



DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
INYUVESI YASETHEKWINI YEZOBUCHWEPHESHE

ENVISION  **2030**

transparency • honesty • integrity • respect • accountability
fairness • professionalism • commitment • compassion • excellence



**Enhancing the University Experience and
Cultivating Student Success Through the
ADAPT@DUT First Year Student Orientation**

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Introduction

The transition to higher education presents numerous challenges for students, critically affecting the success of first-year students. Despite targeted interventions aimed at addressing institutional issues such as retention rates, student success, and low throughput rates, these challenges persist. To facilitate the integration of first-year students, the Durban University of Technology (DUT) implemented the ADAPT@DUT initiative. The objective of ADAPT @DUT is to provide and expose incoming first-year students with tools and essential information that they need to be ready to become successful students. Drawing from a broad scheme of theorem, ADAPT @DUT is designed to foster smooth transition and integration into the campus and to promote student success and retention, by putting students at the centre of the main and co-curricular activities as co-creators of their own experience.

ADAPT@DUT



Objectives

The aim of the **ADAPT @DUT** Programme is to support the student life and academic journey of first-year students' through facilitative experiential learning opportunities that include:

- Nurture smooth academic and campus transition for first time entering students
- Inculcate a sense of belonging, a culture of active participation and agency
- Create an enhancing and enabling environment that is supportive of holistic development and success

OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

Vice-Chancellor's Address and Welcome Day	The Vice-Chancellor and Principal extend a warm welcome to first-year students and their parents. Students are provided with essential information about academic support and available services to help them feel a sense of belonging and supported.
Residence Life for Success	Student Housing and Residence Life welcomes students living in the residences. This session also provides a platform to inform students about the extracurricular activities available across the campus.
Faculty Day	Students are introduced to their faculties, where they meet the Executive Deans, Heads of Departments, and faculty staff members. Additionally, they are informed about the various academic support initiatives available within their faculties.
Team-building and Sport Day	On the last day of the program, students participate in team-building activities and a sports day. This event provides a platform for students to form lasting relationships with one another.

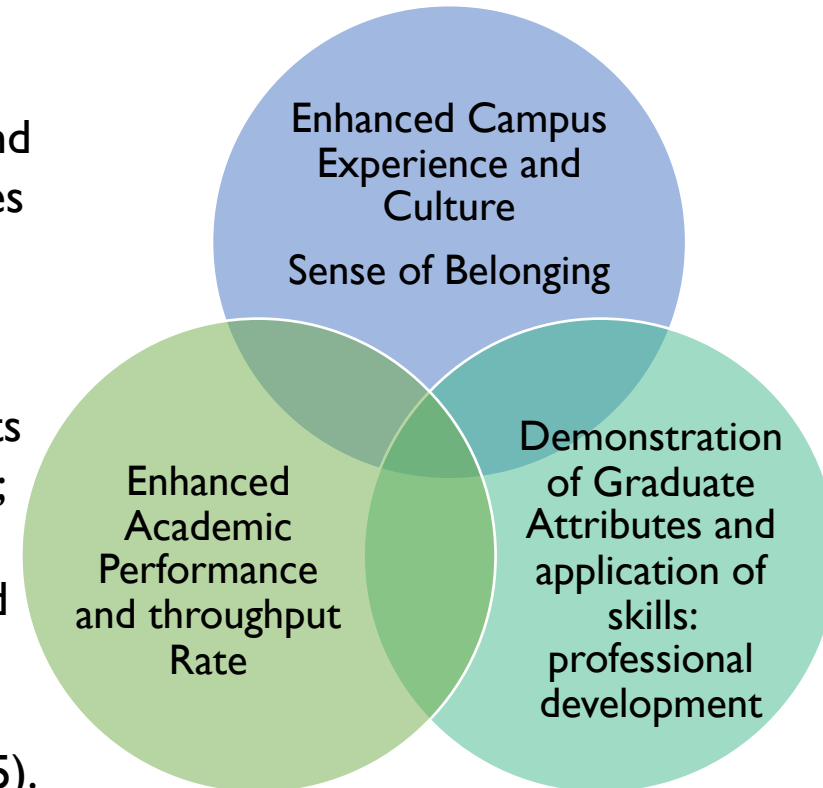




Cultivating Holistic Student Support through ADAPT@DUT

Student success beyond the academic engagement and results, but skills and behaviours, enacting knowledges to improve lives and livelihoods.

The holistic approach to student development has identified dimensions, including; the need for students transition and adapt to the university environment ; the need for curricula to be designed to support students' personal engagement with disciplinary and professional knowledge; the need for students to experience teaching and learning in ways that are supportive and set high standards (McLean,et al, 2015).

