

# Image and Perception Report



*Prepared by:*  
Priority Research Ltd

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## 4. Qualitative Survey Results – Students

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### University Prospectus

The last section of the group discussion focused on the front covers of a number of university prospectuses. To this effect, prospectuses for September 2005 were shown to group participants and their views on the front covers canvassed.

Note:

- (ii) *The university name and logo on the front cover was covered so that participants were unable to identify the university. It should be noted, however, that some participants recognised some of the prospectus front covers.*
- (i) *The prospectuses for XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX were used in two of the five group discussions. A course listing booklet for XXXXXXXXXXXX was shown at three of the group discussions.*

The views and opinions expressed by group participants indicate that the prospectus front covers for XXXXXXXXXXXX and also XXXXXXXXXXXX were particularly positively regarded and tempting to pick up. Conversely, a number of criticisms were apparent, particularly for the front covers for XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX and these were the prospectuses students claimed they would be less likely to pick up.

The research further suggests that the most appealing prospectus front covers are those which include photographs/images depicting the university, its facilities and the city. It is suggested, therefore, that the front cover of any university prospectus should include photos/pictures to give potential students an overview of what the university and city is like.

The views and perceptions expressed by students of the individual front covers can be found below:

### XXXXXXXXXX University

The research suggests that students have a mixed opinion of the front cover, with the inclusion of photos depicting different aspects of the university, city and student life being particularly well received.

- *Looks nice*
- *Interesting*
- *It shows a bit of everything*
- *It shows all the things you need to consider*
- *I think it's probably the best of the three we've looked at so far*
- *It shows the city as well*
- *It's a got a bit of everything – social side as well as academic and how the city is as well*
- *It shows different aspects of the university – courses and environment*
- *It shows what you can do and that it's a nice place to be*
- *They've got all the different parts of university life*

Having said this, however, a number of negative comments have been highlighted:

- *The positioning/clustering of the photographs at the bottom of the page is disliked, with a preference expressed for the photos to be spread across the whole cover*
- *It is also seen to look "a bit bare"*
- *The use of the dark blue is considered a masculine colour and is considered "too dark"*
- *I don't like the photos all at the bottom, it's too imbalanced, they need to spread the pictures out like XXXXXXXXXXXX's*
- *I don't think it's as effective as this one (XXX)*
- *I don't like the design and where they've put the pictures*

## 4. Qualitative Survey Results – Students

Although it is considered, by most, to be a prospectus for a new university, a minority feel that it could be for an old university.

Although most feel that the front cover does not suggest any particular subject specialisms, one of the groups comment that it could specialise in science related courses – an opinion based on the inclusion of the laboratory photograph.

### XXXXXXXXXX University

There was a generally negative reaction to the front cover with criticisms apparent from all of the groups. The main criticism relates to its overall design in that it is considered to look more like a magazine front cover than a university prospectus. In addition, it is not considered to inform students about the university or to give potential students an impression/overview of the university and city.

Other criticisms include:

- General dislike of its design
  - Dislike use of picture of person
  - Dislike of colours used
- 
- *Horrible*
  - *It doesn't look right*
  - *It looks like a magazine*
  - *I would say it's for a new university, but you can't really tell because it looks like a magazine*
  - *I think it looks more like a magazine front cover*
  - *It'd stand out but I don't think you'd pick it up because it doesn't look serious. If you put that next to an XXXXXXXXXX one, you'd pick up the XXXXXXXXXX one because it looks more like a university one, but that one looks like a magazine*
  - *It's like a computer magazine*
  - *She's posing with a laptop*
  - *She looks like she's been posed and told to hold a laptop*
  - *It's like she's been forced to hold the laptop*
  - *It doesn't look like a university prospectus*
  - *It doesn't tell you anything at all, it's just someone with a laptop in her hand*
  - *It doesn't tell you anything about the university*
  - *It doesn't show anything of the university*
  - *It's just a person – it doesn't tell you anything about the university*
  - *I don't know what it's trying to say*
  - *Looks cheap*
  - *It's shiny*
  - *Really boring*
  - *From the initial look of it, I think it's boring*
  - *It suggests a university that's a bit laid back, it doesn't look serious does it?*
  - *It doesn't show a variety of pictures*
  - *I think it looks like a college prospectus*

Having said this, however, a few positive comments have been made, the main one relating to the impression that it caters for people from different cultures

- *It says that people of all cultures can go*
- *Culturally diverse, because of the person on the front*
- *Friendly*
- *Clean, modern and fresh*
- *It's more appealing than the white one, it captures your eye*

## 4. Qualitative Survey Results – Students

- *It looks like it's for a XXXXXXXXXX university*

It is considered to be for a new university – an impression based on its similarity to a magazine. Nevertheless, one participant comments that it could be “*an old one trying to be cool*”.

Although most feel that the front cover does not suggest any particular subject specialisms, one of the groups suggest that it could specialise in computer/IT, Business or Economics courses

Based on initial reactions to the front cover, none of the group participants claim they would be tempted to pick the prospectus up.

### XXXXXXXXXX University

Students have a mixed opinion of the front cover with a number of both positive and negative comments highlighted. Whilst two of the groups claim to like the front cover and would be tempted to pick it up, two are mixed in their opinions and one group claims to dislike it and would not be tempted to pick it up.

The positive comments made relate to:

- Overall design
  - Plain, simple design
  - Use of 'U'
- *That looks better than that one (XXXXXXXXXX)*
  - *Better, it's a bit more formal*
  - *Plain, more formal*
  - *It looks like it's for quite a good university, but not a really good one*
  - *I like it*
  - *I like the simplicity of it*
  - *Simple*
  - *Plain*
  - *Attractive*
  - *A good looking prospectus*
  - *Looks decent*
  - *I like the U – striking*
  - *Concentrates on you – it's more individual*
  - *It's appealing, you'd want to look inside it*
  - *It looks quite professional*
  - *It's got that professional look to it*
  - *Contemporary*
  - *It would stand out*

The negative comments made relate to:

- Lack of information about the university
  - Too plain
- *You don't get much about the university from it*
  - *Too plain, wouldn't stand out*
  - *Boring it looks plain*
  - *Too plain*
  - *Bland*
  - *Boring*
  - *It doesn't seem appealing*

## 4. Qualitative Survey Results – Students

- *I wouldn't want to pick it up and find out about that university*
- *It doesn't interest you or catch your eye, it doesn't make you think I want to go there*
- *It look like it needs to attract people*
- *Corny cheesy*

It is considered to be for a new or "newish" university, either XXXXXXXXXXXX or XXXXXXXXXXXX.

Although most feel that the front cover does not imply any particular subject specialisms, there are some suggestions (from a few participants) that it could specialise in art, fashion or design.

### XXXXXXXXXX University

Although the booklet is considered typical of an old traditional university, it is generally negatively regarded, with the following comments highlighted:

- *Doesn't show you anything of the university*
- *It looks like a Matalan advert*
- *Happy student*
- *It doesn't sell itself*
- *There's too many trees, it makes it look traditional*
- *It's more traditional*
- *I don't really like it to be honest*
- *It's not very attractive*
- *It's got too much happening*
- *There's too much on the front cover*

The leaflet cover is not considered to suggest any particular subject specialisms.

The research also suggests a relatively negative opinion of the prospectus front cover, with criticisms relating to the small size of the photographs and the colours used. It is also seen as dated, old-fashioned and plain.

- *It looks cheap*
- *All the colours are rubbish*
- *The picture of the building makes it look outdated*
- *Boring and plain*
- *It doesn't stand out, you'd miss it wouldn't you?*
- *It doesn't really catch your eye*
- *The pictures are too small, it doesn't really tell you what the university is like*

Having said this, however, a few participants like the colours, its overall design and use of photos

- *It looks quite good*
- *I like the pictures, but they're too small*

It is considered to be the prospectus of an old traditional university – an impression gained from the use of the photo of the building. It is not, however, seen as tempting to pick up and is not seen to specialise in any particular subjects.

### XXXXXXXXXX University

The research suggests a negative response to the prospectus front cover and the majority of group participants claim they would not be tempted to pick the prospectus up. Only a few participants like the prospectus considering it "modern" "cool" and "vocational"

The negative opinions expressed relate to:

## 4. Qualitative Survey Results – Students

- Overall design
  - Lack of information/reference to the university
  - Boring
  - Likened to a school or college prospectus
  - Dated/old fashioned
  - Dislike photo used
- *I could've designed that front cover myself*
  - *It looks boring*
  - *Plain*
  - *It doesn't show any aspect of the university*
  - *It could be a picture of anything*
  - *It doesn't really tell you what they're doing*
  - *It's not showing anything*
  - *It doesn't look that modern*
  - *Old fashioned*
  - *Looks like a school prospectus*
  - *It's like a high school prospectus*
  - *She's got a badge on her T shirt like you do at school*

Additionally, the use of the sports picture means that the prospectus is strongly associated with sports and sports courses. There is some criticism that it is too specific to one subject area and therefore potentially off-putting to students interested in studying other subjects.

- *It gives the impression of being a sports college*
- *It would only attract me if it was something that I was interested in but I wouldn't be attracted to it as I don't want to do sports*
- *I wouldn't pick it up, it's too specific to sports*
- *I would pick it up if I did sports*

Although, for most, the front cover is assumed to be for a new university, a minority consider it to be for an old traditional university - an impression based on the photograph used.

### XXXXXXXXXX University

The research suggests a generally positive reaction to the prospectus front cover and (within those groups who were shown the prospectus) all claim to like it and state that they would be tempted to pick it up.

The positive comments made relate to:

- Colours used
  - Use of the panoramic view of the city
  - Use of pictures
  - Overall design
  - Textured feel
- *It catches your eye straightaway*
  - *I like the view of the city*
  - *I like the colours used*
  - *It looks like America*
  - *I like the texture of the photos*
  - *It's for a more modern university*
  - *It's not too crowded*
  - *I like the picture of the city*

## 4. Qualitative Survey Results – Students

- *I would make me pick it up because it looks nice*

There is, however, some criticism about the size of the pictures used and the fact it doesn't tell the reader about the university

- *The small pictures are confusing, you can't see what they are*
- *But it doesn't tell you about the university*

The front cover is considered to be for a new university and it is not perceived to specialise in any particular subject area.

### XXXXXXXXXX University

The research suggests a generally positive reaction to the prospectus front cover and the majority claim to like it and state that they would be tempted to pick it up.

The positive comments made relate to:

- Overall design
  - Use of the photographs
  - Use of colour
  - Depicts the university/facilities
- 
- *A good looking prospectus*
  - *A lot better looking*
  - *Looks decent*
  - *I like it*
  - *I like the pictures*
  - *Looks like they've spent a bit of money doing it*
  - *It shows more, different aspects*
  - *It tells you something about the university, it's got a picture of it*
  - *It looks like it offers lots of different things because it's not focusing on one thing*
  - *Colourful*
  - *It seems to be more colourful, to show lots of pictures*
  - *I would assume it's for one of the metropolitans*

A few participants from one of the groups are, however, critical of it

- *There's a bit too much going on*
- *Why is that man there, there's no reason for him being there*

It is considered to be for a new university.

Although most participants feel that it does not imply any particular subject specialisms, there are some suggestions that it could specialise in science related courses – an impression gained from the photograph depicting a science laboratory.

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## **Quantitative Survey Results – Students**

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### **5.3 The University Selection and Decision Making Process**

## 5.3 The University Selection and Decision Making Process

### Commentary

Respondents were asked to specify which subjects they were considering studying at university/HE College: Social Studies was highlighted as the most popular subject area students wanted to go on to study (19%), followed by Business & Administration (15%), Subjects Allied to Medicine (14%) and Law (13%).

In terms of subject area preferences and main courses offered by XXXXXXXXXXXX, in theory XXXXXXXXXXXX could be a potential choice for these students.

- Business & Administration was the subject group which received the most degree applications nationally \*, was highlighted by respondents as one of the preferred subject areas and it is also one of XXXXXXXXXXXX's main subject areas.
- Social Studies (ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in terms of national UCAS applications \*) was respondents' preferred subject area and is also one of XXXXXXXXXXXX's main subjects areas.
- Subjects allied to medicine (including Pharmacy, Nursing, Radiography, Sports Science, etc.) was ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in terms of national UCAS applications \* and was highlighted as respondents' 3<sup>rd</sup> most preferred subject area. Additionally, subjects such as Pharmacy and Optometry are strengths of XXXXXXXXXXXX's subject area portfolio.

A comparison with the results of the previous survey indicated that Social Studies and Business & Administration have remained the two most preferred subject areas. It should be noted, however, that the percentage of respondents considering Business & Administration declined slightly from 18% in 2000 to 15% in 2004. The survey results suggest, however, some significant changes in subject area preferences; for example in 2000 only 7% of respondents stated a preference to study Subjects Allied to Medicine at university, rising to 14% in 2004 – a trend comparable with UCAS applications nationally \*. Conversely, vis-à-vis the 2000 survey a decline in popularity for Languages, Humanities, Computing/IT and Creative/Performing Arts subjects has been noted. Whilst the decline in interest in studying Languages and Computing/IT at university was comparable with UCAS applications nationally, UCAS applications statistics \* suggest a rise in the number of students considering studying Creative/Performing Arts.

