STEYNING
CAMERA CLUB
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Expanding Creativity and Diversity.

The Survey

To explore how we can expand diversity and creativity in the club

Expanding Creativity and Diversity

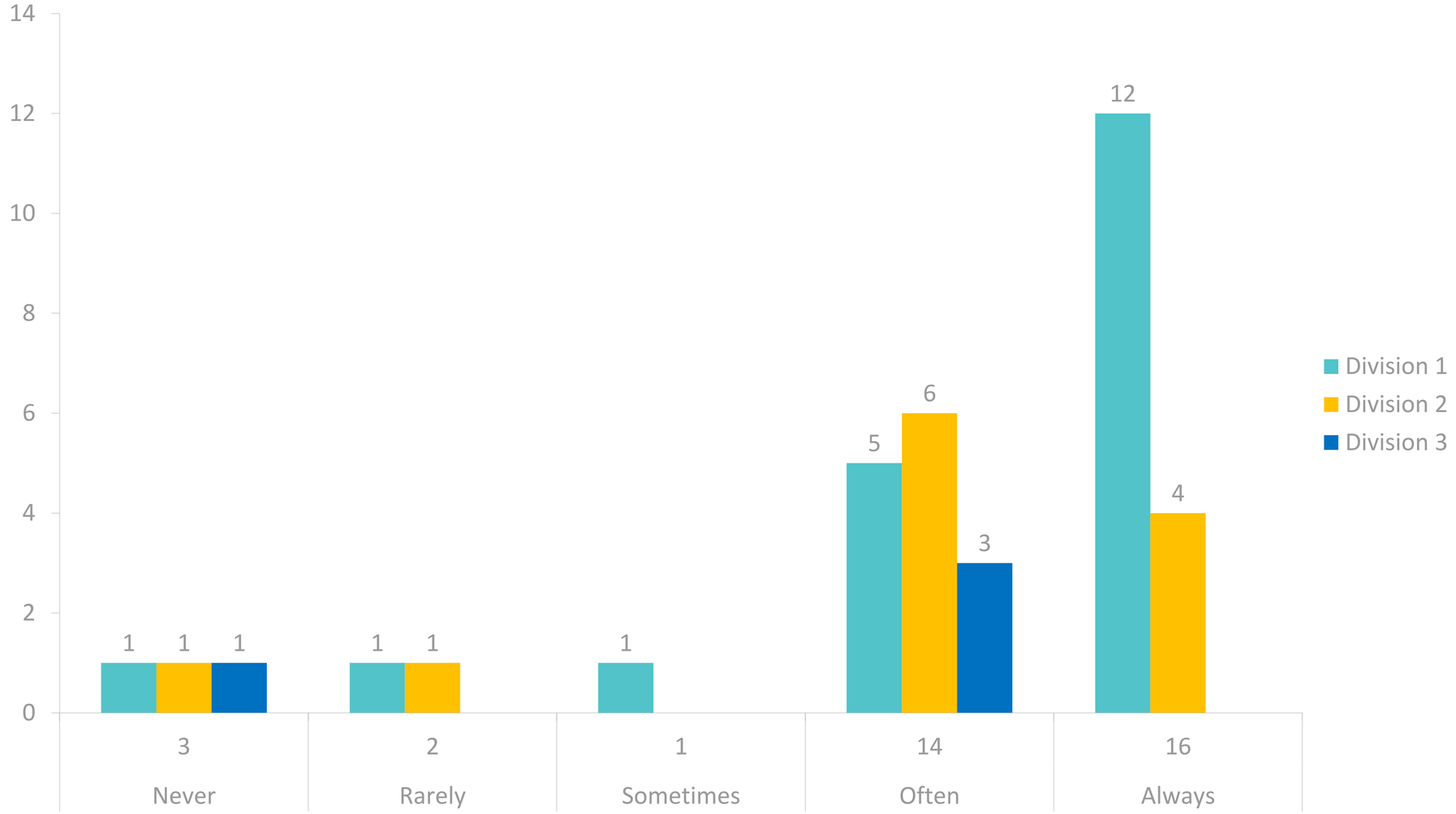
- The survey was conducted in Spring 2021
- It attracted 36 responses from members
- Questions deliberately open so as not to be biased by any preconceptions
- Qualitative analysis to categorise responses, so interpretation is subjective to some extent.

Section 1

Demographic

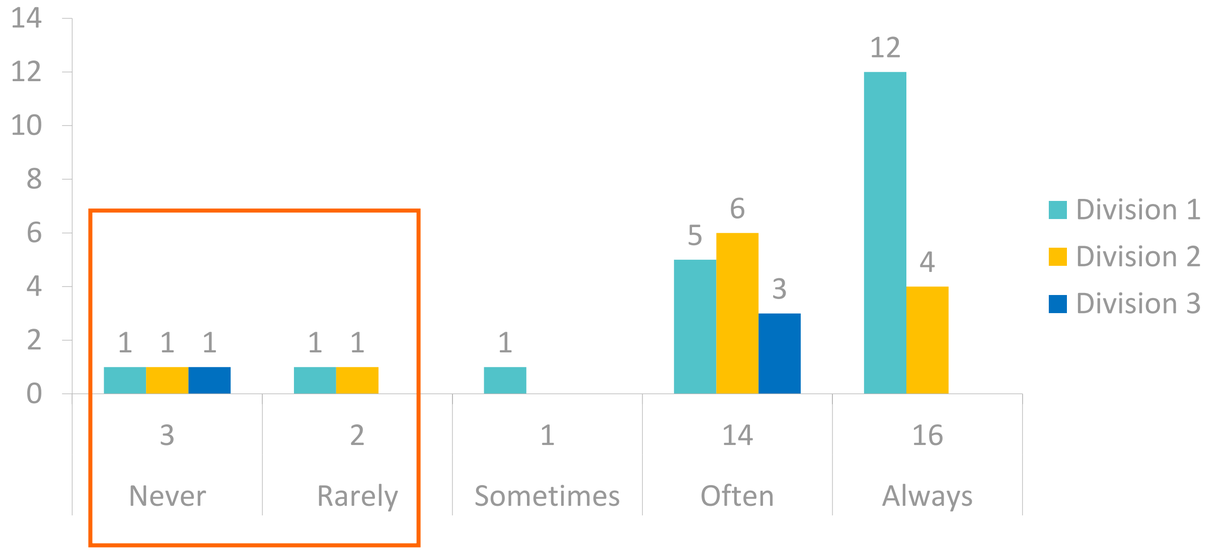
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Q1.1 How often do you enter competitions at the club?



