

STUDENT LIFE SURVEY NOVEMBER 2024: SUMMARY

ABOUT THE SURVEY

It is critical to the University of Edinburgh and Edinburgh University's Students' Association (EUSA) to improve the student experience, ensuring all students have a voice that we listen to and respond to. The Student Life Survey (SLS) aims to understand the changing lives, needs, behaviours and experiences of students at the University – their academic experience, their student life, the campus resources and facilities available to them and their support and wellbeing.

In response to student feedback that surveys should take 3 minutes or less and topics should be asked at the appropriate time in the academic year, we have changed how we ask for feedback in 2024/5. Instead of one long survey sent to students once a year, the questions are divided into five groups spread across the year based on the time they are most relevant to students and the ability to act upon results. The survey is open to all taught students, with slightly different questions sent to on-campus students and online students. An equivalent survey for research students is in early development.

The second (of five) surveys ran from 19 November to 3 December 2024. The questions can be found [here](#) and the results have been published in the [Dashboard](#). Data in the dashboard can be viewed by University, College, School, and Subject Area (where number of respondents are above the publishable threshold of 10). Outcomes can also be viewed by Demographic characteristic. This summary will provide a high-level overview of the results split by undergraduate students (UGs), postgraduate taught students (PGTs) who are based on-campus, and PGTs based online.

INTERPRETING THE RESULTS

In the survey, unless indicated otherwise, students rated their agreement on a 5-point scale from "definitely agree" to "definitely disagree." The agreement rate shows the percentage selecting "definitely agree" or "mostly agree".

The March 2024 survey only interviewed non-final year UGs, however, this year we have also included final year UGs and PGTs. Previous data has been included for interest, but *caution is advisable when comparing to March 2024 data* due to the population change.

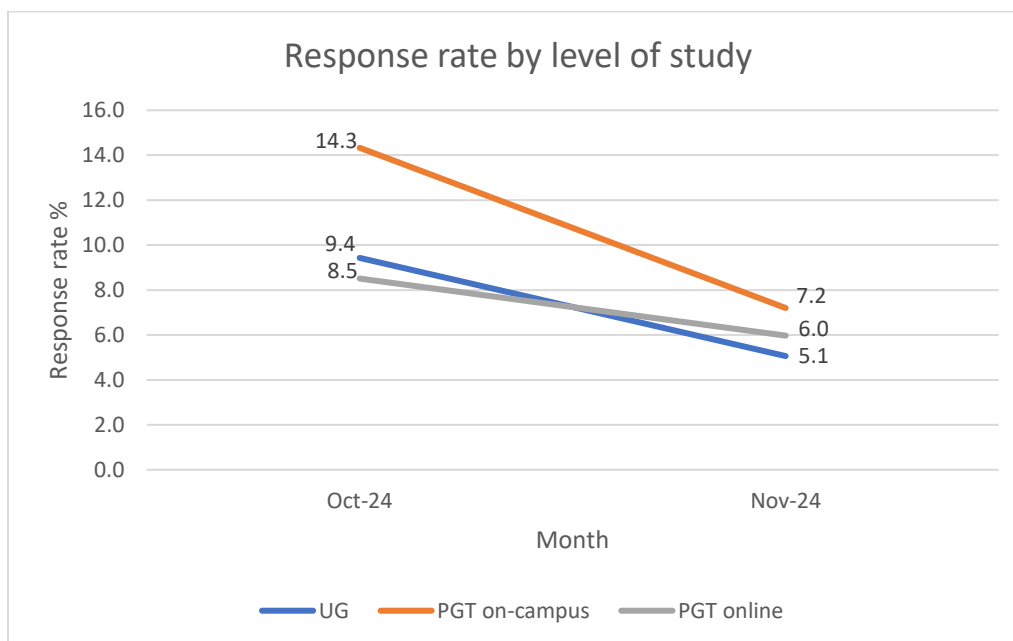
Online students were not asked about taught and study spaces.

RESPONSE RATE

The survey was sent to 39,580 students in total, and 2,209 students responded, a **5.6% response rate**.

