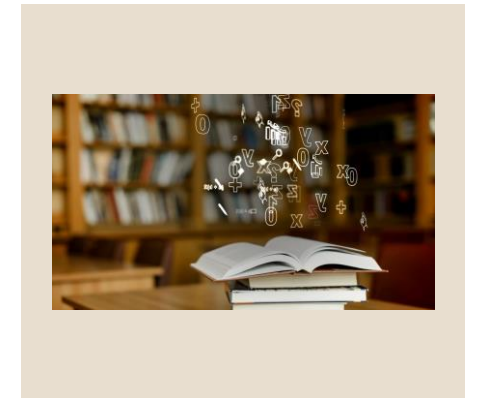


Unmasking educational inequalities: The impact of Covid-19 on deaf students in higher education



Close of Project event

30th January BID Deaf Cultural Centre Birmingham Dr Chijioke Obasi

Welcome and introductions

Team

Beth Dillon, Rachel England, Sayfullah Ismail, Caoimhe Maginn, Chijioke Obasi, Gracie Pinson-Bradley, Helen Phillips, Kate Wilson

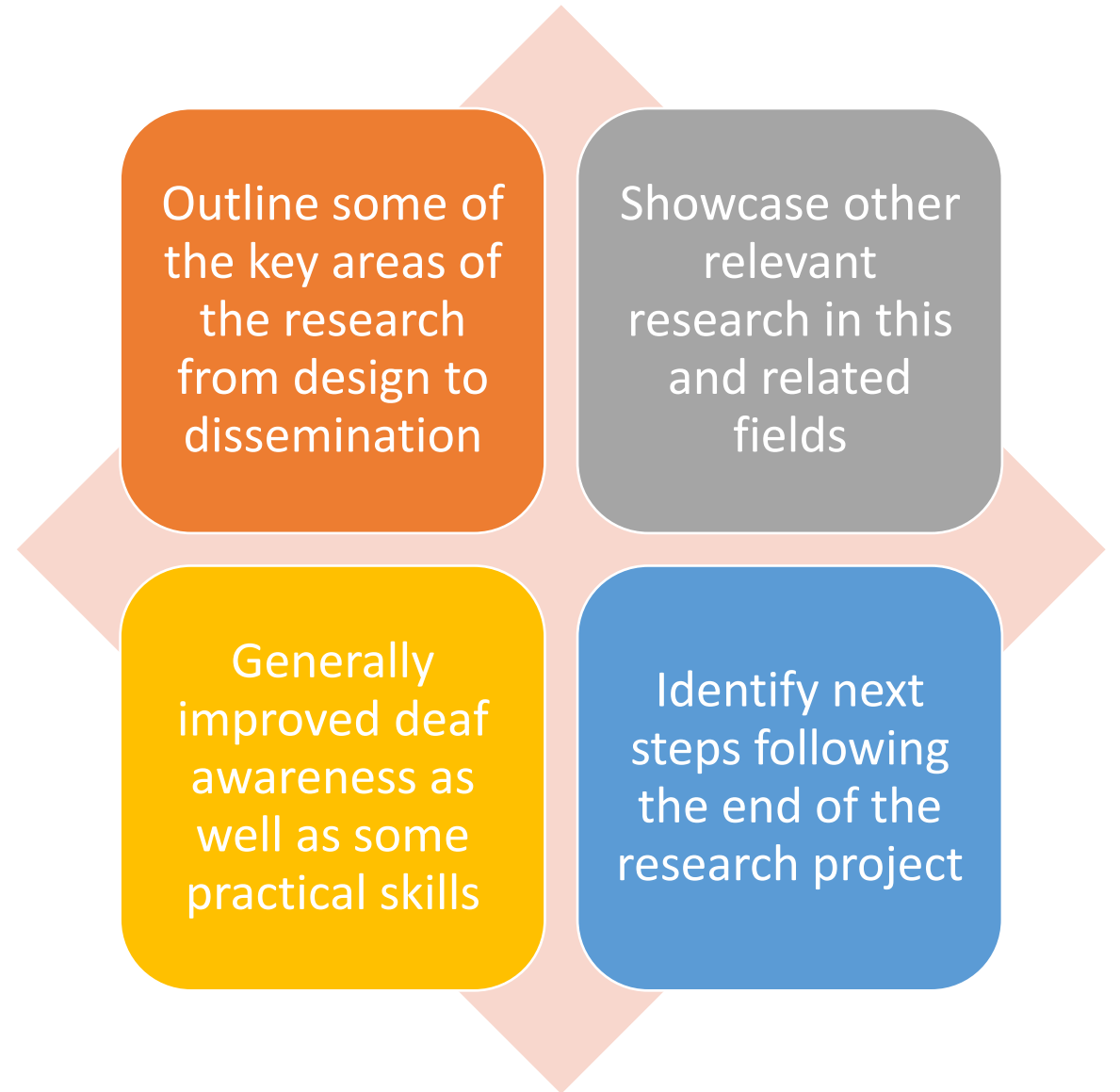
Introducing Caoimhe a deaf student consultant

- <https://youtube.com/shorts/9cXOQ1GKi04>

GROUND RULES

- If you have any questions throughout the session, you can ask as you go along.
- We are using interpreters. Please wait for us to point to you before you start to speak/ sign.
- Please respect everyone within the session regardless of their opinion. Some confidential information may be shared during our session, please keep this private within the room.
- People joining out in Zoom please be patient with technology
- Photography/filming let us know if you don't want to be in photo or film

Aims of today



Background to the research

- The media, university students and the pandemic-
- Student being locked in on campus
- Where was deaf representation and the particular issues deaf people faced?
- Social distancing measures have had particularly severe impacts on deaf people due to their specific communication requirements (Action on Hearing Loss, 2020)

Overall question: What has been happening in different areas of university life and how has this impacted deaf student experience in and out of the classroom?

- Focus on deaf* students, academics/senior managers, access and inclusion professionals
- ESRC funded – support from NDCS

Meet the research team (then and now)



The team



The advisory group



www.deafcovidhe.com

Methodology and methods

- Mixed methods- Interviews and surveys
- The pilot study used to design the main study.
- Designing data collection tools
- Pilot interviews, Survey design, Main study

The target interviews	What we achieved	The target surveys	What we achieved
60/50 students	46	500	86
40 academics	21	100	40
15 access & inclusion staff	15	50	72

Identity,
intersectionality,
and positionality
in the research

The research covers the four nations
England, NI, Scotland, Wales

Intersectionality written in including
questions around BLM, Me Too and
violence against women – any other global
issues of concern (student participants)

Researcher positionality- race, deaf
identity, disability, gender, whiteness,
hearingness, employment status

Student demographics (from the main study survey)

Deaf student diversity (Please note the data from the surveys is updated from the largest of three student surveys (58) so differs slightly from data in previous workshops.)

