



**Northumbria
University**
NEWCASTLE



Culture, Policy and Blue: increasing student engagement

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Quality and Teaching Excellence (Student Library and Academic Services)

March 2023

**THE AWARDS
2022**

**UNIVERSITY
OF THE YEAR**

#TakeOnTomorrow

Northumbria University



- Northumbria University is based in Newcastle upon Tyne, North East of England, UK
- In 2022, we won the Times Higher Education University of the Year award
- Around 32,500 students and 3,100 staff
- 4 Faculties and 24 Departments supported by centralised Professional Support Teams
- London and Amsterdam Campuses
- A number of franchise programmes at a number of overseas partners
- Distance Learning Programmes
- Large HE provider of apprenticeships

Presentation outcomes

Doubled response rate for MEQs

Policy changes

Relationship building

Key features used in Blue to enhance engagement

Raising the profile and engagement of surveys

Learning and Teaching Surveys Team

Muriel Theillere, Governance and Enhancement Manager

Emma Watson, Governance and Enhancement Coordinator

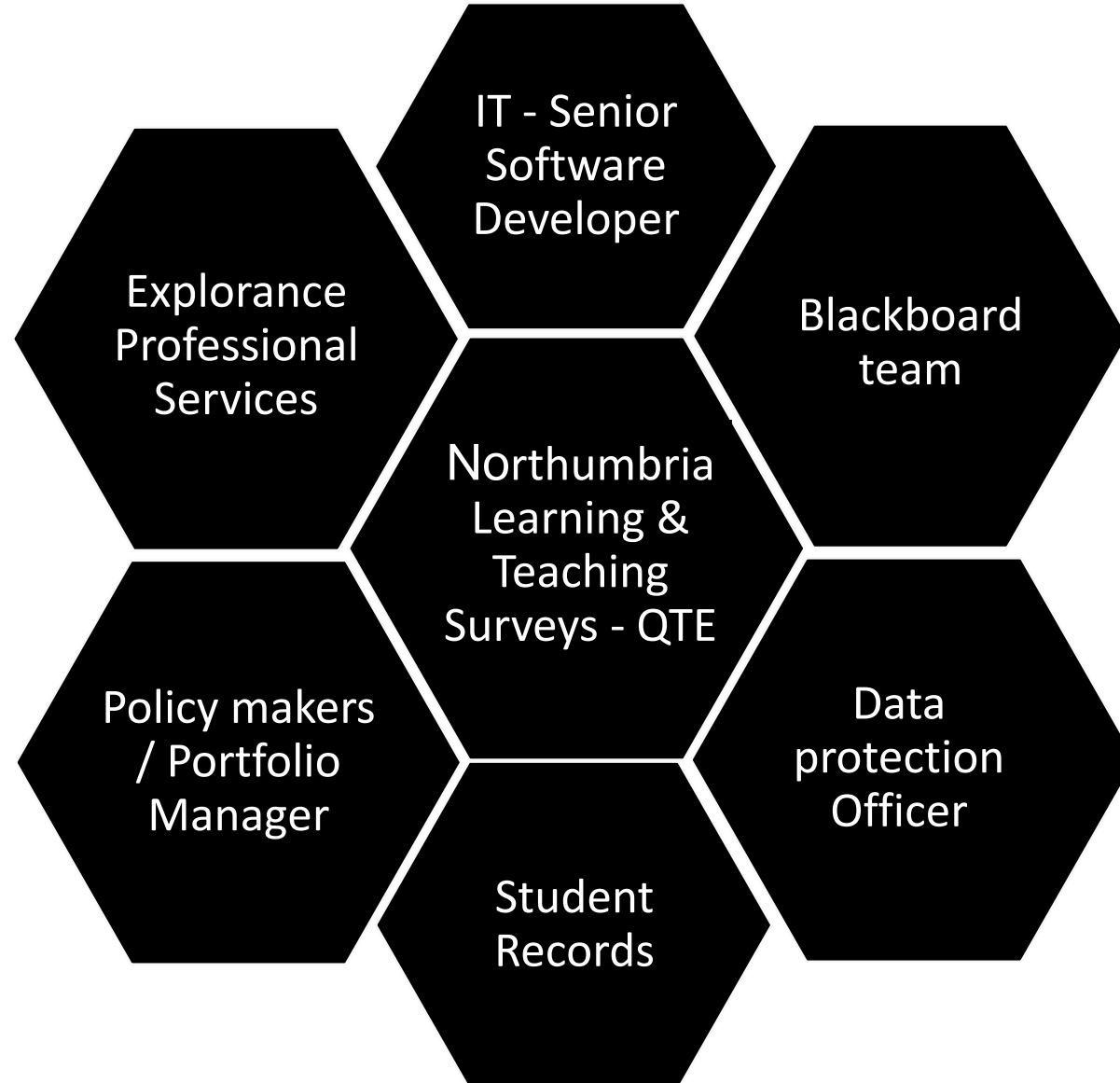
Danielle Grenade, Governance and Enhancement Coordinator

