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Glide

What Students Seek

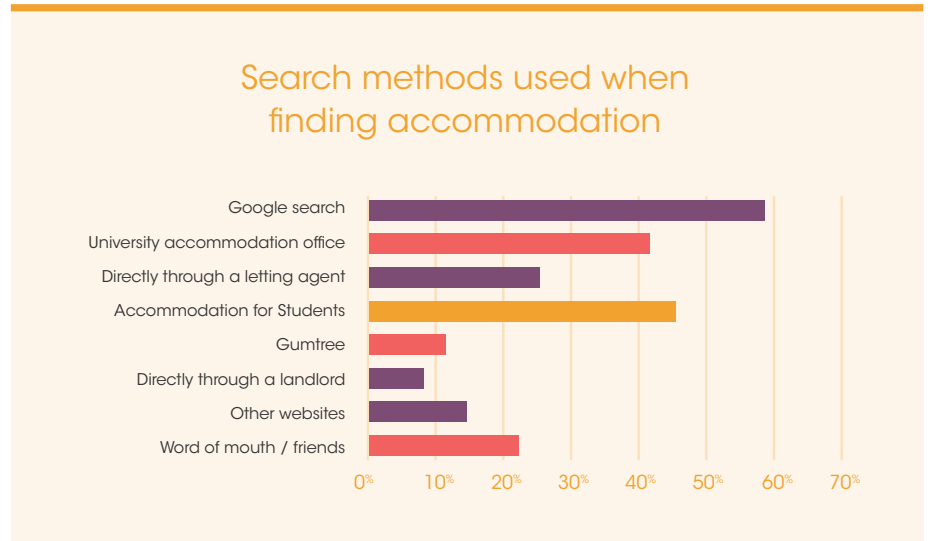
2016



Choosing accommodation

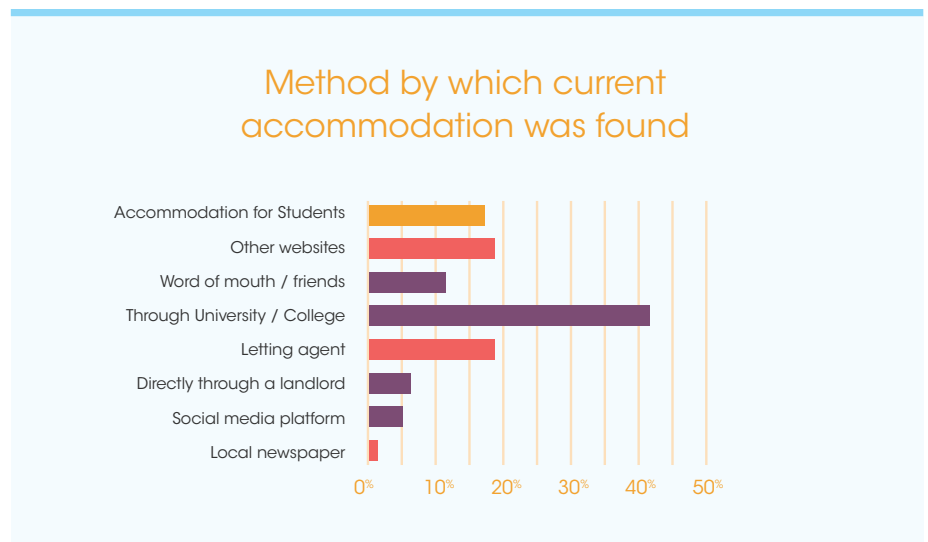
Searching for accommodation

The most popular methods used in searching for accommodation are Google searches (58%) and Accommodation for Students (45%). The use of one's University accommodation office was also a very popular option (44%). Students seem to prefer more generalized search methods that offer a wide range of options rather than more directed search methods such as searching via a letting agent or landlord. These methods are also preferred over more casual methods such as online classifieds ads (Gumtree) or asking other students.



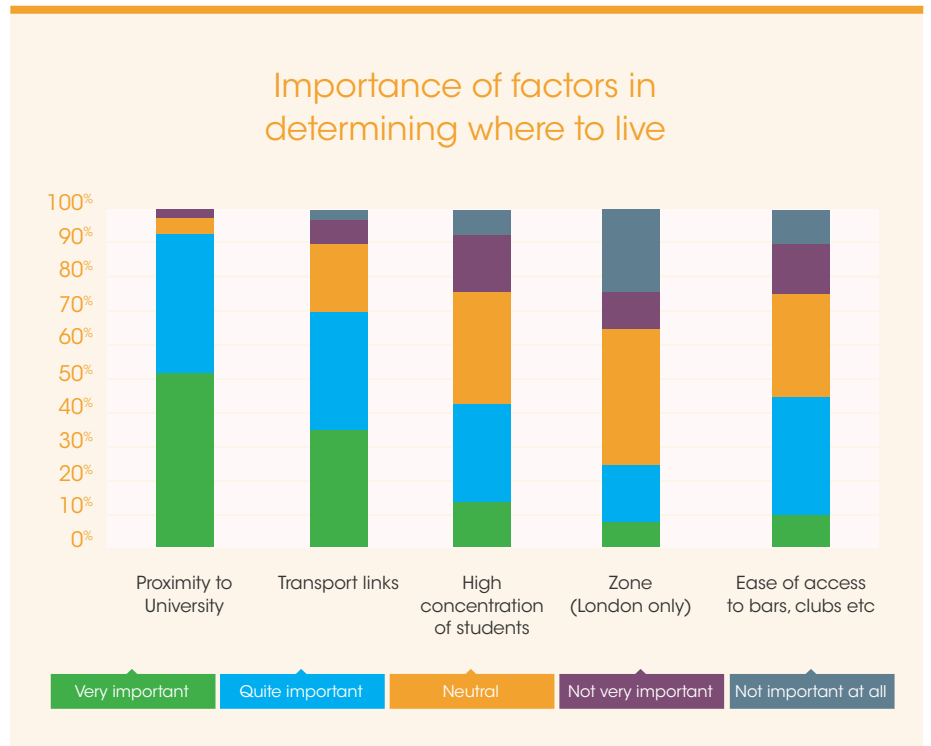
Method by which current accommodation was found

University accommodation offices are ultimately the most common method by which students found their current housing (42%). While students may use various resources in the search process, the overwhelming outcome seems to be relying on their university rather than secondary search sites or through social connections. 71% of first year students find their accommodation through the university accommodation office, suggesting that this is the most convenient option for those just entering university. This is also the more popular means of finding current accommodation for UK students (43%) compared to international students (37%).



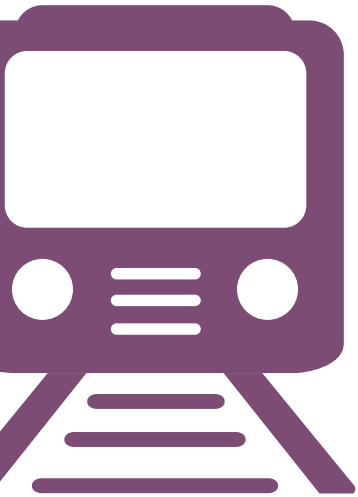
Decision making factors

The proximity of accommodation to university was ranked important or very important by over 90% of respondents. The concentration of students, zone, and ease of access to clubs and bars are the factors that most students remain neutral toward in determining their location, with approximately 1 in 3 respondents reporting a neutral feeling toward the importance of these factors. Transport links are important to 70% of respondents.

