

2019/20

RATE

REPORT

THE RECOGNISING AND ADVANCING
TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARDS



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OPENING STATEMENT

The RATE Awards scheme was first introduced by Stirling Students' Union in 2010 and is one of the longest running student-led teaching awards in Scotland. RATE was created from the desire to recognise the excellent quality of teaching at the University of Stirling and to provide students with the opportunity to identify areas of good practice within their learning experience.

We have developed our awards categories over the years to reflect students' desires to recognise not only faculty members and specific schools, but also supervisors and student services for their excellent work in improving the student experience at Stirling.

The RATE Awards are now a defining moment in the University calendar and staff members from across the institutions look forward to the award ceremony at the end of the academic year. It is an opportunity for the whole University community to come together and celebrate the inspiring teaching here at Stirling.

Although this year the event couldn't go ahead as planned, working with the Faculty Officers to deliver the first ever online RATE Awards was an absolute joy, bringing some much needed positivity to an uncertain time. The boost to staff morale is invaluable, and I am proud to say that RATE continues to be an essential part of the University of Stirling.

Amy Smith (Vice President Education 19/20)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The RATE awards are open to all students across all years, study programmes and campuses. They provide a great opportunity for student voice to be heard and allow for the recognition of staff members who went above and beyond for their students. This year is the 10th anniversary of the RATE awards which provide various categories for nominations shaped by the 10 years' tradition at the University of Stirling. Students submit staff nominations with a brief justification, which are then reviewed by a students' panel to evaluate the nominations and decide on shortlists and winners. These are not decided based on the quantity of the nominations but rather their quality. This ensures that awards are being received based on indicators of excellence in teaching such as teachers showing vast knowledge, passion, encouragement, approachability and support, providing quality feedback and being an inspiration to their students.

When the nomination data was analysed, several common themes came through. Overall, the terms "supportive" and "helpful" were very prevalent, with at least one of them being included in the top 5 themes of every category. This was in accordance with last year's RATE report which also found these themes to be prevalent across categories. Yet some themes also differed across the categories, and even across the faculties. For example, one of the most frequent themes for the Faculty of Health Science and Sport was showing support and care towards students and being an inspiration. In the Faculty of Natural Sciences, the main theme was approachability of the staff, while humour and passion were very prevalent in the Management School. In the Faculty of Arts & Humanities, students appreciated vast knowledge and helpfulness of their teachers and in the Social Sciences, students most frequently mentioned support and help.

Some themes were present across all categories, such as being inclusive. Being inclusive meant to the students that their teachers would ensure that everyone has the conditions to perform well and be engaged, that all resources are available, everyone felt welcomed, being encouraged to participate, and receiving support when needed. Another common theme across all categories and faculties was students' appreciation for teachers connecting with the students on a personal level and the teachers' concern for students' mental health and personal issues in addition to academic issues. Additionally, organising various events and providing possibilities to get engaged were mentioned frequently across the nominations as they helped to build a sense of community at the university.

Another important aspect of the nominations was students mentioning feedback, both concerning feedback on their assignments that were timely, encouraging and aimed at enhancement of their skills as well as students being able to give feedback on their teaching. Students appreciated when they felt they are being listened to and when the teachers would implement changes according to students' needs to make the students' experience the best possible.

The RATE awards provide a space where the students voice is being heard and where the students can share what they think is the best practice in teaching. They can nominate their teachers and other university staff who went above and beyond and send them a positive message of recognition. The RATE awards also provide valuable insight and information about best practice in higher education which can be used to inspire positive change.

WINNERS AND RUNNERS UP

Excellence in Teaching in the Faculty of Arts & Humanities

- Staci Rowilson (WINNER)
- Andrea Baumeister (Runner Up)

Excellence in Teaching in the Faculty of Health Sciences and Sport

- Fiona Smith (WINNER)
- Christopher Hartley (Runner Up)

Excellence in Teaching in the Faculty of Natural Sciences

- Timothy Whalley (WINNER)
- Giuseppe Paladini (Runner Up)

Excellence in Teaching in the Faculty of Social Sciences

- Kylie Bradfield (WINNER)
- Vikki McCall (Runner Up)

Excellence in Teaching in the Stirling Management School

- Paul Cowell (WINNER)
- Maria Grydaki (Runner Up)

Fantastic Feedback

- Christopher Hartley (WINNER)
- Jane Robertson (Runner Up)

Best Tutor

- Damyan Kachulski (WINNER)
- Thomas Collins (Runner Up)

Dedication to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- Peter Matthews (WINNER)
- Roger Watt (Runner up)

Innovation in Postgraduate Teaching

- Terrie-Lynn Thompson (WINNER)
- Simon McCabe (Runner up)

Innovation in Online Module Content

- Edward Moran (WINNER)
- Benjamin Davies (Runner up)

Research Postgraduate Supervisor of the Year Award

- Tessa Parkes (WINNER)
- Mirko Moro, Oliver Mallet (Runners up)

Outstanding Admin

- Allison Butler (WINNER)
- Susan Bell (Runner up)

Outstanding Student Support

- Damyan Kachulski (WINNER)
- David Battersby (Runner Up)

Faculty Officer of the Year

- Ryan McMillan (WINNER)
- Linda Axelsson (Runner Up)

Faculty of the Year

- Faculty of Natural Sciences (Winner)
- Stirling Management School (Runner Up)

Student Service of the year

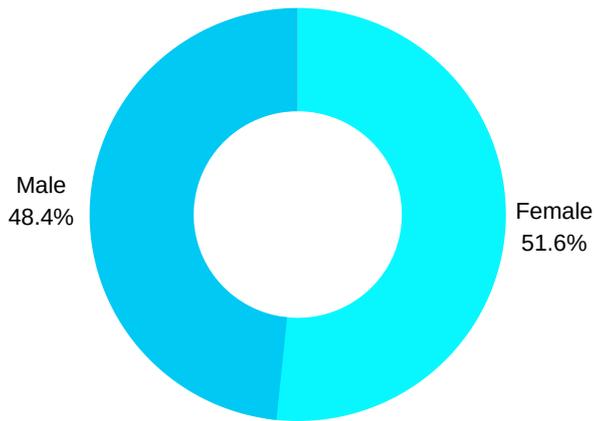
- Accommodation Services (WINNER)
- Library and Information Services (Runner Up)

WINNERS AND RUNNERS UP

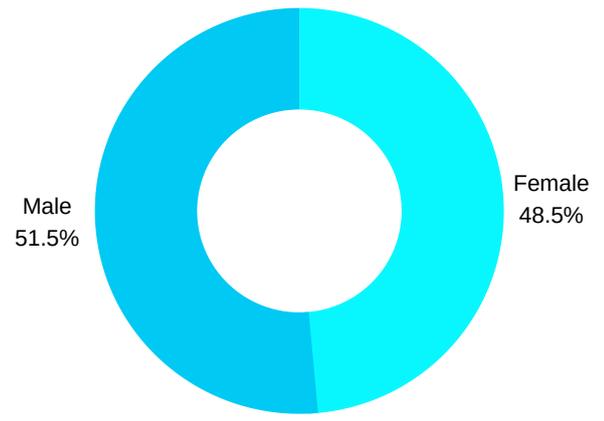
Dedication to Sustainability

- Colin Dey (WINNER)
- Hannes Stephan (Runner Up)

