

Co-creating the blueprint for quality Education for Sustainability

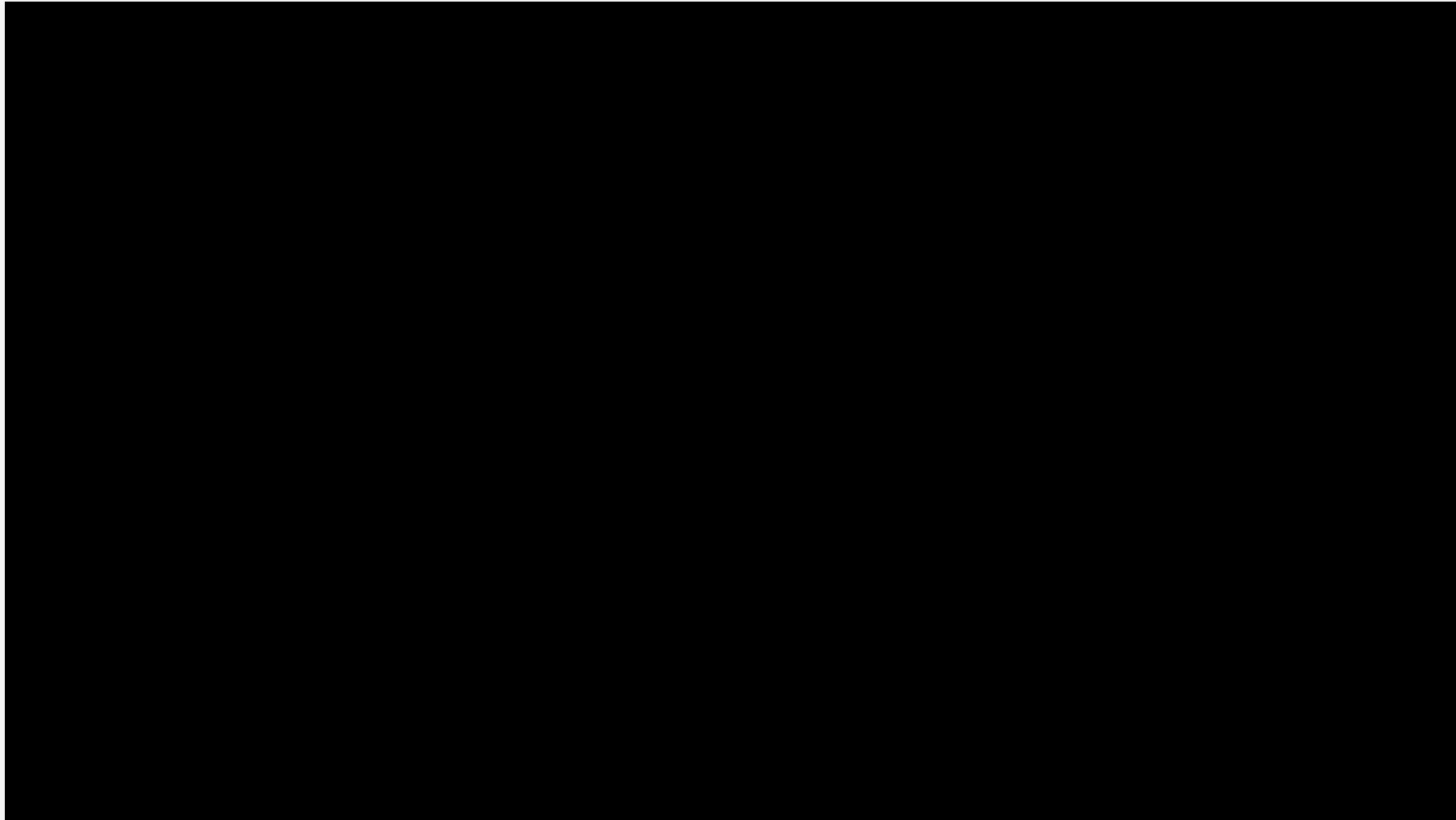
Festival of Learning 2023

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Project in a Nutshell



PART 1 – EfS at UoG and Project Foundations

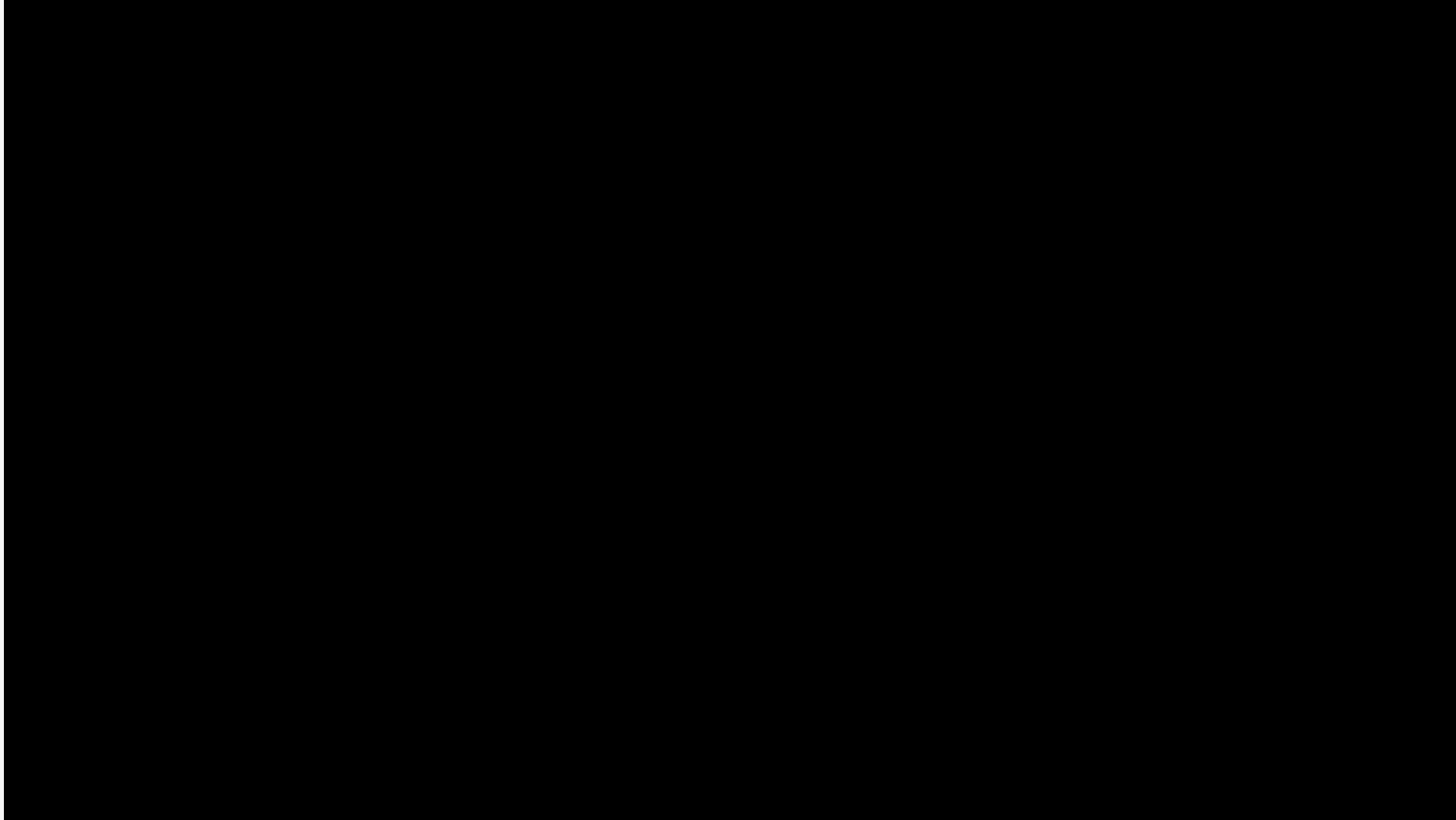
PART 2 – Project activities

PART 3 – Findings and outputs

Role of education



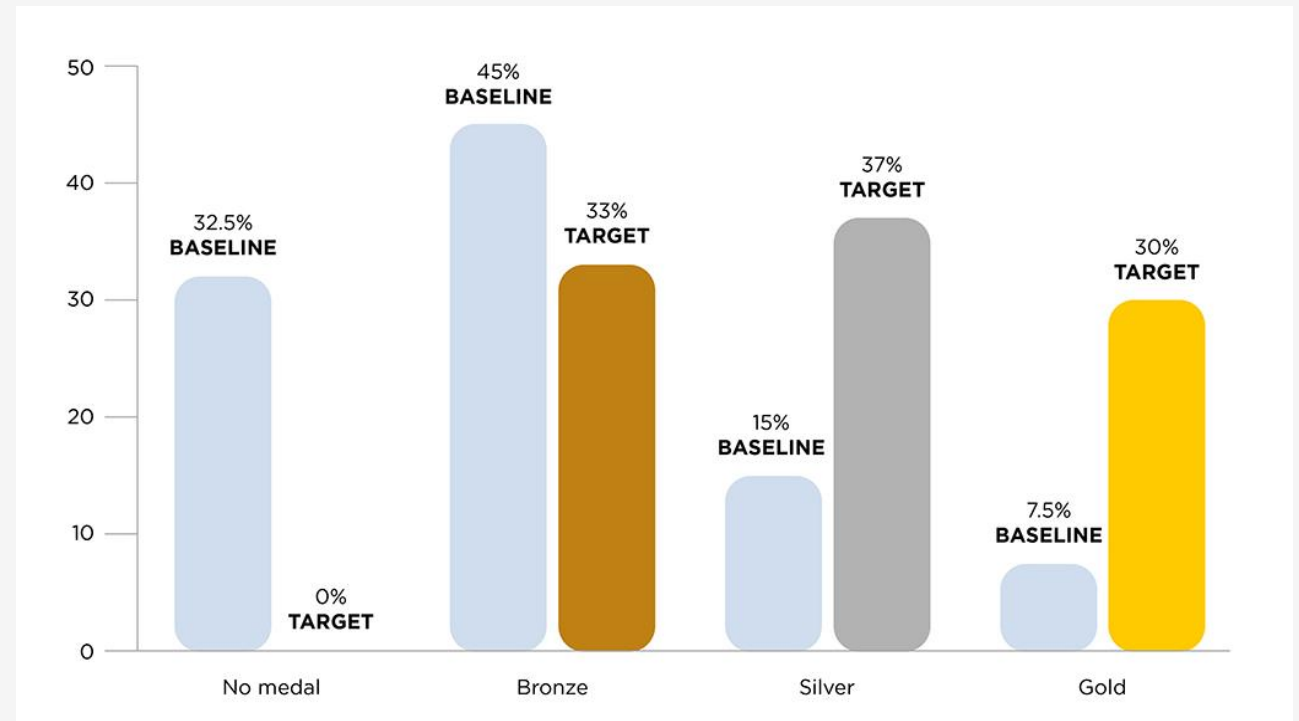
Education for Sustainability skills



Quality Principles

1. Joined-up sustainability learning – ‘people, profit, planet’
2. Integrated into compulsory modules
3. Learning experiences at all levels of study
4. Embedded as part of assessment design

Courses rated Bronze, Silver, Gold, or ‘no medal’ - must follow principle 1 to get on the medal table at Bronze



