



AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITY HEADS OF ENGLISH

2020 AGM

President's Report

University Heads of English



2020-2021 Executive

President	Giselle Bastin (Flinders)
VP Admin	Ann Vickery (Deakin)
VP Finance	Robert Clarke (UTAS)
VP Outreach	Anthony Uhlmann (WSU)

Research committee Chair: Maggie Nolan (ACU)

Teaching & Learning Committee Chair: Clare Archer-Lean (USC)

2019 List out-of-date and to be updated at end of 2020 AGM

2019 State Representatives:

Robert Clarke (Tasmania);

Marg Henderson (Queensland);

Deborah Pike (New South Wales);

Ann Vickery (Victoria);

Lucy Neave (ACT);

Tony Hughes D'Aeth (Western Australia);

Ros Prosser (South Australia)



in 5 domains

Resources (research; reports; website—www.auhe.org)

Events (AGM and networking; keynote speakers)

Advocacy (Letter to The Honourable Dan Tehan MP; Signatory of the HASS Associations (CHASS) Letter opposing changes to HASS Degree fees; Feb 2020 Submission FOR Codes to ARC)

Financial Support (sponsorship of conferences, e.g. AULLA [Australasian Universities Language and Literature Association] funding of keynote for 2021 conference; travel; RA)

Awards, recognition (AUHE Prize for Literary Scholarship; Voss Prize)

Social Media (Facebook)

AUHE AGM December 3, 2020

Online via Zoom

10am—4pm (AEST)

10.00-10.15am **Welcome and President's Report** (Giselle Bastin)

10.15-10.30am **VP Finance/Treasurer's Report** (Robert Clarke) → Including consideration of funding for **secondary-tertiary conference 2021** (Roger Osborne JCU)

10.30-10.45am **VP Outreach Report** (Anthony Uhlmann)

10.45am-12.30pm **Research Committee Report:** (Chair: Maggie Nolan)
Outcomes of English FOR Codes AUHE Submission to the ANZSRC Report.

Special Session: Publication Outlets for English Literary Studies

12.30-1.00pm *Lunch Break*

1.00-1.15pm **Teaching and Learning Committee Report** (Chair: Clare Archer-Lean)

1.15-3.00pm **Special Session: State of the Discipline 2020 Survey Results & Roundtable Discussion about English in the Age of Dan Tehan**
(Chair: Giselle Bastin)

AAL & Literary Studies Associations: Futures (Chris Danta)

3.00-3.20pm **AUHE Prize for Literary Scholarship Shortlist** (presented by Ann Vickery)

3.20-3.40pm **Voss Prize 2020 Winner** (presented by Elaine Lindsay)

3.40-4.00pm **Priority Settings for 2021**

- **Election of Voss Prize Judging Panel (3 members)**
- **Election of AUHE Prize for Literary Scholarship Panel (3 members)**
- **Election of AUHE State and Territory Reps:**
 - South Australia
 - Western Australia
 - ACT
 - Northern Territory
 - Tasmania
 - Queensland
 - NSW
 - Victoria

4.00pm

AGM Close

Special Session 2
Summary of AUHE 2020
Survey:
English in the Age of
Tehan (and COVID-19)



English and the Humanities: the Tehan Reforms

'Some students will pay more than their degree costs'

The national president of the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU), Alison Barnes, said the measures could well steer students away from humanities because of the higher cost. She noted that at \$14,500, it would cost the student as much to obtain their humanities degree as it does to teach it.

"It appears that the Government has set the student contribution to equal the exact average cost of teaching these programs," Dr Barnes said.

The shift in the funding mix towards student fees is most acute in the humanities and social sciences. Students studying subjects such as history, philosophy and politics, as well as those enrolled in law, economics and business degrees, will pay \$14,500 per year in fees. These students will contribute 93 percent of the cost of their university education, while the Commonwealth's decline to 7 per cent will account for only \$1100 a year.

The Federal Government last year commissioned a report by Deloitte that looked into the actual costs of teaching programs.

ANU Professor in higher education policy Andrew Norton has done analysis of the fee changes based on that report.

His analysis found that the current government contribution for a humanities degree was \$6,226, while the student contribution in humanities was \$6,804.

Under the Government's proposed change, the public contribution for humanities falls by \$5,126, while the student contribution increases by \$7,696.

Tehan's wonks kept the price of English subjects in the lowest band; you can do an English arts major for about \$15,000 total for three years, if it's almost all English. Belatedly, they realised that an English degree is not three years of Anglo-Saxon diphthongs, but is full of... horror!... theory.

