Travel Survey Report 2008

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Contents

Introduction

This report provides a summary of the findings of the travel surveys carried out in March and April 2008. It was distributed electronically and on paper to approximately 2,817 staff and 13,380 students. The results of the travel survey will help quantify the University's progress towards the aims laid out in its Travel Plan and allow areas of concern to be targeted.

Methodology

16,197 questionnaires were sent out to the majority of University staff and students. Approximately 23% of these were usable returns up slightly from 20% usable returns in 2006.

Data was converted to SPSS files, where variable labels and value labels were added, to allow results to be more easily interpreted. Text entries were analyzed individually and recoded where appropriate.

The survey was confidential and anonymous with only the gender, age range and partial postcode being requested.

Findings

This report is compiled from all of the usable returns from the survey. If a return lacked a partial postcode, it was excluded from the report. There were 3,772 usable returns in total (representing a return rate of 23%) which comprised 1,454 staff returns and 2,318 student returns. The data which follows comprises all of usable returns except in cases where subsets of usable returns are used due to routing rules present in the questionnaire. Routing was used to question respondents more specifically about their particular mode of travel. In these instances the size of the subset is indicated as follows: *(Percentages calculated from a subset of # respondents)*.

It should be noted that in some situations people who answered positively to a routed question did not go on to answer all the related questions.

Results

Data from all usable surveys was used in the preparation of this report. As can be seen in figure 1.0 the response rate of the survey was 23% overall which comprised a 52% return rate from staff (2,817 distributed: 1,454 returned) and a 17% return rate from students (13,380 distributed: 2318 returned).

Figure 1.0 Survey Return Rate

Total number of surveys distributed	16,197
Total number of surveys returned	3,795 (23%)
Electronic returns	3795
Paper returns	0
Spoilt returns	23
Total number of usable returns	3,772 (23%)

The survey was divided into eight subsections:

1) **Personal Details** – A common stream which requests personal details of the respondent.
2) **Travel Habits** – A common stream which ascertains which mode of travel the respondent uses for commuting.
3) **Car** – A stream restricted to those who travel by car.
4) **Car Share** – A stream restricted to those who car share.
5) **Bicycle** – A stream restricted to those who travel by bicycle.
6) **Public Transport** – A stream restricted to those who travel by bus or train.
7) **Powered Two Wheelers** – A stream restricted to those who travel by motorcycle or moped.
8) **Alternatives and Incentives** – A common stream to elicit opinions of what infrastructure or service improvements would help the respondent travel in a sustainable way.

The results of each of these sections are separated into staff and student survey responses and are detailed below.

Staff Survey Responses

RESPONSE RATES

Overall 1,454 staff responded to the survey from 2,817 surveys distributed, which amounts to a 52% response rate.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Role at University

Figure 2.01 illustrates the breakdown of respondents' role at the University.

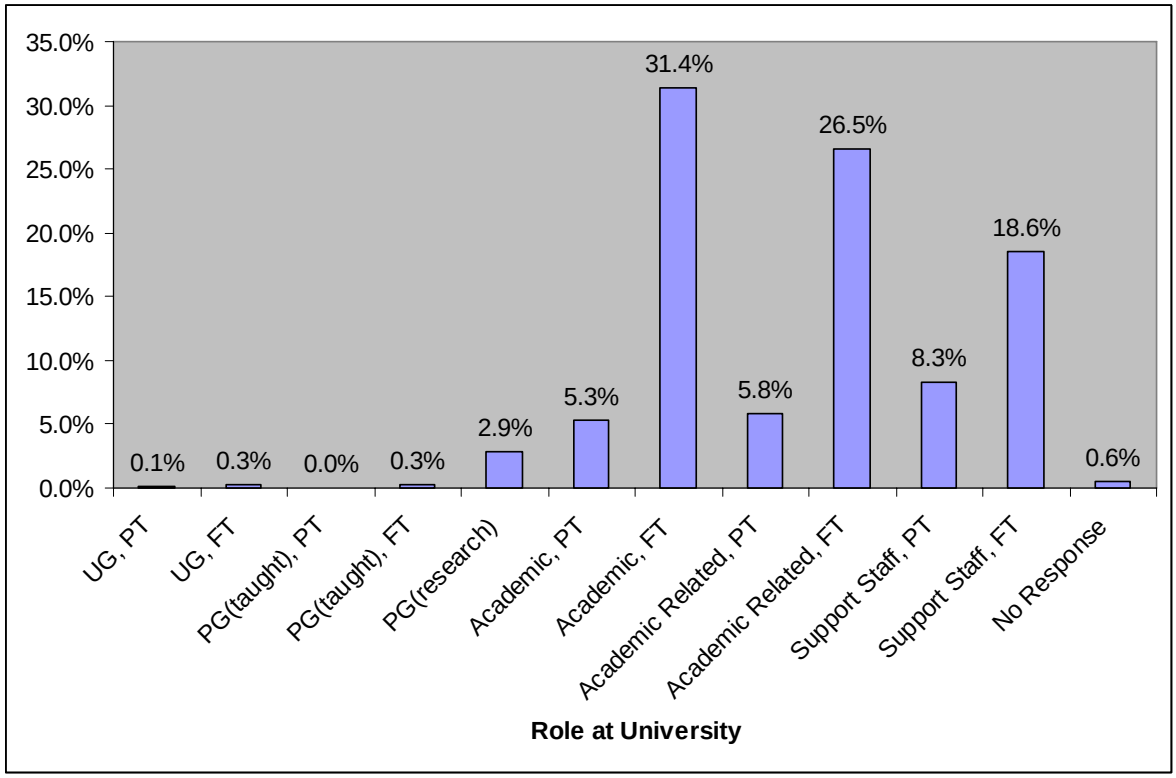


Figure 2.01 Role at University

Gender Split

The information obtained indicated that 59.6% of staff respondents were female, with 37.3% male.

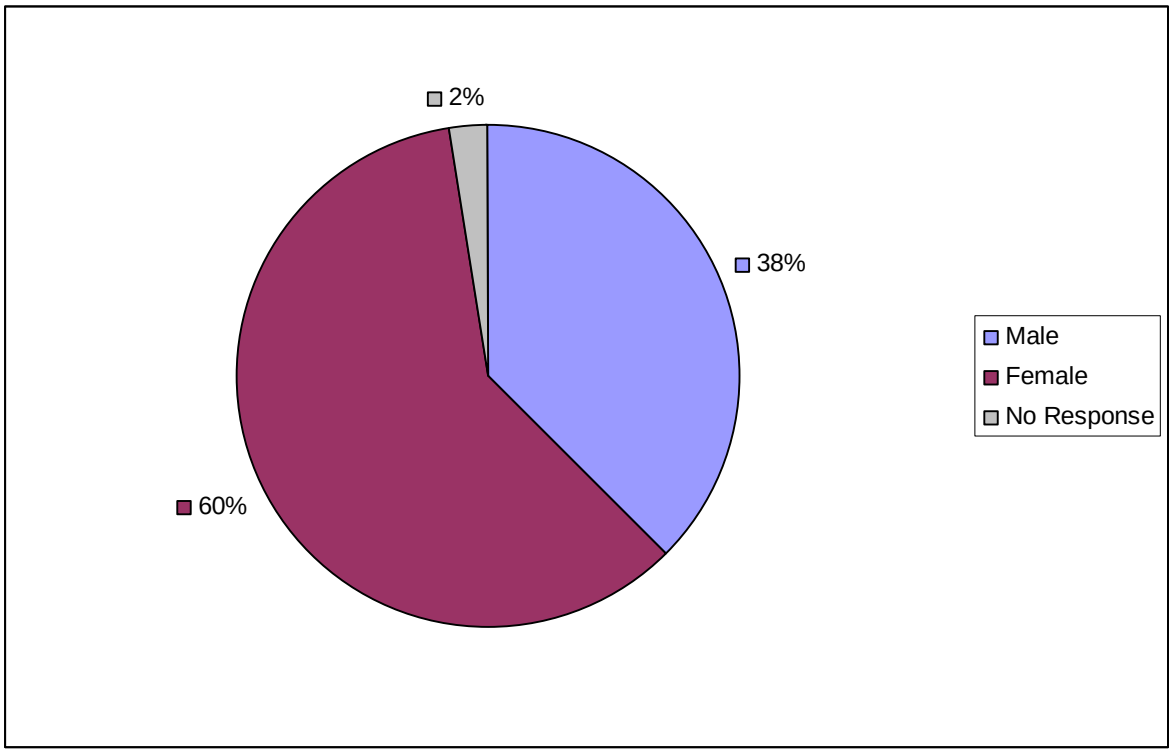


Figure 2.02 Age of Respondents

Age

As can be seen from Figure 2.03 the majority of staff respondents (48.8%) were aged between 40 and 59 years of age with a significant remaining proportion being between 25 and 39.

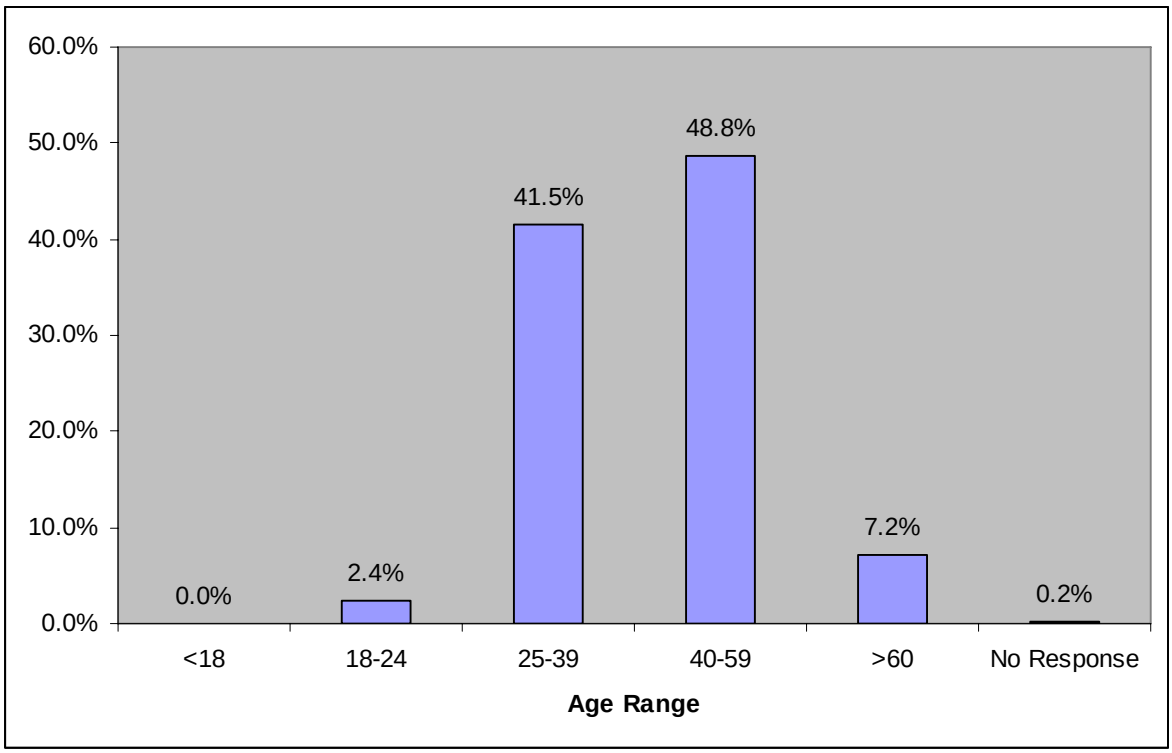


Figure 2.03 Age of Staff Respondents

Distance from Work

Figure 2.04 illustrates the range of distances that staff estimate they travel to work.

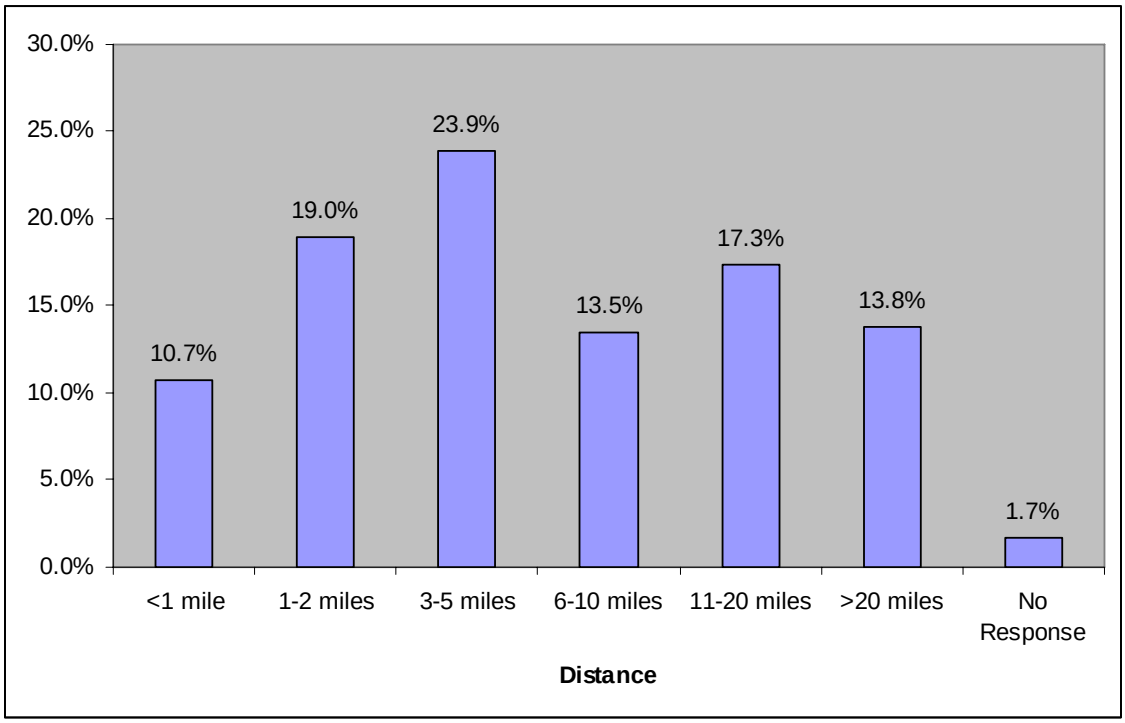


Figure 2.04 Estimated Distance Travelled

Duration of Travel

Figure 2.05 illustrates the time typically taken for people to travel to their workplace.

