THE COMMUNICATION NEEDS OF STUDENTS AT FLINDERS UNIVERSITY

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A partnership between the Colleges of Humanities Arts, and Social Sciences, Science and Engineering, and Nursing and Health Sciences

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Acknowledgments

Executive summary

This report presents the results of a research project undertaken in the Colleges of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, Nursing and Health Sciences, and Science and Engineering and aims at promoting research on pedagogy and teaching practices. The survey was successful in gaining a good level of response from students within the Academic and Professional Communication (COMS1001), Nature of STEM (STEM1001), Professional Skills (ENGR1401) and Communication for Nursing (NURS1021) topics, and across the University, with some 745 completed questionnaires from students. The results of this survey provide detailed and specific information about the communicative practices and needs of students at Flinders University, as well as their perceived strengths and weaknesses with reference to academic literacy and communication. The results of the project have the potential to contribute to a much greater understanding of students' communication skills and abilities, and, more generally, the patterns of language use of students at the University. We acknowledge that some research questions would perhaps be more specifically concerned with the University (such as disability, learning abilities, issues of diversity, and broader issues concerning the student experience); however, the purpose of this current survey is to replicate previous research done in Sweden, Singapore and elsewhere, so that comparisons can be made connecting this present study to the frontline of research on academic communication in higher education worldwide.

Key results from this project include:

(1) Specific data relating to areas of difficulty and need for improvement in academic literacy skills. For example, some 72% of students expressed difficulty writing academic essays, and 67% of students had difficulty reading academic/research articles;

(2) Data describing negative views of students toward online learning, with 66% of students stating they wanted little or no learning conducted online;

(3) Data indicating that a large number of students have problems interacting in their classes due to social anxiety, being shy, being unsure how to express ideas in class or how to engage in class. For instance, 46% of students stated they suffered from social anxiety, and 43% of students stated they were too shy to ask questions in class;

(4) Detailed results indicating the use of languages other than English in the formal and extra-curricular lives of the students with, for example, some 30% of students stating that they are exposed to a language other than English in their personal lives;

(5) Results that indicate a general positive reception of the surveyed communication skills topics in this study (COMS1001, STEM1001, NURS1021, ENGR1401) with 83% of these students indicating a good level of improvement in their academic communication skills;

(6) Results which indicate that students who speak a language other than English as a home language (NESB students) expressed pronounced difficulties in their academic communications, with 47% of these students expressing reading difficulties and 64% expressing writing difficulties in their studies at the University;

Recommendations:

(i) That in coming years the University should pay increased attention to the communication and academic literacy skills of non-English speaking background students it recruits to Flinders;

(ii) That the University should recognise the evident need for greater support for communication topics (informed by relevant research) which aim at enhancing the abilities of students in writing academic texts that are relevant to their College or field of study;

(iii) That the University should continue to strengthen the research and teaching activities of faculty in the disciplines of Academic and Professional Communication, Nature of STEM, and Communication for Nurning;

(iv) That academic communication skills such as higher level reading, writing and spoken communication are at the heart of university education, and with many Flinders students expressing academic communication difficulties in these areas, the University should more adequately prepare its students for the workforce, so that they can learn to read well, speak well, and write well, for their future lives and careers.

Section 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

This report presents the results of a research project supported by the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, the College of Science and Engineering and the College of Nursing, which aims to promote research on pedagogy and teaching practices within these respective Colleges. The project, entitled 'Students' communication skills and communication needs at Flinders University' received ethics approval in August 2021. Subsequently, the research project began in the Spring of 2021, with the first stage of data collection taking place between October 2021 and April 2022 with students studying into Academic and Professional Communication (COMS1001). After this, the project was extended to the topics Nature of STEM (STEM1001), Professional Skills (ENGR1401) and Communication for Nursing (NURS1021) so that a broader response could be generated which would shed light on the academic literacy and communications skills of students across these Colleges. The research project was coordinated by Werner Botha, and drew on the expertise of colleagues teaching into the above topics, as well as the survey experience of the project's academic consultant at The University of Stockholm, Professor Kingsley Bolton. It is the belief of the research team that this project has produced significant results for Flinders University, not least because, to our knowledge, this is the first detailed study of the communication needs of Flinders students hitherto carried out. The online survey of students was successful in gaining a good level of response from students within the topic as well as across the University. The results of this questionnaire survey provide detailed and specific information about the communicative needs at the University, as well as students' perceived strengths and weaknesses with reference to academic communication and academic literacy skills.

1.2 Research methodology

The methodology adopted for this research, was the administration of an online survey. The survey was successful in attracting a good level of response from students, with some 745 completed questionnaires, a number that represented 38% of COMS1001 students (S1, 2022; S1, 2023), 67% of STEM1001 students (S1, 2023), 3% of ENGR1401 students, and 26% of NURS1021 students. The questionnaire was highly detailed, comprising 75 items, with sub-sections dealing with students' personal characteristics, language, educational backgrounds, reading practices, writing skills, spoken communication, face-to-face or online learning experiences, and perceived levels of difficulty. The online surveys were carried out using the Qualtrics program through the Flinders computer system. These were administered between October 2021 through April 2022, and again between February and May 2023. After the data was collected through the Qualtrics system, it was then exported and analysed and checked for consistency. As the survey population comprised COMS1001, STEM1001, ENGR1401 and NURS1021 students, it was decided that the results would not be weighted according to College of study, and some caution as to the representativeness of the results by University College is needed when interpreting those results.

1.3 Sample characteristics

A total of 745 students (out of 1959) responded to the questionnaire. This total represents 38% of the surveyed population over the research periods. One major difference between the sample

and the Flinders student population concerned the response rates by College, and as shown in Figures 1.1, Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences; Science and Engineering and Nursing; and Health Sciences students were over represented in the survey, whereas students in the Colleges of Government, Business and Law; Education, Psychology and Social Work; and Medicine and Public Health were under represented. However, it was decided not to weight the survey results by College to match those of the general Flinders population, as the sample was primarily aimed at students taking COMS1001, STEM1001, ENGR1401, and NURS1201. A more detailed comparison of the sample in relation to such key variables as gender, year of study, and College is presented below in Figures 1.1 and Tables 1.1-1.3.

Figure 1.1: The survey sample by College of study

College	Percentage
College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences	36.6%
College of Science and Engineering	32.0%
College of Nursing and Health Sciences	17.5%
College of Business, Government and Law	7.2%
College of Education, Psychology and Social Work	5.6%
College of Medicine and Public Health	1.2%

N=738
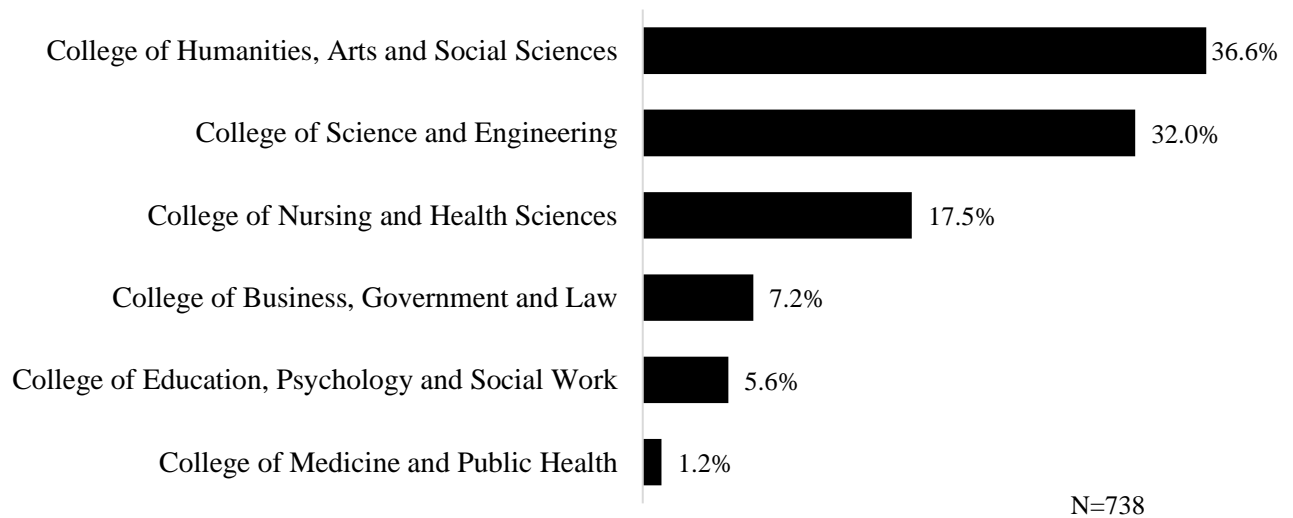
As can be seen from Table 1.1 below, there were almost no differences between the survey sample and the University population for the variable 'gender' with 65% of the university population comprising female students, and 35% male students (Flinders Business Analytics, 2020). The University evidently has more female students, and this is also evident in the survey sample.

Table 1.1: The survey sample by gender

Female	63.38%
Male	33.38%
Other	1.49%
Prefer not to say	1.76%
Total	740

Year of study (below) was another demographic variable in the survey, and, as can be seen in Table 1.2, Year 1 students are substantially overrepresented in the sample, which is due to the nature of the surveyed topics being taken predominantly as first-year topics.

Table 1.2: The survey sample by year of study

Year	%
1	85.14%
2	8.11%
3	4.32%
4	1.08%
Prefer not to answer	1.35%
Total	740

Another variable that was thought to be significant in the profile of undergraduate students was that of 'nationality', as this variable is directly relevant to both the nationality and the educational background of students. The results for this variable are set out in Table 1.3 below, and as can be seen from the figures presented, the proportions of Australian and Australian PR students are somewhat over represented in the sample compared with those of the wider university population. Flinders comprises some 81% Australian or Australian PR students, while 19% are considered international students (Flinders Business Analytics, 2020).[1]

Table 1.3: The survey sample by nationality

Student category	%
Australian student	91.22%
International student (reading a whole degree)	8.65%
Exchange student (at Flinders for a semester/year)	0.00%
I prefer not to answer	0.14%
Total	740

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[1] https://staff.flinders.edu.au/content/dam/staff/ids/analytics/quick-stats-brochure.pdf

Section 2: Results of the survey

2.1 Introduction

In this section of the report, we shall present the results relevant to the on-campus learning population at Bedford Park, Flinders University. Section 2.2 deals with the personal backgrounds of student respondents, Section 2.3 is concerned with questions related to the reading habits and reading difficulties of students, Section 2.4 deals with questions related to the academic writing and writing difficulties of students, Section 2.5 deals with the spoken communication habits of students, Section 2.6 deals with the students qualitative comments on their communication difficulties in their classes, Section 2.7 deals with questions regarding students' use of/attitudes toward online learning, Section 2.8 deals with students' perceptions regarding their online learning difficulties, Section 2.9 deals with student perceptions of their communication difficulties at the University, and Section 2.10 discusses the multilingualism among students at Flinders.

2.2 The personal backgrounds of the student respondents

The sample of on-campus students responding to the survey was significantly over represented with year 1 students, with around 85% of respondents coming from Year 1, 9% from Year 2, 4% from Year 3 and 1% from Year 4. Of the student respondents, 33% were male, and 63% were female, and 87% were aged between 18 and 25 years. Students were also asked a range of questions about their student status and nationality and residence, and the results for these questions are set out in Tables 2.1 and 2.2.

