

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

2025



VYTAUTAS
MAGNUS
UNIVERSITY
MCMXXII

Survey Purpose and Respondents

The survey of graduating students was conducted in January and June, 2025.

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 were 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 1512 students in the survey – 718 bachelor, 661 master, 33 integrated and 100 professional studies' students. 9,5% 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	160	215	74,42%
2. Faculty of Natural Sciences	91	115	79,13%
3. Faculty of Humanities	113	162	69,75%
4. Faculty of Informatics	52	72	72,22%
5. Faculty of Catholic Theology	23	30	76,67%
6. Faculty of Arts	60	116	51,72%
7. Music Academy	33	57	57,89%
8. Faculty of Political Science and Diplomacy	117	190	61,58%
9. Faculty of Social Sciences	156	239	65,27%
10. Education Academy	370	534	69,29%
11. Faculty of Law	57	91	62,64%
12. Agriculture Academy	280	346	80,92%
In total:	1512	2167	69,77%

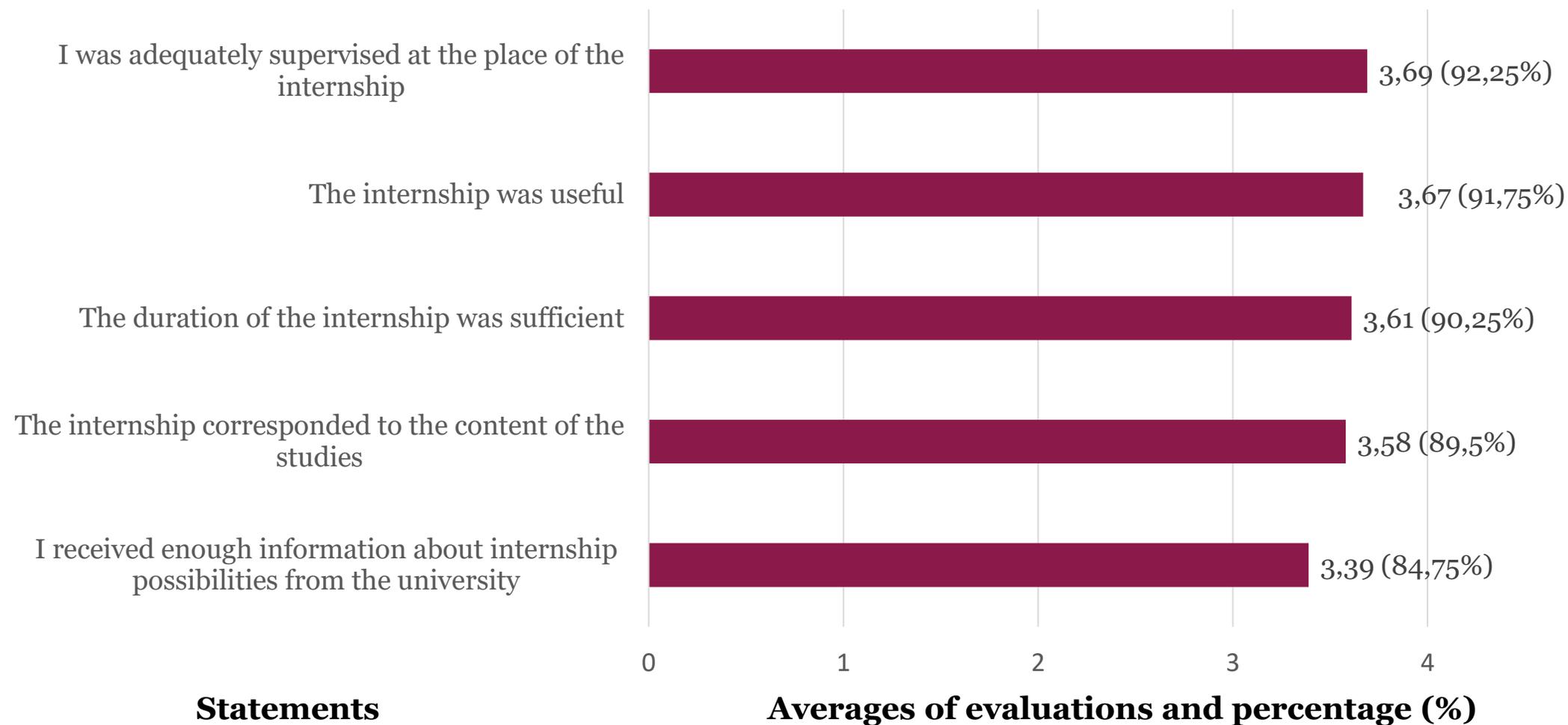
Evaluation of Studies

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.	The content of the courses corresponded to the purpose of the study programme	3,60 (90 %)	3,59 (89,75 %)	3,70 (92,5 %)
2.	Classes (lectures, seminars, lab work, etc.) matched my study expectations	3,44 (86 %)	3,44 (86 %)	3,53 (88,25 %)
3.	The workload of the studies was appropriate for me	3,51 (87,75 %)	3,49 (87,25 %)	3,72 (93 %)
4.	Opportunities to learn various foreign languages were provided at the university	3,53 (88,25 %)	3,52 (88 %)	3,65 (91,25 %)
5.	If necessary, I was able to consult with teachers	3,75 (93,75 %)	3,74 (93,5 %)	3,81 (95,25 %)
6.	There was a possibility to choose minor studies	3,70 (92,5 %)	3,74 (93,5 %)	3,44 (86 %)
7.	The administrative staff provided all necessary assistance	3,79 (94,75 %)	3,80 (95 %)	3,68 (92 %)
8.	The equipment in the classrooms, laboratories and other study rooms was appropriate	3,66 (91,5 %)	3,65 (91,25 %)	3,77 (94,25 %)
9.	Study material and literature sources were available in the library and/or virtual environment	3,71 (92,75 %)	3,70 (92,5 %)	3,79 (94,75 %)
10.	The university provided me with opportunities for international mobility	3,74 (93,5 %)	3,73 (93,25 %)	3,85 (96,25 %)
11.	I completed all the study tasks	3,85 (96,25 %)	3,85 (96,25 %)	3,91 (97,75 %)
12.	I dedicated enough time to my studies	3,68 (92 %)	3,66 (91,5 %)	3,87 (96,75 %)

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=926).



Summary of Respondents' Comments about Study Internship

Positive comments:

Benefits and value of internships: Students perceive internships as beneficial and engaging experience that imparts new knowledge and fosters deeper understanding of their chosen profession.

Application of theoretical knowledge: Internships offer opportunity to successfully apply theoretical knowledge acquired at the university in a real-world work environment.

