

## Speak Week Report

2025/26

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### Introduction

This Student Voice Survey report provides a clear overview of the year's Speak Week outcomes including the experiences, priorities, and feedback shared by Harper Adams students. It discusses the key insights and themes that have emerged from student engagement during the week and explores how the union can drive meaningful change in the upcoming months.

This report explores the successes and limitations of the Speak Week Fair, the themes and trends brought to light in the Student Voice Survey, and future possibilities for improving student engagement.

The report also highlights the crucial role of our Course Representatives, Department Reps, and Part-Time Officers, whose insights, feedback, and advocacy continue to strengthen the connection between students, the Union, and the University. Their engagement provides a vital understanding of course-level experiences, emerging challenges, and opportunities for enhancement.

Drawing from all these sources, this report identifies the key themes emerging from student feedback, celebrates what is working well, and gives honest attention to the areas where further improvement is needed. The insights presented here inform a set of Union priorities for the coming year, ensuring that our actions align with what matters most to our members.

As we look ahead, this report serves as both a reflection of student experiences in 2025–26 and a roadmap for how the Students' Union will continue to champion student voice, strengthen our services, and work collaboratively to enhance life at Harper Adams for every student.

### Speak Week Fair



The Student Voice Fair took place in the foyer of the Bamford Library once again. The goal of the Fair was to engage with students face to face by meeting them in an easily accessible location with a 'come to them' mentality.

Our intention was to keep interactions short, focused, and directly valuable to students, while also creating space for them to question our progress, offer feedback on HASU's decisions, and seek accountability. We see

this as a crucial element of strengthening the relationship between students and their union, and we aimed to ensure students felt comfortable speaking to us about their needs, ideas, and expectations.

Although we had aimed for 300 in-person engagements—similar to last year—our final engagement count was closer to 100. Footfall in the library was noticeably lower than in previous years. Despite proactive social media promotion, advertising of giveaways, and other incentives, student turnout remained limited. Several students shared that many had not yet left their rooms following a ‘wild’ evening at Flock the night before, which we believe contributed significantly to the reduced footfall.

However, while overall engagement and footfall were lower than hoped, the event still had several strong and successful elements. The set-up was visually appealing and well executed, the photography came out beautifully, and the student interactions we had were positive and well received. These aspects provided valuable insights and approaches that we can carry forward into future years, even as we continue striving for higher levels of engagement.

### Spin the Wheel of Shit

One of the most successful engagement components of the Student Voice Fair was the creatively reimagined “Wheel of Shit,” a playful twist on the traditional promotional prize wheel frequently used at campus events.

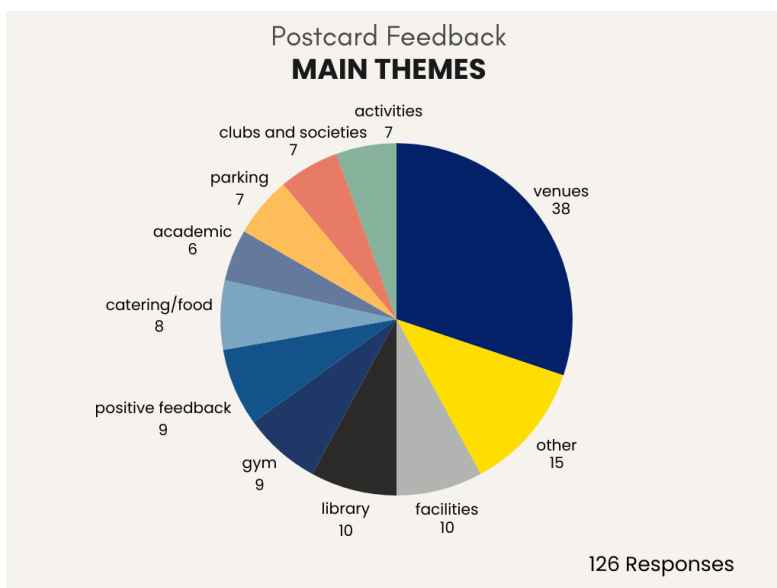
With permission from the University’s Marketing department, we adapted their spinning wheel by designing a bespoke skin that transformed it into a humorous and unexpected attraction aimed at drawing students into meaningful conversation.

