



Making the right connections

Bahrain 12 -13 November

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1. Event fact file

Bahrain

Al Murjan Ballroom, Movenpick Hotel, Muharraq, 12 & 13 November 2014	
Opening hours	12 November 18:00-21:00, 13 November 9:00-13:00 & 17:00-21:00
Opened by	HE Dr Riyadh Hamza, Secretary General of the Higher Education Council at Ministry of Education. HE Iain Lindsay, British Ambassador.
Stand costs	£ 1,300 (Plus VAT)

2. Key statistics

Attendance	Muharraq, Bahrain	
	November 2014	September 2013
Visitors		
Total No of Visitors	1300	1732
Total No of Exhibitors	34	32
	November 2014	September 2013
Level of Study		
Bachelors	443	733
Masters	231	405
PhD	108	182
Foundation Course	46	176
Others	130	204
	November 2014	September 2013
Career choices		
Business/Economic/Management	284	348
Engineering	142	228
Law	68	113
IT/Computer Science	31	49
Medicine/Health	149	315
Others	284	647

Gender & Age Variant	November 2014	September 2013
Gender		
Male	402	559
Female	556	849
Age		
16 – 20	617	734
21 – 24	93	99
25 – 34	126	104
35 – 40	97	89
45 +	25	22

**A full list of exhibitors can be found in Appendix 1*

3. Impact of marketing plan

The formal means of marketing were adopted (External signage, printed media, newspaper advertisements) as is the norm. This year, printed materials were distributed to the appropriate markets. Posters as well as flyers were circulated to all the schools in the private and government sectors, educational institutions, universities as well as training and HR departments in Banks and other major organisations. The utilisation of British Council social media and websites, sending bulk SMS, and arranging school visits for private and public schools also paid dividends in the overall attendance .

Lamppost signs like last year were used this year; the number of the mentioned signs was considerably less than the amount outdoor signage used in the past. The amount of used signs overall were 10 lamp posts. These signs were placed at key intersections that lead up into the capital and were very clearly visible. The reduced amount of outdoor signage was due to a spike in outdoor advertisement costs that coincided with the local parliamentary elections.

Last year we had introduced Whatsapp as a medium of advertising, the same approach of utilising to promoting the EDUKEX 2013 was used this year. These multimedia channels are aimed at reducing marketing costs and have proven to be. The use of highly active local internet blogs and instagram also helped in advertising the event.

Overall the effect of the intensive promotional drive was very evident in the considerable increase in the overall turnout to the event itself. Full details on the advertising and promotion can be referred to in Appendix 4.

- **Visitor data analysis on how they found out about the event**

Visitor survey results demonstrate that over 45 percent of visitors to the exhibition found out about the event through the SMS messages that were circulated and over 55 percent through their teachers/schools. The total number of visitors to the event was 1300, with a breakdown of 530 students, 20 teachers, and 750 general visitors.

- **Pre-registration system**

Schools were urged to register online; email notification included the online registration link. The aim was to attain the individual data from the attendee's prior to the event start. This would allow for better data analysis and recording.

This year, all the schools were urged to register online, email notification included the online registration link. The aim was to attain the individual data from the attendee's prior to the event start. This would allow for better data analysis and recording. A total of 262 registered online and we will further promote online registration to increase numbers for the next EDUKEX event. Anticipating this we had already prepared printed registration forms which allowed for visitor feedback at the event, this however was time consuming to the visitors themselves. The fact that we had an arrangement allowing for a registration desk eased the congestion but it is our opinion that for future events online registration must factor.

The British Council desk was present to give support during registration. Involved in carrying out the process were members of all BC departments who also played a role in the overall organisational effort.

There were no issues related to the lack of materials, sufficient amounts were present for the visitors, the system adopted during the event proved successful. The estimated printed materials meant for visitors prior to the event seemed sensible and adequate. There was no excessive over production of materials and this allowed for the correct amount of materials to be placed in the individual bags distributed to visitors.

- **Other pre-event work**

An issue prior to the event was the co-ordination of the multi delegate online bookings. The registration form had included a caption that incorporated a form for the hotel booking at the lowest rate meant to accommodate this event as a comprehensive package. Efforts were made to ensure that delegates had registered via the registration form but it transpired that six of the visiting delegates had booked via a travel agent. This risked the potential cancellation of the agreement reached between the British Council and the delegates that did not book via the British Council form had to pay at a rate almost three times higher than what was available through package provided by the organizer. Next year, in order to get the best hotel rates, we strongly recommend that delegates book their accommodation through the British Council forms.

The media coverage was prominent as planned, prior to the event, during the event and after its conclusion. The level of circulation in the major daily newspapers was up to standard. The use of Lamppost signs was a more pronounced advertising medium to passersby on the main roads that lead into the capital. There were a total of 400 mailed invitations sent out this year, none of which came back as returned mail. For details on this year's full advertising and promotion plan refer to Appendix 4.

The pre-event reception allowed local representatives to mix with Alumni's, prominent members of the Ministry of Education as well as representatives from educational institute. The ensuing event held at residence of British Council Bahrain country Director proved to be a success. Many of the universities' representatives came back with positive feedback about the event. Many of the alumni also extended their sincere thanks at being invited to the event. The participation by the alumni present was so evident that they were happy to provide orientation sessions to potential candidates to UK universities.

- **Media/press during the event**

The press coverage during the opening was good this included a host of the Kingdom's key newspapers. Pre-event press releases were published in Arabic and English newspapers, in addition to TradeArabia.com and AMEinfo.com, which is free publicity for the event as press releases are being published at zero cost. Post-event coverage was wider as the event was reported in all five local Arabic newspapers and the two English newspapers operating in the country. Further Information on the media coverage surrounding this event can be found in Appendix 4, including circulation.

- **Findings from evaluations, observations from exhibitors**

The marketing techniques leading up to the event manifested in the positive turnout from the general public. The positive effect of targeting the desired market segment was translated tangibly by the university delegates. The response from the delegates was full congratulatory regarding the successful turnout. This was made apparent by the majority of university delegates. This feedback was only possible because the effort and hard work attracted the number of visitors from the general public.

The total number of 2500 flyers and 200 posters were distributed to educational and non-educational institutions/organisations. The printed material reached a total of 33 public schools and 45 private schools. In addition, printed materials were sent to 20 universities, 6 local education agents, 13 embassies, 15 banks, and educational institutions as well as using the British Council premises. An indicator of the successful effect of this exercise was evident from the good response translated into the number of students in attendance during the morning session. Feedback from the exhibitors relating to student visitors included, "*The enquiries were in good numbers and quality*". During this year's EDUKEX we placed a considerable amount of emphasis on the private school sector. There was a considerable turnout from five key private schools, the very interest demonstrated by these schools is encouraging and must be taken further to incorporate other schools within the same sector.

The overall participation by the Ministry of Education in response to the invitations sent was very positive with a considerable turn out from the Ministry's side. The level of co-operation was tangible and extended to employing two representatives from the Ministry who were part of the pre-event briefing to the visiting delegates.

There were no issues regarding the delivery of freighted goods to the venue, all the materials arrived and on time. The university representatives were delighted that their respective materials were at hand when needed, allowing them ample time to setup booths with relative ease

4. Conclusions and follow up

4.1 Key recommendations for institutions

UK Institutions keen on attending future exhibitions are strongly encouraged to submit all forms before the deadline to avoid any delays and mistakes. The institutions are advised to send delegate names in full (not short names) well in advance to inform the British Council of any changes or substitutions, or local representation by educational agents. We feel that as mentioned previously, all bookings must be done through the British Council registration forms.

Institutions that will be attending but not staying at the venue booked by the British Council are advised to inform us and confirm the representatives' names. This is so that badges with name tags and welcome pack folders can be prepared for them duly. They are also encouraged to ensure that promotional material is available for visitors and in sufficient quantities.

The feedback received from visitors was positive overall. The fact that some of the representatives from the universities in attendance were bi-lingual and could speak Arabic was very useful to the public

Other favorable feedback related to the use of presentations that delegates provided the visiting public through the medium of laptops that they used for the exact purpose. Some of the remarks from visitors touched on the duration of the event, citing the fact that two days are not sufficient a period of time for such an event and if it would be possible to extend the event to three days. Another visitor representing a private school mentioned that during the time allocated for school visits the university delegates should be present to accommodate the enquiries of the visiting students as some universities chose not to be present during the schools' session.

