

# UNIVERSITY CHALLENGED: HOW STUDENTS RATE THEIR ONLINE EXPERIENCE

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# 18%

**(NEARLY A FIFTH)**

of students were very satisfied with how easy their university made it to access and manage their administrative services, and a further 45% were satisfied, (c.1.77million students satisfied overall). However, 30% were not satisfied and 8% were not at all satisfied with how easy their university made it to access and manage their administrative services. (c1.08million not satisfied overall)

## Two thirds of students

thought that their university systems were easy to use, that it was easy to find the information they needed and that it was easy to manage.

**However**, just over 10% of students disagreed with all of these statements and around a fifth were neutral suggesting that improvements need to be made.

**55%** could access their university admin services from one place and this was a key driver of ease of use and satisfaction.

## INTRODUCTION

**Administration activities are not something that any organisation or person wants to spend large amounts of time on but they are fundamental to a well-run organisation and to ensuring customer satisfaction. There are a number of administrative activities that students have to undertake as part of their university journey. Focusing on the key points in the student life cycle – registration, onboarding, accessing support services and assessment, this research sought to examine the ease of use around these administrative activities.**

The UK higher education sector has become increasingly competitive with institutions competing not only within the UK for the best students, but also with universities globally. At the same time universities struggle to sound distinctive. Research conducted by W100, a THE Consultancy brand in 2017/18 “found that top universities really struggle to look or sound different when their websites are compared. 50 universities use the same or similar shades of blue, and the best online brands are not necessarily the highest ranked.”<sup>1</sup> Effectively articulating the student experience can be a differentiator for a university so it is becoming increasingly important for a university to ensure their experience is not simply good but excellent.



**Customer service is at the heart of a successful economy and society... In public services and the third sector, the quality of the customer experience is central to well-being and social cohesion.**

Joanna Causon Chief Executive,  
Institute of Customer Service

Students come to university with a full digital life and according to Uswitch almost all (98%) of UK adults aged 16-24 now have a smartphone.<sup>2</sup> This generation of students has grown up with the internet and it is their main resource for communication, entertainment and information-gathering. Students' expectations of digital services are set outside of the university environment, so it was important that the research also considered students experience in the wider digital world and how that influences their expectations of university administration services.

The UK Customer Satisfaction Index (UKCSI) is the national barometer of customer satisfaction published twice a year since 2008 by the Institute of Customer Service.<sup>3</sup> The UKCSI compares 281 organisations across 13 sectors and provides a consistent measure of satisfaction. The Public Services (National) sector (74.3) which includes universities came 10th out of the 13 sectors in July 2023 with only Transport (71.9), Public Services (local) (71.3) and Utilities (69.5) sectors scoring lower. Sectors such as Retail (Non-food) (80.8 – highest performing sector) and Banks and Building societies (80.0 third highest performing sector), which are sectors students regularly interact with, consistently score highly demonstrating that universities are lagging behind other industries in terms of customer satisfaction.<sup>4</sup>

A key question for universities is how to move from ok to best in class to meet evolving student expectations. This research demonstrates that satisfaction with university systems can be increased by providing accessible, clear and timely information to students seamlessly across the institution.

## ABOUT THE RESEARCH

**The research, designed and executed by THE Consultancy, was designed to understand the digital experience of university students in terms of how they access their university services in the UK & how this could be improved.**

The study consisted of:

1. A survey of 1,031 completed interviews with current UG and PGT students was conducted between 18th September and 13th October 2023, in order to measure students experiences and views of university administrative services.
2. Alongside the survey 11 depth interviews were undertaken with current UG and PGT students to further understand students experiences and views of administrative services.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theworld100.com/research/research-projects/brand-snapshot-2017-18/>

<sup>2</sup> UK mobile phone statistics, 2023, Uswitch <https://www.uswitch.com/mobiles/studies/mobile-statistics/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.instituteofcustomerservice.com/research-insight/ukcsi/>

<sup>4</sup> The UK Customer Satisfaction Index, 2023 <https://ip.instituteofcustomerservice.com/ukcsi-july2023>

# STUDENT ATTITUDES TOWARDS UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION SYSTEMS

**Universities are generally trusted by students to manage their personal information with three quarters (74%) of current students agreeing that they feel comfortable sharing their personal information with their university and only 13% being concerned with how their university manages their personal data. Students were more split on whether or not they would like more control over the way in which their institution stores their personal data with 27% agreeing, and 27% disagreeing with the statement and nearly half (46%) remaining neutral. (see Figure 1)**

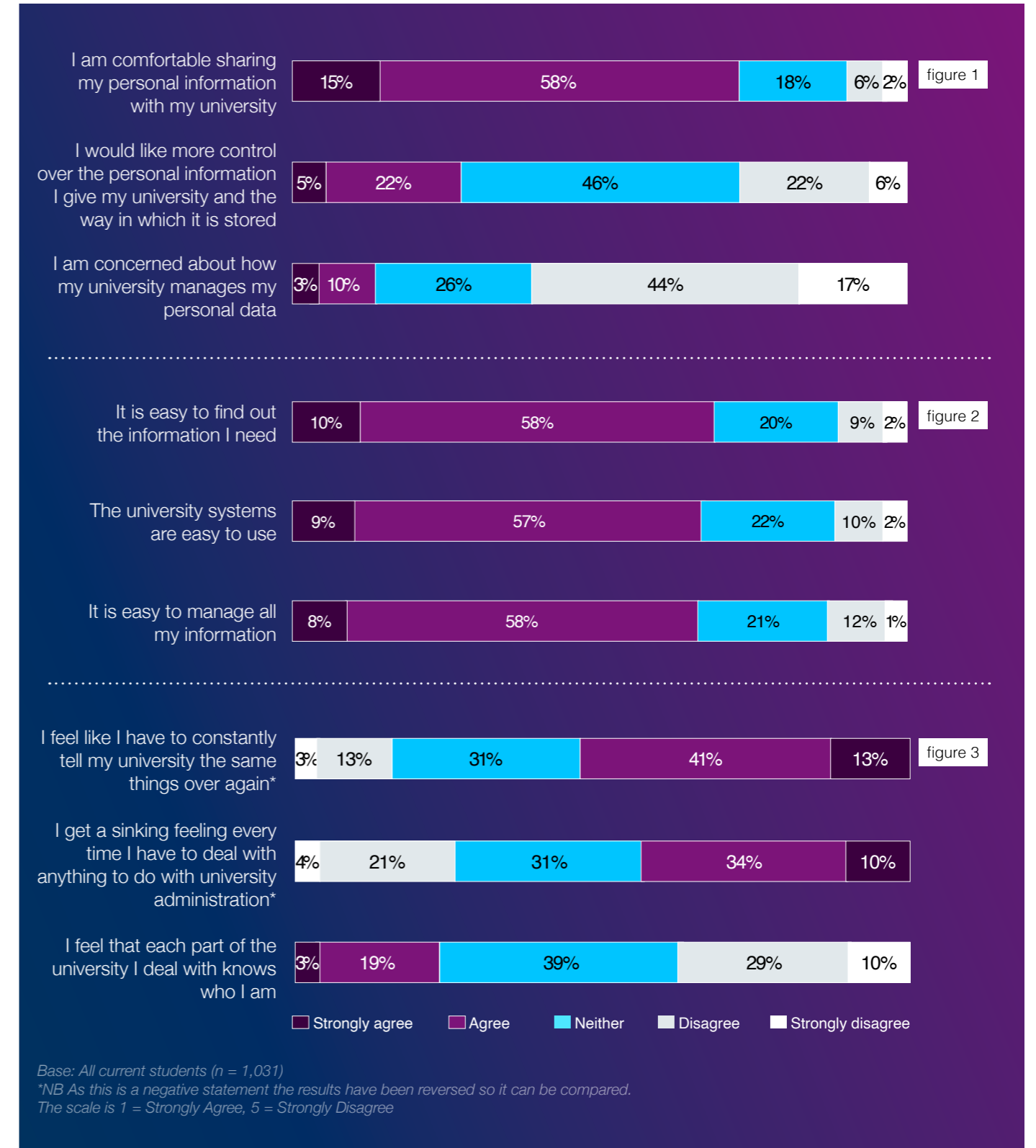
In terms of overall ease of use of university systems, two thirds of students thought that their university systems were easy to use, that it was easy to find the information they needed and that it was easy to manage. However, just over 10% of students disagreed with all of these statements and around a fifth were neutral suggesting that improvements need to be made. (see Figure 2)

For students who could access their universities administrative systems from one place as opposed to having to go to different websites/apps to access these services, agreement with the ease of finding information (76% vs. 60%), with university systems being easy to use (77% vs 54%) and with managing their information (69% vs. 61%) was higher than for those students who had to access their university administrative systems from multiple places. Providing one place to access all administrative services would help universities to increase the ease of use which would help to position them into a place of excellence.

