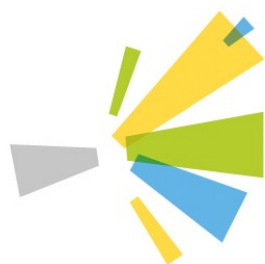


“Learning to Succeed”

A Climate Survey of the Irish
Higher Education Sector 2019



Prospectus



BH ASSOCIATES

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About the Authors

John Crimmins

John Crimmins is the Managing Director of Prospectus Management Consultants, working extensively in the education, health and wider public sector. John specialises in assisting organisations with clarifying their strategic direction; developing detailed business plans; and establishing and reviewing organisational and governance structures. Prior to working in Prospectus, John was a civil servant working in three Government Departments over a period of 15 years.

Tom Boland

Tom Boland is Joint Managing Partner, BH Associates, and international adviser and expert on higher education and research. He has wide experience in leading complex, high performance organisations across a range of public service activities, with strong competence in strategy, organisational and system reform and stakeholder management. In August 2016, Tom stepped down as Chief Executive of the Higher Education Authority of Ireland (HEA), ending over two decades at the most senior levels in the Irish education system.

Prof. Ellen Hazelkorn

Professor Ellen Hazelkorn is Joint Managing Partner, BH Associates, and Professor Emeritus, Technological University Dublin. She was policy advisor to, and board member of, the Higher Education Authority (2011-2017), and is a member of the Quality Board for Icelandic Higher Education. She is also Joint Editor, *Policy Reviews in Higher Education*. Ellen has worked as higher education policy specialist with international organisations and governments for almost 20 years (e.g. EU, OECD, World Bank, UNESCO, U.S. National Academy of Sciences, U.S. Government Accountability Office).

Finally we thank **John Prenty** and **Oscar Sands** for their assistance with writing this report.

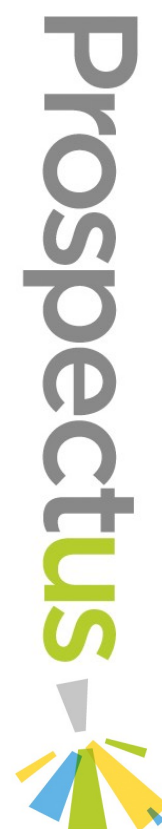


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Introduction

Rationale for the Report

In recognition of the challenges currently facing higher education institutions, Prospectus and BH Associates concluded that there would be value in capturing the climate, concerns and ambitions of the sector at this time. The objectives of the survey are therefore to:

- Provide a picture of the current position of the Irish higher education sector, critical issues and views of opinion leaders across the sector.
- Identify and understand the key strategic and operational issues facing the Irish higher education sector in the future.
- Inform the advancement of higher education in Ireland, in a global context.

Why is this Report Different?

Prospectus previously completed a similar survey in 2007 designed to provide a strong and timely poll of views in Ireland's higher education sector. We feel that the unique insights provided by that report could be replicated to capture the current higher education climate. This survey addresses a broad selection of topics ranging from a macro-level overview of the sector to more micro-level areas such as policy, governance, teaching and learning, research, management capacity and organisation development. This was achieved by capturing the views and opinions of major stakeholders and system leaders in Irish higher education.

Research Methodology

An online survey was conducted in the Spring of 2019 using Survey Monkey. The questionnaire was sent to key stakeholders across the sector including: system and institute leaders; senior academic and administrative personnel in universities, the technological university and institutes of technology; directors and principal investigators in the major research institutes; relevant government departments and state agencies; private colleges and philanthropists in Ireland. These stakeholders are seen to be knowledgeable in the area and handpicked by our HE experts Tom Boland (BH Associates) former Chief Executive of the HEA, Ellen Hazelkorn (BH Associates) and Professor Emeritus TU Dublin and John Crimmins (Prospectus) Managing Director who has conducted numerous consultancy projects within education.



Profile of Respondents

The survey was circulated to 343 individuals in senior positions in the higher education institutions, government agencies and other key stakeholder bodies. Of these there were 123 respondents, a response rate of 36%. To support the findings we have also presented some representative quotes from respondents within blue boxes throughout the survey.

Respondents represented key stakeholders in higher education in Ireland. The respondent profile was as follows:

- 37% University (academic and administration)
- 20% Institute of Technology and Technological University (academic and administration)
- 14% Government Department/Agency
- 10% Private Higher Education Institutions
- 10% Representative Bodies
- 3% Business/Enterprise
- 6% Other

Prospectus and BH Associates would like to acknowledge the time, effort and contribution of all survey respondents who participated in this research.

The Survey

The survey asked 80 questions relating to aspects of higher education as it pertains to the Irish experience. These questions were divided into six sections:

- Irish Higher Education Landscape
- Irish Higher Education in an International Context
- Governance and Management of Higher Education
- Teaching and Learning
- Research
- Development of Human Capital and Excellence

The survey used a five-point Likert scale in order to ascertain the respondent's degree of agreement or disagreement with a particular statement.

The results are presented in this report in five chapters:

- Chapter 1** – National Policy for Higher Education and Research
- Chapter 2** – Governance, Management & Accountability
- Chapter 3** – Quality, Relevance & Engagement
- Chapter 4** – International Education & Reputation
- Chapter 5** – Research
- Chapter 6** – Summary of Our Conclusions



The findings from this survey are presented in the following context:

- The survey was carried out independently by Prospectus and BH Associates.
- The survey has been fully funded by Prospectus and BH Associates, and all individual responses will remain confidential.
- All information collated from this survey will only be used for the purpose of this exercise and directly related processes i.e. a possible publication and seminar.
- No information will be shared with any third parties outside of Prospectus Management Consultants or BH Associates without prior written permission.
- This survey is GDPR compliant.
- Survey findings are presented without any statistical or other manipulation of data. Figures are rounded to whole numbers, as such a rounding of plus or minus 1–2% has occurred in some of the graphs.
- We welcome each reader to make his/her own analysis and draw his/her own interpretation of these findings.

About Prospectus

Established in 1991, Prospectus is Ireland’s leading independent strategy consultancy. We work with clients in higher education, healthcare and social services, philanthropy, not-for-profit and religious orders in building strong, successful organisations by developing sustainable strategies and putting them to work. Our services include strategy development and implementation, governance and organisation transformation, sectoral reviews, change management, proposition development and the commercialisation of research.

Unique in Ireland, Prospectus has a dedicated Higher Education practice and advises clients on a varied range of policy, strategy and operational issues. Given this active engagement with and understanding of the higher education sector in Ireland, Prospectus is ideally placed to carry out this survey.

Our entire professional focus is on helping organisations to put strategy into action by having effective operating models and governance structures in place in order to withstand various growing, changing and competing priorities both internally and externally. Our tag line is **“Creative Change”** and this stems from our focus on implementation and the need to consider how this can best be achieved through innovative thinking and practices. This philosophy underpins our work for this survey.

About BH Associates

Prospectus is delighted to be completing this survey with BH Associates. For over 20 years, Tom Boland and Ellen Hazelkorn have each led higher education organisations, and provided policy advice to governments and university leaders in all parts of the world. Services include policy guidance on all levels of education; evaluation and advice on benchmarking and strategic planning; leadership and strategic planning training; international networking, including designing, organising and hosting high-level policy-sharing and benchmarking seminars and workshops.

BH Associates also work with a team of international experts who have experience across the whole educational landscape. With this strategic partnership, BH Associates bring the benefits of an international pool of expertise and experience.



Executive Summary

The response to the survey displays the higher education system in all its complexity, its challenges and its successes. In the following pages we present an analysis of the responses from a wide range of stakeholders in the system. Each of the five sections begins with a short summary of what the survey tells us.

We start with a widely held view that Ireland does have a **strategy** for our higher education system and throughout the survey there are demonstrations of clear support for key strategic objectives such as the strategic dialogue process, HE engagement with the skills agenda and with enterprise, cross institutional collaboration in a range of areas including research and international education and the development of technological universities. There is a strong support for a bigger role for private providers, for alignment of further and higher education and for a better balancing of the research and teaching and learning missions.

But there are many areas where respondents are much less positive. Inevitably **funding** gets a big thumbs down, as does regulation, which is seen as unnecessarily intrusive. A lack of confidence in **governance and management capacity** is uncomfortably high and points to a need for greater awareness of the issue and action at institutional level as well as in legislation and policy. Correspondingly, support for **reform of structures** in the sector is quite high.

There is a high level of confidence in the **quality assurance** processes in the higher education institutions (HEI) and in the quality and relevance of the skills of graduates, including relevance to the skills needs of the economy. That said, **innovation** in the sector is seen as weak, a telling perspective in a sector that needs to adapt and innovate to a rapidly changing environment, internally and externally.

International education policy is broadly supported but with some misgivings about the risks of creating an over-reliance on international students. There is scepticism about the government's ambition that Ireland will provide the best education and training system in Europe over the next decade. Ranking systems for HEIs are deeply unpopular and seen as an undesirable driver of policy, but are nevertheless seen as unavoidable.

In response to the questions on **research**, respondents demonstrate a high level of support for various government policies including prioritisation, enterprise engagement and collaboration. There is little support for the creation of standalone research institutes. This is consistent with the survey finding that the majority of respondents regard well educated graduates as the key outcome to research activity, rather than inventions and spin-out companies. Funding for research is of course seen as seriously inadequate.

A broad conclusion from the survey responses is that ***the higher education and research sector is in a strong position to continue its support for Irish society and economy but it, in turn, needs support in terms of funding and reform of governance and management systems and structures.***

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International Education & Reputation

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Summary of Our Conclusions

1

National Policy for Higher Education & Research

1.1 Overview

In this section we identify a number of key points emerging under this heading. These include issues relating to:

- Clarity in National Policy
- Pace of implementation
- Alignment of key policy documents with research
- Higher education and further education
- Technological universities
- Civic engagement
- Funding

1.2 Findings

Clarity in National Policy

The response to the survey on the policy environment supports the view that there is a clear national policy for higher education with over 55% of respondents agreeing while only 28% disagree (Q2). This, in all probability, reflects the fact that the *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030* (the Strategy), published in 2011, was largely well received. It is noteworthy that the Strategy was in fact the first and only such strategy for higher education drawn up and approved by an Irish government. Also, unlike many such documents, the Strategy has been implemented and has led to significant reforms in the sector since publication rather than, as all too often happens, sitting on a shelf gathering dust, as the saying goes.

But there are reservations about the pace of implementation

Asked about aspects of the implementation of the National Higher Education Strategy however, respondents are less emphatically positive. The creation of a well-co-ordinated higher education system with a diverse range of institutions, each playing to its unique strengths and mission, is one of the key objectives of the Strategy and one which has driven many of the reforms to-date. However, perceptions of its success appear to be limited as only 43% of respondents (Q3) take the view that Ireland has a well-coordinated system of higher education institutions. Over a third disagree while another 21% are withholding judgement at this point. This outcome, however, could be interpreted as a positive for the policy which, after all, is only 6 years in implementation in a sector where reforms do not occur overnight. Even if there is scepticism about the pace of this particular reform, there is clear support for it as demonstrated by the response to Q14. Almost 80% believe that collaboration between higher education institutions is preferable to competition as a way to boost the overall quality and competitiveness of Irish higher education. It is through such collaboration that a well-co-ordinated system will emerge. There is almost no support (5.8%)

for what was once the dominant culture of strong competition and little or no co-operation between HEIs.

54% of respondents say there is no clear national policy with regard to distinct research missions between different universities, technological universities and IoTs (Q57). Yet there is strong disagreement that restrictions should be placed on the nature and level of research conducted in different HEIs, with only 18% agreeing (Q58).

Support for higher education/enterprise links to support skills

Another key objective of the Strategy is more effectively to align higher education with the skills needs of the economy and here at Q4 it appears that Strategy implementation fares better, with 52% agreeing that national policy for higher education is well aligned with national policy for the skills needs of the economy, while 20% disagree.

Many in the enterprise sector and government or its agencies criticise the relevance of what the HEIs do for economic/enterprise needs. On the basis of this response that criticism appears overdone. The response also reflects the view of many in the FDI sector, and among agencies such as the IDA and Enterprise Ireland, that a key determinant of our success in attracting FDI is our pool of talented graduates. Qs 9, 10 and 12 reflect this positive view of the contribution of higher education to economic success. 89% believe that higher education institutions are making a sufficient contribution to Ireland's economic development. 85.4% agree that higher education institutions are proactive in developing relationships with enterprise. But there is still a way to go before we can conclude that industry and enterprise are effectively engaged with higher education and research. A mere 44.6% agree that this is currently the case while over a quarter do not and a sizeable 30% are unsure at this point.

The Regional Skills Fora are beginning to make an impact. Industry needs faster reactions from HEIs.

Poor alignment in the key policy areas of research and teaching/learning

The response to Q5 uncovers the long-standing debate in the higher education system about balancing the role of the research mission and the teaching and learning mission. It is also worth noting that a significantly greater proportion of respondents believe that national policy for the teaching and learning mission of higher education is NOT well aligned with national policy for the research mission compared with those who believe it is (41% to 32%), while over a quarter commit neither way. More on this later in the report.

HE and FE not aligned

Those who take the view that a more co-ordinated post-secondary level education system is a necessity for economic and social development will see their doubts demonstrated in Q6. Almost 50% of respondents take the view that national policies for higher education and further education are not well aligned; only 24% think they are. This result, if reflected in practice and that is likely, poses a challenge to government and its two key agencies in this space – SOLAS and the Higher Education Authority. Better co-ordination is seen by government and other stakeholders as necessary to meet the wide range of skills needs in the economy, providing students with a wider range of post-secondary education and training opportunities and providing some cooling off of the demand for access to higher education.

