

TIME 2

A follow-up evaluation was conducted on the 18th (for those not participating in the concert) and 25th (for those who were) of October.

We received **37** responses, across the 3 string groups: 9 from group 1, 12 from group 2 and 16 from group 3. Participants were asked some basic demographic questions, as well as four items that rated their experience of the MEP sessions, three items about their intentions to continue, four items about their experience of the concert and two free-response items where they could provide feedback. Adult respondents were also asked to provide feedback on possible costing regimes.

Questions were as below:

	<SD	-	-	N	-	-	SA>
1. I have enjoyed the MEP sessions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I found the MEP sessions difficult	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I think the content of the sessions was at an appropriate level to include everyone	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I liked the way the sessions were conducted	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I would be interested in continuing in the project , if possible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. If the project were to end, I would keep playing a string instrument on my own	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I am interested in playing other instruments as well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

...which instrument (s)? _____

1. The concert experience enhanced my overall experience of the string group.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. The string group would have been more enjoyable for me WITHOUT the pressure of working toward a performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I learned something from the concert process that I might not otherwise have learned.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Participating in the concert changed the way I thought about what I've learned from the String Project.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

*Please outline below which aspects of the program have been the **most fun** and **why they were the best**.*

*Please outline below which aspects of the program you **haven't enjoyed**. In thinking about these aspects, please describe **how we could improve?***

FOR ADULTS ONLY:

In the event that maintaining this program necessitated a cost for participants, please indicate below:

8. What would you consider a reasonable cost to ask of participants? _____

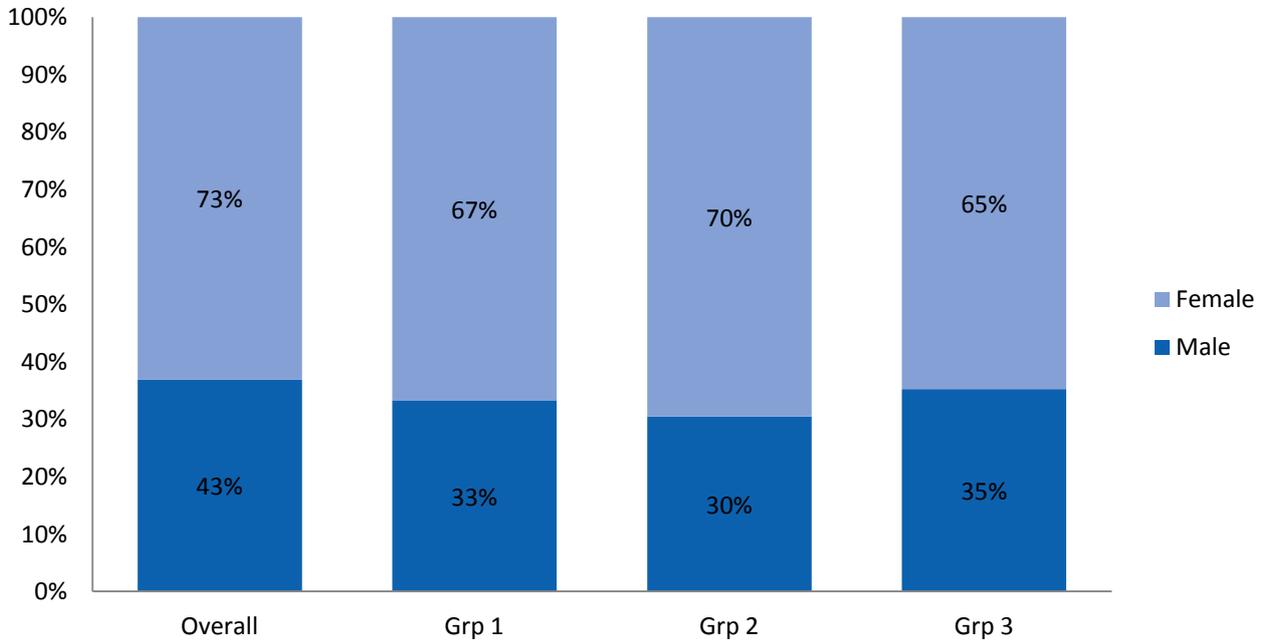
9. From your own personal perspective, what cost would you consider a cost you could manage to continue involvement _____

10. Any further comments on costing (e.g. why your answer to the above questions may differ, whether you foresee any issues in including a cost etc.)?

WHO WERE THE RESPONDENTS?

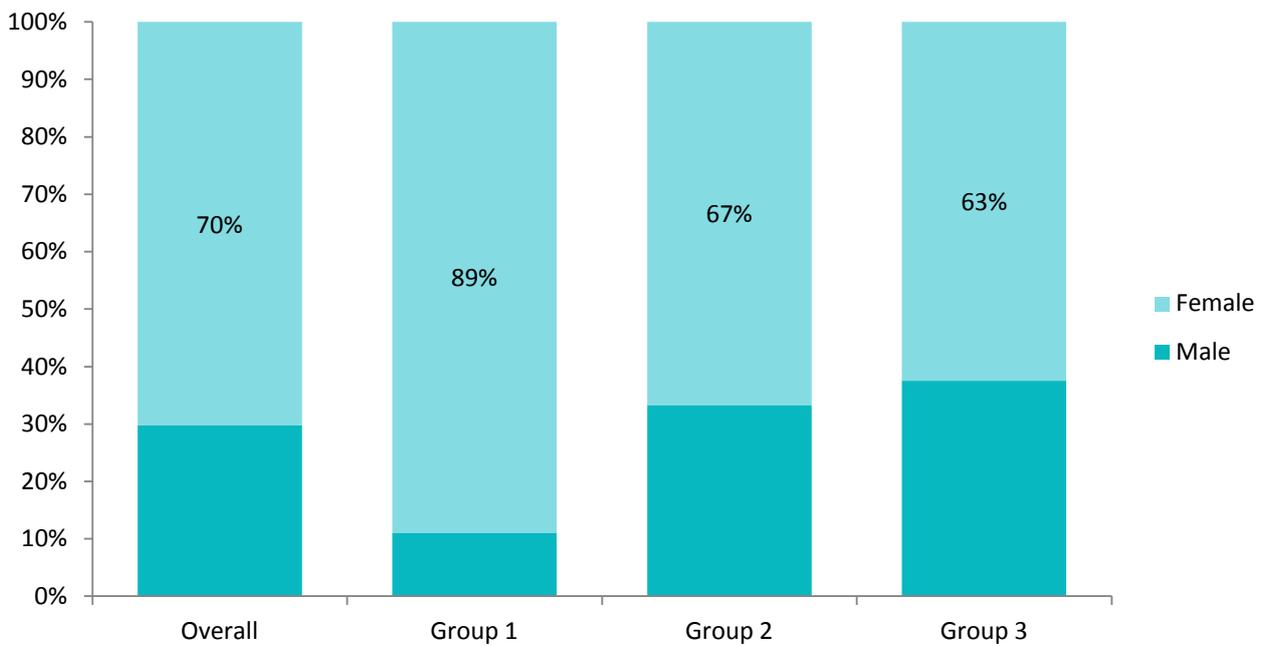
At time 1, survey respondents were predominantly female. 63% overall were female and this pattern was the same across all 3 groups.

