



School of  
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# Quantity Surveying Full Time vs. Sandwich Course Students Success Rates in H.E

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## Introduction

In the last four years we noticed that there is a distinct difference in outcomes and result in degree classification between a Full-time sandwich student completing a year out in industry returning for a final year and a student undertaking a QS FT degree returning for the final year. A key theme identified was the exposure of the full time non placement students to the industry and actual live projects which as a cohort is limited at this point in their studies to a site visit in their first year and subsequently a module in the final year based on a live project which ultimately has resulted in a skills gap requiring a levelling up philosophy.

In this current year the course leader for the undergraduate programme was tasked with designing a course to target the QS FT year 3 students with the emphasis on giving them industry experience that in turn would help level up with the experience of a QS SW Student. NSS feedback has identified the issue through low scores and should be a clear indicator on the impact of a new learning approach

## Objectives

1. Explore the grade classifications currently being achieved by students undertaking the full time Qs course and compare to that of the Sandwich course placement and analyse the differences between the two groups.
2. Establish the learning outcomes between a Full-time student and that of a Sandwich course student and understand if there is a correlation between industry experience and its bearing on the final outcomes.
3. Determine if as the ADBE department we can offer a course to improve the understanding of any affected group and implement a levelling up of the students learning.

## Initial Findings & Analysis

When completing the initial analysis of the board grade splits between the two course types (QSFT and the QS Sandwich course) over the three years the following observations were clear

