

Investigating the experiences of students with disability at the University of Queensland: Report of survey conducted April to July 2022 by the University of Queensland Union

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Executive summary

This report makes recommendations for the University of Queensland to improve the experience of students with disability in the university context and to fulfil the rights of those students to inclusion and equality of opportunity in education. It does this through presenting the findings of a survey conducted with students with disability in 2022. Publication of the survey and report also aims to facilitate comparative research nationally and internationally, contribute to disability and education research tools, and progress inclusivity and education equity.

The right to education has been recognised internationally as a human right. Australia has embraced that recognition through its adoption of obligations under international human rights agreements, including the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, and through the enactment of rights to non-discrimination in education in the federal *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* and in state and territory discrimination laws.

Achieving inclusion and full equality of opportunity in education for people with disability requires education providers, including universities, to be both pro-active and responsive. The pro-active work is to achieve a university that is inclusive by design, and ready to provide a rich and fulfilling educational experience for students with disability. This can be achieved through a planned approach to the implementation of universal design principles and audits of existing processes, facilities, and practices to remove all identifiable barriers. Responsive work is necessary to ensure that, when a student with disability identifies a continuing barrier to their full inclusion, the student experiences a positive and ‘can do’ response that works with them to resolve the issues they are facing. This includes the work of ensuring Student Access Plans are properly tailored to the student’s needs and are implemented effectively throughout the student’s education. Over time it can be anticipated that the work of implementing universal design principles will reduce the need for reasonable adjustments in the form of Student Access Plans. It is not, however, likely to ever result in the complete removal of that need, given the diversity of conditions and impact of intersectionality of conditions on a student’s particular functional capacities.

Survey participants provided important insights, showcasing both the positive and negative factors that have shaped their educational experience. While the research team was unsurprised by some of the data, particularly in relation to challenges around the implementation of Student Access Plans, other aspects provided new and welcome insights. It is noteworthy that the area of student support within the University received favourable ratings in response to several quantitative questions and featured strongly in positive commentary in response to the

qualitative questions. Alongside this, it is notable how many participants spoke of the positive impact of the Student Union Disability Collective on their university experiences. While this report focuses mainly on the quantitative data due to time constraints, the responses to most of the qualitative questions are reported¹ and will be analysed and discussed in a later report.

Overall, the research findings provide clear indications of what further work needs to be done to ensure equitable access to education for students with disability at the University of Queensland. These indications have been framed into the recommendations set out in the next section.

¹ There are several qualitative questions for which the responses could not be effectively de-identified (Question 9) or which did not provide meaningful data (Questions 25 and 27).

Recommendations

In this section, the recommendations made later in the report are summarised and categorised. We have not indicated an order of priority for the recommendations. The researchers note, however, that Recommendation 1 is core to the University's approach to designing and implementing improvements that are inclusive of the voice and experiences of students with disability, and to ensuring that such initiatives have appropriate oversight and are held accountable to the students these initiatives are aimed to support. It is also of note that Recommendation 4 is key to addressing many aspects of the results and areas identified for improvement, and Recommendation 6 highlights potential collaborative directions towards wider adoption of proactive approaches to disability inclusion throughout the sector with the University of Queensland in a leading role.

I Strategic implementation and reporting

<p>(a) Page 32</p>	<p>That the University of Queensland establish a process to work directly with the Student Union's Disability Collective, interested students and recent graduates with disability to review the findings and together develop strategies to improve inclusion and educational opportunities for students with disability ('Review and Development Process'), with those strategies to be added to the University's Disability Action Plan and integrated into all relevant University planning and implementation processes.</p>
<p>(b) Page 32</p>	<p>That the University of Queensland develop and maintain a role for representatives of the Student Union's Disability Collective in the implementation, monitoring and review of strategies identified through the Review and Development Process.</p>

2 Support and access

<p>(a) Page 33</p>	<p>That the University use the Review and Development Process to identify reasons current and prospective students with disability may not disclose their condition, and develop communication and other strategies to overcome non-disclosure.</p>
<p>(b) Page 33</p>	<p>That the University use the Review and Development Process to identify more effective ways to promote the availability of Student Access Plans and other academic adjustments for students with disability, and implement those mechanisms.</p>

<p>(c) Page 34</p>	<p>That the University engage a qualified access consultant to conduct an audit to ensure that inclusive education opportunities are available to all people with disability, including those with physical, sensory, psycho-social, cognitive and/or neuro-diverse conditions. From that audit, develop access improvement strategies to be added to the University's Disability Action Plan and integrated into all relevant planning processes of the University.</p>
<p>(d) Page 39</p>	<p>That the University work with the Review and Development Process to consider the responses to Questions 31 and 32 about the impact of changes arising from the pandemic to identify mechanisms that have affected accessibility, both positively and/or negatively.</p>

3 Legislative obligations and processes

<p>(a) Page 34</p>	<p>That the University ensure that work with the Review and Development Process prioritises consideration of its administrative procedures, policies and/or bureaucratic processes to ensure that barriers to full inclusion and a satisfactory student experience for students with disability are identified and addressed.</p>
<p>(b) Page 38</p>	<p>That the University work with the Review and Development Process to identify how to more effectively ensure that students with disability are aware of the availability of reasonable adjustments, what a reasonable adjustment is, and the breadth of what such adjustments encompass.</p>
<p>(c) Page 39</p>	<p>That the University work with the Review and Development Process to identify more effective ways for students with disability to raise and escalate issues or concerns. This could usefully be informed by people with expertise in designing welcoming and accessible feedback and complaints processes.</p>

4 Teaching and learning

<p>(a) Page 35</p>	<p>That the University adopt the Universal Design for Learning principles and ensure sufficient expertise and ongoing resourcing is available to guide those who design and deliver courses to implement those principles.</p>
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<p>(b) Page 36</p>	<p>That the University ensure that all staff engaged in the design and delivery of courses be provided with training that raises their awareness of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • disability, • barriers to education for students with disability, • the obligations on the University and its staff to ensure non-discriminatory access to education, and • how to work with the University’s specialist disability support staff to implement the Universal Design for Learning principles and Student Access Plans. <p>The most effective training available across these domains should be identified through the University working with the Review and Development process and the Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (‘ADCET’).</p>
<p>(c) Page 37</p>	<p>That within the Review and Development Process, the University explore options for implementing greater flexibility and variety of methods in assessing students’ knowledge and skill acquisition (evidence of learning outcomes), particularly providing accessible alternatives for each aspect of assessment. This exploration would benefit from the involvement of independent, external disability education experts to inform the process.</p>

5 Culture and inclusion

<p>(a) Page 38</p>	<p>That the University prioritise inclusion of representation of the diversity of students with disability at the University of Queensland in its student-facing and public-facing communications and events.</p>
<p>(b) Page 38</p>	<p>That the University work with the Review and Development Process to identify factors that may lead to students with disability feeling isolated and unsupported, and develop strategies to remedy this.</p>
<p>(c) Page 38</p>	<p>That the University and the Student Union work with the Disability Collective to enhance social connectedness of students and to build, maintain and strengthen mechanisms by which students can meet others who have similar experiences and access peer support.</p>
<p>(d) Page 39</p>	<p>That the University and the Student Union work together to ensure that university events are fully inclusive of all students with disability to enhance their opportunities to build friendships and support networks.</p>

6 Survey and future collaboration

<p>(a) Page 33</p>	<p>That the survey be conducted on a regular basis—at least every three years—at the University of Queensland with targeted promotion to ensure engagement with international students and postgraduate students.</p>
<p>(b) Page 33</p>	<p>That the survey be amended to improve recognition of the domains and issues uniquely facing postgraduate students.</p>
<p>(c) Page 34</p>	<p>That the University work with the Student Union Disability Collective to ensure that future survey analysis consider whole-of-university disability data to ensure the survey samples are representative.</p>
<p>(d) Page 39</p>	<p>That the University ensure that it publicly report on the outcomes of future surveys, and work with people with disability to encourage broad adoption of this survey approach to assist future students with disability to identify universities that are pro-active in ensuring fulfilment of the right to education for students with disability.</p>
<p>(e) Page 42</p>	<p>That the University work with Universities Australia and the Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training ('ADCET') to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) Fund a team of researchers from multiple universities to further develop the survey (see (ii)) and to process and analyse national survey results, independent of university oversight.(ii) Further develop the survey for use across all Australian universities and split the survey into two main sections, one that will collect data from all universities, and the other a customisable section in which universities can ask more granular university-specific questions. For the university-specific section, researchers would de-identify the data before returning it to the university to protect the privacy of students and ensure that students will feel confident in the ethical processes involved and will not fear repercussions.(iii) Conduct the survey every three years.

Introduction

Through this report, we seek to contribute to the understanding of the experiences of students with disability in higher education in Australia. There is a developing level of understanding that disability affects the experience of studying at higher education institutions, including at universities, and that the effects cross many aspects of education. This research report seeks to use an empirical research approach to provide greater detail to that understanding and to encourage further such research across Australian universities.

The findings and recommendations reflect the reality that some issues affecting students with disability in higher education are sector-wide issues, while others may be specific to the University of Queensland. We hope that this report can help the University of Queensland to gauge the effectiveness of its current processes and practices in meeting the education needs of students with disability and to identify areas for focus and further improvement. We also believe that the findings and recommendations are likely to be relevant to other Universities in Australia.

Background to the research

Originally intended as an internal survey for the University of Queensland Union ('the Student Union'), it was soon recognised by the authors that a study such as this one, co-designed by students with disability *for* students with disability, would be a useful tool with implications well beyond a single university. The survey was then modified to act as a pilot study investigating the experiences of students at the University of Queensland with a view to roll out the survey nationally after reviewing and refining based on this pilot.

When applied to universities throughout Australia, this survey could provide both broad comparative data for research purposes, as well as granular data to be available to individual universities to assist those universities to identify key areas for improvement in providing equitable education access to students with disability.

In this report, we seek to describe the development process,² set out key data—in particular, the results of the quantitative elements of the survey—in relatively simple terms and discuss the implications. In our discussion, we have identified recommendations for future action to achieve equitable access to education for students with disability, particularly at the University of Queensland. We also

² The authors of this report have recently submitted an article, 'A co-designed tool to explore the experiences of students with disability in tertiary education: from local to national contexts in Australia' to the *International Journal of Discrimination and the Law*. That article describes the survey development methodology in detail.

identify changes to be made to the survey questions as well as future research directions.

Disability

For the purposes of the survey, we did not formally define ‘**disability**’ but rather stated in plain language that it is inclusive of physical disability, sensory disability, mental illness and psychosocial conditions, chronic pain, chronic illness, neurodiversity (for example, autism, ADHD, Tourette Syndrome), deafness, medical conditions, blindness (including colour blindness), and/or any condition that may be considered disabling in any way, whether innately or for social, societal, or environmental reasons. Through this approach, we recognised that there are many students who identify as being disabled or having one or other of the listed conditions. This meant that the survey targeted students who identify in these ways, rather than those many other students who may have short- or long-term conditions that may fall within the very broad definition of disability that is found in Australian discrimination laws. We sought to use plain language to encompass the breadth of that definition of disability found in Australian discrimination laws, for example, the federal *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. We also sought to recognise and incorporate the social model³ approach to understanding impairment and disability found in the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* that recognises it is the interaction of impairments with societal structures, etc, that results in disability:⁴

Article 1

...

Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

We use ‘people with disability’ (person-first language) and ‘disabled people’ (identity-first language) interchangeably in this research. This decision was made in recognition that, while there are preferences for one or the other among specific disability communities and in broader society, these are both terms people in Australia use to describe themselves. We say ‘disability’ rather than

³ Michael Oliver, *The Politics of Disablement* (Macmillan Education, 1990).

⁴ *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, opened for signature 30 March 2007, 2515 UNTS 3, Australian Treaty Series 2008 No 4 (entered into force 3 May 2008, entered into force for Australia 16 August 2008) (‘CRPD’) art 1.

‘disabilities’ as disability acts in place of a plural given that disability is what the person experiences whether due to single or multiple conditions or impairments.

Disability and universal design

There is increasing awareness of and focus on the importance of taking a universal design approach to prevent barriers to equality of opportunity, including those faced by people with disability. The term ‘universal design’ is used in the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* and defined, in article 2:

“Universal design” means the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. “Universal design” shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed.⁵

The *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* imposes a general obligation—article 4(1)(f)—on all parties to the Convention, including Australia, to promote universal design across all areas.

Disability and the right to education

The right to education is recognised internationally as a human right. It is found as a general right in article 13 of the *International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights*.⁶ That article includes the following obligation on those countries that have agreed to be bound by the Covenant, including Australia:

(c) Higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means ...⁷

The specific application of the right to education in respect of people with disability is found in article 24 of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. This article relevantly includes the following:

1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning directed to:

⁵ CRPD, above n 4, art 2.

⁶ *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, opened for signature 16 December 1966, GA Res 2200A (XXI), 993 UNTS 3, Australian Treaty Series 1976 No 5, UN Doc A/6316 (1966) (entered into force 3 January 1976, entered into force for Australia 10 March 1976) (‘ICESCR’) art 13.

⁷ ICESCR, above n 6, art 13(3)(c).

- a. The full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity;
- b. The development by persons with disabilities of their personality, talents and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential;
- c. Enabling persons with disabilities to participate effectively in a free society.

...

5. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education ... without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. To this end, States Parties shall ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities.

The universal design approach provides a means of reducing the need for individual accommodations through the removal, to the greatest extent possible, of identified barriers to participation. Applied to university education, a universal design approach involves audits of all settings and systems to identify ways in which they operate to exclude students with disability and redesigning these to remove those exclusionary effects. ‘Universal Design for Learning’ provides a principle-based approach to the development of curriculum to ensure equality of learning opportunity for all students.⁸ With increased focus on universal design, universities should see a reduced need for expansive Student Access Plans—however named—as many of the adjustments (‘reasonable accommodations’) identified in those plans would become redundant through the redesign process.

Previous research on disability and education

Although the *Disability Discrimination Act* has been in place since 1992 and covers access to education provided by tertiary institutions, disability and tertiary education is still an emerging area of research in Australia and internationally.

The research to date suggests that disability access in Australian tertiary institutions has some way to go before it will be truly equitable. An Australian study into perspectives of students and disability service staff found that both students and staff find the process of negotiating and implementing reasonable

⁸ Janet Gronneberg & Sam Johnston, ‘7 things you should know about universal design for learning [Brief]’ (2015) *Educause Learning Initiative* <<http://www.educause.edu/library/resources/7-things-you-should-know-about-universal-design-learning>>.

adjustments to be confusing and complex.⁹ Another Australian study that explored the retention and success of students with disability in Australian tertiary institutions found that:

Disability action plans were not seen as significant, with most interviewees either not aware of the existence of their university's disability action plan (DAP) or indicated that their DAP had expired, and it had not been updated since the original document had been developed.¹⁰

Overseas studies into disability and tertiary education (often referred to as 'post-secondary' education) describe as best practice proactive and consultative approaches that involve students. These studies indicate, however, that often when consultation is tried and tested by universities, the approaches tend to not go far enough, not meaningfully engage students in service improvement processes and policy changes, and/or are criticised by students with disability as being tokenistic.¹¹ To address these concerns, as discussed above and detailed in the section on Methodology below, this survey and report have involved a co-design approach from the outset, involving students with disability in the survey design, and having a disabled student as the lead researcher and author.¹²

The University of Queensland and disability

The University of Queensland aspires to incorporate universal design principles in its forthcoming Disability Action Plan. Currently its systems for equitable access to education depend to an extent on Student Access Plans and Exam Adjustments. A Student Access Plan is a communication tool between a student and their course co-ordinator, which includes recommendations for reasonable adjustments to accommodate the impact of a student's condition or circumstances. Exam Adjustments follow a similar principle but are specific to exams.

We hope that this report will support this work by the University of Queensland and look forward to working with the University in its endeavours as well as with students with disability and other researchers to implement this survey tool nationally across all Australian universities.

⁹ Ellie Fossey, Lisa Chaffey, Annie Venville, Priscilla Ennals, Jacinta Douglas and Christine Bigby, 'Navigating the complexity of disability support in tertiary education: perspectives of students and disability service staff' (2017) 21(8) *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 822.

¹⁰ Sue Kilpatrick, Susan Johns, Robin Barnes, Darlene McLennan, Sarah Fischer and Kerri Magnusson, *Exploring the retention and success of students with disability* (University of Tasmania, 2017) 33.

¹¹ Karen Beauchamp-Pryor (2012) 'From absent to active voices: securing disability equality within higher education' (2012) 16(3) *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 283.

¹² The student author chose not to complete the survey themselves.

The discussion and recommendations in this report are based on the survey results. The authors acknowledge that initiatives the University has developed and is implementing will not necessarily be reflected in the data. There are a number of possible reasons for this, including, for example, lack of awareness of those initiatives among the student body. The authors recognise that the survey results are part of a bigger picture, which is important in understanding the experience of students with disability.

Methodology and overview of the survey

The aim of this survey was to explore the experiences of people with disability as they undertake study at the University of Queensland. The lead researcher is disabled and has direct links to other students with disability through her elected position as Disability Officer for the University of Queensland's Student Union for 2021 and 2022. The lead researcher's role includes hosting both formal and casual meetings, advocacy, and maintaining the Disability Collective's social media presence.

While the survey was informed by previous research (discussed below in the section on Survey development stages), it was in many ways innovative, and we sought to ensure that it was co-designed by people with disability. The lead researcher's experiences combined with formal and informal feedback from the multitude of connections within the Student Union Disability Collective community were integral to validly and appropriately implementing this aim.

Survey creation

The survey design process was informed by students with disability at the University of Queensland. The lead researcher's access to members of the Student Union Disability Collective afforded unique opportunities to collaborate with those members of the University of Queensland community. The 400+ members of the Disability Collective were well-placed to inform questions relating to limitations and areas needing improvement, as well as language preferences. The team recognised that seeking research guidance from those at the centre of systemic issues is often overlooked yet provides valuable guidance and knowledge. We consider this co-design approach to be a strength in the development of this survey.

Members of the Disability Collective were invited to discuss and engage in formal and informal avenues of feedback for the survey including, for example, e-mail, social media sites, and informal and formal meetings. These discussions included overarching issues to be explored, language sensitivity, diagnostic versus functional disability categorisation, appropriateness and effective framing of questions related to experience and impacts, ethics, and confidentiality. Engagement with the Disability Collective continued throughout the process of the survey design. Before the survey went live, members of the Disability Collective executive committee were invited to trial and provide feedback on the final survey.

Survey development stages

The first step in the survey development was brainstorming consistent and relevant themes derived from direct and online informal engagement with

students with disability at the University of Queensland. Complaints about specific aspects of their university experiences and identification of problems were collated and were referred to the next stage of survey development. Commonly identified themes included gaps in support for, and/or accommodation of, disability-related needs, lack of effective response to accessibility issues affecting the university environment and systems, and a lack of understanding of the systemic impacts of barriers related to disability that affects progress and broader inclusion in university life.

The next stage included reviewing other relevant research, including surveys and questionnaires conducted with people with disability. These included higher-education-specific research, education-specific research, and broader data collection tools, such as the Australian Census.¹³ As a result, questions from two reported studies—Black et al, and Holloway¹⁴—were included in earlier drafts of the survey.

The first full draft of the survey included 108 questions drawn from a range of sources and independently developed. It included questions developed and adapted by the research team to address areas identified by members of the Student Union Disability Collective. The research team determined that a survey of this length was likely to result in high rates of participant attrition, limiting its usefulness. Consequently, the lead author went back to the drawing board and rewrote the survey to include 35 questions in total, with 23 questions specifically relating to student experiences.

It was decided that the survey would be delivered online. This approach was chosen to provide easier access for participants and to reduce barriers for students studying externally or unable to make it to campus during the survey period. Ultimately, Microsoft Forms was the chosen platform for this survey as it is a free and accessible tool for all students, and it would reduce cost and access barriers for future researchers outside of the university environment wanting to adopt a

¹³ The Australian Census is conducted every 5 years, with the most recent Census undertaken in August 2021. It includes questions about disability. The first Census, conducted in 1911, included limited questions on disability and this continued until the mid-1940s when those questions were removed. It was not until the 1976 that questions about disability were re-introduced but were subsequently removed due to problems with data integrity. The Australian Bureau of Statistics, which administers the Census, instead collected disability data through a ‘special social survey’: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Commonwealth of Australia, *Informing a nation: The evolution of the Australian Bureau of Statistics* (Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra, 2005) <[https://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/A8B7911F73578F1ACA2570AA00750101/\\$File/138202005.pdf](https://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/A8B7911F73578F1ACA2570AA00750101/$File/138202005.pdf)> [Accessed 22 September 2022]. A question about ‘need for assistance’ as a result of ‘profound or severe core activity limitation’ was introduced in 2006: Denis Trewin, *Census dictionary: Australia: 2006* (Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra, 2006).

¹⁴ R David Black, Lois A Weinberg and Martin G Brodwin, ‘Universal design for learning and instruction: Perspectives of students with disabilities in higher education’ (2015) 25(2) *Exceptionality Education International* 1; Leona Holloway, *Improving vision impaired students’ access to graphics in higher education* (Monash University and Deakin University, 2017).

similar approach. This choice of platform proved to be a limitation of the survey, as discussed later in this report.

The final survey design includes both qualitative and quantitative questions, intended to amplify the voices of students with disability in a way that could, in future, be used to gather and analyse comparative data from other Australian universities. The survey deliberately includes questions designed to elicit positive reflections from students with disability to identify areas where equitable access and provision of support are working well and to minimise the likelihood of respondents experiencing negative emotions after survey completion.

Ethics

Introductory materials in the survey were included to explain rights of participants and outline potential impacts on participants. Responses were anonymous and where necessary have been further de-identified to protect participants' privacy. Additionally, information about the Student Union Disability Collective, rights under discrimination law, and where assistance could be obtained if needed was also included. This latter material forms the final sections of the survey and has also been replicated as a downloadable Word document on the Student Union Disability Collective webpage.¹⁵

As noted earlier, publication of this survey is intended to facilitate comparative research nationally and internationally, contribute to disability and education research tools, and progress inclusivity and education equity worldwide.

The final survey

The development process resulted in a survey with 35 demographic, qualitative, and quantitative questions. A copy of the final survey is Appendix 1 to this report and is also available at https://osf.io/tbh5p/?view_only=c08f292ee60b4dc88a9e9e4c1bce851a.

The survey was distributed through online groups including the Disability Collective's own network and other online networks associated with the broader student community at the University of Queensland, including public and private Facebook groups, Discord servers, the Student Union's various social media platforms, and unstructured sharing via word of mouth, private e-mail, and messenger services. The survey was open to participants from 20 March 2022 to 27 June 2022 with reminders sent out via these various networks several times during the survey period.

¹⁵ UQU Your Student Union, 'Disability Collective' (2022) <https://www.uqu.com.au/representing-u/uqu-collectives/disability-collective> (UQU Disability Collective) [Accessed 5 April 2022].

Quantitative survey sections (Parts 1 – 4)

Following introductory material (Part 1), Part 2 asked demographic questions relating to age, gender, ethnicity, student status, mode of study, the degree level the participant was undertaking at the time of the survey, and years of study at the University of Queensland. Also included in this section were two questions giving participants an opportunity to name and describe their disability. Inclusion of these questions directly addresses the importance of validating and acknowledging the participant's individual identity, and the functional impacts of their disability.

Part 3 asked two questions, adapted from the disability question asked in the 5-yearly Australian Census. This section seeks to understand individual impacts of disability relating to supports and equipment needs. It was adapted by the research team to respond to public feedback on the Australian Census from people with disability. The widespread criticisms of narrowness and exclusion of a subsection of people with disability who use adaptive technology, assistive equipment, or an assistance animal, were addressed through the research team's amendment to the original question about personal assistance needs by adding the domain of day-to-day life, and the addition of a second question about adaptive technology and related needs in the four domains.

Part 4 is the largest part of the survey and covers questions seeking to elicit information about a range of experiences of students with disability at the University of Queensland. Participants were asked to respond to questions about seven key aspects of university-specific experience.

Respondents were asked to rate each aspect on a 5-point scale (1 = Never, 5 = Always) in terms of whether the participant experienced this aspect as:

- Not accessible
- Difficult to navigate
- Discriminatory
- Causes me problems
- Satisfactory

These initial questions were designed to help us understand the different ways participants characterised their experiences. We were aware, in designing these questions, of the very real possibility that participants have experienced difficulties resulting from the interaction of different university systems or processes with their disability. We were keen to understand the extent to which such experiences were identified as discriminatory and what impact they had on student satisfaction. For example, an aspect that is deemed to be 'not accessible' may or may not be considered 'discriminatory' by a participant.

Part 4 also includes questions about formal complaints (defined in the question) and reasons participants might have for not making a formal complaint, and questions about impacts of disability-related experiences on study outcomes. Participants were also asked to rate on a 7-point agreement scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) a range of positively and negatively expressed statements targeting broad impressions of the University of Queensland in relation to experiences as a student with disability. Inclusion of positive and negative statements was an active choice, aimed to integrate strengths-based approaches, and to minimise carryover of negative emotional responses.

Qualitative survey section (Part 5)

The qualitative component of this survey comprised 12 questions. Participants were first told they did not need to respond to all the questions and were given a summary (see Appendix 1) of each question to enable them to move to those they felt were particularly relevant to them.

Results: Demographics

The following sections of this report provide an overview of the quantitative survey data and selected qualitative data. Appendix 2 sets out almost all of the survey data, excluding those which could potentially result in the identification of participants or third persons.

