

Presentation for the *Paired Peers* annual conference
29th May 2012, Bristol

FUTURETRACK - THE DIVERSITY OF UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE

Evidence from UK HEI students who studied full-time
from Autumn 2006 till 2009/10

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WARWICK INSTITUTE *for*
EMPLOYMENT RESEARCH



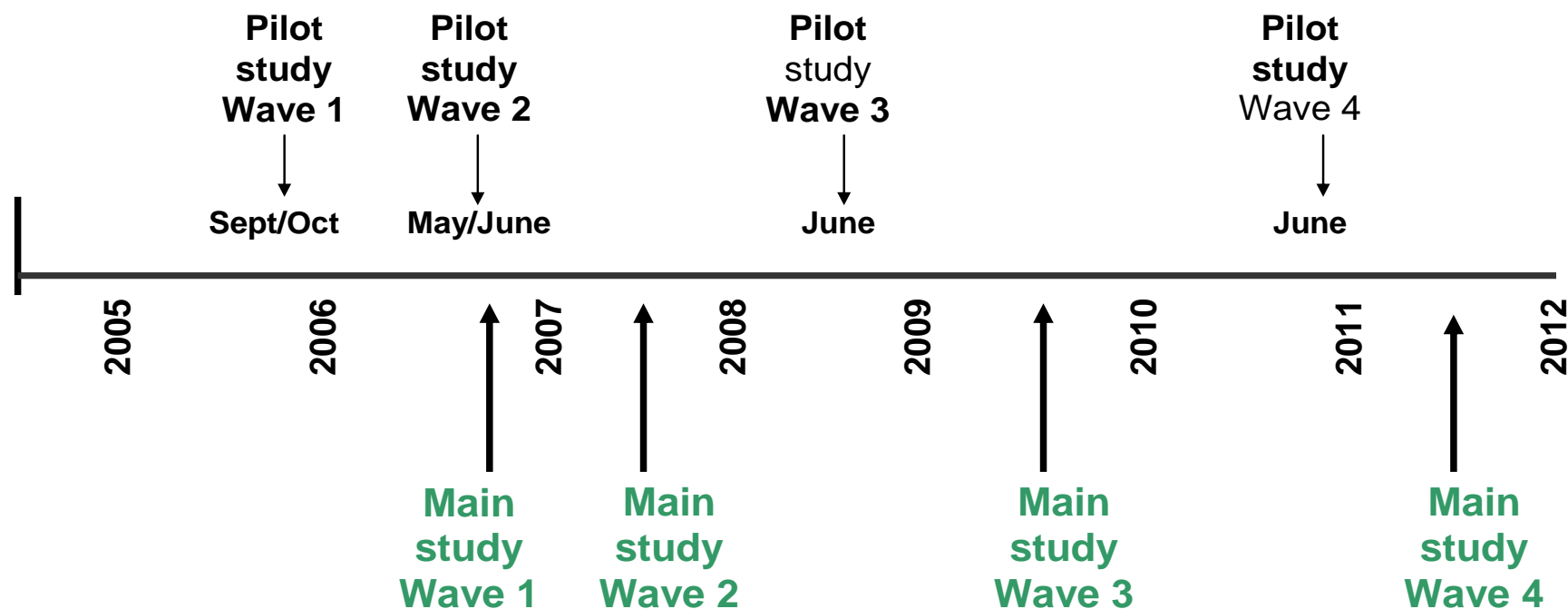
FUTURETRACK – like Paired Peers, a study of the relationship between what students bring to HE, and how this facilitates or limits HE experience and opportunities

- Longitudinal study – tracking respondents from HE application in 2005-6 until 2011-12;
- Large sample with comprehensive and representative coverage of full spectrum of undergraduate full-time student population, including EU and other overseas students;
- Includes applicants who did not proceed to HE;
- Independent, policy-relevant research

Interdisciplinary team

Mixed-methods research with potential for quantitative and qualitative extension.

The fieldwork schedule 2005 - 2012



The scope of the investigation

- Routes and obstacles to access to HE and career opportunities;
- Mapping the HE population:
 - Gender, skills and choices;
 - Ethnicity and HE choices;
 - Age and the implications of timing in HE access.
- Unpacking ‘higher education’ - subject of study, career pathways and rewards.
- Education-led mobility and the geographical dimensions of opportunity.
- Career decision-making: need for, and impact of, access to guidance and information.
- What *actually happens* to students after graduation...

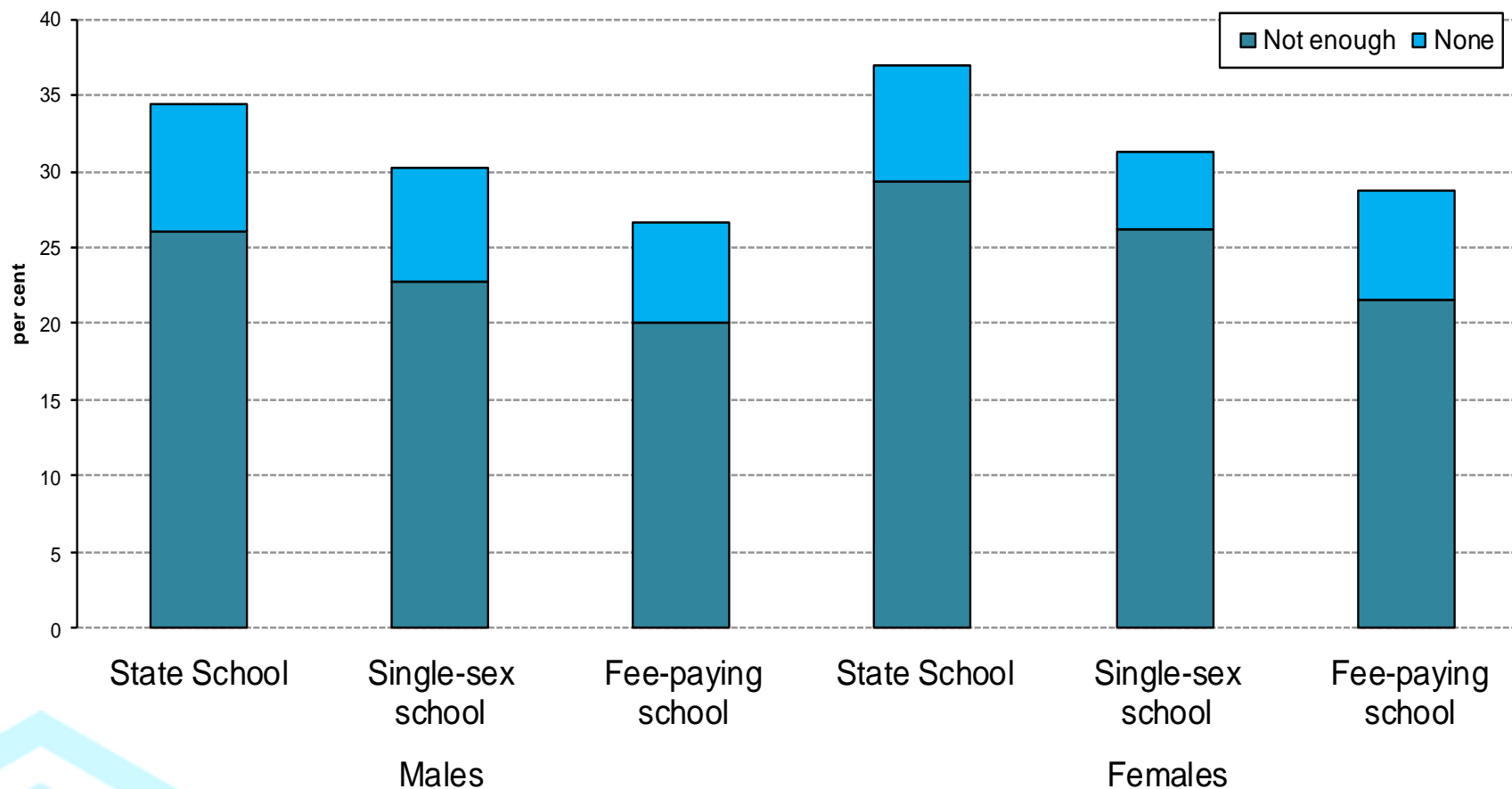
The different HEI and course choices reflect different prior educational and social ‘careers’:

- different degrees of access to opportunity;
- different structural contexts within which educational and employment choices were made and continue to be made;
- different trajectories accessed;
- different attributes, skills and achievements;
- different conceptual universes and perceptions of options available.

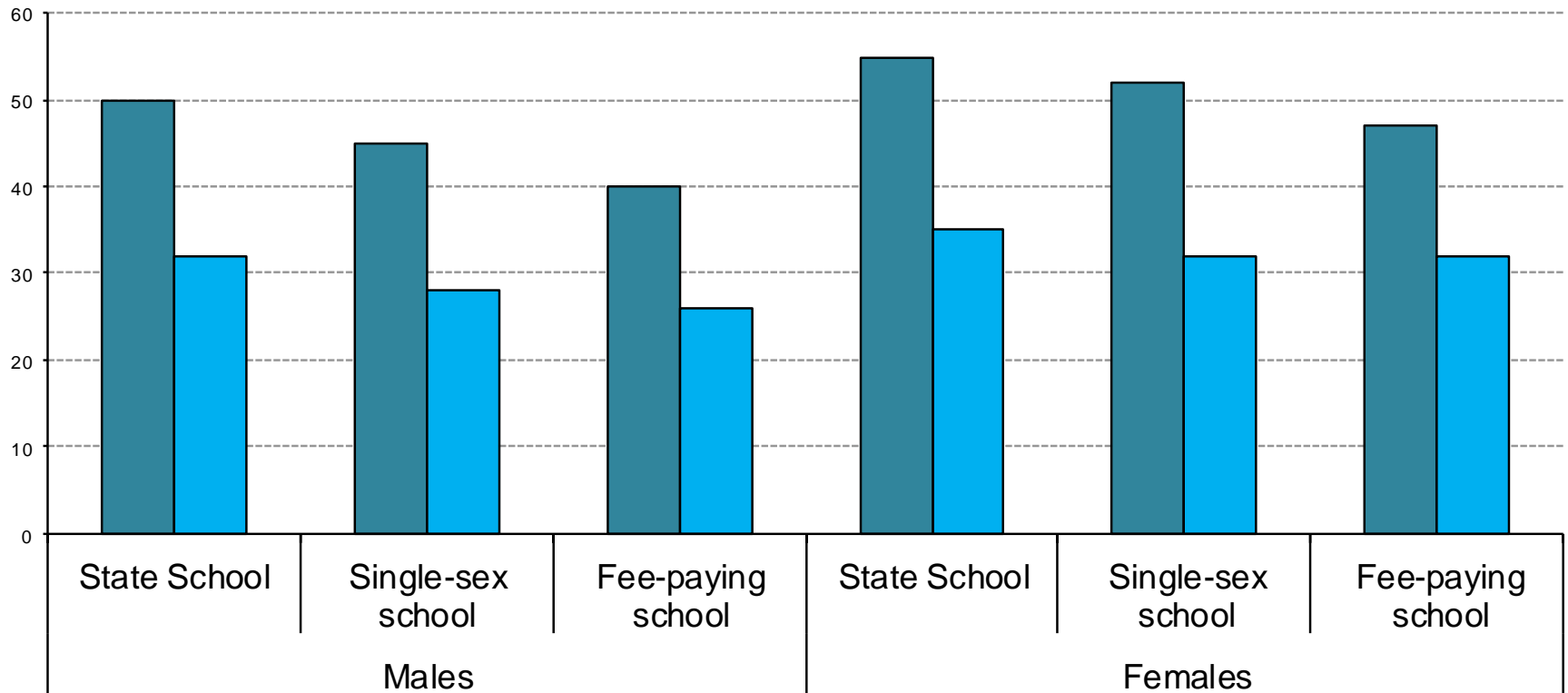
AND *they provide different cultural capital and access to different graduate labour markets (or optional routes within the highly segregated graduate labour market).*

STAGE 1: Information, guidance, choices.....

