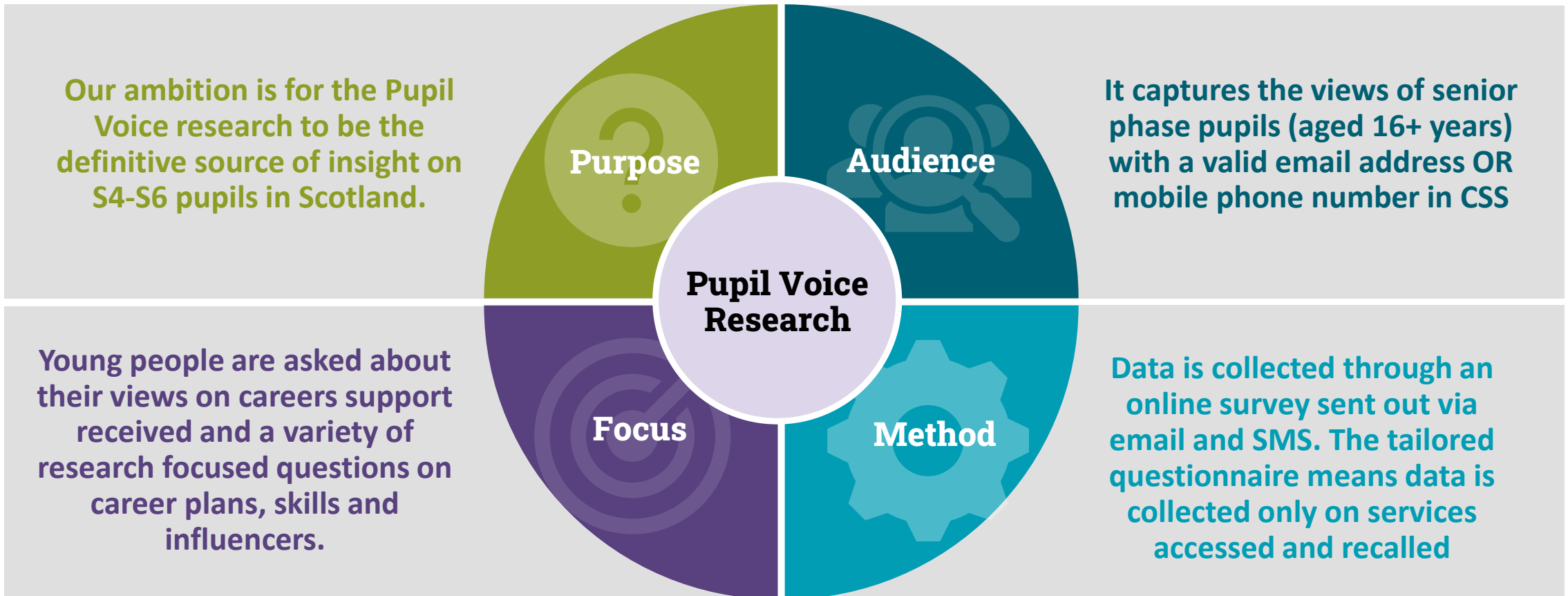**Skills Development Scotland**

Pupil Voice:
Senior Phase Research 2024
Headline Findings – South

Evaluation & Research Team

Background

Purpose — Our ambition is for the Pupil Voice research to be the definitive source of insight on S4-S6 pupils in Scotland.

Audience — It captures the views of senior phase pupils (aged 16+ years) with a valid email address OR mobile phone number in CSS

Focus — Young people are asked about their views on careers support received and a variety of research focused questions on career plans, skills and influencers.

Method — Data is collected through an online survey sent out via email and SMS. The tailored questionnaire means data is collected only on services accessed and recalled

Pupil Voice Research

Pupil Voice: Senior Phase is a collaborative project, informed by several key partner organisations.

Collaborative approach

Our programme of research with young people is designed in collaboration with internal and external reference groups.

External reference group

Scottish Government	Youthlink	Education Scotland
SQA	Developing Young Workforce	Scottish Funding Council
Open University	MCR Pathways	Napier University
Young Scot	College Development Network	ADES

Method

The online survey was distributed to **90,390** young people via the following routes:

Email only	**Text message only**	**Email & text message**

All young people with a valid email address
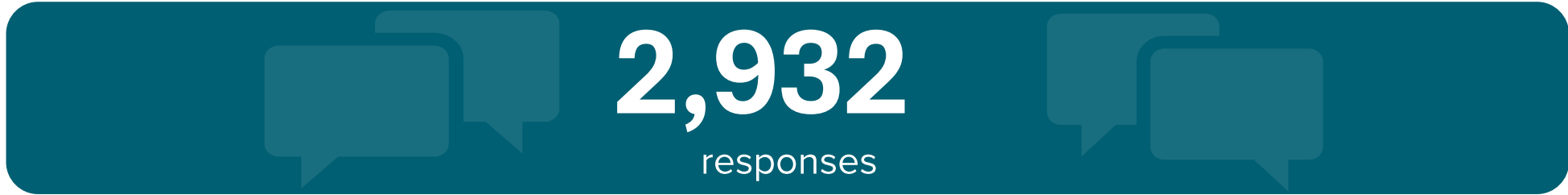
All young people with a valid mobile phone number

All young people with a valid email address **and** mobile phone number

A total of **10,815** young people responded to the survey overall.

The survey was live for four weeks from **12th June – 12th July.**

Response from South region

2,932

responses

Gender / Year group	Number of responses	SIMD / Service offer	Number of responses	Local Authority	Number of responses
Female	1,636	SIMD 1	719	Dumfries & Galloway	371
Male	1,217	SIMD 2	656	East Ayrshire	212
In another way / PNTS	79	SIMD 3	565	East Dunbartonshire	315
S4	549	SIMD 4	518	North Ayrshire	251
S5	1,604	SIMD 5	468	North Lanarkshire	741
S6	779	SIMD NA	6	Scottish Borders	241
		Targeted	1,414	South Ayrshire	187
		Universal	1,518	South Lanarkshire	614

