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STUDY ENVIRONMENT 2017
AARHUS UNIVERSITY

Report no. 1/Study Environment 2017
Results and figures

STUDY ENVIRONMENT SURVEY 2017. Report no. 1.

Main report for Aarhus University

Reports in the Study Environment Survey 2017 series, Aarhus University

STUDY ENVIRONMENT SURVEY 2017. Report no. 1. Main report for Aarhus University

STUDY ENVIRONMENT SURVEY 2017. Report no. 2. Faculty overview for AR

STUDY ENVIRONMENT SURVEY 2017. Report no. 3. Faculty overview for BSS

STUDY ENVIRONMENT SURVEY 2017. Report no. 4. Faculty overview for HE

STUDY ENVIRONMENT SURVEY 2017. Report no. 5. Faculty overview for ST

STUDY ENVIRONMENT SURVEY 2017. Report no. 6. Degree programme reports for AR

STUDY ENVIRONMENT SURVEY 2017. Report no. 7. Degree programme reports for BSS

STUDY ENVIRONMENT SURVEY 2017. Report no. 8. Degree programme reports for HE

STUDY ENVIRONMENT SURVEY 2017. Report no. 9. Degree programme reports for ST

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Abbreviations

AU	**Aarhus University**
AR	**Faculty of Arts**
BSS	**Aarhus School of Business and Social Sciences**
HE	**Faculty of Health**
ST	**Faculty of Science and Technology**

Contents

PREFACE

By Berit Eika, Pro-Rector Aarhus University

When I read the results of this year's study environment survey for the first time, once again, I felt proud and delighted to be part of Aarhus University. Our students are the foundation for all of the university's activities, and their education is our most important mission. And so we must take good care of our students – not coddle them, but ensure that we provide a framework in which they thrive. We must contribute to creating an environment in which thoughts and ideas can bloom, and where young people have the best conditions for academic and personal development.

That almost nine out of ten respondents indicate that they are satisfied with their degree programme at Aarhus University and feel comfortable here - for the third time in a row - is a big pat on the back to our academic staff and our teaching and research programmes, which inspire and challenge our students every day. I'm also pleased that an equally large proportion of our students count on being able to use their education in practice. This emphasises the importance of the university's natural focus on the link between education and the labour market, and it also provides yet another piece of evidence to puncture the myth of the university student as ivory-tower theoretician. Our students want to use their skills and make a difference.

We also have a study environment characterised by strong relationships among the students, who increasingly participate in study groups. Whether this is due to a historically high level of satisfaction with the physical framework, which gives students good opportunities to meet, or to heightened awareness of the value of collaboration, we do not know. But at the end of the day, this is a positive development, as we know that a sense of community strengthens both students' satisfaction with their degree programmes and improves their academic performance.

But nonetheless, we still have work to do in some areas. Stress is becoming ever more widespread, and students are still expressing a need for more feedback. Despite intense efforts across the university, we have to acknowledge that we haven't yet cracked the code of how to help more students more effectively within existing frameworks and with existing resources. But we will continue to work to develop the university's teaching

methods and study environment, and I am optimistic that we will reverse the trend.

The response rate this year was historically high – 46 per cent of the students took the time to complete the survey. I would like to thank the many students who participated in the study environment survey, as well as the boards of studies and student organisations who contributed to increasing the response rate. The more we know about the study environment, the more effectively can we act going forward.

On behalf of Aarhus University's senior management team, I look forward to continuing to work together with the degree programmes and our students to create an attractive study environment and a high degree of student well-being.

CHAPTER 1.
SUMMARY

This first chapter summarises the results of Aarhus University's Study Environment Survey 2017. The results are based on contributions from 15,491 student respondents, equating to a response rate of 46.

The report consists of nine chapters describing key parts of the survey. In addition, separate reports have been prepared for the individual degree programmes, which are made available on the survey website. Finally, additional analyses/special reports may be ordered, if relevant. For further details, see the website.

KEY RESULTS

Well-being
In the Study Environment Survey 2017, student well-being has been surveyed on the basis of a number of questions, three of which are positively phrased. These are questions asking whether students feel comfortable as students, whether they are satisfied with their studies, and about the extent to which they would recommend their degree programme at Aarhus University to others. Signs of negative well-being have been surveyed by asking the students about the extent to which they experience strong stress-related symptoms in connection with their studies.

1. 87% of the respondents generally feel comfortable as students at Aarhus University. 5% 'strongly disagree' or 'mostly disagree' (Figure 3.1). The results are similar to the results from 2011 and 2014 (Figure 1.1).
2. 88% of the respondents indicate satisfaction with their degree programme. 4% indicate dissatisfaction (Figure 3.1). Similar results were seen in 2014.
3. 88% of the students surveyed state that they would recommend their degree programme at Aarhus University to others. The responses from 4% of the students indicate that they would not recommend their degree programme. In 2014, the proportion of respondents who would recommend their degree programme to others was 85% (Figure 3.1).

4. 20% of the students surveyed report that they 'very often' or 'often' experience strong stress-related symptoms in connection with their daily studies. The figures indicate an increase in the incidence of stress among students from 11% in 2011 and 17% in 2014 to 20% in 2017 (Figure 1.1).

5. In the comments, the following recurring themes are identified to which the students surveyed relate their experience of stress: (i) experienced workload (including job of relevance to studies), (ii) exams, including the desire to do well, the number of exams and the late announcement of exam dates, (iii) competition between students, (iv) the study progress reform, both the actual requirements and uncertainty about what the reform means for the students (Chapter 3).

Figure 1.1. Selected questions from 2011, 2014 and 2017
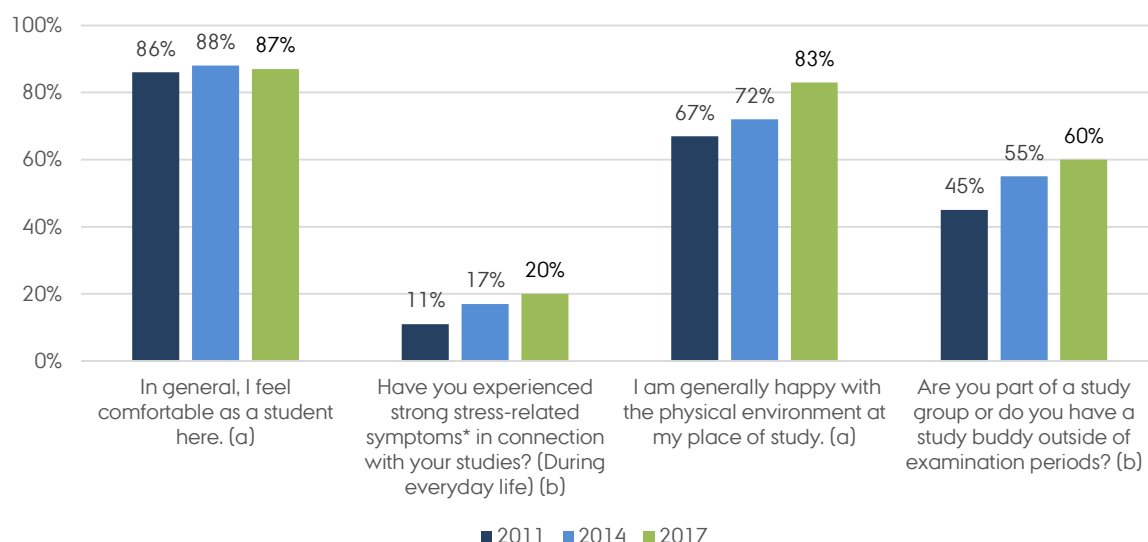
Note a: The figures show the proportion who ticked 'Strongly agree' or 'Mostly agree'. The rest of the students 'neither agree nor disagree', 'mostly disagree' or 'strongly disagree'. The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.
Note b: The figures show the proportion who have ticked 'Very often' or 'Often'. The remainder have ticked 'Sometimes', 'Rarely' or 'Very rarely'. The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.

Degree programme and teaching staff
Analyses in 2011 and 2014 showed that the students' relationship with their degree programme and the academic environment is important for student well-being. In the Study Environment Survey 2017, a total of seven questions were therefore asked concerning the students' relationship with their degree programme and their contact with teaching staff. The results are described in Chapter 4, which among other things shows the following:

6. The students are very interested in their degree programme, which is reflected in the fact that 87% of the students surveyed 'strongly agree' or 'mostly agree' with the statement that the courses they do are courses which they feel like involving themselves in. The proportion

of respondents who 'strongly disagree' or 'mostly disagree' is 4%. Also, 90% of the respondents indicate that they are greatly looking forward to leaving university and using everything they have learnt (Figure 4.2).

7. As regards contact with teaching staff, 84% of the students surveyed state that teachers are available when the students contact them, and 87% reply in the affirmative that the teachers that they have been in contact with generally seem interested in the students (Figure 4.1).

Fellow students

Analyses in 2011 and 2014 showed that relations with fellow students are also important for student well-being.

8. The results suggest that students generally enjoy socially open and academically rewarding relations with each other. 87% of the respondents indicate, for example, that they can get help and support from their fellow students when they need it, and 86% find that academically they get a lot out of talking to other students (Figure 5.1).

9. It should, however, also be mentioned that 24% of the respondents feel that competition between the students is fierce. Significant differences are noted between the faculties. For example, the proportion of respondents who are experiencing fierce competition among the students is 36% at BSS, while at AR the figure is 16% (Table 5.1).

10. A supplementary analysis shows that students who experience fierce competition among students feel less comfortable as students and more often experience severe stress-related symptoms. They feel less able to get help and support from their fellow students, and they more often feel lonely (Figure 5.4).

11. A comparison of the surveys conducted in 2011, 2014 and 2017 indicates that students are increasingly participating in study groups. The proportion of respondents who are 'very often' or 'often' members of a study group or have a study buddy outside of exam periods is 60%. This represents an increase from 45% in 2011 and 55% in 2014 (Figure 5.2).

12. 13% of the students surveyed state that they 'very often' or 'often' feel lonely in connection with their daily studies (Table 5.3).

Physical study environment

Questions about the students' experience of the physical study environment cover the following themes: The experience of having access to the university, the experience of being able to work and work with others at the place of study, and the experience of the functioning of the technical solutions. The following are some of the most important results:

13. Generally speaking, the results indicate that student satisfaction with the physical study environment has increased over a six-year period. The proportion of respondents who are satisfied with the physical study environment is up from 67% in 2011 and 72% in 2014 to 83% in 2017 (Figure 6.1).

14. 94% 'strongly agree' or 'mostly agree' that there is access to the university at the times when they need it, and 88% find that there are places where they can meet with fellow students at their place of study (Figure 6.2).

15. 71% of the students surveyed 'strongly agree' or 'mostly agree' that at their place of study it is possible to find a quiet place to work when they need to. 18% find that they cannot find a quiet place to work when they need it. Similarly, 69% find that it is possible to find a place to work with their study group when they need to. 19% find that it is not possible to find a place to work with their study group (Figure 6.2).

16. 75% of the students surveyed state that the technical solutions (in the form of Blackboard, WAYF, printers and the like) work when they need them. 10% find that the technical solutions do not work when they need them (Figure 6.3).

Feedback

Previous study environment surveys have asked about the students' experience of the feedback they receive. In the Study Environment Survey 2017, the questions have been revised so as to be clearer about what the concept of feedback means. The questions cover three aspects of feedback: (i) whether the criteria for feedback are clear (feed-up), (ii) whether it is clear to the students to what extent they live up to the criteria, and (iii) the extent to which feedback makes it easy for the students to see how they can improve. These are some of the results:

17. 62% of the respondents 'strongly agree' or 'mostly agree' that the teachers spend time discussing with the students what characterises a good assignment. 16% 'strongly disagree' or 'mostly disagree' with the statement that the teachers spend time discussing with the students what characterises a good assignment (Figure 7.1).