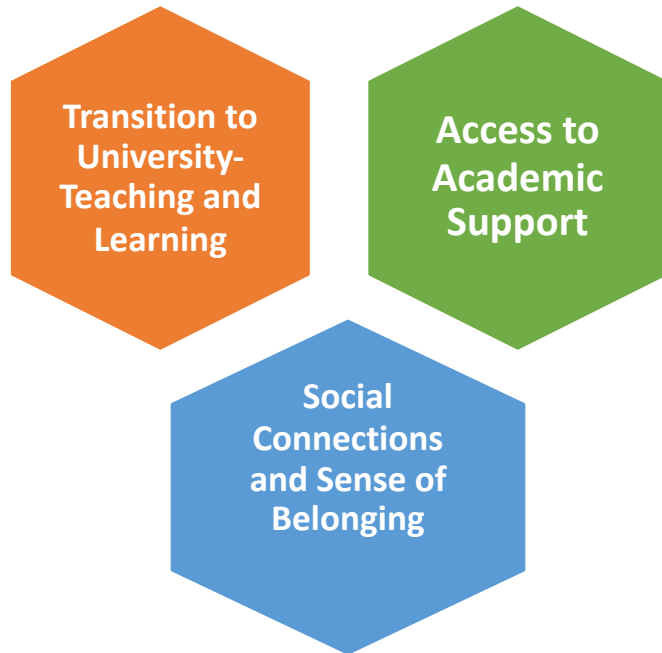


FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW RESULTS & SURVEY RESULTS

Focus Interviews



Themes Emerged



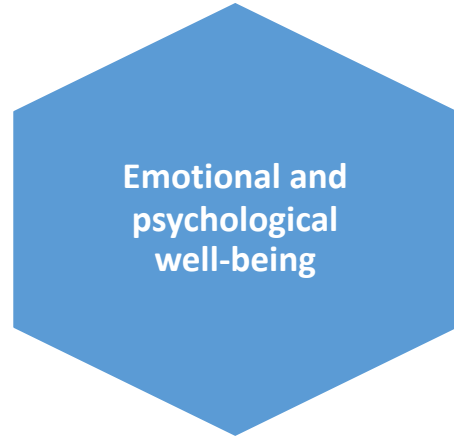
- Challenges encountered in adapting to new academic demands, teaching styles and workload management.
- Students shared their knowledge and awareness of academic advising, TFL , FYSE, tutorials and library resources.
- Experiences shared in making friends, engaging with peers, participation in co-curricular programming and Involvement in student led organizations.
- ADAPT@DUT facilitated Social Integration
- Perceptions of inclusivity, diversity and experiences of belonging or exclusion.



Themes Emerged

- Financial challenges encountered and the impact this had on their academic performance and overall well-being.
- More understanding of financial support available i.e. NSFAS and bursaries
- Financial literacy workshops

- Involvement and participation in class activities, group assignments, FYSE and TFL
- Participation in clubs and societies, sports and residence life programmes
- Promotion of academic engagement in creating a holistic learning experience. ADAPT@DUT encouraged involvement on co-curricular programming and its impact on engagement and development.