Pupil Voice topics covered – South Region

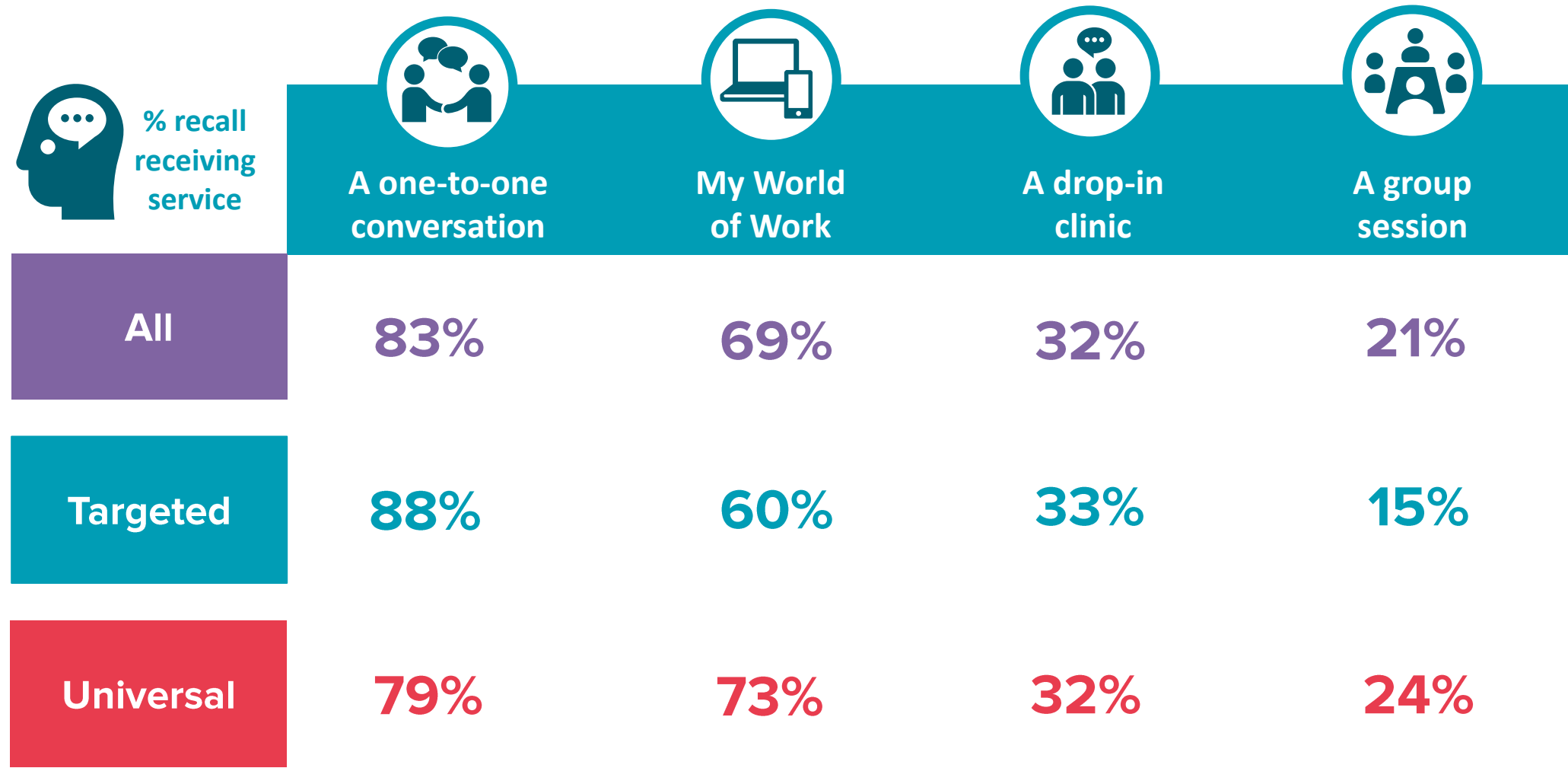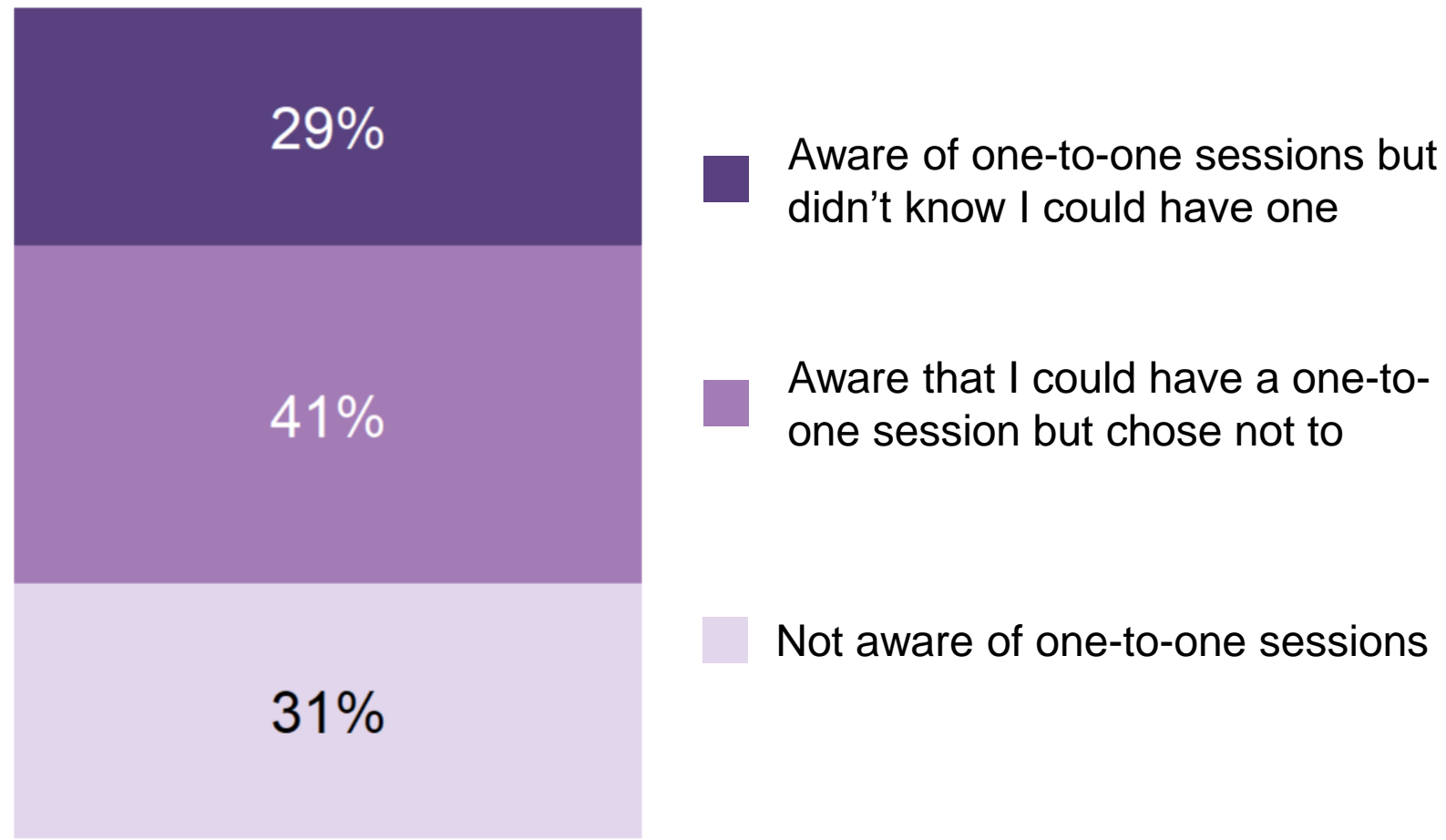|				
Service recall	Views on SDS service offer	Plans to leave or stay on at school	KPIs	Skills for future career
Finding out about services	Views on services received	Reasons for leaving or staying at school	Ideal job and sector	Employability activities
Career Management Skills	Reasons for non-engagement	Plans after school	Key influencers	Extracurricular activities

Visibility and awareness of SDS services
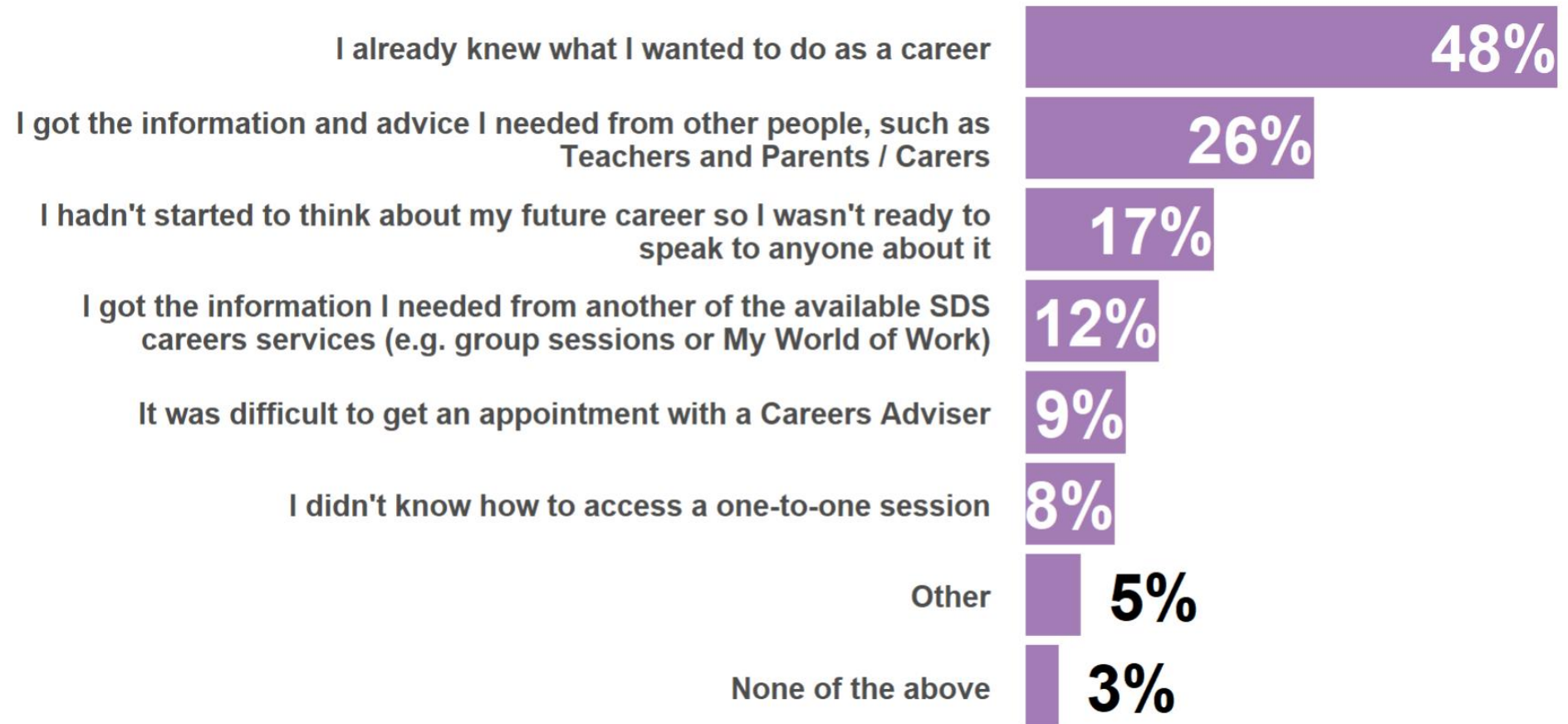
One-to-ones and MyWoW most recalled

% recall receiving service	A one-to-one conversation	My World of Work	A drop-in clinic	A group session
All	**83%**	**69%**	**32%**	**21%**
Targeted	**88%**	**60%**	**33%**	**15%**
Universal	**79%**	**73%**	**32%**	**24%**

