Student Attitudes, Expectations and Behaviour in a New Funding Regime

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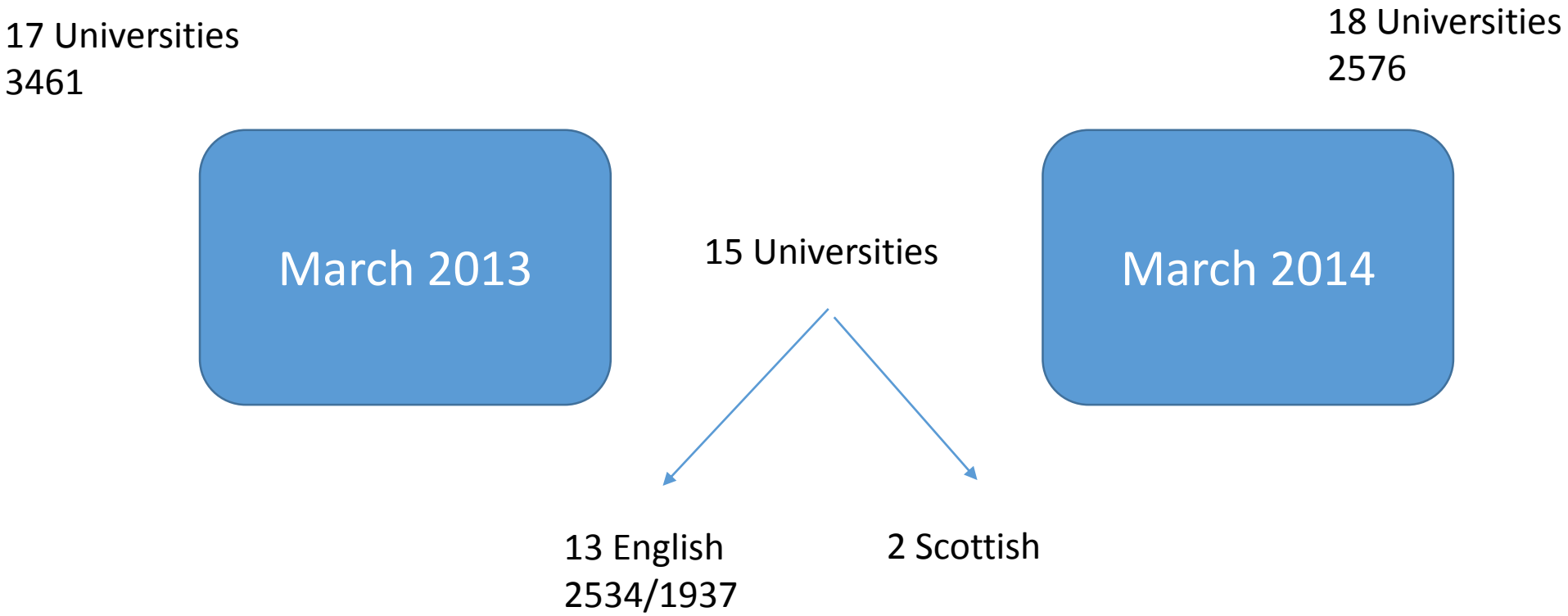
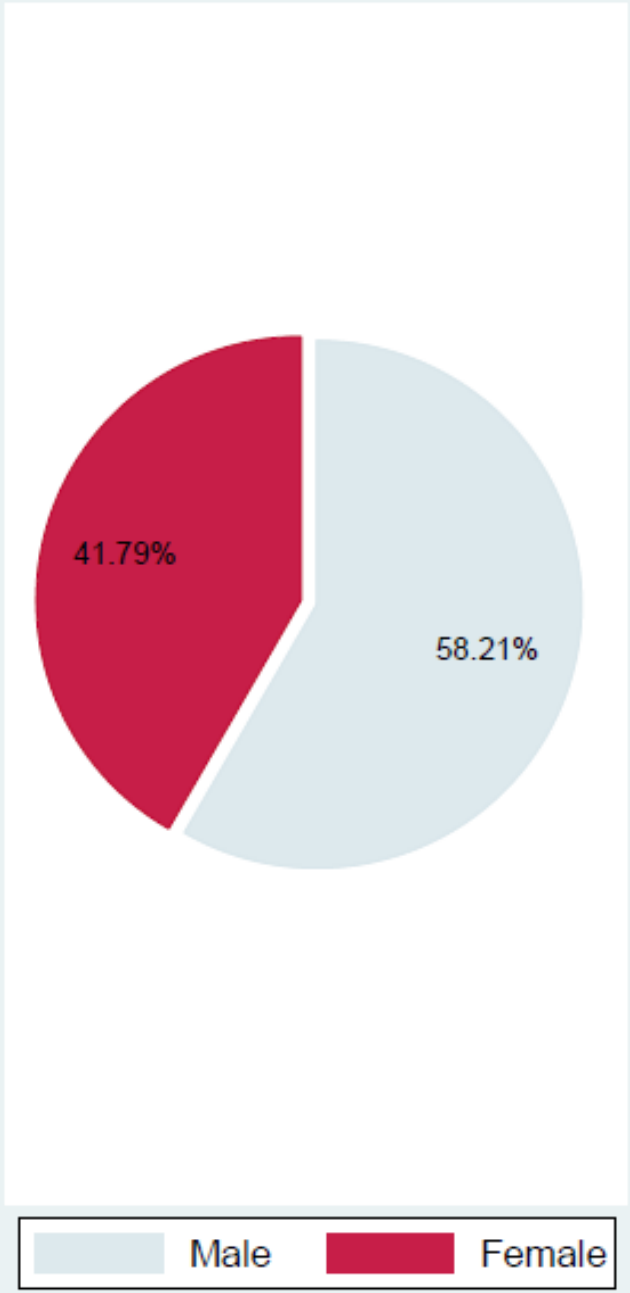
The Survey


17 Universities
3461
18 Universities
2576
March 2013
15 Universities
March 2014
13 English
2534/1937
2 Scottish

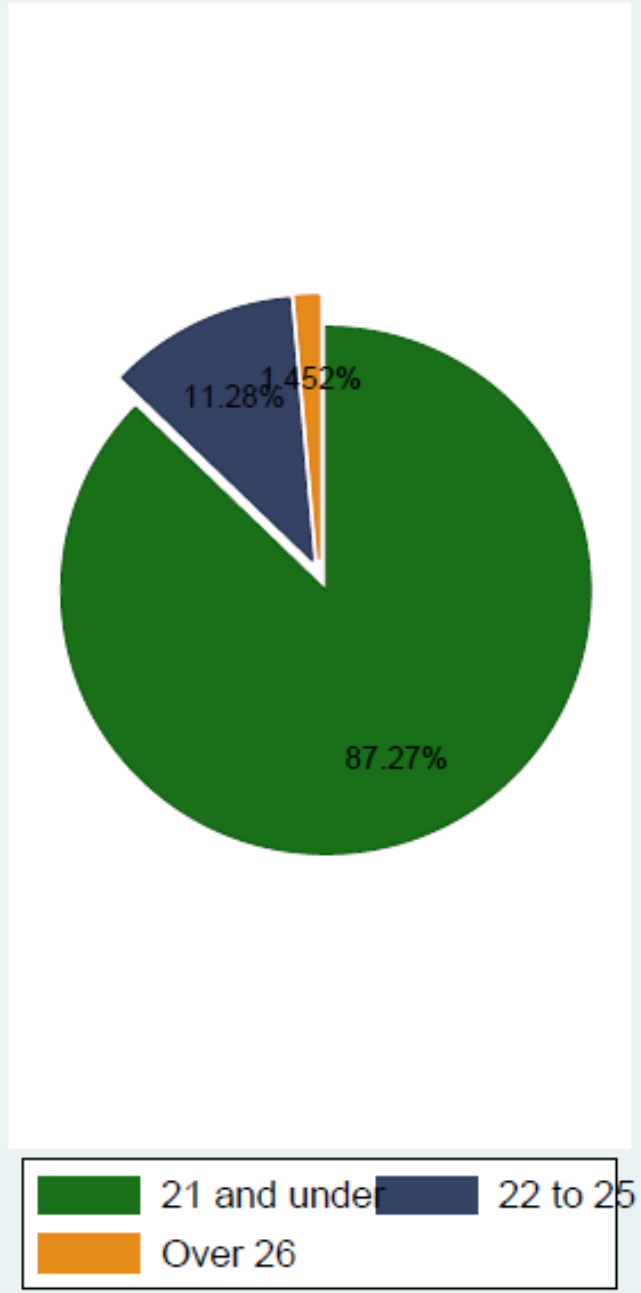
Who was surveyed?

