Taking the next steps to support low engaged students

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Session outcomes

- What is Student Engagement?

- What is the impact of engagement on student success?

- Talking about student (dis)engagement (15 mins)

- What works? (20 mins)

- Before we go any further, can we have 1-minute reflective thinking

- Please think of a student who you have dealt with who had been disengaging & you helped get back on track

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What do we mean by 'student engagement'?

- **Engaging with 'studies'**

- Engaging with quality assurance
  - QAA

- Engaging with student life
  - E.g. volunteering

Engagement with studies (student/course interaction)

- "A key assumption is that learning outcomes are influenced by how an individual participates in *educationally purposeful activities*. While students are responsible for constructing their own knowledge, learning is also seen to depend on institutions and **staff generating conditions that stimulate student involvement"**

  (Kuh, 2001, pg.12)

- "engaging in the activities of a course with thoroughness and seriousness"

  – (Hockings et al., 2007, pg. 721)

- *Learning **is seen as a 'joint proposition', however, which also depends on institutions** and staff providing students with the conditions, opportunities and expectations to **become involved"***

  – *(Coates, 2006, pg. 26)*

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Engagement with studies (multi-dimensional)

- Strong criticism that SE research is often very focussed on behaviourist ways of looking at the student
  - By focussing only on interactions with the course, it can appear to assume that wider student life is unproblematic

- Zepke & Leach (2012) argue that SE depends on multiple dimensions
  - Motivation & agency
  - Transactional engagement: students to tutors
  - Transactional engagement: peers
  - Institutional support
  - Active citizenship
  - Non-institutional support

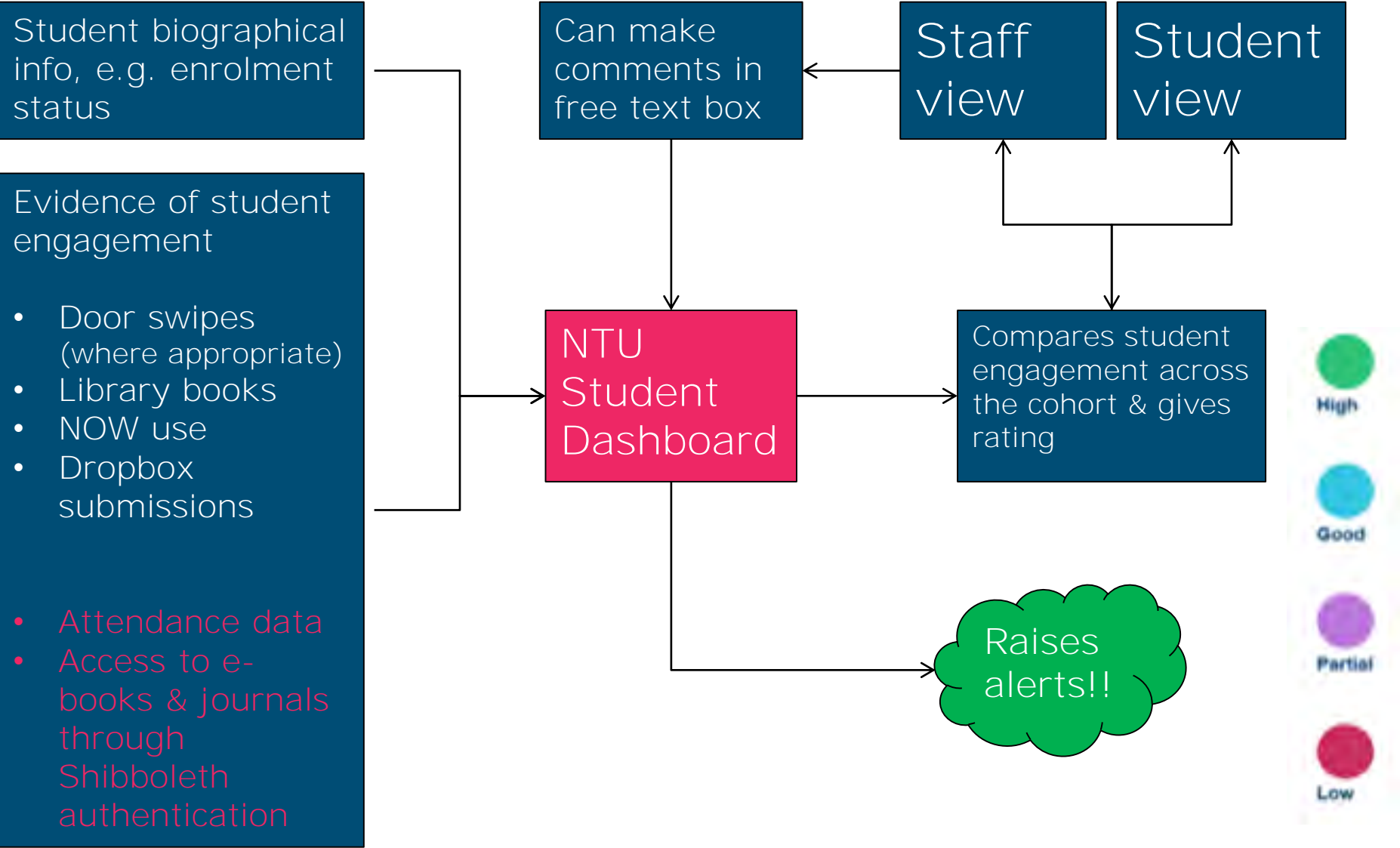# Engagement with studies (Student-constructed)

- **Conflict between staff and students' perceptions (Bryson, 2014)**
  - Staff – students working diligently
  - Students – sense of feeling engaged

- Dubet (1994) argues that identity is constructed through:
  - Nature of the personal project
  - Degree of integration into university life
  - Level of intellectual engagement with the subject

- Solomonides (2012)
  - Students own sense of dimensions of their academic and future professional identity

- Harris et al (2004) four dimensions
  - Cognitive
  - Affective
  - Relational
  - Conative (time on task)

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Student engagement = student success

- Kuh et al., (2008)
  - Background characteristics: gender, pre-university academic attainment, parental income = strongest predictors of success
  - Predictions improved when NSSE results, academic attainment were added