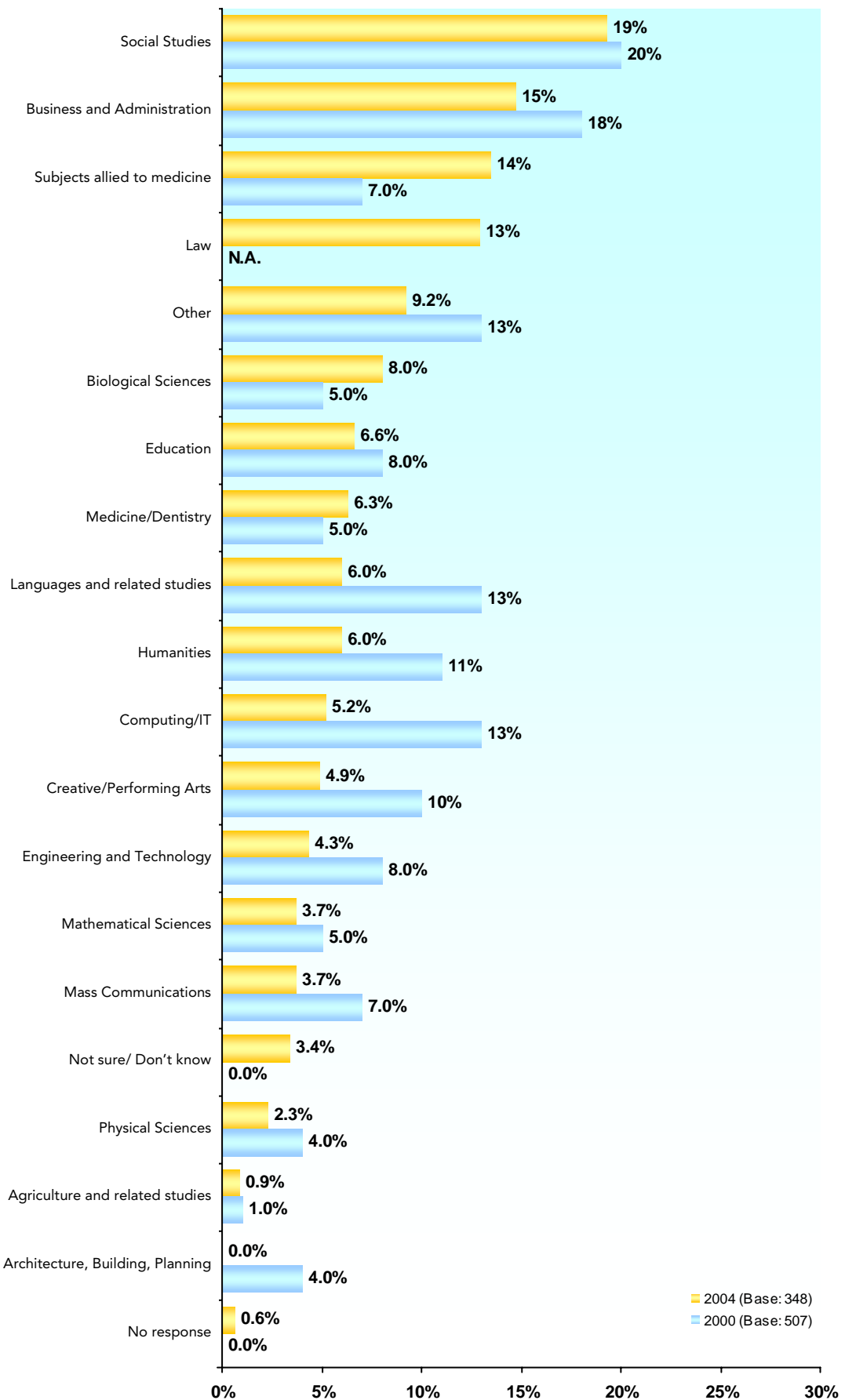
Further analysis of the results suggests that respondents considering XXXXXXXXXXXX were more likely to be considering studying Medicine/Dentistry, subjects allied to medicine, Law and Business & Administration, Conversely, they were slightly less likely/less likely to consider studying Biological Sciences, Engineering & Technology, Languages, Creative/Performing Arts, Education or Social Studies. *Note: These results are not statistically significantly due to the small sample sizes.*

The research results also indicated that there were some significant differences in subject of study by ethnicity and gender. Girls were significantly more likely than boys to study Social Studies, whereas boys appeared significantly more likely than girls to be interested in studying Computing/IT, Humanities, Engineering/Technology and Physical Science. White British respondents were significantly more likely than any other ethnic group to express an interest in Humanities, Languages and Biological Sciences. Conversely, non-white respondents (specifically Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi) were more likely to consider studying Medicine/Dentistry and Business/Administration.

\* Footnote: Source UCAS applications database 2004

## 5.3 The University Selection and Decision Making Process

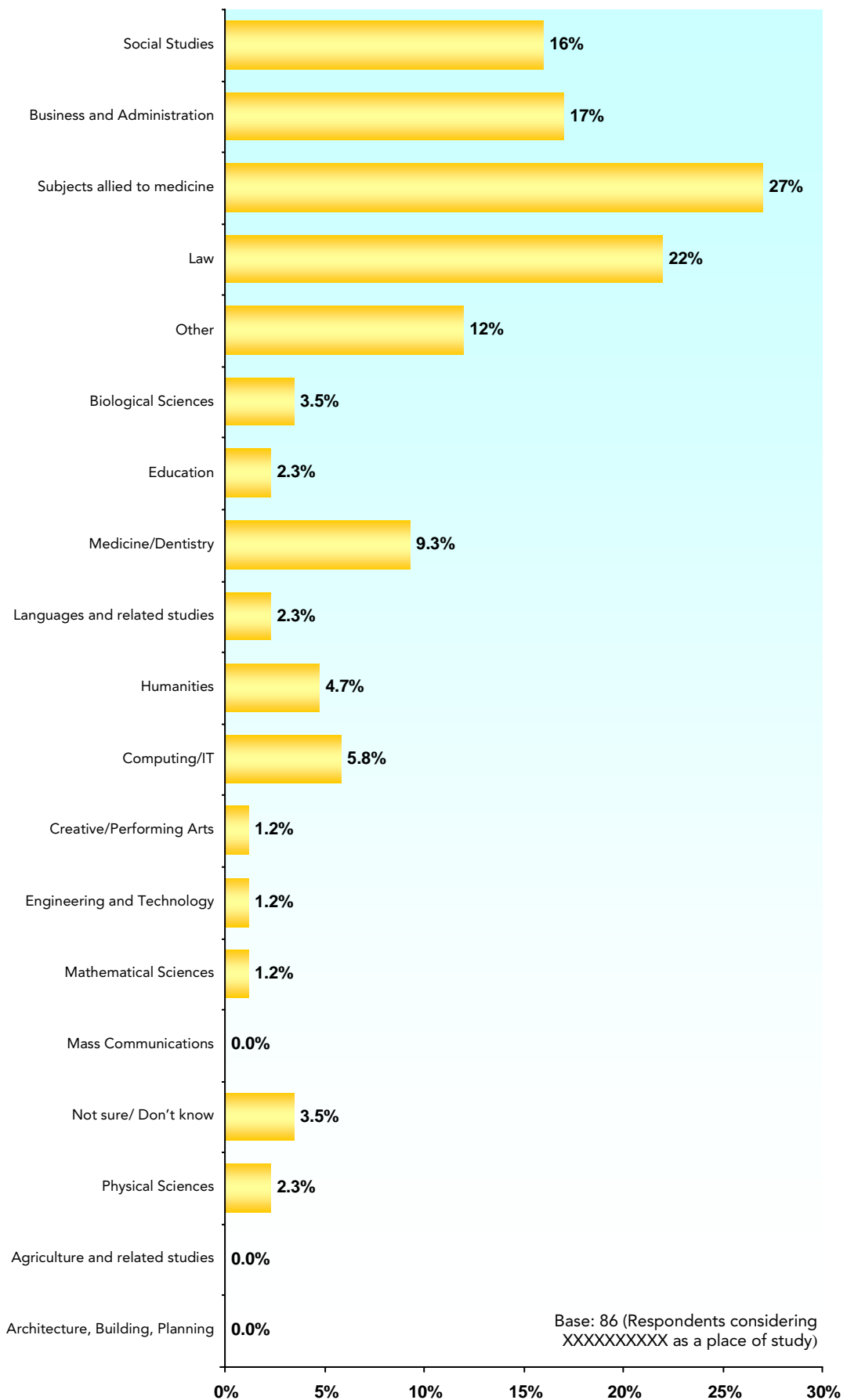
### 5.3.1 Which of the following subjects are you considering studying at university/ HE college?



*Note: Respondents could give more than one answer.*

## 5.3 The University Selection and Decision Making Process

5.3.2 Which of the following subjects are you considering studying at university/ HE college - amongst respondents considering XXXXXXXXXX as a place of study



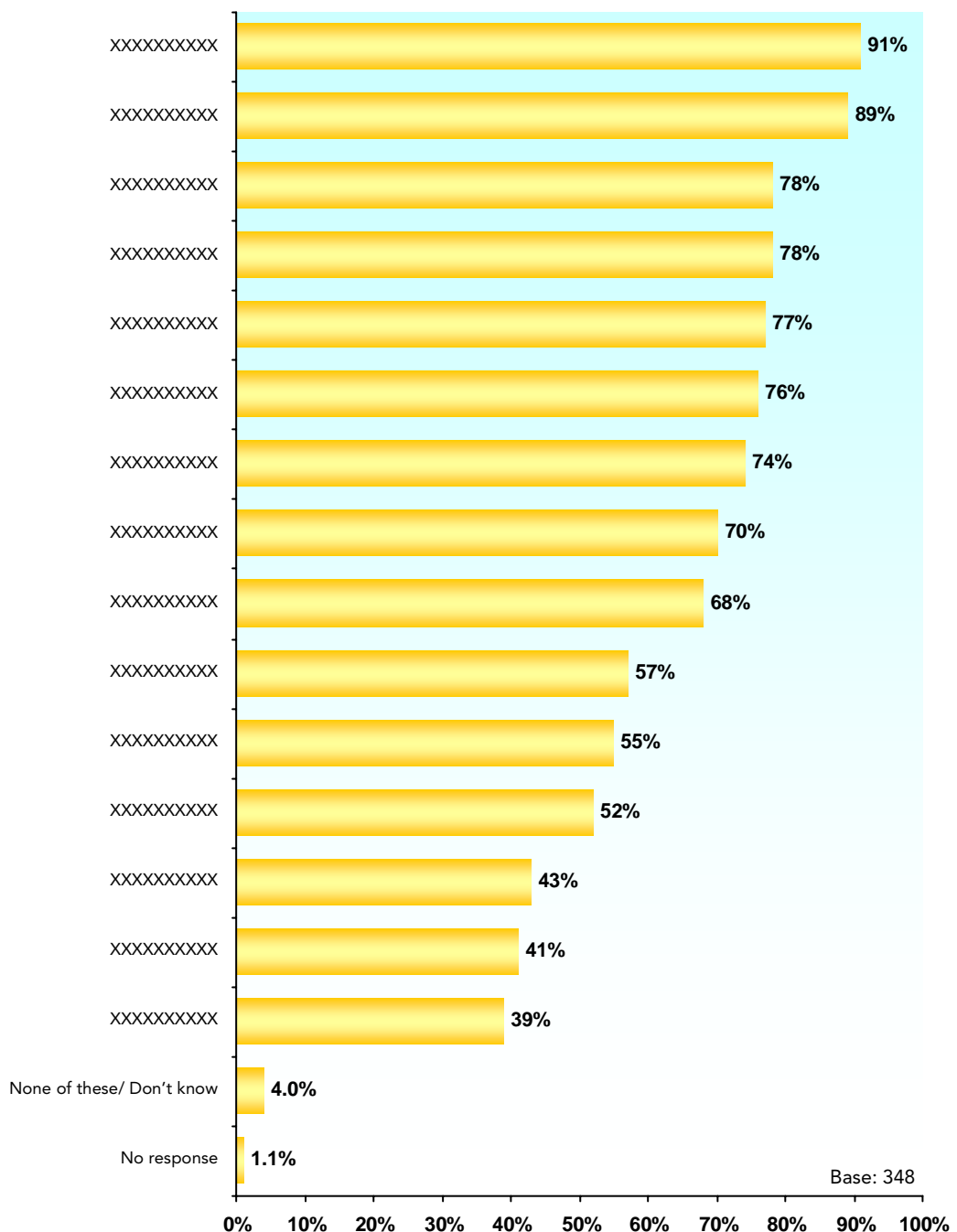
*Note: Respondents could give more than one answer.*

## 5.3 The University Selection and Decision Making Process

### Commentary

In terms of universities, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX were the most well known institutions, with around 90% of respondents claiming to have heard of them. Additionally, around three-quarters of respondents also claimed to have heard of XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX. XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX achieved similar awareness levels of around 70%. Conversely, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX were the three least well known universities. It should be noted that awareness levels for some universities could be explained, in part, by the geographic breakdown of the sample; thus the high awareness levels of XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX could be explained by the fact that 55% of respondents lived in XXXXXXXXXXXX. Similarly, only 10% of respondents lived in XXXXXXXXXXXX, explaining, in part, the comparatively low levels of awareness of XXXXXXXXXXXX and of XXXXXXXXXXXX.

#### 5.3.3 Have heard of following universities:



*Note: Respondents could give more than one answer.*

## 5.3 The University Selection and Decision Making Process

### Commentary

Further analysis of the results suggest that awareness levels of universities varied significantly by gender, ethnicity and geographical location, as follows:

- Female respondents were significantly more likely than males to have heard of the XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX.
- White British respondents were significantly more likely than any other ethnic group to have heard of XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX. Conversely, The XXXXXXXXXXXX appeared significantly better known amongst non-white ethnic groups, as did XXXXXXXXXXXX (particularly amongst Pakistani respondents), XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX (the latter two being more well known amongst Indian respondents).
- Geographical location and vicinity to the university had a significant impact on awareness levels. Thus, respondents living in XXXXXXXXXXXX were significantly more likely than respondents living in other parts of the UK to have heard of XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX.
- Although not statistically significant, awareness levels of these universities appeared lower amongst respondents living in XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX. The exceptions to this were XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX which also appeared relatively well known amongst respondents from XXXXXXXXXXXX. Awareness levels for XXXXXXXXXXXX were also higher amongst respondents in XXXXXXXXXXXX.

*Awareness of Universities by Region*  
Percentages

	Region 1	Region 2* (59)	Region 3 * (36)	Region 4 * (35)	Region 5 * (25)
XXXXXXXXXX	95	86	94	91	72
XXXXXXXXXX	88	100	94	97	60
XXXXXXXXXX	86	63	81	91	32
XXXXXXXXXX	89	81	72	43	44
XXXXXXXXXX	90	59	81	51	52
XXXXXXXXXX	75	97	81	66	48
XXXXXXXXXX	73	85	83	71	52
XXXXXXXXXX	75	54	86	57	68
XXXXXXXXXX	87	61	58	26	20
XXXXXXXXXX	70	25	64	71	4
XXXXXXXXXX	56	41	75	66	36
XXXXXXXXXX	55	92	53	9	0
XXXXXXXXXX	38	44	28	91	32
XXXXXXXXXX	39	27	39	77	44
XXXXXXXXXX	32	86	42	20	8

*\*Note: Care should be taken when interpreting these results due to the small sample base*

## 5.3 The University Selection and Decision Making Process

### Commentary

The top two universities which respondents were considering applying to were identified as XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX (35% were each considering these universities). Other popular universities being considered included XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX and Leeds XXXXXXXXXXXX (respectively 26%, 25% and 21%). Although 74% claimed to have heard of the XXXXXXXXXXXX, it accounted for just 12% of potential applications. Amongst the survey sample, the least popular universities (in terms of potential applications) were identified as XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX, with 2%, 2.3%, 7.2% and 7.8% respectively of respondents considering applying to these institutions.

A comparison with UCAS applications nationally \* also identified XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX as the two most preferred institutions, followed (in 4<sup>th</sup> position) by XXXXXXXXXXXX. Although XXXXXXXXXXXX was being considered by 25% of the sample population, this level of interest is a reflection of the geographic bias in the sample towards XXXXXXXXXXXX, as XXXXXXXXXXXX accounted in 2004 for just 0.5% of all UCAS applications \*.

