Differences in Progression between Sub-cohorts

What can we do to engage the lads?

Workshop Overview

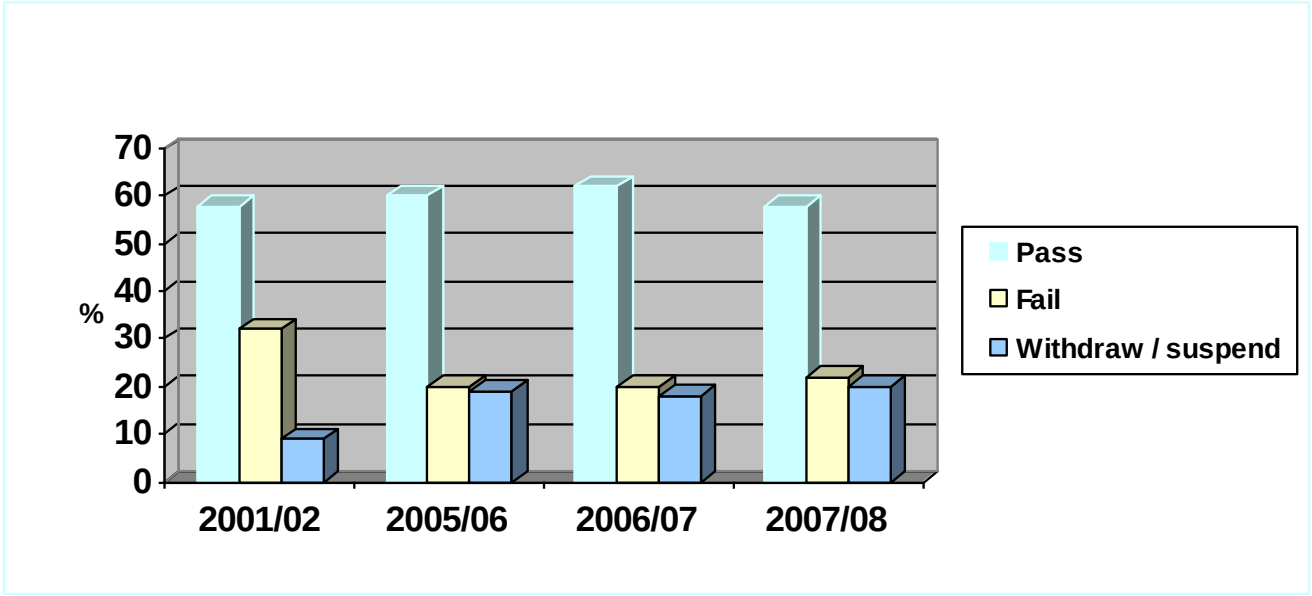
- Retention and progression of sub-cohorts of students on MMU Foundation Year – some inconvenient facts / a few promising signs
- Workshop – What issues do your programmes have? What strategies do you have in place? What works and what doesn't?

MMU Foundation Year

MMU Foundation Year Vital Statistics 2008-2009

- Links to 120 degrees
- Delivered at 4 centres (MMU, MMU Cheshire, Manchester College and Trafford College)
- Grown from 240 students in 2000 to 1007 in 2008/09
- 61% cohort male

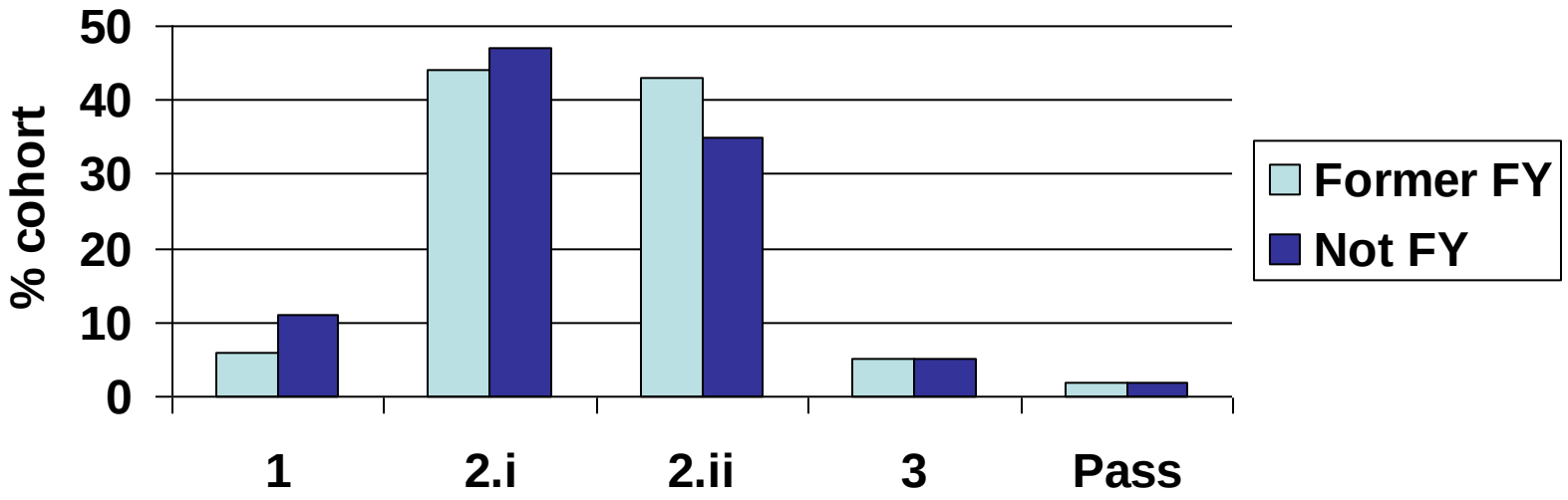
Progression (% enrolled)