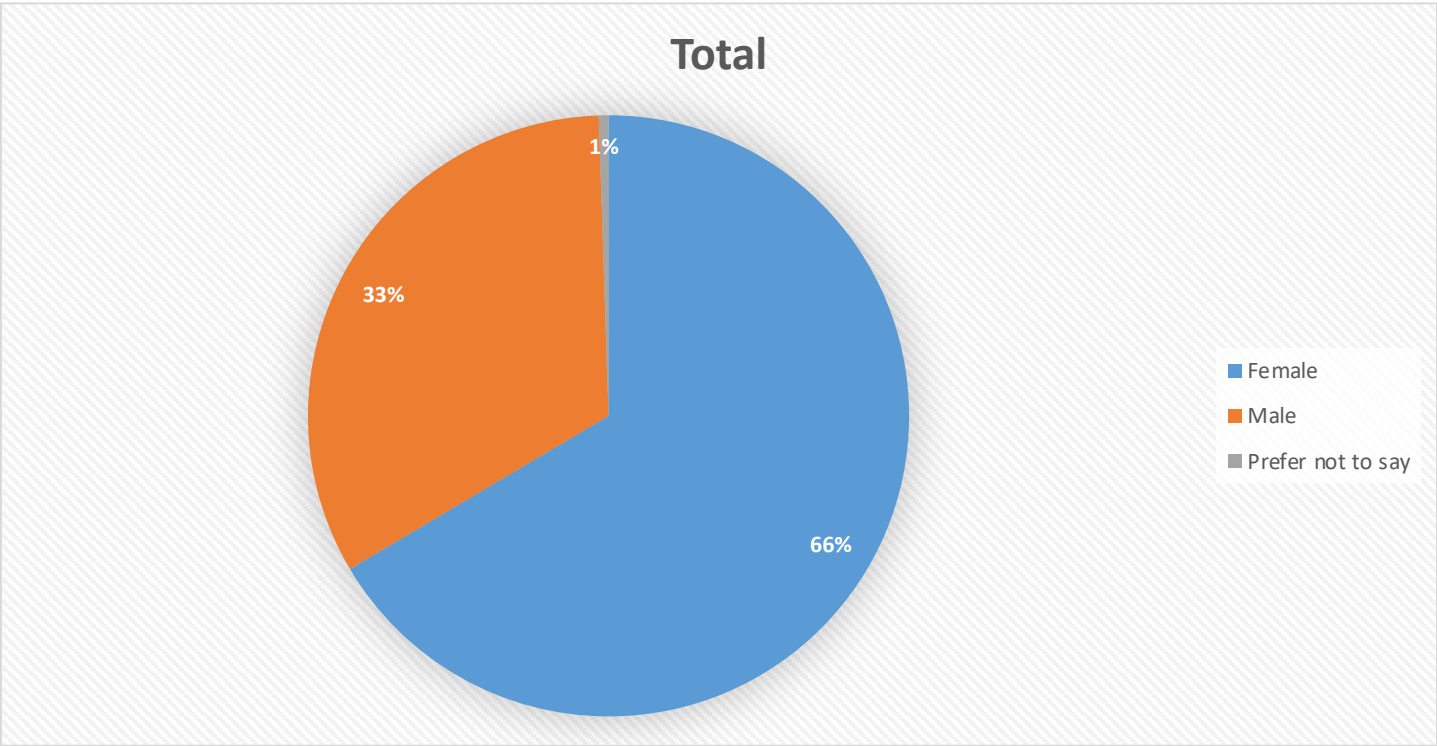


Themes Emerged

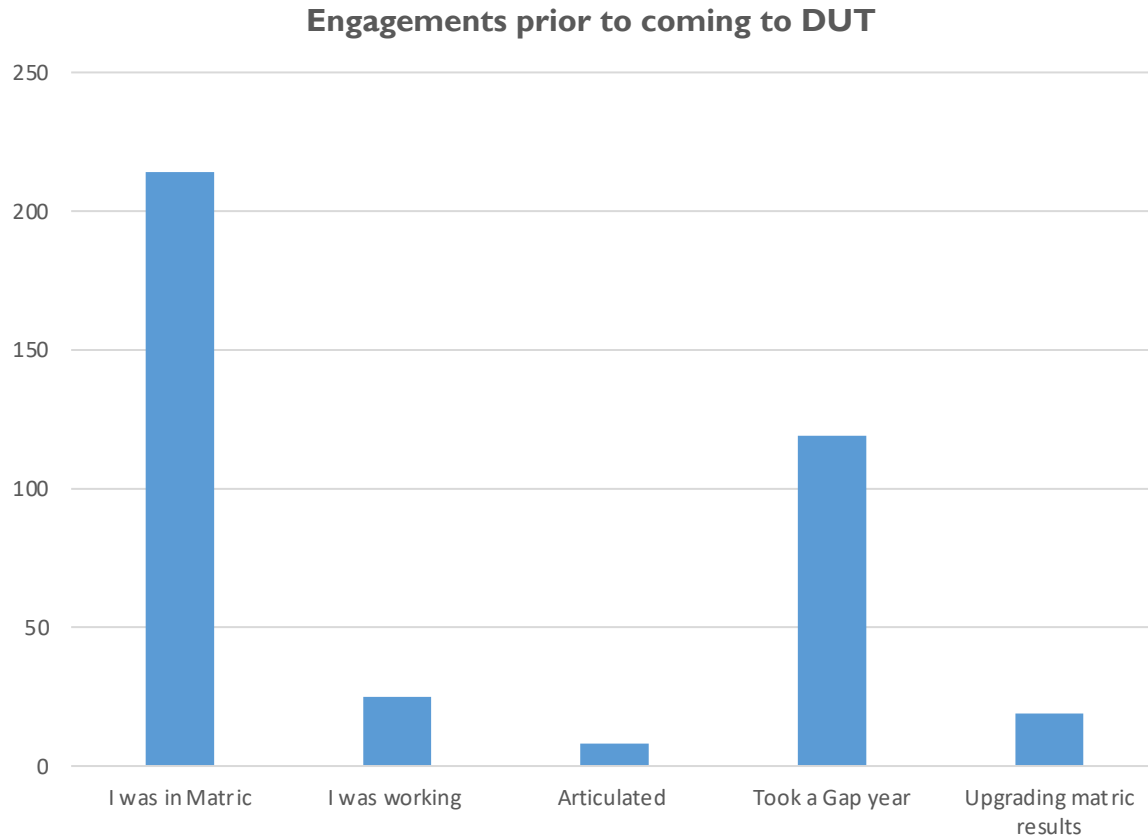
- Managing academic anxiety and mental health
- Levels of stress and anxiety and coping strategies and the use of counselling services, peer support and Residence Life Programmes (exam preparedness workshops)

