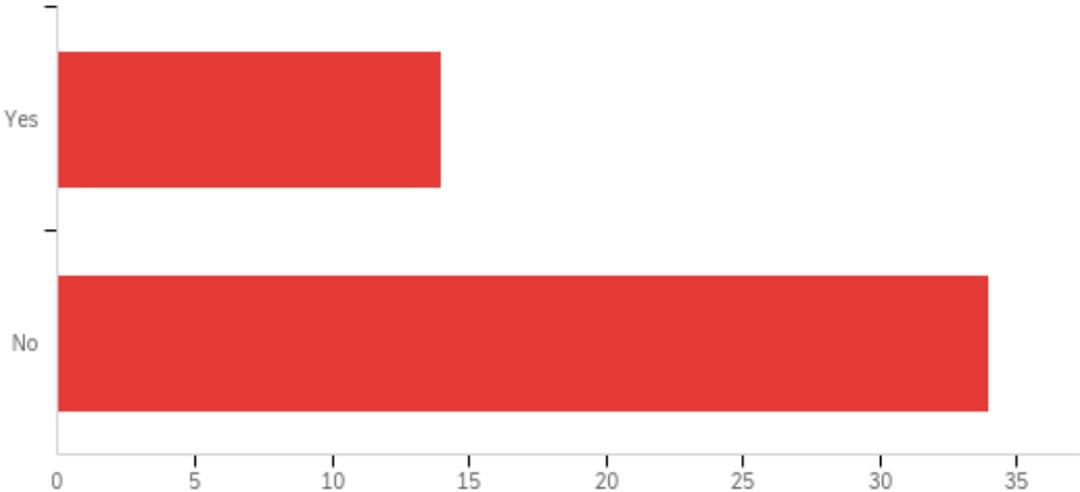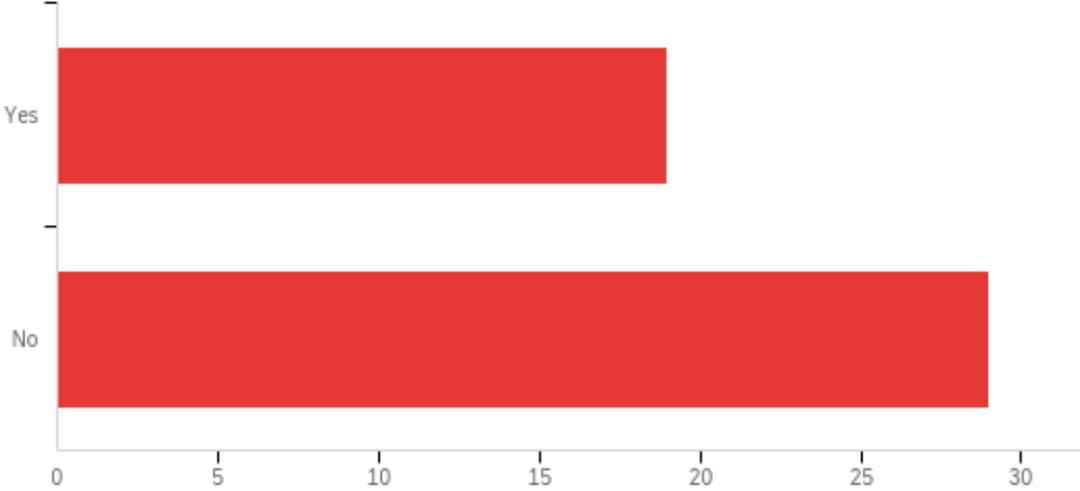# *MRC DTP in IBR - Student Experience Survey 2023*

Section 1 | Student stipend levels/cost of living

Q1 - Do you consider the UKRI stipend sufficient to cover your living costs? (NB, the stipend for 2023-24 will be £18,662).

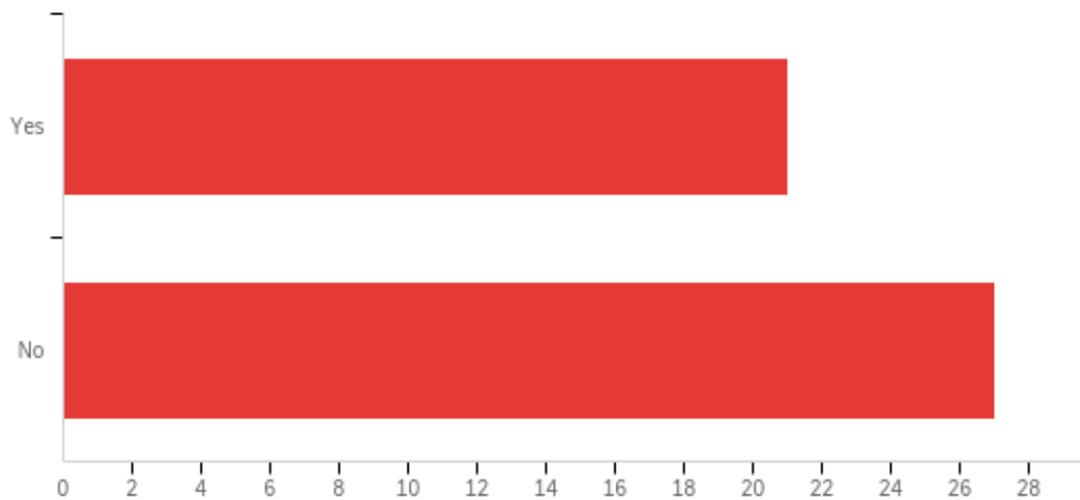**Q2 - Do you undertake additional paid work to cover your living costs?**

Q3 - Please tell us approximately how much you have earned in the last year to supplement your student stipend.

- Average: £1,035

Q4 - Please tell us approximately how much time (in hours) you have spent in the last year to supplement your student stipend.

- Average: 99 hours

Q5 - Are you being supported financially by your family, partner or other source (this could include rent contribution, food or other necessity) to help you with living costs?
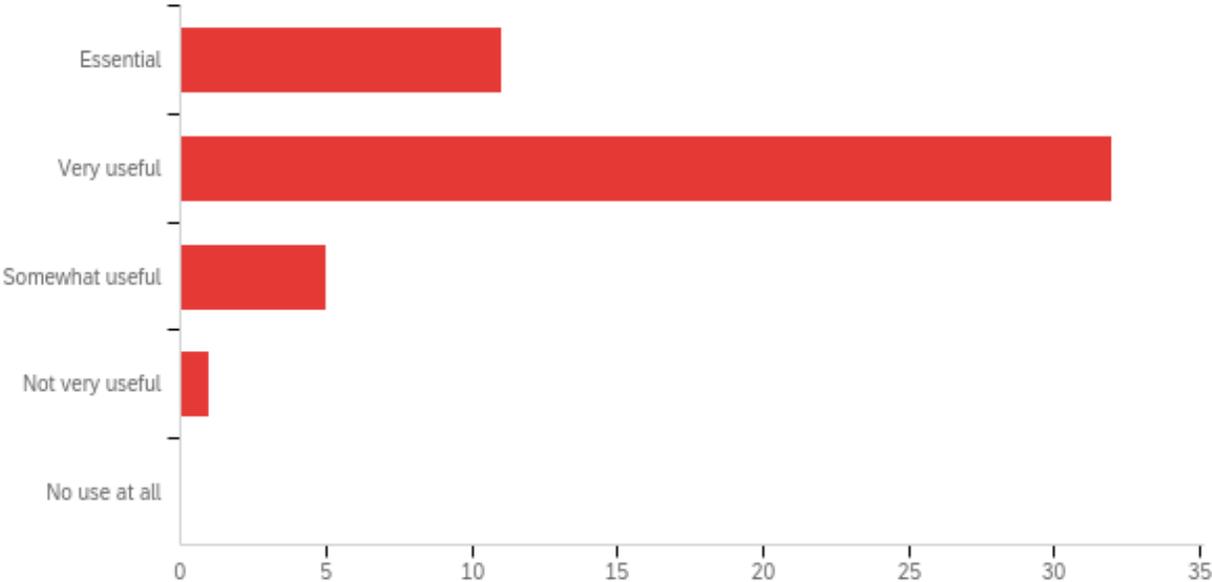

Q6 - What do you think the student stipend level should be such that you would not need to undertake additional paid work to supplement your stipend?
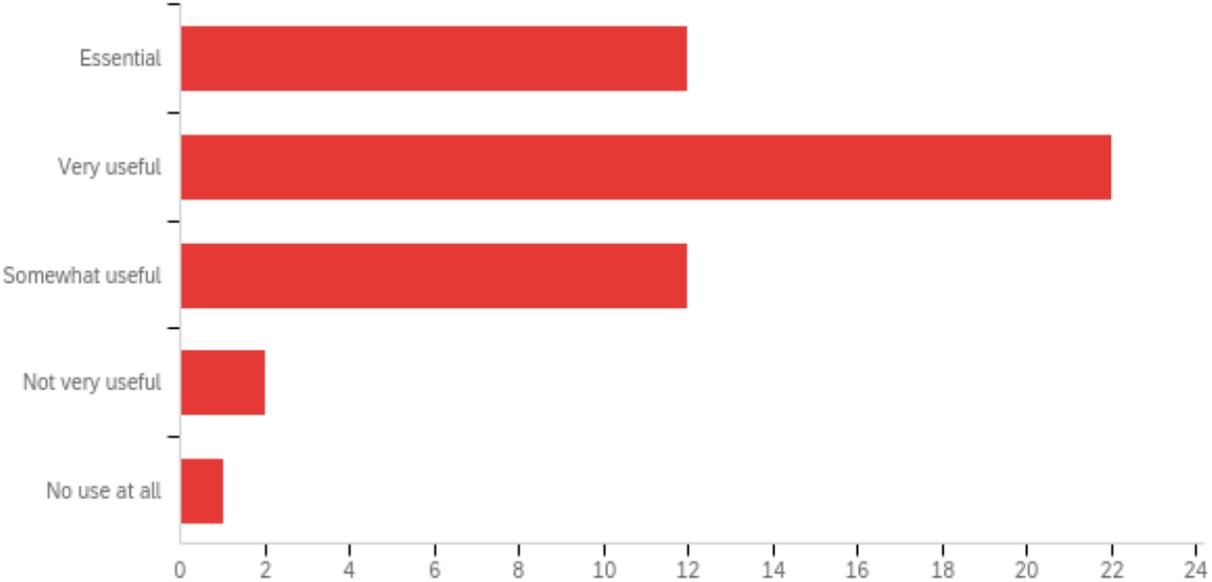
- Average: £21,000