Who responded and what is their student status

In total, the data from 79 people who participated in this study are reported below. One other participant's data was excluded as they submitted the survey without answering any questions. All 79 participants responded that they identify as a person who experiences disability, as defined in the survey information sheet to include 'mental illness, chronic illness, neurodiversity, deafness, etc'.

All but one of the 79 students surveyed were studying currently and/or had studied at the University of Queensland within the last 3 years. One participant was a student at the University of Queensland over 3 years ago and had not been a student within the past 3 years.

Of the 79 survey participants, 77 provided their age.

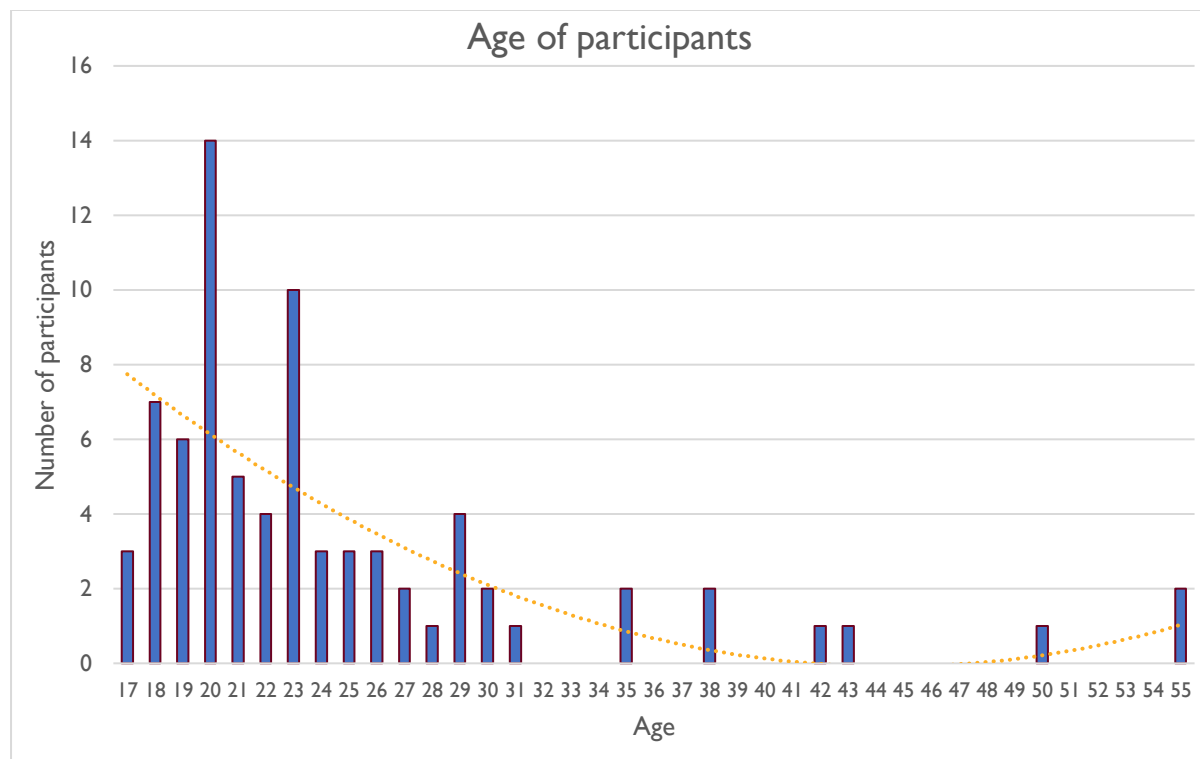


Figure 1: Graph of age distribution of participants

Table 1: Age statistics for participants

Average age	24.66
Median age	22
Mode	20
SD	11.25
Youngest	17
Oldest	55

As can be seen from Figure 1 and Table 1, there was considerable diversity of age, but participants tended to be young.

Participants were permitted to select more than one gender. There were 84 responses to this question from the 79 participants. Table 2 shows the responses to this question, while Figure 2 graphs this data.

Table 2: Gender of participants

Gender	Number	%
Female	44	56
Male	22	28
Non-binary	15	19
Other	2	3
A different term	1	1
Blank	0	0
Total*	84	

*The total number of responses equals 84 as participants were permitted to provide multiple responses to this question.

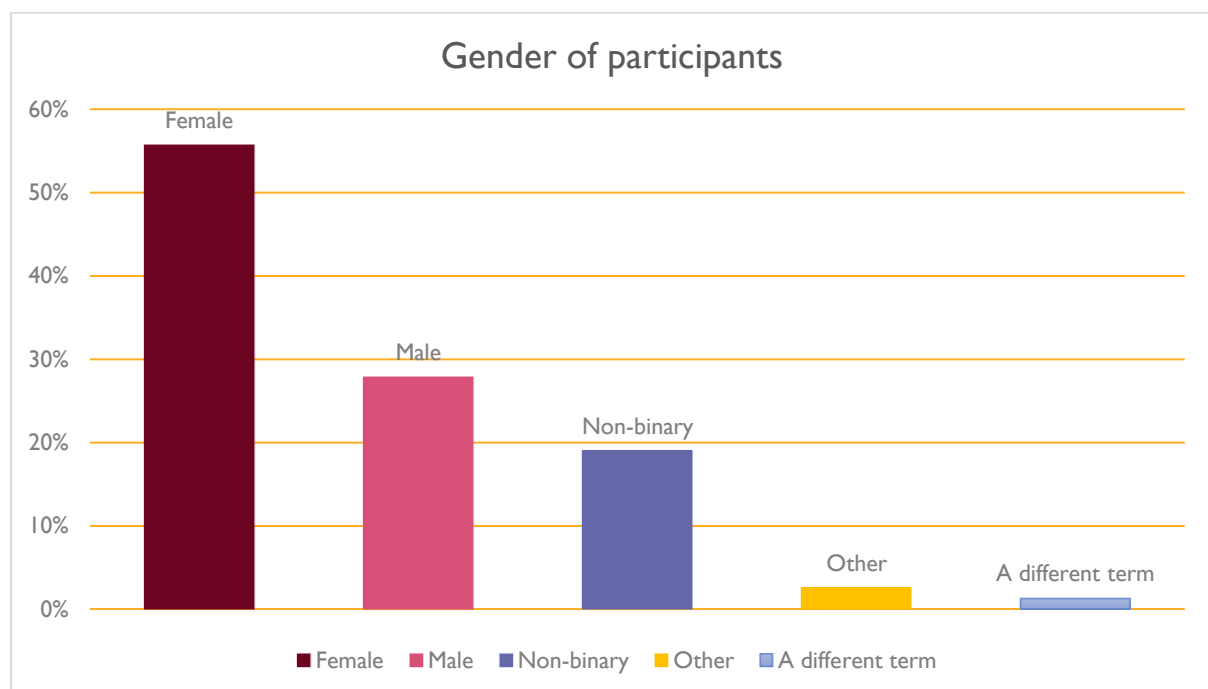


Figure 2: Gender of participants (multiple responses were permitted resulting in percentages adding to more than 100%)

Over half the survey respondents identified as female, a much higher proportion than male respondents. Over 20% of respondents identified as either non-binary, other, or identified with a different term.

Of the participants, the majority—74 of the 79—indicated that they are not Aboriginal Australian or Torres Strait Islander; with only one identifying as Aboriginal, none identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or as Torres Strait Islander, three preferring not to answer, and one response left blank.

Students were asked to select multiple options that described their status including whether they were international or domestic students, their mode and level of study, and whether they have a Student Access Plan and/or are a National Disability Insurance Scheme participant.

Table 3: Domestic or international student

Status	Number	%
a domestic student	72	91
an international student	7	9

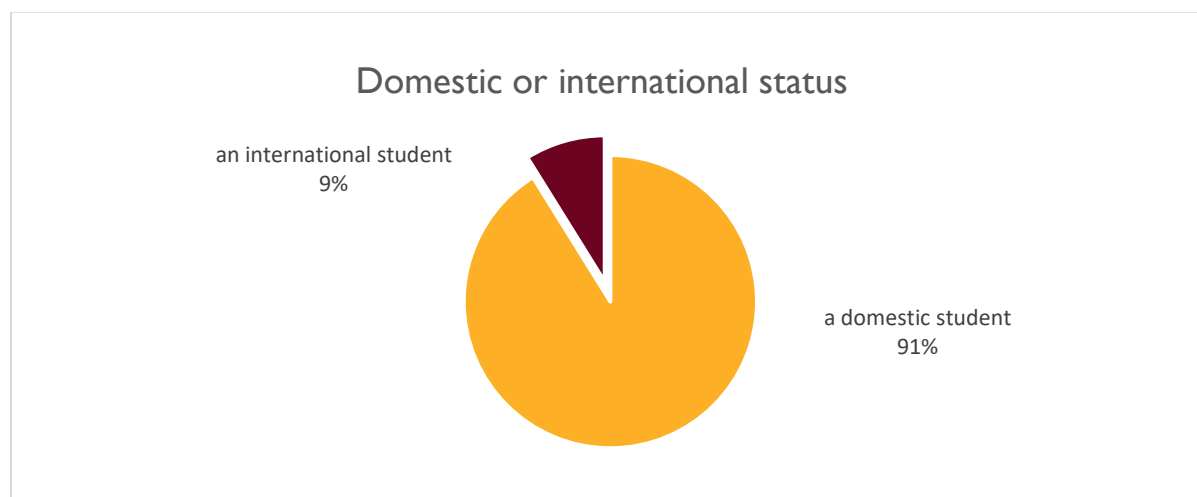


Figure 3: Pie chart of domestic compared to international student respondents to the survey

Table 4: Student mode of study

Study mode	Number	%
studying mostly on campus	41	52
studying mostly externally	6	8
studying through both on campus and external modes	28	35
did not indicate mode of study	4	5

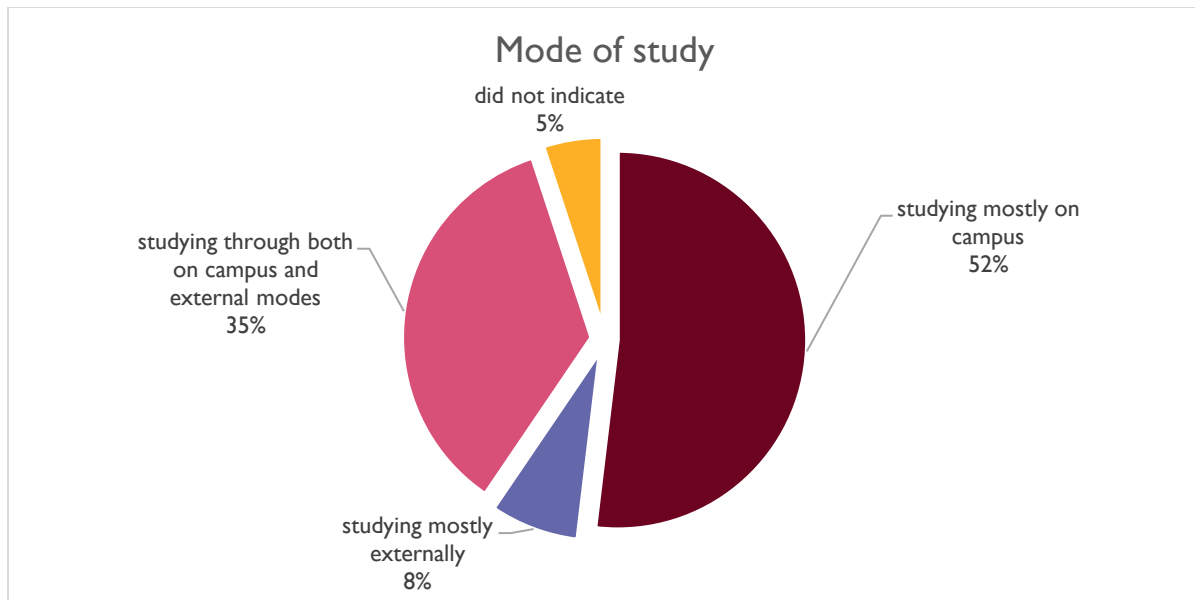


Figure 4: Mode of study indicated by respondents to the survey

Table 5: Student level of study: undergraduate or postgraduate

Level of studies	Number	%
an undergraduate student	58	73
doing postgraduate studies by coursework	6	8
doing postgraduate studies by research	5	6
did not indicate level of study	10	13

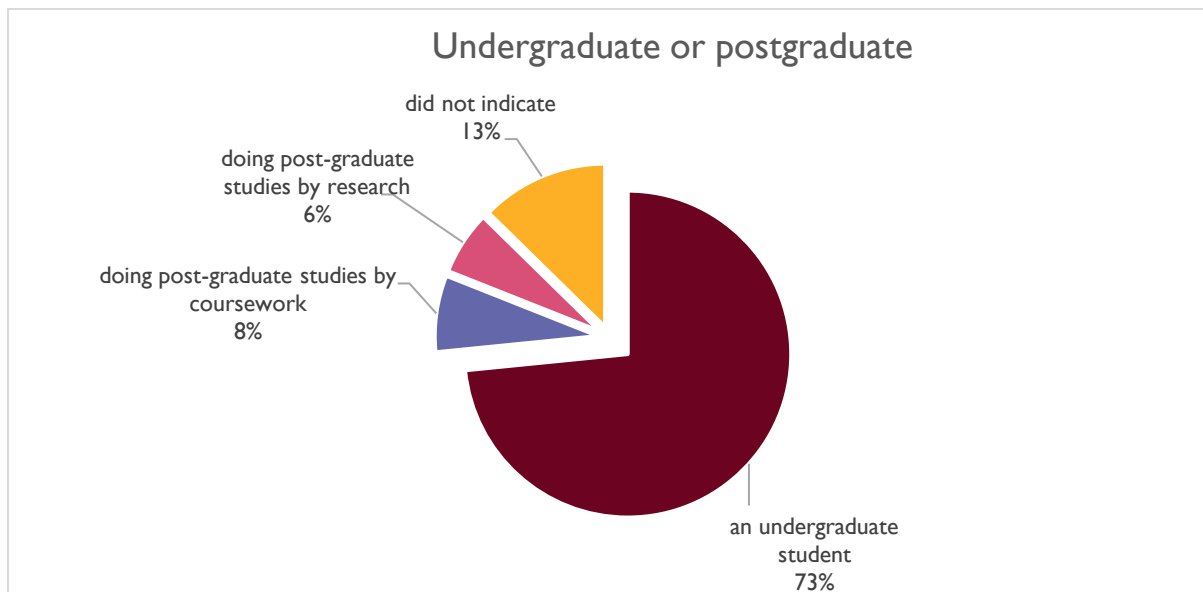


Figure 5: Level of study indicated by respondents to the survey

The vast majority of students surveyed—over 90%—were domestic students. Just over half were studying mostly on campus, while over one-third were studying via both on-campus and external modes (participants could select more than one, and this may affect these percentages). Almost three-quarters of those who responded to the survey (73%) were undergraduate students.

Students and disability

A little over 50% of survey respondents indicated that they have/had a Student Access Plan. In the sample, a large proportion of students with disability, over 40%, did not have a Student Access Plan. Less than 10% of students with disability who responded were National Disability Insurance Scheme participants.

Table 6: Other student status

Status specific to students with disability	Number	%
a student with a Student Access Plan	45	57
an NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) participant	7	9

As with gender, participants were permitted to identify that their disability impacted on more than one functional capacity. The nine functional capacity areas listed were:

- **Vision**, eg, blind, vision impaired, low vision, colour blindness
- **Hearing**, eg, deaf, hard of hearing, hearing impaired
- **Mobility or physical functions**, eg, paraplegia, quadriplegia, amputation, mobility impaired, limited manual dexterity, stature
- **Mental health**, eg, anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder
- **Neurological functions** including physical impacts and thinking, engaging with or learning differently to what is considered ‘typical’, eg, epilepsy, MND, MS, neurodiversity, autism, ADHD
- **Cognitive processes** including memory, processing of information, learning, eg, intellectual disability, autism, ADHD, acquired brain injury
- **Communication**, eg, deafness, neurodiversity
- **Energy levels** (physical or mental), fatigue, comfort or pain levels
- Other

There were 283 responses to this question from the 79 participants.

The significant majority of respondents identified more than one aspect of their functional capacities that are affected by their disability, while three participants identified impacts in seven of the nine functional capacity areas.

Table 7: Number of participants with multiple functional impacts

Number of functional impacts identified	Number of participants	% (N = 79)
1	9	11
2	13	16
3	17	22
4	15	19
5	16	20
6	6	8
7	3	4

It is notable that a large percentage of survey participants—83%—reported that their disability affects their mental health, while relatively small percentages reported impacts on their mobility or physical functions (16%), their vision (8%) or their hearing (5%). Impacts on neurological functions, cognition and energy were overall much more common among participants than physical and sensory impacts.

Table 8: Nature of functional impacts of disability

Disability that affects ...	Number	%
Mental health , eg, anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder	66	83
Energy levels (physical or mental), fatigue, comfort or pain levels	55	69
Neurological functions including physical impacts and thinking, engaging with or learning differently to what is considered 'typical', eg, epilepsy, MND, MS, neurodiversity, autism, ADHD	51	64
Cognitive processes including memory, processing of information, learning, eg, intellectual disability, autism, ADHD, acquired brain injury	50	63
Communication , eg, deafness, neurodiversity	31	39
Mobility or physical functions , eg, paraplegia, quadriplegia, amputation, mobility impaired, limited manual dexterity, stature	13	16
Vision , eg, blind, vision impaired, low vision, colour blindness	6	8
Hearing , eg, deaf, hard of hearing, hearing impaired	4	5
Other	8	10
Blank	0	0

Results: Student experiences

Experience of accessibility across six aspects of university life

Participants were asked to indicate how they experienced various domains of university life in relation to their disability and needs relating to their disability. The question asked about students' experiences across those domains using a 5-point scale (1 – Never, 2 – Rarely, 3 – Sometimes, 4 – Often, 5 – Always).

The domains were:

- **Administrative procedures, policies and/or bureaucratic processes:** for example, timeliness, recording of information about your situation, privacy, ease of finding information related to your situation, flexibility of policies, application of discretion, etc;
- **Exams and assessments:** for example, format, time, alternative assessment options, etc;
- **Support services provided by the university:** for example, use of inclusive language, availability of appropriate supports, knowledge of my disability and willingness to learn, engagement with course co-ordinators, etc;
- **Course delivery, structure and content:** for example, format of delivery, time pressure, lectures, tutorials, teaching methods, laboratory and practicals, use of existing equipment that enhances access, provision of alternatives to students with disability such video recordings and alternative formats, etc;
- **Course materials:** for example, documents in unreadable formats, reliance on visual materials, unreadable fonts, not offered an alternative format, poor audio, etc;
- **Physical access on campus:** for example, including toilets, lighting and sound/acoustics of environments, the ergonomic set-up of desks and other furniture, paths of travel, manoeuvring space, etc;
- **Digital spaces managed by the university:** for example, websites, e-mails, blackboard, mySI-net, etc.

Where these domains are reported on below and in the discussion, the name of the domain—whether its full name or a defined short form of its name—is in bold to make it clear that it is one of these domains that is being discussed.

Table 9 below shows average scores in each domain for the different experience statements. Lower scores indicate that survey respondents have had an experience less often; higher scores indicate that respondents have had an experience more

often. For example, students on average had a satisfactory experience of **Digital spaces managed by the university** (**‘Digital spaces’**) ($M = 3.47, SD = 0.85$) more often than of **Administrative procedures, policies and/or bureaucratic processes** (**‘Administrative procedures’**) ($M = 2.87, SD = 1.03$); students found **Digital spaces** difficult to navigate less often ($M = 2.95, SD = 1.15$) than **Administrative procedures** ($M = 3.18, SD = 1.22$).

Table 9: Student experience of various university domains

Domain	Satisfactory			Not accessible			Difficult to navigate			Caused me problems			Discriminatory		
	Average	SD	% identifying sometimes, often, always	Average	SD	% identifying sometimes, often, always	Average	SD	% identifying sometimes, often, always	Average	SD	% identifying sometimes, often, always	Average	SD	% identifying sometimes, often, always
Administrative procedures, policies and/or bureaucratic processes (N = 79)	2.87	1.03	63%	2.65	1.14	53%	3.18	1.22	72%	2.82	1.11	68%	2.38	1.13	46%
Exams and assessments (N = 77)	3.35	0.94	79%	2.22	1.05	40%	2.58	1.06	52%	2.74	1.03	61%	2.19	1.12	39%
Support services provided by the university (N = 77)	3.38	1.01	82%	2.42	1.18	45%	2.73	1.23	58%	2.39	1.14	47%	2.05	1.09	32%
Course delivery, structure and content (N = 79)	3.20	0.82	86%	2.71	1.04	61%	2.96	0.95	68%	3.09	1.02	75%	2.46	1.04	51%
Course materials (N = 78)	3.46	0.89	87%	2.33	1.05	44%	2.59	1.10	54%	2.53	1.02	54%	1.94	0.92	29%
Physical access on campus (N = 78)	3.45	0.82	90%	2.23	1.12	39%	2.81	1.08	65%	2.59	1.16	53%	2.19	1.11	40%
Digital spaces managed by the university (N = 78)	3.47	0.85	90%	2.27	1.06	41%	2.95	1.15	68%	2.53	1.05	53%	1.80	1.00	23%

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Administrative procedures had the lowest ‘Satisfactory’ score ($M = 2.87$, $SD = 1.03$) among the domains. The majority of students surveyed identified they ‘sometimes’, ‘often’, or ‘always’ experienced this domain as ‘Not accessible’ (53%), ‘Difficult to navigate’ (72%), and ‘Caused me problems’ (68%). Interestingly however, only a minority of students recognised this domain as ‘Discriminatory’ (46%).

Exams and assessments had the second lowest ‘Satisfactory’ score ($M = 3.35$, $SD = 0.94$). As with **Administrative procedures**, a majority of students surveyed also identified **Exams and assessments** as ‘sometimes’, ‘often’, or ‘always’ ‘Difficult to navigate’ (52%), and ‘Caused me problems’ (61%), and again only a minority of students recognised this as ‘Discriminatory’ (39%).

The domain, **Support services provided by the university** (‘**Support services**’) had the third lowest ‘Satisfactory’ score ($M = 3.38$, $SD = 1.01$). A majority of students found **Support services** ‘Difficult to navigate’ ‘sometimes’, ‘often’, or ‘always’ (58%), while a minority identified that ‘sometimes’, ‘often’, or ‘always’ **Support services** were experienced as ‘Not accessible’ (45%), ‘Caused me problems’ (47%) or ‘Discriminatory’ (32%).

Course delivery, structure and content (‘**Course delivery**’) had the fourth lowest ‘Satisfactory’ score ($M = 3.20$, $SD = 0.82$), with over 86% identifying this domain as ‘Satisfactory’ ‘sometimes’, ‘often’, or ‘always’. Despite this relatively high level of satisfactory experiences compared to the previous domains described, **Course delivery** was identified as ‘Not accessible’ (61%), ‘Caused me problems’ (75%) and ‘Difficult to navigate’ (68%) by most students surveyed and interestingly, was the only domain to be identified as ‘Discriminatory’ by a majority of survey respondents (at least ‘sometimes’, ‘often’, or ‘always’) (51%). This domain also had the highest average score for ‘Not accessible’ ($M = 2.71$, $SD = 1.04$), ‘Caused me problems’ ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 1.02$) and ‘Discriminatory’ ($M = 2.46$, $SD = 1.04$).

Digital spaces ($M = 3.47$, $SD = 0.85$), **Course materials** ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 0.89$) and **Physical access on campus** ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 0.82$) were all deemed ‘Satisfactory’ more often compared to other domains. A minority of survey respondents identified that they ‘sometimes’, ‘often’, or ‘always’ experienced these domains as ‘Not accessible’ and ‘Discriminatory’, and a majority identified they ‘sometimes’, ‘often’ or ‘always’ experienced these domains as ‘Caused me problems’ and ‘Difficult to navigate’.

In all of the domains there was a positive correlation between increased number of functional impacts and increased frequency of negative experiences. Put differently, there is a trend that the University is able to accommodate most readily students whose disability has narrower or fewer functional impacts. In contrast, those who experience more diverse functional impacts are less well accommodated, having more negative experiences.

Impacts of experiences as students with disability

Questions about impacts

Students were asked five questions about the impacts of their experiences as a student with disability inviting Yes/No/NA responses. They were asked whether they had ever:

- experienced distress about disability-related issues at the University of Queensland to the extent that it has interfered with your studies? ('experienced distress')
- been disadvantaged in a course by a lack of suitable assessment options (for example, oral test, written test, take-home assignment, observation, etc)? ('been disadvantaged re assessment options')
- been unable to access course content because of mistakes or oversights by the lecturer (eg, walked away from the microphone while speaking, not speaking clearly for captioning, forgot to turn on required functionality, etc)? ('been unable to access course content')
- had to wait for course materials to be made accessible? ('had to wait for accessible course materials')
- considered dropping a subject because your disability adjustments were not being made, eg, course resources not provided in an accessible format or course processes not accessible? ('considered dropping a subject')

Table 10 below sets out the results in response to those questions. There were no blank responses.

