



# Exit Poll for Doctoral Students 2017-2020

## — Department of Molecular Medicine and Surgery

**Committee for Doctoral Education, Karolinska Institutet**

Report conducted by Evaluation Unit  
Per J. Palmgren and Elizabeth Blum

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**Karolinska  
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# Karolinska Institutet – Exit Poll for Doctoral Students 2017-2020

Report: Exit Poll for Doctoral Students 2017-2020 – Department of Molecular Medicine and Surgery

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Karolinska Institutet is one of the world's leading medical universities. Its vision is to significantly contribute to the improvement of human health. Karolinska Institutet accounts for the single largest share of all academic medical research conducted in Sweden and offers the country's broadest range of education in medicine and health sciences. The Nobel Assembly at Karolinska Institutet selects the Nobel laureates in Physiology or Medicine.

## Introduction

Exit Poll is a survey of newly graduated doctors at Karolinska Institutet (KI). The purpose of the survey is to gather information about how KI's doctoral students experience their education. The congregated information then forms the foundation for measures to improve doctoral education and the situation of doctoral students. The questions posed in the questionnaire concern several aspects of the education, such as supervision, courses, administrative support from the department, doctoral students' learning and work environment, and future plans after graduation.

Exit polls have been sent since 2008 to all graduate doctoral students in conjunction with, or shortly after, their public defense.

In this report, results from four years (2017-2020) have been compiled. A similar summary was made in 2017 (dnr: 1-449/2017) and results from this is included for the sake of comparison.

The number of questions in the survey has varied over the years. In the 2020 questionnaire (which this report is based on) there were 43 questions, containing both closed and open-ended response options (questionnaire is attached as appendix).

Respondents have been guaranteed anonymity, which we take the most seriously. Questions which are of sensitive nature have therefore been dealt with separately. For questions regarding discrimination or harassment (page 21) the data are displayed in a restricted format.

The following questions have been omitted from this report: 1. Open questions with free text answers for reasons of integrity and feasibility. 2. Questions intended being evaluated in special order but having a low public interest. 3. Questions that have been altered/changed during the period.

It should be emphasized that responses mediated in this aggregated exit poll report describes the situation at KI retrospectively, as the survey has been launched only upon completion of doctoral studies.

## Who responded to the survey?

All doctoral students at KI will have access to the questionnaire through a personal link via an e-mail sent soon after the public defense of the dissertation. Since 2015 the questionnaire is only being distributed to students obtaining a doctoral degree, previously it was also sent to students pursuing a licentiate degree.

The doctoral students answer the questionnaire anonymously.

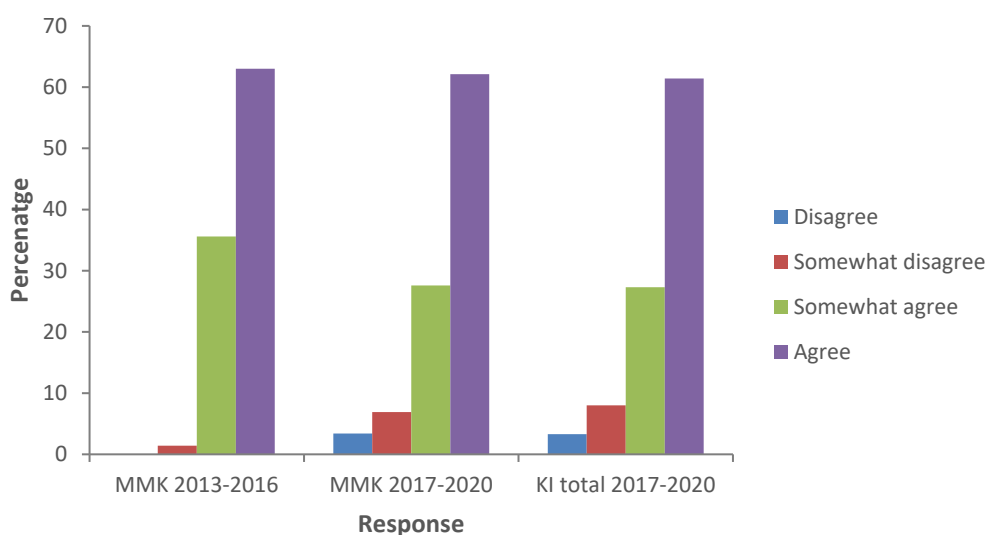
During the period covered by this report, 2017-2020, 1413 doctoral students were asked to answer the questionnaire, which generated a total response rate of 77 percent, for the 2013-2016 periods the aggregated response rate was 83 percent.

## Response rate

Year	Number of graduates	Number of survey responses	Response rate (%)
MMK 2017-2020	85	58	68.2
KI total 2017-2020	1413	1085	76.8

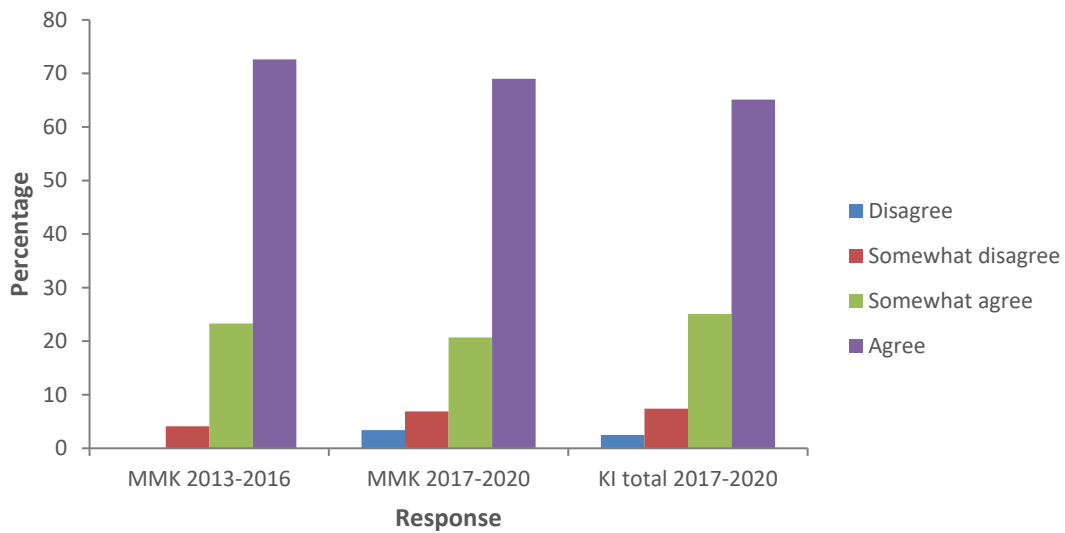
## Doctoral education and overall perception

Overall, I am satisfied with my doctoral education at KI.



