DO WE DELIVER ON LAW STUDENT EXPECTATIONS?

JACKIE LANE
UNIVERSITY OF HUDDERSFIELD

QUESTIONS

- If we *expect* certain aspects of a new experience (e.g. A job or education course) do we feel disappointed if it turns out differently?
- If we had been given more information, would we feel less disappointed?
- How should we, the providers, go about ensuring that new students are given the right information?

Expectations are determined by experience

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRLLelgxGy4
- We have expectations of our students
- Our students have expectations of University or college life
- Do these expectations coincide, or is there a mismatch that causes disappointment?
- If we expected more, would we get more?

Feedback and assessment

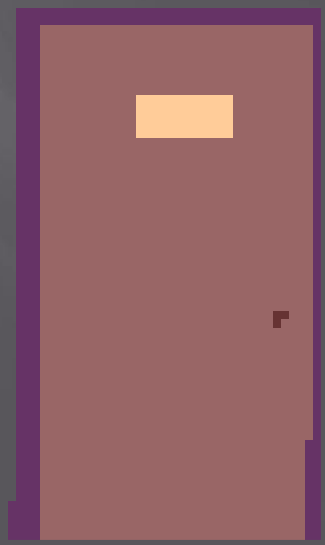
- Are students always delighted with their marks?
- Year 1 is most troublesome
- Years 2 and 3 have better idea of what to expect
- Potential for giving more accurate guidance on how work is graded at an earlier stage

Self assessment?

- Self assessment could be an appropriate means of guiding students to understand how work is graded, and what we expect.
- Lee Sutherland's article
- Examined students' expectations before assessment; lecturer's assessment and self assessment
- Conclusion: student expectations unrealistic *unless* given guidance and training (then very accurate)

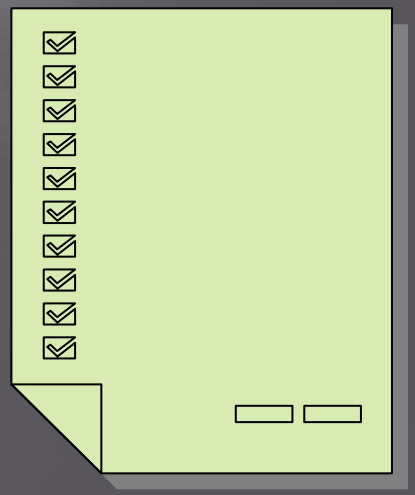
How?

- Make marking criteria explicit
- Move learning from being teacher-directed to being student-directed.
- Manage expectations in a constructive way to avoid disappointment and attrition.



What are the qualities of good feedback?

- 2007 NSS identified only 62% of students "satisfied" with feedback
- Holmes and Papageorgiou suggest "there is a need to develop a greater *understanding* of students' expectations of feedback, their *perceptions* of what feedback is and *how they use* the feedback they receive."



- Feedback should “feed forward”
- Needs to be clearer assessment criteria, shared by both students and tutors
- Feedback should identify the gaps between their performance and the desired standard
- Feedback should be motivational

Course management and students' expectations

- So – student expectations may be unrealistic, but how can these be managed?
- Buckley et al identified an expectation gap
- Suggests managing this through a *student-teacher contract*
- Let the students know exactly what to expect!
- Uses a Realistic Course Preview (RCP) and Expectation Lowering Procedure (ELP)

RCP

- Clarifies the teacher's expectations
- Thereby clarifies student's expectations in the context of past experience
- Provides detailed course information
- Done in the early stages of the process

ELP

- Lower student's expectations to avoid later disappointment
- Focus on how students expect not to have to contribute to their own learning and course outcomes (i.e. lower grades)
- Assists student to develop more *realistic* expectations without providing specific course information
- Helpful in courses with high independent study content, but theory could be extended to other courses

Impact of expectations on teaching and learning – Glesner Fines

- How do the *teacher's* expectations impact on student achievement
- Expect more and you will get more
- Correlation between high expectation and high achievement
- Teachers who can create a warm, positive, encouraging climate can expect high achievement

Workload expectations

- This too should be made more explicit
- HEPI studies show a wide difference in mean study times (teaching and private study combined), varying between 18.17 and 44.8.
- UK students have the lowest study time at 30 hours pw; French students spend, on average, 39 hours pw.
- HEFCE Report