16% of students agreed with the statement 'I feel like I have to constantly tell my university the same things over again' and just over half (54%) disagreed. A quarter (25%) agreed with the statement 'I get a sinking feeling every time I have to deal with anything to do with university administration with only 43% disagreeing and a fifth (22%) of students felt that each part of the university they dealt with knew who they were with 39% disagreeing. (see Figure 3)

Those students who could access their university administrative systems from one place had a much less negative reaction. They were less likely to agree that 'I feel like I have to constantly tell my university the same things over again' (11% vs. 21%), and 'I get a sinking feeling every time I have to deal with anything to do with university administration (20% vs. 32%). There were no differences in agreement with the statement 'I feel that that each part of the university knows who I am' between those who accessed administrative services from one location (25%) and those that used multiple locations (19%). The proportion of students who agreed with the statement did not change between first and third year, but the proportion of second year or later students who disagreed with the statement was higher than for first years (53% vs. 30%) who were more likely to be neutral (48% vs.29% of second year or later students)

Although students were mainly positive about these aspects of dealing with the university, there is room for improvement with such a large proportion of respondents expressing a negative or neutral reaction.



# ENROLMENT

The first experience a student has of a university is the enrolment process. With an average score of 4 out of ten on a scale where 1 was very easy and 10 very difficult, just over half (58%) found the experience of enrolling onto their course for the first time relatively easy. Nearly a third (32%) found the enrolment process hard and around 10% of students found the first time they enrolled to their course difficult (scored 8-10) (See Figure 4). This means that of the c580,000 UK-based students enrolling onto UG and PGT courses for the first time in 2020/21 around 58,000 of them found the experience difficult.



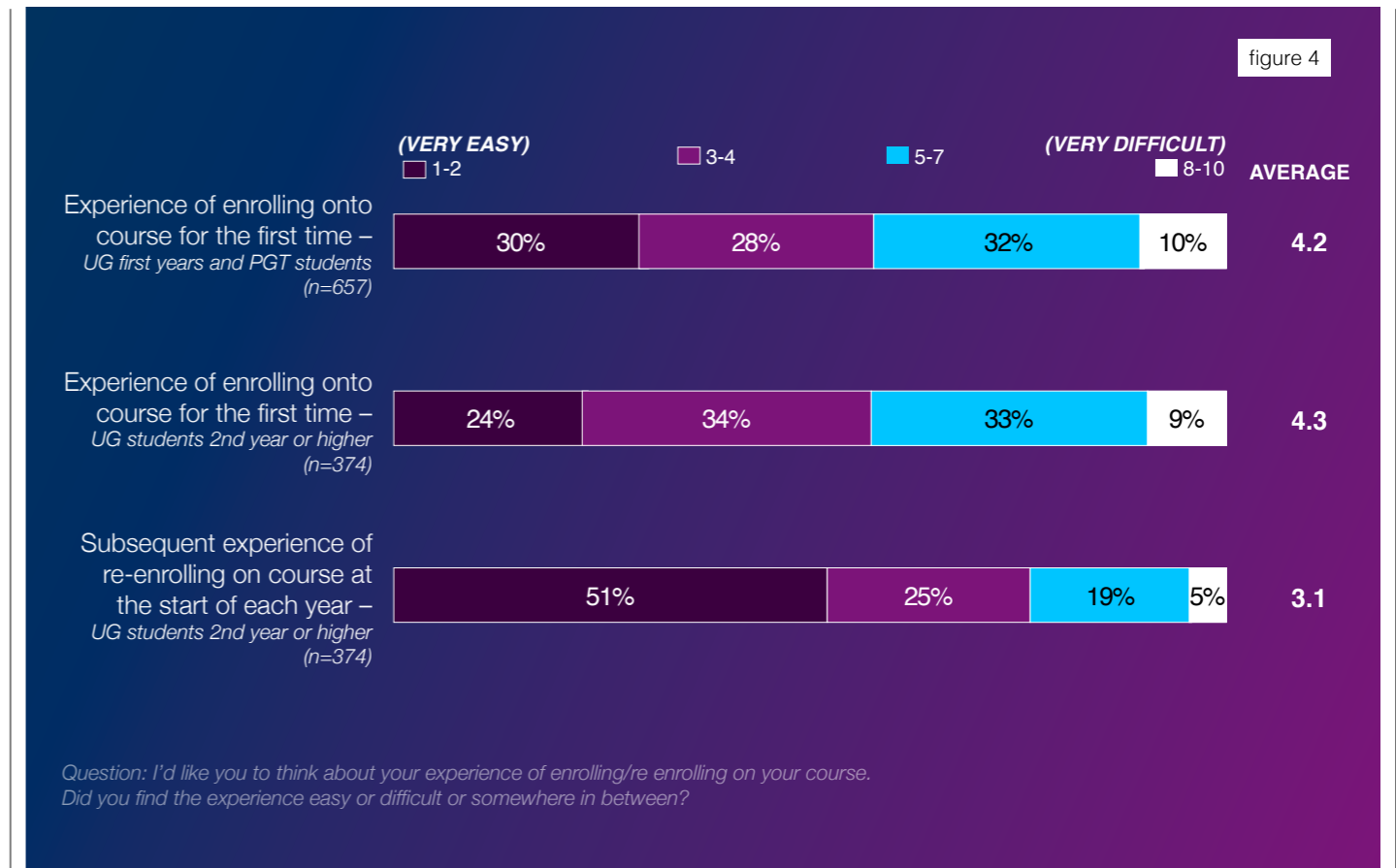
2<sup>nd</sup> year UG  
Management student,  
established university

“And for registering our courses and for the tuition fee payment, they’ve made it on the university’s main page and that’s been a great help I think to all students as it made the information very easy to access... They sent you an e-mail as well specifically telling you how to get it on [the university’s main page]. So I think the entire process of getting onto the page takes around 30 seconds. Then you can navigate your information as you please.”



1<sup>st</sup> year UG  
Pharmacy student,  
established university

“The weeks leading up to the move in day, I had to enrol on this website. It’s got everything to do with the university. They list out all your modules, all the information they have about you and that’s where you register. You have to register so that before you come here you can get your library card and everything like that. I think it was about 20 minutes, it just had everything, like my name, my address, bank details, just everything like that, all that kind of admin stuff. But that was pretty easy. It was just a general form to flick through and then once you were done, you got a confirmation e-mail. And then after that I had to upload a profile picture so that it can be printed onto my library card.”



The key difference in how easy or difficult it was for students to enrol onto their programmes was whether or not they could access their university’s administrative services from one place. Students who said they could access their universities administrative services from one place were more likely to find the enrolment process easier scoring an average of 3.9 out of ten, than those who had to go to different places, particularly when enrolling for the first time. (4.5 out of ten). (See Figure 5). In the qualitative stage students who accessed their universities administrative services from one place described the enrolment process as “easy” and “straightforward”

Those that struggled with the enrolment process found the process “confusing”, particularly the communication around enrolment. “For Enrolment, because I’m doing occupational therapy, I had to book an occupational health

assessment through the university, I had to fill in details for a DBS check for my placement, order the uniform for when I go on placement, get my ID card. These processes start before you started at the university so a lot of it was done via email. And that was slightly confusing, to be honest, because there’s lots of different tasks that you had to do, but they come via lots of different e-mail chains rather than one smooth process where it’s like a checklist of this is what you need to do. I think I would have preferred that, like if it was on a website, if there was a checklist. But instead, I’d I had several different e-mail chains with different departments in the university. So it’d be like the enrolment team, the occupational health team, the placement team, the admin team, the student support team. It’s harder to keep track of what you’ve done and what you need to do.” (PGT occupational health student, post-92 university)

The experience of re-enrolling in a course was found to be significantly easier than the first experience with three quarters (76%) finding it relatively easy compared to their experience of the first enrolment (58%). Students who found the re-enrolment process very easy did so because the process was “simple”, “easy”, “straightforward” and “quick”. Quite a few institutions required their students to simply check the information that they held about them and update it making the process simple and quick.