- Romer (1993)
  - Attendance had multiplying effect on academic success: good attendance improved academic outcomes

- Woodfield, Jessop & McMillan (2006)
  - Several characteristics associated with success: entry qualifications, conscientiousness, extroversion etc.
  - Attendance once again a success multiplying factor, particularly for male students
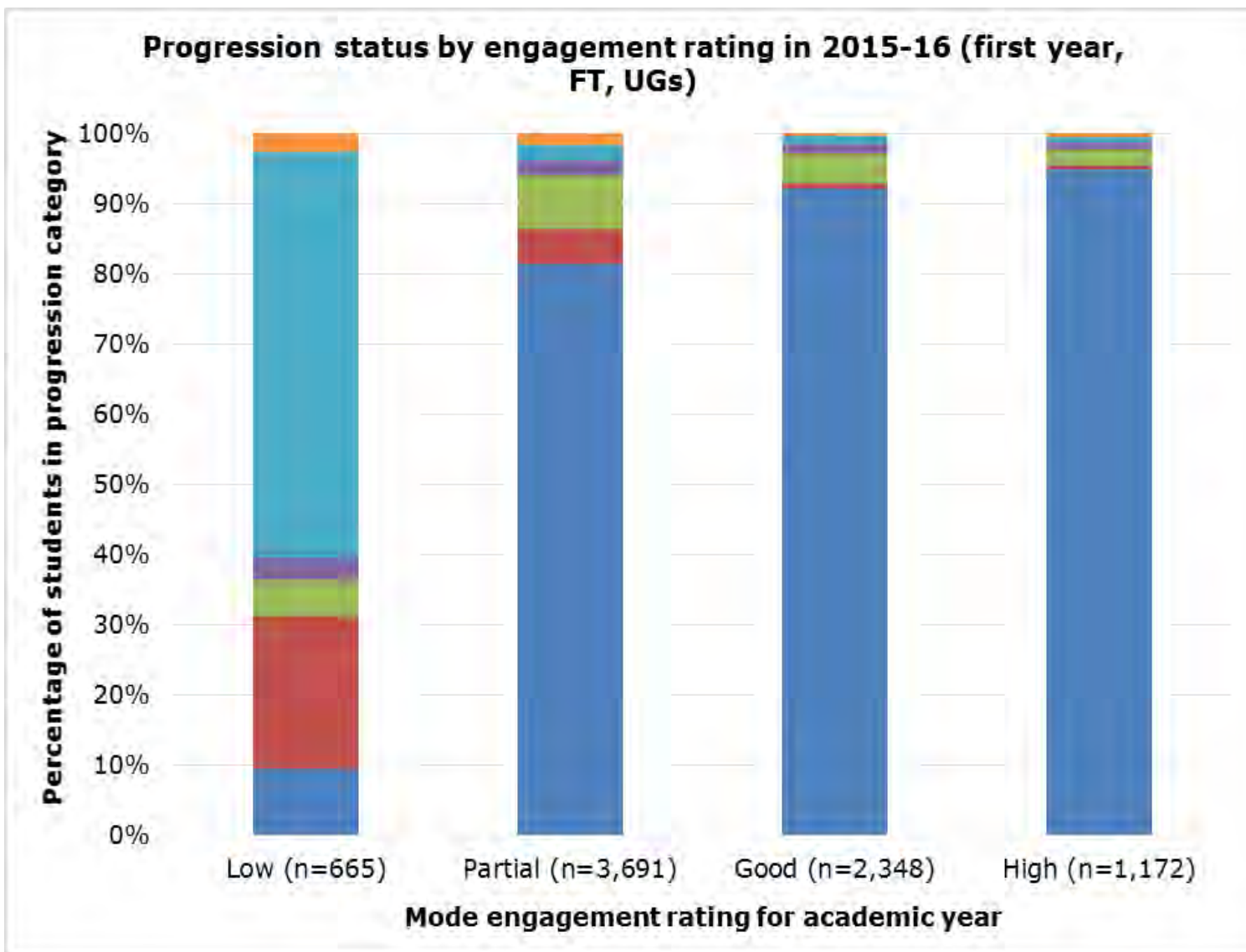
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Measuring engagement
NTU Student Dashboard

Student biographical info, e.g. enrolment status

Evidence of student engagement

- Door swipes (where appropriate)
- Library books
- NOW use
- Dropbox submissions

- Attendance data
- Access to e-books & journals through Shibboleth authentication

Can make comments in free text box

Staff view

Student view

NTU Student Dashboard

Compares student engagement across the cohort & gives rating

Raises alerts!!