Table 10: Impacts of university experiences on students

Impact experienced	'Yes' Number	'Yes' %	'No' Number	'No' %	'N/A' Number	'N/A' %
Experienced distress re disability-related issues at UQ such as to interfere with studies	54	68	20	25	5	6
Been disadvantaged by a lack of suitable assessment options	49	62	20	25	10	13
Been unable to access course content	46	58	23	29	10	13
Had to wait for accessible course materials	42	53	25	32	12	15
Considered dropping a subject	38	48	24	30	17	22

Over two thirds of students surveyed (68%) indicated that they had experienced distress about disability-related issues at the University of Queensland to the extent that it had interfered with their studies. A majority of survey respondents indicated that they had been disadvantaged by a lack of suitable assessment

options (62%), had been unable to access course content (58%), and had to wait for accessible course materials to be made accessible (53%). Just under half of students surveyed (48%) indicated that they had considered dropping a subject because disability adjustments were not being made.

Experience statements

Survey participants were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements about their university experience at the University of Queensland. The question used was asked using a 7-point scale (1 – Strongly disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Somewhat disagree, 4 – Neither agree nor disagree, 5 – Somewhat agree, 6 – Agree, 7 – Strongly agree).

Table 11 below sets out the responses as percentages that disagreed to an extent, agreed to an extent or neither agreed nor disagreed to the positive statements listed.

Table 11: Responses to positive experience statements

Statements	Disagree: strongly, somewhat	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree: strongly, somewhat
I feel that processes and learning activities at UQ are designed with my needs in mind	69%	18%	13%
I feel I can voice my needs and concerns without fear or judgement	65%	11%	24%
There are user-friendly & effective ways for me to raise issues related to disability if & when I encounter them	48%	19%	33%
I have been given helpful advice by UQ staff on the types of adjustments that might meet my needs	38%	15%	46%
UQ is welcoming of students with disability	35%	9%	56%
I feel I am supported to succeed	35%	14%	51%
UQ meets my needs	29%	16%	54%
I would recommend UQ to other students with disability	27%	30%	43%
My course teachers have understood how to implement my student access plan or respond to my needs	24%	32%	44%

Over two thirds of respondents (69%) disagreed to some extent that processes and learning activities at the University of Queensland are designed with their needs in mind, and a majority (65%) disagreed to some extent that they can voice their needs and concerns without fear or judgement. Interestingly however, a majority (56%) agree to some extent that the University of Queensland is welcoming of students with disability. A slim majority of respondents also agreed to some extent that the University of Queensland meets their needs (54%) and that they are supported to succeed (51%).

The following figure—Figure 6—graphs the levels of agreement or disagreement to these positive statements.

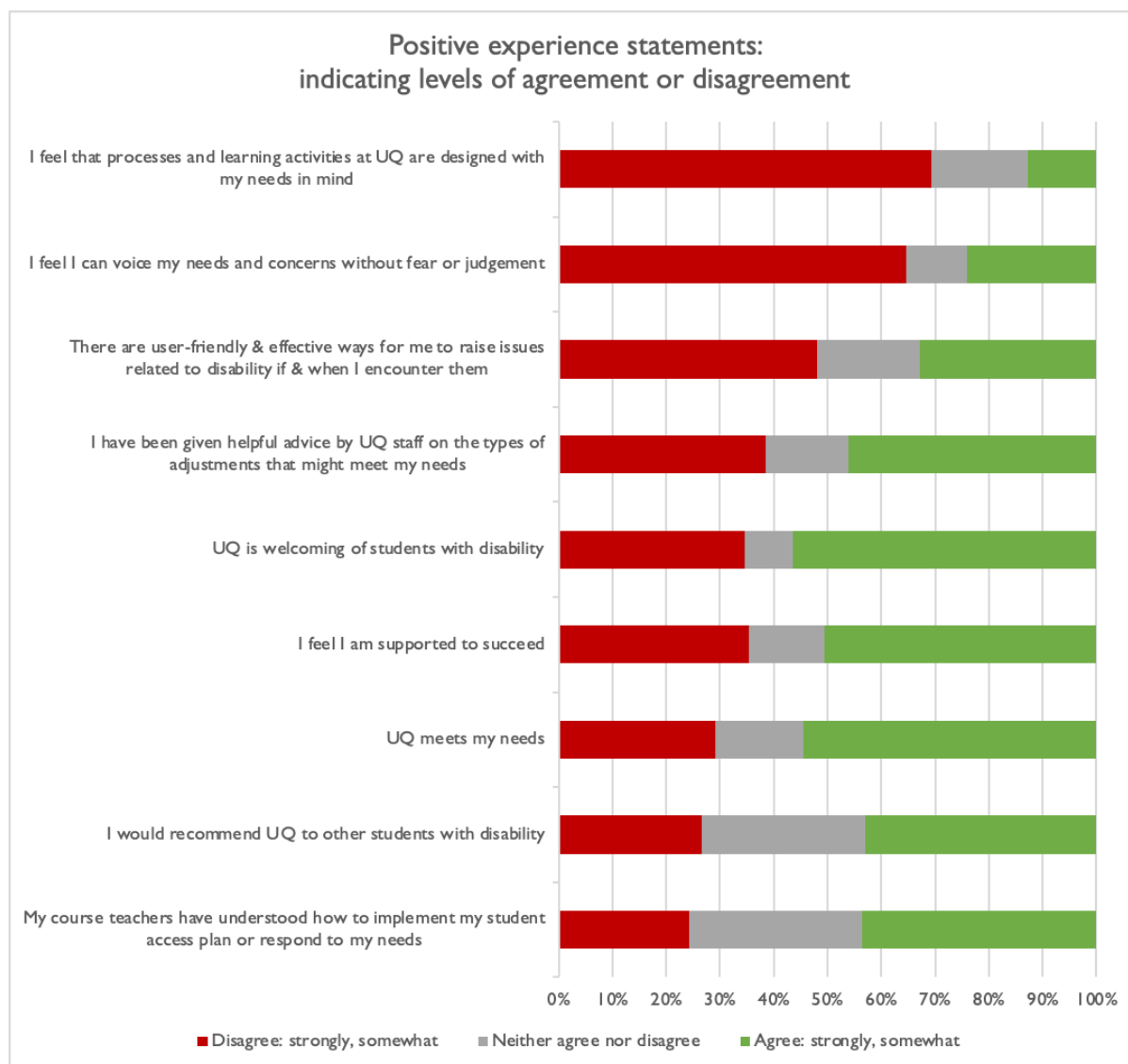


Figure 6: Positive experience statements indicating levels of agreement or disagreement

Table 12 sets out the responses as percentages that disagreed to an extent, agreed to an extent, or neither agreed nor disagreed to the neutral or negative statements listed.

Table 12: Responses to neutral or negative experience statements

Statements	Disagree: strongly, somewhat	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree: strongly, somewhat
It would make me feel more welcome and included to see greater positive representation of people with disability in UQ media, materials and events	7%	17%	76%
I feel my disability is unwelcome at UQ	44%	15%	41%
I am confused about what supports are available to me	31%	5%	64%

Just over 40% of survey respondents agreed to some extent that their disability is unwelcome at the University of Queensland. Over 60% agreed to some extent that they are confused about what supports are available to them. Just over three-quarters of respondents surveyed agreed that it would make them feel more welcome and included to see greater positive representation of people with disability in the University of Queensland media, materials, and events.

The following figure—Figure 7—graphs the levels of agreement or disagreement to these neutral or negative statements.

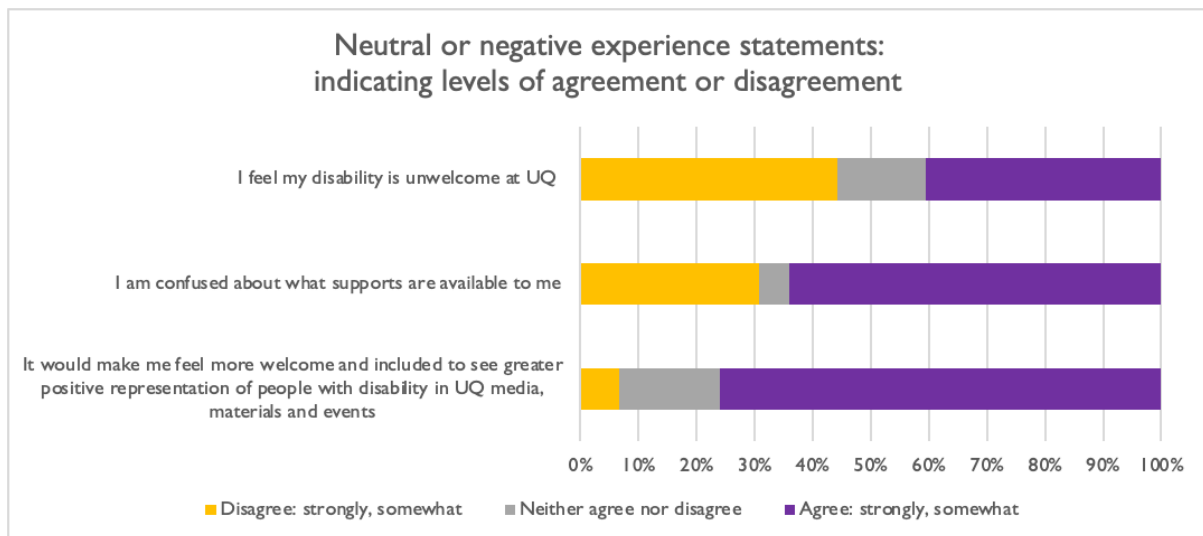


Figure 7: Neutral or negative experience statements indicating levels of agreement or disagreement

Experience in three words

Participants were asked to provide three separate words that best describe the way they feel about their experience as a person with disability at the University of Queensland. In total, 51 participants provided 120 single words or terms (most provided single words). Of these, 76 were terms interpreted to be negative, while 25 were positive. The remaining 19 were arguably neutral terms, with the idea of tiredness dominating these terms.

Figure 8 below is a word cloud of the words listed by participants in response to this question. Excluded are multi-word phrases. The terms ‘isolating’ and ‘isolated’ were both used and have been combined in the word cloud as ‘isolated’



Figure 8: Word cloud of the three words participants used to describe the way they feel about their experience as a person with disability at the University of Queensland

Positive experiences

Of the 79 participants, 37 provided substantive responses to being asked to ‘describe the most positive experience you’ve had since commencing university, with regards to your disability’. These responses can be clustered into three themes, which overlap to some extent. The first of these themes was around experiencing support from teaching staff, specialist support staff and other students, the second was around the positive experience of interacting with the Disability Collective, and the third was around the experience of having a Student Access Plan.

The strong theme around support included, most commonly, reference to supportive staff at the University of Queensland. This meant that students were, for example, able to ‘openly talk with ... lecturers about [disability] and have it contribute to how thing [*sic*] are taught’ and had their options ‘explained thoroughly’ when facing a break in their studies. Students spoke of feeling they had been treated with ‘empathy’, that the experience had been ‘edifying and empowering’, and they felt ‘supported’. In one case, a student said the support received had ‘completely changed the outcomes of my life. There is no single event for this, but rather an accumulation of these positive connections’.

Specific mentions were made by a number of students of the positive impact of disability-specific staff and support services, experiencing ‘respect’, ‘compassion’, and ‘surprise’ at how much they were supported. Less disability-specific services, such as the general counselling service, were also highlighted by several participants.

The Student Union Disability Collective was identified by a number of participants as an aspect of their positive experiences at the University of Queensland, or as a positive experience that stood out. This aspect of the

University of Queensland was seen by one student as enabling them to ‘interact with openly and proudly disabled students and staff’, while others spoke of this as positive as it meant meeting and being with people who ‘understand and care about’ disability. Several participants who highlighted the Disability Collective also referred to the positive benefit of being able to be with people who have ‘similar experiences’. One participant described the Disability Collective as ‘very welcoming and lovely’ and that they were ‘allowed to be there working out my self doubt and internalised ableism^{16]} and finally get treatment’.

The other key theme was around the experience of Student Access Plans, with one participant observing that having been ‘granted a SAP, knowing that if I do need [a particular adjustment], I’m easily able to get [that adjustment] without added stress and anxiety during a flare up’. Another spoke of the benefit of their Student Access Plan in helping them to ‘manage anxiety in exam periods’, while yet another said their most positive experience was the ‘support and speed at which I was able to access student access plans’.

Complaint processes

Participants were asked ‘Have you ever made a **formal complaint** to anyone at the university or outside the university?’ They were provided with the following definition of ‘formal complaint’:

A **formal complaint** means a complaint made under a formal policy (such as the University of Queensland Student Grievance Resolution – Policy) or under a law (such as the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act or the federal Disability Discrimination Act) or to an external authority (such as the Police, the Queensland Human Rights Commission or the Australian Human Rights Commission).

A formal complaint **does not** include an e-mail to your course co-ordination [sic] raising concerns about some aspect of the course, or to an administrative staff member about problems.”

Table 13: Responses to the question ‘Have you ever made a formal complaint?’

Response	Number	%
Yes	2	3
No	50	63
Never needed to	27	34

¹⁶ ‘Ableism’ is to disability as ‘racism’ is to race. It is a term used to refer to conscious or unconscious (or implicit) attitudes in society that devalue and limit the potential of people with disability and/or consider them in need of being ‘fixed’. It can be found in personal views and attitudes and embedded in social structures and systems.

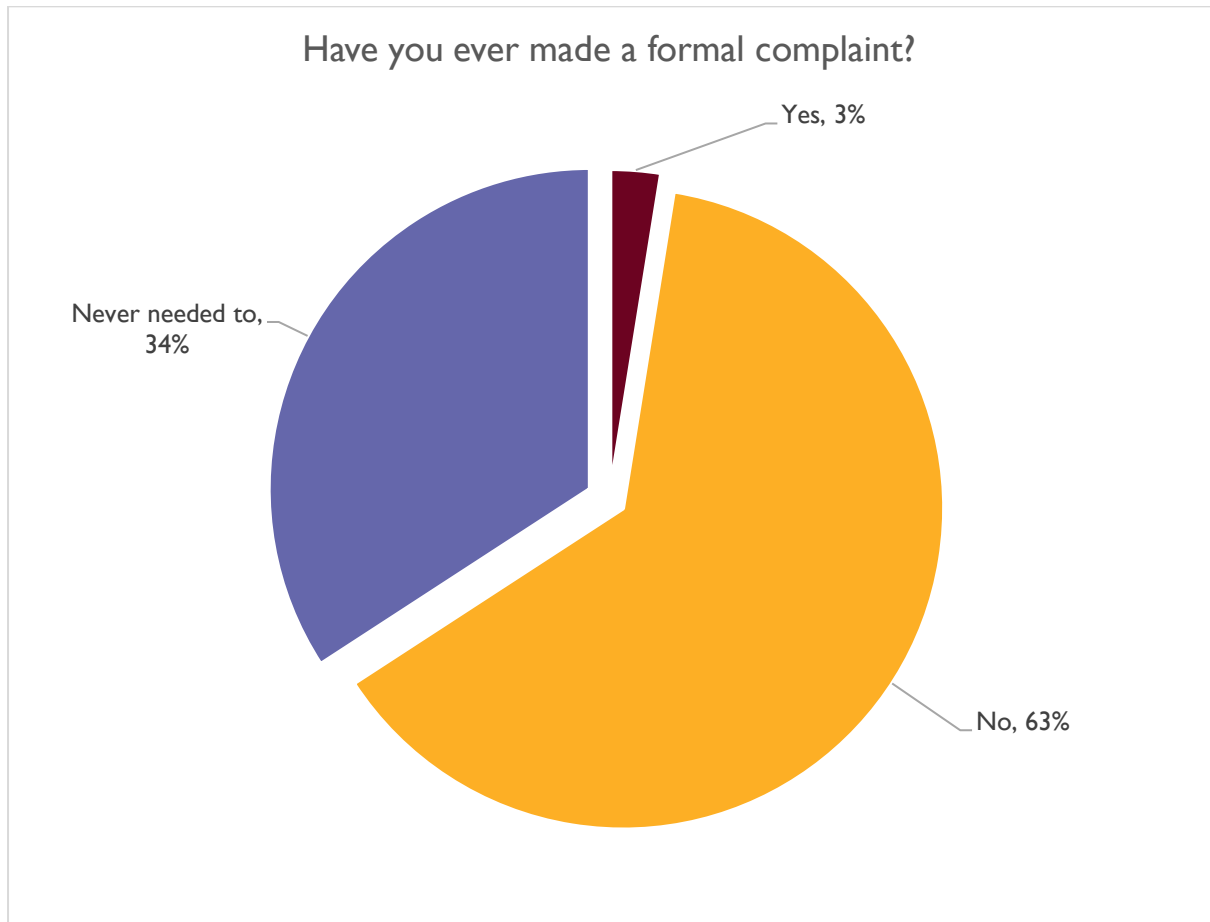


Figure 9: Pie chart of formal complaint data

Table 13 and Figure 9 indicate that a very small percentage of participants had made a formal complaint: 3%. Of those who had not, the largest percentage—63%—had not complained despite having potentially needed to.

The participants were asked, ‘If no, why did you not make a formal complaint? (eg, didn’t know how to, would take too much time or energy, etc)’. Forty-eight participants responded. Two very strong themes are observed in these data.

Firstly, more than half of those who had reason to complain and responded (26 of 48) indicated they hadn’t complained because it was ‘too hard’ or would take ‘too much time’ and/or energy. For example, one participant said, ‘seems too energy intensive to be worth it’, another echoed this with ‘take too much energy, not worth the effort’, and a third ‘Too much time and energy, not worth the hassle’. As with these three, many indicated they didn’t feel that the time and energy they thought would be needed to pursue a formal complaint would be ‘worth it’. Second, almost half of them (20 of 48) indicated that they hadn’t complained because they did not know how to. For example, one participant said, ‘wasn’t sure how to do it’, another said, ‘I wasn’t aware of the correct process of formal complaints’, with a third echoing this, saying, ‘Unsure how to go about making a formal complaint’.

The aspect of the responses about the time and effort involved and concerns it wouldn’t be ‘worth it’ were in part echoed in a separate theme in the responses

that participants (10 of 48) indicated they felt their complaint would not be taken seriously or would result in a disappointing outcome. For example, one participant said, 'Don't think they will do anything about it or understand why it is an issue.' Another said, 'I did not feel it was going to be taken seriously. I felt my problem was not a big enough problem as no one else was having the same problem I was.'

Another five participants indicated they felt their problem was or would be seen as too trivial. One participant described this as 'internalised ableism'. Another participant used this same 'internalised ableism' as the reason they had not complained.

Another theme in these responses was fear of negative consequences of complaining. Seven of the participants included something of this sort in the reasons, including, for example, one participant saying, 'if you identify a problem you become a problem', and another 'I feel like I shouldn't be complaining so much'. Several were concerned about the impact of a formal complaint on their relationship with course teachers or co-ordinators. For example, one said they hadn't complained 'For fear of how that would impact my relationship with the teachers in the future, fearing that I would be seen as lazy or incompetent', and another said, 'don't want to damage an already-poor relationship with the lecturer'.

A further cluster of responses (5 of 48) indicated that they had not complained because of the anxiety and stress this would cause them. Other reasons given included that there was no support available to help with the complaint process, that the bad experiences they had were not 'intentional', that the situation had upset the person too much at the time and by the time they had recovered they felt it was too late, and that they hadn't understood their rights in education.

Limitations

In reporting on these survey results, the authors note the limitations and identify potential ways to remedy these limitations in future uses of the survey.

First and foremost, the reach of the survey to students with disability at the University of Queensland was limited by difficulty with getting formal approvals to use the University's official records of students who identify as having disability or who have a Student Access Plan for disability in place. This difficulty arose in part because of tight time frames in the survey process and the need to finalise this report by the end of 2022 (and therefore end the survey period with sufficient time to allow for analysis and the preparation of this report). In future, this difficulty would be avoided by ensuring sufficient lead time with any university participating, and working more closely with the university administration to implement the survey.

Two related limitations are that the research team had limited capacity to (a) compare the survey data with relevant whole-of-university data, and (b) obtain comparative data on the experiences and views of the whole student body. Again, working directly with university administration should enable these limitations to be overcome.

Ideally a survey of this sort would include a question that would allow the data about how students identify in terms of disability and the functional impacts of their disability to be considered in relation to the university's definitional framework around disability. We were unable to do this and would hope that, again through working directly with university administration, this limitation would be overcome.

A limitation that impacts on the scope of possible reporting is that the study did not go through the university's formal ethics approval process. This limits the scope of publication opportunities and, to avoid this limitation for any future survey work of this sort, full ethics approvals should be sought.

As noted in the Survey development stages section above, there were limitations resulting from the use of Microsoft Forms as the survey input tool. This includes narrow design restrictions and excluding the opportunity for participants to save and return at a later stage if fatigued or unable to complete the survey in one sitting. Future surveys of this sort should, where possible, use an online platform that allows for this option to save progress and return to the survey later.

Discussion

The survey provides an important and timely opportunity for the University of Queensland to work with students with disability to review these findings and through that process develop and implement more effective mechanisms for inclusion and equitable access to education.

Recommendation: That the University of Queensland establish a process to work directly with the Student Union's Disability Collective and interested students and recent graduates with disability to review the findings and together develop strategies to improve inclusion and educational opportunities for students with disability ('Review and Development Process'), with those strategies to be added to the University's Disability Action Plan and integrated into all relevant University planning and implementation processes.

Recommendation: That the University of Queensland develop and maintain a role for representatives of the Student Union's Disability Collective in the implementation, monitoring and review of strategies identified through the Review and Development Process.

Who responded

The survey attracted a much lower number of international student respondents (9%) than the 2021 university-wide proportion of international students (with or without disability) reported for the University of Queensland (37%). Reasons for this may include cultural factors, fear of identifying disability due to visa impacts, lack of formal and informal disability-related supports that may otherwise be available in their home country, and lack of connected-ness of international students with the union and its networks (as the union has historically been more domestic-student oriented, although this is changing).

The survey attracted a lower proportion of postgraduate students (14%) than the 2021 university-wide proportion of postgraduate students reported for the University of Queensland (38%).¹⁷ Reasons for this are unclear but may involve differences in how postgraduate research students interact with the university's systems. The authors of this report also acknowledge the survey is more geared towards undergraduate students, given the number of questions related to coursework, and the lack of questions relating to higher-degree research students as identified by at least one participant as a limitation of the survey.¹⁸

¹⁷ University of Queensland, *Whole Year Enrolments – Demographics by Program Level Group 2022* (26 October 2022) <<https://reportal.mis.admin.uq.edu.au/BOE/OpenDocument/2207061054/OpenDocument/opendoc/openDocument.faces?logonSuccessful=true&shareId=1>> [Accessed 7 November 2022].

¹⁸ See Appendix 2, responses to Question 35, 103 and following.

Recommendation: That the survey be conducted on a regular basis—at least every three years—at the University of Queensland with targeted promotion to ensure engagement with international students and postgraduate students.

Recommendation: That the survey be amended to improve recognition of the domains and issues uniquely facing postgraduate students.

Student Access Plans and functional impacts of disability

Just over half of the participants indicated they had a Student Access Plan.¹⁹ Participants were not explicitly asked whether they had disclosed their disability to the University. However, it may be reasoned, given that the University of Queensland does not currently implement universal design (discussed in the Introduction), that disabled students who do not have a Student Access Plan may be less likely to have disclosed their disability status to the University.²⁰

Recommendation: That the University use the Review and Development Process to identify reasons current and prospective students with disability may not disclose their condition, and develop communication and other strategies to overcome non-disclosure.

The responses to the qualitative questions indicate that, at least for some students, there was a lack of awareness of the option of having a Student Access Plan. Students with disability without a Student Access Plan may, however, have some other form of academic adjustment and/or be receiving other forms of support—both formal and informal—within the University system.

Recommendation: That the University use the Review and Development Process to identify more effective ways to promote the availability of Student Access Plans and other academic adjustments for students with disability, and implement those mechanisms.

The data indicates a significant breadth and depth of functional impacts on students of their disabilities. The majority of participants indicated multiple functional impacts, particularly in the areas of mental health, energy and pain, neurological functions, and cognitive processes. It is likely that these impacts are strongly affected by the disability type(s) of those who participated with the majority of those impacts being in the cognitive (including processing) domain. Without having access to the University's data on identified disabilities of students, it is difficult to determine the extent to which the survey data is more

¹⁹ We understand from feedback received on the draft report that more than half of the students with disability at UQ access some form of academic adjustments.

²⁰ We note that the percentage of students identifying as having disability at the University of Queensland has risen sharply since 2019. Students with disability were 4.15% of the University's undergraduate intake in 2019, and this rose to 9.28% in 2020. It is likely that some of the participants in the survey commenced in 2019 or earlier and, as such, may not have disclosed disability, which in turn may have affected their awareness of academic adjustments available to them. (Source of data: Department of Education, Skills and Employment (Commonwealth), 'Higher Education Statistics' (2021) <<https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-statistics/student-data/selected-higher-education-statistics-time-series-data>> [Accessed 21 September 2022]).

broadly reflective of the population of students with disability at the University of Queensland.

Recommendation: That the University work with the Student Union Disability Collective to ensure that future survey analysis consider whole-of-university disability data to ensure the survey samples are representative.

Irrespective of the extent to which this is a representative sample, it highlights the variety of impacts on students' experiences, including on the process of learning and studying.

Student experiences

The questions in the survey about students' experiences of various aspects of university life, which are referred to in this report as 'domains', yielded interesting results. The **Administrative procedures, policies and/or bureaucratic processes** domain ('**Administrative procedures**') had the lowest 'Satisfactory' score of all domains. This is an important finding given that the accessibility of **Administrative procedures** is not often identified as an area for investigation or research. This result may be explained in part by different disability demographics identified by participants in this study compared to earlier studies. When this survey is rolled out to more Australian universities to obtain comparative data, it will be interesting to observe whether there are significant differences in scores for the **Administrative procedures** domain between larger universities, which may have bulkier bureaucracies and more administrative layers, compared to smaller universities. It would also be useful to compare the experience that students with disability report in relation to **Administrative procedures** with the experience reported by other students.