Students who described the process as easy commented on the clear instructions they were given with some institutions providing guides and a few including videos explaining the enrolment process. These institutions were also good at alerting students to the start of the enrolment process sending out email alerts and reminders.

Although there were relatively few students who found the re-enrolment process very difficult (5%), it was a distinct lack of communication and an unclear process that made the process difficult. One 2nd year UG criminology student commented “*The communication was not as good, as I struggled to understand exactly what I had to do and was always unsure if I had actually completed all I needed to do.*”.

Although the enrolment process was relatively straightforward for the majority of students there is room for some improvements which would be centred around ensuring clear, joined up communication throughout the process. If not already available universities should consider producing guides that explain both the process and the information required.



4<sup>th</sup> year UG law student, post-92 university

“It is conducted online and all your details are saved so you just read over them and click confirm.”



2<sup>nd</sup> year UG Sociology Student, Modern University

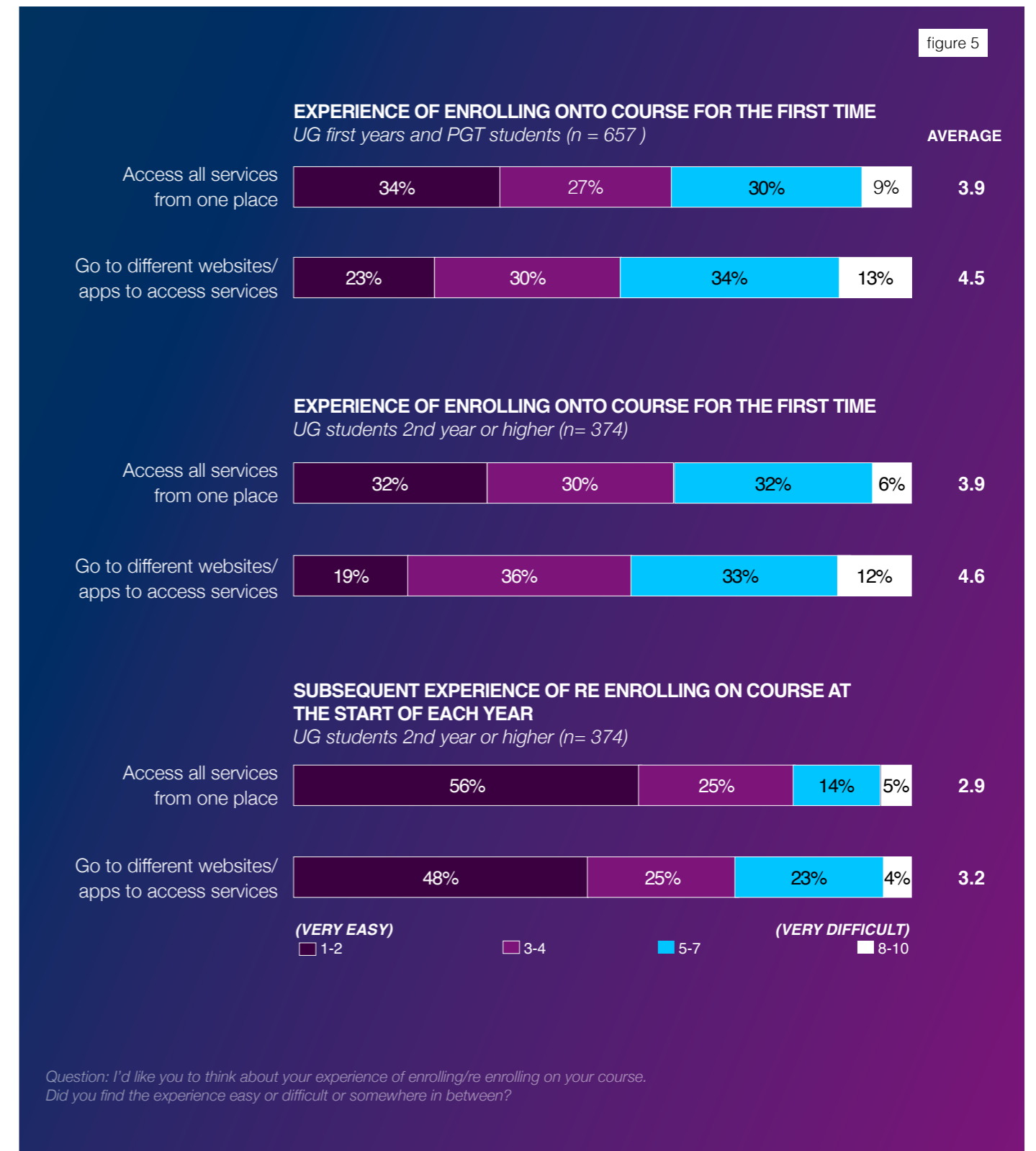
“Very straightforward, everything was easy to find, literally just had to follow the instructions on the screen, also sent out reminder emails with guides on how to re-enrol.”



3<sup>rd</sup> Year UG Geography Student, Modern University

“Clearly listed and stated the process on the university website, provided links, deadlines and helplines in case of difficulties. These all made the process easy to navigate and easy to access and easy to re-enrol.”

figure 5



# COMMON ADMINISTRATION SERVICES

**Just over half (55%) of all students said they could access their university's administrative services from one place, with 45% saying they had to go to different website/apps to access these services. (Figure 6)**  
**The students who could access their institutions administrative services from one place were more likely to be at post-92 (63%), or new wave (73%) institutions than at established institutions (49%).**

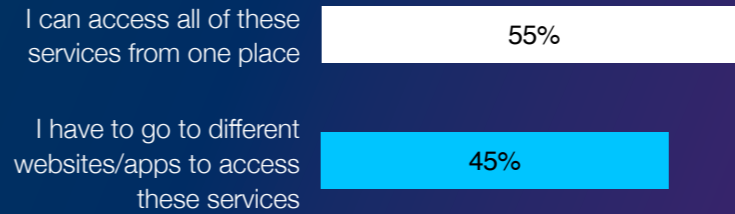
Access via a website was the most common way for 81% of students to access their institutions administrative services, with just over half (56%) accessing via an app and 17% in person. (Figure 7) 53% said they only accessed administrative services via one method, with a website being the most likely method used by 69% of those who only accessed via one method, access via an app was solely used by 28% and 3% said they only accessed services in person. Students at a post-92 institution were more likely to access administrative services via an app (64%) than those at established institutions (55%), but accessing via a website was still the most popular option for students at post-92 institutions (73%).