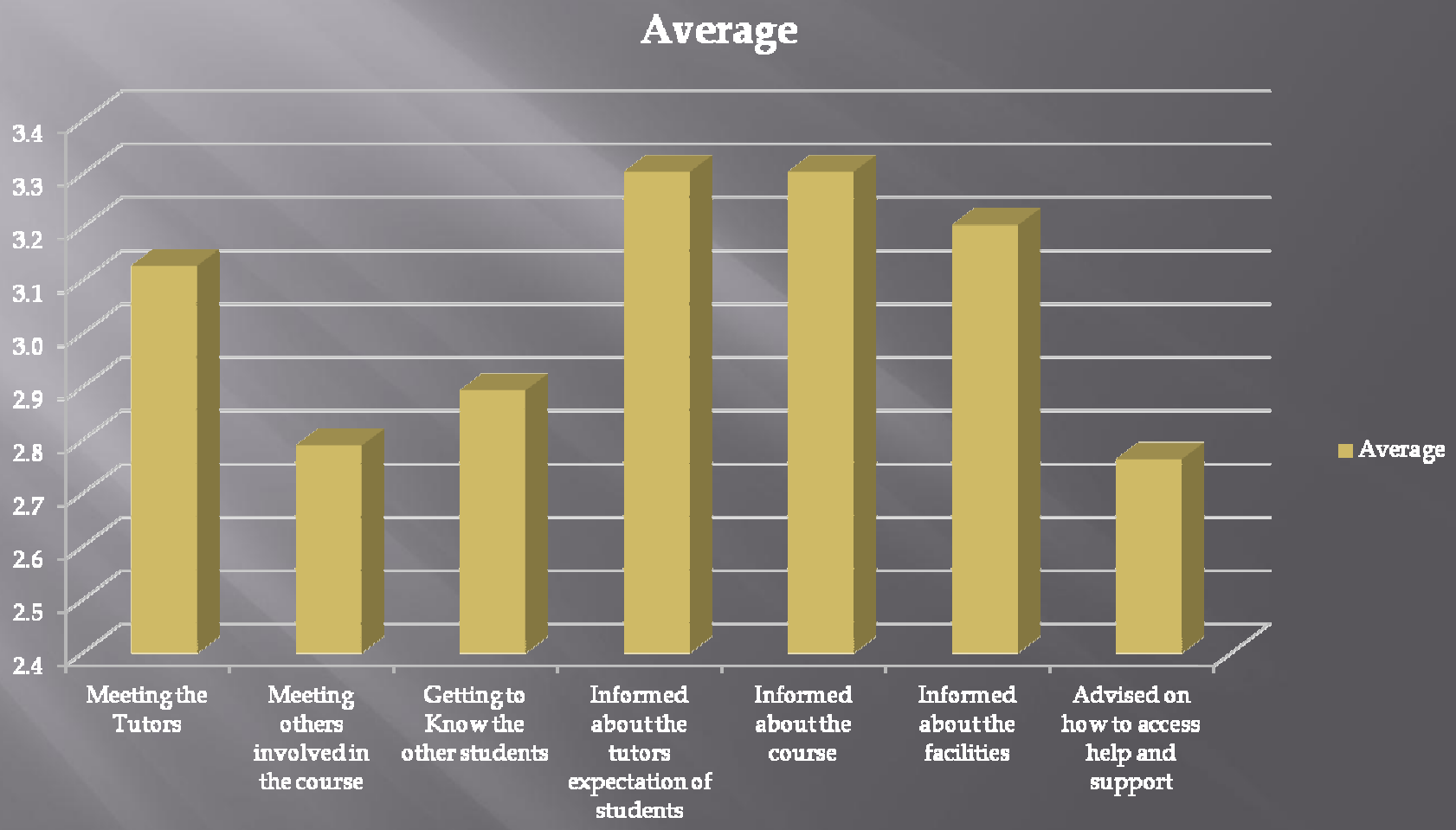
Huddersfield students

- Questionnaire given to first year LL.B students
- 4 broad headings gauging whether students' expectations were fully, largely or partially met, or not met at all:
- Induction
- Teaching
- Materials
- Assessment and Feedback