Age

Ethnicity

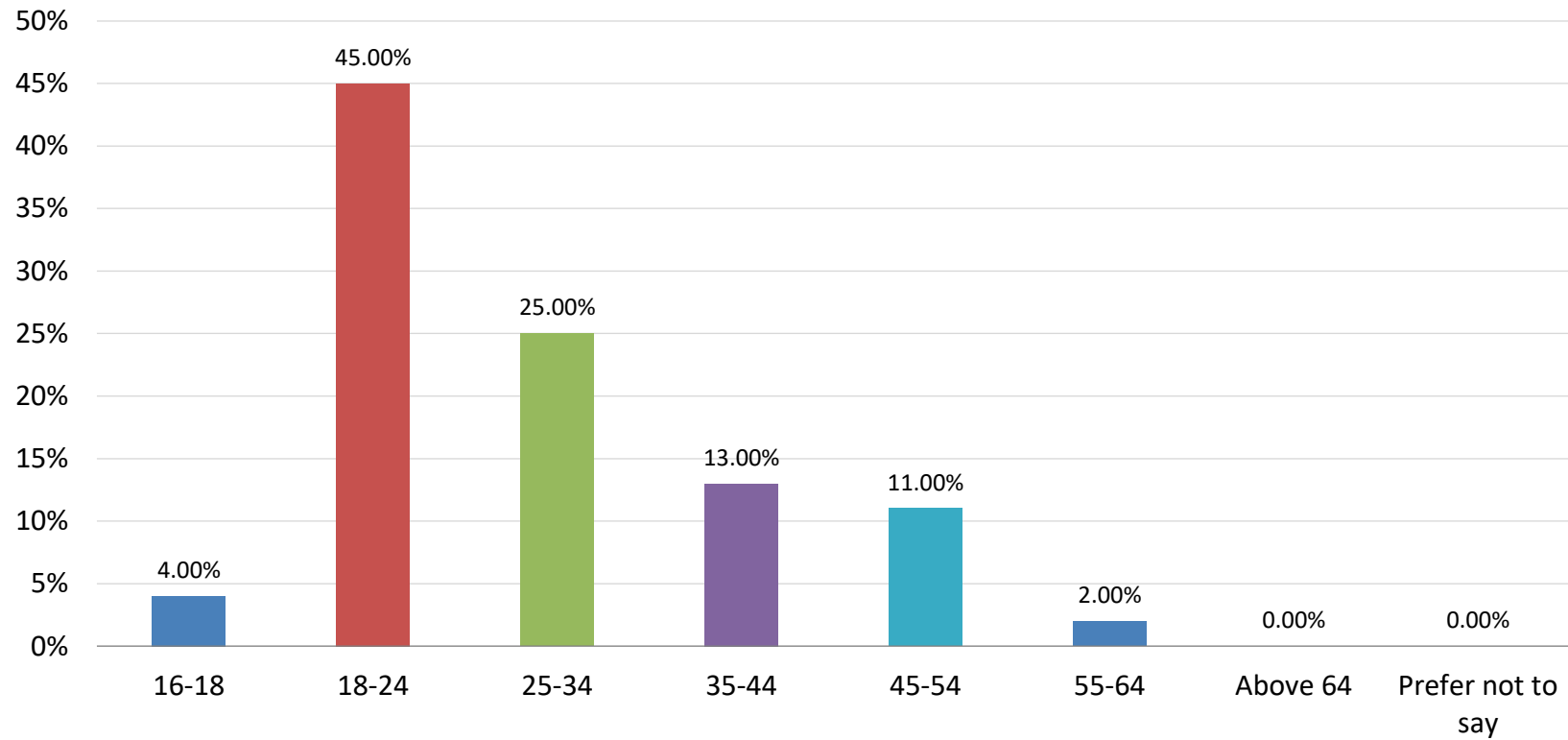
Gender

Sexual orientation

Deaf identity

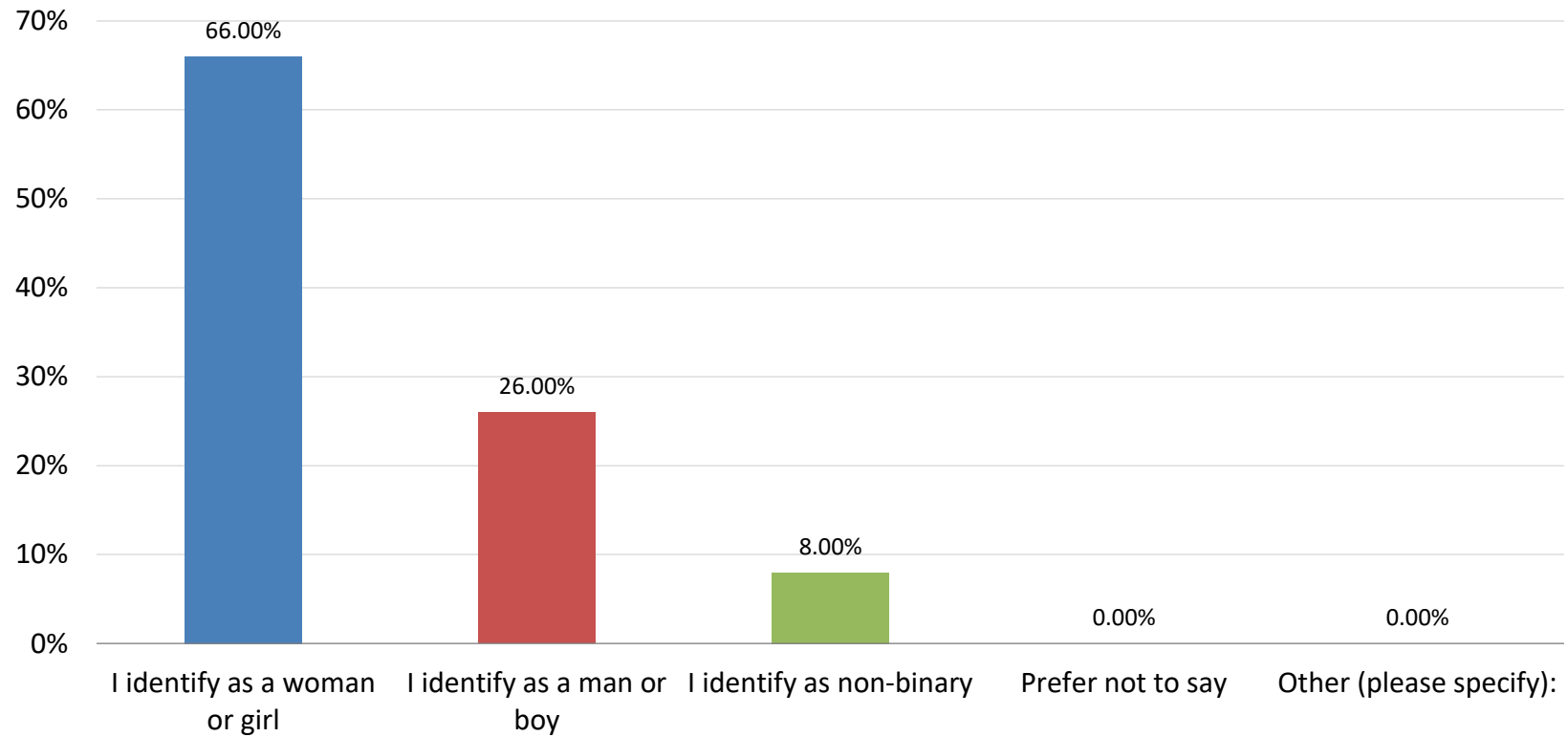
Preferred communication

What is your age?



