# Wellbeing survey results

June 2020

Flexible work arrangements and Christmas close-down sections

Demographics

514 staff completed the 2020 survey which equates to an overall response rate of 60%. Staff participation in the wellbeing survey has increased from 40% to 60% response over the last two years. This response rate is slightly lower than Unitec's staff engagement survey of 70%.

PARTICIPATION NUMBERS
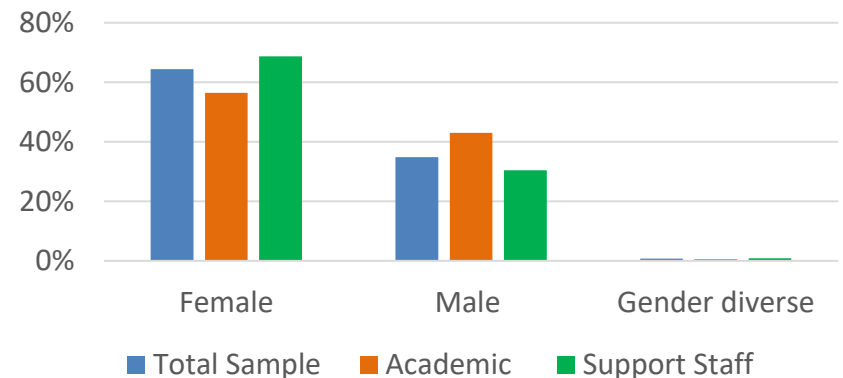
	2016	2018	2020
Academic	NA	170	179
Support	NA	261	335
Total staff responses	380	431	514
Response rate	30%	40%	60 %

Ethnicity
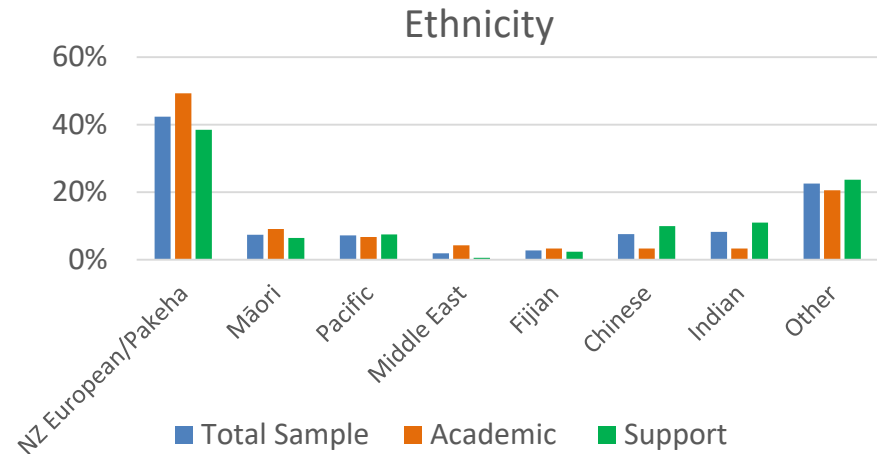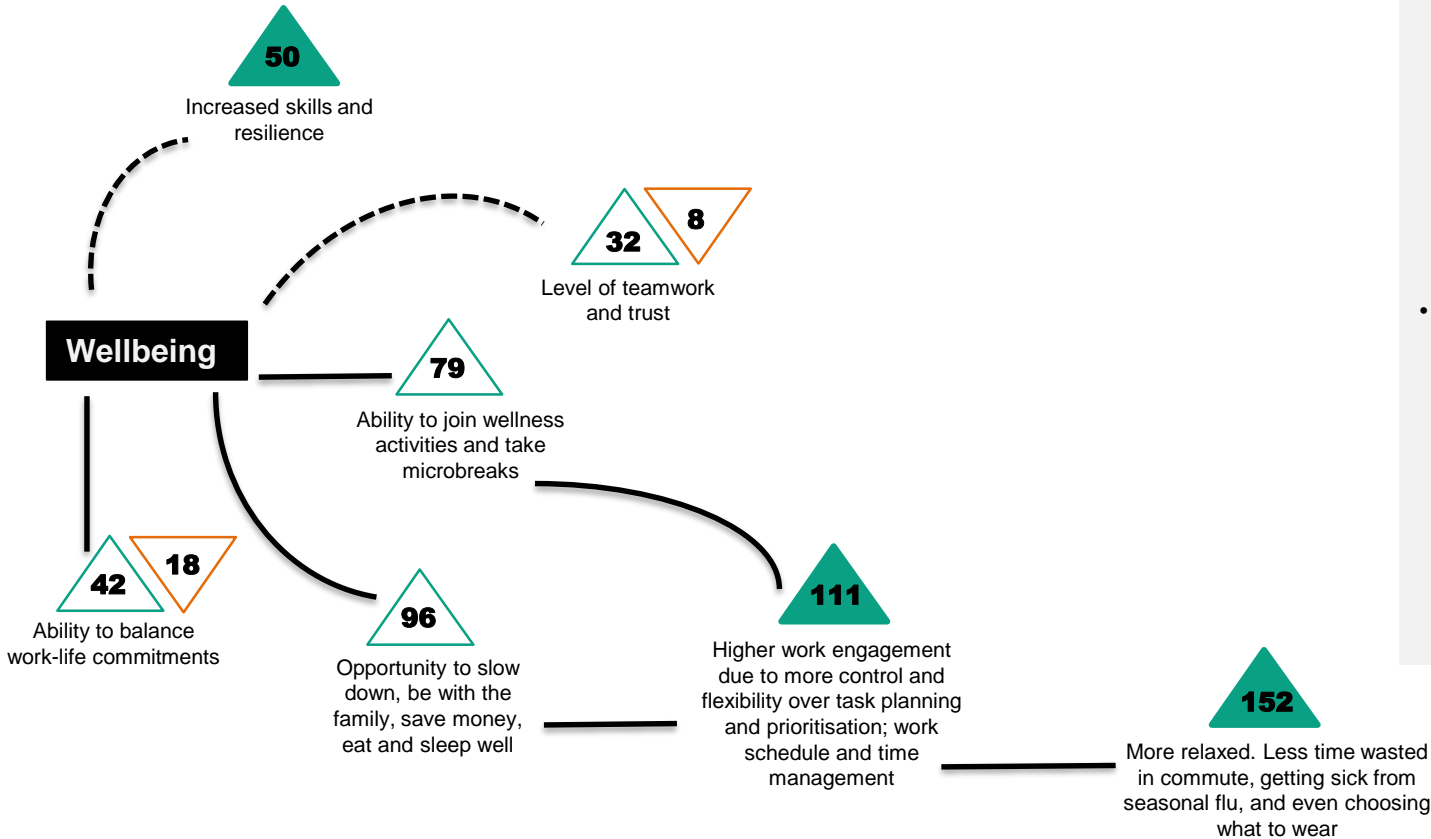