83% Always or Often

1.1 Reasons for not entering



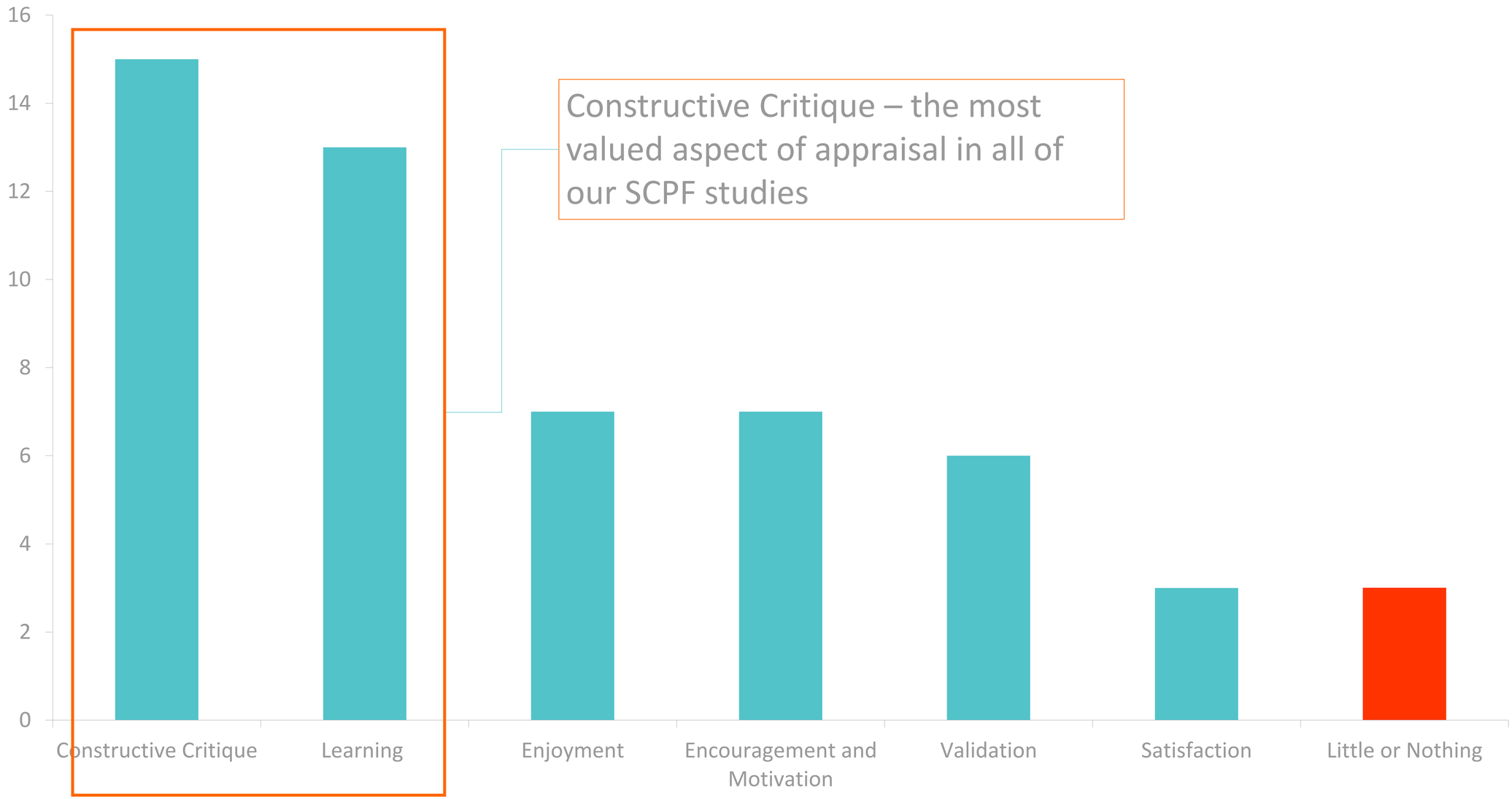
- *"I don't see photography as a competitive arena, and I have no personal need for appraisal in its current form."*
- *"Know[ing] that anything I produce is never or rarely going to do well. I find competitions were detrimental to my trying anything new. The phrase 'the judge wouldn't like that' kept creeping in."*
- *"Not clear on the benefits of competitions. Concern that producing images for competitions may negatively impact my photography, that I end up shooting specifically for judges and their requirements."*
- *"Fear of 'failure', I find it difficult to have the courage of my own convictions."*

Section 2

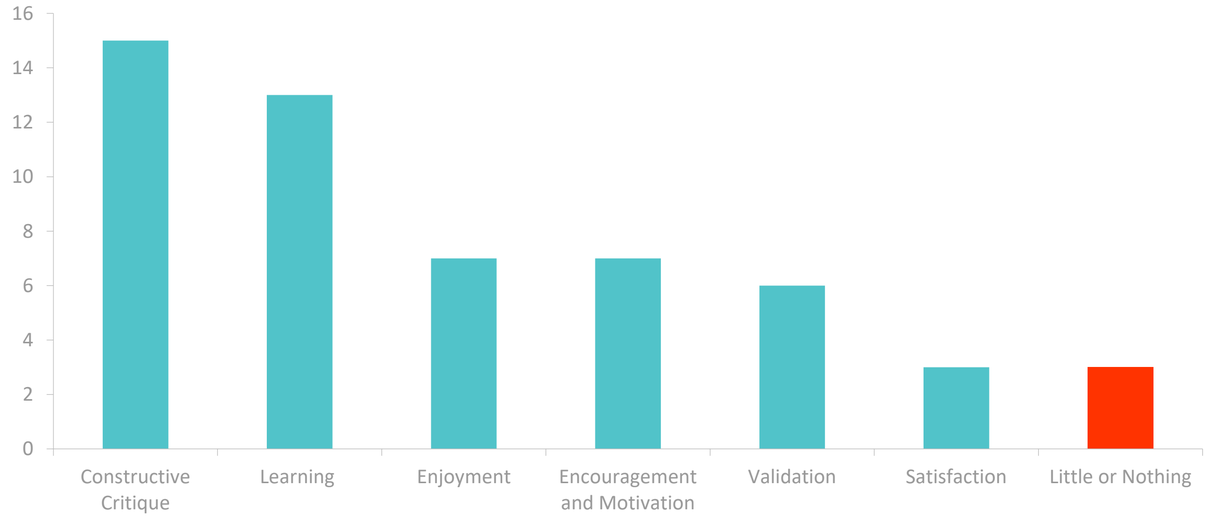
About the value of competitions to you

- Q2.1 What do you gain personally from entering competitions?
- Q2.2 What do you gain personally from watching / listening to judged competitions?
- Q2.3 What do you want / need personally from an appraisal of your work that you don’t get from competitions?

Q2.1 What do you gain personally from entering competitions?

