

British Pharmaceutical Students' Association

Oriel Feedback Report 2019

An Assessment of Candidates'
Responses (2019) and
Comparative Review of
Responses between two BPSA
commissioned surveys (2017 and
2019)

14th January 2020

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Contents

1: Introduction	2
2: Key Points	3
2.1 Key Findings	3
2.2 Key Recommendations	3
3: Methods	4
3.1: Survey design	4
3.2: Statistical analysis	4
4: Survey Results	6
4.1: Section One - Online Application Process	6
4.2: Section Two - Assessment Centre Booking	10
4.3: Section Three - Multiple Mini Interviews (MMI)	11
4.4: Section Four - Situational Judgement Test (SJT)	20
4.5: Section Five - Numeracy Test	23
4.6: Section Six - Overall Experience	25
5: Closing Statement	28
6: References	29
7: Appendices	30
7.1: Appendix 1: Survey Questions	30



1: Introduction

The British Pharmaceutical Students' Association (BPSA) is the official student organisation of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society and the official representative body of pharmacy students and pre-registration pharmacists in Great Britain. Established in 1942, the Association aims to support, advocate for and represent students and trainees on their path towards registration.

In 2017 Oriel was rolled out to Pharmacy students. The BPSA worked to collect feedback from Oriel candidates about the process, from start to finish. Subsequently, a report authored by the then Vice President, Alastair Paterson was published outlining seven 'Key points' and ten 'Recommendations'. This report aims to:

- 1) Assess the most current feedback from the BPSA's 2019 Oriel survey
- 2) Compare the feedback received from candidates between 2017 and 2019, highlighting the successful improvements made in Oriel, and where the BPSA believes further work is required.

This report has been categorised into six question areas, based on the broad subject area that each question falls into.

In order to reduce the potential for bias, the survey was closed at midnight on the 12th of November prior to complete results being released to candidates on the 13th of November. Prior to the survey closing, Health Education England (HEE) made the decision to inform candidates if they had passed or failed the assessment. Due to the short notice of this decision, we felt it appropriate to keep the survey open in order to allow for a larger dataset for this report and to allow for candidates to provide feedback on this short-notice decision in written responses.

The 2019 survey attracted 143 respondents, whilst the 2017 survey attracted 159 respondents, 158 of which provided input into the 2017 report (one respondent provided responses during the production of the report). The total number of candidates in 2019 has not been disclosed by Health Education England. However, our sample size is statistically significant for a cohort size of 3000 (95% confidence level, 8% margin of error).

Unprivileged raw data can be provided by emailing itofficer@bpsa.co.uk during the 2019-2020 mandate, or secgen@bpsa.co.uk thereafter.

This report and the corresponding 2019 survey have been authored by Matthew Michael, who at the time of writing, is a pre-registration pharmacist who has never participated in Oriel.

Matthew Michael

British Pharmaceutical Students' Association IT Officer 2019-2020



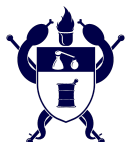
2: Key Points

2.1 Key Findings

1. The online application process must be improved to provide a better user experience. It is hoped that the release of Oriel II will resolve this.
2. Specific IT improvements are required for the process of preferencing. This includes the revision of how filters can be made more effective.
3. Many respondents found the handbook useful, but a shortened version may be useful for candidates to make the process less daunting and to highlight the key elements of Oriel.
4. The time keeping of assessment centres has been poor yet again, and written responses indicate that respondents believe this has affected their ability to perform in MMIs.
5. Guidance and preparatory materials specific to pharmacy students on the SJT is desired by respondents.
6. Written responses indicated that there was variability in the behaviour of assessors and that respondents believe this affected their performance.
7. There was no statistically significant difference in respondent's responses to appendix 1 question 9 when they attended different assessment centres. However, the data around this was weak and this should be investigated further in the future.
8. The BPSA believes that more should be done to directly or indirectly take into account candidate's previous work experience and extracurricular activities.
9. Whilst most respondents completed the numeracy test in the given time, some extra time may have been welcomed. Authors of future surveys should consider revising the questions around this area to provide more useful information.
10. Overall, respondents to this survey had a more positive opinion of Oriel than respondents to the BPSA's 2017 survey.

2.2 Key Recommendations

- 1) A greater level of organisation at assessment centres is required, specifically with regards to time management and ensuring there is little variability between assessors.
- 2) The questions in the Multiple Mini Interviews should be reviewed, to ensure they take a larger account for the candidate's experiences.
- 3) Key dates and decisions must be set from the start and be stated in the handbook, this includes the decision to inform candidates who have failed.
- 4) The user interface of Oriel requires improvement to provide candidates with a more user friendly online experience, this includes the implementation of a new preferencing process.
- 5) Health Education England must work with other stakeholders to provide more preparatory materials and guidance to candidates around the Situational Judgement Test.
- 6) The British Pharmaceutical Students' Association must endeavor to provide Oriel feedback consistently in order to provide national representation of candidates.



3: Methods

3.1: Survey design

This survey was designed based on the questions written in the BPSA's 2017 Oriel feedback survey¹. Minor changes were made in replicated questions: question tense for some questions (in order to provide consistency between questions) and the rewording of the Likert scale multiple choice option 'neither good nor poor' to 'neutral'. Where questions have not been repeated, a decision was made that these questions were not as valuable as others as part of the feedback process for candidates, and that removing these questions would provide scope for new questions which would provide data around points raised in the 2017 report.

An opportunity for further comments was left after most questions in the 2019 survey (**see appendix 1**).

Multiple choice questions were designed with responses required in order to proceed, with the exception of one question (**appendix 1 question 13**). At the launch of the survey, a technical glitch led to some questions being removed, this was quickly rectified and has been accounted for in all percentage and statistical calculations per question.

3.2: Statistical analysis

All references to quantitative data in this report relate to multiple choice responses.

3.2.1: Analysis of survey sample size

At the time of writing the BPSA does not have access to the total number of Oriel candidates for 2019, therefore a true statistical calculation cannot be carried out. Statistical analysis using the standard equation for survey sample size shows that the number of survey respondents (143) is proportional to a population of 3,000 if the confidence level is set to 95% and the margin of error is set to 8%.

3.2.2: Analysis of 2019 survey responses

Chi-squared calculations have been carried out at a significance level of 0.05 ($\alpha=0.05$) to determine three levels of significance within the 2019 dataset for multiple choice questions (for multiple choice questions with only one option, only the first level of significance has been calculated):

- 1) If there are any statistically significant differences between any option
- 2) If there are any statistically significant differences between the three groups below:
 - a) 'Very Good' and 'Good' = ' Σ good'
 - b) 'Very Poor' and 'Poor' = ' Σ poor'
 - c) 'Neutral' = 'Neutral'
- 3) If there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups below:



- a) 'Very Good' and 'Good' = ' Σ good'
- b) 'Very Poor' and 'Poor' = ' Σ poor'

Note that for **appendix 1 question 13**, all response options have been substituted with equivalent Likert scale responses which can be applied to significance levels 2 and 3.

Figure captions contain information about statistical significance for figures where Chi-squared statistical tests have been applied. The caption relates to the two levels of significance e.g. "(Statistical significance, 1: Yes, 2: Yes, 3: Yes)" indicates that all levels of significance have been satisfied for the data in the figure.

Chi-squared calculations have not been performed for **appendix one question 12** as the value of the level one significance would be especially limited for this question, and level two significance cannot be carried out without author bias for defining how much time is equivalent to the groups ' Σ good' or ' Σ poor'.

Separate statistical analysis has been performed for **figure 4.3.2.2**, analysis was only conducted for King Power Stadium and Stewart House responses as these were the most attended and the BPSA is concerned that there are not enough responses from the other test centres for robust statistical analysis. A chi-squared test was carried out using a contingency table, where $\alpha = 0.05$.

