



## Coronavirus and Students Survey phase II

September 2020

**NUS Insight** 

Subject to embargo until 00.01 am Tuesday 8 September 2020



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## Project overview

#### **Objectives**

NUS Insight conducted a survey alongside One Voice Digital who run the TOTUM product for students and member students' unions to understand more about how students and recent graduates feel about the current Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic. This is the second survey in a series taking place during 2020/21 and builds on the Coronavirus and Students Survey April 2020 which saw 10,000 students provide their views.

#### Methodology

A sample of 4,178 was achieved in the phase II survey.

Respondents were given a chance to win £500 to encourage responses.

The survey was promoted via the NUS Student database, the TOTUM database, through social media & via NUS' member students' unions in July 2020.

The survey took around 25 **minutes** to complete & was in field from 1 until 21 July 2020.

#### What we look for

Within this report, a number of questions have been broken down by demographics, which have been compared with each other. Where applicable and the base size is large enough (n>50), statistically significant differences between demographics and their answers have been shown. A difference is significant when it is likely to have been caused by something other than random chance.

### Sample weighting

## Explanation of weighting

NUS and TOTUM achieved an original sample of **4,178** students. The response rate reflected the trend that females participate more than males in completing surveys - the initial gender split was: 69% female and 27% male.

While this survey sampled both Higher Education (HE) and Further Education (FE), our practice is to reflect a student population where possible. In the absence of any national FE statistics, NUS practice is to use HESA. According to HESA\* statistics the gender split within HE is 54% female and 46% male. In order to reflect this, 'weighting' was applied to the data in this report. In this case, we adjusted the profile of the sample by applying weights so that the over represented group, females, are down weighted and the under represented group, males, are up weighted. This resulted in a gender split in this survey of 56% female and 40% male and a sample of **4,179**.

<sup>\*</sup>https://www.hesa.ac.uk/



## Plans for the next academic year



## Summary

#### **Key findings:**

The majority of students (four in five) intend on continuing with their studies as planned when the new term starts.

Those who are unsure what to do largely feel they need more information about how their course will be run before being able to make a decision.

The vast majority (three in four) expect to be returning to their studies in September 2020. The remainder largely expect to be returning in October 2020.



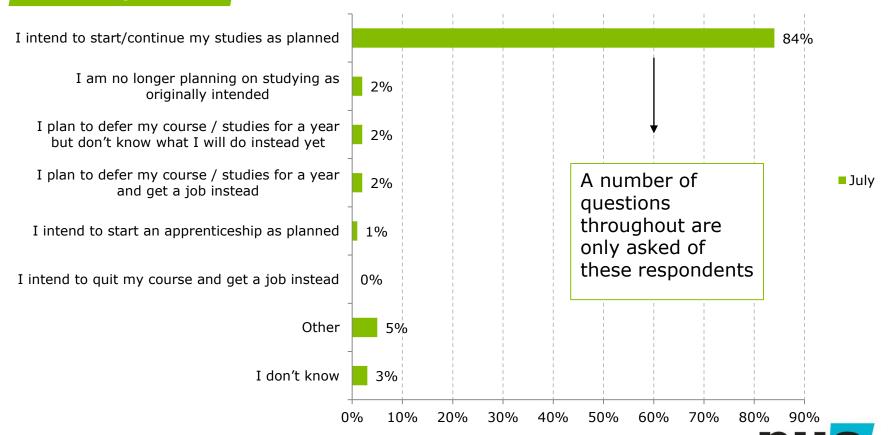


Over four in five students intend to start or continue their studies as planned when their course is due to (re)start. 4% say they will defer their studies and only 2% say they no longer plan on studying.

#### New to phase 2

#### Current plans for when your course is due to restart

national union of students



Weighted Base: 3467 respondents. Balance: Those who will have graduated

Those who don't know what their plans are for when their course restarts largely feel there is a lack of information around how their course will be facilitated. Others are concerned about a second spike in Coronavirus cases and some feel they do not have enough information about how the job market will be impacted.

**New to phase 2** 

### Information that's missing in order to make a decision about plans for when courses restart

#### **Key themes:**

- Lack of clarity around how courses will be taught/run
- Uncertainty/concerns for health and a second spike in Coronavirus cases
- Uncertainty around the impact of Coronavirus on the job market

"Just whether the second wave will hit us and affect my study"

Female, 50-59, HE

"Awaiting further information regarding course before I decide"

Female, 30-39, HE

"What job prospects are likely to be out there"

Female, 23-29, HE

A8. You said that you don't know yet what your plans are for when your course restarts. Is there any information that you feel you are lacking in order to make a decision?

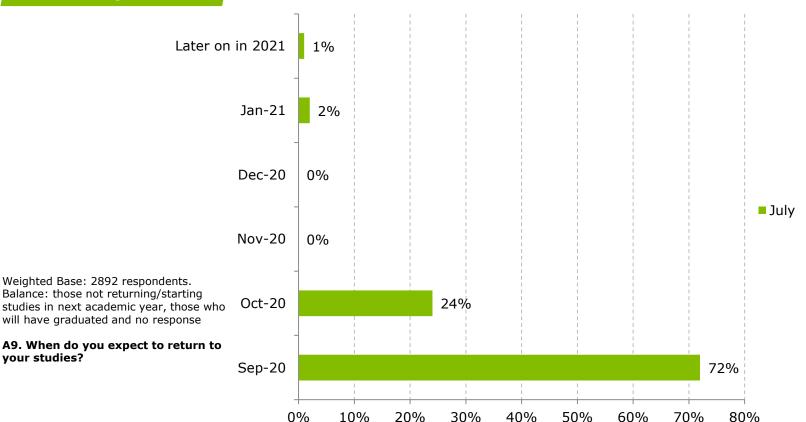




Nearly three quarters of students expect to return to their studies in September 2020, with the remainder largely expecting to return in October 2020.

#### **New to phase 2**

#### Current plans for when your course is due to restart





your studies?





Health, wellbeing and welfare



## Summary

#### **Key findings:**

Concerns about contracting Coronavirus have stayed fairly consistent with levels back in March 2020 – with nearly half feeling 'somewhat concerned'.

Within the context of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, students largely agree that their basic (food, water, warmth) and safety needs (resources, health, property) are being met, with the exception of sleep. Feelings of love and belonging are encouragingly high; however feelings of esteem and self actualisation are much lower at present among students.

The majority of students feel they have had the necessary support to deal with Coronavirus. However, where support has been lacking, this is largely in regards to mental health and the lack of counselling provision.

Family connections have come to the fore for many students throughout the pandemic, with half reportedly interacting with their family more, compensating for the reduction in reported interactions with clubs and societies, other students and course mates.



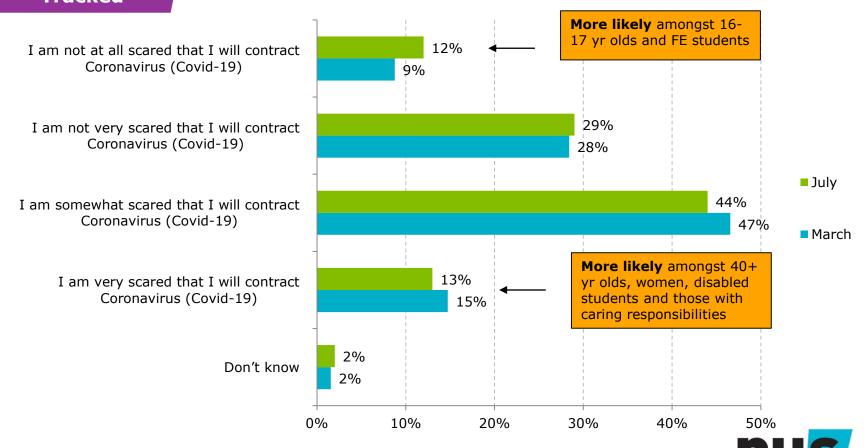


Students' feelings towards contracting Coronavirus are at similar levels to those reported in March 2020; with the largest proportion (nearly half) feeling 'somewhat scared' and just over a quarter feeling 'not very scared'.

#### **Tracked**

#### Feelings towards contracting the Coronavirus (Covid-19)

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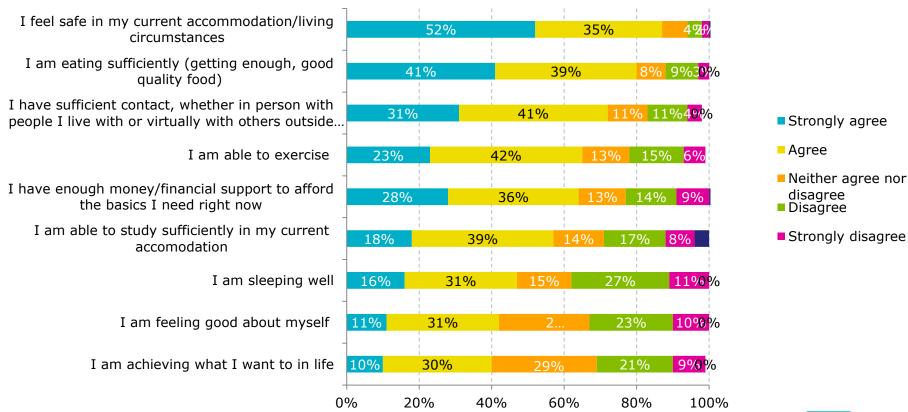


Weighted Base: 4171 respondents. Balance: no response

Within the context of Maslow's hierarchy of needs students largely agree that their basic (food, water, warmth) and safety needs (resources, health, property) are being met. This is with the exception of sleep; only 47% agree to some extent that they are sleeping well. Feelings of love and belonging are encouragingly high (72% agreeing they have sufficient contact with others). However feelings of esteem and self actualisation are reportedly much lower among students at present.

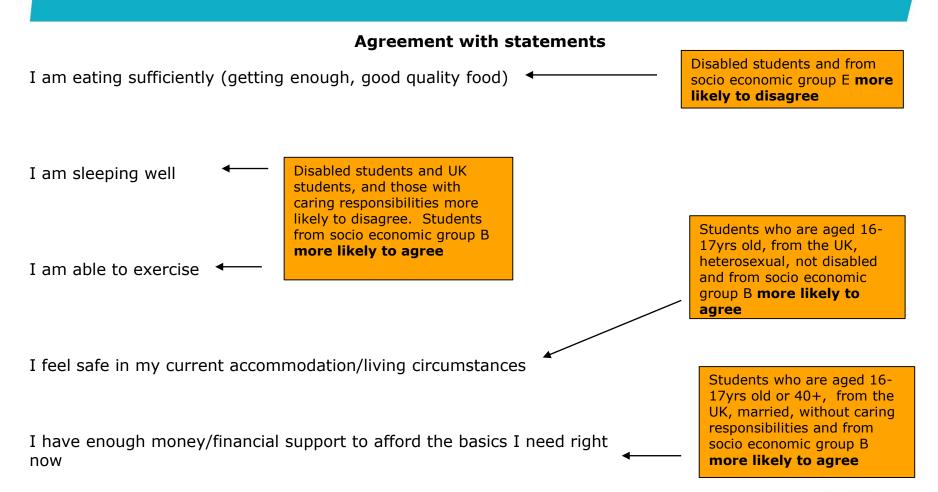
#### **Agreement with statements**

#### New to phase 2





When looking at the data across different demographics we can see some significant differences.





When looking at the data across different demographics we can see some significant differences.

#### **Agreement with statements**

I have sufficient contact, whether in person with people I live with or virtually with others outside my home, to make me feel connected and/or loved ◀

Students who are aged 16-17 yrs, from the UK, heterosexual and not disabled **more likely to** agree

I am feeling good about myself ←

Students who are aged 18-29 yrs, UG, from the UK, studying full time, Trans, not heterosexual, not married and students with a disability **less likely to agree** 

I am able to study sufficiently in my current accommodation lacktriangle

International students, those studying full time and disabled students less likely to agree

I am achieving what I want to in life

Students who are aged 40+, PG, parttime or distance learners, married and not disabled are **more likely to agree** 

Arts and social sciences and languages students **less likely to agree** 



As was the case in March, students are more likely to be concerned about the wellbeing of their family than of themselves or their friends.

#### **Agreement with statements Tracked** Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know/Not applicable Disagree Students who are in HE, women, disabled are more I am concerned about the likely to agree wellbeing of some/all of my 36% 46% family Students who are Trans, Bi, Queer, or disabled, and those I am concerned about the studying languages more wellbeing of some/all of my 19% 54% 15% likely to agree friends Students who aged 40+, in HE, PG, International, Women, disabled or have I am concerned about my own 14% 41% caring responsibilities are wellbeing more likely to agree Students who are I am concerened as to whether I international, Full time, 9% 28% 29% have the tools and skills to 24% trans, not heterosexual, and manage my own wellbeing disabled students more likely to agree 50% 100% 0%

national union of students

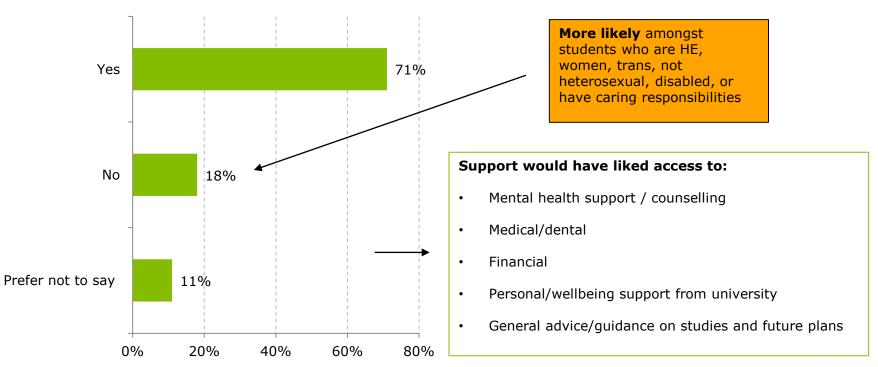
Weighted average base: 4157 Balance: No response

B3. How far do you agree or disagree with the following statements as a result of Coronavirus (Covid-19)?

Just under three in four students say they have had the necessary support to deal with Coronavirus. Where support has been lacking it has largely been with regards to mental health and the lack of counselling provision. Medical/dental provision has also been harder to access for some students. Financial support has not been available to all and others feel there has been little/no general and wellbeing support from their institution.

#### New to phase 2

## Have you had the necessary support to deal with Coronavirus?



Weighted Base: 4161. Balance: No response

B4. Thinking about the impact Coronavirus (Covid-19) has had on your health and wellbeing do you feel you have had access to the necessary support to deal with it?