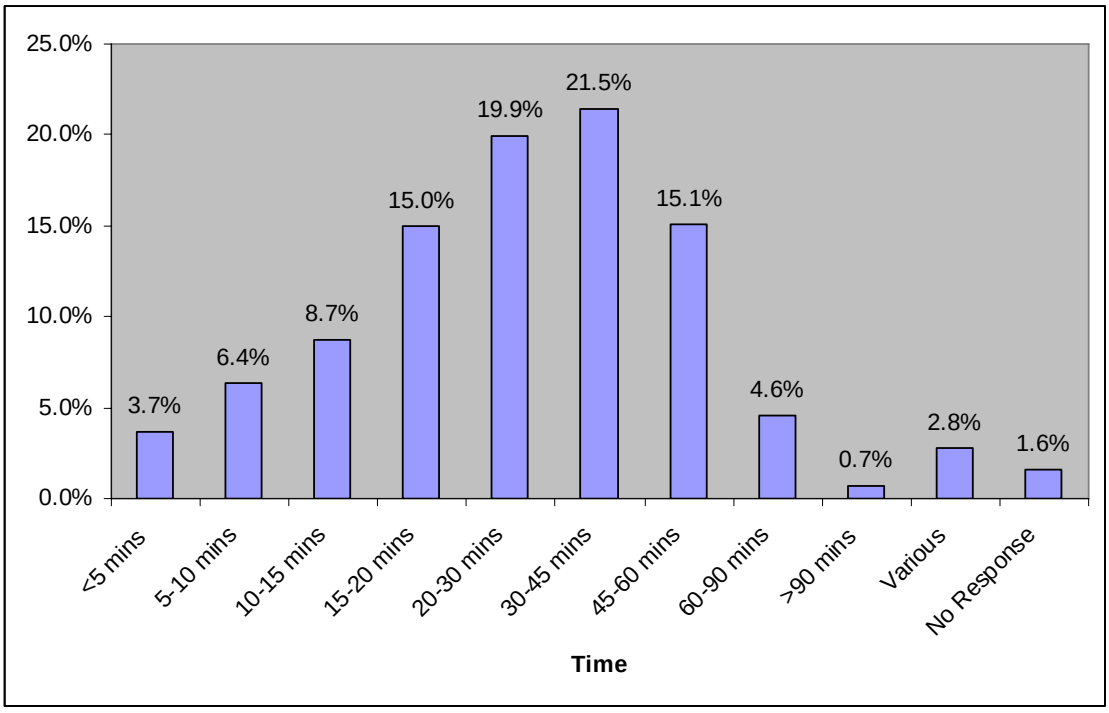


Figure 2.05 Duration of Journey

TRAVEL HABITS

Main Mode of Travel

The most common mode of travel used by staff remains the car at 56% however this is a slight downturn in comparison to the 2006 figure of 59%. This is more likely to be as a result of national trends caused by escalating fuel prices rather than as a result of any specific University actions to tackle car use. Car sharing and bicycle use both see increases over 2006 figures while bus, foot, motorcycle and train use all see slight declines.

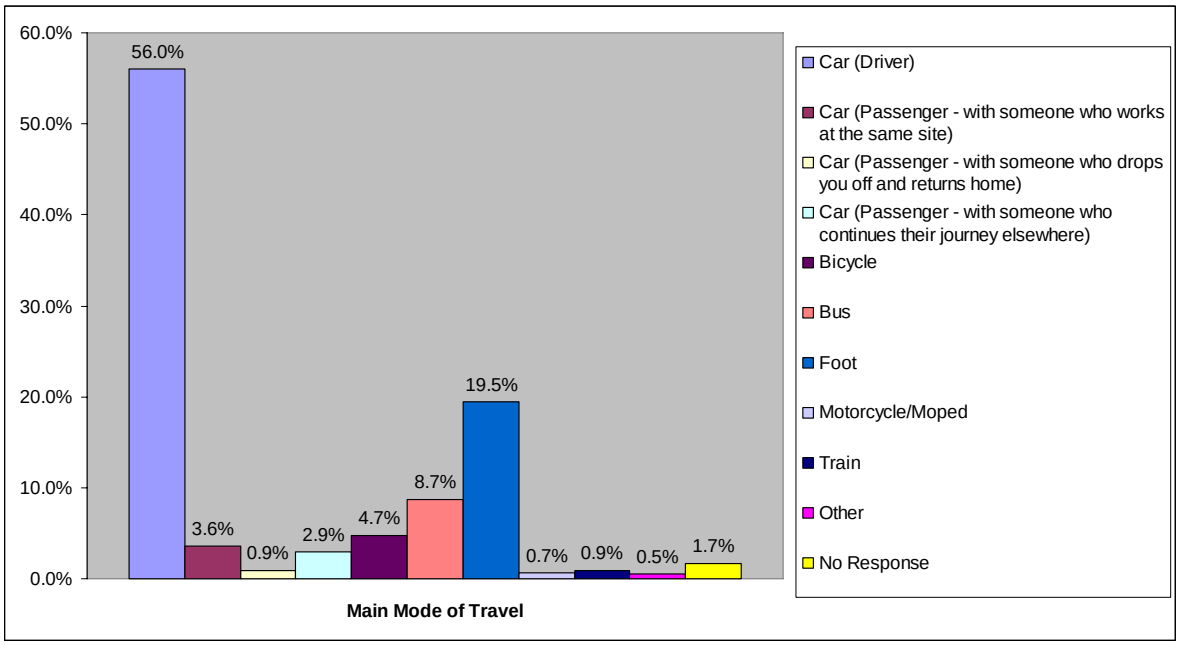


Figure 2.06 Main Mode of Travel by Staff

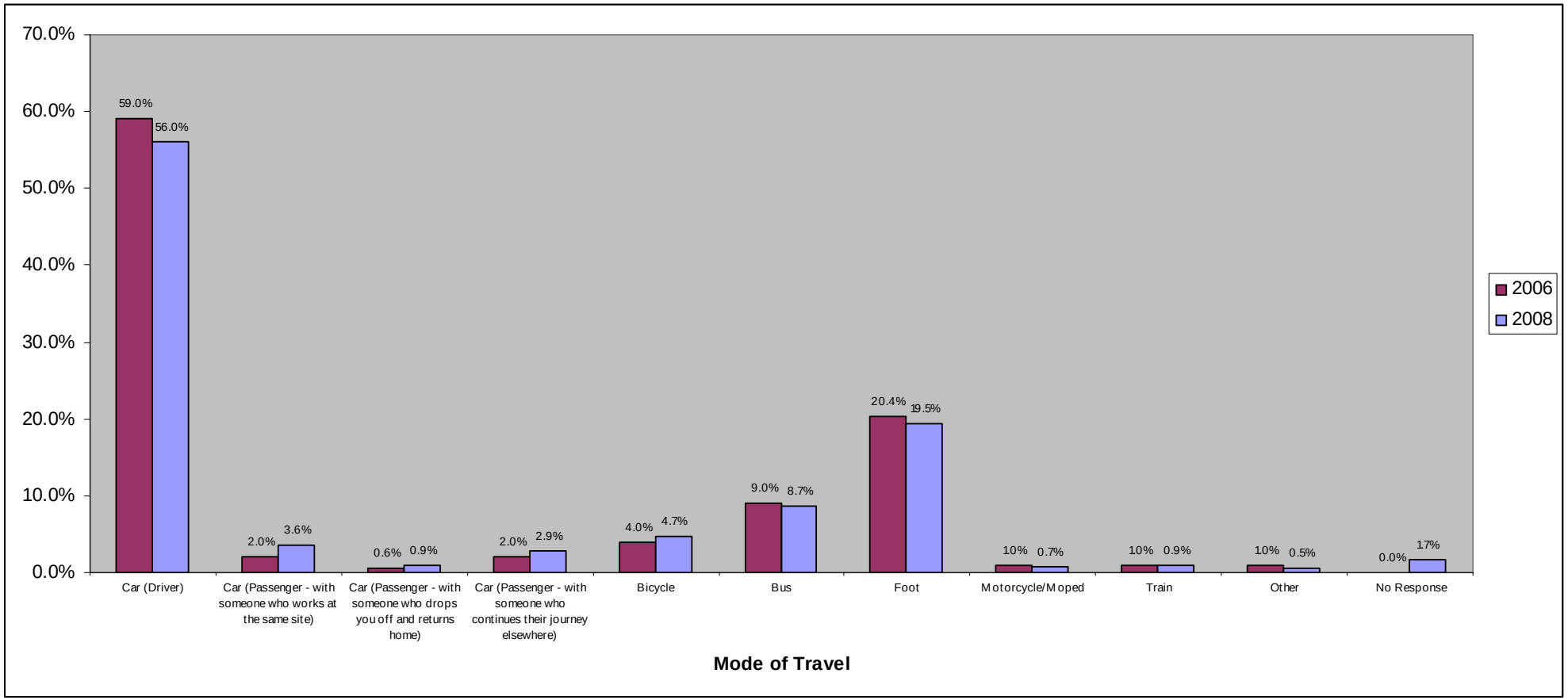
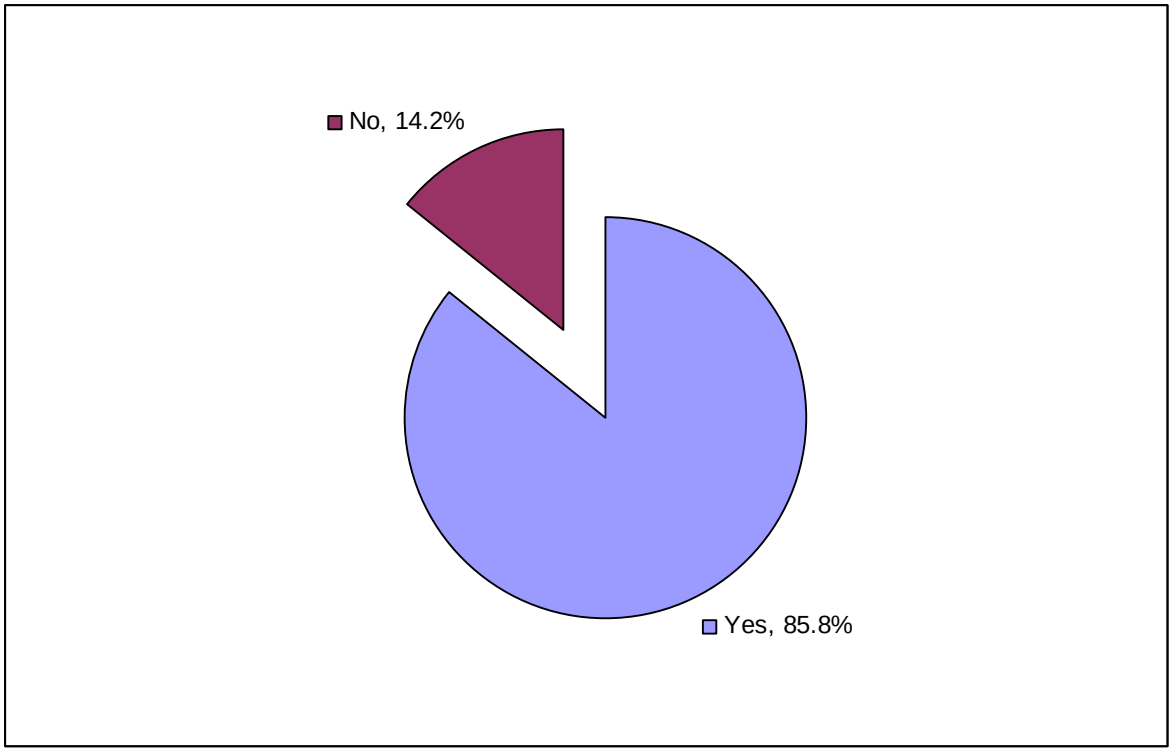


Figure 2.07 Comparison of Main Mode of Travel by Staff Between 2006 and 2008

CAR USE

Permit Holders

Of those who drive to work the majority hold a University parking permit with virtually the same number of respondents indicating that they use that permit to park in University car parks. The majority of respondents who were not permit holders but who did drive to work indicated that they parked using local, on street, parking facilities.



(Percentages calculated from a subset of 810 respondents)

Figure 2.08 Percentage of Car Users Who Hold a University Parking Permit

Reasons for Car Use

No values are used in figure 2.09 as respondents could select as many options as were appropriate. The figure therefore represents the comparative reasons given for using a car to commute. As can be seen in figure 2.09 time constraints and convenience feature heavily in staff member's decisions to commute using their car. Cost, business use, personal use and the lack of a suitable alternative also appear to feature commonly. There are various solutions available to address these issues, for example, the introduction of pool cars would help reduce the need for staff to use their cars for business use. The reasons given therefore help to identify a list of priorities to help address the issues that staff have. Reasons given under the "other" option primarily centred around childcare responsibilities with some being used to qualify previous responses given.