As can be seen in Table 2.1, the majority of students reported their student status as Australian students, with only 9% reporting as international students. The results for nationality (and residence status) are set out in Table 2.2. Interestingly, of the non-resident students, 84% reported to be from Asia, with the most of these from India.

Table 2.1: The status of students in the sample

Student category	%
Australian student	91.22%
International student (reading a whole degree)	8.65%
Exchange student (at Flinders for a semester/year)	0.00%
I prefer not to answer	0.14%
Total	740

Table 2.2: Students' nationality status

Nationality status	%
Australian citizen or permanent resident	90.38%
Other	9.21%
I prefer not to answer	0.41%
Total	738

Students were then asked a number of questions concerning their self-perceived ethnicity and their knowledge of languages and use of languages. Table 2.3 reports results for students' self-reported ethnicity, with the vast-majority of students reporting, interestingly, that they are ethnically 'Australian', and 'Caucasian', with fewer identifying as 'Asian', 'European', 'English', Indigenous Australian', or 'Middle-Eastern'. The results for 'home language' and 'first language learnt as a child' are set out in Figures 2.1 and 2.2. One interesting result here is that 13% of the sample reported that they considered that another language was their 'home language', while nearly 17% reported that they learnt a language other than English as a first language. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the vast majority of students reporting a language other than English as a home language reported an Indian language or variety (such as Malayalam or Punjabi) as the most spoken home language among students. There were also students speaking other Asian languages varieties as a home language, including Chinese (Cantonese or Mandarin), Thai, Vietnamese and Korean.

Table 2.3: Students' self-reported ethnicity

Ethnicity	%
Australian	25.79%
Caucasian (incl. white)	25.10%
Other	20.66%
Prefer not to answer	16.90%
Asian (incl. Indian, Chinese, Thai, etc.)	10.96%
English (incl. British)	3.05%
European	1.94%
Indigenous Australian (incl. First nations)	1.38%
Middle-Eastern (incl. Arab)	0.69%
Total	721

Figure 2.1: Students' reported home language

Other, 13.28%

I prefer not to answer, 0.41%

English, 86.31%
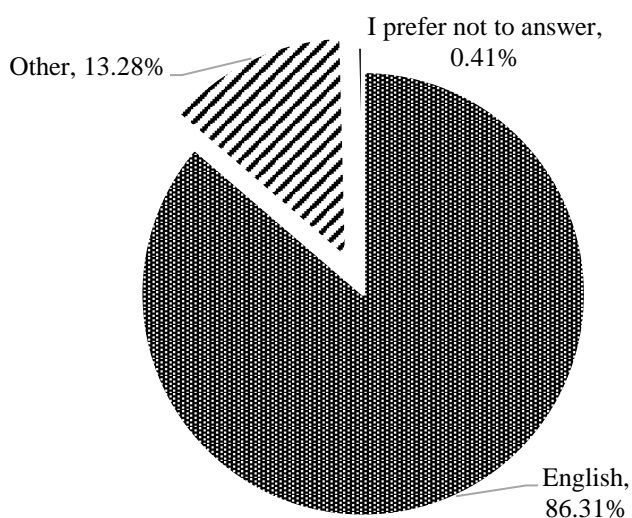
N=738

Figure 2.2: Students' reported first-language learnt as a child

0.54%

Other, 16.94%

English,
82.52%
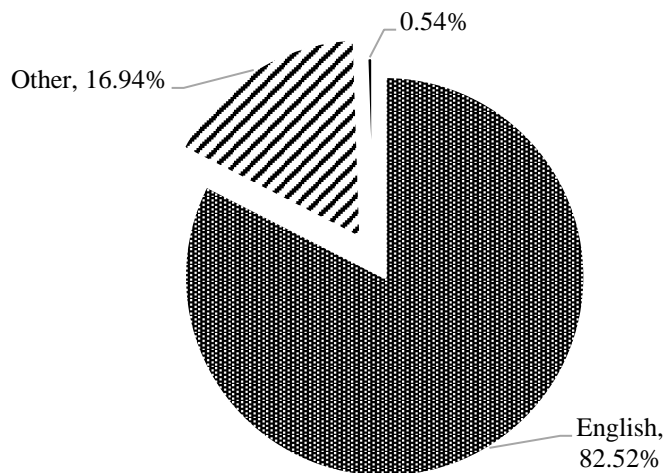
N=738

With reference to students' socio-economic backgrounds, as presented in Figure 2.3, it can be seen that 19% of respondents reported that they were 'Upper' or 'Upper-middle class', while 46% reported to be 'Middle class'. 16% stated that they were 'Lower-middle class', while 10% of students reported that they were from 'Lower/working class' socio-economic backgrounds.

Figure 2.3: Students' self-reported socio-economic status

Category	Percentage
Upper class	1.89%
Upper-middle class	17.05%
Middle class	46.14%
Lower-middle class	16.10%
Lower/working class	10.42%
Other [Please specify]	1.89%
I prefer not to answer	6.50%
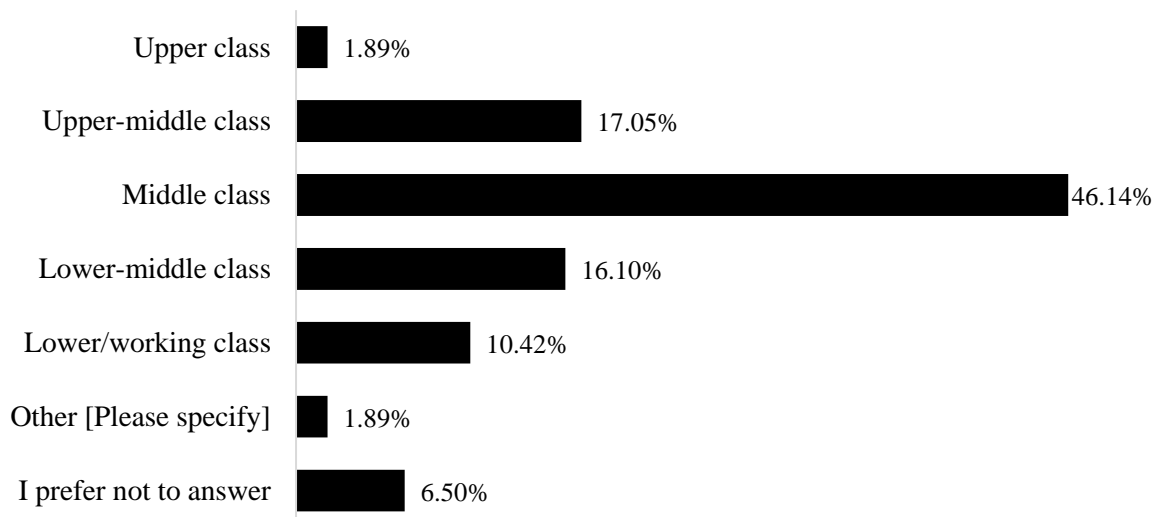
N=739

2.3 The reading habits and reading difficulties of students at Flinders

In this section, questions were asked to respondents about the type of reading materials that they are required to read for their topics at Flinders University. One important question asked

students to report on the type of texts that they read during their studies at the University. The results for this question are set out in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4: Frequency of reading by text type

Text type	%
Academic research articles	85.02%
Workshop/lecture handouts	75.08%
Textbooks	58.10%
Academic reports	52.91%
Laboratory reports	22.78%
Student reports (e.g. academic theses)	22.48%
Academic magazines	19.42%
Others (Please specify):	3.52%
Total	654

Predictably, perhaps, students reported that the text types they read most frequently included academic research articles, workshop/lecture handouts, textbooks, and academic reports. Much less frequently, they reported reading laboratory reports student reports, and academic magazines. It also needs to be pointed out that some of these reading materials are discipline specific, as with laboratory manuals, in Science and Engineering and the Health Sciences. Students were also asked which reading materials they considered 'Most important'. The results for this question indicated that (and generally in line with the results for frequency in Table 2.4) the following text types were considered to be of the greatest importance: reading academic papers, assignment instructions, lecture/tutorial handouts, PowerPoint slides, textbooks, websites, and reports. Students were also asked to report on which text types they found to be the most difficult to read. The results on the perceived difficulty of texts are set out in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5: Perceived difficulty of texts

Text type	%
Reading academic/research articles	67.26%
Reading academic reports	42.75%
Reading textbooks	40.79%
Reading academic reports	30.77%
Reading tutorial/lecture handouts	30.41%
Reading laboratory reports	19.86%
Reading student reports	16.99%
Reading academic magazines	15.92%
Others (Please specify):	4.83%
Total	559

One very clear result from the above table is that students report greatest difficulty in reading academic articles and research articles, with some 67% of students reporting having difficulty

in reading such texts. Lower levels of difficulty were also reported in the reading of academic reports, textbooks, academic reports, course handouts, laboratory reports, student reports, and academic magazines. Interestingly, 4% of students reported reading academic materials in languages other than English.

2.4 The academic writing habits and writing difficulties of students at the University

In the survey, respondents were also asked about the types of academic writing they were engaged in at the University, the types of writing tasks with which they needed assistance, and the importance and relative difficulty of particular writing skills. One basic question here was about the type of academic texts that students were required to write at Flinders. The results for this question are set out in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6: Frequency of writing by text type

Writing task	%
Academic essay	90.71%
Research essay/report	77.53%
Personal reflections	58.39%
Case study analysis	38.56%
Laboratory report	32.32%
Technical/scientific report	25.80%
Cover letter, résumé	19.28%
Personal statements	18.17%
Critique	14.84%
Application for scholarship	7.07%
Others [Please specify]	3.33%
Business report	2.64%
Business plan	1.94%
	N=721

As can be seen above, it is noted that students reported that their most frequent writing tasks included academic essays, research essays, reports, personal reflections, case study analyses, laboratory reports, technical and scientific reports, cover letters and resumes, personal statements, critiques, applications for scholarship, business reports and business plans. Responses to a separate question on the frequency of writing academic essays found that 48% of students stated that they wrote these texts 'Always' or 'Most of the time'. The responses to a separate question on emails to professors revealed that 39% of students reported to frequently email their teachers.

Students were also asked about which of their writing tasks they most needed help with, the results for which provide an indication of the perceived difficulty of particular writing tasks. The results for this question are set out in Table 2.7.

Table 2.7: Perceived difficulty of writing tasks

Text type	%
Writing academic essays	71.91%
Writing literature reviews	32.61%
Writing critiques	27.09%
Writing scientific reports	26.09%
Writing laboratory reports	21.91%
Writing proposals	19.73%
Others (Please specify):	4.85%
Total	598

From the results in Table 2.7, it is evident that students have the greatest difficulty writing academic essays, with over 72% of the students reporting difficulty in writing such texts. Other writing tasks that were associated with visible difficulty included literature reviews, critiques, scientific reports, laboratory reports and proposals. A related set of questions focused on specific writing skills at a micro-level of analysis. Question 56 asked about the importance of particular writing skills in undergraduate student writing. The results for this question are set out in Table 2.8, where it can be seen that students considered summarising and paraphrasing information to be the most important writing skill, followed by citing information and explaining academic concepts.