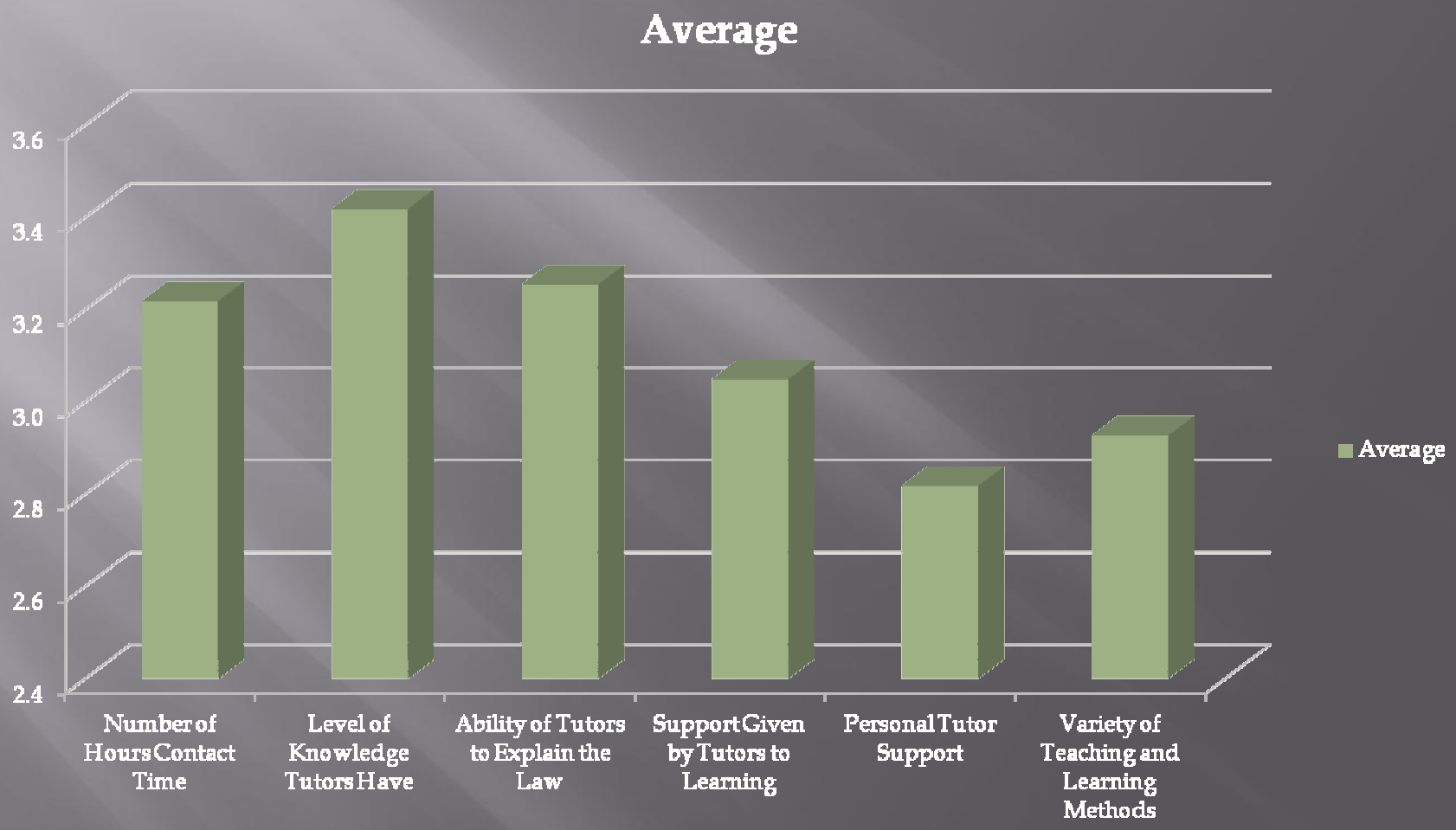
Outcomes

- Students' expectations were either fully or largely met under most headings, but with some areas of concern