High

Good

Partial

Low

Using the Dashboard

- Two change agents

Students	Staff

- Designed student use in from the outset

- Deliberately ignore background and only focus on engagement
  - Students can change their engagement, can't change background
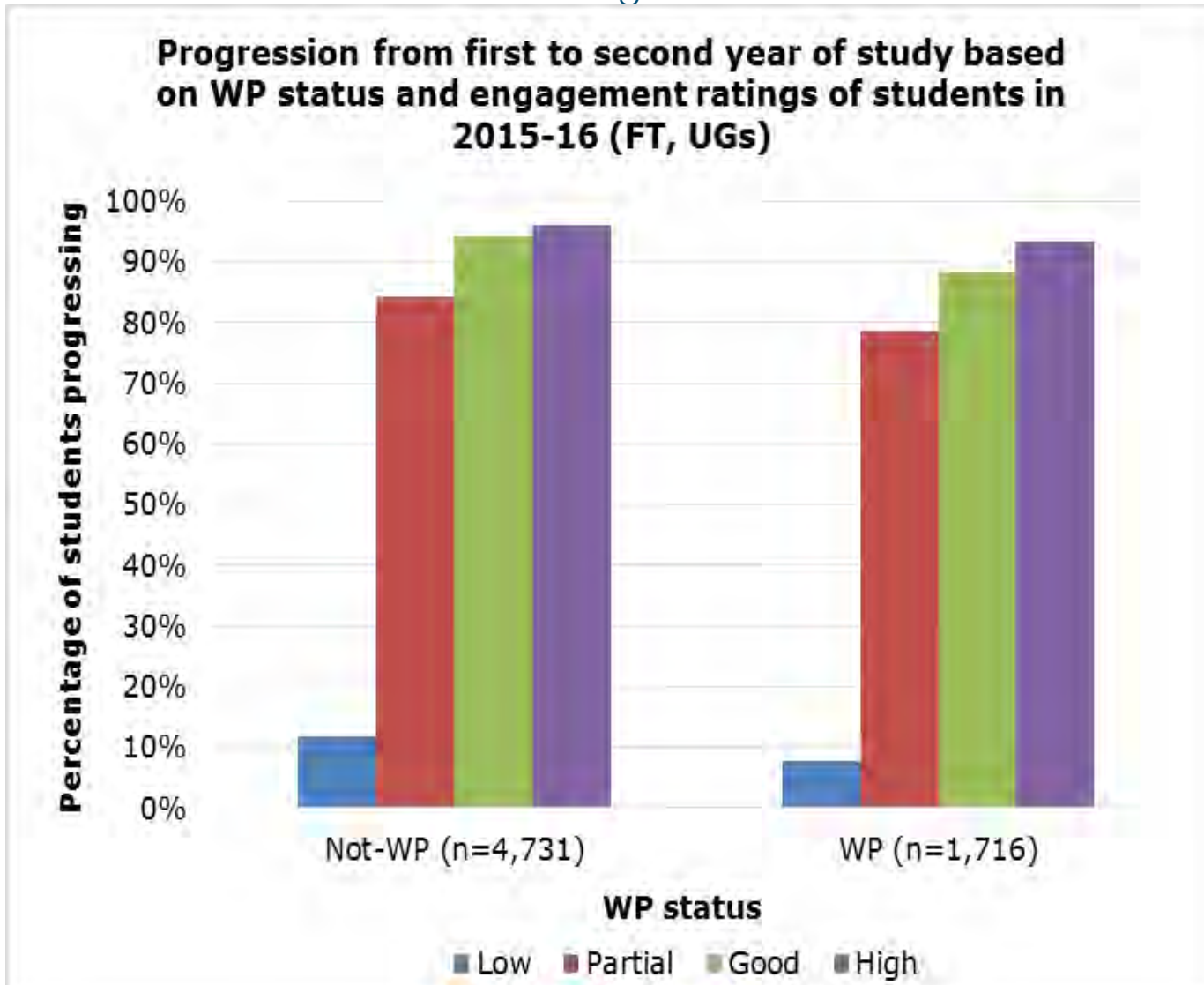
- Dashboard score based on engagement, not risk of failure

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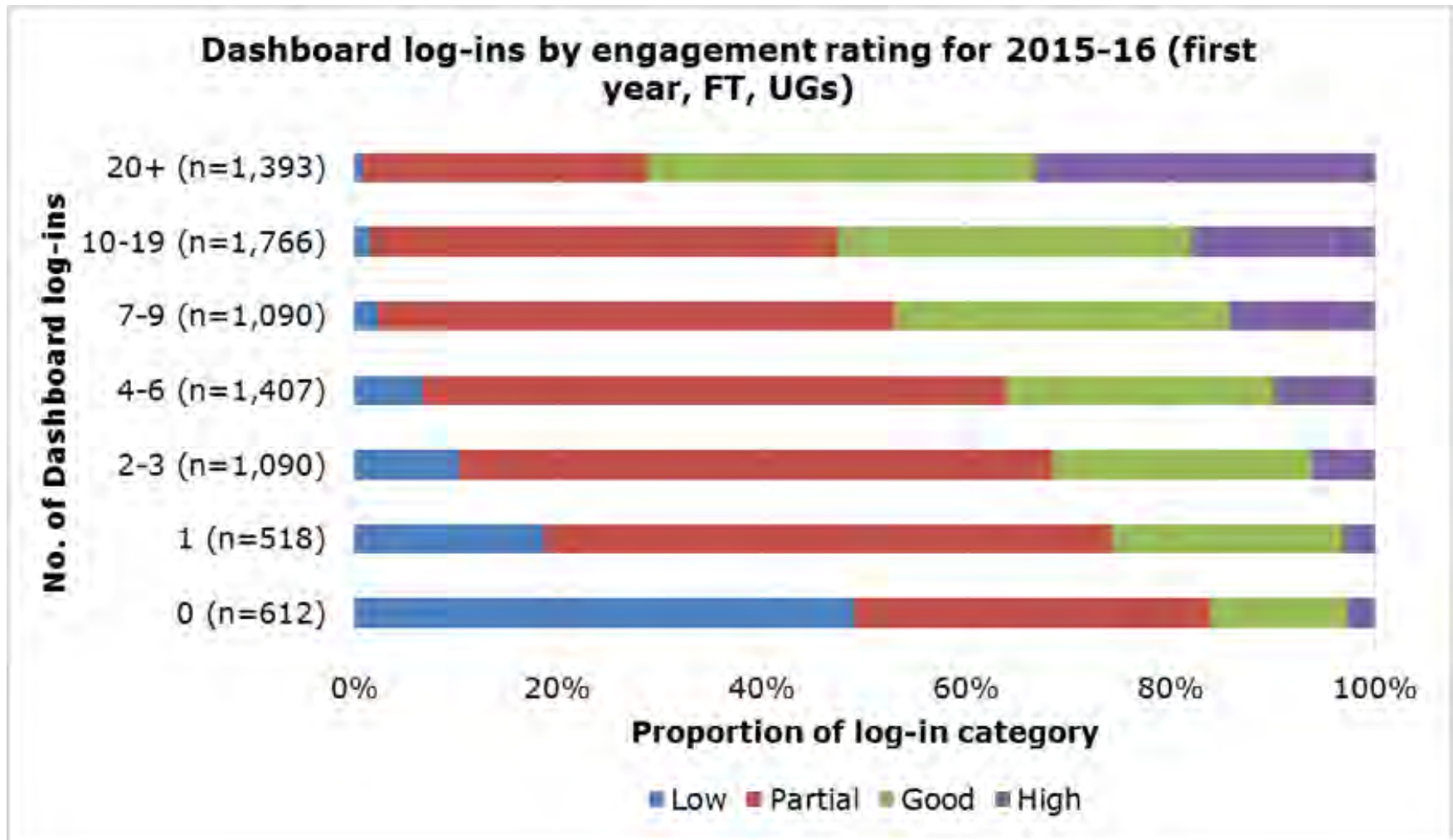# Relationship between engagement & progression (2015-16)

