

NSS 2019: National Headlines

Relevance: UK-wide

This briefing summarises the headline national results of the 2019 National Student Survey. This is one of several NUS briefings and covers the four nations of the UK, as well as the highest and lowest scoring institutions for overall satisfaction.

Key Points

- This is the third year of the same set of Survey questions, so it is possible to see developing trends in your own institution and nationally, as well as having a better data set to use as a comparison tool
- The 2019 survey had 330,035 students successfully complete the survey – 72% of eligible students in total. This compares to around 320,000 from 2018, representing 70% of eligible respondents.
- UK-wide, overall satisfaction of full- and part-time students has risen again to 84%, up from 83% in 2018.
- Question 26 on students' unions shows a continuing disparity between full- and part-time students, as 56% of full-time students are satisfied that their academic interests are well-represented, and 47% of part-time students.
- Student satisfaction remains fairly stable across the four nations and over the past three years, with full-time Scottish students remaining the most satisfied with provision (86%).
- As in previous years, students have scored their institutions in general lower for the assessment and feedback question set, although the results are up from previous years. Further lower scores can be found in part-time students' perceptions of feeling part of a student community.

UK

Scale	2017	2018	2019	Change
The teaching on my course	85	84	84	0
Learning opportunities	84	83	83	0
Assessment and feedback	73	73	73	0
Academic support	80	80	80	0
Organisation and management	75	75	75	0
Learning resources	85	85	86	0
Learning community	77	77	76	-1
Student Voice	73	73	74	-1
Students' Union	57	56	56	0
Overall satisfaction	84	83	84	+1
NHS practice placements	87	87	87	0

Most areas of the Survey have remained on a par with previous years, with the only negative changes being shown in Learning Community & Student Voice. Nationally, the disparities between the experiences of full-time and part-time students are particularly clear here.

Nations Comparison

	The teaching on my course	Learning opportunities (Q5-7)	Assessment and feedback	Academic Support	Organisation and mgmt	Learning resources	Learning community	Student voice	Students' Union	Overall satisfaction
U K	84	83	73	80	75	86	76	74	56	84
E N G	84	83	74	80	75	86	76	74	56	83
S C O	85	82	70	78	74	86	76	73	52	84
C Y M	85	84	75	82	76	86	79	77	59	85
N I	85	84	72	80	77	88	78	73	56	85

Scores highlighted in green are higher than the UK average; scores highlighted in red are lower

Students in Wales routinely reported higher levels of satisfaction than the UK-wide average, although their results mirror the national trends of lower scores in the areas of Assessment and Feedback and Organisation and Management. The largest difference in satisfaction to the UK-wide score was the score for Scottish students' associations, with a difference of -4 points.

England

England	The teaching on my course (Q1-4)	Learning opportunities (Q5-7)	Assessment and feedback (Q8-11)	Academic support (Q12-14)	Organisation and management (Q15-17)	Learning resources (Q18-20)	Learning community (Q21-22)	Student voice (Q23-25)	Students' union (Q26)	Overall satisfaction (Q27)
2017	85	84	74	80	75	85	77	73	57	84
2018	84	83	74	80	75	85	76	73	57	83
2019	84	83	74	80	75	86	76	74	56	83
18 - 19 Change	0	0	0	0	0	+1	0	+1	-1	0

There is very little change between 2018 and 2019 scores for English institutions. There is a small drop in the satisfaction with students' unions, but a small raise in the score for the student voice question set. As our [briefing on using the NSS in your union](#) shows, the work of unions is also picked up in this category when students are answering the questions.

Northern Ireland

NI	The teaching on my course (Q1-4)	Learning opportunities (Q5-7)	Assessment and feedback (Q8-11)	Academic support (Q12-14)	Organisation and management (Q15-17)	Learning resources (Q18-20)	Learning community (Q21-22)	Student voice (Q23-25)	Students' union (Q26)	Overall satisfaction (Q27)
2017	85	84	73	80	79	88	79	72	58	85
2018	85	84	73	81	76	87	79	72	58	84
2019	85	84	72	80	77	88	78	73	56	85
18-19 Change	0	0	-1	-1	+1	+1	-1	+1	-2	+1

This shows that some larger drops in question areas from 2018 are now being turned around, for example the results for Organisation and Management. The largest fall for 2019 is in the students' union question, however this is still fairly minor at 2 points.

Scotland

Sco	The teaching on my course (Q1-4)	Learning opportunities (Q5-7)	Assessment and feedback (Q8-11)	Academic support (Q12-14)	Organisation and management (Q15-17)	Learning resources (Q18-20)	Learning community (Q21-22)	Student voice (Q23-25)	Students' union (Q26)	Overall satisfaction (Q27)
2017	85	82	69	78	73	86	78	71	52	85
2018	84	82	70	78	73	86	76	71	51	83
2019	85	82	70	78	74	86	76	73	52	84
18-19 Change	+1	0	0	0	+1	0	0	+2	+1	+1

Scottish institutions have only stayed level or increased their scores this year, in contrast to 2018 where they dropped in three categories. Particularly interesting is the raise in student voice by 2%, which has been shown to be linked to the perceived performance of students' unions.

Wales

Cym	The teaching on my course (Q1-4)	Learning opportunities (Q5-7)	Assessment and feedback (Q8-11)	Academic support (Q12-14)	Organisation and management (Q15-17)	Learning resources (Q18-20)	Learning community (Q21-22)	Student voice (Q23-25)	Students' union (Q26)	Overall satisfaction (Q27)
2017	84	83	74	81	76	85	78	75	59	86
2018	85	83	75	82	75	86	78	76	58	86
2019	85	84	75	82	76	86	79	77	59	85
18-19 Change	0	+1	0	0	+1	0	+1	+1	+1	-1

Welsh institutions retain the highest score for students' unions in the UK, which at 59% is 3% above the UK average. A high performance in comparison to these averages has been the trend of the past three years, and it is only in the category of overall satisfaction which has fallen.

Get in touch

If you have any questions on our work on the NSS or would like to discuss this further, please email Hannah Sketchley, Policy Officer, on Hannah.Sketchley@nus.org.uk