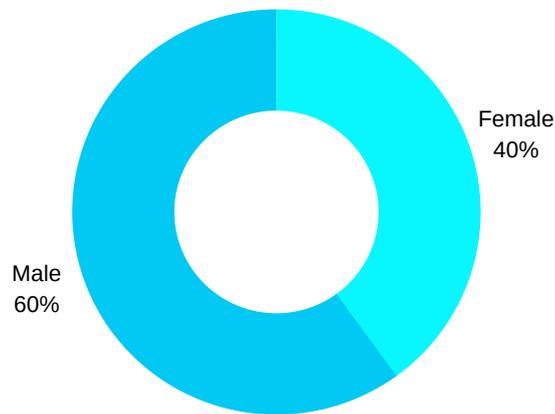
DEMOGRAPHICS OF NOMINATED STAFF



NOMINATED



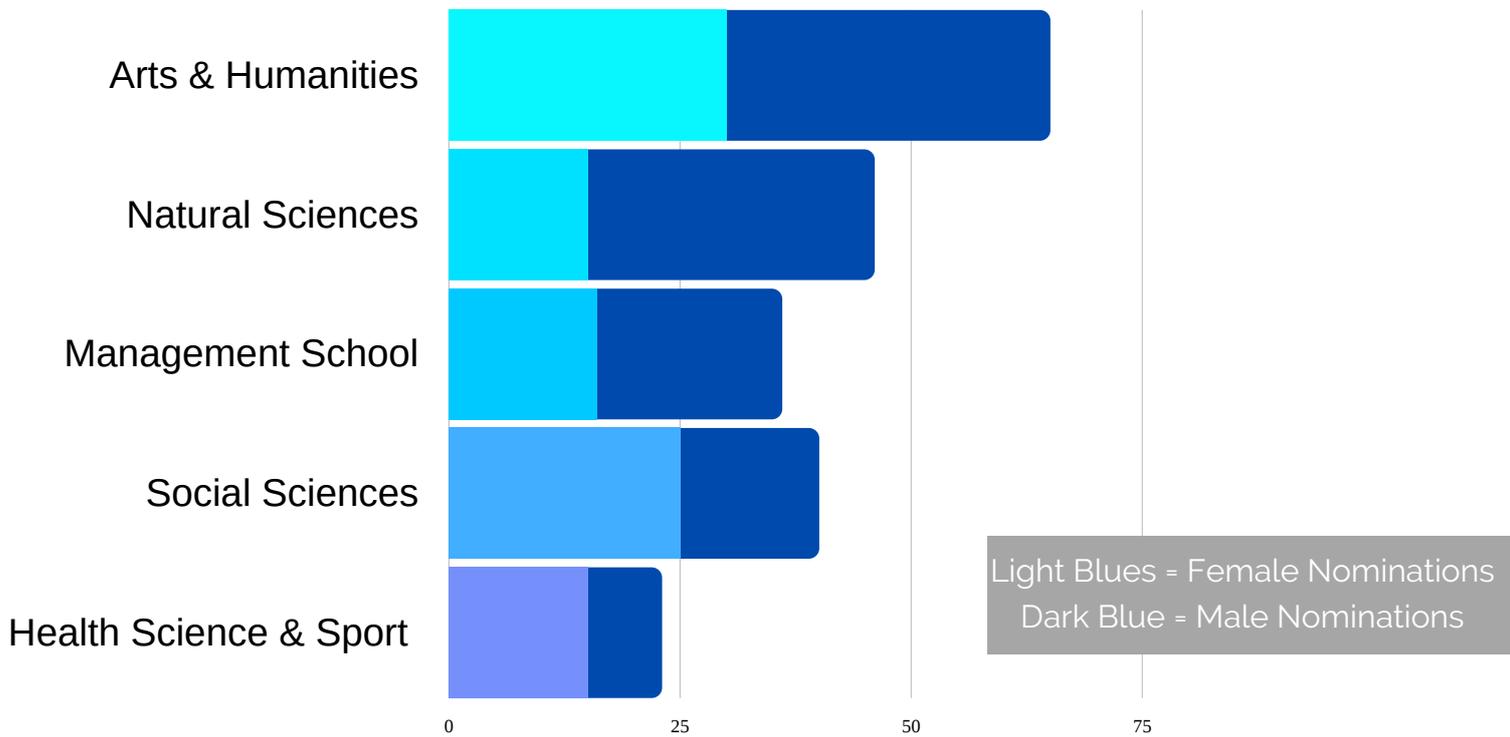
SHORTLISTED



WINNERS

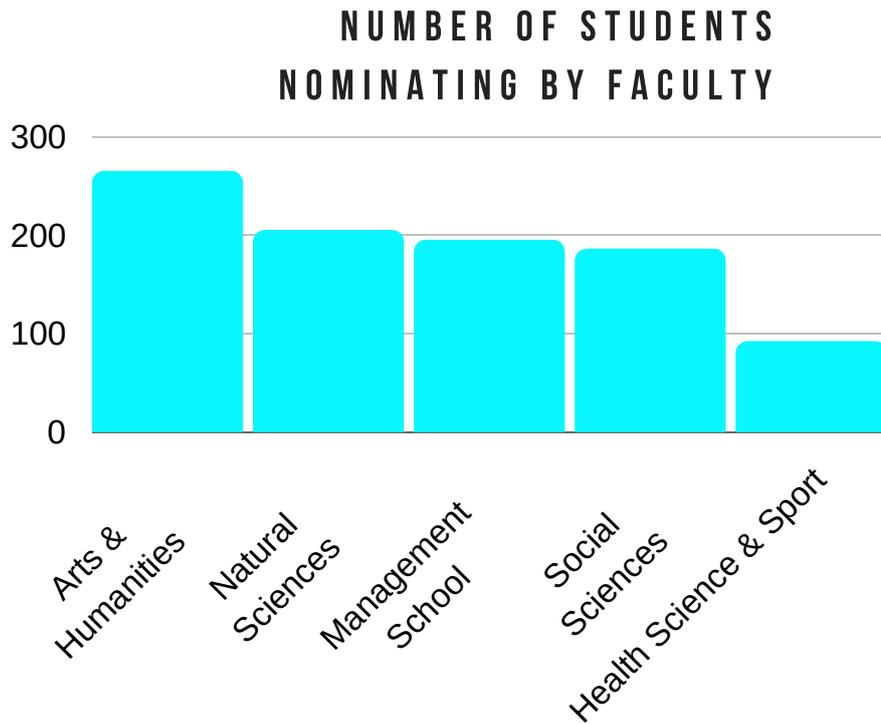
Analysing the gender distributions of nominations, shortlists and winners amongst the teaching staff, it was possible to see a similar trend to last years' analysis. Female teaching staff received more nominations than their male counterparts, however male teaching staff had a larger proportion amongst the shortlisted and the winners. This trend is in accordance with last years' RATE awards analysis, and it would be of interest to consider this trend in the upcoming years.