Over half unaware that they could have a one-to-one*

29% — Aware of one-to-one sessions but didn't know I could have one

41% — Aware that I could have a one-to-one session but chose not to

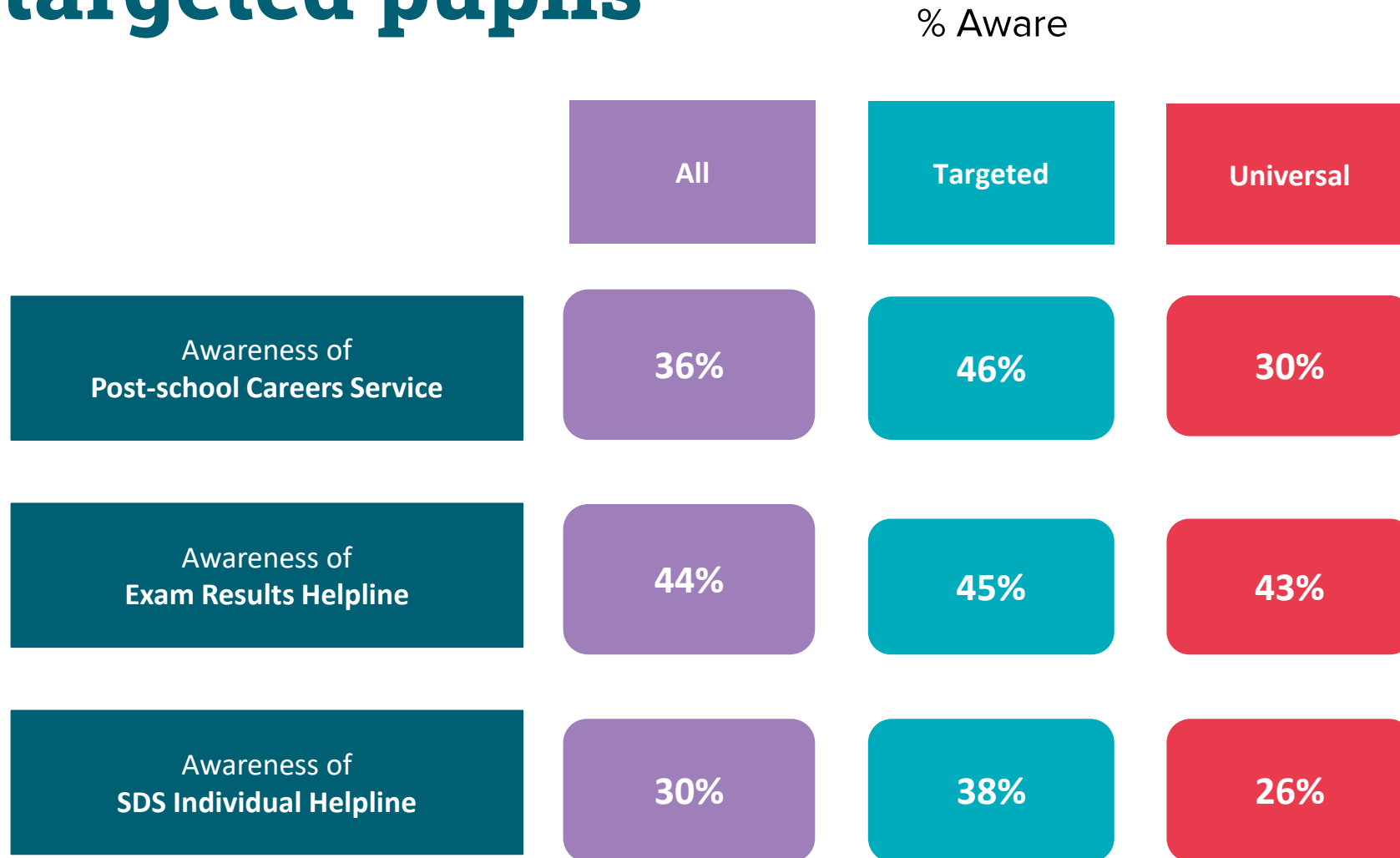31% — Not aware of one-to-one sessions

*Question only asked of those that didn't have a 1-2-1 according to our records or that didn't recall having a 1-2-1.

Pupils who chose not to have a one-to-one already had plans and information

Reason	Percentage
I already knew what I wanted to do as a career	48%
I got the information and advice I needed from other people, such as Teachers and Parents / Carers	26%
I hadn't started to think about my future career so I wasn't ready to speak to anyone about it	17%
I got the information I needed from another of the available SDS careers services (e.g. group sessions or My World of Work)	12%
It was difficult to get an appointment with a Careers Adviser	9%
I didn't know how to access a one-to-one session	8%
Other	5%
None of the above	3%

Awareness of post-school services is highest among targeted pupils

% Aware

	All	Targeted	Universal
Awareness of **Post-school Careers Service**	36%	46%	30%
Awareness of **Exam Results Helpline**	44%	45%	43%
Awareness of **SDS Individual Helpline**	30%	38%	26%

Pupils most likely to hear about careers services from their teachers

Finding out about careers services	All %	Targeted %	Universal %
Word of mouth through a Teacher / Guidance Teacher	80	76	82
Word of mouth through a Careers Adviser	36	36	36
Poster on school wall(s)	18	15	19
Careers fair(s)	15	14	16
School website	8	8	9
Don't know / can't remember	5	5	4
Leaflet	5	5	5
Other	4	4	3
Social media	4	4	4

Pupils want to hear about SDS in a variety of ways

Receiving communications about SDS careers services	All %	Targeted %	Universal %
By email	42	42	41
By text	36	44	31
From a Teacher / Guidance Teacher	33	28	36
From a SDS Careers Adviser	18	19	17
Through school careers events	16	13	18
On My World of Work	15	12	16
Don't know / not sure	9	8	10
Through an App	9	8	9
From social media channels	8	6	9
From your Parent(s) / Carer(s)	8	8	9
By poster	7	5	8
By leaflet	6	4	7
By social media direct message	5	6	4
Other	1	1	1

Views on careers guidance

All questions are asked of those that have accessed (and remember accessing) SDS careers services
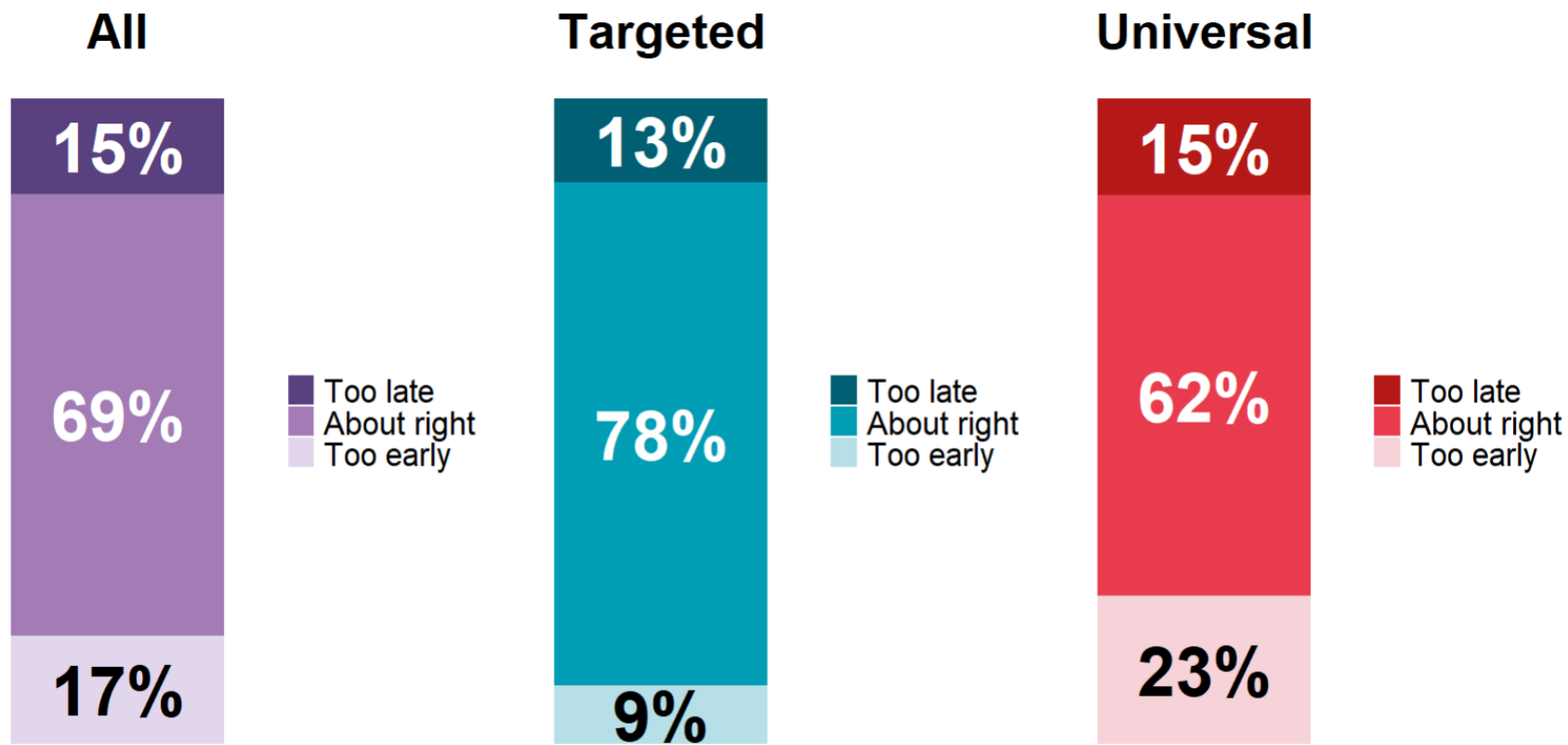
Universal pupils want more interviews