Section 2 | Being an Interdisciplinary Student
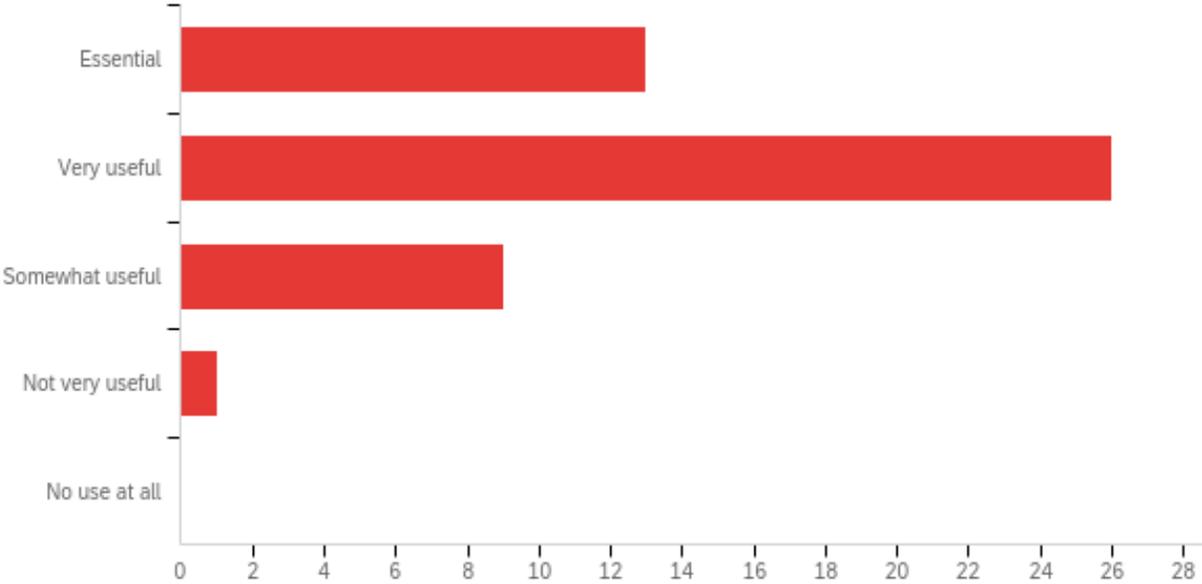
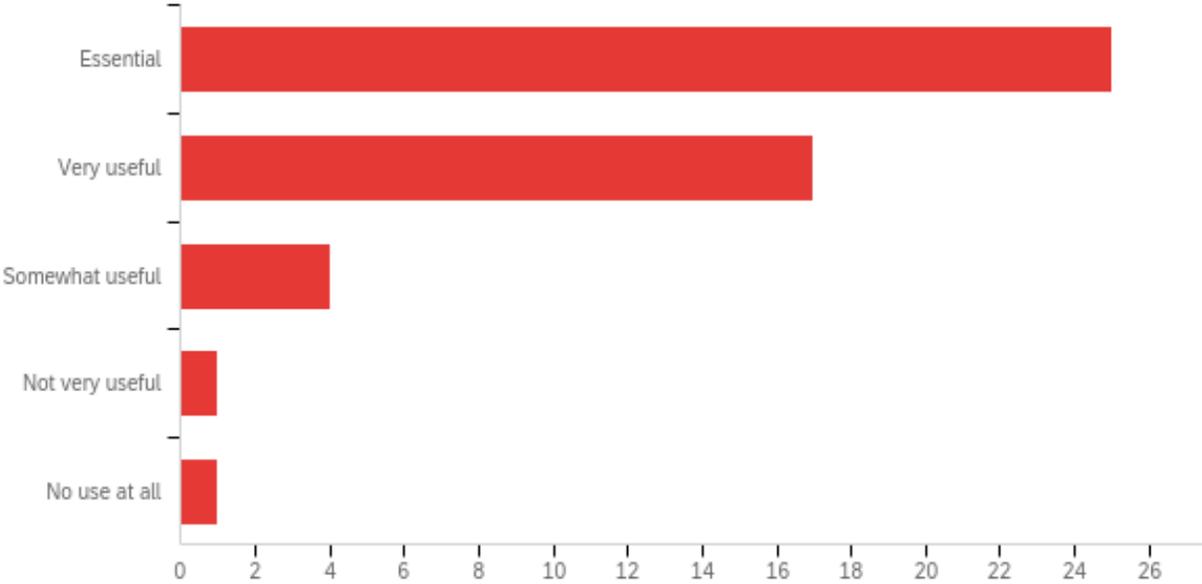**Q1 - How useful do you feel it has been to train alongside students from a range of backgrounds?**

Q2 - How useful do you feel the MSc year in Interdisciplinary Biomedical Research (IBR) has been in enhancing or expanding your research skills?

Q3 - How useful do you feel the MSc year in IBR has been in preparing you to work across disciplines?

Response	Count
Essential	13
Very useful	26
Somewhat useful	9
Not very useful	1
No use at all	0

Q4 - How valuable was it for you to choose your two MSc mini projects?

Response	Count
Essential	25
Very useful	17
Somewhat useful	4
Not very useful	1
No use at all	1

Q5 - How useful was the MSc year in IBR was in preparing you for your PhD project? (For Core students only)

Q6 - Please provide any additional comments or suggestions as to how interdisciplinary training could be improved.

Please provide any additional comments or suggestions as to how interdisciplinary training could be improved.

The trainings and modules very heavily based on biology. Some diversity would be very beneficial (e.g., artificial intelligence, bioengineering. etc.)

Programming and frontiers the only useful modules

Checking research proposals, perhaps there could be a period at the start of the PhD just focusing on this and it could be marked or checked over

A wider range of disciplines as many of the modules were not applicable to everyone's PhD.

I've used most of the modules I took in the MSc year whilst doing my PhD project, but I know that's not common for everyone, especially with compulsory modules (specifically Microscopy and Imaging). It might be useful to have a broader range of optional modules, but I know that's a huge amount of work to organise and I don't know what would be most useful to most people.

More independent practical work

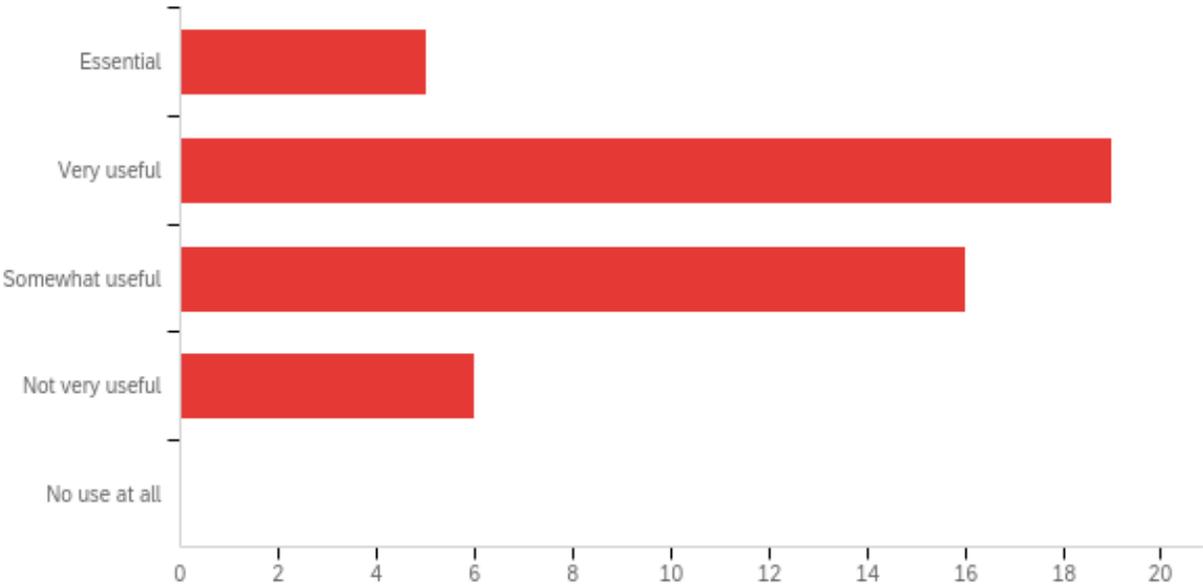A wider range of disciplines - or more choice to tailor options

Having an Intro to Chemistry would have been helpful!

Remove PBoC   More programming

I would not have chosen a computational PhD project without the MSc year, but I am really enjoying it and much prefer it over lab work. The main issue I feel with an interdisciplinary project is getting the balance of work- since I much prefer the computational work I would happily do an entirely computational project now, but feel the pressure to go into the lab sometimes.

Section 3 | Additional Skills Training and Academic Development

Q1 - In general, how valuable do you find the skills development workshops offered by the DTP?

Q2 - What skills workshops or training courses did you find particularly useful?

Presentation
I found the Excellent Presentations and Career Development Workshops particularly useful
Leadership and Management workshop (organised by MAS) was useful
Presentation
The presentation session with Duncan was very good, but that is the exception.
Team manager workshop
training courses for giving presentation
Presentations
Presentation workshop CV workshop
Career talks, presentation and thesis writing
The presentation skill by Duncan Yellowlees
How to give a presentation
Presentation skills from Duncan Yellowlees!!!!
Workshop on presenting Careers workshop
The story telling workshop by Duncan Yellowlees.

Presentation and poster sessions

Job searching one was quite good

Presentation, poster, podcast

I loved the presentation one it was really helpful and useful for me!

Presentation skills

Presentations by Duncan

Programming

Career

Presentation training

Presentation skills

Presentation workshop

CV & Careers

Presentation training, supervisor-supervisee session

The presentations workshop was really great and I think my slides have improved since then.

Podcast workshop was great! Not ever something I'd have considered.

Presentations workshop

podcast, career planning

There are only a few workshops that I found to be worthwhile. To my mind comes the presentation workshop and the careers workshop in the final year. This was a talk but preparing for uncertainty by Nessa Carrey was useful.

The podcast workshop was useful and fun..

Q3 - What skills workshops or training courses, that are not already provided by the DTP, would help your professional skills development?

Further training courses of programming languages

Scientific writing workshop

maybe scientific writing training

Maybe something on data organisation/record keeping/lab books/online lab books

Project management / time management

Workshops tailored towards writing good CV, resume and interview skills for final year PhDs

Making academic posters, time management/how to prioritise and plan experiments (there are some of these in MSc year but I feel like they would be useful during the PhD)

Career workshops.

maybe a session on academic writing? reports, etc.