Progression status by engagement rating in 2015-16 (first year, FT, UGs)

Whole institutional data

However

- Socioeconomic disadvantage remains

Progression from first to second year of study based on WP status and engagement ratings of students in 2015-16 (FT, UGs)

Whole institutional data
1st year students

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Relationship between Dashboard log ins and engagement

Dashboard log-ins by engagement rating for 2015–16 (first year, FT, UGs)

Students as agents

Progression summary by number of Dashboard log-ins in 2015-16 (first year, FT, UGs)
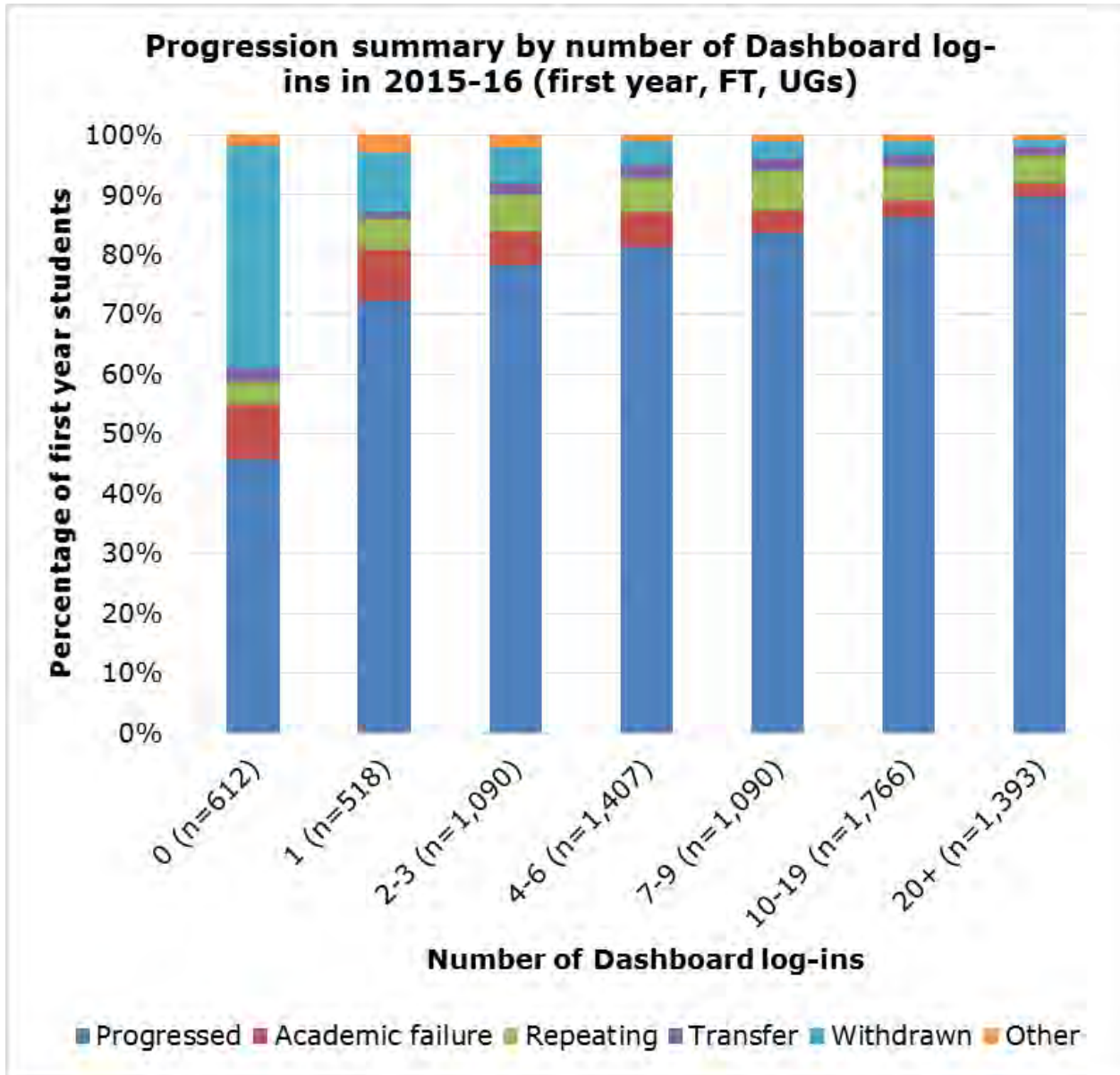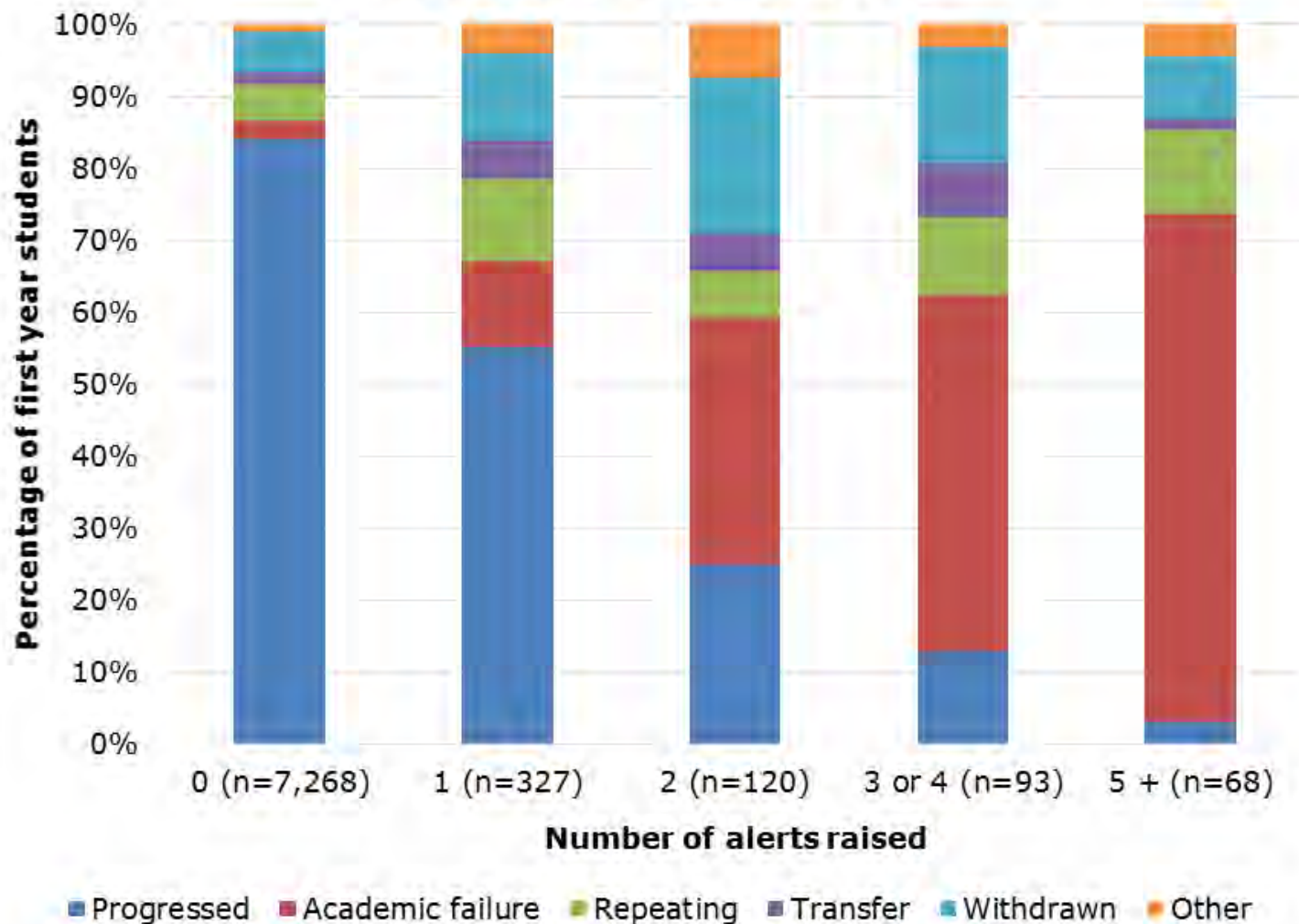
Whole institutional data
1st year students

