

Presented by Kitty Eyes

# SUPERVISED STUDIO:

WHY DO STUDENTS NOT ATTEND AND  
WHAT CAN TECHNICIANS DO TO MAKE  
SESSIONS MORE ACCESSIBLE AND  
APPROACHABLE

# CONTEXT & BACKGROUND

## About me:

- I work on a practical making course – BA(Hons) Hair, Makeup and Prosthetics for Performance as an operationally-based Technician, so I do not teach formal lessons
- My teaching practice is primarily based in ad hoc one to ones, tutorials, and Supervised Studio sessions
- As a former student on the course I now work on, I have a unique view on the course structure and can see persisting issues due to stagnating lesson designs and structures



# WHAT IS SUPERVISED STUDIO?

Supervised Studio sessions are open, independent study sessions that are based in a specialist studio and have at least one Technician attached to them. The students can use the session for whatever they would like and have a Technician on hand for specialist guidance and advice.

They are intended for project development, tutorials and one to ones, lesson catch-ups, etc.

Percentage of Technical Workshops that are Supervised Studio in 2025-26:

1st years – 23%

2nd years – 29%

3rd Years – 55%

\*Data taken from departmental Technical Planning document

# RATIONALE

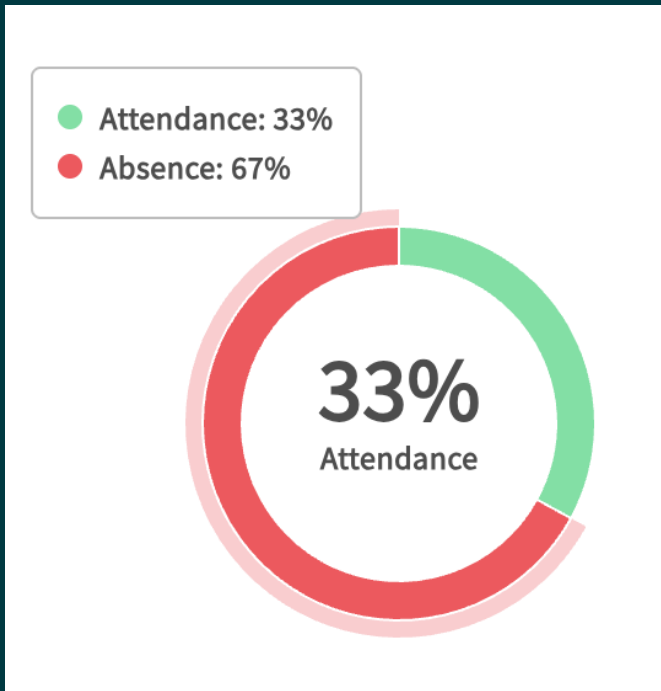


Image taken from sEATS – Year 3 average attendance in Supervised Studio sessions from Term 1 (October 21st – December 5th)

Attendance for Supervised Studio sessions is historically low despite being a mandatory lesson. In theory, Supervised Studio sessions should be allowing and encouraging students to engage in self-directed learning, becoming independent and self-sufficient, but the low attendance rates and outside-of-lesson-demand for technical help show otherwise.

Ultimately, this disadvantages both staff and students, creating an unsustainable cycle of dependency that takes up a large portion of learning time.

What are the boundaries that are arising that are not allowing students to attend? And how can we best use ours and our students time?

# QUESTIONNAIRE

The decision to directly survey the students arose from the desire for honest, direct feedback. When anonymous, students can feel more empowered to be truthful and direct (Fife-Schaw, 2020).

Totaling 12 questions ranging from close-ended Yes/No, open response, and rating from 1-5

The form was digital and both emailed to student via Moodle, and in QR codes posted in rooms during lessons for accessibility and ease of use

Final year students were the only students surveyed as they have had the highest number of sessions compared to first- and second-year students



# REFLECTION

## Successes –

Honesty was evident throughout the open response questions

Students clearly felt comfortable expressing their issues and confusion with the session, as well as sharing personal issues regarding work schedules, travel and material costs

## Failures –

Low number of responses – my chosen method of distribution was clearly not as effective as desired, with a total of 8 responses.

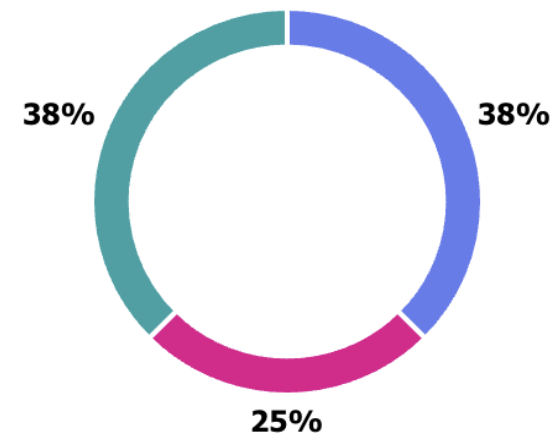
Additionally, to those 8, there were 3 members of staff who misunderstood and completed the survey, requiring me to delete responses to ensure the focus was consistently on the student voice

# FINDINGS

2. To the best of your knowledge, does Supervised Studio have mandatory attendance?

[More details](#)