Same with psychology and languages. **So there is now talk that Tehan's department will price courses, semester-unit by semester-unit**, to accomplish the real aim of the moves: to kill the teaching of critical thinking in the humanities.

[Guy Rundle Crikey August 27, 2020]

Current/2020
funding
clusters

Funding cluster	Part of funding cluster	Unit description	Field of education code	Maximum student contribution amounts (see footnotes for exceptions)	Commonwealth contribution amounts
Funding Cluster 1 Law, accounting, administration, economics, commerce		Law Accounting Business and Management Sales and Marketing Tourism Office Studies Banking, Finance and Related Fields Other Management and Commerce Economics and Econometrics Food and Hospitality Personal Services General Education Programmes Other Mixed Field Programmes	0909 0801 0803 0805 0807 0809 0811 0899 0919 1101 1103 1201 1299	\$11,155	\$2,198
Funding Cluster 2 Humanities		History Archaeology Indigenous Studies Justice and Law Enforcement Language and Literature English Language Linguistics Literature Language and Literature not elsewhere classified Philosophy and Religious Studies	090305 090307 090311 0911 091500 091501 091521 091523 091599 0917	\$6,684	\$6,116
Funding Cluster 3 Mathematics, statistics, behavioural science, social studies, computing, built environment, other health	Mathematics, statistics, computing, built environment or other health	Mathematical Sciences Computer Science Information Systems Other Information Technology Architecture and Urban Environment Building Public Health	0101 0201 0203 0299 0401 0403 061300		

Table 1: Current and proposed Commonwealth contribution amounts, 2021

Fields	Current Commonwealth contribution amount	Proposed Commonwealth contribution amount
Law	\$2,237	\$1,100
Accounting	\$2,237	\$1,100
Administration	\$2,237	\$1,100
Economics	\$2,237	\$1,100
Commerce	\$2,237	\$1,100
Society and Culture not included elsewhere	\$6,226	\$1,100
English Language, Linguistics and Literature	\$6,226	\$13,250
Behavioural Science	\$11,015	\$1,100
Social Studies	\$11,015	\$1,100
Communications	\$13,547	\$1,100
Mathematics	\$11,015	\$13,250
Statistics	\$11,015	\$13,250

Proposed new clusters and bands design

Student Contribution: 4 bands - based on private returns & national priorities

Band 1 - \$3,700	Band 2 - \$7,700	Band 3 - \$11,300	Band 4 - \$14,500
Teaching	Allied Health	Medical	Law & Economics
Clinical Psychology	Other Health	Dental	Management & Commerce
English	Architecture	Veterinary Science	Society and Culture
Maths	IT		Humanities
Nursing	Creative Arts		Communications
Languages	Engineering		Behavioural Science
Agriculture	Environmental Studies		
	Science		

Get the data

Commonwealth Contribution: 4 clusters

Cluster 1 - \$1,100	Cluster 2 - \$13,500	Cluster 3 - \$16,500	Cluster 4 - \$27,000
Law & Economics	Teaching	Nursing	Agriculture
Society and Culture	Maths	Engineering	Dental
Management & Commerce	Clinical Psychology	Languages	Medical
Humanities	Allied Health	Environmental Studies	Veterinary Science
Communications	Other Health	Science	
Behavioural Science	Architecture		
	IT		

The AUHE 2020 Survey

What, if any, is the anticipated impact of the Tehan education reforms on your institution's English offerings? More English topics anticipated? Fewer? Same as usual?

Landscape unclear; 2021 shaping up to look like 2020 with changes anticipated 2022 →

We are ensuring that the coding of our English units is such that these units will be counted as English. We are also looking at our Creative Writing units in these terms, so that Creative Writing units are still affordable for students.