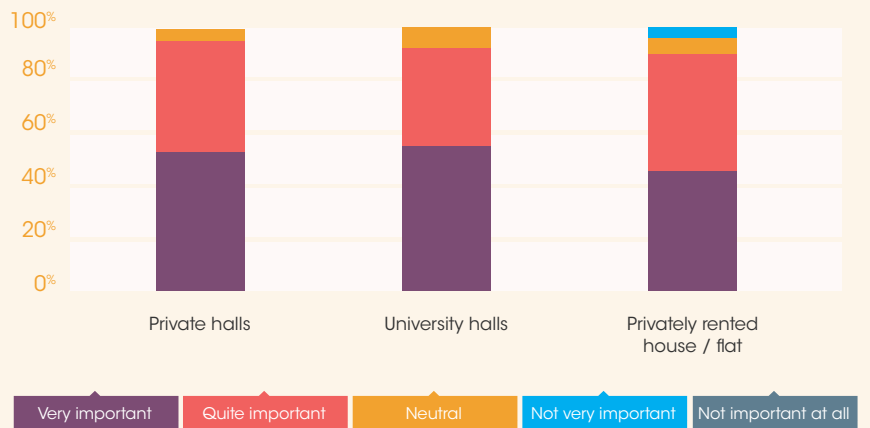


MOST IMPORTANT:
Location

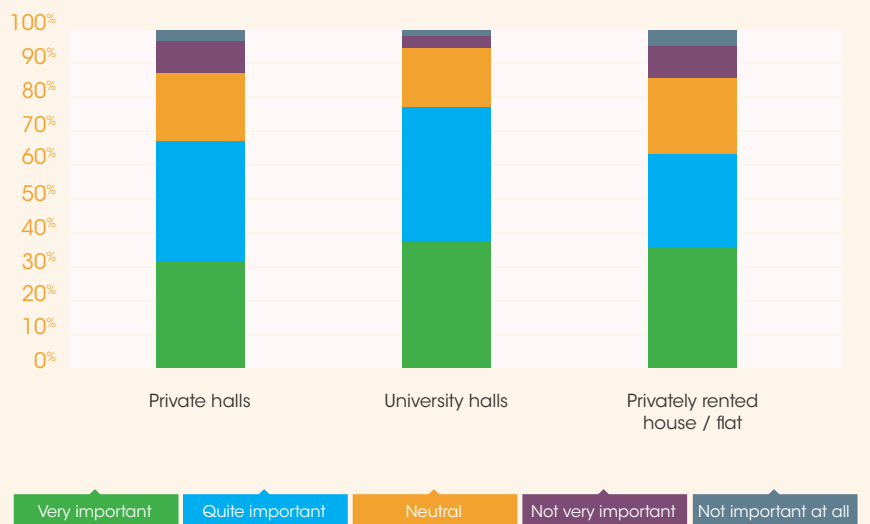
Examining the importance of each of these factors by type of accommodation, there is little difference between those in private halls, university halls, and privately rented houses or flats in their desire to be close to their university; over 90% of respondents who live in each housing type feel proximity is important.



Importance of proximity to university by accommodation type

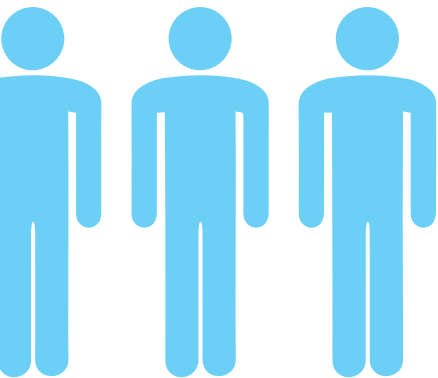


Importance of transport links by accommodation type

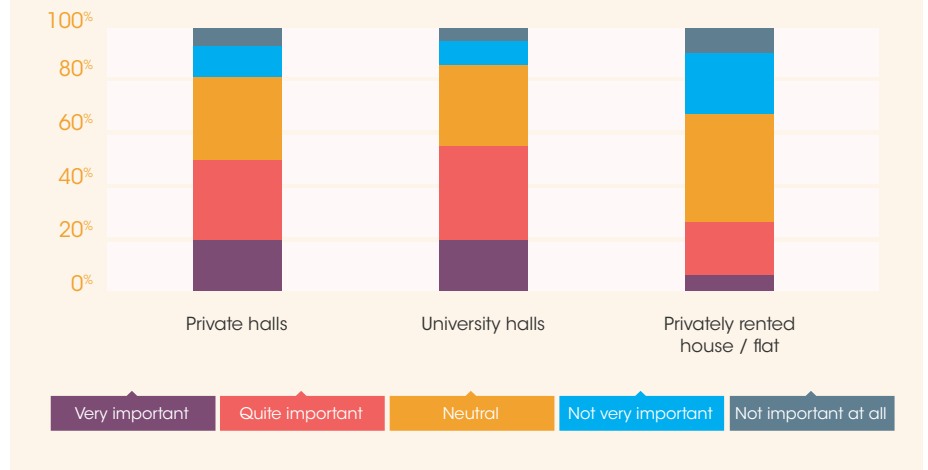


Those living in university halls are most concerned with the proximity of transport links to their accommodation.

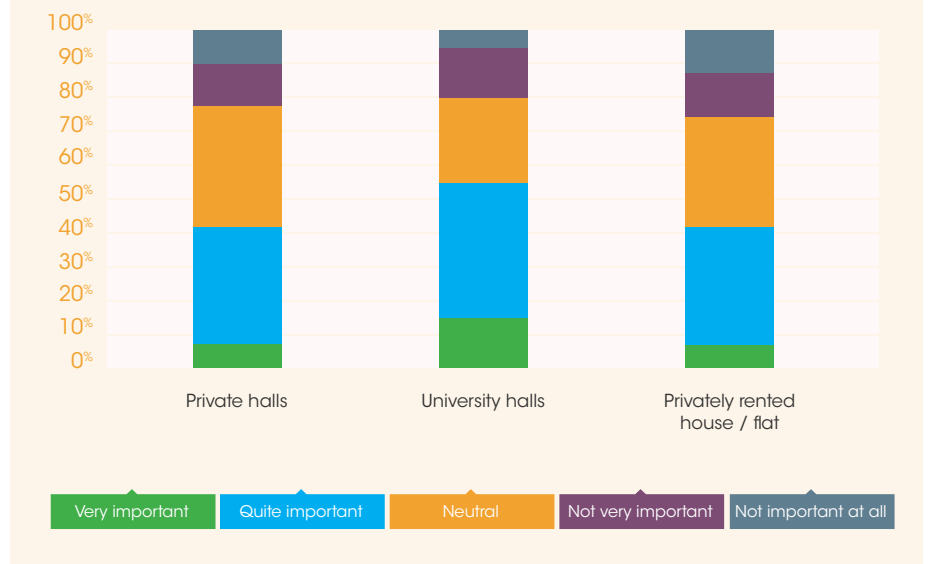
The concentration of students in an area is more important to those living in halls than those in private houses or flats; over 50% of students found this to be an important factor while only 30% of those in non-hall style accommodation found this important. Students living in halls therefore find value in the availability of social experiences and opportunities with other students, whereas those in private accommodations may be looking for experiences that are not dominated by other students.



