



Designing your own future

Education UK Virtual Exhibition 2013

28 November - 07 December

Post event report

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1. ABOUT VIRTUAL EXHIBITION 2013

Despite the rising costs of education and certain visa restrictions on post-work study, the country's students still see the UK as a preferred destination for academics. Pakistan remains an important and rewarding market for UK education institutes.

Given the current security environment in the country however, it has become challenging to hold physical exhibitions. With a rapid increase in the number of Internet users and Internet Service Providers, virtual exhibitions therefore have a role in developing a flexible, sustainable approach that is appropriate to the unique operating context in Pakistan.

The British Council inaugurated the fourth Virtual Exhibition 2013 under its Education UK (EUK) programme. Guiding Pakistani students towards educational opportunities that may be available for them in the UK, the Virtual Exhibition through an interactive online platform has been reaching out to thousands of potential students for the last four years.

The best part about the Virtual Exhibition 2013 is that interested students and their parents can log in from their computer anytime and anywhere from 28 November to 7 December 2013 to take part.

Tony Jones, Deputy Country Director and Director Programmes, said *"The UK is still the most preferred destination of Pakistanis when it comes to a foreign education experience and each year 10,000 students from Pakistan opt to enrol in UK institutions."*

Ottolie Wekezer, Regional Director (SIEM) British Council, South Asia said, *"The British council's virtual fair in Pakistan provides local students with a fantastic opportunity to engage in real – time with some of the UK's world class universities."*

Last year, over 6,800 visits were made to the www.eukvirtualexhibition.com.pk over a course of two weeks – this year a much higher volume is anticipated. The exhibition includes live chat sessions with not only UK university representatives but also with the British Council's expert IELTS team to advise prospective students.

According to QS World University Rankings 2013/14, four of the top six universities in the world are in the UK and graduates from UK universities are among the most employable. Meanwhile, in the new Higher Education Academy Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey, an outstanding 93 per cent of UK postgraduate students rated the quality of UK universities teaching positively.

Education UK has been striving to provide opportunities to UK institutions and aspiring students in Pakistan to connect with each other. This Virtual Exhibition is one of the many activities the British Council has devised for this purpose and engaged and trained over 300 Student Ambassadors to support fellow students during the exhibition."

Virtual Exhibition 2013 Launch Ceremony held in Lahore



Left to right:

Raja Jawad, Marketing Consultant, Marcomms

Ottolie Wekezer, Regional Director (SIEM) British Council, South Asia

Tony Jones, Deputy Country Director & Director Programmes, British Council Pakistan

Shahid Zaman, Additional Secretary (P&G), Higher Education Department, Punjab

Chief Guest, Honourable **Rana Mashood Ahmad Khan**, Minister Education, Punjab

Ayesha Zaheer, Education UK Manager, Punjab

Madiha Noori, Project Coordinator, Education UK

Maharoop Sheri, Education UK Manager, Sindh & Balochistan

2. PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

The Exhibitors in 2013 were 22 UK institutions with IELTS Pakistan also participating.

List of Exhibitors as below:

IELTS Pakistan	Swansea University
Anglia Ruskin University	The University of Manchester
Birmingham City University	UCL (University College London)
Brunel University	University Of Bradford
Canterbury Christ Church University	University of Central Lancashire
King's College London	University of East Anglia
Manchester Metropolitan University	University Of Exeter
University Of Gloucestershire	University of Reading
University of Hull	University Of South Wales
University of Kent	University of Surrey
University of Leeds	University Of Sussex
University of the Highlands and Islands	

3. KEY STATISTICS

Year	Year 2010	Year 2011	Year 2012	Year 2013
Website	www.eukvirtualexhibition.com.pk			
Duration	22 Nov - 4 Dec	21 Nov - 30 Nov	28 Nov - 7 Dec	28 Nov - 7 Dec
No. of Exhibitors	45 UK Institutions	38 UK Institutions	32 UK Institutions	22 UK Institutions
Unique Visitors	12,773	20,001	6,867	7,864
Active users (registered visitors who actively engaged with content of the platform via downloading information/offline query/online chat)	2,391	2,347	2,982	2,825
Chat sessions held	566 hours	674 hours	727 hours	496 hours
Visitors origin (Number of cities covered)	Over 15 cities	Over 15 cities	Over 25 cities	Over 50 cities
Offline queries answered	1039 answered out of 1450	189 answered out of 274	372 answered out of 438	282 answered out of 364

4. REGISTERED VISITORS ANALYSIS

The target participants for this exhibition were students, counsellors, parents and professionals.

A visitor was required to 'register' so as to engage with the UK Institutes using this platform. Once registered, the visitor could avail the interactive features of the website to view the micro page of a UK institute, drop an 'Offline query' or engage in 'Online chat'.

The analysis provided in this section relates to a total of 7,864 registered users and 2,827 users who actively engaged through Offline queries or online chat sessions during this exhibition.

4.1 Number of registered users by gender

Out of the total registered users there has been an increase in female users in 2013; 40 per cent were female whereas 60 per cent were male. As a comparison to 2012, the observed percentage of female users was 32 and 68 male users.

4.2 Number of registered users by location

The highest numbers of registered users – more than 27 per cent were from Islamabad.

The Exhibition reached to over 50 cities nationwide in 2013, the highest number of cities reached in a single year compared to 25 cities in 2012 and 15 cities in 2010 and 2011.

Other than the 10 major cities of Pakistan, an encouraging number of visitors from other cities and towns other than the major cities of Pakistan were:

1. Abbottabad	16. Hidd	31. Murree
2. Argil	17. Hingora	32. Muzaffarabad
3. Attock	18. Hunza	33. Pano Aqil
4. Bahawalpur	19. Hyderabad	34. Peshawar
5. Bannu	20. Jacobabad	35. Qila Deddar Singh
6. Chakwal	21. Jhelum	36. Rahim Yar Khan
7. Chistian	22. Jauharabad	37. Ranipur
8. Dera Ghazi khan	23. Kahrora Pakka, Lodhran	38. Rawalakot
9. Faisalabad	24. Kahuta	39. Sarai-alam-gir
10. Gambat	25. Kambar	40. Sargodha
11. Ghotki	26. Kot Addu	41. Skardu
12. Gilgit	27. Kotli, Azad Kashmir	42. Talagang
13. Gujrat	28. Mardan	43. Turin
14. Hafizabad	29. Mirpur, Azad Kashmir	44. Wah Cantt
15. Haripur	30. Multan	