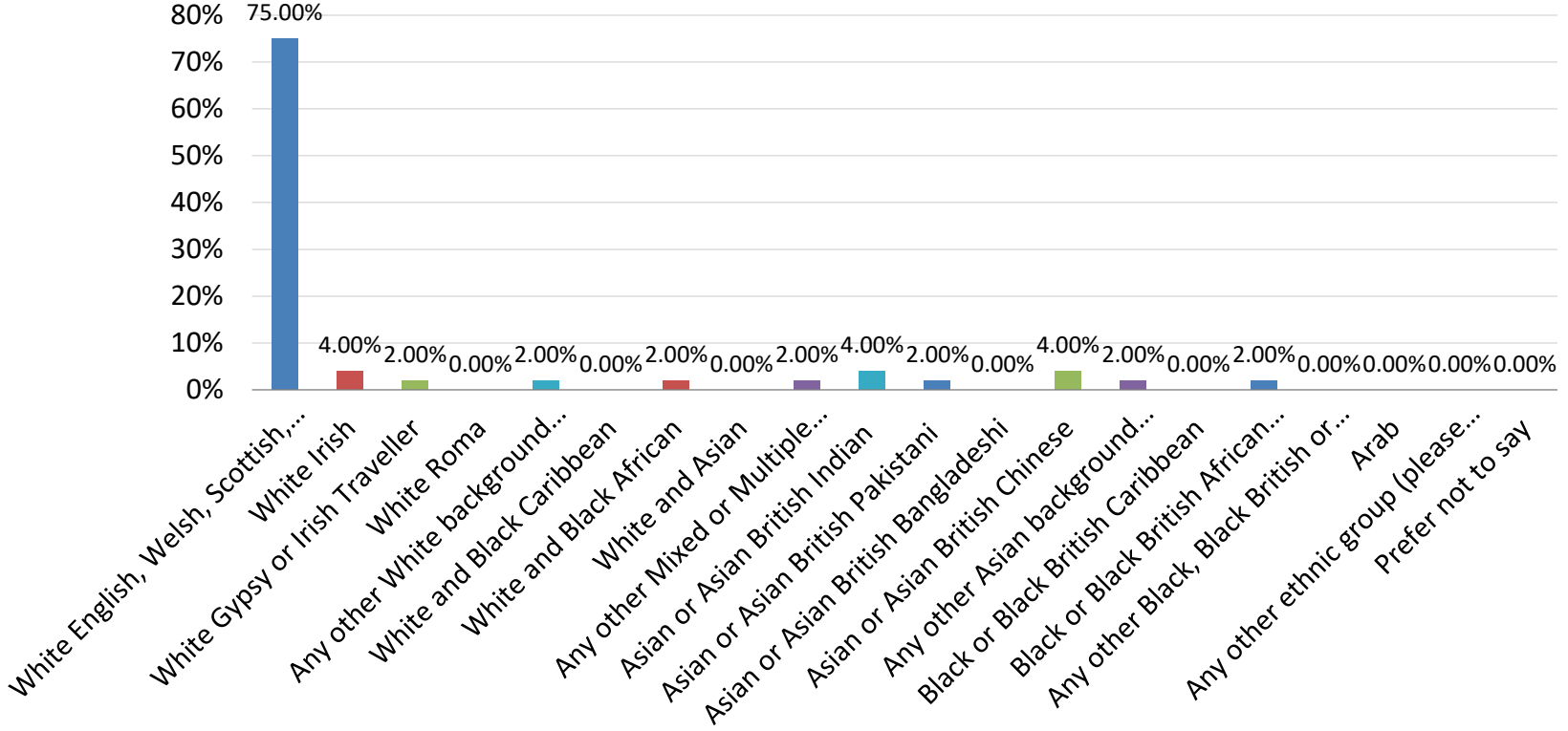
Mean : 2.887 | Confidence Interval @ 95% : [2.571 - 3.202] | Standard Deviation : 1.171 | Standard Error : 0.161

What is your gender ?