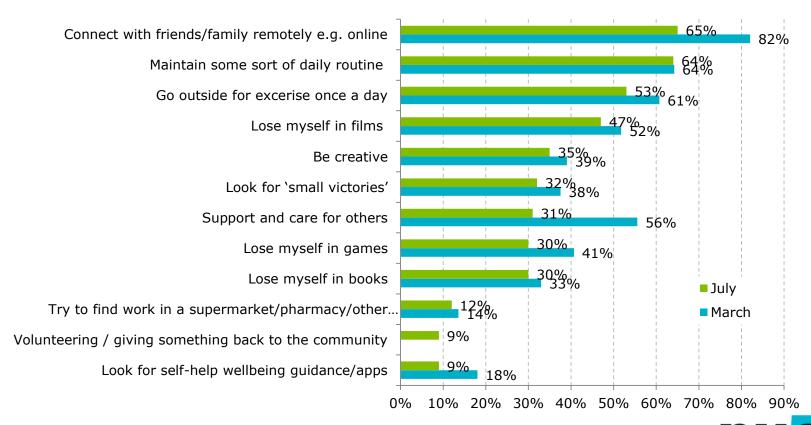


B5. Please tell us briefly what support you would like access to, to help with your health and wellbeing throughout the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic

The vast majority of students currently connect with friends and family online to support their wellbeing. They are less likely to look for self help or work in a supermarket, although around a tenth plan to do each of these things.

#### **Tracked**

#### What are you currently doing to support your well being?



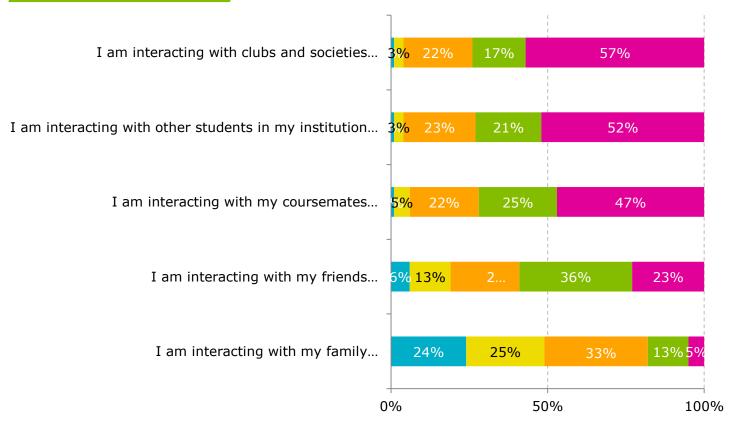
Weighted Base: 4171. Balance: No response



Family connections have come to the fore for many students throughout the pandemic with half reportedly interacting with their family more, compensating for the reduction in reported interactions with clubs and societies, other students and course mates.

#### New to phase 2

#### Interactions...





Much more

A little more

Less

Much less

About the same

Weighted average base: 4144. Balance: No response

When looking at the data across different demographics we can see some significant differences.

#### Interactions...

I am interacting with my family... →

**More:** Aged 16-17yrs. Full time, single, no caring responsibilities, socio economic groups A and C

**Less:** Those aged 40+, UK students, disabled,

I am interacting with my friends...  $\rightarrow$ 

More: International,

**Less:** Disabled students or caring responsibilities

B7. Thinking about your interactions with people since the coronavirus pandemic began, please indicate how much you are interacting with the following now compared with before the pandemic...



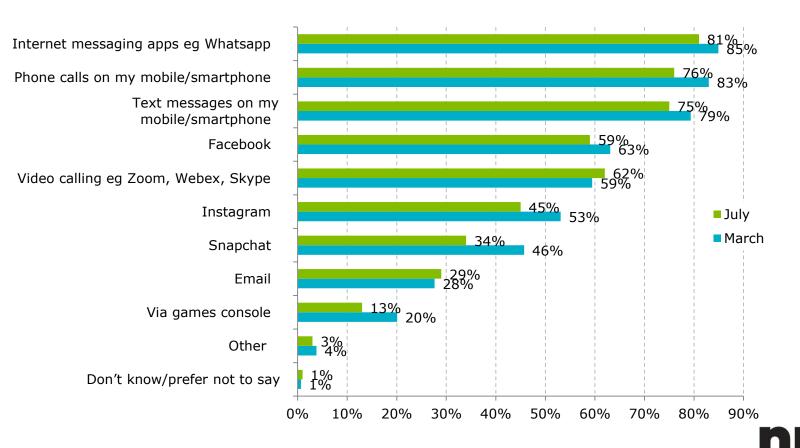


As was the case in March 2020, students are most likely to be keeping in touch with friends and family via internet messaging apps (e.g. Whatsapp), phone calls and text messaging. Facebook and video calling are also popular options for over half of students.

#### **Tracked**

#### How students are staying in touch with friends and family

national union of students



When looking at the data across different demographics we can see some significant differences.

#### How students are staying in touch with friends and family

## Phone calls more common amongst:

40+

Women

Married

Those with caring responsibilities

## Text messaging more common amongst:

40+

**UK** students

Women

## Video calls more common amongst:

HE, PG

Women

Those without caring responsibilities

Socio economic group A



When looking at the data across different demographics we can see some significant differences

#### How students are staying in touch with friends and family

## Instagram more common amongst:

16-22

Full time

Those not married

Those without caring responsibilities

## **Snapchat more common amongst:**

16-17, Full time, UG

UK, based in England and Wales

Full time

Those not married and those without caring responsibilities

#### **Emails more common amongst:**

40+

Part time or distance learners

Married

Those with caring responsibilities





## Support from education institutions



## Summary

#### **Key findings:**

Continuing the trend seen in March 2020, students generally feel they are being kept up to date by their institutions on news / developments and being provided with helpful support and practical advice on what action to take. However, the general feeling is that students are simply not receiving as much information or advice at all, which could be because the initial stages of the pandemic are over and institutions may believe students are beyond the point of requiring practical advice.

Students would like more up to date and useful information that applies to all groups of students during any future outbreaks and more personal contact making sure they are ok, and providing advice on financial and accommodation issues is also needed.

In the event that lockdown or face-to-face services and facilities can't be delivered in the coming academic year, students would most like to see general advice and support offered online. As was the case in March 2020, on the whole students are still more likely to agree that their institution has provided up to date news/developments, helpful support and practical advice on what action to take.

#### **Tracked**

#### **Agreement with statements**

My institution has kept me up to date with 18% 50% 9% 5% 15% latest news and developments Strongly agree My institution has provided practical advice on 8% 26% 17% 9% 34% Agree what action I should personally take ■ Neither agree nor disagree I have received helpful support from my 11% 39% 14% **7%**5% institution 0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

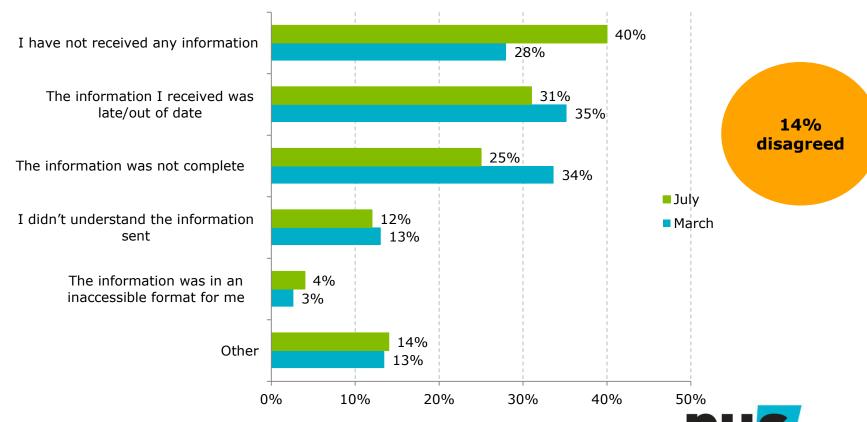


Average weighted Base: 4153

Students in July 2020 are more likely to claim they have simply not received any information from their institution than those in March.

#### **Tracked**

## Reasons for <u>disagreement</u> that institution has kept you up to date with latest news and developments



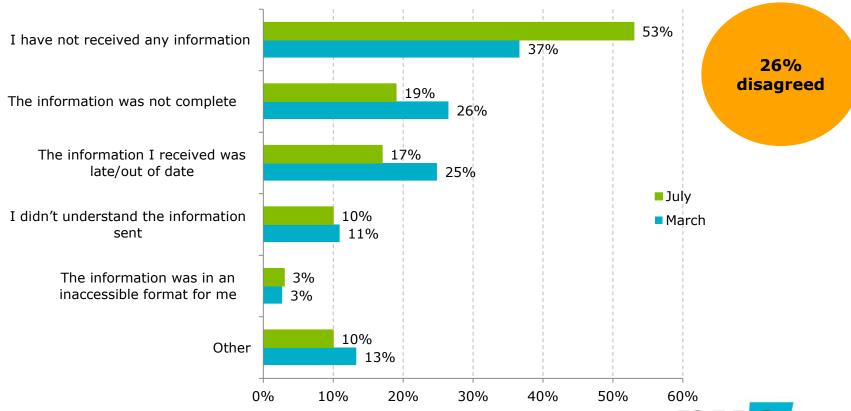
Weighted Base: 598 respondents. Balance: those who agreed that their institution had kept them up to date with latest news and developments, no response



Again, students in July 2020 are more likely to claim they have simply not received any practical advice from their institution compared with March

#### Tracked

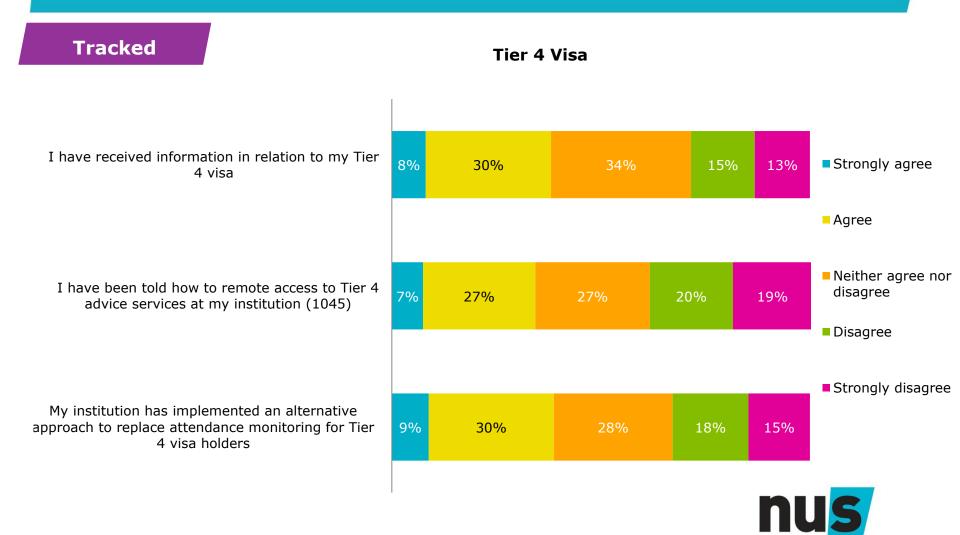
Reasons for <u>disagreement</u> that institution has provided you with practical advice on what action you should personally take



Weighted Base: 1095 respondents. Balance: those who agreed that their institution had provided practical advice on what action they should personally take, no response



Between a third and two in five international students have had a good experience regarding their Tier 4 visa.

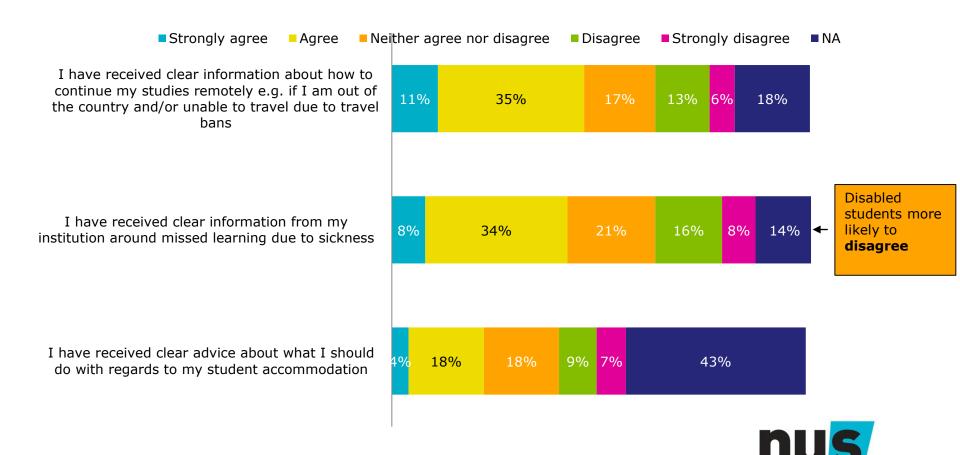


national union of students

Continuing the pattern seen in March 2020, students are most likely to agree that they have received clear information about how to continue studies remotely and around missed learning due to sickness.

#### **Tracked**

#### **Clear information**



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Average weighted Base: 4151 . Balance: no response



# Education: teaching and learning experience and academic success



## Summary

Half of students agree that they have had access to sufficient information and advice to help them with their study plans. However the proportion of students who agree that they are able to access online learning sufficiently to complete their studies, and that the online provision is a good standard/quality, has dropped since March 2020.

One of the biggest challenges for students who weren't able to complete their studies sufficiently online was the lack of access to physical resources their course requires. Suggestions for improved online provision largely focussed on having compulsory online lectures/workshops that meet a certain standard to fulfil the course requirements.

The proportion of students who feel Coronavirus will have a negative impact on any vocational element of their course has dropped since March (79% down to 67%) – perhaps an indication that the pandemic hasn't had as detrimental effect as first feared.

As was the case in March, over half of those who receive learning support feel they have had sufficient support throughout the pandemic to complete their work to the best of their ability. Suggestions to improve this support however largely focus on receiving more individual, targeted support with a personalised approach.





## Summary

Of those who completed an assessment as part of their course, two in three felt satisfied to some extent with the methods used. Further more two in three students got the marks they expected to get in their assessments, with just under half saying their results are the same as before the pandemic and a fifth saying they are actually higher.

Around a third say they would do something different if assessments are carried out in the same way again including planning their time better, studying more, seeking more guidance and support from tutors, and doing more research.

Thinking ahead to when they return to their studies, the biggest concerns students have are a lack of experiences followed by the lack of quality teaching/online learning. However, the vast majority (81%) want their course to run as normal when they return to their studies.

The human interaction previously experienced by students is what they are missing the most throughout the pandemic; e.g. face-to-face teaching environment and the social interaction with course mates, although this is more likely amongst full time, younger students.