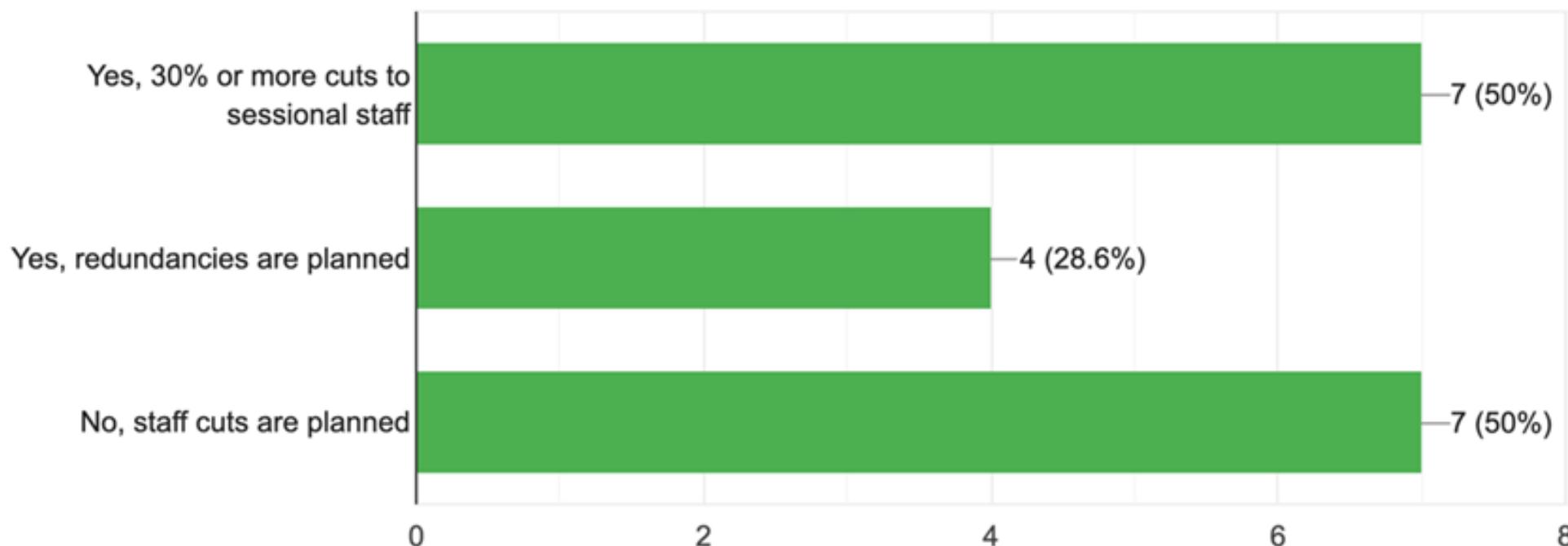
Will the staffing of English be affected in any way by the Tehan reforms?

A fairly grim picture presented in the comments:

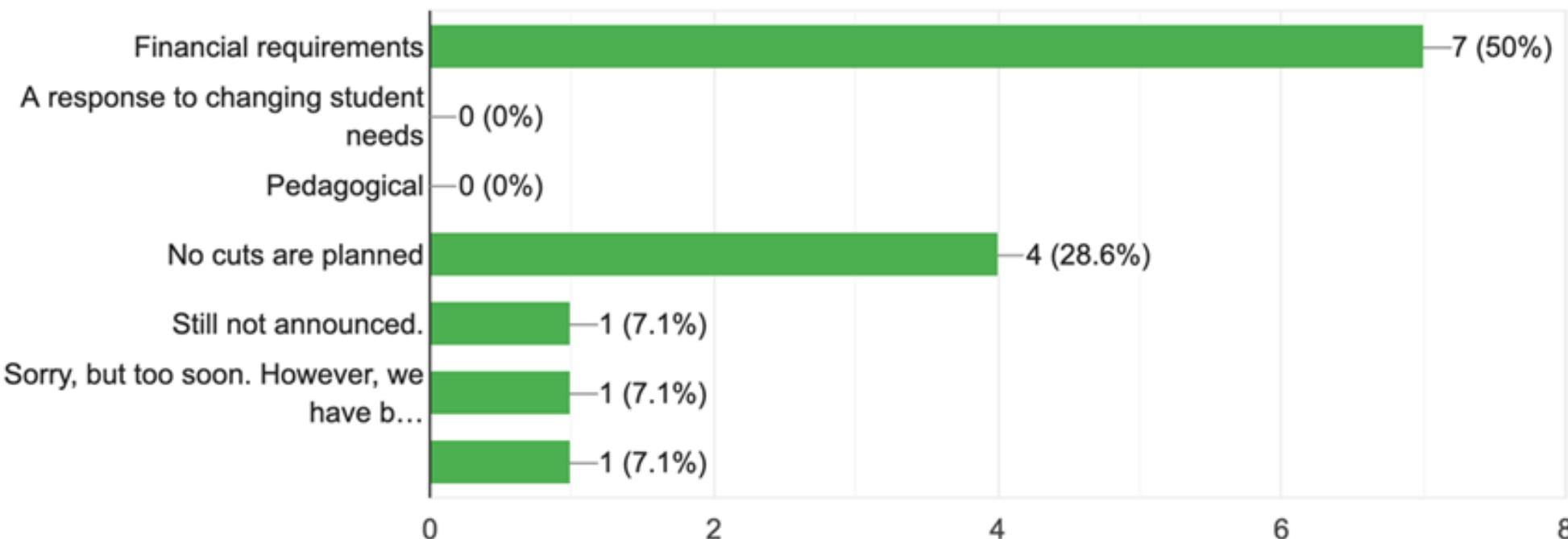
There is not much left of us; Staffing freeze; voluntary redundancies this year; staffing is already parlous; unit offerings have been cut to the bone; colleagues are accepting VERs. This will halve staff in the discipline. The major is unlikely to continue. Involuntary redundancies for those few remaining are possible; All voluntary re leave; minimisation of sessional engagement (e.g. only 10 weeks tutes per semester in place of 10 or 11); remaining blows still to be announced/executed. Think Lit Studies and Creative Writing will be ok.

