Perspectives of students on blended learning approach: post-COVID era.

VICTORIA, M. and WILSON, T.

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PERSPECTIVES OF STUDENTS ON BLENDED LEARNING APPROACH: POST COVID ERA

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Dr Michele Victoria
Lecturer in Quantity Surveying and Commercial Management
Robert Gordon University
Aberdeen

Tillie Wilson
Undergraduate (Quantity Surveying and Commercial Management)
Robert Gordon University
Aberdeen

PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- The context

- What is blended learning?

- Pros and cons of blended learning

- The case study

- How could blended learning be improved?

THE CONTEXT

COVID-19 & ITS IMPACT ON EDUCATION

Disruption to on campus delivery

Made face-to-face teaching and learning impossible

Changes to old school pedagogies/ teaching, learning and assessment approaches

Innovative ways of thinking

BLENDED LEARNING

WHAT IS BLENDED LEARNING?

The Oxford Learners Dictionary (2022) describes blended learning as:

"a way of studying a subject that **combines being taught in class** with the **use of different technologies,** including **learning over the internet**"

Whitelock and Jeffs (2003) define:

1. The **mixture of the traditional teaching approach and online teaching**
2. The **blend of media and technology** used in online environment
3. The **mix of multiple teaching methods involving technology** used for education

WHAT IS BLENDED LEARNING?

"learning that **mixes various event-based activities, including face-to-face classrooms, live e-learning, and self-paced learning**" (Valiathan, 2002)

"a combination of **modern media, communication modes, times and places** in a new kind of learning synthesis in place of traditional classrooms and technology with the teacher serving as a facilitator of a collective learning process" (Norberg et al., 2011)
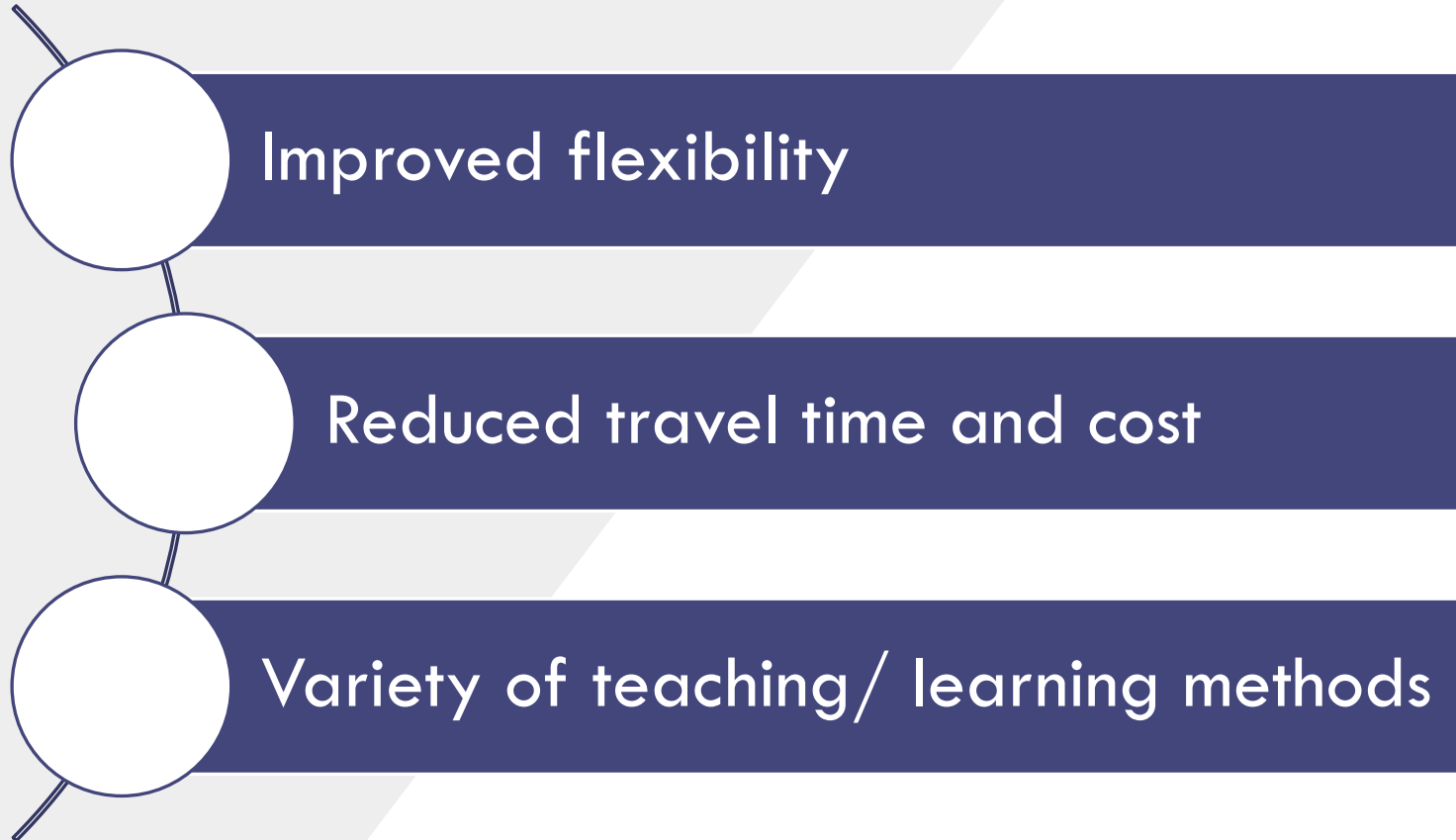
"Blended learning systems **combine face-to-face instruction with computer-mediated instruction**" (Graham, 2006)