A comparison with the results of the 2000 survey, confirms the dominance of XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX as preferred institutions. It should be noted, however, that a decrease in the percentages of respondents claiming to consider these universities has been noted – from around 50% in 2000 to 35% in 2004. Similarly, a decline had been noted for XXXXXXXXXXXX, The XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX. In terms of XXXXXXXXXXXX, a slight increase in popularity has been noted rising from 22% in 2000 to 24% in 2004.

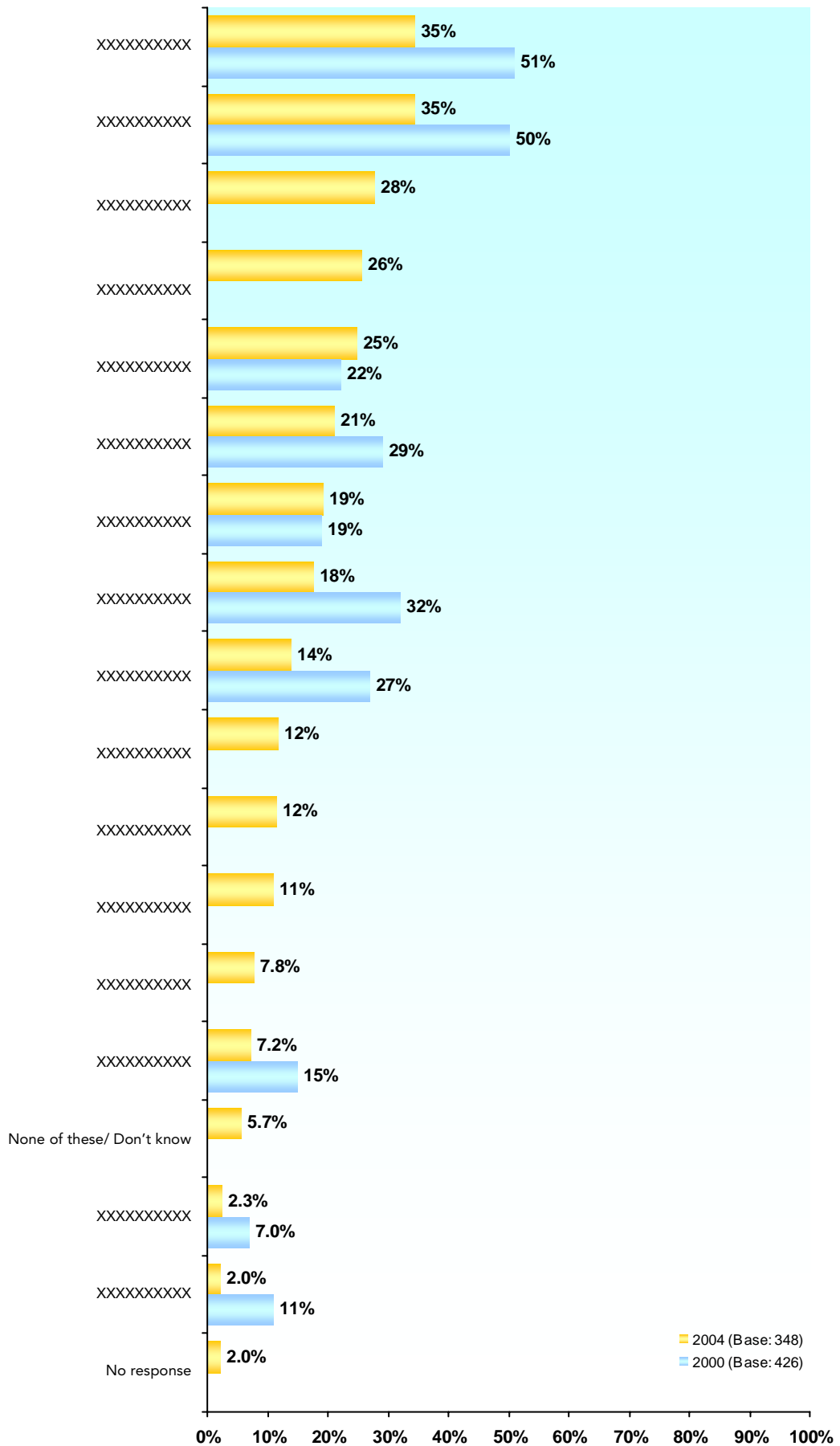
Further analysis of the survey results indicates that compared to the sample profile, an above average proportion of students considering XXXXXXXXXXXX as their place of study were more likely to be aged 19, be of Pakistani origin, be living in XXXXXXXXXXXX (specifically XXXXXXXXXXXX or XXXXXXXXXXXX) and attending sixth form in state schools. Additionally, students considering XXXXXXXXXXXX were more likely to also consider applying to XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX and these universities should be considered XXXXXXXXXXXX's competitor set. *Note: These results are not statistically significant due to the small sample sizes.*

\* Footnote: Source UCAS applications database 2004.

*Note: It should be noted that slight question amendments could explain, in part, the differences between the two surveys. The question used in the 2004 survey was 'Please indicate which of the following universities you are considering/likely to consider applying to'. Whereas the question used in the 2000 survey was 'Are you considering, or likely to consider, any of the following universities.'*

## 5.3 The University Selection and Decision Making Process

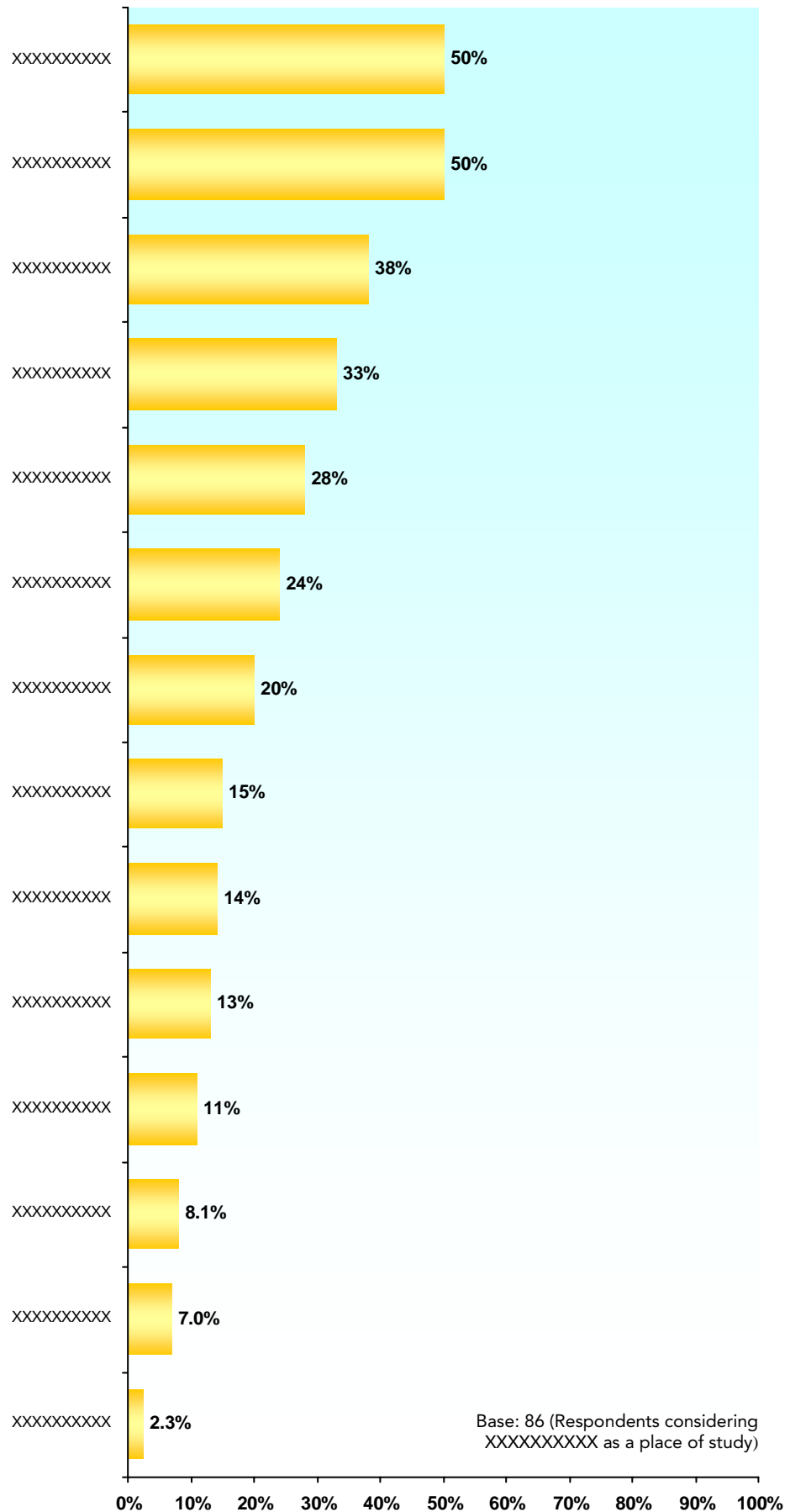
### 5.3.4 Considering/ likely to apply to the following universities:



*Note: Benchmark data for 2000 taken from Q11 of survey. Also, respondents could give more than one answer.*

## 5.3 The University Selection and Decision Making Process

5.3.5 Considering/ likely to apply to the following universities - amongst respondents considering XXXXXXXXXXXX as a place of study



Note: Benchmark data for 2000 taken from Q11 of survey. Also, respondents could give more than one answer.

## 5.3 The University Selection and Decision Making Process

### Commentary

Further analysis of the results suggest that universities respondents were considering applying to varied significantly by gender, ethnicity and geographical location, as follows:

- Female respondents were significantly more likely than males to consider applying to XXXXXXXXXXXX. Conversely, male respondents were significantly more likely than females to consider applying to XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX.
- White British respondents were significantly more likely than any other ethnic group to consider applying to XXXXXXXXXXXX. Conversely, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX appeared significantly more popular amongst non-white ethnic groups.
- Geographical location and vicinity to the university had a significant impact on application considerations. Thus, respondents living in XXXXXXXXXXXX were significantly more likely than respondents living in other parts of the UK to consider applying to XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX. Although not statistically significant, respondents living in XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX appeared less likely to consider these universities (the exception being XXXXXXXXXXXX for students living in XXXXXXXXXXXX).

*Universities Considering Applying to, by Region*

	Percentages				
	Region 1	Region 2 * (59)	Region 3 * (36)	Region 4 * (35)	Region 5 * (25)
XXXXXXXXXX	46	15	42	17	8.0
XXXXXXXXXX	35	56	25	20	16
XXXXXXXXXX	19	14	25	23	0
XXXXXXXXXX	37	24	2.8	2.9	0
XXXXXXXXXX	29	10	19	8.6	4.0
XXXXXXXXXX	21	61	14	14	8
XXXXXXXXXX	11	24	5.6	5.7	4.0
XXXXXXXXXX	13	3.4	28	2.9	0
XXXXXXXXXX	32	6.8	2.8	0	0
XXXXXXXXXX	18	0	19	20	0
XXXXXXXXXX	8.9	41	0	0	0
XXXXXXXXXX	8.9	41	0	0	0
XXXXXXXXXX	5.2	6.8	0	31	0
XXXXXXXXXX	1.0	0	5.6	8.6	0
XXXXXXXXXX	5.2	25	5.6	0	0

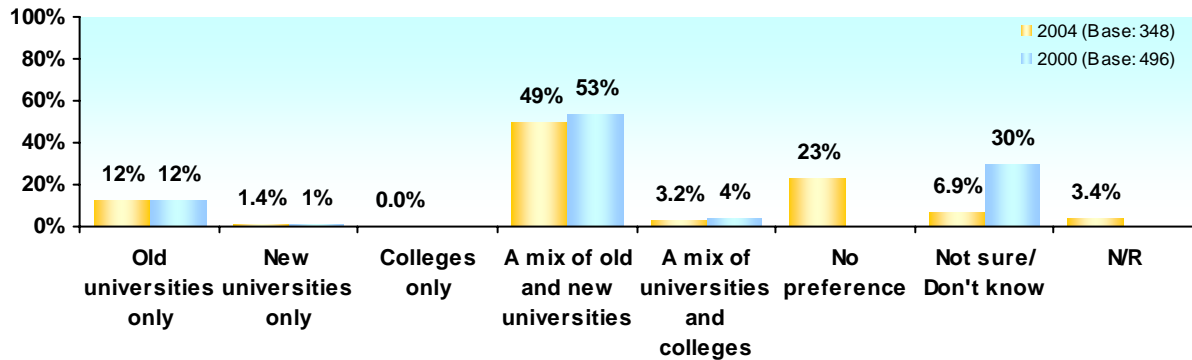
*\*Note: Care should be taken when interpreting these results due to the small sample base*

## 5.3 The University Selection and Decision Making Process

### Commentary

Although around a third of the sample were unable to specify particular types of institutions to which they would be likely to apply (a reflection of the relative unimportance attached to type of university as a decision making factor), 49% indicated that they were considering both old and new universities. Conversely, 12% stated that they would apply to old/traditional/redbrick universities only. The results were consistent with the 2000 survey and no significant changes were apparent.

#### 5.3.6 Are you likely to apply to...



Further analysis of the results suggested that boys were significantly more likely than girls to apply specifically to old universities only and as chart 5.3.19 indicates (in a later section of the report) 'type of university' was a more important university decision factor for males than females.

The most important factors considered by potential students in selecting a university were identified as:

- Specific course content
- Teaching resources/study facilities
- Graduate employment prospects
- Entry requirements
- Subjects/course offered

Followed by:

- Course reputation
- Reputation of the university

Of less importance were size of university, type of university, parental opinion, as well as reputation of city and proximity to city.

The key decision making factors identified in the 2004 survey were comparable with the 2000 survey, with both surveys demonstrating the importance attached to subject and subject area, as well as employment prospects and entry requirements. The relative unimportance attached to size and type of institution was further confirmed.

