

Pre-results day mindset

20th July 2021



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Security marking: PUBLIC

Student confidence

**Impact on university
decision making**

Starting university

Appeals process

A reminder of our methodology

Online survey

520

Year 13 students
from across the UK

All the sample from **UCAS's applicant database**, from across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

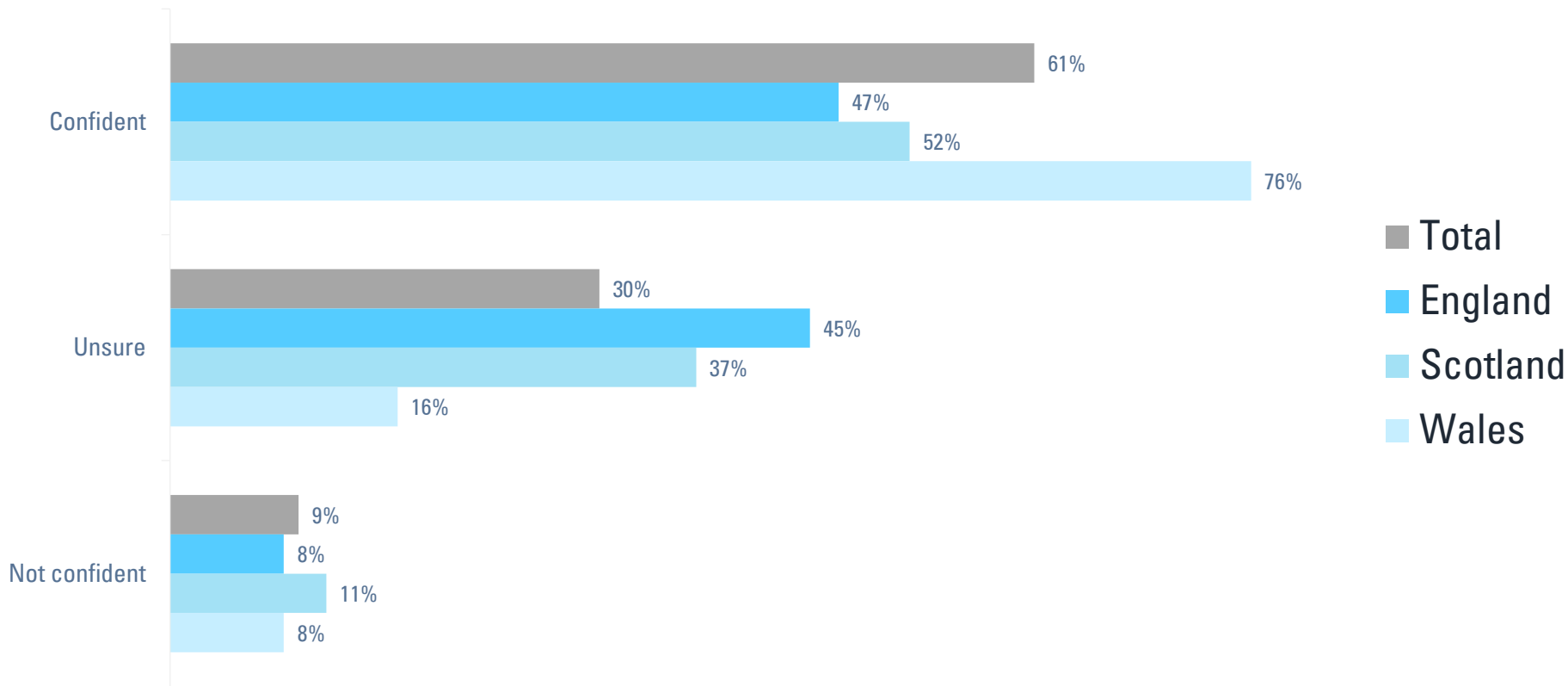
Fieldwork **9th July – 16th July 2021.**

Student confidence

Levels of confidence in results are generally high, but applicants in England are more nervous than others

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Student confidence in attainment of grades required for entry to first choice uni