Location

Jan 7, 2013

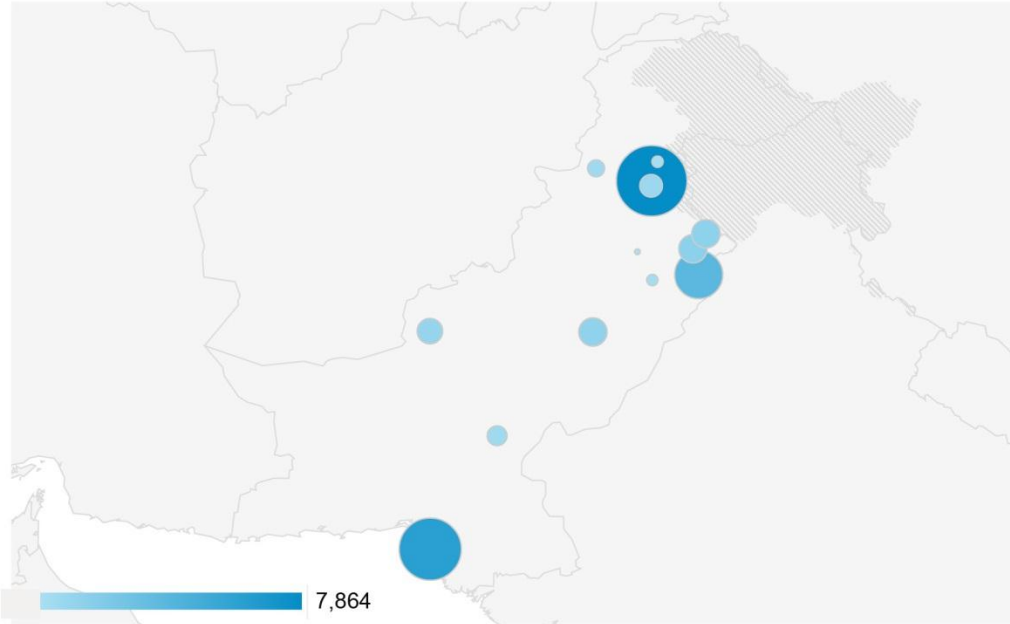
ALL » COUNTRY / TERRITORY: Pakistan



Map Overlay

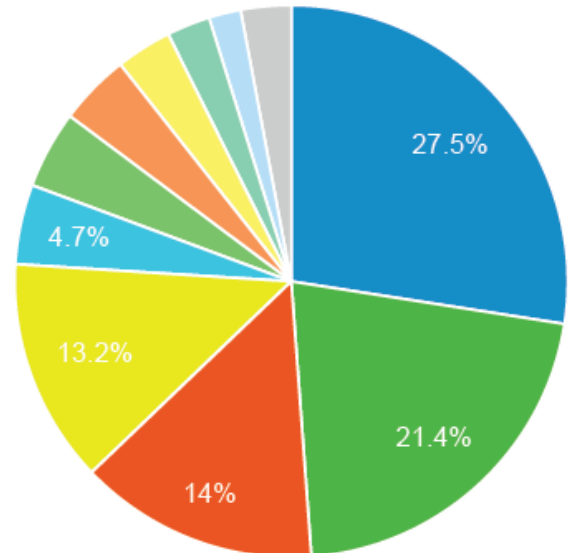
Summary

Nov 28, 2013 - Dec 7, 2013

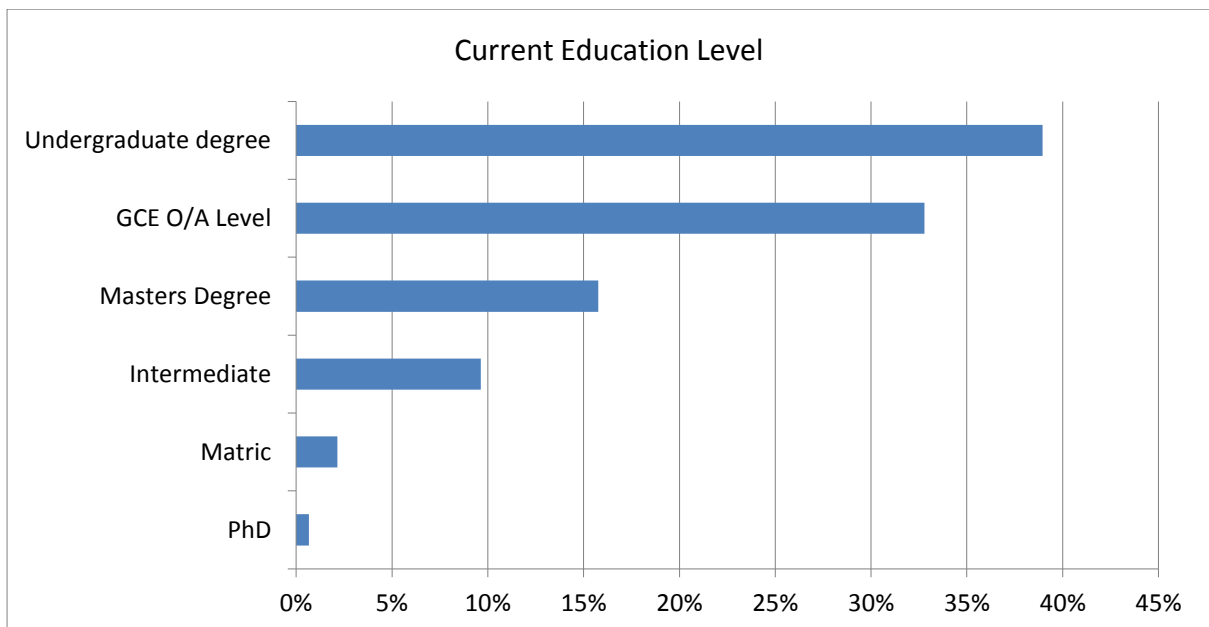
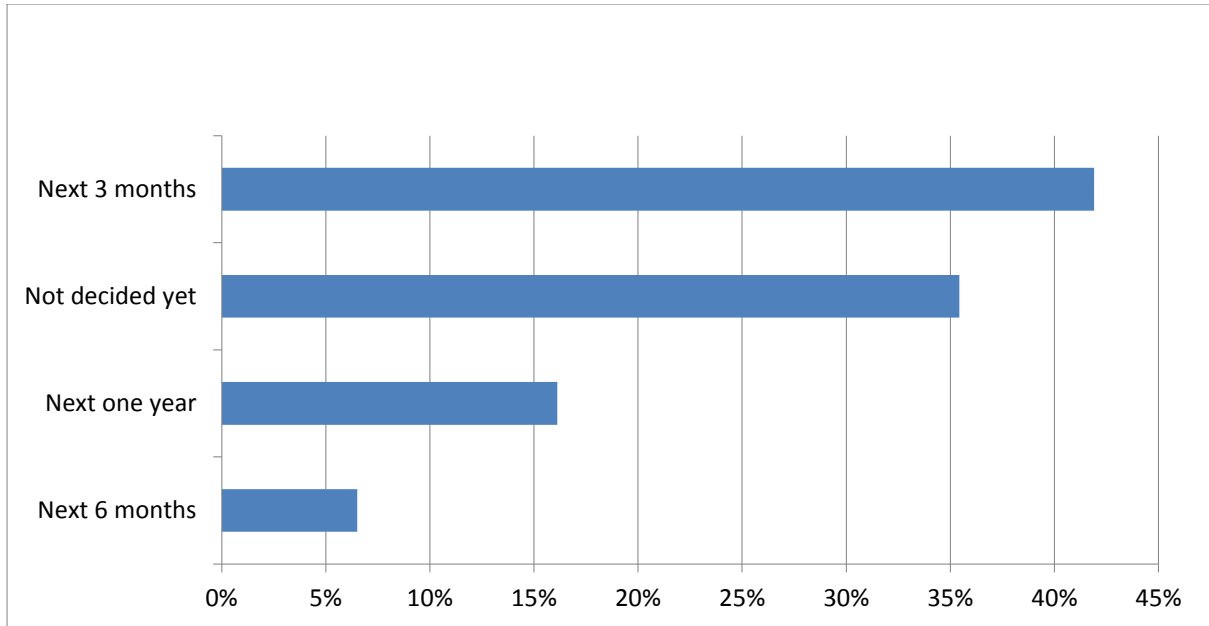