Abbie Cooke, Governance and Enhancement Administrator



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Implementation and Maintenance of Explorance Blue



Previous approaches to MEQ Policy

Prior to 2016 – Paper Module and Programme evaluation surveys

For the last 7 years, electronic surveys have been in place

2016-2018 was with a previous survey software provider

Since 2019 - Explorance Blue has been used to our electronic surveys

Since 2021 – New Module Evaluation Questionnaire Policy introduced

March 2023 – New Teaching Surveys Policy (Programme Level Surveys introduced)

Who do we survey?

Modules

- All undergraduate and postgraduate taught modules at Newcastle, London and Amsterdam campuses, as well as distance learning provisions
- With the roll of CPPR, MEQs introduced for transnational education provision (franchise partners)

Programmes

- All programmes at the end of their level

Continuous Programme Performance Review (CPPR)

CPPR - New
University Initiative
introduced in 2021

More importance
placed on MEQs

Culture shift:
Distinct survey
points to continuous
surveying

Module survey audience and timeline

Semester or Term	MAV periods surveyed	Locations / deliveries surveyed	2022/3 dates	Non-standard modules run throughout the year
Term one	TP1	London and Distance Learning	28 Nov – 11 Dec 2022	
Semester one	SEM1, YLSEM1	Newcastle, London, Amsterdam, Distance Learning, Transnational Education partners	5 Dec – 8 Jan 2023	
Term two	TP2 and TPYL	London and Distance Learning	6 Mar – 19 Mar 2023	
Semester two	SEM2, YL	Newcastle, London, Amsterdam, Distance Learning, Transnational Education partners	24 Apr – 7 May 2023	
Term three	TP3, TPYL2, TPYL	London and Distance Learning	12 Jun – 25 Jun 2023	
Semester three	SEM3, YLSEM3	Newcastle, London, Amsterdam, Distance Learning, Transnational Education partners	7 Aug – 20 Aug 2023	

New data policy and questions



New Module
Evaluation
Questionnaire
policy



New data
sharing policy
for CPPR
purposes



New internet
site



Agreed
timeline of
when surveys
should be
delivered



Reduced
questions over
time



More stability
in the
questions

Module Survey Questions

- 11 questions used across all module surveys (non-apprenticeship)
 - 10 questions use a Likert scale; the last is a free text comment box
 - Likert scale from 1-5 – 1 is definitely disagree
 - 2 is mostly disagree
 - 3 is neither agree nor disagree
 - 4 is mostly agree
 - 5 is definitely agree
- 12 questions used across all module surveys (apprenticeship)
 - 11 questions use a Likert scale; the last is a free text comment box
- Module Leader Dashboard – trends emerging



Programme Level Survey Questions

- 20 questions used across all programme surveys (non-apprenticeship)
 - 20 questions use a Likert scale
- 16 questions used across apprenticeship programme surveys
 - 12 questions use a Likert scale;
 - A Yes/No question
 - 3 open text comment boxes



Evaluating Apprenticeships

- Programme and Module Surveys for Learners
- Apprenticeship Employer Survey

EVALUATING HIGHER
AND DEGREE
APPRENTICESHIPS AT
THE UNIVERSITY

Important to capture
apprenticeship learner voice and
their experience

Courses are regulated by
OFSTED

How Northumbria closes the loop



2021/22 – first time we've delivered reports to students



Educational piece to students / learners in the email which we sent out advising them of how valuable their feedback is



Work with Students' Union

Academic Support Team Liaison

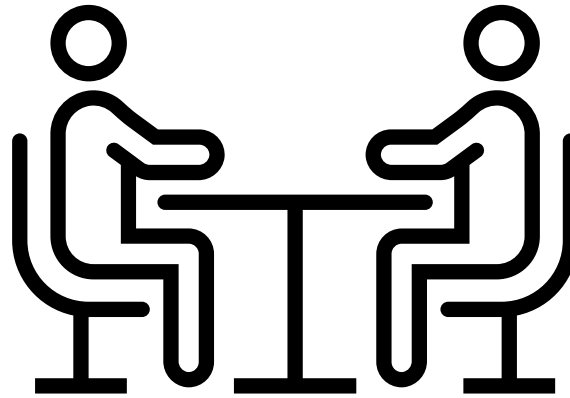
Partnerships and Campuses Team

London, Amsterdam campuses and
our Pearson Distance Learning
Delivery

Some modules run a term time model
instead of a semester based model so
timings for surveys will be different
for these modules

