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## Student Voice Report

Term One 2022/23

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### Introduction

Toward the end of Term One, the Students' Union opened up the year's first student voice survey. The aim of the survey was two-fold. We hoped firstly to find ways to better represent our students academically by gathering insights on their academic needs. Secondly, we asked questions about our clubs, societies, venues, and events in order to tailor future strategies to the social/recreational needs of our student body.

A total of 799 students completed the survey. The results were analysed using both quantitative and qualitative analysis.

### Executive Summary

From the feedback received from students, it should be recognised that:

Key Finding	Action
Students find recorded lectures to be a vital study aid to supplement face-to-face lectures but there is inconsistency in regards to access and quality.	HASU will recommend at LTSEC that the university work toward an environment in which high quality recordings are always available to students.
Harper students have been financially and mentally impacted by the cost-of-living crisis.	HASU will approach senior university leaders and recommend that a committee be created to strategize meaningful ways to mitigate the financial impact to students.
We conclude that more work is needed in efforts to create an inclusive campus with BAME and LGBT+ students. These communities rated feelings of safety significantly lower than other student groups. These groups also scored lower on "a sense of belonging."	The SU will work with our elected Student Executives, especially the BAME Rep, and LGBT+ Rep, to create events and opportunities for these communities. We will work with our representatives to curate specific events for these student communities.
Despite a growing number of positive responses (54%), 37% of our student body are unclear as to whether the SU represents their academic interests.	HASU will redouble our efforts to inform students of the work being done to represent them, and look for more ways to support students' academic interests.
Our students are concerned with value for money in and around HASU extracurricular and commercial provisions.	HASU is committed to keeping its pricing strategy under constant review.  HASU will continue to work with our student leaders within clubs and societies to ensure they are adequately resourced. This is to ensure that costs associated with running activities aren't totally bourn by students and continue to be subsidised by the union's commercial activity.



**Our Work Since the 2021/22 Spring Student Voice Report**

<b><u>You told us...</u></b>	<b><u>We have...</u></b>
<p>As part of the strategic planning section of the survey, you valued being represented academically as a top two priority. This was second only to “the union providing a range of opportunities to make friends”.</p>	<p>Made student voice the number 1 development area within our strategic plan (2022-25).</p> <p>We’ve employed a full-time student voice coordinator to support course reps (Education Champions), to lead on our student voice work and to support or elected officers to prioritise issues that matter to you.</p>
<p>You want to see elements of online teaching continue such as recorded lectures.</p>	<p>We shared this information with the Learning and Teaching Committee. We have seen progress with students now telling us that recorded lecturers make up a key part of learning. We’ve continued to ask students about their experiences and we are now strengthening our position on recorded lectures.</p>
<p>You want to see us increase our alcohol-free activities provision.</p>	<p>We have delivered a host of new activities via our Vice President and reintroduced trips to other cities. We also continued with social sports and Wednesday afternoon alcohol free activities.</p>
<p>You want the union to focus on value for money.</p>	<p>Kept our ticket and event pricing under constant review in order to ensure we balance the Union’s books as well as provide the best value for money we can during a cost of living crisis.</p> <p>Displayed our audited accounts to our windows so that students could see where our income comes from and where we spend it, to demonstrate our “not for profit” status as a charity.</p>



## Student Voice Report

### **Student Demographics**

The majority of students who responded to our survey self-identified as white British, heterosexual, home students, and undergraduate. For the most part, this accurately reflects the demographics of our Harper students, though it slightly overrepresented for females and undergraduates.

### **Academic Life**

We asked students how important face-to-face lectures and tutorials are, and received an average score of 86/100. Their overall satisfaction with them was 75/100, giving a satisfaction gap of -11.

We also asked students how important recorded lectures are and received an average score of 78/100, with a satisfaction score of 73, leaving a gap of -5.

Students were asked to give positive or negative feedback related to their lectures and the main themes are highlighted below.

Positive feedback included:

- Enthusiastic lecturers who make resources available
- A willingness from lecturers to answer individual student questions face-to-face
- Better engagement in face-to-face lectures than in pre-recorded lectures

Negative feedback included:

- Lecturers who rely too heavily on reading slides
- Not supplementing face-to-face lectures with recorded lectures
- Technical difficulties during lectures (audio problems, projection problems, etc)

Lecture recordings were mentioned more frequently than any other topic. Out of 549 comments, 143 mentioned recordings. This demonstrates how important it is to students to have supplementary recordings of lectures.