Recommendation: That the University ensure that work with the Review and Development Process prioritises consideration of its administrative procedures, policies and/or bureaucratic processes to ensure that barriers to full inclusion and a satisfactory student experience for students with disability are identified and addressed.

In contrast to the above, **Physical access on campus** and **Digital spaces managed by the university** were the two domains with the highest 'Satisfactory' scores. This may reflect that these are aspects of the university's operations that have been subjected to greater scrutiny to date. It may also reflect the functional impacts experienced by participants in this survey, with fewer participants with mobility impairments and vision impairments.

Recommendation: That the University engage a qualified access consultant to conduct an audit to ensure that inclusive education opportunities are available to all people with disability, including those with physical, sensory, psycho-social, cognitive and/or neuro-diverse conditions. From that audit, develop access improvement strategies to be added to the University's Disability Action Plan and integrated into all relevant planning processes of the University.

The domain of **Course delivery, structure and content** (**'Course delivery'**) had a middling 'Satisfactory' score—the fourth lowest and fourth highest satisfactory score of the seven domains—yet this domain scored highly for 'Not accessible', 'Difficult to navigate', 'Caused me problems' and 'Discriminatory'. Indeed, this domain had the highest average score for 'Not accessible', 'Caused me problems' and 'Discriminatory' compared to other domains and also had the greatest percentage of participants identifying this domain as 'Not accessible', 'Caused me problems' and 'Discriminatory' either 'sometimes', 'often', or 'always'. This was also the only domain identified as 'Discriminatory' either 'sometimes', 'often', or 'always' by a majority of participants.

These results may reflect the disability demographics of those who completed the survey. Over 80% of participants reported functional impacts of their disability on their mental health, nearly 70% reported impacts on their energy/pain levels, over 60% reported impacts on their neurological processes and over 60% reported impacts on their cognitive processes. Having limited options for methods of course delivery and ways to access content is perhaps more likely to disadvantage students who have difficulties concentrating or, intermittently, with participating. Furthermore, these data may reflect limited disability expertise held by people who design and deliver courses. In this situation, these subject matter experts may struggle to apply a universal design approach to course development, and then may struggle again when required to adjust course delivery reactively in response to specific student needs related to disability. This points to a need for greater disability literacy and support for program convenors/leaders, course co-ordinators and course delivery staff in the work of designing more accessible programs and courses and to appropriately implement Student Access Plan requirements and other academic adjustments.

Recommendation: That the University adopt the Universal Design for Learning principles and ensure sufficient expertise and ongoing resourcing is available to guide those who design and deliver courses to implement those principles.

Recommendation: That the University ensure that all staff engaged in the design and delivery of courses be provided with training that raises their awareness of:

- disability,
- barriers to education for students with disability,
- the obligations on the University and its staff to ensure non-discriminatory access to education, and
- how to work with the University's specialist disability support staff to implement the Universal Design for Learning principles and Student Access Plans.

The most effective training available across these domains should be identified through the University working with the Review and Development Process and Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training ('ADCET').

There is some overlap between the domain **Course delivery** and the domain **Course materials**. While both have similar ratings in terms of 'Satisfactory', **Course materials** are identified as posing less problems in terms of accessibility, etc. This suggests that there are problems in the domain of **Course delivery** beyond issues with course materials.

The domain of **Support services provided by the University** ('**Support services**') received the lowest percentage of 'sometimes', 'often' or 'always' ratings of all domains for 'Caused me problems' and also had the lowest mean score for 'Caused me problems'. The percentage who indicated that these services were 'Satisfactory' 'sometimes', 'often' or 'always' (82%) is of interest and is significantly higher than the reported percentage of undergraduate students at the University of Queensland giving a positive rating for 'Student support' for 2021 (68.2%) in the *2021 SES National Report*.²¹ This result reflects positively on **Support services** compared to other domains in this area of student experience, and is reinforced by the qualitative data around positive experiences, which had a strong theme around supports, both from formal support services and more broadly.

The responses from participants about the impacts of their experiences at university reveal compelling adverse effects and disadvantages. The results that over 50% had been required to wait for accessible course materials, and close to 60% had at some time been unable to access course content due to disability, suggest that accessibility is not being sufficiently considered during the design phase of courses, or that staff have been unable to respond to accessibility needs promptly when they arise, or both. It is concerning that close to 50% of survey respondents considered dropping a subject because disability adjustments were

²¹ Social Research Centre, *The Higher Education Student Experience: 2021 Student Experience Survey* (undated) <[https://www.qilt.edu.au/surveys/student-experience-survey-\(ses\)](https://www.qilt.edu.au/surveys/student-experience-survey-(ses))> Table 6, 16–18.

not being made. This points to failures in the university's system of implementing reasonable adjustments in a timely way, and again suggests that staff may require additional training, guidance or support to implement Student Access Plans.

Over 60% of survey respondents indicated that they had been disadvantaged due to a lack of suitable assessment options. In considering each assessment item within a course, disadvantage could be reduced by having greater flexibility and variety of methods available to students to show proof of knowledge and skill acquisition. It is insufficient to have several assessment modes in a course if there is no choice for each individual assessment item.

Over 70% of respondents experienced distress about disability-related issues at the University of Queensland to the extent that it had interfered with their studies. This highlights the importance of prevention and support with regards to additional stressors placed on students with disability. The results obtained about impacts of student experiences emphasise the importance of surveys and investigations such as this one to assist universities to identify where and when disadvantage occurs and to understand its impacts on students.

Recommendation: That within the Review and Development Process, the University explore options for implementing greater flexibility and variety of methods in assessing students' knowledge and skill acquisition (evidence of learning outcomes), particularly providing accessible alternatives for each aspect of assessment. This exploration would benefit from the involvement of independent, external disability education experts to inform the process.

The results about student experiences identified areas where the University of Queensland is already showing promising results, areas for improvement and some interesting contrasts. Nearly 70% of students disagreed to some extent with the statement, 'I feel that processes and learning activities at the University of Queensland are designed with my needs in mind'. This suggests the University of Queensland could do more to consider disability access in the design phase of courses and also when developing and improving the various systems and processes that students interact with during their time at university.

Of the respondents, 56% agreed to some extent that 'UQ is welcoming of students with disability' and about half agreed to some extent that they 'feel supported to succeed', yet over two-thirds disagreed with the statements, 'I feel that processes and learning activities at UQ are designed with my needs in mind' and 'I feel I can voice my needs and concerns without fear or judgement'. Taken together, this contrast indicates that while the University of Queensland has been successful to a degree at messaging that the university is trying to be inclusive and is providing support to students with disability, many respondents still felt that their needs had not been adequately considered and they did not feel empowered or able to raise their concerns without repercussions. The University of Queensland may wish to consider providing more resources and guidance about what supports students with disability can access at university and about

what may constitute a reasonable adjustment, given that over two-thirds of those surveyed indicated they are ‘confused about what supports are available’.

Recommendation: That the University work with the Review and Development Process to identify how to more effectively ensure that students with disability are aware of the availability of reasonable adjustments, what a reasonable adjustment is, and the breadth of what such adjustments encompass.

The vast majority of respondents—over three-quarters—agreed to some extent that it would make them ‘feel more welcome and included to see greater positive representation of people with disability in UQ media, materials and events’. This seems to be something that could be easily achievable in the short term, although it should be acknowledged that disability representation in social media spaces could open the University of Queensland up to criticism if such representation is not backed by real change and progress to support disabled students and improve equity in education access.

Recommendation: That the University prioritise inclusion of representation of the diversity of students with disability at the University of Queensland in its student and public-facing communications and events.

What is striking about the three words participants provided about their experiences is the dominance of two quite contradictory concepts: ‘isolated’ and ‘supported’. It is positive to see ‘supported’ there, as this indicates there are things the University is doing well to support students. On the other hand, there are a lot of negative words and there is a trend among the negative words suggestive of students not feeling connected with mechanisms that will provide solutions when they do encounter problems. These include, for example, ‘lonely’, ‘alone’, ‘invisible’, ‘confusing’ and ‘frustrating’.

It is of note that the responses from participants about the impact of COVID-19 included both positive and negative impacts on engagement and sense of isolation.²²

Recommendation: That the University work with the Review and Development Process to identify factors that may lead to students with disability feeling isolated and unsupported, and develop strategies to remedy this.

Recommendation: That the University work and the Student Union work with the Disability Collective to enhance social connectedness of students and to build, maintain and strengthen mechanisms by which students can meet others who have similar experiences and access peer support.

²² See Appendix 2, Questions 31 and 32, 94–98.

Recommendation: That the University and the Student Union work together to ensure that university events are fully inclusive of all students with disability to enhance their opportunities to build friendships and support networks.

Recommendation: That the University work with the Review and Development Process to consider the responses to Questions 31 and 32 about the impact of changes arising from the pandemic to identify mechanisms that have affected accessibility, both positively and/or negatively.

Complaints and feedback

Our question about formal complaints had answer options phrased as ‘Yes’, ‘No’, or ‘Never needed to’. Multiple answers were not permitted. This was deliberately designed to capture respondents who may have had reason to escalate any issues they encountered but did not do so. Of the 50 respondents who answered ‘No’, 48 indicated they had reasons to complain but that they do not want to escalate complaints via the formal complaints process for various reasons as reported in our results. Given this high proportion of participants who have encountered issues but were unwilling to use formal mechanisms to escalate these issues, the authors suggest that the formal complaints process either be changed to be more user-friendly, or that there be other mechanisms put in place for students with disability to raise issues they encounter without needing to submit a formal complaint.

Recommendation: That the University work with the Review and Development Process to identify more effective ways for students with disability to raise and escalate issues or concerns. This could usefully be informed by people with expertise in designing welcoming and accessible feedback and complaint processes.

The third last question of the survey asked participants to describe their most positive experience at university with regards to their disability. The inclusion and placement of this question was deliberate, to minimise the degree to which students might be left with a negative affect after completing the survey. While fewer than half of the participants elected to complete this section, the strong theme around supportive staff and feeling supported, as also reflected above in the 3 words, shows areas of success in the provision of accessible education. Those surveyed valued effective support and a sense of community. Respondents described support and positive experiences being empowering and changing life outcomes. This is a strength to build on, as is the Disability Collective. The data highlights the importance and benefits of staff working effectively to implement Student Access Plans.

Recommendation: That the University ensure that it publicly report on the outcomes of future surveys, and work with people with disability to encourage broad adoption of this survey approach to assist future students with disability to identify universities that are proactive in ensuring fulfilment of the right to education for students with disability.

Conclusions

Overall, the survey results provide a compelling argument for the University of Queensland to dedicate focused attention to the situation of its students with disability. There are some clear areas for improvement that would be relatively easy to implement, while other aspects require an effective process of consultation with students and recent graduates, to develop solutions to be implemented in a staged manner.

It is hoped this report will encourage students and the University to work together towards shared goals and, through such collaboration, build a world-leading university experience for students with disability. This research also provides a valuable opportunity to contribute more broadly to disability inclusion in education through its use across the university sector. Taking up that opportunity will benefit students through providing transparency about university approaches to inclusive practice, and will benefit universities in meeting their legislative obligations.

Research future directions

In developing the survey, rolling it out and analysing the results, the research team has identified a number of things we would do differently in subsequent iterations. These are listed here for the benefit of other researchers. We recommend consideration be given to the following:

- Change the phrasing of the questions about survey respondent relationship to the university (Question 1) to avoid confusion.
- Split the question on student demographics (Question 7) into separate questions to reduce dropout rates.
- In the student demographics questions relating to disability include a question about whether the participant has an Exam Adjustment in place (where this is separate to a Student Access Plan).
- Include as follow-ups in relation to whether or not a participant has a Student Access Plan: (a) whether they applied for one; (b) if they didn't apply, their reasons for not doing so; and (c) if they applied, but don't have one, why their application was unsuccessful.
- Change questions about course codes (Questions 25 to 28) to include course co-ordinator names and approximate dates so that specifics can be identified for improvement and positive feedback. Make this an optional extra to be added on an opt-in basis for each university with data only supplied to each individual university.²³
- Ask survey participants explicitly whether they have disclosed their disability to their university.
- Remove the example reasons from the question about formal complaints (Question 22).
- Include specific questions for postgraduate-by-research students (for example, include questions about supervisor support) and close off coursework questions if postgraduate-by-research is selected.
- Investigate the possibility of including in the disability-specific demographic questions (Questions 8 and 9) the disability grouping used in the Kilpatrick et al study²⁴ (and which are used by other universities), so that these can be compared to respondents' self-described functional impacts.

²³ Because of ambiguity about the historical timing of course delivery, this content has been omitted from the present report but can be shared by the authors on request.

²⁴ Kilpatrick et al (n 10).

- Ensure access to all of university disability data to enable analysis of the representativeness of the sample.
- Review the survey tool and consider ways to incorporate the scope within other national surveys.

More broadly, an aim of the research team from the outset has been to explore the possibility that this survey, or similar, become a standard across all Australian universities. This would have a benefit for future students by enabling them to can be better informed about the approaches taken regarding equitable access and inclusion by those universities. It would also enable universities to pro-actively identify areas for improvement and legislative compliance. To this end, the research team makes the following recommendation.

Recommendation: That the University work with Universities Australia and the Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training ('ADCET') to:

- (i) Fund a team of researchers from multiple universities to further develop the survey (see (ii)) and to process and analyse national survey results, independent of university oversight.
- (ii) Further develop the survey for use across all Australian universities and split the survey into two main sections, one that will collect data from all universities, and the other a customisable section in which universities can ask more granular university-specific questions. For the university-specific section, researchers would de-identify the data before returning it to the university to protect the privacy of students and ensure that students will feel confident in the ethical processes involved and will not fear repercussions.
- (iii) Conduct the survey every three years.

About the research team and who has assisted

The research team



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Appendix I: University of Queensland Union (UQU) Disability Collective Survey

Part I About this survey

What will I be asked to do?

This survey by the UQU Disability Collective involves closed and open questions investigating your experience as a student with disability (including mental illness, chronic illness, neurodiversity, deafness, etc) in engaging with processes within or associated with the University of Queensland (UQ). You can decide about whether or not you wish to participate in the survey. By completing this survey, you agree to allow the Disability Collective to record and store your responses.

How much of my time will I need to give?

The survey will take approximately 30 to 40 minutes to complete.

Will the study involve any risk or discomfort for me?

The study may pose a risk of discomfort when you recall past experiences about your university life. If you wish to register any concerns, please contact Alicia Steele (asteele@uqu.com.au). Participation in this survey is completely voluntary and you are free to withdraw from this survey. If you wish to withdraw, simply stop answering the questions and close the survey on your computer. If you do withdraw from the survey, the answers you have provided up until that point will be excluded and will not be included in the study unless you press the submit button. As the study is presented online, you can withdraw at any time by closing your browser window.

Privacy and additional information

Your responses will be anonymous. If your response raises an issue that the Disability Collective feels it would be useful to discuss with the University of Queensland Student Union, we will do so without identifying the details of your situation. Survey responses will be used outside the University of Queensland Union exclusively in a de-identified and anonymised way for the purpose of the collective's advocacy and disability awareness efforts. For our final report, any quotes and specific data used from survey responses will have identifying details removed.

The definition of 'disability'

Please note that for the purposes of this survey, the definition of **'disability'** includes physical disability, sensory disability, mental illness and psychosocial conditions, chronic pain, chronic illness, neurodiversity (for example, autism, ADHD, Tourette Syndrome), deafness, medical conditions, blindness (including colour blindness), and/or any condition that may be considered disabling in any way, whether innately or for social, societal, or environmental reasons.

Part 2

1. Are you or were you a student at UQ? [tick all that apply]
 - Yes, I am a student at UQ now.
 - Yes, I have been a student at UQ in the last three (3) years.
 - Yes, I was a student at UQ more than three (3) years ago.
 - No, I am not a student at UQ, and I haven't been a UQ student.
2. In what year did you first start study at UQ? (if unsure, please give an estimate)
[Free text field]
3. What is your age in years?
[Free text field]
4. What is your gender: [tick all that apply]
 - Male
 - Female
 - Non-binary
 - A different term
 - Other
 - Prefer not to answer
5. Please tell us how you refer to your gender, if you selected 'a different term' or 'other' in the question above (or else leave blank):
[Free text field]
6. Are you:
 - Aboriginal
 - Torres Strait Islander
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
 - Neither Aboriginal Australian nor Torres Strait Islander
 - Prefer not to answer
7. Which of the following (tick all that apply) are true for you. I am:
 - a domestic student
 - an international student
 - studying mostly on campus
 - studying mostly externally
 - studying through both on campus and external modes
 - a student with a Student Access Plan
 - an undergraduate student
 - doing post-graduate studies by coursework
 - doing post-graduate studies by research
 - an NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) participant

8. Do you identify as a person who experiences disability (which includes mental illness, chronic illness, neurodiversity, etc, as defined in the introduction above)
- Yes
- No
9. Please name and briefly describe your disability/disabilities:
- [Free text field]
10. The following question is included so that we can sort responses using these 'categories'.

Does your disability (or disabilities) affect your: (select all that apply).

- vision, eg, blind, vision impaired, low vision, colour blindness
- hearing, eg, Deaf, hard of hearing, hearing impaired
- mobility or physical functions, eg, paraplegia, quadriplegia, amputation, mobility impaired, limited manual dexterity, stature
- mental health, eg, anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder
- neurological functions including physical impacts and thinking, engaging with, or learning differently to what is considered 'typical', eg, epilepsy, MND, MS, neurodiversity, autism, ADHD
- cognitive processes including memory, processing of information, learning, eg, intellectual disability, autism, ADHD, acquired brain injury
- communication, eg, deafness, neurodiversity
- energy levels (physical or mental), fatigue, comfort, or pain levels
- other

Part 3 Questions adapted from census

The following two questions are based on questions asked in the Australian Census. We have modified these– based on feedback from the disability community – to add options that cover more situations.

11. Do you, because of your disability, ever need someone to help you with, or be with you for:

	Yes, always	Yes, sometimes	No
Personal care or self-care activities? (For example: eating, showering, dressing, or using the toilet)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Body movement activities? (For example: getting out of bed, moving around at home or at places away from home, lifting things, carrying things)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication activities? (For example: understanding, or being understood by others)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day-to-day activities? (For example: participating in work or study, socialising, grocery shopping, cooking, or cleaning)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. Do you, because of your disability, ever use adaptive technology, assistive equipment, or an assistance animal to help you with:

	Yes, always	Yes, sometimes	No
Personal care or self-care activities? (For example: eating, showering, dressing, or using the toilet)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Body movement activities? (For example: getting out of bed, moving around at home or at places away from home, lifting things, carrying things)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication activities? (For example: understanding, or being understood by others)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day-to-day activities? (For example: participating in work or study, socialising, grocery shopping, cooking, or cleaning)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 4 Your university experiences as a person with disability

The following questions (13 to 23) focus on your experiences as a person with disability at UQ. We are keen for you to think about how UQ's teaching, administration, physical environment, etc, affect you in relation to your disability and needs relating to your disability.

13. What has been your experience of the following aspect of UQ? Physical access on campus (for example, including toilets, lighting and sound/acoustics of environments, the ergonomic set-up of desks and other furniture, paths of travel, manoeuvring space, etc)

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Not accessible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Difficult to navigate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discriminatory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caused me problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. What has been your experience with the following aspect of UQ? Digital spaces managed by the university (for example, websites, e-mails, blackboard, mySI-net, etc)

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Not accessible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Difficult to navigate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discriminatory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caused me problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. What has been your experience with the following aspect of UQ? Course delivery, structure, and content (for example, format of delivery, time pressure, lectures, tutorials, teaching methods, laboratory and practicals, use of existing equipment that enhances access, provision of alternatives to students with disability such as video recordings and alternative formats, etc)

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Not accessible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Difficult to navigate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discriminatory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caused me problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

16. What has been your experience with the following aspect of UQ? Administrative procedures, policies and/or bureaucratic processes (for example, timeliness, recording of information about your situation, privacy, ease of finding information related to your situation, flexibility of policies, application of discretion, etc)

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Not accessible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Difficult to navigate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discriminatory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caused me problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. What has been your experience with the following aspect of UQ? Course materials (for example, documents in unreadable formats, reliance on visual materials, unreadable fonts, not offered an alternative format, poor audio, etc)

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Not accessible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Difficult to navigate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discriminatory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caused me problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18. What has been your experience with the following aspect of UQ? Exams and Assessments (for example, format, time, alternative assessment options, etc)

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Not accessible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Difficult to navigate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discriminatory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caused me problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

19. What has been your experience with the following aspect of UQ? Support services provided by the university (for example, use of inclusive language, availability of appropriate supports, knowledge of my disability and willingness to learn, engagement with course co-ordinators, etc)

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Not accessible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Difficult to navigate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discriminatory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caused me problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

20. Have you ever:

Have you ever:	Yes, always	Yes, sometimes	No
considered dropping a subject because your disability adjustments were not being made, eg, course resources not provided in an accessible format or course processes not accessible?)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
been disadvantaged in a course by a lack of suitable assessment options (for example, oral test, written test, take-home assignment, observation, etc)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
been unable to access course content because of mistakes or oversights by the lecturer (eg, walked away from the microphone while speaking, not speaking clearly for captioning, forgot to turn on required functionality, etc)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
had to wait for course materials to be made accessible?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
experienced distress about disability-related issues at UQ to the extent that it has interfered with your studies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21. Have you ever made a formal complaint to anyone at the university or outside the university?

A formal complaint means a complaint made under a formal policy (such as the UQ Student Grievance Resolution – Policy) or under a law (such as the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act or the federal Disability Discrimination Act) or to an external authority (such as the Police, the Queensland Human Rights Commission, or the Australian Human Rights Commission).

A formal complaint does not include an e-mail to your course co-ordination [sic] raising concerns about some aspect of the course, or to an administrative staff member about problems.

- Yes
- No
- Never needed to

22. If no, why did you not make a formal complaint? (e.g., didn't know how to, would take too much time or energy, etc)

[Free text field]

23. These statements relate to your experience as a student with disability at UQ.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Some-what disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some-what agree	Agree	Strongly agree
UQ meets my needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
UQ is welcoming of students with disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It would make me feel more welcome and included to see greater positive representation of people with disability in UQ media, materials, and events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There are user-friendly & effective ways for me to raise issues related to disability if & when I encounter them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel I can voice my needs and concerns without fear or judgement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel my disability is unwelcome at UQ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I feel I am supported to succeed

My course teachers have understood how to implement my student access plan or respond to my needs

I feel that processes and learning activities at UQ are designed with my needs in mind

I have been given helpful advice by UQ staff on the types of adjustments that might meet my needs

I am confused about what supports are available to me

I would recommend UQ to other students with disability

Part 5 Open-ended (qualitative) questions

Questions 24 to 35 are open-ended (qualitative) questions. We do not expect you to answer all of these questions, although you may if you want to. Have a look through the following summary of these questions and chose the ones to answer that are most relevant to you.

Questions 24 and 25 ask about courses you have studied that did a good job of providing you with appropriate and equitable access to education and participation, with regards to your disability.

Questions 26 and 27 ask about courses you have studied that did NOT do a good job of providing you with appropriate and equitable access to education and participation, with regards to your disability.

Questions 28 and 29 ask about times you were happy or unhappy with how the university supported you, or accommodated your disability-related needs, or provided you with appropriate and equitable access to education and participation with regards to your disability.

Question 30 asks you to give 3 separate words to describe the way you feel about your experience as a person with disability at UQ.

Questions 31 and 32 ask about ways in which different aspects of life at UQ have become easier or more accessible and / or more difficult or less accessible to you as a person with disability because of changes arising from the pandemic.

Question 33 asks you to describe the most positive experience you've had at UQ with regards to your disability.

Question 34 asks what the one thing is you would change about UQ in relation to the difficulties and the barriers to education and participation that students with disability face.

Question 35 gives you an opportunity tell us anything else you'd like to about your experience of being a person with disability at UQ.

24. Please think about the courses you have studied that did a good job of providing you with appropriate and equitable access to education and participation, with regards to your disability.

In your own words, describe the ways in which those courses were able to achieve these positive outcomes for you.

[Free text field]

25. If you can recall them, please list up to 3 courses (using names or course codes) that did a good job of being accessible and accommodating with regards to your disability.

[Free text field]

26. Please think about the courses you have studied that did NOT do a good job of providing you with appropriate and equitable access to education and participation, with regards to your disability.
In your own words, describe the ways in which those courses were not able to achieve positive outcomes for you.
[Free text field]
27. If you can recall them, please list up to 3 courses (using course names or course codes) that did NOT do good job of being accessible and accommodating with regards to your disability:
[Free text field]
28. Please think of a time when you were happy with how the university supported you, or accommodated your disability-related needs, or provided you with appropriate and equitable access to education and participation with regards to your disability.
Describe it below:
[Free text field]
29. Please think of a time when you were unhappy with how the university supported you, or accommodated your disability-related needs, or the university did not provide you with appropriate and equitable access to education and participation with regards to your disability.
Describe it below:
[Free text field]
30. Please write down 3 separate words (not a sentence) that best describe the way you feel about your experience as a person with disability at UQ:
[Free text field]
31. Is there a way in which the physical access, course materials, administrative procedures, or any other aspect of life at university has become easier or more accessible to you as a person with disability because of changes arising from the pandemic?
[Free text field]
32. Is there a way in which the physical access, course materials, administrative procedures, or any other aspect of life at university has become more difficult or less accessible to you as a person with disability because of changes arising from the pandemic?
[Free text field]
33. Please describe the most positive experience you've had since commencing university, with regards to your disability:
[Free text field]
34. If you could change one thing about the difficulties and the barriers to education and participation that students with disability face at university, what would it be?
[Free text field]

35. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your experience of being a person with disability at university?