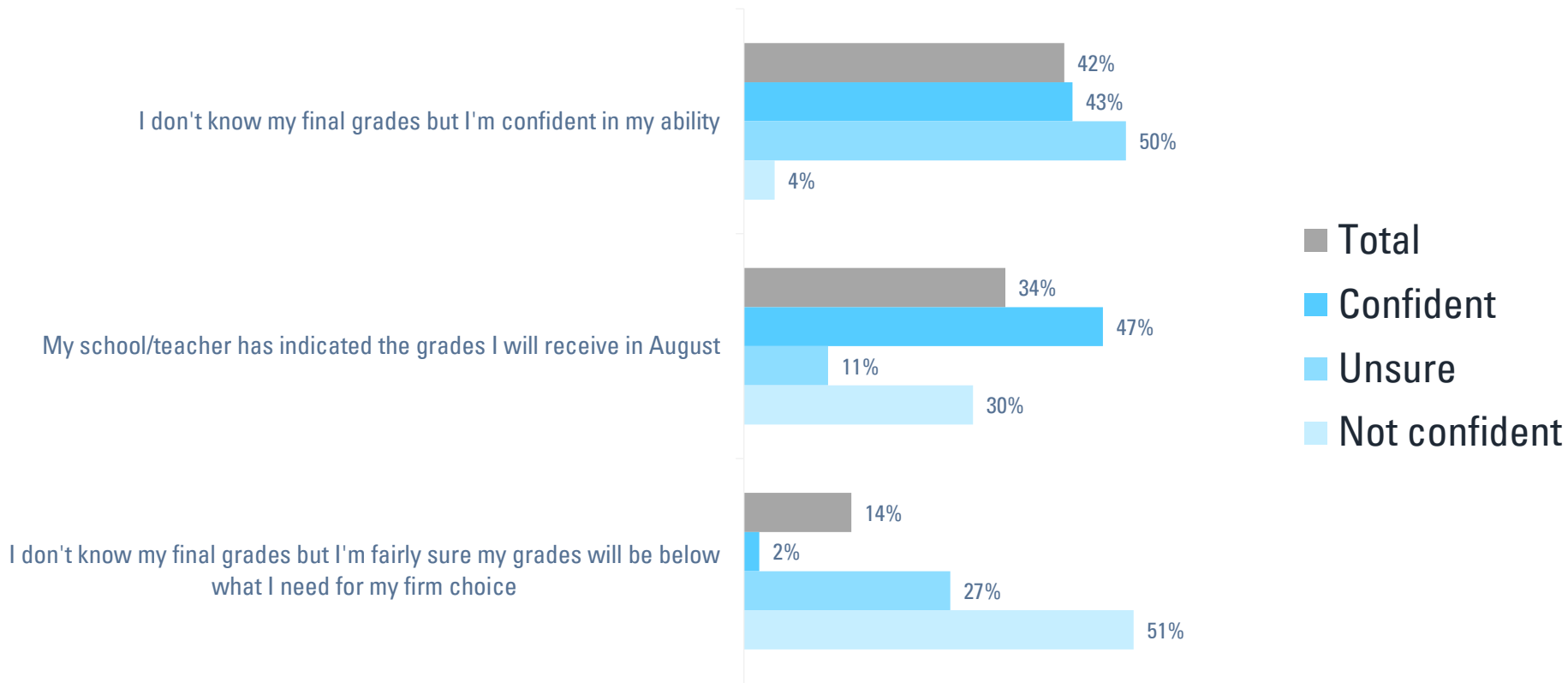


- Males are more likely to be confident than females (69% vs 57%), females are more likely to be unsure (33%)
- BAME applicants are much less likely to be confident (51% compared to 65% among White audiences)

Uncertainty appears to be driven by a lack of knowledge about grades, but many are confident in their ability

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Reasons for feeling towards grades



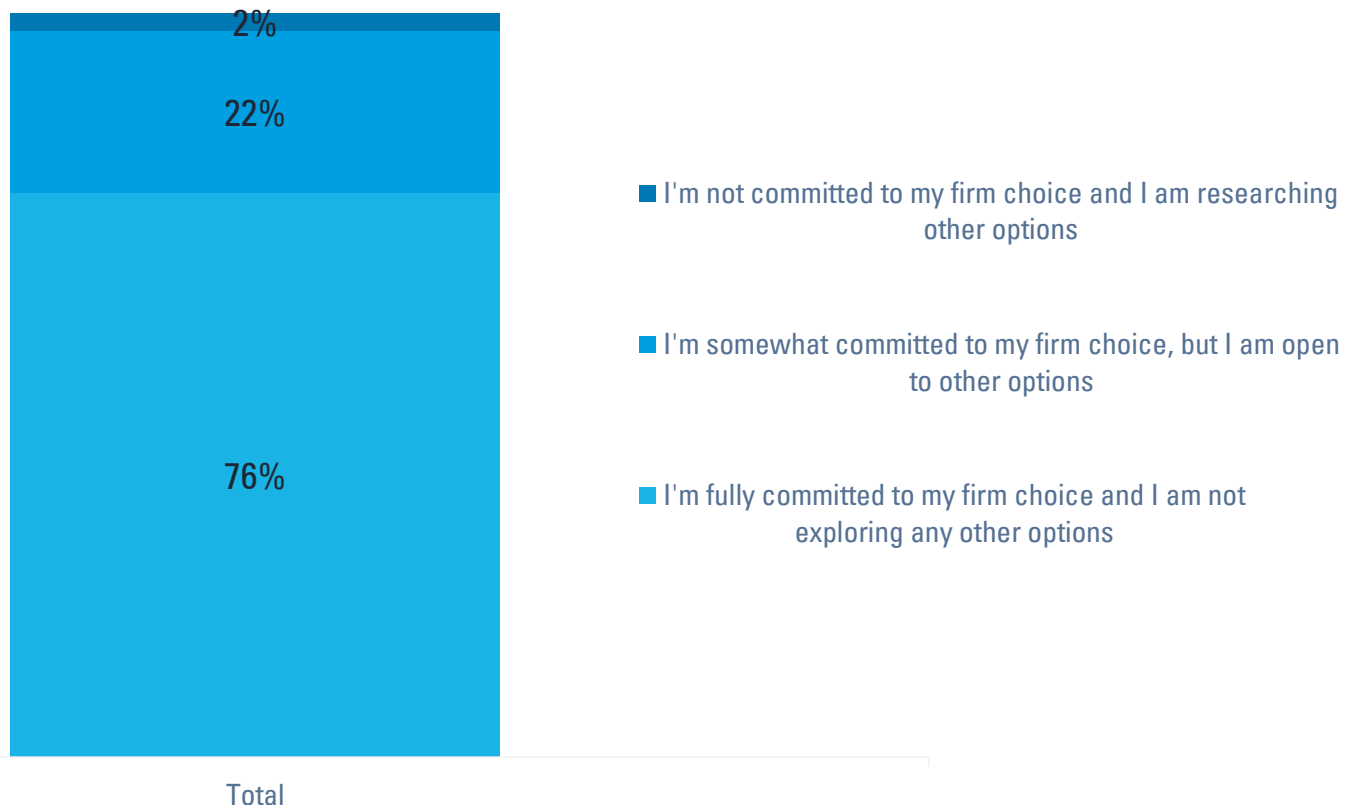
- White applicants are more likely to have been given an indication on grades from their teachers than applicants from BAME backgrounds (38% vs 25%), this may contribute to lower levels of confidence among this group

Impact on university decision making

Those considering other options are more likely to have concerns around the security of their place at their firm choice university

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Commitment to firm choice university