Response	Frequency (%)		
	MMK 2013-2016	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
Disagree	-	2 (3.4)	36 (3.3)
Somewhat disagree	1 (1.4)	4 (6.9)	87 (8.0)
Somewhat agree	26 (35.6)	16 (27.6)	296 (27.3)
Agree	46 (63.0)	36 (62.1)	666 (61.4)
<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1085</b>

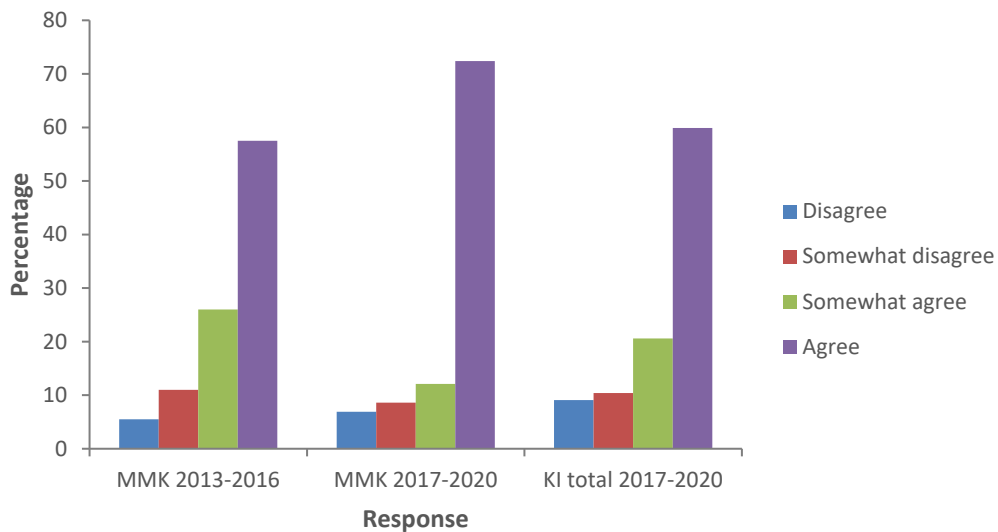
## I would recommend KI to prospective doctoral students.



Response	Frequency (%)		
	MMK 2013-2016	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
Disagree	-	2 (3.4)	27 (2.5)
Somewhat disagree	3 (4.1)	4 (6.9)	80 (7.4)
Somewhat agree	17 (23.3)	12 (20.7)	272 (25.1)
Agree	53 (72.6)	40 (69.0)	706 (65.1)
<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1085</b>

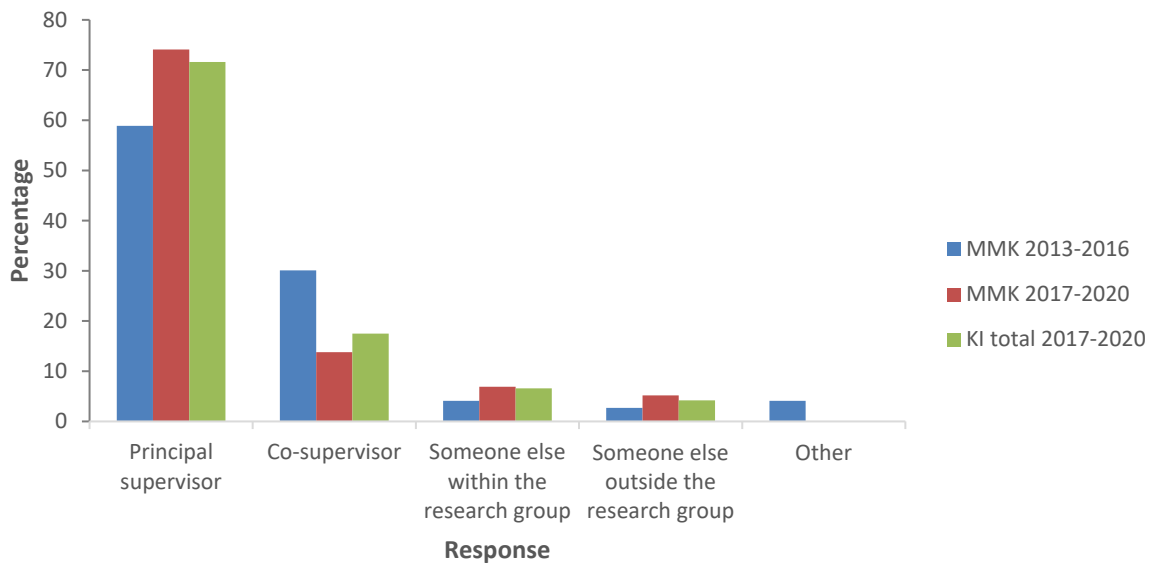
## Supervision

I would recommend my principal supervisor to prospective doctoral students.



Response	Frequency (%)		
	MMK 2013-2016	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
Disagree	4 (5.5)	4 (6.9)	99 (9.1)
Somewhat disagree	8 (11.0)	5 (8.6)	113 (10.4)
Somewhat agree	19 (26.0)	7 (12.1)	223 (20.6)
Agree	42 (57.5)	42 (72.4)	650 (59.9)
<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1085</b>

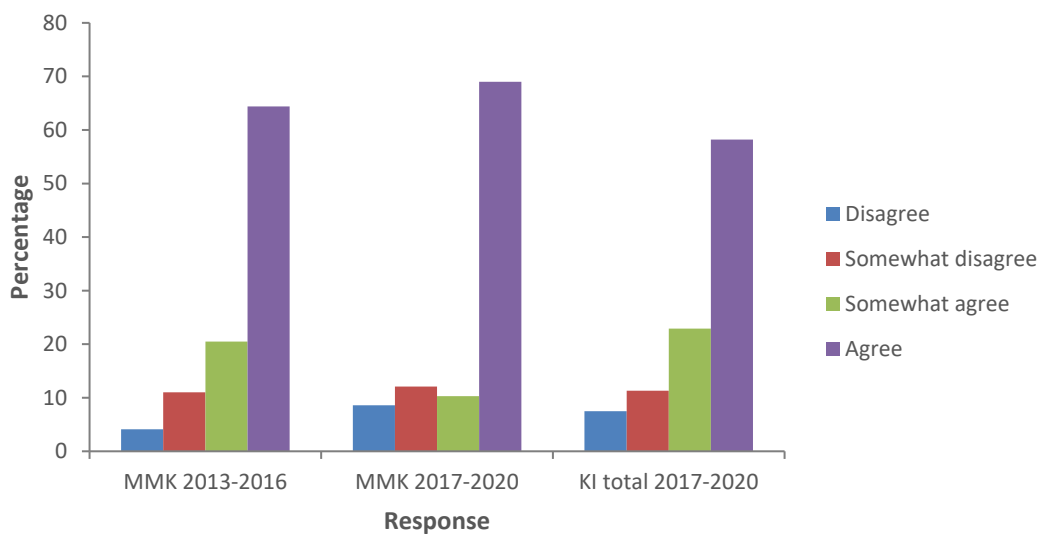
## From whom have you in practice received the most supervision?



Response	Frequency (%)		
	MMK 2013-2016 <sup>a</sup>	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
Principal supervisor	43 (58.9)	43 (74.1)	777 (71.6)
Co-supervisor	22 (30.1)	8 (13.8)	190 (17.5)
Someone else within the research group	3 (4.1)	4 (6.9)	72 (6.6)
Someone else outside the research group	2 (2.7)	3 (5.2)	46 (4.2)
Other <sup>1</sup>	3 (4.1)	-	-
<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1085</b>

<sup>1</sup>In the 2013-2016 report the response option "Other" was available but has now been omitted.