- Core Economics Modules in Year 1 and 2
- At least 50% of degree is Economics
- Repeated cross-section will create some dependence

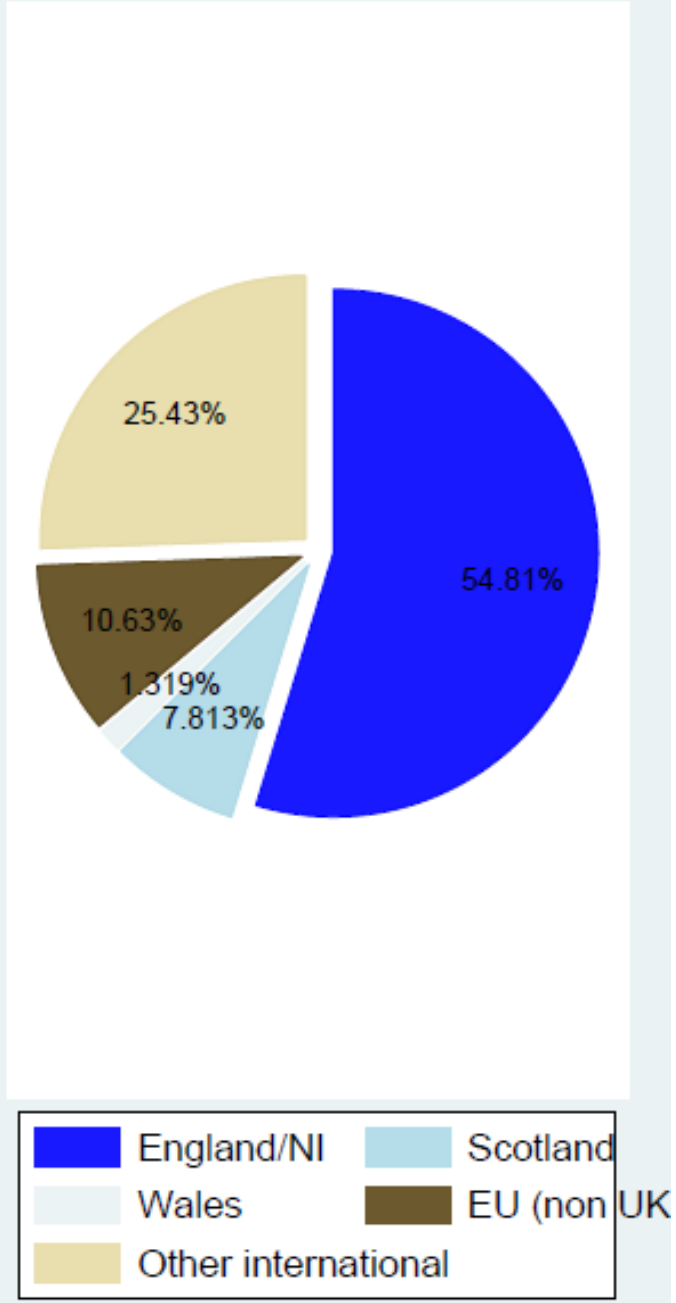
Gender distribution



Age distribution



Permanent Place of Residence



The Survey Questions

- Expectations?: class contact; assessment; access to staff; IT; workload; quality of teaching; feedback; support; skills.
- Behaviour: independent work time; paid work; attendance; submission of work
- Market / admissions: reputation; unistats; course structure; employability; city.
- All Likert scale 1-5.
- Some administrative data for comparison

Quasi Difference in Difference

	Cohort 2013	Cohort 2014
Not Treated	First Years (High)	First Years (High)
Treated	Second Years (Low)	Second Years (High)

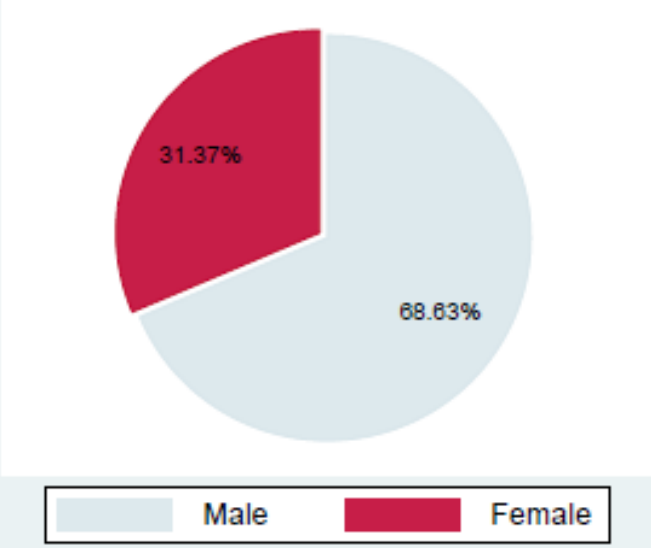
Dependency*

- Same students may have answered in 2013 and 2014. No individual data to model this.
- Check for this using clustering within universities
- And also bootstrapping errors

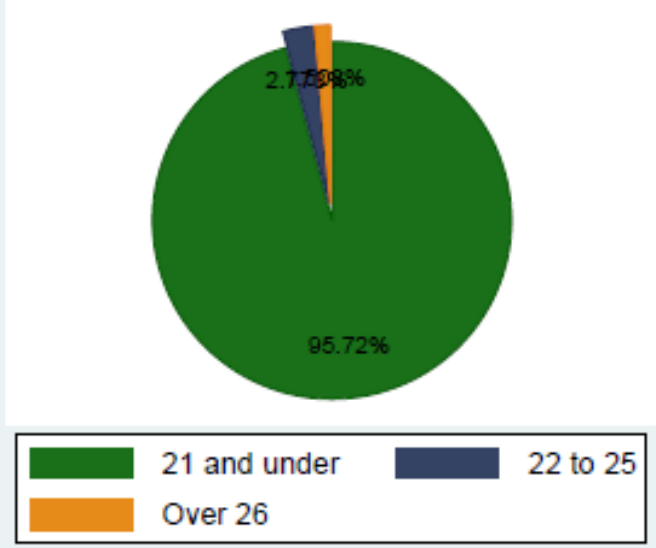
12 Universities Used in main analysis	COHORT		
YEAR	2013	2014	Total
FIRST YEAR	940	705	1,645
SECOND YEAR	707	685	1,392
TOTAL	1,647	1,390	3,037

Demographic Comparison of UCAS 1st and 2nd Year Economics Students and Survey Respondents

