

# TCDSU Social Work Survey Report

## 2023/2024

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## **Analysis**

There were 160 Social Work students registered across undergraduate taught and 103 postgraduate taught students at Trinity College Dublin in the academic year 2023/2024. This group is often neglected by the student union. This is despite this cohort of students facing huge issues, including placement issues such as discrimination and unpaid labour, exhaustion, bullying, unfair grading and impossible workloads. As such, we ran a survey with a 47% response rate (n=75), the results of which will be used to lobby the relevant stakeholders for change.

The section on respondents' feelings regarding the academic and training processes in Social Work provides insightful observations about their experiences and perceptions. Notably, 12 respondents, which constitutes 16% of the sample, mentioned that they had not yet undertaken a placement, leading to their exclusion from responses requiring direct placement experience. This approach ensures the relevance and accuracy of the data collected. First-year Social Work undergraduate students as of 2023/2024 do not have to complete placement, only 40 hours of volunteering.

A significant majority, almost two-thirds of the participants, reported satisfaction with the level of education and training received, indicating a sense of a balanced and comprehensive approach within their programs. However, there's a notable portion, roughly one-fifth, who felt the opposite, with a majority of this group pointing out an overemphasis on in-class learning, suggesting a desire for more practical, hands-on experiences to complement theoretical

knowledge. Additionally, concerns were raised by over a quarter of all respondents regarding the fairness and transparency in the assessment of their work, indicating a critical area for improvement in how students' performances are evaluated. The balance is crucial - especially as workload is high (which will be discussed in-depth later in the report), the number, type and difficulty of assessment should be balanced with the labour already being done on placement.

*“The full academic calendar should be available in the handbook. This should include the pre-placement weeks prior to the following year. How can people plan otherwise. If students are required to attend every single lecture then a number of the written assignments should be substituted with in class assessments. If it’s a professional degree then remove the 8-10 essays at the end of each semester. The placement project should not be required while on placement but as part of a reflection module completed in the semester after. Students on placement don’t have time to do this and haven’t had a chance to reflect and provide good work on this project while still working. Students being sent on placement need to be taught the required practical skills beforehand not more theory.”*

*“I also found that the teaching we received before going in placement is completely inadequate to prepare us, meaning we spend more time trying to figure out what is going on that effectively learning how to do the job”*

*“Overall it has been positive however, the placement aspect is quite challenging. Being thrown into the deep end, expected to know and understand the day-to-day operate without any practical guidance. Having to write a 2,000 word essay and a 7,000 word project while working in placement 5 days a week and trying to balance my job to pay rent bills shopping etc.”*

*“1st semester is way to intense and heavy on academic material.”*

The placement assessment for social work students involves significant pressure, as they are evaluated by the assigned social worker, known as the practice teacher, on a "pass" or "fail" basis under the CORU criteria. The standards set by CORU are stringent, aiming to ensure that social work practitioners meet the required competencies for professional practice (details of which can be found in the CORU's Standards of Proficiency for Social Workers document). When issues arise during placement, a tripartite meeting involving the college, the student, and the practice teacher is convened to address these concerns. However, students often feel apprehensive about voicing their issues due to fears of potential repercussions, which can impact their evaluation and future within the social work field. The lack of awareness as to the degree and placement and what it entails was brought up as a place where CORU can offer improvement.

*“I would like to see CORU create a more indepth explanation of what students should expect from their regulated education programmes. I think this would promote professions such as social work as options for study and work if CORU took a more active approach to their regulation and explanation. A great example of this in action was when CORU created a video help guide for registering after college graduation. This should be followed up with more insight and helpful information that serves student and service user alike.”*

Students also voiced concerns about the repetition of learning materials throughout the course. While understanding the importance of reinforcing key concepts, the perceived redundancy contributes to a sense of inefficiency and disengagement, calling for a more streamlined approach to curriculum design. There is an imbalance between theory and practical elements between different years, as well as this it was mentioned that students do not expect to be on 14 weeks placement for more than a quarter of the degree.

*“Another challenge encountered is the repetition of course material. One aspect contributing to the repetition of course material may be the modular structure of the curriculum, where similar topics are covered in multiple courses or modules throughout the program. While this approach aims to ensure comprehensive coverage of key concepts, it can sometimes result in redundancy, especially if the overlap between modules is not clearly justified or articulated to students.”*

Furthermore, issues with the timetabling in Social Work have been highlighted, with inconsistent scheduling leading to inefficiencies and difficulties in managing time effectively. Long breaks between classes on some days and densely packed schedules on others disrupt students' productivity and engagement. The observation regarding the differences in placement schedules between University College Cork (UCC) and Trinity College, specifically the provision allowing UCC Master's students to have every Friday off during their placements as opposed to every second Friday or half-days at Trinity, is to be noted in this regard. All steps should be taken as far as College can to make sure that the timetable issues are resolved, keeping in mind the 1,000 CORU-required hours.

Students mentioned lots of 9ams, packed timetables with heavy contents and the fact that some lectures are off-campus as places to improve. All of this reinforces an unsupportive learning environment, and should be changed wherever logistically possible.

Among the Social Work students who had experienced placement, a concerning proportion, over one quarter, reported feeling discriminated against during their placement period. When delving into the nature of the discrimination faced, a significant portion of these respondents, almost two-thirds, cited ageism as the reason for the discrimination they encountered. This suggests that age-related biases were a prevalent issue.

Additionally, almost one-third of those who felt discriminated against attributed it to their social background, indicating that socio-economic factors, and possibly cultural backgrounds, played a substantial role in how they were treated during their placements. This highlights a need for greater sensitivity and inclusivity within placement settings to ensure that all students, regardless of their background, are given equal opportunities and treatment.

Moreover, the apprehension towards seeking help was evident, as almost two-fifths of the students expressed discomfort in approaching staff with their problems, fearing potential repercussions. This reluctance underscores a significant barrier to resolving issues of discrimination and suggests a need for a more supportive and open environment where

students feel safe and encouraged to voice their concerns without the fear of negative consequences. This feedback points towards critical areas for improvement in creating a more inclusive, supportive, and fair learning environment for Social Work students during their practical placements.

A notable portion of students, over one-third, have shared experiences from their placements that were adverse enough to make them question their chosen path of study in Social Work. This reflection underscores the profound influence that practical experiences can have on students' perceptions of their future in the field. Furthermore, financial burdens associated with placements have been a significant concern, with almost one-third of the respondents indicating that they incurred considerable expenses due to the practical requirements of their placements. This financial strain is compounded by the fact that over a quarter of the students reported spending in excess of €250 monthly, beyond their course fees, to participate in their program. These financial challenges highlight the economic pressures faced by students in pursuing their education and training in Social Work, underscoring the need for supportive measures to alleviate these burdens. Students mentioned having travel expenses (to and from placement as well as home visits) covered as well as not being expected to drive, noting that Class 2 insurance is not fully reimbursed, would be important changes in this area, as well as the abolition of unpaid placement (which will be discussed in detail later), which prevents them from working. It is also to note that placements in year one and two spill into summer time, meaning that students cannot work as they might have planned.

*“We are never reimbursed for travel expenses incurred travelling to and from placement , but more importantly, expenses travelling to home visits during the day / or access visits.”*

Students also expressed various concerns regarding placement planning. Many look forward to the practical experience but report feeling constantly let down by the coordination team, pointing out a lack of clear communication that is “fragmented” that contributes to uncertainty and stress.