Are there staff cuts planned in the English discipline, you can check more than one answer

14 responses



In the case where course cuts are being planned or have been executed, are the cuts explained as
14 responses



If your English program/course/topics are connected to teacher training/Education courses at your institution, are there any anticipated changes to the relationship in the face of proposed changes to federal funding for teacher training courses?

- *We have to see if/how enrolment patterns are affected by the reforms.*
- *We are moving to a new teaching degree which incorporates English program units, rather than the Teaching/Arts double degree.*
- *We fear [a] tethering to the Education Faculty might be in store.*
- *Some education courses and units have been excised from arts programs, as they are less likely to attract fee increases if coded as Education rather than arts-based and discipline specific units.*
- *We are learning, only in dribs and drabs, that Education is reducing the size of its Humanities/Arts (and therefore English) majors and making moves—we suspect—to teach more and more 'in-house'; it has the potential to be a land grab.*
- *There is no direct correlation between the two. However, many B.Ed. students take ENGL units, especially things like "Shakespeare". Again, no available modelling on this, but I foresee a closer relationship being forged.*

Has there been any discussion amongst your colleagues about how English/the study of literature can be promoted as particularly relevant in the Covid-19 world? If so, what have some of the views been about this?

- People resent having to promote literature...I have instigated a consortium of the liberal arts areas in my school to construct a PR/branding strategy, as we are all under threat from Tehan, the Ramsay Centre etc.
- At a recent Discipline Group meeting we decided as a group to take more leadership of this by setting up a separate webpage for English at our university
- Yes, some anxiety about launching "hot topic" units (e.g. the literature of climate change) into an anxious student body.
- Yes. There has been discussion around marketing and promotion to ensure future students are aware of the true picture of employment and vocational outcomes for students of literature/English.
- Service workload is being redeployed to teaching. Online teaching is being used to increase staff/student ratio.
- more online learning. Less use of casuals.
- Workloads of academics (with research-teaching profile) have increased; research workload allocation has been reduced.

Can you comment on the experience of English colleagues of adapting the teaching of English in online environments necessitated by COVID-19 measures?

- The main one has concerned the relative difficulty of engaging the full cohort of students in tutorials, compared to f2f scenarios.
- It is a second rate pedagogy for teaching literature.
- Generally similar - replication of face to face into online environment
- Overall, and once the initial shift to online learning occurred, English colleagues have found the online teaching experience to be an adequate measure for unusual times. We continue to advocate for face to face learning as the best 'delivery mode' for our students, not least given their overwhelming preference for it (as suggested by repeated survey results).
- Mostly positive, some staff are very happy with working online, others are happier teaching in person.
- It is an ongoing challenge.
- It's been time-consuming, often stressful, but everyone did their best and managed well in the circumstances.
- dealing with mental health issues and lack of morale
- Many have spoken of the qualitative shift in teaching and learning online. It is difficult to gauge student engagement in a zoom tutorial. Attendance and rates of submission of work have, however, been high.
- The initial phase in March 2020 and again in June/July for the second semester have been extremely stressful for most of us. Creative writing and practice-based subjects have undergone significant changes (from introducing workshopping software, to changing the layout of subjects, changing lecture formats etc., bolstering LMS platforms etc.). We have also had to train ourselves and our casual tutors in the finer points of using Zoom over the course of a week. By now, we have ironed out most teething problems, but most of us find online teaching exhausting and are trying hard to motivate students. Increased pastoral care has been a significant factor in both semesters. We all find it hard to stay connected with our students and reach those who are struggling.
- Honestly, the death of the lecture and its replacement with video segments are no bad things, but the students and staff find the Zoom tutorials alienating and the loss of IRL contact exacerbates mental health conditions among the student body. Maybe for the staff too.

