HERTS UNF!LTERED

PHASE 2 | 7 - 18 OCTOBER 2024



HERTS SU YOUR UNION

INSIGHT TEAM
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OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

- Start of Term **student listening** project – with some longer-term insight gathering throughout Semester A.
- Targeting **first year UG** students
- Conversations to be **peer-led**
- Focus on understanding students' **expectations/concerns/barriers**
- Almost 100% of the money spent on this project will be invested in **student wages**
- **Insights to be shared** on an ongoing basis to shape longer tail of induction
- Goal is to **address concerns in real time** where possible and **shape future inductions** in the longer term

STUDENT EXPERIENCE | QUESTION SET



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Running from: 7 October – 29 November 2024

PHASE 2 | RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

From 7-18 October, **HERTS UNFILTERED** received **1,297** responses.

GENDER

Female* - 35% **Male**** - 58%
Non-binary - 1 % **PNTS** – 5%

*Including Trans women **Including Trans men

ETHNICITY

White – 10% **Asian** – 71%
Black – 10% **Mixed** -2%
PNTS – 4%

AGE-RANGE

17-24 years – 70%
25-39 years – 30%

FEE STATUS

Home – 21%
International – 79%

SCHOOL

SPECS – 57% **HBS** – 9%
LMS – 13% **CTA** – 9%
HSK – 10% **HLE** – 2%

LEVEL OF STUDY

Foundation – 1%
Undergraduate – 46%
Postgraduate – 53%
PhD – 0.15%

REGISTERED DISABILITY

Yes – 6%
No – 89%
PNTS – 5%

*Self-declaration

COMMUTER STATUS

Commuter* – 77%
Non-commuter – 23%

*Self-defined

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PNTS = Prefer not to say.

PHASE 2 | RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

From 7-18 October, **HERTS UNFILTERED** received **1,297** responses.

FIRST YEAR, UNDERGRAD
36%

FINAL YEAR, UNDERGRAD
65%

FIRST IN FAMILY
49%

CARING RESPONSIBILITIES
Student parents – **7%**
Eldercare – **6%**
Registered Carers – **4%**

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS
Live on-campus – 19**%**
Live in Hatfield – 19**%**
Live within 60mins – 38**%**
Live 60+mins away – 24**%**

EMPLOYMENT
No PT Job – **63%**
Works 0-10 hours p/wk – **11%**
Works 11-20 hours p/wk – **24%**
Works 20+ hours p/wk – **2%**

FINANCIAL POSITION
No concerns – **46%**
Some concerns – **50%**
Serious concerns – **4%**

COMMUTER STATUS
Commuter* – **77%**
Non-commuter – **23%**

*Self-defined

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PNTS = Prefer not to say.

KEY FINDINGS | LIFE

COMMUNITY & BELONGING: **92%** of respondents feel that they belong within the UH community, with **95%** reporting that they have formed friendships at UH, and **97%** agreeing that they felt safe on-campus.

International (96%), Commuter (93%) and **Postgraduate (95%)** students felt more part of the UH community compared to **home (81%)**, **non-commuter (90%)** and **undergraduate (89%)** students.





EVENTS: **75%** of respondents had attended extracurricular events on-campus.

International (81%) respondents were more likely to participate in extracurricular activities than **home (51%)** respondents. Only **42%** of students **aged 40 and above** had attended on-campus extracurricular activities.

TRAVEL: Overall, **18%** of respondents had experienced difficulties travelling to campus.

Postgraduate (23%) respondents reported the lowest proportion of travel difficulties, whereas respondents of **Arab ethnicity (45%), who worked 20+ hours (41%), with home fee status (39%), or studying within LMS (30%),** reported the highest proportion of travel difficulties.



"Unreliable public transport by bus" was selected as the most common factor **(28%)** to negatively impact a student's ability to engage with their studies (or activities) on campus.

KEY FINDINGS | STUDIES

PERSONAL TUTORS

66% of respondents had **contacted their personal tutor by email** and **69%** of respondents had **met their personal tutor.**

Mixed ethnicity (39%), first-year (60%) and **male (64%)** respondents had the lowest levels of contact via email with their personal tutors. Respondents of **mixed ethnicity (48%)** reported the lowest level of contact in-person.

ACADEMIC WORKLOAD

Overall, **88%** of respondents felt their **academic workload was manageable,** and **92%** felt the distribution of their **coursework deadlines were manageable**.

Respondents aged **40+ (37%) struggled with their academic workload** and they had the lowest agreement rate regarding having **manageable coursework deadlines**.

ACADEMIC CONFIDENCE

94% of respondents felt confident that they will **achieve the degree they are aiming for at UH;** with **respondents of Arab ethnicity (80%)** reporting the lowest agreement rate.

92% of respondents felt confident in their ability to complete academic assignments; with respondents studying within **HSK (83%)** reported the lowest agreement rate.

KEY FINDINGS | SUPPORT

SUPPORT SERVICES: **76%** of respondents were aware of the **financial support UH has to offer** and **83%** of respondents had **accessed academic skills support** by this point in the term.

Respondents of **Mixed Ethnicity (53%)** and **aged 40+ (60%)** had **accessed Academic Skills the least** and only **52%** of **Mixed Ethnicity** respondents were **aware of the financial support** available to them at UH.





STAFF SUPPORT: **97%** of respondents reported that the **university staff are very friendly** and **95%** felt the **UH staff were relatable to them**.

Respondents **aged 40+** reported the lowest agreement level regarding university staff being friendly **(90%)**.

INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY: Overall, **94%** of respondents agreed that the **UH community is inclusive** and **95%** felt the **UH community is supportive towards students**.



The highest proportions of respondents from **Mixed Ethnicities (14%) disabled respondents (12%)** felt they could not be themselves at the university, whilst the **overall disagreement rate was 5%.**

KEY FINDINGS | REFLECTIONS

LONELINESS

Overall, **79%** of respondents **felt lonely either daily, sometimes or occasionally** whilst at UH; with 14% feeling lonely daily.

Non-Binary (92%) respondents, and respondents living in **On-Campus Accommodation (87%)** reported the highest levels of experiencing loneliness.

BARRIERS

Unreliable Public Transport (24%) had the **strongest negative impact** on students' ability to engage with their studies/extra-curricular activities on campus.

Other barriers were, **On-Campus Parking (17%)** and **Cost of Food/Drink (16%).**

EXPECTATIONS VS. REALITY

95% of respondents felt that **UH was the right choice** for them and, of those who had indicated that they were questioning whether UH was the right choice for them, **65%** reported that the **financial cost of studying** was the main reason for this.

Arab ethnicity (20%) and **mixed ethnicity (14%)** respondents reported the **highest level of questioning whether UH was the right choice for them**, with both demographic groups reporting the **financial cost of studying** as the main reason for questioning.

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SCHOOL PERSPECTIVES

HERTFORDSHIRE BUSINESS SCHOOL

HBS respondents reported the **highest sense of community belonging** amongst the schools **(98%)**. They also reported the **highest level of attendance of academic skills support (90%).**
However, HBS respondents reported the second lowest level of having **met with their Personal Tutors (68%)**.

SCHOOL OF PHYSICS, ENGINEERING & COMPUTER SCIENCE

SPECS respondents reported the **highest levels of feeling safe on campus (98%)**, and the **highest level of agreement** that the **UH community is supportive to students (96%).**

However, they also reported the **lowest levels of having met their Personal Tutors (65%)**.

SCHOOL OF HEALTH & SOCIAL WORK

HSK respondents reported the **lowest levels of loneliness** amongst the schools **(72%)**, and the highest level of agreement that the **university community is inclusive (97%)**.

However, HSK respondents reported the lowest level of agreement regarding their **workload feeling manageable (71%)**. HSK respondents also reported the **lowest attendance of academic skills support** amongst all schools **(71%)**.

SCHOOL PERSPECTIVES

SCHOOLS OF LAW & EDUCATION

100% of SLE respondents felt the **information provided by UH was accurate** and helped prepare them for their studies.

However, SLE respondents reported the lowest levels of having **formed friendships** at UH **(85%)**, and the highest levels of **feeling lonely (89%)**.

SCHOOL OF CREATIVE ARTS

CTA respondents reported the **lowest sense of community belonging** amongst all schools **(85%)**.

However, CTA had the **highest proportion** of respondents indicating that their **Personal Tutor knows their name (79%)**.

SCHOOL OF LIFE & MEDICAL SCIENCE

LMS respondents reported the highest levels of having **formed friendships** at UH **(98%)**, and the highest levels of having **met their Personal Tutors (82%)**.

However, LMS respondents also reported the highest level of **financial concern (58%)**, and the lowest level of **financial support awareness (62%)**.

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FIRST YEAR, UNDERGRADUATES

Herts SU received 314 responses from First year, undergraduate students; 24% of all Herts Unfiltered responses.

COMMUNITY & BELONGING:

- Overall, **94%** of first year UG respondents **felt part of the UH community** – which is a substantially higher level that for final year UG respondents **(83%)**.
- **71%** having **attended extracurricular activities** on campus and **94%** had **formed friendships** with other students. **96%** of these respondents feel **safe on campus**.

REFLECTIONS:

- **95%** of respondents stated that the **information provided** by UH prior to their induction **was accurate**.
- The **unreliability of public transport** was reported as the biggest factor which contributed to their difficulty to engage with their studies or extracurricular activities on campus **(29%)**
- **77%** of respondents stated they **felt lonely either daily, sometimes or occasionally.**

SUPPORT SERVICES:

- **Academic skills services were accessed by 80%** of first year, undergraduate respondents and **73%** were aware of the **financial support** UH has to offer.
- **89%** of respondents were also **aware of the wellbeing support** available to them and **88%** were also aware of the **career's services** at UH

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HERTS UNFILTERED | PHASE 2 | RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Continue to Enhance Awareness of Financial Support:
Undertake **targeted communication** about financial support services, particularly for students from **diverse backgrounds** and schools indicating lower levels of awareness.
2. Improve affordability of student lifestyle on-campus
Consider options such as offering **"budget" meal options** in catering outlets, and a wider provision of **community spaces** containing seating/microwaves; **how can student life be made more affordable?**
3. Enhance Public Transport and Parking Options:
Explore how the issues relating to **unreliable public transport** and **limited on-campus parking** can be improved, as these were **noted barriers** for **student engagement** with their on-campus activities.
4. Strengthen Personal Tutor Engagement:
With only 68% of respondents reporting that they have **met their Personal Tutor**, UH should explore how **engagement** with Personal Tutors can be increased further; targeting first-year students especially.
5. Promote Academic Skills Support:
As assessment deadlines draw closer, and concerns about workload increase, **academic skills support promotion**, especially targeted towards **mature students** and students from **diverse backgrounds**, could be highly impactful at this time.

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