"the thoughtful **integration of classroom face-to-face learning experiences with online learning experiences**" (Garrison and Kanuka, 2004)
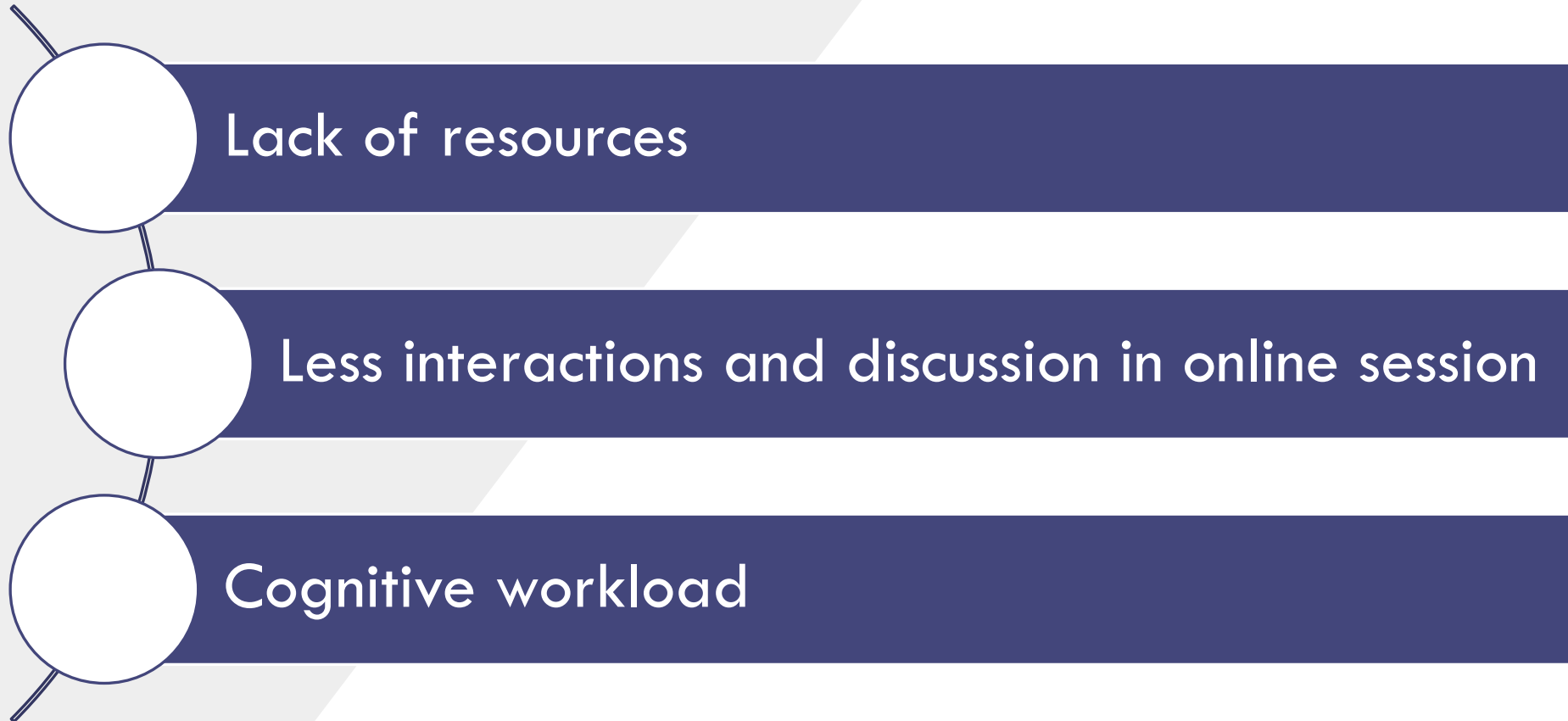
WHAT IS BLENDED LEARNING?

In-person **+** Online **=** Blended Learning

BENEFITS OF BLENDED LEARNING

Improved flexibility

Reduced travel time and cost

Variety of teaching/ learning methods

CHALLENGES OF BLENDED LEARNING

Lack of resources

Less interactions and discussion in online session

Cognitive workload

THE PROBLEM – TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

"Off-campus learning was essential during the pandemic. But when it ends, we should encourage students to return to campus for in-person lectures."

"There should come a point where the terminology 'blended learning' is not needed because it will be the norm."

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How do students perceive blended learning?
2. What are the benefits and challenges of blended learning from students' point of view?
3. Is blended learning the future of higher education?
4. How can blended learning be improved?