*“the written and verbal instructions given for the placement project were conflicting causing confusion and adding unnecessary stress while already in a stressful situation. Further to this students are expected to submit the practice within an extremely tight deadline and again receive little support from the practice team. “*

*“ Placements are communicated to students extremely last minute with little consideration for students' work/life balance and personal circumstances. While I understand and empathize with the fact that CORU governs/oversees placement and have a set of criteria that needs to be met I strongly feel that the practice education coordinators do little to support students during this process.”*

Over half criticized the planning of placements, further questioning the effectiveness of these programs in preparing students for professional practice. The sentiment towards preparedness and responsibility during placements was concerning, with over two-fifths feeling ill-prepared

for the tasks at hand and over half feeling overburdened with responsibilities beyond their qualifications. The issue of placements being used as a source of free labour without contributing to learning and development was noted, with just under 30% feeling this way, though a later statement confusingly indicates a much higher percentage of over three-quarters sharing this sentiment, suggesting a significant concern regarding the exploitative nature of some placements.

The focus on educating students about the oppressive structures they may encounter during placements in high workload and demanding environments like Tusla (the Child and Family Agency in Ireland), mental health services, and other agencies is crucial. Understanding systemic issues forms a vital part of their professional development and readiness for the field. By acknowledging these challenges upfront, educational institutions can better prepare students for the realities they will face and equip them with the tools to navigate these complex environments effectively.

Incorporating structured support groups for students both in preparation for and during their placements can significantly enhance their resilience and coping strategies. These support groups can serve as a platform for peer learning, sharing experiences, and mutual support, thereby fostering a sense of community and solidarity among students facing similar challenges.

The concept of the College call-in-day, which counts towards the CORU-mandated 1,000 hours of placement, is an innovative approach to integrate placement experiences with academic learning. These days can be instrumental in allowing students to reflect on their placement experiences, share insights, and receive peer and faculty support. However, there is a need for more of these sessions to ensure students have ample opportunity to engage with their peers and faculty about their placement experiences in a structured manner.

Moreover, agency-specific support groups could be a valuable addition, offering students tailored advice and insights relevant to their specific placement settings. Such groups could facilitate more nuanced discussions about the unique challenges and learning opportunities within different agencies, enhancing the overall placement experience. Each agency can vary greatly so this is important.

Peer support organised by the College, especially if expanded beyond the 1-2 hours currently offered at the College call-in-day, can play a critical role in this framework. By fostering an environment of continuous development, where experiences and challenges encountered during placements are shared, analysed, and learned from, educational institutions can significantly enhance the preparedness and resilience of their students. This holistic approach, encompassing awareness of systemic issues, peer support, and continuous reflection and development, is essential for equipping future professionals to navigate and contribute positively to their fields.

The current one-week placement preparation for Social Work students in August is insufficient. Rather than extending this period, which would not provide enough support and would either push out finishing dates or bring students back even earlier, more preparation in first and second year is needed and connecting students with additional resources like TCDSU and relevant literature is crucial. There is also potential for a hybrid week of both placement and on-campus hours to give Moreover, making students aware of available TCDSU Placement Bursary can provide necessary financial support, ensuring they are better equipped for their demanding field experiences.

This misalignment between the areas of interest of students and the placement opportunities available was said to be frustrating, with many feeling that their career aspirations and personal circumstances are not adequately considered in the allocation process.

*“Despite expressing a strong desire to work in specific areas of social work, such as mental health or probation, or particular geographical regions to align with students’ personal circumstances the allocation process didn’t always accommodate these preferences, leading to placements that felt misaligned with career aspirations and individual situations. “*

Students suggested reading week to apply while on placement as well as suggesting that the half-day per week study time is inadequate. It is acknowledged that relief can be gotten from ‘study time’, however this point may indicate that students may also like a week off in addition to the weekly ‘study time’.

*“Overall I have enjoyed my studies. I feel placement planning could be better. Reading week should apply while on placement to allow students catch up on placement project etc. I feel a Half day per week study time is not enough time to give placement 100% and your practice project 100%”*

The requirement set down by CORU for students to complete unpaid placements is another point of contention, particularly given the financial strain it imposes during a cost of living crisis. The demanding nature of these placements, coupled with the need for many students to work alongside College, adds to the challenge. Students called on the College to fight jointly for placements to be paid, which has not yet happened.

*“This issue is compounded by the fact that social work placements often involve demanding workloads and emotionally taxing experiences, making it difficult for students to balance their academic studies, placements, and part-time employment to support themselves financially.”*

*“ in addition, social work students NEED to be paid on placement. it is exploitative and disgusting that the college has not addressed this yet even tho it has been asked for numerous times. This lack of respect reflects the flaws and exploitation of the social work system as a whole, and highlights just how much tusla depends upon student’s free labor to function.. which is concerning given the nature of tusla work, as most students are not provided with adequate training due to perceived more urgent tasks or lack of time.”*

*“we need at least a stipend for masters level placements, if not hourly wages”*

*“I am aware this issue is beyond the college’s control, but we had been told on many occasions to not work while on placement in order to give it our full attention. However, this is simply not feasible for many students, including myself, and I feel it is completely inappropriate for the college to suggest we give up our paying jobs for what is essentially unpaid labour. There are many student groups that are working towards getting social work students paid for placement, and I believe the college and school of social work and social policy should be joining in this effort and actively advocating for their students to be fairly compensated for their time on placement. This is especially important for students who are attending the school on visas, such as myself, and are limited to the amount of hours they are allowed to work based on visa restrictions. The cost of living in Dublin is astronomically high, and being able to make a livable wage while on placement should be a right not a privilege.”*

*“Placement without financial compensation is absurd. I do not know if this is a governmental or college issue. We are being expected to do one of the hardest jobs demanded of anyone, it is said to us all the time, and we are expected to take on such complex work during placement. For a lot of us, we have to work on top of this. It’s an insane burden to have to bear. “*

The placements which often involve trauma-creating content, combined with theoretical learning which necessitates an 80% attendance rate, contributes to a high workload and mental health stress and burnout.

*“Overall, the social work course is a very intense form of education which isn’t really acknowledged. We are expected to undertake four full time placements that are not paid, while also doing assignments on such placements and working part-time to financially support ourselves. “*

*“This course is extremely demanding. We have to attend at least 80% of the classes to pass, but a lot of them can be repetitive in my opinion. For example we had multiple classes on the same thing last semester; and then these are being repeated in mandatory trainings on placement. These classes could be replaced with more time to complete the dissertation, or more time to do the placement hours. When on placement you have even less time, 37.5 hours a week is more hours than qualified social workers do in the HSE and tusla. I worked during my first placement before I had my son and it was taxing. I haven’t worked this time but I’ve found it harder as it’s a child protection placement and I have been given quite a large workload.”*

*“I find being a Social Work student in Trinity to be an enjoyable experience, however, I do find a lack of resources regarding mental health support and aftercare post sensitive lectures surrounding topics like child abuse, trauma etc.”*

*“ There is very little time and place in the course for mental health support. Especially while on placement there is none. This being a field where you are likely to experience second hand trauma I would expect more supports to be offered. Trying to go to the trinity counseling also doesn’t prove very effective since we have to be on placement full time and they have very limited availability to begin with.!”*



*“Work load is way too much. Needs to take into consideration, due to it being a 2 year Masters programme that people have to pay for fees, rent/mortgage and daily living expenses that people have to work relief/part time. Especially with the cost of living crisis. This on top of the work load is too much. “*

Social Work attracts a diverse demographic of students with various life experiences due to the nature of the work. This emphasises the need to provide concerted support with regards to mental health following heavy subject matter and while on placement. Additionally, because the course is more diverse, it is also more likely to have student parents. College policy is that important meetings do not occur until 10am so that parents can be accommodated and there is an argument to be made that this should spill into certain degrees depending on their student profiles.