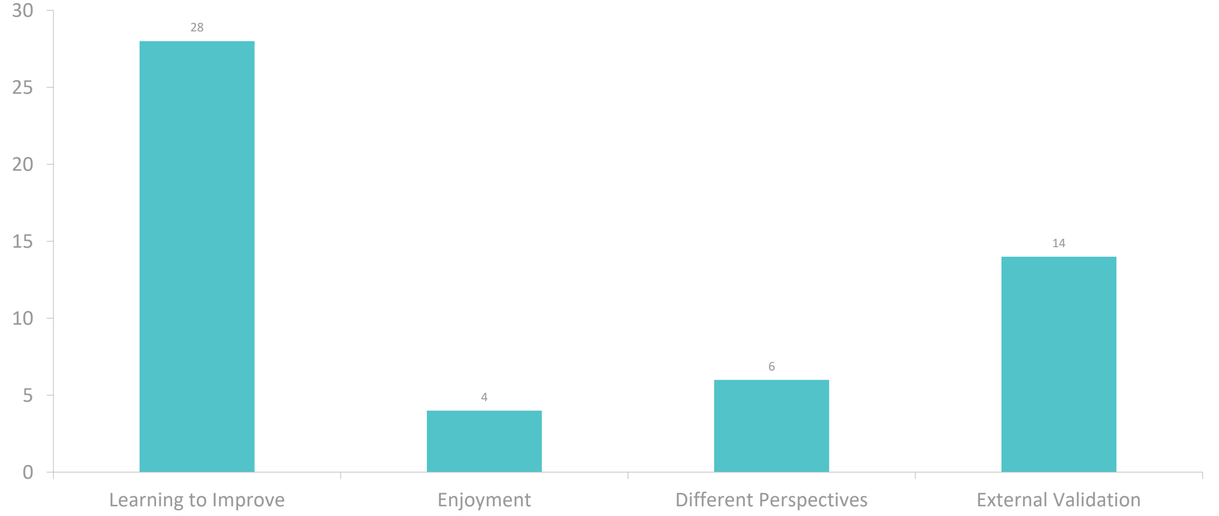


2.1 What do you gain from competition



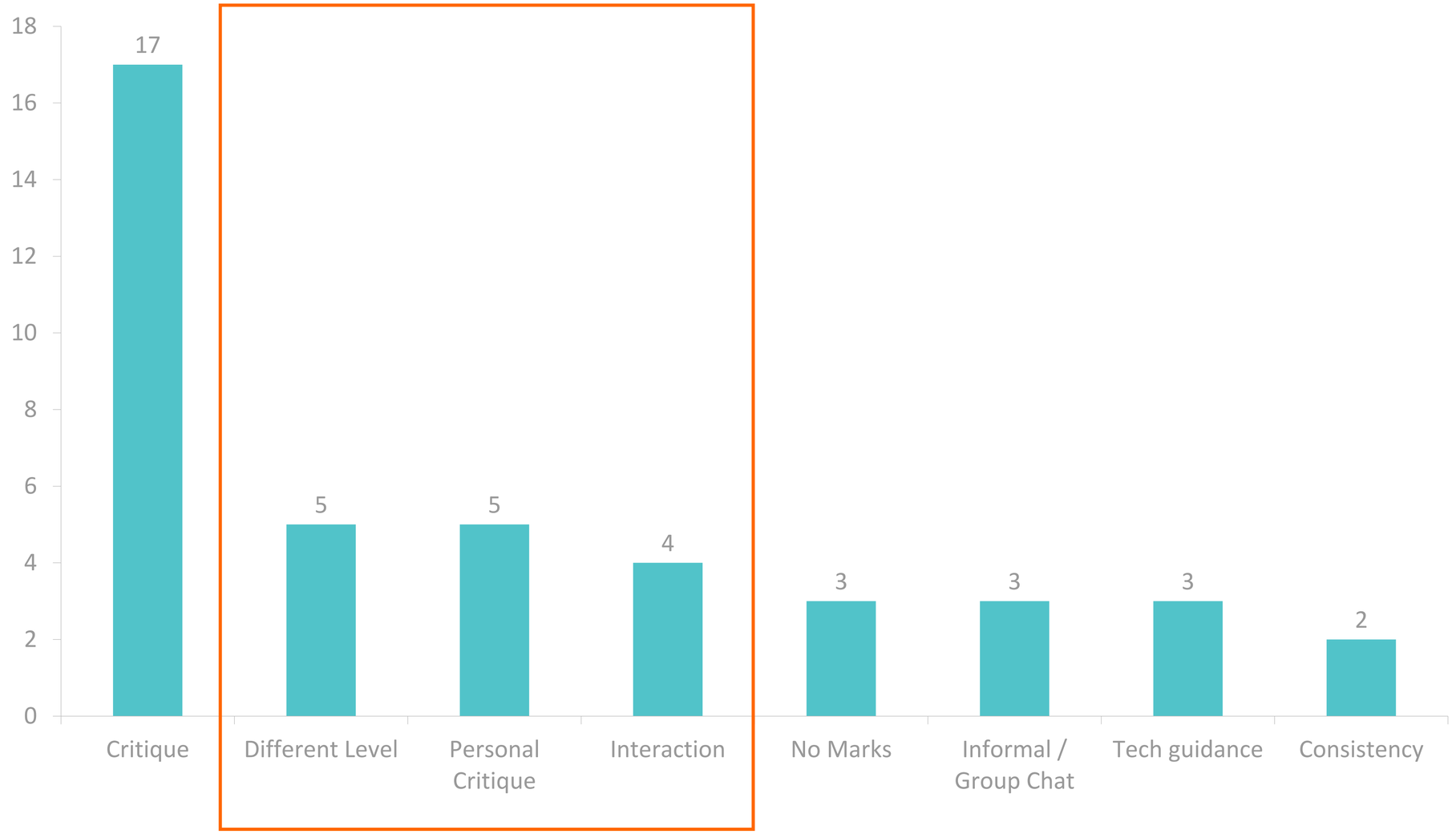
- Constructive Critique – the most valued factor in judging
  - Which facilitates Learning for Improvement
- Enjoyment features both participation and a sense of belonging
- Validation is a form of reassurance
- Receiving Encouragement is good for confidence, several also cited competition provides a Motivation to do photography
- Satisfaction: there is a certain satisfaction to doing well
- A small number say they gain little from competition

2.2 What do you gain from watching competition

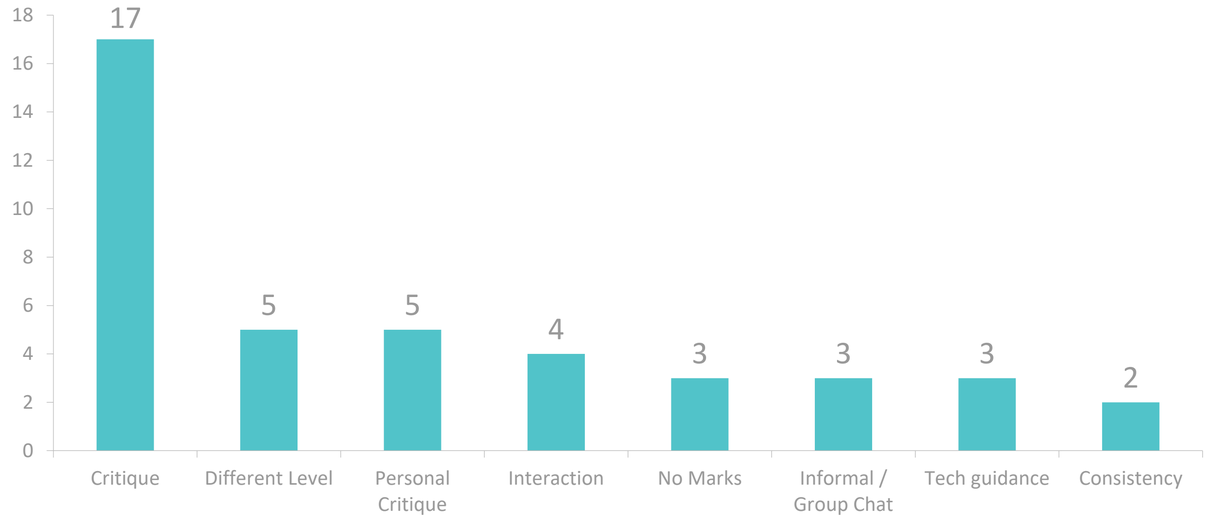


- Similar to 2.1
- Overwhelmingly **Learning to Improve** – both seeing others' images and listening to skilful critique.
- **Different Perspectives** arose from e.g. "varied insight from different judges" and "seeing different styles and genres"

Q2.3 What do you want / need personally from an appraisal of your work that you don't get from competitions?