Age Distribution
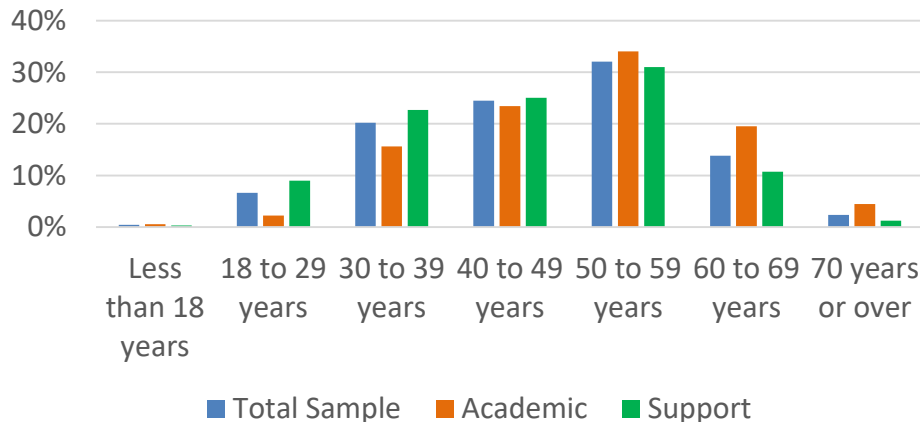
Gender

COVID remote work experience

There are two points where the experience of staff diverge:

- Flexibility that came with working from home improved work-life balance. It gave the ability to use the most productive hours for work and have quality breaks to rest, eat well, exercise, or incorporate other things that matter (i.e. chores and time with the family). Staff who found it hard to balance work-life commitments, mentioned high workloads, lack of routines and boundaries that made it difficult to switch off and take care of their wellbeing. This is related to Page 6 mentions of inadequate work environment set up.

- Teamwork improved for most as we became more mindful of our colleagues, learned about each other and our different communications styles. Trust grew as we got better at self-management. Accountability and visibility got a boost. But some staff did struggle with teamwork due to delayed discussions and taking longer to get things done.

50 Increased skills and resilience

32 **8** Level of teamwork and trust

Wellbeing

79 Ability to join wellness activities and take microbreaks

42 **18** Ability to balance work-life commitments

96 Opportunity to slow down, be with the family, save money, eat and sleep well

111 Higher work engagement due to more control and flexibility over task planning and prioritisation; work schedule and time management

152 More relaxed. Less time wasted in commute, getting sick from seasonal flu, and even choosing what to wear

COVID remote work experience

Two more points where staff experiences diverge:

• We all had to learn how to teach and work online, and while some staff found it better than expected, slightly more staff commented on the importance of F2F interactions for both the quality of learning experience and teamwork.

• Related to that is the point about communication. Some staff prefer to work on campus as it takes less effort to brainstorm, problem solve, stay connected with others and communicate. But more staff found that online communication during lockdown improved their listening and email writing skills. Meetings were better run, the staff came prepared and more people were able to have their say. Meeting recordings were found to be quite useful in avoiding misunderstandings.

Wellbeing

50 — Increased skills and resilience

32 — Level of teamwork and trust

79 — Ability to join wellness activities and take microbreaks

42 — Ability to balance work-life commitments

96 — Opportunity to slow down, be with the family, save money, eat and sleep well

Productivity

30 / 35 — Ease and value of online teaching and team meetings

55 / 17 — Level of concise and mindful communication

111 — Higher work engagement due to more control and flexibility over task planning and prioritisation; work schedule and time management

152 — More relaxed. Less time wasted in commute, getting sick from seasonal flu, and even choosing what to wear