Staff as agents

Progression summary by number of 'no engagement' alerts in 2015-16 (first year, FT, UGs)

Percentage of first year students

Number of alerts raised

0 (n=7,268)   1 (n=327)   2 (n=120)   3 or 4 (n=93)   5 + (n=68)

Progressed   Academic failure   Repeating   Transfer   Withdrawn   Other

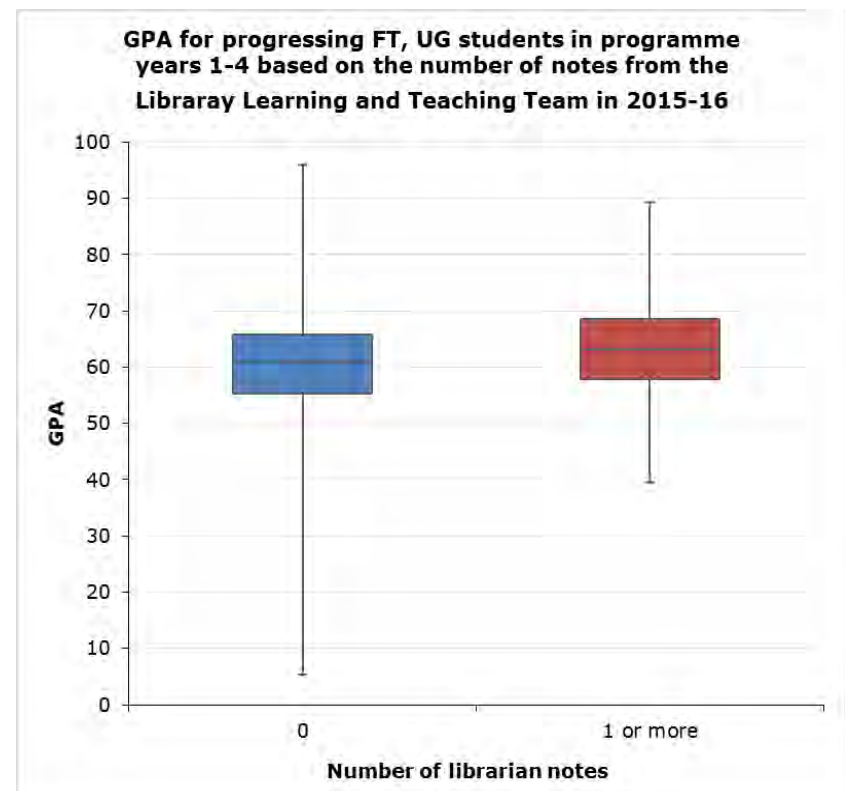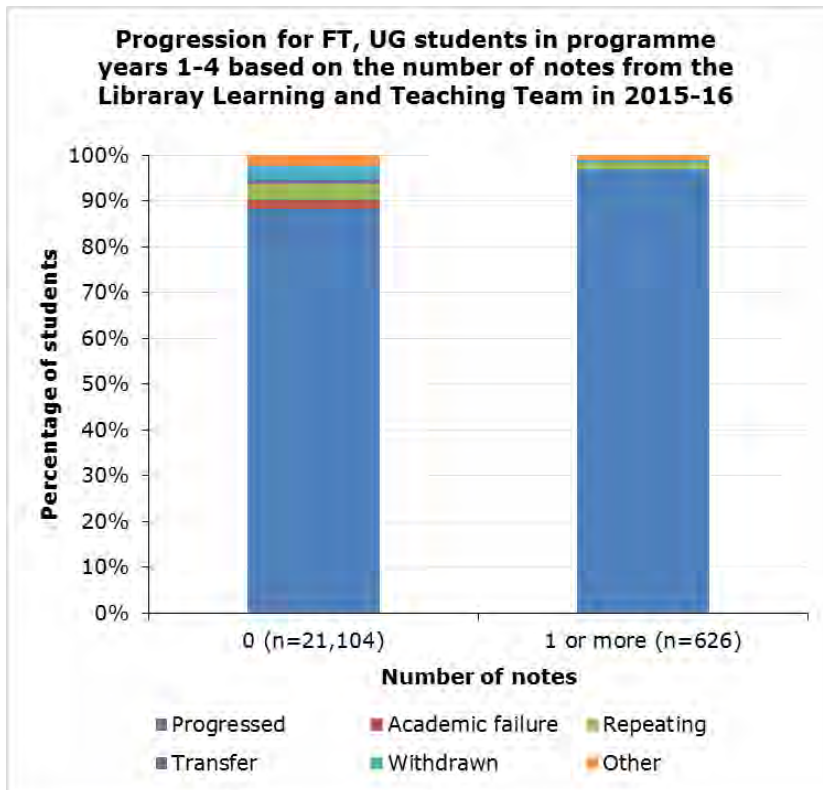Whole institutional data
1st year students