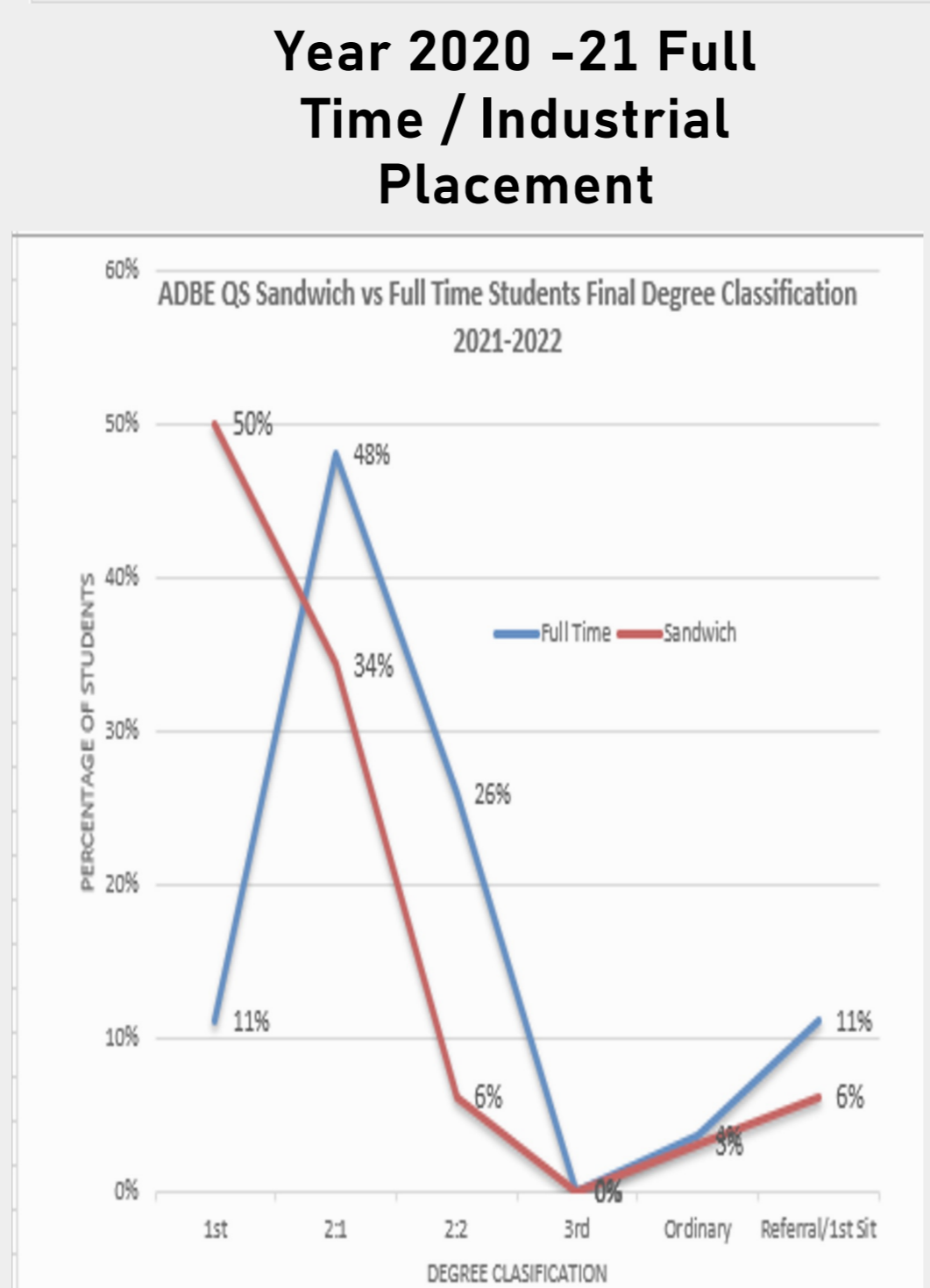
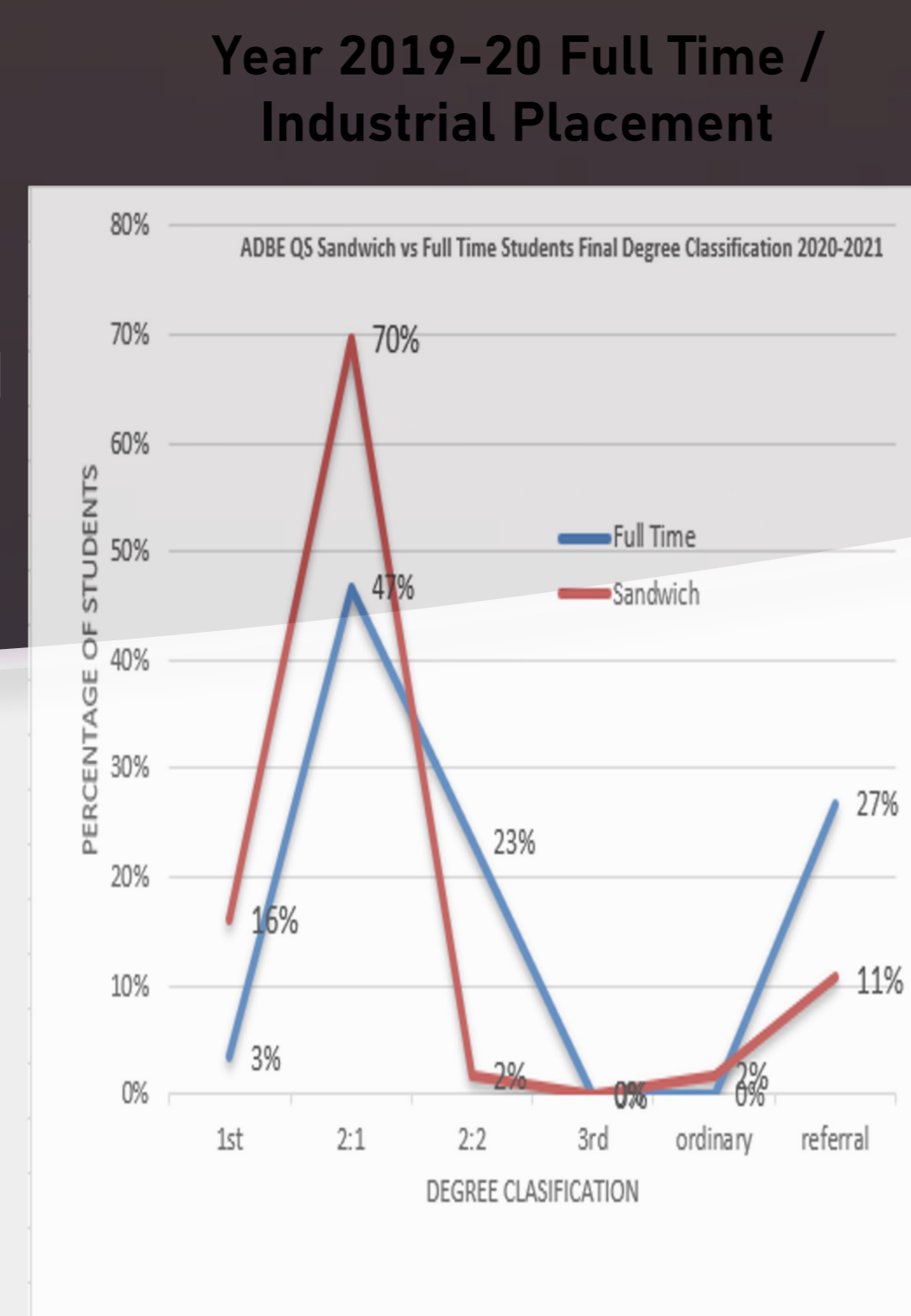
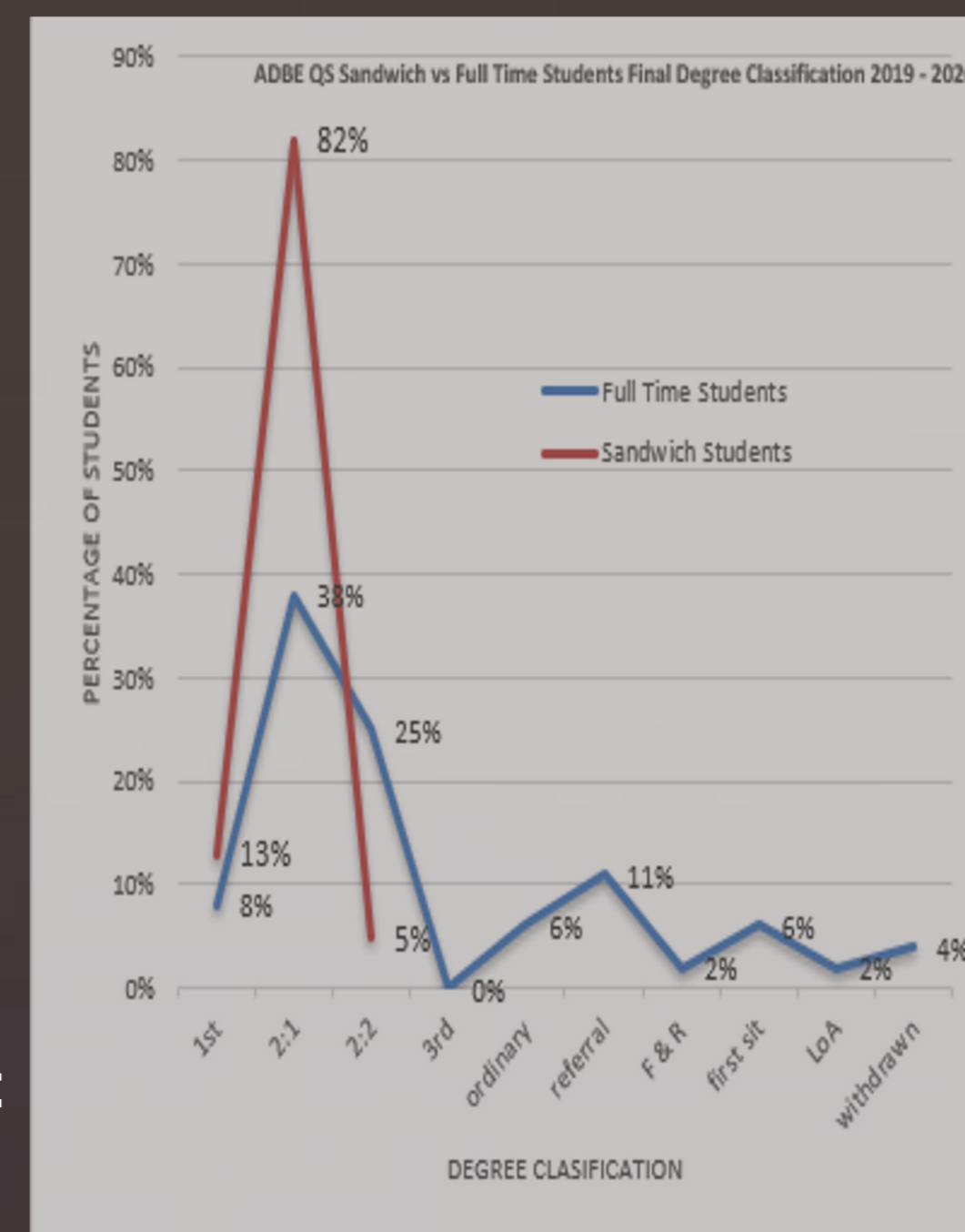
1. Notable trend with number of students achieving a 2-1 and above has reduced year on year from 95% to 84% of the students completing the sandwich course.
2. In comparison to the sandwich course, the full time course equivalent has seen a gradual increase from 46% to 59% however still noticeably less than the sandwich course students outcomes.
3. The number of sandwich course students achieving a 1st has increased from 13% to 50% however note that the student cohort has increased 50% from 8 to 16 no.