3.2.3: Analysis of comparative data between the 2017 and 2019 data sets

Using the two proportion z-test, comparisons of 2017 and 2019 multiple choice results have been assessed for statistical significance ($\alpha = 0.05$, Confidence level = 95%). In order to carry this out, origin data from 2017 has been utilised per question. For some questions, as in 2019, the number of responses is not equal to the total number of survey respondents; this has been accounted for in all statistical and percentage calculations.

An asterisk (*) has been used to indicate where there is a statistically significant difference between 2017 and 2019 data on the relevant figures. The statistical significance is specific to each response (for example 'Very Good' in 2017 and 'Very Good' in 2019).

All statistical comparisons with the 2017 survey contain responses from a respondent who was not included in the 2017 report. This respondent's survey responses were excluded from the 2017 report due to the timing of the responses. This respondent's responses have been utilised in comparisons between the two data sets in this report in order to provide ease when analysing origin data.



4: Survey Results

All sections are presented with data from 2019 survey responses first, any comparisons between 2017 and 2019 results follow below analysis of the 2019 survey results.

4.1: Section One - Online Application Process

4.1.1: What do you think of the online application process?

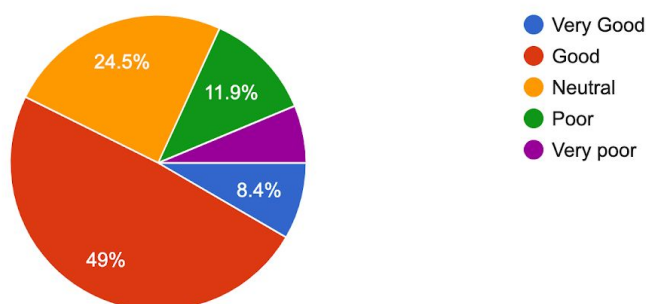


Figure 4.1.1.1: A larger proportion of respondents have a positive opinion of the online application process than a negative opinion, (number of respondents in 2019: 143), (statistical significance: 1: Yes, 2: Yes, 3: Yes).

This question received a positive general response, with a statistically significant majority of respondents believing the online application process was 'Very Good' or 'Good'.

Of the 47 qualitative responses received to this question, more than half of respondents made reference to the website/portal not being user friendly (n=28):

"Could've been easier to navigate"

"Using oriel is confusing as it is not always clear where to find things"

"System can be very glitchy"

"At first the system is very confusing to use, especially with the abundance of information in the applicant handbook. If the user interface was easier to use, this would save students time from reading the handbook. For example, it was not always clear which sections needed to be completed during registration and after preferencing it was not clear that choices would be submitted automatically."

"Why is it that the last preference is the first one ranked ? It would be easier if it was chronological, first preference selected, stays first ranked and all the others follow gradually"



There is a clear demand from the respondents of this survey for improvements to the overall interface. The online application user interface has remained the same since the inception of Oriel for MPharm students in 2017. The BPSA has been informed by HEE at a stakeholders meeting that HEE expects to update the Oriel user interface in 2020 (Oriel II), which is likely to lead to an improvement in overall experience of the process.

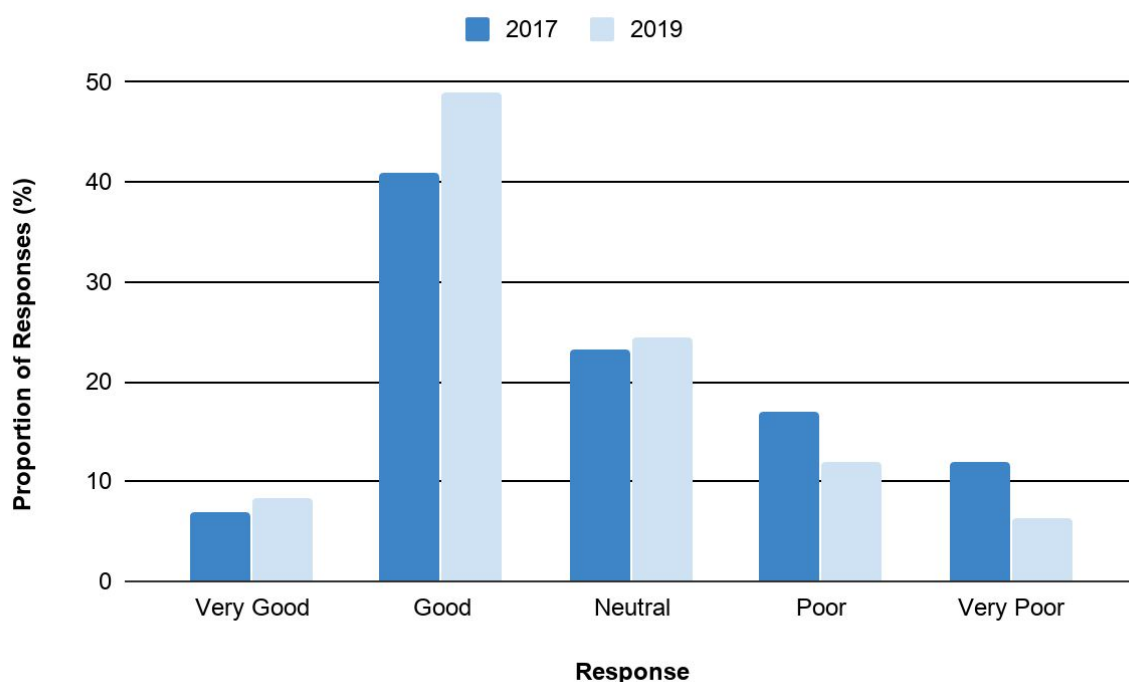


Figure 4.1.1.2: There was no statistically significant difference in any single response between 2017 and 2019, (number of respondents in 2017: 159, 2019: 143), (statistically significant differences indicated by *).

The 2019 responses were overall very similar to the 2017 responses to this question, there was no statistically significant difference within each response option between surveys.

4.1.2: What do you think of the applicant handbook?

In 2017, in long-text responses to question 4.1.1, it was highlighted that the applicant handbook was: “very useful”, “full of relevant information” and “solved a lot of problems” (n=3). Therefore, in 2019, we asked respondents the above question.

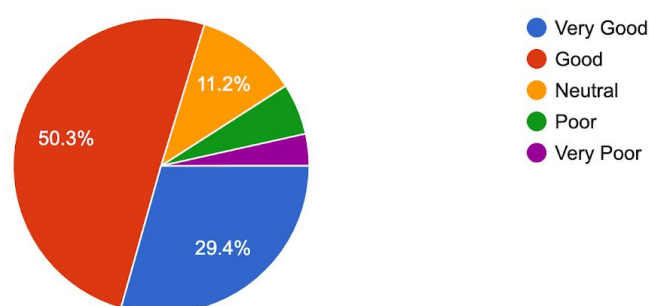


Figure 4.1.2.1: A statistically significant majority of respondents believe the applicant handbook was ‘Very Good’ or ‘Good’, (number of respondents in 2019: 143), (statistical significance, 1: Yes, 2: Yes, 3: Yes).



Overall, the feedback on the applicant handbook was very positive, with over three quarters of respondents believing it was 'Very Good' or 'Good'.

In written responses, multiple respondents stated that the handbook was thorough, useful or detailed (n=7). Constructive feedback included:

"Please can we have ALL dates from the start (Inc. Specific feedback dates)"

"Quite long could do with a cheat sheet"

"I think the instructions on how to do things could have been a lot clearer by adding videos showing how to preference, how to register etc"

"It could have explained how to get to the preferencing section more clearly. As it didn't mention that you had to go into the application section"

"It should clarify that it is not always 3 personal Qs and 3 skills Qs as was highlighted to us throughout"

4.1.3: What do you think of the preferencing process?

In 2017, in long-text responses to question 4.1.1, it was highlighted that preferencing was "complex and unclear" (n=2). Therefore, in 2019, we asked respondents the above question.