SURVEY RESULTS

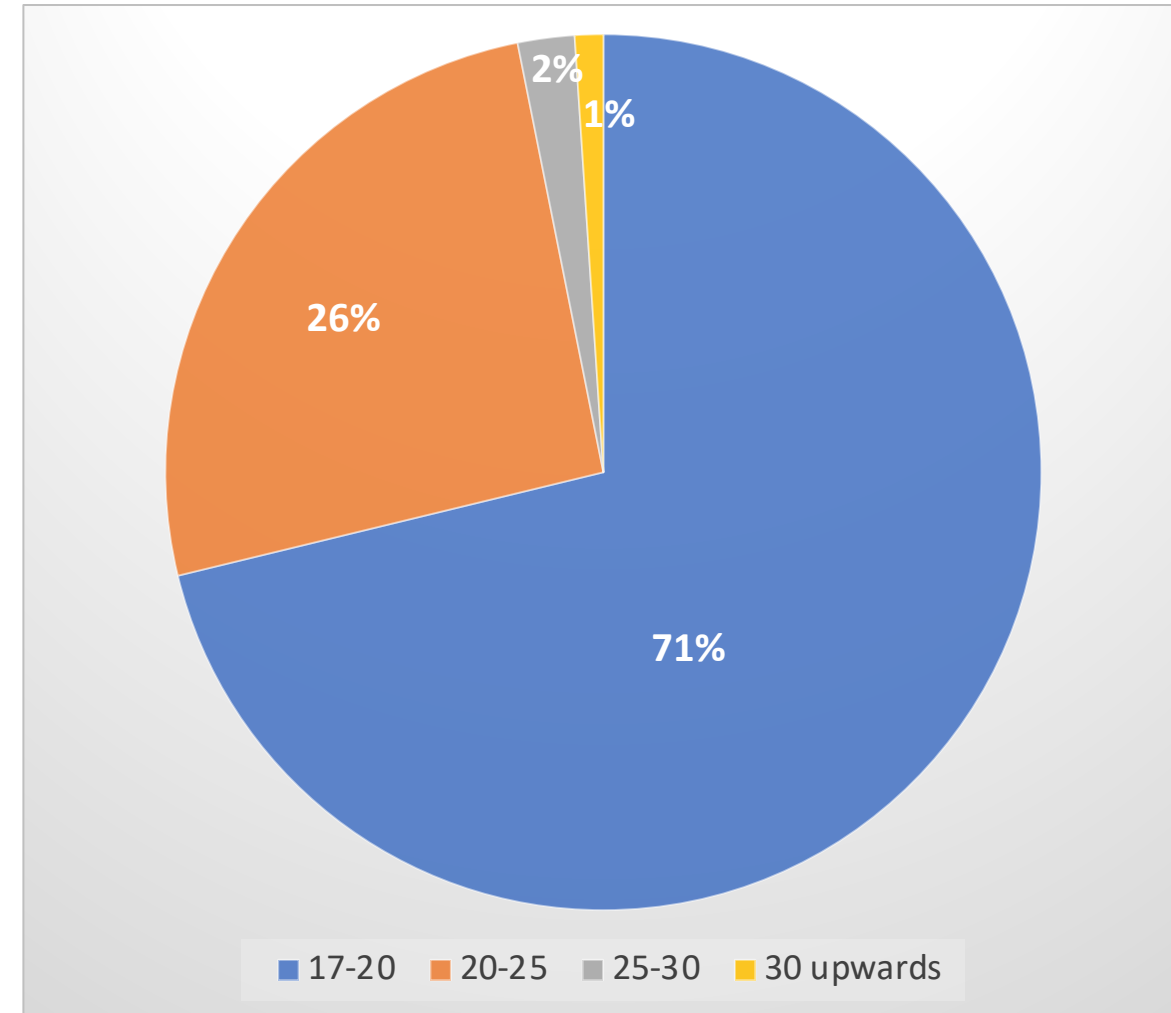
Gender



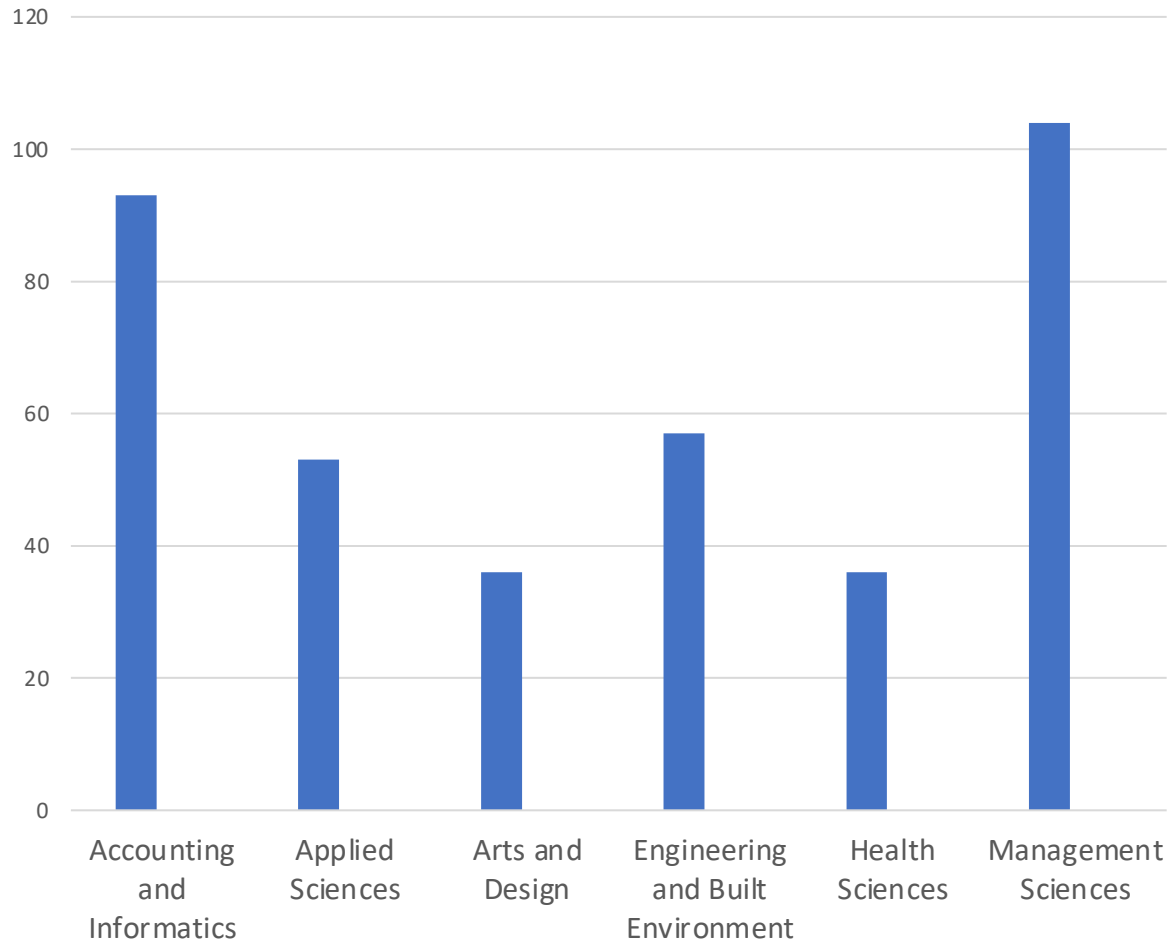
Prior coming to DUT