Writing/preparing for thesis and viva, more on jobs and future career. also just continuing professional development stuff - i.e. leadership, teamwork etc

Academic writing supported on campus to daily or weekly courses and tasks

Maybe something covering business sort of thing? I think the Uni offers them but it is unclear

Python training   Presenting skills

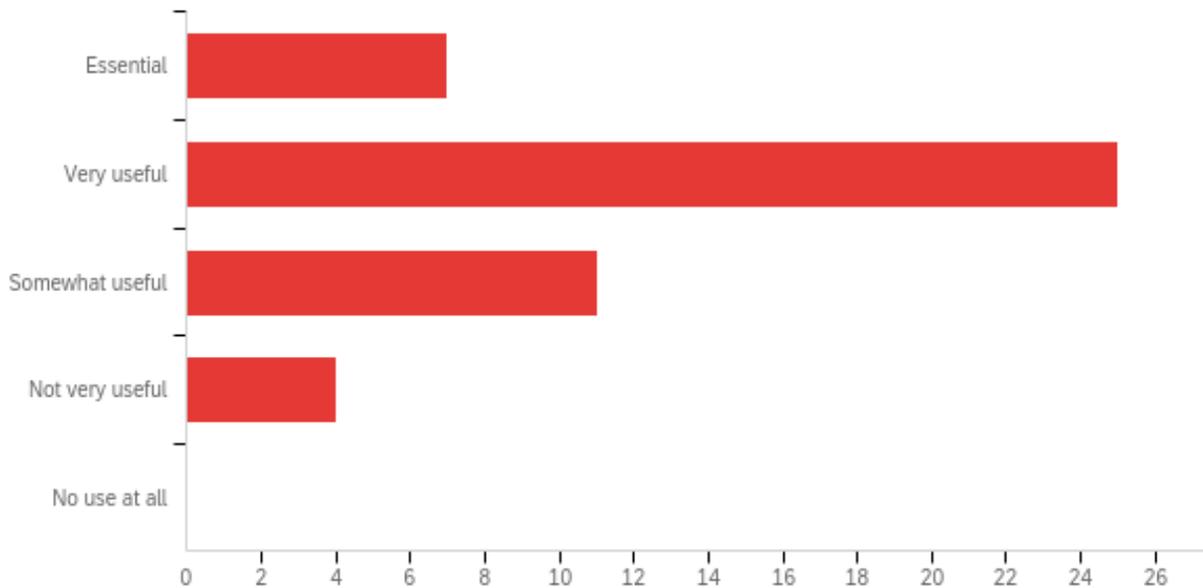A writing workshop for final years

poster presentation

Applying for jobs after a PhD.

Data presentation

personal development, writing workshop

An optional in-depth coding course in python or data visualisation that builds up on the knowledge from the MSc year would be useful.

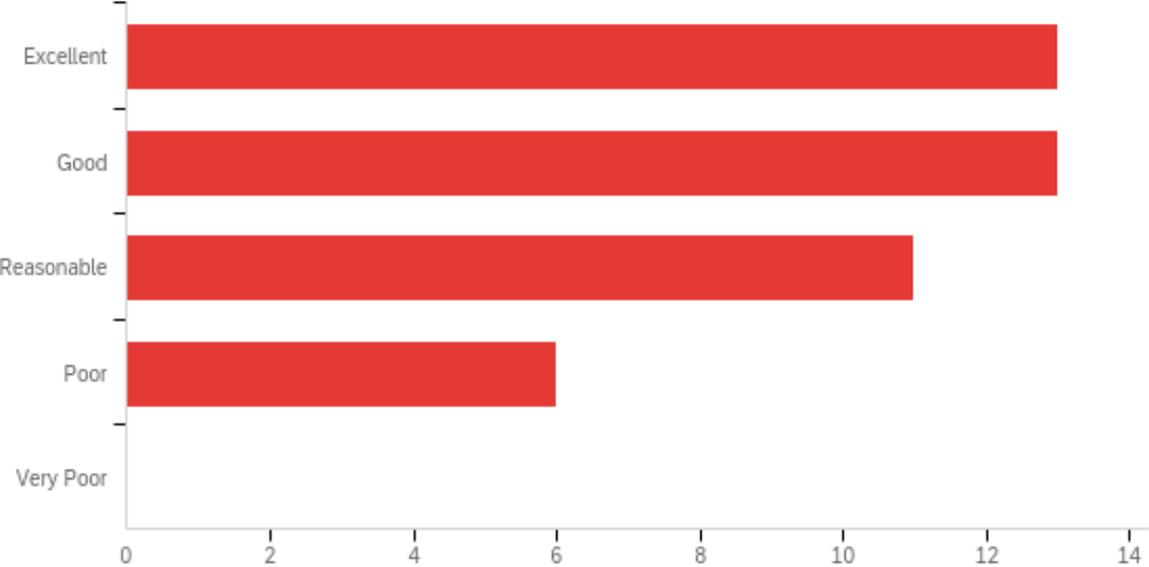Maybe some additional master classes on programming languages

Q4 - How valuable do you find student presentations (at chalk talks and at conferences) in expanding your scientific knowledge?

Q5 - How would you rate the support and information you have received from the MRC DTP Team of the individual training opportunities that can be funded through the flexible training award?
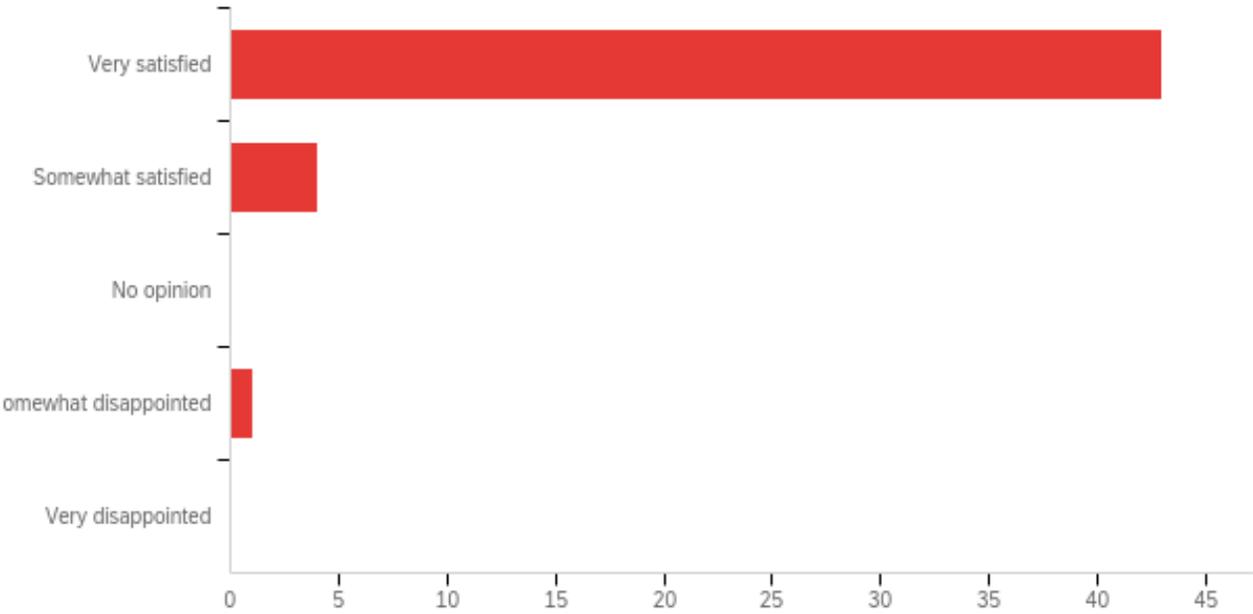

Q6 - How would you rate the support you receive from your PhD advisory committee in identifying and supporting your additional training needs and career development?
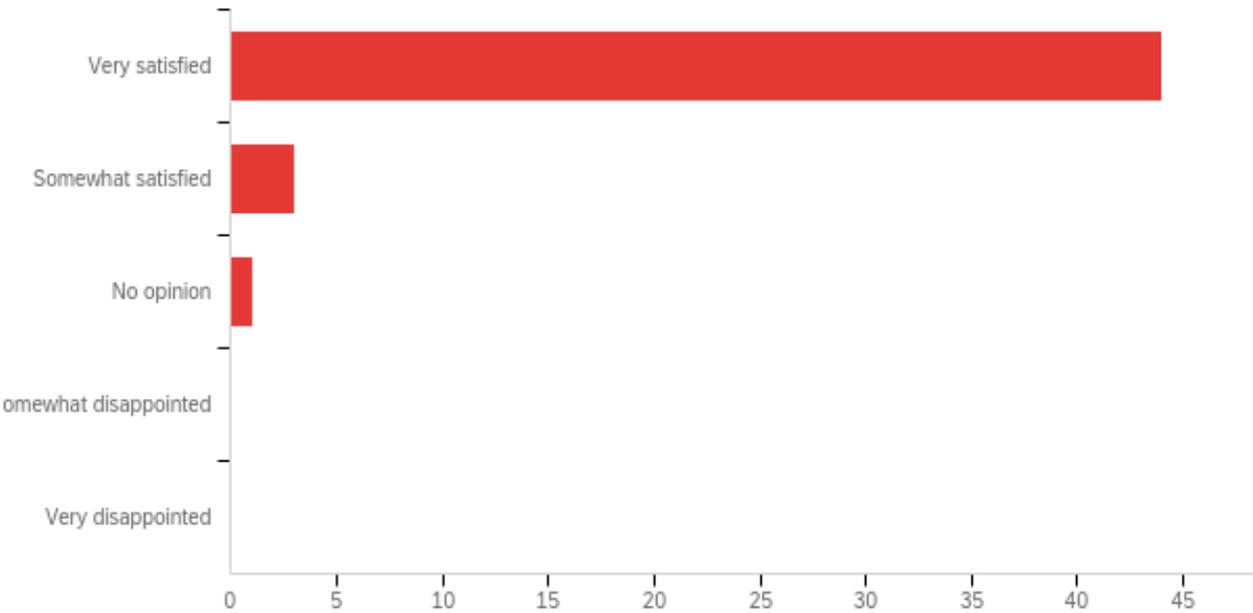
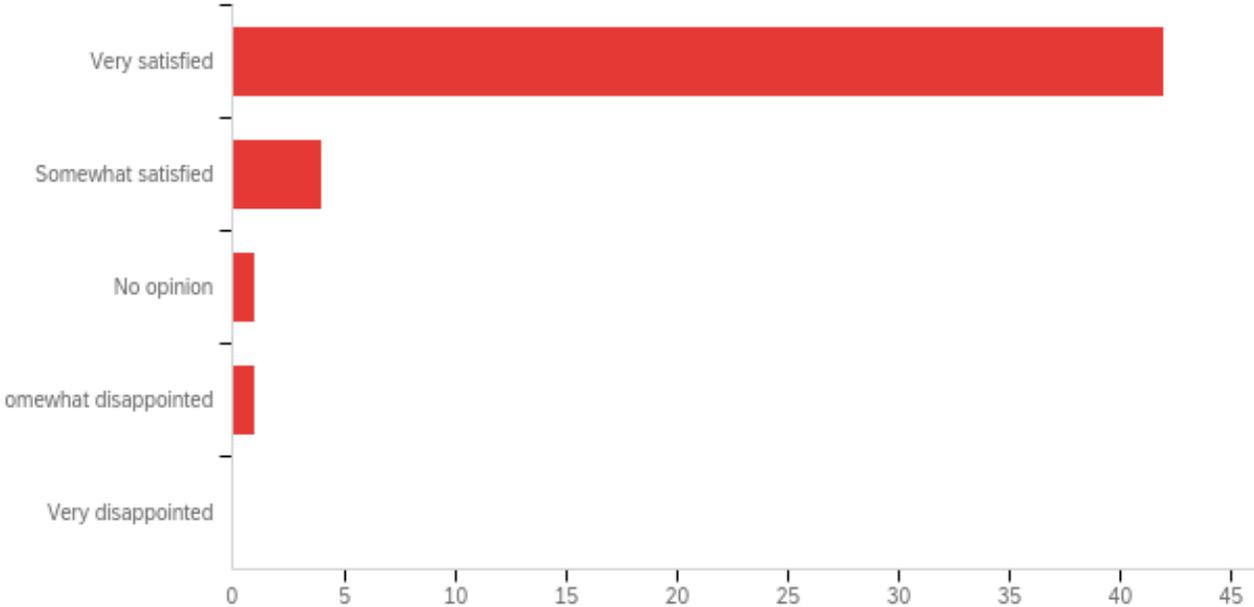# Section 4 | Communication and Feedback

