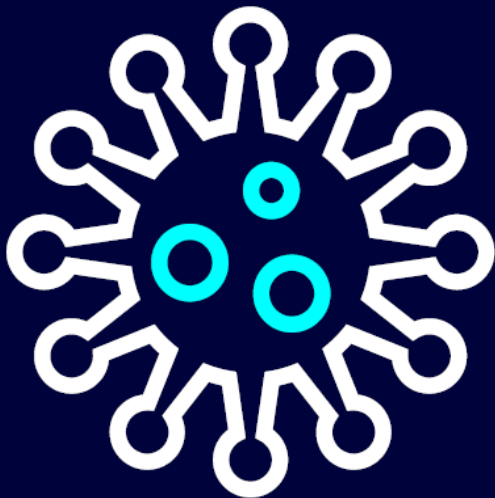


**COVID-19 Lockdown  
Staff Survey  
Summary**



**University of Reading**  
COVID-19 Lockdown Staff Survey

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Project Number: 8529



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## Contents

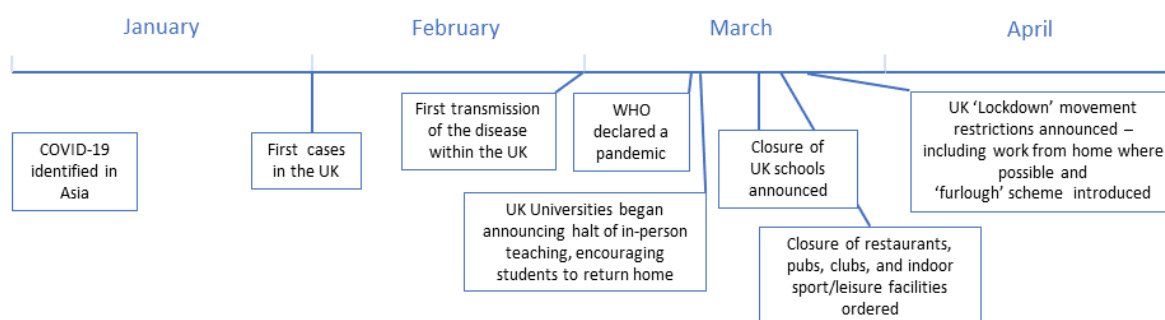
Background .....	4
Part A. Results Summary .....	5
Part B. Survey Results Charts .....	6
Part C. Participation .....	11
Part D. Presentation of results.....	14
Reliability of results .....	14
Confidence intervals and statistical reliability .....	14
Understanding the effect of rounding .....	14

## University of Reading COVID-19 Lockdown Staff Survey

### Background

Like many other employment sectors within the UK, the Higher Education sector has been strongly affected by the Coronavirus outbreak and social distancing controls put in place by the UK Government to tackle the spread and protect NHS resources at this time.

With such a wide range of job roles within the University, there has not been a one-size-fits-all approach to lockdown, and while small numbers of staff have been required to continue to work on campus, many have been working from home. Some roles simply cannot be undertaken remotely, and some staff have been 'furloughed' through the UK government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. The graphic below provides a summary of the timeline of the progression of the virus and government responses, resulting in 'lockdown' from 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020.



The University Executive Board and Leadership Group commissioned a survey of staff to explore their experiences of the 'lockdown' period, especially communication and support from the University and the specific School or department they are employed within. Many of the questions asked in this survey match those being asked in other HEIs, while some have been tailored to suit the University of Reading. It is noted that this survey does not cover use of technology, such as Teams, while working at a distance from colleagues, as this will be addressed in a separate exercise being led internally by DTS.

Personalised email invitations to the online survey were distributed during the late afternoon of Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020, closing at noon on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020. Additionally, the University posted information letters to the homes of staff on furlough, to ensure that they were aware of the survey invitations even if not accessing work emails: access information could be requested from Capita's freephone/email helpline. Alternative completion methods (paper self-completion or telephone interview) could also be requested. Personalised reminders (with URL and individual survey access code) were emailed to non-responders twice weekly.

Capita Surveys and Research processed and validated 2,211 completed survey questionnaires from University of Reading employees: this gives a response rate of 52% based on the 4,246 staff invited to participate. Staff employed at the University of Reading Malaysia were invited to take part in a similar survey, adapted to suit the local situation.