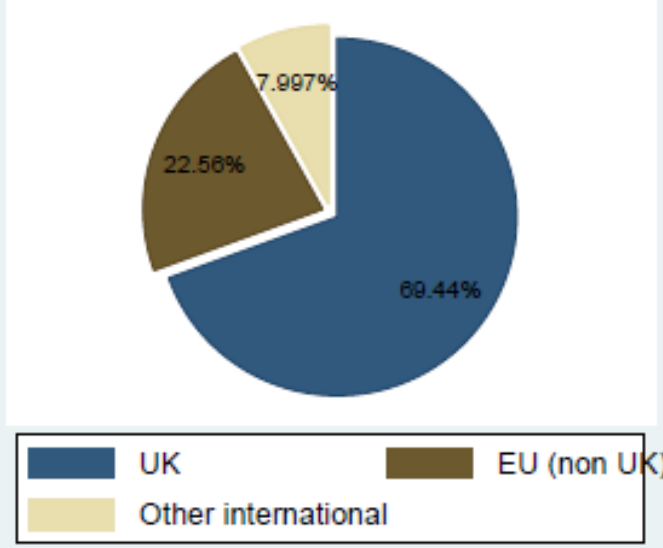
UCAS Gender distribution



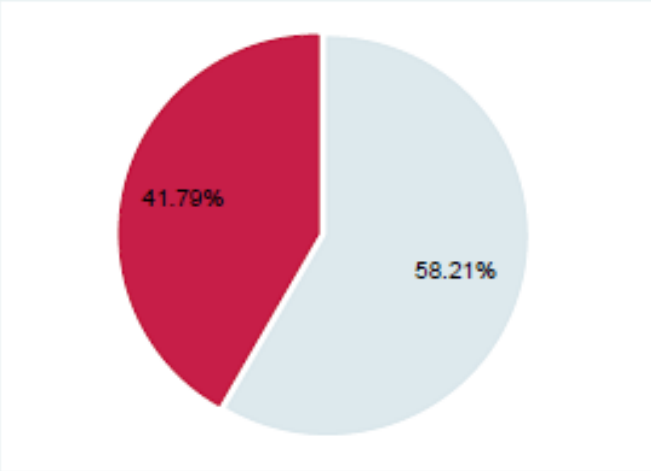
UCAS Age distribution



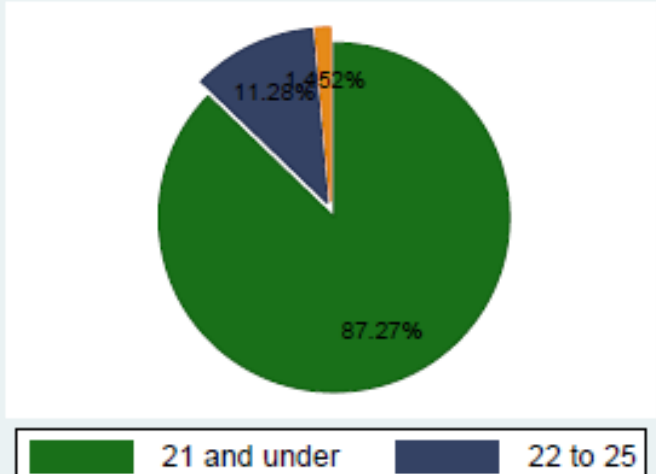
UCAS Domicile



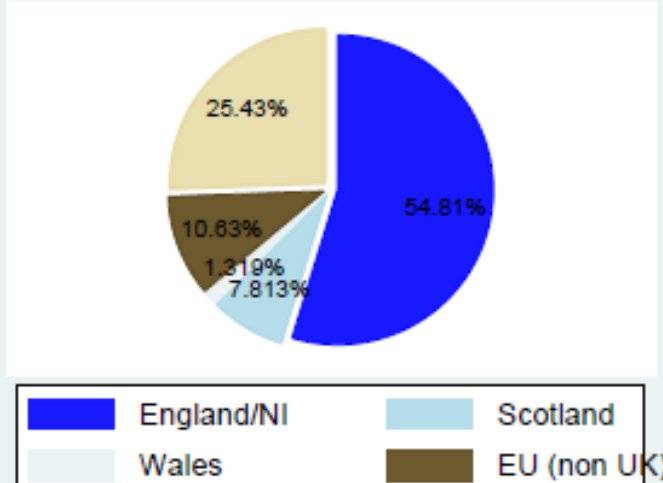
Gender distribution



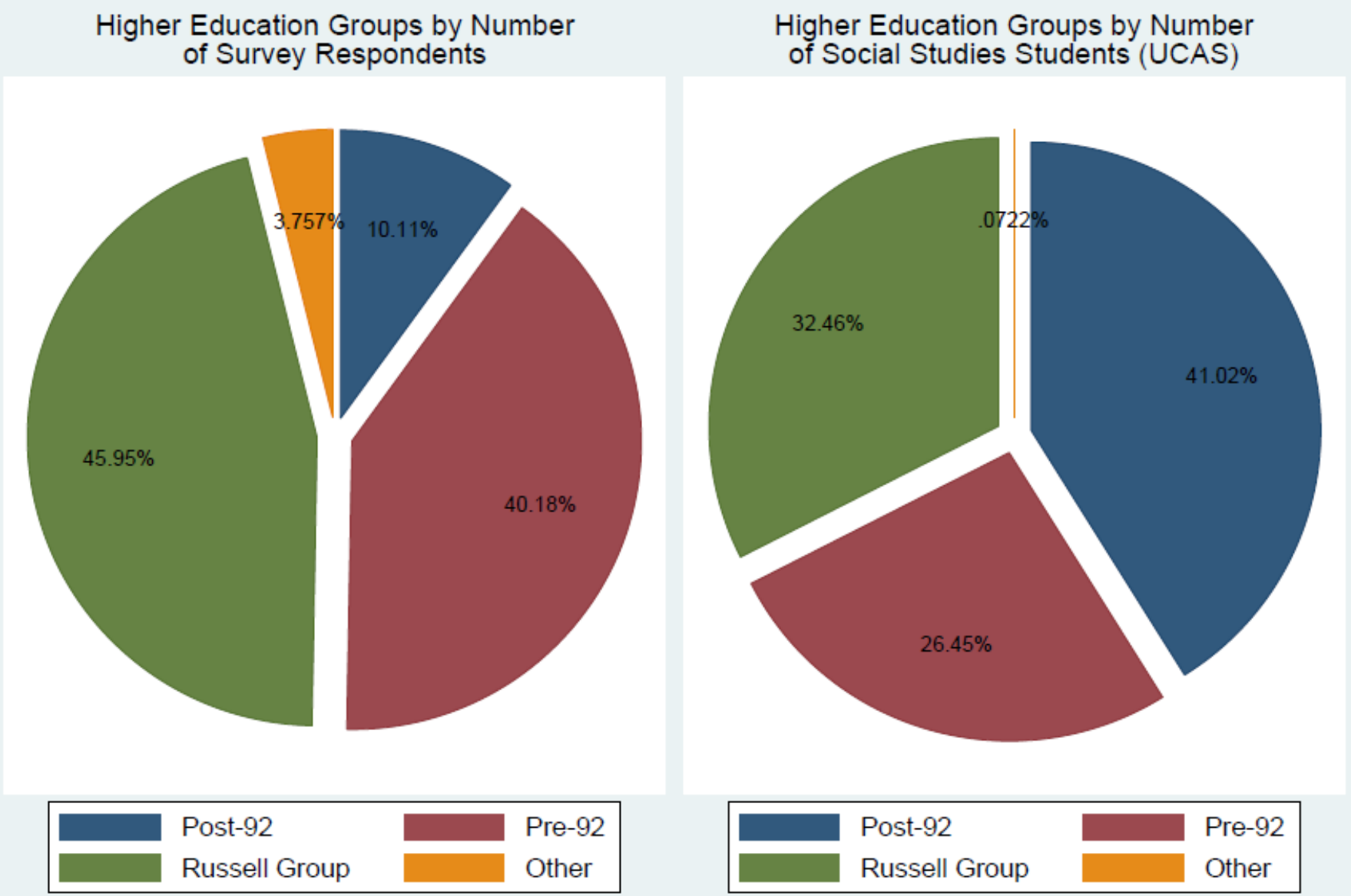
Age distribution



Permanent Place of Residence



Higher Education Groups by Numbers of Students



Specification

- We use:

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 C + \beta_2 T + \beta_3 CT + \text{other covariates}$$

C Cohort

T Treatment group

Other covariates are gender, unigroup

Unigroup is Russell, Post92, Pre92, Other

Regressions

- Likert responses collapsed into binary variables and use:
  - Logit, probit and LPM
  - With and without clustering within universities
  - Boostrapping errors

- Results are robust to different specifications
- We report the logit results with clustering
- Results sometimes sensitive to the “collapsing”

