

# Vytautas Magnus University Graduating Students' Survey (EXIT) Results: Studies, Preparation and Defense of Final Theses

2023



VYTAUTAS  
MAGNUS  
UNIVERSITY  
MCMXXII

# Survey Purpose and Respondents

The survey of graduating students was conducted in January and June 2023.

The aim was to identify the graduating students' opinion about studies at Vytautas Magnus University (further – University, VMU) and to evaluate students' career plans.

Respondents: VMU students who had studied in bachelor, master, integrated and professional study programmes.

Respondents' answers about their studies, completed internships, preparation and defense of the final thesis are presented below.

These questions were answered by 1400 students in the survey – 707 bachelor, 598 master, 19 integrated and 76 professional studies' students. 10,29% of respondents were international students.

# Respondents in faculties, academies

Faculty, academy	Number of respondents	Number of graduates	Percentage of students surveyed, %
1. Faculty of Economics and Management	150	243	61,73%
2. Faculty of Natural Sciences	93	115	80,87%
3. Faculty of Humanities	158	192	82,29%
4. Faculty of Informatics	52	64	81,25%
5. Faculty of Catholic Theology	23	25	92%
6. Faculty of Arts	70	111	63,06%
7. Music Academy	50	84	59,52%
8. Faculty of Political Science and Diplomacy	123	183	67,21%
9. Faculty of Social Sciences	143	189	75,66%
10. Education Academy	243	378	64,29%
11. Faculty of Law	46	70	65,71%
12. Agriculture Academy	249	340	73,24%
<b>In total:</b>	<b>1400</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>70,21%</b>

