

Introduction

This report provides an account of the data gathered during Winchester Student Union's *Speak Week* – a Union-wide campaign, held between 18th and 22nd March 2024, which sought to capture student voice on the student experience at Winchester, and, specifically, attitudes toward Student Union services, in line with our standard KPI data collection practices.

The purpose of this report is to bring together an account of the shift in practice this new approach represents, as well as to provide both summary and detailed analysis of the survey results, with the intention that these findings be used to supplement other data sources in the evaluation of both the Union's performance this academic year, as well as provide insight into future work with our membership.

Approach

Speak Week represents a development in the Union's approach to collecting such data, and supersedes our previous *Big Survey* format. This new exercise borrowed from similar initiatives at other unions, as well as building on existing practices here – amalgamating learning about student engagement from our elections process, cost-of-living initiatives, Zone meetings, and group surveying.

Herein, *Speak Week* consisted of a central seven-question multiple choice survey (see appendix), whose engagement was supported predominantly by physical on-site efforts, mediated through a *Speak Week* hub on the plaza throughout the week, and campus-wide GOATing, which simultaneously raised awareness of the campaign, and incentivised participation. Promotion also included a low-key takeover of virtual displays in the King Alfred Centre. Digital marketing of the survey included Instagram artwork and video stories, and targeted emails to StARs and other volunteer groups, and the general membership, via the Union newsletter.

Incentives included free giveaways (e.g. Student Union merchandise), confectionary, and vouchers (SU Shop, Costa, etc.), as well as a money prize pot which increased with every student contribution (up to £500).

In line with the Union-wide ethos of this new approach, the central *Speak Week* hub was enhanced by additional Union activities throughout the week led by staff and officers, including Campus Crust, Sip Smart Stay Safe glass painting, and a Sustainability hub in support of Green Impact, each of which helped to draw students to the space.

Survey Overview

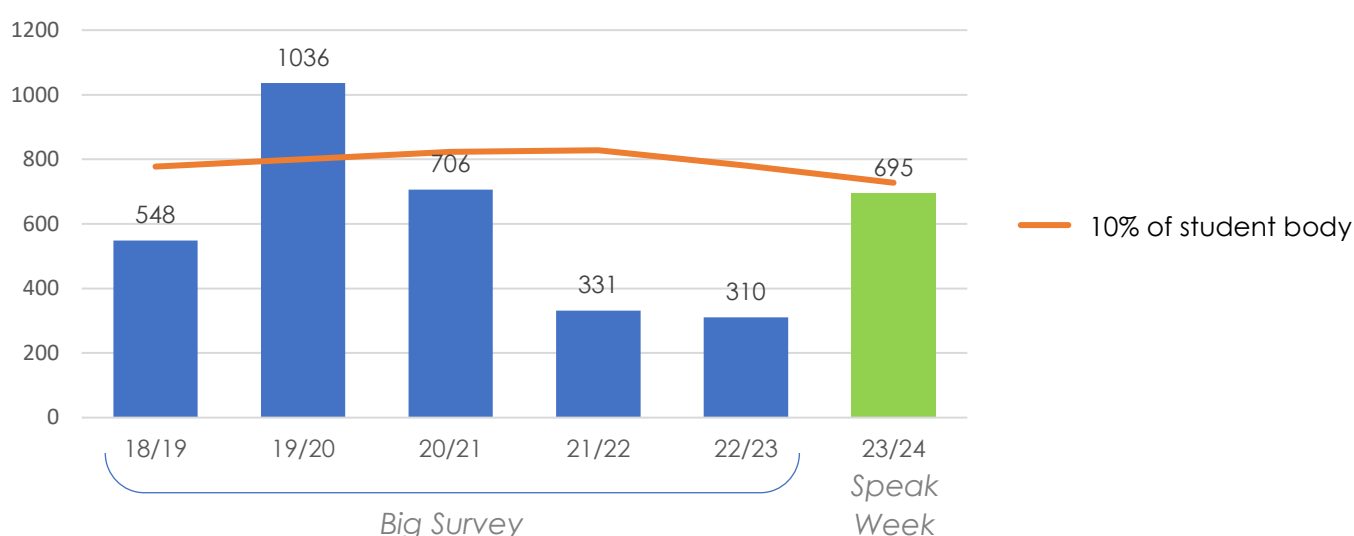
A key aim of the survey was to encourage greater levels of response by reducing the number of questions asked, and therein, the degree of time commitment required of respondents. Compared to the 2022-23 *Big Survey* exercise, the *Speak Week* survey evidences a **71% reduction in the number of questions** (from 31 to 9), achieved through a focus on key KPIs and allocation of commercially oriented questions to their own dedicated survey (reported on elsewhere).

