

Degree Apprenticeships or Apprenticeship Degrees?

**What do young people and their parents
think?**



Background

- Fourth industrial revolution - Degree Apprenticeships – established in 2015
- Government reform 2020; Apprenticeships to fill skills gap
- Incentive to increase uptake of degree apprenticeships

Background – Growing support

- Education providers (universities and colleges) offering degree apprenticeships N=5 in 2014-2015, to N= 103 in 2017-2018.
- Perceptions of employers, too, have been reported as positive toward degree apprenticeships.

Background – Meeting a specific purpose?

- $1/4$ = only way of obtaining a degree
- 10% - only means of engaging with higher education

Background – Increasing uptake but more work remains

- 2017-2018, N=10,870 apprenticeships at Level 6 (equivalent to Bachelors) and Level 7 (equivalent to Masters). More than all previous years combined.
- >3% of apprentices overall & >2% studying at an equivalent level

Research Aim(s) & objectives

- The purpose of our work is to build upon our existing work in this area, in which we explored knowledge of, and perceptions of degree apprenticeships among young people and their parents – presented here.
- More effective IAG – dual nature of degree apprenticeships? Vocational, academic or both?
- Motivations, aspirations and intended destinations

Methodology

Mixed – methods (questionnaires & focus groups)

Methodology

Areas for discussion

- Personal details (socio-demographics)
- Plans for the future (post-18)
- Motivating factors for the future e.g. earning a lot money/being considered well-educated
- Knowledge of degree apprenticeships and other post-18 options
- Views around degree apprenticeships.

Methodology

Survey Monkey Questionnaire- Procedure

Students

10-15 minutes completion.
Completed under exam
conditions/free time (at
the discretion of the
school)

Parents

5-10 minutes in free time
– sent via schools

Methodology

Questionnaire- Sample

Students

- N=800 students in years 10 and year 12 across 11 schools initially took part
- Analytical sample N=521
- 55% female, 43% male and 2% identified as trans-male
- Year 12 students made up 81% of the sample
- Just over 50% identified as white, and 0-2% of students identified as White and Black African or mixed- white and Black Caribbean background, or mixed or mixed (other) background.

Parents

- N=80 parents of whom 64% parents to students in year 12.
- Around 84% of parents identified as white, 3% of mixed ethnicity, 2% Asian British and 8% Asian Indian - 3% preferred not to not to say.
- Over 50% of parents – degree/post-graduate degree