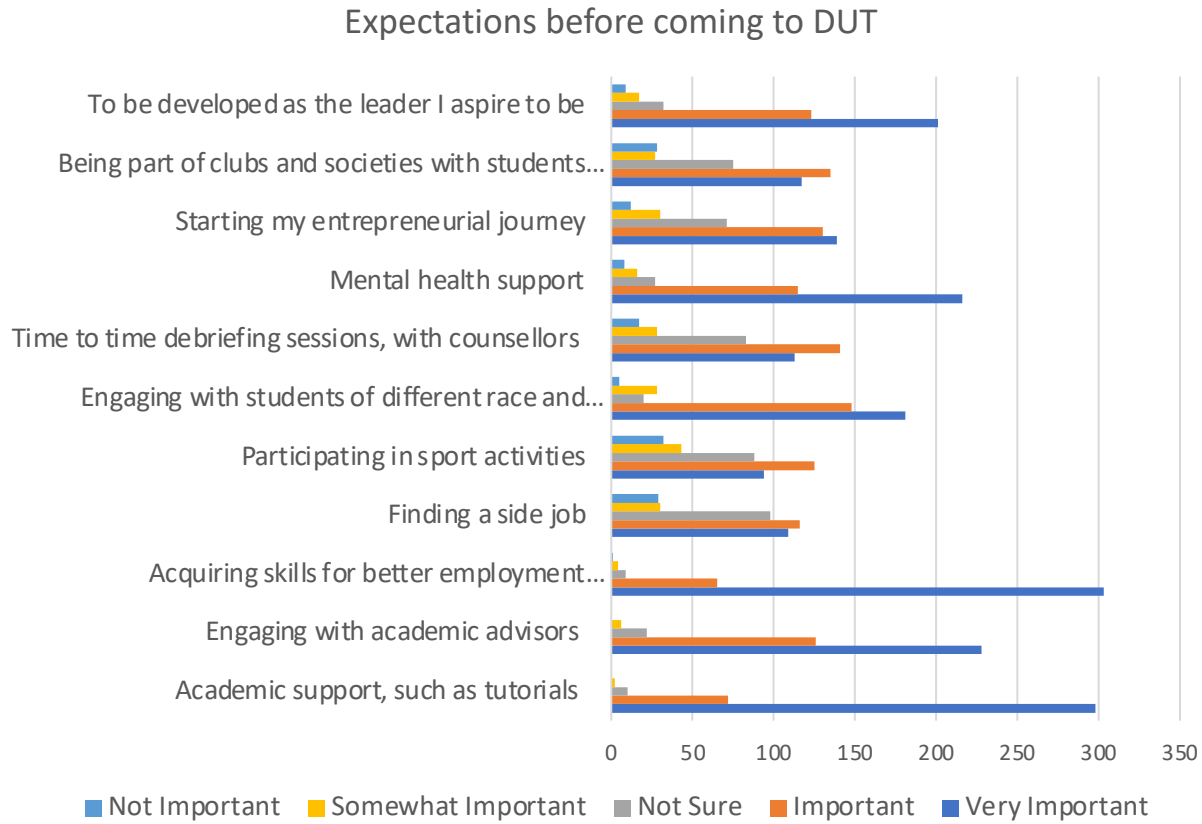
Age



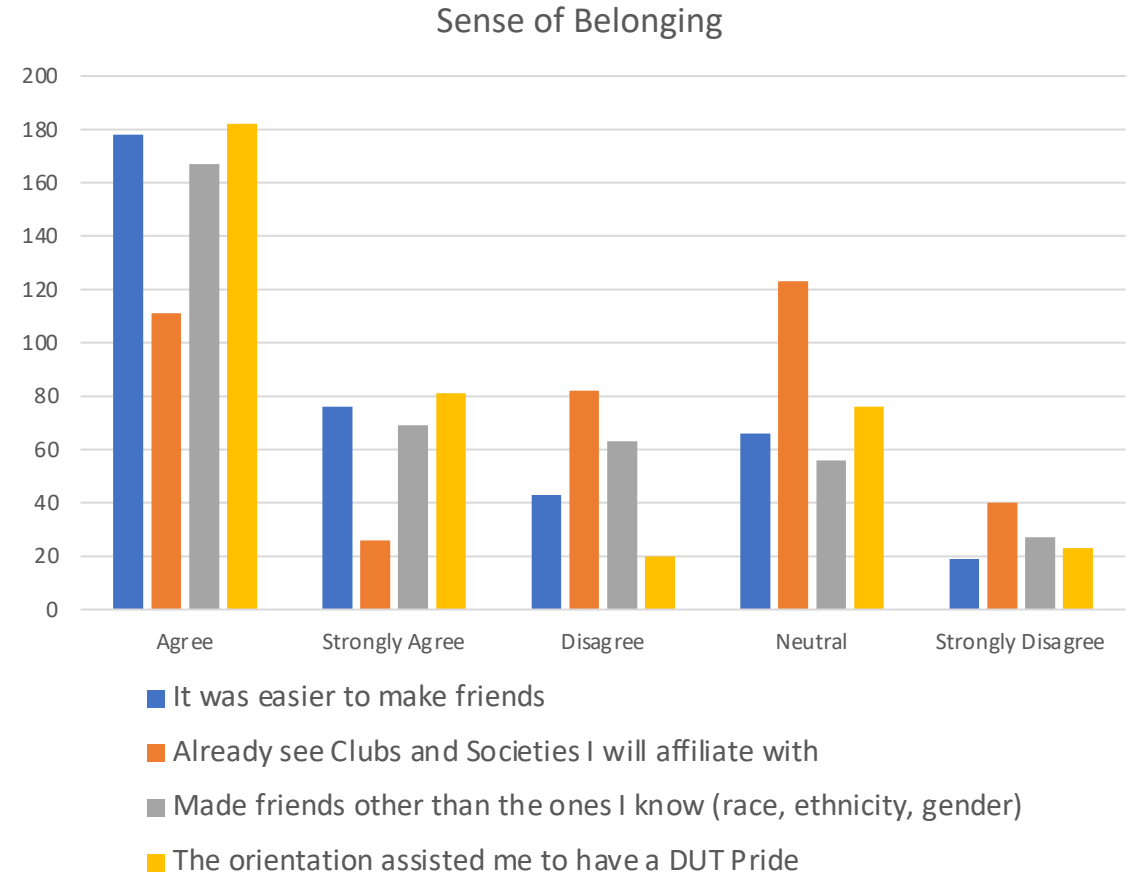
Faculty



Expectations before coming to DUT

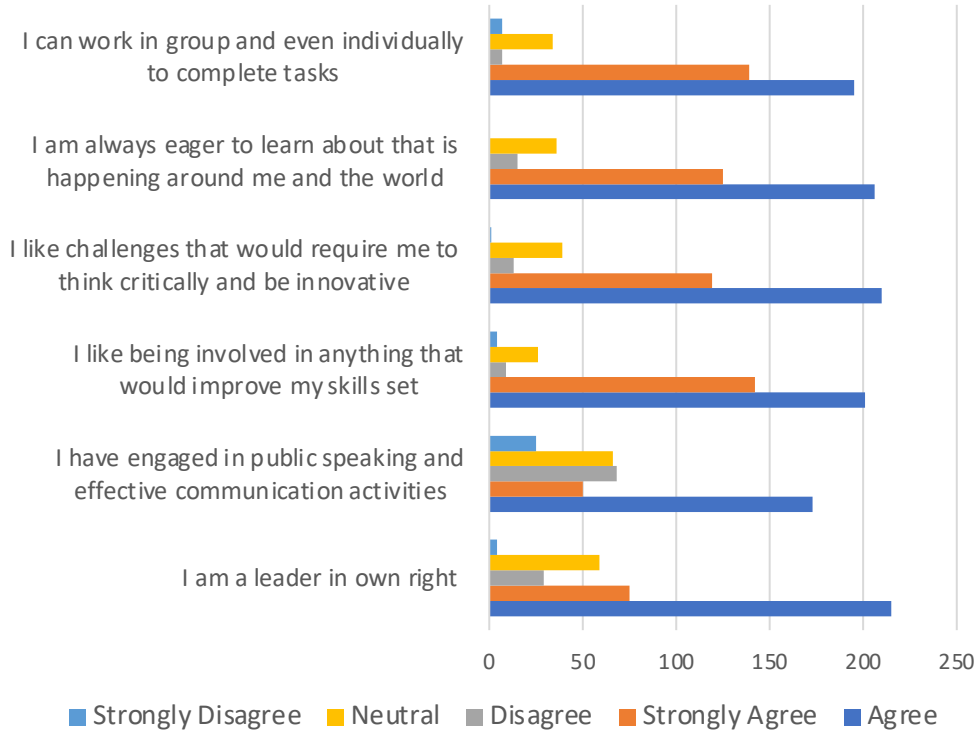