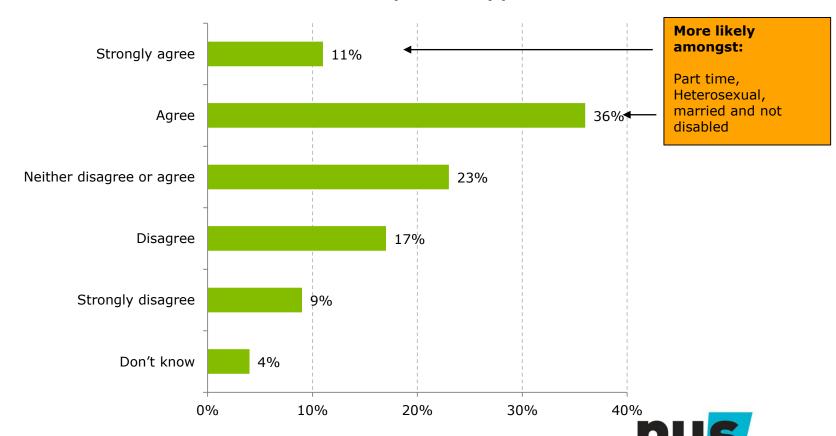




Around half of students agree to some extent that they have had access to sufficient information and advice to help them with their study plans.

#### New to phase 2

#### Agreement you have had access to sufficient information and advice to help with study plans



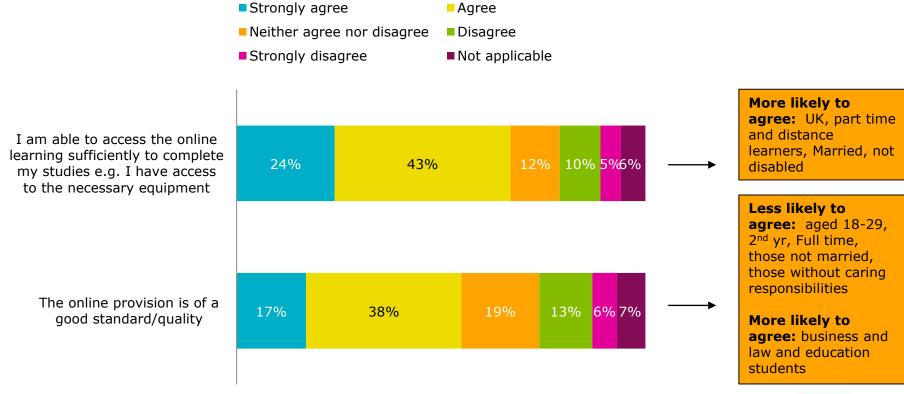
Weighted base: 4151

national union of students D1. How far do you agree that you have had access to sufficient information and advice to help you with your study plans for the future since the Coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak?

Of the students who have had online learning provided by their institution, two in three (67%) agree that they are able to access the online learning sufficiently to complete their studies and half (55%) agree the online provision is a good standard/quality. This sees somewhat of a drop in agreement from March 2020 when agreements were 78% and 65% respectively.

#### **Tracked**

#### Agreement with statements - online learning has been provided



Average weighted Base: 4150. Balance: those whose institution has not provided online learning in response to Coronavirus (Covid-19), no response



D2. You mentioned that your institution has provided online learning in response to the Coronavirus (Covid-19). How far do you agree with the following statements?

For those students who were not able to complete their studies online sufficiently this was largely due to having no access to physical resources, online materials being insufficient, lacking IT equipment/technology, insufficient contact with lecturers, absent or poor WIFI, absent or limited online lectures and not having access to IT programmes/software.

#### New to phase 2

#### What was needed to complete online studies sufficiently

#### **Key themes:**

- Access to physical resources, e.g. library, books, laboratory space and equipment
- More/better online resources
- IT equipment & technology e.g. laptops, printers
- More/better online contact with lecturers and tutors
- Fully functioning wifi/internet connection
- Online lectures/workshops
- IT programmes & software

"All the books in the library. I need books"

Male, 30-39, HE

"Space to study, quiet to study, uninterrupted internet access, laptop, printer"

Female, 18-22, HE

"I needed online lectures. We were given PowerPoint slides. That's it."

Female, 18-22, HE

"Access to a wide variety of online textbooks, better lecture materials"

Male, 18-22, FE

"Support from tutors to contact them if struggling, online lectures."

Female, 18-22, HE

"I needed specific software such as SPSS."

Female, 18-22, HE

Suggestions for how online provision could be improved included making online content/lectures compulsory (some had received none), having agreed standards for the online provision (up to date and sufficient detail), including more interactive elements, providing more information and advice, and more/better access to the lecturers.

### New to phase 2

#### How the online provision could have been better

#### **Key themes:**

- · For online lectures to be compulsory
- Online lectures to be up to date and of adequate detail and quality – not rehashing previous years content
- More interactive elements
- · More information and guidance/advice
- More/better contact and access to lecturers

"Teachers keeping in touch"
Female, 18-22, FE

"We only had a few classes and then they stopped, and we rarely got responses to emails"

Female, 18-22, HE

"Could have more interactive classes and online tutoring class."

Female, 23-29, HE

"Lecturers were reposting old recordings of lectures and not conducting online seminars"

Female, 18-22, HE

"More information and more lessons, it's like we have been left to fend for ourselves."

Male, 23-29, HE

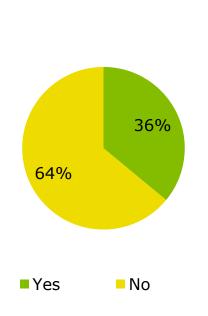


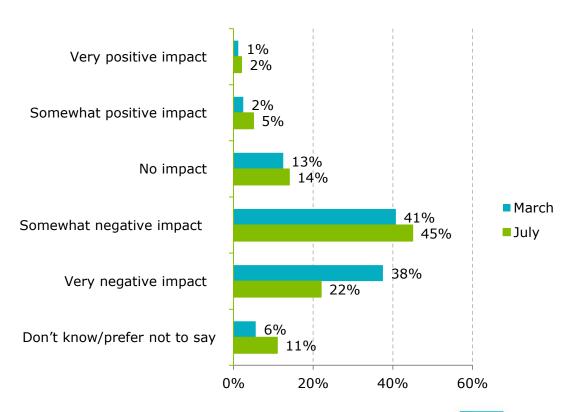
Of those who are on a vocational course (1 in 3), around two in three believe the Covid-19 outbreak will have a negative impact on the vocational element of their course. This is a drop in the proportion who thought it would have a negative impact in March 2020 – an indication perhaps that the realities of Coronavirus haven't resulted in such extreme negative impacts as feared.

#### **Tracked**

# Impact you think Coronavirus (Covid-19) will have on the vocational element of your course

#### **Vocational / vocational component**







Weighted base D5a: 2893 respondents. Balance: no response

Weighted base D5b: 1032 respondents. Balance: those who do not have a vocational element to their course

Suggested ways to improve how vocational courses are delivered include providing more online content, having smaller groups, delaying when the vocational elements need to be completed, ensuring PPE is provided for those on placement, and reducing the number of hours of placement required to qualify.

# New to phase 2

# What could be done to improve the way the vocational element of your course is delivered

#### **Key themes:**

- Provide more content online
- Have smaller groups
- Push back/delay vocational element
- Ensure more PPE & safety measures in place
- Reduce number of required hours on placement

"Reduce the number of placement hours (150) to be completed before May 2021."

Female, 40-49, HE

"Video demonstrations in lieu of practical experience for now and then catch up sessions ASAP"

Female, 23-29, HE

"Practical sessions in smaller numbers to allow for social distancing"

Female, 18-22, HE

"Deliver vocational/practical components in the final semester."

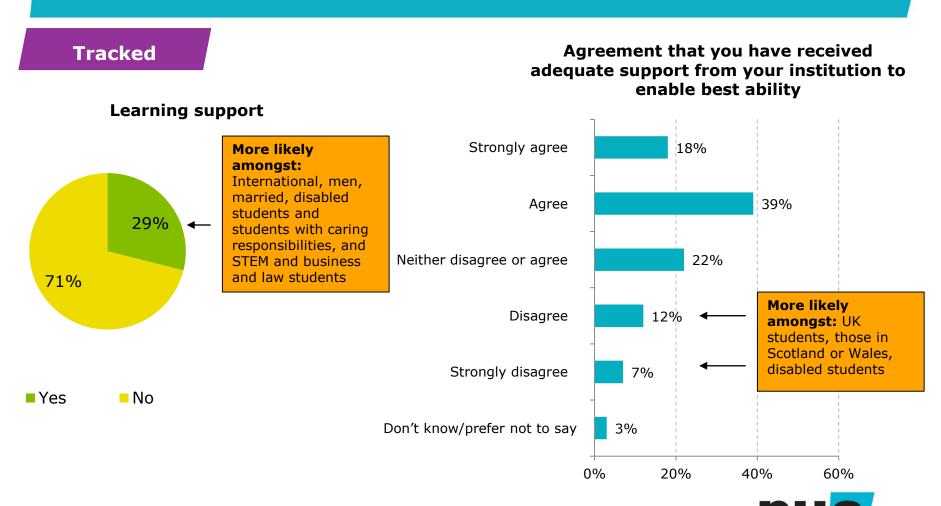
Non-binary, 23-29, HE

"Socially distanced visits with appropriate PPE."

Female, 23-29, FE



Of those who receive learning support from their institution, similar to March 2020 over half feel they have received adequate support to enable them to continue their work to the best of their ability throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.



Weighted base D7: 4164 respondents. Balance: no response

Weighted base D8: 1221 respondents. Balance: those who do not receive learning support from their institution



Suggestions for additional support for those receiving learning support include more individual support, having regular contact and check-ins, being provided with more information about their course/options, more online provision and increased financial assistance.

### New to phase 2

#### Further support required for those who receive learning support

#### **Key themes:**

- More/better support with individual needs
- To have regular check-ins and contact with course staff
- More information about courses/learning and the future
- More online provision/resources
- Financial assistance

"My reasonable adjustments to be put in place properly and my learning support plan to be done proper"

Female, 23-29, HE

"Checking up from the university, more frequent emails"

Female, 18-22, HE

"Just more online lessons."

Male, 16-17, FE

"Transparency and accurate information regarding not coming into classes."

Female, 30-29, HE3

"Accessible financial support and updated student information regarding financial hardship."

Male, 18-22, HE

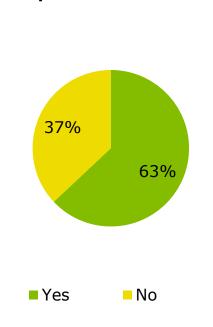


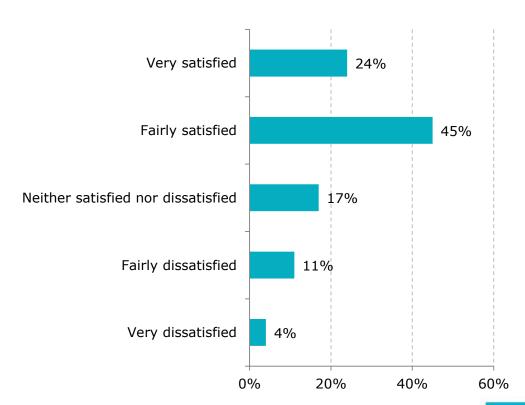
Nearly two in three students have completed an assessment/test as part of their course. Of these individuals two in three felt satisfied to some extent with the methods of assessments used.

# New to phase 2

#### Satisfaction with methods of assessments

#### **Completed assessment?**





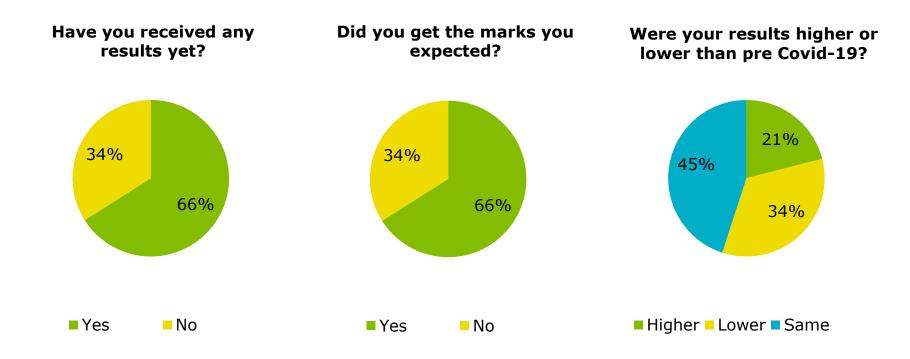


Weighted base D10: 4166 respondents. Balance: no response

Weighted base D11: 2602 respondents. Balance: those who do not receive learning support from their institution

Two in three students have got the marks they expected to get in their assessments. Just under half say their results are the same as before the pandemic and a fifth say they are actually higher. Around one in three however believe their results to be lower than before the Coronavirus pandemic hit.

### New to phase 2



Weighted base: 2598 respondents. Balance: those haven't completed an assessment/test & no response

D12. Have you received any results yet from assessments you have undertaken during the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic Weighted base: 1659 respondents. Balance: those haven't completed an assessment/test & no response

D13. Did you get the marks you expected to get?

Weighted base: 1701 respondents. Balance: those haven't completed an assessment/test & no response

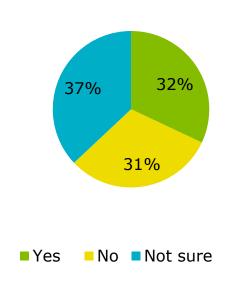
D14. Were your result expectations higher or lower than they had been prior to the Coronavirus (covid-19) pandemic?



When asked if there would do anything differently to improve results if future assessments are carried out in the same way students were fairly split; with around a third each saying yes, no or not sure. Those who would make changes said they would plan their time better, study more, seek more guidance and support from tutors and do more research.

### New to phase 2

# Would you do anything differently if future assessments done in same way?



#### What would you do differently?

#### **Key themes:**

- Better time management / start revising earlier
- Revise / study more
- Seek more guidance and support from tutors
- Do more research

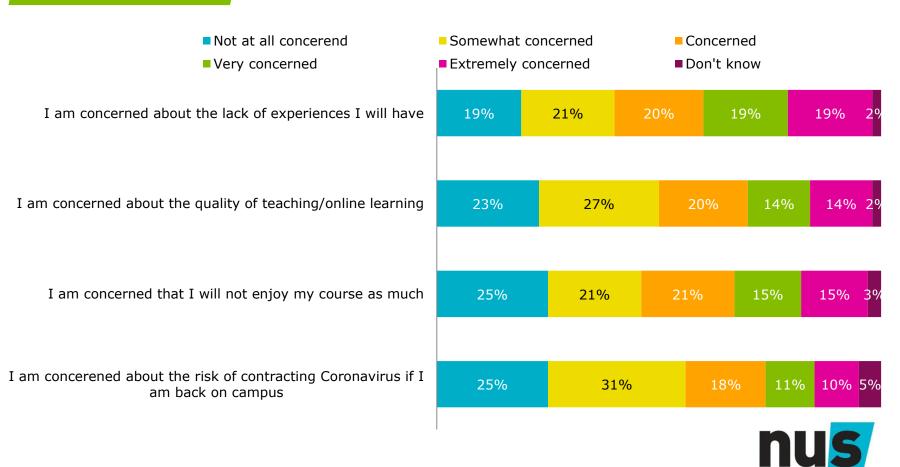


Weighted base: 1189 respondents. Balance: those who have not had an assessment/test and no response

Lack of experiences are the biggest concern for students when they return to their studies. This is followed by the lack of quality teaching/online learning.