Professional development and career opportunities: During internship, new professional skills are acquired and competencies are enhanced, which in some cases leads to successful employment.

Independent choice of internship placement: The ability to independently select an internship placement based on personal interests allows students to gain more valuable experience.

The role of supervisors and mentors: Professional, supportive supervisors and mentors who are willing to share their experience significantly improve the quality of the internship.

Smooth organization: Students appreciate a clear and seamless internship organization process where all necessary information is provided in a timely manner.

Diversity of experience: The opportunity to undertake internship in several different institutions or to try out various activities provides a broader understanding of the professional field.

Summary of Respondents' Comments about Study Internship

Proposals for improvement:

Difficulties in finding an internship placement: Students face challenges in independently searching for internships, lacking assistance and recommendations from the university.

Uneven quality and lack of control in internships: The quality of an internship heavily depends on the chosen institution, and students feel there is a lack of university oversight to ensure consistent standards.

Duration of the internship: Some students believe the internship period is too short to acquire essential skills, while others find it too long and difficult to balance with other activities.

Lack of engagement from mentors and supervisors: In some placements, mentors provide insufficient attention, do not offer feedback, or are uninterested in students' development.

Balancing with work and studies: Working students find it challenging to reconcile internship requirements with their professional and academic commitments.

Administrative burden and redundant tasks: Students report that some internship assignments and reporting requirements are excessive, formal, and time-consuming.

Content and variety of practical tasks: There are cases where students lack meaningful tasks related to their specialty during the internship, or the tasks are monotonous.

Mismatch with the study program: Some students state that their internship was not sufficiently related to their field of study and did not provide new knowledge.

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=221) and percentage
1. Studied under the Erasmus programme	118 (53,39%)
2. Did a traineeship under the Erasmus programme	36 (16,29%)
3. Other*	33 (14,93%)
4. Studied under the VMU bilateral exchange programme	21 (9,5%)
5. Did a Lituanistic traineeship in a Lithuanian community, school or centre abroad	8 (3,62%)
6. Did a traineeship under the VMU bilateral exchange program	5 (2,26%)

*By choosing *Other*, the respondents indicated participation in international summer schools, Blended Intensive Programmes, Transform4Europe, double degree, SustAInLivWork, short-term Erasmus+ and other programmes.