We generally received very positive feedback from visitors concerning the event overall. There was constructive criticism as is normal when registering feedback on events such as EDUKEX. But generally the feedback was positive "*The event gave us the opportunity to plan our future*" a visiting student said. An alumnus who was invited to the reception at the British Embassy and the event wrote the following "*I would like to extend my sincere thanks for all the genuine support that I received during the event*".

Mystery shopper forms were used to randomly assess the twenty six universities. Most feedback was rated in the good category, followed by excellent with minimal ratings of poor / fair.

Communication					
	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Total institutions
Friendliness	0	1	3	13	17
Attitude	0	2	3	12	17
Attentiveness	0	0	5	12	17
Clarity of information provided	1	1	3	12	17
Convincing / Selling	0	1	8	8	17
Provided adequate contact details	0	0	6	11	17
Total	1	5	28	68	

Quality/Knowledge					
	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Total institutions
Standard of knowledge of courses	0	1	8	8	17
Variety of courses	0	2	6	9	17
Standard of knowledge on admission	0	0	9	8	17
Flexibility of admission procedures	0	1	8	8	17
Professional approach	0	0	6	11	17
Promotion material available	0	7	7	3	17
Overall helpfulness	0	1	3	13	17
Total	0	12	47	60	

4.2 Key recommendations for the British Council

To ensure future event success the timing for the event must not coincide with the local Midterm or Final examinations for both the government and private school sector. Due to the examinations there was a drop in the overall attendance compared to last year. In the process leading up to any future event careful consideration must be taken into account to ensure the correct turnout by invitees to such functions, with stress on inviting the right people, with the benefits being communicated to them clearly. Having invited several alumni from the universities already represented at the event allowed for more interaction between delegates and the locals present at the event.

SIEM should visit schools and develop relationships with more private school Counsellors in advance to brief them about EDUKEX rather than at the exhibition. Also, looking at past events in Bahrain, the opening ceremony was attended by several VIPs. This needs to be worked on for us to get back to that level of exposure to VIP contacts for next year's event. Some institutions suggested that British Council could do a schools tour on the morning of the schools session instead of bussing in students. British Council will look into the feasibility of this suggestion for the next event.

Through our visitor survey results the following results were demonstrated:

Firstly in terms of the event meeting visitor's expectations, 223 strongly agreed, 183 agreed, 48 neither agreed nor disagreed, 3 disagreed, and 10 strongly disagreed.

In terms of rating the high quality of the event, 273 strongly agreed, 172 agreed, 15 neither agreed nor disagreed, 4 disagreed, and 3 strongly disagreed.

On whether the visitor acquired new knowledge or skills through this event 208 strongly agreed, 223 agreed, 28 neither agreed nor disagreed, 5 disagreed, and 3 strongly disagreed.

When asked what is the likelihood that you would recommend the British Council to a colleague or a friend on a scale, with 10 being most likely and 0 being least likely;

10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
192	148	52	38	21	14	2	0	0	0	0

The quality of the hotel services such as airport pick up, check-in arrangement, room service, etc. feedback received described it as “*excellent*” and “*faultless*”. However, although the exhibitors and general visitors almost unanimously rated the venue very highly, the student visitors due to their large numbers rated the place as cramped and crowded. Some student visitors suggested that the event would better be held on a school weekend, as this would allow more time for the students to gain a better perspective of what is being offered. As mentioned many in attendance commented that two days were not enough and to extend it. To tackle this issue the format of the event will be re-addressed for next year’s event.

With regards to the stands and layout of the hall, positive feedback was received: “*Excellent event*”, “*Very nice stand and well presented*” and “*Good venue again- they look after us well*”. We also received some neutral comments such as “*Good location, good hall. A/C too cold at times!*” “*I needed a bin*” “*Perhaps next year start the alphabet from the back so that different universities are in the front for a change- it was quiet at the back!*”

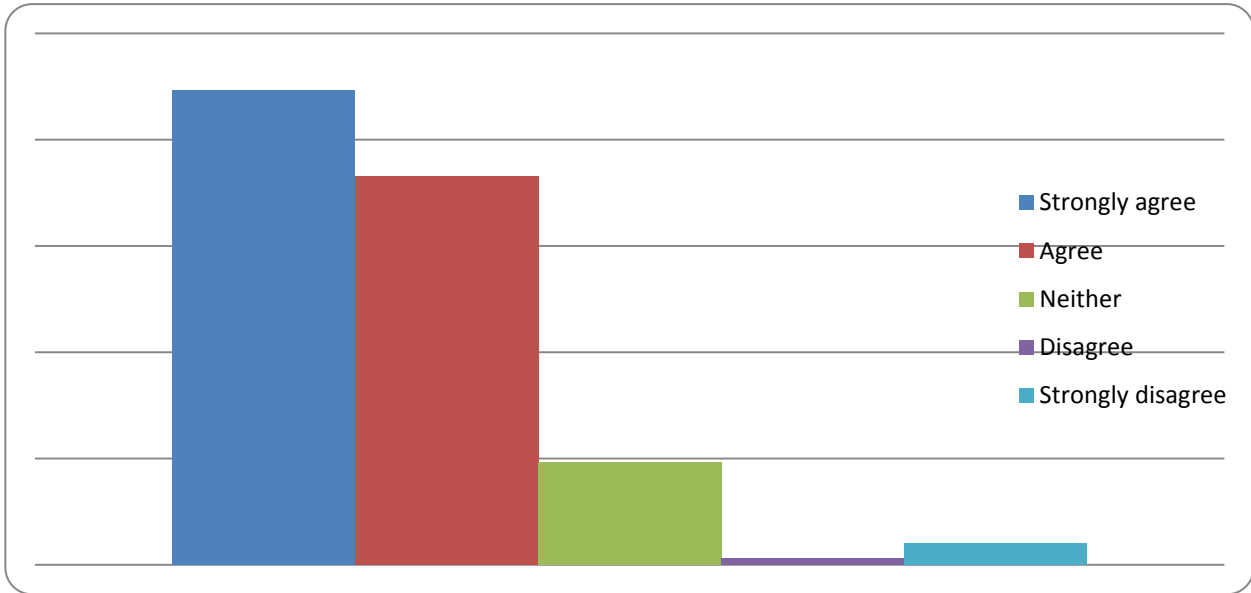
With regards to time management, one area to improve upon is timeliness; exhibitor feedback, “*Thank you for the good efforts made, I am just wondering why we received information regarding the exhibition a bit late this year*”.

Appendix 1: List of participating institutions (Alphabetical Order)

