

**POSTGRADS,  
HAVE YOU**  
*told us your*  
**THOUGHTS**  
*ABOUT YOUR*  
**COURSE?**



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**Understanding and enhancing researcher development  
using the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey**

**Dr Paul Bennett, Head of Surveys, HEA**

# Outline



1. The 'new' Postgraduate Research Experience Survey

2. Results from PRES 2013

Discussion and questions about the results

3. Enhancing researcher development with PRES

Enhancement scenarios

## The 'new' PRES

- PRES launched in 2007, based on Australian PREQ
- Major revision to PRES questionnaire for 2013
- Based on:
  - quantitative testing of PRES datasets
  - qualitative testing of questions (with and by postgraduate researchers)
  - consultation with HEIs and sector bodies
- Results:
  - shorter and simpler instrument with improved wording
  - up-to-date with strong focus on researcher development

# The 'new' PRES

Main scales	Further Questions
1 Supervision	Opportunities (inc. teaching)
2 Resources	Motivations
3 Research culture	Demographic and course
4 Progress and assessment	
5 Responsibilities	Institutional questions
6 Research skills	
7 Professional development	

# The 'new' PRES



## Supervision

RDF

**Q1 d** My supervisor/s help me to identify my training and development needs as a researcher

## Research skills

**Q11 a** My skills in applying appropriate research methodologies, tools and techniques have developed during my programme A1

**Q11 b** My skills in critically analysing and evaluating findings and results have developed during my programme A2

**Q11 c** My confidence to be creative or innovative has developed during my programme A3

**Q11 d** My understanding of 'research integrity' (eg rigour, ethics, transparency, attributing the contribution of others) has developed during my programme C1

## Professional development

**Q13 a** My ability to manage projects has developed during my programme C2

**Q13 b** My ability to communicate information effectively to diverse audiences has developed during my programme D2

**Q13 c** I have developed contacts or professional networks during my programme B3

**Q13 d** I have increasingly managed my own professional development during my programme B3

# The 'new' PRES

## Opportunities

**Q15** Please indicate which of the following opportunities you have experienced during your research degree programme (select all that apply):

- Agreeing a personal training or development plan
- Receiving training to develop my research skills
- Receiving training to develop my transferable skills
- Receiving advice on career options
- Taking part in a placement or internship
- Attending an academic research conference
- Presenting a paper or poster at an academic research conference
- Submitting a paper for publication in an academic journal or book
- Communicating your research to a non-academic audience

## Teaching

**Q16** Please indicate whether you have taught (or demonstrated) at your institution during your research degree programme (Y/N)

- If yes, to what extent do you agree that you have been given appropriate support and guidance for your teaching?
- Did you receive formal training for your teaching?

**PRES 2013: Results from the Postgraduate  
Research Experience Survey**



Paul Bennett and Gosia Turner



**Published today:**

**PRES 2013: Results from  
the Postgraduate Research  
Experience Survey**

[www.heacademy.ac.uk/pres](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/pres)



## Results from PRES 2013

Year	HEIs	Responses	Rate
2007	58	10,544	25.2%
2008	73	16,524	28.9%
2009	82	18,644	28.6%
2011	102	31,202	32.0%
2013	122	48,401	41.9%