Comparative Progression from Year 1 to Year 2 in 2007/08 of former FY students

Former FY student 06/07?	% Progressed to Year 2	Ethnicity (% non-white)	Gender (% male)	Disability (% re disabled)
Yes (n=460)	**81**	**51**	**58**	**9**
No (n=6395)	79	23	44	7

Degree Outcomes 2007/08 (FY 04/05)



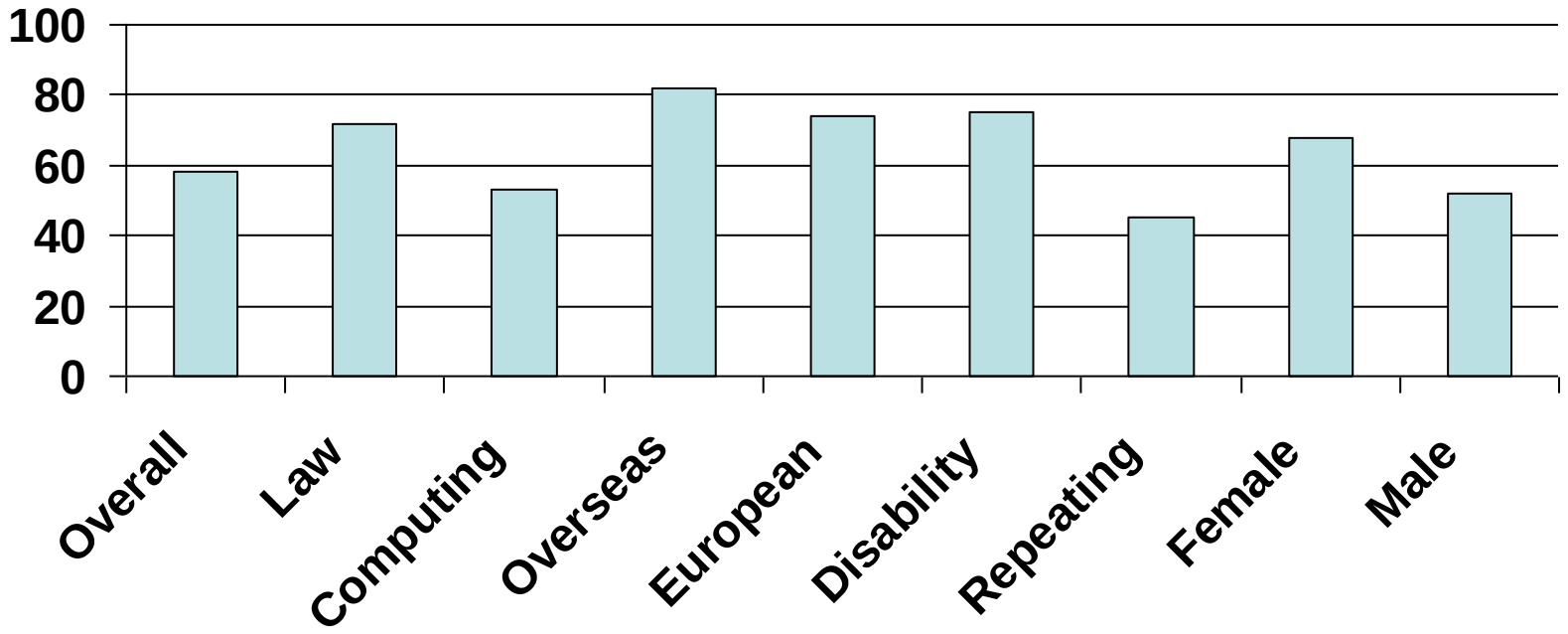
Unequal attainment

The inconvenient facts

Variations in Progression Observed

- By link degree
- By country of domicile
- By disability
- By whether first attempt or repeating
- By gender