#### Notes on the presentation of data

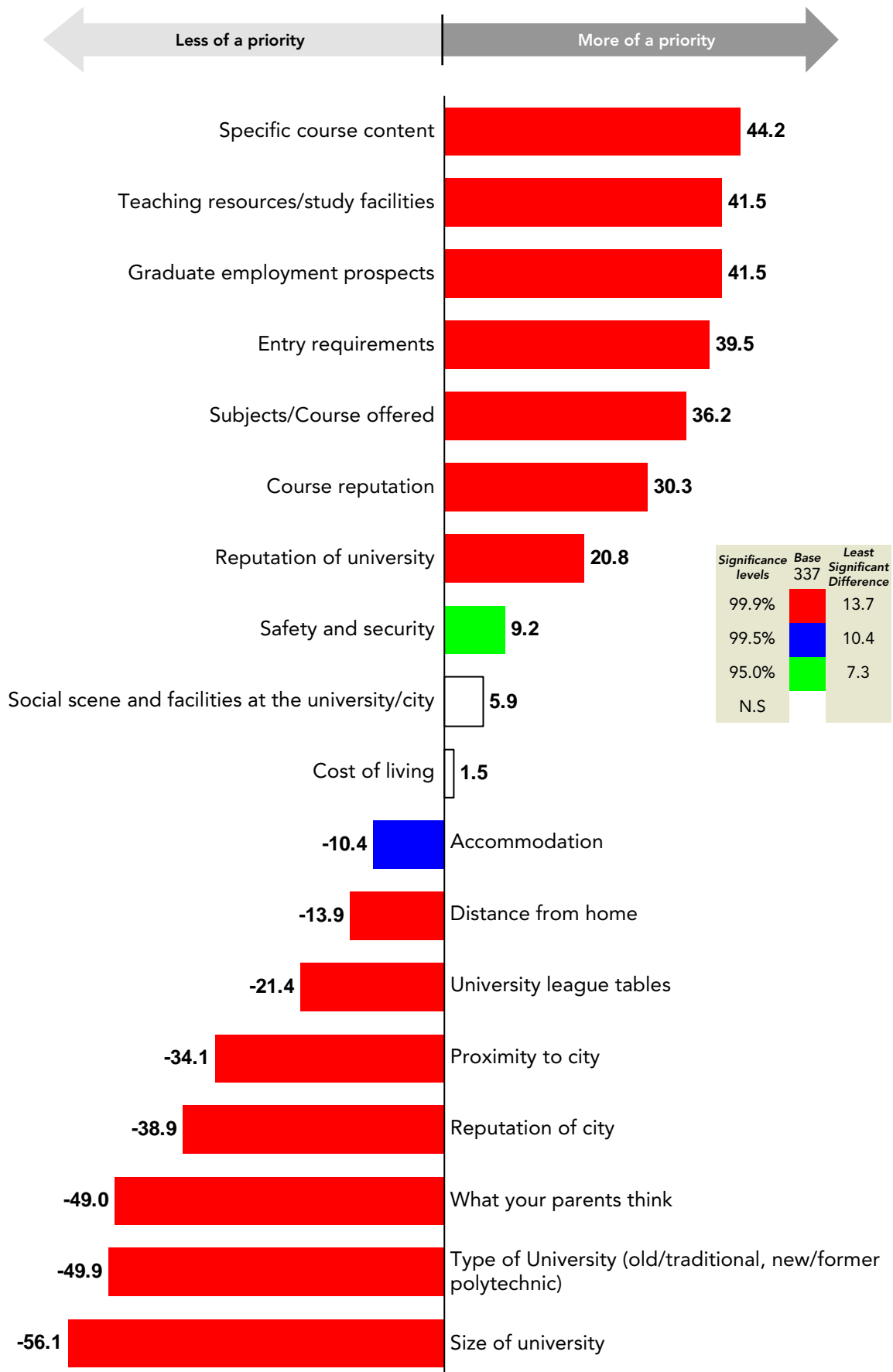
The chart on the page opposite represents the prioritised agenda of respondents to the 'Priority Search' paired comparison section of the questionnaire. It shows the relative importance that they as a whole placed on each of the issues they were asked to rank.

The numbers at the end of each bar show the percentage of respondents who placed that item in the top third of their preferences, minus the percentage who placed it in their bottom third. The result is that if a bar projects to the right, the respondent group illustrated favours that item. If the bar projects to the left, the item is regarded as less important by that group.

The "least significant differences" (LSDs) quoted give the minimum figure by which any two values must differ in order for the difference to be statistically significant at the 99.9%, 99% and 95% confidence levels.

## 5.3 The University Selection and Decision Making Process

### 5.3.7 Factors in choosing a university:



## 5.3 The University Selection and Decision Making Process

### Notes on the presentation of data

The charts below and on the following pages show how different demographic groups relate to the items in the Priority Search about university selection and decision making factors. The information displayed is calculated as for the bipolar chart shown on page 60, and shows how different groups relate to each item. Priority Search significance tests were carried out on all questions and sub-groups in the questionnaire. The average value for the population overall is shown as a yellow bar. Groups which attach a higher importance to this item to a statistically significant extent are shown in green, while those who rate the item as significantly less important are shown in red.

1) The charts display differences which are *statistically significant*. If a group does not appear in a chart (those in a certain age group, for example) it is because the importance they attached to the item did not differ significantly from average.

2) Figures in grey represent the total number of respondents who gave each particular answer.

3) Not all the items are shown in this section, since some showed little variation of interest.

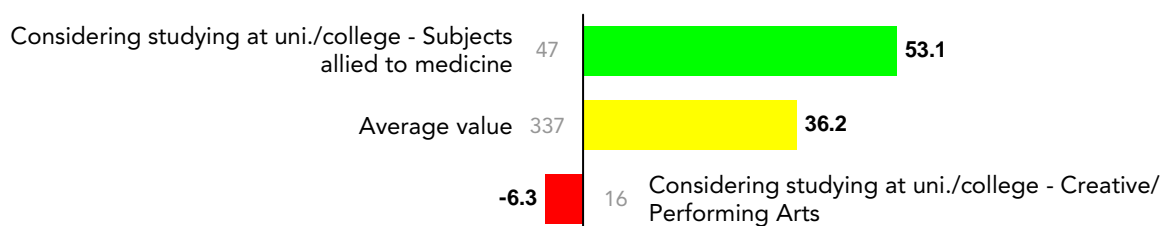
### Commentary

Further analysis of the results suggests that there were some differences in the decision making factors of the different respondent sub groups. For example:

- Subjects/courses offered was a key factor for all respondents, but particularly for those considering studying subjects allied to medicine. It was comparatively less important for those wanting to study creative/performing arts.
- Male students placed more importance on reputation of the city and on accommodation than did females. Accommodation and cost of living were also more important considerations for those opting to move away from home to study than for those wanting to remain at home and study locally.
- Female students placed more importance on safety and security than did males
- University league tables were a priority particularly for students wanting to study Education at university and those opting to apply to old universities only. It was, however, highlighted as a lower priority for those considering studying subjects allied to medicine.
- Female students and those from Bangladeshi and Pakistani ethnic groups placed more importance on parental opinion than other respondent groups. It was also highlighted as a greater priority for those wanting to stay at home and study at a local university.
- The size of the university appeared a priority particularly for students considering studying Business & Administration.
- Students likely to apply to old universities only placed greater importance on the reputation of the university, as did those wanting to move away from home and those from sixth form colleges. Similarly, the type of university was a priority more for students applying to old universities only, male students and those considering studying Business & Administration. It was comparatively less important for those wanting to study Social Studies and those currently studying vocational A Levels.

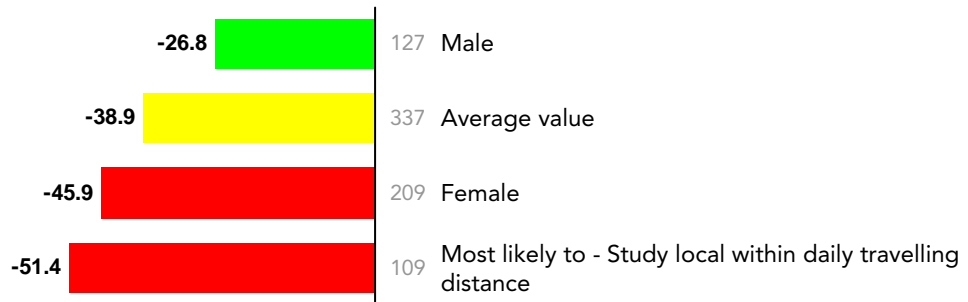
*Note: There are no significant differences in decision making factors amongst respondents considering applying to XXXXXXXXXX*