Table 2.8: Perceived importance of specific writing skills

Writing skills	%
Summarising and paraphrasing information	83.15%
Citing information	80.19%
Explaining academic concepts	73.01%
Composing academic arguments	62.87%
Using quotations appropriately	61.93%
Defining academic terms	59.75%
Others (Please specify):	4.06%
	N=641

Students were also asked about those writing conventions that they found particularly difficult. The results for these questions are set out in Figure 2.4 and provide an interesting comparison with the results in Table 2.8 above. From the figure below, it is noted that a sizeable number of students found evident difficulty in formatting writing tasks, utilising in-text citation conventions, writing up references, conventions of tables/figures, as well as a number of other skills. Only some 2% of the respondents reported 'no difficulty' at all in applying specific writing conventions.

Figure 2.4: Perceived difficulty of writing conventions

Convention	Percentage
Format for different documents	60.64%
In-text citation conventions	51.26%
List of references	43.55%
Conventions of tables/figures	39.20%
Headings and sub-headings	23.45%
Lists or bulleted items	13.40%
Others (Please specify):	3.69%
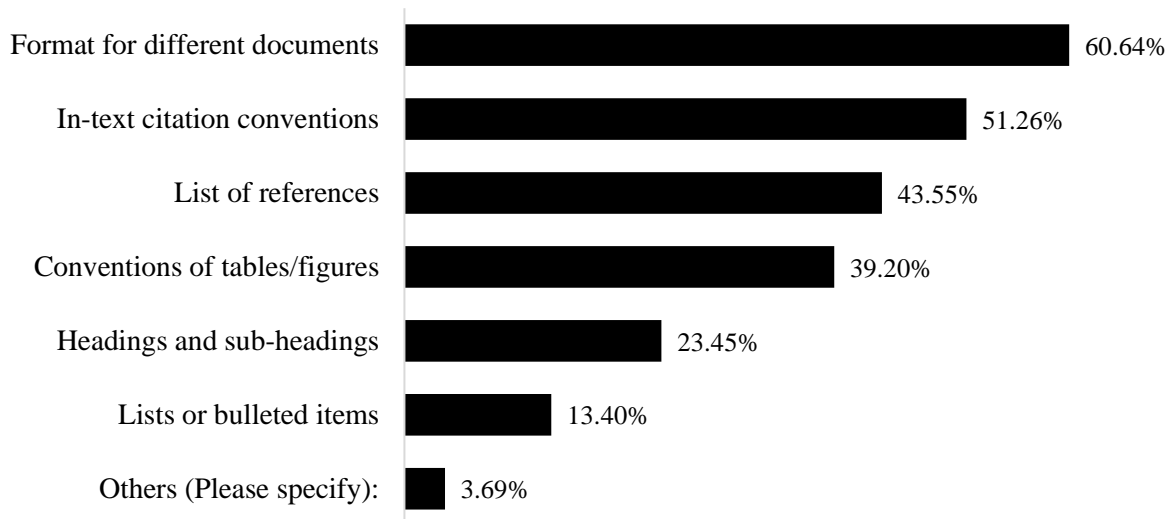
N=597

A related question asked students about specific writing styles for which they would need assistance. The results for this question, which again focused on perceived difficulty, are set out in Figure 2.5 and indicate that some 53% of students indicated that they had trouble adopting a formal style of writing, followed by using scientific and academic vocabulary.

Figure 2.5: Perceived difficulty of writing styles

Style	Percentage
Adopting a formal style of writing	52.94%
Scientific/Academic vocabulary	48.44%
Constructing complex sentences	44.29%
Using objective language	38.75%
Using linking devices	37.89%
Others (Please specify):	4.50%
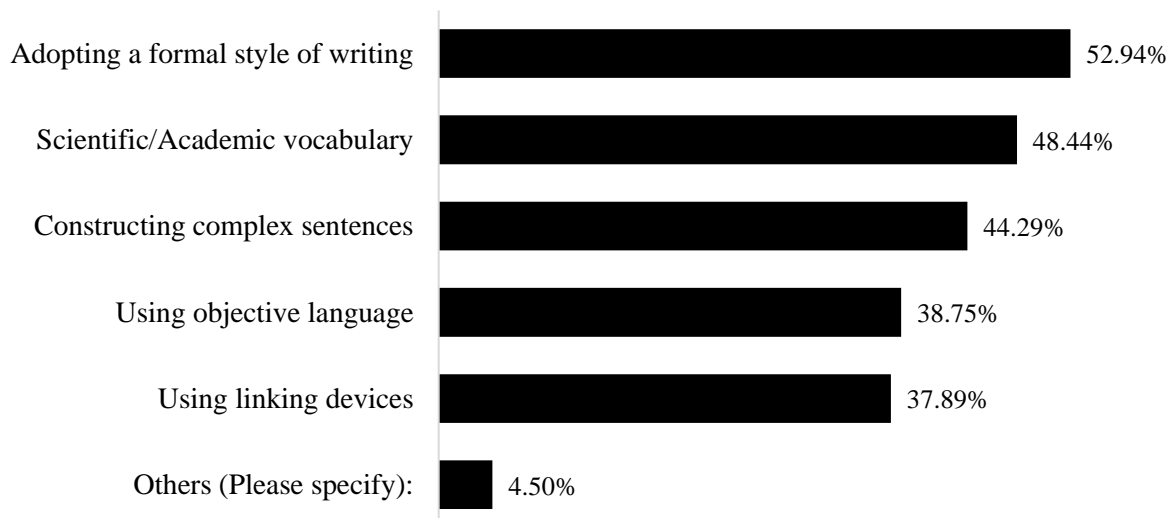
N=578

Students were also asked about writing less 'academic' but rather 'personal' or 'job-related' documents in the near future. The responses from students displayed a high level of awareness of their need to write various kinds of professional communications, particularly those relevant to job applications (incl. resumes and cover letters). The results for this question are set out in Table 2.9, with the vast majority of students reporting that they were most frequently required to write emails.

Table 2.9: Need to write personal/job-related documents

Text type	%
Emails	87.28%
Resumes	49.59%
Cover letters	36.22%
Personal statements	22.84%
Applications for scholarships	9.95%
Applications for internships	9.46%
Others (Please specify):	4.40%
Applications for postgraduate studies	4.24%
Applications for teaching	3.43%
Assistantship	2.94%
Total	613

2.5 The use of spoken communication by in-person students

One very basic question here (question 53) asked students about how frequently they engaged in various types of spoken communication at Flinders. The results are set out in Figure 2.6, which illustrates the most frequent types of spoken communication reported by students.

Figure 2.6: The most frequent types of spoken communication

Speaking to professors/lecturers/tutors — 93.19%
Speaking to peers/classmates — 90.40%
Speaking to administrative staff — 46.28%
Speaking to students of different nationalities — 45.36%
Speaking to laboratory technicians — 35.76%
Speaking to visitors — 21.05%
Others (Please specify): — 1.08%
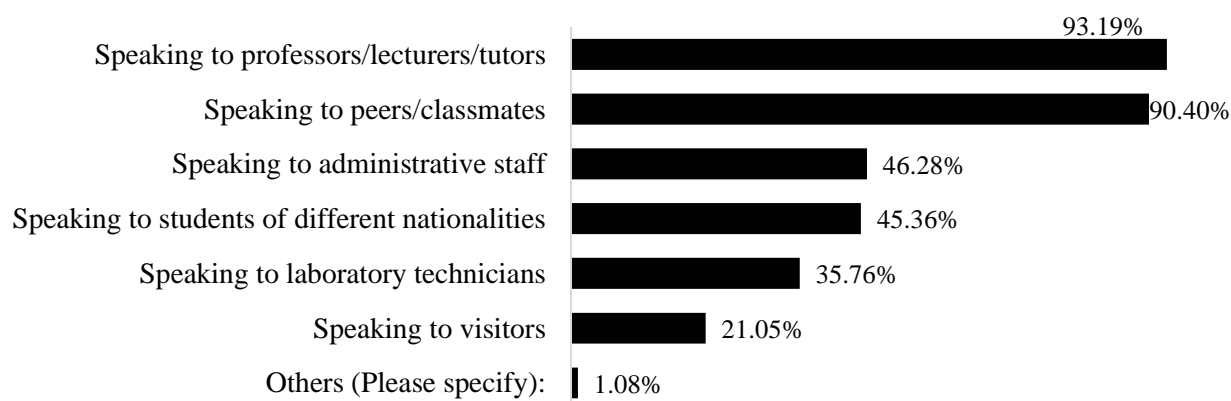
N=646

Students were then asked about the frequency with which they asked teachers questions at Flinders. The results for this question are set out in Tables 2.10 and 2.11 below. One interesting observation here is that some 39% of students reported to 'Rarely' or 'Never' communicate with their teachers in class, and as many as 56% of students reportedly 'Rarely' or 'Never' interacted with their teachers outside of class.

Table 2.10: Students' spoken interaction with teachers in class

Frequency	%
Always	8.48%
Most of the time	20.86%
About half the time	30.74%
Rarely	34.77%
Never	4.59%
Total	719

Table 2.11: Students spoken interaction with teachers outside of class

Frequency	%
Always	2.23%
Most of the time	11.00%
About half the time	30.92%
Rarely	43.73%
Never	11.98%
Total	718

Students were then asked to state the difficulties they experienced when communicating in the in-person learning classes, and these results are presented in Figure 2.7. From the figure it can be seen that of those that expressed difficulties, 'Speaking to teaching staff' and 'speaking to classmates/peers' were the most frequently identified areas of spoken difficulty.

Figure 2.7: Situations where difficulties with spoken communication were identified

Situation	%
Speaking to teaching staff	61.58%
Speaking to peers/classmates	47.43%
Speaking to administrative staff	29.60%
Speaking to foreign students	26.47%
Speaking to laboratory technicians	16.91%
Speaking to visitors	16.36%
Others (Please specify):	6.25%
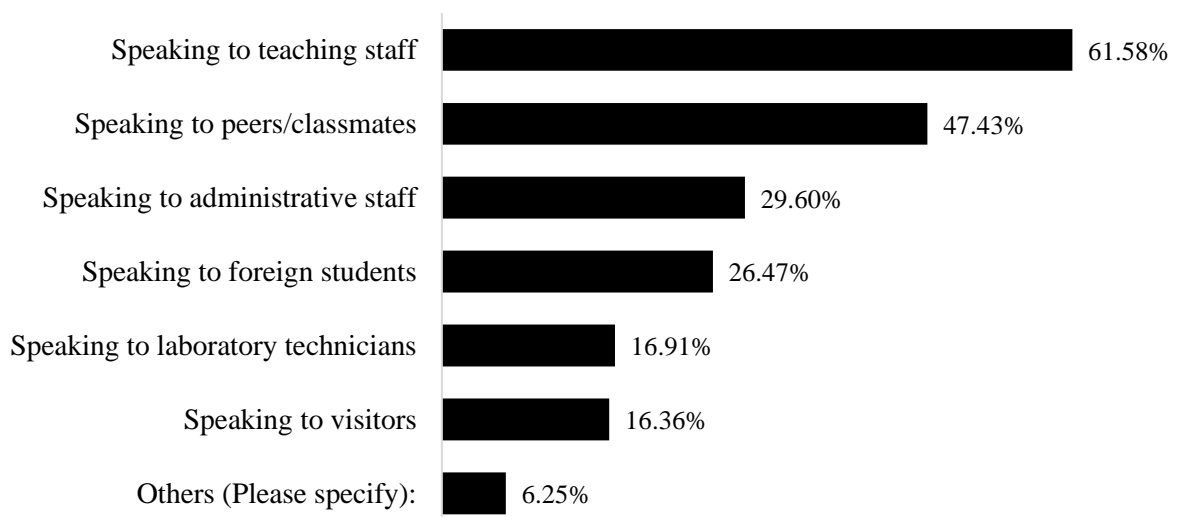
N=544

Students were also asked about their learning in their in-person classrooms, and these results are presented in Figure 2.8 below. From the figure below it can be seen that many students reported difficulties with social anxiety, shyness, expressing ideas, how to engage in class, and how to work with other students. Some 20% of students reported 'No difficulty' in their in-person classrooms. Following these questions, students were then asked to provide explanations concerning the communication problems they had experienced with their teachers and in their classrooms, by filling in open-ended comments into the space provided in the questionnaire. These comments are discussed in the following section.