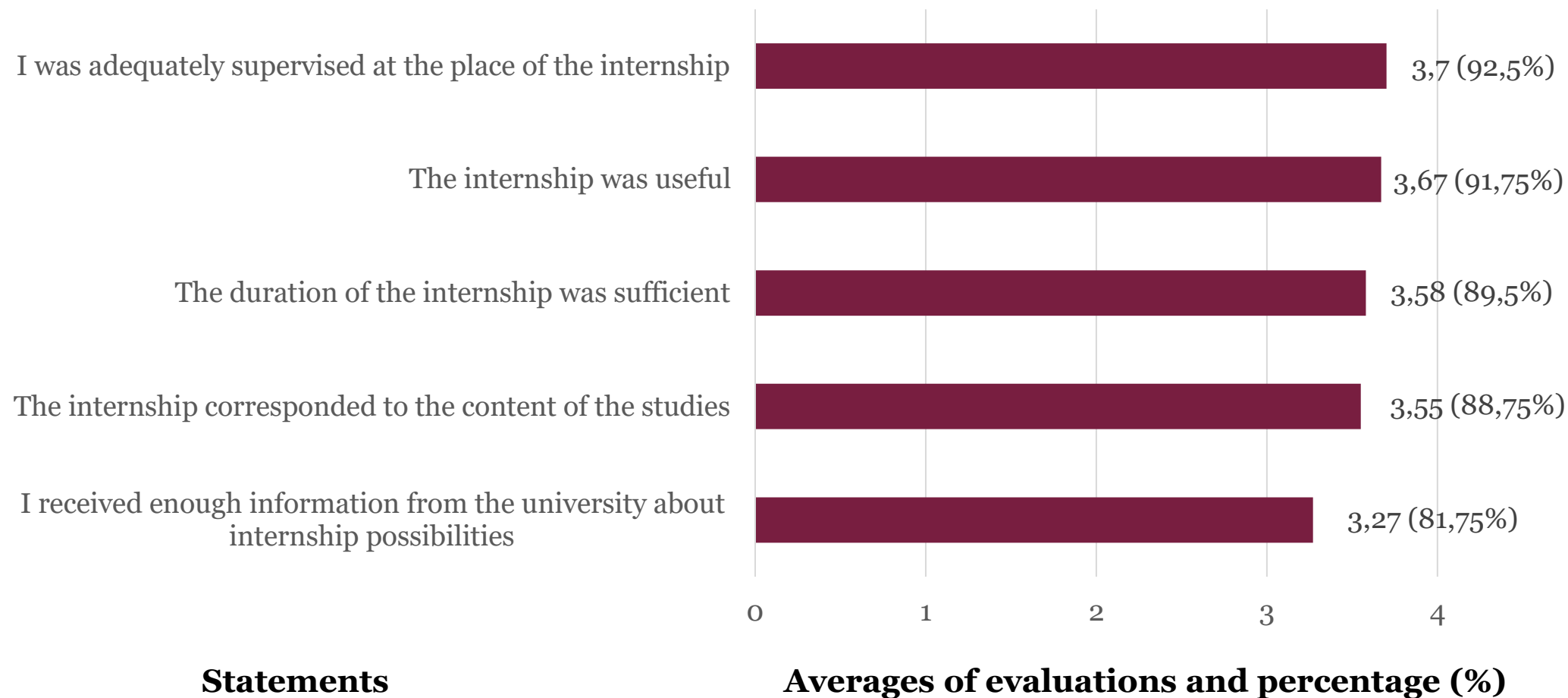
# Evaluation of Studies

12 statements, answers from "agree" – 4 to "disagree" – 1; "I do not know, hard to say" (0) – eliminated.

No.	Statements	Averages of evaluations and percentage		
		All respondents	Lithuanian students	International students
1.	I completed all the study tasks	3,85 (96,25%)	3,85 (96,25%)	3,92 (98%)
2.	The administrative staff provided all necessary assistance	3,73 (93,25%)	3,73 (93,25%)	3,73(93,25%)
3.	If necessary, I was able to consult with teachers	3,71 (92,75%)	3,71 (92,75%)	3,73 (93,25%)
4.	There was a possibility to choose minor studies	3,67 (91,75%)	3,68 (92%)	3,52 (88%)
5.	The university provided me with opportunities for international mobility	3,64 (91%)	3,63 (90,75%)	3,77 (94,25%)
6.	Study material and literature sources were available in the library and/or virtual environment	3,64 (91%)	3,63 (90,75%)	3,74 (93,5%)
7.	I dedicated enough time to my studies	3,62 (90,5%)	3,60 (90%)	3,78 (94,5%)
8.	The equipment in the classrooms, laboratories and other study rooms was appropriate	3,61 (90,25%)	3,60 (90%)	3,69 (92,25%)
9.	The content of the courses corresponded to the purpose of the study programme	3,52 (88%)	3,50 (87,5%)	3,69 (92,25%)
10.	Opportunities to learn various foreign languages were provided at the university	3,48 (87%)	3,47 (86,75%)	3,61 (90,25%)
11.	The workload of the studies was appropriate for me	3,46 (86,5%)	3,43 (85,75%)	3,65 (91,25%)
12.	Classes (lectures, seminars, lab work, etc.) matched my study expectations	3,36 (84%)	3,34 (83,5%)	3,55 (88,75%)

# Assessment of Study Internship

5 statements, answers from "agree" – 4 to "disagree" – 1; "I do not know, hard to say" (0) – eliminated. Replied those students, who had completed internship during their studies (N=916).



# Summary of Respondents' Comments about Study Internship

## Positive comments:

Internship helps to gain personality-building experience, supplements the knowledge and skills already acquired at the University, develops independence, diligence, communication skills, gives deeper understanding of the chosen specialty, helps to decide on a career path.

Internship tasks correspond to the content of the study programme, allow applying the theoretical knowledge acquired during classes, deepen the skills and abilities already possessed, are useful for writing the final thesis and in future professional activities.

Various internship organizing possibilities allow students to choose the most appropriate option: to find an internship institution on their own, to do internship abroad, to get employed at the internship institution.

The supervisor provided plenty of information before and during the internship, helped to solve the problems that arose, communicated kindly, constantly motivated and gave freedom of expression.

# Summary of Respondents' Comments about Study Internship

## Proposals for improvement:

Simplify the requirements for the preparation of the internship report and provide students with more information on this topic.

Strive for closer cooperation between the University and business companies, which would make it easier for students (especially international ones) to find the place of internship that corresponds to their field of study.

Provide clearer information on how internship or a part of it can be credited for those students who work and/or have acquired sufficient competences.

Extend the duration of the internship to allow students to complete the internship and prepare its report to a high standard.

# Participation in Study Exchanges and Internships Abroad

Replied those students, who indicated that they participated in study exchanges and / or did internships abroad.  
Respondents were able to choose multiple answers.

Statements	Response number (N=154) and percentage
1. Studied under the Erasmus programme	90 (58,44%)
2. Studied under the VMU bilateral exchange programme	22 (14,29%)
3. Did a traineeship under the Erasmus programme	19 (12,34%)
4. Other*	13 (8,44%)
5. Did a Litanistic traineeship in a Lithuanian community, school or centre abroad	5 (3,25%)
6. Did a traineeship under the VMU bilateral exchange program	5 (3,25%)

\*By choosing *Other*, the respondents indicated participation in Blended Intensive Programmes, Transform4Europe, Euroforester, AISEC, double degree and other programmes.