Gained or Developed Skills while Studying at VMU

Respondents chose 1-3 skills.

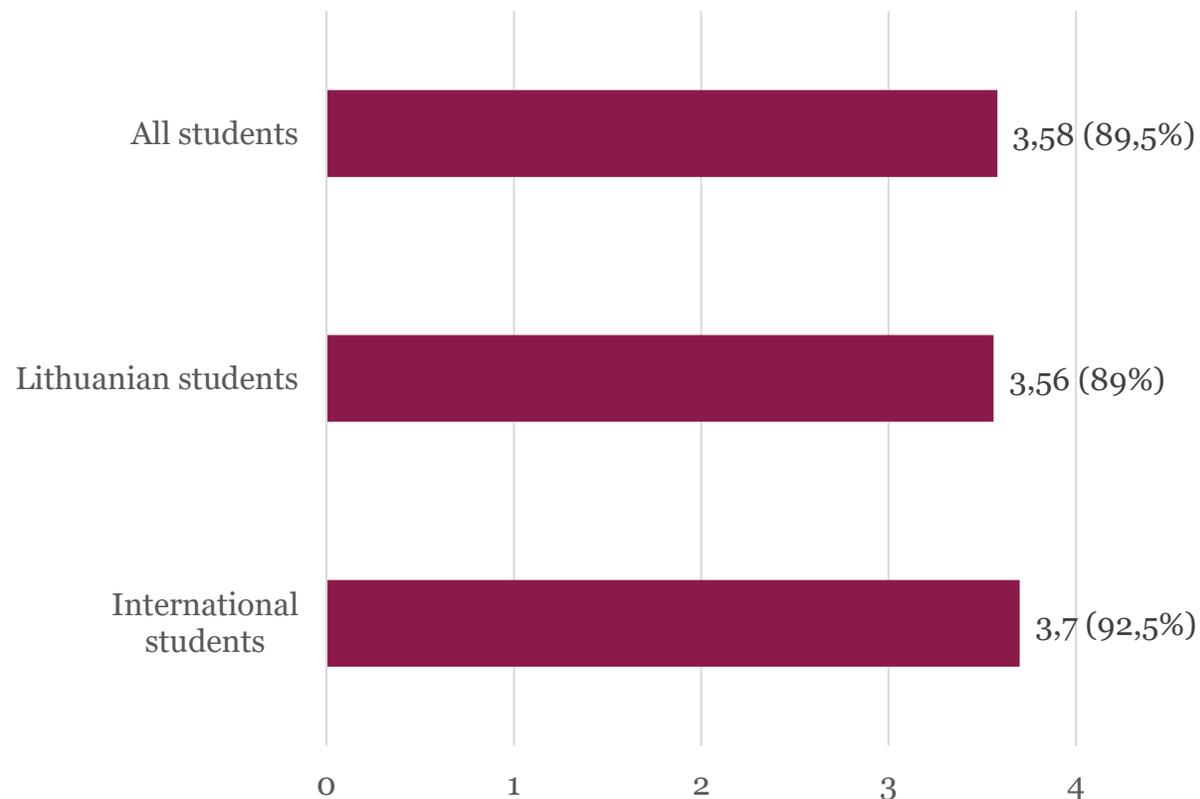
Gained or developed skills	Response number (N=5271) and percentage
1. Specialized knowledge and skills	1021 (19,37%)
2. Communication and collaboration skills	938 (17,8%)
3. Problem solving skills	698 (13,24%)
4. Time planning skills	664 (12,6%)
5. Responsibility	596 (11,31%)
6. Creativity skills	528 (10,02%)
7. Information literacy	476 (9,03%)
8. Foreign language skills	318 (6,03%)
9. Other skills	32 (0,61%)

*By choosing *Other skills*, the respondents mentioned academic writing, research, public speaking, self-reflection, critical thinking, leadership, information analysis and other skills.