THE CASE STUDY

THE CASE STUDY RESPONDENT PROFILE

- RGU – Built Environment courses

- Stage 2, 3 and 4 Students

- Questionnaire survey

RESPONSE RATE
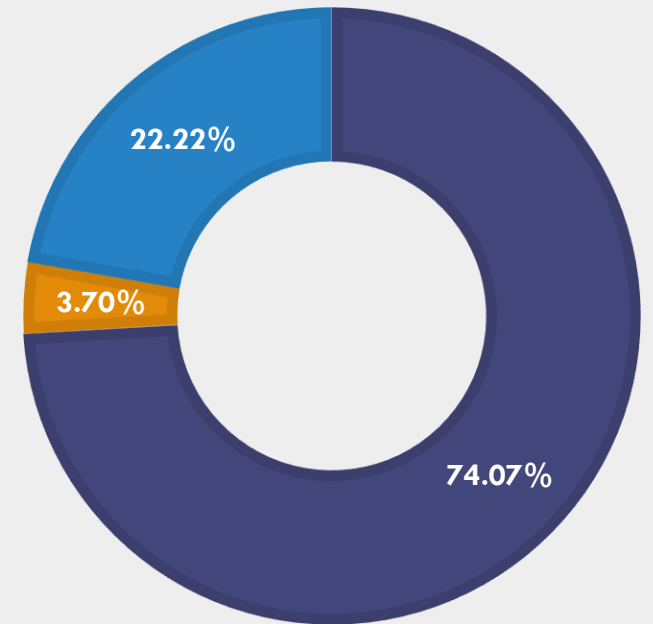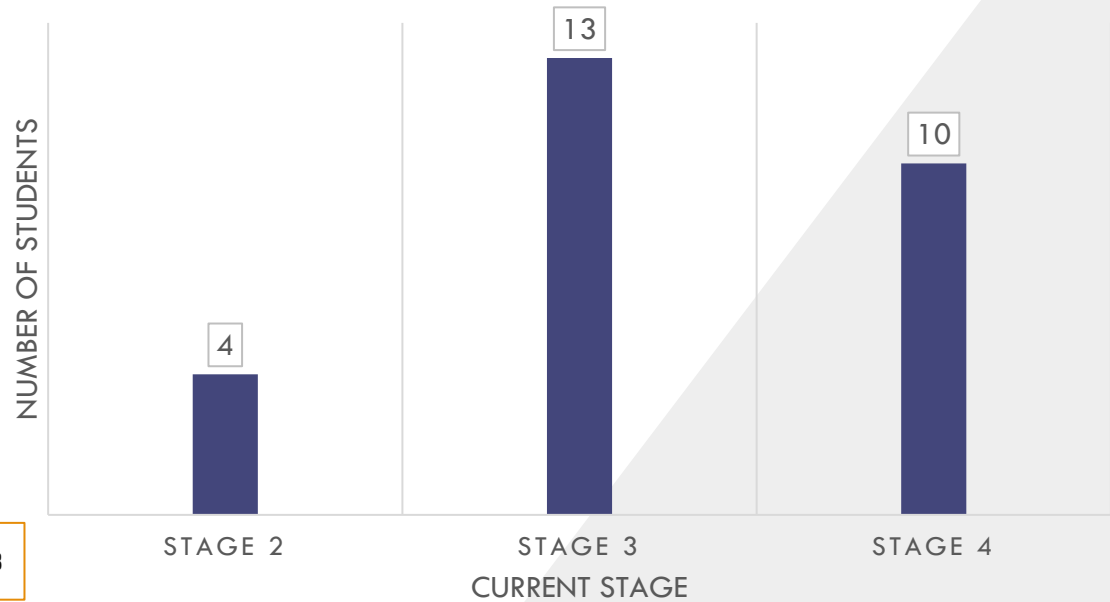
Built Environment Course	Stage	Number of Students	Number of Responses	Percentage
Architectural Technology	Stage 2	25	0	0%
	Stage 3	32	3	9%
	Stage 4	26	3	12%
Building Surveying	Stage 2	4	0	0%
	Stage 3	12	1	8%
	Stage 4	8	0	0%
Quantity Surveying & Commercial Management	Stage 2	21	4	19%
	Stage 3	13	9	69%
	Stage 4	14	7	50%
Construction Management	Stage 4	4	0	0%

RESPONDENT PROFILE

MILES TO ACCOMODATION

15%
26%
7%
7%
15%
8%
22%

- Less than 5 miles
- Between 6 miles and 10 miles
- Between11 miles and 15 miles
- Between 16 miles and 20 miles
- Between 26 miles and 30 miles
- Between 31 miles and 40 miles
- Over 41 Miles
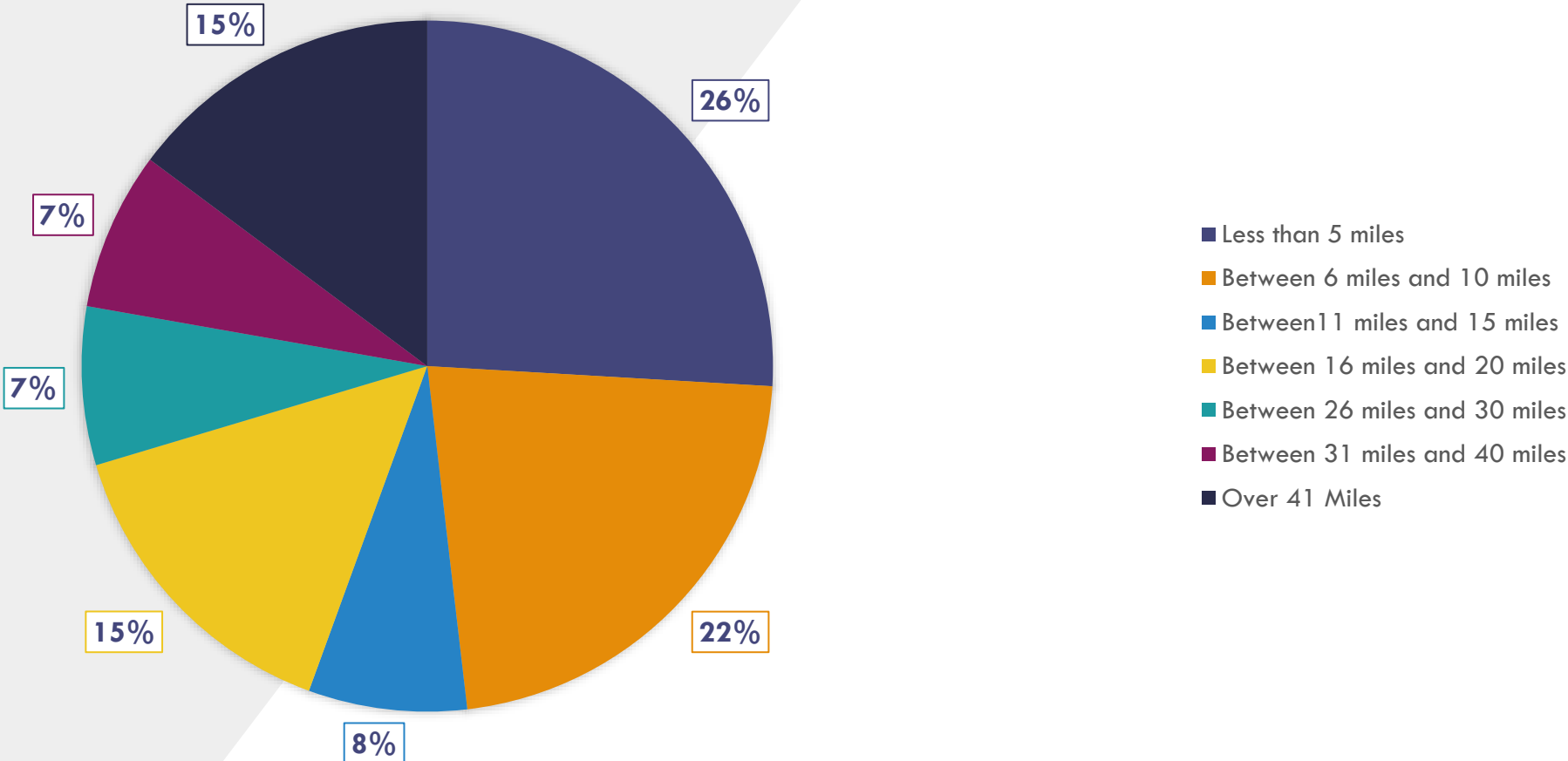
RESPONDENT PROFILE