Inspired by similar initiatives at other students’ unions, the concept subverted expectations by offering deliberately “shit” prizes rather than conventional giveaways. Following discussion with students in advance, we learned that many would genuinely value high-quality toilet roll—an item some struggle to afford—so this became one of the key prizes, alongside other light-hearted, themed alternatives.

To participate, students completed a simple postcard answering the question, “What’s the one thing the Students’ Union can do for you?” before spinning the wheel. This approach successfully blended fun with feedback, encouraging honest student input while fostering a relaxed and engaging atmosphere.

We received a total of 126 postcards. Students shared a wide range of feedback; the most frequent themes included affordability of SU nights, improvements to sports and campus facilities, better communication from staff, and concerns around parking and catering.

Below is a chart summarising the feedback results from the wheel’s postcard by theme.



## Actionable Items from Speak Week Postcards

Question: What's the one thing the Students' Union can do for you?

Feedback Category	Action
HASU Venues and Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review SU ticket pricing models and explore <b>cheaper or subsidised event tickets</b>.</li> <li>Introduce <b>more non-alcohol events</b> and quieter alternatives (e.g., board game nights, craft socials).</li> <li>Improve <b>bus queue management</b> after SU nights.</li> <li>Increase <b>student choice</b> in Flock themes via online polls.</li> <li>Provide more <b>drink deals</b> similar to the VK promotion.</li> <li>Continue promoting a <b>quiet zone</b> in the Barn.</li> </ul>
Gym and Sport Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore options for <b>monthly gym memberships</b>.</li> <li>Repair or replace sports infrastructure (e.g., <b>netball posts</b>, pitch lights).</li> <li>Improve <b>pitch and grounds maintenance</b>, especially the 1st team pitch.</li> <li>Create an <b>online facilities availability checker</b> so students can see when spaces are free.</li> </ul>
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate parking concerns at the Student Experience Group and ensure that this is communicated to students.</li> <li>Review the impact of <b>new regulations</b> and communicate these to students.</li> </ul>
Facilities (General Campus Improvements)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upgrade or rebuild <b>sports storage areas</b> used by clubs.</li> <li>Create more <b>secluded social/study nooks</b>, such as high-backed chairs.</li> <li>Improve outdoor spaces near SU (e.g., add <b>smoking shelter</b>).</li> </ul>
Library & Study Spaces	<p>Communicate the following feedback to the library team/Estates and Facilities team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase <b>library seating</b> or create overflow study zones.</li> <li>Enforce <b>quiet study rules</b> more consistently.</li> <li>Add more <b>PC access</b> and <b>study booths</b>.</li> <li>Provide additional <b>quiet spaces outside the library</b>.</li> </ul>
Welfare, Safety & Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand/communicate free <b>period product provision</b>.</li> <li>Increase/create <b>sexual assault awareness</b> campaigns and visibility of support services.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore and advocate for <b>safer walking routes</b> on and off campus.</li> </ul>
Clubs & Societies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree to an <b>email response standard</b>.</li> <li>Create a structure for greater support for <b>new club creation</b>.</li> <li>Increase transparency on <b>club funding</b> and where money goes.</li> <li>Develop more opportunities for <b>cross-course mixing</b>.</li> <li>Support niche or hobby-based clubs.</li> </ul>
SU Operations & Visibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rebuild or repair the <b>SU website</b>.</li> <li>Continue regular <b>feedback opportunities</b>, like termly surveys.</li> </ul>

## The Ball Pit Question

As part of the Speak Week Fair, we ran an interactive activity known as the **Ball Pit Question**, designed to gather clear and immediate student insight on academic priorities. Students were invited to consider the question:

*“What do you think should be HASU’s academic priority?”*

Each potential priority was assigned a coloured ball. Students selected the coloured ball representing the option they felt was most important to them and threw it into the ball pit. This allowed us to visually capture preferences throughout the day. To widen participation, the same poll was also shared on HASU’s social media channels, and the results were combined with those from the fair.

The four priorities and their colour identifiers were:

Possible Priority	Colour
Teaching Quality	Blue
Giving advice to and representing students in cases of academic misconduct	Green
Lobbying for improved formal and informal learning spaces	White
Better assessment and more meaningful feedback	Yellow

## Results

After combining the responses gathered from both the fair and our online poll, a clear hierarchy of student priorities emerged. The results were as follows:

- **Better assessment and more meaningful feedback (Yellow): 37.2%**
- **Teaching Quality (Blue): 28.5%**
- **Lobbying for improved learning spaces (White): 19.3%**



- **Advice and representation in academic misconduct cases (Green): 15%**

These results suggest that students place the greatest importance on enhancements to assessment practices and the feedback they receive, followed by overall teaching quality. While still significant, learning space improvements and support around academic misconduct processes ranked lower in comparison.