Figure 2.8: Students' difficulties with in-person learning

Category	Percentage
Social anxiety	46.15%
Too shy to ask questions in class	42.74%
Expressing ideas in class	36.75%
Not sure how to engage in class	24.22%
Working with other students	23.50%
No difficulty	19.80%
Others (Please specify):	13.25%
The mode of delivery itself	12.96%
Unsure what to do	11.97%
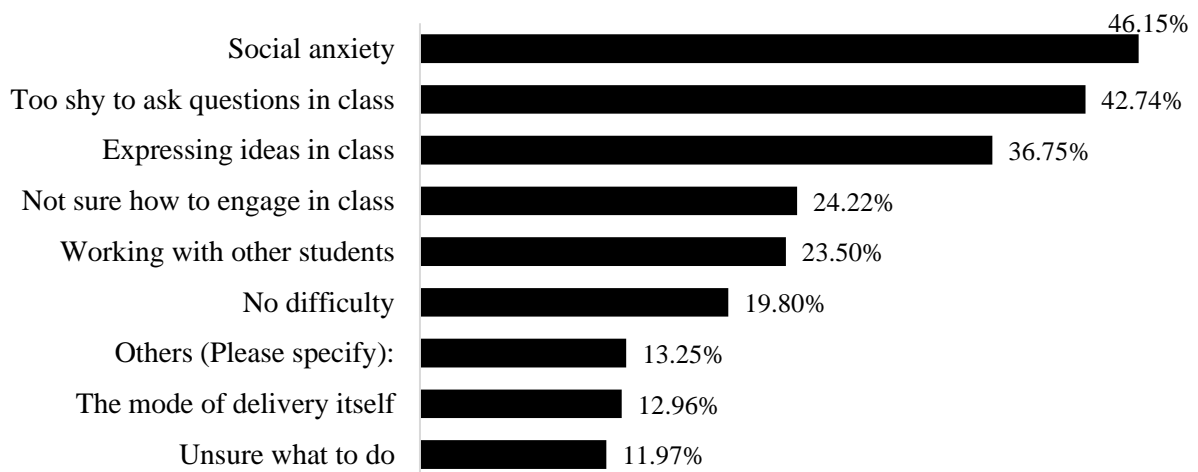
N=702

2.6 Comments from in-person learning students concerning their communication difficulties in their classes

The results presented in Figure 2.8 indicate that a vast majority of students in the survey reported communication difficulties with their teachers and in their classrooms, and it is evident that one needs to give this result due consideration and concern. Two major themes are evident in the qualitative responses, with one concern relating to the challenges some students had with attending their classes, and the other relating to the learning difficulties that some students experienced in their studies, which they felt limited their ability to engage effectively in class.

Comments concerning attendance

Attendance due to transport

Getting to the campus and wasting an hour's worth of time that could have been spent studying

Travel (1hr each way)

The tiresome travel

I live a fair distance away

Travelling to Bedford Park

Difficult to get there sometimes so I miss out on important points
Having to present myself instead of sitting at home

Its a 40 minute drive

Getting to Uni

Sometimes don't have the time to travel into class

Getting to class, organising babysitting etc

Being able to attend due to personal engagements

Working class into my routine

Getting to class on time due to traffic

Comments concerning learning difficulties

I have trouble finding the words to express my train of thought, which makes communicating difficult at times

I have difficultly in speaking, writing, and presenting. There were times I had trouble in making a clear argument and presenting my ideas. I wanted to improve those skills so I can use them in the future

Sometimes, I get mixed with the two languages

Confidence when speaking publicly

ADHD, Anxiety and Autism can make it very hard to relate and understand social cues and other students intentions/thoughts/behaviours. Whether or not it is appropriate or rude to ask tutors certain things, etc.

Yes due to my PTSD selective mutism and constant chronic intense state of flight or flight , and stratospheric stress spikes causing confusion and memory difficulties with information recall

Auditory processing disorder

Sometimes its hard to remember certain things taught in the classroom, which makes it hard to feel like i am actually learning anything

Social anxiety causing fear of being wrong/embarrassing myself

PTSD & Generalised Anxiety Disorder

It can be difficult if you zone out, you can't just replay the recording or pause.

Language Barrier

Language issues

Lack of visual adds. Once something has been said and not written, it is lost forever

Struggle with attention

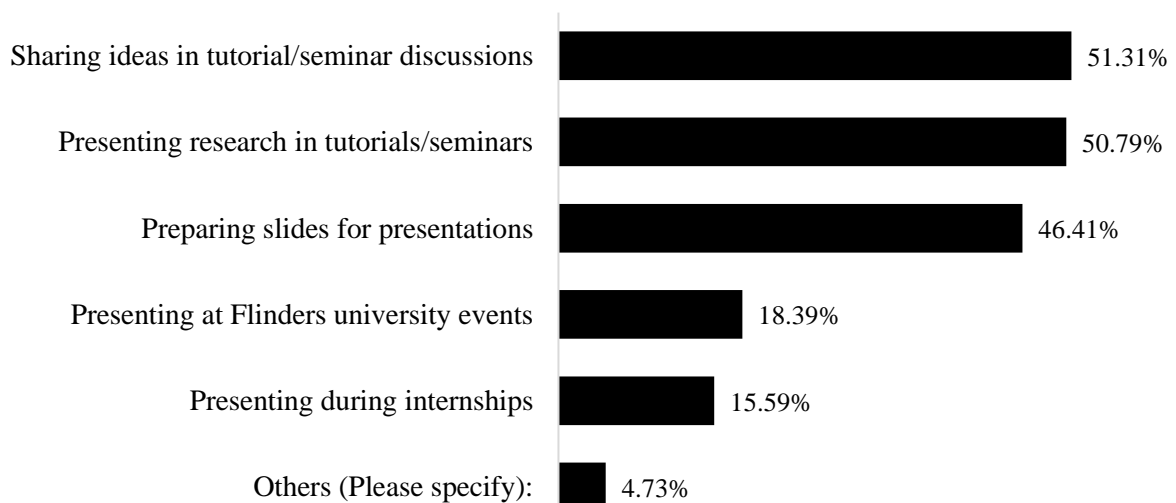Hard to articulate words when you don't speak English that often

A related question asked students to identify what were the most important contexts for making presentations. The results for this question are set out in Table 2.12.

Table 2.12: Most important presentations

Context	%
Tutorials/seminars	60.32%
Graded presentations	58.55%
Others (Please specify):	7.23%
Academic/Science fairs	6.00%
Conferences	5.47%
Internships	4.06%
Total	567

Students were also asked which presentation skills they needed most help with. The results for this question are set out in Figure 2.9, where it can be seen that sharing ideas in tutorials/seminar discussions, preparing for presentations, and presenting research in tutorials/seminars were areas which students needed the most help with. It needs to be pointed out that some 25% of students reported that they did not need any help with presentations.

Figure 2.9: Presentation skills where help was needed

Sharing ideas in tutorial/seminar discussions — 51.31%
Presenting research in tutorials/seminars — 50.79%
Preparing slides for presentations — 46.41%
Presenting at Flinders university events — 18.39%
Presenting during internships — 15.59%
Others (Please specify): — 4.73%

N=571

Finally, in this group of questions, students were asked which listening skills they considered to be most important. The result for this question is set out in Table 2.13.
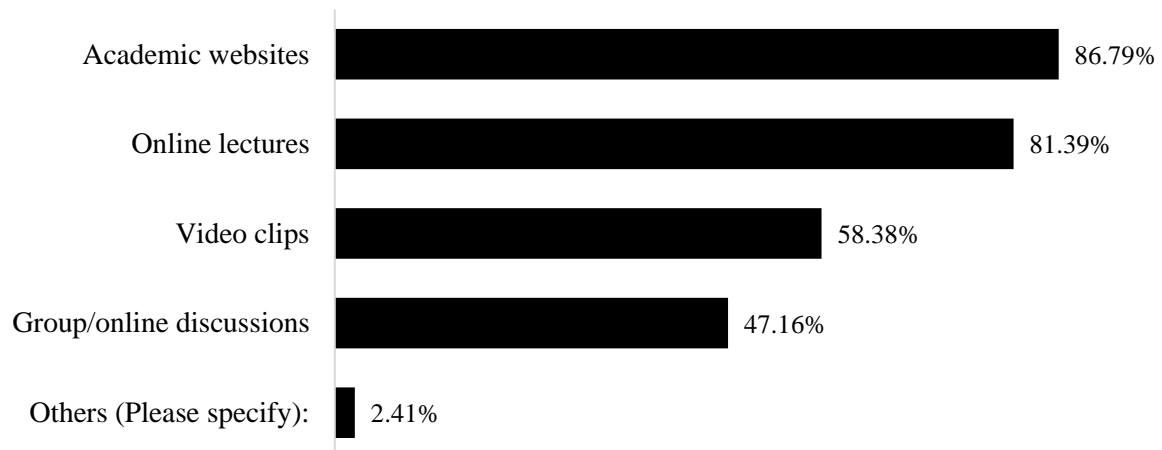
Table 2.13: Most important listening skills

Contexts	%
Listening to understand lectures	96.60%
Listening to understand questions	86.42%
Listening for note taking	82.72%
Others (Please specify):	0.46%
Total	648

2.7 Students' use of/attitudes to online learning

Students were asked which online resources they used as part of their studies at Flinders. Their responses to this question are set out in Figure 2.10. Unsurprisingly, Academic websites and online lectures are mostly used by students at the university.

Figure 2.10: Undergraduate students' use of online resources

Academic websites — 86.79%
Online lectures — 81.39%
Video clips — 58.38%
Group/online discussions — 47.16%
Others (Please specify): — 2.41%

N=704

Students were also asked about their attitudes to online resources and the extent to which they would like online learning to be used in order to teach communication skills. Question 43 asked students whether they wanted more online learning in their courses, and these results are presented in Table 2.14. Importantly, here are results that indicated there were largely negative opinions towards online learning, with some 66% of students stating they wanted 'A little' or 'None at all' online learning options.

