.31	8.71	-8.4%	-2.5%

Exit respondents recorded wider gap scores than Stay respondents in Science; however, with the exception of *job readiness*, the differences between the two cohorts tended not to be as extreme as they were in other faculties.

Exit respondents recorded lower satisfaction ratings, but also lower importance ratings.

2.3 Anything you want your student association to know about your course

Participants were asked *is there anything about your course that you want your student association to know?*

There were nine responses from the Faculty of Science. These included:

“I wish they gave internships to all students like courses in UniMelb did.”

“I'd love more opportunities to connect as well as network.”

“The course provides the social science as well, so as a scientist/ engineer we're gonna experience something different and it makes us realise to not only think of it one aspect only.”

“[Redacted] is a very nice teacher who cares a lot about his students. My other two teachers are not so great. One showed up for 20 minutes the first day to say she would not be attending our class. The other is using materials from a previous teacher and leaving huge disconnects between what those resources teach us, what he goes over in class, and what we get quizzed on; He doesn't seem to be following along with the curriculum that he adopted. Overall, I have been surprised at how much content we're expected to learn on our own time, as opposed to being taught in classes. It makes going to class seem like a waste of time, in

which case, why am I doing this program at all? I can learn on my own time through external resources without paying Monash thousands of dollars.”

“Because my English is poor, so I wish I can get more help about the course in our native language, that I can learn this knowledge more easily.”

“The Masters of Earth Science feels stuck in the past. Unless you're strictly doing geology, there is a lack of variety in the courses offered. We aren't told what we can potentially do in masters with regards to research or other projects. I don't think the potential for publishing a paper is emphasised enough. We don't even really have a "thesis". Just 4 shorter reports to do at the end of every semester. It's hard to remain motivated and encouraged when it feels like the School does not know what to do with us.”

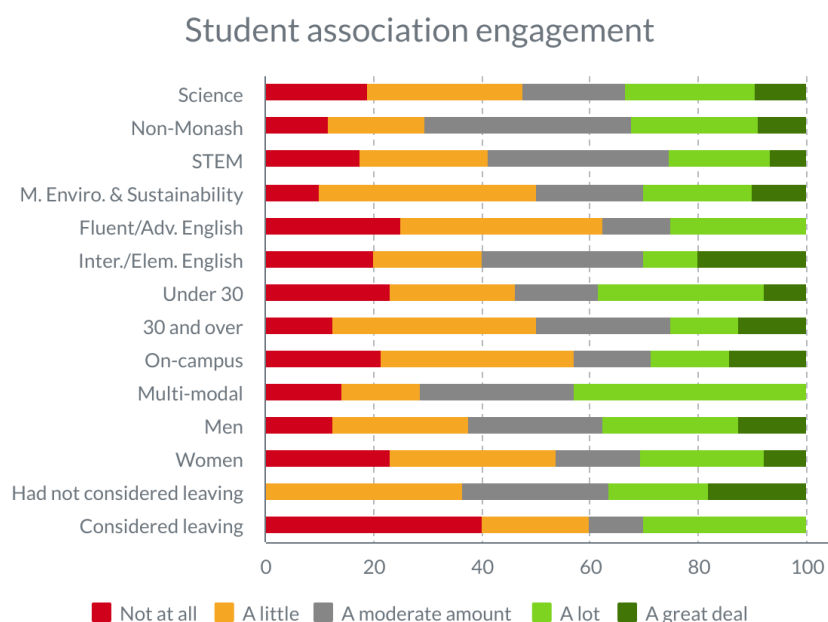
Part 3: Engagement with the Monash Graduate Association (MGA)

This section highlights the engagement levels that Science graduate coursework students have with their representative body - the Monash Graduate Association (MGA).

3.1 Student association engagement

Participants were asked to respond to the question *how engaged do you feel with your student association or union or guild?*⁴

Below is a summary of how students in Science responded:



MGA engagement with Science respondents was slightly better than it was across the STEM disciplines at Monash.

Engagement among those who had considered leaving was particularly poor, while engagement with multi-modal respondents and students under 30 years of age was particularly good.

⁴ Participants enrolled through Suzhou campus were not asked this question.

Conclusion

The results of the MGA's *National Postgraduate Student Satisfaction Survey* have provided valuable insights into what graduate coursework students in the Faculty of Science value in regard to their educational experience, as well as how satisfied they are with the structure and delivery of their degrees.

Key findings

Science respondents consistently more satisfied than their STEM colleagues and non-Monash contemporaries

Respondents from Science were consistently more satisfied with most areas related to their course experience and recorded narrower gap scores between importance and satisfaction than those from outside Monash who were studying in a similar field, as well as those enrolled in a STEM course within Monash.

Science ranked favourably when compared to the other faculties in relation to importance, satisfaction and gap. The faculty had the highest average scores across all three categories.

Job readiness satisfaction is an area of concern

Collectively, students ranked *job readiness* third for importance, but last for satisfaction, while the distance between importance and satisfaction was the widest.

The gap between satisfaction and importance was exaggerated among those who had considered leaving their course.

While this appears to be a part of a wider trend in graduate coursework education within Australia, it was certainly prominent among Science respondents.

Satisfaction levels varied across courses and mode

Across the survey, Master of Social Work students were typically less satisfied than their colleagues and recorded wider gap scores.

Meanwhile, Master of Biomedical and Health Sciences and Master of Biotechnology respondents were, on average, more satisfied than their colleagues and consistently recorded narrow gap scores.

Unemployment among graduate coursework students a concern

Though this has not been directly discussed, 31% of Science respondents were "unemployed and looking for work" (see *Appendix 1: Demographics*). This is a relatively high proportion of students who are unable to find work.