# Gained or Developed Skills while Studying at VMU

Respondents chose 1-3 skills.

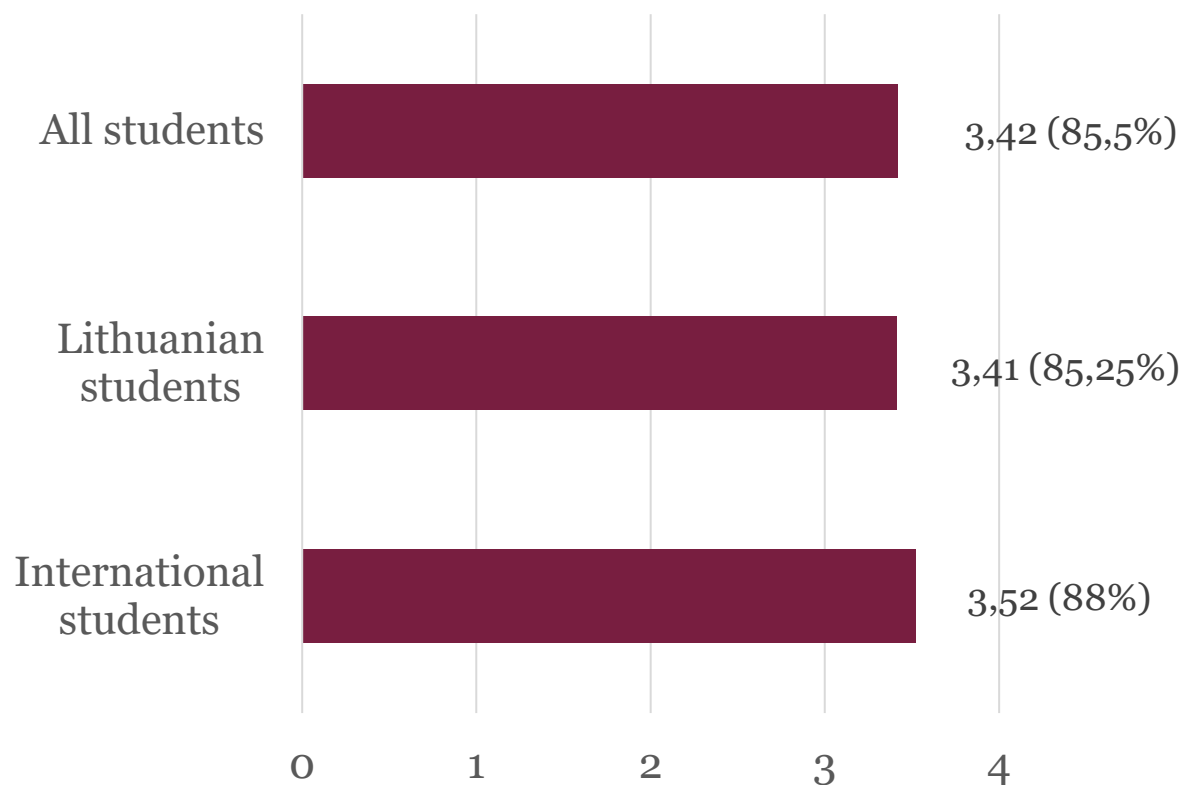
Gained or developed skills	Response number (N=4759) and percentage
1. Specialized knowledge and skills	920 (19,33%)
2. Communication and collaboration skills	813 (17,08%)
3. Problem solving skills	620 (13,03%)
4. Time planning skills	573 (12,04%)
5. Responsibility	522 (10,97%)
6. Information literacy	480 (10,09%)
7. Creativity skills	479 (10,07%)
8. Foreign language skills	316 (6,64%)
9. Other skills	36 (0,76%)

\*By choosing *Other skills*, the respondents mentioned critical and analytical thinking, self-reflection, group work, independent learning, gathering and systemization of information, public speaking and other skills.

