

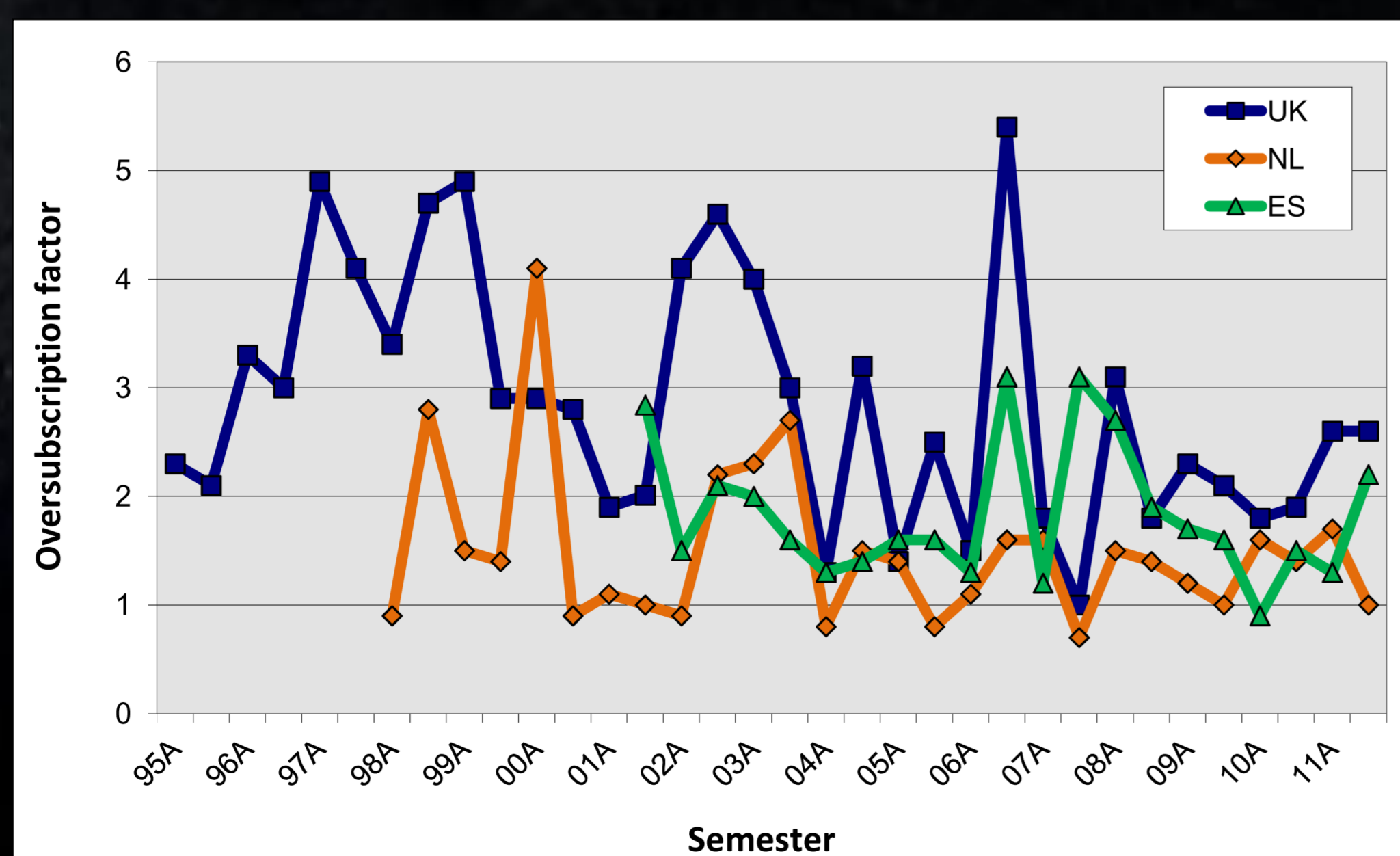
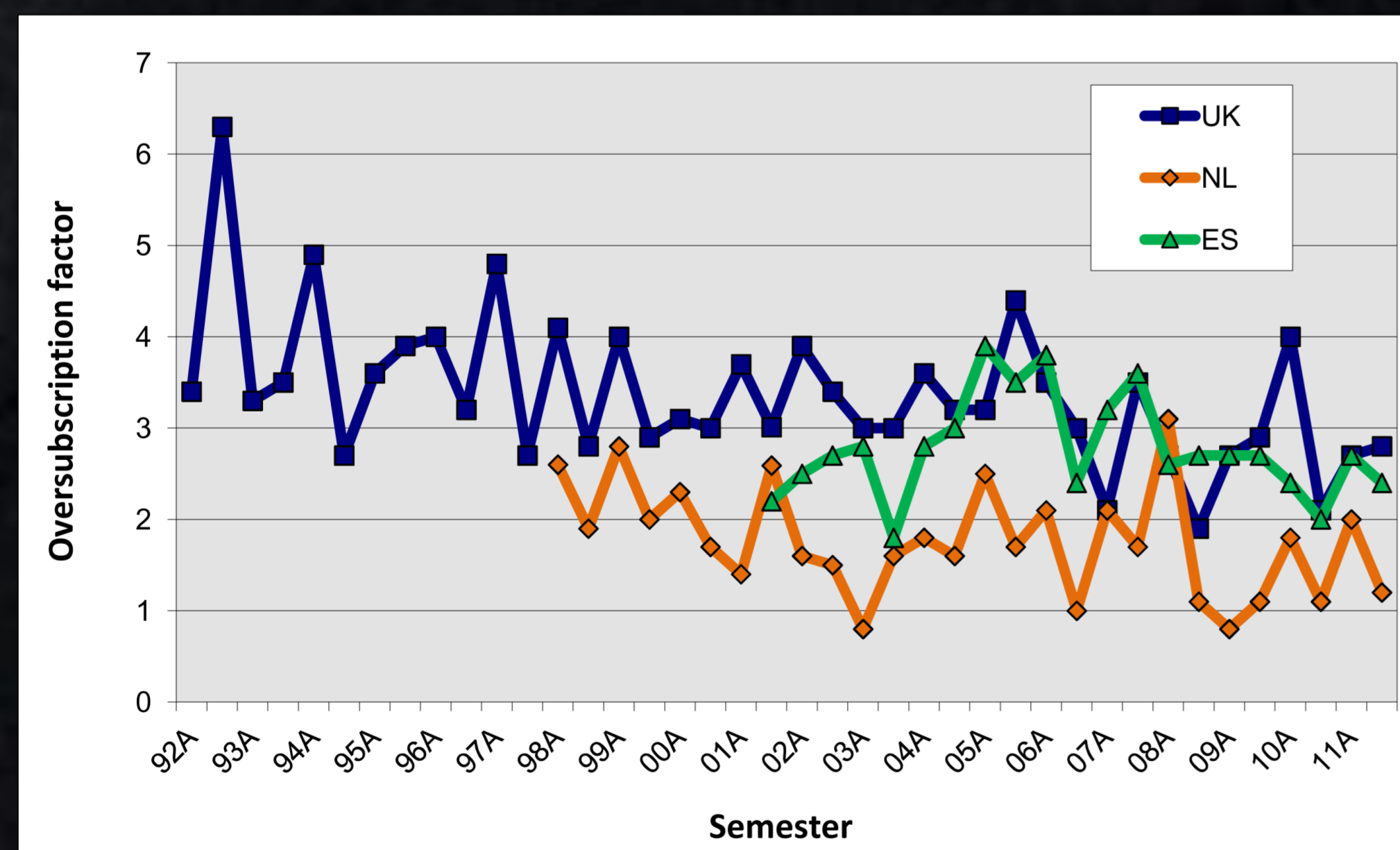
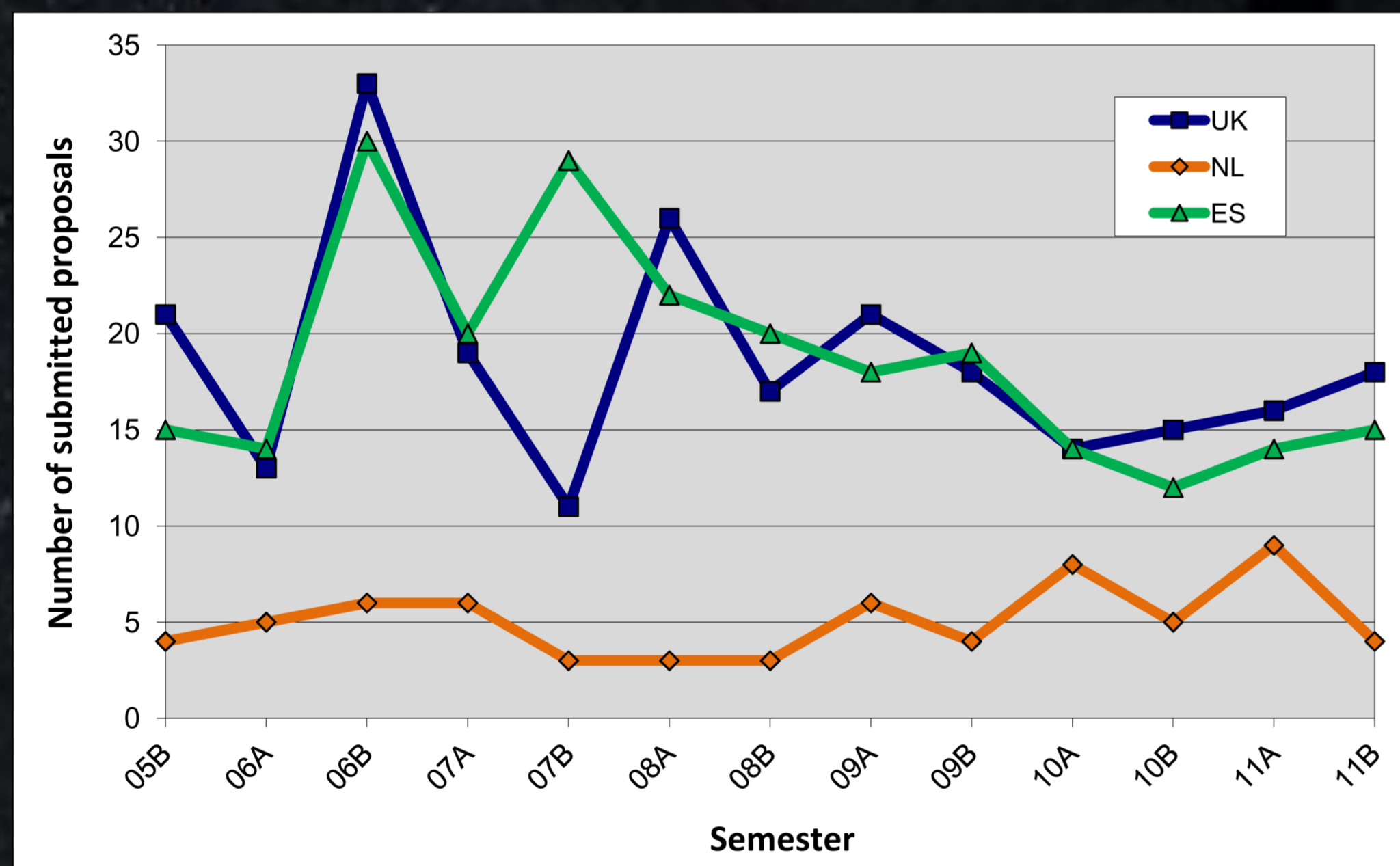
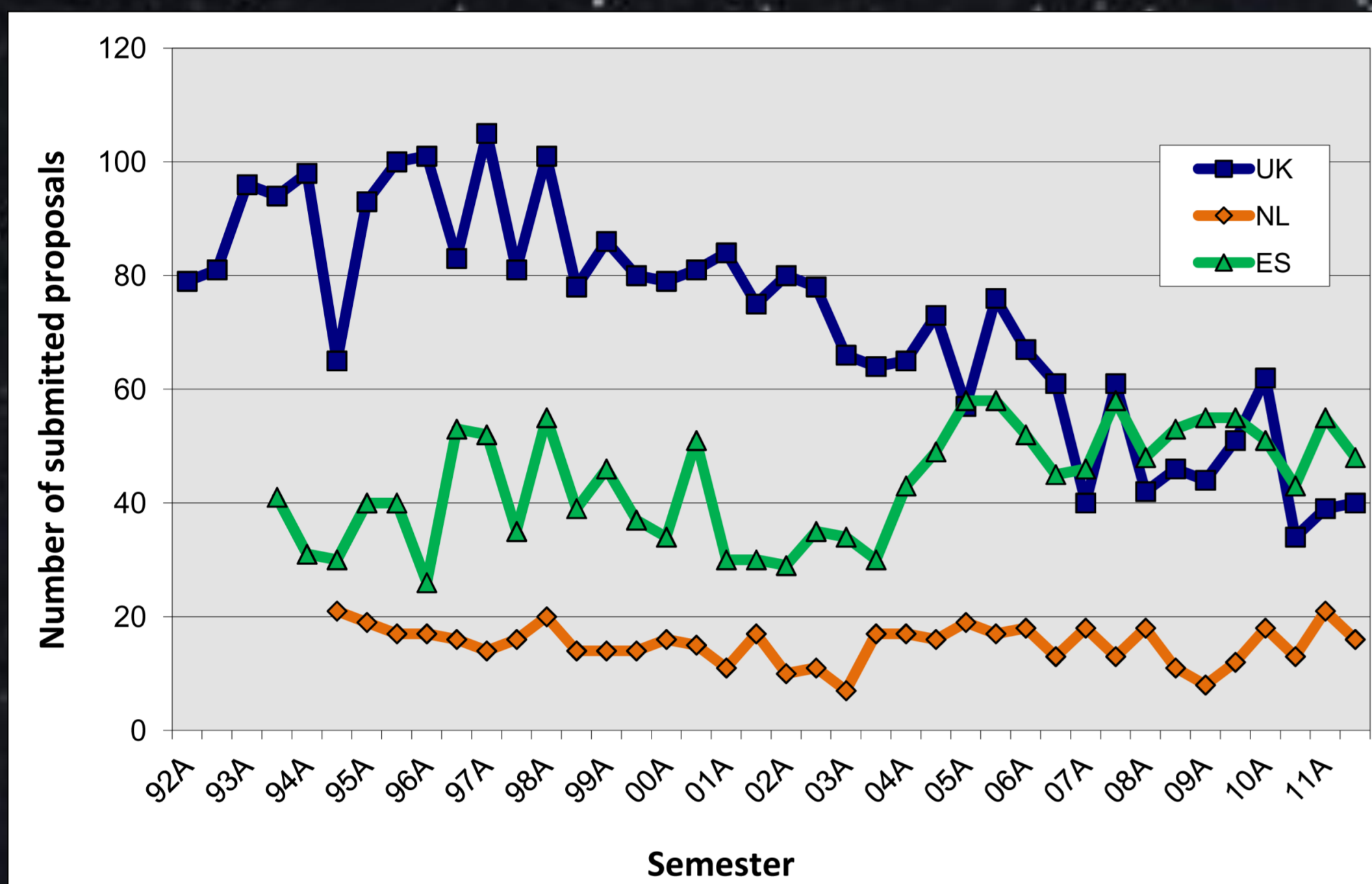
Use of Observing Time and Scientific Productivity (I)

The User Base

The ING scientific community comprises astronomers from the Netherlands (NL), Spain (ES) and the United Kingdom (UK). In 2002 the UK became a member of ESO and Spain joined ING as a full operating partner, and the time available to the operating countries changed from the historical values of 15% (NL), 20% (ES) and 60% (UK) to reflect the new levels of financial contribution. The present division of time between the operating partners is 28% (NL), 34% (ES) and 33% (UK). The remaining 5% of time is devoted to large-scale international time projects (ITP).