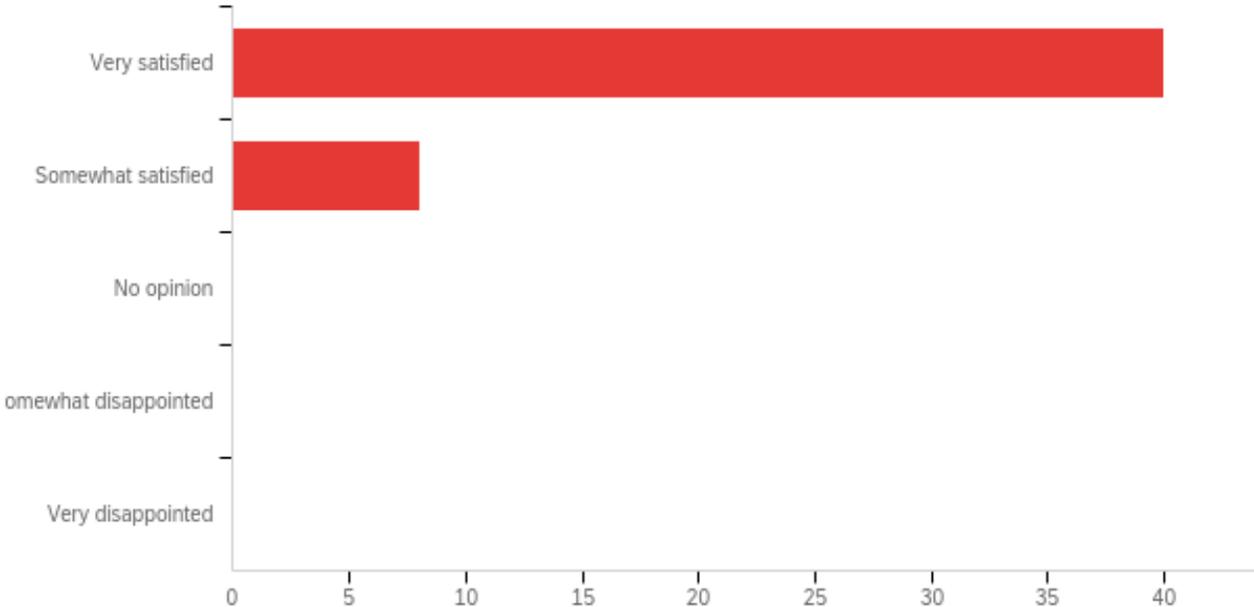**Q1 - How satisfied are you that the MRC DTP team are friendly and approachable?**

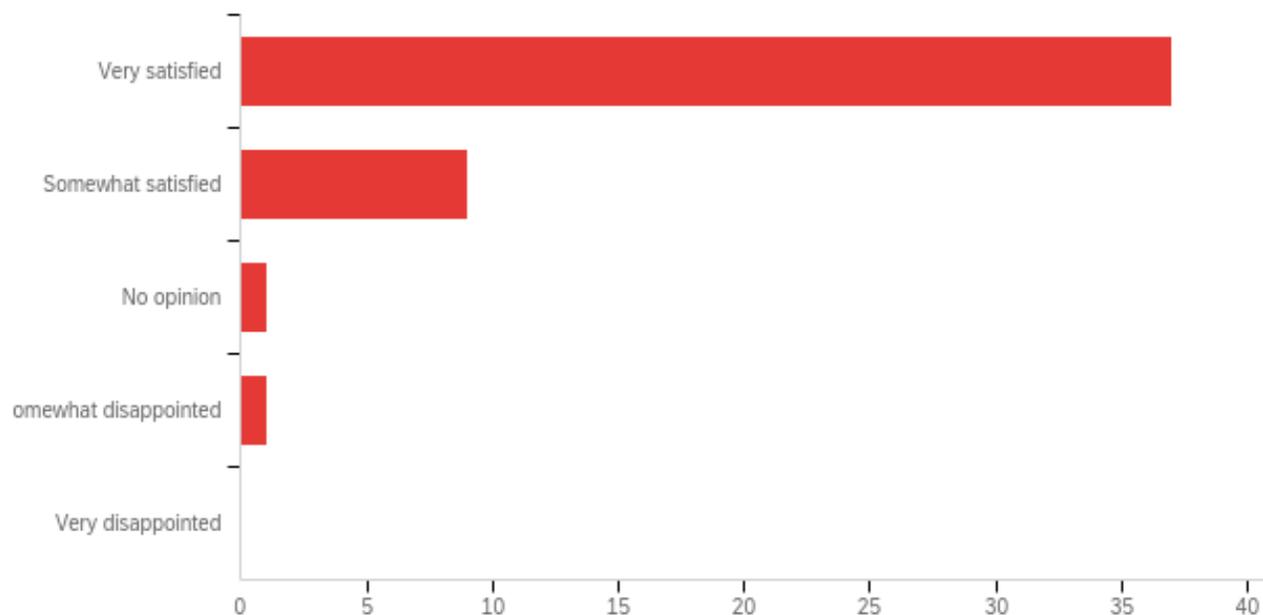**Q2 - How satisfied are you with the timeliness and responsiveness of the MRC DTP team?**

Q3 - How satisfied are you with the quality of support you receive from the MRC DTP team?

Q4 - How satisfied are you with the opportunity to provide feedback to the MRC DTP team?

Q5 - How satisfied are you that your feedback is considered and acted upon by the MRC DTP team (where this is possible and in the wider interests of the student community/course)?
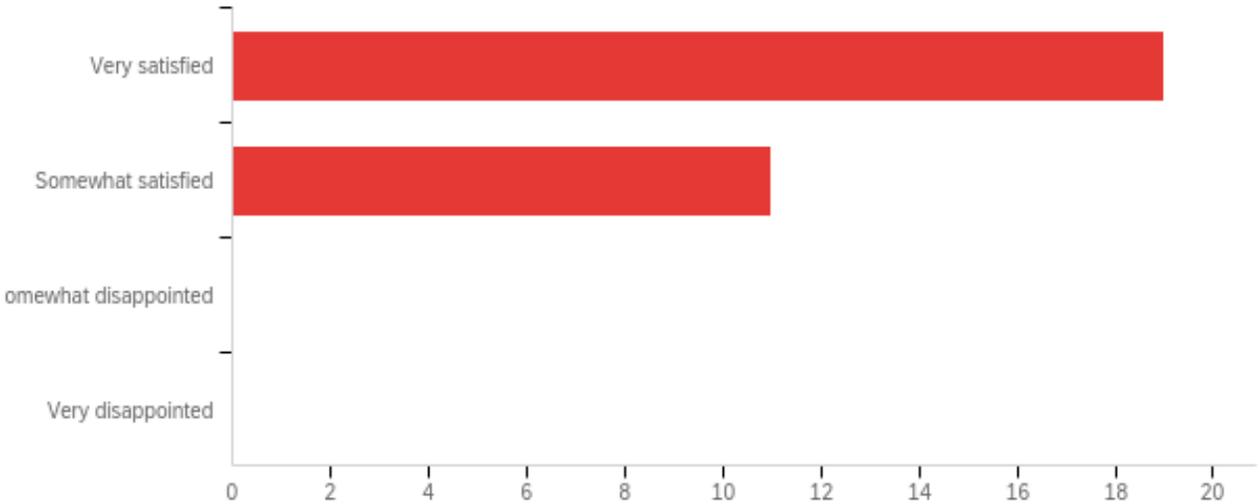

Q6 - Please tell us about any additional comments, suggestions etc, you have that relate to any of questions in Section 4.

I feel the entire MRC DTP team put a huge effort into supporting students, listening to them and helping them accordingly, and I really appreciate this. At times I have felt there is unnecessary pressure from the MRC DTP team to engage with the many developmental/social activities which are run. This has at times seemed to stem more from concern at generating good reports for the MRC than actual benefit to students. I have previously expressed concerns over specific communications from the MRC DTP and these concerns were taken seriously.
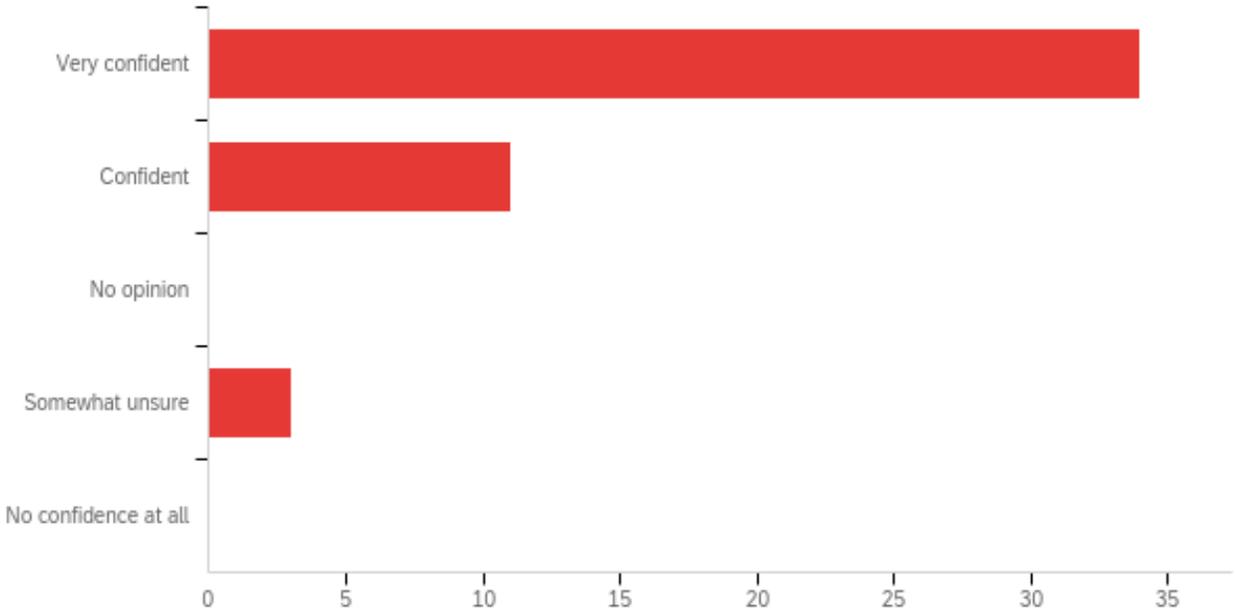
The MRC DTP team are genuinely brilliant, so helpful and approachable, and I feel very supported in the course.
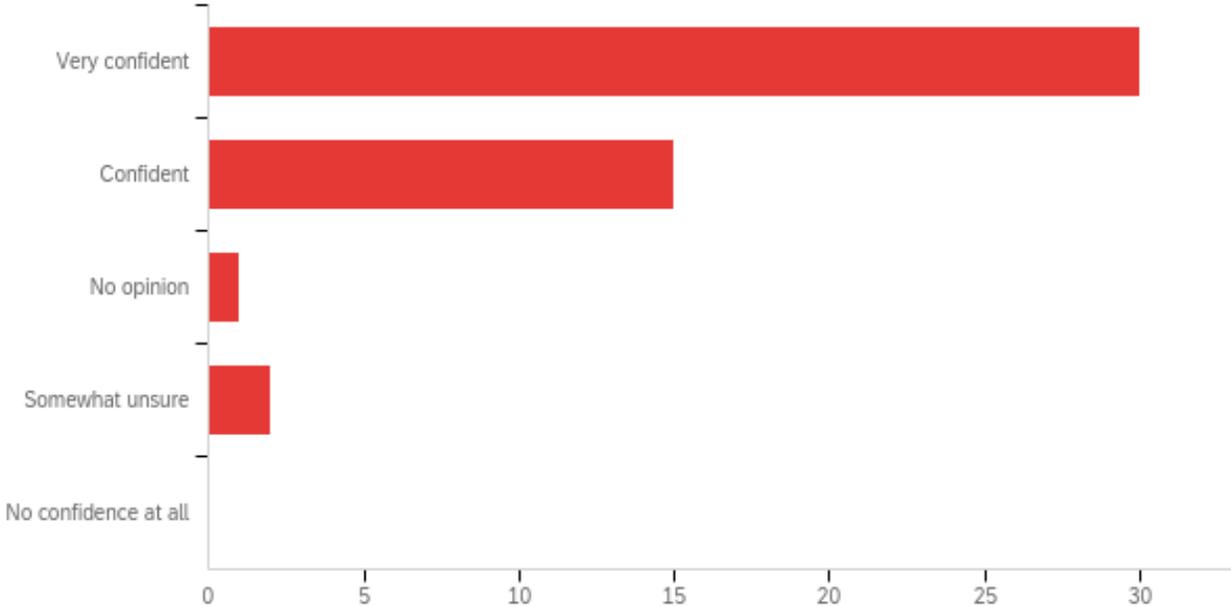
Section 5 | Wellbeing, Guidance and Support