Broad support for technological universities

Q7 addresses another major objective of the National Higher Education Strategy – the development of technological universities. As a policy initiative this attracted considerable opposition, especially from some in the established universities. However, this survey indicates that the policy is broadly welcomed with almost a two to one majority in favour (57% to 29%). This result should give heart to those working in the institute of technology sector to achieve TU status, often in the face of internal and external opposition, and to those in TU Dublin who have blazed the trail

“ Institutes of technology who do not become TUs should continue to be recognised as valuable parts of the HE sector ” .

for others to follow.

HE contributes well to civic engagement and equity of access

Apart from the skills/economic impact, the higher education sector also has a range of other ways in which it contributes to the health and welfare of individuals and society. Qs 8 and 12 address the role of HEIs in civic engagement, and equity of access to and participation in higher education, respectively. Both of these, but especially equity of access, are important national policy objectives for the sector and each show a strong positive from respondents in terms of implementation (71% and 62%). Caution should be exercised in the case of equity of access as there remains wide disparities across the State – a fact given further force by the recently

In Dublin 6 the participation rate is 99% whereas it is only 15% in Dublin 17.

published HEA report *Higher Education Spatial & Socio-Economic Profile, 2017/18 Enrolments*.

HEIs should be thought leaders

The response to Q11 is especially interesting at a time of considerable societal disquiet on a wide range of issues such as Brexit, climate change and populism. It relates to the role of the HEIs in providing thought leadership in relation to national social, economic & cultural agendas – over 92% agree that they should (the highest positive in the survey). While many academics are effective public commentators on a range of issues, the HEIs and in particular their leaderships are often criticised for their focus in public fora on narrow sectoral or even institutional concerns. Clearly almost all respondents expect a more robust engagement by academia with the issues of the day. While 92% agree that HEIs **should** provide more thought leadership, the survey does not ask, and therefore cannot provide an answer as to whether HEIs actually **do** so.

Private providers are a key part of the HE system

Approximately 15% of students attending HEIs are enrolled in private institutions. The lack of funding support for such institutions and their students has long been a bone of contention

The lack of a clear policy for the private colleges contrasts with private secondary schools and to the health sector where private hospitals are funded by the taxpayers

for the private colleges. For instance, students at such colleges are not eligible for SUSI grants. The colleges also point to inconsistencies in policy as they are eligible for Springboard funding but cannot otherwise access public financial support. There is very strong support in the survey at Q17 (84.5%) for the statement that the private sector has an important contribution to make to the higher education system in Ireland. However, there is no such

consensus about national policy with respect to private providers. The response to Q18 shows an almost evenly divided outcome between those who agree that national policy is supportive of the contribution of the private sector to the higher education system in Ireland, those who do not agree and those who take no view on the matter.

Excellent VFM but seriously underfunded

There is a high level of consistency between the responses to Q15 and Q16. 75% of respondents take the view that overall, the Irish system of higher education provides excellent value for money while 75% consider that the system of higher education and research is seriously underfunded.



1.3 Conclusions

Overall there is a strong sense that there is a national higher education policy and there is strong support for many of its key elements. This includes the creation of a well-co-ordinated higher education system, where cross institutional collaboration is seen as an approach most likely to bring strength and success to the sector.

The strong positive response to the key policy of developing technological universities should offer valuable psychological support to those working to bring them about.

The survey indicates that the policy of collaboration between higher education and enterprise is broadly welcomed, even if there is a sense that as matters stand such collaboration could be better.

So too could the alignment of policy for higher education and further education as well as the research and teaching and learning missions of the HEIs.

There is broad support for a wider role for HEIs in society in areas such as civic engagement, thought leadership and addressing issues of equity of access to and participation in higher education.

The contribution of private providers of higher education gets a high level of endorsement, even if national policy is seen not to be supportive.

Unsurprisingly, there is overwhelming agreement on the inadequacy of funding for higher education.

2

Governance, Management & Accountability

2.1 Overview

Governance, management and accountability is a topical talking point within the higher education sector. Some of these issues are highlighted below:

- Over-Regulation
- Governance systems
- Reform
- Strategic dialogue

2.2 Findings

Over-regulation compromising performance

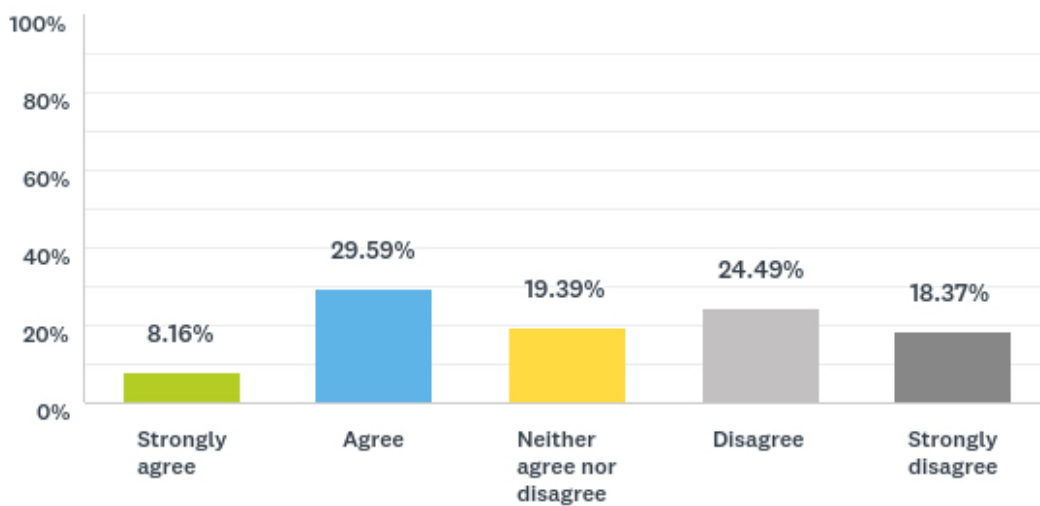
A key fault line in Irish higher education, as indeed in other higher education systems, is the degree to which the universities, institutes and other higher education institutions have the freedom to manage their own affairs (institutional autonomy) and the degree to which the institutions are so heavily regulated by government that their autonomy is compromised. While institutional autonomy for HEIs is guaranteed under Irish law, for 52% of respondents to this survey that is not their experience, while 38% agree that Institutions have sufficient levels of autonomy (Q31). It is noteworthy, but hardly surprising, how strongly respondents felt on this subject given that only 10% had no opinion. This issue has special relevance at present in view of the draft legislation which was published by the Minister for Education and Skills in July on reform of the functions, powers and structure of the Higher Education Authority. Already voices have been raised in opposition to the legislation on the grounds that it further erodes the autonomy of the HEIs and in particular the universities. In considering whether the system of regulation/accountability exercised by the Department of Education and Skills and the Higher Education Authority is appropriate, almost double the number believe that it is not compared to those who believe it is (44% to 24.5%). Correspondingly, 87% believe that the performance of higher education institutions is negatively impacted by public sector constraints (e.g. pay, control of staff numbers etc). This is one of the highest scores in the entire survey.

The current system of data collection and management is too cumbersome for both institutions and the HEA, preventing meaningful analysis and strategy setting.

The PAC is excessively motivated by political considerations rather than objective and effective public oversight.

And it's not just the Department of Education and Skills that excites dissatisfaction with the regulatory regime, 43% of respondents to question 42 (see below) take the view that the system of public oversight/accountability of higher education exercised by such bodies as the Committee of Public Accounts (PAC) is not appropriate. However, given the many controversies raised

by, and in, the PAC, relating to higher education and other areas, it is perhaps surprising that 38% of respondents think their role is appropriate and almost 20% are not prepared to commit either way.



Q42 - The system of public oversight/accountability of higher education exercised by such bodies as the Committee of Public Accounts is appropriate.

Governance and management systems unequal to the challenges facing higher education

Regulation-minded people in support of the need for more regulation point to the response to Q32 and the extent to which governing bodies are generally clear about their governance role and responsibilities. Just over a third (36.7%) agree that they are while 42% are of the view that they are not - a further 21% have no clear view. Part of the reason for this lack of confidence in governing bodies may come from the view expressed by over half (57%) of respondents (Q33) that governing bodies are too large – in the university sector that can, and does, exceed 40 in number. A mere 16% support the current position.

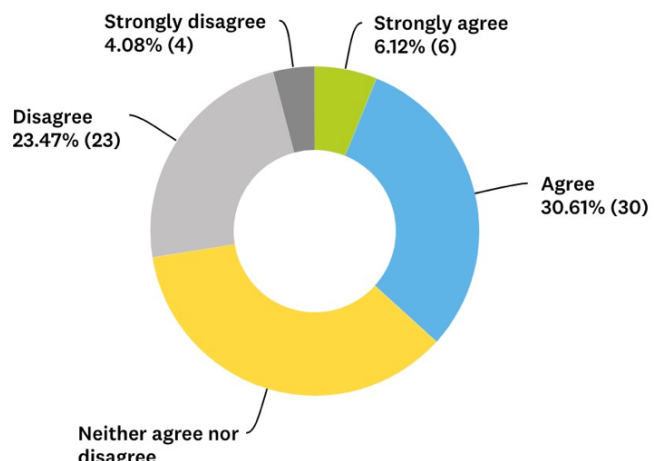
Members receive no training or strategic support in an area that they, in many cases, come to with little knowledge of or experience in.

Section 12 of the Technological Universities Act 2018 is a template for the sector – it provides that the competences required must be agreed in advance with the HEA

There is a lack of commitment to hearing the student voice and fostering a sense of partnership with students .

It is also noteworthy, in this context, that a third of respondents are neutral on the issue of whether institutions generally have clearly allocated responsibilities for decision-making at all levels of governance and management, with another third having a negative view. Only a third of respondents (Q36, see below) take the view that management processes such as strategic planning and review, risk assessment and performance management have been

successfully implemented and embedded by institutions. Almost two thirds either do not have a view or have a negative view of arrangements. Similar figures are revealed in response to the question (Q37) as to the adequacy of the quality of financial management in Irish institutions having regard to the funding and management challenges faced by them. A mere 27.5% are happy with current capability. The responses to Q78 and Q79 are wholly consistent with this sceptical view of institutional management capacity. Q78 poses the question as to whether in general the management capability within Irish institutions is appropriate to the standards required to meet the current management challenges and responsibilities facing HE. Only 22% of respondents agree



Q36 Management processes such as strategic planning and review, risk assessment & performance management have been successfully implemented and embedded by institutions.

while almost double that, 43%, disagree. In question Q79 (Institutions are succeeding in developing standards of operational management that are appropriate to their strategic challenges) 44% neither agree or disagree while a quarter disagree and only a little less than a quarter agree.

Reform is essential and welcomed

These figures, if reflective of the broader higher education community and its stakeholders, reveal a worrying lack of confidence in the current governance, management and accountability systems. Not surprisingly therefore, 57% are of the view that reform of institutional academic and administration structures is essential in enabling the higher education system to achieve world leading status while a mere 14% see no need for reform (Q35).

Strategic dialogue – a successful reform

This appetite for reform is also reflected in the response to Question 39 with a clear majority supporting the statement that the strategic dialogue process and related performance compacts have made an overall positive contribution to the higher education system. Just over 50% agree while only 17% disagree. The strategic dialogue process has been one of the most significant reforms of the Irish higher education sector in decades, spurred by the recommendations in the National Strategy

More transparency required in the strategic dialogue process regarding the outcomes of individual HEI performance and funding.

There is an excessive number of metrics in the compact agreements.

Reform is fine, and to be welcomed, but it will have little or no impact unless the issue of resources is resolved.

for Higher Education. Given the stronger bias in the number of respondents to the survey towards higher education institutions, this reform appetite may surprise some sceptics. The strategic dialogue reform also appears to be a success as Q40 indicates that 42% of respondents consider that the compacts and their performance targets are well integrated into strategic planning across higher education

institutions, while only 19% take the contrary view. A sizeable 39% appear to need convincing either way but six years into the reform it is significant that they have not rejected it.



2.3 Conclusions

The responses to the set of questions that address governance, management and accountability in the higher education system reveal a low level of confidence in the capacity and capability of either the governing bodies or the management of the institutions. If accurately reflective of the sector as a whole and its stakeholders, the outcome of the survey should be a loud wake-up call to the institutions themselves about their personnel management and development systems.

At the same time, there is a high level of opposition to what is seen as overly rigid regulation by the Department of Education and Skills/HEA and the highly politicised approach to public accountability of the Committee of Public Accounts.

Given the level of dissatisfaction with the current governance and management systems, it is not surprising that there is a high level of support for reform of the sector. Support for reform is also demonstrated in the largely positive responses to the major reform brought about by the strategic dialogue process.

A conclusion from these disparate, and somewhat conflicting views, is that the sector and its wider stakeholders are open to reform of the governance, management and accountability/regulation of the sector but in a way that gives more autonomy to the institutions, while enhancing the competences and capability of governing bodies and institutional management and leadership.

3

Quality, Relevance & Engagement

3.1 Overview

For the purpose of this section the survey asked the views of respondents on the quality, relevance and engagement of higher education from a range of different perspectives. Some of the issues identified include:

- Relevance of graduate skills
- Support for quality
- Innovation & lifelong learning
- Support for students with disabilities

3.2 Findings

Confidence in the quality of graduates and relevance of skills

At Q 44, 81.25% agree with the statement that the quality of Irish undergraduate education compares well with leading OECD countries (6.25% disagree). Furthermore, according to respondents to Q 45, graduates continue to have the relevant skills for the Irish economy – just over 90% agree. This shows a very impressive confidence in the quality of outcomes of the higher education system. To some extent this level of confidence would appear to be at odds with the views expressed in other parts of the survey relating, for instance, to such issues as governance, management and funding. The survey itself offers a potential answer to the conundrum and it appears to lie within the higher education institutions themselves, in their processes and procedures for quality assurance and in the system of QA presided over by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI).

We need more progress on language skills and transferable skills.

