

Amplifying our students' voice: the co-production of undergraduate field courses (residential and non- residential) to address DEI

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**University
of Glasgow**



**UK Research
and Innovation**

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in environmental science

Are field skills in environmental science degrees essential?

Give us your answer via PollEverywhere!

Respond at Pollev.com/martinaquagg077
Text **MARTINAQUAGG077** to **07480 781235** once to join, then **A, B, C, D, or E**

Are field skills in environmental science degrees essential?

Strongly agree	A
Agree	B
Neutral	C
Disagree	D
Strongly disagree	E

Powered by Poll Everywhere

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in environmental science

Field skills in environmental science degrees are ESSENTIAL

.. Therefore, we need to make sure that field course are accessible and inclusive for a diverse student community

What are the barriers to DEI encountered by our students in field courses?

Can we find solutions to address these challenges?

What approach should we use to succeed in this?

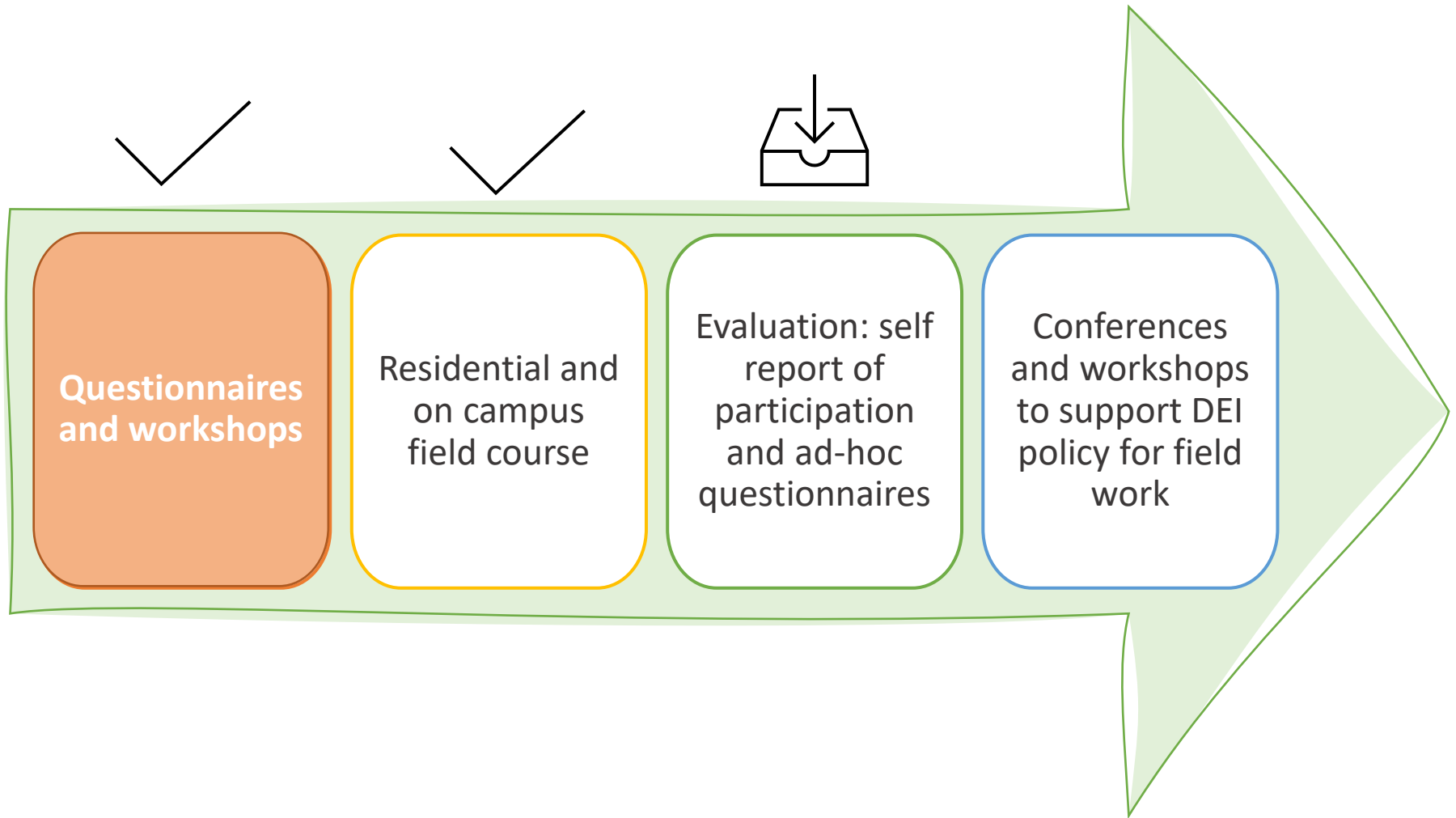


Aims

- *Identify DEI barriers and solutions to fieldwork*
- *Co-produce field courses with students to improve DEI*
- *Test, verify and further refine the co-produced field courses*
- *Disseminate case study and good practice for improving DEI in field work.*



Methods



Questionnaires

55 students; 30 staff
Both from environmental sciences

Identify barriers

- Structural
- Environmental
- Attitudinal
- Protected characteristics
- Identity characteristics