#### 5.3.8 Subject/Course offered

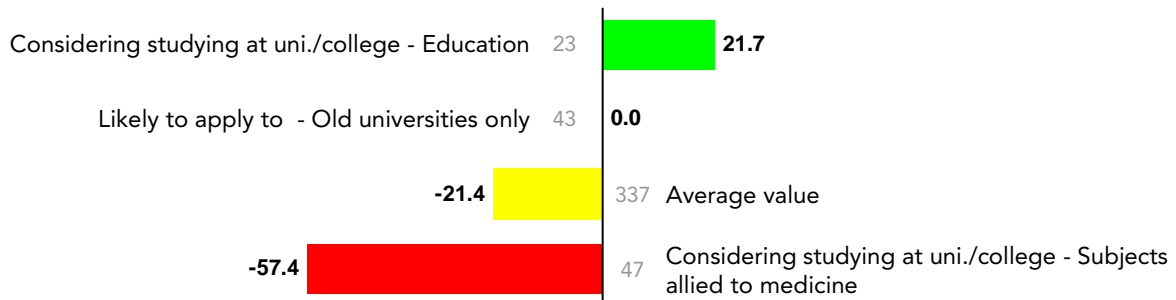


## 5.3 The University Selection and Decision Making Process

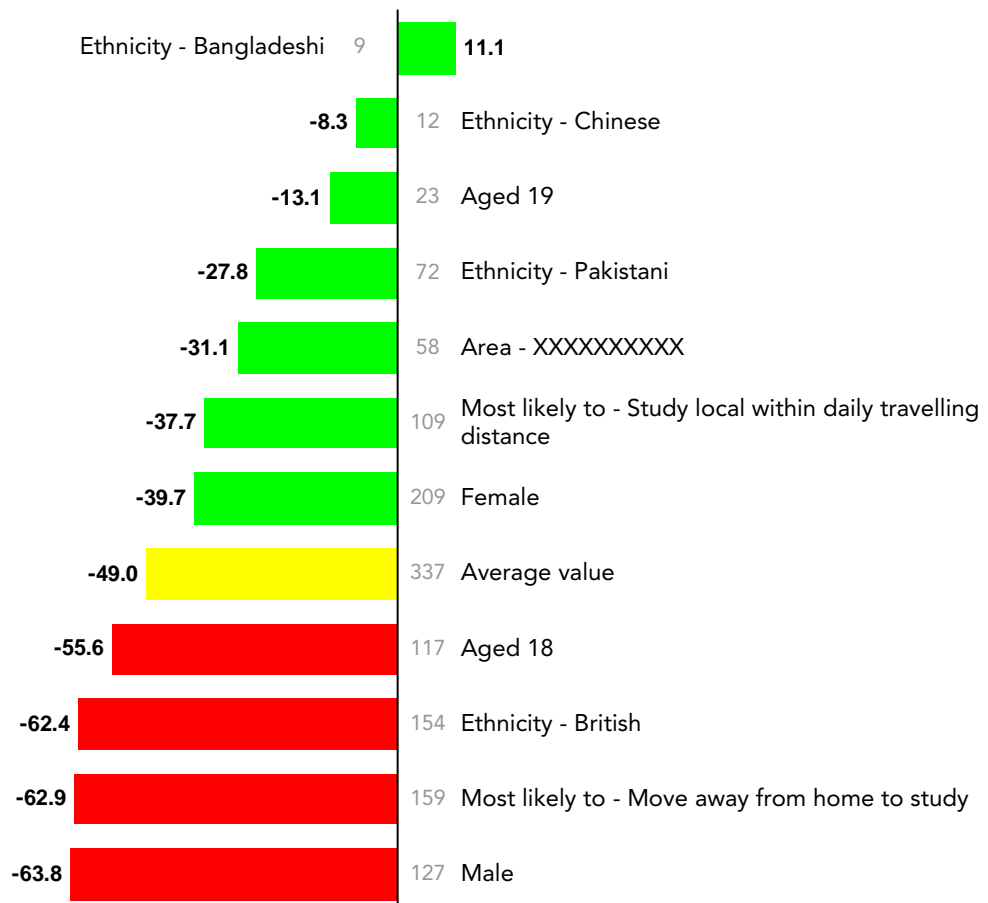
### 5.3.9 Reputation of city



### 5.3.10 University league tables

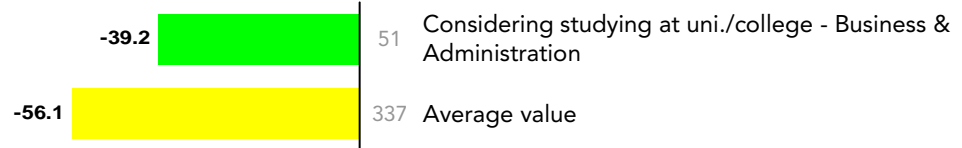


### 5.3.11 What your parents think

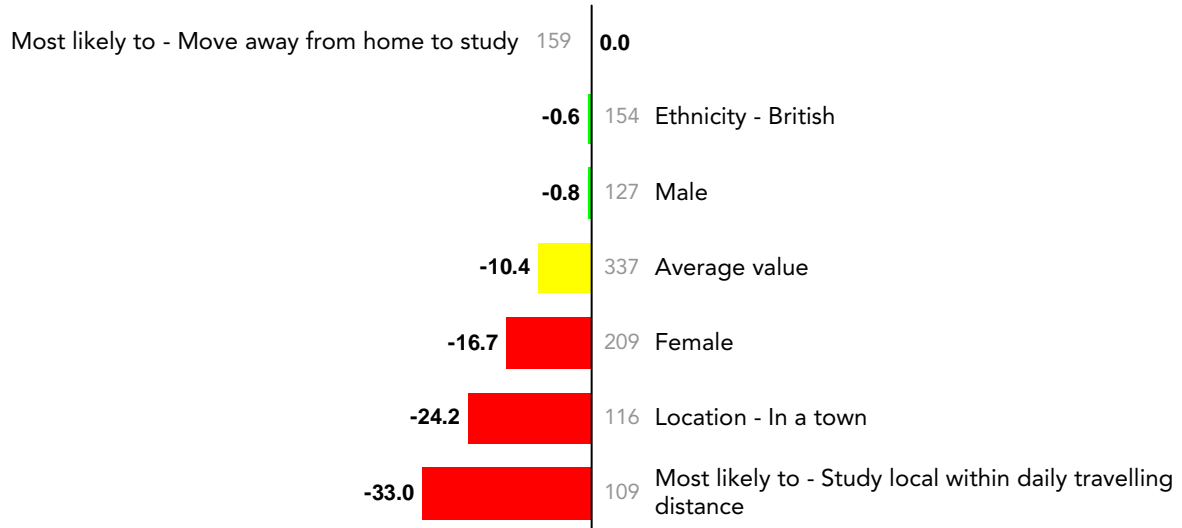


# 5.3 The University Selection and Decision Making Process

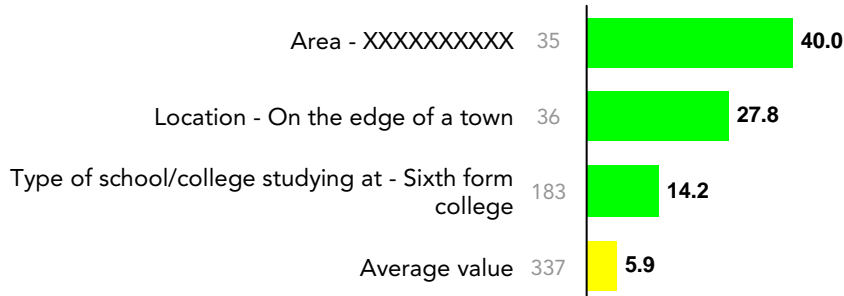
## 5.3.12 Size of university



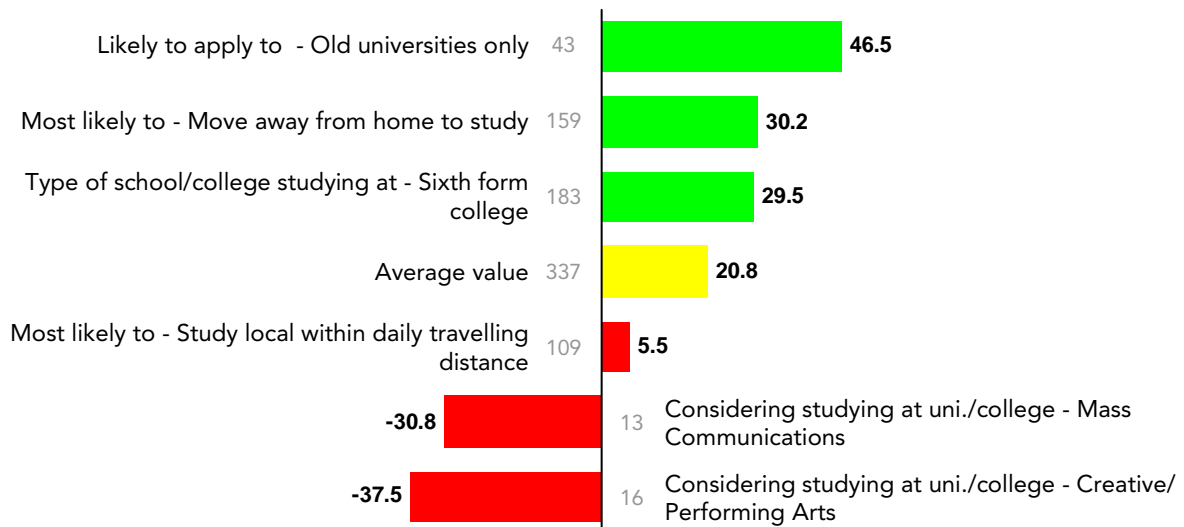
## 5.3.13 Accommodation



## 5.3.14 Social scene and facilities at the university/city

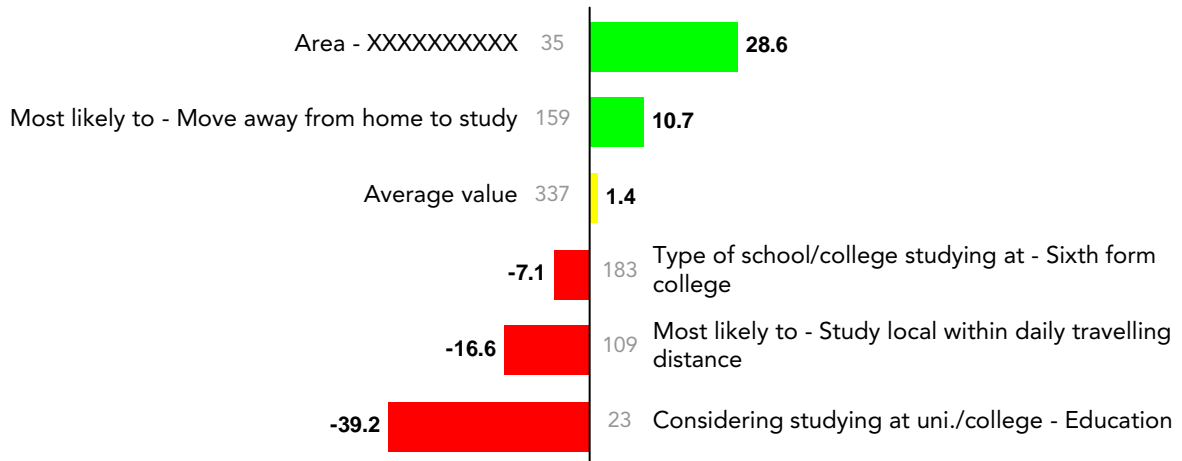


## 5.3.15 Reputation of university

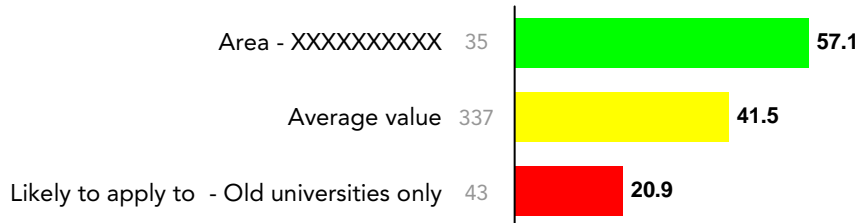


## 5.3 The University Selection and Decision Making Process

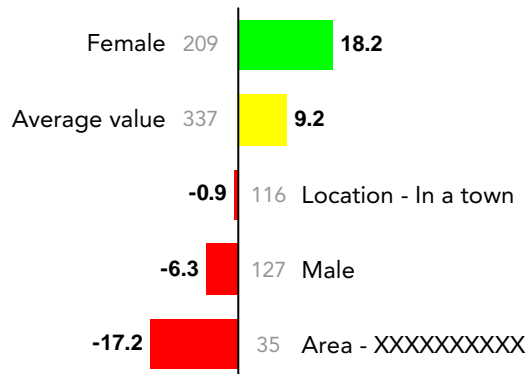
### 5.3.16 Cost of living



### 5.3.17 Graduate employment prospects

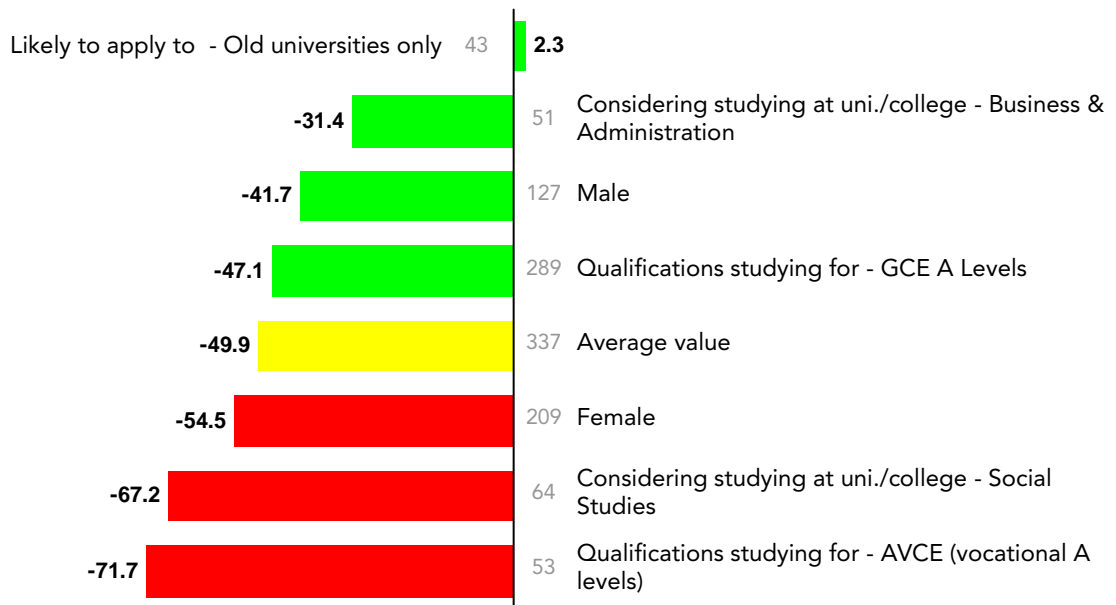


### 5.3.18 Safety and security

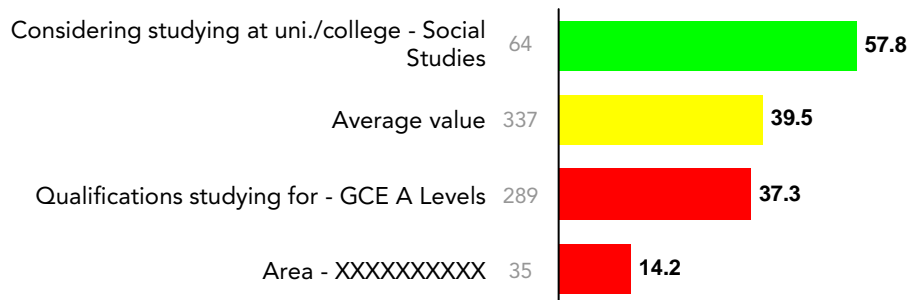


## 5.3 The University Selection and Decision Making Process

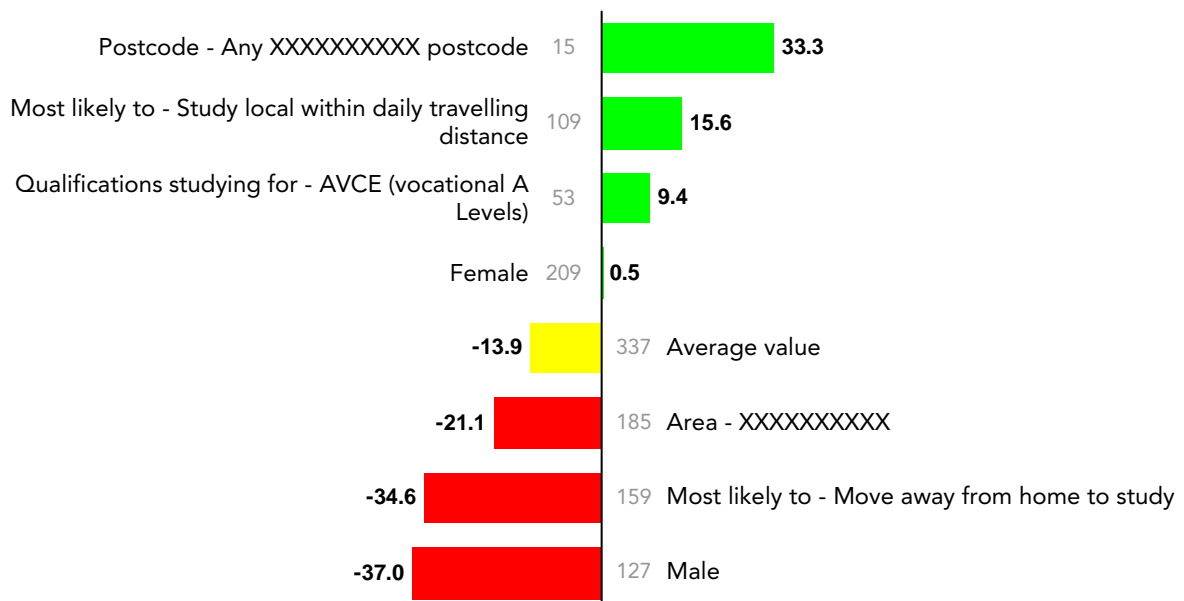
### 5.3.19 Type of University (old traditional, new/former polytechnic)



### 5.3.20 Entry requirements



### 5.3.21 Distance from home



## 5.3 The University Selection and Decision Making Process

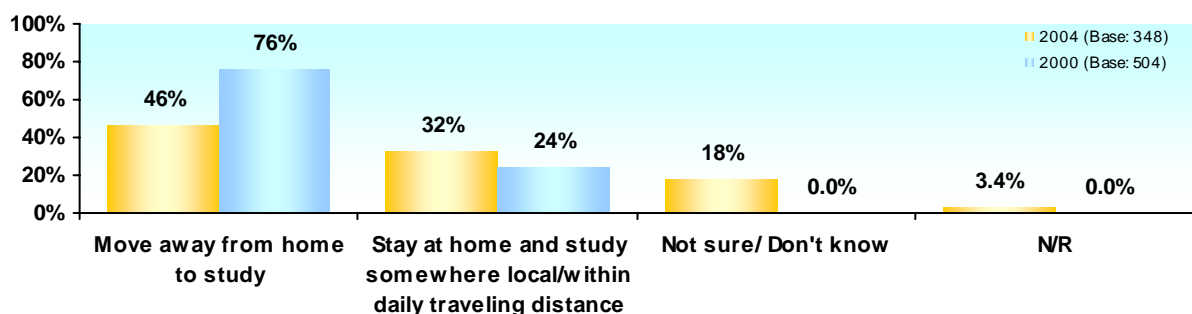
### Commentary

The traditional university experience of moving away from home to study still appeared most popular and 46% of respondents claimed to be considering this option. Conversely, 32% wanted to remain at home and study at a local university. Having said this, however, a comparison with the 2000 survey suggests a significant change in this aspect of the decision making process; significantly fewer students are now opting to move away from home, with more wanting to remain at home and go to a local university (a trend also highlighted by the careers advisers and teachers contacted as part of this research programme)

The survey results further suggest that universities have different geographical catchment areas. XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX in particular appeared more likely than other universities to attract students wanting to remain at home and study locally – 56% of respondents considering XXXXXXXXXXXX and 59% XXXXXXXXXXXX as a place of study claimed to want to stay and home and study at a local university – the highest percentages amongst respondents claiming to want to stay at home and study locally. Conversely, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, and XXXXXXXXXXXX appeared to have wider catchment areas and be attracting students wanting to move away from home to study.

Further analysis of the results shows that girls were significantly more likely than boys to stay at home and study at a local university, as were respondents from a non-white ethnic background i.e. Indian, Pakistani, etc. Conversely, boys and white British respondents were more likely to want to move away from home to study.