### **HASU General Meeting**

This year, we incorporated the Annual General Meeting (AGM) into the Voice Fair with the aim of increasing student engagement. By embedding the AGM within the already existing event we avoided asking students to commit to an additional standalone session. Through this we hoped to improve both turnout and accessibility.

To ensure the meeting remained compliant with legal requirements, the AGM minutes were formally approved via our Trustees.

We also met the regulatory requirement for students to be able to meaningfully engage with their Sabbatical Officers. Students were invited to submit questions for the Sabbaticals in advance through our social media channels, ensuring an accessible and inclusive process. During the event itself, Sabbatical Officers were positioned at a dedicated table, where they engaged directly with students, handed out incentives, and provided updates on their ongoing campaigns.

### **Speak Week Fair – Summary and Conclusions**

The Speak Week Fair remained a valuable opportunity for direct student engagement, even though overall footfall was lower than anticipated. While external factors clearly influenced turnout, the students who did participate offered thoughtful, honest, and actionable feedback across a wide range of issues. This ensured that, despite reduced numbers, the quality of insight gathered was meaningful.

Creative engagement methods such as the Wheel of Shit and the Ball Pit Question proved particularly successful, demonstrating the continued effectiveness of playful, low-barrier activities in encouraging students to share their views. These tools generated clear thematic trends—most notably around **affordability, facilities, communication, assessment, and teaching quality**—providing a solid evidence base for HASU's priorities moving forward.

The Fair also succeeded in strengthening visibility and accessibility by integrating the Annual General Meeting directly into the event. This allowed students to engage with Sabbatical Officers in an open and informal setting, helping the Union meet its regulatory responsibilities while improving the student experience of the AGM process.

Overall, although engagement numbers did not match previous years, the Fair achieved its core purpose: creating space for genuine conversation, capturing meaningful student voice, and building trust through approachable, face-to-face interaction. The insights gathered will directly inform HASU's work in the year ahead, and the successes of the interactive elements provide a strong foundation for developing even more engaging and student-led formats in future Speak Week activity.

## Student Voice Survey 2025/2026


### Introduction and Methodology

The annual Student Voice survey was open to all Harper students and was advertised on social media and on our website. It was communicated to students via the President’s all-student email and the link was sent to course reps to distribute to course mates via their own communication channels.

This year’s Student Voice Survey received **283 responses**, which is **469 fewer** than last year’s total of 752—a decrease of approximately **62%**. While the overall response rate was lower, the level of engagement among respondents improved significantly. Nearly **87%** of students completed the entire survey this year, compared with **76%** last year and only **30%** the year before that. This means we successfully retained a far higher proportion of respondents throughout the survey.

Number of responders and retention rates across years

Survey Year	Started (N)	Finished (N)	Retention %
2023/2024	874	265	30.32
2024/2025	752	571	75.93
2025/2026	283	245	86.57



One likely reason for the improvement in retention is the revised question order introduced this year. Following advice from survey training delivered by Bristol Students’ Union, we adopted a ‘triangle’ structure—beginning with less sensitive questions to build trust and placing more sensitive items toward the end. This approach appears to have been effective.

### A note on question formatting

While several questions were retained in their original format to allow for meaningful year-on-year comparisons, some questions were redesigned following guidance from the Bristol SU training session. This decision was not taken lightly, as changing question formats inevitably reduces the ability to compare results with previous years. However, after weighing the potential drawbacks against the benefits, we determined that revising certain questions would ultimately enhance the overall quality, clarity, and usefulness of the survey.

Across the three Student Voice Surveys, several question areas show a clear shift in 2025/26 where neutral response options were deliberately removed. In earlier surveys, questions about the range of clubs and societies (23/24 Q29; 24/25 Q44), inclusivity of clubs and societies (23/24 Q30–31; 24/25 Q48 & Q46), freedom to express ideas (23/24 Q40; 24/25 Q56), and working interfering with studies (23/24 Q64; 24/25 Q73) all included a midpoint such as “Neither agree nor disagree”.

In 2025/26, the equivalent questions (Q14–17, Q32, Q46) replaced the neutral option with either Not applicable or Not sure, removing the midpoint entirely.