Workshops

9 students; 3 staff

Identify solutions to barriers

- Structural
- Environmental
- Attitudinal

Quantitative and qualitative methods

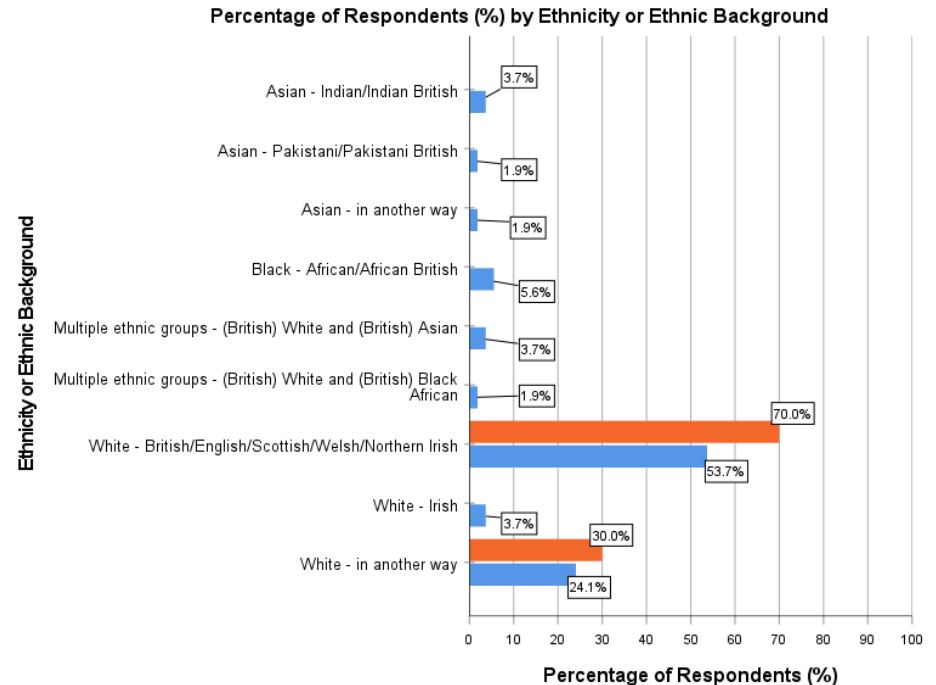
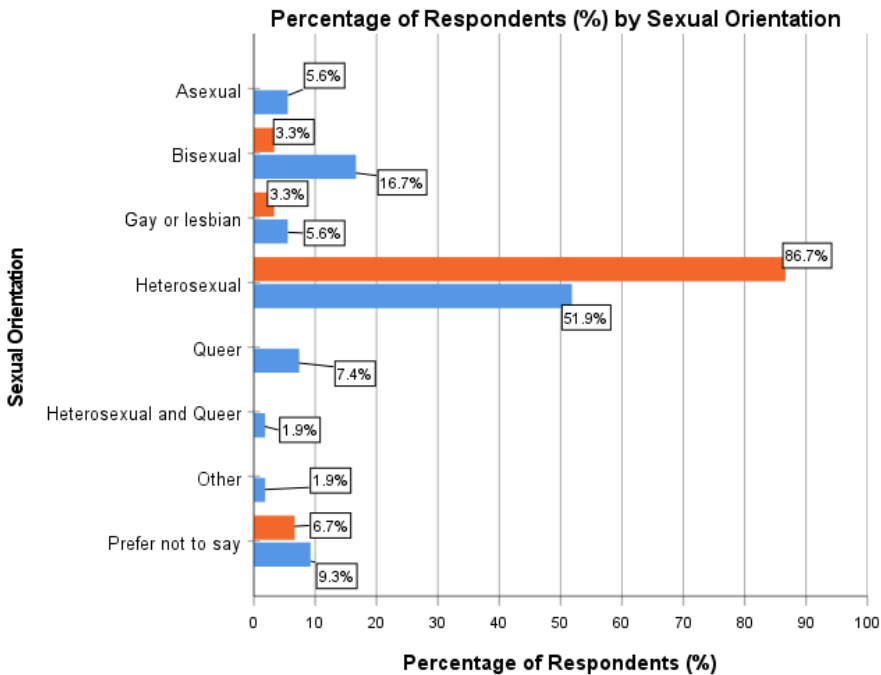
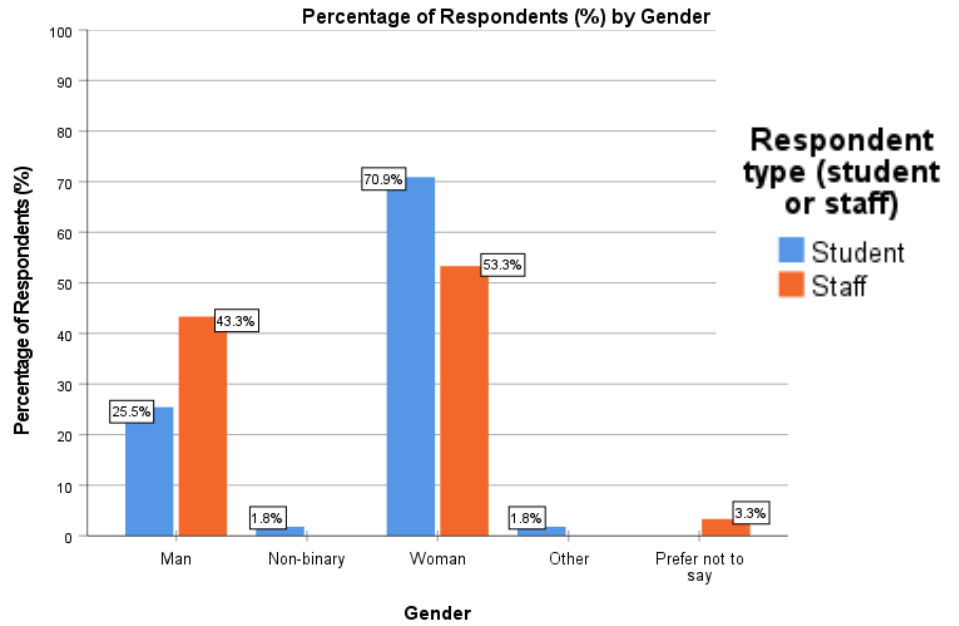


Barriers

- **Structural barriers** can include timetabling, curriculum, and other practices that are embedded within the running of higher education institutions
- **Environmental barriers** can include access to a building, to a location and other obstacles related to the use of space.
- **Attitudinal barriers** can include, for example negative behaviour of students, staff or others.