Gender- Time 1



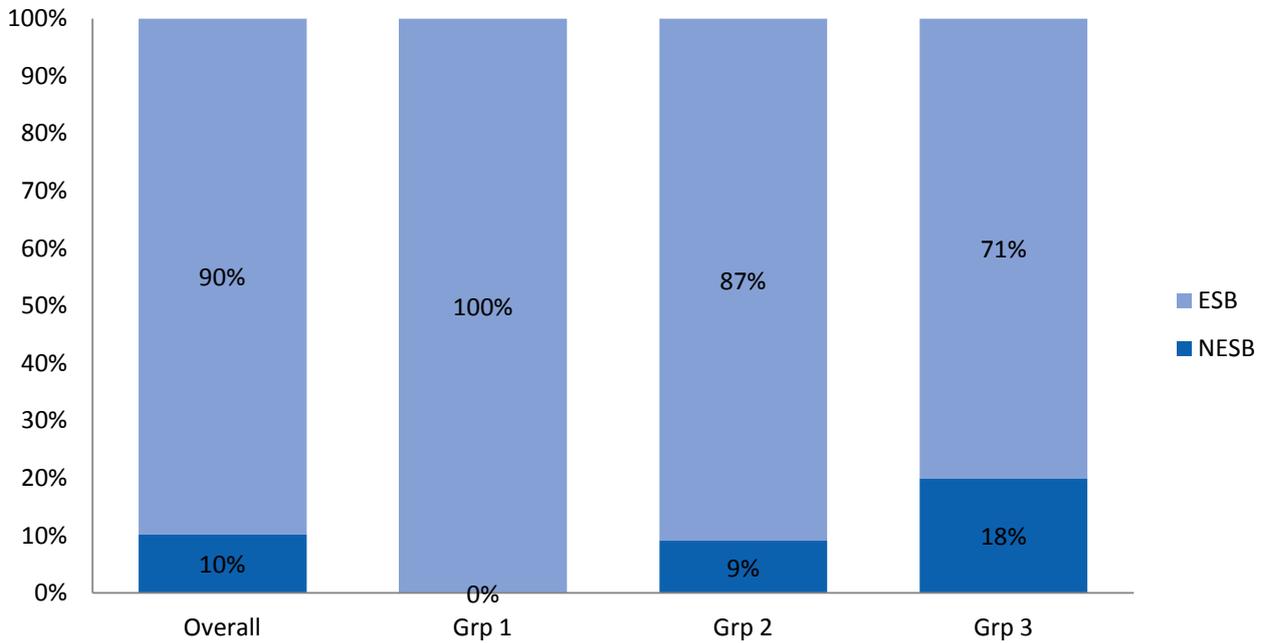
At time 2, this pattern was repeated, with approximately 70% of respondents identifying themselves as female.

Gender- Time 2



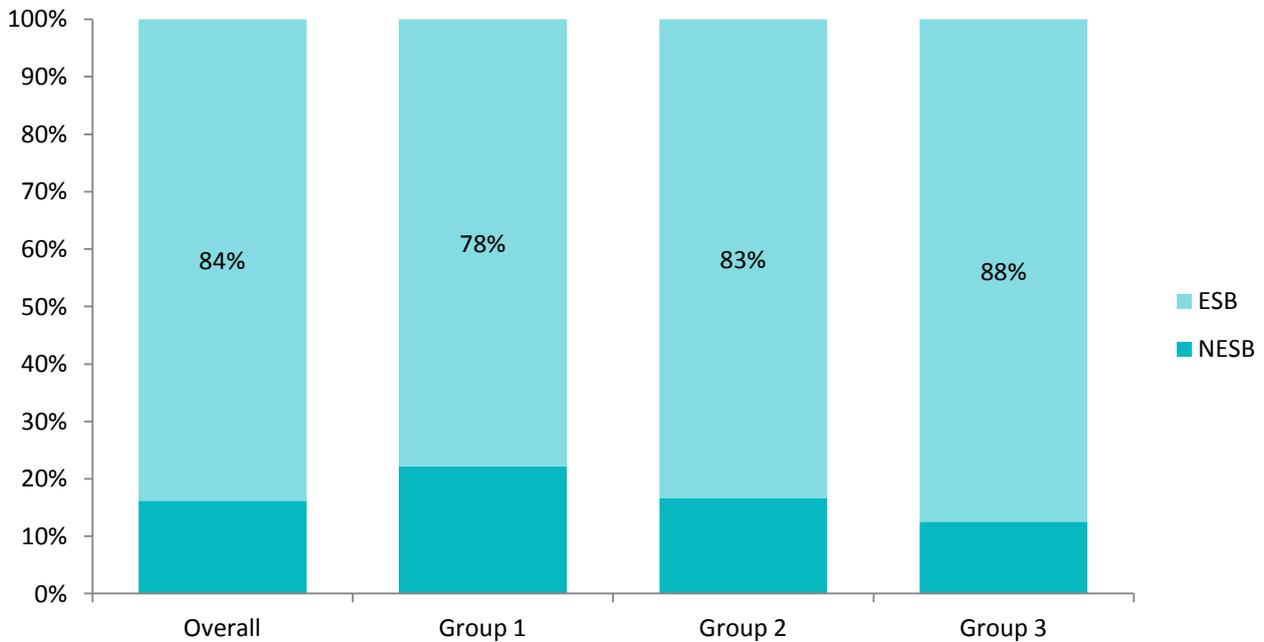
Respondents were from a predominantly English-speaking background. At Time 1, only 10% of respondents reported a non-English speaking background (NESB). This pattern holds across group. Group 1, in fact, had no NESB respondents.

Language background



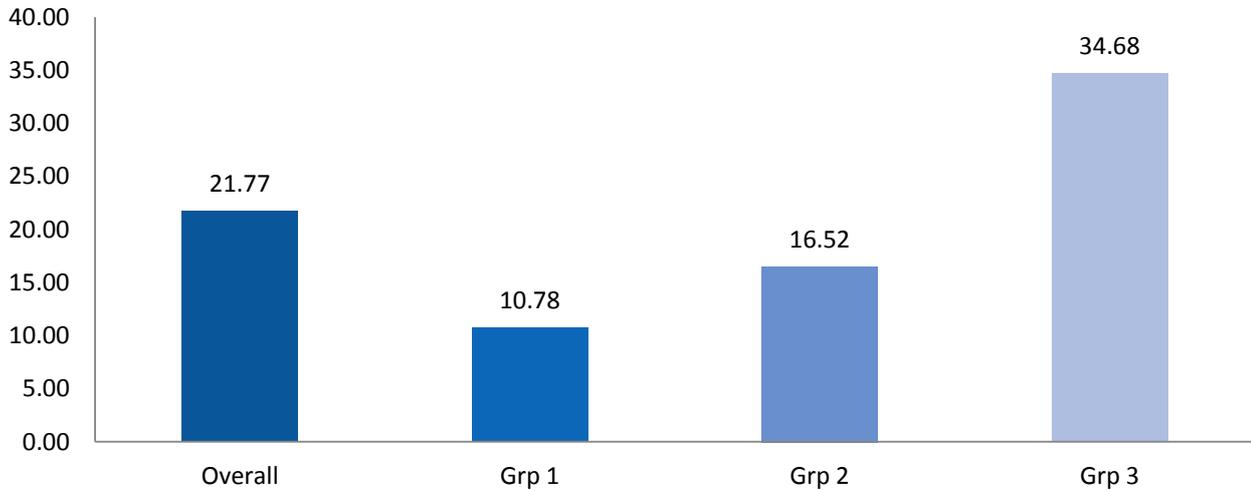
At time 2, English was still the predominant native language, with those from a NESB being in the minority across all groups (~15%).

Language background



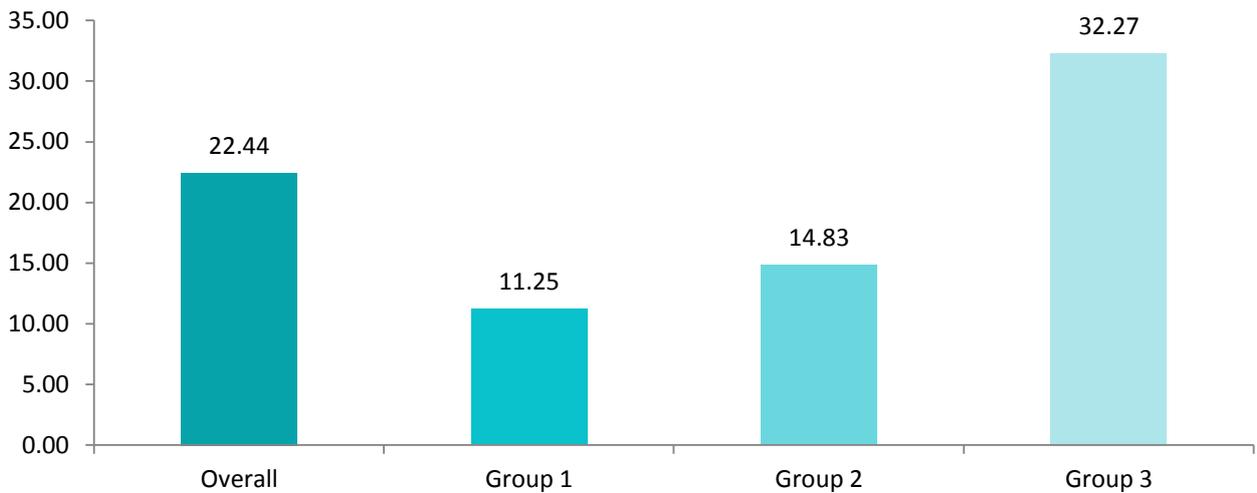
Age was unevenly distributed by group. At Time 1, the overall average age was about 22, but survey respondents from group 3 were, on average, significantly older than that (at 34.7) and in group 1 were significantly younger (approx 11 years old).