Group	Population size	Respondents	Response rate
Undergraduate	27,591	1,396	5.1%
Postgraduate – on-campus	7,754	560	7.2%
Postgraduate – online	4,235	253	6.0%

This was a decrease from the October survey, but not unexpected given the time of year



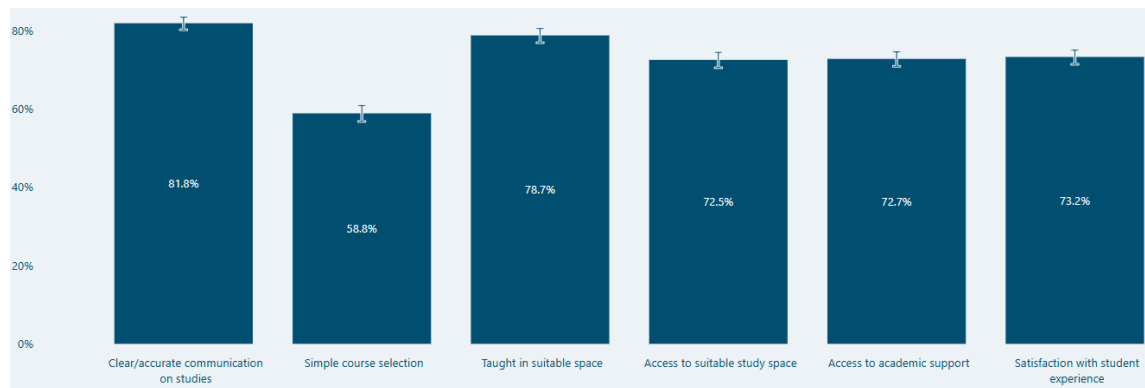
OVERVIEW

The November 2024 SLS questions were focused on learning experience, and included questions on clarity and accuracy of information about their studies, selecting option courses, taught and study spaces, and academic support. The survey also included a question on satisfaction with their student experience.

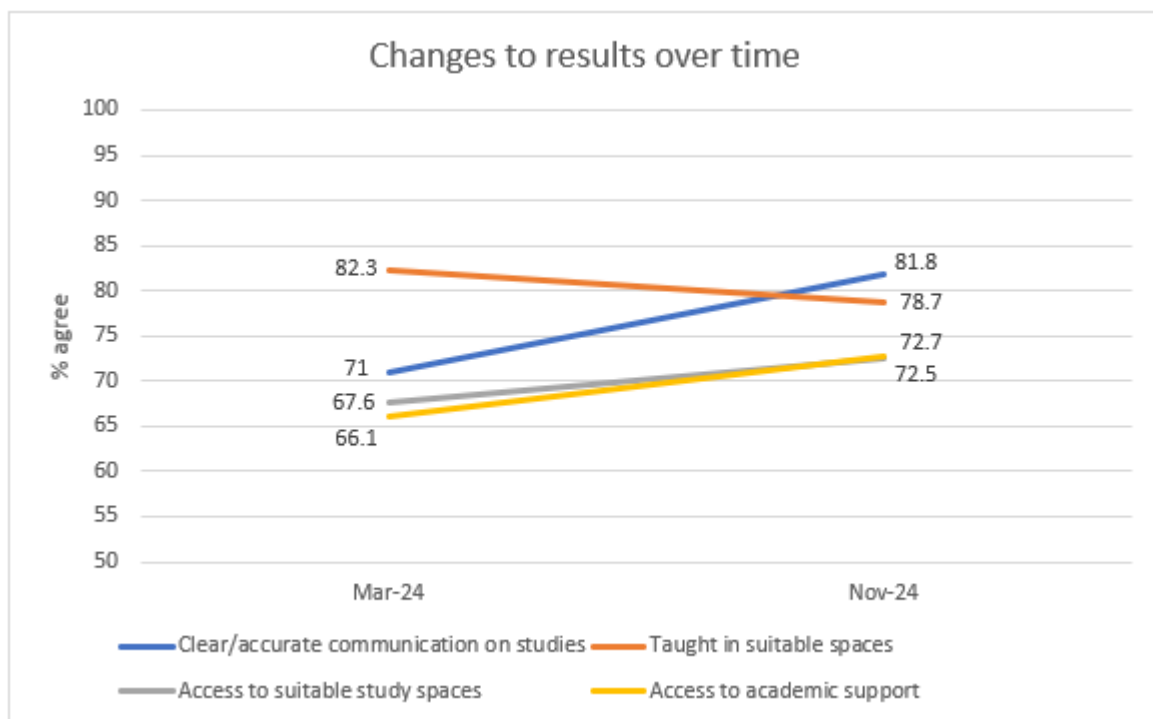
Overall, 73.2% of respondents said they were moderately to very satisfied with their student experience over the past month.