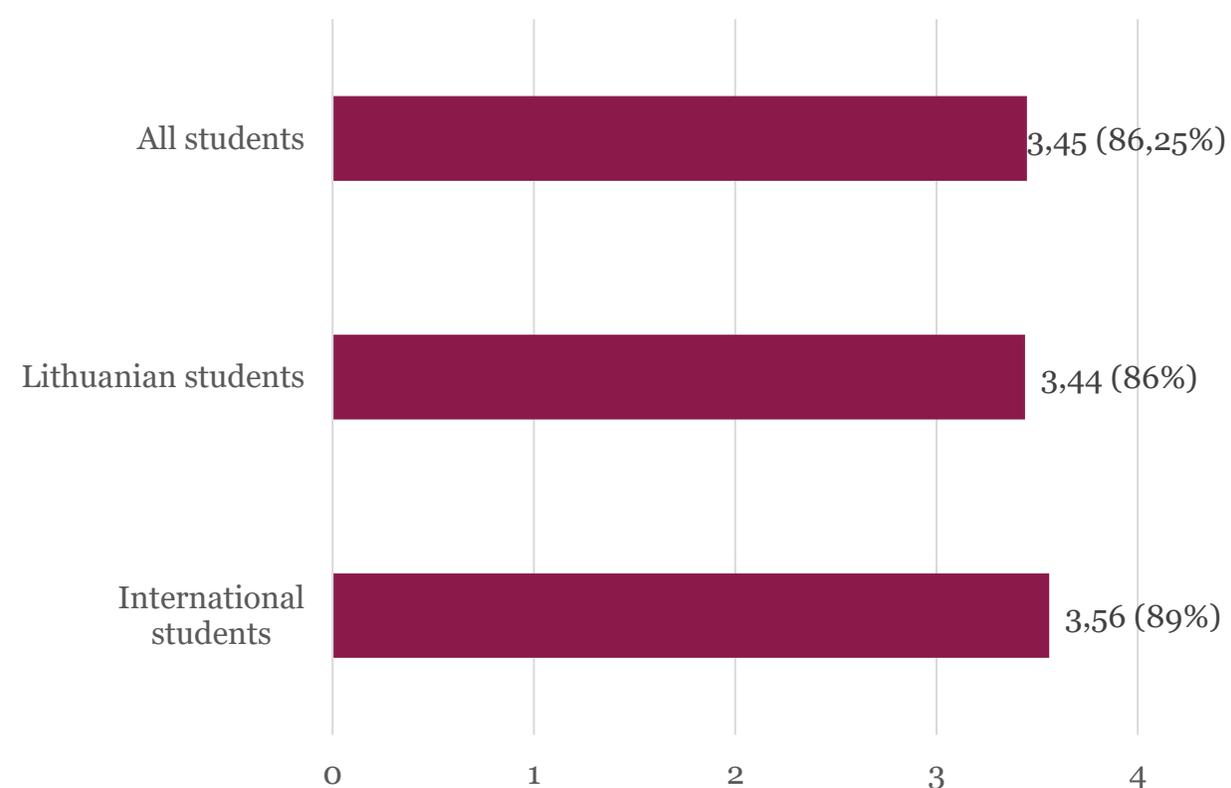
Summarised Evaluation of the Studied Programmes

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:

Teachers and their competence: Students value the teachers' professionalism, sincere and supportive communication, and their ability to present study material in an engaging way.

Community and supportive atmosphere: The sense of community and the supportive atmosphere created among students, teachers, and administrative staff are positively reviewed.

Flexibility of study organization: The opportunity to combine studies with work and personal life is valued, thanks to a flexible lecture schedule and the availability of remote studies.

Study content and practicality: Students appreciate the relevant and engaging study content, which includes plenty of practical assignments, seminars, and discussions.

International opportunities: The wide range of opportunities for international exchanges and projects enriches the study experience.

Variety of studies and freedom of choice: Students appreciate the opportunity to freely choose their study courses, including those that are not related to their main field of study.

University environment and resources: The modern and comfortable physical environment of the university and its accessible resources, such as libraries, are positively evaluated.

Summary of Respondents' Comments about Studies

Proposals for improvement:

Practical application: Students report a lack of practical assignments, real-world case studies, and opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge in actual work environments or using specialized software.

Study organization and administration: There is a need for smoother communication from the administration, as well as clearer information regarding study processes, schedules, and assessment procedures.

Teachers' work and communication: There is a desire for greater teacher engagement in the study process, the provision of constructive feedback, the application of more modern teaching methods, and more respectful communication with students.

Study content and curriculum: Study program content should be updated to avoid information overlap, adapted to modern labor market needs, and ensure the relevance of the study courses.

