

# STUDENT PERSPECTIVES ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND MENTAL HEALTH

2023



STUDENTS  
ORGANISING FOR  
SUSTAINABILITY  
UNITED KINGDOM

**Summary:** In April 2023, over 2500 students in higher and further education answered our survey about their feelings on climate change. Here's what they told us...



**77%** say, at the time of completing the survey, they feel very or fairly worried about climate change and its effects.



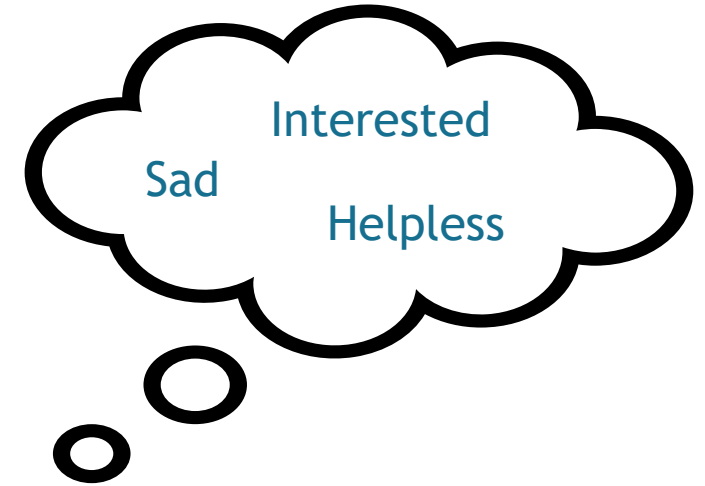
**60%**

say their feelings are strongly, mostly or moderately described by...  
 “At times I find myself thinking and worrying what the world will be like in the future because of climate change.”



**12%**

report that their thoughts or feelings around climate change interfere with their wellbeing of cause problems for them (4 or 5 where 5 is ‘extremely/significantly’)



When they think about climate change, respondents most commonly say they ‘very much’ or ‘moderately’ feel interested (68%), sad (63%) or helpless (62%).

