

# STUDENT VOICE TRIMESTERLY REPORT

## 2018/19 – TRIMESTER THREE

### Introduction

The Trimester 3 Student Voice report is an opportunity for Hull University Union to share an overview of students' priorities, concerns and feedback. Whilst it covers academic representation and student-led campaigns during the Trimester 3 period, the data from the Student Life Pulse survey was collected between April-June 2019; having only received this data over the summer months, this is the earliest opportunity for us to be able to report on this.

### 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 3 survey suggest a mixed picture of students' levels of satisfaction with their academic experience during this period in 2019 compared to the same period in 2018.

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

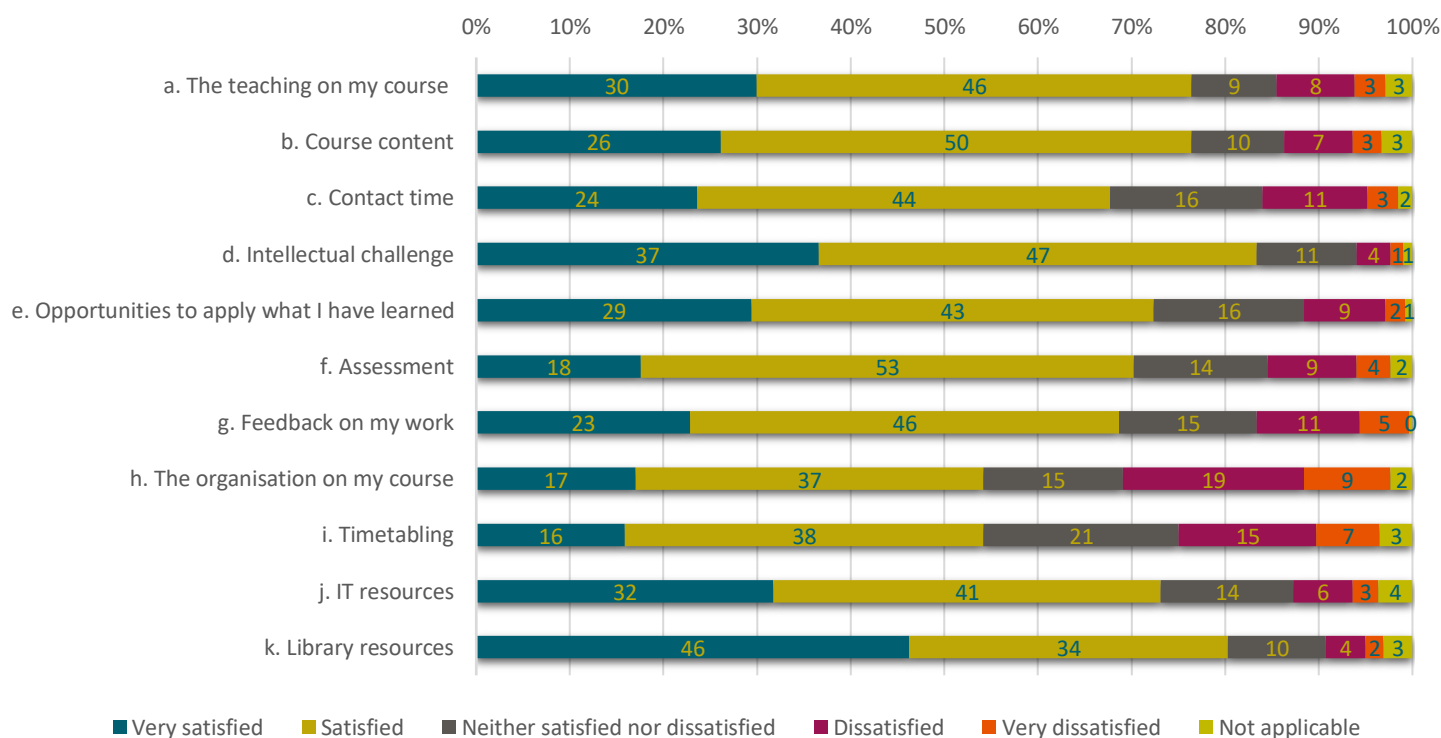


Figure 1: Students' Satisfaction with their Academic Experience (Pulse 3, 2018/19)

## COMPARING 2019 WITH 2018: THE ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

The data presents a mixed picture in terms of satisfaction, with students expressing more satisfaction with their academic experience in some areas during April-June 2019 than in the same period of 2018 and less in others.

