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Embedding academic study skills within a module to support student achievement and sustained engagement with assessment

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Background



- The number of students entering Higher Education who possess inadequate study skills is rising (Groves, Bowd and Smith 2010)
- Support with study skills has been traditionally provided by ‘Study Skills Centres’ within universities (Haggis and Pouget 2002)
- Dunkin and Main (2002) have shown that embedding study skills support within courses enhances students’ engagement with the support.

The aim of this study was to investigate the impact of embedding academic study skills within a module to support student achievement and sustained engagement with assessment.

Methods – The case study

The module 'Human Movement and Skill Acquisition' SCQF Level 8 – 15 Credits

Data was collected over two consecutive academic sessions (2022-23 and 2023-24)

The topic specific content, delivery and assessment (both formative and summative) remained unchanged.



Methods – The Intervention

In 2023-24 students were given additional integrated academic study skills teaching

- Searching for literature,
- How to read journal articles,
- Academic writing,
- Identifying key ingredients in an academic method,
- Microsoft Excel skills.



Methods – The outcome measures



The following data was collected:

- Module attendance,
- Student engagement with Moodle (the University's virtual learning environment),
- Engagement with formative assessment opportunities,
- Student feedback (via online questionnaire)
- Student attainment.

Results - Attendance

Attendr

- 2022/23 Mean Attendance % = 92.0 ± 7.1
- 2023/24 Mean Attendance % = 91.4 ± 11.9

No significant difference in attendance percentage between years ($P > 0.05$)

No association between perceived attendance and year of attendance ($P > 0.05$)

