

STUDENT VOICE TRIMESTERLY REPORT

2018/19 – TRIMESTER TWO

Academic Life

This section provides an overview of key issues identified with regards to students' academic experience in Trimester 2. The results offer a snapshot of student satisfaction and more detailed breakdowns of the data are shared with all Faculties. Overall, the results of the Student Pulse 2 survey suggest that students are more satisfied with their academic experience during this period in 2019 than they were in 2018.

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following aspect(s) of your academic life?

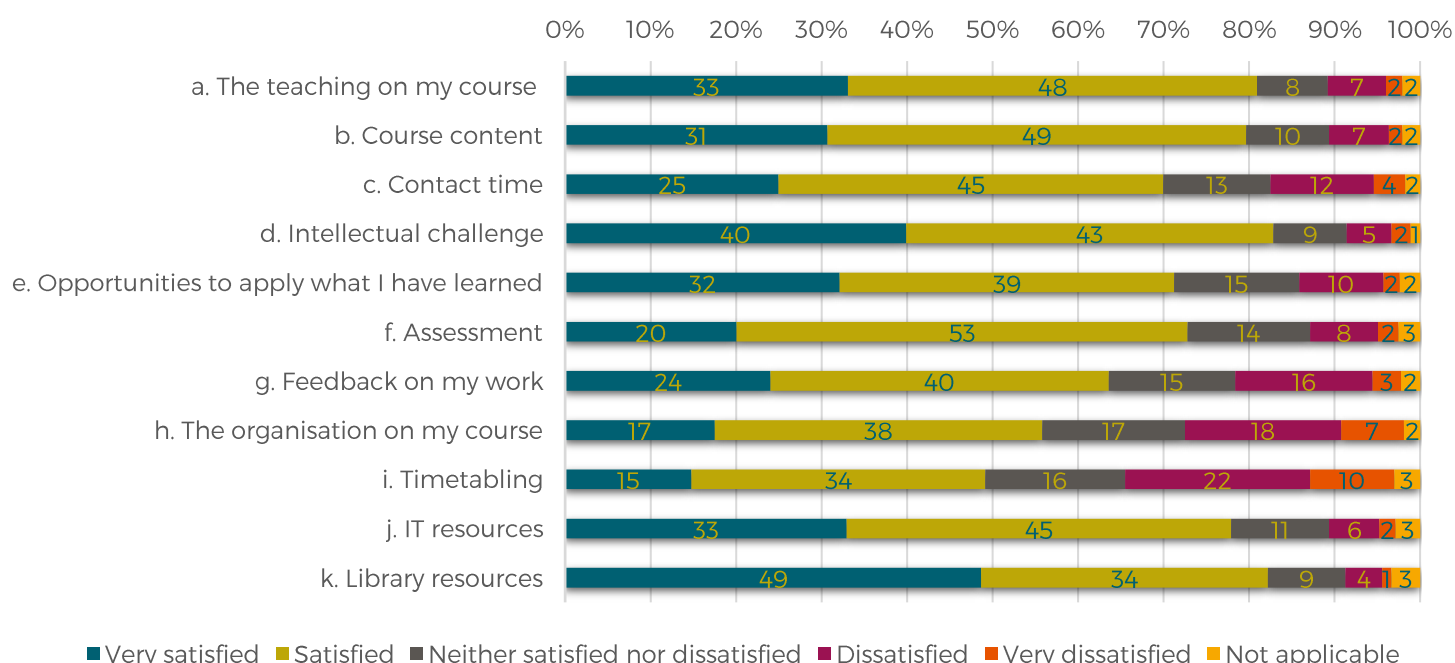


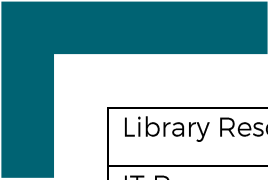
Figure 1: Students' Satisfaction with their Academic Experience (Pulse 2, 2018/19)

COMPARING 2019 WITH 2018: THE ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

In general, the data suggests that students are slightly more satisfied with their academic experience in January-March 2019 than in 2018.

A comparison of the proportion of students who expressed satisfaction with aspects of their academic experience in 2018 and 2019 is available in figure 2 (below).