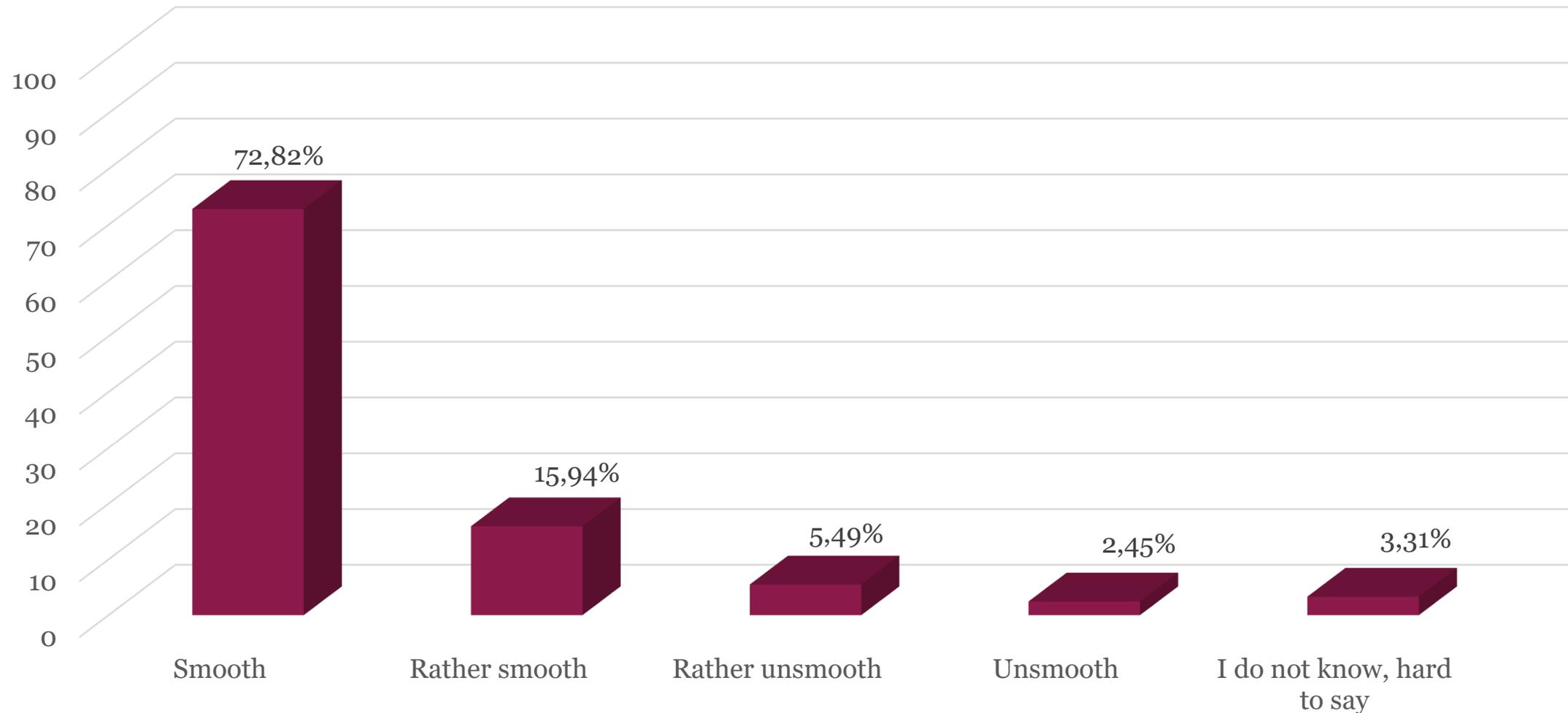
Study workload and balancing with work: Students find it difficult to balance intensive studies with work; they lack sufficient time to delve deeply into the subjects taught and complete assignments properly.

Mode of learning and environment: There is a preference for more in-person or hybrid lectures to encourage live interaction; improved conditions within the learning environment are also desired.

Resources and infrastructure: There is a lack of access to necessary software, updated library resources, specialized equipment, and properly equipped study facilities.