### Participation in PRES, 2007-2013

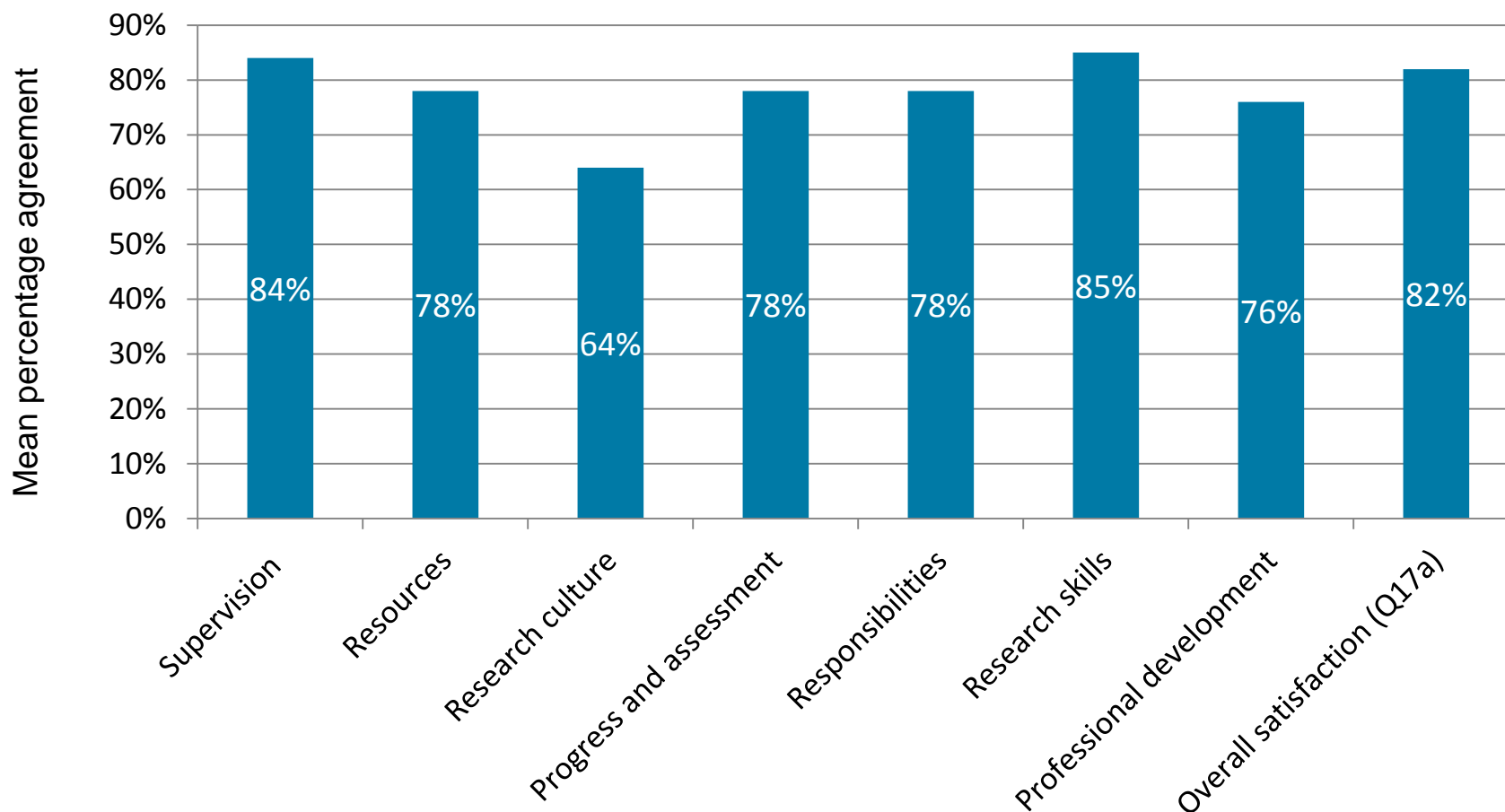


# Results from PRES 2013

	<b>PRES 2013</b>	<b>HESA 2011/12</b>
<b>Male</b>	50.1%	53.4%
<b>Female</b>	49.9%	46.6%
<b>UK</b>	58.9%	59.2%
<b>Other EU</b>	12.2%	12.9%
<b>Non EU</b>	28.9%	28.0%
<b>Full-time</b>	80.4%	72.4%
<b>Part-time</b>	19.6%	27.6%