Methodology

Focus group- Sample

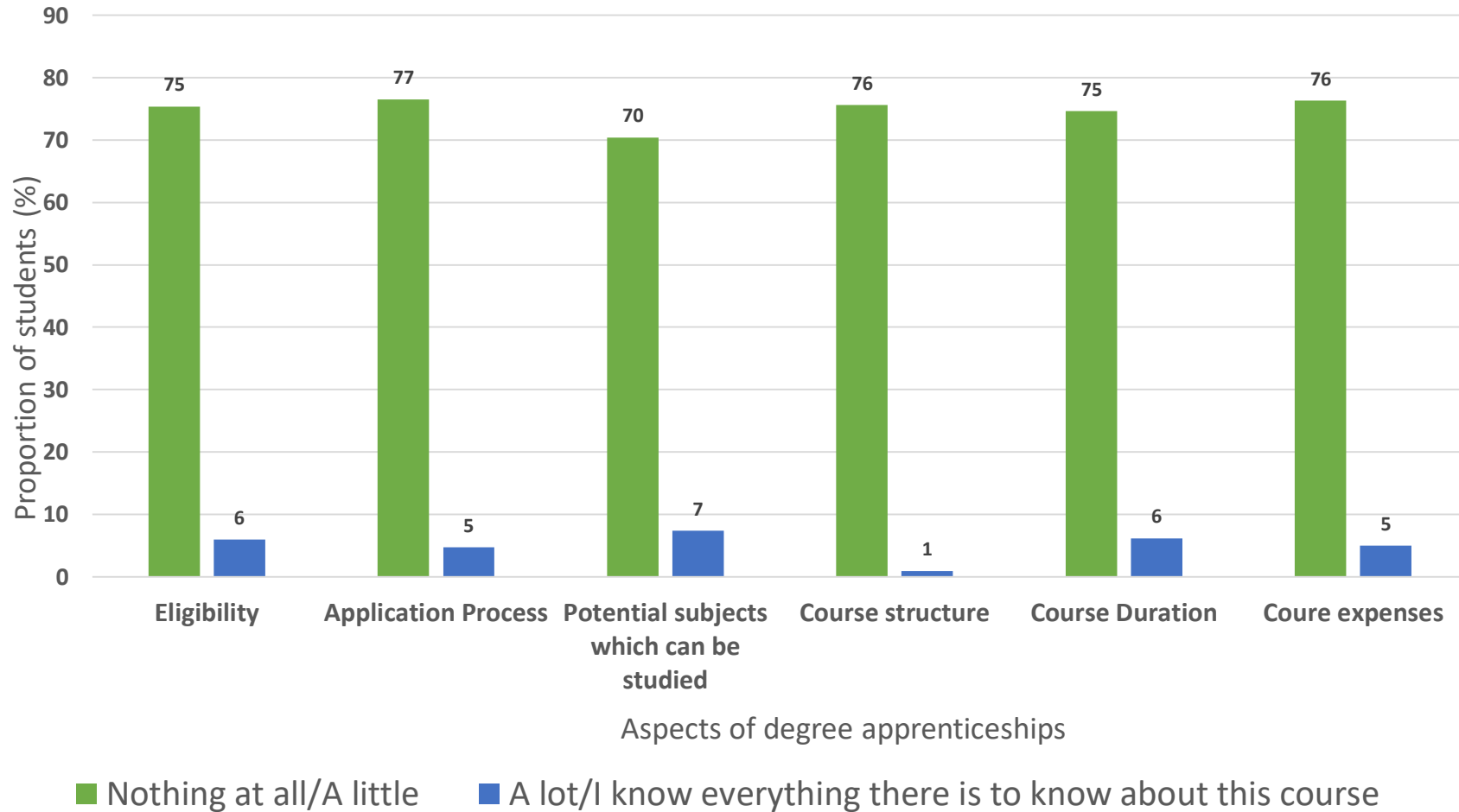
Students

- N=207 students across 15 focus groups (eight with students in year 12, and the remainder with students in year 10), in 9 schools.
- Largest proportion (40%) – SE
- Around 25% each in Y&H, and SW
- Less than 10% from NE, and less than 2% from NE
- Predominantly white

Parents

- N=13 parents across three focus groups in SW and South SW.
- All white

Results - Student knowledge of degree apprenticeship N=422



Perceptions around degree apprenticeships

Work Experience & transferrable skills

Degree Apprenticeships or Apprenticeship Degrees?

- *With an apprenticeship you probably have more of a customer awareness. For example, the plumber, they've probably had one on one with customers before and know how to react in that environment, whereas if you've just done a degree, you don't really have that same connection. Grimsby, Year 12*
- *"If you've got like a degree apprenticeship in commercial law and you applied for a criminal law position, then they'd probably rather have someone with just a law degree because there's no point in having experience if it's not relevant" Leeds, Y12*

Perceptions around degree apprenticeships
Work Experience & transferrable skills
Degree Apprenticeships or Apprenticeship Degrees?

- *“I definitely think that an employer would look at someone who has had an apprenticeship and would think, “Great. Work experience. They’ve done it, they know what they’re doing”, but I also think that with that you get, “Oh, an apprenticeship, oh.” Like, “Oh they didn’t go to university, that’s not as good”, which is completely the wrong way to think, but I still think they employ that stigma in the working world.” Exeter, Year 12*

Student Perceptions around degree apprenticeships
Work Experience & transferrable skills
Degree Apprenticeships or Apprenticeship Degrees?

“I think for some of us in here, we’ll probably do medicine or veterinary medicine or whatever, in a heartbeat if it was available as an apprenticeship because it would give you the ability to do it and have an income and be in a working environment.” Exeter, Y12

Student Perceptions around degree apprenticeships

A less prestigious option?

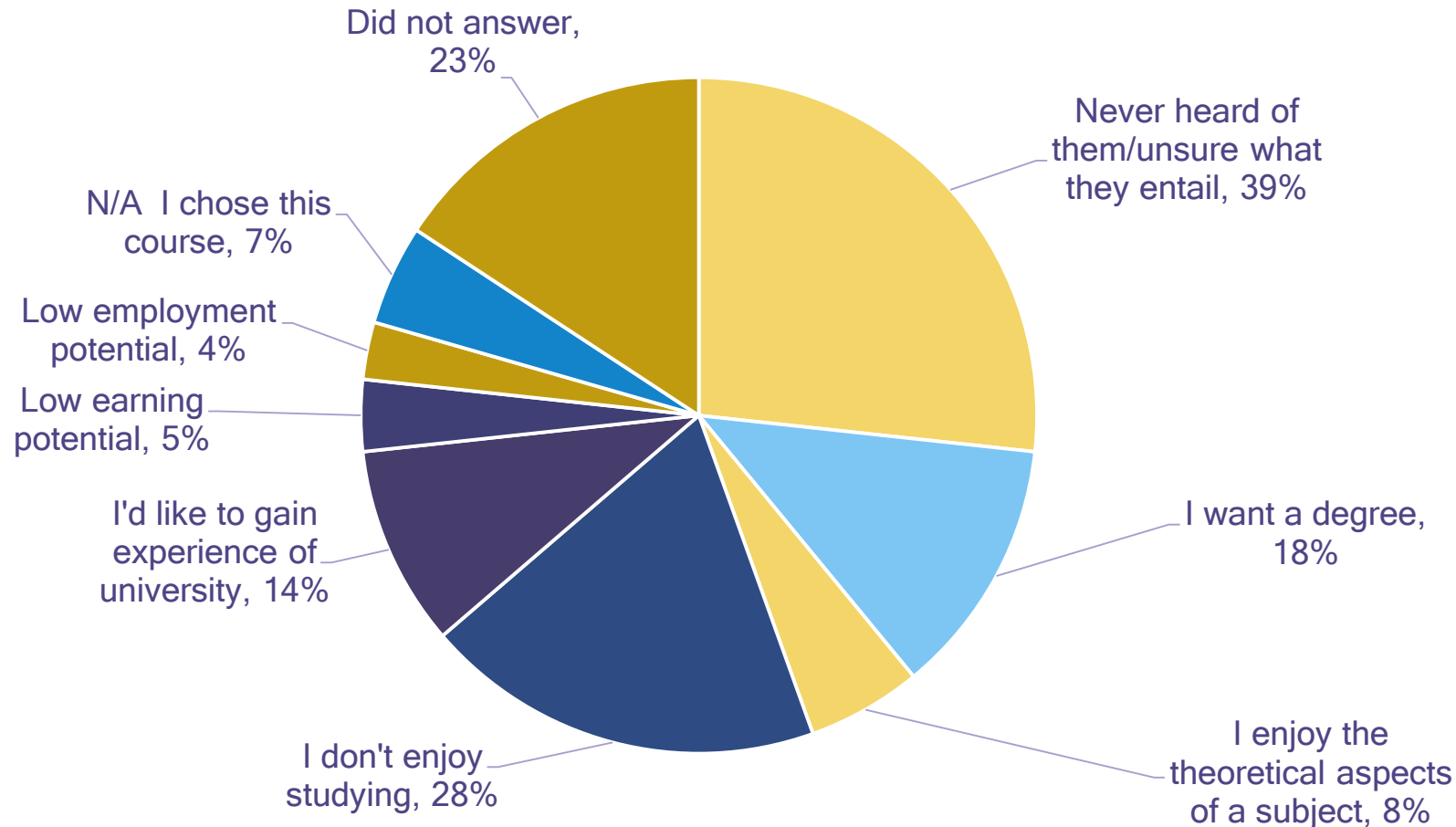
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- *“Apprenticeships are a bit more what people might think is downgrading, going to do an apprenticeship for a substitute because you don’t want to go to university.” Exeter, Year 10*
- *“When you see the word, ‘apprenticeship’, you kind of automatically associate it with lower achieving, even though it’s not.” Exeter, Year 12*
- *“I think it’s (Apprenticeships) are shown as a more, easier route to go down than going to a university.” Bodmin, Year 12*