The full time course has also seen an increase however not nearly at the rate of sandwich course with only a 3% increase from 8% in 2019-20 to 2020-21

4. Ultimately the gap between the sandwich and full time students has opened up with regards to achieving a 1st class degree in the latter years to a 39% difference (Year 2021 -22).

5. The gap in referral rates have decreased from a gap of 16% down to 5% between the last two year groups however notably these categories never existed in years 2019-20 for sandwich students.

6. Also worth noting that sandwich student cohort have dropped by approx. 50% from 61 down to 32 students. This may be related as there has been increases in the apprenticeship numbers with all fees paid by the employers.



## Methodology: Theory into Practice

In terms methodology and research for this study, the aim is to use a mix method approach. The use of a time timeline, in the following year we effectively monitored the situation and in the second year we offered a placement on construction live however the attendance was below 50% and the impact was negligible. Application of Blooms Taxonomy in order to create a scaffolded leaning approach and make up the skills gap that has resulted from students undertaking the placement over those continuing full time.



1. In terms of the course we had a discussion with industry and **“Create”** learning objectives with aims to give the students exposure of the day to day tasks specific to what a student Qs would have been exposed to had they completed an industrial placement i.e. Preparation of a valuation, variation and procurement of sub-contractor’s.
2. We held a series of workshops with Volker Fitzpatrick and ourselves prior to rolling out the course to **“Evaluate”** and critique the learning objectives and mainly the relevance of content in relation to what a placement student having completed a year would have been exposed whilst trying to maintain the learning outcomes within the timescales i.e. 4 days of teaching.
3. During to workshops we **“Analysed”** and sketched out initial briefs of each day and every learning aspect we were aiming top cover.
4. **“Application”** came in the form of running the teaching sessions and quizzing the students at the start of each session and determining there current understanding and level and tailing the sessions around this focusing on the gaps in learning and industry knowledge.
5. Reinforcing **Understanding** and explaining concepts came in the form of trips to the live site with workshops of site using the content from the live project explain the methodology behind the industry processors.
6. Recognizing elements included within the **“Week in the life of a Qs”** and relating that to past learning recalling facts will hopefully be proven by aiding the students in there final year notably in the QS project and Dissertation module.



## Conclusion

Subsequently a course was designed and titled **“A week in the life of a QS”** which was a collaboration between Volker Fitzpatrick and NTU to primarily address the skills gap through a combination of on the project training and workshops at NTU. Key industry skill sets to be addressed were Value engineering, variations, and valuation techniques. Further research study would potentially look further into the correlation between the Full time / Sandwich students and the outcomes to the final year dissertation module.

Initial discussions within the department suggest that those that have been exposed to the industry have developed there understanding and furthermore they have developed connections and links in the industry.

To further reinforce the theory of increased outcomes for sandwich students completing there dissertation, Volker Fitzpatrick openly offers its placement students support with there dissertations in the final weeks of the placement. Furthermore, they also actively encourage all their staff to answer any questionnaires and interview requests which are facilitated by their head of training. This support in its self is invaluable to a student completing there final year of a degree through relieving pressure, allowing a student to effectively have additional mentoring and potentially increasing the chance of a good grade outcome i.e. 2-1 or above.

One potential adjustment would be to insist on every student completing a sandwich course with the aim of increasing outcomes. However if the economy was to slow with say a recession, this in previous years has seen students unable to obtain placements. As a result the effected students have had to complete the course full time, undertaking there final year of study in what would have been there sandwich placement.



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