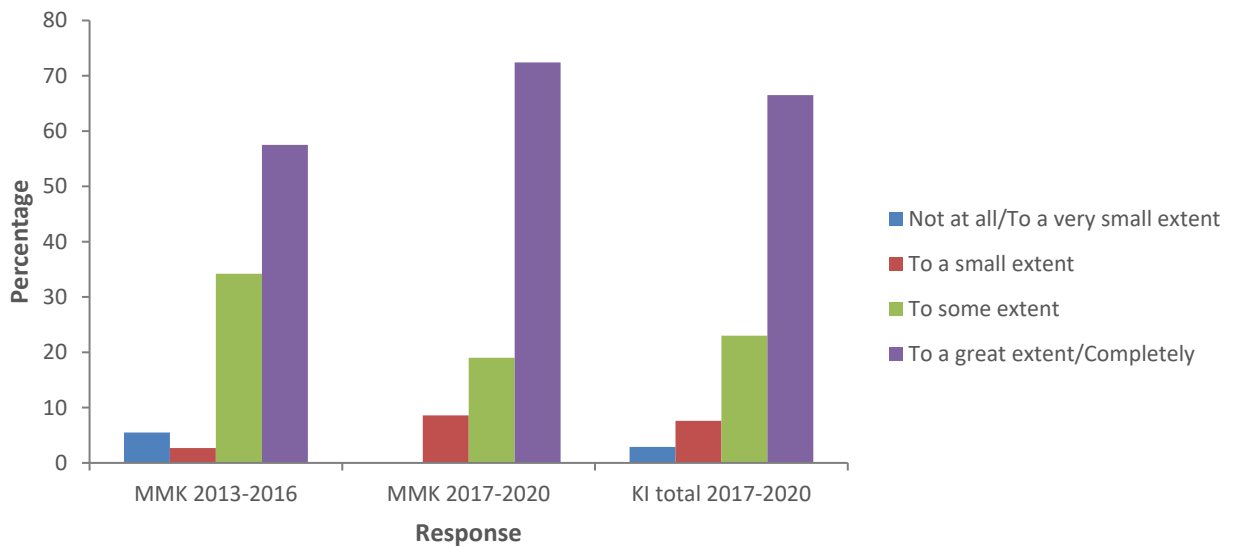
## I have received adequate supervision.



Response	Frequency (%)		
	MMK 2013-2016	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
Disagree	3 (4.1)	5 (8.6)	81 (7.5)
Somewhat disagree	8 (11.0)	7 (12.1)	123 (11.3)
Somewhat agree	15 (20.5)	6 (10.3)	249 (22.9)
Agree	47 (64.4)	40 (69.0)	632 (58.2)
<b>Number of answers</b>	73	58	1085

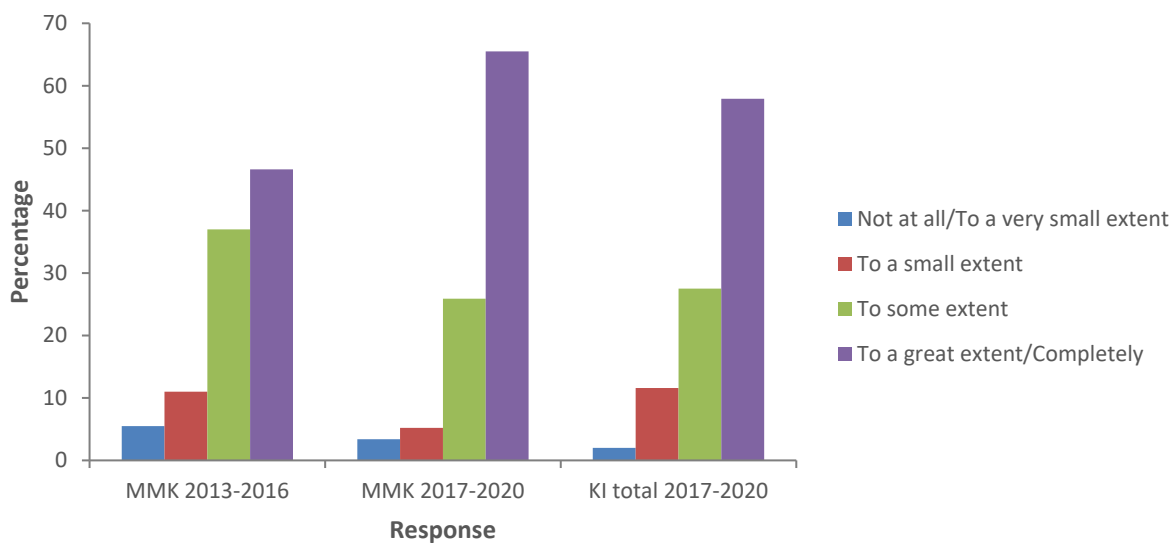


## To what extent have your supervisors displayed interest in your doctoral education?



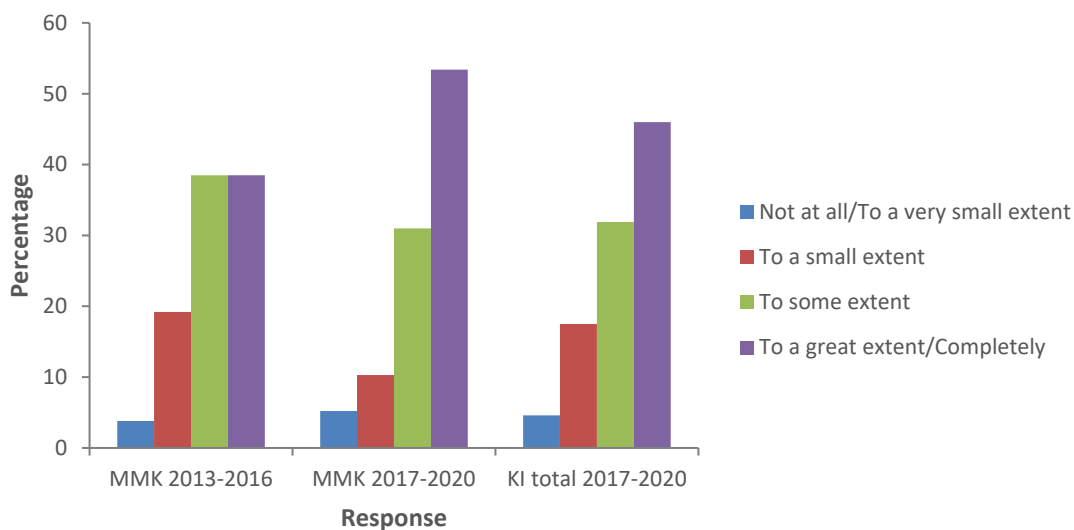
Response	Frequency (%)		
	MMK 2013-2016	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
Not at all/To a very small extent	4 (5.5)	-	32 (2.9)
To a small extent	2 (2.7)	5 (8.6)	829 (7.6)
To some extent	25 (34.2)	11 (19.0)	250 (23.0)
To a great extent/Completely	42 (57.5)	42 (72.4)	721 (66.5)
<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1085</b>