“I did not have enough information about the implications of post-16 subject choices”, comparing selected school students’ response by gender

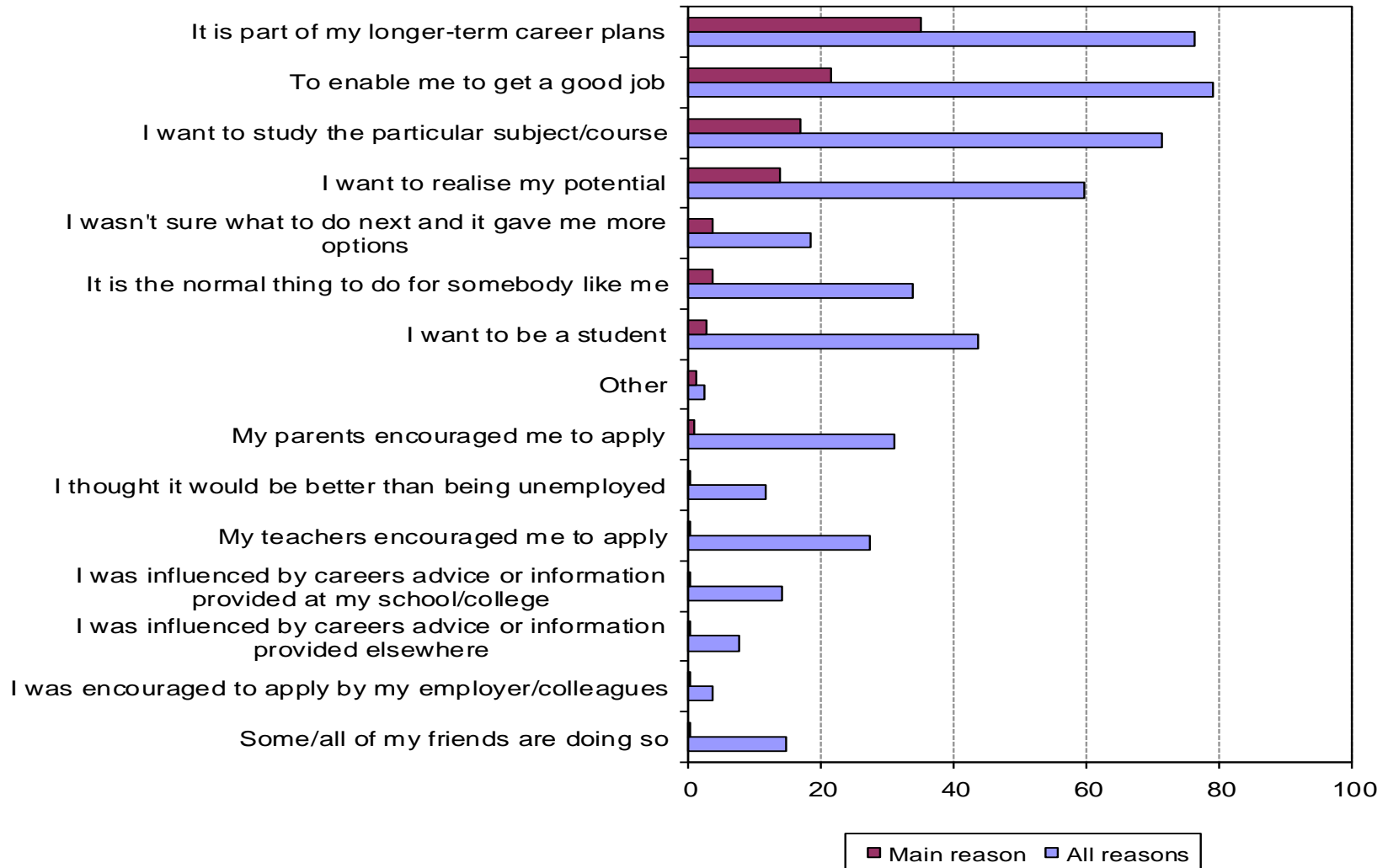


“I did not have enough information about..[items identified]”, comparing selected school students’ responses by gender

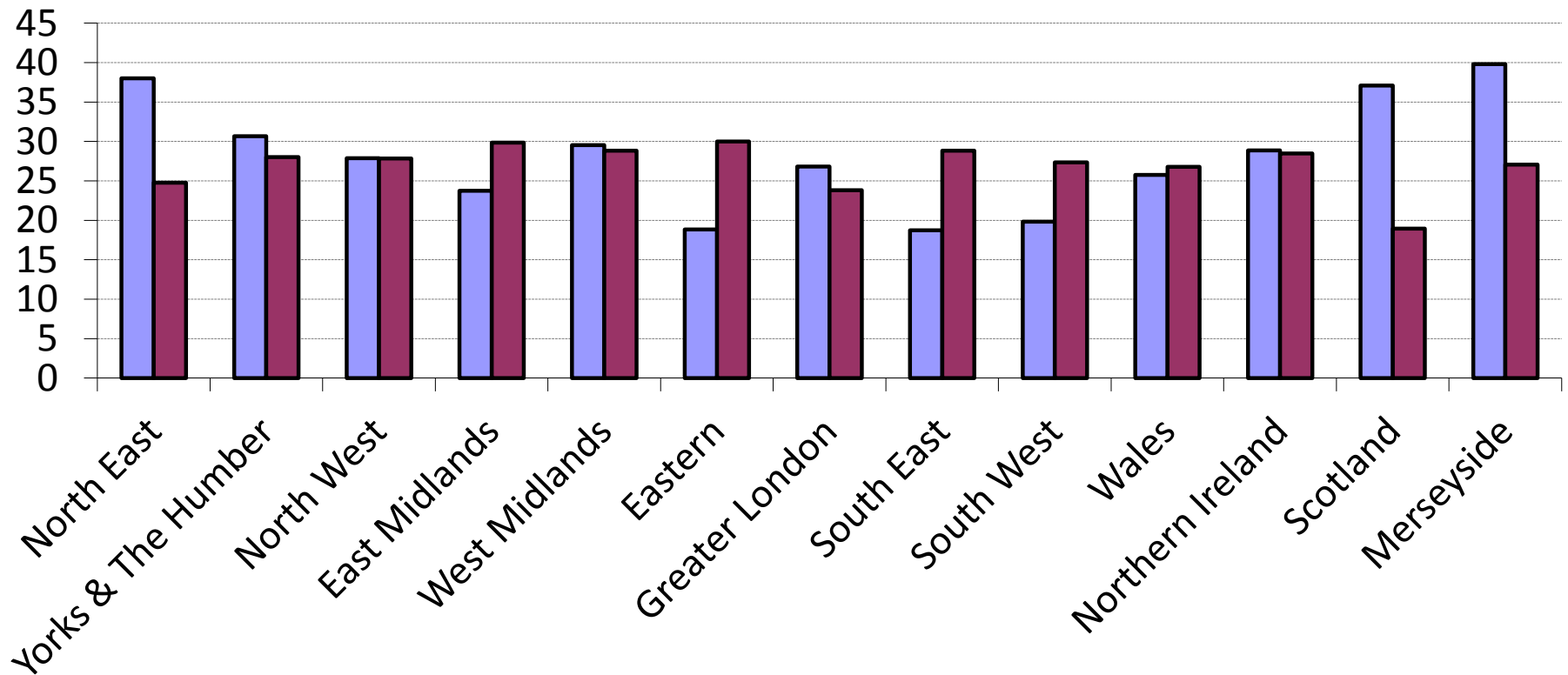


■ Relation between courses an employment options ■ Information about courses available

Reasons, and main reason, for applying to do an undergraduate degree



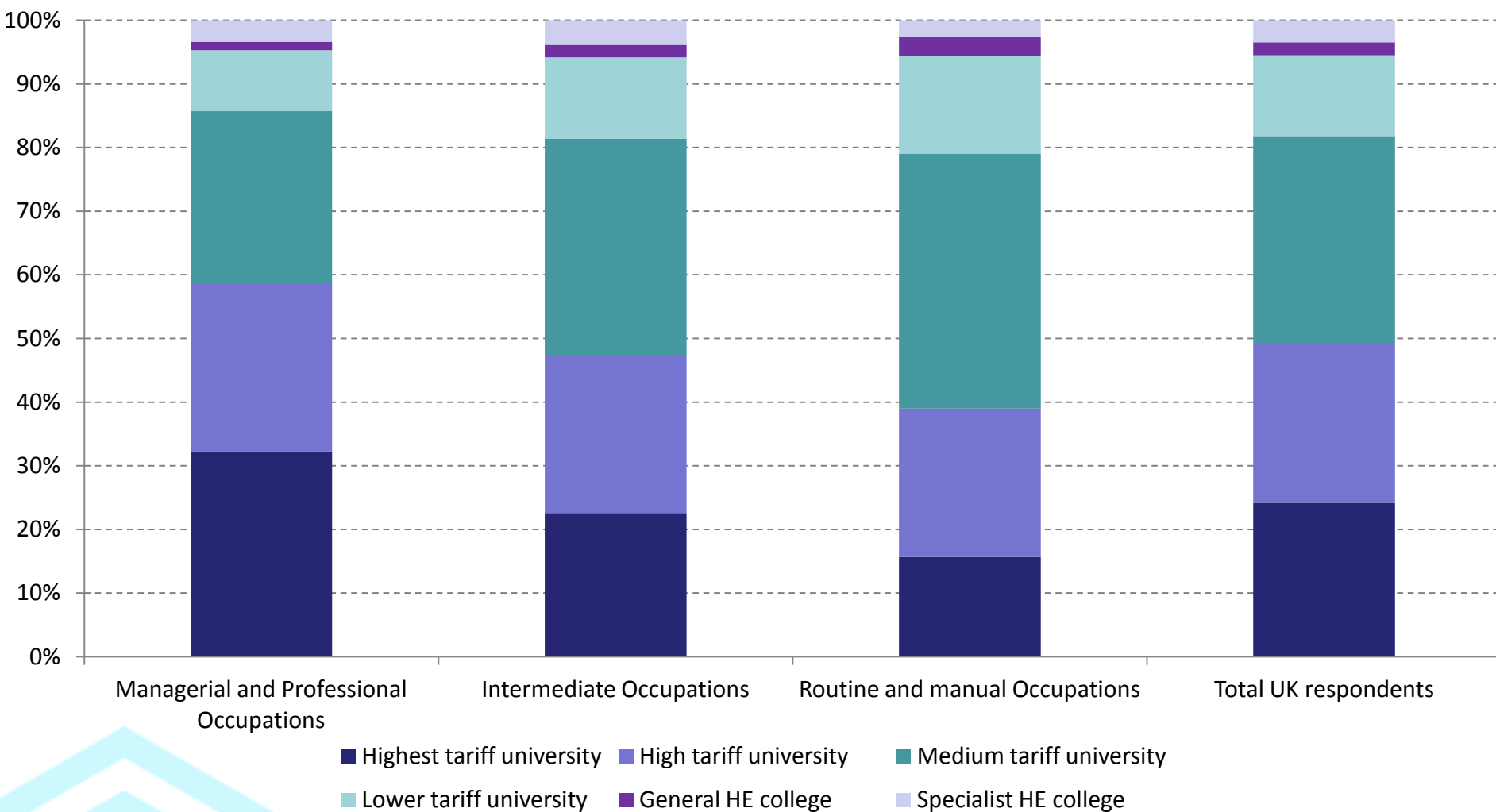
Importance of location in terms of opportunity to stay at home or to study away from home, by region of domicile prior to application



■ Could continue to live at home

■ Wanted to study away from home

HEI access by socio-economic background



‘Everybody in my school goes for higher education - there was no question or doubt in my mind as to whether or not I would apply’. [Male, 18 and under, Eastern, White, Independent school, Professional/Managerial background, Mathematical and Computing Sciences, Russell Group]

‘My husband left [me] and three children. I decided I wanted to do something I had always wanted to do as well be a good carer in order to provide for my children and give them and myself a decent future’. [Female, 31- 40, West Midlands, White, Subjects allied to medicine, other HEI]

‘No one of my family members have gone to university so I want to achieve more than my parents and other relatives ever have’,
(Female, 18 and under, Greater London FE college, Socil Sciences, New university)