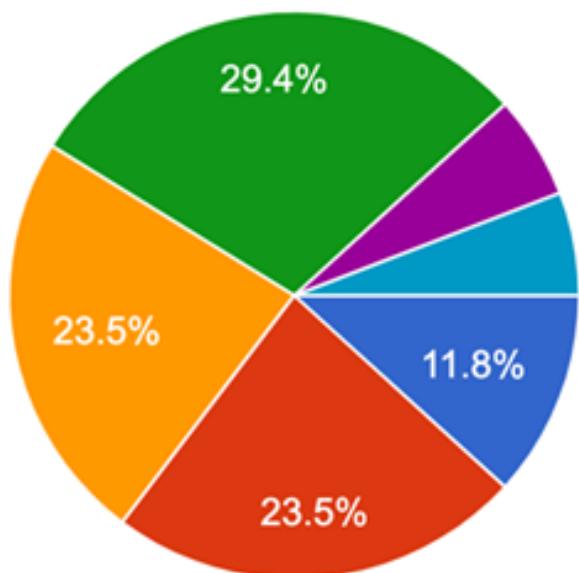


Some have found English relatively well adapted to online learning

- English is easier than more practical disciplines
- relatively adaptable - students read and wrote more
- Lecture videos remove problem of poor lecture attendance.
- I'm getting good responses to on-topic YouTube videos and Moodle forums interspersed between lecture segments. Good to have a sense of what the students are making of lecture content prior to the tutorials. Students are loving the back-channel communication via chat function during Zoom tutorials.
- Online discussion forums and synchronous and asynchronous teaching and learning opportunities.
- Yes, well clearly, without too many practical elements, it's suited to online learning. But collaborative work is more difficult.

How have you found the experience of adapting the teaching of English in online environments necessitated by COVID-19 measures?

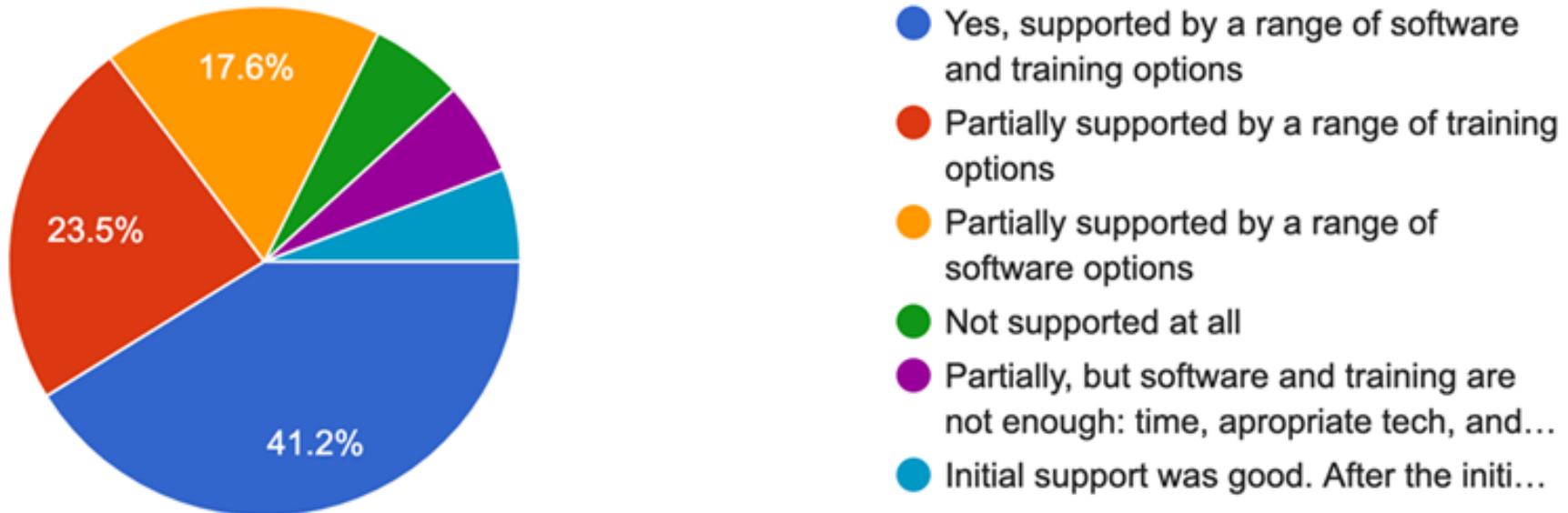
17 responses



- Adaption has been relatively seamless because of parallel online leaning mo...
- Creation of online resources has been a matter of narrating existing powerpoint...
- Creation of online resources has involved learning new technologies
- Creation of online learning materials has been extremely time consuming and s...
- Learning new technologies; Time cons...
- Adaptation is easy. But students have...