Map key

23 — Number of mentions
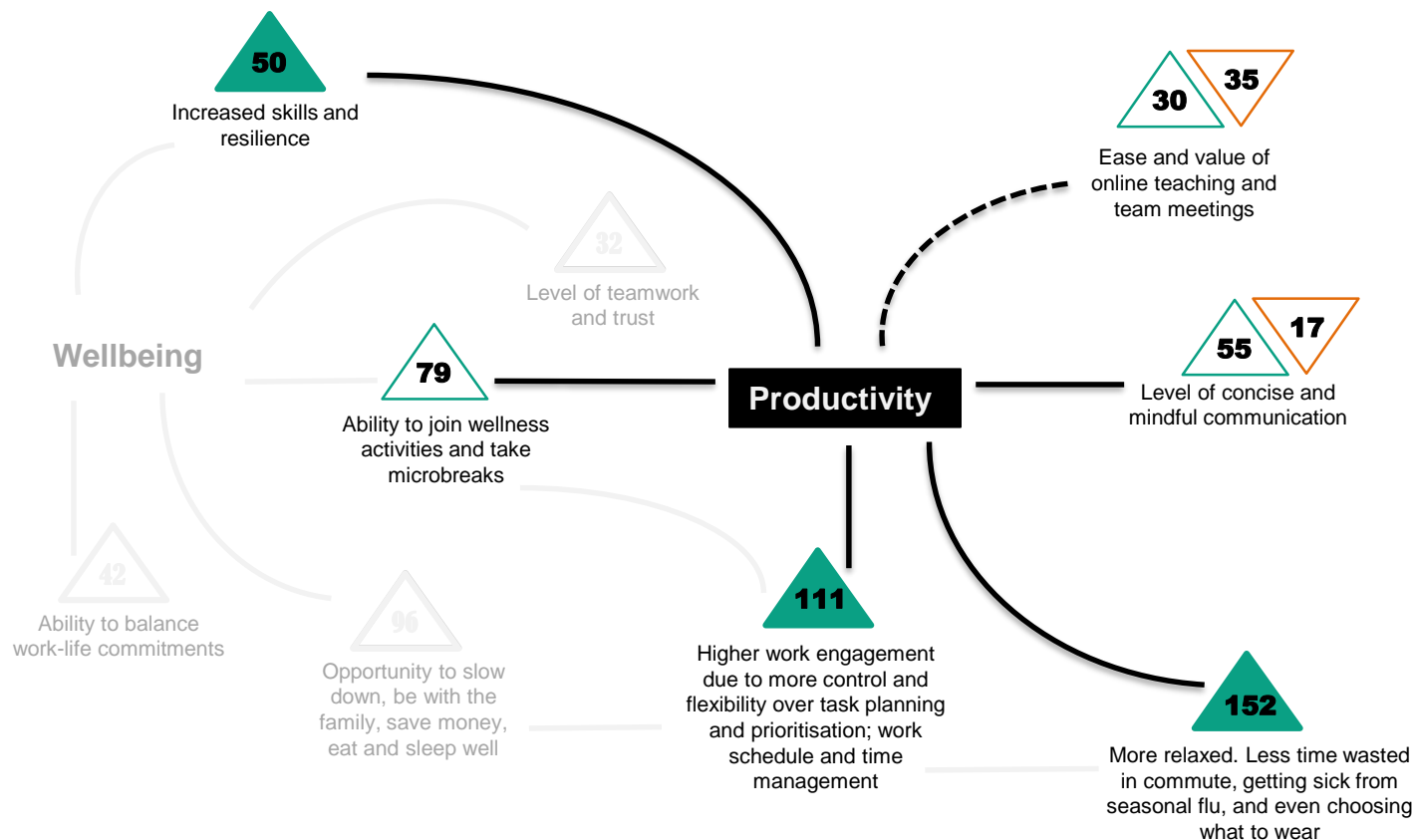
△ Unanimous experience
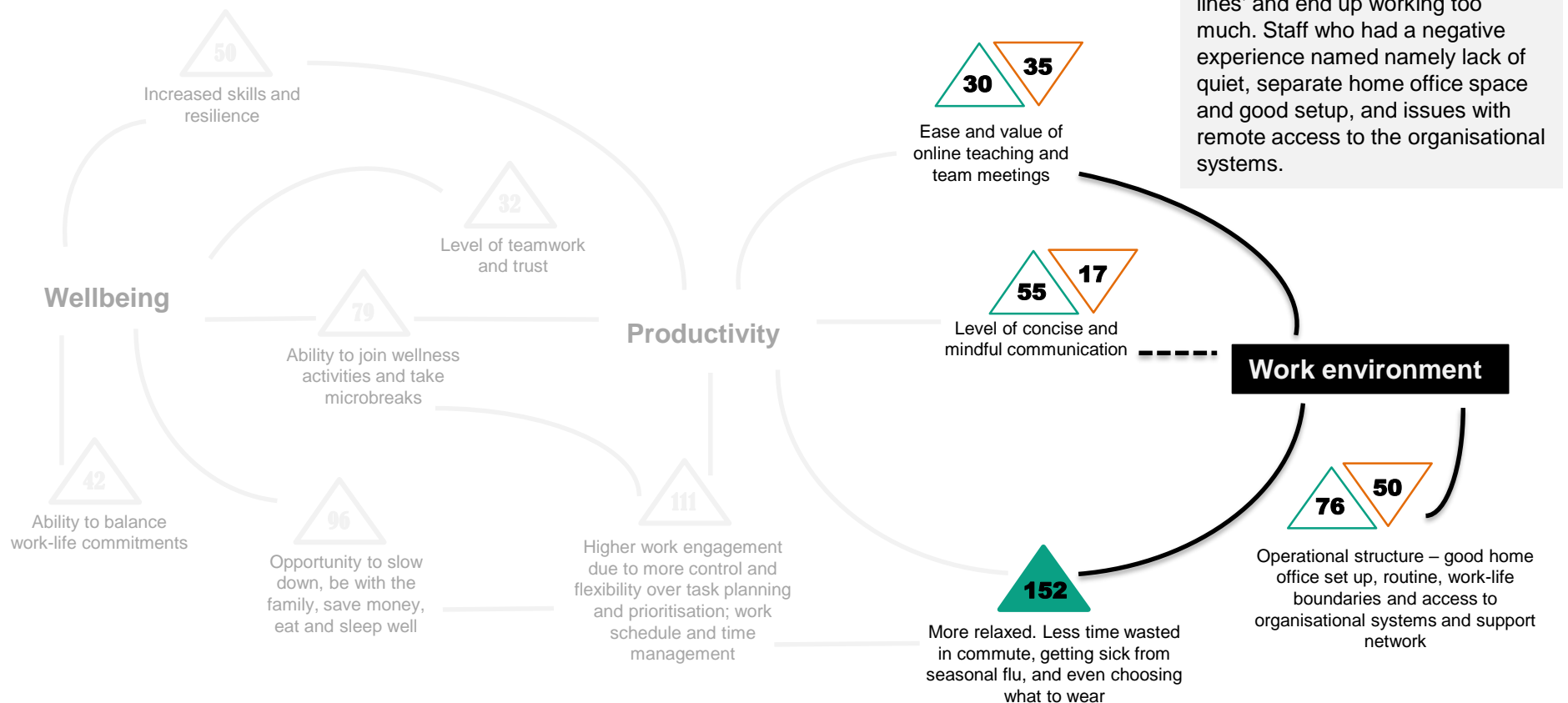
▽ Lockdown had a negative impact

△ Positive experience

Lacking link (related topic not mentioned in the staff comments)

COVID remote work experience

Staff experiences also diverge on whether work from home helped their productivity and wellbeing or not. On a positive note, working at home meant less noise and interruptions, better light, and temperature control. The importance of personal discipline and boundaries was brought up many times as it is easy to 'blur the lines' and end up working too much. Staff who had a negative experience named namely lack of quiet, separate home office space and good setup, and issues with remote access to the organisational systems.

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Level of teamwork and trust

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Ability to join wellness activities and take microbreaks

Wellbeing

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Ability to balance work-life commitments

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Opportunity to slow down, be with the family, save money, eat and sleep well

Productivity

111
Higher work engagement due to more control and flexibility over task planning and prioritisation; work schedule and time management

30 **35**
Ease and value of online teaching and team meetings

55 **17**
Level of concise and mindful communication

Work environment

76 **50**
Operational structure – good home office set up, routine, work-life boundaries and access to organisational systems and support network