In terms of the device students use to access their university's administrative services, the laptop/computer was the preferred device for nearly six in ten students (59%), with just over a third (37%) preferring a mobile phone and 3% preferring a tablet. (Figure 8). Enabling students to access services from the most appropriate device is important as this quote from a 2nd year UG management student illustrates:

*"And I think the biggest benefit with that is they allow you to link the timetable app to the calendar on your phone. So as soon as you link, you get your entire timetable for the year on your phone. Which I think it makes it much easier as no one wants to log on to the website every day trying to remember which class they had, where they had it and through this link they also give us access to our teacher's name, the class building. For example some classes are conducted in a separate room for one certain week, even that reflects onto your timetable on your phone and it shows you that this will be held in this building at this time, but today's class is only an hour. They inform you of all the changes on your phone, which is pretty convenient."* (2nd year UG Management student, established university)

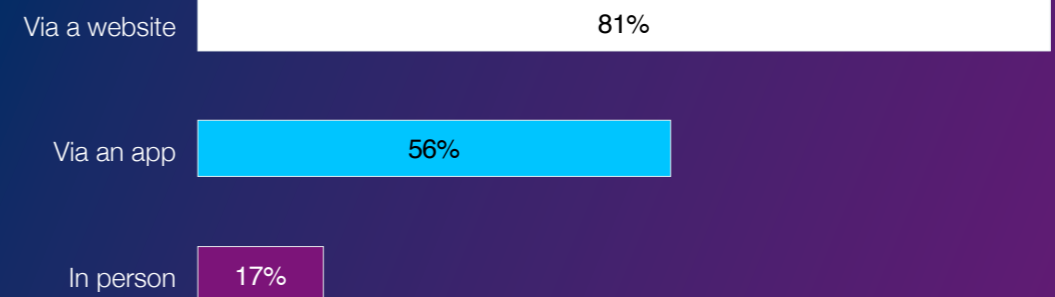
## WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS BEST DESCRIBE HOW YOU DIGITALLY ACCESS ALL OF THESE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES?

figure 6



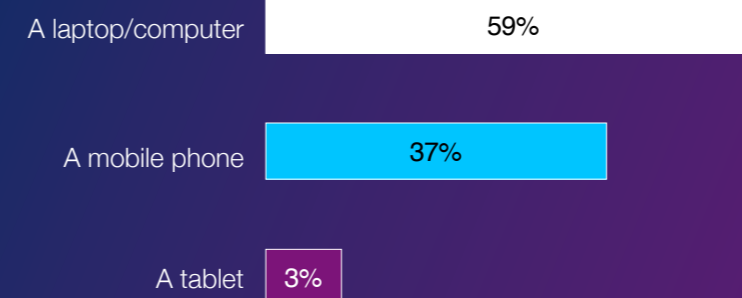
## HOW DO YOU GENERALLY ACCESS YOUR UNIVERSITIES ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES?

figure 7



## WHAT DEVICE DO YOU PREFER TO USE TO ACCESS YOUR UNIVERSITIES ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

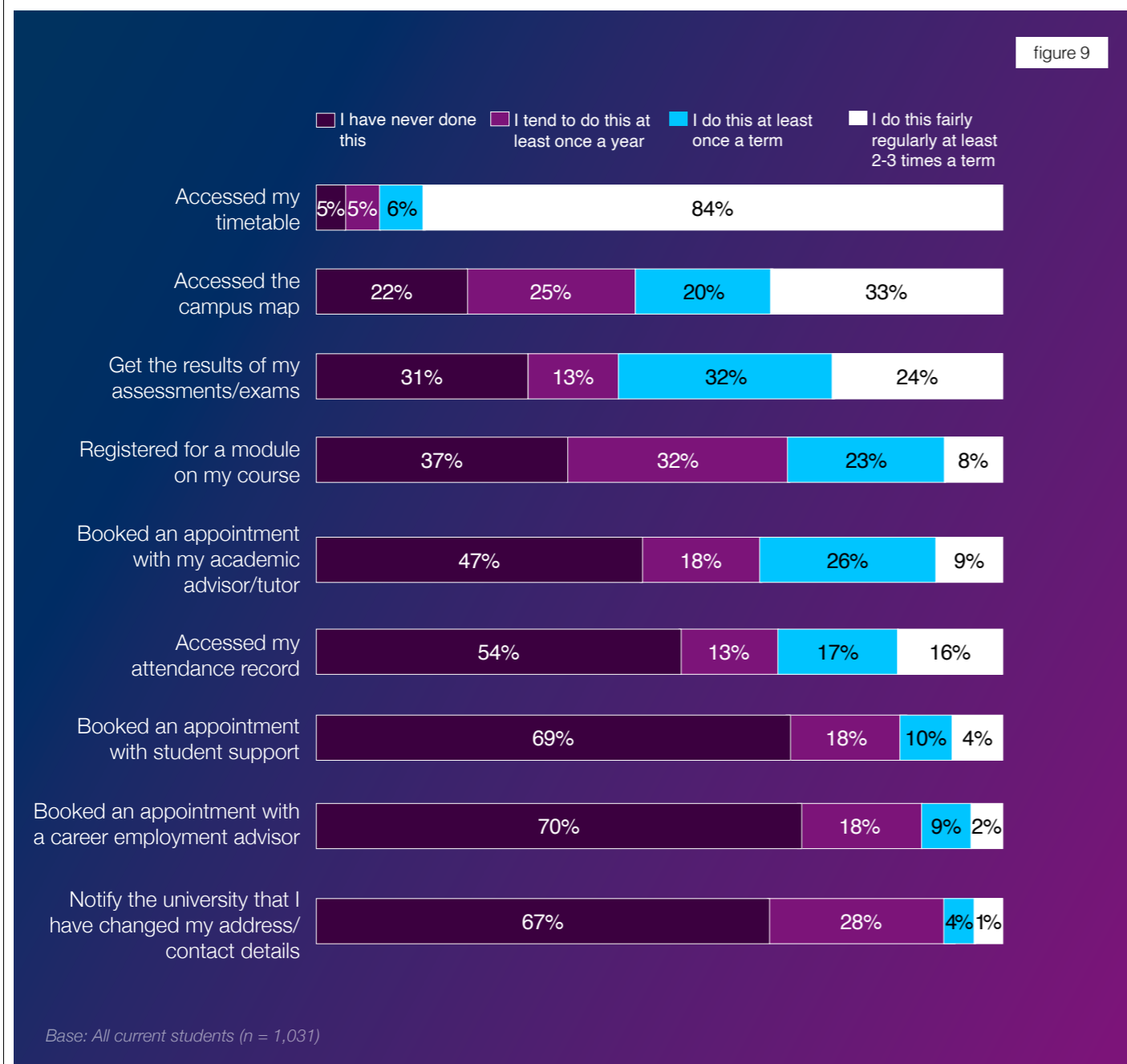
figure 8



Base: All current students (n = 1,031)

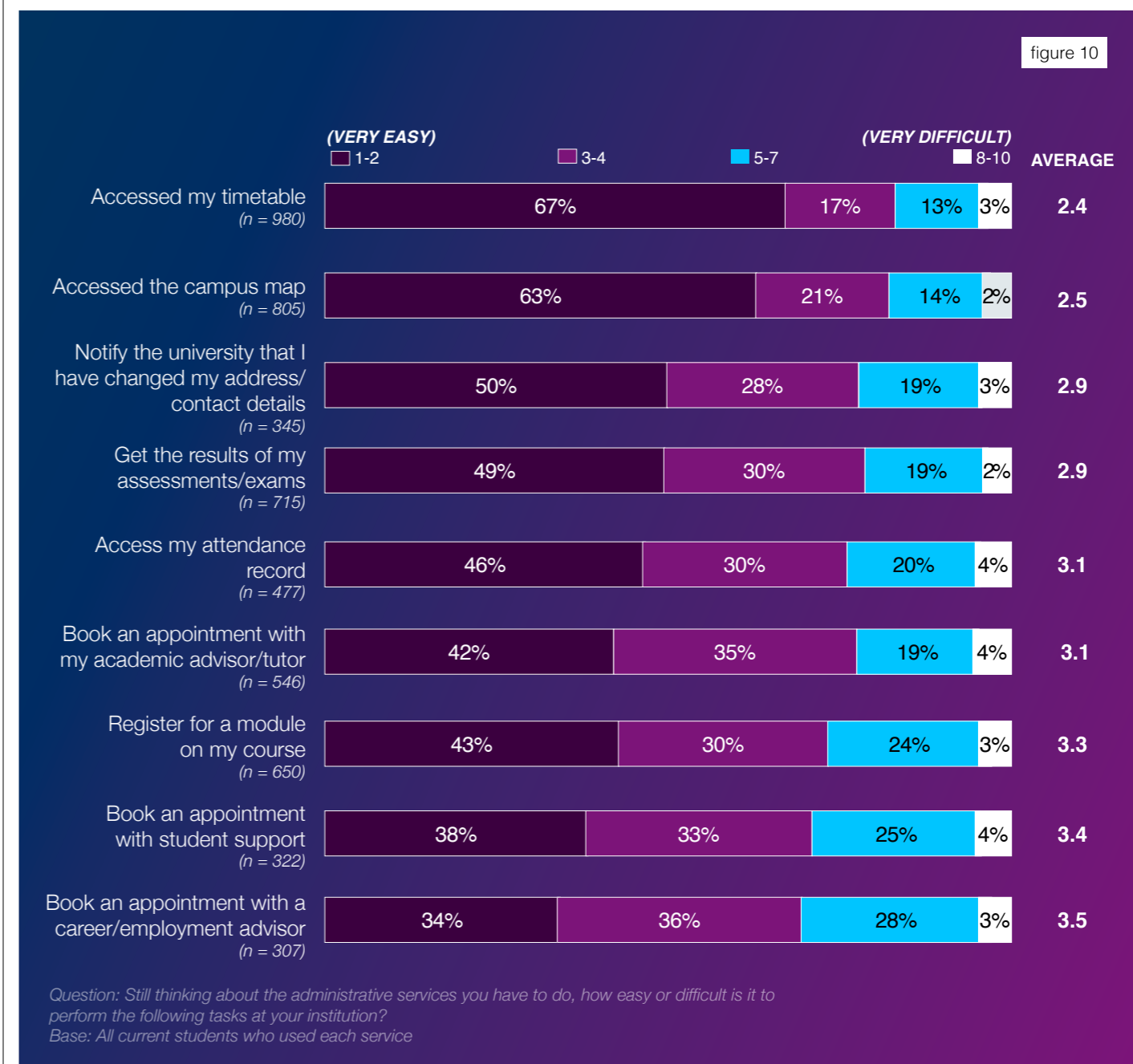
Understanding which administrative services students access most often can help to determine how best to deliver services. Unsurprisingly accessing their timetable was the administrative activity that students did most regularly at least 2 to 3 times a term (84%), followed by accessing the campus map (33%). Over half of the students surveyed

