

## Study environment, well-being and support

The memo presents selected results from the student survey<sup>1</sup> from autumn 2020, and deals with the respondents' assessment of the educational and social environment, their general level of well-being on their programme, as well as their knowledge of where they get support and guidance if they are struggling.

Since 2019, the responses to the questions about the academic environment have formed the basis for the calculation of indicator *5a: Educational environment* and indicator *5b: Social study environment* in AU's quality assurance system.

In 2020, the results of the survey may be affected by coronavirus restrictions and the periodic physical shutdown of AU. The survey was conducted from 20 October to 15 December 2020. During this period, the university was subject to a number of coronavirus restrictions that impacted teaching, but was not physically shut down.

---

<sup>1</sup> The student survey is carried out by the Ministry of Higher Education and Science every two years. The study consists of a number of sub-elements, including the Learning Barometer (which measures the students' experiences of the learning environment on their degree programme and their own approaches to learning), Degree Programme Zoom (digital admissions tool that allows students to compare degree programmes), Teaching Environment (under the auspices of Dansk Center for Undervisningsmiljø (the Danish centre for the teaching environment)). For more information about the student survey, please see the [LINK](#) to the memo on background and method on the SMU website.

In the wake of the shutdown in the spring, in early summer 2020, the university conducted a survey evaluating the transition to online teaching and exams. The aim of the survey was to learn from these experiences in order to enhance AU's approach to digital teaching and exams in future. The report and main conclusions are available here: <https://newsroom.au.dk/nyheder/vis/artikel/hvad-laerte-vi-af-foraarets-corona-undervisning>.

**Main findings: Study environment:****There is a good educational environment**

- Generally, the respondents responded that their degree programmes have a good academic environment, and this evaluation is stable over time: 2020 (90%), 2018 (91%) and 2016 (87%).

**There is a good social study environment**

- Fewer respondents responded that they 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree' that their degree programmes have a good social study environment: 2020 (78%), 2018 (83%) and 2016 (79%), relative to their evaluation of the educational environment.
- The percentage of respondents who 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree' that there is a good social study environment is highest at Nat (87%), followed by HE (82%), Tech (82%), AR (76%) and finally BSS (73%).
- Eighty-two per cent of academic Bachelor's degree students responded that they 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree' that there is a good social study environment. This applies to 80% of professional Bachelor's degree student respondents and 72% of Master's degree student respondents.

**In general, I feel really good at my education**

- In 2018, 82% responded that they 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree' that they generally feel very content with their degree programme. We see a slight decrease in 2020, where this applies to 79% of the respondents.

**I know where to get support and guidance at my campus if I'm not well**

- Seventy-two per cent responded that they know where they can get support and guidance from their programme if they are not flourishing. The percentage is more or less identical at four of the faculties: Nat (77%), Tech (75%), HE (74%) and AR (75%); however, it is significantly lower at BSS: just 64%.
- Seventy-seven per cent of respondents from professional Bachelor's degree programmes responded that they know where they can get support and guidance from their programme. This applies to 74% of the academic Bachelor's degree student respondents and 67% of the Master's degree programme student respondents.