18. 48% of the students feel that it is difficult to know whether they are doing well and learning what is required (Figure 7.1).
19. 50% of the respondents 'strongly agree' or 'mostly agree' that it is easy for them to see how to improve their ways of learning when they receive feedback on their academic work. However, 18% find that it is not easy for them to see how they can improve their ways of learning when they receive feedback on their academic work. (Figure 7.1).

Study intensity

The students were asked to indicate how many hours they spend on various activities during a typical week of study outside of exam periods.

20. Based on the self-reported number of hours spent on study-related activities (i.e. hours devoted to teaching activities, internships and preparation), the students surveyed devoted an average of 34.9 hours a week to their studies (Table 8.1).
21. The average of 34.9 hours covers considerable variation. Variation is seen in the results for the four faculties, but also among students at the same faculty (Table 8.2 and Figure 8.2).
22. An important methodological note is that the study intensity figures for 2017 are not comparable to the time use figures from the Study Environment Survey 2014.

Bullying and harassment

The questions about bullying and harassment have been revised in the same way as the questions for the university's most recent workplace assessment to further clarify the concept of bullying and add the category 'repeated abusive, offensive or derogatory speech incidents'.

23. 2.8% of the students surveyed stated that within the past 12 months they have been subjected to repeated incidents of abusive, offensive or derogatory speech incidents. Less than 1% state that they have been exposed to bullying, sexual harassment, threats of violence or physical violence (Table 9.1).
24. The proportion of respondents who have experienced discrimination is between 0.3% and 1.8%, depending on the type of discrimination (Table 9.1).

About the survey

In Chapter 2, the collection of data and the methodology applied are described in further detail. The main points concern response rates, representativity and the possibility of making comparisons over time:

25. The survey was conducted among all students who were registered as active and full-time students at Aarhus University in October 2016. 15,491 valid responses equates to a response rate of 46 (Table 2.1).

26. A more detailed analysis of the representativity showed satisfactory results although undergraduate students were slightly over-represented. Also, female students have been more likely to complete the questionnaire than male students, and the response rates are higher at ST and HE than at AR and BSS (Figure 2.3).

27. Based on the response rate, the statistical uncertainty is approx. 0.5 percentage points for the AU figures. The smaller the units reported on, the higher the uncertainty.

28. Where possible, comparisons have been made with the results from the Study Environment Survey 2011 and the Study Environment Survey 2014. Readers should note, however, that data for the Study Environment Survey 2017 were collected in the autumn semester, whereas in 2011 and 2014, the data were collected in the spring semester. It should also be noted that the student population is not the same, that some degree programmes have been reorganised, and that extensive educational reforms have been passed by the Danish parliament. Caution should therefore be exercised when interpreting any changes over time.

Table 1.1. Main results

	AU 14	AU 17	AR	BSS	HE	ST
Well-being						
In general, I feel comfortable as a student here. ('Strongly agree' + 'Mostly agree')	88%	87%	85%	85%	90%	89%
I am generally satisfied with my studies. ('Strongly agree' + 'Mostly agree')	87%	88%	86%	87%	92%	90%
I would recommend my programme of study at Aarhus University to others ('Strongly agree' + 'Mostly agree')	85%	88%	86%	87%	91%	89%
Have you experienced strong stress-related symptoms* in connection with your daily studies? ('Very often' + 'Often')	17%	20%	21%	19%	18%	20%
Degree programme and teaching staff ('Strongly agree' + 'Mostly agree')						
The courses I do are courses which I feel like involving myself in.	-	87%	86%	85%	90%	88%
I am greatly looking forward to leaving university and using everything that I have learnt.	-	90%	86%	91%	94%	90%
Teachers are available when I contact them.	-	84%	86%	82%	77%	89%
The teachers that I have been in contact with generally seem interested in the students.	81%	87%	89%	85%	84%	91%
Fellow students						
I can receive help and support from my fellow students when I need it. ('Strongly agree' + 'Mostly agree')	85%	87%	85%	84%	92%	91%
Academically, I get a lot out of talking to other students. ('Strongly agree' + 'Mostly agree')	-	86%	84%	84%	92%	90%
I find that competition among students is fierce. ('Strongly agree' + 'Mostly agree')	-	24%	16%	36%	22%	19%
The possibilities for social contact with my fellow students are good. ('Strongly agree' + 'Mostly agree')	76%	80%	77%	78%	85%	85%
Are you part of a study group or do you have a study buddy outside of examination periods? ('Very often' + 'Often')	55%	60%	58%	63%	66%	55%
How often do you feel lonely in connection with your daily studies? ('Very often' + 'Often')	12%	13%	15%	14%	10%	10%
Physical study environment ('Strongly agree' + 'Mostly agree')						
(At my place of study) there is access to the university at the times I need it.	-	94%	93%	95%	93%	94%
(At my place of study) there are places to meet with fellow students.	-	88%	90%	87%	88%	89%
(At my place of study) I am able to find a quiet place to work when I need to.	-	71%	77%	70%	76%	61%
(At my place of study) I am able to find a place to work with my study group when I need to.	-	69%	79%	63%	63%	71%

	AU 14	AU 17	AR	BSS	HE	ST
I am generally happy with the physical environment at my place of study.	72%	83%	83%	83%	83%	82%
Feedback ('Strongly agree' + 'Mostly agree')						
The teachers spend time discussing with us what characterises a good assignment.	-	62%	68%	61%	52%	62%
The possibilities for receiving feedback regarding my academic performance at exams are good.	-	36%	42%	35%	18%	43%
It is very difficult to know whether I'm doing well and learning what is required.	-	48%	47%	54%	50%	37%
When I get feedback on my academic work, it is easy for me to see how to improve my ways of learning and studying.	-	50%	52%	45%	40%	61%

CHAPTER 2.
DATA COLLECTED AND METH-OD

Chapter 2 describes the methodology applied to produce the reports. This includes an account of the development of the questionnaire, the collection of data, response rates, anonymity concerns and statistical uncertainty. Prior to this, an account is given of the possibility of comparing the results from this survey with the results from previous study environment surveys at Aarhus University.

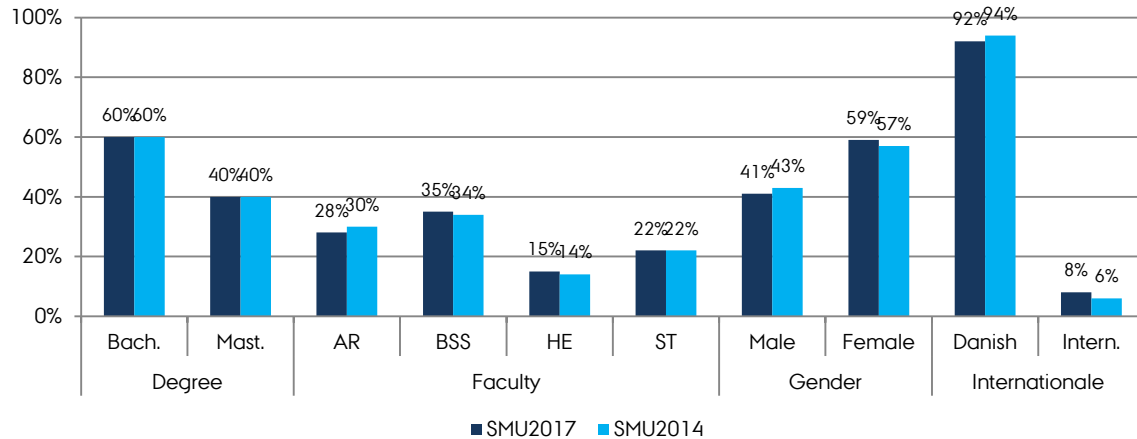## COMPARISON OF STUDY ENVIRONMENT SURVEY 2017 AND STUDY ENVIRONMENT SURVEY 2014

In cases where both the phrasing of questions and the response categories are unchanged since the last survey in 2014, it will be natural to compare, and therefore results from 2014 are shown in this report, where possible. Nevertheless, readers are urged to exercise caution when interpreting any developments over time, as it is uncertain what the causes may be. Readers should therefore pay particular attention to the following differences between Study Environment Survey 2017 and Study Environment Survey 2014 which are likely to affect any changes over time:

a. Time of data collection: In 2014 and 2011, data were collected in the spring semester, whereas the data for the Study Environment Survey 2017 were collected in the autumn semester. With regard to the 2017 survey, this means that it must be assumed that more first-year students have completed the questionnaire as any students who drop out often do so in the first semester. Similarly, unlike the first-year students in the 2014 survey, the first-year students in this year's survey had not yet done any exams at the time of collecting the data.

b. Different populations: Since 2014, new students have naturally been enrolled, and others have graduated, and the student population is therefore not the same. Figure 2.1 below shows a comparison of sampling characteristics for 2014 and 2017.

c. External impacts: When interpreting the differences over time, account must be taken of the fact that both internal and external events

may have had an impact. Examples of external events include the study progress reform adopted by the Danish parliament, the degree programme resizing initiative etc.

Figure 2.1. Analysis of sampling population, Study Environment Survey 2017 vs Study Environment Survey 2014

Note: The columns show the relative sizes of each group (e.g. undergraduate students) in the samples for the Study Environment Survey 2017 and the Study Environment Survey 2014.

QUESTIONNAIRE AND CONSULTATION PROCESS

Prior to the collection of data, the themes in the questionnaire were first discussed by the heads of studies and student representatives at a meeting in the directors of studies forum on 25 May 2016. Subsequently, the questionnaire was sent to the relevant boards of studies and directors of studies for consultation. The questionnaire was then revised. The final revisions of the questionnaire were approved at a Committee on Education meeting on 20 September 2016. The full wording of the questionnaire can be found on the survey website.

DATA COLLECTION AND REPRESENTATIVITY

Data were collected between 24 October 2016 and 25 November 2016. All students were sent an email inviting them to participate in the survey via a link. To draw as much attention to the survey as possible, it was promoted on the social media, on the university's website, in newsletters and on information screens. In addition, it was announced that students completing the questionnaire would be entered in a prize draw to take place after the end of the data collection period. Figure 2.2 shows the development in the number of responses received as well as the total response rate.

Figure 2.2. Overview of data collection
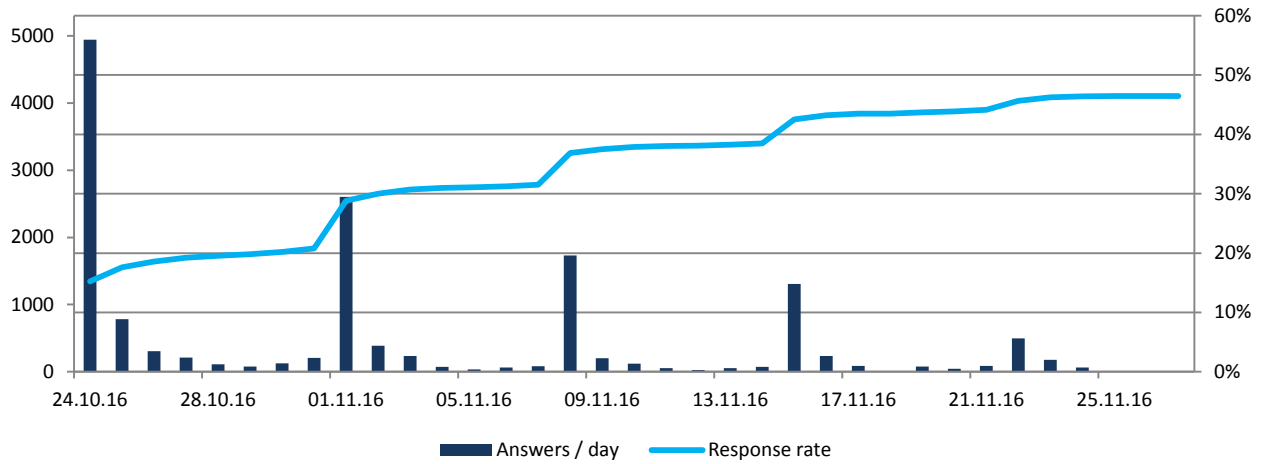
Note: The columns show the number of responses received per day, while the graph shows the development in the total response rate.