Mean age by group



At Time 2, the group mean ages were roughly the same, with Group 3 reporting the highest ages and group 1 the lowest.

Mean age



Taken together, these demographics indicate that we have comparable respondents at Time 1 and 2, if not necessarily exactly the same respondents. Respondents were not tracked across time individually (owing to the difficulty of unique code generation for children) and survey responses were deliberately anonymous. The similarity in demographic composition in the time 1 and 2 datasets, however, indicates that it is suitable to compare group means across time.

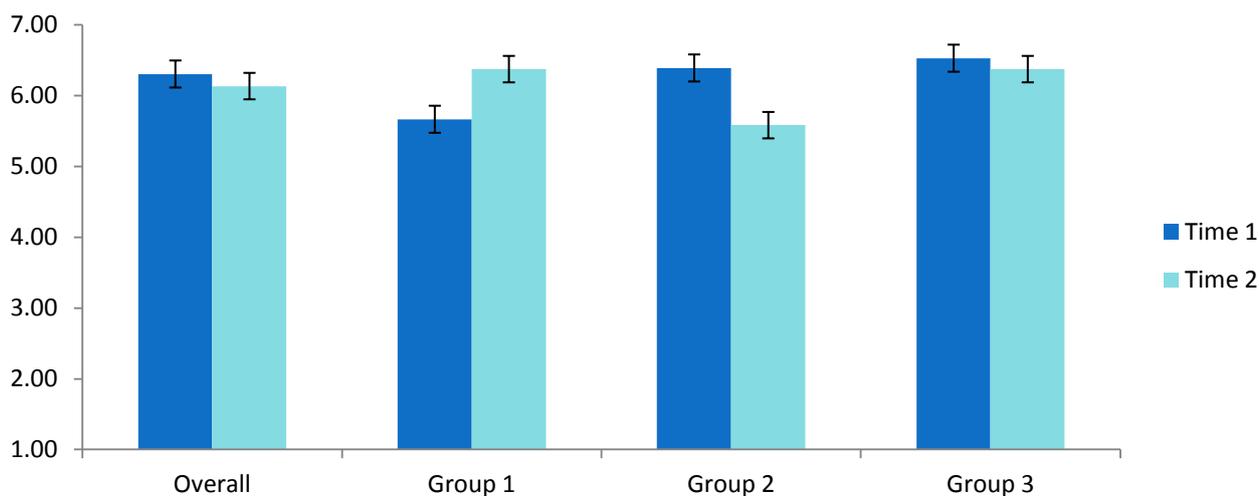
OVERALL RATINGS

Responses to the four rating questions, means overall, and by group are compared across time.

ENJOYMENT OF SESSIONS

The first item, "I am enjoying the MEP sessions"/ "I have enjoyed the MEP sessions", was fairly highly rated at time 1. The overall average was 6.31 and all groups scored more than 5 (the "agree" point on the 7-point scale). At time 2, the overall average had decreased slightly (6.14), but the difference was not statistically significant. Over time, there was little change in this item. The one exception is that for group 1, there was an increase in enjoyment and group 2 reported a decrease. The non-overlapping error bars suggest that these effects are not due to chance.

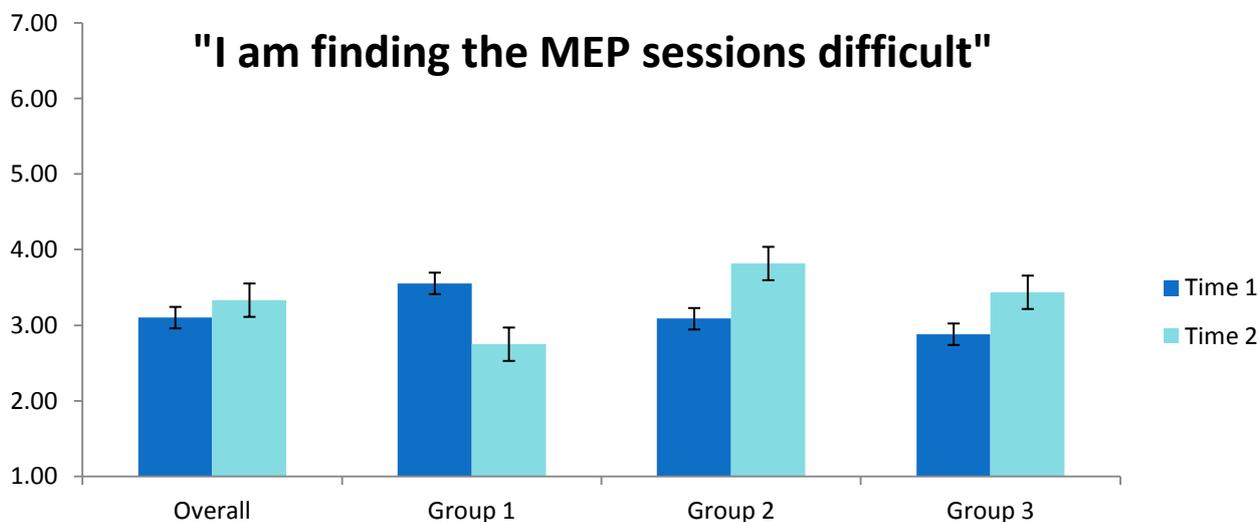
"I am enjoying the MEP sessions"



DIFFICULTY

Difficulty ratings generally increased over time. The overall sample, as well as the members of Groups 2 and 3, reported that they found the sessions more difficult at time 2 than time 1. Group 1, however, reported a lower level of difficulty. Group 1 had reported the highest level of difficulty at time 1 and the lower level of enjoyment, so it is possible that their feedback was addressed and their experience of the sessions had improved by time 2.

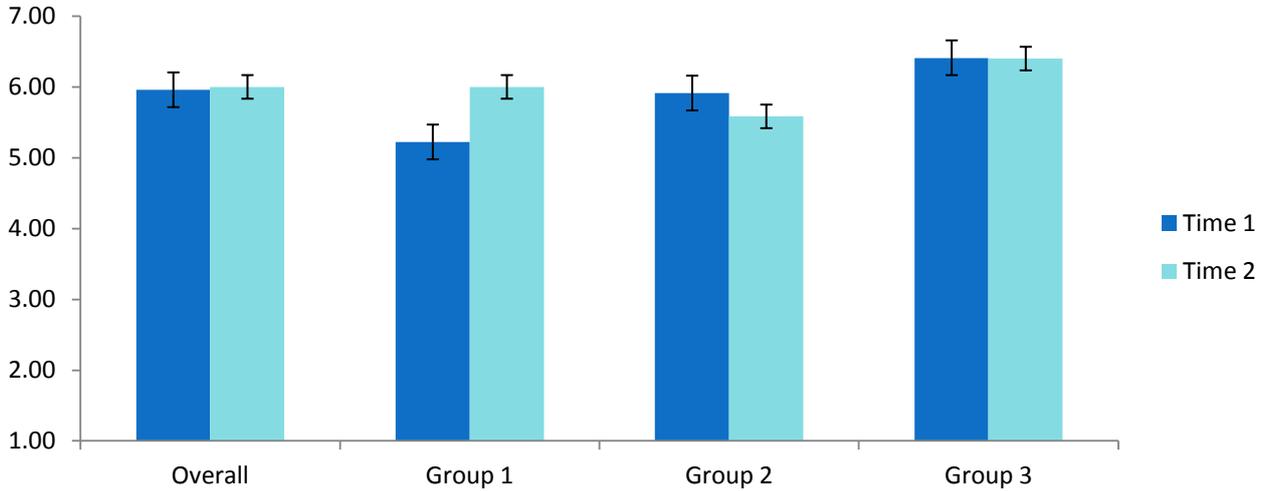
"I am finding the MEP sessions difficult"



CONTENT LEVEL

Participants generally agreed that the content was at an appropriate level to include everyone. All mean responses, across all groups at both times were above the agree point (5) on the 7-point scale. There was no real change across time in responses. In group 1, however, there was an increase in agreement that content is at an appropriate level, which possibly reflects the greater level of enjoyment and lower level of difficulty this group reported at time 2.