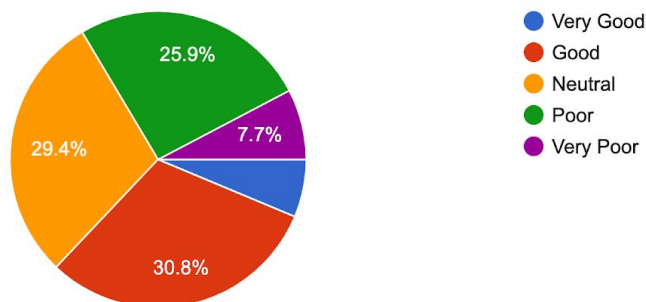


Figure 4.1.3.1: Multiple choice responses provide no clear united opinion on the preferencing process, statistical significance was only shown at level 1 significance, indicating at least one unspecified option was statistically different from at least one other option, (number of respondents in 2019: 143), (statistical significance, 1: Yes, 2: No, 3: No).

This question received a mix of responses, with no clear statistically significant majority towards either extremity along the spectrum of options.

However, written responses clearly indicate that improvement is required, particularly in two areas: identifying a placement and allocating a rank to placements.

Several respondents suggested a better mechanism to identify placements was necessary, specifically by improving the filters (n=13).



"Should also be able to filter more effectively e.g. distance from a certain post code, salary or hours"

"Can't even distinguish between GP and community. Should be a filter for GP/GP-Hospital/GP-Community/Hospital/Community etc."

"I found that many of the places were not under the correct area category"

"some community placements were listed without a specific postcode for the location of the store which made it difficult to preference these as location was a big factor for me"

Respondents also suggested more guidance was required for preferencing (n=5) and that the IT aspects of preferencing were not user friendly (n=34).

"HEE emails were quite vague and this led to some confusion"

"It is a stressful process. Some SOP's prepare students for it better than others."

"Preferencing was very stressful, mixed advice about how many places to preference, limited information about each place given on oriel - would have liked to see more specific information about what each placement involved"

"Hard to drag and drop the options as there is a huge lag between clicking and you being able to move it"

"There should be a way of being able to put a preference in the order you want straight away, rather than it always going to the top of the list. It would also be helpful to be able to group and move many things at once."



4.2: Section Two - Assessment Centre Booking

4.2.1: What do you think of the assessment centre online booking facility?

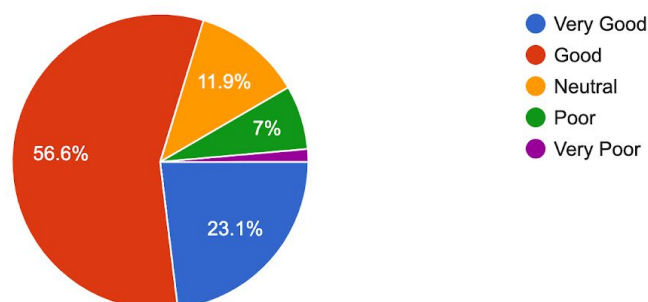


Figure 4.2.1.1: Responses show a statistically significant positive opinion of the booking facilities, (number of respondents in 2019: 143), (statistical significance, 1: Yes, 2: Yes, 3: Yes).

The majority of respondents (>75%) believed that the online booking facility was 'Very Good' or 'Good'.

There was a clear improvement in assessment centre booking between 2017 and 2019, as shown by **figure 4.2.1.2**. A possible reason for this is due to technical issues faced in 2017 and the poor communication with candidates which followed.

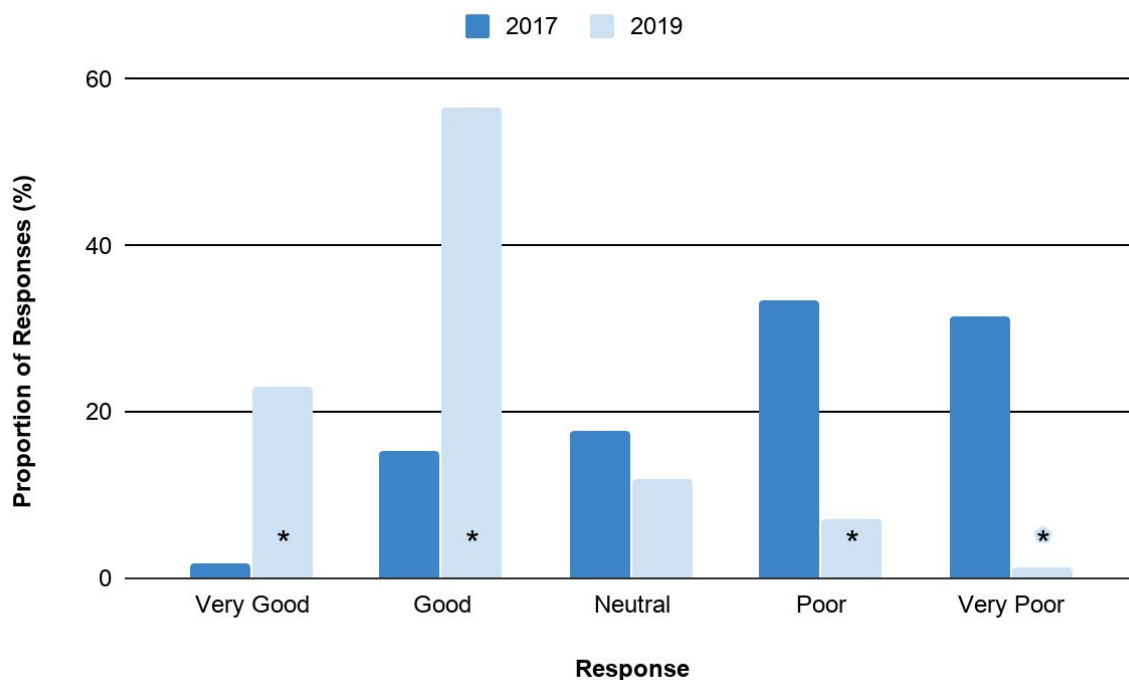


Figure 4.2.1.2: Responses indicate opinion of the booking facilities have changed, there are statistically significant differences between 2017 and 2019 results, (number of respondents in 2019: 143, 2017: 158), (statistically significant differences indicated by *).



4.3: Section Three - Multiple Mini Interviews (MMI)

The MMIs account for 60% of a candidates total score¹.

4.3.1: Which assessment centre did you attend for the MMI?

Assessment Centre and Date	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents (%)
Cardiff City Stadium (Cardiff) 17th July 2019	9	6.3
HEE Office, Park House (Bristol) 17th July 2019	5	3.5
Kassam Stadium (Oxford) 17th July 2019	17	11.9
Elland Road Stadium (Leeds) 17th July 2019	18	12.6
King Power Stadium (Manchester) 17th July 2019	39	27.3
Etihad Stadium (Manchester) 18th July 2019	8	5.6
Stewart House (London) 18th July 2019	47	32.9

Figure 4.3.1.1: The majority of respondents attended Stewart House (London), whilst HEE Office (Bristol) was the least attended, (Number of respondents in 2019: 143).

This data has been utilised for **figure 4.3.2.2** to identify variability in respondent's experiences at each test centre.

4.3.2: What did you think of the Multiple Mini Interviews (MMIs)?

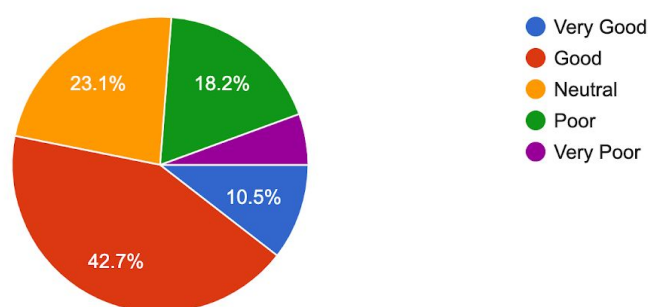


Figure 4.3.2.1: Just over half of respondents (a statistically significant majority) believed the MMIs were 'Very Good' or 'Good', (number of respondents in 2019: 143), (statistical significance, 1: Yes, 2: Yes, 3: Yes).