2020/21 response rate – 22.4%

2021/22 response rate – 26.2%



Collaborative Ventures Team

Pilot of three franchise partners in
2021/22

Collaborative working with the
partner: surveys promoted and
students engaged

Traditionally surveying franchise
partners has been challenging

2021/22 response rate

Partner one – 29.5%

Partner two – 17.8%

Partner three – 30.9%

Staff buy-in - Module Evaluation Questionnaires

Staff buy-in is key

Covid slowed down engagement with Academic staff. Some module evaluations did not take place during covid and pulse surveys were conducted instead

Module evaluation is now a core element of a new review process, Continuous Programme Performance Review (CPPR), within the university and surveys form a key component of this regulatory review process

Module Evaluation Questionnaire (MEQ) Workshops

- How Blue Works
- Provided information the current module survey which is running
- What tools are available to staff to help with MEQs, e.g. audits, subject view management and response rate monitoring
- Raised awareness of emails which we send out

New Pro Vice Chancellor (Education)

- Held departmental roadshows which include MEQs

Value-added Tech in Blue

Datasource and
Blackboard
Integrations

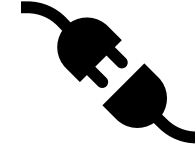
Date changes
through subject
view management

Question
Personalisation

Data Integrity
Gateway - DIG

Reporting

Datasource Integrations

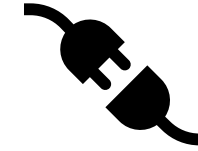


No datasource integration

Long lead in time required for surveys

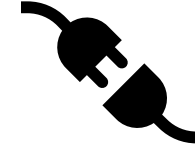
More time spent cross-checking spreadsheets and waiting for them to update

Datasource Integrations



	2019-20 SEM1	2020-21 SEM1	2020-21 SEM2	2021-22 SEM1	2022-23 SEM1
No of modules surveys	2476	1432	1587	1106	1367
No of surveys sent out	88837	86278	85252	66052	69565
No of students surveyed	25558	27559	27559	26209	27240

Datasource Integrations



No datasource integration

Long lead in time required for surveys

More time spent cross-checking spreadsheets and waiting for them to update

Data may not have been correct at the point of surveying

Students may have received a survey in error as data not up to date

Module Leader data would need to be manually changed on the system

Datasource integration is a game changer!

Datasource Integrations



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Time back

We can be
more
responsive

Data gaps
filled

Accurate data

Surveying at
the right time
point

Blackboard Ultra integration and popups



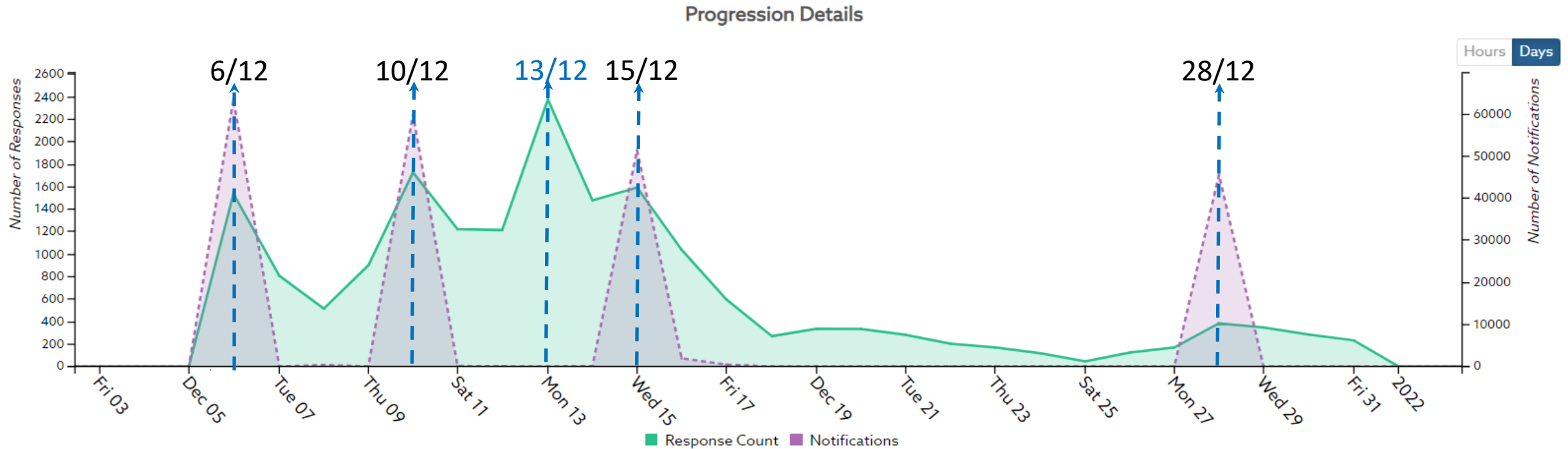
Integrate Blackboard Ultra with Explorance Blue using LTi

Blackboard Ultra pop-up messages were appearing on module pages and this was changed to appear upon any Blackboard Ultra log in

Messages in pop ups can be changed to increase urgency

When the Blackboard Ultra pop-ups are not available, what happens to our student engagement with surveys?