TEACHING STAFF NOMINATED IN EACH FACULTY



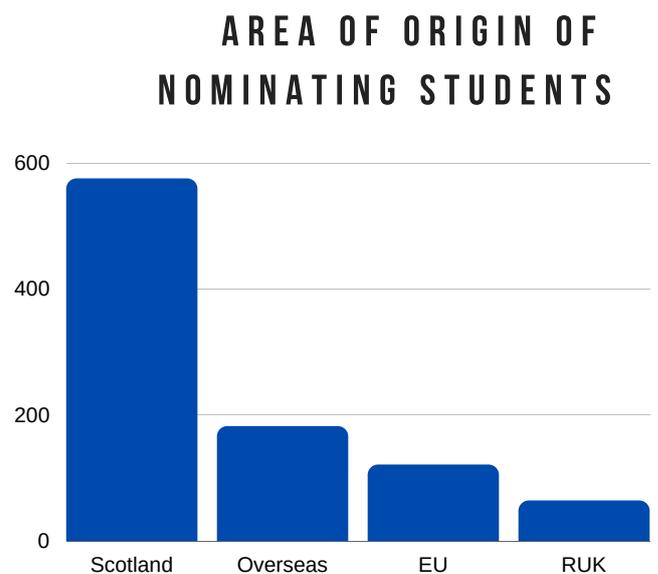
The Faculty of Arts & Humanities had the highest number of nominated teaching staff amongst the faculties. The Faculty of Natural Sciences had the largest proportion of male teaching staff nominated in a faculty, whereas the Faculty of Health Science & Sport had the largest proportion of female teaching staff nominated for the RATE awards. The genders of nominees were most equally distributed in the Faculty of Arts & Humanities.

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS



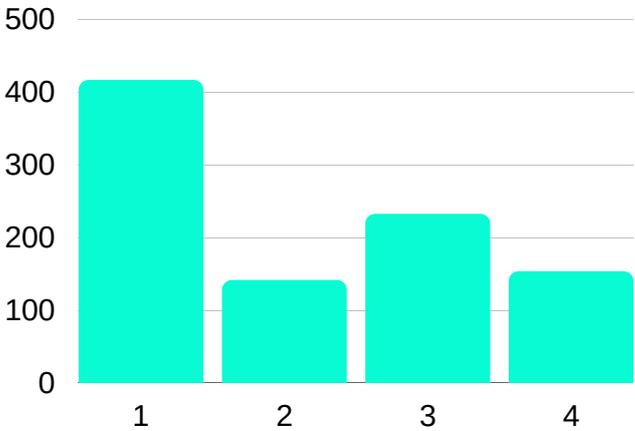
In the category of Excellence in Teaching, the faculty of Arts & Humanities received the most nominations. Followed by Natural Sciences, Management School and Social Sciences which all received a similar number of nominations.

Most nominations were received from students of Scottish origin, which was a similar trend to last year. However, compared to last years' analysis, overseas students increased nominations by 136%, making this group the second largest of students nominating.

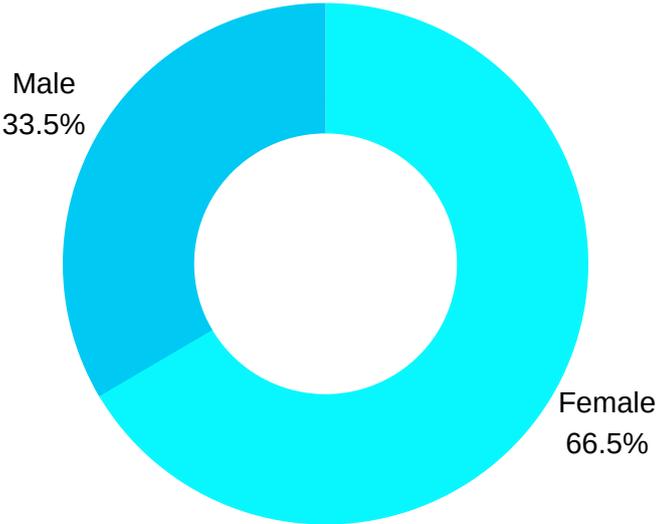


Most nominations were received by 1st years students. It was a large increase compared to last year, where they formed the 3rd largest group in received nominations. It would be interesting to observe this trend in the next years and be able to hear from all year groups. It should be noted this included postgraduate students, so for example a postgraduate taught student would appear as a 1st year students. Due to set-up of the system the data was gathered in, it was not possible to separate these at the time and as such this should be factored into any conclusions.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS NOMINATING BY YEAR GROUP



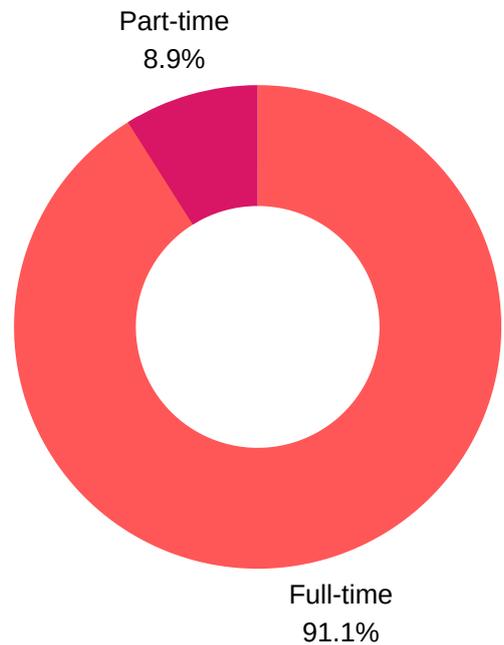
GENDER OF STUDENTS NOMINATING



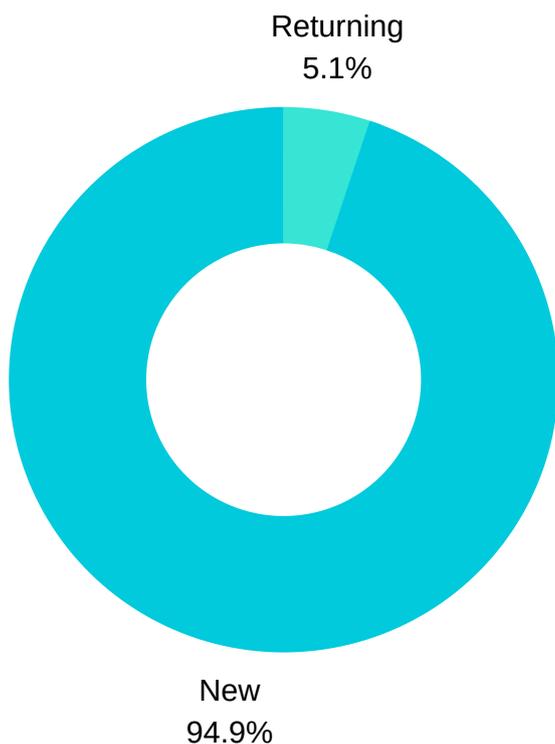
Female students participated in RATE nominations more than their male counterparts. This was a similar trend to last years' RATE awards, however, the percentage of male students nominating increased by 10% this year.

MODE OF STUDY OF STUDENTS NOMINATING

Full-time students participated in the RATE awards the most. It would be of interest to include more part-time students and ensure their student voice is heard.