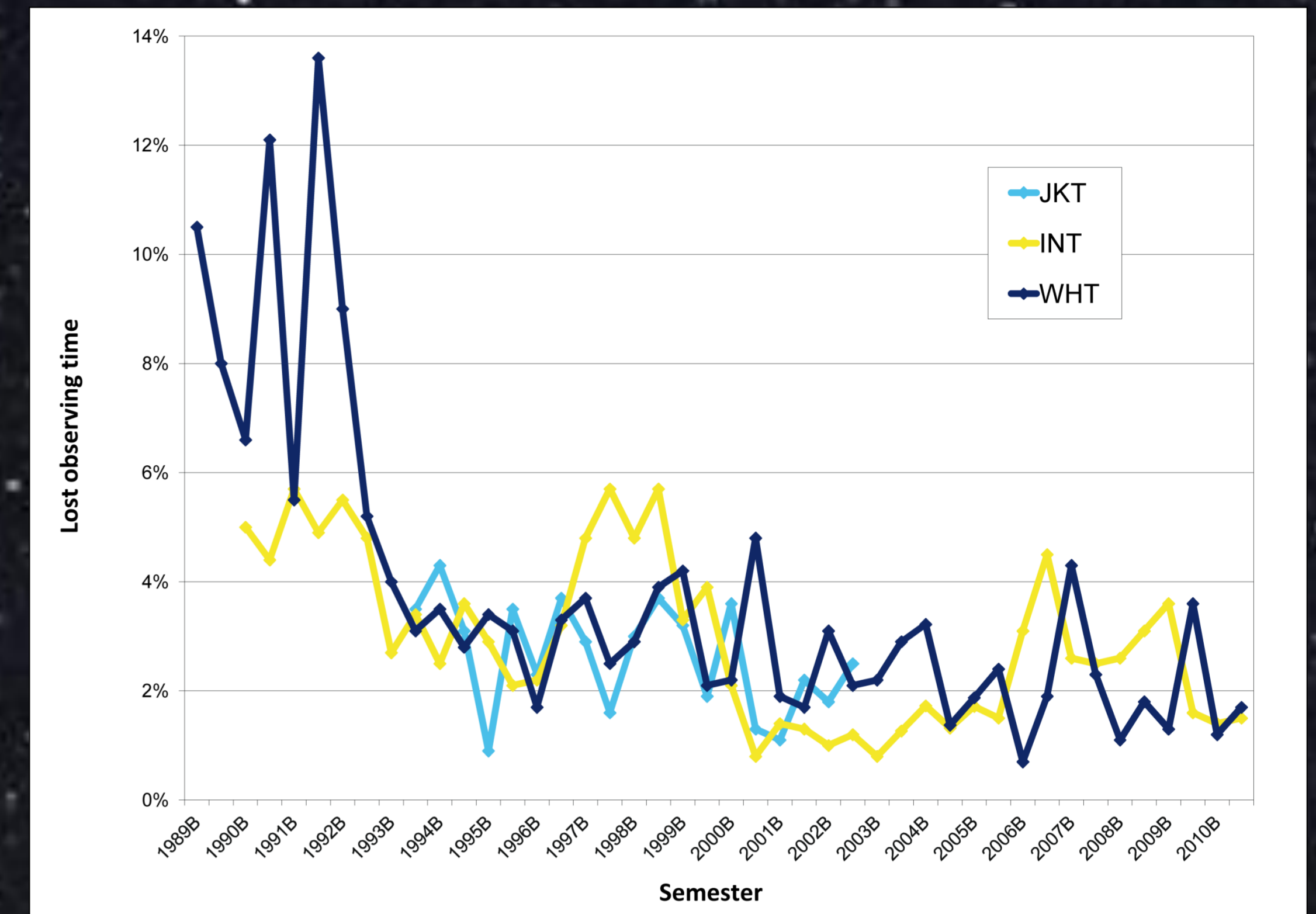
Time Allocation

Telescope proposals are accepted bi-annually and observing awards for each semester are made by time allocation committees (TACs) sitting in the NL, ES and the UK. Demand for observing time is high; the diagrams show the numbers of proposals submitted from each community and the levels of oversubscription.