External actors support quality outcomes

According to the survey responses, institutions have been effective in developing long-term academic strategies for the development of teaching and learning (59.38% at Q46) and 68.75% agree that the systems of internal quality assurance in Irish institutions ensure the ongoing improvement and overall quality of undergraduate programme (Q47). In addition, it appears that the quality of outcomes has been strongly supported by external actors. At Q50, 64.59% of respondents say that the processes employed by QQI supports the quality assurance activities of the institutions. At Q51, the contribution of the Forum for the

Wholehearted support from top level of HEIs would provide well deserved support for its mission.

Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, a relative newcomer on to the Irish Higher Education landscape, gets a 55% approval rating while only 9% dissent. Student and employer surveys get high levels of endorsement for the information they provide at 65.63% and 66.27% respectively with low levels of dissent. These results validate the value of the close collaboration evident across the institutions, students, staff and employer bodies in developing the surveys. Overall, the survey is an

endorsement of an approach to quality assurance in the Irish system that focusses responsibility on the institutions themselves with QQI and the Forum having important roles in supporting quality enhancement, rather than heavy handed regulation.

But innovation and lifelong learning supports are weak

But as well as the respondents who had a more negative view of these issues (albeit relatively small) there are also some important reservations relating to quality and the related issue of relevance emerging in the survey. Respondents are fairly evenly split on the statement at Q49 that institutions have been efficient in developing innovative pedagogical approaches, including digitalisation - 32.29% agree, 35.42% disagree and 32.29% neither agree nor disagree. Weak or absent innovation in teaching and learning runs the risk of obsolescence and failure to accommodate higher education to the needs of an increasingly diverse student population. This scepticism about innovation finds a reflection in the response to Q 54 (Institutions have effective policies and systems in place to promote and support lifelong learning – 46.87% disagree while only 30% agree). This reflects a long-identified weakness in the Irish HE system with its very strong emphasis on school leavers and inadequate flexibility in models of programme delivery.

Institutions need to prioritise the utilisation of a rich resource that students have taken the time and effort to create.

Responsibility also rests with funders and with employer engagement with the very important agenda of upskilling and reskilling those already in the workforce. Q48 demonstrates a key bone of contention between those who see higher education as an end in itself and those who regard it as an entry to the world of work. A third of respondents feel that the HEIs are not doing enough to provide students with sufficient exposure to business/industry or practically focused learning opportunities, but 46% are of the opposite view.



Good support for students with disabilities, but more to do

The 50% agreement that institutions provide adequate support services for the learning requirements of students with disabilities (Q55) reflects the considerable progress that has been made in the education at all levels of people with disabilities. But a quarter of respondents don't agree, so there is clearly no room for complacency, and while matters may be improving in the education and training system, employers also have a key role to play in recognising the talent pool that graduates with disabilities represent.

3.3 Conclusions

The higher education system is central to meeting a range of social and economic needs. As such, it needs to be accessible to as many participants as can benefit from it, provide them with quality learning experience and learning outcomes and, through its engagement with its students, staff and wider stakeholder groups, conduct its affairs in a way that is relevant to the needs of its graduates and Irish society.

The survey indicates a strong endorsement of the quality of the system and its relevance to the skills needs of the economy.

Quality outcomes are supported by two key actors external to the institutions – QQI and the Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning.

There are nevertheless misgivings about the capacity for innovation in teaching and learning in the HEIs, the promotion of lifelong learning and, to a lesser extent, the adequacy of support for students with disabilities.

4

International Education & Reputation

4.1 Overview

This section of the survey sought to determine the views of Irish higher education stakeholders on the international focus and quality of Irish higher education institutions. Some of the findings include:

- Policy scepticism
- International student recruitment
- Brexit

4.2 Findings

Scepticism at government ambitions for the HE sector

Without significant, robust and sustainable support for postgraduate research students we cannot foster a world-leading academic culture in Ireland, or attract academics who can help to develop this.

Although the stated ambition of the Government is that Ireland will provide the best education and training system in Europe over the next decade (*Action Plan for Education 2016 – 2019*) the results of this survey display a high level of scepticism, not least as regards Government policy itself. Less than one third (31%) of respondents agree with the statement (Q20) that national higher education policy supports the system achieving outcomes that are world-leading, while 43% disagree. The responses to Q23 (Irish institutions are

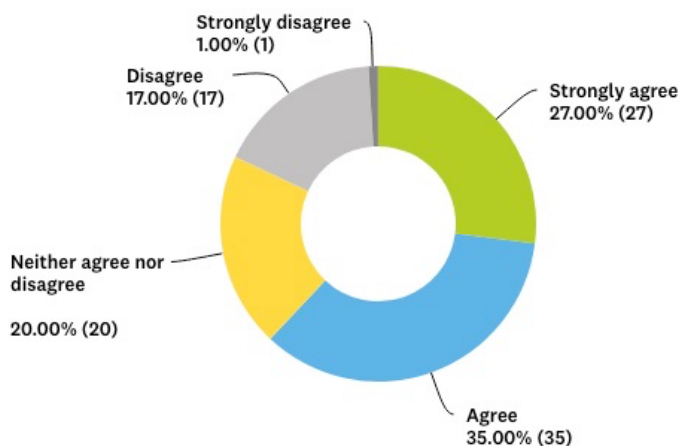
succeeding in attracting world-class academics to work in Ireland) give no comfort to Government either as the respondents are almost equally divided at one third who agree, disagree and take no position.

In Q27, an important aspect of national policy in this area gets a thumbs down from respondents. 51% believe that national immigration practice does not provide enough support for higher education to attract international students (20% say it does). This is a long running bone of contention in the sector which believe that the Department of Justice should do more to support the international student sector. In fairness to that Department substantial changes have been made in recent times such as the streamlining of visa issuance and allowing primary degree holders to remain in the country for one year after graduation and allowing master's degree holders to remain for two.

International student recruitment – opportunity and risk

It is reasonable to assume that the negativity shown to the issue of appropriate funding for the sector earlier in the survey is an important factor in scepticism about national ambition to be world leading. This appears to be borne out by Q 28 with 68% of respondents agreeing that there is a high risk for Irish institutions that seek to maximise their income by recruiting a large number of students internationally (11% do not see a risk). International student recruitment is regularly pointed to as the reason why the institutions, and particularly the universities, have weathered the public funding crisis so well. However, such dependence has risks as it is subject to the policies and practices of other countries over which Ireland has no control. Additionally, as some institutions in Australia have discovered, a sector that becomes over-reliant on international students can, ironically, find itself less attractive to such students who want to experience an education in an institution with a majority of domestic students. Since the release of “Investing in Global Relationships: Ireland’s International Education Strategy 2010-2015” there has been a strong Government strategy on setting targets to increase international student numbers within higher education. As a result, the majority of higher education institutions routinely state that increasing international student numbers is of great importance in their strategy documents. A recently commissioned report from the HEA “The Internationalisation of Irish Higher Education” evaluated the internationalisation efforts of HEIs over the past number of years and found that despite some success, a number of improvements could be made.

Care must be taken by individual HEIs to avoid trying to absorb large numbers of overseas students too quickly and to displacing Irish students.



Q29 Collaboration across the higher education system under a common brand would improve the recruitment of international students

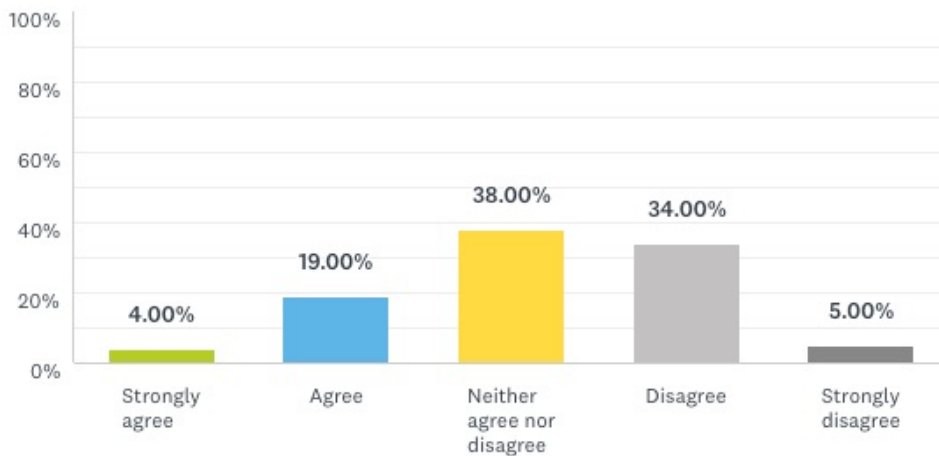
Recruitment of international students is often characterised by competition between the HEIs. Government policy has long preached the benefits of collaboration and this finds favour with 62% of respondents to Q29 while only 18% appear to favour the more individualistic and competitive approach. Replies are more evenly matched when respondents consider (Q26) if Ireland is meeting its potential as a preferred destination for international students (30% agree, 37% disagree while 33% take no position).

Rankings – unpopular but cannot be ignored

At various times each year the media trumpet the success, or bemoan the failure, of Irish HEIs in various international league tables. In recent times failure is more frequent than success with no Irish university featuring in the top 100. HEI leaderships also highlight success and often declare their ranking on their websites and other promotional material. 52% of respondents (Q25) disagree that international rankings should influence higher education strategy and policy (27% agree). The quandary posed by rankings is nevertheless exposed in the response to Q24 (International university rankings are highly relevant to the positioning and reputation of Irish higher education). While such rankings are viewed with considerable scepticism here at home, like them or not, their reputational impact is acknowledged and the figures are reversed in responses to Q24. 52% of respondents consider that they DO influence reputation (27% disagree), and are highly relevant to the positioning and reputation of Irish higher education.

Brexit – uncertainty reigns

If nothing else, the response to Q22 captures the general sense, across all sectors of the Irish economy and society, of uncertainty over the direction and impact of Brexit as almost the same proportion of respondents chose to remain neutral (38%) as those who disagree (39%) with the proposition that Irish institutions are well prepared to respond to the risks and opportunities of Brexit.



Q22 - Irish institutions are well prepared to respond to the risks and opportunities of Brexit.



4.3 Conclusions

The survey reveals widespread scepticism about the Government's high ambition to be the best education and training system in Europe. Poor policy support, failure to attract world-class academics and an unhelpful policy on immigration are factors feeding the scepticism. Funding too is likely to be an issue.

Recent success by Ireland in increasing the proportion of international students on campuses is seen as a mixed blessing, with a high level of concern about the risks inherent in a high number of such students. There is, however, a sense that Ireland has not reached this stage yet and has further potential – a potential more likely to be achieved through cross institutional collaboration in international markets.

International league tables of HEIs are clearly unpopular with respondents, but respondents clearly feel that they cannot be ignored when it comes to international reputation.

Brexit, and our preparedness for the opportunities and challenges is as much a conundrum for HEIs as for other parts of the economy and society.

5

Research

5.1 Overview

Section 5 of the survey asked a series of questions aimed at gathering the views of stakeholders on the quality and challenges of research in Irish higher education institutions. The key findings include:

- Research mission
- Research prioritisation support
- Collaboration
- HEI-based or research institutes
- Industry engagement
- Funding

5.2 Findings

Which institutions should carry out research

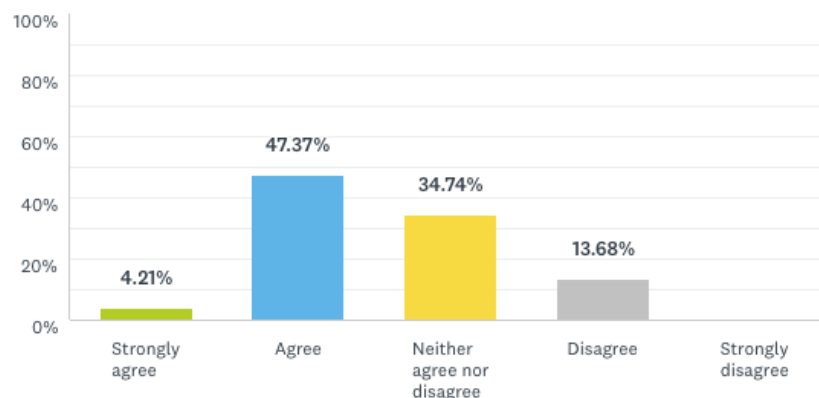
One of the issues that arouses considerable debate is which HEIs should carry out research. Traditionally, universities are defined by the fact that they have the mission and capacity to conduct research. There continues to be a degree of opposition to a research role for institutes of technology, given their origins as RTCs and their more professional/vocational orientation. The landscape has just become more complex following the establishment of technological universities. Q57 reflects the confusion as 57% of respondents are of the view that there is no clear national policy as regards the distinct research mission of universities, technological universities and institutes of technology. While only 22% agree that there is such a policy. The response reflects the fact that governments have been very slow to spell out, even in broad terms, where it is expected that research should be carried out. In turn this may reflect a wariness on the part of government to do so as there would inevitably be financial and political consequences. The result is a kind of free-for-all with all HEIs having research ambitions to a greater or lesser extent, but with a clear concentration of research funding and activity in the universities. And there appears to be support in the responses to the survey for the continuance of this flexible approach as 64% of respondents to Q58 disagree with the proposition that there should be restrictions on the nature and level of research conducted in different higher education institutions.

Policy appears to be institutionally led rather than nationally led.



Support for research prioritisation

While there is a high level of scepticism about the existence of a national policy for research, many of the responses to other questions actually demonstrate a high level of support for key elements of such a policy. Almost half of the respondents to Q59 support research prioritisation - a cornerstone of Ireland's approach to research funding. As a policy initiative, it initially incited considerable opposition but now 48% support the policy and only 27% disagree that it has had a positive impact on the research performance of higher education institutions. However, it should be noted that concerns are being raised recently about Ireland's poor performance in the European Research Council competition where success depends on a more broad-based research system.