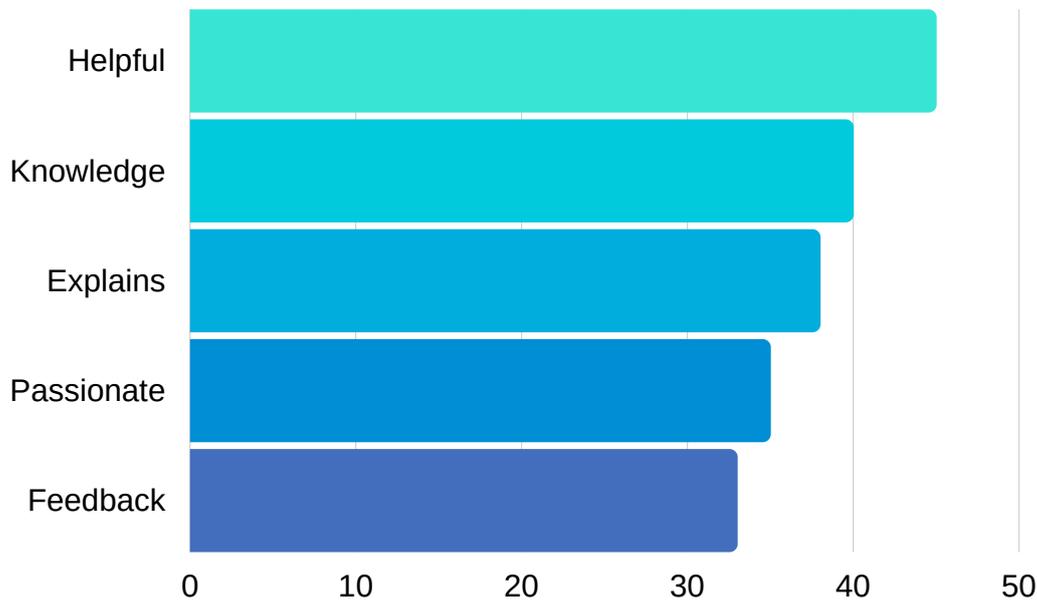
RETURNING AND NEW STUDENTS



New students (so 1st year undergraduate and 1st year postgraduate) made up the largest proportion in the nominations for RATE awards.

INDICATORS OF EXCELLENCE

ARTS & HUMANITIES



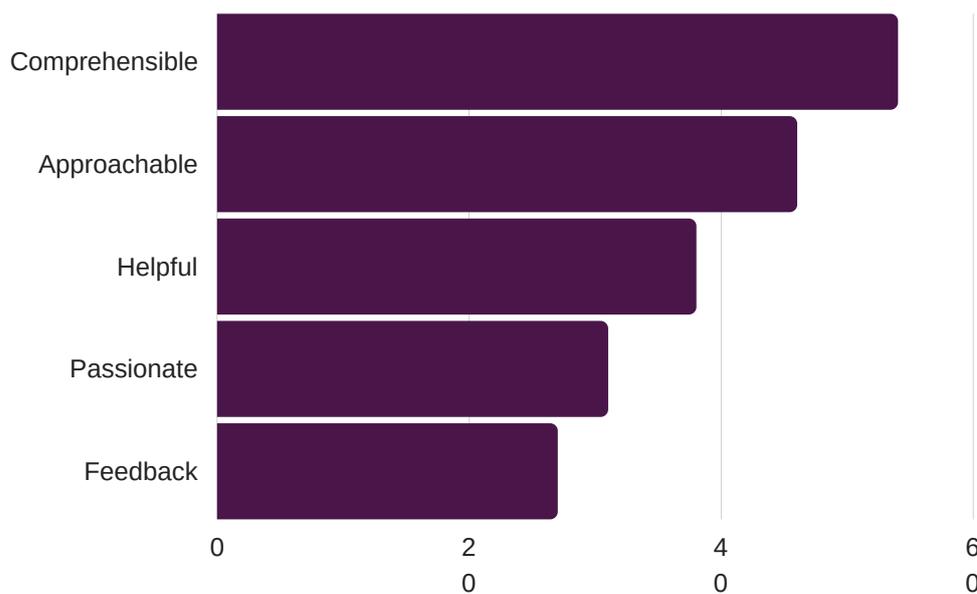
Helpful

Many students appreciated when their teachers were helpful. Helpful can mean different things to different students. Helpful meant for many students that their teachers were approachable and were willing to provide them with further explanations of their topics, they provided both academic and personal support, and they helped them reach their full potential. Many students found it helpful when their teachers were open to questions, were responsive in online communication and made the students feel at ease about approaching them.

Knowledgeable and Passionate

Students valued highly when their teachers were knowledgeable in their field and had expertise and experience as they provided deep insight into their topics and could share their own experience in the field. Students appreciated when their teachers were passionate about their subject as it made their teaching captivating, igniting students' own passion for the subject, and inspired them for future careers.

NATURAL SCIENCES



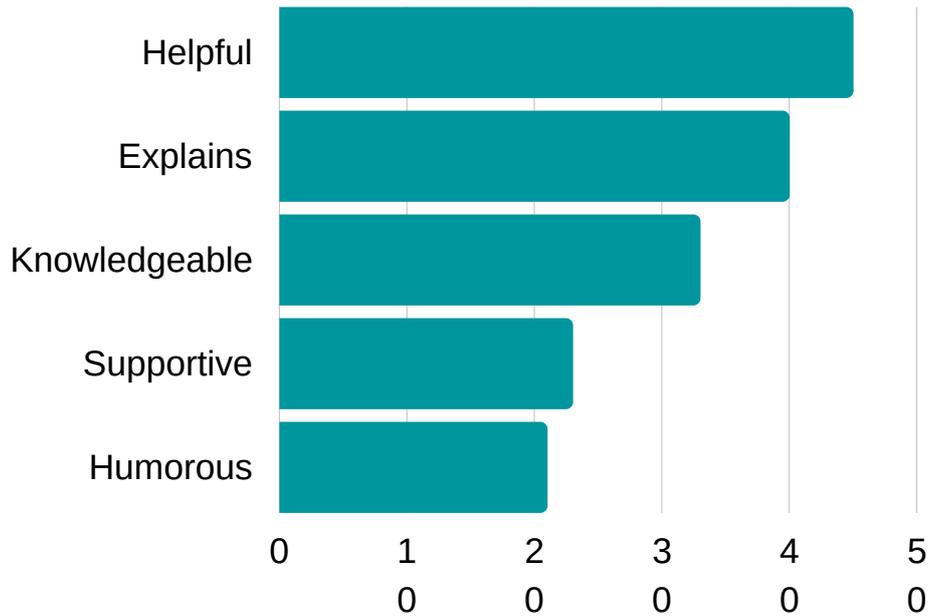
Comprehensible

Students appreciated when their teachers explained the topics in a comprehensible manner by breaking down a complex topic into easier and more understandable chunks. They valued when teachers were mindful about being understood by all the students and would try to get information across to everyone. This made students feel more at ease and made them more engaged. Many students valued when their teachers were able to link the topics to current issues and to relatable, real-life examples as well as enriching their lectures with amusing anecdotes and personal stories.

Approachable

Students valued teachers' approachability when the teachers were available and open for discussions and were responsive to student's questions. Approachability was indicated by breaking down the student-teacher barrier where students felt encouraged to ask questions and the teachers took extra time out of their schedules to be available to the students.