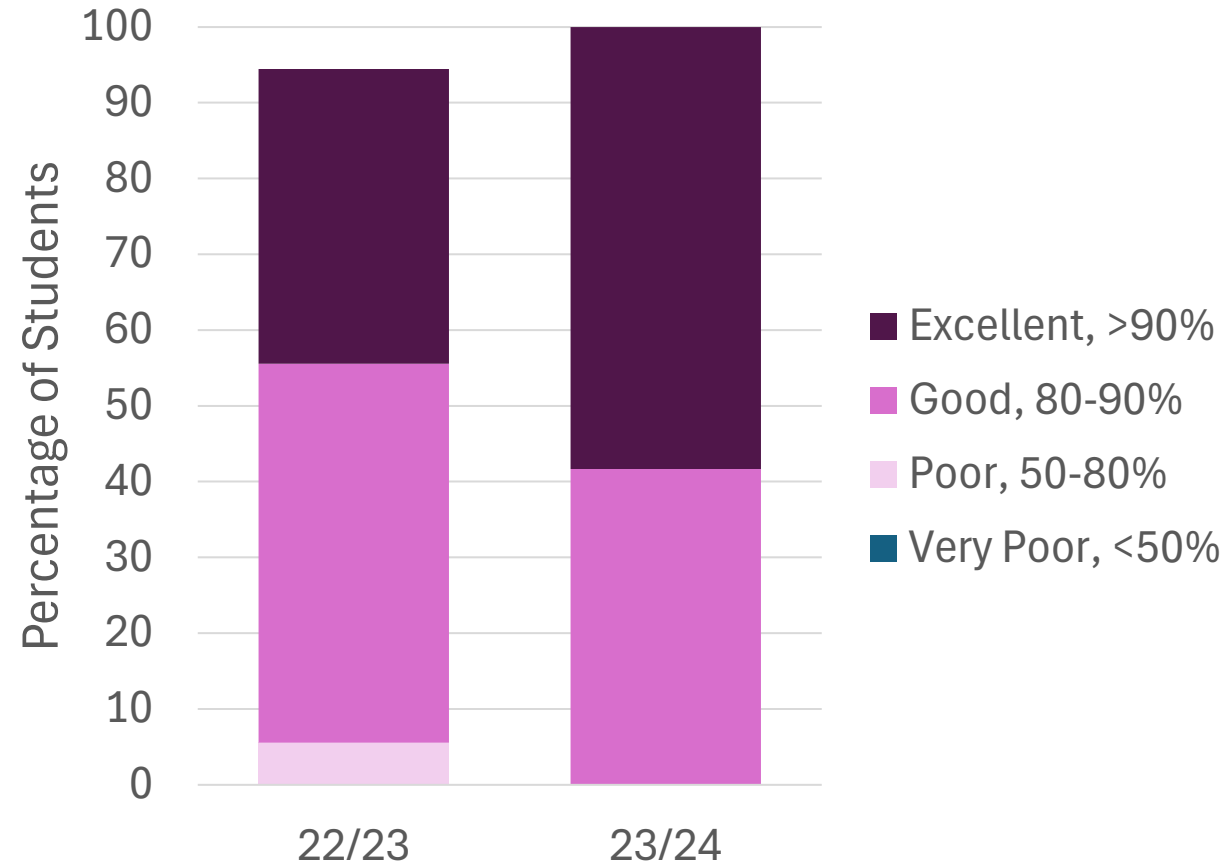
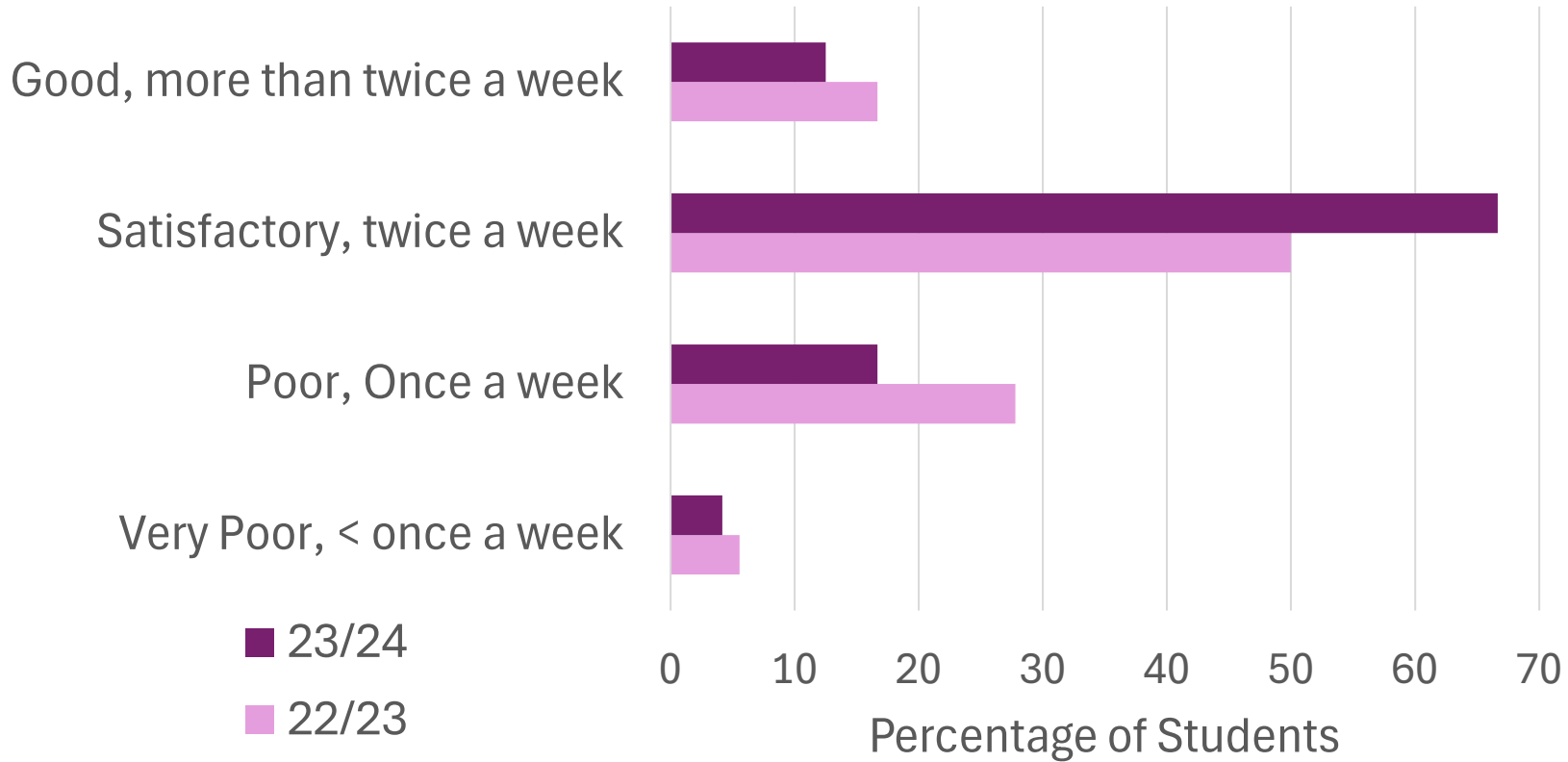