‘I reached a point in my life, where I realised that walking into an office everyday and staring at a computer monitor, could, if I didn't make a change, be for the rest of my life. I want to do something fulfilling’.
[Male, 26-30, North East, White, New university, Linguistics and Classics]

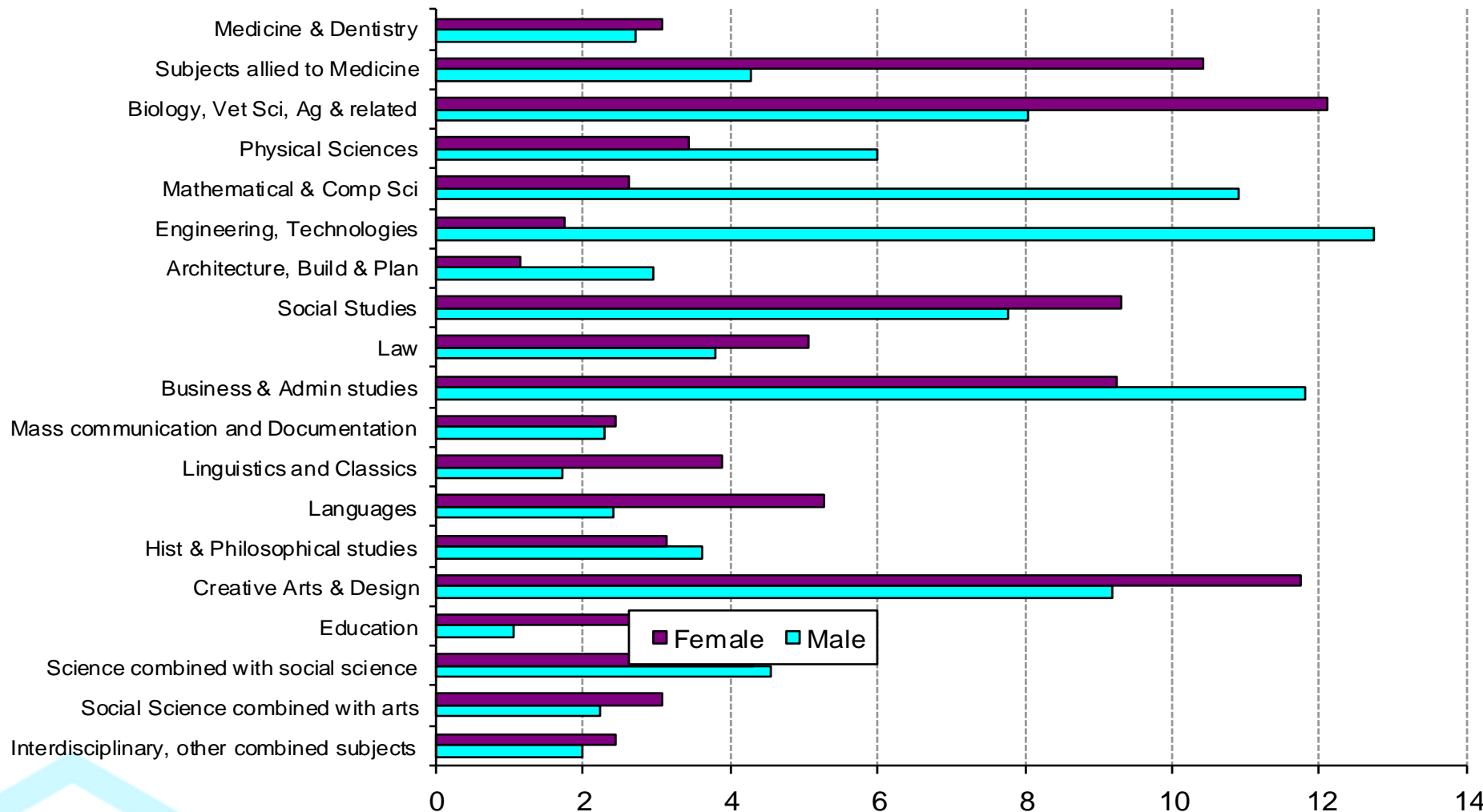
‘I was made redundant after working for one organisation for 21 years. Further education has given access to higher education and the opportunity to fulfil my dream of becoming a school teacher’. [Female 41-50, Scotland, White, Russell Group, Education]

Key characteristics of 2006 students (selected subjects)

	% Female	% Asian	% Black	% 25+	% 'professional managerial background
ALL 2006 accepted UK applicants	55.4	9.6	5	11.8	41.3
Pre-clinical Medicine	57.5	18.5	2.7	16.3	58.2
Pharmacy etc	57.3	42.7	13.2	13.3	35.6
Nursing	90.5	2.9	6.1	42.2	25.7
Physics	19.4	5.3	1.5	2.9	57.8
Mathematics	43.5	14.8	2.1	2.9	48.9
Computer Science	12.1	15.0	6.1	9.3	34.1
Mechanical Engineering	6.7	10.4	4.6	5.5	44.9
Economics	29.0	22.8	6.5	1.5	51.9
Sociology	74.7	8.2	6.2	13.6	37.1
Media Studies	48.8	5.3	4.4	4.8	37.5
History by period	45.5	2.6	0.6	7.2	52.4
Design Studies	62.1	6.1	3.2	9.4	36.6
Languages	71.3	3	2	6.8	52.2

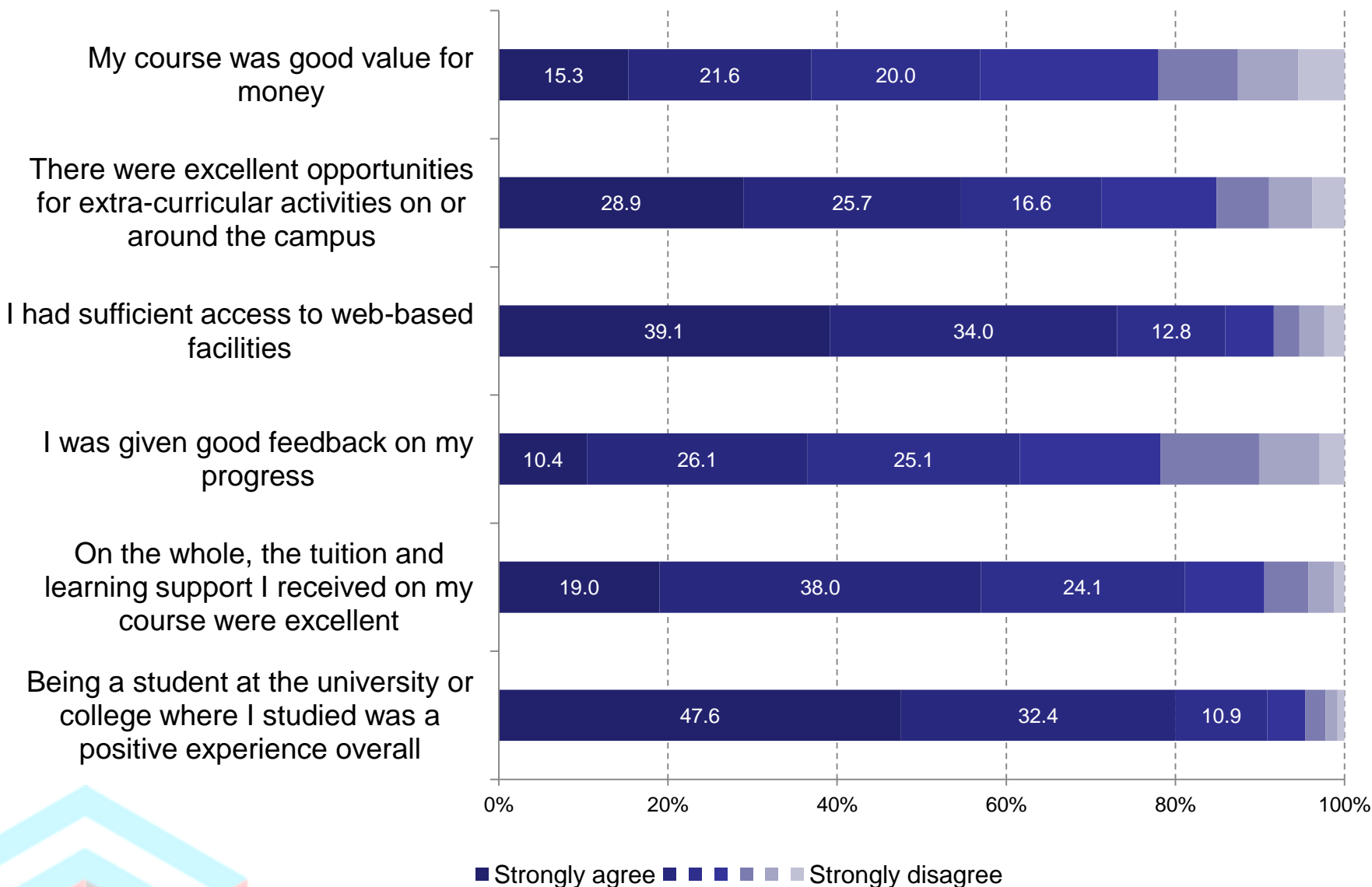
STAGE 2: The experience of higher education....