## To what extent have your supervisors discussed methodological issues with you?



Response	Frequency (%)		
	MMK 2013-2016	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
Not at all/To a very small extent	4 (5.5)	2 (3.4)	33 (2.0)
To a small extent	8 (11.0)	3 (5.2)	126 (11.6)
To some extent	27 (37.0)	15 (25.9)	298 (27.5)
To a great extent/Completely	34 (46.6)	38 (65.5)	628 (57.9)
<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1085</b>

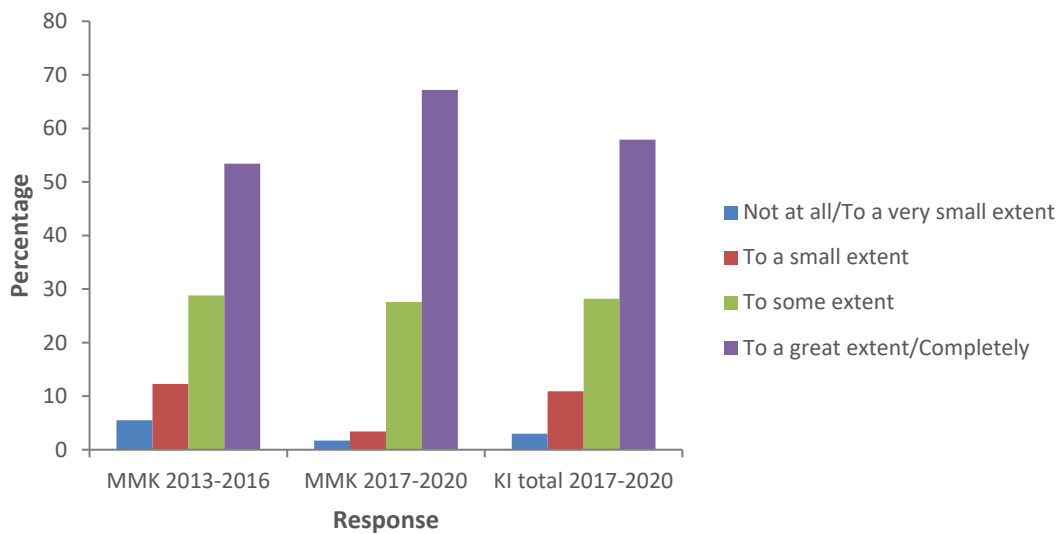
## To what extent have your supervisors discussed theory with you?



Response	Frequency (%)		
	MMK 2013-2016	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
Not at all/To a very small extent	2 (3.8)	3 (5.2)	50 (4.6)
To a small extent	10 (19.2)	6 (10.3)	190 (17.5)
To some extent	20 (38.5)	18 (31.0)	346 (31.9)
To a great extent/Completely	20 (38.5)	31 (53.4)	499 (46.0)
<b>Number of answers</b>	52 <sup>a</sup>	58	1085

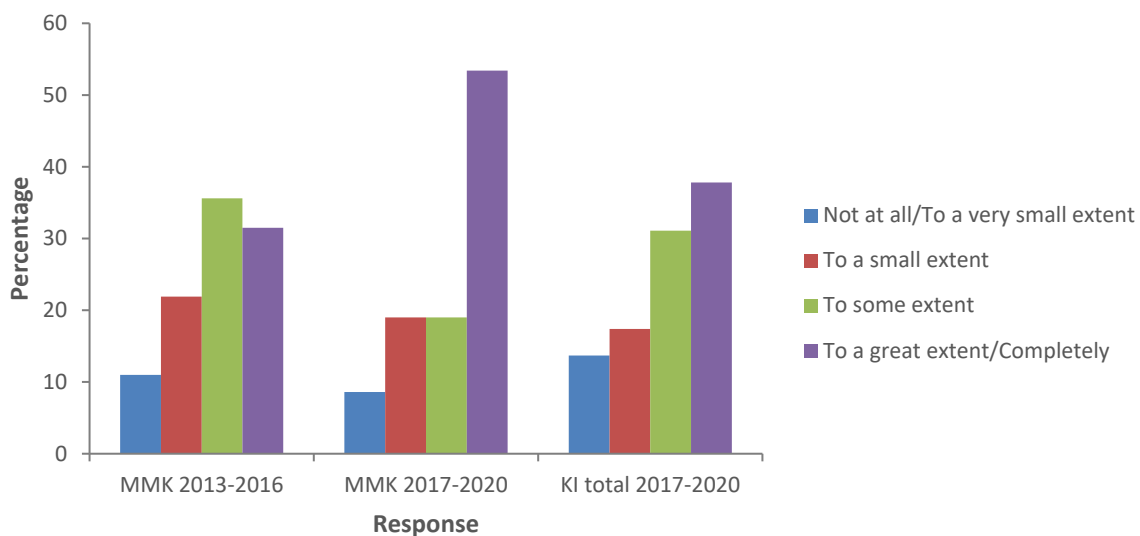
<sup>a</sup> Please note missing data n=21 (28.8 %)

## To what extent have your supervisors provided constructive criticism of your research?



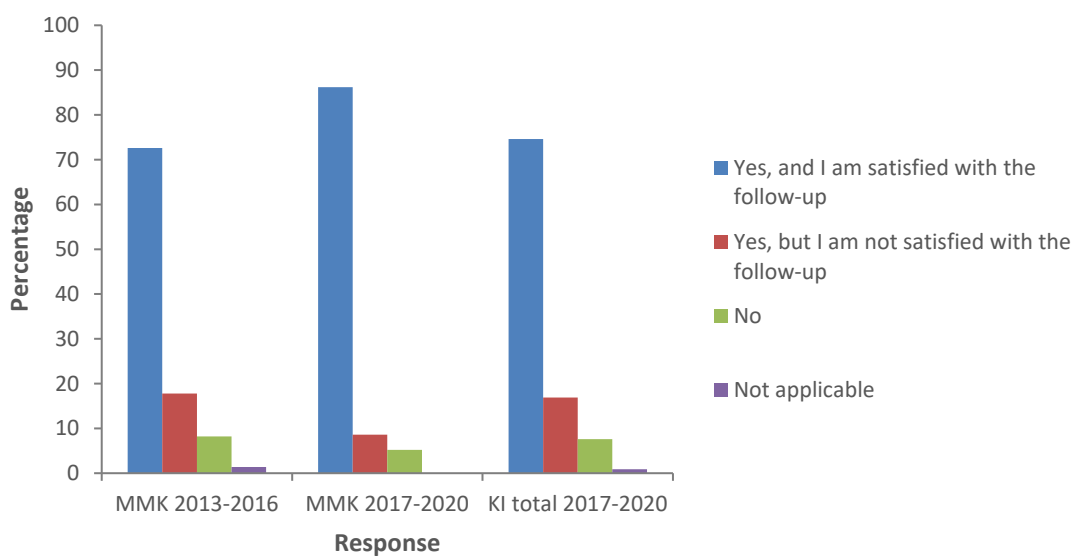
Response	Frequency (%)		
	MMK 2013-2016	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
Not at all/To a very small extent	4 (5.5)	1 (1.7)	33 (3.0)
To a small extent	9 (12.3)	2 (3.4)	118 (10.9)
To some extent	21 (28.8)	16 (27.6)	306 (28.2)
To a great extent/Completely	39 (53.4)	39 (67.2)	628 (57.9)
<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1085</b>