Students’ Work

Paid Work

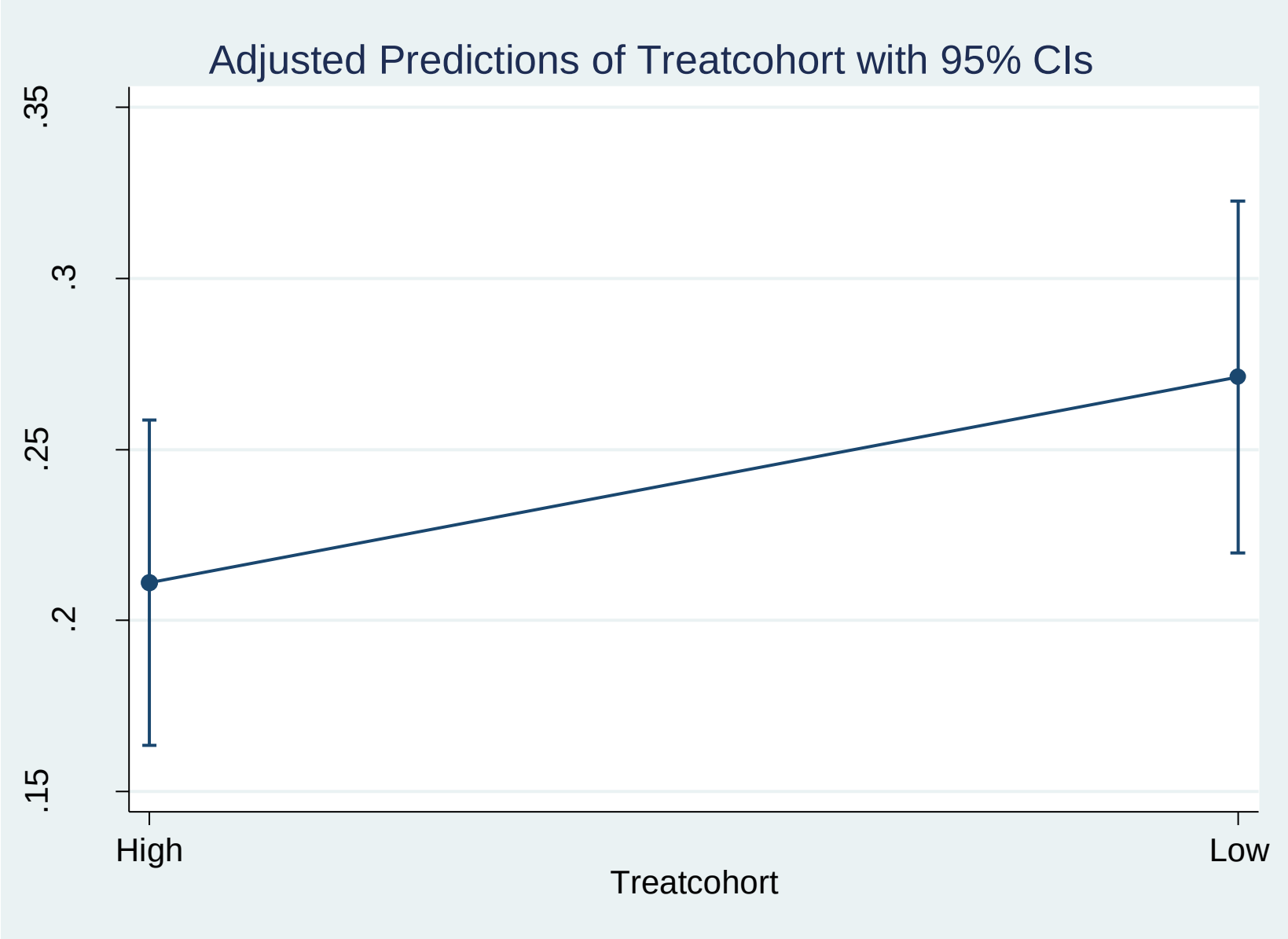
(Coding 1)

- Coded “0-5 hours” against “6 and above”. Students paying higher fees work less.
- Probability of working >6 hours for low fees = 0.18. Value falls by 0.056 for high fees – around a third.

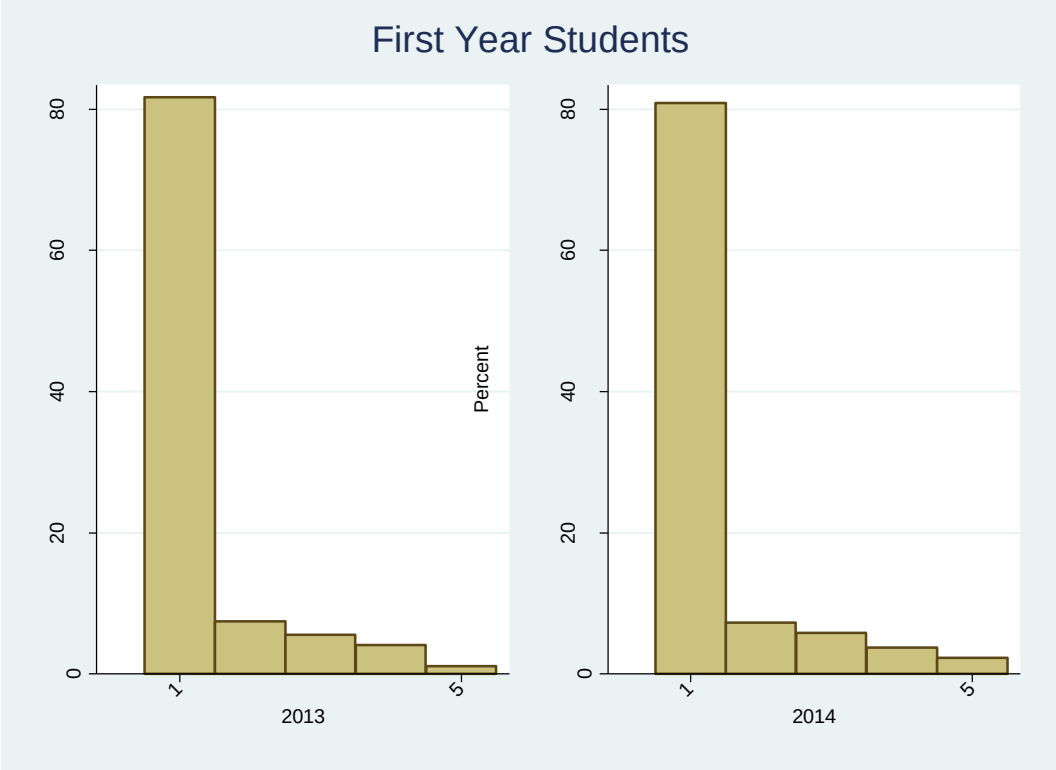
Paid Work

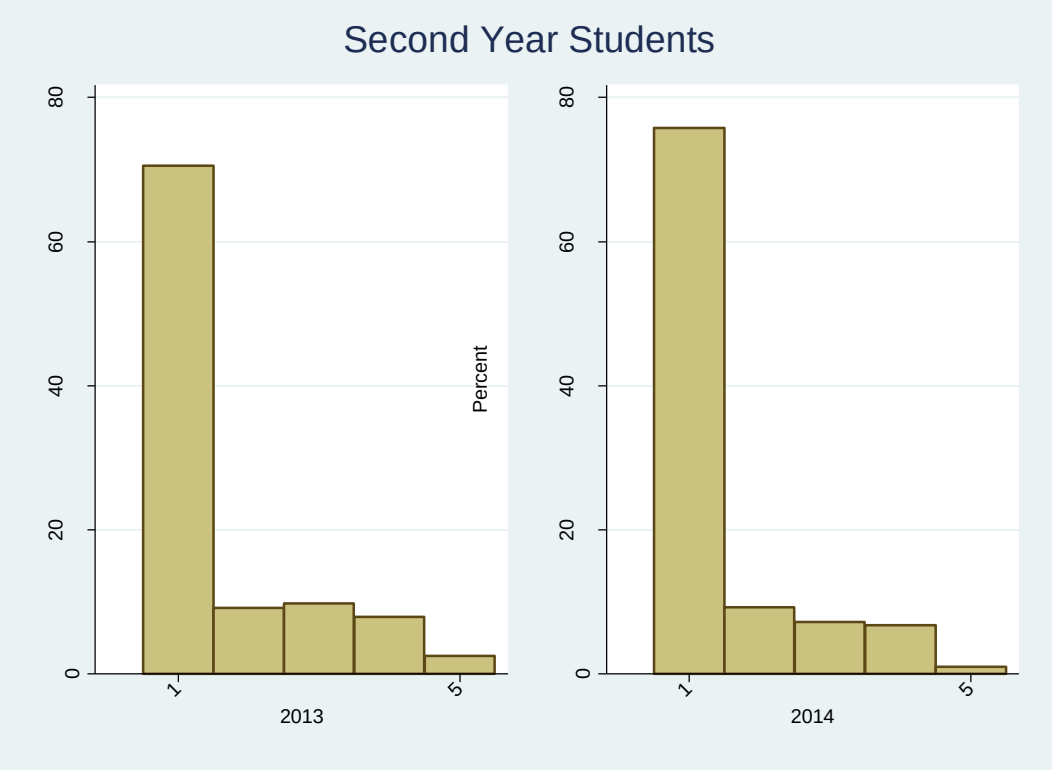
(Coding 2)