Subject applied for, comparing male and female distributions*

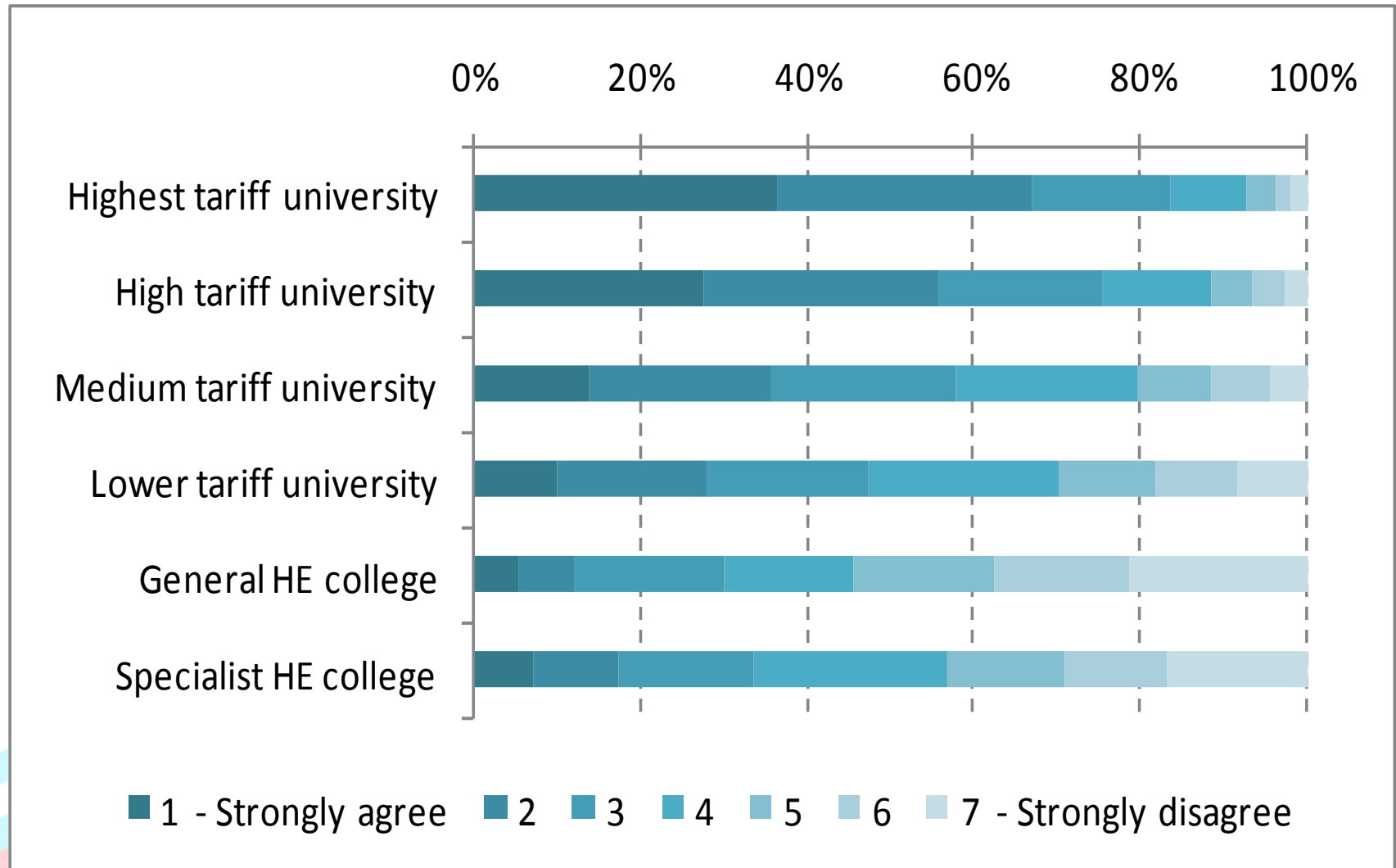


*accepted applicants

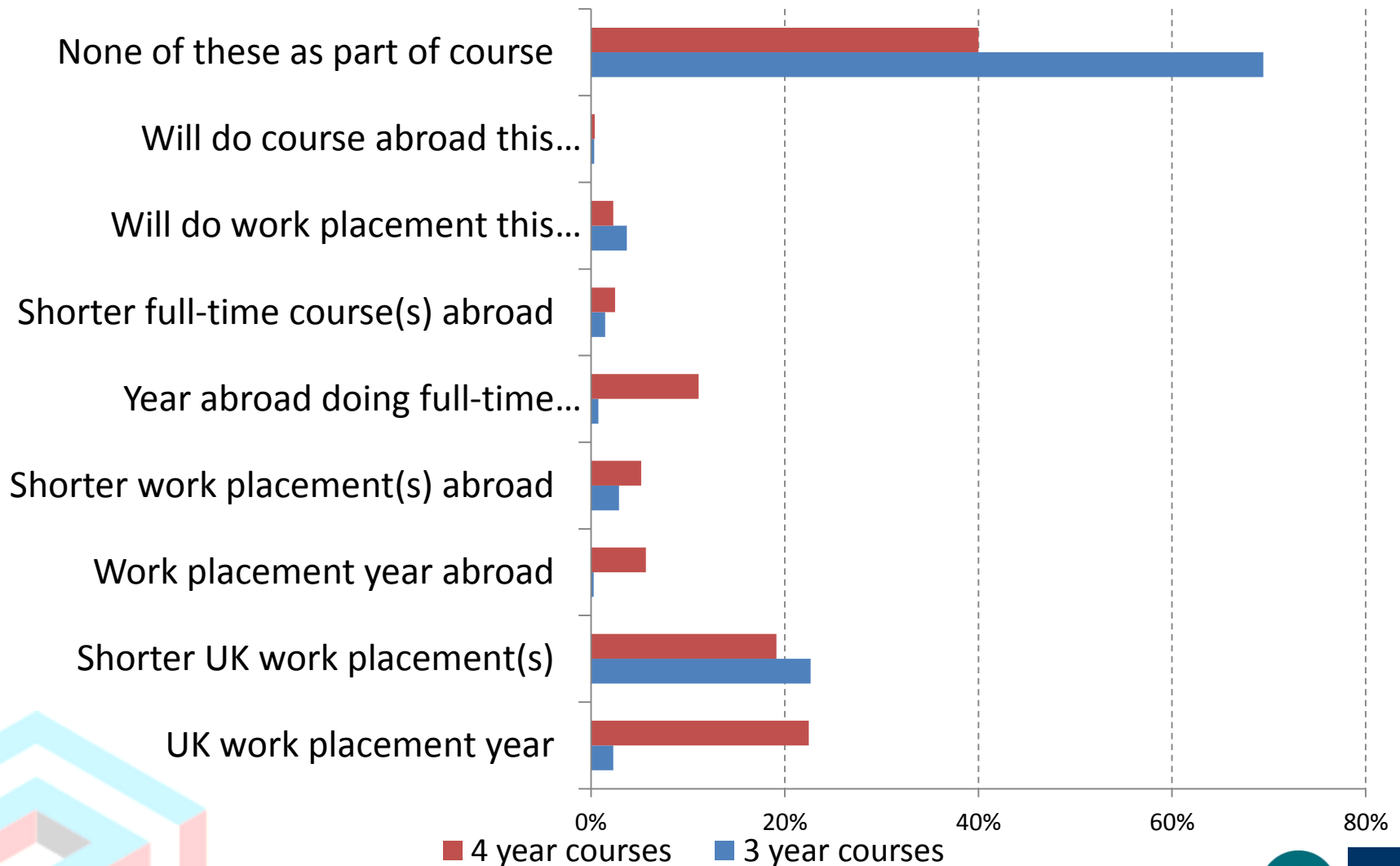
Experience of 1st Year: positive items



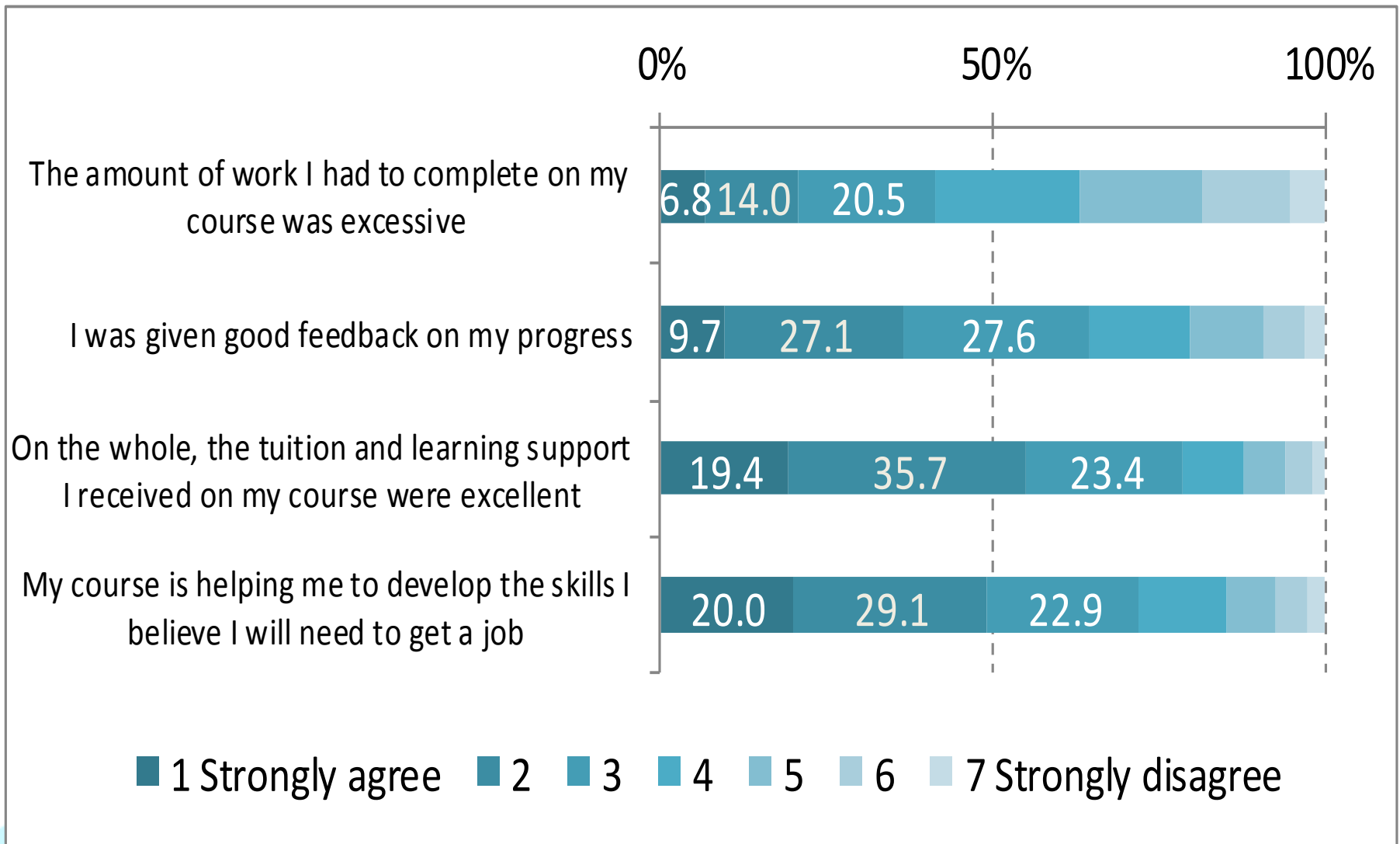
‘There were excellent opportunities for extra-curricular activities on or around the campus’ by type of HEI



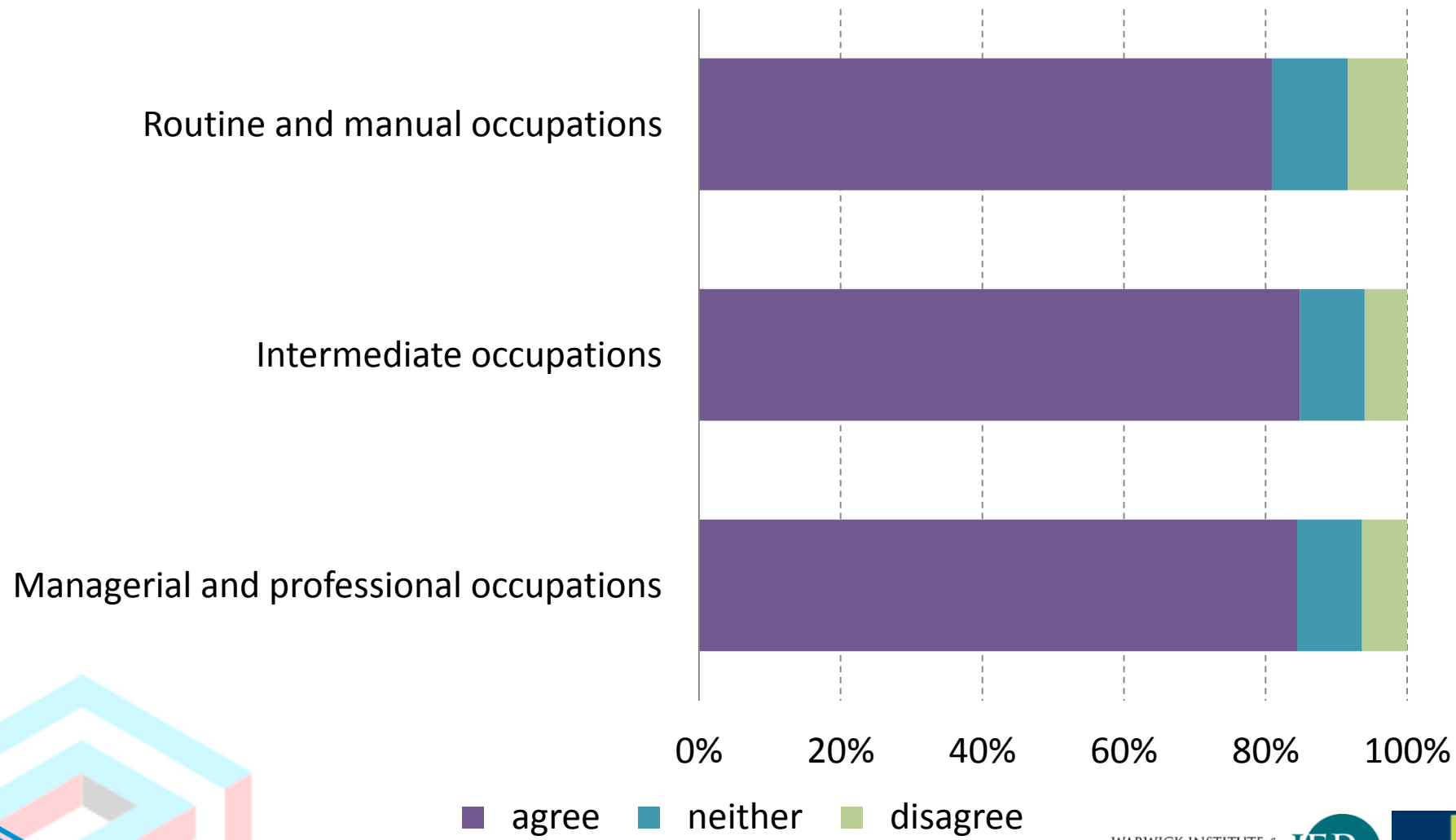
Work placement in the UK or abroad as part of course, comparing those on 3 and 4 year undergraduate courses