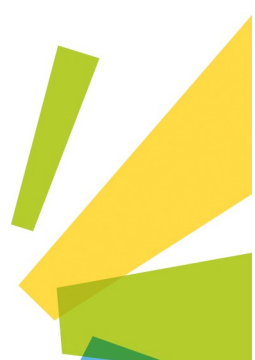
Q59 - Research prioritisation has had a positive impact on the research performance of higher education institutions.

Support for collaboration

Q63 addresses another cornerstone of Ireland's research strategy. From the earliest days of the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTL), cross institutional collaboration has been a requirement of successful proposals. 68.4% of respondents take the view that Institutional collaboration has proven to be effective in raising the quality of research and development carried out by Irish institutions.

HEI-based or research institutes?

One of the long-running arguments regarding Irish research strategy relates to the location of research activity. At present, and from the outset of the development of our research system under the PRTL, publicly funded research was located in the higher education institutions – in particular the universities. From time to time the argument has been made



that due to the restrictions of the public sector on matters such as pay, conditions and regulation the relocation of research to independent research institutes would lead to better outcomes. There is very little support from respondents to this view with only 8.4% agreeing that conducting research primarily in research centres/institutes outside of higher education institutions would be a more effective approach for improving research performance, while almost 75% disagree (Q64). Even so, this is unlikely to end the argument.

The balance between teaching, learning, and research is better fostered within the institution. Research students can benefit from a sense of academic community, preventing isolation.

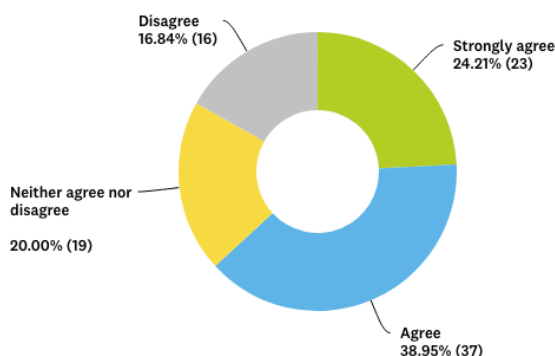
Support for industry engagement

The strong support (75%) in Q65 for the proposition that greater direct involvement by industry with higher education research could make a major contribution to the overall development of world-class research in Ireland also supports another long-standing strand of government strategy. It also gives the lie to a view, often expressed about academics, that they are at best indifferent, and at worst hostile, to the needs of industry and the value engagement with industry can bring to the outcomes of higher education and research.

What outcomes?

Q66 (see below) and Q67 raise another of the key issues causing debate in policy and institutional settings – what is research investment and activity for. On the one side are those who argue for research to be directly relevant to innovation and invention, and that it be more applied. On the other side are those who see research as a central element in the education of students.

Going on the basis of this survey, the latter group are in the majority with 63% agreeing that the priority outcome from research should be well educated graduates, while 24% are of the view that the priority outcome from research should be inventions and spin out companies. This majority view is reinforced by the responses to Q69 with only 23% believing that it is realistic to expect that institutions will deliver significant income from the development of IP within a 5–10-year timeframe while 56% disagree.



Q66 The priority outcome from research should be well educated graduates



Funding is a problem but HEIs are getting on with their research

Responses to other questions reveal –

- At Q62 75% of respondents are of the view that the physical infrastructure (e.g. laboratories, equipment, other facilities) necessary to conduct internationally competitive research is not adequately provided for in current funding and capital plans. This is hardly surprising given the response earlier to the overall funding of higher education.
- However, HEIs appear to be taking initiatives themselves with, at Q60, 51.6% agreeing that institutions have developed effective research strategies to support the delivery of institutional goals for research (13.6% disagree) and at Q61 53.7% agree that institutions have succeeded in identifying niche areas of research in which they aim to be world-leading (21% disagree). This result, if a true reflection of the realities on the ground, would be welcomed by policy makers who wish to see HEIs increasingly playing to their strengths in a diversified system.
- At Q68, 60% agree that institutions are developing long-term strategies for the development of IP and technology transfer (only 10% disagree).



5.3 Conclusions

Research, how it is funded, by whom and how directed should such funding be, which HEIs should carry out research, the purpose of research and the engagement of business and enterprise in influencing the research agenda are all significant issues in the long and on-going debate about research in Ireland – and indeed in other jurisdictions.

The survey provides a high level of consensus on a number of these issues as follows –

- There is no clear national policy as regards the distinct research missions of universities, technological universities and institutes of technology;
- Almost half of the respondents support research prioritisation;
- Institutional collaboration is seen as effective in raising the quality of research;
- HEIs are the preferred location for research over stand-alone research institutes;
- The priority outcome from research should be well educated graduates;
- Industry engagement is a plus;
- The amount of funding is a source of concern.

6

Summary of Our Conclusions



National Policy for Higher Education & Research

This section of the survey pointed to a higher education sector which has a number of questions yet to be answered on a range of issues from the effectiveness of national policies, strategy and structures. Specifically the survey revealed:

- The response to the survey on the policy environment supports the view that there is a clear national policy for higher education
- However, success around the implementation of the strategy is more mixed
- There is support for higher education and enterprise links to support skills
- Balancing teaching and learning mission with the research mission
- 50% of respondents feel that higher education and further education are not well aligned
- There is broad support for technological universities
- Strong evidence to show that equity of access is viewed positively in terms of implementation
- Over 92% agree that HEI's provide thought leadership in relation to national social, economic and cultural agendas
- Private providers are a key part of the HE system
- 75% of respondents consider that the system of higher education and research is seriously underfunded

Governance, Management & Accountability

This section revealed an overall low level of confidence in the capacity and capability of either the governing bodies or the management of the institutions. The main issues raised included:

- Over regulation is compromising performance
- Governance and management systems are unequal to the challenges facing higher education
- 57% are of the view that reform of institutional academic and administration structures is essential in enabling the higher education system to achieve world leading status while a mere 14% see no need for reform
- 50% of respondents support the statement that the strategic dialogue process and related performance compacts have made an overall positive contribution to the higher education system

Quality, Relevance & Engagement

The higher education system is central to meeting a range of social and economic needs and this is explored in this section. Some key conclusions are highlighted below:

- 81.25% agree with the statement that the quality of Irish undergraduate education compares well with leading OECD countries
- There is overall confidence in the quality of graduates and the relevance of their skills



- 68.75% agree that the systems of internal quality assurance in Irish institutions ensure the ongoing improvement and overall quality of undergraduate programme
- Overall, the survey is an endorsement of an approach to quality assurance in the Irish system that focusses responsibility on the institutions themselves with QQI and the Forum having important roles in supporting quality enhancement, rather than heavy handed regulation
- A third of respondents feel that the HEIs are not doing enough to provide students with sufficient exposure to business/industry or practically focused learning opportunities
- 50% agreement that institutions provide adequate support services for the learning requirements of students with disabilities

International Education & Reputation

This section of the survey looking at international education and reputation reveals widespread scepticism about the Government's high ambition to be the best education and training system in Europe. Other important findings include:

- Less than one third (31%) of respondents agree with the statement that national higher education policy supports the system achieving outcomes that are world-leading
- 51% believe that national immigration practice does not provide enough support for higher education to attract international students
- 68% of respondents agree that there is a high risk for Irish institutions that seek to maximise their income by recruiting a large number of students internationally
- 52% of respondents disagree that international rankings should influence higher education strategy and policy
- Overall international rankings are unpopular but cannot be ignored

Research

The main findings arising from this section of the survey, relating to research, include:

- Almost half of the respondents support research prioritisation – a cornerstone of Ireland's approach to research funding
- 68.4% of respondents take the view that Institutional collaboration has proven to be effective in raising the quality of research and development carried out by Irish institutions
- There is very little support from respondents to the view that conducting research primarily in research centres/institutes outside of higher education institutions would be a more effective approach for improving research performance
- 75% are in favour for the proposition that greater direct involvement by industry with higher education research could make a major contribution to the overall development of world-class research in Ireland

Our Overarching Finding

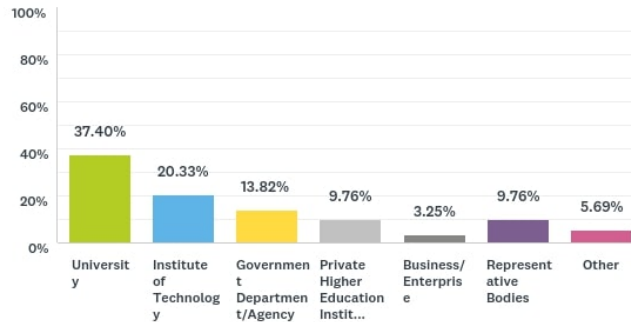
The *Prospectus and BH Associates Survey of the Higher Education Sector 2019* provides some clear insights on what the HE sector is currently doing well but also what it needs to improve. These insights should enable the HE sector to build on its strong academic tradition, and proactively develop and deliver a world-class research and learning environment that makes Ireland the destination of choice for students, academics and professional staff.

From our analysis it would appear the HE sector is strongly committed to the development of a vibrant system of education that will be relevant, excellent and accessible to all. The Prospectus and BH Associates' view is that this commitment, energy and ambition will be critical if Ireland is to maintain its competitiveness in an increasingly dynamic global environment. However there are a number of key questions for the HE sector, government and other actors to address if this is to be realised.

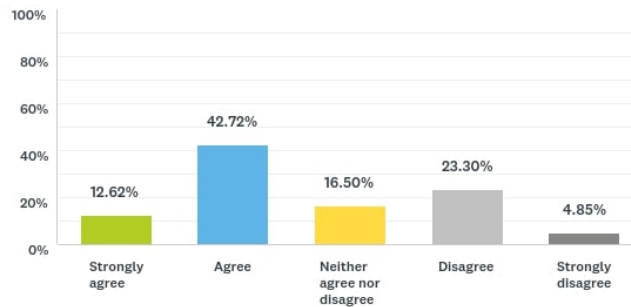


Appendix – Survey Answers

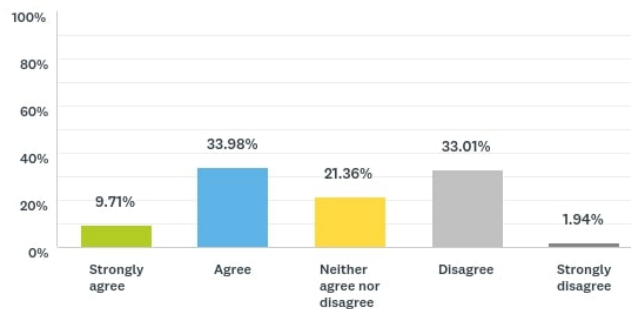
Q1 Please indicate which of the following is most relevant to you in relation to higher level education:



Q2 There is a clear national policy for Irish higher education.

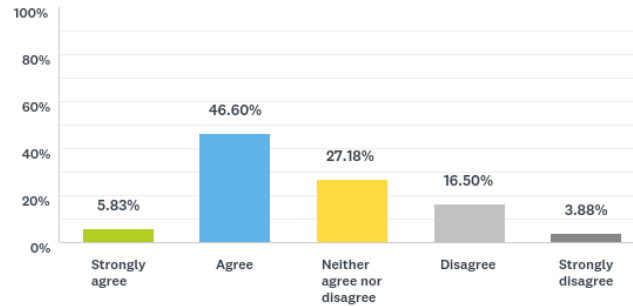


Q3 Ireland has a well co-ordinated system of higher education institutions.

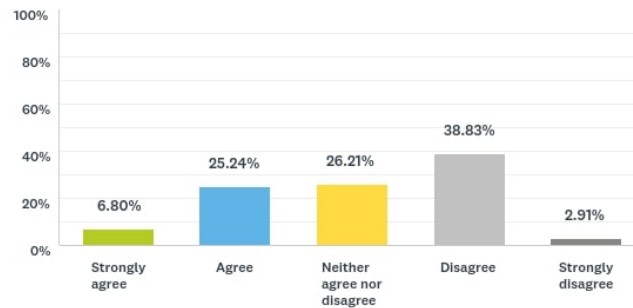




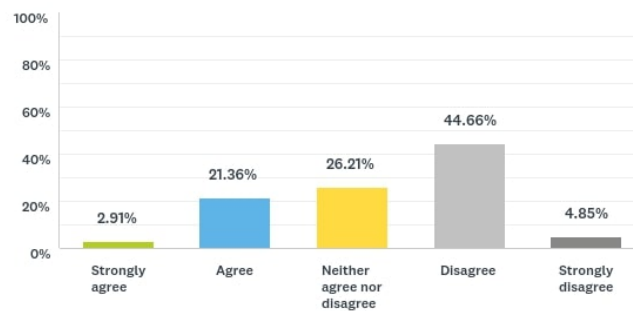
Q4 National policy for higher education is well aligned with national policy for the skills needs of the economy.



Q5 National policy for the teaching and learning mission of higher education is well aligned with national policy for the research mission.

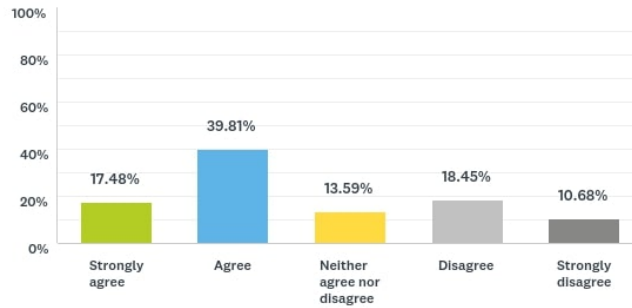


Q6 National policy for higher education is well aligned with national policy for further education.