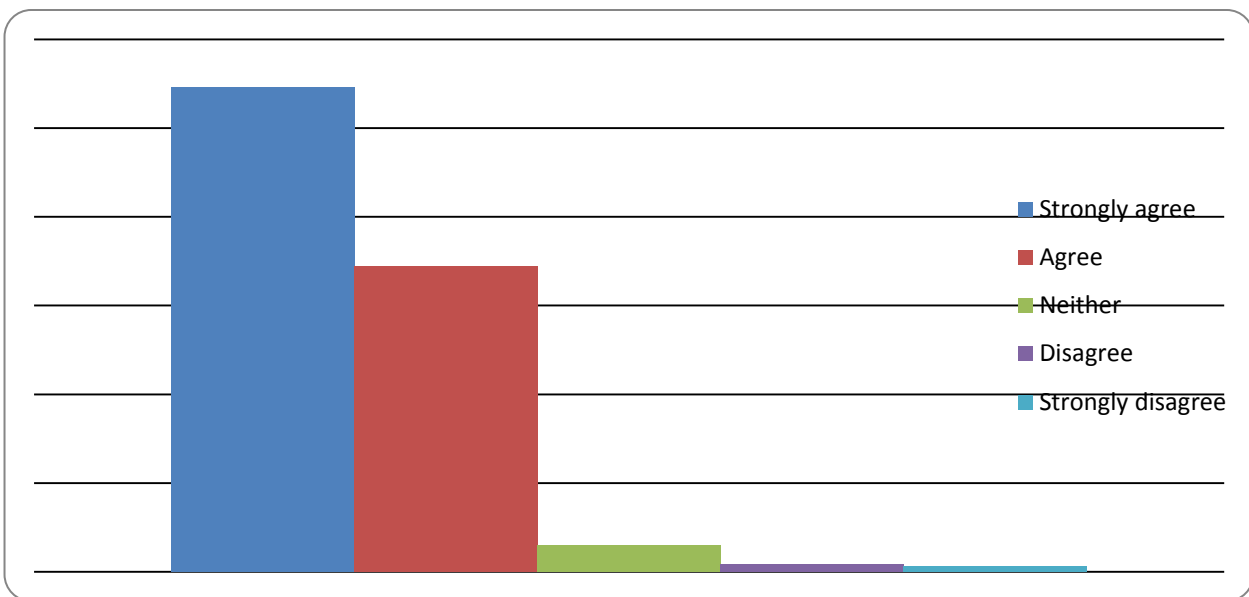
1	Bangor University
2	Bath Spa University
3	Cardiff University
4	Central College Nottingham
5	City College Plymouth
6	De Montfort University
7	Dudley College
8	Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW)
9	Leeds Beckett University
10	Manchester Metropolitan University
11	Newcastle College
12	Newcastle University
13	Northumbria University
14	School of Oriental & African Studies (SOAS), University of London
15	Southampton Solent University
16	The University of Northampton
17	The University of Reading
18	University of Brighton
19	University of Central Lancashire
20	University of Derby
21	University of Greenwich
22	University of Huddersfield
23	University of Kent
24	University of Leeds
25	University of Lincoln
26	University of Plymouth
27	University of Portsmouth
28	University of South Wales
29	University of Sunderland
30	University of Surrey
31	University of the Arts London
32	University of the West of Scotland
33	University of Warwick
34	City University London

Appendix 2: Visitors' survey results

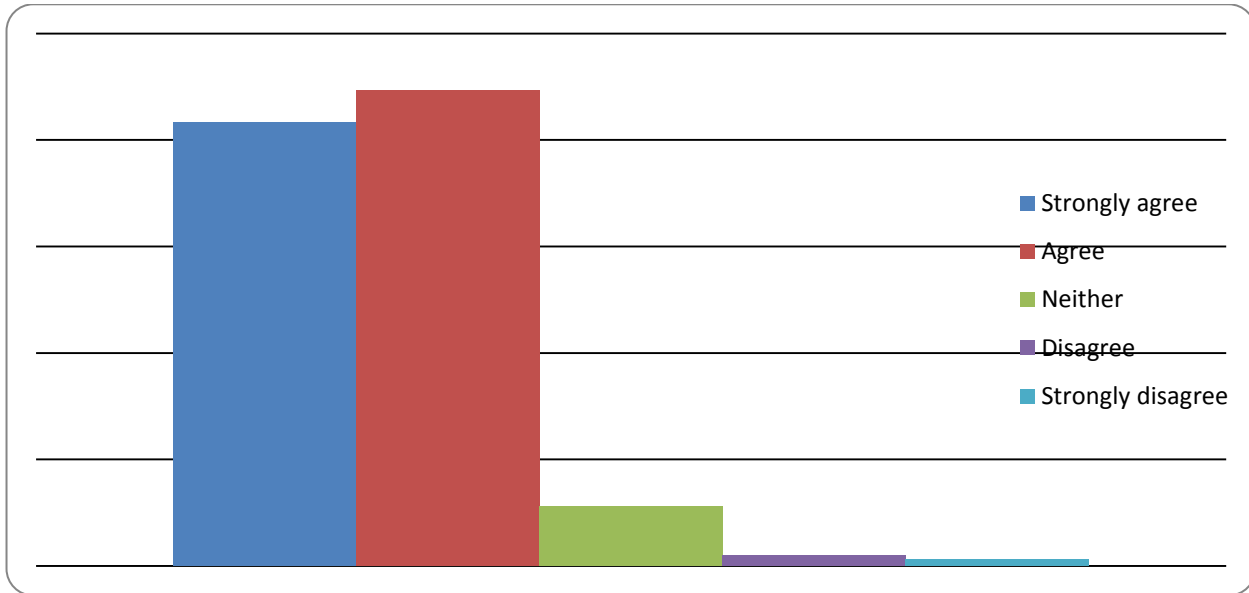
This event met my expectations



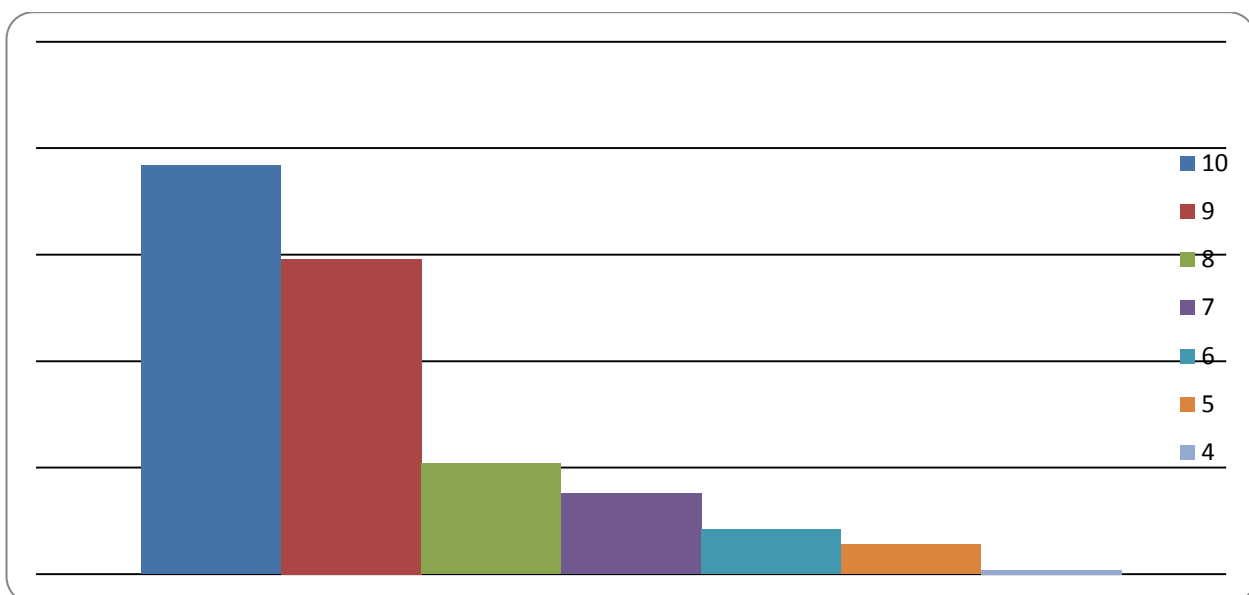
Overall, this was a high quality event



I have acquired new knowledge/or skills through this event/activity.

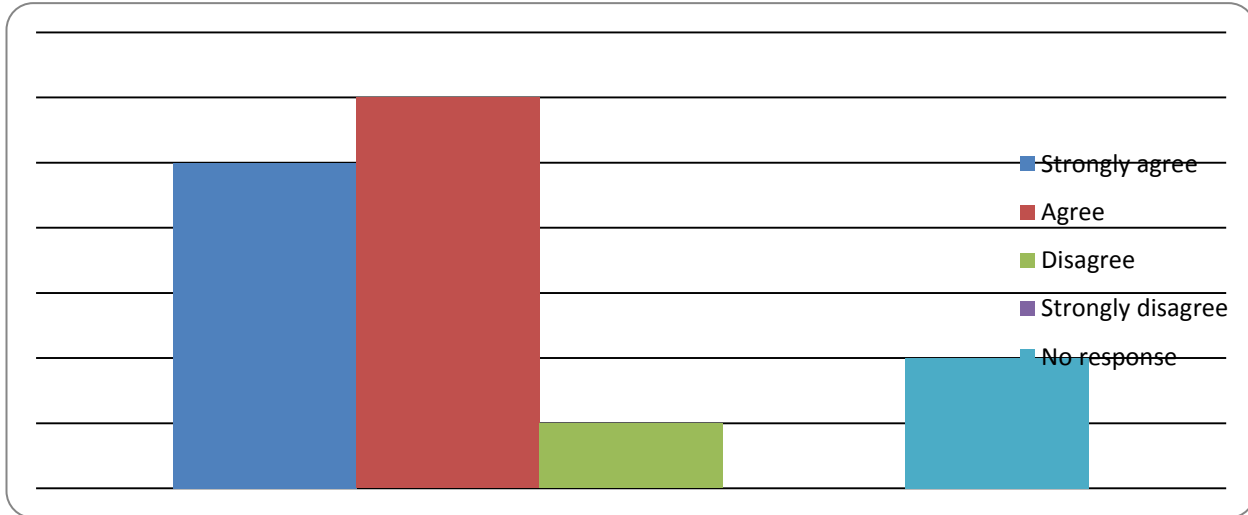


How likely are you to recommend the British Council to a colleague or a friend?