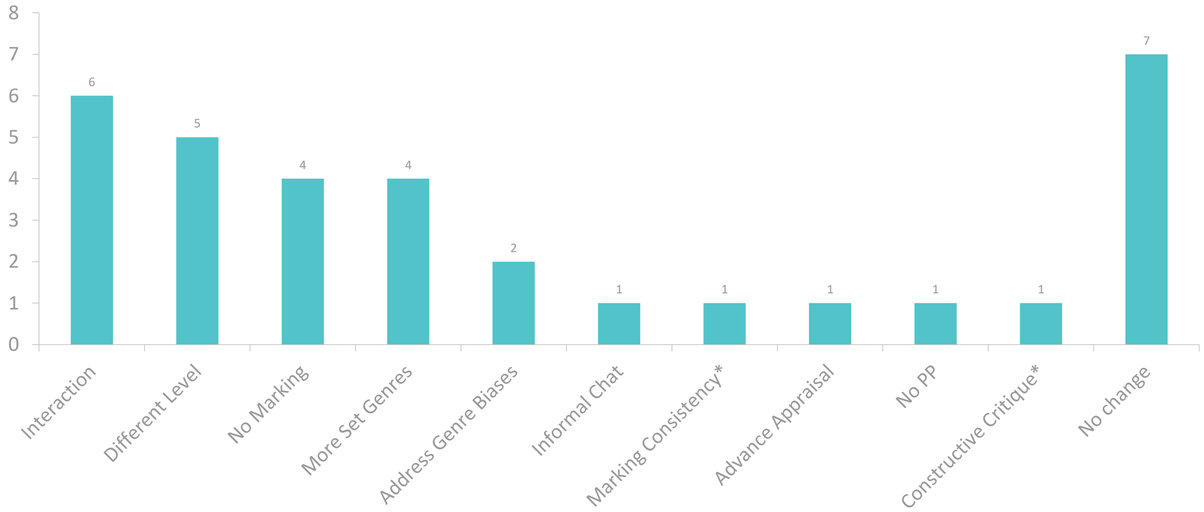


2.3 What do you need that you don't get?



- Critique is perhaps not to the level that people want.
  - *"… how an image might be improved"* - though it is arguable whether there is any agreement on what 'improved' actually means
- Feedback on a Different Level includes:
  - Feedback that is "*open and responsive to my intention in the image*"
  - "*the judges feeling about the image; the technical [elements] are easier to point out but it gets a bit formulaic*"
- Personal Feedback – a suggestion that critique could be tailored more personally across a body of work rather than single images, which are typically limited to a dozen per year (max)
- Interaction – a clear need for more discussion and dialogue about our images – see later

2.4 What do you change about competitions?



- More Set Themes – See later
- Other comments made reference to concerns about he way judging is done. These are all well known and outside of our control

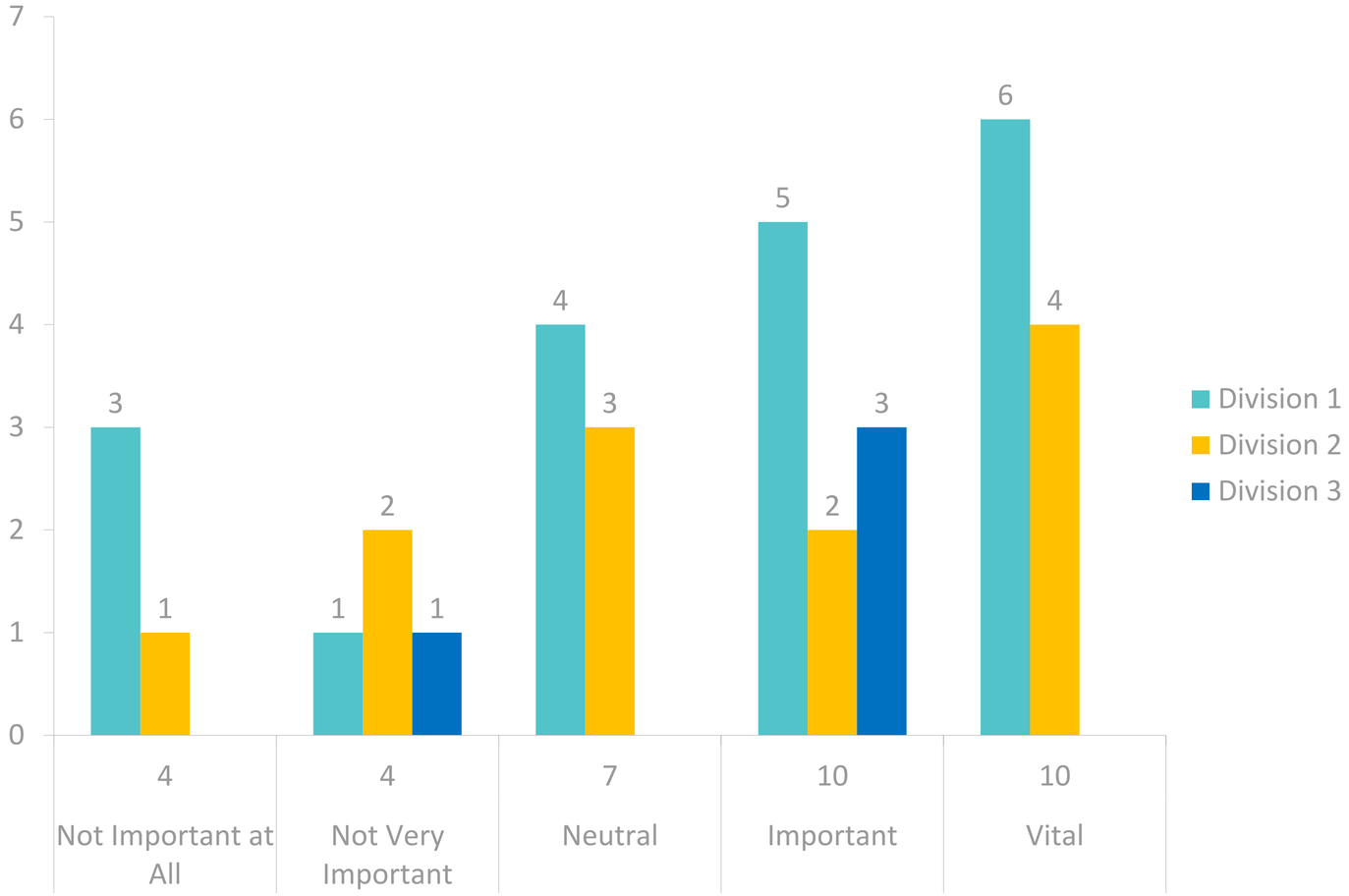
Section 3

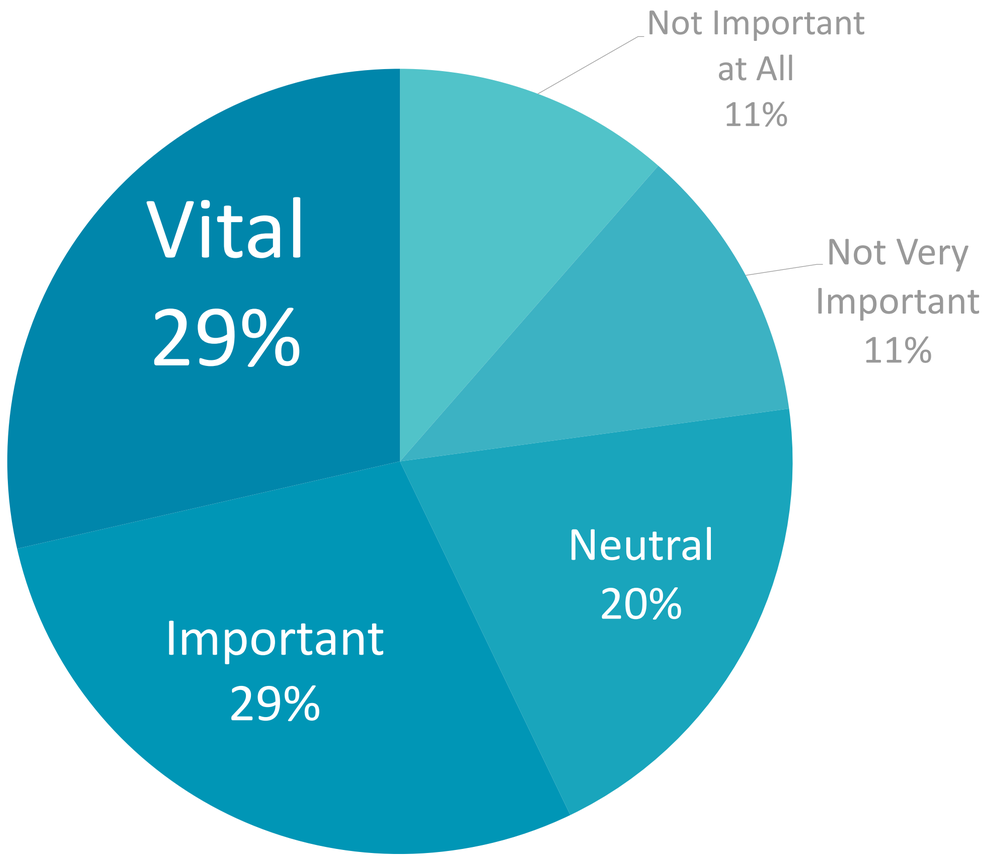
About Marks in Competitions

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- Q3.1 How important are marks to the value you get personally from competitions?
- Q3.2 Would an appraisal hold more or less value for you if there were no marks awarded?