Respondents to our survey had mixed views on the MMIs upon observation of the quantitative data. 53.2% of respondents believed that the MMIs were 'Very Good' or 'Good', whilst 23.8% of respondents believed the MMIs were 'Poor' or 'Very Poor'.

Of the 64 written responses provided, 13 respondents made reference to long waiting times.

"Timing could be improved, my session was running 11/2 - 2 hours behind"

"Mine was 2 hours late, it made me so much more nervous. No apology from the staff there for the lateness"

Multiple students were expecting and would have liked more experience based questions (n=7):

"5 scenario questions and only 1 tell me about a time... question - no scope to actually tell the interviewer about things you've done and achievements"

"5 questions were SJT, one question was about me. Should be more balanced. We have a whole SJT test"

"I would have liked the interview to focus a little more on my past experience rather than just scenarios."

The BPSA has concerns about a lack of consistency between candidates' experiences with different assessors. Written responses indicate the receptiveness of assessors was inconsistent and that respondents believe this did affect their performance. Some example responses that raise concerns for the BPSA include:

"one of the interviewers with his arms crossed on chest makes me feel REALLY stress[ed]"

*"Was nice that people nodded along even though I had been told they wouldn't"
[grammatical corrections made]*

"Some examiners didn't acknowledge and looked at each other while we were answering and it was a little stressful"

*"A smile wouldn't go amiss. We are all very nervous a hello would greatly help"
[grammatical corrections made]*

"One conductor was always butting [in] and one another assessor did not look interested in my answer" [corrections made]

"One of the interviewers didn't listen to answers and kept interrupting as I was explaining, which is just rude and distracting and not fair in the slightest"



"Interviewers were very friendly, with a generally comfortable and positive environment"

Another concern raised through analysis of qualitative responses is the lack of consistency between candidates' experiences at different assessment centres and during different time slots. Written responses indicate inconsistent practices reported by respondents. A major element of this is the waiting times, which have been reported above. Other examples include external noise, hearing other assessments and candidate's access to time keeping resources. The BPSA understands that candidates were not asked to remove any watches prior to entering the MMI, however, a small number of respondents (n=4) reported that the MMI rooms did not contain a clock, timer or method to determine how much time was remaining. Under timed conditions, this may affect a candidate's ability to respond to the assessor's questions.

Naturally, any differences are multifactorial and could be unrelated to the venue or MMI itself, for example, candidates in one region may generally be better prepared by their Schools of Pharmacy than in another region.

"You could hear the assessors and other candidates talking if outside the room"

"we were told we could ask how much time we have left but when I asked an interviewer they said they could not tell me"

"Open doors during the interview, could hear people (not related to pharmacy) speaking, put me off during the preparation time"

"Would be better to have a timer in the rooms"

"In the London one during the assessment people who were coming for the test were walking in and out and this was very disturbing"

In order to determine if the assessment centre attended affected the respondent's experience of the MMIs, the quantitative data was cross referenced with the assessment centre each respondent attended; the results are displayed in **figure 4.3.2.2**. Due to the large differences in the proportion of respondents that attended each assessment centre, it is difficult to draw conclusions for some assessment centres from this data. The number of candidates per assessment centre is unknown to the BPSA, therefore analysis of candidate: respondent ratio per assessment centre is not possible.

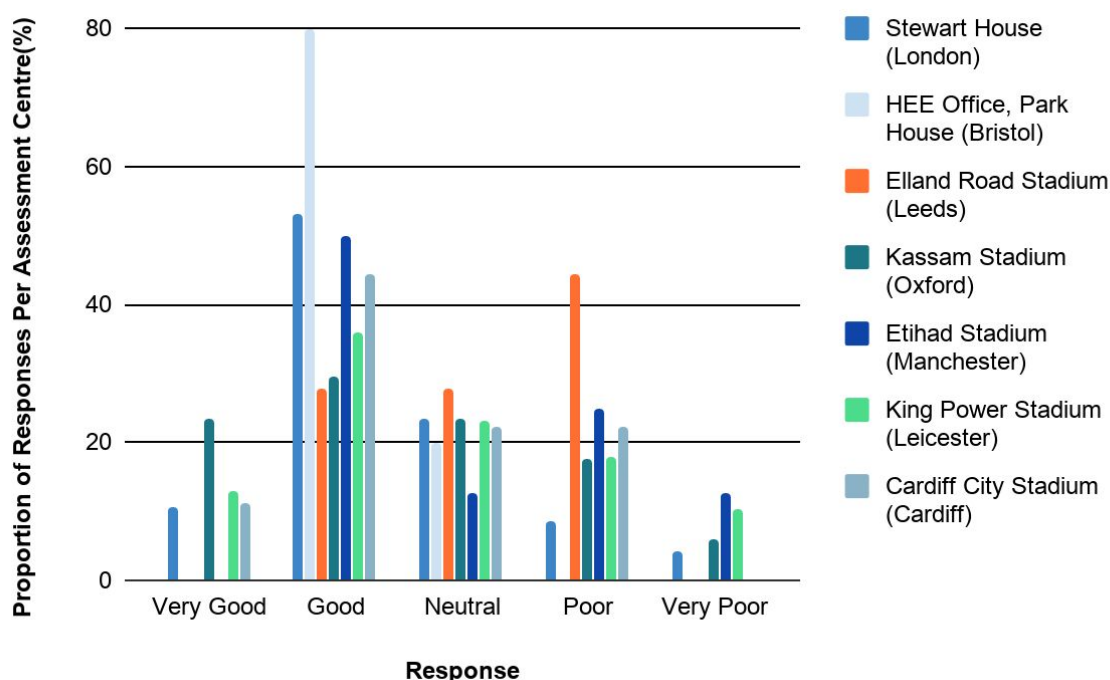


Figure 4.3.2.2: Data suggests further investigation is required to investigate if the attended assessment centre affects respondents' feelings towards the MMI. Statistical analysis was only carried out between King Power Stadium and Stewart House.

Statistical analysis was only carried out between King Power Stadium and Stewart House as these were the two most highly attended by survey respondents ($n > 30$). Statistical analysis shows no statistically significant difference between both assessment centre respondent's responses. Therefore, the quantitative data available from this survey does not support the concerns raised through the qualitative responses. It is important to note the limitations of the statistical analysis carried out, only two assessment centers were statistically compared in this case due to the small sample sizes.