Student Perceptions around degree apprenticeships

A less prestigious option?

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Motivation, Aspiration & Intended Destination

Students reported destination at 18/19? N=521



Motivation, Aspiration & Intended Destination

Students reported destination at 18/19? N=521

The importance of different factors in choosing future courses at age 18/19 N=512				
	%			
	Extremely/Very important	Somewhat important	Not at all important/Not so important	Did not answer
Earning money as soon as I can	52	32	11	5
Being qualified for a range of careers	61	24	11	4
Avoiding debt	69	16	11	4
Obtaining practical	78	15	4	3
Developing relationships with employers	72	20	5	3
Opportunities to socialise	65	21	9	5
Social life- meeting like-minded people	72	19	5	4

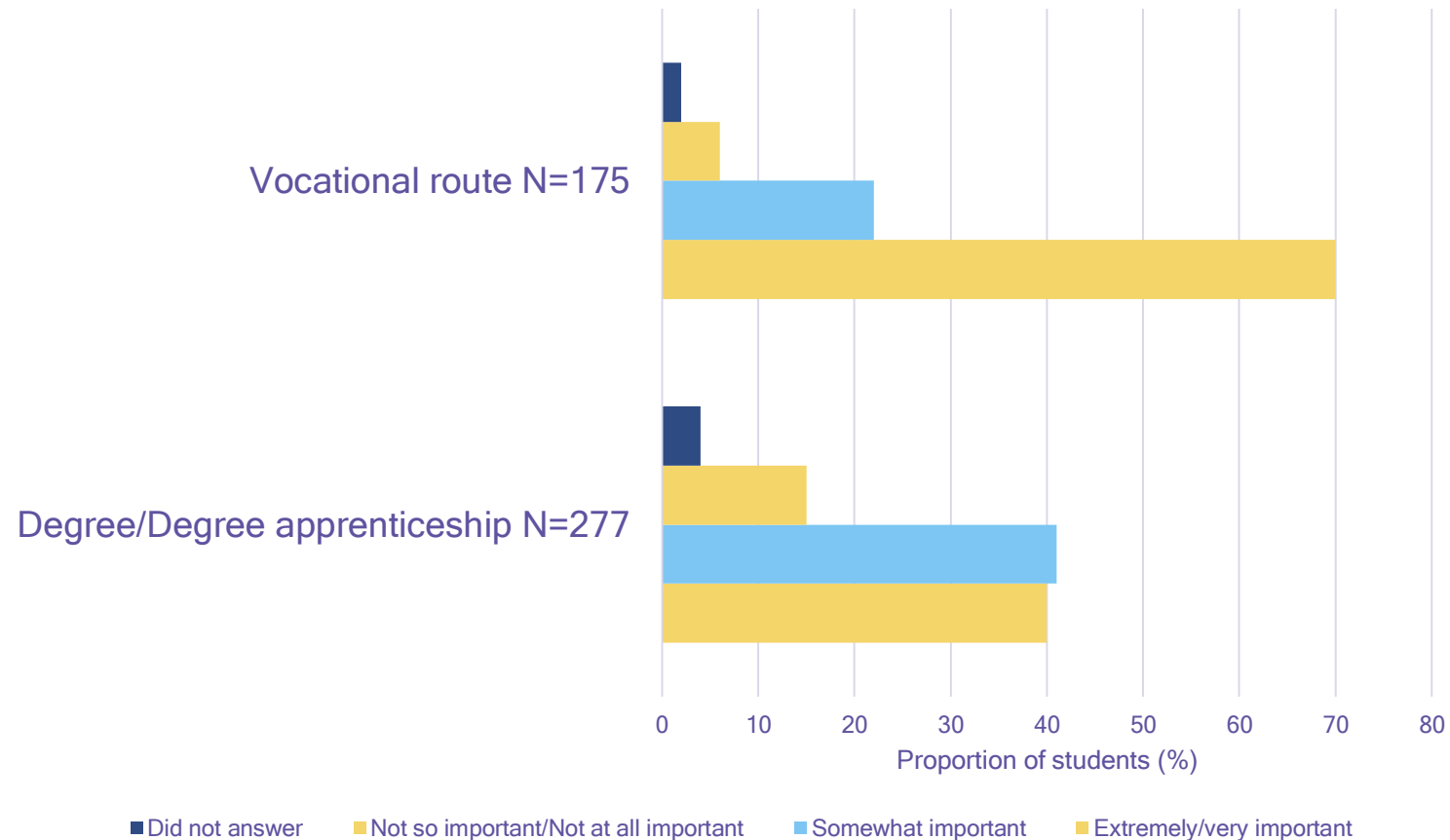
The importance of different factors in choosing future courses at age 18/19 N=512