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Library Learning and Teaching Team

- The team offers guidance covering all aspects of academic skills.

- Students can book 30 minute one-to-one sessions with team members between 9 am and 5 pm using an online booking system

- In 2015-16, the eight team members inputted 815 notes into the NTU Student Dashboard during/shortly after one-to-one sessions with students
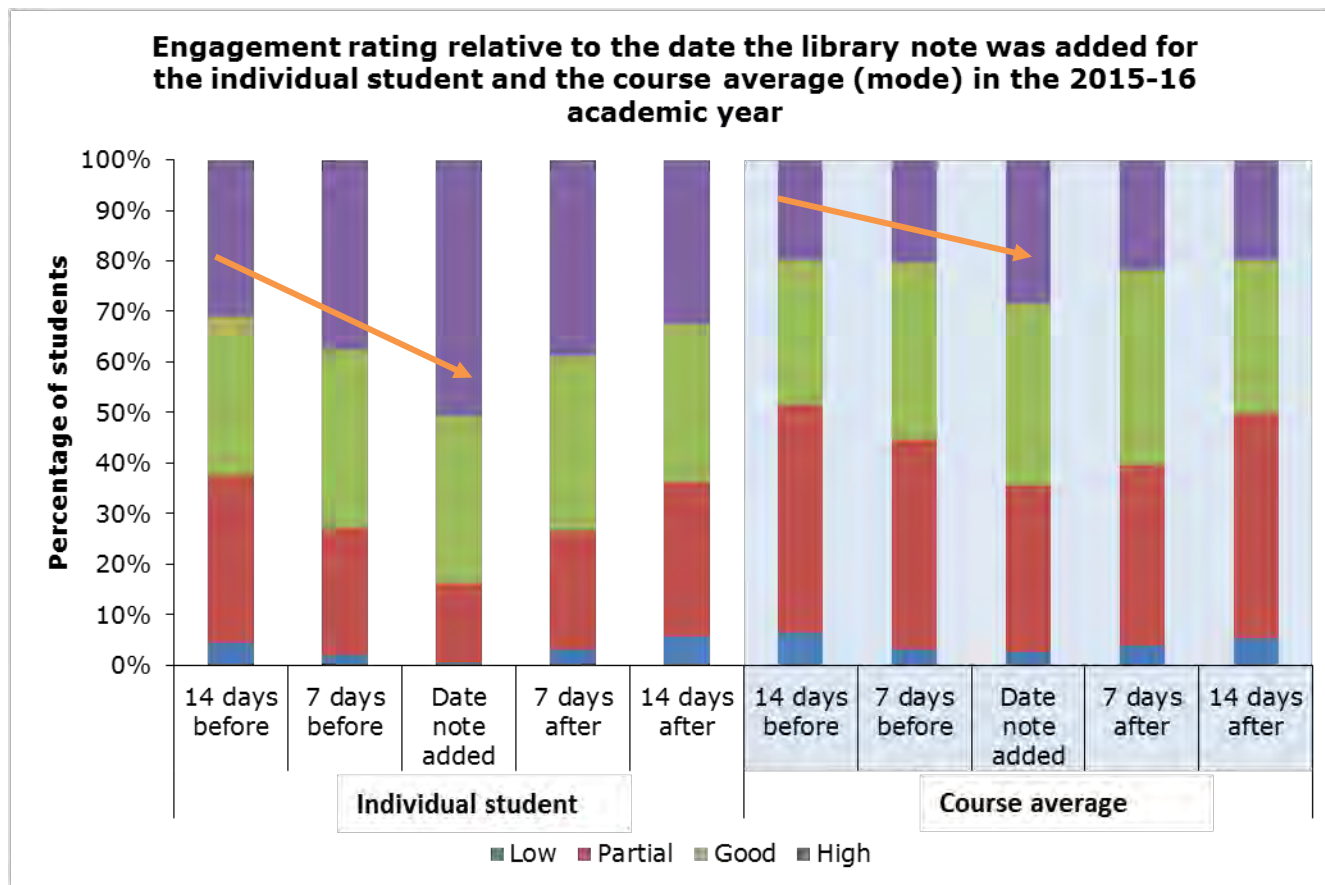