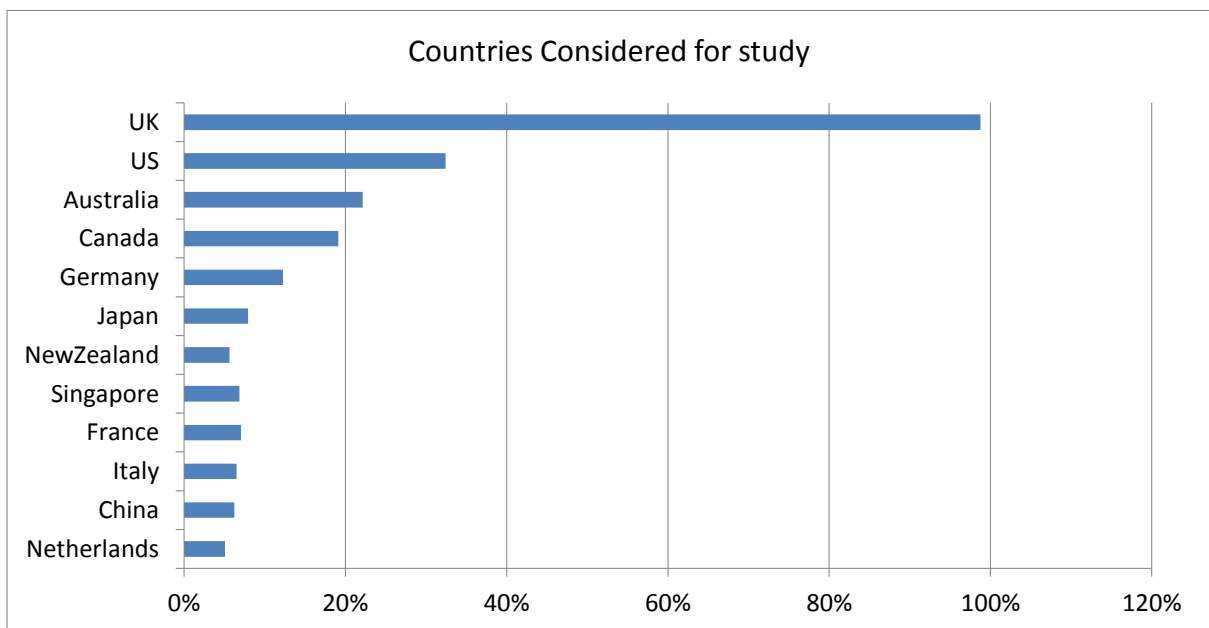
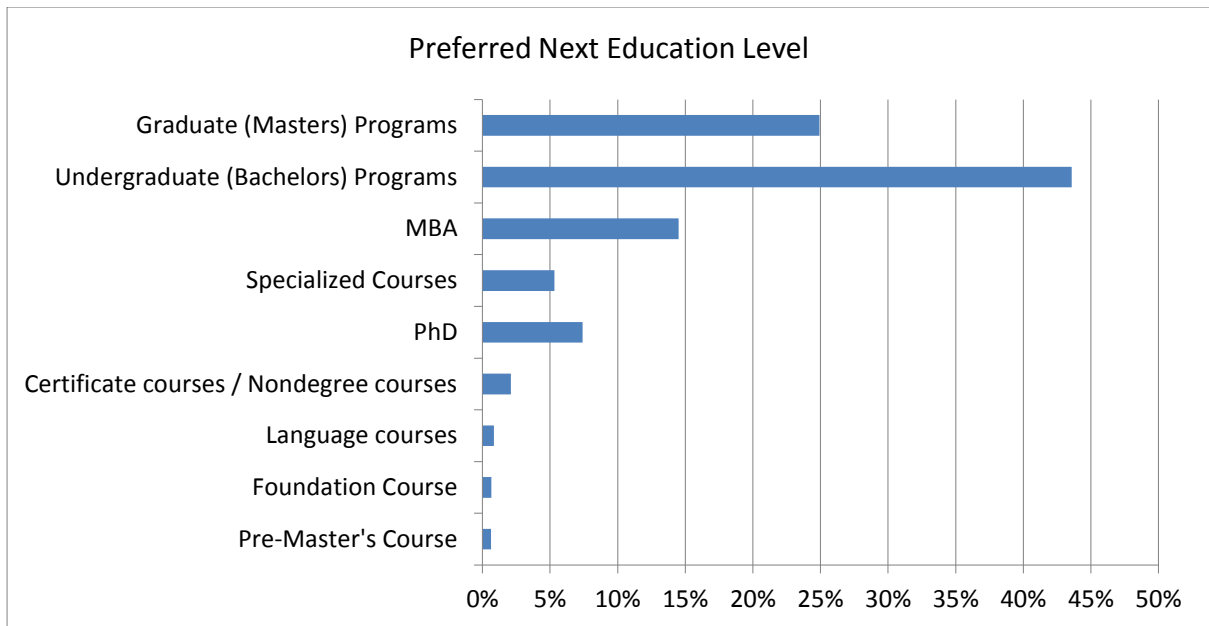
City	Visits	Visits
	4,220 % of Total: 71.95% (7,864)	4,220 % of Total: 71.95% (7,864)
1. Islamabad	1,159	27.46%
2. Karachi	902	21.37%
3. Lahore	591	14.00%
4. Gujranwala	555	13.15%
5. Faisalabad	197	4.67%
6. Sialkot	192	4.55%
7. Multan	176	4.17%
8. Quetta	138	3.27%
9. Rawalpindi	107	2.54%
10. Sukkur	79	1.87%

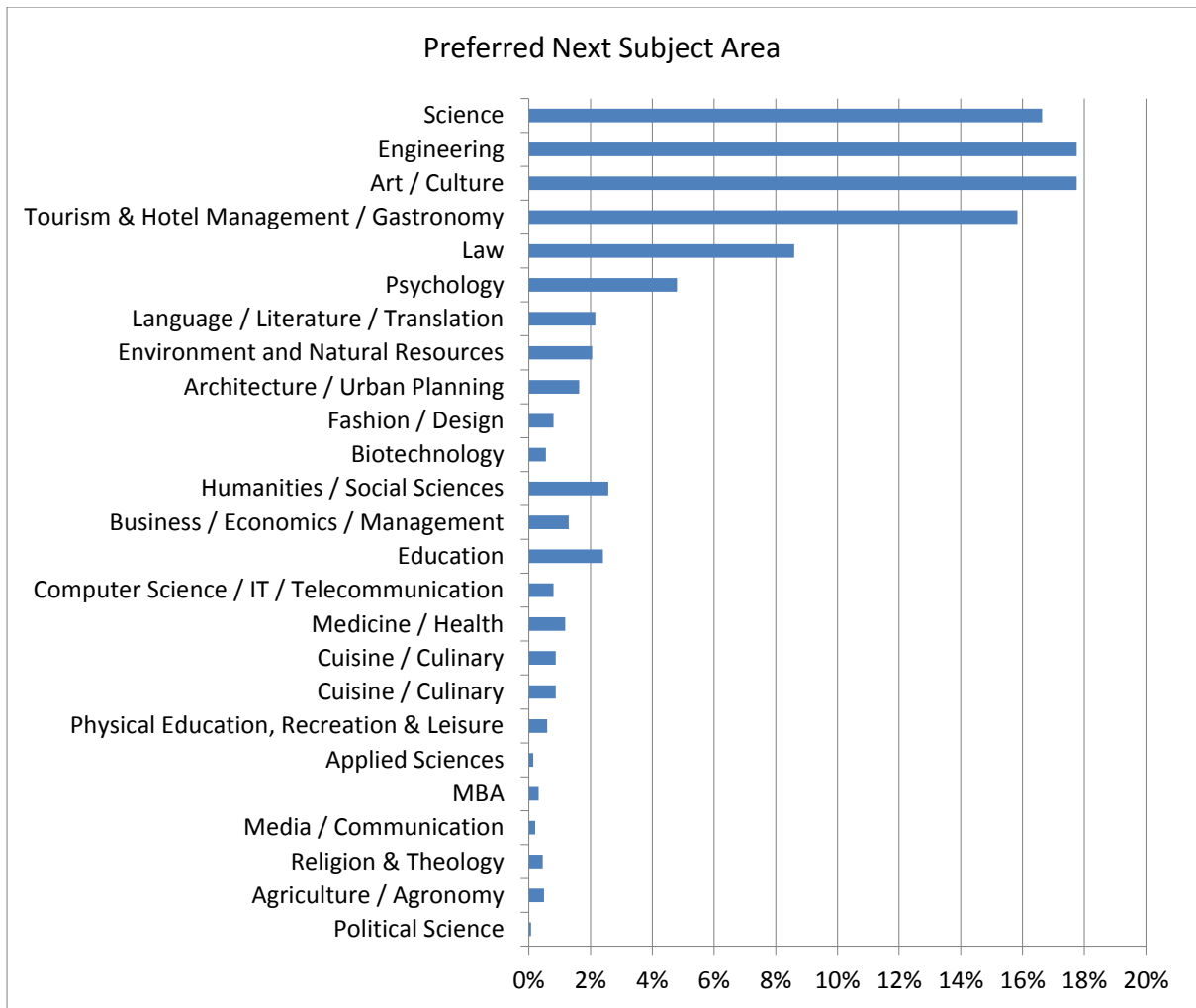
Contribution to total: Visits



Following are a series of graphs depicting data gathered from registered users:







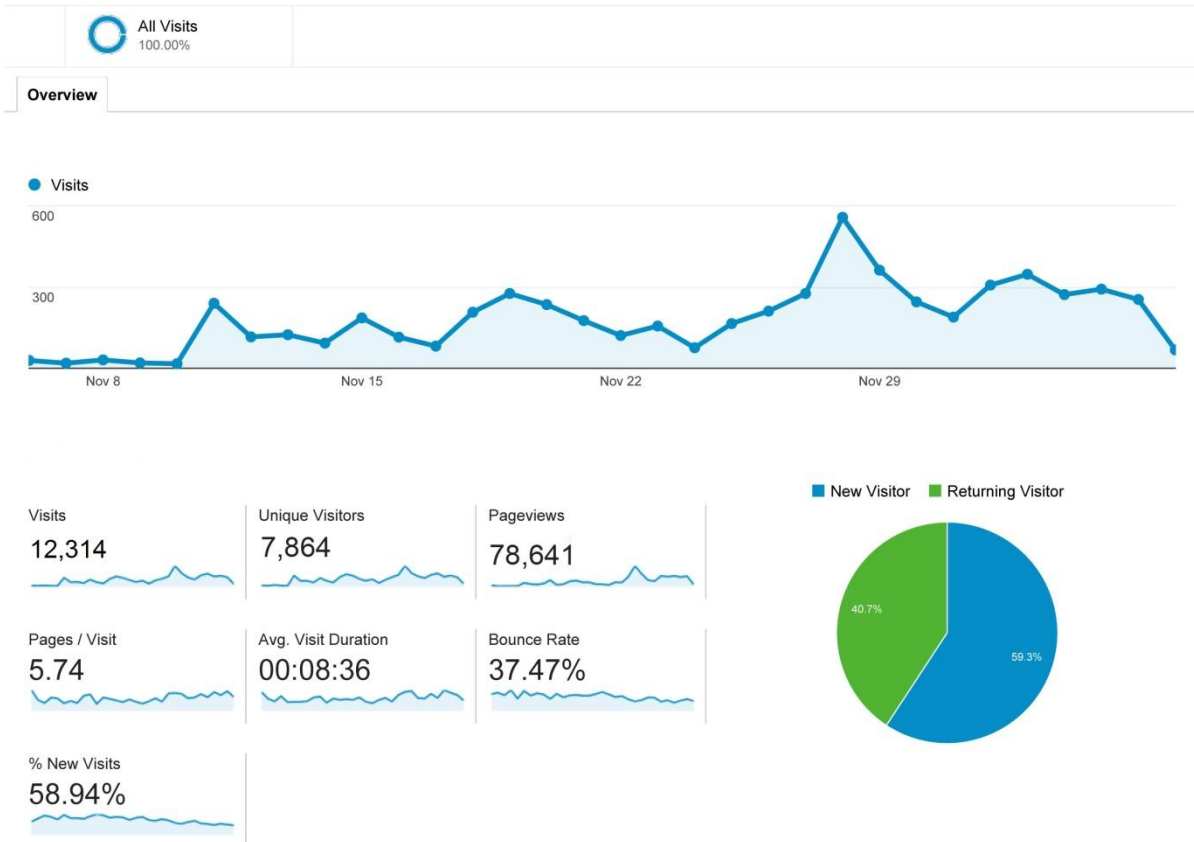
5. ANALYTICS OF VE 2013 PLATFORM

A total of 12,314 visitors clicked onto www.eukvirtualexhibition.com.pk

Out of these, the unique visitors were 7,864 in 2013 compared to 6,867 in 2012.

Audience Overview

Nov 28, 2013 - Dec 7, 2013



A comparison of Virtual Exhibition of 2013 and 2012 is as below:

The below graphics show that there was a 19.52 per cent increase in visitors in the Virtual Exhibition of 2013 as compared to 2012.

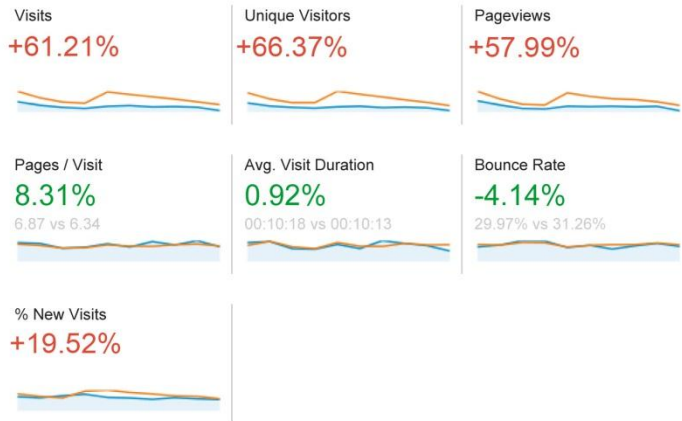
Audience Overview

Nov 28, 2013 - Dec 7, 2013
Compare to: Nov 28, 2012 - Dec 7, 2012



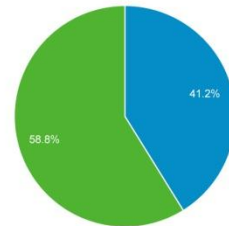
Overview

Nov 28, 2013 - Dec 7, 2013: Visits
Nov 28, 2012 - Dec 7, 2012: Visits

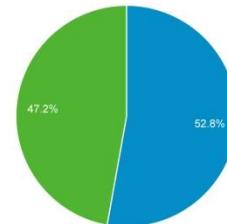


Returning Visitor (Blue) | New Visitor (Green)