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

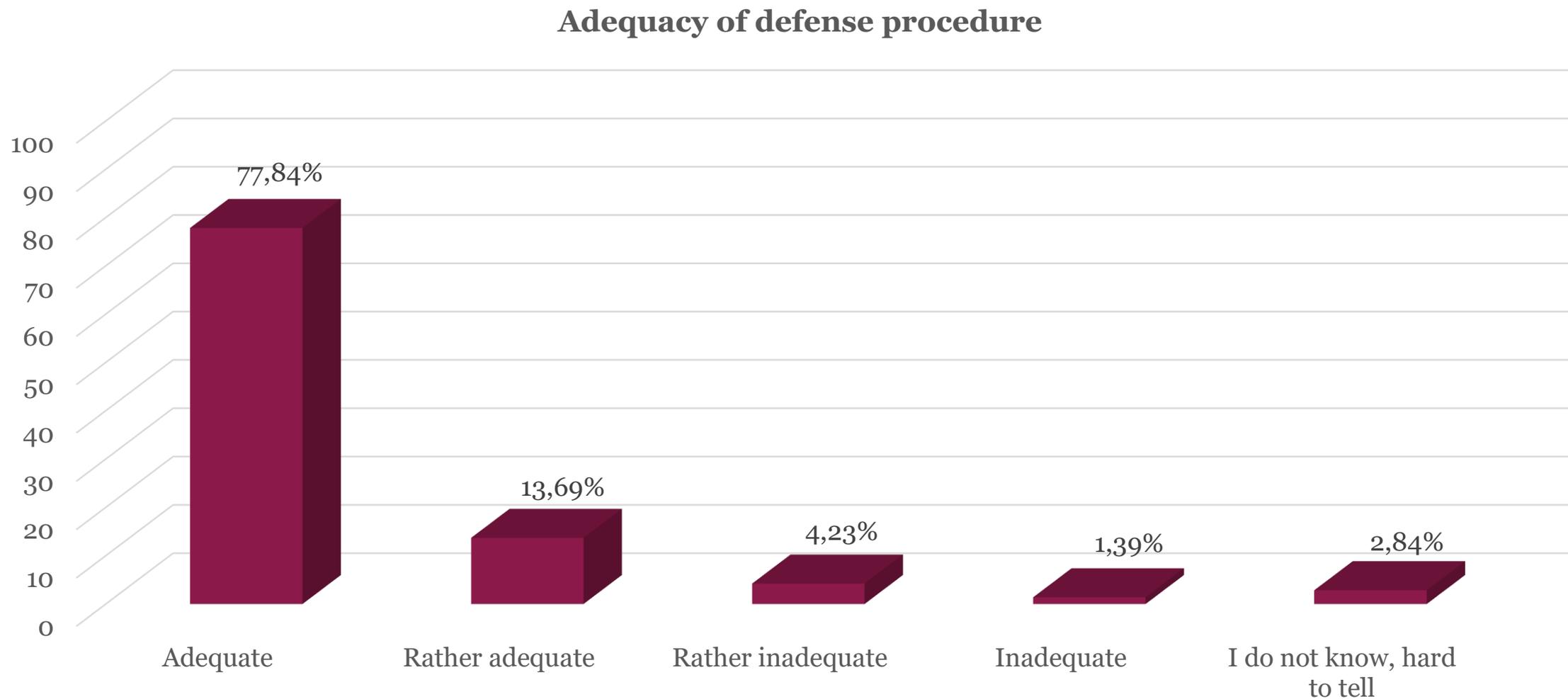
Smoothness of cooperation



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

Reasons of sufficiently smooth cooperation	Response number (N=2141) and percentage	Reasons of insufficiently smooth cooperation	Response number (N=145) and percentage
1. The supervisor has made sufficient efforts to ensure smooth cooperation	1082 (50,54%)	1. The supervisor did not put in enough effort to make the cooperation smooth	72 (49,66%)
2. I have made sufficient efforts to make the cooperation smooth	963 (44,98%)	2. Other (the absence of a single supervisor, instead of that - consultations with several teachers who provided different insights; supervisor's high workload; supervisor's slow communication and unwillingness to help; supervisor's frequent changes of opinions)	42 (28,97%)
3. Other (mutual cooperation; supervisor's professionalism, support and empathy; clear communication; regular feedback)	96 (4,48%)	3. I did not put in enough effort to make the cooperation smooth	31 (21,38%)