Figure 1: Students' perceptions of their levels of attendance

Results – Moodle Engagement



No association between perceived engagement and year of attendance (P > 0.05) – See figure 2.

Figure 2: Students’ perceptions of their engagement with Moodle

Results – Moodle Engagement

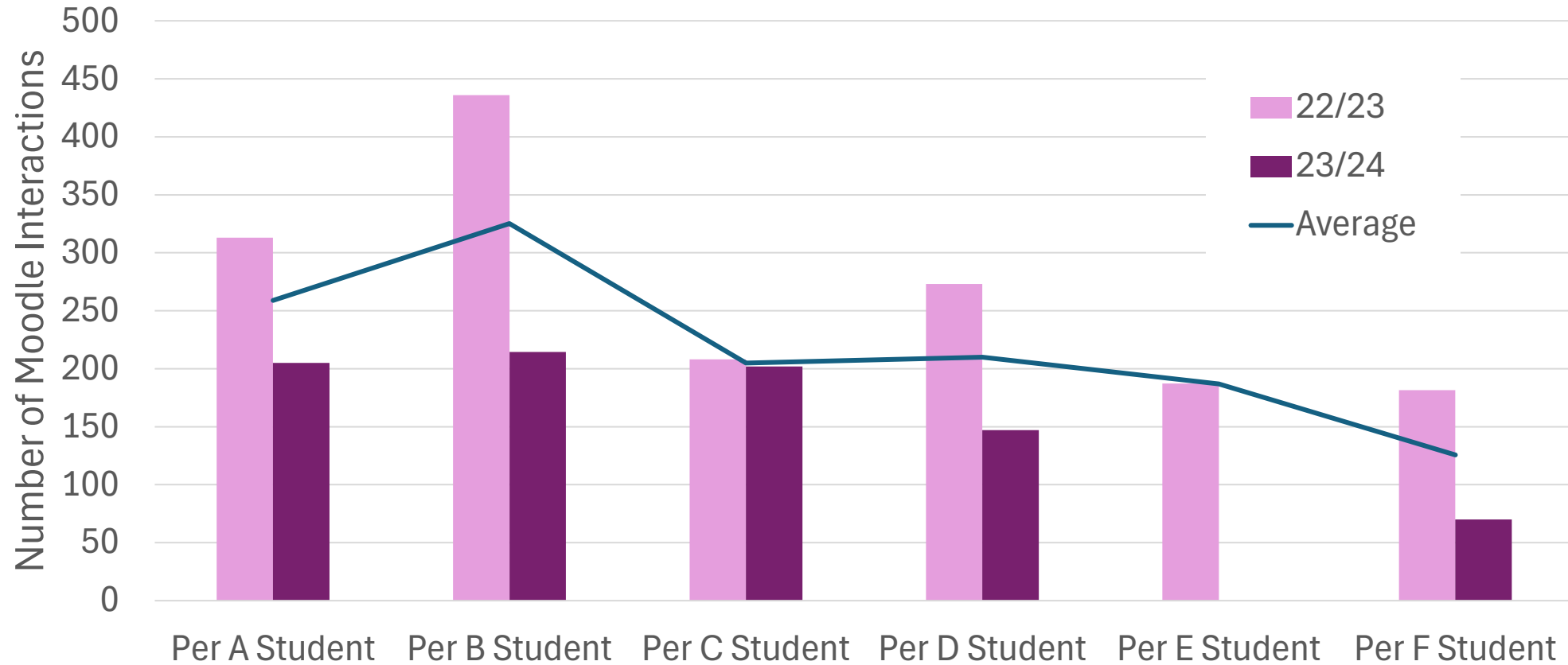


Figure 3: Students’ Moodle interactions categorised by summative grade achieved

Results – Engagement with formative assessment

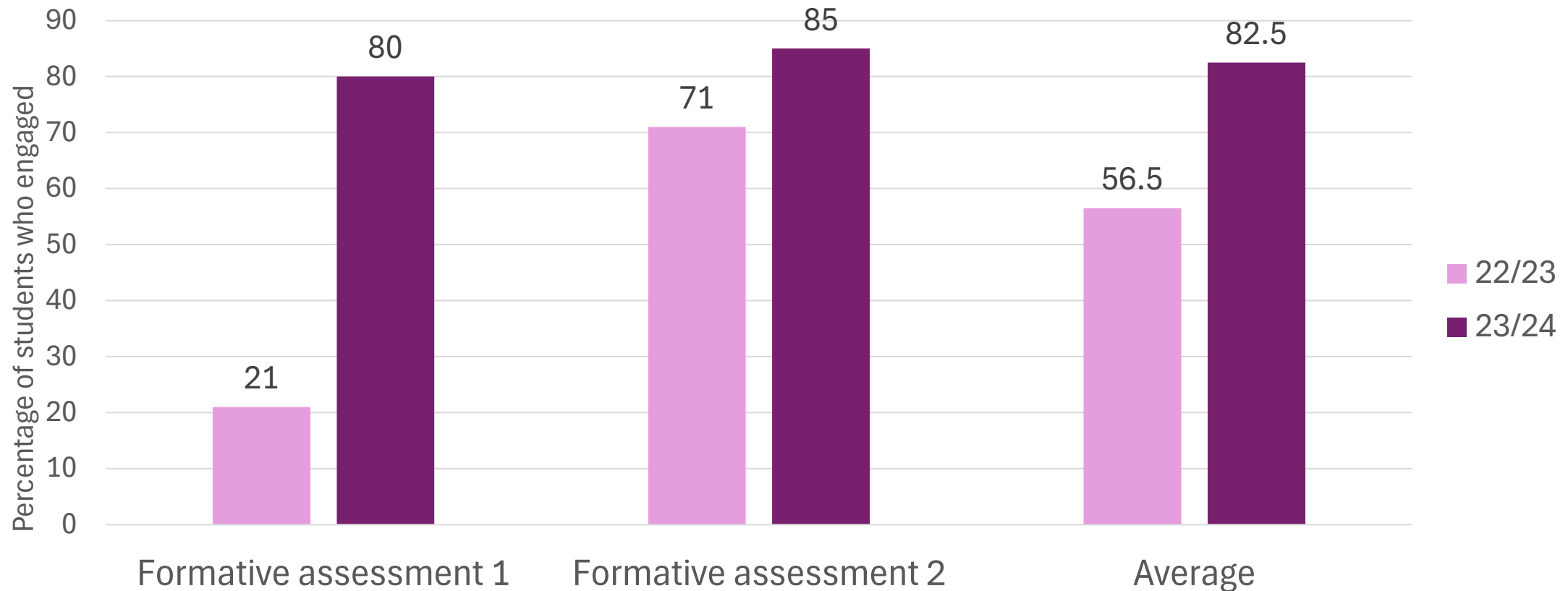


Figure 4: Students' engagement with formative assessment

Results – Student feedback

Table 1: Students’ engagement with assessment support resources and perception of helpfulness

	To aid you with your assessment which of the following did you engage with											
	Assessment Brief		Assessment Pre-record		Formative assessment		Assessment support classes		Week by week assesment guide		Assessment forum	
	22/23	23/24	22/23	23/24	22/23	23/24	22/23	23/24	22/23	23/24	22/23	23/24
Not at all	22	17	44	46	50	33	22	33	67	54	22	58
Somewhat	0	0	17	17	0	25	22	4	28	17	50	21
Fully	78	83	39	38	50	42	56	63	6	29	28	21
	To aid you with your assessment how helpful were these											
	22/23	23/24	22/23	23/24	22/23	23/24	22/23	23/24	22/23	23/24	22/23	23/24
Not at all helpful	11	0	17	13	6	4	17	4	28	13	39	17
Somewhat helpful	44	46	56	38	50	33	56	42	61	42	56	58
Very helpful	44	54	28	50	44	63	22	54	11	46	6	25