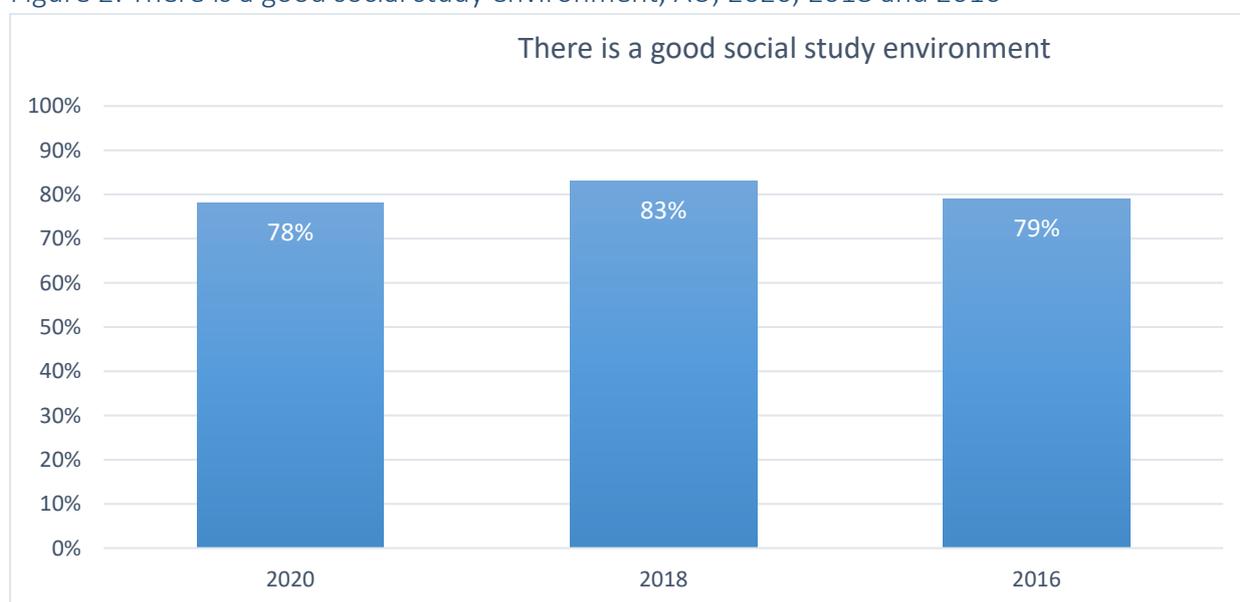
## Educational and social study environment on the degree programme

### Social study environment

The percentage of respondents who responded they 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree' that there is a good social study environment on their degree programme is not quite as high as the assessment of the educational environment. Figure 2 shows the results of the most recent three surveys in 2020 (78%), 2018 (83%) and 2016 (79%).

The level has remained relatively stable in the three most recent surveys. However, the percentage of respondents, who responded that they 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree' that there is a good social study environment fell by five percentage points from 2018 to 2020. As described in the introduction, the coronavirus situation may affect the results of this year's results in general, and it is to be expected that the social study environment has been particularly strongly affected by the consequences of the restrictions imposed on in-person interaction and participation.

Figure 2: There is a good social study environment, AU, 2020, 2018 and 2016\*



Note: The figures show the percentage who replied 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree'. The remainder have replied 'Neutral', 'Somewhat disagree', or 'Disagree'. The response 'Unsure/not applicable' is not included in the calculations.

Student evaluations of the social study environment differ by faculty. The percentage of respondents who 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree' that there is a good social study environment is highest at Nat (87%), followed by HE (82%), Tech (82%), AR (76%) and finally BSS (73%).

Evaluations of the social study environment also differ across degree programme levels. Eighty-two per cent of academic Bachelor's degree students responded that they 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree' that there is a good social study environment. This applies to 80% of the university Bachelor's degree student respondents and 72% of the Master's degree programme student respondents. A slightly larger proportion of men (80%) than women (77%) responded that they agree with the statement.

Table 2: There is a good social study environment, 2020\*

There is a good social study environment	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
AR	36%	40%	14%	8%	2%
Aarhus BSS	33%	41%	15%	8%	4%

HE	46%	36%	12%	6%	1%
Nat	50%	37%	9%	3%	1%
Tech	38%	44%	13%	4%	2%
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>2%</b>

\*The response category 'Unsure/not applicable' is not included in the calculations. n=10.842

### Comfort on degree programme

As in the 2018 survey, the students were asked to consider the extent to which they feel comfortable with their degree programme in 2020. In 2018, 82% responded that they 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree' that they generally feel very content with their degree programme. We see a slight decrease in 2020, where this applies to 79% of the respondents. The percentage is greatest at Nat (83%) and smallest at BSS (77%). In general, relatively few students respond that they 'Disagree' or 'Strongly disagree' with the statement. There are no significant differences correlated with degree programme level or gender.