Adequacy of the Final Work (Art Project) Defense Procedure



Reasons of Inadequate Defense Procedure

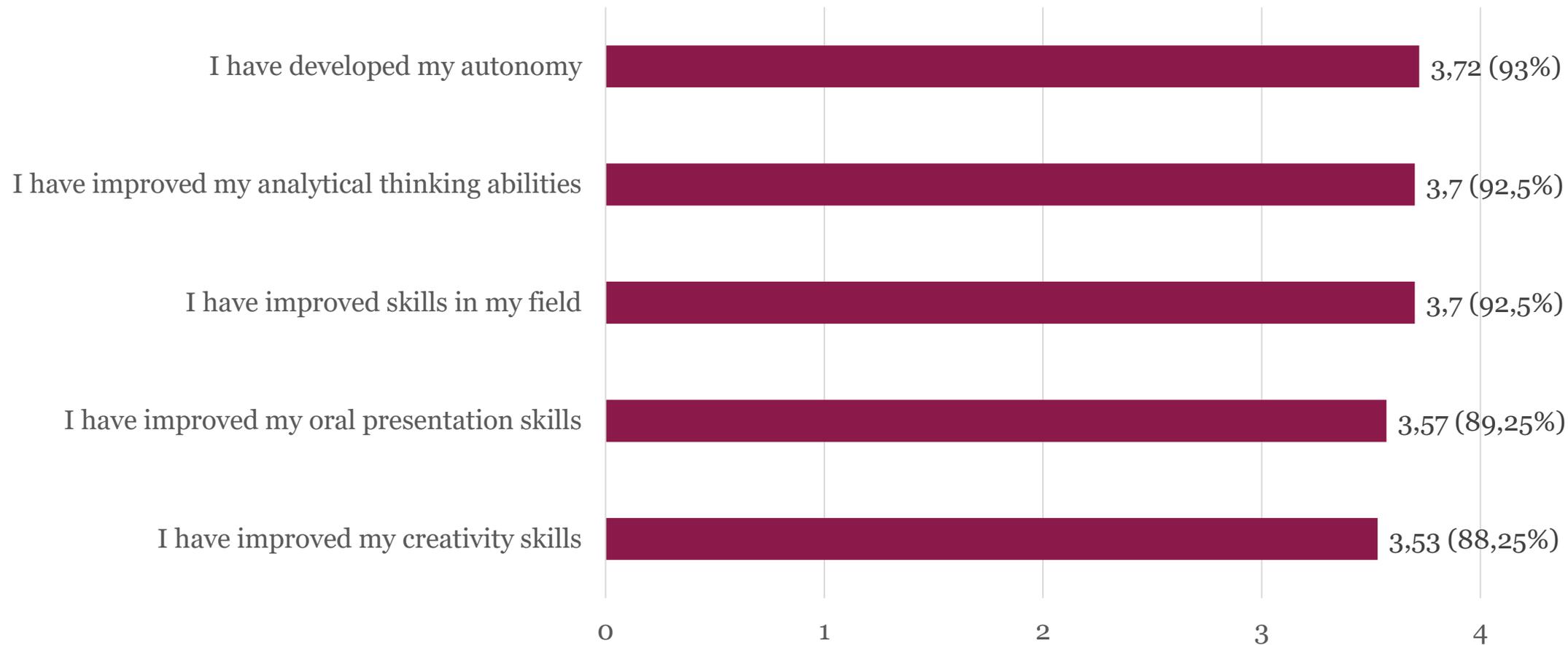
The question was given for those, who indicated the defense procedure was not sufficiently correct. Respondents were able to choose all matching reasons.

Reasons	Response number (N=162) and percentage
1. The defense committee applied unclear evaluation criteria	51 (31,48%)
2. The defense committee took an unethical approach during the defense (rude, disrespectful)	32 (19,75%)
3. Other*	31 (19,14%)
4. The reviewer's feedback was unclear to me	25 (15,43%)
5. The reviewer's response was given to me late	12 (7,41%)
6. The work of the defense committee was unstructured and ill-planned	9 (5,56%)
7. I was not properly prepared for the defense procedure	2 (1,23%)
8. I behaved incorrectly during the defense procedure	0 (0%)

* By choosing *Other*, respondents mentioned the following reasons for the incorrect defense procedure: committee members did not agree among themselves on the evaluation criteria; the composition of the committee changed; both supervisors and reviewers participated in the committee; the evaluation was biased and unobjective.

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.



Skills

Averages of evaluations and percentage (%)

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

Evaluation and feedback: Students lack clearer assessment criteria and more detailed justification for the final grade; they would also like to receive reviews earlier with the opportunity to make corrections.

Defense process and organization: It is suggested to improve the organization of thesis defenses by allocating more time for presentations, ensuring smooth time management, and maintaining a respectful and professional atmosphere.

Supervisor performance: More active and engaged work from thesis supervisors is needed, ensuring consistent consultations and unified support for students throughout the entire writing process.

Requirements and guidelines: Students miss clearer, more consistent, and uniform methodological instructions and requirements for preparing the final thesis.