[Free text field]

Further information

What's next

The following sections give you information about your rights in education and where to find out more. You could print these or copy them if you don't want to read them now. Or you can just click through these and press submit. This will close the survey. If you want to access the information in those sections, they are [available in a downloadable document under Resources on the UQU Disability Collective page: https://www.uqu.com.au/representing-u/uqucollectives/disability-collective](https://www.uqu.com.au/representing-u/uqucollectives/disability-collective).

About the UQU Disability Collective

The Disability Collective is a branch of the University of Queensland Union (UQU). The Collective is concerned with the advocacy, support, and social connectedness of UQ students with disability (which includes, for example, students with chronic illness, mental illness, neurodiversity and/or are Deaf).

The Collective also offers peer support for its members and to raise awareness of issues surrounding disability throughout the greater UQ community, as well as in the wider community.

The Disability Collective focuses on building a positive, welcoming, and supportive community for members, running informal networking events, workshops, organised events, and meetings both online and on campus. The Collective has rooms on campus as well as online communities that provide safe spaces for students to ask questions, connect with others, and access support and advocacy.

The Disability Collective is committed to working with the UQ administration and teaching staff, and UQ's Disability, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisors (DDIA), to advocate for student rights, refer students to appropriate support services, and help students navigate life at university.

[More information about the UQU Disability Collective](https://www.uqu.com.au/representing-u/uqucollectives/disability-collective) can be found on our website via the following link: <https://www.uqu.com.au/representing-u/uqucollectives/disability-collective>.

A bit about your rights in education

As a person with disability who is a past, current or future student at a university (or any other education provider), you have legally enforceable rights under discrimination laws in Australia. There are laws that apply across Australia (called 'federal laws' in relation to disability rights in education, and there are state and territory laws).

There is some information in the next sections about federal and Queensland discrimination laws, particularly in relation to education rights.

If you want to find out more about both the Queensland and the federal laws, contact the Queensland Human Rights Commission (see the Queensland law section).

Federal law

The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) (often called the **DDA**) states that a person or educational institution must not discriminate against a current or prospective student. Discrimination includes being treated worse than other people because of your disability or being disadvantaged by a policy, or practice, or requirement, because of your disability. It is against the law to discriminate against people with disability.

The DDA requires education providers, such as schools and universities, to adjust the way in which their institution is operated to ensure that students with disability are able to participate in all aspects of education on an equal footing to other students. These adjustments are called ‘reasonable adjustments’ or ‘reasonable accommodations’.

As well as the DDA, there is a federal standard that all education providers must follow: the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* (Cth) (these are often called the **Education Standards**). The Education Standards set out what education providers must do to avoid discrimination against students with disability. The Education Standards provide details of what must be done in all aspects of education to ensure equal opportunity for students with disability, including enrolment processes, curriculum design, teaching practices, assessment, and prevention of harassment.

There is [information about the Education Standards on the internet provided by the National Consistent Collection of Data on Schools](#) (NCCD). Click the following link to go to the opening page of that information: <https://www.nccd.edu.au/disability-standards-education>.

If you feel that you have been discriminated against, or are not sure, you can contact the **Australian Human Rights Commission**, which is responsible for the DDA, and speak to someone about your situation. The information service and the complaint process are free. There is a page on the Australian Human Rights Commission’s website tells you all of the [ways you can contact the Commission to discuss your situation](#), click the following link to go to that page: <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/complaint-information-service/enquiries-national-information-service>.

There is also [information about disability rights](#) on the Australian Human Rights Commission’s webpage. You can access that information by clicking the following link: <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disabilityrights>.

Queensland law

Queensland has two laws that are particularly relevant to the rights of students with disability (and prospective students): the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld) (**ADA Qld**) and the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld) (**Human Rights Act**).

Like, the DDA, the ADA Qld makes it unlawful for an educational institution or provider to discriminate against a student with disability. To find out more about your rights or to ask about a particular situation, you can contact the **Queensland Human Rights Commission** (which is responsible for the ADA Qld and the Human Rights Act) in a range of ways. Click the following link to [find out about the different ways you can contact the Commission](#):
<https://www.qhrc.qld.gov.au/contactus>.

As well as the ADA Qld, the Human Rights Act gives all people in Queensland the right to equality. Again, you can contact the Queensland Human Rights Commission to find out more.

The Queensland Human Rights Commission has an education team and if you are part of a group, you could contact the Commission to find out about having someone come to speak to your group.

Where else can you get information about your rights?

Community Legal Centres (CLCs) can give you free legal advice. There is an [online directory to every CLC in Australia](#). Click the following link to access the page: <https://www.clcs.org.au/findlegalhelp>.

You will be able to find information about the specialist CLCs that are set up just to help with disability discrimination issues. There is a [specific website for finding Queensland CLCs](#): <https://www.communitylegalqld.org.au/>.

You can find [links to all of the state, territory and federal discrimination laws and the organisations that are responsible for dealing with complaints made under those laws](#) on a page of the website of Equal Opportunity Tasmania (EOT). Click the following link to go to the EOT links page:
<https://equalopportunity.tas.gov.au/resources/links>.

The following section lists other organisations that may be able to answer questions or provide you with support.

Other resources

LEGAL & ADVOCACY SERVICES

Legal Aid Queensland

Free legal advice by phone 1300 65 11 88 | www.legalaid.qld.gov.au

Queensland Advocacy Inc (QAI)

An independent advocacy organisation advocating for the protection and advancement of the needs, rights, and lives of people with disability in Queensland. QAI is a community legal service.

<https://qai.org.au/> | 07 3844 4200 or 1300 130 582

ADA Law (Aged and Disability Advocacy Law)

<https://adalaw.com.au/> | 1800 232 529

Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia

www.adaaustralia.com.au | 1800 818 338

OTHER SERVICES

The Australian Network on Disability

Provides employment mentoring and internships Australia-wide

www.and.org.au | Ph: 1300 363 645

1800RESPECT

National sexual assault, domestic family violence counselling service

<http://1800respect.org.au> | 1800 737 732

Disability Advisors / UQ Student Services

Will work you to create a student access plan (SAP) and put in place alternative exam arrangements.

inclusion@uq.edu.au | (07) 3365 1704

*Note that an SAP and alternative exam arrangements are distinct documents

Headspace

Free or low-cost counselling and support services to young people aged 12–25

Open Monday–Friday | <https://headspace.org.au/headspace-centres/> |

Ph: (07) 3157 1555

Student Advocacy and Support (SAS)

Free, independent, short term support service for all UQ students

SAS can help you to submit a formal complaint to UQ, appeal a decision, and assist with other advocacy needs

<https://www.uqu.com.au/supporting-u>

St Lucia: Mon–Fri 8am–4pm | Ph: (07) 3346 3400

Gatton: Mon & Wed 8am–4pm | Ph: (07) 5460 1791

Sane Australia

Counselling, support, information, and referrals for complex mental health issues

<https://www.sane.org/> | 10am–10pm AEST | Ph: 1800 187 263

Lifeline

Crisis support and suicide prevention

<https://www.lifelineqld.org.au/> | 24 hours a day, 7 days a week | Ph: 13 11 14

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Appendix 2: Full data tables for each question

In this appendix, we provide a short form of each question asked for ease of understanding. To review the full question, please refer back to Appendix 1.

The following acronyms were used in the questions and/or by participants in their responses:

ADHD Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

ECP Electronic Course Profile

GPA Grade Point Average

HDR Higher Degree Research

MND Motor Neurone Disease

MS Multiple Sclerosis

NDIS National Disability Insurance Scheme

OCD Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

SAP Student Access Plan

SAPD Student Access Plan Disability

SAP(D) Student Access Plan Disability

SAP-D Student Access Plan Disability

STUPOL Annual University of Queensland Student Union Executive election process

UQ University of Queensland

UQU University of Queensland Student Union

Part 2

Question 1: Are you or were you a student at UQ?

Table 14: Question 1: Currency of the University of Queensland student status

UQ student status	Number	%
Yes, I am a student at UQ now	70	89
Yes, I have been a student at UQ in the last three (3) years	23	29
Yes, I was a student at UQ more than three (3) years ago	3	4
No, I am not a student at UQ, and I haven't been a UQ student	0	0
Blank	0	0

Question 2: In what year did you first start study at UQ?

Table 15: Question 2: Year commenced studies at UQ

Year started	Number	%
2009	1	1
2010	0	0
2011	1	1
2012	2	3
2013	4	5
2014	0	0
2015	1	1
2016	6	8
2017	3	4
2018	3	4
2019	16	20
2020	10	13
2021	12	15
2022	18	23
Blank	2	3

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Question 3: What is your age in years?

Table 16: Question 3: Age of participant at the time they completed the survey

Age	Number
17	3
18	7
19	6
20	14
21	5
22	4
23	10
24	3
25	3
26	3
27	2
28	1
29	4
30	2
31	1
35	2
38	2
42	1
43	1
50	1
55	2
Blank	2

Table 17: Question 3: Age grouping of participants

Age group	Number of participants	%	UQ data for 2021* %
Under 16	0	0	0
16–20	30	38	37
21–25	25	32	41
26–30	12	15	11
31–35	3	4	5
36–40	2	3	3
41–45	2	3	2
46–50	1	1	1
52–55	2	3	1
Over 55	0	0	1
Blank	2	3	N/a
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* Source: University of Queensland, *Whole Year Enrolments – Demographics by Program Level Group 2022* (26 October 2022)

<<https://reportal.mis.admin.uq.edu.au/BOE/OpenDocument/2207061054/OpenDocument/opendoc/openDocument.faces!ogonSuccessful=true&shareId=1>> [Accessed 7 November 2022].

Question 4: What is your gender?

Table 18: Question 4: Gender identity

Gender	Number	%
Female	44	56
Male	22	28
Non-binary	15	19
Other	2	3
A different term	1	1
Prefer not to say	0	0
Blank	0	0
	84	

Question 5: Please tell us how you refer to your gender, if you selected 'a different term' or 'other' in the question above

Table 19: Question 5: Gender identity where self-described

Self-described gender	Number
Genderqueer	1
Questioning	1
Transmasculine genderfluid	1

Question 6: Are you?

Table 20: Question 6: Whether or not the participant identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander status	Number	%
Neither Aboriginal Australian nor Torres Strait Islander	74	94
Prefer not to answer	3	4
Aboriginal	1	1
Blank	1	1
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	0	0
Torres Strait Islander	0	0
	79	

Question 7: Which of the following (tick all that apply) are true for you?

Table 21: Question 7: Student status – domestic or international

Student type: domestic or international	Number	%
A domestic student	72	91
An international student	7	9
Blank	0	0

Table 22: Student status – mode of study

Student type: mode of study	Number	%
Studying mostly on campus	41	52
Studying mostly externally	6	8
Studying through both on-campus and external modes	28	35
Blank	4	5

Table 23: Student status – disability support

Student type: disability support	Number	%
A student with a Student Access Plan	45	57
Did not indicate they have a Student Access Plan	34	43
An NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) participant	7	9
Did not indicate they are an NDIS participant	72	91

Table 24: Student status – undergraduate or postgraduate

Student type: level of study	Number	%
An undergraduate student	58	73
Doing post-graduate studies by coursework	6	8
Doing post-graduate studies by research	5	6
Blank	10	13

Question 8: Do you identify as a person who experiences disability?

Table 25: Question 8: Whether or not participant identifies as having disability

Identify as having disability	Number	%
Yes	79	100
No	0	0
Blank	0	0

Question 9: Please name and briefly describe your disability/disabilities

Data excluded on the basis they would lead to significant risk of participant identification.

Question 10: Does your disability (or disabilities) affect your:

Table 26: Question 10: Disability impacting on functional capacity

Disability category	Number	%
Vision , eg, blind, vision impaired, low vision, colour blindness	6	8
Hearing , eg, deaf, hard of hearing, hearing impaired	4	5
Mobility or physical functions , eg, paraplegia, quadriplegia, amputation, mobility impaired, limited manual dexterity, stature	13	16
Mental health , eg, anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder	66	83
Neurological functions including physical impacts and thinking, engaging with or learning differently to what is considered 'typical', eg, epilepsy, MND, MS, neurodiversity, autism, ADHD	51	64
Cognitive processes including memory, processing of information, learning, eg, intellectual disability, autism, ADHD, acquired brain injury	50	63
Communication , eg, deafness, neurodiversity	31	39
Energy levels (physical or mental), fatigue, comfort or pain levels	55	69
Other	8	10
Blank	0	0

Table 27: Number of participants with multiple functional impacts

Number of functional impacts	Number	%
1	9	11
2	13	16
3	17	22
4	15	19
5	16	20
6	6	8
7	3	4
	79	

Part 3

Question 11: Do you, because of your disability, ever need someone to help you with, or be with you for ...

Table 28: Question 11: Needs someone to help with various activities

Need help with	Personal care or self-care activities?		Body movement activities?		Communication activities?		Day-to-day activities?	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes, always	1	1	3	4	4	5	10	13
Yes, sometimes	20	25	14	18	40	51	36	46
No	58	73	61	77	33	42	32	41
Blank	0	0	1	1	2	3	1	1
	79		79		79		79	

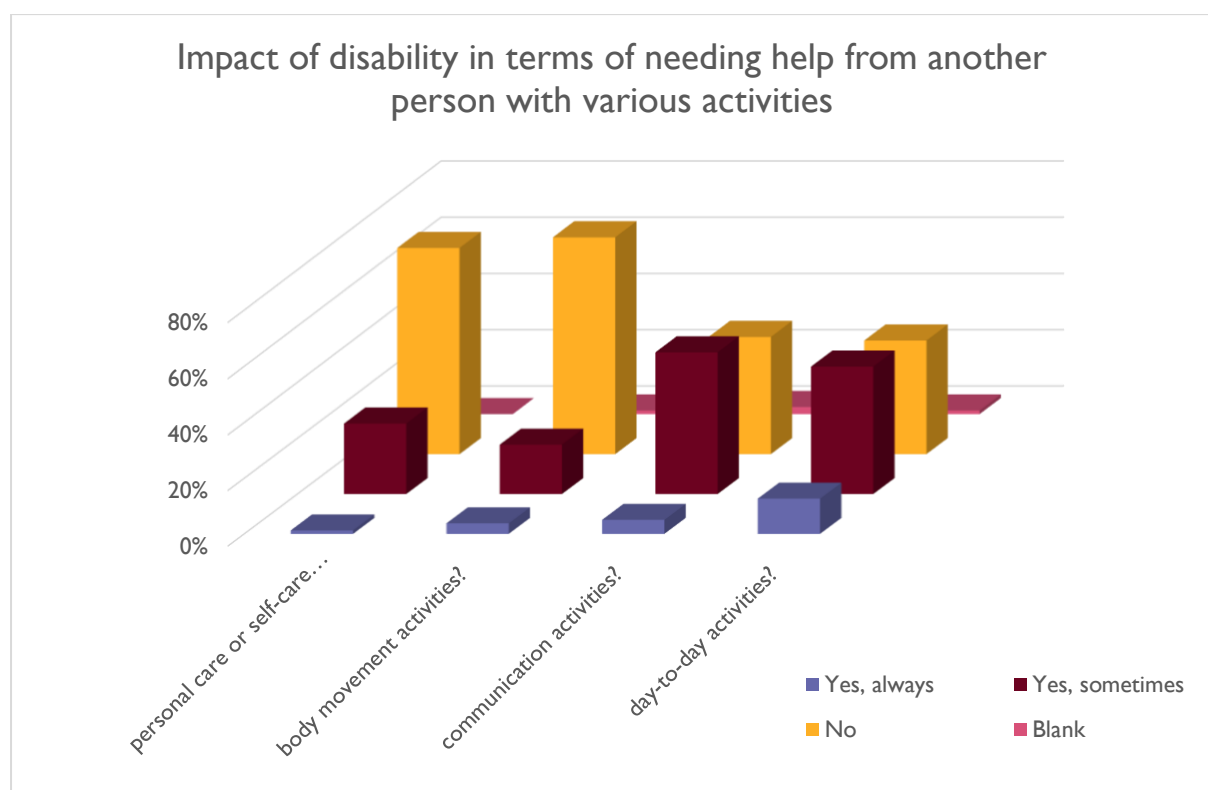


Figure 10: Question 11: Graph indicating where participants require help from another person for various activities

Question 12: Do you, because of your disability, ever use adaptive technology, assistive equipment, or an assistance animal to help you with ...

Table 29: Question 12: Uses aids or equipment for various activities

Use aids, etc, for	Personal care or self-care activities?		Body movement activities		Communication activities?		Day-to-day activities?	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes, always	2	3	5	6	3	4	8	10
Yes, sometimes	9	11	9	11	19	24	24	30
No	68	86	64	81	56	70	46	58
Blank	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total	79		79		79		79	

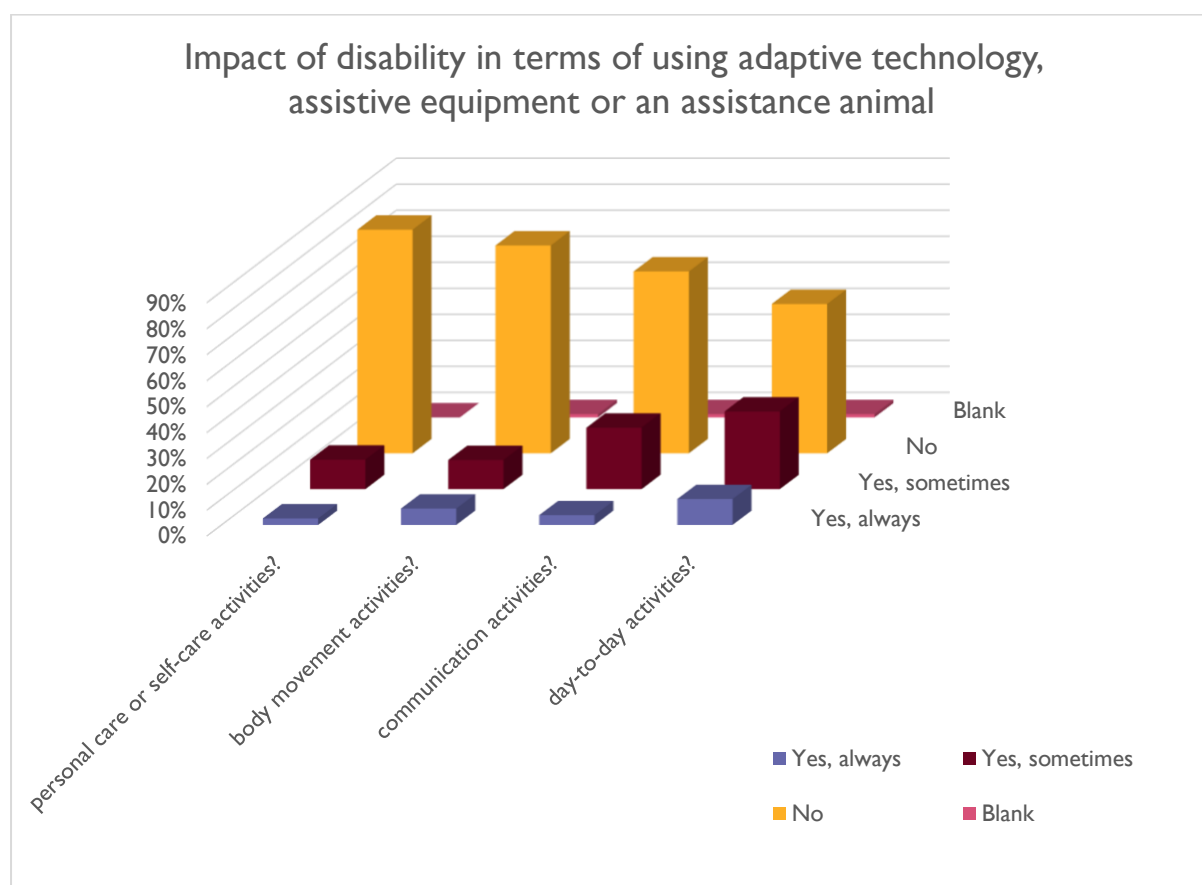


Figure 11: Question 12: Graph indicating where participants use adaptive technology, assistive equipment or an assistance for various activities

Part 4

Question 13: What has been your experience of the following aspect of UQ? Physical access on campus

Table 30: Question 13: Physical access on campus

	Not Accessible		Difficult to navigate		Discriminatory		Caused me problems		Satisfactory	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Never	26	33	12	15	28	35	17	22	1	1
Rarely	21	27	15	19	19	24	20	25	7	9
Sometimes	17	22	30	38	20	25	22	28	32	41
Often	12	15	18	23	10	13	16	20	32	41
Always	1	1	3	4	1	1	3	4	6	8
Blank	2	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	79		79		79		79		79	

Question 14: What has been your experience of the following aspect of UQ? Digital spaces managed by the university

Table 31: Question 14: Digital spaces managed by the university

	Not accessible		Difficult to navigate		Discriminatory		Caused me problems		Satisfactory	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Never	22	28	12	15	41	52	15	19	1	1
Rarely	25	32	13	16	20	25	22	28	7	9
Sometimes	24	30	26	33	12	15	30	38	32	41
Often	5	6	23	29	5	6	9	11	30	38
Always	3	4	5	6	1	1	3	4	8	10
Blank	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	79		79		79		79		79	

Question 15: What has been your experience of the following aspect of UQ? Course delivery, structure and content

Table 32: Question 15: Course delivery, structure and content

	Not accessible		Difficult to navigate		Discriminatory		Caused me problems		Satisfactory	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Never	12	15	5	6	17	22	6	8	2	3
Rarely	19	24	20	25	22	28	14	18	9	11
Sometimes	30	38	29	37	29	37	31	39	44	56
Often	16	20	23	29	9	11	23	29	19	24
Always	2	3	2	3	2	3	5	6	5	6
Blank	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	79		79		79		79		79	

Question 16: What has been your experience of the following aspect of UQ? Administrative procedures, policies and/or bureaucratic processes

Table 33: Question 16: Administrative procedures, policies and/or bureaucratic processes

	Not Accessible		Difficult to navigate		Discriminatory		Caused me problems		Satisfactory	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Never	14	18	9	11	22	28	14	18	7	9
Rarely	23	29	13	16	20	25	11	14	22	28
Sometimes	24	30	24	30	22	28	32	41	28	35
Often	13	16	21	27	12	15	19	24	18	23
Always	5	6	12	15	2	3	3	4	4	5
Blank	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
	79		79		79		79		79	

Question 17: What has been your experience of the following aspect of UQ? Course materials

Table 34: Question 17: Course materials

	Not Accessible		Difficult to navigate		Discriminatory		Caused me problems		Satisfactory	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Never	21	27	16	20	32	41	16	20	1	1
Rarely	23	29	20	25	24	30	20	25	9	11
Sometimes	24	30	25	32	19	24	28	35	30	38
Often	10	13	16	20	4	5	15	19	29	37
Always	1	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	9	11
Blank	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
	79		79		79		79		79	

Question 18: What has been your experience of the following aspect of UQ? Exams and assessments

Table 35: Question 18: Exams and assessments

	Not accessible		Difficult to navigate		Discriminatory		Caused me problems		Satisfactory	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Never	25	32	13	16	28	35	10	13	1	1
Rarely	22	28	24	30	19	24	20	25	15	19
Sometimes	20	25	24	30	18	23	30	38	24	30
Often	11	14	14	18	11	14	14	18	30	38
Always	0	0	2	3	1	1	3	4	7	9
Blank	1	1	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	3
	79		79		79		79		79	

Question 19: What has been your experience of the following aspect of UQ? Support services

Table 36: Question 19: Support services

	Not accessible		Difficult to navigate		Discriminatory		Caused me problems		Satisfactory	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Never	22	28	17	22	32	41	22	28	3	4
Rarely	20	25	15	19	20	25	19	24	11	14
Sometimes	19	24	22	28	14	18	22	28	27	34
Often	13	16	18	23	11	14	12	15	26	33
Always	3	4	5	6	0	0	2	3	10	13
Blank	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	3
	79		79		79		79		79	

Question 20: Have you ever ...?

Table 37: Question 20: Impact of experiences on key aspects of university life

Have you ever ...	Yes		No		N/a	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Considered dropping a subject	38	48	24	30	17	22
Been disadvantaged by a lack of suitable assessment options	49	62	20	25	10	13
Been unable to access course content	46	58	23	29	10	13
Had to wait for accessible course materials	42	53	25	32	12	15
Experienced distress about disability-related issues such as to interfere with studies	54	68	20	25	5	6

Question 21: Have you ever made a formal complaint to anyone at the university or outside the university?