152
More relaxed. Less time wasted in commute, getting sick from seasonal flu, and even choosing what to wear

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Map key

23 Number of mentions

Unanimous experience
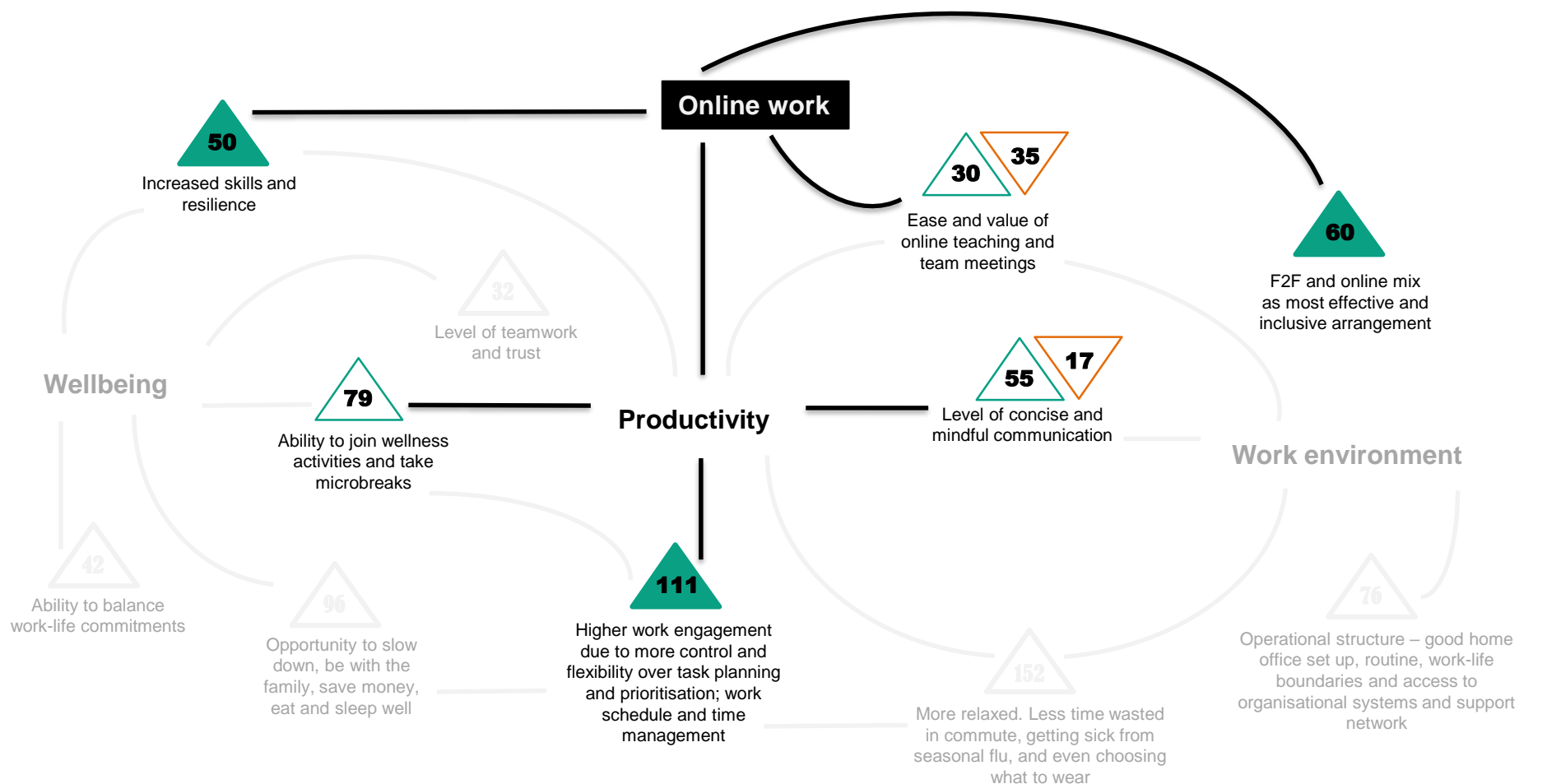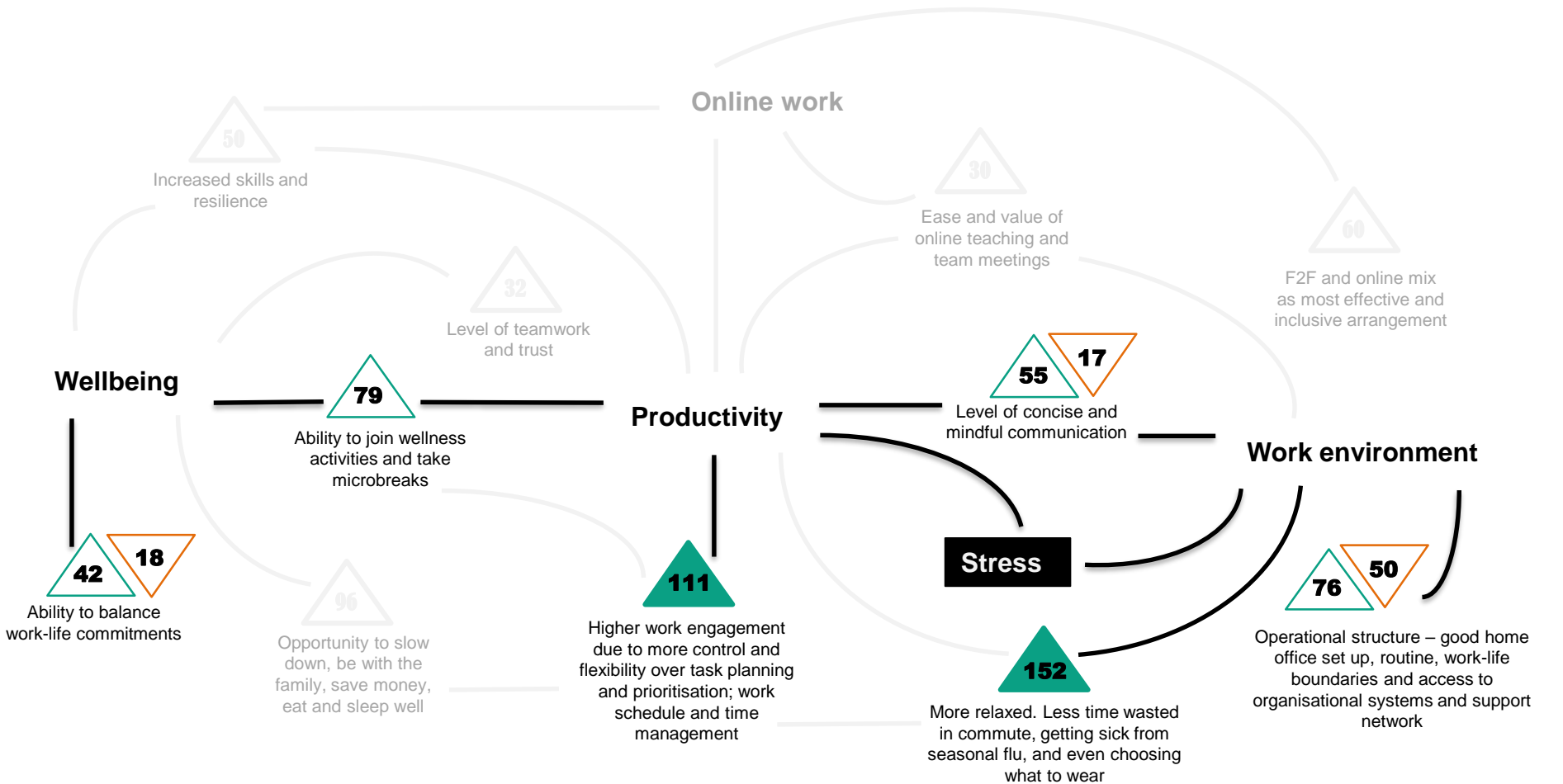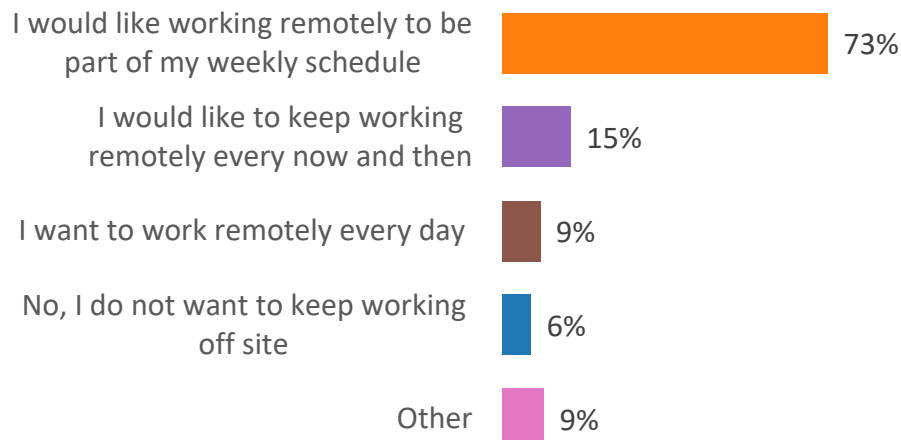
Lockdown had a negative impact