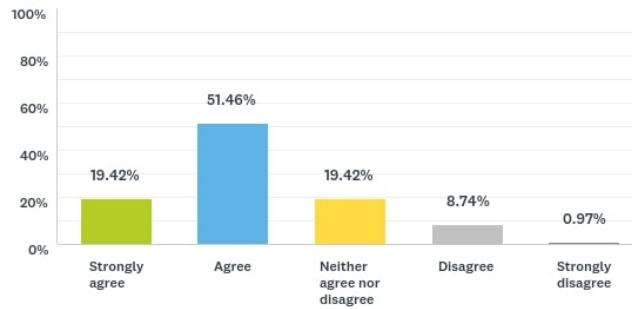




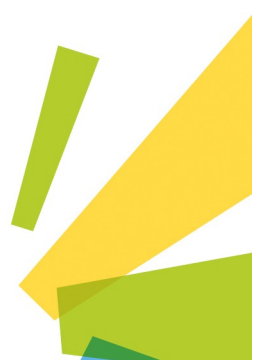
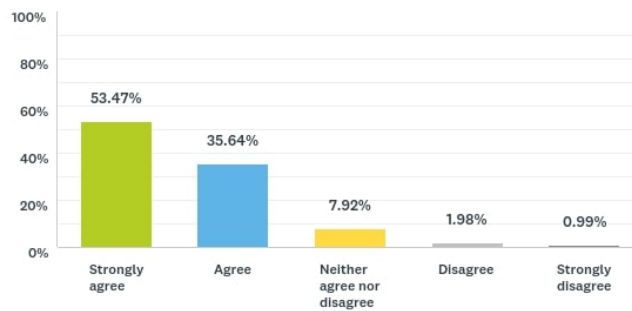
Q7 The policy of developing technological universities will strengthen the higher education system.



Q8 Higher education institutions are proactive in developing civic engagement.

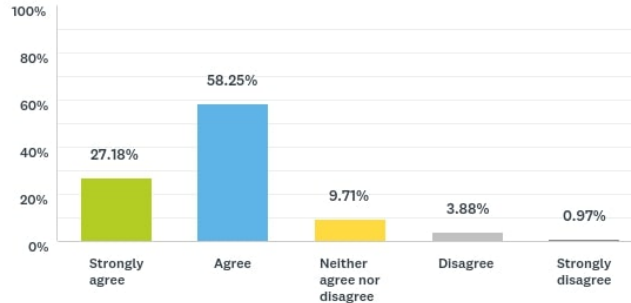


Q9 Higher education institutions are making a sufficient contribution to Ireland's economic development.

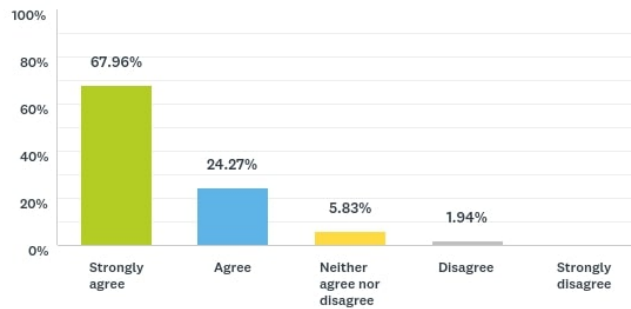




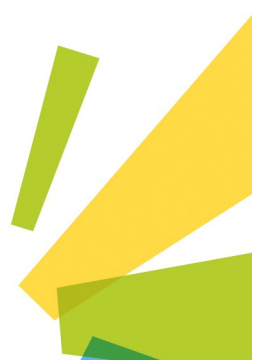
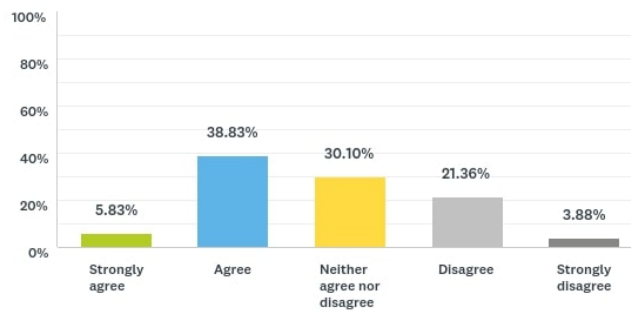
Q10 Higher education institutions are proactive in developing relationships with enterprise.



Q11 Higher education institutions should provide thought leadership in relation to national social, economic & cultural agendas.

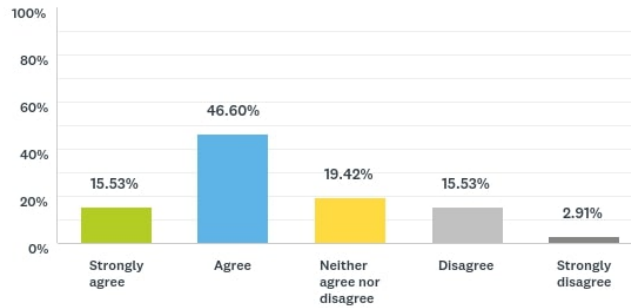


Q12 Industry and enterprise are effectively engaged with the development of higher education and research.

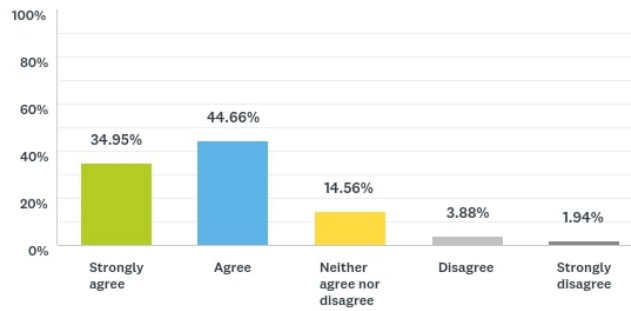




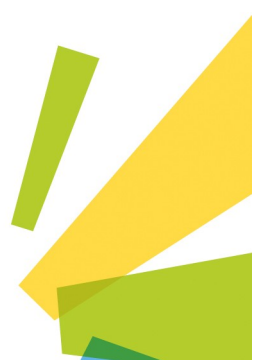
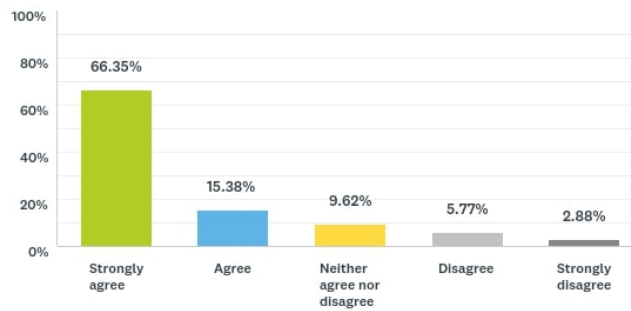
Q13 In general, the system of higher education is succeeding in supporting equity of access to and participation in higher education.



Q14 Collaboration between higher education institutions is preferable to competition as a way to boost the overall quality and competitiveness of Irish higher education.

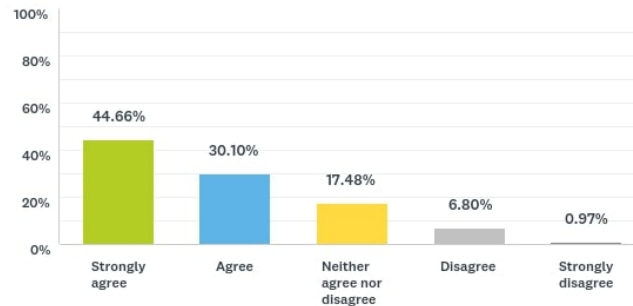


Q15 The system of higher education and research is seriously underfunded.

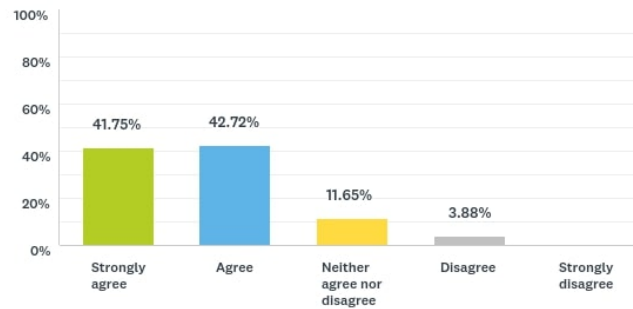




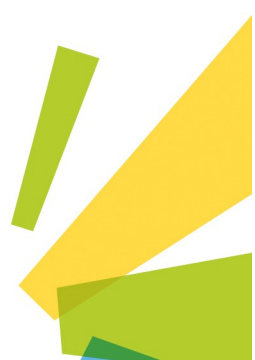
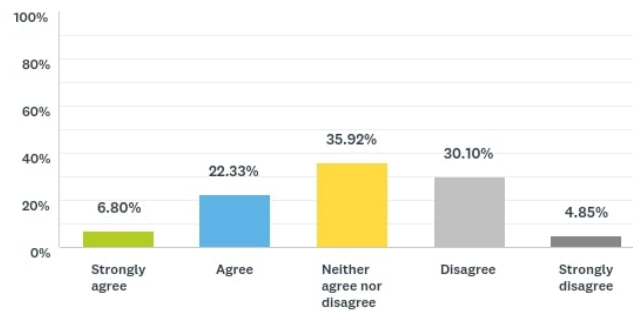
Q16 Overall, the Irish system of higher education provides excellent value for money.



Q17 The private sector has an important contribution to make to the higher education system in Ireland.

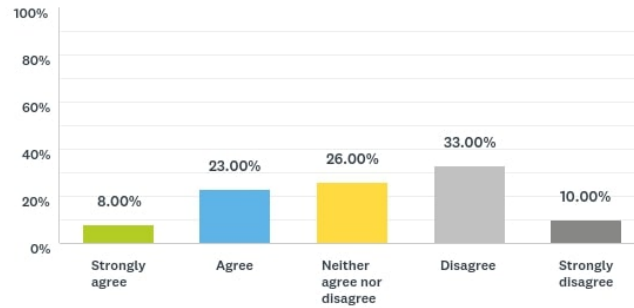


Q18 National Policy is supportive of the contribution of the private sector to the higher education system in Ireland.

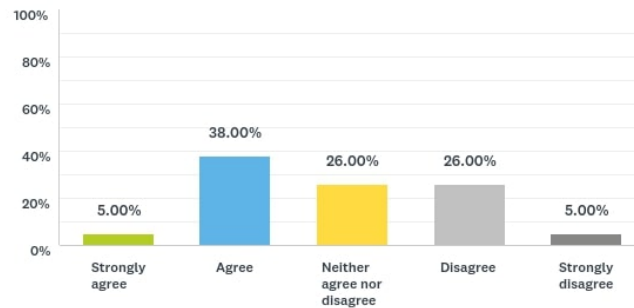




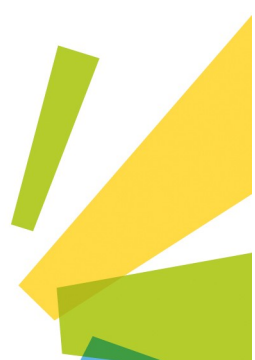
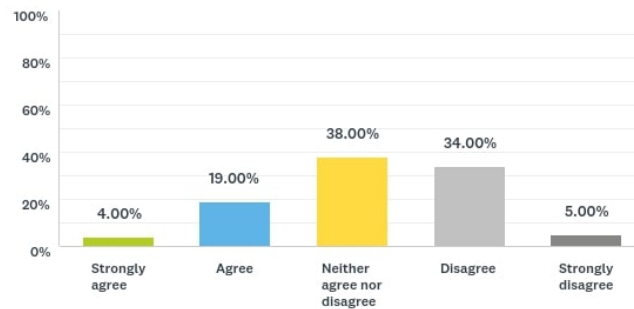
Q20 National higher education policy supports the system achieving outcomes that are world-leading.



Q21 The higher education institutions are adopting strategies that will place Irish higher education as a world-leader.

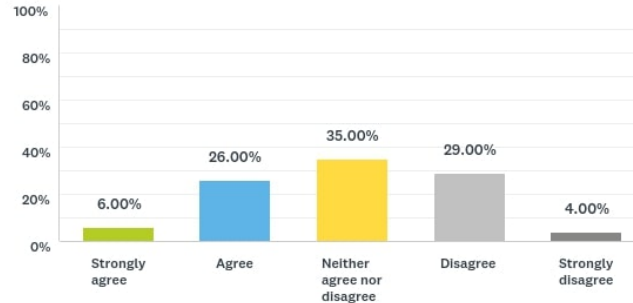


Q22 Irish institutions are well prepared to respond to the risks and opportunities of Brexit.

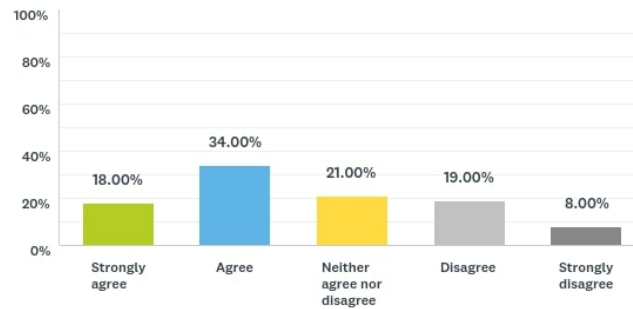




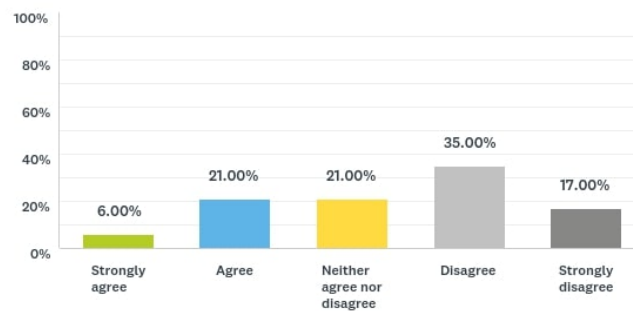
Q23 Irish institutions are succeeding in attracting world-class academics to work in Ireland.



