# Belonging and Engagement for a Successful Transition University of Glasgow

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## About the Project

 This project aimed to explore the factors which impacted new undergraduate physics students transition to higher education at the University of Glasgow

# What is Belonging and Engagement?

Sense of Belonging

- Feeling like an 'integral part of a system' or environment'
- As well as feeling accepted and valued by those within this environment [1]

Engagement

- Participation in and out of the academic setting [2] Astin's (1993) theory of involvement implied that the more students were
- involved at higher education, the more likely they are to be successful [3]

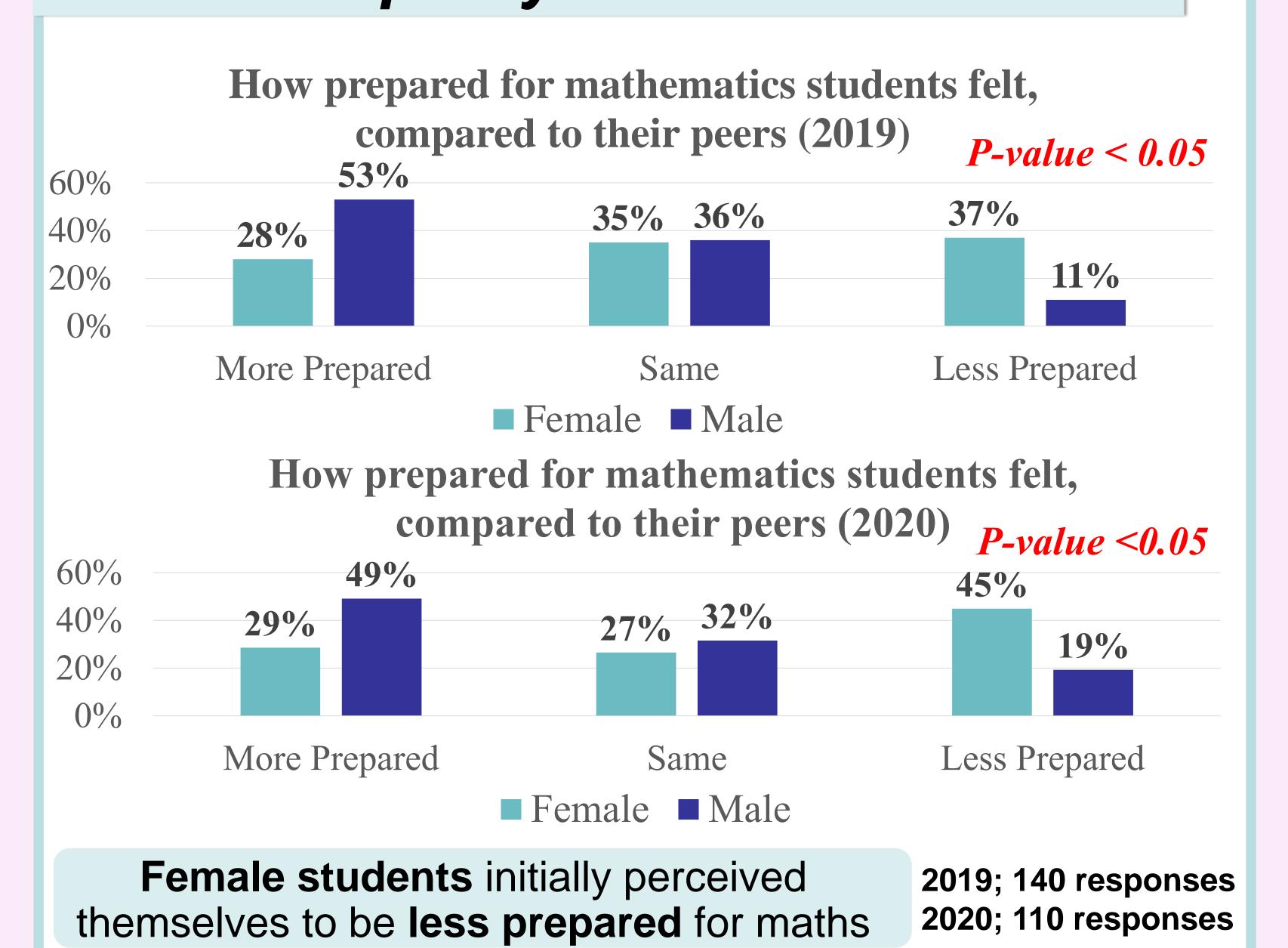
#### Data Collection

- First-year students received two surveys, the first at the beginning of semester one and the second at the end