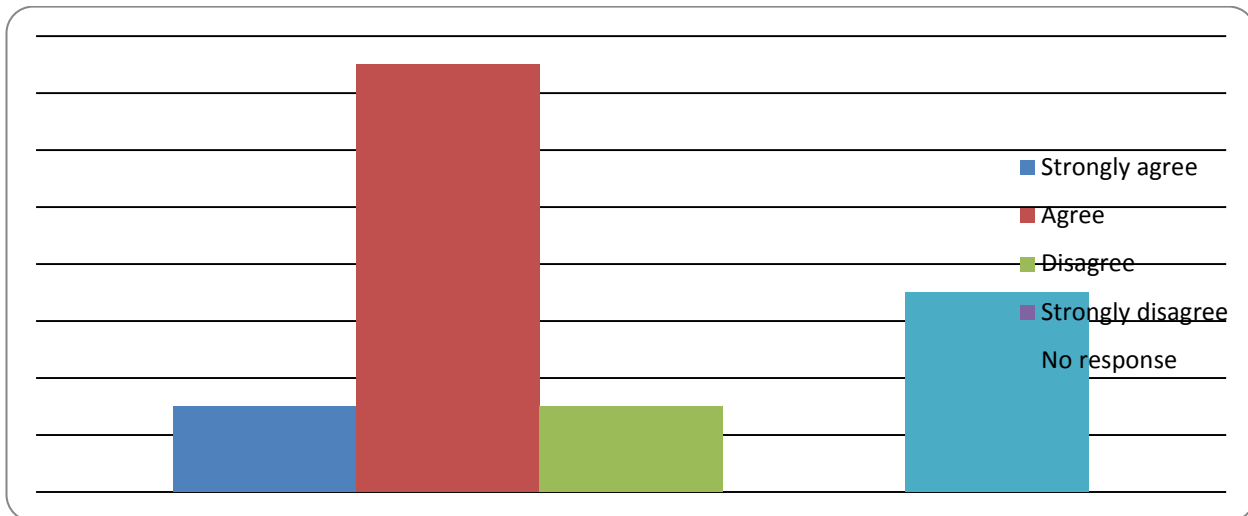


Appendix 3: Exhibitors' survey results

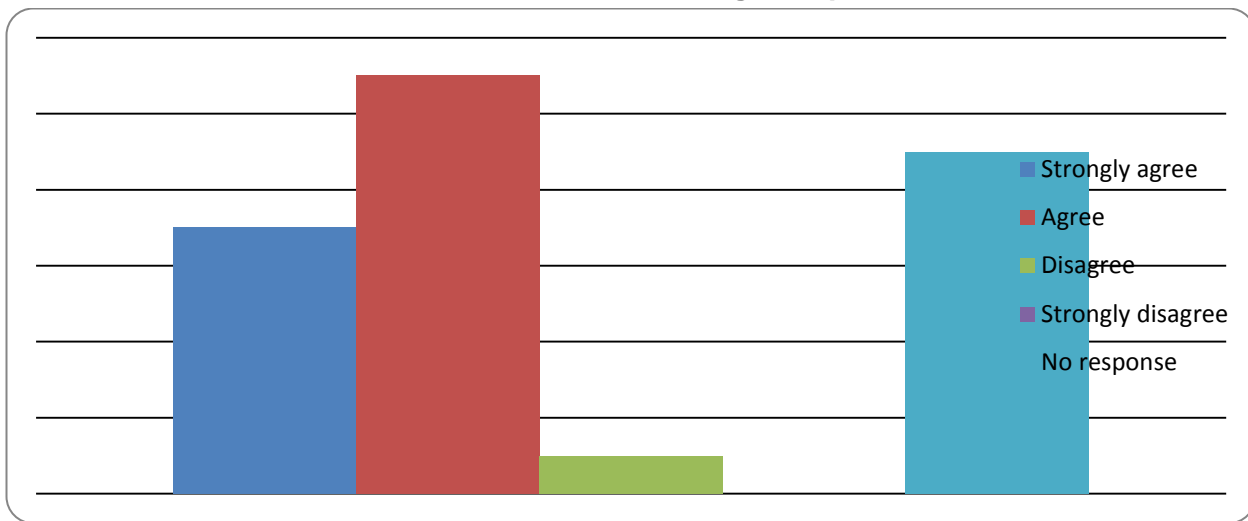
I received all the information and support that I needed before the event and in good time



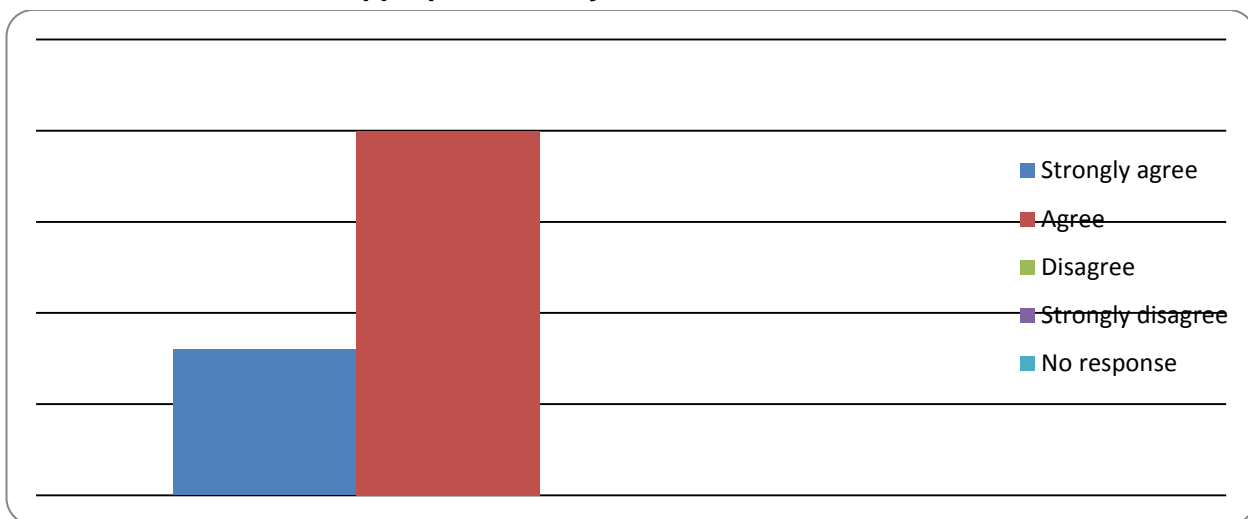
I found the pre-event briefing on September 29th informative



