

# HERTS UNFILTERED

## START OF TERM REVIEW

SPILL THE TEA



**HERTS**  
**SU** YOUR  
UNION

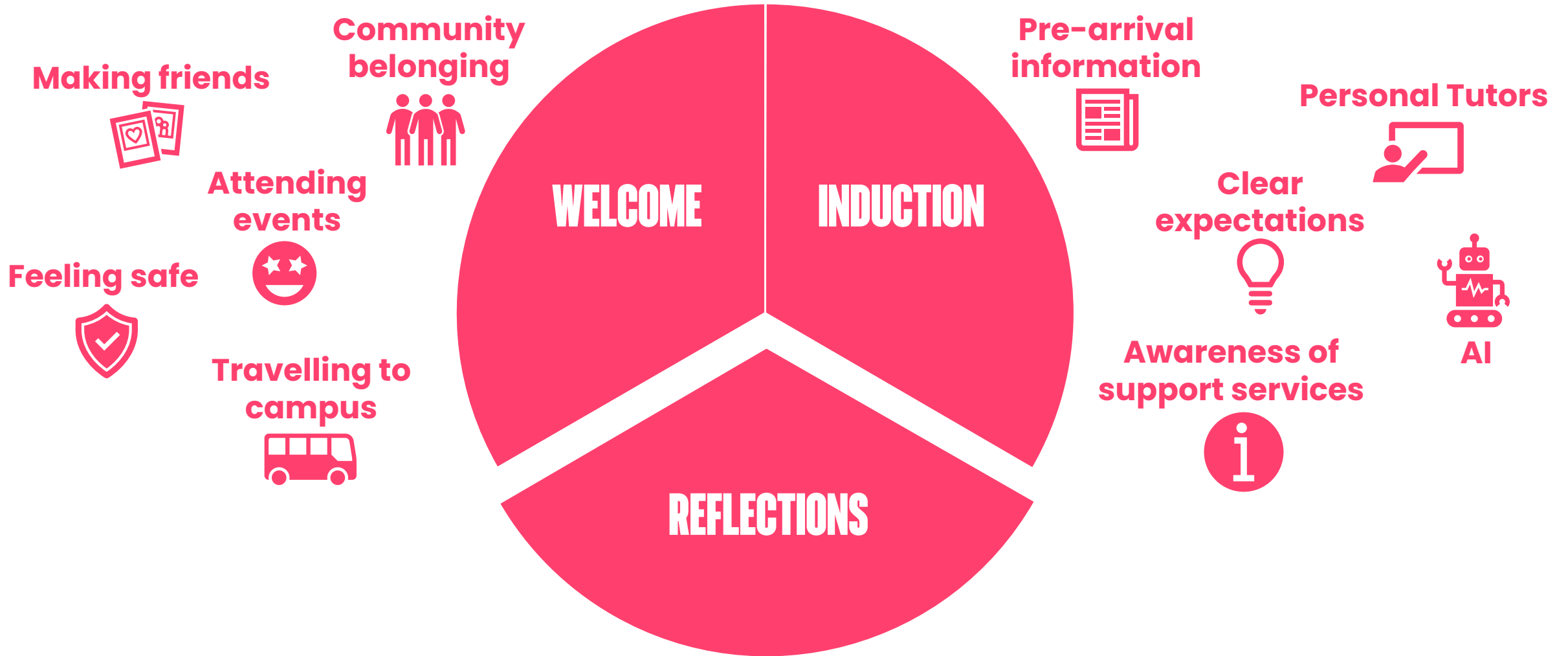
INSIGHT TEAM  
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# OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

- 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

# START OF TERM EXPERIENCE - QUESTION SET |

23<sup>rd</sup> Sept – 4<sup>th</sup> Oct 2024



**HERTS SU**

 Expectations vs. reality 

# THE DEMOGRAPHICS

Our **Start of Term** experience element of **HERTS UNFILTERED** received **1,183** responses.

## GENDER

**Female\*** – 45% **Male\*\*** – 50%  
**Non-binary** – 2% **PNTS** – 3%

\*Including Trans women \*\*Including Trans men

## ETHNICITY

**White** – 14% **Asian** – 65%  
**Black** – 11% **Mixed** – 2%  
**PNTS** – 8%

## AGE-RANGE

**17-24 years** – 72%  
**25-39 years** – 28%

## FEE STATUS

**Home** – 25%  
**International** – 75%

## SCHOOL

**SPECS** – 38% **HBS** – 22%  
**LMS** – 16% **CTA** – 12%  
**HSK** – 9% **HLE** – 3%

## LEVEL OF STUDY

**Foundation** – 2%  
**Undergraduate** – 47%  
**Postgraduate** – 50%  
**PhD** – 1%

## REGISTERED DISABILITY

**Yes** – 7%  
**No** – 90%  
**PNTS** – 3%

\*Self-declaration

## COMMUTER STATUS

**Commuter\*** – 65%  
**Non-commuter** – 35%

\*Self-defined

# THE DEMOGRAPHICS

Our **Start of Term** experience element of **HERTS UNFILTERED** received **1,183** responses.

## FIRST YEAR, UNDERGRAD

**23%**

## FINAL YEAR, UNDERGRAD

**12%**

## FIRST IN FAMILY

**48%**

## CARING RESPONSIBILITIES

Student parents – **5%**  
Eldercare – **4%**  
Registered Carers – **2%**

## LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

Live on-campus – **37%**  
Live in Hatfield – **23%**  
Live within 60mins – **26%**  
Live 60+mins away – **13%**

## EMPLOYMENT

No PT Job – **72%**  
Works 0-10 hours p/wk – **9%**  
Works 11-20 hours p/wk – **17%**  
Works 20+ hours p/wk – **2%**

## FINANCIAL POSITION

No concerns – **49%**  
Some concerns – **49%**  
Serious concerns – **2%**

## COMMUTER STATUS

**Commuter\*** – **65%**  
**Non-commuter** – **35%**

\*Self-defined

# KEY FINDINGS - WELCOME

**COMMUNITY & BELONGING:** 98% agreed that they had felt welcomed into the UH community during SOT, with 94% agreeing that they'd had opportunities to make friends and 88% agreeing that they had attended SOT events.