## Part A. Results Summary

52% of University of Reading staff responded to the Covid-19 Lockdown Survey (compared with 64% responding to the longer staff engagement survey conducted in 2018).

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following?	
88%	The initial communication from the University about the decision to end face-to-face teaching and move towards shutting the campus down was clear
94%	I received further communication from my own department / local management / line manager / supervisor
95%	Further communication from my own department / local management / line manager / supervisor had a supportive tone
94%	I understood clearly what was expected of me and my work for the period of national 'lockdown'. (For example, whether you would be required to work from home, attend work (with social distancing measures), or not be able to work through the period)
84%	The University handled the communication well (including any negotiations with me) about [my personal work/furlough arrangements]
93%	My department / local management / line manager / supervisor has kept in touch with me during the 'lockdown' period, helping me to keep connected
94%	Hearing about the University partnering with the NHS and local community shows practical ways that the University makes a positive contribution to society

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the University has communicated effectively during the 'lockdown' period about ...	
81%	...plans for completing tuition (and assessment) for 2019/20 academic teaching year
71%	...plans for resuming work on campus
71%	...plans for commencing the 2020/21 academic teaching year
78%	...reminders about employee assistance scheme / helpline
85%	...email / intranet 'news' with tips for arranging working from home during the 'lockdown' e.g. creating a routine, separating 'work' and home, taking breaks - screen breaks, walking around, 'coffee breaks', maintaining physical health - hydration, good nutrition, exercise, staying in touch with colleagues

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following?	
88%	I have adjusted mentally to working from home
79%	I am able to limit the impact of distractions from others in the home (partner / children / pets)
93%	I am content with my manager's approach to working from home (understanding the difference from 'office' working)
87%	I have flexibility around the actual times at which I do my work
86%	I have flexibility to undertake essential errands during the day (e.g. shop for groceries / collect prescriptions / check on vulnerable neighbours / relatives)
93%	I am content with any agreed 'core-hours', where I am expected to be available for contact
59%	I am able to limit my work to the normal/contracted number of hours (being able to 'walk away' from work and 'switch off')
69%	It has been easy for me to me to work effectively during the current lockdown

## Part B. Survey Results Charts

This part of the report is a presentation of the survey results in chart format in the same order as the questionnaire for ease of reference.

All the main results charts (for scale response questions) are structured in a similar way:

1. **Question:** The text of the question that was asked.
2. **Response chart:** The percentage of respondents who selected each response option for each question, rounded to the nearest whole percentage, is presented in a stacked bar chart. It is important to look at this detailed breakdown, not just the percentage of positive responses, when interpreting the survey results. Note that the rounding of percentages occasionally results in the total percentage not adding up to exactly 100%.

Where a percentage of less than 3% occurs, the value label does not fit inside the bar and is therefore shown in a block of the matching colour below the main bar chart.

3. **Total Responses:** The number of valid responses that were received for the question.
4. **Combining the positive responses and the 'rounding effect' (Positive %):** The total combined percentage of 'good' or positive responses that were received for each question in 2020 is shown after the stacked bar chart.

The combined positive responses add together the 'Agree/Tend to agree' responses.

The following colour coding is used on the bar charts to aid with analysis:

**Green** generally represents the positive or 'good' outcome.

**Red** generally represents the negative or 'poor' outcome.

**Grey** represents outcomes which are neither positive nor negative, such as those questions in the 'About You & Your Role' section.

To ensure the figures are accurate, rounding to the nearest percentage point is applied at the last stage of the calculation. This may mean the total positive percentage displayed can be up to 1% different from simply adding together the two positive percentages. [A more detailed explanation of this and an example can be found in the section of this report under the heading '*Understanding the effect of rounding*'].

## COVID-19 Lockdown

Q2 The initial communication from the University about the decision to end face-to-face teaching and move towards shutting the campus down was clear	Total Responses: 2178	Positive %: 88
Q3 I received further communication from my own department / local management / line manager / supervisor	Total Responses: 2194	Positive %: 94
Q4 Further communication from my own department / local management / line manager / supervisor had a supportive tone	Total Responses: 2185	Positive %: 95
Q5 I understood clearly what was expected of me and my work for the period of national 'lockdown'	Total Responses: 2194	Positive %: 94
Q6 The University handled the communication well (including any negotiations with me) about my personal work/furlough arrangements	Total Responses: 2192	Positive %: 84
Q7 My department / local management / line manager / supervisor has kept in touch with me during the 'lockdown' period, helping me to keep connected	Total Responses: 2196	Positive %: 93
Q8 Hearing about the University partnering with the NHS and local community shows practical ways that the University makes a positive contribution to society	Total Responses: 2184	Positive %: 94