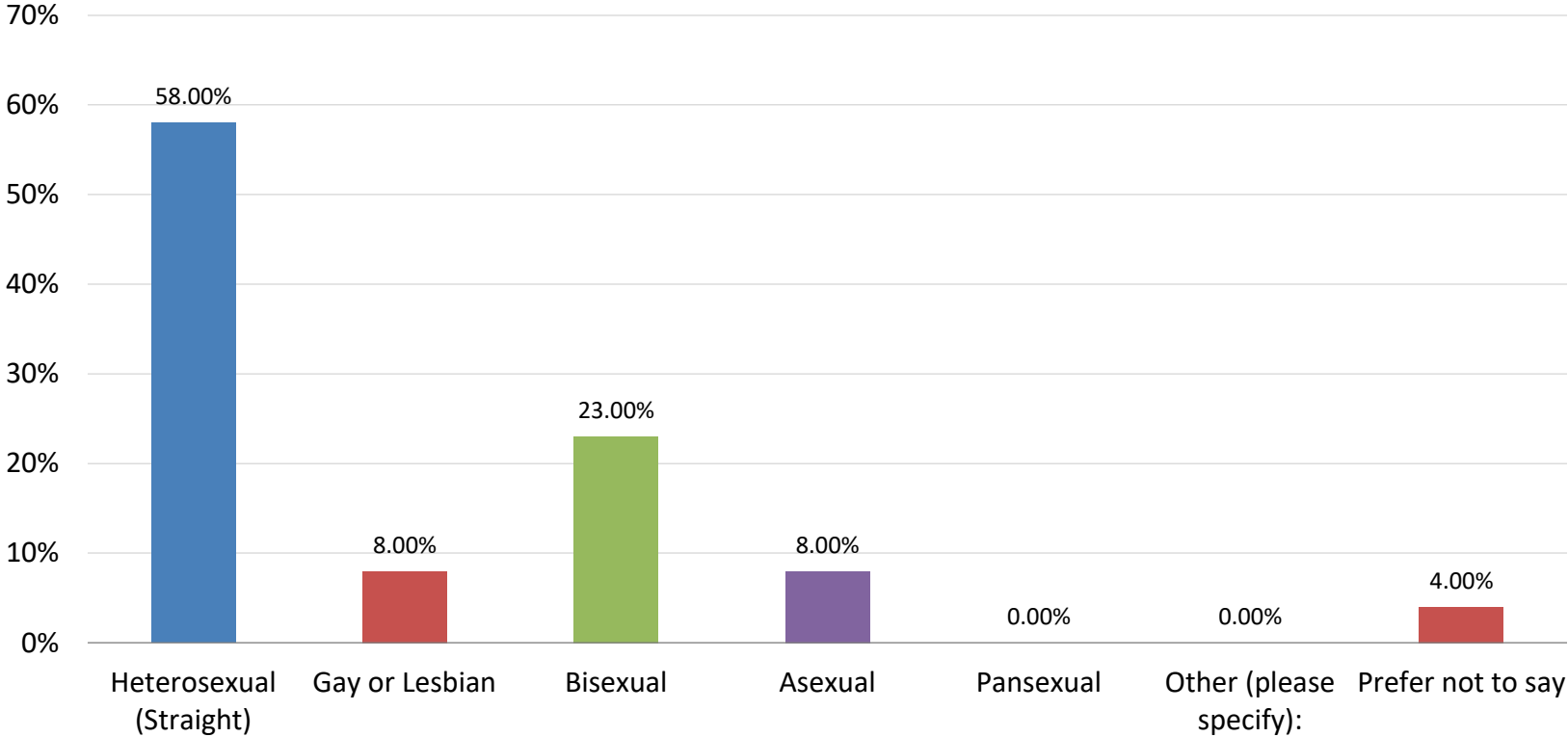
Mean : 1.415 | Confidence Interval @ 95% : [1.245 - 1.586] | Standard Deviation : 0.633 | Standard Error : 0.087

What is your ethnicity?



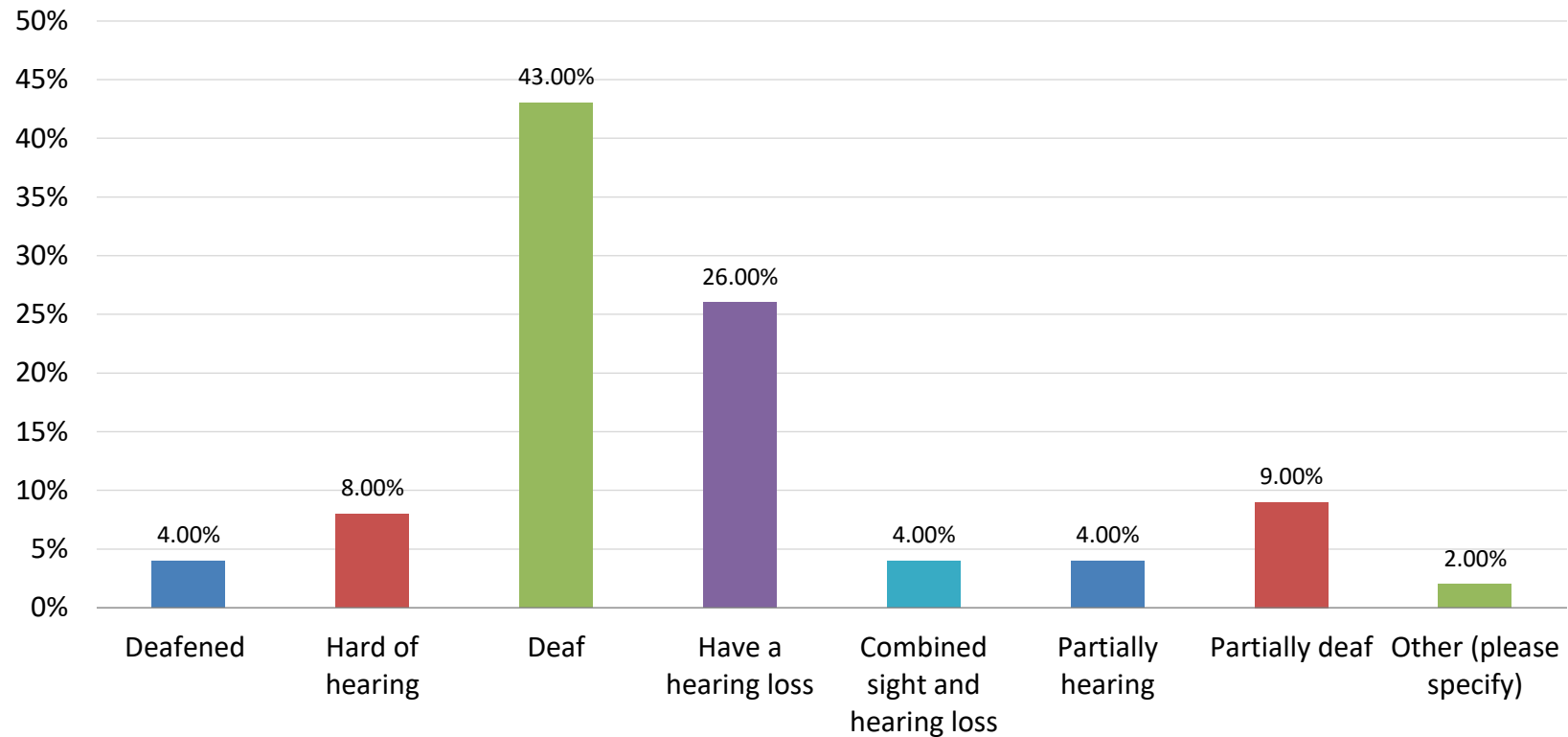
Mean : 2.925 | Confidence Interval @ 95% : [1.823 - 4.026] | Standard Deviation : 4.090 | Standard Error : 0.562

What is your sexuality?