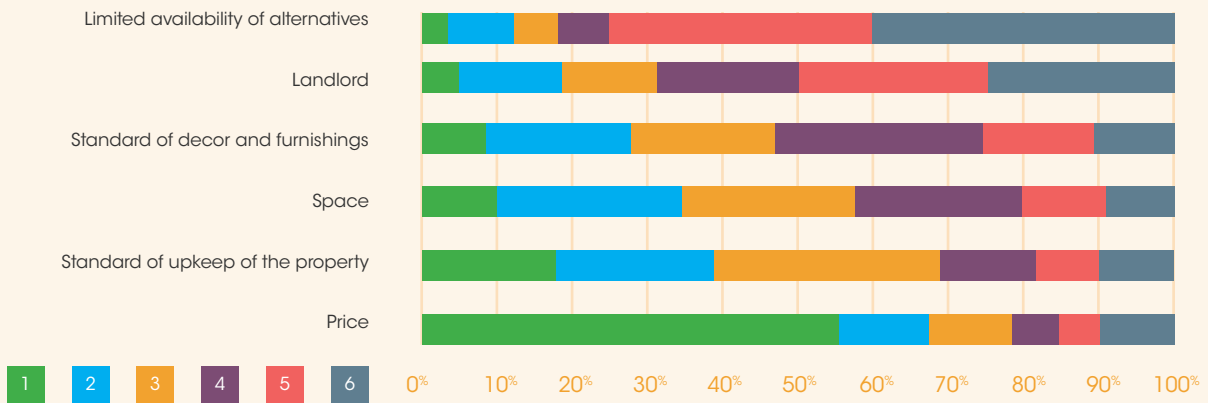
Importance of a high concentration of students by accommodation type



Importance of ease of access to bars and clubs by accommodation type



Ranked importance of factors in choosing accommodation

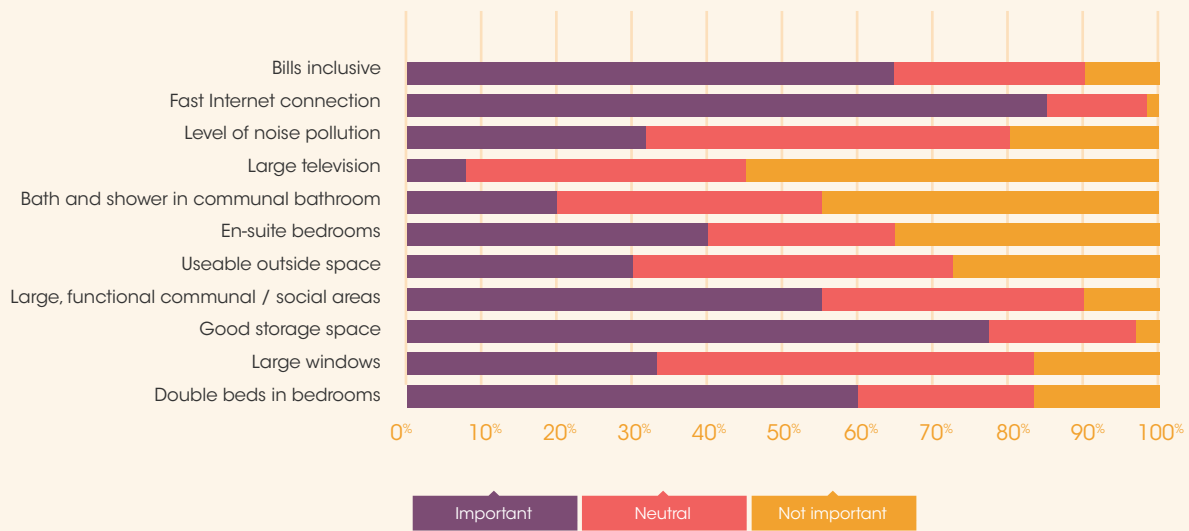


Rank of importance of factors influential in deciding where to live

In addition to the location and its characteristics, students also make decisions on where to live based on the attributes of the accommodation itself, and by far the most important of these factors is price. 55% of students rank price as the number one factor in choosing accommodation. The upkeep of property, space, and the décor and furnishing are the next most important factors which suggests that students are making considerations for their daily living comfort in addition to be concerned about their finances.



The importance of attributes when choosing accommodation



These daily living conditions were also ranked according to their importance for students. Having access to good storage space and a fast internet connection were the two attributes deemed important by the highest percentage of respondents (78% and 84%, respectively).

Students have largely neutral opinions on the size of windows, levels of noise pollution, and the presence of useable outdoor areas. A large television was said to be not important by 56% of respondents; coupled with the high importance of a fast internet connection, this could be indicative of students preferring to use laptops and online media streaming services rather than traditional televisions as sources of entertainment.



Price

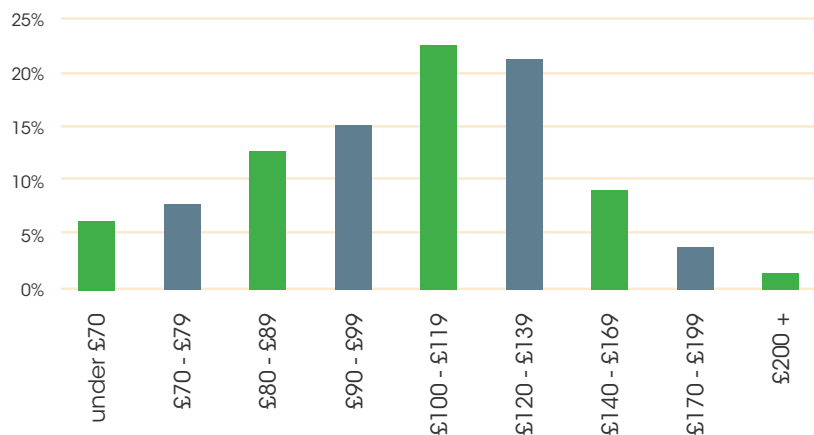
Rent

The majority (58%) of students surveyed are spending between £90 and £139 per week on their accommodation.

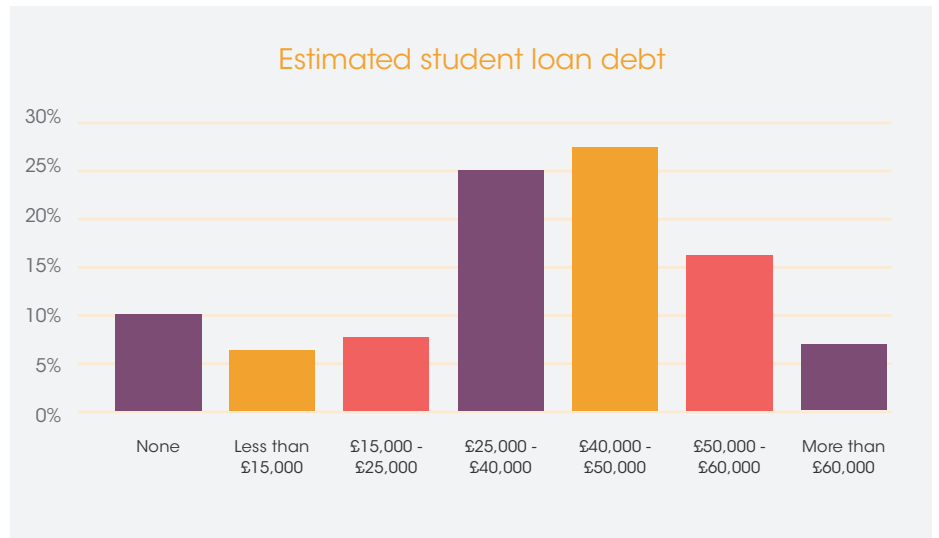
This translates to monthly costs of between £360 and £556. These costs are important to consider in the context of general spending during university and the impact of this spending on student loan debt.