**Representativeness of respondents**

# Results from PRES 2013



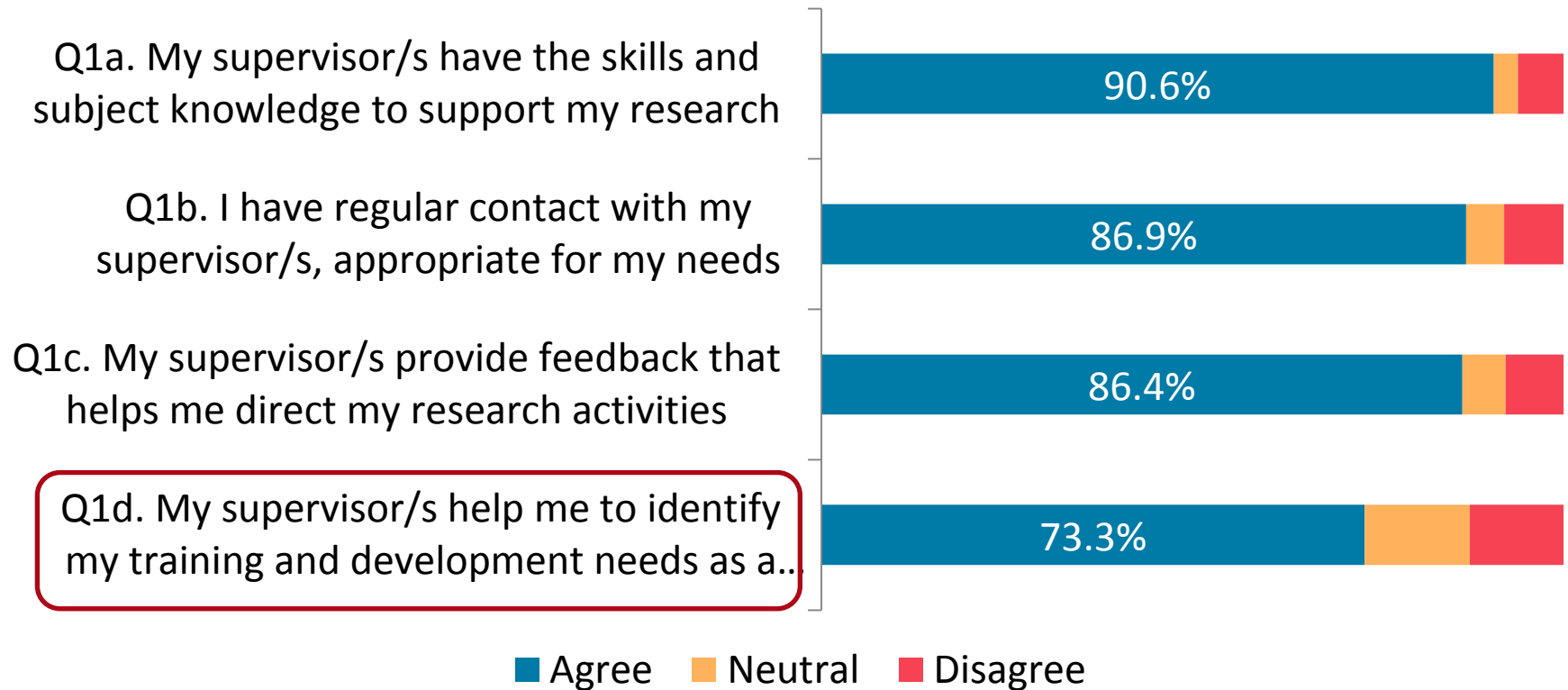
Mean levels of agreement for each scale

# Results from PRES 2013

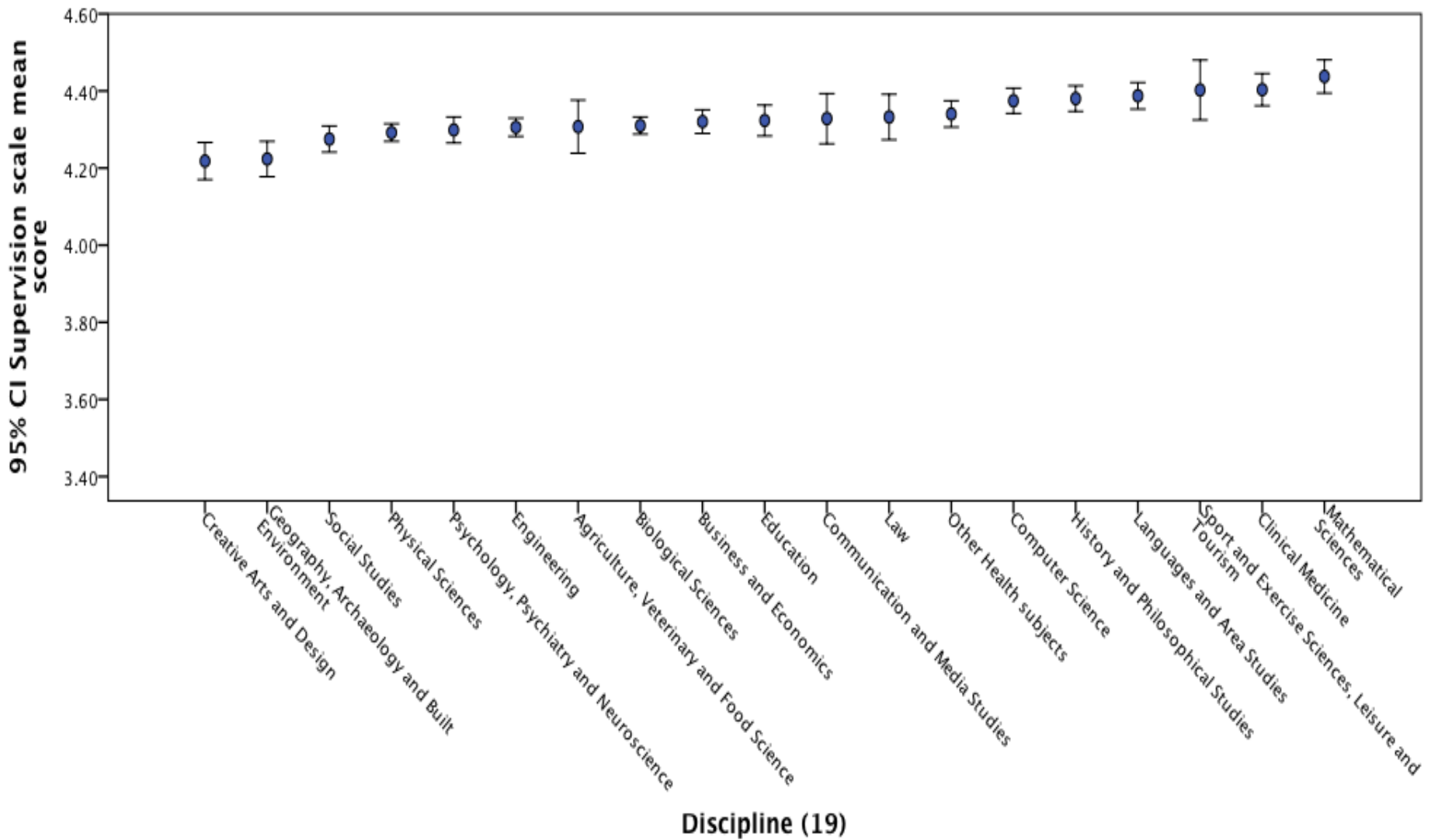
Scale	Standardised Beta
Supervision	.251
Resources	.046
Research culture	.197
Responsibilities and Progress and assessment (combined scales)	.201
Research skills and Professional development (combined scales)	.231