	%			
	Extremely/Very important	Somewhat important	Not at all important/Not so important	Did not answer
Opportunities for non-academic development	26	16	23	36
Obtaining an intensive understanding of the theoretical aspects of a given subject	63	27	6	4
Developing ‘soft skills’ for employment	37	24	34	5
Taking the course my parents approved of	17	25	55	3
Obtaining Degree	67	17	11	5
Earning lots of money	67	2	28	3
Being qualified to enter a specific career	77	18	4	1

Motivation, Aspiration & Intended Destination

Students reported destination at 18/19? N=521

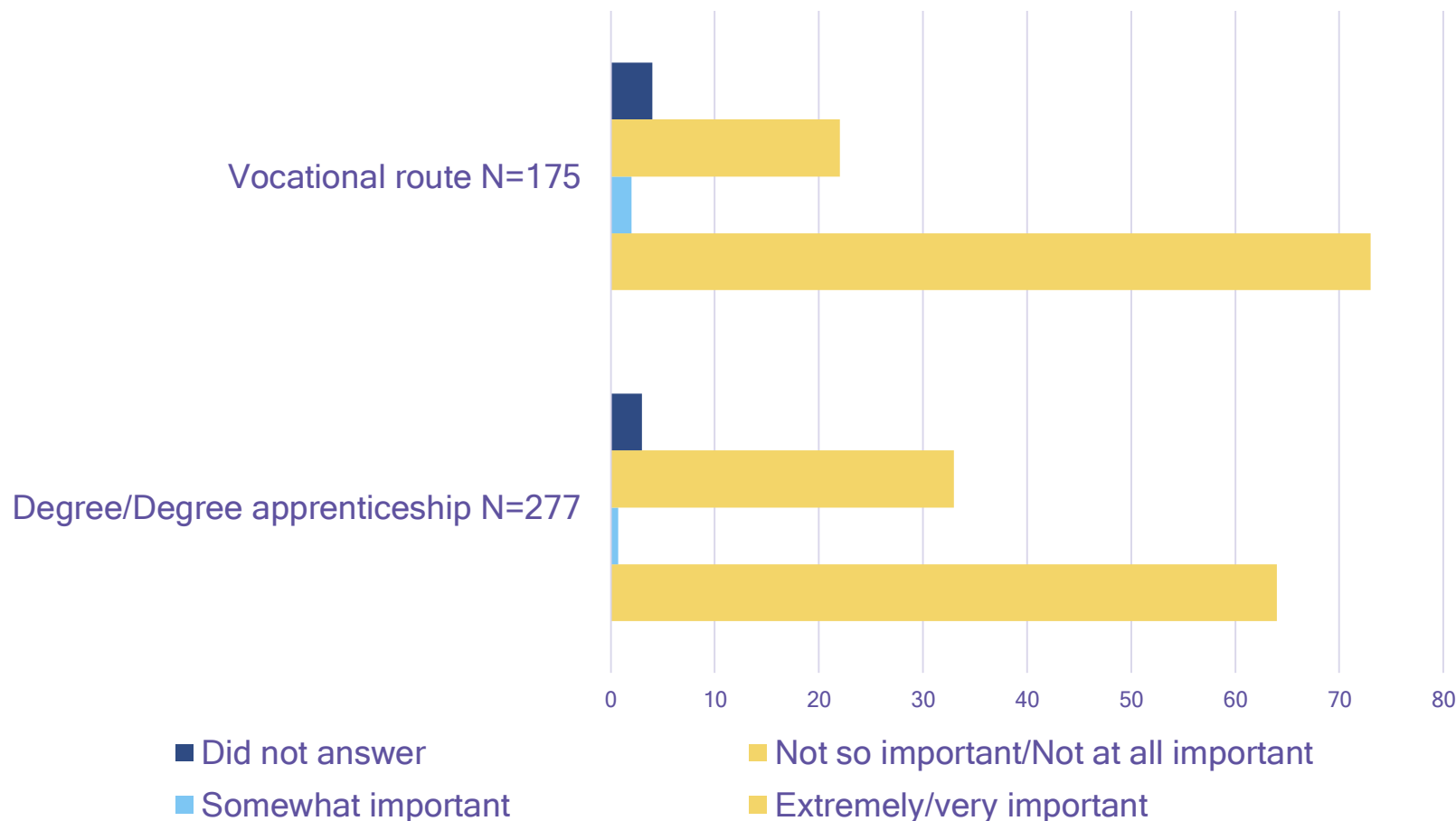
The importance attached to “earning lots of money”, by intended destination