STIRLING MANAGEMENT SCHOOL



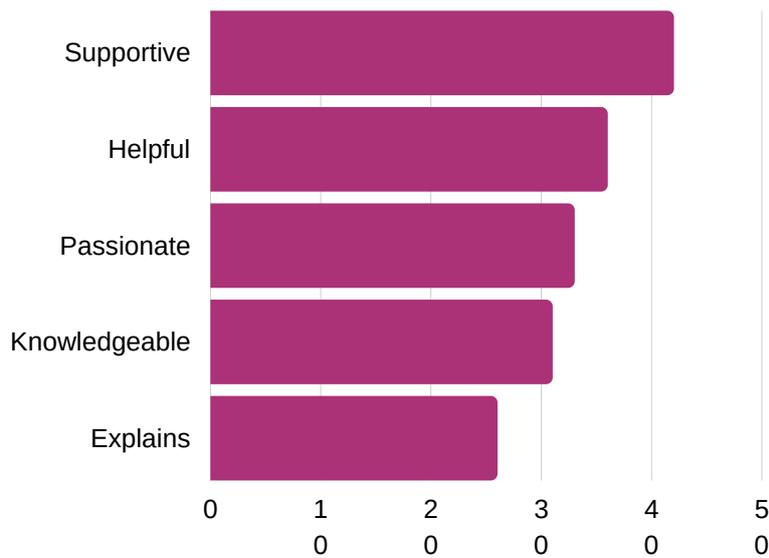
Humorous

Students enjoyed when their teachers would occasionally tell a joke or include a humorous analogy in their lectures as it captivated students' attention and made them more receptive to information. It also took pressure of the students and made the lectures more enjoyable and interesting. Students felt they would attend these lectures more often and would look forward to attending.

Knowledgeable

Students valued highly when their teachers were knowledgeable in their subjects and were able to provide a deep insight into their topics. Students valued when their teachers had expertise in the industry and would share their own experience with the students. Students appreciated when the teachers took the time to explain complex topics and break them into easier, more understandable chunks and were flexible with different teaching approaches to best suit their students and ensure that everyone understands their topics. Students also appreciated when teachers used real-life examples and analogies to make the learning content more relatable and understandable.

SOCIAL SCIENCES



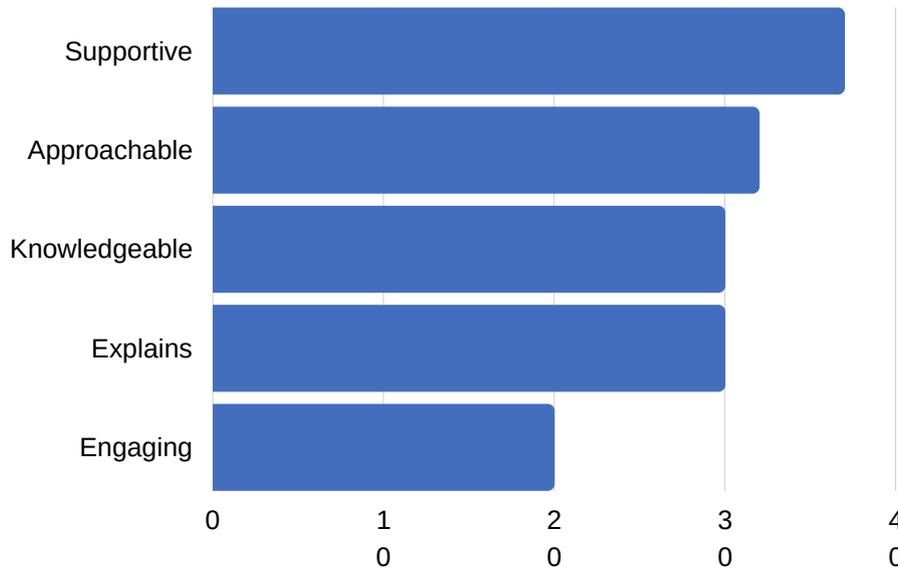
Passionate

Students valued highly when their teachers were passionate about their subject as it made their lectures more interesting and enjoyable. Being passionate helped the students ignite their own passion for the subject and inspired them for future careers in the field. Students also appreciated when their teachers were humorous and had a positive attitude as it made them feel more relaxed and they would look forward to attending those classes.

Feedback

Many students highlighted feedback which they appreciated receiving on their assignments. They valued when feedback was encouraging, balanced, thoughtful, clear and positive. They also enjoyed receiving feedback that could contribute to their self-development in studying and writing skills and encourage new ways of thinking. Many students also valued when the teachers were receptive to receiving feedback from the students and would take time to listen to the students and be understanding of their needs.

HEALTH SCIENCE & SPORT



Supportive

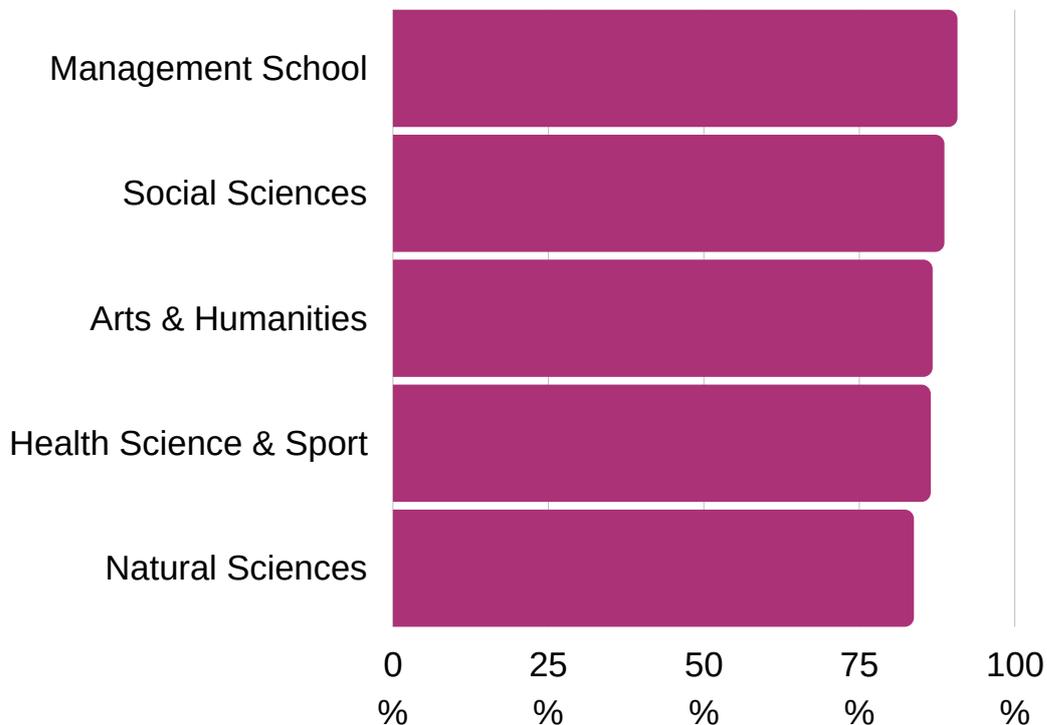
Students valued receiving support from their teachers regarding the teaching content and assignments and concerns about their future careers and personal issues. Students valued teachers who were willing to take time from their busy schedules to pay attention to students' needs and support them by providing academic and personal advice. Students valued when teachers were understanding of issues that the students face and showed care and kindness towards them. They also valued when teachers made an effort to get to know the students. Students highly valued increased amounts of support from their teachers during the COVID-19 outbreak by providing honest and up-to-date information and reassurance.

Approachable

Approachability may mean different things to different students. Students especially valued when teachers were "easy to talk to" and they could easily get in touch with them to ask questions or seek advice or support. Many students valued teachers' availability to meet with them for a chat or quick responsiveness to any queries. Students highly valued teachers' preparedness to help and support them.