Number and date of Library Learning and Teaching Team notes inputted in the 2015/16 academic year
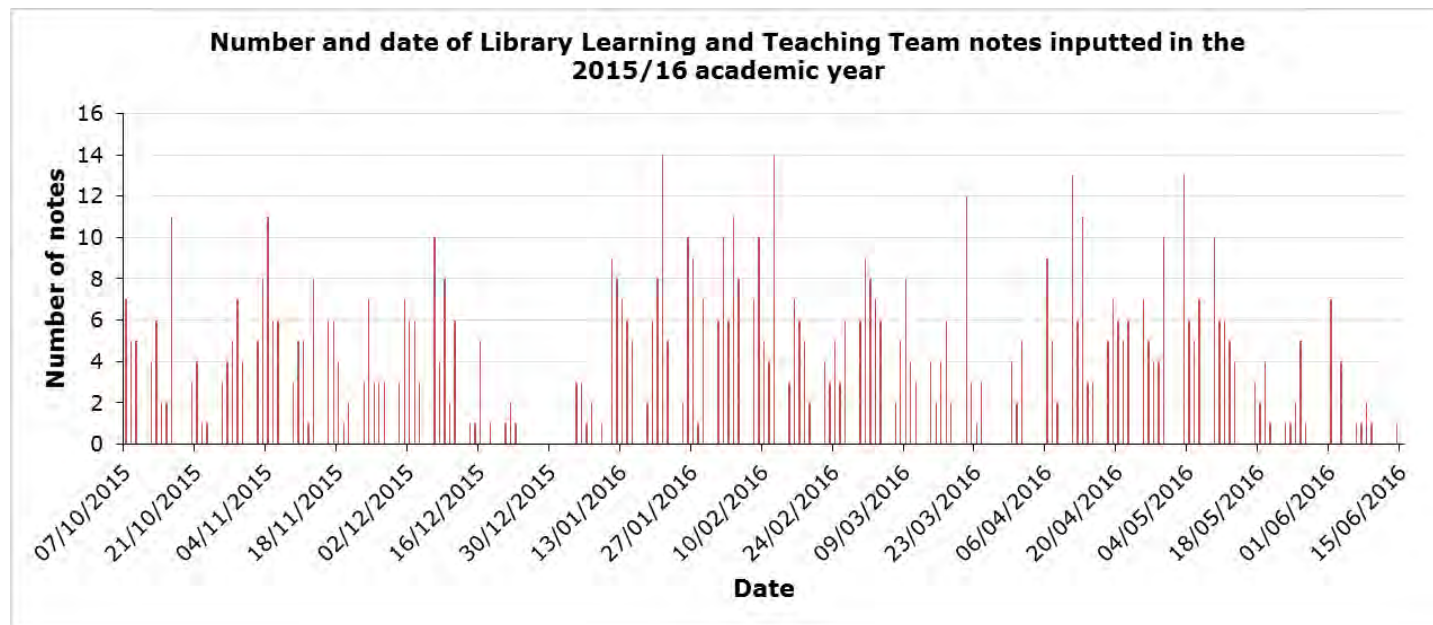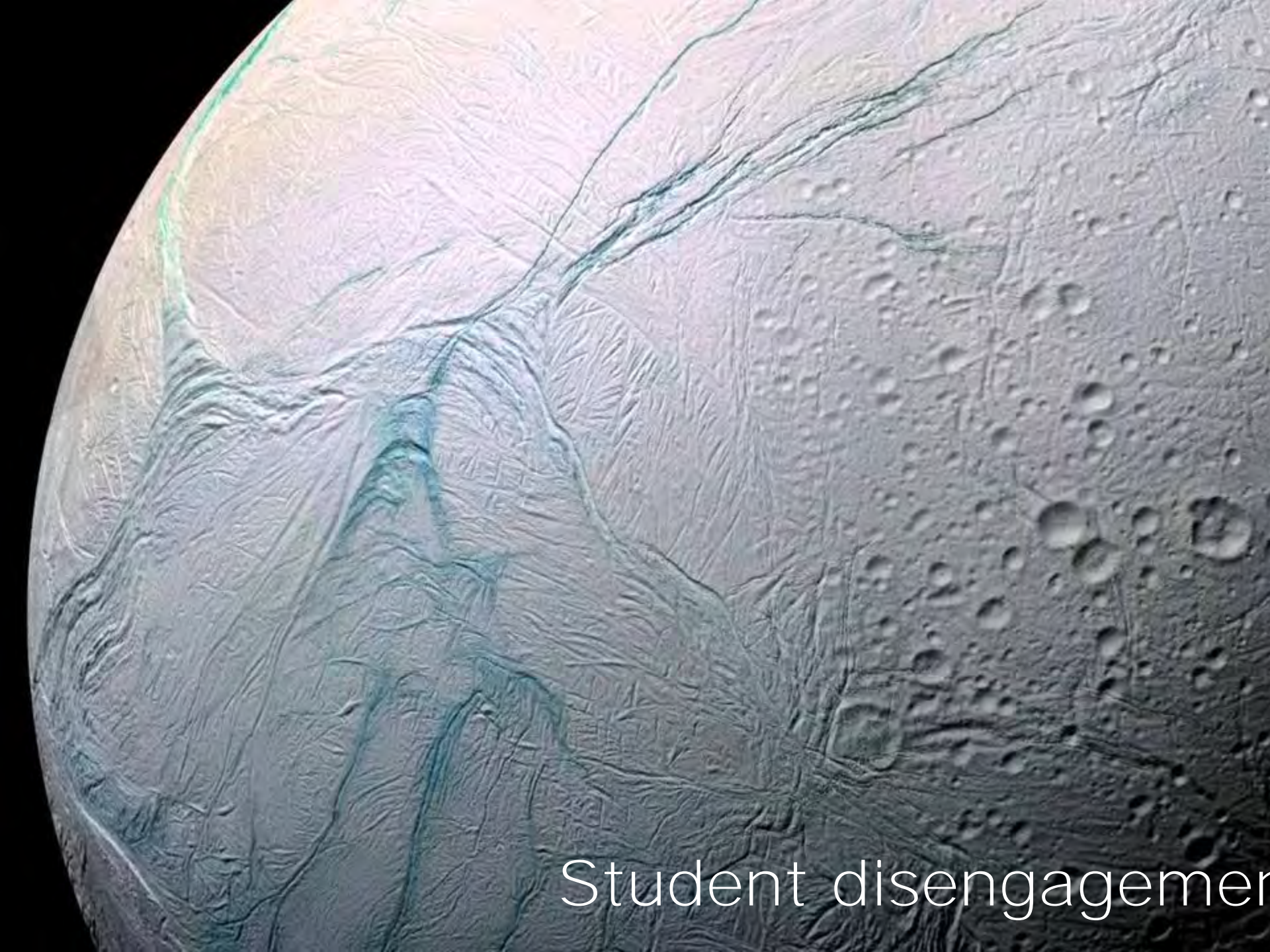
Progression differences