**Influence of factors on overall experience**

# Results from PRES 2013

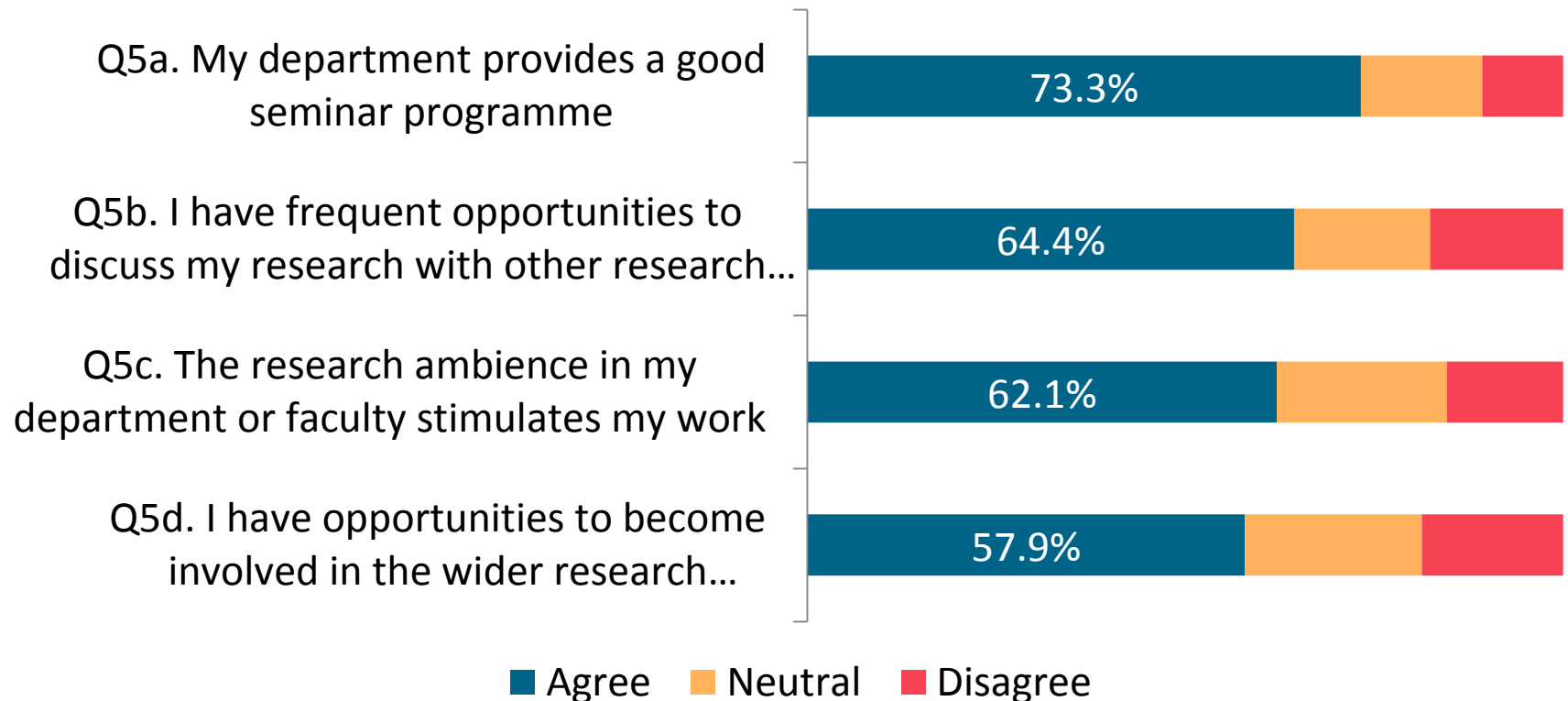


## Experience of supervision



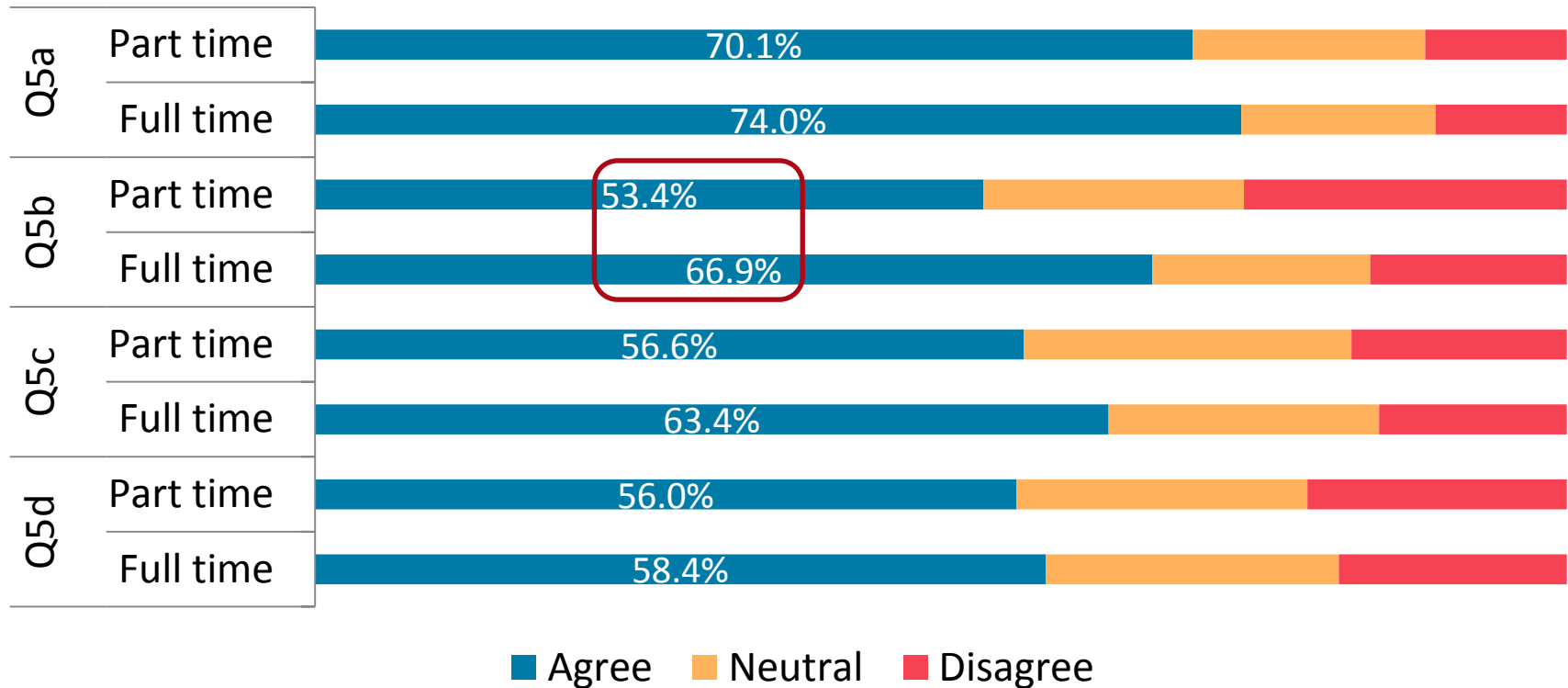