The *Speak Week* survey link was actively promoted over five consecutive days (18th – 22nd March), during which time it received **718 raw responses**, later rising to 723. Of these responses, 3.7% were

duplicated, leaving a total of **695 unique survey responses**, and constituting approximately 9.6% of the student population in 23/24¹.

As **fig. 1** reveals, as an annual membership survey exercise, *Speak Week* was eminently more successful than more recent iterations – not only achieving a 124% increase in number of responses on the 2022-23 exercise, but also a 5.6ppt increase on responses relative to 10% of the student population, and a ~45ppt increase on response rate (86.3%). Overall, in comparison with exercises dating back to 2018-19, *Speak Week* response numbers and the proportion of the student body it engaged have been among the Union's most successful efforts.

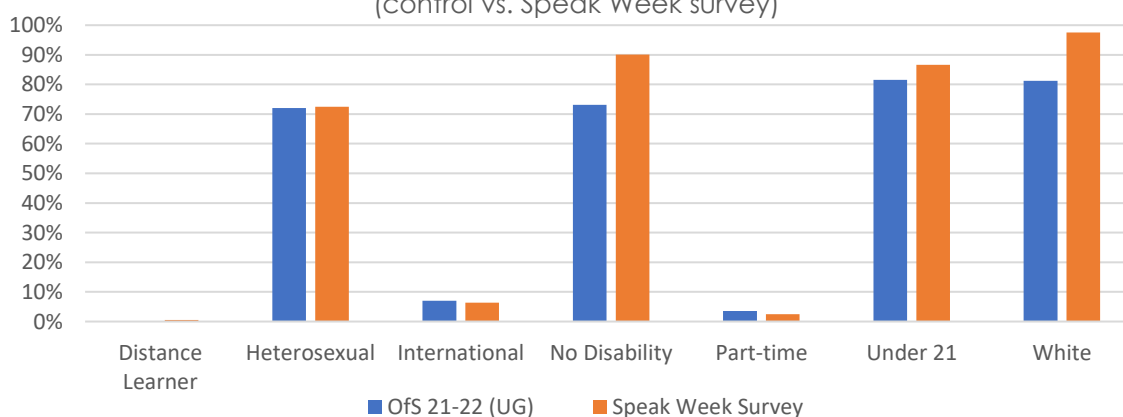
fig. 1 Number of Responses per Annual Survey exercise, with 10% student population comparison



Representation

As **fig. 2** shows, the response population, when analysed by demographic, broadly echoes the University's 2021-22 profile – especially in the relative proportion of self-identifying heterosexual², international, and part-time students³. The data suggests that students identifying as white, and those who do not report a disability, may be overrepresented in this data set (by 17ppt each). This may have implications for the survey's findings, noted below, as well as implying something about the success of the Student Union in engaging different student groups.

fig. 2 Comparison of Student Demographics (control vs. *Speak Week* survey)



¹ Data based on recorded 7275 confirmed student count by the Students' Union website in March 2024.

² This figure derived from the number of respondents identifying as LGBTQPIA+

³ Distance Learner numbers are a DPL in the OfS' control dataset.

General Findings

Responses from the survey generally indicate a positive appreciation for the Student Union and the work that it undertakes, with the Union scoring **a positive Net Promoter Score** (+12 vs. – 6 in 2022-23, see **fig. 2**)⁴, and a strong degree of support for the Student Academic Representative (StAR) scheme (**77% scored the StARs scheme effective or very effective** at representing students' academic interests).

Wellbeing services across campus received strong approbation (**83.5% reporting feeling very well/well supported**), alongside a clear signal that **respondents highly valued the importance of having access to independent provision of wellbeing initiatives**, support, and advice from their Student Union (92.4% approval / 4.9% detraction).

Respondents' opinions on the significance of the Union's contribution to belonging on campus were more mixed, though still positive, with a majority (**66%**) **affirming that engagement with the Union enhanced their sense of belonging to some, or a large extent**, while 20% felt it contributed to a small extent.