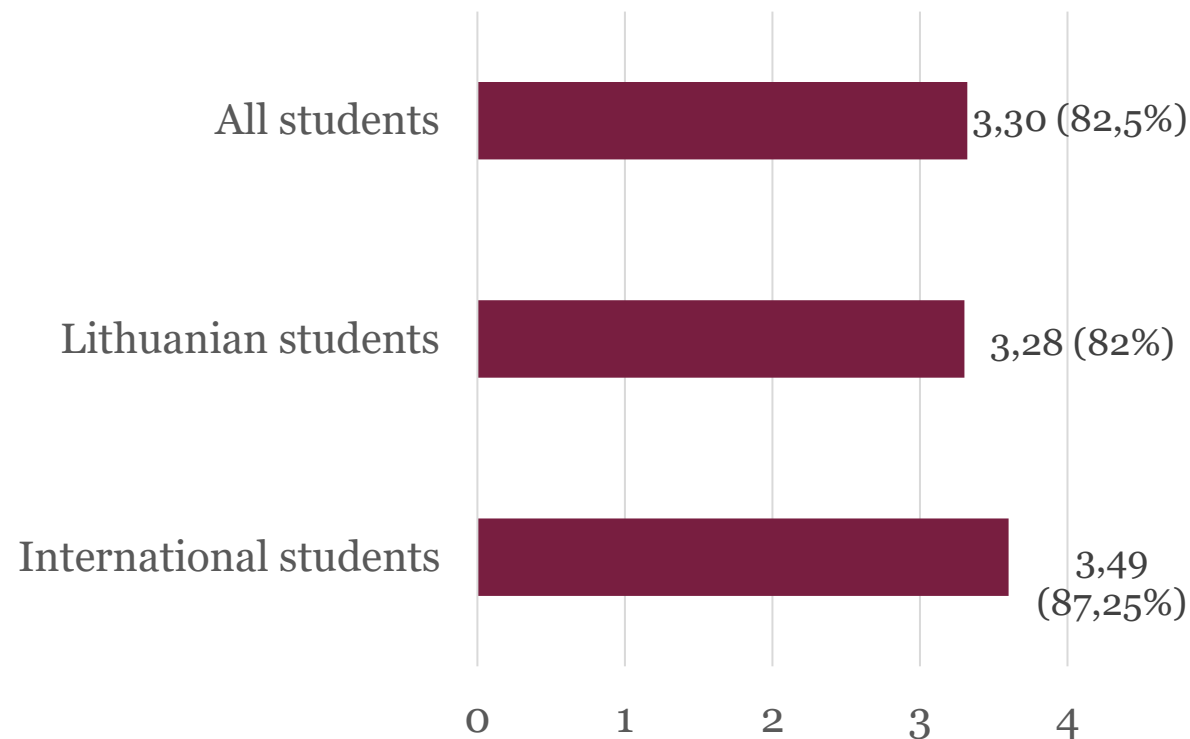
# Summarised Evaluation of the Studied Programmes

2 statements, answers from "agree" – 4 to "disagree" – 1; "I do not know, hard to say" (0) – eliminated.

**In general, the quality of the study programme is appropriate**



**I would recommend this study programme to others**



# Summary of Respondents' Comments about Studies

## Positive comments:

Competent and supportive teachers interest students in the lecture material and create welcoming atmosphere in classes; helpful and friendly administrative staff provide students with timely study-related information.

Students are provided with excellent opportunities to study various foreign languages, to choose minor studies, to study under exchange programmes abroad, to try out various sports, to participate in sports competitions representing the University, to spend their leisure time actively and meaningfully in various activities offered by the University.

A competitive system of incentive scholarships motivates students to study harder; the University provides good opportunities to design one's own study schedule, to study and consult with teachers remotely, to take an intensive exam session, to combine studies with work and personal life.

Students are happy with renovated VMU buildings, bright and modern classrooms and halls, updated laboratory equipment, access to a wide range of information resources (library, reading rooms, databases, etc.), convenient learning platform *Moodle*.

Students gain valuable experience studying together with people from all over the world, attending lectures by foreign professors, and making new personal and professional friendships.

# Summary of Respondents' Comments about Studies

## Proposals for improvement:

Review the connections of some study courses with the current issues in the world of work, offer students study courses that would be relevant to a future employee and employer.

Encourage teachers to share more practical knowledge with students and to develop students' independent work skills.