## Experience of supervision

# Results from PRES 2013



## Experience of research culture

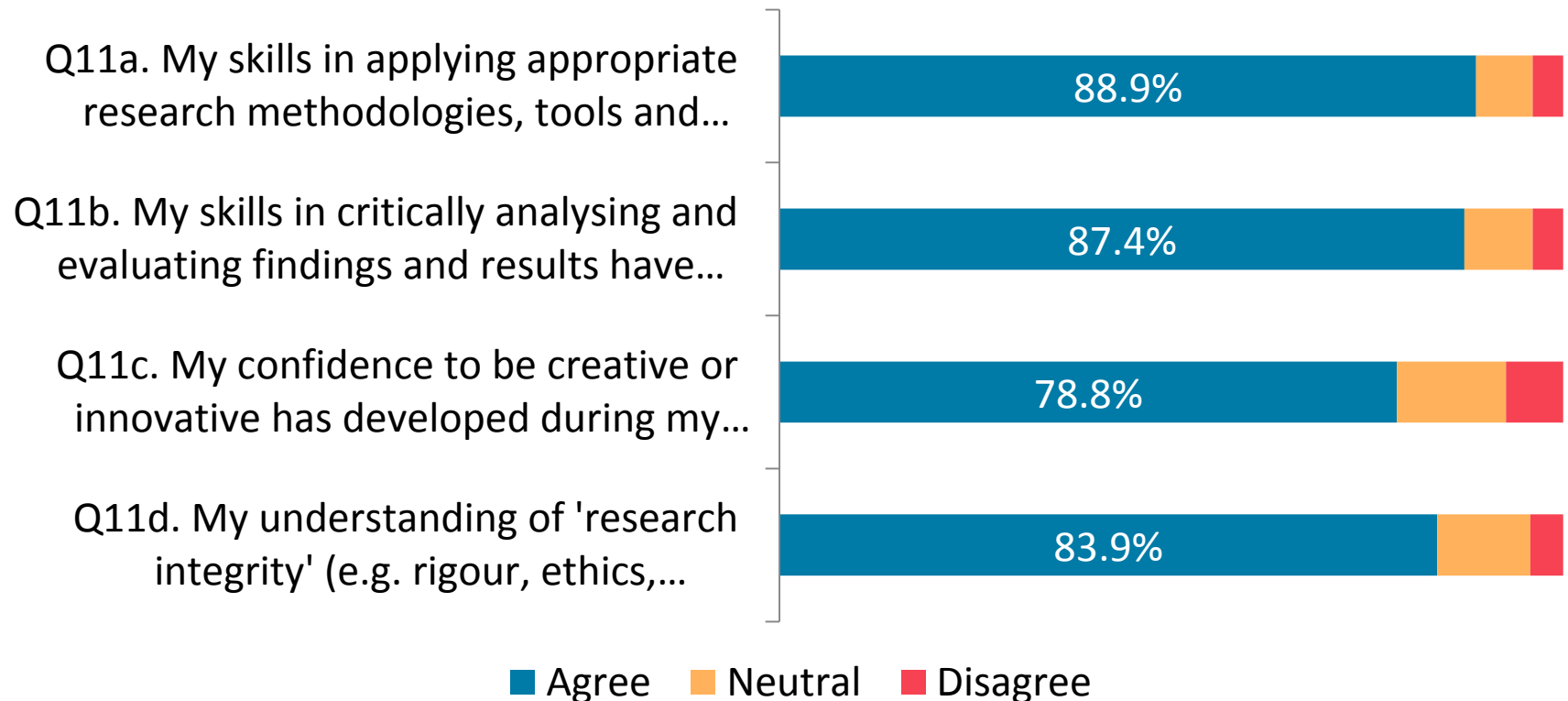
# Results from PRES 2013



## Experience of research culture

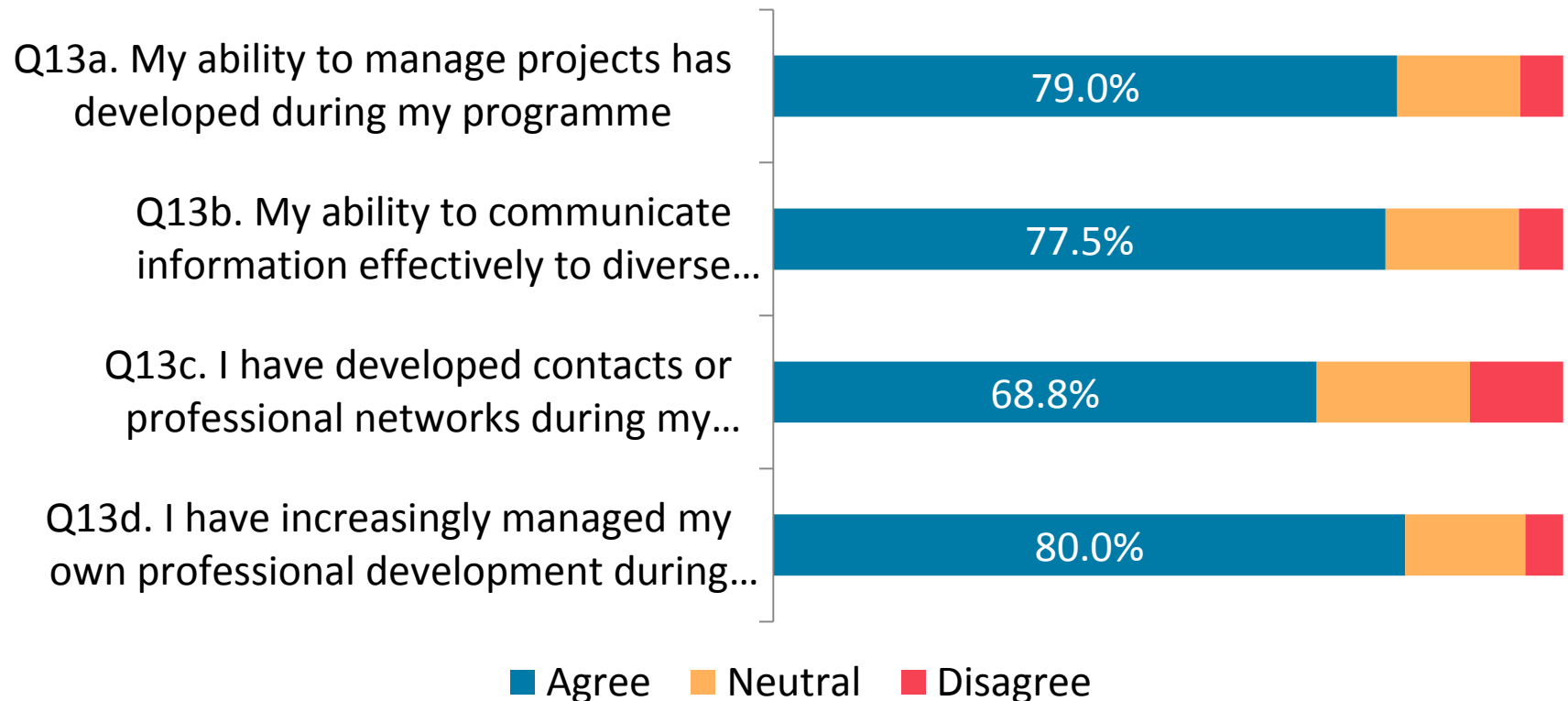