- Second-year students in 2020 received one survey to identify any changes since year 1

## Data Analysis

- Statistical analysis was used to identify any significant results from quantitative data
- General inductive coding process was used to identify any key themes from qualitative data

## Gender Disparity in Mathematics



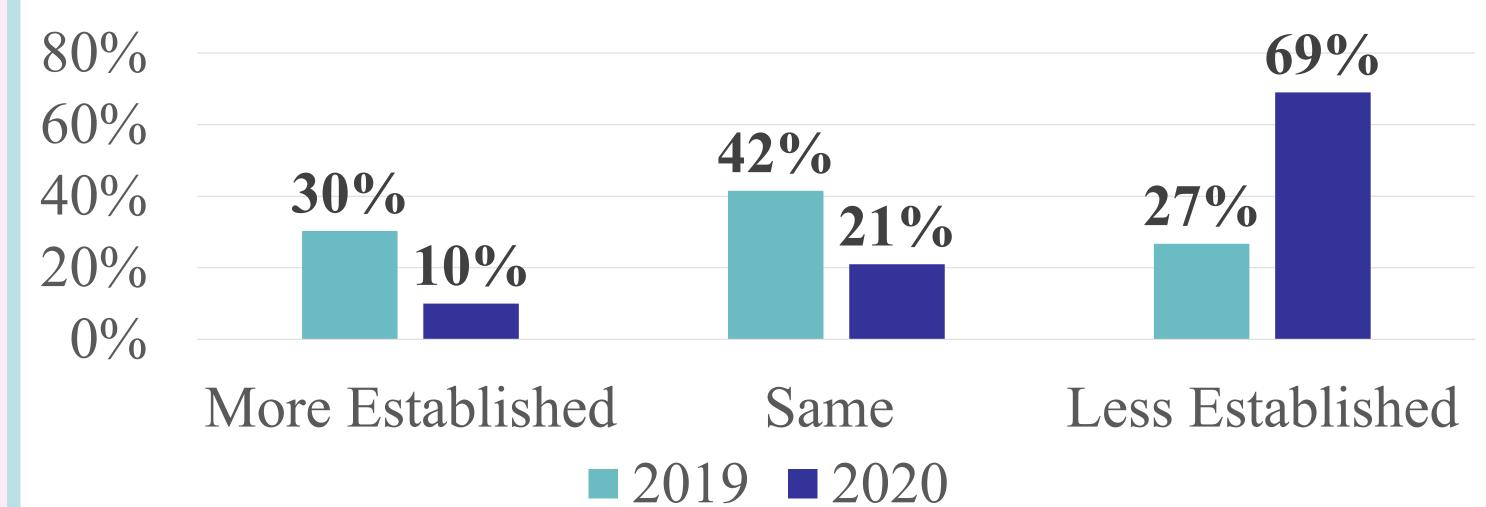
#### Conclusions

- Female students sense of belonging may be negatively impacted by their lack of self confidence
- Remote learning has highlighted the importance of student engagement
- Sense of belonging requires ongoing intervention

## Social Engagement

**2019**; **142** responses 2020; 53 responses

How students perceive their relationships with new friends to be, in comparison to other students



All of the students from 2019 who felt they were less established with new friends at the end of semester one stated they were not enjoying the course