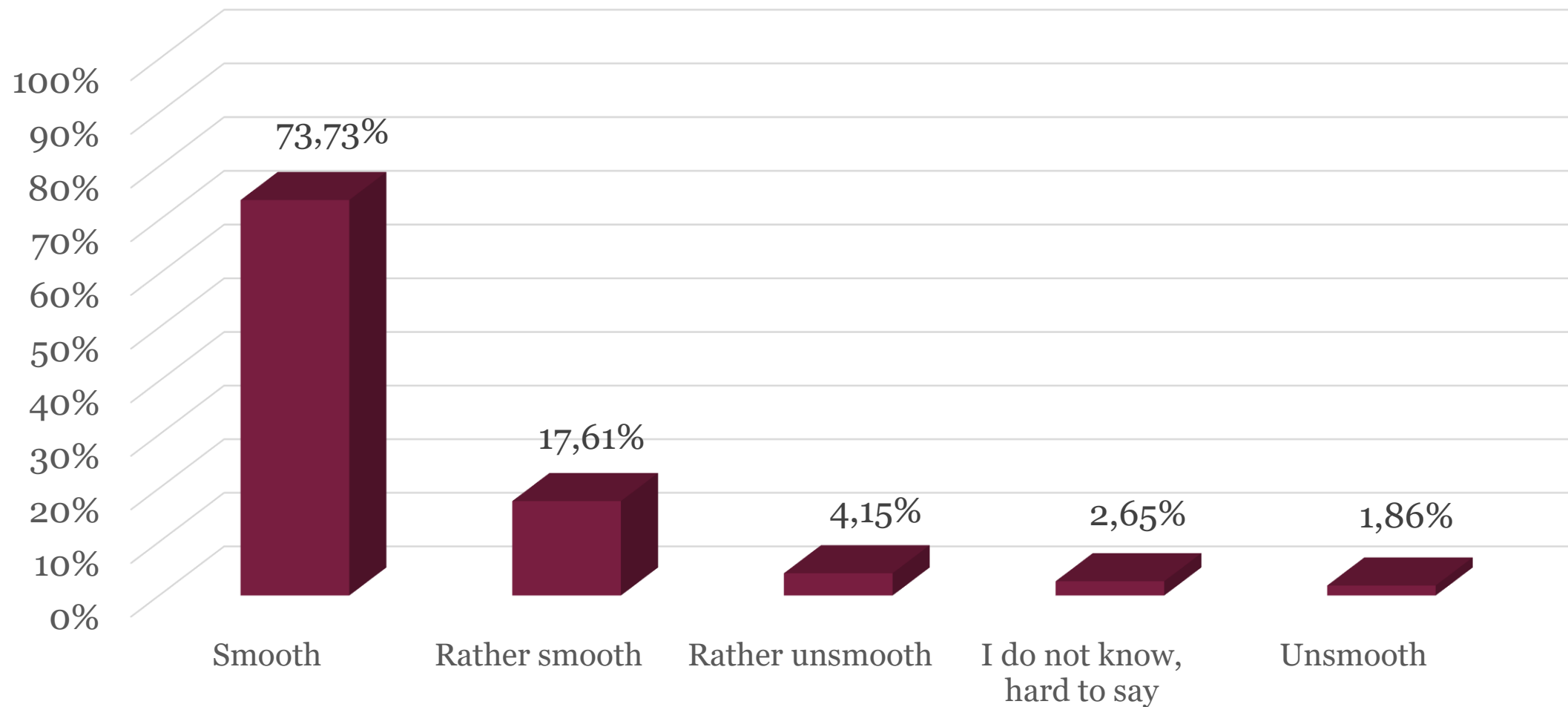
Review the content and consistency of study courses in study programmes, paying attention to the repetitions in study courses and the harmony of the planned study content with the actual content of study classes.

Promote mentors' activities, which would facilitate the integration in the new academic environment not only for first year students, but also for those who have transferred to higher courses from other universities.

Review teachers' workload in terms of preparation for lectures, teaching and supervision of final theses; improve teachers' English language skills.