At the end of the data collection period, 15,491 valid responses had been collected, equating to a response rate of 46. In comparison, the response rate was 40 in 2014 and 37 in 2011. The highest response rate was achieved at HE, where 57% of the students chose to participate in the survey.

Table 2.1. Response rates for Study Environment Survey 2017

	%	N
AU	**46%**	**15,491**
AR	42%	4,390
BSS	42%	5,354
HE	57%	2,384
ST	51%	3,363

N is the number of responses.

The group of students who chose to contribute their response to the Study Environment Survey 2017 was compared with the population (i.e. the total population of full-time students who at the time of collecting the data were registered as being active). The results are presented in Figure 2.3.

17

Figure 2.3. Analysis of representativity, sample versus population
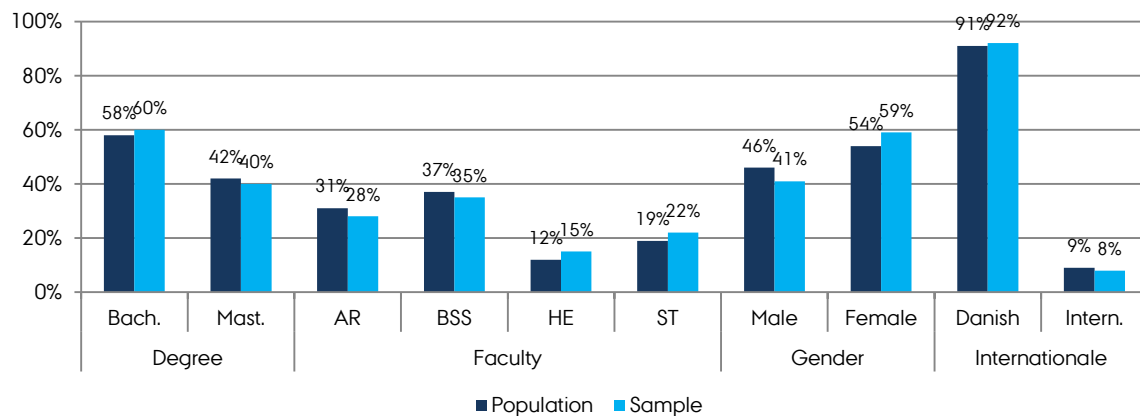
Note: The columns show the size of each group (e.g. undergraduate students) relative to the entire population of students at Aarhus University and relative to the group of students who chose to contribute to the Study Environment Survey 2017 (valid responses).

CALCULATION OF DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES

The analyses in this report are primarily descriptive. Even though the answers to most of the questions were based on five-point Likert scales, for the sake of clarity it has been necessary – as is common practice when reporting survey data – to collapse some of the response categories. For example, for many of the questions, figures are reported for the 'Strongly agree' + 'Mostly agree' response categories combined. This means that the remaining respondents have stated that they 'strongly disagree', 'mostly disagree' or 'neither agree nor disagree'. In the notes for each table, it is clearly stated what the percentages cover, and what the remaining percentages up to 100% cover.

A special challenge is posed by questions where no answer is given or where the respondents have ticked 'Unsure/Not applicable'. As most of the analyses are purely descriptive, no attempt has been made to replace missing answers with the averages from the sample or any other estimates. As a general rule, the missing answers are therefore not included in the analyses. Thus, the missing answers are *not* included in the calculation of the percentage distributions for the other (valid) response categories. For example, if 47% indicated that they agree with a statement, and 47% indicated that they 'strongly disagree' or 'mostly disagree', and 6% did not provide a response or stated that it was not possible for them to answer the question, then the final analysis will show that 50% of the students who have submitted a valid answer agree.

This analytical construct can be problematic in situations where the share of missing responses can be described as large. For this reason, a note has been inserted to explicitly make the reader aware of this for questions where the

share of missing answers is more than 10%. For example, many students ticked 'Unsure/Not applicable' when asked whether they were registered for exams, which is only natural as the sample includes many first-year students who at the time of collecting the data had not yet done any exams. A note points out that a significant proportion of the students were not able to answer the question. It is possible to request additional descriptive analyses from the analysis group for those interested in seeing the response rate calculations inclusive of missing answers (the raw percentage distributions).

ANONYMITY CONCERNS

All students have been promised that the results will be reported in such a way that it will not be possible to identify individual respondents. In practice, it means that reports will not be prepared for groups of less than ten students. For questions about bullying and harassment, the limit is set at 20 students, and for questions about discrimination, the limit is set at 50.

STATISTICAL UNCERTAINTY

All figures in this report are associated with statistical uncertainty. The precise degree of statistical uncertainty depends on a number of factors, and it is therefore difficult to generalise about the statistical uncertainty of the figures in this and other reports. The degree of statistical uncertainty depends, among other things, on the proportion of respondents (π), the number of responses (n), the population size (N) as well as confidence level (defined here as 95%) (see Figure 2.4.). For example, the statistical uncertainty associated with the result that 20% (π) of the students surveyed at Aarhus University experience strong stress-related symptoms leads to a statistical uncertainty of approx. 0.5 percentage points (response rate = 46, n = 15,491).
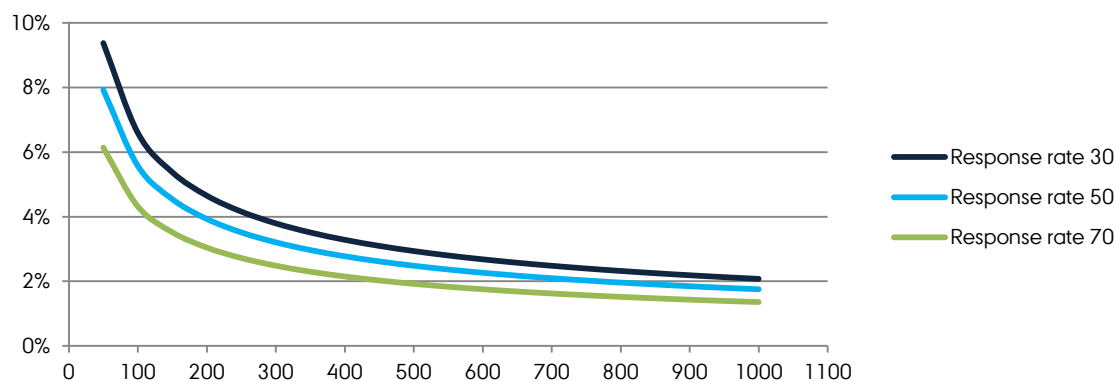
Figure 2.4. Calculation of statistical uncertainty

$$\pm z * standard\ error * FPC\ factor$$

$$\pm\,1{,}96 * \sqrt{\frac{\hat{\pi}(1-\hat{\pi})}{n}} * \sqrt{\frac{N-n}{N-1}}$$

Figure 2.5 shows the statistical uncertainty as a function of the size of the degree programme given different response rates.

Figure 2.5. Statistical uncertainty as a function of the response rate and the size of the degree programme

Note: The X axis shows the size of the degree programme. The Y axis shows the statistical uncertainty as a function of the size of the degree programme given different response rates.

COMMENTS

As part of the survey, the students were invited to write comments at the end of the questionnaire. A total of 3,941 students out of 15,491 wrote comments. The comments, which varied in length, came to a total of 344 pages. In so far as the students have consented, by ticking a box, to the comments being passed on to the relevant boards of studies, this will be done. Furthermore, the comments have been analysed in Chapter 3 and Chapter 5 of this report.

CHAPTER 3.
WELL-BEING AND STRESS

Since the first study environment survey at Aarhus University (2007), two statements have operationalised the concept of well-being: 'In general, I feel comfortable as a student here' and 'I am generally satisfied with my studies'. The statement about comfortableness is designed to establish the *immediate* feeling of well-being of students and is therefore the first question about well-being in the questionnaire. The statement about satisfaction implies an *assessment* of a wide range of factors in the study environment, and therefore, the students have been asked to consider this statement at the end of the questionnaire (after having answered the other questions about the physical facilities, feedback, teaching staff, fellow students etc.).

Stress is also included in this chapter because stress is often associated with lack of well-being. However, asking questions about stress is difficult as the term tends to be applied very broadly these days; from stress being used synonymously with being very busy to stress referring to a potentially life-threatening condition. In Aarhus University's study environment surveys, questions are therefore deliberately being asked about the incidence of 'strong stress-related symptoms', and a note has deliberately been inserted to explain what is meant by such symptoms.

Table 3.1 shows the distribution of responses as regards well-being in the form of comfortableness and satisfaction.

Table 3.1. Students' experience of comfortableness and satisfaction

	AU	AR	BSS	HE	ST
In general, I feel comfortable as a student here.	87%	85%	85%	90%	89%
In general, I feel comfortable as a student here … (2014)	88%	86%	87%	92%	90%
In general, I feel comfortable as a student here … (2011)	86%	84%	86%	90%	89%
I am generally satisfied with my studies.	88%	86%	87%	92%	90%
I am generally satisfied … (2014)	87%	85%	85%	92%	88%
I would recommend my programme of study at Aarhus University to others.	88%	86%	87%	91%	89%

I would recommend ... (2014)				85%	84%	83%	91%	88%

Note: The figures show the proportion of respondents who have ticked 'Strongly agree' + 'Mostly agree'. The rest of the students 'neither agree nor disagree', 'mostly disagree' or 'strongly disagree'. The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.

87% of the students surveyed indicate that they generally feel comfortable with their study environment. 5% state that they disagree with the statement. These figures are very close to the figures from similar surveys in 2014 and 2011 (Figure 3.1).

Correlating closely with the responses to the statement about comfortableness, 88% of the students surveyed indicate that they are generally satisfied with their studies. 4% 'strongly disagree' or 'mostly disagree' with the statement. This result is also very similar to the result from the Study Environment Survey 2014 (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1. Development in comfortableness and satisfaction over time
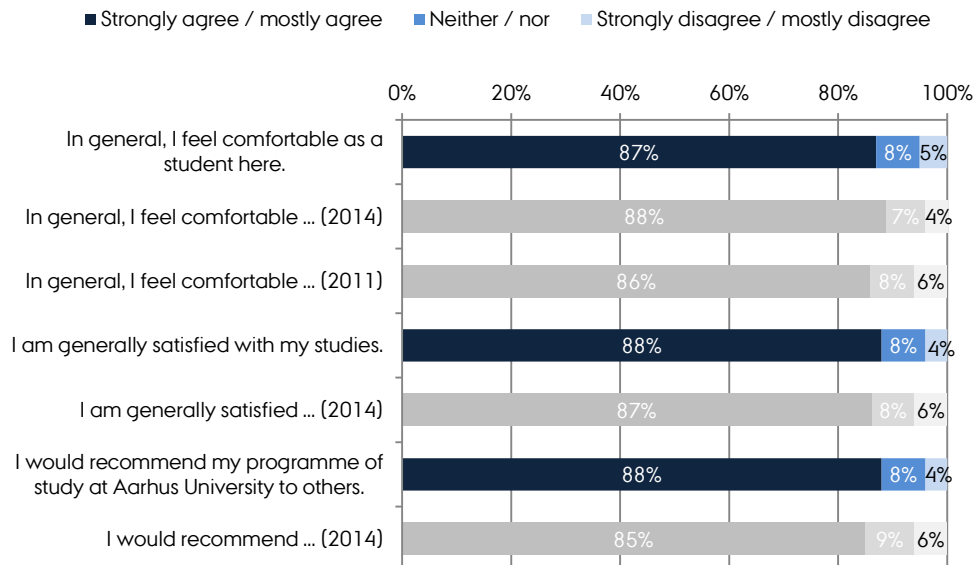
Note: The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.