had never accessed their attendance record (54%), booked an appointment with student support (69%), or a career/employment advisor (70%) and 67% had not notified the university about a change in address/contact details. (Figure 9) The longer a student was at a university the more likely they were to have accessed most of these



administrative services. The research was undertaken in October, so most first year undergraduate students hadn't been at university more than a few weeks and unsurprisingly first year undergraduate students were the least likely to have used many administrative services and were the main driver for a lack of use of administrative services.

The proportion of students accessing these administrative services increased with the number of years they attend university, so undergraduates in their second year or later and PGT students were more likely to have accessed these administrative services at least once, compared to first year undergraduates.





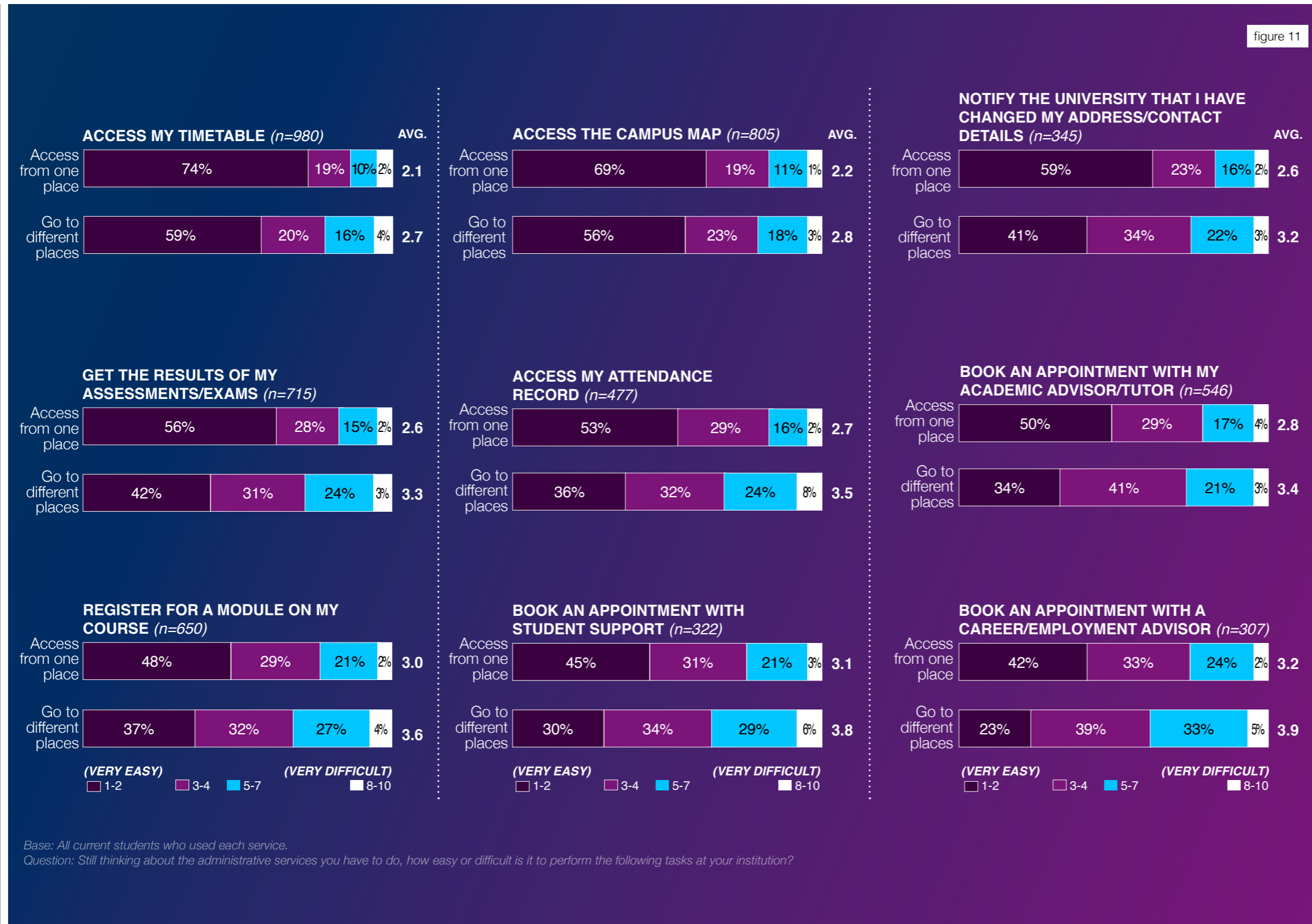


figure 11

Amongst those students who had accessed their university administrative services at least once, the majority of students found these services relatively easy to access scoring an average of 2 or 3 out of ten for each activity. (Figure 10) As with enrolment, being able to access all their university administrative services from one place was a key driver of ease of use, with those students who could access services from one place more likely to find accessing their institutions administrative services easy. (Figure 11)

Although around three quarters of students found it relatively easy to conduct administrative tasks at their university, around a quarter did not with 3%-5% of these finding it difficult, so there is room for improvement.

“ Although around three quarters of students found it relatively easy to conduct administrative tasks at their university, around a quarter did not, so there is room for improvement.

Students expectations of digital services are set through their interactions in the virtual world. *"The use of the internet is now firmly embedded in young people's lives. Socialising, learning, playing and exploring are all now done virtually to a greater or lesser degree and the majority of young people take this for granted as part of their everyday existence."*<sup>1</sup> This is a generation comfortable online as a PGT occupational health student said *"I guess I've grown up with Internet, so I'm just more comfortable using the [banking] app rather than having to ring up or going into the branch."* Managing their finances was a common administrative activity for students and most of the students interviewed in the qualitative stage used a banking app. They liked the ease of use of the apps, the fact

that they were simple to navigate around and displayed the information they were looking for, that they were quick and convenient to access enabling them to quickly check their accounts on the move. The apps also had useful features that helped them to manage their finances better. (see quotes)

Whilst students understand that banks and other large organisations are far better resourced than universities, the ease of use they experience with these apps are what they expect from university administrative services. When comparing their experiences of administrative services with their university students could all identify improvements that would make their experience more seamless, joined up and easier to navigate. A sport and exercise PGT student summed it up when he described his university's administrative system as "pretty straightforward" but "a little bit more messy" (See quote below)



A sport and exercise PGT student, post-92 university

"Obviously, having access to everything that you would need on your phone, it's actually just a case of opening up the banking app. It logs you in with Face ID, so you don't even have to type a passcode half the time."