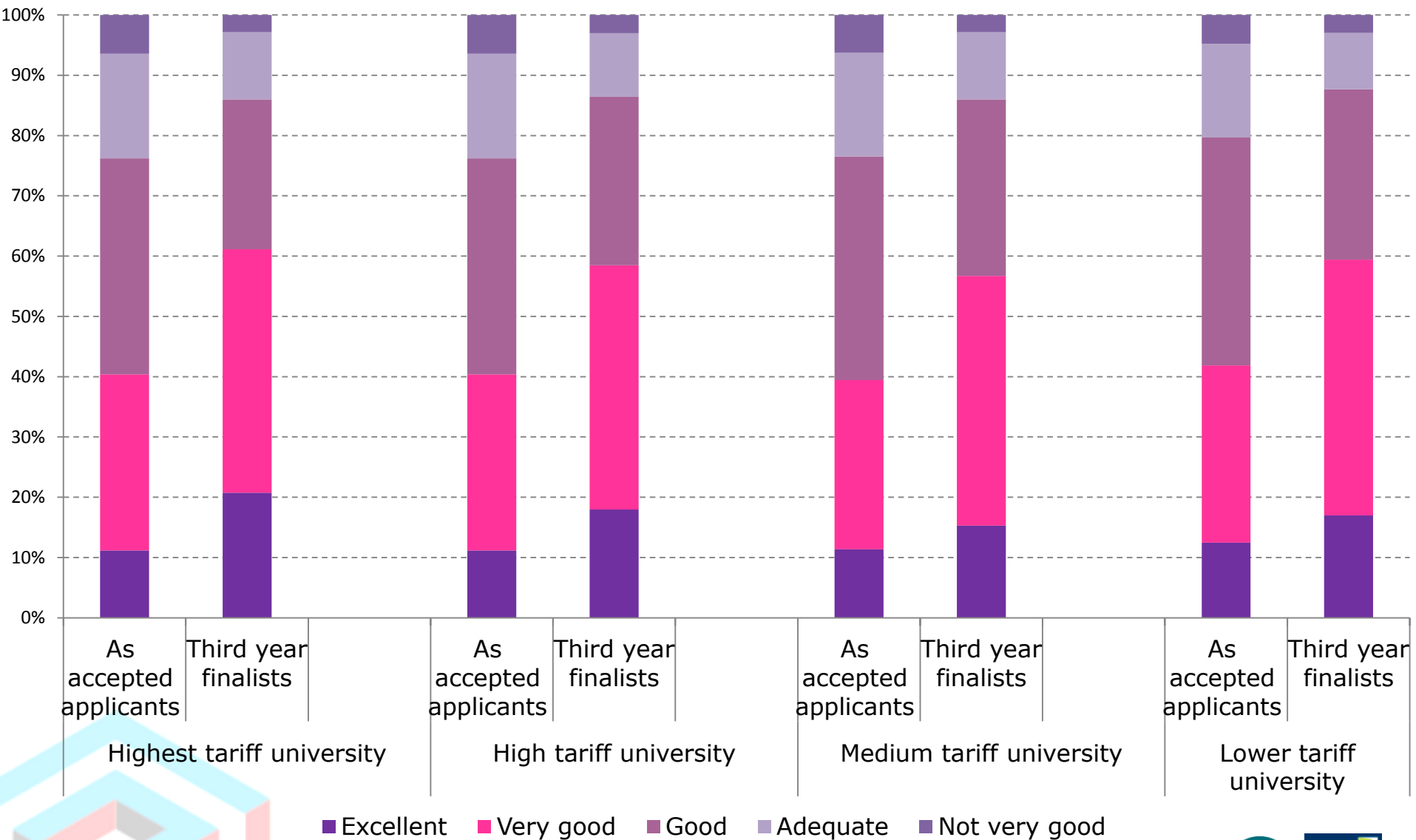
Final year students' evaluations of aspects of courses



Agreement with the statement 'Being a student has enhanced my social and intellectual capabilities more broadly' by broad socio-economic group

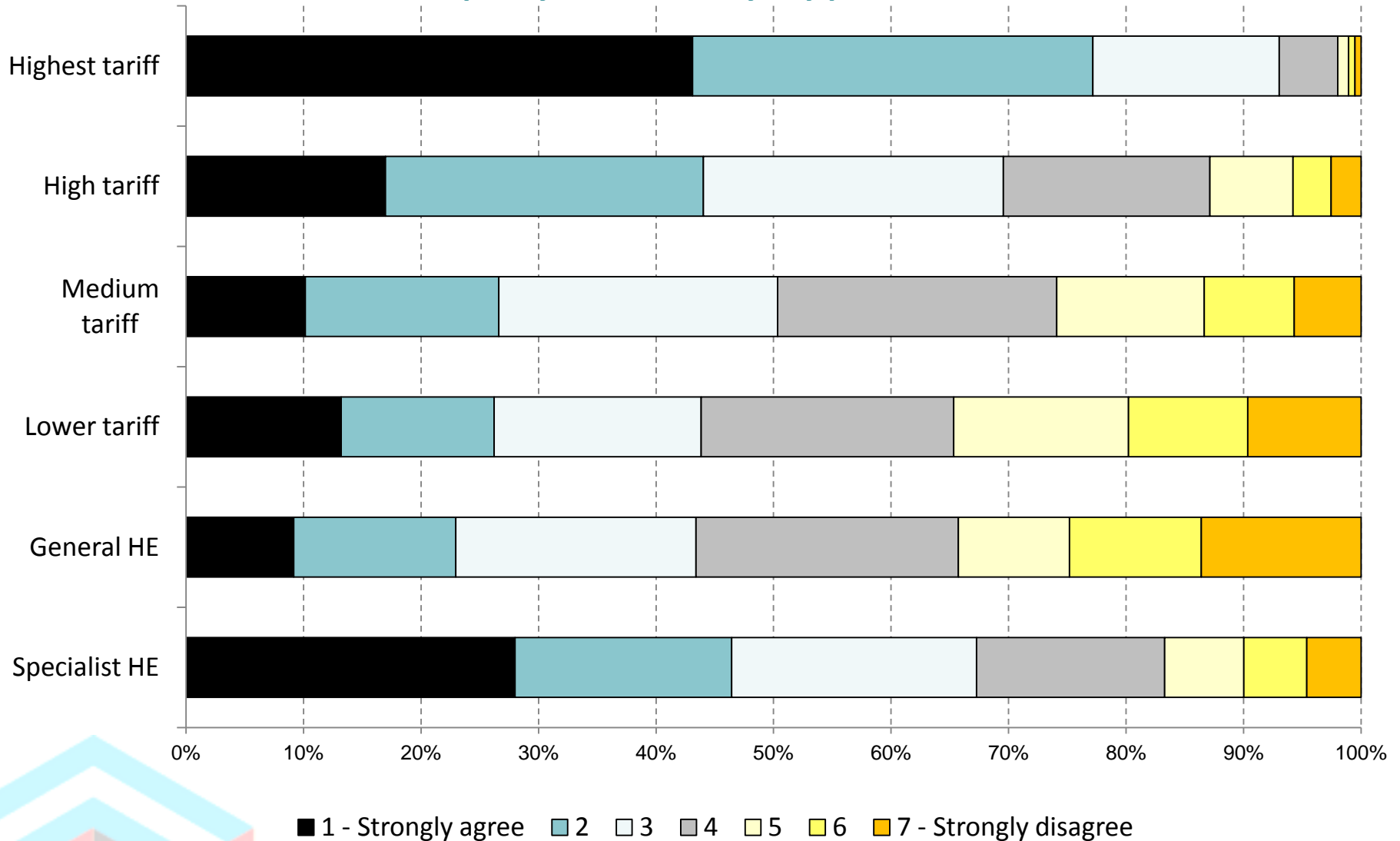


Self assessed self confidence, by HEI type

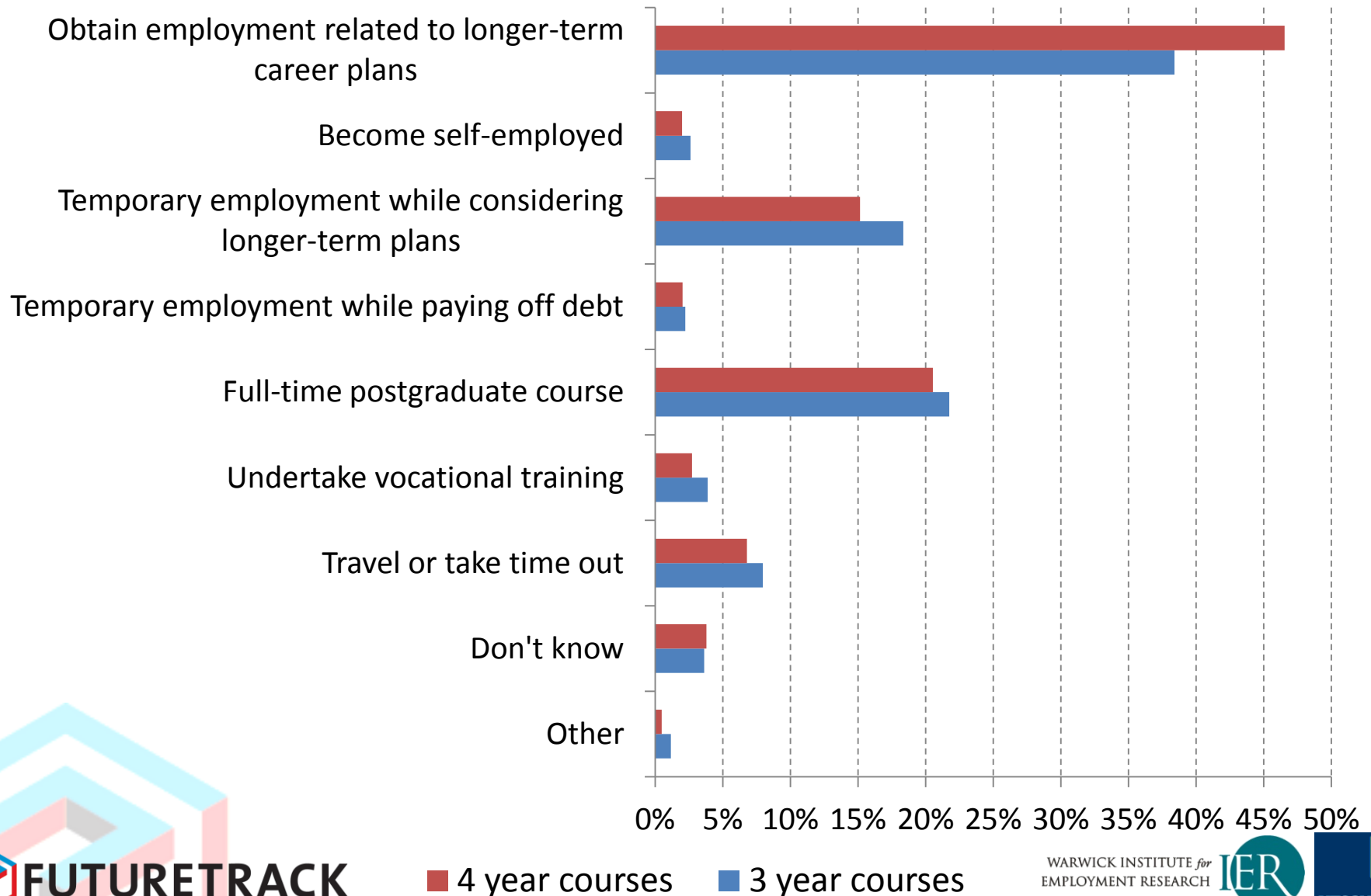


STAGE 3: ...what were they planning to do next?