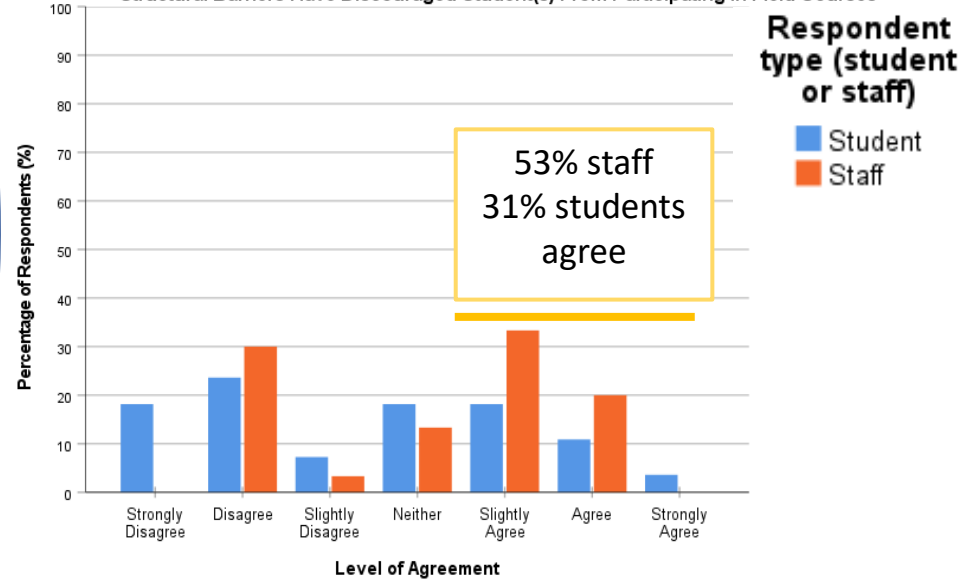
Although neither student nor staff samples are very diverse, the student sample is more diverse, highlighting a need for greater representation and more diverse role models



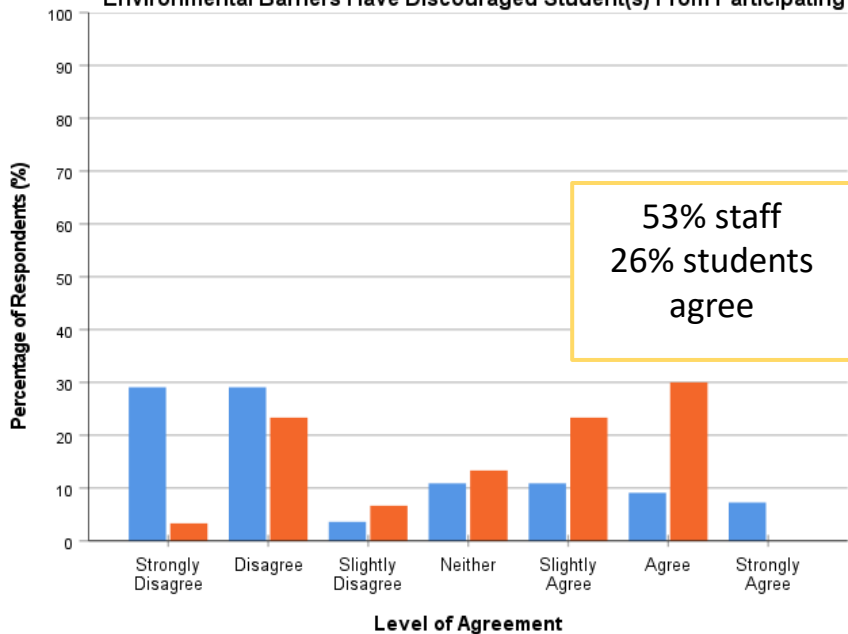
Staff sample believe that barriers can discourage students from participating in field course more than students do.