- Progression rates for students who visited the library team was 8.6 **% higher than those who didn't**

- 65.2% of students who visited the librarians achieved a GPA **equivalent to a 2:1 or better compared to 54.1% of those who didn't**

Progression for FT, UG students in programme years 1-4 based on the number of notes from the Libraray Learning and Teaching Team in 2015-16

GPA for progressing FT, UG students in programme years 1-4 based on the number of notes from the Libraray Learning and Teaching Team in 2015-16

Timing of the appointments with the Library Learning and Teaching Team

- Students appear to be using library as part of the process of engaging more with the University, rather than the library appointment being the trigger for increased engagement
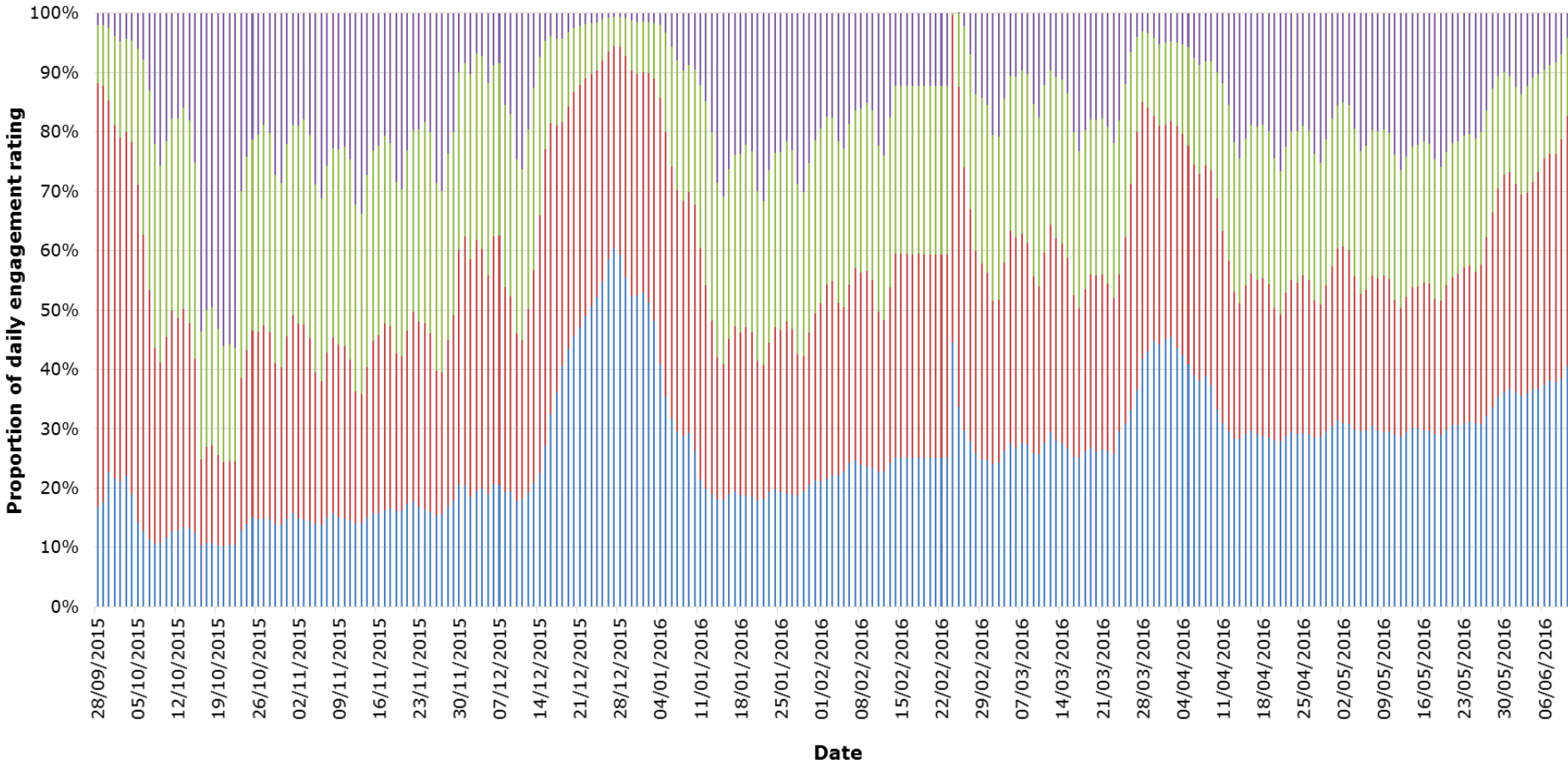

Engagement rating relative to the date the library note was added for the individual student and the course average (mode) in the 2015-16 academic year

Student disengagemen

Student Engagement 2015-16

Daily engagement ratings 28/09/2015 - 10/06/2016

Legend: ■ Low ■ Partial ■ Good ■ High

■ = Low engagement   ■ = Partial engagement   ■ = Good engagement   ■ = High engagement

Timeline of low engagement

- Using the flipchart paper, please draw a timeline for the academic year. Please work with the other colleagues on your table

1. Across the year, what warning signs do you currently use to spot students with low engagement/ at risk of underperforming?

- 2. What communication/ interventions do you carry out?

(10 minutes)

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What works case studies

What works?

- Please work in pairs

- Would you describe a student whose engagement dropped that **you've had a positive impact upon?**

- Rules
  - This is an unreservedly positive activity, we are interested in times when your **intervention/ support worked, not when it didn't**
  - Please do focus on a success story
  - Please describe your actions, student reactions and feedback

  - 10 minutes each
  - 5 minutes explaining what happened
  - After 5 minutes describing what you did, please discuss why you think it worked in this case

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What next?

- We were going to use a some of the literature to frame the conclusions
  - But just ended up with lists

- So

- Prevention (acculturation) is probably better than cure
  - Early communication of expectations, cultural norms and feedback all likely to help
- **But 'cure' is still important**
  - Evidence is poor about changing student trajectory, but the quality of relationships is probably an important factor

- We would like help with a Dashboard pilot to test the efficacy interventions (& time it takes)
  - Is anyone interested?

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