What are your views on the number of interviews you had with your Careers Adviser?
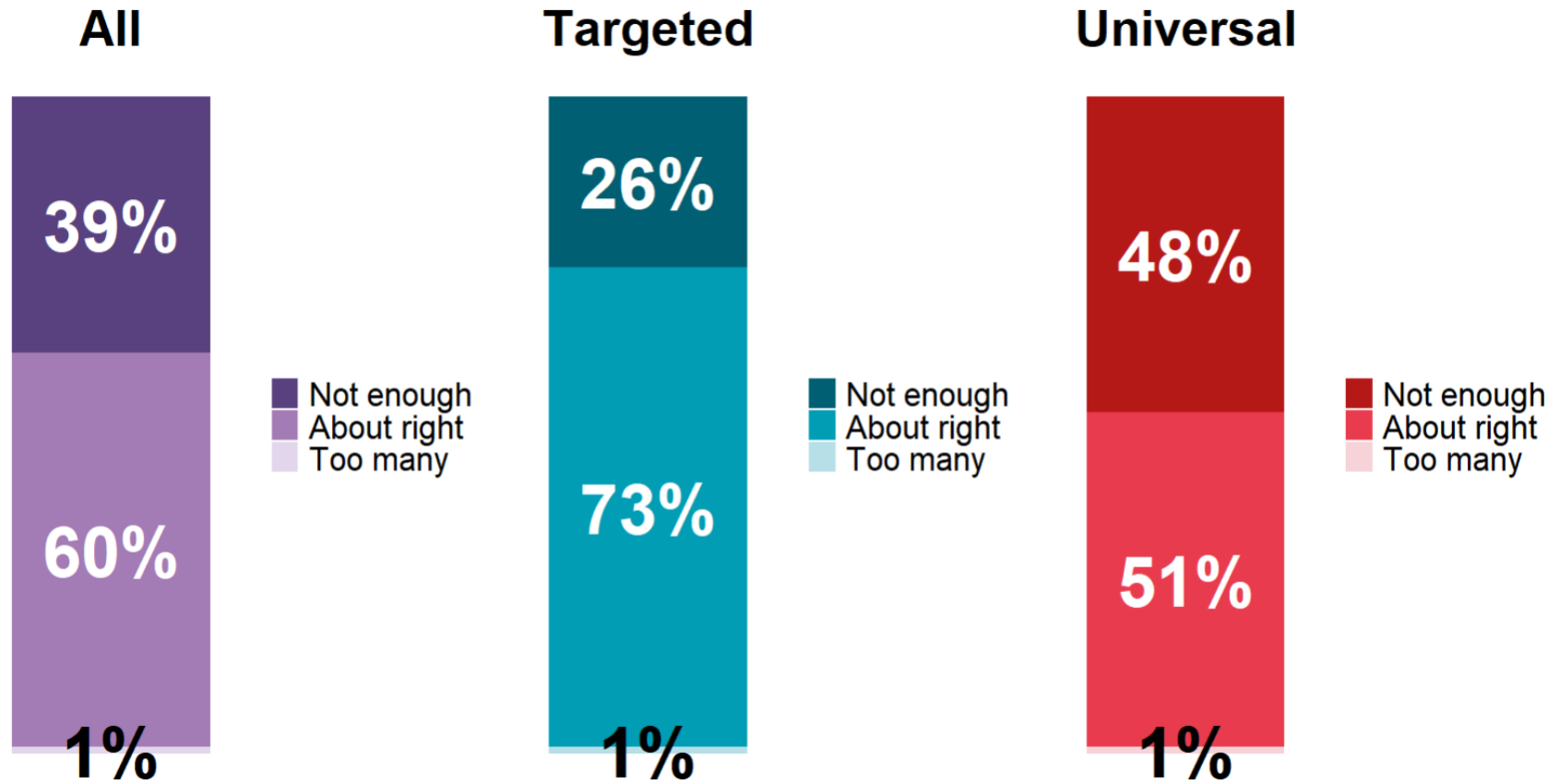
Targeted pupils most satisfied with the timing of interviews

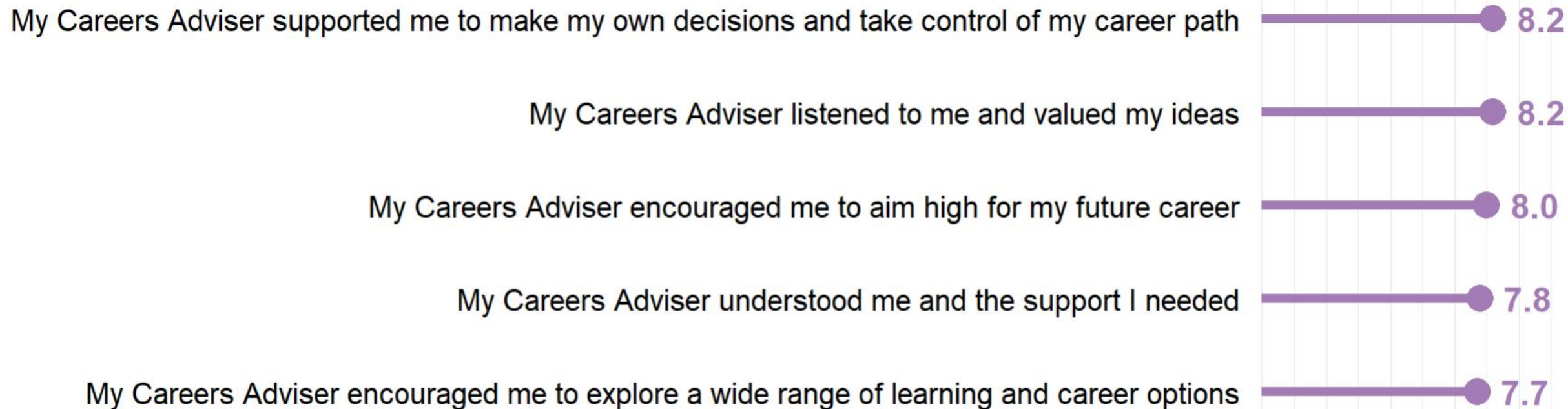## Did your interview or interviews happen at a time in your career journey that was right for you, too early or too late?

All

15%	
69%	
17%	

■ Too late
■ About right
■ Too early

Targeted

13%	
78%	
9%	

■ Too late
■ About right
■ Too early

Universal

15%	
62%	
23%	

■ Too late
■ About right
■ Too early

Support provided in one-to-one interviews was highly valued

Average score out of 10

● All

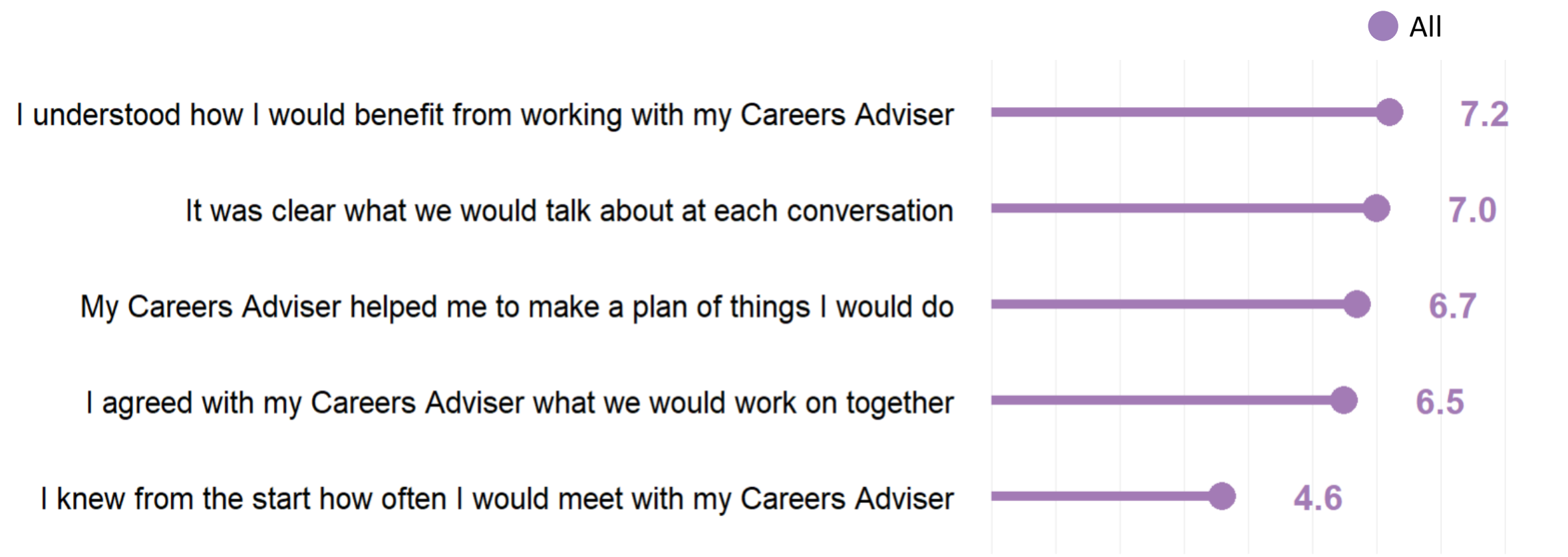|	
My Careers Adviser supported me to make my own decisions and take control of my career path	8.2
My Careers Adviser listened to me and valued my ideas	8.2
My Careers Adviser encouraged me to aim high for my future career	8.0
My Careers Adviser understood me and the support I needed	7.8
My Careers Adviser encouraged me to explore a wide range of learning and career options	7.7

One-to-one interviews most valued by targeted pupils

Average score out of 10

● Universal ● Targeted

My Careers Adviser supported me to make my own decisions and take control of my career path — 7.9 ● ● 8.5

My Careers Adviser listened to me and valued my ideas — 7.9 ● ● 8.5

My Careers Adviser encouraged me to aim high for my future career — 7.9 ● ● 8.3

My Careers Adviser understood me and the support I needed — 7.5 ● ● 8.2

My Careers Adviser encouraged me to explore a wide range of learning and career options — 7.4 ● ● 8.1

Pupils unsure how often they would meet their Careers Adviser

Average score out of 10

All

| Statement	Score
I understood how I would benefit from working with my Careers Adviser	7.2
It was clear what we would talk about at each conversation	7.0
My Careers Adviser helped me to make a plan of things I would do	6.7
I agreed with my Careers Adviser what we would work on together	6.5
I knew from the start how often I would meet with my Careers Adviser	4.6