#### 5.3.22 Which of the following are you most likely to do?



## 5.3 The University Selection and Decision Making Process

*Preference to move away verses stay at home, by university being considered*

	Percentages		
	Move away from home to study	Stay at home and study somewhere local/within daily travelling distance	Not sure/ Don't know
XXXXXXXXXX	60	24	16
XXXXXXXXXX	18	56	26
XXXXXXXXXX	63	0.0	38
XXXXXXXXXX	71	14	14
XXXXXXXXXX	27	59	14
XXXXXXXXXX	53	24	24
XXXXXXXXXX	45	30	25
XXXXXXXXXX	37	47	16
XXXXXXXXXX	49	26	26
XXXXXXXXXX	39	35	27
XXXXXXXXXX	44	35	22
XXXXXXXXXX	38	45	18
XXXXXXXXXX	38	48	15
XXXXXXXXXX	51	22	27
XXXXXXXXXX	60	24	16
Other	54	30	16
None of these/ Don't know	45	25	30

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# **Quantitative Survey Results – Students**

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## **5.4 Image and Perception of Cities**

## 5.4 Image and Perception of Cities

### Commentary

#### Awareness and Visiting Frequencies

XXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX were identified as the most visited cities; around two-thirds of respondents claimed to have visited these cities in the last three years. Additionally 46% had each visited XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX. Amongst the survey sample, 53% claimed to have visited XXXXXXXXXXXX in the last three years and 31% XXXXXXXXXXXX.

Further analysis of the results suggested that respondents visiting XXXXXXXXXXXX were more likely to live in the XXXXXXXXXXXX, whereas XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX were more likely to have been visited in the last three years by respondents from XXXXXXXXXXXX. Additionally, XXXXXXXXXXXX was more likely to have been visited by those living in XXXXXXXXXXXX and the XXXXXXXXXXXX. Respondents visiting XXXXXXXXXXXX were more likely to live in XXXXXXXXXXXX.

Consistent with the identified most popular universities, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX were highlighted as the preferred cities and around 60% of respondents stated that they would consider studying there. Conversely, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX attracted comparatively less interest; 24% of respondents stated they would consider the city of XXXXXXXXXXXX, 24% XXXXXXXXXXXX and 20% XXXXXXXXXXXX as places of study.

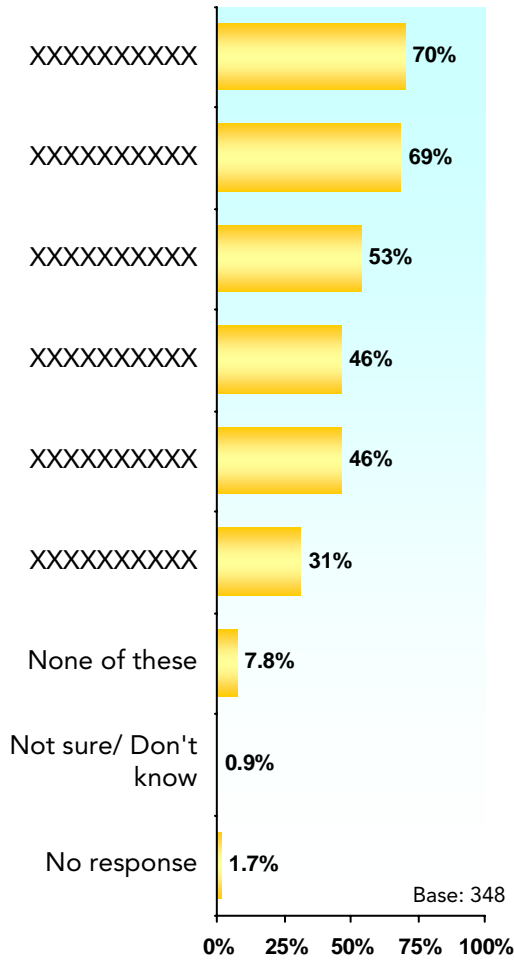
Further analysis of the results suggested that respondents considering studying in XXXXXXXXXXXX were more likely to live in the XXXXXXXXXXXX, whereas XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX were more likely to be considered by respondents from XXXXXXXXXXXX. Conversely, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX appeared more popular choices amongst respondents from the XXXXXXXXXXXX, the latter city also being considered by respondents from XXXXXXXXXXXX. Respondents considering XXXXXXXXXXXX as a place of study were also more likely to live in XXXXXXXXXXXX.

The research also indicates, that students tend to visit the cities they are interested in studying in; Around 85% of respondents wanting to study in XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX claimed to have visited these cities in the last three years, and 76% of those wanting to study in XXXXXXXXXXXX had also recently visited the city. Conversely, the results for XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX suggested slightly lower visiting patterns and around two-thirds of respondents wanting to study there had visited.

The survey results were comparable with the 2000 survey which also highlighted XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX as the preferred cities within the student market place. Having said this, however, XXXXXXXXXXXX appeared to have declined slightly in popularity; from 66% of respondents who stated in 2000 they would consider studying here to 56% in 2004. The results also suggested a decline in popularity of XXXXXXXXXXXX (from 44% in 2000 to 36% in 2004) and XXXXXXXXXXXX (36% in 2000 to 24% in 2004) – a finding consistent with section 4.3.4 of the report. The level of popularity for XXXXXXXXXXXX remained consistent with under a quarter of respondents expressing an interest in studying in XXXXXXXXXXXX.

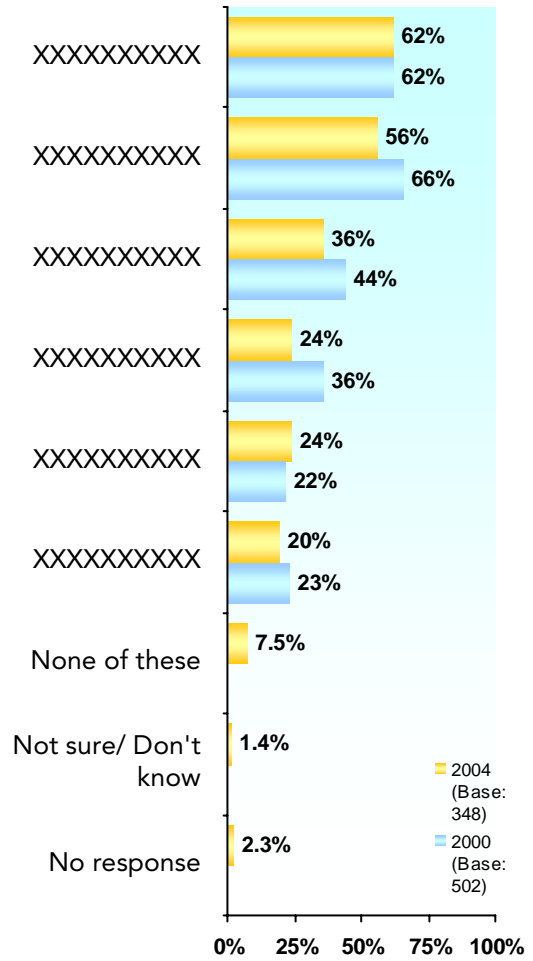
# 5.4 Image and Perception of Cities

5.4.1 Cities visited in the last three years:



Note: Respondents could give more than one answer.

5.4.2 Which of the following cities would you consider studying in?



Note: Respondents could give more than one answer.

## 5.4 Image and Perception of Cities

### Commentary

#### Image

XXXXXXXXXX was seen to have a very strong multi-cultural feel. It was also described as a big and busy but relatively attractive, modern and vibrant/lively city, with a relatively strong industrial base. It was also considered to have a fairly good atmosphere, with relatively good facilities, social life and shops and to offer good employment prospects. It was, however, considered by some an expensive place to live. Conversely, it was not seen as a particularly safe city.

Consistent with the 2000 survey, XXXXXXXXXXXX was perceived as a relatively small city with a strong industrial base, and with a very strong multi-cultural feel. It was also considered an inexpensive place to live (significantly more so than any of the other cities included in the research). It was not, however seen as particularly safe, attractive, modern or vibrant/lively. Neither was the city perceived to have a particularly good atmosphere, good reputation, and good employment prospects or to offer a good social life, facilities or shops. The attributes used by potential students to describe XXXXXXXXXXXX tended to be dull/boring, dirty and old. It is clearly apparent that amongst the sample population, the city of XXXXXXXXXXXX does not have a particularly positive image and the research study suggests that the negative image of the city impacts on the university with students not considering XXXXXXXXXXXX because of the city of XXXXXXXXXXXX. Having said this, however, it was apparent from the research that students considering XXXXXXXXXXXX as a place of study tended to have a significantly more positive image and opinion of the city than those not considering this city.

Further analysis of the results illustrated that respondents from a non-white background (particularly from the Pakistani ethnic group) tended to have a generally more positive opinion of XXXXXXXXXXXX than white British respondents, as did respondents currently living in XXXXXXXXXXXX.

XXXXXXXXXX was, in some ways, perceived to have a similar image to XXXXXXXXXXXX. It was, like XXXXXXXXXXXX, perceived as a small and inexpensive, but relatively dull/boring city. Similarly, it was not seen as particularly student friendly, busy, attractive, modern or vibrant/lively place, nor was it considered to have a particularly good atmosphere or reputation, good facilities, shops, social life or employment prospects. Unlike XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX was not associated with an industrial base, nor was it seen as multi-cultural.

Potential students had a positive perception of XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX and both cities were highly regarded and popular amongst these students. The research further suggests that these cities had a relatively similar image within the student market place. Both XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX were perceived as student friendly, attractive, modern, vibrant/lively and multi-cultural. They were also associated with having a good atmosphere and reputation as well as offering good facilities, shops, social life and good employment prospects. Similarly, both cities were seen as big busy cities. (It should be noted that XXXXXXXXXXXX was associated with all these aspects to a slightly greater extent than XXXXXXXXXXXX). Relative to other cities, XXXXXXXXXXXX particularly but also XXXXXXXXXXXX were, however, considered more expensive. XXXXXXXXXXXX was also considered safe and this was an attribute associated more with XXXXXXXXXXXX than XXXXXXXXXXXX. XXXXXXXXXXXX was seen more as an industrial city.

A mixed and neutral opinion of XXXXXXXXXXXX was apparent and for some, XXXXXXXXXXXX was seen as relatively student friendly (although less so than XXXXXXXXXXXX or XXXXXXXXXXXX), safe, industrial and to have a relatively good atmosphere and reputation. It was also considered by some students to offer good facilities, social life and shops.

# 5.4 Image and Perception of Cities

## 5.4.3 Which of the following words would you associate with/use to describe the city?

	Percentages											
	City 1		City 2		City 3		City 4		City 5		City 6	
	2004 (Base: 348)	2000 (Base: 454)	2004 (Base: 348)	2000 (Base: 450)	2004 (Base: 348)	2000 (Base: 405)	2004 (Base: 348)	2000 (Base: 460)	2004 (Base: 348)	2000 (Base: 461)	2004 (Base: 348)	2000 (Base: 438)
Student friendly	24	N.A.	25	N.A.	20	N.A.	57	N.A.	57	N.A.	33	N.A.
Multi-cultural	52	86	63	85	20	46	46	71	54	70	23	49
Safe	14	18	19	16	22	39	35	40	26	19	25	37
Attractive	27	23	12	11	13	22	49	53	49	41	20	29
Small	2.6	7	33	45	35	62	6.0	8	4.0	7	17	19
Big	56	78	19	26	6.9	17	51	70	72	81	23	55
Industrial	27	47	31	43	8.6	27	19	32	33	44	31	62
Modern	35	32	10	16	10	23	54	61	55	55	21	31
Expensive	31	37	6.6	11	8.3	17	29	38	44	43	15	22
Vibrant/lively	37	50	19	23	13	14	55	77	60	76	22	44
Good atmosphere	30	N.A.	18	N.A.	17	N.A.	50	N.A.	53	N.A.	29	N.A.
Good facilities	35	N.A.	18	N.A.	17	N.A.	50	N.A.	58	N.A.	27	N.A.
Good social life	37	N.A.	17	N.A.	16	N.A.	56	N.A.	64	N.A.	32	N.A.
Good reputation	30	N.A.	12	N.A.	13	N.A.	52	N.A.	56	N.A.	25	N.A.
Good employment opportunities	35	N.A.	14	N.A.	14	N.A.	45	N.A.	53	N.A.	23	N.A.
Dull/boring	12	N.A.	36	N.A.	28	N.A.	5.2	N.A.	4.3	N.A.	14	N.A.
Dirty	20	N.A.	36	N.A.	14	N.A.	8.9	N.A.	13	N.A.	13	N.A.
Old	13	N.A.	29	N.A.	17	N.A.	12	N.A.	12	N.A.	14	N.A.
Inexpensive	8.9	N.A.	35	N.A.	23	N.A.	13	N.A.	9.8	N.A.	12	N.A.
Good shops	38	N.A.	16	N.A.	12	N.A.	56	N.A.	64	N.A.	26	N.A.
Busy	54	N.A.	26	N.A.	15	N.A.	56	N.A.	64	N.A.	29	N.A.

## 5.4.4 Words you would associate with/use to describe the city by respondents considering XXXXXXXXXX as a place of study

Base: 86	Percentages	Percentages	Percentages
Student friendly	57	Expensive	9.3
Multi-cultural	84	Vibrant/lively	37
Safe	40	Good atmosphere	40
Attractive	30	Good facilities	40
Small	36	Good social life	35
Big	29	Good reputation	26
Industrial	36	Good employment opportunities	29
Modern	20	Dull/boring	20
		Dirty	24
		Old	30
		Inexpensive	52
		Good shops	37
		Busy	48

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# **Quantitative Survey Results – Students**

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## **5.5 Image and Perception of Universities**

# 5.5 Image and Perception of Universities

## Commentary

### Course/Subject Specialisms

Respondents were then asked to specify which courses/subjects they would associate with the universities. The research suggests that medical subjects tended to be associated most with XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX, but also with XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX than with other universities. The XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX were also more likely to be associated with Science and Maths courses than any other university. The XXXXXXXXXXXX was most associated with Business & Management courses, together with XXXXXXXXXXXX and the XXXXXXXXXXXX. XXXXXXXXXXXX was associated slightly more with Social Studies courses. It is worth noting that around a third were unable to associate the universities with any particular subject areas, due in part to a lack of knowledge about these universities as well as little perceived differential in subject specialisms.

Further analysis of the research suggested that girls were more likely than boys to associate XXXXXXXXXXXX with Arts/Humanities courses, whereas boys were more likely than girls to associate this university with Science & Maths and Business & Management courses. In general, non-white ethnic groups were more likely than white British respondents to associate XXXXXXXXXXXX with all subject areas – a reflection of their greater level of awareness and knowledge about the university.

A comparison with the 2000 survey, suggests that XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX were still strongly associated with medical subjects and that XXXXXXXXXXXX continued to be one of the universities associated with Business & Management.