Q1 - How satisfied are you with the careers advice and support that you have received from the MRC DTP team?
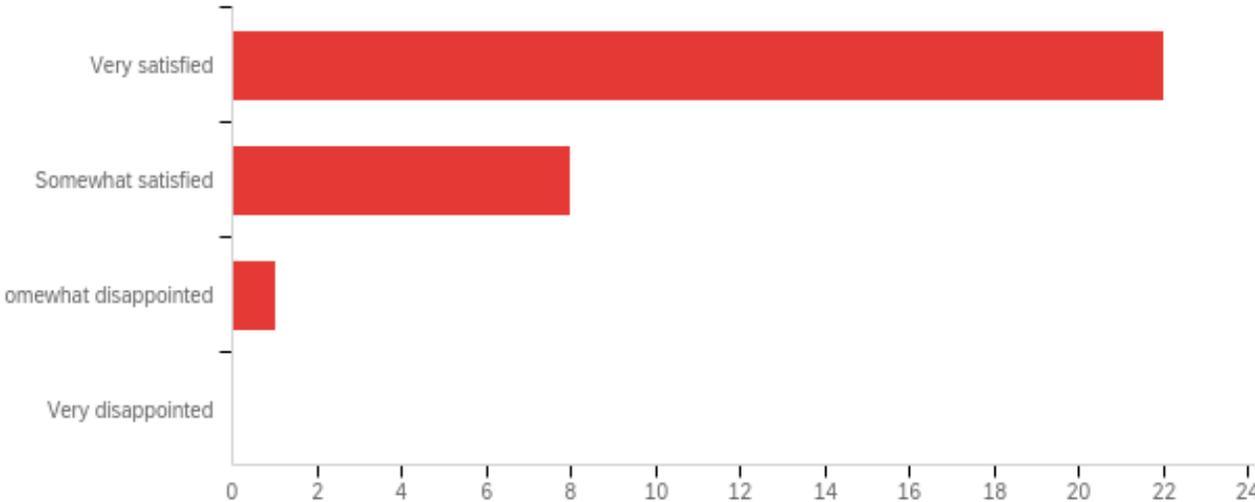

Q2 - How confident are you that the MRC DTP leadership team would help you with supervisory issues should they arise?
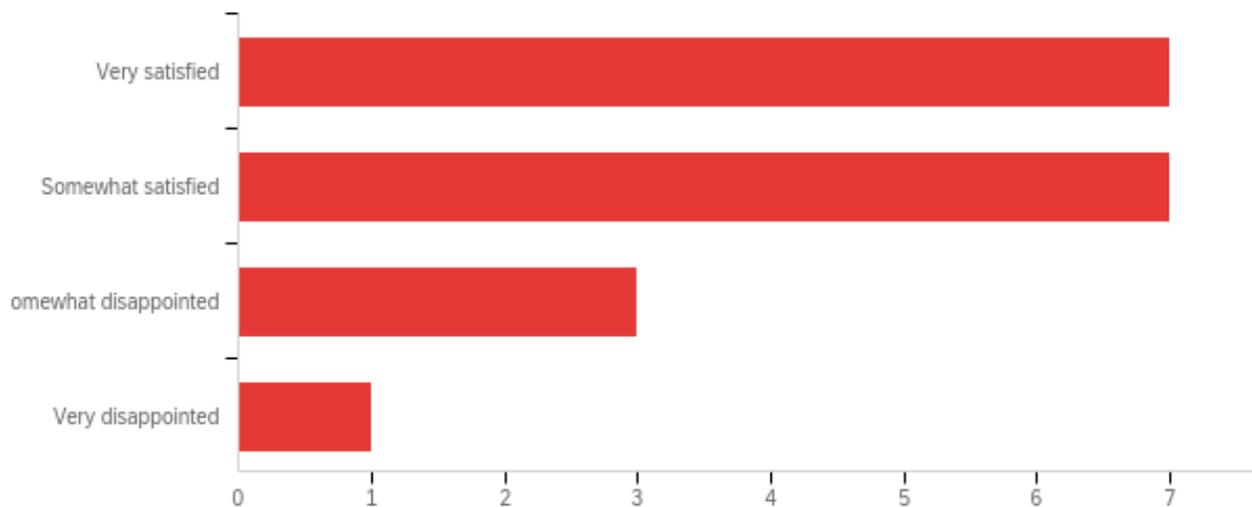
Q3 - How confident are you that the MRC DTP leadership team would help you with supervisory issues rapidly, sensitively and effectively?

Q4 - How satisfied are you with the efforts of the MRC DTP to support your personal mental health and well-being? If not relevant – please state not applicable.

Q5 - If applicable, how satisfied are you with support you have received from departmental or university services (e.g. WMS Senior Tutor, University Wellbeing Services, Student Support and Disability Services). If not relevant – please state not applicable.

Q6 - Please tell us here about any additional comments, suggestions, etc, you have that relate to questions in Section 5, including any additional types of personal support that would be helpful

I think that we don't really get a chance to bring up wellbeing/supervisory issues - we have to reach out if we're struggling which is hard when you're in a bad place. Perhaps the option of a brief (10 minute) meeting with a DTP team member/wellbeing team to discuss any issues every few months might help.

The MRC DTP team have helped me with issues with supervisory arrangements. They have been very supportive and available which made the situation much easier.
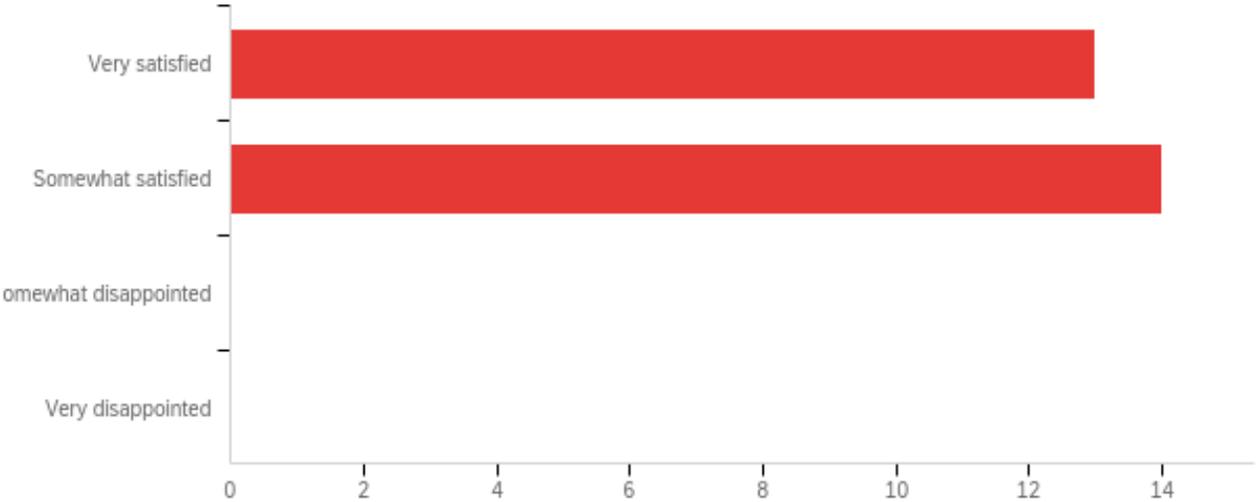
disability services are appalling! it's better not to direct students towards them