Community Vs. individual experience

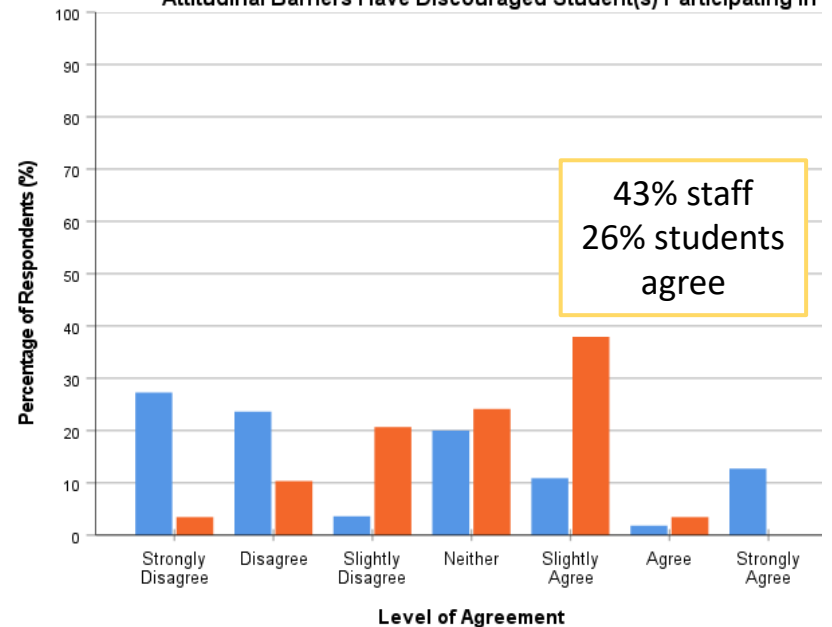
Structural Barriers Have Discouraged Student(s) From Participating in Field Courses



Environmental Barriers Have Discouraged Student(s) From Participating



Attitudinal Barriers Have Discouraged Student(s) Participating in



challenging campus
trips individuals commitments
residential **accommodation** offering
sites practical **experience** mental study
understand **skills** needs careers
conditions **issues** group adapt teaching
require **learn** **disabilities**
personal **science** **access** difficult sharing
subject build aware costs location support
limits afford **physical** different semester
choice classes participation anxiety useful
concern communication health

participate
discourage discussions others
careers **opportunity** complete disabilities
gives covid great **understanding** offer valuable
transport **accessible** location future
involve class **issues** **provide** funding
ensuring lecturers **experience** online clothes
engaging **skills** **practical** studies really
person availability **learning** **support** better
equipment **communication** helps essential
people option theory group aspect enjoyable
flexibility

Different perspectives



Solutions

Structural barriers

Preparatory work prior to the field

Many lecturers using virtual material developed during covid times to prepare students for fieldwork. Introducing them to the sites virtually and discussing caveats associated with the work in the field. Using this as a way to introduce students to each other before being in the field

field course accessibility

considering options to run field courses 'closer to home' where possible cutting down on costs which might put off students from lower income backgrounds

distribution of knowledge/better training on environmental barriers

if better training is provided to the staff involved in the physical places/organisations that often host field courses, and training for lecturers and other staff involved in providing them then students will feel more confident about any barriers that might come up eg. how a trans student might feel when faced with a field course which only offers gendered dormitory living situations

asking about what people's needs are, rather than assuming

easier said than done/more an attitude thing than environmental but trying to learn from people's own experiences is always important since everyone is unique and different barriers will be presented by different accessibility considerations

Environmental barriers

Attitudinal barriers

mental health

since it's something that isn't physically seen there can be more negative attitudes surrounding students with mental health issues that can discourage us from sharing about these when we might potentially benefit from eg. some 'downtime' from a structured activity, or some emotional support, so again empathy towards these issues if a staff member or lecturer cannot relate is key, but also solved by training making people aware of what the variety of needs for people can be - one person with a disability may be completely different to another and vice versa

Attitudes around working students

mentioned previously but also applies here, students that work alongside their degree - there's a big problem where lecturer's attitudes are that these students care less about their degree but often just means the student has to supplement their income to study. From personal experience i have had lecturers make comments about how they think students prioritise work when their degree should be at the forefront of their minds, as though it is the student's fault (and feeds into wider attitudes about low-income students as well as discouraging us): maybe the solution to that is again, better training, and research like this study is important too, because it's learning directly from student's experiences :)

Next steps

- Thematic analysis: coding underway
- Co-designed a residential field course with students
- Evaluation and feedback

The best part was being able to work together to make a tangible difference to future field courses.

I loved the fact that my voice mattered in the organization of the activities

I felt working with lecturers without barriers and them taking on board feedback was rewarding. It made me feel a sense of freedom.



Thank you for your attention!

Any questions?



