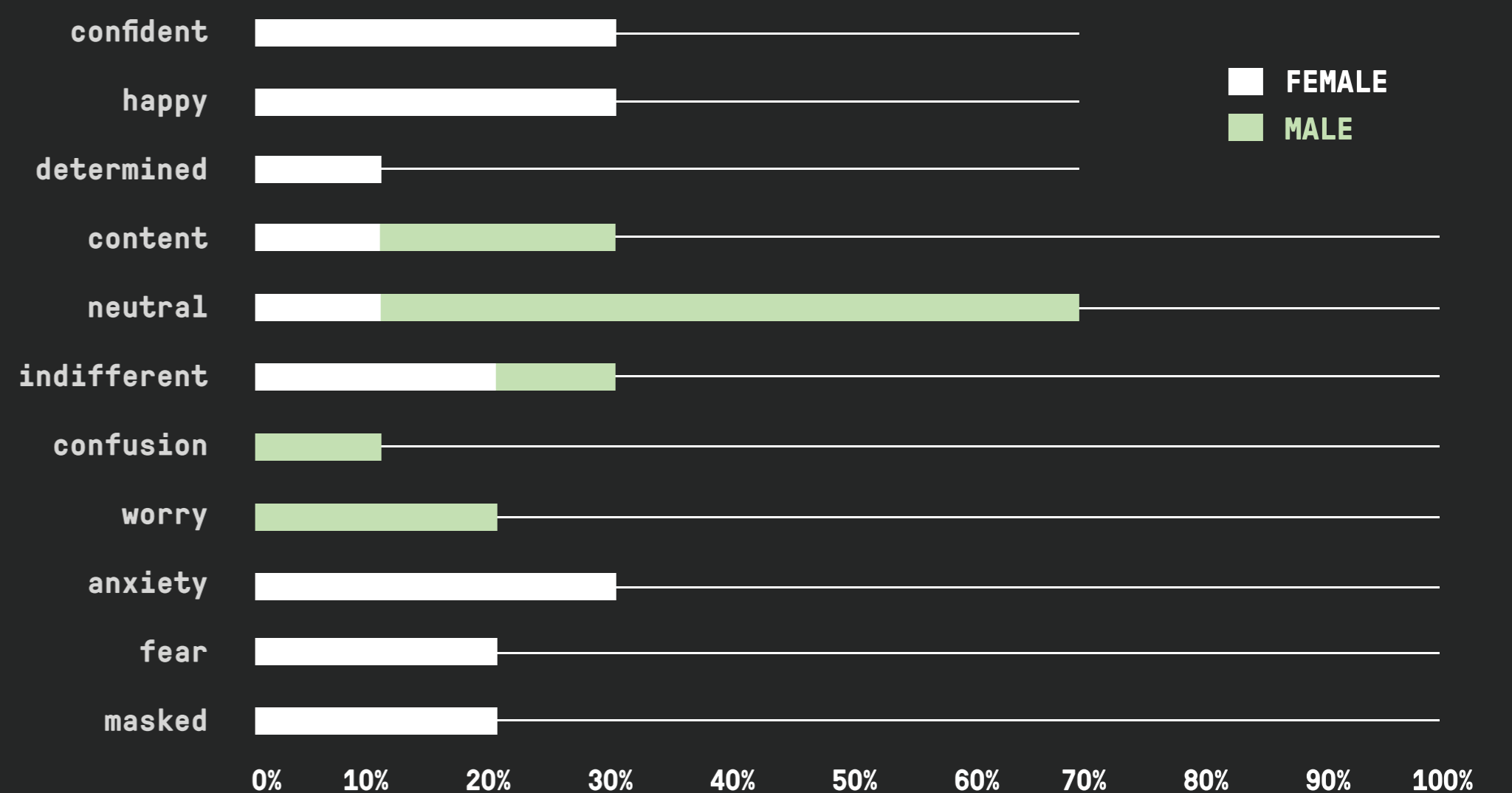# THE SELF[IE] SURVEY

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The reliability and usefulness of data collected through student response surveys, is largely dependent on the ability of the surveyed student to effectively reflect on behaviours that relate to their learning experience.