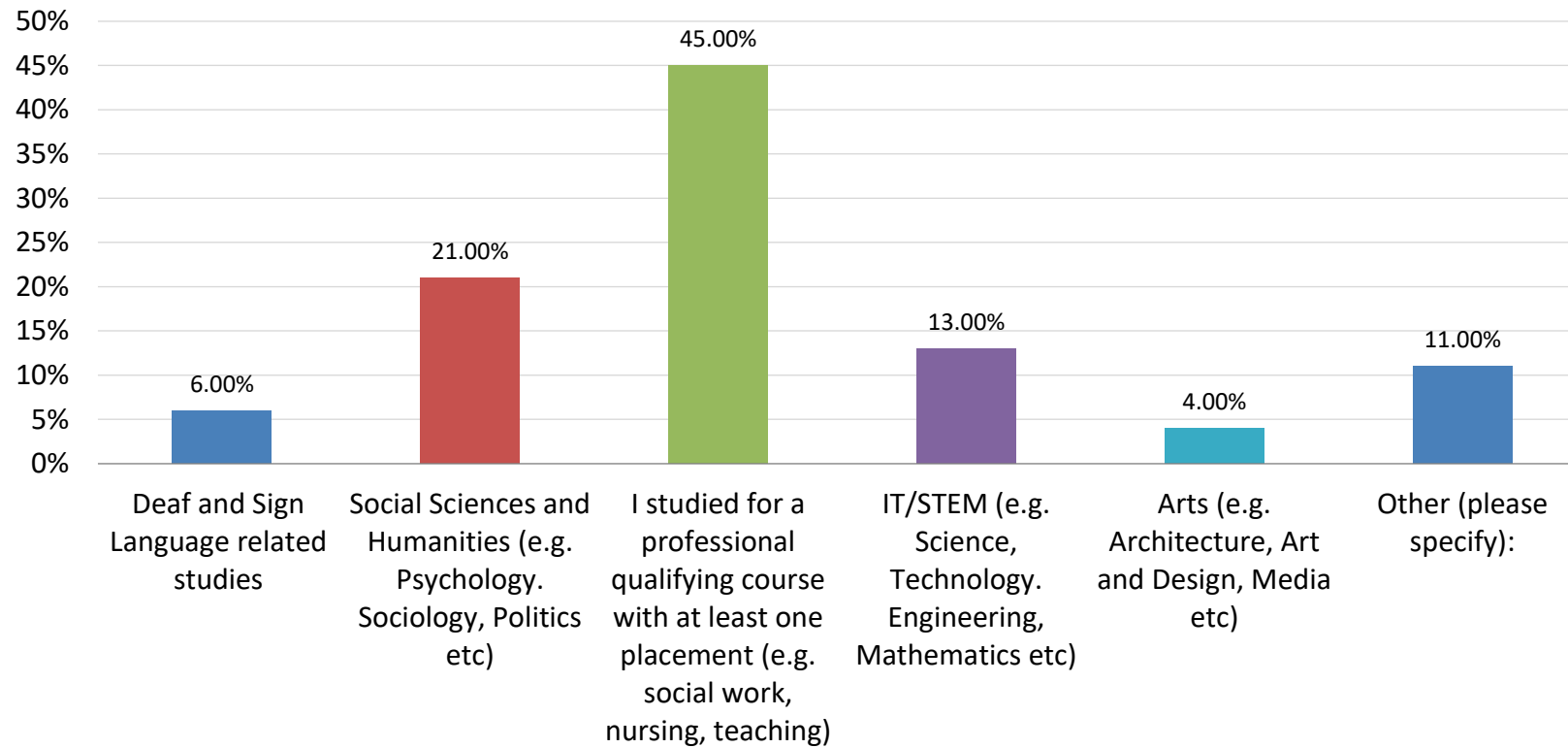
Mean : 1.981 | Confidence Interval @ 95% : [1.591 - 2.371] | Standard Deviation : 1.448 | Standard Error : 0.199

Out of the following, what best describes how you identify yourself? (PLEASE SELECT ONE)



Mean : 3.774 | Confidence Interval @ 95% : [3.356 - 4.191] | Standard Deviation : 1.552 | Standard Error : 0.213

What was the subject of your main studies during the pandemic? (PLEASE SELECT ONE)



Mean : 3.226 | Confidence Interval @ 95% : [2.874 - 3.579] | Standard Deviation : 1.310 | Standard Error : 0.180

Key findings around

Different and differential types of fatigue

Problems with:

DSA

Online platforms

Captioning

Working with interpreters

Complaints

Online learning fatigue/additional labour

Some of the negative impacts of online learning- Fatigue

Screen fatigue/eye fatigue/hearing fatigue/concentration fatigue
bureaucracy

Online learning has particular impacts on deaf students because of the need for sustained concentration (captions/interpreters/hearing aids)

“Looking at interpreters on screen for 2 hours was really draining....for deaf people, we have to watch really intensely. I have the lecturer on one screen and the interpreters on the other and I have to look back and forth.”

“I get really tired, and sometimes the internet goes off, then the interpreter freezes and I miss some of it. I can't engage well online and I lose the concept of what's going on. I have fatigue.”

“I found in general online learning has been more draining than face to face, ...I could have a 2 hour session that included a group discussion I was exhausted by the end listening and paying attention. Online learning has been more mentally and physically draining than face to face”

