



# Where are the guys?

Understanding male engagement  
in higher education

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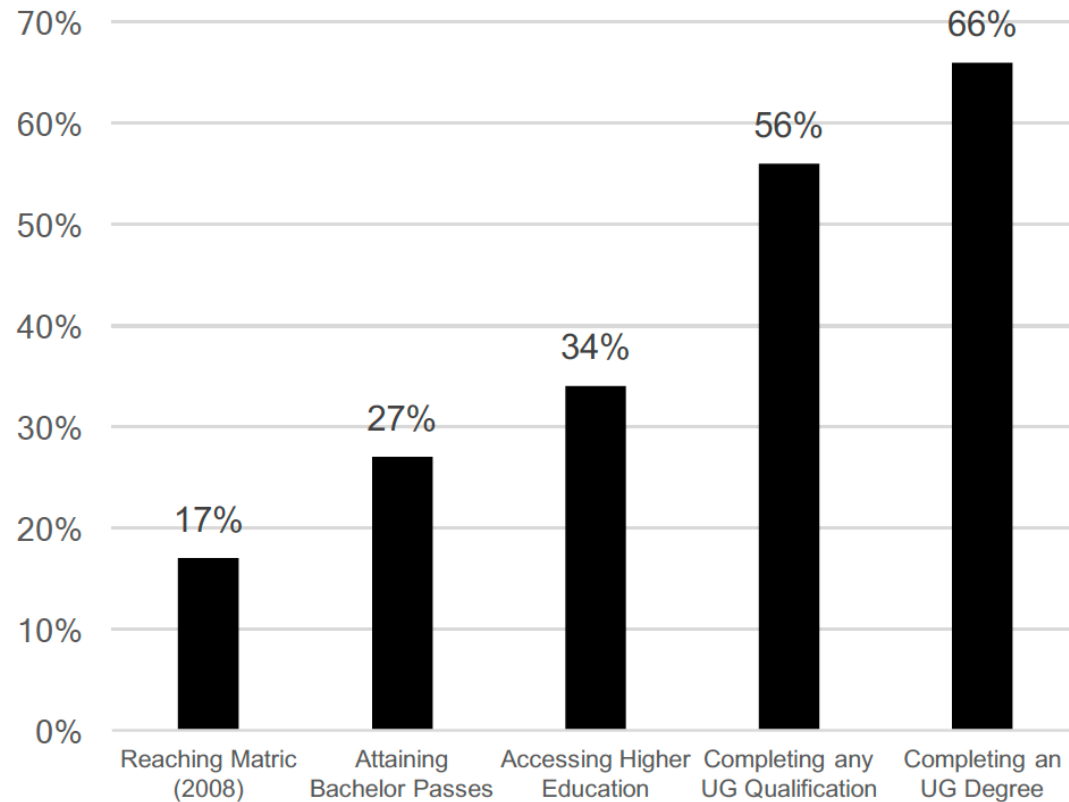


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# Quantifying the gender gap