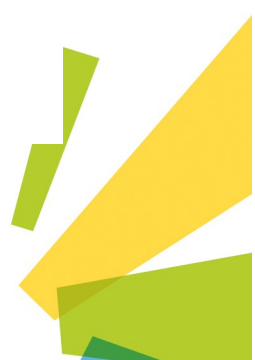
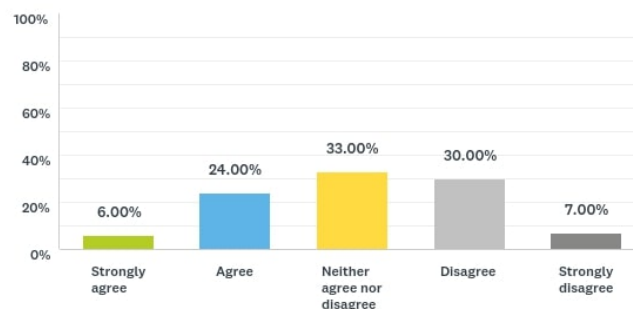
Q24 International university rankings are highly relevant to the positioning and reputation of Irish higher education.



Q25 International rankings should influence higher education strategy and policy.

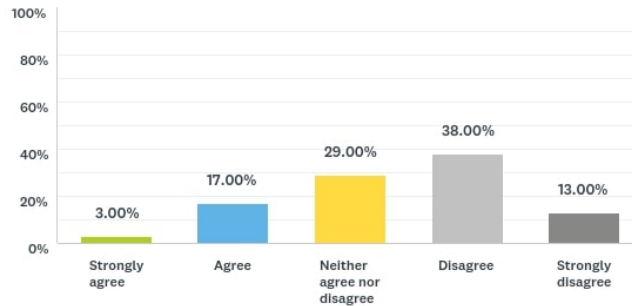


Q26 Ireland is meeting its potential as a preferred destination for international students.

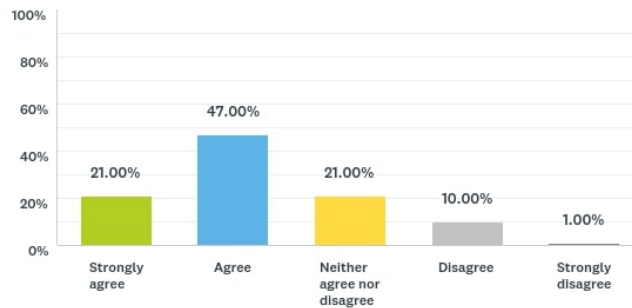




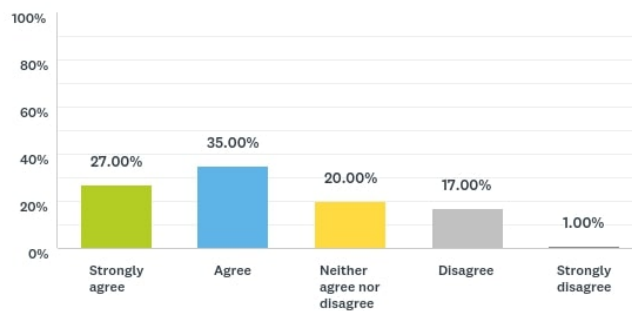
Q27 National immigration practice provides enough support for higher education to attract international students.



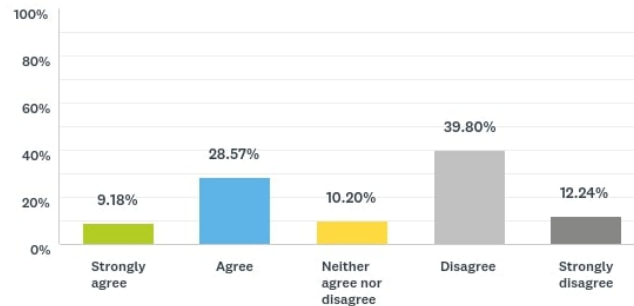
Q28 There is a high risk for Irish institutions that seek to maximise their income by recruiting a large number of students internationally.



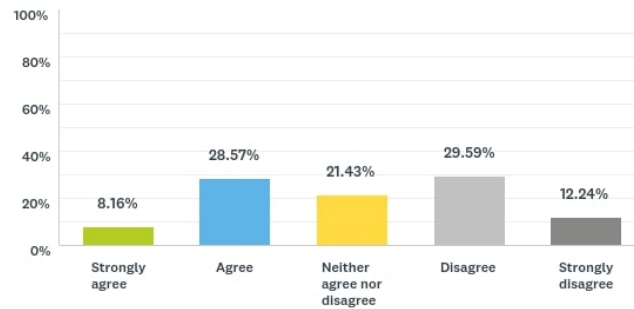
Q29 Collaboration across the higher education system under a common brand would improve the recruitment of international students.



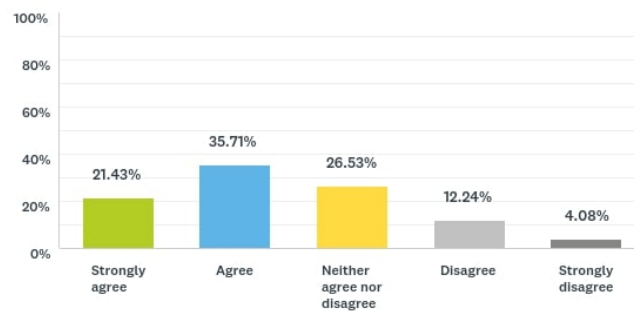
Q31 Institutions have sufficient levels of autonomy in managing their affairs.



Q32 Governing authorities/bodies are generally clear about their governance role and responsibilities.

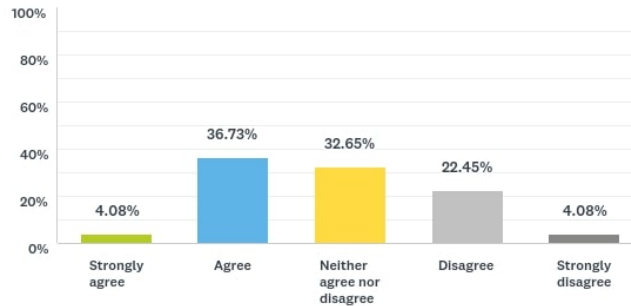


Q33 The size of governing bodies is too large to be effective.

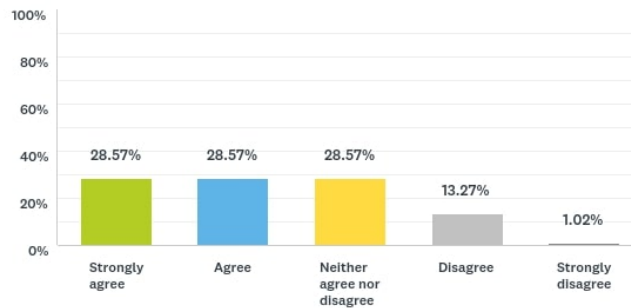




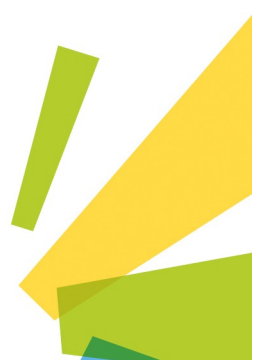
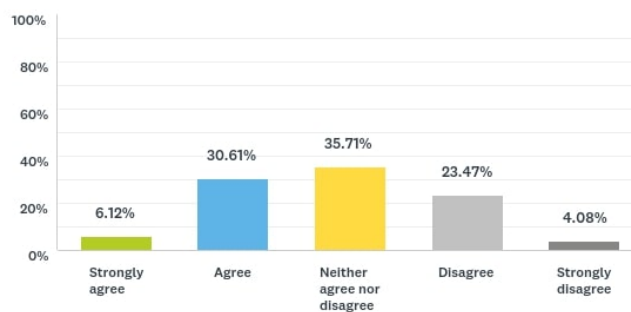
Q34 Institutions generally have clearly allocated responsibilities for decision-making at all levels of governance and management.



Q35 Reform of institutional academic and administration structures is essential in enabling the higher education system to achieve world-leading status.

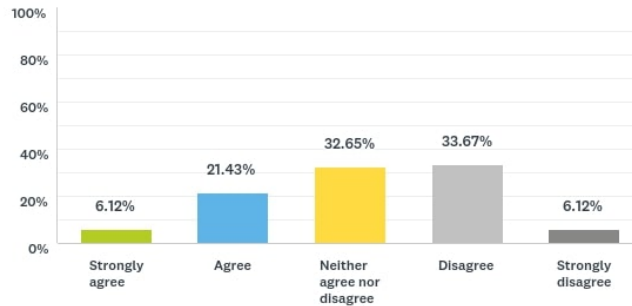


Q36 Management processes such as strategic planning and review, risk assessment & performance management have been successfully implemented and embedded by institutions.

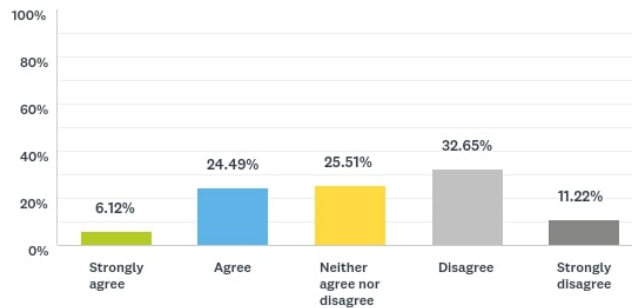




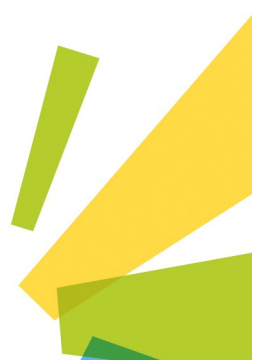
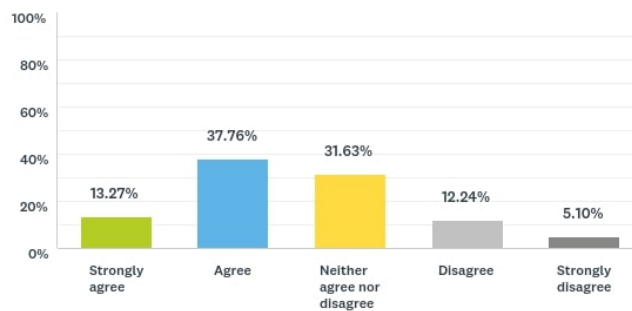
Q37 The quality of financial management in Irish institutions is adequate for the funding and management challenges faced by the institution.



Q38 The system of regulation/accountability exercised by the Department of Education and Skills and the Higher Education Authority is appropriate.

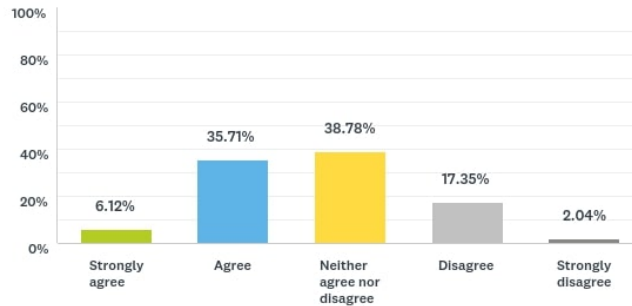


Q39 The strategic dialogue process and related performance compacts have made an overall positive contribution to the higher education system.

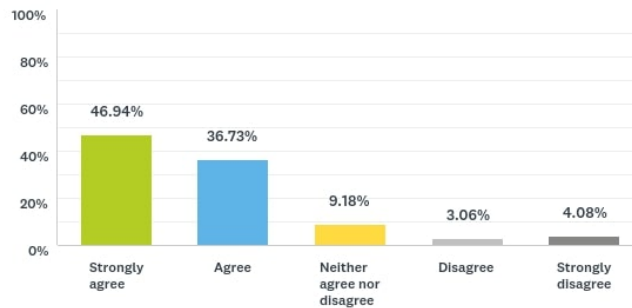




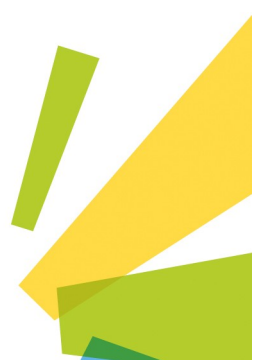
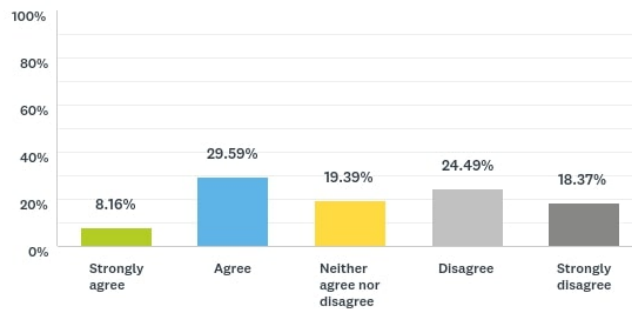
Q40 The compacts and their performance targets are well integrated into strategic planning across higher education institutions.



Q41 The performance of higher education institutions is negatively impacted by public sector constraints (e.g. pay, control of staff numbers etc).

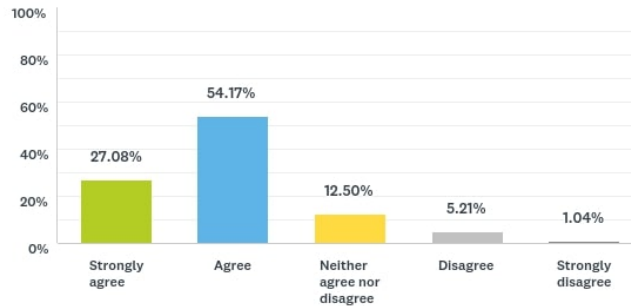


Q42 The system of public oversight/accountability of higher education exercised by such bodies as the Committee of Public Accounts is appropriate.