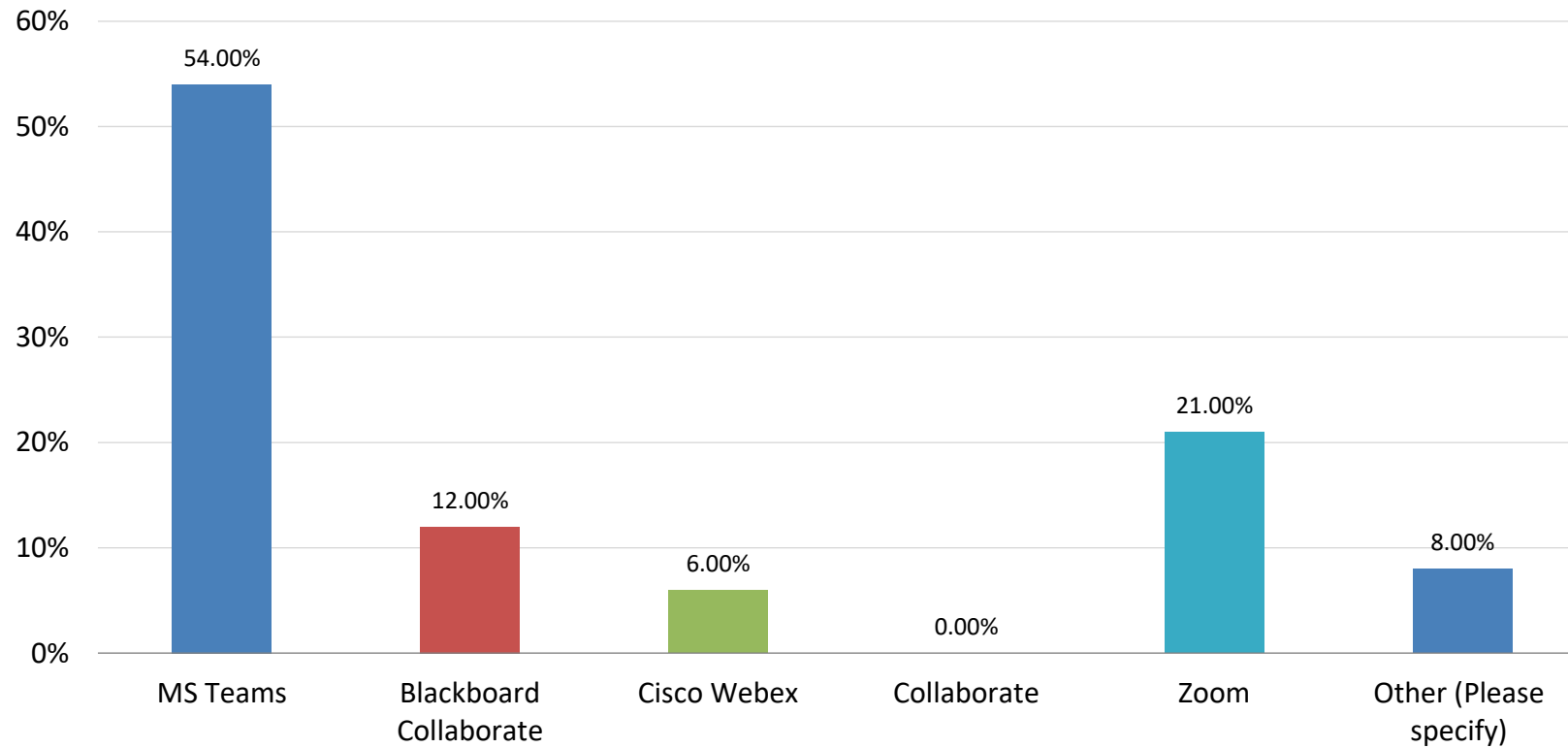
Online learning fatigue/additional labour

- Deaf/disabled students are not a homogenous group,
- Being tired of having to explain their needs time and time again
- Using two screens in order to get access when working with interpreters
- Having to co-ordinate communication between teaching staff and support professionals (sending links, material, last minute changes)
- There are so many other disabilities that we learn about that are more widely understood no one questions a ramp when year 2 comes round, I'm not going to have time to look for interpreters, send emails, wait on responses, I just won't have time for that.
- I was told that it was a shame that I was deaf and not dyslexic as I would receive a lot more support if I was dyslexic - but that it was ok as being deaf didn't affect my ability to access study
- During the first lock down the software used had no subtitles available. Note takers therefore had to write in a private chat to me what was being said and discussed. This however was not efficient as it meant I was always a step behind the class discussions and therefore unable to interact and keep up. It left me feeling very isolated and the constant reading of messages while trying to watch the lecture caused a lot of mental fatigue.

DSA

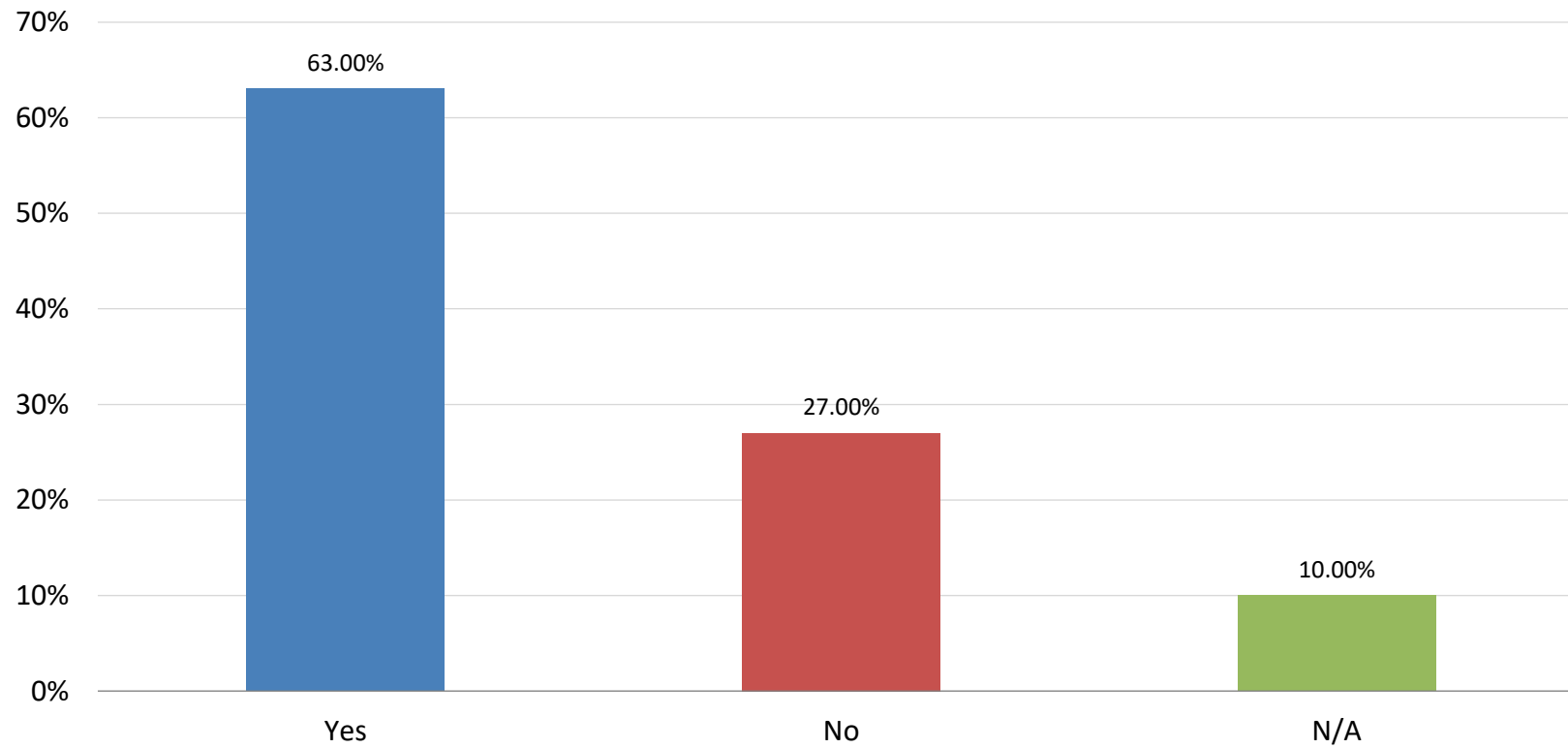
- DSA Pre-pandemic 46% of deaf students didn't have their support in place at the start of their course (NDCS, 2019).
- DSA was particularly problematic for deaf students
- 43% needed DSA for the first time as a result of the pandemic
- 55% of existing DSA users felt their needs had increased in pandemic. However, adjustments weren't being made
- In my DSA assessment I got told that I could have a note taker but that they couldn't be in a room unless I was there. So if I had coronavirus one week, I would have no notes and no support. The disability officers should be able to sort that and come up with an answer and I don't mean just recording the lecture but trying to support me by making changes in special circumstances
- It's been a battle because for DSA I applied last June, my captioning software still hadn't been approved until last week and the auto captioning they have been using was so inaccurate I couldn't participate in the learning. They said we don't have time to check the captions so you have to try and guess.”