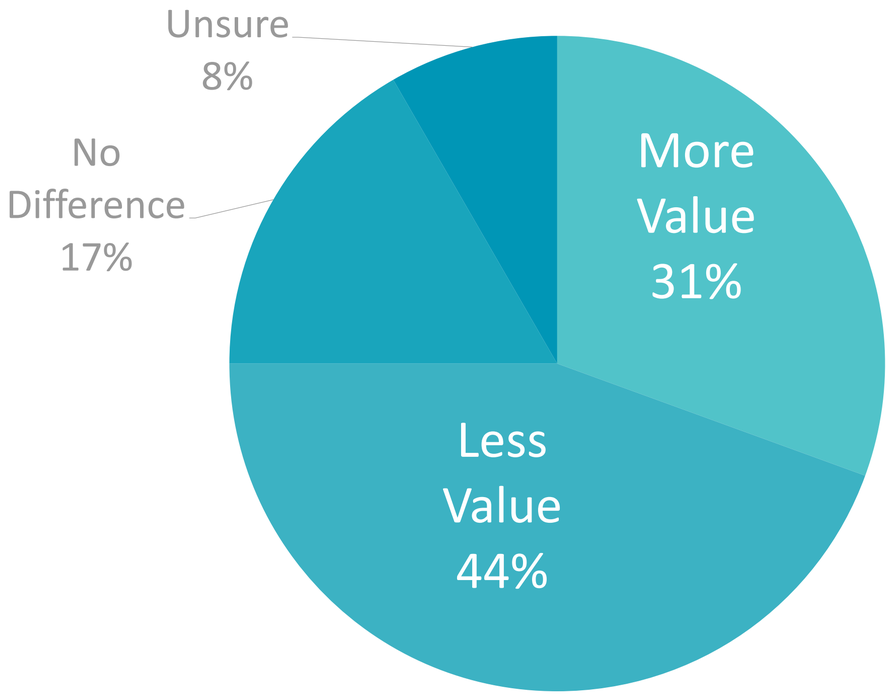
3.1 How important are marks to the value you get personally from competitions?