# New to phase 2

#### Concern about when studies begin/restart



national union of students

Average weighted Base: 2870. Balance: no response

When looking at the data across different demographics we can see some significant differences.

#### Concern about when studies begin/restart

### More concerned by lack of experiences:

UG, students in England or Wales

Full time

Single

Have no caring responsibilities

### More concerned by not enjoying course:

18-22

HE, UG

International

Second year, full time

Gay/lesbian, bi or queer

Not married

No caring responsibilities

# More concerned by quality of online teaching:

18-22

HE, UG

International

Full time

Not married

# More concerned by the risk of catching coronavirus on campus:

International

Disabled students

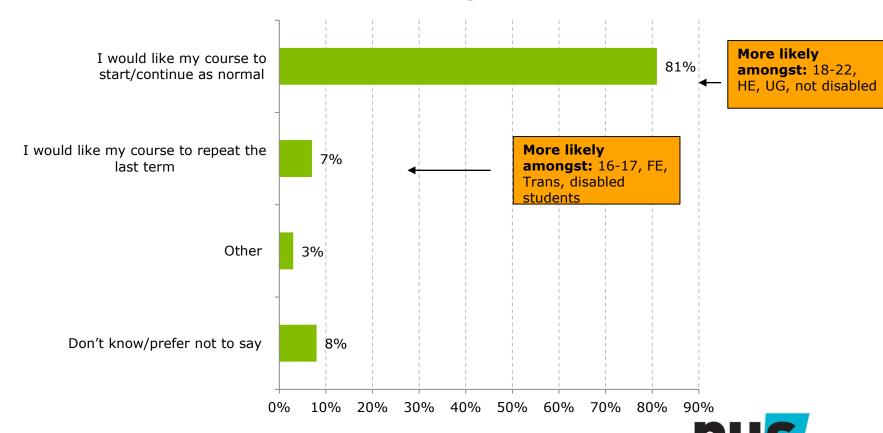
Caring responsibilities



Four in five students want their course to run as normal when they return to their studies. Fewer than one in ten say they would like to repeat the last term.

# **New to phase 2**

# What students would like to see from their institution when their course begins/restarts



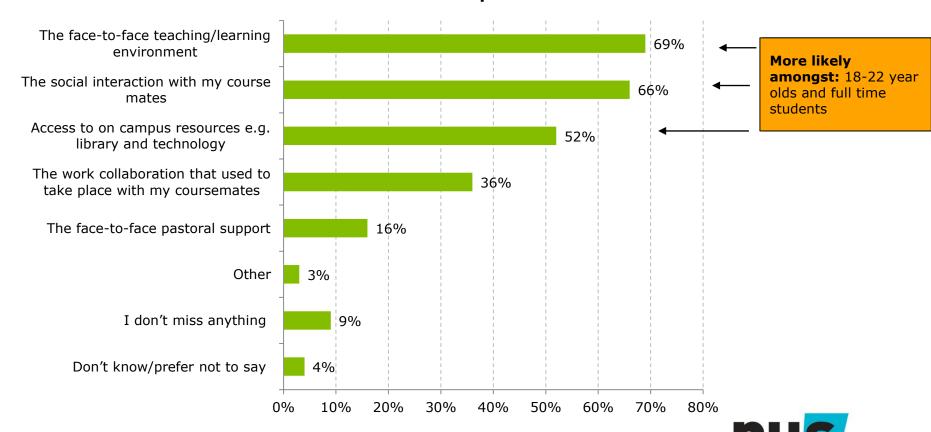
national union of students

Weighted Base: 2891 respondents. Balance: no response

The human interaction previously experienced by students is what they are missing the most throughout the pandemic; with two in three missing the face-to-face teaching environment they previously had and a similar proportion missing the social interaction with their course mates.

# New to phase 2

# Top three things missed from previous day to day learning experiences



Weighted Base: 4155 respondents. Balance: no response





# Employment, income and financial circumstances



# Summary

Three in five students say that Coronavirus has had some degree of impact upon their income. The key impact has been the result of fewer job opportunities and fewer hours/shifts available, loosing a job, or being furloughed so receiving a lower income.

When it comes to spending, students report spending on average a third of their income on rent. Food is the next biggest expenditure at around a fifth of their income. Two in five students say they have sought financial assistance from family members and the same proportion from savings. However compared to March 2020 there has a been a reduction in the proportion of students who have cut back on spending across a range of items - perhaps indicating a gradual return to shopping habits seen prior to lockdown. And although concern with regards to managing financially during the Covid-19 outbreak continues to be high, it is coming down; with three in four students currently concerned compared to four in five back in March 2020 (73% vs 80%).

As was the case in March 2020, half of students say that the income of someone who supports them financially has been impacted by Covid-19. And thinking ahead to beyond the pandemic, three in four say they are concerned about their ability to manage financially.





# Summary

Around half of students intend to work along side their studies next term (up from March). With regards to those currently working, figures have remained fairly stable with one in five working from home and similar proportions having been furloughed, had their hours reduced or been made redundant.

Two in three students either already had a summer job or were looking for one. Of those who were still looking confidence in finding a job was relatively low; with three in five not at all confident they would find one. The most common type of summer jobs lined up were within hospitality (e.g. bartender/waitress/barista), followed by childcare/educational roles, care/support work, healthcare and admin.





The proportion of students who say they will have a full or part time job when their course begins has increased from March; 50% compared to 38%.

#### Job(s) held alongside studies **Tracked** More likely amongst: 23+, PG, part time, married, caring 19% responsibilities, socio Full time employment 14% economic group D, business and law and education students 31% Part time time employment 24% More likely amongst: 18-8% Zero hours contract 22 year olds 12% 7% July Casual basis 8% March 4% Other 3% 31% I do not work at all 38% 0% 20% 60%

40%

Weighted Base: 2890 respondents. Balance: no response

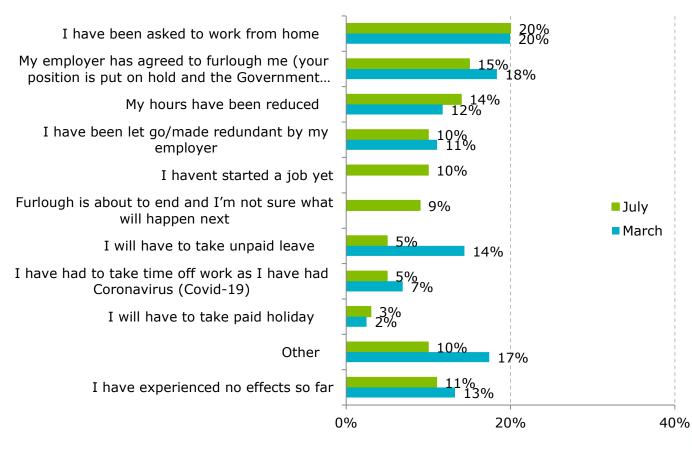


As was the case in March, one in five students who have a job have been working from home and similar proportions have been furloughed, had their hours reduced or been made redundant. Significantly fewer people however have had to take unpaid leave.

#### **Tracked**

#### How work has been affected by Coronavirus (Covid-19)

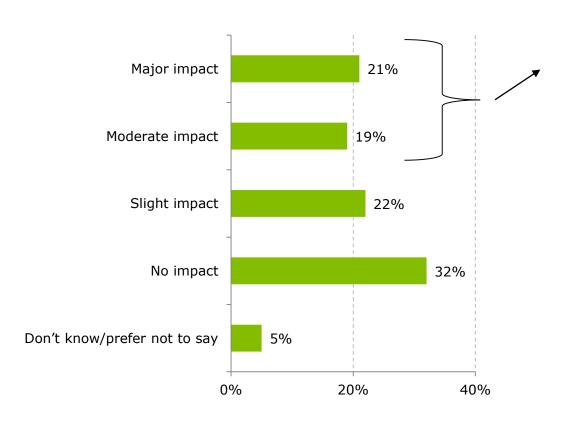
national union of students



Three in five students say that Coronavirus has had some degree of impact upon their income; with around a fifth saying this impact has been major. The key impact has been the result of fewer job opportunities and fewer hours/shifts available, losing a job, or being furloughed so receiving a lower income.

# New to phase 2

### **Impact of Coronavirus on your income**



#### **Key themes:**

- Fewer hours/shifts available or no work at all
- Made redundant
- Been furloughed (on less money)
- Self-employed and no/less work

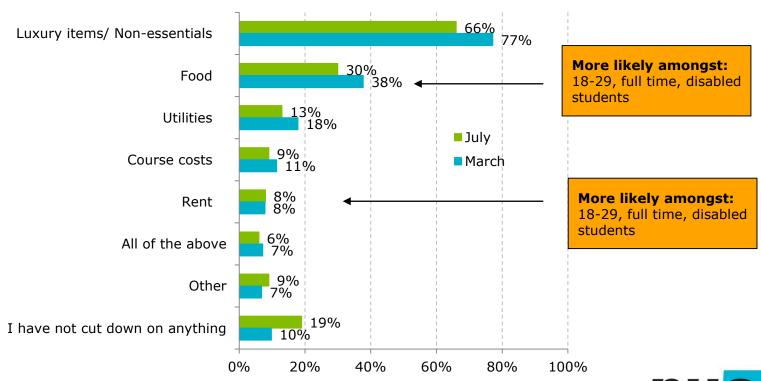


Weighted Base: 4152 respondents. Balance: those who do not work

Overall compared to March 2020 there has a been a reduction in the proportion of students who have cut back on spending across a range of items. In particular two in three students say they have cut back on luxury/non essential items compared to three in four in March 2020; perhaps indicating a gradual return to shopping habits seen prior to lockdown.

### **Tracked**

#### **Cutting back in terms of spending since Coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak**

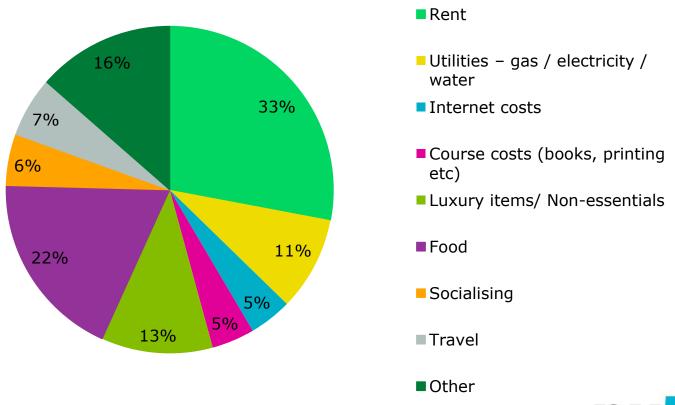




Students report spending on average a third of their income on rent. Food is the next biggest expenditure at around a fifth of their income.

# **New to phase 2**

### How income is being spent

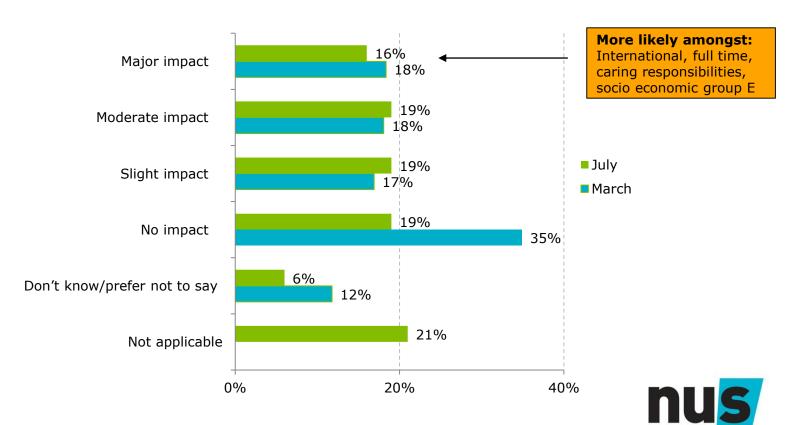




As was the case in March 2020, half of students say that the income of someone who supports them financially has been impacted by Covid-19. Note the reduction in those saying it has had no impact is likely being offset by the response option 'not applicable' that was introduced in this round of research.

**Tracked** 

# Has the income of someone who helps support you financially been impacted by Coronavirus (Covid-19)?

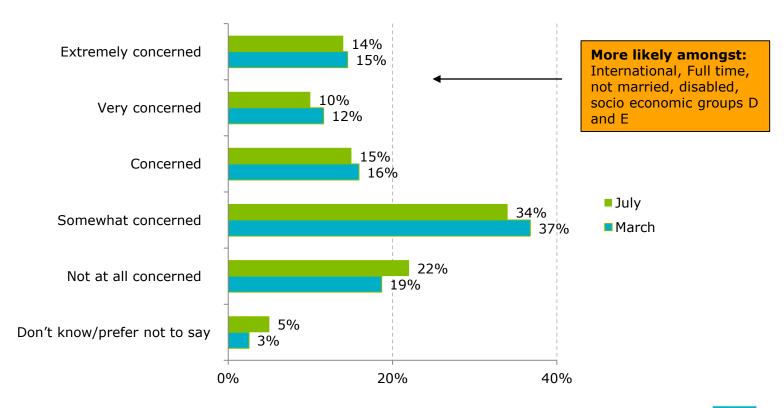


national union of students

Concern with regards to managing financially during the Covid-19 outbreak continues to be high but is coming down; with three in four students currently concerned compared to four in five back in March 2020 (73% vs 80%).