Yes	3
No	2
I don't know	3



"Concerning, but not surprising" - Technician A

## 6. What do you personally use Supervised Studio for?

8 Responses

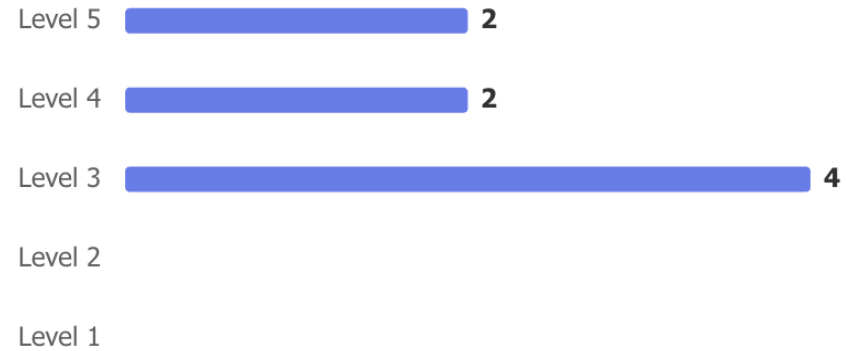
ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	I would normally use it to use the facilities at uni
2	anonymous	To work on uni projects and knowing I have instant help available.
3	anonymous	To work on my project and ask the technicians for advice
4	anonymous	to have a chill environment to sculpt or work on assignments
5	anonymous	Work on own projects
6	anonymous	Working on whatever I need to do for the project
7	anonymous	Help and support from the teacher
8	anonymous	As a focused time to work on my project, ask for help with materials or processes I am unfamiliar with and get feedback on how I am getting on.

8. Do you find Supervised Studio sessions helpful? Please select from 1 to 5 - 1 being not helpful at all and 5 being very helpful and integral to your learning.

[More details](#)

3.75

Average Rating

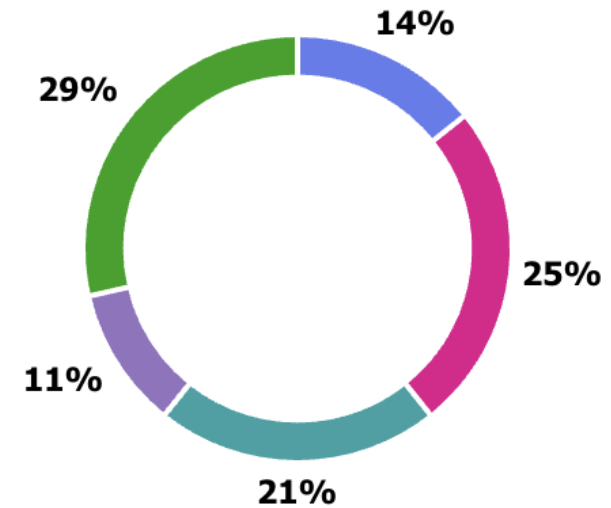


3	anonymous	I would like them more structured as sometimes I don't know what to do during the sessions, but when I do have a question about a specific skill the technicians have always been helpful
4	anonymous	because im not necessarily learning, its just scheduled free time
5	anonymous	They vary in the amount of support available dependent on who is with you
6	anonymous	They are helpful! If we didn't have supervised studios I would struggle to find the time to work on everything, especially with technical support- but sometimes I think the sessions could be more structured to make sure more skills are covered each year

11. Would you find Supervised Studio sessions more useful if they included: (Please select all that apply)

[More details](#)

- Specific topics per session 4
- Short demos / "tips and tricks" sessions 7
- Bookable tutorial slots with specific technicians 6
- Peer reviews and activities 3
- Multiple technicians with different specialisms 8



One of the final questions offered suggestions for additions to sessions that have already been trialed or actually are already in place.

100% of students who completed the questionnaire stated that they would find it more useful to have more technicians with different specialism – this is already offered across each unit in all three years

# STAFF FEEDBACK

Technician C - "I want to help the students, but how can I if they never turn up."

All 6 Technicians mentioned the same main issue – students aren't turning up, and when they do it's often outside of a lesson and not when we are specifically scheduled to be with them.

Technician D - "It often feels like students think that anytime I'm not in a technical lesson, they can have supervised studio with me, like they don't actually understand it's a lesson itself."

Additionally, several technicians mentioned concern around students with chemical process-based specialisms being required to come in to make, whereas other students can still make from home and might prefer to depending on travel time and costs, work schedules, and comfort in the studios.

Student A – Sessions "could feel like a waste of time if you travelled far"

# FINDINGS - COMMON THEMES

## 1. Student Perception

Student D - "should be available for outside of lesson time not replacing lesson time"

Lack of clear communication to students about what Supervised Studio is

## 2. Lack of lesson structure

Inviting creativity and independence is doing the opposite of what it should do, it feels overwhelming to students and creates a mental barrier (Ames, 1992)

Mentioned more than once by 50% of students polled

## 3. Wrong place, wrong time

25% of students polled feel that there is too much Supervised Studio

Student E - "They often come too early into projects where we don't have much testing/ making to do"

# PROPOSED CHANGES

## 1. Rebranding

Changing the name of the sessions on the timetable to be more specific to what the students are expected to work on gives students a clear idea of what they should be working on and can help them plan, maintain expectations, and build self-confidence (Cobb and Patton, 2024)

## 2. Restructuring

Creating structure inside of the lesson, specifically by introducing bookable tutorial slots, allows for students to receive more formal feedback and dedicated one to one time with a technician which can facilitate and positively reinforce independence and self-sufficiency (Sachdeva, 1996)

## 3. Replacing

Due to the constraints of the definition of Supervised Studio, in order to deliver a lesson plan, the lesson would have to be formally changed – depending on where in the unit the session lands, it would be more beneficial to become a formal lesson on a topic that is frequently being requested in one to ones

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