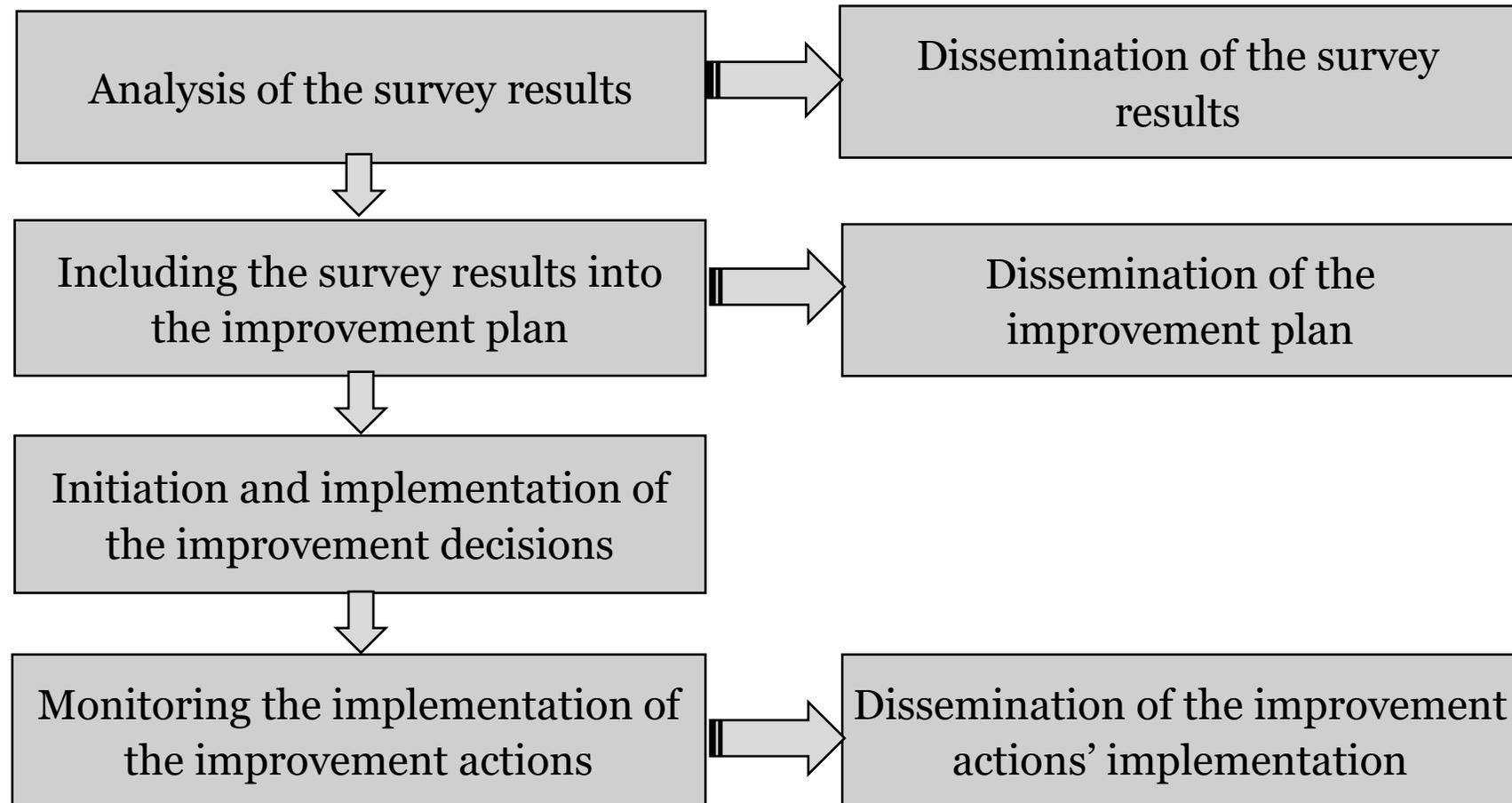
Committee composition and ethics: It is desired that the defense committee members be impartial, more thoroughly familiar with the students' work, competent in the assessed field, and communicate professionally and ethically.

Time planning and workload: It is believed that more time should be allocated for the preparation of the final thesis, and the process should be better coordinated with other academic activities to avoid an excessive workload.

Preparation and student support: Students would benefit from more practical seminars, mock defenses, and consultations to help them better prepare for writing and presenting their final thesis.

Thesis content and nature: An opinion is expressed that final theses should be more oriented towards practical applicability, and in some study programs, it is suggested to review the scope of the theoretical part or the necessity of the written thesis itself.

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



THANK YOU FOR COOPERATION

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