- Coded “0 hours” against “>0”. Students paying higher fees work less.
- Probability of working >6 hours for low fees = 0.26. Value falls by 0.0556 for high fees – around a fifth.


Adjusted Predictions of Treatcohort with 95% CIs
.35
.3
.25
.2
.15
High
Low
Treatcohort

Paid Work

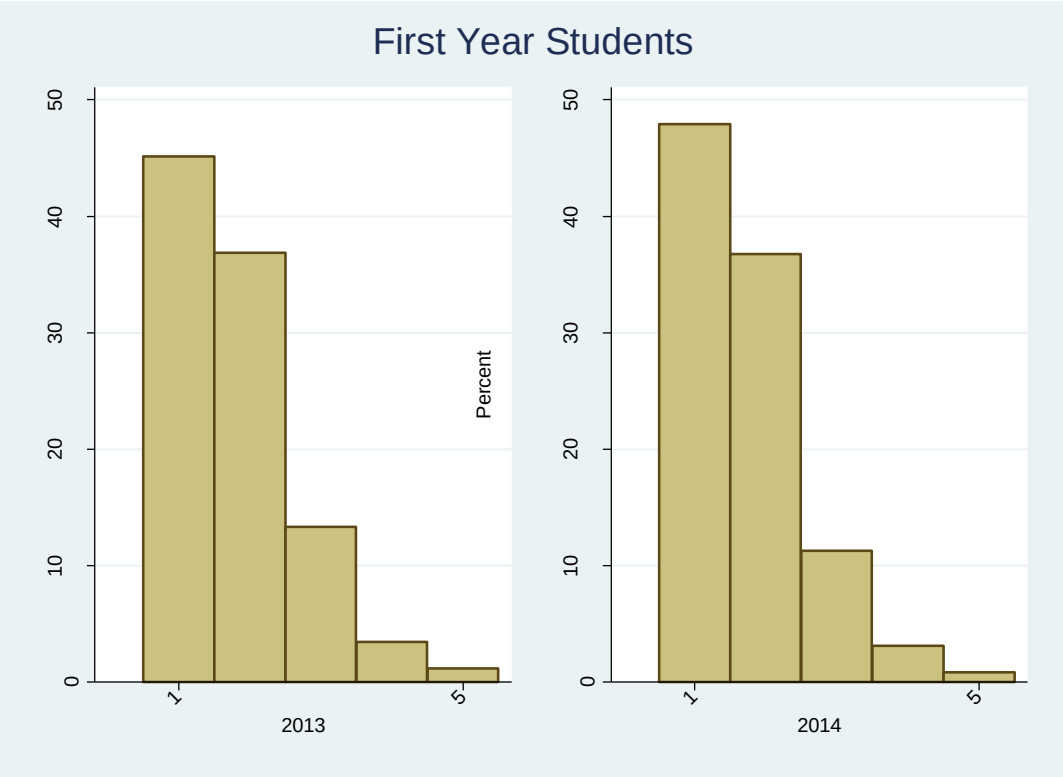

First Year Students
Percent
0
20
40
60
80
1
5
2013
2014


Second Year Students
Percent
0
20
40
60
80
1
5
2013
2014

Independent Study

- Coded as “<10” and “>10” hours.
- Prob for low fees: .56. Increases by .07 (around an eighth).

Independent Study



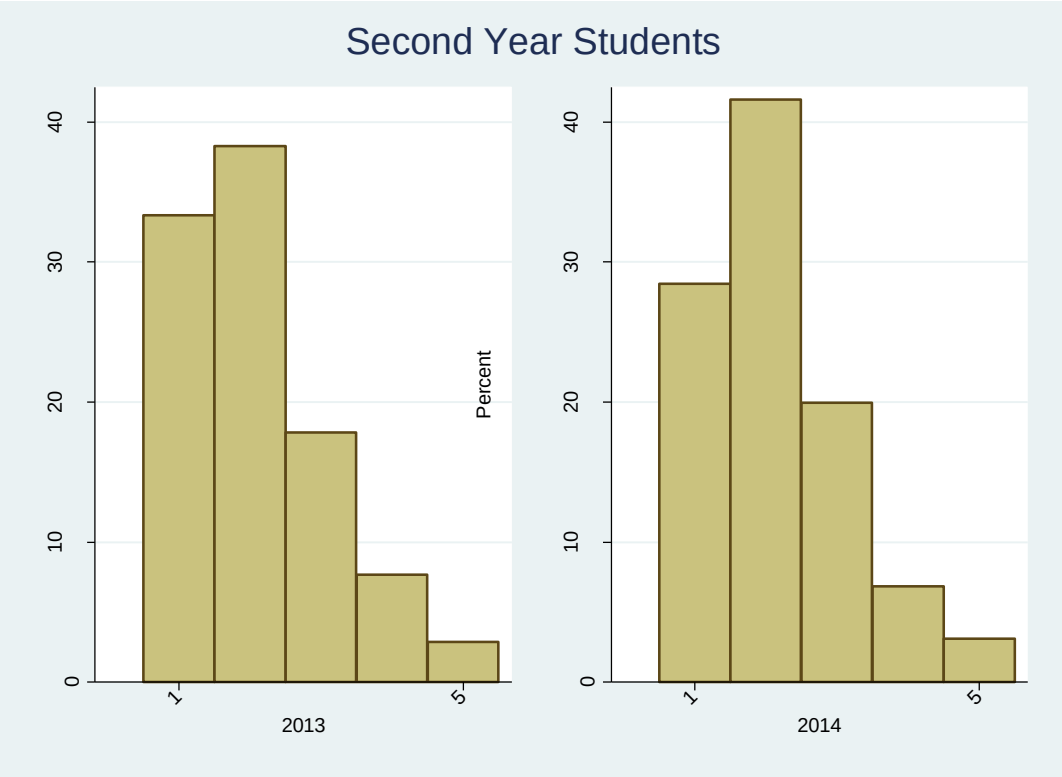
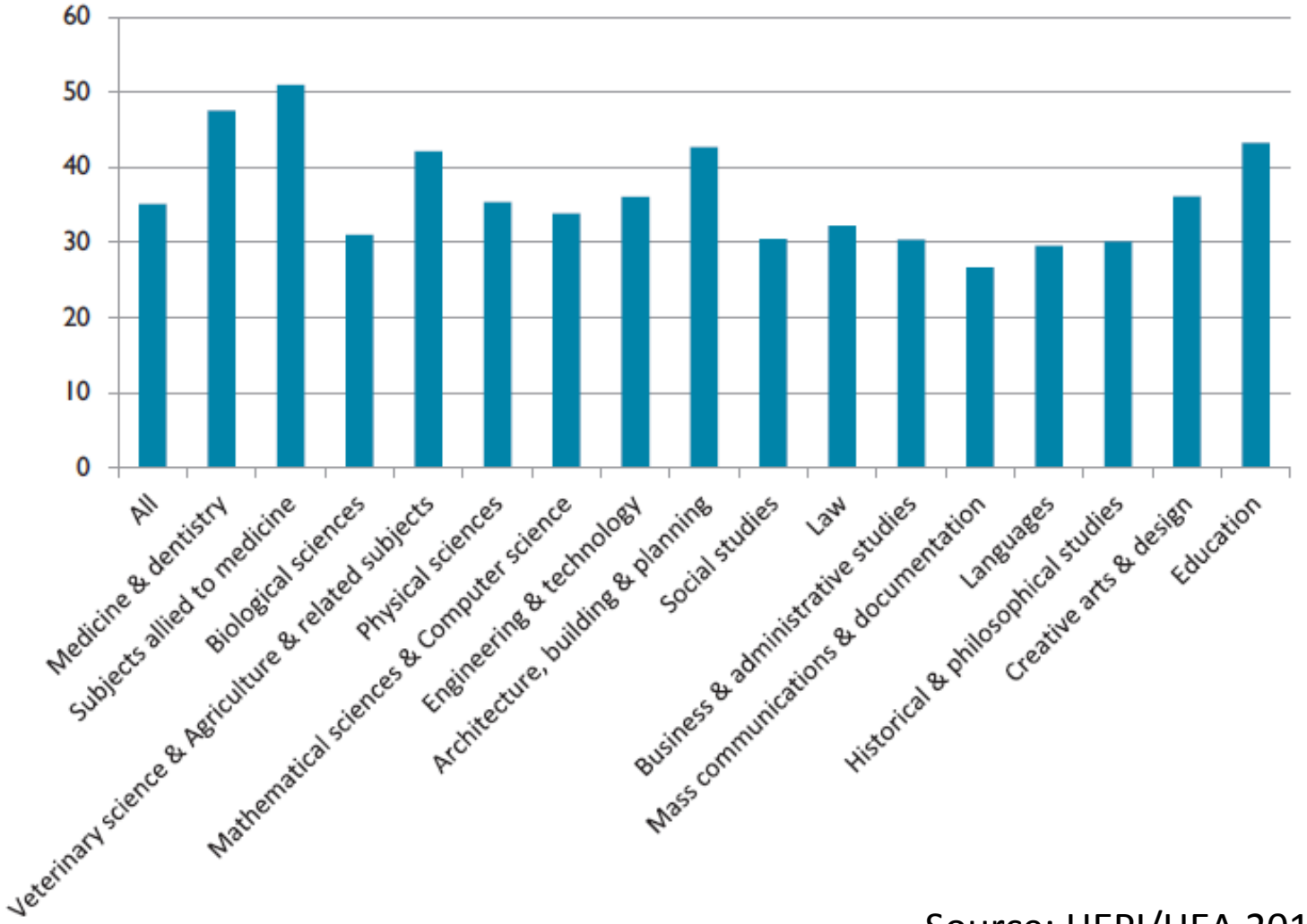