### 5.5.1 What courses/subjects/specialisms, if any do you associate with each of these universities?

	Percentages									
	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX
Medicine and related subjects	12	20	5.7	31	5.2	34	6.3	18	4.5	
Engineering and technology	13	11	11	14	12	18	12	11	10	
Science and maths	14	16	9.8	23	10	29	11	15	8.9	
Business and management	16	21	16	18	20	20	15	12	12	
Social studies	11	18	16	19	20	15	18	14	14	
Arts/humanities	8.3	13	13	16	15	14	15	10	14	
Other (please specify below)	0.6	3.2	2.0	3.2	4.0	3.7	4.0	1.7	2.0	
No subjects/specialisms	1.7	2.3	1.4	1.7	2.0	2.6	2.0	0.9	2.0	
Don't know	37	28	33	23	27	24	31	30	35	

## 5.5 Image and Perception of Universities

### Commentary

#### Academic Reputation and Entry Requirements

XXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX, together with XXXXXXXXXXXX were identified as having very good academic reputations; views expressed by 95%, 91% and 78% respectively of respondents. The survey results (chart 5.5.4) suggest a link between academic reputation and entry requirements as these were also the universities which were considered harder to get into, demanding high entry grades.

In terms of academic reputation, XXXXXXXXXXXX was also relatively positively regarded and 70% of respondents considered XXXXXXXXXXXX to have a good academic reputation. Similarly, it was considered by 65% of respondents hard to get into.

The next university grouping appeared to comprise XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX and around 60% of respondents considered these universities to have good academic reputations. There appeared, however, a mixed opinion of entry requirements; around 45% considered them to demand average grades, around a third high grades and the remainder low grades.

XXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX were not perceived to have as good an academic reputation as other universities and although 47%, 46% and 51% respectively considered them to have good reputations, around 20% did not. Additionally, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX were not seen as particularly hard to get into. Around half the sample considered these universities to demand average grades, and around 25% high or low grades. Similarly, whilst a mixed opinion was apparent about the entry requirements for XXXXXXXXXXXX, it was considered slightly harder to get into than XXXXXXXXXXXX or XXXXXXXXXXXX.

It is worth noting that XXXXXXXXXXXX's perceived entry requirements were seen as one of the lowest amongst its competitor set and XXXXXXXXXXXX was seen as demanding lower entry grades than the new universities such as XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX. Significance testing identified that students expressing a more positive opinion of XXXXXXXXXXXX's academic reputation tended to be from a non-white ethnic background, to be considering XXXXXXXXXXXX as a place of study and to be local students from the XXXXXXXXXXXX area. They were also significantly more likely to be currently studying at a state school than at any other type of establishment.

A comparison with the results of the 2000 survey suggest a similar pattern in terms of perceived academic reputation, with the XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX remaining the top three universities in terms of academic reputation. Conversely, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX were continued to be rated as having poorer academic reputations. In terms of absolute percentages, encouragingly, however, all universities were rated higher than they were in 2000.

A comparison with the results of the 2000 survey also suggests a similar pattern in terms of perceived entry requirements, with XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX continuing to be perceived to demand higher entry grades than other institutions. XXXXXXXXXXXX, together with XXXXXXXXXXXX remained the perceived easier universities demanding relatively lower entry requirements. The research also suggested that it was considered more difficult to get into all of these institutions than it was in 2000.

#### *Notes on the presentation of data*

The chart on the following page summarises student's opinion of the academic reputation of different universities .

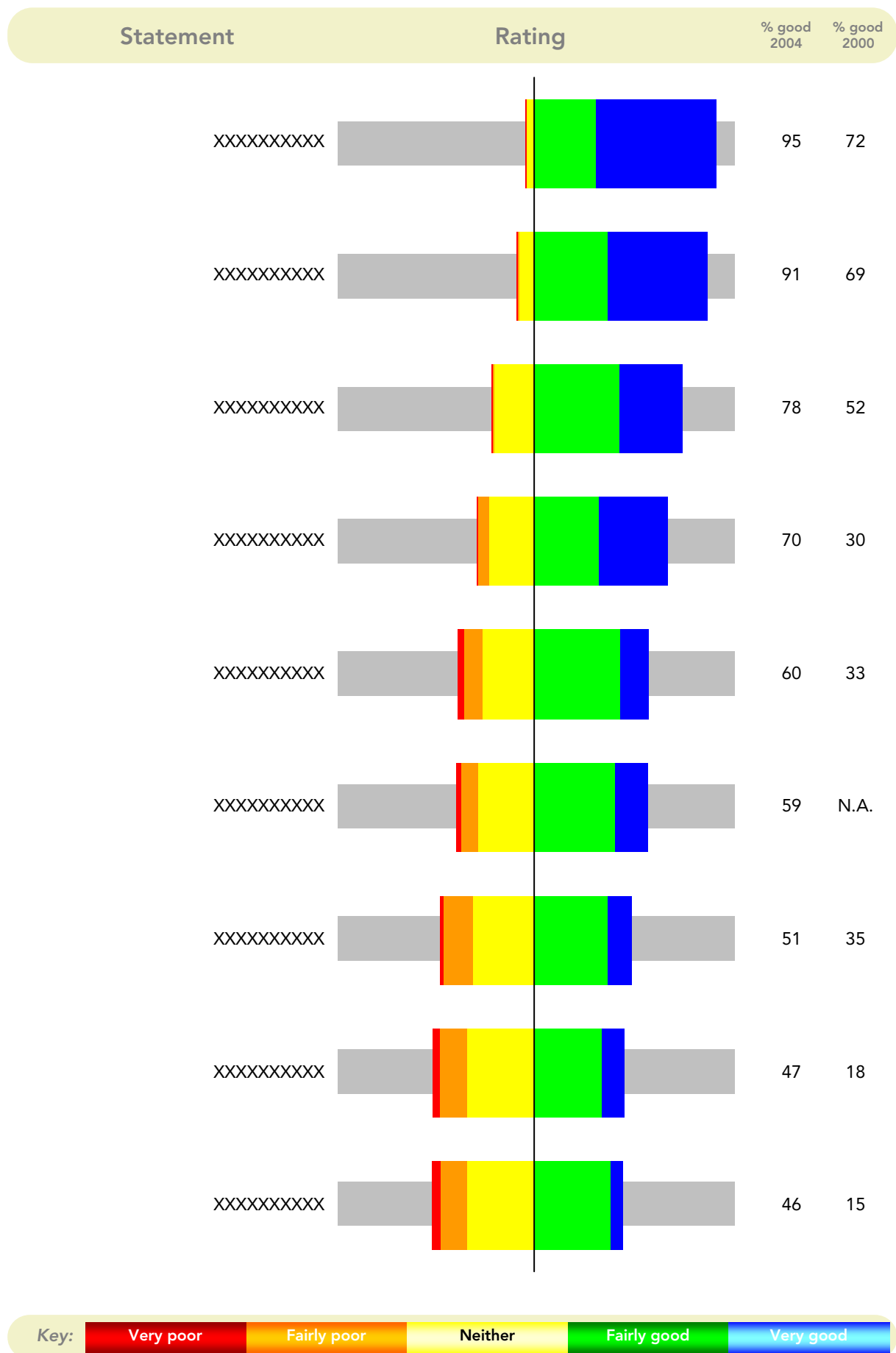
Respondents were asked to rate each university on a five-point scale, marked 'Very good' through to 'Very poor'. There was also a category for 'No opinion/ N.A.'. The bar chart shows the proportions of respondents who ticked each of the categories, omitting those who did not respond or express an opinion.

The column of figures at the right of the chart shows the percentage of respondents who replied either very or fairly good.

Following the chart is a table that shows the responses in more detail, including those who did not respond.

# 5.5 Image and Perception of Universities

## 5.5.2 Academic reputation - summary of opinion

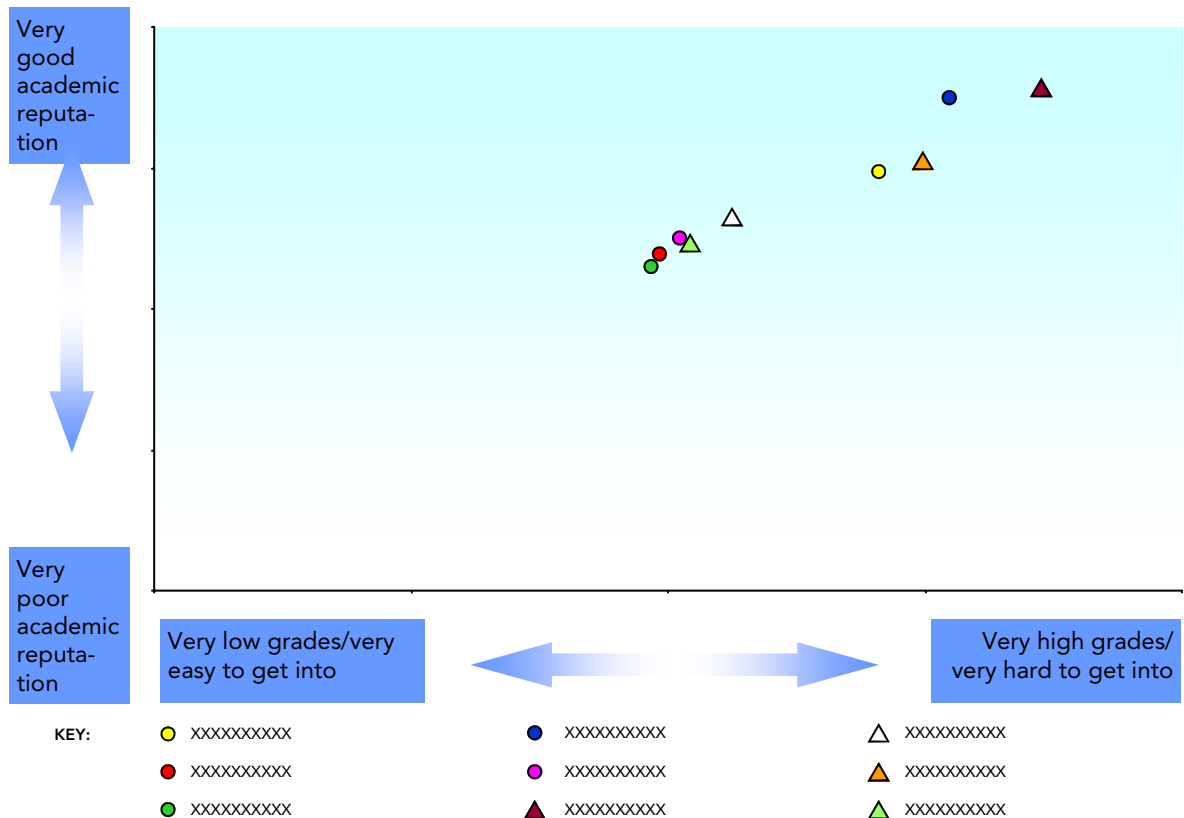


# 5.5 Image and Perception of Universities

## 5.5.3 Academic reputation - detailed summary

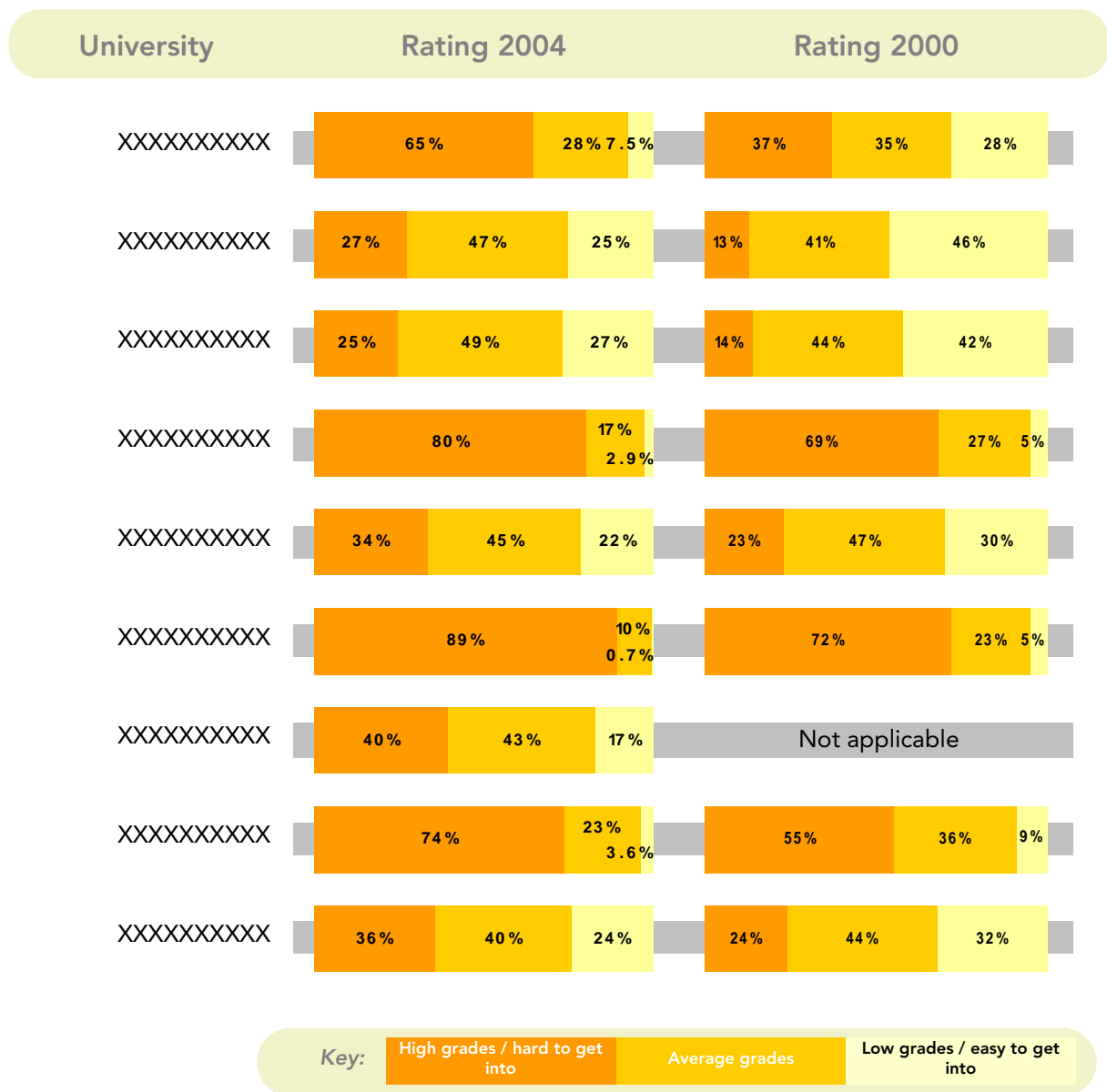
	Percentages					Further details				
	Very poor	Fairly poor	Neither	Fairly good	Very good	Base	N/R	Don't know/N.A.	Response	Total base
XXXXXXXXXX	1	6	24	34	36	182	10.6	37.1	52.3	348
XXXXXXXXXX	4	14	35	36	12	253	7.5	19.8	72.7	348
XXXXXXXXXX	5	14	36	40	6	230	9.8	24.1	66.1	348
XXXXXXXXXX	1	1	8	38	52	279	7.5	12.4	80.2	348
XXXXXXXXXX	3	11	27	46	14	263	9.5	14.9	75.6	348
XXXXXXXXXX	1	0	4	33	63	295	6.0	9.2	84.8	348
XXXXXXXXXX	2	9	29	42	17	262	8.9	15.8	75.3	348
XXXXXXXXXX	0	1	21	45	33	251	8.3	19.5	72.1	348
XXXXXXXXXX	2	15	33	38	12	233	8.3	24.7	67.0	348

## 5.5.4 Academic reputation against entry requirements



# 5.5 Image and Perception of Universities

5.5.5 What level of entry requirements (A level or equivalent) do you think are required by each of the following universities?