There are limitations from the University Wellbeing services (eg they only operate from 10am-4pm)
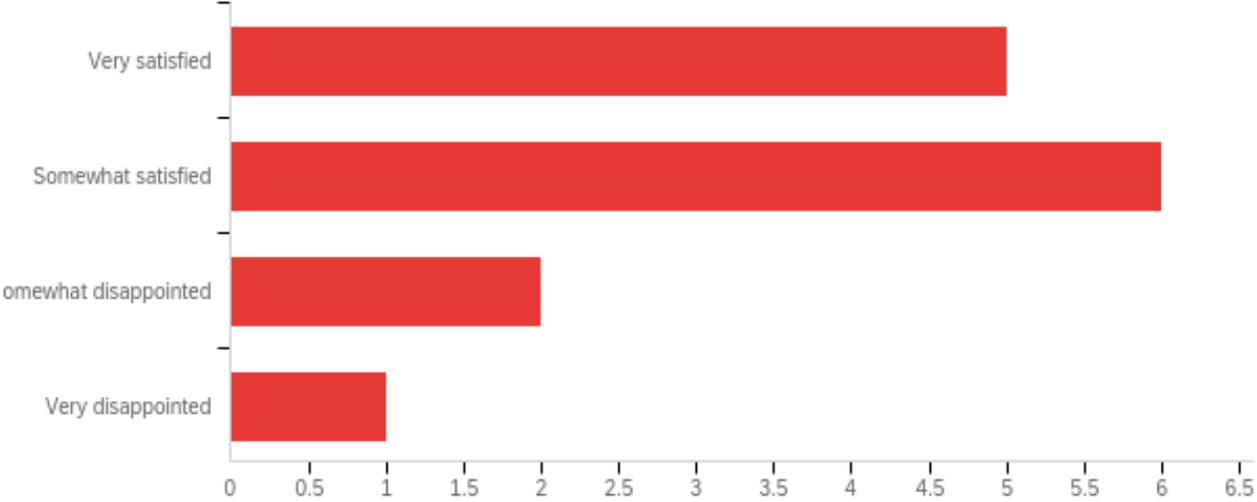
I think that a lot of the career-related stuff from the MRC DTP is talks from people in different careers and how they got there, which is vaguely useful but a lot of them are not relevant to what I am actually interested in, or don't discuss how they decided on that path. Also would love more talks from people who don't prioritise work in all things, and are still happy. A lot of the talks are from people who have been successful because they work very long hours, but maybe we just want to hear from someone who earns enough to support their lifestyle and has a good work-life balance.
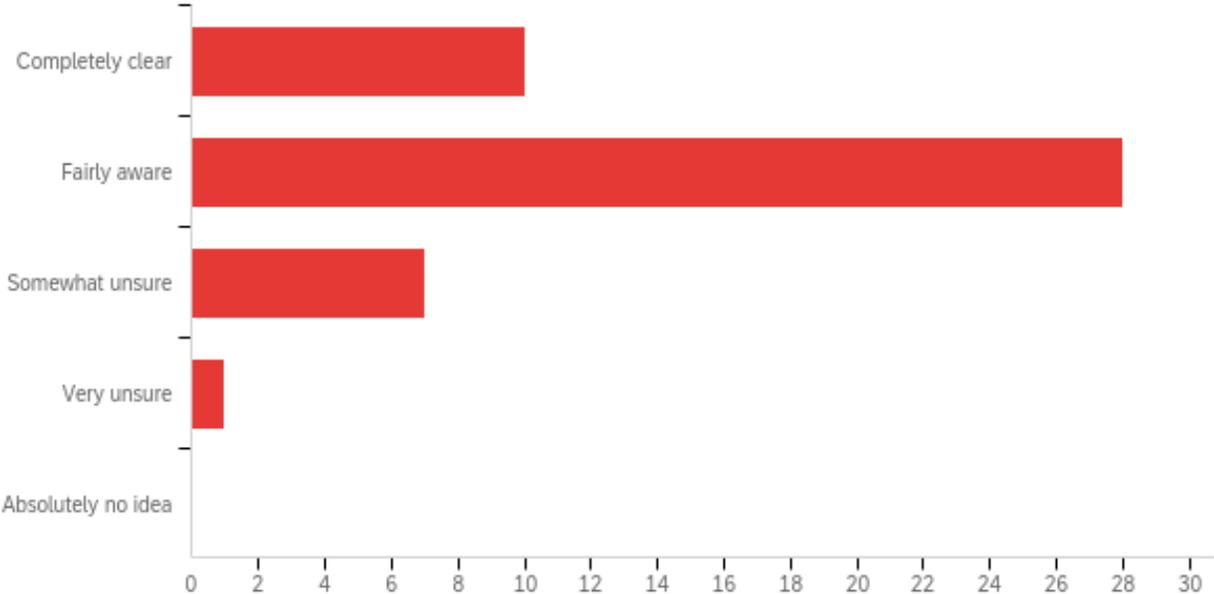
Section 6 | Careers Support

Q1 - How satisfied are you with the careers advice and support that you have received from the MRC DTP team?
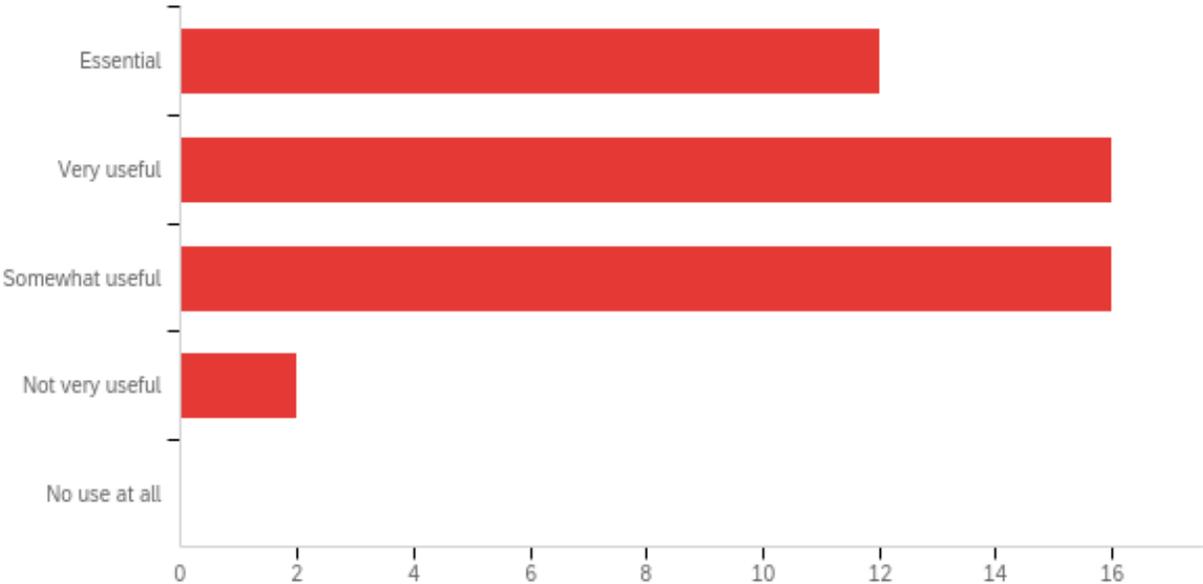

Q2 - How satisfied are you with the Careers support and advice available from the department or university? If not relevant – please state not applicable.

Q3 - How clear are you as to what the Career Transition Fellowships are for and how to apply for them?

Response	Count
Completely clear	10
Fairly aware	28
Somewhat unsure	7
Very unsure	1
Absolutely no idea	0

Q4 - How valuable are the careers talks for learning about a broad range of career options?

Response	Count
Essential	12
Very useful	16
Somewhat useful	16
Not very useful	2
No use at all	0

Q5 - What types of careers would you like to learn more about?

Careers outside of science but still utilising our skills, e.g. software development.

Biotech

Academic early career

global health

Patent law, consultancy, jobs abroad

Entry level industry

Industry jobs and what's available outside pharmaceuticals.

Careers in research other than in universities (e.g., institutes, industry)

Consulting. Biotech, Academia.

Just all the options available and resources to build experience in preparation

moving from academia to industry - also just ordinary people with more ordinary jobs (senior scientist etc) - because sometimes the talks are by very interesting people - but their path is incredibly niche or the role is difficult to get and it feels too far away from where I am or what I could do

Start up/spin out what its like, maybe recruitment for what skills are useful ?

academia

Non-academic

Industry - general talk about industry and different career routes within it. Both research and business roles. Overview of types of research companies - Pharma, biotechs etc.

Academic careers

Lecturing/Teaching in Academia

Data science and coding. And anything with a decent work-life balance, don't need to only hear from people who are head of a department or a PI.

Health / medical careers that aren't research based

Science journalism and science comms

scientist in the pharma industry

People who have taken their PhD ideas and commercialised them by building their own company.

Q6 - Please tell us here about any additional comments, suggestions, etc, you have that relate to questions in Section 6
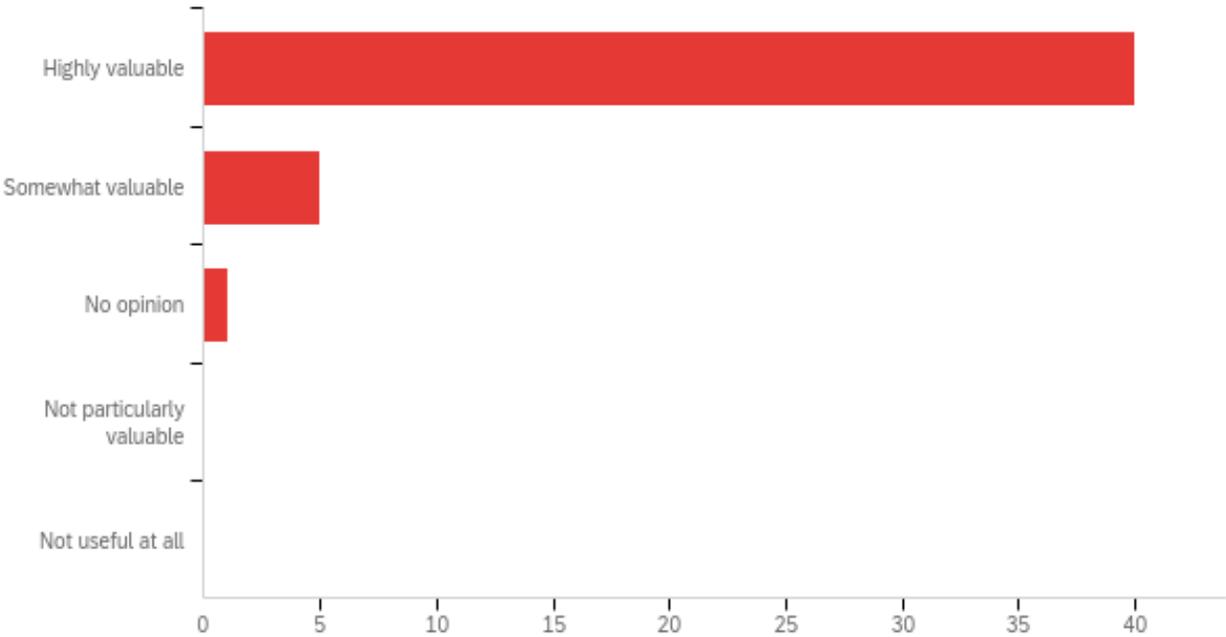
I loved the panel we did on MRC DTP conference this year, very good to get perspectives across the range of translation!