57.6% of respondents had engaged with more than one of the Union's opportunities (see appendix A for list), with 43.5% having engaged with 2-3 activities (see **fig. 3**). Responses demonstrated **high degrees of engagement with attending Union club nights** (59%), **Activity Group membership** (43%), and attending **one-off events and activities** (60%). Engagement with the Student Listeners Wellbeing Cafe (6%), volunteering opportunities (6%), and involvement in Union campaigns (1%) was comparatively low.

Fig 2. Net Promoter Score

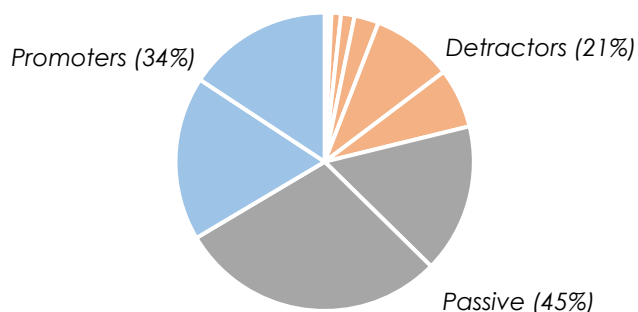
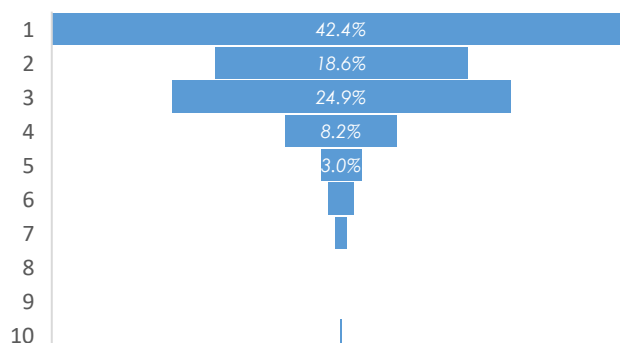
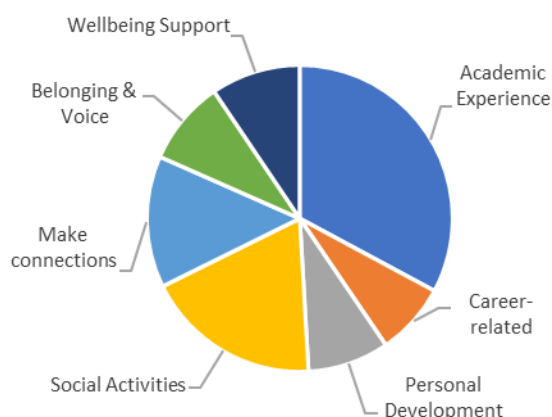


Fig 3. Respondents' Engagement with SU Opportunities



Respondents' priorities for their university experience were varied, though appear to be split evenly between **positive academic experiences and achievements** (e.g. obtaining a degree) (46%), and **enjoying fun social opportunities** to meet with others and forge **lasting, meaningful relationships** (46%). A number of free form comments praised existing provision, though the majority were framed towards enhancing the opportunities on offer in each instance across the University.



⁴ Net Promoter Scores compare the % of detractors vs. promoters, subtracting 'neutral' values. Any score above 0 is very positive. For proper analysis, data on NPS scores in the sector would be required.

Demographic Analysis

As the survey collected demographic data from respondents, it has also been possible to analyse responses in this additional dimension. The following offers a summary of findings.

In regard to the survey's four questions on StARs, wellbeing provision, independence, and belonging, **demographic level data echoes the overarching trends identified above**, with the majority of responses clustered in positive valuation, and with a comparatively greater proportion of negative responses with regards to the Union's contribution to a sense of belonging. Greatest variation (positive or negative) from the overarching trend was primarily evident in groups with low respondent population numbers (e.g. Student Parents), and, as such, it is difficult to draw definitive conclusions from their data.