The introduction of aftercare support in the form of peer support groups during the third year has proven beneficial for students, offering a platform to discuss and reflect on their placement experiences. However, the lack of emphasis on such support mechanisms in the final year is a notable gap. Care for students is crucial not only during their placements but also afterwards, as the transition back to academic life and preparation for professional practice can be challenging.

There is a concerning situation regarding student well-being in Social Work. The high percentage of students, two-thirds, not involved in co-curricular activities, coupled with a similar number reporting an unhealthy social life, suggests a lack of engagement or opportunity beyond academic pursuits. The figure exceeding 80% regarding the negative impact of course demands on mental health is particularly alarming, indicating a potentially widespread issue with stress, anxiety, or other mental health challenges among students. This situation calls for a deeper examination of the academic environment and support systems in place to address these concerns. When looking at first-year Social Work undergraduates only (n=14), who do not have to do placement, only 40 hours of volunteering, 64% indicated that the demands of the course had negatively affected their mental health.

The revelation that 80% of students report negative mental health effects, while simultaneously two-thirds express satisfaction with their course, highlights a concerning normalization of stress and intensity within their academic environment. This paradox suggests that students may be internalizing high stress levels as a standard aspect of their education, potentially diminishing their inclination to collectively address these challenges or seek assistance. The satisfaction with the course content or structure might be overshadowing the critical need to address mental health concerns, leading to a culture where excessive stress is tolerated or even expected. This scenario underscores an urgent need for increased awareness and proactive measures to support student well-being, encouraging a culture where seeking help and advocating for a healthier educational environment are normalized and encouraged.

The situation is that Social Work is a highly stressful academic environment for many students. The fact that over half of the respondents have considered dropping out due to the demands of their course is a significant indicator of the intense pressure they are experiencing. This is further compounded by the revelation that almost three-quarters of the respondents are working in addition to their studies, which can significantly increase stress levels and contribute to burnout. The situation is also concerning for those not currently working, as over two-thirds believe it would be impossible to manage employment on top of their coursework. This could reflect the perceived intensity of their academic obligations or a lack of flexible work opportunities that accommodate student schedules.

The survey results reveal a nuanced perspective on the experiences and perceptions of college students, particularly in the context of their academic environment, support systems, and placements. A significant portion, 60%, expressed dissatisfaction with the college's understanding and support of their broad needs, indicating a potential gap in the institutional support system. The Students' Union also appears to struggle with representation, as almost a third of respondents felt their needs as students in professional courses were not adequately advocated for.

Concerns were raised about inclusivity and accessibility within college clubs and societies, with just over 45% feeling these groups do not sufficiently cater to students in their specific courses. Placement experiences varied among respondents; while over a third felt well-supported, an equal proportion reported the opposite, highlighting inconsistency in the support provided during critical hands-on learning experiences.

A substantial majority reported not being members of the relevant professional union. Among the few who were members, a strong preference emerged for seeking advice from their professional union over the Students' Union or College Tutor, indicating a perceived higher value in trade unions. There is currently no student Social Work union but respondents might be referring to Fórsa or to the Irish Association of Social Workers (IASW). There is no communication from College as to professional unions.

There was a section that delved into the role of the Social Work Placement Tutor within the context of undergraduate education, focusing solely on the perspectives of undergraduate students, totaling 56 respondents. Among these participants, almost one-third expressed dissatisfaction with the fulfillment of the Social Work Placement Tutor's role in their experience. Conversely, just over one-third reported satisfaction with the support provided by their Social Work Placement Tutor. Regarding the title 'Social Work Tutor,' exactly half of the respondents deemed it fitting, while the remaining 28 respondents who disagreed offered alternative suggestions. Among these, 'Placement Advisor' and 'Placement Supervisor' emerged as the most commonly recommended titles.

It is noteworthy that over half of the students surveyed expressed dissatisfaction with the title "social work tutor," citing its inadequacy in accurately representing the multifaceted responsibilities inherent in the role. These responsibilities extend beyond traditional tutoring to

encompass monitoring, evaluating, and ensuring learning achievements, as well as providing ongoing support to both students and practice teachers. Despite the crucial nature of these duties, the current title fails to capture their breadth, resulting in ambiguity and confusion regarding the role's scope. Furthermore, the lack of an independent, impartial figure solely dedicated to supporting students exacerbates this confusion, as social work tutors are also responsible for supporting practice teachers, potentially creating conflicts within the role. This dual role can further compound tensions between a student's academic status and their emerging professional identity.

## **Research**

Many of the themes emerging in this survey are mirrored in social work research, and therefore should be considered carefully.

The issue of unpaid labour on social work placements is a nationwide issue, as 95% of students in a recent study by Mooney (et al 2023) named financial burden as a source of difficulty, as well as a barrier to enrolling in social work courses. Some in this study felt as though the cost of academic fees combined with unpaid placements was 'elitist' and a barrier to those coming from a lower socio-economic background(P45). These sentiments are echoed heavily among current social work students in Trinity.

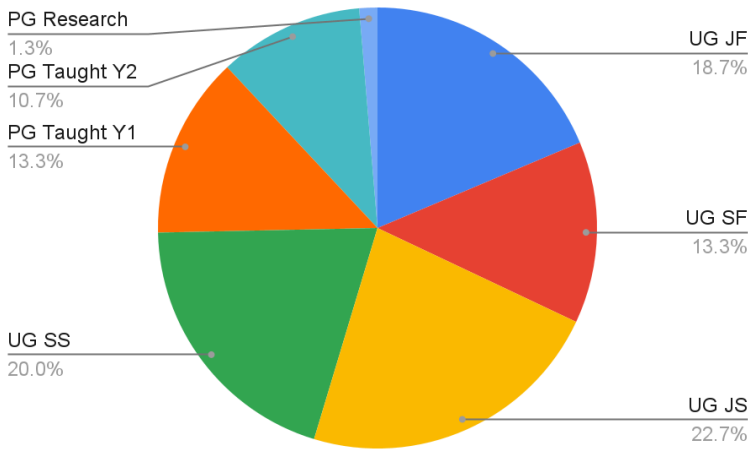
Unfortunately, some of the discriminatory issues students face on placement are difficult to control past practice teacher training, so supporting students if they are struggling is paramount. A study by Horton (2009) found that 34% of social work students studied reported high levels of depressive symptoms, with 12% having a history of suicidal ideation. Gallagher (2023) found that many students' motivations to study social work are heavily influenced by Adverse Childhood Experiences. Students in this survey are calling out for more supports. However, a nuanced approach is needed as Ting (2013) points out in her survey of mental health support seeking among social work students. Students indicated in this study that the lack of time due to the intense course workload was preventing their use of mental health services. There were also concerns about confidentiality, and what it would mean to disclose mental health issues as a student in a professional course.

Many of the issues around placement planning and course satisfaction can be solved at a school level, through stronger communication and consultation with students.