	% of students 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with this aspect of academic life in T2 2018	% of students 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with this aspect of academic life in T2 2019



Library Resources	81%	83% (+2%)
IT Resources	78%	78% (~)
Timetabling	50%	49% (-1%)
The organisation of my course	55%	55% (~)
Feedback	66%	64% (-2%)
Assessment	71%	73% (+2%)
Opportunities to apply my learning	68%	71% (+3%)
Intellectual challenge	82%	83% (+1%)
Contact time	65%	70% (+5%)
Course content	79%	80% (+1%)
The teaching on my course	79%	81% (+2%)

Figure 2: Students' Academic Experience (Pulse 2, 2017/18 and 2018/19)

Hull University Union is pleased that overall, students are reporting a slightly more positive academic experience across the majority of areas during January-March 2019 than in the same time last year. The improvement in students' levels of satisfaction with contact time is particularly encouraging to see. In addition, we welcome the continued work to resolve long-standing issues with assessment and feedback.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FACULTIES

Levels of students' satisfaction with their academic experience in the above areas differed between the different Faculties at the University.

Faculty of Arts, Culture and Education students were the most satisfied across the board when compared with the university-wide data, with a higher proportion rating themselves as 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with every aspect of academic life, especially in the following areas: Timetabling; Organisation of course; Feedback; Opportunities to apply learning; Teaching on the course; and Assessment.

By contrast, **Faculty of Science and Engineering students were the least satisfied**, most strikingly in the following areas: Feedback; Library Resources; Assessment; Timetabling; Teaching on my course; and Opportunities to apply learning. 'Contact time' was the only aspect rated more highly in this faculty than the university-wide data.

Similarly, students in the **Faculty of Business, Law and Politics were less satisfied than average**, most notably in the areas of Contact time; Opportunities to apply learning; Intellectual challenge; and Feedback. The only aspect rated more highly than the university-wide data was Timetabling.

Finally, **Faculty of Health Sciences students were reasonably satisfied** with their academic experience, being the most satisfied of all students with the Opportunities to apply their learning, and were equally as satisfied as FACE students with Feedback and Library Resources. They were less satisfied with Timetabling; Organisation of course; and Assessment.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT TUITION

In the Pulse 2 survey, students were asked for feedback on their experience of their Academic Support Tutors (ASTs).

84% of the respondents to this question stated that they knew who their AST was, and of these, 71% reported having met with them in Trimester 1. Therefore just under two-fifths of students (38.5%) did not meet with their AST in the first Trimester, either because they did not know who they were, or for some other reason.

Students were also asked to what extent they agreed with the statement, 'My AST knows how to support me with my academic needs':