Response Analytics – SEM1 and YLSEM1



	Date	Notifications	Response Count
1	6 December 2021	63287	1533
2	10 December 2021	59662	1724
3	13 December 2021	No system notification	2371
4	15 December 2021	51243	1589
5	28 December 2021	45423	383

Subject Management and Question Personalisation

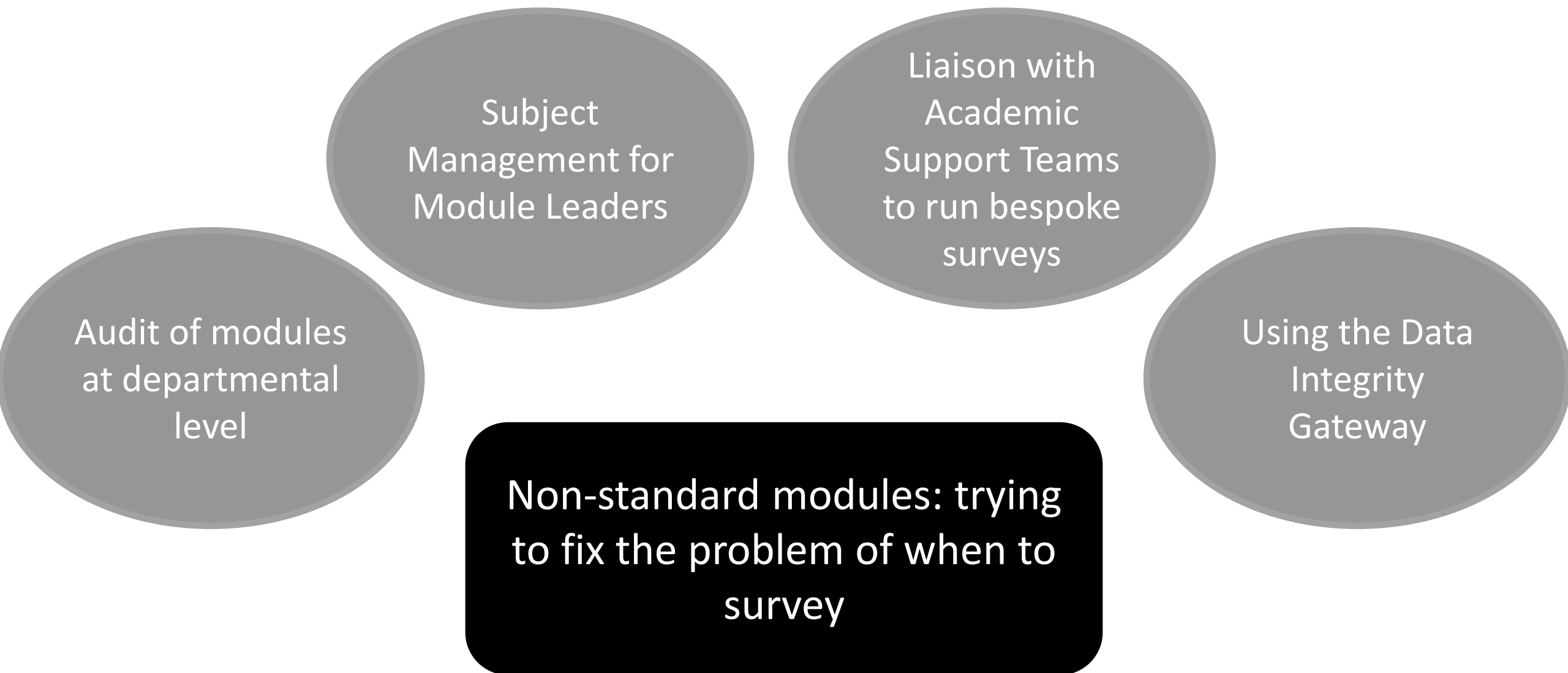
Subject Management (SM)

- Allows module leaders to change the dates of their surveys

Question Personalisation (QP)

- Module leaders can either insert their own questions or pick from a list of set questions
- Authorisation mechanism for questions written by module leaders