Table 2.14: Students' attitudes towards more online learning

Frequency	%
Very much	6.52%
A lot	10.76%
Quite a lot	16.57%
A little	45.04%
None at all	21.10%
Total	706

Despite the negative comments towards online learning more generally, students responded that they were generally confident in their use of online learning technology. In response to the broader question of how confident they were in using online technology for learning, for example, audio recording, blogs, creating videos, wikis, etc., students generally responded quite positively, as illustrated by the results in Figure 2.11.

Figure 2.11: Students' confidence in using online resources
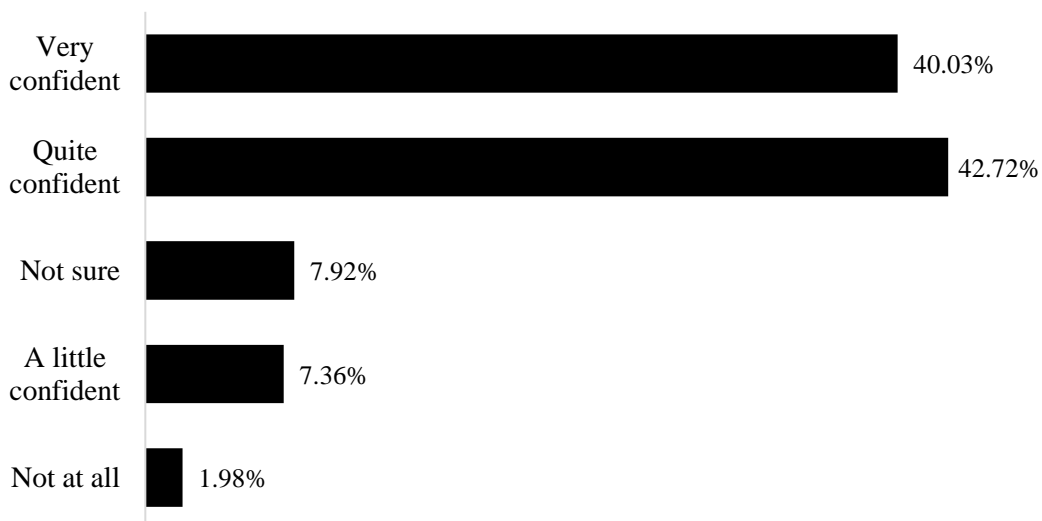
N=707

2.8 Students' perceptions of their online study difficulties

Students in the sample were asked a number of questions concerning their self-perceived online learning difficulties. These online learning difficulties are displayed in Table 2.15 below.

Table 2.15: Areas where most help is needed with online study

Area of difficulty	%
Better time management	59.05%
Understanding instructions	45.70%
Writing academic texts	40.50%
Asking questions/handling questions online	39.32%
Reading academic materials	35.61%
Engaging with other students in class	29.67%
Others (Please specify):	3.26%
Total	264

It is evident from the above table that students reported most difficulty with time management, understanding instructions, writing academic texts in the online context, asking questions and handling questions online, reading academic materials, and engaging with other students online. Students were also asked to what extent they would like more online learning resources to be used in COMS1001, STEM1001, ENGR1401 and NURS1021, and these results are presented in Table 2.16. It can be seen that some 52% COMS1001, 30% of NURS1021, 33% of STEM1001, and 20% of ENGR1401 respondents were rather unsupportive about the inclusion of online learning content (such as interactive quizzes, videos, online discussion boards).

Table 2.16: The extent to which students wanted more online learning in their communication skills topics

	COMS1001	NURS1021	STEM1001	ENGR1401
Very much	6.73%	16.46%	19.15%	40.00%
A lot	14.42%	21.52%	22.87%	20.00%
Quite a lot	26.92%	31.65%	25.00%	20.00%
A little	39.42%	27.85%	27.66%	0.00%
Not at all	12.50%	2.53%	5.32%	20.00%

N=637

2.9 Students' perceptions of their communication difficulties at Flinders

Many respondents stated that there was room for improvement with reference to their academic communication and academic literacy, with around half of students stating that they needed improvement. Students were asked to report on the difficulty associated with various communication/academic literacy tasks at Flinders. As can be seen from Figure 2.12 below, the results indicate that the task of 'Writing essays' was perceived by students as the single most difficult task they faced as part of their education at Flinders. However, it is also noteworthy that a large percentage of students reported to have some difficulty in 'Reading textbooks' and 'Listening to lectures'.

Figure 2.13: Students' perceived difficulty of communication tasks at Flinders

N=625
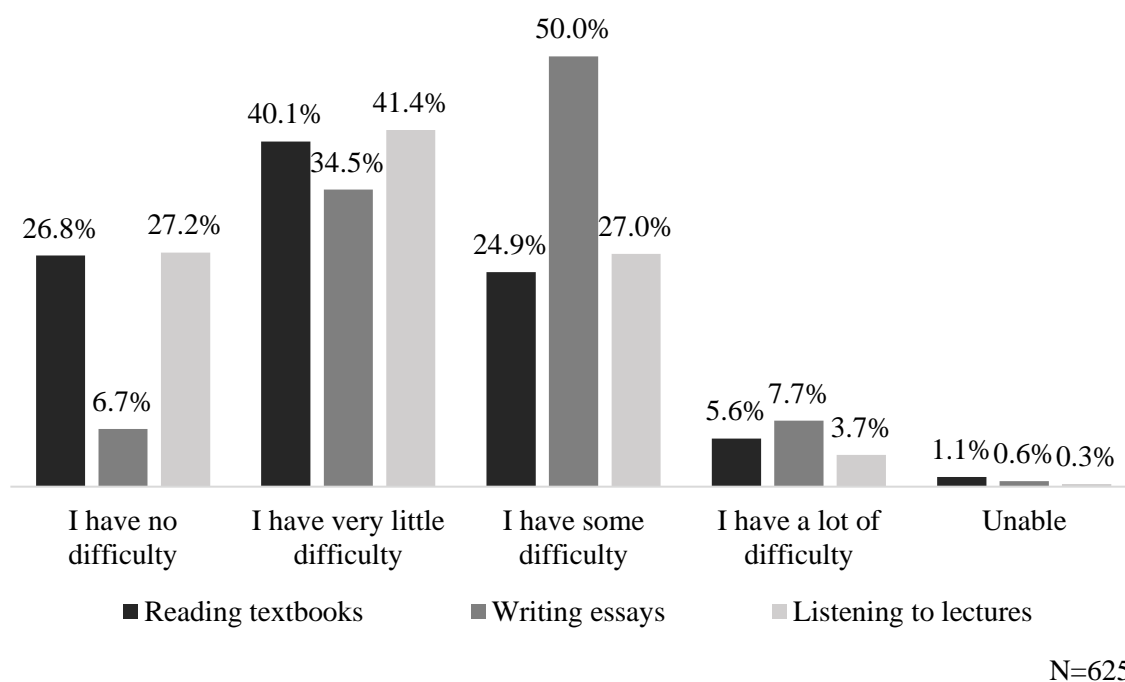
Students were also asked to rate their improvement in the communications skills topic, Academic and professional communication, and these results are presented in Table 2.17 below. From these results it is evident that the majority of students felt they improved in their academic communication abilities while studying academic and professional communication at the University.

Table 2.17: Students' self-rated improvement in their academic communication topics

	COMS1001	NURS1021	STEM1001	ENGR1401
Excellent	1.79%	10.68%	2.00%	0.00%
Good	49.11%	52.43%	38.50%	33.33%
Average	33.93%	28.16%	33.00%	0.00%
Little	10.71%	5.83%	17.50%	16.67%
No improvement	4.46%	2.91%	9.00%	50.00%
Total				704

2.10 Multilingualism among students

Students were asked a few questions related to their use of languages. Although the vast majority of students stated that they mostly use English at home and in their education, many are reportedly exposed to a language other than English in their spare time, as shown in Table 2.18 below, with some 30% stating that they were 'Always' or 'Very often' exposed to another language.

Table 2.18: Students' exposure to languages other than English in their spare time

Frequency	%
Always	10.74%
Very often	18.91%
About half the time	22.92%
Rarely	39.10%
Never	8.33%
Total	624

Table 2.19 reports students' use of languages when socialising with one another, with a few who reported mixing their use of language among one another. English and one of the Indian languages (e.g. Punjabi, Gujarati, Hindi) were mixed most frequently among those that reported mixing languages, with fewer reported cases for English and Mandarin and Tagalog and English and Spanish.

Table 2.19: Students' use of languages when socialising with their classmates

Language	%
English	95.40%
Mixed [Please specify]	2.09%
Total	718

Students were next asked to what extent they used a language other than English for a range of extra-curricular activities, as shown in Figure 2.14. Those activities of travel, reading, socialising with friends, messaging, online socialising, Internet searches, games, and online chats were reported as the most frequent. It needs to be pointed out that the majority of 21% of students stated that they never used a language other than English in their free time.

Finally, Table 2.20 indicates the extent to which students considered themselves to be bilingual, with just over 20% of students considering themselves to at least be 'Somewhat' bilingual.

Table 2.20: Students' perception of their own bilingualism

Level of bilingualism	%
Completely	8.55%
Very	5.81%
Somewhat	9.03%
A little	11.29%
Not at all	65.32%
Total	620

2.11 Student support services at the University

The last part of the survey concerned the student support services on offer at the University. Students were asked about their knowledge and use of various student support services on offer at the University, and these are presented in Tables 2.21 and 2.22 below.

Table 2.21: Students' awareness of support services at the university

Student Learning Support Service	94.61%
Studiosity	88.14%
Oasis	69.27%
Counselling services	67.12%
CareerHub	64.96%
Disability services	60.65%
Health services	55.53%
Academic advocacy	32.88%
Financial advocacy	31.27%
Total	371

Table 2.22: Students' awareness of support services at the University

Student Learning Support Service	58.98%
Studiosity	46.88%
Oasis	18.75%
Counselling services	16.41%
CareerHub	14.84%
Disability services	16.02%
Health services	14.45%
Academic advocacy	3.52%
Financial advocacy	5.08%
Total	256

What is observable from the Tables above is that students are generally aware of the various student support services at the University, but that far fewer students reported to make use of these services. The two most frequently used support services that students use are the Student Learning and Support Services and Studiosity, as these services concern supports for student learning and academic writing, with very few students reporting that they engaged academic and financial advocacy.

Section 3: Results of the survey by College of study

3.1 Introduction

In this section, we stratify some of the most relevant findings that relate to the communication practices and needs of students in terms of their College, with a focus on Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, Science and Engineering, and Nursing and Health Sciences. We do this by comparing the findings of students studying into the Academic and Professional Communication (COMS1001), Nature of STEM (STEM1001), Professional Skills (ENGR1401) and Communication for Nursing (NURS1021) topics. We point out again that these findings are not representative of the University's individual College populations; nevertheless we believe these findings are useful in indicating the types of communication difficulties that students in these Colleges have with respect to their academic communication practices in the topics listed above. We also need to mention that the survey sample presented in this section is smaller compared with the sample of overall findings presented in the previous section. This is simply because we are comparing students who all completed the survey in semester one, of 2023, so that a direct comparison of students in the topics above can be made, and who were surveyed at the same time. Section 3.2 deals with the reading habits and difficulties of student respondents by College, Section 3.3 is concerned with questions related to the academic writing and writing difficulties of students, Section 3.4 with the spoken communication habits of students, and Section 3.5 deals with student perceptions of their communication difficulties at the University, which includes a short description of the difficulties in academic literacy skills by students of non-English speaking backgrounds.