Progression rates for different sub-cohorts 2007/08 (% enrolled)



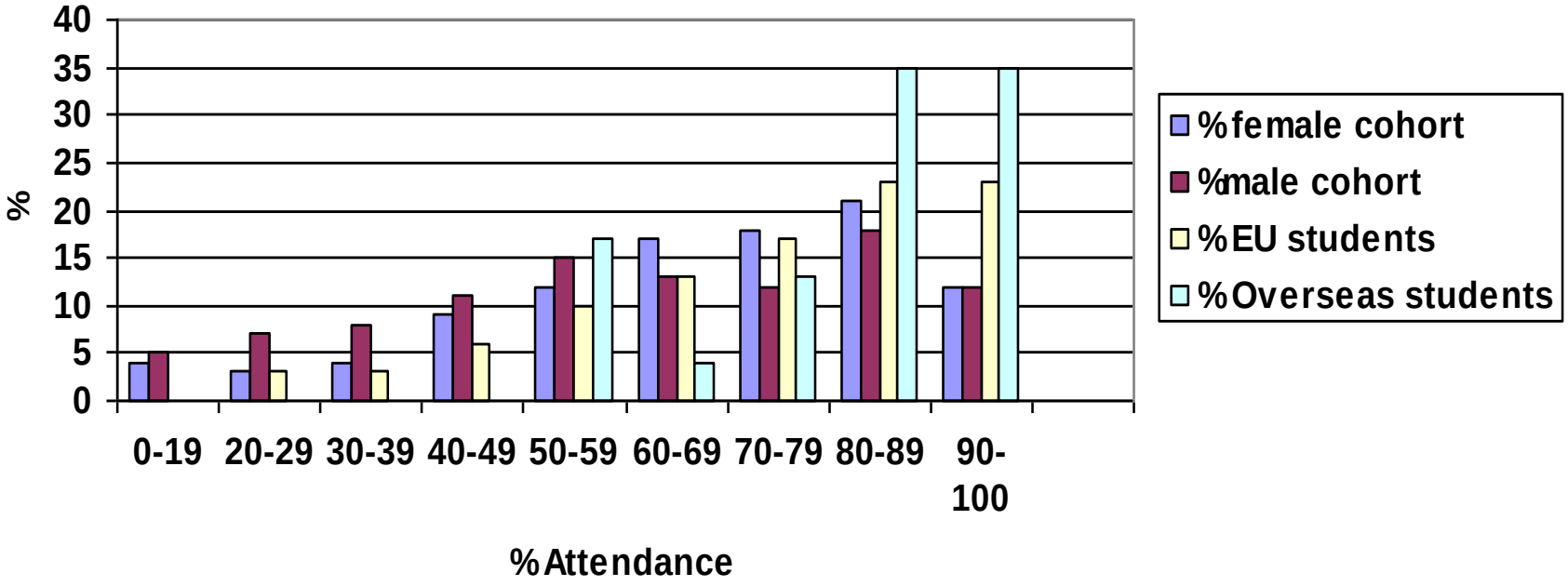
Variation by Gender

"We all need to realise that the poor education experience of males – now shown to extend comprehensively into higher education – is a real problem" Higher Education Policy Institute, June 2009.