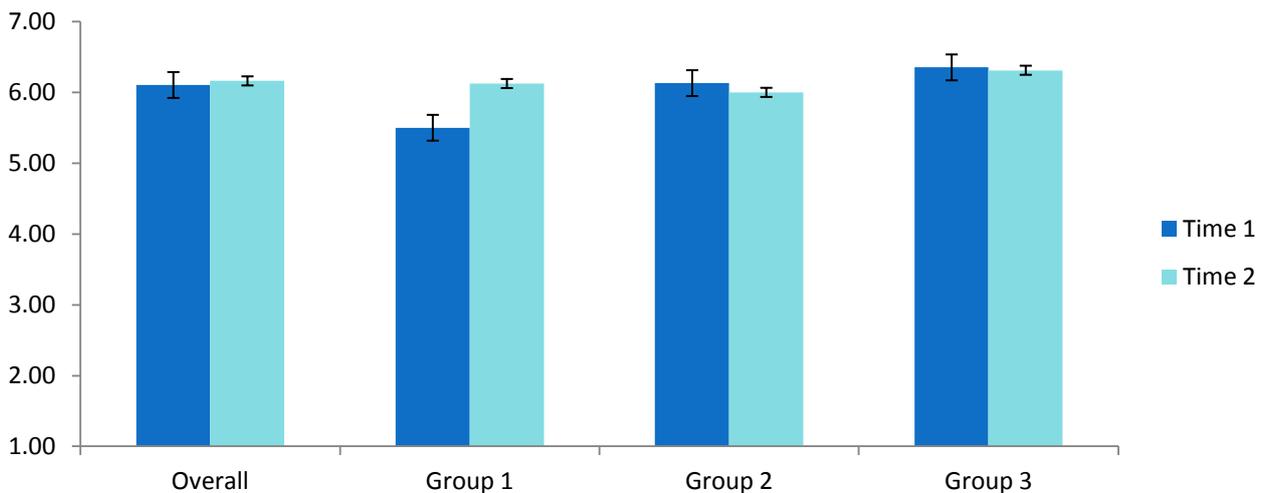
"I think the content is at an appropriate level"



THE WAY THE SESSIONS ARE CONDUCTED

At time 1, Group 1 rated the way the sessions were conducted more lowly than the other groups. At time 2, all three groups were rating this question very highly. The means were all approximately 6 (on a 7-point scale), indicating that, participants were happy with the way the sessions are run. In fact, only 3 respondents disagreed with the statement "I like the way the sessions are conducted".

"I like the way the sessions are conducted"



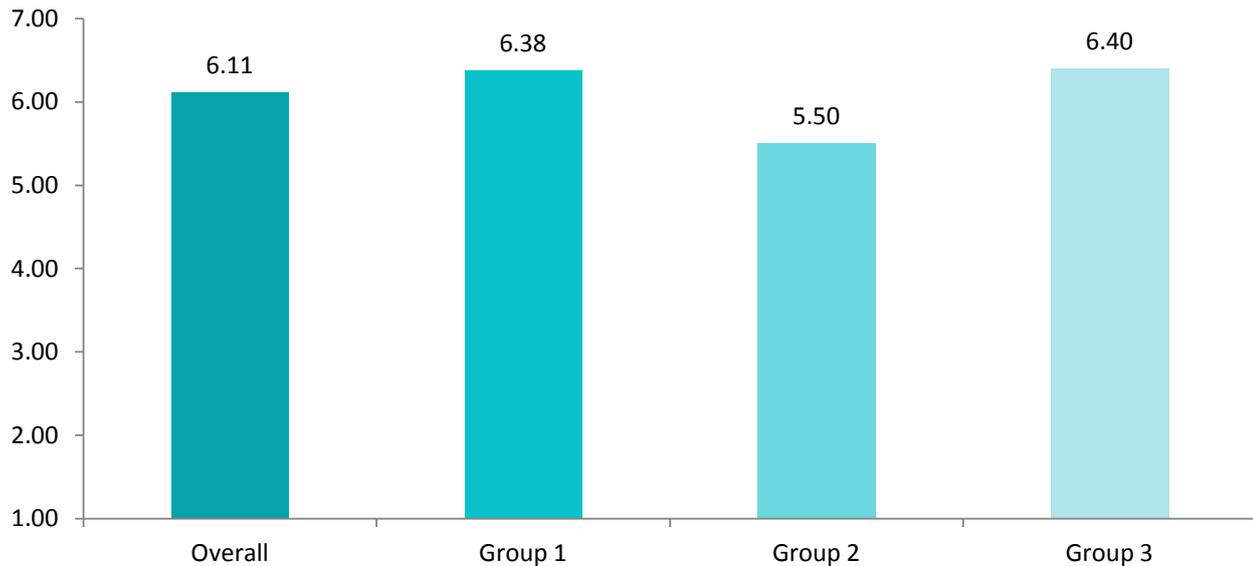
INTENTION TO CONTINUE

Participants were then asked if they would like to continue in the program, and if they would continue to play, in the event that the program were to cease.

IN THE PROGRAM

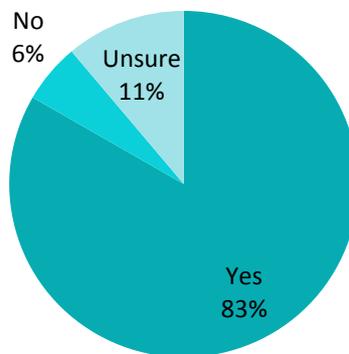
The mean response, across all groups and overall, was that participants moderately strongly agreed (~6 on a 7-point scale) that they would like to continue in the program.

Would you like to continue in the program?



The scale was then dichotomized, so that the "agree" end of the scale (5-7) was recorded as a "yes" and the disagree end (1-3) a "no". Participants who responded at the centre point (4), were coded as "unsure". An overwhelming majority of participants (83%) indicated they would like to continue in the program.

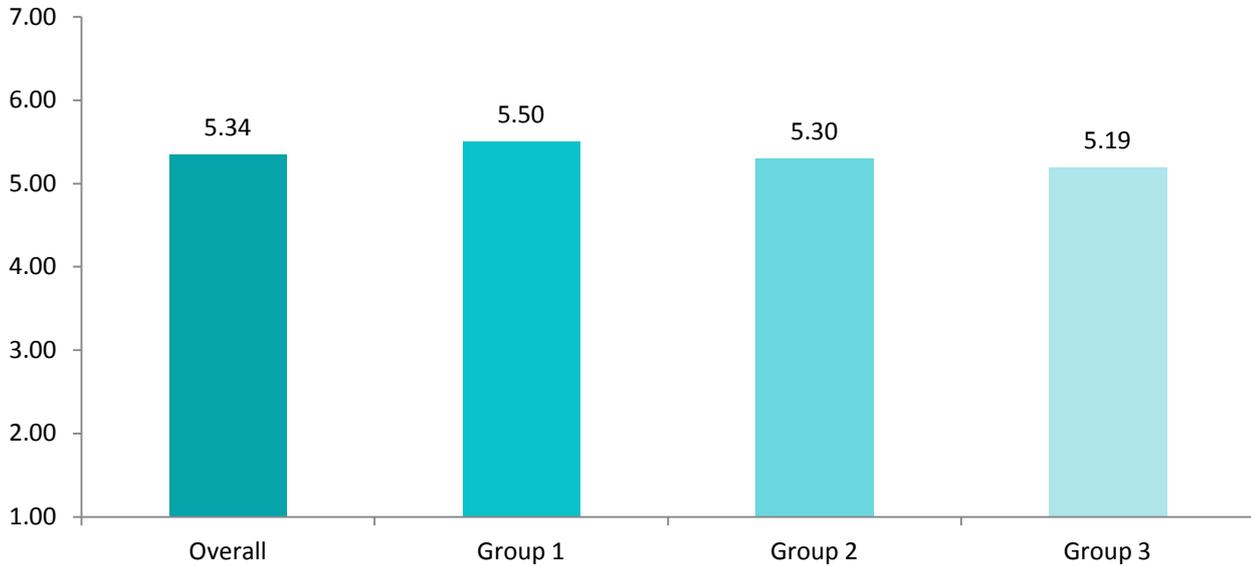
Would you like to continue in the program?