NSS 2020 ANALYSIS

OVERALL SATISFACTION % RATING



Natural Sciences

The Faculty of Natural Sciences scored highly (85.4%) in teaching on the courses. The keywords analysis of the RATE nominations showed that students often mentioned a great ability of their teachers to explain difficult concepts, teachers made sure that everyone in their class understands and comprehends. Another prevalent theme in the Natural Sciences faculty was teachers' passion for their topics, which made their teaching interesting and engaging, and the use of humour, which makes classes more enjoyable and relaxed. The score for satisfaction on Assessment and Feedback in the NSS was 73.5%. Feedback was quite a prevalent theme in the RATE nominations with students appreciating feedback that was timely, constructive and directed at enhancement of students' development and skills. Student Voice score in the NSS was 71.1% for the Natural Sciences faculty. Students often mentioned in the RATE nominations that excellence in teaching was connected to the teachers listening to students' feedback and implementing changes in their courses accordingly. Students valued when the teachers organized feedback sessions, would respond in discussions boards and would provide the option to give feedback anonymously.

Arts and Humanities

The Faculty of Arts and Humanities scored 89.3% for satisfaction on the teaching courses. An analysis of the RATE nominations showed themes around good practice in teaching, such as teachers being knowledgeable and passionate. Students in the Arts and Humanities Faculty valued highly when their teachers had large expertise and experience as it allowed them to explain their topics on a deeper level, and they enjoyed when their teachers were passionate as it helped the students ignite their own passion for the subject. The Faculty of Arts and Humanities scored 81.9% for Academic Support satisfaction. Support was one of the key themes in the RATE nominations as students nominated teachers who offered them academic and career guidance, support on their course and other available courses, and support and care about personal issues. Students also valued when their teachers were approachable and easy to talk to as it made the students more comfortable about asking for support and guidance. The overall score for Assessment and Feedback satisfaction from the NSS in the faculty was 82.7% and the RATE nominations showed a prevalent theme of feedback which was evaluated especially positively when feedback was timely, detailed, extensive, sensitive and positive and would encourage the students to further develop their academic skills.

Health Sciences and Sport

The overall score for Academic support in the Health Sciences and Sport faculty was 78.8%. The RATE nominations showed that support was the most frequent theme for the faculty. The students appreciated when they could approach their teachers for support on their course work and assignments as well as for academic and career guidance and support during difficult circumstances and personal issues. According to the NSS, the overall satisfaction with teaching on the course was 88% for the faculty, increasing by 8.8% from last year. In the RATE nominations, there was a common theme connected to quality teaching, such as teachers who were knowledgeable and comprehensible and were able to transfer their knowledge in an understandable and captivating manner. The satisfaction about the Organisation and Management at the faculty was 70.1%, increasing by 11.7% from last year. The RATE nominations showed themes of students appreciating structured and organised courses which had a clear outline of expectations for the students.

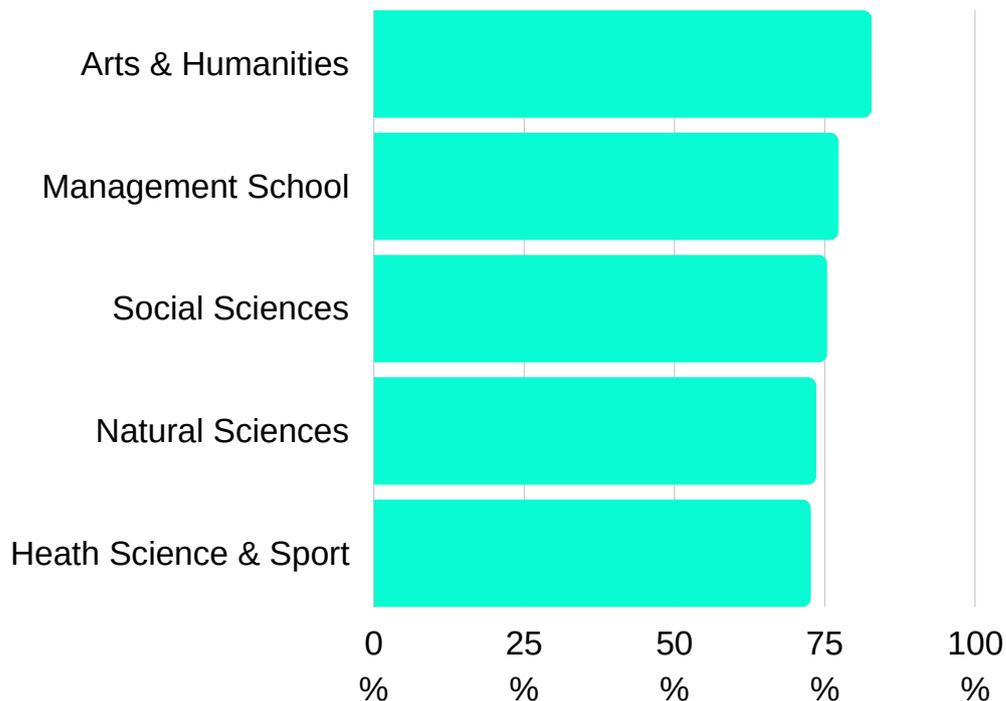
Faculty of Social Sciences

The NSS showed overall satisfaction with teaching on the courses of 88.9%. In the RATE nominations, some of the most prevalent themes were knowledgeable and passionate, with the students appreciating vast knowledge and expertise of their lecturers who were able to challenge their thinking and introduce new ways of thinking and perspectives. According to the NSS, the satisfaction for Academic Support in the faculty was 71.9%. The RATE nominations showed support to be the most prevalent theme in the nominations with students appreciating receiving academic guidance and support, hearing about career opportunities, and receiving support with their personal issues.

Stirling Management School

The NSS showed satisfaction with teaching in the Stirling Management School of 84.5%. Analysis of RATE nominations showed that students in this faculty appreciated when their teachers were knowledgeable and had expertise and experience in the industry so they could provide an insight into their topics, share their own experiences, and provide real-world examples. Students also valued when their teachers had a positive attitude and occasionally used humour to make students more relaxed. The overall satisfaction with academic support was 80.6% according to the NSS. The data from the RATE nominations showed frequent themes of support and approachability, where the students felt at ease about approaching their teachers and getting support regarding their course work and academic paths, as well as with personal issues. The score for satisfaction regarding assessment and feedback was 77.2%. The RATE nominations showed students were also nominating their teachers for providing comprehensive, timely, transparent and regular feedback which aimed at enhancing their studying skills. Students valued when they had the option to give feedback on their teaching and when they felt they are being heard and the teachers implement changes as a response. The NSS score for Student Voice was 79.5%, increasing by 7.2% from last year.

Assessment and Feedback: Positive Performance by Faculty - NSS 2020



Staff have made the subject interesting

Interesting was a frequent theme in the RATE nominations with students mentioning different reasons why they found a lecture interesting. For example, by making a lecture interactive, providing deep insight and real-life examples or sharing, using different multimedia or sharing a humorous anecdote. According to the NSS, the category "Staff have made the subject interesting" has risen by 3% from last year.