Student lead – Bea Hughes

But do the EfS experiences of students match the aims of course designers?

Why we put students at the centre of this project:

- To user-test the principles
- To get student course ratings
- To see the sector response on EfS through student eyes



Sector review

35 leading UK universities working to embed EfS – desk-based survey of website info against key questions plus right of reply

2 essential questions behind this review:

1. Mainstreaming – are their targets aimed at all courses and students?
2. Quality – are they developing and monitoring an authentic EfS offer?

Findings

- 16 of 35 have targets for EfS in all courses – but only 3 are targeting compulsory learning; only 4 aim for EfS at multiple levels of study
- 19 of 35 have audited the portfolio – 2 looked for EfS; 4 were unclear; 12 looked for single UN global goals; 2 looked for skills on UN goals

Project significance

- UK aspirations to be leaders globally on EfS implementation
- Universities want to get up to speed fast on 'what good looks like'
- Students need to be able to make sense of what they are offered
- Course teams want approaches that allow tailoring to specialisms
- Campaigning and capacity building efforts need to model good practice



QAA

AdvanceHE



Department
for Education



STUDENTS
ORGANISING FOR
SUSTAINABILITY
UNITED KINGDOM



UNIVERSITY OF
GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Road testing activities

Student team advised and shaped the creation and delivery of:

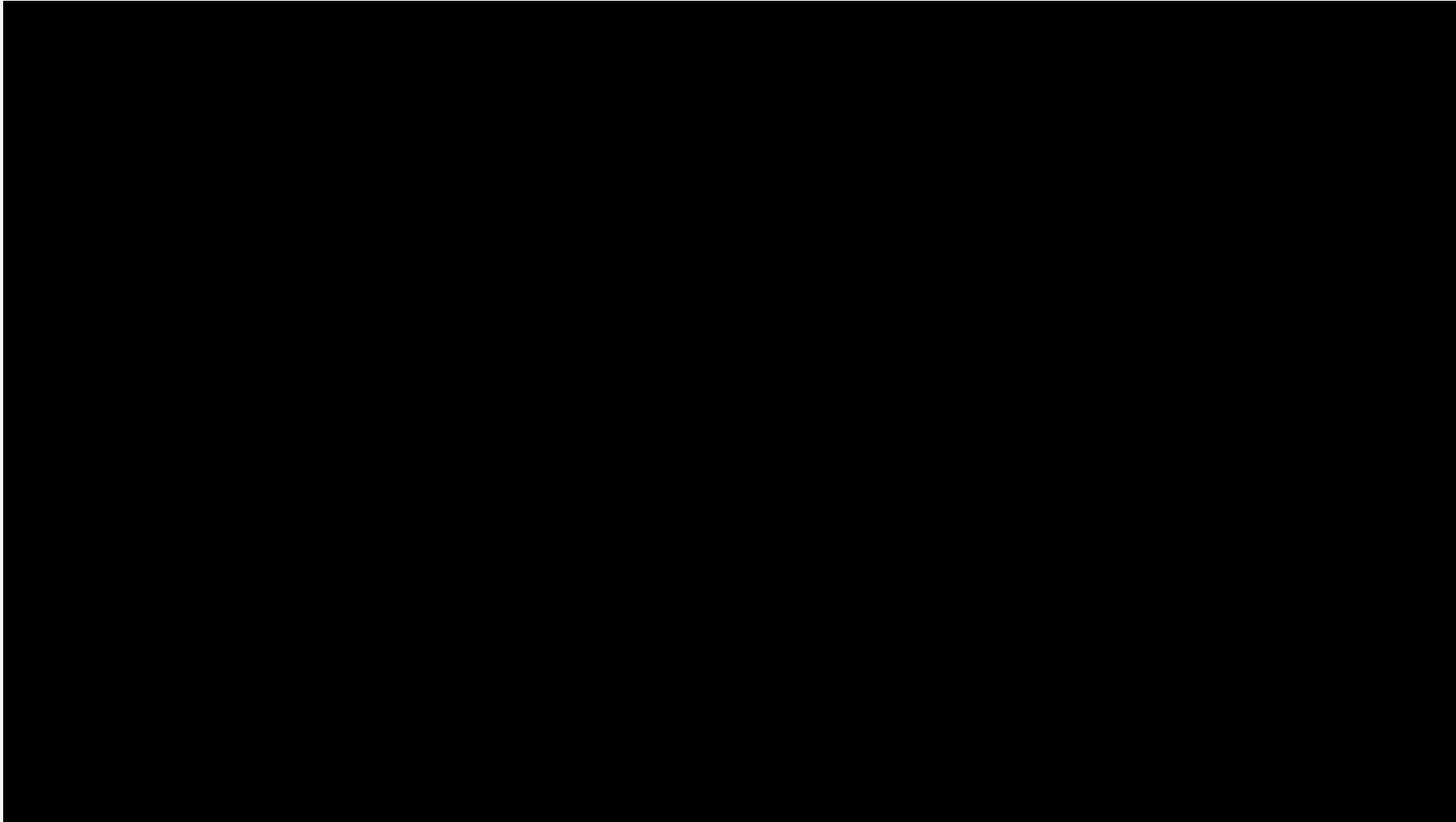
- 6 short films on EfS essentials and the principles for sustainability learning
- Speed training dashboard with self-practice examples and extra insights
- Engagement workshops with students at each of the 3 partner settings

QAA Strategic Student Advisory Committee also advised the project and 6 members tested the dashboard, rated their courses and gave feedback

Results – 132 student assessors rated 87 different courses at 9 universities

UoG high volume response via dashboard - 103 students rated 65 courses

How to rate a course



Business module – level 4 [this module is compulsory]

Students are introduced to the workings of the global music industries. Students are introduced to the global goals framework and the concept of the triple bottom line, and encouraged to think about how they can apply the goals as within the music business.



Sport module – level 5 [this module is compulsory]

Students look at how sport is used for international development. They look at a range of sporting organisations and their response to development needs in the context of issues like influencing social justice, equality or wellbeing.



Architecture course

Sustainability is very strong and clear in both the module content and assessment at level 4, 5 and 6 of this course. Students can see the relationships between people, the environment and economy. Students work on live briefs with industry partners – critically addressing sustainability through a strong employability focus.



Student approval – the principles

51% positive approval of the quality principles

23% positive but gave ideas to improve communication of them

25% neutral – no comments either way

Only 1% made any critical comments

“I think this was an effective rating system to assist sustainability learning by analysing all the major corners of a student's education, better highlighting the key issues and needs for change” (UoG student)



Student expectations – the process

45% of the UOG high volume cohort said the experience as an assessor raised their insight and expectations around EfS in their course

“This has made me more aware of how little sustainability is built into the learning I experienced at UG and PG level. For all the talk of sustainability in the classroom, it has rarely if at all gone beyond surface-level input.

This project has given me a sense of excitement for the steps that can be taken by course teams to rectify this and make sustainability a key feature of all courses.” (QAA student)



UoG staff vs student ratings

From an even spread of replies across levels of study and course clusters:

52% agreement between staff and student ratings of the same course

23% of students gave more optimistic ratings and 21% less optimistic!

21 courses had multiple raters:

- 8 of these were rated consistently
- 7 spanned the 2 nearby levels
- 6 showed more divergent views



Q&A