Student Characteristics used in the survey

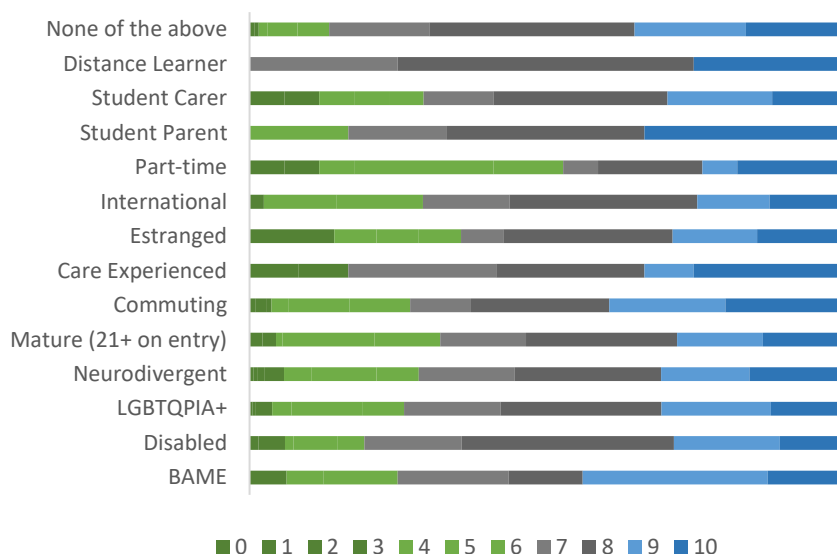
BAME
Disabled
LGBTQPIA+
Neurodivergent
Mature (21+ on entry)
Commuting
Care Experienced
Estranged
International
Part-time
Student Parent
Student Carer
Distance Learner
None of the Above

For larger subpopulations (>10% of the whole), it was evident that **Disabled and LGBTQ+ respondents scored campus wellbeing provision more negatively** than the overall trend, while **Mature**, and **Commuting students were similarly more negative regarding** the Union's capacity to enhance **belonging**. Simultaneously, **Disabled and Neurodivergent students recorded a marginally greater degree of importance to the need for independent wellbeing advice & support by the Union** (+4-6%). (See **fig. 1**, appendix C for more)

Tentative cross-analysis of belonging responses to each of the listed opportunities weakly correlates certain activities (attending an event, belonging to an Activity Group, being a part-time staff member, and being involved in a Union campaign) with stronger positive scoring. Engagement with wellbeing provision (Advice Centre, Wellbeing Café) correlated with a more mixed distribution of scoring, though still weighted towards a positive contribution to belonging, overall. Generally, the more Student's Union opportunities respondents engaged with, the higher their valuation of the Union's contribution to a sense of belonging. (See **fig. 2**, appendix C for more)

Analysis of engagement by demographic suggests, of non-data low groups, **Disabled, Neurodivergent**, and **LGBTQ+** respondents were **more likely to engage in a greater number of Union opportunities** than the average respondent, especially those involving a routine commitment (e.g. Activity Groups, StARs, and the Wellbeing Café). Conversely, despite **Mature** and **Commuting** students having a comparatively higher proportion of respondents accessing 1 opportunity than other non-data low groups, they were also far **less likely to engage in multiple opportunities**, and had generally lower engagement overall. When they did engage these were with one-off, limited activities (e.g. Union club nights). Notably, those students who did not identify with any listed characteristic, while broadly following the overall trend, were noted to have higher engagement with Union club nights, and Activity Groups, and lower engagement with wellbeing related provision (e.g. Advice Centre, Cost-of-Living provision). (See **fig. 3**, appendix C for more)

NPS Scoring Profile by Student Characteristic



Demographic analysis of NPS scoring (see graph opposite) shows, of non-data low groups, the majority were less passive in their scoring than the overall trend. Of these, **Disabled, LGBTQ+, and Neurodiverse groups rated a lower, though still positive, NPS score (+2 - +9)**, while **Non-identifying respondents were much greater positive scorers (+22 vs. the overall +12)**. **Data low groups were typically more passive, and more detracting**, most notably with the Part-time group (-29).

Conclusions

From the above analysis we may conclude the following:

- The Speak Week survey, and surrounding exercises has been, relative to its predecessors, a highly successful exercise in engaging students and gathering feedback. This suggests that physical presence on campus, and a focussed survey, coupled with rewards for participation (direct and indirect – i.e. participating in a fun activity) are effective drivers for survey completion. Cross-union collaboration appears also to have been positive in encouraging student engagement, providing multiple 'pulls' which the survey team were able to capitalise on (e.g. Sip Smart Stay Safe glass painting).
- To the Students' Union's credit, students within the survey population broadly acknowledge the effectiveness of StARs, the high quality of student support on campus (including University services), and the importance of independent wellbeing provision and support through the Union.
- The Students' Union appears to do well in engaging a broad demographic of students, across a range of activities and opportunities which, overall, are typically positively valued. Broadly speaking, students want to have fun, achieve academically, and make (lasting) connections with others. They want services on campus to support these endeavours.
- That students feel that the Union is integral to enhancing a sense of belonging at Winchester is less clear – and would appear to correlate to the degree to which students engage with the opportunities on offer. Unsurprisingly, the Union is perceived to contribute less to a sense of belonging for those groups of students for whom the nature of their studies, and the Union's opportunities, is likely a barrier to access (e.g. commuting, mature, and those with other responsibilities).
- Traditionally minority groups (e.g. Disabled, LGBTQ+, etc.) tend to appear in the data as either strong promoters or detractors, who engage more often with Union activities than