What is your preferred online learning platform? (Please select one)



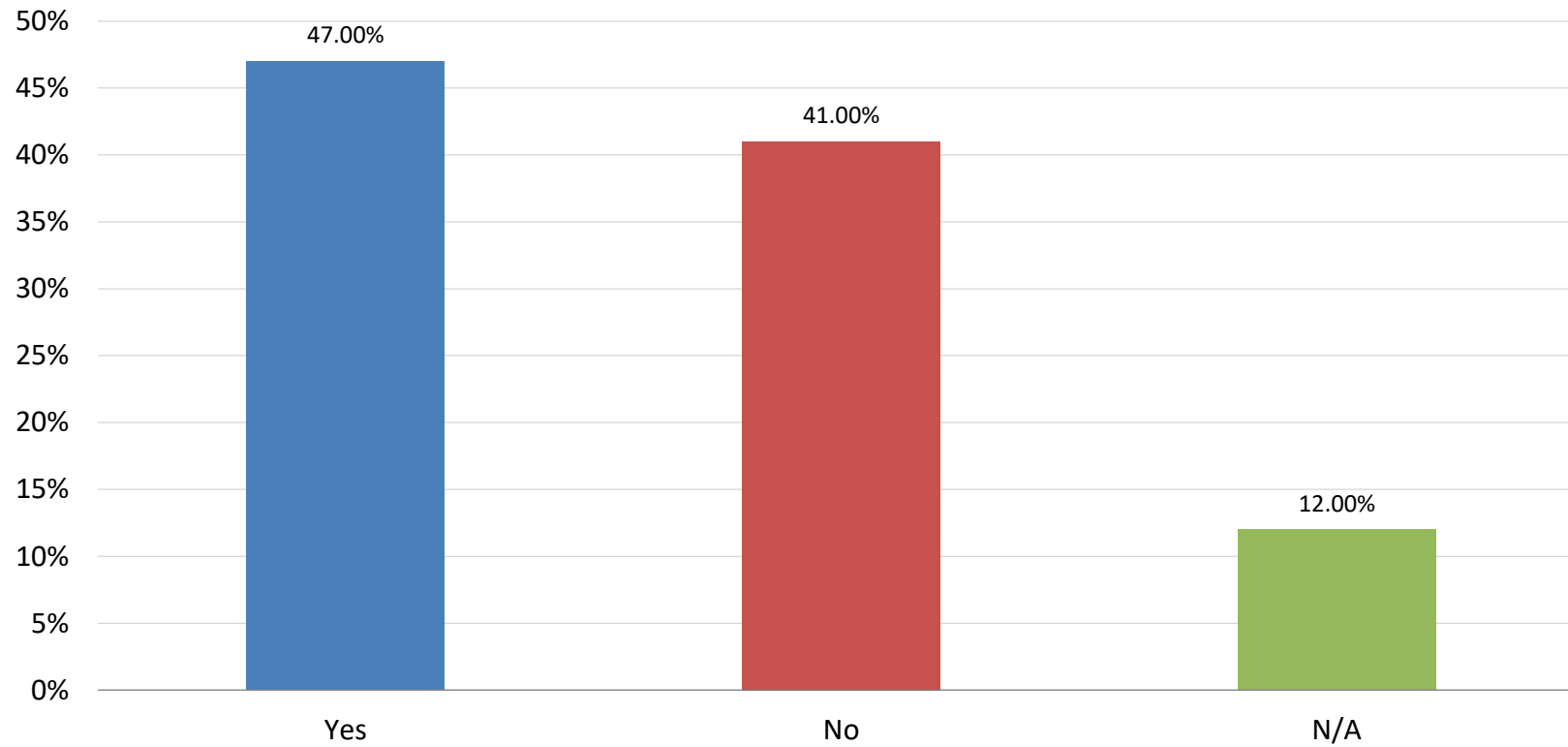
Mean : 2.462 | Confidence Interval @ 95% : [1.947 - 2.976] | Standard Deviation : 1.894 | Standard Error : 0.263

MS Teams



Mean : 1.462 | Confidence Interval @ 95% : [1.279 - 1.644] | Standard Deviation : 0.670 | Standard Error : 0.093

Zoom



Mean : 1.653 | Confidence Interval @ 95% : [1.459 - 1.847] | Standard Deviation : 0.694 | Standard Error : 0.099