WITHOUT THE PROGRAM

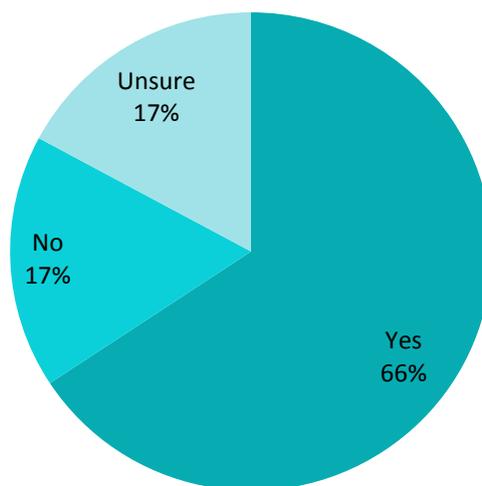
Responses regarding continuing to play the instrument, in the absence of the MEP sessions, was less strongly in agreement. Scores hovered around the agree (5) score. Several participants commented in the margin of the questionnaire that they *couldn't* continue to play without the MEP, as they didn't have access to an instrument.

Would you continue playing if the program ended?



Scores were again dichotomized and the majority of participants (66%) indicated they would continue playing. The remaining 34% were evenly divided between being unable to continue and unsure.

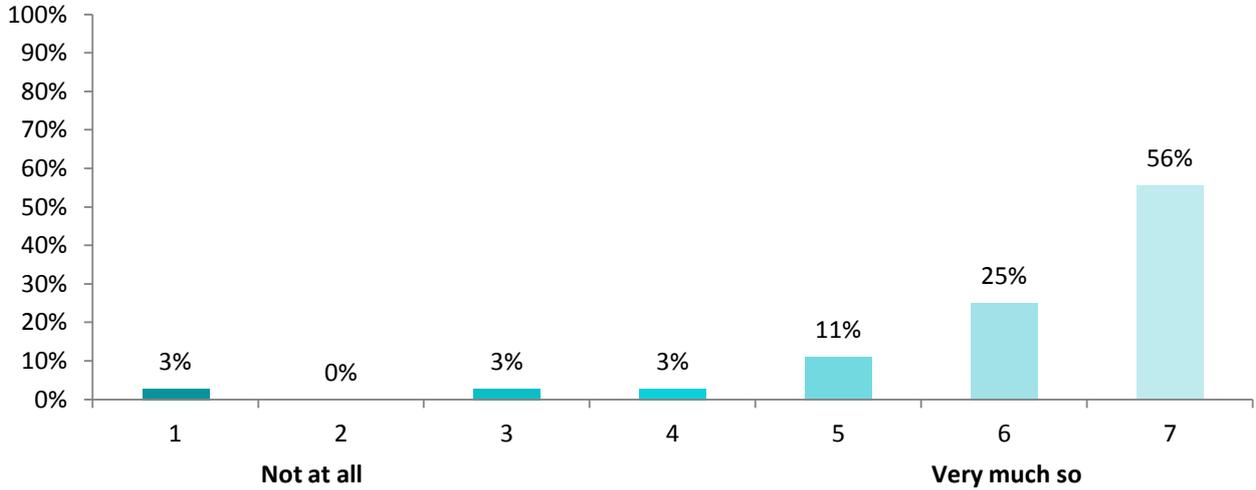
Would you continue playing if the program ended?



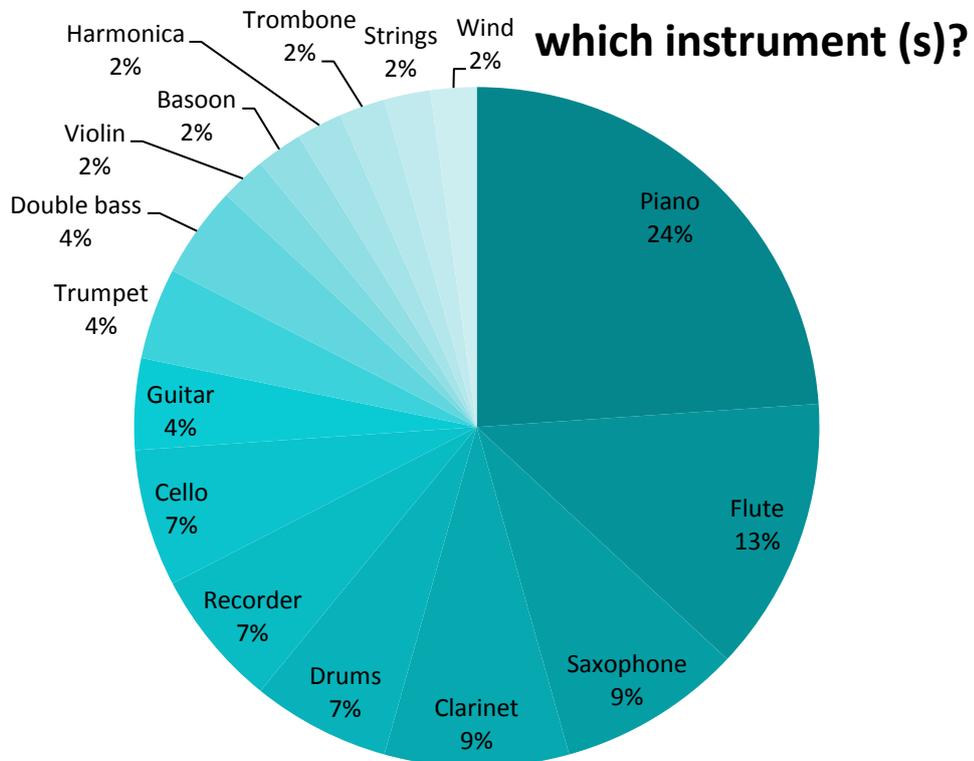
OTHER INSTRUMENTS

Participants were also asked if they would be interested in playing other instruments (other than strings). Most participants (91%) indicated that they would be interested in playing instruments other than strings. The majority (56%) STRONGLY agreed that they were interested.