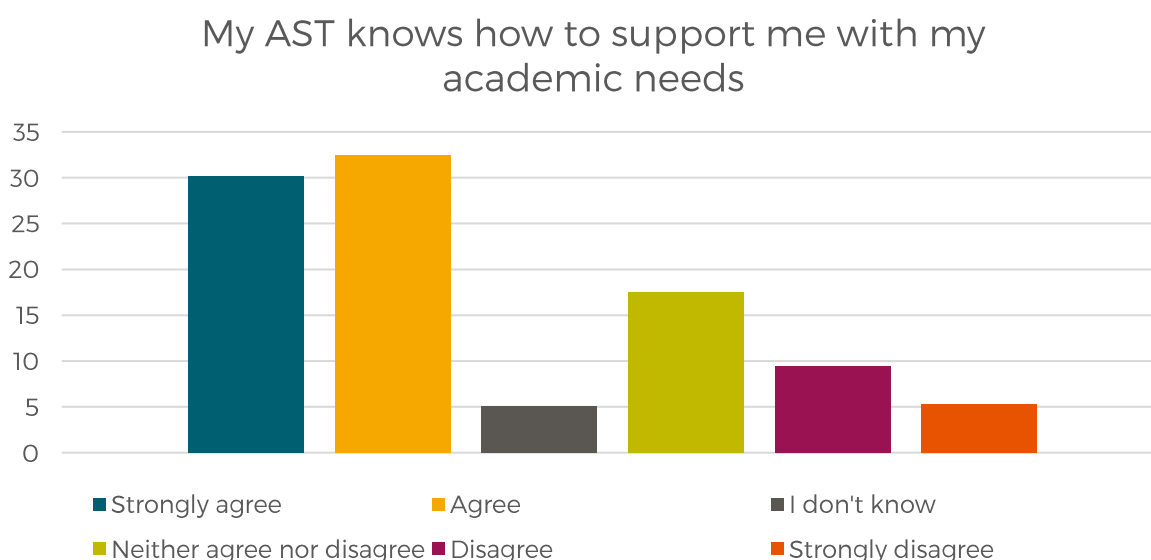


Figure 3: Academic Support Tutor Feedback (Pulse 2, 2018/19)

When this data is analysed by faculty, it is interesting to note that the Faculty of Health Sciences had the lowest proportion of students knowing who their AST is (79%), compared to 86% in the three other faculties. Despite this, Health Sciences contains the highest proportion of students who met their AST in Trimester 1 (87%), and the highest proportion who agreed or strongly agreed that their AST knew how to meet their academic needs (75%).

By contrast, the Faculty of Business, Law and Politics had the lowest proportion of students both accessing their AST (59%) and agreeing that they knew how to meet their academic needs, with just half of those who had met with their ASTs agreeing with this statement.

The data for the Faculties of Arts, Cultures and Education and Science and Engineering was close to the overall averages displayed in the narrative above.

Representation

THE ACADEMIC REPRESENTATION SYSTEM

In Pulse 2 the NSS question relating to how well the Students' Union represents students' academic interests saw a slight decrease (1%) compared to the same period last year. Year to date we remain at 52% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with this.

In comparing the data relating to academic representation by course reps during the Pulse 2 period, the following observations can be made.

- In both 2018 and 2019, around half of all respondents stated they knew who their course rep was, knew how to contact them and knew what they did.
- In both 2018 and 2019, around one quarter of respondents stated they were aware of the achievements of their Course Rep in the past year.

Minor decreases can be noted between the figures for this year and last year:

- In January-March 2018, 54% of respondents knew who their Course Rep was. This has decreased to 50% during the same period in 2019.
- During this period in 2018, 52% of respondents knew how to contact their Course Rep. In 2019 51% of respondents said they knew this.
- In January-March 2018, 59% of respondents knew what their Course Rep did. This has dropped to 56% in 2019.
- In 2018, 26% of respondents stated they were aware of their Course Rep's achievements. This has dropped to 24% in 2019.

The Faculty of Business, Law and Politics has the lowest proportion of students knowing who their course reps are, what they do and how to contact them. The Faculties of Science and Engineering and Arts, Cultures and Education have the highest levels of engagement and knowledge about course reps during this period, although we acknowledge that there is still much work to do to reach optimum levels of awareness about academic representation across all faculties.

ACADEMIC REPRESENTATION LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

The number of Student-Staff Forums that took place during Trimester 2 in

Faculty	Number of SSFs held	Number of meetings cancelled/minutes unavailable
FACE	19	1 - cancelled due to no reps in attendance 1 - cancelled due to clash with field trip 1 - unknown
FBLP	8	1 - cancelled due to no reps in attendance
FHS	11	2 - cancelled due to no reps in attendance
FoSE	14	0

each faculty are displayed in the table below.

Figure 4: Student-Staff Forums Trimester 2 (SSF Minutes, 2018/19)

Very few meetings achieved 100% attendance from academic reps, and we continue to work to address issues of attendance.

Key issues that were raised across several SSFs this trimester included:

- Deadline clashes or insufficient time between students receiving feedback for one assignment and needing to submit the following piece of work;
- Slow or lack of communication of dates for exams and the release of results;
- Library resources, such as core texts only being available for 24 hour loan and the availability and awareness of e-texts, in particular for students with dyslexia and to help students in general save money if they are not required to purchase books; and

- Continued discussion about the accessibility and role of ASTs.

Additionally, the subject of recruiting a greater number of course reps and engaging more students in providing feedback was discussed in several SSFs. Some areas are exploring the notion of holding online SSFs or chats on Canvas, whilst others are hosting additional open forums where all students are invited to attend and provide feedback.