### **Tracked**

#### Concern about ability to manage financially during pandemic

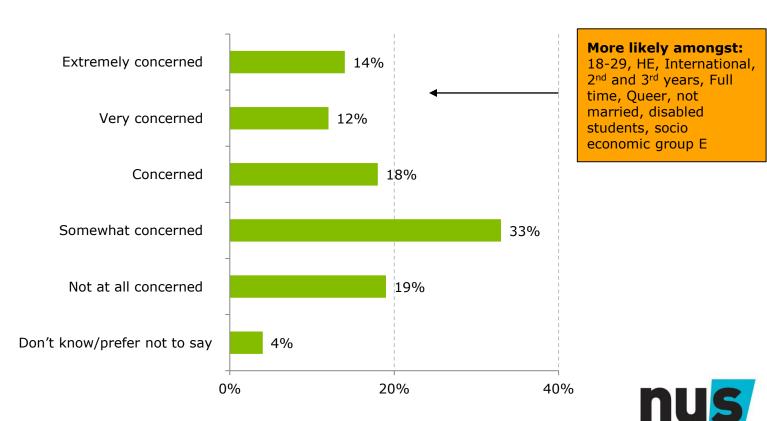




Thinking ahead to beyond the pandemic, three in four say they are concerned about their ability to manage financially.

### New to phase 2

#### Concern about ability to manage financially beyond the pandemic



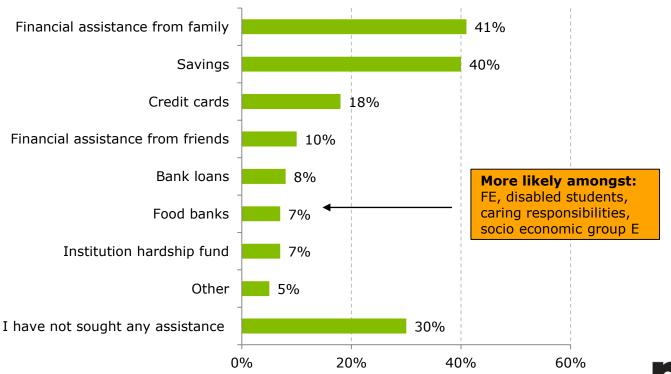
national union of students

Weighted Base: 4124 respondents. Balance: no response

Two in five students say they have sought financial assistance from family members and the same proportion from savings. A further one in five say they have used credit cards to help them out.

**New to phase 2** 

# Which of the following have you sought support/assistance from during the pandemic



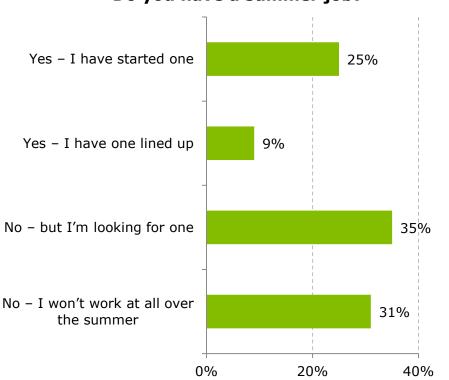


Weighted Base: 1807 respondents. Balance: no response

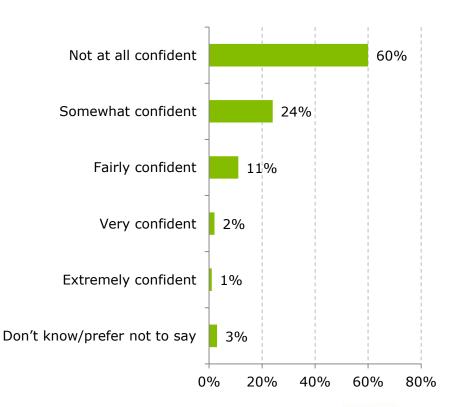
Two in three students either already have a summer job or are looking for one. Of those who are still looking confidence in finding a job is relatively low; with three in five are not at all confident they will find one.

# New to phase 2

#### Do you have a summer job?



### Confidence in finding a summer job?

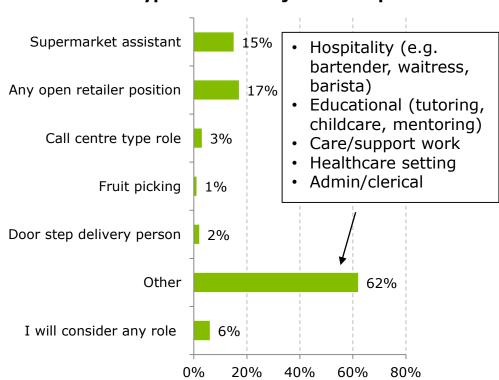




The most common type of summer job lined up was specified within hospitality (e.g. bartender/waitress/barista), followed by childcare/educational roles, care/support work, healthcare and admin. Two in five students who are still looking for a summer job say they would consider a supermarket assistant role and the same proportion would consider any retailer position. Equally two in five would consider any role.

# New to phase 2

#### Type of summer job lined up



#### Type of summer job will consider



national union of students



Weighted Base E13: 795 respondents. Balance: no response



# Accommodation



# Summary

Where students plan to live when their course begins is quite varied - one in four plan to live in a privately rented house/flat shared with friends. A further one in five will live in their own home and another one in five will live with their parents/guardians. Two in five of those planning on living in some form of rented accommodation have already signed a tenancy agreement.

Accommodation continues to be an area of concern for some students; in particular meeting rental payments - with around a fifth admitting to having been unable to pay their rent in full over the past 4 months. And the same proportion admit they have been unable to pay their bills in full over the past 4 months.

Thinking ahead to the new term, the types of health and safety information students would like regarding their accommodation include details on how the institution/landlord plans to limit the spread of the virus e.g. how they will manage social distancing and cleaning of communal spaces/venues.



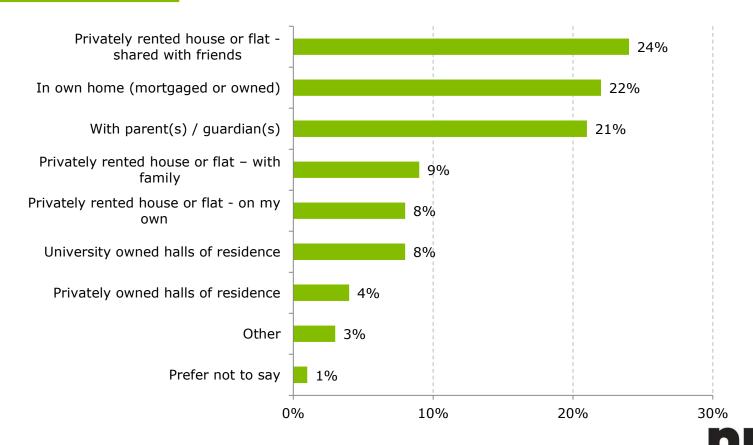


One in four students plan to live in a privately rented house/flat shared with friends when their course begins again. A further one in five will live in their own home and another one in five will live with their parents/guardians.

# New to phase 2

### Where plan to live when course begins

national union of students

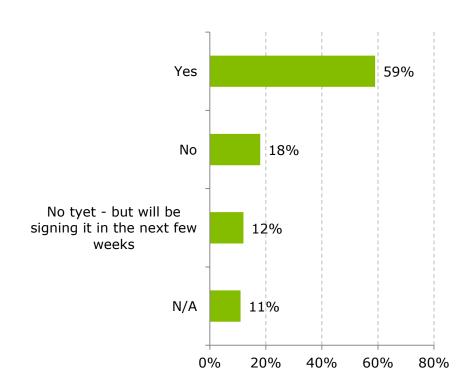


Weighted Base: 2884 respondents. Balance: no response

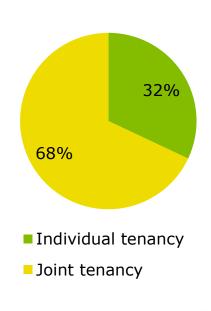
Three in five of those planning on living in university or privately rented accommodation have signed a tenancy agreement for the coming academic year. And two thirds of these have signed a joint tenancy.

# New to phase 2

# Have you signed tenancy agreement for coming academic year



### **Individual or joint tenancy**





Weighted Base: 1526 respondents. Balance: no response

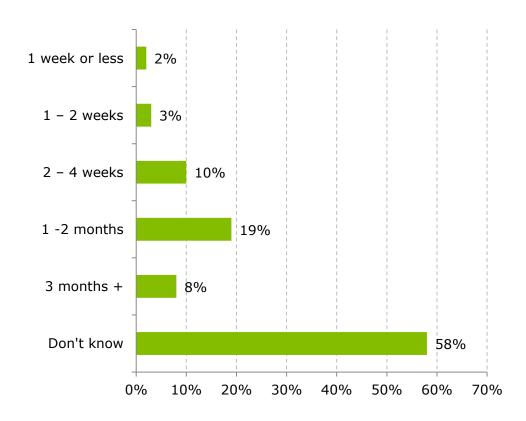
F2. Have you signed your tenancy agreement for the coming academic year?

Weighted Base: 746 respondents. Balance: those not signing a tenancy agreement and no response F3. Is your tenancy individual or joint?

Three in five don't know what their notice period is in their contract. Of those who do know, the largest proportion (one in five) say the notice period is 1-2 months.

# **New to phase 2**

### **Notice period in contract**



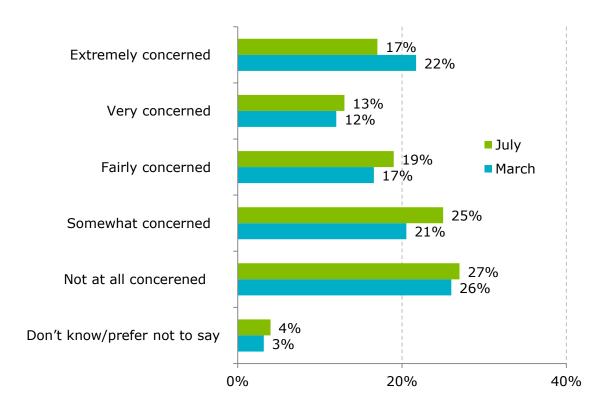


Weighted Base: 1520 respondents. Balance: no response

As was the case in March 2020 around three in four are concerned to some extent about their ability to pay rent as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak. However compared to March, the concern students feel is not as extreme; with fewer feeling extremely concerned and more feeling fairly or somewhat concerned.

**Tracked** 

# Level of concern about financial impact of Coronavirus (Covid-19) on ability to pay rent



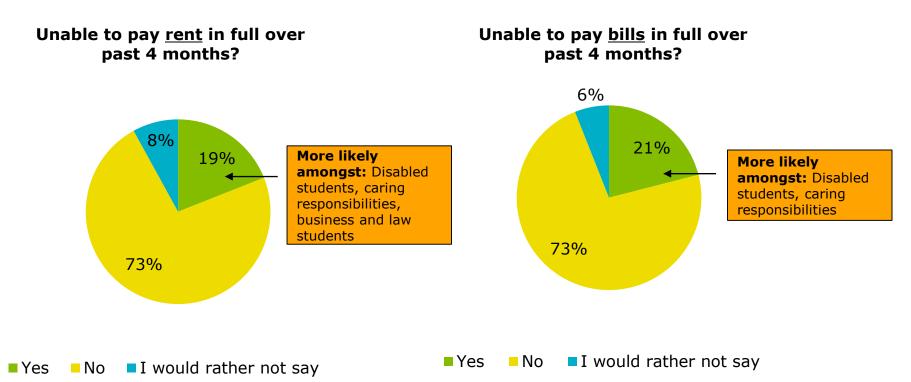


Weighted Base: 1523 respondents. Balance: those not living in privately rented accommodation or owned halls of residence

F5. How concerned are you, if at all, about the financial impact of Coronavirus (Covid-19) on your ability to pay rent in

Around a fifth of students admit to having been unable to pay their rent in full over the past 4 months. And the same proportion admit they have been unable to pay their bills in full over the past 4 months.

# **New to phase 2**





Thinking ahead to the new term, the types of health and safety information students would largely like with regards to their accommodation is how the institution/landlord plan to limit the spread of the virus e.g. how they will manage social distancing and cleaning of venues.

### New to phase 2

#### Health & safety information would like access to in the new academic year

#### **Key themes:**

- What the institution/landlord's procedures and policies will be for limiting the spread of the virus e.g. maintaining social distancing and cleaning protocols
- Provision of PPE and hand sanitisers
- How to manage and access mental health support

"If they are going to be decreasing the numbers in the dorms"

Male, 18-22, HE

"I would like to access more sanitation. Things like Disinfectant soap and face masks at the entrance of buildings."

Male, 18-22, HE

"Mental health support, for example support for eating <u>disorders, self harm</u>, low mood.

Female, 18-22, HE





# Government actions



# Summary

Since March there has been a decline in how well students feel the UK government is acting; with far more disagreeing that the UK government is acting in the best interests of students and that they have adequately considered the difficulties students face as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak. Business and law students appear to have more trust in the government than any other students, which could be linked to a more analytical, technical and/or financial mindset that is taught in these courses.

Conversely there has been an overall increase in how well students studying in the nations (Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) feel their respective governments have been acting with regards to their best interests and the difficulties they face.

The majority of students, regardless of which nation they are studying in, claim to keep themselves up to date with the information provided by the UK and/or the relevant devolved governments. However, whilst the majority do not trust the UK government to do the right thing for students, in the event of a second wave of the virus, half or more of those studying in the nations do trust their respective governments to do the right thing. With the exception of the UK government, awareness of what the individual nations are doing is low across other nations.

In the event of a future outbreak, financial support from the government(s) is the key request of students regardless of where they study.



# Summary

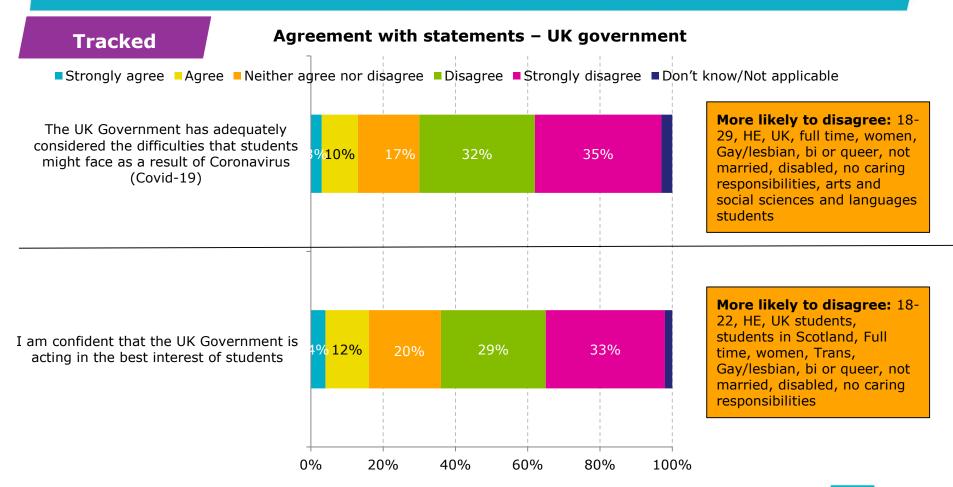
Again when it comes to perceived clarity of key messages from the UK government and the nations governments, students studying in the nations are far more likely to feel the messages are clear (e.g. new advice on social distancing).