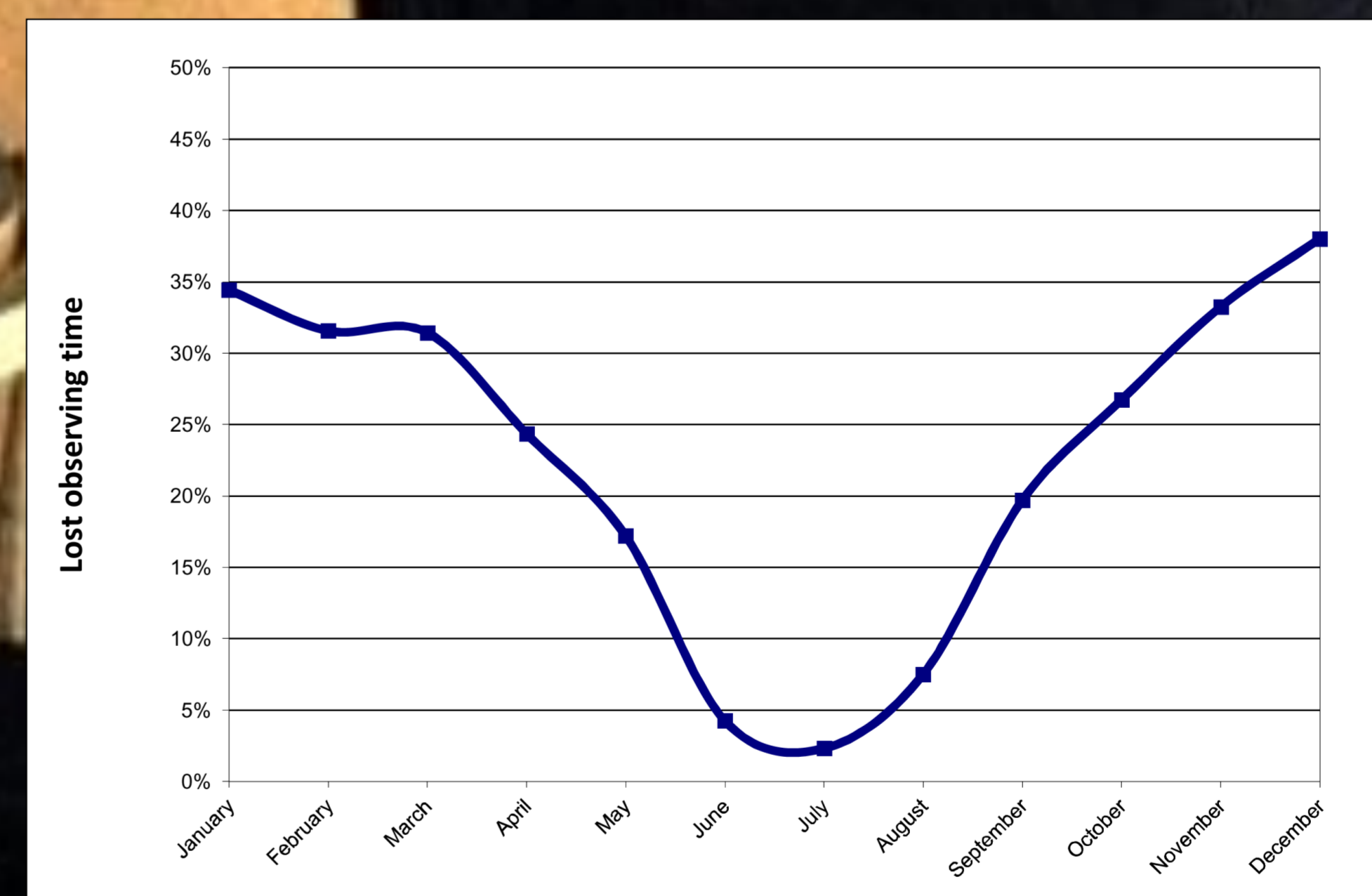
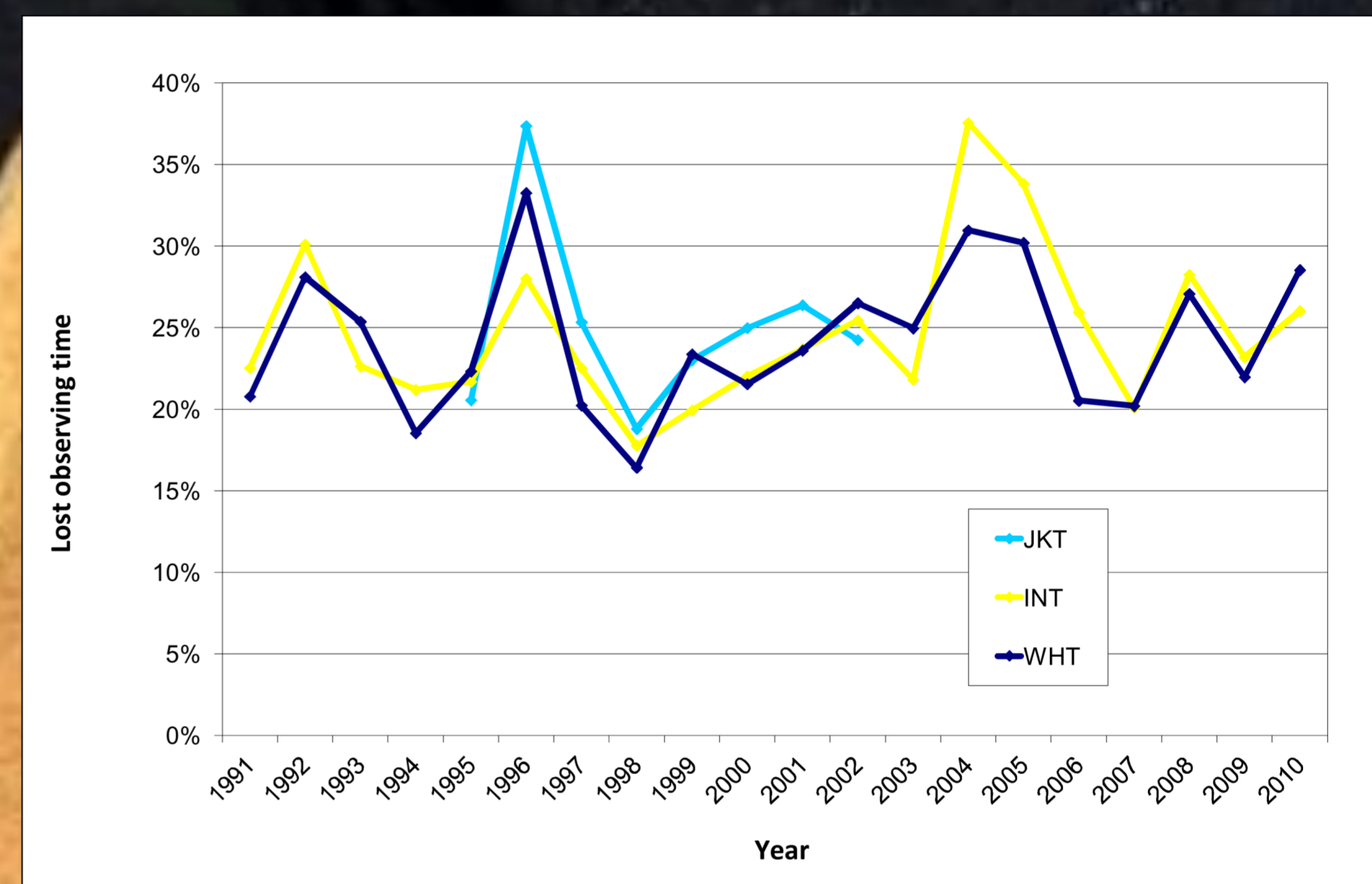
Technical Downtime

The WHT and its instrumentation demonstrate a high degree of technical reliability. The diagram shows technical downtime expressed as a percentage of scheduled time; in recent semesters this figure is generally less than 3%.



Site Quality

The WHT is situated on a world-class astronomical site. Observing time lost due to bad weather is only ~5% in the summer months, rising to a peak of ~40% in winter. About 85% of clear weather is photometric and the median seeing is ~0.7 arc-second.



User Satisfaction

Users of ING facilities leave with a positive impression of their experience; 88% rate their level of satisfaction as either 'good' or 'excellent'.