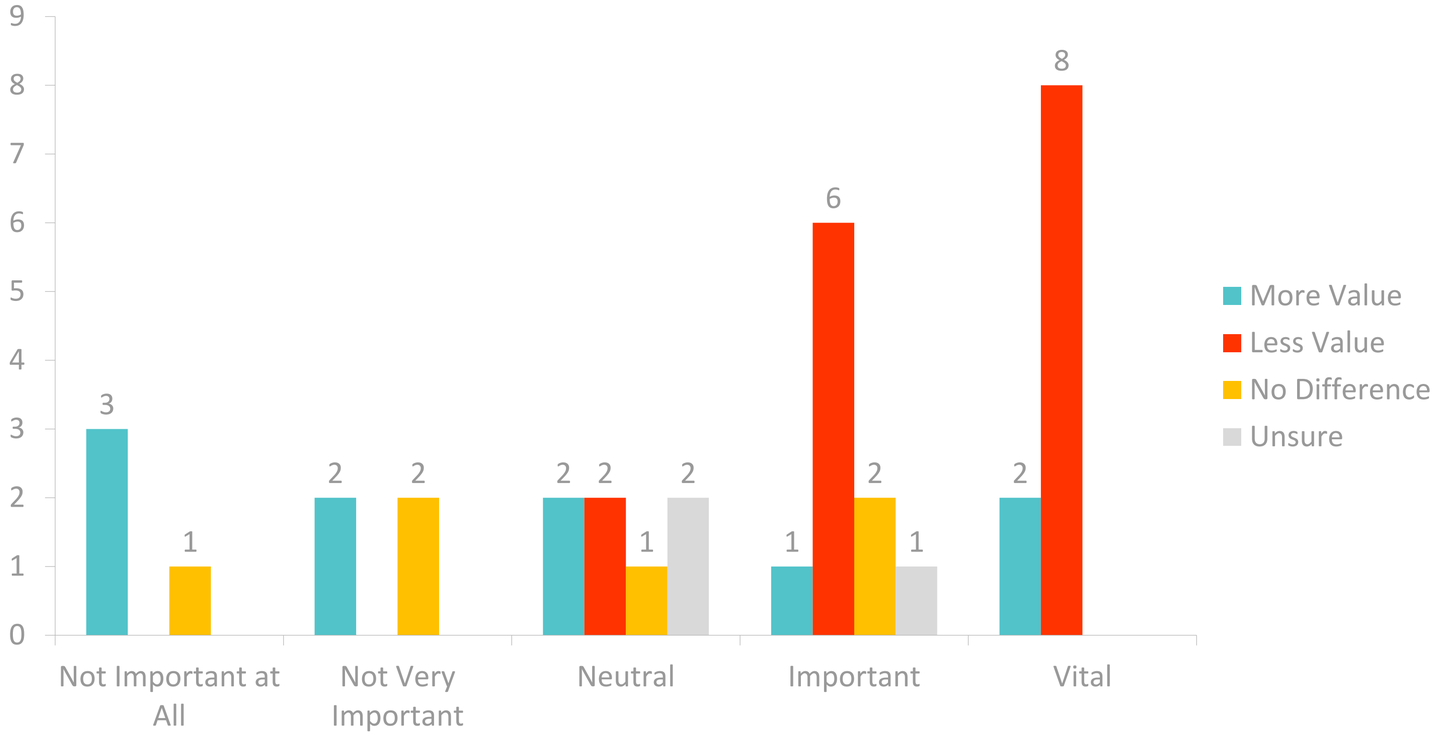




58% Important or More so

3.2 Would an appraisal hold more or less value for you if there were no marks awarded?





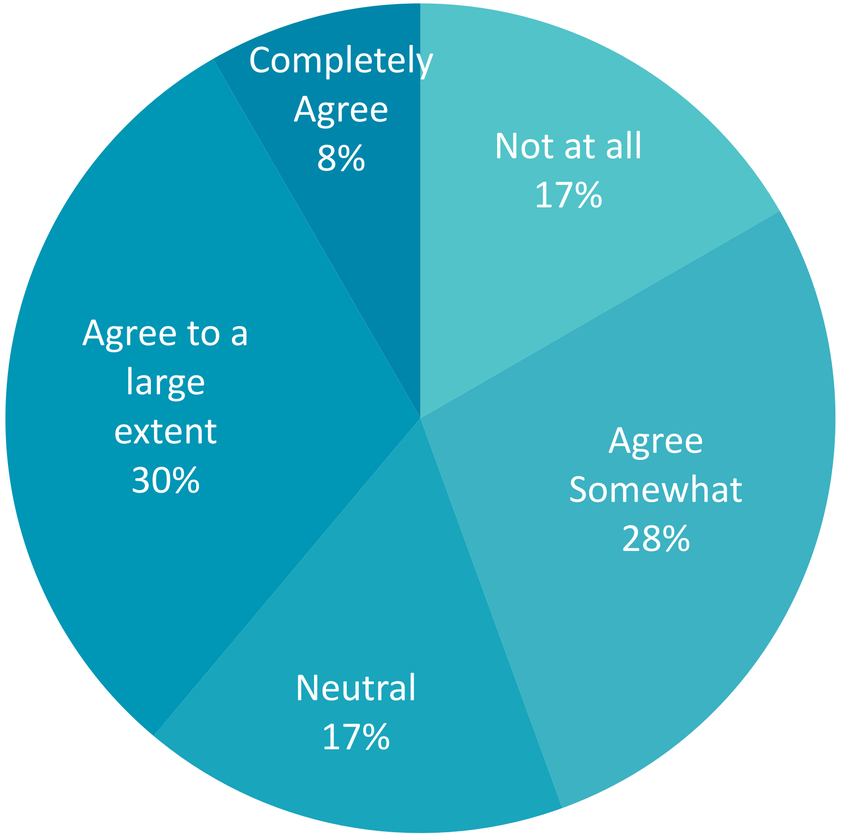
- A sizeable minority 31% believe there would be more value in ‘no marks’
- Two of those who felt that Marks were ‘vital’ also felt that appraisal would hold more value if no marks were awarded.

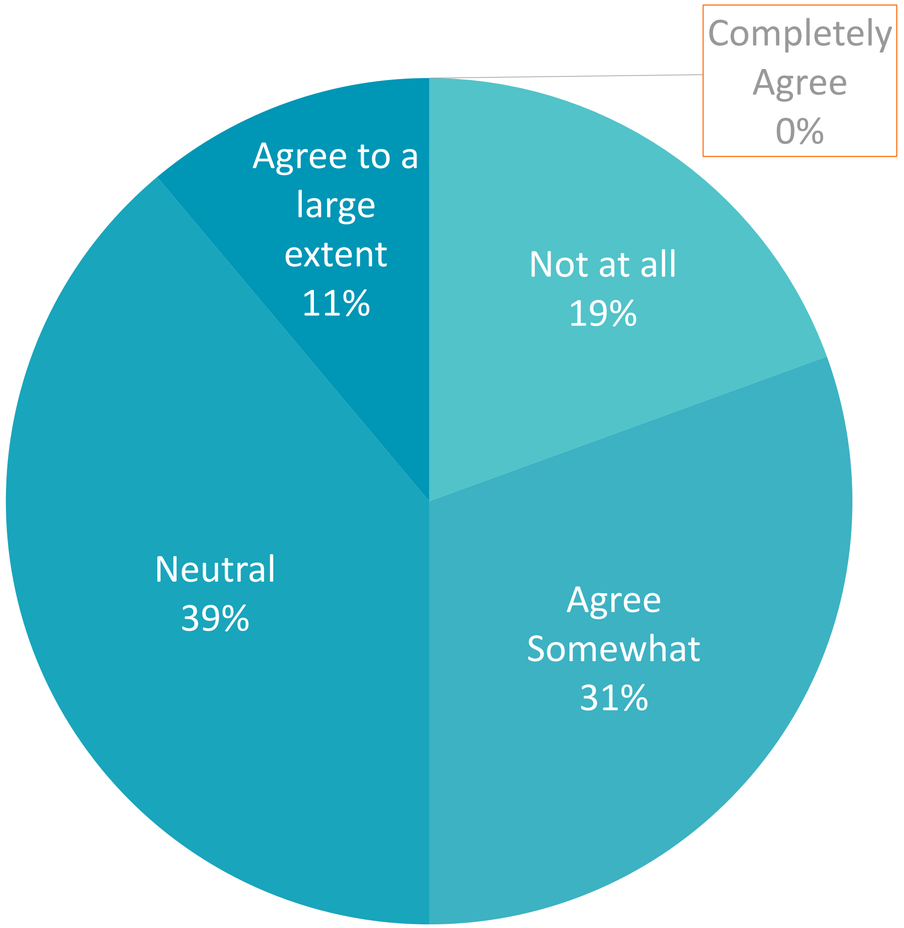
Section 4

About Competitions and Diversity

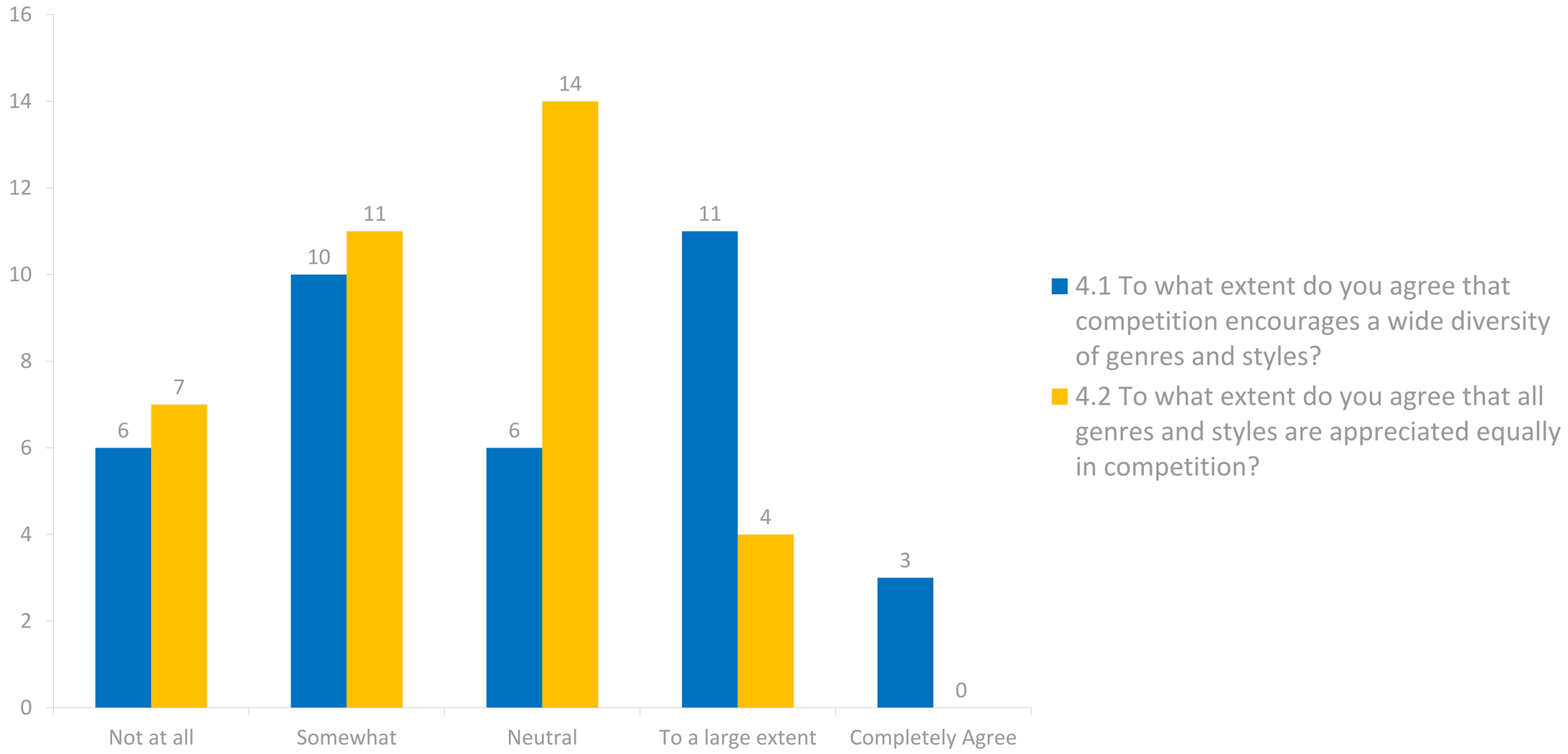
- Q4.1 To what extent do you agree that competition encourages a wide diversity of genres and styles??
- Q4.2 To what extent do you agree that all genres and styles are appreciated equally in competition?
- Q4.3 If you feel that diversity is constrained in any way by competition, or that some genres are advantaged or disadvantaged, how might we encourage more diversity and individuality?