The general themes to the recording comments were: the importance of recorded lectures as a study aid, frustration over poor recordings/technical problems, the value of correct captions, and a desire to have recordings available earlier for preparation.

When asked 'How often are your lectures recorded and available to you?', the majority of students responded with 'usually'. The result conclusion is that 77% of students surveyed have been denied access to a recorded lecture at some point.

In the comment sections, students also highlighted that they want lecturers to stay on point and focused, and not rely too heavily upon lecture slides.



They prefer their lecturers to be engaging and enthusiastic and use 'real world' examples in their teaching.

### **Welfare and Resources**

Overall, students are broadly satisfied with both Student Services and Student Support. Of the students who used Student Services, 70% were either satisfied or very satisfied with the service they received. Of the student who used Student Support, 82% were satisfied with the service.

However, it should be noted that 75% of our survey responders have not accessed Student Support, and 72% have not accessed Student Services.

When asked, 'To what extent do you agree with the following statement: I know how to access the Health and Well-Being Resources site', 65% agreed or strongly agreed, and 71% agree or strongly agree that they know how to raise a well-being concern about a fellow student.

While these statistics are largely positive, it is useful to note that 25% of students did not agree that they knew how to access well-being support at Harper, and 35% did not agree that they knew how to access well-being resources. 25% of students do not know how to raise an issue regarding diversity, equality, and inclusion, and 33% are not aware of where to find or how to complete the university's anonymous reporting form. These results suggest that more work can be done to promote Harper services to our students.

Results also suggest that students could be greater utilising financial resources. While 54% of students claim that their parttime work interferes with their studies, a mere 3.5% of students have asked the university for financial assistance.

### **Campus Life**

The survey shows that students are happy with the library and its resources. They responded with overwhelming satisfaction with library resources and facilities, and the majority visit the library on a regular basis.

When asked how satisfied they were with catering provisions, on average, students living in accommodation responded with 56 out of 100. The average is slightly higher (61) for students living off campus. 68% of students living on campus attached at least some importance to having food available on campus after 7pm, and 73% attached importance to having food available on weekends.

### **The Students' Union**

When asked if the Students' Union represents their academic interests, most students responded with 'agree' (45%). 9% of students went further and said they "strongly agreed although a large chunk (37%) neither agree nor disagree. This would suggest that the Students' Union should expand its work on informing students of the work being done to represent them, and look for more ways to support students' academic interests.



When asked how safe students feel when attending an SU event in The Barn, students gave an average response of 75 out of 100. This 3% increase from last year's results comes after the SU's hard work to increase safety within our venues and enforce tighter rules to reduce major incidences.

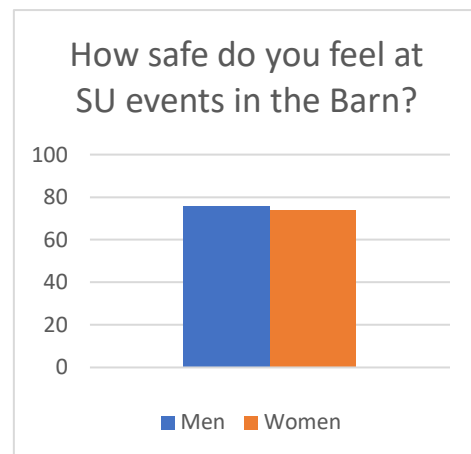
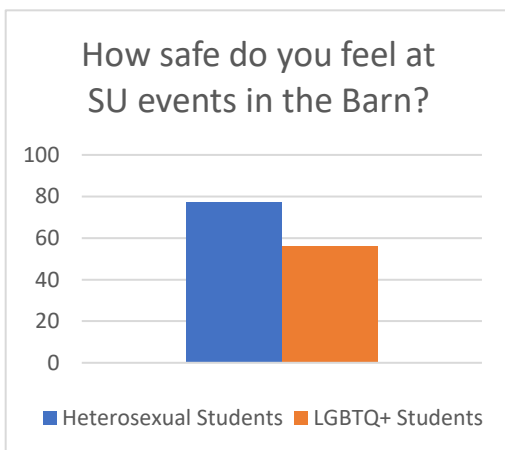
It should be noted that Student Services records show that the number of major incidents has decreased this year by  $\frac{2}{3}$ , in part due to a greater security presence. The SU is proud that the Barn and Welly have received a Gold accreditation from industry recognised "Best Bar None" scheme. One of our challenges is to ensure that the perception of safety increases alongside actual incidence data.