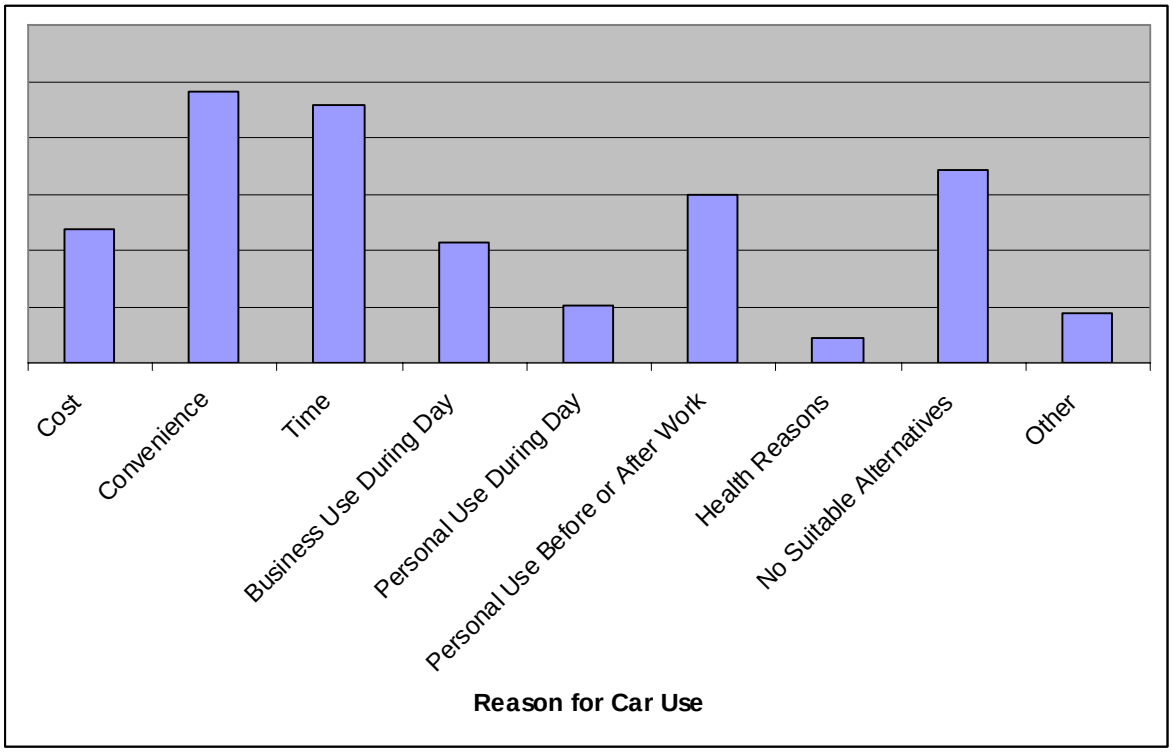


Figure 2.09 Reasons for Car Use

Business Travel Alternatives

No values are used in figure 2.10 as respondents could select as many options as were appropriate. The figure therefore represents the comparative preference of alternative travel options for business travel. A clear preference for public transport and pool cars can be seen over using conferencing technology.

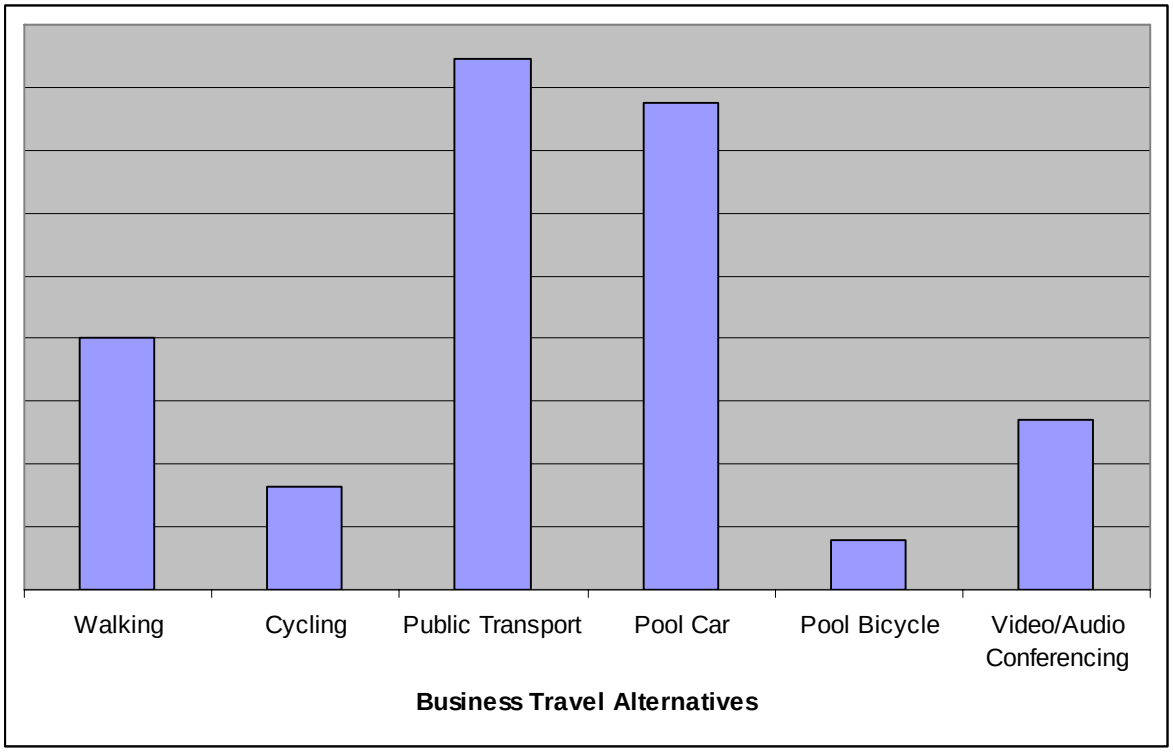


Figure 2.10 Preferred Business Travel Alternatives

Encouragement of Car Sharing

No values are used in figure 2.11 as respondents could select as many options as were appropriate. The figure therefore represents the comparative preference of incentives to encourage car sharing. No clear preference can be seen in the incentives however the majority of respondents did indicate that nothing would encourage them to share their car.

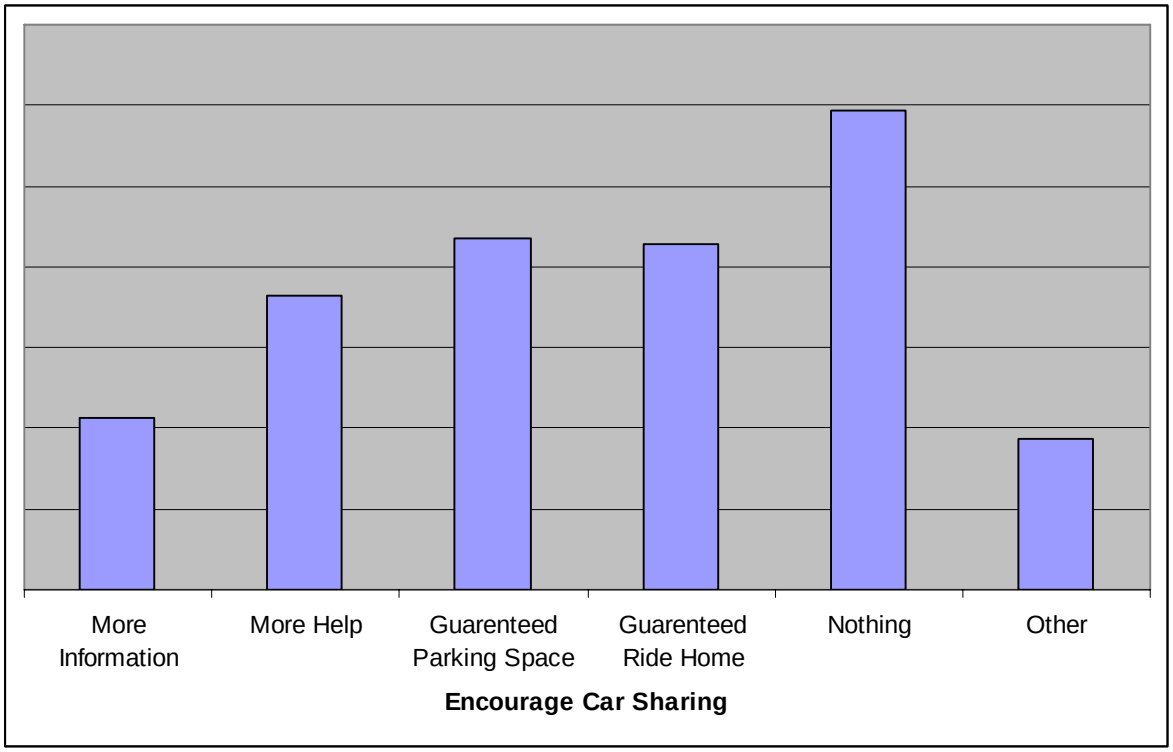


Figure 2.11 Preferred Business Travel Alternatives

CAR SHARING

Reasons for Car Sharing

No values are used in figure 2.12 as respondents could select as many options as were appropriate. The figure therefore represents the comparative reasons why staff members car share. Convenience can clearly be seen as the most prominent reason while cost, time and a lack of suitable alternatives also feature strongly.

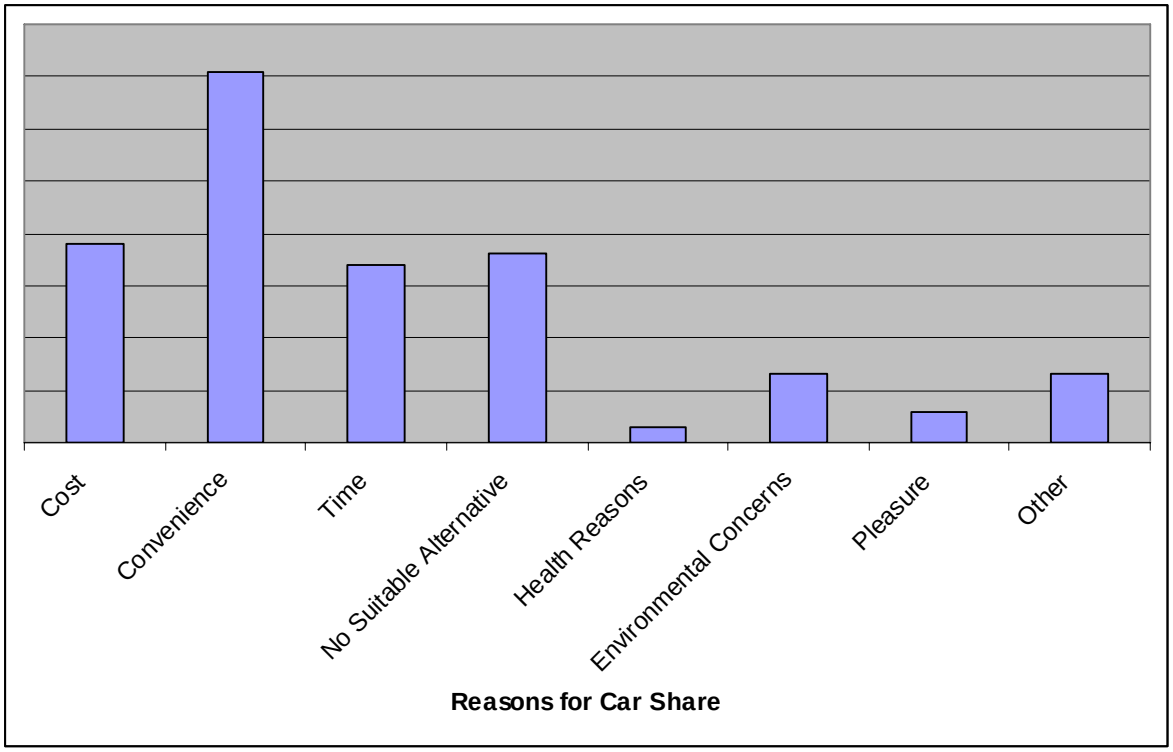


Figure 2.12 Reasons for Car Sharing

CYCLING

Reasons for Cycling

No values are used in figure 2.13 as respondents could select as many options as were appropriate. The figure therefore represents the comparative reasons why staff members cycle to work. With the exception of there being no suitable alternatives all reasons seem to influence cyclists to a fairly large extent with health and fitness featuring most prominently and the lack of competition for parking featuring least prominently.

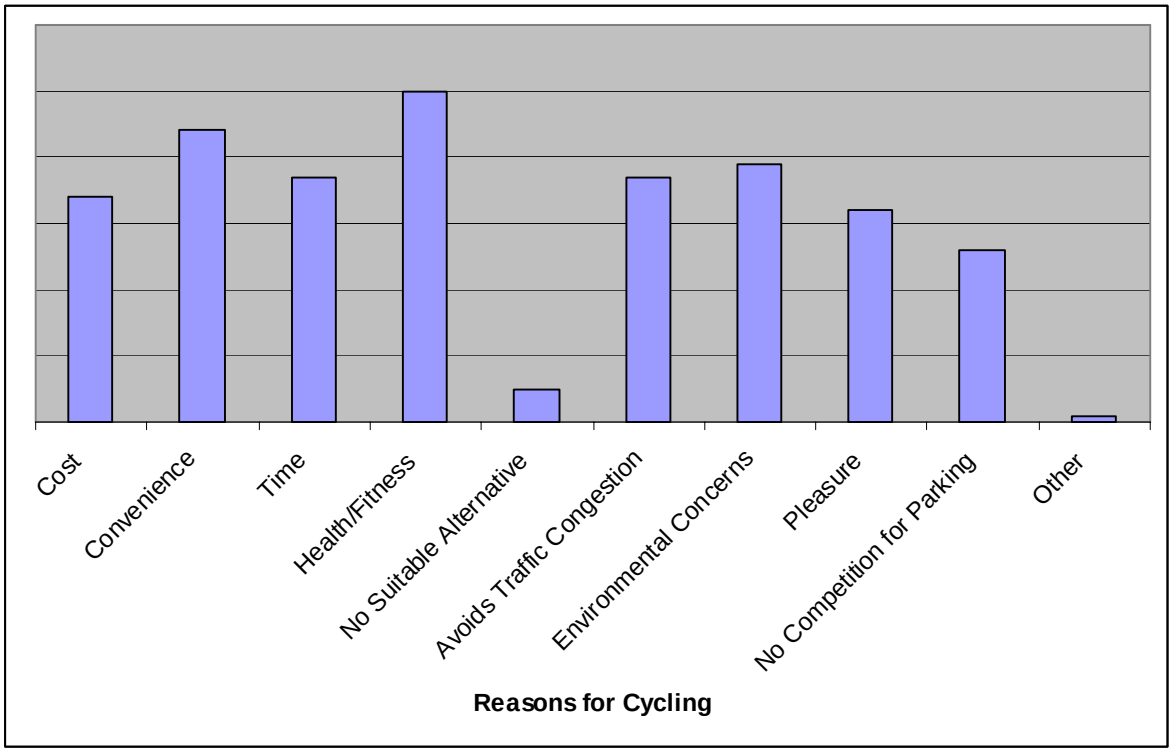
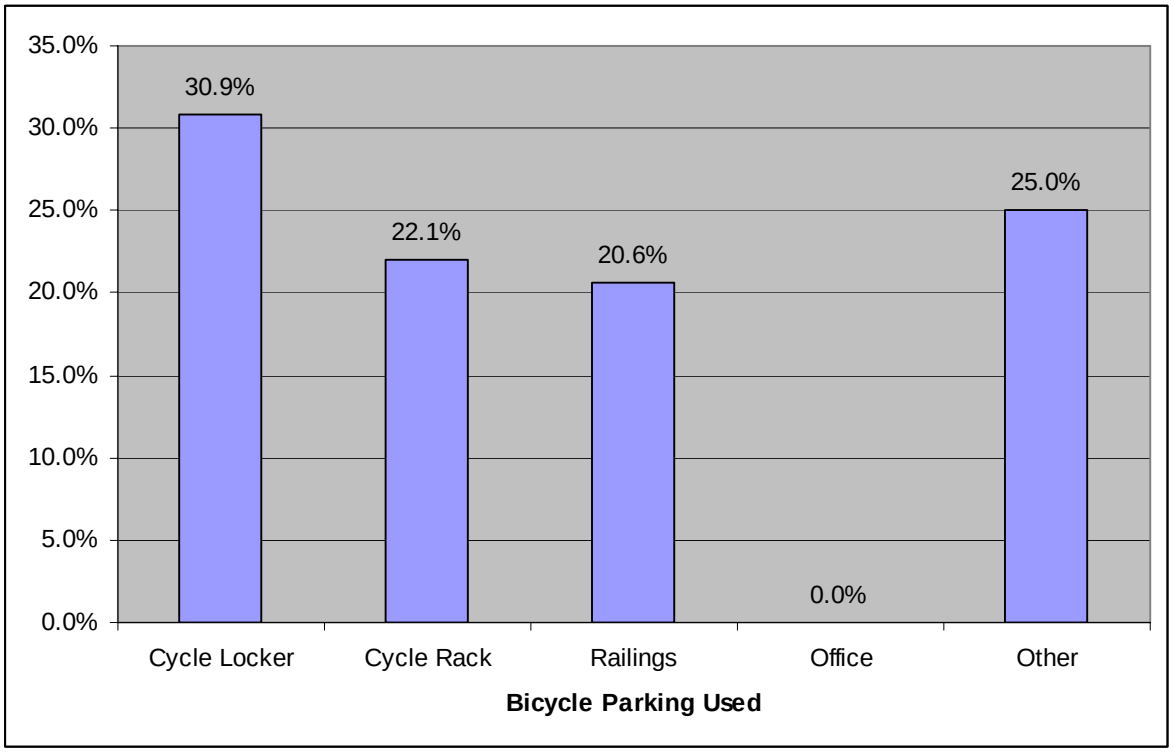