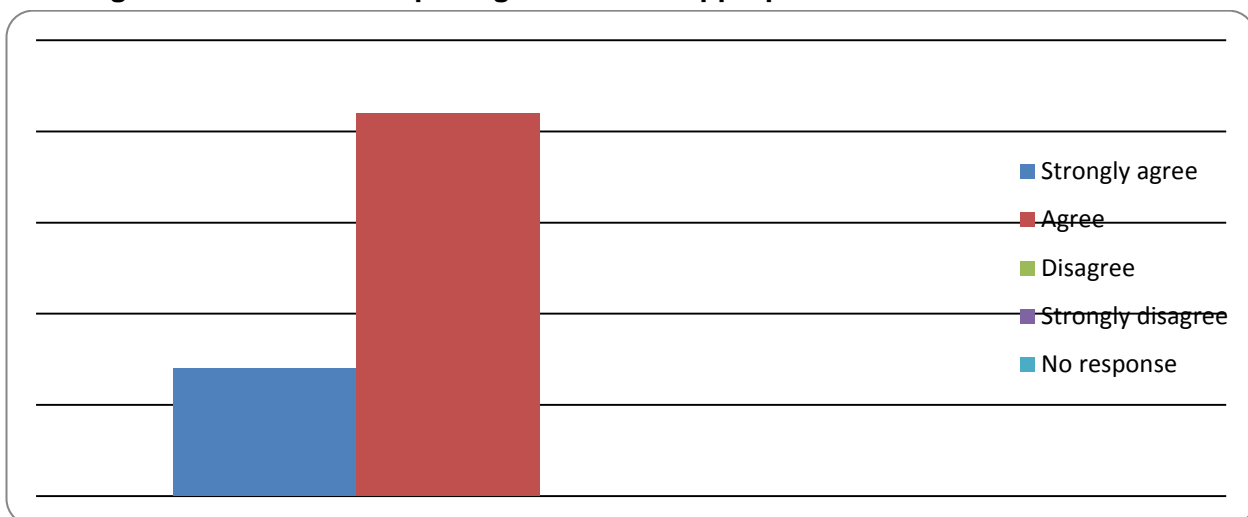
Please rate the value of the Education UK networking Reception



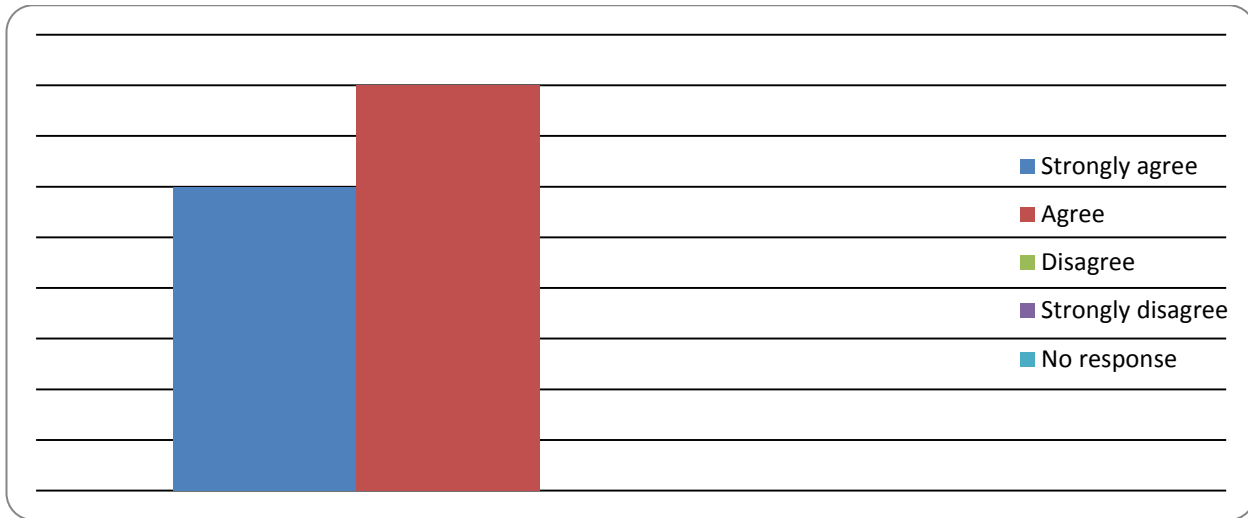
The exhibition date was appropriate for my institution



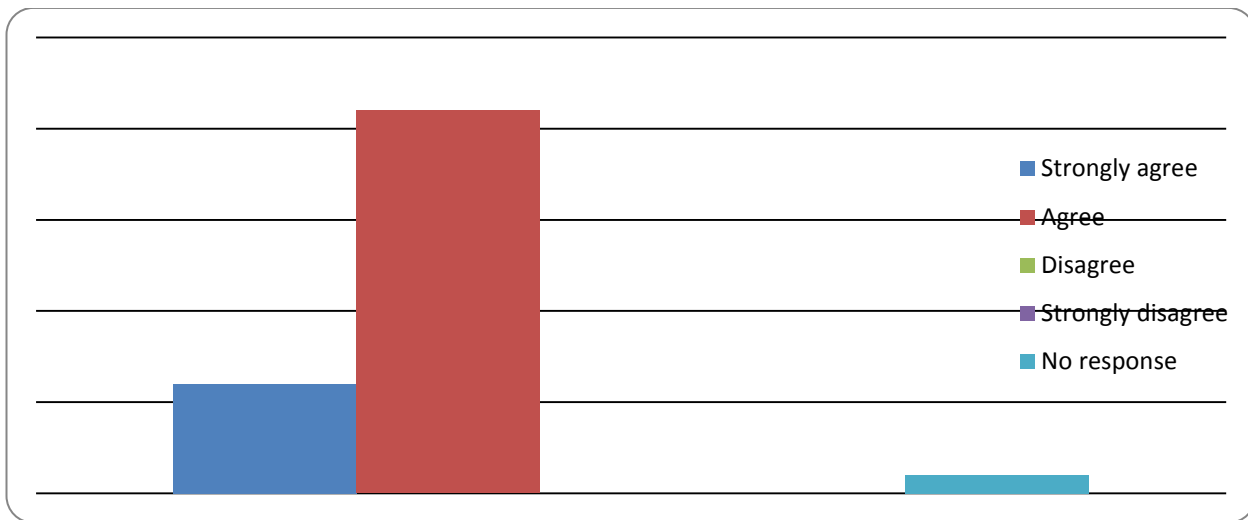
The length of the event and opening hours were appropriate



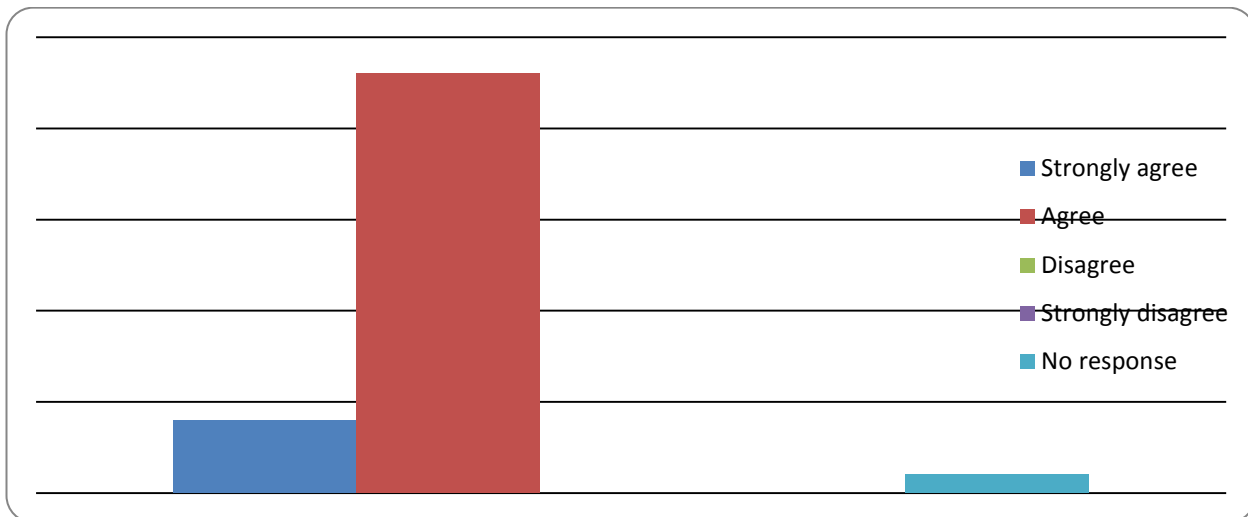
The exhibition venue was appropriate for the event