Positive experience

Lacking link (related topic not mentioned in the staff comments)

COVID remote work experience

Online work

50 — Increased skills and resilience

30 / 35 — Ease and value of online teaching and team meetings

60 — F2F and online mix as most effective and inclusive arrangement

Wellbeing

32 — Level of teamwork and trust

79 — Ability to join wellness activities and take microbreaks

Productivity

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Stress

152
More relaxed. Less time wasted in commute, getting sick from seasonal flu, and even choosing what to wear

76 / 50
Operational structure – good home office set up, routine, work-life boundaries and access to organisational systems and support network

Flexible work arrangements – remote work

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON CONTINUING TO WORK REMOTELY POST COVID-19?

I would like working remotely to be part of my weekly schedule — 73%

I would like to keep working remotely every now and then — 15%

I want to work remotely every day — 9%

No, I do not want to keep working off site — 6%

Other — 9%

Most staff (73%) are in favour of remote working each week.

Support staff and female staff show slightly higher inclination towards wanting to work remotely as part of their weekly schedule.

Majority of the 'other' comments were in favour of working from home either regularly or ad-hoc but wanted to make a point re the need for a set of guiding principles and more thought into deciding the organisational approach. See example of the quote on the next page.

	ROLE		AGE							GENDER	
	Academic	Support	>18*	18 - 29	30 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 59	60 to 69	*70 +	Female	Male
	74%	77%	100%	57%	85%	78%	77%	66%	88%	78%	72%
	12%	13%		33%	6%	12%	12%	17%		12%	14%
	7%	7%		10%	3%	6%	7%	11%		6%	8%
	8%	3%			6%	4%	4%	6%	12%	4%	7%

* Caution: low base sizes

WHAT WOULD YOU SEE AS AN IDEAL MIX OF WORK/HOME HOURS AND DAYS?

	# of mentions	Total	AR	SR
Part of weekly schedule				
Less than half of the working week	167	32%	28%	33%
More than half of the working week	72	14%	12%	14%
Structured and for specific purpose	57	11%	21%	5%
Remote most of the time. Onsite ad-hoc	46	9%	3%	12%
Half week / half days	41	8%	9%	7%
Every now and then				
When business allows or needs it	21	4%	3%	4%
Twice a month	13	2.5%	3%	2%

"Business rules required for a balance that needs to be struck … to ensure that outcomes are satisfied, that nothing falls between the cracks, and that the standard of work is delivered to a high degree. Individual schedules need to be established with line managers and weekly team meetings (minuted) need to ensure compliance to the 'diamond' work flows. I don't think a magic number/mix is uniform. Different outcome areas require different f2f/online requirements."

From 514 staff that responded to this survey, a third (30%) mentioned that they would need an extra monitor.

EQUIPMENT NEEDS FOR AN ADEQUATE HOME OFFICE SET UP

	# of mentions	Total	AR	SR
Do not need anything	201	40%	36%	38%
Extra screen	155	30%	22%	34%
Ergonomic chair	70	14%	11%	15%
Headset/keyboard/mouse	39	8%	4%	10%
Docking station	31	6%	6%	6%
Office desk	24	5%	6%	4%
Software update & access	20	4%	7%	2%
Fibre internet	19	4%	4%	4%
Computer	18	4%	2%	4%
Cost contribution	12	2%	5%	1%

Support staff are needing more equipment (monitor, ergonomic chair, headset/ keyboard/ mouse) when compared to Academic staff.

Even with a small sample, it is interesting to note that Academic staff are needing more IT and financial support when compared to Support staff. Not captured in the table are the 3 to 5 mentions of needing printers and other specific IT equipment such as PC pads and cameras.