## COVID-19 Lockdown

Q9 The University has communicated effectively during the 'lockdown' period about plans for completing tuition (and assessment) for 2019/20 academic teaching year	Total Responses: 2120	Positive %: 81
Q10 The University has communicated effectively during the 'lockdown' period about plans for resuming work on campus	Total Responses: 2191	Positive %: 71
Q11 The University has communicated effectively during the 'lockdown' period about plans for commencing the 2020/21 academic teaching year	Total Responses: 2136	Positive %: 71
Q12 The University has communicated effectively during the 'lockdown' period about reminders about employee assistance scheme / helpline	Total Responses: 2165	Positive %: 78
Q13 The University has communicated effectively during the 'lockdown' period about email / intranet 'news' with tips for arranging working from home during the 'lockdown'	Total Responses: 2182	Positive %: 85





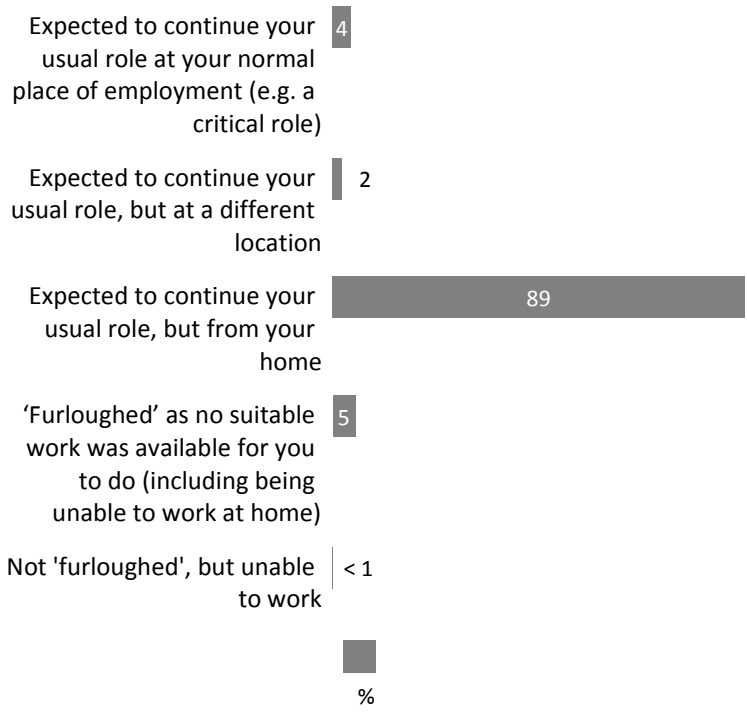
## COVID-19 Lockdown

Question	Total Responses:	Positive %:
Q14 I have adjusted mentally to working from home (based on people who during 'lockdown' were expected to continue their usual role, but from their home - from Q1)	1950	88
		
Q15 I am able to limit the impact of distractions from others in the home (partner / children / pets) (based on people who during 'lockdown' were expected to continue their usual role, but from their home - from Q1)	1941	79
		
Q16 I am content with my manager's approach to working from home (understanding the difference from 'office' working) (based on people who during 'lockdown' were expected to continue their usual role, but from their home - from Q1)	1941	93
		
Q17 I have flexibility around the actual times at which I do my work (based on people who during 'lockdown' were expected to continue their usual role, but from their home - from Q1)	1945	87
		
Q18 I have flexibility to undertake essential errands during the day (based on people who during 'lockdown' were expected to continue their usual role, but from their home - from Q1)	1938	86
		
Q19 I am content with any agreed 'core-hours', where I am expected to be available for contact (based on people who during 'lockdown' were expected to continue their usual role, but from their home - from Q1)	1891	93
		
Q20 I am able to limit my work to the normal/contracted number of hours (being able to 'walk away' from work and 'switch off') (based on people who during 'lockdown' were expected to continue their usual role, but from their home - from Q1)	1941	59
		
Q21 It has been easy for me to work effectively during the current lockdown (based on people who during 'lockdown' were expected to continue their usual role, but from their home - from Q1)	1949	69
		
		

## About Your Role

Q1 What happened to your role during lockdown? Were you...