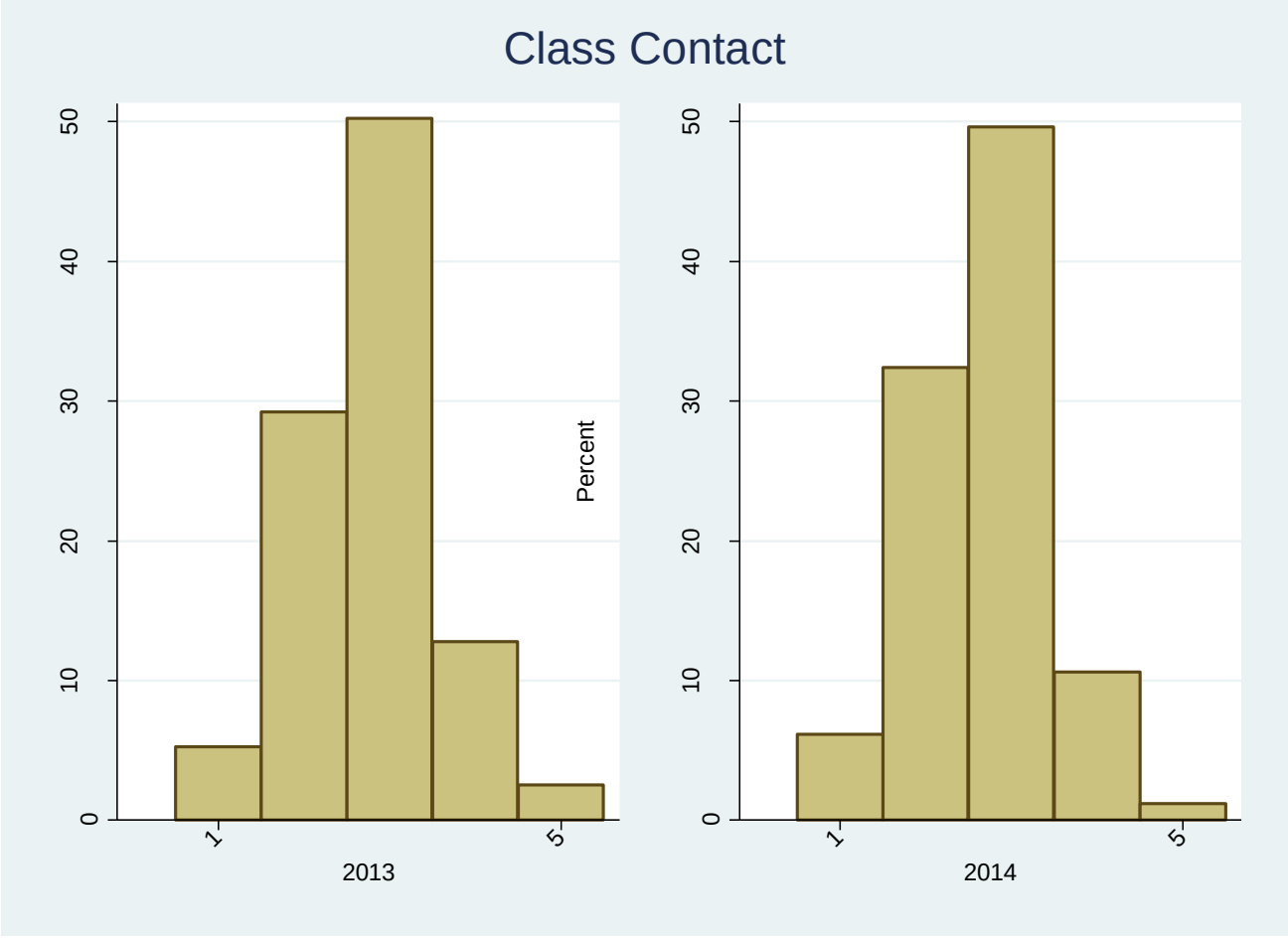
Figure 15: Total workload hours by discipline



Source: HEPI/HEA 2014

The Course

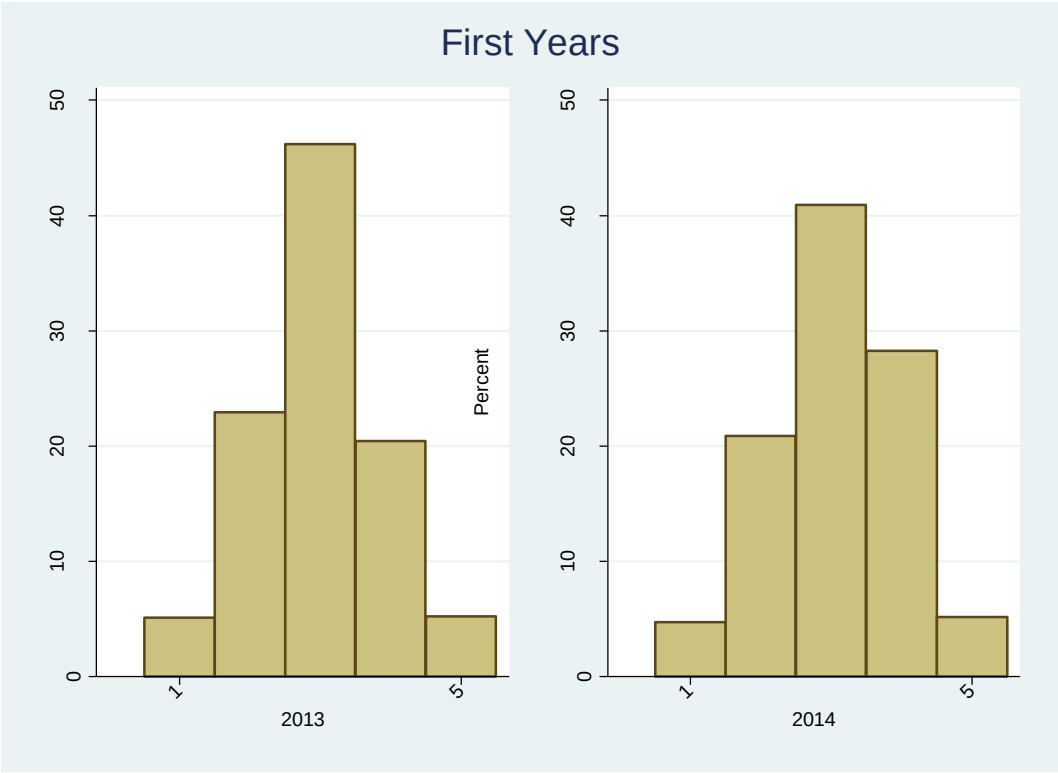
Class contact time?