75% of students surveyed estimate that their student loan debts will exceed £25,000, with 23% estimating debts of over £50,000. The reality of high costs for university education understandably contributes to price of accommodation being the number one factor in deciding where to live. For students living in their student accommodations for 9 months of the year, completing a three year undergraduate degree, the estimated cost of rent would total between £9,720 and £15,012. 95% of students say their estimated debt will take over 10 years to pay off, with 23% of those individuals saying they think they will never be able to pay off the debt they accumulate before it expires.

Weekly cost of accommodation



Daily living expenses are also worth consideration as they contribute to students' debt. When asked how to rank monthly spending on different items, 87% of students reported their number one most costly expense was rent. 44% said that bills accounted for their second most costly expenditure while food was the most common third answer with 40%. Half of all students reported home furnishing or books as the items that took up the smallest portion of their monthly spending. This is most likely as a result of utilizing libraries or online sources rather than purchasing books and also living in already-furnished accommodations like university halls and private halls.



87%

Rank	Expense
1	Rent
2	Bills
3	Food (not inc. alcohol)
4	Social activities
5	Transport
-	Toiletries / clothing
-	Technology (inc. phones)
6	Books
7	Home furnishings

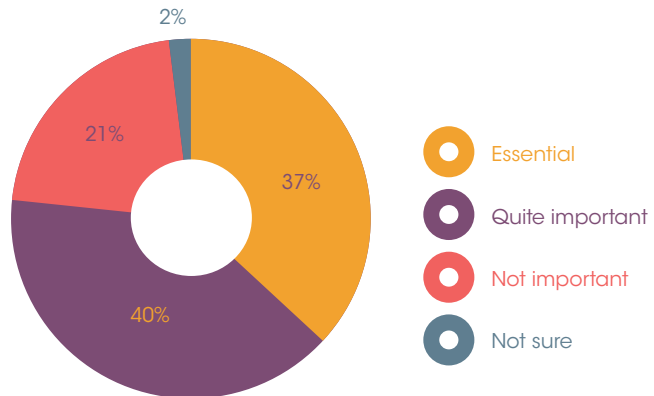
of the students reported rent was the number one most costly expense



Bills

Students' second largest expense outside of rent is bills. Two thirds of students pay rent with bills included, while the remaining one third are left to sort bill payments separate from rent payments. 3 in 4 students think that the inclusion of bills in their rent is important or essential. This suggests there is a gap between students who would like their bills to be included in rent payments but do not currently have such an option in their accommodation. Paying for bills and rent is a convenient option that suits the needs of students and as such most surveyed found this to be a service that they desire.

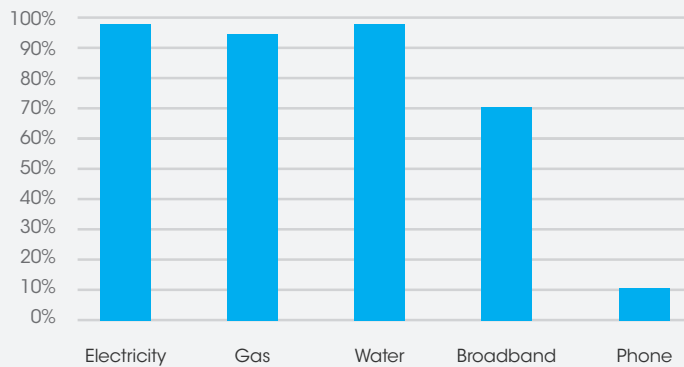
Importance of bills included in rent



Students were largely in agreement that electricity, gas and water are expected to be lumped into a bills-inclusive rent payment.

Over 95% of respondents felt these utilities should be included. 70% also expected the inclusion of broadband service in their utility payment. This information may be useful for landlords looking to please students by offering utilities-inclusive rents: a broadband service is something students would like to not have to worry about paying for separately.

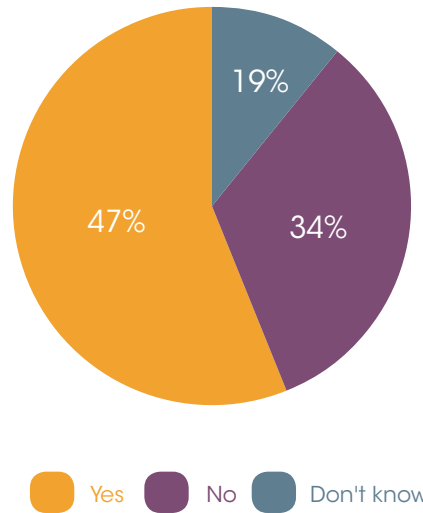
Utilities expected to be inclusive in rent



Value for money

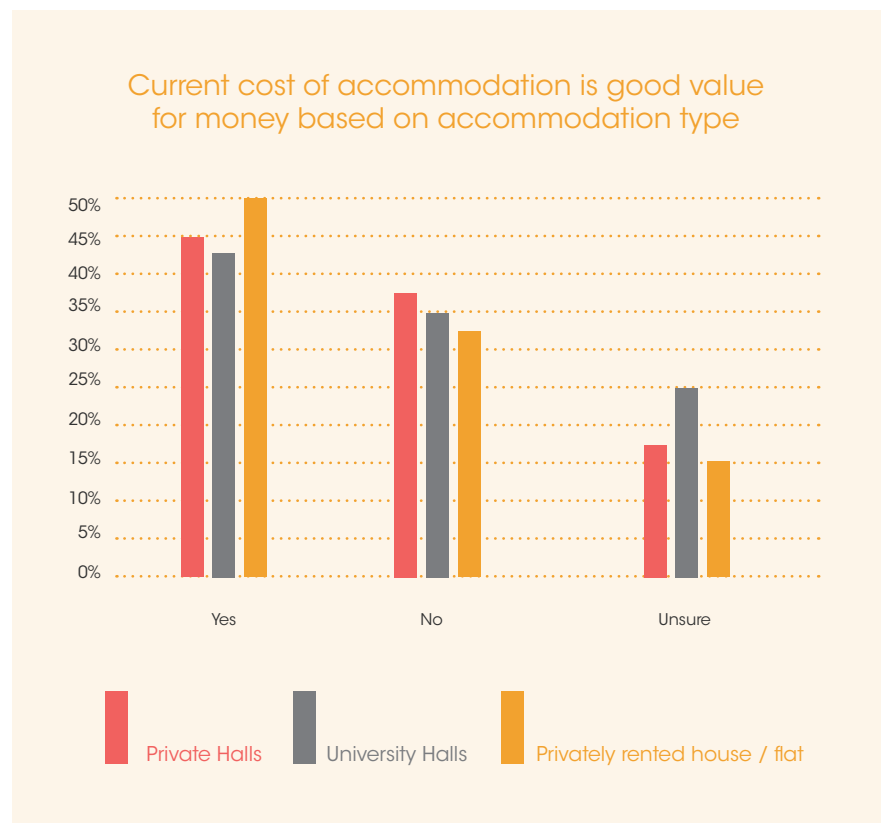
Students were also asked whether they felt they were getting their money's worth in regards to their accommodation. Approximately one in five students were unsure if they were getting good value for their money. There may be a disconnect between what students personally experience with their accommodation and what they know of other accommodation situations; students may be unfamiliar with other options and the costs for those options.