Table 38: Question 21: Formal complaints

Have you made a formal complaint	Number	%
Yes	2	3
No	50	63
Never needed to	27	34
Blank	0	0
	79	

Question 22: If no [to question 21], why did you not make a formal complaint? (e.g., didn't know how to, would take too much time or energy, etc)²⁵

- All of the above
- Any sort of “formal” complaint/forms, etc. are an absolute pain with dyslexia. Takes too much time and energy to work out
- At UQ if you identify a problem you become a problem. It can also be extremely time consuming and is often not worth the stress to follow through.
- Complicated and nerve wracking
- Course coordinators were also sometimes unwilling to make alternative assessments especially in place of in person presentations and such. Sometimes it's hard to prove you're being discriminated. Also some courses have a strict no extension policy and even though my SAPD [Student Access Plan Disability] requests for extensions, technically even though my SAPD is not being honoured, it's part of the ECP [Electronic Course Profile]. It's unfair and kind of ableist.
- Didn't know how and didn't feel like I'd know what to say, or even if I'd be the best person to say it or not
- Didn't know how to
- Didn't know how to, anxious, didn't want to use energy fighting it
- Didn't know how to, didn't have the energy to, too much time had passed by the time I had the energy and ability to investigate how to do this
- Didn't know how to, would take too much time and energy, can't be bothered
- Didn't know how, didn't have the energy, would probably have been shut down and dismissed and it wouldn't have been worth my time
- Didn't know how, too much energy and time
- Didn't know how, would take too much energy and felt that it wasn't worth the time and effort and/or wouldn't be received we;;
- Didn't necessarily know it was a thing, or that a complaint would be taken seriously. But yes, also what you said.
- Didn't think it would get resolved
- Don't know how to, seems too energy intensive to be worth it
- Don't know how. Don't think they will do anything about it or understand why it is an issue.
- Don't know who to go to anymore. Been trying to get a SAP since August last year. Currently on a show cause notice and could be expelled if I fail this semester. Not the schools fault, it's my doctor.
- For fear of how that would impact my relationship with the teachers in the future, fearing that I would be seen as lazy or incompetent
- Have not needed to, or my issues have been with teaching styles, materials or delivery, that would not be recognised as constituting a breach.
- I did not feel it was going to be taken seriously. I felt my problem was not a big enough problem as no one else was having the same problem I was. I also did not know how to and had no one to help my through the process (i.e carer)
- I did not know how to and pretty much after I had experienced issues I deferred the semester, so didn't feel the need to as it was too late.

²⁵ There were 48 responses to this question. As with Part 5 below, the responses to this question has been edited to protect participants against the risk of identification. The responses have then been re-ordered—so the first words of each response are in alphabetical order—again to reduce the risk of identification.

- I didn't know how to do it and was scared it would lead to a hostile relationship between me and the university
- I didn't know I was eligible for a SAP-D until my final semester
- I don't think it would be taken seriously.
- I don't remember whether or not I have actually made a complaint
- I was told by the formal complaint application form to solve it myself informally before bothering. So the issues were never solved
- I was too upset and didn't know how to.
- I wasn't aware of the correct process of formal complaints, but have emailed course coordinators
- Internalised ableism or otherwise didn't think my problems were worth making a fuss over.
- It would take too much energy
- Nobody has ever *intentionally* been discriminatory to me
- only time this came up was DV related, formal complaint may have led to retaliation against other former partners etc
- Spoons²⁶
- Take so much time and energy
- take too much energy, not worth the effort
- too anxious, internalised ableism,
- Too hard
- too much effort with minimal evidence
- Too much energy
- Too much energy
- Too much energy and I feel like I shouldn't be complaining so much
- Too much energy to spend for too little of an outcome. A Facebook post fixed a lot of it
- Too much mental stress going through the steps
- Too much time and energy, not worth the hassle, don't want to damage an already-poor relationship with the lecturer
- Unsure how to go about making a formal complaint and scared of having a disappointing outcome
- Wasn't sure how to do it, was worried I wouldn't be taken seriously, felt like a massive amount of effort for potentially no pay off, didn't have the energy
- would take too much time or energy

²⁶ 'Spoons or 'lack of spoons' is an analogy used by some in the disability community, especially those who experience neurodiversity and chronic illness, to describe their capacity or lack thereof with regards to time, energy, etc. 'Spoons' could equally be 'cups' as it is an arbitrary measure of capacity. In this context, 'Spoons' indicates that the person did not have the capacity, whether due to lack of time or energy or some other requirement, to make a complaint.

Question 23: These statements relate to your experience as a student with disability at UQ. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Table 39: Question 23: Likert statement 1 – UQ meets my need

UQ meets my needs	Number	%
Strongly disagree	4	5
Disagree	6	7.8
Somewhat disagree	13	16.5
Neither agree nor disagree	13	16.5
Somewhat agree	22	28
Agree	21	26.6
Strongly agree	0	0
Blank	0	0
	79	

Table 40: Question 23: Likert statement 2 – UQ is welcoming of students with disability

UQ is welcoming of students with disability	Number	%
Strongly disagree	7	8.8
Disagree	6	7.6
Somewhat disagree	14	17.7
Neither agree nor disagree	7	8.8
Somewhat agree	23	29.1
Agree	20	25.3
Strongly agree	1	1.3
Blank	1	1.3
	79	

Table 41: Question 23: Likert statement 3 – It would make me feel more welcome and included to see greater positive representation of people with disability in UQ media, materials and events

It would make me feel more welcome and included to see greater positive representation of people with disability in UQ media, materials and events	Number	%
Strongly disagree	2	2.5
Disagree	1	1.3
Somewhat disagree	2	2.5
Neither agree nor disagree	13	16.5
Somewhat agree	11	14
Agree	19	24
Strongly agree	30	38
Blank	1	1.3
	79	

Table 42: Question 23: Likert statement 4 – There are user friendly & effective ways to raise disability-related issues

There are user friendly & effective ways to raise disability-related issues	Number	%
Strongly disagree	9	11
Disagree	13	16
Somewhat disagree	16	20
Neither agree nor disagree	15	19
Somewhat agree	15	19
Agree	9	11
Strongly agree	2	3
Blank	0	0
	79	

Table 43: Question 23: Likert statement 5 – I feel I can voice my needs and concerns without fear or judgement

I feel I can voice my needs and concerns without fear or judgement	Number	%
Strongly disagree	14	18
Disagree	15	19
Somewhat disagree	22	28
Neither agree nor disagree	9	11
Somewhat agree	10	13
Agree	9	11
Strongly agree	0	0
Blank	0	0
	79	

Table 44: Question 23: Likert statement 6 – I feel my disability is unwelcome at UQ

I feel my disability is unwelcome at UQ	Number	%
Strongly disagree	8	10
Disagree	16	20
Somewhat disagree	11	14
Neither agree nor disagree	12	15
Somewhat agree	15	19
Agree	12	15
Strongly agree	5	6
Blank	0	0
	79	

Table 45: Question 23: Likert statement 7 – I feel I am supported to succeed

I feel I am supported to succeed	Number	%
Strongly disagree	7	9
Disagree	12	15
Somewhat disagree	9	11
Neither agree nor disagree	11	14
Somewhat agree	26	33
Agree	12	15
Strongly agree	2	3
Blank	0	0
	79	

Table 46: Question 23: Likert statement 8 – Course teachers understood how to implement my sap or respond to my needs

Course teachers understood how to implement my sap or respond to my needs	Number	%
Strongly disagree	2	3
Disagree	8	10
Somewhat disagree	9	11
Neither agree nor disagree	25	32
Somewhat agree	14	18
Agree	15	19
Strongly agree	5	6
Blank	1	1
	79	

Table 47: Question 23: Likert statement 9 – I feel that processes and learning activities at UQ are designed with my needs in mind

I feel that processes and learning activities at UQ are designed with my needs in mind	Number	%
Strongly disagree	15	19
Disagree	22	28
Somewhat disagree	17	22
Neither agree nor disagree	14	18
Somewhat agree	9	11
Agree	1	1
Strongly agree	0	0
Blank	1	1
	79	

Table 48: Question 23: Likert statement 10 – I've been given helpful advice by UQ staff on types of adjustments that might meet my needs

I've been given helpful advice by UQ staff on types of adjustments that might meet my needs	Number	%
Strongly disagree	7	9
Disagree	10	13
Somewhat disagree	13	16
Neither agree nor disagree	12	15
Somewhat agree	16	20
Agree	12	15
Strongly agree	8	10
Blank	1	1
	79	

Table 49: Question 23: Likert statement 11 – I am confused about what supports are available to me

I am confused about what supports are available to me	Number	%
Strongly disagree	2	3
Disagree	12	15
Somewhat disagree	10	13
Neither agree nor disagree	4	5
Somewhat agree	19	24
Agree	14	18
Strongly agree	17	22
Blank	1	1
	79	

Table 50: Question 23: Likert statement 12 – I would recommend UQ to other students with disability

I would recommend UQ to other students with disability	Number	%
Strongly disagree	8	10
Disagree	7	9
Somewhat disagree	6	8
Neither agree nor disagree	24	30
Somewhat agree	14	18
Agree	16	20
Strongly agree	4	5
Blank	0	0
	79	

Part 5

Note: The responses to the qualitative questions have been edited to protect participants against the risk of identification. The responses have then been re-ordered—so the first words of each response are in alphabetical order—again to reduce the risk of identification.

Question 24: Please think about the courses you have studied that did a good job of providing you with appropriate and equitable access to education and participation, with regards to your disability. In your own words, describe the ways in which those courses were able to achieve these positive outcomes for you.²⁷

- Absolutely none in [discipline]
- At best courses were already set up so accommodations were already there. For example multiple formats of course materials. However they did not meet all my needs.
- Basically any of the Masters level (a lot are co-badged) courses offered by [School]. There's a very strong and active Equity, Diversity and Inclusion committee in [School] who do good work educating educators.
- Captioning, recorded tutorials for me to do at my own pace
- Content uploaded to blackboard a couple of days before the lecture.
Full lecture recordings.
Access to previous year's recordings.
[Course code] all lectures are recorded and presented on zoom, all information is clear on the blackboard site. They have very good communication and notify about assessment deadlines.
- [Course code] had many support classes/worksheets to learn in different ways
- [Course code] - the external resources are accessible to internal students, so if you feel up to it you can attend in person, or you can attend a live zoom which gives flexibility. The practical sessions can also be taken by zoom. Also the option of watching recordings of lectures was good. A mandatory assessment was also provided via zoom or in person for internal students.
- [Course code] understood tutorial participating not always possible due to anxiety, written statements instead
- [Course code] made videos for missed parts even if only several students missed sections
- [Course code] was able to take an additional semester to complete my studies. My supervisor and all staff involved were very understanding.
- Course coordinators were adaptable and willing to accommodate me even without necessarily needing official approval (ie. giving me a 30s breath break during prac exams before I knew how to officially activate my exam adjustments)
- Course coordinators were willing to meet up with me 1:1, and during these meetings were friendly, understanding and eager to listen to my needs and ask how they could help. Tutors were understanding when I told them my needs and were accommodating to my need for breaks or absences
- Doesn't apply – have only ever done postgrad at UQ. I only really interact with my supervisor and [...], but the Hons course coordinators were very supportive when I needed extensions and adjustments to my ECP last semester due to health issues

²⁷ There were 46 responses to this question.

- Flexible resit options (for pracs & assessments), external option, understanding of my inability to attend pracs/tutorials
- had tutors and a lecturer who went out of their way to make the content accessible, and gave me a sense that I was being heard for the difficulties I encountered.
- Honestly, I have ADHD and pretty severe memory issues, particularly with reference to episodic memory. Additionally, I've been studying on and off for around a decade, so the earlier years have become incredibly fuzzy. With that said, my recent courses have generally been quite flexible with allowing for extensions for ADHD/mental health reasons, which was enormously helpful
- I found accessing an SAPD prohibitively difficult for my first two years at university causing me to drop out of all courses in 2020 and 2021. Therefore I do not know what difficulties I may have had, or what may have been adequately compensated.
- I had one class where the lecturer provided full accurate transcripts in a word document which were invaluable. These made studying and understanding the lecture content way more accessible to me
- I have had courses in which the co-ordinators went out of their way to support me through difficult times, including things such as emailing about my late submissions with information on how to apply for extensions, being very generous with extensions plus just very kind and supportive words. It is surprising how much a difference just knowing that the staff actually want to help me succeed actually makes. It is so difficult to ask for help sometimes, and the understanding that sometimes I ask for help later in the semester, and the willingness to still help is amazing. The two classes I list in 25 both did that for me and I am extremely appreciative.
- I previously studied at another university that provided a lot of lockers for students. I didn't appreciate at the time (as it was before my chronic pain) how useful it was to offload some of my bag's contents in a locker between classes and not have to carry my heavy bag around to all classes. UQ doesn't provide this locker facility and I have to carry a heavy bag every time I am on campus. This causes me to do more of my lectures online at home, but when I do go I risk my pain flaring as a result. This is not a course issue, but a university wide issue. Please note, I would happily pay for a locker fee each year to use a dedicated lockable locker.
- I was given extra time on exams to account for needing bathroom breaks, and assignment extensions when I was fatigued. One course allowed me to change my timetable to a better time and took into account my disability related to time.
- I was in hospital once for my chronic pain, but only for a day. When I applied for an extension the course coordinator gave me a week and told me to take some more time to rest. During the same time, I was able to miss a compulsory workshop for a different subject without a medical certificate, as I was still in hospital
- I wouldn't have even known about the SAP if not for my [course] teacher telling me. I take introductory [subject] and we were required to complete a 'get to know you' question sheet. At the end of the sheet it asked if there was anything my teachers needed to know to make my learning experience better so that's when I told them about me being on the spectrum and what that can be like in a classroom. I got an email back the next day thanking me for informing them and letting me know about my options.
- I'm only doing one course at the moment but I have had a session with a student advisor and got an student access plan that both me and my parents felt was amazing and suited my needs exactly. I have also talked to my practical coordinator and [they were] also amazing and ran me through how to apply for adjustments and has taken care of that for all my exams. [They] also organised things so if I needed to leave during a tutorial or practical I

could and I wouldn't be disadvantaged in any way. And also what will happen when I eventually learn on campus

- In 2017, when I studied postgraduate course work. Primarily, the courses that I took were easy to access.
- It has always been up to the individual running/teaching the course/class. When this person has been great with following the access plan, incorporating flexibility into the class, or just being approachable with my issues, this has made all the difference. This is especially relevant as my disabilities impact time management and the quality of my work (can fluctuate).
- Lecturers or tutors always welcoming questions
The course coordinator for this course ... was by far the best course coordinator I have ever had. [They were] always ready to make time for me. [They] prioritized my learning. [They] met *my* vision, and came to *my* level, rather than rigidly imposing a set of predetermined expectations and expecting me to be the one to make all the adjustments. I felt seen and heard by [Name]. [They] exhibited no prejudice. [They were] a calm and clear communicator – not in a contrived manner, but in a natural sense. [They] did more than respond – [they] pre-empted my needs; sensing them intuitively. I didn't actually feel like I needed to spell everything out, nor was it required of me. Our discussions were usually to do with the content of the course itself, and the concepts behind everything [they were] explaining to me. [They] followed the logic I used to make connections between things, validating my understanding. [Their] empathy for my situation was borne of [their] own lived experience – which [they] shared with me. That unique relatability was central to my success in the course. The grade I received was irrelevant. I walked away from that experience feeling enlightened and empowered.
- Multi-modal methods of receiving important course information. Lots of examples of concepts and understanding tutors who aren't overworked.
- My lecturer or tutor would check in with me throughout the semester in class to make sure I was okay and they were adjusting things appropriately, honestly this rarely happened, however for the courses that did this, my grades were typically higher. In the early days of my education, I didn't have the confidence to speak up.
- My lecturers have been excellent about taking their masks off (once the mandate was lifted) and facing the front of the class so that hard-of-hearing students can read lips and hear their words more clearly, although whether the mask-wearing is for personal comfort rather than accommodating disabilities, I can't be sure.
- My tutors are very good at allowing me to sit at the front of the classroom, and are learning to look directly at me when speaking to me, and making sure their words are clear and loud (without being exaggerated).
- Not applicable. My disability is invisible and I have not raised issues with course staff
- One course tutor made a point to make sure every student was aware of what an SAP(D) was and how to access Student Services and how to make an appointment/application for.
- One of the courses that I was treated really well in was in semester 1 2020, during COVID online learning, and before I had even considered ADHD and autism diagnoses. My positive experiences with the course were nearly all because of the course coordinator, who really got to know some of us, who reached out to me when [they] could tell that I was stressed and having trouble, and offered me extension after extension for assessments that I struggled with, even without submitting an official request. Having a CC that actually cared about [their] students, rather than one that just rattled off UQ-Endorsed 'Advice' was a really great thing for me during those difficult times.

- Only area that I have had help with are the examination adjustments and extensions for assessments. Not actually had any help with accommodating my disability with participation and education.
- providing timely online content
flexible contact hours for course coordinators
- providing good examples of work
- Putting lecture slides on blackboard before the lecture, so I can look at them in advance and have them open on my laptop during the lecture. Some physics courses have a number of assignments (usually 5 or 6) throughout the semester, but the one that you get the lowest grade on doesn't count toward your overall grade for the course.
- Recorded lectures that were edited into video format with transcripts of audio. This allowed lectures to be engaging, easy to digest & accessible (micro2000) open book exams help to rely on learning the content rather than memorise. many small assessment pieces throughout the course, stops all the pressure to perform well in the final exam. Often it gets hard at end of sem with my disabilities & all other assessment at the same time, which can make putting all my eggs in one basket (a large final exam) extremely hard and not a fair example of my performance in the course. Having lots of small assessments allows an equitable gage on my performance in the course throughout the sem while also encouraging me to keep on top of work.
Giving lecture notes before lectures, this allows me to follow the content easily during a lecture.
- The best courses have been those with optional contact time, to discuss aspects of the course materials and assessments. These tend to be from [Discipline] and [Discipline].
- The worst courses have been those with very little guidance, high time pressure and which actively discourage (by penalty) discussion of the course materials and assessments. These include almost all courses from [Discipline].
- The course I am referring to did a good job at accomodating my SAP plan, providing me with the support I needed, largely in the form of thorough, well-written, well-designed course notes. Additionally, the course notes for the entire semester were provided at the beginning of the semester, making it easier for me to plan my studying and assessment around all my other personal health requirements (e.g. rest, appointments etc) and enabling me to work at my own pace (If I fell behind, i had thorough notes to accompany lecture recordings and if i was too unwell to watch the lecture recording, the notes were sufficient on their own. OR, if I knew I had a busy week coming up, I could work ahead a little bit to prevent falling behind). The course coordinator responded incredibly well to my SAP, was open to learning about my conditions, and was very understanding throughout the semester with all extensions/deferrals etc. The course coordinator also always responded promptly to emails and queries.
- The professors are open to discussing with you and take initiative to encourage you to reach out to you rather than waiting for you to reach out to them, but also provide a good amount of information on what historically has been done.
- They actually accepted the access requests on my SAP. The staff were alright with me sitting out of tutorials with practical work if I had a flare up, and they didn't mark me down for it. They also just generally weren't rude about me needing mobility aids, and they've promised to help me as best they can with assessment provisions.
- they didn't. they just didn't.
- They were very accommodating. In most cases, a make up assessment was often able to be put in place.

- Uploaded lectures online, did not require me to attend every lecture or class, did not punish my grade for absences, went through course work at an appropriate pace and gave thorough feedback on assessment, areas to work on, etc.
- Used appropriate language and outlined how my SAP applied to all different aspects of course content and assessment
- Visual and audio for dialogue with accurate live captions.
- Weekly catch ups with the course coordinator on top of lecture content delivered in short videos. It kept me on task and attentive

Question 25: If you can recall them, please list up to 3 courses (using names or course codes) that did a good job of being accessible and accommodating with regards to your disability

No data are reported here. We omitted to collect information as to when the course was delivered. In addition, the sample size of participants responding with course codes was very small.

Question 26: Please think about the courses you have studied that did NOT do a good job of providing you with appropriate and equitable access to education and participation, with regards to your disability. In your own words, describe the ways in which those courses were not able to achieve positive outcomes for you.²⁸

- After discussing about my SAP plan with the teacher before class, it was dismissed and then not followed. I was called on in class when the plan says not to do so. I had a freak out during the class and was completely thrown off track after having my request ignored.
- All first year [discipline] courses
- Almost every single exam I have taken there has been loud music, loud groundskeeping work or some other noise near the exam room. Can there be some sort of allocated time for no noise during exams as this makes it very difficult to focus if my only good ear is facing the window with the leafblower being used outside. This applies to every course and this lengthy form isn't a great way to get detailed responses.
- Any courses where teachers just regurgitated the same "advice" were usually the ones I struggled with the most. Like telling me to just "read the textbook" when I would ask how else to learn I could learn the content apart from via the lectures (seriously, you expect me, an autistic an ADHD person who is already struggling to learn this stuff, to read a *textbook* about it?). I also personally have a dislike for courses that encourage "self-directed learning". Like I understand that it's a good and useful skill to learn, but if I wanted to teach myself, I wouldn't be attending university.
- As having a number of disabilities there is a lot to accommodate for, but the one I struggle the most is with vision impairment. Never had help with accommodating with course work or participation within the classroom environment in all courses I have studied.
- Automated transcripts of the lecture, full of inaccuracies. If I were deaf and/or Hard of hearing not simply having to navigate lectures with sensory processing difficulties (which transcripts help with) there would be sections of the lectures that would have been incomprehensible
- classrooms not a good working environment for me

²⁸ There were 42 responses, of which 2 have been excluded on the basis they simply listed course codes, and 3 were excluded as 'not applicable'.

- [Course code] Final exam involved being given a few randomly chosen theorems from a list to prove (we were given the list beforehand). We'd have an adequate amount of time to prove them and then present the proofs to the assessor and discuss our solutions. However, each student had a staggered start time which meant that there'd always be someone speaking in the room, so it was near impossible to focus. I deferred that exam, hoping to have a quieter time later on, but about 1/3 of the cohort deferred also. The material we had to learn/memorise was not in line with normal mathematics course standards and was highly stressful.
- [Course code] have immense trouble reading and understanding material. Assessments have little guidance.
- [Course codes x 6]
- Courses are being restructured all the time so the older ones probably aren't as relevant. But these are the most immediate ones I can think of. I have been through a lot of courses. None of them have been good to me, save a couple.
- Content delivered is 'fuzzy' (poorly recorded or scanned) hard to listen to or read with no alternatives. Important concepts can be hard to grasp because the content given is an example with no base equation. Or equations given assume you fully understand how it works.
- Course had a tutor who in the middle of class weekly questioned my absence from the beginning of the course despite having been provided with information as to why I was absent and documentation of SAP in place.
Also literally any course with tutes in Hartley Teakle, the building is a nightmare, especially to get to/around in summer.
- Course material was in strange format, lecturers would not cover all needed material and asked students to guess what else was needed to complete assessments. Questions asked were always met with more questions rather than answers. Did not accommodate for neurodivergent students at all.
All subjects with laboratory components tend to be inaccessible due to 'ohs guidelines'. Not wheelchair accessible, hard to navigate and need to stand for hours at a time.
- Courses that had a one size fits all approach and did not allow differences was difficult. Especially when I had a fluctuating condition or wasn't yet fully diagnosed. This was especially relevant for speeches and presentations, where I was not given alternative presentation options.
- [Description of identifiable incident related to disability] This was an assessment when I was completing coursework and I had to [complete a specific assessment type]. I don't feel comfortable stating which course was as the lecturer/course co-ordinator is now based at [another university]. It wasn't a course offered by [School]. [Identifiable information describing incident in class]. The lecturer/course-coordinator actually joked about this and turned it into a 'case study' of [identifiable information]. This really impacted me badly - I was marked down for 'lack of prep' because my SAPD didn't explicitly note that I had problems with [a specific assessment type]. At that stage I really didn't have the capacity mentally to go through with appealing that decision. Mainly though, [this experience] impacted my confidence with public speaking and I started avoiding situations where this was required, I still struggle with group settings where I don't know anyone.
- Did not finish teaching content during the lecture but expected students to know and understand the content that wasn't taught by the tutorial class, only had lectures available at early times, punished grades for absences, lesson pace moved too quickly, did not provide enough resources to assist with how to study course material.

- difficult computational assignment w little assistance and significant lack of prior knowledge on topic
 - Missing lectures, used previous years instead
 - Long complex textbook readings that are unnecessary
- During my earlier years of study, I was not particularly well aware of the options available for a person with a disability (amongst other things, I wasn't diagnosed until quite a way into my degree). I can't speak to the options available at the time, but as someone that tried to study with ADHD, I struggled hugely with time management, assessment planning etc and those years at university were (in retrospect) quite a distressing time in my life. When I did have a student access plan created, the extensions etc that I was able to apply for were useful, but I can imagine it would be hugely distressing if they were not accepted for whatever reason, which is something I have heard has happened to others.
- Expectations were open-ended/unclear.
- Expectations were unrealistic for beginners/inexperienced students.
 - No opportunities to consolidate learnings, before taking large steps up, with each successive course.
 - Very limited time to work with tutors.
 - Discussion/collaboration actively discouraged.
 - Subjectively 'harsh' and isolating.
 - In some cases, teaching was poor.
- I'm partially deaf, I had a course where I had to do a mini quiz at the end of the lecture, on that days lecture content. I rarely could hear the lectures and would just have to guess the answers at the end. The mini quizzes counted towards my grade. It was honestly a nightmare for me.
- In module 1 of this course, the weekly course content was provided in 3-4 30 minute videos online. Firstly, at the beginning of the course, in lecture 1, we were told that no videos in the online content would be over 5/6 minutes. I, following this, planned out my time accordingly so discovering that in fact there was 1 1/2 hours of, what were essentially lectures to watch, was difficult. Furthermore, these videos were in addition to a two hour lecture each week. While the lectures were still run, these online videos seemed to replace the content of the timetabled lectures, and the lectures were simply question time. While I can understand how this could be helpful, I think possibly keeping the course content in the lectures (complimented by online information) and then scheduling a series of shorter, more concise 'question/consultation class' for smaller groups of students (in which students can ask highly individual questions) might be more effective. Otherwise, students with disabilities will have to cover at least 1 1/2 hours of videos (difficult for people with fatigue, concentration, attention symptoms), in addition to attending the 2 hour lectures (in case they miss any actual content) consisting of a two hour long question time with highly specific questions from individual students (several hundred students). By separating the course content (lectures) and question time, it allows students to choose what classes they attend each week, depending on their symptoms and other commitments that week. If the course content was to stay in the same format, I might suggest more comprehensive written notes/diagrams to accompany them, so different learners can study the content in different ways.
- In most cases, I feel it was on me for not asking for support or accomodations early enough, or at all. But in other ways, you could say that maybe those courses/teachers were not structured in a way that made me feel safe to ask for accomodations.
- Last year, in 2021, I took the course [Course code] with [lecturer]. The lecturer was so impatient and rude toward me because I couldn't understand [their] explanation during the online zoom lectures for [a particular] exercise... I was uncomfortable when [lecturer]

asked why only you were different and the others were fine. I didn't want to make a scene, so I decided to respond and answered to [lecturer]; that's okay; I will figure it out later and quietly logged out and didn't continue for zoom class. The following day, I am dropping this course.