Sense of Belonging



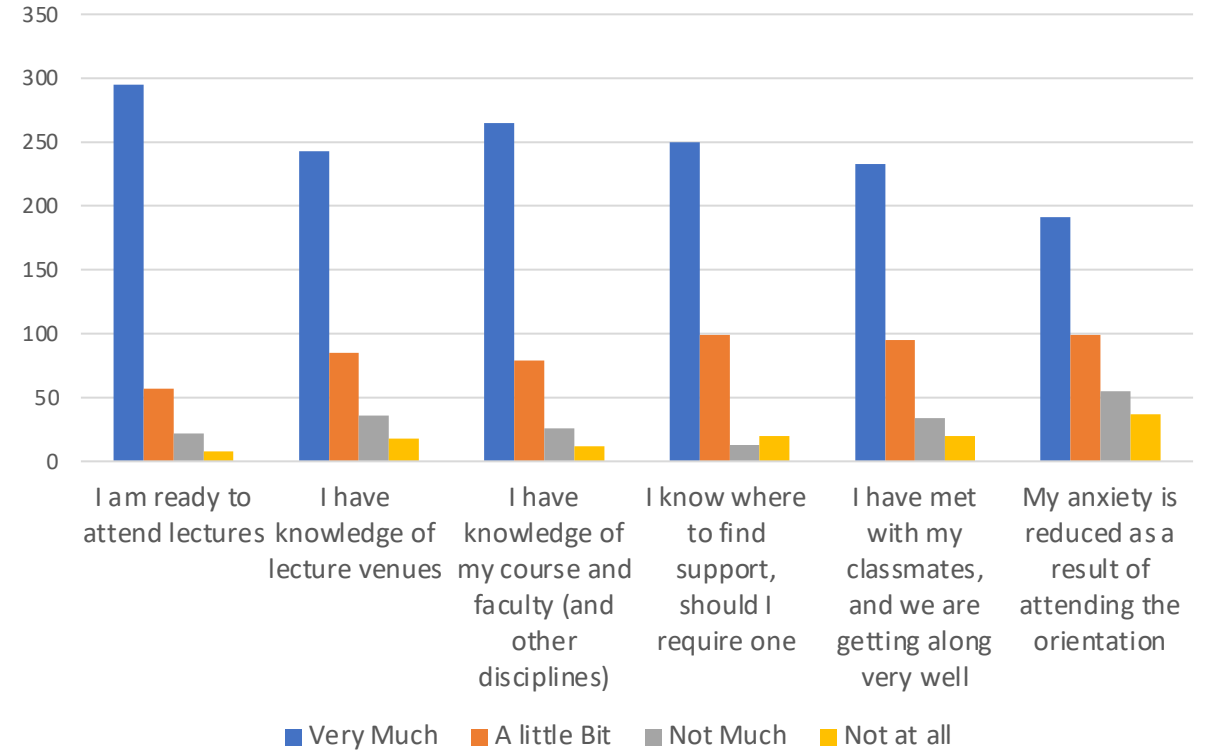
Demonstrating Graduate Attributes

Graduate Attributes