Nov 28, 2013 - Dec 7, 2013



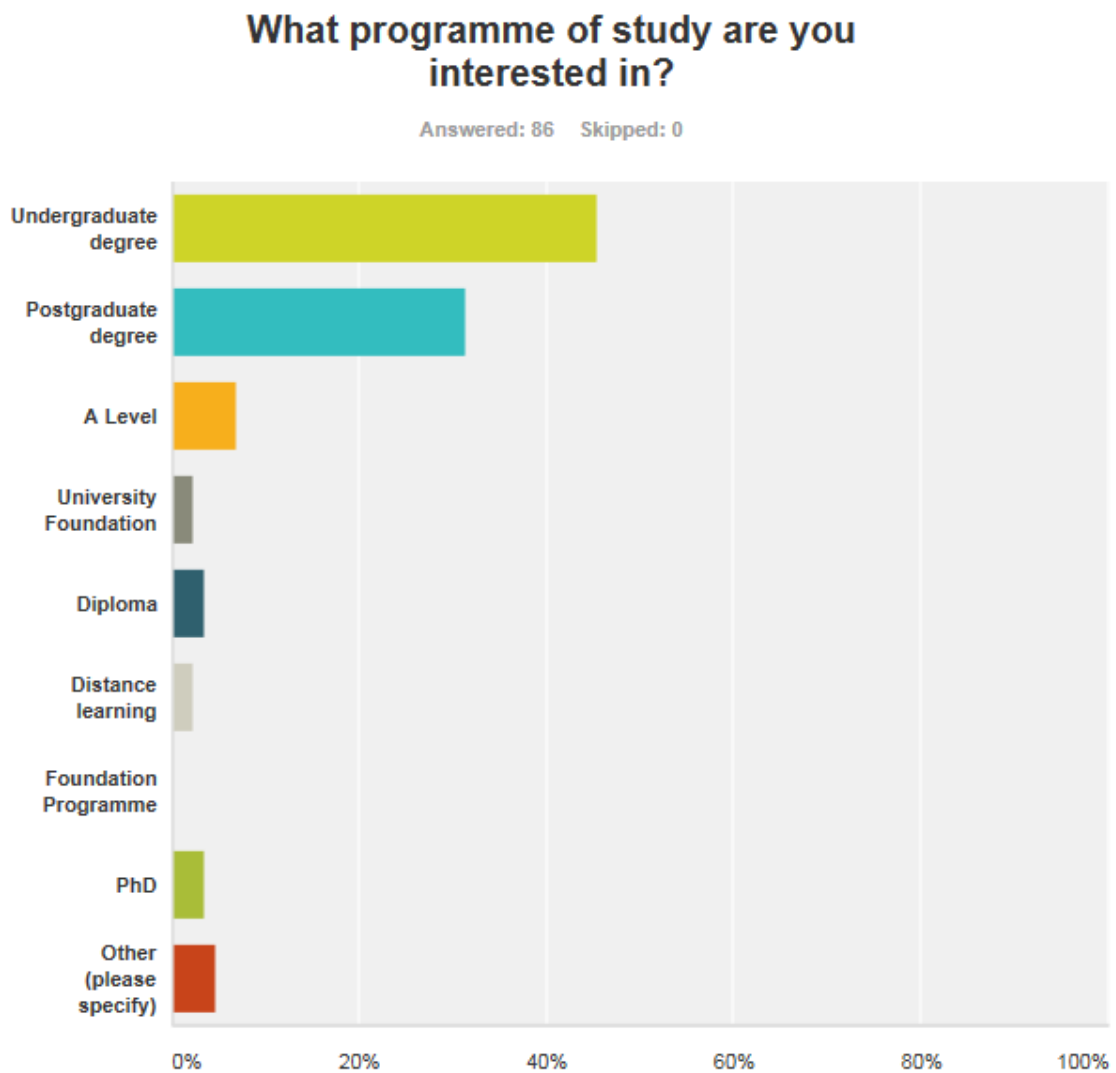
Nov 28, 2012 - Dec 7, 2012



6. FEEDBACK SURVEY ANALYSIS

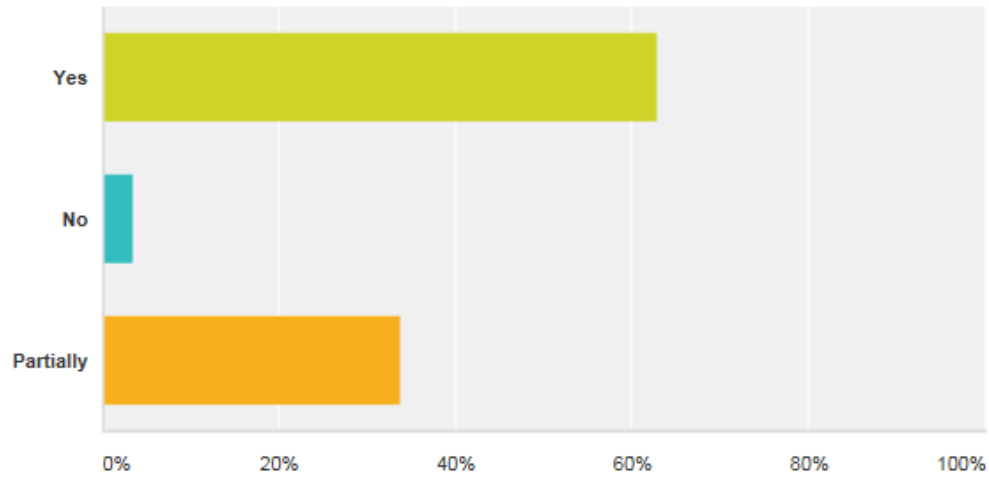
6.1 Visitors survey

All registered users were asked to fill out a post-event survey form; a total of 86 registered visitors filled out the online document online. The series of charts that follow below show feedback obtained from these visitors:



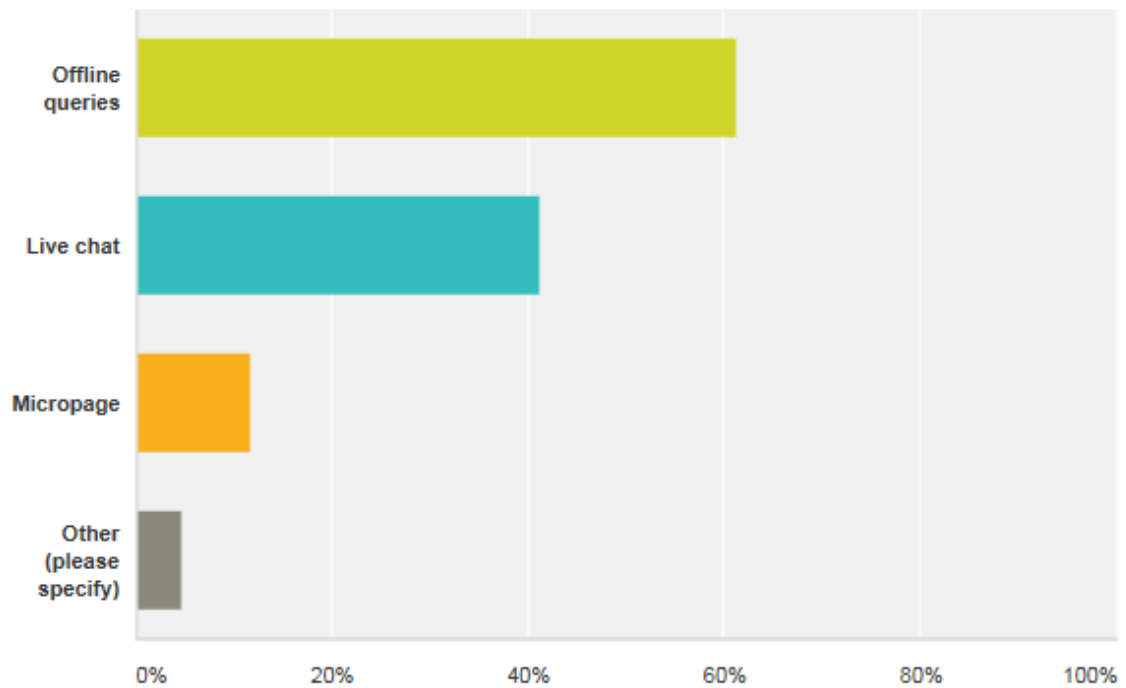
Through the Virtual Exhibition, did you get relevant information on the course that you were seeking?

Answered: 86 Skipped: 0



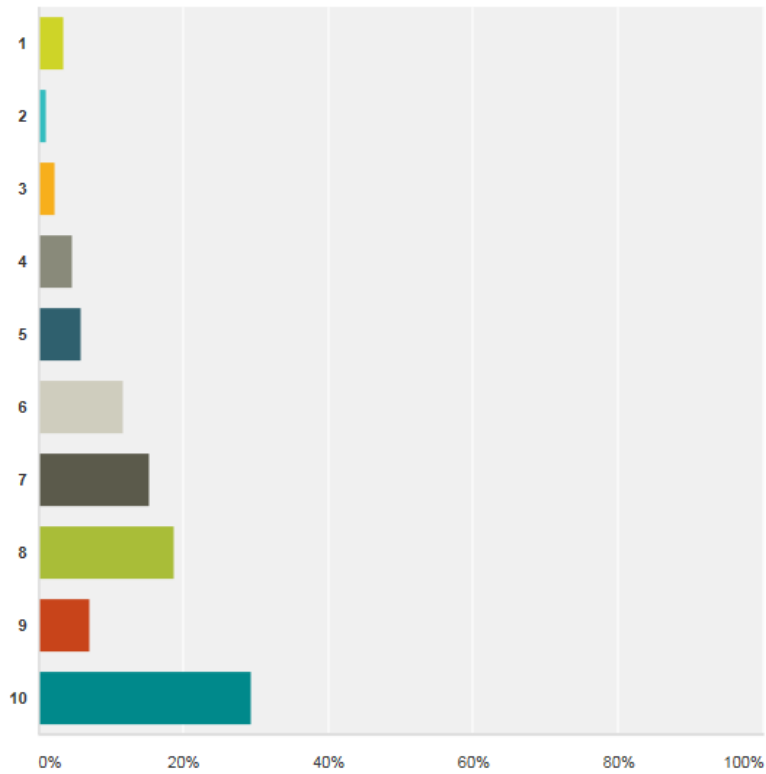
How were you queries answered?

Answered: 85 Skipped: 1



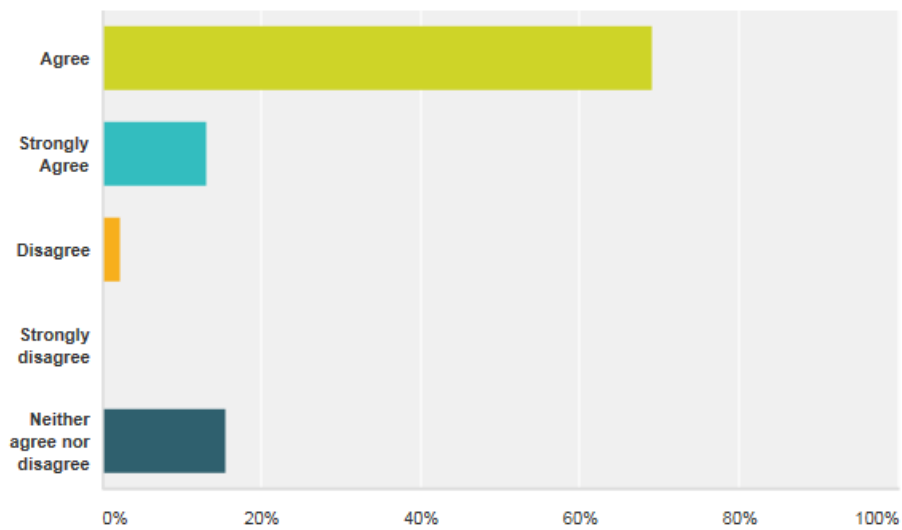
How likely is it that you would recommend British Council to a friend or colleague?