This reflects a purposeful design choice recommended by Bristol Students' Union, often used in survey methodology to reduce satisficing—where respondents default to the middle option rather than making an evaluative judgement—and to encourage clearer directional feedback. Neutral options can mask genuine sentiment, particularly in institutional surveys where respondents may feel hesitant to express dissatisfaction. Removing the midpoint helps reduce ambiguity, improves the sensitivity of year-on-year comparisons, and gives the Students' Union a more actionable understanding of whether students genuinely lean positive or negative on key experience measures.

In addition, in this year's survey we replaced several recurring 0–100 slider items with discrete response options (e.g., *Strongly agree* → *Strongly disagree*). For example, items that previously used sliders—such as “How safe do you feel at SU events in The Barn?” and “How safe do you feel at SU events in The Welly?” (slider presentation in 2023/24 and 2024/25) now use categorical scales (*Extremely/Very/Somewhat/Not so/Not at all safe*) in 2025/26.

Attitude statements about SU venues and activities that were gathered via sliders in 2024/25 are now asked on standard Likert scales (e.g., “Nights out in the SU venues are high quality / represent good value for money”, and “The SU provides a diverse range of clubs/societies; clubs/societies are inviting and inclusive”).

We made this change to improve data quality and usability: fixed-option Likert responses are quicker for students to answer, reduce ambiguity around what “72 vs 78 out of 100” really means, and make year-on-year comparisons clearer. The shift was adopted on the recommendation of **Bristol Students' Union**, who advised that categorical agreement scales generally yield more interpretable insights for decision-making.

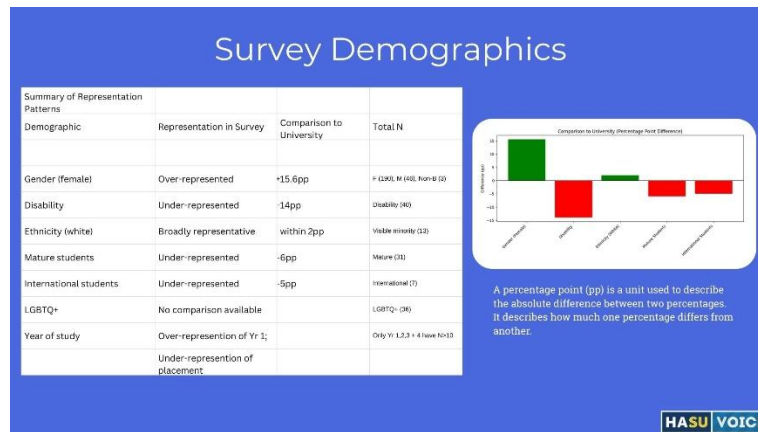
## Survey Demographics and Representation

A total of 245–283 students responded to most demographic questions in the survey, depending on the item.

This represents a substantial sample of the student body and provides a basis for meaningful analysis; however, some demographic groups are represented more strongly than others.

Female students were over-represented in the survey sample, making up 78.19% of respondents compared with 62.62% of the mainstream student population. In contrast, disabled students were under-represented, with only 16.39% identifying as having a disability versus 30.85% in the wider population. Ethnically, the survey reflected the institution reasonably well: 85.89% of respondents identified as White British, aligning closely with a predominantly White student body where 10.68% are classified as non-White nationally. Mature students (aged 21+) were also less represented, accounting for 12.65% of respondents compared with 18.79% of the mainstream cohort. International students were similarly under-represented, making up only 2.86% of responses in comparison with 7.40% Overseas and 0.95% EU students in the mainstream population. Although the survey captured insights from LGBTQ+ students (14.75% of respondents), no institutional comparator exists for this characteristic, limiting representativeness assessment in this area. In terms of year of study, first-year students were slightly over-represented (34.69%), while placement students were under-represented relative to institutional levels, where 17.11% of undergraduates are on placement within the mainstream cohort. Overall, the sample provides broad demographic coverage but includes several imbalances that should be considered when interpreting findings. (Percentage points measure the

difference between two percentages by simple subtraction, making them useful for comparing survey results to a baseline. For example, if 40% of the university population belongs to a group but 55.6% of survey respondents do, the survey figure is higher by 15.6 percentage points. Unlike saying something is “15.6% higher,” which implies a relative change, percentage points clearly express the absolute gap between two percentage values.)