Finally, 88% of the students state that they would recommend their degree programme at Aarhus University to others. 4% would not recommend their degree programme to others.

The students were asked to indicate whether they have experienced strong stress-related symptoms, both in connection with their daily studies and in connection with exams. The distribution of responses is shown in Table 3.2 below.

One in five students, 20%, state that they 'often' or 'very often' experience strong stress-related symptoms in connection with their daily studies. 29% state that they 'sometimes' experience severe stress-related symptoms in

connection with their daily studies, while half of the students, 52%, only 'sometimes', 'rarely' or 'very rarely' experience strong stress-related symptoms in connection with their daily studies (Figure 3.2). Incidence of strong stress-related symptoms appear to be equally prevalent at the four faculties (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2. Strong stress-related symptoms

	AU	AR	BSS	HE	ST
Have you experienced strong stress-related symptoms* in connection with your daily studies?	20%	21%	19%	18%	20%
Have you experienced strong stress-related symptoms … (2014)	17%	17%	17%	16%	17%
Have you experienced strong stress-related symptoms … (2011)	11%	12%	10%	8%	13%
Have you experienced strong stress-related symptoms* in connection with your studies? (During examination periods)	38%	40%	38%	38%	37%
Have you experienced strong stress-related symptoms … (2014)	34%	34%	34%	36%	32%
Have you experienced strong stress-related symptoms … (2011)	32%	34%	31%	37%	26%

Note: The figures show the proportion who have ticked 'Very often' or 'Often'. The remainder have ticked 'Sometimes', 'Rarely' or 'Very rarely'. The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.
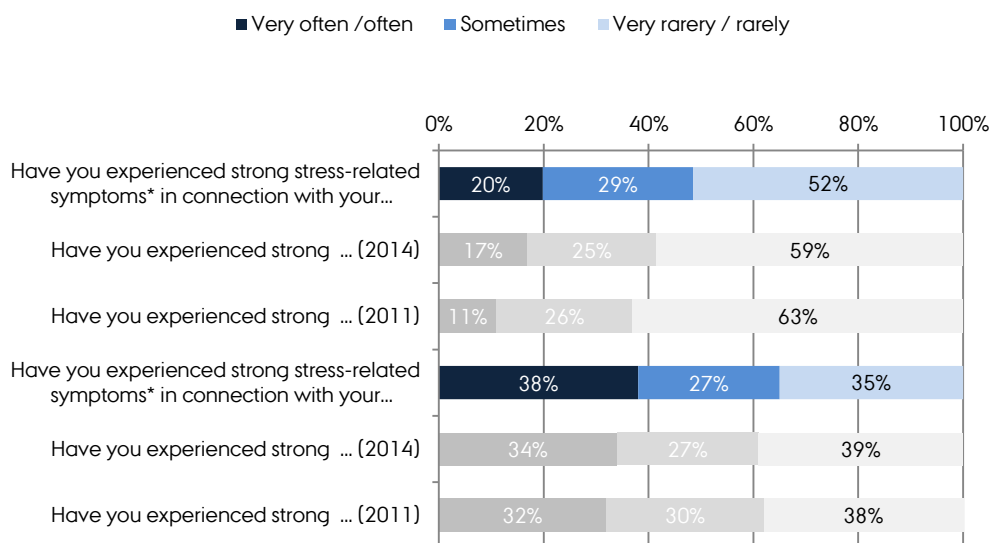Note (*) '*Strong stress-related symptoms may be: solitude irregular heart beat, stomach-ache, muscular tension, sadness, restlessness, relaxation problems, headaches, anxiety, insomnia.'

As the question about stress appears in its original form, it is possible to compare with the results from the study environment surveys in 2011 and 2014. From Figure 3.2 and Table 3.2, it can be seen that since 2011 there has been almost a doubling of the number of students who 'often' or 'very often' feel strong stress-related symptoms in connection with their daily studies, from 11% in 2011 to 17% in 2014 to 20% in 2017.

As regards feelings of stress during exam periods, there has been an increase of 6 percentage points in the proportion of students who 'often' or 'very often' experience strong stress-related symptoms. From 32% in 2011 and 34% in 2014 to 38% in 2017.

Figure 3.2. Strong stress-related symptoms

■ Very often /often ■ Sometimes ■ Very rarery / rarely

Note: The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.
Note (*) '*Strong stress-related symptoms may be: solitude irregular heart beat, stomach-ache, muscular tension, sadness, restlessness, relaxation problems, headaches, anxiety, insomnia.'

In the comments field at the end of the questionnaire, many students have written about stress. The following quotes have been selected as being representative of the themes which many students have touched upon. The quotes have been lightly edited where this was necessary for clarification or to ensure anonymity.

Some of the comments about stress relate to exams. The comments typically concern lack of knowledge about the dates of exams and, especially for ST, the number of exams.

> *I think it's very stressful that we get examination plans late (a maximum of two weeks prior to the exam period). This makes it very hard for students to plan their reading.* (Student from ST)

> *On the degree programme in [subject], the academic year is not organised into semesters, but into quarters, which is very stressful. That is perhaps the only negative thing I have to say about my degree programme.* (Student from ST)

Another type of comment about stress relates to the pressure of work students experience.

> *I find the study environment very overwhelming in terms of all the reading there is to do and the high level of complexity of it. For me, it has meant that I've felt incredibly stressed and under pressure due to my bad conscience.* (Student from BSS)

24

In many comments, stress is associated with a desire to do well. The desire to do well is fuelled both by the students themselves, but also – judging by the comments – by fellow students and in some cases the surroundings. In many of the comments describing an experience of stress associated with a desire to do well, students thus also mention the feeling of having to compete with their fellow students, not least from the point of view of future career prospects. The following comments are illustrative:

> *During my time at university, I have observed an increase in the incidence of stress among my fellow students. (…) This is due, among other things, to the constant pressures lurking just beneath the surface when you are a student. It no longer 'suffices' to read all the set reading and prepare well for lectures and group meetings. These days, you need top marks, a job which is relevant to your studies and on top of that voluntary work which is also relevant to your studies. If you cannot manage that, you might as well forget about it and wave goodbye to finding a relevant job once you graduate. At least that's the widespread feeling at the moment among my friends and acquaintances, and it is a feeling which I recognise myself.* (Student from AR)

> *I believe that both teachers and students play a role in creating a stressful study environment which is making many students feel that they are not good enough. This is due, in particular, to the rhetoric. I'd like to mention, for example, the very strong focus on finding a student job which is relevant to your studies, which many students have neither the time nor the energy to do.* (Student from BSS)

> *People demand a lot of themselves and thereby also of each other. There is a strong tendency to whip up an atmosphere of collective stress, especially during exam periods on the BSc programme.* (Student from HE)

A small number of comments also mention that stress may be a bit of a taboo.

> *It's too much of a rat race, and there are far too many taboos (e.g. if you feel you are having a hard time, or that something is difficult). There are so many people with stress-related symptoms but who do not dare say anything about it because you are expected to be some superhuman who can handle everything. It's a very unpleasant environment to be in on a daily basis.* (Student from ST)

> *I know several people who see stress symptoms as a sign of weakness, and to some extent I suppose I do too, and this means that stress is ignored.* (Student from BSS)

Finally, the study progress reform is mentioned in many of the comments about stress.

> *The study progress reform and the media rhetoric about students have killed my enthusiasm for my studies. You get a clear sense that you just*

have to get through university as quickly as possible. (...) I do my best, but all I hear all the time is that I'm lazy and spoilt. I'm actually quite ambitious, and during most of my time at university, I've had jobs on the side. (Student from AR)

Even though I haven't had to redo any subjects so far, it stresses me a lot knowing that it is no longer possible due to the study progress reform. Generally, doing a degree programme which you have to put a lot of hours into, with the reform breathing down your neck at all hours is stressful. (Student from ST)

CHAPTER 4.
DEGREE PROGRAMME AND TEACHING STAFF

Previous surveys of the study environment at Aarhus University have shown that the students' relationship with the academic environment is important for student well-being. In Study Environment Survey 2017, the students' relationship with the academic environment has been surveyed both by asking about the student's contact with teaching staff at their place of study, and by asking the students about their interest and involvement in courses as well as their degree programme.

Student contact with teaching staff has been surveyed through three questions. The first question asks whether the teachers are visible outside the classrooms. 48% of the students surveyed report that they 'often' see teachers outside the actual teaching situation. Conversely, 29% of the students surveyed do not find that the teachers are 'often' seen outside the classrooms (Figure 4.1). Across the faculties, the students at ST are the ones who most frequently (69%) see their teachers in the corridors, communal areas and canteens. At BSS and HE, the proportion of students who see their teachers outside the classrooms is 37%.

Table 4.1. Contact with teaching staff

	AU	AR	BSS	HE	ST
Teachers are available when I contact them.	84%	86%	82%	77%	89%
The teachers that I have been in contact with generally seem interested in the students.	87%	89%	85%	84%	91%
The teachers that I have been in contact with ... (2014)	81%	85%	73%	80%	87%
The teachers that I have been in contact with ... (2011)	80%	84%	77%	79%	86%
At my place of study, you often see teachers outside the classrooms (e.g. in corridors, hallways or in the canteen)	48%	51%	37%	37%	69%
At my place of study, you often see teachers out-	43%	43%	33%	28%	69%

Note: The figures show the proportion who ticked 'Strongly agree' or 'Mostly agree'. The rest of the students 'neither agree nor disagree', 'mostly disagree' or 'strongly disagree'. The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.

The visibility of the teaching staff is one thing, another is their availability when contacted by students, while a third question concerns the friendliness of the teachers once contact is established. 84% of the students find that the teachers are available when they contact them, and 87% find that the teachers with whom they have been in contact generally seem interested in the students.

Figure 4.1. Contact with teaching staff
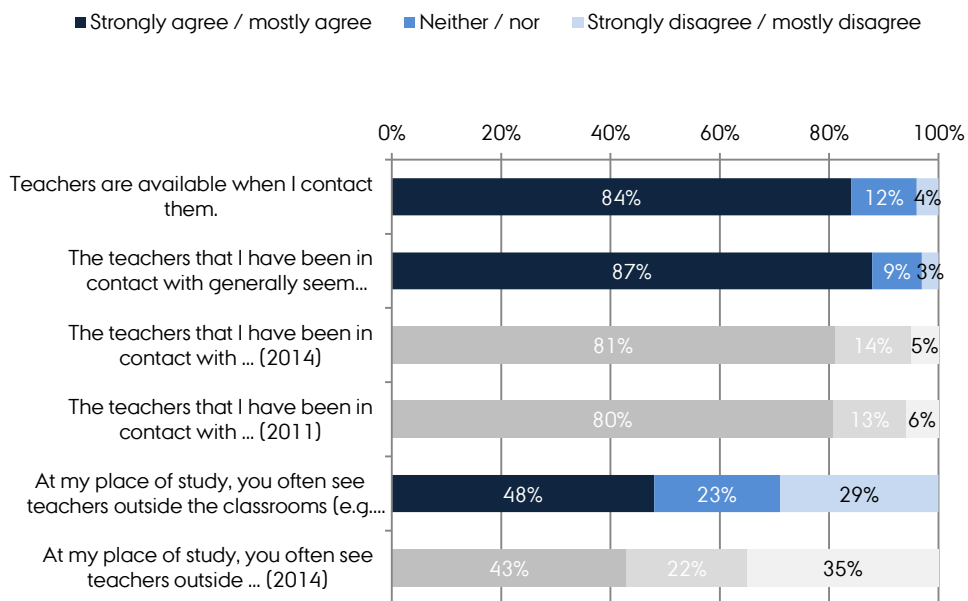
Note: The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.