Answered: 85 Skipped: 1



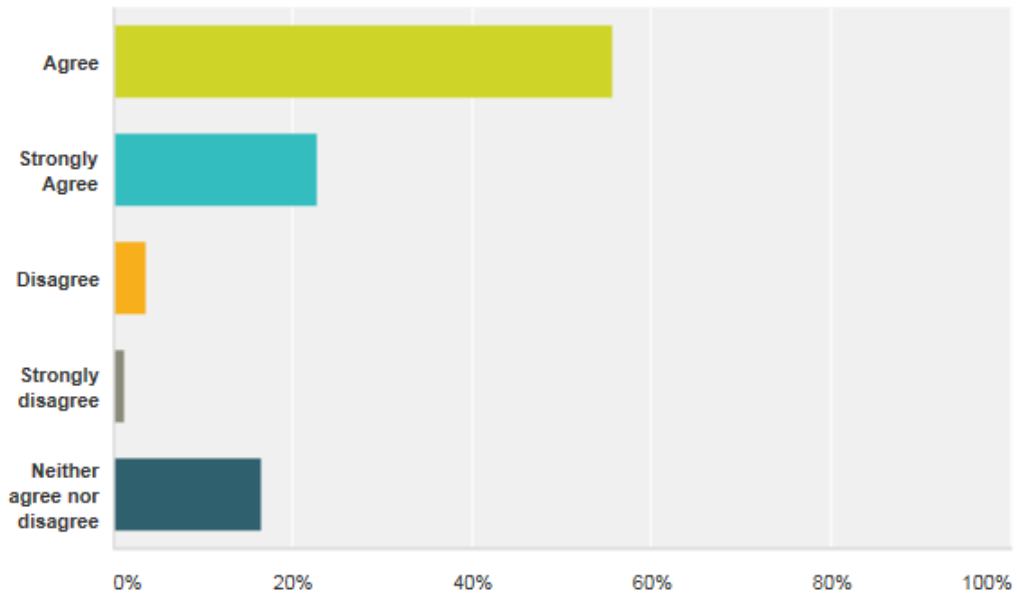
The Virtual Exhibition met my expectations?

Answered: 84 Skipped: 2



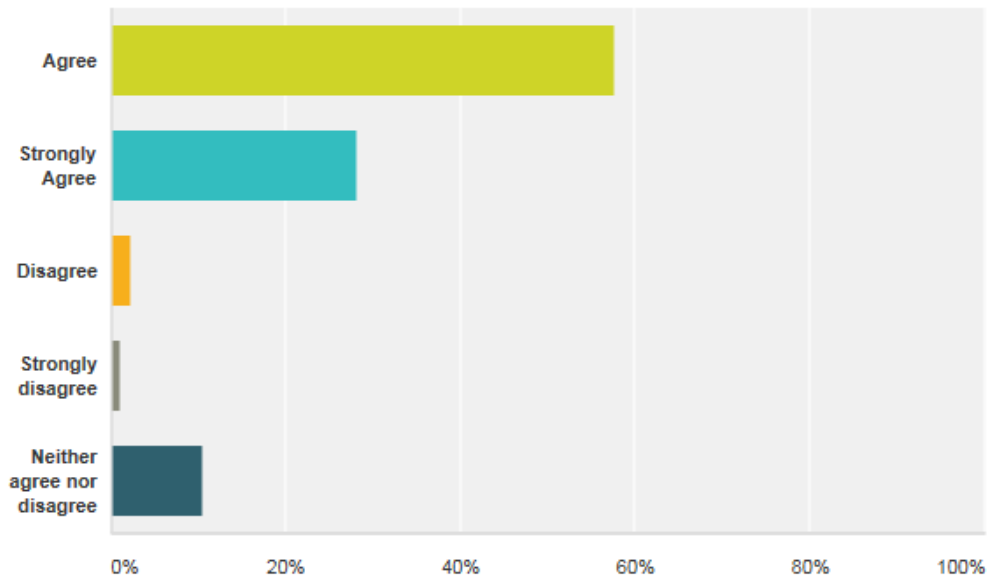
Overall, was the Virtual Exhibition a high quality event?

Answered: 79 Skipped: 7



The British Council is among the leading organizations in its field?

Answered: 85 Skipped: 1



Some comments from our visitors:

"It should be for a much longer period, plus the layout of the chat should be changed, including the speed of posting a query on chat session."

"Maintain the quality and increase their network as well."

"More days for virtual exhibition rather than a week"

"Many of the students want to get more and more about the Virtual Exhibition, the educational ambassadors should arrange seminars in the educational institutes and as well as in the other areas"

"Add some video interaction with the university coordinators"

"Job well done!"

"Involve the students as more as British council can"

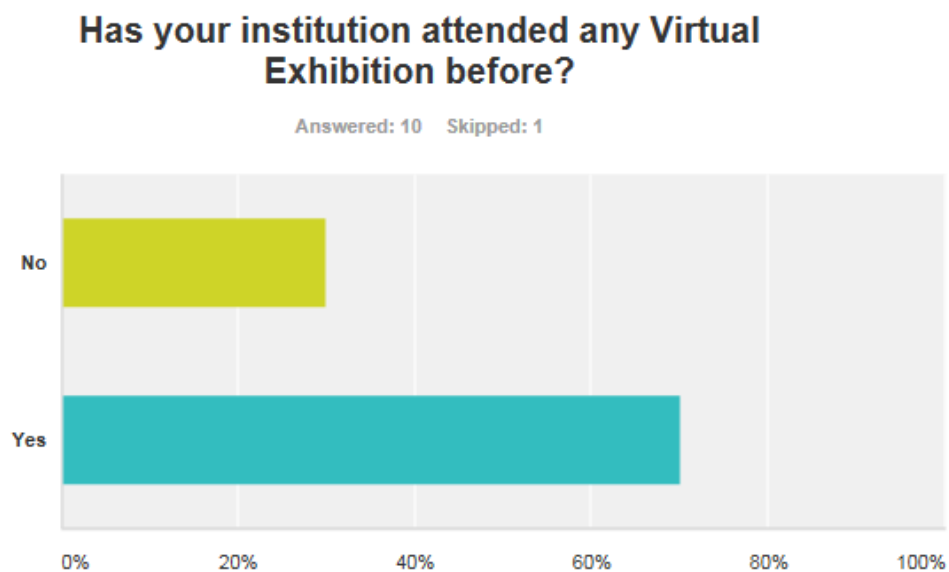
"Show offline line chat whole year so that student take guide any time as I was busy during live chat and now I want to collect information from others queries".

"Please increase number of correspondents from the universities as they don't answer all queries"

"To make it more comprehensive Instructors should elaborate their answers more."

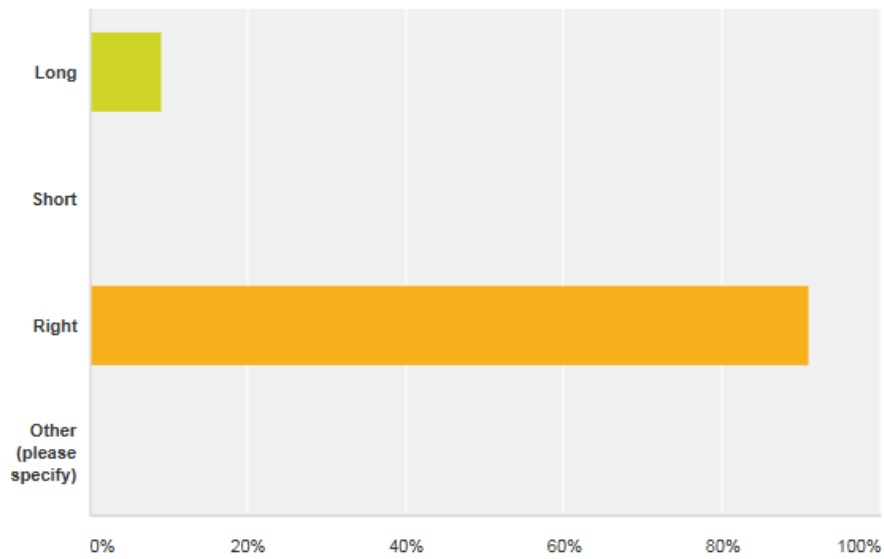
6.2 Exhibitors survey

This section presents feedback collated from 11 Exhibitors.