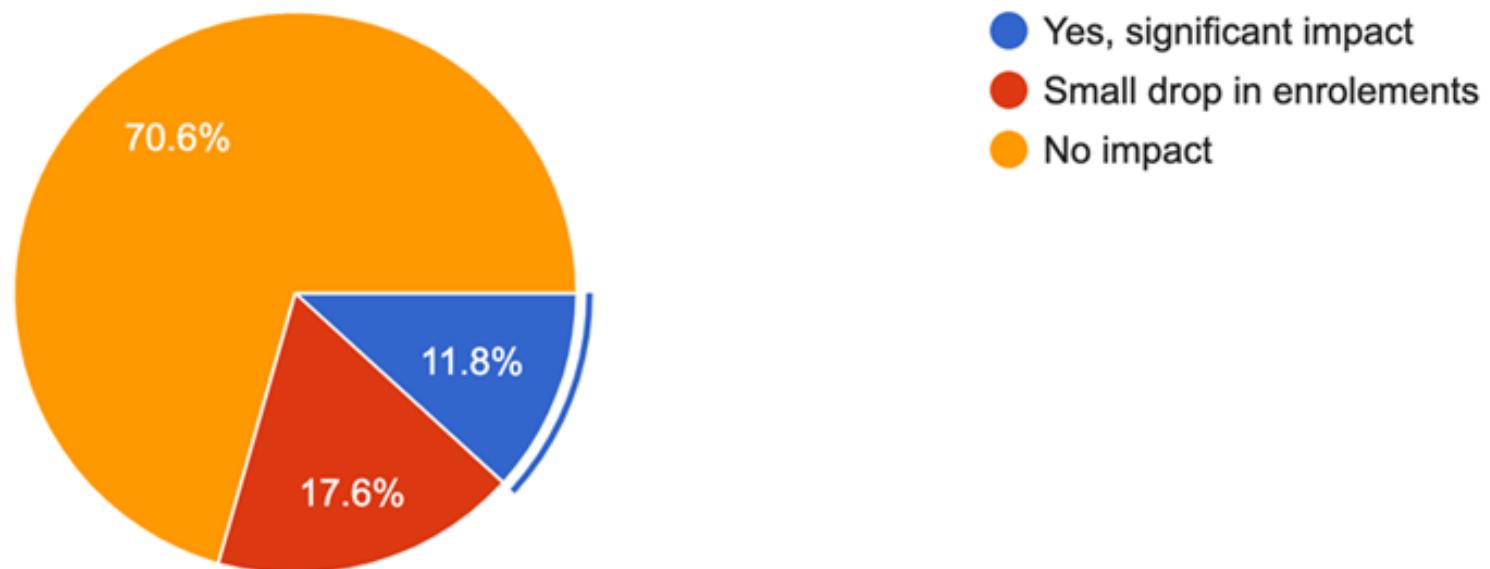
Have you felt supported by your institution in adapting to COVID-19 measure and online learning environments?