Pupils unsure how often they would meet their Careers Adviser

Average score out of 10
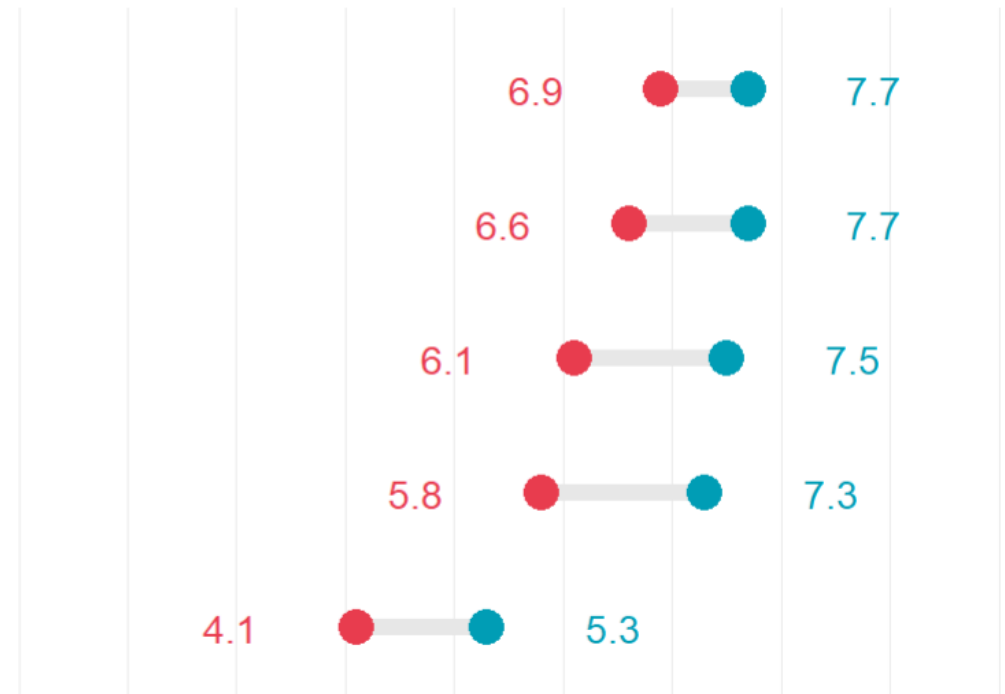
Group sessions valued by targeted pupils

Average score out of 10

Group Sessions	All	Targeted	Universal
I understood what I would learn in the group session	7.0	7.2	6.9
The content of the group session was useful and relevant to me	6.7	7.0	6.5
The group session kept me interested throughout	6.4	6.6	6.3

Key Career Influencers

Parents & Carers, Teachers and Careers Advisers most influential

Key Career Influencers - People	All %	Targeted %	Universal %
Parent(s) / Carer(s)	78	78	79
Teacher(s)	64	61	66
Careers Adviser	58	74	49
Friend(s)	57	60	56
Other family member	57	56	57
Guidance teacher	53	57	52
A university or college representative coming in to my school to talk about careers	39	38	39
An employer or training provider coming in to my school to talk about careers	39	40	39

Various factors influence young people's career decisions

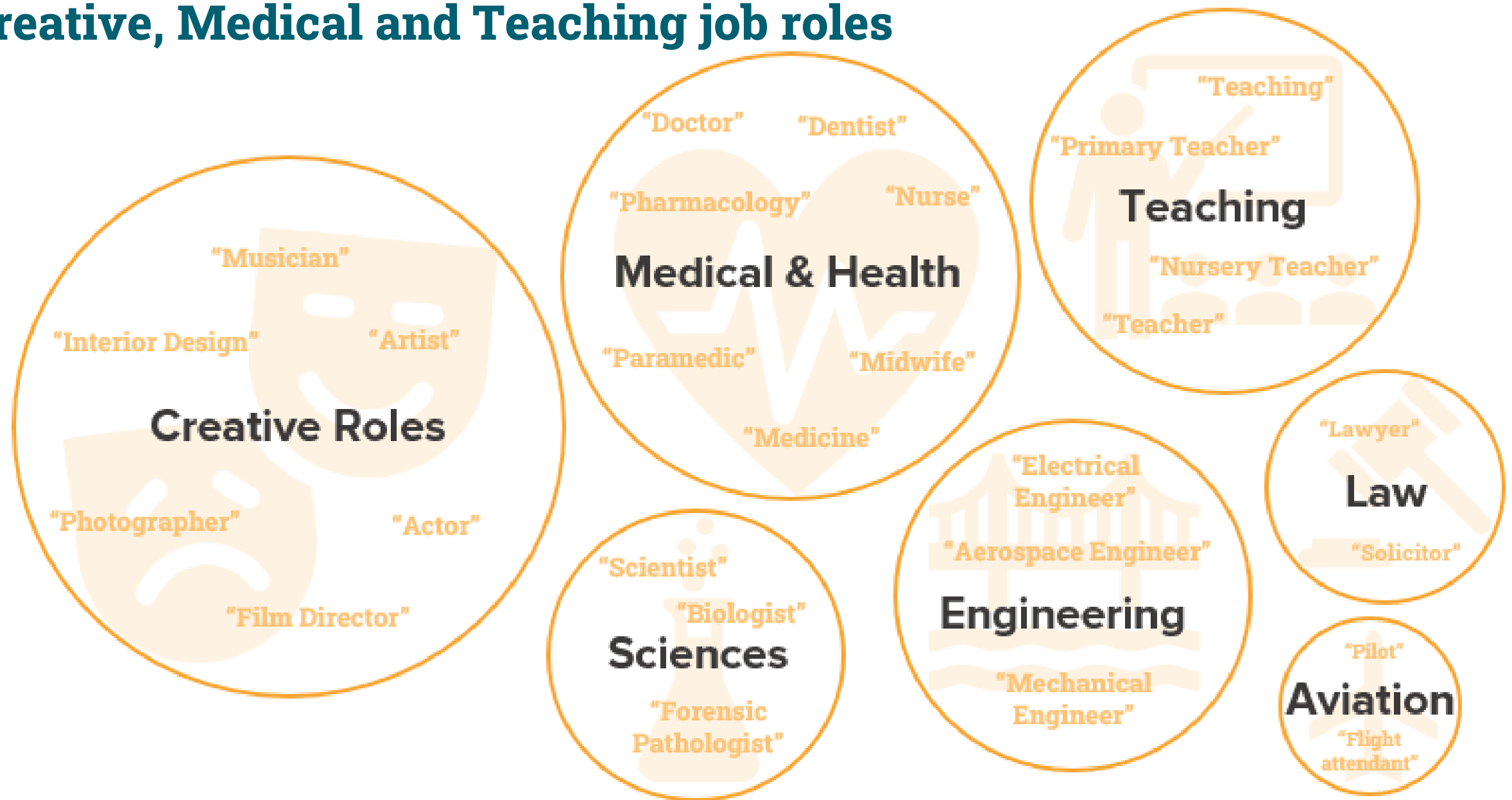| Key Career Influencers - Factors	All %	Targeted %	Universal %
My interests / hobbies	86	86	86
The qualifications I achieved at school	81	76	83
The need to earn money	79	81	78
Education / training opportunities available to me	70	69	70
Job / career opportunities available to me	68	66	69
Work experience in school or part-time job	51	51	50
Opportunities available within my local area	48	50	47
Social media (including Facebook, Instagram, X, etc.)	47	52	44
Online careers websites (for example: My World of Work)	42	48	39

Sectors

Sectors

What sector(s) do you want to work in in your future career? (select all that apply)

Sectors	All %	Targeted %	Universal %
Engineering	17	14	19
Medicine and Health	16	13	18
Creative Industries (e.g. Art & Design, Music, Acting)	15	18	14
Teaching	13	10	15
Science	11	7	14
Sport	11	10	12
Armed Forces, Policing or Security	10	11	9
Computing and ICT	10	10	10
Construction	10	13	8
Caring (e.g. childcare, social care)	9	12	7
Law	9	7	10
Banking and Finance	8	5	9
Hospitality (e.g. working in hotels, bars, restaurants)	4	7	2
Tourism	4	4	3
Energy	3	2	4
Housing / Property	2	2	2

Young people in the South are interested in Creative, Medical and Teaching job roles
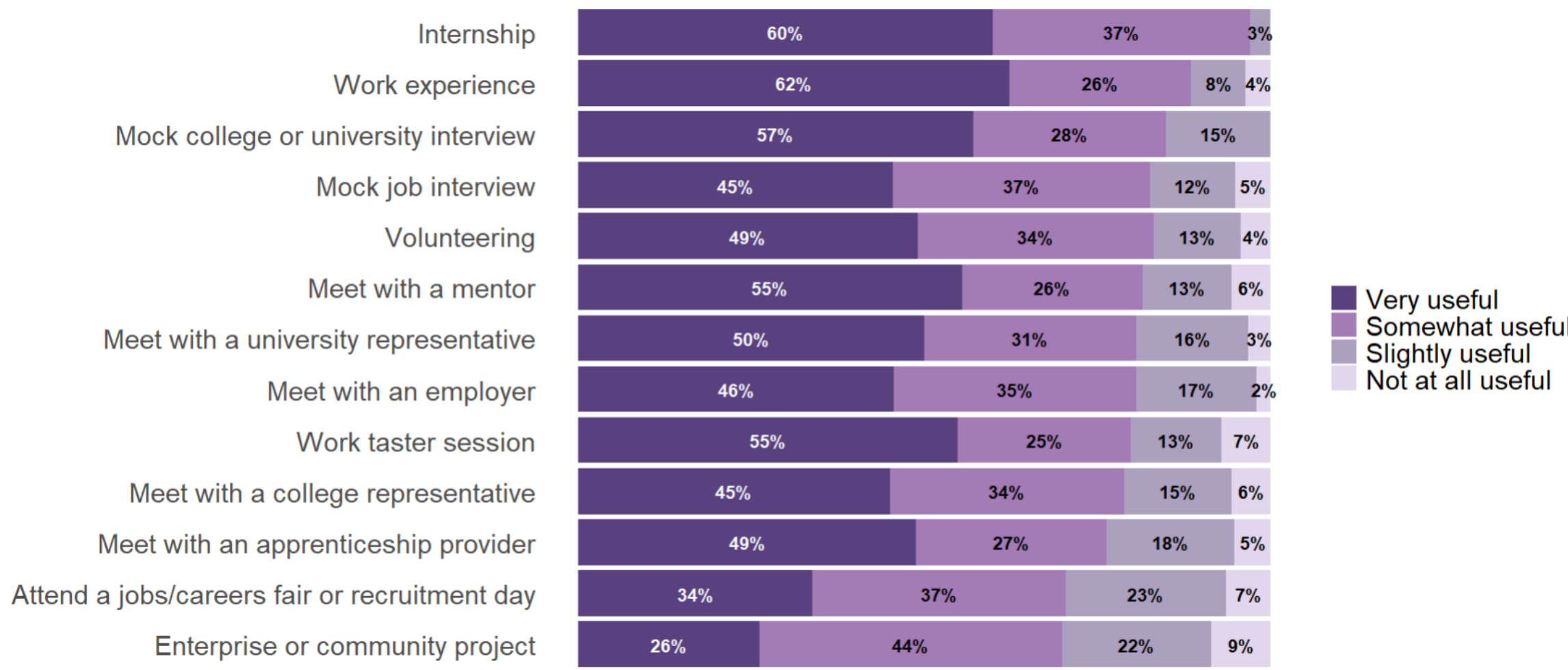
Creative Roles
"Musician"
"Interior Design"
"Artist"
"Photographer"
"Actor"
"Film Director"