non-identifying students, and more often with advice and support-based initiatives (e.g. cost-of-living, Advice Centre). Tentatively, while this data may be indicative of the Union's success in promoting inclusivity throughout its work, it could also be evidence that the opportunities the Union provides cater more to the needs/tastes of these groups, than perhaps a more 'normative' student – especially in regard to one-off events, involvement in general campaign work, and wellbeing provision.

Recommendations

- In line with good representation practice, share, in some form, the findings of the Speak Week survey with students, and any arising actions, thereby closing the feedback loop.
- The data gathered during this exercise cannot speak strongly to identifying and understanding students' barriers to engaging with the Students' Union – though we may suspect cost, time, and awareness are likely the most significant, capturing a greater level of detail in these matters is likely to be beneficial to the Union's strategic planning.
- Inclusion of an 'I did not engage with any of these' option within the survey (Q7) to ensure the validity of these responses.
- Continue to explore and further develop on-site, cross-union efforts to engage with students.

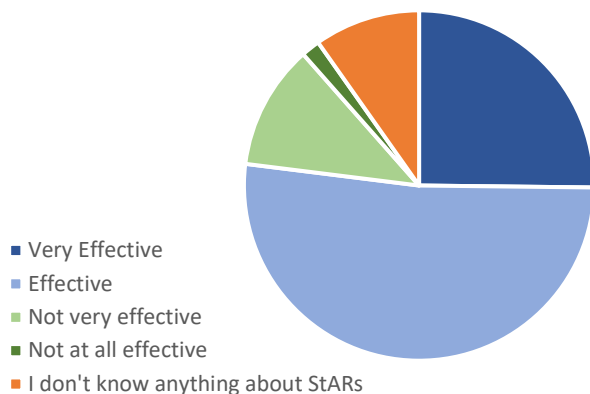
Appendices.

Appendix A: Speak Week Survey Questions

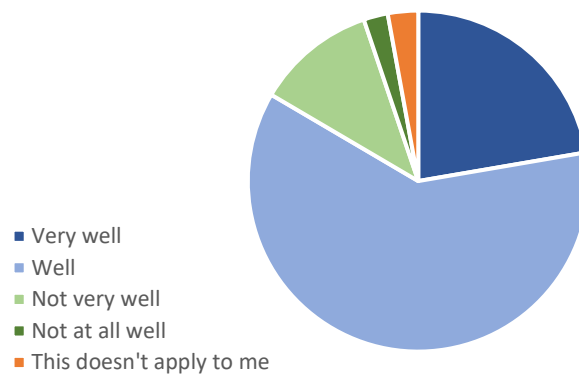
1. Please enter your Student ID Number
2. Please select any of the following groups which you belong to: BAME, Disabled, LGBTQPIA+, Neurodivergent, Mature (21+ on entry), Commuting, Care Experienced, Estranged, International, Part-time, Student Parent, Student Carer, Distance Learner, None of the above
3. How effective do you feel the Student Academic Reps (StARs) scheme is at representing your interests as a student? Very effective, Effective, Not very effective, Not at all effective, I don't know anything about StARs
4. How well do you feel your wellbeing is supported as a student at Winchester? Very well, well, not very well, not at all well. This doesn't apply to me.
5. Winchester Student Union is an independent organisation, separate to the University of Winchester. How important do you think it is that wellbeing initiatives and independent support and advice are provided by your Student Union? Very important, important, not very important, not at all important. This doesn't apply to me.
6. 'Engaging with the Student Union enhances my sense of belonging' To a large extent, to some extent, to a small extent, not at all. This does not apply to me.
7. Which areas of the Student Union have you engaged with this academic year? Attended Union Club nights; Part of an Activity Group; Attended one-off events and activities (e.g. vintage fair, clothes drive, Freshers); Attended the Student Listeners Wellbeing Café; Been a Student Academic Rep (StAR); Been involved in the Union's Campaign work; Are a part-time staff member of the SU; Received support from the Advice Centre; Used any of the Cost of Living initiatives (e.g. Breakfast Club, Aldi Shuttle Bus, Bookcase Food Pantry); Volunteered with the Student Union (incl. One Winchester, Freshers Crew, Student Senate, Placements)
8. What do you want from your university experience?
9. How satisfied are you with your Student Union? [0-10 scale]