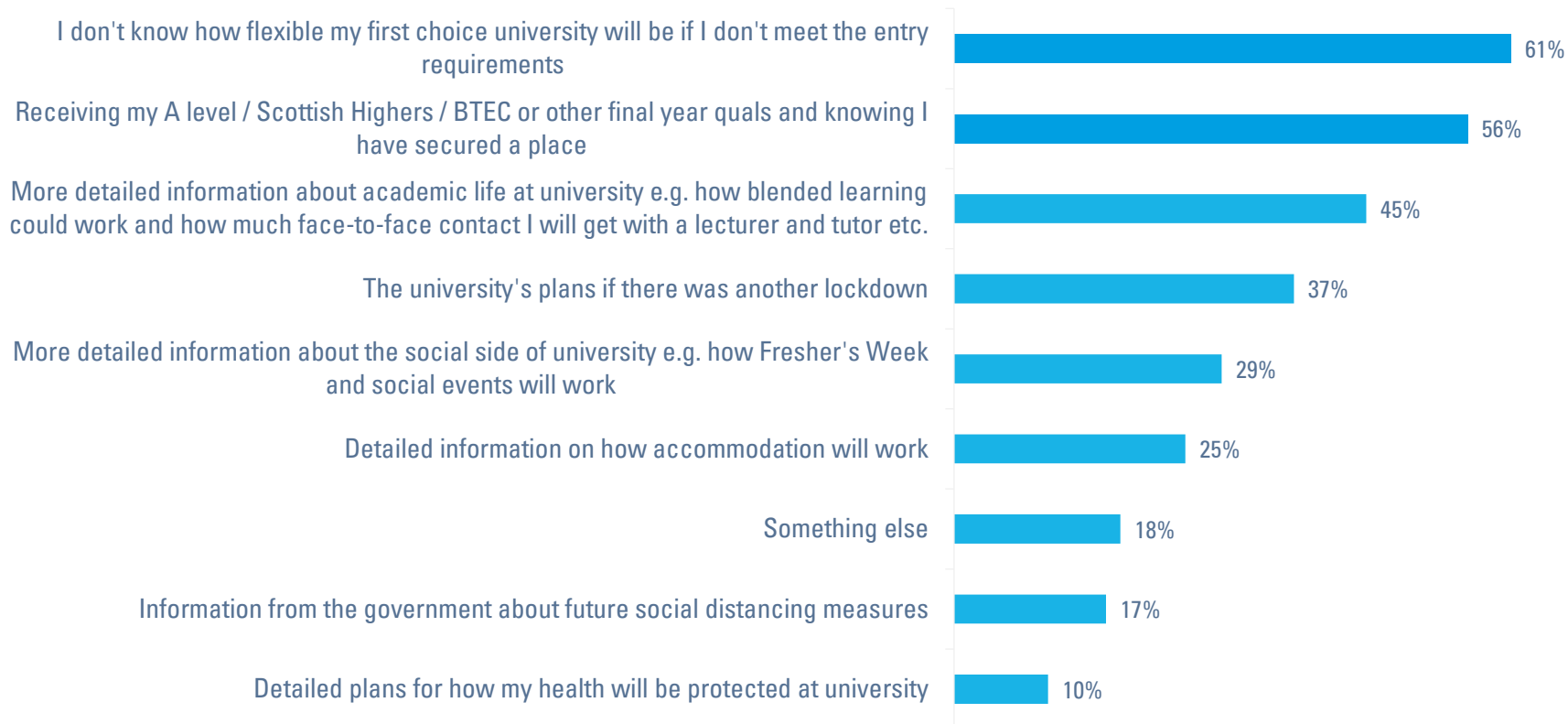


- Levels of commitment are higher among Welsh applicants, in line with their higher levels of confidence. 80% are fully committed to their firm choice
- Those applying to high tariff universities are less likely to be fully committed (72%) when compared to those applying to low tariff universities
- Those who are unsure (32%) or not confident (43%), are more likely not to be fully committed to their firm choice university

More information on grade flexibility and certainty around grades can help to boost commitment among applicants

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Reasons for not being fully committed



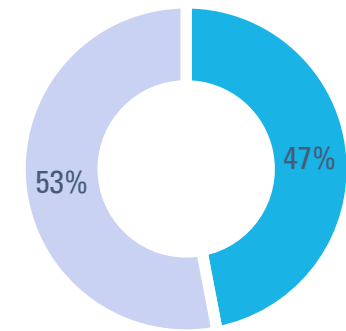
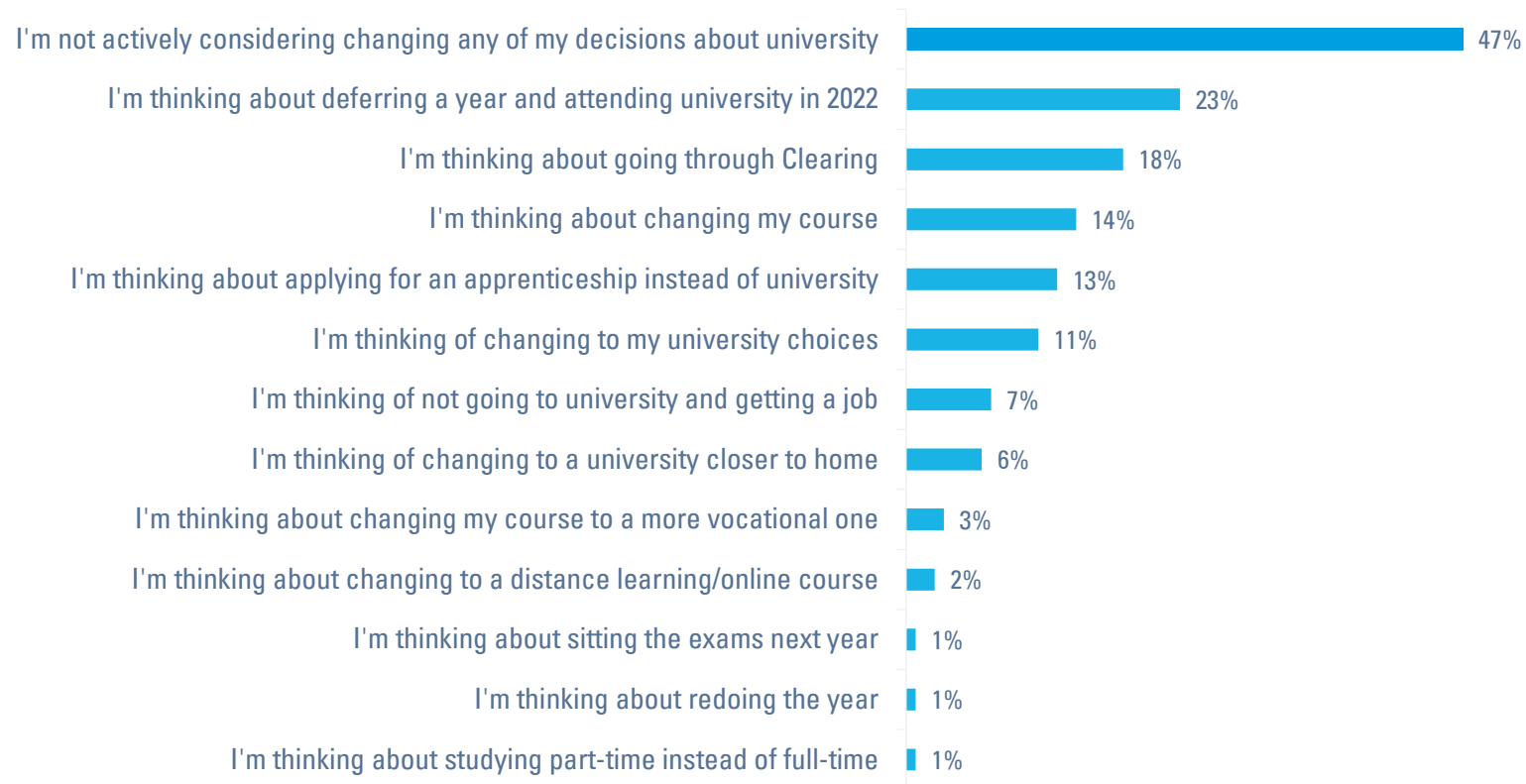
• Females would like to hear more detail about academic life to improve commitment (54% vs 35% among males)