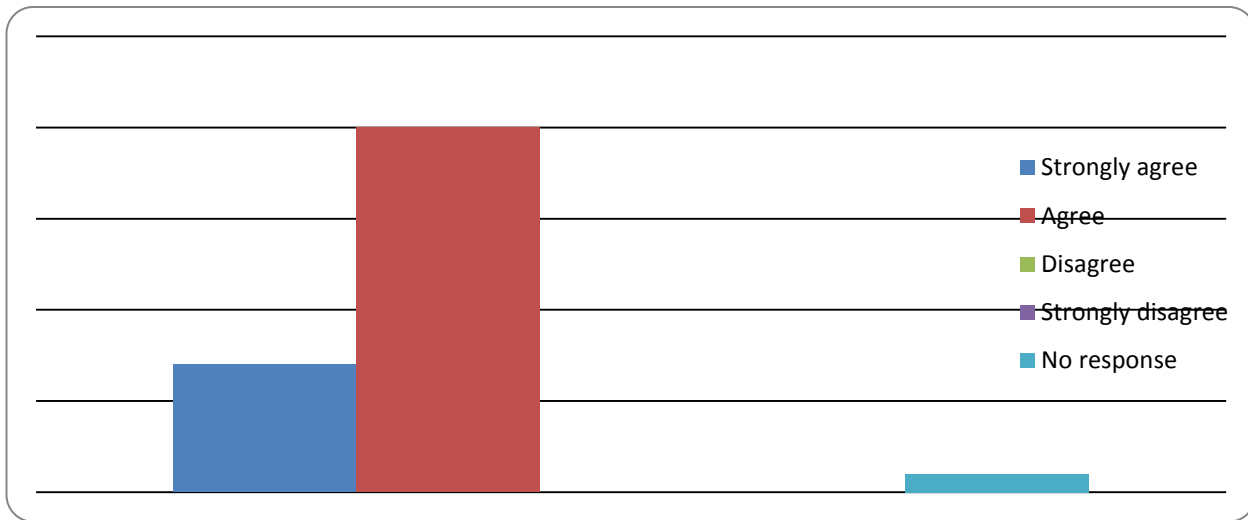
The stand and furniture were of good quality



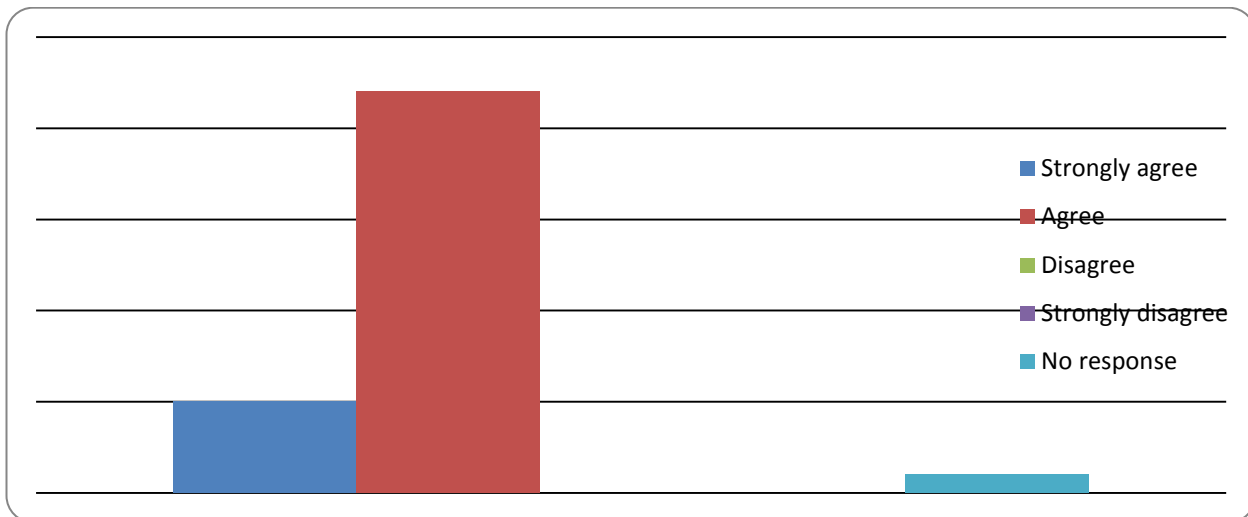
The enquiries were in good numbers and quality



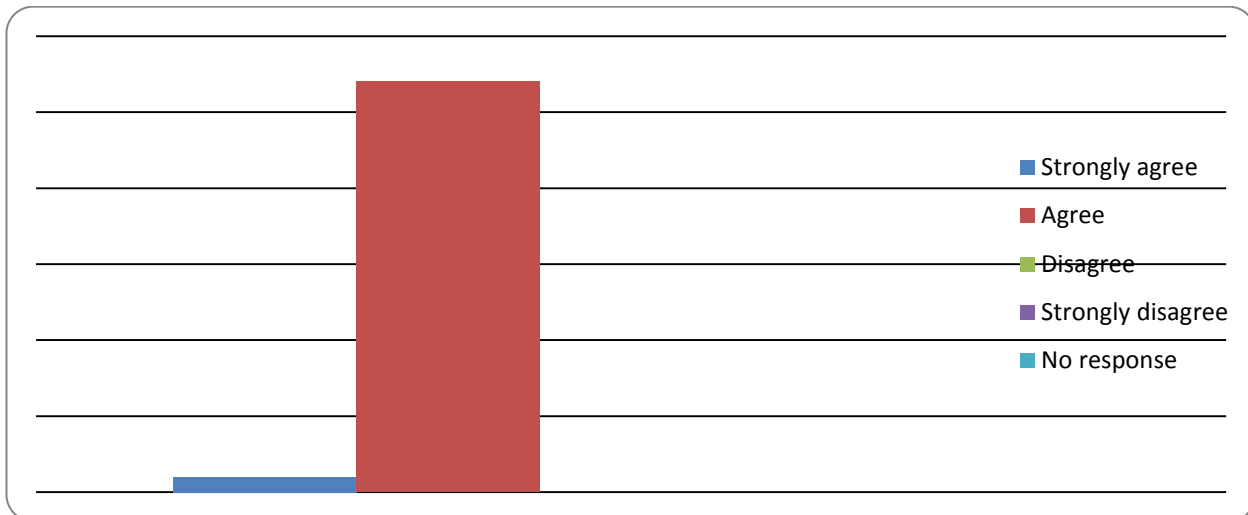
Please rate the quality of the hotel services (airport pick up, check-in arrangement, room service, etc.)



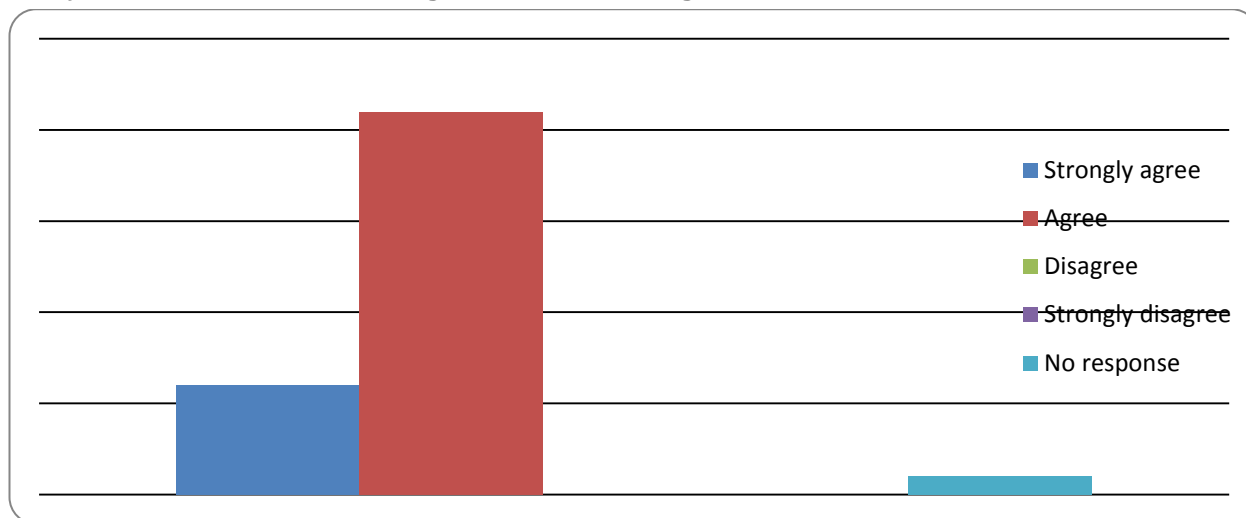
The event overall represented a good showcase for UK education in a professional environment