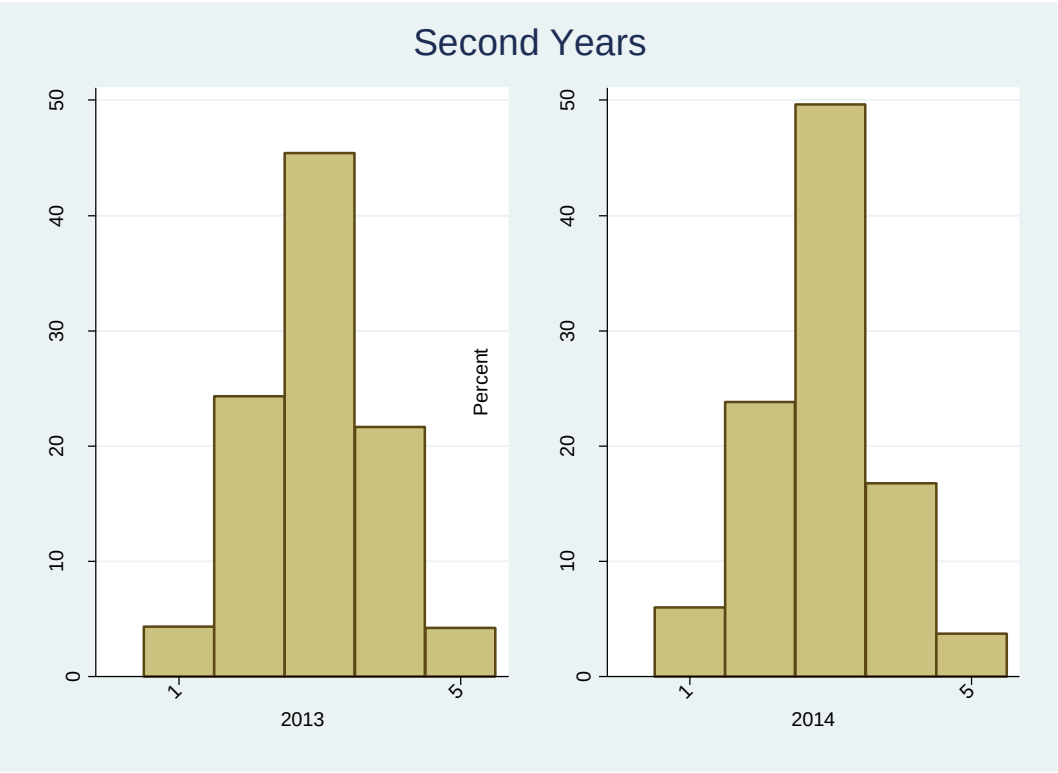


Quantity of IT and E-learning

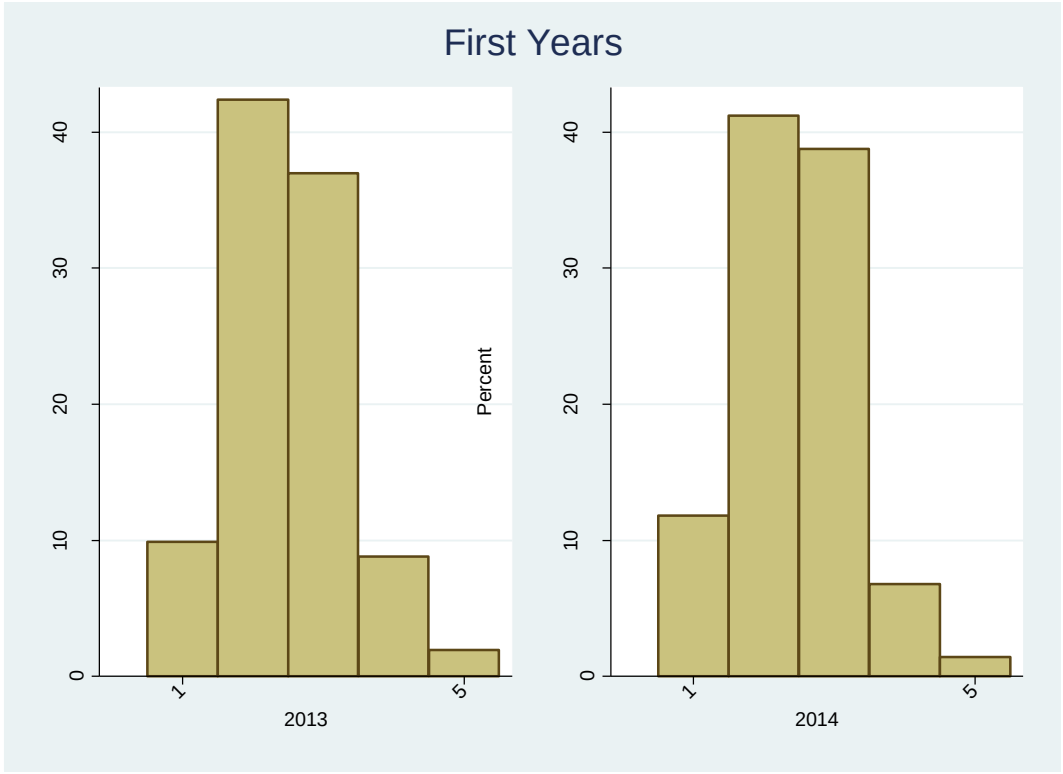
- Coded as “More/Sig more” and “Matches or less” than expectations.
- Prob for low fees: .39. Falls by .15 (almost a half).