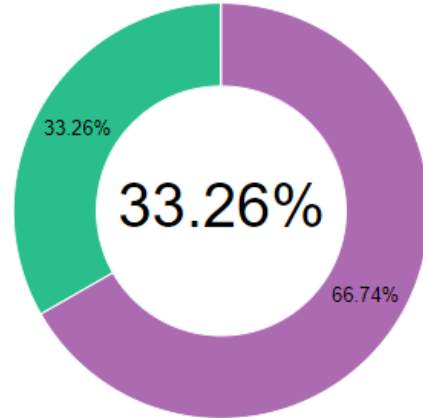
Non-Standard Modules and DIG



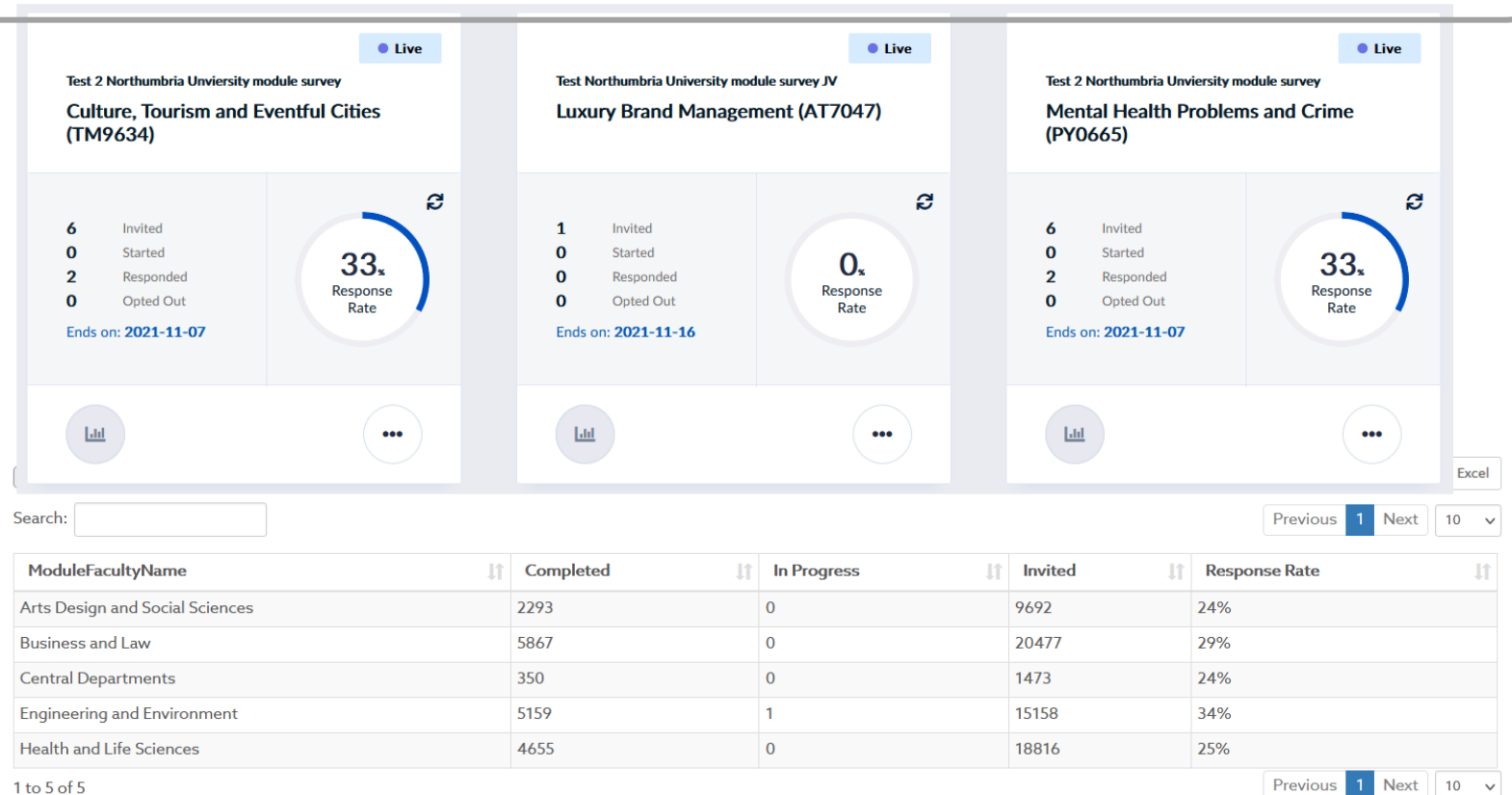
Tracking response rates

Module Leaders, FPVCs, DFPVCs, Heads of Department and Directors of Education can access response rate dashboards to monitor response rates of their relative groups