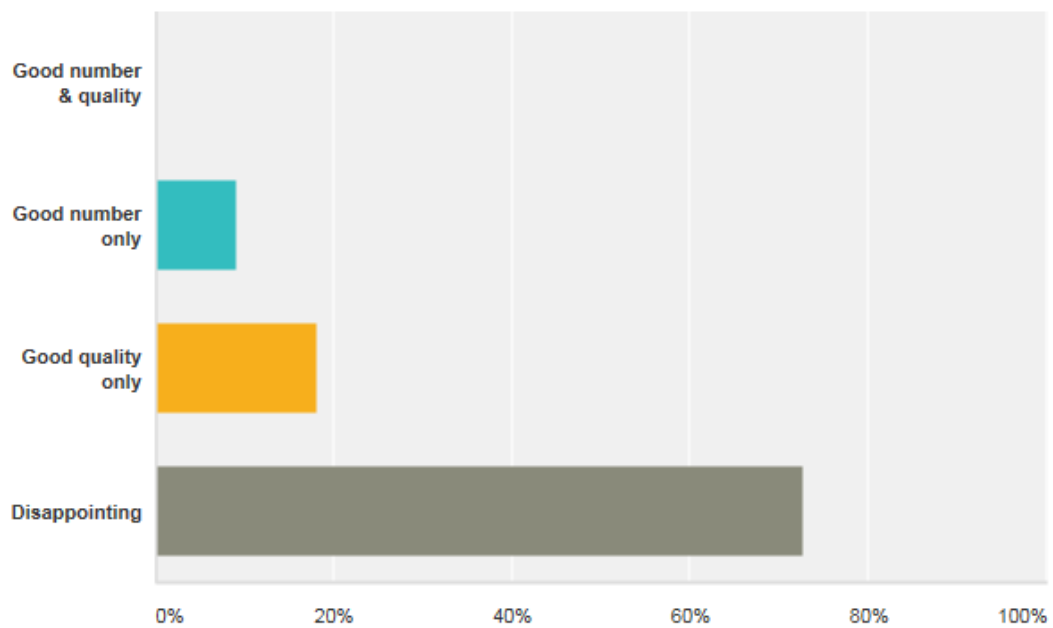
How would you rate the duration of the Virtual Exhibition 2013 (28 Dec – 7 Dec)?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



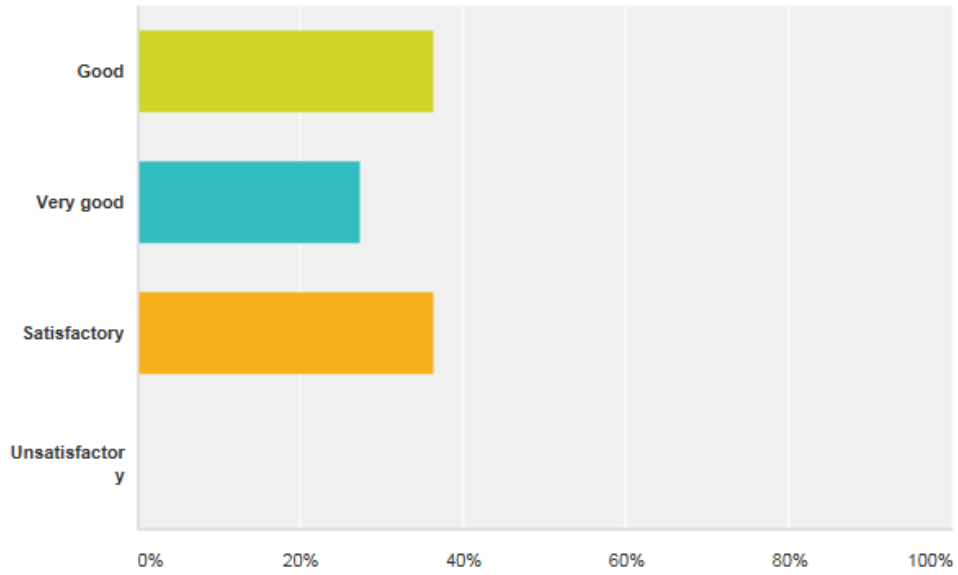
What is your assessment of the visitors that came to your micropage/chat session?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



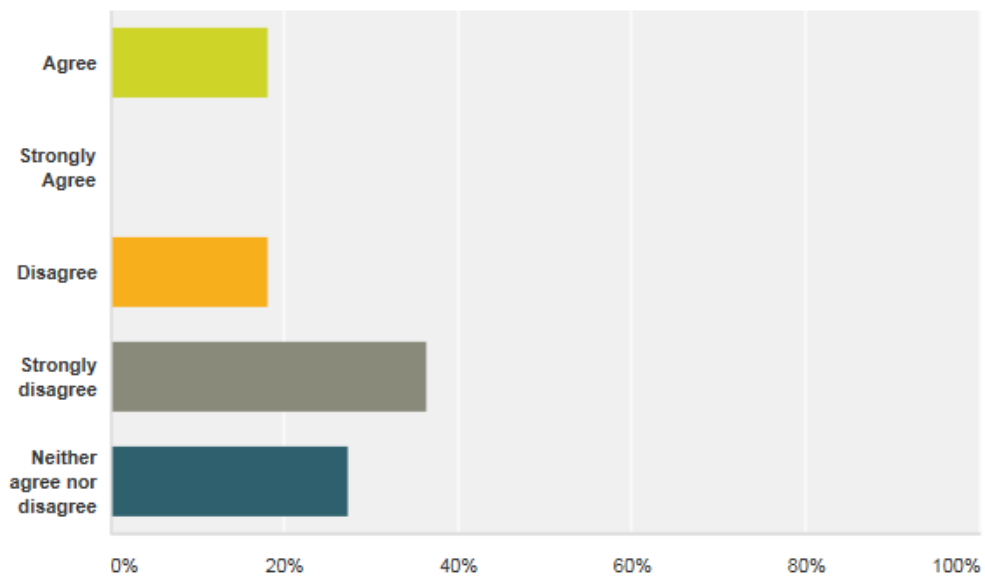
How do you rate the support provided to you from British Council before and during the event?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



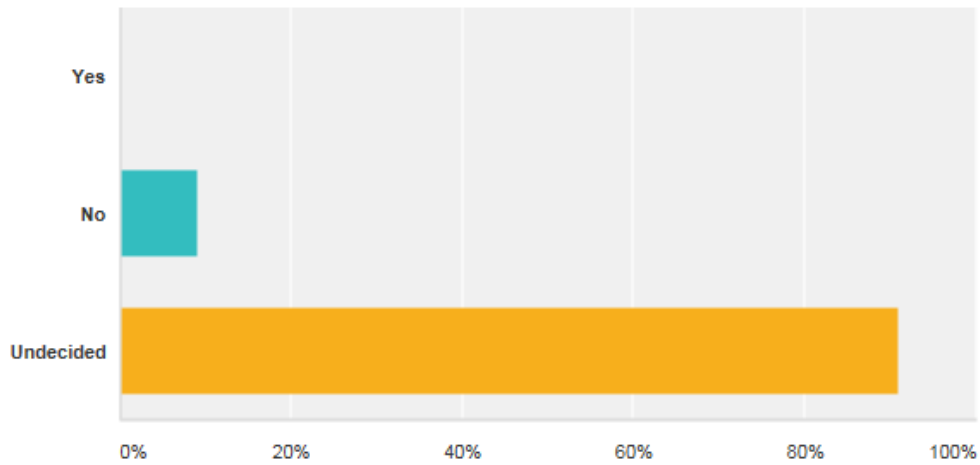
Did this online event meet your expectation?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