- 81.8% agreed that information relating to their studies is clearly and accurately communicated.
- 78.7% agreed they were taught in spaces which cater to their needs as a student.
- 72.7% agreed they have access to the academic support needed to succeed at the University.
- 72.5% agreed they have access to suitable spaces to study.
- 58.8% agreed they found the process of selecting option courses simple.

The lowest scoring question was whether the process of selection option courses was simple, followed by access to suitable study spaces and academic support. The highest agreement score was for clear and accurate communication about their studies, followed by suitable taught spaces.



Some questions can be compared to March 2024 data. Of those that can be compared, most have seen an improvement in scores since March 2024, with taught spaces showing a slight decrease. Note the population difference with March 2024 as described earlier in the report, and the scale of the axis.



UNDERGRADUATE RESULTS

OVERALL SATISFACTION

68.2% of UG students were moderately to very satisfied with their student experience over the past month.

COURSE INFORMATION AND SELECTION

78.7% of UG students agreed that information about their studies was clearly and accurately communicated. This is an increase from March 2024 when 71% of non-final year UGs agreed.

54.8% of UG students agreed that the process of selecting option courses was simple. This was the lowest scoring question in the survey.

Many students expressed their frustration with course registration processes and timetabling scheduling in the open-ended comments. They found the course selection process confusing, and it was especially challenging for those who are doing joint-honours degrees. They also raised issues about limited availability of elective or optional, as well as course clashes and late timetable releases.

TAUGHT AND STUDY SPACES

77.8% of UG students agreed they were taught in suitable spaces. There was a lower proportion of UG students agreeing that there was access to suitable study spaces - 69.6%. The taught spaces score is slightly lower than results from March 2024 (82.3%), while the study space score is marginally higher (67.6%).

Nearly 30% of open-ended comments from UG students highlighted a lack of suitable study spaces. The Main Library is always full, particularly during exam periods. Many students would like to have more study spaces across different campuses. Some student suggested that an online system to check current occupancy of study spaces would be beneficial. Meanwhile, there are concerns that the current study space do not adequately meet students' needs. For instance, some students prefer small and silent study spaces, while others have encountered issues with broken or faulty facilities within these spaces.

Some students found teaching spaces to be insufficient, unsuitable and unaccommodating. Some students reported that certain teaching spaces were inaccessible for disabled students, inadequately heated during the winter, or had faulty facilities

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

66.3% of UG students agreed they have access to the academic support they need to succeed at the University. This is similar to March 2024 when 66.1% of non-final year UGs agreed.

There have been calls for improved academic and emotional support system in the open-ended comments. Some students reported difficulty in reaching their student advisors and expressed a desire for more one-on-one sessions with both their advisors and teaching staff. There are also requests for clearer, more constructive and prompter assessment feedback.

POSTGRADUATE – ON-CAMPUS RESULTS

OVERALL SATISFACTION

78.6% of PGT on-campus students were moderately to very satisfied with their student experience over the past month.

COURSE INFORMATION AND SELECTION

85.2% of PGT on-campus students agreed that information about their studies was clearly and accurately communicated. However, some students mentioned that communication about course requirement and assessment deadlines was not timely enough.

60.4% of PGT on-campus students agreed that the process of selecting option courses was simple. On the other hand, some students described the current course selection process as inconvenient, while others suggested that the University should expand the availability of optional courses to improve the process.

TAUGHT AND STUDY SPACES

81.3% of PGT on-campus students agreed they were taught in suitable spaces compared to 80% agreeing that there was access to suitable study spaces. Despite the relatively high agreement rate for study space, some PGT students expressed a desire for more designated study areas for PGT students, particularly during peak periods like exam and assessment deadlines.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

80.5% of PGT on-campus students agreed they have access to the academic support they need to succeed at the University. Despite the majority feeling supported, some students suggested that integrating more real-world applications, such as internships or industry collaborations related to their academic curriculum, could further improve their academic experience.