The pandemic appears to have had a impact on how political some students feel, with just under half now feeling more political as a result of Coronavirus.





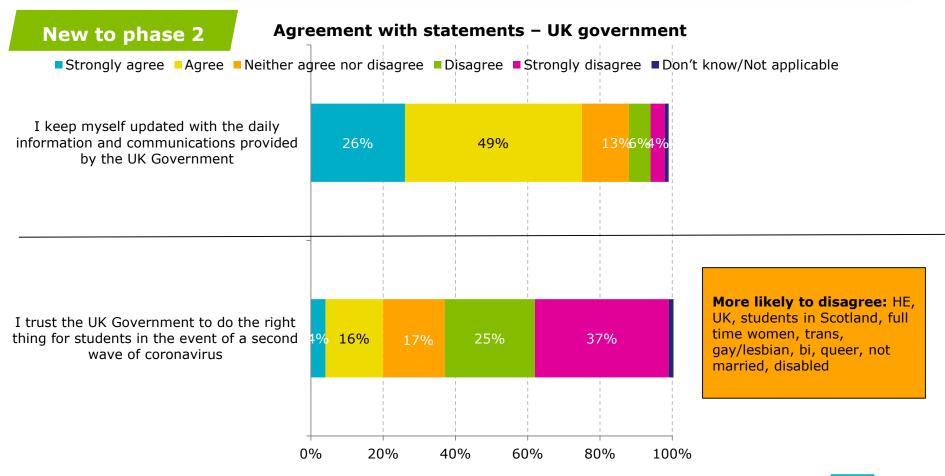
The proportion of students disagreeing that the UK government is acting in the best interests of students has significantly increased from 40% in March to 67%. Similarly the proportion of students disagreeing that the UK government has adequately considered the difficulties students face as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak has increased from 55% in March to 62%.



Average weighted Base: 4126. Balance: no response



Three in four students keep themselves updated with the daily information and communications provided by the UK government. However, three in five students do not trust the UK government to do the right thing for students in the event of a second wave of Coronavirus.



Weighted Base: (in brackets). Balance: no response



The vast majority of students would like the UK government to help students financially in the event of a future outbreak. Many feel their fees should be reduced/removed and/or refunds offered for their courses. There is also a feeling that the UK government do not care enough about FE and HE students and the effects of Coronavirus on them

# New to phase 2

# What would you like the UK government to do in the event of a future outbreak

#### **Key themes:**

- Help students financially refund fees, fee reductions, additional financial support
- Demonstrate they care about students acknowledge and consider us
- Act quicker and have a plan in place
- Provide better, clearer, honest information and advice

"I would like to see the government be more open, honest and clear with its communication, and policy decisions."

Female, 50-59, HE

"Reduce university fees; when the learning becomes online and home-based, there is no reason for it to cost anywhere near as much"

Female, 18-22, HE

"Just think about us and have a plan for us? because uni students have NEVER been mentioned."

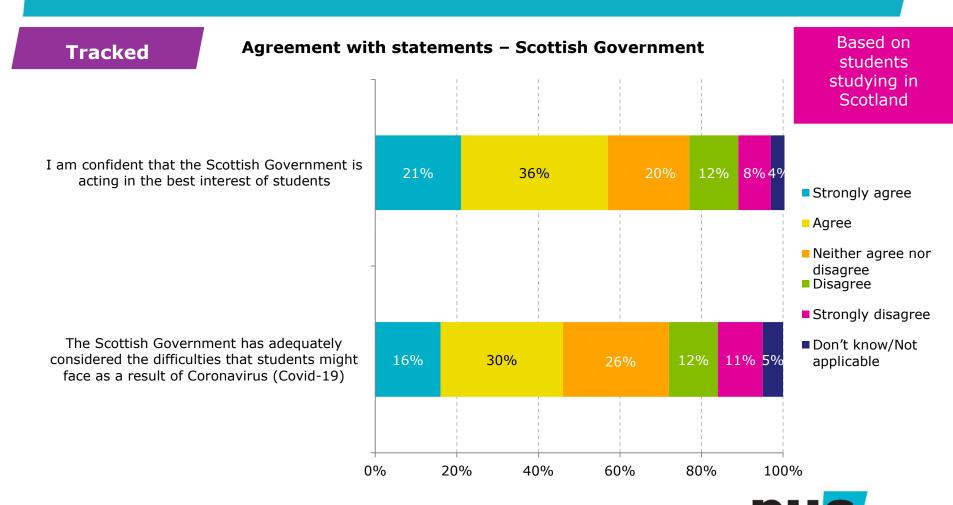
Female, 18-22, HE

"Take real action and think more carefully before it acts!! So far, it's acting like a sloppy teenager!!"

Female, 23-29, HE



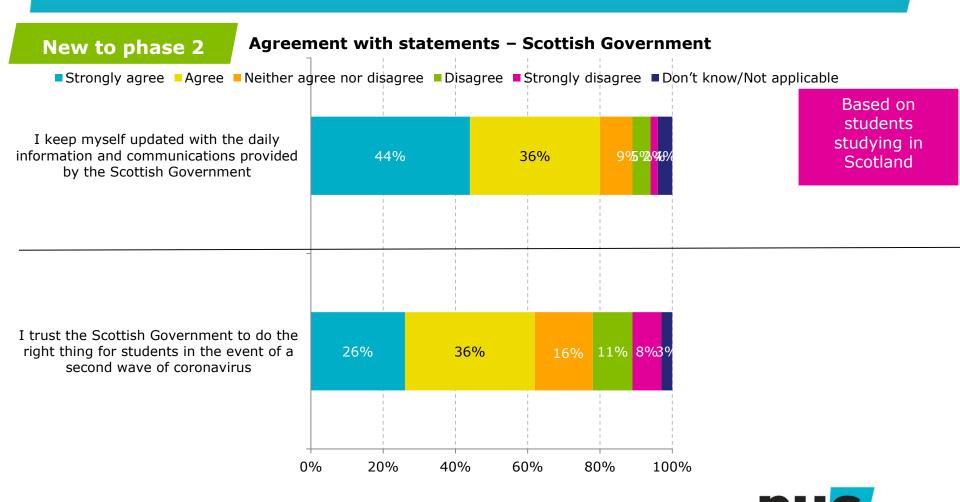
Confidence that the Scottish Government is acting in the best interests of students, has grown since March 2020 from 46% agreement to 57%. Similarly the proportion of those agreeing that the Scottish Government has adequately considered the difficulties students face has increased from 32% in March 2020 to 46%.



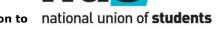
Average weighted Base: 164. Balance: students not studying in Scotland

G3. Please tell us how far you agree, if at all, with the statements below regarding the Scottish Government in relation to national union of **students** the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic?

Four in five students studying in Scotland keep up to date with daily information and communications provided by the Scottish Government. Three in five trust the Scottish Government to do the right thing for students in the event of a second wave of Coronavirus.



Average weighted Base:163. Balance: students not studying in Scotland



Students studying in Scotland on the whole would like the Scottish Government to provide more financial support if there is future outbreak. Others would also like them to make online learning compulsory and provide support for institutions to implement this.

## New to phase 2

# What would you like the Scottish Government to do in the event of a future outbreak

#### **Key themes:**

- Financial support e.g. reducing/reimbursing fees, grants
- Provide support and guidance to ensure online learning is provided
- Keep doing what it's doing well
- Act faster and provide better support

"Act swiftly and provide clear advice." Female, 23-29, HE "Look into financial aspects that are going to effect students and see if there is any support that can be given"

Female, 18-22, HE

"Support universities and their staff to provide online resources."

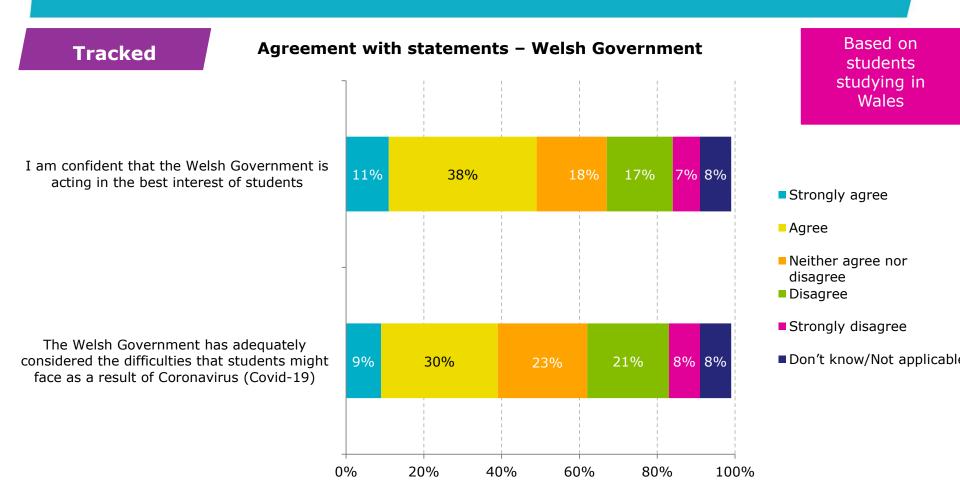
Male, 50-59, HE

"Continue to be as clear & as helpful as they have been currently"

Female, 18-22, HE



Confidence that the Welsh Government is acting in the best interests of students has grown since March 2020 from 35% to 49%. Likewise agreement that the Welsh Government has adequately considered the difficulties faced by students has risen from 21% in March to 39%.

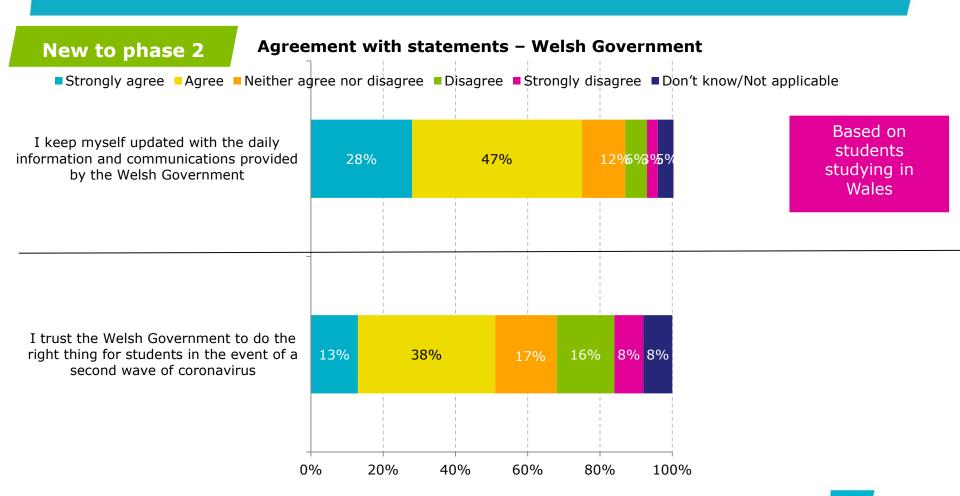


Average weighted Base: 284. Balance: students not studying in Wales





Three in four students studying in Wales keep themselves updated with the daily information and communications provided by the Welsh Government. And half trust the Welsh Government to do the right thing for students in the event of a second wave of Coronavirus.



Average weighted Base:163. Balance: students not studying in Wales



Students studying in Wales would largely like to see the Welsh Government provide some financial assistance in the event of a future outbreak. Providing clear advice and information is also on their list, along with making online learning compulsory and helping institutions run as best they can.

# New to phase 2

# What would you like the Welsh Government to do in the event of a future outbreak

#### **Key themes:**

- Financial support e.g. fee reductions/refunds
- Provide clear, advice and information
- Where possible make online learning mandatory
- Help institutions stay open/running as much as possible

"I would like them to consider refunding me part of my university fees or freezing the interest on my loan."

Female, 40-49, HE

"Announce clear and detailed measures on how to combat the outbreak."

Female, 18-22, HE

"Keep University facilities running as close to normal as possible.

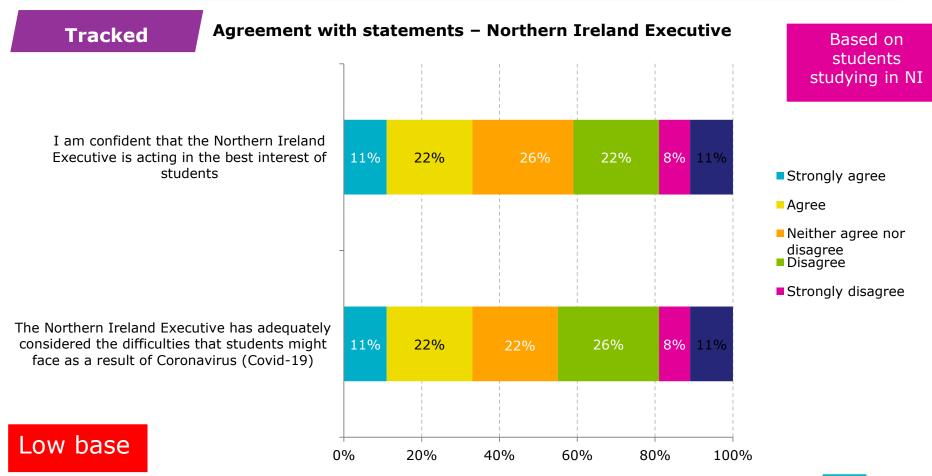
Male, 18-22, HE

"In a way make universities feel responsible for converting to online teaching and actually do put lectures online"

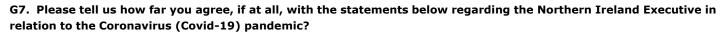
Female, 18-22, HE



Compared to March 2020, the proportion of students studying in Northern Ireland who strongly agree they are confident that the NI Executive is acting in the best interests of students has doubled, and the proportion strongly disagreeing has halved. And the same pattern can be seen when looking at agreement levels that the NI Executive has adequately considered the difficulties that students face as a result of Coronavirus.