17 responses



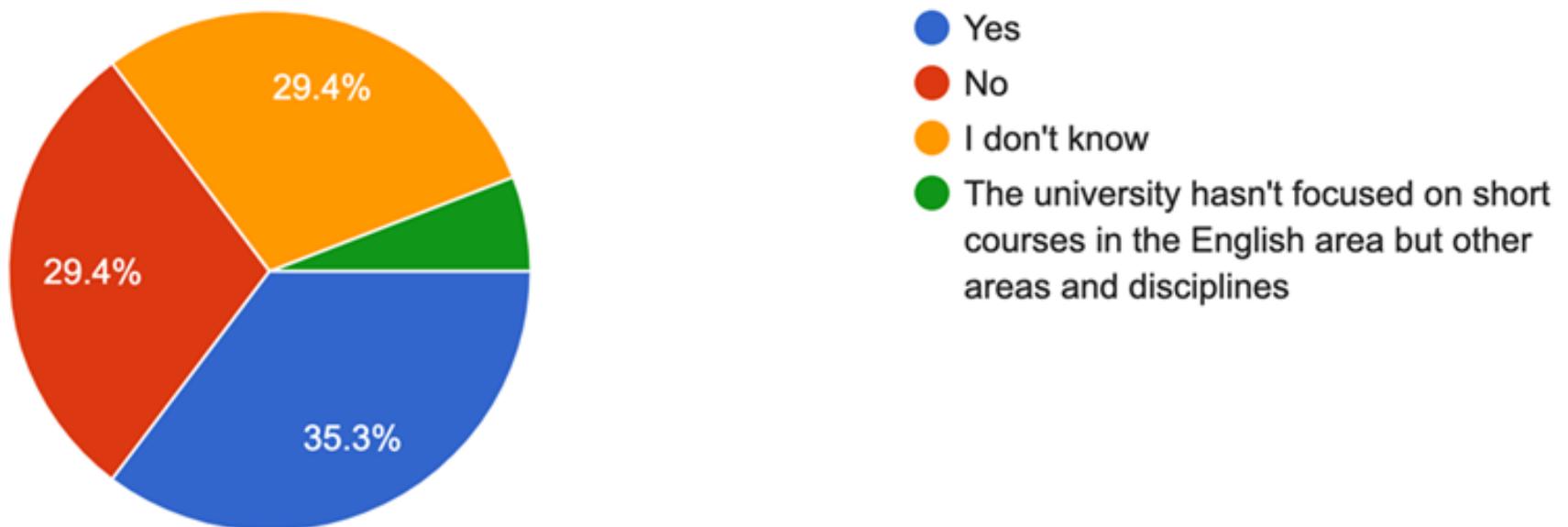
Have you seen any impact on the discipline in terms of drops in student numbers?

17 responses



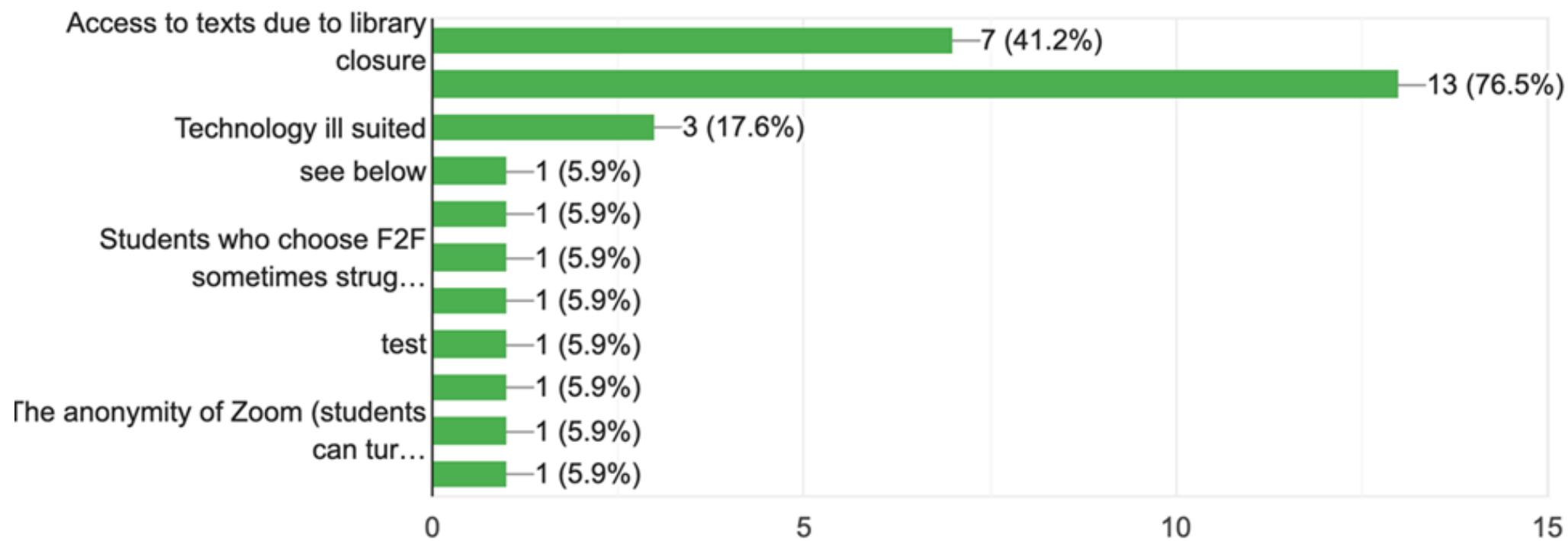
Is your institution seeking to capitalise on Government study incentives via short courses (or other indicators of growth) in the English area?