Figure 2.13 Reasons for Cycling

Cycle Parking Used

Figure 2.14 shows a surprisingly large percentage of staff who use cycle lockers in preference to cycle racks. This suggests that, despite there being many more cycle racks available than cycle lockers, the lockers are a preferred storage method. The relative equality of staff using cycle racks and railings suggests that, despite the existing cycle racks being generally underutilised, they are not in convenient or popular places. No data was requested to specify where "other" cycle storage was being utilised.



(Percentages calculated from a subset of 68 respondents)

Figure 2.14 Cycle Parking Used

BUS TRAVEL

Reasons for Bus Travel

No values are used in figure 2.15 as respondents could select as many options as were appropriate. The figure therefore represents the comparative reasons why staff members use the bus to travel to work. No suitable alternative features heavily suggesting that bus travel is often used out of necessity rather than choice. Time and cost feature less prominently suggesting that the service frequency and level of fares is perceived to be poor.

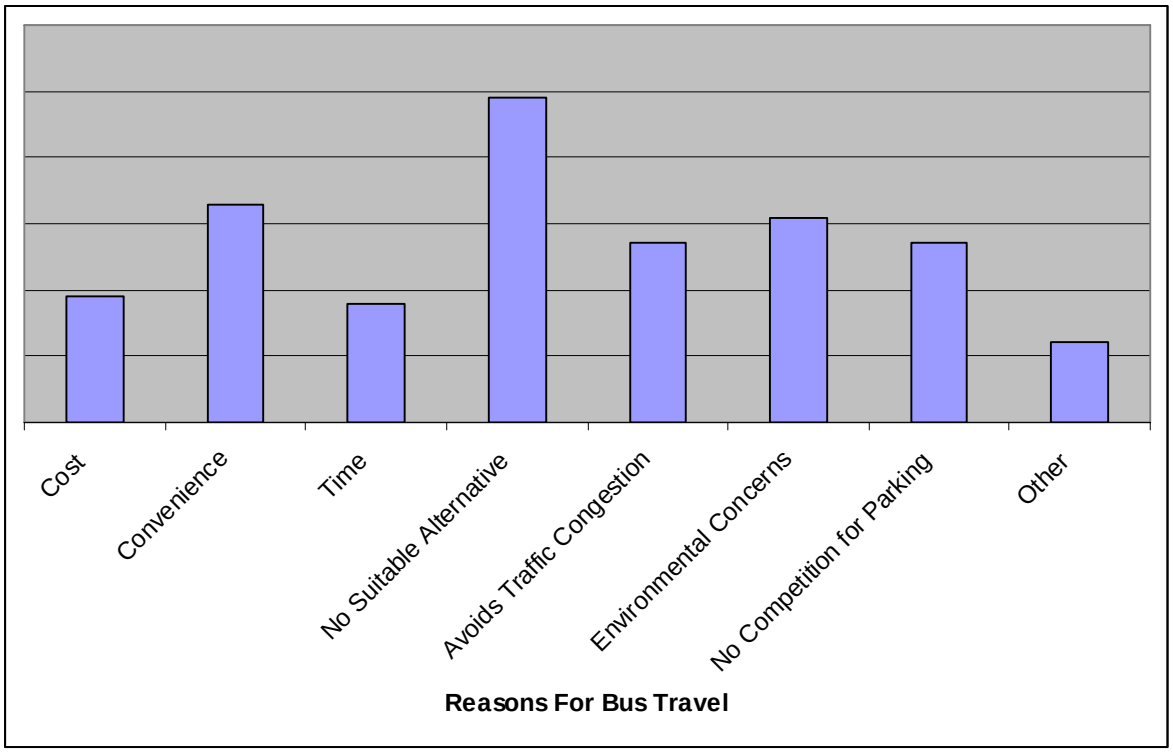


Figure 2.15 Reasons for Bus Travel

Bus Routes Used

No values are used in figure 2.16 as respondents could select as many bus services as they use on a regular basis. The figure therefore represents how much each service is used compared to others. The most common route used is that of the 1/2 which serves Old Aberdeen both from the Bridge of Don and from Garthdee. All other city services showed similar levels of use with the exception of the route 13. This may be due to the fact that the 13 shares part of its journey with that of the 1/2 which is a more frequent service. Country services were predictably used less than city services with marginally more people using the 260 service which serves Peterhead and Ellon.

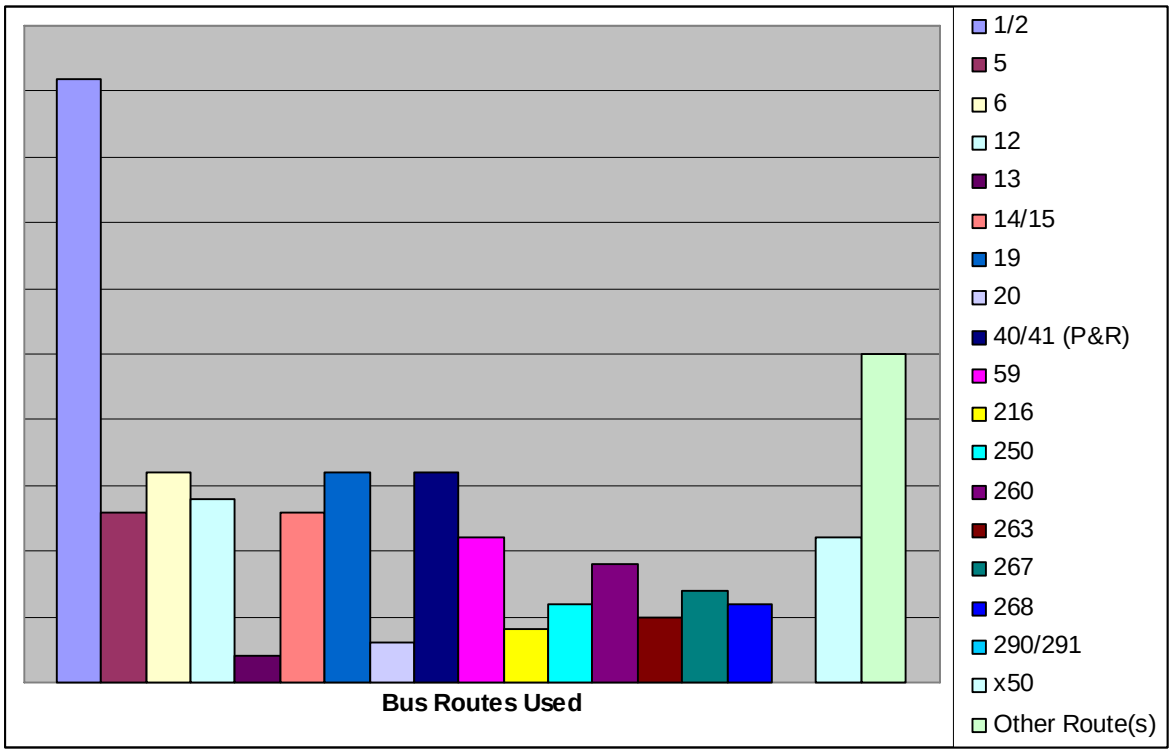


Figure 2.16 Bus Routes Used

WALKING

Reasons for Walking

No values are used in figure 2.17 as respondents could select as many options as were appropriate. The figure therefore represents the comparative reasons why staff members walk to work. Convenience and health reasons feature most highly with cost, environmental concerns and pleasure also making a significant impact.

Figure 2.17 Reasons for Walking

MOTORCYCLING

Reasons for Traveling by Motorcycle

No values are used in figure 2.18 as respondents could select as many options as were appropriate. The figure therefore represents the comparative reasons why staff members travel by motorcycle to work. Like cycling, there seem to be many contributing factors why people choose this mode of travel. Again, like cycling, there is a perception among motorcyclists that it is not due to a lack of suitable alternatives that they choose to use a motorcycle.

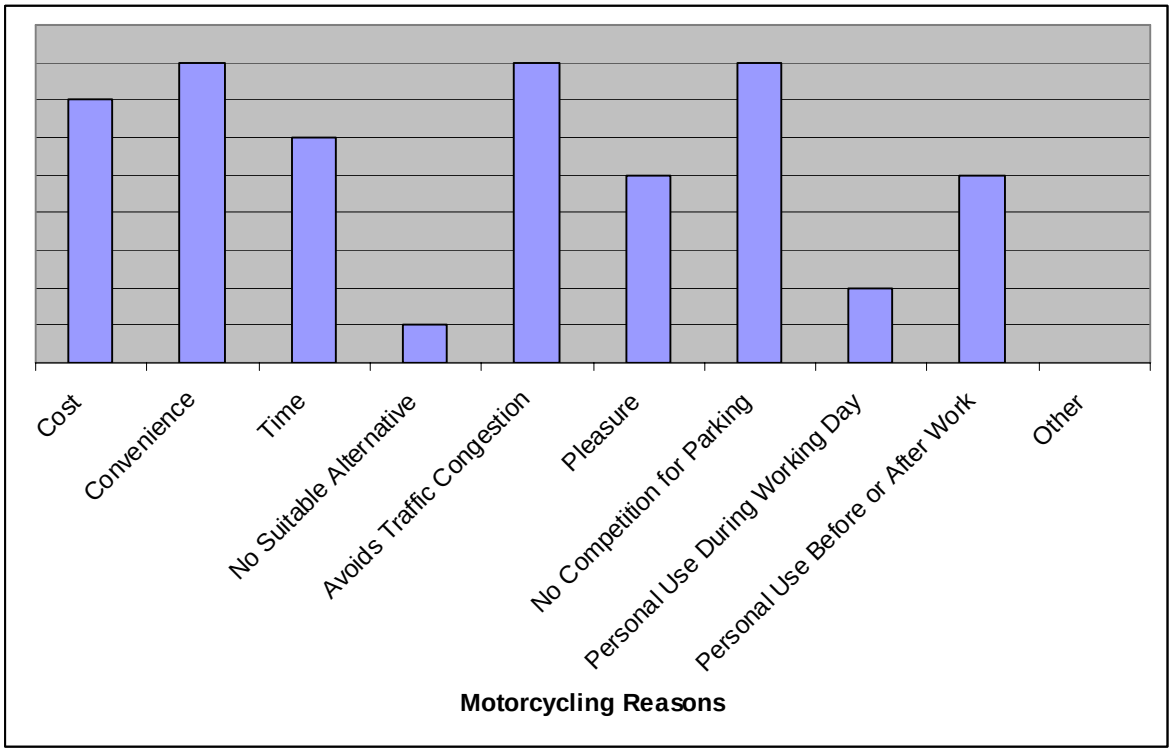


Figure 2.18 Reasons for Travelling by Motorcycle

RAIL TRAVEL

Reasons for Traveling by Train

No values are used in figure 2.19 as respondents could select as many options as were appropriate. The figure therefore represents the comparative reasons why staff members travel by train to work. Convenience, time, avoiding traffic and environmental concerns feature strongly.