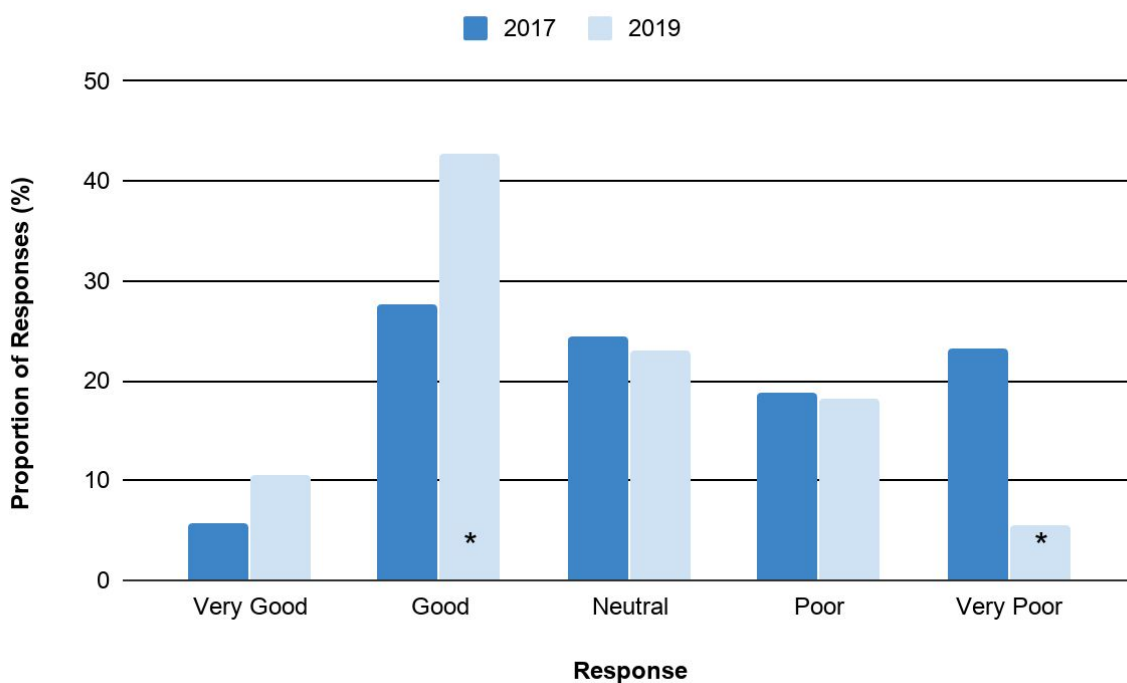


Figure 4.3.2.3: More respondents believed that the MMIs were 'Good' in 2019 than in 2017, (number of respondents in 2017: 155, 2019: 143), (statistically significant differences indicated by *).

Comparison of the data gathered in 2017 to the data gathered in 2019 shows a more positive opinion from respondents in 2019.



4.3.3: Was this your preferred location of the given locations?

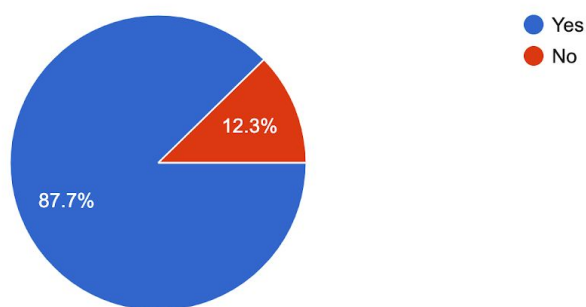


Figure 4.3.3.1: Respondents generally attended their preferred location for the MMIs, (number of respondents in 2019: 138), (statistical significance, 1: Yes).

Responses to this question clearly indicate that despite the number of booking locations reducing from eight in 2017 to seven in 2019, HEE has succeeded in streamlining the online booking facilities, comparison of data from 2017 in **figure 4.3.3.1** shows a statistically significant improvement in responses.

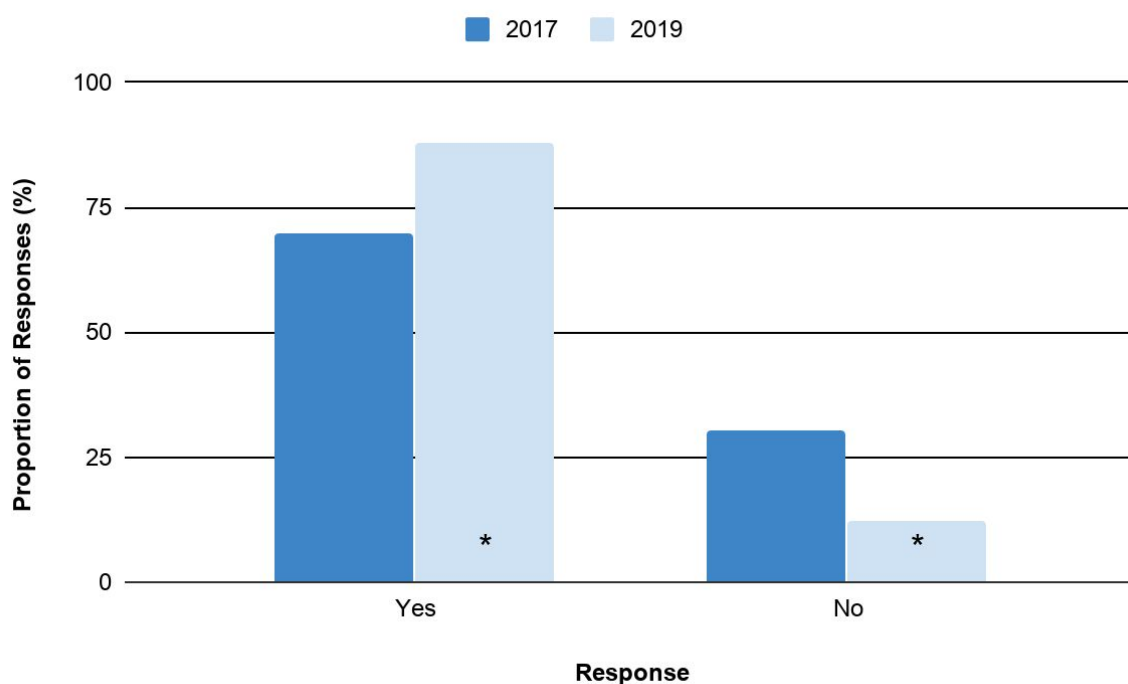


Figure 4.3.3.1: In 2019, there was a statistically significant increase in the number of respondents who attended their preferred assessment centre compared to in 2017, (number of respondents in 2017: 159, 2019: 138), (statistically significant differences indicated by *).



4.3.4: What was your travel time to the assessment centre? (one-way travel time)

The previous question indicated that more respondents attended their preferred assessment centre in 2019 than in 2017. This is likely to have contributed to the reduction in travel times of respondents as presented in **figure 4.3.4.1**.

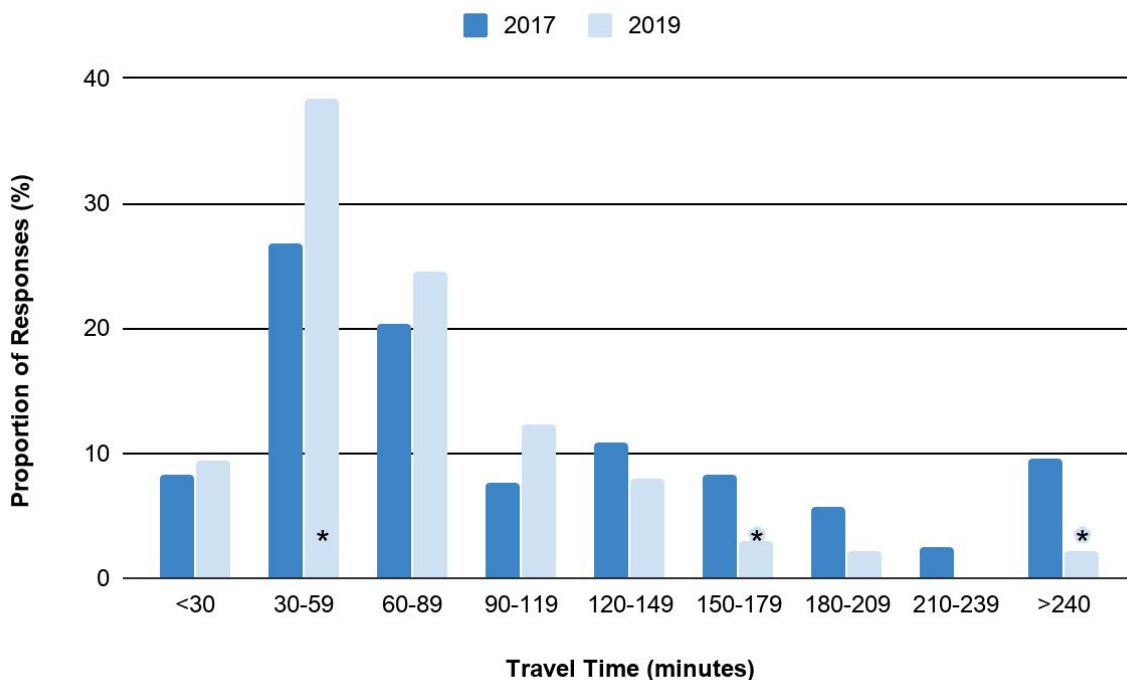


Figure 4.3.4.1: There was a statistically significant increases in the number of respondents who travelled 30-59 minutes and decreases in the number of respondents who travelled 150-179 minutes or >240 minutes between 2019 and 2017, (number of respondents 2017: 157, 2019: 148), (statistically significant differences indicated by *).