Average weighted Base: 22. Balance: students not studying in Northern Ireland

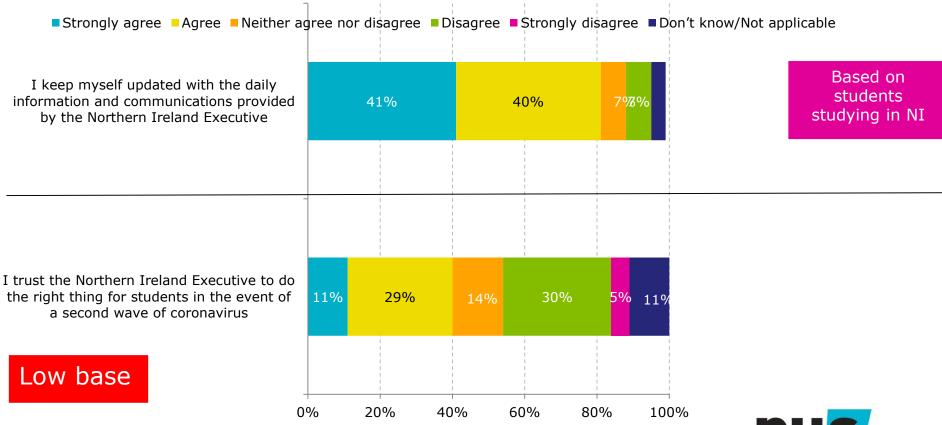




Four in five students studying in NI keep themselves updated with the daily information and communications provided by the Norther Ireland Executive. And two in five trust the NI Executive to do the right thing for students in the event of a second wave of Coronavirus.

# New to phase 2

### Agreement with statements – Northern Ireland Executive



Average weighted Base: 22. Balance: students not studying in Northern Ireland

G7. Please tell us how far you agree, if at all, with the statements below regarding the Northern Ireland Executive in relation to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic?



In the event of a future outbreak, students studying in Northern Ireland would largely like the Northern Ireland Executive to help them financially and either pause their studies or reduce the amount they are required to do.

# **New to phase 2**

# What would you like the Northern Ireland Executive to do in the event of a future outbreak

## **Key themes:**

- Financial assistance
- Pause study/reduce amount required

"Cancel rent, allow students to go home, cancel courses for the semester, refund course costs, increase student grants."

Female, 23-29, HE

"Pause of study. Fee reimbursement."

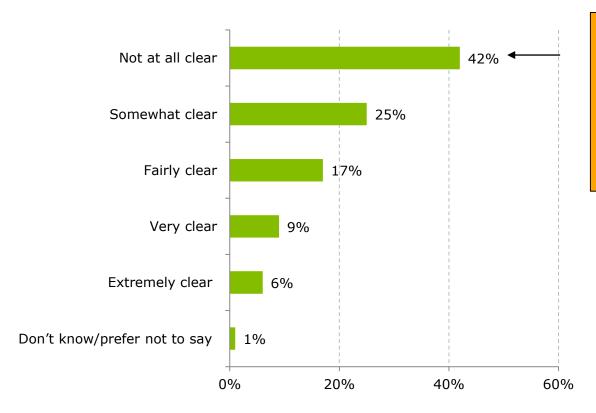
Female, 30-39, HE



Two in five student feel the UK government's 'Stay Alert, Control the Virus, Save Lives' message is not at all clear. The same proportion feel the message is fairly or somewhat clear. Fewer than a fifth believe it is extremely or very clear.

# New to phase 2

## Clarity of 'Stay Alert, Control the Virus, Save Lives' message



#### More likely amongst:

Disabled

23+
HE, PG, UK
Part time or distance learners
Women
Trans
Gay/lesbian, bi or queer,
Married or in a partnership

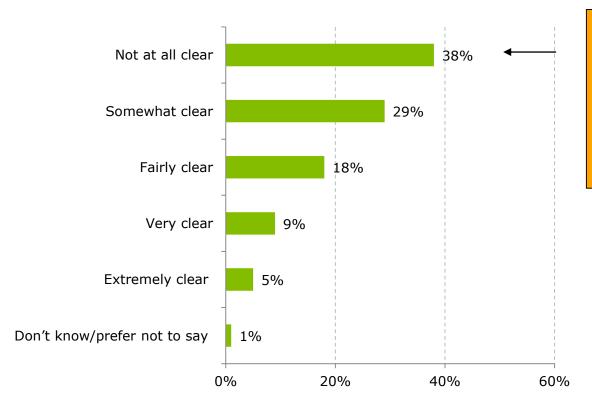
national union of students

Weighted Base: 4077 Balance: no response

Two in five feel that the UK government's new advice on social distancing is not at all clear. Around half feel it is fairly or somewhat clear, but again fewer than a fifth believe it is extremely or very clear.

# New to phase 2

## Clarity of UK government's new advice on social distancing



# More likely amongst: 23+ HE, PG, UK Students in Scotland Part time or distance learners Women Trans Gay/lesbian, bi or queer, Married or in a partnership Disabled

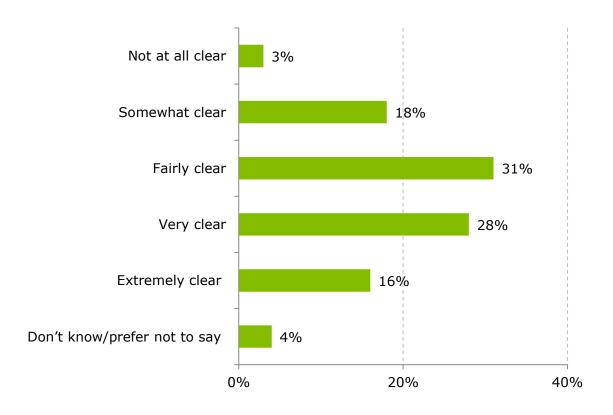


Weighted Base: 4076 Balance: no response

Two in five students studying in Scotland believe the Scottish government's new advice on social distancing is extremely or very clear. And half feel that the advice is fairly or somewhat clear.

# New to phase 2

# Clarity of Scottish government's new advice on social distancing



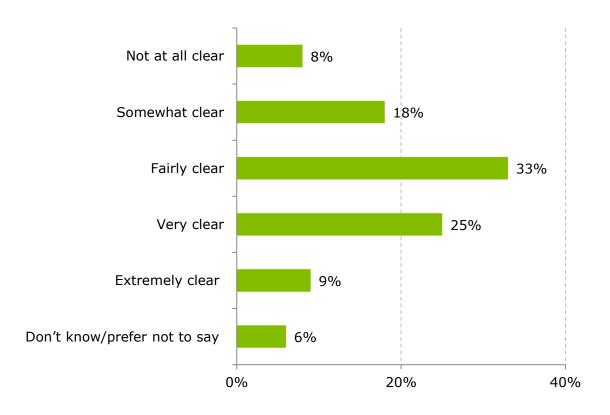


Weighted Base: 161 Balance: those not studying in Scotland and no response

One in three students studying in Wales feel the Welsh government's advice on social distancing is extremely or very clear. And half feel it is fairy or somewhat clear.

# New to phase 2

## Clarity of Welsh government's new advice on social distancing





Weighted Base: 286 Balance: those not studying in Wales and no response

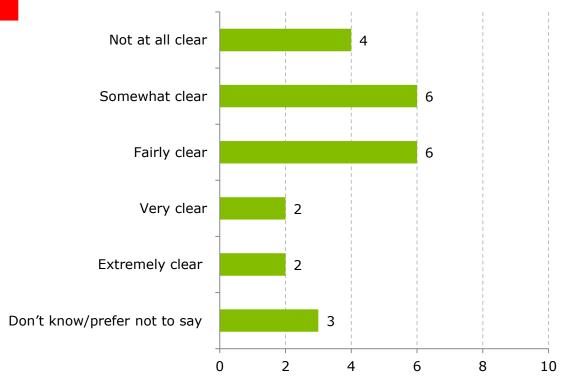
Half of students studying in NI believe the Northern Ireland Executive's advice on social distancing is fairly or somewhat clear.

# New to phase 2

# Low base

Weighted Base: 23

## Clarity of Northern Ireland Executive's new advice on social distancing



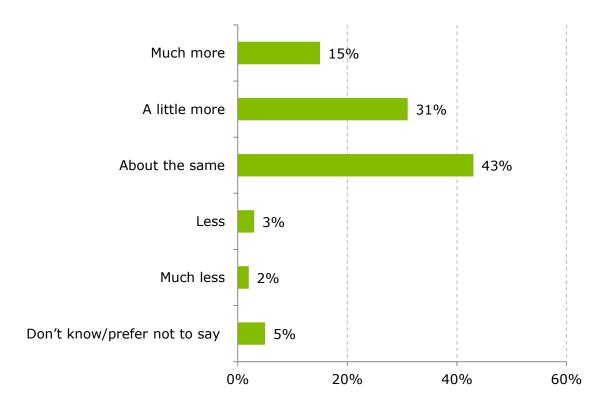


Balance: those not studying in Northern Ireland and no response

Whilst two in five students say how political they feel has stayed the same throughout the Coronavirus pandemic, just under a half now say they feel more political as a result of Coronavirus.

# New to phase 2

## How much more political do you feel as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic





Weighted Base: 4080 Balance: no response



# The future



# Summary

The vast majority of students feel prepared for another wave of Coronavirus. This is largely down to observing social distancing rules, feeling more informed, knowing what to expect and having access to PPE. To increase feelings of preparedness however students would like to have the option of financial assistance, to have more information from their institutions and governments and the reassurance of more and better regulated online learning options.

As was the case in March 2020 students are most likely to show a level of concern for the wider economy. Concern for exams and assessment has seemingly dropped since March.

Concerns for longer term careers options focus on a likely lack of job opportunities, fewer options to realise career ambitions and a perceived greater risk of redundancies. Amongst those who have just or are about to graduate there are real concerns around current and longer term career prospects. Consequently some students say they have had to reassess their future career aspirations as a result of Coronavirus.

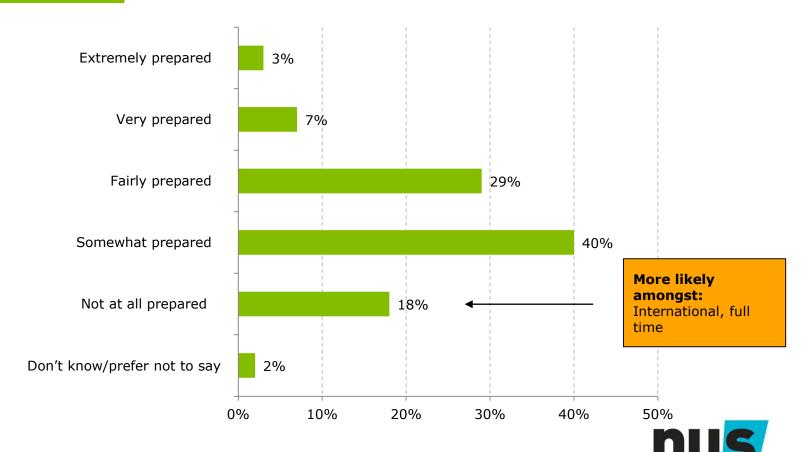




Four in five students feel prepared to some extent for a potential second wave of Coronavirus.

# **New to phase 2**

## **Preparedness for a potential second wave of Coronavirus**



national union of students

Weighted Base: 4087 respondents. Balance: no response

Those who feel very/extremely prepared for a second wave of the virus say this is largely because they have been following the advice on social distancing and keeping safe, generally feeing more prepared and knowing what to expect now and also having PPE which previously few people had.

## New to phase 2

## Reasons for feelings very/extremely prepared

#### **Key themes:**

- I've been observing social distancing guidelines and following all advice
- Generally feel more informed
- We know what to expect now
- Have the necessary PPE

"I will continue to restrict my lifestyle by keeping travel and physical socialising to a minimum."

Male, 50-59, HE

"As previously experienced and got through the 1st wave."

Male, 50-59, HE

"Know more about it and how it works now."

Female, 23-29, HE

"We have all the PPE at home that was nigh impossible to get at the start of the coronavirus, we've been through this before."

Male, 18-22, HE



To help students feel more prepared for a future lockdown many would like financial support. Others would value more information and support direct from their institutions and clearer, more honest advice and guidance from the government.

## New to phase 2

## What would make students feel more prepared for future lockdowns

#### **Key themes:**

- Financial support
- More information from institutions
- More, clearer, honest information from the government
- More/better online learning

"Being able to be supported with financial burdens of student loans/course fees."

Female, 40-49, HE

"More information from government about how they're going to support students"

Female, 18-22, HE

"More information on how this could effect our studies. What are the university's plans for a second wave in the Autumn?"

Female, 18-22, HE

"Better online learning resources."

Male, 18-22, HE

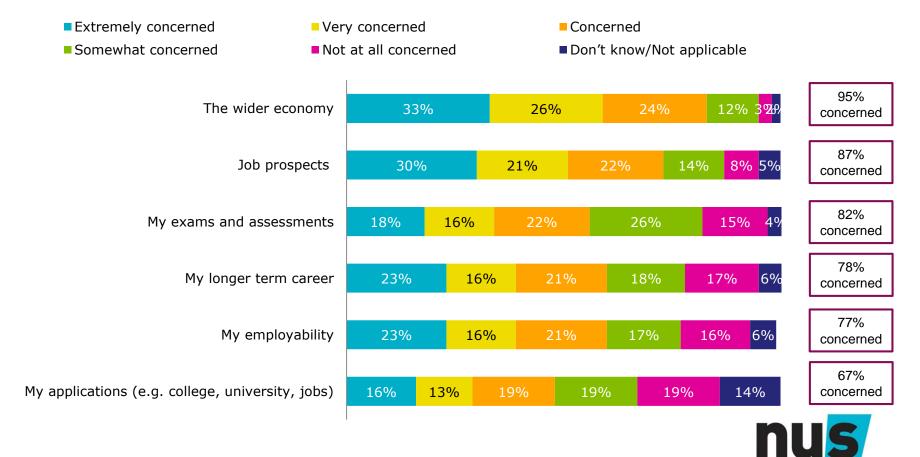


As was the case in March 2020 students are most likely to show a level of concern for the wider economy. Concern for exams and assessment has seemingly dropped since March from 37% extremely concerned to 18% - perhaps a reflection of most exams/assessments having taken place and results being either the same or higher than expected for two in three.

## **Tracked**

## Levels of concern about impact of Coronavirus (Covid-19)

national union of students



Average weighted Base: 3897 respondents. Balance: no response

Specific concerns abut the impact of Coronavirus on longer term careers include there being a general lack of job opportunities, not being able to achieve career goals and the risk of being made redundant in the future workplace.

## New to phase 2

## Specific concerns about the impact of Coronavirus on longer term career

#### **Key themes:**

- Lack of jobs
- Not achieving career goals/realising ambitions
- Job security/risk of redundancy

"Competing against more people for fewer jobs short term that will impact opportunities long term."

Female, 40-49, HE

"Being laid off or out of work"

Female, 18-22, HE

"I specialise in the creative arts, which has been condemned by the lack of government action and the industry may never recover. I am having to chan"ge career plans and life goals based on this..."

Female, 18-22, HE



Amongst those students who will have graduated by September the vast majority (four in five) are concerned about their job prospect; and around a third are extremely concerned. A similar proportion are also concerned to some extent about their longer term career prospects.