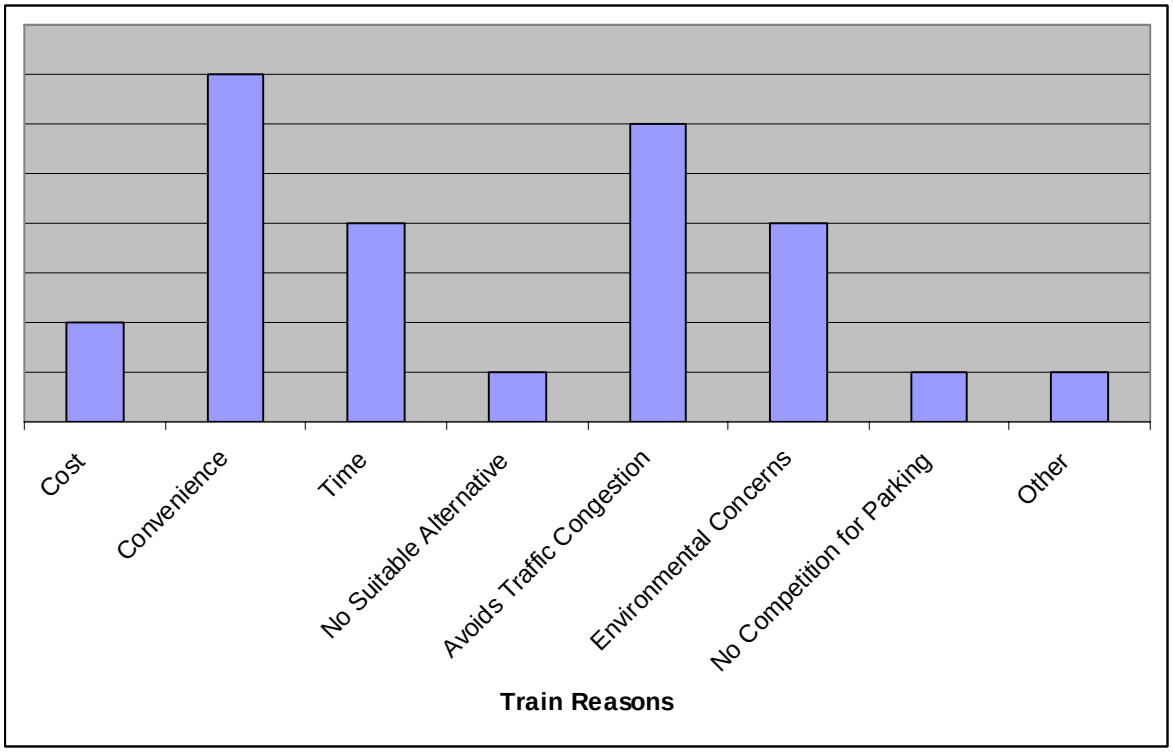


Figure 2.19 Reasons for Travelling by Train

ALTERNATIVE TRAVEL

Alternative Modes of Travel Used

To determine what modes of travel were considered most viable as an alternative to the main mode of travel used, respondents were asked to give their preferred alternative if any. Although bus travel was scored highest as an alternative it is concerning that a quarter of respondents said they would not use any alternative. Of this quarter who are unwilling, or unable, to adopt alternative transport 62% were single occupancy car drivers. This shows a distinct reluctance to change travel habits from the majority of single occupancy car drivers. To address this we need to determine why people choose to drive and what barriers there are to adopting alternative modes of travel.

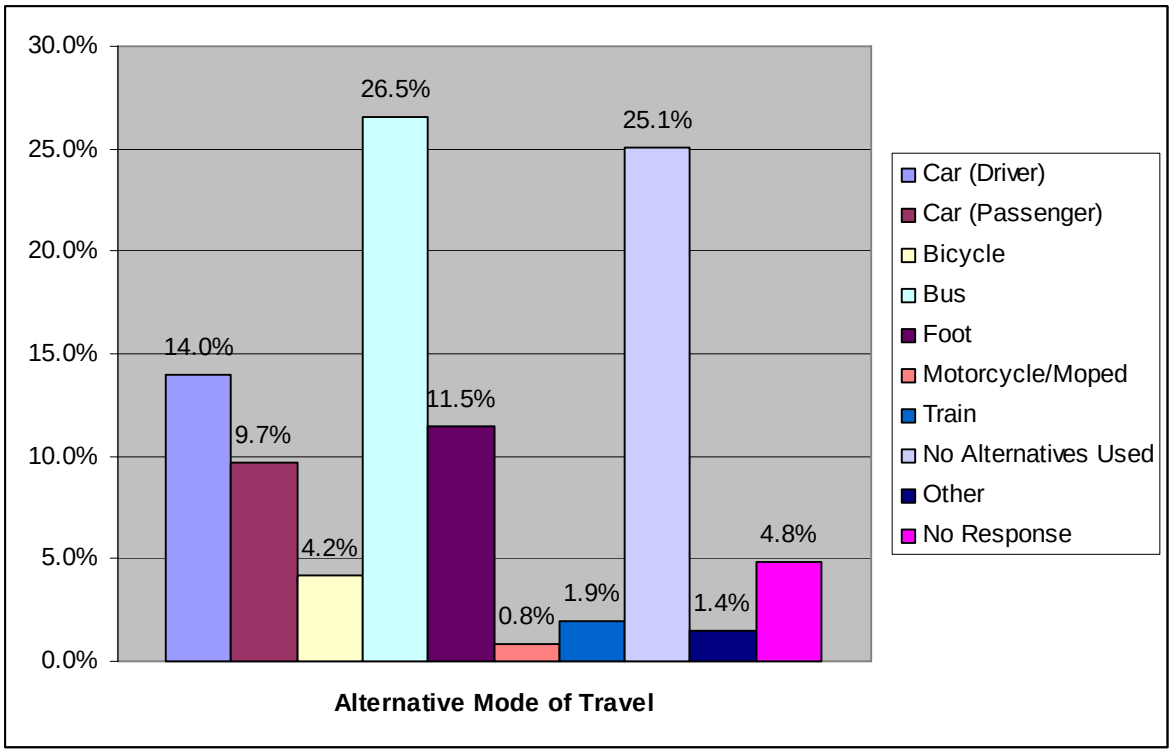


Figure 2.20 Alternative Modes of Travel Used

Student Survey Responses

RESPONSE RATES

Overall 2,318 students responded to the survey from 13,380 surveys distributed, which amounts to a 17% response rate. Although this response rate is relatively low there is nothing to suggest that it does not represent a fair sample of the student community.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Role at University

Figure 3.01 illustrates the breakdown of respondents' role at the University.

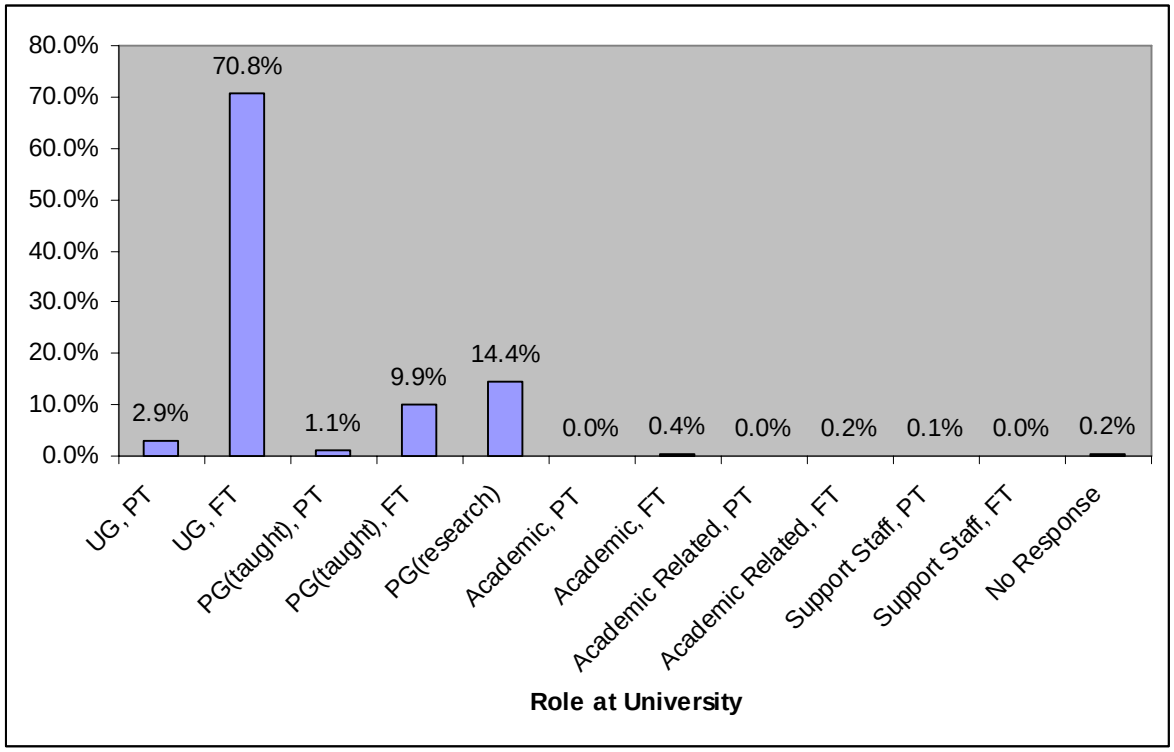


Figure 3.01 Role at University

Gender Split

The information obtained indicated that 61.3% of staff respondents were female, with 37.0% male.

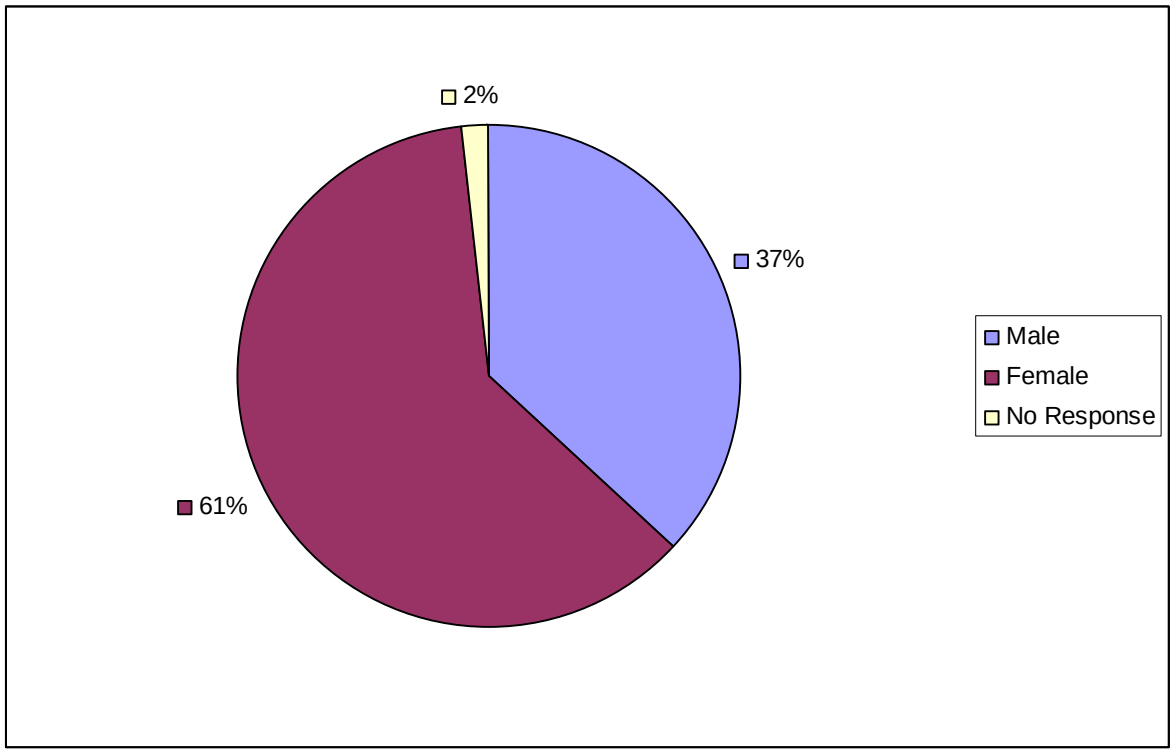


Figure 3.02 Age of Respondents

Age

As can be seen from Figure 3.03 the majority of student respondents (69%) were aged between 18 and 24 years of age with a significantly smaller proportion being older.

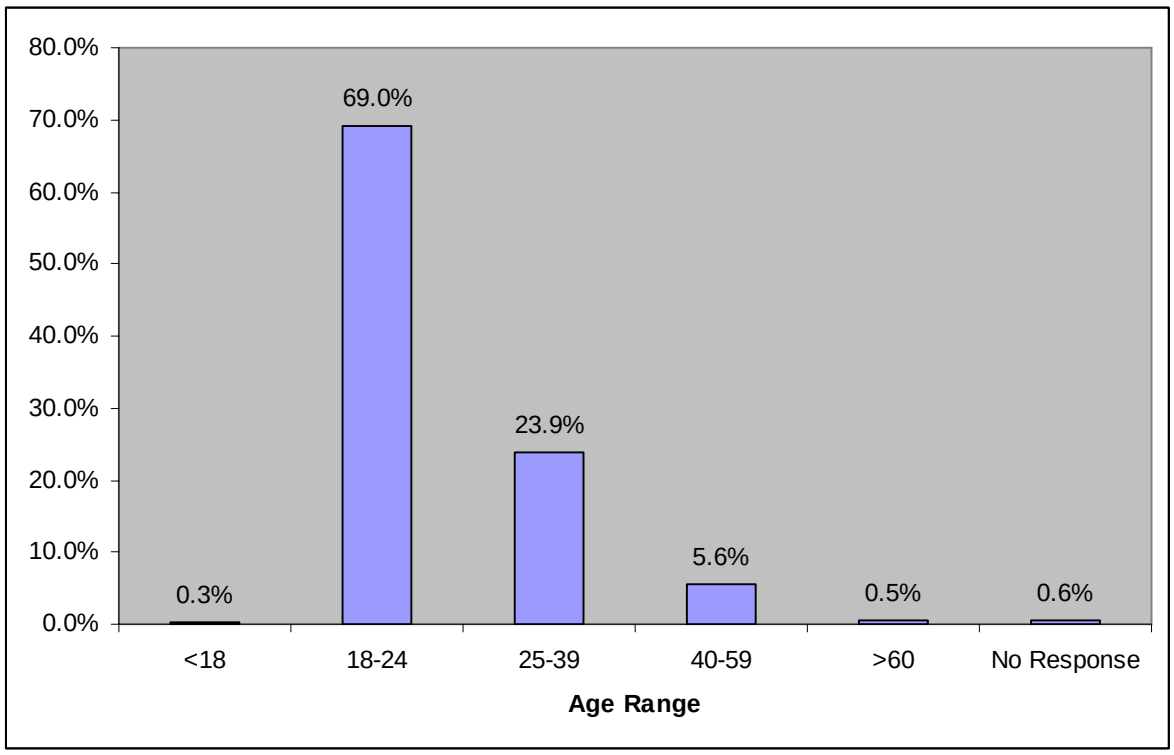


Figure 3.03 Age of Staff Respondents

Distance from Work

Figure 3.04 illustrates the range of distances students estimate they travel to their place of study.