## Our Focus

The 2025/2026 Student Voice Survey was designed to gather clear, focused insight into students’ experiences of the Harper Adams Students’ Union and university life more broadly. This year, the survey was shortened making it easier and quicker to complete, while still capturing meaningful feedback.

A particular emphasis was placed on understanding students’ engagement with the Students’ Union—especially their experiences of clubs and societies, as well as SU venues and events such as The Barn and the Welly. Alongside this, the survey placed renewed attention on improving the clarity, format, and overall organisation of the questions to ensure a more user-friendly and accessible experience for all respondents.

## Clubs and Societies: Summary of Findings

### 1. The Positive Impact of Clubs and Societies

The 2025/26 Student Voice Survey confirms that clubs and societies continue to make a highly positive contribution to the student experience. Satisfaction remains strong, with over 83% of students agreeing that Harper Adams Students’ Union offers a diverse range of opportunities.

Students who take part in a club or society consistently report:

- A stronger sense of belonging
- Better mental health and wellbeing
- A more enjoyable and socially connected experience

Open-text comments highlight clubs as a source of friendship, routine, identity, and skill development — reinforcing that student-led communities are central to creating a supportive university environment.

## 2. Key Areas of Concern Highlighted by Students

While the overall picture is positive, students identified several areas that need continued attention:

### Initiations and concerning behaviour

Some students report witnessing or experiencing bullying, pressure, or uncomfortable behaviours during club activities. Although not widespread, these incidents can undermine safety and discourage participation.

### Loneliness among some members

Interestingly, some students who have joined a club report feeling lonely. This may relate to internal group dynamics — such as cliques, hierarchies, or difficulties integrating — showing that joining a club doesn't automatically guarantee belonging. The culture within each group plays a significant role. Further research into this possible correlation is needed before drawing conclusions but it does present interesting possibilities for further analysis into the dynamics of club culture.

Overall, the insights emphasise the importance of ensuring that clubs and societies remain, and continue to become more, inclusive, welcoming, and supportive for all students.

## 3. Looking Ahead

The findings from this year's survey provide a clear picture: clubs and societies are one of the most powerful contributors to belonging and wellbeing at Harper Adams, but maintaining positive, inclusive cultures requires ongoing focus.

We look forward to working closely with our 2026/2027 Sabbatical Officers, and with the university, to shape priorities for the coming year and continue strengthening the club and society experience for every student.

## Venues and Events: Summary of Findings

The Student Voice Survey 2025/26 provides a detailed picture of how students experience HASU's bars and venues, including perceptions of safety, value for money, and the availability of quieter, more accessible social environments. With **283 responses** to the Bars and Venues questions, the findings show a broadly positive picture in some areas, alongside clear signals of where student expectations are shifting.

### 1. Perceptions of Safety in SU Venues

Across both The Barn and The Welly, most respondents reported feeling safe during SU events. In The Barn, **61.48%** of students described feeling *extremely* or *very safe*, while a further **24.03%** felt *somewhat safe*. Only **5.65%** of respondents reported feeling *not so safe* or *not at all safe*. These results suggest that, for the majority, The Barn remains a space where students feel comfortable during SU-run events.

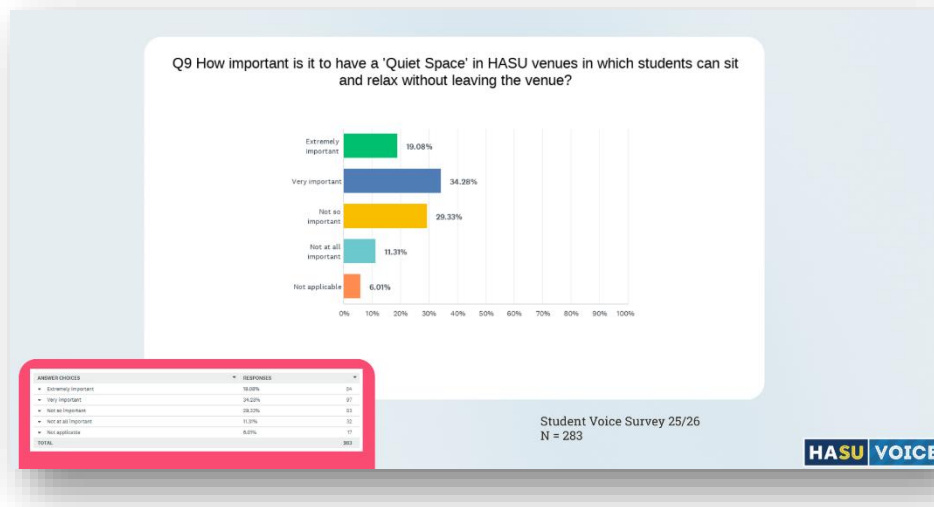
A similar pattern is visible in The Welly, where feelings of safety were slightly stronger. A combined **77.74%** of respondents reported feeling *extremely* or *very safe*, with only **0.35%** feeling *not so safe* and no students reporting that they felt *not at all safe*. This suggests that The Welly continues to be perceived as a reliably safe space for students attending SU activities.