Motivation, Aspiration & Intended Destination

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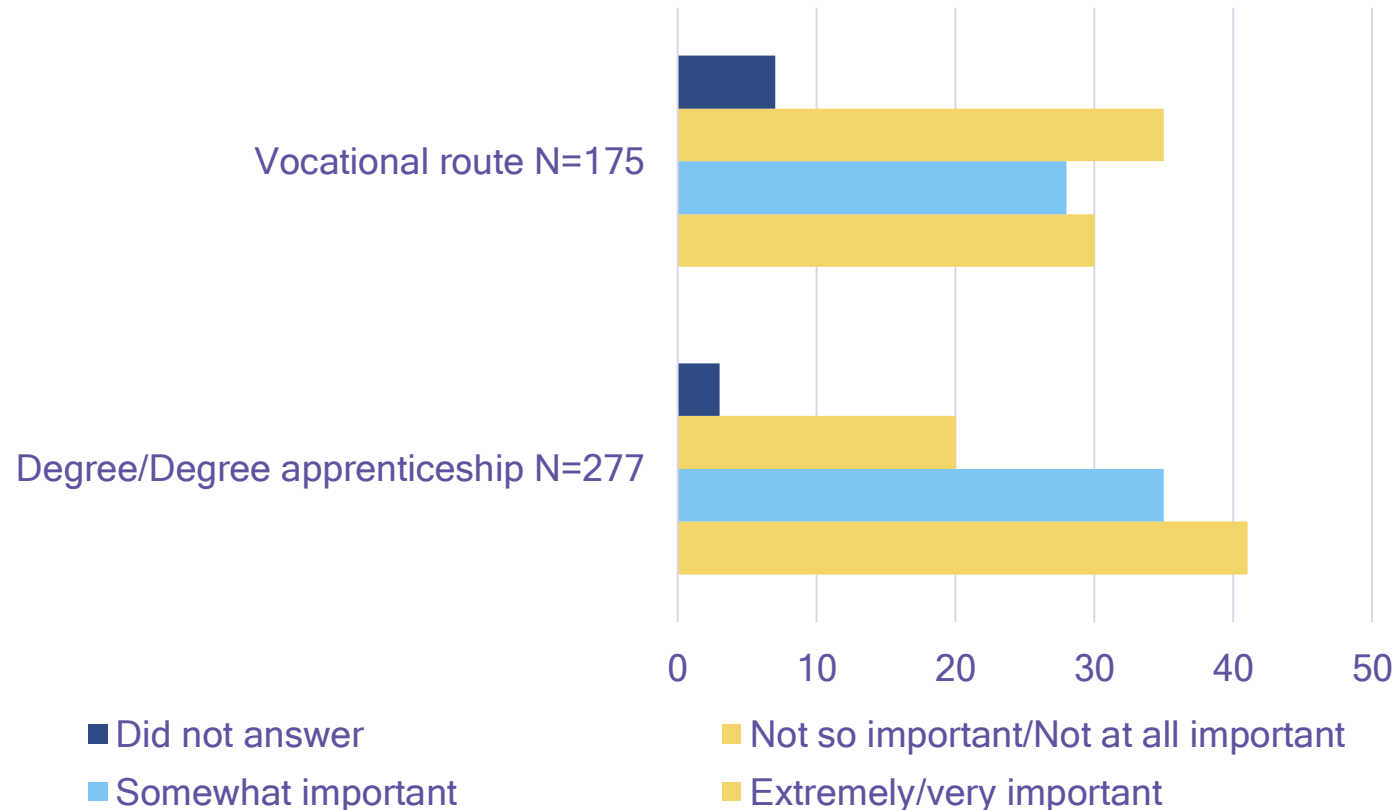
The importance attached to “earning lots of money”, by intended destination