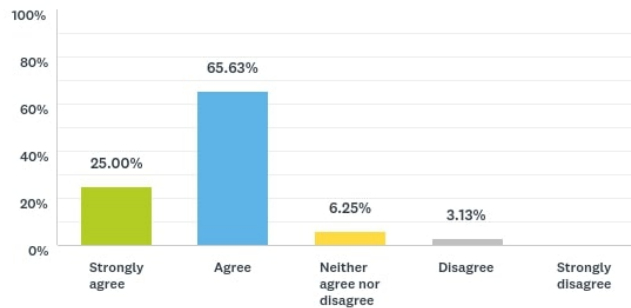




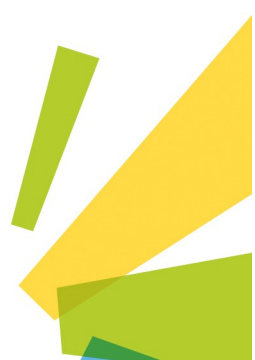
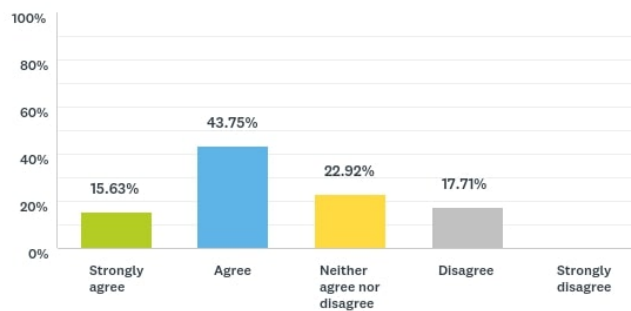
Q44 The quality of Irish undergraduate education compares well with leading OECD countries.



Q45 In general, Irish institutions are producing a calibre of graduates who have the relevant skills for the Irish economy.

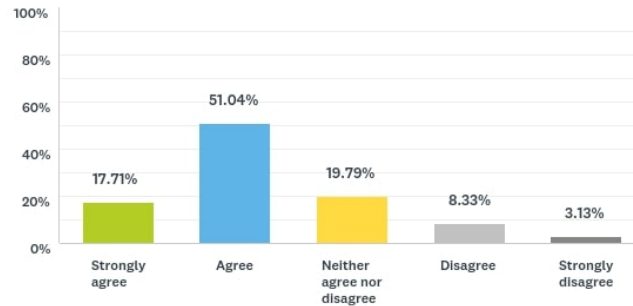


Q46 Institutions have been effective in developing long-term academic strategies for the development of teaching and learning.

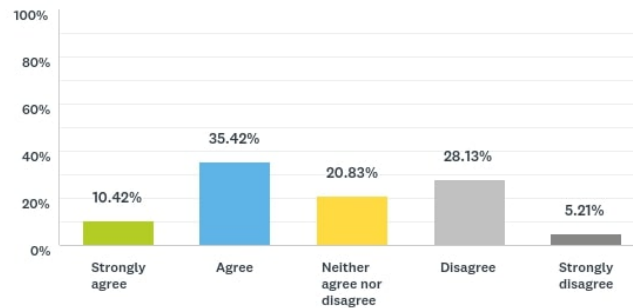




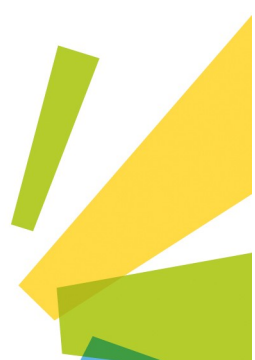
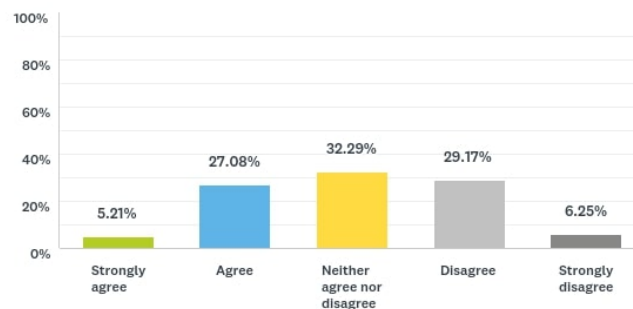
Q47 Systems of internal quality assurance in Irish institutions ensure the ongoing improvement and overall quality of undergraduate programmes.



Q48 Higher education students are provided with sufficient exposure to business/industry or practically focused learning opportunities.

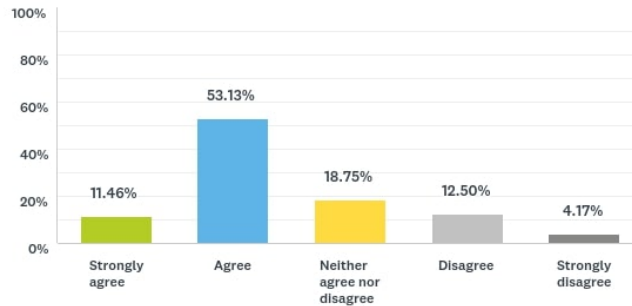


Q49 Institutions have been efficient in developing innovative pedagogical approaches, including digitalisation.

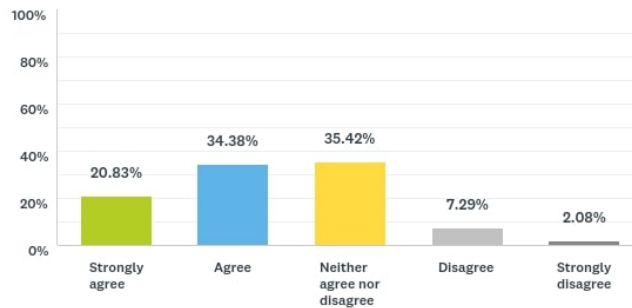




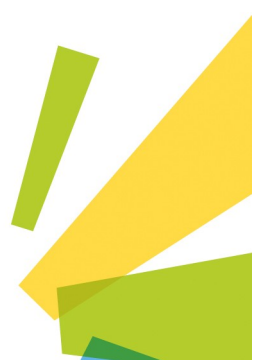
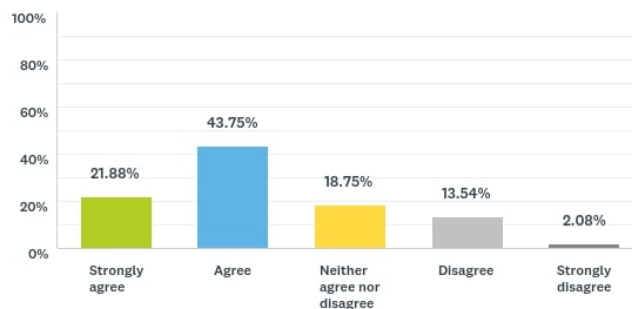
Q50 The processes employed by QQI supports the quality assurance activities of the institutions.



Q51 The Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning makes a positive contribution to the quality of the student learning experience.

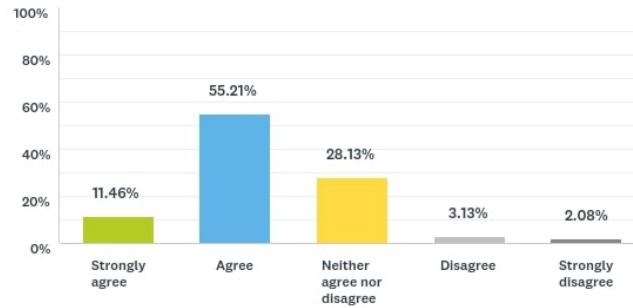


Q52 The Survey of Student Engagement provides helpful information/data on the quality of the student learning experience.

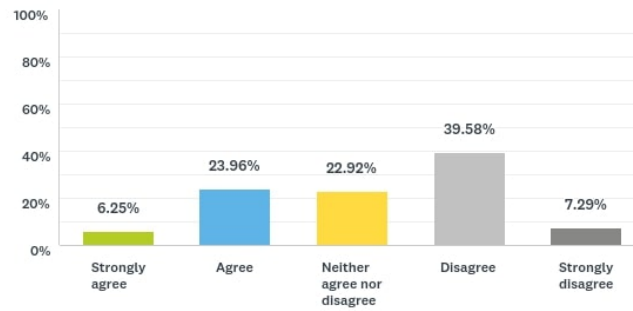




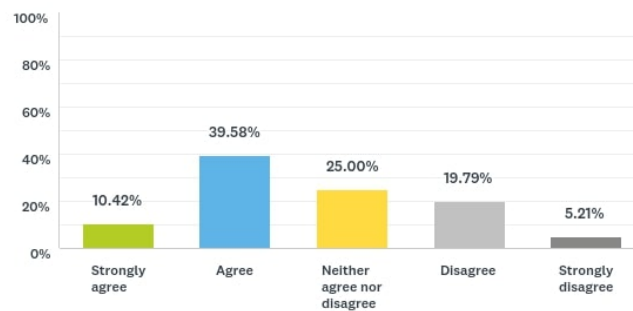
Q53 The Irish National Employment Survey provides helpful information/data on the quality of graduates.



Q54 Institutions have effective policies and systems in place to promote and support lifelong learning.

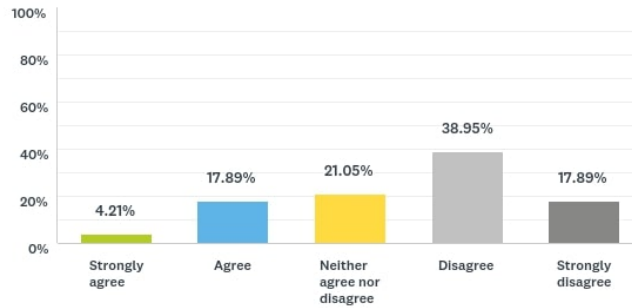


Q55 Institutions provide adequate support services for the learning requirements of students with disabilities.

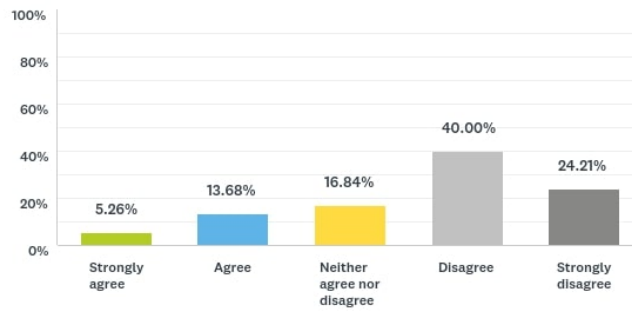




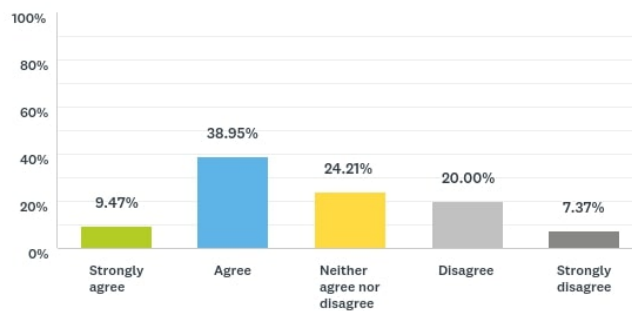
Q57 There is a clear national policy as regards the distinct research mission of universities, technological universities and institutes of technology.



Q58 There should be restrictions on the nature and level of research conducted in different higher education institutions.

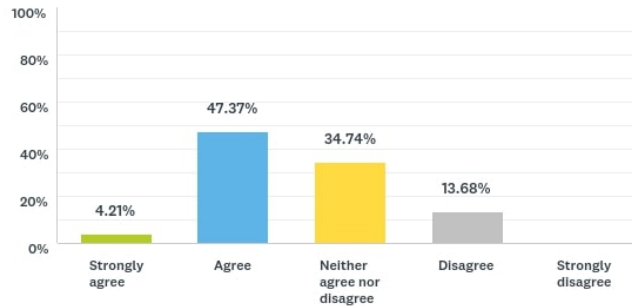


Q59 Research prioritisation has had a positive impact on the research performance of higher education institutions.

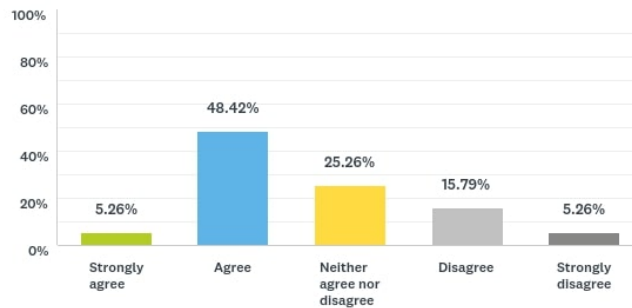




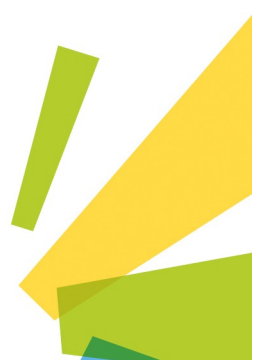
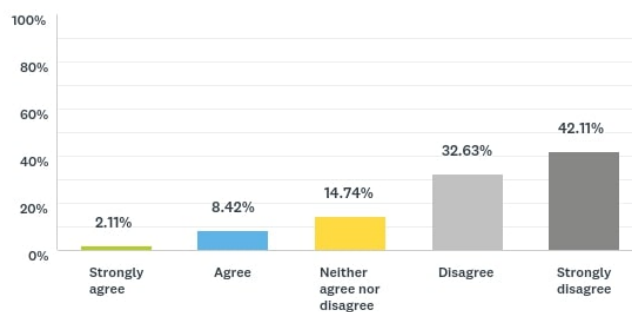
Q60 Institutions have developed effective research strategies to support the delivery of institutional goals for research.



Q61 Institutions have succeeded in identifying niche areas of research in which they aim to be world-leading.