Medical & Health
"Doctor"
"Dentist"
"Pharmacology"
"Nurse"
"Paramedic"
"Midwife"
"Medicine"

Teaching
"Teaching"
"Primary Teacher"
"Nursery Teacher"
"Teacher"

Sciences
"Scientist"
"Biologist"
"Forensic Pathologist"

Engineering
"Electrical Engineer"
"Aerospace Engineer"
"Mechanical Engineer"

Law
"Lawyer"
"Solicitor"

Aviation
"Pilot"
"Flight attendant"

Career Activities

Pupils most likely to have taken part in work experience and volunteering

Taking part in career activities	All %	Targeted %	Universal %
Volunteering	46	39	50
Work experience	46	45	47
Attend a jobs/careers fair or recruitment day	38	31	42
Meet with a university representative	22	14	26
Meet with an employer	20	16	22
Meet with a college representative	19	22	18
Mock job interview	16	15	17
I have not had the opportunity to take part in any of these activities	13	16	11
Meet with an apprenticeship provider	10	8	11
Enterprise or community project	7	6	8
Mock college or university interview	7	8	6
Meet with a mentor	6	6	6
Work taster session	6	5	7
Internship	2	2	2

Internships and work experience most useful

How useful did you find the following activities?

Activity	Very useful	Somewhat useful	Slightly useful	Not at all useful
Internship	60%	37%		3%
Work experience	62%	26%	8%	4%
Mock college or university interview	57%	28%	15%	
Mock job interview	45%	37%	12%	5%
Volunteering	49%	34%	13%	4%
Meet with a mentor	55%	26%	13%	6%
Meet with a university representative	50%	31%	16%	3%
Meet with an employer	46%	35%	17%	2%
Work taster session	55%	25%	13%	7%
Meet with a college representative	45%	34%	15%	6%
Meet with an apprenticeship provider	49%	27%	18%	5%
Attend a jobs/careers fair or recruitment day	34%	37%	23%	7%
Enterprise or community project	26%	44%	22%	9%

Career activities – participation vs usefulness
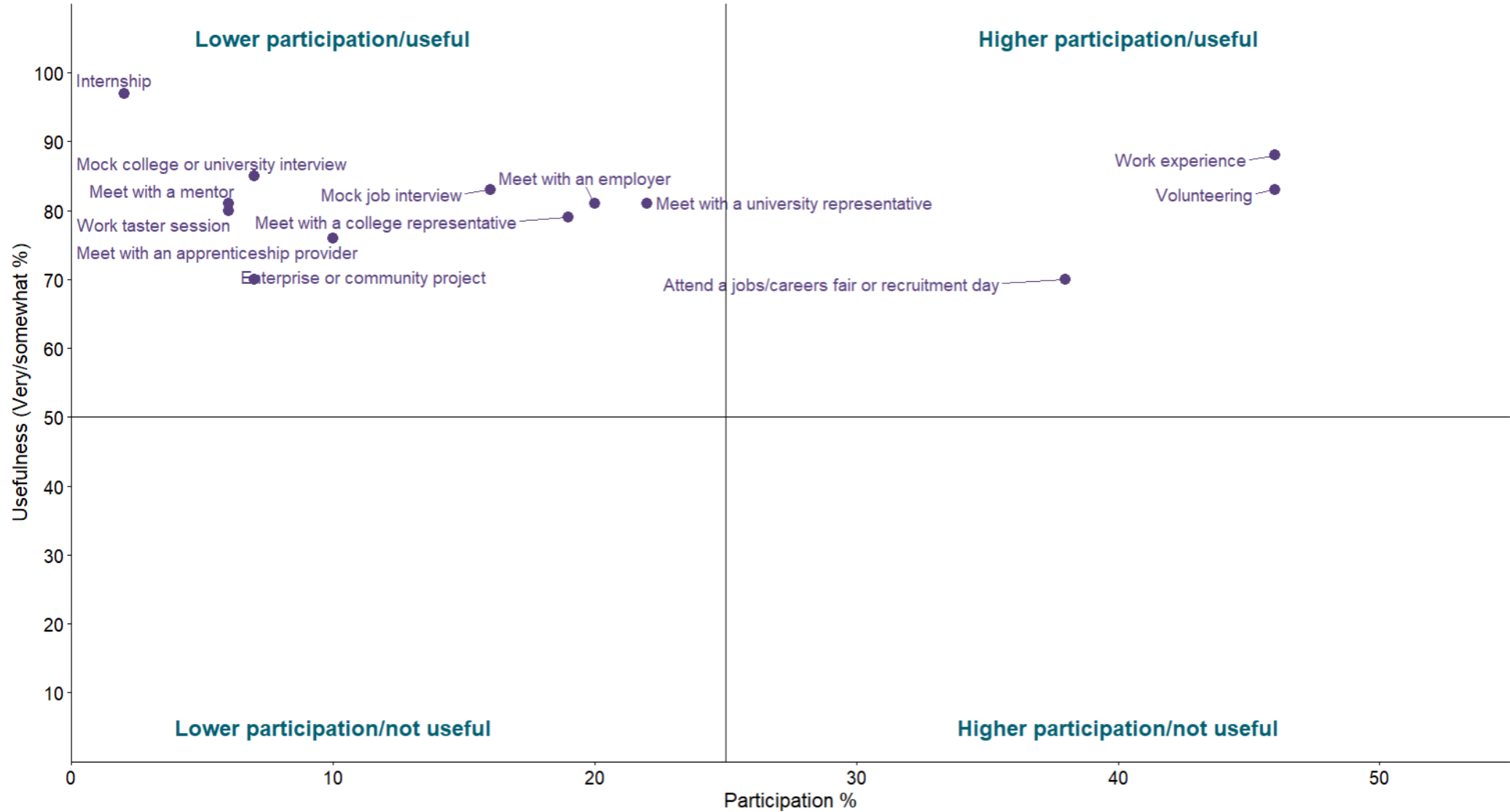
Extra-curricular activities

In the last 12 months, have you actively taken part in any of these types of groups, clubs, organisations or activities (including evening classes)?

Activities	All %	Targeted %	Universal %
Team sports (e.g. football, rugby, hockey, basketball etc.)	31	26	34
Sports, fitness or exercise groups (e.g. dance, swimming, athletics, martial arts etc.)	30	23	34
Volunteering and fundraising groups	29	24	32
I have not taken part in any of these activities	24	30	20
Creative arts groups (e.g. drama, art, music, photography etc.)	19	18	20
Youth award schemes (e.g. Duke of Edinburgh)	19	13	22
Youth clubs	10	10	10
One-to-one mentoring	9	9	9
Uniformed youth groups (e.g. Scouts, Girl Guides, Army Cadets etc.)	9	7	10
Science and technology (e.g. coding club, science club etc.)	6	4	7
Other	5	5	5
Political and democracy groups (e.g. Scottish Youth Parliament, political parties, representative on boards/youth panels etc.)	4	2	5