On the other hands, assessment feedback was often described as insufficient or too slow among PGT on-campus students in the open-ended comments. There are also calls for more structured support for dissertations and more frequent interactions with supervisors and student advisors.

POSTGRADUATE - ONLINE RESULTS

OVERALL SATISFACTION

88.9% of PGT online students were moderately to very satisfied with their student experience over the past month.

COURSE INFORMATION AND SELECTION

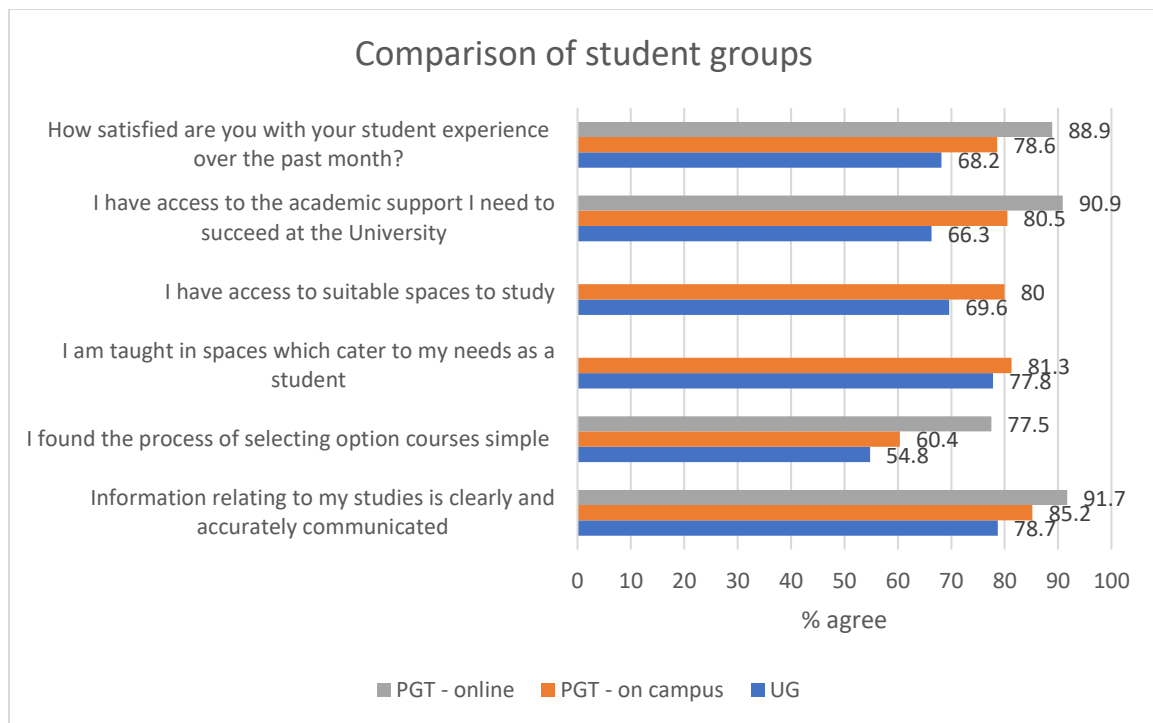
91.7% of PGT online students agreed that information about their studies was clearly and accurately communicated. However, some students found the communication regarding changes in timetabling schedules could be further improved.

77.5% of PGT online students agreed that the process of selecting option courses was simple.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

90.9% of PGT online students agreed they have access to the academic support they need to succeed at the University.

COMPARISON OF STUDENT GROUPS



ADDITIONAL STUDENT COMMENTS

All respondents have been asked to provide suggestions on how the University could improve their learning experience and the academic support they receive.

SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

There is a strong demand for more opportunities that facilitates networking and engagement among both UG and PGT, including on-campus and online students. Specifically, online students often feel often feel disconnected from the University community. They have expressed a keen interest in participating in on-campus activities with other online students.