4.1 To what extent do you agree that competition encourages a wide diversity of genres and styles?

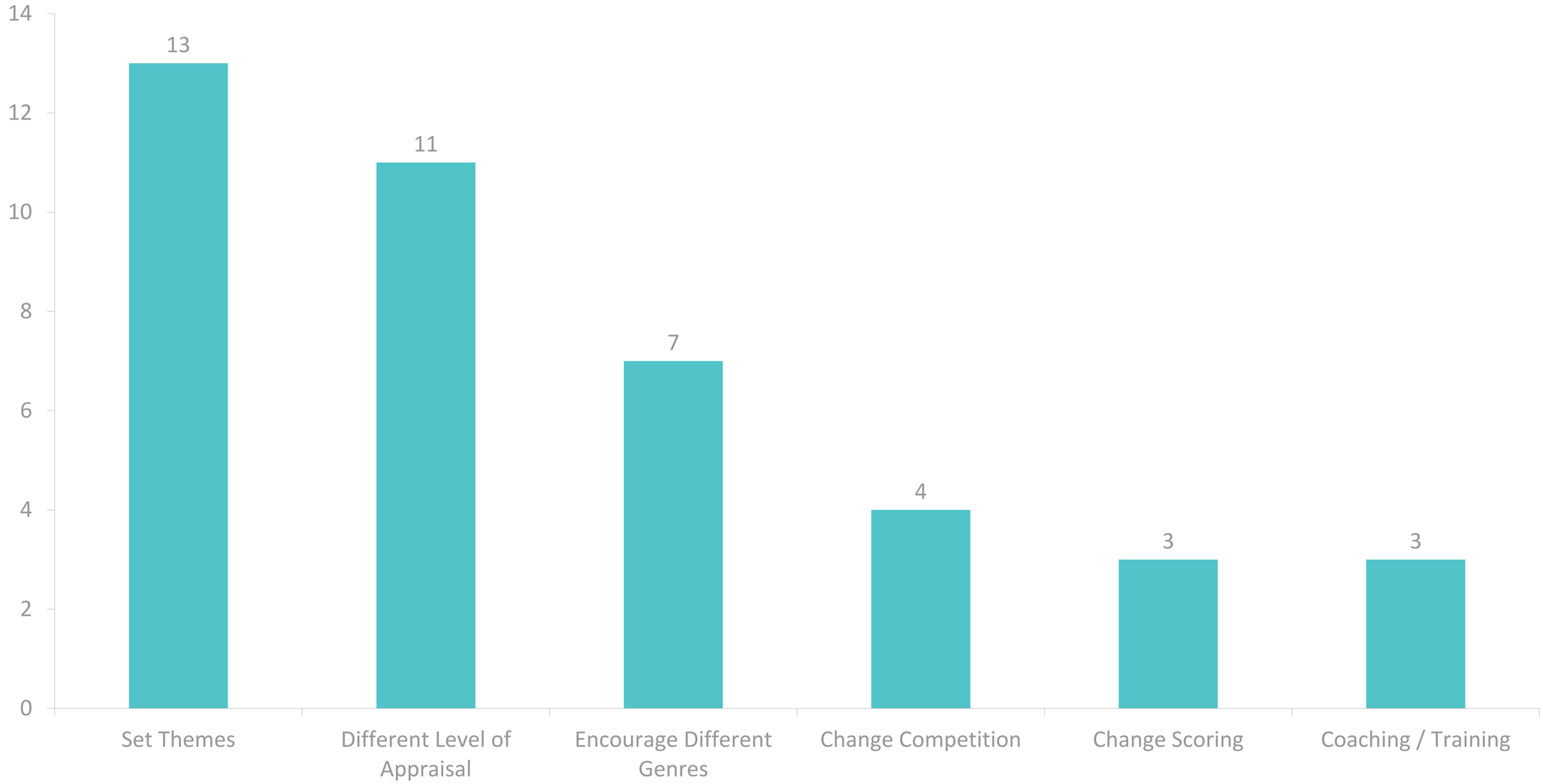




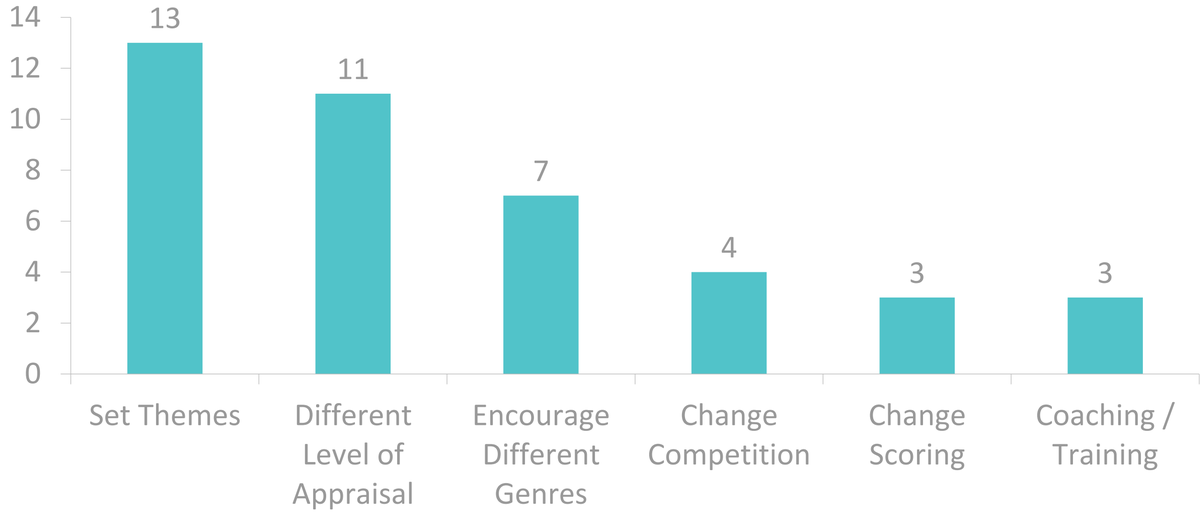
4.2 To what extent do you agree that all genres and styles <u>are</u> appreciated equally in competition?


16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
6
7
10
11
6
14
11
4
3
0
Not at all
Somewhat
Neutral
To a large extent
Completely Agree
4.1 To what extent do you agree that competition encourages a wide diversity of genres and styles?
4.2 To what extent do you agree that all genres and styles are appreciated equally in competition?

4.3 If you feel that diversity is constrained in any way by competition, or that some genres are advantaged or disadvantaged, how might we encourage more diversity and individuality?