Two questions concern the students' relationship with and interest in their degree programme in the form of the individual subjects/courses as well as their degree programme as a whole. 87% of the students feel that the courses they do are courses which they feel like involving themselves in, and 90% indicate that they are looking forward to leaving university and using everything they have learnt.

Table 4.2. Students' relationship with their degree programme

	AU	AR	BSS	HE	ST
The courses I do are courses which I feel like involving myself in.	87%	86%	85%	90%	88%
I am satisfied with the number and range of academic activities.	76%	77%	76%	82%	73%
I am satisfied with the number and range of academic ... (2014)	74%	73%	74%	83%	71%
I am greatly looking forward to leaving university and using everything that I have learnt.	90%	86%	91%	94%	90%
My degree programme contributes to my academic well-being.	83%	82%	81%	86%	87%

Note: The figures show the proportion who ticked 'Strongly agree' or 'Mostly agree'. The rest of the students 'neither agree nor disagree', 'mostly disagree' or 'strongly disagree'. The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.

76% of the students surveyed are satisfied with the number and range of academic activities, while 7% are not satisfied with the offering of academic activities (see Figure 4.2). 83% feel that their degree programme contributes to their academic well-being.

Figure 4.2. Students' relationship with their degree programme
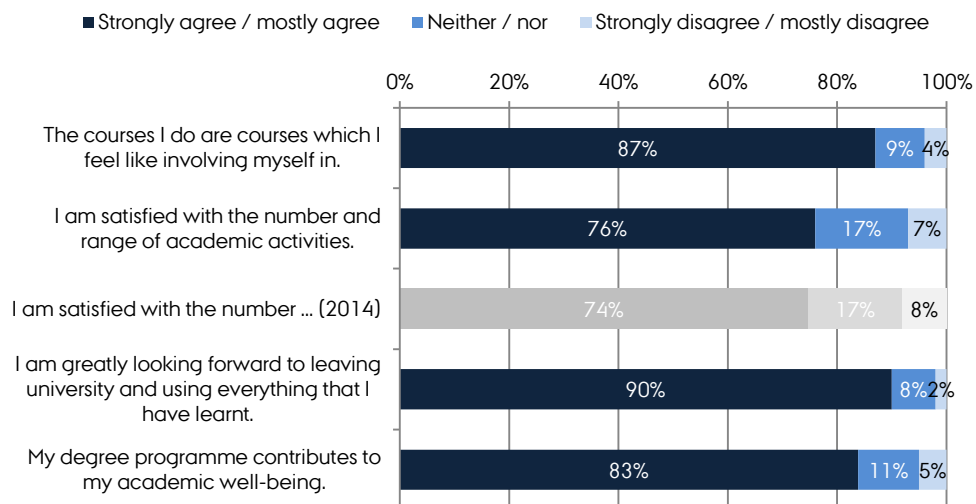
Note: The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.

CHAPTER 5.
FELLOW STUDENTS AND LONELINESS

Relations among students are important for the study environment as both a social and academic community. As part of the study environment survey, the students were asked to consider nine statements describing various aspects of the social study environment. One question asks whether the students feel that there are possibilities for social interaction with their fellow students. 80% of the respondents feel that the possibilities for social interaction with their fellow students are good. 8% do not feel that the possibilities for social interaction with other students are good. 71% of the students are satisfied with the number and range of social activities, while 10% state that they are not satisfied with what is on offer (Figure 5.1).

Table 5.1. Contact with fellow students

	AU	AR	BSS	HE	ST
I can receive help and support from my fellow students when I need it.	87%	85%	84%	92%	91%
I can receive help and support from my fellow students … (2014)	85%	84%	81%	87%	89%
Academically, I get a lot out of talking to other students.	86%	84%	84%	92%	90%
I find that competition among students is fierce.	24%	16%	36%	22%	19%
The possibilities for social contact with my fellow students are good.	80%	77%	78%	85%	85%
The possibilities for social contact are good … (2014)	76%	70%	74%	85%	82%
I am satisfied with the number and range of social activities.	71%	67%	71%	79%	69%
I am satisfied with the number and range of social activities (2014)	70%	61%	72%	79%	73%
My degree programme helps me to thrive socially.	68%	64%	65%	75%	71%

Note: The figures show the proportion who ticked 'Strongly agree' or 'Mostly agree'. The rest of the students 'neither agree nor disagree', 'mostly disagree' or 'strongly disagree'. The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.

Another aspect of the social study environment concerns the actual nature of the contact between the students. 87% of the respondents feel that they can receive help and support from their fellow students when they need it, and 86% find that talking to other students is academically rewarding. However, some of the students feel that competition among the students is fierce. For AU as a whole, 24% feel that competition among the students is fierce. At BSS, 36% of the students feel that competition among the students is fierce (Table 5.1).

Figure 5.1. Contact with fellow students
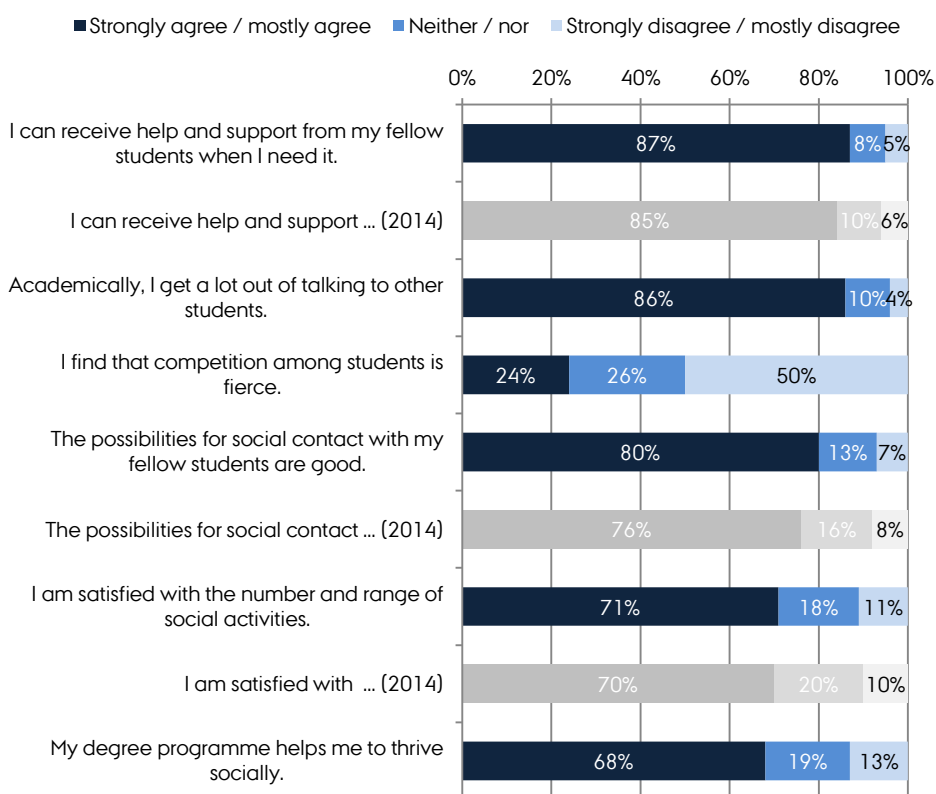
Note: The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.

For many students, being part of a study group or having a study buddy are important sources of academic support and social interaction. 60% of the students surveyed state that they are 'often' or 'very often' part of a study group (or have a study buddy) outside of exam periods (Table 5.2). 23% are 'sometimes', 'rarely' or 'very rarely' part of a study group. The incentive to be part of a study group or work with a study buddy seems to increase in the run-up to the exams, where 65% of the students surveyed are 'often' or 'very often' part of a study group (Figure 5.2).

Table 5.2. Study groups

	AU	AR	BSS	HE	ST
Are you part of a study group or do you have a study buddy outside of examination periods?	60%	58%	63%	66%	55%
Are you part of a study group … (2014)	55%	53%	55%	64%	51%
Are you part of a study group … (2011)	45%	43%	46%	54%	43%
Are you part of a study group or do you have a study buddy during examination periods?	65%	57%	67%	80%	64%
Are you part of a study group … (2014)	62%	53%	62%	79%	63%
Are you part of a study group … (2011)	57%	49%	55%	82%	58%

Note: The figures show the proportion who have ticked 'Very often' or 'Often'. The remainder have ticked 'Sometimes', 'Rarely' or 'Very rarely'. The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.

The question about study group membership has been asked since the first study environment survey, and it is therefore possible to follow the development in study group membership. The trend is that more and more students elect to work in study groups or with study buddies, and this trend – the increase in the use of study groups – is most apparent when it comes to working in study groups in connection with the daily studies. In 2011, 45% of the students surveyed were 'often' or 'very often' part of a study group in connection with their daily studies, in 2014 the figure was 55%, and in 2017, the figure is 60%. This equates to an increase of 15 percentage points.

Figure 5.2. Study groups
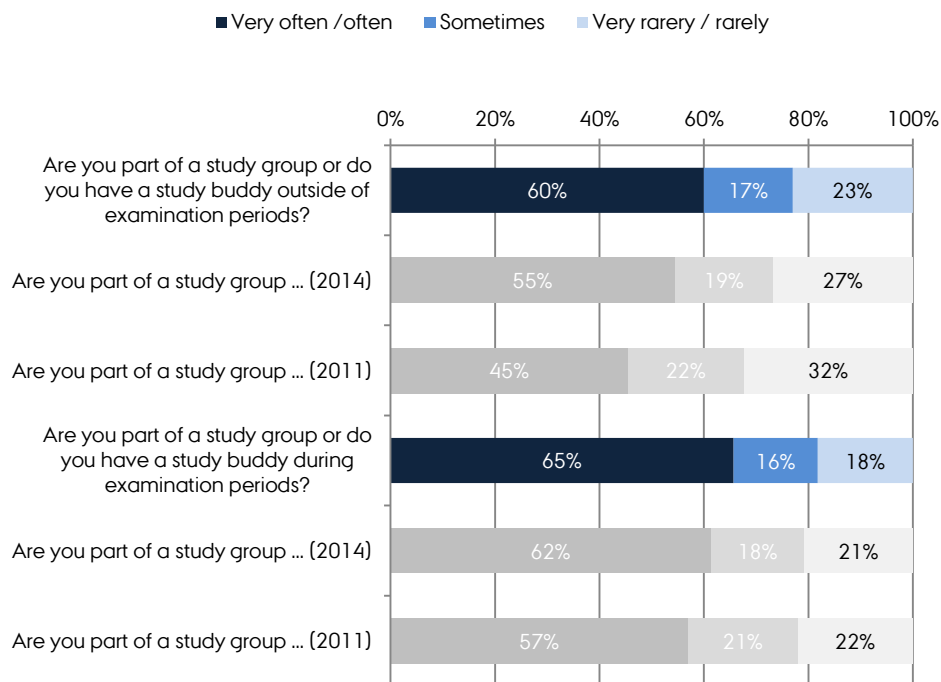
Note: The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.