2008 NSC cohort (N=112 402)

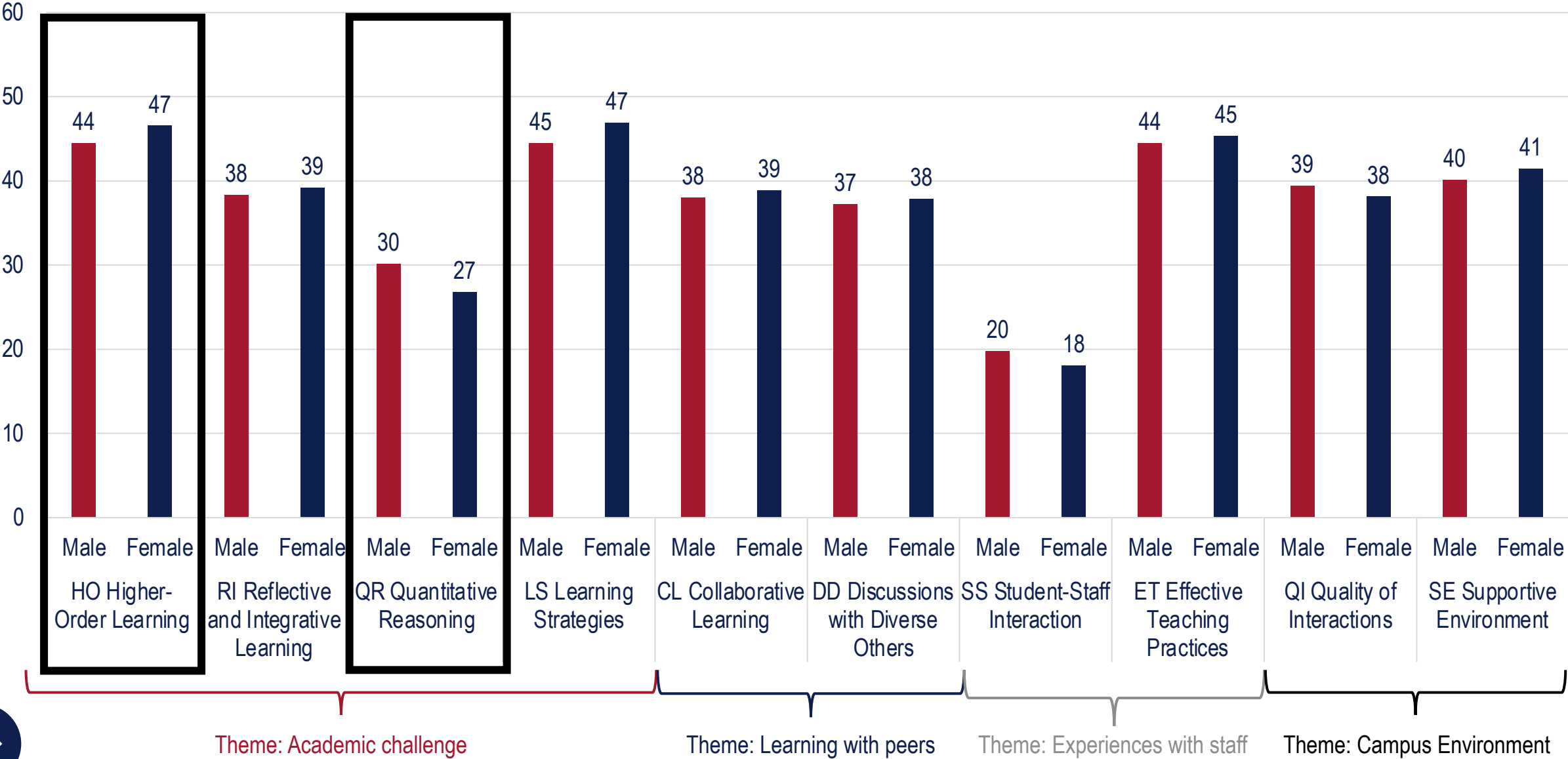


(Van Broekhuizen & Spaull, 2017:4)

Van Broekhuizen & Spaull (2017) found that females are, relative to their male counterparts:

- 17% more likely to reach Grade 12
- 27% more likely to qualify to study for a bachelor's degree
- 34% more likely to access higher education
- 56% more likely to complete any UG qualification
- 66% more likely to complete an UG Degree