# Results from PRES 2013

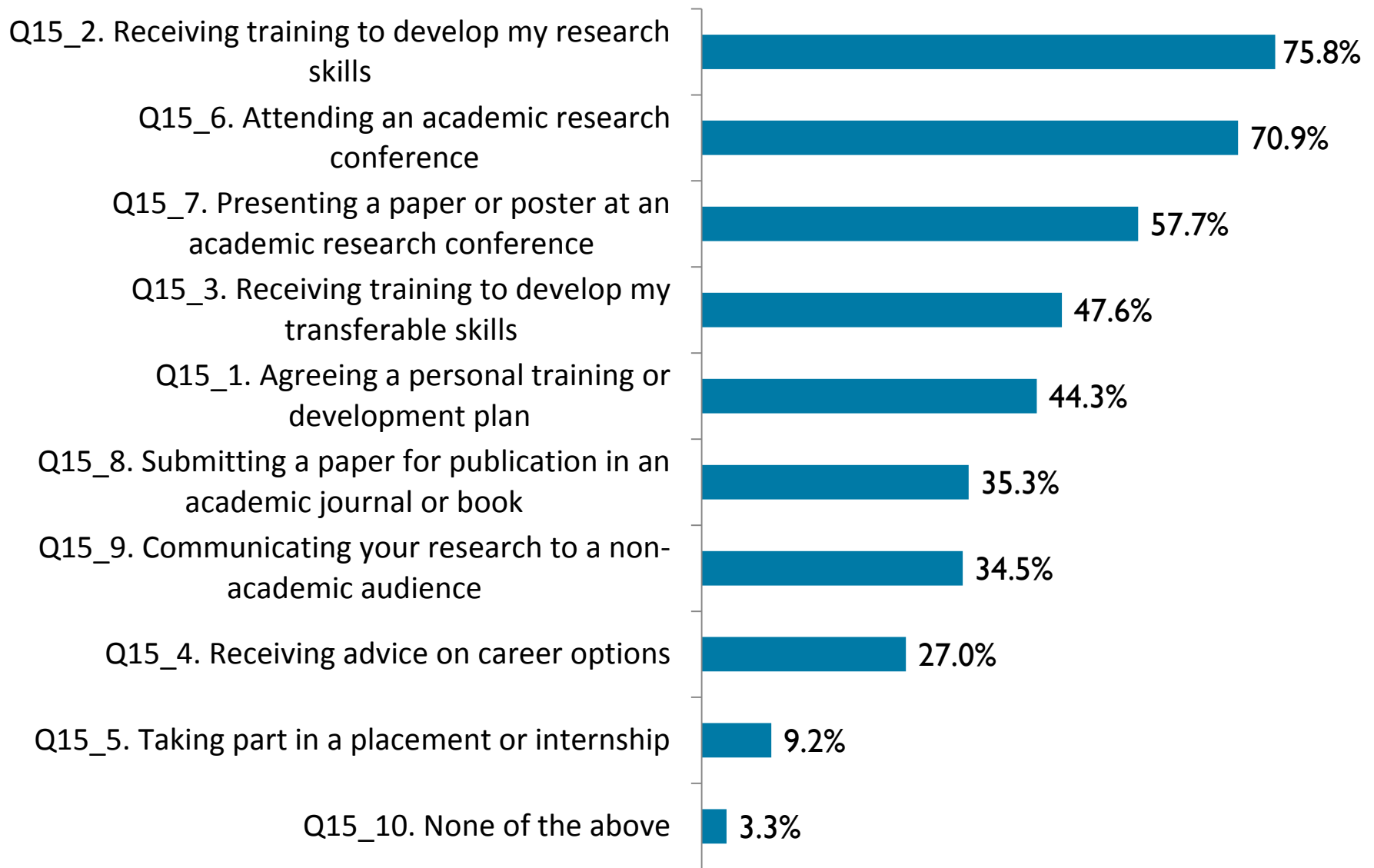


## Experience of research skills

# Results from PRES 2013

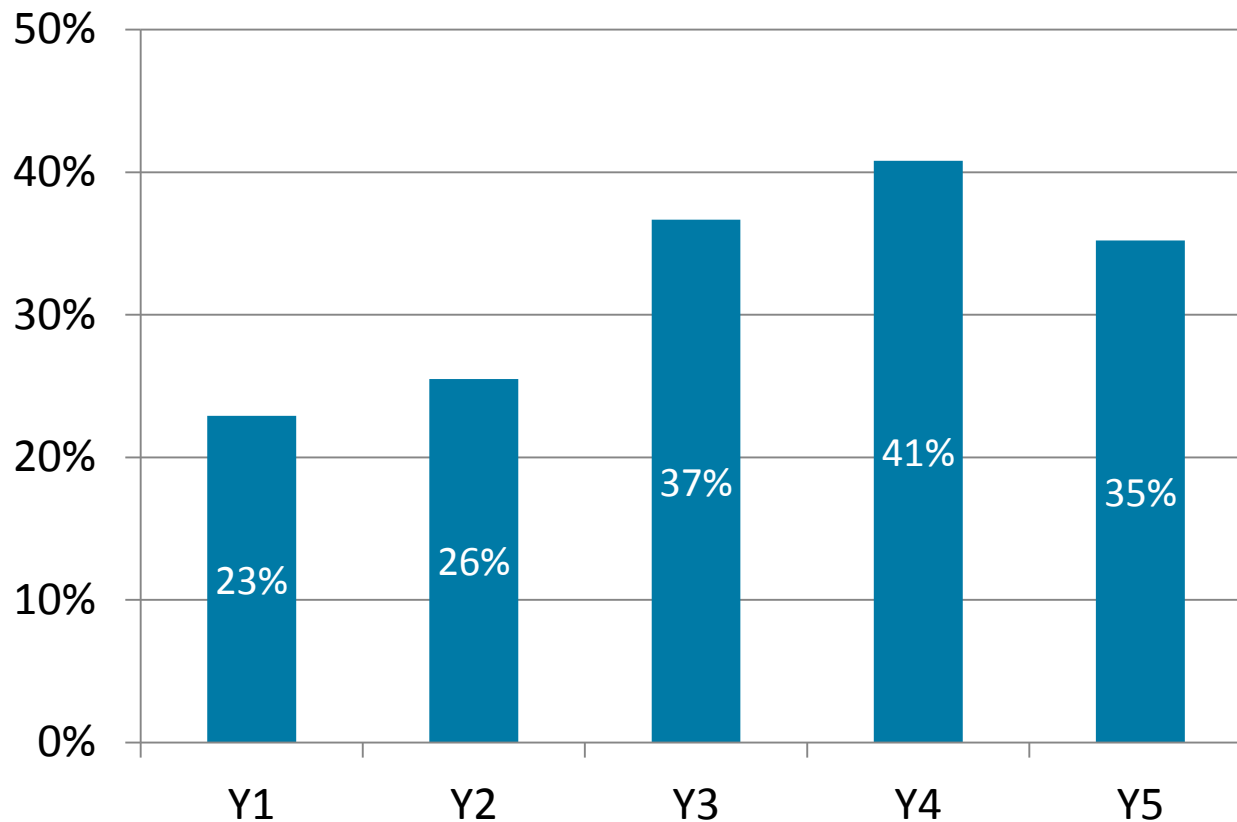


## Experience of professional