# Smoothness of Cooperation with the Supervisor of the Final Work (Art Project) (1)

Smoothness of cooperation

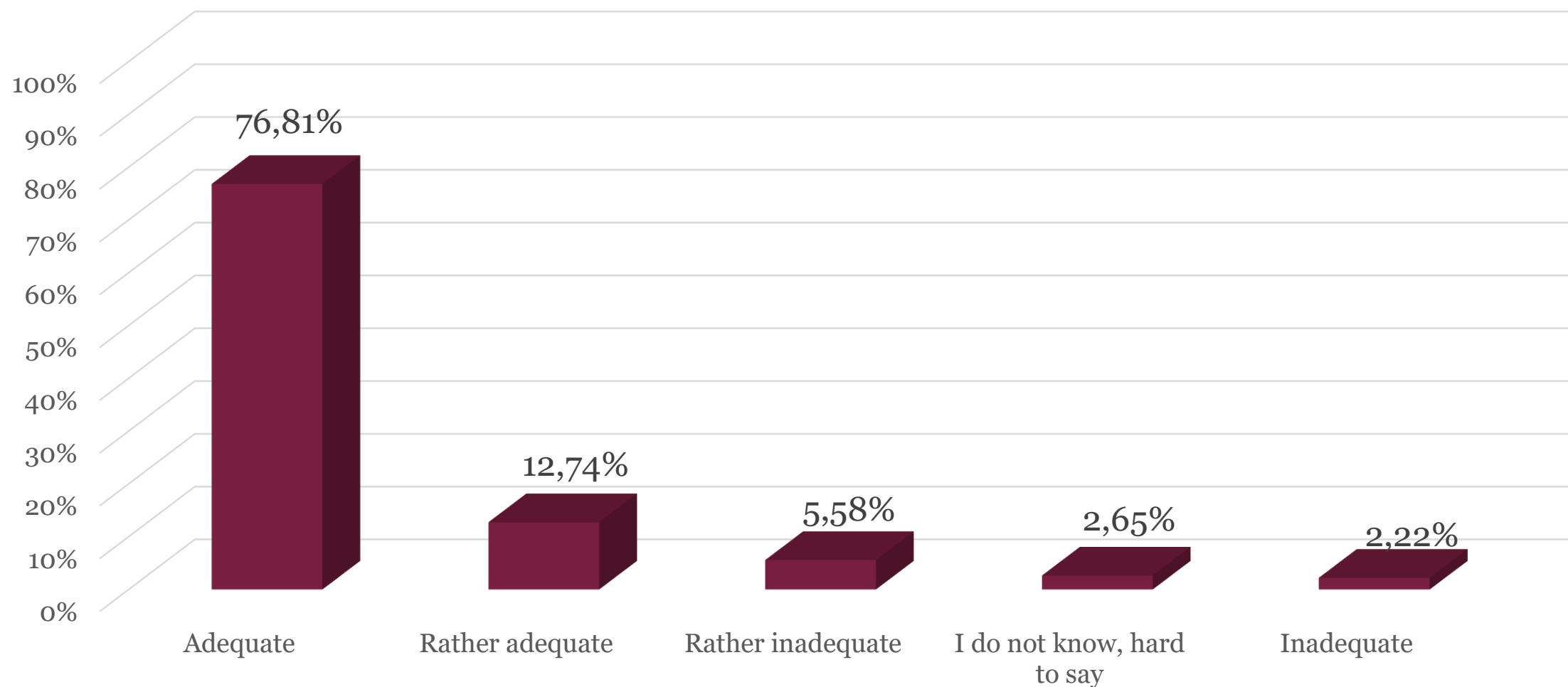


# Reasons of Sufficiently Smooth and Insufficiently Smooth Cooperation with the Final Work (Art Project) Supervisor (2)

Reasons of sufficiently smooth cooperation	Response number (N=2037) and percentage	Reasons of insufficiently smooth cooperation	Response number (N=112) and percentage
1. The supervisor has made sufficient efforts to ensure smooth cooperation	<b>1020 (50,07%)</b>	1. The supervisor did not put in enough effort to make the cooperation smooth	<b>44 (39,29%)</b>
2. I have made sufficient efforts to make the cooperation smooth	<b>924 (45,36%)</b>	2. Other (slow, superficial communication, supervisor's heavy workload due to the large number of counselled students or other work, lack of critical, essential comments for the thesis, language barrier when advising international students, lack of support and willingness to help)	<b>41 (36,61%)</b>
3. Other (equal mutual cooperation, fast communication, supervisor's academic and psychological support, encouragement of critical thinking, supervisor's high competence in providing constructive criticism and advice on the thesis)	<b>93 (4,57%)</b>	3. I did not put in enough effort to make the cooperation smooth	<b>27 (24,11%)</b>

# Adequacy of the Final Work (Art Project) Defense Procedure

Adequacy of defence procedure



# Reasons of Inadequate Defense Procedure

The question was given for those, who indicated the defense procedure was not sufficiently correct. Respondents were able to choose all matching reasons.