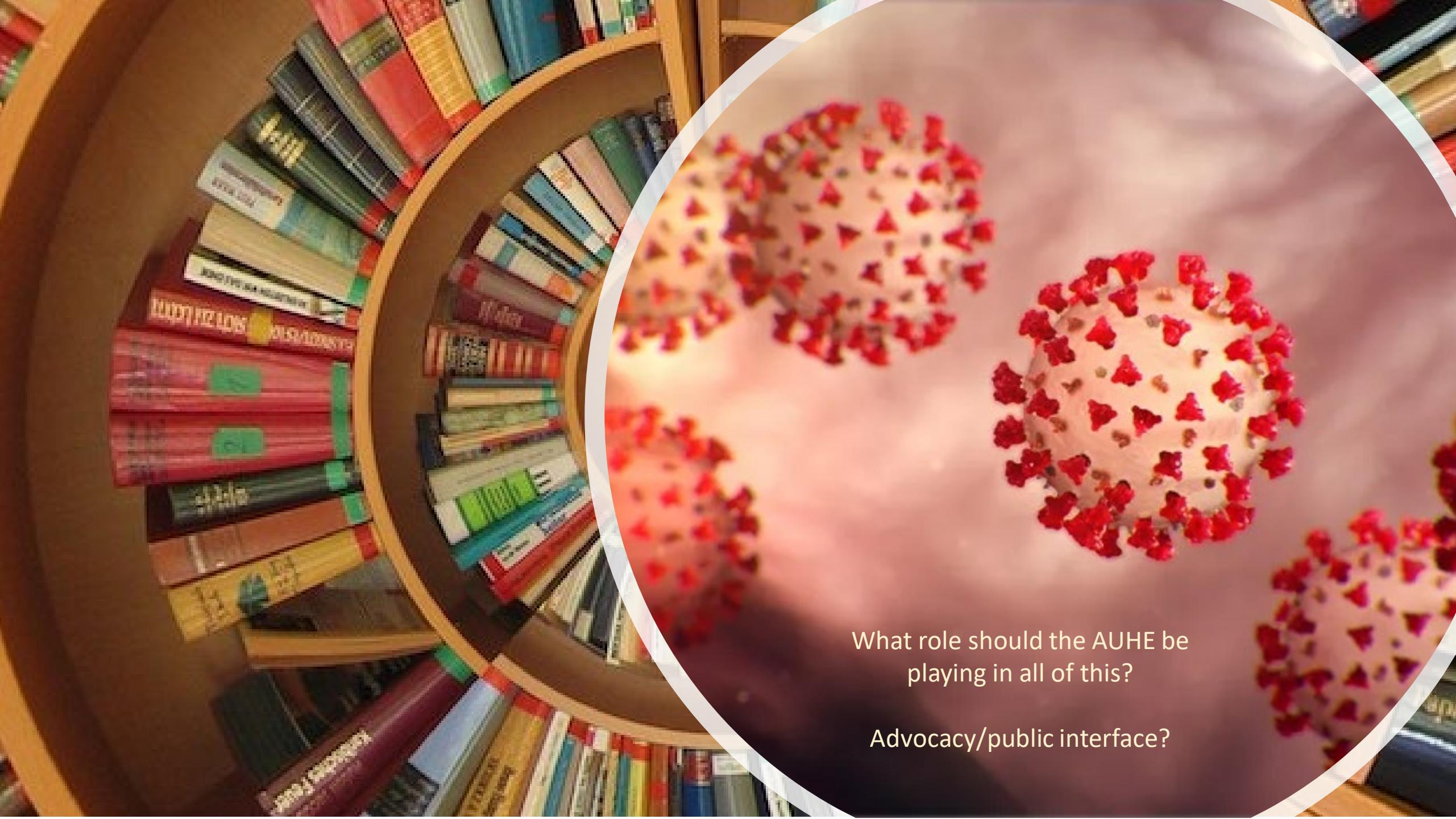
17 responses



What ways do you see tertiary English teaching and learning quality as particularly negatively effected by COVID-19 measures? You can select more than one.

17 responses





What role should the AUHE be
playing in all of this?

Advocacy/public interface?