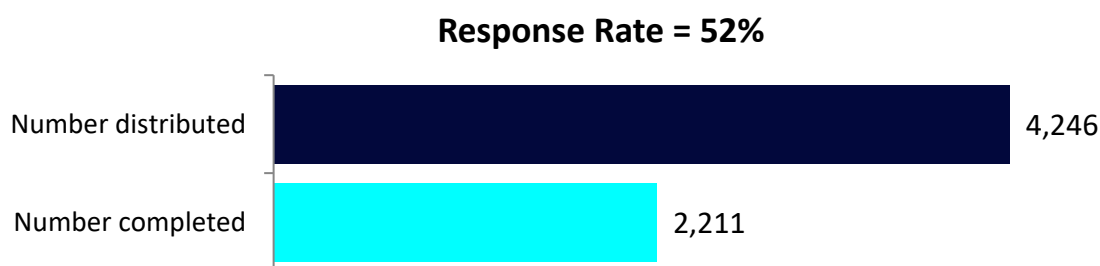
Total Responses: 2211



## Part D. Participation

The following chart shows the response rate for all staff who responded to University of Reading's staff survey.

A total of 2,211 survey questionnaires were completed and returned by the 4,246 members of staff invited to participate in the survey: this means that the overall response rate for University of Reading is 52%.



Across the Academic Schools, the average response rate was 44%, ranging from 24% to 64%.

Across Management and the Professional Services, the average response rate was 63%, ranging from 25% to 100%\*\*.

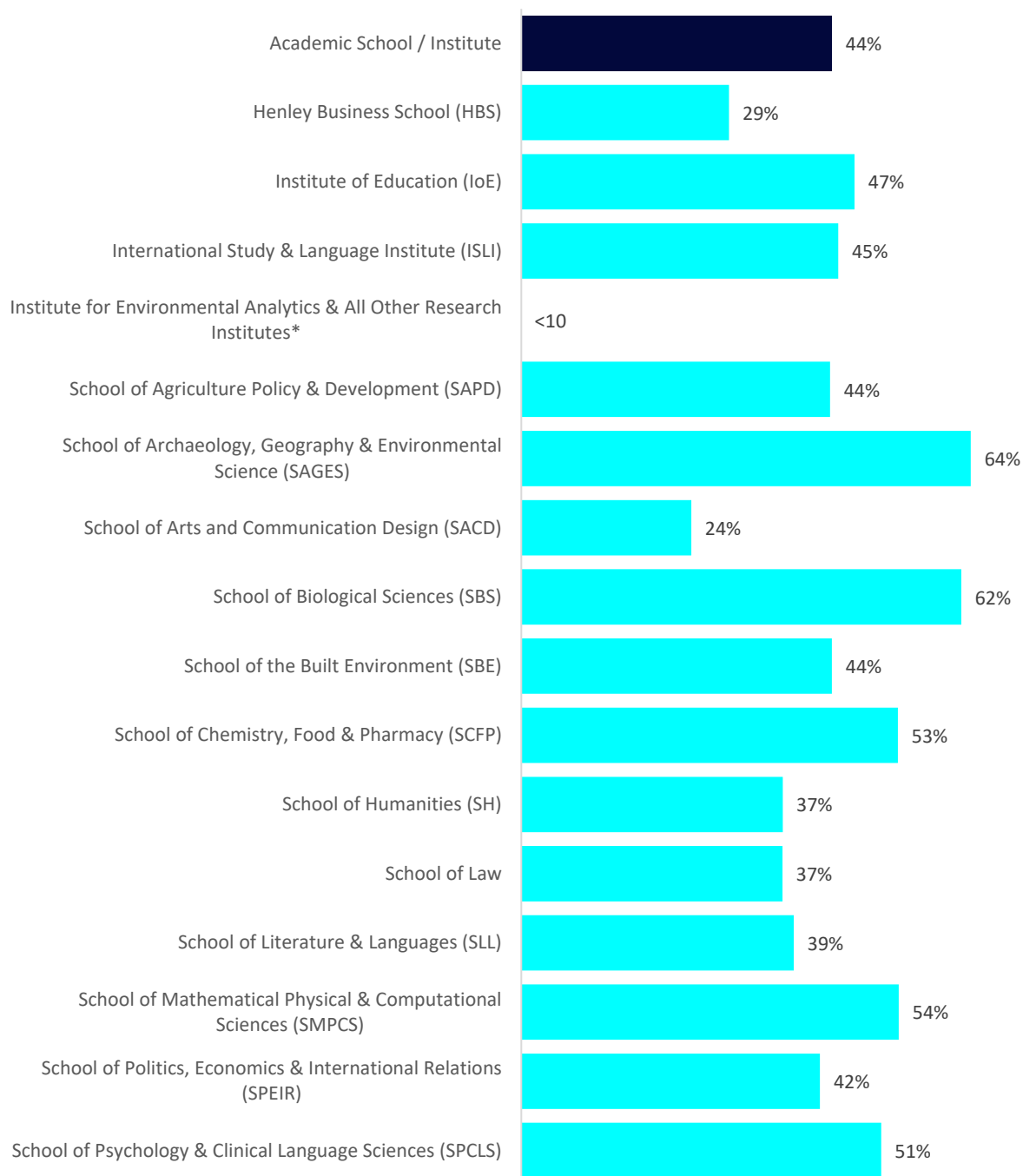
\*\*The number of responses received for Commercial is more than the number of staff identified in the staff profile, which may be the result of accidental mis-identification of the area of work by individuals completing the survey, or staff members identifying with more than one area of work which differs from the area of work profile provided by the University.