development



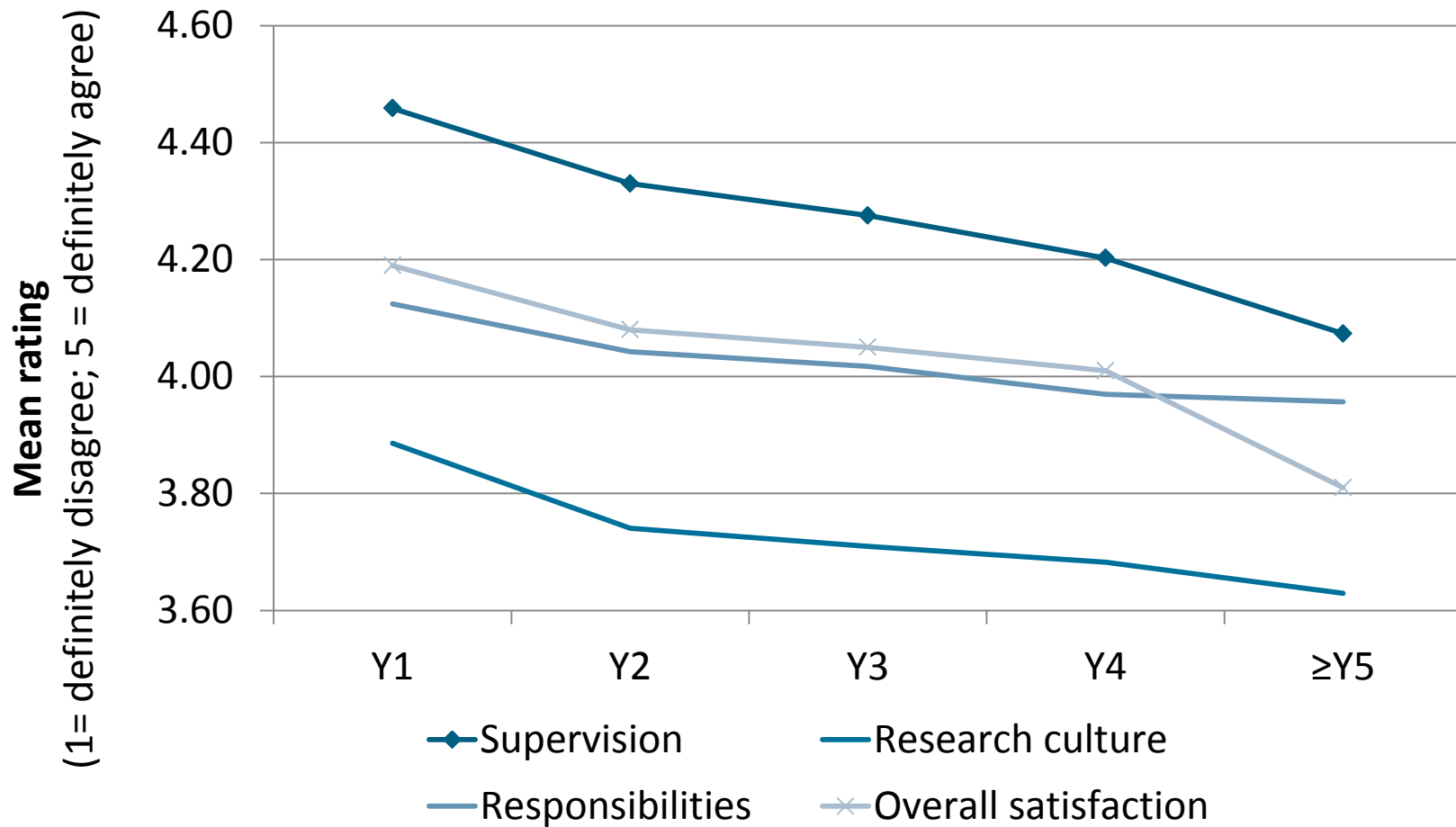
## Development opportunities

## Results from PRES 2013



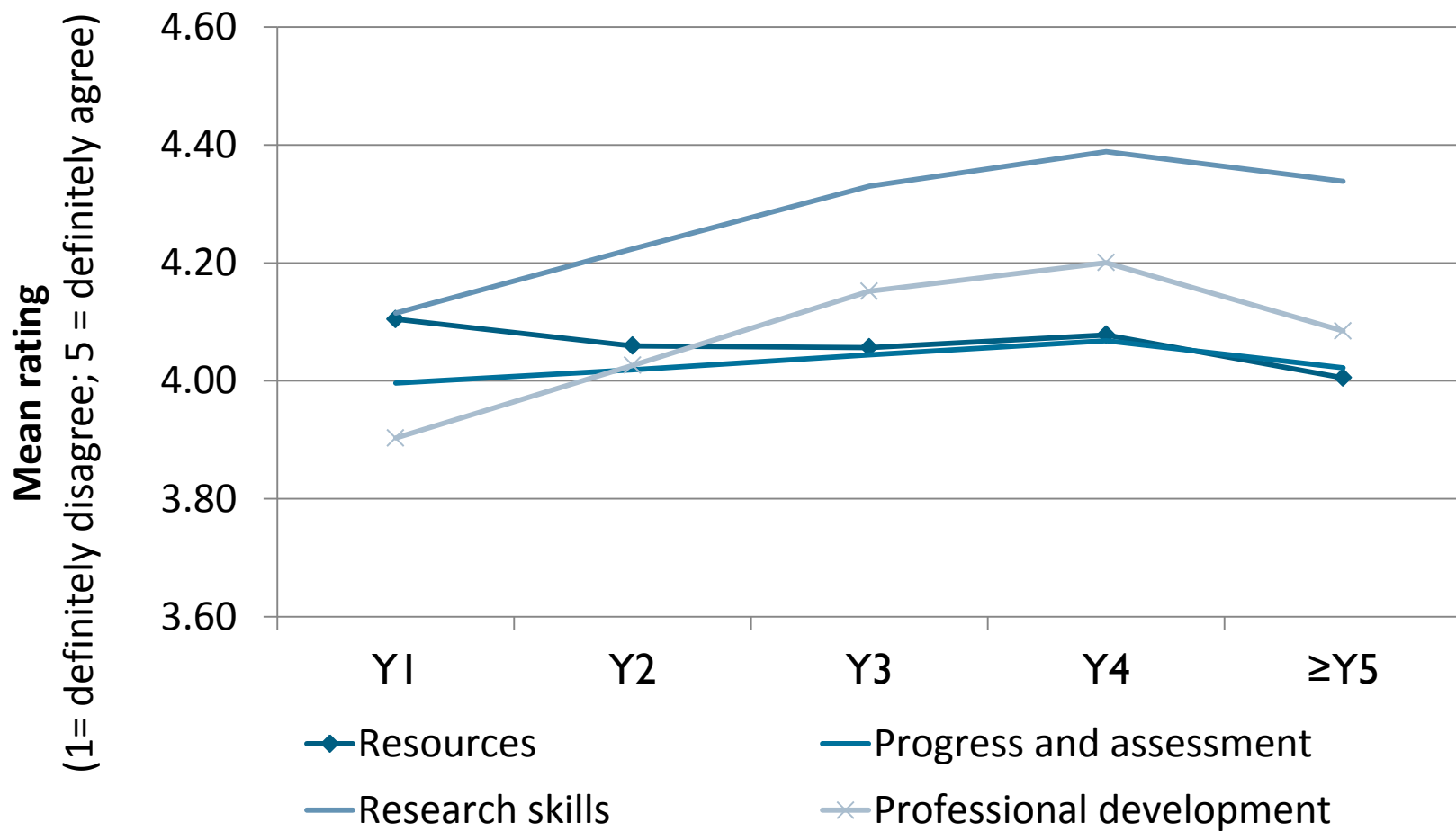
**Received career advice by year of study (full-time only)**