LIVING CIRCUMSTANCES

Owned Property, 18.52%

Rented Property, 22.22%

Living with Parents, 59.26%

Student Accomodation, 0.00%

FINDINGS

no work life balance
more motivation
harder to grasp concepts
mentally draining
less engagement
more lazy
less stressful
more relaxed
lacking motivation
work life balance
suits some classes
better concentration
saves time
saves money
maintains engagement
improved morale
break boundaries
independent learning
poor value
more productive
distance and detached
worse concentration
lacking social aspect
less professional

BENEFITS OF BLENDED LEARNING

Reduced travel time and cost

Improved flexibility

Improved independence and collaborative learning experience

Allows preparation before face-to-face classes

Variety of teaching/ learning methods
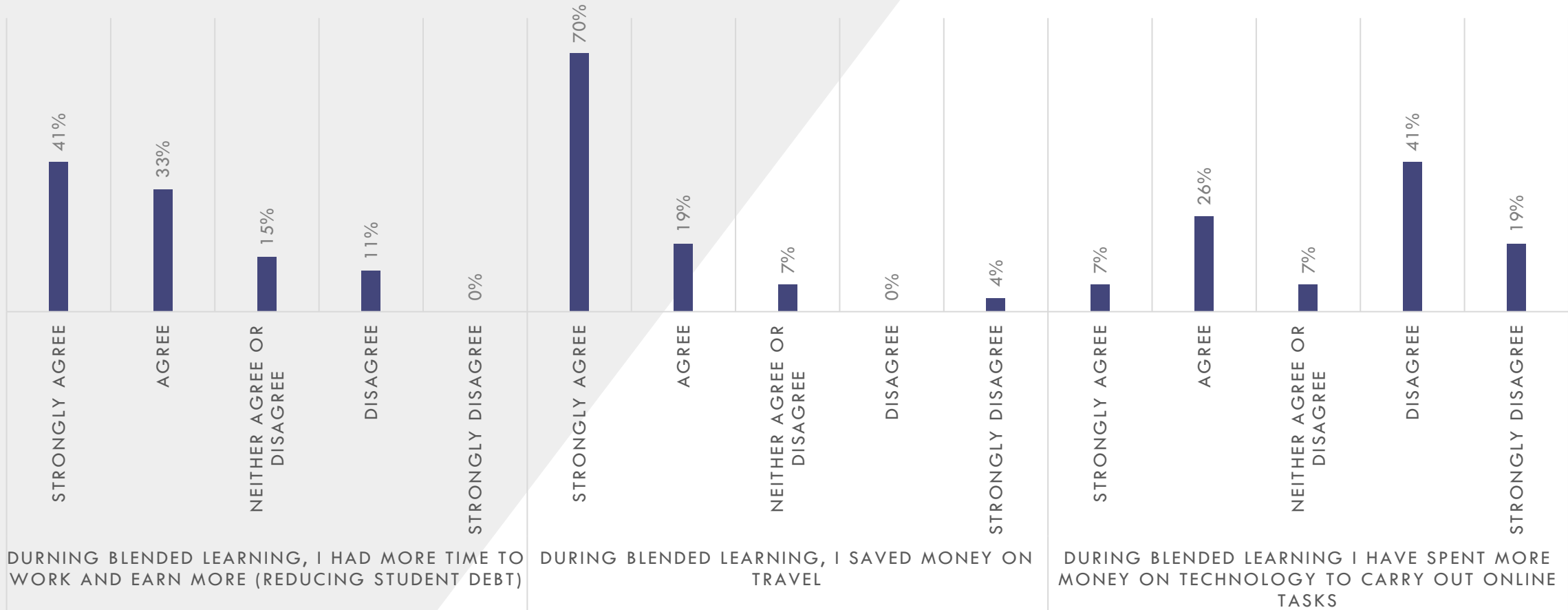
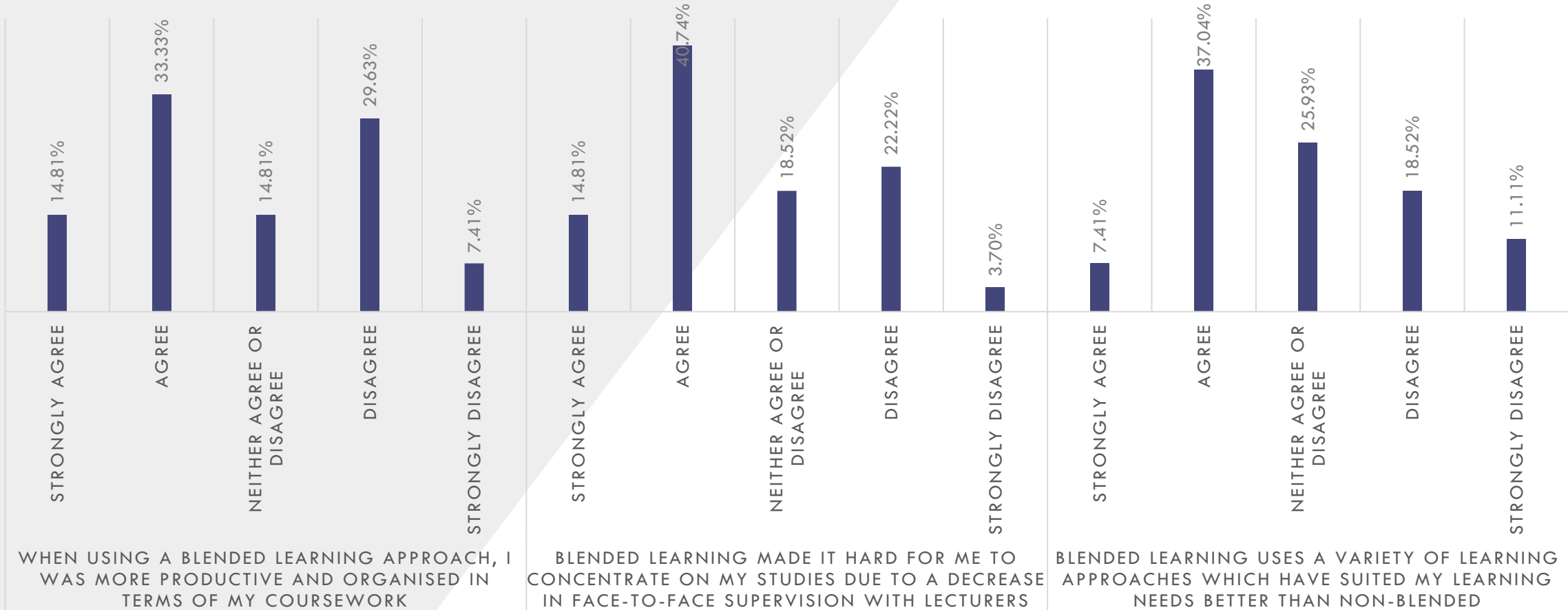# CHALLENGES OF BLENDED LEARNING