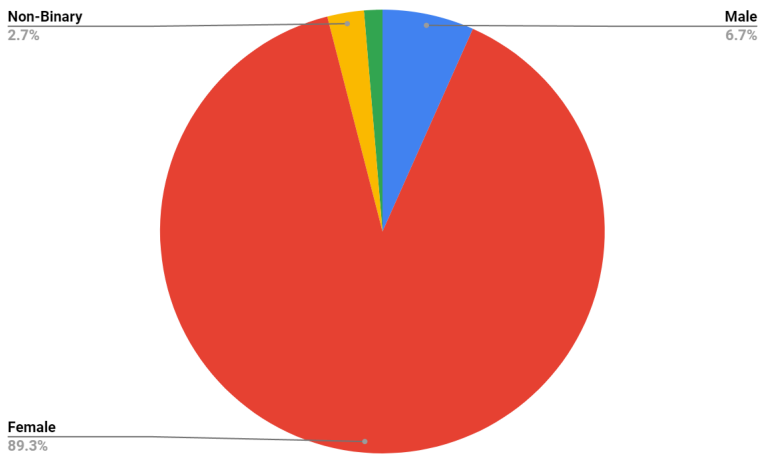
We know that there are retention issues across social work employers and many current social workers feel dissatisfied in their roles, for reasons such as work-related stress, bureaucracy and burnout, (IASW, 2022) which are some of the issues highlighted in this report.

## General Demographics of Respondents

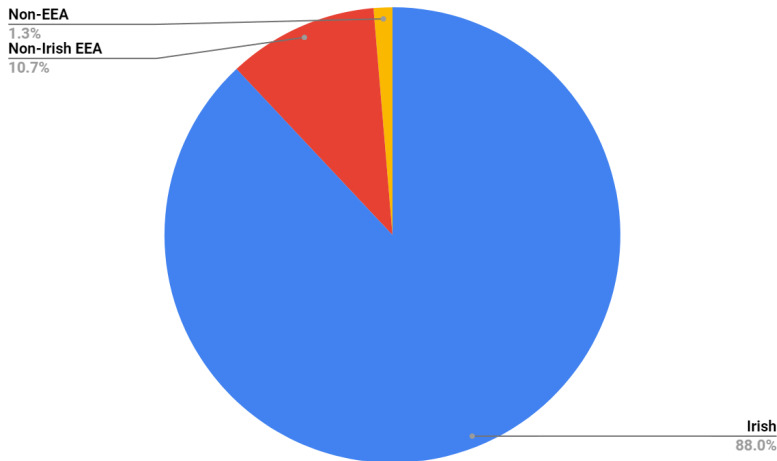
### Year of Study



### Gender



### Nationality



The survey was completed by 75 students.

Some key breakdowns are:

56 Undergraduates and 19 Postgraduates

67 of the respondents (89.3%) identify as female.

66 respondents (88%) are Irish.

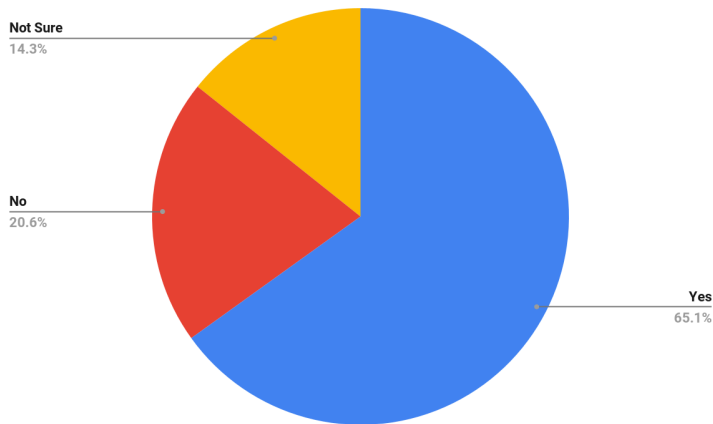
22 respondents (29.3%) are Mature Students.

8 respondents (10.7%) identified as being a 'Student with a Disability'.

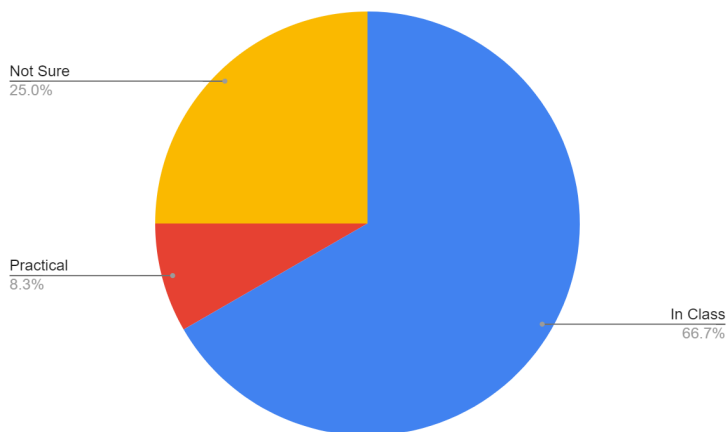
8 respondents (10.7%) reported being student parents.

## Academic Experience

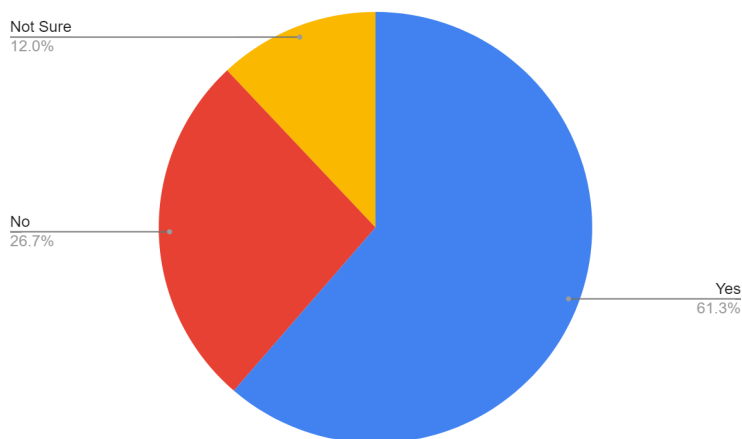
Do you feel that the combination of course work and practical work have provided you with a balanced and rounded level of education and training?



If no, do you feel that your education to date has been too heavily focused on academic in-class learning, or on the practical elements (placements)?



Do you feel that assessment of your overall work is fair and transparent?



This section covers respondents' feelings about the academic and training processes with Social Work.

12 respondents (16%) advised that they had not been on a placement yet. As such, these respondents have been removed from the answers where experience on placement would be necessary to answer.

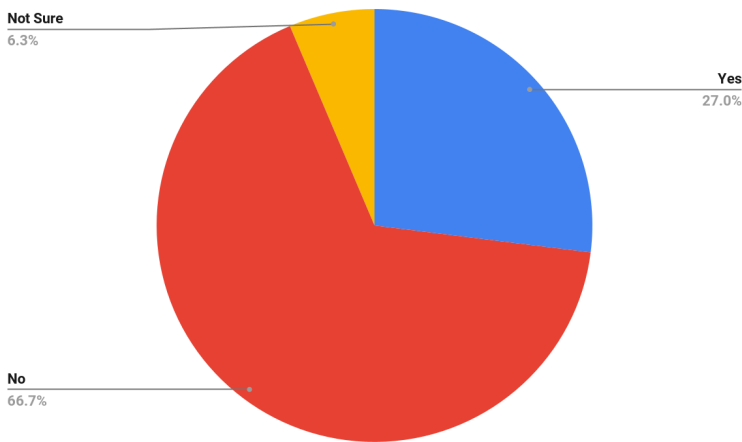
Almost two-thirds of respondents feel that they have been provided with a balanced and rounded level of education and training.

Of the roughly one-fifth of respondents who felt that they had not received a balance level of education and training, two-thirds felt that there was too much focus on in-class learning.