# Results from PRES 2013

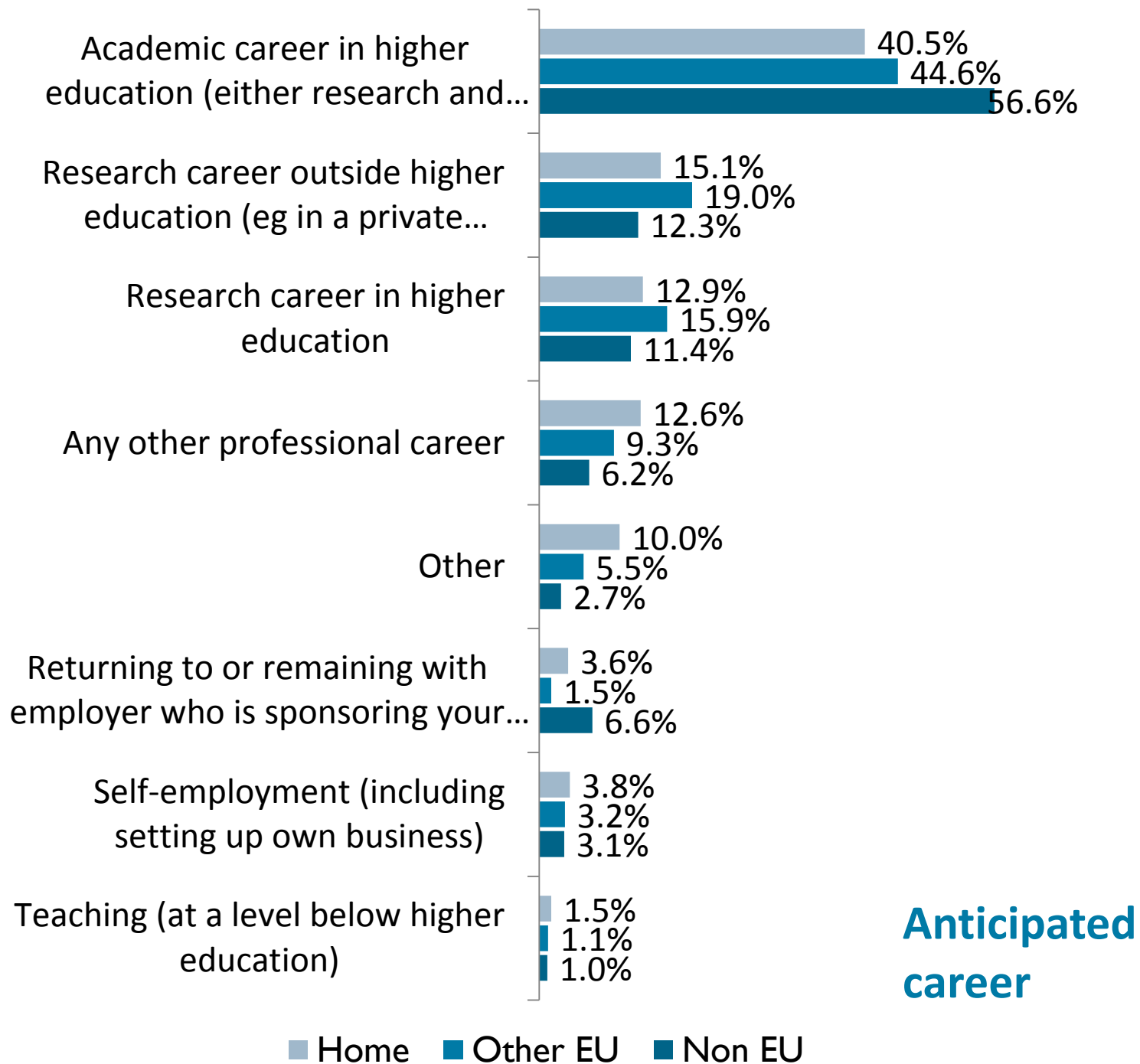


**Mean scale scores by year group (full-time only)**

# Results from PRES 2013



**Mean scale scores by year group (full-time only)**





# Results from PRES 2013

## Discussion and questions about the results

- Which results were surprising?
- What requires further investigation?
- What do the results say about the state of postgraduate research provision in the UK?
- What priorities for the sector emerge from the results?

# Enhancing researcher development with PRES



- PRES is only worthwhile if used to inform enhancement
- Benchmarking is a good starting point
- Further investigation is usually necessary
- Engaging staff at all levels is vital
- Increasing emphasis on students as partners

## Enhancement scenarios

- What might be causing the poor result(s)?
- What can you do to find out more about the causes and possible solutions?
- Who needs to act to solve the issue and what might encourage them?
- How should results and actions be communicated to staff and students?



**Using PRES to enhance the experience  
of postgraduate researchers**

**A good practice guide**

**PRES good practice guide  
published September 2012**

**[www.heacademy.ac.uk/pres](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/pres)**

## Making it count

Reflecting on the National Student Survey in the process of enhancement

Alex Buckley

‘Making it Count’

NSS enhancement guide  
published October 2012

[www.heacademy.ac.uk/nss](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/nss)



## Further information

The HEA provides a range of resources, events and bespoke support for institutions and sector bodies looking to use surveys to inform enhancement

Please visit: [heacademy.ac.uk/surveys](http://heacademy.ac.uk/surveys)

Contact: [paul.bennett@heacademy.ac.uk](mailto:paul.bennett@heacademy.ac.uk)

Register for participation in the 'new' **PTES 2014**  
from 26 September