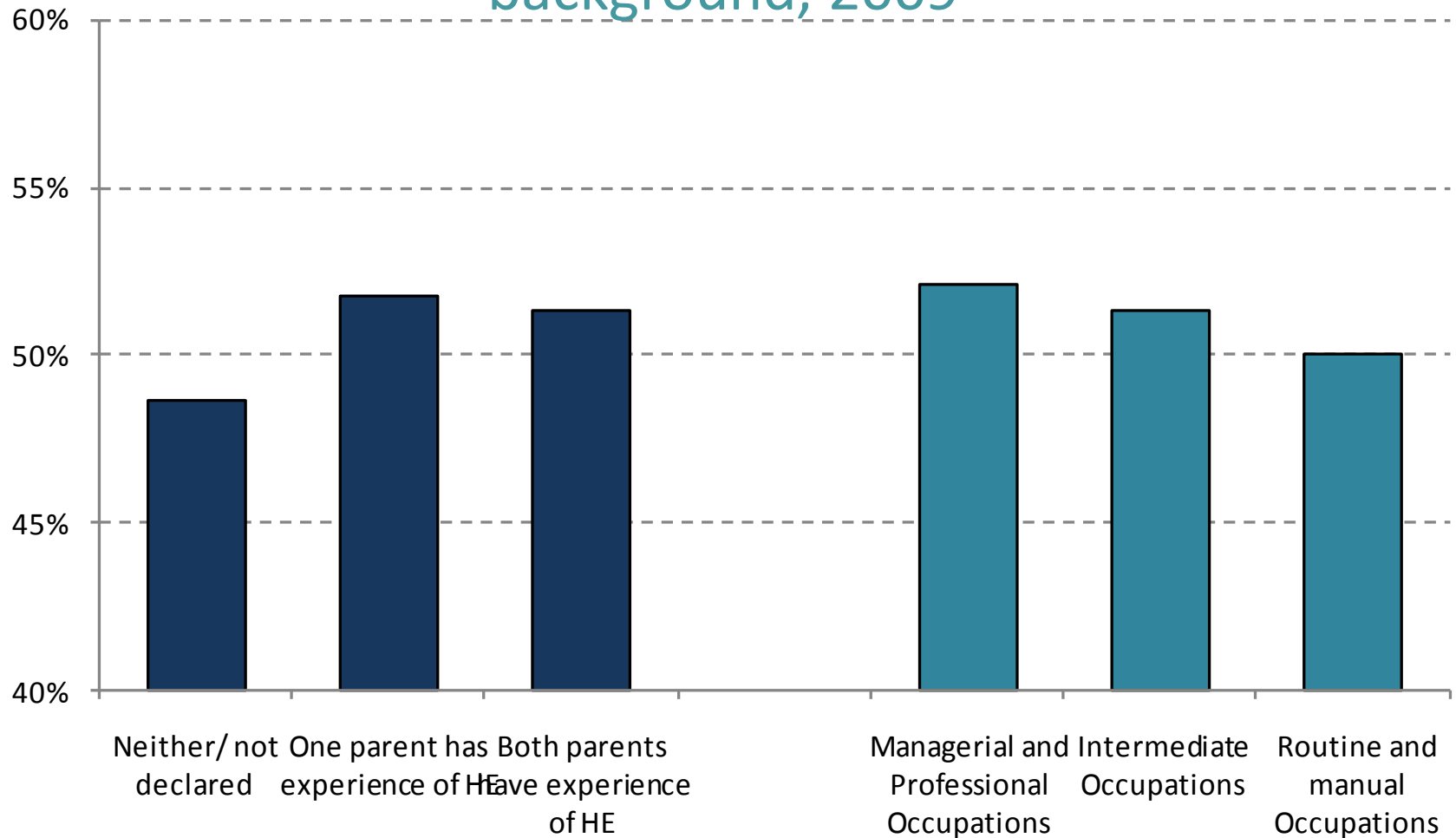
'The university I attended is an advantage in looking for employment' by type of HEI



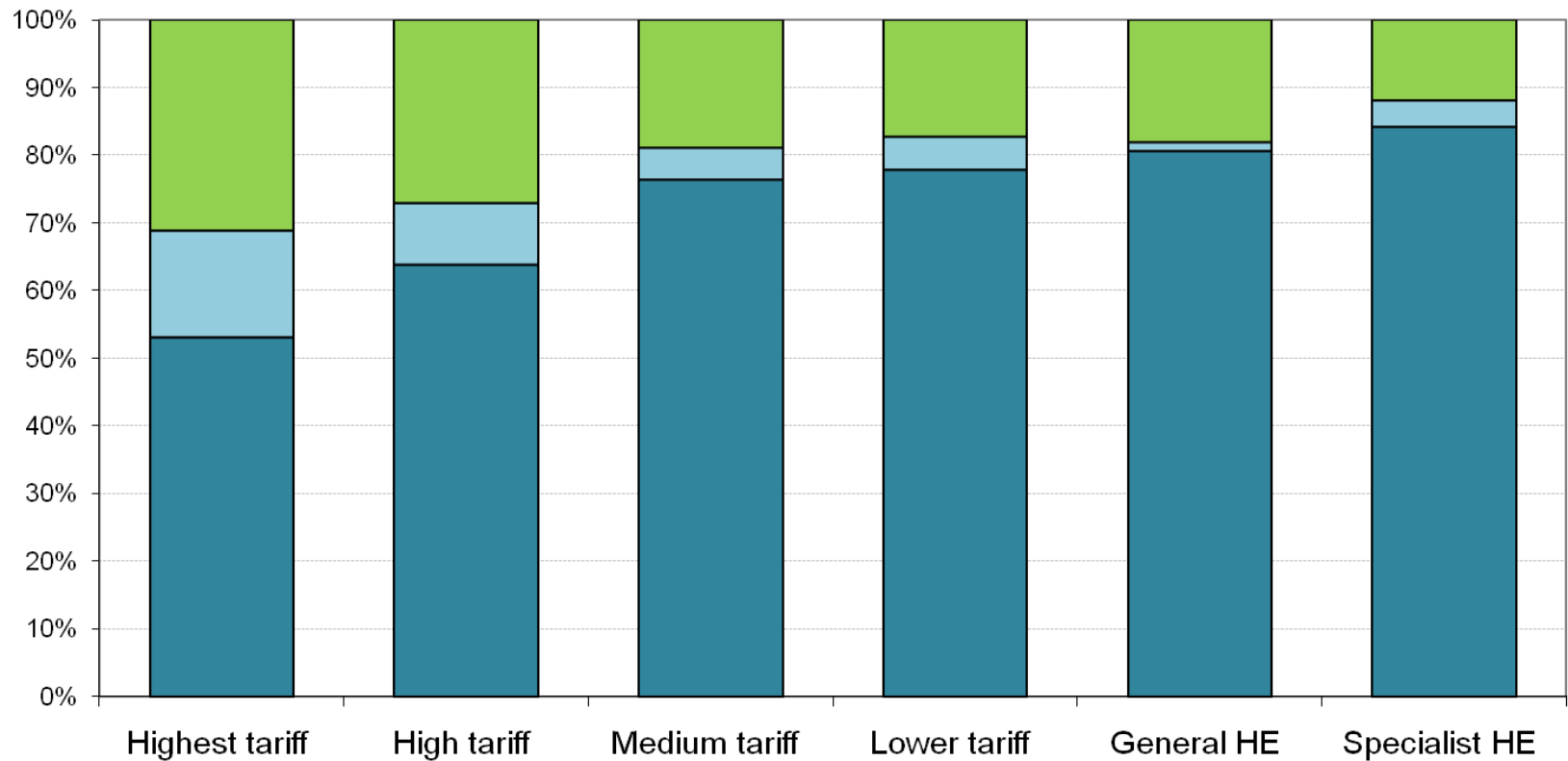
What do you hope to do in the year after graduation?' comparing 3 and 4 year course final year students



% searching for employment in final term, by parental experience of higher education and socio-economic background, 2009

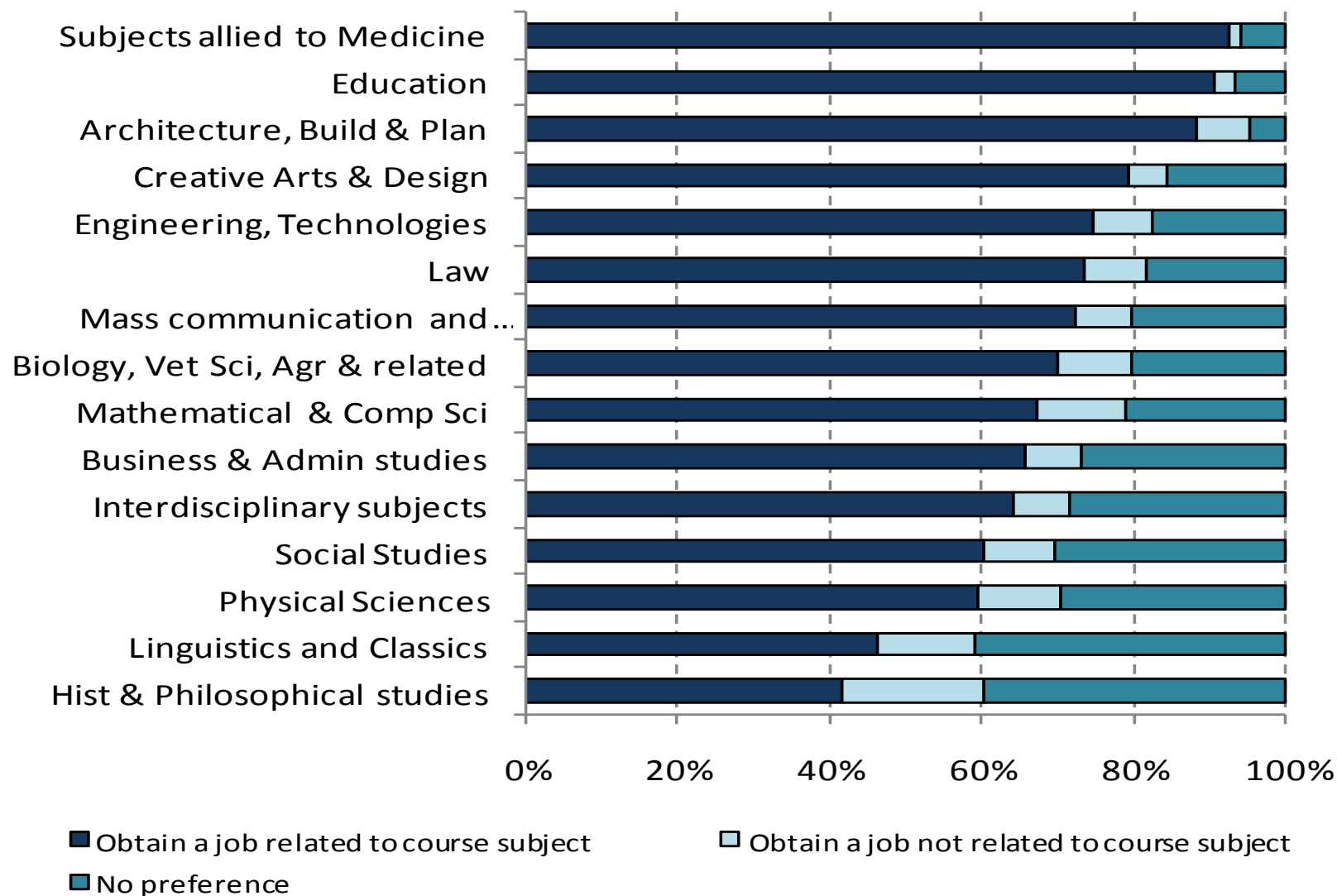


Whether students hoped to obtain a job related to their course subject by HEI type