Hull University Union welcomes the range of approaches being developed to involve students in programme feedback, development and evaluation, providing that they complement the academic representation system where student feedback, actions and progress are documented and contribute formally to the management of quality and standards at the University.

ACADEMIC REPRESENTATION SYSTEM REVIEW

Throughout Trimester 2, Hull University Union's President of Education, Isobel Hall, led a thorough review of the system of academic representation at the University. Based on this work, a number of changes to the system are being brought into place for the 2019/20 academic year, having been voted through at Course Rep Forum, Education Zone, Union Council and agreed upon at the Student Voice Operations Group and USEEEC.


A summary of the key changes can be found below:

- Postgraduate and undergraduate academic representation will be separated
- The undergraduate system will remain similar to the current system.
- Course Rep Forums will be replaced with Education Zone Open Meetings, with all undergraduate students invited to attend, share feedback and receive updates from the President of Education, their academic representatives and University staff
- Subject Reps are to be renamed Course Rep Leaders, and will be aligned to Academic Units. They will be elected by their constituents
- Postgraduate Taught and Research Faculty Reps will represent postgraduate students, all of whom will be invited to attend open postgraduate faculty forums to share their feedback
- Faculty Reps will continue to be appointed through an application and interview process, and will newly be supported by Deputy Faculty Reps in recognition of the heavy workload for this volunteer role.
- Course Reps will continue to nominate themselves for the role.
- The Code of Practice for Partnership with Students in the Management of Quality and Standards has been updated to reflect these changes.

DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION

The main Union Elections took place in March 2019. Our target was to increase voter engagement and turnout from the previous two years' 14.8% to 16%. By providing more opportunities for students to meet with relevant union staff and officers face-to-face to find out more about the process of running and voting in the elections, and a sustained social media campaign, we were delighted that voter turnout increased to 16.6%.

A total of 24 nominations were received; 17 for the 5 full-time President positions, all of which were contested, and 7 for the 23 voluntary part-time



officer positions. Those roles which were unfilled in the elections will be open for nomination and voting in the October 2019 by-elections.

A total of 19 motions passed at the four Union Council meetings which took place during Trimester 2. Most motions were focused on enhancing representative structures and processes through amendments to Standing Orders and the remit of specific part-time officer roles.

Some examples of motions that passed in the second Trimester include:

- Inclusivity and Diversity Zone changes, such as creating a centralised budget for all part-time officers in this zone to access and changing their titles from 'officers' to 'representatives' to more accurately reflect their voluntary roles
- The addition of new roles in the Sports Zone, to improve the representation of women, international and disabled students in sport.

Led by the President of the Students' Union, Osaro Otobo, a proposal for a revised governance system was considered by referendum, enabling all students to have the opportunity to vote on a new system. Whilst the proposal achieved the quorum and was supported by the majority of students who voted, it did not reach the two-thirds majority needed to pass.

The proposal elements which centred on the scrutiny of elected officers were further developed into Union Council motions by a Councillor for Scrutiny which passed in April 2019. The below changes will happen in 2019/20:

- Standardised report templates are to be completed by both full-time Presidents and voluntary part-time officers, and these reports will be published on Hull University Union's website to improve visibility and accountability to the whole student body
- A new accountability panel will consist of Councillors for Scrutiny and will hold Presidents to account in a meeting separate from Union Council on a regular basis during term time.

UNION COUNCIL MOTIONS

In addition to the above, other issues raised by students via Union Council in Trimester 2, included mandating the President team to lobby for more healthy food to be available across campus, and a strength of feeling around the change of graduation venue. This resulted in the President continuing to work closely with the University on ensuring that the new arrangements were communicated with students in a full and timely manner, and that the new venue was going to provide an equitable experience for students and guests with disabilities, as highlighted in the University's justification of the changes.

STUDENT-LED CAMPAIGNS

A small number of campaigns have been led by students during Trimester 2, including one around bike safety which collected 303 signatures on a petition in support of improved secure storage and CCTV for bikes on campus, and the provision of a free self-defence class run by the Ju-Jitsu Club.

Members of the President team have also run campaigns, one of which focused on countering exam stress through offering 'free brain food' breakfast and opportunity for students to talk to members of the President team every morning during the assessment period.