Overall Response Status

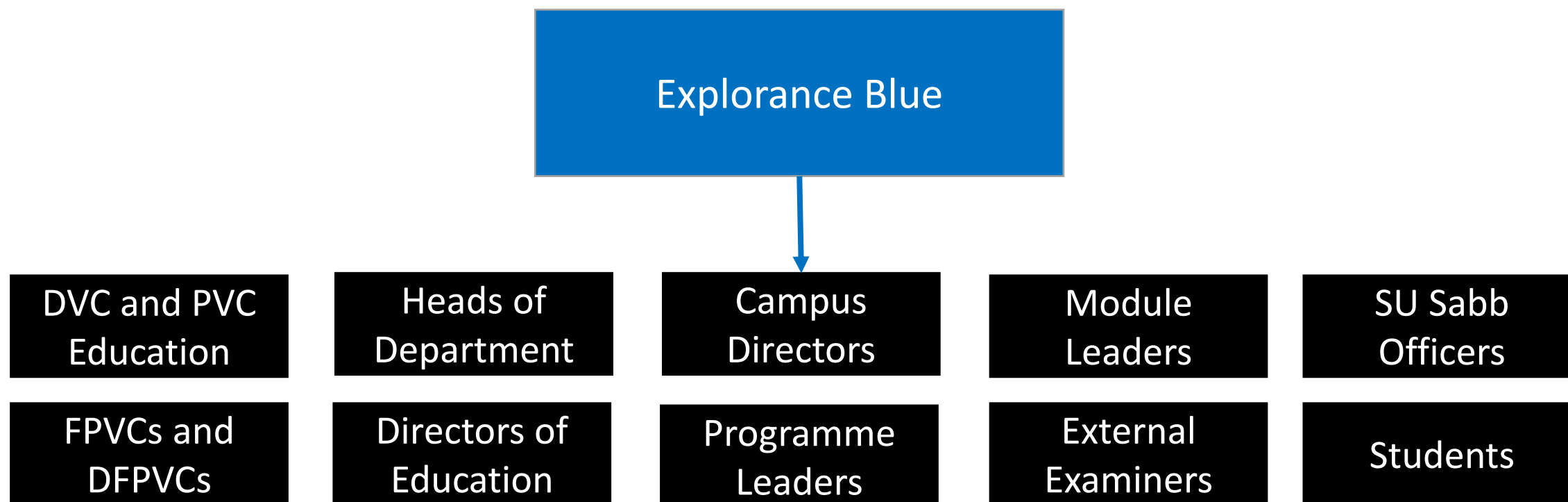


■ Completed
 ■ In Progress
 ■ Not Completed
 ■ Not Ready
 ■ Expired



Report distribution

Our hierarchy and relationship files allow us to aggregate reports at different levels and distribute to different roles



Can apply a response rate threshold at all levels

Summary of Cultural Changes

Raising awareness of module
evaluation questionnaires

New data sharing policy and less
survey questions

Introduction of CPPR

Academic support team liaison to
pinpoint correct survey timing

Closing the loop back to students
via student reports

Degree apprenticeships module
and programme surveys

Summary of Technical Changes

Module datasource integrations

Module Blackboard integration
and popups

Different Schedules in Blue

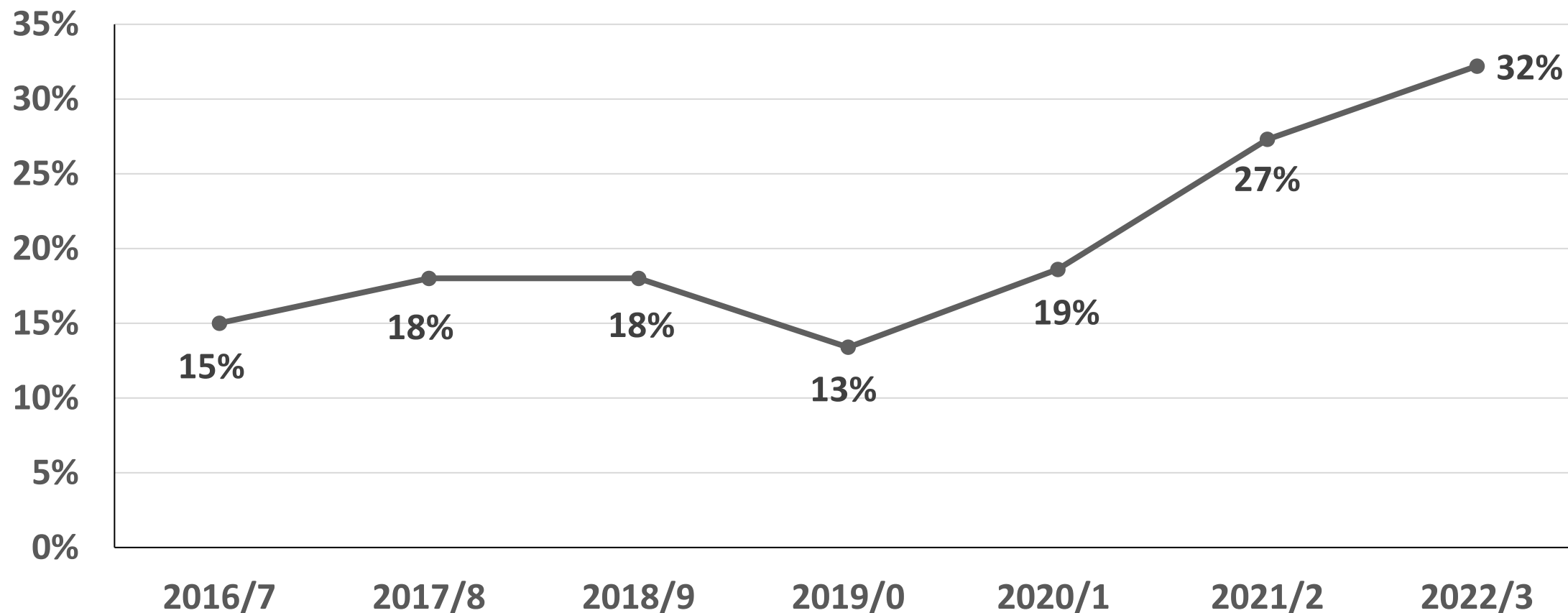
Using subject management to
identify non-standard modules