How orientation prepared students

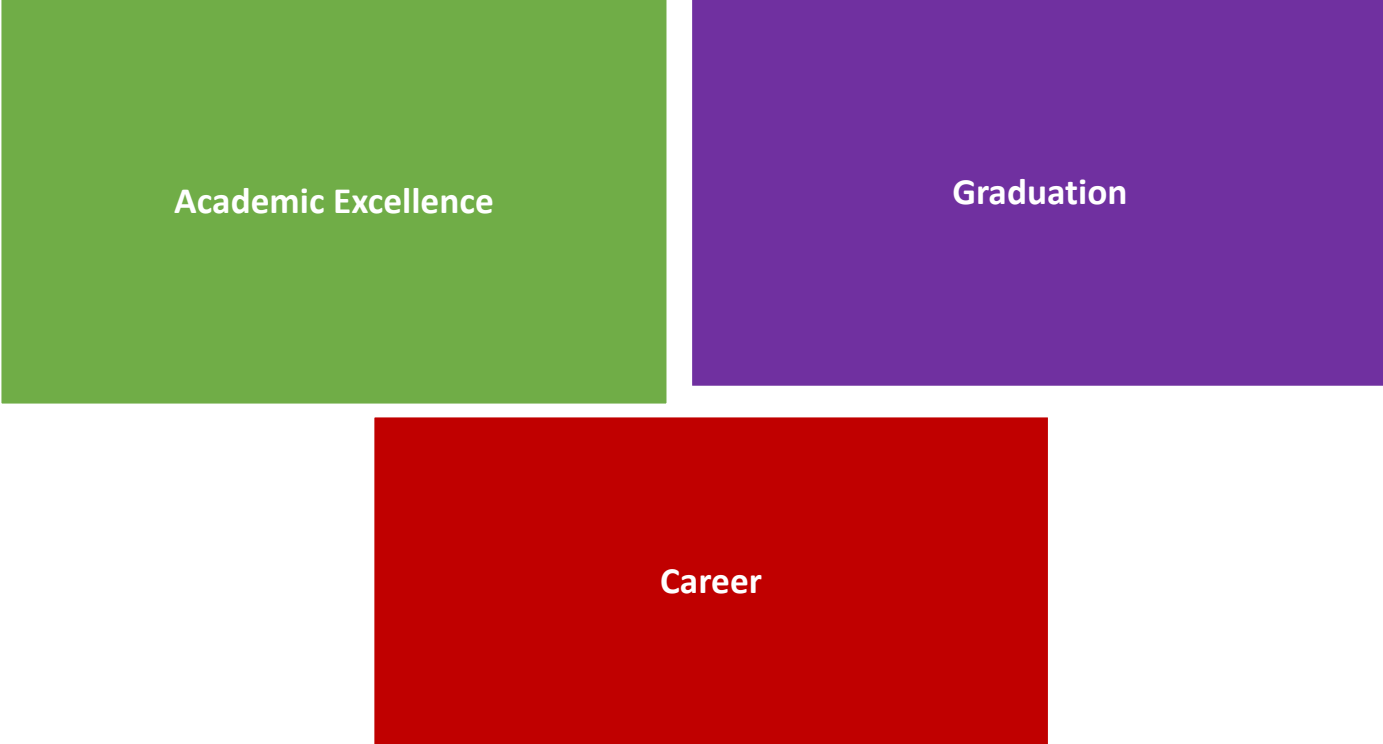
How Orientation Prepared Students



Areas of development