3.2 The reading habits and reading difficulties of students, by College

In this section, we report on the type of reading materials that on-campus students have to read for their topics at the University. One important question here relates to the type of texts that students read during their studies at the University. The results for this question are broken down by topic of study in Table 3.1.

Figure 3.1: Frequency of reading by text type and topic of study

	COMS1001	NURS1021	STEM1001	ENGR1401
Research articles	93.52%	78.75%	89.29%	0.00%
Topic handouts	64.81%	66.25%	88.78%	66.67%
Academic reports	56.48%	35.00%	59.18%	33.33%
Textbooks	47.22%	87.50%	54.08%	33.33%
Student reports	24.07%	18.75%	21.94%	0.00%
Academic magazines	19.44%	22.50%	21.43%	0.00%
Laboratory reports	6.48%	11.25%	55.10%	0.00%
Others	3.70%	0.00%	0.51%	0.00%
Total	108	80	196	6

N=390

From the table above it can be seen that there are some variations according to text type by topic of study, and we can infer by College of study at the University, with research articles and student reports being more prominent in the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (HASS), research articles and textbooks are more frequent in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences (NHS), and topic handouts, research articles and lab reports are more frequently assigned to students in the College of Science and Engineering (SE). This is an interesting finding as one might question the relevance of first year students being required to read academic research articles at first year level. With the exception of Nursing students, it is also noteworthy that not many students in HASS and SE are required to read textbooks for their studies, and one might expect students at first year level to read more introductory level textbooks relevant to their fields of study.

Students were also asked to report on which text types they found to be the most difficult to read. The results on the perceived difficulty of texts by topic (and therefore College) are set out in Table 3.2, where it can be seen that students from all the Colleges found reading academic or research articles to be most difficult. College of study is an important variable in this context, as certain text types align with specific colleges. Students in NHS and SE students also reported having difficulties reading laboratory reports, and a fair number of students from all colleges reported difficulties with reading academic reports and textbooks.

Table 3.2: Perceived difficulty of texts and by topic

	COMS1001	**NURS1021**	**STEM1001**	**ENGR1401**
Reading academic/research articles	75.51%	70.27%	52.38%	0.00%
Reading student reports	12.24%	18.92%	23.81%	0.00%
Reading laboratory reports	9.18%	21.62%	37.50%	0.00%
Reading academic magazines	15.31%	18.92%	14.88%	0.00%
Reading academic reports	46.94%	41.89%	42.26%	0.00%
Reading academic reports	28.57%	27.03%	32.14%	33.33%
Reading textbooks	37.76%	48.65%	42.86%	0.00%
Reading tutorial/lecture handouts	32.65%	37.84%	29.76%	0.00%
Others (Please specify):	4.08%	4.05%	6.55%	66.67%
Total	98	74	168	3

N=343

3.3 The academic writing habits and writing difficulties of students, by College

In this section we report on the types of writing tasks with which students needed assistance, and the importance and relative difficulty of particular writing skills. One basic question here was about the type of academic texts that students were required to write at Flinders, and these results are set out in Table 3.3. Despite academic essays being the most frequently written text type across HASS, NHS and SE, there are variations in terms of the other text types. One obvious difference, although perhaps unsurprising, concerns technical/scientific reports and laboratory reports which were reportedly produced more frequently in the College of Science and Engineering. Research essays/reports were interestingly frequently required in all three colleges, while personal reflections are more frequent in Nursing and Health Sciences and Science and Engineering.

Table 3.3: Frequency of writing by text type, and College

	COMS1001	NURS1021	STEM1001	ENGR1401
Academic essay	100.00%	93.86%	80.50%	33.33%
Research essay/report	69.64%	71.93%	87.50%	83.33%
Personal reflections	26.79%	84.21%	81.50%	33.33%
Case study analysis	25.89%	35.09%	50.50%	16.67%
Critique	18.75%	5.26%	8.50%	16.67%
Personal statements	16.96%	14.04%	21.00%	0.00%
Technical/scientific report	8.93%	2.63%	65.50%	50.00%
Laboratory report	7.14%	11.40%	83.50%	50.00%
Others	4.46%	0.88%	1.50%	0.00%
Cover letter, resumes	2.68%	8.77%	47.50%	0.00%
Business plan	1.79%	0.00%	0.00%	50.00%
Application for scholarship	0.89%	14.91%	8.00%	0.00%
Business report	0.89%	0.88%	1.00%	33.33%
Total	112	114	200	6

N=432

The results in terms of the writing tasks that students most needed help are set out in Table 3.4. From these results, academic essays seemed most difficult overall, however, SE students also reported difficulties with writing scientific reports and writing laboratory reports. Some Nursing students also reported difficulties with writing literature reviews. Some students from all three colleges reported difficulties with writing literature reviews.

Table 3.4: Perceived difficulty of writing tasks, by topic

	COMS1001	NURS1021	STEM1001	ENGR1401
Writing academic essays	80.39%	86.08%	56.83%	33.33%
Writing critiques	30.39%	22.78%	25.68%	33.33%
Writing literature reviews	24.51%	32.91%	29.51%	33.33%
Writing scientific reports	13.73%	16.46%	55.19%	33.33%
Writing proposals	9.80%	16.46%	28.96%	0.00%
Writing laboratory reports	7.84%	18.99%	47.54%	0.00%
Others:	3.92%	5.06%	5.46%	33.33%
Total	102	79	183	3

N=367

One question asked about the importance of particular writing skills in undergraduate student writing. The results for this question are set out in Table 3.5. From the results in this table, it can be seen that a majority of students reported greater difficulties paraphrasing and summarising information. Many students also reported difficulties citing information and explaining academic contexts. A sizable number of Science and Engineering students reported difficulties with composing scientific arguments. It can also be noted that a fair number of students stated that they had difficulties with the majority of writing skills listed in the table.

Table 3.5: Perceived difficulty of writing skills, by topic

	COMS1001	NURS1021	STEM1001	ENGR1401
Summarizing and paraphrasing	61.32%	64.94%	46.11%	33.33%
Citing information	55.66%	62.34%	42.22%	0.00%
Explaining academic concepts	48.11%	58.44%	45.56%	0.00%
Using quotations appropriately	33.02%	37.66%	23.33%	66.67%
Composing scientific arguments	21.70%	35.06%	40.56%	33.33%
Defining scientific terms	16.98%	36.36%	35.00%	0.00%
Others:	2.83%	3.90%	2.78%	0.00%
Total	106	77	180	3

N=366

A related question asked students about specific writing styles for which they would need assistance. The results for this question, which again focused on perceived difficulty, are set out in Table 3.6. Here it is noteworthy that a large number of Nursing students reported difficulty adopting a formal style of writing, while a large number of students from all three colleges stated difficulties with scientific/academic vocabulary.

Table 3.6: Perceived difficulty of writing styles and by topic

	COMS1001	NURS1021	STEM1001	ENGR1401
Adopting a formal style of writing	52.53%	70.13%	39.08%	0.00%
Constructing complex sentences	46.46%	58.44%	36.78%	0.00%
Scientific/Academic vocabulary	41.41%	51.95%	57.47%	33.33%
Using linking devices	42.42%	35.06%	39.66%	33.33%
Using objective language	38.38%	44.16%	33.33%	0.00%
Others:	5.05%	3.90%	5.17%	33.33%
Total	99	77	174	3

N=353

3.4 The use of spoken communication, by College

One important question asked about the frequency with which they asked teachers questions at Flinders.

Table 3.7: Students' spoken interaction with teachers in class, by topic

	COMS1001	NURS1021	STEM1001	ENGR1401
Always	3.57%	16.07%	5.00%	0.00%
Most of the time	22.32%	20.54%	14.50%	50.00%
About half the time	33.04%	31.25%	30.00%	16.67%
Rarely	31.25%	32.14%	44.00%	33.33%
Never	9.82%	0.00%	5.50%	0.00%
Total	112	112	200	6

N=430

The results for this question are set out in Tables 3.7 below, where it can be seen that nearly half of SE students reported to not interact much with their teachers in class, compared with students from HASS and NHS. Nursing students reportedly interact with their teachers slightly more compared with SE and HASS students. In terms of students' in class communication, Table 3.8 indicates the self-perception of students towards their own confidence when engaging in their tutorials and seminars. From the table it can be seen that large numbers of students are at least 'Not so confident' is speaking in their seminars and tutorials, particularly with large numbers of SE and HASS students expressing a lack of confidence when speaking in this context.

Table 3.8: Students' confidence in speaking in seminars, by topic

	COMS1001	NURS1021	STEM1001	ENGR1401
Very confident	4.76%	9.46%	2.12%	0.00%
Confident	13.33%	20.27%	10.05%	40.00%
Somewhat confident	27.62%	31.08%	32.28%	0.00%
Not so confident	21.90%	21.62%	20.63%	20.00%
Not confident	28.57%	17.57%	28.57%	40.00%
Unable	2.86%	0.00%	5.29%	0.00%
Total	105	74	189	5
				N=373

Students were also asked about their learning in their in-person classrooms, and these results are presented in Table 3.9 below. Students from all three colleges reported high levels of social anxiety issues, but HASS students reported higher levels of social anxiety compared with SE and NHS students. A fair number of students from all three Colleges also stated they were too shy to ask questions in class, and had difficulties expressing their ideas in class.

Table 3.9: Students' difficulties with in-person learning, by topic

	COMS1001	NURS1021	STEM1001	ENGR1401
Social anxiety	60.71%	41.75%	45.23%	33.33%
Too shy to ask questions in class	50.89%	45.63%	47.24%	0.00%
Expressing ideas in class	43.75%	40.78%	36.18%	16.67%
Not sure how to engage in class	27.68%	23.30%	21.11%	0.00%
Working with other students	27.68%	18.45%	24.12%	0.00%
No difficulty	14.29%	24.27%	20.60%	16.67%
Unsure what to do	13.39%	15.53%	12.56%	0.00%
Others (Please specify):	13.39%	6.80%	13.07%	33.33%
The mode of delivery itself	9.82%	13.59%	14.57%	16.67%
Total	112	103	199	6
				N=420

Students were asked about their attitudes to online resources, with one question asking students whether they wanted more online learning in their courses, and these results are presented in Table 3.10. Importantly here, are results that indicated there were largely negative opinions towards online learning, with perhaps the exception of NHS students who were slightly more

positive about online learning, while HASS and SE students were particularly negative in this regard.

Table 3.10: Students' attitudes towards more online learning, by topic

	COMS1001	NURS1021	STEM1001	ENGR1401
Very much	3.57%	8.65%	8.54%	0.00%
A lot	7.14%	17.31%	14.07%	16.67%
Quite a lot	16.96%	18.27%	17.09%	0.00%
A little	47.32%	41.35%	41.71%	50.00%
None at all	25.00%	14.42%	18.59%	33.33%
Total	112	104	199	6

N=421

3.5 Students' perceptions of their communication difficulties, by College

Students were asked to report on the difficulty associated with various communication/ academic literacy tasks at Flinders. The academic literacy tasks are presented in Tables 3.11-3.13, in terms of listening to lectures, reading textbooks, and writing essays. Table 3.11 below presents the difficulties in listening to lectures by College, where it can be seen that a number of students from HASS, SE, NHS indicated at least 'some difficulty' with this aspect.