## To what extent have your supervisors discussed your plans for the future with you?



Response	Frequency (%)		
	MMK 2013-2016	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
Not at all/To a very small extent	8 (11.0)	5 (8.6)	149 (13.7)
To a small extent	16 (21.9)	11 (19.0)	189 (17.4)
To some extent	26 (35.6)	11 (19.0)	337 (31.1)
To a great extent/Completely	23 (31.5)	31 (53.4)	410 (37.8)
<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1085</b>

## Has there been any follow-up of your individual study plan during your doctoral education ('årlig uppföljning')?

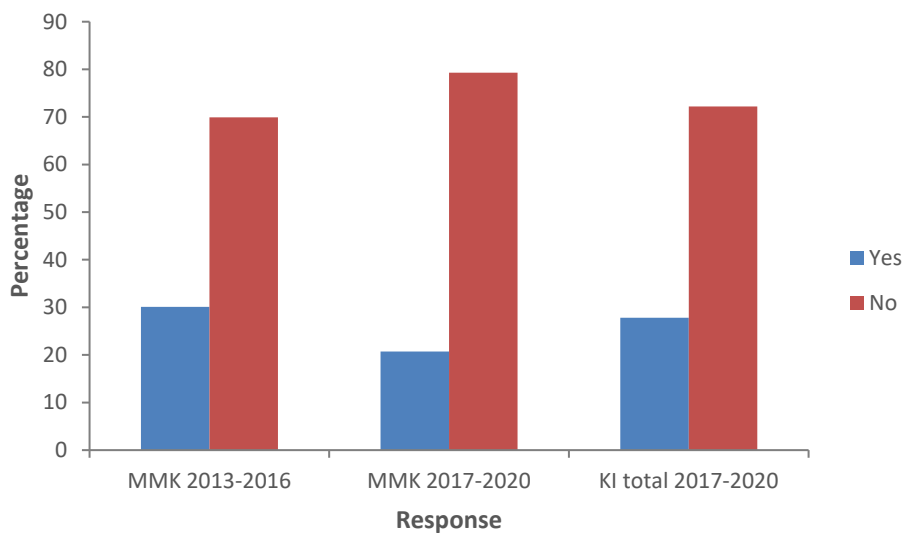


Response	Frequency (%)		
	MMK 2013-2016	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
Yes, and I am satisfied with the follow-up	53 (72.6)	50 (86.2)	809 (74.6)
Yes, but I am not satisfied with the	13 (17.8)	5 (8.6)	183 (16.9)
No	6 (8.2)	3 (5.2)	83 (7.6)
Not applicable <sup>1</sup>	1 (1.4)	-	10 (0.9)
<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1085</b>

<sup>1</sup> Response option was removed in 2020 but is reported in the aggregated score.

## Teaching

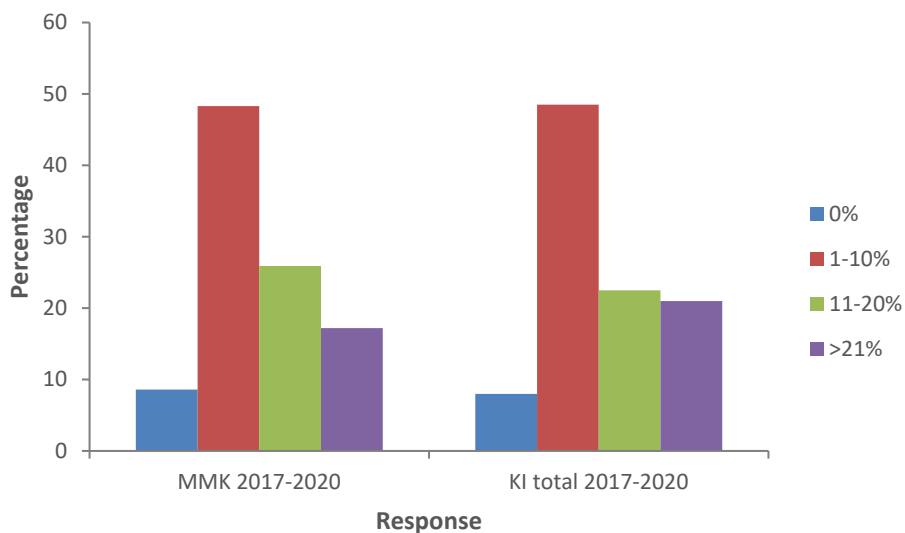
Have you taken part in any teacher training?



Response	Frequency (%)		
	MMK 2013-2016	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
Yes	22 (30.1)	12 (20.7)	302 (27.8)
No	51 (69.9)	46 (79.3)	783 (72.2)
<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1085</b>

## Estimate how much teaching (%) you did during your entire doctoral education 0-100(%) of full-time.

The students stated their estimation and these were then aggregated into categories.



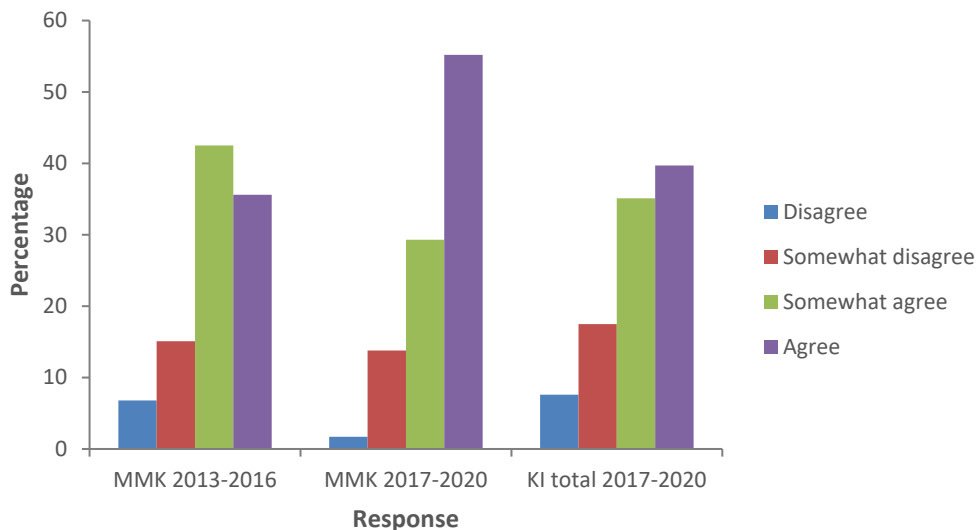
Response	Frequency (%)	
	MMK 2017- 2020 <sup>a</sup>	KI total 2017-2020
0%	5 (8.6)	87 (8.0)
1-10%	28 (48.3)	526 (48.5)
11-20%	15 (25.9)	244 (22.5)
>21%	10 (17.2)	228 (21.0)
<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1085</b>

<sup>a</sup> No aggregated data displayed for 2013-2016 as data from those years were collected differently.