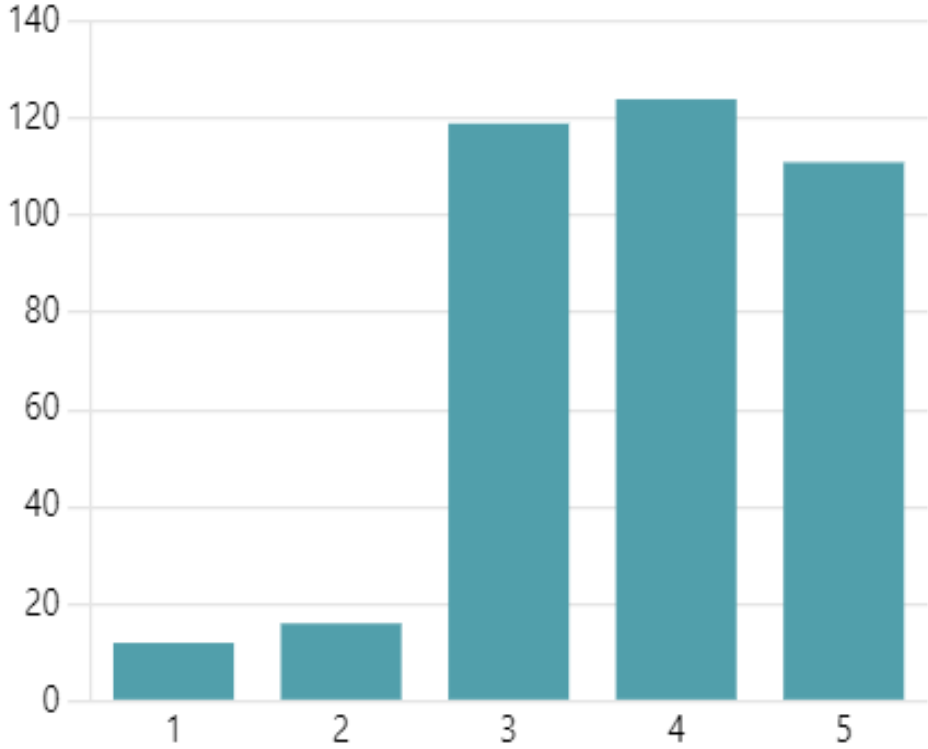


Academic goals



Rating of the overall impact of the orientation programme

3.80
Average Rating



THANK
YOU