KPIs & Career Management Skills

Targeted pupils most likely to view SDS as effective

Average score out of 10

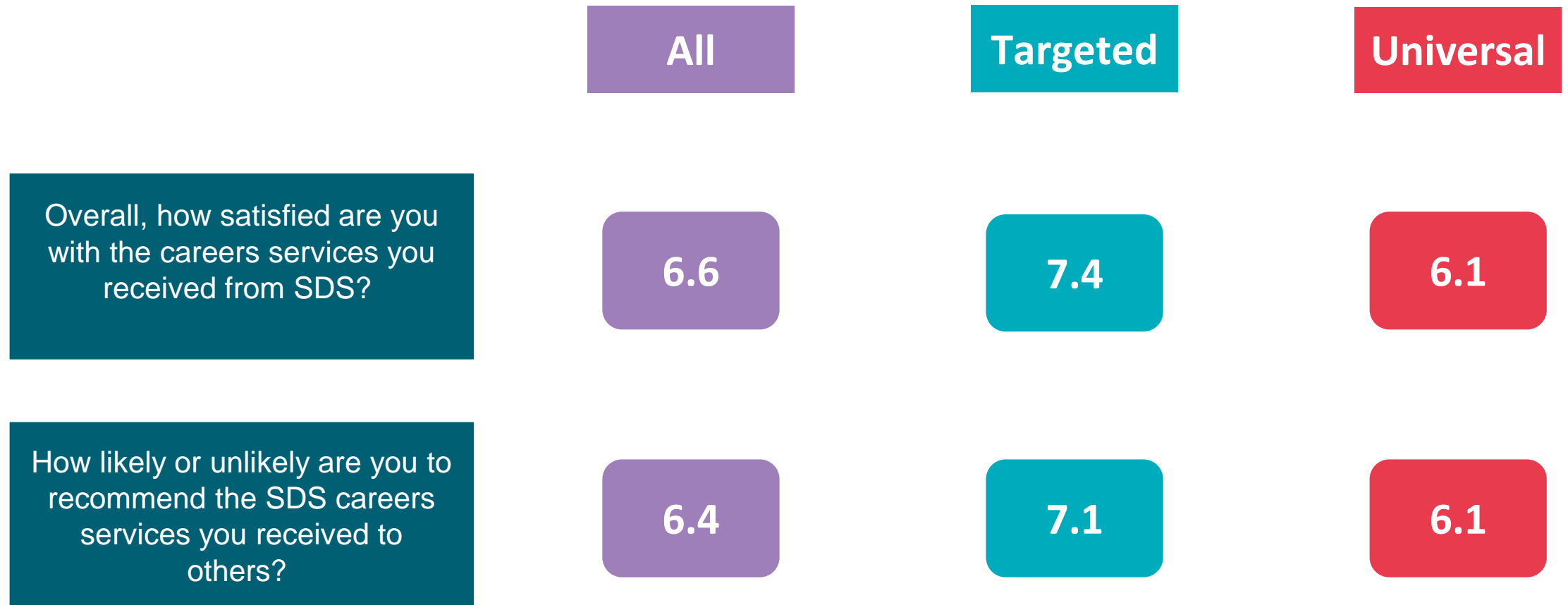|	**All**	**Targeted**	**Universal**
SCHOOL LEAVERS How effective were the SDS careers services in helping you decide what to do when you left school?	**6.3**	**7.1**	**5.6**
S4/S5s How effective have the SDS careers services been in helping you decide what you may want to do when you leave school	**5.9**	**6.5**	**5.7**

Targeted pupils most satisfied and likely to recommend

Average score out of 10

	All	Targeted	Universal
Overall, how satisfied are you with the careers services you received from SDS?	6.6	7.4	6.1
How likely or unlikely are you to recommend the SDS careers services you received to others?	6.4	7.1	6.1

Satisfaction with aspects of careers services

Overall, how satisfied are you with the following aspects of SDS careers services...

Average score out of 10

Satisfaction with elements of careers services	All	Targeted	Universal
The ability to access support when needed	7.2	7.6	6.9
The amount of support available	7.2	7.7	6.8
The range of SDS careers services available	7.1	7.5	6.8
The information you were given about how to access SDS careers services	6.6	7.1	6.3
The information you were given about the range of SDS careers services available	6.6	7.1	6.4

SDS helps pupils to develop a range of CMS

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the support you received from SDS has helped you to do the following?

Career Management Skills	All %	Targeted %	Universal %
Find and use career information easily	81	86	78
Understand how your experiences and learning can help you make career choices	80	86	76
Understand and build on your skills, strengths and achievements	79	84	75
Consider new things you may not have thought of when it comes to your career journey	76	81	72
Make informed career decisions	76	84	71
Identify and build relationships with people who can help you in your career	66	75	61

Post-school plans
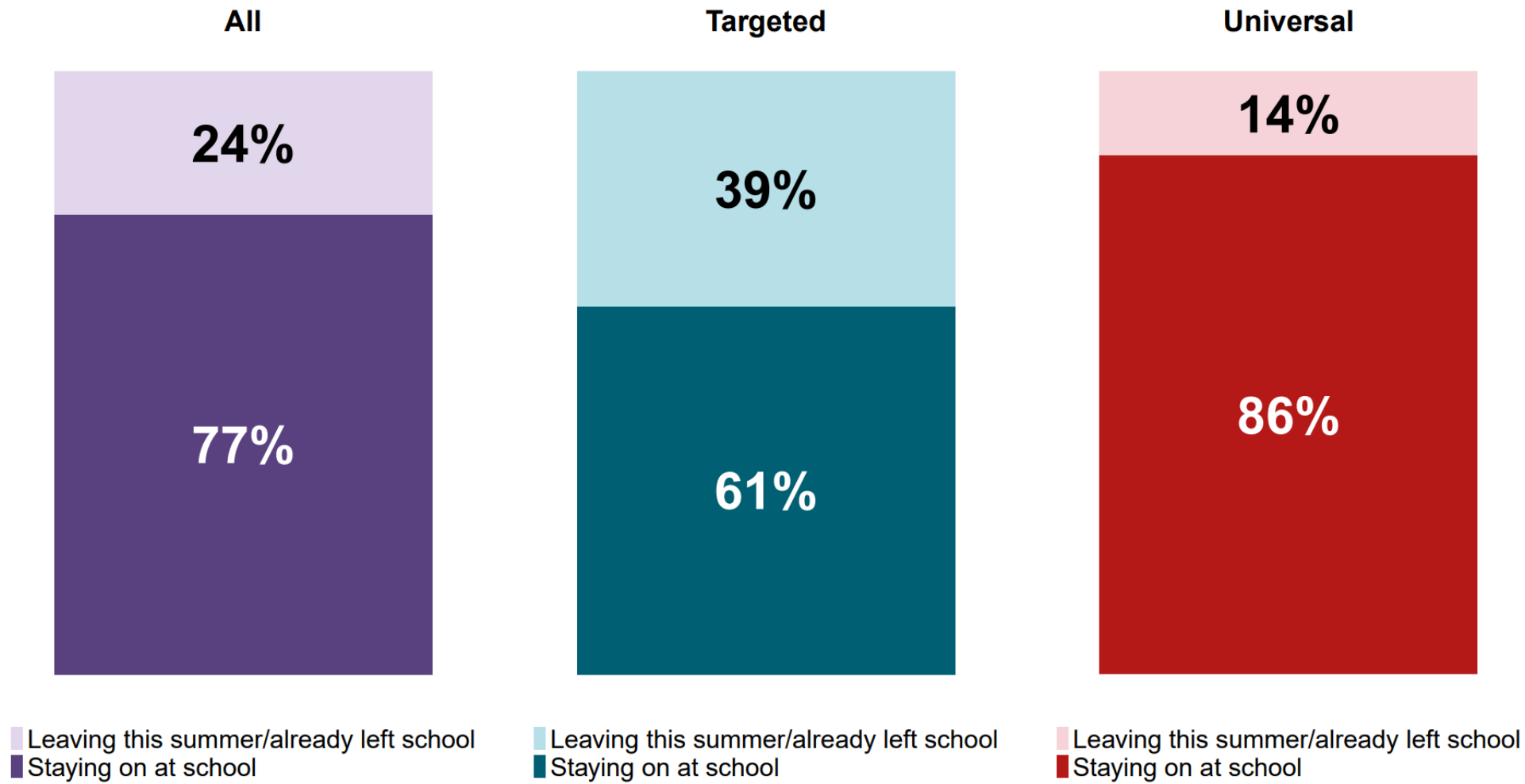
Pupils stay on at school to gain more qualifications

Reasons for staying until S6	All %	Targeted %	Universal %
To gain more qualifications	88	85	89
To get as much out of school as possible	65	63	66
To stay with friends	41	37	43
I don't feel ready to leave school	38	40	38
I enjoy school	29	25	31
I don't know what I want to do after school	23	23	23
To participate in extra-curricular activities	21	17	23
Other	3	2	3

Why do some pupils leave before S6?
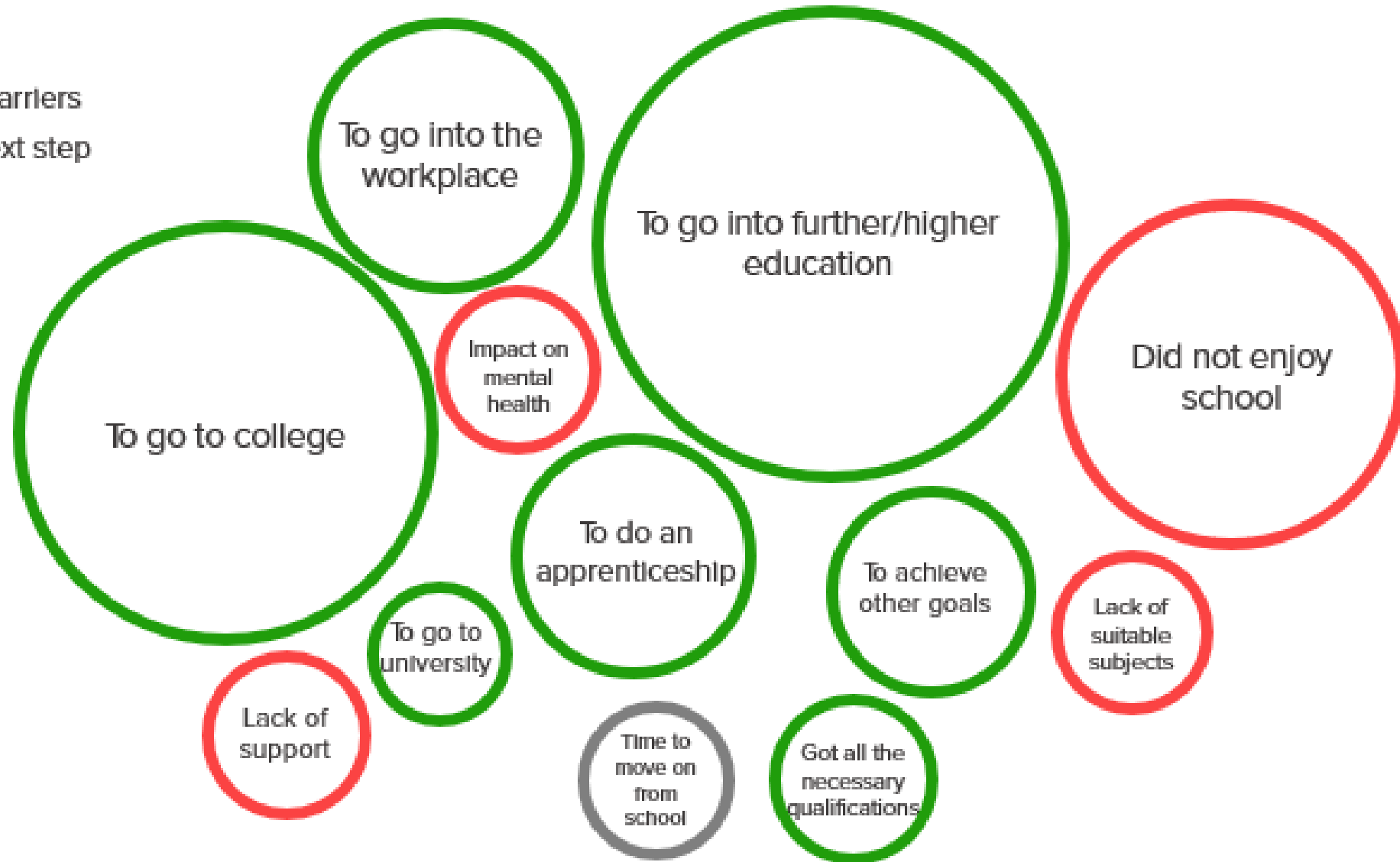
Majority of pupils staying on at school plan to go to university