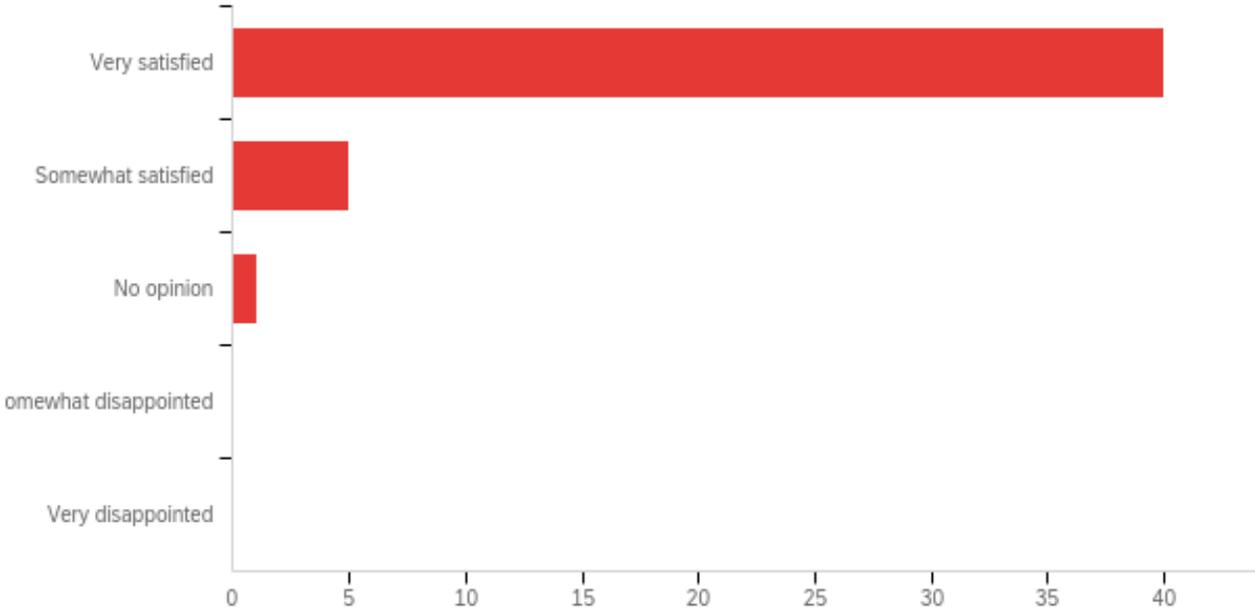The careers talks we have had have been really broad ranging and interesting - really great

There hasn't been much opportunity for career support from the DTP team
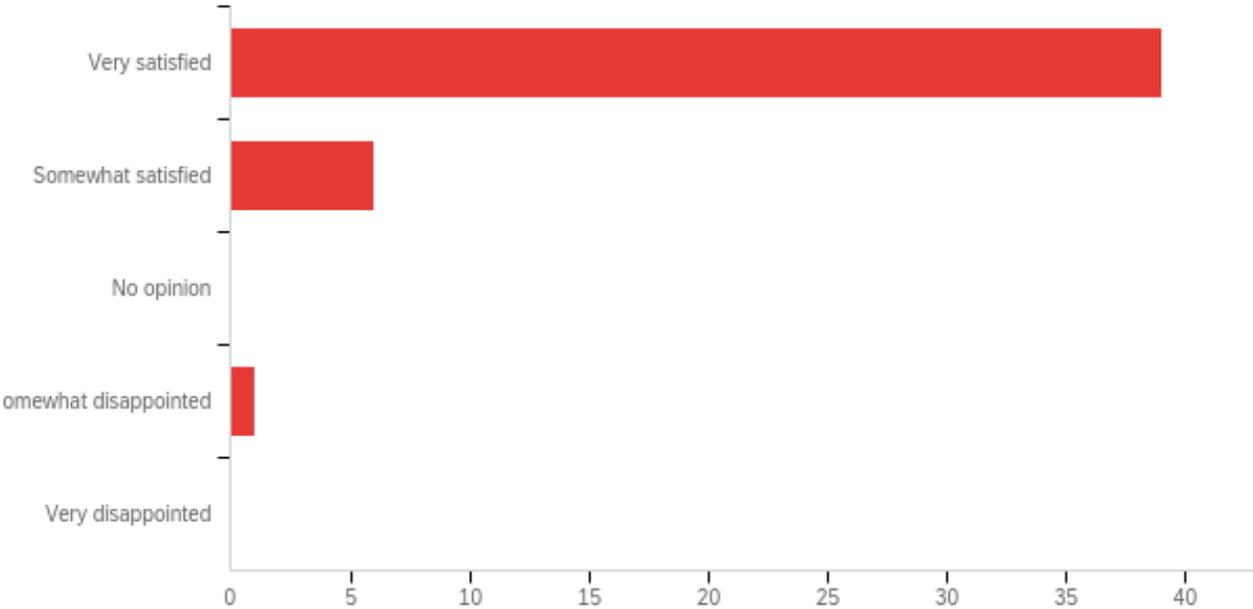
Section 7 | MRC DTP in IBR community

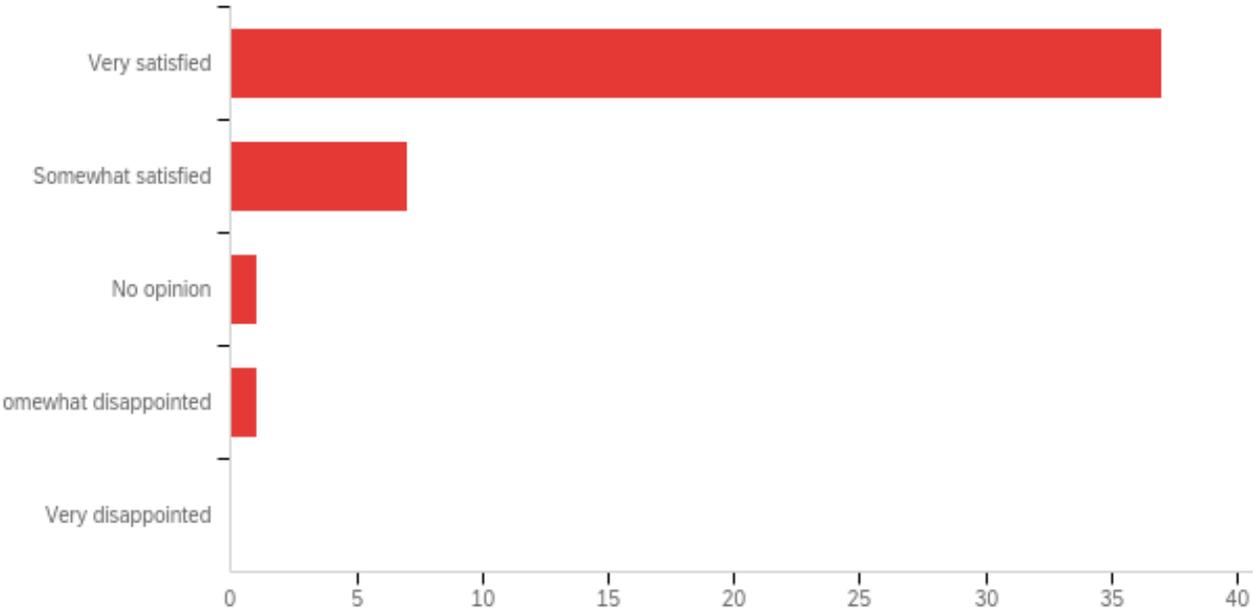## Q1 - How valuable is it to you that you are a member of the MRC DTP community?

Q2 - How satisfied are you that being part of the MRC DTP community enhances your overall student experience
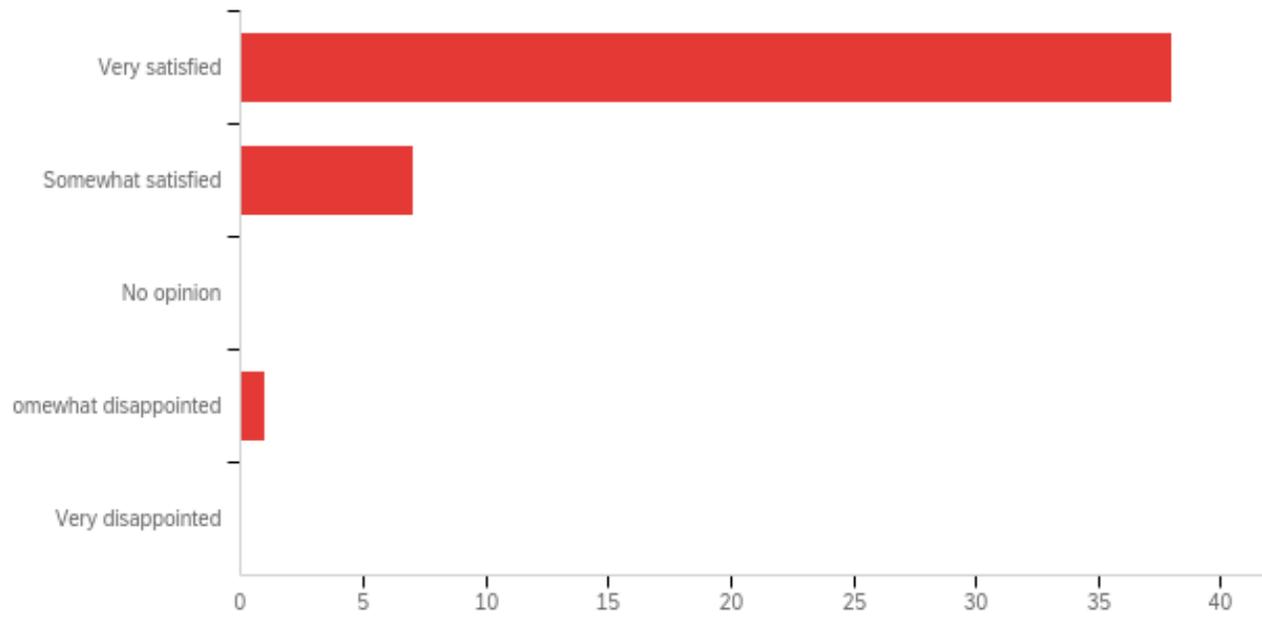
Q3 - How satisfied are you that the MRC DTP is welcoming and inclusive?

Q4 - How satisfied are you that the MRC DTP acknowledges and values diversity and differences?

Q5 - How satisfied are you that everyone on the MRC DTP is treated with dignity and respect?