4.3 Encouraging more diversity within competition



- Set Themes
  - *"The only way to have a more level playing field is to only hold set subject PDI competitions, rather than open PDIs"*
  - *"Set subject seems to be the only way to get people out of their comfort zone and taking different images …"*
- Change Competition
  - *"Competition can encourage photographers to play safe and not push their comfort zones because that means taking risks." ;*
  - *"Experimentation and creativity are not really encouraged … If you enter a competition your aim is to win."*
  - *"Remove penalties for putting in 'risky' images (i.e. points table), which could reward all-round photography rather than specialist …;*

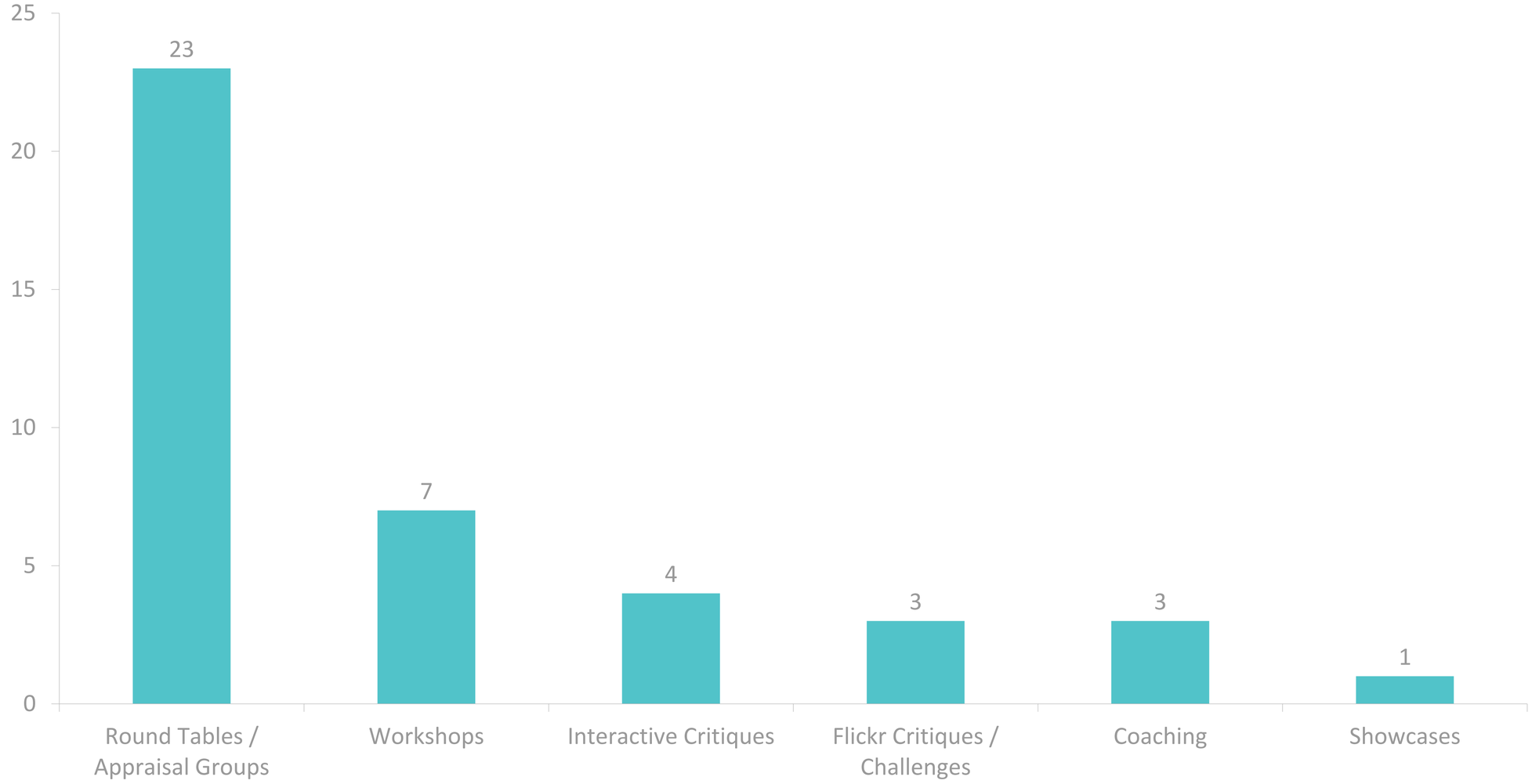
Section 5

About Appraisal outside of Competition

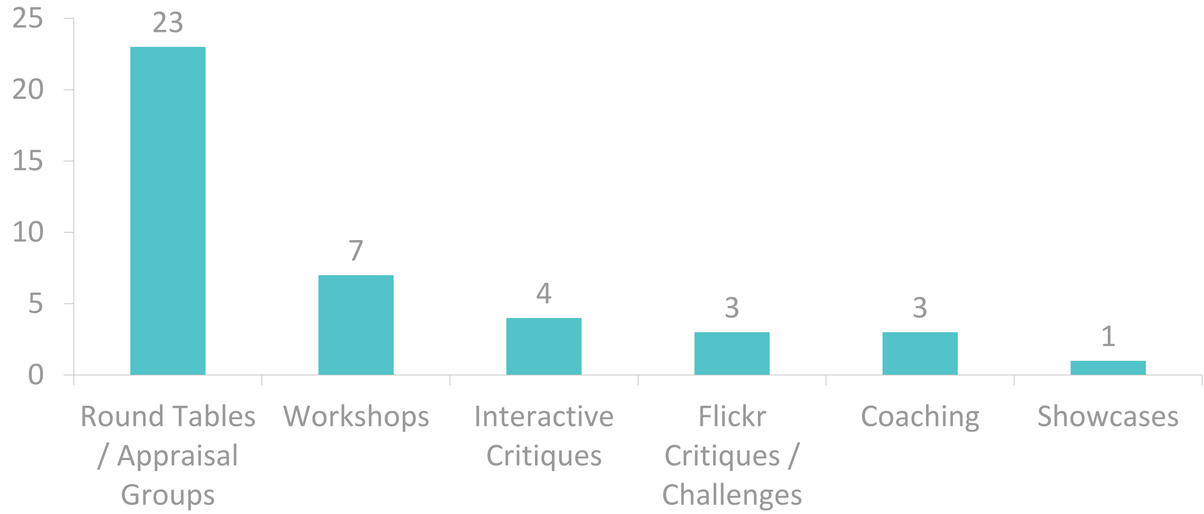
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- Q5.1 How else could we provide constructive appraisal opportunities for the development of your photography, other than by competition?

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5.1 Encouraging more diversity outside competition



- Round tables / Appraisal Groups: there is a considerable call for informal discussion groups as a mainstream activity outside of competition.
- Workshops: focused on the learning and practice of photography rather than appraisal.
- Interactive Critique: still employing an external appraiser / facilitator but in a large group setting.
- Flickr / Social Media Challenges: using the facilities of social media to form appraisal groups.
- Coaching and Mentoring: establish a process for formal and informal coaching and mentoring
- Showcases: More opportunities for members to present bodies of work and projects

General Comments and Conclusions

General Comments

- *“Competition can encourage photographers to play safe and not push their comfort zones because that means taking risks”*
- *“Many creatives are sensitive and sensuous individuals and need something different to competitions to develop”;*
- *“Informality in chats & environment - camera club evenings always seem to be a bit of 'an event', which people look forward to but not conducive to the types of discussion which lead to development”;*
- *“I feel the club could develop an attitude of collaboration in order to improve everyone's photography rather than an attitude of competition. This change needs to come from the top downwards ...”*
- *“the only feedback one gets on one's work is from a judge on a competition night, 4 times a year.”*
- *“Some competition should be retained. The important thing is not to exclude one or the other approach but to develop each. “*



Key Findings

Conclusions

- *More set subjects / themes*
- *More genre-based workshops*
- *More informal appraisal / interactive discussion*
- *Formal and informal mentoring*

Expand



Conclusions

Actions

- *Present Outline to Members*
- *Working Group*
- *Recommendations early in 2022*

- *Appraisal / Coaching training*
- *Mentoring system*

Expand

Close

Thank you

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