Table 3.11: Students' difficulty in listening to lectures, by topic

Topic/Level of difficulty	COMS1001	NURS1021	STEM1001	ENGR1401
I have no difficulty	23.81%	37.84%	22.75%	60.00%
I have very little difficulty	47.62%	29.73%	39.68%	20.00%
I have some difficulty	28.57%	25.68%	33.33%	0.00%
I have a lot of difficulty	0.00%	4.05%	4.23%	20.00%
Unable	0.00%	2.70%	0.00%	0.00%
I prefer not to answer	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Total	105	74	189	5

N=373

Table 3.12 below presents the self-perceived difficulties in reading textbooks by College. More students from HASS and SE expressed 'some difficulty' with this aspect, with fewer NHS students expressing difficulty. This could perhaps be attributed to NHS students being expected to read more textbooks for their studies (see Figure 3.1).

Table 3.12: Students' difficulty in reading textbooks at Flinders, by topic

Topic/Level of difficulty	COMS1001	NURS1021	STEM1001	ENGR1401
I have no difficulty	18.10%	35.14%	31.22%	80.00%
I have very little difficulty	42.86%	43.24%	37.57%	0.00%
I have some difficulty	30.48%	17.57%	24.34%	0.00%
I have a lot of difficulty	6.67%	1.35%	4.76%	0.00%
Unable	0.00%	2.70%	0.53%	20.00%
I prefer not to answer	1.90%	0.00%	1.59%	0.00%

Total	105	74	189	5

Table 3.13 below presents the self-perceived difficulties in writing essays and reports by students in the respective topics. In the case of academic writing, there appears to be far greater difficulties reported with this skill. Many students from HASS, NHS and SE expressed at least 'some difficulty' with writing essays, with the greatest difficulties expressed by NHS students

Table 3.13: Students' difficulty in writing essays at Flinders, by topic

Topic/Level of difficulty	COMS1001	NURS1021	STEM1001	ENGR1401
I have no difficulty	4.76%	9.46%	8.47%	20.00%
I have very little difficulty	34.29%	18.92%	39.68%	60.00%
I have some difficulty	55.24%	58.11%	44.97%	0.00%
I have a lot of difficulty	5.71%	10.81%	5.82%	0.00%
Unable	0.00%	2.70%	0.00%	20.00%
I prefer not to answer	0.00%	0.00%	1.06%	0.00%
Total	105	74	189	5

N=373

Finally, Figure 3.1 indicates the self-perceived difficulties of students from non-English speaking backgrounds, or those students in the survey that indicated they speak a language other than English at home.

Figure 3.1: NESB students' difficulties in academic listening, reading and writing
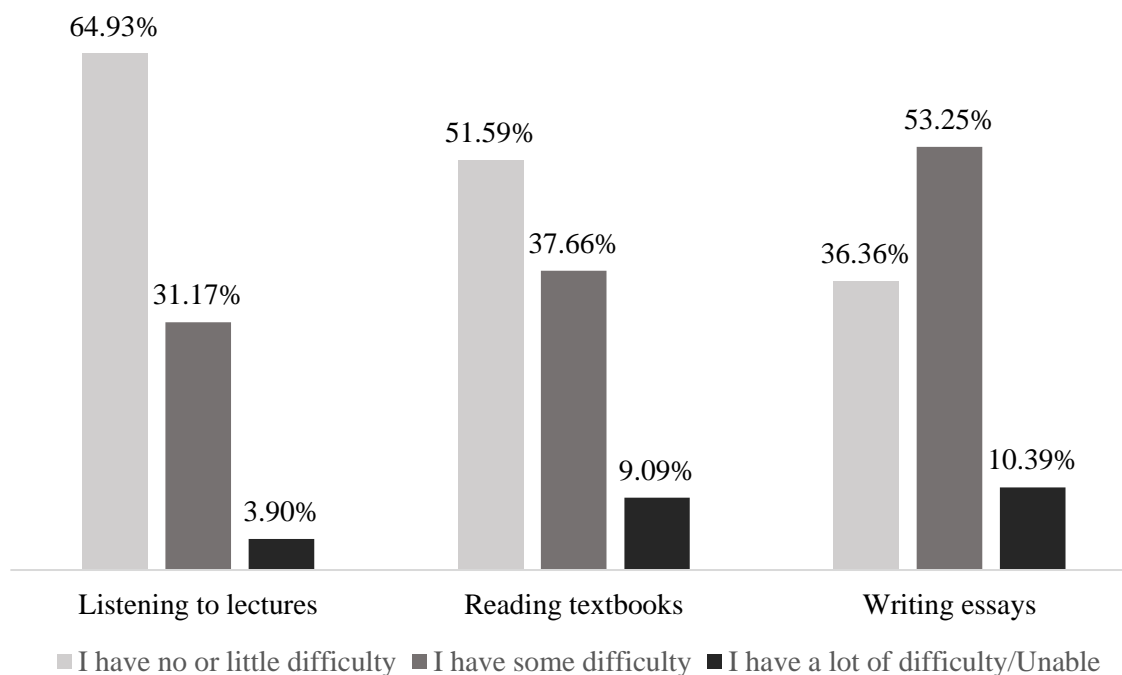
N=77

Students who stated that they spoke another language as their main language at home expressed difficulties reading textbooks, as well as writing essays, to an extent that many of these students evidently require additional help with their academic literacy skills. It can be seen that 47% of NESB students expressed at least 'some difficulty' reading textbooks, while a majority of 64% of these students stated they had at least 'some difficulty' writing essays.

APPENDIX 1: Students' qualitative comments regarding their communication difficulties at the university

COMS1001 (Academic and Professional Communication)
Have you experienced any communication difficulties in some of your classes? If so, please describe those here.
I wish I were able to better connect with my peers of different nationalities who's first languages aren't English, I regret sometimes that I can't speak to them with ease as I'd like to get to know them despite the language barrier in place.

language issues

No experiences of this.

Not really

some times I'm unsure if I should answer a question out of fear of being judged.

Not being able to communicate with peers and sometimes the lecturer

I have not experienced any communication difficulties in my classes.

I have not except i do notice that international students struggle to understand some concepts.

Sometimes there would be a guest that has a strong accent that I find difficult to understand

I am a native English speaker, although I tend to struggle with communication as I have social anxiety + disabilities.

Communicating with both teachers as well as peers in both academic and casual contexts.

speaking in general.

NURS1021 (Communication for Nursing)
Have you experienced any communication difficulties in some of your classes? If so, please describe those here.
Yes, while communicating in English
I have not experienced any difficulties while communicating with others, but I don't talk much and prefer being reserved. But I talk where it is needed effectively.
Presenting
nope, all good, just anxiety.
Have not experienced difficulities.
occasionally i find it heard to understand different accents
Understanding some accents . Having to get the person to repeat what they are saying
Public speaking
some difficulties understanding accents. most of the time I can figure out what people are trying to say.
sometimes i cant understand what people are saying due to their accent
Accents can be difficult to understand if you haven't been exposed to them before.
I find it hard understanding people who donâ€™t speak English is group discussions.
I don't know any other language, so I communicate with English. Some international teachers and students don't understand what I am understanding, and therefore both parties cannot contribute to the conversation.

STEM1001 (Nature of STEM)
Have you experienced any communication difficulties in some of your classes? If so, please describe those here.
It could just be because I'm introverted or something, but I struggle to find the drive to get to know complete strangers.
N/A
yep, I am an international student. I am not fluent in English. For example, in India the ruler (for measuring) we called as scale. Many of things are different names. we feel insecure about our English

some topic coordinators taking lengthy amounts of time to reply to emails or action extension requests etc.

I don't expect hugely speedy replies especially outside of university hours, but I still expect to be answered in a timely manner.

I feel as though if I send an email or post on a discussion asking a question on a business day then it should be answered that day

I find it difficult to reach out to students within my classes

Foreign language students having difficulty with english

Probably most when I'm trying to communicate with peoples with more experience with languages other than english

Yes, I have difficulty understanding international students, sometimes.

Depending on the situation, sometimes with the people I am put around I cannot relate too and therefore cannot develop deeper relationships with other than peer ones

sometimes its hard to understand people with strong accents and individuals where english isnt their first language.

Unresponsive tutors and topic coordinators.

Yeah, My english is not that good so I have experienced lots of communication difficulties in classroom.

yes, sometimes there is difficulty understanding lecturers

Some assessment deadlines aren't clear enough and it feels like they are hidden from you as you have to search for them (on FLO)

Easily getting confused with tasks and how they should be done, however this is a mix of overthinking the task, not being confident in my skills to properly express my work, along with my dyslexia. (sorry if this isn't helpful)

Some accents are difficult to understand sometimes but I ask what they mean and get clarity.

No I haven't. Apart from when I try to explain things sometimes and make it difficult for them to understand.

accents are difficult for me

Hard to understand some lectures

Just that I struggle with communication as a whole.

not being able to understand

understanding teaching staff with thick accents

Group work. Other people sometimes lack social skills.

Sometimes with group work with other international students

Lectures

International students or students where english is their second language

some of our lecturers have thick accents and forget some words, or mispronounce them. in a science degree when talking about enzymes different pronunciations mean different enzymes which can be difficult. or when someone asks a question it can be difficult to understand what they are trying to say without some words that they do not know.

More I have trouble understanding concepts and then I get lost in the content

the tasks are often structured very academically making it significantly more difficult to understand what i actually have to do?

Sometimes I get anxiety talking to class members. Sometimes I struggle to understand accents

One communication difficulty that I have sometimes is understanding different ethnicities accents however once I have heard it a few times, I get better at understanding what they are saying.

I find accents can be challenging. Sometimes differing word order makes it challenging to understand what is being said - particularly in lectures.

Comprehension

Yes during lab practicals it can be difficult to communicate effectively to those who don't speak lots of English.

ENGR1401 (Professional Skills)

Have you experienced any communication difficulties in some of your classes? If so, please describe those here.

Trying to understand some international students from a certain region. Its quite hard and I can explain a concept like more than 5 times to them and they don't understand. And some tutors with foreign accents, pronunciation of words, but that's fine.