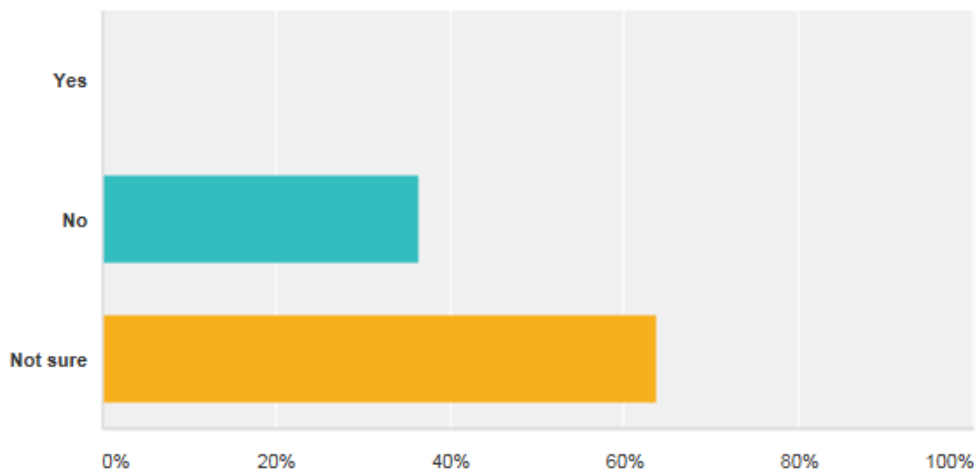
Will your institution be participating in similar online event next time?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



Any student conversations expected from this event?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



Some comments from our Exhibitors:

"Similar results to this year"

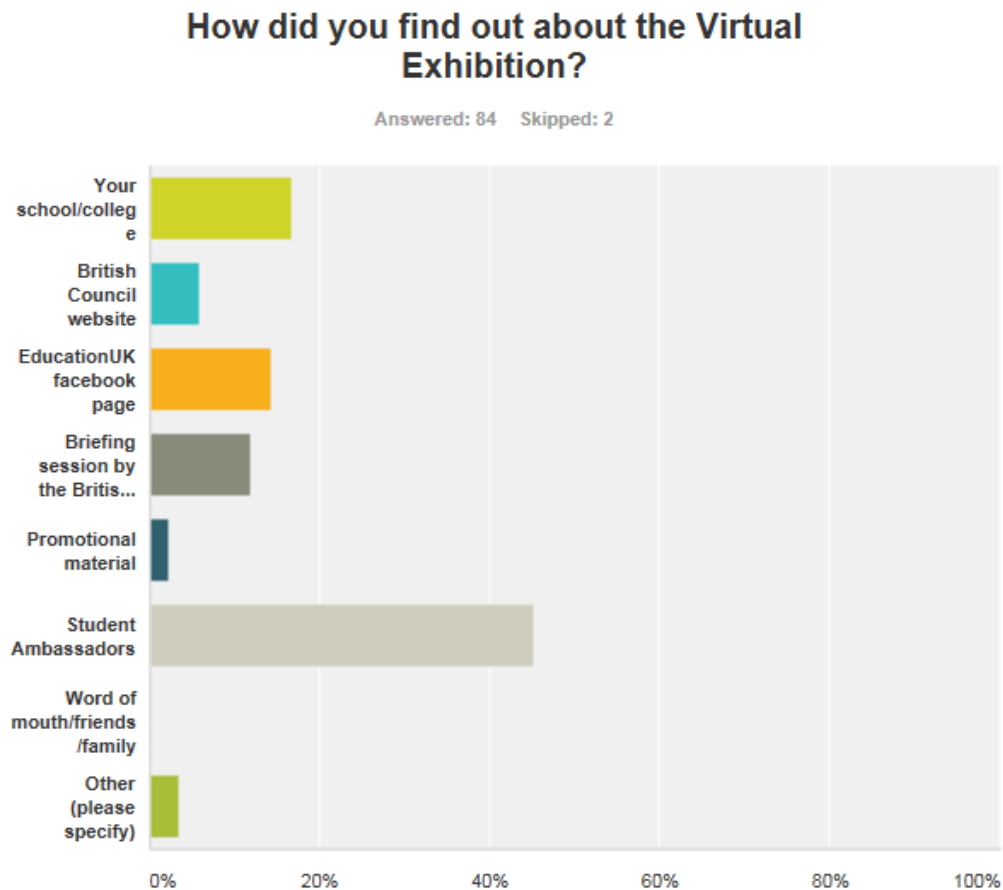
"Given the number of students registering interest in the exhibition the number that actually looked at our microsite was very disappointing. Participation in web chats across the board was poor. Not convinced virtual exhibitions work for Pakistan."

"Number of students visiting the microsite and chat was limited. Suggest use of webcam functions and organising web chat with schools."

"I was expecting a much larger traffic of students, but it was very disappointing, the British Council did however help to organise a Skype session with a school which was more beneficial."

7. MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Marketing for the event was done through various print media, radio and social mediums. The graph below shows responses by registrants when asked "From where did you hear about Virtual Exhibition 2013"



7.1 VE ambassadors

This marketing activity engaged students from A and O level schools, colleges and universities around the country. Briefing sessions for these students were held in Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Bahawalpur, Quetta, and Multan where they were encouraged to devise marketing plans and implement them, both before and during VE 2013.

As data gathered from registered users showed, this marketing activity proved to be extremely successful. There were more than 350 student ambassadors from all across Pakistan.

Glimpses/photos of Student Ambassadors

- Students being trained at briefing sessions by British Council
- Student Ambassadors presenting their marketing plans during these sessions
- Students campaigning for the Virtual Exhibition at other institutions





8. SUMMARY AND LEARNING POINTS

- Over 350 VE ambassadors were briefed and trained by the Education UK team nationwide. They played a key role in promoting the Virtual Exhibition. During our campaigning, several schools sent us requests to train their students as Student Ambassadors.
- A good response was received from second tier cities to participate in this Exhibition. The Exhibition reached to over 50 cities nationwide in 2013, the highest number of cities reached in a single year compared to 25 cities in 2012 and 15 cities in 2010 and 2011 respectively.
- A significant proportion of the registered users marked their current education level as GCE O/A level and Intermediate which clearly implies the exhibition reaches the right target audience.
- Majority of the visitors strongly agreed that the event met their expectations and they got all the information which they were looking for. However, they wanted the duration of the Exhibition to be extended for more than a week.
- Live chat sessions were more popular than the offline queries this year as compared to last year. There was a demand of video conferencing to be added to the website as well and more elaborate answers to their offline queries.
- The Exhibition had a greater impact on the target audience in Pakistan in comparison to the Exhibitors. There was wider engagement and satisfaction from the students in Pakistan from this Exhibition. The services of Education UK brand were widely acknowledged as it really bridged the gap between UK Universities and students looking to study in the UK.
- Majority of the Exhibitors responded that the ROI from Virtual Exhibitions is not satisfactory from Pakistan due to the low numbers of students attending the Exhibition. The quality of questions asked was better in 2013 than last year – but the conversation rate is expected to be below 5% which leaves 70% of the Exhibitors undecided if they would want to join a similar Exhibition next year.
- The time of the Exhibition wasn't right – as most of the students were engaged in their exams during the first week of December. Active participation of students slowed down during this period. Best time should be in September to hold such an Exhibition.
- From the experience of Virtual Exhibition 2013 – results can be doubled by adopting a different marketing strategy to promote this event for next year. A group of minimum 50 trained Student Ambassadors can be engaged to promote each UK Exhibitor exclusively. Thus all Exhibitors will have their own Student Ambassadors promoting their courses, admission processes and bringing in spot admissions for them.
- As compared to physical Exhibitions, Virtual Exhibitions have a steady and long lasting impact in creating awareness in target audiences to study abroad. Physical Exhibitions are limited to a specific location only – Virtual Exhibition is a gradual and long term plan that works in a ripple effect – drawing in potential audiences from the most remote areas of the nation, establishing brand image of UK Universities and creating awareness and opportunities to study abroad.