13% of the students surveyed 'often' or 'very often' feel lonely in connection with their daily studies (Table 5.3 and Figure 5.3.). 24% 'sometimes' feel lonely, and 63% only 'rarely' or 'very rarely' feel lonely in connection with their daily studies.

Table 5.3. Loneliness

	AU	AR	BSS	HE	ST
How often do you feel lonely in connection with your daily studies?	13%	15%	14%	10%	10%
How often do you feel lonely … (2014)	12%	13%	15%	8%	11%
How often do you feel lonely … (2011)	9%	10%	9%	6%	7%

Note: The figures show the proportion who have ticked 'Very often' or 'Often'. The remainder have ticked 'Sometimes', 'Rarely' or 'Very rarely'. The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.

Figure 5.3. Loneliness
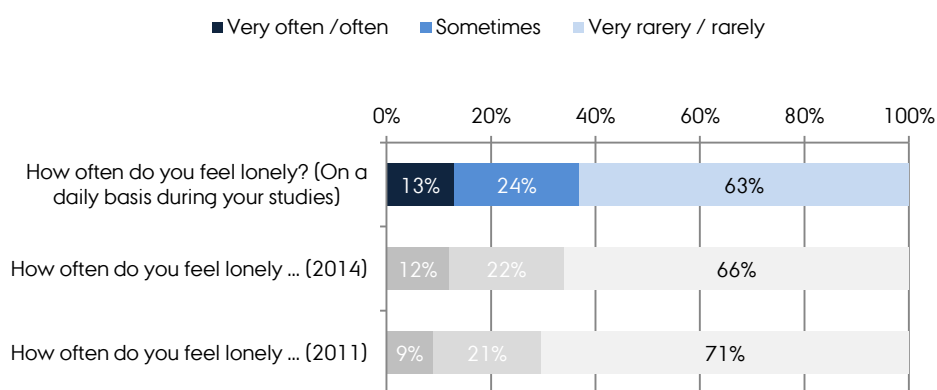
Note: The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.

In addition to the descriptive analysis, an analysis was conducted in order to identify the relation between the experience of the fierce competition on the one hand and, on the other hand, comfortableness, stress, support from fellow students and not feeling lonely. The result is shown in Figure 5.4 below.

Figure 5.4. The correlation between fierce competition and a feeling of comfortableness, stress, support, and loneliness
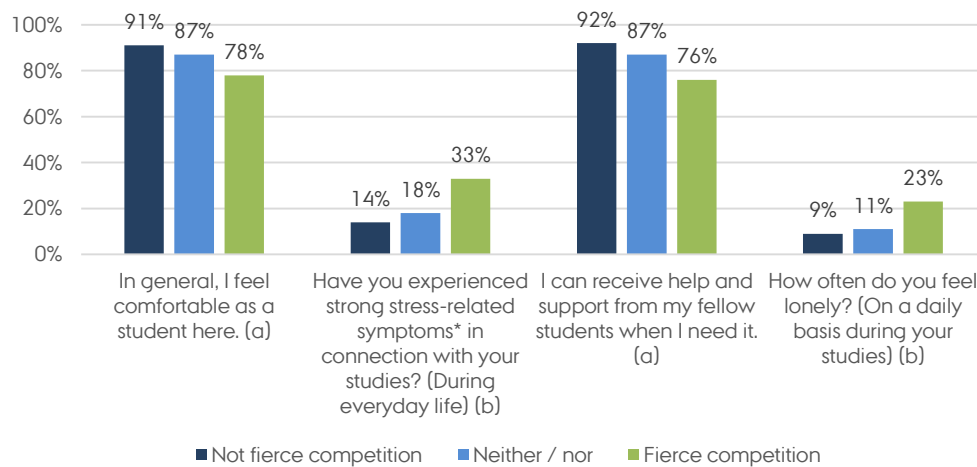
Wording of the question: 'I find that competition among students is fierce.'
Note: 'Fierce competition' = respondents who have ticked 'Strongly agree' or 'Mostly agree' for the above statement. 'Not fierce competition' = respondents who have ticked 'Strongly disagree' or 'Mostly disagree' for the above statement. 'Neither/nor' = respondents who have ticked 'Neither/nor' for the above statements.
Note a: The figures show the proportion who ticked 'Strongly agree' or 'Mostly agree'. The rest of the students 'neither agree nor disagree', 'mostly disagree' or 'strongly disagree'. The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.
Note b: The figures show the proportion who have ticked 'Very often' or 'Often'. The remainder have ticked 'Sometimes', 'Rarely' or 'Very rarely'. The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.

Figure 5.4 shows that students who experience fierce competition feel less comfortable as students, and they often experience strong stress-related symptoms. They are less likely to feel that they can receive help and support from their fellow students, and they are more likely to feel lonely.

The comments also provide an insight into the internal competition experienced by some of the students surveyed. The following quotes have been selected as been representative of the statements which touch upon fierce competition. Some of the quotes show what some students see as the reason for the competition, i.e. the desire to do well on the degree programme (in the form of marks) and the desire to do well in the future job market. The following two quotes are examples of this:

> There is A LOT OF competition internally among the students on the degree programme, which, of course and among other things, is because our marks must comply with a normal distribution pattern, which means that we are in direct competition with each other. This stresses people, and sometimes also has a bearing on the social life on the degree programme. (Student from BSS)

> From day one you hear stories from other students about how important it is that you find a student job. Marks are crucial, and fierce competition is to be expected. This creates an environment in the class-

room where competition plays a bigger and bigger role together with the feeling of being constantly assessed. (Student from BSS)

As this is a small degree programme, it would be great if specific help was available for those wanting to find a study-related job. I feel that the atmosphere among my fellow students is strained. (...) The teachers are good, but the other students are basically egotistic and unwilling to help each other as competition is fierce for a small number of jobs. (Student from AR)

There is much talk about how important it is to upgrade your qualifications and compete with other doctors after graduation. (Student from HE)

Some comments describe how the competition sometimes gets in the way of personal well-being, and also the social interaction with fellow students.

The psychosocial study environment is leaving quite a lot to be desired. There is a bad tone among the students, and the environment is highly competitive and prestige-oriented. You easily end up feeling inadequate when you have to compete academically, hold down a relevant student job and take part in all the social events on offer to be part of the social life. It is like you have to compete with your fellow students on all three parameters. (Student from BSS)

My degree programme is highly competitive, which means that as students we are not very good at helping each other. So if you have a question, you cannot always get an answer from your fellow students; instead, you have to contact the lecturers or teachers. And if you do ask a fellow student, sometimes what you get are slightly condescending comments/answers. (Student from BSS)

CHAPTER 6.
PHYSICAL STUDY ENVIRONMENT

In connection with the survey, the students were asked a total of seven questions about the physical study environment. At the core of this battery of questions are four questions centring on the place of study as a framework for both social and academic interaction. In addition, two questions are asked about the functioning of the technical solutions and the support available in a digital space, including the wireless internet and Blackboard. Finally, the students were asked to indicate their general level of satisfaction with the physical environment. The results are shown in Table 6.1. below.

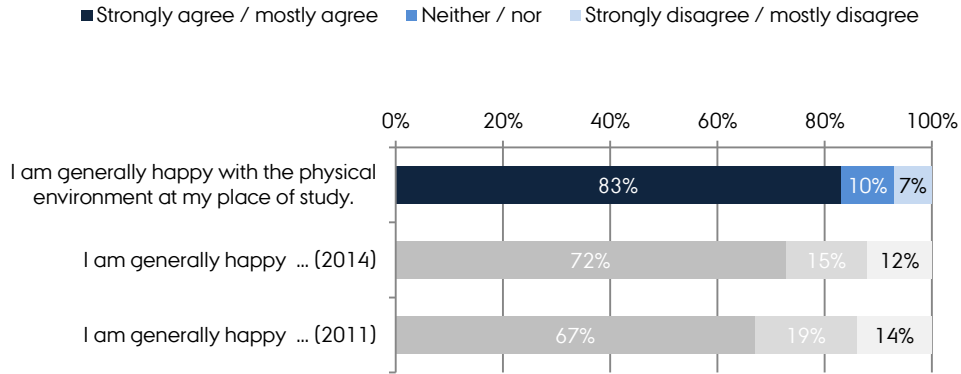**Table 6.1. General satisfaction with the physical study environment**

	AU	AR	BSS	HE	ST
I am generally happy with the physical environment at my place of study.	83%	83%	83%	83%	82%
I am generally happy … (2014)	72%	71%	73%	73%	72%
I am generally happy … (2011)	67%	62%	66%	68%	76%

Note: The figures show the proportion who ticked 'Strongly agree' or 'Mostly agree'. The rest of the students 'neither agree nor disagree', 'mostly disagree' or 'strongly disagree'. The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.

The majority of the students surveyed (83%) are generally happy with the physical environment at their place of study, while 7% indicate that they are unhappy with the physical environment. The level of satisfaction is remarkably similar across the four faculties.

The question about satisfaction with the physical environment was also asked in 2014 and in 2011, and as the phrasing of the question and response categories are the same, it is possible to follow the development over time (see Figure 6.1). It can be seen that the proportion of students who are happy with the physical environment at their place of study is up 16 percentage points, from 67% in 2011, and 72% in 2014 to 83% in 2017.

Figure 6.1. General satisfaction with the physical study environment

■ Strongly agree / mostly agree   ■ Neither / nor   ■ Strongly disagree / mostly disagree

I am generally happy with the physical environment at my place of study.	83% 10% 7%	
I am generally happy … (2014)	72% 15% 12%	
I am generally happy … (2011)	67% 19% 14%	

Note: The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.

A high proportion of the respondents (94%) find that there is access to the university at the times when they need it. Also, a high proportion, 88%, find that there are places to meet with fellow students at their place of study.

**Table 6.2. Possibilities for social interaction. 'At my educational institution …'**

	AU	AR	BSS	HE	ST
… there is access to the university at the times I need it.	94%	93%	95%	93%	94%
… there are places to meet with fellow students.	88%	90%	87%	88%	89%
I am able to find a quiet place to work when I need to.	71%	77%	70%	76%	61%
I am able to find a place to work with my study group when I need to.	69%	79%	63%	63%	71%

Note: The figures show the proportion who ticked 'Strongly agree' or 'Mostly agree'. The rest of the students 'neither agree nor disagree', 'mostly disagree' or 'strongly disagree'. The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.

As regards places to be in connection with the academic coursework, 71% of the students surveyed indicate that they are able to find a quiet place to work when they need to. On the other hand, 18% say that they are not able to find a quiet place to work when they need to (Figure 6.2).

When it comes to working in study groups, 69% state that they are able to find places to work with their group when they need to. 19% find that at their place of study there is nowhere to sit down and work with their study group when they need to.

Figure 6.2. Possibilities for social interaction. 'At my educational institution …'
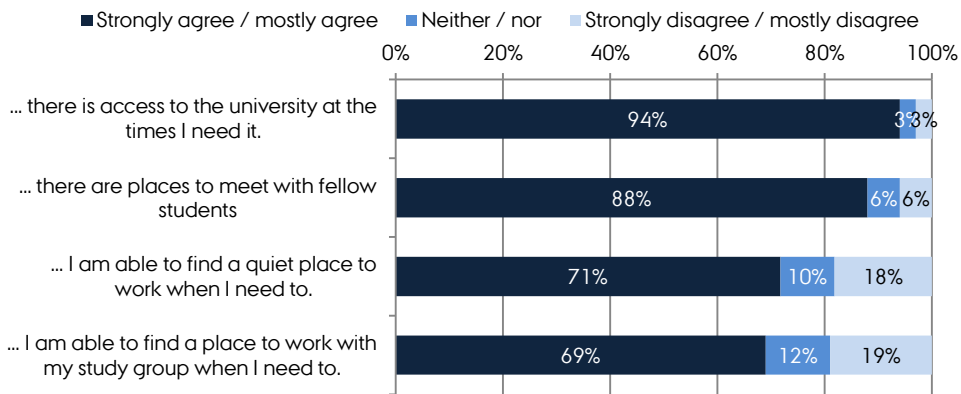
Note: The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.