I am interested in playing other instruments as well



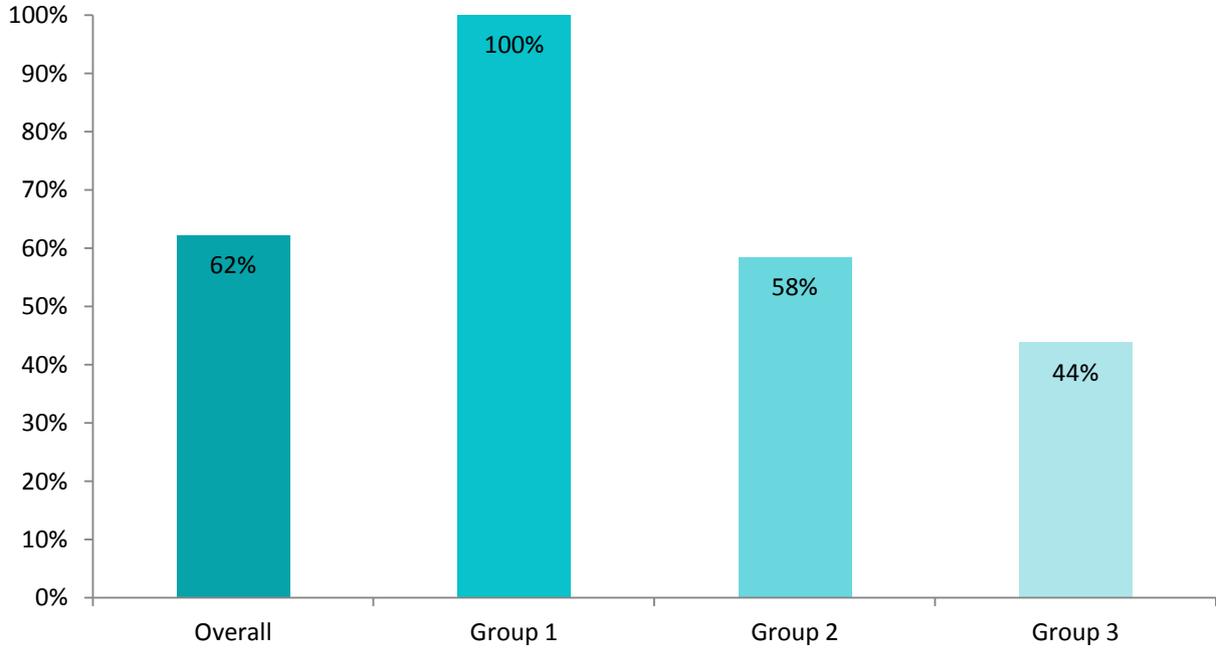
This was then followed by a free-response, in which participants could indicate which instruments were of particular interest to them. Piano, Flute, Saxophone and Clarinet made up the majority of responses, but a wide variety of possible instruments were suggested.



CONCERT

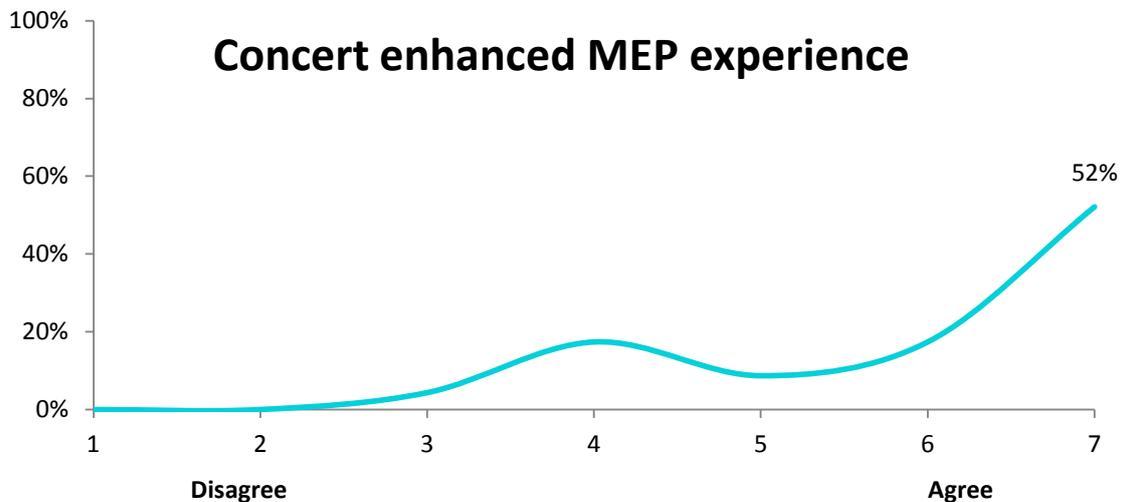
Participants who performed in the concert were asked about their experience. 62% of respondents overall had performed in the concert. All of group 1, the majority of group 2 respondents and almost half of group 3 respondents had performed.

Participated in concert

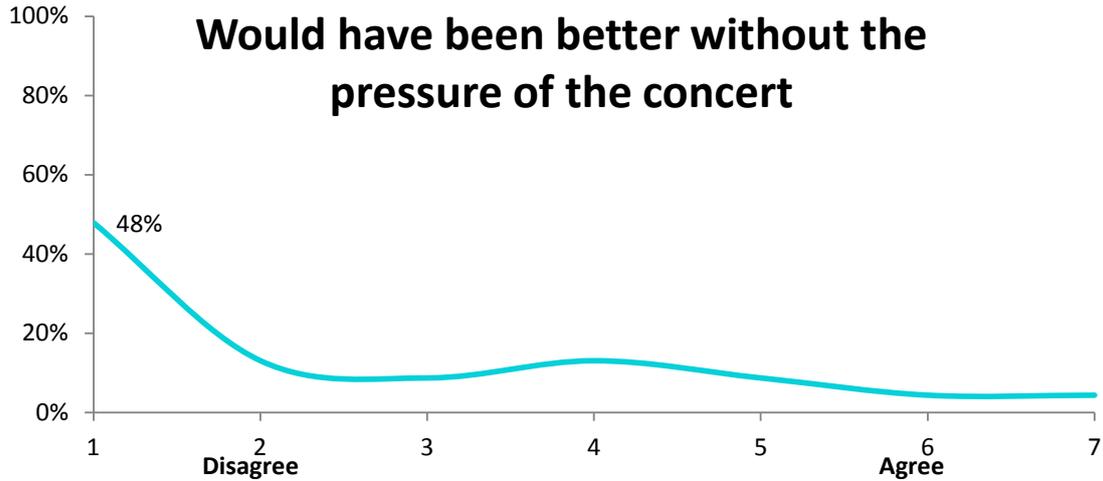


Those who had performed were then asked: whether they felt the concert had enhanced their MEP experience, whether they would have preferred not to have the pressure of a concert, whether they had learned anything extra from the concert, and whether the concert experience had changed the way they thought about what they'd learned from the MEP. Response distributions are presented below. The area under the curve indicates the proportion of respondents who gave that response. Questions 1, 3 and 4 were all skewed toward the "agree" end of the scale and questions 2 was skewed toward the "disagree" end.

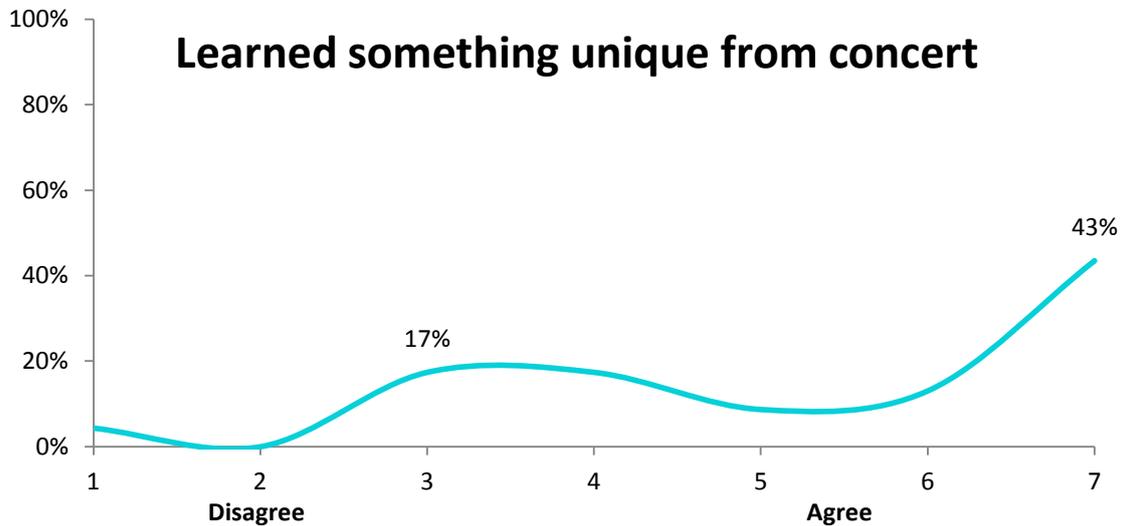
The majority of respondents (52%) strongly agreed that the concert had enhanced their MEP experience. Only 4% disagreed.