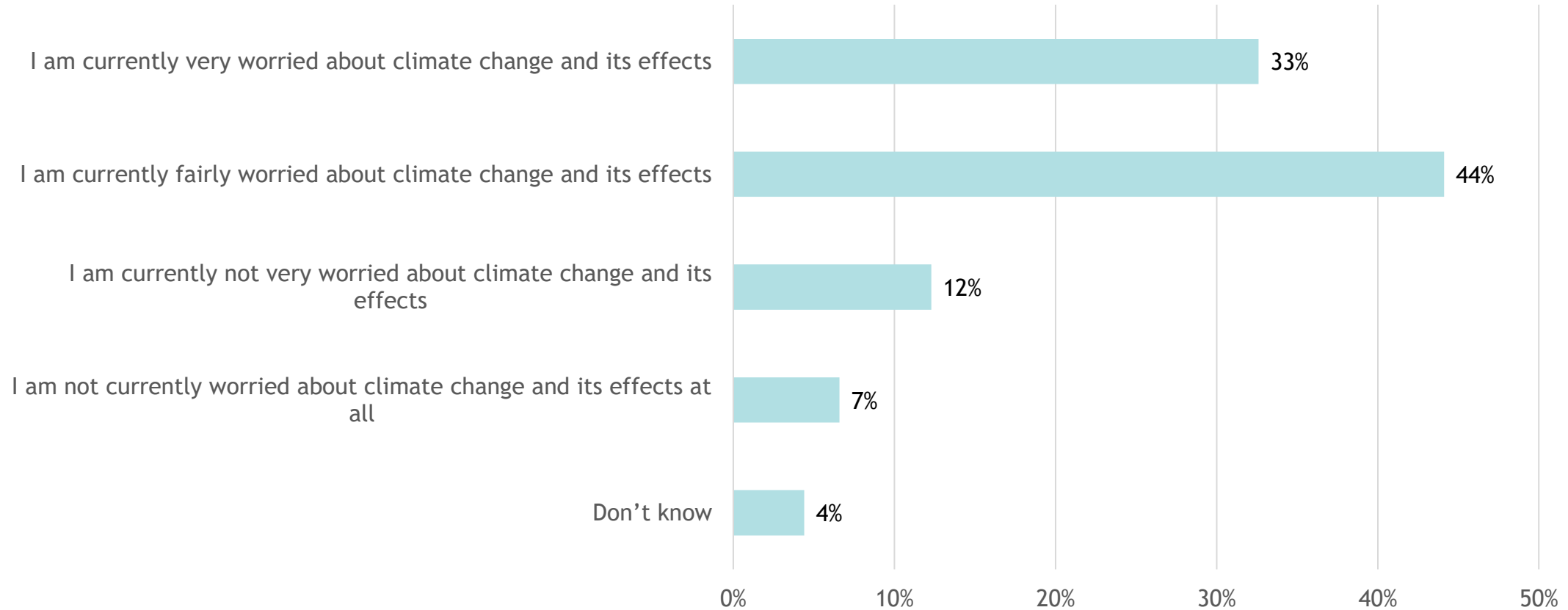
# About the research

In April 2023 SOS-UK asked further and higher students studying in the UK about their feelings related to climate change. A total of 2503 students completed the survey.

The survey was distributed via the database of TOTUM cardholders and form part of a wider omnibus survey containing questions on a variety of topics. Respondents are incentivised to complete the survey with a cash prize draw. Responses have been weighted by gender to reflect the demographic make up of the UK student population.

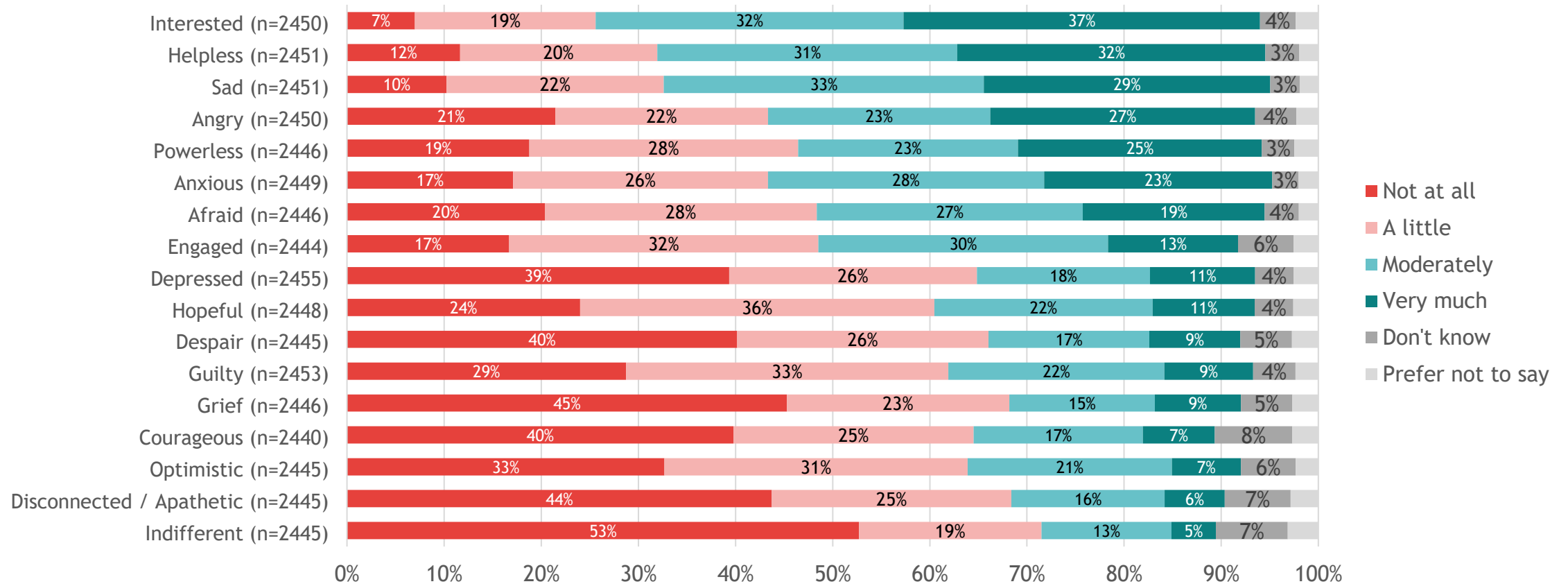
# FINDINGS IN DETAIL

Thinking about how they felt about climate change at the point of completing the survey, over three quarters of respondents (77%) said that they are very or fairly worried about climate change and its effects