Cost of accommodation represents good value for money



This trend seems to be most pronounced for those living in university accommodation. Because they found accommodation through their university rather than having to navigate searching for private accommodation, they may not feel as certain that what they are getting represents a good value. Those in privately rented houses or flats are most confident that they are getting a good deal on their accommodation.

Current cost of accommodation is good value for money based on accommodation type



Current accommodation

Property management and satisfaction

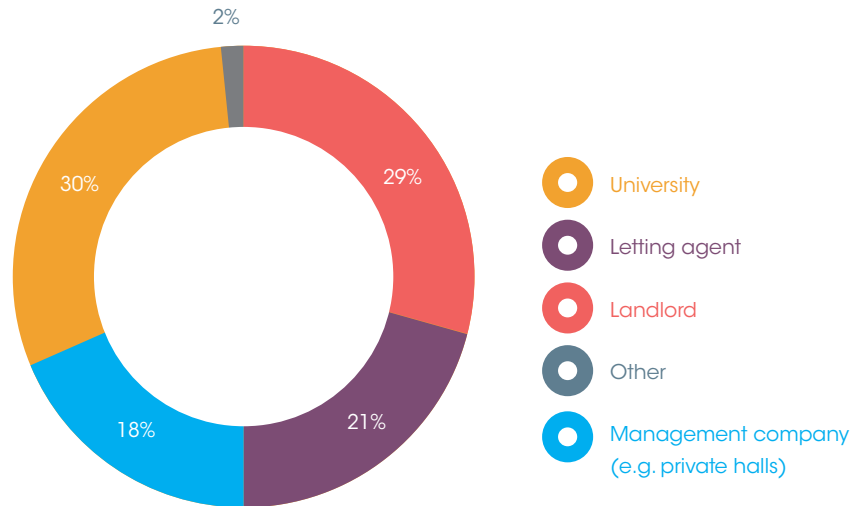
In order to get a better understanding of students' current living situations, several questions were asked about the properties in which they lived and their satisfaction with their living arrangements. Reports of how properties are managed are consistent with the proportion of students who report living in each type of accommodation; those who cite "other" are living either with their parents or in a temporary accommodation with friends.



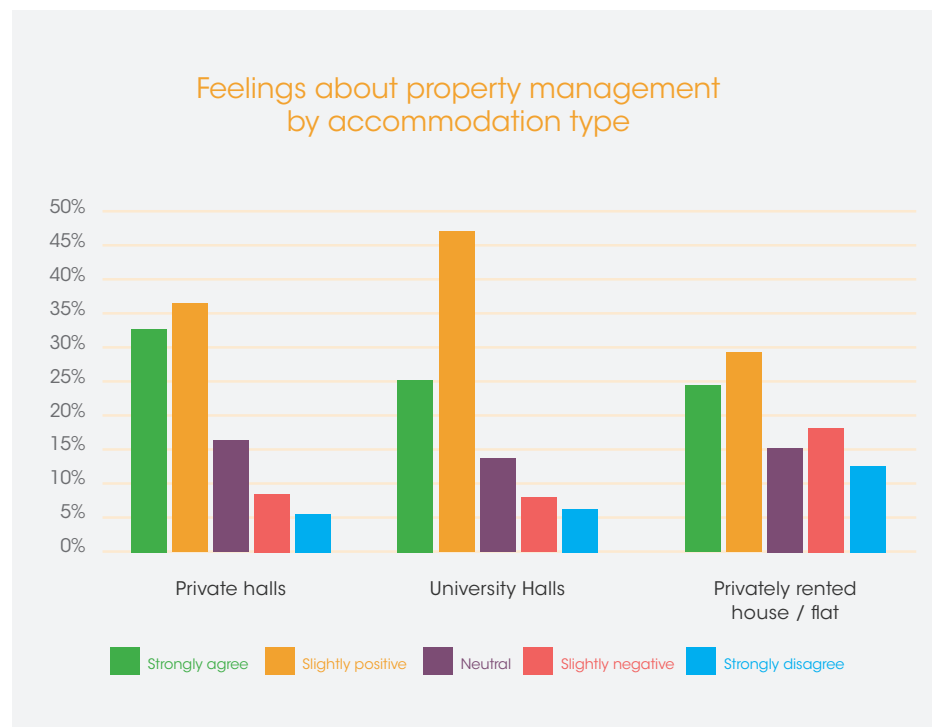
Most respondents are happy with the ways their property is managed, with slightly over 60% reporting positive feelings toward their property managers.

Examining the breakdown of feelings toward property management by the type of accommodation, those living in privately rented homes or flats are more than twice as likely to report negative views. The same portion of students in each type of housing feel neutral toward their management, university halls have the most positive feedback with private halls having an only slightly smaller portion of students with positive views. University and private halls may offer more consistent, timely, or thorough property management which leads to residents viewing them in a more positive light than those living in privately rented accommodation.