Lack of motivation

Cognitive workload

Lack of resources, i.e. laptops, good wifi

Lack of IT knowledge

COST ASSOCIATED WITH BLENDED LEARNING

DURING BLENDED LEARNING, I HAD MORE TIME TO WORK AND EARN MORE (REDUCING STUDENT DEBT)
- STRONGLY AGREE: 41%
- AGREE: 33%
- NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE: 15%
- DISAGREE: 11%
- STRONGLY DISAGREE: 0%

DURING BLENDED LEARNING, I SAVED MONEY ON TRAVEL
- STRONGLY AGREE: 70%
- AGREE: 19%
- NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE: 7%
- DISAGREE: 0%
- STRONGLY DISAGREE: 4%

DURING BLENDED LEARNING I HAVE SPENT MORE MONEY ON TECHNOLOGY TO CARRY OUT ONLINE TASKS
- STRONGLY AGREE: 7%
- AGREE: 26%
- NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE: 7%
- DISAGREE: 41%
- STRONGLY DISAGREE: 19%

IMPACT OF COVID ON BLENDED LEARNING

When using a blended learning approach, I was more productive and organised in terms of my coursework
- Strongly Agree: 14.81%
- Agree: 33.33%
- Neither Agree or Disagree: 14.81%
- Disagree: 29.63%
- Strongly Disagree: 7.41%

Blended learning made it hard for me to concentrate on my studies due to a decrease in face-to-face supervision with lecturers
- Strongly Agree: 14.81%
- Agree: 40.74%
- Neither Agree or Disagree: 18.52%
- Disagree: 22.22%
- Strongly Disagree: 3.70%

Blended learning uses a variety of learning approaches which have suited my learning needs better than non-blended
- Strongly Agree: 7.41%
- Agree: 37.04%
- Neither Agree or Disagree: 25.93%
- Disagree: 18.52%
- Strongly Disagree: 11.11%

26

IMPACT OF COVID ON BLENDED LEARNING

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PREFERRED MODE OF LEARNING

BS

QS

On-campus
35%

Blended
65%

Stage 2	25%
Stage 3	100%
Stage 4	43%

AT

On-campus
50%

Blended
50%

Stage 3	67%
Stage 4	33%

BS

Blended
0%
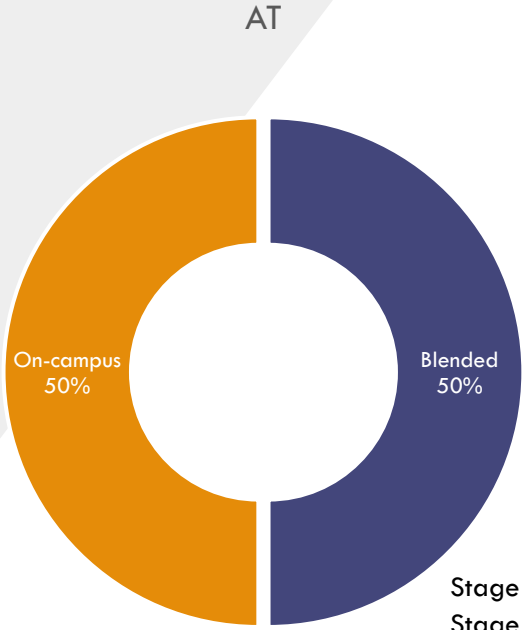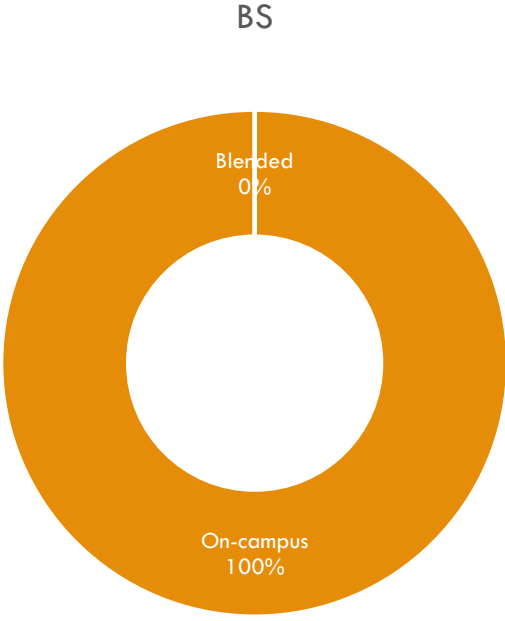
On-campus
100%