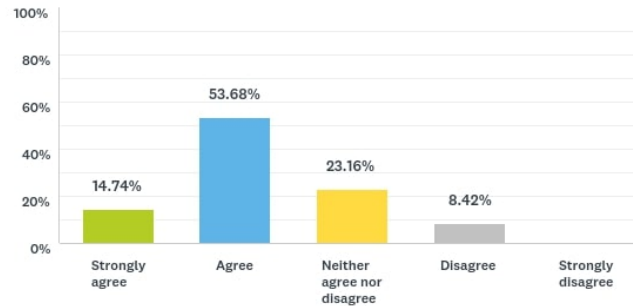


Q62 The physical infrastructure (e.g. laboratories, equipment, other facilities) necessary to conduct internationally competitive research is adequately provided for in current funding and capital plans.

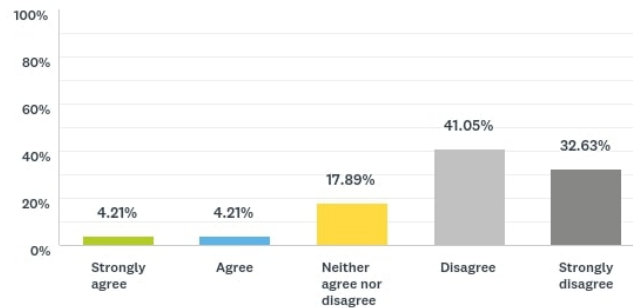




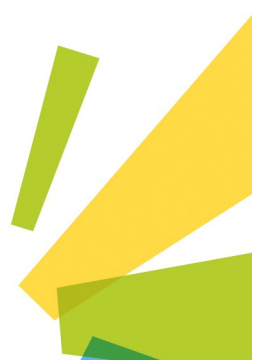
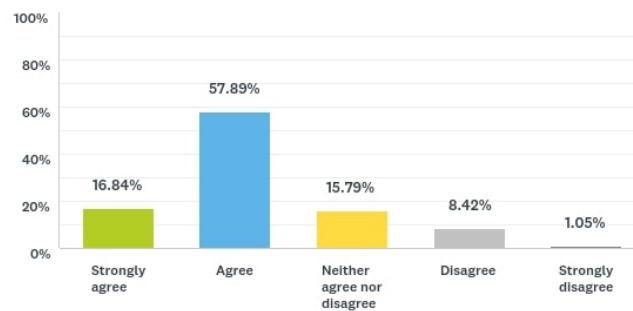
Q63 Institutional collaboration has proven to be effective in raising the quality of research and development carried out by Irish institutions.



Q64 Conducting research primarily in research centres/institutes outside of higher education institutions would be a more effective approach for improving research performance.

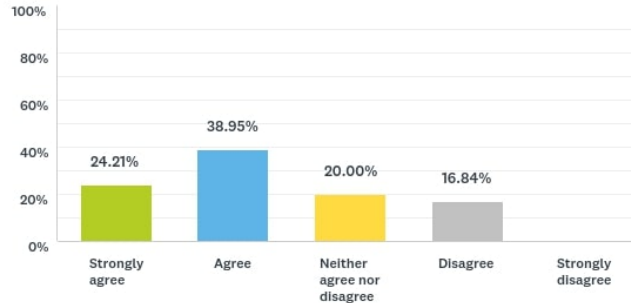


Q65 Greater direct involvement by industry with higher education research could make a major contribution to the overall development of world-class research in Ireland.

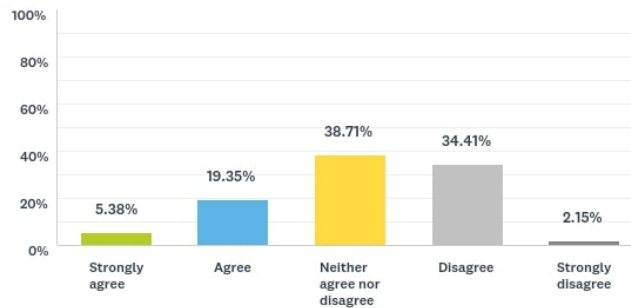




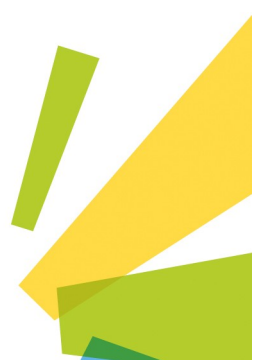
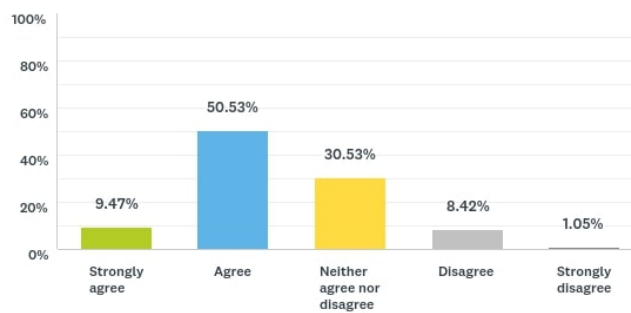
Q66 The priority outcome from research should be well educated graduates.



Q67 The priority outcome from research should be inventions and spin out companies.

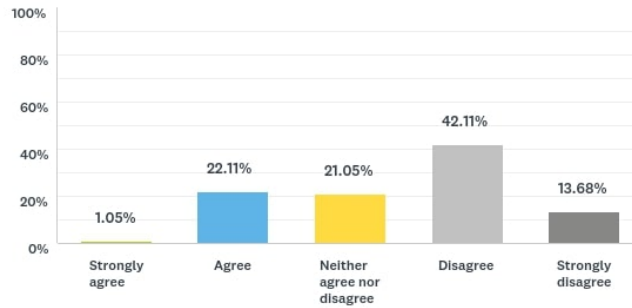


Q68 Institutions are developing long-term strategies for the development of IP and technology transfer.

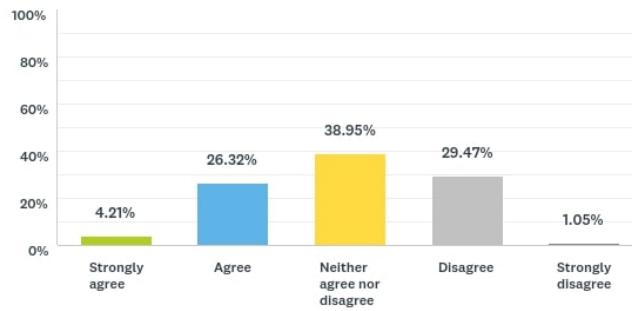




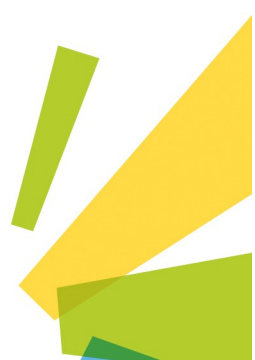
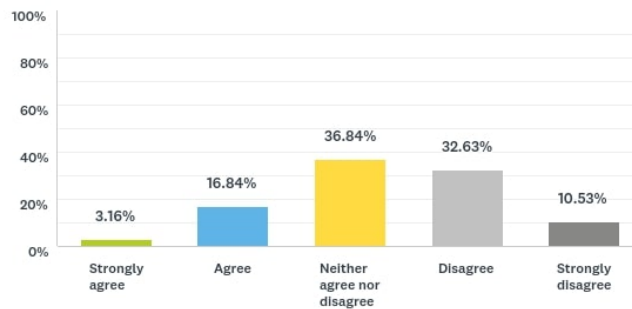
Q69 It is realistic to expect that institutions will deliver significant income from the development of IP within a 5–10 year timeframe.



Q71 Ireland has been successful in attracting and retaining highly skilled academic, management and administrative staff.

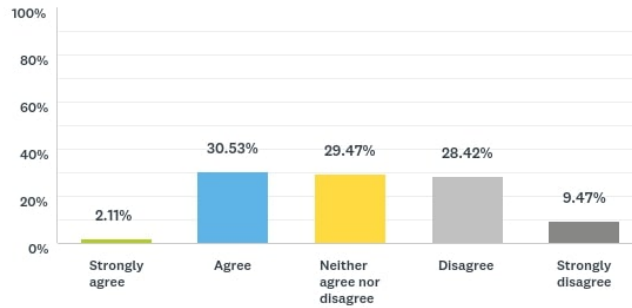


Q72 In general, communication processes within higher education institutions ensures that all staff are informed of key developments and decisions in an appropriate and timely way.

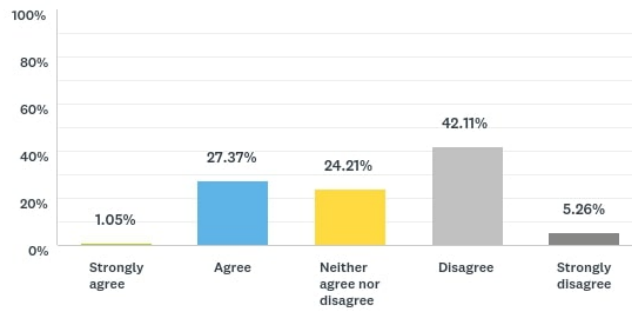




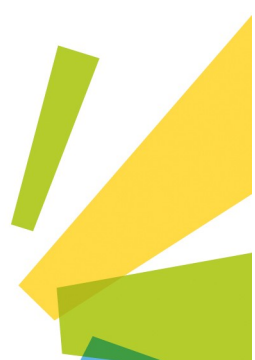
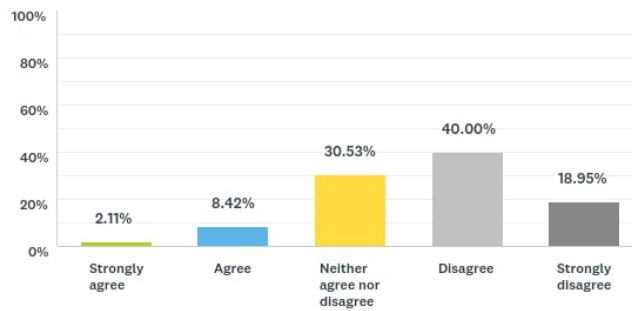
Q73 In general, the culture within higher education institutions is positively disposed towards partnership and collaboration with other Irish HEIs.



Q74 In general, the culture within higher education institutions is positively disposed towards inter-disciplinarity.

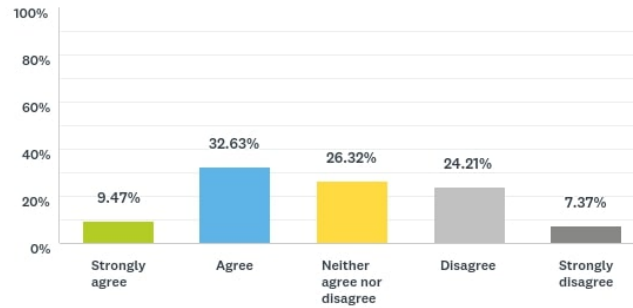


Q75 The quality of human resource management in Irish institutions is adequate for the strategic and competitive challenges facing the institution.

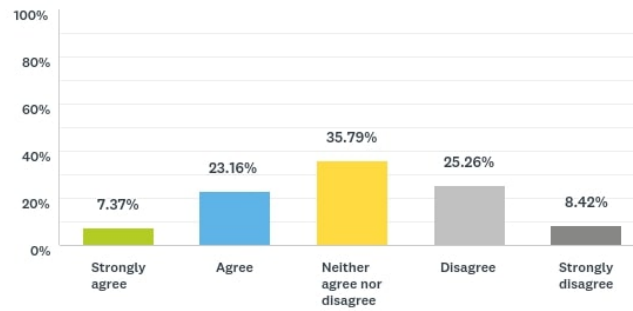




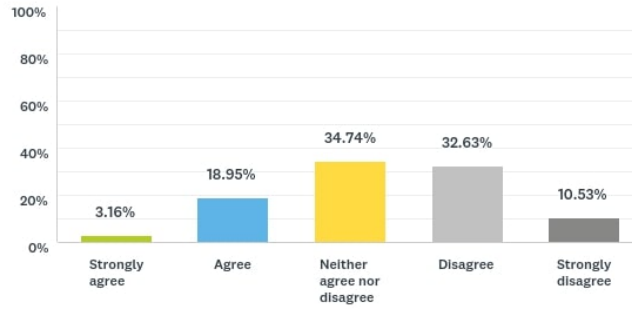
Q76 Higher education institutions are sufficiently active in developing policies to promote gender equality at senior levels in the institution.



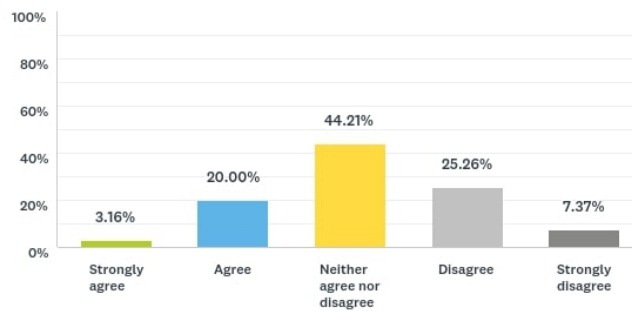
Q77 Higher education institutions are actively developing family-friendly policies to support, attract and retain staff throughout their career.

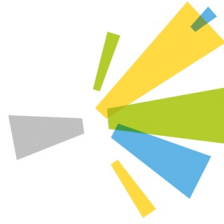


Q78 In general the management capability within Irish institutions is appropriate to the standards required to meet the current management challenges and responsibilities facing HE.



Q79 Institutions are succeeding in developing standards of operational management that are appropriate to their strategic challenges.





Prospectus

creative change

www.prospectus.ie

advisory@prospectus.ie

+353 1290 2800

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BH ASSOCIATES

www.bhassociates.eu

info@bhassociates.eu

+353 87 677 8021/872472112

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