4.3.5: (If you have work experience) To what extent do you agree or disagree that your previous work experience assisted you throughout your application directly or indirectly?

In 2017, in long-text responses to question 4.3.2, it was highlighted that respondents felt there were “not enough questions delving into their character and experiences (n=6)”. Furthermore, a delegation at the BPSA’s Annual Conference voted the following motion into policy: “This Association believes that Oriel should take students’ previous work experience and extracurricular activities into greater consideration”. Therefore in 2019, we asked respondents the above question.

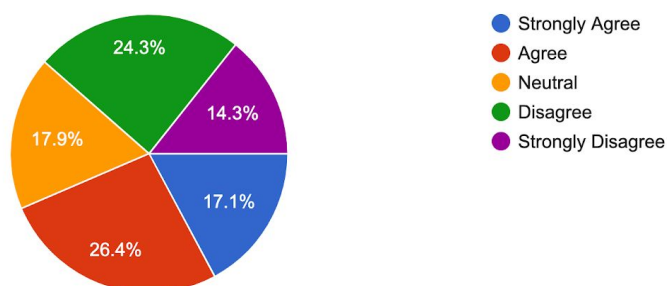


Figure 4.3.5.1: There was no clear unified response to this question, indicating respondents had mixed views based on their own experiences of Oriel, (Number of respondents in 2019: 140), (statistical significance, 1: No, 2: Yes, 3: No).

Our survey responses to this question have captured the level of debate around this issue. Statistical significance calculations suggest that the only statistically significant difference is between the number of neutral responses compared to positive or negative responses. The BPSA received a spectrum of written responses to this question:

“It was very much scenario based and not based on past experience”

“Work experience enabled me to reflect and to implement my experience throughout the process”

“very little chance to talk about it”

“Experience helps you answer questions. You have something to go back to”

“Did not feel as though the MMI questions allowed me to talk about any of my past experiences. Registration for oriel was the only place to add previous jobs, but this was not even part of the assessment so felt a bit pointless”

“Scenarios described seemed familiar and I could relate to real life experiences”



"Working anywhere develops core transferable skills so I believe the work I have been doing assisted me in answering questions"

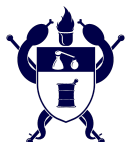
"Work experience from gained from the university was almost completely irrelevant, however working as a dispenser in different pharmacies exposes you to different situations that you will come across. It was disappointing that I couldn't show this knowledge in my interviews"

"Additional emphasis should be put on previous experiences where students have been able to grow and showcase their learnt skills. Please understand that this takes additional time to explain on top of the 5 minute restriction due to the variety of experiences"

"I do feel that there should be a more specific question or opportunity to discuss experience as I found I did not get the opportunity to bring it up in the scenarios given"

"At least half of the questions based around hospital and GP practice areas - places where a lot of pharmacy students don't have sufficient experience in. I don't feel like my previous work experience helped in answering the questions in most of the scenarios"

The BPSA believes that previous work experience and extracurricular activities should be taken into consideration to a greater extent. To prevent misunderstanding of the BPSA's stance, the BPSA would like to reinforce HEE's own statement: "IMPORTANT: Information relating to your employment history will not be used to assess your application. This information is collected on behalf of employers"². Whilst there is some clear debate on if previous work experience is taken into account indirectly, the BPSA still maintains that any current indirect consideration of work experience and extracurricular activities is not enough and that more is required. This is further highlighted by responses in section 3.3.2 (n=7) that the MMIs (where this issue would be expected to impact performance the most) did not ask enough questions with scope for work experience and extracurricular activities to be taken into account.



4.4: Section Four - Situational Judgement Test (SJT)

The Situational Judgement Test (SJT) accounts for 40% of a candidates total score².

4.4.1: What did you think of the situational judgement test (SJT)?

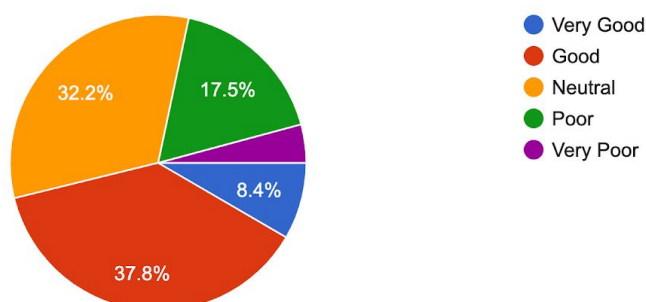


Figure 4.4.1.1: Few respondents had a negative opinion of the SJT, (number of respondents, 2019: 143), (statistical significance, 1: Yes, 2: Yes, 3: Yes).

Responses show a statistically significant proportion of respondents (46.2%) feel the SJT is 'Good' or 'Very Good'. This is closely followed by 32.2% having a 'Neutral' opinion. Written responses provide an insight into how improvements can be made in preparation of students for the SJT. Many respondents believe that more guidance/training material is needed (n=8), specifically aimed at pharmacy students (n=3). Some candidates believed there were too many questions or that the SJT was too/very long (n=15). Other comments to note were that respondents stated were that many questions were similar (n=7) and that the nature of the SJT is too subjective as an assessment tool (n=8).

"There was no guidance at all"

"Currently students are using medic questions as practice which isn't beneficial"

"less pharmacy SJT resources out there to prepare"

"More resources specifically designed for pharmacy related questions needed"

Comparison of results from 2017 and 2019 for this question do not indicate a dramatic change in opinion. The only observation to note from **figure 4.4.1.2** is that there was a statistically significant reduction in candidates answering the above question with the option 'Very Poor'.

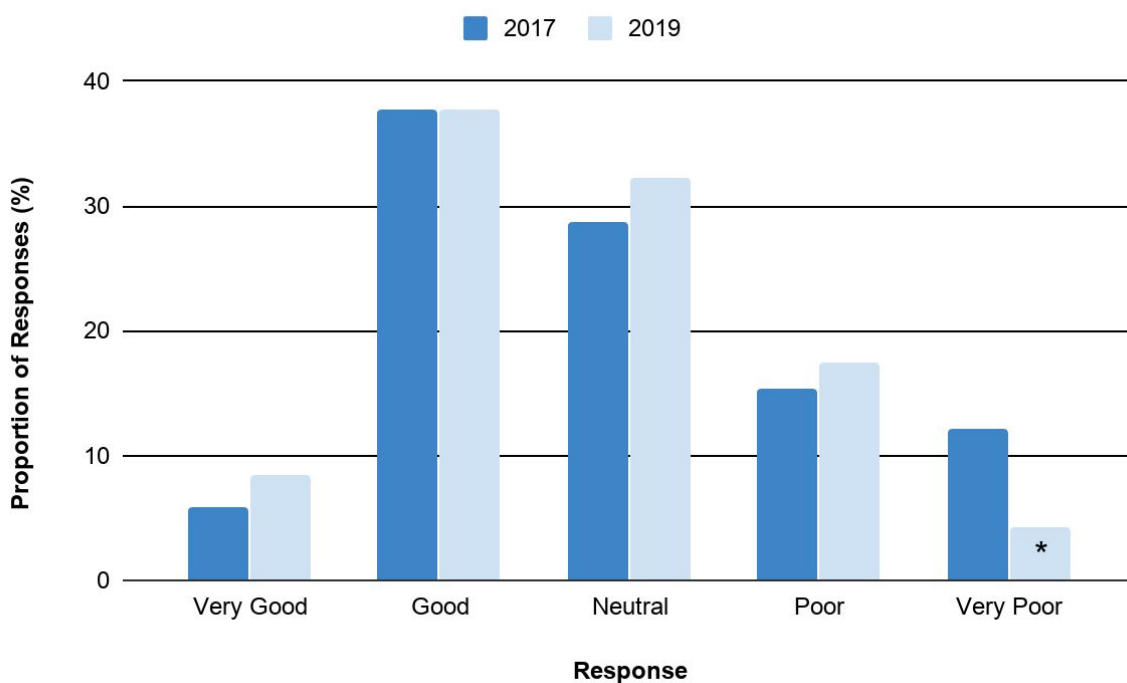


Figure 4.4.1.2: Comparison of 2017 and 2019 indicates that there were statistically significantly fewer respondents in 2019 who believed the SJT was 'Very Poor', (number of respondents 2017: 156, 2019: 143), (statistically significant differences indicated by *).