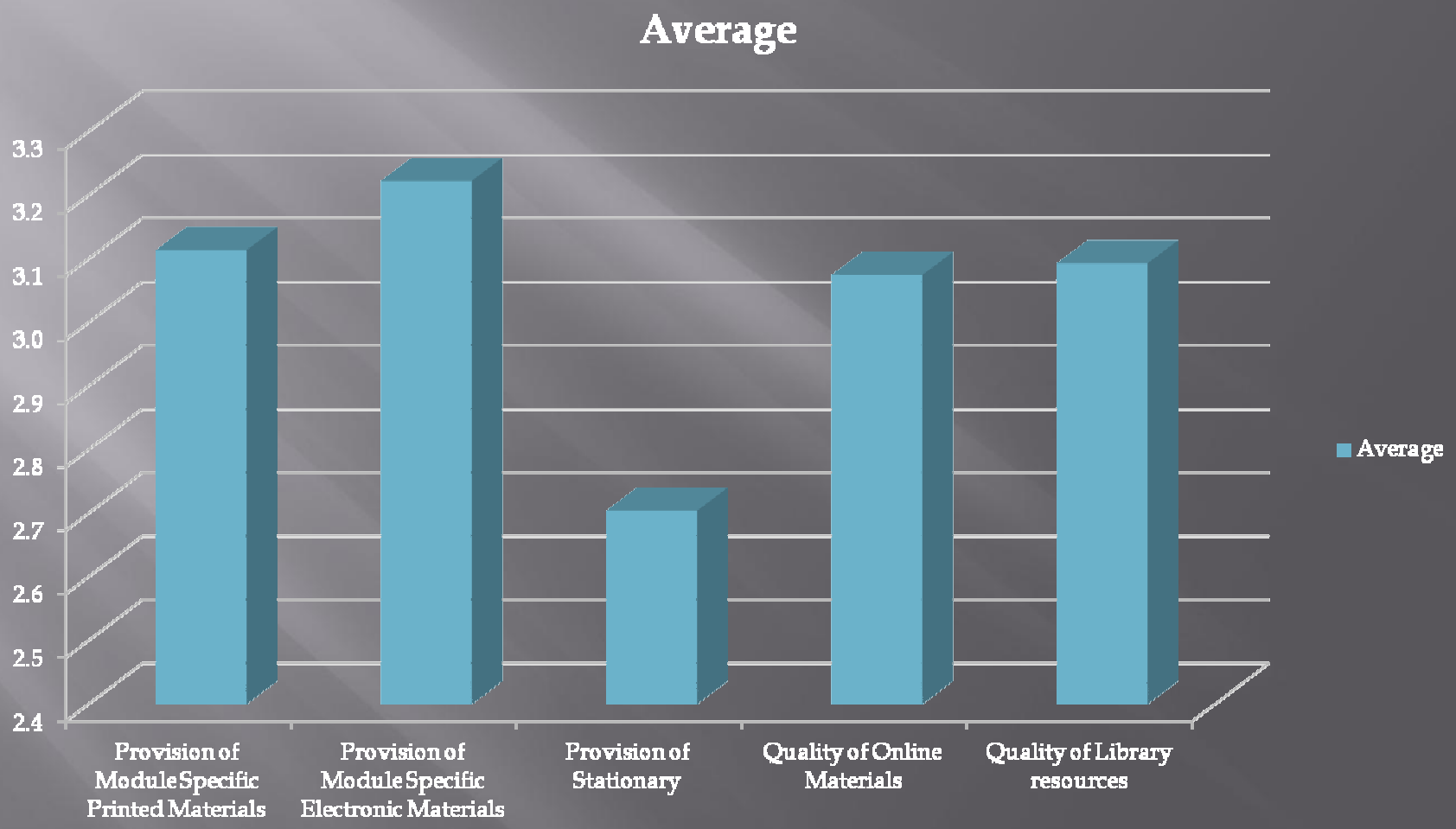
1. Induction


Average
3.4
3.3
3.2
3.1
3.0
2.9
2.8
2.7
2.6
2.5
2.4
Meeting the Tutors
Meeting others involved in the course
Getting to Know the other students
Informed about the tutors expectation of students
Informed about the course
Informed about the facilities
Advised on how to access help and support
Average