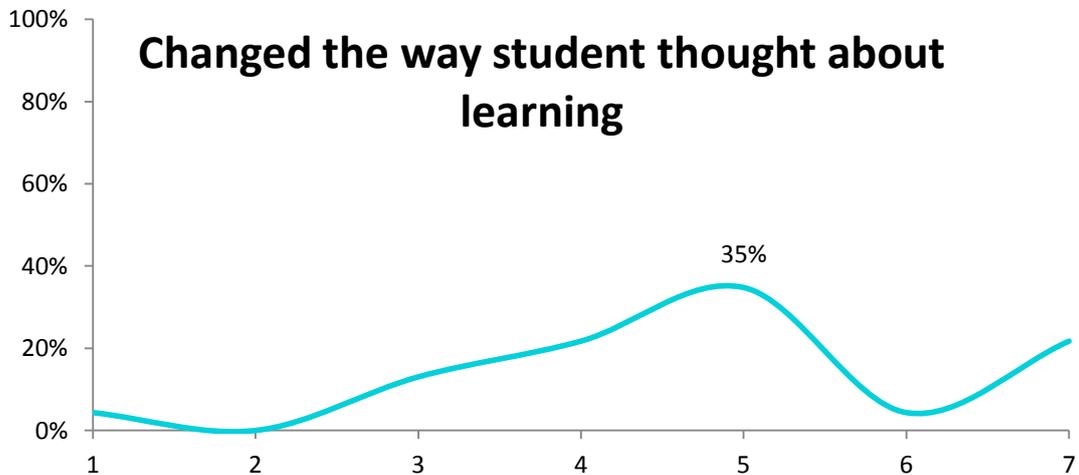
48% of respondents (nearly half) STRONGLY disagreed that the MEP experience would have been better without the concert experience. Only 6 respondents would have preferred to not have the concert.



Participants were slightly less sure they had learned anything from the concert. Nearly half (43%) strongly agreed, but there was also a healthy 17% who slightly disagreed.



Responses to the item "Participating in the concert changed the way I thought about what I've learned from the String Project." were quite variable. The modal response was the agree (5), but the distribution is spread in both directions. It is possible that participants didn't fully understand this item.

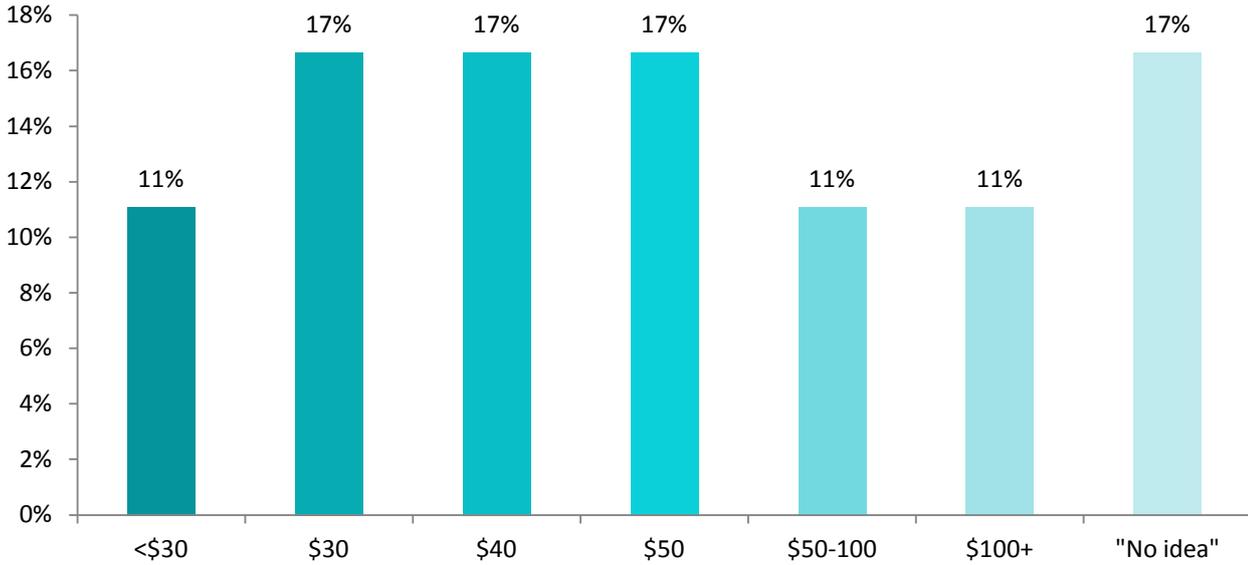


COST

Adult participants were asked about their perceptions of the issues surrounding costing the project. They were asked, first, what they thought participation should cost. Secondly, they were asked what they, personally, could afford to contribute for their continued participation. Finally, they were asked for any comments on costing the program.

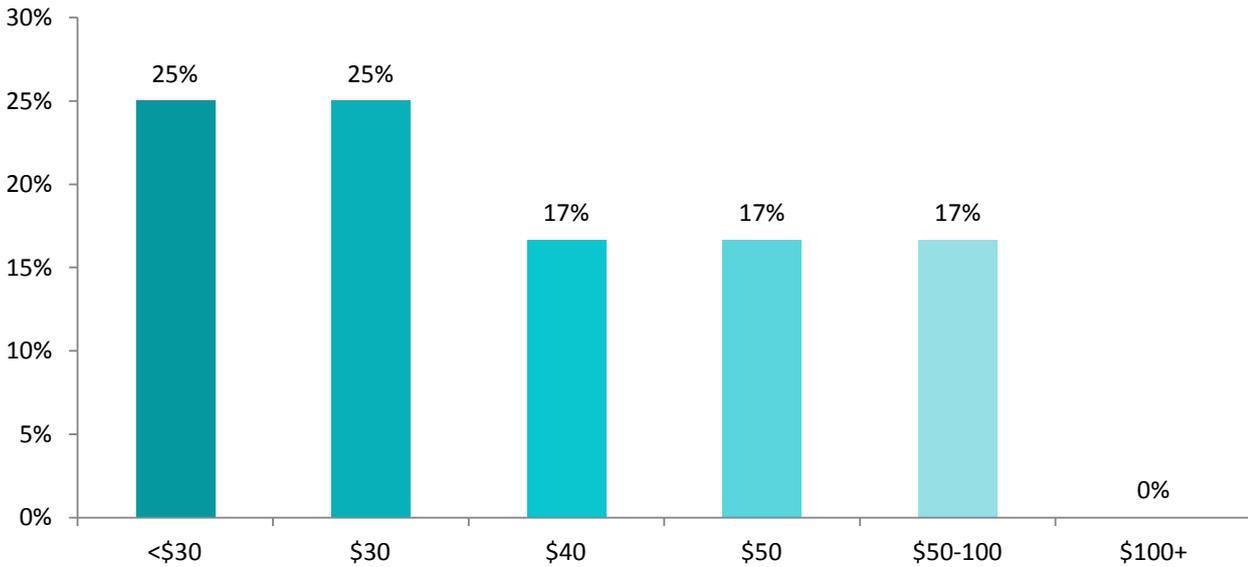
In response to what the project should cost, responses were varied. The most popular answers were in the \$30-\$50 (per term) range, or "No Idea ". The distribution of responses is as below.

"What should it cost?"



What participants felt they could afford, was somewhat lower, in the \$30 (per term) range.

"What could you afford to pay?"



Participants were also asked for any comments, some of which shed light on the differences between the perceived value and the achievable price range:

- *"Charging only for the hire of the instruments was very generous!"*
- *"Seems only fair to pay, but couldn't continue if it was too much."*
- *"Provision of own instrument should decrease cost."*
- *"I live below the poverty line (pension) & it's just not in the budget. I really don't know how to cost it. "*
- *"Or a pay-as-you-go structure."*
- *"Value is great, reward is great."*
- *"Including instrument hire. Discount for more than 1 family member, to encourage groups."*
- *"Depends on the number of people."*

Taken together, these findings indicate that, while most participants can understand why there would need to be a cost, they can contribute less than they think the course is worth (about \$30 a term) and would prefer a structure where family groups, students, pensioners and those who have their own instruments would receive a discount.