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 April-June 2018	% of students 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with this aspect of academic life in April-June 2019
Library Resources	83%	<b>80% (-3%)</b>
IT Resources	78%	<b>73% (-5%)</b>
Timetabling	55%	<b>54% (-1%)</b>
The organisation of my course	48%	<b>54% (+6%)</b>
Feedback	66%	<b>69% (+3%)</b>
Assessment	73%	<b>71% (-2%)</b>
Opportunities to apply what I have learned	72%	<b>72% (~)</b>
Intellectual challenge	83%	<b>84% (+1%)</b>
Contact time	64%	<b>68% (+4%)</b>
Course content	80%	<b>76% (-4%)</b>
The teaching on my course	76%	<b>76% (-3%)</b>

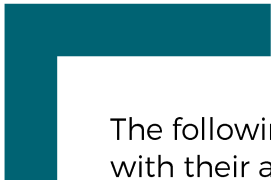
Figure 2: Students' Academic Experience (Pulse 3, 2017/18 and 2018/19)

The improvements in students' levels of satisfaction with contact time and course organisation are particularly encouraging to see. However, the ongoing challenges within timetabling and assessment, and decreased satisfaction with course content and teaching highlight issues that are known by the students' union and University, many of which we are aware are in the process of being addressed.

## 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 Business, Law and Politics 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 most aspects of their academic experience.



The following table displays the proportion of students expressing satisfaction with their academic experience across each faculty:

	<b>FACE</b>	<b>FBLP</b>	<b>FoSE</b>	<b>FHS</b>
Library Resources	83%	<b>87%</b>	77%	78%
IT Resources	67%	73%	<b>78%</b>	74%
Timetabling	<b>63%</b>	56%	45%	55%
The organisation of my course	58%	<b>62%</b>	49%	52%
Feedback	<b>75%</b>	70%	60%	71%
Assessment	72%	<b>77%</b>	64%	72%
Opportunities to apply what I have learned	66%	<b>78%</b>	70%	77%
Intellectual challenge	75%	85%	<b>88%</b>	86%
Contact time	58%	66%	71%	<b>73%</b>
Course content	71%	<b>82%</b>	73%	<b>82%</b>
The teaching on my course	76%	<b>85%</b>	71%	77%

Figure 3: Students' Academic Experience by Faculty (Pulse 3 2018/19)

### ACADEMIC SUPPORT TUITION

In the Pulse 3 survey, students were asked for feedback on their experience of their Academic Support Tutors (ASTs).

80% of the respondents to this question stated that they knew who their AST was, and of these, 65% reported having met with them in the previous trimester. It is concerning that a fifth of students reported not knowing who their AST was, and that of those who did, just over a third did not meet with them.