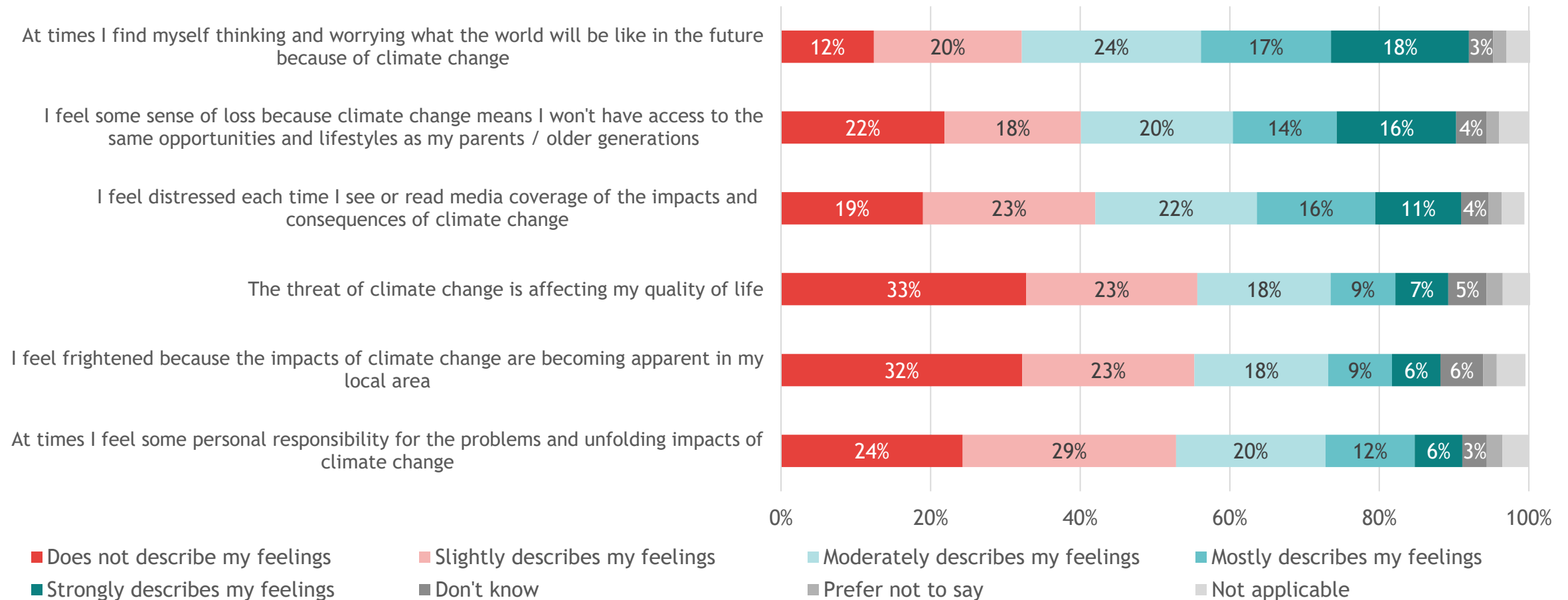
Question: Thinking about how you feel TODAY about climate change and its effects, which of the following comes closest to your view? Weighted base: 2455 Balance: no response

When they think about climate change, respondents most commonly say they ‘very much’ or ‘moderately’ feel interested (68%), helpless (63%) or sad (62%). Respondents are least likely to report feeling (very much or moderately) indifferent (18%) or disconnected/apathetic (22%) when they think about climate change.



Question: When you think about climate change, how strongly (if at all) do you feel each of the following emotions? Base: See chart Balance: No response