A psychology PGT student, established university

"As soon as I go in [to my banking app], I see which accounts have which balances and I can navigate through it. It's all very simple to navigate through, there's not a lot of having to look around...All your navigation tools are on the phone page. It was just very simple compared to some of the other banking apps I have."

<sup>1</sup> Net Gains? Young people's digital lives and wellbeing, The Children's Society <https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/information/professionals/resources/young-peoples-digital-lives-and-well-being>

*"Maybe [the university is] a little bit more long winded to do things at times, but [a bank] are a massive corporation that can put a lot of money into developing an app that does everything that you need... I think for what you need to do for the uni stuff, albeit maybe a little bit more clicking about and forms and redirections and whatnot. I think it's still pretty straightforward and does what it needs to do and does it pretty effectively as well. So maybe, a little bit more messy, I suppose, but not to the point where it's, you know, an issue, I mean it still functions for its purpose."* (A sport and exercise PGT student, post-92 university)

In order for universities to move from a position that is "ok" to one that is really easy, simple and useful for students will require some improvements. Firstly, for those students who had to go to multiple places to find information and access different services, having one place they could go to would be really beneficial. For a 2nd year student at an established institution they "have to go to separate places to get my relevant information so for my coursework and everything, I have to go to one website, and then for my registration and module selection I have to go to [another website] and my timetables I have to go to the app. So that is, three different main places that I have to go to, to access relevant information. So yeah, if it was just one app or one website that did all of this, it would have been much more convenient."

Having one access point for everything is a starting point but it is also important to ensure that the navigation is easy to follow. A PGT psychology student at an established explained the challenge she had in trying to find out careers information from the university's portal. *"There's one tile for careers and further stuff, and I explored that thoroughly. But that tile leads you to six other tiles, leads you to four other links, leads you to six other pages. So you know, you go on and on and on and you're out of that one tile and you want to get back to that tile because there was another thread you wanted to follow. I applied for a couple of things and I gave up then as well. I was like, maybe there's something better suited out there, but I'm not going to find it after, I've spent hours doing this."*



1st year UG Pharmacy student, established university

"I use a banking app. I've completely switched everything to online, I don't even need to go into the bank, everything is just paperless now and it's just so much easier. I don't even have to carry my physical card with me... You can even get notifications when money comes in or when money goes out. I upgraded to the student current account, that's made things a lot easier. I can split my money that I spend on rent and the rest of the student finance and everything else that I need. They even have a live chat function, either you get the robot or you get forwarded on to an advisor if the robot isn't completely understanding what you're saying. I really love that feature as well."



3rd year UG English student, established university

"And so for me, who's someone who's constantly on the go...you want to be regularly able to check your bank account to see how much you're spending. So for me, I'd probably check my bank account like every couple of hours just to see how much I've spent, if I need to put some money into my savings. And I find that that is really easy because with my bank, it's just one app. You get it, pull it up, you open it up, you look when you're done and you can do it again as many times as you need."

If a university has a single point of access digitally it is also important to ensure that the different departments this represent are joined up. A PGT occupational therapy student found dealing with different departments during her enrolment process confusing because they were not talking to each other: *“They [universities] do have to have separate departments that deal with things, right? But I think during the induction process, there’s loads of different tasks that you need to do. And rather than it be one point of contact or one stream of communication that you have around your enrolment. You’re talking to several different departments at once about your enrolment and they’re not necessarily talking to each other. And that’s where I think confusion can happen.”*

For some of the students interviewed problems both in and outside of university cannot always be solved digitally and being able to have someone to contact was important. A 3rd year English student compared the experience with her established university and the everyday administrative services she uses. *“So I think the biggest difference is that with big platforms and big services like banking, they have agents and people readily available to help you at any given point. So if you need to make a phone call, if you have any issues, you e-mail and you usually receive an e-mail within the next three to four working days...And I think in comparison to university, university administration is difficult because there’s a hierarchy, different people work in different departments. So in order to find the right person, you have to kind of go through a trail of people before you eventually find the right one. And I don’t think with personal everyday administration I have that issue. I ring up the service, they provide me with an agent, someone I speak to, and the issue is resolved within a matter of an hour usually. Whilst with university it’s going to be a little bit longer because it’s an institution, not a big service that you can just call up and get help.”*

## RARER ADMINISTRATION ACTIVITIES

**The problems identified by students when managing regular administrative tasks at university are exacerbated when they are dealing with rarer administrative tasks such as registering for mitigating/extenuating circumstances, registering for a leave of absence or submitting a complaint. Overall, just under a quarter (23%) of students had registered for mitigating or extenuating circumstances. However, amongst those respondents who had a physical or mental health condition lasting 12 months or more 60% had registered for mitigating or extenuating circumstances compared to only 11% who did not have a health condition.**

Fewer students had registered a leave of absence (15%) than a mitigating circumstance and unsurprisingly those in their second year or later of a UG programme (22%) were much more likely to have requested a leave of absence than those in their first year (7%). Overall only 9% of respondents had submitted a complaint (see Figure 12).

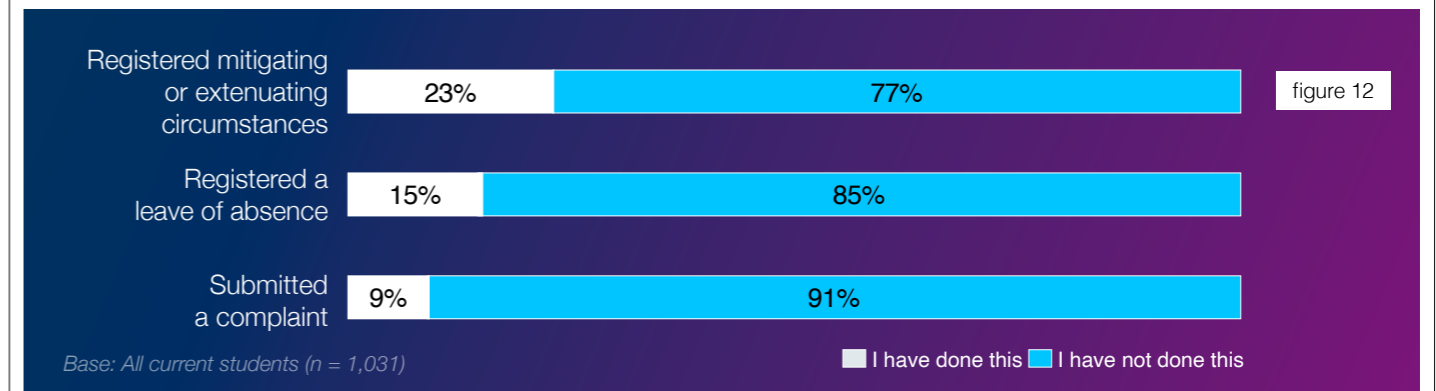
With an average score of 3.5 out of 10 over two thirds of students found the experience of registering for mitigating circumstances, a leave of absence or submitting a complaint easy, which is similar to the more regular activities such as booking an appointment with career advisor or registering for a module that are typically done