PREFERRED MODE OF LEARNING VS. LIVING CONDITIONS

■ Blended ■ On-campus
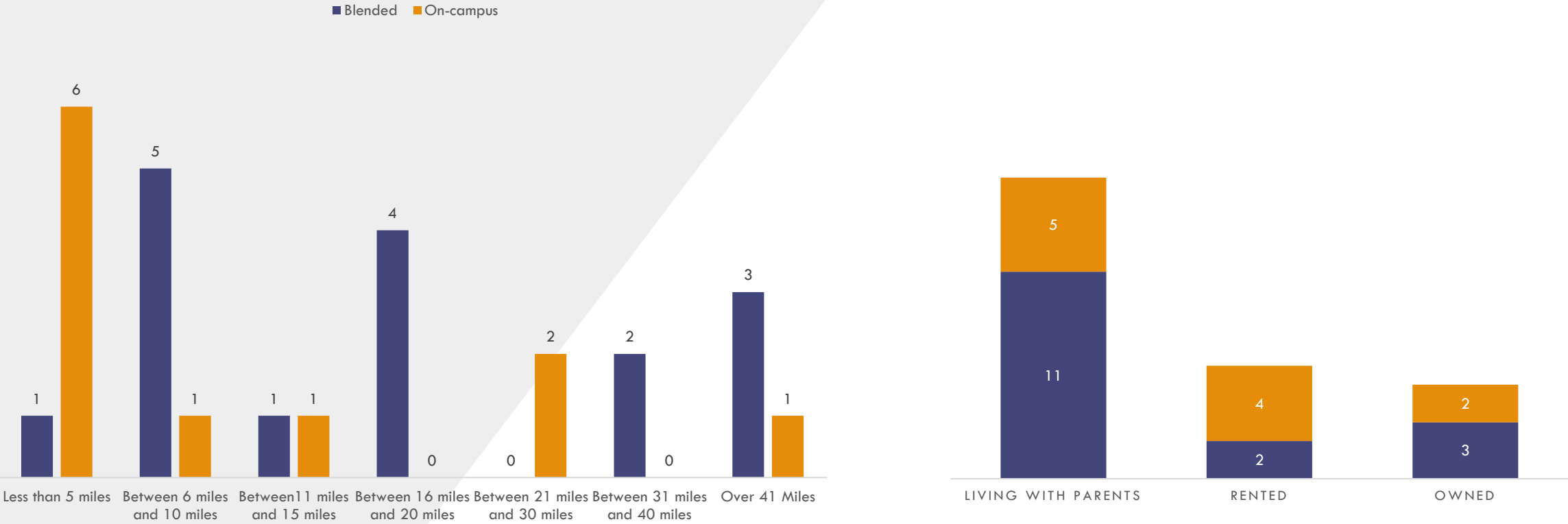
FOR FULL TIME ON-CAMPUS

- In-person lectures have **fewer distractions**
- It ensures **full focus** and **improved concentration** on the tasks
- Build better **relationships** with classmates and lecturers
- Develops a **discipline** of getting ready and being present

"Allows for easier communication between students and lecturers as opposed to the barriers of muted microphones on Teams."

"Gets you ready for work life after uni - waking up, dressing, being professional. Online means you sit with your camera off and mic off and get told to do work on Moodle."

"on-campus lectures are vital as they provide a less formal approach to asking questions to lecturers and classmates. For example, you can eavesdrop into a conversation with classmates on minor queries whereas on a teams meet it requires all questions to be asked in front of everybody"

FOR BLENDED LEARNING

- PowerPoint based sessions could be **easily delivered online**
- Better **work life balance**
- **Sustainable** - opportunity to save time and money

"I was better organised. Had more time for coursework and work when blended. Ideal would be lectures on-line & tutorial / workshops on campus, alternating weeks"

"the workshops and some tutorials have to be done face to face because discussion and interaction with the lecturer and other people in my course, this had massively helped my technical knowledge in the quantity surveying role"

"learning different things requires different learning methods, so not everything has to be face to face and not everything is online"

"classes that are not interactive should be delivered online - cost of living needs to be taken into consideration for students further away from the campus and having to move home due to extensive housing costs"
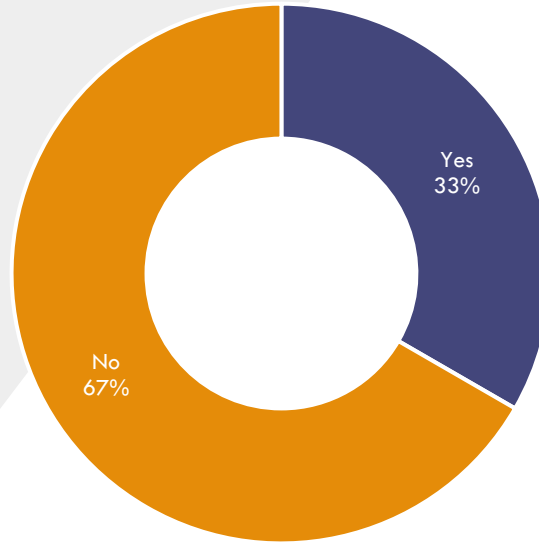
IS IT NECESSARY TO BE ON CAMPUS FULL-TIME?