Results – Student feedback

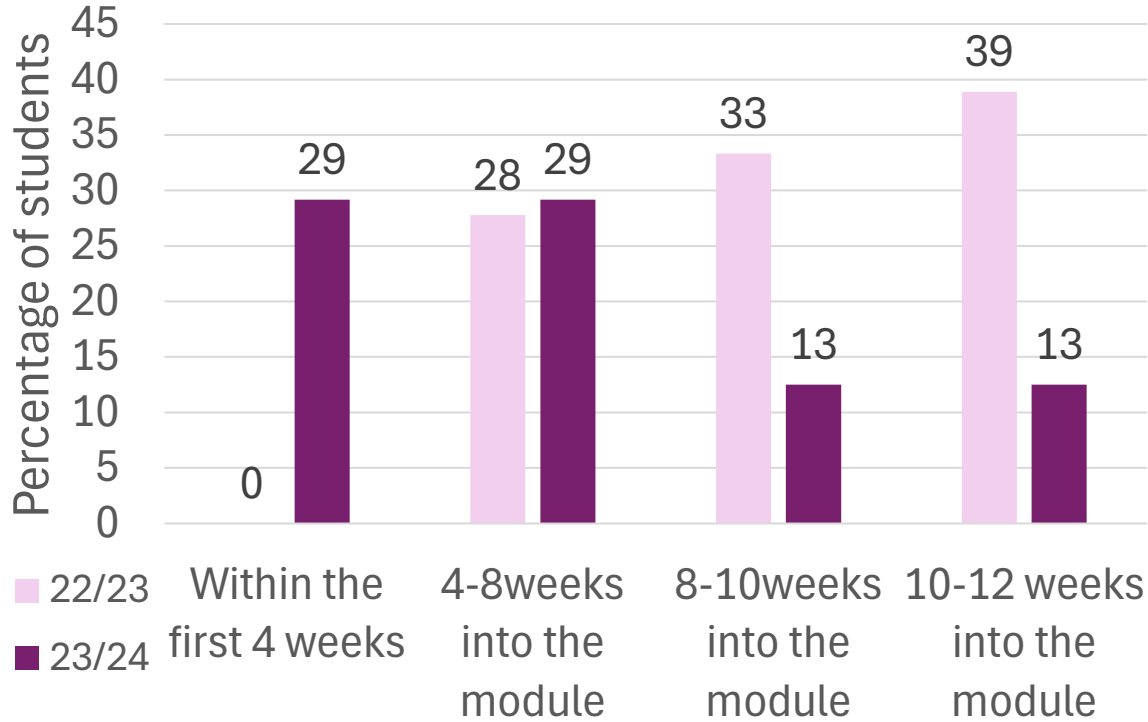


Figure 5: Students’ account of when they began working on the assessment

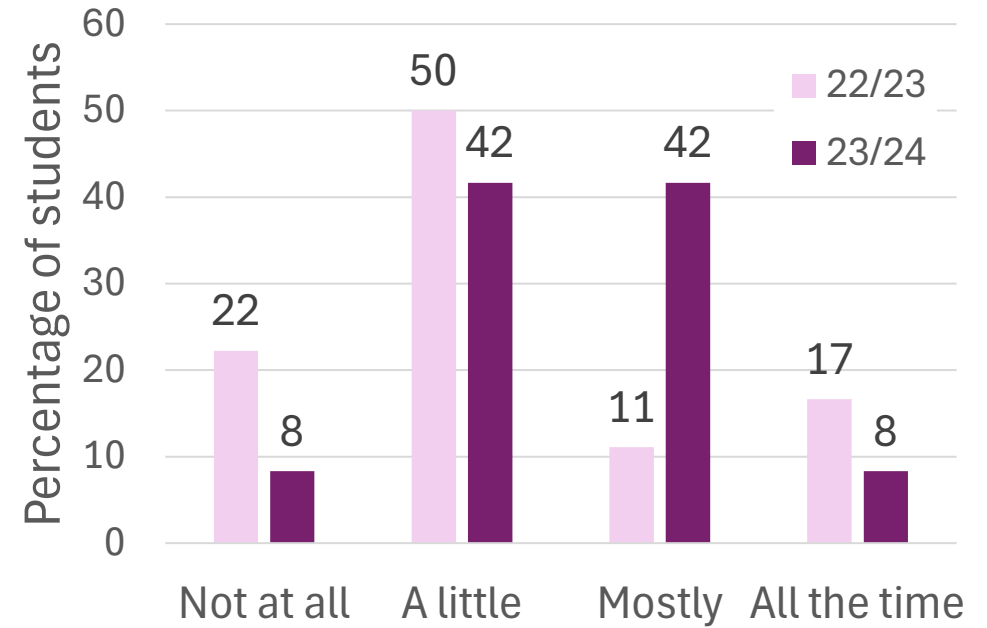


Figure 6: Students’ report of how