The aim of the SELFie REFLEXIVE survey is to leverage the intensified processes of self-reflection created by novel forms of convergence across the social landscape in which photography is embedded, to record and examine learning behaviours.

The project deploys a visual ethnographic methodology that uses 'selfies' as the reflexive artefact on which relevant and authentic insights into the student learning experience can be explored. Presenting the outcome of the survey using an infographic model, the objective of the survey is to yield accurate practical measures of the variances and patterns in the student experience in higher education, and to create alternative formats on which to describe the connections between behaviour and learning in this sector.

THE EMOTIONAL PERFORMANCE REVEALED IN THE SELF[IE]

FEMALE
MALE

confident / happy / determined / content / neutral / indifferent / confusion / worry / anxiety / fear / masked

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

presentation day Kelly's hate nervous ideas
space deadline realise over fan pulling
motivation rise confused learned nearly
tired mixed week time anxious
positive more finished sorted shine lessons
already thought glad hair intervention
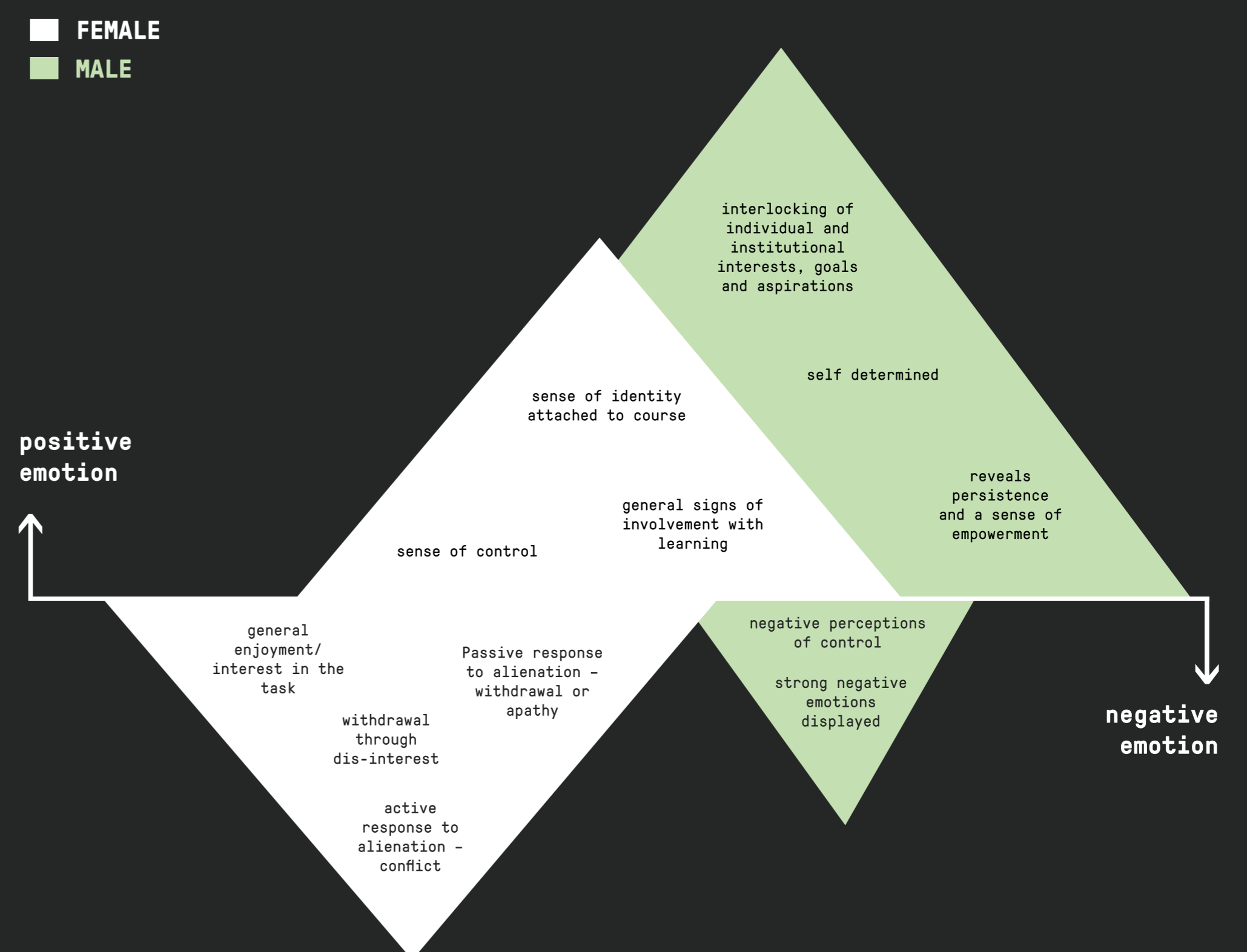active treat feeling stress starving potential