# New to phase 2

## Concern for the future for those who will have graduated by September

national union of students

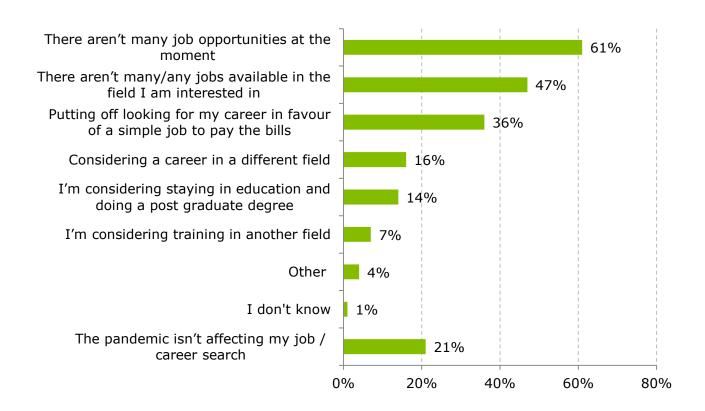


Average weighted Base: 572 respondents. Balance: : those who will not have graduated at the start of the next academic term and no response

Three in five students who will have graduated by September say that there aren't many job opportunities at the moment. And around half specifically feel there aren't many job opportunities in the field they are interested in. Around one in three say they are delaying their career to look for a simple job to pay the bills.

# New to phase 2

# The impact of Coronavirus on jobs/careers for those who will have graduated by September



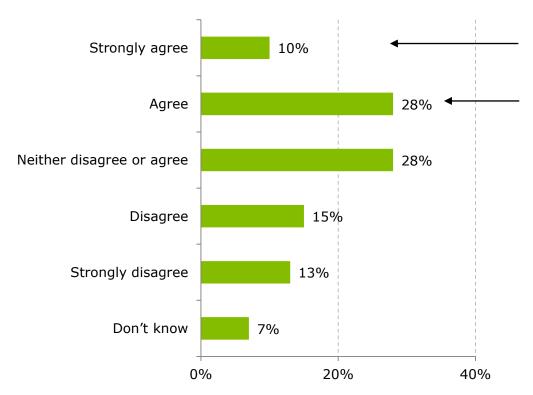


Weighted Base: 579 respondents. Balance: those who will not have graduated at the start of the next academic term and no response

Nearly two in five agree that they have had to reassess their future career aspirations as a result of Coronavirus.

# **New to phase 2**

# Agreement that they have had to reassess future career aspirations as a result of Coronavirus



# More likely amongst:

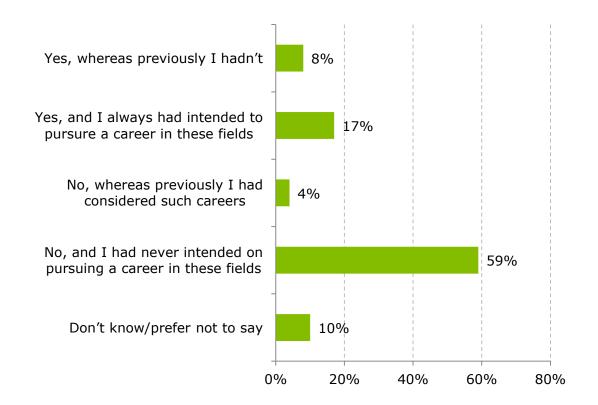
Business and law, Arts and social sciences and languages students



Just under a fifth say they still plan on pursuing a career in frontline health or social care following the Coronavirus pandemic. Just under a tenth say they are now considering a career in these field whereas previously they hadn't.

## New to phase 2

# Those who would consider a career in frontline health/social care following the Coronavirus pandemic





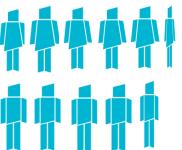
Weighted Base: 4135 respondents. Balance: no response





# Key demographics (weighted base)

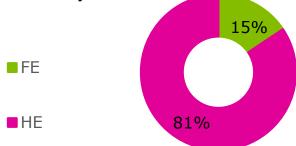




Women **56%** 

Men 40%

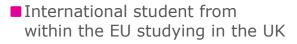
# Level of study



## Age



■UK citizen studying in the UK



5% 89%

■International student from outside the EU studying in the UK

Our survey slightly oversampled on students from the UK; HESA statistics indicate that students from the UK account for 80% of the higher education population



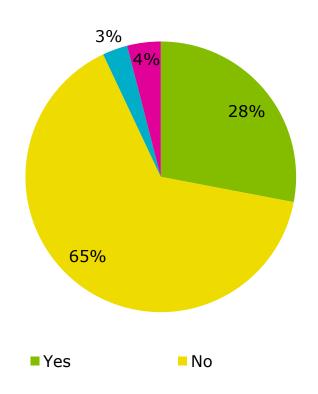
Full time: 69%

Part time: 21%

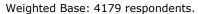
**Distance learner: 13%** 



# Disability, impairment or long term health condition

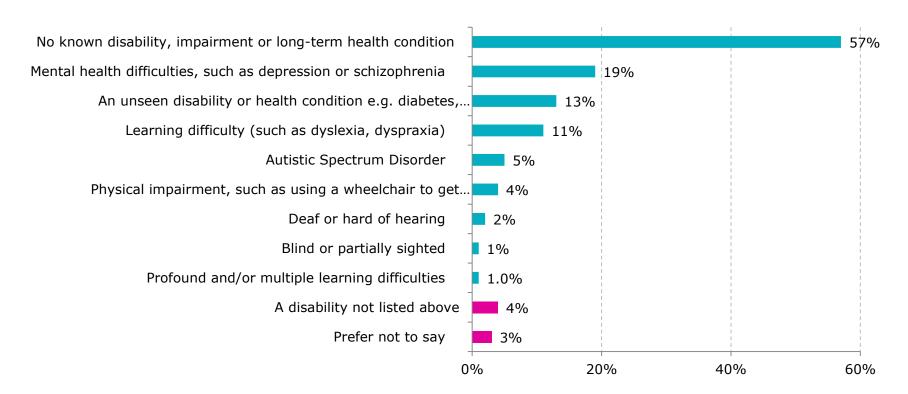


Our survey oversampled on students with a disability; HESA statistics indicate that students with a disability account for 14% of the higher education population





# Disability, impairment or long term health condition



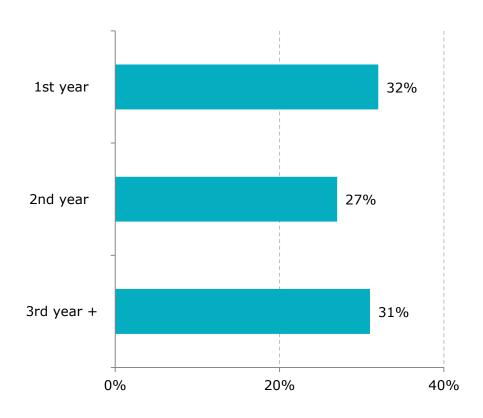


Weighted Base: 3518 respondents

Region	Percentage
North East	5%
North West	8%
Yorkshire and the Humber	7%
East Midlands	7%
West Midlands	8%
London	14%
East of England	4%
South West	19%
South East	16%
England Total	88%
Scotland	4%
Wales	7%
Northern Ireland	1%

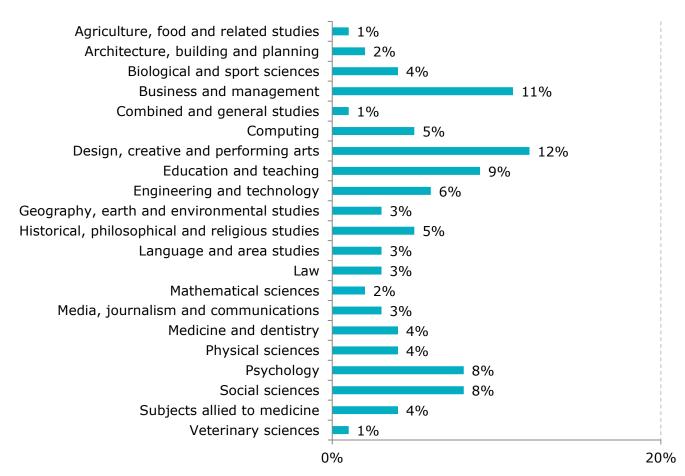


## Year of study





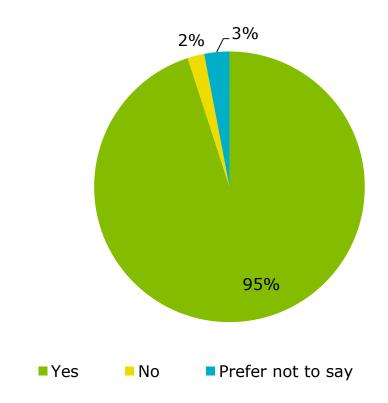
#### Course





Weighted Base: 4102 respondents Balance : FE students, no response

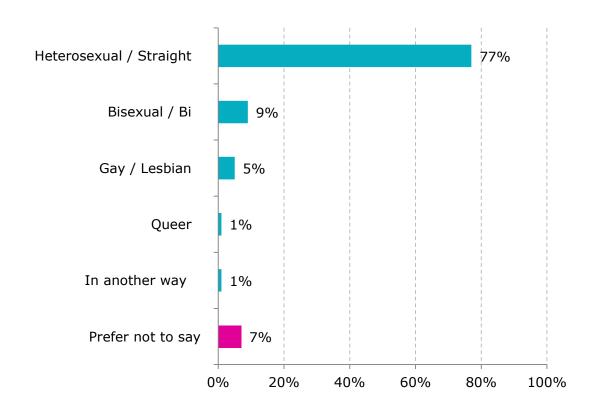
# Does your gender identity match the gender you were assigned at birth?





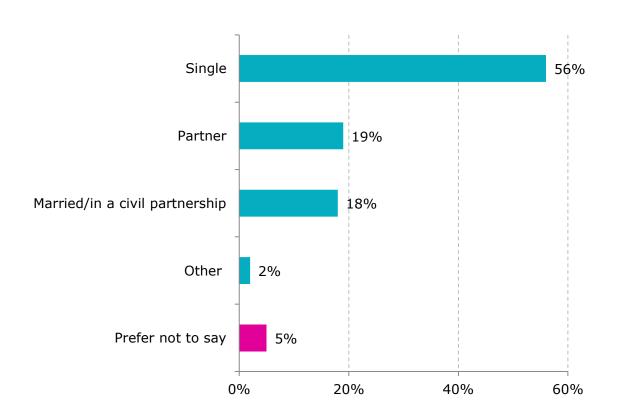
Weighted Base: 4179 respondents.

## **Sexual orientation/preference**



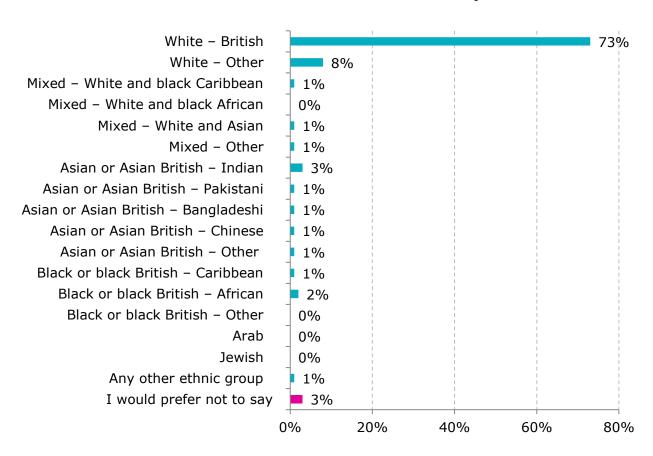


## **Marital status**



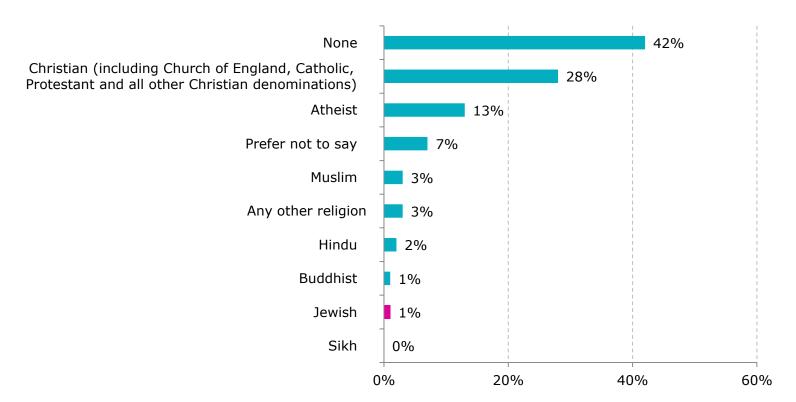


## **Ethnicity**



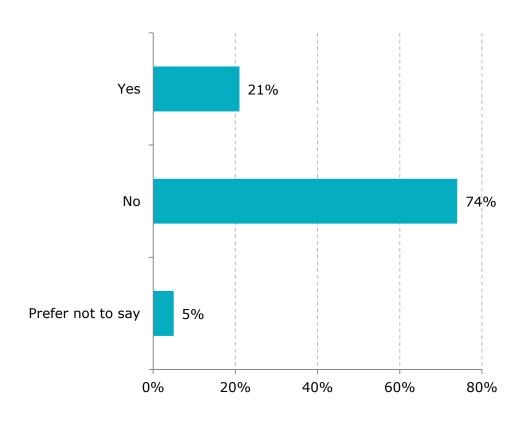


# Religion, faith or belief



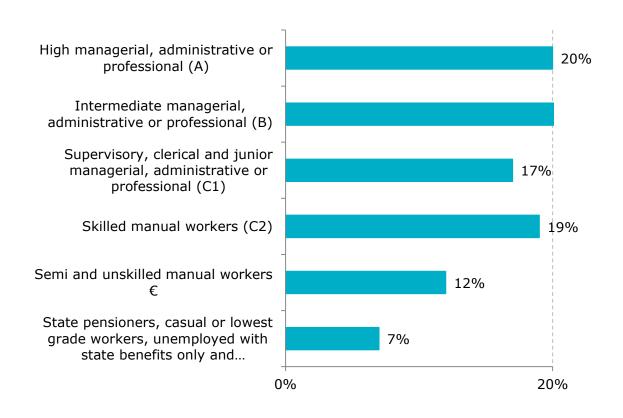


# Caring responsibilities





#### **Social Grade**









# Coronavirus and Students Survey phase II

September 2020

**NUS Insight** 

Subject to embargo until 00.01 am Tuesday 8 September 2020