well they stuck to the week-by-week assessment guide

Results – Student feedback

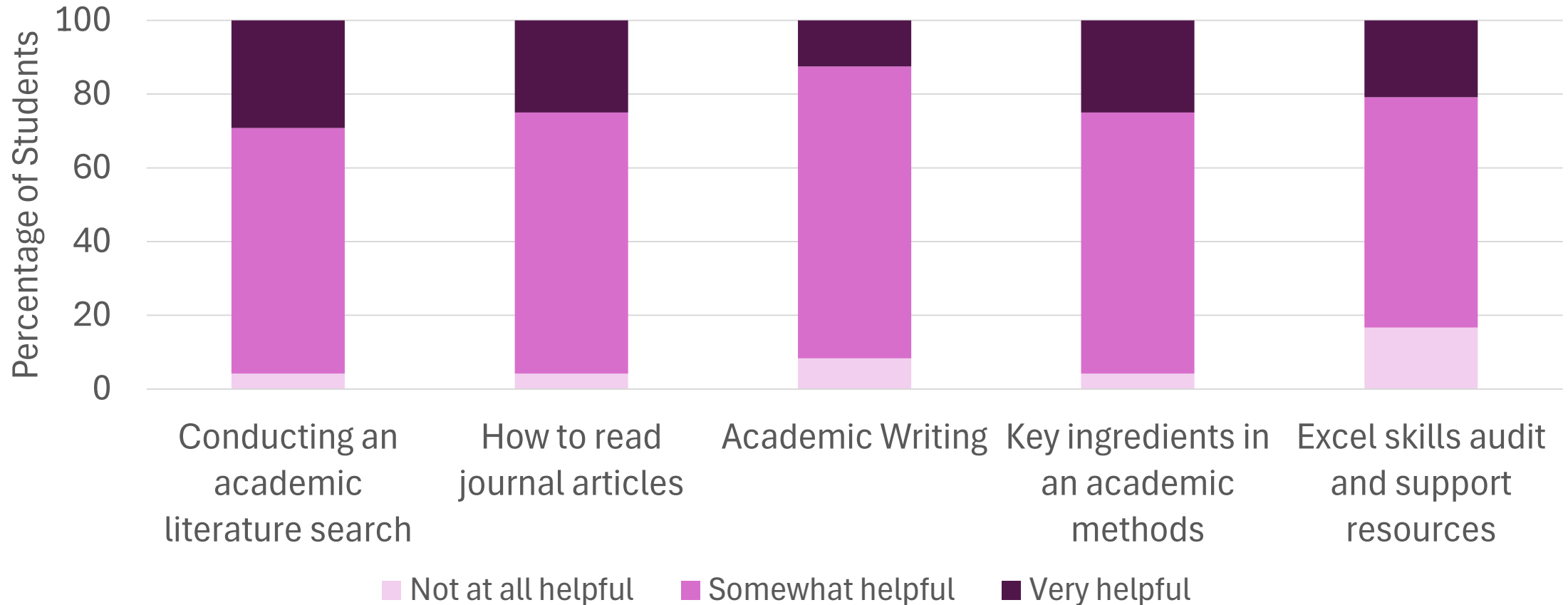


Figure 7: Students’ view of the helpfulness of the additional embedded academic skills support