How property is managed

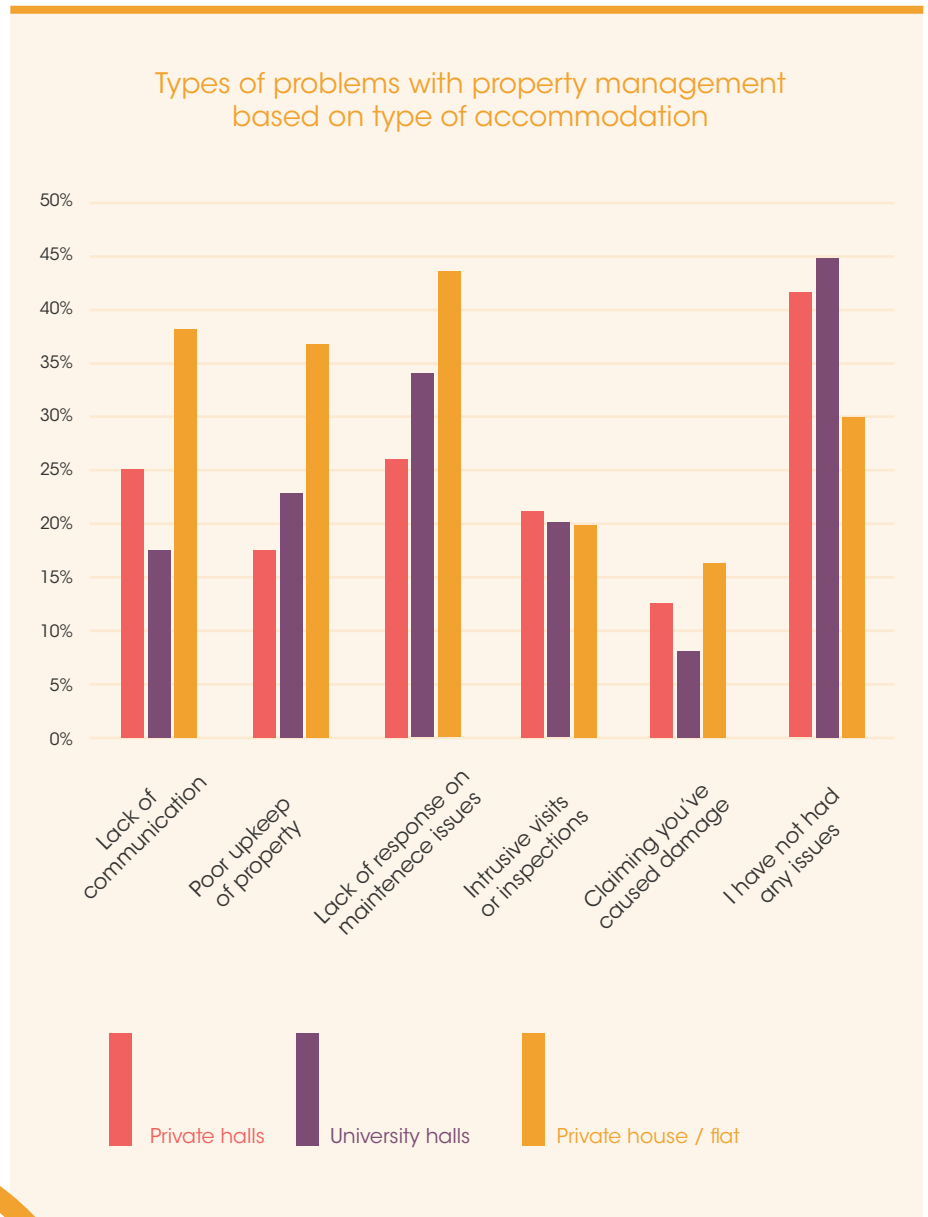


Feelings about property management by accommodation type



Problems with property management

When asked about issues that students have with their property managers, over 40% of those in private and university halls reported no problems. The proportion of students in privately rented homes and flats reporting problems regarding a lack of communication or poor upkeep of the property was almost double the proportion of students in halls reporting such problems. This again is indicative of how students in non-hall accommodation face more challenges in dealing with their property managers. Additionally, when asked whether landlords had engaged in inappropriate behaviour or actions meant to bribe students in anyway (offered monetary incentives, providing alcohol, helping with coursework, etc), 89% of students said such behaviour had never occurred. However 6% did report that a landlord had helped them on a matter unrelated to their accommodation.

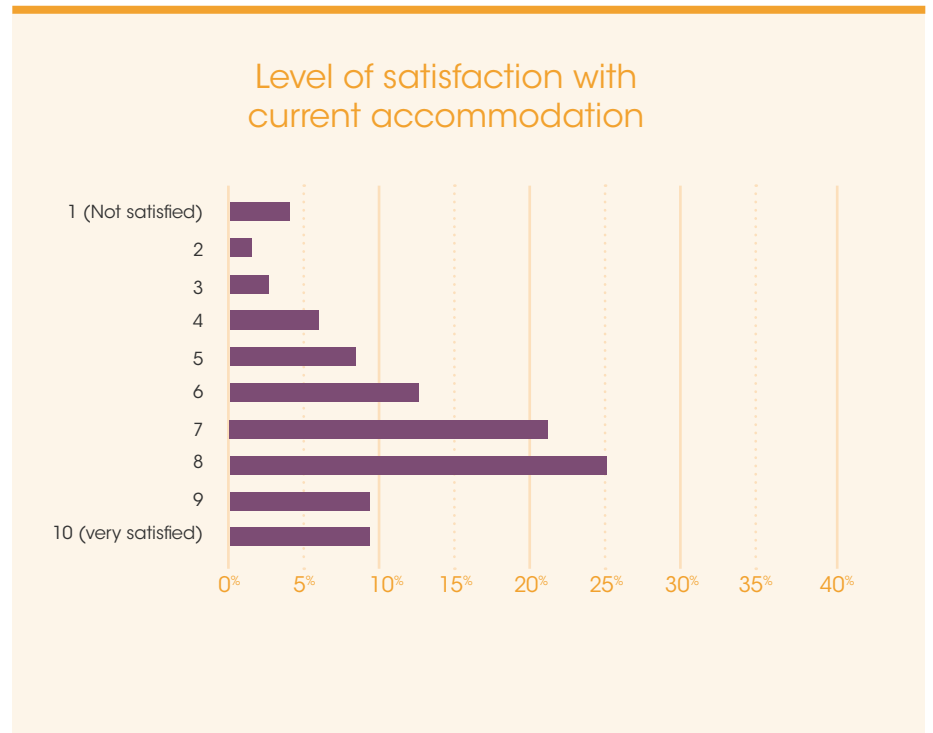


87%

of the students in private and university halls reported no problems

Satisfaction with accommodation

In addition to students' perception of their property management, they were asked about their overall satisfaction with their choice of accommodation. This general satisfaction allowed students to consider all aspects of their living situation - price, location, housemates, etc- and report their feelings. 3 in 5 students rate their level of satisfaction as 7 or higher, suggesting that most students feel good about where they are living.



When comparing satisfaction among students with different characteristics, some patterns begin to emerge about how the environment of one's accommodation affects their satisfaction. For students who have their bills included in their rent, 65% report a level of 7 or higher while only 56% of those with bills non-inclusive report a 7 or higher. Since over 75% of students would like to have bills included in their rent, this is clearly an area for improvement in increasing student satisfaction.



Comparing satisfaction among students living in different accommodation types, those in privately rented houses or flats report lower levels of satisfaction (a score of 4 or lower) than those in halls; this is in line with this same group's propensity for more negative feelings toward their property management.



Satisfaction with current accommodation by whether or not bills are inclusive with rent



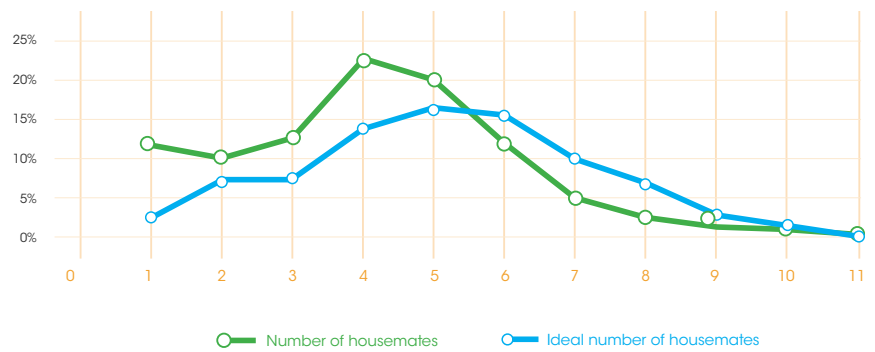
Satisfaction with current accommodation based on accommodation type