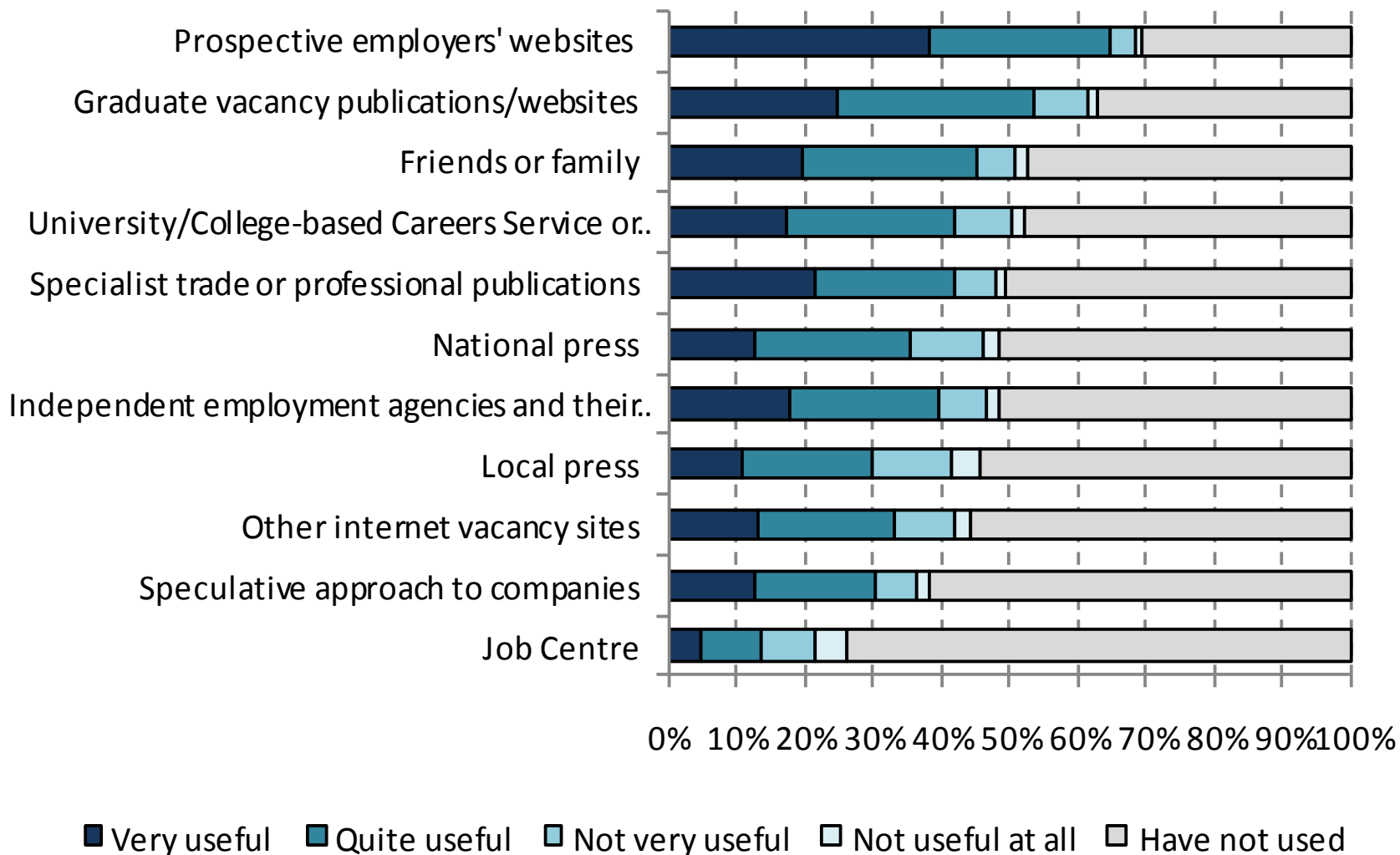


■ Obtain a job related to course subject ■ Obtain a job not related to course subject ■ No preference

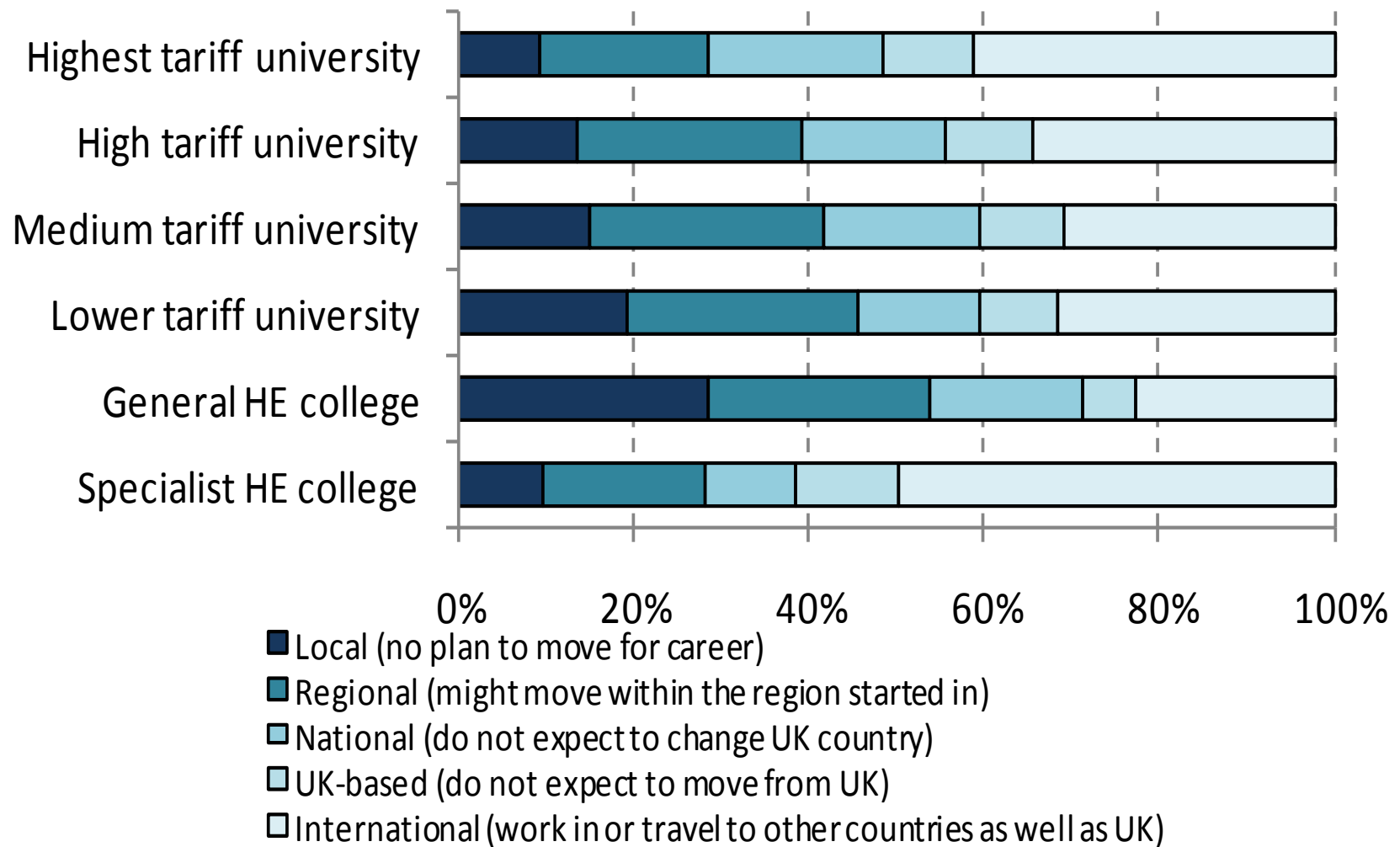
Whether students hoped to obtain a job related to the subject of their course by broad subject group



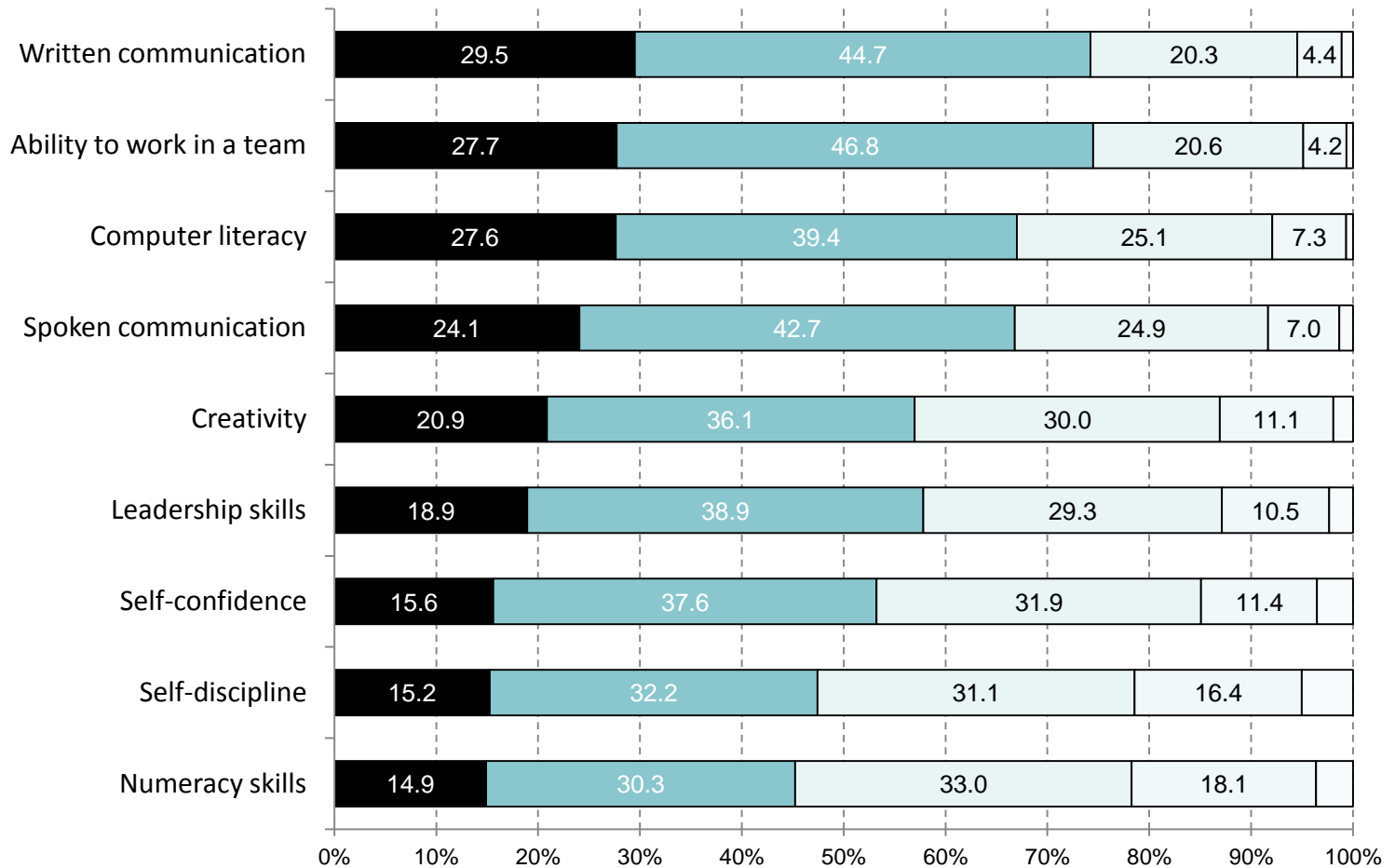
Sources students used to look for future employment, and how useful they found them