DISCLOSURE OF THE SELF

The disclosure of the self: this is an examination of the self[ie] and conscious, an act of remembering the self and using this as the mechanism to develop knowledge about the performance of the self as student. These comments are the reflexive personal memories of the student that enable the routines of student life to be made explicit.

REGIME OF PERFECTION

The reflective process mediated by the selfie, reveals a strong desire in the student for transformation. This regime of perfection[1] proceeds systemically by building upon succeeding levels of self-discipline. It is evident in the reflexive comments where there is consistent use of terms for struggling, resisting, overcoming, prevailing…words for attaining, gaining, achieving success. Where this struggle to achieve is apparent in the self[ie] refection, it reveals an attempt to transform the self through rigour of conduct.

DESIGN OF THE REGIME OF PERFECTION MODEL

The desire for transformation communicated in the self[ie] reflexive process highlights the importance that students place on their emotional engagement with learning. Analysis of this emotional engagement, in which the student strives to overcome inhibitors to transformation, reveals indicators of those theoretical principles most commonly used to benchmark a student's psychological engagement with modes of learning. The auto-ethnographic statements captured in this project, have been assessed for alignment with topologies of student engagement styles[2], and the numbers of responses that identify with each of these dimensions, recorded. In the Regime of Perfection Model to the right, the underpinning pedagogic values associated with the reflexive comments and the volume of these recorded, have been mapped graphically. The design of the model reporting the quantitative values of engagement modes has been implemented to both capture the variances and diversity of experiences of the student as they engage with their learning, and map the interconnected and competing issues that create the nature of student engagement.

FEMALE
MALE

positive emotion

negative emotion

interlocking of individual and institutional interests, goals and aspirations

self determined

sense of identity attached to course

reveals persistence and a sense of empowerment

sense of control

general signs of involvement with learning

general enjoyment/ interest in the task

Passive response to alienation – withdrawal or apathy

negative perceptions of control

strong negative emotions displayed

withdrawal through dis-interest

active response to alienation – conflict

CONCLUSIONS

The visualisation created by the Regime Of Perfection Model, helps to map the less tangible aspects of learning, such as attitudes, transforming behaviours and adaptability. The model emphasises the dynamic nature of competing positive and negative emotions that construct the mode of student engagement. Operating to counter the reliance on surveys to define student engagement, and modes of recording student data that obscures the student voice, the self[ie] reflexive survey provides a model on which the information captured, records both pedagogic benchmarks and the richness and variances in the student experience.

1 Revealing how knowledge of the self can be facilitated by technology, Foucault describes how the process of self-disclosure works to construct a narrative that is essentially progressive. For further information see Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault. By L. H. Martin, H. Gutman and P.H. Hutton (eds). Tavistock Publications, London, 1988, 166 pp.

2 The indicators upon which the auto-ethnographic statements were assessed against, were constructed using the framework for understanding student engagement as described in Ella R. Kahu (2013) Framing Student Engagement in Higher Education, Studies in Higher Education, 38:5, 758-773, DOI:10.1080/03075079.2011.598505