We understand that many staff were furloughed in some areas of work within the University and this may have an impact on the survey response rates for these areas.

Charts showing the response rates for individual Academic Schools and Professional Service are presented on the following pages.

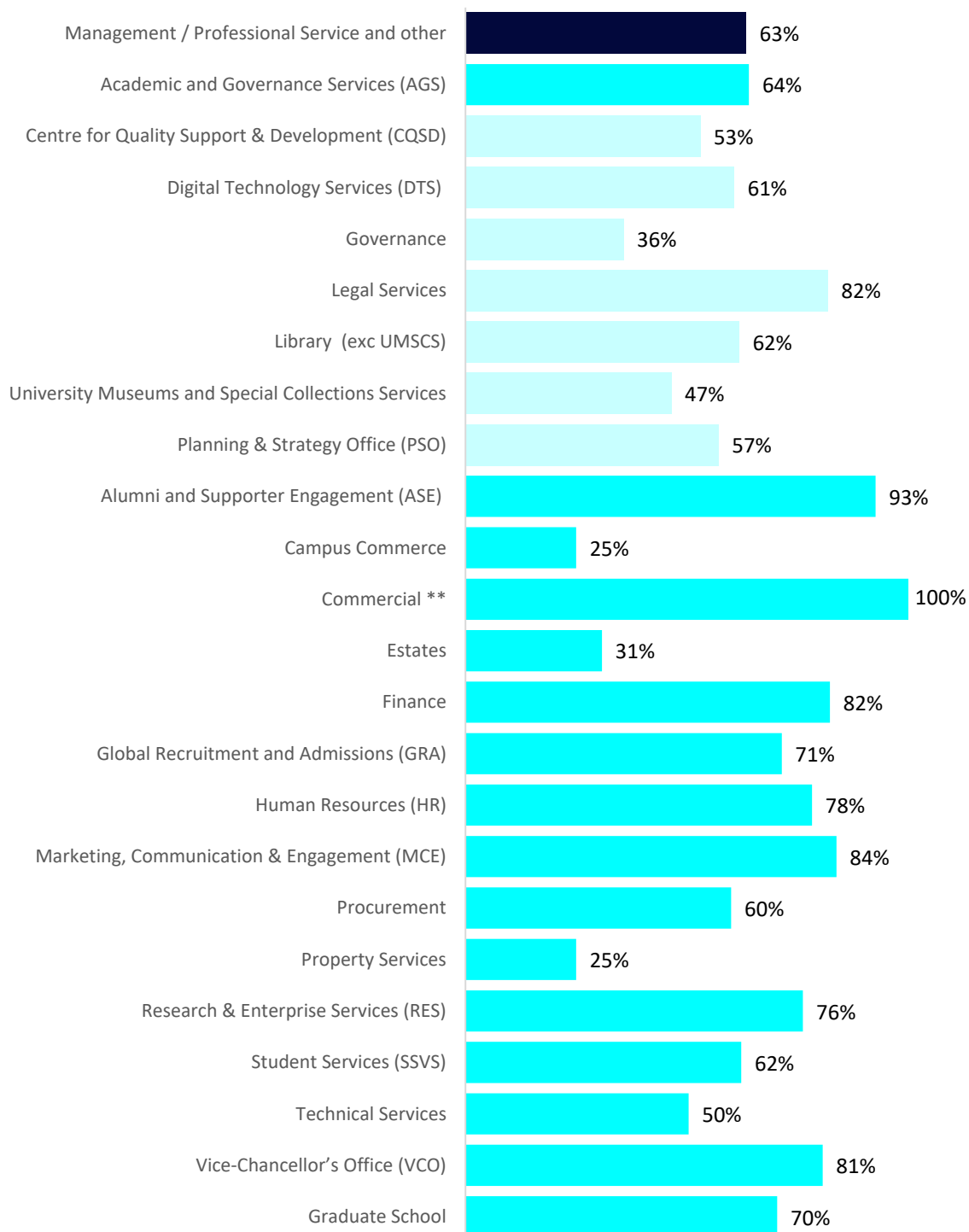
Staff of the University of Reading Malaysia were surveyed separately, in acknowledgement of the different progression of, and response to, COVID-19 in Malaysia compared to the UK. 61 of 106 staff (58%) responded. Findings are reported separately.