## Commentary

Further analysis of the results indicated that white British respondents were significantly more likely than other ethnic groups to consider XXXXXXXXXXXX an easy university to get into/to demand low entry grades.

# 5.5 Image and Perception of Universities

## Commentary

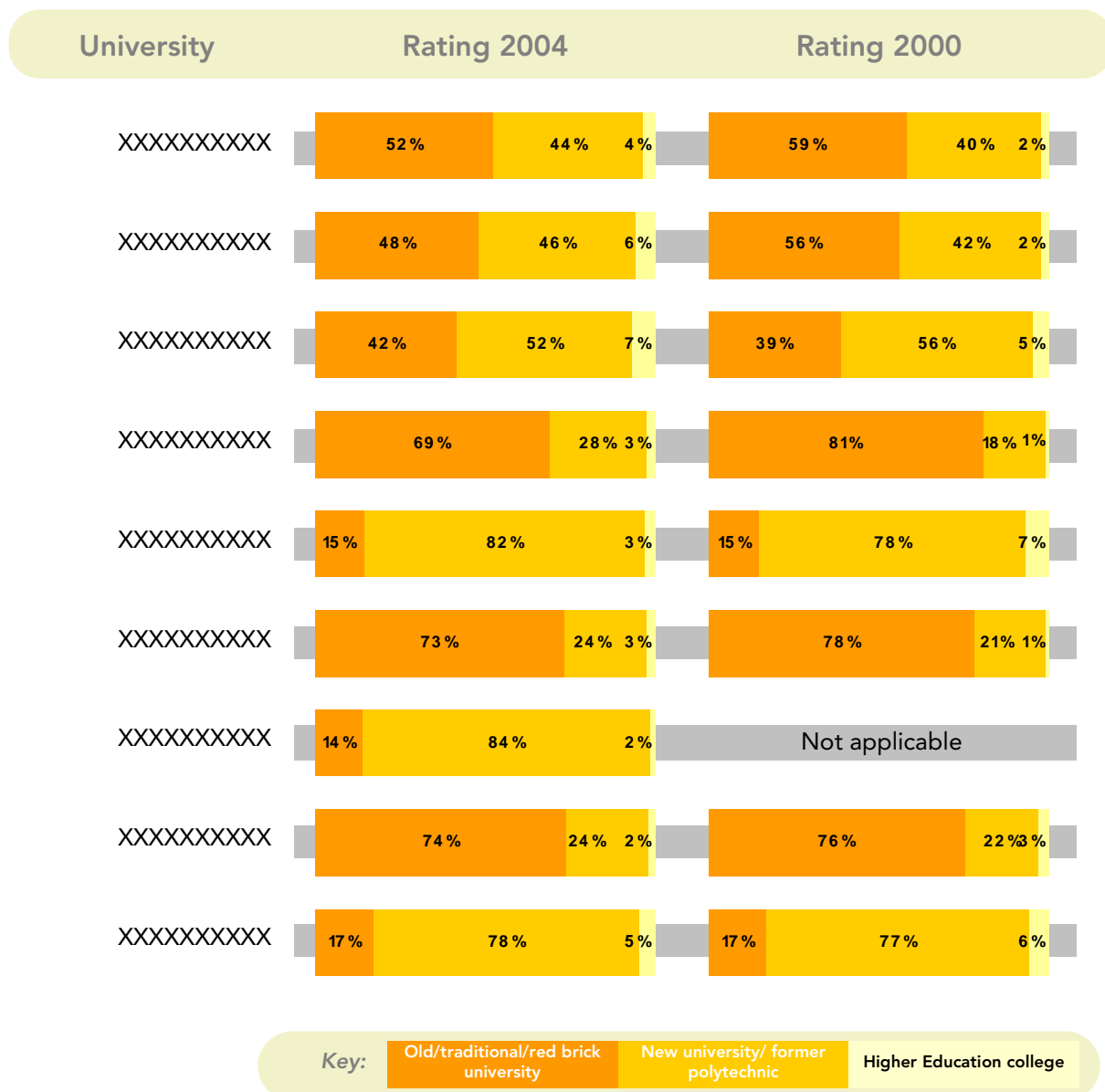
### Type of Institution

Consistent with the results of the 2000 survey, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX were described more as old, traditional, red brick universities. Conversely, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX still tended to be considered new universities/former polytechnics. Again consistent with the results of the 2000 survey, there appeared still an element of confusion about XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX and XXXXXXXXXXXX and although some considered them old/red brick universities, others regarded them as new/former polytechnics.

Further comparisons with the 2000 survey data suggests, however, that students in 2004 were less likely than previously to associate XXXXXXXXXXXX with being an old traditional university – 48% of respondents considered XXXXXXXXXXXX an old traditional university compared to 56% in 2000. Conversely, 46% of respondents considered it a new university/former polytechnic and 6% an HE college, against 42% and 2% respectively in 2000.

It is also worth noting that 30-45% of respondents were unable to specify the type of institution; a further indication of the relative unimportance attached to type of university as a decision making factor.

### 5.5.6 What type of institution do you think each of the following universities is?

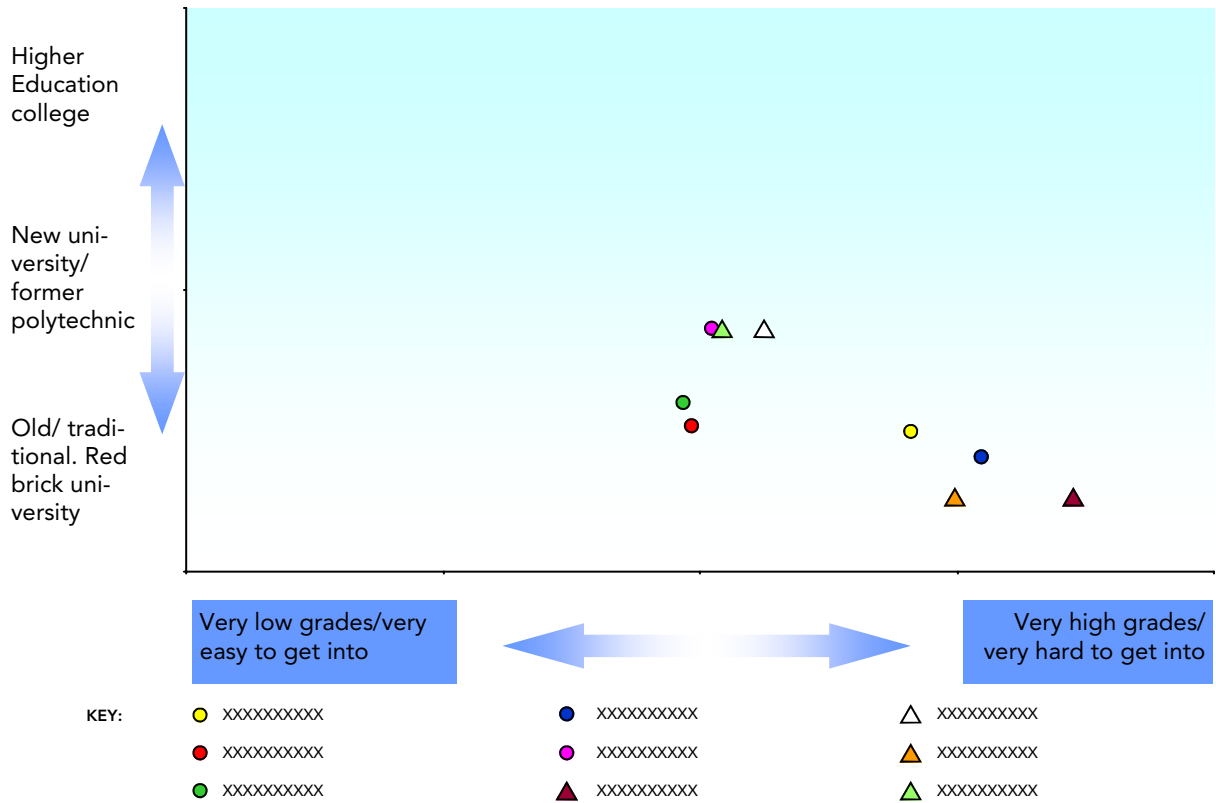


# 5.5 Image and Perception of Universities

## Commentary

The survey results suggest a link between entry requirements and type of institution; institutions regarded as being old/traditional/red brick universities (XXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, etc.) were perceived to demand high entry grades, whereas the new universities/former polytechnics (XXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX, etc.) were perceived to demand low-average grades.

### 5.5.7 Perceived type of university against entry requirements



## 5.5 Image and Perception of Universities

### Commentary

#### Image

XXXXXXXXXX was considered to have a relatively good teaching/academic reputation. It was also associated by around 20% as being located on a relatively attractive campus, offering good quality accommodation, having a relatively good graduate employment record, social and study facilities. It was also seen by a proportion of the sample as a perceived relatively big, high status/prestigious university, positioned relatively high in the university league tables.

XXXXXXXXXX was (like the city) considered an inexpensive university and this was an attribute associated more with this university than any other. It was also considered to offer more vocational courses. It did not tend to be associated, however, as being one of the top universities, nor was it perceived to be positioned high in the university league tables. It was, however, associated by around 20% as having a relatively good teaching reputation, being located on a relatively attractive campus offering good quality accommodation, having a relatively good graduate employment record, social and study facilities. Encouragingly, however, it was apparent from the research that students considering XXXXXXXXXXXX as a place of study tended to have a more positive image and opinion of the university than those not considering this institution. Additionally, respondents from a non-white background tended to have a generally more positive opinion of XXXXXXXXXXXX than white British respondents, as did respondents currently living in XXXXXXXXXXXX.

Similarly, XXXXXXXXXXXX was perceived to offer vocational courses. The University was not seen as a big, prestigious/high status university with a high position in the university league tables. It was, however, associated by around 20% as having a relatively good teaching reputation, offering good quality accommodation, and as having good social and study facilities.

XXXXXXXXXX appeared to have a positive image amongst students. It was considered one of the top/high status universities with a good teaching/academic reputation, a good graduate employment record and a high position in the university league tables. It was seen as a big university, located on an attractive campus offering good social and study facilities and good student accommodation. It was not seen to offer vocational courses, nor did it tend to be associated as an inexpensive place to study.

XXXXXXXXXX was perceived to offer vocational courses. It was also considered by some to have a relatively good academic/teaching reputation and to be located on a relatively attractive campus with good accommodation, social and study facilities. It was not, however, perceived to have a high league table position or to be a prestigious/high status university.

XXXXXXXXXX (like XXXXXXXXXXXX) appeared to have a positive image amongst students. It was considered one of the top/high status universities with a good teaching/academic reputation, a good graduate employment record and a high position in the university league tables. It was seen as a big university, located on a relatively attractive campus offering good social and study facilities and good student accommodation. It was not seen to offer vocational courses, nor was it associated with being an inexpensive place to study.

XXXXXXXXXX was perceived to offer vocational courses and relatively good social facilities. It was not, however, perceived to have a high league table position or to be a prestigious/high status university. It was, however, associated by around 20% as having a relatively good teaching reputation, being located on a relatively attractive campus offering good quality accommodation, having a relatively good graduate employment record and study facilities.

XXXXXXXXXX was considered a fairly large university with good social and study facilities and to have a relatively good teaching/academic reputation. It was also seen by around 20% to be located on an attractive campus, to offer relatively good student accommodation and to have a good graduate employment record. Its image (for some) was also that of a relatively high status/

## 5.5 Image and Perception of Universities

prestigious university with a relatively high league table position. It was not considered to offer vocational courses to students.

XXXXXXXXXX was perceived to offer vocational courses. It did not tend to be strongly associated, however, with being a prestigious/high status university nor was it high in the league tables. It was, however, associated by around 20% as having a relatively good teaching reputation, being located on a relatively attractive campus with good social and study facilities and being a relatively inexpensive place to study at.

*Note: Care should be taken when interpreting the results as the strength of the image associations could be a reflection of the knowledge respondents have of a particular university.*

### 5.5.8 Which of the following words would you associate with/use to describe the following university?

		Percentages										
		Good teaching/academic reputation*	Attractive campus	Good quality accommodation	Good graduate employment record	Good social facilities	Good study facilities	Vocational/less academic courses	Prestigious/high status/one of the top universities	Big	High in league tables	Inexpensive
XXXXXXXXXX	2004 (Base: 348)	33	20	21	20	23	24	14	19	22	19	12
	2000 (Base: 320)	53	44	N.A.	52	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
XXXXXXXXXX	2004 (Base: 348)	22	18	17	19	22	23	27	11	18	8.6	34
	2000 (Base: 300)	39	30	N.A.	41	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
XXXXXXXXXX	2004 (Base: 348)	18	15	17	15	18	22	23	7.8	13	6.3	24
	2000 (Base: 276)	31	41	N.A.	41	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
XXXXXXXXXX	2004 (Base: 348)	51	40	36	38	47	44	11	41	47	37	16
	2000 (Base: 394)	78	55	N.A.	67	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
XXXXXXXXXX	2004 (Base: 348)	23	27	24	16	33	26	28	11	24	12	20
	2000 (Base: 301)	43	51	N.A.	56	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
XXXXXXXXXX	2004 (Base: 348)	54	38	41	42	51	45	12	43	50	41	13
	2000 (Base: 395)	74	49	N.A.	66	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
XXXXXXXXXX	2004 (Base: 348)	25	22	21	20	35	24	27	12	25	12	19
	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
XXXXXXXXXX	2004 (Base: 348)	32	22	25	22	28	27	10	20	31	22	16
	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
XXXXXXXXXX	2004 (Base: 348)	21	18	14	14	24	17	23	8.3	17	7.2	21
	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

\* Note: In the 2000 survey this attribute was noted as 'good academic reputation'. Also respondents could give more than one answer.

### 5.5.9 Words you would associate with/use to describe the university by respondents considering XXXXXXXXXX as a place to study

Percentages (Base; 86)										
Good teaching/academic reputation*	Attractive campus	Good quality accommodation	Good graduate employment record	Good social facilities	Good study facilities	Vocational/less academic courses	Prestigious/high status/one of the top universities	Big	High in league tables	Inexpensive
52	34	36	41	41	47	22	20	35	21	54