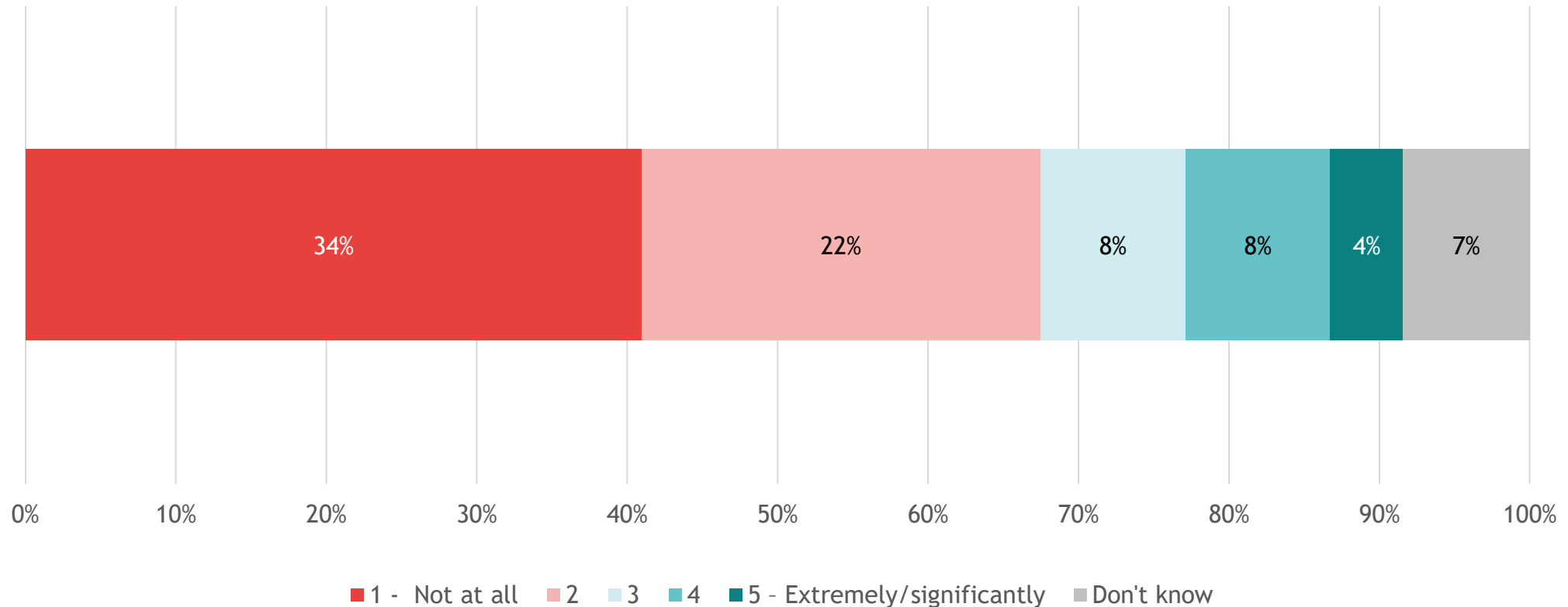
60% of respondents agree that thinking and worrying what the world will be like in the future because of climate change ‘strongly’, ‘mostly’ or ‘moderately’ describes their feelings. 34% of respondents say that the feeling that the threat of climate change is affecting their quality of life ‘moderately’, ‘mostly’ or ‘strongly’ describes them.



Question: How much (if at all) do each of the following statements about climate change apply to you? Does climate change make you think any of the following? Balance: No response

12% of respondents report that their thoughts or feelings around climate change interfere with their wellbeing or cause problems for them. However more than half (56%) of respondents don't report being affected by their feelings on climate change in this way.

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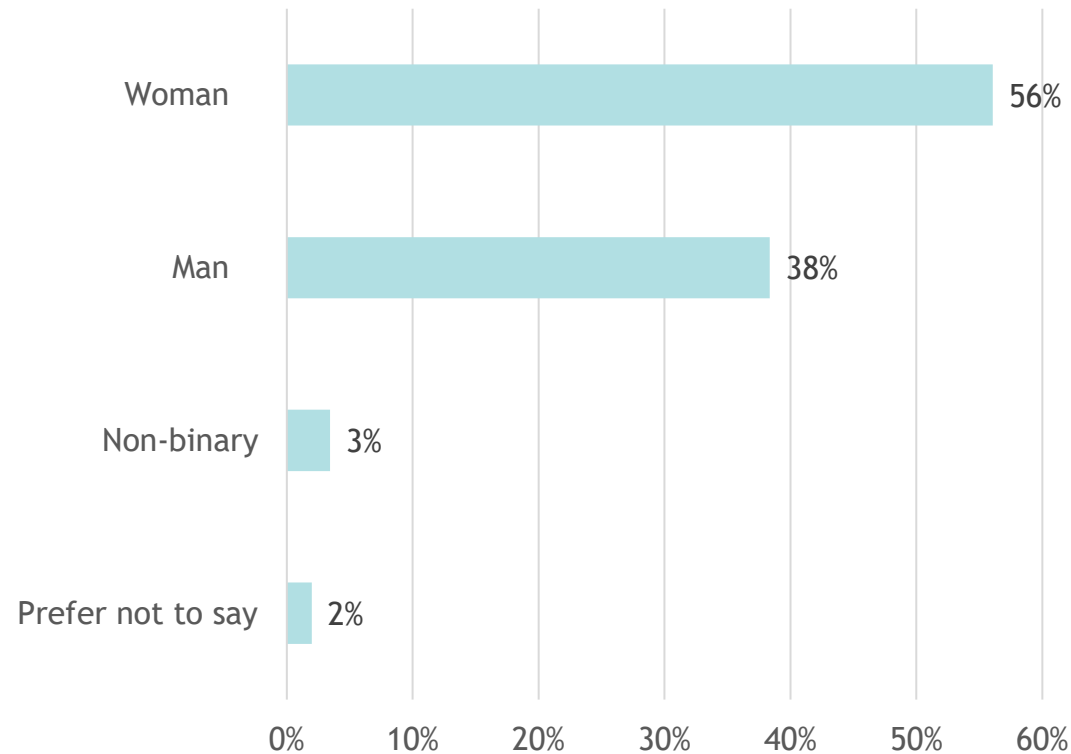
Question: Do your thoughts or feelings around climate change ever interfere with your wellbeing or cause problems for you in any way? Weighted base: 2443