### Response Rates by Academic School / Institute



**\*This area achieved fewer than 10 respondents and so response rates are not shown.**

### Response Rates by Management / Professional Service and other



**\*\*The number of responses received for Commercial is more than the number of staff identified in the staff profile, which may be the result of accidental mis-identification of the area of work by individuals completing the survey, or staff members identifying with more than one area of work which differs from the area of work profile provided by the University.**

**AGS and its seven constituent areas were listed on the questionnaire, hence some respondents chose only the identify within AGS, rather than the sub-area they work in, which results in lower response rates for the sub-areas.**

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## Part D. Presentation of results

### Reliability of results

The accuracy of survey results is related to the size of the responding sample, not the whole organisation from which it is drawn. Very low response rates run the risk of non-response bias, e.g. if only 30% of an organisation participate can you be sure that the views of the 30% who responded are the same as the 70% who didn't respond? As a rule of thumb, a sample size of 200 responses or a 50% response rate is considered the minimum for opinion research whatever the organisation size and will overcome any non-response bias. When considering a sub-group of a total survey population 50 responses or a 50% response rate is considered the minimum for results to be reliable.

### Confidence intervals and statistical reliability

The respondents to the questionnaire are only a sample of the total University of Reading population, so we cannot be 100% certain that the figures obtained are exactly those we would have if everybody had returned their questionnaires, i.e. the 'true values'. We can, however, predict the variation between the sample results and the 'true' values from the knowledge of the size of the samples on which the results are based, the 'confidence level'.

In social research, the most common measure of confidence for this prediction is the 95% confidence interval – where the chances are 95 out of 100 that the true value would be within a specified range – i.e. if everyone had responded. As a general guide it is calculated that the results for University of Reading as a whole (excluding UoRM) are within  $\pm 1\%$  (the confidence interval), for each question.

### Understanding the effect of rounding

Figures throughout this report are displayed as whole numbers for the ease of reading. To ensure the figures are as accurate as possible we apply rounding to the figures to the nearest percentage point. Sometimes this will mean that the figures shown may not be identical if calculations are performed using the figures displayed in the report, however any difference would not be larger than  $\pm 1$  percentage point.

Therefore, if you sum the percentages for all the response options to a question, the figure may not sum to 100% but may sum to 99% or 101%.

When combining the total positive responses, we first combine the number of responses and then calculate a combined percentage, rather than simply adding the two individual response percentages together.

In the example shown below, if we sum the displayed percentages for *agree* and *tend to agree* to calculate the percentage positive response it would be 70%, however, by using raw figures we calculate the result more accurately to 70.699% which is rounded up to 71%.

**EXAMPLE:**

	Agree	Tend to Agree	Tend to Disagree	Disagree	Total	Total Positive responses calculation
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	A+B+C+D	A+B
Number of responses	667	882	455	187	2191	1,549
Percent of responses	30.443%	40.256%	20.767%	8.535%	100%	70.699% (this rounds up to 71%)
Rounds to	30%	40%	21%	9%	100%	70%