"Off-campus learning was essential during the pandemic. But when it ends, we should encourage students to return to campus for in-person lectures."
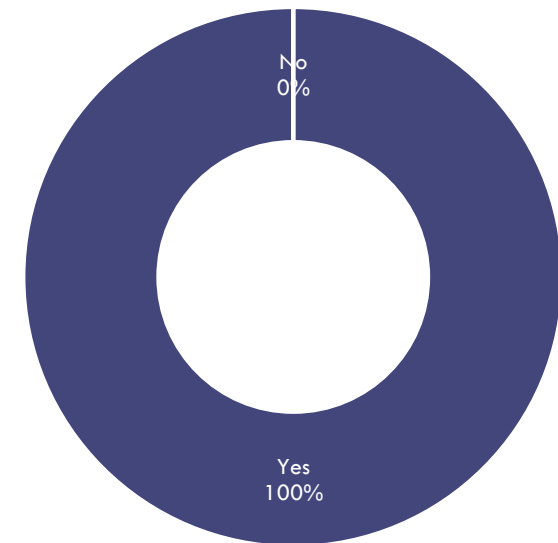
QS
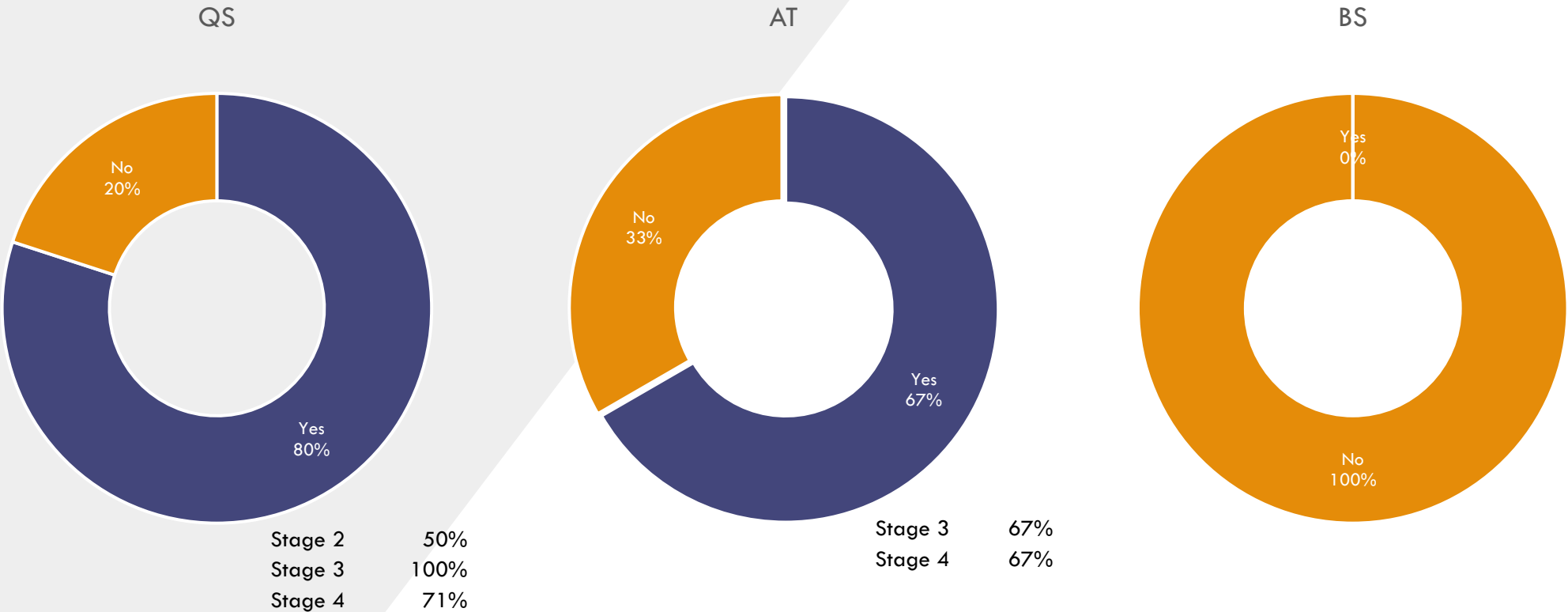
Yes
35%