Appendix B: Primary Question Breakdowns

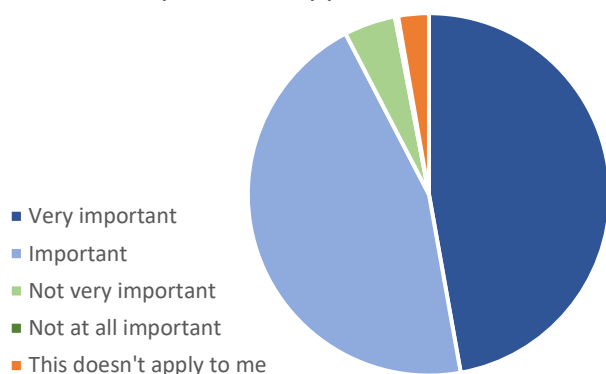
StARs Effectiveness



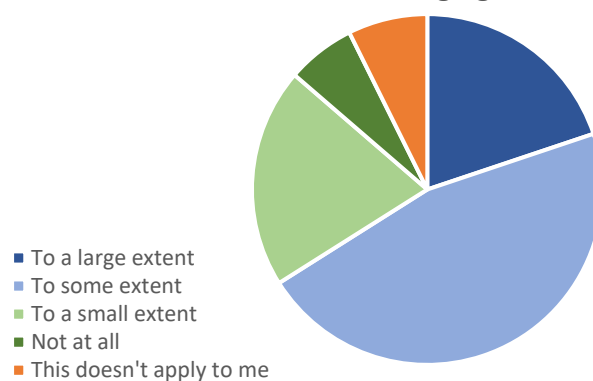
Student Wellbeing Support at Winchester



Importance of SU-provided Independent Support & Advice



Extent to which the SU contributes to students' sense of belonging

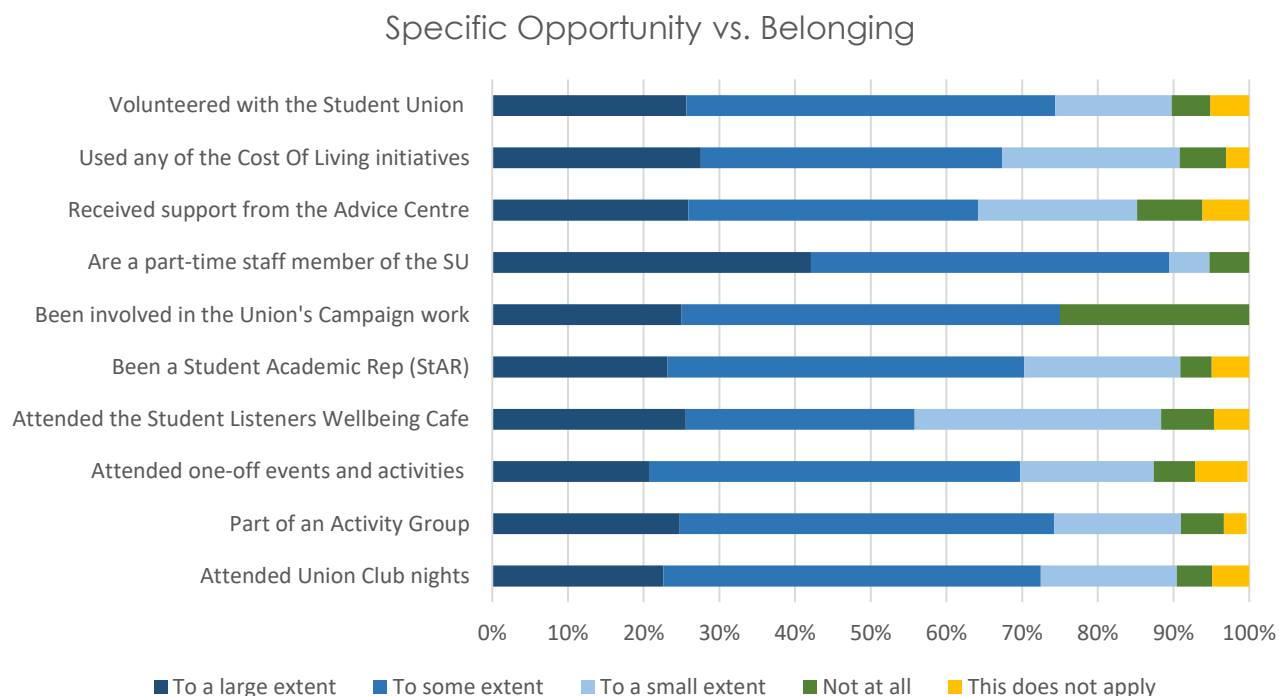


Appendix C: Demographic Data

Fig. 1: Comparison of Demographic Groups to the Overall trend of responses to key questions

	Groups with greater negative valuation vs. Overall (≥ -5 ppts)	Groups with greater positive valuation vs. Overall ($\geq +5$ ppts)
StARs' Effectiveness	Care Experienced [DL: 2%] ⁵ Estranged [DL: 2%] Student Parents [DL: 1%] Student Carers [DL: 2%]	BAME [DL: 2%] Distance Learners [DL: 1%]
Campus-wide Wellbeing provision	BAME [DL: 2%] Disabled LGBTQPIA+ Care Experienced [DL: 2%] Estranged [DL: 2%] Student Carer [DL: 2%]	Part-time [DL: 2%] Student Parents [DL: 1%] Distance Learners [DL: 1%]
Importance of independent wellbeing advice & support provision	Care Experienced [DL: 2%] Estranged [DL: 2%]	Disabled Distance Learners [DL: 1%]
Union's enhancement of belonging	Disabled Mature (21+) Commuting Care Experienced [DL: 2%] Estranged [DL: 2%] Part-time [DL: 2%] Student Carer [DL: 2%]	BAME [DL: 2%] International [DL: 6%]

Fig.2: Comparison of Belonging by Activity



⁵ Any group which represented <10% of total respondents has been classified as a 'data low', or [DL]

Belonging vs. Number of Opportunities engaged with

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
To a large extent	16%	17%	23%	18%	43%	46%	67%			0%
To some extent	39%	57%	49%	61%	38%	31%	33%			0%
To a small extent	25%	14%	20%	16%	14%	23%	0%			0%
Not at all	8%	5%	5%	2%	5%	0%	0%			100%