Respondents of **Arab** ethnicity (88%), **aged 40+ years** (93%), and **studying within LMS** (97%) reported the lowest levels of agreement regarding feeling welcome at SOT.



**CAMPUS SAFETY:** 98% agreed that they felt safe on campus.

**Student parents** (91%), and respondents **studying within the Schools of Law & Education** (88%) reported the lowest levels of agreement regarding feeling safe on campus.

**TRAVEL:** 88% agreed that travelling to campus has been easy.

Respondents **living 60+mins away** (67%), **disabled respondents** (74%), and respondents **studying within LMS** (79%) showed the lowest agreement levels.

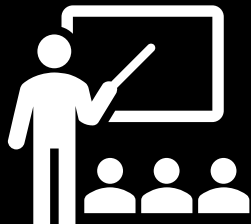


# KEY FINDINGS - INDUCTION

## PERSONAL TUTORING

**88%** knew who their Personal Tutor was, and how to contact them.

Respondents **aged 40+ years (73%)**, **registered carers (75%)**, and respondents **studying within CTA (77%)** reported the lowest levels of awareness.



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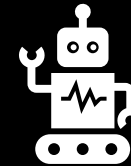
## AWARENESS OF SUPPORT SERVICES

The highest level of respondent awareness was regarding academic skills support (**94%**), followed by wellbeing support (**93%**), and careers guidance (**90%**).

Respondents had the lowest levels of awareness regarding UH financial support (**82%**).

**Law & Education respondents** had the lowest awareness of academic skills (**88%**) and wellbeing support (**88%**). **CTA respondents** had the lowest awareness of financial support (**71%**).

## USE OF AI



**43%** of respondents agreed that they had used AI tools before, as part of their learning experience. **98%** of respondents reported that they found AI tools helpful. Throughout their learning so far.

**31%** of respondents use AI tools weekly, and **21%** of respondents use AI tools daily. The most common AI tools used are ChatGPT (**85%**), Grammarly (**42%**), and Quillbot (**23%**).

# KEY FINDINGS - REFLECTIONS

**EXCEEDED EXPECTATIONS:** The most common factors which exceeded student expectations at SOT were "**extra-curricular activities/events**" (19%), "**social life**" (18%), and "**academic support**" (17%). Respondents also indicated that "**making friends**" was the best part of the SOT experience within **35%** of free text comments.



**FELL SHORT OF EXPECTATIONS:** The most common factors which fell short of student expectations at SOT was "**the affordability of the student lifestyle**" (19%), and "**experience within accommodation**" (16%). Affordability was the biggest concern for respondents of **mixed ethnicity** (31%) and respondents **aged 40+ years** (29%). The experience in accommodation was the biggest concern for **student parents** (25%).

**PRE-ARRIVAL INFO & REALITY AT UH:** **95%** agreed that the information provided by UH prior to the commencement of studies was representative of the reality of studying at UH.

Demographic groups with the lowest level of agreement were **UG final year respondents** (90%), **White respondents** (90%), and respondents with **registered disabilities** (92%).



**95%** agreed that they knew all the information they needed to succeed on their course.



# FIRST YEAR, UNDERGRADUATES

Herts SU received 272 responses from First year, undergraduate students; 23% of all Herts Unfiltered responses.

## WELCOME:

- 99% **felt welcomed** to the UH community during SOT; with 90% attending **SOT events**, and 95% agreeing they'd had opportunities to **make friends**.
- 99% agreed that they **felt safe** on campus, and 92% agreed that **travelling to campus** was easy.

## INDUCTION:

- 89% know who their **Personal Tutor** is, and how to contact them; with 94% agreeing that they understand what they must do to **succeed** on their course.
- These respondents had the highest levels of awareness regarding **academic skills** (93%) and **wellbeing support** (93%) services; with the lowest level of awareness regarding **UH financial support** (83%).

## REFLECTIONS:

- Only 7% indicated that the overall SOT experience had fallen short of their expectations; with **"making friends"** being highlighted as the best part of their SOT experience in 48% of free text comments and **"social life"** receiving the highest proportion of any factor exceeding their expectations (25%).
- **"Affordability of student lifestyle"** was the most common factor which fell short of expectations (18%).

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# START OF TERM EXPERIENCE - RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1. Enhance awareness of financial support

Undertake **targeted communication** about financial support services, particularly for students of Black or Asian backgrounds, and students with registered disabilities or caring responsibilities; ensuring that accessible, **student-friendly information** about financial support and resources is available for all.

## 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 and free hot water. Also explore more broadly how more **affordable accommodation** could be made available closer to campus for students.

## 5. Explore how cost of living pressures and concerns can be addressed

Explore strategies to alleviate the financial burden on students, such as providing **more part-time jobs** on campus, **financial literacy workshops**, and the availability of **quick-access emergency funds**.

## 3. Strengthen support for Mature and Carer Students

**Mature students** (40+) and **registered carers** reported lower awareness of personal tutors and support services. **Specific outreach activities**, aimed at these groups, offering more guidance and ensuring easy access to academic and wellbeing services, would be beneficial.

## 4. Undertake student safety initiatives in specific areas

Undertake **safety initiatives** for students in the **Schools of Law & Education**, who report feeling less safe on campus. This could include further research, increased campus patrols, or safety workshops.