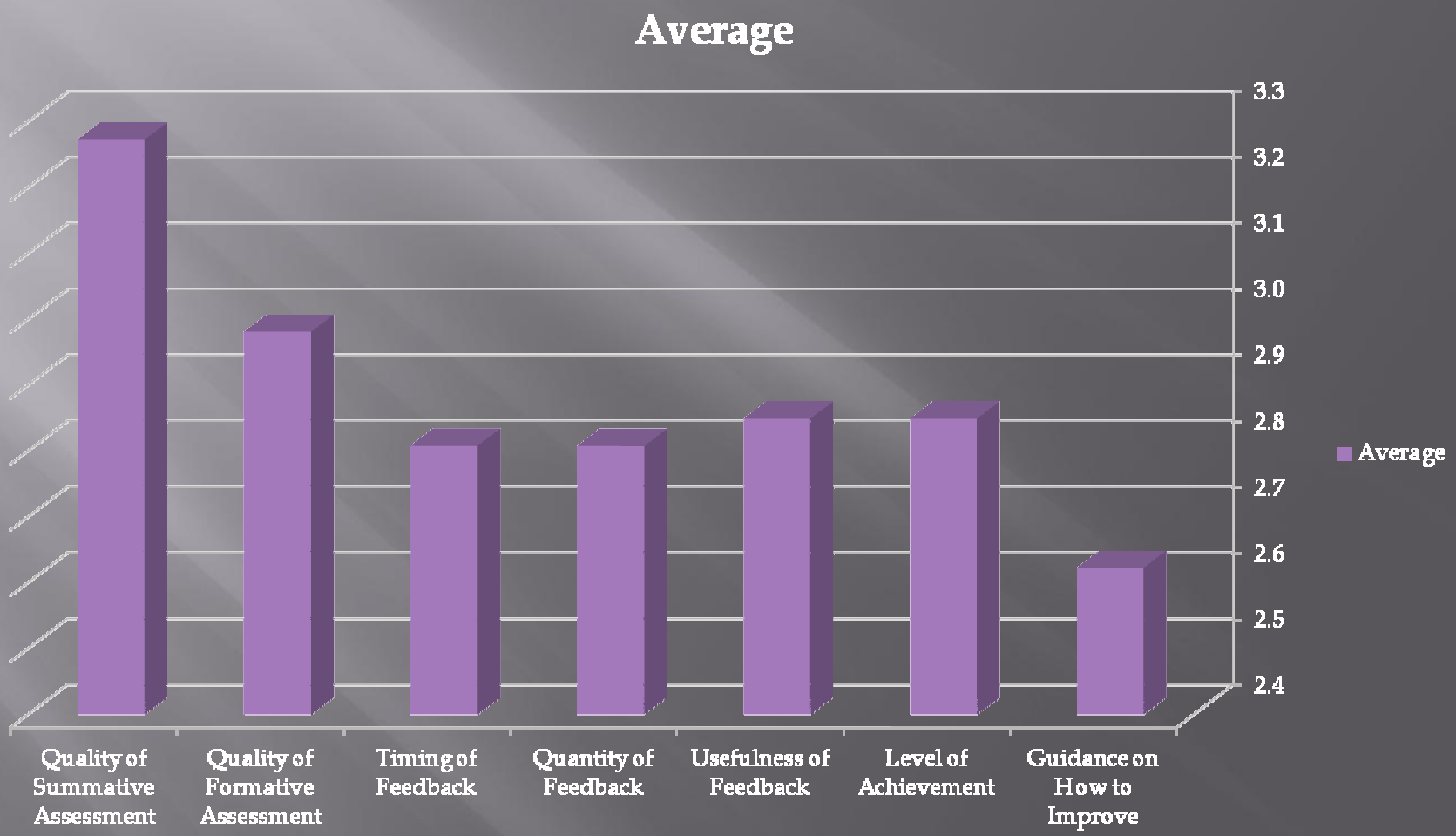
2. Teaching


Average
3.6
3.4
3.2
3.0
2.8
2.6
2.4
Number of Hours Contact Time
Level of Knowledge Tutors Have
Ability of Tutors to Explain the Law
Support Given by Tutors to Learning
Personal Tutor Support
Variety of Teaching and Learning Methods
Average

3. Materials


Average
3.3
3.2
3.1
3.0
2.9
2.8
2.7
2.6
2.5
2.4
Provision of Module Specific Printed Materials
Provision of Module Specific Electronic Materials
Provision of Stationary
Quality of Online Materials
Quality of Library resources
Average

4. Assessment and feedback



I have a cunning plan...

- The research indicates an overall mismatch between what the students expect and what they actually receive.
- Recommendations for a plan of action are detailed in the full paper under:
- Feedback and assessment
- Manage student expectations
- Review teacher expectations
- Induction