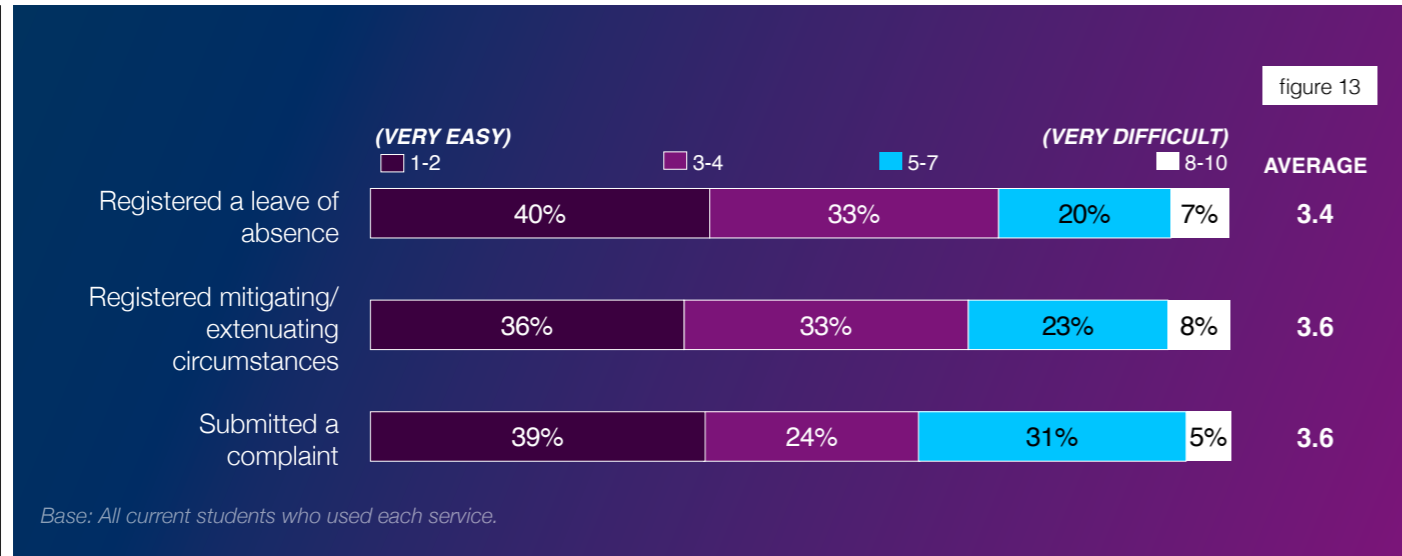
once a year. There is room for improvement as around a third of students did not find the process particularly easy with 5%-8% finding it difficult. (See Figure 13). As with the regular administrative activities, those students who accessed their services from one place found it easier to register for mitigating circumstances, a leave of absence or to submit a complaint. (See Figure 14)

For some students who found the process easy it was started before they applied to university as was the experience of this 2nd year English UG student *“It was relatively easy. I registered with the student disability services before I started at the university, while I was applying for DSA through student finance. They held a meeting with me and advocated on my behalf from there. I did not have to re-register etc and have ILP in place for extension requests etc.”* At some institutions students were able to email or speak to people such as personal tutors or student support to start the process which made things simple for them.

Although some students said they found the overall process of registering for mitigating circumstances easy they still experienced confusion around the process, some students had problems compiling the evidence needed and others had to register the same circumstances more than once. (see quotes)

Unlike more regular administrative services these irregular administrative activities are likely to be more complex and whilst they can be initiated digitally via a form on a website or an email they are likely to require some in-person contact to solve the issue. The challenges a first year UG student studying physiotherapy at a post-92 institution had with





trying to get extra time during exams illustrates what can happen when a student does not fit into any particular category. This student knew she would need extra time in exams due to her experiences at GCSE and A levels, but she doesn't have a disability as such and consequently found it very difficult to navigate through her university's support systems and teams to get the help she needed. "To be honest, it's been a bit difficult because they keep referring me to different places. Like at first they were telling me to talk to the disability team, but for me it wasn't anything that was confirmed to be a disability, when I had done the tests regarding this. So I tried to talk to that team and they referred me elsewhere and it was kind of just going in a loop to the point where I'm kind of thinking is it really worth me trying to carry on doing it because, you know, I don't really fit into these categories that they're trying to [put me in]."

Universities can improve the processes around registering mitigating circumstances, or an absence and submitting a complaint by ensuring that the appropriate forms are easy to find and complete and that the process is also clear. It will also be important to ensure that students do not have to register the same circumstance more than once. Universities should also recognise the potential complexity that may be involved in some of these circumstances and ensure that students have a person they can speak to with questions about their situation.



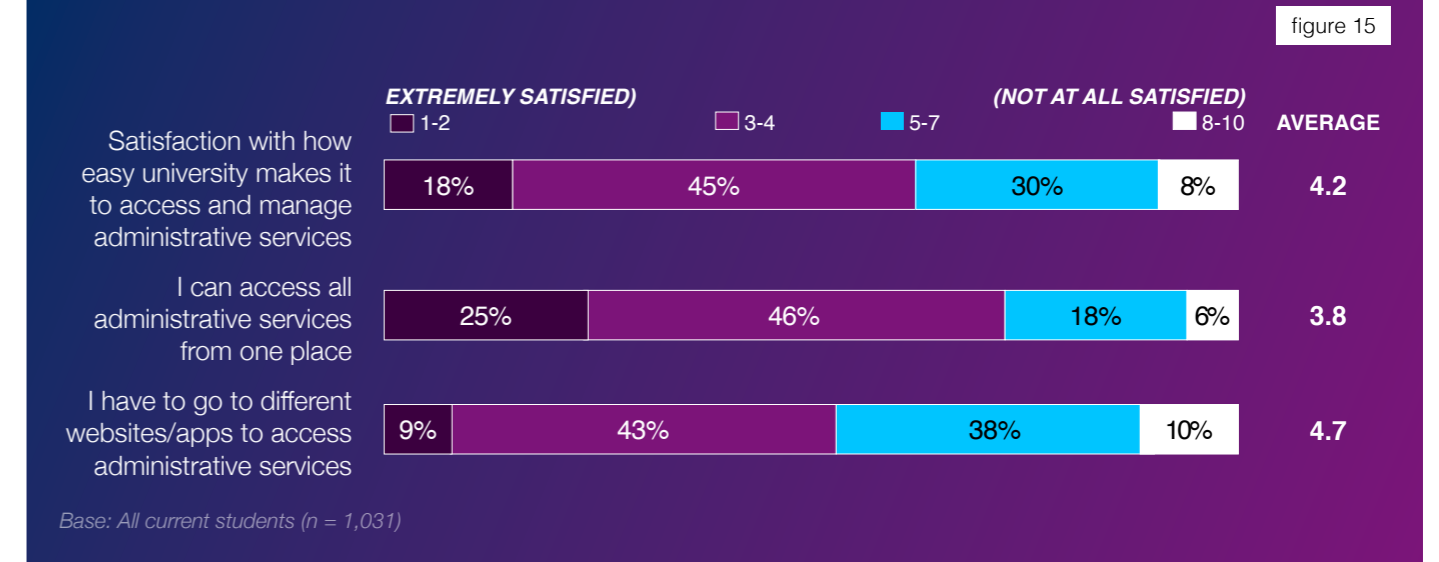
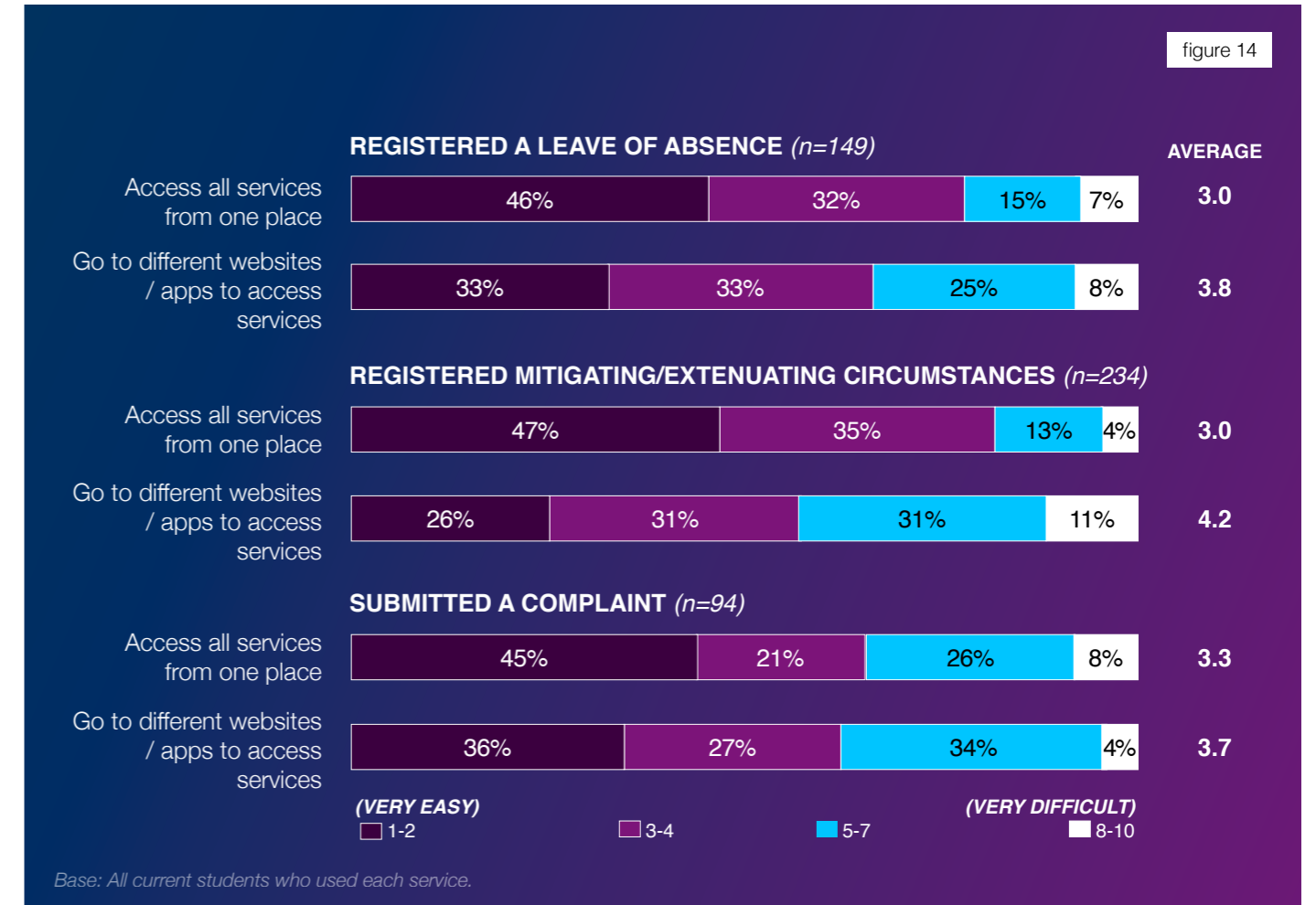
2<sup>nd</sup> year UG fashion student, Post-92 university