Sub group analysis restricted by small base sizes

Many who are not fully committed are considering alternatives, particularly deferring and going through clearing

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Consideration of alternatives



- Considering other options
- Not considering other options

- Males are slightly more likely not to be considering alternatives.
- Females are more likely to be considering changing either their course (22% vs 6%) or their university choice (17% vs 4%)

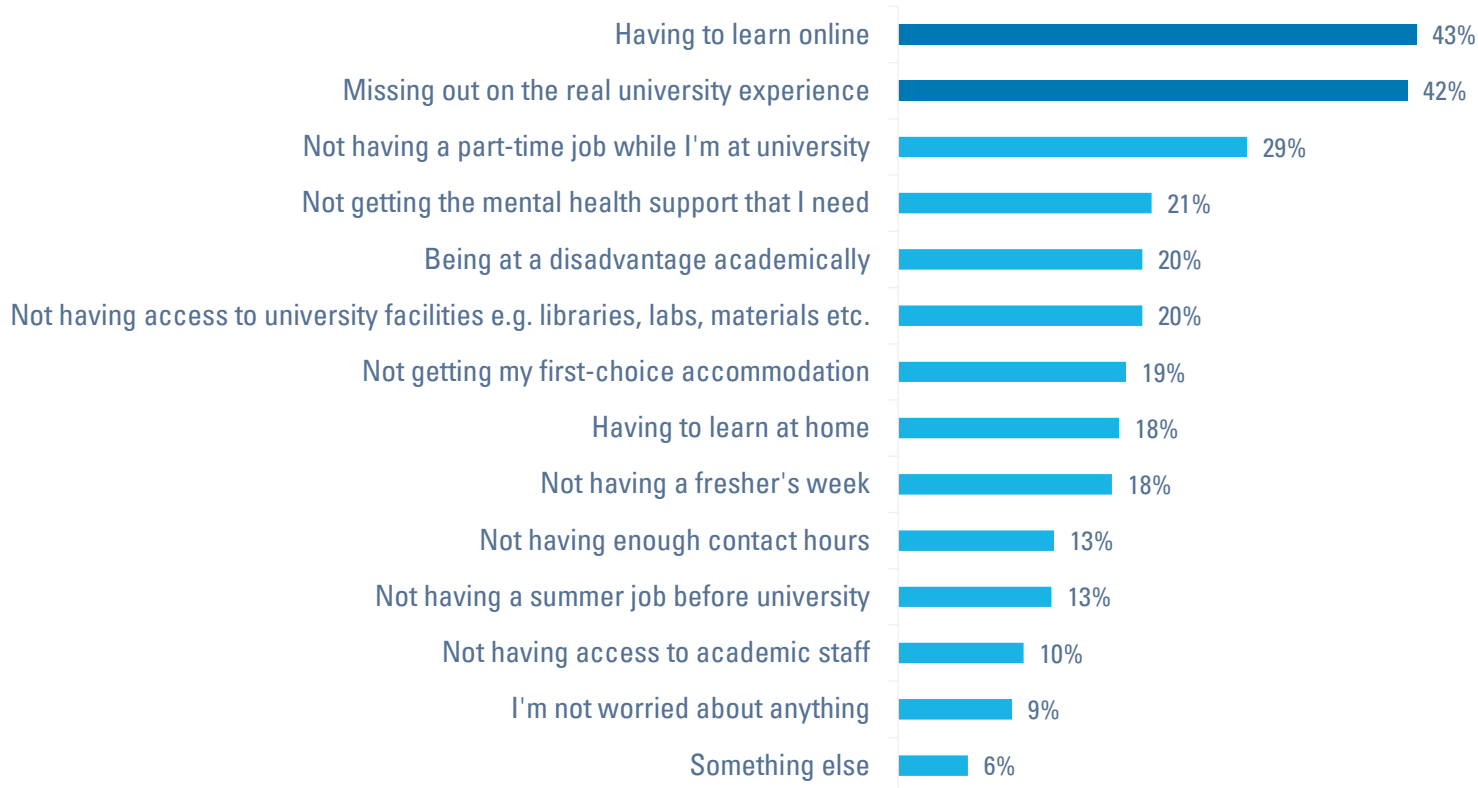
Sub group analysis restricted by small base sizes

Starting university

Missing out on the full experience (academically or socially) at university is top of mind for applicants

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Concerns about starting university in the autumn