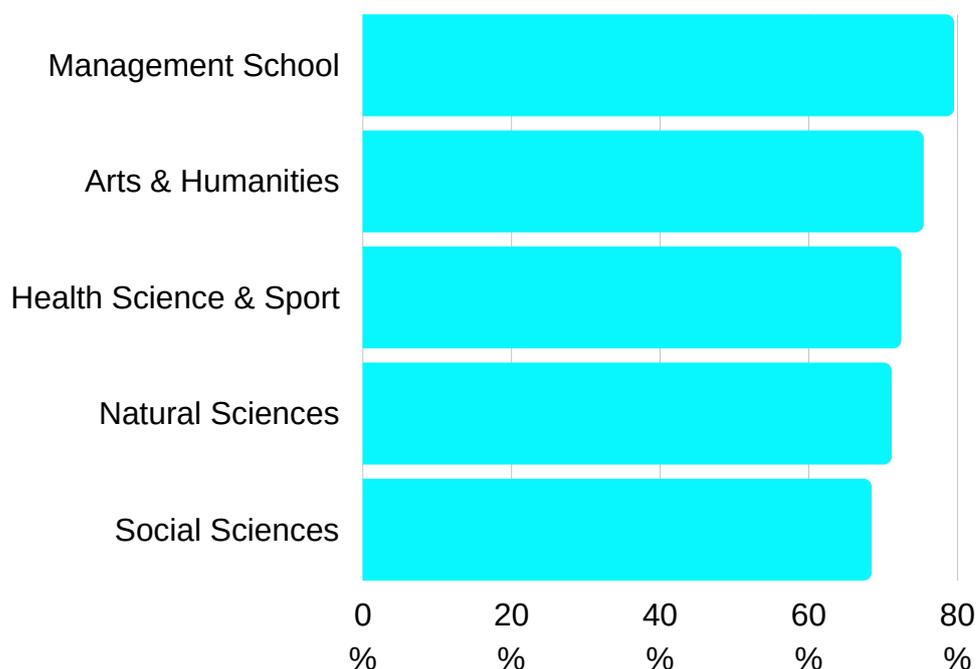
My course has challenged me to achieve my best work

The theme "challenging" has been mentioned by students in each faculty where they appreciated when their course was positively challenging and motivated them to acquire new skills and helped their development. According to the NSS, the overall score for this category was 84%, with a 4% rise from last year.

I have received helpful comments on my work

Feedback was one of the most common themes in the RATE nominations, with the students appreciating its regular and timely manner as well as valuing feedback's emphasis on developing students' skills and providing encouragement. The NSS score for "I have received helpful comments on my work" was 76%.

Student Voice: Positive Performance by Faculty -
NSS 2020



I have had the right opportunities to provide feedback on my course

According to the NSS, the overall score for this category was 90%, showing a 3% increase from last year. Being able to provide feedback on the course was a prevalent theme in the RATE nominations with students highlighting opportunities where they could share feedback from the students and discuss issues with the teachers. Students valued highly when they felt they are being listened to and changes are being implemented to improve the students' experience on the course. According to the NSS, there was an increase by 8% this year in the clarity of how students' feedback is being acted on.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Many students highlighted that their teachers went above and beyond or took the extra mile to provide a great learning experience for them. Going above and beyond can mean different things to students, as they highlighted extra efforts and engagement in many different areas.

Connecting on a personal level. Taking extra effort to get to know students' names and so making their learning experience more personal.

Taking extra time to chat with the students, listen to their concerns, offer more explanations and answer questions.

Mental Health. Being concerned with students' well-being, being attentive and offer support and flexibility.

Inclusive. Making sure all students understand. Making everyone feel included and engaged and provide the best opportunity for all students to perform well.

Support. Providing support regarding course work as well personal issues and offering career guidance.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Opportunities. Making students aware of extracurricular activities, career opportunities and internships and supporting them throughout application processes.

Explaining. Providing real-life examples to make teaching more relevant and comprehensible. Adjusting teaching styles according to the students' needs.

Feedback. Regular feedback which was constructive and encouraging helped students deepen their knowledge, enhance their studying skills and helped their academic development.

Organized. Clear structure of content and assesment. Well-informed students felt more at ease.

Interesting. Going above and beyond to make teaching captivating by implementing different teaching methods and using multimedia.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Positive Attitude. Use of humour and personal anecdotes made lectures more fun and relaxed. Friendly and positive attitude towards the students was highly appreciated.

Resources. Providing extra resources to enhance understanding of a topic. Providing training material for tests and exams to build students' confidence and make them feel more at ease.

Caring. Showing personal interest towards students how they perform academically and how they do personally. Providing opportunities to fulfil students' potential.

Encouraging. Encouragement for students to get involved in extracurricular activities and to apply for internships as well as giving encouraging feedback that builds students' skills and confidence.

BEST TUTOR

Best tutor was the most popular category in the RATE awards. A tutor is a close person to the students and often the first point of contact, Students recognized many tutors who went above and beyond.

Students appreciated a personal connection with their tutors where their tutors would make an effort to get to know their students and connect with them. This made students feel more at ease and supported and they would feel more relaxed about approaching their tutors with questions or asking for guidance. They appreciated their tutors taking extra time to listen and valued highly when their tutors were receptive and understanding their needs.

Students enjoyed a positive attitude of their tutors and use of humour as it took the pressure off the students. They also enjoyed their tutors' passion for their subject which elevated their own interest and made them feel more positive and motivated about their course.

Students valued when their tutors encouraged their skills development, personal growth and would help them build their confidence. Students valued highly when their tutors were aware of opportunities within their field and encouraged students to get involved.