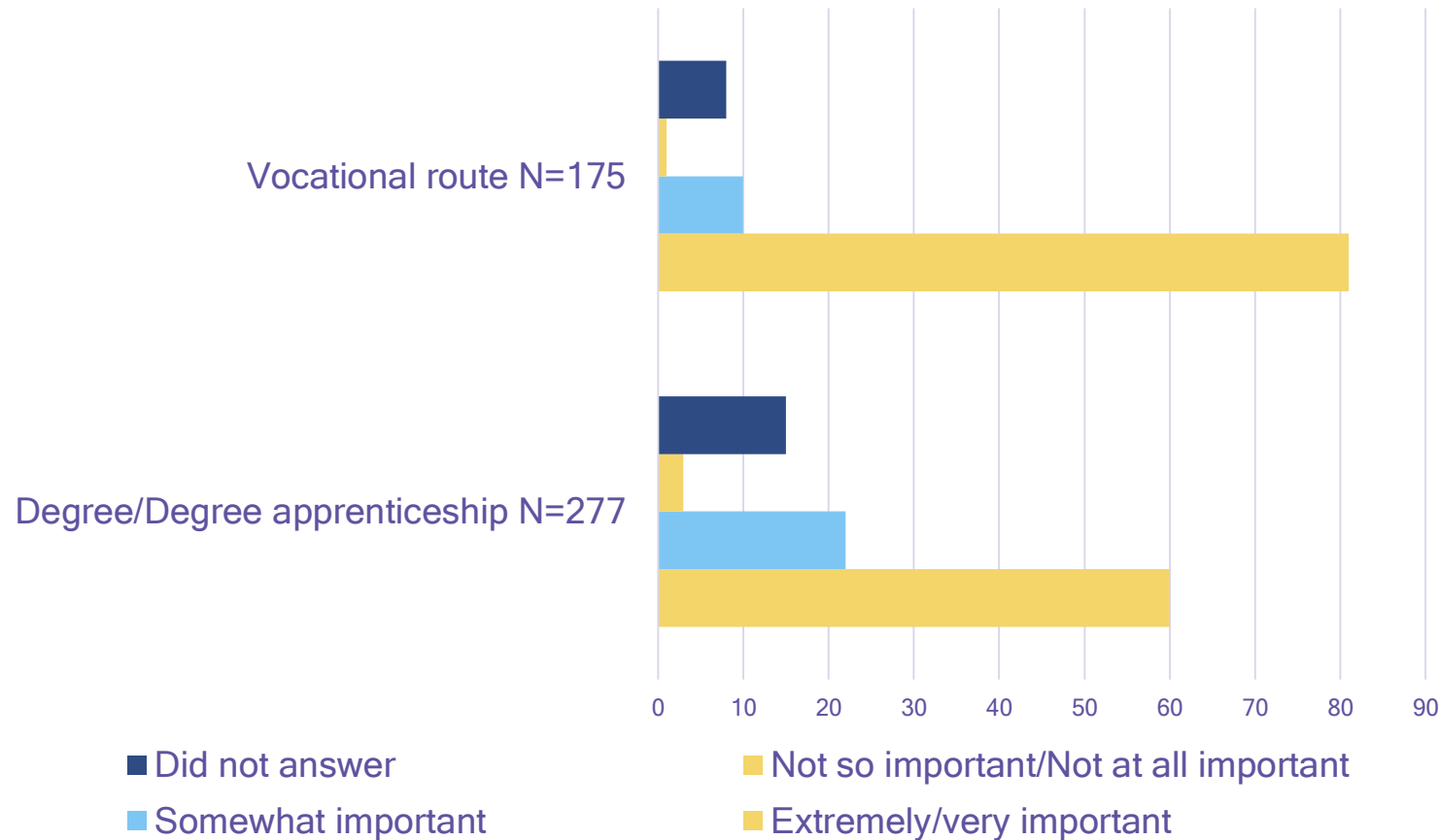
Motivation, Aspiration & Intended Destination

Students reported destination at 18/19? N=521

The importance attached to “opportunities for non-academic development, e.g. socialising and volunteering” by intended destination