Finally, the students were asked about their experiences with the technical solutions, meaning the wireless internet, WAYF, printers, computers, Blackboard etc. The result is shown in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3. Technical solutions. 'At my educational institution …'

	AU	AR	BSS	HE	ST
… the technical solutions work when I need them.	75%	68%	81%	74%	74%
… I can get the help and support I need when I cannot get the technical solutions to work.	69%	61%	76%	73%	64%

Note: The figures show the proportion who ticked 'Strongly agree' or 'Mostly agree'. The rest of the students 'neither agree nor disagree', 'mostly disagree' or 'strongly disagree'. The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.
Note: Technical solutions were defined as: 'Wireless internet, WAYF, printers, computers, Blackboard etc.'
Note: The proportion of respondents who ticked 'Unsure/Not applicable' to the question about support was 18%. They have been left out of the analysis.

75% of students surveyed 'strongly agree' or 'mostly agree' that the technical solutions work when they need them. 10% find that this is not the case (Figure 6.3).

Of the students who have answered the question about the availability of support, 69% state that they have been able to get sufficient help and support when they have not been able to get the technical solutions to work. 10% strongly disagree or mostly disagree with the statement.

Figure 6.3. Technical solutions. 'At my educational institution …'

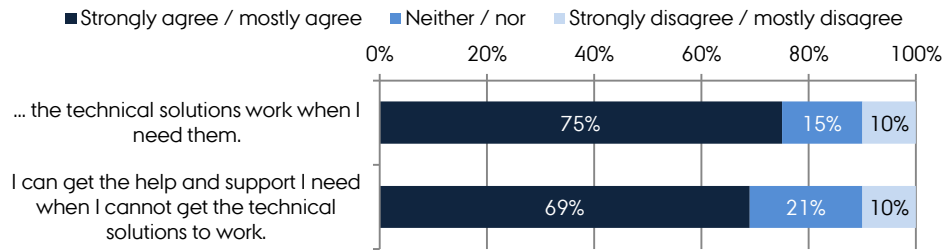Note: The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.
Note: Technical solutions were defined as: 'Wireless internet, WAYF, printers, computers, Blackboard etc.'
Note: The proportion of respondents who ticked 'Unsure/Not applicable' to the question about support was 18%. They have been left out of the analysis.

CHAPTER 7.
FEEDBACK

Like previous surveys, this year's study environment survey asks about the feedback which students receive on their academic work. In the Study Environment Survey 2017, work has been done to define and elaborate on the concept of feedback.

The students were asked a total of five questions covering three aspects of the feedback: (1) whether it is clear to the students what the *criteria* for the feedback / assessment (also called *feed-up*) are; (2) whether it is clear to the students to which extent they fulfil the criteria (also called *feed-back*); and finally (3) to which extent the students find that they can *use the feedback actively* to improve their ways of learning and studying (also called *feed-forward*).

The results are shown in Table 7.1. below. It should be noted that quite a few students have been unable to answer some of the questions, which makes sense, as they had not sat their first exams at the time of the survey.

Table 7.1. Students' experience of feedback

	AU	AR	BSS	HE	ST
The teachers spend time discussing with us what characterises a good assignment.	62%	68%	61%	52%	62%
It is very difficult to know whether I'm doing well and learning what is required.	48%	47%	54%	50%	37%
The possibilities for receiving feedback regarding my academic performance are good.[b]	36%	42%	35%	18%	43%
I often have difficulties understanding the feedback I get regarding my assignments.[b]	16%	14%	20%	17%	12%
When I get feedback on my academic work, it is easy for me to see how to improve my ways of learning and studying.[c]	50%	52%	45%	40%	61%

Note: The figures show the proportion who ticked 'Strongly agree' or 'Mostly agree'. The rest of the students 'neither agree nor disagree', 'mostly disagree' or 'strongly disagree'. The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.
Note (a): The proportion of respondents who ticked 'Unsure/Not applicable' to this question was 17%. They are excluded from the analysis.
Note (b): The proportion of respondents who ticked 'Unsure/Not applicable' to this question was 19%. They are excluded from the analysis.
Note (c): The proportion of respondents who ticked 'Unsure/Not applicable' to this question was 16%. They have been left out of the analysis.

As regards the feedback which concerns the clarification of the criteria for a good performance, 62% of the students surveyed state that the teachers spend time discussing with the students what characterises a good assignment. 16% 'strongly disagree' or 'mostly disagree' (Figure 7.1).

Figure 7.1. Students' experience of feedback

■ Strongly agree / mostly agree ■ Neither / nor ■ Strongly disagree / mostly disagree

	Strongly agree / mostly agree	Neither / nor	Strongly disagree / mostly disagree
The teachers spend time discussing with us what characterises a good assignment.	62%	22%	16%
It is very difficult to know whether I'm doing well and learning what is required.	48%	25%	28%
The possibilities for receiving feedback regarding my academic performance at exams are good. (a)	36%	24%	39%
I often have difficulties understanding the feedback I get regarding my assignments. (b)	16%	31%	53%
When I get feedback on my academic work, it is easy for me to see how to improve my ways of learning and...	50%	32%	18%

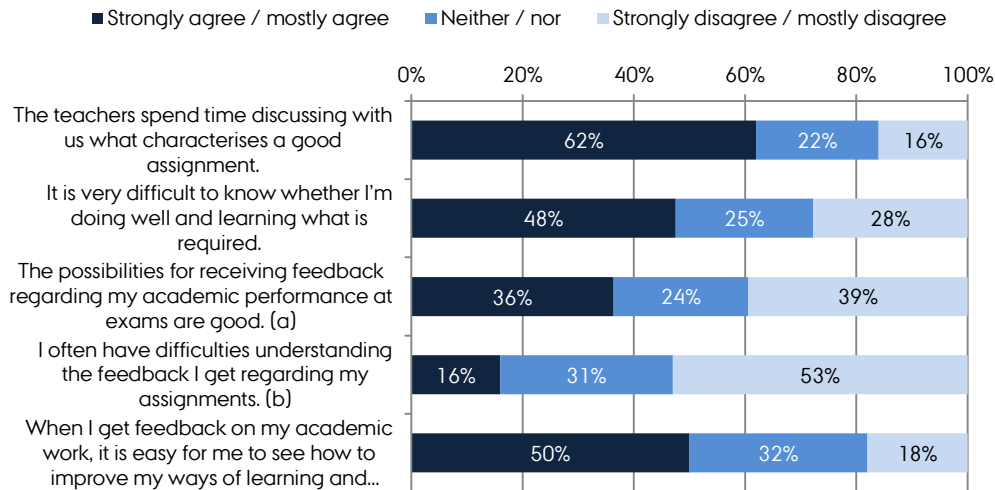Note: The 'Unsure/Not applicable' category has been left out of the analysis.
Note (a): The proportion of respondents who ticked 'Unsure/Not applicable' to this question was 17%. They are excluded from the analysis.
Note (b): The proportion of respondents who ticked 'Unsure/Not applicable' to this question was 19%. They are excluded from the analysis.
Note (c): The proportion of respondents who ticked 'Unsure/Not applicable' to this question was 16%. They have been left out of the analysis.

As regards the feedback itself – the students knowing whether they are doing well – 48% indicate that it is difficult for them to know whether they are doing well and learning what is required. 28% disagree with this statement.

At the universities, feedback is often in the form of feedback on the students' performance at exams. 36% of the students surveyed 'strongly agree' or 'mostly agree' that the possibilities for receiving feedback regarding their academic performance at exams are good.

The last two questions relate to whether the feedback received is seen as being useful. 50% of the students state that they 'strongly agree' or 'mostly agree' that it is easy for them to see how they should proceed when they receive feedback on their academic work. 18% 'strongly disagree' or' mostly disagree' with this. 16% indicate that they often have difficulties understanding the feedback they get regarding their assignments. 53% state that they do not have difficulties understanding the response.

CHAPTER 8.
STUDY INTENSITY

As part of the Study Environment Survey 2017, the students were asked to indicate how many hours they spend on study-related activities, jobs of relevance to their studies and leisure activities during a typical week outside exam periods.

The students' responses concerning time use are summarised in Table 8.1 below. For AU as a whole, the students state that they spend 14.7 hours on teaching activities, 2.7 hours on internships and 17.5 hours preparing during a typical week outside exam periods. This equates to a 34.9-hour study week. Moreover, the students surveyed state that they spend 3.0 hours working in jobs of relevance to their studies and 3.1 hours working in non-relevant jobs, in addition to which they spend time on student organisation work, voluntary work and leisure activities.

Table 8.1. Weekly study intensity (hours per week)

	AU	AR	BSS	HE	ST
Teaching[a]	14.7	11.0	14.1	13.4	21.6
Internship[b]	2.7	1.6	1.2	8.9	2.1
Preparation[c]	17.5	18.3	17.9	17.8	15.6
Job of relevance to studies[d]	3.0	2.7	4.1	2.8	1.7
Other job[e]	3.1	3.2	3.8	2.0	2.5
Student organisation work[f]	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.5	1.0
Leisure activities[g]	6.0	5.4	6.3	5.9	6.3
N	12,522	3,499	4,378	1,999	2,646
Study week[h]	34.9	30.8	33.2	40.1	39.3