APPENDIX 2: Students' reported major areas/field of study

COMS1001 (Academic and Professional Communication)

What is your discipline or degree?
Bachelor of International Relations and Political Science
Archeology
Creative Industries (Film and TV)
Bachelor of Arts
Bachelor of International Relations and Political Science
Bachelor of Arts
Bachelor of Creative Arts (Fashion)
Bachelor of Creative Industries (Interactive Design)
Archaeology
Creative Arts (Visual Effects and Entertainment Design)
Archaeology
Creative Arts: Visual Effects and Entertainment Design
Diploma of arts
BCAVEED
Bachelor Of Creative Arts (Fashion)
Bachelor of Arts
Digital media
Bachelor of visual effects and entertainment design
Bachelor of Creative Arts (VEED)
Creative arts entertainment design
Bachelor of Creative Arts (Fashion)
Bachelor of Visual Arts
Creative arts
Bach Vis Arts (Creative Arts)
Bachelor of Criminology
Bach of vis arts
BCA VEED
Criminology
Visual Effects and Entertainment Design
Bachelor of Creative Industries (Digital Media)
Bachelor of Creative Industries (Film and Television)
Bachelor of Arts
Bachelor of Creative Arts, Game production
Bachelor of Creative Industries (Film and television)
Bachelor of Creative Industries (Film and Television)

Bachelor of Archaeology

Bachelor of Arts (majoring psychology & creative writing)

Bachelor of Arts

Bachelor Of Science (Cognitive Science)

Tourism and Events

Bachelor of Creative Industries (Digital Media)

Bachelor Of Creative Arts

Archaeology

Bachelor of Arts

Bachelor of Arts - Archaeology and History

BCAVEED

Bachelor of Creative Arts (Fashion)

bachelor of arts

Bachelor of Arts

Creative Industries (Writing and Publishing)

Bachelor of Archaeology

Bachelor of Criminology

Archaeology

Bachelor of Archaeology

Tourism and Events

Bachelor of Science (forensic) and Archaeology

Criminology and Forensic Science

International Relations and Political Science

Archaeology

To give ideas of world tourism and how to manage a team in proper way.

Creative Industries: Film & Television

Bachelor of international relations and political science

Bachelor Of Creative Art Film and Televison

Creative Industries - Publishing and Creative Writing (First year)

Archaeology

Archaeology

Bachelor of Creative Industries - Film and Television

Bachelor of Creative Industries (Film and Television)

Bachelor of Arts

Palaeontology and Archaeology

Criminology

Bachelor of Creative Industries (writing and publishing)

Bachelor of International Relations and Political Science

Criminology

Bachelor of Medical Science

Bachelor of Arts

Bachelor of Archaeology

Laws and Legal Practice, International relations and Political Science

Bachelor of science

VEED

Bachelor of Creative Industries (Writing and Publishing)

Creative Writing and Publishing

Bachelor Creative Industries Writing and Publishing

Criminology & forensic science
Creative Industries in Film and Television
Digital design
Honours Criminology
criminology
Archaeology
Bachelor of arts: Psychology
Fashion design
Creative Arts (Visual Effects, Entertainment and Design) in partnership with CDW.
Bachelor of Creative Arts: Visual Effects and Entertainment Design
bachelor of creative industries (film and television)
VEED
Creative Arts: Visual Effects & Entertainment Design
Bachelor of Creative Arts: Visual Effects and Entertainment Design
students limits
Visual Effects and Entertainment Design
Bachelor of creative arts visual effects and entertainment design
Medical Science
Bachelor of Creative Industries (Film/Television)
Visual effect and Entertainment Design
Bachelor of Creative Industries: Film & Television
Bachelor of Creative Arts (Visual Effects and Entertainment Design)
Film and Television
Bachelor of Creative Industries (Film and Television)
Creative Industries (Film and Television)
BSHPA
Bachelor of Creative Media
Bachelor of International Relations and Political Science

NURS1021 (Communication for Nursing)
What is your discipline or degree?
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
BACHELOR OF NURSING
Nursing
bachelor of nursing
Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Registered Nurse
bachelor
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of nursing
Bachelor of Nursing

Bachelor of Nursing
registered nursing
Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
undergraduate bachelor of nursing.
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Nursing
Nursing
Bachelor of nursing
Nursing
nursing
Bachelor Degree of Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor
Nursing
Nursing
Batchelor of Nursing
Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing (Pre registration)
bachelor of nursing
Nursing
nursing
Bachelor's in Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of nursing
registered nursing
Bachelor's Nursing
Bachelor or Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Nursing
Bachelor in Nursing
nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Nursing
Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Nursing
Bachelors of Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing

Nursing
Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
NURSING
Bachelor of Nursing
Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
nursing
nursing
nursing
Nursing
bachelor of nursing
nursing
Nursing
Nursing
Bach of Nursing
Bachelor of preregistration nursing
BSC nursing
Nursing
Nursing Student
Nursing student
Nursing
Nursing
Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of nursing
Bachelors Of Nursing
bachelor of nursing
Nursing
nursing
Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of nursing
Bachelor of Nursing (Pre-registration)
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing (Preregistration)
Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Regiestered Nurse
bachelor of nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of Nursing (prereg)
Bachelor of Nursing
Bachelor of nursing
bachelor of nursing (preregistration)

Registered Nurse
Bachelor of Nursing
pre- registration nursing
Bachelor of Nursing
Nursing
nursing
Nursing

STEM1001 (Nature of STEM)
What is your discipline or degree?
science degree
Bachelor of Science
Marine bio
Chemical Sciences
Bachelor of Science
Marine biology
biotechnology
science (animal behaviour) + behavioural science (psychology)
Animal Behaviour
Bachelor of Science (Marine Biology)
Physics
Bachelor of Science (Forensic and Analytical Science)/Bachelor of Criminology
Geospatial information systems (GIS)
Bachelor of Biodiversity and Conservations
(Honours) Forensics and analytics
 Bachelor of Science- Animal Behaviour
animal behaviour
Life Sciences
Bachelor of Palaeontology
science (animal behaviour)
Chemical Science
Bachelor of Science (Environmental Science)
Palaeontology (Honours)
Science
Bachelor of Science (Animal Behaviour)
Bachelor of Science(Marine Biology)
Physics
Bachelor in Environmental Science
Bachelor of Science (paleontology)
bachelor of science (animal behaviour)
Bachelor of Geospatial Information Systems
bachelor of science (animal behaviour)
Animal Behaviour
Forensic and Analytical Science + Criminology
Forensic Science and Archaeology
bachelor of criminology with bachelor of science (forensic and analytical science)
Bachelor in Maths
Sciences

Bachelor of Science with a major in Chemistry

Environmental Science

Forensic Science

Bachelor of Science (Biotechnology)

Bachelor of Science (Biotechnology)

Forensic and analytical science

STEM (mathematical sciences)

environmental science

Forensic Science

Psychological Science and Animal Behaviour

Bachelor of Science

Bachelor of Science in Biodiversity and Conservation

Bachelor of Science (Forensic and Analytical Science)

Bachelor of science (Animal Behaviour)

paleontology

Bachelor of Science (Palaeontology)

animal behaviour

Bachelor of science in animal behaviour

Bachelor of science

Paleontology

Bachelor of Science

forensics

Bacholer of science (Forensic and Analytical science)

Chemistry

Bachelor of Science (Environmental)

Bachelor of Science (Biodiversity & Conservation)

bachelor of science (animal behaviour)

biodiversity and conservation

Bachelor of Science (Conservation and Biodiversity)

Bachelor of Science

bachelor of science (marine biology)

Bachelor of Geospatial Informtion Systems

Combined degree of Bachelor of Science (Forensic and Analytical) and Bachelor of Archaeology

Bachelor of Science (Biodiversity & Conservation)

Science (Animal Behaviour)

Bachelor of Science

Bachelor of Science (forensic and analytical science)

Bachelor of Science (Biodiversity and Conservation)

Bachelor of Science (Biodiversity and Conservation)

Bachelor of Science (Honours) (Marine Biology)

bachelor of science - biodiversity and conservation

Bachelors of science: Animal Behaviour

BSc. Palaeontology

Bachelor of Science (Forensic and Analytical Science)

mathematical science

Bachelor of science. Animal Behaviour

Bachelor of Science (Chemical Sciences)

Bachelor of Science (Biodiversity and Conservation)
Bachelor of Marine Biology
biodiversity and conservation (Hon)
Forensic and analytical science pathway
Bachelor of Science- Animal Behaviour
Animal Behaviour
Marine biology
Bachelor of Science
Palaeontology
Palaeontology
Bachelor of science (honours) (marine Biology)
BSc (Chemical sciences)
Biodiversity and conservation
forensic and anaylitcal sciecne and criminology
Environmental Science
Palaeontology
Bachelor of Science (Forensic and Analytical Science) / Bachelor of Criminology
Science (Marine Biology) (Honours)
Animal Behaviour
Bachelor of Forensic Science and Archeology
Science
Forensic and Analytic Science
Forensic science and criminology
Forensics and Analytical Science
Animal Behaviour
Bachelor of Science (Marine Biology)
BofSc Physics
Bachelor of Science (Environment)
Marine Biology
Bachelor of Science in Marine Biology
Bachelor of forensic and analytical science, Bachelor of criminology
Bachelor of Science: Environmental Science
Bachelor of Science (Chemistry)
Forensic and Analytical Science
palaeontology
Bach of Sci (Forensics and Analytical Science) (Hons)
Palaeontology
Bachelor of science, Animal behaviour
Science
Biodiversity and Conservation
bachelor science (forensic and analytical)
Bachelor of Criminology and Bachelor of Science (Chemical Sciences)
Forensic and analytical science
forensic and analytical science.
Plant Science and Palaeontology
Bachelor of Science (Biotechnology)
Forensic and Analytical Science Pathway Course
Bachelor of Science

Bio-Chemistry

Marine Biology

Combined Bach of forensics and crim

Bachelor of science

Biodiversity and Conservation

Environmental Science

Forensic Analytical Science

Bachelor of Science

Bachelor of Science (Palaeontology)

Science

Bachelor of Science (Palaeontology)

Bachelor of science (Environmental Science)

Forensic & Analytical Science + Criminology

Bachelors of Science (Physics)

Bachelor of Science

Bachelor of Chemical Science

Geospatial Information Systems

Environmental Science

Environmental Science

forensic and analytical science

marine bio

Bachelor's of science (Biotechnology)

biotechnology

Bachelors of Science (Environment science)

bachelor of science (molecular biology and biochemistry

Bachelor of Science in Animal Behaviour

forensic analytical science combined with criminology

Double degree in Animal Behaviour and Biodiversity and Conservation

Bachelor of Science

Bachelor's in Marine Biology

Environmental Science

bachelors in science biotecchnology

Bachelor of Science (Biodiversity and Conservation)

Bachelor Of Science Biodiversity and Conservation

Environmental Science

Bachelor of Science (Animal Behavior)

Biotechnology

Bachelor of Science, Marine Biology

Bachelor of Mathematical Sciences

Bachelor of Science (Environmental Science) (Honours)

Bachelor or science (Animal Behvaiour)

Geospatial Information Systems / Information Technology

Bachelor of Science (Forensic and Analytical)

Environmental Science

Bachelor of Science (Honours) (Animal Behaviour)

Environmental Science

Bachelor of Science: Animal Behaviour (Honours)

Bachelor of Forensic and Analytical Science

Bachelor of Science (Animal Behaviour)
bachelor of mathematical science
Environmental science
Bachelor of Arts and Science - Majoring in Geography and Earth Science
environmental science
Bachelor of Science (Forensic and Analytical)
Biochemistry and Forensic Science
Forensics and Criminology
Bachelor of Science (Biodiversity and Conservation)
mathematical sciences
Environmental Engineering and Environmental Science
Bachelor of Science
Forensic Science and Criminology
Bachelor of Forensic and Analytical Science (Honours)
bachelor of science (animal behaviour)
Bsc animal behaviour
Marine Biology

ENGR1401 (Professional Skills)
What is your discipline or degree?
Bachelor of information technology
Engineering
Cybersecurity
IT
computer science
IT