- Females are more concerned than males about having access to mental health support (23% vs 13%) and being at an academic disadvantage (23% vs 16%)
- BAME applicants are more concerned about not having had a summer job before starting uni in the Autumn (17% vs 10%)
- Applicants in Scotland are more worried about a lack of contact hours (27%)
- Those applying to high tariff universities are more worried about the overall academic experience, particularly having to learn online (43%), not getting their first choice accommodation (26%) and not having a freshers week (21%)

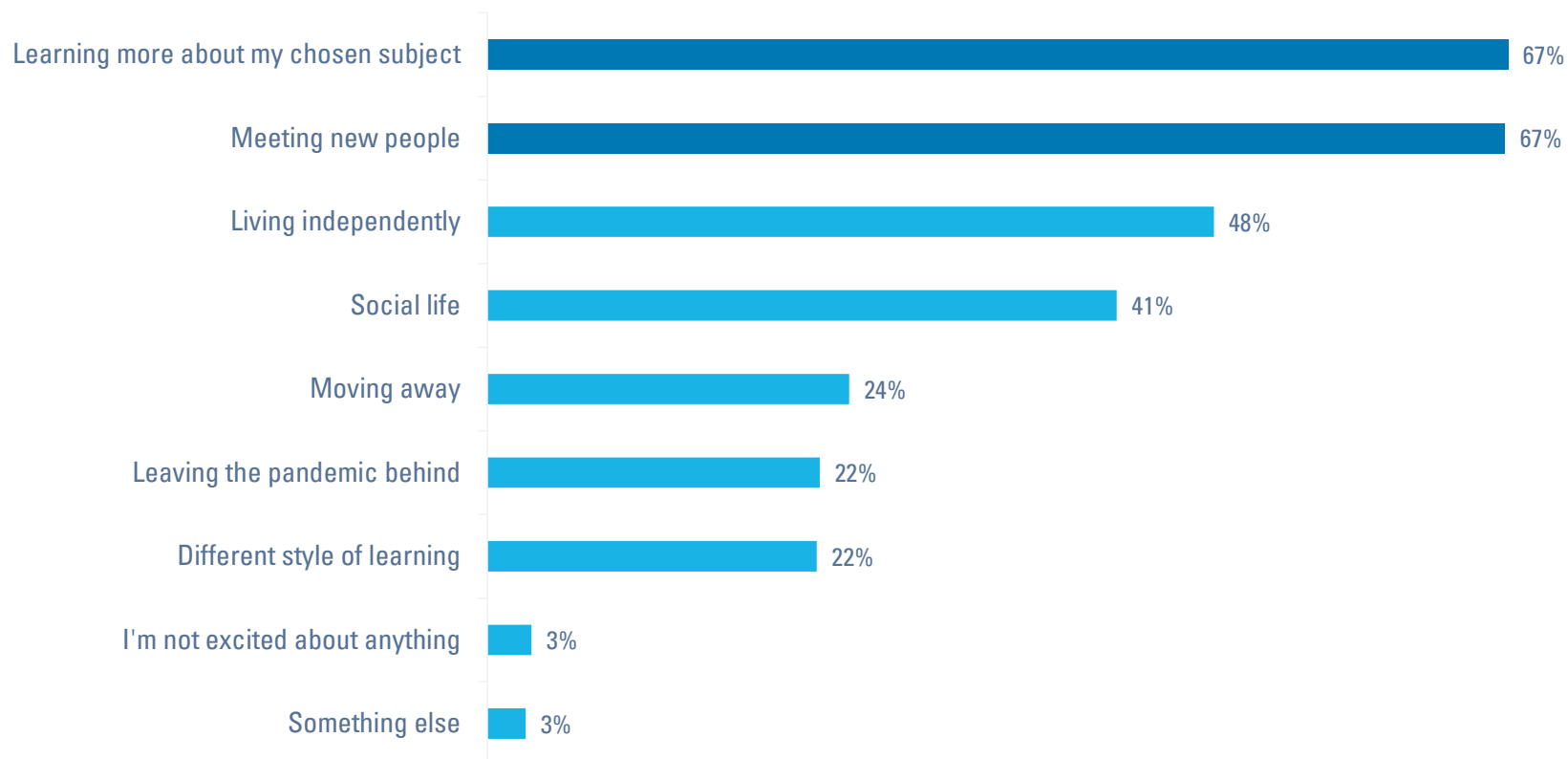
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The desire to learn is still high despite the pandemic and applicants are still excited about starting a new chapter of their life

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What applicants are excited about