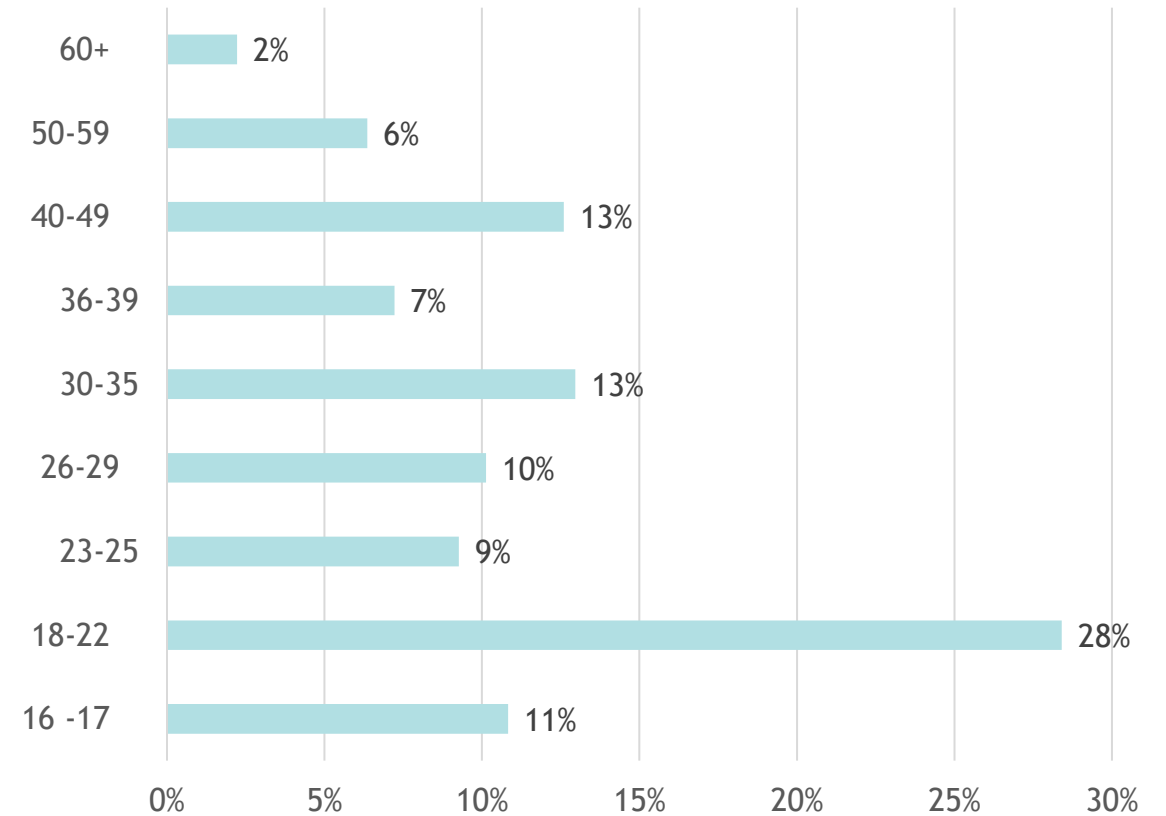
# DEMOGRAPHICS

Over half of respondents are women and just under two fifths of respondents are aged 22 and under.