# UFS SASSE Engagement Indicators 2023 - significant differences between gender

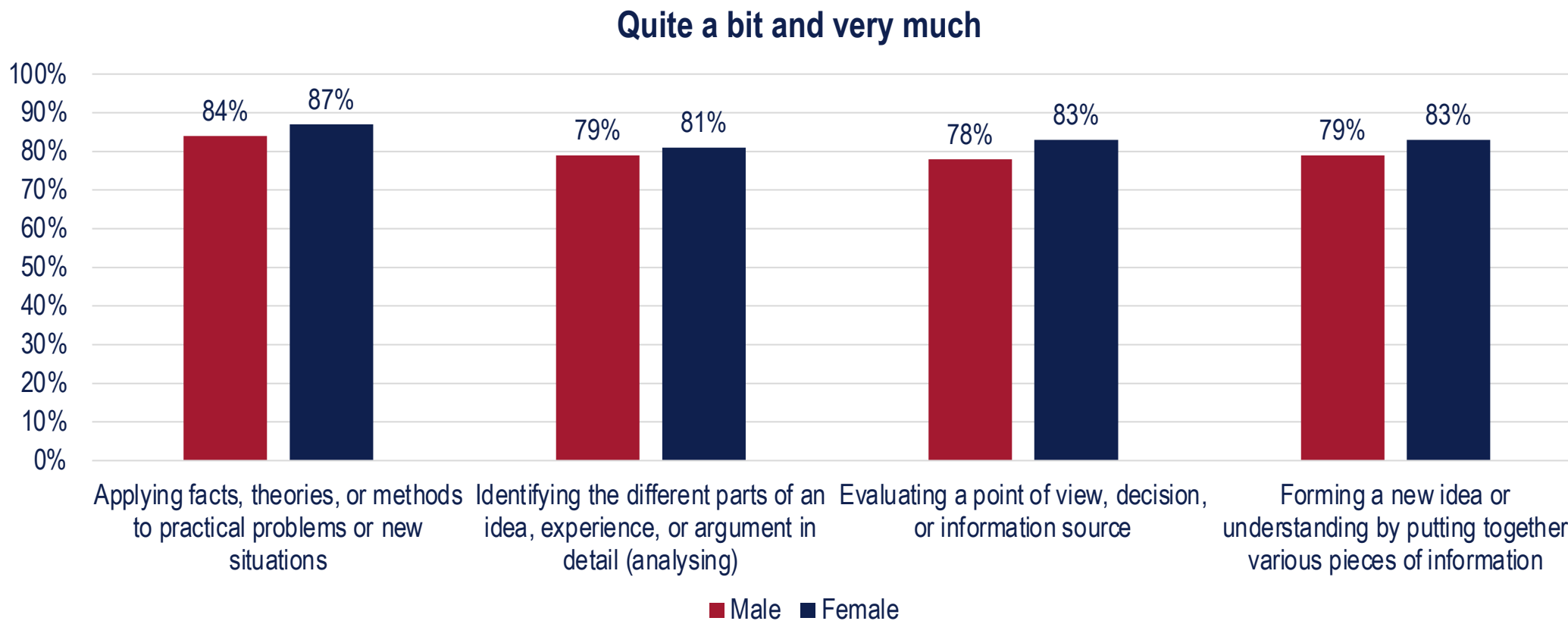


# ACADEMIC CHALLENGE



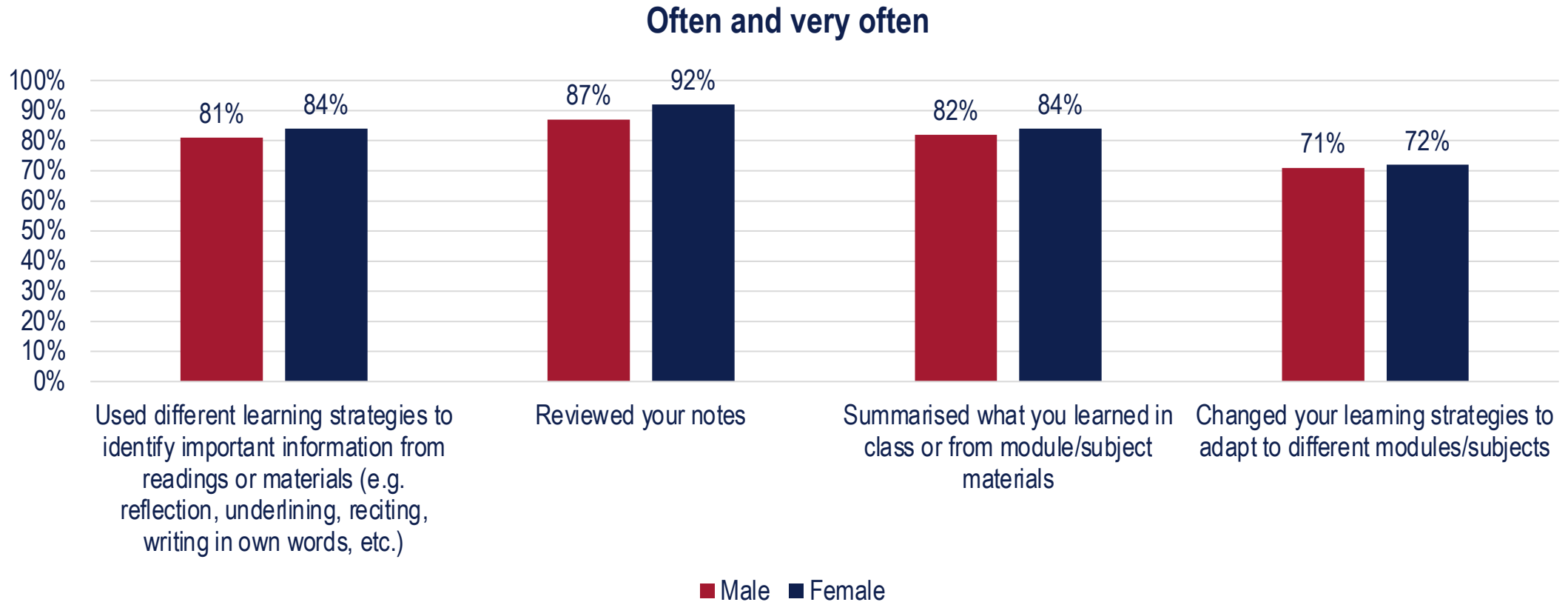