Job-market aspired to in the medium to long term, by HEI classification



Final year students' self-rating of their skills



■ Excellent

■ Very good

□ Good

□ Adequate

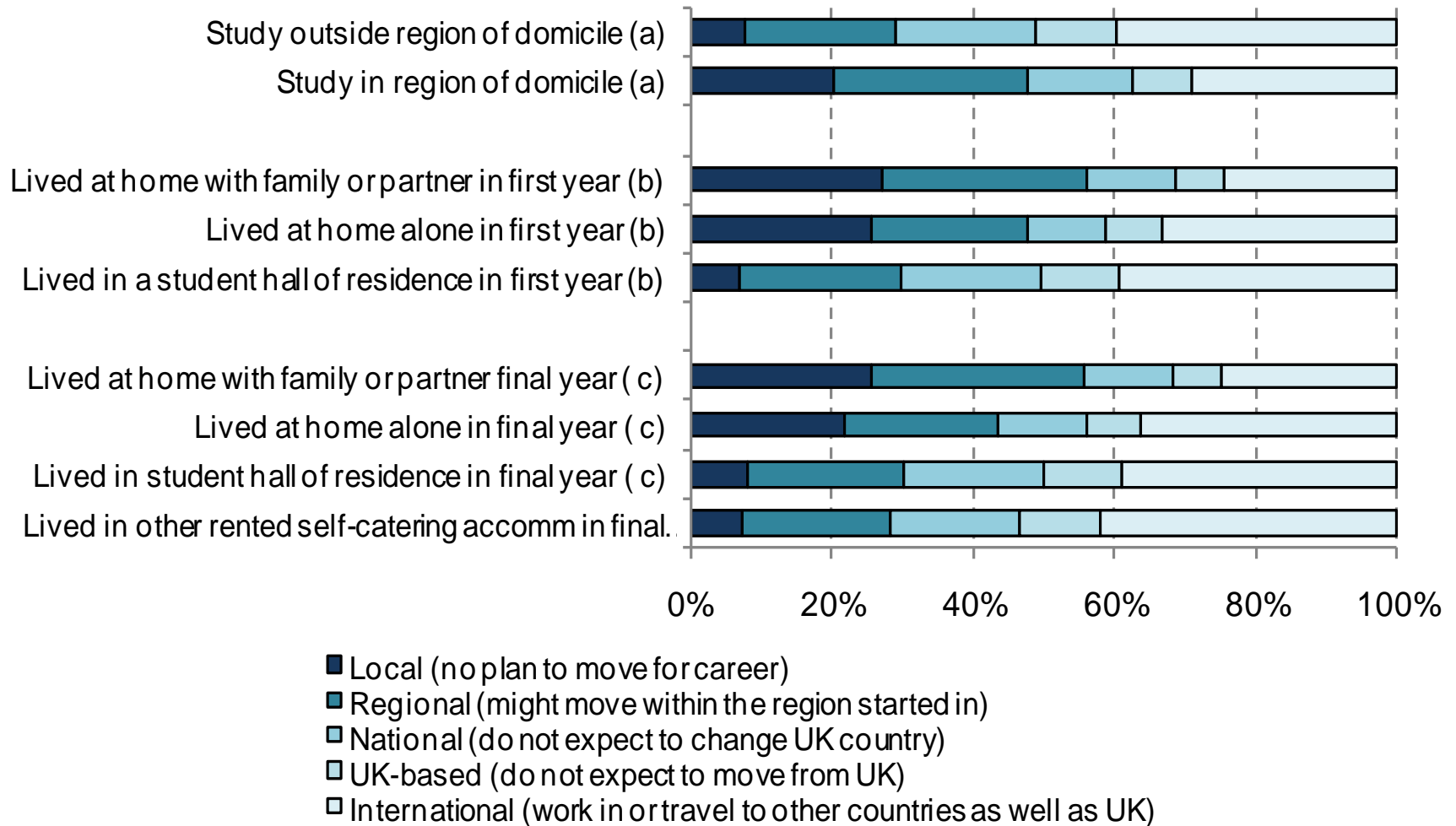
□ Not very good

Self-rating of core skills by selected broad subject groups

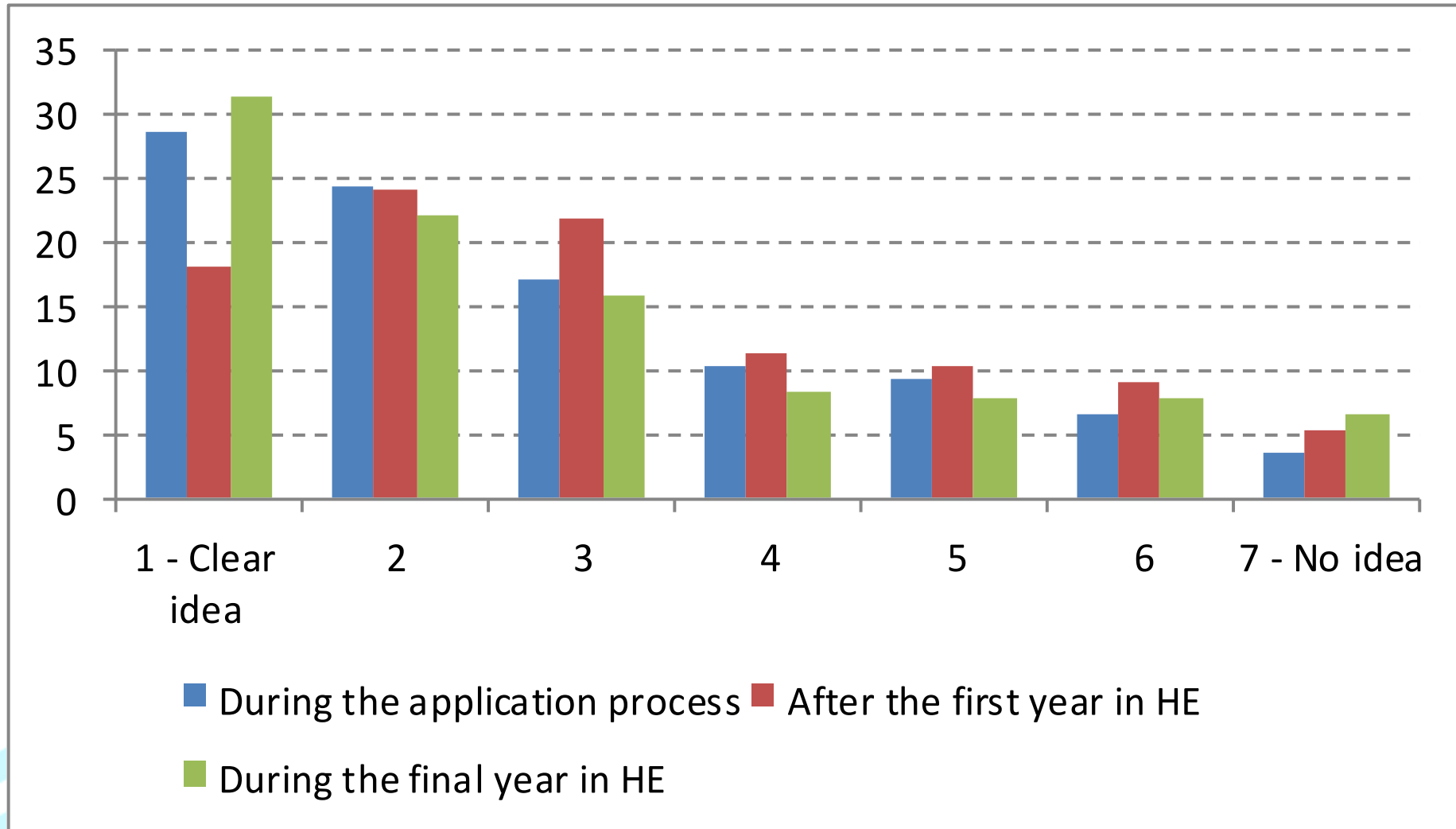
Broad subject of study	<i>Percentage rating themselves as excellent or very good</i>				
	Written communication	Numeracy	Ability to work in a team	Self-confidence	Self-discipline
Physical Sciences	73.6	55.1	75.1	52.7	43.9
Engineering & Technologies	60.8	63.9	69.1	58.9	46.6
Mathematics & Computing	69	70.7	72.1	51.1	51.6
Law	82.6	43.2	73.6	58.7	52.1
Social Sciences	75.1	43	72.8	53.4	46.6
Business & Administration	73.6	58.2	76.7	62.6	55.6
Historical & Philosophical Studies	83.5	33.4	69.4	52.2	46.1
Creative Arts & Design	68.7	38.3	80.5	54	48.7

Source: Futuretrack 2006 combined dataset: UK based final year students, selected subjects (weighted)

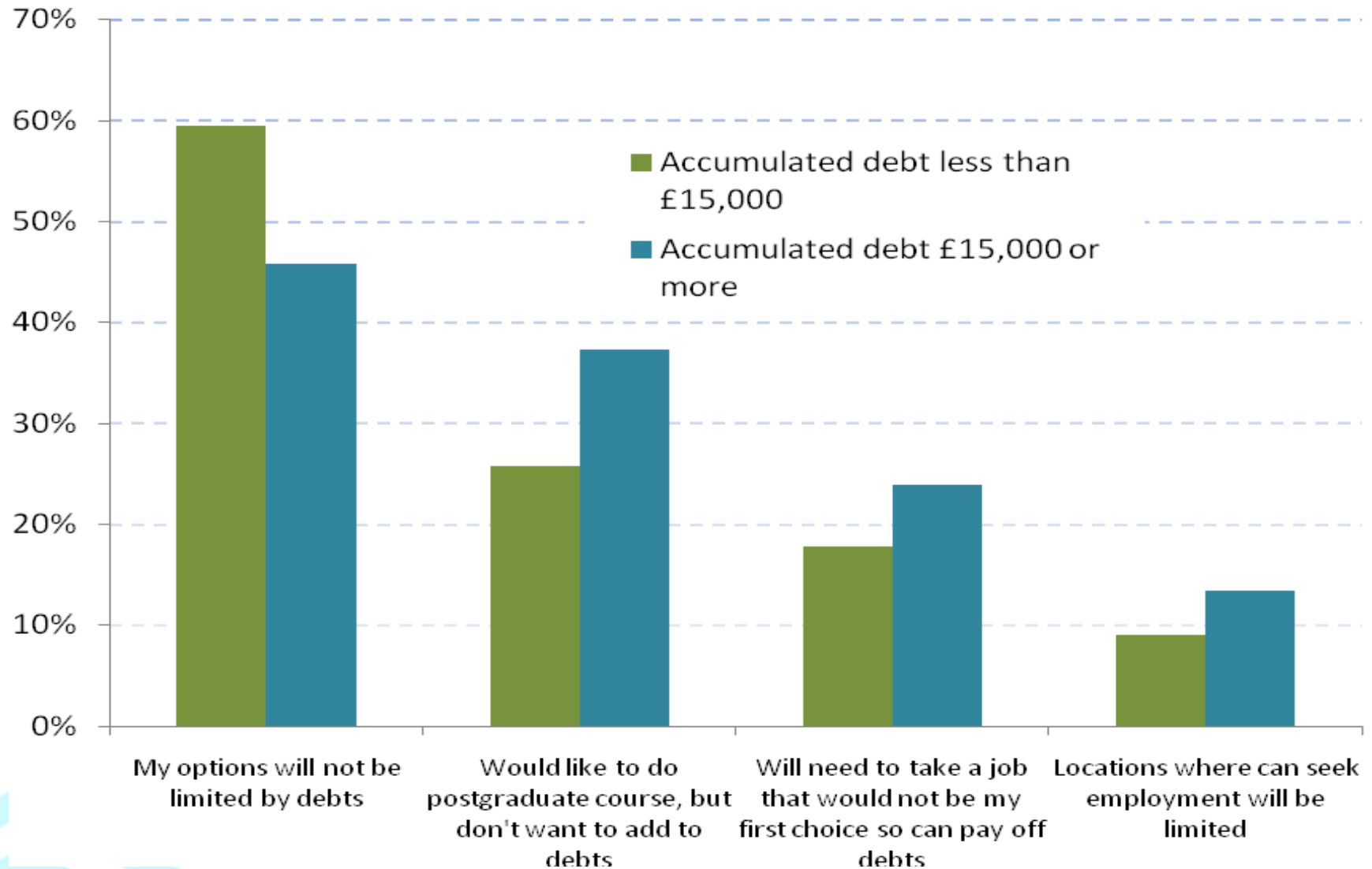
Expected labour market expected in the medium to long term by selected indicators of previous mobility



‘I have clear idea about the occupation I eventually want to enter’ by Futuretrack stages



Future options and accumulated debt



STAGE 4: ...and now we are beginning to analyse responses 18 – 32 months on...

(Report to be published in November 2012)

For further information and links relating to the Futuretrack project and related research see:

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/research/glmf>

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