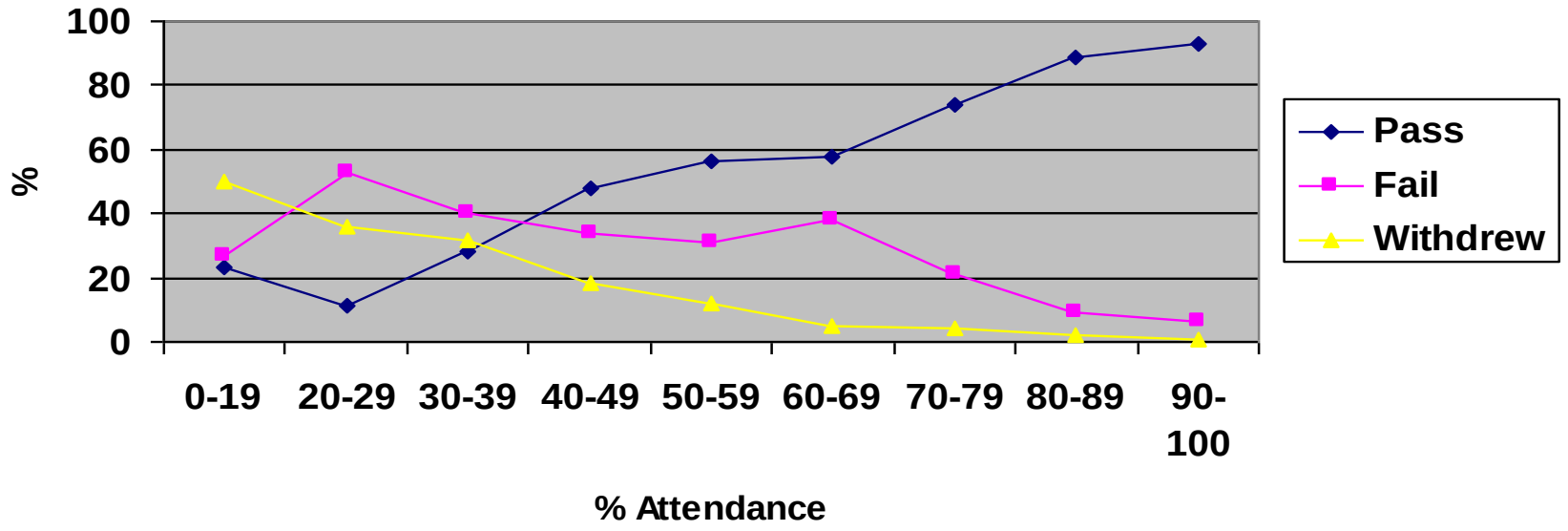
Variation in Progression by Gender

- Only 52% of male students progressed in 2007/08 (68% female students)
- However, in 2008/09, 69% (29) of students obtaining a weighted average >70% were male and of 8 students obtaining weighted averages >80%, 5 were male
- Engagement key to success – can measure by attendance

Effect of gender and origin on patterns of attendance 2007/08



Effect of Attendance on Success 2007/08



What affects engagement of male students?

Does type of assessment affect engagement?

Gender	Course Work		Exam		Ratio CW:EX
	% requiring reassessments 2008/09	Mean no. reassessments / student	% requiring reassessments 2008/09	Mean no. reassessments / student	
Males	29%	2.4	24%	1.8	1.6:1
Females	18%	2.2	17%	1.7	1.45:1

Does “type” of degree (vocational / non-vocational) affect engagement?

Link Degree Area	Progression 2007/08		% male underperformance
	Female (n)	Male (n)	
Law	79% (14)	63% (16)	21%
Biomedical Science	67% (21)	60% (25)	10%
Accounting and Finance	69% (13)	61% (51)	12%
Business	73% (15)	33% (45)	55%
Social Sciences	62% (35)	38% (23)	39%
Combined Honours	59% (39)	48% (27)	19%

Does gender balance in classes affect engagement?

Gender Mix	Link Degree	Progression 2007/08		% male underperformance
		Female (n)	Male (n)	
>41% male	Clothing/Fashion	76% (29)	50% (6)	34%
	Social Sciences	62% (35)	38% (23)	39%
	Combined Honours	59% (39)	48% (27)	19%
40%<male>60%	Biology	67% (21)	60% (25)	10%
	Law	79% (14)	63% (16)	17%
<59% male	Accounting & Finance	69% (13)	61% (51)	11%
	Business	73% (15)	33% (45)	55%
	Computing & Mathematics	100% (3)	52% (83)	48%
	Engineering	73% (11)	44% (57)	40%

So what can be done to increase male engagement?

Attendance management strategies

- Central database in which attendance at one key activity per week for each unit is registered for each student
- Interventions – letters / interviews
- Over-recruitment (under resourcing!) necessitated a different approach this year
- Instead of individual interviews students were invited to attend as groups – “Fresh Start Seminars”

Fresh Start Seminars

- Held early November for students with 20-50% attendance
- Group divided into three separate sessions – males, females and repeating students
- Involved giving data on link between attendance and success. Aimed for a welcoming and non-judgmental approach and offered the immediate opportunity to meet with staff and resolve problems.
- Additional input for male students from a former FY student who proved to be an inspirational speaker

Fresh Start Seminars - Outcomes

Sub-cohort	Attendance January 2009		
	Better	Same	Worse
Females	54%	15%	31%
Males	60%	3%	37%
Repeating	29%	21%	50%

- 16/68 (23%) raised attendance to >50%
- Of these 11/16 passed at first attempt
- Of these 8/11 were men
- 56% have reassessments
- As effective as individual interviews!

Workshop

What do you do?

Workshop

- Do you have the same progression issues as us?
- If not what sub-cohorts do you have / have you had concerns about?
- What have you tried?
- What seems to work / what doesn't?
  - e.g. induction, curriculum, assessment, "carrots", "sticks"