What are you thinking about doing once you leave school?

Destination	All %	Targeted %	Universal %
University course	59	40	67
College course	11	22	6
Don't know yet	7	11	5
Modern Apprenticeship	7	9	6
Graduate Apprenticeship	4	3	4
Take time out / gap year	4	4	3
Full-time employment	3	4	3
Other	2	3	2
Part-time employment	2	2	3
Self-employed / start my own business	1	1	1
Voluntary work	1	1	0

Pupils who are leaving school plan to go to college or university

What are you doing, or planning to do, now that you have left school?

| Destination	All %	Targeted %	Universal %
College course	38	56	25
University course	34	16	48
Full-time employment	7	5	8
Modern Apprenticeship	7	10	6
Part-time employment	4	4	3
Take time out / gap year	4	2	5
Other	3	4	2
Graduate Apprenticeship	2	1	2
Voluntary work	1	1	0
Self-employed / started my own business	0	1	NA
Working with a Careers Adviser at my local SDS centre to plan my next steps	0	1	0

Skills

Pupils say communication and team working skills are important for their future career
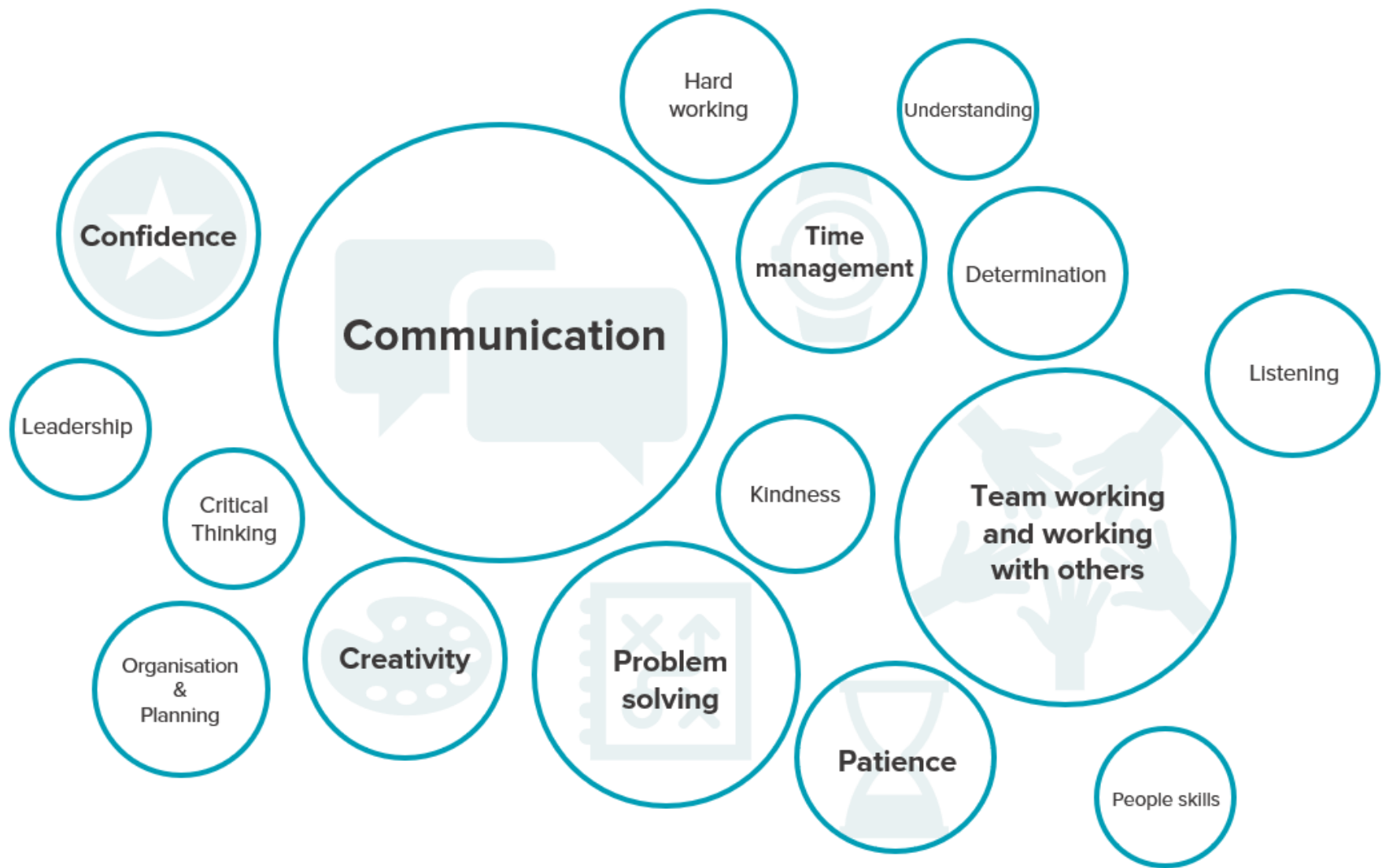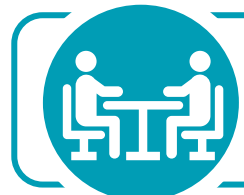
Summary
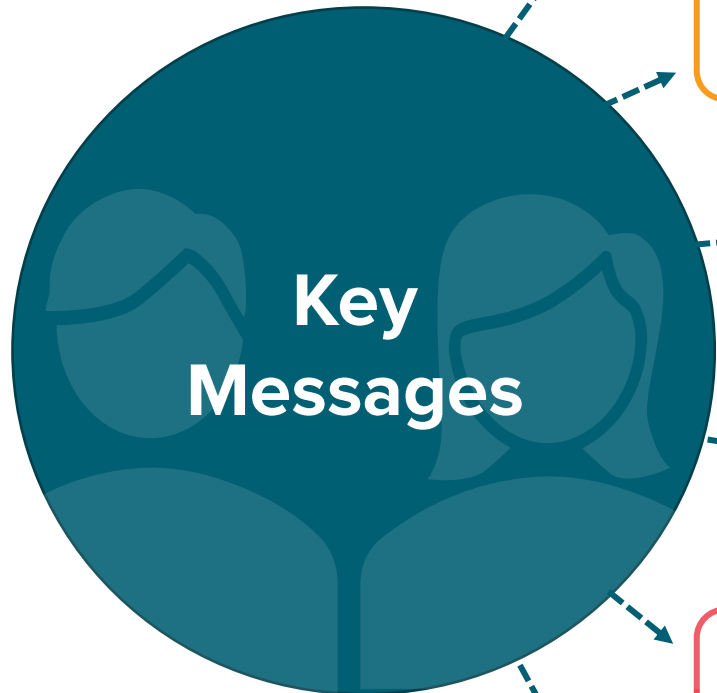
Key Messages

The **response to Pupils Voice has never been higher**. A combination of email and text message invitations were a success.
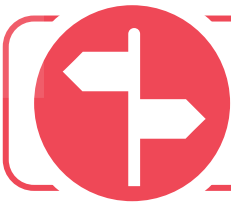
Results across core SDS service questions remain **similar to previous years.**

Visibility and awareness of one-to-ones has improved, but still **half of pupils who haven't had a one-to-one are not aware that they could have one**.

One to ones and drop-in sessions are highly valued by pupils, particularly by pupils in the targeted group.

Those who plan to **stay on at school want to gain more qualifications** and go to university. **School leavers** have various reasons for leaving and plan on going to **college or university**.

Pupils agree that SDS has helped them to develop CMS.

Guidance: Using Regional results

When using detailed breakdowns of data, such as regional results, as evidence to support decision making or service development, it is important to exercise caution and be aware of the following factors:

When national or large-scale data sets are disaggregated at a regional level, the number of responses becomes smaller. Smaller numbers of responses can lead to less reliable and representative data. Results should be interpreted with caution and treated as indicative.

Response rates for different regions may differ from national response rates, as could the composition of respondents from each region, which could affect the reliability of the data.

Contextual factors may also affect results across regions. For example, different levels of service, customer types, interventions or events carried out in each region, or socio-economic and labour market conditions.

If you have any questions or would like further guidance, please get in touch with Evaluation&Research@sds.co.uk