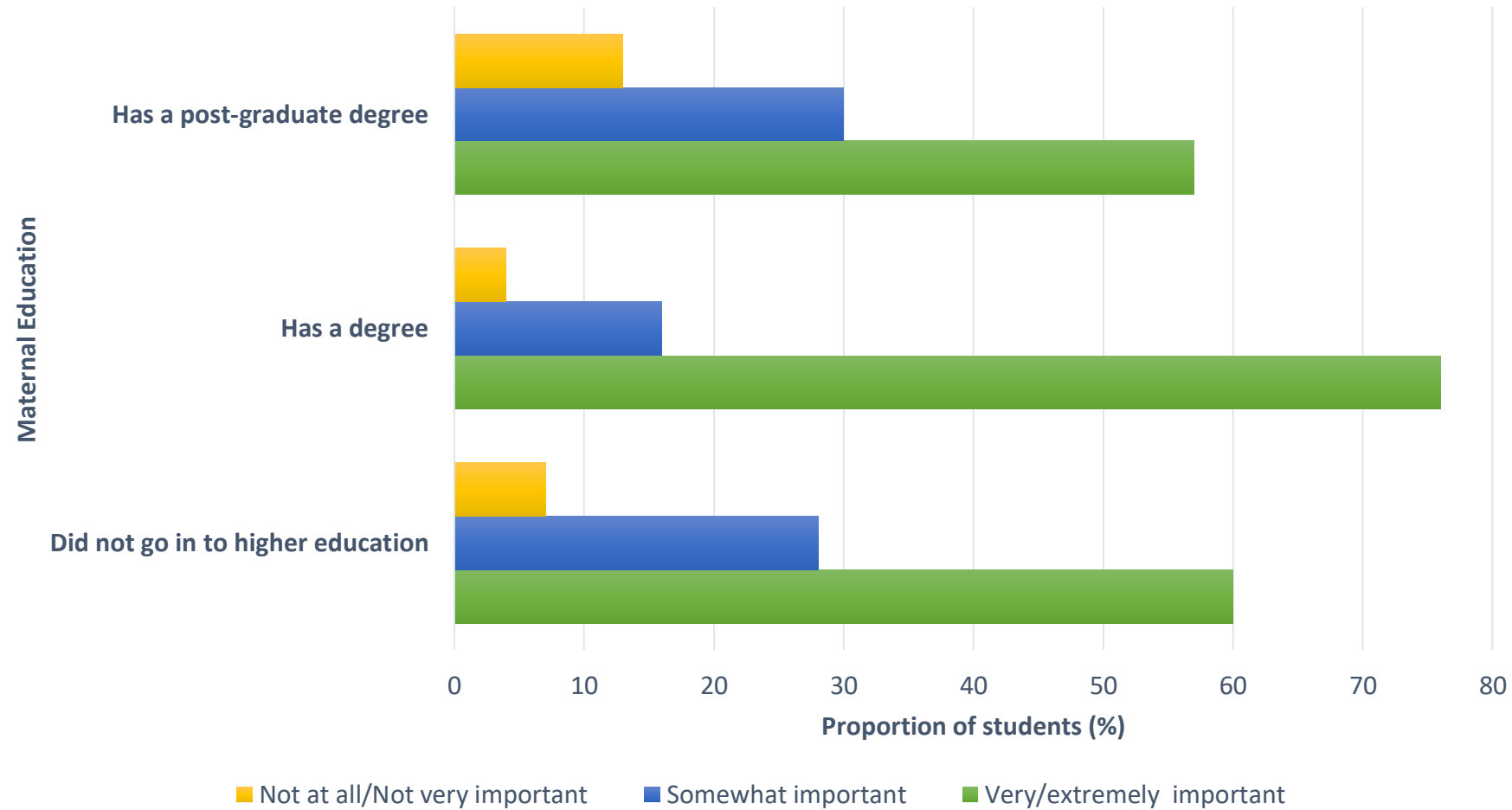


The importance attached to “avoiding debt”, by intended destination

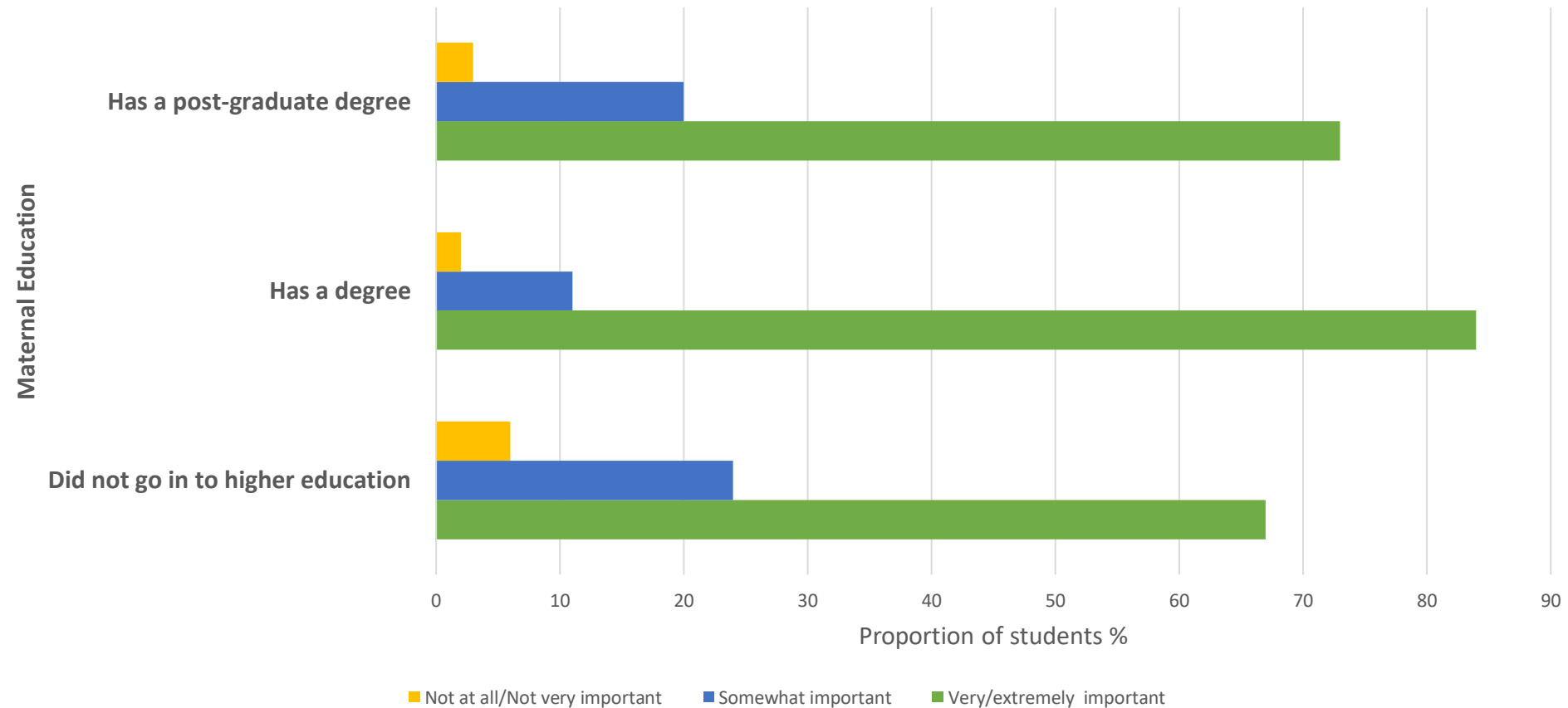


Which factors predict motivating factors & aspirations for the future? Maternal Education