Table 3: In general, I feel really good at my education\*

In general, I feel really good at my education*	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
AR	31%	48%	16%	5%	1%
BSS	27%	50%	16%	5%	2%
HE	34%	47%	13%	4%	1%
Nat	37%	46%	12%	4%	1%
Tech	32%	49%	15%	4%	1%
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>1%</b>

\*The response category 'Unsure/not applicable' is not included in the calculations. n=11.084

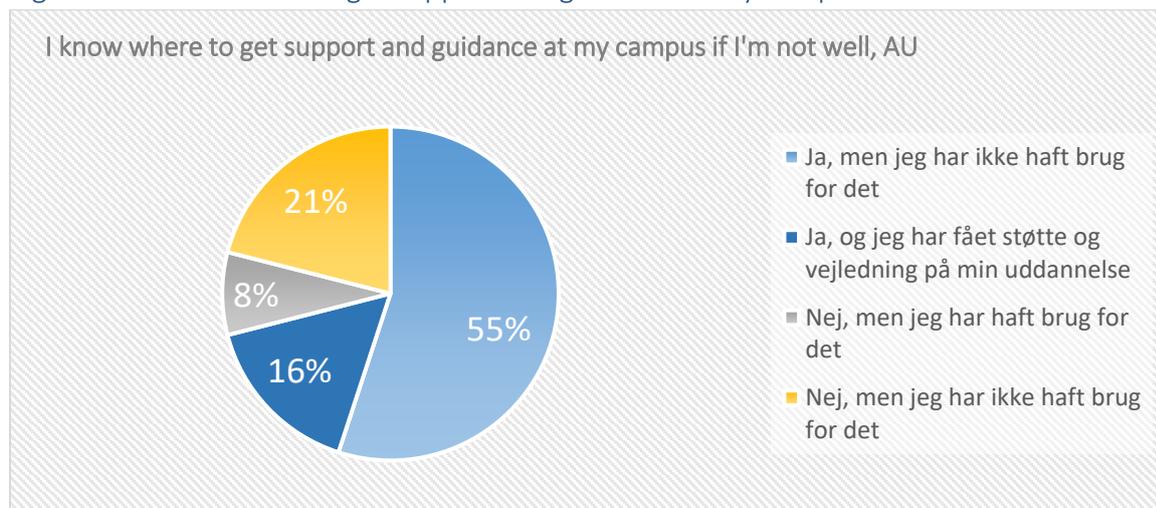
### Where to get support and guidance from the degree programme

The statement *I know where to get support and guidance at my campus if I'm not well* was included in the student survey for the first time in 2020.

Figure 3 shows that 72% of students responded that they know where to get support and guidance if they are not flourishing. The 72% is divided between 55% who responded that they know where they can get support and guidance, but that they have not needed it, and 16% who responded that they have received support and guidance from their degree programme.

28% responded that they do not know where to go for support and guidance. The 28% is divided between 21% who responded that they have not had a need for support and guidance, and 8% who responded that they have in fact had a need for support and guidance from the degree programme, but that they do not know where to ask for it.

Figure 3: I know where to get support and guidance at my campus if I'm not well\*



\*\*The response category 'Unsure/not applicable' is not included in the calculations. n=11.133

The percentage of respondents who responded that they know where they can get support and guidance from their degree programme is virtually identical at four of the five faculties: Nat (78%), Tech (75%), HE (75%) and AR (74%). At BSS, however, only 63% responded that they know where they can get support and guidance.

Table 4: I know where to get support and guidance at my campus if I'm not well

I know where to get support and guidance at my campus if I'm not well	Yes, but I have not needed it	Yes, and I have received support and guidance at my study program	No, I do not know, but I have needed it	No, I do not know, but I have not needed it
AR	58%	17%	8%	18%
BSS	50%	13%	9%	27%
HE	56%	18%	7%	19%
Nat	59%	19%	6%	17%
Tech	58%	17%	6%	20%
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>21%</b>

\*The response category 'Unsure/not applicable' is not included in the calculations. n=11.133

Most respondents among professional Bachelor's degree students(77%) responded that they know where they can get support and guidance from their degree programme if they are not flourishing – this applies to 74% of the respondents among the academic Bachelor's degree programme students and 67% of the Master's degree programme respondents.

**FACTS about the 2020 survey:**

AU's study environment survey is based on data collected by Epinion for the Danish Ministry of Science, Higher Education and Aarhus University. The results of the survey form the basis for the university's teaching environment evaluation, which is conducted every three years.

The survey is carried out every other year and was most recently conducted in the autumn of 2020.

The questionnaire was sent to 33,381 full-time students at Aarhus University and 11,133 students took the survey, which results in an overall response rate of 33.40%.