4.4.2: Did you complete the SJT in the given time?

In 2017, in long-text responses to question 4.4.1, it was highlighted that “some candidates thought that they were given too much time to complete the SJT (n=9)”. Therefore in 2019, we asked respondents the above question to determine the feasibility of shortening the SJT.

The BPSA retrospectively believes that this question should have been better presented in the 2019 survey to provide better utilisable data about if respondents felt the SJT required more time, less time or if the current time constraints should be maintained.

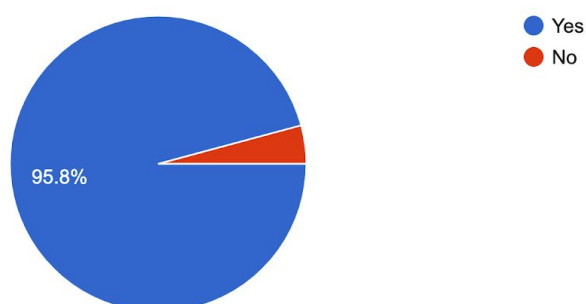


Figure 4.4.2.1: Over 95% of respondents completed the SJT in the given time, (number of respondents 2019: 143), (statistical significance 1: Yes).



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Quantitative assessment clearly shows that the vast majority of respondents were able to complete the SJT in the given time.



4.5: Section Five - Numeracy Test

4.5.1: What do you think of the numeracy test?

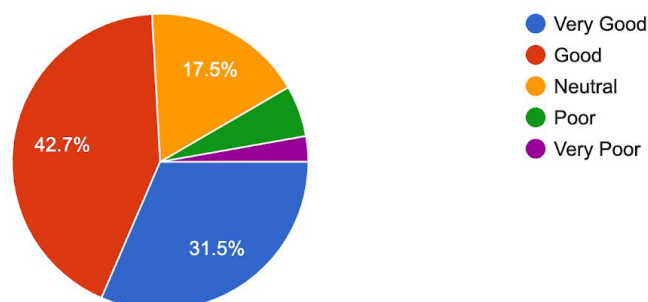


Figure 4.5.1.1: Respondents generally thought the numeracy test was 'Very Good' or 'Good', with respondents reporting negative experiences in this question, (number of respondents in 2019: 143), (statistical significance, 1: Yes, 2: Yes, 3: Yes).

A statistically significant difference was identified between positive and negative responses to this question in 2019.

Written responses show multiple respondents reported not knowing whether to provide units in answers (n=7).

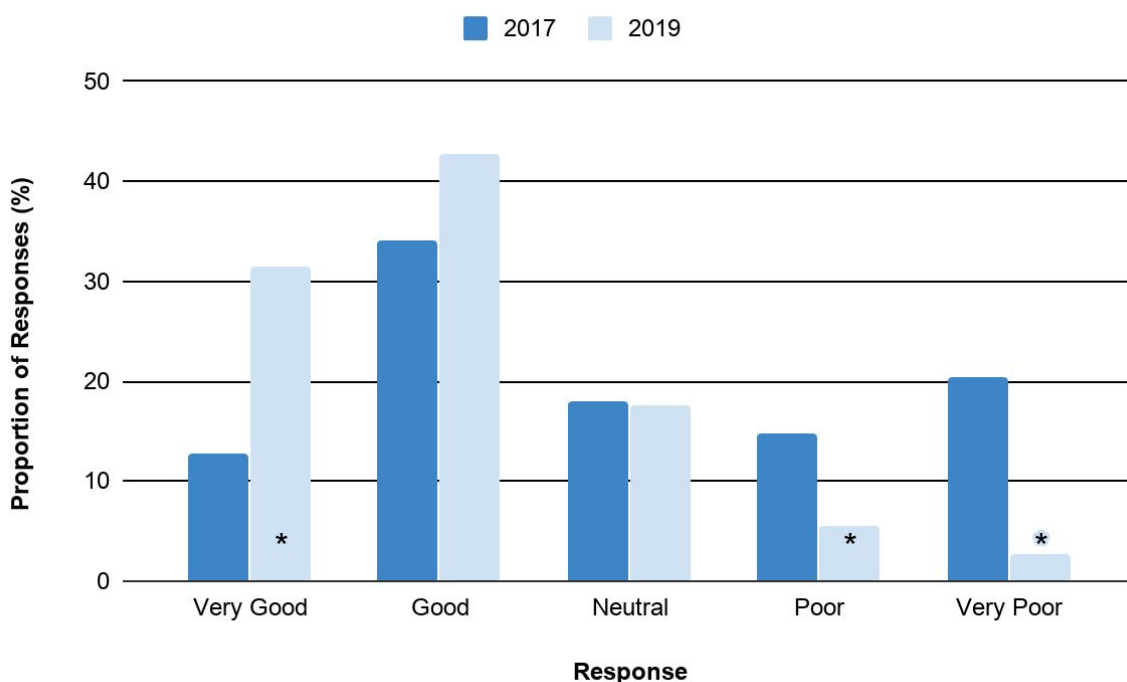


Figure 4.5.1.2: Comparison of 2017 and 2019 responses indicates a statistically significant increase in the number of respondents who believed the numeracy test was 'Very Good' and a statistically significant decrease in the number of respondents who believed the numeracy test was 'Poor' or 'Very Poor', (number of respondents in 2017: 156, 2019: 143), (statistically significant differences indicated by *).



The comparison between 2017 and 2019 for this question shows a clear change in opinion, towards a more positive general opinion of the numeracy test.

4.5.2: Did you complete the numeracy test in the given time?

In 2017, in long-text responses to question 4.5.1, it was highlighted that “many applicants complained that there was not enough time to complete calculations quickly and accurately (n=52)”. Therefore in 2019, we asked respondents the above question.

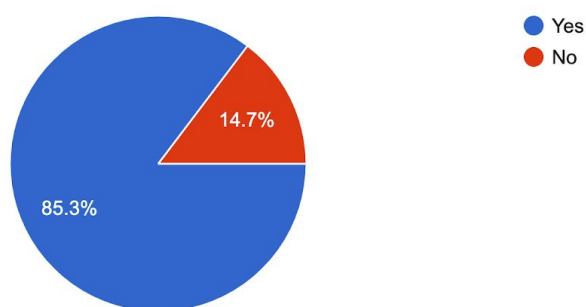


Figure 4.5.2.1: Over 85% of respondents reported that they did complete the numeracy test in the given time, (number of respondents in 2019: 143), (statistical significance, 1: Yes).

The data provided by this question shows that a statistically significant majority (>85% of respondents) completed the numeracy test in the given time. Whilst this is the case, written responses indicate respondents that did complete the test would have liked more time for the test (n=9).



4.6: Section Six - Overall Experience

4.6.1: How would you rate your overall experience of applying for pre-registration training?