Results – Student Attainment

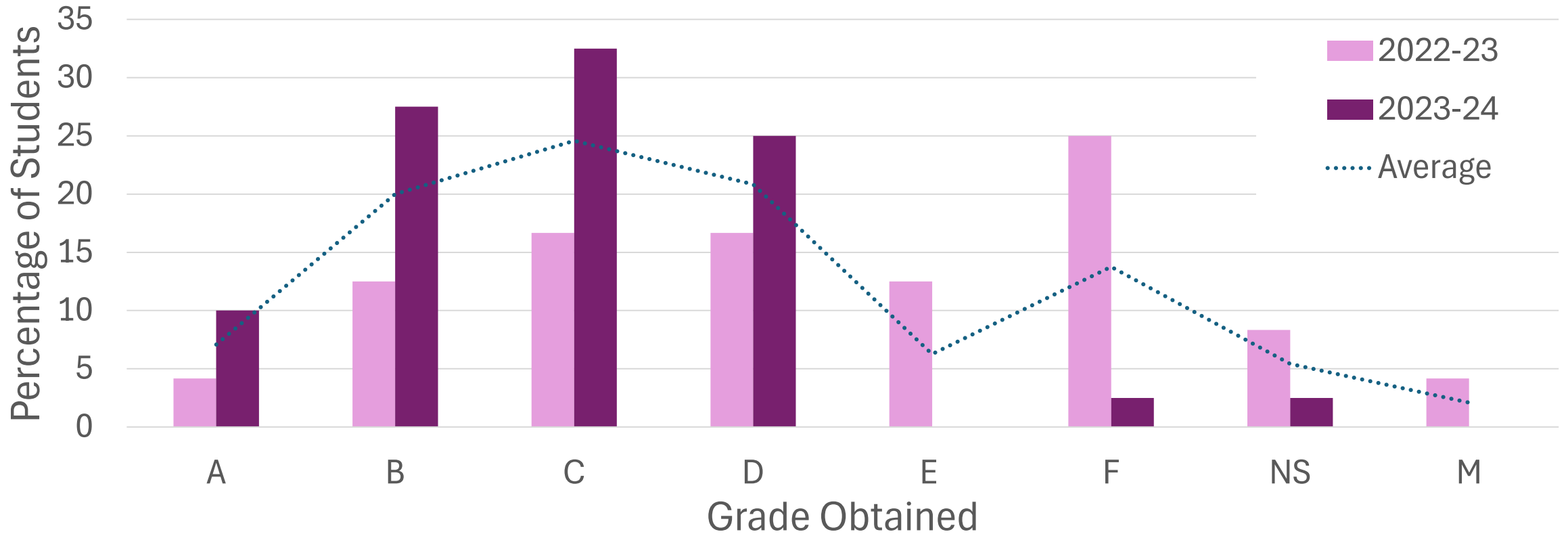


Figure 8: Student attainment for both academic sessions

Summary

The aim of this study was to investigate the impact of embedding academic study skills within a module to support student achievement and sustained engagement with assessment

Following embedding academic study skills, the following results were evident:

- Module attendance and engagement with Moodle were similar
- Enhanced attainment (45% rise in pass rate and 21% rise in % A&B Grades)
- Students started assessment earlier & engaged more with the week-by-week assessment guide
- Students found the existing assessment support more helpful
- Students showed greater engagement with formative assessment



References

- Durkin, K. and Main, A. (2002) 'Discipline-based study skills support for first-year undergraduate students', *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 3(1), pp. 24–39.
- Groves, M., Bowd, B. and Smith, J. (2010) 'Facilitating experiential learning of study skills in sports students', *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 34(1), pp. 11–22.
- Haggis, T. and Pouget, M. (2002) 'Trying to be Motivated: perspectives on learning from younger students accessing higher education', *Teaching in Higher Education*, 7(3), pp. 323-336.