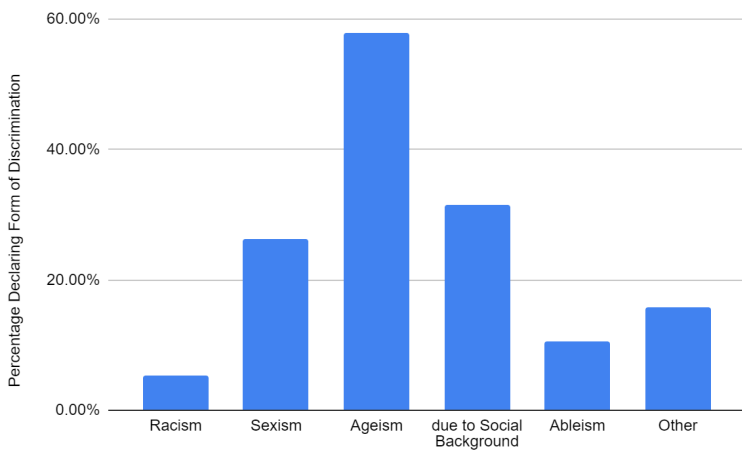
Over one quarter of all respondents advised feeling that the assessment of their work is not fair and transparent.

## Personal Challenges

Have you ever felt discriminated against while on placement?



If yes, what kind of discrimination have you felt you have experienced? Feel free to tick multiple boxes if necessary.



As with the case before, the 12 respondents who advised that they had not been on a placement yet have been removed from the answers where experience on placement would be necessary to answer.

Of those who had been on placement, over one quarter felt they had been discriminated against while on placement.

We asked those respondents in what way(s) they felt discriminated against. Of those:

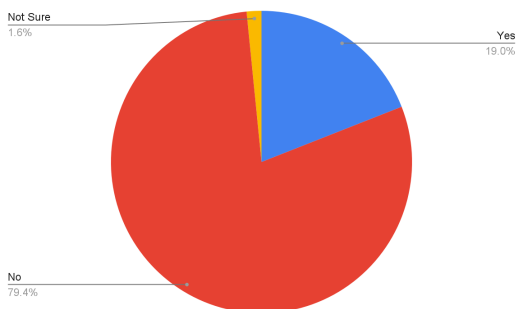
Almost two-thirds felt that they had been discriminated against due to ageism.

Almost one third felt discriminated against because of their social background.

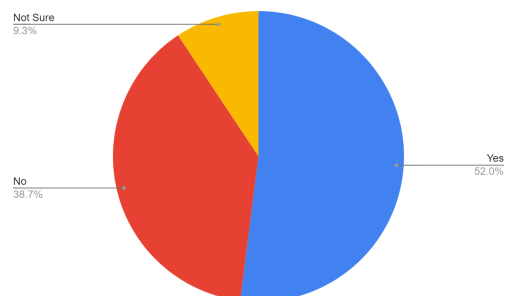
Almost one fifth felt that they had been victimised while on placement.

Almost two-fifths advised that they would not feel comfortable approaching staff about problems, due to fear of repercussions.

Have you ever felt victimised or bullied while on placement?

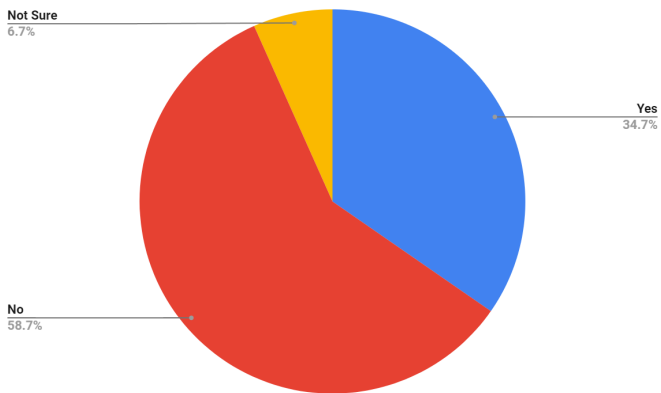


Do you feel comfortable approaching academic and administrative staff with problems or complaints, without fear of repercussion?



## Experiences on Placement

Have you had negative experiences on a placement which have led to you wanting to reconsider this path of study?

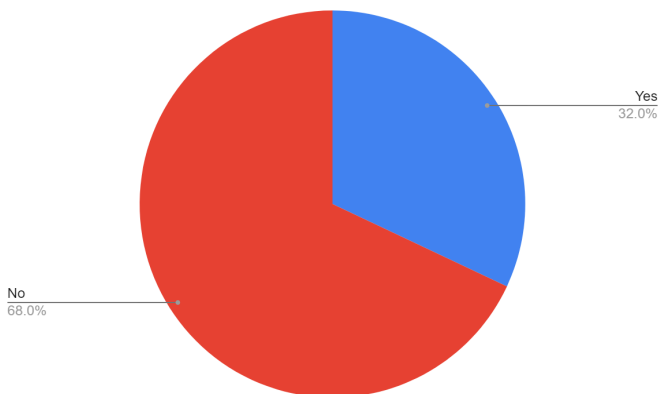


Over one-third of respondents reported having experiences on a placement which led to them reconsidering their path of study.

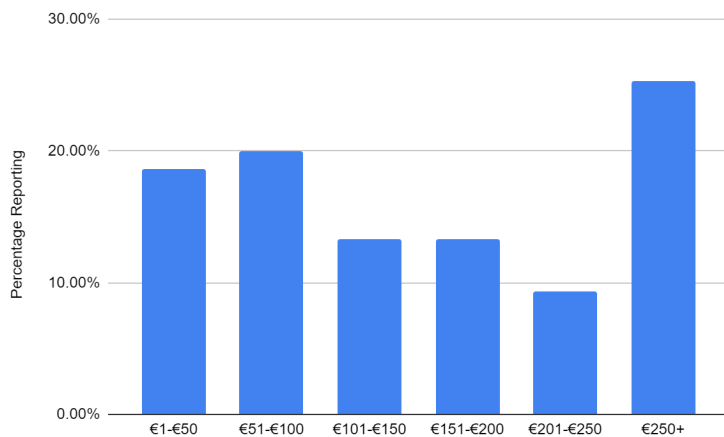
Almost one third of respondents reported paying out significant expenses due to the practical elements of placements.

Over a quarter of respondents reported that they spend over €250 per month (in addition to course fees) in order to take part in their course.

Have you experienced significant expenses due to practical elements of your placements? (eg. Needing to buy materials, needing to rent accommodation, needing to travel long distances?)

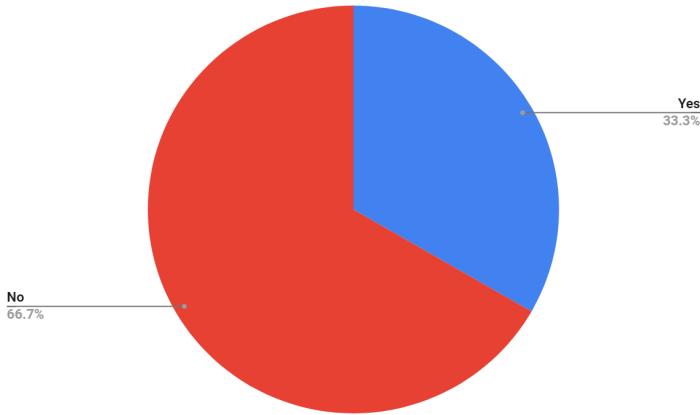


In addition to your fees (your registration fee or tuition fees), please state the average financial costs directly associated with your course on a monthly basis.