This does not apply	12%	7%	3%	4%	0%	0%	0%			0%

Fig.3: Comparison of Demographic groups' engagement with Union opportunities against the Overall trend

	Low Engagement vs. Overall (>/= -5ppts)	High Engagement vs. Overall (>/= +5ppts)
Union Club nights	Student Parent (DL) International (DL) Commuting Mature (21+)	No Identified Characteristic LGBTQPIA+ Student Carer (DL) Estranged [DL]
Activity Groups	Commuting Mature BAME (DL) Part-time (DL)	Disabled Estranged [DL] Student Carer [DL] No Identified Characteristic
One-off events/activities	Part-time [DL] Student Parent [DL] Mature (21+) Commuting	Care Experienced [DL] LGBTQPIA+ Neurodivergent Disabled
Student Listeners Wellbeing Café	None *lowest scoring was commuting (4%)	BAME [DL] Disabled Neurodivergent Estranged [DL]
StAR Scheme	Part-time [DL] BAME [DL] Care experienced [DL]	Disabled Neurodivergent LGBTQPIA+ Mature (21+)
Getting involved in Union Campaign Work	None *no entries for estranged, international, part-time, student parent, student carer, distance learner	BAME [DL] Disabled Care Experienced [DL] Estranged [DL]
Part-time Staff Opportunities	None *no entries for BAME, commuting, international, student parent, student carer, or distance learner	Part-time [DL] Estranged [DL]
Advice Centre Support	International [DL] Part-time [DL]	Care Experienced [DL] Mature (21+) Disabled [DL] Estranged [DL]
Cost of Living initiatives	None * commuting and no identifying characteristic students scored lowest; no entries from BAME and distance learners	Disabled Neurodivergent International [DL] Estranged [DL]
Volunteering with the SU	None *No identifying characteristics scored lowest; no entries from student parent and distance learners	BAME [DL] Disabled Care Experienced [DL]