## GENDER

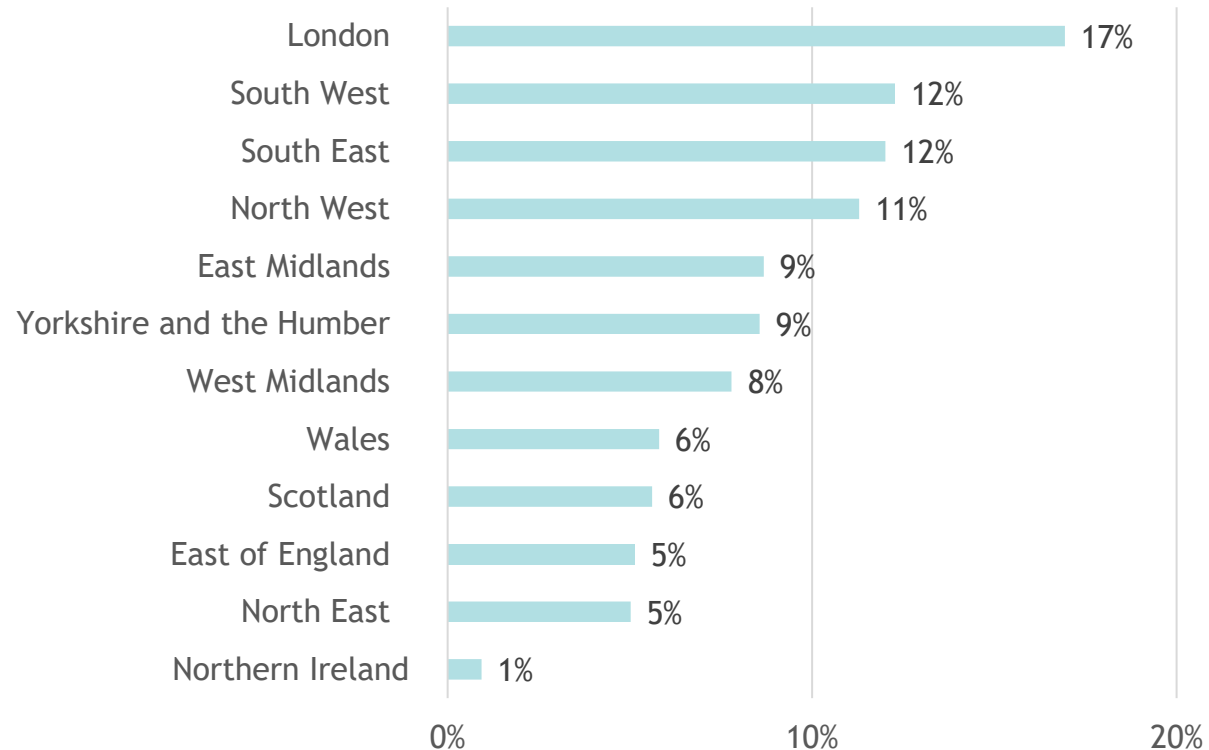


## AGE

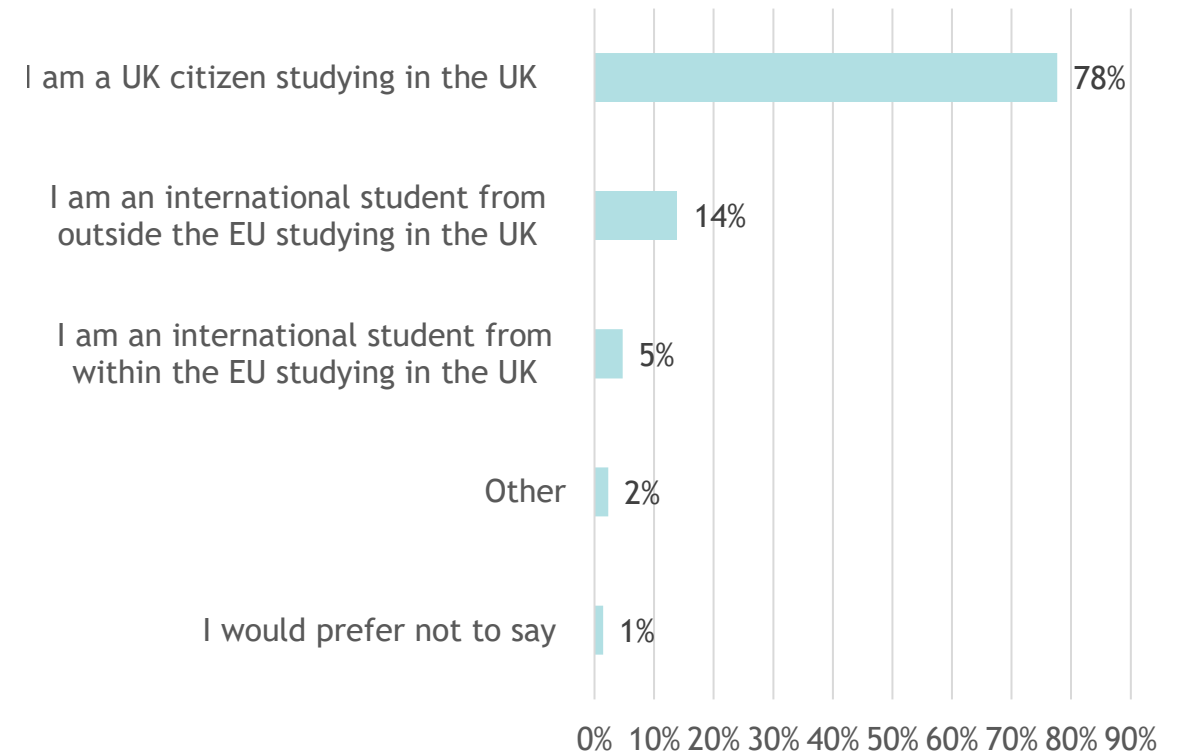


41% of respondents are studying in the south of England. 78% of respondents are UK citizens.