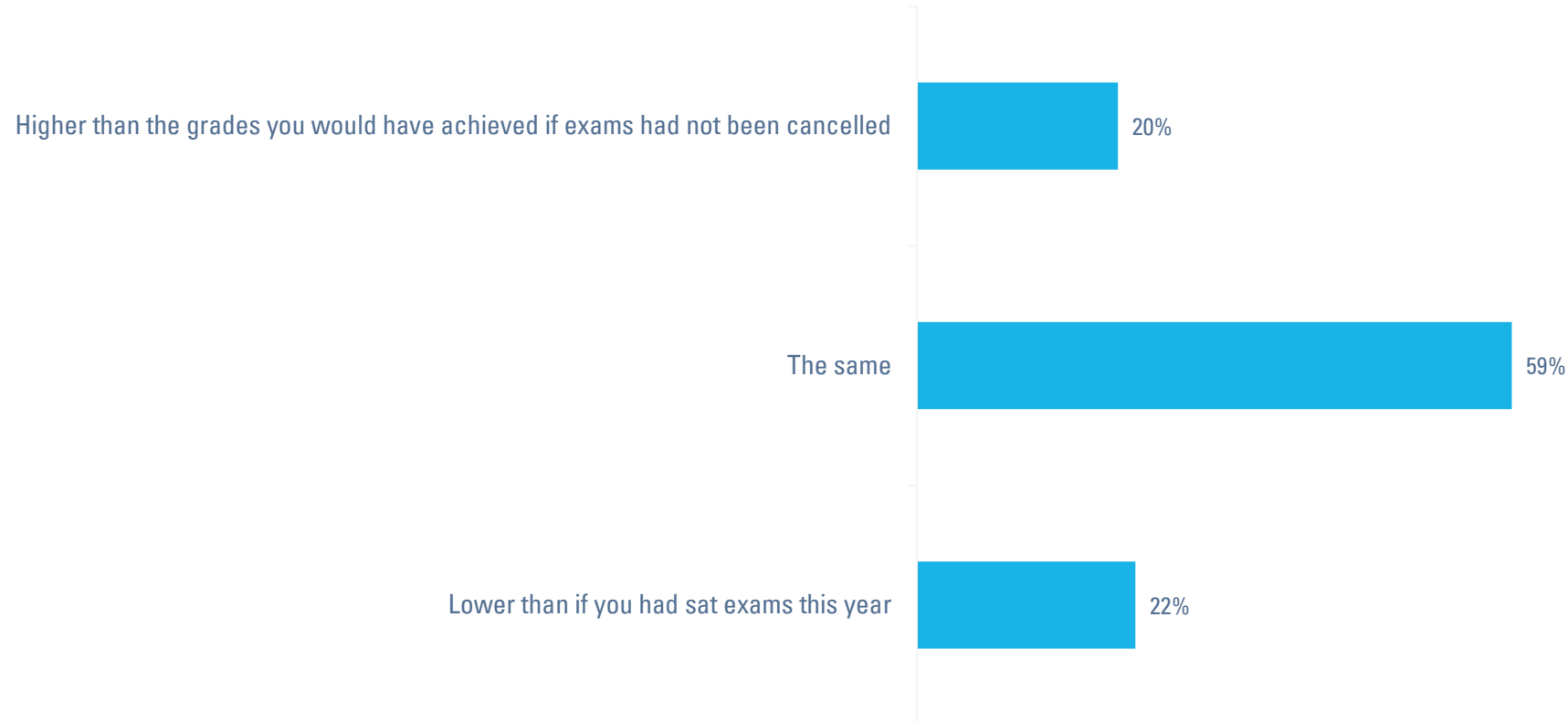


- White applicants are more excited about living independently (50%), while BAME applicants are more excited to experience different styles of learning (28% vs 19%)
- Scottish students are more excited than others to leave the pandemic behind (31%)
- Those applying to high tariff universities are more excited about living independently (51%) and the social life (46%)

Appeals process

Four in five are confident that teacher assessed grades will be at least the same if not higher 20 July 2021

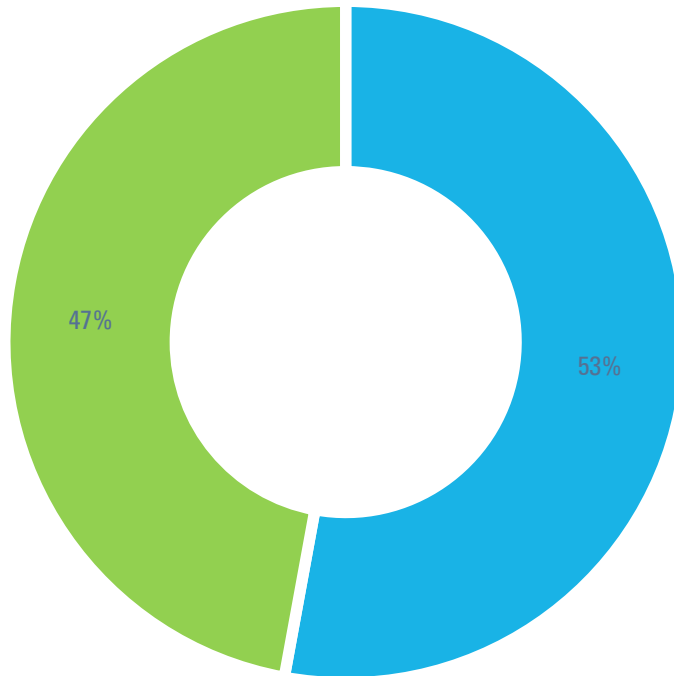
Perceptions of teacher assessed grades



- BAME applicants are slightly more worried that teacher assessed grades will be lower than if they had sat exams (29%)
- Scottish applicants share this concern with 26% believing they will be lower
- Those applying to higher university tiers are also more likely to have concerns about teacher assessed grades (25% among medium/ high tariff applicants)
- Those not confident in getting the grades required also have concerns (60% lower)

Around half of applicants say that they are aware of the appeals process

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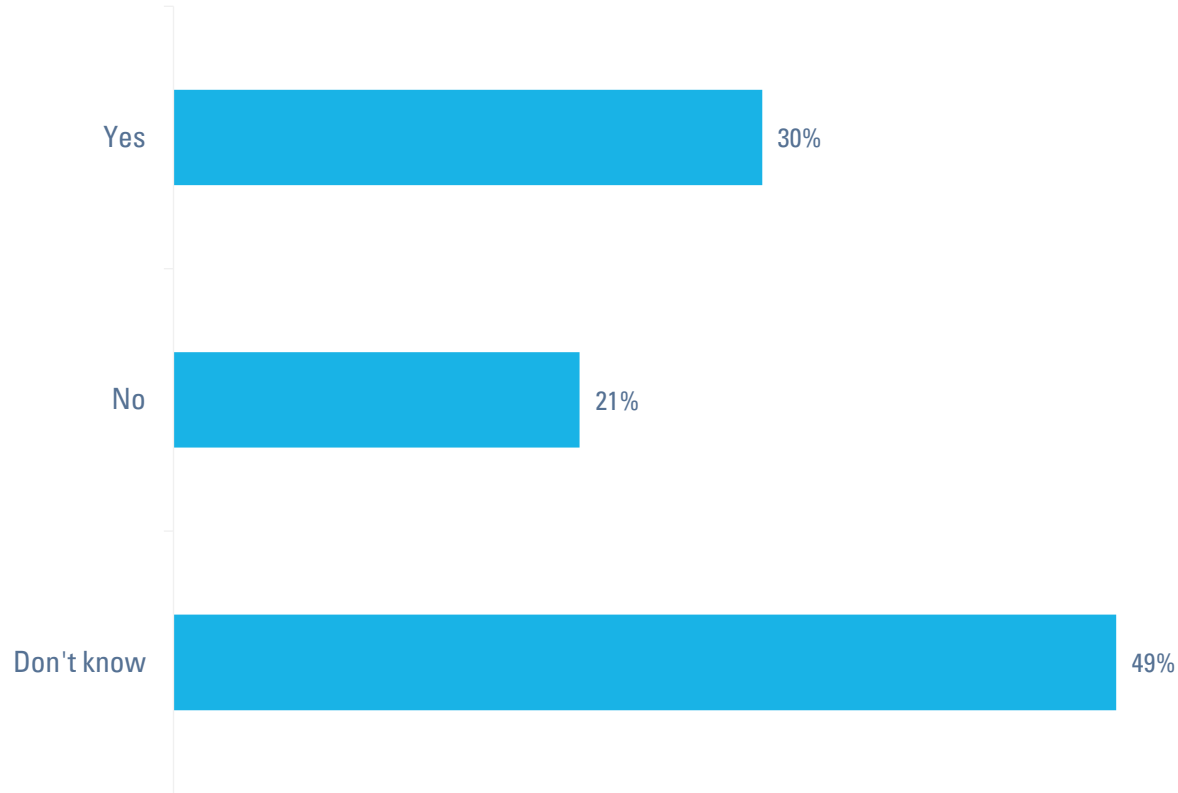