#ThatsNotOk was another campaign which was led by four Presidents, and centred on ensuring students were aware of sexual assault policies and procedures, improving campus safety with security, CCTV and better lighting, and tackling behavioural issues surrounding sexual assault and reporting.

YOUR IDEAS SCHEME

Although 8 ideas were submitted in Trimester 2, none of these reached the threshold of at least 10 votes from other students in order to be allocated to the President Team to work on further.

A total of 26 ideas were progressed during Trimester 2:

- Phased implementation of more water fountains across the university campus began, following extensive work from the President of Inclusivity and Diversity, Andy Costigan, in response to the 17 ideas submitted requesting this.
- At the start of the trimester, it was announced that the printing credits for all students would increase from £3.50 for the entirety of a student's programme to £20 per year of study. This was a fantastic achievement, the subject of eight ideas and was achieved by the President of Education, Isobel Hall, working with the University Leadership Team.
- Andy Costigan worked with Hull City Council to ensure better lighting was installed on Salmon Grove in spring 2019.

Wider Student Experience


STUDENT WELLBEING AND CONCERNS

In response to the question 'overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?' respondents were 79% satisfied – the same level of satisfaction as in this period last year.

However, when asked about specific concerns, students reported being more concerned about a wide range of issues compared to the same period last year, most particularly in the areas of personal safety (+23%); balancing academic and social time (+7%); and mental health and wellbeing (+5%). Comparisons between this year and last can be made by viewing the data in Figure 5 below. All changes of more than 3% have been highlighted.

Issue	students 'concerned' or 'very concerned' in T2 2018	students 'concerned' or 'very concerned' in T2 2019
Physical health	42%	44% (+2%)
Mental health and wellbeing	48%	53% (+5%)
Personal safety	15%	38% (+23%)
Career prospects	52%	56% (+4%)
Accommodation	23%	23% (-)
Academic workload	60%	64% (+4%)
Academic achievement	67%	67% (-)
Balancing academic and social time	45%	52% (+7%)
Loneliness	32%	34% (+2%)
Bullying	4%	7% (+3%)
Employability	45%	49% (+4%)
Being able to pay for the things I need	53%	57% (+4%)
My level of debt	44%	47% (+3%)
Effect of responsibilities on academic achievement	44%	45% (+1%)

Figure 5: Student Concerns (Pulse 2, 2018/19 and 2017/18)



Hull University Union considers the increase in students' concerns for their health and wellbeing, and the range of issues that impact on their lives, to be significant and serious, and will seek to continue to address these concerns through a variety of initiatives and campaigns during Trimester 3 and into the next academic year, including continued working with the University on the organisation-wide mental health strategy, ensuring that relevant Union staff are trained in mental health awareness and know the appropriate signposting routes, and marketing the opportunities available for students to meet and mix with others in order to help combat loneliness.

STUDENT HUBS

Students were also asked about their experience of Student Hubs in Pulse 2, as they were during the same period in 2017/18. Overall, there has been an upturn in students accessing their Hub, with three quarters of respondents (75%) reporting having ever used their Hub in 2019, compared with 68% in 2018. Of these, 83% stated that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the accessibility of the Hub, an increase of 1% from last year, and 80% were satisfied with the service they received – the same proportion in 2019 as in 2018. The majority of students confirmed that the Hub was helpful or very helpful in answering their enquiry (94%).

Whilst it is encouraging to note that the proportion of students accessing their Hub has increased, and that the majority of them are reporting a satisfactory and accessible experience, it is evident that the levels of satisfaction vary significantly across the different Faculty Hubs. For example 71% of students express satisfaction with the service in the Faculty of Business, Law and Politics in comparison with 88% satisfaction in the Faculty of Health Sciences. Hull University Union will continue to work with the University in order to ensure that student input is helping to shape and improve the student experience of the Hubs.

Conclusion

The Trimester 2 Student Voice Report provides an overview of student views on specific issues and Hull University Union's work to leverage these views to enhance the student experience. The next report will provide data from the Pulse 3 period (April to June 2019), an evaluation of the course rep experience in 2018/19 and analysis of this year's Student-Led Teaching and Support Awards.