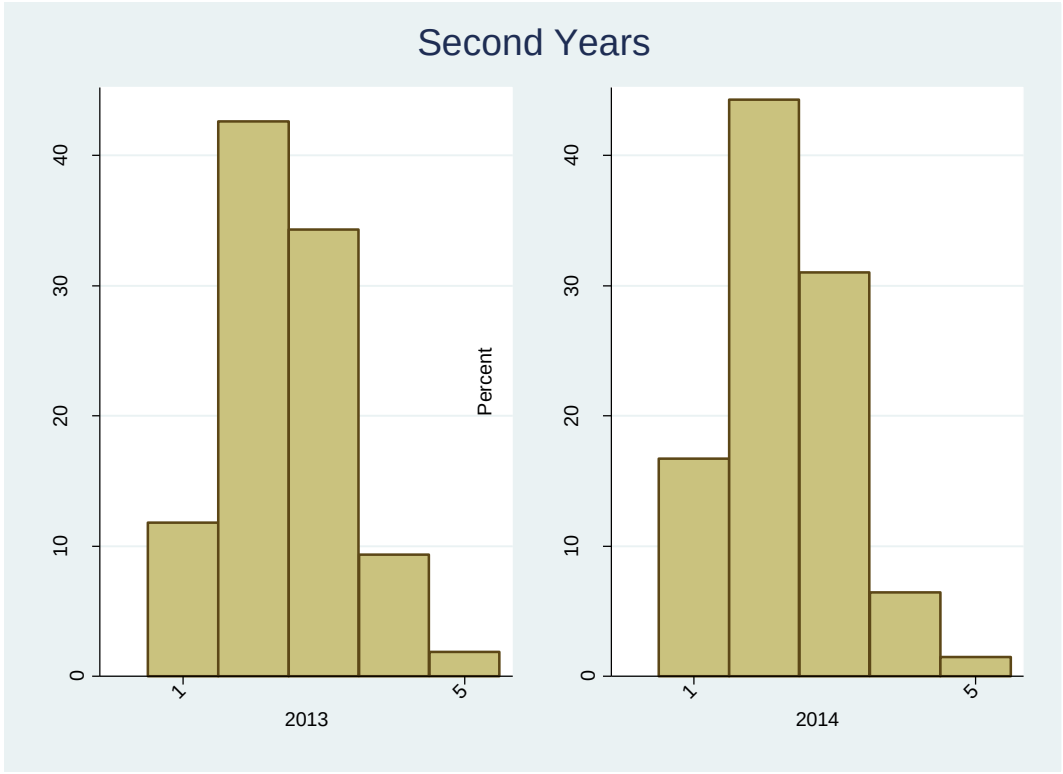
IT and E-Learning





Quality of Feedback



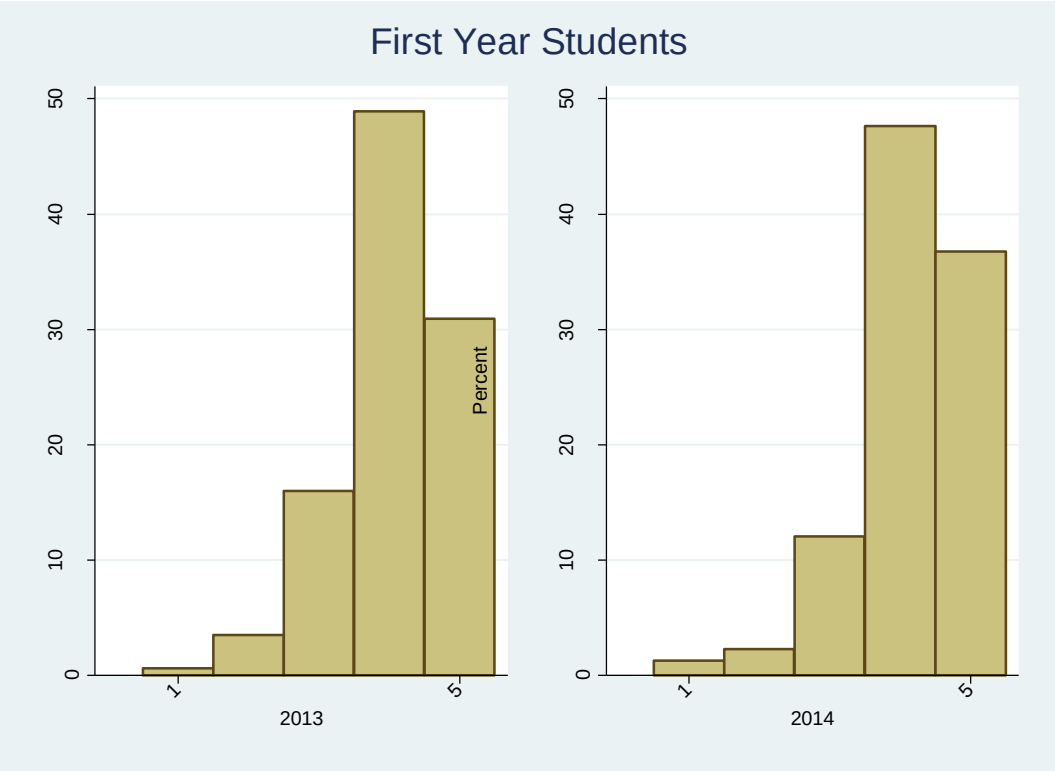


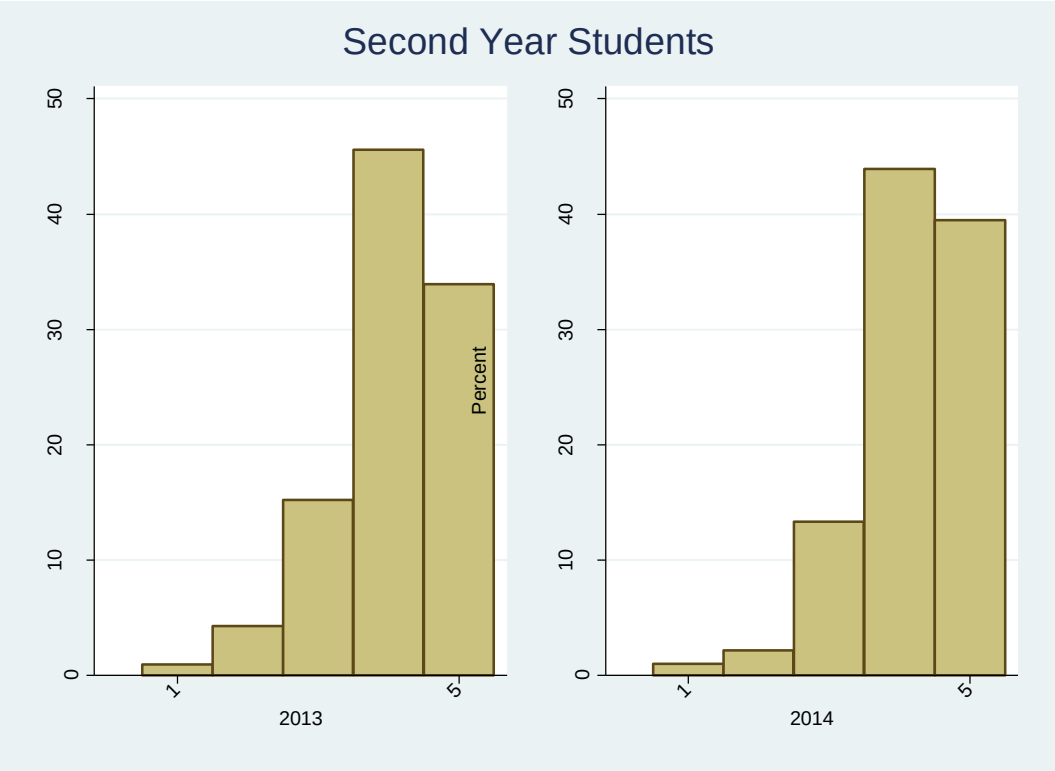
Group Work

- Formative group work: High fees students more likely to say that there was more than expected (from around 7% of students to around 12%).

Market Variables

Location of the University





Reputation of the University

- Important for non-Russell Group.
- Prob of saying “SA” increases by .17 from 0.24 to 0.41.
- Importance increasing over time (independently of high fees)

Other “market” variables

- Content is important (but becomes insignificant with clustering)
- Employability – no high fees effect but its importance increases over time (prob of SA increases over 2013-4 by 0.04 from 2013 [0.6] to 2014 [0.64])
- Induction: high fees students are less likely to have found this valuable or very valuable.
- No effect of skills variables: Problemsolving, Essays, Writing, Presentation, Application

Russell Group Only

- Reduction in satisfaction with lecturer contact (12/345) – (fall in prob 0.1 to 0.06)
- Evidence of increased dissatisfaction due to feedback quality (123/45) (.11 to 0.06)
- Support: high fee payers less likely to be satisfied (.25 to .15)
- More exams than expected (prob 0.1 to 0.14 with high fees)
- More essays/assignments than expected (prob 0.04 to 0.1 with high fees)

Summary

- Student responses are not markedly different across most questions
- Evidence of a more discerning/critical “consumer” in some areas
- Evidence of more competition (location, reputation)
- More independent work and less paid work
- Little evidence of concern with skills in the course
- Feedback is an increasingly important area of concern
- RG: over-assessment; student support.