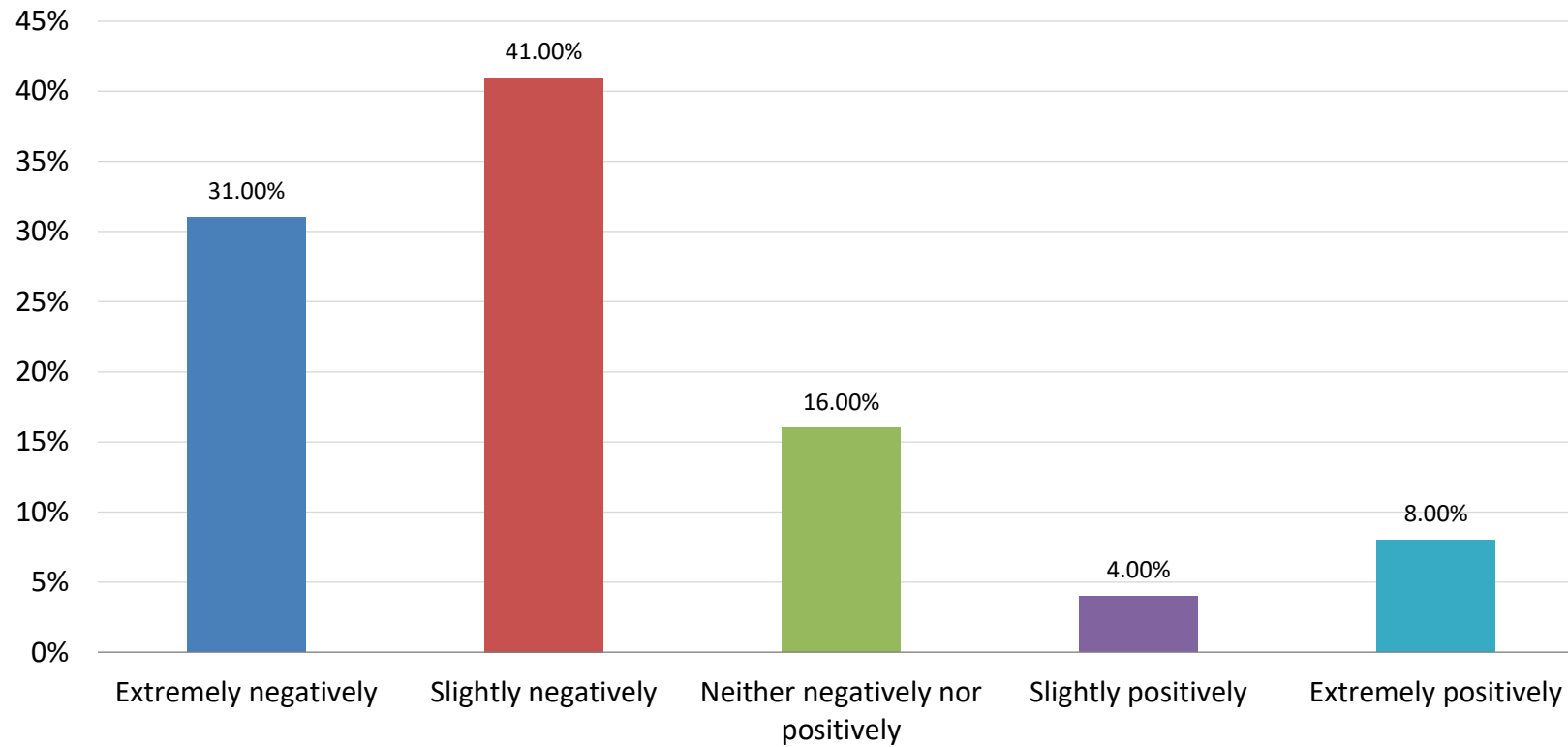
Online platforms – Teams v Zoom

- Microsoft Teams, is all over the place and keeps moving and lots of bits, it shows the person who is speaking then it goes and another is there, Zoom is better, where all the people are on camera in a set place so you can see them all. MS Teams you can do this if you set up things not just randomly come up when a person is speaking. The lecturers are the worse, forgetting to pin the interpreter, so they disappear, then I panic, so I would have to use my phone and or the iPad and look between the computer and the other device. So the lecturer needs to think, also when they share PowerPoints, the interpreter disappears, that's why I need the interpreter on a separate screen, the class should all be on screen not just popping up when they speak.

Complaints

- Students are complaining about their circumstances
- 81% of deaf students complaint about access but only 25% felt their complaint was resolved.
- 97% Access and inclusion professionals had to complain or request changes to enable them to do their work.
- 80% access and inclusion staff had problems accessing the online session they were working in (sent the wrong link, not told of last minute changes etc)

Your mental health and well being



Mean : 2.184 | Confidence Interval @ 95% : [1.857 - 2.510] | Standard Deviation : 1.167 | Standard Error : 0.167

Recommendations

- Ask the deaf student directly what their needs are
- More mental health support
- Captions as standard in all live and pre-recorded lectures
- Check and amend automatic captions – HEIs should allow time in workloads for this.
- Choose DSA agency who aim at high accessible learning, not profit to make students suffer
- Make sure student disability services take full responsibility for booking interpreters instead of making students responsible for this.
- For ALL staff to have appropriate head wear when delivering lessons online so that you can clearly hear them speak
- Regular check ins from staff with BSL interpreters/users Clear outlines of what can be expected
- Be respectful of your peers. My cohort were fantastic and it really helped

Dissemination

Our publications-

- Limping Chicken article: <https://limpingchicken.com/2022/04/21/research-deaf-university-students-struggles-and-benefits-from-the-pandemic-and-online-teaching-with-bsl-videos/>
- Valencia language rights conference

Further publications coming soon:

- identity and intersectionality
- Publication of the pilot
- Book chapter the impact of covid on deaf people
- Our best practice workshops- students recruited as consultants. Co-design and co-delivery online and face-to-face.

Case study work led by deaf student consultants

Beth Dillon, Rachel England, Sayfullah Ismail, Gracie Pinson-Bradley, Helen Phillips

Open to university students and staff

A DEAF STUDENTS' JOURNEY

Join us for our workshop at the Holiday Inn Birmingham City Centre, led by Deaf students and researchers about their experiences in higher education and how to better support Deaf students at university

13th January 1-4pm
FREE to attend!

For more information, please contact deafcovidHE@outlook.com

Kate poetry

-
- 'grateful d/Deaf'
- Instinct and survival do not sit right with me The cows milk shaped knot in my abdomen Like bitter growth from a bad haircut. A bodily conquest so unlike anything Roman, not one of romance, not emetic, just mine
-
- Maybe communication is not my strong point It is in the jaws of the ambush predator That I beg for mercy in 'gesture'. No alarm is sufficient to incite my alarm Missing last words is enough.
-
- Recycled plastic reminds my disposables that There is no scrape of wheelless headboard on Bitter Lino, no sugar rush of river as it Finds new course. I am strung up to the neck with skin coloured tights But my ears are a bright green.



Qnext Steps

Next steps