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

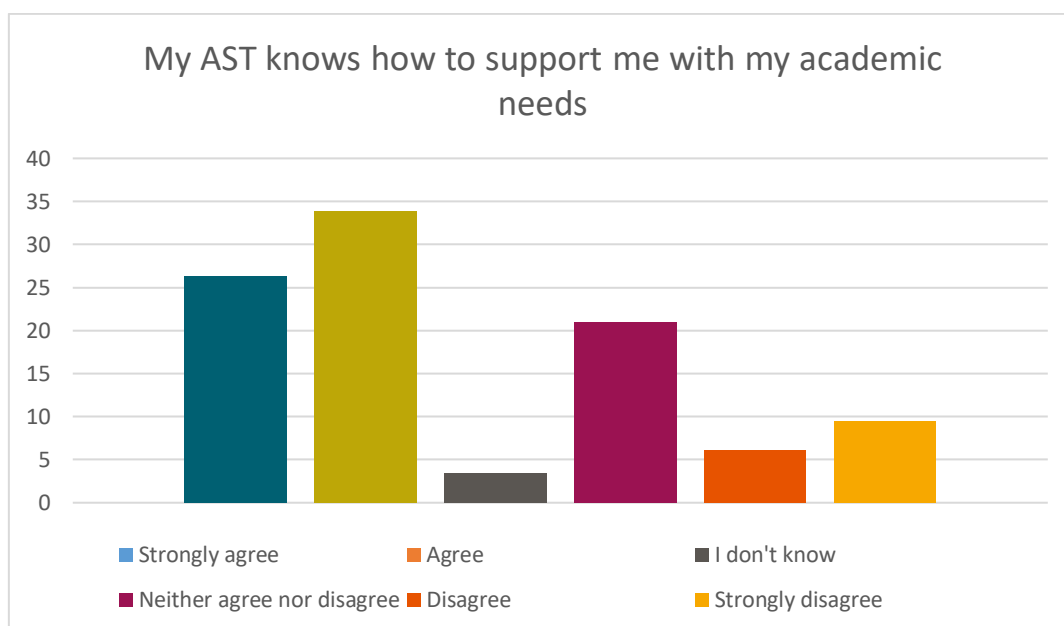


Figure 4: Academic Support Tutor Feedback (Pulse 3, 2018/19)

Faculty of Health Sciences had the lowest proportion of students knowing who their AST is (73%). Despite this, Health Sciences contains the highest proportion of students who met their AST in Trimester 1 (82%), and the highest proportion who agreed or strongly agreed that their AST knew how to meet their academic needs (71%).

By contrast, the Faculty of Business, Law and Politics had the lowest proportion of students both accessing their AST (40%) and agreeing that they knew how to meet their academic needs (43%),


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.

Hull University Union welcomes the University's work to evaluate and review Academic Support Tuition across the institution and is keen to be part of this process.

## Representation

### ACADEMIC REPRESENTATION

Across the year, 48% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Students' Union effectively represents students' academic interests. This is a decrease of 4% from 2017/18. Interestingly, this figure is 10% lower than the proportion of students agreeing with this statement in the NSS (58.44%) – potentially a reflection of the fact that our Pulse data gives a snapshot of students across all year groups whilst the NSS is only completed by final year students, who have had more opportunity to have experienced and engaged in academic representation.



In comparing the data relating to academic representation by Course Reps during the Pulse 3 period, across all measures, fewer respondents have had knowledge and understanding of their Course Rep.

The following observations can be made:

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

- In April-June 2018, 54% of respondents knew who their Course Rep was. This has decreased to 45% during the same period in 2019.
- During this period in 2018, 52% of respondents knew how to contact their Course Rep. In 2019 46% of respondents said they knew this.
- In April-June 2018, 60% of respondents knew what their Course Rep did. This has dropped to 51% in 2019.
- In 2018, 28% of respondents stated they were aware of their Course Rep's achievements this year. This has dropped to 24% in 2019.

The Faculty of Business, Law and Politics had the lowest proportion of students knowing who their course reps are and what they do, although it did have the highest proportion of students knowing about their course rep's achievements for the year.

The Faculty of Science and Engineering had the highest levels of engagement and knowledge about who their course reps were, what they did and how to contact them during this period.

Health Sciences had the lowest proportion of students knowing their reps' achievements.

A key action for the University and Union is to build on our partnership-working in the area of academic representation to ensure that students understand the course rep system and how to engage with it should they need to.

## STUDENT-STAFF FORUMS

No Student-Staff Forums were held during Trimester 3. This is despite there being an expectation within the code of practice for partnership with students in the management of quality and standards that any programmes which include teaching during the third trimester should hold SSFs, and the capacity for these to be held online rather than face-to-face meetings.

## DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION

The newly elected President team for 2019/20 took office on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019, and spent the summer months engaging in training and planning their objectives for the year.



## STUDENT-LED CAMPAIGNS

The main campaign suggestion from a student over the summer was about the lack of online information, financial support and suitable accommodation for Hull University students with children.