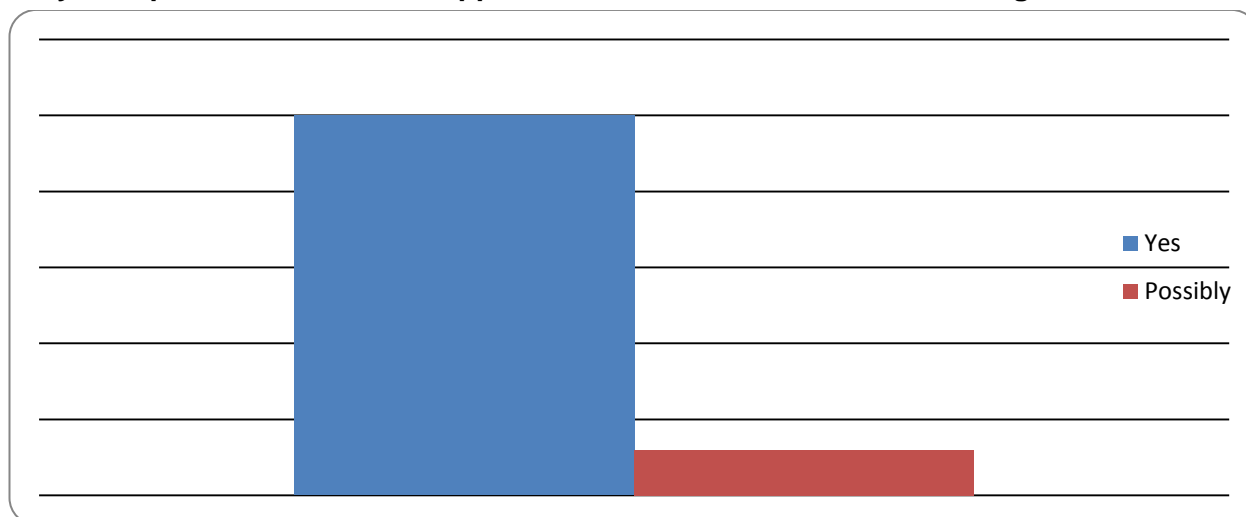
Do you think your participation was a worthwhile investment of time and money?



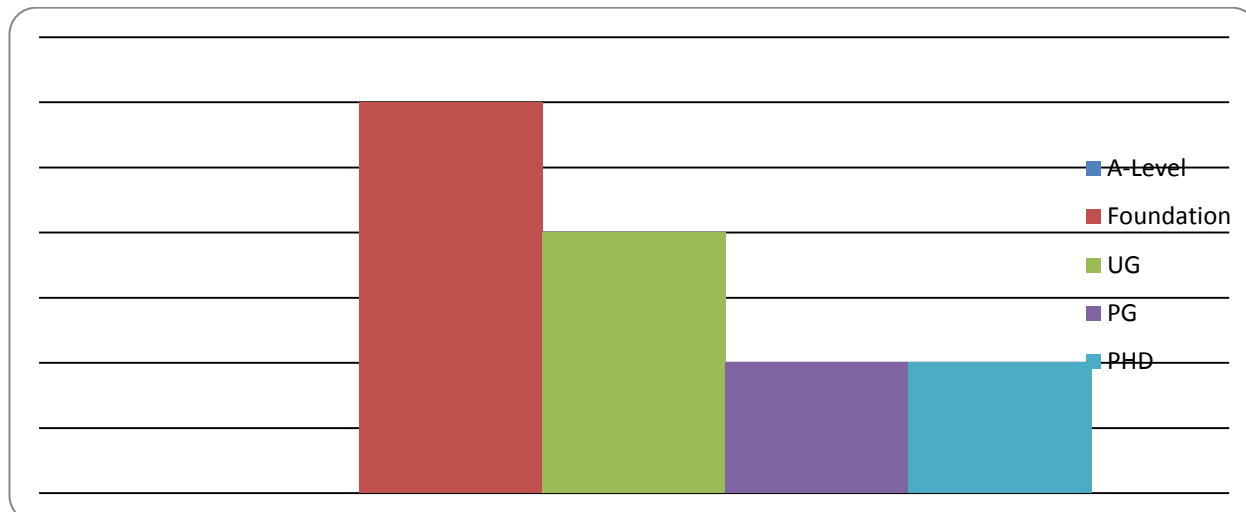
Are you interested in attending a similar event again?



Do you expect to have definite applications as a direct result of attending this event?

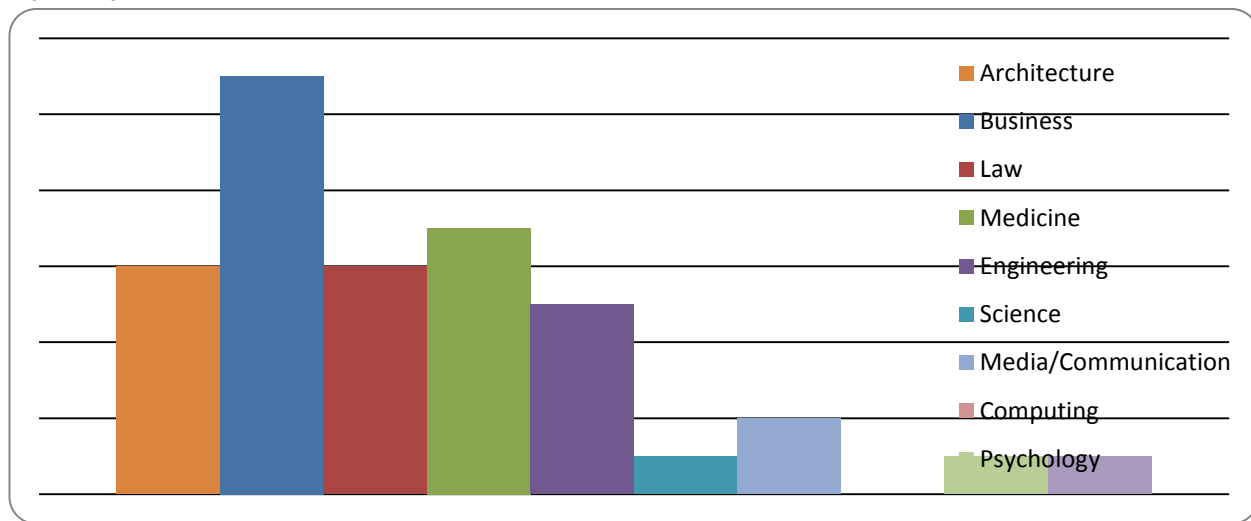


If yes, at what level and about how many?

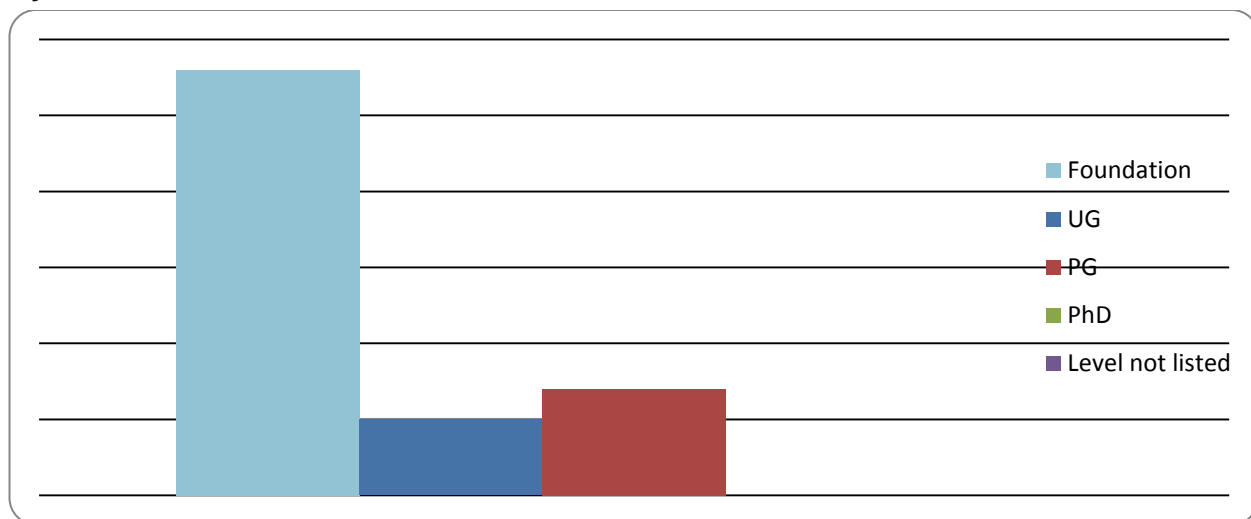


In which subjects and at what levels did you receive the most interest?