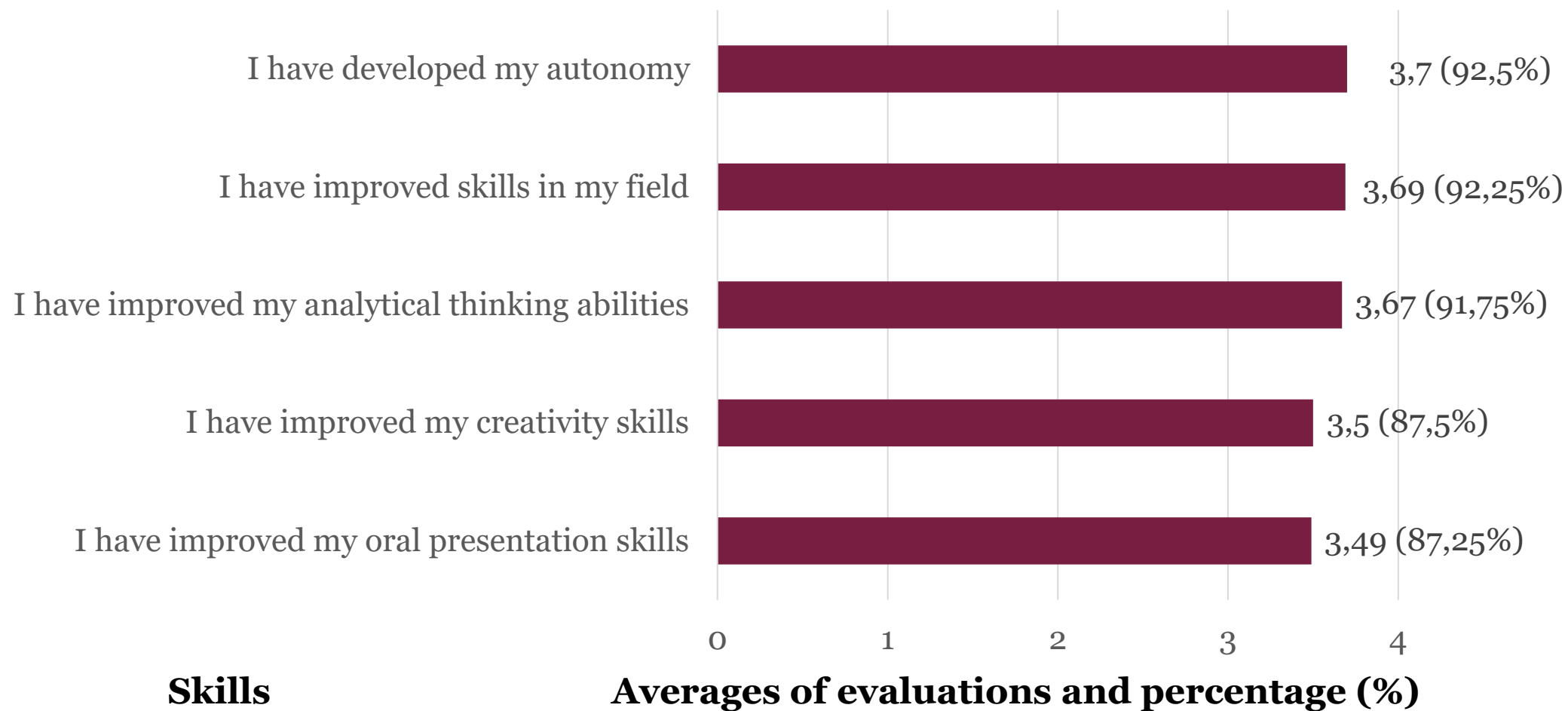
Reasons	Response number (N=191) and percentage
1. The defense committee applied unclear evaluation criteria	58 (30,37%)
2. Other*	47 (24,61%)
3. The defense committee took an unethical approach during the defense (rude, disrespectful)	35 (18,32%)
4. The reviewer's feedback was unclear to me	26 (13,61%)
5. The work of the defense committee was unstructured and ill-planned	10 (5,24%)
6. The reviewer's response was given to me late	9 (4,71%)
7. I was not properly prepared for the defense procedure	5 (2,62%)
8. I behaved incorrectly during the defense procedure	1 (0,52%)

\* By choosing *Other*, respondents mentioned the following reasons for the incorrect defense procedure: only University teachers in the committee, committee members' prejudice against some students, supervisor's influence on the committee regarding evaluation, unfair, biased evaluation, disagreements between committee members and supervisors, students were not given the opportunity to defend their statements during the committee meeting.



# Usefulness of Thesis Preparation and Defense in the Development of Skills

5 skills, answers from "agree" – 4 to "disagree" – 1; "I do not know, hard to say" (0) – eliminated.



**Proposals for  
improvement of the  
preparation and  
defense of final  
theses (art projects)  
processes:**

Provide students with more concise and clear information on the procedures for the preparation and defense of final thesis and inform them in advance about the deadlines for the preparation, presentation and defense of final thesis.