Living arrangements

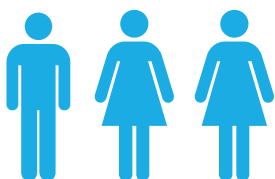
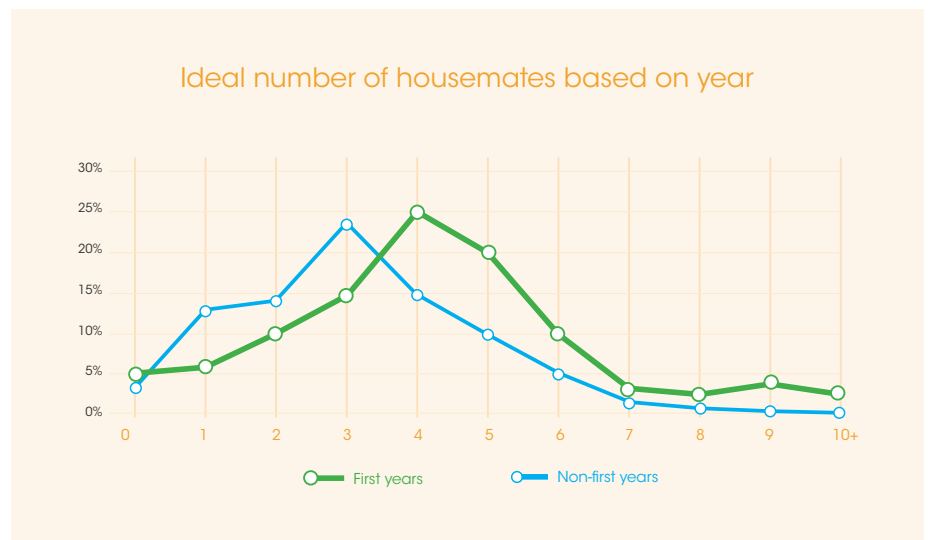
To gain an expanded view of students' daily living in their accommodation, several questions relating to their living arrangements were asked including questions about their housemates and their efforts to create a comfortable, "home" environment in their accommodation. The following graph displays students living with each number of housemates compared to how many housemates they would ideally have; the peak ideal number of housemates is around 4 or 5.

Current number of housemates compared to ideal number of housemates



Examining the breakdown of ideal number of housemates of first year students compared to non-first years, younger students appear to be comfortable or prefer more housemates than older students. They may prefer a more active and social environment than those who are further along in their course.

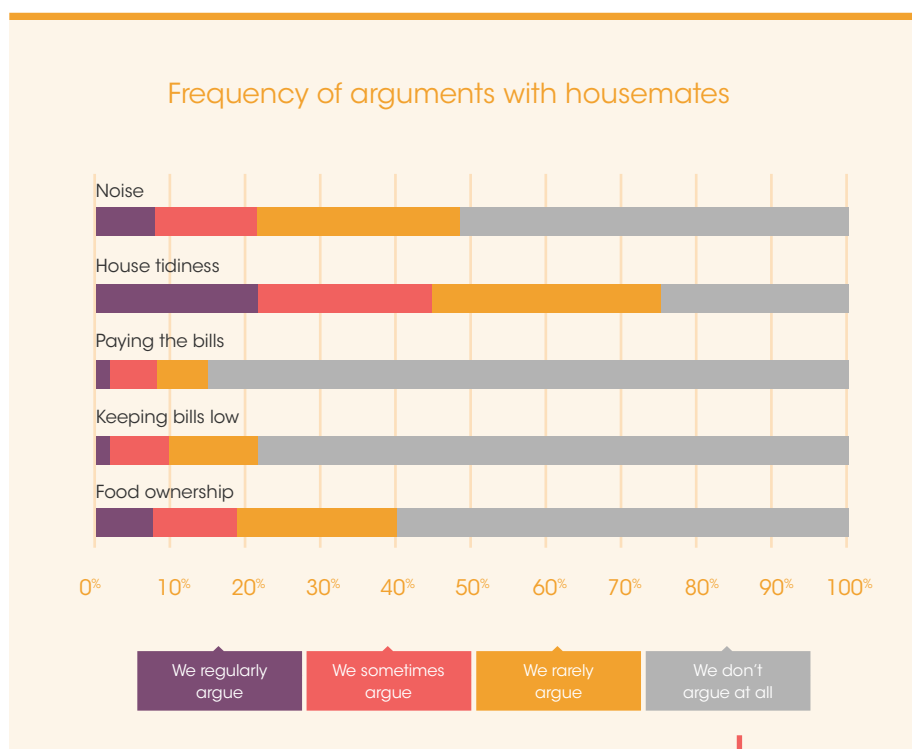
Ideal number of housemates based on year



Younger students prefer more housemates than older students.

Arguments with roommates

Students were asked about the types of arguments they have with their housemates and the frequency of those types of arguments. Fights over noise and the tidiness of their accommodation were the most commonly reported issues, with 77% saying they at least occasionally argue about tidiness and 45% saying they at least occasionally argue about noise. 20% of students have constant arguments with housemates over tidiness; this appears to be a large issue that could be addressed to create better relations between housemates and higher levels of satisfaction with accommodation. For 85% of students, paying the bills is something that never amounts to an argument. The inclusion of bills in rent could be a large factor in this being a non-occurring problem for so many students. Additionally, only 9% of students reported ever having to pay a bill on their own because their housemates had not done so.



85%

of students never argue about paying the bills

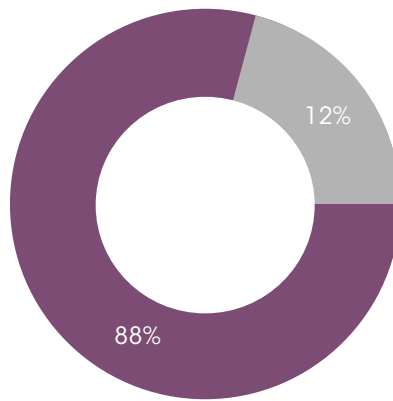


Utilities

TV packages

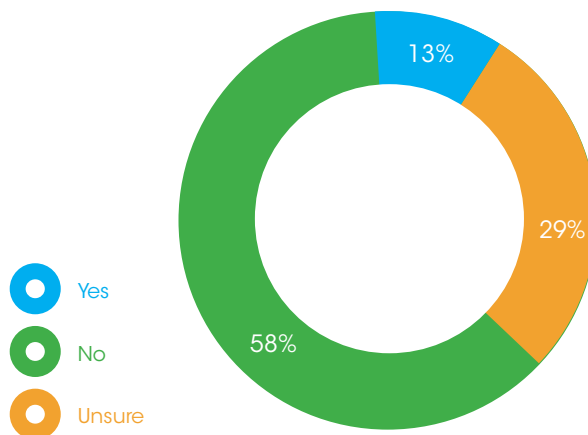
When asked about their TV viewing, 88% currently have only what is available with Freeview and 58% plan to remain only having Freeview in the future. 29% are unsure if they would subscribe to a larger TV package in the future, suggesting that perhaps there is some flexibility in convincing students to adopt a larger TV package.

Is your current TV package better than freeview?



- Yes
- No

Do you plan on getting a TV package in the future?