Flexible work arrangements – remote work

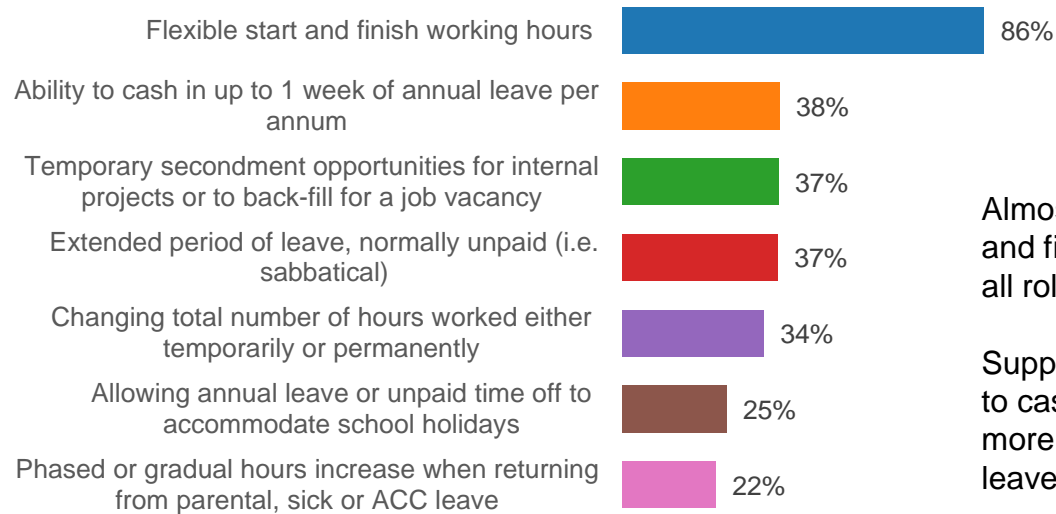| Themes	Examples of the comments
Part of weekly schedule	**Less than half of the working week** • 4 days on campus, 1 from home**.** Noticed that since being back on campus, the simplest activity is taking far longer to achieve. The volume of meetings is a concern and maybe as a part of a process, look at training staff to run effective meetings. • 4 days on campus, 1 from home. Its worked well during lockdown - for most of it however, the benefits of having my staff in one room for one meeting as opposed to 2x smaller weekly meetings has been great. • 3 days on campus, 2 at home: There will need to be at least 1 days where our business unit is on campus at the same time. Managers and Leaders will need to remain flexible to ensure they are seeing their team's individually in person during the week. • Flexibility to work remotely for 1 to 2 days a week, when face to face meetings would not add additional benefit. • One day from home would be beneficial to alleviate traffic stress. It takes 3.5 to 4 hours to travel to and from work. • 2 days at home to cover admin or marking tasks. Or having partial days on campus is beneficial, half days I've found have been good as well. **Half week/ half days** • I think working remotely 2 to 3 days a week is great and works well for my role. I could probably work from home more but I do like being connected with people. So couple of days is enough to get my work goals and personal goals achieved. • 2 days a week on campus one week and 3 days a week the following week. I'd have to be stricter with my time management so that I could attend face to face meetings with other staff whenever possible when i am on campus, then I can focus on completing other tasks when I'm working from home without so many interruptions. • I do see a lot of students (by appointment and drop inns) so as long as I worked with another colleague to ensure at least one of us was on campus every day, then I would be happy to do 2-3 days at home and 2-3 days on.

Flexible work arrangements – remote work

Part of weekly schedule	**More than half of the working week** • Come to work on lecture days to prepare, deliver class and interact with students. During remote days, be accessible online, marks assessments, preparation for classes, research, professional development. • I would prefer a 3-3.5 day at home to 2-2.5 day onsite schedule ideally but I would also want to be flexible with this as it would depend on teaching/student needs. I would be able to undertake most of my 1;1 and small group teaching via Zoom (though in person sessions can easily be accommodated) and lectures could be done either way depending on requirements.
Every now and then	**When needed** • The amount of work I have that could be done from home varies throughout the year, days/hours working from home would have to be fairly flexible. • I would like to be able to mix it up as/if it was necessary. It would be nice to take the guilt out of staying home with a bad headache or if a child was sick knowing that we can still work and don't have the stress of not coming to work or having to juggle and find someone to care for them. • It would be on days where I may not be feeling 100% healthy (i.e small dry cough or runny nose), however am capable of working, rather than have to take a sick day and have my absent work managed. **Twice a month** • One or two days working from home each month to catch up on marking etc is useful, but as a regular working pattern I prefer to be in my office. • Twice a month as it gives me a routine to stick to if we have to go back working from home again if required. • Work from home 1 day every fortnight - my work would remain much the same. However I prefer to be at work physically for the most part, as I feel more engaged with the work and with my team.

Flexible work arrangements - other options

WHICH OF THE OPTIONS BELOW ARE SUITED FOR YOUR ROLE AND YOU WOULD BE LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT?

Option	%
Flexible start and finish working hours	86%
Ability to cash in up to 1 week of annual leave per annum	38%
Temporary secondment opportunities for internal projects or to back-fill for a job vacancy	37%
Extended period of leave, normally unpaid (i.e. sabbatical)	37%
Changing total number of hours worked either temporarily or permanently	34%
Allowing annual leave or unpaid time off to accommodate school holidays	25%
Phased or gradual hours increase when returning from parental, sick or ACC leave	22%

Almost all staff (86%) are interested in flexible start and finishing hours. This view is consistent across all roles, age and gender.

Support staff are more interested (40%) in the ability to cash in a weeks leave while Academic staff are more interested (46%) in an extended period of leave.

	ROLE		AGE							GENDER	
	Academic	Support	>18*	18 - 29	30 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 59	60 to 69	*70 +	Female	Male
(blue)	86%	87%	100%	88%	87%	86%	87%	82%	92%	85%	87%
(orange)	33%	40%	100%	35%	49%	36%	35%	29%	25%	37%	38%
(red)	46%	33%	100%	26%	43%	33%	39%	35%	33%	36%	39%
(purple)	34%	34%	0%	38%	35%	24%	35%	42%	50%	33%	34%
(green)	29%	36%	100%	38%	37%	32%	34%	24%	17%	35%	28%
(brown)	29%	24%	50%	3%	36%	33%	19%	19%	8%	22%	29%
(pink)	21%	24%	0%	21%	29%	21%	20%	22%	17%	23%	20%

* Caution: low base sizes

Flexible work arrangements – remote work

MISSING OPTIONS WE SHOULD CONSIDER

Longer days, shorter working week
- 4 day week
- 9 day fortnight

Temporary job location change
- From overseas for 2 to 3 weeks
- From different place most of the month

Varied work hours
- During peaks do more, in low times do less
- During winter leave early, in summer stay later
- Work during the weekend and night