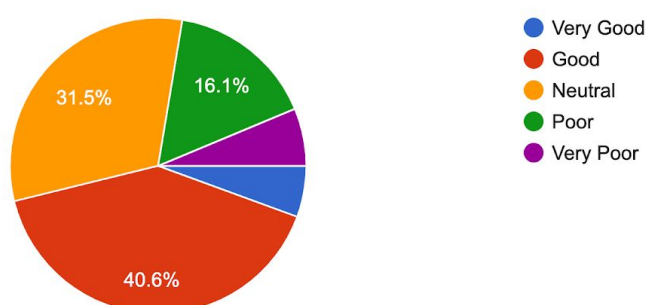


Figure 4.6.1.1: 22.4% of respondents rated their overall experience as 'Poor' or 'Very Poor'; this compares to 46.2% of respondents rating their overall experience as 'Good' or 'Very Good', (number of respondents in 2019: 143), (statistical significance, 1: Yes, 2: Yes, 3: Yes).

Responses indicate a statistically significant majority of respondents rating their overall experience as 'Very Good' or 'Good'. This final question is the culmination of respondents' opinions following a survey which examines several areas of Oriel. This paints an overall positive picture of Oriel by respondents. It is of some concern that a large proportion of respondents (accounting for the second largest proportion of responses) remained neutral on this question, however, comparison with 2017 data suggests no statistically significant change in this response option.

Statistical comparison of 2017 and 2019 responses to this question shows that there has been a significant increase in respondent's reporting an overall 'Very Good' or 'Good' opinion of Oriel, whilst there has been a significant decrease in negative responses to this question.

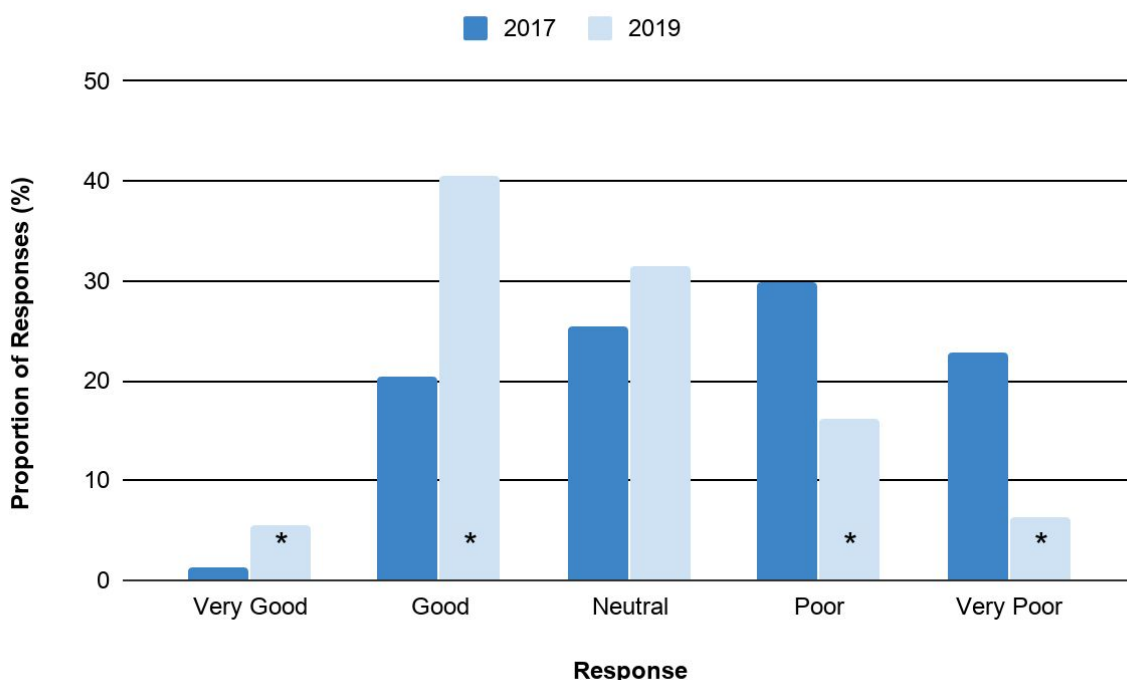


Figure 4.6.1.2: Comparison of 2017 and 2019 responses shows a statistically significant difference in all response groups with the exception of 'Neutral', overall indicating more positive opinions of Oriel in 2019, (number of respondents in 2017: 157, 2019: 143), (statistically significant differences indicated by *).

Some final comments from candidates include:

"Overall it was a good experience, I feel like there are some areas where there is room for improvement but generally it was an ok process"

"I think the system needs an overhaul (personally I preferred the idea of the previous system of applying directly to the places)."

"Doesn't take into account your marks from degree / any pharmacy experience you've had in the past or you weren't even given the opportunity to do so in the interview"

"Releasing pass/fail and offers before the arranged date does not seem fair to candidates or schools."

"I think it's a fair process for British people but not very much internationals. The fact that Tier 2 can apply only to 1/5 of the places a national student can apply to and that the tier 2 licences are usually only given once by placement reduces drastically the chances of internationals. A hospital might have 15 places to offer but only one tier 2 licence and it's not even a mandatory one, the hospital can decide to pick 15 British students. How is it equal opportunity?"

"I think it's a fair system but we should get told our ranks before we preference to give a better idea"



"As long as you know what you want, it's very comprehensive"

"Other than it being stressful, i think it has been quite fair"

"There are still many places for improvement, particularly with regards to the release of results. These could be released a lot earlier I believe, and the pass/fail result recieved on the 7th of November was very poorly handled as it was unexpected due to us not being informed at all"



5: Closing Statement

In 2019, two years following on from the BPSA's 2017 report, there have been multiple improvements to Oriel. However, some of the recommendations raised in the 2017 report are highlighted in this report too. The reason for this is that improvement is still needed in these areas. This report has also identified other potential areas for improvement, which are highlighted throughout the report and the recommendations. The BPSA must continue to collect data from future cohorts of Oriel in order to fairly represent the views of the student population on this key element of initial education and training.



6: References

- 1) Health Education England, NHS Wales. Pre-registration Pharmacist Recruitment Applicant Handbook [Internet]. 2019 July [Cited on 8th December 2019]. Available from: <https://www.oriel.nhs.uk/Web/ResourceBank/Download?file=6cfea323-4376-42e6-a0e8-9820b72bca66.pdf&name=PreregistrationPharmacyRecruitmentApplicantGuidecommencing2020.pdf%20>
- 2) Paterson A. The British Pharmaceutical Students' Association Oriel Applicant Feedback: HEE Pre-registration Pharmacy Recruitment Operational Group Meeting [Internet]. 2017 November [cited on 8th December 2019]. Available from: <https://www.bpsa.co.uk/static/pdf/c297fbfbf2d9b3524ab2860186d5eeb7.pdf>



7: Appendices

7.1: Appendix 1: Survey Questions

***Indicates where a response is required question to proceed**

Section One - Online Application Process

- 1) What do you think of the online application process?*
- 2) Further Comments
- 3) What do you think of the applicant handbook?*
- 4) Further Comments
- 5) What do you think of the preferencing process?*
- 6) Further Comments

Section Two - Assessment Centre Booking

- 7) What do you think of the assessment centre online booking facility?*

Section Three - Multiple Mini Interviews (MMI)

- 8) Which assessment centre did you attend for the MMI?*
- 9) What did you think of the Multiple Mini Interviews (MMIs)?*
- 10) Further Comments
- 11) Was this your preferred location of the given locations?*
- 12) What was your travel time to the assessment centre? (one-way travel time)*
- 13) (If you have work experience) To what extent do you agree or disagree that your previous work experience assisted you throughout your application directly or indirectly?
- 14) Further Comments

Section Four - Situational Judgement Test (SJT)

- 15) What did you think of the situational judgement test (SJT)?*
- 16) Further Comments



17) Did you complete the SJT in the given time?*

18) Further Comments

Section Five - Numeracy Test

19) What do you think of the numeracy test?*

20) Further Comments

21) Did you complete the numeracy test in the given time?*

22) Further Comments

Section Six - Overall Experience

23) How would you rate your overall experience of applying for pre-registration training?*

24) Further Comments



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[END OF REPORT]