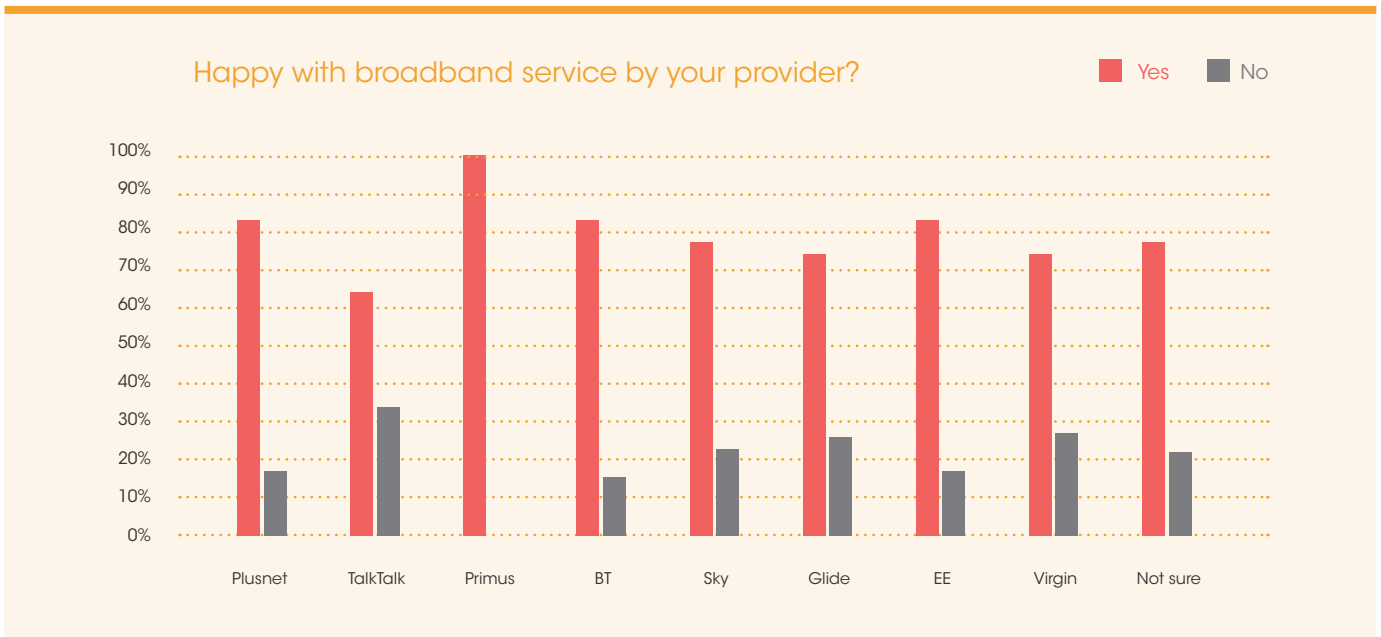
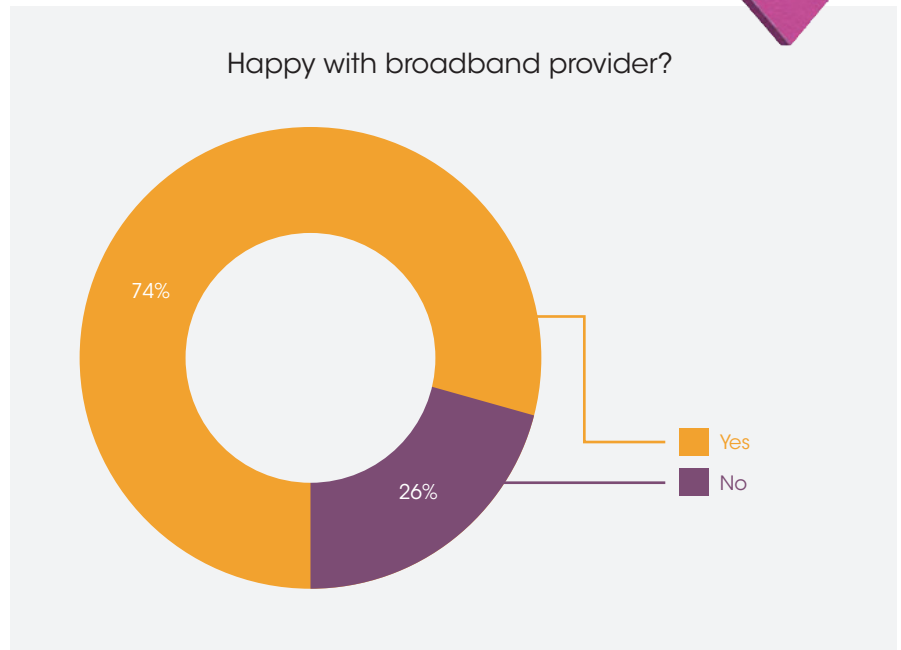


- Yes
- No
- Unsure



Broadband

About three in four students say they are happy with their broadband providers. The most common broadband provider is Virgin (25%) and the second most common is Sky (12%). One in four students do not know who their broadband provider is, perhaps because their broadband is included in their utility payments for their accommodation and they do not directly pay a provider (as is commonly the case for university halls). Satisfaction with broadband service is fairly consistent across providers; however, students with TalkTalk are more likely to be unhappy with their service. Only one student reported having Primus service explaining the 100% satisfaction.



Students were asked to comment on any dissatisfaction with their broadband service; the word cloud (right) shows the most commonly used words in their complaints. These comments show students are concerned with the costs associated with their broadband and also the quality of the service.

BROADBAND
INTERNET
SLOW
EXPENSIVE
CONNECTION

MONTH
SIGNAL
CUTS
WIFI
SPEED
PROBLEM

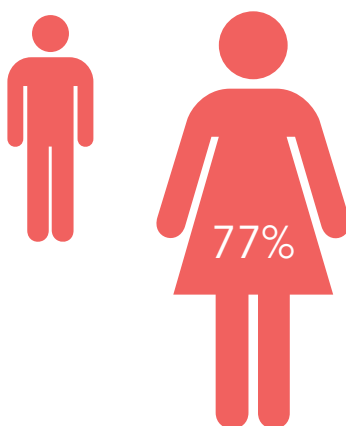
NOT FAST
PRICE
SUPPLIER
NOT GREAT
LIVE

DOWNLOAD
CONSISTENT
FAR
VIRGIN

OVERLOADED
INTERMITTANT
TROUBLE
CHANNELS

Demographics

Respondents to this survey were overwhelmingly female (77%) and in the typical student age range of between 18 and 29 years old. However, there were a small number of mature student respondents (1.5%). 43% of the sample were first year students, 25% were second year, and 14% were third year students. 83% were British while the remaining international population was predominated by European students (7%). About one third of students surveyed are currently living in the South East and South West regions. The most cited specific universities were the University of Surrey and the University of Manchester, which each contributed about 4.5% of the total students who completed the survey.

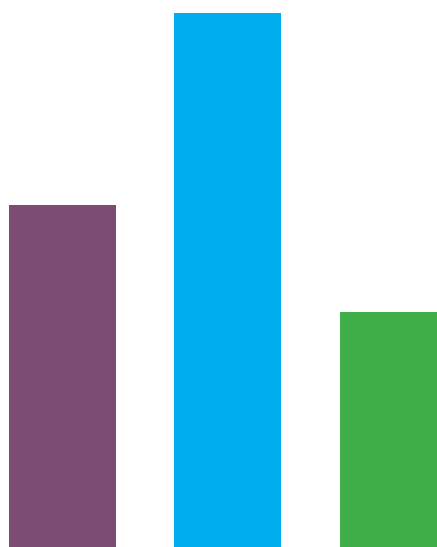


Mostly female

18 - 24



83% British





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Thank you