THE POSSIBLE BARRIERS

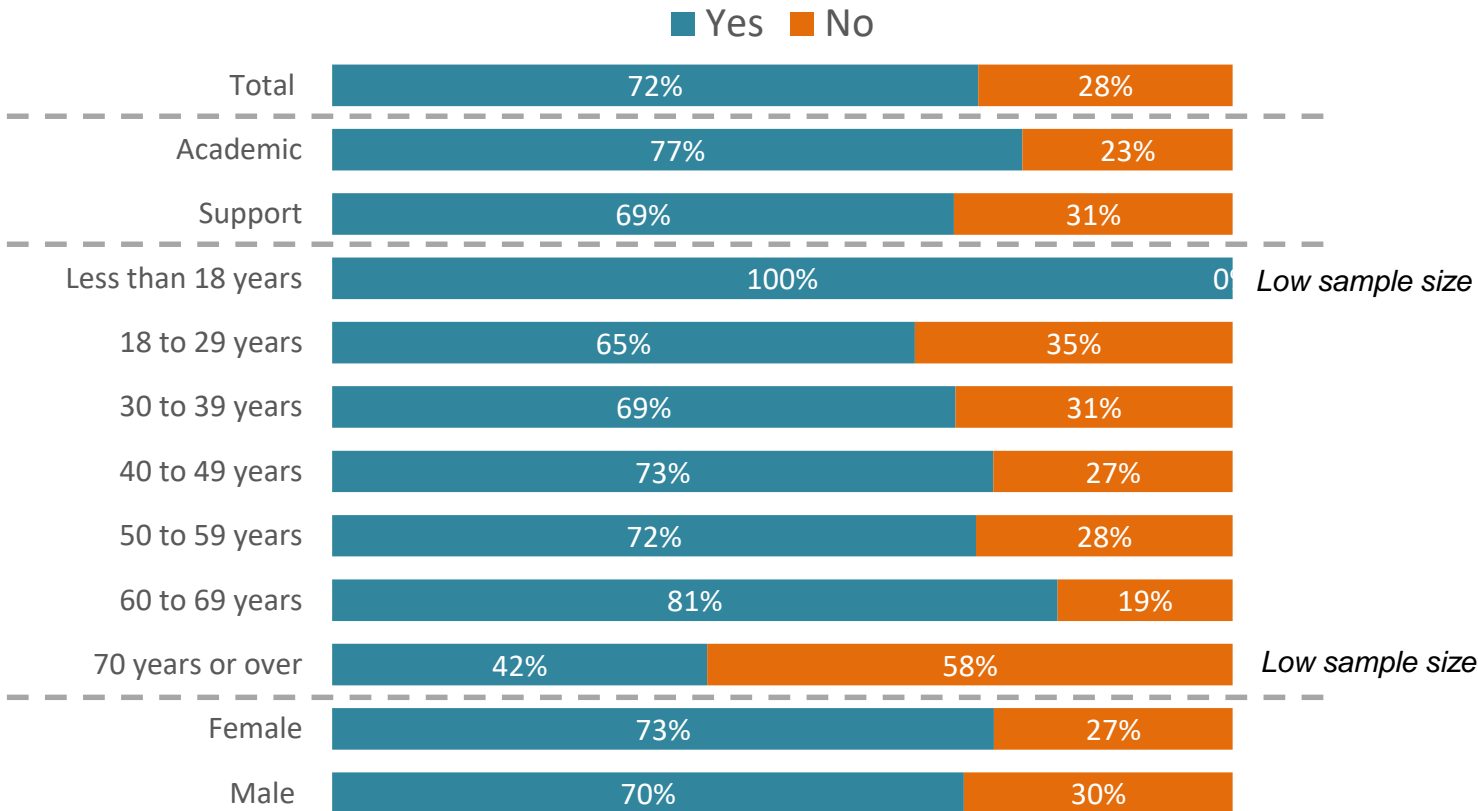|		
Management attitudes and teamwork	42	(i.e. impact v. hours worked mindset, colleagues not being flexible or understanding and some not working hard)
Secondment hard to implement	28	(i.e. no actual career development opportunities at Unitec, who picks up the work while I am gone, time to train temporary replacement, will my role still be there when I get back?)
Workload	24	(i.e. short staffed, high workload due to not enough prioritisation and lack of self-manging skills)
Planning is already quite complex	20	(i.e. timetabling issues, range of peak times across the organisation and teams that need to collaborate)
Lack of clear business principles	14	(i.e. which meetings have to be F2F, making core working hours visible, when is too early to book a meeting, who gets priority when time off requests clash?)

Other options to look into:

- An option worth considering would be a "results-only working environment (ROWE)" which focuses on measuring performance and output rather than the number of hours spent in the office. This involves giving employees a flexible schedule as long as they meet measurable goals.
- Project work - when person goes into another team temporarily to assist for 1 particular project especially during peak times (good learning opportunity as well as support)
- I think there are opportunities here for Unitec to combine this with green solutions i.e. shutting certain buildings one day a week, or completely, reducing carbon emissions by ensuring everyone who can has one day a week from home. We could be a 'green campus' and a leader in this space. Also there may be opportunities to have more shared office spaces on campus that people can pop into, like a lot of the co-working spaces all around the city. This could provide social interaction and workspace for those who work from home a lot.

2019 Christmas Close-Down Satisfaction

72% of staff state that they were happy with the length of the Christmas closedown period last year. This high proportion is consistent across gender and age (except 70yrs+ which is a small sample size so should be treated with caution).
Academic staff show slightly higher approval (77%) compared to Support staff (69%).