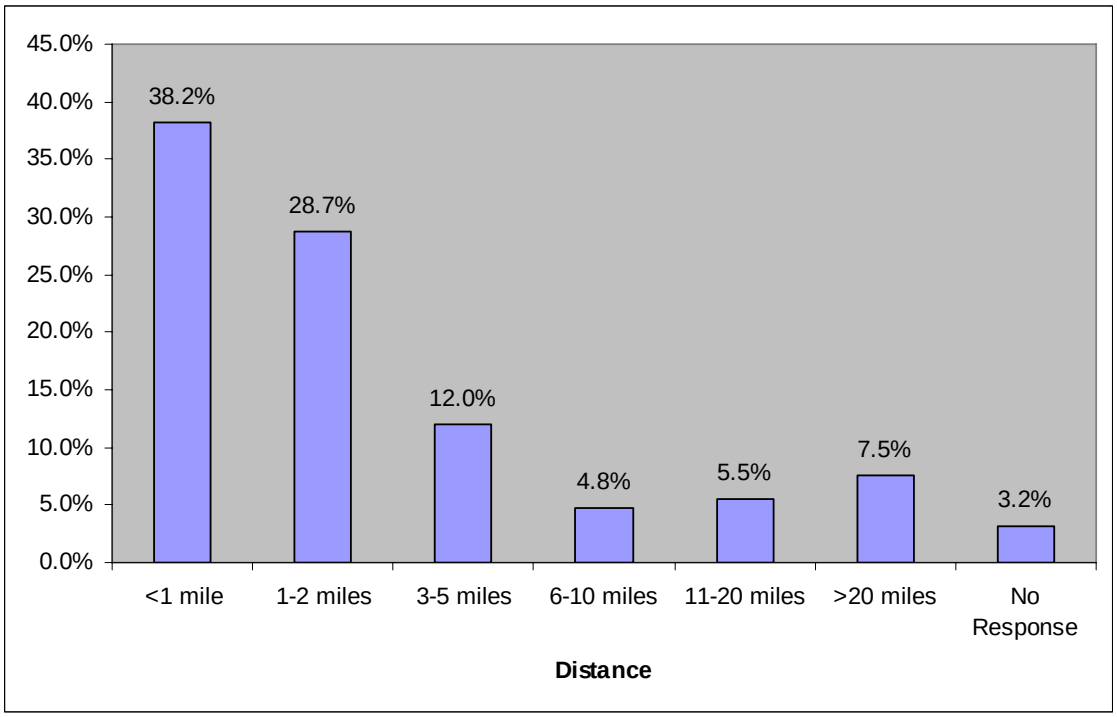


Figure 3.04 Estimated Distance Travelled

Duration of Travel

Figure 3.05 illustrates the time typically taken for people to travel to their place of study.

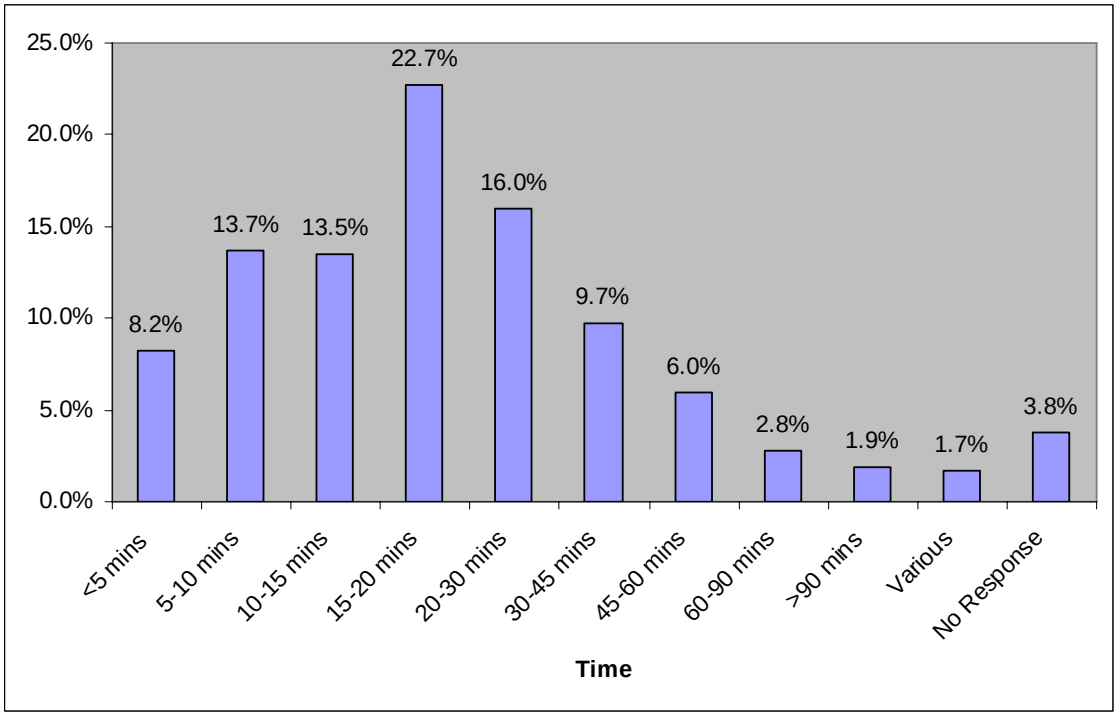


Figure 3.05 Duration of Journey

TRAVEL HABITS

Main Mode of Travel

The most common mode of travel used by students remains walking at nearly 58% however this is a slight downturn in comparison to the 2006 figure of 64.7%. It is difficult to account for this change since there is little difference in the distances students are traveling to get to University. Car sharing shows a slight increase over 2006 figures while bus, motorcycle and train use all remain virtually unchanged. Cycling has shown an increase from 2% to 4.4% which may, in part, account for the drop in walking.

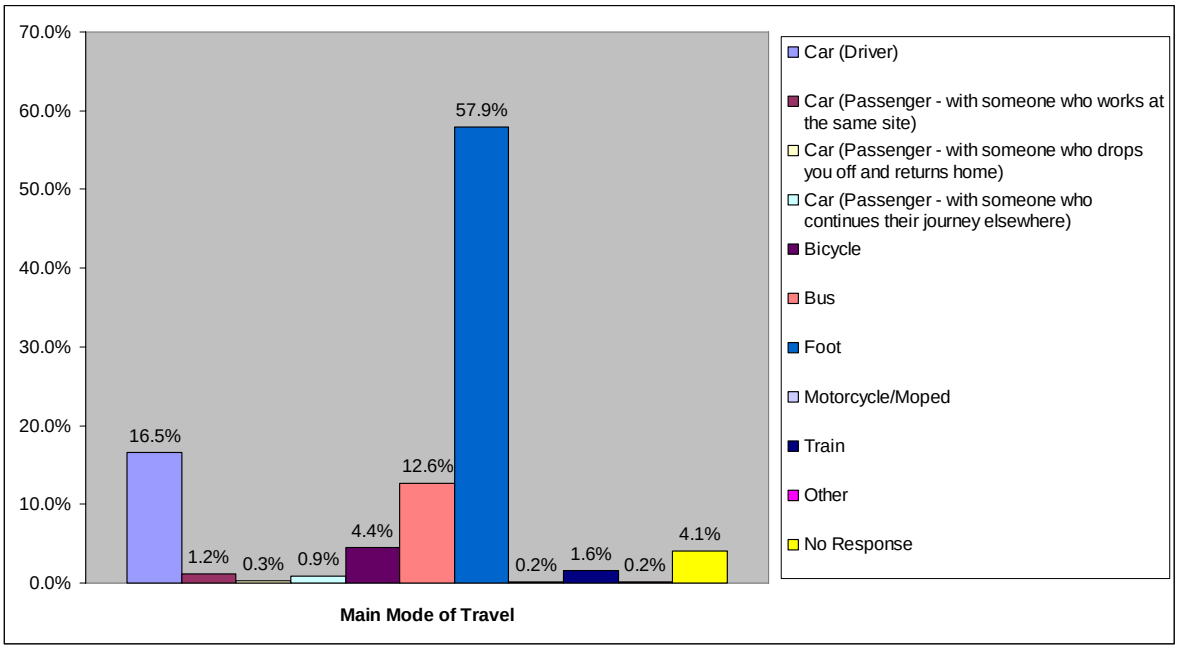


Figure 3.06 Main Mode of Travel by Students

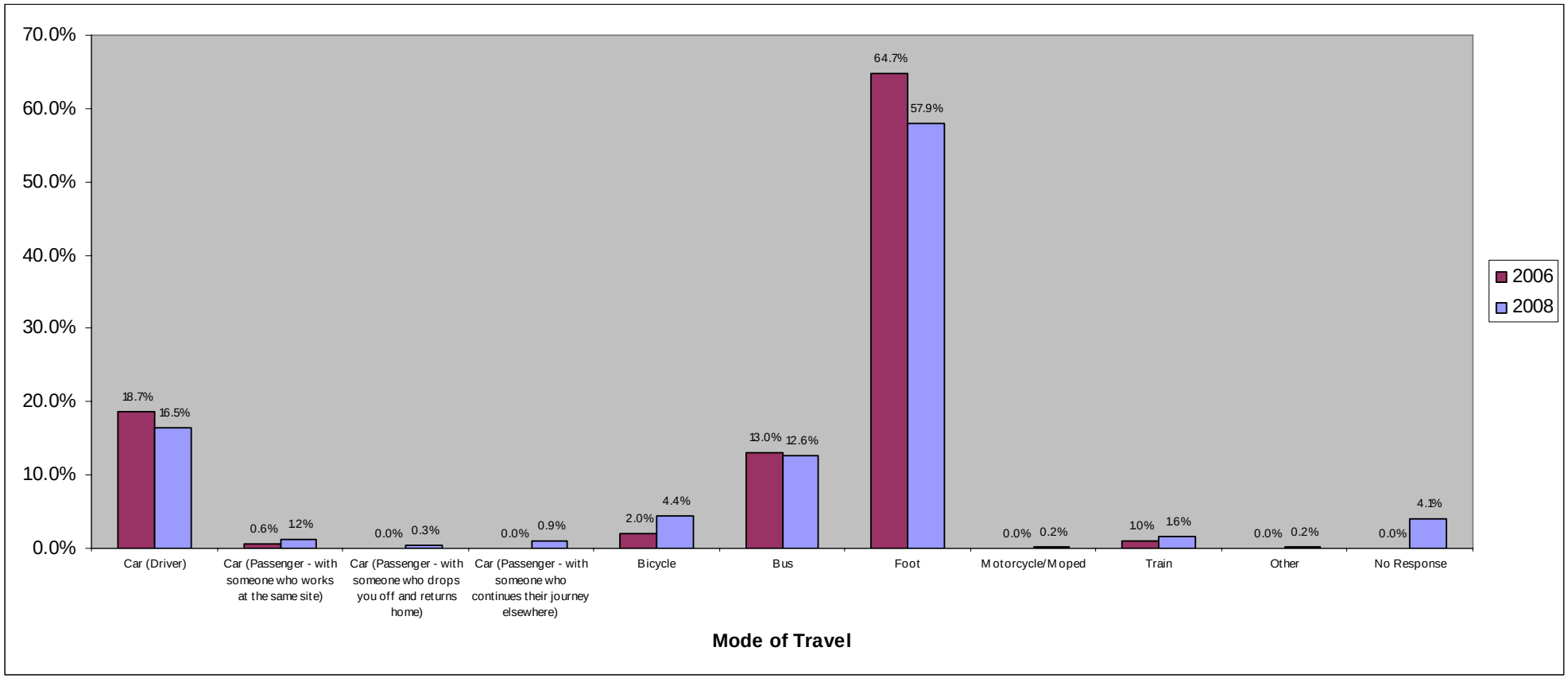


Figure 3.07 Comparison of Main Mode of Travel by Students Between 2006 and 2008

CAR USE

Reasons for Car Use

No values are used in figure 3.08 as respondents could select as many options as were appropriate. The figure therefore represents the comparative reasons given for using a car to commute. As can be seen in figure 3.08 time constraints and convenience feature heavily in students' decisions to commute using their car. Cost, personal use and the lack of a suitable alternative also appear to feature commonly. The data shows that personal choice features most heavily and therefore there is scope for encouraging and enforcing change among students. Reasons given under the "other" option primarily centred around childcare responsibilities and the inefficiencies or cost of public transport.