- No alternative assessment – forced to do an oral presentation despite having severe anxiety over it. Closed captions on lectures were completely useless and not even worth looking at. Was given a pdf that wasn't accessible to screen readers as the only source from which I could access a textbook.
- None of my courses have had reliable captioning for their lectures, very often the words in the automatic captions are entirely incorrect and no accompanying imagery or text hints at what the words could actually be.
- Not allowing extensions for assignments under any circumstances (note I never tried to get an extension, but they did say that they won't allow extensions). Not putting lecture slides on blackboard before the lecture. Having a long and difficult [course] assignment almost every week, so there's 8 assignments in the semester.
- Not willing to give alternative assessments for required attendance
- Poorly recorded lectures with inaccurate transcripts makes content hard to follow. Some of my courses would not provide lecture notes beforehand, or, they would have barely any notes (or pictures) on lecture slides, making it extremely hard to get the information down.
- Standardized copy/paste response which was not personalized at all
- The material content arrived too late, one took 8 weeks before anything, similar to another one. I had to withdraw both.
- The only marks I lost in my seminar presentation were due to my body language during the presentation, and losing my train of thought at one point because the lights were so damned bright and the room was so loud. With my only assessments oral presentations and a thesis, I feel those with neurodivergency are at a HUGE disadvantage in the presentations.
- They refused my SAP, I was told my accommodations were pointless and that if I don't do the course exactly how able bodied people do, I will fail the course. They pretty much told me they can't be bothered to accommodate me and will fail me if I try to get those accommodations.
- The other courses just ignored my SAP all together, never responded to it or acknowledged it.
- Too confusing with how the chapters were ordered
- Too many exams at the same time that overwhelmed me and gave me excessive stress (4 exams in 4 days)
90min Unstructured prac classes: It's hard for me to stay focused without a clear plan. When I fell really behind due to a symptom spike (caused by the 2022 floods), it was really hard for me to understand what we were going over and stay regulated during these classes
Prac classes and lectures going beyond scheduled time. One of the ways I can regulate myself is having a clear expectation of how long I need to keep myself focused and regulated and going over time can be really triggering since I only planned/was prepared for that specific amount of time
- Unclear expectations of what to expect from exams
- Unaccommodating. Extensions not allowed. Attendance compulsory and there was no way to make up for non attendance. Attendance was also graded.
- Use that "lectorial" format where you have to watch videos at home then attend the lecture knowing the content. It's terrible.

- Use the ECP to say extensions aren't available for certain assessment, have an unpublished school policy that SAP may only be used for a 1 week extension.

Question 27: If you can recall them, please list up to 3 courses (using course names or course codes) that did NOT do good job of being accessible and accommodating with regards to your disability

No data are reported here, as the sample size of students responding with course codes was too small to provide any meaningful data and no information had been collected regarding when the course was delivered that might enable targeted feedback.

Question 28: Please think of a time when you were happy with how the university supported you, or accommodated your disability-related needs, or provided you with appropriate and equitable access to education and participation with regards to your disability. Describe it below:²⁹

- Exam adjustments after a bad exam experience
- Exam time increased, assignment extensions for fatigue and medical appointments.
- Extra time in exams is an absolute game changer for me
- Fast to generate a SAPD, [Faculty] administration helped me go through my options in detail, follow ups from UQ administration, course coordinators flexibility in prac attendance
- Giving my scholarship back when I failed a few courses
- I am happy UQ has provided me do my exam in quiet a room and adjusted the time because I am anxious to see crowded students and noise in a big hall for the exam.
- i am not happy with how uq does anything regarding disability other than having a disabilities collective. but that's the union, not uq.
- I am quite happy at the moment in terms of how the University is accomodating my disability. However I do feel a bit isolated but that is for seperate reasons.
- I appreciate being able to receive extensions on assessments, and getting extra time on exams.
- I find the extension process very easy to complete and often understanding. I've never been denied an extension due to hospital visits or appointments I can't reschedule.
- I found accessing an SAPD prohibitively difficult for my first two years at university causing me to drop out of all courses in 2020 and 2021. Therefore I do not know what difficulties I may have had, or what may have been adequately compensated. Being able to drop out of classes with relative ease makes the shame often imposed on disabled people less.
- I got basic pamphlets that said that there were services available.
- I had a discussion with my [Subject] lecturer, who helped me apply for a Student Access Plan, which I got wrong the second time I attempted to submit. [The lecturer] took the time to talk with me after the lecture, and it made me feel comforted to know I had one educator i could talk to in regards to my mental and physical health.
- I have been happy with the implementation of SAPs.
- I was at QUT
- I was happy when I had a rough bout of Anxiety and this escalated my OCD, meaning that I was losing a lot of time on rituals and behaviours. When I was able to use my SAP to get an extension easily, this significantly removed pressure from me and allowed me to refocus.

²⁹ There were 35 responses, of which 2 were excluded as they simply referred back to Q24, and 3 were excluded as 'not applicable'

- I was really last minute in being able to get an appointment to get exam adjustments because there were no spots available for appointments. But it was the last day and somehow they managed to rush me in, so I was very grateful.
- Included lectures in short videos allowing for me to watch the content
- It was rather quick and easy to book an appointment with a student advisor, who helped me set up a plan that we both agreed was appropriate. I get validated and confident after that meeting and was eager to participate and learn at uni after.
- Just being able to have a SAP in place that allows me to get extensions without going through my entire medical history with a staff member or having to get to my GP for a medical certificate.
- My academic advisor being very helpful with planning out my courses
- My disability plan helps a lot with needing extensions for assignments and exam adjustments. Also I have been offered mobility devices
- My dog has just started on an assistance dog program and [External organisation] and UQ have been extremely supportive of our training journey by giving us access before he is fully accredited.
- My first initial appointment with my Student Advisor was very helpful, as was my implementation of the Student Access Plan.
- My lecturer removed [their] mask because [they] knew I lip read and would be unable to understand without that. Also the mobility scooters were so helpful.
- Only decent thing that happened wasn't even decent. I complained to a student advisor that the students and general public are blocked from seeing accessibility maps of UQ. Do they not think students and public can require mobility aids, or have mobility impairments? So I got emailed the PDF copy of the map. Honestly disgusting that I had to make an appointment just to be able to get around campus, but at least I got it eventually.
- So far I have met with my course coordinators for [Course code] and [Course code]. Both times, I left the meeting feeling better than when I went in. Both were willing to listen, didn't make me feel bad, patronized or like anything I was telling them was my fault. They both asked "what can I do to help you" and either were willing to accommodate my needs or supportive in finding alternative routes to help when my ideas were incomplete or implausible. They treated me like any other person and were encouraging and validating.
- The best day I've had at UQ was meeting my original Disability Advisor [Name] when I was doing course work. Unfortunately [they aren't] at UQ anymore. [They] explained to me what supports and adjustments were available and, honestly was just fantastic in how [they] approached the SAPD process. Apart from getting a great SAPD, I walked out of that appointment (45mins) armed with an amazing amount of information and a clear plan of when and how I could use the information. You could immediately tell [they] had years of experience advocating for students as well.
- The university has helped a lot with accommodating with extensions for assessments and examination adjustments. Helping also with workshops for education and well being. Also having lovely & helpful staff at student services.
- When coordination between disability services and lecture coordinators went efficiently, and exam adjustments or preparations were tested and sent to me as a sample set of exercises.

Question 29: Please think of a time when you were unhappy with how the university supported you, or accommodated your disability-related needs, or the university did not provide you with appropriate and equitable access to education and participation with regards to your disability. Describe it below³⁰

- After the flooding, my mental illnesses spiked dramatically. I was barely able to get out of bed and even thinking about doing one of my online lectures spiked my anxiety to the point where my heart would race and my chest would feel tight. I also saw my [disability]-related meltdowns increase [in frequency].
Since all school programming had been pushed back a week I sought to get a deferred exam (for [Course Code]) also pushed back a week to [have] time to recover without the stress and [...] to study properly so that I could do as well on test as I knew that I could. In the end, I did receive the deferral for the exam but the process of doing so was so distressing I'm honestly starting to get upset again just thinking about it. (as such, I apologize if this is rant-like. the subject is very upsetting, but I'll try my best).
[Particular staff members] were [...] incredibly supportive and since I was only asking for the test to be pushed back a week (the same way that EVERY other programming was) I thought it would be a simple ask. It was not.
First of all, the [relevant administrative authority] didn't reply in a timely matter. I sent them an email [three days] before the exam [...], this was as soon as I could (since I had been speaking to [relevant staff] prior to this about how to get a deferral). [I was] assured [...] that they would respond quickly due to the time sensitive nature of the request. When I didn't get a response by [the day before the exam], I [contacted a relevant staff member] who seemed [...] confused [...] that I hadn't heard back. I [was eventually told by the relevant] office [that I would not get a response] until the following week (AFTER the exam date). [This was distressing and it was clear the person I was dealing with didn't understand the impacts of disability. Eventually I was told the administrative authority would contact me.]
[I was contacted shortly afterwards by the administrative officer who asked about my situation. When I explained my situation, the administrative officer was unsympathetic, concerned only about physical impacts] This again, triggered a meltdown that made it hard for me to function or focus and started to send me into a spiral. I couldn't [understand] why [the administrative authority] was [...] unsympathetic to [the mental health impacts I was experiencing].
Thankfully [I had a supportive friend who encouraged me to] see [a medical professional] that same day. [The medical professional] was wonderful and was so understanding and kind. [The medical professional] made me feel better after having had multiple meltdowns that day and being terrified that he would be as unsympathetic as the [administrative authority] had been. [The medical professional] gave me a letter that [...] was enough to get [...] my [exam] defer[ed].
- Before I was diagnosed with my Anxiety disorders, I struggled with speeches. I had multiple occasions where my requests for alternative arrangements were ignored as I did not have this on my SAP, and caused me much distress. It is common for me to have a panic attack during speeches. I do not believe we should need to be diagnosed (a lengthy and expensive process) in order to be respected and supported.
- Exam experience where anxiety and asthma medications were taken off of me mid exam for "concern of being used to make me physically sick to get out of the exam"

³⁰ There were 36 responses of which 1 was excluded as 'not applicable'.

- Flipped learning classrooms have been difficult in helping me learn content. I think the idea itself is good, but the teachers often upload a big pile of resources for students to learn the unit content themselves before the class, and then use class time as more of a discussion about the content. I think there needs to be more time where the teacher is implementing different teaching strategies themselves and explain the content more deeply, helping students grasp the information and then go on to the discussion or activity time.
- gave me so many pdfs i couldn't use a screen reader for. [Name of course] has an unimaginably high workload that's really text dense and i'm shocked i'm even passing.
- i didn't know i could get a SAP-D
- I don't understand some of the wording of the services. The criteria is extremely specific. It is hard to find something that I qualify for and will help me in the ways I need.
- I don't like how the ddi website says you need a diagnosis to get a SAP. I am not yet diagnosed with anything, but my doctor thinks I have a bunch of things and I am waiting to see a psychologist, and that should be enough for me to be able to get a SAP.
- I found accessing an SAPD prohibitively difficult for my first two years at university causing me to drop out of all courses in 2020 and 2021. Therefore I do not know what difficulties I may have had, or what may have been adequately compensated.
- I have to wear safety glasses in the lab, but the lights are too bright and there are no tinted lenses available for prescription safety glasses. So I don't wear safety glasses as I can't concentrate at all.
No alternatives available for oral assessments
- I haven't been contacted regarding what is available with regard to scaffolding, especially for ADHD but this diagnosis is new too
- I was recommended by the disability support to make an appointment with a learning advisor. I didn't really want to, as I feel I am doing okay with the aspects of university that I can control – its just that due to my disorders other aspects are hard and that is out of my control! I did book an appointment anyway, and explained to the learning advisor my disability and how it effects my study. I felt like I wasn't really listened to, and just was given the stock advice which was not possible for me to do given my disorder, as I had explained. I felt belittled and at one point they laughed at me as I was explaining my difficulties with connecting with other students. It was overall a very disappointing experience.
- Lab work in science courses is not accessible to neurodivergent folk at all
- Lack of forms and etc when starting university to flag disabilities or neurodivergence with UQ immediately
- Literally all the time. In a fundamental sense, before we even begin to address specific “instances”. Ableism and rigid inaccessibility is inherent to the structure of this institution and all its systems.
- Most of the time.
Ignoring SAP, refusing SAP, blocking basic accessibility knowledge, not really overly welcoming to disabled students.
- Mostly, I wouldn't like it if the lecturers didn't know how to act toward disabled students or the lecturers didn't get training from UQ on how to handle students with disability backgrounds.
- No specific instance, just that services are hard too book, need to book weeks in advance the last I tried
- Not sure if this is applicable here, but it frustrates me when I receive responses from course coordinators on my SAPD, and it's just a generic “welcome to the course, here's how it's gonna go” message that could be copy and pasted onto any SAPD, as if they haven't read

mine at all. Also once I got denied a two week extension to an assessment due date via my SAPD, and I received no explanation why.

- Probably the course where I had to do the mini quizzes, I had an access plan, the lecturer knew and didn't care. Very much an attitude of this is how it is. Also many buildings and toilets are not accessible. Particularly with a mobility scooter. I really struggled finding properly accessible bathrooms, often having to leave the building a class was in, to find one, then come back it made me anxious, and not want to come into campus. I only would go into campus for classes, not to study or socialise, because of issues like this.
- Relating to "No opportunities to consolidate learnings, before taking large steps up, with each successive course.":

I once asked a coordinator about how to improve at particular types of problems and while they did provide some suggestions, that remarked that these problems were of a level that 'someone taking the course should be able to do, by now'.
- School hasn't done anything wrong, I'm stuck in bureaucratic hell trying to get a SAP and just waiting to be kicked out.
- See previous answers, but generally just the energy of some staff in [area] is very hustle-y with little regard for breaks
- Several times my SAPD has not been implemented as I have not received a response from the disability services team. Also very hard to navigate the university it is very unfriendly to those with mobility issues inside and outside classrooms
- Student Access Plans should not have to be renegotiated on a semester by semester basis for chronic or ongoing conditions. It's a time-consuming process, and having to spend effort and time on that when it's pretty damn unlikely that my neurodevelopmental disorder cleared itself up over the semester break is a frustrating experience.
- That hasn't happened.
- The lights in the exam room are too bright which can be distracting
- The need for tutorial participation for marks is quite stressful. Attendance isn't an issue for me, but answering questions in front of 20–30 people can be very intimidating, especially when it's always at the back of my mind that if I don't speak up I might suffer academically for it
- The [name of faculty] puts a lot of emphasis on networking to be successful. As an autistic person I find it near impossible to go to networking events for a number of reasons. The [name of faculty] is not supportive of autistic people in terms of networking. There is no alternative for us.
- The second Disability Advisor I had was atrocious – absolutely did not have any idea of either university processes or the needs of people who were coming to [them]. Well that was my experience. [They] actually told me I was legally required to disclose my conditions to course co-ordinators – I just sat in the meeting dumbfounded after that because that statement is 1. factually incorrect and 2. coercive. The disclosure of mental health conditions is an extremely fraught and personal decision, I'm sure there's people who will argue that non-disclosure is somehow 'internalised ableism' but I disagree vehemently with that position as it misses the point – it's an individual decision, and sometimes it is just plain old unsafe to disclose.
- There were very few spots available when I was trying to get an adviser appointment
- Was having a depressive episode and they wouldn't give me an extension on my assignment because it wasn't a good enough reason and I didn't have a medical certificate. I couldn't get a medical certificate because I couldn't get out of bed.
- When I was given only 4 extra minutes on an online quiz that caused panic

- When tutors did not take into account screen reader particularities and marked me 0 for all assignments in a particular component of each (formatting marks constituting around 20% of overall marks).

Question 30: Please write down 3 separate words (not a sentence) that best describe the way you feel about your experience as a person with disability at UQ³¹

- alone, entirely up to me, if I succeed it will be despite UQ support
- alone, defeated, conflicted
- alone, scared, tired
- anxious, persistent, unsupported
- bureaucratic, neoliberal, contractual
- challenging, heavy, isolating
- complicated, decent-ish, isolated
- confused, panicking, lonely
- confusing, tiring, long
- different, harder, tired
- disappointed, letdown, leftout
- disappointed, stressed, depressed
- equipped, informed, not taken seriously
- forgotten, unconsidered, facetious
- hard, abled, frustrating
- hindrance, imposter, invisible
- ignored, repressed, used
- impressed, supported, included
- inconsistent, helpful, difficult
- inequitable, disappointing, isolating
- infuriated, frustrated, helpless
- invisible, complication, sporadically supported
- kind, inefficient, burdening
- listening, empathy, supporting
- lonely, obscure, different
- novel, helped, person
- overwhelmed, isolated, dissociated
- overwhelming, confusing, contradictory
- progressive, accommodating, universal
- sad, frustrating, lonely
- self-directed, isolated, unhelpful
- stress, fighting, alternative
- stressed, unintelligent, inadequate
- stressed, hopeless, weary
- “supported (for the learning side of uni), accessible (the arrangement and support), isolated “
- supported, assisted, seen
- supported, acknowledged, recognised
- supported, misunderstood, inflexible

³¹ There were 40 responses.

- understood, blurry, unproductive
- unsatisfied, rejected, unsupported

Question 31: Is there a way in which the physical access, course materials, administrative procedures, or any other aspect of life at university has become easier or more accessible to you as a person with disability because of changes arising from the pandemic?³²

- A lot of courses (tutorials mostly) were recorded and kept on blackboard, which was great for me to study at my own pace and I understood the content better
- Being able to access lecture recordings after they occur is greatly helpful from both the perspective of someone with low energy due to a depressive mood disorder (may not have the energy to go on campus) and someone with severe social anxiety (having a phobia of people can make being in a room full of them distracting and anxiety inducing). Online tutorials allowed me to participate much more than in-person tutorials due to autism and severe social anxiety inhibiting participation that requires me to talk in a room full of people and respond in the moment. I can write/type much more eloquently and quickly than I can speak.
- Being able to ask questions in a chat box has been helpful and makes me feel like I can participate
- Being able to attend classes over zoom has been amazing, I haven't needed to use support workers as much and it helped with fatigue, pain etc. I believe my GPA increased to a 7 due to this
- Being able to zoom into lectures when I can't get out of bed
- Have consistent Blackboard layouts so that online materials are easily found
- Having everything online already, makes it easier for me to access course content in advance.
- Having external courses and tutorials helps me to still attend class when I have a pain flare up or am very fatigued. It also allows me to better manage my energy which allows me to still attend work and thus afford rent etc which has decreased my overall stress levels, improved my quality of life and my enjoyment of university as a whole
- Having more online materials to access at my own pace has been helpful, as it often takes me much more time than the rest of my peers to process information. Learning at my own pace comes from this.
- Having more online modules makes it easier for people with varying disabilities, including myself
- Having more things available for online reference eases the anxiety of not having access if I can't attend a class and I'm too nervous to reach out to peers.
- I don't know the full extent of what the university has done in the long-term as a direct result of the pandemic itself. But 2020 was one of the worst years of my life, and much of the deep sadness and emptiness I experienced at that time was a direct result of the apathetic policies and practices of the university and its staff. One thing I can say is: thank fucking god you finally provided the option for online course delivery. The fact that it took you so long to make this happen, and that you needed a global pandemic to pull you into gear on the matter, should be a colossal embarrassment to you as an institution. It certainly is for me.

³² There were 44 responses, of which 4 have been excluded as 'not applicable' or 'not relevant', 1 as 'no', 1 as 'not really'.

- I like how if I don't feel like going to campus, I can just watch lectures on zoom, and I know that there's going to be a reliable recording of the lecture.
- I really liked the flexible delivery of courses during the pandemic where you had the option to do courses external but if you felt well enough to also have the in person support of being at campus. Also that all coursework was handed out digitally.
- In some ways yes, it has been easier to watch lectures online instead of having to be on campus 24/7
- It was much easier when classes were exclusively on Zoom or recorded, because lecturers and tutors made an effort to set up transcripts and captions very quickly, and made them easier to access. Now that classes are in person, it's not their priority anymore and I often have to wait 12–16 hours for a transcript to become available. By this time, it is often almost time for my tutorials anyway.
- It's a lot easier to access online materials as an external student. If I had a bad panic attack, for instance, I can go home and watch a practical instead of being there in person.
- It's more accessible through blackboard and, hopefully, in the future, the course will have video recording by the lecturer.
- Lectures being recorded so I can access them when I'm thinking better
- More online coursework available
- More online tests
- online learning is the only reason i passed anything first year. i was too anxious and depressed to do anything except in random bursts from which i could access my online materials. I could watch lectures at 1.5x to get through the slow talking that made me want to gouge my ears out, i could also pause them to take notes which i would not be able to do in a real lecture. I'd zone out a lot in a real lecture, but recorded lectures i could go back a couple of minutes. Online classes meant i could keep my camera off and that helped me manage my anxiety a lot better and participate more than if i were in an in person class. there oral presentations i am confident i would have done very poorly on that were turned into essays because of the pandemic. I owe my very high gpa to the pandemic.
- Online lectures and recordings are really good! I prefer that to inperson.
- online/recorded lectures allow me to catch up when I fall behind and do the lectures at a pace that matches my day to day motivation and mood
- Prerecorded lectures are MUCH easier for me to understand and engage with. I think it's good to be on campus, and I enjoy it, but having all my classes be on campus is very difficult for me to keep up with. Pre-recorded lectures and in person tuts has been my new favourite delivery method.
- Streamline the SAP process, and if at all possible, remove the need for continual reapplication on a semester by semester basis. Additionally, increase the information available to students as to their options when it comes to implementing a plan. Whilst the officer I spoke to was both pleasant and knowledgeable, my experience was that implementing the plans are a bit of a 'tell us what you need and we'll see if it's possible' setup, and students with disabilities may be unaware of the options available to them (or what would be helpful for someone with their disability, given historical precedent of other students)
- Studying externally has helped because if my tic disorder it makes me a bit more comfortable at home and I can rest a lot more at home if I need to. I also have my parents if I need them in an emergency
- The ability to study online and in campus in flexible delivery was the best part of the pandemic as I no longer needed to come to campus on days were my disabilities flared up.
- The lecture recordings definitely make things easier.
- The more appropriate recordings of lectures and content available on blackboard sooner

- the option to study externally or have meetings over zoom is beneficial to me especially in regards to my mental health preventing me from studying on campus
- The options of online content/lectures/tutorials has made a huge difference. It has made it possible for me to attend UQ as an internal student, which means I can enjoy being on campus, attending classes and meeting people, while still having the option to select certain classes to do online, adding a new layer of flexibility to university which is very helpful for someone with a disability. This is instead of simply being solely an internal or external student.
- Wearing a mask is now seen as acceptable in public places and understanding of immunocompromised people and how autoimmune conditions can severely affect your life. Social distancing and sanitising rules make it less likely for me to catch flus/gastro/colds
- Withdrawing from courses with no financial penalty, assistance from administration/UQ Support
- Yes, recorded content even if attended live makes it much easier. [Discipline] discussion board is also fantastic.
- Zoom has made it so much easier to do the public presentations required of HDR students. Without question presenting online has made it so much easier to build confidence with public speaking again!
- Zoom lectures make it so much easier because I can watch when I am able to instead of having to turn up or get nothing
- Zoom presentations of live lectures

Question 32: Is there a way in which the physical access, course materials, administrative procedures, or any other aspect of life at university has become more difficult or less accessible to you as a person with disability because of changes arising from the pandemic?³³

- Apparently people ‘get’ mental health a bit more because of the pandemic, which I think on balance probably a very, very good thing. I’m yet to see much in the way of practical solutions from UQ for those of us with chronic mental health diagnoses though. While I know I am lucky to have been seeing a psychiatrist monthly for some time and I have a fabulous GP, I really don’t think UQ procedures reflect the difficulties that presently exist in terms of being able to get an appointment with a mental health professional or indeed the time it can take to be able to access the required evidence (eg reports/med certs).
- Being external there are a few benefits but also some challenges especially as it feels like there is not much support from the course staff as their time is limited with a lot of other students wanting one on one time etc.
- Certain staff seem intolerable of missing class due to illness (even if testing positive for covid), some see masks as a ‘hindrance’ to their hearing skills. People assume everyone experienced the pandemic the same way – life as an essential worker while studying full time was troublesome sometimes
- Completing assessment online has been more difficult. Especially tests and quizzes, I find it distracting doing online as I’m zoned in on worrying about computer or time trouble.
- [Discipline] lab session were too long for me to sustain attention levels

³³ There were 36 responses, of which 4 have been excluded as ‘not applicable’; 2 excluded as ‘no’; 1 as ‘not that I am aware of’

- Due to my social anxiety zoom calls are particularly stressful and difficult. I find zoom tutorials to be very hard to do and often am too nervous to turn my camera or microphone on, and sometimes find myself unable to talk. Most classes are good with keeping up with the text chat and understanding that some people cannot use camera/microphone, but I have had a few classes where it
- During the mask mandate, it was extremely difficult to communicate due to masks muffling people's voices and also limiting lip-reading. I often avoided conversations because I was too scared to repeatedly ask people to repeat their words, or was worried about misunderstanding them.
- Getting extensions because course coordinators already think we have it easy
- I didn't like zoom tutorials, and not being able to actually talk to people was hard on my mental health.
- I do feel a lot more isolated because I'm currently unable to be vaccinated I'm hoping to be soon but I can't attend physically. That does have a few advantages as I mentioned above but it is a lot more isolating and is impacting my mental health. lot
- I have difficulty with the tutorials of information/calculation-dense subjects. I find it difficult to keep up, and since the tutorials are not recorded, I often miss important teachings, without the ability to review a recording.
- Being external, it is not always possible for me to attend at my regular tutorial time, meaning that I miss-out, altogether.
- I have trouble with written communication (sending emails).
- I was not at UQ pre-pandemic and therefore cannot speak to any changes made.
- Instructors assume that students will catch up on their own and tend to overload information because students will watch back or watch later
- It isn't easy when UQ has maintenance and we can't access the course materials.
- Less interactions makes it more difficult for me to focus, especially when past years lectures are used instead of recording new ones
- No lockers on campus for students to regularly use.
- Not being able to be on campus in semester 1 2020 so I could not work on my honours thesis in a productive environment. I really struggle to get any work done at home, and this affected my grades, understanding of material, and likely contributed to my low GPA for 2020–2021.
- Not being able to talk face to face and staffs not wanting to zoom made it difficult to communicate as email often is not an effective means of communication.
Also all my accommodations were shrugged off as well that is already happening so you don't need extra help. For example needing certain times for exams or classes. Needing extra time for course work or exams.
- Online learning was really difficult for me, as I learn better in a classroom environment than I do by myself. It meant that I couldn't ask tutors or fellow students for help (as easily) during certain classes, and it was more difficult to stay focused and take notes (especially when I had to flip back and forth between the Zoom screen and my Word document (as opposed to just looking up at a powerpoint slide projected on a wall)
- Poor audio from lecturers the first few months of the pandemic, a lot better now though
- Remaining engaged
- Remote study as a person with ADHD was an absolute shit-show, and I ultimately ended up postponing my degree as a result (amongst other factors). The lack of routine and opportunity to procrastinate and/or ignore deadlines led to a great deal of self-inflicted stress and anxiety. I'm not sure what the university could do to help with that (I know that there are workshops and learning opportunities for developing study skills, time

management etc) but the difficulty I experienced cannot be overstated. I don't think that's the case for everyone with my disability, other people presumably have more organised routines and systems, but I struggled greatly with the shift.