Wording of the question: 'How many hours do you spend on the following activities during a typical week outside the exam period?'
Note (a): 'Teaching activities (lectures, class lessons, seminars, laboratory work and the like)'
Note (b): 'Clinical practice, internship or long-term laboratory work'
Note (c): 'Preparation (reading, study group work, writing, registration for exams, finding literature, writing emails and similar organisational activities related to being a student)'
Note (d): 'Job of relevance to your studies'
Note (e): 'Job of no relevance to your studies'
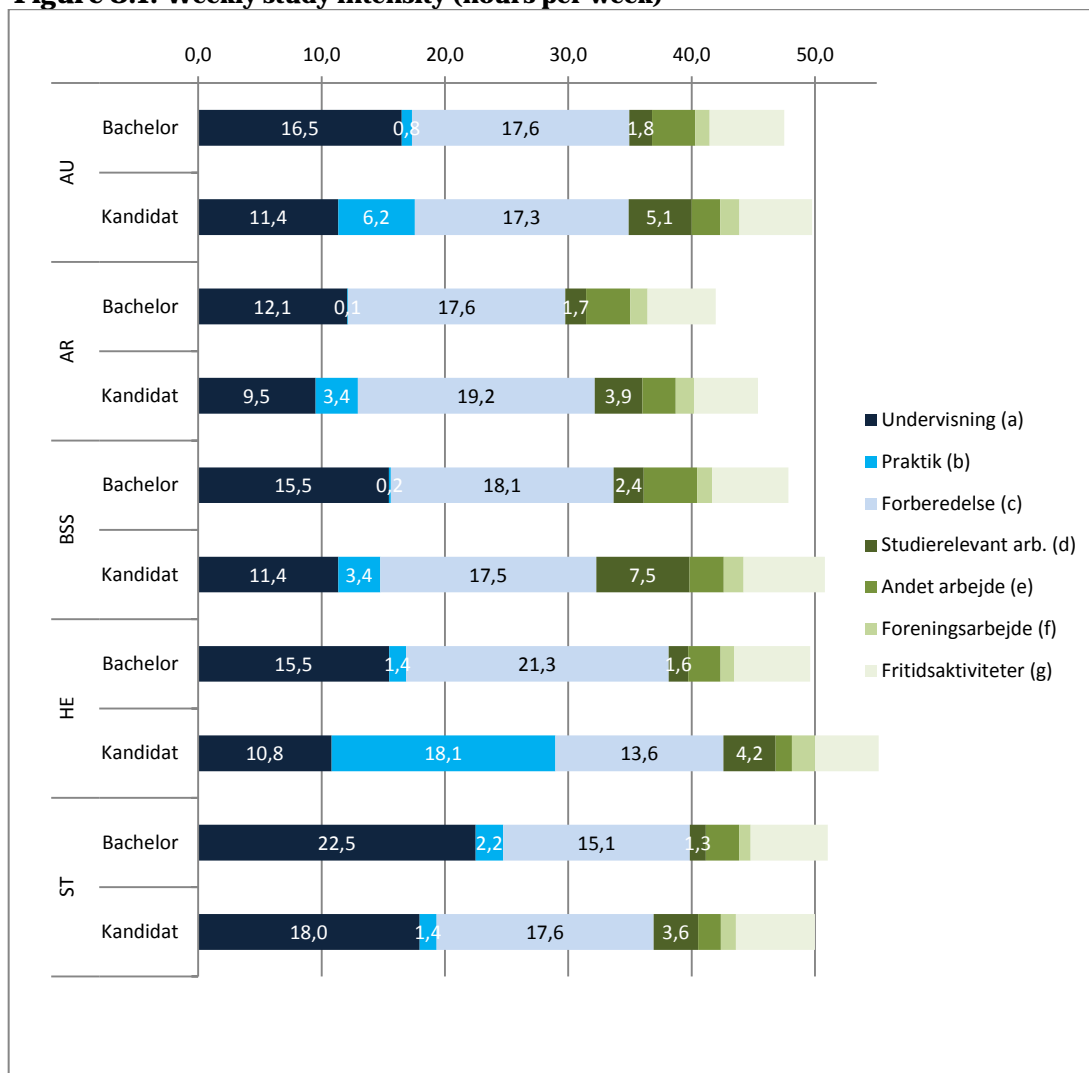Note (f): 'Voluntary work or student organisation work'
Note (g): 'Leisure activities'
Note (h): Adding up a+b+c
Note: Please note that these figures should not be compared with time figures from earlier study environment surveys as the operationalisation of the question is not the same in the various surveys.
Note: Responses are included in the calculation on the following conditions: (1) The student is not in the process of writing his or her Master's thesis, (2) the student has indicated that he or she is registered for exams corresponding to 30 ECTS, (3) the weekly activity is greater than 0 and less than 112 hours (corresponding to 16 hours a day).

Figure 8.1. Weekly study intensity (hours per week)

Wording of the question: 'How many hours do you spend on the following activities during a typical week outside the exam period?'

Note (a): 'Teaching activities (lectures, class lessons, seminars, laboratory work and the like)'

Note (b): 'Clinical practice, internship or long-term laboratory work'

Note (c): 'Preparation (reading, study group work, writing, registration for exams, finding literature, writing emails and similar organisational activities related to being a student)'

Note (d): 'Job of relevance to your studies'

Note (e): 'Job of no relevance to your studies'

Note (f): 'Voluntary work or student organisation work'

Note (g): 'Leisure activities'

Note (h): Adding up a+b+c

Note: Please note that these figures should not be compared with time figures from earlier study environment surveys as the operationalisation of the question is not the same in the various surveys.

Note: Responses are included in the calculation on the following conditions: (1) The student is not in the process of writing his or her Master's thesis, (2) the student has indicated that he or she is registered for exams corresponding to 30 ECTS, (3) the weekly activity is greater than 0 and less than 112 hours (corresponding to 16 hours a day).

It should be noted that these averages cover significant variation between the faculties, but also among students at the same faculty. For example, undergraduate students at ST tend to attend the most lessons, while Master's degree students at HE spend most hours doing internships and Master's degree students at BSS spend most time working in jobs of relevance to their studies (Figure 8.1).

The variation in study intensity is also illustrated in the graphs (Figure 8.2), and in Table 8.2. Table 8.2 should be read as follows: 1% of the students surveyed at Aarhus University spend between 0 and 10 hours on their studies during a typical week, 9% spend between 10 and 20 hours, and so on and so forth. The study week is defined as teaching activities, internships and preparation (note to Table 8.2)

Table 8.2. Variation in weekly study intensity

	AU	AR	BSS	HE	ST
+0 to 10 hours	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%
+10 to 20 hours	9%	15%	10%	4%	4%
+20 to 30 hours	27%	34%	32%	18%	17%
+30 to 40 hours	37%	36%	37%	37%	39%
+40 hours	26%	13%	20%	41%	40%
Summed-up	100%	100%	101%	101%	101%
N	12,522	3,499	4,378	1,999	2,646

Note: The students have been divided into categories depending on how many hours a week they devote to their studies. The number of hours is found by adding up the figures for teaching activities, internships and preparation.
Note: Responses are included in the calculation on the following conditions: (1) The student is not in the process of writing his or her Master's thesis, (2) the student has indicated that he or she is registered for exams corresponding to 30 ECTS, (3) the weekly activity is greater than 0 and less than 112 hours (corresponding to 16 hours a day).

Figure 8.2. Variation in study intensity
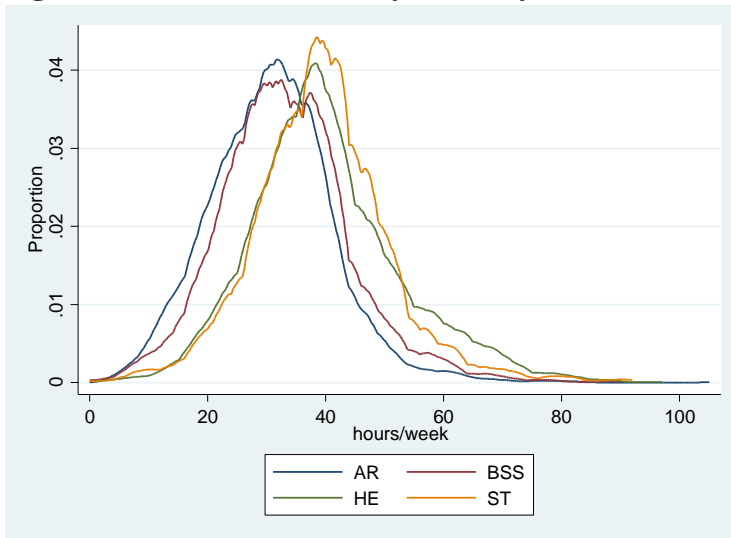
Wording of the question: 'How many hours do you spend on the following activities during a typical week outside the exam period?'
Note: The figures are based on a study week which is defined by the number of hours spent on teaching activities, internships and preparation.
Note: Responses are included in the calculation on the following conditions: (1) The student is not in the process of writing his or her Master's thesis, (2) the student has indicated that he or she is registered for exams corresponding to 30 ECTS, (3) the weekly activity is greater than 0 and less than 112 hours (corresponding to 16 hours a day).

Finally, the students were asked to assess how much time they spend on study-related activities during a typical week in the exam period. The results are presented in Table 8.3.

Table 8.3. Hours of study-related activities during exam periods

	AU	AR	BSS	HE	ST
Hours per week during the exam period	43.5	39.0	43.4	48.7	45.1
N	10,142	2,653	3,480	1,660	2,349

Wording of the question: 'How many hours do you spend on study-related activities during a typical week during the exam period?'
Note: Responses are included in the calculation on the following conditions: (1) The student is not in the process of writing his or her Master's thesis, (2) the student has indicated that he or she is registered for exams corresponding to 30 ECTS, (3) the weekly activity is greater than 0 and less than 112 hours (corresponding to 16 hours a day).

CHAPTER 9.
BULLYING AND HARASS-MENT

Being subjected to harassment or discrimination is hard for individual students, and the study environment survey therefore includes questions about harassment and discrimination in the same way that the questions about harassment and discrimination are a natural part of the university's workplace assessments. In Aarhus University's psychological workplace assessment in 2016, a category was added to the questions about harassment in the form of the question of whether the employee had experienced 'repeated abusive offensive or derogatory speech incidents'. This question has also been added to the study environment survey. Another change in the questionnaire concerns the question about bullying, where the definition of bullying (also inspired by the university's workplace assessment) being based on the definition used by the Danish Working Environment Authority.

Table 9.1. Bullying and harassment

	AU	AR	BSS	HE	ST
Repeated abusive, offensive or derogatory speech incidents.	2.8%	2.9%	2.6%	3.0%	2.9%
Bullying.	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%	0.9%	0.8%
Sexual harassment.	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%	0.6%	0.8%
Threats of violence or threatening behaviour.	0.4%	0.5%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
Physical violence.	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.1%

Question: 'Have you during the last 12 months been exposed to ...'
Note: Bullying is when one or more persons regularly and over an extended period of time – or repeatedly in a rude manner – subject one or more other persons to offensive acts which the person perceives as degrading or hurtful. However, the offensive actions only become bullying when the persons they are aimed at are not in a position to defend themselves effectively against them. Teasing which is perceived by both parties as good-natured and single incidents of conflict are not considered bullying.
Note: Please note that these figures should not be compared with results of previous surveys as the questions have been phrased differently.

The distribution of responses is shown in Table 9.1. 2.8% of the students surveyed state that within the past 12 months they have experienced repeated

abusive, offensive or derogatory speech incidents. 0.7% of the students surveyed state that they have been exposed to bullying, and 0.7% state that they have been exposed to sexual harassment within the past 12 months. 0.4% of the students surveyed have experienced threats of violence, and 0.2% of students indicate that they have been exposed to physical violence within the past 12 months.

Table 9.2 below shows the proportion of respondents who have been exposed to discrimination because of their age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic background, and/or religion or philosophy of life.

Table 9.2. Discrimination

	AU	AR	BSS	HE	ST
Discrimination because of your age	1.6%	1.7%	1.9%	1.6%	1.2%
Discrimination because of gender identity	1.8%	1.8%	1.9%	1.8%	1.7%
Discrimination because of sexual orientation	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
Discrimination because of ethnic background	1.5%	0.9%	2.0%	1.5%	1.2%
Discrimination because of religion or philosophy of life	1.2%	1.4%	1.1%	1.3%	1.1%

Note: Question: 'Have you during the last 12 months been exposed to ...'
Note: Please note that these figures should not be compared with figures from previous surveys as the questions are phrased differently.

Students who stated that they had been exposed to harassment or discrimination in reply to the above question were asked by whom they had been exposed to such harassment or discrimination. Table 9.3. shows the result from this question.

Table 9.3. Who is doing the bullying, discrimination and harassment?

	AU	AR	BSS	HE	ST
Fellow students	55%	54%	59%	44%	56%
Employees (e.g. teachers or studies administration staff)	21%	25%	15%	29%	21%
External parties (e.g. patients)	8%	7%	8%	16%	4%
Other parties	14%	15%	13%	14%	13%
N	1,125	310	413	184	218

Note: Question: 'Who has subjected you to bullying/harassment (tick more than one box if necessary)?' As the students have been allowed to tick more than one box, the figures do not necessarily add up to 100%.

'Other parties' mentioned in the comments field include foreign persons whom students have encountered on campus or on their way to and from the university, other non-AU students (e.g. fellow residents or students at other universities), non-AU-staff (e.g. staff at host organisations where students have done internships or study-related work).