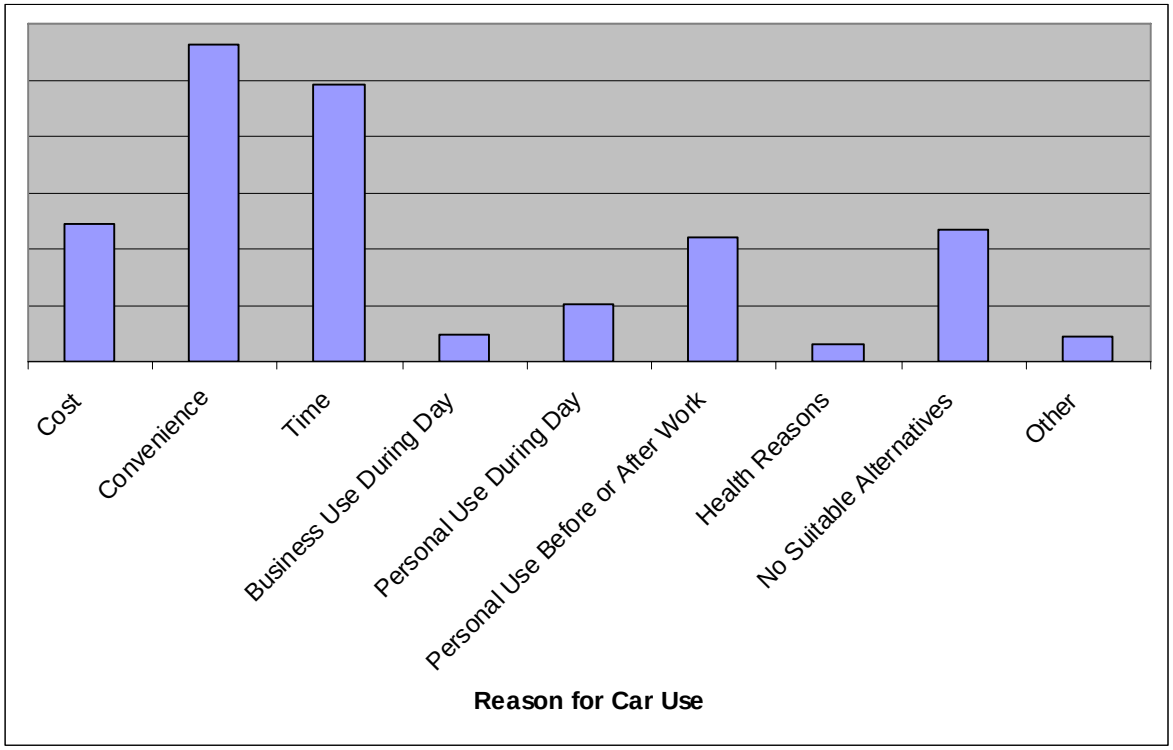


Figure 3.08 Reasons for Car Use

Encouragement of Car Sharing

No values are used in figure 3.09 as respondents could select as many options as were appropriate. The figure therefore represents the comparative preference of incentives to encourage car sharing. Guaranteed parking and ride home featured strongly together with more help in finding a car share partner.

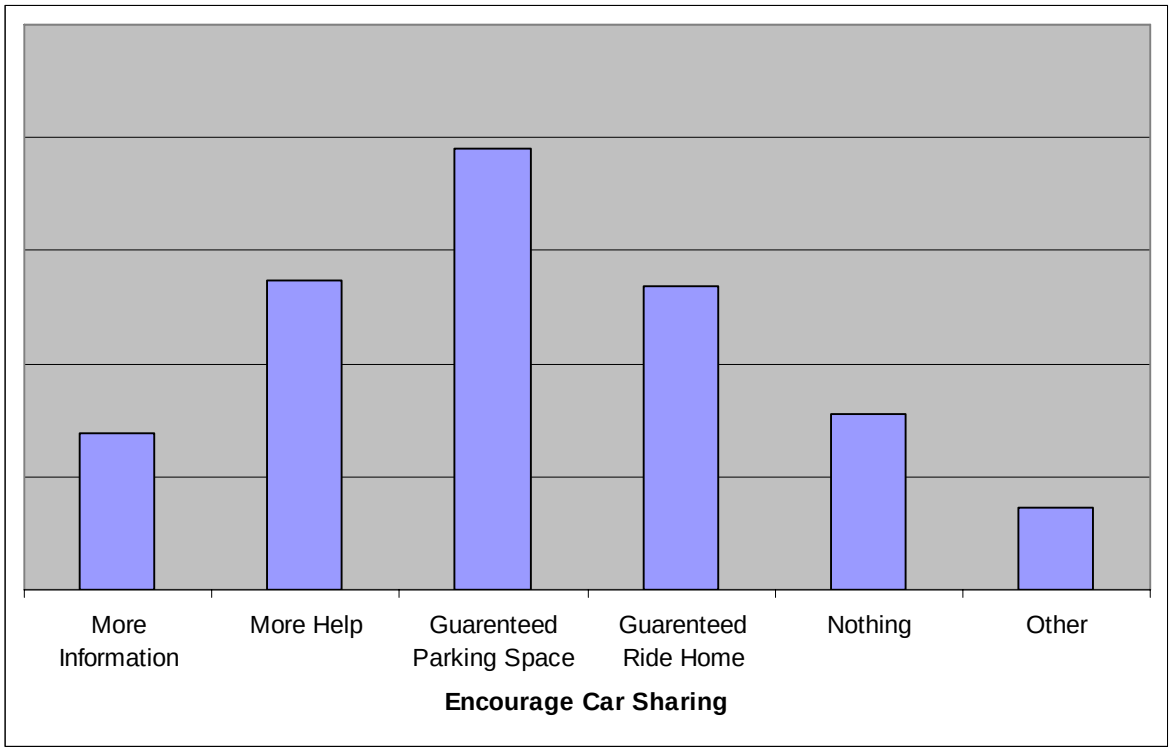


Figure 3.09 Preferred Business Travel Alternatives

CAR SHARING

Reasons for Car Sharing

No values are used in figure 3.10 as respondents could select as many options as were appropriate. The figure therefore represents the comparative reasons why students car share. Convenience can clearly be seen as the most prominent reason while cost and time also feature strongly.

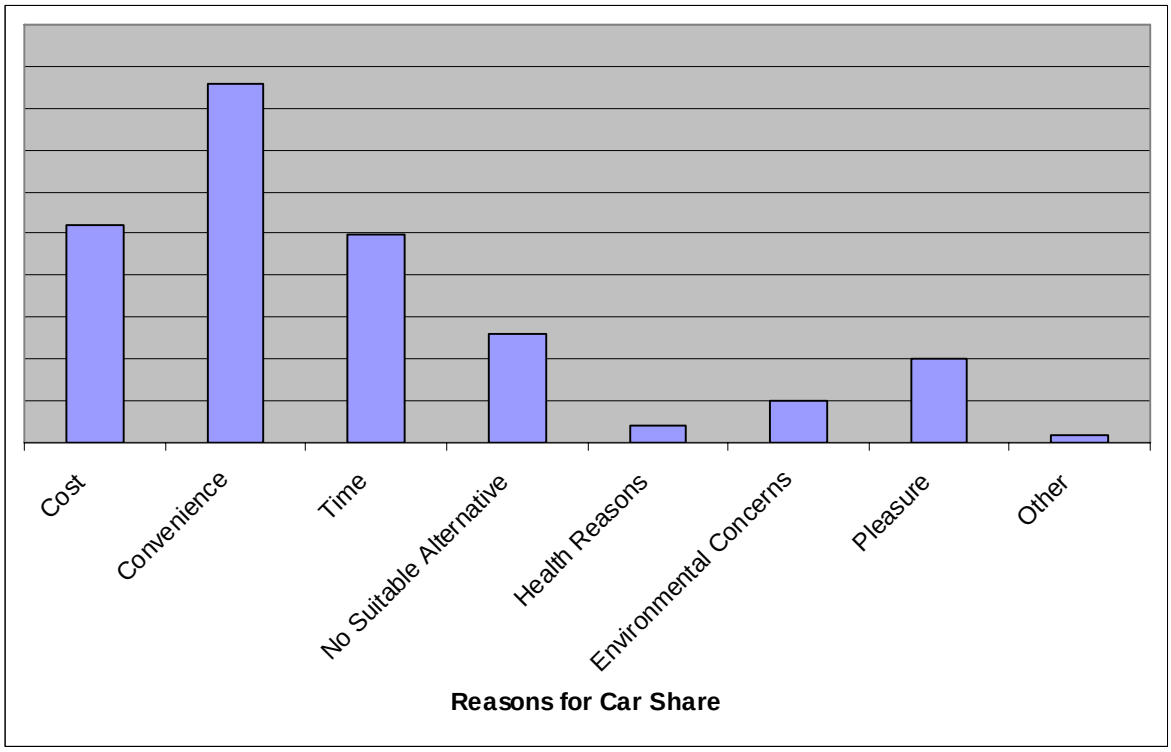


Figure 3.10 Reasons for Car Sharing

CYCLING

Reasons for Cycling

No values are used in figure 3.11 as respondents could select as many options as were appropriate. The figure therefore represents the comparative reasons why students cycle to work. With the exception of there being no suitable alternatives all reasons seem to influence cyclists to a fairly large extent although the lack of competition for parking and avoiding traffic congestion feature least prominently.

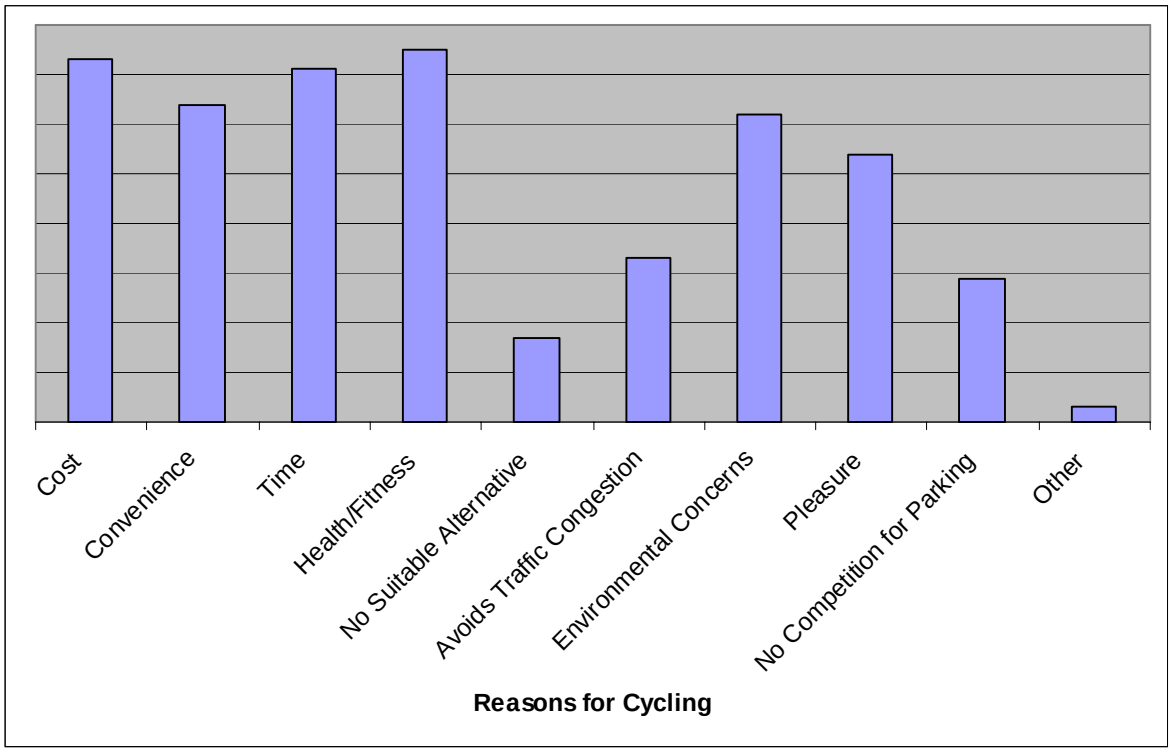
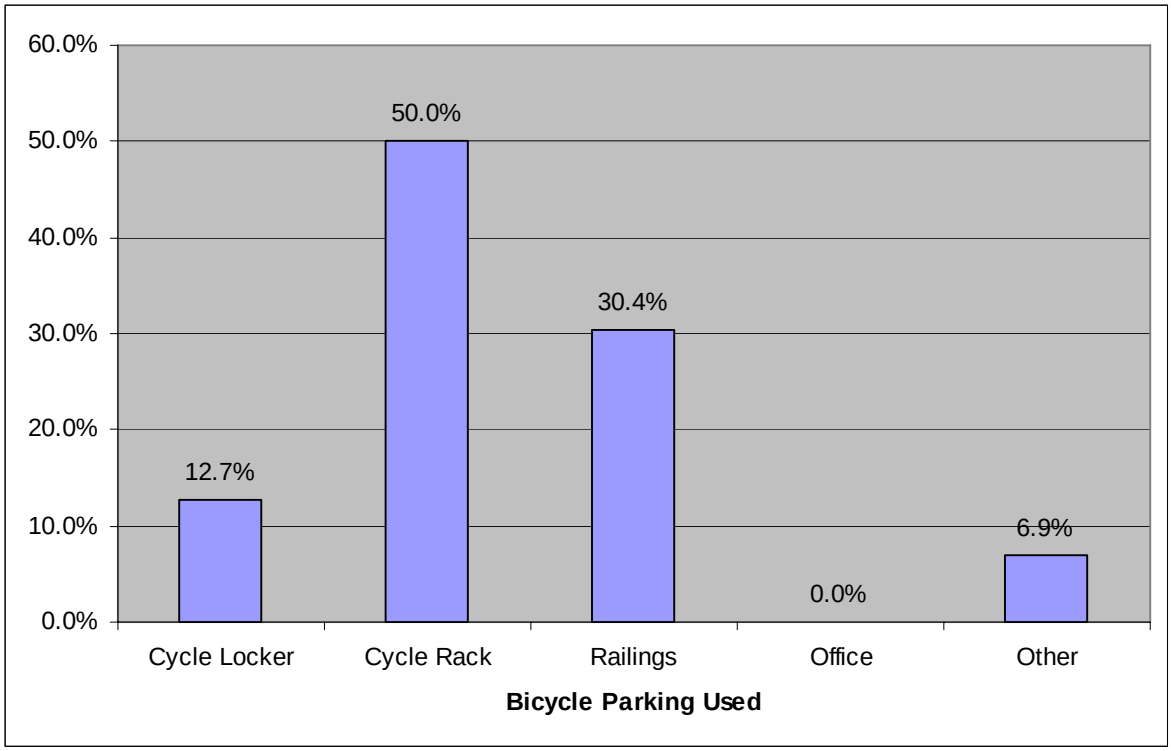


Figure 3.11 Reasons for Cycling

Cycle Parking Used

Figure 3.12 shows the majority of students use cycle racks. Railings appear to be used commonly as an alternative, presumably if there are no cycle racks nearby. The relatively low percentage of students using cycle lockers may be due to the cost of the locker deposit (£60) or the perception that lockers are not available to students. No data was requested to specify where "other" cycle storage was being utilised.



(Percentages calculated from a subset of 102 respondents)

Figure 3.12 Cycle Parking Used

BUS TRAVEL

Reasons for Bus Travel

No values are used in figure 3.13 as respondents could select as many options as were appropriate. The figure therefore represents the comparative reasons why students use the bus to travel to their place of study. No suitable alternative features heavily suggesting that bus travel is often used out of necessity rather than choice.