"It was a bit confusing to navigate around to find what I was meant to fill in & where, the uni made a video showing us how to do to how confusing the process was."



(4<sup>th</sup> UG medicine student, Post-92 university)

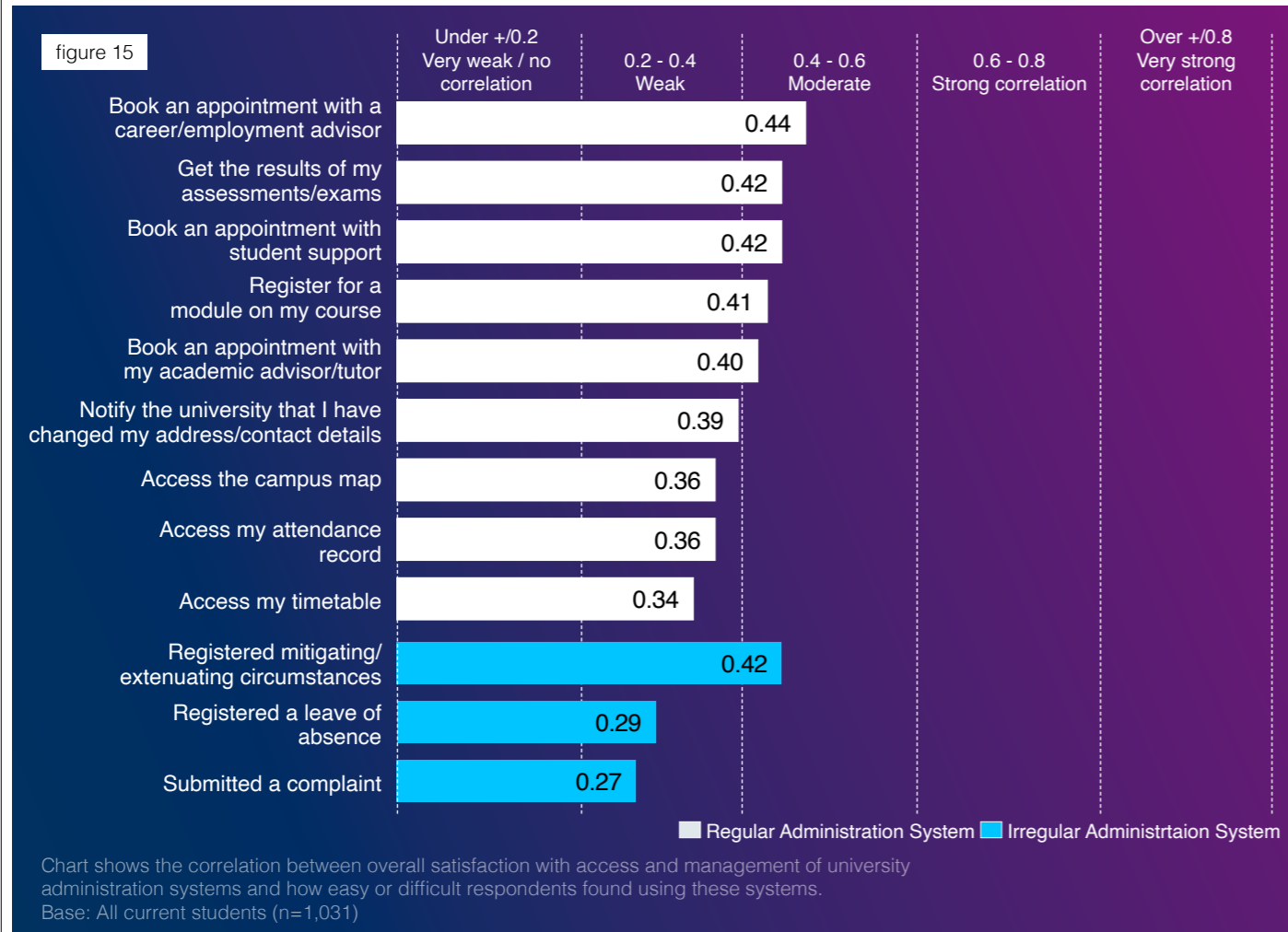
"I have had to register the same circumstances multiple times which requires specific evidence which takes a long time to get and is difficult to access. It often takes a lot of time and is very frustrating."



# SATISFACTION WITH UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION SYSTEMS

Nearly a fifth (18%) of students were very satisfied with how easy their university made it to access and manage their administrative services, 45% were satisfied, 30% not satisfied and 8% not at all satisfied with how easy their university made it to access and manage their administrative services. Satisfaction increases to 71% (25% very satisfied) amongst those students who could access all the university's administrative services from one place (see Figure 15).

There was a correlation, albeit a weak one, between how satisfied current students were with their university's administration systems and how easy they were to use, with those who found the services easy to use more likely to be satisfied. Figure 16 shows the correlation between overall satisfaction with the access and management of university administration systems and how easy or difficult respondents found using these systems. Improving the ease of use of an institution's administration system will increase student satisfaction.



# CONCLUSION

The digital administrative experience that universities provide to their students is ok; two thirds of students were satisfied with how easy their university made it to access and manage administrative services and two thirds of students thought that their university systems were easy to use, that it was easy to find the information they needed and that it was easy to manage. However, that leaves a third of students feeling neutral or dissatisfied towards the ease of use of university administrative systems. If a university aspires to provide an excellent student experience then ensuring their administrative systems are easy to use will help to underpin the student experience.

To create an excellent student experience, all administrative systems should be accessible from one place. Those students who accessed their university's administrative systems from one place consistently found the processes easier to use and were more satisfied than students who had to use multiple websites/apps. Having all services accessible through one portal is not enough to improve the student experience, the communication that surrounds university administration systems also needs to be simple, clear and timely. Students were often unsure if they had completed forms correctly and this was particularly the case for the first time that a student had to undertake a task for example enrolling onto their course for the first time, selecting modules and applying for mitigating circumstances. Ensuring that the forms that need to be completed are simple and clear and help and guidance is provided in the form of videos, written guides and pop-up help boxes on the form as appropriate would help students to complete their tasks. Finally a university should ensure that the digital systems that are used for administrative activities are linked to in-person support and that there are clear communication channels between departments particularly for registering for mitigating circumstances.

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