## REGION

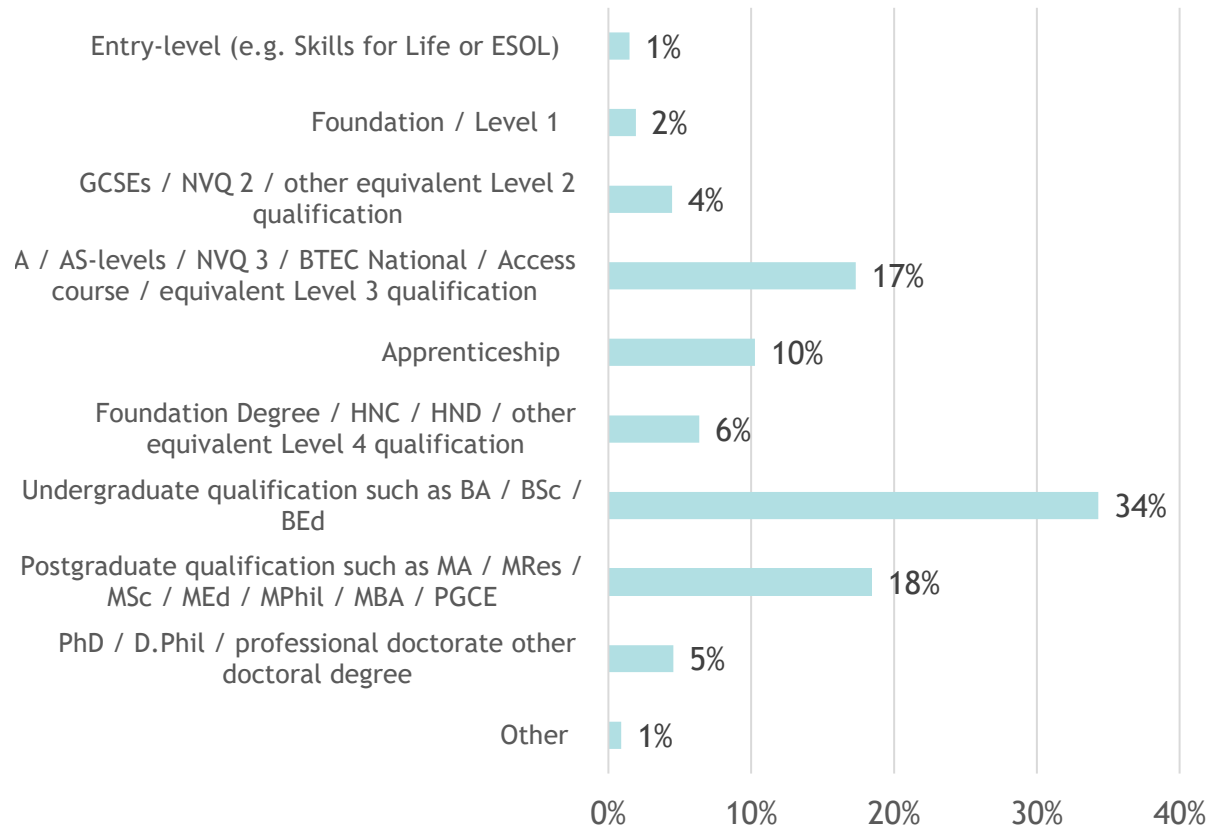


## STUDY MODE

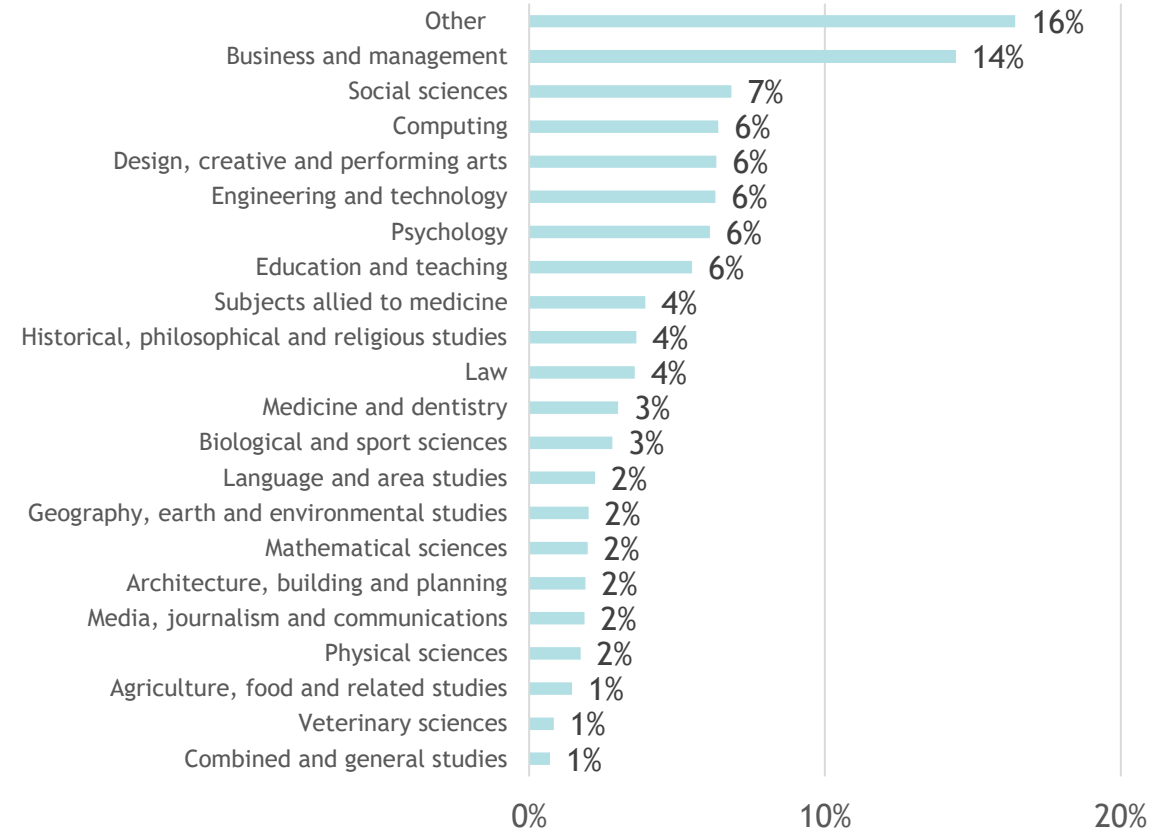


34% of respondents are studying undergraduate qualifications. 14% are taking business and management courses.

## STUDY LEVEL



## COURSE



Read more of SOS-UK's research with students on our website.

Summary page icon: Mental Health by Narakorn Chanchittakarn from The Noun Project