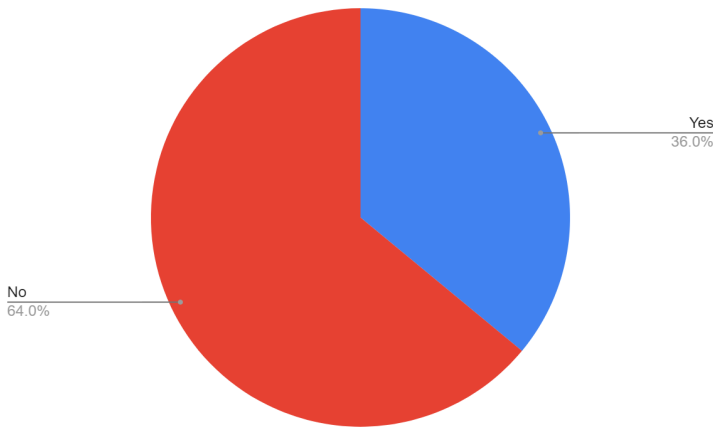


## Life Outside of Studies

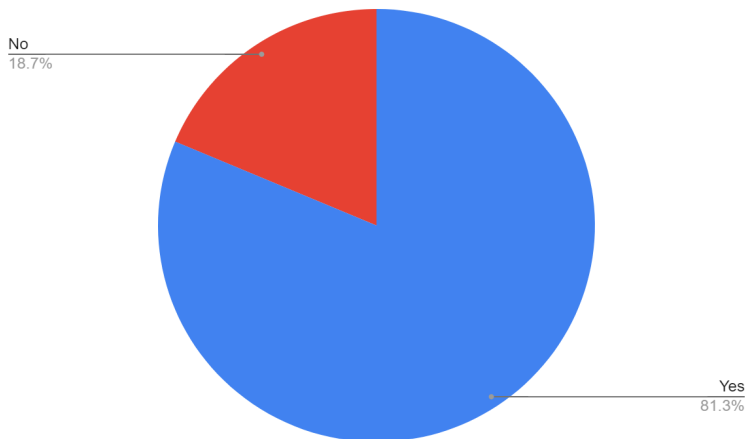
Are you involved on a regular basis with any co-curricular activities in College (e.g. sports club, society, Students' Union)?



Do you feel that you have time to have a healthy social life or pursue hobbies alongside your studies?



At times, have the demands of your course adversely affected your mental health?



Two thirds of respondents reported that they are not involved in any co-curricular college activities.

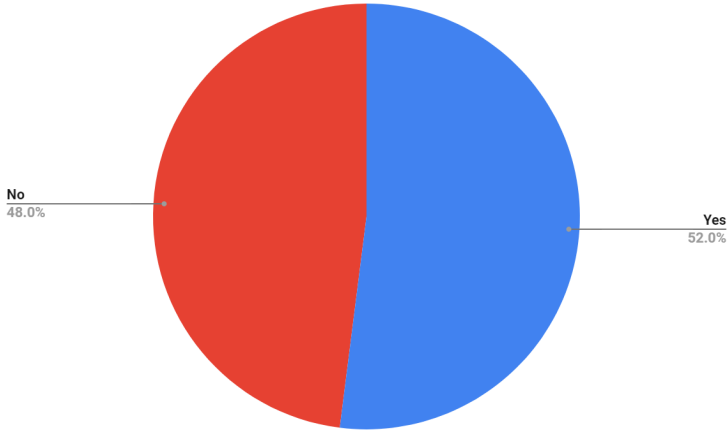
Almost two thirds again reported not having a healthy social life alongside their studies.

Over 80% of respondents reported that the demands of the course were adversely affecting their mental health.

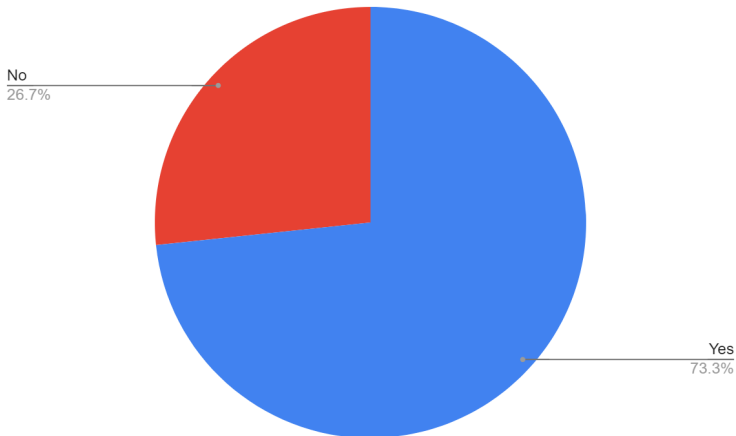


## Life Outside of Studies

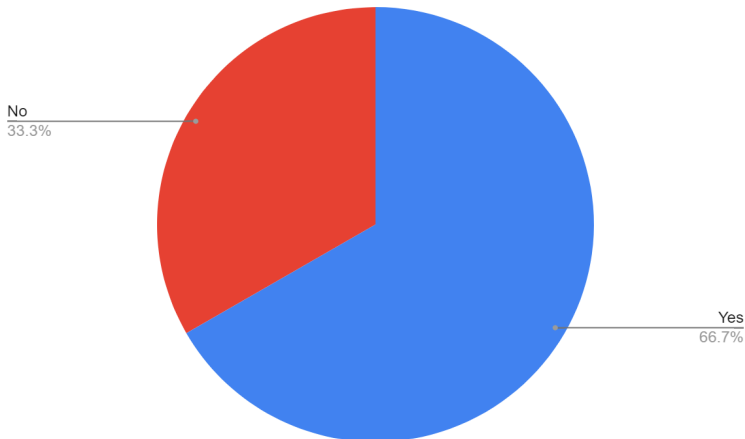
At times, have the demands of your course led to you wanting to drop out?



Do you work in any kind of paid job on top of your placements and/or studies?



If no, do you feel like it would not be possible for you to work an additional job on top of your placements and/or studies?



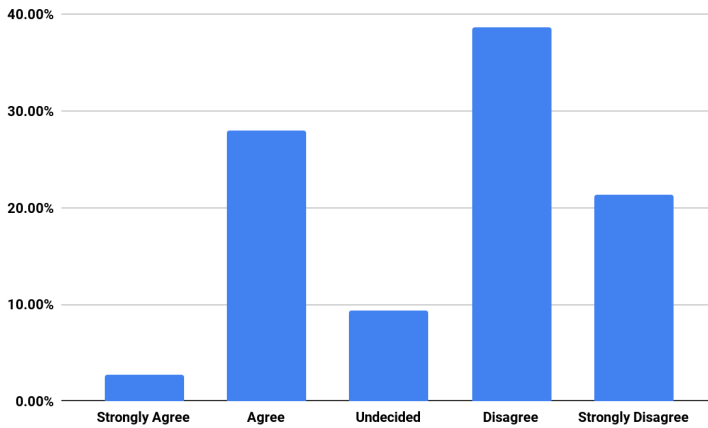
Over half of respondents reported that the demands of the course had led to them wanting to drop out.

Despite the course being very demanding, almost three-quarters of respondents reported that they also work, on top of their studies.