# Higher-Order Learning



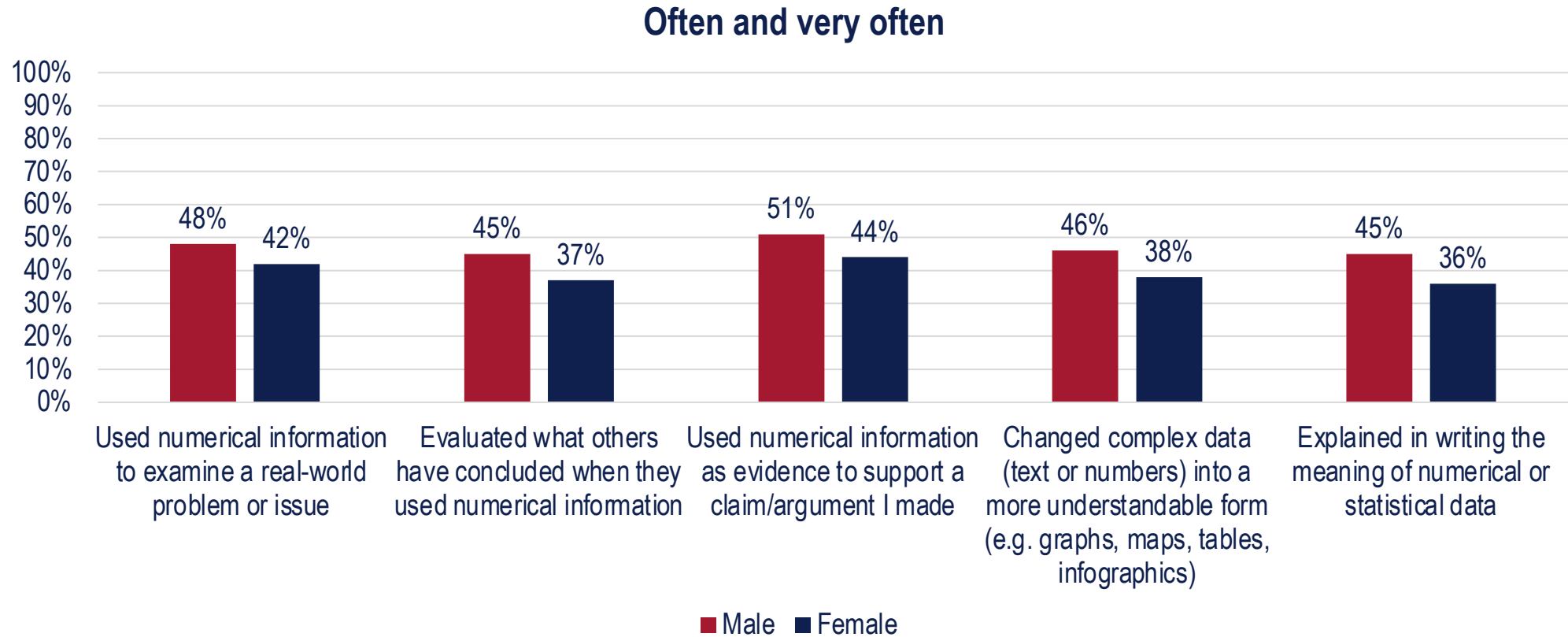
- Females participate more regularly in behaviour associated with higher-order learning