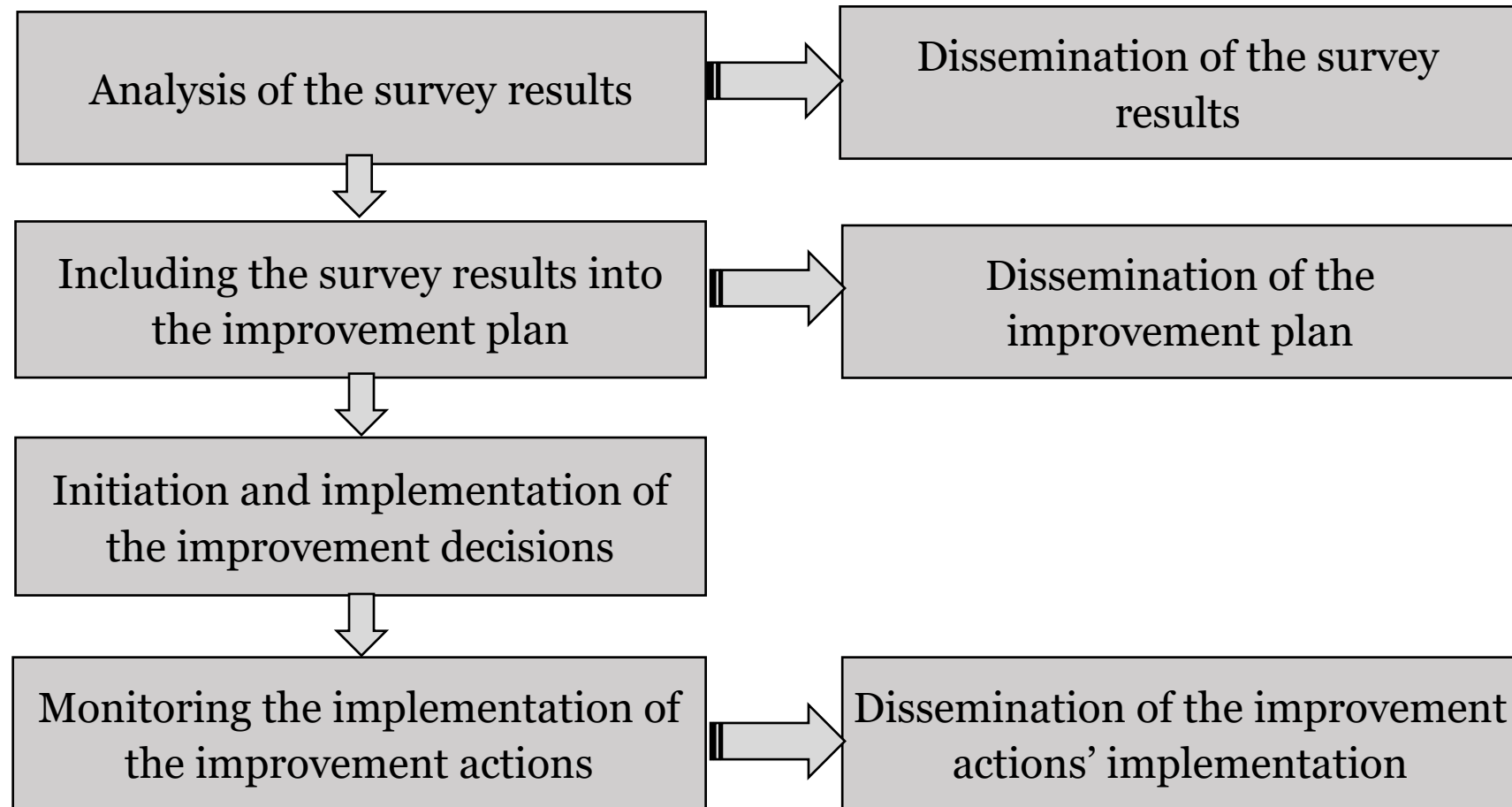
Encourage thesis reviewers to focus on the strengths and weaknesses of the thesis. In order to save time, do not read whole reviews during the theses defense committee meeting.

For the sake of objectivity, do not appoint thesis supervisors and reviewers as members of the thesis defense committee.

Encourage thesis defense committee to adhere to the time scheduled for the defense and to create calm and respectful environment during the thesis defense.

Plan enough breaks and ensure smooth operation of technical equipment during the final thesis defense.

# Using the Survey Results: The Role of the Study Programme Committee (Field Committee)



THANK YOU FOR COOPERATION

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