By Subject:



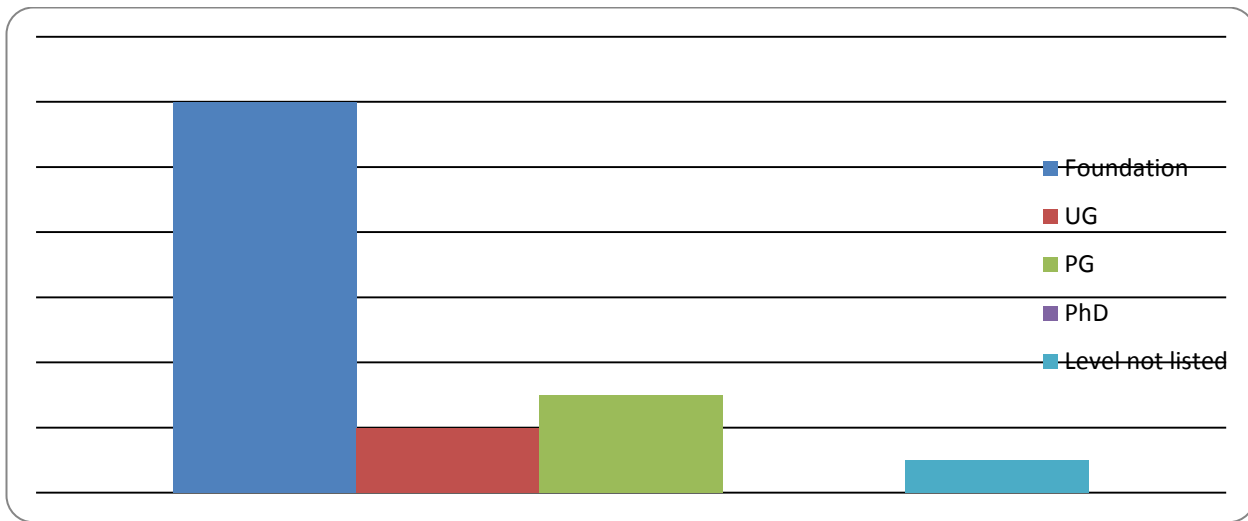
By Level:



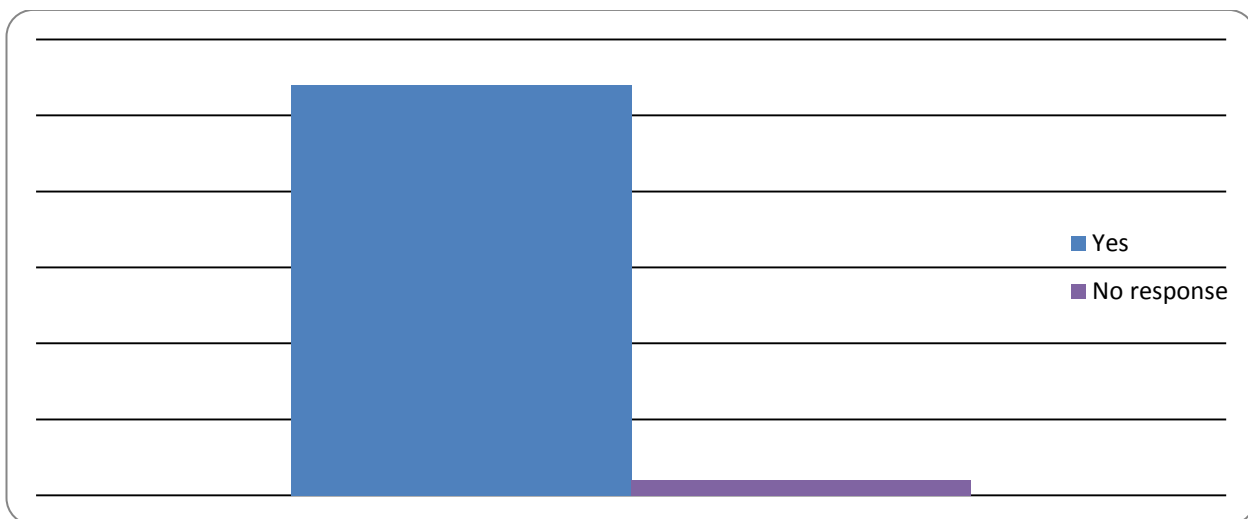
By subject and level:

	Foundation	UG	PG	PhD	listed
Architecture	4	0	2	0	0
Business	9	1	1	0	0
Law	4	1	1	0	0
Medicine	5	1	1	0	0
Engineering	4	1	0	0	0
Science	0	1	0	0	0
Media/Communication	1	0	1	0	0
Computing	0	0	0	0	0
Psychology	1	0	0	0	0
Interior design	0	0	1	0	0
Total	28	5	7	0	0

What do you feel is the biggest market potential for your institution in Bahrain?



Do you (or another representative from your institution) plan to return to Bahrain within the next twelve months?



Appendix 4: Advertising and promotion plan

Newspapers and Magazines	Circulation Figures
AlAyam (Arabic)	33,000 daily
AlWasat (Arabic)	30,000 daily
Gulf Daily News (English)	12,500 daily
Al Waseet (English/Arabic)	100,000 daily
Alwatan (Arabic)	27,500 daily
Akhbar Alkhaleej (Arabic)	35,000 daily
AlBilad (Arabic)	25,000 daily
Daily Tribune (English)	8,000 daily

Newspaper advertising:

Type	Media	Quantity/ Date
Newspapers size 15X2	Al Wasat (Daily/Arabic) (BD 210 per insertion)	2 advert + 1 FREE 29 October & 11 November
	Gulf Daily News (Daily/English) (BD 210 per insertion)	2 adverts 3 & 9 November
	Alayam Newspaper (Daily/Arabic) (178.5 BD per insertion)	2 advert + 1 FREE 29 October & 11 November
Al Waseet	Full colour Size 15 X 2	2 adverts 1 November & 8 November

Arabic and English press releases sent to all local newspapers and magazines pre and post the exhibition.

Press Releases:

- Arabic: Alayam, Alwasat, Akhbar Alkhaleej, Alwatan, AlBilad
- English: GDN, Daily Tribune
- AMEinfo.com website coverage: 14520 hits
- Trade Arabia website coverage: 1710 hits

Outdoor Advertising Details:

Advertising using on road lampposts

- 10 Hanging Lamp posts at 3 locations around Bahrain-
- Sheikh Khalifa Highway 2
- Adhari Highway 4
- Muharraq 4

Flyers and Posters:

2,500 flyers and 200 posters (Arabic & English) were distributed as follows:

2,500 flyers and 200 posters sent in person to:

Location	Number
Public Schools	33
Private Schools	46
Universities	20
UK Agents in Bahrain	6
Private institutes	10
Embassies	12
British Embassy	1
Banks	15

Invitations

- 400 invitations sent through mail.
- 200 distributed by hand for the opening ceremony

Bulk SMS

70000 SMS sent to British Council customers 4 days before the event on 2 rounds over 2 days in Arabic and English (10 days before the event and 28 September)

School visits

Letters sent to the Ministry of Education and to all public and private schools with secondary level/ grade 11-12in Bahrain to arrange for school visits during the morning session of the 30 September.

E-Campaign

The event was advertised on the following websites using the e-banner with a description about the exhibition and the list of exhibiting institutes.

- British Council- Bahrain
- British Embassy Facebook
- UK Agents Websites
- British Council Twitter Account
- Instagram

E-invitations

- 20000 e-invitations to British Council contacts on 2 rounds (10 days before the event and 28 September)
- E-invitation mailed to BC IELTS Saudi contact database