- No, I don't know the process
- Yes, I know the process

• Those in Wales have a higher level of familiarity with the appeals process (58%)

Some are not convinced that they will use the appeals service even if they didn't get the grades

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- Scottish students are more likely to believe that the appeals process would help them to get better grades (36%)

Key headlines

Levels of confidence in results are generally high, but applicants in England are more nervous than others

- Uncertainty appears to be driven by a lack of indication in terms of grades, but many are confident in their ability
- Those considering other options are more likely to have concerns around the security of their place at firm choice university

More information on grade flexibility and certainty around grades can help to boost commitment among applicants

- Many who are not fully committed are considering alternatives, particularly deferring and going through clearing
- Missing out on the full experience at university is top of mind for applicants who considering alternatives
- Applicants are excited to continue learning and start a new chapter in their life

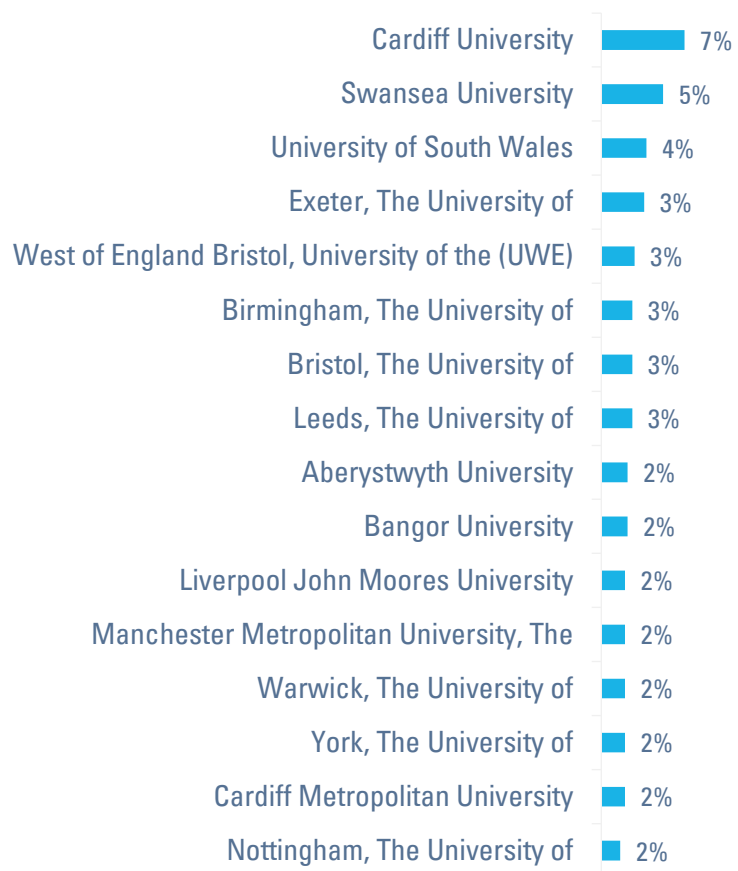
Four in five are confident that teacher assessed grades will be at least the same if not higher

- Around half of applicants say that they are aware of the appeals process
- Although some are not convinced that they will use the appeals service even if they didn't get the grades