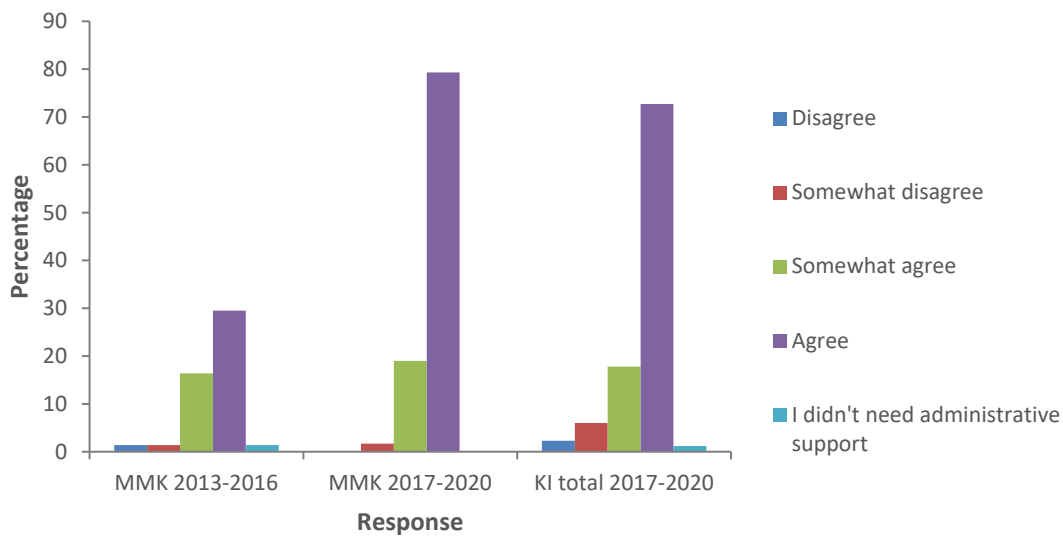
## Information and Administrative Support

I received good introduction / information from the department when I started my doctoral education.



Response	Frequency (%)		
	MMK 2013-2016	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
Disagree	5 (6.8)	1 (1.7)	83 (7.6)
Somewhat disagree	11 (15.1)	8 (13.8)	190 (17.5)
Somewhat agree	31 (42.5)	17 (29.3)	381 (35.1)
Agree	26 (35.6)	32 (55.2)	431 (39.7)
<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1085</b>

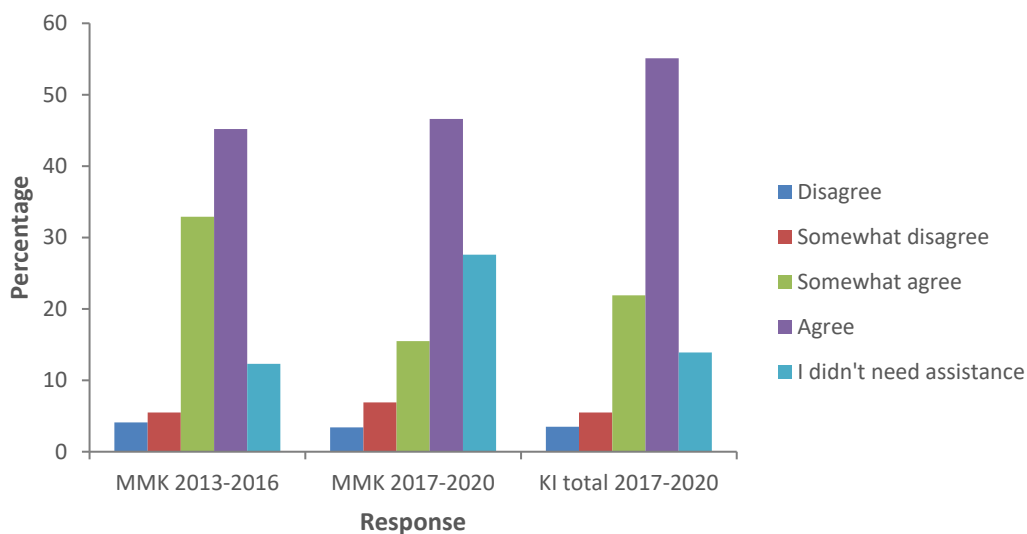
## I received adequate administrative support from the departmental administrators during my doctoral education.



Response	Frequency (%)		
	MMK 2013-2016	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
Disagree	1 (1.4)	-	25 (2.3)
Somewhat disagree	1 (1.4)	1 (1.7)	65 (6.0)
Somewhat agree	12 (16.4)	11 (19.0)	193 (17.8)
Agree	58 (79.5)	46 (79.3)	789 (72.7)
I didn't need administrative support <sup>1</sup>	1 (1.4)	-	13 (1.2)
<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1085</b>

<sup>1</sup>Response option added in 2014

## I received adequate assistance from the departmental director of doctoral studies<sup>1</sup> during my doctoral education.



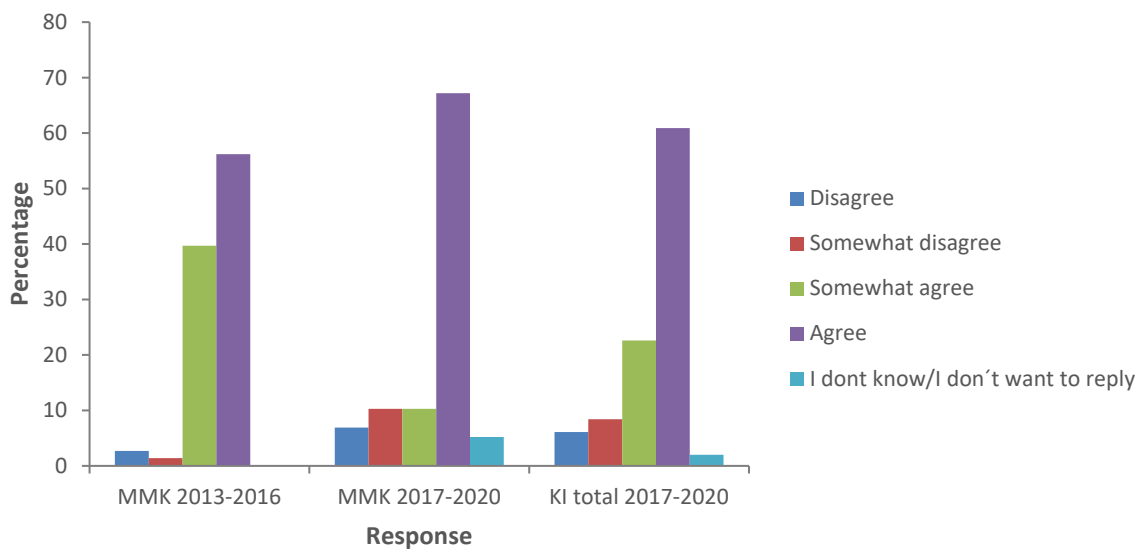
Response	Frequency (%)		
	MMK 2013-2016	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
Disagree	3 (4.1)	2 (3.4)	38 (3.5)
Somewhat disagree	4 (5.5)	4 (6.9)	60 (5.5)
Somewhat agree	24 (32.9)	9 (15.5)	238 (21.9)
Agree	33 (45.2)	27 (46.6)	598 (55.1)
I didn't need assistance <sup>1</sup>	9 (12.3)	16 (27.6)	151 (13.9)
<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1085</b>

<sup>1</sup> Response option added in 2014

<sup>1</sup> Institutionens studierektor för forskarutbildning

## Working Environment

I enjoyed a good working environment within my research group.