# Learning Strategies



- Females participate more regularly in effective learning strategies than males.

# Quantitative Reasoning



- Males more regularly participate in activities related to quantitative reasoning

# Qualitative findings

What one change would most improve your educational experience at your institution?

*Doing more examples in classes and the lectures should make past papers and their solutions available for students to practice.*  
- Male Student

*Applying what is taught instead of just memorizing*  
- Female Student

*I feel like my sole obligation is to memorise what I study instead of actually gathering insight and applying my own knowledge to complex questions. – Male Student*

QUANTITATIVE  
 QUALITATIVE





# What does the literature say?

- Academic success is dependent on cognitive and non-cognitive skills (Vossensteyn et al., 2015)
- Teaching methodologies characteristic of higher education teaching (e.g., requiring students to ask critical questions, analyse problems, come up with own solutions and ideas) are generally more positively experienced by females than males (Wrigley-Asante et al., 2023)
- Physiological aspect of maturation of the late adolescent brain which relate to non-cognitive skills like self-reflection, self-regulation and the ability to assess the long-term consequences of choices and actions may contribute to the gender gap, with females maturing faster than males (Koster & Kaiser, 2016)

## **BUT**

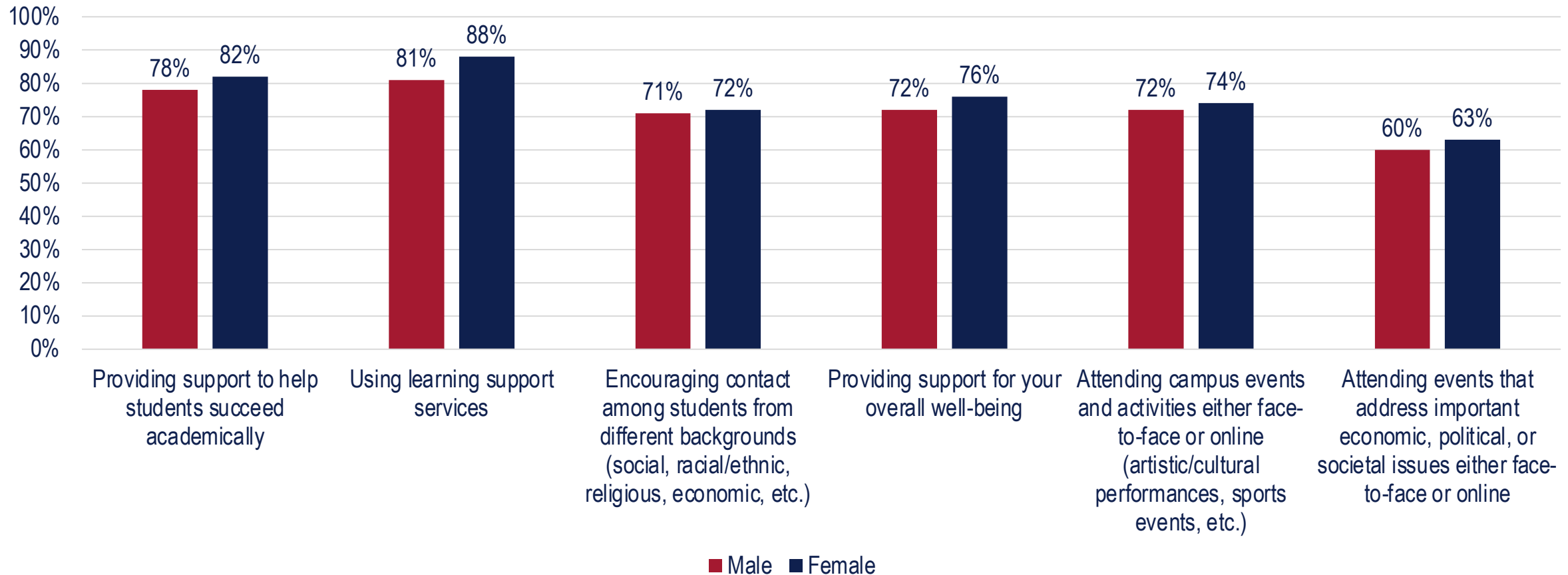
- Males are more likely to complete their degree in minimum time in fields of Engineering and Computer Science than females (Van Broekhuizen & Spaull, 2017)

# CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT



# Supportive Environment

Quite a bit and very much

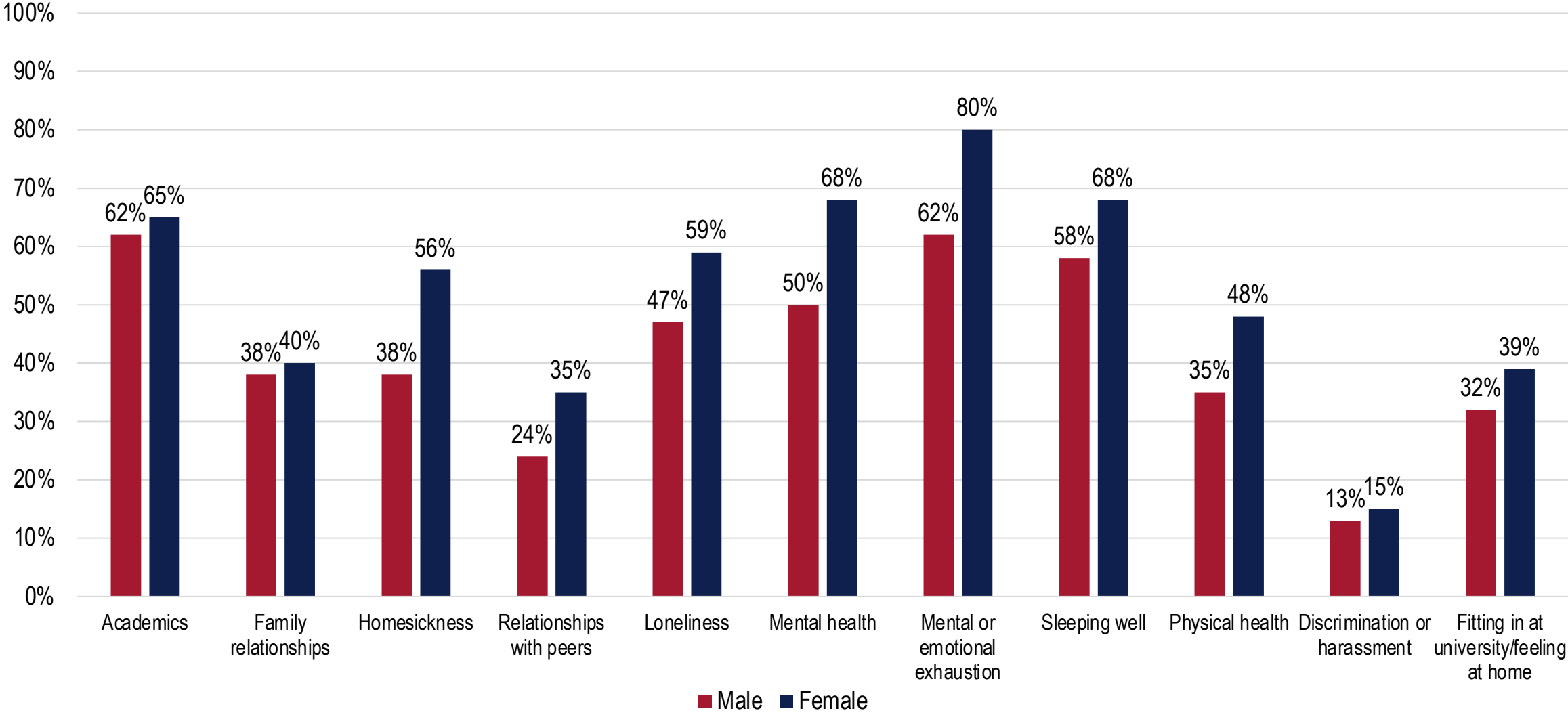


- Females report more emphasis placed by institution on supportive environment than males

# Mental health and well-being topical module



During the current academic year, how difficult have the following been for you? - Difficult



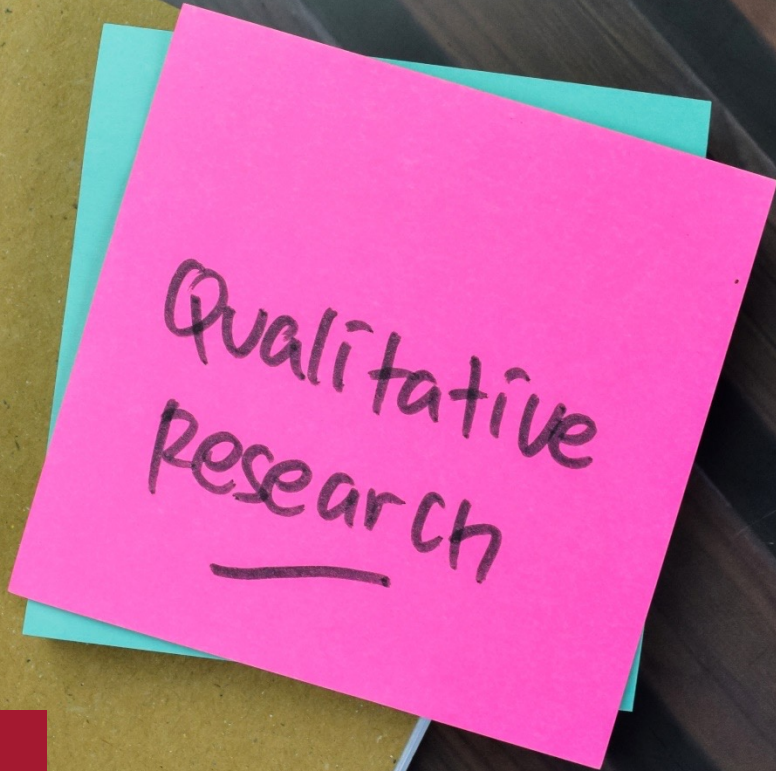
# Qualitative findings

What one change would most improve your educational experience at your institution?

*Considering the actual mental health issues of the students and factoring it in actively to decisions made in terms of academic workload.*  
- Female student

*Faster and better quality access to mental health facilities.*  
- Female student

*By providing free mental, financial advisors and a person who you will talk to if you are facing family issues. Because as I am a first-year student, I have suffered a lot more under these issues stated above.*  
- Male student



# What does the literature say?

- Help-seeking is a crucial self-regulated learning strategy that impacts academic achievement. There are 2 types of help-seeking (Martín-Arbós et al., 2021):
  - Instrumental help-seeking: seeking help to understand and master a task (more common among females)
  - Executive help-seeking: seeking answers to solutions directly (males more likely to engage in this)
- Self-efficacy is associated with more instrumental help-seeking.
- Females are generally more proactive in seeking academic help while males are more likely to avoid seeking help (Ruihua et al., 2023)





# References

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Thank You

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