- Studying at home is harder due to environment and it's harder to stay productive.
- The exam process. It's just so much harder than the in person exams that would be set up to accommodate my student action plan.
- the lecturers didn't know what was going on and it was confusing
- The masks
- Yes. Online classes are, in general, absolute trash. The fact that I don't need to engage in the stress of a daily commute across multiple modes of transport, on an inconsistent basis (times of the day and days of the week), is an enormous relief. But being expected to watch monotonous, repetitive, heavily scripted videos, and attend lectures and tutorials on zoom, is pretty stupid when that's not at all how I learn. I need other means of engaging with the content. Lecture slides are a poor means of content delivery too, honestly. I need to have individual involvement with the course coordinator on a regular basis to actually understand what the hell is going on. Stop expecting me to sit onerously through agonizingly inefficient or anxiety-inducing formats. Let's create something new together.
- Yes some of my courses are now external only because of the pandemic, and I struggle to do online study

Question 33: Please describe the most positive experience you've had since commencing university, with regards to your disability³⁴

- Accessing the free counselling services
- All my lecturers have been fantastic in getting help. They are the ones who encouraged a SAP.
- Being able to interact with other openly and proudly disabled students and staff in the disability and queer collectives.
- Being able to meet and become friends with other neurodivergent students, and being inspired to seek out an ADHD/autism diagnosis for myself.
- being granted a SAP, knowing that if I do need an extension, I'm easily able to get one without added stress and anxiety during a flare up
- Can't think of one
- [Course code] prac coordinator was concerned for me and brought me to see [Faculty] administrator. Both went through my options in regards to my disability & upcoming surgery/treatment. Collaborated with parents and helped with finalising a decision on that day. [Faculty] administrator explained thoroughly my options and implications as well as provided empathy. This helped made the process easier.
- [Course] lecturers very kind
- Finding the disability collective and meeting people who actually understand and care about these issues
- Finding the disability community and having people who share similar experiences to me has been invaluable.
- Finding the disability room! I had a study space that I didn't have to be nervous in and I was so happy!
- Getting really good and suitable arrangements on my student access plan

³⁴ There were 39 responses, of which 1 has been excluded as 'N/A'.

- Having a student advisor explain that I have help available, and being surprised at how much I am supported.
- Having accurate lecture transcripts
- I don't typically tell people about my autism if I'm not asked, but it seems obvious to some lecturers that I'm autistic and it's always nice when they're understanding about it when I don't even tell them it's there. Some are just able to recognise it I think.
- I don't feel shame around my disability and my teachers/lecturers haven't judged me because of it so I'm glad that this has been my experience so far.
- I got support from the UQ disability team, like a counsellor and disability advisor. I want to say many thanks to [Name]; [they were a] Disability Advisor and supported me a lot during my studies postgraduate from 2016 until I Graduated in 2019. [They have] compassion and gives a good strategy for my studies; how I must manage my anxiety and think positive to pass the courses.
- I graduated
- I have not had any experience that stands out.
- I started university with low self-esteem and low expectations. However, I met others like me (staff and students) who supported my development and have completely changed the outcome of my life. There is no single event for this, but rather an accumulation of these positive connections.
- Joining the Disability Collective.
- Joining the Disability Collective. The first appointment with my Student Advisor.
- *There's no question for this, but the ability to have a support student during labs and practicals has changed my life. There is no way I would be able to complete the required lab and practicals for my [discipline] degree without this support (have not had a support student at UQ yet, but I know they do offer this service and I know how helpful it was at a previous university).
- Learning that I have dyslexia and that I can get accommodations
- Learning that SAPs existed, and that additional considerations were available off the back of a diagnosis.
- Meeting other people with disabilities.
- My student advisor [Name] has been a wonderful support for me throughout my time at UQ. [They are] incredibly knowledgeable and is quick to reach out to colleagues get any information [they don't] readily know. [They are] able to help me find out my needs and gives incredibly clear paths for how to navigate some of the less efficient mechanisms put in place by the university (ie. activating exam exemptions). Even when there may be a long-ish wait time to meet with [them], [they are] accessible over email and called me repeatedly throughout the distressing process of trying to get my exam deferred in order to assist and check in on me. [They are] amazing and deserves all the praise in the world.
- Probably getting the week extension I mentioned earlier, I was able to take a few more days off.
- Probably this semester with [Name] in [Course Code]. Our discourse has been genuinely edifying and empowering. [They are] being flexible with the structure of [their] course in an effort to accommodate my needs, and even going beyond to see the objective merit in the contributions I bring to the table.
- Receiving SAP to help manage anxiety in exam periods
- Seeing all the ADHD relevant memes about Proctor U and being unable to focus at home, and realising that lots of people also had ADHD
- the academics ive worked with personally have helped me create strategies to work around my mental health as they are also on the spectrum and understand my needs
- The disability advisor was nice, but most people don't know I'm disabled because it's invisible.

- the disability collective is very welcoming and lovely. i was allowed to be there working out my self doubt and internalised ableism and finally get treatment.
- The most positive experience I've had with my disability is that I've had opportunities to openly talk with my cohort and lecturers about it and have it contribute to how things are taught
- The support and speed at which I was able to access student access plans
- The wonderful helpful disability support and student services staff who have been amazing and always treats you with respect.
- UQ having a psychology clinic where you can talk to someone for a student rate

Question 34: If you could change one thing about the difficulties and the barriers to education and participation that students with disability face at university, what would it be?³⁵

- Access to DDI/SAP, and course coordinator responses to these
- Actually accessible buildings and bathrooms for those who use mobility assistance devices
- All staff would be educated on disability and accommodation. It would be nice to talk to lecturer and be taken seriously.
- Autistic people need to be taken seriously and be considered. Events like STUPOL and market day with large crowds and noises are extremely exclusive of the autistic community. It appears that event organisers literally do not even consider autistic people
- Be a bit more clear about it, and have more reminders at the beginning of semester for student action plans to be renewed
- Be willing to accommodate for people with multiple disabilities and disabilities that aren't widely known about/understood.
- Being more flexible to students' needs
- Change the exam adjustment activation system. It places too much burden on the disabled individual to activate each exam and some disabled students (especially any with issues with executive functioning and/or planning issues will likely have difficulty completing this process for every test far enough in advance).

Putting the power in the hands of the people are willing to help and knowledgeable about disabilities (physical AND mental). This can be achieved by empowering advisors and/or course coordinators who actually know and regularly interact with the disabled students to have more influence in how those students get supports. People like the academic board members need to be educated in what it means to be mentally ill or disabled to prevent them using triggering and ableist language towards students such as myself [...]. I have consistently found that the people who can and want to help and are not the ones with the power to actually do so.

Switch to a proactive approach. I firmly believe that UQ's mental health services use a reactive approach which focuses more on helping people once they are already are severely impacted. For example, it is nearly impossible to see a psychologist who specializes in your desired area in a timely manner and the only 'right away' services are reserved for people who are at immediate risk of self harm [...]. There needs to be a way to assist students who have identified themselves as struggling and are trying to be proactive about preventing it from getting worse.

(Lol I put three. Sorry, but I firmly believe that all three of the above things are critical).

³⁵ There were 41 responses.

- Drop the requirement for a diagnosis to be able to get a SAP, and make it more clear on the website what a SAP can actually do for you, it very frustrating having such a lack of information.
- Easier to get documentation for SAP can't afford doctor that doesn't bulk bill and have to wait a long time before I can get documentation.
- Education and sensitivity training. Course teachers need to be taught how to naturally include and accommodate students with disabilities, without singling them out or acting as if it is an inconvenience.
- Get rid of UQ Life
- Greater physical access that is considerate of multiple disabilities
- have disability collective oversight with final say in every course
- having less restrictions to accessing course content and extensions
- I think that the uni has good things in place, but the staff and students are not fully educated on these. If more staff are aware of SAPs, then they could suggest this to more students, and so on. As well as fellow students having better understandings of their roles within supporting disability.
- I would make it so that all courses would have to have accessibility built into them from the start, not just added on as an afterthought. All teachers would have to design their classes with disability accommodation in mind.
- If like to see all OT at student services. If like an academic mentor to help me organize myself, my files and notes and my academic writing
- Increase staff levels of knowledge and understanding about disabilities/willingness to learn about and then subsequently accommodate those with disabilities.
- Introduction courses should include info about SAPs and financial assistance in general.
- Make lectures online, prerecorded & digestible, with transcripts. Then hold workshop at those times for people who want in person lectures. Like what micro200 did. Also banning the r slur being used in content.
- make the process of getting material/categorising/structuring easy. put an emphasis on unifying the experience as opposed to fragmenting across a myriad of platforms which all claim to make life easier but in fact complexifies it.
- Maybe more communication of needs beginning and during semester with disability advisors, course staff and the student.
- More accommodations that people do not have to explicitly ask for. If there were just options built into courses, that would be amazing!
- More visible knowledge that SAPs exist and what you can get them for, because most students aren't aware they are eligible.
- Multiple disabled students and staff with experience in disability activism should get to look over assessment options in order to insure there are accessible ways for all students to participate in all areas of assessment. The lack of flexibility in assessment is deeply inequitable and the ability to access support and accommodation only after jumping through the hoops required to get an SAPD is unjust and unnecessary. The likelihood that non-disabled students will take advantage of accessibility should be less of a concern compared to the needs of disabled students.
- My experience would be vastly different, if there were tutors available more often, whom I could discuss course materials/assessments with, as in the [Subject] First Year Learning Centre or the Support Learning Tutorials.
The [School] focus on anti-collaboration (due to concerns about plagiarism) has made my studies much more difficult than need be, as evidenced by the better approach of the [discipline] areas towards coding-focused subjects, where they discussion/collaboration is

encouraged, while also engaging with the students, personally, to verify that they have undertaken aspects of the learning/assignments, themselves.

Often my only opportunity to seek help is from course discussion boards, but my disabilities and/or circumstance mean that i am often behind and rely on last-minute answers to questions, prior to assignment submissions, which frequently go unanswered in time, due to the days/hours/frequency that the boards are actively checked. This can be frustrating when I can see that my 'private' questions have been viewed by staff with access (tutors etc) but they have not responded. This could be resolved my having a tutor who is responsible for responding to questions, outside of regular 'office hours'.

- One thing? I guess one of the annoying things for me is that I always have to apply for an extension before the due date. But this doesn't make a whole lot of sense to me, I can't decide when I'm going to shut down or have a meltdown and not be able to speak to anyone. If something terrible happens and I can't communicate at all I'm not going to be at the computer filling out an extension form with all the evidence and documentation. What's frustrating is: not that I haven't done the assignment on time, I could have nearly finished it but if I have an interruption then I won't be motivated to submit it. I've literally got a finished assignment that I haven't submitted because of what's going on in my head.
- Raise more awareness about neurological/developmental disorders like autism, ADHD, OCD, Tourette's etc.
- Stigma around mental health and getting rid of hustle culture.
- Talk to your students with disability more often and make anonymous feedback methods accessible.
- The amount of hoops one has to jump through to get the help. If you don't know what you're doing it's very easy for lecturers to take advantage
- The isolation and exclusion that we face. Also just because my experience has been positive so far I also know that some peoples experiences have not been as positive as mine and I would like them to be able to access the same support I have.
- The marks for tutorial participation. I understand that it's there so that you can't just zone out or go on your phone in the tutorial, but there are other ways to make sure somebody is paying attention than to pressure them to speak in front of a group of people. All it does for me is make me stress about answering a question at some point so that I get the mark, then after I've answered that question I go back to being quiet. I think it would be a lot less stressful if the mark was given for answering questions on paper for pre-work instead that the tutor checks answers for by reading them (in fact, that may even encourage me to speak *more* in tutorials, rather than less, as with the stress taken away I'd feel more comfortable)
- The policies and procedures at UQ are broad. As a result the policies and procedures are opaque and prone to different interpretations by different people. This in turn means there is zero consistency in the application of policies and procedures. I personally feel this is confusing.
- The University should support international students with medical hardships by either providing some form of financial/supportive help. Eg: free counselling.
- There is zero representation of disabilities (neurodivergency especially) among faculty and administrative staff, and no mentorship programs that allow students and staff to guide/educate each other
- To not expect everyone to have the same amount of knowledge, experiences, or abilities, and to not put large weights on certain assessments making it more stressful
- To staff at all levels of power within this institution: Detach yourselves from your overreliance on established methods. Escape the prison of your own myopia. Forget about what a

university “is”. Forget about what UQ “is”. Forget about what your course “is”. Think about what these things *could* be. Your basis for determining this shouldn’t just be a textbook. It shouldn’t just be industry. It should be everything. You need live and ongoing involvement from the individuals in your stewardship. How are you going to make their lives better? How are you going to connect with them? How are you going to empower them? Re-evaluate the way you perceive things. Open yourselves to new understanding. You can’t expect a rich conversational energy within your course if all you’re providing on your end is glorified word vomit. Static does not beget dynamic. Be the dynamic.

- Understanding troubles with completing set reading when given 5+ pages for each course and having to read them online which can be extremely difficult to get through at times. UQ must provide tutors, especially for that student with disability are in a separate class from students without disabilities. In my experience, it was hard to catch up quickly during lab [courses] lab because we have only one tutor, mixed students without disabilities, so I was often left behind and reluctant to ask more questions or explanations because I was too afraid of the other student will be upset if I am too slow. So, I decided to hire a private tutor again, which is costly as I really want to pass my course.

Question 35: Is there anything else you’d like to tell us about your experience of being a person with disability at university?³⁶

- A lot of people won’t have the traditional 3 years full time and done experience. The world has changed and people who wouldn’t have been able to attend university a couple of decades ago now have the support to gain entry but the university system hasn’t changed to respect that. e.g. I cannot be a full time student just because I find the amount of content I need to cover each week exhausting. It’s just too much extra work and time for me.
- Another thing is making it easier to defer exams/ spacing them out. Or provide us with an actual swotvac instead of 3 days. It doesn’t make sense to me as to why I, someone who can easily get extensions, have to go through a lot just to defer an exam. I get extensions because I fall behind, yet I am expected to be up to date with course content by the exam, even when they don’t give us a reasonable swotvac.
- Being transgender greatly impacts and intersects with disability and accessibility especially regarding ability to safely use public toilets on-campus. More disabled/unisex toilets (AT LEAST ONE wherever there are womens and mens alongside each other) would make things safer and easier for both transgender and disabled students.
- During the second half of summer semester I was very distressed from having failed my first in person exam and was feeling the pressure of 4 exams in 4 days coming up in just a few weeks. I noticed the toll this was taking on my mental health (increase in meltdowns) and decided I wanted to get help before it got any worse (I have a history of self harm and suicidal ideation that I didn’t want to fall back into). However, I was unable to book an appointment with a trauma-educated-psychologist prior to the upcoming exam week. When I had spoken to my course coordinator [Name], [they’re] phenomenal) about what was going on, [they] mentioned talking to student services to see if I could get on a wait list of sorts in case anyone cancelled with one of the psychologists I needed to speak to. So my [friend] and I went to student services later that day. This is when we met [Name 2]. When I was explaining the situation to a [gender] student services rep, [Name 2] stepped

³⁶ There were 26 responses of which 6 responses were excluded as they added not meaningful data, eg, ‘no’, ‘maybe’.

in (literally stepped in front of [them]) and took over the conversation. Initially, [Name 2] sent us away [...] to UQ Psych and try with them. We need and they told me that it would be a 6 month wait period. Since that (obviously) was too long to wait we came back. For context, at this point my anxiety was starting to spike and I could feel what I call a “low” coming on (basically a pre-meltdown). Upon seeing us again and us explaining the wait time, [Name 2] pulled me away from [friend] and sat me down at a table and pressured me into booking what [they] called a “crisis appointment” before wandering off. My [friend] came over to me after [Name 2] left and it took us [no time at all] to determine that the “crisis appointment” was just a regular appointment which we had already tried to do and meant either waiting a month or speaking to someone who was unqualified. Frustrated with the whole situation, my [friend] ended up calling the crisis hotline, which turned out to be just the student services desk (which is very confusing, what is the point of the hotline if it’s just the regular number and not people who seem to have any sort of crisis training?). At this point I was fully melting down with frustrating at now being able to get help despite doing what I had been told I should do: “get help.” I remember hearing my [friend] saying “are you telling me [they have] to tell me [they’re] going to kill [them]self?” Apparently the were telling [my friend] there was nothing [they] could do other than a welfare check (we didn’t need a welfare check, my welfare was BAD. I was literally 10cm away from [my friend] crying and shaking). The [person] said [they] needed to talk to me directly (which wasn’t a great idea I was barely coherent, but we’ll move past that one) at which point I eventually able to explain that just having a crisis line available wasn’t a viable option because I can’t move during full meltdown (I kind of just get stuck on the floor/bed unable to move) because I can’t pick up a phone let alone dial a number, so [they] said [they]’d talk to the head of Psych and get back to us.

At this point, [Name 2] returned. [Name 2] was inexplicably angry and confrontational the moment [they] realized we hadn’t booked a “crisis appointment” (I really can’t stress how much that just isn’t a thing). [They] pulled my [friend] aside (but not out of earshot) and berated [them] for calling someone else and not forcing me to book the appointment like I asked (as if taking away my agency would’ve been better). My [friend] attempted to explain that [the] suggested plan wasn’t viable which only served to make [Name 2] angrier and more confrontational (which I feel I should’ve have to say wasn’t super helpful to my meltdown). [They] eventually stormed off to get [their] manager. This ended being a great idea because unlike [Name 2], the manager was not unreasonably angry at the crying, mentally ill student for no reason. (I have more to say but RIP. word count)

- Give the training for the lecturers about the students has different types of disability. It’s shamed they have titles of Professor or Dr, but no compassion or empathy. Also, no patience toward student and better don’t teaching then at UQ.
- I almost thought not to go to University because of my experience with the education system. But these days I think it’s important to have people like me exist on campus and within the institutions so that the right changes to the system can be made. I don’t like it when people assume that you can:
 - Speak loud and clear
 - Ask for help
 - Have the ability to stay on task/schedule
 - Can focus without distractions
 - Communicate well
 - Regulate your emotions (enough to know if you’re about to have a meltdown and will require an extension for an assignment)
- I am nervous for when I eventually go on campus because of my tics and I’m worried they will be too disruptive but I’m not sure how the University could help me with that.

- I find there are opportunities here if we want them, but we are not always able to
- i want to reiterate how valuable the disability collective is. i also want to go off about how you should be able to pick what kind of assingment you do because an oral presentation is completely inaccessible to some people while an essay is inaccessible for others. Imagine if you could just pick the assessment format that best suits your disability without having to go through the complicated, exhausting, painful and anxiety inducing beaureaucratic nonsense that is getting an SAPD, becuae right now you need to basically actively harm yourself mentally to get the university to say “ok you’re disable enough now” and so you can finally get the altered assessment, but it’s too late becuae either your course coordinator can’t or won’t accomadate or you’re out of energy to do it because you spent all of it trying to work out how the hell you are supposed to be able to do anything other than the oral presentation that makes you want to completely drop out of university.
- I wonder how much the Student Union cares about students with disabilities when they don’t even pay the Disability Officers. I’m not treated as disabled because people can’t see what I live with, and I don’t face the same stigma as other people with mental health issues.
- More representative signage around campus would be really nice (aka the international accessible signage)
- My worst experience as an autistic person was during stupol last semester when I was just trying to move between classes and around campus as non disabled people can do freely. These events are ableist and can and have triggered autistic meltdowns. These events are exclusive due to the large crowds, the noises, the disorganisation, the behaviour from people that insist on talking AT you without letting you leave, the amount of signs, and the complete chaos of the environment
- No peer support. A communication board for advertising for help.
If like the student services list of people to list their qualifications and area of expertise. If like more basic workshops for mature students especially with software use. I would pay for this.
- Overall I am happy with University of Qld and completely understand that there are a lot of students and the time limitation of staff so not all needs are going to be available. I love also the disability room and the students who run the disability collective.
- Sorry that this is a bit ramble-ey: I had an interesting experience where a lecturer introduced a class by saying something along the lines of “we are going to be talking about [x], [y], and [z] in this course, if you are squeamish or aren’t comfortable with any of that then you probably should leave this course”. While I personally am okay with the content in the course, it got me thinking about accessibility in general with regards to sensitive topics. At my previous university, another lecturer instead told the class “we will be discussing sensitive material today, if at any point you are not comfortable with the conversation, it is okay to exit the room and come back later”. When the topic was suicide, I did indeed leave the room as I was at the time not able to safely have a discussion on the matter. Afterwards, the lecturer even checked up on me and made sure I was okay before continuing. Contrasting that to my experience with the other lecturer is interesting. We are all adults here, it is okay for people be able to make informed decisions to dip in and out if the particular topic is difficult for them, and I wish it was more normalised to give people that option. It has not happened to me, but I have heard from friends that they have been required to do assessments on topics that were not safe for them, in the same way as the conversation on suicide was not safe for me. I just wanted to bring it up as think it’s something that is not often talked about specifically when discussing accessibility but it is just as important as other factors.
- There are statistics galore and a large corpus of literatrue about the number of students who experience mental health crisis for the first time during their PhD. I honestly don’t believe that very much at all is being done for HDR candidates with mental health conditions. In

fact what I've found is that once you start in a HDR program, what you find is that UQ becomes even more disjointed and that life is a lot more complicated. Even this survey lacks questions in anyway related to HDR students, which isn't a criticism of the survey design, it just speaks volumes about the way that HDR's are viewed by both UQU and the university. For more on why targeted and specific questions for HDR's is important please read these two blog posts - <https://thesiswhisperer.com/2018/02/28/we-need-to-talk-about-disability-and-chronic-illness-during-the-phd/>
<https://thesupervisionwhisperers.wordpress.com/2017/09/19/more-than-accessibility-navigating-the-supervision-relationship-with-students-with-disability/>

- There's always more. But I think I've made some good contributions here. I'd be happy to elaborate or clarify any of the comments I've made, if you'd like to reach out.
- UQ and it's [Institute] have a segment on [medical condition]. However, no support besides online information has been offered to the students that have a hard time accessing healthcare (especially an international student without Medicare). I was unable to keep up with uni commitments and seek help for my health at the same time. I hope UQ, knowing how debilitating endometriosis is, would be able to help student endo warriors (whether diagnosed or not), financially/mentally, with this chronic illness.
- We should get a supplementary medal for going through the gauntlet. There should be a better way to assess the actual capacity of the student and better reflect it on marks.
- When writing adjusted exams, the invigilator called out our names to call us into the room. I would much prefer they did not do this, as it just puts everyone's attention on you or if you didn't want it be known that you had a disability.