Students in 2020 have experienced a lack of social engagement due to remote learning

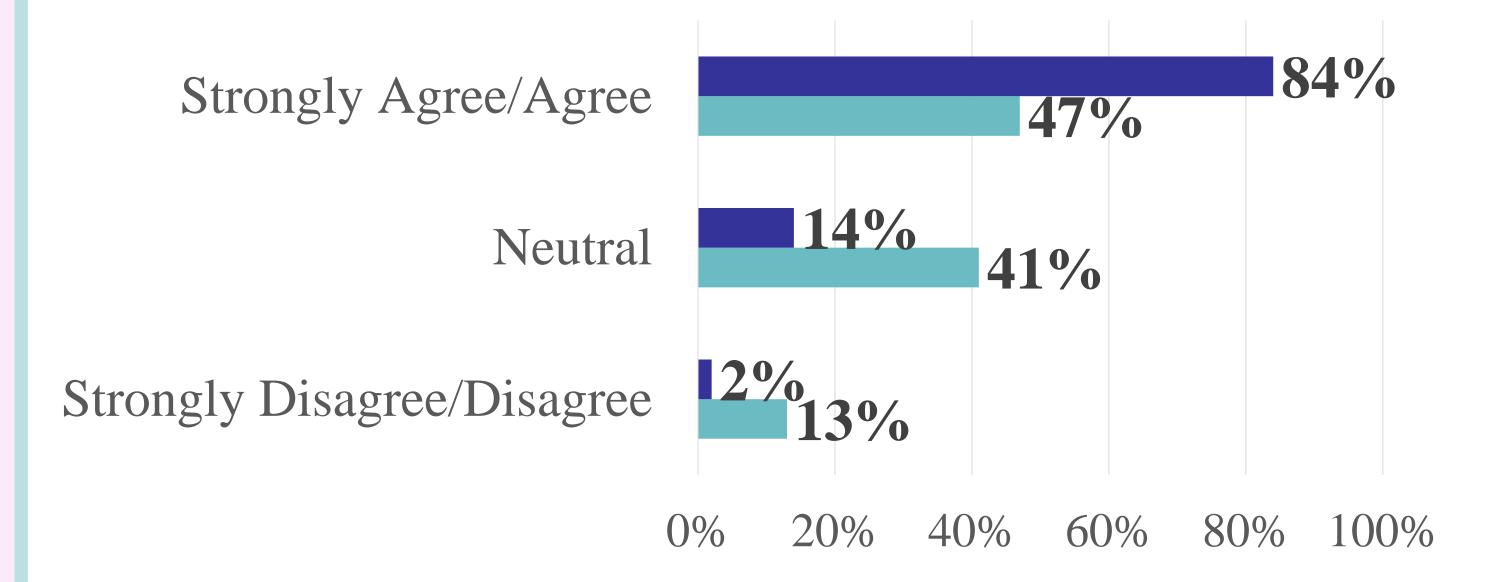
Majority of students stated this has made them feel isolated and alone

This lead to the majority of first-year students in 2020 perceiving themselves to be less established with new friends after one semester

#### Sense of Belonging

Year 1; 142 responses Year 2; 32 responses

Comparison between feeling welcome in Year 1 and belonging in Year 2



- I feel welcome in the School of Physics (Year 1)
- I feel like I belong on this course (Year 2)

This illiterates that although students felt welcomed by the department in their first year this did not translate into the strong sense of belonging in their second year

#### References

[1] Hagerty, B. M. K., et al (1992). Sense of belonging: A vital mental health concepts. Archives of Psychiatric Nursing, 6, 172-177 [2] Kuh, G., et al, 2008. Unmasking the Effects of Student Engagement on First-Year College Grades and Persistence. The Journal of Higher Education, 79(5), pp.540-563.

[3] Astin, A. W. (1984). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education Journal of College Student Personnel, 25:4, 297–308