No
65%
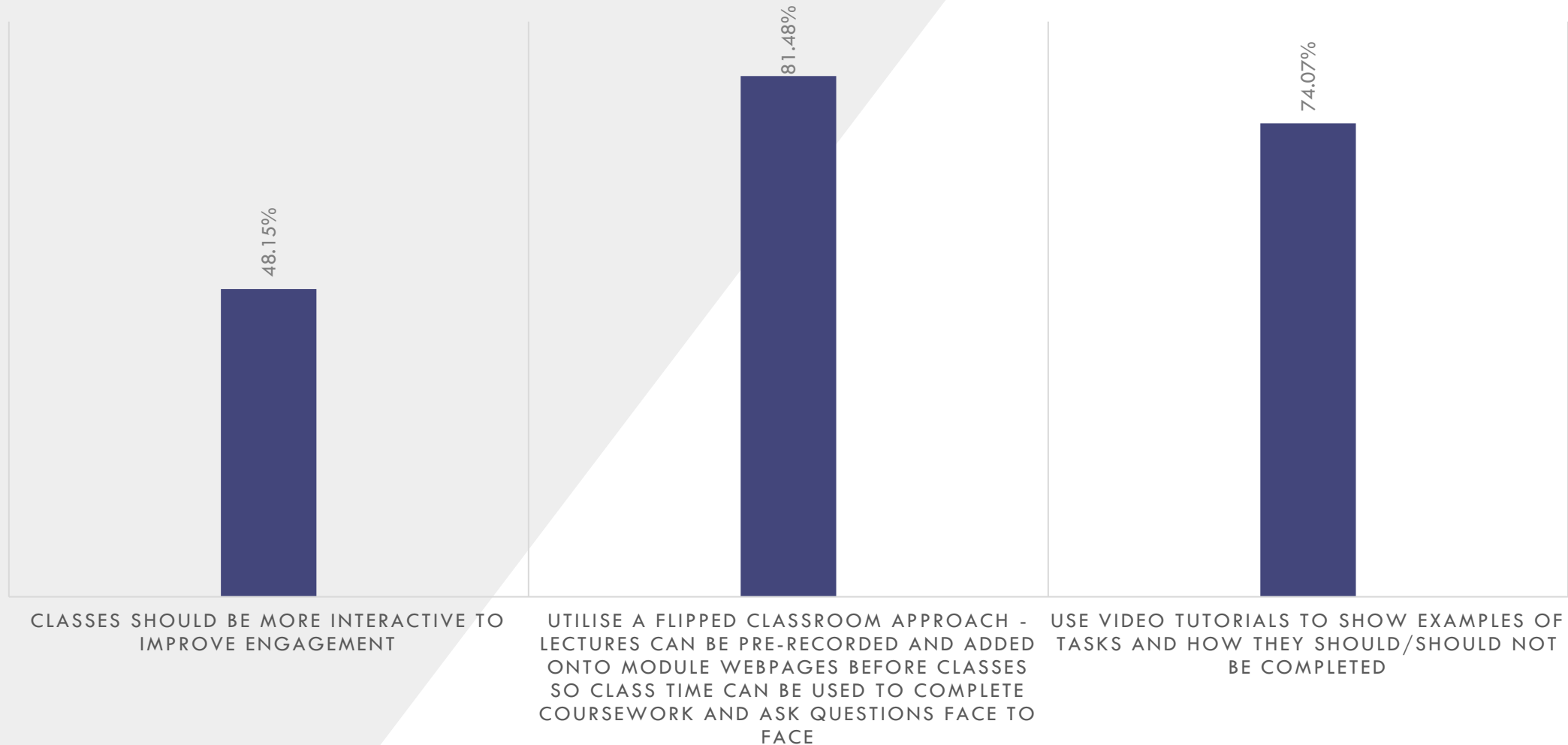
AT

Yes
33%

No
67%

BS

No
0%

Yes
100%
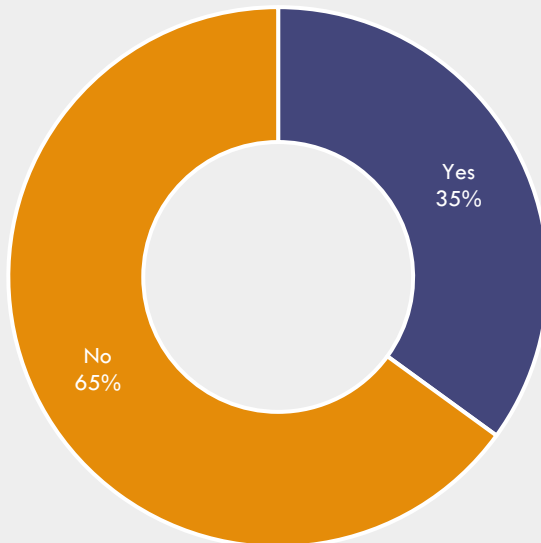
IS BLENDED LEARNING SUITABLE FOR YOUR COURSE?

"There should come a point where the terminology "blended learning" is not needed because it will be the norm."

QS

No
20%

Yes
80%

Stage 2	50%
Stage 3	100%
Stage 4	71%

AT

No
33%

Yes
67%

| Stage 3 | 67% |
| Stage 4 | 67% |

BS

Yes
0%

No
100%

33

HOW BLENDED LEARNING CAN BE IMPROVED?

48.15%

81.48%

74.07%

CLASSES SHOULD BE MORE INTERACTIVE TO IMPROVE ENGAGEMENT

UTILISE A FLIPPED CLASSROOM APPROACH - LECTURES CAN BE PRE-RECORDED AND ADDED ONTO MODULE WEBPAGES BEFORE CLASSES SO CLASS TIME CAN BE USED TO COMPLETE COURSEWORK AND ASK QUESTIONS FACE TO FACE

USE VIDEO TUTORIALS TO SHOW EXAMPLES OF TASKS AND HOW THEY SHOULD/SHOULD NOT BE COMPLETED

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Blended learning should **thoughtfully integrate classroom face-to-face learning experiences with online learning** experiences to enable communities of inquiry – every course is different!

- **Students value on-campus sessions** – make it worthwhile

- Information heavy **sessions with limited possibilities of engagement can be easily delivered online** – saving time and money for students in commuting

- Students appreciate **recorded videos** to explain complex topics and assessments

- Use a **variety of methods and technologies** to cater to varied learner needs

- Find ways to **improve communication** with lecturers and peers

- Blended learning **prepares students for work life** as the world is moving towards more flexible ways of working

LIMITATIONS & FURTHER RESEARCH

- Response rate was very low in the BS course and AT courses so findings cannot be generalised

- Methodology was mainly quantitative so there's scope for in-depth qualitative research to understand more intricate issues around blended learning and get insights from different stages across different courses

- It would be interesting to compare academics' vs students' perception on different courses on the effectiveness of blended learning

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