IN 2019, I WAS HAPPY WITH THE LENGTH OF THE CHRISTMAS CLOSE-DOWN PERIOD

■ Yes ■ No

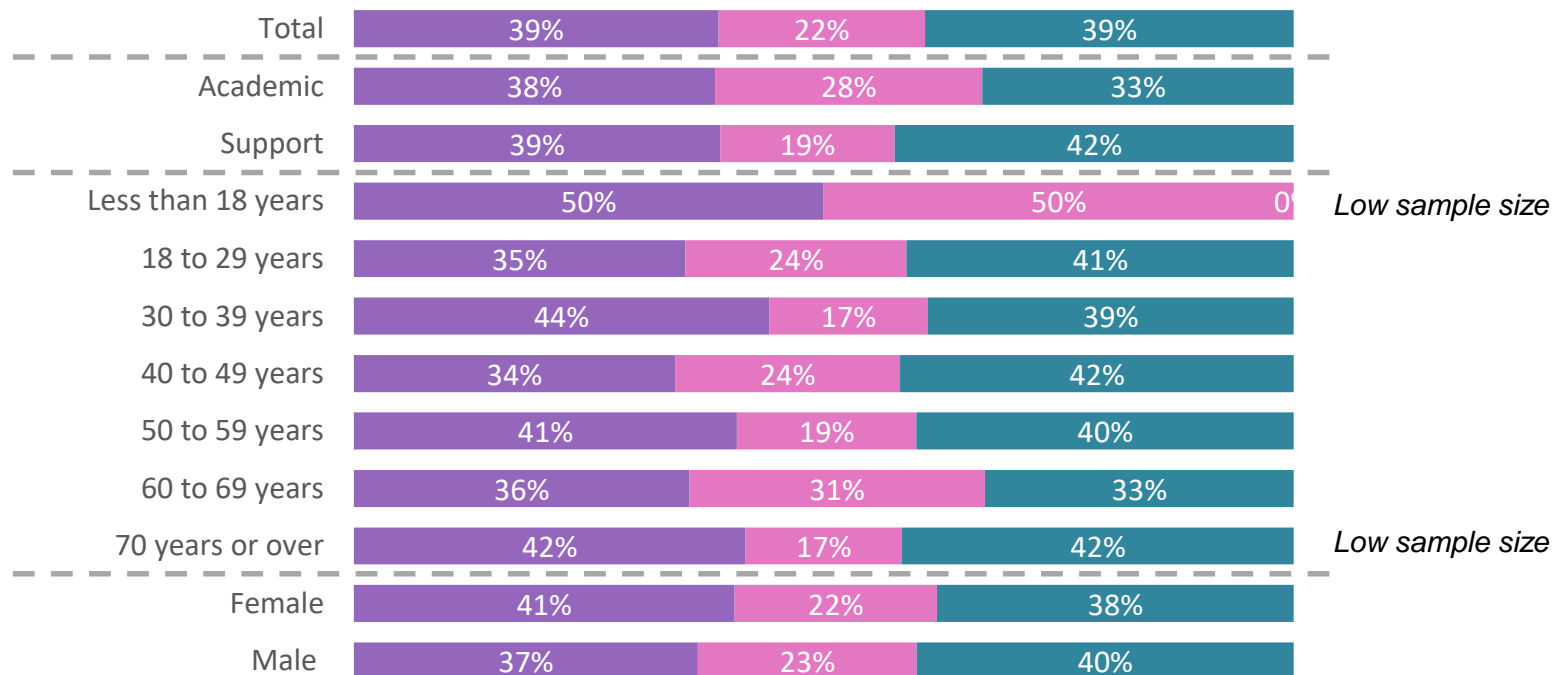| Category	Yes	No
Total	72%	28%
Academic	77%	23%
Support	69%	31%
Less than 18 years	100%	0% *Low sample size*
18 to 29 years	65%	35%
30 to 39 years	69%	31%
40 to 49 years	73%	27%
50 to 59 years	72%	28%
60 to 69 years	81%	19%
70 years or over	42%	58% *Low sample size*
Female	73%	27%
Male	70%	30%

2020/21 Christmas Close-Down Preference

Staff are split on whether they would like a minimal period vs an extended period over Christmas with 39% preferring each. A quarter (22%) are ambivalent.

Academic staff are less likely to prefer a minimal period (33%) when compared to support staff (42%) however they are similar in wanting an extended period. Preference is relatively similar across age and gender of staff.

FOR 2020/21 CHRISTMAS CLOSE-DOWN PERIOD, WHAT WOULD YOU PREFER?

- ■ Extended close-down period (returning mid January);
- ■ I am ok with whatever you choose as I plan to take long summer break ;
- ■ Minimal close-down period (returning early January);

	Extended	Ambivalent	Minimal	
Total	39%	22%	39%	
Academic	38%	28%	33%	
Support	39%	19%	42%	
Less than 18 years	50%	50%	0%	*Low sample size*
18 to 29 years	35%	24%	41%	
30 to 39 years	44%	17%	39%	
40 to 49 years	34%	24%	42%	
50 to 59 years	41%	19%	40%	
60 to 69 years	36%	31%	33%	
70 years or over	42%	17%	42%	*Low sample size*
Female	41%	22%	38%	
Male	37%	23%	40%	

Christmas close-down

Themes	Examples of comments
Suggestions for a different approach	• Recommend that staff be given the choice of return to work dates. Particularly those undertaking summer school programmes (need January to prepare) • Would like to see that this is also handled more flexible. It should be based on workload and if there are individuals with large leave balances, these should be approached individually • May be worth letting people choose - as long as they have a plan to take up a minimum number of leave days during a year or couple of years, negotiated with their manager. With remote working, the campus could remain closed down while people work, but they could then take leave when they need to depending on their own situations/plans/needs rather than be forced to during Christmas, when holidays are expensive and they may end up frustrated. • Be happy to do some working from home remotely as part of a longer Christmas close down to enable all staff to be with family over an extended Christmas holiday period.
Supports extended close down	• Agree with the extended close down period, allows me to spend time away from Auckland with family and not be worrying about what's happening back in the office • I like the extended close down period so that you don't come back to hundreds of emails. I can relax better knowing my colleagues are also on leave. I think Unitec needs to take a breather together at the end of the year • I think it is very important to have the extended period and return mid-Jan. In our role there is never a good time to take a break and without an enforced period, team members would not schedule a break at all and very large leave balances would accrue • With the impact of CoVID19 on staff wellbeing still to be fully realised, I think a longer shut down period would be beneficial for all. Especially given the changes in semester dates etc which will have an impact on peoples mid year breaks.

Christmas close-down

Themes	Examples of comments
Minimal close down/Early return	• Coming back earlier allowed me to set up systems for the start of the new year • Minimal close-down period is ideal as those who would like to extend their holiday, they can apply for it. Compulsory extended close-down period can be an issue for those who have plan in other time of the year • Possibly a work from home option could be made available at the end of a minimal close down period to suit both lots of people's preferences • Christmas close down is a peak period and traveling can be very expensive. Its ok for people earning over $100K pa. Our travel time for family reunions etc is at other times when its cheap
Disagree to longer close down	• Makes it almost impossible to use annual leave to cover other school holidays when I have to use 11 days in one go • I prefer to take my annual leave at another time - say middle of the year. To avoid crowds. And also to take advantage of Northern Hemisphere summer • As Unitec is very multicultural workplace, many staff including myself need longer leave to go to visit their family living overseas at other times of the year • A 2 week shut down is reasonable. that extra week can be a burden. Rather than allowing staff to 'rest' up over the break the imposed extra week actually created stress for many.