It should be noted that amongst students who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or other, the average response to the question lowers to 56 out of 100, indicating that non-heterosexual students feel significantly less safe than heterosexual students. This shows that more work is needed to allow our LGBT+ students to feel safe whilst at Harper.

The same can be said for our non-white community, who gave an average score of 59 – significantly lower than our white community score of 75.

These lower average scores within our LGBT+ community and non-white communities, mirrors the lower scores given by them to the questions "I feel like I can be myself at university", and "Do you feel part of the Harper community?".

**Action: The SU will work with our elected Student Executives, especially the BAME Rep, and LGBT+ Rep, to create events and opportunities for these communities. We will work with our representatives to curate specific events for these student communities.**



Interestingly, the average does not move more than two points in regards to gender, indicating no significant gender difference to the feeling of safety in the Barn.

The survey results show that HASU's value for money score has dropped by 14%. It is likely that the cost-of-living crisis reported by our students has had an effect on how students feel about our prices. It is also likely that our increased ticket prices, resulting from increases in security services, has led to decreased scores.



It is worth noting that the Students' Union has had to increase prices at a time when students are reporting less available money for socialising. We are concerned that this inability to pay for social activities will have a deeply negative impact on mental health.

**Action: HASU is to keep its pricing strategy under constant review. In Term 2, HASU is introducing a Term Pass for events in an attempt to provide better value for money for those who want to socialise.**

67% of students who responded to the survey had joined a club or society this year, while 33% have not. Those students who have not joined were prompted to give an explanation. The following reasons were given:

1. Too expensive
2. Nothing of interest available to them
3. Not enough time to attend

We conclude that the cost-of-living crisis is having a further impact on student socialising. **Our action is to provide a greater variety of clubs/societies/social events, with affordable options.**

## You

In this section of the Student Voice Survey, we asked students questions regarding their feelings while on campus. Results reveal that an overwhelming majority of students, 95%, feel as though they can be themselves at Harper – a figure that has slightly increased from last year. The majority (81%) also agree that they feel free to express their ideas, opinions, and beliefs.

The majority of students agreed that their peers can be themselves while at Harper (81/100), that they are treated respectfully by staff (87/100), and that they are treated respectfully by fellow students (79/100).

It should be noted that, amongst all these questions, the LGBT+ community scores were lower. The only score which was not significantly lower was in response to the question 'I feel I am treated respectfully by staff' which resulted in a similar average score.

We conclude that more work is needed in our efforts to create an inclusive campus, and provide a university experience that is equally rewarding for all communities of learners.

When asked if they feel safe on campus, 86% of our responders feel 'very safe' or 'extremely safe'. While these results are positive, it shouldn't be forgotten that 90 individual student responders do not feel safe or extremely safe.

The most notable community to respond with less than 'very safe' was the LGBT+ community: 31% feel less than 'very safe' when on campus.

In this light, we should continue our efforts to increase feelings of safety on campus in an effort to create a safe environment for *all* persons who come to Harper Adams. No student should feel unsafe while at Harper, and so we recommend that measures continue to be taken to increase safety on our campus, and allow for all communities to feel at ease.



## Cost of Living

Our survey indicates financial pressures on our students. 43% are currently maintaining full to part-time employment, while another 23% are actively seeking out work. Of the students who work and study simultaneously, 32% have admitted that working is interfering with their studies at Harper.

When asked about struggles to pay for essentials, students living in accommodation are struggling to pay for petrol and food (42% and 33% respectively). Students living off campus appear to be particularly struggling financially. 30% are struggling with electricity bills, 27% with gas/heating, 53% with petrol, and 38% with food bills. Despite these startling statistics, only 3.5% of students overall have asked the university for financial assistance.

Even more startling, 55% of responders strongly agree or agree that the cost-of-living crises has negatively affected their mental health. This suggests that it may be more important than ever to provide students with outlets for anxiety, yet 79% agreed that as a result of the cost-of-living crisis, they will have to cut back on social events.

Students revealed that 21% are struggling to pay for a gym membership, 28% for sports/societies memberships, and 52% struggle to pay for social/event tickets. The conclusion may be that social and physical activities will have to be further subsidized to account for the cost of living.