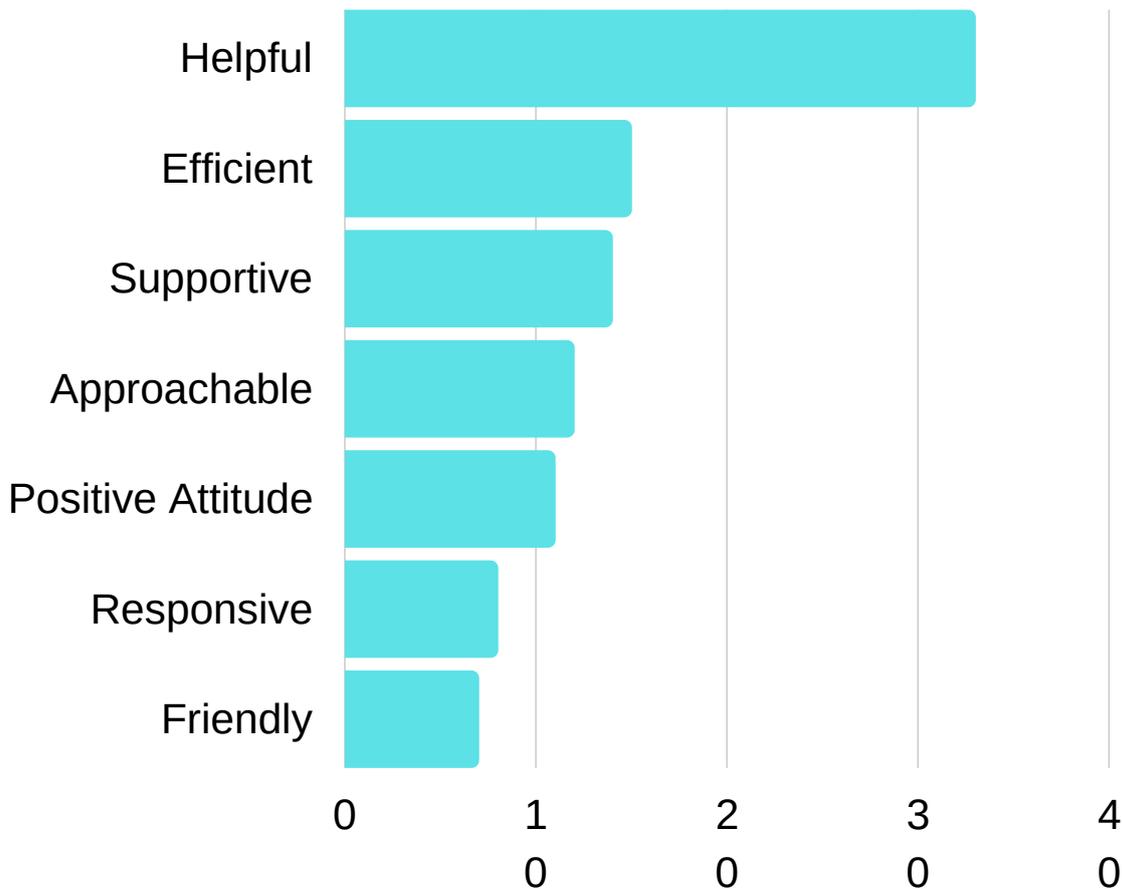
OUTSTANDING ADMIN

Admins play a key role in students' experience at the university. Their support throughout different processes is crucial and many students nominated their admins for going the extra mile.

Students appreciated their support and help during application processes, study exchange programmes or collaboration within faculties. Students valued highly when admins showed approachability, were easy to talk to in person and were responsive in email communication. Many students highlighted that admins "have always been there for them" and highly valued their dedication to providing support.

Many students valued that admins were very knowledgeable, were able to provide information and had outstanding problem-solving skills.

Lastly, students highlighted friendliness and positive attitude of the admin staff which made them feel reassured.



INNOVATION IN ONLINE MODULE CONTENT

Students appreciated innovations in online module content as it made teaching more accessible and flexible. Students enjoyed being able to access tutorials and learning materials on their computers and phones anytime which they found time-saving. Students appreciated use of video guidelines and podcasts and innovative ways of using canvas for sharing songs and video tutorials. Students appreciated using new technologies as they felt it enhances their practical skills.

Students valued highly when they received support regarding new technologies such as teachers giving tutorials on how to use them, being responsive in online communication and being at hand to help fix problems. It was also highly valued when teachers used interactive programmes for discussions as it helped captivating students' attention and made the lectures more enjoyable. Students appreciated use of new technologies and new media as it kept them up-to-date with new possibilities and made teaching accessible for all and enabled students to be more flexible with completing their course work.

New technology

Enhancement of practical skills

Video guidelines

Podcasts

Online tutorials

Support

Flexibility

SPOTLIGHT ON WELLBEING

One of a very frequent themes across the nominations was students' well-being. Students appreciated when their teachers took mental health into considerations and would try to take pressure of the students by being flexible with competing deadlines or offer more flexibility for personal reasons.

Taking students' well-being into consideration enhanced their learning experience at the university and made them feel less stressed.

Connecting with students on a personal level. Getting to know students' names made their learning experience more personal.

Flexibility. Offering more flexibility for students during competing deadlines or personal circumstances.

Approachability. Students felt more at ease when their teachers were available to meet and were open to questions and discussions.

Support. Listening to students' concerns and providing support and guidance.

Students' voice. Being able to provide feedback on their course made students feel more relaxed. Regular feedback session ensured that students' needs were being met.

Contacting students when concerned about their well-being.

Understanding. Students appreciated when the teachers were understanding of students' needs and were mindful that students might feel stressed at times.

Listening. Students appreciated when their teachers took time to listen to students' concerns or personal issues.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION

Raising LGBTQ+ awareness and launching LGBTQ+ support network

Ensuring everyone feels welcome

Ensuring all students have equal opportunities to learn and perform well

Welcoming students from all backgrounds

Raising Mental health awareness

Engaging students in active discussions, ensuring everyone's voice is heard

Tackling the topic of gender equality and being an inspirational advocate for it

Providing innovative online resources that make teaching flexible and accessible to all

Students sent nominations appreciating dedication to equality, diversity and inclusion of the university staff. These are some of the mentioned themes in students' nominations for the RATE awards.

SUSTAINABILITY

Including sustainable development in their teaching

Raising awareness of climate change and environmental issues

Igniting students' passion and interest for sustainable development and providing real life examples from the industry

Informing about different initiatives and projects

Providing accessible online resources about sustainability

Students nominated their teachers for their engagement with sustainability topics, for raising awareness and keeping the students up to date with current initiatives and projects concerning sustainable development. These are some of the themes from the RATE nominations that students enjoyed learning about in their classes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It would be beneficial to analyse data from the NSS in relation to RATE awards nominations in the next years. This year, no direct correlation between the students' satisfaction in the NSS and numbers of RATE nominations in faculties have been established, and we do not expect to find a direct correlation in the next years. However, it is beneficial to explore themes from the NSS as they are frequently being mentioned in the RATE nominations. For example, support, feedback or the students' voice.

In order to increase engagement from students across all year groups (especially returning students), continue to publicise the link to nominations on a variety of platforms.

To engage returning students in the RATE nominations, it would be beneficial for the teaching staff also promoted the RATE awards to students so as to increase participation.

In their nominations, students placed a lot of emphasis on the value of their overall well-being. Therefore it is recommended that there is a greater focus placed on mental health awareness in learning spaces and an emphasis on signposting students.

Different means of online content innovations were mentioned by the students who found them flexible and time-saving. Use of podcasts, video guidelines, online tutorials and new ways of using Canvas were highlighted. With more teaching content moving online, it would be beneficial to use these means of innovations as well as provide students with guidance on their use.

A similar trend to last year's analysis was observed of more female staff receiving nominations however, a larger proportion of shortlists and winners being male staff. It would be of interest to continue looking into this trend in the next years and further observe gender distributions of the nominated staff and nominating students.

While there are many members of staff who are passionate and committed to the UN SDGs, there remains a need to increase awareness among both staff and students in order to provide a wider understanding of each of the 17 goals.

CONCLUDING STATEMENT

Ten years of developing and building on the RATE awards has provided us with a wonderful way of celebrating and recognising the excellent actions and characteristics of the University of Stirling staff that has led to a better student experience. Over the past year, it was the staff members that were able to be helpful and supportive of students' health and wellbeing that were often nominated, or staff that were able to be inclusive, both on a technical and personal level. We hope that staff at the University of Stirling see how valuable these elements are for empowering students and enabling them to be successful in their studies and in life more generally, and that we are developing a culture of support and inclusivity throughout our learning community.

Going forward, the higher education sector in the UK is going through rapid changes, whether in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic, Brexit, climate change, or wider calls for justice, equality, and inclusivity throughout society. The RATE awards provide us with an opportunity to learn during these turbulent times and adjust our approach to learning, teaching, and student living to reflect the needs and desires of students considering the changing environment. The 20/21 academic year is going to look very different from any year previously, and I'm sure that with a few updates for the current circumstance, our RATE awards will help capture these nuances and shed light on best practice going forward.

Lexi Ehresmann (Vice President Education 20/21)



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