Appendix

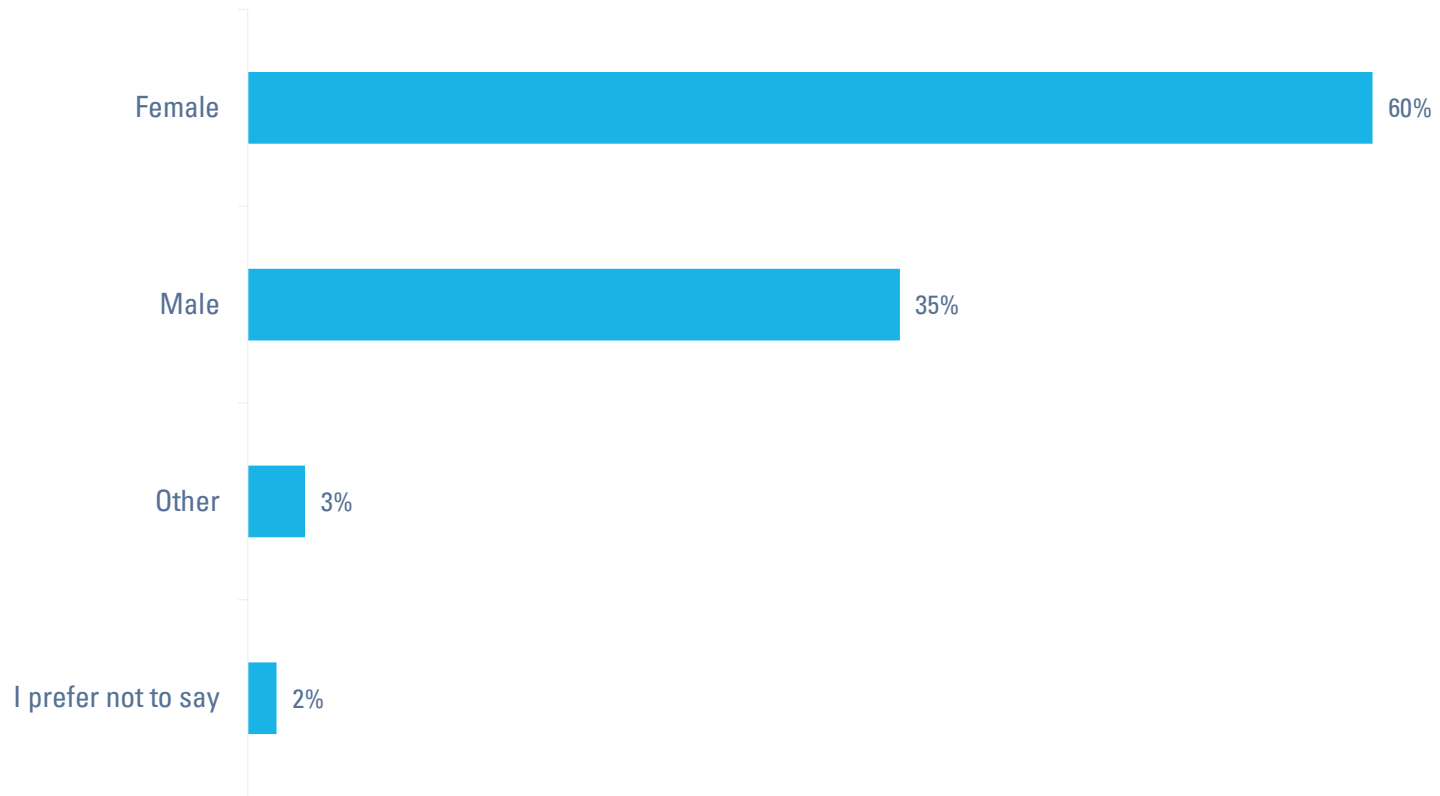
University tier

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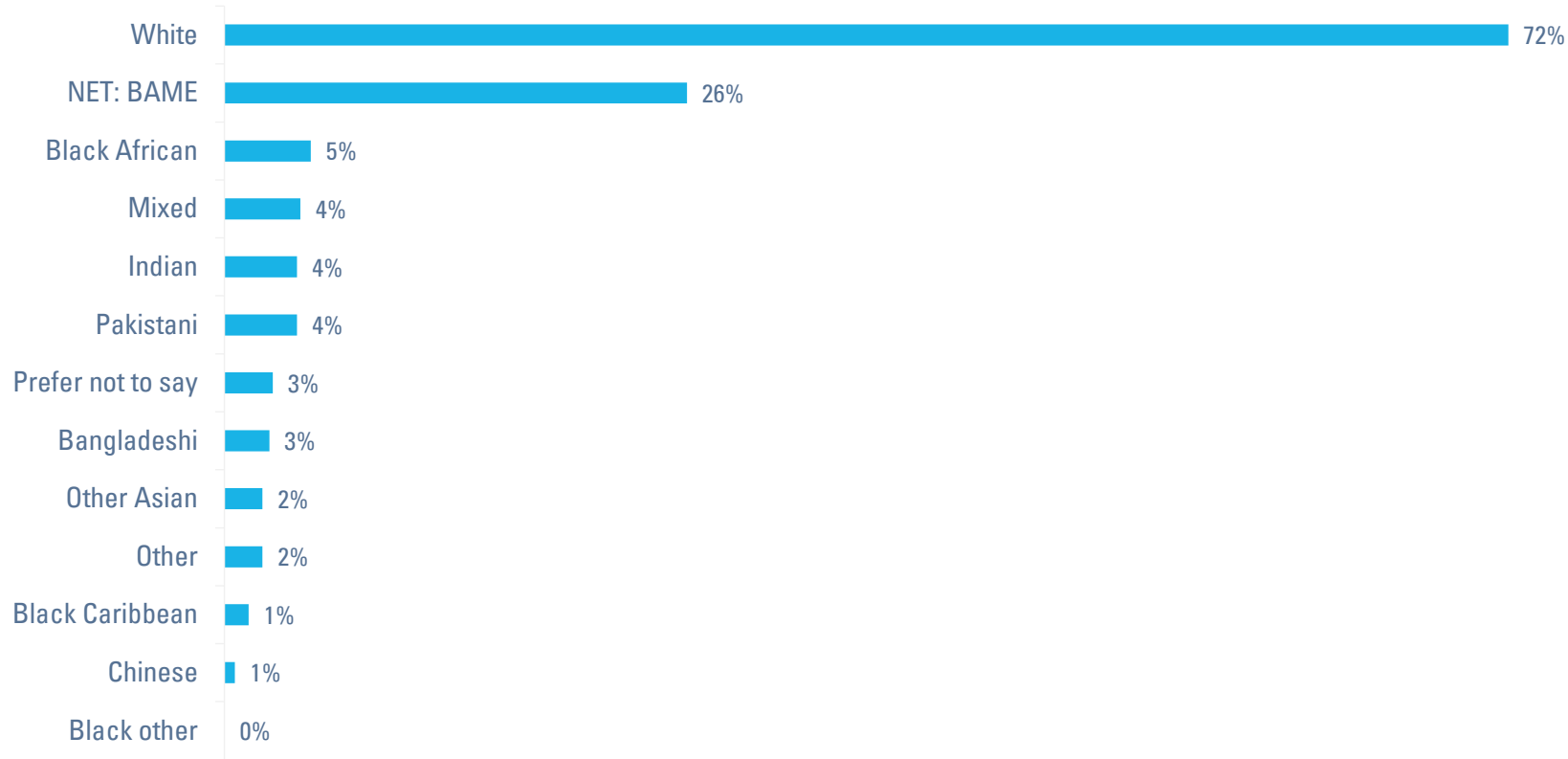
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Ethnicity

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Q15. What is your ethnicity?
All respondents: Total=520