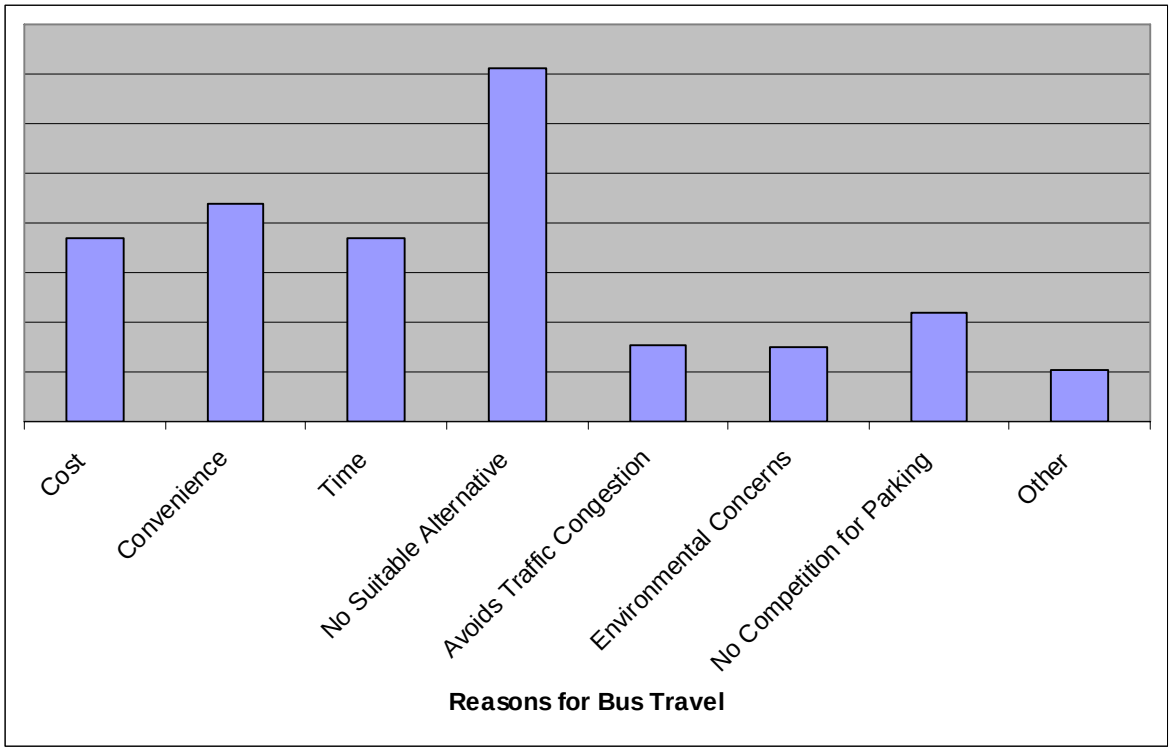


Figure 3.13 Reasons for Bus Travel

Bus Routes Used

No values are used in figure 3.14 as respondents could select as many bus services that they use on a regular basis. The figure therefore represents how much each service is used compared to others. The most common route used is that of the 1/2 which serves Old Aberdeen both from the Bridge of Don and from Garthdee. All other city services showed similar levels of use. Country services were predictably used less than city services but showed more people using buses on the Peterhead/Fraserburgh corridor.

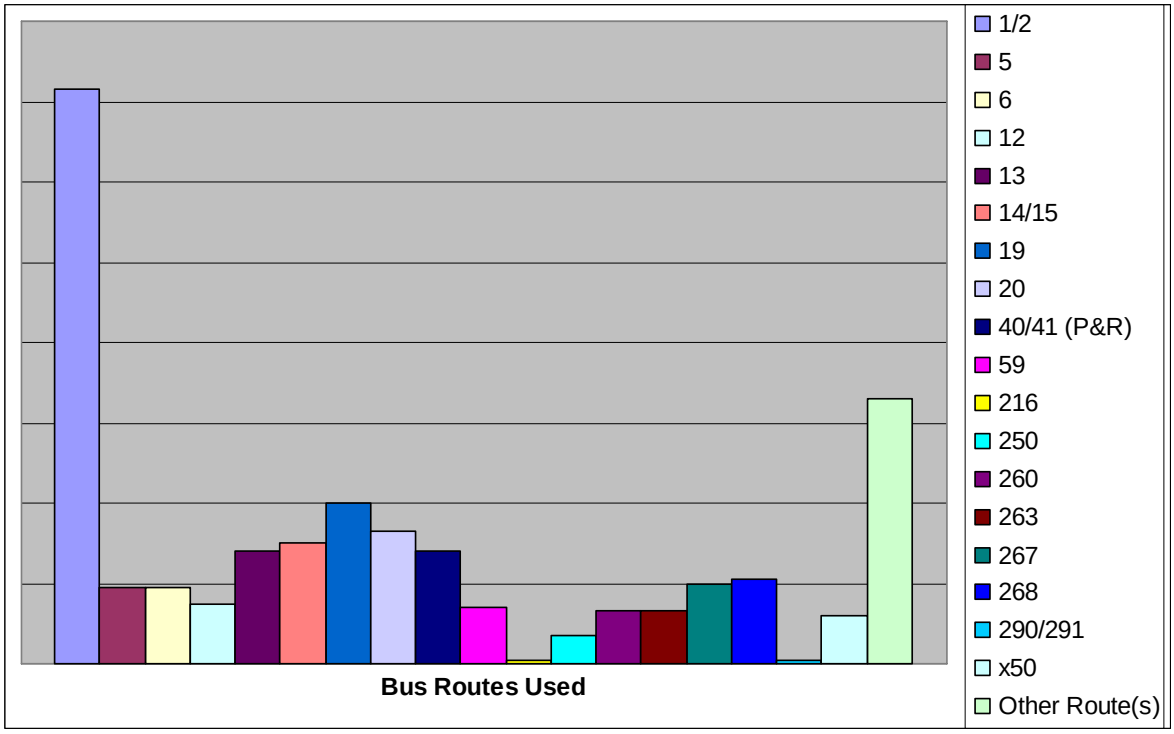


Figure 3.14 Bus Routes Used

WALKING

Reasons for Walking

No values are used in figure 3.15 as respondents could select as many options as were appropriate. The figure therefore represents the comparative reasons why students walk to their place of study. Convenience, health reasons and cost feature most highly.

Figure 3.15 Reasons for Walking

MOTORCYCLING

Reasons for Traveling by Motorcycle

No values are used in figure 3.16 as respondents could select as many options as were appropriate. The figure therefore represents the comparative reasons why students travel by motorcycle to their place of study. Cost, convenience and health seem to feature most highly. The results differ significantly from those received from staff who were asked the same question illustrating the differing needs and motivations of staff and students.

Figure 3.16 Reasons for Travelling by Motorcycle

RAIL TRAVEL

Reasons for Traveling by Train

No values are used in figure 3.17 as respondents could select as many options as were appropriate. The figure therefore represents the comparative reasons why students travel by train to their place of study. Convenience, time, avoiding traffic and lack of competition for parking feature strongly.

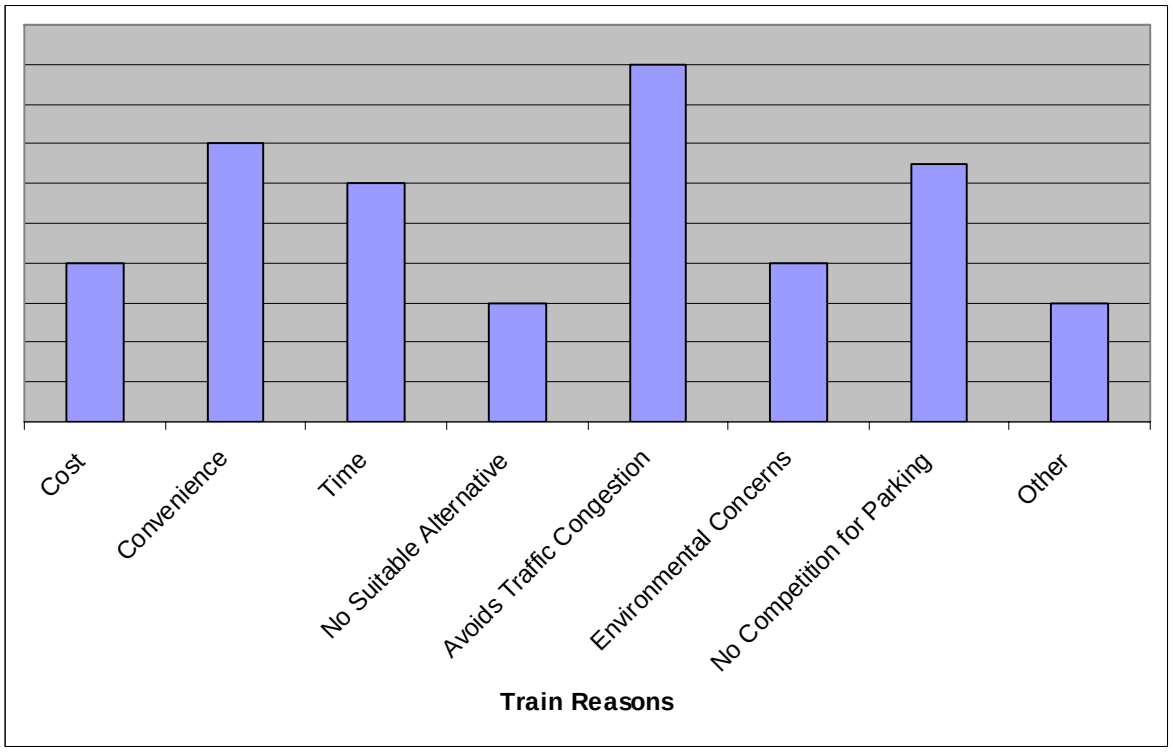


Figure 3.17 Reasons for Travelling by Train

ALTERNATIVE TRAVEL

Alternative Modes of Travel Used

To determine what modes of travel were considered most viable as an alternative to the main mode of travel used, respondents were asked to give their preferred alternative if any. Although bus travel was scored highest as an alternative it is concerning that almost 23% of respondents said they would not use any alternative. However, of that 23% who are unwilling, or unable, to adopt alternative transport only 11.6% were single occupancy car drivers in comparison to 62% in the case of staff. This shows that only a relatively small proportion of students overall drive and are unwilling to change. To address these few remaining we need to determine why people choose to drive and what barriers there are to adopting alternative modes of travel.

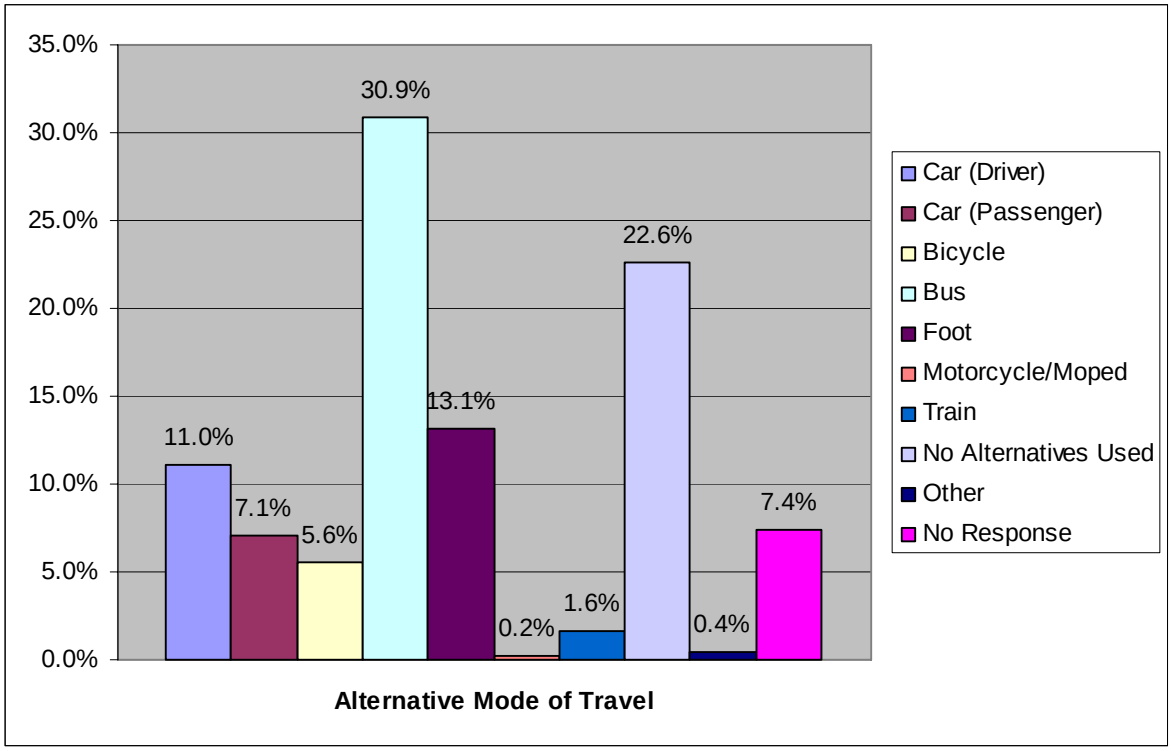


Figure 3.18 Alternative Modes of Travel Used

Conclusion

Although progress has been made in reducing single occupancy car use it is not in line with the targets set out in the Travel Plan. To address this more needs to be done to encourage the key areas of modal shift namely; car sharing, public transport, cycling and walking. Disincentives to discourage the use of single occupancy car use should also be applied to although this should be in conjunction with increased facilities to cope with modal shift.

A particular area of concern is the reduction in public transport use. This is contrary to modal shift in most other areas of the country but in line with what other local organisations are experiencing. This, together with input received during the survey, suggests that it is the cost and quality of public transport service in the area that is causing a reduction in public transport use. This is largely outwith the control of the University since transport operators are private companies however work will continue with transport operators and local authority public transport units to reverse this trend.

A positive and encouraging result of the survey is the increase in cycling. This is a three fold benefit since it reduces traffic congestion, parking congestion and increases the health and fitness of the organisation resulting in a healthier and more productive University community. Positive working relationships have been developed with local cycling organisations and the University has reintroduced its Bike to Work scheme to encourage further staff and students to take up cycling.