Q6 - Please tell us here about any additional comments, suggestions, etc, you have that relate to questions in Section 7.
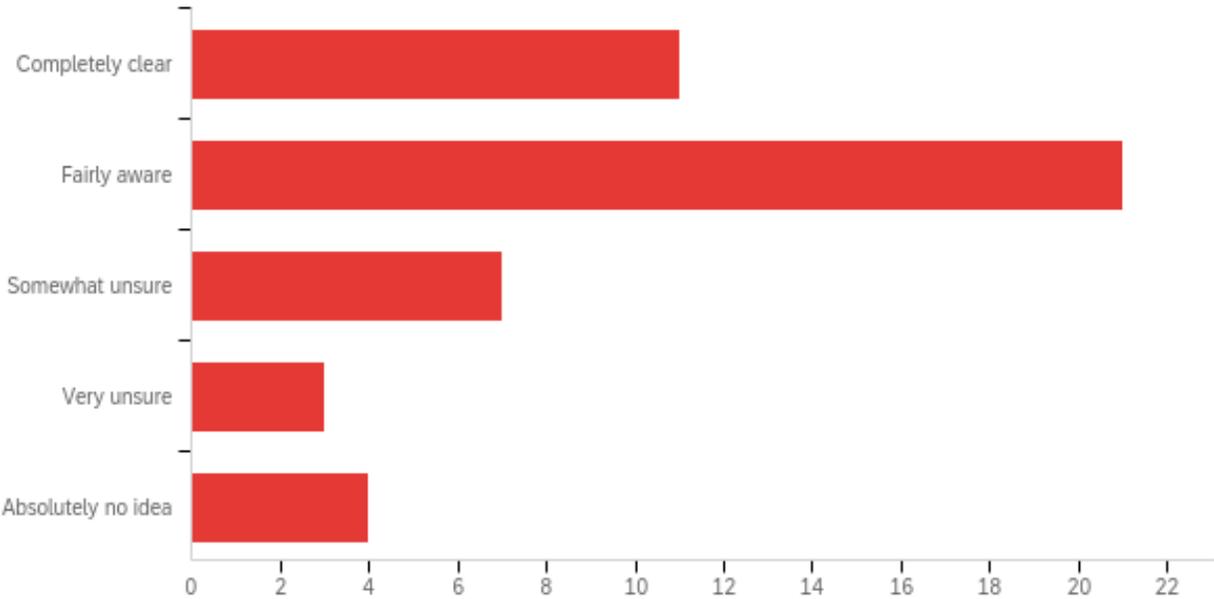
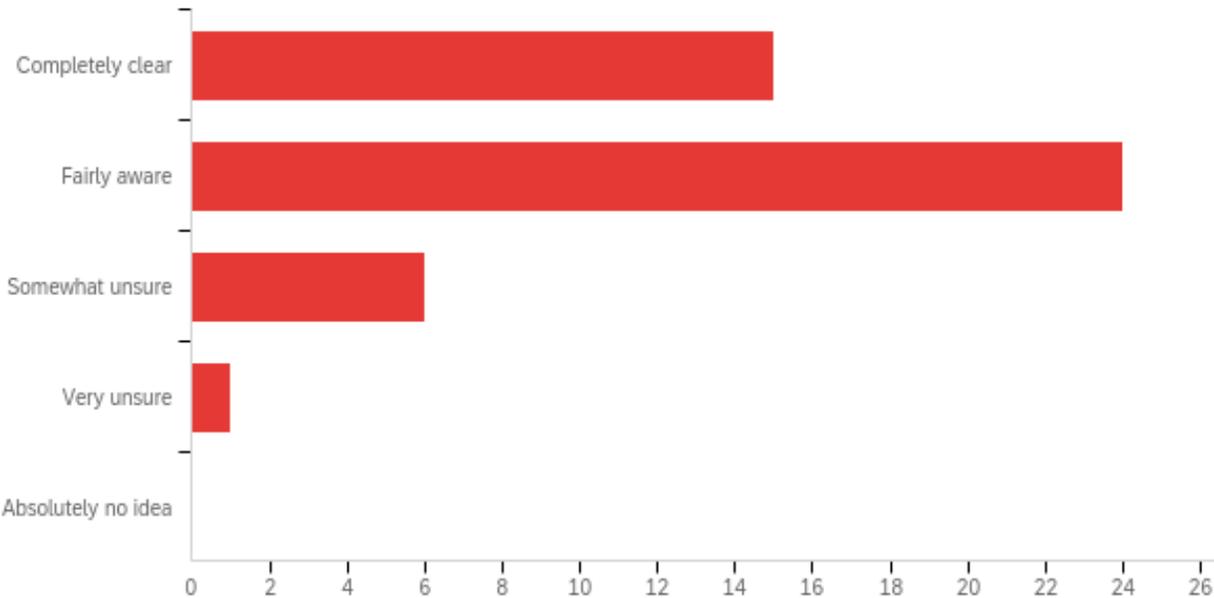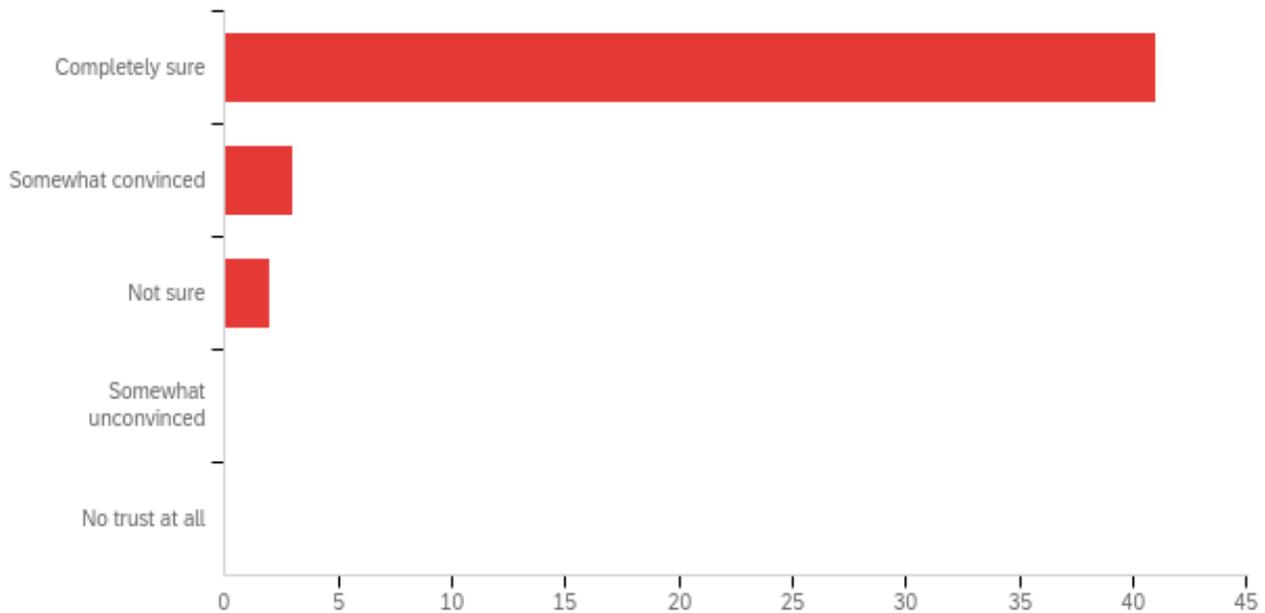| Please tell us here about any additional comments, suggestions, etc, you have that relate to questions in Section 7. |
| --- |
| The social events really keep us engaged and part of the community. The student conference was great to get to know people across different years, and I think the effort put into having more student social events is fantastic |
| Could be better with more social activities. I feel like we are only truly together as a cohort at the conferences. Otherwise, we just talk in groups and some of us get isolated. |
| very glad to be part of the MRC DTP community =) |

Section 8 | Research and Training Culture

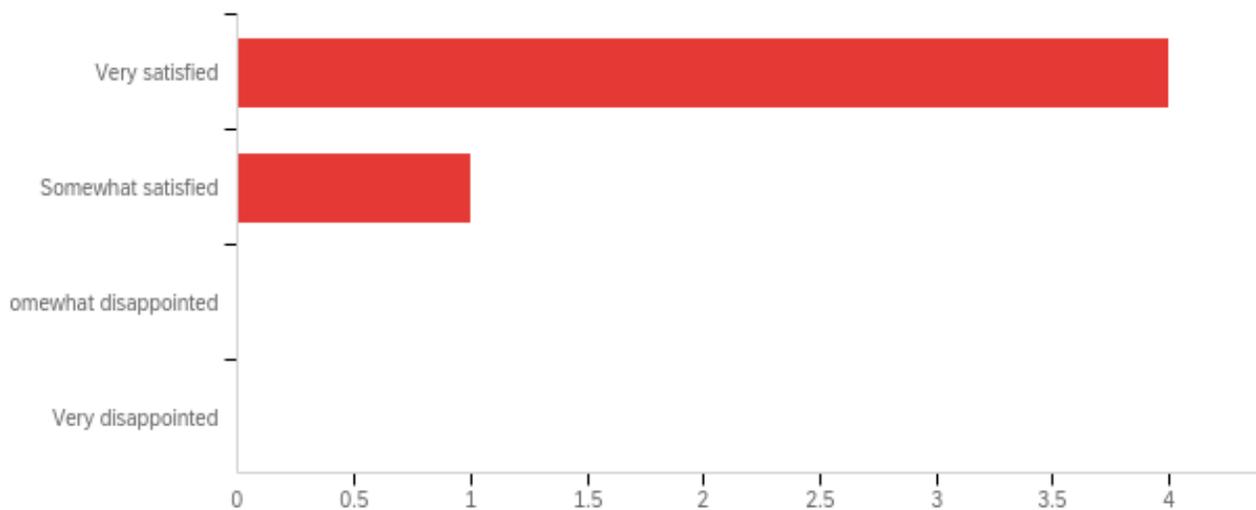**Q1 - How aware are you of the university's Dignity at Warwick policy?**

Q2 - How clear are you about how to raise and report any harassment or bullying issues that you might experience or witness?

Q3 - How convinced are you that the MRC DTP Team would both support you and take action if you were to experience any harassment or bullying issues?

Q4 - How satisfied are you with the help you have received from the MRC DTP Team in responding to such harassment or bullying issues? If not relevant – please state not applicable.
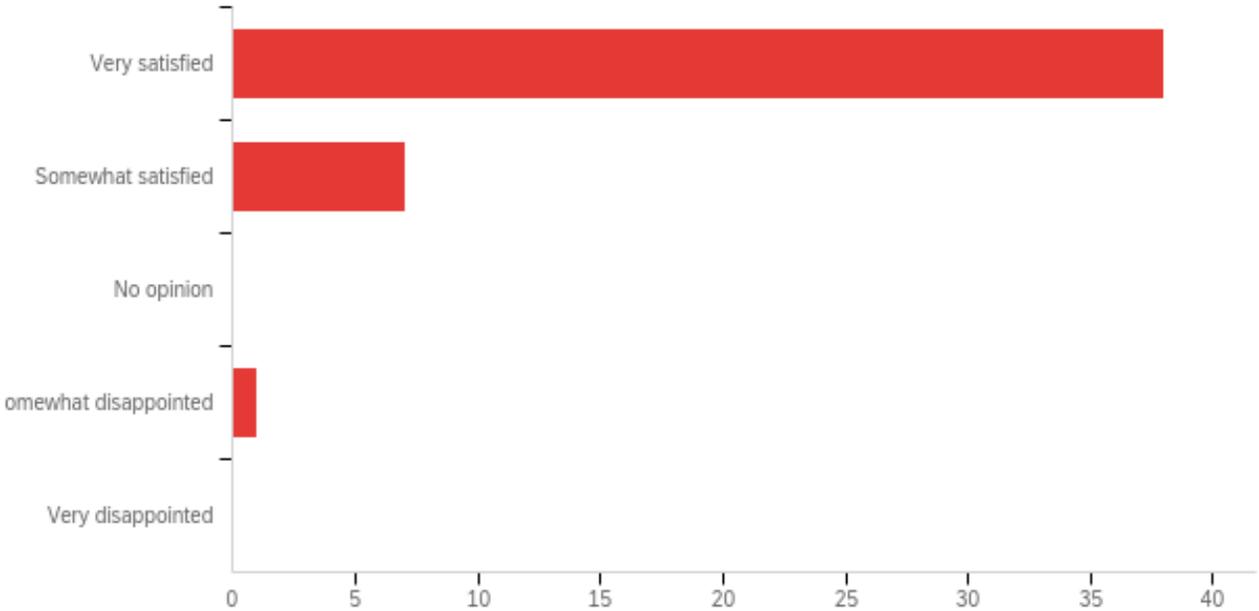

Q5 - Please tell us here about any additional comments, suggestions, etc, you have that relate to questions in Section 8?

The report and support FYI we did in December was really useful, and the fact the processes are on the website is excellent.

Section 9 | Overall Satisfaction

Q1 - How satisfied are you with the overall quality of the programme and support available to you?

Q2 - Please tell us here about any additional comments, suggestions, etc. you have about the overall quality of the programme and support available to you.

The support staff, Jonathan and Claire are brilliant. They make being on the course and what is expected very clear. It also feels like they are on your side if you need anything. It is also nice having a sense of community across the entire MRC DTP course at Warwick.