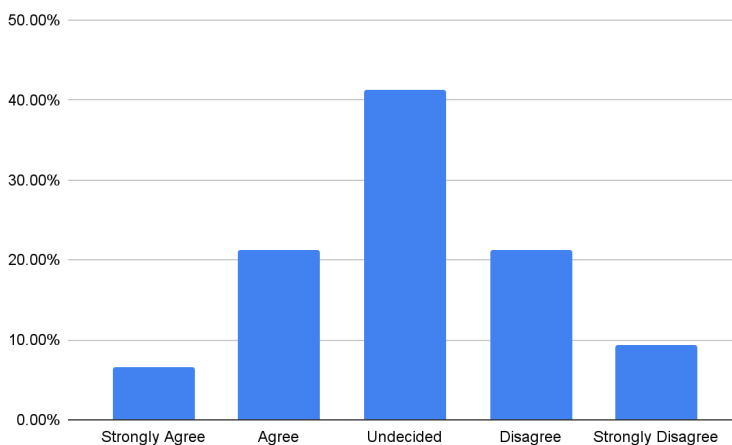
Of those who don't work, over two-thirds reported that they did not think it would be possible for them to work on top of their studies.

## Sentiment Analysis

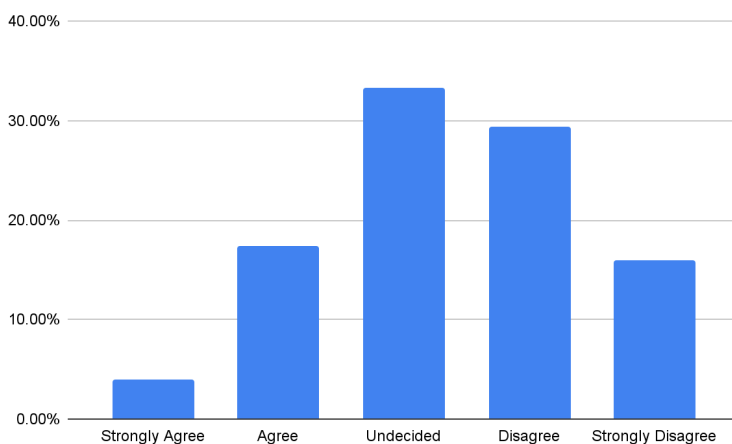
**I feel like the college understands and supports my needs as a student, a professional, and a person with interests and responsibilities outside of college**



**I feel like the Students' Union understands and represents my needs as a student in a professional course.**



**I feel like college clubs and societies make an effort to cater for students on my course.**



Respondents were asked to rank their agreement with a number of statements on a 5-axis 'Strongly Agree' to 'Strongly Disagree' axis.

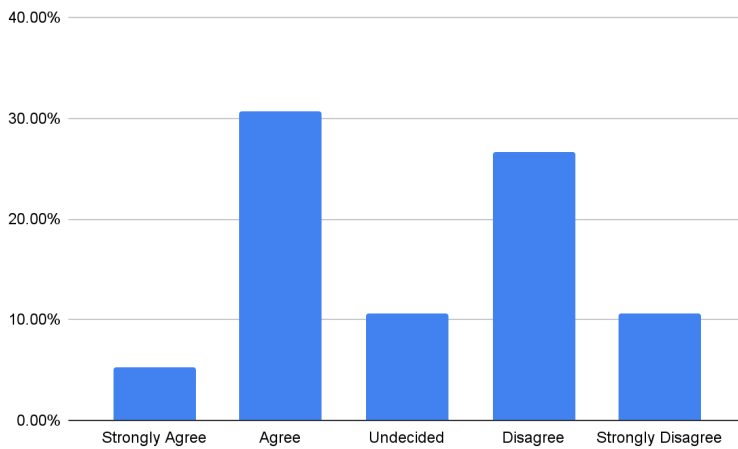
60% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the college understood and supported their broad needs.

Almost a third either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the Students' Union represented their needs as a student in a professional course.

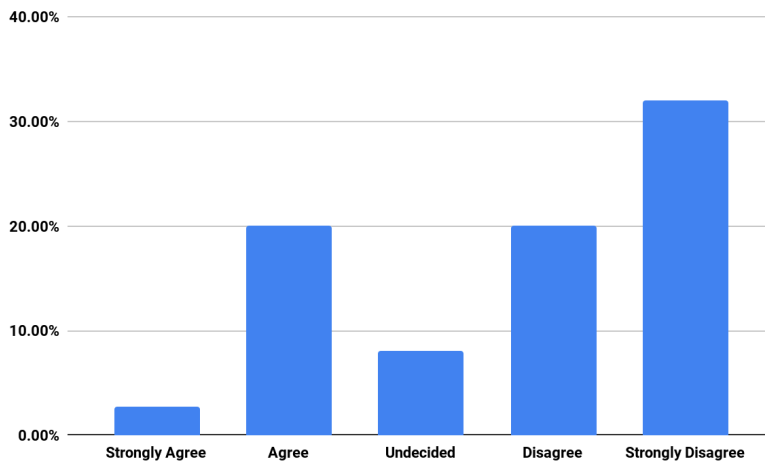
Just over 45% of all respondents felt that college clubs and societies do not make an effort to cater for students on their course.

## Sentiment Analysis

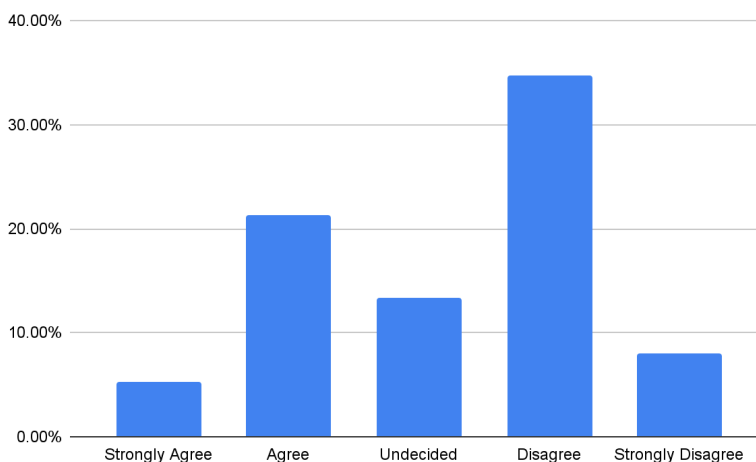
I have generally felt well-supported during my time on placements



I feel like placements are well-planned



I feel like I have been capable and well-prepared to do all elements of work which have been asked of me while on placement



Respondents were asked to rank their agreement with a number of statements on a 5-axis 'Strongly Agree' to 'Strongly Disagree' axis.

Over a third of respondents agreed with the statement that they had felt well-supported during placements. However, more another group of over one-third of respondents disagreed that they were, in fact, well supported.

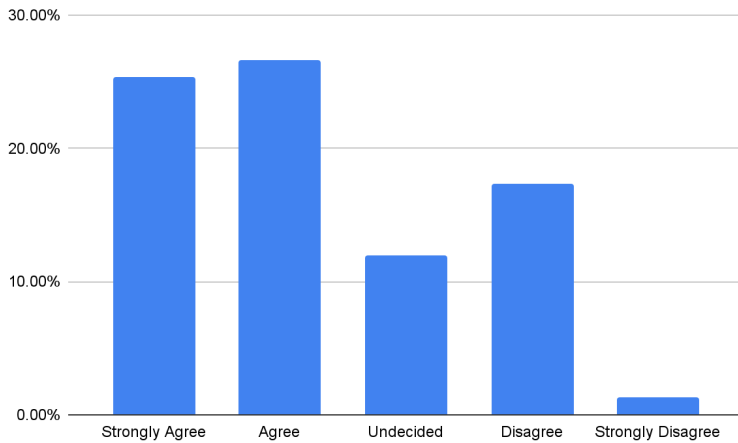
Over half of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that placements are well planned.