Our Pulse data shows that students with dependents in private rented accommodation are more concerned than the general student body about the following issues:

- Balancing academic and social time;
- Being able to pay for the things they need;
- The effect of their other responsibilities on academic achievement.

We have researched other universities and students' unions' websites in this area and found a very mixed picture across the sector. Some institutions provide a wealth of information and services, whilst others either offer no information, or are clear in not welcoming children onto campus.

Currently, the websites of both the University of Hull and Hull University Union have no pages specifically focused on information and support for students who are parents.

Moving forward, we are going to add a page to the students' union website with information for student parents. Whilst the university's student support services website is currently under redevelopment, we have received assurance that this is an area which they would be keen to include. The next step for this campaign is to survey student parents to identify the highest priority issues that need addressing.

Other campaigns run and planned by the Presidents during this period include a campus safety initiative, opposing suggested cuts to foundation degree funding in the Augar Report, which involved Isobel Hall, President of the Students' Union, meeting with Philip Augar at Westminster and sending a letter in support of foundation programmes to the Minister of State for Universities, Research, Science and Innovation, plans to address the BAME attainment gap by Simeon Orduen, President of Education, and plans to address the climate crisis as a whole organisation.

## YOUR IDEAS SCHEME

11 ideas were submitted during Trimester 3, with 4 of these reaching the threshold of at least 10 votes from other students in support of them.

The main themes of the ideas submitted were around mental health, wellbeing and support, and environmental concerns.

We are currently reviewing and revising the Your Ideas Scheme, to ensure that the process is an effective tool for students to be able to submit feedback to Hull University Union's services, and make changes and suggestions in line with our existing democratic procedures and structures.

In a future report, we will share the updated process and plans with the committee.

## Wider Student Experience

### STUDENT WELLBEING AND CONCERNS

In response to the question 'overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?' respondents were 76% satisfied both between April-June 2019 and across the whole year – this is 3% less satisfied than in 2017/18.

It is evident from the table below that students reported feeling more concerned about almost all areas than the same period last year, most notably personal safety, the effect of responsibilities on academic achievement and physical health. However, it should be noted that whilst the proportion of students reporting concerns about personal safety reached a peak in February (46%) and March (45%), at the time that Libby Squires went missing, by June this had dropped to 15%.

Issue	students 'concerned' or 'very concerned' in Pulse 3 2018	students 'concerned' or 'very concerned' in Pulse 3 2019
Physical health	41%	<b>45% (+4)</b>
Mental health and wellbeing	48%	<b>49% (+1)</b>
Personal safety	18%	<b>26% (+8)</b>
Career prospects	53%	<b>56% (+3)</b>
Accommodation	23%	<b>25% (+2)</b>
Academic workload	61%	<b>59% (-2)</b>
Academic achievement	68%	<b>68% (-)</b>
Balancing academic and social time	44%	<b>47% (+3)</b>
Loneliness	33%	<b>36% (+3)</b>
Bullying	7%	<b>6% (-1)</b>
Employability	50%	<b>52% (+2)</b>
Being able to pay for the things I need	59%	<b>61% (+2)</b>
My level of debt	46%	<b>48% (+2)</b>
Effect of responsibilities on academic achievement	43%	<b>49% (+6)</b>

Figure 5: Student Concerns (Pulse 3, 2018/19 and 2017/18)

Hull University Union sought to address students' concerns about safety through a campus safety card initiative; this consisted of a card which includes key contact phone numbers in case of an emergency and was distributed by members of the President team to new and returning students during Welcome Fest.

## Conclusion

Addressing the concerns of students continues to be a priority for us as an organisation, from encouraging students to engage in sports, societies and volunteering to counter loneliness and foster good physical and mental health and wellbeing and develop skills and experience to improve their career prospects, through to providing high quality confidential advice to support students with issues including their finances, accommodation and academic issues.

The 2019/20 academic year is an opportunity for the students' union to trial a number of new and revised systems and processes for academic representation and scrutiny of Presidents and part-time officers.