MGA engagement low with Science students

MGA engagement with Science respondents was slightly better than it was with STEM respondents across the University. However, overall engagement remained low. As such, there is certainly room for improvement.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the MGA's *National Postgraduate Student Satisfaction Survey*, the MGA has recommended actions for the Faculty, the University and ourselves that would potentially improve the graduate coursework student experience, increase satisfaction and improve retention rates.

Renewed focus on graduate students' perceptions of preparedness to enter the workforce

- Bi-annual or annual industry graduate job fair.
- Guest lectures and workshops with industry professionals.
- Career counselling and support.
 - Annual group information sessions (by course) with Monash Career Connect representative.
- Alumni mentoring program.
- Career resource hub, by course, accessible through Moodle.

Action: Faculty; Career Connect; MGA

Introduce employment assistance programming

- While it is not the responsibility of the faculty, graduate coursework students may appreciate a greater emphasis on employment support available to them through Monash at orientation or early in the course.

Action: Faculty; Career Connect

MGA to investigate ways to improve engagement with online students and those based at satellite campuses

- Improve outreach to domestic students.
- Work with faculties and course coordinators to interact with traditionally difficult to reach cohorts.

Action: MGA

Appendix 1: Demographics

Course type	Respondents
Masters by coursework	22 (92%)
Graduate diploma/certificate	2 (8%)

Course	Respondents
Master of Environment and Sustainability	11 (48%)
Master of Food Science and Agribusiness	1 (4%)
Master of Genome Analytics	2 (9%)
Master of Financial Mathematics	0 (0%)
other	9 (39%)

Campus	Respondents
Clayton	19 (59%)
Caulfield	7 (22%)
Parkville	2 (6%)
Suzhou	4 (13%)
other	0 (0%)

Domestic/International	Respondents
Local student (Australian or New Zealand citizen/permanent resident)	3 (13%)
International student	21 (88%)

Study load	Respondents
Full-time	22 (92%)
Part-time	2 (8%)
On leave from study	0 (0%)

Study location	Respondents
Entirely on-campus	16 (67%)
Multi-modal	8 (33%)
Entirely online	0 (0%)
other	0 (0%)

Time since last degree	Respondents
Less than 1 year	7 (29%)
1-5 years	9 (38%)
6-10 years	5 (21%)
11+ years	3 (13%)

Course progress	Respondents
First year	16 (67%)
Second year	6 (25%)
Third year	2 (8%)

Study hours	Respondents
Less than 5	0 (0%)
6-10	4 (17%)
11-20	9 (38%)
21-30	4 (17%)
31-40	3 (13%)
Over 40 hours	4 (17%)

English proficiency	Respondents
Fluent	9 (38%)
Advanced	5 (21%)
Intermediate	9 (38%)
Elementary	1 (4%)
Beginner	0 (0%)

Gender	Respondents
Woman	16 (67%)
Man	8 (33%)
Non-binary/gender diverse	0 (0%)
Prefer to self-describe	0 (0%)
Prefer not to say	0 (0%)

LGBTIQA+	Respondents
Yes	3 (13%)
No	21 (88%)
Prefer not to disclose	0 (0%)

Indigenous (domestic students only)	Respondents
Yes	0 (0%)
No	3 (100%)
Prefer not to disclose	0 (0%)

Disability	Respondents
Yes	1 (4%)
No	23 (96%)
Prefer not to disclose	0 (0%)

Registered disability with DSS	Respondents
Yes	1 (100%)
No	0 (0%)

Age	Respondents
24 or under	10 (44%)
25-29	5 (22%)
30-39	7 (30%)
40 and over	1 (4%)

Employment status	Respondents
Full-time	1 (4%)
Part-time	4 (15%)
Casual	8 (31%)
Unemployed and looking for work	8 (31%)
Not employed and not looking for work	5 (19%)

Work hours	Respondents
Less than 5	0 (0%)
6-10	4 (36%)
11-20	3 (27%)
21-30	3 (27%)
31-40	1 (9%)
More than 40	0 (0%)

Appendix 2: Wording of course experience questionnaire

Question	Wording
<i>Commencement</i>	
Pre-enrolment	Having clear information about the course prior to my enrolment
Enrolment	A user-friendly enrolment process
Orientation	The orientation experience
<i>Academic quality</i>	
Clear criteria	Clear learning outcomes and assessment criteria
Quality teaching	High quality teaching
Engaging lectures	Lectures are engaging
Academic access	Lecturers are accessible for answering my questions/having a discussion
Timely feedback	Timely feedback on assessments/assignments
Academic feedback	Constructive feedback on assessments/assignments
<i>Academic delivery</i>	
Mixed delivery*	Appropriate mix of online and in-person course delivery
Balance of units	Appropriate balance of compulsory units and electives
Elective variety	Appropriate variety of electives to choose from
Class times	Acceptable variety of tutorial/studio/lab times to choose from
Assignment no.	The numbers of assessments/assignments for the course is appropriate
Submission dates	Assessments/assignments submission dates are appropriately spaced
<i>Support services</i>	
Facilities	Adequate facilities for your field of study
Language support**	English language support
Library resources	Easily accessible books and journals (online or hard copy)
IT support	IT support
Learning support	Learning skills support e.g. academic writing, referencing, time management
<i>Culture</i>	
Grad community	Feeling part of a postgraduate social community
Academic community	Feeling part of an academic community
Sense of belonging	Feeling a sense of belonging to my university
<i>Job readiness</i>	
Internship	Placement/internship opportunities
Networking	Links to industry/professional networking
Workforce entry	Being ready to enter the workforce when I graduate

*Only asked of students who selected their course attendance involved a "mix of on-campus and online study"

**Only asked of students who indicated that their proficiency in English was not "fluent"