In the lower graph, we see the sentiments of respondents towards the statement that they have felt capable and well-prepared to do the work which was asked of them while on placement.

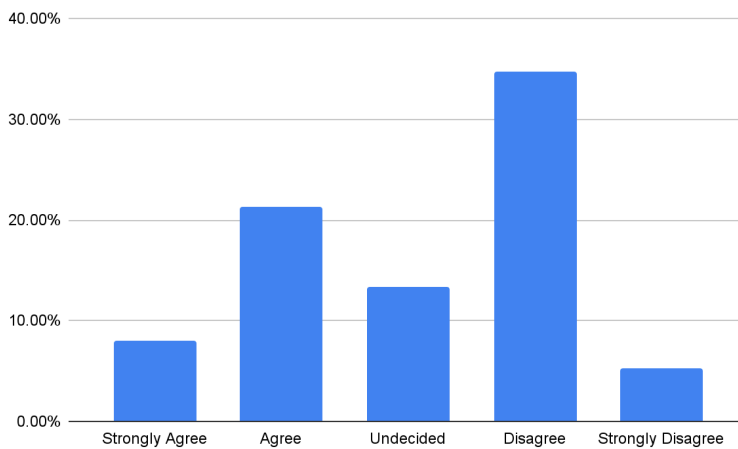
Worryingly, over two-fifths of respondents disagreed with this statement.

## Sentiment Analysis

I feel like I have, on at least one occasion, been given responsibility above and beyond that which is appropriate to my level of qualification while on a placement.



I feel like a number of elements of my placements have involved me providing free labour which is not key to helping me learn and develop in my profession.



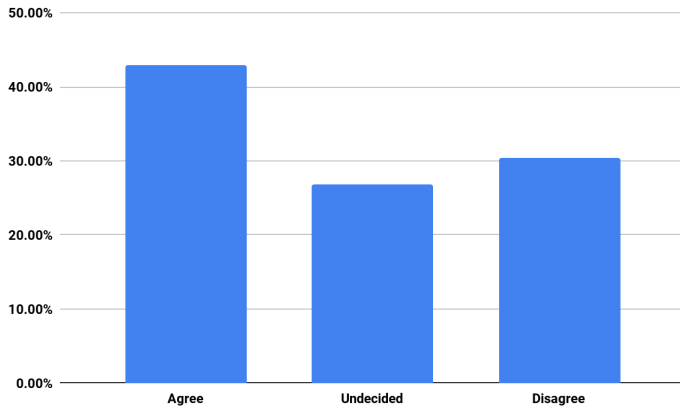
Respondents were asked to rank their agreement with a number of statements on a 5-axis 'Strongly Agree' to 'Strongly Disagree' axis.

Following on from the previous graph, over half of respondents felt that they had been given responsibilities above and beyond their qualifications while on placement.

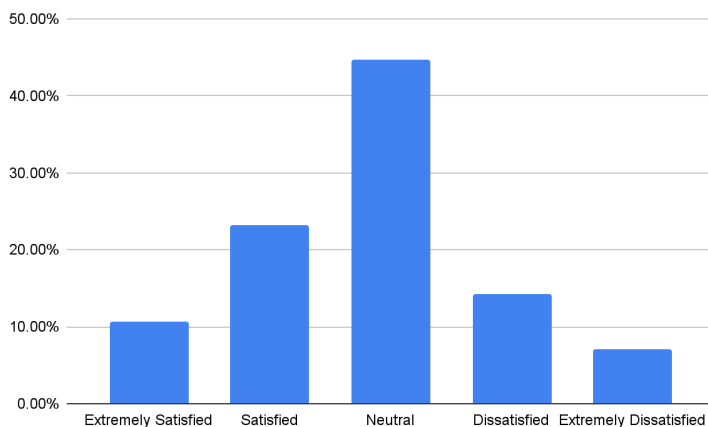
Just under 30% of respondents felt that elements of their placements had involved them providing free labour which was not, in itself, a key part of their learning and development.

## Sentiment Analysis

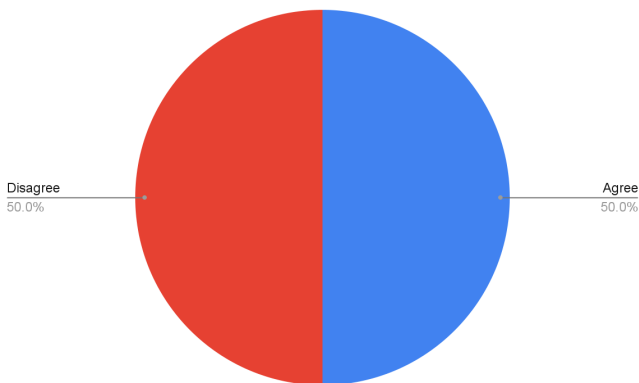
The role of the Social Work Placement Tutor is to support and monitor students on placement. Do you agree or disagree that this role was adequately fulfilled?



How satisfied were you with specifically the support that the Social Work Placement Tutor provided?



Do you agree with the title 'Social Work Tutor'?



If not, what name would you suggest is more suitable?

Recommended Title	Respondents
Placement advisor	13
Social work advisor	4
Placement supervisor	10
College supervisor	7
Placement inspector	3
No Opinion	2

This section looks at the role of The Social Work Placement Tutor. This role is related specifically to undergraduate education. As such, only the views of the undergraduate students (56 respondents) are included.

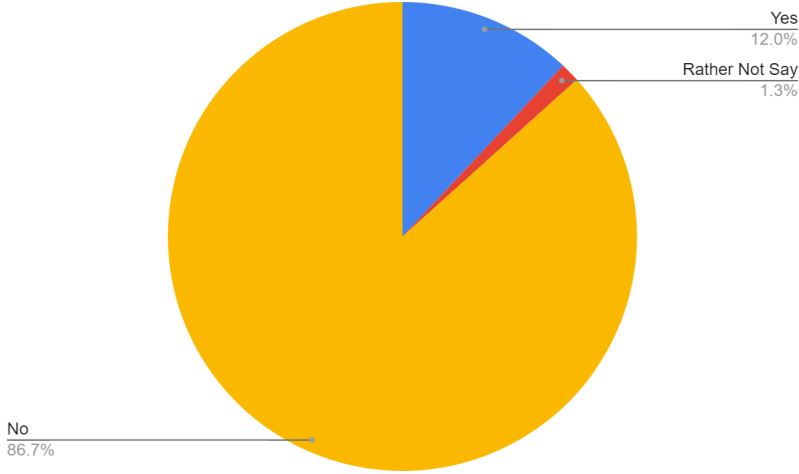
Almost one-third of these respondents felt that the role of the Social Work Placement Tutor had not been adequately fulfilled in their case.

Just over one-third advised being specifically satisfied with the support they had received from their Social Work Placement Tutor.

Exactly half felt that the title 'Social Work Tutor' was a good title. The 28 who did not were asked for recommendations of other titles. 'Placement Advisor' and 'Placement Supervisor' were the most popular suggestions.

# Union Representation

Are you a member of the relevant union for your area of professional training?



Over four-fifths of respondents reported that they are not members of the relevant professional union.

However, of the small proportion of respondents who are, over three-quarters reported that they would rather get advice from their professional union than from the Students' Union or their College Tutor.

If you are in a professional union, then rate the following statement.

"If I was in difficulty with my course, I would rather seek advice from my professional union representative rather than the Students' Union or my college tutor."