Response	Frequency (%)		
	MMK 2013-2016	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
Disagree	2 (2.7)	4 (6.9)	66 (6.1)
Somewhat disagree	1 (1.4)	6 (10.3)	91 (8.4)
Somewhat agree	29 (39.7)	6 (10.3)	245 (22.6)
Agree	41 (56.2)	39 (67.2)	661 (60.9)
I don't know/I don't want to say	-	3 (5.2)	22 (2.0)
<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1085</b>

<sup>1</sup>This response option was only available in 2019 and 2020.

**During your doctoral education, have you noticed or experienced unequal treatment, discrimination, degrading behaviour and/or harassment: (please feel free to comment below)**

1. due to gender
2. due to age
3. due to ethnicity
4. due to sexual orientation
5. due to transgender identity or expression
6. due to religious background or other beliefs
7. due to disability
8. other

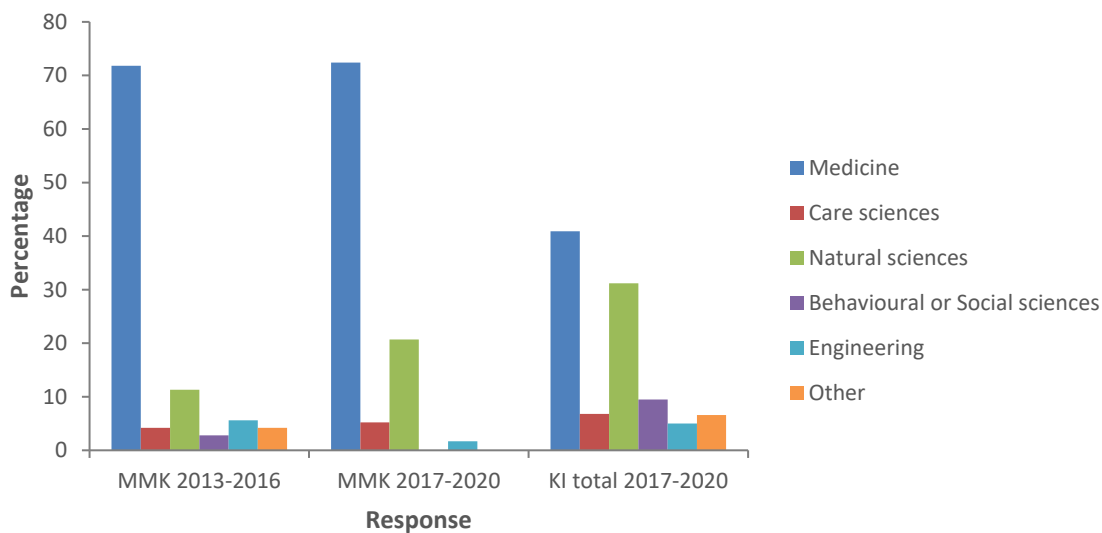
The response options were for each of the eight questions: No; Yes, I have noticed; Yes, I have experienced; Yes, I have both noticed and experienced.

Results below are displayed as percentage of respondents answering whether if they had experienced any of the above mentioned.

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency in percentage</b>		
	MMK 2013-2016	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
Yes, I have experienced/ noticed and experienced	13.0%	5.2%	15.6%

## Other Information

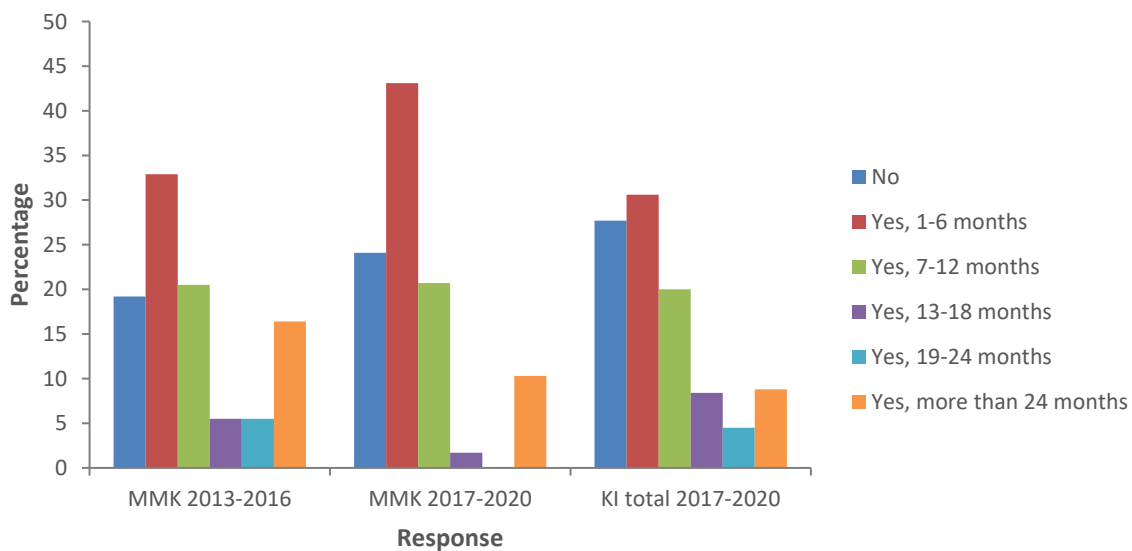
### Educational background before you began your doctoral education



Response	Frequency (%)		
	MMK 2013-2016	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
Medicine	51 (71.8)	42 (72.4)	444 (40.9)
Care sciences	3 (4.2)	3 (5.2)	74 (6.8)
Natural sciences	8 (11.3)	12 (20.7)	338 (31.2)
Behavioural or Social sciences	2 (2.8)	-	103 (9.5)
Engineering	4 (5.6)	1 (1.7)	54 (5.0)
Other	3 (4.2)	-	72 (6.6)
<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1085</b>

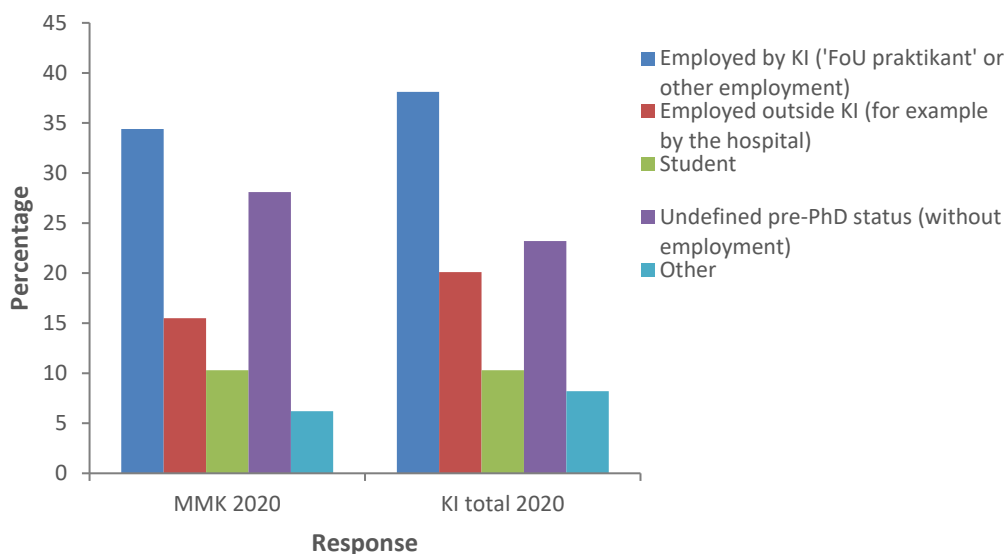
## Were you active in research at KI before formal admission to doctoral education?