When compared with previous years, the long-term trend in safety perceptions at The Barn appears relatively stable. Average safety scores—converted from earlier slider formats—indicated **77/100 in 2023/24** and **75/100 in 2024/25**. While direct comparison with 2025/26 is limited due to the shift to categorical response options, the proportion of students selecting positive safety categories remains broadly consistent.

## 2. Importance of Quiet Spaces in SU Venues

This year’s survey introduced a dedicated question about the value of quiet zones in HASU venues—an area of growing interest across the student body. Responses show that many students place significant importance on having a calm, accessible space within SU venues, without needing to leave the event entirely.

A combined **53.36%** of respondents said a quiet space is *extremely* or *very important*, with a further **29.33%** finding it *not so important*. Only **11.31%** felt such a space was *not at all important*. This indicates that, although not universally required, over half of respondents benefit from or actively value a quieter area during SU nights. This theme also aligns with feedback collected during Speak Week, where students highlighted the benefits of quieter zones and inclusive event environments.



## 3. Value for Money and Quality of SU Nights

Student perspectives on the value for money offered by SU venues present a more mixed picture. When asked whether SU nights represent good value for money, *agree* responses made up **38.16%**, with **8.48%** strongly agreeing. However, **34.28%** disagreed, and **9.54%** strongly disagreed. This indicates a relatively even split between students who feel SU events are reasonably priced and those who do not.

Perceptions of the *quality* of SU nights were more positive. A combined **68.55%** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that SU nights are high quality, while **22.97%** disagreed or strongly disagreed. This demonstrates that while students may question pricing, the overall delivery and experience of SU nights continue to be well-regarded.

Drinks pricing received similarly mixed feedback. **61.84%** of respondents felt drinks offered good value for money, while **31.09%** disagreed. This suggests that students generally view drink prices more favourably than overall event pricing, but concerns remain for a notable proportion of the student body.

Year-on-year comparisons show that value-for-money scores have fluctuated. Earlier surveys using slider formats recorded average scores of **42/100 in 2023/24** and **50/100 in 2024/25**, indicating an improvement before this year’s shift to categorical response options. While the different format limits direct numerical comparison, the 2025/26 results suggest a more balanced—rather than strongly positive—perception of value among students.



## Speak Week Report 2025/26 – Summary

This year's Speak Week offered an honest and constructive snapshot of student life at Harper Adams, highlighting where things are working well and where students would like to see continued improvement. Although in-person engagement at the Fair was lower than hoped—largely due to reduced footfall on campus—the quality of conversations and feedback remained genuinely valuable. Students who did take part engaged openly, and the creative elements such as the **Wheel of Shit** and the **Ball Pit Question** proved especially successful in sparking meaningful dialogue.

From the 126 postcards gathered, clear themes emerged around **affordability, improving facilities, better communication, and campus experience** concerns such as parking and study spaces. The Ball Pit Question reinforced academics as a key priority, with students placing the most importance on **better assessment and meaningful feedback**, followed closely by **teaching quality**.

The Student Voice Survey, while seeing fewer responses than last year, showed much stronger completion rates and provided rich, targeted insight. Students continue to highlight the powerful role that **clubs and societies** play in their wellbeing and sense of belonging, while also raising important considerations around inclusivity and group culture. Feedback on SU venues remained broadly positive—particularly around safety—though views on value for money were more mixed. The growing importance of **quiet, inclusive spaces** at events came through clearly this year.

Bringing the AGM into the Speak Week Fair helped boost visibility and created a more relaxed space for students to connect with Sabbatical Officers. Ultimately, despite lower numbers, this year's Speak Week succeeded in its core purpose: listening to students, building trust, and gathering evidence that will directly shape HASU's priorities for the year ahead.