FREE RESPONSE FEEDBACK- TIME 1

At **time 1**, participants were also asked which aspect they'd most enjoyed and which aspect they hadn't. Responses were overwhelmingly positive, with the most common response to the "thing to improve" question being "Nothing!"

GROUP 1

Things they most enjoyed:

- "Copy cat."
- "Learning the strings and songs."
- "Playing!"
- "Learning songs."
- "Learning an instrument for the first time. The game copy cat is fun."
- "Copy cat is the best!"

Things that could be improved:

- *"Learning to read music."*
- *"Nothing!"*
- *"You could give us music on sheets and we could learn more pieces that are hard."*
- *"More interesting songs. Not singing as much. Spending less time on each song. Music sheets."*

GROUP 2

Things they most enjoyed:

- *"I love how unstressful the sessions are. I have a go and feel supported."*
- *"Learning as a group."*
- *"Playing a violin! I've never learnt another instrument than piano and I really enjoy playing it, even though I'm not very good."*
- *"I like violin group a lot."*
- *"The first time when everyone was mucking around and we got our violins, violas or cellos."*
- *"People playing different parts to include people."*
- *"Playing new songs. I like having variation & being challenged."*
- *"Everything is awesome."*
- *"Playing songs together."*
- *"Playing all of the songs."*

- *"It's more of a fun practice than a serious one. I like how the conductors are always enthusiastic."*
- *"Imitating other people's tunes (going around the circle)."*
- *"Everybody gets a go."*

Things that could be improved:

- *"If we had more time."*
- *"Can't think of anything."*
- *"It's a bit short on time. We usually only play 1 song."*
- *"A bit chaotic- group is large."*
- *"Group is very large."*
- *"We haven't be able to get to the beginning of the lessons so soon after school (driving from Dickson)."*
- *"Nothing."*
- *"I have enjoyed everything!"*
- *"I don't really like the copycat game."*
- *"I wish I had more time at the lessons."*

GROUP 3

Things they most enjoyed:

- *"Playing in a group with other people of the same experience as me makes me feel most welcome."*
- *"Opportunity to play parts in a large group is fantastic. Rounds & harmonies are great."*
- *"Music, because it is fun."*
- *"Playing with the little kiddies! They're so cute. And i get to expand my own musical and teaching knowledge."*
- *"The music is great & easy to understand. Playing parts, great to hear music come together."*
- *"Playing with other people and the piano accompaniment. Being with encouraging people when you are making a racket!"*
- *"I enjoy helping and sharing my experience with others."*
- *"I like how we are trying lots of songs because it's nice trying lots of things."*
- *"Playing music! Making sounds that sound like something!"*
- *"Playing in a group by playing simple. Open strings- still feel creative and capable despite being "bottom" of the class."*
- *"Really fun and it's really good that there is not much structure."*
- *"Relaxed atmosphere and gradual low-stress progress."*

- *"We play more notes, using all different strings (and no copycat!)"*
- *"More fun now that we separated the room out, can ask people, although still hard to work out where I fit."*
- *"Not caring if not keeping up with the rhythm."*
- *"Discovering that you can do things you thought you couldn't. Feel supported."*

Things that could be improved:

- *"Walking around while playing is very hard because of multitasking. I would like less walking while playing."*
- *"The room is too small."*
- *"Nothing ♥☺."*
- *"Nothing ☺."*
- *"The loudness of the chaos."*
- *"Not confident with holding the instrument. Just want to know correct holding position to make it wasier to play."*
- *"Maybe a bigger room."*
- *"I hate going home at the end ☺."*
- *"Maybe having more woodwind stuff."*
- *"1) Start the lessons by repeating what was practiced the previous lesson. 2) Don't give people too many choices- just propose the way/ action. Thank you for making this possible."*
- *"Even with simple changes from open strings to open strings (of DD AA AA DD)- can't hear when to change notes. Would have preferred you to yell out "DD" "AA".... Thank you. Awesome fun ☺."*
- *"The group is really big; it's a bit hard to deal with the noise when we are waiting for instruction."*
- *"Too short!"*
- *"Nothing."*
- *"When it goes to fast I can't work out where to play."*
- *"Not being able to see the finger motion in slow motion first."*

FREE RESPONSE, TIME 2

Participants were also asked at **Time 2** which aspect they'd most enjoyed and which aspect they hadn't. Responses were overwhelmingly positive.

THINGS PARTICIPANTS MOST ENJOYED:**THE CONCERT**

- *"The concert because it was fun playing in front of each other."*
- *"The concert."*
- *"I like the concert because of my excitement."*
- *"Concert- I got to see my friends and they know how much I have been practicing."*
- *"The concert. Looking at my classmates on stage."*
- *"Going to the loud and proud concert. Learning for the first time."*

THE GROUP SETTING

- *"It was nice to see people of all age groups learning/ playing together."*
- *"How everyone was included at different levels."*
- *"Social aspect is vital."*
- *"Good humour of teachers & group."*
- *"Being a small part of a big sound."*
- *"Playing with other people- being supported, encouraged."*
- *"Hearing what's possible for oneself, as well as others."*
- *"Different aged people learning together."*
- *"Could be helped by & help each other. All felt good. "*
- *"Playing as a group."*
- *"Playing the violin with group."*
- *"Good to make music with lots of people. There are no other opportunities for group playing."*
- *"I enjoyed teaching the adults."*
- *"Being able to play with other people, getting lost and finding my way back in, the enthusiasm of the teachers."*
- *"Watching and helping people learn and improve."*

PACE

- *"Getting new pieces but not working on them for long, so it doesn't get boring. Exploring the strings."*
- *"Quick moving, relaxed."*
- *"Being able to make a reasonable sound (tune/ music) after a few weeks. Fun to perform."*
- *"Pace was good."*
- *"Didn't get bored. Was fun. "*
- *"I liked how we played new sheets. It was fun."*

LACK OF PRESSURE

- *"All of it because we learnt fast and they did not pressure us to do it."*
- *"Could challenge myself as much as I wanted. No pressure."*
- *"The ability to learn an instrument without the pressure of getting it right."*

PLAYING & SINGING

- *"Learning how to play the instrument."*
- *"Playing & singing along."*
- *"When we learnt how to play it."*
- *"Playing the violin was the most fun."*
- *"Violin is a great instrument and I love playing it and having it played."*
- *"Learning a different kind of instrument (other than woodwind)."*
- *"Singing."*
- *"The types of songs we played."*
- *"I have really enjoyed the sessions; to be able to focus on me and my playing, instead of taking it too seriously like all other music ensembles I have been in, in the past, has been great!"*
- *"Playing harmonies."*
- *"Building up numerous parts."*
- *"I like it that I knew some of the songs."*

THING PARTICIPANTS FELT NEEDED TO IMPROVE:

22% of respondents thought that there was "Nothing (enjoyed everything!)" to be improved about the program.

Others suggested:

MORE TIME:

- *"Have more or longer sessions."*
- *"Not enough! More sessions. 90 mins (instead of 60)."*
- *"Too short :-("*

DEALING WITH OVERCROWDING:

- *"Bit more room to move & more music stands."*
- *"Room was a little crowded. More harmony work and a bit less for "odyssey"."*
- *"Sometime being cramped (not enough space). Not having music stand for practice."*

THE WAY THINGS ARE TAUGHT:

- *"More information on finger placement & holding the bow & other technical stuff (you may have covered this earlier- I missed the beginning). A longer time length or more content in the allotted time. A complete running order for the concert."*
- *"Need to understand music timing & sheet music."*
- *"Doing so much singing. I think it is much more important playing, not singing. Getting to do the tunes of the songs (good thing), playing other bits gets boring and not interesting. Not knowing where the notes are, we need to know so we can read off music."*

ADMINISTRATION ISSUES:

- *"We could have done harder pieces and been given more pieces."*
- *"Lack of structure."*
- *"Talking-do not talk as much."*
- *"Talking less & showing more of the violin."*
- *"Not everyone got taught."*
- *"Organisation of sheet music."*
- *"Maybe a few more instruments."*
- *"I had trouble attending all of the sessions so was lost by the end. Possibly knowing all dates (i.e. Holidays) from the start would have helped?"*