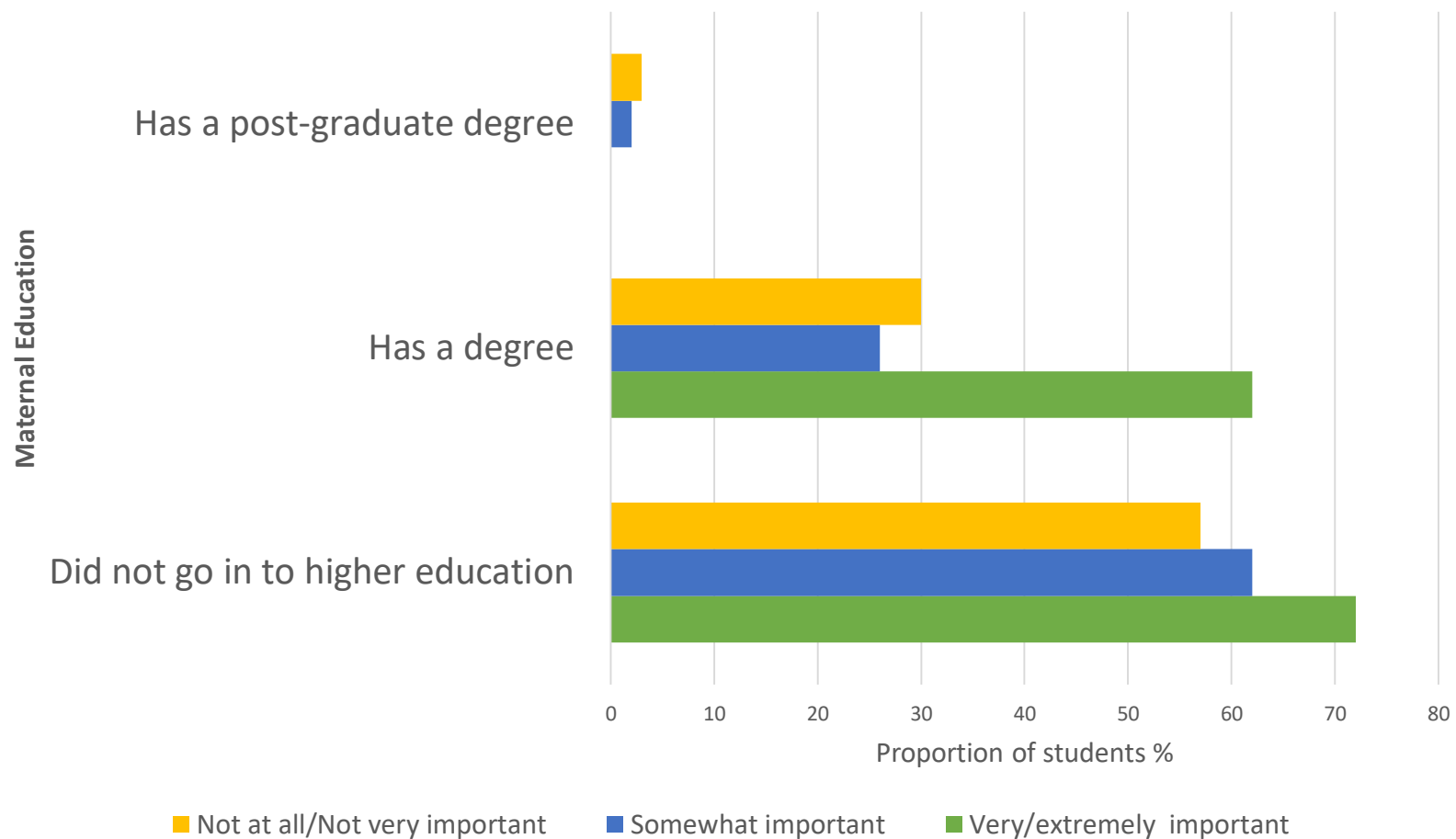
The importance of being perceived as well educated, by maternal education



The importance of making a positive contribution, by maternal education



The importance of avoiding debt, by maternal education



Parental knowledge of degree apprenticeships

- 20% of parents reported never having heard of apprenticeships before this project.
- Over 40% of parents reported never having discussed apprenticeships with their child.

To what extent do you agree that the information from schools on degree apprenticeships has been sufficient? N=81

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- Over 40% of parents reported never having discussed apprenticeships with their child.

Parental views on degree apprenticeships

- *“The word apprenticeship really appeals to me on that front because that suggests that you are actually being taught to do or encouraged to do and not just think.” Parent, Exeter*
- *“They are effectively, cheap labour and I wouldn’t want my children to do that anyway, at that level”. Parent, Bodmin.*
- *“Of course, anything that means that my children don’t come out of education with that millstone around their neck is something that I am going to be pointing them towards.” Parent, Bodmin*
- *“The only problem is the fact that it’s (degree apprenticeship) called an apprenticeship, that the word apprenticeship is in there because I’ve spoken to my tutor group over many years. The minute they hear that word, you’ve got a problem because they see it as lesser.” Parent, Bodmin*
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