Using question personalisation

Using DIG to enable the use of
dynamic dates

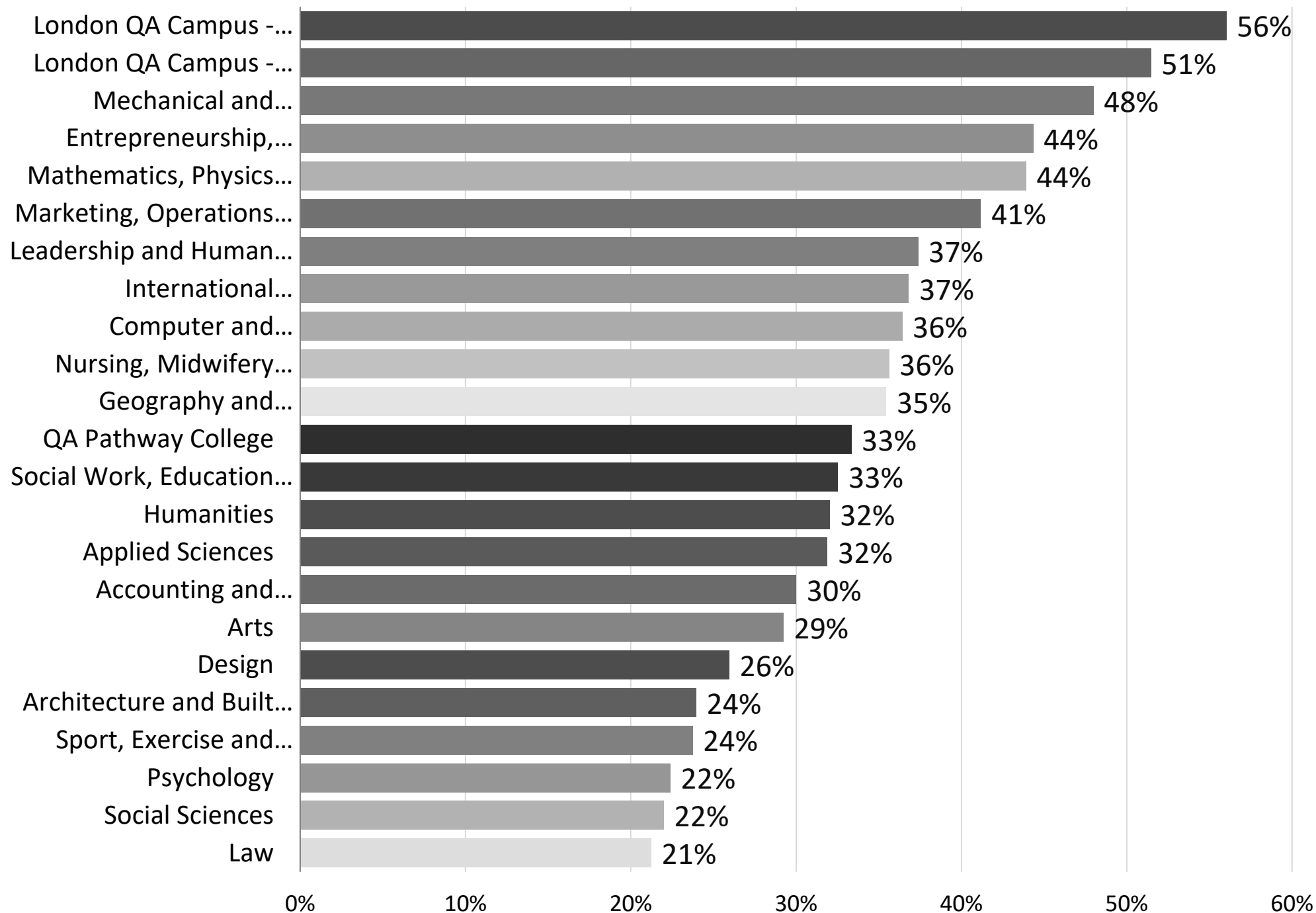
Module Evaluation Response rate over time