Please, do NOT include time in undergraduate or master courses.



Response	Frequency (%)		
	MMK 2013-2016	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
No	14 (19.2)	14 (24.1)	301 (27.7)
Yes, 1-6 months	24 (32.9)	25 (43.1)	332 (30.6)
Yes, 7-12 months	15 (20.5)	12 (20.7)	217 (20.0)
Yes, 13-18 months	4 (5.5)	1 (1.7)	91 (8.4)
Yes, 19-24 months	4 (5.5)	-	49 (4.5)
Yes, more than 24 months	12 (16.4)	6 (10.3)	95 (8.8)
<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1085</b>

## Under which circumstances were you active in research before admission?<sup>1</sup>

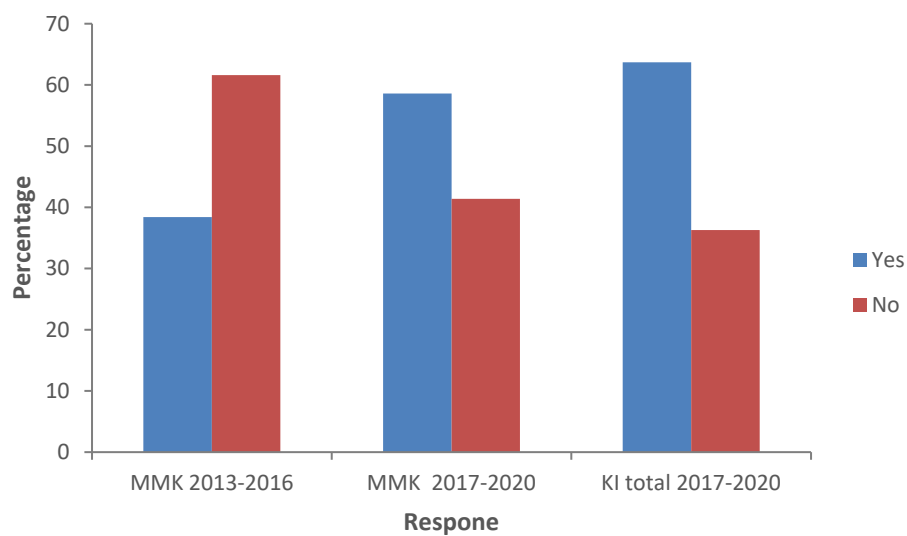


Response	Frequency (%)	
	MMK 2020	KI total 2020
Employed by KI ('FoU praktikant' or other employment)	11 (34.4)	74 (38.1)
Employed outside KI (for example by the hospital)	9 (15.5)	39 (20.1)
Student	6 (10.3)	20 (10.3)
Undefined pre-PhD status (without employment)	4 (28.1)	45 (23.2)
Other	2 (6.2)	16 (8.2)
<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>194</b>

<sup>1</sup> Due to heavy reformatting of this question, only data from 2020 are presented.



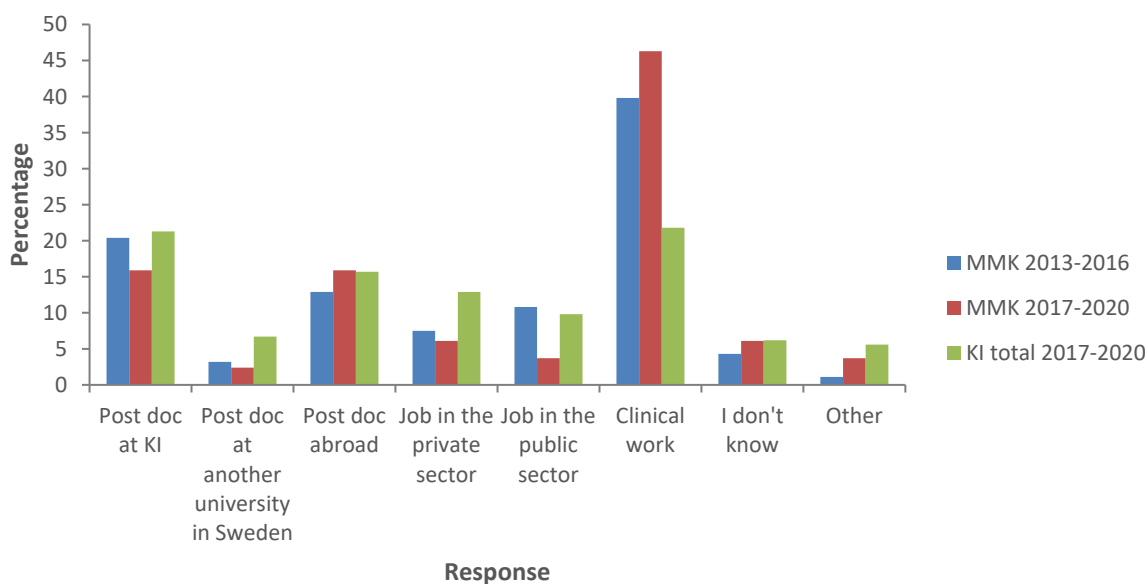
## Have you performed your doctoral education full-time?



Response	Frequency (%)		
	MMK 2013-2016	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
Yes	28 (38.4)	34 (58.6)	691 (63.7)
No	45 (61.6)	24 (41.4)	394 (36.3)
<b>Number of answers</b>	73	582	1085

## What do you plan to do after your PhD degree?

The respondents could choose more than one response option.



Response	Frequency (%)		
	MMK 2013-2016	MMK 2017-2020	KI total 2017-2020
Post doc at KI	19 (20.4)	13 (15.9)	362 (21.3)
Post doc at another university in Sweden	3 (3.2)	2 (2.4)	114 (6.7)
Post doc abroad	12 (12.9)	13 (15.9)	267 (15.7)
Job in the private sector	7 (7.5)	5 (6.1)	220 (12.9)
Job in the public sector	10 (10.8)	3 (3.7)	167 (9.8)
Clinical work	37 (39.8)	38 (46.3)	372 (21.8)
I don't know	4 (4.3)	5 (6.1)	105 (6.2)
Other	1 (1.1)	3 (3.7)	96 (5.6)
<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>1703</b>