% response rate for semester one time each year

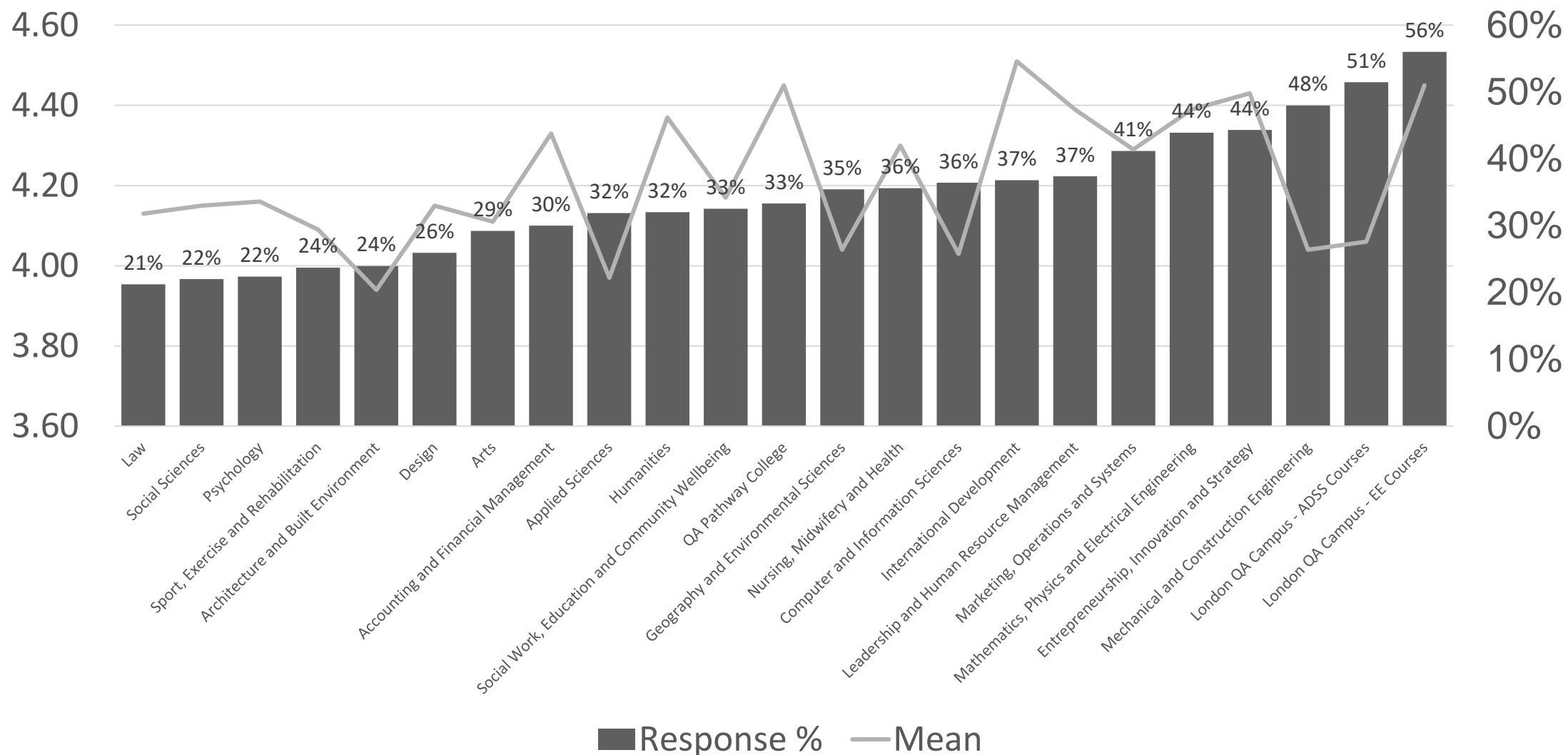


Departmental response rates for semester one 2022/23

Mean scores range
from 3.94-4.51
across the different
departments



DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSE RATES AND SCORES FOR SEMESTER ONE 2022/3



Future Plans

Connect more with our Students Union to achieve greater buy-in from Students and Learners

Engage two interns: Digital Marketing and HTML coding interns in October 2023

Applied for Enhancement Project funding to support internships

Acknowledgements

- Dr Ann Macfadyen, Director of Learning and Teaching
- Paul Mitchell, Governance and Enhancement Coordinator (previous)
- Emma Watson, Governance and Enhancement Coordinator (current)
- Muriel Theillere, Governance and Enhancement Manager
- Harriet Walshaw, Portfolio Manager
- Dr Guy Brown, Dean of Students
- Matt Claridge, Director of Customer Success
- Explorance Professional Services



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Any Questions?

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